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The Role of Identity in Georgia's Security Policies:

Critique of Realism

### **Introduction**

To understand the security policies of Republic of Georgia one must focus on both domestic and external factors. Domestic factors include dire economic straits, political instability, and general ethnic make-up of Georgia. On the external area one needs to consider rivalries of global and regional powers. Nevertheless, it is extremely difficult to differentiate between domestic and external implications because they are inextricably bound together and sometimes go without any distinction. For instance, problems of Abkhazian and South Ossethian breakaway republics are both internal and external; they involve economic, ethnic implications on the domestic scale, and simultaneously define relations with Russian Federation. Relations with Russia, in turn, define Georgian domestic politics and affect the republic's foreign policy in general. The same is true in the case of NATO – Georgia relations: they substantially affect bilateral relations between Russia and Georgia. All these important characteristics are necessary to take into

account in order to understand Georgia's security concerns and introduce a somewhat clearer picture of the situation in South Caucasus at large.

Ethnic make-up being one of the most important variables deserves a special attention. Apart from the fact that Georgia is comprised of various ethnic groups, such as the Abkhazians, the Adjars, the Ossets, the Armenians, and the Azerbaijanis, there exists also a view that the Georgians themselves are not homogeneous and can be further divided into groups. For instance, Hunter while summarizing important facts of Georgian history and explaining geographical differences between eastern and western parts of Georgia writes that the nucleus of the first independent state was established in eastern Georgia; afterwards the western part fell under the eastern control. He goes on saying that '...the sense of Georgianness was strongest in the eastern part. Echoes of this aspect of Georgia's history are still to be heard today, when some observers characterize the behavior of various Georgian governments toward the country's minorities in the last few years as 'Kartvelian chauvinism.'<sup>1</sup>

In this respect a somewhat radical approach can be traced in George Hewitt's views. He claims that the term 'Georgian' has been used since 1930s as a general term for four South Caucasian, Kartvelian languages, that is, Georgian proper, Mingrelian, Svan, and Laz. He asserts that mutual intelligibility between these sister tongues is possible only between Laz and Mingrelian.<sup>2</sup> This implies that the Georgians themselves cannot be regarded as ethnically cohesive and are subject to internal divisions. If we add to it the problems of almost independent Adjara populated by ethnically Georgian Muslims,

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<sup>1</sup> Shireen T. Hunter, *The Transcaucasus in Transition: Nation Building and Conflict*, The Center for Strategic & International Studies, Washington, D.C., p. 111, Kartvelian means Georgian

<sup>2</sup> George Hewitt, *Abkhazia, Georgia and Circassians*, *Central Asian Survey*, 1999, 18(4) pp.464-465

Javacheti populated by Christian Armenians, minority of Azeris, the image of Georgia, as a state extremely susceptible to ethnic divisions will be complete.

The ethnic cleavages, aggravated by harsh economic conditions, make Georgia extremely vulnerable to threats coming from both domestic and external sources. Having a strategic geographical location but limited capabilities Georgia, seeks to enhance its security first of all by joining alliances and incorporating itself in European structures. This policy complicates Russia-Georgia relations, for Georgia's westward trip raises Russian suspicion and hostility. Consequently, Georgia is facing the following reality: by trying to join NATO it aggravates relations with Russia, and postpones the probability of restoration of Georgia' sovereignty over Abkhazia and South Ossethia. Indeed, it is widely admitted that reliance on Russia could help Georgia to restore its territorial integrity, because Russia exerts influence over Abkhazia and South Ossethia through CIS (predominantly Russian) peacekeeping forces deployed in these secessionist republics.

One of the basic assumptions of realist tradition, namely, state's concern about territorial integrity and sovereignty as the highest priorities of states, is not clearly present in the Georgian case. Other ideational priorities, such as the aspiration to construct Georgia as a European state, professing European values, often times compete with realist assumptions. It is argued that realism, with its emphasis on sovereignty, fails to explain Georgian foreign policy, while constructivist theory by stressing identity factors, can provide better insights into the understanding of security dynamics in Georgia. The paper suggests that identity factors play as significant role in issues related to peace and war, as do power politics. The Georgian case is used as a good example for

demonstrating the strength of ideational factors in a region traditionally regarded as a domain of power politics only.

### **Georgia as a small state**

To understand Georgian security policies one must look at it as a typical small state. Admittedly there is no universal definition for ‘smallness’. All states are defined as small, major or middle relative to other states. Another issue is what variables do we employ for calculating smallness: territorial size, population, or economic capabilities? The other stumbling block is the question: Does being small mean being weak? Empirical evidence shows that many states small in size (e.g. Austria, Switzerland, Israel and the like) are by no means weak, but rather strong in terms of viable and well - functioning political institutions (in case of Israel also strong military capabilities).

According to Krause and Singer as ‘minor’ (small) can be defined those states ‘whose diplomatic and material resources are so limited that their leaders focus mostly on the protection of their territorial integrity rather than on the pursuit of more far – reaching global objectives.’<sup>3</sup> This definition stresses the protection of territorial integrity as a priority for small states, thus for Georgia as well.

Admitting that the definition of smallness is a difficult task because of its tendency to be all-encompassing, attempting to grasp the diverse reality of the current world, in this paper the term ‘small state’ will be used as incorporating two sets of parameters: first, territory, population, economy and second, weak statehood with inability to exercise sovereign control over state territories.

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<sup>3</sup> Volker Krause, J. David Singer, *Minor Powers, Alliances, and Armed Conflict: Some Preliminary Patterns*, in *Small States and Alliances*, edited by Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner, Physica – Verlag, p. 16

Olav F. Knudsen considering security policies of small states sets forth six key variables, which influence a small states foreign policy. First, the strategic significance of small states geographic location. Second, the degree of tension between the leading great powers. Third, the phase of the power cycle in which the nearest leading great power finds itself. Fourth, the historical record of relations between the small state and the nearest great power. Fifth, the policy towards the small state of other, rivaling great powers. And sixth, the existence of multilateral frameworks of security cooperation<sup>4</sup>

To explore Georgia's policy towards Russia and NATO I will view Georgia's foreign policy according to suggested categories. This will help to schematize and elucidate Caucasian peculiarities, and, most importantly, demonstrate the weaknesses of the realist tradition.

### ***Strategic Location***

Knudsen views small state's location in terms of great power elites' perception of the threat it would be if the small state were under influence of their main opponent. The classical example is the perception of Finland's location by Russian leaders. The same logic can easily be applied to Russia's perception of Georgia or the perception of this state in the calculations of NATO leaders.

The strategic importance of the Caucasian region in general and Georgia in particular is widely accepted. Suffice it to say that Caucasus has been mentioned as a strategically important region in NATO Prague Summit Declaration.<sup>5</sup> Georgia's location

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<sup>4</sup> Olav F. Knudsen, *Analyzing Small – State Security: The Role of External Factors, in Small States and The Security Challenge in The New Europe*, edited by Werner Bauwens, Armand Clesse & Olav F. Knudsen, Brassey's London –Washington, 1996, pp. 9-18

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nato.int/> last accessed on 4, December, 2003

on the important transportation route, which connects Central Asia with the Western Europe, its vicinity to Russia, and the fact that Georgia is bordering on Chechnya make it of huge strategic importance both to Russia and NATO block.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Degree of tension between great powers***

In this context it is hard to determine the degree of tension between great powers. NATO's eastward expansion has done much to exacerbate relations between Russia and NATO, but, on the other hand, NATO's double – track policy entailing both enlargement and accommodation with Russia may suggest that tensions are not high. Some analysts argue that Russia has accepted NATO's eastward expansion. But what is right for Eastern Europe is not necessarily applicable to Caucasian realities. The major difference is that Georgia's aspiration to join NATO is viewed by Russia in the wider Caucasian context, where exists the problem of Chechnya. This means that the accession of Eastern European countries does not threaten the territorial integrity of Russian Federation, while the probability of Georgia's accession does. It is worth noting that often times the main accusation Russia brings against Georgia is harboring of Chechen terrorists.

### ***Phase of power cycle***

Knudsen posits that small states formed on the periphery of a great power at the latter's peak of power will be more viable than those formed at weak stages of great power. Further, small state will be at risk during the period of great power's decline, a

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<sup>6</sup> Dmitri Trenin, *Russia's Security Interests and Policies in the Caucauss Region*, in *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*, edited by Bruno Coppieters, Vubpress, pp. 91-102

period when great power will have the temptation to assert itself and punish small state that distances itself from the former hegemon using its current weakness.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, being established in its current form during the peak of Bolshevik Russia's weakness, Georgia fits Knudsen's paradigm, for today it is extremely weak in the face of weak Russia. For many Eastern European states Russian threat is imaginary and intangible, while in Georgian case given the gravity of the situation in Chechnya, Abkhazia and other regions, the Russian threat is real and sometimes too close. For instance, on September 11, 2002 Russian President Vladimir Putin was reported to express concerns about Georgia's inability to control its territory and spoke about the possibility to strike Chechen terrorists hiding in Georgia.<sup>8</sup>

### ***History of relations***

Knudsen rightly asserts that the history between great powers and their smaller neighbors is marked by violence and domination. Georgia's historical record in this regard is at best mixed with both positive and negative elements. Though Russian empire was an opportunity to get closer to European ideas and values, and influence positively nation-building process in Georgia, the Georgians remained in an inferior position under tsarist rule. In 1917, when the Russian revolution broke out, Georgia seized the opportunity and declared independence, which lasted from 1918 to 1921, when the Soviet troops occupied the country. However, this conquest did not eliminate Georgian nationalism. Throughout the period of Soviet domination Georgia remained one of the

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<sup>7</sup> Olav F. Knudsen, *Analyzing Small – State Security: The Role of External Factors*, in *Small States and The Security Challenge in The New Europe*, edited by Werner Bauwens, Armand Clesse & Olav F. Knudsen, Brassey's London –Washington, 1996, pp. 12

<sup>8</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2252056.stm> last accessed on 18, December, 2003

most nationalistic republics, nationalism, which perhaps could be compared with that of the Baltic states. During the 1970s and 1980s students and intellectuals showed more inclination than those in other republics to protest against Russification and the loss of national values. Of course, *perestroika* and *glasnost* opened up new opportunities and from that time up to Shevardnadze's takeover of the power, relations between Russia and Georgia could be described as open confrontation. The most notorious incident, which is still remembered by the Georgians, was the brutal treatment of the Georgian demonstrators in Tbilisi on April 9, 1989.<sup>9</sup> The relations between Russian Federation and Georgia further worsened after the war in Abkhazia, which led to the creation of self-proclaimed independent republic of Abkhazia. During the Abkhazian war, many Georgians believed that the Abkhazians received an open support from Russia as a punishment for Georgia's pro-western policies. After the de-escalation of the conflict in Abkhazia, the Russian government used its position in the UN Security Council and secured the presence of Russian troops in Abkhazia in the capacity of peacekeepers. In Georgia this is viewed as a de facto occupation of Georgian territories by the Russian Federation. There is also a strong tendency to regard the Abkhazian conflict as a Russia – Georgia confrontation.<sup>10</sup>

### ***The Policy of Rivaling Powers***

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<sup>9</sup>more detailed account of Georgia – Russia relations see Shireen T. Hunter, *The Transcaucasus in Transition, Nation Building and Conflict*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., 110-141

<sup>10</sup> For the evidence of this see in particular the interview with Jemal Gakhokidze, the first deputy secretary of the Georgian National Security Council available from <http://www.geotimes.ge>, last accessed on 18.November, 2003



Dealing with this issue Knudsen poses a question: What could be more treasonable in the eyes of the great power's elite than the attempt of such a small state to enlist the support of a rivaling great power?<sup>11</sup> In the Georgian case this assumption goes uncontested and vast media coverage and existing analytical literature bluntly indicate that Georgia – Russia confrontation is largely affected by the Western (American) policy in the region and Georgia's aspiration to join NATO.

### ***Frameworks of security cooperation***

The operation of viable and reliable intergovernmental institutions in the region, provided both Russia and Georgia participate in them as fully - fledged members, can ameliorate the situation and remove existing power disparities and mutual grievances. However, this idea of 'security community' in the Caucasus is highly problematic. Collective Security Treaty of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) is not acceptable for Georgia because of the overwhelming Russian influence within it, the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) frameworks are acceptable for both states, but the lack of coercive mechanisms make it not effective if considered in terms of restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity. The last option left is NATO, which currently includes neither Russia nor Georgia. NATO may promote reconciliation between the two states provided both states become NATO members. But so far parties pursue different policies in that respect. Georgia is trying to enter NATO, while Russia seeks to prevent it by tightening its grip on Abkhazia and refusing to remove its military bases from Georgia.

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<sup>11</sup> Olav F. Knudsen, *Analyzing Small – State Security*, p. 13

Indeed, Georgia's cooperation record with NATO shows increasing trends: in 1992 it became a member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, in 1994 Georgia signed the Partnership for Peace Framework Document, in 1997 it was a founding member of the Euro – Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). And, on November 22, 2002 it officially bade NATO for accession. In spite of its strong desire to join NATO, Georgia faces dire challenges, which seem hard to resolve in the near future, thus hampering chances for membership.

Considering Georgia within the framework proposed by Knudsen, might suggest that Georgia's foreign policy embraces all these variables and reflects the whole theoretical complexity. On the surface, it seems that throughout its post-Soviet history Georgia is trying to resolve its internal problems through integration in European structures and first of all through joining NATO. Central to this is the assumption that the restoration of sovereignty is the highest priority for Georgia. Having limited material capabilities, and weak political institutions Georgia falls into the category of 'small' or 'minor' states. Therefore, it can be assumed that Georgia's security policy in general, and policy towards alliance formation, in particular, are subject to the behavioral patterns characteristic for small states; Georgia lacking sufficient military capabilities to gain control over breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossethia is seeking NATO membership to get necessary means for recovering the territorial integrity of the state. This perception can also be reinforced by analyzing statements and speeches of Georgian officials.

For instance, David Tevzadze, the former Defense minister of Georgia, speaking about Georgia's participation in peacekeeping in Kosovo expressed hope and strong belief that '...the vast experience gained in Bosnia and Kosovo can be used in the

solution of other existing conflicts in the Euro-Atlantic area, namely in Georgian region of Abkhazia.’<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, Georgia’s former president E. Shevardnadze told students gathered at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague on November 21, 2002, that ‘Membership of NATO means final guarantee for security for Georgia’.<sup>13</sup>

### **Georgia: A Puzzle for Realists?**

When looked at Georgia’s case through lenses provided by realist theory, which stresses the importance of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and their key priority on the foreign policy agenda of any state, the picture seems to be clear and unproblematic. Georgia through seeking NATO membership tries to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty over Abkhazia, and South Ossethia. Therefore realist theory can claim to embrace all the problems present and provide the necessary answers. However, as closer examination can show, the realist theory fails to capture the whole complexity of the situation, and, therefore, lacks sufficient explanatory power.

In reality, Georgia’s security policies could be a puzzle for realists; having high priority of restoring territorial integrity by establishing some kind of *modus vivendi* with Russia, which still exercises powerful influence over Georgian internal affairs<sup>14</sup>, Georgia, to enhance its security, seeks NATO membership, which aggravates the situation and

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<sup>12</sup> Statement by Lt. Gen. David Tevzadze, Minister of Defense of Georgia, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1999/s991203b.htm>, for other speeches of high ranking Georgian Officials about relations between NATO and Georgia see the same site. Last accessed on 1 December, 2003

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>For instance, Russian Federation still maintains military bases in Georgia and refuses to remove them. In addition, Russia covertly, sometimes even overtly backs the separatist forces within Georgia

perpetuates dividing lines within the republic. In other words, by seeking security, Georgia gets insecurity. The question therefore is: Why do they pursue these policies? Most analysts agree that the realist assumption of priority of territorial integrity for states should have compelled Georgian policy-makers to seek substantial *rapprochement* with Russia. As Alexandr Rondeli posits ‘... small quasi-states, neighbors of Russia, located in the Russian sphere of influence are not always able to choose neutrality or non-alignment as their strategy. This means that Georgia, due to its weakness, has to count on a union with Russia, which has to guarantee Georgia sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and economic development.’<sup>15</sup>

Surprisingly this does not happen. It should be stressed, however, that Georgian authorities are well aware of the fact that Russian assistance can be crucial for Georgia. For example, in autumn 1993, the Georgian forces in Abkhazia were defeated, while the supporters of Gamsakhurdia started their armed attacks in western Georgia. In this critical situation, in October 1993, then president Shevardnadze requested military aid from Russia, whom he had accused of the occupation of Abkhazia one month before, saying that he would not fall on his knees before Russia any longer.<sup>16</sup>

All these facts suggest that the realist account is problematic and cannot alone explain these multifaceted developments. Indeed, if territorial integrity is the highest priority for Georgia, why it does not solve this problem by relying on Russian help? Why does Georgia go closer to the NATO, thus postponing the solution of the problem? Obviously, when viewed from realist perspective, Georgian foreign policy might look

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<sup>15</sup> Alexandr Rondeli, *Georgia in Post – Soviet Space*, Caucasian Regional Studies, vol.1, No 1, 1996

<sup>16</sup> David Darchiashvili, *The Russian Military Presence in Georgia: The Parties’ Attitudes and Prospects*, Caucasian Regional Studies, vol. 2, No1, 1997

irrational and leading nowhere. The first fault of realism is that it fails to see that states not always place the restoration of territorial integrity high on the agenda. Of course, it is still a priority, but as the evidence shows, the *means* of recovering the territorial integrity are as important as the desire to do so. In other words, it is equally important, *how* and with *whose* assistance a state wants to recover its lost territories.

This leads one to pose following questions: Is NATO membership valued more than territorial integrity of Georgia? Are there other cultural implications, involving Georgian identity, that shape predominantly pro -Western and anti - Russian policies, thus perpetuating the problems of Abkhazia and South Ossethia? Is the construction of the negative image of Russia spurred by the lack of ethnic cohesion, and the image of ‘the other’, helps to consolidate Georgia or is perceived as a consolidating factor. Another question is: Does Georgia’s location on the periphery of both NATO and Russian Federation, impose on it a policy of a buffer zone, a stronghold of Europeanism?

### **Constructing Georgian Security**

Here it will be argued that the failure of realism to explain the unwillingness of Georgian politicians to solve the problem of territorial integrity with Russian assistance can be explained by strong desire to identify Georgia with Europe and create a European identity as opposed to the image of Georgia as a part and extension of Russia. Therefore, one can suggest that constructivist theory with its focus on interaction and identity dynamics can provide a better explanation and illuminate those aspects, which realism fails to explain. In particular, constructivism can answer why Russian help has always

been considered undesirable in spite of the simple fact that Russian Federation exercises effective control over Abkhazia, hence holds keys to the resolution of the problem.

As Ted Hopf argues, ‘the identity of a state implies its preferences and consequent actions. A state understands others according to the identity it attributes to them, while simultaneously reproducing its own identity through daily social practice.’ Central to the assumptions of constructivism is that the producer of identity does not control the ultimate product.<sup>17</sup>

History of Georgia can provide some important insights into current process of Georgia’s identity construction. It is essential to note that Georgia perceives itself as a state that first allied with Russia on equal footing. In 1783 the king of Georgia concluded an alliance with Russia in the hope of gaining protection from Islamic expansion. Russia made increasingly importunate demands, however, and in 1801 it annexed eastern Georgia. After short period of independence from 1918 to 1921 facilitated by the weakness of the central authorities, Georgia was again occupied by Russian troops. Therefore, after the demise of the USSR, the image of Russia as a colonial power was especially strong during the first wave of nationalism marked by coming to power of Zviad Gamsakhurdia who conducted uncompromising anti – Russian foreign policy and viewed Soviet troops as merely occupying forces.

One of the first legislative acts of Georgia's first post-communist leadership, which came to power after the election of 28 October 1990, was a ban on the call-up of Georgian youth into the Soviet Army. In the autumn of 1991, towards the end of his short-lived reign, president of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, officially conferred on the

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<sup>17</sup> Ted Hopf, *The promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory*, International Security, Vol. 23, No.1, Summer 1998, p. 175

Soviet forces stationed on Georgian territory the status of occupation forces. Such decisions proceeded from the course towards state independence and a notion that the presence of Soviet troops was incompatible with the idea of independence.<sup>18</sup>

As the historical evidence shows, in the Georgian society the anti-Russian sentiments are particularly strong and the Georgian ‘self’ is being shaped in opposition to the Russian ‘other’. This way of identity construction, as the forgoing evidence indicates, influences the Georgian foreign policy, forcing Georgian policy makers to choose between Russia and the West for tackling internal security problems. This, in turn, results in the procrastination of the conflict resolution, and leads one to think that Georgia is pursuing an irrational foreign policy.

In sum, Georgia shapes its identity against the Russian ‘other’. This raises the following question: if Russia as a model for cooperation and emulation is discarded, who does Georgia try to identify itself with? This will be examined in the next section.

### ***Whose periphery?***

For definition of Georgia’s identity it is imperative to answer the following question: Does Georgia consider itself located on the periphery of Europe or Russia? This question is important because it totally depends on the viewer’s attitude. Georgia’s location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia can be interpreted in either way. But, if Georgia perceives itself as European periphery it will have a tendency to draw lines, to demarcate its borders and oppose Russia through official and unofficial discourses. Georgia’s ex-president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, for instance, had a mystical view of

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<sup>18</sup> David Darchiashvili, *The Russian Military Presence in Georgia: The Parties’ Attitudes and Prospects*, Caucasian Regional Studies, vol. 2, No1, 1997

Georgia's role as the spiritual mediator between East and West, Christianity and Islam. As argued by Hunter, such religious and philosophical concepts as Zoroastrianism with dualistic perception of the world were dominant in Georgia for several centuries and even shape current reality. It is interesting that some observers commented on the rivalry between president Gamsakhurdia and his opponents in terms of a battle between the forces of light and darkness.<sup>19</sup>

An examination of the official discourses can provide interesting insight into the identity construction process of Georgia. For instance, on October 5, 2001 the former president Shevardnadze in his address for the Institute of Central Asia and Caucasus of the John Hopkins University elucidated his views on Georgia's location by stating that

Assessing Georgia through one country's filter alone has unfortunately become a rule. It would be remiss to ignore Turkey's role in Georgia's success and stability as well as Russia's. Georgia is not the southern flank of Russia's strategic space, but rather the northern flank of a horizontal band of Turkish and NATO strategic interests, running from Turkey and Israel to Central Asia. Geography, history and culture locate Georgia comfortably within this band.<sup>20</sup>

In his another speech delivered at the EAPC summit Shevardnadze further elaborated on Georgia's role on Europe's periphery stating that 'Georgia as an active member of the Partnership for Peace program stands ready to cooperate fully with the Alliance to address this problem in our region which happens to be an *outpost of a*

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<sup>19</sup> Shireen T. Hunter, *The Transcaucasus in Transition, nation building and conflict*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., pp. 110-141

<sup>20</sup> for E. Shevardnadze's speeches see <http://www.presidpress.gov.ge/English/index.html> last accessed on 1 December, 2003. last accessed 5 December, 2003.



*civilization* that regards freedom and humanism, in the widest possible sense, as its central values.’<sup>21</sup> (emphasis added)

Clearly, Georgia constructs its image as a state defending and promoting European values. Of course, it cannot be with complete certainty claimed that ideational factors (European values) take precedence over sovereignty issues in Georgian decision making. This interplay is subtle, ambiguous and not easy to define. It could be argued, however, that the ideational dimension has as much importance as the desire to exercise sovereign control over its territories. It is obvious from the fact that Georgia does not go closer to understanding Russian security concerns, it insists on joining NATO, thus postponing solution of its domestic problems and restoration of the control over breakaway and centrifugal regions.

## **Conclusion**

The corollary of the foregoing assumptions about dilemma facing Georgia from the time it gained independence onward, perhaps, can provide useful insights for assessing the theoretical rigor of political realism.

As it was argued throughout this paper realism glosses over some important aspects, which are crucial to understanding Georgian foreign policy. In particular, the major shortcoming of the realist account is its neglect for identity and overemphasis of sovereignty. Georgian case vividly exemplifies that the use of identity factors in analyses is crucial for getting a fuller picture of the political processes.

Georgian case bears some extent of uniqueness for it stands in sharp contrast, for instance, with the case of Finland opting for neutrality vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. If we

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid

view examples within the Caucasian region, Georgian security policy is completely different from that of Armenia. Armenia being a small state, places its security and territorial integrity on top of its agenda. Unlike Georgia, Armenia seeks to cooperate with post-imperial Russia and gain quick benefits from this cooperation rather than orient itself toward NATO, which can deteriorate current security situation but, perhaps, bring real stability in the long-term perspective.<sup>22</sup>

The existence of ideational factors in harsh economic conditions, in a state of insecurity in which Georgia today is, makes one question realist assumptions about priority of sovereignty and territorial integrity in state policy and the realist disregard for identity. Georgian case exemplifies that the strife to gain new ideas, to be associated with European values can be on the equal footing with such 'realist' values as states' territorial integrity and sovereignty.

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<sup>22</sup> Some analysts stress the fear that weak Russia over time will not be able to defend its allies at all. This is one of the major fears of the Armenian policy makers.

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