

*History of Science*

## The Outstanding Scientist and the Honorable Son of his Country Land – Ivane Javakhishvili

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**ABSTRACT:** One of the most popular public figures in Georgia was outstanding historian and linguist Ivane Javakhishvili. Hundred and forty years passed since his birth (1876-1940). His contribution into Georgian science, culture and public life is tremendous. He is one of the founders of Tbilisi State University. Now Tbilisi State University is called after his name. We say Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. He was the real patriot of Georgia and Georgian nation. All his life he devoted to the development of science and bringing up young generation. He brought a lot of new ideas into education. He left substantial contribution in the history of Georgia, history of Georgian economy, history of Georgian law, Georgian palaeography, historical geography, metrology, numismatology, history of music, construction activities and other fields of sciences. Georgian people are proud of having such an honorable human and scientist. © 2016 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

**Key words:** Javakhishvili, Georgian public people

Ivane Javakhishvili is a completely unique phenomenon in the history of Georgian public life, who appeared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in the history of Georgia. One hundred and forty years passed since Ivane Javakhishvili's birth (1876-1940). He was a citizen and scientist, whose great efforts resulted in the foundation of the University, the first educational hearth in Georgia, and investigation of Georgian history. It was the beginning of a completely new stage in Georgian historiography. With his intense scientific work and social activities he continued the deeds for the use of the cultural life of the Georgian nation started by Ilia Chavchavadze.

Ivane Javakhishvili was born on April 11 (23), 1876. Ivane's father, Alexandre Javakhishvili, was engaged

in teaching activities. I. Javakhishvili had a traditional Georgian family and children were brought up in the spirit of boundless love for the homeland and native language. In 1888, Ivane Javakhishvili was enrolled into the second class of gymnasium after completion of pro-gymnasium. He had penchant for history at that time. During that period, he began writing small and very interesting essays. His works attracted attention and Ivane Javakhishvili decided to become a historian.

In 1895, Ivane Javakhishvili finished the gymnasium. The Director of the gymnasium gave excellent characteristics to Ivane and he went to Saint Petersburg. The same year he entered the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Armenian-Georgian-Iranian Depart-

ment of the Saint Petersburg University. There he was specialized in Georgian and Armenian history.

Ivane Javakhishvili took part in the activities of the Georgian community in Saint Petersburg. He managed a Georgian history learning circle. Under his leadership a good relationship with Armenian and Azerbaijan communities was established, furthermore, the South Caucasus community was founded.

In 1899, Javakhishvili graduated from the University and by the decision of the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies he continued the studies for Scientific Degree.

Even hundred years ago, in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Ivane Javakhishvili foresaw that Georgian history was in front of new, important challenges. A lot of things needed to be reviewed and evaluated. To form pure and genuine academic history, foremost, it was required to have good basis to achieve the goal. As a real patriot of his nation Ivane Javakhishvili chose his own way, the way of telling the truth. He criticized anti-scientific and false views concerning the history of Georgia. Ivane Javakhishvili declared:

«ქართველმა ისტორიკოსმა პირუთვნელად უნდა შეისწავლოს თავისი ერის წარსული, პირუთვნელად უნდა წარმოუდგინოს თავის სამშობლოს წარსული თანამემამულეებსაც და უცხოელებსაც, რადგან მას არ უნდა დაავიწყდეს, რა დიდი ღვაწლიც უნდა მიუძღოდეს ეროვნებას წარსულში, თუ იგი აწმყოში არას წარმოადგენს, ბრწყინვალე წარსული ვერას უშველის» [1].

Ivane Javakhishvili took over the heritage and the ideas of national liberation of Ilia Chavchavadze and other public people of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ivane Javakhishvili put into practice the plan for the National University establishment in Georgia. In 1914 the law on the establishment of private educational Institutes in non-Russian language was issued in the Russian Empire.

Ivane Javakhishvili in collaboration with his supporters (Akaki Shanidze, Ioseb Kipshidze, Shalva Nucubidze, Zurab Avalishvili and others) made great

contribution for establishment of the University. He was in the center of public opinion of the nation.

In spring 1917, Javakhishvili came to Tbilisi and first organizational arrangements were held. On May 12 of the same year, they held the foundation meeting of the Georgian University society, where famous scientists, Ekvtime Takaishvili, Dimitri Uznadze, Luarsab Botsvadze, Grigol Veshapeli, Ilia Zurabishvili and many others were present. The Great Scientist had clearly documented that Georgian University had to be at the same time a scientific research center, Higher Institution for preparing the scientific staff of higher education for science and practice in Georgia.

Broad activities began in Kutaisi as well. Georgian society with satisfaction met the news regarding the attempt to establish the University. Beside Georgians, The representatives of other nations living in Georgia expressed their support. Ivane Javakhishvili, Petre Meliqishvili and Andria Razmadze were entitled to choose and invite the professors for the University. The first session of the University Professors' Collegium was held in January 13, 1918. They elected the University administration and asked Javakhishvili to take the post of the University Rector. Javakhishvili declined this proposition and offered Petre Meliqishvili, being very popular scientist in Russia and abroad, to be assigned for this post. The Professors' Collegium accepted this offer. Javakhishvili was appointed the Dean of Philosophy Faculty.

The Georgian University was opened on the Memorial Day of David Agmashenebeli in January 26, 1918. The first lecture was delivered by Ivane Javakhishvili on the topic «Human personality and the significance in ancient Georgian historical-philosophical writings».

On December 24, 1919, Ivane Javakhishvili was elected the Rector of the University. He held this position until January 24, 1926. All this time he devoted himself to the University's further prosperity. The University's autonomy and Ivane Javakhishvili himself became unacceptable for the new government of the Soviet regime. In 1925, the government

assaulted the University's autonomy. Practically, the University's autonomy was abolished. Since 1926 the position of the Rector was not electable, but it was appointed by higher-level authorities. It was continued until 1992 and the University's autonomy was disintegrated. Since June 1926, Javakhishvili was dismissed from the post of the Rector and practically he was put aside from the University.

In July 7, 1930, the Georgian National Soviet of Commissars issued the resolution on Tbilisi University reorganization. The University was divided into several higher Institutes. This period was very difficult for Georgian intellectuals. In the whole Soviet Union the fight against so-called «Kondratevshchina» began. Georgia stood out in this fight as well. This fight was against unreliable scientists. On December 13, 1930, the Rector of Pedagogical Institute Ivane Vashakmadze began to blame Javakhishvili and his School at the committee meeting. According to I. Vashakmadze, Ivane Javakhishvili was “the representative of the old feudal – nationalistic country. Methodologically, he was the crawling empiricist and anti-Marxist. The history of Ivane Javakhishvili was not the history as Science ... his work was worsening rather, than progressing”. Unfortunately, many attendees sided with the Rector's pathos. Among them some famous historians, who practically betrayed the Great Scientist. Aspirant Severian Kalichava criticized Javakhishvili to emphasize that the symbol of the Georgian nation was David Agmashenebeli.

Thus, Javakhishvili was dismissed from the University on May 28, 1931, by the order of the Commissar of Public Education. For some time Ivane put all his work off and was unemployed. Three months later, he started working as the scientific consultant to the National Museum. In 1933, the University was restored. Ivane Javakhishvili was returned to be the Head of the Department of Georgian Ancient History. The Head of the department of Georgian Modern History was Simon Hundadze. Two years later Ancient and Modern History Departments were united and Simon Janashia became the Head of that

department. Ivane Javakhishvili was left jobless again.

In 1936, a new stage of persecution against Ivane Javakhishvili began. This period was very difficult for the University professors and students. It became regular for mutual denunciation and sacrificing, moreover, each such action could fall a victim. In March 23, 1936, a public meeting of the University History department was held, where the Rector Karlo Oragvelidze in his report: “The decision on historical issues and our challenges by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Council of People's Commissars” called the school of the I. Javakhishvili to be a «bourgeois-nationalistic school» [2]. It was completely undeserved condemnation of the Great Scientist. However, the same year, the circumstances drastically changed. The criticism and persecution of Ivane Javakhishvili stopped. His works on historiography drew the attention of the first editor Alexander Svanidze, the founder of the all-union Journal “Vestnik drevney istorii”. Due to this information and recommendation to Ioseb Stalin (he was Stalin's brother-in-law), Ivane Javakhishvili returned back to regular scientific and public life. Soon he was appointed a scientific consultant to the Institute of Language, History and Material Culture. Later he was elected the Deputy to the Georgian Supreme Soviet, a Member of the Presidium Supreme Soviet, the Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, the head of the History Department of the Georgian Museum. Ivane Javakhishvili personally headed the exhibition dedicated to the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the manuscript «The Knight in the Panther's Skin» and was rewarded with the Order of the Red Banner of Labour.

The Rectors of the Tbilisi University after Ivane Javakhishvili, had severe misfortune. Tedo Glonti, Malaqia Toroshelidze, Ivane Vashakmadze, Levan Agniashvili, Karlo Oragvelidze, Alexandre Erqomaishvili were shot during 1937-1938 by the existing political regime, to which they had served loyally.

Javakhishvili had close relationship with the society of read and write distribution. He supported

with pleasure the idea of publishing the textbooks on the general linguistics and linguistics of the Georgian language. Ivane recommended Ioseb Kipshidze and Akaki Shanidze to be the authors of these textbooks. Javakhishvili considered that there was the need for composing General History of the East. He offered Mikheil Tsereteli to be the author of this book.

The main role in the development of Georgian historical science was played by historic and ethnographic Associations, founded by Ekvtime Takaishvili in 1907. Ivane Javakhishvili was actively involved in the Association's activity. Since 1921, after Ekvtime emigrated, Ivane headed this Association for ten years.

In the 1930's, Ivane Javakhishvili actively participated in the creation of the Georgian encyclopaedia. Unfortunately, it was not published. Remaining archive materials clearly show the role of Ivane in this work. Ivane Javakhishvili drew special attention to the Museum activity. With the scientist's documented request, the history department was formed at the Museum, which Ivane headed for the rest of his life. Ivane personally managed the exhibition dedicated to the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the book «The Knight in the Panther's Skin». Javakhishvili paid significant attention to the protection-research issues of the Georgian people's cultural heritage. The academician Giorgi Chubinashvili emphasized that the Georgian Art issues, Georgian Art past researches and its future were close and valuable for Ivane. He devoted particular attention to Georgian ancient artistic creativity (field of the plastic arts – architecture, sculpture, gold-work and others) and acknowledged it as the indicator of the Georgian people's high culture, independence and strength. By 1914, the scientist had already prepared Georgian Art History. One part was published with title: «Art terms and main knowledge about the monuments of art and material culture in the Ancient Georgian literature» [3]. The merit of Ivane in the activity of Georgian Cultural Monuments protection must be highlighted. Along with monumental painting, Javakhishvili drew great atten-

tion to Georgian Architecture Monuments and took significant measures for maintenance, protection and preservation of architectural monuments. In 1946, after the death of the scientist, Ivane's very important research work was published: «The materials for the history of Georgian nation's material culture (the construction art in ancient Georgia) ». This is the fundamental research on residential buildings, their names, origin and evolution. The gigantic fruit of labour of Ivane Javakhshvili is ... «History of Georgian nation, Economic history of Georgia, History of Georgian law, historical geography, metrology, numismatology, musicology, source studies, history of Armenian writing, construction activities and general issues of material culture history» – this is the non-exhaustive list of problems, which the Great Scientist put into the framework of education.

The name of Ivane Javakhishvili is closely associated with the research and development of the history of Georgian Music. He made valuable conclusion that the polyphony was the inner benefit of Georgian music development.

Ivane Javakhishvili had close relationship with such cultural figures as Zaqaria Paliashvili and Davit Kakabadze. He had special relationship with Niko Marr. They went to Mount Sinai, where they studied medieval Georgian manuscripts (April-September 1902). Ivane Javakhishvili valued much and supported the student's activity: Tamar Lomouri, Simon Janashia, Simon Kauhchishvili, Niko Berdzenishvili and others.

The Great Scientist was completely unpretentious in life and lived with special simplicity.

In November 18, 1940, the Georgian scientific society gathered to listen to Ivane Javakhishvili's report. The problem was very important: «The goals of philological scientists and Georgian literary monuments». At the appointed time, Ivane began his report ... in several minutes near the cathedra, while reading, the Great Scientist's heartbeat stopped. Ivane Javakhishvili passed away, carrying out his scientific and civic duty. In Paris, the outstanding scien-

tist and public man Mikheil Tsereteli said: «Be at peace dear and Great Ivane, forever among those Georgians, who as you are with martyr halo. Your place is with Great Ilia, who before you got the reward of great

merit of the same halo».

Today, we can proudly announce, that the Great Scientist, patriot of the nation and public man – Ivane Javakhishvili fulfilled his duty.

## ისტორია

# დიდი მეცნიერი, ღირსეული მამულიშვილი — ივანე ჯავახიშვილი

## რ. მეტრეველი

*აკადემიის წევრი, საქართველოს მეცნიერებათა ეროვნული აკადემია, თბილისი*

ასორმოცი წელი შესრულდა ივანე ჯავახიშვილის დაბადებიდან (1876-1940 წწ.). ამ მანძილიდან ნათლად ჩანს ის მძიმე და რთული, თავაუღებელი შრომისა და წარმატების გზა, მრავალ პრობლემებთან ერთად რომ გაიარა მეცნიერმა. სრულიად უნიკალური მოვლენაა ივანე ჯავახიშვილი საქართველოს საზოგადოებრივი ცხოვრების ისტორიაში. მე-19 საუკუნის მიწურულისა და მე-20 საუკუნის დასაწყისის საქართველოს ცხოვრებაში გამოჩნდა პიროვნება, რომელმაც თავისი დიდი დაღი დაასვა ჟამთასვლას; ადამიანი, რომელმაც ჭეშმარიტი მამულიშვილობის მისაბაძი მაგალითი უჩვენა თანამედროვეებს, მაგალითი ღრმა მეცნიერული კვლევისა, სამშობლოს უსაზღვრო სიყვარულისა, მოძმეთა პატივისცემისა;

ქართველი ერის ისტორია, საქართველოს ეკონომიკური ისტორია, ქართული სამართლის ისტორია, ქართული პალეოგრაფია, ისტორიული გეოგრაფიის, მეტროლოგიის, ნუმისმატიკის, მუსიკის ისტორიის, სამშენებლო საქმის და საერთოდ მატერიალური კულტურის ისტორიის საკითხები - ეს პრობლემები დიდმა მეცნიერმა ცოდნის გარკვეულ ჩარჩოში მოაქცია.

მოქალაქე და მეცნიერი, რომლის დიდი მცდელობის შედეგია საქართველოში უპირველესი განათლების კერის – უნივერსიტეტის დაარსება და საქართველოს ისტორიის კვლევის, ქართული ისტორიოგრაფიის სრულიად ახალი ეტაპის დაწყება, ეს იყო ივანე ჯავახიშვილი, პიროვნება, რომელიც მე-20 საუკუნის დასაწყისიდანვე თავდაუზოგავი მეცნიერული შრომითა და საზოგადოებრივი საქმიანობით მტკიცე ბურჯად შეეგება ილია ჭავჭავაძის მიერ დაწყებულ საქმეს ერის კულტურული ცხოვრების წინსვლისათვის.

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*Received April, 2016*