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## DISSIDENT ZURAB CHAVCHAVADZE-THE PERSONALITY OF GRIGOL PERADZE AND “HYMNS OF REPENTANCE”

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### ABSTRACT:

**Dissident movement as one of the forms of the struggle against undemocratic regime was widely spread in the Soviet Union. It united lots of freely thinkers in Russia and the Union Republics and made a big contribution in exposing Soviet totalitarian crimes inside and outside the country. In this viewpoint, one of the distinguished direction of the currents democratic phenomenon was Georgian dissident movement.**

**Key words: Zurab Chavchavadze, Hmns of Repentance, dissident movement, David the Builder.**

### INTRODUCTION:

In any country, the main active forces of the dissident movement are concrete subjects, separate people who are turned into leaders of vast classes throughout the time. Accordingly, their perception of the undemocratic world is deeply subjective phenomenon. Furthermore, the new world imagined by them which should be existed instead of totalitarian one is much more peculiar. Zurab Chavchavadze was such a person who discussed every issue with immense ccuracy.

### MAIN PART:

Zurb Chavchavadze was born in Tbilisi, on February 5, 1953. His father was a famous

philosopher Niko Chvchavadze and mother-orientalist Tina Tsagareishvili. Zurab graduated from Iv.Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, the faculty of Chemistry. During 1971-1972 he studied in Germany, the University of Yen. In 1976-1979 he worked as a senior Lab assistant in Georgian Soviet Scientific Academy in the scientific - research Institute of Physical and Organic Chemistry. In 1979 he left scientific work and started work as a referent of Catholicos - Patriarch of all Georgia, his Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II. In that period he was interested with the spiritual literature and started scientific research with his characteristic aspiration and determination. During 1980-1983 he worked as a scientist-editor in the main editorial board of scientific translation and since 1984 he has been at first scientist-editor and later the head of scientific literature department of the belles-lettres translation which existed in the Georgian Writers Association. Zurab was so enthusiastic with the humanitarian researches, that after two years, in 1986, he took external exam in The History of Georgian Literature and defended candidate dissertation on the thesis “XII century Georgian Hymnography”. Here is what professor Sargis Tsaishvili writes about his work: “There may be a lot of debatable issues in his work, but I think, that not acknowledging some important novelties won’t be useful for the business itself and the memory of young researcher those days who

put lots of passion and love in his work "The Confession of David the Builder" which was published in the magazine "Tsiskari" (№10) in 1984. This isn't only scientific essay but essayist sketch as well where author's personal characters are quite vivid and that national striving is seen that finally led him to the new margins of Georgian national movement". In 1988-1989, Zurab Chavchavadze was the board member of Ilia Chavchavadze society and one of the active fighters of national-liberation movement. Though in the frames of this monograph we won't study Zurab Chavchavadze's personality in the viewpoint of national-liberation movement, but we will discuss those sides of his social activities which are interesting for the history of Georgian dissident movement. In this aspect, we distinguish three spheres of his work: 1. The issue of Meskhians, 2. The case of skyjacking, 3. Issues of April 9, 4. The issue of the church. 5. The personality of Grigol Peradze.

Enthroning his Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II as Catholicos Patriarch (December 25, 1977) had great impact on certain number of Georgians and on Zurab as well. There appeared the hope of freedom I people. We shall think that exactly this situation promoted Zurab to be actively involved in church life. During 1977-1978 he served in church and wore surplice in Sioni Cathedral. His church service was the issue of interest for Georgian Communist government which caused the fact that he was excluded from the association as rebel (in spiritual viewpoint). From this year Zurab became the referent, personal secretary of his Holiness and Beatitude, Catholicos Patriarch Ilia II. In this period, under Zurab's leadership, the grave of **Pavle Tsitsinov in Sioni Cathedral was abolished**. [2, pg. 20].

Since 1984 till the end of his life he worked as the head of scientific literature department of the belles-lettres translation

which existed in the Georgian Writers Association.

Zurab decided to change the sphere of scientific interests. He chose Georgian philology and took external exam in The History of Georgian Literature and in 1986 defended candidate dissertation on the thesis "XII century Georgian Hymnography".

Regarding Zurab's scientific work we will call adequate assessment in the studies of Georgian Literature. Famous philologist, scientific supervisor of Zurab's candidate dissertation, professor Sargis Tsaishvili wrote: "He had numerous observations especially on indecipherable issues in Georgian hymnography". Mr. Sargis had the following observation on one of Zurab's article-"the confession of David the Builder" (see magazine "Tsiskari", 1984, №10): This isn't only scientific essay but essayist sketch as well where author's personal characters are quite vivid and that national striving is seen that finally led him to the new margins of Georgian national movement". [2, pg. 25].

Prof. Revaz Balanchivadze (psychologist-philosopher) wrote about Zurab's dissertation: "I have been opponent of numerous dissertations, but I hardly can remember such a defense. This is because that there was not standing beginner scientist at the chair as it usually happens, but quite experienced and educated person in his field who talked to quite well-known opponents in the science in such a manner (I consciously don't say he had an argument with them), he was their equal [2, pg. 26].

In Zurab Chavchavadze's viewpoint there always were the key issues of Georgian culture. He made great contribution in modifying numerous problems. His publicistic letters are the following: "XII century Georgian Hymnography", "the Experiment of the Hymns of David the Builder", "Turkmen and Meskhians", "No one can pay the debt of

Russia", "Bloody Week", "May 26 in Tbilisi", "Conflict in Kvemo Kartli", "The time of judgment", "Open letter to Academician Andrei Sakharov", etc.

At the beginning of the 80-ies, Georgian Catholicos –Patriarch, his Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II presented to Zurab Chavchavadze a magazine edited by Poles, in which the life and creative work of Grigol Peradze was discussed. As in those days Mr.Zurab worked in the board of belles-lettres translation, Patriarch asked him to translate the text into Georgian language. Unfortunately, there was no Polish language translator in the board and Mr. Zurab translated the given text himself. This was first time, when Georgian society heard about Grigol Peradze's perfect life. It's interesting that Grigol Peradze was brought up in Kvareli with his uncle who was the priest in Kvareli, John the Baptist church and this is the ancestral church of Chavchavadze family. Mr. Zurab was searching the graves of G.Peradze's parents in Bodbe and finally found them. Though the interest towards the personality of great scientist and public figure wasn't finished with this.

In 1987, Grigol was specially sent to Poland to collect the data about the life and work of archimandrite Grigol Peradze. He fundamentally investigated Grigol Peradze's work and collected important data. Besides, he took videos on certain facts which later became the main part of the film shot about Grigol Peradze. ( materials are used in the film shot by Rezo Tabukashvili). He also translated the work by Polish theologian Henrik Paproski "Archimandrite Grigol Peradze".[2, pg.21]. Zurab Chavchavadze's work promoted extension of Georgian-Polish relations and its proof can be the fact that Poles did the translation of David the Builder's text "Hymns of Repentance" " [6;352-353].

"Hymns of Repentance" is original poetic work which belongs to XI-XII century Georgian

king David IV the builder. This work is the expression of ideological and aesthetic belief of Georgian culture of the middle ages. It is dedicated to deeply processed (hymns of Efreim Asu Damaskeli, Ioseb and Theodore the Studite, Andria Kreteli, Ioane Damaskeli, etc) repentance motive in the spiritual lyrics. Common sadness for all mankind is expressed in the hymns. David IV the Builder compares himself to the people who have done the heaviest sin and expresses the opinion that there exists no crime that doesn't make his soul heavy.

In such self-decline, high ethical belief of morally well-developed person is revealed. In the Hymns of David The Builder, with the consciousness of sins they are already surpassed and the sadness for humans defeat is accompanied with bright colors of the deep belief of humans perfection. He reveals special similarity with the "Big Law" by Andria Kreteli. The similarity between these two works has been noticed and recognized long time ago by Georgian scientists. Both of these works are created on the motives of 50<sup>th</sup> psalm: "Forgive me my Lord with your great and numerous mercy..."[4, pg. 101].

Both of them are related with one topic, one circle of ethnic ideas. In both of the hymns, lyrical character says confession in front of the God, repents all the sins they have done and hopes for the God's mercy. The teaching of New Testament on people is the basement of both of the hymns and lyrical character is based on wide perception of humans. In David's hymns of repentance the calling of lyrical character is eternal towards our Savior, the Virgin. With this David IV made his contribution in developing Georgian hymnography.

The Hymn is a literary term denoting homographic work which was formed in the VIII century by great Byzantine hymnographers Ioane Damaskeli and Kozman Jerusalema. Such works are characterized with

the unity of thematic, reflective and compositional units.

“Hymn of Repentance” isn’t the title of David the Builder’s work but it’s literary term denoting separate genres-they are such hymns that contain author’s confession(1, pg. 143 )

In order to find out the peculiarity of the work and to correctly understand the “sins” of David the Builder enumerated here, it’s necessary to provide the author’s viewpoint, his faith and Christian teaching according to that the sin is not only what is committed, but fallacious intention as well. That’s why refusing the fact that David the Builder had numerous sins in Christian viewpoint is the same as refusing the fact that David was the real person, human being; but receiving the sins as historical facts isn’t possible. (1,pg.143]

The glory of Georgian king was mentioned in Armenian and Arabian historical works, European world set him and the guard of legendary “Gogi” and “Magogi” and equaled to the savior of crusaders Ioane Khutsesi. Representatives of every era expressed extreme respect towards the great king. It’s known that Georgian church imputed David to Saint and in the hymns of Anton Catholicos he is praised with divine epithets.XVI century unknown painter painted the king with the Gelati image on the fresco of the same cathedral. T. Bagrationi called him “sacred in beauty and haven for people”, and Petre Laradze called him “beloved of premature time and blessed with sunny nights”. Grigol Orbeliani addresses David: “David, you said: “Be the town”, and towns appeared! You passed terrible desert and transformed it gloriously! You hit the pickaxe and beautiful churches were built, Georgians should thank the God for you”! [4]

From numerous sins mentioned in the hymns only two will be considered as realized ones: conquering other states and David’s interest in astronomy-astrology. All the other

sins he mentioned in the confession are such sins that maybe made by David at all, but they are only thought up. This work doesn’t let us make another conclusion-denotes Zurab Chavchavadze. [1, 83. 144].

#### CONCLUSION:

Thus, Zurab Chavchavadze is one distinguished and important figure in the history of Georgian dissident movement. Furthermore, in the following period of Georgian history which is called national-liberation movement, Mr. Zurab was one of the figures who kept establishing modern, civilized methods of struggle against existing totalitarian regime and guarded firmly the process of awakening and raising social consciousness.

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