

About an Epigraph of Ilia Chavchavadze's one Verse

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Ilia Chavchavadze is described as "a person of great intellect and analytical talent, unusual for others he did not follow the flow of vague emotions and feelings and did not act from the first impulses of outer forces, and although he had a big heart, he subjected his emotions to mind, thus generalizing their content and therefore was a deliberate presenter of the aspirations of the whole nation" [Kiknadze, 1978 : 251].

Ilia Chavchavadze as an artist, a poet had his own point of view, his own national concept. These views are expressed through the language of emotions, in his artistic material and his foremost goal was to transfer his ideas to the society.

To show the society the right way, create the appropriate mood, promote the purposefulness of the works, the right understanding of his ideological intention the writer used many means and among to other tools Ilia Chavchavadze paid particular attention to epigraphs. He treated the selection of epigraph with utter carefulness, though a lot about which epigraph to adjust to certain work. He often used to change the epigraph, in cases when he found something more precise and expressive. The poet did so in the case when working on the epigraph of the verse "Nana", the poem "Achr dili", etc.

As epigraphs for his work Ilia Chavchavadze used important sources – Bible, Folk Wisdom, quotes from well-known authors or from their works – for instance, Rustaveli, Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani, Grigol Orbeliani, Nikoloz Baratashvili, A. Pushkin, M. Lermontov, B. Belinski, G. Leibniz, etc.

Usually, Ilia Chavchavadze indicates from where he took this or that statement or admonition. This principle is not observed only once in the case of lyric poetry. It concerns Ilia Chavchavadze's famous verse "Worker", depicting a new issue which is rather unusual for lyrical poetry at that time. As it turns out, the author thought a lot about the epigraph of the poem. The earlier variant has no epigraph. The later variants already have an epigraph. It is created by the author himself and he states what agonizing feeling a man has, when he sees that man, who is created as an image of God dies unjust. Noteworthy is that Ilia found this epigraph later not appropriate and deleted it and at last selected a stanza from a Russian verse: „В труде проходит жизнь его, и не приносит ничего" ("His life expires in labor, but gains nothing from it"). Ilia does not indicate the author.

At a first glance, it is possible to think that if Ilia Chavchavadze does not mention the author of the epigraph, he himself is the author. Such an opinion was later expressed. Pavle Ingorokva, a great scientist, the editor and commenter of the main editions of Ilia Chavchavadze's Works, noted that "The epigraph of Ilia's "Worker" is taken from the work of Nekrasov" [Chavchavadze, 1951: L11].

This idea was later echoed by many other authors.

We sought in the works of N. Nekrasov, but were unable to find such stanzas. In the later scientific twenty-volume edition of Ilia Chavchavadze's Works the researcher Rusudan

Kusrashvili notes in the first volume: "in our Literary Studies it is believed that the epigraph of Ilia Chavchavadze's verse "Worker" is taken from the famous Russian poet N. Nekrasov (1821-1878)". But at the same time the commentator conscientiously indicated: "The exact source has not been established". [Chavchavadze, 1987: 374].

As we found out recently^[1], the stanzas which are used by Ilia Chavchavadze as an epigraph does not belong to N. Nekrasov. They are taken from a censored work, by a famous Russian poet and publicist, revolutionary-democrat Nikoloz Ogarev, called "Russian Empire". It is known that Nikoloz Ogarev spent one part of his life in prison, and then was exiled to Penza. Last years of his life he spent in emigration, he lived in London and befriended Gertz. He was actively involved in the publication of the magazine "La cloche". It is natural that Ilia would not be able to indicate the censored author.

One of the complications that we had was that we could not find this verse in none of the editions of Nikoloz Ogarev. We asked Nodar Porakishvili for help, who is an important researcher of Russian Literature. He also could not find this verse anywhere. As it seems, this verse is still forbidden in Russia.

This verse was published in France along with other eighty censored verses in the collection published by V. Sidoratsk (Unfortunately, year is not indicated). The verse "Russian Empire" is one of the most important among the forbidden verses of Nikoloz Ogarev.

Due to such an interesting history, we believe that this verse should be fully presented below, so that the readers will clearly see what stipulated Ilia's interest toward this verse in particular and on the whole toward Nikoloz Ogarev:

Под диким гнётом изнывая,
Томится русская земля:
Безгласны люди от Китая
До стен недвижимого Кремля!
Живут и мрут среди смиренья
В молчаньи вялом поколенья.
Молчит запуганный мужик
Под гнётом маленьких владык!
Его чиновник грабит смело!
**В труде проходит жизнь его
И не приносит ничего!**
Проходит тускло... После тело
Кладут, как ветошь, в тёмный гроб.
Над ним бормочет пьяный поп
Да бабы вопят... Жизнь бесцветна,
Безрадостна и неприветна,
Смерть равнодушна и дика,
Хоть скорбь на сердце велика.
Но тот из нас, кому наука
Раздвинула границы дум,
На привязи свой держит ум,
Снедаем праздностью и скукой.

Кругом отпетые глупцы,
Рабы, шпионы-подлецы,
Попы, каналы голубые,
Воров несметные полки,
Да меры строгости тупые,
Да тюрьмы, ссылки и штыки!
А чья-то воля будто правит
И сверху вниз всё нагло давит.
Тут тесно, тяжело дышать,
И хочется бежать, бежать,
Куда-нибудь уйти скорее
От этой жизни, пытки злее,
Из этой грязи вековой,
От этой родины «святой»! [Огарёв]

(იტანჯება რა რუსეთის მიწა

საზარელი უღლის ქვეშ, სული უღონდება,

უტყვი ხალხი ჩინეთიდან

უძრავ კრემლის კედლებამდე

ცხოვრობენ და კვდებიან მორჩილად

უსიხარულოდ და მდუმარედ თაობები.

დუმს შეშინებული გლეხკაცი

პატარა მბრძანებლის კირთებქვეშ.

მას ჩინოვნიკი ძარცვავს უსირცხვილოდ

შრომაში მიდის მისი ცხოვრება

და არაფერი არ მოაქვს[2],

მიდის უღიმღამოდ, მერე მის სხეულს

ჩააგდებენ, როგორც ძველმანს, ბნელ კუბოში.

თავს ადგას მთვრალი მღვდელი და ლულუღებს,

დედაკაცები მოთქვამენ, ცხოვრება კი უფერულია,

უსიხარულო და ცივი.
თუმცა გულში წუხილი დიდია,
სიკვდილი გულგრილია და უაზრო,
მას, ვისაც მეცნიერებამ გაუდიდა გონების საზღვრები,
მოთოკილი აქვს თავისი ფიქრები,
გამოხრული უსაქმურობისა და მოწყენილობისაგან.
ირგვლივ ხელიდან წასული ბრიყვები,
მონები, ჯაშუშ-არამზადები, მღვდლები, გაიმვერები.
ქურდების უთვალავი ლეგიონი
და კიდევ სისასტიკის უაზრო ზომები,
ციხეები, გადასახლებები და ხიმტები,
თითქოს ვიდაცის ნება მართავს
და ზემოდან ქვემოთ ყველაფერს უტიფრად გუდავს.
აქ სივიწროვება, სუნთქვა გეკვრის,
და გინდა გაიქცეს, გაიქცე სადღაც, ჩქარა გაეცალო
ამ ყოფას, წამებაზე უფრო ავს, ამ საუკუნო ტალახს,
ამ „წმინდა“ სამშობლოს!)[3].

Russian Land is suffering,

Under a terrible yoke, the soul saddens

Silent people from China

To the walls of the Kremlin

Live and die obediently

silent and cheerless generations.

Silent is the frightened peasant
Under the hem of the Little Sovereign.
He is shamelessly plundered by officials

His life expires in labor

but gains nothing from it[4],

Life goes worthlessly, then his body
thrown as rags, in a dark coffin.

A drunkard priest stands by his head and mumbles,
Women cry, Life is colourless,
Joyless and cold.

Although concern in heart is large,
Death is indifferent and meaningless,
Him, whom science increased the boundaries of mind,

Has tied his thoughts,
Bore with idleness and boredom,
Around full of fools,
Slaves, spies-villains, priests, lustful people.

Countless legions of thieves
And senseless brutality measures,
Prisons, exile and bayonets,
As if someone will hold

And from top-down everything persists.

It is narrow here, breath is taken away,

And you want to run away, run somewhere, quickly get out from here

In the worst , torture is kept in eternal mud,

Following this, the sacred " homeland !)[5].

Especially notable is that Ilia Chavchavadze was not only familiar with Russian Poetry, but knows forbidden verses and used them in case of necessity. This helps to promote interest in the society and stresses the issues that are important and are banned because they underline the bitter truth.

[1] We thank the young researcher, Irakli Minashvili, who aided us in the finding of information,

[2] Underlined lines are the epigraph of Ilia's verse.

[3] Interlinear translation into Georgian is made by the author.

[4] Underlined lines are the epigraph of Ilia's verse.

[5] English Interlinear translation is done from Georgian by the translator.

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