

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University
Institute for Georgia's Neighbourhood Studies
III International Scientific Conference

POLITICS AROUND THE CAUCASUS

October 21, 2017

Venue: 1, Ilya Chavchavadze Avenue, TSU, Tbilisi, Georgia

Auditorium N 202

Conference agenda

Registration

09:30-10:00

Opening of the Conference and Speeches

10:00– 10:30

Professor **Revaz Gachechiladze**, Director, IGNS

Giorgi Sharvashidze, Rector, TSU

Associate Professor **Tamar Dolbaia**, Dean
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, TSU

10:30

P u b l i c L e c t u r e

Roman Karapetyan, Associate Professor, Yerevan State University

**The current dynamics and the prospects of development of Armenian-Georgian relations in
the context of regional political processes**

P r e s e n t a t i o n s

11:30 - Khatuna Tabagari, Alexander G. Tvalchrelidze (TSU, Georgia)
Caucasus and world globalization – opportunities and challenges

11:45 - Kamer Kasım (Abant Izzet Baysal University, Turkey)
Turkey-Armenia relations: implications on the Caucasus

12:00 - Abdülaziz Ahmet Yasar (Istanbul Center for International Law, Turkey)
Turkish-Georgian relations during the governments of the Justice and Development Party

12:15 - Birgit Wetzel (Kyrgyzstan)
**Caucasus at the crossroads: New Silk Road - One-Belt-One-Road strategy as a stabilizing
factor**

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13:30 - Nigar Shiralizade (Middle East Technical University, Turkey)
**Mediator or igniter? Russia's path to hegemonic throne of the South Caucasus through the
Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**

13:45 - Ana Anushidze, Nika Qitoshvili (TSU, Georgia)
Georgia-Azerbaijan relations in the sphere of energy and economy In 2003 – 2017

14:00 - Giuliano Bifulchi (University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy)
**The role of Georgia in the fight against the Islamist threat and
terrorist activities in the Caucasus**

14:15 - Keisuke Wakizaka, Hasan Oktay (International VIZYON University, Turkey)
The importance of the Administration of South Ossetia in Tbilisi for the Ossetians in Georgia

14:30 - Meri Gabedava, Maia Manchkhshvili (TSU, Georgia)
Russia's and Turkey's "soft power" in Georgia and cultural and ideological influences

14:45 - Tamás Kozma (University of Pécs, Hungary)
Energy transit country as an identity? The example of Turkey and the Transanatolian Pipeline

15: 00 - Nina Miholjic (ADA University, Azerbaijan)
Azerbaijan as Georgia's new reliable energy investor

15:15 - Ulviyye Aydin (Manisa Celal Bayar University, Turkey)
Energy diplomacy between Turkey and Azerbaijan: recent developments

15:30 - Anna Gevorgyan (Yerevan State University, Armenia)
**One revolution, different revolutionaries:
some tensions between the President Rouhani and Ayatollah Khamenei**

15:45 - Tinatin Mshvidobadze (Gori State Teaching University, Georgia)
Perspectives of e-Government in Iran

16:00-16:30
Coffee break

16:30 - Valeri Modebadze (Caucasus International University, Georgia)
EU relations with the South Caucasian countries since the breakdown of Soviet Union

16:45 - Armen Karamanian (Macquarie University, Austria)
Fulfilling the Armenian diaspora's dream of return - contemplating the idea of homecoming to the ancestral homeland

17:00 - Archil Sikharulidze (TSU, Georgia)
Russia and the so-called Rose Revolution: contribution and expectations

17:15 - Ali Hamidian (University of Tehran, Iran)

Nature protection policies in the *de facto* entities: Caucasian case study

17:30 - Mohsen Abbaszadeh Marzbali, Hamid Yahyavi Hamedani

(Tehran State University, Iran)

Localization of democracy as globalization of democracy

17:45 Tengiz Verulava (Ilia State University, Georgia)

Pension system in the South Caucasus: challenges and reform options

18:00 - Konstantine Vekua (TSU, Georgia)

Peace as a common good and democratic models

18:15 - Oleg Mironov (Centre for Trans-Regional Studies and Crisis Development Policy, Austria)

Determinants and politics in transformation of multilateral institutional cooperation mechanisms for energy security in extra-European regions: toward a comprehensive approach

18:30 - Sudan Altun (Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey)

Turkish-Georgian political and literary relations

(a case study of activities of the Georgian Language and Literature Department)

18.45 - 19:00

Certificate handing ceremony and closing of the Conference

P r e s e n t a t i o n s u m m a r i e s

Roman Karapetyan

Professor of Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia

The current dynamics and the prospects of development of Armenian-Georgian relations in the context of regional political processes

One of the main priorities on the agenda of Armenia's foreign policy is development and consolidation of relations with neighboring countries. Country's foreign policy priorities also include the establishment of favorable environment for cooperation and providing peace in the Southern Caucasus region. These challenges have numerous obstacles for implementation. The main challenges of the region were linked to territorial conflicts. On the other hand, regional countries show distinctive approaches in the selection of political and economic partners.

Georgia is currently actively involved in the East-West integration platforms, Armenia, due to objective reasons, focuses on the development of the North-South cooperation platform. Our main task is to answer the following questions: if these cooperation platforms can be combined and what kind of developments can be in the region. The analysis of the following facts can help us to answer abovementioned questions:

- what we have now,
- which are the main aims and benefits of the sides,
- which are the main obstacles and external factors,
- what are the main perspectives.

Khatuna Tabagari, Alexander G. Tvalchrelidze

TSU, Georgia

Caucasus and world globalization – opportunities and challenges

On January 20, 2017, the globalized world faced absolutely new challenges: after inauguration President Trump tried to change vectors of global politics, which deteriorated the U.S. partnership relations within the NAFTA, the G7, the NATO, the OECD, etc. formats. Arduous attitude towards Iran, where President Rouhani tries to surmount political and economic influence of Islamic Revolutionary Guards, directly damages energy security of EU, because makes Iranian gas supply to EU markets extremely problematic. Hence, Iran, which is the richest gas-bearing country of the world (33.5 trillion m³ versus 32.3 trillion m³ in Russia and 24.3 trillion m³ in Qatar) may substitute Russian gas in the EU countries and, thus, prevent further

extension of the Russian expansionistic global energy policy. Simultaneously, opening of the EU market gates for Iranian gas will facilitate renovation processes within this Islamic country and ultimately bring it back to the civilized world. This way, global and regional political risks may be significantly mitigated.

In this ambitious project, which is a logical expansion of Zbigniew Brzezinski's approach and which is prosperous for all the stakeholder countries excepting the Russian Federation, the Caucasus Region, and namely Georgia, geographically, geoeconomically, and geopolitically represent a key hub of global importance. Primo, Iranian gas may be soaked up by Sah-Deniz-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline with farther switching with Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic pipeline systems under construction. Secundo, even using the inner Georgian gas distribution systems, about 20 billion m³ of Iranian natural per annum may be transferred to Supsa, where using FLNG terminal it may be supplied to Europe. And tercio, oil refinery and petrochemical plants are suggested to be constructed at Supsa.

Faster these projects will be executed, more political stability will rule.

Kamer Kasım

Professor of Abant İzzet Baysal University, Turkey

Turkey-Armenia Relations: Implications on the Caucasus

Despite the fact that Turkey recognized the independence of Armenia, the normal diplomatic relations between the two states could not be established. Armenia's policy regarding genocide allegations and refrain from openly recognizing the Turkish-Armenian border are the main reasons for the rift in bilateral relations. Besides Armenia's ambiguous attitude towards its border with Turkey, Armenian occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict caused crises in the relations and Turkey closed its border with Armenia after the occupation of Kelbecer in 1993. Since then Turkey-Armenia relations are under scrutiny of the EU and the US and they argued that Armenian integration with the West required normalization of Turkey-Armenia relations. After August 2008 Russian invasion of the Georgian territory, the EU and the US fastened their pressure for the normalization of Turkey-Armenia relations. Armenian administration also realized the danger of isolation during August 2008 Russian attacked on Georgia. Turkey and Armenia signed protocols in 2009. Continuing occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and Armenian diaspora's rigid attitude towards Turkey made the process impossible to work. Turkey-Armenia relations are the impact on many issues in the Caucasus from energy and transportation projects to security issues like the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In this article Turkey-Armenia relations' implications on security issues, economic relations, and energy and transportation projects on the Caucasus will be analyzed. Armenia's position vis a vis Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia relations and Turkish-Russian relations' implications on Turkey-Armenia relations will also be dealt with.

Abdülaziz Ahmet Yasar

Co-founder of Istanbul Center for International Law, Turkey

Turkish-Georgian Relations during the Governments of the Justice and Development Party

In this article, bilateral relations between Turkey and Georgia since 2002 until our present are going to be investigated on the basis of political, economic and further grounds. The AKP, which came to power in 2002 with an outright majority, is since then ruling Turkey. Even though the AKP follows a specific political ideology, its foreign and bilateral relations changed depending on the ministers of foreign affairs, the varying status quo's and other factors. Therefore, this paper focuses on three different eras of the AKP, its early years between 2002 and 2007, its 'peak' years until 2014, and from 2014 until our present. In other words, Turkish-Georgian relations are illustrated with the broader view of regional and domestic political, economic and social changes, and probable changes, differentiations and constants are taken into account in the relations between both countries.

Besides of superficial and general relational facts, special emphasis is made on the historical, cultural and ethnical relations between both countries. Therefore, it includes a historical framework and ethno-religious framework of the past, which is used as a discourse by AKP politicians and agents.

Birgit Wetzel

Researcher, Kyrgyzstan

Caucasus at the crossroads: New Silk Road - One-Belt-One-Road strategy as a stabilizing Factor

Georgia and the Caucasus are on the crossroad of new trade routes that will connect China and Europe. The so called New Silk Road will connect Chinese and European markets, peoples and cultures, including Caucasia and Central Asia. The new Initiatives will stabilize the situation in Georgia and in the Caucasus.

Already in 2007 the European Union released the first Central Asia Strategy, hoping to open a new corridor for energy imports from Central Asia, trespassing Azerbaijan and Georgia. The idea was to receive carbohydrates and in return to deliver knowledge, especially for water management and state building. Hopes were, that the states of Central Asia would see a win-win situation in working together. But they did not. Each one of them was thriving for their own well being, not trusting their neighbors and having no ambitions to work for a common future.

The Georgia-Russia war in August 2008 can to my opinion be clearly linked to the ambitions of the EU to become less dependent on Russian gas and oil, but to get energy from Central Asia. Russia gave a clear signal, that it was not willing to give up the European gas market. Georgia and the Caucasus were drawn into a geopolitical conflict, due to their position between Europa and Central Asia, and Europe and Russias vital economic interests.

After six years, the first Central Asia Strategy ended.

A special case to be named are contact to Kazakhstan. A large group of German origin people had left the Kazakhstan in three migration waves, in the early 1990-ies, the late 1990-ies and in 2001/2. They had been invited to come to Germany as a late „family re-union“. 800.000 Germans from Kazakhstan now form a „living bridge“ between the two countries. Quite a number of them have started businesses and trade and created new ties.

In 2014 Russia invaded Eastern Ukraine and started a conflict that is still going on until today, followed by the annexation of Crimea, against all international laws. In the same year the first Central Asia Strategy ended. There is no direct link between the two events, but it seems that the conflict in Eastern Ukraine raised awareness for the weakness of individual states. In 2016 a new attitude could be noticed for cooperation in Central Asia. States are beginning to have intensified talks. A new Central Asia strategy was launched but with altered goals. The road to and from China is what drives the parties, Europe and China, via Caucasus and connecting to the old concept, but under different pre-conditions:

Although Russia has increased its influence in the Caucasus by occupying South Ossetia, China's rising interest in stable conditions for Central Asia and Caucasus will support stability on the road between Europe and China, and thereby foster a stable development in the Caucasus.

Nigar Shiralizade

PhD student of Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Mediator or igniter? Russia's path to hegemonic throne of the South Caucasus through the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

The research work aims to analyze the influence of Russian Federation to conflict resolutions enduring in post-Soviet region. With analyzing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict emerged between two states of South Caucasus, Azerbaijan and Armenia the paper will interrogate reasons preventing solutions to it. By the application of neo-Gramscian theory of 'hegemony' the research paper will try to depict Russia's utilization of conflicts as a leverage in acquiring and maintaining its supremacy over previously ruled territories. The paper is going to question benefits of this 'frozen conflict' to Russia during the past 25 years and indicates the previous superpower as one of the key players hindering the solution.

Through the analysis on bilateral, trilateral and multilateral negotiations conducted with the attempts of international organizations or specific states the investigation will try to illuminate how the existence of the conflict in the region can be manipulated by the regional power. Moreover, relevant ignorance to this conflict by Western world triggers the research to inquire whether there was a 'gentleman agreement' between RF and the West over Caucasus after the collapse of USSR.

Ana Anushidze, Nika Qitoshvili

TSU, Georgia

Relations between Georgia and Azerbaijan in the sphere of energy and economy in 2003 - 2017

The study of the relationship between the two strategic partners, the neighboring country - is always an important issue for both the countries and the region as a whole. Features of the region: long-term Conflicts, external orientation, energy resources, level of economic development, relations between countries, the threat of terrorism, increasing interdependence among all countries in the region, despite the existence of bilateral relations.

Elected two neighbors are each other's strategic partner. It means that there are wide range, of issues in respect of which both countries have common interests. But we should emphasize that, near this common interests two strategic partner also have their own state interests in the sphere of economy and energy. These sensitive issues should be analysed very delicate. So in our report we will present this kind of analyze in the sphere of energy and economy. It is noteworthy that these issues are largely related to the economy and energy sector. Analysis of these issues will be presented in the report.

Giuliano Bifulchi

Researcher of University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy

The role of Georgia in the fight against the Islamist threat and terrorist activities in the Caucasus

The geographical position of Georgia makes it a bridge which connects the North Caucasus region with the South Caucasus and the Middle East. Even if the majority of the Georgian population is Christian, there is a significant Muslim *umma* in the Pankisi Gorge, Adjara Republic and Kvemo Kartli region where Daesh propaganda can find a fertile ground for its recruiting process.

The socio-cultural and political link with the North Caucasus, a volatile region characterized by ethnic conflicts, terrorist activities perpetrated by the Caucasus Emirate and the contrast between the local population and the central Russian authorities, the Northern Caucasian Diaspora inside the country, particularly the Chechens, the diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan and the geographical ties with Turkey could turn Georgia into a jihadist logistic hub where Daesh or other terrorist groups could coordinate their activities and recruit foreign fighters from the post-Soviet space.

The aim of this paper is to describe the fundamental role of Georgia in stabilizing the Caucasus, a region which has been affected by local insurgency and Islamist propaganda for decades and was designated by Daesh with the name of Vilayat Kavkaz (Caucasus Province) confirming the will of the Islamic State to extend its local influence and presence.

Furthermore, the paper would like to underline the necessity of a better cooperation between the

regional key players, particularly Georgia and the Russian Federation, in a period characterized by diplomatic tensions and contrasts which create a power vacuum and give more opportunities to jihadist groups to operate on the ground.

Keisuke Waziaka, Hasan Oktay
International VIZYON University, Turkey

The importance of the Administration of South Ossetia in Tbilisi for Ossetians in Georgia

When the Provisional Administration of South Ossetia was established in 2007 and Dmitry Sanakoyev became the leader of this administration, the issue of South Ossetia entered new process. After the Administration was formed under the support of Georgian government, it dominated the areas of South Ossetia where Georgian population is the majority. After the crisis in 2008 it has been working over internally displaced people from South Ossetia. However, the relations between this administration and Ossetians in Georgia had not been analyzed despite it is very interested in the rights of Ossetians in Georgia. The topic of our article is this relationship and we will analyze the role of this administration in keeping identity of Ossetians in Georgia. In this work we will make half-structured interview with Ossetian intellectuals, academic persons and the leaders of non-governmental organizations as well as news published by the Provisional Administration of South Ossetia, because there are few literatures about this administration and the current situation of Ossetians in Georgia. In the first chapter, we will give short information about the Administration of South Ossetia in Tbilisi and its works. In the second chapter we explain the current situation of identity of Ossetians in Georgia.

In the third chapter, we discuss the role of this administration in the process of keeping identity of Ossetians in Georgia. In conclusion we summarize these three chapters and emphasize that Ossetians in Georgia have strong relations with this administration and that this cooperation affects the effort of keeping identity of Ossetians in Georgia against assimilation.

Meri Gabedava, Maia Manchkhshvili
TSU, Georgia

Russia's and Turkey's "Soft Power" in Georgia and their cultural and ideological influences

The “soft power” strategy of Russia and Turkey in Georgia has significantly intensified in recent years. They aim to gain control over political processes in the country and to bring Georgia under the sphere of influence of Russia or Turkey by strengthening economic ties, assistance in education, science and culture.

Either direct or indirect influence on Georgia is equally important for Russia and Turkey,

because none of them has the geographical boundary with regional partners - Armenia and Azerbaijan. Georgia is a bridge between Turkey and the Central Asian Turkic population. Russia's main task is to maintain the political, economic and military positions in the South Caucasus, where it considers Georgia as a strategic buffer between its southern borders and the NATO alliance. The growing military-political tensions between Russia and Turkey in 2015 once again demonstrated Georgia's, as a transit country's, special role in the region.

Georgia has close cooperation with Turkey in the energy (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Gas Pipeline) and transport (Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway) projects, in international organizations, in military training and logistical equipment issues. There are significant Turkish investments in Georgia. About 20 Turkish private secondary schools and schools of higher education operate in Georgia. There is also a Turkish religious school, which promotes Turkey's religious influence among Muslims of Georgia.

Since Russian-Georgian war 2008, Russia had been represented as a hard power in Georgia (military occupation, recognition of independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the creeping annexation). 2012 showed signs of "reset policy", as a beginning of informal dialogue between the sides, some revival of the trade and improving of cultural ties, but diplomatic relations have not been yet restored. Russia runs an aggressive anti-Western and anti-American campaign, in which is actively involved Russian mass media as well as newly created pro-Russian non-governmental organizations in Georgia. The favourable outcome for pro-Russian political party "Alliance of Patriots of Georgia", which is distinguished by its anti-Turkish rhetoric, in last parliamentary elections, should be considered as the Russia's success. Orthodox Christian religion contributes to maintenance of Russia's cultural and ideological positions in population. We should also mention pro-Russian sentiments of ethnic Armenians, which is a serious support for the Russia in Georgia.

Thus, both the Russian and Turkish governments have enough military-political, socio-economic and cultural mechanisms to successfully implement their "soft power" in Georgia. It poses threat to security of the Georgian State and undermines its independence and sovereignty. Based on the complex analysis of problems, we worked out recommendations, the implementation of which, in our view, will weaken the influence of neighboring countries upon political processes in Georgia.

Tamás Kozma

PhD Student of University of Pécs, Hungary

Energy transit country as an identity?

The example of Turkey and the Transanatolian Pipeline

The constructivist discourse in International Relations has undoubtedly given rise to scholarly interest in identity research. Indeed, it is hardly possible to define identity in a way that would be accepted unanimously by academia. At the same time, the plurality of approaches gives room for interpretation of the applicability of identity concepts to a wide range of issues. The point of departure of this study is that the analytical framework of identity can be applied to the geostrategic situation of states and their foreign policy goals. A specific geopolitical feature of a state can be the basis of its' identity and in consequence its' identity can be the basis of the state's foreign policy acts. This article argues that

Turkey's current and desired role as energy transit country can be identified as an important element of contemporary Turkish state identity. Given the geopolitical importance of the Transanatolian Pipeline project, it is not only considered as a possible game-changer in regional energy security dynamics, but from the point of view of this study, it can be used for the exemplification of the above concept, in which the energy transit role of Turkey is interlinked with its' state identity and foreign policy.

Nina Miholjic

MA of ADA University, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan as Georgia's New Reliable Energy Investor

Since 2006, when *the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline* has started pumping Azeri oil from the Caspian to Mediterranean Sea, energy relations between Georgia and Azerbaijan have remained surprisingly successful. Even though both countries have a common difficult neighbor, Russia, it seems that cautious Azerbaijan's diplomacy and Georgia's geopolitical leverage (Georgia has a transit route that enables Russia to continue supplying Armenia with its gas) so far have brought prosperous results.

Georgia-Russia conflict in 2008 made the South Caucasus region even more upset and determined to seek alternative ways for energy independence from Russia. Georgia more than other South Caucasian countries expressed detesting feelings towards Russian aggressive foreign policy and, since then, has been trying to find more reliable energy partners. On the other hand, Azerbaijan seems to be using its petroleum resources in the most effective way, strengthening energy relations with Georgia by exporting considerable amounts of oil via BTC and managing to, without serious provocations, remain in a relatively good relationship with the Kremlin.

Possibly, the least worried position, when it comes to dealing with not so cooperative Russian government, holds Armenia. That is not surprising because, since Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (1988–94), Russia has been acting as Armenia's protector in international relations and

Armenia still benefits from Russian interest in exporting its energy resources via Georgia.

Although Georgia still depends significantly on Russian energy resources, Azerbaijan has become more involved and more willing to provide Georgia with necessary energy supplies in the last decade, thus, turning into *serious Georgia's energy investor*.

Ulviye Aydın

Professor of Manisa Celal Bayar University, Turkey

Energy Diplomacy Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: Recent Developments

Admittedly, one of the most important events of the 20th century is the end of the Cold War. With the collapse of the bipolar world order, a new era began in international relations. Republics within the Soviet Union have gained their independence also. In the light of mentioned developments because of their close geographical regions, deep historical ties and most importantly sharing common language, religion, culture and ethnicity, Turkey has been closely interested in Azerbaijan and the Central Asian Republics and became the first country that has recognized their independence. At the end of the 1990s, several bilateral co-operation agreements were signed, mainly political and diplomatic, between Turkey and these republics. Over the past years Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, which have rich energy resources have agreed with the world's leading companies on oil and natural gas production.

The problem of transporting Caspian energy resources to world markets has opened a new chapter in Turkish foreign policy. Because of its unique geographical location, Turkey has made very important contributions to projects closely monitored on a global scale with the aim of being a transit country and a trade center since 2000s, and has played a role as a powerful regional actor that combines the West and the East with its multi-faceted energy policies. In this context, Turkey continues to pursue a multi-faceted energy diplomacy aiming to increase the energy security of itself and its region.

In this study, the energy diplomacy between Turkey and Azerbaijan was emphasized and recent developments were evaluated in the light of current international relations, assessing the achievements of Turkish foreign policy.

Anna Gevorgyan

Researcher at CCCS, Yerevan State University, Armenia

One revolution, different revolutionaries: some tensions between the president Rouhani and ayatollah Khamenei

The main ideology of the Islamic republic of Iran and the most popular political narrative of it is a revolutionary ideology of ayatollah Khomeini. After the 1979 Islamic revolution and after the establishment of the Islamic republic of Iran revolutionary ideas became the

cornerstones of all political, socio-economic and cultural programs, visions and frameworks. Despite the fact that the revolution lead by ayatollah Khomeini has had its own peculiar objectives and goals, there has been some disagreements concerning the ways those objectives and goals must be reached.

In my paper I will analyze some disagreements between the president of IRI Hasan Rouhani, and the Supreme Leader of IRI, ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The paper is based on a research made by the methodology of discourse analyzes: the speeches of the president and the Supreme Leader of IRI have been analyzed and their main ideas about the Revolution and revolutionaries have been taken out.

Tinatin Mshvidobadze

Associate Professor of Gori State Teaching University

Perspectives of e-Government in Iran

E-governments can be considered as use of information and communication technology in public administrations combined with an organizational change and new skills in order to improve public services and strengthen support to public policies. With this regard, National Mapping Organizations (NMOs) around the world have to stabilize their position in the future government body by playing an effective role in establishing E-Government within country. As a general rule, implementation of E-Government concept in NMOs will result to change in document and data exchange process inside and outside organization, better responsibility to customers, improvement in working process of technical and administration sections, reduction in costs and more efficient and effective organization.

In this paper reviewed the recent achievements and developments in this subject in National Cartographic Centre of Iran (NCC) which actually act as Iranian national mapping organization.

In the first step, concepts and models for implementation of E-Government concept and role of Spatial Information in it will be explained with focus on Government to Citizens relations (G2C), Government to Business services (G2B) and Government to Government relations (G2G). in the next part, the current situation of E-Governance in Iran in different aspects will be discussed.

Valeri Modebadze

Professor of Caucasus International University, Georgia

EU relations with the South Caucasian countries since the breakdown of Soviet Union

In the 1990-s the European Union showed little interest in Caucasus and treated this region as the Russia's backyard. In contrast to UN and OSCE, it played a passive role in

Caucasian affairs, especially in the security sphere. Moreover, EU was more preoccupied with the bloody wars and conflicts in the Balkans and did not pay enough attention to the South Caucasus. Although EU provided financial and technical assistance to the newly independent Caucasian states, its involvement in Caucasus was still very insignificant and limited. Since the enlargement of the European Union and the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU, The South Caucasus is no longer viewed by EU as a distant and insignificant region. Nowadays, the European Union has an access to the Black Sea and the maritime boundary with the Caucasus region. After the enlargement process, Europe's interest in the neighboring region has increased considerably. Over the last years the European Union began to develop closer economic and political relations with the South Caucasian states by means of the European Neighborhood policy and the Eastern Partnership Program. The aim of this Neighborhood policy is to create a secure political, economic and social environment and promote stability, co-operation and prosperity in the Caucasus region. European Union helps Caucasian states in the implementation of democratic reforms and supports democratization process in South Caucasus. European Union is also involved in the resolution of conflicts of the Caucasus region. However, its role in the settlement of conflicts is rather limited. The aim of this article is to analyze European union's relations with the South Caucasian states - Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Armen Karamanian

PhD student of Macquarie University, Austria

Fulfilling the Armenian Diaspora's Dream of Return - contemplating the idea of homecoming to the ancestral homeland

The Armenian people have yearned to return to their mountain homeland with its holy mountain, Ararat. However seventy years of Soviet rule deepened divisions between the homeland and its worldwide Diaspora. The independence of the Republic of Armenia in 1991 led to the rapprochement of relations between the two groups and the possibility of return for descendants of Armenian Genocide survivors in the Diaspora. Unlike returning migrants, Diasporan returnees have little to no contact with the ancestral homeland, due to years of Soviet isolation. The perceptions of the homeland; motivations for ancestral return; and reactions of family and friends in the Diaspora will be analysed, through data collected from interviews with thirty-individuals who have returned and permanently settled in the ancestral homeland. Research shows the importance members of the returning Diaspora place on the memory of the land their ancestors originated from, Western Armenia, and their increasing realisation of the significance of the Republic of Armenia (Eastern Armenia). Motivations for their ancestral return are fuelled by patriotism, job opportunities, relationships and the safety of the cherished homeland for their offspring. Family reactions,

which include negative stereotypes of homeland society and past stories of discrimination, resulted in dissuasion.

However, encouragement was provided by those who did not wish to see future generations wandering, but rather return to a place they belong. The increasing shift towards accepting the Republic of Armenia (Eastern Armenia) as the primordial entity of the Armenian people, the new ancestral homeland, is found to result in the return and permanent settlement of the Diasporan to a physical Armenian homeland rather than an imaginary one (Western Armenia).

Archil Sikharulidze

PhD student of TSU, Georgia

Russia and the so-called Rose Revolution: Contribution and Expectations

On 23rd of November 2003 the so-called Rose Revolution took place in Georgia. Pro-Western trio of politicians – Mikheil Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burjanadze managed to push Eduard Shevardnadze's government peacefully resign. The country's strategic partners (especially, USA) played crucial role in the process as well as Russian Federation. Post-revolutionary government succeeded in handling with Aslan Abashidze and avoiding possible confrontation in Autonomous Republic of Adjara due to Moscow's significant contribution. Nowadays, there are few narratives regarding the reasoning behind motivation of Vladimir Putin's government to help Georgia's pro-Western movement.

The paper aims to gather main narratives of Russian experts and analyze them in the following theoretical framework explaining Russia's domestic and foreign policies – the so-called concentration and liberal empire periods.

Ali Hamidian

Ph.D. student of University of Tehran, Iran

Nature Protection Policies in De Facto Entities, Caucasian Case Study

Increasing global environmental changes around the world had been resulted in governmental activities to find remedies to these problems. According to ecological, social, cultural and economic characteristics in each country, different policies and programs have been implemented to solve the environmental challenges. The efficiency of nature protection policies effect on several dimension of geopolitics situation of any region. In this paper, according to global experiences, suitable policies have been illustrated for nature protection in de facto entities. Based on distinct economic and political situations of such regions, the results and

recommendations have been revealed. Also, in this research we have tried to discuss outputs and feedbacks of each group polices. Caucasian de facto regions have been discussed with emphasis in the article.

Mohsen Abbaszadeh Marzbali, Hamid Yahyavi Hamedani
Tehran State University, IR of Iran

Localization of democracy as globalization of democracy

In the dominant paradigm of Political Science, globalization of democracy has actually been understood as globalization of Liberal Democracy; a presupposition so predominant that has hindered the thought of formation of the “more local” models of democracy, despite the normal developments having accrued to democratic theory owing to post-positivism in human science; in this regard, it can be said that the literature of Democratization is still considerably influenced by the classic / conventional assumptions of requirements of democracy such as the notion of necessary correlation between creation of civil / political identity and exclusion of religious one. It is whilst, as the defected cycle of democracy in the Middle East indicates, globalization of democracy, in the real sense of word, might require being open to contextual conceptions of democracy; in other words, transition to democracy might primarily call for theoretical transition from universal model of democracy to particular ones. Considering these, taking advantage of post-secular and multiculturalist criticism, the present paper deconstructing the universal / Liberal notion of democracy seeks to discuss the possibility and functionality of a contextual / post-liberal vision of democracy. The paper hypothesize that the consolidation of democracy, especially in societies like Iran being influenced by religious norms, is not merely dependent on “rational obligation” of citizens to democracy but is vitally tied with their “emotive commitment” to it as well.

Therefore, functionality of democracy requires institutionalization of democratic norms within the people’s “forms of life” which, in turn, requires compatibility with their “life-world”. Such a rethinking, regards democracy as a “combination of the universal and the particular” within which withdrawing from the essentialism in theorizing democracy in favor of a pragmatic flexibility might provide the possibility of articulating the religious signers, as pre-political foundations of solidarity, in democratic political discourse as regulating idea.

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Pension System in South Caucasus: Challenges and Reform Options

Worldwide discussion on the sustainability of pension systems remains a core agenda of debate. Factors such as aging, rising longevity, declining fertility rate, reducing the active population, labor migration caused financial difficulties in Southern Caucasian (SC) countries. A

1994 World Bank report classifies pension systems as mainly defined by three pillars: pay-as-you-go (PAYG) pension plan, which is a publicly managed system; a privately managed mandatory savings system (fully funded); and voluntary savings'. The financial unsustainability of old PAYG systems has led many countries to re-think their pension systems.

This paper reviews the pension systems of SC countries' and tries to show the main features and trajectories of the development of pension systems in three countries that are dealing with the challenges of these systems.

Since 2006, Armenia is changing its existing pay-as-you-go (PAYG) pension system to the multi-pillar, accumulation system. Azerbaijan reforming of old pension system began in 2014, the aim of which was to transfer to the mixed model (PAYG and fully funded pension schemes). Georgia is the only country in the Caucasus region where the old PAYG pension system still operates. Starting in January of 2018, the government of Georgia proposes to shift to a hybrid (mixed) pension model.

As noted, the countries of the South Caucasus, like other countries, are trying to change PAYG pension system on the mixed (hybrid) pension system. This is due to the fact that solidarity (PAYG) pension system plays an important role in poverty reduction and serves a valuable welfare distribution function, so its disappearance would have many undesired social consequences. Therefore, it is advisable to introduce a more sustainable pension system. One possible solution is the introduction of mixed (hybrid) model (PAYG and the accumulated Fully Funded). Any decision about a possible reforms should be based on comprehensive analysis and a study of international experience.

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Peace as a common good and democratic models

The present work is an attempt to philosophically analyze preconditions of political, cultural, economical and social nature of peaceful *modus vivendi* in Georgia and generally in Caucasus. Peace as a common good and essential value of individual, or public development is discussed in the context of the differences incidental to various democratic models. The analysis of the above issues is performed with the purpose to shape the contours of transformation of the region and the countries in it into a complex system – zone of peace, which in comparison to the neutrality status can be better, more efficient and oriented towards third millennium.

The revision of democratic models from the perspective of peace studies reveals trends that facilitate constructive interaction and positive peace between the various segments of the political and social order. It applies this abovementioned structure to the pragmatic field for spreading the culture of peace, peace education, peace activities and joint

venture projects; and all this to create another peace environment that will mature and transform the area between the West and the East into a new subject of peace, as a mediator between Europe and Asia, global North and global South.

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Determinants and politics in transformation of multilateral institutional cooperation mechanisms for energy security in extra-European regions- toward a comprehensive approach

The trend of decentralization of European politics, denoting primarily in such areas as complicated determinate regional security. This complexity of security approaches field puts on the agenda of search optimal model of security providing process two factors which are in dichotomous interdependence- is determined by the degree of involvement- and self- bounding of the state in its foreign and security strategy on the sub-regional level and correlated through supranational and transnational system which is what the EU and NATO, and the Member States to which they are.

Given the fact that the structural-functional, institutional and political challenges and increase international security systems from a practical perspective imagines: the process of disseminating except security area of the European Union, institutional overload and functional representation between actors. It should be mentioned that EU is undergoing successful integration process. In particular in sphere of security under European security strategy. Success of such approach lies in development if effective multilateral institutions. Obviously, this method meets the need of convergence on different levels of the system and sub-system components, such as the sub-regional fields or „External regions“.

However, energy-saving measures for example in the German-speaking countries (German, Austrian and Swiss) have shown that cross-border control and coordination is useful, but implementation on the ground must include the integration of regional action logics, specifics and policy styles. Since the energies in the form of renewable energies and networks as well as changes in energy behavior, mobility and energy use (storage, etc.) have implications, which affect the local population to a large extent, democratic imperatives of the inclusion follow in the sense of socially acceptable technology development, which is the subject of democratic decision-making processes.

In this context concluded a set of questions: Domestic and regional dimension for energy security strategy; Trans-regional perspective of transformation of institutional and normative structures for the regional energy system; Institutionalisation of domestic trans-sectoral dialog on the energy challenge in the region: local level – civil society initiatives and private sector activities within the inter-parliamentary formats; Discursive forms of coordination of energy policy at local, regional and transnational level; Regional and national level: e.g. discursive

participatory forms and procedures of direct democracy.

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**Turkish-Georgian political and literary relations
(a case study of activities of the Georgian Language and Literature Department)**

Turkey attaches importance to political, economic and cultural activities in the context of relations with neighboring Georgia. For the first time in Turkey, the Caucasus Language and Literature Department of Kars Kafkas University, which was opened in 2006, is the best example of the Georgian Language and Literature Department.

Graduate program of Georgian Language and Literature is carried out in the Department. The aim of the program is to develop skills of students to read, speak, listen and understand Georgian language and to train staff members who will take part in official and private organizations playing a role in the commercial, economic and scientific relations between Turkey and Georgia. Attention is given to providing the students with the skills of text analysis and criticism during the undergraduate program.

The Language and Literature Department is opened as a department at different state universities of the Republic of Turkey and Georgian is taught as an optional foreign language in some state and private universities, such as Kars Kafkas University, Ardahan University, Artvin Coruh University, Rize Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University and Düzce University Science and Literature Faculties.

The history of neighboring Georgia, its language and literature had always been a focus of curiosity in Turkey. The same interest continues today. Cultural links can build heart bridges; literary and cultural relations will become even more rational.