

Georgia's Identity Making in Relations with Russia and the European Union After the “Rose Revolution”

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Author's Declaration

I confirm that this is my own work and that all sources used have been fully acknowledged and referenced in the prescribed manner

Respectfully submitted

(Date,Signature)

Executive Summary

After the “Rose Revolution” in 2003, Georgia's political elite announced its new policy direction to follow democratic and liberal beliefs norms, values and ideas. This has formed Georgia's national identity, which, the country claims, has always been European. Georgia's powerful neighbor country – Russia - never supported those changes and saw them as a threat to the Russian influence in the region.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the impact of Georgia's national identity reshaping process after the “Rose Revolution” in the relationships between Russia and the European Union, in terms of Georgia's foreign policy and the perspective of social constructivism. The thesis will also analyze how Georgia's newly proclaimed democracy is being implemented together with its sustainability and stability.

The first chapter is a brief introduction which is followed by the second chapter which includes the literature review. This includes an overview and analysis of the research, substantive findings, theoretical and methodological contributions currently in the field.

The third chapter of the work is based on the thesis' theoretical base, namely, the theory of social constructivism. The central idea of social constructivism is that identity forms the basis of a country's interests and foreign policy activities. In the process of identity making and shaping, ideas and norms play an important role, and they affect the formation of a country's interests and actions of foreign policy.

The fourth chapter is an analysis of the effect of the “Rose Revolution” on Georgia's national identity, taking into account that the ruling political elite makes the country's foreign policy. The ideas, values, beliefs, and plans of the elite affect the realization of Georgia's foreign policy, its social identity and how it visualizes itself in the international arena.

The fifth chapter describes the development of Georgia's national identity through relations with Russia and the European Union. The chapter is divided into two parts, the first part discusses the process of Georgia's national identity making, in relationships with Russia after the “Rose Revolution” in 2003. The second part is an insight into Georgia's identity reshaping in relations with the European Union, which positions itself in international relations as a power that is promoting its liberal and democratic values in the world using soft power via diplomacy or influence through a good example.

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List of Abbreviations

CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States

DCFTA: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

EaP: Eastern Partnership

ENP AP: European Neighborhood Policy Action Plan

ENP: European Neighborhood Policy

EU: European Union

GUAM: Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova (Organization for Democracy and Economic Development)

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PCA: Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

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1. Introduction

Georgia is a country which has always been at a political, economic and geographic crossroads. Next to its powerful neighbor Russia, Georgia balances between relations and the willingness to integrate within the Euro-Atlantic organizations with whom it believes it has the same values and norms. The country is situated in the region where European and Russian values, norms and interests meet and Georgia apparently wants to show and prove that it is following the West. The situation is further complicated by the fact that Russia does not want to lose its influence in its neighboring country, where a lot of ethnic Russians live and which has been a part of the former Soviet Union. As a powerful neighbour, Russia wants to keep its strong historical ties and does not want to lose its power over the region.

Since the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, Georgia has been slowly going down the path of European integration because it believes that this is where it has belonged for centuries, and it simply was not able to do it due to the Soviet Russia's occupation. The country is positioned as a "new democracy" which now can follow whichever path it chooses to take. Furthermore, the eventual integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures would increase the safety and stability of Georgia.

The repositioning of Georgian identity in the international area and its foreign policy discourse is complicated; it led to a military confrontation with the Russian Federation in 2008. Georgia became a fragmented country with Russia occupying 20% of Georgia. The territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (see figure 1) later became relatively independent, but are still considered to be closely tied to Russia.



Figure 1. Georgia (Caucasus Report, 2014)

Georgia has developed stronger cooperation with the European Union, so Georgia has become a more important aspect in the European Union's foreign policy. Due to that, EU researchers find it important to analyze Georgia's domestic policy and country's relationship with its neighboring countries and international organizations. The aim of this

research is to analyze the development of Georgia's national identity after the "Rose Revolution" in relationships with Russia and the European Union in terms of the country's foreign policy discourse within the perspective of social constructivism.

The central question of the thesis is to find out how Georgia's national identity was reshaped by its bilateral relations with Russia and the European Union after the "Rose Revolution" in 2003. The hypothesis that will be tested is: Georgia positions itself as a "new democracy" which wants to return to European values and protect itself from non-democratic Russia, which is contributing to the creation of an even greater divide between Georgia and Russia.

In order to test the hypothesis, the following tasks can be listed:

- An analysis of Georgia's identity reshaping after the "Rose Revolution."
- An analysis of Georgia's relationship with the European Union and Russia after the "Rose Revolution"
- An analysis of Georgia's foreign policy rhetoric in relations with Russia and the European Union after the "Rose Revolution"
- An analysis of how Georgia positions itself in the international environment.

In order to test the hypothesis and research tasks mentioned before, quantitative and qualitative research strategies are used. First of all, in order to test tasks within the theory of international relations, a social constructivism approach was used. Constructivists believe that the international environment is socially constructed and that ideas, norms and how the world is seen, rather than material interests or the division of power, play the principle role in decision making. These aspects, constructivists highlight, affect the construction of identity and the interest making of countries, and they further affect their foreign policy. In other words, countries create their own interests which are based on ideas and these ideas develop understanding about the international environment. Furthermore, the idea of agent-structure is used which claims that human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors (agents) "whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live," where society is made up of social relations, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors (Wendt, 1987).

Checkel criticizes constructivism because in this theory the internalization of norms and their dissemination in the country and society is not discussed enough. He points out two approaches to solving it: pressure of community and the learning process of the elites. In the first case, non-governmental actors, the representatives of society together, support a particular international norm by pressuring the leading political elite. He believes that elites

accept norms because of the pressure of society. In that case, norms restrict the choices of norms and actions. In the second case, elites are in the process of learning when those international standards are being internalized. In this study, the author combines the theories of rational choice and constructivism, so it can be explained why in some countries international norms are internalized and in some cases they are not. The most important actors in this theory are the leading political elite because they control the political agenda (Checkel, 1997). This is a counter argument to the theory of Wendt, in which the main idea is that countries are unitary actors in international relations.

As this thesis is based on the international relations theory of social constructivism and the research done by scholars of the theory, namely, Wendt and Checkel, mainly a deductive research strategy is used.

An important method used in the research was discourse analysis. Discourse definitions differ, but they may be divided into three categories: firstly it can be seen as anything beyond the sentence, secondly, the study of discourse can be seen as a study of language and thirdly, it can be seen as further social practice which involves non-linguistic and linguistic instances (Schiffrin, 2001).

Wennersten believes that discourse can be seen not only in linguistic practices, but in actions as well. When analyzing identity making, it is wrong to take into account only an actor's language and linguistics because then the analysis will not be complete. The language does not always follow the actions of actors, and it can be seen in cases when different linguistic practices exist and they compete with each other. Furthermore, it is possible that the action of an actor will be totally different from what is communicated by their language. Wennersten highlights that discourse gives the world its social dimension. It is an instrument which shapes social identities and social reality. This process involves linguistic and behavioral actions and practices (Wennersten, 1999).

The second chapter is a literature review, which includes the research, the substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions previously done in that area. A short description and analysis will also be given.

The third chapter of the work is based on the theoretical base of the thesis, namely, the theory of social constructivism. The central idea of the theory is that identity forms the basis of a country's interests and activities. In the process of identity making and shaping, ideas and standards play an important role, and they affect the formation of a country's interests and actions of foreign policy. Interaction between countries involves linguistic practices as well as language and speech which constructs the understanding of an

actor's social reality. Their social status, interests and foreign policy, however, affect that. Furthermore, the idea of the agent-structure is used in order to examine how Georgia's social identity structure is shaped.

The fourth chapter is an analysis of the "Rose Revolution's" effect on Georgia's national identity, taking into account that the ruling political elite makes the country's foreign policy. Their ideas, values, beliefs, and plans are embedded into the foreign policy, and therefore the country's social identity and how it sees itself in the international arena. The author uses political elite's socialization model as described by Checkel which can be applied to norm internalization in Georgia after the "Rose Revolution". Furthermore, a discourse analysis is included in order to study Georgia's social identity and foreign policy's reshaping.

The fifth chapter captures Georgia's national identity's development in relations with Russia and the European Union. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part points out the process of Georgia's national identity's making in relationships with Russia after the "Rose Revolution" in 2003. The second part discusses Georgia's identity reshaping in relations with the European Union, which positions itself in international relations as a power that is promoting its liberal and democratic values in the world using its soft power. In both parts the author analyses the development of relations and the movement towards the values of the European Union, in which ways Georgia's relationship with Russia is deteriorating, how the political elite of Georgia views the diplomatic relationship with the European Union and Russia and how they see Russia and the European Union as national units.

The "mirroring principle" of Alexander Wendt can be applied to explain why Georgia is moving towards Euro-Atlantic integration and why Russo-Georgian relations worsened. Wendt claims that a country's comprehension about itself and its interests affect the behavior and actions of other countries, and it can be used in the perception of a country's identity. The European Union in the international relations positions itself as a normative power which makes relationships with other countries based on norms and values such as good governance, human rights or the rule of law. The new Georgian political elite sees the European Union as a "magnet of democracy", as a support for its new democratic identity, and as a safety guarantee.

The final conclusion is that in order to become a real "new democracy," Georgia truly has to become a free, democratic state, not only partly free as it is now. However, Georgia is developing democratic characteristics in the state's identity.

In order to complete these tasks, a previous theoretical framework in the field of international relations theory of social constructivism will be researched and analyzed. This will be complemented with theoretical background about the Russo-Georgian and the Georgia-EU relationships, examples of which will be given in the "Literature Review" chapter.

2. Literature Review

In Georgia's identity reshaping process in relations with Russia and the European Union the theory of social constructivism is applied. The following chapter is a review of previous literature on this topic. Furthermore, the review explores how the history of Russo-Georgian and Georgia-EU relations has shaped the foreign policy choices of Georgia and how that can be explained via the theory of social constructivism.

2.1 Social Constructivism

When analysing Georgia's social identity shaping, the author uses the theory of social constructivism. The theory focuses on how human awareness of consciousness effects its place in the world affairs and how social aspects and not military forces or economic capabilities define the balance of power between states. The theory sees the international system as ideas or a system of norms which is organized by selected people at a particular time and place (Jackson, 2006).

Wendt claims that the identity shapes a country's interests and it affects a country's choices in the international world. Furthermore, a national identity is a result of interactions between countries. Wendt suggests, that countries act like humans, and they have characteristics such as needs and beliefs (Wendt, 1999). Some scholars argue that identity is an important aspect in a country's foreign policy decisions (Hopf, 2002), and it is shaped by a country's norms, interests and values (Checkel, 2006). Other scholars have argued that the identity, however, is a connection between norms and interests, which affects a country's actions on the international environment (Herman, 1996).

The identity reshaping process can be examined via the agent-structure principle which claims that human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors (agents) "whose actions help to reproduce or transform the society in which they live" (Wendt, 1987, p. 37). Discourse can be seen not only in linguistic practices, but in actions as well. Actor's promises are not always the same as their actions. Discourse is an instrument which shapes social identities and the social reality (Wennersten, 1999).

2.2 The Georgia- EU Relationship

Georgia's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures has been one of the country's main aims since the "Rose Revolution" (European Union External Action, n.d.). The country sees the European Union as a friendly partner which would be a good support to Georgia's reshaped values, norms and interests. That is the reason why Georgia prioritizes the EU in its foreign policy (Jones, 2014). Georgia's foreign policy after the "Rose Revolution", directed by the former President M. Saakashvili, had a strongly articulated pro-Western foreign policy discourse directed towards Georgia's integration

into the EU and NATO. That, however, was not supported by government's actions of not following the EU guidelines and a vague level of democracy (Merabishvili, 2013).

Jawad suggests that Georgia's transition towards a democratic regime began even before it became a sovereign state. The book "Diversity, Conflict and State Failure: Chances and Challenges for Democratic Consolidation in Georgia After the "Rose Revolution" gives a deep historical, political and geopolitical look into Georgia's efforts to achieve the Western democratic standards and balance its foreign policy between the West and Russia. The author sees Georgia as an almost failing state in terms of its democracy and security rates; it has a lack of stability in the political institutions, a low level of socioeconomic development and a high rate of corruption (Jawad, 2006). Wheatley, however, sees the "Rose Revolution" as a regime change which directed Georgia towards democracy (Wheatley, 2005).

2.3 The Russo-Georgian Relationship

Many scholars have already done research on the Russo-Georgian relationship. Asmus in the book "A Little War That Shook the World: Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West" provides a political, historical and geopolitical analysis about the Russo-Georgian war (Asmus, 2010). Goltz, in "Georgia Diary: A Chronicle of War and Political Chaos in the Post-Soviet Caucasus" provides an insight into political actions of Georgia and the historical background of its leaders and country's method of achieving justice, freedom and peace. Georgia at that time had series of power struggles, rampant crime, corruption as well as secessionist wars and spread of the war in neighboring Chechnya (Goltz, 2009).

As Georgia is one of Latvia's foreign policy priorities, The Latvian Institute of International Affairs did an extensive research in this field. Ozolina claims that the World leading powers always had a particular interest in the post-Soviet territories ("it is obvious that the post-Soviet territory is a place where the interests of Russia, the USA, the EU and NATO cross paths" (Rostoks, Ozolina & Spruds, 2009, p. 15)). Spruds adds that the Russo-Georgian war has launched several important Russian foreign policy trends, such as Russia positioning itself as a powerful player that is independent from any strategic partnerships. Furthermore, Russia declares that the entire post-Soviet area is a zone of its "privileged interests" (Ozolina, Rostoks & Spruds, 2009).

Because Georgia is one of the EU foreign policy priorities, a lot of research has been done about Georgia's relationship with the EU. The European Union Committee in the report "After Georgia - the EU and Russia: Follow-up Report" discusses the development of relationships in 2008-2009. It observes how Russia's foreign policy is dealing with

organizations such as NATO when it comes to the country's conflict with Georgia. Furthermore, it examines how Russia uses its economic and politic power towards Georgia (United Kingdom Parliament, 2009).

3. The Creation of a Country's Social Identity from the Social Constructivists' Point of View

In the eighties a new theory of international relations, namely social constructivism, was born. It rejected neorealist and neoliberalist assumptions about the international environment and offered a sociological perspective on the world system. It describes how ideas play an important role in the international environment, because they affect actors in international relations. Social context is important because it affects the international relations subject, but this subject can change depending on the social environment. Based on this, constructivists point out that structural changes on the global environment always occur (Jackson, 2006).

Wendt, the analyst of social constructivism, in the book "Social Theory of International Relations" points out that constructivism is not exclusively a theory of international politics. This method can be adjusted to other social forms such as societies, families and countries.

Wendt highlights the idea of agent-structure that evaluates the relationships of actors with "underlying assumptions about the relationship of system structures to human agents" (Wendt, 1987, p. 38). Wendt describes actors as "human beings and their organizations whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live." In other words, actors can be individuals, organizations or even the political elite and their actions (decisions) change the society to which they belong. The society, however, "is made up of social relationships, their structure and the interactions between those purposeful actors" (Wendt, 1987, p. 37).

Checkel identifies three types of social constructivism: conventional, interpretative and critical/radical. Conventional constructivism is the dominant school of constructivism in the USA, and it focuses mainly on norms that change the international politics and outcomes of international relations. Interpretative constructivism, however, has gained the highest popularity in Europe. It analyses the role and importance of language in the creation of social reality. Interpretative constructivists, in contrast to conventional constructivists, do not try to analyze which factors influence the social identity. Rather, they analyze the background conditions and linguistic structures (discourses). In the analysis of critical/radical constructivism linguistic constructions can be found as well, but the main focus is on the role, influence and dominance of language (Checkel, 2006).

Most international relations theories focus on how the distribution of power, such as military force or economic capabilities, defines the relationships between states and their behavior. Social constructivism, however, is seen as an appropriate theory of the

international relations in order to analyze the process of Georgia's identity reshaping in relations with Russia and the European Union because the theory is based on social findings and knowledge. The study of the identity reshaping is very complex and involves a wide range of aspects. Social constructivists emphasize the importance of culture and identity, and they believe, that it is expressed in ideas, norms and values.

3.1 The Concept of Identity and the Development of it in International Relations

Countries are acting differently towards friends and enemies because enemies are related with threats and friends are not. The question who is a friend and who is an enemy cannot be answered only by the state organs, it has to involve citizens as well. Countries are in the process of a constant decision-making. Furthermore, social constructivists see countries as persons who have features such as desires and beliefs.

In the discourse of Georgia's foreign policy Georgia recognizes Russia as a threat due to its aggressive policy, economic decisions and Russo-Georgia's military confrontation in 2008. The European Union is seen as a friendly partner, which supports Georgia's new identity and promotes security and stability in the country.

3.2 Norms and Ideas: the Base of a Country's Identity and Foreign Policy Making

Collective thinking towards norms and values is shaping the organizational structures of countries. If those collective comprehensions are taken into account actors have identities. The identity is seen as a relatively stable and clear towards the way how the actor sees itself. Each person and each country have many identities, for example, "a sovereign country" or "the leader of freedom" and those identities are based on the interests of a country.

In an analysis of how countries behave in the international system, realists highlight the anarchy and the separation of power. Wendt criticizes that approach because it is not enough to use the anarchy and the separation of power in order to be able to explain a country's actions. That is why the identity and interests are important. The identity of countries affects the interests shaping, the foreign policy course and the international relations in general. That is why it can be assumed that a country's identity is developing its national interests that make a country's foreign policy (interests are results of the identities of countries because a country cannot know what it wants, if it does not know who it is).

Wendt makes a division between two types of interests: objective and subjective. Objective interests are needs, which have to be fulfilled, so the identity is reproduced. Hegemony, for example, cannot exist without its clients or "the new democracy" without

democracy and institutions which help to support it. If those requirements are not satisfied, the supported identity cannot survive. When actors shape their identities, they have to take into account not only their needs but further actions how to fulfil them as well. That guarantees the stability of an identity (Wendt, 1999). However, as mentioned before, a social identity is a product of interaction between social processes. Other countries' assumptions about the international system affect the character, actions and choices of a country. That country, after the interpretation of the international system, will define its actors by classifying them as friends or enemies.

A country's identity and interests are affected by actions of other countries. Collective identity is made when certain social group sees itself as "we" and others as "they". The collective identity gives its group members the interest to save the common culture, values and ideas. Collective interests mean that the main purpose of a group's subjects is the prosperity of the group, what will help them to overtake their egoistic interests (Wendt, 1999).

The relationship between countries can develop when a player tries to convince others. Wendt claims that actors need each other in order to promote their identity. In the process of interaction, needs of actors meet. Those may include material and associative or representative needs (the ideas who they are). Furthermore, all actors firstly need to meet their basic needs, such as survival needs, and only after that they can fulfil other needs (Wendt, 1999).

To sum up, it is important how players see and represent themselves and how they perceive themselves within the system. The representative practice can be done with the perspective of realism (self-interest, no recognition of others, what could create enemies). It can be also practiced with pro-social strategy which involves activities such as respect to others what creates friends. Obviously, pro-social policy is more likely to encourage a positive interaction (Wendt, 1999).

In the process of the identity shaping, an important role is played by ideas and norms of a country; they affect country's interests and its foreign policy. The identity is a connection between norms and interests, which affect countries actions in the international environment (Herman, 1996). Ideas are socially constructed, learned and kept in the process of interaction and interpretation. They influence and shape a country's interests in the international relations, so they affect a country's foreign policy choices as well. Countries make their interests on a base of ideas that develop their comprehension about the international environment. Ideas can be seen as a resource or an instrument for normative beliefs (what is wrong or right). Ideas have structural features that promote

and limit actions of actors. That means that ideas can change and affect the behaviour of actors, they can affect and shape the actor's characteristics (Fabbri, 2002).

Fabbri points out that there are no "bad" or "good" ideas. She emphasises the importance of ideas and the analysis of actors in the international area. Ideas do not naturally become dominating and used in the institutional practises, they have to be strengthened (Fabbri, 2002). Elite and individuals, who can access different resources, work as the political agenda makers. The power of ideas depend on how much institutional support they get from the political and intellectual elite. Those actors can be autonomous in their actions in the political agenda making and mobilise coalitions of actors to support those ideas. Fabbri points out three main types of actors: bureaucratic structures of individuals who can give their ideas further to leaders, leaders and transnational communities of individuals (Fabbri, 2002).

4. The Beginning of Georgia's Orientation Process: "The Rose Revolution"

The national identity of a country is stable and it is shaped in the process of interaction with other actors of the international environment. The theory of social constructivism by Wendt points out that countries are actors and social structures cannot be reduced to individuals. The political elite which is having the most power in a country, because of its power in the process of decision making, is shaping the foreign policy and relations with other countries. The elites have access to different resources, and they can act as the decision makers in the political agenda. Ideas, values and beliefs affect the foreign policy making, a country's national identity and how it sees itself in the international arena.

The political elite's socialisation model of Checkel, the pressure of society and the elite's learning process, can be well examined in the political discourse of Georgia. As mentioned before, non-governmental actors and the representatives of the society support certain international standards by giving pressure to the leading political elite. They can accept those standards as a result of a pressure but in that case norms are not internalised (Checkel, 2006).

When Georgia became a sovereign country in 1991, a period of instability started: the government was unstable, corruption was present in the all levels of the society and the election results were incorrect. Furthermore, the change of first two presidents was not constitutional. Georgia was in the identity crisis. When Georgia's second President (1992-2003), Eduard Shevardnadze was in power, the administrative policy course went towards the rule of law, good governance and human rights, but that, however, stayed in the level of the political rhetoric:

"Though formally Georgia was moving from an autocratic regime towards a democratic political system, most of the institutional and legal initiatives were taken so that the political elite benefited from them and in such a manner, politicians sustained their public offices" (Dadalauri, 2005).

Due to massive protests and a pressure of the political opposition, on 23 November, 2003 Eduard Shevardnadze resigned. Society and the political opposition were accusing him and the leading political elite for fraudulence in elections on 2 November, 2003. The so-called "Rose Revolution" started shortly after that, and it was named after the symbol of the opposition party-a rose. In 2004, after the presidential and parliamentary elections, a new political elite was in power. They announced that they wanted Georgia to become a democratic country, by decreasing corruption, by economic and governmental reforms, by solving conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and beginning an integration course

towards Euro-Atlantic structures (Stent, 2014). Those were the first steps towards Georgian identity reshaping from the East to the West.

Most of the new leading Georgian political elite educated in universities at Europe or USA. They had an entirely different education than the previous political elite which educated in the Soviet Russia. That means, that they were allowed to study some aspects of the political science that probably were not allowed in the education system of the Soviet Russia. Mikheil Saakashvili studied in The George Washington University, USA and the current head of Georgian Intelligence Service and the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gela Bezhuashvili, graduated university in Dallas, USA. Foreign minister (2004-2005) Salome Zurbishvili was born in France and before the "Rose Revolution" she worked as the French ambassador to Georgia. Almost all active participants of the "Rose Revolution" worked as journalists or were participating in non-governmental organisations. In the interview M. Saakashvili said, that he thinks he is an idealist, "because without ideals and believes it is impossible to change people's attitude to the world, country and in the end to myself" ("Yoshchenko i Saakashvili Vstretjat Novij god na Maidane Nezalezhnosti", 2004).

The protection of Georgia's democracy and Georgia's democratic values was the main motivation for Georgians to be on the street and protest during the "Rose Revolution". In the speech to the Council of Europe, M. Saakashvili said: "During the month of November 2003, the Georgian nation rose up in defence of the fundamental right to live in a free and democratic nation where the people hold the exclusive right to choose their own leaders and destiny. Our peaceful Rose Revolution was not inspired by Georgia's economic or political stagnation nor was it incited by rampant corruption. Rather, the Rose Revolution was a direct manifestation of the European values of liberal democracy values that form the basis for Georgia's identity and culture. Values that are widespread and shared by all Georgians. If anything, the non-violent Rose Revolution served as a message to the world that all Georgians aspire to build and live in a democratic, independent and stable state, where human rights are respected, protected and revered. Furthermore, we Georgians showed the courage, tenacity and commitment, necessary to defend those fundamental values, in a civilized manner, when they were under threat" (Saakashvili, 2004). Zurab Zhvania, one of the leaders of the "Rose Revolution" said: "I don't think it was *coup d'état*. I think it was a massive protest of the nation for the protection of constitutional rights" (Kabikadze, 2003).

"We have to realise a real dream of the nation of Georgia- Georgia has to become a free and democratic country," said M. Saakashvili in the inauguration day on January 25, 2004. The new President was planning to perceive the democracy with a support towards the

basic democratic values such as equality, freedom and liberty ("A country, where every citizen has equal rights. A country where the most valuable treasures are education and knowledge"). Reforms and the foreign policy course supported 96% citizens, from whom 82.8% participated in the elections. That means, that Georgians saw reforms very positively ("Gruzija dolzhna statj demokratitechkoy stranoj svobodnih, obrazovannih i gordnih lodej- Mikheil Saakashvili", 2004).

In the discourse of the political parties of Georgia, the aspect of democracy is highlighted. Georgia has chosen to become a country in which "foreign policy priorities are founded on the values established by modern democratic world" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, n.d.). David Berdzenishvili, a member of the Republican Party commented: "Georgia has to become a country with strong, high standards of democracy. We have to transform Georgia from a speckled to a pluralistic Georgia. We, the government and opposition need a dialogue in order to really strengthen democratic standards in the country." Furthermore, it is highlighted that those values Georgia already had before: "The current Georgian government realises a century-old wish of the Georgian people finally to become members of a sovereign, proud, and democratic state, belonging to Europe, to Euro-Atlantic space," Giory Bokeria, one of the leader of the main Georgian party United National Movement ("Gruzinskij politik o gruzino-russkih otnoshenja: "Mi-raznie u dolzhni ponjatj eto'", 2004).

In the international environment Georgia positions itself as a "new democracy", where in the power are new politicians, who base their values and principles on justice and equality. It is crucial for the Georgia's identity reshaping because the political elite is making decisions for the Georgian society so it can shape its identity and foreign policy choices. Mikheil Saakashvili highlights that everybody who was involved in the "Rose Revolution" and who became a member of the leading political elite, have seven main characteristics of "the behaviour codex", to whom democrats have to be loyal. First of all, "democratic movement must be the political expression of the free will of people and must be motivated by a desire to free a nation and bring its people closer to other democratic people. Secondly, the movement must forswear the use of violence and be absolutely committed to change by peaceful means. Thirdly, political leaders must be committed in word and deed to transparency. Autocratic regimes are financially and politically corrupt. Democratic movements and governments must root out the corrosive cancer of corruption. Fourthly, a democracy must be committed to observance of all human rights, including those of ethnic or religious minorities. There can be no compromise on the commitment to building a society based on tolerance, political pluralism and the rule of law. Fifthly, a democratic government must be prepared to share power and responsibility

with parliament, courts, a free media and the nongovernmental organizations of civil society. Sixthly, democratic leaders must convey a sense of responsibility toward the nation's children, future generations and the most disadvantaged in their society. Finally, good intentions must be confirmed by a rise in prosperity and a meaningful improvement in the lives of ordinary people and the most vulnerable members of society" (Saakashvili, 2004).

It is important to mention, that the political path chosen by the new political elite of Georgia was not supported by the Russian Federation. Russia sees Georgia as an area where it has a strong influence because it is its neighbour, it has close historical, economic and cultural ties with it. Furthermore, Georgia has been a part of the Soviet Russia and Georgia has a big Russian minority. Russia has political, economic, and geopolitical interests in Georgia.

With the political elite which follows the "behaviour codex" by the former President M. Saakashvili, Georgia is going towards the identity reshaping with promoting its new values, norms and interests. The country sees itself as a "new democracy" which goes towards its aim to achieve high standards of liberty, equality and freedom.

5. Georgia's Identity Making in Relations with Russia and the European Union after "The Rose Revolution"

Georgia sees itself as a "new democracy" which tries to strengthen its relations with countries that have democratic values and principles. Those principles Georgia sees in the European Union: it is an attractive and democratic community which Georgia wants to join. Furthermore, Georgia positions itself as an old European country which has recently become independent, free and with a willingness to return to Europe where it thinks it belongs to. In Russia Georgia does not see those democratic principles, and Georgian politicians often mention that it is the main reason why Russia's and Georgia's bilateral relationship grew worse after the "Rose Revolution" in 2003.

5.1 Georgia's Identity Making in Relations with Russia

The relationship between Russia and Georgia after the collapse of the Soviet Union has always been quite tense, and there are several reasons why. Georgia was one of the first Soviet republics which announced its willingness to leave the union. After that, a referendum was arranged in 1991 and Georgians expressed their willingness to live in a sovereign country (Samsoblo, n.d.). Georgia's new government with leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia and then Eduard Shevardnadze prioritised the departure of Russian military forces from the Georgian territory. The reciprocal relationship between those two countries, however, has never been as tensed, as they have been in the past ten years. In 2004, Mikheil Saakashvili, former Georgian President, said that the Russo-Georgian relationship "is based on a pragmatism and the recognition of common interests," he highlighted that "the doors are open for new and positive relations." Talking about the same now, we have become *they* and Russia has directly and indirectly positioned as an unfavourable partner or even an enemy.

Russia always had a different view about how Georgia should express its democratic and independent nature. Moscow does not support Georgia's successful integration into the Western structures, which may lead to Russia's loss of influence and credibility in the Caucasus and the post-Soviet space. Georgia's willingness to go towards the West transformed the Russo-Georgian relations and created a verbal to military confrontation; Russia occupied one-fifth of Georgia's sovereign territory.

After the "Rose Revolution" on November 2003, and the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004, new politicians became leaders of the country and new political aims were set. The political elite announced their willingness to see Georgia as a democratic country, fight corruption in it, promote its economy and state administration, solve conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and develop an integration course towards the Euro-

Atlantic structures. Vladimir Putin commented: "There is nothing new about Georgia. A change of government is a logical result of a series of domestic and foreign mistakes. Georgia's foreign policy have been realised with not taking into account Georgian cultural and historical ties" (Tas, 2003). The speech can be interpreted that Georgia made a decision without taking into account the interests of Russia and Russia is not satisfied with that.

In his speech after the "Rose Revolution" V. Putin highlighted Georgia's economic situation as well. The country's foreign loan reached 2 billion United States of America dollars, which is 60% of its gross domestic product. Furthermore, the socioeconomic situation was difficult: the unemployment rate was 11.5%. One million Georgians left their country, most of them went to Russia. The approximate income from trade with Russia (officially and unofficially) reached 2 billion, which was more than the external financial help (Tas, 2003). Using those facts, V. Putin indirectly pointed out that Georgia is economically firmly tied with Russia, and it has to take its interests into account. In the speech the President expressed a hope that the new government will do everything in order to re-establish old Russo-Georgian traditions ("Why Georgia Is Serious about EU integration", n.d.). From the new President, Mikheil Saakashvili, it was expected that he would take into account the interests of Russia and have a 'loyal' policy towards Moscow. M. Saakashvili in his speech in 2004 commented: "If Russia is willing to adopt a pragmatic approach to its relations with Georgia – one grounded in respect for the sovereignty and dignity of the Georgian people – I am sure we can enhance our cooperation and advance our mutual legitimate interests" (Sepashvili, 2004).

Georgia is trying to improve its relations with Russia, because it is a powerful neighbour, but at the same time, it is done with a *balance*, so in the meantime the process of the new identity reshaping is not disrupted. The first M. Saakashvili visit was to Moscow. According to the Russian newspaper "Komersant", the main Kremlin's aim during this visit was to sign a bilateral statement for a real strategic partnership which would support the strategic interests of Russia in Georgia. In the statement the departure of Russian military forces from the Georgian territory was unclear, and the agreement included the recognition of "special interests" of Russian minorities in Georgia. In other words, the declaration would support Russia's interests in Georgia and would create stronger ties between Russia and Georgia. Even though Moscow pushed Georgia's leader the document was not signed. M. Saakashvili, was confident about the outcome of the visit: "I saw and discovered an elementary thing [during the Moscow visit] that it is possible to do business with Russia," in an interview on February 12, with the Russian television Rustavi-2.

Georgia was under a pressure to make a choice between two powers: the West or Russia. After M. Saakashvili's visit to Moscow, V. Trubnikov, the deputy of the Minister of foreign affairs of Russia, announced that the purpose of the Kremlin during this visit was to find out Georgia's new foreign strategy and how it sees itself in the regional context. In other words, V. Trubnikov was asking Tbilisi to announce its strategic priority and decide which partner is more important: Russia or the West. When M. Saakashvili returned to Tbilisi, many favourable decisions to Russia were made: on February 17 Tbilisi announced that it is in favour of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation and V. Putin was planning a visit to Georgia in the same year. Those decisions, however, did not show Georgia's preference in its foreign policy: "[Georgia] is a country for Georgians; it is not a battleground for Russia and the United States," said M. Saakashvili in his policy speech at the Moscow Institute of Foreign Affairs (Torbakov, 2005).

Georgia's President, Prime Minister and the majority of the parliament were thankful to Russia and V. Putin for its role in solving the Adjara crisis on April and May 2004. At that time, thanks to Russian Foreign minister Igor Ivanov, a conflict between Georgia's government and Adjara's council's head Aslan Abashidze, who announced its unwillingness to follow central lead was resolved. However, already on July 2004 the situation worsened in South Ossetia. M. Saakashvili said: "Imperial powers in the territory of Russian Federation are making a military conflict in South Ossetia. If there will be conflict, it will not be Georgia's civil conflict, but it will become a military conflict between Russia and Georgia. Right now we have to deal not with separatists but Russia's army" (Milashina, 2004). Since then, in Georgia's foreign policy discourse towards Russia a division from *we* to *they* appeared: "As we consider what to do next, understanding Moscow's goals is critical. It aims to satisfy its imperialist ambitions, to erase one of the few democratic, law-governed states in its vicinity - and, above all, to demolish the post-cold war system of international relations in Europe. It is showing that it can do as it pleases. (...) Since our democratic government came to power after the 2003 Rose revolution, Russia has used economic embargoes and closed borders to isolate us, and has illegally deported thousands of Georgians. It has tried to destabilise us politically with the help of criminal oligarchs. It has tried to freeze us into submission by blowing up vital gas pipelines in midwinter" (Saakashvili, 2008).

Even though officially Russia recognises Georgia's territory, it supports separatist regimes in South Ossetia and Abkhazia as well. That means that it does not support Georgia's process of stabilisation. Many examples of Russia's support towards separatist regimes can be pointed out: in both republics the national currency is the Russian rouble, in each republic at least 80% of all inhabitants are Russian, in South Ossetia and Abkhazia

Russian companies are freely working, foreigners can travel to Abkhazia if they have a Russian visa and goods are exported to Russia with no prohibitions. Besides of that, presidents of those republics are regularly going on official visits to Russia and other way around.

As mentioned before, Georgia is economically tied with Russia. Events discussed further prove that Russia uses its economic power towards Georgia in order to compel it to change its foreign policy's direction choices. First of all, Russia uses its economic and energy power against Georgia. In 2006, it increased gas prices from 64 to 110 dollars for 1000 cubic meters and Georgia had to pay it immediately from January 1, 2006. Many experts expressed an opinion that this move was political. For White Russia, for example, gas prices were not adjusted to the market prices and for Armenia prices did increase, but the agreement was made much later. Georgia's President announced: "The decision to raise prices for the Russian gas is merely political, and not economic. The raise in gas prices would strike the Georgian economy but will not be able to spoil Georgia's mood for democracy" ("Saakashvili: Raising gas prices would strike the Russian companies most", 2005).

Secondly, on January 22, 2006 in Russia's territory, close to the border with Georgia two gas pipelines and one electricity line was bombed at the same time. Gas pipelines were the only gas suppliers to Georgia and the electricity line supplied Georgia partly. Georgia's President announced: "We don't think it is accidental in any way. The places where it happened, the environment in which it happened, the history in which it happened - this all looks like a policy decision" ("Pipeline blasts cut Georgia gas supply", 2006). This incident was seen as a punishment from Russia to Georgia due to its willingness to become democratic and independent state, which chooses integration towards the EU and NATO.

The Russian officials in the announcement highlighted that they did everything in order to fix the problem. Russia's President V. Putin, however, named the reaction of Georgia as a "spit towards Russia": "Well, an accident happened. Our specialists have been working days and nights in mountains in -30 degrees cold. But what can we hear from the side of Georgia? Only spits. And Georgians do have to understand that that kind of policy towards Russia will not increase the standards of living of an ordinary Georgian citizen. For all this the Georgian government has to be responsible" ("Financovaja policija Gruziji rasledujet aferu v rezultate kotori dvoje grazhdan Gruziji poterali 30 tisach dolarov", 2005).

On September 27, 2006, the Georgian security services arrested four Russian officers who were in Georgia. The reason was spying and bombing in the Georgian city Gori on

February 2005. Both officers were arrested for 2 months. Russia's President called it "country's terrorism": "One thing is clear: there are attempts to pinch and provoke Russia as much as possible. This should be clear to everyone. And it seems that those who are doing this think that an anti-Russian stance in the foreign policy is in the interests of the Georgian people. I do not think so. These people think that they can feel comfortable and secure under the roof of their foreign sponsors" ("Putin Accuses Georgia of 'State Terrorism'", 2006).

Right after the crisis, Russia's Ministry of Transport announced the discontinuation of Georgian air, railways, roads and sea transportation links. Furthermore, Russia's Information and Communication Ministry discontinued all mail connections and the embassy of Russia in Georgia stopped visa applications to Russia. On October 6, 130 Georgians were deported from Russia and, with a support of the Russian government, a movement for suppression policy towards Georgians started. Georgian parliament called it an ethnical discrimination whose "organisations are Russian government services, officials, ministers and politicians" and Georgia was punished because it is "A democratic, free and modern country, which is oriented towards Euro Atlantic and European values." M. Saakashvili compared the situation with Russia's aggression towards Jews when they were ordered to be expelled and deprived of property rights: "I know what it is to try to build your own nation when danger is knocking on the door. (...) Georgians and Jews understand each other on a visceral level" ("Georgian leader Saakashvili compares Georgians to Jews", 2006).

It can be clearly seen that Russia uses its economic power in order to create pressure towards Georgia, but what is its main aim? It could be assumed that Russia is punishing Georgia for its foreign policy orientation change after M. Saakashvili became the country's leader in 2004. However, during the leadership of Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign policy course was not as pro-Russian as Kremlin would like to. E. Shevardnadze tried to balance priorities between the USA, which was the principal donor, and Russia because of the economic ties with it. M. Saakashvili announced that his two main purposes are conflict solution in Georgia and the country's integration in the Euro Atlantic organisations, such as NATO and the EU. None of the aims of Saakashvili were in the interests of Russia. Just after he became the President of Georgia his first visit was to Moscow, but a week after- to the USA. In a meeting with G. W. Bush, he said that he was: "Rather worrying before the meeting with Mr. Putin, then with Mr. Bush because everything is clear in relations between Georgia and the United States of America. We are fiends" (Sepashvili, 2004).

Georgia's willingness to join NATO and its identity reshaping towards Euro-Atlantic values is not seen as an unfriendly step, but its foreign policy, namely, integration in the Euro Atlantic structures is seen as anti-Russian. The new policy course is aiming to push Russia out of South Caucasus and to reduce Russia's power not only in Georgia but in the whole region. Russia's foreign minister Sergei Ivanov, about Russia's borders with Georgia have stated: "There's never been a proper border there" (Kots, 2006). Furthermore, Georgia's path towards NATO is seen as a threat to the Russian security: "We are actively developing two alpine brigades with the latest equipment. Both brigades will be stationed right by the border with Georgia...Therefore, Russian security will not suffer if Georgia joins NATO" (Jibladze, 2007).

Russia's attitude towards Georgia's willingness to join NATO was seen clearly in the statement of Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's controversial Ambassador to NATO: "Georgia has not settled a single substantial question in a manner that confirms the country's independent existence-neither economic, nor political, nor in the area of territorial integrity, nor in the military area, the country does not respond to any of the NATO criteria. (...) Georgians essentially voted for an exterior force to help them resolve their problems of territorial integrity" (Weitz, 2010). Those announcements prove that Russian military officials see Georgia not like a country with its own interests and priorities, but like an enemy.

When M. Saakashvili was elected as the country's President for the second time in 2008, V. Putin congratulated him with an official letter: "I congratulate you on your re-election to the post of President of Georgia. It is my hope that the upcoming period will bring constructive development in the relations between our countries." Russia's ambassador to Georgia Vyacheslav Kovalenko commented: "Russia is seeking to normalize relations. Russia expects Georgia to make a specific step, actions that could be regarded as a drive to normalize relations" (Asmus, 2010). It can be explained that Georgia should change its foreign policy towards Russia in order to normalise its relationship with it.

During 2008 the relationship between Georgia and Russia worsened. First of all, the pressure increased politically. Russia provoked Georgia with allowing people from South Ossetia and Abkhazia to join elections in Russia without any consultations with Georgia. Furthermore, V. Putin opened political, social and economic relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which in Georgia was interpreted as a move to legalise the Russian annexation in those regions. Russian officials saw Georgian President as a corrupted and undemocratic leader who supports "the regime change." Georgians, however, were concerned about Russia's intervene in Georgian South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Even

though Russia's Foreign Minister denied the possible Kremlin's thoughts about any undemocratic actions in Georgia. Russian ambassador to the UN Vitaly Churkin claimed: "Sometimes there are democratic leaders who do things that create problems to their country. Sometimes those leaders need to contemplate how useful they have become to their people." Other Russian officials called Georgian government as a "criminal regime" (Weitz, 2010, p. 67).

Secondly, both sides were rapidly enlarging their armed forces. On June, the Georgian government increased the country's military spending two times. Military forces were concentrated towards South Ossetia and Abkhazia. On May 8, 2008 Russia increased the amount of peacekeepers in Abkhazia to 2, 542. On May 31, 400 Russian troops were sent to Abkhazian railways. Tbilisi saw it as a preparation for military intervention. On July 15, Russia began an extensive military exercise next to Georgian border. War between Georgia and Russia started on 7th and ended on 12 of August which resulted to Georgia's loss of control in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, they both became as an independent republics of Russia (Asmus, 2010).

Even though Moscow claimed that its invasion in Georgia was a response to Georgia's military actions, there are several facts that prove that it was planned. Russia's introduction of paratroopers and heavy equipment into Abkhazia and Russian peacekeepers helped South Ossetians to target Georgian positions during the conflict. Georgia informed Russia's military forces that if they stayed neutral, guns would not be pointed towards them. Russia's Major General Marat Kulakhmetov about that commented: "Of course they were giving [coordinates]," (Asmus, 2010) which means, that Russia supported them and was not peace keeping.

The difference between the identities of both countries is seen as a central aspect in the worsening of the Russo-Georgian relationship. Nino Burjanadze, the former member of the Georgian Parliament, talking about the Russo-Georgian relationship pointed out: "They do not understand values which are related to NATO, West and democratisation. Many of them simply do not understand that NATO and West do not mean bad relationship with Russia. Others cannot leave their imperial ambitions and still think that Georgia is a part of Russian empire" (Climovics, 2006). The leader of the Republican party, David Brdzenishvili, about the Russo-Georgian relationship said: "Russia in its state of power and Georgia in its state of power – those are countries and governments which are offering alternative ways of the development. (...) In Georgia, democratic opposition has always been against stay together with Russia. For Russia, close foreign countries are former CIS countries. It does not include Baltic countries, for them they are not close.

Naturally, there are not Central and Eastern European countries. The main actors in Russia's anti-democratic space are from authoritarian central Asia's regimes. (...) We are different, and we have to understand that. We have to start the process, and we have to come back to our historical, normal and civilised environment" ("Gruzinskij politik o gruzino-russkih otnoshenja: "Mi-raznie u dolzhni ponjatj eto'", 2004).

Georgia sees its relationship with Russia as a fight between good and bad where the good party will win. Georgia as a "new democracy" wants to be independent and united; it wants to develop its relationships with other countries based on equality and respect. Georgia wants to do everything in order to support the process of its identity reshaping process. It does not want to be a "little sister" of its "big brother" Russia. However, the relationship between both countries is becoming better. It can be seen in the political discourse of both countries: "We see improving our relations with Russia as being vital for ensuring our national security, promoting peace and sustainable development in the region, and there is no alternative to a dialogue in this regard." Georgia's current Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze (Panjikidze, 2012). The information published in Georgia's foreign ministry website states: "Despite Russia's aggression on August 2008 and its persisting destructive policy directed against Georgia's independence and statehood, the Government of Georgia seeks a gradual normalization of relations with the Russian Federation, based on the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.).

The new Georgian President, Giorgi Margvelashvili, elected on November 17, 2013 in his inauguration speech stated: "Economically and politically stable, integrated and developed Georgia is the guarantee of peace and cooperation development in the region; it is the precondition for the development of economic and cultural projects; it is the basis for kind neighbourly relations. This is understood by our neighbours, this is understood by the progressive part of the mankind. Alongside with our partners we try our best to convince Russian Federation leadership in this. We try to show them that by creating obstacles to Georgia none of the problems of Russia will be solved. And even may be, on the contrary...We try to show them that secure, economically strong, stable Georgia, which has made its European and Euro-Atlantic choice, does not mean an Alliance against any other country. Last year, we opened a new format of dialogue with Russia, within which we have started discussions on economic, trade, cultural and humanitarian issues. (...)We still declare our readiness to enhance dialogue with Russia together with our partners, along with Georgia's integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, by full respect towards Georgia's national interests – principles of internationally recognized borders, territorial integrity and sovereignty. On the basis of these principles, we are going

to solve these most complicated problems" (Margvelashvili, 2014). That can be interpreted, that Georgia is willing to develop its relations with Russia if Russia accepts Georgia's way towards the Euro-Atlantic structures, which, however, as stated before, would lead to Russia's loose of power in Georgia and in the whole region.

5.2 Georgia's Identity Making in Relations with the European Union

Integration into the Euro-Atlantic organisations has been one of the main aims of Georgia's foreign policy since the "Rose Revolution." The European Union would support the Georgia's identity reshaping, its values, norms and interests, which, as Georgia claims, are similar to the European ones. Furthermore, it is seen so important because of the organisation's military and political support.

The European Union in the international system has become a normative and civilising power, that is promoting liberal and democratic values in the world with the usage of its soft power. "We are not simply here to defend our own interests: we have a unique historical experience to offer. The experience of liberating people from poverty, war, oppression and intolerance. We have forged a model of development and continental integration based on the principles of democracy, freedom and solidarity and it is a model that works. A model of a consensual pooling of sovereignty in which every one of us accepts to belong to a minority," – former President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, about the EU role in the world (Prondi, 2000).

Georgian authorities see the European Union as an "area of peace and justice" and they would like to be part of it. Former Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gela Bezhuashvili, sees it as an attractive organisation: "We are saying that every attempt to affect the choice of a country is meant to be unsuccessful. It has never been possible, and it will never succeed. There are so many people who think that it is necessary not to let it happen. I think twenty-first century predicts other methods, we have to be attractive. Right now, NATO and EU are attractive organisations, they are attracting with their democratic standards. Sadly, there are no other organisations which would be as attractive as NATO and EU. From the point of view of a small country, which is trying to strengthen its sovereignty and ensure its citizens a normal life, I think, it is a very good opportunity - reach all of that with integration into NATO and EU" ("Glava MID Gruziji: Rossiya perehodit "krasnojo chertu", 2007).

After Georgia announced its sovereignty in 1991, the country's leaders started to move towards the West. Nino Burjanadze, about the Russo-Georgian relations said: "Russia has to understand that in the 21st century you have to fight for the positive not negative influence. Positive influence means that you get benefits, the friendship is predictable,

when you take into account democratic values, equality and bilateral respect” (Climovics, 2006). M. Saakashvili expressed a similar opinion: “(...) Georgia should never leave the path of European integration. The closer Georgia integrates with EU institutions, the more Russia will have to rethink its policy towards Georgia. In the end Russia also wants to belong to Europe, even if in a different way or on different institutional levels” (“Saakashvili: Georgia 'should never leave path' of EU integration”, 2011).

The first major event which framed Georgia's path towards Europe was in 1996 when the PCA between Georgia and the EU was signed. When Georgia became a member of the Council of Europe in 1999, Zurab Zhvania, a former speaker of the Georgian parliament made a well-known comment: “I am Georgian and therefore I am European.” This quote clearly showed Georgian willingness for the European integration. When Mikheil Saakashvili became the President in 2003, his first visits were to the European capitals in order to express his openness to the democratic continent and willingness to develop a strong friendship and partnership ties with them. In 2004, Salome Zurbishvili, who has a Georgian origin but a French citizenship, became the Foreign Minister of Georgia. That established Georgia's political orientation towards the European Union (Lejins, 2005).

The Georgian-EU relationship became more settled after the “Rose Revolution” in 2003, the same year Mikheil Saakashvili became the President. The leader was young, energetic and represented the new political elite, which contained mostly young and ambitious officials, who educated in Europe or the USA. The new government started many reforms, with a particular aim: joining the European Union. “It is clear to me and all Georgians that our identity is fundamentally European. So Georgia is on its way to home by integrating into Europe with who it has common values and common history,” said M. Saakashvili in the inauguration speech to the Council of Europe on January 28, 2004, when the European Union flag together with Georgia's flag raised, “... all Georgians do believe that Georgia and the European Union have common values” (Pöttering, 2008).

Due to Georgia's strong desire to integrate into the European Union, many domestic actions were made in order to promote the process. In 2004, a separate ministry for the European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation was created which led to Georgia's addition to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the agreements of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan (ENP AP) in 2006. The plan stood for economic and political integration and the possibility of a contractual relationship. The European Neighbourhood Policy framework, however, could not lead to the EU membership (European Union External Action, 2009). Georgia developed its relationships with the European Union economically as well. Since July 2005, Georgia has benefits from the EU

Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) that offers no duties payments of exports to the EU of products covered by the general agreement (European Commission, n.d.).

All steps for strengthening relations with the EU Georgians consider very positively because the friendship is beneficial, predictable and the EU as a partner supports democratic values and equality. If Russia closes its market to Georgian goods, then the EU slowly starts to open the market for Georgia, and GSP+ is a good example of that. The ban from Russia's side only contributed to the development of connections with the EU. Furthermore, when Russia made a decision to stop all flights to Georgia and back, more flights were opened from Georgia to the capitals of the European Union and more people were flying to Moscow or Saint Petersburg via Riga or Kiev. Important to mention, right after the "Rose Revolution," the EU and the USA were offering help to Georgia because the budget of the country was almost exhausted. After elections on January 2004, the European Commission and Georgian government signed a document that would give Georgia in the period of 2004-2006 help of 28 million euros ("EU Allocates €28 million to Assist Georgia", 2004).

During the Russo- Georgia war on August 2008, the European Union was not participating in conflicts resolution mechanisms, however, since August 7, 2008 it provided 6 million euros in aid for people affected by the conflict in South Ossetia and other regions of Georgia. On September 1, 2008 the EU organised an emergency summit which lead to the review of political and economic relations with Russia (Pöttering, 2008).

After the Russo-Georgian war in 2008, the EU introduced the Eastern Partnership initiative with dimensions such as DCFTA, which would contribute to Georgia's integration to the European single market and eventual visa-free regime with the EU. The negotiations about the Association Agreement between both actors started in 2010, when the visa facilitation agreement which would simplify obtaining the Schengen visa for Georgians was signed (Merabishvili, 2013).

Even though a lot of reforms were demanded by the European Union's Eastern Partnership agreement, in order to stabilise democracy, freedom, justice and the rule of law in Georgia, it was seen with a great enthusiasm because it would lead to Georgia's membership in the European Union. Current State Minister on the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Alex Petriashvili commented: "Eastern Partnership with its progressively developing institutional structures and rich cooperation possibilities has high potential to be good catalyst of the reforms. For this reason, we see this initiative as an effective mechanism to ensure the political association and economic integration into the

EU. (...) the majority of Georgian population supports Georgia's European aspiration and path of European integration development" (Petriashvili, 2013).

As stated in the recent Georgian Foreign Policy Strategy document, the greatest aim of Georgia is to promote "International engagement in order to strengthen Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, achieving concrete results towards fulfilling the objectives of Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, 2013). The biggest achievement so far is "'Eastern Partnership" Summit in Vilnius, which saw the initialling of Georgia's Association Agreement with EU" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, 2013). Georgia's Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze said that it is a "historic moment for my nation" which, said by Georgia's President Giorgi Margvelashvili, "Will bring us closer to the EU and ensure irreversibility of our European course" (Georgia, EU Initial Association Agreement, 2013).

The political elite of Georgia highlights the importance of the EU association agreement because it would ensure Georgia's eventual addition to the European Union and support for a country's identity. Furthermore, the European Union would increase Georgia's independence from Russia and help it to improve its security. As mentioned before, Russia does not favour Georgia's decision because it would decrease Russia's power in Georgia and in the whole region. Alex Petriashvili in a speech in Brussels said: "...each partner state has a sovereign right to choose its foreign policy course, and we respect this right. (...) We think the EU should encourage these countries through timely concluding technical procedure necessary for initialling or signing the Association Agreements and begin their provisional application as well as intensify cooperation aiming at creating visa-free regimes with respective partner countries. (...) It is Important for EU to offer political counter-measures to EaP Partner countries which would be aimed at diminishing of the negative impact on the integration process caused by aggressive policy from Russian side towards EaP countries by using economic leverages" (Petriashvili, 2013).

It can be clearly seen that the foreign policy discourse of Georgia is going towards European and Euro-Atlantic structures due to their democratic values, which, if adapted fully, would increase the security, safety and development of the country: "I am truly convinced that it is the mission of our generation of diplomats, politicians and citizens of Georgia to further the process of European integration to its historical level. We will spare no effort to do everything possible - or, indeed, impossible - to fulfil this dream of free, democratic and reunited European Georgia" Minister of Foreign Affairs Maia Panjikidze, at the occasion of the Diplomat's day of Georgia (Panjikidze, n.d.). "Attitude of state authorities towards the minorities is clearly directed to Europe. And the most important –

in 2013, we held free elections conformable to European standards, and it was recognized not only by Georgian society, which is naturally the main meter in this regard, but also by our western partners and monitors," Giorgi Margvelashvili (Margvelashvili, 2013).

Furthermore, even though the government of Georgia is making "Europe into the country," with opening schools, hospitals, hotels or transportation systems with the European standards, in the meantime, it is pointed out that Georgia already is Europe and it is one of its oldest countries: "Georgia is forever yoked to Europe. We are joined by a common and unbreakable bond-one based on culture, on our shared history and identity and on a common set of values that has at its heart, the celebration of peace, and the establishment of fair and prosperous societies. Together, with our partners in the European Union we will continue to strengthen these historic ties" (Margvelashvili, 2013). With Georgia's European identity it is pointed out, that Georgia is one of the old members

Wendt's "mirror theory" explains the way a country sees itself, its interests and other actors. The process of the evaluation is affected by behaviour and attitude of other countries. The theory can be "mirrored" in the comprehension of a country's identity (Wendt, 1992). The EU positions itself as a normative, civilising power which is making relations with other countries based on standards such as good governance, respect of human rights or the rule of law. Georgia's political elite sees the European Union as a "magnet of democracy" but the European Union, however, sees Georgia as a relatively "new democracy" which is still on its way to create a truly democratic state. That assumption "mirrors" the identity of Georgia. Constructivists believe that countries recognise the comprehensions of a "good" behaviour named by the international organisations only if they think that they are a part of this community of values, and they look for a recognition from the members of this organisation. Georgia is looking for recognition from the European Union as a "new democracy" and as a European country because it has common values and identity with it:

- "In the light of our commitment to European values, we see the European integration process as a natural path for our country's development. European and Euro-Atlantic integration is the cornerstone of our foreign policy, which is determined by the choice of the Georgian people and embedded in our identity" Current Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze (Panjikidze, n.d.).
- "Our European path has been chosen by Georgian people themselves. For them and for me, it is indeed the embodiment of our country's enduring European identity" M.Saakashvili (Saakashvili, 2011).

- "From the very first day, the new Georgian government made it clear that Georgia's western path is irreversible. The country's European way of development is based on the choice of its people. According to the most recent poll conducted by the NDI, up to 77 % of the population support Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. (...) Deepening relations with our partners in Europe are predetermined by the shared values, common interests and aspirations" analyst Alex Petriashvili (Petriashvili, 2013).

As mentioned before, in the identity making process, an important role is played by discourses. The discourse of similarity is dominating in the rhetoric of Georgia's political elite when discussing relations with the European Union. The process of identity construction is a practice of discourses, because the interaction of international relations actors includes not only actions, but linguistic practises and language as well. That constructs the actor's comprehension of the social reality. The identity construction affects a country's social identity and interests and it influences its foreign policy behaviour. The discourse gives to the world its social meaning. It is a tool that shapes social identities.

Georgia sees the European Union as a guarantee for a safe democratic development. It wants to become "a model for European Neighbour" and "a democratic European State" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). Georgia wants to become a part of the European community to which it belonged before. The country sees itself moving towards Europe and adapting its norms, values and interests ("The post-Soviet period is over. And the development of a modern type of democracy has started, laying the foundation for a new, European kind of political culture" (Margvelashvili, 2013)). It can be clearly seen, that Georgia in relations with the European Union positions itself not only as a "new democracy" but it acts like a "new democracy" should act.

6. Conclusions

The national identity of a country is relatively stable, and it works in interaction with other actors of international relations. Furthermore, the leading political elite makes a country's foreign policy and its relations with other countries. The leading political elite has the access and power towards different sources, and they can act as a political agenda makers. The ideas, values, the way they see the world and their beliefs affect not only the realisation of foreign policy but the country's national identity as well. In the process of identity making an important role is played by ideas and norms which influence the formulation of country's interests, its foreign policy.

After the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, a new politic elite gained control. It contained politicians who were new and young, furthermore, most of them educated in universities in Europe and USA. The new political elite promised to act and make decisions based on democratic values and principles. In Georgia the "Rose Revolution" is seen as a manifestation of democratic values when people were on the street in order to fight for their fundamental democratic values, in order to protect democracy in the country. Due to that, the "Rose Revolution" is often called the revolution of democracy, because it can be seen as the beginning of the new Georgian national identity making.

The country announced that it is a "new democracy," which in its actions will behave as a "new democracy," by making a stable, democratic and independent country, and by promoting the development of democracy in other countries. The former President of Georgia in his speeches has highlighted many times that Georgia is willing to develop stronger relationship ties with countries that already have principles of democracy. For Georgia the European Union is that kind of community, and it believes that it has already belonged to it for many centuries.

In Georgia the European Union is seen as an area of justice and peace, which Georgia would like to imitate. Furthermore, it is an attractive organisation which gives a positive influence in other countries. The political elite of Georgia sees a positive influence in the European Union because the friendship is predictable, with bilateral respect and equality.

The "mirroring principle" of Alexander Wendt claims that the country's comprehension about itself, its interests and others, changes the behaviour and actions of other countries and it can be used in the comprehension of a country's identity. The European Union in the international relations positions itself as a normative power which makes relationships with other countries based on norms and values such as good governance, respect of human rights or the rule of law. The new Georgian political elite sees the European Union as a "magnet of democracy" which wants to develop friendships, but the European Union

sees Georgia as a "new democracy" which has only started the path of a democratic state. That is why, this assumption "mirrors" in the identity of Georgia. Constructivists believe that countries recognise comprehensions of an appropriate behaviour formulated by international organisations if they think that they are a part of this community of values, and they look for recognition from the member states of the community. Georgia is looking for recognition from the European Union as a "new democracy," European state, as a country which has shared values with it.

Georgia sees the European Union as a guarantee for Georgia's democratic development. Country's politicians position Georgia as a "new democracy," which has to be supported financially and politically, so it can be as an example to other post-Soviet countries. Moving towards the European Union is seen not only as a desire to get back the European identity, but to not become a part of Russia. In the political discourse of Georgia three options are seen. Firstly, Georgia can go towards the Euro-Atlantic integration, which it believes it already belongs to, secondly, it can be a part of Russia or, thirdly, Georgia can be in chaos. The best choice is seen in the European Union integration.

In relations with Russia, Georgia constructs its national identity with the principle of distinction between *we* and *they*. In that case, discourse is shaping not only the actor's comprehension about the reality, but it shapes its actions, behaviour and the identity choice as well. Georgia believes that Russia, as a part of *they*, does not allow Georgia to become an independent, united, stable, democratic country and to strengthen its relations with Europe.

When talking about the Russo-Georgian relationship, Georgia's leading political elite highlights that the essential elements are normative differences between countries such as differences between two opposite regimes (democratic and undemocratic), empire and the "new democracy". Russia is seen as an unfriendly actor and the worsening of the relationship between two states is seen as a conflict between good and evil, where the good actor has to win. Georgia as a "new democracy" wants to be independent and united with establishing relationships with other countries that are based on equality and respect.

As stated in the "principle of mirroring" by Alexander Wend, the identities of actors and their interests are shaped by reactions to other actor's behaviour and actions. If in Russia Georgia is seen as an unfriendly country, then Georgia mirrors this assumption in its own identity in the relationships with Russia. Furthermore, if Russia uses its economic and energy power towards Georgia, the country sees Russia as an enemy. Finally, if Russia is connected with unfriendly names such as "enemy", and if Georgia realises an "unfriendly

policy" towards Russia (for example, Georgia's willingness to join NATO) then there is a bigger possibility that Russia will start to act as Georgia's enemy.

Georgia positions itself as a "new democracy" to which Russia is a threat because it is an undemocratic state which has different values and principles, and that is the main reason Georgia has not developed very good relationships with Russia. With positioning itself like that, Georgia decreases its possibilities to manoeuvre in the foreign policy making, especially in relationships with Russia. Furthermore, Georgia's position as a "new democracy," which wants to get closer to Europe and with protect itself from undemocratic Russia, only creates more problems in the Russo-Georgian relations.

In relations with the European Union and Russia Georgia positions itself as a "new democracy", but that, however, does not fully affect Georgia's foreign policy making. Azerbaijan, for example, is not a democratic state, but it is Georgia's strategic partner. Furthermore, can Georgia be called as a real democracy? Is not Georgia creating decorations of democracy? Is not the new identity, namely, the "new democracy" used only as a tool in relations with the European Union? In order to become a real "new democracy" it truly has to become a free, democratic state, not only partly free how it is now.

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