

ABSTRACTS

Tamar Dolbaia

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

South Caucasus Transport System as a Regional Factor of Development

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, three states - Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, that are located within the single geographical space and share common historical and economical past, are considered as the South Caucasus region in the system of international relations. Still, regional ties are weak due to political instability, territorial disputes, regional conflicts and different foreign partnership interests.

In the global economic space, the establishment of the importance and the role of the South Caucasus occurs though its transit function being in favourable transport - geographic location, collecting and conducting the transport and cargo flows, passenger turnover between Europe and Asia and more importantly differentiating roots to Russia.

In this work, I analyse transport system of the South Caucasus region: all types of transport, export-import and transit cargo flows, passenger turnover, and main features of all types of transport networks, international transport corridors and pipelines passing through the region.

I recommend to create integrated regional system of transport infrastructure, complying with (or at least approaching) international standards, to improve regional custom procedures, to create common transport system, featuring “door to door” delivery capacities, hooked up to international multimodal transport corridors and attractive for cargo flows.

Strengthening transit function of the South Caucasus region and involvement in multimodal transport corridors is a guarantee of regional cooperation, security and sustainable development.

Lale Yalçın-Heckmann

Professor

Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany

Prices and Sustainability of Rose and Rose Oil Production in Isparta, Turkey

This paper investigates rose and rose oil production in the province of Isparta with reference to the discourses on and procedures of price formation. Farmers have been engaging in rose cultivation for over a century and rose oil production is considered to be a traditional industry. The market actors for rose oil are global functioning cosmetic firms and almost all rose oil from Isparta is exported. Prices and production have been steadily increasing since 2000. Although prices are seen as good, there are concerns about over-production and harsh competition between the rose oil firms for buying the harvest, hence pushing up rose prices and, leading to a crash of rose oil prices on the world market. Through careful observation of payment and price formation procedures, the paper raises issues concerning the moral economy of price formation. Findings are provisional and the research is on-going, but the discourse on prices clearly suggests that value judgements are embedded in capitalist markets rather than being simply or primarily anti-market.

José G Vargas-Hernández
Research Professor
University of Guadalajara, Mexico

**Urban Green Spaces as a Component of an Ecosystem.
Functions, Services, Users, Community Involvement, Initiatives
and Actions**

This paper aims to analyze the existing literature on some important features of urban green spaces such as the components, functions, services, community involvement, initiatives and actions from an ecosystem perspective. The analysis begins from the assumption that urban green spaces are ecosystems of vital importance in enhancing the quality of life in an urban environment and supplying ecosystem services such as biodiversity, climate regulation. Thus, the urban green space is an important component of an ecosystem in any community development. Meeting the needs of users is related with the functions and services that urban green spaces provide to communities. Community involvement, engagement and development requires mechanisms to meet the needs and aspirations of local users in the community. The methods employed in this analysis are the empirical literature and document review, analysis of existing data on uses and users, interviews with authorities and more detailed examination of a case specific data. Also, as some concluding remarks, some wider environmental, economic and social initiatives for local authorities and communities are suggested that can justify initiatives by all represented and involved stakeholders. Finally, the study advances some opportunities, challenges and further research.

Ali Cheshmehzangi

Associate Professor

The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC), China

“Smart Cities” and The Changing Urban Systems: Does ‘Smart City’ Oppose Theories of Urbanism?

This study looks into the case of ‘Smart City’ as one of the main transformative trends of city branding processes in our era. While, smart cities are very much dependant on Information Technologies (IT) and big data, the information is mainly used for optimisation of city operation and management. This has enhanced some of the previously complicated operations at the city level, but also implies deep conflicts with some key theories of urbanism. In light of this argument, these conflicts are highlighted and assessed comprehensively in this research paper.

The emergence of smart city development has, to some extent, reduced the role of urbanism in city development. The new urban solutions or interventions are supported and derived from computational simulations, big data analysis and optimisation processes. The latter plays a major role in how cities may develop, shape up and eventually adapt new modes of spatial use in urban planning and design.

While some of the smart city initiatives appear as innovative solutions for sustainable cities and neighbourhoods, they also oppose concepts and theories of urbanism in many ways. This paper elaborates on this opposing factor, by not necessarily measure the changes, but by assessing the potential threats to cities and the field of urbanism. This study explores three associated elements of ‘physical space’, ‘virtual space’ and ‘accessibility’, initially from the smart city point of view and later from the urbanism point of view. The analysis of these three elements will then be utilised to assess how they could have negative impact on theories of urbanism, if to be considered solely from the smart city thinking.

Suzanne Elisa Harris-Brandts

PhD Student

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA

Tourism Development During State Building: The Case of Post-Revolutionary Batumi, Georgia

This paper critically examines the challenges and opportunities that come with undertaking tourism development during the nascent period of a nation's post-revolutionary state building. After Georgia's 2003 Rose Revolution, Batumi underwent dramatic neoliberal reforms and rapid reconstruction. Over a decade, it grew to be the Black Sea's premier tourist destination, standing as a larger symbol of the nation's prosperous post-revolutionary transformation. This paper looks at how the new tourism projects commissioned by the government during this time simultaneously served purposes of nationalism promotion through architectural symbolism. It further demonstrates how tourism interfered with and confused the communication of these symbols.

During periods of state building, increased tourism can provide an effective means of economic expansion, in contrast to the challenges associated with slowly establishing new extractive industries or skills-intensive manufacturing sectors. Yet, there are also many risks with transforming cities into popular tourism destinations. Beyond economic uncertainty, tourism can fundamentally change the character of a city and even alienate citizens from the city's key spaces. Focusing on the case study of Batumi, Georgia, within this presentation I will examine the social and political impacts of the urban restructuring of the city for tourism and explore how these impacts relate to the country's broader challenges of post-revolutionary nation building. In doing so, this paper raises caution about the impact that extensive tourism-sector development during state building can have on parallel state initiatives toward civilian cohesion and nationalism promotion. Beyond providing insight into the complex relationship between tourism development and nationalism, it exposes some of the unintended impacts of tourism

economies on newly emerging nations through symbolic architecture and urban form.

Batumi is used as a representative case study to understand the type of urban transformations currently underway across post-socialist countries in the name of tourism development. The analysis is based on key informant interviews, field observations, and public surveys carried out in 2016-2017.

Tuba Bircan

Senior Researcher

University of Leuven, Belgium;

Teona Mataradze

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

International Migration Trends and its Impact on Families' Social and Economic Conditions back in Georgia

The aim of the presentation is to discuss the general migration trends from Georgia and compare the social and economic characteristics of the family with and without out-migrants. The presentation is based on the national survey of Georgia conducted in autumn 2015 in the framework of the targeted scientific-research projects financed by Tbilisi State University. The sample size of the survey was 1000 respondents. The method of survey was face-to-face interviews. Within the presentation, we will discuss the demographic characteristics of migrants, their destination, civic and employment status in the receiving states, forms and amount of assistance to their families back in Georgia. The main hypothesis of the presented survey is the following: having the migrants changes the attitudes of the sending family members towards the state and different institutions. In order to verify the hypothesis, we measure the content of the population with the service provided by different state institutions and the level of their trust towards the public organizations and persons. Generally, the survey showed that the 14.3% of the families have at least one out-migrant. Portion of outmigration is high in Imereti, Shida Kartli regions and in the capital of Georgia. The gender distribution of migrants is the following: 44.4% male and 55.6% female migrants. Most of migrants are middle age (31-62-year-old). 46.8% of migrants have high and 39.1% of migrants have professional education. The female migrants have higher education than male migrants, but in general, the level of education of migrants is higher in comparison to local population, which somehow indicates to 'brain-drain' tendency of migration. The highest number of migrants is in Russia, while the high migration flows are attested in Greece, Italy and

Turkey, where the female migrants are doing the household work for the receiving families. 64.5% of migrants have the citizenship of Georgia, while 31.1% of them have registration only in the sending society, which means that they are lacking the civil rights in the receiving states. Half of migrants are sending the remittances to the families in Georgia, while third of them do not support the local family members financially.

Alexandre Kukhianidze

Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Nuclear and Radiological Security Threats in the South Caucasus: Georgia and Armenia

The black market of nuclear and radiological materials today covers large areas from Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Since the end of the 1990s, the experts pointed out that the ways of nuclear and radiological smuggling changed their direction from Western Europe to the Caucasus and Central Asia. This shift is disturbing because of the hotspots in the Middle East and South Asia. Therefore, the smuggling of nuclear and radiological materials through the Caucasus region became a special focus for secret services, border guards and migrants.

Since 1997, Georgia is cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to search and neutralize the radiation materials, train personnel, and equip border and customs offices. Georgia signed and ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in 1998 adopted the Law on Nuclear and Radiation Safety. According to the law, transportation of radiation waste through Georgia is prohibited. Transportation of radioactive materials or equipment that can be used to create weapons of mass destruction (WMD), across the customs border of Georgia, shall be punishable by imprisonment from five to eight years. A similar action, committed by an organized group, shall be punishable by imprisonment from eleven to fifteen years.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the smuggling in nuclear and radiological materials has become a serious problem in Georgia, because of the following factors:

1. The existence of orphaned and uncontrolled radiation materials;
2. Weak protection of registered radiation materials;
3. State border protection quality;
4. Low level of population "radiation literacy";
5. Poverty levels in the country;

6. Uncontrolled separatist regions.

In the aftermath of the breakup of the Soviet Union, up to 300 uncontrolled radiation sources have been detected in Georgia, and in most cases these materials are abandoned by the Soviet and then Russian troops who left Georgia's territory after the Soviet collapse, or by former Soviet organizations of Georgia during industrial construction. There are also about 1,500 registered sources of radiation in various research and medical organizations of Georgia that can be stolen and are dangerous for people.

Some of the most dangerous cases of smuggling in nuclear and radiological materials which are registered in Georgia, demonstrate serious global threats to the Global community.

Most of smuggling routes pass from Russia via Georgia to Turkey or Armenia, while smugglers have been arrested mostly in Batumi or Tbilisi, based on operative information or radiation detectors.

The Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant as a threat to the regional and global security

In the context of natural disaster and terrorism, the problem of the nuclear power plant in Armenia is the most dangerous problem. The solution of the question of radiation threat depends on several other problems: the Armenian conflict with Azerbaijan, the tense relations with Turkey and the absence of money for building a new nuclear plant.

Thus, the outdated Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant creates serious problems for the regional and global security. Solution of the problem is hindered by Azerbaijani economic blockade of Armenia, Armenia's economic crisis and the lack of alternate energy resources at the local level.

Hossein Nazmfar

Associate Professor

University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Iran

Space, Society, Inequality - Case Study: Ardabil Province, Iran

The beginnings of social justice have rooted in spatial and environmental justice. Spatial justice as one of the programming issues is based on geography and aims to satisfy the needs of the residents of geographical areas. Extensive spatial zones of Ardebil are affected by the spatial injustice according to the development indicators. Thus, present study investigates and assesses the spatial justice of development of city of Ardabil. Research method is the applied - descriptive and analytical. According to the Statistical Yearbook #1390 the Ardabil population inhabits 10 cities. To assess the level of development of spatial justice the 40 urban indicators has been used. Each indicator was analyzed using the Shannon entropy method in order to determine their importance, while for ranking the cities two models - TOPSIS and VIKOR – were used. Since the results of the two models in some cases were inconsistent with each other, to reach a general consensus, Integration method (mean rank, Bordar, Copeland) has been used. After using the integration techniques, the results show that Ardabil city occupies the first position according to the development indicators; later within the list of developed cities come Khalkhal, Namin; cities of Sarein and Kosar are semi-developed; ccities of Meshkin Shahr, Pars Abad and Nire are less developed; the cities deprived of development indicators are Moghan and Bilesuar.

David Matsaberidze

Assistant Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Putin's (Dis)-Information Incursion and the Fragmentation of the European Politics

The paper analyzes concurrences and linkages between the Putin's information policy and political positions of the European far-right groups in the contemporary Europe. The paper reflects on circumstances of the rise of popularity of the right wing parties in Europe in the light of transformation of the existing economic and migrant's crisis of Europe into their political capital. The rise of popularity of the radical right-wing parties of Europe is pushed not only by the external support of Putin, but by the internal logic of the European integration, which at some point clashed with the national level politics. Through its information politics the Russian Federation succeeded in creation of the Fifth Column in the EU, which is used for projection of the Russian interests in Europe and for extension of its influence over European far-right groups. It is argued that EU's concentration on national politics, which comes at the expense of shared EU positions on various issues, will be further increased due to the complementarity of emerging new type of risks and increasing Vox Populi in Europe.

Phikria Asanishvili

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Impact of Iran's Soft Power on Geopolitics of South Caucasus

The South Caucasus plays an important role in the foreign policy agenda of Iran. Iran's approach to the South Caucasus is shaped by its desire to counter threats from regional and outside powers (Turkey, Russia and the USA). In order to balance the influence of other regional and trans-regional powers in the South Caucasus, Iran tries to solidify its presence in the region. Especially at the present juncture, when due to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, Iran faces difficulties in energy resources transportation to Europe via the Mediterranean Sea. So Tehran tries to substitute this route with one that reaches out to the Black Sea, therefore Georgia. Thus the South Caucasus has not only political and strategic importance for Iran but also it represents a window that might connect Iran with Europe. Therefore, strengthening its presence in the South Caucasus and balancing the influence of regional actors is the basic goal of Tehran's foreign policy. However, Tehran tries to achieve this goal by soft power tools.

According to Joseph Nye Jr. "soft power" is the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants without force or coercion. Nye argues that successful states need both hard and soft power - the ability to coerce others as well as the ability to shape their long-term attitudes and preferences.

Aim of this paper is to analyze the nature of Iran's use of soft power, the main tools, dimensions and the strategy of Iran in the south Caucasus as well as the impact of Tehran's soft power strategy on the geopolitics of the South Caucasus.

Terane Amiraga Shirvanova

Assistant Professor

Azerbaijan State Economic University, Azerbaijan

**Soft Security Perceptions in the former Soviet Republics:
Following, Engaging or Ignoring NATO?**

The recognition of “soft” or non-traditional threats in the national security concepts of the former Soviet republics has become increasingly common during the past decade. Yet, this has also occurred in parallel with the gradual evolution of NATO strategic doctrine from its classical purpose of maintaining an effective counter-balance to Russia in continental Europe, to the vision of a transnational security community that protects member states from both military and non-military challenges that affect societies as a whole. This article examines the linkage between soft security perceptions in the post-Soviet states and their relationship with NATO since independence. The analysis compares bilateral relations with NATO and the recognition of soft threats as indicated by their inclusion in the official national security documents of the Baltic states, East Europe/the Slavic Republics, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia since independence. The chronology of NATO policies and the identification of soft threat types are examined to determine to what extent they represent direct alignment with NATO soft security initiatives, indirect influence of security assistance policies, or the pursuit of more independent definitions of national or Eurasian security as an alternative to renewed opposition between Europe and Russia alleged by advocates of further NATO enlargement.

Arda Arikan

Professor

Akdeniz University, Turkey

A Study of How Syrian Refugees are Depicted in Turkish Caricatures

Available research postulates that cartoons are important texts that are often used for the construction of the identity of the self and other. Research on available documents suggest that while caricatures have been associated with propagandistic purposes throughout history, it still remains as an art form that encompasses both letters and graphics in a way to let readers construct meaning by using both drawings as well as the words- often in a humorous manner. Although how people make meaning out of these caricatures is directly influenced by the context composed of cultural, social, political and situational qualities of the moment of exposure to these materials, it is nevertheless obvious that the content of caricatures carry statements and opinions that are easy to define especially when they are scrutinized in relation to the context clues inherent in these visual and textual materials. In many cases, as research shows, cartoons are used for demonstrating ideas and information swiftly in contrast to providing readers with lengthy verbal explanations that cause losing an important amount of time by the writer and the reader as well. In relation to these, cartoons are mentioned as texts which can shape public opinion, thus, having significantly important functional use and value when the political atmosphere is tense or in locales that are known to experience strict censorship along with widespread illiteracy. As the function of caricatures on shaping public opinion is obvious, the aim of this article is to understand how Syrian refugees are depicted by caricaturists in Turkey. Following a detailed web-search of images on the topic of Syrian refugees, a total number of 37 caricatures were collected from online sources and this collection of cartoons was analyzed by means of a content analytical procedure. In the analysis, first, the researcher ensured that each caricature was given a numerical code. Lists of the characters and the textual elements were written under each code and all of these cartoons were

described by means of short narratives explaining what actually is written and drawn in each caricature. Following these, caricatures were collected under relevant headings by focusing on the emerging themes. The results of this data analytical procedure were checked by a volunteering researcher with a PhD who had used content analysis in her research while having taught BA and MA level courses that included the theoretical explanations about and the steps in using this technique. Both researchers' analyses were finalized as their results were appropriated in a way to reach a consensus on the meanings inherent in these caricatures as can be constructed by the readers. Results suggest that the caricatures depict Syrian refugees as people who are exploited in businesses, approached and considered as future voters, and seen as individuals out of whom political gains will be attained. Also, some humanitarian concerns are available in the caricatures which advocate for the rights of Syrian children as well as women whose rights are violated and thus who have pressing existential needs.

Mariam Gersamia

Professor

Maia Toradze

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Employment of Young Journalists in Media Job Market

The Goal of this research is to find out criteria (knowledge and skill-based competences) which employers consider while employing young journalists. The research is current for adjusting educational programs and accreditation standards.

Employer's survey was conducted in September-October 2016. Quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches were carried out; Open-ended and closed-ended questions were used as a survey instrument; 25 representatives of Media Organizations have been interviewed.

The following research questions have been answered:

1. According to what criteria young journalists are employed in Georgia?
2. What qualifications (knowledge and skills) are preferable for employers?
3. Do employers take into consideration which University the journalist graduated from? Does he/she have a relevant degree or competences, etc.?

According to the results, only 40% of interns are paid in Georgia. While employing journalists "writing skill" is considered the most important (88%). Employers consider that "working on deadline" and ability of working with new technologies is important skill as well (76%). 52% of employers' priority is profound knowledge of the specific field. It is worth mentioning that 84 % of respondents give preference to the competences gained in specific fields.

According to the employers, opinion the students at Universities gain more theoretical knowledge than practical. For majority, practical knowledge is essential. Recommendations have been produced for media educational sector.

R. Jefferson George
Senior Lecturer
North Texas University, USA

Developing an Online Graduate Program in Educational Leadership

In 2012, the Educational Leadership Master's degree program was faced with declining enrollment, declining funding, and a retiring faculty. The University of North Texas offered to support a new accelerated degree program that would be offered as a fully online degree. The university offered loans, technological support and marketing to facilitate the process. The program began in the summer of 2013 with 16 students who had enrolled in the first 2 courses and rose to 54 students in the fall. Courses were continually designed and re-designed as the program enrollment increased and 12 required courses were offered online.

The progress of the program is tracked in this presentation and insight is given into the necessary elements in creating a successful online program. The program, which is now completing its 4th year, has over 450 graduates and certifications, and a continuous enrollment between 350 and 400 students. Emphasis is given to what has made this program both successful and sustainable; the use of adjunct faculty in meeting the needs of the program and the constant oversight and revision of the course content.

Самира Караева

Научный сотрудник

Институт Археологии и Этнографии НАНА, Азербайджан

Проблемы гендерного вопроса в Азербайджане

Впервые на мусульманском Востоке, в 1918 году в Азербайджане женщинам было предоставлено право голоса, первая светская школа для мусульманских девочек была открыта в Баку, первые опера и балет на Востоке также были впервые поставлены в Азербайджане.

Азербайджан занял 94-е место из 142 в рейтинге Global Gender Gap Index по уровню гендерного равенства в 2014 году- сегодня мы уже поднялись на несколько строчек. Это означает, что положение азербайджанских женщин в общественной и политической сферах по сравнению с мужчинами за последние годы улучшилось. В то же время, в Азербайджане немало фактов нарушения женских прав. Положение женщины можно оценить через призму традиционного распределения обязанностей в семье. Как известно, в Азербайджане женщина в основном реализует себя как жена и мать. Председатель Женского общества «За рациональное развитие» Шахла Исмаилова говорит, что есть женщины, которые подвергаются дискриминации именно по половому признаку, несмотря на достаточные знания и способности. «У женщины, которая не может защитить свои права, есть дополнительные обязательства – женщина все больше ассоциируется с семьей, с узким общественным кругом, в обществе не признают ее как лидера. К тому же есть внутренние барьеры. Женщины не занимают руководящих постов в компаниях, и в составе правлений вы можете встретить одну женщину, в лучшем

случае. Природа женщины, материнство тоже мешают работе. Она не может оставить ребенка, и пойти на работу, если не будет поддержки семьи». Согласно исследованию Международной финансовой корпорации (МФК), всего 12% женщин-выпускников вузов получают бизнес-образование по сравнению с 33% мужчин. По данным отчета Программы развития ООН на 2013 г., среди населения трудоустроено 67% женщин и 77% мужчин. При этом средняя зарплата женщины составляет всего 44% от зарплаты мужчины. Этот перекокс «объясняется» распространенным мнением о том, что женщины, как правило, находятся у кого-то на иждивении. По статистике женщины реже занимают руководящие должности, а именно 22% в госсекторе и всего 5% в частном секторе. Так называемая законодательная опека над женщиной усугубляет патриархальную модель азербайджанского общества. Доля участия женщины в нефтегазовом секторе ограничена-всего 10% Женщины преобладают в таких секторах, как здравоохранение и социальная защита населения (76.5%) и образование (67.7), в частном секторе, в недвижимости (51%), связи (33.3%), работе с персоналом и оказании услуг. Однако зарплаты в этих секторах слишком низкие для обеспечения нормального уровня жизни. Согласно выборочному исследованию, женщины в малом и среднем предпринимательстве составляют от 8% до 14%. Женщины начинают бизнес в основном в сфере продовольствия и сельского хозяйства, а также открывают магазины по продаже текстильных изделий и центры эстетической медицины, в то время как мужчины в основном работают в строительстве и сфере услуг. Азербайджан, как и другие страны, столкнулся сегодня с демографической проблемой -за последние 20 лет число мужчин стремительно увеличилось, половое соотношение среди населения сравнялось. Матери

нередко передают привычки гендерной дискриминации молодому поколению. «Изменение соотношения между числом женщин и мужчин может привести к дисбалансу полов. Поэтому следует усилить меры для предотвращения селективных абортов, а также вместе с Министерством здравоохранения и другими соответствующими структурами усилить контроль над этой проблемой» (Председатель Госкомитета по проблемам семьи, женщин и детей Х. Гусейнова). Ниязи Мехти (Университет Искусств)- «Бедность в Азербайджане настолько высока, что думаю, несмотря на стереотипы, мужчина хочет, чтобы его жена работала и приносила в дом деньги. Думаю, экономическая ситуация ослабляет силу стереотипов». В Азербайджане с 2006 года действует Закон «О гендерном равенстве» и с 2010 года - Закон «О предотвращении бытового насилия». Но для становления гендерного равенства необходимо сделать переоценку укоренившихся норм поведения и общественно-социальной нагрузки, которую несут женщины.

Giorgi Kvinikadze

Assistant Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

**Geoeconomical Problems of Small Countries with Transition
Economy in the Works of Professor Alexander Rondeli**

(dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the Georgian scientist)

*“In today’s world use of military force is not considered as universal
panacea”*

Alexander Rondeli

Geo-economics is a relatively new branch of social sciences and is a few decades old. The works with geo-economical connotation are related to the period after the “cold war” (more specifically, to the second half of the 90s) in Georgia. In this respect, Georgian scientists, especially the former and current employees of the Strategy and Study of International Relations Foundation of Georgia and of Tbilisi State University have laid a remarkable basis for the further development of geo-economical studies in Georgia. However, geo-economics in Georgia is taking roots very slowly but steadily. That is why it is relevant to study and analyse those scientific publications of geo-economical connotation that had laid the basis of the geo-economical studies in Georgia. In this respect, the scientific heritage of the famous Georgian scientist Professor Alexander Rondeli should be mentioned. In his works, the geo-economical context has a clearly expressed character and often states perspective view of development of geo-economics (this moment is shown well, when it comes to the issues of choosing of correct geo-economical strategy in small countries with transition economy).

Mr. A. Rondeli remarkably manages to adapt the theory of international relations (especially of complex interdependencies) to the modern geo-economical paradigm. The respective countries are a unique manual of construction of geo-economical strategy. The whole arsenal of instruments (both defensive and offensive) for implementation of modern geo-economical strategy is presented in

the works of Professor. The present work will analyse only one part of the above-mentioned document. In the conclusive part of the paper, based on the works of Professor A Rondeli, a general construction of perspectives of development of geo-economics in small countries is constructed and the main vectors of geo-economical strategy are determined.

Malkhaz Matsaberidze

Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Ivane Javakhishvili and the Conception of Historical-Strategic Borders of Georgia

The problem of borders of the new state during the existence of the Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918-1921) was an actual issue as its borders were contested by its neighboring states which strived for its revisionism. Ivane Javakhishvili, who was considered to be an expert on resolution of border related issues by the government of that time, formulated guiding principles for delimitation of the borders of Georgia:

- Georgia has got historically formed, clearly defined borders, within which the country existed and developed for the centuries;
- Historical borders coincide with natural boundaries and are strategically important for the country as long as within its limits the Georgian state can develop and organize its defense;
- Considering the conception of historical-strategic borders, principle of the so-called “ethnographic” borders is against state interests of Georgia;
- In case of delimitation of its borders the government of Georgia should be guided in line with the state interests; contemporary ethnic composition of population of any of its part should not be taken into consideration if this territory has been the part of Georgia historically and is strategically important for country’s defense and its social-economic development;
- For regulation of relations with its neighbors some concessions could be made in terms of adjustment of borders, although state interests should not be compromised;

The viewpoint of Ivane Javakhishvili regarding historical-strategic borders of Georgia is formulated in his work, titled as “The Borders of Georgia” (1919) and could be found through archival

materials and newspaper articles. They reflect practical activities of Javakishvili regarding the problem of borders of the Georgian state.

By the end of the 1918 Javakishvili provided judgment regarding historical-strategic border-line between Georgia and Armenia. He was also active participant of the governmental committee dealing with the central part of the Northern border of Georgia. Historical-strategic conception, elaborated by Javakishvili, was accepted by the Social-Democratic party – a governing party of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, notwithstanding the fact that the idea of “ethnographic borders” was quite popular among the leftist political forces. During the elections of 1919, the Social-Revolutionary party popularized the idea of “ethnographic borders.”

Valerian Dolidze

Assistant Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Third Wave of Democratization and Post-communist Democratization: Georgian case

Post-communist democratizations are fundamentally differed from the third wave of democratization. While the last were limited by the changes of political systems and political regimes, the former determined substantial and total changes in all spheres of society. Because of the post-communist democratization had deeper influence on society then it was the case in the third wave. International effect of post-communist democratizations was also stronger than the influence of the third wave over the world politics. Post-communist changes are determined by the democratization of the USSR, which produced the demise of the Soviet Union. In some cases this democratization was continued in the new independent states, but in the other they were stopped and reversed in the stage of liberalization or resulted in the formation of authoritarian regime. But democratizations in these last cases were not stopped suddenly, but gradually as the result of struggle between democratic and authoritarian forces. In some cases this reversed democratization into liberalization as it was the case in Georgia. Specific features of post-communist democratizations are determined by the specificities of political system of “real socialism”. In communist countries society was created by political system, which penetrated and controlled it from economics to culture. Because of this democratization in communist countries determined total changes. This produced differences between the functions of third wave and post-communist democratizations. In the last case, main function of democratization is not transformation to democracy, but rather to change of the whole society from economic and social stratification systems to the culture and creation of new social identities. Post-soviet democratizations stood out of post-communist democratizations by the peculiar properties, produced by the

features of political system of the Soviet Union and disintegrated in the result of democratization. The particular qualities of post-soviet democratizations are clearly visible in Georgian case. Political agenda of the country was overloaded with different problems all of which needed instant solution: 1. State building; 2. Formation of political regime; 3. Restoration of territorial integrity; 4. Formation of political nation; 5. Creation of new economic system; 6. Formation of new forms of ownership and social stratification system; 7. Creation of new society and new persons. 8. Formation of political system of democracy. But Georgia does not have enough resources for the simultaneous solution of all these problems. Because of this democratization in independent Georgia was stopped and resumed only in 2012 as a result of defeat of the United National Movement in the parliamentary elections.

Zviad Abashidze

Assistant Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Separation of Powers and Forms of Government in East-Central Europe and Georgia

The formation of new mechanisms of separation of powers and forms of government has turned out to be the problematic issues almost for each post-communist country. There were two main tasks to fulfill: 1) Creation of Constitutional democratic government and 2) Creation of such authority which would be obstacle for possible origination of authoritarian regimes from one side and would be effective from the other. That's why, the countries of East-Central Europe decided for hybrid forms of government that are sometimes parliamentarian-presidential and occasionally presidential-parliamentarian.

Georgia is still going through the constitutional reforms, the product of which has been still unclear. However, according to official constitutional project it is more inclining towards the pure parliamentarianism where the formation of coalition government is not taken into consideration. The aim of my presentation is to clarify the importance of East-central European experience for contemporary Georgia.

Irina Bichikashvili

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

The Role of Culture in Politics. Historical Parallels

The term “culture” is a multifaceted concept and is associated with different spheres of life. In my presentation I consider culture as a part of governance which is realized by means of media. During analysis of managerial role of culture, I will consider historical experience referring to the Romantic era (18-19 centuries).

Contemporary anthropology regards culture not only as a product of biological evolution but as a mechanism that promotes adaptation of individual to the surrounding world. According to anthropologists, in the course of human history every society has spread its culture either through expansion or synergy.

Terms “kulturkampf”, “kulturträger”, “cultural imperialism”, “soft power” represent integral concept which means expansion of ideas and values introduced in particular society. Those ideas and values might not be harmful but they are imposed and have not gone through the historical approbation.

There is a historical example of using “soft power” in Georgia. In the 1920s newspaper “Zaria Vostoka” was published in Tbilisi. Newspaper which existed almost hundred years ago exemplifies positive effect of “Soft power” on inhabitants of the South Caucasus region. This phenomenon will be discussed in my report.

Revaz Jorbenadze

Professor

Marekh Devidze

PhD Student

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

The Structure of Social Axiom and Personal Behavior

In the presentation, the social axioms are discussed as the generalized believes of individual towards self, other individuals, mental and physical world, social surroundings, etc. We discuss the main functions of the social axioms, the correspondence of social axioms towards attitudes and values. The relations between the social axioms and individual behavior is discussed according to different models. The measurements of the social axioms are studied in various cross-cultural researches. The social axioms play very important roles in regulating the individuals' social action together with other parameters.

Natela Donadze

Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Family, as a Value: Comparative Analyses of Georgian and Western Countries

The XXI century is characterized by the highly institutionalized societies. Such social institutions, as family, religion, politics, education, law, economy, mass media, etc., play an important role in the functioning and developing of every society as well as in the lives of individuals.

Family has an important place among the social institutions, as a primary social group and a main agent of socialization.

The aim of my analysis is to consider family as a value, to present the different attitudes towards it in Georgia and some Western countries. For this purpose, I have analyzed the empirical quantitative data, which were gathered by “Atlas of European Values” in 2008 and “World Value Survey” in 2014. Basing of the comparison of these data I have analyzed the opinions of the population of Georgia and some Western countries towards the family as a value.

The adequate description of any society is possible by studying its culture, namely, its value system. Value, in some way, is the unity of objective and subjective factors. It is objective as it refers to reality which exists independently of an individual; simultaneously, it is subjective as it reflects the objective reality perceived by a subject.

Towards the objective reality individuals have both cognitive and estimation attitudes. The estimation attitudes are accompanied by subjectivism, which is determined by such factors as individual’s gender, age, social status, origin, education, economic and political orientation, life and professional experiences, marital status, values, value orientation and value system, the type of society he/she lives, its socio-economic, political, legislative, cultural conditions.

In the above-mentioned investigations, it is clearly shown the different attitudes of different individuals towards family as a main value of value system.

Globalization is a process which somewhat universalizes values of different cultures. It surely endangers national traditional values, especially of cultures of small countries and nations. According to F. Fukuyama, owing to the modernization all countries will recognize Western values and that will be the 'end of history' or the greatest victory of liberal democracy in the World. I. A. Vasilenko opposes this view. He truly considers that globalization will cause the contrary reaction and resistance to Western values, preservation of native values.

In the investigations conducted by "Atlas of European Values" and "World Value Survey" is clearly shown this tendency. In spite of aspiring to the Western values which are being instilled (human rights, freedom of speech, tolerance, freedom of expression, civil rights, etc.) in Georgia people respect and keep the national values, traditions, customs, etc.

Marina Burdzenidze

Associate Professor

Marina Kevkhashvili

PhD Student

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Practices of Social Media Usage and Georgian Civil Society Organizations

The paper represents a research on practices of social media usage by Georgian civil society organizations (CSOs). In modern society, the use of social media is multi-functional. CSOs use social media for different purposes in their activities (initiatives, public meeting announcements, information dissemination, discussions, public engagement etc). Kanter & Fine (2008) define the term of social media as a combination of tools and platforms that allow users to communicate, connect, and share content. From this perspective, it is important to study practical work activities of CSOs. The aim of the research is to identify how effective CSOs use social media as a communication tool in their activities and public awareness. Ten civil society organizations have been selected as research target. Organizations' different missions and profiles are defined as selection criteria. Within the scope of the study, social media activities of civil society organizations have been explored. Particularly, web pages, Facebook accounts, frequency of information dissemination, intensity, CSOs' TV broadcast, their activeness, number of comments and likes throughout a specific period - from April 17 to 26 of the current year was the focus of our study. Survey results showed, how actively CSOs use social media in their activities as well as in awareness raising informing. The study helps to increase our knowledge and understanding of social media potential as a communication tool.

Amiran Berdzenishvili

Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Peculiarities of the Establishment and Development of "Digital Generation" in Georgia

The rapid growth of information-communication technologies and first of all of the Internet has led to the emergence of a new "digital generation" in the society, to study the peculiarities of these issues in the developed information societies (in US, Western Europe, Japan, etc.) pay special attention.

There are conflicting opinions about the "Digital Generation" in the world as well as in Georgia. The older generation has negative attitudes towards "Digital Generation" because of technological predictions: this is a "missing", "egocentric" and "non-social" generation. Some call alarms: "The generation of" iPhone "comes and today homeland, patriotism, civil liberties are going to decay and impair." But studies have shown that it is contrary to the fact that the "Digital" or "Network" generation is more open in terms of ethnic, national or religious relations, is politically active and has a high intellectual coefficient.

The "Facebook" establishes the new form of "Digital Generation" in Georgia. Introducing this technology in the field of education strengthens the concept of "Digital Generation." Particularly new teaching strategies include: transforming teacher-oriented lecture process into student-oriented learning interaction and transition to knowledge creation process; Gradually progressive fragmentation, mosaicism and visualization in teaching processes that are not oriented on tensing once attention permanently. Social networks become also an inseparable part of the surrounding landscape for Georgian "Digital Generation". The existence of a network technological component for the representatives of this generation is perceived to be natural and desirable practically in every type of daily activities.

This is especially about new life strategies: regularly engaging in networking, multilateral and immediate responding, permanently

appealing for support to the network, getting new ideas, new information, getting ready recipes for actions and etc.

It is worth of mentioning that role of texting into social communications has increased dramatically. This is the generation that appeared with Web 2.0 simultaneously in the early 2000s; Likewise, digital devices and the first toys were acquired simultaneously. Digital language is native for this generation and they are "Digitally Native", i.e. They are named to be the people born with digital literacy. This generation is still young and nonhomogeneous, However, 18-20 years old generation in Georgia is named to be the "Digital Generation". However, due to the specificity of development of our country the process is characterized with its own peculiarities unlike the Western and Eastern European "Digital Generations."

Nana Matcharadze

PhD Student

Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)

Digital Broadcasting Practice in Georgia: Its Impact on Developing of the TV Informational Resource

Digital formats are highly actual issue in the broadcasting field. Today this is a global process of switching on digital broadcasting in which after the leading countries of the world the developing countries are also involved. In Western Europe and in the United States of America the switchover process began in the 90-ies and the analog broadcasting has changed to digital broadcasting in developed countries. The development of innovative technologies in the last 20 years of the last century showed the world that it was possible to introduce more effective means of using frequency resource. After switch off analog broadcasting and switch on digital broadcasting we observed positive changes in the audiovisual media market: free flow of information in society, the development of mobile Internet and new communications services. Switching on digital broadcasting positively affects the possibility of television to carry out public functions and ensure human rights protection. Switchover to digital broadcasting creates preconditions for the diversity of TV programs, audio-visual media and information technology providers.

Practice shows that the importance of digital broadcasting technology value is big for the end users, especially on direction of so-called Universal broadcasting Service Delivery. It should be noted that the majority of the population of the regions are dependent on the analog broadcasting, where as an alternative we can consider the well-developed satellite broadcasting. The internet TV (IPTV) and cable network is better developed in the cities and the number of citizens depend on the digital broadcasting is relatively small, but if there will be a good quality of alternative service, the citizens will use free digital broadcasting services for the second and third television in their families.

That is the challenge and the expected changes the country has faced since July in 2015 when digital broadcasting switched on in Georgia and as the result become expected the changes of still the first by the numbers of use of the media - television in the country, in particular, to increase the number of channels, and their coverage area and at the same time change of Media content, both quantitative and qualitative terms.

The switchover process is completed in Georgia. According to the international obligations since July in 2015 Georgia moved to digital broadcasting. For a while, the digital and analog broadcasting simultaneously operated, and then analogue broadcasting switched off and Georgia completely moved on the digital broadcasting format.

Switching on digital broadcasting is not only technological, but also somehow are stimulating the social changes. The rapid growth of the number of TV channels, which is one of the following changes of digital broadcasting, causes audiences segmentation. As a result of this, the changes are expected in terms of perception of media content by the audience. The existence of more and more informative, symbolic content will also cause changes within the audience in both individual and social context.

Tengiz Verulava

Professor

Iliia State University

Universal Health Care in Georgia: Achievements and Challenges

After gaining independence, the crisis in healthcare systems of Georgia required implementation of fundamental reforms in the sector. The lack of financial means practically ruled out comprehensive medical care, characteristic to the Soviet System. Consequently, it became necessary to balance government obligations with its capacity in the health field (Verulava, 2001).

The process of health care system reorientation began in 1995 in Georgia. The main objective of reforms was to establish qualitatively new relationships in the system, which would correspond to the requirements of the country's political and economic development (Verulava, 2001).

Until 2005 mandatory contributions of Health insurance or the targeted healthcare tax imposed on wages ("3+1") and being a part of social tax, were the major sources of state healthcare financing in Georgia. It was replaced by mandatory government taxes (general taxes).

Tax Department of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia is responsible for collection of taxes, which ultimately are consolidated on single state treasury account. While determining the annual budget, the Ministry of Finance allocates a certain part of state budget to the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, which in turn, distributes the amounts per categories (The Government of Georgia, 2015).

In 2006 The Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia has launched implementation of "Health Insurance Programme for Socially Vulnerable Families". Its aim was to ensure medical service for the population below the poverty line. In 2012 the Health insurance programme was extended to children aged 0-5, pensioner women above 60 years and men above 65 years, students

and people with severe disabilities. In 2007 Health Insurance programme covered only 4.1% of the population, in 2012 it increased up to 37.9%, together with persons covered under private and corporate health insurance (12.9%), overall amounting was up to 50.8% insured persons (Verulava, 2016. 56).

Despite the extension of the state health care programme coverage, more than a half of the population of the country, about 2 million of persons had no insurance and in most cases, were unable to cover the medical expenses from own pocket. It shall be mentioned that the number of visits to primary healthcare per person is 2.1 and with this indicator Georgia ends up second in comparison to European countries (Health system performance assessment report, 2013. 24).

Since 2013, the Universal State Healthcare Program has been enacted. according to the data of April of 2014, all citizens of Georgia are provided with basic medical services through universal healthcare or state and private insurance programs. Among them, 3.4 million people are covered by universal state healthcare program, 560 thousand are beneficiaries of the state healthcare program, and 546 people have private or corporate insurance.

The programme aims at providing financial support for accessibility to healthcare to Georgian citizens who are not insured. First time in the history of the country the state programme extends to citizens of the country, as well as holders of neutral identification cards/neutral travel documents and individuals without citizenship status. The state money allocated for healthcare almost doubled from 2012 to 2013 and increased from 365 million to 634 million Gel (Verulava, 2016. 46).

Universal State Healthcare Program includes regular and emergency medical services, urgent inpatient treatment, regular surgical operations (including, day care) and examinations related to them within the appropriate limit.

Universal Healthcare programme provides the beneficiary with the opportunity of free choice of a medical institution. The programme beneficiary has a right to select a healthcare provider throughout Georgia and register with any family physician. Further, in case of

dissatisfaction with the service provided, a person can change the provider once in two months. There is no any limit for selection of a provider when obtaining emergency in-patient or out-patient service. As for the planned in-patient service the beneficiary has to address the Agency of Social protection and obtain a voucher or a letter of guarantee. Any medical institution, which meets the requirements established by the law, is eligible to participate in Universal healthcare programme.

After introduction of Universal Health programme, the visits of population for medical services have significantly increased. In February-April, 2014 experts of WHO, USAID, WHO carried out assessment of one year results of Universal Health state programme. Simultaneously, with the technical assistance of USAID/HSSP was carried out the phone survey of the population on the satisfaction of obtained services and qualitative study of service providers and beneficiaries (Focus groups) for assessment of Universal Health Programme. (The Government of Georgia, 2015. 24). The survey showed that majority (96.4%) of the beneficiaries of Universal Health programme are satisfied or highly satisfied with hospital and/or urgent outpatient service, 80.3% of beneficiaries are satisfied or highly satisfied with planned outpatient service; 84.1% of respondents on the planned outpatient component and 78.2% of planned hospitalization and urgent outpatient component indicated that the financial support of population is the most positive part of the Universal Health; also, most of the beneficiaries mentioned the rights to free choice as one of the core positive factors of Universal Health. 7.6% of respondent's dissatisfaction was mainly about the length of the waiting period for containing needed service (The Government of Georgia, 2015. 25).

Despite increased government spending on healthcare, its share in overall health expenses is significantly lower not only compared to the margin recommended by WHO, but compared to the indicators of many low-income, poor countries (Verulava, 2015). Therefore, the population has to bear substantial costs of medical services itself.

The Universal Health Programme together with quite a few positive factors has many flaws that need corrections. Despite the serious advancements, there are still problems associated with the primary health care (Verulava et al, 2017). It is necessary to increase the financial accessibility of services linked with high expenses. In this regard, the volume of these services shall be increased. It is reasonable to engage private insurance companies in implementation of state health care programmes for effective use of available scarce resources. This will increase competitiveness and the quality on the healthcare market together with decreasing of healthcare expenses.