საერთაშორისო პრეზენტაცია **International Conferences**

Mariam Chkhartishvili

Molding of Nationalist Ideology and Printed Media: Georgian case study

Introduction

The present paper[*] grasps one moment, more precisely three month period in the long-term process of Georgian national consolidation.[1] I ground my historical representation exclusively on the evidence obtained in *Iveria* – one of the most influential Georgian printed media issued for almost three decades since the 1870s.

It is generally accepted amongst Georgian historians that it was a period within which the shaping of the modern Georgian nation had taken place. However, the picture of Georgian nation formation process still lacks clarity: usually Georgian scholars provide a very superficial discourse on the subject, actually nothing more than stating that the nation has been formed.[2] In my opinion, the main reason of this lies in theoretical approach. Most works on the topic are done with the Soviet version of Marxist sociology. Despite the fact that in general Marxist sociology represents a very powerful explanatory system, it fails while reconstructing history of identity. While Marxist sociology gives preference to the objective factors defining the phenomenon of nation, identity first and

---

[*] The paper is a part of the contribution presented at the International Symposium 'The Balkans and Caucasus. Parallel Processses on the Opposite sides of the Black Sea. Past, Present, and Prospects' held by New Europe College – Institute for Advanced Study, Bucharest, 12-13 , April, 2010.

foremost is shaped through attitudes, perceptions, shared values, symbols and memories, thus subjective factors. As Schlesinger convincingly puts it:

> Identity… is not to be considered a 'thing' but rather a 'system of relations representations'… the maintenance of an agent's identity is… a continual process of re-composition rather than a given one, in which the two constitutive dimensions of self-identification and affirmation of difference are continually locked… identity is seen as a dynamic, emergent aspect of collective action (Schlesinger 1987, 236-237).[3]

In this paper I attempt to challenge the Soviet approach towards nations and nationalism and employ ethno-symbolist theory, developed by A. D. Smith. I adopt Smith's definitions of a nation and nationalism and his assertions concerning 'the common elements of the "belief-system" that underpins the various kinds of nationalist ideologies', findings on the universal character of fundamental ideals and core concepts of nationalism, description of politics of ethno-nationalism and historicist character of nationalism. Along with Smith and many other scholars, I view a nation as a form of culture and recognize a decisive role of humanitarian intelligentsia in molding of national identities.

The analysis of obtained data shows how *Iveria* through the fostering the sense of 'our community' (our business, our territory, our language, our destiny, our roots, our history, our culture, our others, our character, our people, our women etc), forged 'horizontal comradeship' of its readers gradually transforming them into members of the emerging Georgian nation.

General Background

In order to clarify the structure of this paper, this section presents excerpts from Smith's works. Namely, it provides definitions of a nation (1) and nationalism (2), description of nationalism as an ideology (3), characteristics of ethno-nationalist politics (4), clarifications concerning the historicism of nationalist ideologies and the role of humanitarian intelligentsia in rediscovering of na-

tional past (5).

1) A. D. Smith defines *nation* as

> a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for al members (Smith 2001, 13).

2) A.D Smith views *nationalism* as

> an ideological movement that seeks to attain and maintain the autonomy, unity and identity of a human population, some of whose members deem it to constitute an actual or potential nation (Smith 2001, 25).

3) According to Smith, the fundamental ideals of nationalism are: national autonomy, national unity and national identity (Smith 2001, 25). The core concepts of nationalism are: authenticity, continuity, dignity, destiny, attachment ('love') and homeland (Smith 2001, 28-33).

4) A. D. Smith distinguishes two types of pre-modern communities or ethnie: lateral or aristocratic and vertical or demotic. The Georgian case is more linked with latter one; therefore, I will cite Smith's views on it:

> The break-up of modern empires was hastened by the twin processes of politization of culture and vernacular mobilization. In pre-modern periods, culture rarely assumed any political significance… But with decline of empires went a new desire on the part of the rulers to legitimate their positions through attempts to homogenize their populations. Such attempts could include linguistic standardization and/or conversion, as with the example of Russification under the last Tsar… This in turn provoked resistance on the part of hitherto quiescent and accommodated demotic ethnies. Since these attempts to homogenize ethnic minorities were often accompanied by social and cultural discrimination, they soon incite dissatisfaction, notably by the small intelligentsias of each ethnie (Smith 1999, 193).[4]

Smith characterizes the process of 'vernacular mobilization':

Essentially, we are dealing with processes of re-definition, re-education
and regeneration. The first step is perhaps crucial one; the minuscule co-
terie of intellectuals redefine a loose ethnic community and its traditions
as a potential nation…the process of redefinition is one that sharpens the
boundaries between "us" and "them"… The second step in the process of
vernacular mobilization is to reeducate the genuine membership in the
true culture… this true culture is to be found in the authentic products of
the people… the third step is to regenerate and politicize the culture itself.
This means rediscovering its primordial elements, selecting genuine
components and rejecting extraneous accretions… It is of course but a
further step to the idea of purifying the nation itself… But the process of
national purification which begins with desire to recover a partly sub-
merged ethnic past, can so easily end in exclusion of others, non-national
values and ultimately their bearers… The drive of national purification in
demotic ethno-nationalisms tends to elevate the people as a repository of
the truth and virtue, and the embodiment the true national values (Smith
1999, 194-196).

According to Smith just in this process nation and people have been
fused and identified with ethnie (Smith 1999, 196).

5) As nationalism means searching for community's culture, the role
of cultural elite in the process of national identity-formation is para-
mount:

As a sociopolitical movement the ideologies of nationalism require an
immersion in the culture of the nation – the rediscovery of its history, the
revival of its vernacular language through such disciplines as philology
and lexicography, the cultivation of its literature, especially drama and
poetry, and a restoration of its vernacular arts and crafts, as well as its
music, including native dance and folksong. This accounts for the fre-
quent cultural and literary renaissances associated with nationalist
movements, and the rich variety of the cultural activities which national-
ism can excite. Typically, a nationalist movement will commence not
with a protest rally, declaration of army resistance, but with a appearance
of literary societies, historical research, music festivals and cultural jour-
nals – a kind of activity that Miroslav Hroch analyzed as an essential first

phase o and spread of Eastern European Nationalisms, and, we may add of many subsequent nationalisms of colonial Africa and Asia. As result, ''humanistic' intellectuals – historians, and philologists, artists and composers, poets, novelists and film directors – end to be disproportion ally represented in national movements and revivals (Smith 2001, 6-7).[5]

These quotes by no means are enough for comprehending theoretical richness of ethno-symbolist approach; they only help to contextualize the Georgian case in general history of nationalist movements, by allowing singling out common elements of nationalist ideologies and national consolidations in the world. At the same time, Georgian case has its own peculiarities which are not always represented in available social theories. However, this paper focuses on universalities rather than peculiarities of Georgia.

Reasoning Source

It is generally recognized that media plays a decisive role in the construction and maintenance of collective cultural identities. The postmodern world is characterized by essentially new technologies for information delivery, challenging existing world order and intensifying tensions between global and national identities on level of culture as well as politics. In its time the invention of alphabet had the same revolutionary impact: writing languages assisted the process of ethnic identities molding. As for the nation-formation process, it was linked with printing. Standardized print languages and the emergence of nation-wide networks of readers (called 'imagined communities' by B. Anderson) are in casual interconnection.[6]

The first Georgian printed book was published in the seventeenth century but it was a single fact which had taken place abroad. Therefore it cannot be considered as an important fact for Georgian identity-development. In the eighteenth century, the situation changed because Georgian books were printed regularly. In the nineteenth century the process further intensified by issuing newspapers in Georgian as well as

in Russian.

In the second half of the nineteenth century printing products, including newspapers and magazines, already had palpable impact on societal life. Among these publications *Iveria* as a historical source deserves quite special interest from many points of view. Its influence on societal life was indeed great. It was one of the most long-lived periodicals in Georgian reality issued uninterruptedly (it was closed only for a short period in 1896) for about three decades between 1877 to 1906.[7] Its founder was an eminent Georgian writer and public figure, the ideologist of national-liberation movement Ilia Chavchavadze (1837-1907),[8] who also edited *Iveria* for many years. For his unprecedented contribution to Georgia's history, in the end of the twentieth century, Ilia Chavchavadze was canonized by Georgian Church as Saint Ilia the Righteous.

Iveria was founded in Georgia on 3 March, 1877. First, it was a weekly newspaper; however in 1879-1885 it was issued as a magazine, only to become a newspaper again in 1886. Co-editors of *Iveria* were Sergei Meskhi (1881), Ivane Machabeli (1881-1884), Aleksandre Sarajishvili (from December 4, 1901) Grigol Qipshidze (1903-1905) and Philip Gogichaishvili until its closer (August 27, 1906).

Data Analysis

This work is a part of the research devoted to the complete study of Georgian nation formation using all available issues of *Iveria*. In this paper I will limit myself with analyzing only several issues.

Before analyzing concrete evidence in detail, I would like to present sketchy description of *Iveria*.

In 1878 the title of this newspaper had a form of a monogram serving as some kind of visual marker. It was issued weekly (on Tuesdays) and consisted of 16 pages. Every issue began with the information regarding the places and services of its own distribution. Considering this data, it is possible to conclude that readers of this paper were Georgians living in both western and eastern parts of Georgia. Thus, the territorial dimension for the readers of this newspaper was whole Georgia.

This intention of the editorial board to address all Georgia is obvious from the title of the periodical: as in certain period (in particular, this was the case in official Georgian-Russian documents) the term 'Sakartvelo' ('Georgia') referred exclusively to the eastern part of the country, the newspaper, aimed to appeal to the whole nation, was called *Iveria* – the term for Georgia in pre-modern times.

The content of the newspaper shows that there were some topics of public interest. This fact was reflected in permanent columns, such as 'Georgian Chronicle' (these were correspondences from the regions), 'Political affairs,' 'Georgia (Historical-ethnographical investigation)', 'Stories of the war', etc. The newspaper often published literary fictions: original Georgian writings as well as translations.

Correspondence shows how the newspaper managed to gain public interest in certain topics and mold Georgian readers. Even banal stories describing the daily life in Kacheti (an eastern region of Georgia) were read with an animate interest in Imereti (in western Georgia) and vice versa.

 A special interest was paid to the social stratum of clergymen, presented not always with positively, because evidently many of them collaborated with the Russian authorities, participating in some events unfavorable for the Georgian community.

Many articles and literary fictions in *Iveria* show nostalgia for the past. According to these materials, the forebears of Georgians did not resemble contemporary Georgians. They were more patriotic, more consolidated, and more moral. The past, perceived as 'Golden Age', idealizing forebears, is not a unique feature of Georgian experience, but a common feature of any nationalist ideology, as A. D. Smith explains:

> The return to a golden age is an important and probably as essential component of nationalism. Its role is to re-establish roots and continuity, as well as authenticity and dignity, among population that is being formed into nation, and thereby to act as guide and model for national destiny (Smith 2004, 229).

From publications of the *Iveria* it is obvious that the readers were ethnic Georgians and not all population of Georgia. In any case the newspaper aimed at making of Georgian ethnic community or, more precisely, Georgian ethno-nation and it is why it underlined the importance of historical roots, uninterrupted ties between generations. All social ranks in the past were patriotic and fond of fatherland. National sentiments were similar in all population: representatives of all social strata were ready to sacrifice for patria. Idealized picture of past with regards to national solidarity was supplemented by perception what is 'our.' According to *Iveria* 'our' should refer to both peasants and nobility because there was no discrepancy in their attitudes to patria at least in the past. Here is used Georgian word 'mamuli' which in previous times was referred to estate left by father, i.e. was term for designation of an economic category. The *Iveria* fostered its new sense, namely, meaning of category of collective cultural identity: 'mamuli' was referred to fatherland, patria and native community and culture. On the value scale of Georgian community in times under the consideration 'mamuli' occupied the highest position. Underlining the sacral nature of inter-group bonds is also common place of ideology of nationalism. In academic literature, ethnic and also national communities are viewed as communities with sacral foundations. They are not considered as mere ephemeral human associations, but communions with divine and, accordingly, global missions.[9]

Interestingly enough the fact of using Georgian term 'eri' as equivalent of European nation. 'Eri' is a very ancient Georgian word for designation of a group. In ancient and medieval times it was mostly used for social groups; for communities based on collective cultural identities, i.e. ethnic groups, there was used another term, namely, 'natesavi'. Only from nineteenth century 'eri' was used for designation of nations, i.e. communities based on collective cultural identities.

Iveria is a good source for researching attitudes towards 'others'. In the nineteenth century, the 'others' for Georgians were Russians and Armenians. Attitudes towards them were very negative, especially that towards Armenians.[10] Georgian national identity formed vis-à-vis both,

external and internal 'others'.

National ideology tries to form a homogenous community, and eliminate all kinds of social cleavages between marginalized groups in order to create favorable conditions for easy circulation of sentiments and national ideas and to build inner solidarity. Therefore, gender issues in general and women's issue in particular, occupy an important place in nationalistic discourse, since women also must become members of the national community. The Georgian case is a good illustration of this assertion: *Iveria* paid great attention to Georgian women's participation in public events.

After such general observation, let us pass to the close consideration of obtained materials.

The first issue of the *Iveria* begins with information on charity event which took place in the town of Gori: the episcope Aleksandre provided a financial support to Tbilisi theological seminary. The donation was spent on publishing church chants music and theological literature translated from Russian into Georgian, as well as on books for library. The author of the article sets this episode as an example of 'our man' spending money 'our business.' It is clear that he wanted to use this case for shaping 'community of ours' and defining common interest ('our business'). Such episodes, most likely were rare in this period, and the author takes an opportunity to use this case to enforce national sentiments and discuss the role of the clergy in the life a national community. According to this article the clergy played indeed a significant role in the development of national identity but in the past, men, servants of god, used to be also servants of the nation. Since the adoption of Christianity as an official religion, education and scholarship were in hands of clergy, leading Georgians to the success.

By idealizing the past the author criticizes his contemporary clergy who, being poorly educated and unpatriotic (as one can conclude from provided discourse), completely have given up their historical role.

The same article allows concluding again that *Iveria* was aimed exclusively at ethnic Georgian readers, promoting the project of ethno-

national consolidation, which would result in formation of an ethno-nation.

One can easily place this fact in the general context: national consolidation on the grounds of ethnic revival is a universal rout of the nations within empires.

The attitudes expressed in the above-mentioned article, are found also in fiction on the pages of *Iveria*. The same issue published the ballad by Ilia Chavchavadze about the Georgian king Dimitrii Tavdadebuli (late thirteenth century), [11] which begins with bard's (the author of the ballade identifies himself with a bard) addressing the readers with the questions: who are we, where did we come from?

These questions are universal in the repertoire of nationalist ideologies and are asked in times of in-group mobilizations. Looking for ethnic roots is important for communities which seek national consolidation trying to rediscover the authentic past and, consequently, the authentic self.

> Come on, o my sons, round me,
> I will tell you the heart pleasing story,
> Who we, Georgians, were, and how we lived
> In the past times.

According to the ballade forebears were able to overcome social conflicts and all kind of tensions between various social classes because all Georgians were equal in their love and devotion to patria – 'mamuli:'

> In ancient times nobles and peasants alike
> Were happy to have sons
> So, that saw in them
> Soldiers of mamuli.

According to this ballad, the Georgian community especially valued 'mamuli' as a phenomenon marked by divinity. Devotion to 'mamuli' was considered a fundamental feature of a human being. The author of the ballade seems extremely upset because of Georgians lost this feature. He idealized past and blamed present, he wanted the future to be not as

the present, but, at the same time, despite adoring the past, he does not imagine the future as its exact copy either.

This ballad is very interesting with regard to the terms used for collective cultural identities: first of all it is term 'Sakartvelo' – a country or collectivity of Kartvels, in other words Geotrgia; and 'Kartvlis eri' – a nation of Kartvels.

For those who study the history of Georgian national identity, it would be interesting to consider the attribute of 'Sakartvelo': 'patara' (small). This attribute served as certain kind of marker in the face of 'others', first of all Russia. It compares small Georgia to the huge Russian empire. Size is an actual characteristic of these nations; however, it had gained a social meaning through of *Iveria*'s publications.

In the ballade under the analysis the Georgian community that is Georgian 'eri' (nation) is presented as sacred phenomenon. To the fact of self-sacrifice for 'mamuli' the bard had attached efficacy of a religious sentiment: martyrdom for 'eri' he considered as guarantee of person's immortality.[12] The supreme hierarch of the Georgian Church instructed the king Dimitri in the following way:

> You, o, King should sacrifice yourself
> For Your eri and country.
> With great pain in my heart
> In name of our Lord
> I should say to You:
> Give up your flash for the soul
> And do not lose immortality
> For the momentary this world life.

Representatives of all social ranks without exception are objects of the king's care. Devotion to 'eri' was perceived as a principal responsibility of kings. It is evident that for *Iveria* the elimination of any social stratum was not acceptable. The most important message of this ballad reads that all classes of the Georgian community can collaborate on the basis of love towards 'mamuli' According to the bard (/according to the *Iveria*) this feeling, common to all Georgians , makes all humans (regard-

less their actual social position equal) and creates a community.

Let us, now pass to another publication of the same issue of *Iveria:* 'The letter from Petersburg' which represents continuation of the cycles of letters having been published in several previous issues. The publication provides comments on the article 'Future of Slavdom' brought out in Russian journal 'The Herald of Europe'.

For readers of *Iveria* the importance of this publication was twofold: first of all, it allowed the readers to picture their native community vis-à-vis 'others': the article provided a global context.

Secondly, while describing the historical development of Slavdom, the article contributed to the elaboration of special terms for the communities that emerged on the ground of collective cultural identities. Obviously, it is not always possible to avoid ambiguity and vagueness in the use of terms, taking into account that this can be the case even today as illustrated by definitions of 'nation'.

First of all, I am concerned by the use of the term 'tomi', usually translated into English as a 'tribe'. 'Tomi' was used as term designating the origin. Expression 'peoples by tomi Slavs' means peoples by origin Slavs. Thus, 'tomi' refers to kinship based communities. However, the same paper used 'tomi' for a cultural community, almost as an equivalent to 'ethnicity'.

It must be noted that this article views solidarity within a community based on kin identity less powerful compared to communities bound by political ties.

According to this article, a firm integrity of people is possible only within a polity, thus agreeing with the idea of perceiving a state as a necessary precondition for the birth of a nation as well as for its survival.

It is not accidental that *Iveria* paid much attention to the history of the Slavdom, which provides better understanding of the processes of national and ethnic consolidation in general.

From the second half of 1877 '*Iveria* begins publication of the articles devoted to Georgia's history. The topics include, first of all, the ethno-genesis of Georgians. As mentioned above, taking interest in past is a common feature of nationalism.

Iveria's interest in ethno-genesis and, generally in the past was not caused by mere curiosity. Neither was it an exclusively academic problem. It had a great social meaning.

Another important characteristic of national consolidation processes is homogenization of the community through uniform educational system. It creates cultural space within the whole community and helps to circulation nationalistic ideas and sentiments among the in-group members. Number of publications under the heading "Georgian Chronicle" (as it was already mentioned these were correspondences from the regions) one can find in I*veria*. Namely, in the second issue of the year under the analysis was published rather voluminous article on the School of Theology in the town of Ozurgeti (western Georgia, Guria region). The article containing criticism on this school. In this regard this article was not exception. In the third issue one can find an article under the title 'Certain teachers'. This is a critical article as well. The author writes about schools in Kakheti, where some teachers were blamed for being immoral and uneducated.

With regard to schools, according to this publication as well as some other concerned with education, the situation in eastern Georgia was much like that in western Georgia.

Their most important message, however, is the following: the readers living in the different parts of the country had common problems and, accordingly, shared interests. For all Georgians, despite their place of residence, it was important to know how schools in other regions did. The Georgian community was tied by this interest and *Iveria* sought to maintain and strengthen   these ties.

The same issue, under the heading 'Georgia (Historical and ethnographical investigations)' presented a review of the Caucasus. Asserting that Georgia represents a border, essentially a bridge, between Europe and Asia, the author attempts to picture his native country in the historical-cultural context of the region and identify the national mission of Georgians. Undoubtedly, the emerging Georgian nation took a great interest in knowing its place on the globe.

An article entitled 'Thoughts regarding the New Year' can be found in the same issue. This publication is very helpful for an adequate understanding of the insights of Georgian national consolidation process.

Every sentence of this article carries a powerful impulse. In the opening part of the article one can find the following address to the readers.

'Dear reader, many of us cry and as well as laughs at our life. Indeed there is a reason for both, crying and laughing in our existence, in our Georgian life'.

Again, *Iveria* appealed exclusively to ethnic Georgians: 'our' definitely refers to Georgians only.

We have already discussed the attribute 'small' used for Georgia. In this article the Georgian nation is characterized by another attribute, 'pirgia' – a person with widely opened mouth. Metaphorically it refers to a person who is not able to understand the reality adequately and remains passive facing challenges of an outer world. Thus, with this attribute Georgians criticized for their backwardness and passiveness in front of internal or external 'others.'

An extremely pessimistic mood of the article aimed to strongly influence the readers. According to the author, even after thousands of years, nothing will change in the lives of Georgians, as they willingly allow others to humiliate them while laughing and pretending as if they do this because of being democrats. Evidently, the author meant Armenians and not Russians in 'others' when speaking about the humiliation willingly.

The article touched upon the issue of a national language as well. Some ethnic Georgians at the time apparently did not know the native language and even took a pride in this fact. The author reveals his indignation, referring to such Georgians as dangerously malicious persons. According to this paper, national nihilism makes men inhuman. This judgment is quite understandable taking into account the attitudes of the Georgian cultural elite towards 'mamuli' as sacred value for the Georgian community. The author concludes with an address to the readers: 'I would like to stop here and do not trouble you any more by speaking of our life which is on the brink of an abyss'.

Again the perception of 'our' and the belief in a common shared fate

and destiny of the community are clear.

The same, third issue of *Iveria* in the column 'Georgia (Historical-ethnographical investigation' draws attention to the evidences from 'Kartlis Tskhovreba' ('The life of Georgia', a medieval collection of historigraphical writings) on Ossetians, discussing their ethnic and linguistic belonging. Thus, history and ethnography of Georgia is understood not only as history and ethnography of ethnic Georgians, but also as history and ethnography of ethnic minorities – residents of Georgia since pre-modern times. It is clear that the readers did not identify Georgian eri with Georgian country – Sakartvelo, which historically was considered as multiethnic reality.

'Georgian Chronicle' in the issue four discusses history and ethnography of Gurjaani. This multiethnic town is perceived as Georgian: 'The inhabitants of Gurjaani are indeed amazing people; the moderateness does not characterize them. You may ask why? Why? Because they are Georgians'.

This correspondence serves as an introduction to the correspondence, again about Gurjaani, focusing on elections of a local governor and a judge.

It is interesting with regard to 'us' and 'them' relations. As it became clear from the correspondence under the analysis until this time in local elections Armenians were successful. It happened because they spent money to promote their candidates. Now when elections were held in accordance of rule, winners became Georgians. On positions of the local governor and judge were elected Georgians. The author takes pride in this fact. The conflict is presented as ethnic-social controversy: on the one side are Armenian merchants, on another – Georgian peasants. However, it is evident that the ground for solidarity was not always ethnic identity. Some Georgians were on side of Armenians. These were Georgians who were merchants and were in subordination of Armenians 'in business or in thoughts'.

It is evident that author cherished kindly feelings just for Georgian peasants and he is not merely Georgians. Many Georgian nationalists in

nineteenth century (Ilia Chavchavadze among them), idealized a Georgian peasant perceiving this stratum as basis for Georgian nation.[13]

Iveria's issues # 9 and # 10 show negative attitudes towards commercial activities. Namely, the article about the situation in Guria during the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878, describes Gurians who answered the challenges of the time adequately by developing commercial skills (not a common feature among Georgians) behaving like Jews. This fact gives the author a reason to recall a popular etymology of the term 'Gurians' according to which it comes from 'hurians', a Georgian word for Jewish people.

The author considers commerce a dishonest way of life. He mentions that some Gurians, namely those from the town of Ozurgeti, behaved even more meanly than Jews. Gurians from villages, however, maintained their positive features, did not get involved in commercial relations and remained honest.

Thus, author's negative attitudes are caused by social positions. In Guria, the merchants were ethnic Georgians, but their treatment of ordinary people was as cruel as that of Jews.

Now I would like to touch upon the correspondence published in the issue # 7, which informs about the opening of the primary school for women in Tianeti. The correspondent himself is one of the parents. This publication is interesting not only because it describes insufficiency of school functioning, but also because it discusses gender issues. The event seems to the author as a fact of a great importance. However, the school curriculum makes it clear that it was aimed at preparing girls for their traditional role in the society. In the same article the author expresses his concerns about misfortune of Georgians. The sense of common destiny, as well as common character represent distinguishing feature for communities founded on collective cultural identities. The image of an unfortunate nation was cultivated among Georgians representing an important catalyst in the process of national identity formation.

As it was mentioned almost all issues of the *Iveria* contained information on world politics. The column 'Political affairs' presented a digest of European press. These materials are interesting not for facts but

the terminology describing the world of nations. For example, the issue # 5 presents discourses attracting our attention by treating of notion 'eri' (nation). The author cited a speech about human rights by French politician Gambetta, who apparently asserted that equality enlightens nations and makes them moral. The article aimed at showing its readers that the right to vote is a necessary attribute of 'eri', that 'eri' is a political community. At the same time it is viewed as individual characterized by such exclusively human feature as morality.

The issue # 6 published a play by Rapiel Eristavi, revealing the author's attitude towards peasants. As it was mentioned idealization of peasantry is a common feature of nationalist ideologies everywhere, but in Georgia it was an especially sensitive topic. The image of a peasant was an image of a nation rather than bourgeoisie mostly being ethnically non-Georgian.

In the issue # 8, merchants are presented in negatively because they stripped peasants. On the other hand, peasants also receive criticism for loosing their Georgianness.

In the same issue was published very interesting material concerning the sources of Georgian history. Again the problem of ethno-genesis was concerned. The paper made references to classic authors, for asserting that Georgians were kinship based community. There may be distinguished the several Georgian tribes. This publication makes to think that searches in history undertaken by *Iveria* were not mere academic pursuit. They should be considered as a reflection of mnemonic activities by the nationalizing community.

Many nationalisms can be characterized as linguistic movements.[14] Since language always had a special role for Georgian identity, along with a unique Georgian alphabet it became an object of special care. This is expressed in *Iveria's* issue # 7 in the article 'Briefly on the necessity of relevant matrix for the Georgian alphabet'.

National proud was found in other spheres of collective culture. One of such components was Georgian polyphonic chants. *Iveria's* issue # 8 addressed the problem of notes for church chants in order to preserve

them. The author of the paper expressed his dissatisfaction with previous attempts In particular; he found it not acceptable to present Georgian songs in four tones uncharacteristic for church and folk chorus.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that my goal in this paper was to challenge the existed practice of schematic representation of the process of Georgian nation formation. I attempted to document every day of this process based on such an important source as *Iveria*.

Iveria not only reflected the process, but played a special role in creating 'the community of ours,' this Georgian nation, out of its own readers. As shown above, *Iveria* was successful in fostering a sense of commonality, constantly uploading in the perceptions of the we-group topics like 'our business,' 'our territory,' 'our language,' 'our destiny,' 'our roots,' 'our history,' 'our culture,' 'our others,' 'our character,' 'our people,' 'our women,' etc, thus forging 'horizontal comradeship' of its readers who gradually were transformed into members of the Georgian nation.

Acknowledgement

Notes

1. Georgian modern nation emerged on the basis of Georgian ethnic community, the roots of which are traced deeply in past. At least from fifteenth century B.C. one can speak on rather developed Georgian (Colchian) ethnic entity. This social body had polity of its own (Colchian Kingdom) with the centre in western Georgia. From fourth century B.C. the political centre of Georgian community had been moved from western to eastern Georgia and the heir of Colchian

Kingdom became the polity found by King Parnavaz. This political unite embraced territories in both western and eastern Georgia. The process of cultural unification had taken on a far more intensive character and concerned all main ethnic markers. After six century – in fourth century the Georgian ethnic consolidation process received a very powerful impact: Christianity became the official religion of the Georgians. It is worth mentioning here that from time to time the Georgian in-group was characterized by the modification of its political frame: unification with different territorial coverage, moving of political centers from west to east, from east to south, etc. However, all these changes did not concern the cultural essence. At the close of tenth century and beginning of eleventh century the new polity (designated in special literature as the united Georgian Kingdom) accommodated the Georgian in-group. The flourishing of Georgian medieval culture reached its peak. The facts of amalgamation of Georgian culture and enhancement of political power lead some Georgian scholars to think that the eleventh and twelfth centuries should be named as date of Georgian nation's birth. I share this opinion, with one remark: this was the pre-modern Georgian nation whose heir is the Georgian modern nation, which emerged in the nineteenth century. Having in mind the above mentioned facts I think it is completely misleading, not to say, non-sense to speak on Georgian tribes (kinship bases entities in soviet understanding) in time under the analysis. For more detailed account on Georgian identity in pre-modern era see (Chkhartishvili 2009a, 35-65).

2. It is worthy to mention here that from the beginning of 21st c there were published number of investigations on history of Georgian identity which are designed within the frames of modern social theories (Alasania 2003, Pataridze 2005, Chkhaidze 2009, Zedania 2009, Songulashvili 2010, etc) however, by now they have little influence on current scholarly discourse in Georgia as well as on high school academic programs in history.

3. The quotation is made from the e-book Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries by David Morley and Kevin Robins. London and New York. First published in 1995 by Routledge.

4. For this last assertion Smith refers to Kedourie (ed.) 1971. Introduction.

5. Smith also refers to contributions by Argyle (1969) and Hroch (1985).

6. B. Anderson asserts that, for a nation, the involvement in the imagination process is necessary. By means of this, humans identify themselves with those, they have never seen in their real lives. This is possible only in modern times,

after the emergence of new communications means. For instance, the emergence of printed media can associate people distanced in time and space. B. Anderson describes how a population becomes readers of one and the same newspapers, novels, etc., and how thus a deep horizontal commonwealth has been created (Anderson 1983).

7. Maybe it would be worthy to mention here that the above period is placed within 1870-1918 years singled out by E. J. Hobsbaum as specific time (stage of transformation) in history of European nationalism (Hobsbaum 1990, 101).

8. For nationalists views by Chavchavadze see (Chkhartishvili 2007, 215-243)

9. For general assertions concerning nation's sacral foundations see (Smith 2003). For Georgian identity's sacral aspect see (Chkhartishvili 2009c, 386-391; Chkhartishvili 2010, 72-91).

10. On Armenians as Georgian 'significant others' see (Chkhartishvili 2009b, 107-125).

11. *Tavdadebuli* is an attribute referred to a person who had sacrificed himself.

12. The drama of nation has three climatic moments, each of them is glorious: Its golden age, its ultimate national destiny, and the sacrifice of its members. But, since the ultimate destiny of the nation can never be known, though many may hope to divine it. All we can be sure of is that it will come about only through the commitment and self-sacrifice of its members and that is what the nation must continually upload, remember, celebrate' (Smith 2003, 218).

13. '…since the later eighteenth century… Europe had been swept by the romantic passion for the pure, simple and uncorrupted peasantry…' (Hobsbaum 1990, 103).

14. For linguistic dimension of Georgian identity see (Chkhartishvili & Mania 2010, 472-483.

References

Alasania, Giuli. 2003. 'Self-identification in medieval Georgia (on interrelation between whole and part)' (tvitidentifikacia shua saukuneebis saqartveloshi. mtelisa da nawilis urtiertoba). Georgian Heritage (kartveluri memkvidreoba), Kutaisi.

Anderson, Benedict. 1983. Imagined Communities. London. Verso.

Argyle, W.J. 1969. 'European nationalism and African tribalism', In: P. H. Gulliver (ed.). Tradition and Transition in East Africa. London. Poll Mall Press.

Chkhaidze, Irakli. 2009. Modernist Theory of Nationalism and Georgian Na-

tional Project ("tergdaleulebi") (nacionalizmis modernistuli teoria da kartuli nacionaluri proeqti), Tbilisi.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam. 2007. "Universalities of nationalist ideology in Ilia Chacchavadze's writings and public activities (nacionalismis ideologiis universaliebi ilia chavchavadzis shemoqmedebasa da sazogadoebriv mogvaweobashi), in: I. Ratiani (Ed.). Chavchavadze – 170. Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian literature Press, 214-243.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam. 2009a. Georgian Ethnie in the Epoch of Religious Conversion kartuli etnie religiuri moqcevis epoqashi). Tbilisi, Universali Press.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam. 2009b. On Georgian Identity and Culture. Nine international presentations by Professor M. Chkhartishvili.Tbilisi.Universali Press.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam. 2009c. 'Forging Georgian identity. Ideology of ethnic election'. Caucasiologic Papers. Tbilisi. Tbilisi University Press, Vol.1, 386-391.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam & Mania, Ketevan. 2010. 'Linguistic marker of Georgian identity in pre-modern ear and time of national consolidation' (kartuli identobis lingvisturi markeri premodernul xanashi da nacionaluri konsolidaciis epoqashi). Proceedings of the International Conference 'Language and Culture' held by Akaka Tsereteli State University, 472-483.

Chkhartishvili, Mariam. 2011. "Georgian identity's sacral aspect" (kartuli identobis sakraluri aspekti). I. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. Faculty of Humanities. Institute of Georgian History. Proceedings. Tbilisi. Meridian Publishers, Vol. 1, 72-91.

Hobsbaum, Eric. 1990. Second Edition. Reprint 2008. Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge University Press.

Hroch, Miroslav. 1985. Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Kedourie, E. (Ed.). 1971. Nationalism in Asia and Africa. London. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Morley, David & Robins, Kevin.1995. Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries. London. Routledge.

Pataridze, Lela. 2005. "Georgian identity" (kartuli identoba). Georgia at the verge of Millennia (saqartvelo ataswleulta gasakarze). Arete Press.

Schlesinger, P. 1987. "On national Identity: some conceptions and misconceptions criticized". Social Science Information, 26 (2), 219-264.

Smith, Anthony D. 2003. Chosen Peoples. Oxford University Press.

Smith, Anthony D. 2004. Reprint 2008. The Antiquity of Nations. Polity Press.

Smith, Anthony D. 2001. Reprint 2003. Nationalism. Theory, Ideology, History. Cambridge. Polity Press.

Smith, Anthony D. 1999. Myth and Memories of the Modern Nations. Oxford University Press.

Songulashvili, Nato. 2010. Georgian Community and its identity in 1920s (kartuli ertoba da misi identpba meoce saukunis pirvel ocwleulshi). Tbilisi, Universali Press.

Zedania, Giga (Ed.). 2009. Birth of Georgian Nation. Proceedings of the Conference (26-27 November, 2007) dedicated to Ilia Chavchavadze. Ilia Chavchavadze State University Press.