

Chapter # 14

MIDDLE CORRIDOR PERSPECTIVE: WHAT DOES GEORGIA'S POLITICAL IDENTITY CHANGE?

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ABSTRACT

This Chapter considers a wider Black Sea Region for Georgia's identity search considering Georgia's geopolitical location, its Euro-Atlantic aspirations and its main value for the region and beyond – all features for a successful transit hub. It is even more relevant in the context of the current geopolitical changes and an increased focus on Middle Corridor. The Middle Corridor, also called TITR (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route), is a trade route from Southeast Asia and China to Europe via Kazakhstan, Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. It is an alternative to the Northern Corridor, to the north through Russia, and the Ocean Route to the south, via the Suez Canal. Geographically, the Middle Corridor is the shortest route between Western China and Europe. International Sanctions on Russia and COVID-19 before that make Middle Corridor a safer and better option for trade. Based on different intergroup approaches developed in social psychology (e.g., Social Identity Theory, Realistic Conflict Theory), political identities refer to identification with and meaning attributed to membership in politically relevant groups, including political parties and national, ethnic, linguistic, or gender groups. A key concept in this intergroup approach to political psychology is political identity. This Chapter argues that (i) Georgia's political identity is strongly tied with its Euro-Atlantic aspirations and (ii) Georgia will embrace its regional identity if it sees the perspective of strengthening its political identity.

Keywords: political identity, middle corridor, values, Georgia, EU, regional identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing over two decades ago, Stuart Hall (1991) first told the story of European identity as contradictory processes of marking symbolic boundaries and constructing symbolic frontiers between inside and outside, interior and exterior, belonging and otherness, which are central to any account of the political psychology of European integration. However, no systematic attempt has been made to weave the stories of European identity together with those of European integration using political psychology (Manners, 2018, *Political Psychology*). Given that marking inside and outside, interior and exterior, belonging and otherness are both political and psychological processes, this absence of engagement seems problematic.

Georgia could be a good case study to highlight this engagement.

Georgia's complex political geography has always been and will stay a reality that we cannot avoid on multiple levels – be it politics, economy, or identity (Pirtskhalava & Kvanchilashvili; 2023). The global changes that the COVID-19 and Russia's War in Ukraine has caused, pushes Georgia to balance its regional integration with its ultimate goal to become a member of the EU. Today, Georgia holds the EU candidate country status bringing it closer to opening negotiations for its EU membership, which makes the nature

and possible impact of its effort to balance between regional and Euro-Atlantic values something that needs to be watched closely.

Middle Corridor could be one factor amplifying Georgia's need for perfect balance. The so-called "Middle Corridor" is a Trans-Caspian logistics route that connects Asia with Europe, bypassing Russia. Due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the sanctions imposed and the resulting obstruction of the transport route via Russia, the Middle Corridor is becoming increasingly important. A multimodal land-and-sea transport route is stretching from China through Kazakhstan, and partly Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and across the Caspian Sea, through Azerbaijan and Georgia, to the Black Sea. The route consists of about 4,250 km of rail lines, and about 500 km of seaway. Afterwards, two paths lead to the Europe via Turkey and the Black Sea, respectively. From a European perspective, it also offers access to the growing markets of Central Asia and the Caucasus region, as well as faster access to the Middle East, North Africa and the European Mediterranean region via the ports in Georgia and Turkey.

In November 2023, the World Bank published the report titled - *The Middle Trade and Transport Corridor: Policies and Investments to Triple Freight Volumes and Halve Travel Time by 2030* – which provides a comprehensive assessment of the expected demand for the Middle Corridor, a multimodal rail and maritime corridor linking Chinese and European markets via Central Asia and the Caucasus. The study also offers a detailed diagnostic of infrastructure and logistics services capacity and constraints in the three core countries of the Middle Corridor: Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Although there is significant focus on the corridor's role as a land bridge between China and Europe, it is of critical importance as a regional corridor for countries through which trade will flow. Increased trade between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Europe are the key drivers of demand. [<https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/middle-trade-and-transport-corridor>].

In this Chapter, I argue that this opportune moment for the Middle Corridor development and the recent reshuffling of the trading routes might be one factor where Georgia's political identity and values on the one hand, might help the country to secure its role in the wider Black Sea region without a compromise towards its Euro-Integration path that the majority of Georgian citizens have steadily chosen [https://crrc.ge/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/eng_perception-of-foreign-threats-in-georgia-2023.pdf].

2. WHY POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND MIDDLE CORRIDOR?

Political psychologists strive to unravel the psychological foundations, origins, and consequences of political behavior. Political psychology uncovers the dynamics of significant real-world phenomena, offering valuable insights and enhancing the development of fundamental theories regarding cognitive processes and social relations. In essence, it helps us understand why political events unfold as they do.

That being said, the single most consistent criticism of political psychology (and political behavior more generally) is its frequent disregard of politics or, at best, its tendency to reduce politics to a psychological phenomenon [Kuklinski, 2002, Cambridge University Press]. Given that the three foundational elements of politics are power, conflict, and governing, political psychology, to be truly political, must address each of these elements.

Middle Corridor comprises all three basic elements of politics.

Firstly, it represents the most practical way to exercise a general vision for establishing transport links within the wider Eurasian region, which could link two economic powerhouses – China and Europe, and help establish a connecting route through Central Asia

and the South Caucasus by circumventing Russia (Civic Idea, Geopolitics of Transportation, CAPS, 2024). The need for this alternative route in itself arises from the largest geo-political conflict of our time – Russia's unprovoked war in Ukraine.

On the other hand, the maintenance of a peaceful environment is crucial to ensure the smooth and uninterrupted operation of the Middle Corridor. This means it is imperative to de-escalate conflicts and any other potential disruptions to the route. Russia's continued sabotage of its international reputation and trade partnerships can further motivate countries in the region to recalibrate their partnerships, diversify trade portfolios, and seek viable alternatives to Russia (Civic Idea, Geopolitics of Transportation, CAPS 2024). As a result, better governance will become increasingly crucial for all the countries alongside the route.

Lastly, before 2022, the Trans-Caspian Middle Corridor was primarily a niche regional initiative that lacked proper endorsement from international businesses and stakeholders. Then COVID-19 happened and the global supply chains have been distorted. Later, Russia invaded Ukraine, resulting in international sanctions on Russia, Europe's biggest trade partner, especially in the area of energy. All of this was followed by the resurgence of interest in the Middle Corridor that came with a significant engagement from global logistics corporations and initiatives that were attracted by the diversifying environment around the route (Civic Idea, Geopolitics of Transportation, CAPS 2024). Therefore, it will be crucial to see who gains the most influence over the new route and help emerge a totally new power against Russia's dominance – especially in the global economic sphere.

And finally, analyzing Middle Corridor from the perspective of political psychology is a completely new approach and an initial attempt to avoid reductionism. This chapter argues that the concept of the Middle Corridor for Georgia could be viewed as an economic and foreign policy tool. This leads us to the notion of Political Identity in Georgia's context.

3. GEORGIA'S POLITICAL IDENTITY

Political identity refers to how individuals define themselves and others in terms of their political affiliations, values, and group memberships. It is deeply intertwined with concepts of social identity and often revolves around ideological, party, national, ethnic, or other group identifications that shape political outlooks.

Georgia's political identity has been vastly shaped by speech of the late Georgian Prime Minister, Zurab Zhvania, in front of the Council of Europe in 1999: "I am Georgian and therefore I am European."

Being at the cross-roads of diverse experiences and common cultural practices with multiple states and regions, Georgia could potentially identify itself with a range of regions. These include the post-Soviet space, the Caucasus, wider Black Sea Region or even the Middle East. Georgia could have chosen a multi-vector political approach as well; however, it decided to select a sole vector, focusing on its European identity, which in itself is also viewed as a ticket to Euro-Atlantic integration – Georgia's foreign policy priority for almost two decades now.

The last NDI/CRRC survey, for example, which was conducted last year, before the European Commission's November 8th decision when Georgia was granted EU candidate country status, reaffirms the unwavering dedication of the Georgian people to European integration, with an impressive 79 percent expressing support for EU membership. Over the last year, public opinion trends show a significant increase in favor of political and economic cooperation with the EU [<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Georgia%20October%202023%20poll%20>

-%20press%20release%20-%20Eng%20-%20FINAL.pdf]. Other surveys show the same support for Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic Integration. The 2024 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia is to this day viewed as the attempt of Georgian people to break away from Russia’s influence and move forward to the EU membership.

This Chapter argues that the political identity of Georgia and the concept of the Middle Corridor share several parallels, particularly in their geopolitical positioning, aspirations for independence, and the pursuit of broader regional integration. Below are some key parallels:

*Table 1.
Georgia’s Political Identity & Concept of Middle Corridor – Parallels.*

Aspect	Georgia’s Political Identity	Middle Corridor
Strategic Location	A bridge between Europe & Asia, enhancing regional importance	Connects Europe & China through Eurasia, bypassing Russia
Sovereignty & Independence	Strives for Independence, especially from the Russian influence	Reduces reliance on Russia, offering greater autonomy in trade
Western Alignment	Seeks integration with NATO, EU & Western Institutions	Aligns with global trade routes, linking Europe & West
Geopolitical Conflict Navigation	Navigates tensions with Russia, aiming for resilience & peace	Created as a response to geopolitical conflicts, especially in Ukraine
Regional Stability & Security Role	Acts as a stabilizing force in a conflict-prone region	Requires stability for smooth operation, contributing to peace
Economic Development	Focuses on modernization & attracting foreign investment	Enhances economic prospects by becoming a critical trade hub
Balancing Regional & Global Interests	Balances regional issues with global aspirations (NATO, EU)	Balances regional cooperation with global trade & supply chains

In-depth interviews conducted with the three main International Financial Institutions involved in securing Middle Corridor as a viable option for transit for Georgia and beyond, support these parallels. Some main quotes are summarized below:

“This region has been having multi-crisis, poly-crisis I would say. As we know there are geopolitical tensions but also after COVID, we noticed a huge issue about supply chains followed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We saw huge differences in trade flows and lots of challenges in gas supply to Europe and also Europe deciding to de-couple from Russian energy market; so, energy prices increased creating huge energy crisis. Georgia in particular is a country that has been thinking about – because of its geopolitical situation – how to bring countries together around major infrastructure – Georgia being at the center of an important region trying to get countries to have a common vision”... Charles J. Cormier - Regional Director for Infrastructure for ECA, WB [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbG7u5aOdWc>]

“I took the note of the role and ambition that Georgia has in becoming a hub and a key participant, a key player in the Silk Road. I am convinced in the political buy-in in this one, because there are a number of projects that the realization of which will make a difference in Georgia's economic growth and the prosperity of the people...” Alkis Drakinis - Director, Regional Head of Caucasus, EBRD [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svM95UUQeuo>]

“My impression was of the strategic importance of what the country – Georgia – means and the strategic importance for the economic development of Georgia and the Caucasus and the Western Asian countries. The Middle Corridor is definitely a strategic infrastructure that can enhance cooperation and develop and foster the economic development, trade and investment and can bring not only public but also private capital at place to help the sustainable development of the whole region” ... Roberta Casali - VP, ADB [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yau37axZQg0>]

In summary, the Middle Corridor serves as both a literal and symbolic extension of Georgia's political identity. Both are defined by their strategic positioning, desire for sovereignty, alignment with Western institutions, resilience in the face of conflict, and a commitment to fostering economic growth and stability in a complex geopolitical landscape. This Chapter argues that the EU aspirations of Georgia shape its political identity to the higher extent than its desire to balance. For this, the Chapter analyzes World Culture Map 2023 – the largest open-source data for world values, currently in 7 waves.

4. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Political psychology is critical for understanding the processes behind political beliefs, values and behaviors, decision making processes and interactions between individuals and groups. With the help of political psychology, researchers examine the foreign policies of nations through different conceptual theories and research methods.

This Chapter attempts to analyze the role of Middle Corridor from the perspective of the political psychology on three main levels: Political Psychology, Political Behavior and Political Identity, with the biggest focus on the latter. With the focus on the Political Identity the chapter delves into ‘who’ people see themselves as within the political landscape, linking personal and group identification to political attitudes and behaviors. With focus on the Political Behavior the chapter accentuates ‘what’ people do in politics, encompassing all form of political engagement. And with the focus on Political Psychology the chapter attempts to explain the ‘why’ behind political attitudes and behaviors from a mental and emotional standpoint.

The theoretical framework is visualized in the chart below:

*Table 2.
Theoretical Framework.*

Aspect	Political Identity	Political Behavior	Political Psychology
Definition	The way individuals define themselves based on political group membership and affiliations.	The study of political actions and activities of individuals and groups.	The study of how psychological processes influence political attitudes, beliefs, and behavior.
Key Focus	Self-concept and group membership in terms of political ideologies, parties, or movements.	Observable actions and forms of political participation, such as voting, protests, and campaigning.	Mental and emotional processes that shape political attitudes and behaviors.
Core Concepts	Partisanship, Ideological Identity, Social Identity Theory, intersectionality	Voting behavior, political participation, public opinion, electoral choices.	Cognition, emotions, personality, heuristics, group dynamics, biases.
Discipline Roots	Political Science, Social Psychology, Identity Theory, Sociology	Primarily political science, with insights from sociology and economics.	Interdisciplinary: psychology and political science.
Focus on Individual vs. Collective	Primarily individual identity, but deeply tied to collective group affiliation	Focuses on both individual and collective actions in the political sphere.	Primarily individual processes, though it also includes group dynamics.
Observable vs. Latent Processes	Combination of latent identity processes & observable group aligned actions	Observable political actions and behavior.	Latent processes (mental and emotional factors, biases).
Key Theories / Models	Social Identity Theory, partisanship theory, intersectionality	Rational choice theory, mobilization theories, political socialization.	Cognitive dissonance, motivated reasoning, authoritarianism, emotion theories.
Outcomes	Understanding of how political self-identification shapes attitudes & actions	Patterns of political participation and trends in collective behavior.	Insights into how mental processes shape political decision-making.

This Chapter incorporates three main political psychological conceptual approaches in its analysis:

(i) Situationism vs dispositionism – this approach is important, because the evidence shows that there is no consistently pro-disposition or pro-situation bias across international relations (Houghton, 2009). The opportune moment of the Middle Corridor is definitely driven by situationism [COVID-19 and Russia’s unprovoked war in Ukraine]; however, its sustainable development is based on dispositionism in the sense that dispositions account for altruistic, desirable, or “good” behaviors, which are crucial for international cooperation rather than competition (Houghton, , 2009);

(ii) Operational Code Analysis –this is one especially prominent approach that political psychologists have used to study political beliefs. The first set of beliefs has to do with one’s general philosophy about the

nature of political life, while the second deals with more “practical” questions such as how one goes about implementing one’s chosen political objectives (Houghton, , 2009). This Chapter slightly modifies the approach in the sense that it examines the political beliefs not of the elites, but rather public on both ‘philosophical’ and ‘practical’ levels of their own political behavior. This approach is more relevant for Georgia’s current situational framework since developing Middle Corridor is viewed as an alternative to a North Corridor by the West, confronting Russia, by trying to bypass its interests and grip in the region. In order for the political elites in Georgia to take brave political steps and side with the democratic part of the world rather than autocratic, they will need strong electoral support. 2024 elections in Georgia in late October are thought to be exactly this – some sort of referendum on Georgia’s EU-NATO aspirations rather than securing its place on Russian orbit [https://eprc.ge/en/news/8th-tbilisi-international-conference-2024-a-pivotal-year/];

(iii) Beliefs vs. values –Values are stable long-lasting beliefs about what is important to a person. They become standards by which people order their lives and make their choices. A belief will develop into a value when the person’s commitment to it grows and they see it as being important. This Chapter argues that current (immediate) economic development has an impact on value sets of Georgia. This Chapter uses the most recent World Value Survey, the largest open sourced data that is available in 7 waves and focuses on two sets of values, namely traditional-survival values and secular-rational values.

Figure 1.
Factor Loadings.

	Factor Loadings
Traditional values emphasize the following	
(Secular-rational values emphasize the opposite): ^a	
God is very important in respondent’s life.	.70
It is more important for a child to learn obedience and religious faith than independence and determination. (Autonomy index)	.61
Abortion is never justifiable.	.61
Respondent has strong sense of national pride.	.60
Respondent favors more respect for authority.	.51
Survival values emphasize the following	
(Self-expression values emphasize the opposite): ^b	
Respondent gives priority to economic and physical security over self expression and quality of life. (4-item Materialist/Postmaterialist Values Index)	.59
Respondent describes self as not very happy.	.59
Homosexuality is never justifiable.	.58
Respondent has not and would not sign a petition	.54
You have to be very careful about trusting people.	.44
<i>Note:</i> The original polarities vary; the above statements show how each item relates to the given factor. Total N = 165,594; smallest N for any of the above variables is 146,789.	
^a First factor explains 26 percent of total individual variation; secular = positive pole.	
^b Second factor explains 13 percent of total individual variation; self-expression = positive pole.	
<i>Source:</i> World Values Survey data from 125 surveys carried out in three waves in 65 societies.	

Traditional–survival values emphasize the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values. People who embrace these values also reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook. Survival values place emphasis on economic and physical security. It is linked with a relatively ethnocentric outlook and low levels of trust and tolerance. These values are referred to as materialist values. [<https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp?CMSID=findings>].

Secular-rational values have the opposite preferences to the traditional values. These societies place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values and authority. Divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide are seen as relatively acceptable. (Suicide is not necessarily more common.) Self-expression values give high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of minorities and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life. These values are referred to as post-materialist values. [<https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp?CMSID=findings>].

5. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The World Cultural Map and the Middle Corridor intersect in their emphasis on cross-regional connectivity, cultural exchange, and geopolitical significance. They both highlight how geographic and cultural positioning influences not only individual national identities but also broader international dynamics.

The Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map shows that as societies become more prosperous and educated, their values tend to evolve from a focus on survival to self-expression. Georgia's movement on this map indicates a cautious shift from the survival values that emphasize economic and physical security, toward more progressive, self-expressive values that prioritize environmental protection, tolerance, and self-expression.

According to the Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map, following an increase in standards of living, and a transit from development country via industrialization to post-industrial knowledge society, a country tends to move diagonally in the direction from lower-left corner (poor) to upper-right corner (rich), indicating a transit in both dimensions. This is where most of EU countries are positioned on the World Cultural Map.

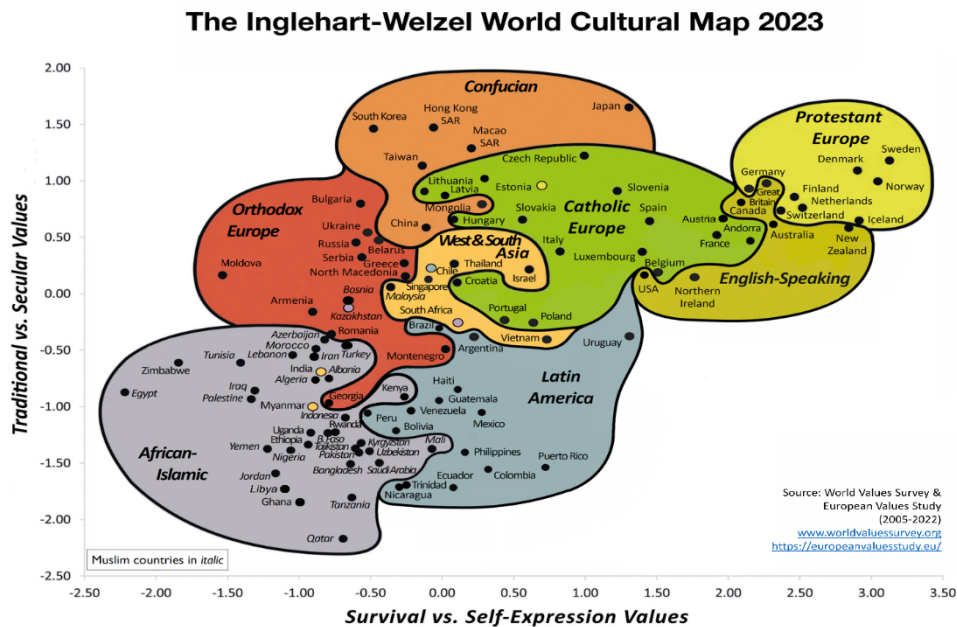
The World Cultural Map and the Middle Corridor represent frameworks for understanding cultural, economic, and geopolitical dynamics across regions, and there are notable parallels between the two. While they have different primary focuses—one centered on cultural value systems and the other on trade and infrastructure—their overlaps highlight shared influences in shaping international interactions. The World Cultural Map, based on theories like those of Ronald Inglehart and Samuel Huntington, identifies clusters of countries with shared cultural, religious, and historical foundations. The Middle Corridor, which links Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey to Europe and China, passes through regions historically shaped by Islam, Turkic heritage, and the influence of the Silk Road. Both frameworks emphasize a cultural continuum that spans from East to West, illustrating a blend of civilizations. For instance, countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus feature prominently on the Middle Corridor and also fall within a unique cluster in the World Cultural Map, reflecting shared historical influences from Persian, Ottoman, and Soviet legacies.

The World Cultural Map also emphasizes areas where cultural identities intersect or clash, often giving rise to geopolitical competition. The Middle Corridor, part of the broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and an alternative to Russian routes, holds strategic significance as countries navigate complex power dynamics between China, Russia, Turkey,

and the EU. The clear parallel here is that both frameworks highlight regions of geopolitical importance and competition. The Middle Corridor runs through countries like Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, which sit at the crossroads of different cultural spheres (Eastern Orthodox, Islamic, and Turkic cultures) on the World Cultural Map. This geographic positioning creates a blend of cultural and political identities and a competitive geopolitical environment where nations seek to assert influence.

Despite these differences, as the World Cultural Map shows, all three main countries driving the demand for the Middle Corridor – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan – tend to be closer to traditional and survival values, rather than rational and self-expression values that are more common to the EU countries of Georgia's aspiration.

Figure 2.
World Culture Map 2023.



However, out of all three countries along the Middle Corridor – Georgia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan – only Georgia shows the clear trajectory shift from traditional towards emancipative values.

*Table 3.
Traditional & Emancipative Values.*

Mean	Traditional Values	Emancipative Values
Georgia	0.28	0.35
Azerbaijan	0.33	0.33
Kazakhstan	0.38	0.37

In the context of the Middle Corridor, this means that value-wise Georgia might side more with green initiatives, gender-sensitive policies and shared responsibilities in decision-making process. How sustainable may Georgia be towards these values – is another issue and the main component to be observed here is Georgia’s current (immediate) economic situation.

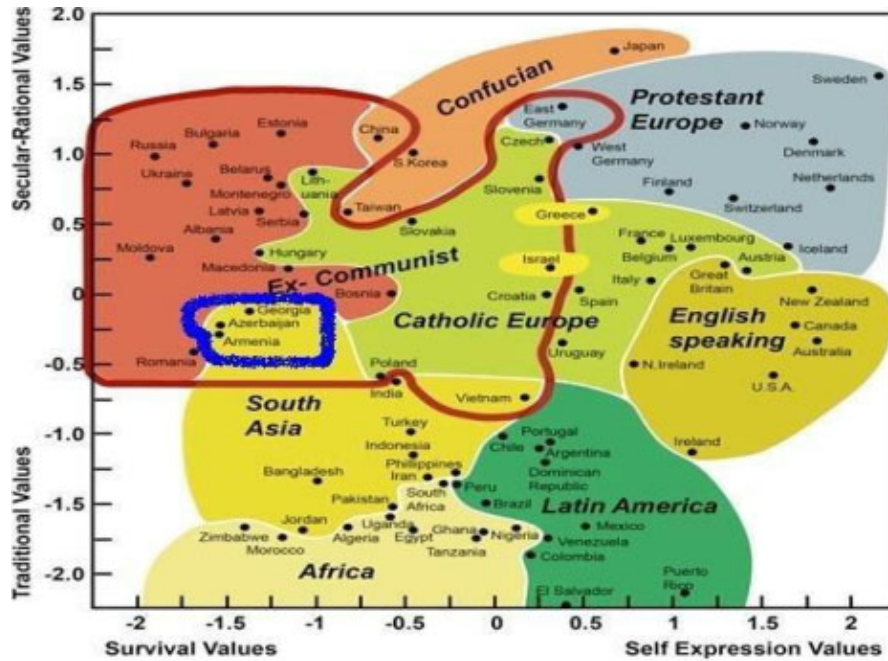
*Table 4.
Situationism.*

Most Serious Problems & Aims		Most Serious Worries	
People living in poverty and need	73.1%	Losing my job or not finding a job	85.2%
A high level of economic growth	76.8%	A war involving my country	96.7%
A stable Economy	73.5%	A civil war	94.4%
		Government wire-tapping or reading my email or mail	74.4%

Main concerns associated with the economy include losing a job or not finding a job, lack of a high level of economic growth; stability and a high level of poverty.

This economic situation then influences Georgia’s diagonal move on the World Cultural Map. The sharpest shift towards traditional and survival values for Georgia happened during pandemic [WVS 2005-2020 / Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map 2020]. Since then, Georgia has not returned to its highest position on the World Cultural Map’s diagonal: From 2005 to 2009, Georgia had the stable trajectory towards secular-rational and self-expression values and it was ahead of its two neighbors.

Figure 3.
World Cultural Map 2005-2020.



What differentiates Georgia from Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan is its transition process in values. The Middle Corridor is fundamentally about connectivity, linking China to Europe via Central Asia and the Caucasus through a network of railways, highways, and maritime routes across the Caspian Sea. Similarly, the World Cultural Map suggests that societies are not isolated but are influenced by cultural exchange, migration, and trade. Both frameworks suggest the tension between modernization and maintaining cultural identity. For instance, Middle Corridor countries like Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, are pursuing modernization primarily through investment in infrastructure and trade, while Georgia on the other hand tries to embrace economic growth while retaining traditional cultural values.

If we compare materialist and post materialist indexes for Georgia, we will see that Georgia is still driven by material values, which express the need for economic and financial security, societal stability, personal safety, and law and order - Materialist vs. Post Materialist Index: Materialist – 42.8%; Mixed – 51.7%; Post Materialist – 0.8% - however, the share of mixed nature of values clearly indicates that Georgia has already started to question its material values and is ready for transition.

The same tendency is maintained in the Autonomy index, which show the transition from traditional to emancipative values - Autonomy Index: Obedience – Religious Faith – 28.8%; Mixed – 38.5%; Determination-Perseverance – 32.7% - clearly, Georgia strives towards advanced Western society league. According to Inglehart (2023) [European Values Study 2017-2022], advanced Western societies experience a shift from materialist to post-materialist values. In other words, Georgia expresses a greater need for political freedom and participation, self-actualization, personal relationships, creativity, and care for the environment.

Operational Code analysis also reflects this mixed nature of Georgia’s value shift in that its philosophical beliefs not always match its instrumental beliefs.

*Table 5.
Operational Code Analysis.*

Philosophical Beliefs		Instrumental Beliefs	
Confidence in Democracy	79.3%	Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections	53.8%
Importance of Democracy	54.1%	People obey their leaders	11.3%
Confidence in Politics	38.7%	Would never attend peaceful demonstrations	60.6%
		Would never join strikes	80%
Confidence in Churches	87.1%	Membership of Churches or Religious Organizations	Not a member – 79% Inactive member – 14.1%
		Attendance of Religious Services	Only on Special Holidays – 25.5%
Confidence in the EU	47.6%	I see myself as the citizen of the EU	41.3%

As you can see Georgians say they have confidence in almost all important institutions; however, with the democracy, for example, they also need a strong leader, but are not inclined to obey the leader. This again shows the mixed values that are overriding Georgia. The only high consistency is confidence in the EU.

Overall, Georgia's latest trajectory in the World Values Survey (WVS) reflects a slow transition toward more secular and self-expressive values, in line with global trends. This shift includes a growing focus on individual autonomy, gender equality, and democratic governance, although the influence of Orthodox Christianity remains significant in shaping social attitudes.

Table 6.
Value Analysis.

Traditional Values		Survival Values	
God is very important	67.1%	Feeling of Happiness	69.6%
Abortion is never justifiable	68.1%	Homosexuality is never justifiable	86.1%
National Pride	76.2%	Would never sign a petition	71.9%
Respect for the Authority	61.6%	You need to be rather careful when trusting other people	90.1%

The slow and cautious shift described in this Chapter, occurs amidst broader regional pressures, including political turbulence, economic challenges, and Russia's geopolitical influence. These factors create some friction between traditional elements of Georgian society and the newer, more liberal attitudes emerging among younger generations, resulting, for example, in the permanent demonstrations against the ‘Russian Law’, the primary reason the EU accession process has been currently suspended for Georgia [<https://civil.ge/archives/600995>].

To conclude, Middle Corridor could be a relevant instrument for enhancing Georgia’s transit role and contributing to its economic development, but not sufficient enough to form Georgia’s political identity alone. Georgia’s regional and / or cultural identities are important as long as they contribute to the overall political goal of Georgia embracing its political identity – shifting diagonally on the World Culture Map close to the EU countries while itself becoming the member of the EU. The only high consistency in philosophical and instrumental political beliefs for Georgia is confidence in the EU.

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