Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences

The 6th International Scientific Conference

"Space, Society, Politics"
Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Ivane Javakhishvili
Tbilisi State University

PROGRAM

and

ABSTRACTS

21 - 23 June, 2018
Tbilisi

21-23 June, 2018

The 6th International Scientific Conference

"**Space, Society, Politics - Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University"**

Editors: Tamar Dolbaia, Valerian Melikidze, Teona Mataradze

Technical Group: Teona Tabuashvili, Miranda Mikadze, Nino Abesadze, Otar Kobakhidze

21-23 ივნისი, 2018

VI საერთაშორისო სამეცნიერო კონფერენცია

"სივრცე, საზოგადოება, პოლიტიკა"
მიძღვნილი ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის 100 წლის იუბილესადმი

სამეცნიერო რედაქტორები:
თამარ დოლბაია, ვალერიან მელიქიძე, თეონა მატარაძე

ტექნიკური ჯგუფი: თეონა თაბუაშვილი, მირანდა მიქაძე, ნინო აბესაძე, ოთარ კობახიძე

PROGRAM

<u>**21 June, Thursday**</u>

Building I, room #107
Chavchavadze Ave. #1

09.30 - 10.00 Registration of conference participants

10.00 Conference speeches and welcomes:
Building I, room: #107

Giorgi Sharvashidze - Rector, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Tamar Dolbaia - Dean, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

I Session (Working Languages - English, Russian)
Building I, room: #107

Chairpersons: **Alexandre Kukhianidze, Boris A. Portnov**

10.20 **Khatuna Maisashvili -** Associate Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Media System and Reevaluation of History in Glasnost-Period Georgian Media - 1989-90"*

10.40 **Juha Yoon,** Doctor, Indiana University Bloomington, USA; **Lasha Beridze**, Doctor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Georgia; **Alex Gang**, PhD Student, Indiana University Bloomington, USA - "Understanding the *Dynamics of Mega Sport Events in the Context of Hostile Interstate Relations: An Analysis of the 2018 Russia World Cup's Influence on Perceptional Development among Georgians about Russia"*

11.00 **Agnieszka Tomczyk** – PhD Student, University of Warsaw, Poland. "*Looking towards Separatist Abkhazia: Attitudes, Challenges and Perspectives*"

11.20 **Valerian Melikidze**, Associate Professor, **Salome Kobaidze**, PhD Student – Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. „*Georgia - Global Outlook of Development Prospects*"

11.40 **Julia Kaczmarek-Khubnaia** - PhD Student, Adam Mickiewicz University in Pozna , Poland. "*Factors and Barriers of Regional Development in Georgia*"

12.00 **George Mchedlishvili** – Associate Professor, International Black Sea University, Georgia. "*Comparing and Contrasting the Three South Caucasus Countries' Views of the West*"

12.20 **Seifulla Rashidov** - Professor, Izmail State University f Humanities, Ukraine. *"The Islamic State" in the North Caucasus"*

12.40 **Rustam Begeulov** – Professor, Karachay-Circassian State University, Russia. "*Georgian Diaspora in Karachay-Circassia: History and Modernity*"

13.00 **Alexandre Kukhianidze** – Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Russia: Leviathan, Kleptocracy or Super Mafia?"*

13.20 - 14.20 Lunch

14.20 **Boris A. Portnov** – Professor, University of Haifa, Israel. "*Geopolitical and Environmental Risk Factors behind Mortgage Defaults in Israel"*

14.40 **Giorgi Kvinikadze** – Associate Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Theoretical Questions of Geo-Economics: Stages of Evolution of Thinking and Interdisciplinary Connections"*

15.00 **Richard W. Maass** - Assistant Professor, University of Evansville, USA. "*Annexation: How Democracy and Xenophobia Limited US Territorial Expansion*"

15.20 **Eteri Tsintsadze-Maass** – PhD Candidate, University of Kentucky, USA. „*Regional Hegemons and their Neighbours: The Effects of Nationalism on International Relations*"

15.40 **Justyna Ol dzka** – Doctor, Vistula University, Poland. "*CIS in the Years 1991-2016. A Quarter-Century of Changes or Stagnation?*"

16.00 **Walenty Baluk** - Professor, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland. *"Aggression of the Russian Federation against Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). Brief Comparative Analysis"*

16.20 **Teona Mataradze,** Associate Professor, **Tatia Kartlelishvili**, PhD Student - Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*The Post-Socialist Transformation of Mining Cities*"

16.40 **Beata Surmacz –** Professor, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland. "*City Diplomacy*"

22 June, Friday

Building I, room #101

II Session (Working Language – Georgian)

Chairpersons: **Malkhaz Matsaberidze, Revaz Jorbenadze**

10.00 **Malkhaz Matsaberidze** – Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Comprehending the Conception of Nation-State During the Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918-1921)"*

10.20 **Salome Dundua** - Associate Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Foreign Political Orientation Issues in Georgia's Governmental Discourse"*

10.40 **Natia Zedginidze** - Assistant Researcher, Ilia State University, Georgia. *"Attempts to Elaborate an Ethical Code of Behavior of Party in Georgia"*

11.00 **Vladimer Nafetvaridze** – PhD Student, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Cybersecurity as a Corner Stone of Electronic Governance"*

11.20 **Eka Darbaidze** – Doctor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Gender Analysis of Programs Presented by Election Subjects at Local Self-Governance Elections in 2017"*

11.40 **Manon Bokuchava** - PhD Student, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Media of the Occupied Regions"*
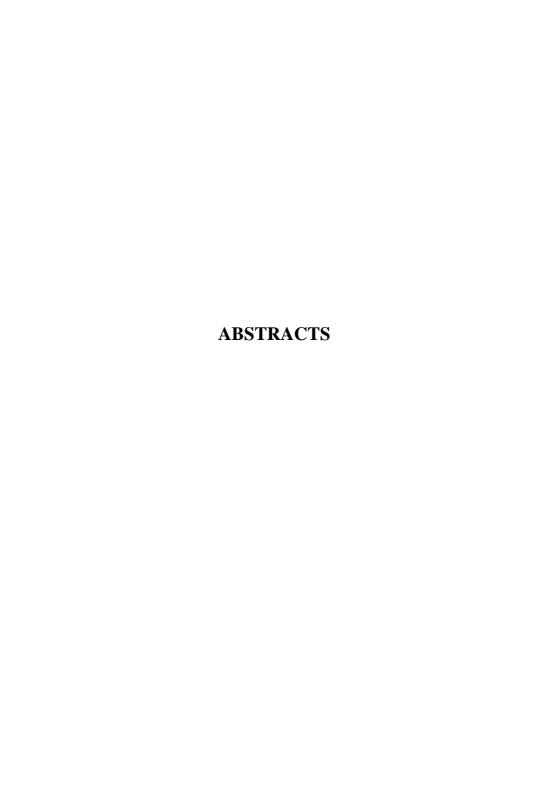
12:00 **Thinathin Macharashvili** – PhD Student, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Reflection of "Prison Scandal" in Visual Composition of Modern Georgian Print Media"*

12.20 – 13.20 Lunch

13.20   **Amiran Berdzenishvili** - Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"The Peculiarity of Social Movement in Georgian Society"*

13.40 **Natela Donadze** – Associate Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Narrative Analysis of the Women's Stories*"

14.00 **Kakha Ketsbaia** – Associate Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. "*Post-Modern and Suicide of Society*"

14.20   **Revaz Jorbenadze**, Professor, **Teona Mataradze**, Associate Professor - Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Territorial Identity of the Inhabitants in the "New" and "Old" Neighbourhoods (Case of Tbilisi)"*

14.40 **Amiran Berdzenishvili,** Professor, **Ilona Gogia,** Phd Student - Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Students' Digital Literacy Research"*

15.00 **Tengiz Verulava** – Professor, Ilia State University, Georgia. "*Esping-Andersen's Typology of Welfare Stare and Georgia*"

15.20 **Germane Gvaramia** - PhD Student, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *"Analysis and Prevention of Conflicts which May Cause Terrorism in Georgia"*

23 June, Saturday

Tour for Foreign Guests:

Uplistsikhe - Gori - Mtskheta

ABSTRACTS

Khatuna Maisashvili
Associate Professor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Media System and Reevaluation of History in Glasnost-Period Georgian Media - 1989-90

The aim of the research is to examine and analyze the specific Georgian peculiarities of the Glasnost policy in 1989-90, based on the relational content analysis of 158 media stories from four Georgian newspapers with different editorial policies. The term *Georgian peculiarities* refers to (1) media system specifics and (2) characteristic features of re-evaluation of Soviet History as a crucial part of Glasnost narrative. Studying the specific characteristics of Georgia's mainstream media at that time is interesting in that it allows for (1) critical analysis of Hallin and Mancini's theoretical approach and ways to enrich it through the study of media transformation from still authoritarian in form but, in essence, under a mixed type of political system (this process may be referred to as *political uncertainty*), and (2) accentuation of the media's active role in shaping political and cultural memory. As for history's reevaluation in Glasnost's content, it still remains the main, dominant issue ultimately unrivaled (in terms of time and intensity) by any other issue proclaimed by Glasnost—be it food shortage exposed by the media or criticism of one-party rule. The issue of history's reevaluation in the Soviet republics, in the so-called national periphery, acquired an even more critical meaning because the change brought about Perestroika there, along with the new political and social elites, placed history as the cornerstone of a future independent state, or metaphorically speaking, turned *yesterday* into *today* and further into *tomorrow*. This process proved to be so far-reaching that so-called *inert Glasnost* maintained its position even in the post-Soviet media for some time and with certain intensity. The main findings of the research are: 1) Identifying the unified and segmented paradigms of Glasnost in Georgia's politics and media; 2) Defining the political attitudes of the Georgian political elites toward Glasnost, and 3) Distinguishing the concept of reinterpretation of history (in the Center, Moscow) from the concept of revisionism of history (National Peripheries of the USSR).

Juha Yoon
Doctor, Indiana University Bloomington, USA

Lasha Beridze
Doctor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Georgia

Alex Gang
PhD Student, Indiana University Bloomington, USA

Understanding the dynamics of mega sport events in the context of hostile interstate relations: An analysis of the 2018 Russia World Cup's influence on perceptional development among Georgians about Russia

By utilizing the FIFA World Cup to be held in Russia in the summer of 2018, this research aims to identify the impact of this mega event on changing perceptions about Russia among citizens of Georgia. This study utilizes the international stereotype concept to examine the impact of an international mega sporting event on influencing Georgians' country image about Russia.

The concept of stereotypes in an inter-group context can be analogous to the concept of international stereotypes in an international context (Chen et al., 2016). Political scientists have identified three dimensions of international relations that are critical to the formation of stereotypes (i.e., goal compatibility, relative power, and relative culture status) (Alexander et al., 2005), which, in turn, lay the foundation for developing the cognitive schemas.

Studies (e.g., Chen, 2010; Cho, 2007) have found that tourism can be used as a mechanism to alleviate tension between nations that are politically divided or involved in conflicts. Mega sport events attract a significant influx of tourists and countries and communities host such extravaganzas with the hopes of rousing positive economic and social benefits (Kim et al. 2014). One such benefit relates to the concept of country image, as it directly attributes to enhancing a country's image to the international

community. We adopted country image because it effectively captures both the affective and cognitive aspects. (Martin & Eroglou, 1993).

The Russo-Georgian relations experienced heightened tension even before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The worsened relation between the countries reached their nadir as their confrontation led to the breakout of Russo-Georgian War of 2008. Given the historical background and considering current development between Moscow and Tbilisi, the 2018 Russia World Cup poses unique opportunity to trace the impact of global mega sporting event in the context of strained bilateral relations.

A pre-post study model will be adopted to accurately trace the change in country image on Russia in the eyes of Georgians. While the pre-survey will be initiated a month prior to the World Cup, the post-survey will be conducted immediately after its final match. Furthermore, the current study intends to compare the image changes among different groups based on their sport involvement, media consumption level, visit experience to Russia, age, and geographic residence.

The theoretical population of this study is the public of Georgia who watches the World Cup only through media channels. We adopted and modified Alvarez and Ocampo's interpretation on country image scale with 20 items on 2 sub-dimensions (i.e., cognitive and affective). In addition, to trace their impact on conative dimension, three additional items were developed to trace the behavioral outcomes.

This initiative will expand current body of knowledge both in the realm of international relations, tourism, and sport management by bridging the concept of international stereotypes with country image in a unique context. The findings could serve as the essential guidelines for future hosts of the mega sporting event to develop strategic initiatives to embrace the potential visitors from historically antagonistic neighbors.

Agnieszka Tomczyk
PhD Student
University of Warsaw, Poland

Looking towards separatist Abkhazia: attitudes, challenges and perspectives

The roots of the Georgia's conflict with Abkhazia and South Ossetia date back to the early 20th century. The increasing ethnic tensions, fanned by a national identity in the separatist republics, led to the outburst of two wars and resulted in separation from Georgia in the early 1990s. Years after secession, South Ossetia and Abkhazia are far from becoming actually independent entities. Seeking to gain recognition as states, both breakaway territories are politically, institutionally, economically, military, and socially dependent on Russia which perceives them as convenient centres of Kremlin influence in the Caucasus. At the same time, the functioning of the breakaway territories have prevented Georgia's bid for EU or NATO membership.

The year 2018 will mark a decade since the 2008 war in South Ossetia, and in 2017 it was the 25th anniversary of the Georgian-Abkhaz war (1992-1993). The aim of the work is to analyze the Georgian attitude towards separatist Abkhazia as well as the peace initiatives taken by Georgian authorities to simplify trade and educational procedures and encourage contacts with Abkhaz people. In this respect, the presentation will also emphasize the challenges and perspectives for the future functioning of Abkhazia.

The valuable contribution to the work will have the findings of the survey, which was a part of a research project carried out mainly among the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU) students in the Autumn of 2015. The survey set out to identity the way in which the young generation living in Georgia perceive Abkhazia. Importantly, there is a number of ethnic Abkhazians and also ethnic Georgians from the Gali District of Abkhazia who are enrolling in TSU. The discussion on further plan for stabilizing the conflict situation remains open. One of the challenging tasks is to develop solution that, above all, respects Georgia's right to its territorial integrity.

Valerian Melikidze
Associate Professor

Salome Kobaidze
PhD Student

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Georgia - Global Outlook of Development Prospects

This presentation deals with small country development perspectives in the contemporary globalized world. Development trends of such countries, besides objective, are to a large extent defined by a number of subjective factors, including related to creating image of such country in *global rating systems.* Today, each and every country has become the object of scrutiny by the said systems and it is reflected within numerous, single or multidimensional parameters. The leading international organizations like UN, IMF, WB, as well as leading countries or their groups (USA, EU) may stand behind such *parametrization*. Private rating agencies, such as Standard & Poor's, Fitch Group, Moody's as well as the most numerous research and non-profit organizations are of no less importance in this regard. For a small country (sometimes for a large one as well) position it occupies in such rating system(s) factually means the *branding* as well as it creates its image to be addressed by individuals, organizations or countries interested in cooperation with it. In majority of cases such evaluation is rather subjective, despite continuous attempts to improve them, since they cannot (or do not) take into account specifics of development of any individual country and put side-by-side rather incompatible countries. For instance, judged by the GDP per capita Georgia is positioned alongside with tropical African countries (or even behind them), although the factual quality of life in Georgia is much higher. The problem here is that while planning and implementing their development policies, any small country authorities have to take into account the parameters, which evaluate the country and define its place in rating systems, to attune development plans and programs to these parameters. Accordingly, this quite often leads to creation of a *closed circle –*

development policy takes into account such evaluation parameters (often subjective), while subsequent parametrization is based on such subjective values etc. – *ad infinitum*. Taking the above into account it seems to be rather important to *weed out* the numerous development parameters in order to determine those, which may relatively objectively define problems and needs of Georgia as a small country.

Julia Kaczmarek-Khubnaia
PhD Student
Adam Mickiewicz University in Pozna , Poland

Factors and Barriers of Regional Development in Georgia

Choosing a development path leading to continuous and balanced development has become one of the main objectives of many modern states. This goal can only be achieved through adaptation of a comprehensive country management system, i.e. by implementing necessary solutions (factors) that activate development[1] while, at the same time, eliminating or mitigating the process' barriers[2] (mainly regional disparities and spatial contrasts, on both economic and social levels).

An example of a country working towards sustainable development is Georgia, as evidenced by the records contained in its strategies and programmes (e.g. *Georgia 2020*, or *The Regional Development Program of Georgia for 2015-2017*). The fall of the 'Iron Curtain' has undoubtedly a been a breakthrough moment for Georgia, an opportunity for a 're-opening', which can be seen in the re-orientation of political, economic, and military ties.

Systemic transformation has been a strong influence on the development process of the country as a whole as well as of its regions. According to Bagdzi ski and Maik (1995), the transformation caused '*a complete change in economic and social relations at regional and local levels resulting from introducing, into the regional system, of new criteria*

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[1] Development activating factors are defined as being active and (to some extent) controllable as opposed to determinants (conditions), which are pre-existent and as such, are more difficult to control or change in a short amount of time. (Chojnicki, Czy 2004).

[2] Under the term of 'barriers of process development' we understand:
1) existence of specific restrictions; and / or
2) absence of specific development activating factors within a given area.
(Bagdzi ski, 1994; Ch dzy ski,2007).

regulating its functioning ...' which, in turn, led to *'revealing of many disadvantageous phenomena and processes'*. Apart from struggling with high unemployment rate, spatial and functional conflicts or increase in social inequality (Bagdzinski & Maik; 1995), Georgia has also been struggling with other negative effects of the transformation: ubiquitous corruption, nepotism or ethnic wars have been effectively destabilising the situation of the country.

When analysing the last 26 years of independent Georgia, one can clearly see that the negative consequences of the past of country management system (low social and economic quality of life) have been addressed and are being dealt with. Modern literature on the subject, research results of various international organisations, strategies of Georgian ministries, press reports as well as own observations of the author, suggest a necessity of introducing and implementing further changes that, by eliminating existing, often historically determined barriers, would accelerate the development process.

The purpose of this presentation is to identify and describe the key elements affecting the level of socio-economic development of regional units of Georgia: the activating factors and the inhibiting barriers. The speaker will also address the issue of strong regional diversification.

George Mchedlishvili
Associate Professor
International Black Sea University, Georgia

Contrasting Views of the West in the three South Caucasus Countries: A Comparative Analysis

Since regaining independence from the Soviet Union, the three South Caucasus states have followed divergent paths, both domestically and in terms of their foreign policies. I would argue that: (1) in no other sphere have the policies of the three South Caucasus states been more different than in foreign affairs, and (2) the foreign policy orientation/preferences influenced domestic development, and not the other way around, as is the case in most countries. The reasons for such a unique phenomenon - and it does qualify as 'unique', given the massive commonalities in history and culture among the three countries – lie first, in the character of the leaders that came (or returned) to power shortly after regaining independence and second, in the fact that the region made an important appearance on the global map mostly as a potential energy and transportation route. I will discuss how the geopolitical realities and the nature of the leaderships in the three countries shaped their different views of the West as well as what can (and may) be done to improve the rather tainted image of the West.

Seifulla Rashidov
Professor
Izmail State University f Humanities, Ukraine

"The Islamic State" in the North Caucasus

After June 29, 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in a mosque in Iraq's Mosul declared a caliphate in the conquered territories (and he also declared himself a caliph), the organization "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" was renamed and got the name of "Islamic State". The grouping of the Islamic State (IS) immediately called upon all Muslims to swear allegiance to the new caliph. Their main goal was to build a "caliphate" on the entire territory of the planet, governed by the caliph of the Islamic State, in which everyone should live according to the Shariah standards fixed in the Quran and the Sunnah. "The Islamic state" was declared the only country in the world where they rule according to the Shariah. Some time after the formation, the "Islamic state" declared its plans to extend its activities to the Russian North Caucasus. In September 3, 2014 a video appeared in the Internet, in which the fighters of the "IS" appealed to Russian President Putin: "With the permission of Allah, we will liberate Chechnya and the entire Caucasus! "The Islamic State" is and will be, and it expands with the permission of Allah. Your throne has already shaken, it is under threat and will fall with our arrival to you. We are already on the way with the permission of Allah!". After the oath to al-Baghdadi caliph of the "Islamic state" in June 2015, by the leaders of four of the six provinces of the "Imarat Kavkaz" - Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia and the Kabardino-Balkaria - the Islamic State announced the creation of 34 provinces in the North Caucasus region – "Vilayat Kavkaz". Thus, the "Islamic state" wants to demonstrate its global viability in the introducing of jihad. At the same time, the creation of the "Vilayat Kavkaz" leads to the decline of the "Imarat Kavkaz" as an al-Qaidi department in the Caucasus. The Russian state declared its determination to eradicate separatist sentiments in the south of Russia and to increase its counter-terrorist operations in the North Caucasus. Time has shown that the attempts of the fighters of the "Islamic state" "with the permission of Allah to liberate Chechnya and the whole Caucasus" and to establish the "Vilayat Kavkaz" in this region failed. The activities of the "Islamic State" in the North Caucasus resulted in two dozen acts of terrorism committed in Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia and the Stavropol Territory. At the same time, the "Islamic State" has never

claimed responsibility for armed attacks in Karachay-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria. Since 2018, the "Islamic state" has chosen religious buildings as a new object of attack: two attacks were committed on Orthodox churches and one attack - on a Muslim religious object. The attack of May 2018 on the Orthodox Church of Michael the Archangel in Grozny was carried out by representatives of the Caucasus branch of the Islamic State – "Vilayat Kavkaz". Thus, after the territorial destruction of the "Islamic State" in Syria and Iraq, the threat of terrorist attacks in the North Caucasus by the returnees and local fighters is still preserved.

Rustam Begeulov
Professor
Karachay-Circassian State University, Russia

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Alexandre Kukhianidze
Professor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Russia: Leviathan, Kleptocracy, or Super Mafia?

Politics, crime and corruption are 'siblings' in many political systems and states, but not all of them are kleptocracies. What is modern Russia - a 'leviathan', a'kleptocracy,' or a Mafiosi state as many political analysts qualify her as? A brief review of the definitions of professional and political organized crime, Mafiosi state and kleptocracy helps better understand Russia's current status. Two periods of political-criminal relations are compared in this research- Stalinism and Putinism, which includes: Josef Stalin's activities in the Caucasus in the beginning of 1900s and bolshevism, as a form of political organized crime, Vladimir Putin's activities in Saint-Petersburg in the beginning of 1990s and the consolidation of his power in Kremlin.

Is modern Russia a 'super mafia', as Mark Galeotti wrote in his book "The Vory - Russia's Super Mafia," or just a typical post-soviet kleptocracy? What role does the Russian Orthodox Church play in this system? Why did Georgia manage, to carry out anti-corruption and anti-criminal reforms and Russia did not? Most importantly – does modern Russia represent a serious threat to international security and particularly to Georgia, and if so, then how could these threats be neutralized?

Boris A. Portnov
Professor
University of Haifa, Israel

Geopolitical and Environmental Risk Factors behind Mortgage Defaults in Israel

Real estate market, heavily depended on mortgages given by financial institutions to individual borrowers, is a major component of national economies. If this market faults, the entire economy may become fragile, as happened in many countries around the globe during the 2008/2009 worldwide economic crisis. It is thus important to understand factors potentially affecting mortgage default (MD), which is a failure of a borrower to make mortgage payments on time. If the borrower misses three or more of loan payments, the mortgage moves into the MD category. This study examines the effect of individual attributes of the borrowers and several environmental and security factors on MD events in Israel during the 2010-2011 period, by analyzing 91,537 individual records obtained from a nation-wide mortgage database. The study focuses on several environmental and security risk factors, including five air pollutants (NOx, O3, PM10, PM2.5, and SO2), proximity to the Lebanon-Syria and Gaza area borders and location outside the 1949 armistice ("green") line. In the study, geographic locations of properties were defined by their 7-digit ZIP-codes, and linked to the air pollution records of local air quality monitoring stations by the nearest monitor method, while other proximity variables were estimated using GIS tools. The analysis was performed using logistic regressions, in which environmental variables, individual characteristics of the borrower and property-specific attributes served as predictors. The analysis revealed statistically significant associations between MD risk and air pollution exposure estimates, proximity to the Gaza border and location outside the "green" line ($p<0.01$). We explain these associations by the fact that prolonged exposure to air pollution may elevate morbidity and weaken the repayment ability of the borrower, while security risks may limit the attractiveness of high-risk areas to investors, thus restricting employment opportunities available, and decreasing the asset value due to out-migration

of economically established residents. To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first study which investigated the effect of air pollution and proximity to conflict zones on MD rates.

Giorgi Kvinikadze
Associate Professor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

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Richard W. Maass
Assistant Professor
University of Evansville, USA

Annexation: How Democracy and Xenophobia Limited US Territorial Expansion

Why did the United States stop annexing territory? Early US leaders are widely remembered for annexing Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and California, but they notably declined opportunities to annex other areas like Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. This project examines why US leaders seized some opportunities for territorial expansion but declined others. In doing so, it raises questions about the adequacy of the conventional wisdom on international territorial expansion, which focuses on the profitability of conquest, and it proposes that adding domestic political variables offers a better explanation of the full pattern of US territorial expansion. In particular, the combination of democracy and xenophobia in the United States made the annexation of alien populations domestically costly for US leaders. I test this theory against profitability theory in my forthcoming book using 23 case studies of US leaders' decision-making, based on primary source documents and archival research.

Eteri Tsintsadze-Maass
PhD Candidate
University of Kentucky, USA

Regional Hegemons and their Neighbors: The Effects of Nationalism on International Relations

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the relationships between Russia and its 14 post-Soviet neighbors took vastly different shapes, ranging from mutual cooperation to military conflicts. Why would states with similar past experiences under the Soviet rule and similar asymmetric power positions vis-à-vis the regional hegemon experience such radically different relationships with Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union? Theories of international relations that consider states to be primarily influenced by the international distribution of power are unable to offer a compelling answer to this question because they predict that states facing similar international constraints should behave similarly. This study proposes that nationalism, the strongest unifying collective identity within states, can explain the variation of post-Soviet states' foreign policy choices vis-à-vis Russia. If states' particular historical developments such as previous struggles for independence and interstate conflicts are combined with effective information dissemination mechanisms such as public education and mass media, their population becomes primed to see themselves as unique socio-political units. After gaining formal independence, these states will display higher policy independence from and greater hostility towards the regional hegemon that previously dominated them. The theory is tested here through an in-depth analysis of one region, consisting of Russia and its 14 neighboring states. This study sheds light on often-assumed but rarely systematically studied effects of nationalism on interstate relations, and makes a contribution toward a more nuanced treatment of the concept of nationalism by distinguishing between national characteristics, national experiences, and information dissemination mechanisms.

Justyna Ol dzka
Doctor
Vistula University, Poland

CIS in the years 1991-2016. A quarter-century of changes or stagnation?

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the processes of system transformation led to the implementation of various political models in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Initial observation of the trajectory of transformation of political systems in all countries formed after the collapse of the USSR, suggested that they would develop in a two-way manner in a natural way: according to authoritarian scenarios or democratization patterns, it was assumed that non-democratisms would occur in a distinct minority. After years of observation of socio-political changes, it can be concluded that post-Soviet political regimes show an autonomous internal logic and that the whole array of authoritarianisms fixed in the region shows their diversity, specificity, dynamics and broad development perspectives. The experiences of the countries described prove that neither democratization nor the regime's authoritarianism are linear processes. This is confirmed by the Freedom House report published in 2017 as part of the "Nations in Transit" research project, in which 8 of the 15 post-Soviet states were classified as a consolidated authoritarian regime, one was classified as a semi-consolidated authoritarian regime, and three were hybrid or transitional regimes. This means that according to the authors of the report, there is not a single, fully democratic state in the CIS area. On the contrary, the tendency to authoritarize political regimes is enhanced. The work presents selected political processes taking place in some post-Soviet countries, which in the early 1990s combined not only one international organization, but also the lack of crystallized plans for the future. In principle, each of the former republics had to redefine its political and social structure, that is, to undertake in-depth reforms. In the first years of independence, all countries automatically implemented solutions known from Western democracies, and the fact of the mechanical adaptation of some formal and institutional solutions to the new political and geopolitical

reality could even lay the foundation for a real system transformation. It did not happen because in some of the countries of the region, which initially led the way in implementing democratic solutions, the emergence of new political institutions and tools, it served only imitative function. In fact, under the guise of democratic structures and methods, Soviet solutions that were adapted by the power of postnomenclature functioned perfectly well. Thus, political systems evolved initially towards crypto authoritarianism or hybridity, however, minimal protests from both the public, opposition representatives and the international community led to explicitly authoritarian changes.

Walenty Baluk
Professor
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Teona Mataradze
Associate Professor

Tatia Kartlelishvili
PhD Student

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

The Post-Socialist Transformation of Mining Cities

Following the Soviet Union dissolution, former Soviet republics did face different kinds of challenges. At the first stage of transformation, economic, social and political changes had negative impact on post-soviet republics' populations, social institutions and conditions in general. The cities were not exceptions. Urban infrastructure was destroyed and living conditions got deteriorated. Researchers of post-socialist countries' transformation (Lang, et al 2015) argue about geographical diversification, resulting in polarization between the centers and the peripheries. Number of peripheral cities, particularly the ones with mining industry, were extensively developed during the socialist period. Industrialization in the Soviet Union put the emphasis on this type of cities that enjoyed central subordination to the system, meaning that infrastructure, supply and workers' social care was better here than in many other cities. Mining activities and metallurgy represented priorities in the Soviet Union and such cities with mining and metallurgical production enjoyed state investments (Gentile and Sjöberg, 2006). In the post-socialist period, preferential positions of similar cities have been weakened. Mining works, which were associated with great economic expenses, were a hard burden for the countries' budget, so the volume of mining production decreased or stopped completely. Accordingly, the towns with populations entirely connected with this form of production massively emigrated in search for other sources of economic revenue. The target of our research is the mining cities of Georgia, namely Chiatura and Tkibuli. After the Soviet collapse, Tkibuli coal mining in the shaft was virtually ceased, and the coal-filling factory was collapsed. In 2006 coal mining was restored in two mines, and

the coal-filling factory was renewed. The total number of employees is approx. 1000 people. In 2005, Georgia had 148 enterprises that were involved in mining and quarrying out of a total of 4,632 industrial enterprises, which comprised 3.2% of the total number of industrial enterprises. Seven of these 148 enterprises were state-owned and the rest were private. In 2005, the workforce involved in mining and quarrying totaled 8,600 out of a total industrial labor force of 94,300, or 8.6% of the industrial labor force. State-owned mining and quarrying enterprises employed 5,700 people and private enterprises employed 2,900 people. Mining and quarrying contributed 10.4% of the total value of industrial production in 2005. In the recent years miners have been on strike several times. They demanded a state review of labor policy. According to the employees, the conditions in Tkibuli shafts are extremely difficult and dangerous for workers. Also, social protection, healthcare and emergency response systems do not work. Working environment, equipment and tools used by miners are obsolete and dangerous, that often is the reason for miners' death and injuries. In 2007-2016, 414 people were killed and 716 got seriously injured from industrial traumas across the country, according to the joint data of the Georgian Trade Unions Union and the Interior Ministry. In 2016 alone, 58 died and 84 people were seriously injured. In 2015, 42 people died and 80 were badly injured. Since 2011 the death rate keeps increasing. As for methodology, the research uses literature review, document and discourse analysis. The literature review includes an overview of relevant old and new magazines, newspapers and books. The study of literature can be sorted by: 1) historical development of mining cities, 2) the importance of workers, their rights and protection, 3) contemporary situation in the mining cities. The paper will analyze Georgian Labor Code, professional union action plan, contracts, various articles. Discourse analysis implies analyzing articles, blogs and comments published in the social networks or other sources from Internet.

Beata Surmacz
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City Diplomacy

Diplomacy is one of the oldest mechanisms of managing the international environment. It is traditionally associated with operation of the state. However, in the contemporary times the parameters of functioning of the international environment have changed considerably. States are no longer the only entities participating in the international relations. Along with states, sub-state actors (regions, cities) have emerged, as well as supra-state (the EU) and non-state ones. Sub-state actors go through the process of repositioning in the contemporary international order: from being an object of management to building their own subject status in this respect. In order to achieve this goal, they increasingly use mechanisms and instruments which were the sole domain of the state until recently.

Despite substantial attention for the region diplomacy, academic discussion has focused less on the increasing role of cities in diplomacy. The paper aims to introduce the concept of city diplomacy. It will be argued that cities have become important actors on the world stage, they have developed diplomatic apparatus and city diplomacy is becoming more and more professional diplomatic activity.

Malkhaz Matsaberidze
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Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Comprehending the Conception of Nation-State During the Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918-1921)

Declaration of the independence of Georgia implied the formation of the nation-state, although governing political force – the Social-Democratic Party of Georgia acknowledged this fact later. This shift came with significant changes in the ideas regarding a national issue. During this period, the move from so-called "proletarian internationalism" position to that of defense of national interests could be traced through the writings and public speeches by Social-Democratic Party representatives. The paper analyses articles from the newspaper "Ertoba", published in 1918, exclusively dedicated to the problems of the independence of Georgia, as well as essays published in the newspaper "Social-Democrat" (Kutaisi) by Viktor Nozadze. Viktor Nozadze was the first author to try finding theoretical justifications for Georgia as a nation-state. The essay of Nozadze, "The Independent Nation-State – Georgia," was published in "Ertoba" in 1919, preceding the opening of the Constituent Assembly of Georgia. Interestingly it had a note attached that said "some of the theoretical propositions of these essays are not shared by the newspaper editorial." This was a sign of a complicated process of national question comprehension. Initially, the declaration of independence of Georgia was considered as a tactical move by Georgian Social-Democrats; this is attested by the letter sent to Russian Social-Democrats (at the end of May, 1918). Later on, however, the Georgian Social-Democrats split with the Russian Social-Democratic Party and established an independent Social-Democratic Party (November, 1918). The conception of the Georgian nation-state was significantly reflected during the preparatory works for 1921 Constitution. The constitutional commission considered creation of a strong nation-state as one of its primary tasks; as the head of the Constitutional Commission, P. Sakvarelidze mentioned: "we are aimed at creation of a unified, strong national organism and we will try our best to mitigate those challenges which lead to its weaknesses and fracture." The problem of national minorities was to be solved according to the interests of the nation-state as well. The process of formation of Georgia as a nation-state was undermined by the Soviet occupation and its consequences were revealed in the post-Soviet life of Georgia too.

Salome Dundua
Associate Professor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Foreign Policy Orientation Issues in Georgia's Governmental Discourse

The aim of this presentation is to discuss governmental foreign policy orientation discourse in Georgia. It does not intend analyzing the concrete steps toward foreign political orientation, but rather the discourses the Georgian governmental level produces to define foreign policy vector. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Georgia like all other post-Soviet republics faced different fundamental social, economic, cultural or political problems. One of these problems was to define/develop foreign policy orientation and to properly explain it to the society. From 1990 till today, so-called Western/European discourse on one hand and non-western/pro-Russian on the other, do exist in a Georgian political discourse. Each discourse has its own "justificatory" arguments and respond to existing political, territorial integrity and economic issues in Georgia. In this presentation the main "data" is a political text. The process of defining political orientation and subsequent identity text is one of the main communication tools. Each text is elaborated by actors and it gets influenced by those actors' political statuses and views. Therefore, analyzing discourses by the government representatives allows us to study which identity markers are emphasized and how in the process foreign political orientation formation. In this presentation such discourses are expressed via texts, interviews and reports of the first persons of the state: the presidents and the prime-ministers. The sources for this presentation are official texts, interviews, election platforms by the presidents and the prime-ministers published in online or print media.

Natia Zedginidze
Assistant Researcher
Ilia State University, Georgia

Attempts to Elaborate an Ethical Code of Behaviour of Party in Georgia

The present article aims studying attempts to create ethical code of party behaviour during pre-election periods in Georgia. By using face-to-face interviews with the experts and content analysis it seeks to study the role of having a fair moral-ethical dimension in politics for sustainable development of legal, democratic and independent state. The functionality of democracy in the modern world is essentially related to the existence and effectiveness of political parties. In the Western democracies of a high level of political culture and civil consciousness, the ethical-legal dimension of behaviour is considered the cornerstone of a democratic state. The Council of Europe has been calling on both member and partner states since 1999 to develop ethical codes of behaviour in all branches and levels of government that will support the recovery of the democratic process. Based on the above mentioned, in Georgia, which seeks to create a Western-style democracy, it is necessary to develop an ethical code of party behaviour that should promote fair and healthy political process. Since regaining independence from USSR to the present day, pre-election fight between the political parties in Georgia is essentially a fight for government, political parties try to bribe voters and do often use violent methods. By doing this, political parties neglect the values and pluralism ofpolitical party rivalry that is a major condition for state development. Thus, they ignore willingness of society to support this or that political party, which goes against ethics and justice and prevents not only stability of the political process, but also the basis of firm democracy existence. Political parties understand that such condition is unacceptable and development of "Ethical Code of Party Behaviour" gains actuality in the pre-election period. The aim of the article is to find out the efforts to elaboration of the Ethical Code of Party Behaviour in pre-election periods since 1991 to this day. Despite many attempts, establishing an "Ethical Code of Party Behaviour" for all political forces failed. Thus, creating a legal and moral environment with a healthy competition among the political parties is still far from being achieved in Georgia. The delegated constitutional rights that political parties have are not proportionate to their political responsibility. The ethical-legal environment of the political

process implies having honest approaches and conscious sense of responsibility not only after entering the legislative body, but also party behaviour during the election process. We can assume that the party ignoring moral and legal principles in the process of gaining power will act within the same unlawful and unethical manner after coming to power. Eliminating good faith and sense of responsibility in the political process promotes nihilism, conformism and unfair environment. There is a lack of academic works about Georgian political discourse on this issue, even though the problem poses serious challenge to a democratic and legal state-building process.

Vladimer Nafetvaridze
PhD Student
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Cybersecurity as a Cornerstone of Electronic Governance

Electronic governance is the modern way of communication between Government and society. The communication process is provided using the internet which makes the process of governance even more effective.

Transparency and public engagement are one of the main values of a democratic process. In conditions of electronic governance, the population has more opportunities to take part in ongoing social and political processes. The importance of the internet and digital technologies grows gradually.

Electronic governance development encourages the development of democracy. Most of the states are trying to introduce digital technologies in the governance process, therefore, the research of the process of establishing electronic governance has a crucial role. There are many pieces of research on this topic, had by international organizations. Among them is the UN E-Government Survey, which includes the results of 193 countries.

Increasing the popularity of the electronic governance is fuelled by the technical possibilities, brought by the internet. Virtual space became the main tool of public engagement in various political and social processes. Besides the internet portals offered by the government to participate in a decision-making process, active citizens create their own portals for public consolidation and mobilization around an important topic. In order to implement electronic governance, there should be some criteria should be fulfilled. First of all, this is a political will of the government, that should provide electronic services; the next factor is presence of ICT infrastructure, citizens do not have access to the internet they cannot use electronic services offered by the government. The net aspect is the level of readiness of society.

This criterion includes the high level of public awareness towards government digital platforms. Citizens can't use electronic services if they don't have information and trust about it.   Trust in its turn is ensured by reliable cyber security. The main aim of this article is to present the role of cybersecurity in a process of electronic governance establishing. In the framework of the study, cases of   Georgian government Internet portals failures and their influence on the public opinion about electronic services will be discussed.

Eka Darbaidze
Doctor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Gender Analysis of Programs Presented by Election Subjects for Georgia's 2017 Municipal Elections

The right to women's participation in political life is one of the fundamental human rights, while the existence of gender balance in representative bodies is the basic principle of democracy. Women's involvement is equally problematic issue in case of both, developing as well as consolidated democracies. Women are under-represented at economic and political decision-making levels in all parts of the world, and therefore deprived of their political decision-making ability. In the developed countries of high political culture, however sophisticated electoral laws and steps by the governments towards equality casuse somewhat mitigates these problems. According to Inter-Parliamentary Union data as of April 2017 Georgia occupies the 124th position among 193 countries with 24 women in the parliament (IPU 2017). Observing the women's representation growth rate in Georgia shows that women's representation in Georgian parliament grew merely by 5 % in 22 years. Despite recent efforts by the Government and the civil sector to ensure women's polygraph representation and the promotion of financial incentives for political parties, women's representation at the local governance remains significantly low. Georgia's Municipal Elections 2017 demonstrated once again that majority representation system does not support growth rate of women's political involvement. The number of women elected by majoritarian system is at 8%, which is significantly lower compared to number of women elected through proportional representation system. The same refers to legislative elections where female representation in proportional representation system is 23.38%, while in the majoritarian system it is only 4.35%. Women represent 52% of the Georgian population and the interests of this majority should be adequately reflected not only in the programs of Georgian political parties, but they should be presented in public-political life as well. That is why it is interesting to study how issues important for women voters are presented by the election subjects and how these programs addressed to women's needs and expectations.

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Manon Bokuchava
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Media of the Occupied Regions

While central Georgia government cannot exercise control over the occupied territories of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions for more than 25 years, the persons living in the area create public opinion and values, characteristic uniquely for those societies. Although Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions are largely inaccessible for Georgian researchers on ground, it is still possible to study the local society through online media of the separatist regions through internet. The research aims at studying the Russian-language local of the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Regions, regarding the broad issues of Georgia and Russia, issues concerning the International Organizations (NATO, European Union, OSCE, UN), issues of the religious, sexual, ethnic minorities and women's rights and gender equality issues. This research studies main characteristics of media of the Russia-occupied regions of Georgia and analyzes the influence of media editorials over the public opinion making in the occupied territories. I also take into account the readers' responds to the articles. The hypothesis of the study is "the Russian-speaking media of the occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali creates an image of enemy from Georgia." This media covers Georgia-related news with a negative bias, while it depicts an image Russia as a friendly nation. Media of the occupied areas covers Russia related issues with a positive bias towards her. The analyzed media covers news regarding the International Organizations with a negative bias. Much of the political issues are covered by neglect of journalistic standards. The religious, sexual, ethnic minorities coverage is discriminative towards them. Media is not a watchdog for the human fundamental rights in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali - the issues of gender equality are covered in breach of basic journalistic standards. The present research will be conducted by using political propaganda, framing and priming theory. I will analyze the works of media of the occupied regions by content analysis. The following media-sources are analyzed: Apsny.ru, asarkia.info, abkhaziform.com, apsnypress.ru, sputnik-abkhazia.ru, apsnypress.info, Sputh.ossetia.info; osinform.org; sputnik-ossetia.ru, mc-ir.ru; Research period was from January to March, 2018.

Thinathin Macharashvili
PhD Student
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Reflection of "prison scandal" in visual composition of modern Georgian print media

The aim of our report is to demonstrate how the most discussed story of 2012 "Prison Scandal" was visualized in the modern Georgian printed media. The scandal played a decisive role in the change of power in Georgia. As Louis Navarro, back then head of National-Democratic Institute (NDI) – Georgia said "the prison scandal" played a decisive role in the elections. people, who had not decided who to vote for shortly before elections, made their choices after the prison scandal." This presentation is interested in what means of information visualization were utilized by the print media to cover such an important fact and enrich the information provided by the verbal code. Based on semiotic analysis, I try to analyze what kind of additional subtext information was given to readers by the non-verbal code. I selected the following magazines and newspapers for analysis: "24 hours", "Resonance", "Kviris Palitra", "Prime Time", "Asaval-Dasavali", "Tabula" and "Liberal". They were selected based on the following criteria: high circulation, stability and distribution throughout Georgia, different functions and objectives of communication, different degrees of editorial independence, abundance of expressive means, in particular the variety of photos. As mentioned, semiotic analysis, namely myths analysis was used as an analytical approach, and as a research technique - content analysis. Semiotic analysis allows us to find out explicit as well as sub-text information. In these magazines and newspapers thematic and personal photos, as well as pictures describing the existing situation are used to illustrate the information, loads it with a much more convincing message. Also, it should be noted that besides socio-cultural codes, intertextual values are also activated via creating thematic photos, that intervenes with the creation of connotations and enhances the implicit values. Also, in one of the instances, digital-graphic means were used to create the image, namely a table that instead of informing the reader

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objectively, incorrectly accented statistical data and confused the reader even further. Based on semiotic analysis, I examined the myths that the magazines and newspapers created by attaching visual and verbal codes to describe the so-called "prison scandal." Implicit meanings revealed through myth analysis were placed in coding system. It was shown that the visual information published in modern Georgian printed media illustrated a more peaceful form of "human rights protection" than the aggressive one. As for the attitude expressed through connotative meanings to the United National Movement (UNM) government, it is obvious that negative attitude is often expressed, while the loyalty towards it is rarely seen. The study also showed how the visualized information implicitly encouraged the readers to engage in protest rallies. It was found that the symbolic contents of visual component speak about how media was politically bought off, rather than opposite.

Amiran Berdzenishvili
Professor
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

The Peculiarities of Social Movement in Georgian Society

Georgian society as a post-soviet country faces the challenges of inevitable modernization. If different social forces in Georgia want to catch up with the leading countries, then they have to modernize the country's economic, political, social and cultural systems in such a way that these systems create basis for self-sufficient society with its own cultural identity. In Georgian society modernization mainly takes place through more or less successfully implemented reforms main actors of which primarily come from political and governmental forces. Without the development of the social movement, civil activism, however, the political forces alone cannot successfully transform the society into modernized one. The present article explores the social agents eager to play an important role, if not decisive, in modernization of the society and tries to define the peculiarities of their functioning. For this purpose, based on the number of theoretical works I provide a model for determining the development and viable stages of social movement, and thus the role that the certain social force with a certain level of development can play.

I review several groups of social movement that are more or less authoritative and active in modern Georgian society, which encourage the society to activate and effectively solve existing economic, political, social and cultural problems, by which they promote/support to the process of modernization of Georgian society.

I studied the action strategy and tactics of the following social movement groups: "Green Movement", "Green Fist", "Laboratory 1918", "Georgian Feminists", "Auditorium 115", "White Noise", "Fabians", "Orthodox Parents' Union","No Occupation", "Georgian March"and some others. Analysis made it clear that each of them is quite weak and are at the first stage of social movement development that is the stage of social anxiety and tension. They are aware of the problem, have anxiety and are mainly of a protest character. Despite the fact that in the information-digital era Internet and the social networks greatly help social actors, very often

appeals/calls to protest remain in a virtual field. This is largely influenced by the Soviet legacy of having no tradition of civil activities. On one hand, however, the increase in effectiveness of social movement action intensifies young generation's activism; on the other hand, they take advantages of smart use of social networks and such advantages are well understood by the social movement leaders. Last but not least, I argue that the social movement will be strengthened and its influence will grow even further in the Georgian society. This is believed to help one of the most powerful modernization actors in reaching its task to successfully modernize Georgia into a self-sufficient society.

Natela Donadze
Associate Professor
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Narrative Analysis of the Women's Stories

In a contemporary Georgian society social–economic, political and cultural changes take place both on macro-level that is institutions and organizations and on micro-level of social groups and individuals as well. In order to study the condition and social characteristics of the women living in the regions, we have analyzed the research done in the framework of the Caucasus Barometer 2017 Georgia and the women's stories (50 stories) told by the participants of "Open Society – Georgia" contest. The women's stories provide us with vast quantity of information to analyze transformational processes, value formation and behavioral norms' development and to determine social character - a link between society and personality – of the women living in the regions of our country.

In order to study the specificity of the women living in the regions, the results were analysed through three settlement types: capital, rural and urban settlements. It was revealed that the type of settlement has a significant impact on women's social and economic as well as cultural or emotional position. The study revealed that the share of women having income is higher in rural areas (this income is relatively low and is less than 100 dollars) than in the case of women in small urban settlements or in the capital. However, the economic situation of families is relatively lower in rural areas than in urban settlements and in Tbilisi in general. The Women living in rural areas are more likely to assess their health conditions worse than those living in urban areas.

According to the rate of happiness, women living in rural areas feel less happy. According to the results of the survey, women in the capital are more engaged in the activities related to the Internet, cultural events and civic activity than those living in the regions (urban and rural settlements). Although the rate of participation in the elections is the highest in rural areas, rural women feel the abandonment from the government.

The authors of the stories review the processes characteristic of Georgia, on the whole, and in the regions, in particular. They focus their attention on existing problems, such as difficult social-economic, legal, political and cultural conditions, domestic violence, human rights issues, gender discrimination, etc.

The vast majority of women living in rural areas, based on their way of life, are traditions-driven and that holds leading role in their value system. For example, according to their evaluation keeping tradition is a significantly more important for a good citizen than supporting people worse off than themselves or voting in the elections. Analyzing the women's stories gives slightly different results: the authors take an active part (or want to take) in various spheres of their regions' social life in order to solve some of the problems. One of their objectives is to help other women to improve their social-economic conditions, to give them possibilities of self-realization and self-assertion or to help them become better informed on various issues.

Kakha Ketsbaia
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Postmodern and Suicide of Society

Postmodern transformations of man and society set new challenges to modern sociology which failed to answer them. Therefore, it became necessary to form an alternative sociology. Postmodern discourse questions existence of modern sociology as an epistemology but not as a theory of society in general. As Baudrillard shows, modern sociology has exhausted itself and even more, nowadays it has no subject to study. Modern sociology was oriented to totality and that postmodern sociology finds unacceptable. Total society underwent total deconstruction. Besides, in classical sociology economics was the factor determining typology of society. Postmodern sociology rejects such position. According to postmodern sociology economics in a traditional sense of the word is replaced by trans and virtual economics. If the subject matter of modern sociology was modern society and sociology came into existence in result of analysis of such type of society, today we see that modern society has turned into trans-society and modern sociology is unable to study it. Post-society is to be analyzed by post-sociology which will be a sociology of a new dimension. Many contemporary scientists, however, think that it is the death of sociology. But it is not correct. In this case we argue about a new non-modern model of sociology which has a different subject of research. A new type of society has replaced modern society and consequently traditional sociology is replaced by trans-sociology. On the basis of this brief characterization of the post-modern society we can argue whether all these features will drive the world civilization to destruction (not only from the view point of moral but from the view point of physical existence as well) and whether we have to face the so-called civilizational suicide in the form of post-modernism. According to post-modernism, traditional society and man died and we do simply have to face their lifeless bodies having their own (virtual) rules of existence. We may think that these rules are

absolutely unacceptable for real society and domination of the virtual will last long. The leads to an impression that in a post-modern condition the society commits suicide. Time will probably show what the further development in this direction will be and what other surprises might offer.

Revaz Jorbenadze
Professor

Teona Mataradze
Associate Professor

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Territorial Identity of the Inhabitants in the "New" and "Old" Neighbourhoods (Case of Tbilisi)

The modern development of Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, as well as its growth is very much connected with the Soviet past of the country. The settlement structure of Tbilisi was defined by the Soviet approach to create the standardized settlement type all over the country. At the beginning of the 21st century, when the Georgia had overcome the economic hardship and political instability, the development of the capital city sped up, with the mushrooming new construction within or next to the Soviet style settlements. According to the management style the "new" settlements create different urban space unlike to the "old" ones. Due to these changes it is important to study the identity of the residents of different settlements that enjoy emotional, cognitive and motivational factors. The presentation is based on the research done in 2017 within the targeted scientific-research project financed by the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, faculty of Social and Political Sciences. The aim of the presentation is to display the territorial identity of Tbilisi inhabitants in the "new" and "old" settlements. Within the presentation we will also discuss the the motivations of the residents while choosing the space for living, issues related to the existence or formation of the neighbourhood community, the ideal types of space management and problems related to the apartments, settlements or the capital in general. In order to show the different motivational and cognitive factors of the territorial identities of the different settlement types, we measured the value orientation of the respondents in relation to left–right political spectrum, authoritarianism-liberalism, environmentalism and gender equality. Research design included interdisciplinary approaches and combinations of different methods. The first stage of the research was literature review, while at the second stage the qualitative research was done using focus group and in-depth interview methods. After analyzing the data, the structured questionnaire was developed for quantitative face-to-face survey. We used

the quota sample design targeting comparison of the three types of settlements: Soviet settlements, new gated settlements and new settlements. All the settlements were sampled in the Saburtalo district of Tbilisi in order to avoid the influence of other independent variables related to the spatial distribution of the city. The data was analyzed using one, two and multidimensional statistical methods.

Amiran Berdzenishvili
Professor

Ilona Gogia
Phd Student

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Students' Digital Literacy Research

There are difficult social trends in the world from the last quarter of the 20th century. The importance of traditional technologies is reduced and the new, informative, social, intellectual and technological role is increasing, and the main factors for the development of the whole world and individual societies become: human potential / skills, social capital, scientific knowledge.

On the basis on generating and consumption of knowledge, the development of the modern world is going on the informational phase. The new social reality based on intellect and knowledge is being developed spontaneous and reveals all the features of new information epoch.

The main character of the knowledge society is the aspiration of human from 21st century to build the life on the basis of knowledge. Knowledge can be defined as "The Ability to Act" as a possibility to move something in motion. Scientific and technological knowledge is primarily business-active oriented. Today there is a foundation in science and through it the new world, where knowledge with the growing size becomes the principle in human action in all areas. Thus, from the field of knowledge exlusion everything that does not enhance and enlarge „The Ability to Act", which is not a tool for "mobilizing" things that do not contribute to the transformation and development of the world.

Theoretical forms of knowledge are in social, collective and individual - in every region of personal life. Consequently, a list of professions that request the knowledge-based work are increasing and the number of jobs requiring limited cognitive abilities are rapidly decreasing. That is why it

is not surprising that fewer people are employed in material production. Thus, the only society in the modern world that "generates new knowledge by knowledge" (M. Castells), and the society, which is oriented on the traditional form of labor in the framework of existing knowledge fills the "Fourth World" and becomes the cheapest labor supplier.

Over the years, scientists have been actively exploring what skills and knowledge people have to in the knowledge society. One of the most challenging challenges of modern human is to adopt the necessary skills to use the necessary technologies. These new skills are called digital skills or digital literacy. Digital literacy is the ability to analyze and use information from different sources. Digital competence defined by the representatives of social sciences as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations and responsibilities.

The aim of the students' digital literacy / competence level research was to study digital competences, particularly the knowledge and attitudes that they operate in relation to digital technologies. To achieve the aim of the research, the following objectives were set: 1. Determine the level of digital competences of students. 2. Frequency and motivation of using internet and social networking. 3. Their attitudes to the Internet and digital technologies. 4. Most commonly used computer programs and applications. 5. Ethical issues of information security and Internet activity.

To achieve the aim of the research, the level digital literacy of students have studied using the quantitative research methods. In particular, quantitative research has conducted through face-to-face interviews method. The research tool was a questionnaire. In research there were participated the students from ten higher education institutions. It was used stratified sampling.

According to the results of the survey, students are an active Internet users, namely more than half of the surveyed students use the Internet all day long.

In terms of digital competences and the development of internet competence it is worth noting that the majority of students have studied the Internet and computer not in the school and by school but by themselves.

It should be noted that according to one of the important indicators of digital literacy, with the activities carried out on the Internet, the majority of students are engaged in cultural-educational and communicative practices. Students are active users of social media, which means that they regularly create photo and video contents and put them in the Internet but not generating, analyzing, and synthesizing new knowledge.

If knowledge really become the constitutional characteristic or feature of modern society, then the sit production, reproduction, distribution, and consumption have to be in the center of our political discussions inevitably to become the priority attention and mobilize efforts subject for produce of scientific knowledge, that the knowledge become a leading principle and the basis in the field of human action in Georgian society.

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Esping-Andersen's Typology of Welfare State and Georgia

Social policy is one of the most important components of state policy. The following basic human needs are essential for human existence: food and shelter, sustainable and safe environment, health and disease treatment, care and supporting people who can not live independently. In the 20th century, the concept of welfare state was developed, in which the state plays an important role in the economic and social welfare of its citizens.

In „The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism" (1990), Esping Andersen presents a typology of 18 Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) welfare states based upon three principles: decommodification (the extent to which an individual's welfare is reliant upon the market, particularly in terms of pensions, unemployment benefit and sickness insurance), social stratification (the role of welfare states in maintaining or breaking down social stratification) and the private–public mix (the relative roles of the state, the family, the voluntary sector and the market in welfare provision). The operationalisation of these principles, largely using decommodification indexes, leads to the division of welfare states into three ideal regime types: Liberal, Conservative and Social Democratic.

In the Liberal regime countries (USA, Canada, Australia), state provision of welfare is minimal, benefits are modest and often attract strict entitlement criteria, and recipients are usually means tested and stigmatised. The Conservative welfare state regime (Germany, Austria, Italy, France) is distinguished by its "status differentiating" welfare programmes in which benefits are often earnings related, administered through the employer and geared towards maintaining existing social patterns. The role of the family is also emphasised and the redistributive impact is minimal. The Social Democratic regime (Sweden, Denmark and Finland) is the smallest regime cluster. Welfare provision is characterised by universal and comparatively generous benefits, a commitment to full

employment and income protection, and a strongly interventionist state used to promote equality through a redistributive social security system.

In this regard, it is important to assess the welfare state of Georgia according to the Esping-Andersen's typology and justify the theory of "(in)stable welfare states". This article analyses different aspects of well-being (pension and healthcare systems, labour-market policy and family benefits) in Georgia during the period of 1991-2013. The research showed the diversity of policies in different fields of social care. Results revealed that Georgian health and labour-market policy can be classified as a liberal, pension system – as a social-democratic and family benefits policy – as a conservative. Thus, the theory of (in)stable welfare state can be justified and Georgian state can be qualified as a country with a hybrid and instable social policy. However, further research is needed for the final confirmation (or falsification) of this theory after the current policy reforms started from 2013 are completely implemented.

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Analysis and Prevention of Conflicts causing Terrorism in Georgia

In the introductory part I will discuss briefly about terrorism, as an international global threat and about its characters (changeable, continuable, unpredictable, increasing). Attention will be paid to religious, state and separatist terrorisms, where the purpose is to weaken the state, undermine the legitimacy of government, cultivate fear and violence in a society. Presentation will refer to the manifestation of major terrorism type of religious extremism, that is widely spread by various groups with the help of financial resources, radical ideology, modern technology and recruiters. Terrorism is directly connected to asymmetrical threats where the result cannot be predicted. The ideology of terrorism helps the actors use violent acts not acceptable for the mankind and peaceful development of the world. In the presentation I will discuss the reasons of terrorism threats in Georgia caused by the factors, such as geopolitical situation, multi-ethnic population, having the Russia-occupied territories, lack of awareness of the threats in Georgian public, presence of the groups engaged in radicalization of people in Georgia, participation of some Georgian citizens in various international terrorist groups, and insufficient protection of public spaces in the country. Based on theoretical and practical research and analysis the main problem here defined as "despite international and domestic threats faced by the country, Georgian society does not seriously consider the existing threats. Georgia faces significant challenges, yet there is a lack of preventive measures. By preventing measures, I mean that the state does the first steps to not allow the wrongdoer fulfill a malicious intention. Government cannot combat the terrorism on its own if there is a lack of support from the society. Consistent and well-planned preventive system helps identifying the treats, analyzing it and then taking counter measures to finally guarantee safety and security of the society. There is a wide consensus on legislative and national level that security is a priority, but so far it only seems like it is a desire. At the end of the presentation,

prevention, main aspect of combating terrorism will be discussed. Although various government agencies do jointly fight against terrorism complex rearrangements is still needed to combat it. New preventing measures must involve following aspects: awareness-raising in the society about the terrorism threats; changing the attitudes of the civil society through education and training; fighting the ideology and propaganda of terrorism; strong cooperation with private sector, as well as with foreign security research centers; upgrading security systems in educational institutions.