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	<p>RESEARCH ARTICLE </p>
	<h2>Diplomatic Recognition Beyond Occupation: The Historical Foundations and Political Significance of Georgian–Mexican Relations in the Early Twentieth Century</h2>
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<p><b>Keywords</b></p>	<p>Democratic Republic of Georgia; Mexico; Diplomatic recognition; International law; Post–World War I diplomacy; League of Nations; Soviet occupation</p>
<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>The foreign policy of the Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918–1921) was fundamentally oriented toward securing international legitimacy and full integration into the post–First World War international system. Achieving recognition from major and peripheral powers alike was a strategic necessity in a rapidly transforming global political environment shaped by the collapse of empires and the emergence of new nation-states. Within this context, the establishment of diplomatic relations with states beyond Europe represented not only a symbolic achievement but also a pragmatic effort to consolidate Georgia’s sovereignty under international law. This study examines a specific yet underexplored dimension of Georgian foreign policy: the diplomatic relations between the Democratic Republic of Georgia and the United Mexican States. Drawing upon previously underutilized archival materials preserved in Mexican diplomatic collections; the article reconstructs the process that culminated in Mexico’s de jure recognition of Georgia on 14 April 1921. Particular attention is devoted to diplomatic correspondence exchanged between Georgian officials, the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, and Mexico’s diplomatic representatives in Europe, highlighting the legal, political, and normative considerations underlying Mexico’s decision. The findings demonstrate that Mexico’s recognition of Georgia was grounded not only in the resolutions of the Inter-Allied Conference and the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, but also in broader principles of international legitimacy and solidarity with newly recognized states. Importantly, the study reveals that this recognition was granted despite Mexico’s awareness of Georgia’s precarious political situation following the Soviet Russian occupation. By analyzing this diplomatic episode, the article contributes to a deeper understanding of early twentieth-century international recognition practices and sheds new light on Georgia’s global diplomatic engagement beyond the European sphere.</p>	
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**Introduction:** The principal objective of the foreign policy of the Democratic Republic of Georgia was the attainment of full integration into the international community. In this context, the favorable disposition of the leading political powers was of decisive importance—a goal that proved particularly challenging in the complex international environment that emerged in the aftermath of the First World War. Nevertheless, through the concerted efforts of the contemporary Georgian government, notable progress was achieved in this direction. Evidence of these successes includes both the de facto and de jure recognition of Georgia by major world powers, as well as the establishment of the Georgian Association of the League of Nations on 7 December 1919. The primary purpose of this organization was to foster close relations with the first universal international institution. The Association was chaired by Aleksandre Lomtadze (1882–1924), First Deputy Chairman of the Constituent Assembly of Georgia.

It is noteworthy that the process of de jure recognition of Georgia continued even after the annexation and occupation of the country by Soviet Russia. During this period, Georgia was formally recognized by several states, including Haiti - March 9, 1921, Liberia - March 28, 1921, Mexico - April 14, 1921, Panama - August 26, 1921, Siam (Thailand) - November 20, 1921, and Luxembourg - February 23, 1922. The present study focuses on a specific dimension of the foreign policy of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, namely its relations with Mexico. In this regard, special acknowledgment is due to the Georgian Embassy in Mexico for granting access to archival materials preserved in that country, which constitute a valuable source base for the present research.

**Discussion/Results:** As evidenced by the aforementioned primary historical sources, the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia had already appealed to the United Mexican States for diplomatic recognition prior to the entry of the Soviet Russian occupation forces into Georgian territory. In diplomatic correspondence # 266, dated 9 February 1921, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yevgeni Gegechkori, expressed satisfaction with Mexico's readiness to align itself with the position of the Entente powers concerning the de jure recognition of Georgia.

It is also noteworthy that in this correspondence—drafted in French and dispatched from the Georgian diplomatic mission located at 44 Avenue Victor Hugo in Paris—the head of the Mexican foreign policy establishment is referred to as “Minister,” whereas during the period 1921–1923 Alberto José Pani Arteaga officially held the title of Secretary of Foreign Affairs. To substantiate these observations, the present study proceeds with an analysis of the document itself:

“Excellency,

By decision dated January 27, the Inter-Allied Conference resolved to recognize the de jure independence of the Georgian Republic.

This resolution of the representatives of the Great Allied Powers puts an end to the indecisive situation of Georgia from an international point of view.

The Georgian Government would be pleased to learn that Your Government joins in the decision of the Inter-Allied Conference and recognizes, like the Great Powers, the de jure independence of Georgia.

In the hope that the friendship between Georgia and Mexico will only grow and strengthen, in the interest of both our peoples, I take this opportunity to renew to You, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs. Evguéni Guéguetchkori” (Secretaria 1921: 3).

It should be emphasized that Yevgeny Gegechkori's correspondence received a substantive and effective continuation: The Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Alberto Pani, forwarded the matter to President Álvaro Obregón (1920–1924) for consideration and a final decision. Of particular importance is letter # 143, dated February 21, 1921, in which Pani identifies the de jure recognition of Georgia by Russia and the Entente powers as one of the principal grounds for

Mexico's prospective recognition of the Georgian state. Furthermore, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs refers to the Treaty of Versailles (1919) as the fundamental legal basis for this diplomatic act, noting that Chapter XIV of the treaty addresses the former Russian Empire and the states that emerged or were restored on its territory. In support of this argument, reference is made below to the relevant diplomatic correspondence.

"I have the honor of forwarding to you, enclosed, a note I received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Georgia, dated in Paris (seat of said ministry) on the 9<sup>th</sup> of this month, in which, following customary protocol in such cases, the aforementioned official addresses you personally requesting our Government's recognition of the aforementioned Republic.

As supplementary information, I have the honor of informing your Superiority that the Republic of Georgia, whose independence has just been recognized by the Inter-Allied Conference, simultaneously with Lithuania and Estonia, and is provided for by Article 117 of the Treaty of Versailles (European Political Clauses), has also been recognized by Germany, Argentina, and, above all, by Russia, at whose expense its territory was formed.

Please reiterate the assurances of my most distinguished consideration and respect" (Secretaria 1921: 2).

As evidenced by the Mexican archival document, this petition constituted the formal basis upon which the recommendation for the de jure recognition of the independence of the Democratic Republic of Georgia by the aforementioned state was issued. Specifically, the correspondence of Rodolfo Nervo, the Mexican Chargé d'Affaires in France, indicates that:

"In response to your kind note No. 145 dated February 21<sup>st</sup> last, please forward to His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Georgian Republic the attached note, in which the Government of Mexico recognizes the de jure independence of said State.

I renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

Mexico, April 14, 1921

Senior Rodolfo Nervo, Chargé d'Affaires ad-interim of the United Mexican States" (Secretaria 1921: 4).

As for the final decision made on the above issue, which is dated April 14, 1921, it states:

"Your Excellency:

Our Chargé d'Affaires in France forwarded me note #266, which Your Excellency was pleased to address to you on February 9<sup>th</sup>, in which he informed the Government of Mexico that the Inter-Allied Conference resolved, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, to recognize the de jure independence of the Georgian Republic.

In due reply, I have the honor to inform Your Excellency, on behalf of the Government of Mexico, that it likewise recognizes the independence of Georgia, thus joining the sentiment of the great Powers that have already granted said recognition.

This occasion favors me to beg Your Excellency to accept the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration" (Secretaria 1921: 5).

A crucial consideration is that, in the process of granting de jure recognition to the Democratic Republic of Georgia, the Mexican government was fully cognizant of the political complexity and sensitivity of the ongoing developments within the country, and thus of the significance of its decision. This awareness is substantiated by the correspondence addressed

by Rodolfo Nervo to the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs on March 4, 1921, as well as by the official response issued by that institution. Notably, the telegram dispatched by the Mexican Chargé d’Affaires in France emphasized that:

“Referring to the request for recognition of the Republic of Georgia, news received here of the stability of that Republic seriously threatened by the Bolsheviks” (Secretaria 1921: 6).

The government's response to the above-quoted correspondence, dated June 15, was as follows:

“Your kind telegram of March 4<sup>th</sup> was duly received, in which, referring to the request for recognition of the Republic of Georgia by our Government, you inform us that news has reached that capital that the stability of the aforementioned Republic is seriously threatened by the Bolsheviks.

This Secretariat is aware of its contents. Regarding the request mentioned above, I wish to inform you that with note number 2287, dated April 14<sup>th</sup>, the recognition of the Republic of Georgia by the Government of Mexico was sent enclosed. I reiterate to you the assurances of my highest consideration” (Secretaria 1921: 8).

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the analysis of archival materials allows for a more nuanced understanding of the early contacts and diplomatic interactions between Georgia and Mexico. These sources demonstrate that, despite geographical distance and limited direct engagement, both states exhibited a mutual interest in establishing formal relations during a complex and rapidly changing international environment. However, the consolidation and further deepening of these ties were ultimately precluded by the annexation and occupation of Georgia by Soviet Russia, which effectively terminated Georgia’s capacity to act as an independent subject of international law.

Nevertheless, Mexico’s de jure recognition of Georgia remains a pivotal episode in the history of Georgian–Mexican relations. When assessed within the broader international and geopolitical context of the period, this act acquires particular diplomatic and legal significance, reflecting Mexico’s adherence to principles of state sovereignty and international legitimacy. As such, the recognition should be regarded not merely as a formal gesture, but as the most consequential development in bilateral relations, one that continues to hold historical importance for the study of Georgia’s foreign relations in the early twentieth century.

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative historical research methodology based on the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources. The primary source base consists of diplomatic correspondence, official notes, and archival documents originating from the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and the Georgian diplomatic mission in Europe. These materials are analyzed using historical-documentary and comparative methods in order to reconstruct the chronology, motivations, and legal foundations of Mexican–Georgian diplomatic relations.

Secondary sources, including scholarly literature on post-World War I diplomacy, international recognition, and Georgian foreign policy, are utilized to contextualize the findings within broader historiographical debates. The methodological approach emphasizes source triangulation, contextual interpretation, and adherence to established standards of historical scholarship.

## Findings

The study yields several key findings. First, it establishes that the Georgian government actively pursued diplomatic recognition from Mexico prior to the Soviet occupation of Georgian territory, demonstrating a proactive and globally oriented foreign policy strategy. Second, it confirms that Mexico’s de jure recognition of Georgia was legally justified through reference to the Treaty of Versailles and the recognition already granted by the Entente powers and Russia.

Third, the research reveals that Mexican decision-makers were fully aware of the unstable political and military conditions in Georgia at the time of recognition, yet proceeded with the diplomatic act based on principles of international legitimacy and continuity. Finally, the study highlights the symbolic and political importance of Mexico's recognition as part of a broader pattern of international acknowledgment that persisted even after Georgia's loss of de facto independence.

### Ethical Considerations

This research complies with internationally accepted ethical standards in historical and archival scholarship. The study is based exclusively on publicly accessible and officially archived documents and does not involve human subjects, personal data, or sensitive information. All sources are accurately cited, and the research has been conducted with scholarly integrity, transparency, and respect for historical authenticity.

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### Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

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