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## THEME OF THE ORIGINAL SIN IN GEORGIAN BAROQUE LITERATURE

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Baroque Age in general is characterized with emphasis on religious issues and this showed up in different ways: in European countries these were fierce religious confrontations and wars (Reformation and Counterreformation, Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), in Georgia this was determined resistance of Orthodox Christians to Moslem invaders. Therefore, fate and state of Georgian literature is specific: literature of the Christian country existed far from Christian environment and in the unfriendly milieu with the view of religion. Country, exhausted by permanent historic storms, faced tremendous challenges not only to keep its identity, but also to lead literary processes according to the route, which would be natural for literary process of the Christian country.

It turned out, that Georgian literature of the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, which bares the title “so called Revival Epoch”<sup>1</sup> (Geo: “ე.წ. აღორძინების ხანა”, the term belongs to Korneli Kekelidze), elaborated themes and topics relevant to the European Baroque literature. Researches carried out in this direction from the 70<sup>th</sup> of 20<sup>th</sup> century and onward (G. Gachechiladze,<sup>2</sup> I. Kenchoshvili,<sup>3</sup> M. Nachkebia<sup>4</sup>) show that in the great number of Georgian authors' works of this period is explicitly presented Baroque worldview. To this testify that Georgian authors of that period selected and elaborated topics relevant to the European Baroque literature: “Life is a dream”, variance of life, *Memento Mori*.

<sup>1</sup> K. Kekelidze, ქართული დიიტერატურის ისტორია II, Tbilisi 1958, pp. 22-23; 309.

<sup>2</sup> G. Gachechiladze, ბაროკოს პრიმდებება და ქართული დიიტერატურათმცოდნების ამოცანები, „ლიტერატურული საქართველო“, №29-30, 1972.

<sup>3</sup> I. Kenchishvili, ქართული ავთენტური ბაროკოს, „ცისქარი“ №9, 1973; გარდამავალი პერიოდი: XIII-XVIII საუკუნეები. „კლიმასობა“ №2 (39), 2000.

<sup>4</sup> M. Nachkebia, ქართული ბაროკოს საკითხები, Tbilisi 2009.

Baroque man is a man of deep religious passions and therefore, his entire world perception is oriented towards Christian religion. His feelings towards the Old and New Testament are much deeper and sharper than those of the man of previous epoch. In this paper I will discuss the issue of the original sin that expresses Baroque world perception. Literary works created by Archil II and David Guramishvili on the issue of the original sin belong to the genre of *dispute*.<sup>5</sup> Archil wrote *Dispute between Man and the World*<sup>6</sup> (1684) and the author of the other one – *Argument and Dispute between Man and Life and Reminding their Evil Deeds*<sup>7</sup> (1774) is David Guramishvili.

By the reason of deep crisis and generally dark atmosphere, characterizing epoch of Baroque, people had the feeling of hopelessness, they had doubts and distrust to the transient world. Pessimistic attitude to life in Georgian literature showed up as early as in the sequels of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, where the anonymous authors repine at vanity and falsehood of life but this motif became particularly apparent in the works of the authors of the 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In discussing Georgian poetry of that period, K. Kekelidze, together with the other novelties, focuses his attention on pessimism and the issue of transience of life. He found this new attitude in the works by King Teimuraz I (1589-1663), King Archil II (1647-1713) and David Guramishvili (1705-1792) and named this new motif “lament for life”. Though, in the works of the authors of that period pessimism coexist with deep religious feelings and pieces of work of religious content by Teimuraz I, Archil, David Guramishvili demonstrate Christian devotion<sup>8</sup>.

Baroque literature is generally characterized with crisis, tragic perception of the world that was fed by strained social and political situation and

<sup>5</sup> In Georgian poetry of 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century the dispute became the most popular genre. In discussing this genre, K. Kekelidze emphasized its dialogue form (Korneli Kekelidze, ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორია, II. საერთ მწერლობა XI-XVIII, Tiflis 1924, p. 401) and supposedly, popularity of this genre was caused by its structure relying on the principle of dialogue. D. Janelidze, researcher of the history of Georgian theatre associated this genre with Sakhioba, theatrical-show culture of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, (ქართული თეატრის ისტორია უფელები დროიდან XVIII საუკუნეები, Tbilisi 1965, p. 526). In this respect, it should be taken into consideration that category of the literary genre is a historical category that emerges only at certain stage of art development while the style of one or another epoch is associated with the text and hence, with the genre, thus expressing worldview characteristic for the epoch. Genre of *dispute* is notable because it is dynamic and in addition, supposedly, it was attractive for the authors due to involvement of the characters that have different positions, allowing the author expressing opposing views.

<sup>6</sup> Archili, თხბულებათა სრული კრებული, ტექსტი გამოსაცემად მოამზადეს, დექსი-კინი და საბიექტილი დაურთეს ი. ლოდაშვილის, ლ. კეკელიძეს, ლ. ძოვინიძეს, გამოკვლევა რ. ბარამიძისა, Tbilisi 1999, pp. 34-84.

<sup>7</sup> D. Guramishvili, დავით გურამიშვილი, თხბულებათა სრული კრებული, Tbilisi 1955, pp. 170-176.

<sup>8</sup> K. Kekelidze, ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორია II, Tbilisi 1958, p. 549; 571.

tragic events in personal life. Situation in Georgia of the 17th century was indeed very heavy, the country suffered under cruel domination of Persians and Ottoman Turks. Therefore, pessimism in the works of Teimuraz I is so strong, his negative attitude to the life is conditioned by the critical situation in the country and dramatic developments in his personal life: martyrdom of his mother, Queen Ketevan and cruel, violent death of his young sons that were sent to the court of Shah Abbas I as hostages. All these have formed the tragic vision of life and added pessimistic mood to his poetry. Dissatisfaction with life, its metamorphoses, endless changes that were very painful for the king poet, all was expressed in his poetry: "ill caprice of life make me suffer very much" (*The Nightingale and the Rose, Introduction* 9, 3 - 4), "no end of perfidy of life against me can be seen" (Lament for Life, 16, 1). In Majama he says: "life and damned time dispelled all my joy" (*Majama VII*, 1) or "I suffered for entire my life, I was tortured so that the others cannot even imagine such things" (*Candle and Ash, Introduction* 12, 1- 2).

Irrespective of such pessimistic attitude, Teimuraz I was deeply religious Christian and as a king of the country in the hostile encirclement of Moslem countries he was well aware that he had to resist Moslem aggression with Christian religion. Therefore the religious motifs are so strong in his poetry. This can be seen from his literary works of religious nature, abecedarian poems, where the biblical stories are versified, Christian dogmas are presented and various heresies known historically are condemned. His religious poem *The Book and Passion of Queen Ketevan* is dedicated to devotion to the faith. It describes dedication of Queen Ketevan, his mother, to Orthodox faith and her martyrdom by Shah Abbas's order. Teimuraz I, who followed anti-Persian political orientation, was fond of Persian literature at the same time and he was engaged in translation activities though, it should be emphasized that the introduction and epilogue of each translation contains reflections of deeply religious Christian. In the *Introduction of Leila and Majnun* he expresses his sorrow about indifference of his contemporary society to the religious books and spiritual themes. He says that the Fathers have written about all holy commandments but no one reads the books, they are kept without any use (*Introduction*, 3, 3 - 4), he repeats almost the same in the *Introduction to Praise of Spring and Autumn*: "no one desires to read even the Acts of the Apostles" (*Introduction* 5, 1) and in afterword to *Rose and Nightingale and Candle and Ash* he notes with sorrow, in relation to translation of the secular literary works: "I fear that vain talk can harm my soul" (*Rose and Nightingale, Afterword* 95, 4) and "Lord, do not be angry with me for my vain talks and loquacity" (*Candle and Ash, Afterword* 68, 1).

Pessimism and religious motif coexist in the works of Archil as well and he is influenced by the similar circumstances: difficult situation in the native country, tragic events in personal life, short periods of reign and final loss of the throne, departure from Georgia and life in the foreign country. His ecclesiastic ode *Lambiko* expresses deep religious feelings, his poem *Word on Baptism* deals with the religious themes and expresses the author's feelings.

For the Baroque authors one of the most attractive themes was endless metamorphoses of life and this can be clearly seen in the literature of that epoch. Baroque literary works are frequently based on the theme of uncertainty of life, its permanent changes from happiness to misfortune. This was opposition of the light and dark, virtue and evil has conditioned creation of white and black world of good and evil. Therefore, the picture of Baroque world is the result of this contradiction: in the world consisting of the light and dark an individual followed the way where short seconds of happiness changed with gloomy minutes of sorrow. Rest and static condition is inorganic for Baroque literature; person of that epoch is permanently uneasy, paying particular attention to incessant inconstancy of life, endless alteration of short periods of joy with hardships, i.e. as says the Man in Archil's *Dispute between Man and the World*: "if morning is joyful, in the noon sorrow is at our door" (*Dispute* 142, 2); "Your mood is not the same for even a mere second, you give us little good and eliminate it if it is too much", (*Dispute* 312, 3); "suddenly it gives something to you but takes it away next moment, this is the worst nature of the world" (*Dispute* 313, 1).

Life of David Guramishvili is marked with deep tragedy as well; his works combine misfortune of his native land and the twists and turns of his personal life. He laconically paints the picture of his native land tormented by the internal and external enemies even in one single strophe in *The Misfortune of Georgia*:

„The Turks, Ossetians, Lekis, Persians,  
Cherkez, Ghughvis, Didos and Kists  
Were ever Georgia's enemies,  
Assaulting her with blood-smeared fists.  
But soon at home domestic broils,  
Quarrels and feuds arose like mists.  
Brothers with brothers grappled. Thus  
Did trifles cause mighty contests.”<sup>9</sup>

David Guramishvili is overwhelmed by a dismal pessimistic mood which is mirrored in his poetry. In the poem *Guramishvili's Complaint of*

<sup>9</sup> *Anthology of Georgian Poetry, translated by Venera Urushadze*, Tbilisi 1958, p. 32.

*the Transient World* he declares: “I don’t trust this transient world, it is unsteady and false!” and in *The Lamentation of David* the poet says: “My heart doth weep in sorrow deep, O fleeting world! O treacherous world!” but at the same time, his entire poetry is deeply religious.

Historical disasters and personal ill-luck impacted consciousness of Baroque authors; made them concerned and stimulated to find the answer to this misfortune on the one hand and find the solution to the situation on the other. Particular interest to the religious issues in Baroque epoch was caused by the hostile internal and external factors in the life while the Commandments of Christian religion provided the system of coordinates to which the Baroque person exhausted by the endless misfortunes compared himself and the events and that could explain the causes of misfortune. Some of the Baroque authors came to the conclusion that the reason of calamity was non-compliance with the Commandments while the solution was their observance.

Problem of the sin is one of the central issues in Christian religion and the biblical story about the original sin provides basis for discussion of the good and evil, life and death, human nature before and after the original sin, ramifications of the sin, general world and human. This depth of biblical story, possibility of discussing the eternal and topical issues attracted Archil and Giuramishvili when they selected this biblical theme for their works.

Here we should note that the structure of Archil’s and Guramishvili’s works fully correspond to the model established in Baroque literature. Significance of the general picture of the world in the Baroque epoch was so high that even where the subject of reflection was certain events in the life of a single person, it was included into narration, starting from the creation of the world. In a brief form it could be included before commencement of the main story.<sup>10</sup>

Similar to morality play, in the works by Archil and Guramishvili a man is generalization of the entire mankind, i.e. each individual “me”. In the picture of the world created by them imagination plays particular role and combine incompatible phenomena. This can be clearly seen in the dispute with personified “World”, where the authors’ fantasy presents the dispute between the “World”, the “Transient world”, and a “Man”. The authors intentionally applied this method: they desire to find the cause of causes that is entirely understood within the scopes of Christian tradition.

By the story of the first parents who could not resist seduction, Archil and Guramishvili attempted to explain their contemporary historical situation, consider it regarding the truth of Christian religion and find the answers to questions which disturbed the society of that time. Therefore, they

<sup>10</sup> Л. А. Софронова, *Человек и картина мира в поэтике барокко и романтизма // Человек в контексте культуры. Славянский мир*, Москва 1995, pp. 87-88.

gave to the “Man” consciousness of their contemporary especially suffering from changing nature of the life. A “Man” is dissatisfied with life; in his opinion life is treacherous, deceitful, unreliable, and volatile as it gives to a man more troubles and woes than gratification and pleasure. Guramishvili describes the metamorphoses of life, switching from one extreme position to the other with the antithesis characteristic for Baroque: sometimes life is “dark as night” and sometimes – “light as day”, sometimes burns a man with heat and sometimes – freezes him with cold; while for a man of Archil the life is changing, cunning, merciless and vain.

Archil’s *Dispute between Man and the World*<sup>11</sup> (1684) is an expanded work preceded by the following epigraph:

“They said: “The grending wheel of the world’s treachery is  
eternally turning,

It gives us delight, we have trouble equally, now help, now grief.  
Let no one pursue it, no-one can reach it, whether you have  
horse or boat.”

It is said that nobody will remain to the end without resentment.”<sup>12</sup>

These four lines were written by certain David Japaridze. As Archil said, his *Dispute* was inspired by this single strophe. Indeed, this amazingly laconic verse expresses the worldview of a Baroque individual, his attitude to the permanently changing life. Archil’s *Dispute* consists of thirty three pairs of answers and attracts particular attention due to the fact that there the human is presented in three capacities: these are “Adam” (strophes 5-60), “Adam’s sons” (strophes 64-68) and the “men” (strophes 71-225), or the mankind in general. The time scopes in the work are very wide – from the Book of Genesis to the epoch of the author, thus providing picture of the world in some kind of dynamics. In Archil’s *Dispute* chronologically appear initially “Adam”, further “Adam’s sons” and finally – the “men”. Thus the author has emphasized his attitude towards the issue with respect of his contemporary world. Consequently, we obtain the following picture: 1. Adam in the Garden of Eden and the fall of Adam and Eve; 2. Adam and his ancestry after the sin; and 3. Mankind after the Atonement.

In the Baroque context, with respect of the original sin, it is notable for us that when a man blames the world that it is changing, treacherous and deceitful and from the birth to death the life develops in a wrong way, the “World” answers that “God created him in his own image and he had to be

<sup>11</sup> Archili, თხმულებათა სრული კრიტიკა. ტექსტი გამოსაცემად მოამზადეს, დექსიეთი  
და საძიებელი დაურთეს ი. ლოდაშვილი ა. ლ. კერივი დემათიშვილი, ლ. ბოჭივაძე გამო-  
ყვლევა რ. ბარაძი დისტრიბუტორი, Tbilisi 1999, pp. 34-84.

<sup>12</sup> Translation quoted from Rayfield Donald, *The Literature of Georgia. A history*. Gurzon Press: 2000, p. 107.

a ruler of the world while he had broken a Commandment and as a result he has lost the glory and became like an animal" (*Dispute*, 6). The "World" reminds initially Adam and further the man many times, in different contexts that he had a free will and was able to make a choice between good and evil as he was his own master: "having free will why you have followed the evil?" (*Dispute*, 39, 4), "you, yourself fulfill your will" (*Dispute*, 61, 1). Guramishvili's *Argument and Dispute between Man and Life and Reminding their Evil Deeds* is much shorter than Archil's *Dispute between Man and the World*. It consists of only ten pairs of answers. In Guramishvili's work, similar to Archil's one, the life is unreliable, treacherous, deceitful and volatile but in addition, he specially emphasizes that death emerged because the first parents. Adam and Eve broke the Commandment and eat the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Similar to Archil, Guramishvili adds particular significance that initially "Lord gave the world to a man as a slave, as a servant but further it became his enemy" (*Argument and Dispute*, 8, 1–3) and this happened because a man failed to rule properly while Lord has created the world to serve the humans, real master is the life and a human is a slave as the he is not able to show required intelligence and prudence to consume in moderation what is given to him by the world and live as required by the predestination of human. World tells a man: 'but you are not able to rule properly' (*Argument and Dispute*, 9, 2). People are not able to distinguish between good and evil and it is their fault that they have to be responsible for the debts of their first parents. Therefore, Archil's and Guramishvili's works based on the story of Adam and Eve are discussing reasons of the world falsity, inconstancy, instability and animosity and link human misfortunes to the original sin.

In the Baroque epoch, generally very religious, among the biblical themes the story of Adam was particularly popular: Andreani's *Adamo, Vondel's Lucifer and Adam in Exile*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*<sup>13</sup> deal with this issue. Generally, the issue of the original sin was one of the key ones in Baroque literature that presented it in different aspects and stated different goals to it;<sup>14</sup> George Herbert's poem *Easter Wings* deals with the same issue as well. Here the Almighty God created man and gave heaven to him, but he foolishly lost it. Men continuously decayed until the first coming of Christ, and the decay and the subsequent suffering of mankind were the effect of the original sin.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Warner P. Friedrich, *Outline of Comparative Literature from Dante Alighieri to Eugene O'Neil*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1954, p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> А. А. Морозов, *Симеон Полоцкий и проблемы восточно-славянского барокко в славянских культурах*, Москва 1982, p. 177.

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237457859\\_Peculiarities\\_of\\_English\\_Baroque\\_in\\_Its\\_Literary\\_Expression](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237457859_Peculiarities_of_English_Baroque_in_Its_Literary_Expression).

An artistic system of the Baroque represents the crisis of Renaissance ideas as in the human nature ceased to exist the harmony, upon which was based Humanist and Renaissance conception of the man. Political and social crisis and cataclysms put on the agenda complicated relationship between the human being and the universe, destroyed the Renaissance harmony between the mind and feelings and caused internal splitting of the human being. That is why the Baroque is marked with tragic and pessimistic emotional experience of the human being left face to face with the life.

According to the main idea of Renaissance, a human, with its nature, is good, born for great deeds. The apogee of humanist thinking is teaching about human. Italian philosopher of Renaissance epoch, Pico Della Mirandola (1463-1494) in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, called the “Manifesto of Renaissance”, wrote: “We have given you, O Adam, no visage proper to yourself, nor endowment properly you own, in order that whatever place, whatever from, whatever gifts you may, with premediation, select, these same you may have and possess through your own judgement and decision. The nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted with the laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by you own free will, to whose custody We have assigned you, trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. I have placed you at the very center of the world, so that from that vantage point you may with greater ease glance round about you on all that the world contains. We have made you a creature neither of haven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of you own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine”.<sup>16</sup>

Late Humanism questioned the doctrine offered by the Renaissance representatives about good nature and unlimited capacities of humans. Artists of Baroque have deepened the critical reflection of reality characteristic for Renaissance and demonstrated it with its entire tragic contradictions. In their works idealization of the reality, Renaissance idea of harmonic development of the society and nature was substituted by pessimistic world perception of Baroque epoch caused by disharmony of the existing reality. Renaissance idea of almighty of humans was replaced by the idea of human inability to defeat the evil that existing in the world and corrupting people. Hence, the world seen by the Baroque authors lacks the stability and harmony that the Renaissance representatives strived to discover. This commenced destruction of the worldview: therefore, in the works of

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<sup>16</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man. (De hominis dignitate)*. [https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/pico\\_della\\_mirandola/giovanni/dignity/complete.html](https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/pico_della_mirandola/giovanni/dignity/complete.html).

Baroque authors the motifs of pessimism, skepticism, volatility of transient world gradually became stronger. Returning to the religious themes became dominant. While the substance of Renaissance was restoration of the antique ideals and the artists saw the life full of joy, some of Baroque authors started to seek the causes of his misfortunes and found them in the original sin and discovered that this was the cause of such inconstancy and mercilessness of life. This was the changing life, its endless inconstancy that made him lose the hope to find stable landmark. This approach to life of Baroque individual clearly demonstrates his drastic difference from the Renaissance individual. According to the Renaissance ideas, man is the crown of the universe while literature of Baroque period is characterized by the world perception that, as Freidrich noted, the man was no longer demi-god but a reed in the wind, a miserably wailing sinner.<sup>17</sup>

Some thinkers of Baroque epoch regarded that the man was unable to defeat the evil and wickedness widespread in the world and harming his personality. Therefore, some authors, rejecting the humanists' thesis about good nature of the humans, introduced the idea of original, ontological sinfulness of human nature, seeing the cause of this in fall as a result of the original sin and regarding that only means of salvation was compliance with commandments as they associated ills of the existing reality with forgetting of Christian religion.<sup>18</sup>

Such approach and declaration of such attitude is very significant with respect of literary criticism as here opposing of the key principles of Renaissance and Baroque show up: man of Renaissance is almighty, he is the ruler of the world while the Baroque man is scared and terrified; he is unable to make anything better. Archil's *Dispute between Man and the World* and David Guramishvili's Argument and *Dispute between Man and Life and Reminding their Evil Deeds* clearly state the most significant idea: from the ruler of the world that is Renaissance conception of man, he has turned into the slave of the world that is Baroque conception of the man. Hence, Archil and David Guramishvili, with their worldview, world perception, selection of topic and attaching importance to its significance are the complete parallel of the European Baroque system of thinking.

<sup>17</sup> Warner P. Friedrich, *Outline of Comparative Literature from Dante Alighieri to Eugene O'Neil*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1954, pp. 103.

<sup>18</sup> История зарубежной литературы XVII века, Москва 1987, pp. 10-11.

### Theme of the Original Sin in Georgian Baroque Literature

Researches carried out from the 70th of 20th century and onward show that Georgian literature of the 16th-18th centuries, which bares the title ‘so called Revival Epoch’, elaborated themes and topics relevant to the European Baroque literature. Feelings of Baroque authors towards the Old and New Testament are very deep. In this paper is discussed the issue of the original sin in the works created by Archil II (*Dispute between Man and the World* (1684) and David Guramishvili (*Argument and Dispute between Man and Life and Reminding their Evil Deeds* (1774). In the Baroque literature the story of the original sin was particularly popular (Andreani’s *Adamo*, Vondel’s *Lucifer* and *Adam in Exile*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, George Herbert’s poem *Easter Wings*).

Baroque literature is generally characterized with crisis, tragic perception of the world that was fed by strained social and political situation and tragic events in personal life. For the Georgian literature of this period is typical pessimism and the issue of transient world which coexist with deep religious feelings. Archil’s and Guramishvili’s works based on the story of Adam and Eve are discussing reasons of the world falsity, inconstancy, instability and animosity and link human misfortunes to the original sin. According to the Renaissance ideas, man is the crown of the universe while literature of Baroque period is characterized by the world perception that the man was no longer demi-god but a miserable sinner. With regard to literary criticism Archil’s and David Guramishvili’s works dedicated to the issue of the original sin clearly state the most significant idea: from the ruler of the world that is Renaissance conception of the man, he has turned into the slave of the world that is Baroque conception of the man. Hence, Archil and David Guramishvili, with their worldview and selection of topic are the complete parallel of the European Baroque system of thinking.