

## THE GEORGIAN-NORWEGIAN RULE OF LAW ASSOCIATION LECTURE SERIES

A lecture by Teimuraz Antelava:

*The Impact of Legal Culture on the National Modernization Projects:  
Deriving Some General Findings from Juxtaposing the Modernization of  
Norway (1814-1980s) and Georgia (1801-present)*

### **Abstract:**

A common sense perception of Norway and Georgia would normally make one think of the two very different countries that are remote from each other – one vested in the Nordic and a broader Western European tradition and another coming from the Soviet past with only recently emerged European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Yet, an exploration of the role of law in the modernization projects of the both societies reveals some meta-geographic and meta-cultural concepts, which, albeit to the different extent, underpin the legal cultures of the two and thus establish their own validity beyond traditionally thought Western borders. In following the periodization of the post-1814 history of Norway established by Jens Arup Seip (1814-1884: the ‘civil servants state’; 1884-1940: the ‘Liberal Party state’; 1945-1980s: the ‘Labour Party state’) and the conventionalized periodization of the post-1801 history of Georgia (1801-1917: the Russian Empire rule; 1917-1921: Georgian Democratic Republic; 1921-1990: the Soviet occupation rule; 1991-2003: the post-Soviet state; 2003-present: the post-‘Rose Revolution’ state) the law as a social instrument of “stabilizing change” (Luhmann) towards democratic modernization, and the law as an expression of the *collective rationality* reached through *societal self-reflexivity* (Slagstad) is discussed with a view to revealing the common centrality of the latter two concepts in seemingly totally different contexts of Norwegian and Georgian national modernization projects – one accomplished and one underway – to democracy.

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