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# PECULIARITIES OF THE PHENOMENON OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN POST-SOVIET GEORGIA

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#### ABSTRACT

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Political Leader, Political Elite, Post-Soviet Georgia, Charisma, Society, Values, Transformation, Traditional. The socio-political processes developed in Georgia in the 90s of the twentieth century led to the political transformation of the country. The political changes that began during this period led to the ideological and value transformation of elite structures, including procedural changes in the mechanisms of elite circulation. All this was reflected in the country's domestic and foreign policy. In Georgian reality, the main part of the society is focused on a specific political figure, however, the elite groups united around this leader differ

from each other in their values and ideological orientation. At the same time, all post-Soviet political leaders followed different paths of accumulating social and political capital, which became an important component of developing their individual political charisma.

The article discusses the features of 4 political leaders of post-Soviet Georgia (Z. Gamsakhurdia, E. Shevardnadze, M. Saakashvili, B. Ivanishvili) and the political processes related to them.

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Understanding the phenomenon of political leadership is still relevant today. Since ancient times, it has been interpreted differently at different historical periods. Every epoch had its leaders and this was due to the peculiarities of that epoch. Political philosophy itself can be divided into two stages – before Machiavelli or ancient philosophy, based on philosophical principles and focused on ideal models and the post-Machiavellian period, when the search begins not for ideal forms of government and leaders, but for analyzing the already existing types and determining the type of management and leaders based on pragmatism. Even at the present stage, we cannot ignore the phenomenon of the leader formed as a result of globalization and the influence of different political cultures, because these factors help us to better analyze the phenomenon of the leader in today's world.

The socio-political processes developed in Georgia in the 90s of the twentieth century resulted in the political transformation of the country. The political changes that began during this period led to the ideological and value transformation of elite structures, including procedural changes in the mechanisms of elite circulation. All this was reflected in the domestic and foreign policy of the country.

As a result of the value changes of the political elites, the political vector of Georgia changed and it became oriented towards the West, which complicated the relations with the Russian Federation, which ended with the 2008 military conflict between the two countries. When we talk about the personification of political processes, it is very important to consider the conceptual aspects of the formation of Soviet and post-Soviet Georgian society. Some sociologists point out that during the Soviet modernization period there was a symbiosis of two cultural principles – traditional and modernist, but this process actually took the form of a pseudomorphosis if we use Oswald Spengler's terminology. Such a society was, in essence, a hybrid society. Traditional cultural principles and elements of modernity coexisted in one society, but they were not systematically related to each other and were not logically interdependent. Even the social modernization of traditional society did not lead to a complete transformation of the lower strata of society. In a given sociocultural type of society, at different stages of its historical development, one or the other principle becomes dominant.<sup>1</sup>

During the Soviet period, social modernization, technological development, and industrialization of the country were impossible without introducing modernist elements to the broad masses of people and linking them to the traditional cultural values of Georgians and some different ethnic groups. This fact led to the symbiotic functioning of society, which was formed on the basis of traditional peoples living in the Soviet Union. As the subsequent development of events showed, modernism was not able to completely erase traditional values from the minds of the peoples, thus conditioning the coexistence of two cultural norms in one society.

Perhaps it is related to the above mentioned that in the last years of the Soviet system in Georgia, the traditional principles were much more relevant than the modern Soviet ones which along with the political pressure from the lower stratum personified political life and legitimized charismatic leaders who were distinguished by proclaiming national values and declaring religious attitudes.

Therefore, in the study and research of the political elite of post-Soviet Georgia, the focus should be on political leaders. The political elite, in this case, is a "train" of a charismatic leader. Max Weber called them "retinue."<sup>2</sup>

When we talk about the political leader of Georgia, it is better to study this leader's past and the history of his career growth, because the path he took in the system of social relations allows for the best sociological research. The process of socialization shows what stages he went through during his public life, what factors influenced the formation of his personal qualities that evoke boundless respect and trust of the people.

The formation of the political phenomenon of Zviad Gamsakhurdia – the first president of independent Georgia, took place in stages over several decades. He was a man who got into politics first of the Soviet Union and then of independent Georgia from the dissident movement.

His dissident career began in 1956 when after the events in Hungary Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his friends posted proclamations in the streets of Tbilisi criticizing the Soviet Union's policy. This was an unprecedented event in the Soviet reality of that time.

Due to this fact, Zviad Gamsakhurdia and eight of his friends – members of the illegal organization "Gorgasliani" were arrested.<sup>3</sup> He was only 16 years old at the time of his first arrest.<sup>4</sup> The panel of judges passed different sentences to the convicts – from 3 to 4 years in prison. Gamsakhurdia was sentenced to 5 years in prison. But eventually the court took into account the mitigating circumstances and commuted the prison sentences to probation.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, the leader of the dissident movement did not stop fighting against the Soviet system. Together with his friend Merab Kostava, he became even more active. On their own initiative the Helsing Group Georgia was founded in Tbilisi in 1976 led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia until the end of his life. (The Helsinki Group actively promoted human rights, and in the first place, the rights of the Georgian nation, Georgian cultural monuments, the Georgian Orthodox Church. The group published underground samizdat journals "Georgia", "The Golden Fleece", "Messenger of Georgia", etc. On Gamsakhurdia's own initiative "The Gulag Archipelago" by Russian dissident writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn was for the first time published in Tbilisi in the form of samizdat).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ubilava G. Formation and circulation of political elites in post-Soviet Georgia, dissertation for the degree of a candidate of political sciences, 2019

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Weber M. Selected Works. - M., Progress, 1990. pp. 648,64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Khurtsilava T. Undisclosed details of the arrest of Merab Kostava // Historical Heritage, No. 3, 2014. P. 28. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Koridze T. Not all people are right. Letters, notes, publicism. Tbilisi, 2016. P. 23. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Khurtsilava T. Undisclosed details of the arrest of Merab Kostava // Historical Heritage, No. 3, 2014. P. 28. In Georgian.

In 1977-1979 the Soviet State Security Service (KGB) arrested Z. Gamsakhurdia for dissident activities again. In April 1977 he was expelled from the Georgian Writers' Union for "anti-Soviet propaganda."

In the course of an irreconcilable struggle against the Soviet system his personal qualities as a politician were formed and manifested with particular intensity in the era of Gorbachev's "Glastnost" and "Perestroika."

When talking about Zviad Gamsakhurdia's political phenomenon, we should also focus on the important events that led him from being an ordinary dissident to coming to power and becoming the leader of the ruling elite.

During Gamsakhurdia's public and political career, everyone unanimously acknowledged his oratorical talent, his ability to influence people's feelings, and control their political energy. As his friend and closest comrade Temur Koridze recalled, Zviad Gamsakhurdia did not make any calls for support at the rallies, but his speeches on the patriotic-religious themes had a unique effect in terms of mobilizing people, so great masses of people trusted and respected him.<sup>1</sup>

"Here we have a new choice. The Lord came and told us: Georgian nation, there are two ways in front of you, your national movement is approaching the crossroads. There is the way of Ilia the Righteous, the way of morality and purity, and there is the way of Barabbas savagery and insidiousness, there is the way of terrorism! Make your choice, Georgian people! Make your choice, Georgians! Choose the way of Christ and goodness, choose the way of Ilia the Righteous, because this way will lead us to purification! Gamsakhurdia: The Way of Christ – The Way of Judas!<sup>2</sup>According to Temur Koridze, people's attitude towards Zviad Gamsakhurdia could be expressed in three words: "People adored him!"<sup>3</sup>

The question arises – what caused people to love Zviad Gamsakhurdia so sincerely, trust and support him?

Apart from oratory, the fact that he was the son of the famous Georgian writer Konstantine Gamsakhurdia played a big role in the socialization of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, in the formation of his personal qualities and people's selfless love for him. (Konstantine Gamsakhurdia was a prominent Georgian writer, academician, classic of the twentieth century Georgian literature). In Georgian society he was perceived as a great patriot, whose death was regarded by Georgians as a national tragedy. Therefore, in the mythologized and ideologized society Konstantine Gamsakhurdia's son was a priori considered a great patriot of the country and no one at the rallies doubted the sincerity of his words imbued with national-religious pathos. In addition, his academic success played an important role in his dissident biography. He was a doctor of philological sciences, writer and translator, author of about 40 scientific papers and more than 200 publicist essays.<sup>4</sup>

All these components were combined in a complex way throughout Zviad Gamsakhurdia's entire dissident political career, which in turn became a contributing factor toward the consolidation and mobilization of the active members of the elite with a dissident political past. At the same time, a great mass of patriotic-religious people gathered around him.

The reality created in the early 90s led to the rise of the political elite mobilized at the highest level of the socio-political hierarchy around the charismatic leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia. In the first phase of the activities of the ruling dissident political elite of independent Georgia the confrontation between Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the counter-elite escalated into a civil war. The government of Zviad Gamsakhurdia failed to come to an agreement with those in power and the privileged intellectuals due to the sharp confrontation with them. In the end, the ruling political elite and counter-elite failed to achieve the required level of political maturity. They failed to reach a consensus through political compromises, and a radical confrontation escalated into an armed conflict. With the active intervention of outside forces and with the broad participation of criminal elements the Army and Mkhedrioni overthrew the legitimate government elected by the people, which led to the civil war and the fragmentation of the country.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Koridze T. Not all people are right. Letters, notes, publicism. Tbilisi, 2016. P. 25. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQyKz7JKCSQ (Date of access: 20.08.2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Koridze T. Not all people are right. Letters, notes, publicism. Tbilisi, 2016. P. 32. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The coup d'état in Georgia // Historical Heritage, No. 1, 2015. P.4. In Georgian.

The destabilization of the political situation caused by the civil war, the chaotic functioning of the political system to a large extent contributed to the destruction of the economic infrastructure and a sharp deterioration in the socio-economic and material situation of the population.

Crime and criminality increased, which left a significant mark on the public awareness. There was a demand in the society for a change of the charismatic leader with a leader who would have experience in managing administrative and political structures, working in high positions of government.

At that time the society perceived Eduard Shevardnadze as a person who had gone through almost all the levels of the administrative hierarchy in the communist party system.<sup>1</sup>

The graduate of Kutaisi Pedagogical Institute had gone through really important stages in the administrative positions hierarchy. In 1957-1961. – the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Republic of Georgia, in 1961-1964. – First Secretary of the Mtskheta Regional Committee of the Communist Party, then the First Secretary of the Communist Party Committee of Tbilisi 1<sup>st</sup> May District. Shevardnadze was a member of the Central Committee of the Georgia, and in 1965-1972 from 1958. In 1964-1965 he was the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, and in 1965-1972 he was the Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia. In 1972 he was elected the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia.<sup>2</sup>

As we have mentioned, in 1965 Shevardnadze was appointed Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia and headed the structure for 7 years. He declared an irreconcilable fight against corruption. At that time the country's economy was managed by clan principles and corruption pervaded the entire vertical of the ruling elite. The new interior minister launched an attack on the shadow economy and corruption immediately after his appointment. Although the campaign received widespread publicity, it did not work, since it was impossible to fight corruption in Soviet Georgia. Shevrdnadze knew this well, but in this campaign he established himself as an energetic, effective and uncompromising ruler. Shevardnadze's efforts did not go unnoticed in Moscow. He made new contacts in the capital of the USSR. He had a particularly close relationship with the Soviet Interior Minister Nikolai Shchelokov, who was part of Brezhnev's inner circle. As a result, Shevardnadze started an independent game in support of Moscow in Georgia.<sup>3</sup>

In 1972, he replaced Vasil Mzhavanadze, who was exposed to corruption, and became the first secretary of the Central Committee. Shevardnadze's "dizzying" progress began in 1985, and he became a "world-class" leader. With the support of the General Secretary of the USSR Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev, he was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. According to many analysts, it was from this period that his political activities began to be mythologized in the consciousness of the Georgian society. This was due to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. At that time, this was well perceived in Georgia and was considered as an indicator of his high qualification as a civil servant.

In the minds of Georgians, the last two facts made Shevardnadze a global political figure having a high level of recognition and acknowledgment among the political elites of the United States and Europe. At the same time, as it turned out later from various sources, E. Shevardnadze was against the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This is confirmed by the minutes of the meetings of the politbureau, where Gorbachev said: "Shevardnadze's hawk-like cry is unacceptable to me."<sup>4</sup>

As for E. Shevardnadze's high authority in the Western political elite, we can quote the words from the memoirs of the former US Secretary of State J. Schultz which clearly reflected the attitude of the American and European political class towards him: "From the point of view of practical experience in Georgia at that time, E. Shevardnadze was an uncompetitive political figure."

His mythologization as a person with great political influence led him to the role of a charismatic leader and the weakening of Zviad Gamsakhurdia as a charismatic leader and his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tukvadze A. Political elites selection systems. // International scientific-practical legal Journal "LIFE AND LAW", №1, 2009. P.71, in Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia. V.10, Tbilisi, 1986. P.702. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Biography of Eduard Shevardnadze. Part 1. Retrieved from http://intermedia.ge. (date of access: 20.08.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Biography of Eduard Shevardnadze. Part 1, Retrieved from http://intermedia.ge. (date of access: 20.08.2017. In Georgian).

replacement. Many people created exaggerated expectations regarding him and considered him the savior of the homeland. It was this political situation that led to the replacement of Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the national dissident elite associated with him. The political elite of the former Soviet ruling class gathered around Eduard Shevardnadze.

Despite Shevardnadze's government's strong focus on Western democratic-liberal values, the political rule in Georgia, like in other post-Soviet republics, was elitist. The political elite, due to total corruption, unlimited growth of privileges and wealth, as well as the extremely difficult economic situation of the population, lost its social bases and the people's support.

The revolutionary processes that took place in November 2003 radically changed the political situation in the country. A qualitatively different new political elite came to power under the leadership of President Mikheil Saakashvili. Prior to his presidency, the biography of Mikhail Saakashvili had no particular achievements in the political arena. He got involved in Georgian politics at the request of his political partner Zurab Zhvania. According to various sources, during his life and work in the United States, Zurab Zhvania contacted Saakashvili in 1995. At the request of President Eduard Shevardnadze, he was invited to the ruling "Georgian Citizens' Union." In the same year, Saakashvili was elected a member of the Georgian Parliament. While working in the Parliament in 1995-1998, he became the Chairman of the Constitutional and Legislative Committee, in 1998-1999 he headed the ruling faction "Citizens' Union of Georgia."<sup>2</sup> As part of Georgia's political elite, Saakashvili often found himself in the center of media attention due to his populist and unorthodox behavior. This behavior shaped his political image in society as an energetic, hardworking young politician fighting against corruption. Georgia's third president, as his counterparts in the West recall, was a brave and energetic man who offered the Georgian people simple recipes to fight poverty and corruption. The third president of Georgia, as his Western colleagues recall, was a brave and energetic man who offered the Georgian people simple recipes for fighting poverty and corruption. Highly established European leaders describe Saakashvili as an inconsistent leader.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to populism and heterogeneous behavior, Mikheil Saakashvili had what is highly regarded in traditional Georgian provincial thinking – Western education – for a successful political career in Georgia's diverse political spectrum. This in turn significantly contributes to career advancement in any field. After graduating with honors from the Kiev Institute of International Relations, he enrolled at Columbia University under the Edmund Muskie Program. In 1995 he received a Master of Laws degree. In the same year he received an honorary diploma from the Strasbourg International Institute for Human Rights in Comparative Human Rights Law. In 1995-1996 he was a Graduate Student at National Law Center, George Washington University,

In 1995-1996 he studied for a doctorate at George Washington University, National Center for Law.<sup>4</sup>

Western education, Western social and political life reflected in his consciousness, significantly contributed to the formation of the personal qualities of the populist politician and good image maker, which he tried to transfer to a specific Georgian political reality and even achieved success. His success was also driven by the problems in Shevardnadze's government - stagnation, corruption, severe socio-economic situation of the population, etc.

Against the backdrop of the frustration experienced during Shevardnadze's time, Saakashvili's public speeches and social and political activities gave a spark of hope to a large part of the society. The population supported him in all regions of Georgia. But despite the significant support of ordinary people, prior to Shevardnadze's ouster, M. Saakashvili and the group of young reformers, separated from the Citizens' Union, did not have a particularly high rating in post-Shevardnadze Georgia. However, Saakashvili's political activism and leadership status during the Rose Revolution ultimately determined his role as the leader, fueled by his charisma and the rise of the United National Movement to power.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dolidze V. Political parties and party building in Georgia // Central Asia and the Caucasus, No. 1, 2005. P.57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Biography of Mikhail Saakashvili. Retrieved from http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00003028/ (date of access: 20.08.2017). In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Retrieved from http://www.for.ge/view.php?for\_id=43668&bloger\_id=22&cat=12, (date of use 20.09.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Biography of Mikhail Saakashvili. Retrieved from www.saakashviliarchive.info/ge/ (Date of access: 20.08.2017. In Georgian).

During his tenure, a number of successful reforms were carried out – the improvement of the status of patrol police, introduction of unified national exams, the fight against crime, the elimination of corruption at the household level, the increase of the state budget, the payment of pensions and salaries, and so on. All this at some point gained him the support of the people, but soon the time of failure came in the international arena. This was followed by an increase in the use of authoritarian methods and, consequently, an increase in violence, especially after the 2008 war. The propaganda machine was activated, and Saakashvili took on the role of the main ideologist, demagogue, propagandist and savior of the country. All this was accompanied by abundant funding of foreign lobbying groups. The Georgian political arena became on the one hand, "a space of public, nominal rights and a free market, and on the other hand, a covert sphere of control, corruption and intimidation."<sup>1</sup> The tendencies of introducing servility into political thinking were intensified in the country. The creator of all this was an authoritarian leader, with amazing energy and restless nature.

A new group of people of totalitarian thinking and culture appeared on the political scene. The United National Movement "successfully privatized the state." Close ties with the authorities became a means of success in all spheres of public life. "Elite corruption" reigned in the country. The maintenance of power was possible at the expense of establishing full control over the media and launching the state propaganda machine in every possible way. The maintenance of power took place at the expense of establishing full control over the mass media and launching the state propaganda machine.

Consistent conversations and populist promises were enough as criteria for selecting political leaders. According to foreign experts (Stephen Jones, Lincoln Mitchell), the United National Movement created an "aggressive political culture" in the political arena of Georgia. Lincoln M. Georgia: Four Opinions and Four Questions About the Georgian Elections.<sup>2</sup> Under Saakashvili, façade democracy, on the "path to complete democratization" of society, exaggeration of success, and propaganda of illusory promises acquired an unprecedented scale. In the war lost to Russia in 2008, Saakashvili's government declared that they were victorious and promised the people that the country would soon join the NATO and the European Union. During the rule of the National Movement, more lies were told and more false promises were made than ever in the history of Georgia. Stephen F. Jones called the political orientation, rhetoric and behavior of Saakashvili's government "political orientation, rhetoric and behavior of Saakashvili's government"

The authoritarian regime just like the totalitarian regime introduced its terminology with totalitarian elements into political circulation, – "washed away", "red intelligentsia", "corrupt professors", etc. The policy of creating an "enemy icon" was aimed at intimidating the population, achieving an imaginary stability, consolidating around the government and, most importantly, creating political culture based on obedience and submission.

The tendencies of authoritarianism were getting stronger and stronger, and we finally got a violent regime that served the supremacy of one man, and the United National Movement was the creator of this regime.

And in this situation Bidzina Ivanishvili appeared on the political scene. His political appearance and critical statements gave a "spark of hope" to the people embittered and frustrated by Saakashvili's repressive regime. Considering Ivanishvili's financial capabilities, his rise to power was associated with the country's new industrialization, construction of factories, economic development and material well-being. The population believed that he would invest most of his financial capital in the Georgian economy in the form of investments.

Before he appeared in politics, there were many rumors about him. The media talked a lot about him. "Ivanishvili did not like to be in the spotlight, so only 'legends' circulated about him as a person who just helped people."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Stephen F. Jones. Democracy in Georgia. Retrieved from http://www.cicerofoundation.org/lectures/Stephen-Jones.Georgia.pdf. (date of access: 14.09.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Retrieved from http: //foreignpress.ge/chven-shesakheb/4120.html. (Date of access: 14.09.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Stephen F. Jones. Democracy in Georgia. Retrieved from http://www.cicerofoundation.org/lectures/Stephen-Jones.Georgia.pdf. (Date of access: 14.09.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ramazashvili T. Bidzina Ivanishvili is a person who managed the impossible. Retrieved from http://reportiori.ge/old/aww.ge/sputnik-georgia.com?menuid=48&id=883&lang=1 (Date of access: 14.09.2017. In Georgian).

Unlike other political leaders and political groups, the source of power for Bidzina Ivanishvili and the opposition elite mobilized around him consisted of Ivanishvili's achievements in business, not in politics. Before 1988, that is, before moving to Moscow, Ivanishvili had his own business in Georgia. He traded in computers. His first customer was the Georgian Academy of Sciences. As a result of these business operations, he amassed a solid capital. Then, B. Ivanishvili continued his business in Moscow with new partners, after some time a business of copying machines and telephones was added to the computer business. Later, his company acquired an electrical engineering plant in Hong Kong. By 1990, Ivanishvili had become one of the leaders in the sale of electrical appliances in Russia. With the accumulated capital, Ivanishvili and his partners opened the bank "Roscredit."<sup>1</sup>

In 1991, he became Chairman of the Board of Directors and President of Rossiysk Credit Bank. As a result of B. Ivanishvili's business activities, a number of companies turned out to be wholly or partially owned by him, which made quite large profits (e.g., Holding Metaloinvest, Dr. Stoletov Pharmacy Chain, Impexbank, Interfin Trade, Stoilenskaya Niva, Tiazhmekhpress, RTI-caoutchouc, Ural plant of rubber products, "Erkapharma", Insurance Company "RK-Guarantor", Hotels "Minsk" and "Central", Transport Company "Ore Transportation Center"; in Georgia: Food Company Tolia, Cartu Bank).<sup>2</sup> B. Ivanishvili made a special contribution to a very important part of the Georgian society. The increase in trust and the formation of charisma necessary in political leadership was achieved through his charitable and patronage activities, which he carried out after his arrival in Georgia from Moscow. He provided financial assistance to intellectuals and members of the public who were doomed to poverty. This list is quite impressive and includes about 3550 people.<sup>3</sup> (Bidzina Ivanishvili, how much and to whom did he pay each month? The list includes artists, scientists, athletes and ordinary citizens B. Ivanishvili scholarships.<sup>4</sup> Ivanishvili's charitable activities are also linked to his many non-profit infrastructure projects. With his help, a number of national and cultural monuments were reconstructed and rehabilitated.

In his first political statement, he sharply criticized Saakashvili, accusing him of "falsifying election results, aggressive dispersal of demonstrations, violence against business and monopolization of power." The businessman noted: "The flow of lies about Saakashvili's achievements is insulting." Bidzina Ivanishvili joins Georgian politics.<sup>5</sup> A mythologized idea about the businessman greatly contributed to the formation of Ivanishvili's charisma, with the support of Ivanishvili the political bloc "Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia" was founded. This movement and the above factors finally determined the fate of the 2012 power change in favor of B. Ivanishvili and his elite entourage.

**Conclusions.** Overall, it may be said that after gaining independence, political leaders at different stages of Georgia's recent history differed in both political values and foreign policy orientation. In addition, they differed from each other in personal qualities that had a significant impact on the mechanisms for recruiting elites, as well as on the further development of Georgia. As a result, in Georgian reality the main part of society is focused on a specific political figure, while the elite groups united around this leader differ from each other in their values and ideological orientation. At the same time, all post-Soviet political leaders followed different paths of accumulating social and political capital, which became an important component of developing their individual political charisma.

Here we must pay attention to the most important detail that had a significant impact on the process of creating the charisma of these leaders. With the exception of the first president of the country, Z. Gamsakhurdia, the charisma and its related components of all the other leaders were formed outside the country and the electorate socialized in the patriarchal society focused on them - on famous and successful people working abroad.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Government of Georgia. B. Ivanishvili. Retrieved from http: //gov.ge/index.php? Lang\_id = geo & sec\_id = 361 (Date of access: 09/11/2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ivanishvili's charity, 2005-2010 - for the reconstruction - rehabilitation of cultural monuments // Kviris palitra, No. 44, 2011. In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Retrieved from http://mpress.ge/2016/01/%e1% (Date of access: 11.09.2017). In Georgian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Retrieved from https://www.kvirispalitra.ge/old (Date of access: 11.09.2017. In Georgian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Retrieved from https://www.amerikiskhma.com/ (Date of access: 09/14/2017). (In Georgian).

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