Georgia’s capital Tbilisi - mentioned Tpkhis in medieval Armenian sources - has for centuries been the center of close spiritual and cultural ties between Armenia and Georgia.

St. George Church (1251) is one of the oldest Armenian churches of Tbilisi, which remained the principal church of the Armenian community in the city for a long period of time and is now the See of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia. In early medieval sources it was named Holy Virgin Cathedral and Gevorg Zoravar. Later, in view of its location on the renowned square of the town was named Maidan St. George or Big Fortress Church.

In 2012, upon the initiative of Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia and an entrepreneur, philanthropist Ruben Vardanyan, a Foundation for Reconstruction of St. George Cathedral was established. The reconstruction of the church and restoration of frescoes were realized in 2012-2015.

Firstly, church murals were studied by the Armenian Scientific-Research Center for Restoration of Armenian Murals (Arzhanik Hovhannisyan, leading specialist and head of the center) and the Italian restorer professor...
Construction works were completed by Georgian specialized company (‘CJSC Mgvime’). Alongside construction works, comprehensive restoration of murals was completed, during which a number of new layers were uncovered and the iconostasis was restored.

Interestingly, since the 17th century these frescoes have been regularly restored and rarely covered by new layers of plaster.

As a result of the cleaning of the frescoes, a series of images emerged that were hitherto unknown: “God the Father”, “Twelve Apostles”, “Image Belt of Sufferings” and “Four Evangelists”, located in the section beneath the dome that provided a more comprehensive glimpse of the inner decoration system of the church.
Surb Gevorg Cathedral. The Frescoes,
Preface authors Karen Matevosyan, Avet Avetisyan, Yerevan, 2015.
Թիֆլիսի մեյդանը և Ս. Գևորգ եկեղեցին 20-րդ դ. Սկզբին:

Tiflis Maidan and St. George Church, early 20th c.
Արևելյան պատի հատված (գծանկարը վերականգնողական խմբի)

A section from the East wall (drawing by the restoration group).
Inside the dome.
Հայր Աստված:  God the Father.

Երեք հրեշտա:  Three Angels.
Աշխատանքային դրվագներ: Work in progress.
Mark the Evangelist (before and after restoration).
Մաքրման և վերակականգնման աշխատանքներ:  Cleaning and restoring.
Adam and Eve.

Conservation documentation section.
With the group of conservator-restorers: group leader Arzhanik Hovhannisyan (second left), research advisor Karen Matevosyan (third right), winter 2014.