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**Subject of the thesis:** US-Georgia Relations in the Context of American Strategy in the South Caucasus

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**Relevance of the research issue:** With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Caucasus has become a source of chronic instability. Dominated for decades by Russian Empire and the USSR, the region has turned out to be "vacant". Being the only superpower the U.S. engaged the region into its sphere of influence. After the established diplomatic relations with the three republics of the South Caucasus in the early 1990s, they enhanced their political, military, economic and cultural penetration into the region. Georgia has been the most loyal U.S. partner among all the South Caucasus republics. This directly concerns the Russian national security. Analyzing the factors leading to the fruitful cooperation between Washington and Tbilisi and outlining how it influences the Russian south make the work topical.

**The purpose** of the work is to outline major foreign policy priorities of the United States in the South Caucasus as well as to draw a number of aspects and problems of the bilateral relations between Washington and Tbilisi (1992-2012).

**Research objectives:**

- outline key parameters of the bilateral relations in modern world politics;

- define the role of the South Caucasus for American foreign policy since the break-up of the Soviet Union;
- prove that geopolitical interests of the U.S. in Georgia are a priority;

- trace the dynamics of the US-Georgia relations since the Obama took office and forecast the situation in the short-run.

**Scientific novelty:**

- key trends in American NGOs activities in Georgia have been outlined;

- current initiatives of the American administration in Georgia have been analyzed and conceptualized.

**Structure:** The two chapters, containing two paragraphs each, the conclusion and a 126-reference bibliography (58 of which are in foreign languages) and the 5 Appendixes. The total volume is 82 pages.

**Summary:** Achieving their national interest in the Caucasus presumes bringing loyal elites to running Georgia. This trend has been cryssalized after the 9/11 atrocities when America saw the Caucasus as a vital platform for its operation in Afghanistan and Iraq.

U.S. policy toward Georgia is a bipartisan issue. The Georgia revolution revealed a wide window of opportunities for American policy in the country. Large financial aid both through government and NGOs is a characteristic of the policy as well as closed ties between Georgian political elite and American political establishment. At the same time, NGOs activities on “monitoring” democratic process in Georgia are a “bully stick” to control these elites. Another trend of the policy is succession – many administrations work within the same patterns.

NATO has been n important part of American foreign policy toward Georgia – the institution where the country seeks membership.

Modern US-Georgia relations are based on 5 pillars: Charter on Strategic Partnership; bilateral commission and a new NATO-membership Plan; financial aid; building democratic institutions; Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
The strategy of “engagement without recognition” has been advised to Georgians as the most efficient option in dealing with the partly recognized republics, while the main focus is still on Abkhazia rather Ossetia.