

**International Scientific Conference
“Thirty Years After Restoration of Independence”**

November 23, 2021

Report by Natia Phiphia (TSU) and Tedo Dundua (TSU)

Thirty years have passed from the glorious event in history of modern Georgia. On April 9, 1991, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia declared restoration of independence of Georgia and based its legitimacy on the Act of Independence of May 26, 1918. Institute of Georgian History at the Faculty of Humanities at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University organized an international conference dedicated to this important event.

Head of the Institute of Georgian History and vice-dean of the Faculty of Humanities, professor **Tedo Dundua** officially opened the conference. He served as a session chair for the first, English session. He also gave the first talk about *Western Heraldry in Modern Georgia and Western Mints for Georgian Money*. Professor Dundua overviewed the Western influences in Georgian heraldry and emphasized that tricolor flag of Democratic Republic of Georgia in 1918-1921 had the flag of German Empire as a prototype, while modern Georgian flag was inspired by cross of Jerusalem – Western Europe’s historical symbol of integration. He also outlined that Georgians in the past and present used Western mints to issue their money.

Andžej Pukšto from Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania) gave a speech about *Act on the Re-establishment of Independency and International Recognition of Lithuania (1990-1991)*. He talked about all stages Lithuania had passed during the process of restoration of Lithuanian independence – Sajūdis, the organization fighting for Lithuanian independence, tragic events in Vilnius in January 1991, and influence of August attempted

coup d'état in Moscow on political processes in Lithuania.

Edgars Engīzers, who presented Baltic International Academy (Riga, Latvia), talked about *Act on the Re-establishment of Independency and International Recognition of Latvia (1990-1991)*. He overviewed the path Latvia had passed in the process of restoration of independence, namely non-violent civil disobedience concept and its influence on independence movement of Latvia, also connection of August attempted coup d'état in Moscow with international recognition of Latvia's independence.

Sergei Tambi presented University of Tartu (Estonia) and he talked about *Estonian Eurosceptics in the Early Days of Independent Estonia (1991-1995)*. He pointed out that political spectrum of Estonia mostly supported process of integration with Western Europe, however there were some Eurosceptics who were and are still active, although their role and influence on politics is minimal.

Leri Tavadze, PhD in history, assistant-professor at Tbilisi State University, in his report *Church and State in Modern Georgian Reality* pointed out that unfortunately part of Georgian citizens do not feel themselves as part of fully functional social contract.

Natia Phiphia, PhD in history, assistant-professor at Tbilisi State University, in her report about *Political Cartoons in the Journal “Niangi” and the Issue of Media Freedom in the 90s of the 20th Century* stressed that editorial policy in the beginning of the 90s could not be characterized as free since no major politicians were criticized directly while satire became wittier in late 90s.

Niko Javakhishvili, associate professor at Tbilisi State University, served as a session chair for the second session of the conference. **Dodo Chumburidze**, a researcher at Ivane Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology (Tbilisi State University) talked about *Political Conflicts in the 90s of the 20th Century and Their Interpretation in Georgian Historiography*.

Dimitri Shvelidze, associate professor at Tbilisi State University, overviewed *Noe Zhordania's concept about the Georgian Constituent Assembly*. According to this concept, constituent assembly was supposed to control and influence executive branch of the government while power was supposed to be substantially devolved in favour of local governments.

Niko Javakhishvili, associate professor at Tbilisi State University, gave a speech about *Relations Between the Republics of Georgia and Lithuania in the Last Year of the Soviet Union (1991)*. He stressed the fact that national

government of Baltic republic which in fact was coordinated by Vytautas Landsbergis and national government of Georgia with the leadership of Zviad Gamsakhurdia fought for the restoration of independence of their respective countries side by side.

Bondo Kumatadze, associate professor at Tbilisi State University, showed the results of his comparative study about *Parliamentary Elections of Georgia in 1990-2020*.

Zviad Tkeshelashvili, a scholar at Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature, overviewed *Post-Soviet Modernization of Paternalism in Georgia*.

Both sessions were followed by interesting discussion and most importantly the conference was attended by BA and MA students of the Faculty of Humanities at Tbilisi State University. Participants of the conference also talked about their plans of academic collaboration.