

## The Modern Age and the Birth of Nation

No one argues in the social sciences any longer that nationalism as an ideology was created by the end XVIII century. The objective of the given article is to review the roots and creation of the idea of the nation in Georgia

### *The outline of the definitions of terms and notions*

A study of an issue usually implies the clarification of terms and the achievement of common agreement on their use. It also requires that working definitions of notions be outlined.

It should be noted that the term “eri” is often used in parallel with the term “nation” in Georgian scientific literature of late. Even though “eri” has been used as an equivalent to the European nation since 19<sup>th</sup> century, these two terms starkly differ in their sense.

Two scholarly studies, *From the History of Ancient Georgian Philosophical and Theological Terminology*, and *Issues of Georgian History*, by Damana Melikishvili and Nico Berdzenishvili, respectively, are of interest for the definition of the term “eri”.

These two scientific works drew our attention because they provide various readings of the term “eri”.

Damana Melikishvili builds up her analysis on the Georgian translation of Holy Scripture while Nico Berdzenishvili relies on other sources in his study.

Damana Melikishvili notes that *eri in the translations of the Holy Scripture are used as an equivalent to two Greek lexemes – ο λαος and ο οχλος. The lexeme λαος is more frequently used in such phrase as ... people of God, meaning, in any case, the people chosen by God. Thus, λαος is used to denote Israel, the chosen people.*

It is also interesting to note that λαος (as the people of Israel) and εθνος (as heathens, idolaters) are used as opposites in one and the same context.

*Accordingly, Georgian translators oppose heathens and people. “Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?” (The Acts, 4.25) or: “A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke, 2.32)<sup>1</sup>*

One thing is important here: the primary meaning of εθνος is people, tribe. As regards the heathen, it is just one of the meanings<sup>2</sup>. In a certain sense, εθνος is a synonym to Greek γενος, which includes 1) ancestry 2) people of

the same origin, “nation” in a modern understanding, 3) any class, grouping, family line, stratum<sup>3</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the Georgian equivalent to γενος, εθνος is “natesavi”. Therefore, it was precisely the word “natesavi” that was used in Georgia to denote the people of the same origin. Niko Berdzenishvili puts an emphasis on this aspect: people is of a different origin, it is not derived from the notion of relative, natesavi. Natesavi derives from the notion of seed<sup>4</sup>. (Melikishvili also wrote about the meaning of terms “relative” - εθνος and “seed” - σπερμα<sup>5</sup>).

*It is noteworthy that the Greek λαος, apart from denoting people, crowd, is used by Homer to denote warriors or armed forces<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, the Georgian term “people” corresponds to the Greek λαος in this sense as well. As early as in the times of Saba<sup>7</sup> it meant a worldly man i.e. saecularis in contrast to religious.*

The analysis of terms clearly illustrates that the Christian tradition forms a new consciousness. On the one hand, the disposition of εθνος, relative, and λαος, the chosen people, is obvious. The former is based on blood relationship, common origin, whilst the latter is based on faith. This disposition, however, implies not only and not so much the opposition but rather the development. The chosen people does not exclude the blood relationship but is more than the blood relationship alone. Ethnos is born anew inside the chosen people. Every non-Jewish ethnos and, in this particular case, the Georgian one, developed by drawing analogy with Israel, into the chosen people after adopting Christianity. Therefore, Georgians and, say, Armenians are different not by an ethnic sign but rather by the reality that some remained Monophysite and became Armenians whereas others adopted Diophysitism and became Georgians. Shushanik, Habo and other martyrs also became sons of the chosen people irrespective of which relative or tribe they descend from<sup>8</sup>.

In respect with the adoption of the Christianity by St. Nino, History of Kartli says: *“A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”*<sup>9</sup>

As it can be seen, a fragment from the Holy Scripture describes a concrete historical context here. This evangelical quote precisely describes the attitude that the heathenry, the unity built upon a relative-tribal basis alone, is linked to idolatry. Heathenry, εθνος, is a possession. Pagan gods are the gods of particular related peoples. Christianity bonds people through different principle. The absolute god is not the god of this or that εθνος but rather those who worship the absolute god are the chosen people. Therefore, the idea of the absolute truth, which is the foundation of monotheism and, namely, the Christianity, creates the possibility for people to unite not only around natural kinships but also around the idea.

In Christian tradition Paul describes such approach the most clearly. In Romans epistle is Paul identifies that *there is no partiality with God*<sup>10</sup>. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also*<sup>11</sup>. Christianity unifies people on totally different basis. This new unity is called simply *doers of the law . . . justified before the God*<sup>12</sup>. In Christianity being *chosen by God* does not depend on origin anymore, *for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified*. Being chosen people means more than only belonging to any ethnos, than being Jew, According to Paul: *he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God*<sup>13</sup>. It is obvious that Christianity overcomes the idea of being chosen for any ethnic group separately. He the word Jews is only a metaphor. But it includes the idea that the temptation of any ethnic group for being chosen would fail.

As it can be seen, the Christian idea of the people provides the possibility to make it the basis for the modern understanding. The modern notion of the “eri” also implies much more than εθνος, but naturally, it does not mean the chosen people. It means that it is neither an ethnic unity alone nor only a religious one. Structurally, however, it rather resembles the latter but in terms of content - the former. Thus, ethnos and monotheistic religion, i.e. Christianity, represent the main possibility and factor for the birth of a modern nation. But possibility is one thing whilst the reality, and the way of realizing this possibility, another. It is important to realize that we are dealing with the translation of the Holy Scripture and the idea of Christianity, which would further experience modification, but it would have taken little time for this idea to become widespread. Georgian sources show that this was not the case. It is precisely why analysis of Georgian sources by Berdzenishvili is important, who talks about several definitions of the “eri”. The first one is “ordinary people”. The Passion of Saint Shushanik, for example, is of some interest in this respect, which says that *Saint Shushanik turned to her people and said*<sup>14</sup>. A quote from the martyrdom of Habo is also interesting: *Who are you, which relative or which people you descend from or which faith you worship*. Berdzenishvili notes that *relative (origin) is one thing, variety is another (which does not necessarily imply origin) and the faith is the third one*.<sup>15</sup> Eri, here, seems to be implying the subordination to a prince. This assumption is proved by other sources. For example, *Zarzmeli, 333 princes and peoples do not imagine that these miracles happened with any of our powers*. As Berdzenishvili notes *here princes are separated from eri, people*. Elsewhere, for example, in the *Life of Illarion* we read: *then they embalmed the corpse of the saint and put it on the trunk*

*brought in by his people, as there arrived lots of priests, deacons, monks and worldly men.*<sup>16</sup> Berdzenishvili notes here that the people comprise worldly men where princes, patriarch-bishops, priests, deacons are excluded from city people.<sup>17</sup>

The term “eri” is also used as an opposite to infantry, i.e. cavalry.<sup>18</sup> (strategos).

And finally, one of basic meanings is a worldly man in contrast to a religious one.

Berdzenishvili also notes that *a tendency is often observed to use these two notions of different origin (relative and people) interchangeably.* In spite of this tendency though, it is impossible to say that there is any resemblance between the idea of the chosen people and the general medieval understanding of the term “people”.

### *The possibility of the birth of nation*

A cursive analysis of the meaning of the term “people” will provide four basic meanings. The first meaning is that of *chosen people*, the second is - ordinary people, the third - infantry and the fourth is non-religious stratum. It should be noted that out of these four meanings three are just designations, as regards the chosen people, it is a certain idea in a sense that it introduces some new concept in the conscience of the society. Therefore, there had to be a certain layer of the society which should have been interested in not only the introduction of this idea but also in the spread of its influence.

Such a layer, first of all, was a religious stratum. A Christian religious society was based on a similar principle of the *chosen people*. Therefore, it was precisely this unity that introduced this new idea among the rest of the society.

It is well known that one of the first examples of the Georgian identity is linked to religious circles. I am talking about the quote from Giorgi Merchule: Georgia is the entire country where preaching is in Georgian<sup>19</sup>. Georgian here is the language of faith, i.e. culture, as it is the case with Greek and Latin. The importance of the language is acknowledged when realizing of being the chosen of the god. It is precisely the language of worship that becomes the language of the chosen people.

But the idea of becoming the chosen people was not limited, as we noted above, to this or that ethnos. The enhancement of its limits was linked only to the capacity of power. Thus, the religious circles should have had an ally, who had had power. Therefore, it was somewhat defined by the anatomy of an ally, i.e. a concrete power.

As regards the ally, it was another social stratum which was interested in the idea of unification. This is a secular elite, but it is not thus simple as the interest lies with those who unite whereas those who do not want to be subordinated may oppose this idea. Therefore, it can be said that the initiator of the unification is a winner prince, i.e. a royal dynasty. What makes a foundation for the unification of an ethnos is a religious and secular power. Two aspects are of interest here. First, neither royal nor religious authority is keen to limit itself to a particular ethnos, however, the former is willing to subordinate different ethnicities to the past, present and the future of its own family and consequently, the ancestry. Thus the realm of unification seems indefinite but the topos of subordination is absolutely definite and concrete. Therefore, the principle of subordination system requires that a subordinated (in this case, people) variety shall be subordinated to the ancestry, history of one family. It is precisely those, over which the power is extended, make up the chosen people. There is some sort of unity and solidarity among them. This, however, is not true for the next stratum of the society. It does not seem likely for a prince to want his subordinated people have complete cultural unity with the people subordinated to another prince. On the contrary, more diversified were the people of principedom more solid was the power of princes and more unique was the prince. It was the solidarity of these different unique princes that created unity.

Thus the basis and the symbol of the idea of the people's unity is a religious stratum, hence, the religion and a royal dynasty. However, both of them create a certain impediment to the unification of the society subordinated to them as according to its internal constitution they subordinate different people who do not have close links to each other.

Gellner precisely illustrates this phenomenon. Ruling strata have horizontal links with each other. However, the links between layers subordinated to them are weak. *A cultural difference between a ruler and a subordinate is greater than the unity. Bigger is the difference between various stratum, less is the discord and misunderstanding between them*<sup>20</sup>.

The idea, which was realized among certain circles of the society, should have extended over other strata. The secular and religious authorities should have redistributed the wealth, which they created, to other strata of the society. Nation is born through the implementation of the idea of the *chosen people* among every stratum.

### *Secularization and the birth of nation.*

Usually birth means starting from zero, from where something which did not exist, start to exist. Birth of nation has different structure. Birth of nation is a new stage of the social development. Accordingly it means that one need to achieve birth point first. Society given in nation is born anew.

Structurally we may recognize Christian thinking in such events. Let us say that everything on earth has got its old and new testaments. In such case birth means appearance (vision), impregnation of something which existed before, based on which not only appears a new life but of changes past as well.

Such structural similarity indicates to the fact that the birth of the nation is the result of secularization. In this case secularization shall be understood not as the dissociation of secular and religious rules of life, but more as transfer of religious rules of life and thinking into secular life.

So as Blumenberg justly notes, if we say that A is a secularized B, we need to explain to B in order to understand A. Or in other words, if we need to understand what does secular mean, we need to understand what is non-secular<sup>21</sup>.

In general discussion of the concept of nation is impossible without using the term “secularization”. To demonstrate this, it is enough to follow the example of development of the Georgian notion of “eri”.

It is natural that the previous definition of the term of “nation” is different from its current definition and therefore it could not be founded in Middle Ages. Although the birth of modern nation is founded on the basis of the medieval culture and the idea of *chosen people*, from the viewpoint that the emancipation of the notion of God from the notion of nation happened in the modern time.

In the modern time, which is mostly based on rationalism, everything shall be identified as of own origin and not relative to something else. Accordingly, after de-sacralization εθνος was used as a term all over. But emancipation is not a simple dissociation. Emancipation (*emancipacio* in Latin) means breaking free of the son and resignation from his father’s influence, or in other words, officially abandoning father’s property. It meant *mancipium*, or in other word, legalization of own property. When fathers officially made a property over their sons, the latter became free. Thus we can say that *people*, or *chosen people* were those who broke free from their fathers’ influence, but got the same structure as the heritage.

Dissociation from the church does not necessarily mean opposition against it. It means breaking free and inheritance. It means that the secular

liberty could become mature and independent in result of inheritance Christian values. Thus Christian values are the basis for modern world.

Sure, we can conceive harmful relations between the parent and successor, when father is abusing son, or vice versa, when the son tends to do away with his father. The history knows lots of cases of killing own fathers, but despite such facts, it is senseless to judge on heritage, independence, adulthood and freedom in accordance with such pathological and/or accidental cases, when freedom was not implemented.

The content of the structure of heritage is more obvious if we review the structure of classical tragedy. By the way the same topic is a stratum of the testament. Let us take a plot of one of the classical tragedies, such as *Oedipus* by Sophocles. The difference between the Oedipus legend and the tragedy of Sophocles is the following:

The legend of any hero is characterized by the ordinal consecution of the life development - a person is born, grows up, achieves some success and finally some misfortune happens to him.

Tragedy has a different structure. Tragedy usually starts with the period when the hero achieves same stage of development from the viewpoint of which he/she can overview own passed life, return to past and meet with own self. It looks like the birth of a new person. Individuals are undergoing radical changes in tragedies. Change is the result of the reflex from the past. It is impossible to stay the same after perception.

According to *Nietzsche*, as merger of two opposite sexes determines new life, likewise, the encounter of two opposite principles determines creation, the essence of which lies in Greek tragedies. On the one hand it is a *Dionysian* principle, junction of the human being and nature; and on the other hand it is *Apollonian* principle, the imagination of the human being, the dream, which turns indefiniteness into polygon profiles and conformably creates art. Accordingly the structure of classical tragedy is founded on naturalness, indefiniteness of nature and opposition of order (Chaos and Cosmos).

As we know one of the bases of the modern time is Renaissance age, during which the secular world and nature got back their significance. We may say that the tragedies of renaissance period (e.g. *Hamlet*) are partly emancipated from the classical tragedies, but still preserves the structure as a heritage and is based on origin (*genesis*) and so called *notion*, and the opposition of *ratio*. Namely such opposition creates a new unity (as in *Hamlet*). In the modern time nature and genesis are the subjects of comprehension for *ratio*. Scientific knowledge as the symbol of the modern time is based on the relation of nature and human mentality. One of the main principles of this relation is Locke's definition of knowledge, saying that knowledge of the subject

means the knowledge of its genesis. Accordingly, the only place of the meeting for the nature and human mind is the past, the history. Thus knowledge means to know past, or the genesis.

As mentioned above, the Christian idea of the *chosen people* has undergone the secularization. In the West such processes are related with the renaissance and later with the reformation period. By the end of the middle ages the secular world obtained significance. The significance of any phenomenon was to be identified by its own origin but not by the extraneous world. By the way, the relation even considered that the Christian values are important in the secular life the same way as in the spiritual life.

Belonging to the chosen people in the Western world or the Christianity was identified with the Roman Catholic Church and accordingly to the Latin culture. Communion of the Holy Scripture was conducted in Latin language, but not in the native language. It meant that distance between the genesis and the birth in chosen people was bigger in Western than in Eastern Christianity. One of the main evolutions of the reformation was the right to read the Holy Scripture in native languages. It was the chance to discover God in own language and culture. Thus the idea of being chosen was related with the genesis. Each language and culture created unique view of Holy Scripture and the Christian culture. Gradually the accents were made on the people, its culture, language and traditional values. Accordingly the notion of "people" is connected with the past and the genesis. Taking into account such condition "people", the creators of any specific culture is becoming a nation. The notion of nation is obtaining unique value.

It is noteworthy that comprehension of the past means leaving the past behind and creation of new (modern) life permanently. Likewise perception of nature means increasing distance to it. There is no comprehension in natural state. Borges says the same about Koran that the book which is totally Arabic, does not mention camel at all, while the modern Arab nationalist would mention the caravan of camels on each page written by him underlining his nationality through that. Mohamed did not notice camels in his natural environment as something specific. Only after turning to the past one can notice the features of any specific occurrence. Only after distancing one can find out that a camel, mountains and other things are the inevitable parts of your own nature and life is not possible without them - larger the distance, stronger the sentiments. Mostly neither the truth nor the current reality but own genesis and the ability of discovering nature anew gains the biggest significance in the life of nation. Past and future are connected exactly in this dimension. Something *unknown and unseen* could be discovered both in past



and in future. Still there is a starting point from where people start to discover of past and future anew.

As it was already mentioned, speaking on secularization in the modern time, they usually underline separation of the religious and secular rules of lives and prioritization of the secular life. It is generally recognized fact that our age entirely secular<sup>22</sup>. But they often forget that modern time thinking is more interested in identification and dissociation phenomena rather than in giving advantage to any specific world. For example Kant the dissociation between knowledge and belief is the main phenomenon. Bu does not grant any advantage to knowledge. Even more, Kant says that *he had to limit knowledge to leave the room for faith*<sup>23</sup>. For the author of the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* emancipation took place through dissociation and not through granting advantage as the religion was the *main unification force*<sup>24</sup> previous to modern time. Habermas notes that coming from the metaphysical tradition Kant *instead of the notion of substantial mind had offered the conception of the intellect spread in the own mind the unity of which is just formal*<sup>25</sup>. Exactly from this point of view according to Kant the difference between the ability of practical judgment and theoretical perception is important. As Emil Lask says *philosophy dissociates the realms of the cultural values, unifies science and technique, justice and moral, art and criticism only within the formal frames*.

This way of thinking became the basis of the following: since the end of the XVIII century Science, Moral and art have been institutionally disassociated. Accordingly *the issues of truth, justice and taste were worked out autonomously and following the aspect of specific acknowledgment of oneself*<sup>26</sup> and all these realms are disassociated from the religion. Namely this desacralized, non-homogeneous vital area create new basis for identification. Religion identity is replaced by secular identity.

### *Ilia Chavchavadze and the birth of nation*

Modern time for Georgia started in XIX century in particular, along with the activity of Ilia Chavchavadze. I would recall the article *Ireland and England*<sup>27</sup> written by Ilia Chavchavadze in 1886, to underline the importance of the activities of Ilia Chavchavadze in the processes of Georgian National Consciousness. Ilia Chavchavadze noted that since 1852 initiated by Napoleon III so-called “nationality” (belonging to an ethnic group) has been forwarded in politics. *Nationality has gained recognition as in Italy it unified Italians and in Germany –Germans. Thank to it partitioned nations became whole*<sup>28</sup>.

This fragment is as important as it makes obvious that the activity of Ilia Chavchavadze was not limited by the expression of only the simple patriotism. He worked on modern, wide-ranging and deliberated projects. Ilia Chavchavadze fought not for the restoration of the past. He knew that the reality called Georgian Kingdom already belonged to the past. It was a fight for creation of future for which the reality called Russian Empire would become the past. Achieving freedom was possible only through recognition of the modern world principles, through establishing modern time on own area. Ilia Chavchavadze recognized that before XIX century the idea of nationality did not unite the people of the same ethnicity. The national essence of “people” becomes relevant in nineteenth century.

The notion of “people” represented political union and accordingly it had future.

Ilia Chavchavadze was the one who founded the opportunities for emancipation and secularization in Georgia. Typical example of emancipation is given in Ilia’s idea that Georgians have inherited three divine treasures: *land, language and religion*<sup>29</sup>. Ilia was trying to integrate the heritage of Georgian people into the secular life.

The idea of nationality or “people” became a vital space where the old treasure could be placed. Ilia founded three signs of Georgian identity: motherland, mother language and religion, which have their old testimony. Ilia conduct secularization of the identification by Vakhushti: *Religion, Language and the King*<sup>30</sup>. The first two signs are not changed but the third one is, the King being replaced by the Motherland. Or in other words the things, which were under the rights and responsibilities of the King, became the rights and responsibilities of the Georgian people. In the conditions of monarchy, people did not have any rights or responsibilities. A peasant was responsible to his master and the King. Princes are responsible to the King and for their own land. Only the King was responsible to the God and for the whole Kingdom. In the letter dedicated to the 100 years anniversary of the Erekle the II death, Ilia Chavchavadze recalls a folk poem<sup>31</sup> where symbol of the King is very important as after the death of the King he was embodied in the motherland. It became heritage of the Georgian people and that’s how the emancipation process has been revealed.

Disassociation of spiritual and secular power was impossible in the middle ages, in the condition of Monarchy. *Pope and Emperor were not the representatives one for spiritual and another for secular world order, but both are two different servants of one church. Emperor was the same way blessed by God as Pope*<sup>32</sup>. *They leaved in the religious-political unity.* The states of the middle ages represented religious-political unity, where there was no room for secular

life. Fighting against the King started dismantling of the religious-political unity and creation of the secular world. Resigned king was withdrawn from the spiritual-sacral space; he was not blessed by the God anymore and had become simple ignoramus. Thus revolution was de-sacralizing of the king's institute. Such process of secularization created politics as an indivisible part of the secular world.

In this dimension it is interesting that in the history of Georgia after Russia has abandoned the Georgian monarchy Georgian people became the only responsible for the destiny of the country. Accordingly it became possible politics to turn into secular area. It was not the area obtained by people themselves but it was heritage that made ground for rebel in future. Cemetery of King is in any case the pre-history of modern nations.

Although religion is unchangeable sign of identity it is not the basis for legitimating language and motherland any more whilst during the period of the King Vakhushti religion granted significance to the King and language. In the era of Ilia Chavchavadze the literal, de-sacralized language became the symbol and basis of the unity of Georgia.

As to the faith it has some other significance besides the religious meaning. It is connected with the very important phenomenon for Ilia Chavchavadze and the modern time, such as past, the history. The nation is born after recognition own history. History means the analyses of the own past but not staying in the past. Christianity is the most important determiner of the past of Georgian people. Secularization of Georgians gave birth to the notion of Georgian "people". It is noteworthy that during the discussion on Muslim Georgians Ilia Chavchavadze states the following: *Neither the language and clans nor religion can unite people except the unity of history*<sup>33</sup>.

The next level for foundation of the Georgian "people" is related with the long religion wars in Europe. The possibility for *co-existence of different faiths in one political area*<sup>34</sup> was becoming an actual issue. The idea of religious policy made obstacles to the idea of tolerance. Religion wars were political wars at the same time. The winners of the wars established their truth. There was only one way out: politics was to be released and stand above religious belonging. Bockenfoerde notes that receiving Catholicism by the Henri IV (from Navarra) was *the winning of politics, but not of the religion as it was seen from the outside*<sup>35</sup>. It is interesting that only after that act Henri the IV (from Navarra) managed to grant the privileged rights to Huguenots based on Nanty Edict (1598).

The basis of any faith is free choice. There is no faith without free faith. Accordingly to protect the principles of faith and/or the believer to have the opportunity to live in the state, the state itself should be neutral, or in other

words it should be disassociated from the church. It is interesting that Hegel evaluated the process of secularization as the implementation of the idea of apparition.

It is important to recall the Hobbes' Concept of the State. It is not the job of the state to identify the truth. The state shall take care of the security and peace for people. It is interesting that the basis of the modern state is an individual with its natural and utilitarian demands.

Ilia realized the importance of the idea of tolerance in creation of the modern people, as he recognized that the national identity differs from religious identity. In his letter *In Ottoman Georgia* he says: *We are not afraid of the presence of different religions in the country. Georgians who were crucified for own religion do know the value of other religions . . . we are not afraid of the fact that our brothers who live in ottoman Georgia believe in Mohamed. The most important is our integration and, brotherhood. In such case Georgians proudly will prove to the whole world that he/she will not go against conscience*<sup>36</sup>.

Those who know the value of the freedom of the own will, those who have protected own faith *do not threaten other people's conscience*. On one hand the people, who has such history as ours, should not have such problems as mentioned above but when we are saying that we sometimes forget about our newest history. Nowadays many of us think that we are one of the most faithful nations. We probably forgot that some about fifteen years ago we were not only one of the unbelieving nations and the part of the biggest atheist society. Our nearest ancestors, almost several generations, did not care about the freedom of faith and fought against other's conscience. We have to get rid of bad habits first.

Thus the by secularization of the Motherland, Language and Faith gave the birth to the modern Georgian people and accordingly, the protection of the de-sacralized area shall become the subject of the national interest of Georgian people.

And finally let us say several words about Ilia Chavchavadze - In the last years of the Soviet Union, by the end of the late eighties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on the background on intensifying of national movements in Georgia, Ilia Chavchavadze was recognized as a Saint person. Sacralization of the man who created desacralized area softly saying is a comic fact. It is a paradox and includes the element of martyrdom (I do not know any other cases of canonization of educators), which is very strange. But I have to say that I have nothing against the paradoxes and comic facts as they include some divinity as well.

The paradox partly represented *"a stumbling stone and rock of offense*<sup>37</sup>. *"Just like Christianity was the rock of offense for Judeans and Craziness for*

Greeks<sup>38</sup>, the same way canonizing of Ilia Chavchavadze represented the *rock of offense* for both, the post soviet church and the liberal democracy *in embryo*.

Ilia Chavchavadze was the opportunity for the Georgian nation to be born as the Georgian “people”. But recognition of Saint Ilia is the opportunity for the Georgian church which went through the soviet times, to be re-born again. The strangest thing is that those opportunities do not have alternatives.

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**Notes:**

- 1 Damana Melikishvili, *The History of Ancient Georgian Philosophical and Theological Terminology*, Tbilisi 1999 (in Georgian).
- 2 A. D. Weissman; *Greek-Russian Dictionary*, Moscow 1991, p. 370 (in Russian).
- 3 Damana Melikishvili, *The History of Ancient Georgian Philosophical and Theological Terminology*, pp.210-211.
- 4 Nico Berdzenishvili, *Issues of Georgian History*, Tbilisi 1990, p.367 (in Georgian).
- 5 Damana Melikishvili, *The History of Ancient Georgian Philosophical and Theological Terminology*, p.210.
- 6 Nico Berdzenishvili, *Issues of Georgian History*, p.751.
- 7 Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, *Georgian Dictionary I*, Tbilisi 1991, p. 241.
- 8 Nico Berdzenishvili, *Issues of Georgian History*, p.368.
- 9 *History of Kartli IV* p.77 (in Georgian).
- 10 Rom. 2.11.
- 11 Rom. 3.29.
- 12 Rom. 2.13.
- 13 Rom. 2.28-29.
- 14 *Ancient Georgian Story*, Tbilisi, 1979, p. 17 (in Georgian).
- 15 Nico Berdzenishvili, *Issues of Georgian History*, p.368.
- 16 Ibid, p.371.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, *Georgian Dictionary II*, Tbilisi 1991 (in Georgian).
- 19 *Ancient Georgian Story*, p. 197.
- 20 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford 2004, p. 14.
- 21 Hans Blumenberg, *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 12.

- 22 Ibid, p. 10.
- 23 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, Leipzig 1930, p. 28.
- 24 Jürgen Habermas, *Der Philosophische Diskurs der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main 1985, p. 31.
- 25 Ibid, p. 30
- 26 Ibid, p. 30.
- 27 Ilia Chavchavadze, *Works*, vol. IX, p. 9 (in Georgian).
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ilia Chavchavadze, *Works*, vol. III, p. 26 (in Georgian).
- 30 *History of Kartli IV*, p. 291.
- 31 Ilia Chavchavadze, *Works*, vol. IV, p. 267 (in Georgian).
- 32 Ibid, p. 70.
- 33 Ibid, p. 9.
- 34 Ibid, p.74.
- 35 Ibid, p. 78.
- 36 Ilia Chavchavadze, *Works*, vol. IV, p. 13.
- 37 Rom. 9.33.
- 38 Kor. 1.23.