

CAUCASIAN PRISONERS, OR HOW GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS INVENT TRADITIONS AND (RE)PRODUCE MEANINGS

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Abstract

The author of the article analyses various cultural tactics, practices and strategies that Georgian intellectuals used for the invention of traditions and the (re)production of meanings. The author presumes that various cultural practices and social strategies of Georgian intellectuals became the main incentives for the transformation of traditional local groups into the Georgian modern nation. The history of the 20th century promoted the fragmentation of Georgian intelligentsia. The disintegration of the USSR, the restoration of state sovereignty and political independence of Georgia became powerful stimuli for the radical and deep fragmentation of the thinking-class into intelligentsia and intellectuals. The author states that intelligentsia and intellectuals coexist in modern Georgia simultaneously, but this social and cultural cohabitation is temporary because the intelligentsia became an endangered social and cultural category. Georgian intellectuals are genetic heirs of the old intelligentsia. The permanent voluntary and forced participation in the imagination of the nation and the invention of traditions as the formation and promotion of new myths brings together intelligentsia and intellectuals. The dynamics of the 20th century turned Georgian intellectuals into cultural hostages of modernization and processes of constant (re)production of the identities and meanings, including nation, space, freedom, independence etc.

Keywords

Georgia; intelligentsia; intellectual communities; intellectuals; nation; nationalism; myths; intellectual history



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КАВКАЗСКИЕ ПЛЕННИКИ, ИЛИ КАК ГРУЗИНСКИЕ ИНТЕЛЛЕКТУАЛЫ ИЗОБРЕТАЮТ ТРАДИЦИИ И (ВОС)ПРОИЗВОДЯТ СМЫСЛЫ

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Аннотация

Автор статьи анализирует различные культурные тактики, практики и стратегии, которые грузинские интеллектуалы используют для изобретения традиций и (вос)производства смыслов. Автор полагает, что различные культурные практики и социальные стратегии грузинских интеллектуалов стали основными стимулами для трансформации традиционных локальных групп в современную грузинскую нацию. История 20 века содействовала фрагментации грузинской интеллигенции. Распад СССР, восстановление государственного суверенитета и политический независимости Грузии стали мощнейшими стимулами для радикальной и глубокой фрагментации мыслящего класса на интеллигенцию и интеллектуалов. Автор полагает, что интеллигенция и интеллектуалы сосуществуют в современной Грузии одновременно, но это социальное и культурное совместное пребывание является временным, потому что интеллигенция как социальная и культурная категория встала под угрозу. Грузинские интеллектуалы являются генетическими наследниками старой интеллигенции. Постоянное добровольное и вынужденное участие в воображении нации и изобретение традиций как формирование и продвижение новых мифов роднит представителей интеллигенции и интеллектуалов. Историческая и политическая история и динамика 20 века превратила грузинских интеллектуалов в культурных заложников модернизации и процессов постоянного воспроизводства идентичностей и смыслов, в том числе, таких как нация, государство, свобода, независимость и т.д.

Ключевые слова

Грузия; интеллигенция; интеллектуальные сообщества; интеллектуалы; нация; национализм; мифы; интеллектуальная история



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FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Modern nations are the main political actors in the contemporary world, and it is generally agreed today that their histories are extremely short. First nations, in present-day political and civil sense, appeared in Europe after the historic triumph of capitalism, and bourgeois revolutions became the main incentives for the politicisation of dynastic states and their further transformation into nation-states. Peasant communities and urban groups which had traditional identities became political nations. These processes had a universal all-European character, but the social speed and paces of political and cultural transformations in the Greater Europe from Portugal to Georgia were uneven and different. The European peripheries embarked on the path of political transformation, dropped the shackles of tradition and became political nations later than the states of the historical, political and economic hard core of Europe. The processes of transformation of traditional groups into nations were extremely different, but the forms of these cultural changes and social mutations of archaic identities and communities in the modern ones were universal.

It is undeniable that institutions of identity and production of meanings and senses became two factors that nourished nationalisms (Gelneri, 2003; Smit'i, 2004; Hech'teri, 2007; Hobsbaumi, 2012; Amirgulashvili, 2013), inspired and stimulated nationalists to transform traditional communities into nations and forced dynastic states to change and become nation states. The first thing that has to be said is the following: intellectuals played special or leading roles always and everywhere in the history of nationalisms and political parties that were ambitious enough to change the status of a physical geographical territory to a more prestigious status of cultural, political or economic regions or states. These new states belong to a number of dynamically changing, transforming and nationalizing societies, despite the fact that they could have developed political and state traditions in the past. Such states, which were parts of multinational empires or multi-component non-democratic states, tend to transform ethnic nations into political nations and modernise formal states in nation-states. The role of intellectual communities in these societies is obvious and it is impossible and senseless to ignore it. Georgia is one of those post-Soviet and post-authoritarian states where intellectuals play a significant role in the functioning of the actual political regime and its legitimating.

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ARTICLE, OR WHAT IS THIS ARTICLE ABOUT?

Analysis of traditional institutionalised forms of generation of identities and national meanings, including academic institutions, is the main



purpose of this article. Analysis of the institutions of identity as the imagined factories where intellectuals invented political traditions and generated meanings is the main task of this article. The author also analyses the role of intellectuals as the main generators of meanings because they propose political invented traditions and legitimise nations and states they live in.

Structurally, the article consists of two large sections. The author analyses the main traditional institutions and their tactics of the invention of political traditions, including the geographical imagination in the first part of the article. The author analyses the roles, statuses, tactics, and strategies of the Georgian intellectual community in the second part of the article, presuming that intellectuals are responsible for the invention of traditions and their national meanings.

The author will analyse the role of Georgian intelligentsia and intellectual communities in the political life of Georgia. The author presumes that intellectuals are important participants in the political processes, but their roles and historical significance are in the shadow of other more topical subjects of modern Georgian political history. Analysis of institutions and the production of meanings of identity is the main objective of this article. The author will try to analyse how the institutions of identity legitimize the nationalistic political project in Georgia. The author will also analyse how Georgian intellectuals involved in numerous processes and forms of invention, imagination, and production of meanings formulate political and cultural spaces, integrating them into the standardized and unified canons of national identity. Therefore, this article has several tasks in addition to the main one mentioned above. The tasks of this article are as follows: analysis of the forms of political activity of Georgian intellectuals; the study of fragmentation of the Georgian intellectual community; analysis of the role and significance of intellectuals in the development of Georgian identity and political nation.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF MODERNIZATION

The dynamic rise and historical success of institutions of identity and the production of meanings and senses stimulated political, social, cultural and intellectual changes and transformations in Georgian society. Intellectuals who imagined and invented identities strive to do it because they wanted to actualize the features of the community they belonged to, and to prove that they are radically different from other ones. One of the Georgian intellectuals of the period of the First Republic tried to fix this component in the national identity and argued that “our sharp subjectivism is unknown to the Russians. The ancient Slavs, as historians claim, cut off the heads of

their victorious commanders: they could not accept the individuality that towered above the middle level. The propensity to monotony became the characteristic feature of the Russians... We will never reconcile ourselves with this kind of egalitarianism and centralism... our neighbours do not accept our subjectivism. Therefore, spiritually, we will always remain strangers to one another” (Kikodze, 1919).

The academic community, in general, tends to believe that European nationalisms generated their own institutions for the reproduction of identity, and intellectuals endowed them with meanings and new senses that legitimised the nations and national states of their dreams. Institutions of identity were extremely diverse. In fact, the intellectual, cultural and social practices of nationalists were attempts to invent, imagine and produce meanings for legitimating and glorification of nationalisms and all these efforts of nationalists were their impacts to legitimate nations they belong to or dreamed about. Secondary school, universities, public and private media, political parties, folklore organisations, choirs, ensembles, ethnographic societies, cultural communities, and associations became social and political institutions that monopolised functions of imagination, invention and reproduction of political and ethnical identities for national or dynamically nationalizing states. The intellectuals involved in the activities of these institutions formed, imagined, invented and constructed the identity of the nation and the Georgians were not excluded from this politically universal and historically inevitable logic of modernizations and transformations of archaic and traditional communities into modern nations.

It is clear from these observations that Georgian nationalism and Georgian nation (Zedania, 2009; Kakitelashvili, 2012) did not become exceptions from this universal logic of the development of nationalism, the invention of nations as imagined communities and invented traditions. The modern Georgian nation became a political and civil nation later than other European nations. The Soviet political experiment became a powerful stimulus for the transformation of traditional communities into a nation with political and state attributes. The forced Soviet modernization transformed traditional and archaic communities radically and decisively, forced them to change and become a political Georgian nation. Soviet modernization provided Georgians with the necessary institutions of identity, including the secondary school, universities, state media, folklore organisations, choirs, ensembles, ethnographic societies, and cultural associations. Political parties and independent media as institutions of identity emerged in the post-Soviet period. National history and literature, which also became invented traditions, arose in the pre-Soviet era, but Georgian intellectuals rewrote and reimagined them several times in the 20th century and these in-



stitutions of identity were less stable because they depended on political situations and ideological conjunctures. Georgian intellectuals involved in the activities of these institutions which imagine and invent Georgian nation and provide it with symbolic and real political and cultural meanings became historically necessary captives who victimised themselves in their individual and collective attempts to legitimise the fact of the historical existence of the nation they belong to.

Secondary school and universities are primary institutions that form and reproduce identity simultaneously. Schools and universities, as social institutions, unlike intellectual communities, do not generate new senses and meanings of identity; they only translate and reproduce identities suggested by the intellectuals. The school and universities in Georgia are important links in preservation, reproduction, and broadcasting of the national Georgian identity. The school became the primary institution that is responsible for the formation of national identity and the transformation of children into citizens with political and national identity. Georgian history, literature, and language belong to the number of subjects with the systemic importance for the formation and reproduction of national identity. Studies of history are extremely important in the context of methodological and theoretical changes in the main approaches Georgian intellectuals used and practised since the critical moment when Georgia regained its political and state independence. The theoretical and methodological approaches in studies of national literature also changed. Humanities were nationalised at the secondary and higher schools of independent Georgia. These processes actualised their instrumentalist and servilist roles and purposes of knowledge in the dynamically nationalizing societies. Georgian universities (gurgendze, 1988; metreveli, 1998; metreveli, 1996; jorbenadze, 1988; tadzari, 2000; metreveli, 2003; jorbenadze, 1968) in general and their humanitarian departments in particular, including historical and philological faculties, engage in the collective realisation of the servilist duties and are less responsible than the secondary school. Georgian university intellectuals as heirs of the old Soviet Georgian national intelligentsia and part of heterogeneous European intellectual communities simultaneously prefer to invent, imagine and offer meanings, when the secondary school simplifies and uses them for the socialisation and nationalisation of new generations of Georgian citizens.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS PRISONERS OF FORMAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

The old academic institutions that form Georgian National Academy of Sciences became the traditional social and cultural places of residence

for the old Georgian intelligentsia. These institutions are involved in the production of identity and the invention of national meanings, but representatives of the traditional Georgian intelligentsia prefer to invent meanings in an archaic way and use traditional forms for the promotion of new senses of identity. Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature and Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts are two iconic, typical and symbolically important academic institutions that produce a traditional model of academic historical knowledge and generate new meanings of the national Georgian identity simultaneously. Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature with its outdated and archaic site belongs to the post-Soviet or even neo-Soviet academic institutions that became reservations for representatives of the older generation of Georgian intelligentsia. Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature as other state scientific organisations “produce” academic knowledge in its traditional and almost positivist understanding.

The subjects and directions of the academic activities in the Institute are traditional, and most of them are focused on the history of Georgian literature in its eventual or personified contexts. Georgian intellectuals from Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature participate in production of meanings but prefer to do it archaically because they imagine the positivist grand narratives. Synthetic versions of the history of Georgian literature, Shota Rustaveli Institute propose, are eventual and linear in their inner logic because they combine medieval traditions, realistic classics, modernity, the Soviet period and contemporary epoch. Attempts to localise the legacy of the literature of Georgian emigration does not change this harmonious scheme radically. Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts also participates in the invention of meanings but prefers to do it differently than other traditional academic institutions. Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts is more active than other academic institutions in its attempts to use contemporary means of communication. Kekelidze Centre has its own pages on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, and YouTube channel. Korneli Kekelidze Centre plays an instrumentalist role and actualises the ancient and Kartvelian ethnic character of Georgian identity. The social and cultural roles of the Centre have much in common with the functions of the Armenian Matenadaran.

The Centre visualises symbolic and sacred dimensions and levels of Georgian identity. Traditional texts and manuscripts became the raw material for the invention of the modern nation and new forms, senses, and meanings of national identity. The Centre is successful in its attempts to find a place for a medieval heritage in the modern world, and localise it in the invented ethnocentric national identity. Korneli Kekelidze Georgian



National Centre of Manuscripts attempts to instrumentalise identity and actualise the potential of the ancient ethnic cultural, linguistic and literary heritage in the post-modern contexts. Other projects of Georgian academic institutions have the same tasks in the contexts of imagination and invention of identity, and in production of meanings and senses. The Rustaveli Committee focus on preservation and analysis of Shota Rustaveli's legacy and heritage. Traditional academic institutions and centres imagine and invent the meanings of identity in their modern understandings and attempt to modernise and integrate the archaic, ethnic and Kartvelian origins and foundations of Georgian nation in the heterogeneous and numerous contexts of the globalizing world.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN MYTHS

Georgian intellectual community (Dzigua, 2009; Makharadze, 1997; Maghlap'eridze, 2005) is a more important institution of identity which is responsible for the production of meanings. The problems of definition of nature and status of the thinking minority or intellectual class in Georgia are extremely controversial. The thinking class of the Soviet period was known as intelligentsia. The Georgian national intelligentsia, on the one hand, as their counterparts in other post-Soviet countries suffered very much during the transition period and became victims of social and economic marginalization (Barbak'adze, 2010). On the other hand, part of the intelligentsia was able to adapt and became intellectual communities. Contemporary Georgian intellectual communities are not familiar with the concepts of unity and unanimity in their Soviet radical understandings. Therefore, the intellectual spaces of contemporary Georgia are too fragmented. The pro-Western and pro-European part of the old Soviet Georgian intelligentsia, which latently and secretly cultivated European identities and ideas during the Soviet period, was able to adapt to contemporary realities successfully and became part of Georgian intellectual communities. This segment of Georgian intellectual space is responsible for the genesis, imagination, invention, and production of national senses and meanings. These Georgian intellectuals rewrote the old Soviet versions of history because the dominance of communist ideology and the class approach ceased to satisfy them. Georgian intellectuals rejected the old versions, tactics, and strategies of the national history writing and replaced them with new ones rooted in ethnocentrism. Georgian intellectuals proposed a new national pantheon of the founding fathers of the nation, rejected the old Soviet heroes and replaced them with new and 'more national' images, including

representatives of Georgian emigration and activists of the national anti-communist and anti-Soviet movement.

Institutes of identity in contemporary Georgia are represented by institutions in the traditional sense as institutionalised organisations and institutions as processes that significantly influence the basic trajectories and directions of identity development simultaneously. These processes of identity, including clericalisation and secularisation, are mutually exclusive, but present-time Georgia exists and develops in the contexts of these two trends. The intellectual communities of Georgia are actively responding to threats of clericalisation and secularisation. Secularisation in Georgia as in other peripheral regions of Europe developed more slowly than in the central regions of Europe. The role of the Orthodox Church in Georgia was comparable to the influence of the Catholic Church in Poland, Lithuania or Spain. Therefore, the starting conditions for secularisation were extremely negative because Georgian society was traditional. Secularisation was the result of a coercive policy of modernization initiated by the Bolsheviks who 'sovietised' Georgia.

Despite all attempts of atheisation and forced secularisation of Georgia during the Soviet period, Georgia was among those Soviet republics where the role of church and religion in social and cultural life was more significant and visible than in other republics. Religion and the church became the collective heroes of Georgian Soviet culture and literature. Georgia was among those republics where local authorities destroyed churches and temples less actively than the authorities of other regions. Therefore, Georgian society was more religious than the societies of other Soviet republics. Georgia, in this cultural and intellectual situation, was more prepared for the religious revival and radical clericalisation of society and culture that prevailed in Georgia after the republic restored state and political independence and sovereignty. The restoration of Georgian political independence became an incentive for the clericalisation of society. It did not exclude the cessation and further development of secular political and intellectual trends in cultural evolution. Georgian liberal intellectuals who believe that the Orthodox Church is dead and not ready to debate and discuss certain items with society (khvich'ia, iago. personaluri snobi....; urushadze, ilia; badoiani, norik...) became the main critics of the Orthodox Church as the initiator of the archaization and clericalization of society.

The period of Mikheil Saakashvili became the golden age in actual Georgian history for pro-American oriented liberals who promoted the project of resolute Westernisation and democratisation. They also reinforced the secular foundations of contemporary Georgian statehood. The assertions that Georgian intellectual communities are very heterogeneous and



fragmented became common place in historiography, but the political preferences of Georgian intellectuals predetermined these internal schisms. Giorgi Maisuradze (maisuradze, giorgi. polarisats'ia...) presumes that Georgian society has much in common with Italian because the left minority supports leftist ideas and prefers to criticise the church as too archaic and traditional institution. Criticism of the Orthodox Church in the 2000s was not a criticism of Orthodoxy in particular; opponents of the church preferred to actualise its traditional and archaic character in general. Therefore, Georgian intellectuals in modern Georgia fluctuate between the poles of clericalisation and secularisation continuously and constantly.

The Orthodox Church became an important factor in cultural, social and political life of contemporary Georgia, and Church hierarchs became media figures also. The clericalisation of cultural and social life became a very controversial process in Georgia because Georgian intellectuals failed in their collective attempts to create a consolidated community. The Georgian church reacted to the weakness and indecisiveness of secular intellectual communities promptly and actively. Hierarchs and representatives of the Church realised and understood that secular society could not overcome the traumas of post-communist transformations. They decided to show initiative and proposed an alternative path of development that excluded the achievements and successes of modernization and secularization. On the one hand, Georgian intellectuals are far from the total unification of their opinions. On the other hand, Georgian intellectuals are dependent on ideological conjuncture and influence of political elites. Georgian intellectuals prefer to compare their ideas with the positions of the authorities and ruling political elites.

Therefore, Georgian intellectuals are very fearful and dependent on external influences and controls, including financial dependence on the state (beriashvili, levan. sakhelmtsip'o kapitalizmi...) which continues to be the main sponsor of the formalised Georgian national culture. Georgian intellectual discourse develops as heterogeneous, and attempts to transplant Western approaches, and popularise the heritage of European philosophy of the 20th century (Elizbarashvili, 2012; T'inikashvili, 2012; Berekashvili, 2012; Elizbarashvili, 2014) will coexist with formal and imitative practices of representatives of the old Georgian intelligentsia from traditional academic institutions. New and old Georgian intellectuals participate in the processes of reproduction and imagination of meanings equally, but the projects of identity and nation invented by them can be diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive. Georgian society reacted several times to social and religious challenges in the 1990s and the 2010s, but the reactions of the church and the intellectual community were diametrically opposed

and mutually exclusive. If the Church became the source of archaization and clericalization of society because it defended traditional values consistently and condemned the representatives of sexual minorities strongly, then the intellectual communities which were heterogeneous and their social and cultural reactions were also extremely diverse. Despite the amorphism of the modern Georgian intellectual community, intellectuals tried to resist the tendency of the clericalization of Georgian society occasionally.

Zaza Burchuladze's novel "Inflatable Angel" (Burchuladze, 2011) became an attempt of the Georgian society to react to mutually exclusive tendencies of secularization and clericalization. The novel has something in common with Mikhail Bulgakov's "Master and Margarita", but these similarities are formal only. Georgiyi Gurdjieff, as a representative of the early modern culture, who accidentally ended up in present-day Georgia where consumerism supplanted the national idea, became the main hero of the novel. The motives of postmodernism are combined with the images of a traditional archaic fairy tale and myth. Therefore, Foucault is no more than the dog's name and the local criminal authority rustles turns into a semi-living wooden folk sculpture, a local saint and healer. The novel became an important impact on the development of the invented traditions of Georgian identity in a post-modern society that lost its stable links with the traditional culture and social bases of the Georgian political nation. The novel actualised the folk archaic traditions and tendencies of the rising consumer society simultaneously.

The novel was an attempt to revise the traditional foundations of the Georgian political and national identity, the role of faith and religion in the development of the Georgian national consciousness. If Gia Nodia stated timidly that he does not understand why Konstantine Gamsakhurdia has the reputation of the greatest Georgian writer, then Zaza Burchuladze (Kharbedia, 2012; Vanishvili, 2011) turns the foundations of the Georgian identity upside down: a bandit and a robber with the name of the Georgian academic-philologist Chikobava becomes an Orthodox saint and a righteous man in one of his novels. Other heroes have the names of the best representatives of Georgian intelligentsia of the 20th century also, but no one understands them and does not feel connections and links with the historical forms of Georgian identity. The novel has a revolutionary character in the context of attempts to question the religious Orthodox roots and the backgrounds of the Georgian identity. The novel actualised its revolutionary message in a transit society where part of the society retains its religious preferences when other segments were involved in secularisation processes, and the intelligentsia could not adequately meet the challenges of secularization and the threats of clericalization.



The novel became a symbolic proof of the fact that Georgian identity is a political, social and cultural construct because the author actually revisited, imagined and invented Georgian identity again. Zaza Burchuladze actually cut out Georgian classics from their traditional cultural and social landscapes, including school textbooks and synthetic versions of the history of Georgian literature. Zaza Burchuladze dismantled archaic ideas about the history of Georgian literature, the pantheon of classics and founding fathers, replaced them with a collection of oddities and anecdotes about the adventures of the Georgian from the past in the post-contemporary Tbilisi. The novel became an attempt to invent territorial forms and dimensions of Georgian identity because Tbilisi appears as an invented tradition and a collective hero in the text simultaneously. The novel was an attempt to overcome the carnival traditions in Georgian culture because Zaza Burchuladze attempted to deconstruct collective and individual faith in a miracle, but Georgian society was not ready to break with its past and faith in the golden age and national utopia finally and decisively.

Actually, the novel became a literary fiction and it has nothing in common with Georgian cultural, political and everyday realities, but the text can be imagined as real because Georgian society exists and develops as a society of invented traditions. Therefore, reading a novel does not stimulate the complexity of readers who perceive it as another invented tradition. Despite the desire to part with the carnival and laughing culture as the form of Georgian identity Zaza Burchuladze, on the one hand, actually plays different forms of Georgian identity by himself. On the other hand, Zaza Burchuladze, in spite of his attempts to actualise new tendencies in the invented traditions of Georgian identity, does not offer anything fundamentally new because he does not imagine the new golden age of a national ethnic and romantic utopia. Zaza Burchuladze ruthlessly throws his protagonists into the world of new post-national invented traditions where the market monopolised statuses and roles of the invented traditions and mutated into the object of collective worship with elements of madness.

The novel genetically relates to other texts of Georgian literature that became classical ones because Zaza Burchuladze continued to invent and imagine new political traditions. The novel became a deconstruction novel because its author deconstructed the classical myths of Georgian identity as invented traditions that became archaic and could not resist new competitors anymore, but the deconstruction of archaic invented traditions inspired Zaza Burchuladze to invent new political traditions. Literature as an invented tradition in this context inevitably actualises its functions as another imagined factory of identity that reproduces new meanings and senses for old and even archaic political and social institutions. Actually, Zaza Bur-

chuladze's successful literary experiment proved that the Georgian identity and Georgian literature as a frequent case of its development was imagined by Georgian intellectuals of the 19th and 20th centuries as an invented tradition. The novel became, in these intellectual contexts, another Georgian attempt to invent tradition in literature and to reconcile traditional and modern, archaic and secular trends in Georgian identity.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF SPACE AND SERVANTS OF THE NATIONAL BODY

The institutions of identity in contemporary Georgia are extremely diverse. The intellectual communities and these institutions including the traditional institutions of institutionalised groups (parties, media, academic organisations) are responsible for the production, reproduction, and generation of new national senses and meanings. Geographical spaces in the modern globalizing world ceased to be objects of physical geography only and exclusively. Intellectuals are responsible for the actualisation of new meanings of spaces in contexts of the development of identity and the idea of a political nation. Intellectuals imagine nations and invent the landscapes they exist in simultaneously.

The nationalized spaces and imagined nations as also invented traditions form an indissoluble unity. Georgian intellectuals did not become an exception to the universal logic of the development of nationalistic imagination and did a lot to transform Georgia into an ideal and idealised homeland. Intellectuals imagined physical geographical spaces as the sacred body of the nation. Historically arisen regions with their physical geographical features were imagined as parts of the sacred and indivisible spatial body of Georgian political nation. According to some experts, the modern political body of Georgian nation in spatial and territorial dimensions includes Adjara or *acharis avtonomiuri respublika* (the Autonomous Republic of Adjara), Guria, Imereti, Kakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo-Svaneti, Samegrelo and Zemo-Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli, and Shida Kartli. Modern regions of Georgia became imagined and invented constructs. Therefore, nationalist intellectuals imagining the historical forms of Georgian statehood try to prove and actualise the continuous character of the development of political institutions and the continuity between different regionalised and even localised forms of Georgian statehood. Actually, these intellectual practices became attempts to impart new meanings to Georgian political space as a constantly functioning factory of production and reproduction of meanings and senses.

Therefore, *samts'khe-saat'abago* (XIV-XVI), *k'art'lis samep'o* (the Kartlian Kingdom, 1484 - 1801), *kakhet'is samep'o* (Kakheti Kingdom),



imeret'is samep'o (the Imeretian Kingdom, XV - 1811), *guriis samt'avro* (Gurian Principality, XIV - 1828) (Lort'k'ip'anidze, 1994; Sudadze, 1998; Kozhoridze, 1987; Rekhviashvili, 1989; Rekhviashvili, 1976; Khomeriki, 2012; Ch'khatarashvili, 1985) became collective places of remembrance and geographic invented traditions that form the political body of Georgian nation. These regions emerge as the intellectual and cultural constructs, intellectual attempts to overcome the isolation of physical geography and to propose a new version of political geography of the ideal homeland where each region is part of a symbolic and sacred body of a political nation. Therefore, Georgian intellectuals construct the history of Georgia as a single Kartvelian state and, on the other hand, imagine and invent regional dimensions of Georgian history actively and simultaneously. Actually, these intellectual and cultural practices became attempts to impart new cultural and political meanings to physical geographical spaces.

Regions of Adjara, Guria, Imereti, Kakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo and Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, and Shida Kartli constitute the administrative structure of modern Georgia, but we should also point out the fact that the political body of Georgian nation lost its unity in the 1990s. The forms of legitimation of the state and the nation change more slowly than the nations and states themselves, they live in, and their intellectuals imagine and invent for needs of political elites. Modern Georgia inherited and received archaic forms of organisation of political space. Collective representations of intellectuals about space are also obsolete because they are rooted in traditional versions of legitimisation. Traditional forms of imagination, invention, and legitimating of the Georgian space as a fortress, where the body of a political nation lives in, change more slowly than space itself. Georgian intellectuals are partly responsible for this because they prefer to use positivistic and ethnocentric models of the imagination of the political territories of Georgian nation.

We cannot ignore the fact that the loss of the territorial integrity of Georgian national spatial body stimulates numerous political traumas of modern Georgian intellectual community and forces intellectuals to produce and reproduce meanings and reinvent political and ideological myths actively and simultaneously. Georgia has lost control over two regions in the 1990s, but Georgian intellectuals had time to imagine and invent them as historically Georgian and integrated them into the sacred body of the Georgian political nation. Adzharia and South Ossetia became these two regions, which form the problematic and sick parts of Georgian political body. Definition of *samkhret' oset'is respublika* (Republic of South Ossetia) is completely alien to the Georgian political consciousness and Geor-

gian identity because it made doubtful the central idea of unity and indivisibility of the Georgian political space. Therefore, Georgian elites, on the one hand, prefer to divide these areas into the other parts of Georgian political and national space, including Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Imereti and Racha-Lechkhumi and Zemo Svaneti. On the other hand, the concepts of *qop'ili samkhret' oset'is avtonomiuri olk'i* ("the former South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast") and *ts'khinvalis regioni* (Tskhinvali region) are in active political and public use.

Some Georgian intellectuals use the term *samach'ablo* in their attempts to construct Georgian images and collective ideas about South Ossetia. In August 2008 Georgian elites tried to solve the problem of Ossetian separatism radically and restore the unity of the political body of Georgian nation in spatial and administrative dimensions, but Russian interference into the conflict led to the institutionalisation of the break and separation of South Ossetia from the political body of Georgian nation. Georgian intellectuals imagine the events of 2008 as *ruset'-sak'art'velos omi* or the Russian-Georgian war. The war of 2008 became a serious psychological trauma for Georgian political elites and intellectual communities.

The memory of the war stimulates political imagination and invention of new political traditions, including *sak'art'velos kanoni okupirebuli teritoriebis shesakheb* or "The occupied territories law". *Ap'khazet'is avtonomiuri respublika* or the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia is the second problematic part of the spatial body of Georgian political nation. Actually, Tbilisi lost control of this region in the 1990s; the military conflict of 2008 institutionalised the destruction of the unity of the political body of the Georgian nation because the Russian Federation recognised the independence of the rebelling regions, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but the Georgian political and intellectual elites are united in their solidarity not to recognise this fact because they prefer to ignore the loss of two regions. Therefore, official Tbilisi does not recognise the government of Sukhumi as legitimate and insists that the Government of *ap'khazet'is avtonomiuri respublikis mt'avroba* or the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia in Exile is the only legitimate body of state power.

The Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia defines Abkhazia as the autonomous part of Georgia [*ap'khazet'is avtonomiuri...*]. Tbilisi did not reconcile itself to the actual loss of control over the territory of Abkhazia but seeks to integrate it and bring it back to the political body and space of the Georgian political nation actively. The government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia in exile is a formalised institution that must imagine and invent Georgian images of Abkhazia, reproduce Georgian centric Abkhazian senses and integrate the region into the Georgian



Kartvelian cultural, political, social and economic contexts and spaces. Therefore, the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia promotes Kartvelian centred images of the region, including state symbols. Symbols became forms of visual representation of the political body of the nation and the geographical space of modern Georgian statehood. Official flag and coat of arms of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia combines Georgian and Abkhazian motifs and images, but the first ones dominate and prevail clearly. This flag and coat of arms, recognised by the official Tbilisi and used by the government in exile, became an attempt of symbolic reunification and the return of Abkhazia to the Georgian political space.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF THEIR HISTORICAL HERITAGE

Various intellectual groups which became the soil for the formation and progress of the national intelligentsia, arose in Georgia in the 19th century. The Georgian intelligentsia of the 19th century was a breeding ground for the emergence and further rise and development of Georgian nationalism and the ideas of Georgian political and state independence. The history of Georgian intelligentsia in the 19th century had several features that significantly differentiate the social and cultural processes in Georgia from other European countries, including the states of the geographical peripheries. While in other European countries intellectual communities arose historically in wombs of the national bourgeoisie, the nobility and the traditional political aristocracy became the social groups that formed the nucleus of the national intelligentsia in Georgia. By the beginning of the 20th-century Georgian intelligentsia was the leading group that defined the main trajectories and vectors of the development of nationalism.

The period of the Georgian Democratic Republic became a brief epoch of the rise and success of the national intelligentsia, but the 'sovietisation' of Georgia and its transformation into Georgian SSR as part of the Soviet political space changed the general tendencies of the development of the Georgian intelligentsia substantially. The Georgian intelligentsia became a victim of 'sovietisation', but Georgian intellectuals received significant preferences and benefits after they accepted official rules of political and cultural behaviour. The Georgian intelligentsia was forced to demonstrate loyalty to the communist regime, but Georgian intellectuals who lost their freedom, received social benefits and preferences instead. The Communist regime provided the intelligentsia with the monopoly rights of the formation of official canons of humanitarian knowledge. Therefore, Georgian intellectuals had no competitors when they wrote, imagined and in-

vented the great and synthetic official versions of Georgian political history and the history of the Georgian language and literature, imagined as the two fundamental backgrounds of national identity.

The Soviet regime, despite its internal authoritarianism and the desire of Moscow elites to ‘russify’ the national republics, allowed Georgian intellectuals to transform and modernise Kartvelian groups into a Georgian political nation and develop it as an invented tradition. By the late 1980s, Georgian intellectuals made significant progress in the invention and imagination of Georgian nation in its political and ethnic dimensions. The institutionalisation of the nation and nationalists as a social and cultural class became the most important achievements of Georgian intellectual communities. The Georgian intelligentsia was able to imagine the nation as a political class, providing it with the necessary political, cultural and social virtues. The intellectual community in Georgian SSR became the arena of confrontation and struggle between the two most significant and influential political doctrines and ideologies of the 20th century. The principles of the class confronted the values of the nation and Georgia was one of the many arenas of this struggle.

Nationalism proved to be a more adaptive political force and ideology. Nationalism became the sphere where the communist idea was defeated in competition with the inevitable attraction and fascination of the national language, historical myths, and collective beliefs that nation is more natural, normal and inevitable than the ideological and political projects of communism. If Russian nationalists in the USSR turned out to be political marginals and losers who could not resist the universal temptations of communist ideology because the values of the class defeated the principles of the nation, Georgian nationalists were more successful because they were able to turn national values into the fundamental principles of political life in the Sovietised Georgia.

Georgian intelligentsia became an influential and stable group by the time the Soviet Union became the victim of an internal crisis that launched a mechanism of its disintegration. Georgian intelligentsia in independent Georgia became free but it lost its internal unity because the intelligentsia transformed into several different intellectual communities. The processes of political democratisation and economic liberalisation forced Georgian intellectuals to become public intellectuals because the closed model of the Soviet intelligentsia became ineffective in independent Georgia. The processes of transition from authoritarianism to democracy actualised simultaneously three functions of intellectuals that were absolutely alien to the Soviet Georgian intelligentsia. These functions include public role, responsibility of intellectuals and – betrayal of intellectuals. Modernity changed



radically the social and cultural roles, functions and purposes of intellectuals because the hypostasis of an intellectual as an expert marginalized the functions of an intellectual as a prophet. Democratisation and liberalisation transformed former Soviet intellectuals from the cabinet and academic scientists into public and media figures. Involvement in political processes actualised responsibility of representatives of the intellectual community, especially those who became part of the ruling political elites. Political dynamics and instability, heterogeneous nature of Georgian society, ethnic conflicts and wars forced intellectuals to become traitors and collaborators who cooperate with elites and change their political backers.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF FAITH IN THE MISSION OF SONDERWEG

The Georgian Soviet intelligentsia had every chance to become an active political class in the late 1980s and early 1990s despite the fact that it differed little from other formally national and in fact Sovietised intellectuals in the union republics because, as Nino Pirtskhalava presumes, “the Georgian intelligentsia as a certain social, external quantitative phenomenon in its structure, internal and external organisation corresponded to the Soviet model” (Pirtskhalava, 1997). The late Soviet and early post-Soviet Georgia belonged to those countries where the intellectuals from academic institutions gained control over the authorities, but this was only an idealistic illusion because the former communist party bureaucracy used all available resources to remove these romantic nationalists from power. Zviad Gamsakhurdia (Gamsakhurdia, 1990; Gamsakhurdia, 2000) as Əbülfəz Elçibəy in Azerbaijan, Levon Ter-Petrosyan in Armenia and Vladislav Ardzinba in pseudo-state of Abkhazia could not use and control political power effectively and ceded it to formal professional politicians who received state experience in the Soviet period.

Russian critic and philosopher Gasan Guseinov (Guseinov, 2012) presumes that intellectuals who control political power can be dangerous to society, but intellectuals in national or dynamically nationalizing states always become faithful servants, representatives, political agents, and the mouthpieces of the nation they belong to, or imagine and invent actively. The advent of nationalist-minded intellectuals into power in the early 1990s was the result of historical and cultural features of the development of the local political class in general and Georgian nationalism in particular. The Soviet regime toughly, cruelly and decisively tamed Georgian intelligentsia and deprived it of opportunities to influence the decisions of the authorities. Georgian writers realised the danger of the passivity of the intelligentsia in the 1930s.

Therefore, Nikoloz Mitsishvili was forced to state: “when I refer to our history, I do not find a higher meaning and a ‘divine hand’ in it. All our existence is the irony of fate, the mockery of providence. A lion and a flea, a devil and an angel, a talent and a pompous arrogance coexist in each of us. The past does not seem complete, monolithic, it was hastily tailored and sloppy glued, scattered in pieces mosaically, and lost also. I do not find the main core, the spine of the Georgian idea, the thought in the history of Georgia... Perhaps the highest meaning, salvation, and justification of Georgia are in Christianity... the cross was constantly cut, was torn from all sides, and torn into pieces. But after all, the cross blessed peace and holiness. Where is this blessing? Is our tragic, bitter and bloody history good? Is it possible that for two thousand years the power and strength of this cross could not bring to life, create fateful phenomena that define its special destiny and idea? Does Georgia lose forever ‘a bright, life-giving pillar that covers every nation’s way of a new word and creativity’?! ... Georgia is a passive phenomenon. Its energy, restricted by external factors (the energy of a worm crushed by a foot), lacked inner activity always... As a result, it was outside the higher and fair court, it lost universal sympathy and justification, its own religion, its confession, and its thought...” (Robakidze, 2004).

Sovietisation of Georgia aggravated these psychological and cultural traumas of Georgian intellectual class. Sovietisation of the intelligentsia actualised its servilist functions when it mutated from intellectual communities into an institution of identity. Sovietisation of Georgia led to the emergence of a professional intelligentsia that legitimised the regime willingly and inspired, imagined the nation and invented history. Georgian intellectuals believed naively and idealistically that they invented a national identity, but in fact, they cultivated a myth. The triumph of the ethnocentric national myth inspired, on the one hand, the rise of Georgian nationalism and its radicalisation simultaneously, and on the other hand, it sanctioned the enslavement of Georgian intelligentsia, which understood that it fell into a dependence on power and could not propose any alternative model for the existence of an intellectual class. Therefore, Georgian intellectuals were deported to academic reservations subordinated to the Academy of Sciences. This intellectual emigration, as Nino Pirtshalava defined, in the “realm of fantasy and heroic folklore” (Pirtshalava, 1997) transformed Georgian intellectuals into “myth-makers and only the tragic-comic grimace of the homegrown totalitarian regime of nationalistic persuasion sobered the intellectuals who blessedly stayed in the realm of dreams, pushed them out of it... The magical realm of its history, populated entirely by wise kings and



queens, and the noble and brave knights also... intellectuals realised that this myth-making was not a harmless fun” (Pirtshalava, 1997).

The degree of this understanding was different; the effect was superficial because representatives of the former Georgian intelligentsia who became intellectuals of independent Georgia began to do what they specialised in and what they were able to in the best way. Georgian intellectuals recovered relatively quickly from the moral trauma and the consequences of civil conflict and realised that the invention and imagination of new myths and identity were the best way to consolidate the nation. Zaal Andronikashvili and Giorgi Maisuradze, developing these assumptions of the 1990s, suggested a decade later that “the political project of independence was based primarily on returning to history imagined not in terms of active social and political activities in state or difficult work of memory, but in the sense of restoration of the idealised Georgian medieval statehood (a national-secular version of the myth about a paradise state before the fall). This picture of the world does not imply modernization in general with all its problems and real collisions. A homeostatic society emerged in this space and it aimed to preserve the certain state and prevented it from deviations” (Andronikashvili, 2012; Andronikashvili, 2007).

In fact, the dominance of these sentiments and idealised perceptions of the past and national history in Georgian society actualised its unwillingness to radical political modernization and decisive democratic reforms. Social and cultural institutions responsible for the development of identity were under control of the intellectuals. Georgian intellectuals were more active in myth-making than in a real democratisation of society. Actually the myth-making of Georgian intelligentsia that mutated into heterogeneous intellectual communities became one more institution of identity, and the author presumes that the myth as an institution was more adaptive than formal institutions of identity, including secondary school and universities, which, educating and nurturing new generations, assisted transformation of national identity to mass production of new meanings and senses of archaic and traditional institutions.

Myth as an institution of identity had adapted to the ideological demands of the Soviet communist doctrine, the romanticised and ethnicised nationalism of early independent Georgia, the imitative democracy of Eduard Shevardnadze and the political regimes of his successors. The political dynamics of the post-Soviet Georgia assisted to the gradual fragmentation of the thinking class into *dzveli int’elighentsiis* or “the old intelligentsia” and *akhali int’elekt’ualebi* or “new intellectuals” (Shatirishvili, 2003) despite the fact that the boundaries between these social and cultural categories had frontier character and were extremely conventional and imagined. Some

authors use the definition *marginali intelek'tualebi* or marginal intellectuals (Metreveli, 2014), but it does not describe the wide range of social and cultural contradictions among the Georgian heterogeneous thinking class because the signs and characteristics of marginality are extremely subjective.

Georgian intellectuals who are ideologically biased use it as a political label for strict critics of their ideological opponents. The domination of these sentiments predetermined the fact that Georgian intellectuals became victims and hostages of melancholy and the prolonged political and ideological depression. The image of “plumber of melancholy” (Iat’ashvili, 2016) arose even in Georgian poetry in this intellectual context. Motives of depression and despair became central in the reflections of Georgian intellectuals and entered their identity so deeply that they began to imagine misfortune as a natural and normal psychological state of the nation [*ch'ighvinadze, alek'si. uazro situats'iebis gmiris...*]. Georgian intellectuals are torn between common cultural universals and national historical and political myths agonizingly.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF POLITICAL LANGUAGE

These myths form the basis of the national Kartvelian identity of Georgian nation. The motives of *k'alak'i* (city) and images of *gamok'vabuli* (cave) (T'avdgiridze, 2016) became universals of Georgian political culture and national identity that rooted in the mutually exclusive myths of the “cave” as a stronghold of Christian virtue and morality and the “city” as a motor of social and cultural changes, modernizations and transformations. The simultaneous coexistence of these motifs with a sense of uncertainty predetermined that images of *gzis* (road) and *gza* (way) (Milorava, 2013) entered the number of central ones in Georgian identity because they actualise the general incompleteness of national and political construction in a country that, unlike other post-socialist states, continues to exist and develop in the stage of transition from communism to democracy. Motives of the uncertain trajectories of political movement actualise the numerous problems and contradictions of the state that communism in the past resolutely, but the post-communism is still an insurmountable obstacle for Georgian intellectual communities and political elites.

The images of *k'alak'i* and *gamok'vabuli*, *gzis* and *gza* are not the only collective mythologems invented by Georgian nationalists. Georgian intellectuals proposed several invented traditions, including *k'veqana* (country), *dedamitsaze* (motherland), *samshoblo* (fatherland), *t'avisup'leba* (freedom), *damoukidebloba* (independence), *ik'neba* (liberty). These invented traditions are extremely diverse and actualise various forms and di-



mensions of the national and cultural identities of the Georgian nation as an ethnic community and political body. The narratives of *k'alak'i* and *gamok'vabuli* belong to the number of elements of archaic heritage in present-time Georgian identity and actualise mainly religious components of national identity. The concepts of *k'alak'i* and *gamok'vabuli* became the result of the development of the book Christian culture and traditions of martyrdom, monasticism, and asceticism. They included Georgian identity into the wider context of the Western Christian political tradition.

These concepts were among the most influential in the traditional pre-modern Georgian identity, but their significance declined rapidly and sharply in the 19th and 20th centuries, especially in the Soviet period when Georgia became the victim of a forced modernization, which inspired secularization of Georgian society. The political and social dynamics of the 20th century inspired the rapid simultaneous disruption and desecration of concepts of *k'alak'i* and *gamok'vabuli* in Georgian identity despite the fact that Georgia was able to save more formal attributes of Christianity in the geographical landscape of the republic than the other parts of the Soviet empire. Narratives and images of *k'veqana* (country), *dedamitsaze* (motherland), *samshoblo* (fatherland), *t'avisup'leba* (freedom), *damoukidebloba* (independence), *ik'neba* (liberty) became later constructs in Georgian identity. Georgian political nationalism and civic activism inspired their appearance in the social, political and intellectual discourses of Georgia.

These invented traditions had predominantly instrumental purposes and applied nature because nationalists and other politicians used them to describe political changes and transformations, as well as legitimise them. The triad of *k'veqana* (country), *dedamitsaze* (motherland), *samshoblo* (fatherland) and *t'avisup'leba* (freedom), *damoukidebloba* (independence), *ik'neba* (liberty) emerged as a result of efforts of Georgian nationalist to develop nationalism as a predominantly political ideology. These narratives describe predominantly secular political virtues of Georgian state project because they were resulting from the transplantation of ideas inspired by Western bourgeois revolutions and the triumph of political nationalism introduced to the intellectual Georgian discourse. These invented traditions inspired the emergence of new political myths, which were more in demand in the period after Georgia regained its state and political independence. These definitions lost their abstract character in the 1990s because *t'avisup'leba* (freedom) and *damoukidebloba* (independence) ceased to be only abstract concepts in the Georgian language as they were a few years earlier when Georgia was a Soviet republic.

Georgian nationalism in these intellectual contexts gradually transformed from an exclusively political and ideological phenomenon into a

fact of the social medical situation of contemporary Georgian society because nationalistic discourse actualises signs of social paranoia and cultural schizophrenia simultaneously. George Orwell, an English writer, presumed that nationalism actualises three social states, including obsession, instability, and indifference to reality (Orwell, 1945), but these three features became the causes of the unstable position of intellectuals in the modern world where they mutated into educated marginals. Edward Said, commenting on this situation, wrote that “there is something fundamentally unsettling about intellectuals who have neither offices to protect nor territory to consolidate and guard; self-irony is, therefore, more frequent than pomposity, directness more than hemming and hawing. But there is no dodging the inescapable reality that such representations by intellectuals will neither make them friends in high places nor win them official honours. It is a lonely condition” (Said, 1994).

On the one hand, the discourse of modern Georgian nationalism functions as a reproduction of new meanings and senses or revision of old ones that became archaic ideas in Georgian nationalism because nationalist-minded Georgian intellectuals idealised them in the 20th century, and modern Georgian intellectuals canonized and mythologized the legacy of their political predecessors. On the other hand, nationalist discourse programs and determines the way of thinking of citizens who belong to a nation imagined and invented by nationalism. This feature of the nationalist discourse actualizes dimensions of nationalism as a deliberately planned and “programmed response” (Teslya, 2014) to threats of archaization and radical modernization as globalization simultaneously. Russian historians state that “the symbolic world of the innovation group is fundamentally opened and antidogmatic, anti-authoritative” (Dubin, Boris; Gudkov, Lev. *Evropeiskii intellectual...*), but the history of Georgian intellectual community actualizes tendencies of isolation and inclination towards dogmatic thinking, active participation in the imagination and invention of new political and national myths.

GEORGIAN INTELLECTUALS AS HOSTAGES OF THE HISTORICAL LOST TIME

Georgian intellectuals felt an acute sense of loneliness in the Soviet period because Georgian culture retained the significant degree of freedom and internal independence and its tonality; in general, it was different from other national cultures. Georgian society faced other problems when it tried to part with the images and symbols of Stalin (Nodia, 2010) imagined as the greatest Georgian of the 20th century. This parting with Stalin’s era legacy was very long and continued until the beginning of the 2010s when



the last monument of the Soviet leader was dismantled in Gori's central square and moved to his house-museum. The demolition of Soviet monuments was symbolic in the contexts of the struggle against the Soviet political and ideological heritage.

The authorities of independent Georgia dismantled the monuments of Sergo Ordzhonikidze who made a significant impact to the Sovietisation of Georgia despite that he was an ethnic Georgian. Georgian authorities did it immediately as the political and state independence was restored in the early 1990s. Monuments of Lenin as ethnically and ideologically alien monuments of the Soviet era were dismantled a little bit later. The demolition of Stalin's monument in 2010 was an attempt to prove that the ideas of national statehood, freedom, and independence became emotionally more important and attractive for Georgian citizens. Restoration of political independence did not abolish this sense of cultural and intellectual loneliness, which predetermined attempts by Georgian intellectuals (Kharbedia, 2017) to find mentally related cultures in the European context. Intellectual discourse in Georgia develop intensively, and local cultural spaces are very heterogeneous and amorphous [*mrgvali magida: XXI saukunis...*], and this fact force Georgian intellectuals to recognise the absence of general tendencies in developments of literature and cinema which were the main means of formation of the attractive image of the country in the world and promotion of its reputation as an oasis of European culture and freedom in the undemocratic USSR during the Soviet period. Georgian intellectuals in the 20th century mythologized identity and their heirs of the 21st century received several extremely stable myths about the great Georgian culture and literature as a stronghold of national identity.

Therefore, Georgian intelligentsia parted with old stereotypes and collective ideas very painfully. Any intellectual initiatives to revise old ideas are perceived as national treason and an attempt to assassinate the national myth and cultural foundations of the nation. Therefore, the attempt of Gia Nodia, who stated that he does not understand why Konstantin Gamsakhurdia has a reputation of the great writer [*nodia, gia. konstantine gamsakhurdia...*], to reconsider the stable and even stagnant pantheon of Georgian classics remained unnoticed because the society preferred to ignore it. Georgian intellectuals, in this cultural atmosphere, prefer to ignore this problem and therefore alternative points of view are extremely rare. Therefore, Georgian intellectuals dismantle the old stereotypes very slowly and they can not part with the standard pantheon of the founding fathers of the modern Georgian nation. Parting with the past and unpleasant totalitarian experience (Kharbedia, 2011) and the Soviet legacy predetermined intellectual traumas among representatives of Georgian intellectual community.

The social feeling of depression (Lomidze, 2015; Kekelidze, 2014) and collective fears institutionalized in the phenomenon of national melancholy and the myth of a yearning nation became system characteristics of Georgian contemporary intelligentsia and cultural elite. These feelings co-exist with fears of “post-apocalyptic zombies” (Zark’ua, 2010) because of Georgian society, where some citizens recalled the Soviet era nostalgically, is not able to overcome the fears that communism will be restored. The domination of collective fears predetermined the existence of Georgian intelligentsia in a closed model of development because Georgian intellectuals seek to avoid carefully acute and unpleasant topics and problems, including war (Kharbedia, 2011), civil conflicts, social problems, clericalization of society (Ninidze, 2014).

In general, Georgian authors (Kakabadze, 2008) recognise that the intellectual spaces of contemporary Georgia are too heterogeneous internally. The concept of *tsit’eli intelligents’iis* relates to *marginali intelek’tualebi* genetically and even historically precedes it, but it has more political and ideological character because some Georgian authors use it actively in their attempts to demonise the old intelligentsia. Levan Javakhishvili accuses the old intelligentsia, defined as ‘the red’ by him, in the overthrow of Zviad Gamsakhurdia (Zviad gamsakhurdiadan zviad gamsakhurdiamde...; sak’art’veლოს რესპუბლიკის პრეზიდენტი....; Sharadze, 1995; Gamakharia, 2004; Sajaia, 2004; Ghlonti, 2007) and legitimization of the state upheaval (Javakhishvili, 2010). Georgian intelligentsia in the USSR and Georgian intellectuals in independent Georgia had never known what political and cultural freedom was (Maisuradze, 2012), the degree of their influence was too different. Jago Hvichia [Khvich’ia, iago. Personaluri snobi, vupis t’edzo da...] presumes that no more than one percent of Georgian citizens understand and accept the ideas of the liberal intelligentsia, and attempts to free and abandon the authoritarian legacy and totalitarian Soviet heritage were not very successful because Georgian intellectuals preferred to do it in an academic way, comparing German National Socialism and Stalinist Bolshevism (Gabelia, Alek’sandre. ‘Politikis est’etisats’ia` da...).

This idea of the intellectuals was incomprehensible to other citizens who did not have special knowledge in the history of the authoritarian political experience of the 20th century. Liberal experiments in politics and post-modernist experiments in literature became equally alien and incomprehensible for a significant number of citizens of independent Georgia. These rejections had cultural and social background because Georgian society, despite of all attempts of the forced economic and social modernizations in the 20th century, continued to be traditional and even partly archaic. The border line of intellectual and cultural division between the various



segments and cultural strata of Georgian society lay in their relation to religion in general and to the Orthodox Church in particular. Zaza Burchuladze's texts "Instant Kafka" and "Mineral Jazz" actualised various attitudes towards Orthodoxy that ranged from denial to ridicule with elements of political satire. Zaza Burchuladze actualised the state of cultural and intellectual schism and the semantic fragmentation of modern Georgian society in his texts where some groups accepted and assimilated Western values whereas others preferred to preserve archaic cultural and religious background.

The groups of Tbilisi intellectuals in the texts of Zaza Burchuladze actively and successfully imitate and simulate Western cultural practices and strategies because social and cultural behaviour was rooted in the denial of traditional models. Heroes of Zaza Burchuladze's prose attack an old man in Tbilisi park and forcibly circumcise him. This moment actualises the ritual circumcision of modern post-religious Georgian culture because it represents the act of parting with the past, the rejection of traditions and their decisive desacralisation. It will be a simplification to assume that Zaza Burchuladze deliberately deconstructs the foundations of the classical Georgian identity.

The secular and postmodern messages coexist with attempts at the religious enlightenment of heroes who allow themselves incorrect and frankly offensive phrases about the Catholicos Patriarch. Zaza Burchuladze criticises the Church actively and believes that "Georgian church is a system that became festered from within ... when 80 percent of residents are Orthodox fundamentalists, it's very dumbfounded for a free person to live in this space ... this society radicalises from day to day ... Our priests like fight dogs... You can say something about the patriarch, and you can be beaten easily by someone. When I wrote about the patriarch's breast in my novel 'Instant Kafka', I had problems. I was sworn in the streets... the taxi drivers have icons in their cars, there are icons in the offices of our ministers... everyone baptises. The people fast almost all year. It is some sort of collective hallucinosis. I teach a course in the Caucasian Media School with the symptomatic title 'Pop mechanics'. I meet wildly and stupidly believing young people... it is difficult to communicate with them: freedom of speech and freedom of the body also are closed for them" (Burchuladze, 2012).

Literary texts and political meanings produced and reproduced by intellectuals after a historical turning point when Georgia restored its political independence and sovereignty, were understandable only for a small number of intellectuals. Actually, Georgian intellectuals in independent Georgia did not reproduce the meanings for mass cultural consumption. Georgia in

this historical context echoed the intellectual experience of other Western countries where intellectual communities formed and developed historically as thinking social and cultural minorities. This ignorance became a consequence of negative political dynamics because neither the Soviet intellectuals nor intellectuals of independent Georgia have ever tried to become independent and distance themselves from the state and political power. Despite the objective differences between the old intelligentsia and the new intellectuals, these cultural groups have much in common, including Soviet genetic roots and origins, the experience of symbiosis with party nomenclature, fascination with the ideology of nationalism (Shubit'idze, 2013; Davit'ashvili, 2003) and national patriotic myths, conformism and the ability to adapt to any political regime [*intelligent-intelek'tualt'a qop'ierebis...*].

Georgian authors presume that the old intelligentsia and new intellectuals are very different groups with diametrically opposed and even mutually exclusive economic, social, cultural preferences, forms and ways of thinking, intellectual tactics, and strategies. The old intelligentsia and new intellectuals live in different social and cultural spaces. The old intelligentsia is connected with Eduard Shevardnadze's political era genetically, but in fact, they continue Soviet cultural and political traditions because the second president of Georgia was the product of the Soviet system and the party elite. New intellectuals are very different from the old intelligentsia in their political preferences because the *vardebis revolutsia* (Kopitersis, 2006) or Rose Revolution and President Mikheil Saakashvili were, in fact, the factors that inspired intellectuals and turned them into an influential force and factor of Georgian social and cultural life. New intellectuals and old intelligentsia consciously and intentionally use various definitions: the old intelligentsia uses the concept of "intelligentsia" in its attempts to actualise historical ties with Georgian intelligentsia of the pre-Soviet and Soviet epochs. New intellectuals tend to reject the definition of "intelligentsia" in general because they perceive it as the Soviet political and ideological construct and form of Soviet influence.

The definition of *t'ergdaleulebi* (Ch'khaidze, 2009) is still applicable to the representatives of the old intelligentsia because they imagine themselves as part of European cultural elite. New intellectuals, unlike the old post-Soviet intelligentsia, can be defined as *potomakdaleulebi* because American culture became more attractive for them in general than the Russian one. Despite the attractiveness of American political culture and traditions, Georgian media are less active in its popularisation and prefer to publish translations of European intellectuals and thinkers than the texts of their American counterparts [Ts'khadaia, Giorgi. Interviu berni...]. Contemporary Georgian intellectuals, disappointed in the society and culture of



unrestrained consumerism [Khvich'ia, Iago. Dzudzuebi, Integrats'ia, Trak'torisats'ia...], mastered, assimilated and integrated the main achievements of Western humanitarian knowledge into national Georgian contexts successfully [K'oiava, Revaz. Istoriuli METS'NIEREBA...].

Despite formal differences between historical and cultural generations of Georgian intellectuals, representatives of various groups of contemporary Georgian intelligentsia deny the objective laws of knowledge and perceive scientific universalism in particular and the very idea of logos in general as social archaisms inherited from the era of Enlightenment. If the Georgian intellectuals of the 17th and 18th centuries discovered Europe for themselves (Kharbedia, 2016; Zark'ua, 2015) and invented the ideal images of Georgia for Europe, the modern Georgian intellectual communities changed the geographical coordinates of their cultural and political preferences resolutely and radically. If the idea of the West, in general, was popular among representatives of the Soviet Georgian intelligentsia, which carefully studied the historical aspects of Georgian-European cultural ties, then contemporary Georgian intellectuals preferred to minimize the concept of the Western world to the North American political space. European culture in particular also became less popular, but the interest in European intellectual experience as the regional form of Western one is still very stable.

Therefore, contemporary Georgian authors in their attempts to translate and popularise the classical works of European intellectuals, including founding fathers of Marxism (Shanidze, 2016; Tavelidze, 2014; Abramishvili, 2014; Kit'khvari – T'anamedrove K'art'uli... 2013, 25 noembers; Markuze, Herbert. Utopiis Dasasruli...; Markuze, Herbert. Haidegeris Analizi....; Markuze, Herbert. Dzaladobisa da Radikaluri....; Markuze, Herbert. Agresiuloba Motsinave....; Lukach'i, Georg. Moralis roli...; Badiu, Alan. Ch'ven ar Unda...; P'romi, Erikh. Mark'sizmi, P'sik'oanalizi...; Zhizheki, Slavoi. ar Shegiqvardet'....; Marineti, P'ilipo Tomazo. P'uturizmis Daarseba da...), seek to integrate the theoretical reflections and achievements of European political culture with the national contexts. Attempts to transplant the European including the Italian intellectual experience into Georgian contexts generate some curiosities rooted in common pro-American sympathies. Antonio Gramsci's (Gramshi, 2016) texts about political responsibility of intellectual class were translated into Georgian from English because his Georgian popularisers prefer to bypass Italian original source, but it does not mean that Georgian intellectuals completed their romantic relationship with Italy and Italian culture (Khatiasvili, 2017) because Italian motifs become visible in the modern cultural space of Georgia from time to time.

Georgian intellectuals are interested in Italian historical, political and cultural experience and attempt to find traces of Italian influence in the Georgian cultural landscapes, including the architectural appearance of Tbilisi (Kalandarishvili, 2017; Ts'khovrebadze, 2017; Berdzenishvili, 2017; Gegelia, 2017). The “old” Georgian intellectuals in the 1990s and 2000s were forced to hide in traditional academic institutions (Academy of Sciences, universities etc) and creative unions (Writers’ Union, etc.) that Georgia inherited from the USSR. “New” intellectuals, unlike the “old” ones, preferred non-governmental organisations or new independent media based on market principles. Cultural and social preferences and differences inspired the fragmentation of the intellectual community: Russian, French, German and some other regional European languages including Italian or Spanish were the main foreign languages for the “old” post-Soviet Georgian intellectuals. New intellectuals prefer to use English and ignore and even forget Russian.

The political events of the early 1990s inspired the political radicalisation of Georgian intelligentsia because Zviad Gamsakhurdia himself used radical methods and his opponents also believed that radical forms of political struggle were most effective. Zviad Gamsakhurdia was able to gain control over the political sphere, but his triumph was extremely short. Despite the statements and assurances of Georgian intellectual Dato Barbakadze that “poetry and politics will never stretch one another’s hands” (Barbakadze, 2009), the poet was able to become a political leader. The Georgian intelligentsia in the 1990s became a hostage of political struggle, and political ruling elites were not interested in its ideological fluctuations despite the fact that intellectuals imagined and invented the identity of the new Georgian political nation. Dato Barbakadze presumes that this political choice actualised certain features of the Georgian intelligentsia, which “adapted to the current situation always... and plays the role of an authorised and controlled opposition in the extreme situations” (Barbakadze, 2003). Georgian intellectuals, despite all the contradictions of the era of political transition from authoritarianism to democracy, could become a cultural force that gained control over the symbolic political resources of the formation of civil and national identities. The 1990s marginalized the communist and extreme nationalist discourse in Georgian political thinking. Therefore, modern Georgian intellectuals are compelled to remain in liberal discourse which they imagined as a universal and inevitable political and ideological compromise between the communist stagnation and the extremes and horrors of ethnic nationalism.



CONCLUSIONS: ETERNAL CAPTIVES OF SENSES, NATION, EUROPE AND THE NATIONAL MISSION

Institutions of identity and production of meanings in Georgia were diverse, their political values and swarms were also unequal. Symbolic institutions and practices of the reproduction of meanings had a predominantly symbolic sense and stimulated the progress of ethnic and radical forms of nationalism. Intellectual communities ceased to be sovereigns of thoughts and lost in competition with professional politicians who formed a semi-closed political class that no longer needs the intellectuals, and identities, and nations they imagined and invented. The secondary school and universities which imagined and invented nations in Europe in the 19th century, which standardised folk dialects turning them into national languages, became actual outsiders and social marginals in the modern information society, which no longer has a sustainable social need in these archaic institutions.

National histories, histories of literature, great historical and political narratives, national pantheons of the founding fathers of nation invented and imagined by intellectuals are among the social and cultural relics because they ceased to be interesting and important for political elites and classes. The small number of intellectuals still tries to invent senses and meanings of identity and legitimise social and cultural spaces where national identity exists. The institutions of identity and the production of meanings in Georgia in these intellectual contexts became special cases of inventing traditions in general and invented traditions in particular. Modern nationalism exists and develops in the context of imagination and its invention by intellectuals who imagine, invent and maintain nationalist discourse. They can no longer stop the production of meanings their historical predecessors began several decades earlier. Political classes and elites removed the intellectuals and nationalists from the political decision-making processes and started to participate in social and cultural games that their nationalistic and romantic predecessors inspired in the 19th century. Nationalism will create institutions of identity that will reproduce social, cultural and political meanings, but other actors, including political classes and mass media, are doomed to generate new meanings and become service personnel of the universal body of nationalist discourse.

Intellectuals became an important factor in political, cultural and social histories of Georgia and they are responsible for the modernization that determines the social face of contemporary Georgia as a nation and state. Intellectuals became the founding fathers of the modern political nation and formulators of its imagined and invented traditions. The idea of Georgian ethnic and political nation emerged, developed, progressed after intellectu-

als imagined it in various cultural and social practices and activities. Georgian intellectuals of the 20th century and their modern heirs and successors lived and continue to live in a dynamically changing nationalizing and modernizing society where nationalism did not become part of history, but continues to function as a real political force that determines the social shape of Georgian society and the basic trajectories of the development of Georgian statehood, simultaneously.

The assertions and statements that Georgian intellectuals are nationalists became a common place and sound quite trite. Georgian intellectuals provided the Georgian nation, which they actively imagined and invented, with the necessary social, political and cultural attributes. Georgian history, Georgian literature, Georgian language, Georgian geography became imagined constructs and invented political traditions. Georgian intellectuals as nationalists actualised the significant consolidation potential of national myths. Nationalists were the first who codified the myths and collected unsystematized disparate ideas of Kartvelian groups turning them into an ethnic and political Georgian nation. Georgian intellectuals became not only nationalists, but they became hostages of the sad and unpleasant political situation that led to the tragedy of intellectual communities in Georgia. Georgian intellectuals became victims of several tragic situations, including unsuccessful attempts to create a national independent statehood that became a victim of Sovietisation; integration into the political apparatus of Soviet authoritarianism; crisis and the disintegration of the habitual social environment in the early 1990s.

The epoch of Zviad Gamsakhurdia became the era of the rise and fall of political intellectuals in post-Soviet Georgia because formally Zviad Gamsakhurdia became the first intellectual who could gain real political power in Georgia, but intellectuals could not control it in competition with the former party nomenclature that formed the core of professional politicians, united by corruption and participation in other informal political and economic institutions. The tragedy of professional intellectuals who gained political power was the result of their radicalization and ethnicization because they preferred to replace the slogans of political nationalism, rights, and freedoms with the values and myths of ethnic nationalism and radicalism. These political tragedies inspired the gradual radicalisation of Georgian intellectuals and institutionalised foundations for their protracted relationship with ethnic nationalism.

This political metamorphosis inspired intellectual attempts to ethnicize history and the rise of ethnic myths which became new invented traditions because they marginalized political nationalism. Georgian intellectuals got a unique and unpleasant experience in years of transition from au-



thoritarianism to democracy, despite the fact that this transition had a formal nature before the historic moment of “Rose Revolution”. The years of political transit changed the social and cultural appearance of the old Georgian Soviet intelligentsia radically. A new generation of intellectuals preferred to become intellectuals in the Western meaning of this concept.

The heterogeneous Georgian intellectual communities replaced the old Soviet intelligentsia, but the intellectuals, as their Soviet historical predecessors, were very ideological and politicised. Contemporary Georgian intellectuals remained secular and did not become radical fanatics of the church or ethnic nationalism as a new universal political religion. Intellectual communities in Georgia, despite the fact that they are extremely fragmented and heterogeneous, continue to be factories where intellectuals produce meanings and transplant them into the political and cultural spaces of modern Georgian society. Georgian intellectuals, especially those who are close to political elites, take active part in the functioning of the official state machine that produces meanings and promotes the identity of the nation. Actually, Georgian intellectuals, in those cultural and social situations, became theorists of the new political economy for the nation and nationalism.

The production of meanings became a form of symbolic exchange and an act of political communication between various groups of elites. On the one hand, Georgian intellectuals continue to develop European narratives which bring them closer to the Soviet intelligentsia, but they prefer to replace European sympathies with American ones. On the other hand, Georgian intellectuals face many problems and difficulties because their ideas are incomprehensible to most Georgians who prefer to preserve traditional values, including Orthodoxy. Georgian intellectuals are forced to exist in a society that prefers to remain partly traditional and archaic because of the values, principles, and ideas of secularisation in Georgia, unlike Christianity, became victims of social marginalization. Georgia experienced modernization in the 20th century, but Georgian modernization did not inspire the radical secularisation of society.

Therefore, Georgian intellectual communities are forced to exist in two social and cultural times. On the one hand, intellectual communities live in the same time zones with intellectuals of the West. On the other hand, Georgian intellectuals in their attempts to keep in contact with their fellow citizens use local time, which lags behind the paces and velocities of social and cultural changes and transformations of the Western world. These features of the social and cultural situations in Georgia turned intellectuals into a spiritually isolated group from formally ‘their’ society in general, but intellectuals were able to maintain their unity with the rest of

the world. The vectors and trajectories of the further developments of Georgian intellectual communities continue to remain vague, but their social and cultural roles are undoubted and significant.

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