

NATO NIKABADZE

NOE ZHORDANIA AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Noe Zhordania, a leader of the Georgian Social-democracy covertly or openly recognized the importance of the national question until 1903. In the Second Assembly of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party of the summer 1903 Yuli Martov supported the idea of "The Oblast self-governance" for Finland, Poland and the Caucasian countries. Noe Zhordania shared this idea.

However, in 1905-1914 Noe Zhordania denied the idea of asking for the Georgia's autonomy within the Russian empire as he counted it unacceptable. On this ground Noe Zhordania had acrimonious controversy with Social-federalists, and even with V. Darchiashvili, a social-democrat, the latter criticizing the Russian Social democratic Labor Party's program in the national questions.

In the preliminary period of the February Revolution of 1917 Georgian social-democrats came to the recognition of Georgia's independence. The Menshevik Party had enjoyed most of the popular support.

In the National Assembly of November 1917 Noe Zhordania supported the regaining of independence of the Georgian state. It is true that he was not the author of this idea but he played a decisive role for its realization. The Independence Charter of May 26, 1918 says that Noe Zhordania chose to stand on the side of Georgia.