Privatizing the Police. The Political Economy of Law Enforcement in Eastern Europe

Stephan Hensell*

Abstract: The reform of the police in Eastern Europe after communism has made only slow headway. This article suggests that a major obstacle for the reform lies in an informal privatization of the police through bureaucratic entrepreneurs. In order to support this thesis, two case studies analyze recruiting and finance practices of the police in Albania and Georgia. The findings suggest that informal practices of patronage and appropriation play a central role in the functioning of the police.

Keywords: Police, informal practices, Albania, Georgia
Polizei, informelle Praktiken, Albanien, Georgien

1. Introduction

Since the end of socialism, the police forces in the former eastern bloc have gone through a process of reform. The so-called "three d's" of depoliticization, demilitarization and decentralization are perceived as major contents of the reform on the road to legitimate, professional and accountable police forces (Caparini & Marenin 2004: 331-334). However, the results of reforms have, up to now, been mixed at best. The reorganisation of the police has proven to be difficult and, in some cases, it seems to have failed (cf. Taylor 2011). How can this failure to establish modern police forces be explained? In order to better understand the major obstacles of the reforms, I advocate a political economy perspective of law enforcement, which highlights the economic interests involved in police administration. My hypothesis is that the police have become to a considerable degree subject to private interests of bureaucratic entrepreneurs. Striving for the acquisition of jobs and economic capital, these entrepreneurs have virtually privatised the police through job patronage and the illegal appropriation of material resources. In order to support this hypothesis empirical evidence is presented from two case studies, in which informal practices in the police are analyzed in detail.

2. Two Modes of Privatization

In the transformation of the state in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the scramble for post-communist spoils played a central role, leading to diverse practices of privatization and acquisition (cf. Hensell 2009: 116-124). A key actor in this process has been the "bureaucratic entrepreneur", who tries to benefit from new opportunities after communism. Typical examples of such opportunities are the lingering centralization of the apparatuses, delayed reforms in public services and personnel law, politically motivated lustration as well as the privatization of the former state economy and the expansion of criminal spheres. The bureaucratic entrepreneur attempts to informally privatize the state by diverting public resources and channeling them into private pockets. This informal privatization has basically two dimensions: the acquisition of bureaucratic positions, and of opportunities for earnings (Weber 1978: 222, 232). The control over „access to office and fruits of office" (Geddes 1999: 121) are, thus, most important for bureaucratic entrepreneurs. In this sense, two modes of informal privatization can be distinguished: *job patronage* and the *illegal appropriation of material resources*.

Job patronage is based on dyadic ties between a higher-level patron and lower-level client, who are characterized by unequal status, power or resources. They exchange material privileges and their relationship is characterized by calculation of mutual advantages (Landé 1977: xx; Eisenstadt & Roniger 1984: 29-50). Typically, the patron grows into the role of an entrepreneur and distributes public offices among his clients, in return for receiving favours of all sorts. The patron-client relationships develop in the hierarchical order of the state into vertically structured networks, when the client himself becomes a patron of lower-level clients (Clapham 1982: 18-33; Eisenstadt & Roniger 1984: 220-245). The more lucrative the positions to be distributed, the more likely are the establishment of market-like principles and the sale of offices. This happens when the expected amount of bribes and the possibility of getting rich in a position determine the value of that position. The patron then strives not only to distribute positions but also to market them by selling (Scott 1972: 45-46). Here, interested buyers invest economic capital in the purchase of lucrative offices and acquire a quasi-right to their office (Rose-Ackerman 1999: 82).

The second mode of informal privatization is the illegal appropriation of material resources through the particularistic exercise of a public function. This applies to the entire spectrum of securing material resources, from spontaneous individual acquisition to systematic commercialization. In addition to practices of misappropriation of state budgets, all acquisitional opportunities arising from the attempt to influence state action are included here (Scott 1972: 21). Bureaucratic entrepreneurs typically profit from the implementation and enforcement of legal regulations (Scott 1972: 21-23). They can reap all sorts of benefits from their positions, be it that they promote certain private economic activities through regulations or that they let their official acts be paid for as a discretionary product. The possibility of expediting administrative proceedings or delaying

* Dr. Stephan Hensell is a senior researcher at the Research Unit of Wars, Armament and Development, Institute of Political Science, University of Hamburg.

them is the gateway for a broad spectrum of informal fees (Rose-Ackerman 1999: 9-38). The related practices range from accepting and granting undue advantages through extortion to the general commodification of public goods by which all state services become purchasable wares (Della Porta & Vannucci 1999; Scott 1972: 54-91; Rose-Ackerman 1999: 9-38, 91-126).

Patronage and appropriation can be considered as two modes of informal privatization by bureaucratic entrepreneurs. In the following, I want to use this conceptual vocabulary for the analysis of the recruitment and finance practices of the police in Albania and Georgia.[1] The period for the analysis runs from the beginning of the 1990s until about 2003-2004.

3. The Police in Albania and Georgia

3.1 The Police in Albania

During the socialist period, Albania was considered one of the most repressive of all socialist regimes. The reorganisation of the police began immediately after the country opened up politically. As early as mid-1991, a new police law was passed, which envisioned the de-politicization of the police. This was followed by a series of further laws and organizational innovations with the goal to restructure the police in accordance with western models (Republic of Albania 2001: 6-7). However, there were no substantial changes in the security apparatus. Although all ministers have been civilians since the beginning of the 1990s, the service remained strongly centralized and structured along the lines of the old military ranks (Koçi 1998: 85). At the end of the 1990s, the Interior Ministry characterized the reforms in its own house as "totally failed" (Republic of Albania 2001: 8).

3.1.1 Patronage and Rotation

The recruitment of the police was determined by dynamics in the political field. The competition between the Democratic Party of Albania (*Partia Demokratike e Shqipërisë, PD*) and the Socialist Party of Albania (*Partia Socialiste e Shqipërisë, PS*), which had alternately formed the government since 1992, played a decisive role. Both parties practiced job patronage with respect to their followers. A change of government resulted in shifts in the composition of clientelist networks, which entailed a change of personnel in the administration. Because the client chains reached deeply into the apparatus, such shifts often took on the dimensions of an outright cleansing campaign (Kajsiu et al. 2002: 17-18). The Interior Ministry also predominantly followed the logic of party patronage. Changing governments always had a direct impact on the police apparatus and involved new appointments, transfers and dismissals of personnel. At the same time, the possibilities for patronage declined because the number of police personnel was constantly being reduced, starting at the beginning of the 1990s. From over 21,000 officers in 1992, the police had been scaled down to barely 16,000 by 1998 and since 2001 to somewhat over 12,000 (Policia e Shtetit 2004; Taçi & Shkëmbi 2001: 40). This resulted in increased competition among the patronage parties for scarce jobs for their clients.

After the fall of the communist regime and the election victory of the reform-oriented PD, some 80% of police officials were transferred or dismissed in the course of the police reform between 1992 and 1993 (Taçi & Shkëmbi 2001, p. 51; Koçi 1998, p. 86). It was, above all, the adherents of the PD who ended up with the available positions (IPLS 2000, pp. 21-22). Following forced new elections in 1997 and the constitution of a new government under the leadership of the PS, which had previously been in opposition, the police apparatus once again underwent a personnel renewal, in which a large number of the police recruited since 1992 were transferred or dismissed and many of those previously removed from service were re-hired (IPLS 2000: 22). From 1997 to 1999 about 73% of the total personnel was transferred or removed from office (Taçi & Shkëmbi 2001: 51).

These practices occurred not only after changes of government but also over the course of a legislative period. This was particularly the case for the period from 1997 to 2005, during which the PS, whose ruling coalition depended upon a fragile balance of smaller parties, was in power. Regular power struggles led to a reshuffling of the cabinet and also to frequent changes at the top in the Interior Ministry (cf. Kajsiu et al. 2002). Thus, in the space of two legislative periods from July 1997 to September 2005 eight different people held the position of Interior Minister. Every change of ministerial leadership was accompanied by changes in the upper ranks of the police, which, in turn, involved further shifts at the lower levels, because every Minister practiced job patronage.[2] Subsequently, the clients of the minister, following the hierarchy of the offices, evolved into the role of patrons and distributed to their own clients the positions they were empowered to fill.

Every Interior Minister grew into the role of a bureaucratic entrepreneur and first attempted to subdue the General Director in order to control his competencies of appointment and dismissal in the upper police ranks. Ultimately, the Minister attempted to install a new General Director on whose loyalty and dependency he could count. Thus, sooner or later, a change of the Minister was followed by a change of the General Director. In turn, every General Director, recruited new police staff either at the request of the Minister or because he himself grew into the role of a patron. Thus, shifts at the level of the district police chiefs always followed the replacement of the General Director. Along with the eight Interior Ministers from July 1997 to September 2005, the position of General Director was filled by seven different people and the position of district police chief in Tirana by eight. Each newly filled leadership position, in turn, affected the office or commissariat assigned to it, because each newly installed director recruited his own administrative staff.[3] The result was an extremely

1 Unless otherwise indicated, the case studies are based on some 120 interviews, which were conducted between 2003 and 2006 in the course of field research in Albania and Georgia.

2 Interviews in Tirana and Durres with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2004 and September 2005.

3 Interviews in Tirana, Durres, Gjirokastra and Saranda with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2004 and September 2005.

limited continuity of personnel due to constant transfers and dismissals of personnel. The appropriation of police functions occurred also through selling of police positions. However this happened only in certain very lucrative areas and for a limited period of time.[4] The venality of police positions continued to be restricted since stable networks or an administrative market could not be established due to the rotation of personnel.

3.1.2 The Smuggling Economy of the Police

In addition to an uncertain career path, the economic situation of the personnel was always precarious. Although the salaries of the police were paid punctually and completely, they were generally considered to be too low to support a family (Republic of Albania 2001: 32; EIU 2000b: 14). Moreover, the provision of administrative resources was disastrous. The unavoidable recourse to private means such as employees' own cars and mobile telephones for work was, thus, widespread. These conditions favoured diverse practices of appropriation of economic resources from the imposition of "cut-rate" non-registered fines for traffic offenses through the seasonal revenue generated from taxing travelling foreigners or Kosovo Albanians to wasteful public tenders in the General Directorate of the Police.[5]

However, the police profited, above all, from the involvement in the criminal spheres of the post-socialist economy. In the 1990s Albania established itself as a preferred transit and production country for smuggled goods of all sorts. The activities of diverse criminal groups led to the *de facto* privatization of the cross-border trade in weapons, cars, drugs and people (cf. Miletitch 1998; Chassagne & Gjeloshaj 2001; Tabaku 2005). The smuggling was dependent on the active support or at least the tolerance by police. This involved all those areas of policing which dealt with the monitoring of entry and exit as well as movement within Albania. It was especially the relevant positions in the border and traffic police, in the commissariats of the harbours and the airport, where the greatest opportunities for appropriation existed. The competition for these positions was particularly intense, which is why the constant personnel changes in the apparatus took place mainly there.[6]

The police profited, first and foremost, from drug smuggling. Albania was an important transit country for heroin and a significant producer of marijuana, which was smuggled from there into Western Europe and other Balkan countries. The drugs confiscated in Albania always represented only a fraction of what actually flowed through the country (UNODC 2004: 126).

Another source of appropriation was the profitable trafficking in people. Between 1990 and 1999 some half a million Albanians emigrated, primarily to Greece and Italy. The percentage of illegal emigrants is estimated at 70 to 80% (Doka 2003, p.: 53). Moreover, Albania was a transit country for people of other nationalities smuggled into the European Union. According to estimates, between 500,000 and a million people were smuggled by sea to Italy between 1991 and 2002 (Hajdinjak 2002, p.: 50; Miletitch 1998: 4-21). The trade in women, young girls and children for sexual exploitation and other forced labour represented a lucrative business. Shipments from Albanian seaports over the Adriatic Sea to Italy, with many regular crossings every night, evolved from the mid 1990's until 2002 into a largely undisturbed border traffic (Miletitch 1998: 13-16; IOM 2004: 16-33). The police too were directly or indirectly involved in this traffic (IOM & ICMC 2001: 5-10).

Last, but not least, the police appropriated material resources on the local car market. About 50% to 80% of all cars traded in the country were presumed to be smuggled or stolen abroad and were sold on the used car market through non-licensed dealers.[7] Government personnel including the Interior Minister stocked up in these markets. In 1999, during an official visit to Greece, the staff limousine of the Interior Minister was identified by the Greek border police as stolen and subsequently confiscated by the Greek authorities (Miletitch 1998: 165). The police also drove smuggled cars privately and arranged registrations for other people with counterfeit papers, for which they took bribes.[8]

3.2 The Police in Georgia

The transformation of the police in Georgia after the collapse of the Soviet Union was accompanied by few legal and institutional innovations. Although the police law of 1993 put the work of the police on a new legal basis, a fundamental institutional reorganization was lacking (Aphrasidze 2004: 43; Krunić & Siradze 2005: 48-49). The police operated partly on the basis of old Soviet procedures. In addition, the entire system remained strongly centralized and no clear separation between police, military and civilian areas was introduced. Virtually all the employees of the Interior Ministry were, at the same time, police officers and all police ranks continued to be tied to military service grades. The Interior Minister himself was a police officer and made his career from the old soviet police elite (Darchiashvili 2003a: 8; Kupatadze et al. 2007: 94; Aphrasidze 2004: 42). The Interior Ministry was a key power institution in the Shevardnadze regime. However, the Georgian police were not very popular. According to a 1997 survey, only 2% of the respondents believed they would have a good chance of a fair and just process during a police investigation (Hanf & Nodia 2000: 104-05).

4 Interviews in Tirana and Vlora with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2004 and September 2005. Cf. World Bank (1998: 4).

5 ADN 2.11.2002, Press Review: Zeri i Popullit: „Five Tenders of Scandals".

6 Interviews in Tirana and Durres with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2004 and September 2005. Cf. for example on the airport: ADN 22.4.2003 „Rinas Police Chief Arrested"; ADN 6.7.2004 „Staff Purge in Airport's Police Commissariat"; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Newsline Southeastern Europe 11.10.2005, „Big Forgery Racket Uncovered at Albanian Airport".

7 Miletitch (1998, pp. 164-65); Tabaku (2005, pp. 127-28). RFE/RL Newsline Southeastern Europe 14.1.1999 „Prosecutor Says Albania Flooded With Stolen Cars"; RFE/RL Organized Crime and Terrorism Watch Reports, 2, 11, 21.03.2002, „‚Stolen' Car Scam Revived in Albania"; ADN 8.4.2004 „Car's Legal Distributors Demand Measures Against Informal Market".

8 Interview with an employ of the Interior Ministry, Tirana April 2004. Cf. RFE/RL Balkan Report, 4, 61, 15.8.2000 „Albanian Investigators Arrest Kukes Police Chief"; ADN 31.7.2003 „Chief Police of Central City Dismisses 18 Subordinates", Korrieri 22.4.2004, „106 policë me makina kontrabandë, p. 4.

3.2.1 The Police Department Market

Within the police force an administrative market became the dominant form of recruitment. The personnel, through the buying of lucrative posts, appropriated offices on a large scale. Clientelist relationships and bribes influenced the practice of hiring, transferring and promotion. Even entrance into the police academy required personal contacts and bribes (Kupatadze et al. 2007: 100). The price for a police position -- as a rule a four- to five figure sum in US dollars -- was based on the amount of bribes that could be expected in that position. The more lucrative the post, the better the connections necessary to high-level police officials and the more money needed for its purchase.[9] The practice of buying offices became so common that a regular market for police functions established itself, recognizable by the knowledge among the police and the population about the availability, prices, and economic advantages of individual posts (Cf. World Bank 1998: 4; World Bank 2000: 19; Gordadzé 2003: 218-219; Aphrasidze 2004: 44-45).

To purchase a position in the police was a risky investment. It paid off only through later illegal revenues and was dependent on a certain length of stay in the apparatus. Thus, all police officers saw themselves as bureaucratic entrepreneurs who quickly tried to make illegal profits from the venture capital they had invested. They were covered by high-level patrons, who not only tolerated the appropriation practices of their clients but also fostered them. As a result, the police apparatus took on the form of a pyramid by which those at the lower levels accumulated economic capital, which was then channelled through the various steps of the official hierarchy further upwards to the Minister himself. [10] The market of police offices brought about a relative stability of the apparatus. Although new ministers and police chiefs distributed offices to their own clients, from which shifts in high- and mid-level positions in the apparatus resulted, personnel changes were limited. The purchase of offices and the entitlement to economic opportunities acquired with it facilitated a practice of accommodation by which the police officer was assured further employment and permanent integration into distributive coalitions. Thus, the continuity in a purchased position was not solely dependent on stable patronage through the person who was originally paid or who had made the appointment. The clients survived the departure of their patron and entered into new patronage relationships. A new director of police "respected old contracts" as one staff member of the Interior Ministry expressed it.[11]

The result was a constant growth of the apparatus. According to various sources, at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Interior Ministry had at its disposal some 25,000 employees, which more than doubled after independence (Kupatadze et al. 2007: 92-93; Krunić & Siradze 2005: 19). In addition to the continuity of police personnel from the Soviet era, further officers were recruited in the 1990s (Wheatley 2005: 113-14). According to statistics of the General Inspection of the Interior Ministry, over a period of about 10 years from 1994 to 2003, only 1,586 police officers were relieved of duty.[12] Measured against different data on the total strength of the police, this represented some 3-5% of the total personnel. The stability and constant growth in the number of police personnel were, at least in part, due to the fact that the appropriation of offices created stable ties and, at the same time, continually attracted new interested parties. However, the workforce was only partially reflected in the official budget. The national budget of Georgia for the fiscal year of 2003 recorded, as in previous years, about 30,000 employees for all services of the Interior Ministry.[13] Following the fall of the Shevardnadze regime this number was corrected significantly upwards by the new reformed police leadership. Thus, the Interior Ministry reported in 2004 to have at its disposal not 30,000 but 54,000 employees (Krunić & Siradze 2005: 19; Aphrasidze 2004: 42-43). One can conclude from this that some part of the police personnel was financed not from the official salary budget but from other sources (Darchiashvili 2003a: 11).

3.2.2 Police Officers as Bandits

The maintenance and management of the police was affected by far-reaching budget restrictions. Allocation of funds earmarked in the budget for public order and security between 1998 and 2002, remained almost 20% below the planned target.[14] Of the budget finally implemented, a part of it, in turn, disappeared into dark channels. This resulted in considerable cuts in technical equipment and salaries, which were already very low. Until 2004 the average salary of an ordinary police officer amounted to about 40-50$ and thus had already fallen below the official minimum wage (Aphrasidze 2004: 43; Kupatadze et al. 2007: 95). However, even this marginal salary was paid out only irregularly. In mid-2000 the Interior Ministry found itself in arrears by some 13 months salary (EIU 2000a: 14). At the same time, the catastrophic technical supply situation meant that the civil servants frequently had to provide uniforms, office equipment, spare parts or fuel for their cars themselves.

The poor equipment in conjunction with the market for police functions led to a constellation in which, through the sale of state offices, the costs for equipping these offices were also shifted to the incumbents themselves, who had to meet these expenses from the formal and informal income connected with their position. The chronic under-financing of the apparatus and the pressure to earn, arising from the purchase of offices, gave rise to wide-ranging practices of appropriation of economic resources. The police became one of the most corrupt state institutions, often bribed by households and firms (World Bank 2000: 5-9).

For instance, the police acquired economic capital by dropping complaints for a payment. This applied to the entire range of possible offenses from petty crimes, such as the illegal possession of weapons, theft, drug possession or vandalism

9 Interviews in Tbilisi with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, December 2003, March 2004, May – July 2004, April 2005, September 2006.
10 Interviews in Tbilisi with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, December 2003, April 2005, September 2006.
11 Interview in Tbilisi, April 2005.
12 Statistics of the General Inspection (1994-2004), Ministry of Interior, Tbilisi.
13 Cf. sakartvelos 2003 ts'lis sakhelmts'ipo biujet'is shesakheb, Tbilisi.
14 Source: Parliament Budget Office (2002: 11); World Bank (2002, p. 35); UNDP (1999: 38); UNDP (2000: 79-80); GEPLAC (2003:. 21).

right up to armed robbery and murder (Gordadzé 2003: 222-23). If no offenses were available, they were fabricated, or confessions were forced during interrogations in police custody in order to extort bribes for dismissing a charge.[15] Through the administration of prisons, the police also profited from the entire penal system. The length of sentence, the conditions of the sentence or conditions of probation in principle remained negotiable (Gordadzé 2003: 225-26).

A further lucrative area was the traffic police, which was considered to be the most corrupt segment of the police (World Bank 2000: 5-7). The traffic police was present through countless mobile posts or road blocks, through which they made capital out of actual or fabricated traffic offenses. Thus, the police taxed the entire passenger and goods traffic on Georgia's streets. Moreover, the traffic police profited from a range of administrative functions, such as the issuing of license plates and drivers' licenses.[16]

Furthermore, the Interior Ministry appropriated material resources through diverse commercial activities (Gordadzé 2003, pp. 223-225). For example, the police had the right to examine the business activities of companies and to inspect licenses and tax documents. However, because many manufacturers and dealers were working in the informal sector, the police could make capital from countless irregularities, which they tolerated in exchange for bribes or a stake in the business.[17] In addition, various firms were in direct or indirect contact with high-ranking police officers and, as monopolistic suppliers, received orders without a public call for tenders from the Ministry. Thus, they sold their products to the Interior Ministry at excessive prices. Among these firms were suppliers of uniforms, weapons, petrol, communications systems, food, driver's licenses and license plates (Papuashvili 2003; Darchiashvili 2003b: 8). Monopolistic arrangements also existed in the areas of car insurance and private security services as well as on the cigarette market.[18] Senior police officers also tried to appropriate a football club and rehabilitate it with financial resources from the Interior Ministry (Chapidze 2001; Usupashvili 2001: 8).

Finally, the Georgian police also cooperated with criminal groups, whose businesses were tolerated and protected for a share in the profits.[19] For example, the police promoted the organized drug trade and drug consumption in order to tax them.[20] The police also established direct relationships with the criminal world through participating in the smuggling of goods such as petrol, diesel, fuel, sugar, flour, alcohol and cigarettes. In addition they were involved in the arms and kidnapping business.[21] The participation in cigarette smuggling represented a central source of income for the police (Kukhianidze et al. 2004: 15, 23, 39-42). This trade was conducted and protected through a network of connections between the nephew of Shevardnadze, the Interior Minister and a local power broker (Targamadze 2000: 81-82; Wheatley 2005: 115-16; Stefes 2006: 99). According to estimates from the budget office of the Georgian Parliament, more than 75% of the tobacco products in Georgia, on average, escaped taxation between 1997 and 2002 (Gotsiridze 2003: 11, 35). Moreover the police were involved in the illegal trade in diesel and gasoline, which again was supported by a business relationship between the Interior Minister and the President's nephew (Darchiashvili 2003b: 8; Stefes 2006: 99; Targamadze 2000: 82). This sector was also characterized by widespread smuggling practices (Gotsiridze 2003: 9-10; Kukhianidze et al. 2004: 37-39). According to estimates for 2001, the tax revenue in this area was less than 20% of the possible revenue (USAID 2002: section 1-3 and 3-1).

4. Conclusion

The police in Georgia and Albania in the 1990s were characterized by widespread practices of patronage and appropriation, which determined the recruitment and financing of the police and led to a virtual privatisation of the police apparatus. However, the trajectories of the police in the two cases are different.

In Albania the recruitment of the police was significantly determined by the spoil system and job patronage of the political parties. By contrast, in Georgia an internal administrative market for police functions was the critical gateway to the police. Thus, the impetus for the acquisition of offices in Albania came from the political field, while in Georgia it came from the bureaucratic field. In Albania, the party patronage combined with a decrease in police personnel led to permanent shifts in the client chains, and therefore to a markedly low administrative continuity. In Georgia, the purchase of police offices brought about the exact opposite, namely a permanent integration into networks and, at the same time, a constant increase in personnel. Regarding the appropriation of economic resources, however, the modus operandi was somewhat the same in the two countries. In Albania the police gained their most lucrative earnings by tolerating or by participation in illegal smuggling. In Georgia the chronic under-financing of the police and the purchase of offices resulted in more diverse strategies for self-financing from the blackmailing of criminal

15 Interviews in Tbilisi with young offenders, November 2003 as well as with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, December 2003, April 2005, September 2006. Cf. Civil Georgia 22.7.2002 „Primary Detention Breeds Human Rights Abuse"; Liberty Institute (2004: 5-28).

16 Interviews in Tbilisi with taxi and bus drivers as well as with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2005, September 2006. Cf. Papuashvili (2003); Gordadzé (2003: 226-27); Kupatadze et al. (2007: 97).

17 Civil Georgia 13.8.2003, „Red Bridge: Bent Mirror of the Georgian Economy"; IWPR Caucasus Report CRS No. 147, 20.9.2002 „Georgia's Red Bridge Ordeal"; IWPR Caucasus Reporting Service CRS No. 189, 31.7.2003, „Georgia's Dodgy Traders".

18 Interviews in Tbilisi with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry, April 2005, September 2006. Cf. EIU (1997: 10; 1999: 7); Targamadze (2000: 81-82); Wheatley (2005: 115-119); Gordadzé (2003: 220-211); Darchiashvili (2003b: 8); The Georgian Times, No. 105 (669), 30.5.2000 „‚Aldagi' – Limited Insurance Market: Few Choices because of Regulations", p. 3.

19 For the criminal groups in Georgia cf. Glonti & Lobjanidze (2004); Shelley (2007). For the smuggling business see Kukhianidze et al. (2004: 31-49); Gotsiridze (2003); Wheatley (2005: 115-16, 122-23).

20 IWPR Caucasus Report CRS No. 130, 23.5.2002, „Police Collude in Georgian Drug Trade"; IWPR Caucasus Report CRS No. 95, 24.8.2001 „Traffic Control"; Wheatley (2005: 125, Fn. 67); Interviews in Tbilisi April 2005 and September 2006 with youth offenders as well as with police officers and staff of the Interior Ministry.

21 Kupatadze et al. (2007: 94-95); Kukhianidze et al. (2004); Civil Georgia 19.7.2001 „The Police Cooperates with Criminals in the Pankisi Valley"; EurasiaNet, Eurasia Insight 10.7.2002 „Kidnapping of British Businessman in Georiga Focuses Attention on Law-Enforcement Corruption".

enterprises through the systematic taxation of road traffic to the organisation of lucrative smuggling.

The overall trajectory of the police in Georgia and Albania can be constrasted as a process of "autonomization" versus "political capture", representing two different but equally unfavourable developments. Georgian police, lacking effective civilian control, became increasingly independent and predatory. This pattern contrasts with the Albanian case, where the police were subject to continuous political intervention and party politics. However, in both cases, the police force has been characterized by an inadequate separation between public and private spheres, thus featuring typical elements of a neo-patrimonial bureaucracy. According to Max Weber, a rational administration needs civilian political control, as much as a relative autonomy in order to function effectively. The same applies to the police in the modern state. The practices and trajectories of the police outlined here are also observable in other transitional states of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Possible future reforms of the police there would thus have to tackle political as well as administrative shortcomings.

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