

*Marine Sioridze*  
*Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University*  
*[marine.sioridze@bsu.edu.ge]*

*Ketevan Svanidze*  
*Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University*  
*[ketevan.svanidze@bsu.edu.ge]*

## **European Ideals and National Identity in Georgian Emigrant Literature of the XX Century**

**Abstract:** *The political processes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century became a kind of test for Georgian writers, the passing of which was largely manifested by the writers' physical presence-absence, the denial of their own beliefs. Immigrant literature has become a form of free expression of dissident thoughts. The authors were forced to move to another language space for their spiritual and physical survival in order to at least somehow get closer to the national culture. However, new contradictions arose at the same time. Writers lived in a foreign country, in a society of a different mentality and worldview, for which the topic that was close to the Georgian way of life could possibly be completely alien and uninteresting. The works of Georgian emigrant authors could be incompatible or less compatible with foreign literary discourse.*

*The goal of writers and poets of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was to remove the shackles of imperialism from Georgia and to become closer to Europe. The Soviet authorities launched a cruel and immoral campaign against the writer, caused by the ideology of that time. One of the outstanding representatives of this particular era was Grigol Robakidze.*

*The present paper deals with the research and analysis of the movement that began at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was aimed at bringing Georgia closer to Europe; it also discusses the reasons that served the public to appeal to European ideals and how the struggle went on to establish their cultural values. Grigol Robakidze's German-language work is essentially a part of Georgian literature.*

*The writer was delighted with the poetic greatness of the Georgian language and its capabilities. Robakidze's works clearly show his selfless love for the motherland. He was in love with the Georgian language, the Georgian land, the Georgian character and, in general, with everything Georgian. It is easy to imagine that the stay in emigration even more strengthened the writer's patriotic feelings. The creative path of the*

*emigrant writer was in expressing his own and national identity, on the one hand, and in adapting to the literary environment, the part of which the author should have become himself, on the other hand. Thus, he did not move away from his native roots and found his place in a foreign literary discourse.*

**Key words:** *ideology, dissident journalism, emigration, national identity, European values.*

## Introduction

“I have a desire: when I leave this world, let a Georgian mother come to Mtskheta every year, on my birthday, to light a candle in front of this small icon and to pray for me. I would ask nothing more from Georgia”.

*Grigol Robakidze*

An important era in the history of Georgian literature begins at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Along with the reassessment of old beliefs, many innovations are being introduced from Europe into the Georgian cultural space, many “isms” appear. New thinking introduces new topics, ways and forms of decision.

The goal of the great writers and poets of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was to free Georgia from the imperialist yoke and bring it closer to Europe. The great representative of this era is Grigol Robakidze, whose journalistic essays largely determine the dominant of Europeanism in Georgian literature, which was manifested in symbolism, impressionism, dadaism and other literary movements.

The political processes of 20<sup>th</sup> century became a kind of test for Georgian writers, the passing of which was largely determined by the physical presence or absence of a writer, the rejection of author’s beliefs and views, the false admiration and pathos. Soviet reality required unconditional obedience. However, when Soviet ideologists realized that literature could become a kind of mouthpiece with which it was possible to arouse sympathy and support in society for everything that existed without any efforts, then they decided to make every effort to “tame” literature. The process itself was to take place under the revolutionary slogan: “He, who is not with us, is our enemy”.

For people of a creative spirit, both forms of protest — silence or frank expression of their views — were equally impossible and dangerous. The are impossible, because if a writer has not expressed his own “ego”, has not animated himself with an artistic word, then he is no longer a writer. At the same time, representatives of the dictatorship of the proletariat perfectly understood that silence did not always mean agree-

ment. Non-confirmation of the position meant that a writer had to abandon his work, and indeed, the literature. Both of these forms of protest meant the stigmatization of a writer as a “people’s enemy”, and from here to exile or execution there was only one step away. However, Georgian literature, despite great sacrifices and enormous efforts, nevertheless, managed to remain true to itself and was manifested in various forms.

Grigol Robakidze’s literary and aesthetic principles meant the introduction of new ideas and their popularization in traditional Georgian life, what was initially received by a reader rather coldly, but was gradually accepted and approved, thanks to the pathos and attitude of the writer. A huge contribution to the approval and dissemination of the writer’s ideas was made by a group of progressive intellectual writers, one of the most attractive and systematically organized directions of which was the so-called literary order of the “Blue Horns”, which ideological leader was Grigol Robakidze.

This outstanding person created a whole series of completely different linguistic-mental works, the subjects of which are diverse and varied. Despite the variety of issues, Grigol Robakidze’s main idea was not changed, it was aimed only at bringing “the Georgian gene” closer to the world, based on the aspirations of modern literary criticism, when the interdisciplinary research led to the study of postcolonial trends and the introduction of new thinking systems.

The following topics are especially important in the writer's work: the history of Georgia and Asian myths, worldview, socialism and nationalism of Georgia, as well as portraits of such figures as Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler, who were generally influential personalities.

Grigol Robakidze managed to bring literary innovations to Georgian culture so organically that they were not perceived as something alien. He breathed the national spirit into these tendencies, gave philosophical depth to Georgian literature and brought back the myth. “Three factors played a significant role in Grigol Robakidze’s life and thinking: Friedrich Nietzsche’s philosophy, the aesthetics of symbolism and myths. He adapted all this to Georgian reality, altered in a Georgian way and filled with a national spirit” (Injia 2005, 161). So, Grigol Robakidze became a creator of a new era, a preacher and a founder of symbolism in Georgia.

The writer lived 10 years under the communist regime. In Georgia, he created his novel “The Snake’s Shirt”, the plays “Londa”, “Malshetrem” and “Lamara”, poems and journalistic-critical letters. After

the occupation and de facto annexation of Georgia, Grigol Robakidze was constantly harassed by the repressive apparatus of the Soviet state. He had been in political exile since 1931, living in Germany and Switzerland. Grigol Robakidze was one of the prominent figures of Georgian political emigration, who enjoyed great authority among Georgian emigrants.

The life and work of Grigol Robakidze would have been radically different if he had followed a relatively less complicated path. Emigration brought many difficulties to the writer, but it made his name famous outside of Georgia.

### **European genius in the Europeans' eyes.**

Georgian emigrants in Germany, including Grigol Robakidze, were engaged in national-patriotic, cultural, educational or scientific activities. Grigol Robakidze's creative heritage enriches not only Georgian but also German culture. During the study, it was interesting to learn how foreign scientists and readers perceived Grigol Robakidze's activity. His works gained great popularity in Europe in the 1930s, especially in Germany. Most of works, written in German, occupied an honorable place in German literature. As a result, a lot of articles, reviews and essays, highly appreciating Grigol Robakidze's work, have been published in the European press.

In the introduction to the German edition of Grigol Robakidze's novel "The Snake's Shirt" in Jena in 1928, Stefan Zweig wrote: "... only the son of his people, spiritually rooted in it, can make real exoticism in poetry ... I think that Grigol Robakidze's novel gave birth to another new nation ... Georgian nation resides in world's one of the most beautiful areas. It is a shame that these people who have made their name through their songs and legends, mythical tales, full of heroic characters, are still unknown to us, Europeans. From this book I learned how rich this nation is with its mystical power, to what extent it is filled with heroism and at the same time is captivated with modern ideas. Each page of the book contains something chaotic, fiery lines, extracted from old legends and ballads, are beautifully knitted into the carpet of narrated stories ... and although, it is not clear where this stupefying smell really comes from - the writer Robakidze or Georgia itself - I still want to surrender to this sweet captivity" (Sharadze 2005, 14).

Perhaps Zweig would really have visited Georgia, if not for the political events that soon swept the whole world, and the victims of which, ironically, became the both writers. Unfortunately, the Austrian writer

who wrote the preface to “The Snake’s Shirt” did not visit Georgia. Otherwise, perhaps, after this meeting, he would certainly give Grigol Robakidze’s personal description. It would be interesting to see Grigol Robakidze, the Georgian writer, highly educated, with unmatched looks and sophisticated manners, through Zweig’s eyes.

After that, the writers did not meet again. Three years later, Grigol Robakidze fled from the communist regime and settled in Germany. Even the mention of his name was banned in Soviet Georgia. In Austria the same fate expected Stefan Zweig, the “great European”, as he was called. He escaped from the Nazis, who burned his books in public, because of his Jewish origin.

Grigol Robakidze did not end his life as Stefan Zweig, probably only because he was a deep-believing Orthodox. However, he repeatedly thought about suicide, what is confirmed by his letter to Akaki Papava: “I admit, I have often wished myself a quick death, so, I have sinned before the Lord ...” (Jolokhava 2008, 204).

The German writer Wilhelm Schäfer wrote about Grigol Robakidze's “Demon and Myths” (Jena, 1935): “I was particularly struck by Robakidze's ability to speak German. Here we can feel sources inaccessible to us” (Sharadze 1991, 181).

Marcel Brion, a member of the French Academy of Sciences, a literary critic, devoted an extensive introduction to the French translation of Grigol Robakidze’s novel “Megi”:

“Only the great talent of this extraordinary writer can create such brilliant metamorphoses... “Megi” is divided into various chapters that are real poems in prose. Each chapter is so perfect and independent that can be considered a separately completed poem... we can say that living breathing regulates the rhythm and controls the pace... This phenomenon is determined by the narrative itself, which sets it in motion and reveals with the development of the plot. And this happens because, regardless of its content, the narrative itself becomes somehow a living being, a kind of second reality of the book... This talented storyteller either talks about comfort and loneliness, sometimes spontaneously, without literary and artistic load, represents ancient myths, always alive or ready for revival” (Sharadze 1991, 182).

Grigol Robakidze's work was praised by Thomas Mann in the issue of magazine "Bedi Kartlisa" N47, published in Paris in 1964.

The German philosopher Leopold Ziglár writes in his monumental work "Überlieferung": "Robakidze is both the son and the grandson of the ruins of the Georgian nation, located in the center of a mythical period of time, as if inherited from life. Unlikely us, he doesn't need artificially acquired memories, he just needs to look around and observe what is awaiting him ..."

Later he wrote: "In these dark days, I again read your two books "The Killed Soul" and "The Guardians of the Grail", and while reading it became clear to me that it took me ten years to understand and correctly evaluate these books... so the apotheosis of Georgia arose. And since "The Snake's Shirt" is considered the prelude to these two books, in the future these three books should be printed as "The Georgian Trilogy" (Nikolskaya 2009, 182).

Hans Paschke, a publisher of the German literary magazine "Mercury", devoted an in-depth study of Grigol Robakidze's works entitled "Offenbarung der Elementen", published in 1936 in the magazine "Eckart", in which he examines the Georgian writer's work in detail.

"There are many spontaneous beginnings in the universe", writes Paschke, "which come from an explosion of volcanic origin, and which in a matter of seconds take on a bodily form, as required by the act of self-creation. The impulses that revive Robakidze's heroes lead us to the comparison, that they supposedly comprehended the world at the time of its appearance, they are not personalities, but the essence of elements of a similar nature ..."

### **Caucasian identity and European mentality**

It is difficult to find a writer, whose personality or work would be so radically different from the attitude of society. Grigol Robakidze was the author of not only beautiful novels, plays and poems, but also an essay dedicated to the two most famous dictators of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Adolf Hitler and Mussolini), however, at the end of his life, the writer explains in detail what was the real reason for writing his essay.

From a creative point of view, the years spent in Germany were very productive. In 1931-1945, there were published "Megi", "The Killed Soul", "The Call of Goddess", "The Guardians of the Grail", "Demon and Myths". Grigol Robakidze's poems, literary and political works, and essays were often published in the European press. The multi-

lingual collection of “The Caucasian novels” has gained immense popularity in German and other languages.

Emigrant literature has become a form of free expression of dissident thought. The authors were forced to move to another topos, into another linguistic space, with the goal of their own spiritual and physical survival, in order to at least remotely approach national culture. But at the same time, a new obstacle arose. The writer lived in a foreign country, in a society with a different political, economic or ideological mentality, for which topics close to Georgian ethnic existence could be absolutely alien and uninteresting. The intellectual and expressive layers of the Georgian emigrant-authors’ works turned out to be incompatible or less compatible with the literary discourse of a foreign country.

The creative path of the emigrant writer was to be based on the presentation of his own and national identity, on the one hand, and on the adaptation to the literary environment of which he was to become a part, on the other hand. In other words, the writer had to find a code that combines subjective and objective elements of his existence. Thus, he would not have retired from his native roots and could have established himself in foreign literary discourse. Such a unifying code for Grigol Robakidze was the creation of a mythopoetic image.

Among the emigrants of the twentieth century, Grigol Robakidze is one of the prominent figures who, with his work, organically merges with the mainstream of Georgian literature. All the writer's work is devoted to the definition of Georgian reality, ethnic mentality. The basis of his writings is a mythological discourse, as the writer himself pointed out in his letter “At the Origins of My Creativity”: “Those who do not understand symbols and myths, cannot understand my work, I mean the researchers, not the readers. The readers often delve deeper into the essence of a book than the researchers, burdened with equipment” (Robakidze 1996, 81).

For Grigol Robakidze, the myth turned out to be a kind of universal key that opened the door to both Georgian and European literature, because the immortal images that exist in the depths of the myth, their transformational paradigms and relationships, revived in ethnographic rituals, made it possible to connect the Georgian literary space from afar, and Georgian and Caucasian reality has become exotic and intriguing for the European reader. With a constant alternation of empirical and transcendental, physical and metaphysical, historical and mythical, the writer managed to reach the origins of national identity thanks to the concepts of Goethe’s phenomenon and Nietzsche's eternal return.

At the time of writing “The Caucasian Novels”, the change in the political map of the world, the redistribution of territories became a new mystery to the world. The interests of small countries were subject to the desires and aspirations of the superpowers. And the Caucasus region, as always, was a very important territory, as well as the people living here needed to constantly think about their survival, since there was always a danger of assimilation. Salvation had to be sought in self-knowledge, in the fixation of personality.

In such circumstances, the Georgian scientist, Professor Mikhail Tsereteli wrote: “You, dear Grigol, have done a great job for your homeland. Your books in German, such as “The Snake’s Shirt”, “The Killed Soul”, “The Call of Goddess”, “The Guardians of the Grail”, and others, are not old-fashioned novels from “Our Life”, but your original creations. Frankly, perhaps I am exaggerating, but for me there is no other writer who was able to turn prose into a verbal music, symphony with such amazing skill... This symphony marks on the ground... Georgia and the Georgians will be forever remembered and honored because your art will always be admired by those who are chosen for understanding and love of that high art, with the help of which you sang your homeland and people...” (Sharadze, 1991, p. 184).

### **Short Stories by Grigol Robakidze**

When we talk about identity, we must first clarify what we mean by that. This term denotes the fundamental essence, the subjective concept of personality. The term comes from the Latin phrase “Idem et Idem”, which literally means “the same”. Using this term, a person identifies himself with a certain typological category. “The mechanism of identity plays a decisive role in the preservation and transmission of social structure and cultural traditions. Cultural identity is the self-consciousness of participants in a historical unity, as members of the culture of this unity. Ethnic identification is the process of identifying a person with his own ethnic environment, allowing him to master the norms of behavior and cultural values of this ethnicity” (Dictionary of Socio-Political Terms 2004, 321).

Anthony Smith, in his article “National Identity”, presents the defining components of identity. He believes that the historical territory, i.e. homeland, as well as common myths and historical memory, common social masculinity, common legal duties for all members of society, a common economy for members of the union with territorial mobility are evidence of national identity:



“Under the Caucasian identity, we need to understand the similarity by the unifying feature of communities living in the Caucasus. In this case, the Caucasus is a historical territory, inhabited by ethnically diverse tribes, which is perceived as the birthplace of these ethnic groups. The historical memory of the Caucasians is formed by the interdependence, that existed for centuries between individual tribes and expressed in either friendly or hostile relations between them. Regarding the legal side, almost every tribe in the Caucasus had its own customs, although, often its separately taken rule was universal, since it took on a common Caucasian appearance. This can be said about the rules of hospitality, blood feud, hunting. But basically, signs of Caucasian identity should not be sought in everyday details, but in the mental attitude, in the way of thinking, that underlies the concept of “Caucasian”, which is synonymous with the concepts of courage, love of freedom, devotion to custom” (Smith 2008, 157).

Grigol Robakidze studied in detail the ethnogenesis of Georgians and believed that myth is the beginning of both the historical source and the means of cognition of modern reality. All the sacred, whether it was an object or a ritual action, was considered as an attribute of access to the roots of a national phenomenon. Therefore, in order to clarify the role and place of the Georgian phenomenon in universal human discourse, the writer paid special attention to the Caucasus and presented it as a single, indivisible whole.

The author relied on the main maxim that characterizes the mythical worldview, according to which human unity is an integral part of the whole, and the Caucasian mentality is unified, although this region is quite diverse from the ethnic point of view. In this regard, “The Caucasian Short Stories”, published twice in the exile in German (in 1932 by the publishing house “Inzel” and in 1979 - by “Zurkamp”), undoubtedly deserves attention. The collection, which included three short stories, became very popular.

For obvious reasons, this book was not published in Georgia, but Georgian readers still had access to the short stories “Engadi” and “Imam Shamil”, published in the journal of immigrants “Bedi Kartlisa”, which were subsequently published in periodicals and called big interest. And

“The Killing of the Holy Bull” was still unknown and was specially translated along with the preface to the German edition (translated from German by Tamar Kotrikadze).

The author himself wrote about the publication: “My work “The Caucasian Short Stories”, that have just been published, depicts the Caucasus as a single whole. Last year, I was struck by a deep inner awareness: the human heart is a carnal part of the mythically torn God. This conclusion has become life for me” (Robakidze 2013, 7).

In the novel “Imam Shamil”, bold images of freedom-loving Caucasians are presented with the highest expressiveness, and as the author himself says, they convey the general character traits of Caucasians as a whole. The tense and majestic tone of the narrative will not only make the reader mentally and visually feel, but also sympathize with the Caucasian unwaveringness and strong spirit. The writer manages to convey to the reader the essence of the Caucasian phenomenon - the greatest love of freedom. The author shows the relentless struggle of the Caucasus and the enemy not from outside, but from inside. His inviolability and constant renewal is supported by an unshakable faith in the Lord.

For better appreciation of the Chechens’ self-sacrifice and the perception of the Caucasian soul’s identity by a foreign reader, the writer uses several symbols that have become models in world literature. The narration begins with a description of a bewitching sunset, a kind of hint that despite the dedication of the Caucasians, everything has its end. As though the sun of Shamil’s strength should set. The enemy is strong and has countless resources, and the Chechens’ resistance seems already absurd. As if it’s time to think about physical salvation. This idea permeates the mind of the Naibs, but in order to escape from it, the author offers a second unchanging symbol - the attitude of children to the leader. As the mother says, the insane Imam runs out into the field, there he meets little boys who do not know who he really is, but they know that Shamil is the strongest man in the world. “Shamil will defeat you” is a sacred word uttered by a child, in which cosmic energy lurks, which makes the leader feel the power of overcoming and triumphing over himself. He must take communion before the Lord, and with the help of the Lord he will find the energy within himself to defeat the Rubicon. The author introduces the third symbol – the insurmountable abyss. But the one who has seen God, who has known himself through the truth that was spoken with the mouth of a child, will overcome this abyss, that is, he will be able to defeat the seemingly invincible enemy. However, Shamil is not alone, he is with those Naibs who at the beginning of the novel agree with the idea of

reconciliation, but in the finale they embody the inseparable parts of mythical unity, for the freedom of which the Caucasian identity is even ready for self-sacrifice.

By performing sacred rituals, communication with the Lord takes place in the apotheosis of “Engadi”. Its main character, George Valuev, is half Georgian by origin, so he has already genetically united his own “ego” and something else coexisting with it. This personality trait doubles his desire to get acquainted with Khevsureti, which, in his own words, is “the most mysterious tribe not only in Georgia, but throughout the Caucasus” (Robakidze, 2013, p. 31).

The main character is trying to understand the spirit of the Khevsurians, but this is not so easy. A person must be accepted by the tribe, or rather, he must become part of the mythical whole, otherwise all the customs, so sacred and important for each Khevsur, will be incomprehensible to him. At the Khakhmati festival, the character understands that he is not able to internally become a participant, he remains only a spectator.

He felt that “the tribe was a single whole, the fragmentation in it disappeared, and its physical members were only one invisible unity”. To get into this unity, one needs to feel and understand the Caucasian identity. George Valuev analyzes the ritual of righteousness and understands that there is no adultery. This ritual is a pure expression of approaching God and feeling Him. Its roots are lost in the ancient past and it will inevitably tear away everything unfamiliar. The main character also feels a stranger himself and at the same time shares a divine essence. It becomes clear to him that the Khevsurs have only the mentality characteristic of this region, which is manifested in spiritual purity. In the first place there is an internal freedom of an individual, which flows from the free will of the entire community. And masculinity is determined by a courageous attitude, which also takes its place in Caucasian identity.

The third short story by Grigol Robakidze, “The Killing of the Holy Bull”, is about the life of the Svans. The author talks about the original character of the Svan tribe, presenting its ancient rituals, in particular, he describes the first day of Lent after Shrovetide - the Lashkh festival “Murkvamoba”<sup>1</sup> and the carnival ritual of the early spring cycle “Melia

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<sup>1</sup> The first morning after the end of the Shrovetide is called Black Monday. On the first day of the Lent, Lashkhis celebrate a great holiday, which is called “Murkvamoba” in Svan. On “Murkvamoba”’s day, almost the entire gorge gathers in the square in Jakhunder. On this day, the Lashkhs living in highlands come down with pipes and flags. They make a large “Murkvami” (tower) out of snow and raise a flag above it. After this, the struggle begins between the opposing sides (i.e. between the Lashkhs of

Tulefia” (or Telefia).<sup>2</sup> The unity of the community is embodied in the custom of Perkhuli. As in the short story “Imam Shamil”, here the dance demonstrates the unity of the community and mythical integrity. “Perkhuli” has a sacred meaning, its main purpose is to express the connection of unity with the Supreme. The joint actions of the participants take on a double load, firstly, to show their reverence for God, and secondly, to show the nature of the community. In this episode, Grigol Robakidze somehow prepares a reader to understand the meaning of further action. The members of the community should take revenge, because they believe that the killing of the Holy Bull means not only disrespect for their faith, but also a threat to their freedom. All the people, living in Ushguli, served the Lord.

For foreign readers, undoubtedly intriguing was the Caucasian custom of hospitality, which was introduced with the allusion in Vazha Pshavela’s short story “Stumar-Maspindzeli” (“Guest and Host”). Although Futa Dadeshkeliani is an enemy, he was nevertheless received as an honored guest. However, the community is unshakable, and that who insult God must be punished. The community must pronounce a sentence on him and kill him, in this case the mythical inseparable integrity is revealed in the form of thinking. With integrity, conscience will remain clear, and it will not be a murder, but the completion of justice. With this understanding, the community first of all justifies itself before its customs. But even in this case, the murder of a guest is considered a great crime, because a guest in the Caucasus is considered a messenger from God, and, thus, the people of Ushguli commit a godless act.

Grigol Robakidze sometimes uses essay inserts in his short stories. He often explains those phrases that are incomprehensible to a reader (Zankuri, Chanuri, holidays). Such details show that the writer is trying to make the Caucasian identity more visible for the language discourse in which he works.

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the highlands and lowlands), headed by a “Caesar”. In the direction where “Caesar” falls during the defeat, they turn the snow tower, and this sign determines the future harvest of the year (from the notes by Arsen Oniani).

<sup>2</sup> The custom “Melia Tulefia” states that one man gets completely undressed, so his shameful places are exposed. Another man takes him by the hand. The third man also takes the second one’s hand, and so on, until those standing behind obscure the naked man. He (the naked man) covers his bare spots with one hand, and in the other hand he holds a twig and beats off standing behind him people, who try to push him, shouting loudly: “Melia Tulefia, Yo-Yo!” (from the notes by Arsen Oniani).

“In all three short stories, the author creates an art model that reveals Caucasian identity for both foreign and Georgian readers; the writer manages to create a double space of reality - external and internal: the first is achieved through the linguistic stylization, characteristic of Grigol Robakidze, and the second one - by introducing everyday ethnic rituals into the narrative. Thus, the writer first “outside” shows the reader the phenomenon of Caucasian identity (which unites all communities and ethnic groups, living in this geographical region), and then gives the opportunity to feel it from the “inside” and arouses sympathy for it. In all three short stories, the author’s goal is to present Caucasianism as a way of life, subordinate to a certain traditional order, that combines personal and ethnic qualities” (Jinjikhadze 2003, 75).

All the three short stories by Grigol Robakidze still retain their exoticism. Moreover, the writer takes us on a journey through the highlands of the Caucasus. Its native roots are better visible here. Civilization cannot abruptly transform the local way of life. Dominant traditions and customs do not allow people to degenerate, which is more or less inevitable in the face of changing time.

Until the end of his life, Grigol Robakidze remained an admirer of his homeland - Georgia and the native Georgian language, what is also confirmed by his own words: “The Georgians are conceited. But they have the right to be conceited. The language of Georgians is the most ingenious creation among other languages. Its entrenched current holds countless secrets of the world. The Georgian grape cross is also amazing. Such a deep symbol cannot be found throughout the Christian world” (Japaridze, 1988, 208). The scene in all three “Caucasian Short Stories” is different. The time of action seems to be eternal, like a myth. Indeed, there is no past and no future in the myth. It always exists and has a circular form of time. The short stories are small in size, but allow us to look at Caucasian Georgia in an interesting perspective, through Robakidze’s eyes.

The patriotic feelings, aggravated in emigration, are the leitmotif of short stories. Robakidze is proud of his homeland. At the same time, his fighting spirit is tolerant. In the “Caucasian Short Stories” the enemy is not humiliated or insulted. Even the existence of the enemy seems natural and necessary for Robakidze. There is no aggression against the enemy. We are more likely to see a picture of devotion and self-sacrifice, than

the image of a specific enemy. The characters in the novel are ready to do any thing to protect their homeland, even if the disastrous results are clear in advance. Grigol Robakidze untiringly emphasizes the beauty of the homeland, its nature, beautiful people and the talent inherent in these people. An unusually beautiful language tells us about the fidelity and brotherhood peculiar to the Caucasians, their hospitality, respect for elders, superplatonian attitude to a beloved, a unique understanding of the phenomenon of the enemy, blood, birth and death. We can confidently say that all the above should certainly be interesting to both European and non-European readers.

### Conclusion

The mental-intellectual world of any thinker is based on his philosophical, social and cultural consciousness. In the case of Grigol Robakidze, this opinion acquires special significance, since he was an outstanding figure of the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century in the field of Georgian literature: he had a brilliant European education and a comprehensive knowledge of Georgian culture. Based on this, Grigol Robakidze developed his own attitude to Georgian culture and especially to literature. This attitude is solid, systemic.

Therefore, his assessments of current trends in the field of Georgian culture and especially in the field of literature, both at the level of his deep knowledge of European literary-critical or general aesthetic concepts, are of particular importance.

Grigol Robakidze never lost his spiritual connection with his homeland, he always devoted to it: "If there is something good in me, it is only thanks to Georgia; ...it is felt and manifested in everything. The Georgians represent a universal phenomenon, it is a small nation with a tribal, united, common soul: its land is a sacred "mother", its ancient history, which has been gathering a living memory for millennia, is the essence of Georgia, manifested in the Georgian character, the Georgian word, the Georgian customs, the Georgian sword, the Georgian song (dedicated to the gods)", wrote Grigol Robakidze in 1933 (Sharadze 1991, 206).

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