



The 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference

# TAO-KLARJETI

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29 September – 2 October, 2020

CAUCASUS UNIVERSITY

A historical and geographical term firmly established in contemporary academic literature, Tao-Klarjeti refers not only to Tao and Klarjeti themselves, but to a wider region comprising several historical Georgian provinces (including Shavsheti, Kola, Artaani, Erusheti, Chrdili, Speri, and others) located on the territory of present-day Turkey.

This region is referred to in Georgian sources as Upper Kartli or Meskheti, and its inhabitants as Meskhetians. In the Middle Ages, state formations that traced their existence back to the ancient period formed the “Kingdom of the Georgians”, a powerful national and ecclesiastical centre which played a highly significant role in the history of Georgian statehood and culture.

For thousands of years, this region of great strategic importance served as a meeting place for a number of states, peoples, and cultures, and its political and administrative status was accordingly subject to change throughout this time.

Tao-Klarjeti is distinguished by its natural and geographical diversity, its large number of provinces, the significance of its political, administrative, and spiritual centres, its multitude of churches, its abundance of fortifications, its rich building traditions, its monumental paintings, its architectural decor, its inscriptions, and the manuscripts and examples of goldsmithing that originate from it.

Political, socio-economic, demographic, and ethno-religious processes both major and localized have left their mark over the centuries on the way of life of Tao-Klarjeti’s inhabitants, as well as on its religions, toponyms, languages, and dialects.

The provinces of Tao-Klarjeti are today located within 4 Turkish administrative regions (Artvin, Ardahan, Erzurum, and Kars) that occupy the basin of three rivers (the Chorokhi, the Mtkvari, and the Aras). Although, for a long time, opportunities to travel and conduct research in the region were extremely limited, today Tao-Klarjeti is visited by a great many tourists and academics. The region’s historical monuments are growing more popular by the day, and initial restoration work on some of these has already been carried out, providing us with hope for the expansion of such projects in the future.

Academic interest shown by various countries in Tao-Klarjeti’s rich historical and cultural heritage is understandably on the rise – especially given the growing opportunities to conduct research in the region. In the meantime, the interdisciplinary International Conference on Tao-Klarjeti, which was first held in 2010, has already become a well-established tradition.

### Organizer



Caucasus University

### Co-organizers



the Research Centre for the South  
Caucasus and Anatolia



the Research Centre for Georgian  
Culture and Tourism Resources



House of Georgian studies

### Supported by



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### Conference topics (in relation to the region)

political and administrative history; Christian and Islamic monuments; fortifications and fortification systems; written sources; archaeological monuments and excavations; manuscripts and historical documents; examples of metalworking craftsmanship; restoration projects; the history of local studies; ethno-religious processes; ways of life and traditional customs; folklore; languages and dialects; the natural and geographical environment; tourism and the management of cultural heritage

### Working languages

Georgian  
English  
Turkish

### Abstract

Submission deadline: 30 May  
Character limit: 2,000-4,000  
Confirmation of participation by the organizing group: by 30 June

### Talks

Submission deadline: One month following receipt of confirmation of participation  
Character limit: 13,000

### Please note:

Work should not be published, or have been presented at other conferences. Papers should clearly indicate the results of research carried out.

### Conference venue and dates

Caucasus University  
29 September – 2 October, 2020