Parahyangan Catholic University

Faculty of Social and Political Science

Department of International Relation

Accredited A

SK BAN –PT NO: 3095/SK/BAN-PT/Akred/S/VIII/2019

The Construction of The Culture of Anarchy between Russia, Georgia and Ukraine; The Tragedies of 2008 and 2014

Thesis

By

Robby Cahyadi

2016330045

Bandung

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Idil Syawfi, S.IP., M.Si.

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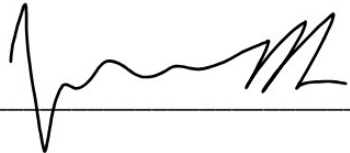
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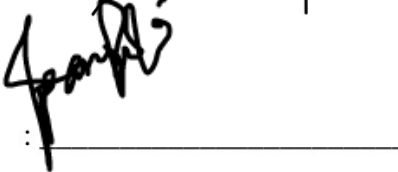Adrianus Harsawaskita, S.IP., MA   : _____

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Hereby assert that this research proposal is the product of my own work, it has not been previously proposed by any other party in order to attain academic degree. Any idea and information gained from other party is officially cited in accordance to the valid scientific writing method.

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Bandung, 6 August 2020

Robby Cahyadi

2016330045

Abstract

Name   : Robby Cahyadi

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Title   : The Construction of The Culture of Anarchy between Russia, Georgia and Ukraine; The Tragedies of 2008 and 2014

The goal of this research is to shed light at why Russia went to war with Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 despite having ambitions a benign hegemon in the region. The contradiction between Russia's aspiration as a benign Great Power and the war that occurs between it with Georgia and Ukraine is the focus of this thesis. To answer the research question, this thesis uses Wendtian Constructivism in identifying the Hobbesian culture of Anarchy that made Georgia and Ukraine misperceive Russia. There are five crucial findings that the author pinpoint; the social interaction in the region affirms Hobbesian culture in Russian Near-Abroad. The color revolutions marked the descent into thick logic of enmity in states behaviors. Russian identity as a benign hegemon failed to reproduce itself due to not fulfilling its interest. Georgia and Ukraine's identity prevailed, placing Russia as an enemy and providing background for the wars. The Hobbesian culture of anarchy shapes the context that made war the preferred instrument in solving conflicts, resulting in the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and the Ukrainian Crisis in 2014.

Keywords: Anarchy, Russian Near Abroad, Wendtian Constructivism, Interest and Identity, Social Interaction, Russo-Georgian War, Ukrainian Crisis, Culture of Anarchy.

Abstrak

Nama   : Robby Cahyadi

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Judul Skripsi   : *Konstruksi Budaya Anarki antara Rusia, Georgia dan Ukraina; Tragedi tahun 2008 dan 2014*

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui alasan Russia *berperang dengan* Georgia *di 2008 dan* Ukraina *di 2014, walaupun memiliki ambisi sebagai* benign hegemon *di region tersebut. Kontradiksi antara aspirasi* Russia *dan respon dari* Georgia *dan* Ukraine *menjadi fokus penelitian ini. Untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian, penulis menggunakan Konstruktivisme versi Wendt yang mengidentifikasi budaya* Hobbesian *sebagai alasan* Georgia *dan* Ukraina *menyalahpahami* Russia. *Terdapat lima penemuan penting di penelitian ini. Interaksi sosial di* Russian Near-Abroad *mengafirmasi budaya* Hobbesian. *Revolusi warna menandakan mulainya eskalasi konflik. Identitas* Russia *sebagai* benign hegemon *gagal direproduksi karena tidak bisa memenuhi kepentingannya. Identitas* Georgia *dan* Ukraina *mendominasi konteks regional sehingga* Russia *menjadi musuh. Budaya* Hobbesian *membentuk konteks yang menjadikan instrumen militer lebih diperhitungkan daripada dialog, sehingga perang terjadi di 2008 dan 2014.*

Kata Kunci: Anarki, Russian Near-Abroad*, Konstruktivisme Wendt, Identitas dan Kepentingan, Interaksi Sosial, Perang Russia-Georgia, Krisis Ukraina, Budaya Anarki*

Foreword

Thank you to the Almighty God for His guidance during the course of this writing. The author expresses special thanks to the advisor Mr. Idil Syawfi, who has dedicated his time, effort and commitment despite his busy schedule. Due to his patience and advises, the author has finished this thesis titled "Misperception of Russian Behaviours in Its Near-Abroad: The Case of Georgia and Ukraine" with satisfactory quality. The Russian Near-Abroad has been relatively understudy after the end of the Cold War especially compared the Middle East and Western Europe and Eastern Asia. Existing literature on the region, mostly used Realism in understanding it. This study uses Constructivism to complement existing literature in explaining the condition of Russian Near-Abroad.

The author hopes that this research can contribute in the study of International Relations. Especially in understanding Russia and the relation it has with Georgia and Ukraine. The author acknowledges the imperfect nature of this writing, and every constructive critique, comment and suggestion are appreciated for the development of this field of study.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. Background

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the ex-Soviet states scrambled in redefining their place in the Post-Cold War era. The Russian Federation is the strongest of the Post-Soviet states. In reflection to this relative material superiority[1], it was designated as the only legal successor of the Soviet Union. Russia inherited the permanent seat at the security council, treaties and debt of the Soviet Government.[2] It also inherited its geography and connectivity with the Post-Soviet space. Therefore, the Russian Federation aspire to be the regional hegemon amongst its fellow ex-Soviet states.

Russia's aspiration was limited early on. The fractured economy and political instability plagued all the ex-Soviet states when the Union suddenly collapsed.[3] The other ex-Soviet states faces their own crisis.[4] In the midst of this all, They must redefine borders and treaties that will guide their interaction with each other in the future.

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[1] Piotr Dutkiewicz and Dmitriĭ Trenin, eds., *Russia: The Challenges of Transformation*, Possible Futures Series, v. 4 (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 407-32.
[2] Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 25.
[3] Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin: Honor in International Relations* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-40.
[4] Maria Raquel Freire and Roger E. Kanet, eds., *Russia and Its Near Neighbours* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2012), 109-74. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230390164.

During the 2000s, Russia regained political stability and the rise of natural recourse prices rejuvenate Russian economy.[5] Russia that regained its capabilities, sought to redefine its place in the Post-Soviet space. With its newfound capabilities, Russia seeks to position itself as the regional hegemon. Using The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)[6] as its basis, Russia embarked on a benign hegemony project.

In its effort to be the regional hegemon. Russia tried to court all of the post-Soviet states by engaging in regional and bilateral cooperation project in multiple sectors. The Eurasian Union represent, the economic integration of the Eurasian region[7], while the Collective Treaty Security Organization (CSTO) represent the political and military cooperation.[8] In term of bilateral relation, Russia offered cheap gas prices and access to Russian market.

Russian benign intention is marked with its diplomatic endeavors. It proposes the conception of "Greater Europe", an idea that Europe is multicultural stretching from Lisbon to Vladivostok[9]. The place of Eurasian integration is not to rival European integration but to complete it. Eurasian economic and security cooperation are part of greater European project, acknowledging that Eurasia is distinct from Western Europe but shares the same home in a Greater Europe. The

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[5] Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Fourth edition (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016). 1-30.
[6] Tom Casier, "The Different Faces of Power in European Union–Russia Relations," *Cooperation and Conflict* 53, no. 1 (March 2018): 101–17, https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836717729179.
[7] Marvin Kalb, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine, and the New Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2015), Chapter 1 and 2.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2015), Chapter 1.

establishment of the Organization of Security and Co-operation for Europe (OSCE) was supported by Russia in part to champion its vision of Greater Europe toward its Near-Abroad and Western European neighbors.

Russia's effort in establishing itself as the regional hegemon met significant setbacks in Georgia[10] and Ukraine.[11] Georgia is dependent on gas with Russia, and Russia has been playing the role of peacekeepers between Georgia and its *de facto* independent territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.[12] Ukraine shares the same East Slavic-Orthodox roots as Russia, and together with Belarus, they made the core of the Soviet Union.[13] Russian relations with these states should have been amicable, but reality today shows different result.

1.2.   Problem Identification

Russian relations with Ukraine and Georgia are riddled with suspicion. Their interdependence becomes the reason for conflict rather than the reason for cooperation. Georgia discredits Russian peacekeeping programs in Abkhazia and South Ossetia[14], while Ukraine engaged in several anti-Russian policy.[15] These reality should not be the case with Russia's intention to be a benign hegemon. Its

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[10] Stephen F. Jones, *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2013), 1-42. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315875415.
[11] Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska and Richard Sakwa, *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, 2016, 123-72.
[12] Dmitri Trenin, *Should We Fear Russia?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2016), Chapter 1.
[13] Stephen White and Valentina Feklyunina, *Identities and Foreign Policies in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 1-50. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137453112
[14] Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad: Putin, the West and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 93-100.
[15] Angela E. Stent, *The Limits of Partnership: U.S.-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), Chapter 5.

neighbor who shares many connections with it treated Russia as an enemy rather than a regional hegemon.

Georgia misperceive Russian benign intention and any connection between both states are filled with suspicion. Two of the frozen conflict left behind by the collapse of the Soviet Union are inside of Georgia. Russia has played the role of middleman in preventing an all-out civil war between Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia since 1993.[16] Georgia expressed its discontent on this arrangement and seeks to closer relation with the West, primarily the United States, NATO and EU. As early as in 1998, Georgia has flirted with the idea of NATO membership, despite having direct borders with Russia.[17]

Russo-Georgian relation took another bitter turn after the Rose revolution. Under Mikhail Saakashvili, Georgia warned the West on the Russian Threat. Georgian government grew more confident due to its improving relation with the West. Russian intention for cooperation were thwarted. Georgia left the CSTO, was not active in the CIS, and bilateral cooperation change into confrontation and finally war in 2008.[18]

Ukraine shares similar roots in culture with Russia, and with Belarus they formed the core of the Soviet Union. Dispute broke-out between who is the legal successor of the Soviet Union. This dispute causes the Ukrainian parliament to never ratify the CIS charter which stated Russia as the Soviet Union only legal

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, "Duelling Honors: Power, Identity and the Russia-Georgia Divide," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, no. 4 (October 2009): 307–26, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1743-8594.2009.00095.x.

[18] Niklas Nilsson, "Role Conceptions, Crises, and Georgia's Foreign Policy," *Cooperation and Conflict* 54, no. 4 (December 2019): 445–65, https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836718808332

successor. Thus, Ukraine is a founding member of the CIS yet also not a full member of the organization.[19]

Russian intention as a regional hegemon was not taken kindly by Ukraine under the Orange regime. Ukraine alongside Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan established GUAM. In 2005, Ukraine participated in the Community of Democratic Choice and the Carpathian Declaration. The CIS, CSTO and other regional cooperation that involved Russia were not accepted.[20] There was a brief period of rapprochement when Yanukovych was Ukraine's President, but it was ended in the Euromaidan and the Ukrainian crisis broke out in 2014.[21]

Georgia and Ukraine shares similarities in their perception of Russia. They look at themselves as part of the captive European states.[22] Europe for them is the West, they do not share Russia's vision of Greater Europe. Eurasian identity was seen as a backward, corrupt symbol of their Soviet past and the only way forward if European integration. Russia plays the part of an external colonial threat that is preventing them from rejoining their European family in the West.[23] This narration gradually worsens their relationship with Russia. Georgia went to open conflict with Russia in 2008, and Ukraine follow suit in 2014.

1.3.   Research Scope

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[19] Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*, Chapter 2.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Andrei Tsygankov, "Vladimir Putin's Last Stand: The Sources of Russia's Ukraine Policy," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 31, no. 4 (July 4, 2015): 279–303, https://doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2015.1005903
[22] Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad: Putin, the West and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1-60.
[23] Ibid.

Taking into account of Post-Soviet politics, this research is limited from 1991-2014 in broad term. While intense analysis is grounded on post-Color Revolutions. The main focus is the year 2008 where the Russo-Georgian War commenced and 2014 where the cessation of Crimea and the War in Eastern Ukraine happened.

The author limits the actors observed in the research. The main focus of the research is Russia, its Near-Abroad specifically Georgia and Ukraine. The West, NATO and The US is assumed as one actor, serving as a background behind the dynamics of relation between Russia and its neighbors. This is done to put more weight to Georgia and Ukraine role, contrary to the popular tradition of treating the two states as an arena of Western-Russia rivalry.

The context of the research will also be limited. Internal state dynamic will be muted, and state will be assumed as a unitary actor. Russia's involvement in other region which has connection to the issue such as its involvement in the Syrian crisis is also excluded. This research only looks at the regional condition of the "Russian Near-Abroad" between Russia-Georgia and Russia-Ukraine.[24]

It must be noted that this research is not a comparative study, but a study on the existence of Hobbesian culture of anarchy in Russian Near-Abroad. The two cases chosen in this research were chosen due to its significance toward interstate relation in the region that serves as the foundation of this thesis main arguments.

Based on the exposition above, the author's chosen research question is:

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[24] "Soft Power and Identity: Russia, Ukraine and the 'Russian World(s),'" *European Journal of International Relations*, n.d., 24.

"Why Do Georgia and Ukraine Misperceive Russia's Aspiration as a Great Power?"

1.4. Research Objective and Research Contribution

1.4.1. Research Objective

This research is designed to comprehend the dynamic relationship between Russia with Georgia and Ukraine that ended up in war. Russia has benign intention, and the three states possesses complex interdependence in their economy and culture. The fact that war occurred between them signifies a deeper complication in their relationship.

1.4.2. Research Contribution

This research is contoured in an effort to enrichen the literature on Wendtian Constructivism. Using the case of Russia and its near-abroad, this research provides empirical evidence on how the macrostructure of culture and the microstructure of social interaction are mutually constitutive and co-determined.

This literature will also deepen the understanding toward Russia and its Near-Abroad. It is very common to contribute Russia's aggressive endeavor toward its revisionist nature. The author believes the truth is more complex than that. The exclusion of Russian perspective and biased toward treating Russia as a Revisionist Power by the Western-dominated IR discourse could be understood due to historical context of the Cold War. Using a third person perspective out of the West and East

(former Eastern bloc) this literature may contribute more in explaining Russia without biases due to Soviet past that most Western scholar suffers from.

The author also hopes that this research can be useful to other researchers, students, policy makers and anyone interested in Russia and its Near-abroad. Serving as a reference and a perspective that help understand the context from a Wendtian Constructivist point of view.

1.5.   Literature Review

In order to provide a comprehensive research, the author has listed several existing literatures that has played the role of a building block in the field of Russian role building and its effect on its Near-Abroad. After extensive reading, literatures on The Russo-Georgian War and the Ukraine Crisis are polarized into two different camp. The first one argues that both conflicts happened due to Russia revisionist nature. The second one argues that Russia has a justified interest in its near abroad and the wars are a result of violating those interest. The author has chosen several literatures that has precedent in defining Russian identity, the factors that define and consolidate its identity, and the interaction it has with its neighbors.

The first literature represents the argument that Russia is an imperial power, and its action in Ukraine and Georgia are a manifestation of these imperial/revisionist tendencies.[25] According to Lo, Russia is a post-modern empire, one without a clear imperial characteristic but shares many commonalities with the

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[25] Bobo Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder* (Brookings Institution Press with Chatham House, 2015).

traditional empire in behavior. Thus, imperial problems are resurgent, and the Russian elites are unable to fully recognize former imperial vassals (Georgia and Ukraine in this case) as a sovereign nation. Lo implicitly agrees that Russia behaves like a 19th century great power. If Russia failed to have a qualitative change on the factual condition of the new world disorder, it risks a collapse reminiscing China's Qing dynasty and 16th Century Spain.

Kuzio's research compliments Lo's opinion on Russian imperialism seen from the ex-Soviet States perspective. In this detailed record of Ukraine history and politics, he acknowledges that Ukraine and Russia shares history but argues that history has been weaponized by Russia to control the direction of Ukraine's future.[26] Russia's intelligence operations and propaganda are designed to keep Ukraine from becoming a truly sovereign country. The Euromaidan is seen as a pan-national movement, and the annexation of Crimea a key event that severs Ukraine-Russia relations. Kuzio identify European association with positives feeling of modernization and prosperity, while Eurasian as backwardness, corruption and kleptocratic practice. In his conclusion, Kuzio stated that history is not destiny and European integration with western support is key in saving Ukraine. Kuzio's stance is even more certain of Russian imperialism.

Agnia Grigas provided one of the most radical view on Moscow and Imperialism. For Grigas, Russia's ultimate goal is the revival of the Russian Empire. Crimea was the start and the whole of Ukraine is the goal.[27] Just like Kuzio, Grigas

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[26] Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine; Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism* (Praeger Security International, 2015).
[27] Agnia Grigas, *Beyond Crimea: The New Russian Empire* (Yale University Press, 2016).

contributed the war to Russian imperialism. Her work demonizes Moscow the most and warns of a resurgent of Russian Threat.

Tsygankov took the other spectrum in the debate on Russia as an imperial/revisionist state or as a normal Great Power.[28] His argument rested on the Social Constructivist theory in IR. According to Tsygankov, identity plays a key role in determining Russian foreign policy. He identified 3 school of thoughts in Russian politics, namely Westernist, Statis and Eurasionist. He also identifies their common ground which becomes the basis of Russian policy and justify its aspiration as a Great Power not as an imperial ambition but as a part of Russian state identity. While the statist school of thought is said to currently dominate Russian politics, Tsygankov argues that this balance are held by dynamics with Russia's neighbours. How the world treated Russia will determine how Russia treated the world.

Toal complements Tsygankov's stance in defining Russia's motive. He uses critical geopolitics as his tools in analyzing the situation in Russian near-abroad.[29] Like Tsygankov, he puts weight on identity but add the elements of critical geopolitics in his research. Toal emphasizes affective geopolitics to explain why Russian near-abroad means so much to Russian policy makers. Accordingly, he criticize the use of "thin" geopolitics that are used both by those that agree and disagree that Russia is a revisionist states. He argues that both defensive and offensive realism simplify the stakes of the conflict, negating the role of cultural,

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[28] Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Fourth edition (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).
[29] Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad: Putin, the West and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017).

historical conditions of the post-Soviet space that are part of Russia's affective geopolitical space. He is especially critical on Saakashvili, rather than excusing Georgia's attack on Tskhinvali as a premediated trap by Russia, he sees it as Saakashvili's error. The Russo-Georgian war is more than a proxy war between Georgia back US and imperialist Russia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia has real ethnic issue with Georgia, not as a Russian puppet but as a distinct ethnic group. His account on the Crimean crisis took account of the Russophone part of Ukraine while also critical to Russia. in his surveys, Toal further clarify the Maidan is not a pan-national Ukrainian movement and the secession of Crimea with following Civil war was not supported by Russophones in Ukraine.

Sakwa added more depth in explaining the Crimean Crisis. This literature is more critical to the West rather than to Russia. Sakwa argues that the conflict with Russia stems on the different European version held by EU/NATO with Russia.[30] the domination of Atlanticism made the EU a civilizational wing of NATO rather than a unifying force in Europe. The West Atlanticism directly conflict with Russia's vision of Greater Europe, stemming from Gorbachev "common European home" that seeks to mend bloc mentalities and accommodate different identities in the European continent. This differing version exacerbate the multicultural heritage of Ukraine. The Monist vs pluralist debate on Ukrainian identity qualitatively transformed Ukraine-Russia relation. Thus the state of the Borderland was plunged to chaos not by Russian imperialist ambition but by The West who put the Monist school of thought on top of Ukraine governmental position.

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[30] Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2015).

This thesis fortifies the argument that argues Russia is not an imperial/revisionist state. To add more weight to the argument, this thesis complements interpretation on Russian action based on its relationship dynamic with the ex-Soviet states not The West. All the literature above acknowledges the exceptional role of The West as Russia's significant "Others" in the scope of social constructivism construction of themselves. This thesis seeks to strengthen the role of Georgia and Ukraine in this conflict. They are not merely pawns that are contested and played by Russia and The West but also serves as an "Other" in the post-Soviet states that builds on the regional culture of anarchy with Russia. The cause of the war is the misperception of Russia's benign intention that plunged the region into a Hobbesian culture of anarchy.

1.6. Paradigm

The central paradigm used in this research shall be Constructivism mainly by Alexander Wendt in his book "The Social Theory of International Politics".[31] The author acknowledges that there are several version of Constructivism that has differences from each other. Wendt believes Constructivism is a theory on par with Realism and Liberalism while Onuf thinks of it as an approach.[32] Kratochwil criticized Wendt's Positivist stance on Constructivism, arguing for a more radical form of Constructivism not bound by "positivist formulation" which makes it different in the first place.[33] In response toward this differing version of

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[31] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, n.d.
[32] Nicholas G. Onuf, *Making Sense, Making World*
[33] Friedrich Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms and Decisions*

Constructivism, this research primarily uses Wendtian Constructivism while reinforcing its assumption with other significant figures borrowing upon Hadiwinata's conception of the constructivist debate as the base.[34]

Wendt's Constructivism is often called light Constructivism due to its positivist nature.[35] Different from "hardcore" constructivist theories that view material forces have no independent effect on international politics, Wendt accepts material forces have some impacts. There are three ways that material forces can influence international politics. First, the distribution of material power can affect specific outcomes; weak states cannot conquer powerful states. Second, material power in the form of technologies defines the ability to have an international community and the limitation in both warfare and communication. Third, material power in the form of geography and natural resources give and limit society and state action in international politics. Thus, according to Wendt, material forces are not solely constituted by social meanings but is also a causal factor toward the formation of social meanings. In Wendt's word, his Constructivism is not "ideas all the way down" but material forces given context via ideas is the one that formed international politics.

On the other hand, Wendt's Constructivism is in tone with the Reflectivist school of thoughts from its insistence on the role of idea in the formation of interest and identity and vice versa.[36] While it identifies interest, ideas and desire are distinct of each other's they also constitute one another more complex than the

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[34] Bob Sugeng Hadiwinata, *Studi dan Teori Hubungan Internasional; Arus Utama, Alternatif dan Reflektivis.* 200-220.
[35] Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 92- 96.
[36] Ibid, 109.

desire + interest = action of the reductionist positivist school of thoughts. In other words, material power and interest are as important as what realist says about them but rather than treating them as a purely material force, Wendt emphasizes its ideational basis. Thus, ideas give the context on how pure material factors exist and matters in international politics, placing Wendt's Constructivism in the middle of neo-realist/neo-liberal camps and the "ideas all the way down" camp of postmodernist.

In relations with the basic conception mentioned above, Wendt's Constructivism uses both structural system and social interaction in explaining international events. Social interactions between actors who have beliefs on who they are and whom their partners are formed intersubjective understanding among them. This intersubjective understanding, in turn, forms a culture between the actors, one which is communally constructed among them and is sustained by actions that adhere to the culture. Thus, culture provides a context where particular action representing friendship, rivalry or enmity is the more logical option in dealing with the Other. The Reflectivist nature of Wendt's Constructivism lays in how the structure and the agent are mutually constitutive, and the positivist nature lays in how both are also co-determined. In Wendt's word, "anarchy is a self-fulfilling prophecy".[37]

1.6.1. Identity and Interest

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[37] Ibid, 185.

Following this mutually constitutive and co-determined nature of international politics, actors need to define the situation based on their own identity and interest, which reflect their understanding of themself and others when interacting.[38] The conformity or fallacy of these expectations and action determine the nature of their shared culture. Culture shared between actors are indeed self-reinforcing by making specific options more logical than other, but if the actors involved in this culture continuously fail to fulfil the expectation of Other, the culture in which they live will be questioned. When the structural culture is questioned, the identity and interest that formed the Self will also be modified to fit it. Wendt's Constructivism sees international politics as a self-fulfilling prophecy that has a tendency to stay the same but has the possibility of change.

Wendt's Constructivism defines the state as an actor that has anthropomorphic characteristics such as a sense of "self", desires, belief and intentionality of actions.[39] As an actor with anthropomorphic qualities, states have interest and identity. The ideas that form a state identity is the state understanding of itself and Other understanding of the state. The two factors, internal and external, defines state identity in the long term. Key events that adhere or go against the identity held by a state may make it rethink its identity in a certain way. Nevertheless, states with a comparative advantage on material power than the significant Other may refuse and "insist" on its definition of itself and others. In this sense, the identity of a state and its significant Other are mutually constitutive,

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 398.

and effort to change the identity is possible but will be severely limited if the significant Other do not ascent to the changes.

State identities, in turn, implies its interest, and interest is the one that explains state action in relevance to the identities that it held.[40] Wendt identifies two kinds of interest; objective interest and subjective interest. Objective interest refers to the interest that state identity needs to fulfil to stay in existence, i.e. a regional hegemon needs client states, a member of the West need the solidarity of the West. Objective interest exists even when states are not aware of them. In tandem, subjective interest is the main proponents that explain state behaviors. It is the needs that state believes it needs to keep its identity; it is not necessarily true in an objective sense but states act per their understanding that it is true. The ability and failure of states to fulfil objective and subjective needs result in the state keeping or losing identities. i.e. a state that thinks it is a hegemon will need to maintain cordial relations with its client states, but if it fails to align its objective and subjective interest, their relation may devolve into enemies rather than friends.

The combination in interest that states held due to its multiple identities result in its national interest.[41] For Wendt, national interests are pre-social, but they are malleable from the result of social interaction. Accordingly, states have four national interest, physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being and collective self-esteem. Phenomenon that threatens its national interest will be curbed in a way that states think is right but not necessarily right, and continuous failure to fulfil

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[40] Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 224-33.
[41] Ibid, 233-34.

national interest will lead to marginalization and instability which could end in the demise of the state itself.

1.6.2. The Three Cultures of Anarchy

Moving from the assumption of state, identity, interest and national identity, Wendt's prescribe three Cultures of Anarchy that provides causal explanation toward phenomenon in the state system. The Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian Cultures of Anarchy are each driven by differing logic of enmity, rivalry and amity.[42] These cultures have a causal explanation of state behaviors and their interaction while also being constituted by them. The logic of anarchy in the structure give role identities to the state inside of it, as enemies, rivals or friends. Thus, roles are exogenously given by structures to the state. These roles are then incorporated into the identities and interest of the states, allowing them to behave in accordance to the culture dominant in the system. The structure of anarchy made it more logical for states to behave in a specific manner and conformity or defiance toward this logic makes the structure more durable or susceptible to changes.

The Hobbesian culture is the culture with a logic of enmity where the states inside of it serve the roles of enemies.[43] According to Wendt, enemies are an Other who does not recognize the right of Self to exist as an autonomous being and does not refrain from violence to the Self. This assumption of Other's intention does not need to be true for it to take hold, as long as the Self believes the Other acts like an

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[42] Ibid, 246-50.
[43] Ibid, 259-78.

enemy, the logic of enmity holds. In this culture, the Self will act in four fashions. It will replicate like enemy behavior if their capabilities allow them to do so. Second, the Self's decision will be heavily oriented on the worst-case scenario. Third, relative military capabilities became a focus. Lastly, when it comes to actual war, Self will assume Other will be unrelenting thus seeking to either completely decimate Other or severely limit its military capabilities in the long term.

The Lockean culture gives birth to the logic of rivalry in the state system.[44] According to Wendt, this is the dominant culture of anarchy from the Westphalian system until now. Rivals acknowledge each other life and liberty but contested the boundaries of this rights. Thus they may fight over territories, trade agreements and other disagreements but not to the extent of annihilating each other. In this culture of anarchy, states possess self-restraint where the level of violence between state is not as high with a Hobbesian culture. Rivalry has four implication toward foreign policy. First, states behave in a way that respects each other sovereignty. Second, states can move past worst-case scenario and look toward long-term prospect and relative gains in contrast toward the "do or die" tendencies of Hobbesian culture. Third, the meaning of relative military power changes from one that determines the outcome of war into one that guarantees a balance of threat.[45] Moreover, finally, when war happens, rivals exert self-restraint and limit their violence, marked with sentiments similar to the Just War Theory.

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[44] Ibid, 279-97.
[45] Petr Kratochvíl, "The Balance of Threat Reconsidered: Construction of Threat in Contemporary Russia," 2004, 33.

Kantian culture represents the logic of amity, and states treat each other as friends rather than a potential rival or a threat.[46] The logic of amity limit states interaction on settling a dispute in two forms. First, conflicts between states are settled without violence and second, they will defend each other against external threats. Friends are different from allies; it is more permanent and is more sustainable than alliances. According to Wendt, Kantian culture has only started sprouting in a dominantly Lockean state system due to prolonged peace and cooperation among the states.

Cultures of anarchy is an ongoing process and result from interaction based on identity and interest. To help analyze international phenomenon, we are allowed to treat identity and interest as given, but we must take account that they are susceptible to change if the social interactions that reinforce them change as well.[47] To this end, Wendt adopted social interaction in the form of cultural selection to explain the process of identity formation.

1.6.3. The Four Phases of Social Interactionism

Social interactionism and deep social learning between its actors formed the process of identity formation in Wendt's Constructivism.[48] Identities and interest are learned and reinforced in response to how Other treated the Self, whether they agree and reinforce existing identity and interest or disagree, thus weakening or even changing them. The Other mentioned here is a significant Other, a particular

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[46] Ibid, 297-303.
[47] Ibid, 313.
[48] Ibid, 318-36.

existence outside the Self that has more impact in comparison with an ordinary Other. Historical, cultural and material capabilities determine which actor is the significant Other of the Self.

Social interaction between the Self and Other can be separated into four phases.[49] First, the Self defines the situation on who it is and in relation who other is and do specific actions that reflect this understanding. Second, Other processes Self's action from its own definition and gives meaning to it according to its own understanding. Other can either understand the Self and agree to the position it was given, it could understand but reject it, or it could misunderstand Self intention completely. Third, based on Other understanding of the Self from its action, Other engages in its own action that signifies how it sees its role and the role of Self in their relationship. Fourth, the Self processes Other's actions in the same way Other prosses Self's action. This process is continued until both actors share an intersubjective understanding of the situation and each other's identities and interest. The difference in power determines the evolution of the relationship between the states. An actor that is relatively more powerful can refuse to learn and force its definition on Other. Changes in interaction accordingly affect the social constructs known as identity and interest, which in turns change the system.

Wendt treated identity and interest as given for methodological purposes but allows changes from its mutually constitutive nature with the system via social interaction. While acknowledging that structure (Culture of Anarchy) gave roles to

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[49] Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 406.
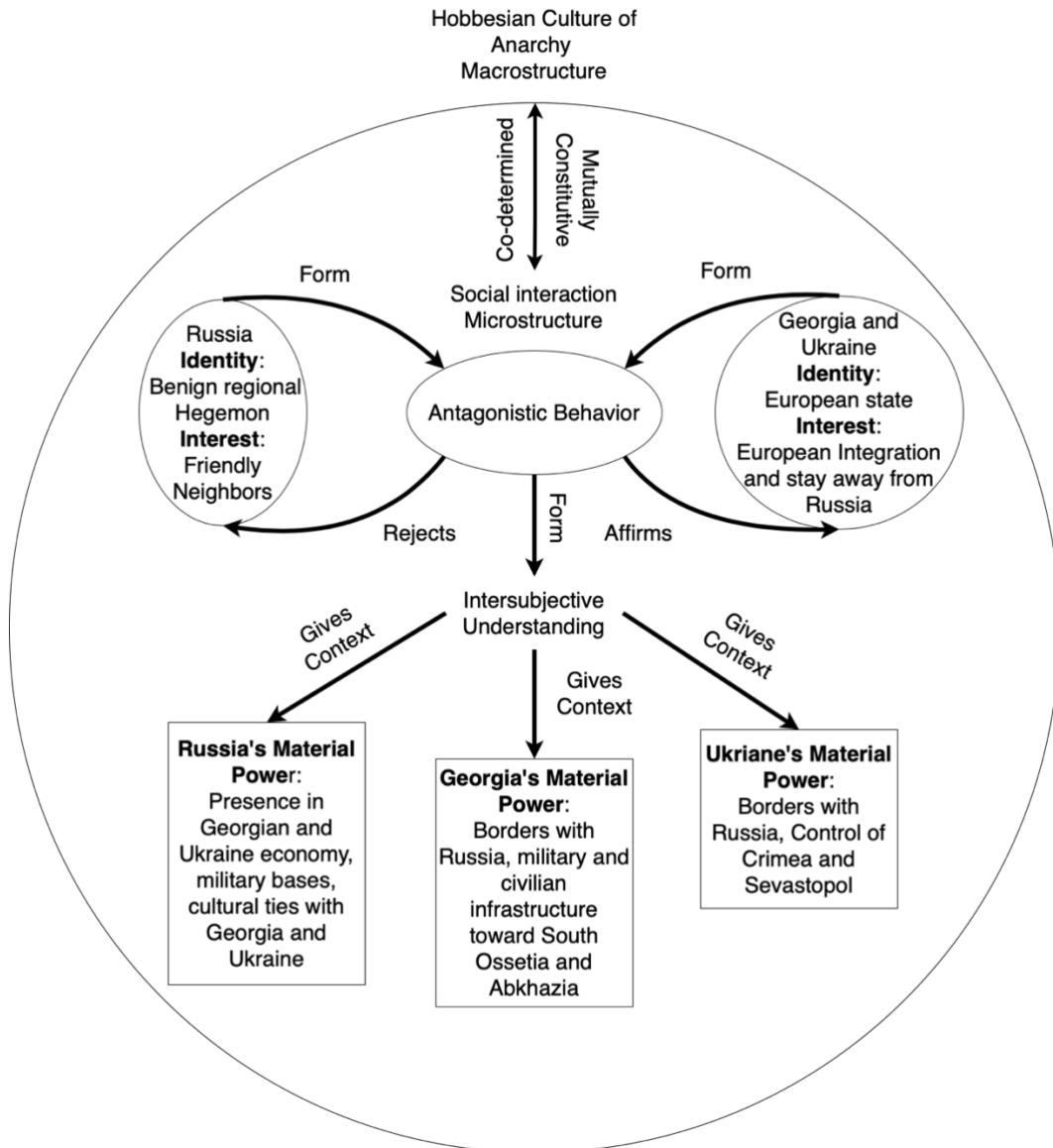
states, he also acknowledges states anthropomorphic nature. Meaning when a state decided to change its identity, its interest and its interaction with another actor will also change. If the state in question successfully changes its identity in relation to its significant Other, their relationship may evolve from one culture or anarchy to another. If it fails, the preexisting culture will remain dominant. Thus, change in identity does not mean a change in structure, but a structural change begins with a change in identity.[50]

The antagonistic nature of the actor's social interaction is driven by the pre-dominant culture of anarchy and in turn affirms it. The intersubjective understanding gained from these interactions give context to the material power that each actor possesses, in this case as threats. The simplification of the paradigm explained above and its application toward this topic are entailed in the figures below.

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[50] Ibid, 340-42.

Figure 1.1.Wendtian Constructivism application on Russia's Relations with Georgia and Ukraine

Hobbesian Culture of
Anarchy
Macrostructure

Mutually
Constitutive

Co-determined

Form

Form

Russia
Identity:
Benign regional
Hegemon
Interest:
Friendly
Neighbors

Social interaction
Microstructure

Antagonistic Behavior

Georgia and
Ukraine
Identity:
European state
Interest:
European Integration
and stay away from
Russia

Rejects

Form

Affirms

Intersubjective
Understanding

Gives
Context

Gives
Context

Gives
Context

Russia's Material Power:
Presence in Georgian and Ukraine economy, military bases, cultural ties with Georgia and Ukraine

Georgia's Material Power:
Borders with Russia, military and civilian infrastructure toward South Ossetia and Abkhazia

Ukriane's Material Power:
Borders with Russia, Control of Crimea and Sevastopol

1.7.   Research Method and Data Compilation

1.7.1. Research Method

The main research method in this research is the qualitative research method. Qualitative method main purpose is to understand the origin of social problems.[51] This method builds upon assumption and theoretical framework in identifying research problem.[52] The type of qualitative research method used in this thesis is the collection and analyses of text and documents. While the data that are used in this method are qualitative data without using numerical data. Accordingly, a research that uses qualitative method will dissect the qualitative data with theoretical framework in order to answer the research question.[53]

1.7.2. Data Compilation

According to Bryman, documents are the main source of data in a qualitative research.[54] It can be divided into the primary sources and the secondary sources. Primary data in a qualitative research are official documents, interviews and speeches. While secondary data consist of, journals, books, newspaper article and reliable websites.

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[51] Magnan, Sally Sieloff, Creswell, John. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.* The Modern Language Journal, 1997.180.
[52] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 4th ed (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). 380-84
[53] Ibid, 384.
[54] Ibid, 542-88.

Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) which is a form of narrative analysis, is the data analyzing process used in conducting this research[55]. The author moved back and forth multiple times between conceptualization, data collection, analyses and interpretation.[56] First, various literature on the topic were analyzed to become familiar with the context of the case. Second, identify and analyze key official documents that will be the primary recourses. Third, the author went back in forth in conceptualization, analysis and interpretation as more data from text are collected. Revision toward the conception used in the research are done as the analysis is being done, fully expecting changes to the pro-conceived concept that was provided beforehand.

1.8.   Research Organization

This research is systematically divided into four main components; The first chapter is the introduction that consist of the problem surrounding Russia's great power aspiration and the reality on the field. It consists of the background, problem of identification, limitation, research objective and contribution, literature review, paradigm, research methods and research organization. It is intended to give a clear picture on the contradiction in Russian Near-Abroad and how we can understand it better.

The second chapter is filled with interpretative data on the dynamic of state interaction at Russian near-abroad. There are three parts that tackles specific sets of

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[55] Ibid, 559.
[56] Ibid.

data; First, Russia's aspiration as a Great Power. Explains Russia's ambition to be a regional hegemon in the region, the efforts it has exerted and the foreign policy document showing this ambition. Second and third describe Georgia and Ukraine's respective response toward Russian aspiration. The explanation is done in a chronological order to give readers an understanding of how their relationship evolves after the Collapse of the Soviet Union, especially after the color revolutions.

The third chapter represents the analytical explanation of the data compiled in the previous chapter using Wendtian Constructivism. Based on these data and theory there are three main part with sub-parts that argued on the dominance of Hobbesian culture and the Misperception of Russian aspiration. The first part explained microculture of social interaction that formed the culture of anarchy in the region. The second part pinpoints the identity and interest that guides state behaviors when interacting. This part argued that Russian identity as a benign hegemon failed to reproduce itself, and Georgian-Ukrainian conception of Russian threat became reality when it was first a fiction. The last part consists of the main argument of this thesis. The Hobbesian culture in the region plunged the states four tendencies that made war possible when conflict of interests takes place.

The conclusion consists of the main recollection from the main findings of the thesis. The answer toward the research question is supported with five crucial findings that transform Russia's relation with Georgia and Ukraine what it is today. This part also include, limitation of this research and suggestion for further research into the topic.