

Mikheil Javakhishvili's Neorealism as an Alternative to Modernism

(Abstract)

Mikheil Javakhishvili declared Neorealism, as definition of his creation. This was the twentieth century, 20-ies. In general, the two high flow was in a half of XX century in the Georgian Literature: on the one hand, Modernism, with its various branch (Symbolism, Impressionism, Expressionism, Futurism), and, on the other hand, Neorealism - of Javakhishvili's prose, which was demonstrating the pulse of the epoch. Modernism was some kind of protest against Realism. It was a new chapter in the Georgian literary life, which was repeating the past experience and was developing a new perspective. Modernism used experience of the ancestors. Mikheil Javakhishvili's Neorealism was some kind of Alternative to Modernism.

Key words: Neorealism, Modernism, Mikheil Javakhishvili

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“Literature for me is not entertainment, nor someone else's amusement. It's not parnassus for wanderer, not is opened field for loiterer, but it's originally a social activity, the writer is an objective and hard-working servant of the nation. Therefore we start a new-Neorealistic way”. Mikheil Javakhishvili declared Neorealism, as definition of his creation. This was the twentieth century, 20-ies. In general, the two high flow was in a half of XX century in the Georgian Literature: on the one hand, Modernism, with its various branch (Symbolism, Impressionism, Expressionism, Futurism), and, on the other hand, Neorealism of Javakhishvili's prose, which was demonstrating the pulse of the epoch. Modernism was some kind of protest against realism. We said some kind, because it was a new chapter in the Georgian literary life, which was repeating past experience and was developing new perspective. We mean, that fact that Modernism used experience of the ancestors. For example, it is known that the aesthetics of Modernism regenerated ideals of Baroque, medieval dualism, allegorical images. For example, “The Blue Horns” was declaring Besik Gabashvili, Georgian poet of eighteenth century, as their ancestor, because they were linked their work to Besiki's poetry In terms of music and metaphorical artistic style. Titsian Tabidze wrote: “The writer of the future must unite Rustaveli and Malarme” (Tabidze 2002: 91).

Rustaveli, a Georgian classic poet, expressed the best traditions of Georgian culture and Malarme, French poet, was a symbol of modern western modernist aesthetics culture. In Georgia aesthetics of Modernism created distinguished writers, among them: Grigol Robakidze, The Blue horns, Niko Lortkipanidze, Konstantine Gamsakhurdia, Vasil Barnov, Demna Shengelaya, Leo Kiacheli. Mikheil Javakhishvili in his writing manner and artistic style was distinguished from everyone from the very beginning, when he appeared on the literary scene and published his first short stories. He wrote about the everyday problems of ordinary people's fate. His style was clear, transparent, and very rich lexical. His style continued the tradition of Georgian realistic writing, but at the same time, expressed a new height. At the time, in the first half of the twentieth century, the Georgian literature was more modernist style. Mikheil Javakhishvili realism was seen as an alternative to Modernism.

Britannica Online Encyclopedia says: “Neorealism , Italian Neorealismo, Italian literary and cinematic movement, flourishing especially after World War II, seeking to deal realistically with the events leading up to the war and with the social problems that were engendered during the period and afterwards.

The movement was rooted in the 1920s and, though suppressed for nearly two decades by Fascist control, emerged in great strength after the Fascist regime fell at the end of World War II. *Neorealismo* is similar in general aims to the earlier Italian movement *verismo* (Realism), from which it originated, but differs in that its upsurge was brought about by the intense feelings, experiences, and convictions that Fascist repression, the Resistance, and the war had instilled in its many gifted writers. Added impetus was given the movement by the translation of many socially conscious U.S. and English writers during the 1930s and 1940s.

Among the outstanding Neorealist writers are Nobel Prize-winning poet Salvatore Quasimodo and the fiction writers Alberto Moravia, Ignazio Silone, Carlo Levi, Vasco Pratolini, , Carlo Bernari, Cesare Pavese, Elio Vittorini, Carlo Cassola, Italo Calvino, Curzio Malaparte (in postwar writings), and Carlo Emilio Gadda” (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/409085/Neorealism>).

Later, in 1926, Mikheil Javakhishvili formed the certain principle of Neorealism in the letter “Our Land’ (Literary declaration). The writer's opinion, the artistic words from the first day of his birth was the most realistic, deepest and broadest sense of this concept. It is still and will remain the same. All the rest are either streams or tributary of realism. “Figuratively, Realism is the main tree of fiction. It is standing on the the ground and rising from the ground. Realism and the the ground (life) feeds, growth, and strengthens each other” (Javakhishvili 1980: 44). He thought that if the nation will forget the ground, the nation's spiritual strength will reduce, become poor creatively. In his opinion, the writer should not lose sense of reality.

Mikheil Javakhishvili noted the different signs between Naturalism and Realism. The writer's opinion: “Fiction is not dry newspaper or story, not a photographic image. The artist is not a scientist, his mind did not turn into cold warehouse or laboratory of facts. Lifeless and dry Naturalism did his duty and went. Mikheil Javakhishvili also denied such Realism, which must adhere to this or that political - social ideology. He thought that literature could be the high-principled, utilitarian, didactic, but it would be very tendentious literature more dangerous’ (Javakhishvili, 1980: 48).

Realism, in general, implies that the literature accurately reflects life, everything in the story could happen to real people living in our natural physical world, the characters have normal human powers etc. There are different branch of realism, including the *pseudo-realism* of the Stalinist era as exposed by George Orwell’ work.

Mikheil Javakhishvili ‘s Neorealism also opposed socialist Realism, which was the main ideological weapon of the Soviet government. “Socialist realism is a teleologically-oriented style of realistic art which has as its purpose the furtherance of the goals of socialism and communism. It should not be confused with social realism, a type of art that realistically depicts subjects of social concern, although it is related. The original intent of socialist realism was to portray the lower classes of society that had traditionally not been the subject of literature or the arts in general. What began as an attempt to depict a new kind of art later became the cultural and artistic policy of the Soviet Union to which writers and artists were required to conform. As socialist realism became state policy, the old censorship of Imperial Russia was replaced by a new censorship, as art that did not conform to state demands was suppressed, and artists who did not comply were silenced” (http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Socialist_realism).

Mikheil Javakhishvili thought that a writer should not have been a slave to themes and forms. In his opinion, Some writers are looking for only the content, Some has been frozen in obsolete forms. Searching the new form some planed as the only main goal, others introduced the cult of music and obeyed to the it all sense of the word. In his opinion, Neorealism, first of all, was referring to the unity of form and content. He criticized the modernists, especially Futurism, that undermine the word from contents.

Neorealism do not limit the freedom of the artist's eye and intuition, it's main aim was to reflect the realities of modernity, this concept of a broad meaning. The writer should choose the material and write so that people feel encourage, kindle the flame of love, hope, energy and morals.

Mikheil Javakhishvili was assessing greatly beneficial of the creators of his time (including Grigol Robakidze, Konstantine Gamsakhurdia, Vasil Barnov (he saw the latter's creation the mixture of realism and romantic).

But do not shy away from to say sharply his view about Modernism. He wrote: “Sick Dadaism and weakly soul of Decadence strongly was invading in Georgian Literature. This phenomenon was caused Parnassianism, extracted from the public (The Parnassians were influenced by Théophile Gautier and his doctrine of “art for art’s sake” _ M.J.) The writer really dissociated from the land and people. Symbolist, instead of observation of life, brought abstract thinking. Clearly, real country they were shadowed with a vague fog“ (Javakhishvili, 1980: 45).

Outstanding Georgian writer Otar Chkheidze noticed and identified one of the most important characteristics features of Mikheil Javakhishvili’s Neorealism: “In this realistic work (meaning the novel by Javakhishvili “Jaqo's Dispossessed”), in this absolutely true, absolutely ordinary life situations, if you wish, totally banal situations, many things are symbolic, figurative and metaphorical, nothing to say about the mythos and fairy tale; somehow strange, it seems everything on the contrary: if elsewhere, Reading the real faces in metaphors and symbols, and in the mythological and allegory situations, here, in the real, vital and naked faces naked up to naturalistic faces, metaphorical and symbolic images are recognized. This is not a little art, this is great art, real mastership of realistic novel and Javakhishvili is the incomparable grand master narrative” (Chkheidze 2009: 1).

Otar Chkheidze’s point of view, artistic prose of our time, of course, the Georgian Prose is determined mainly by two distinctive artistic style, the main two artistic concepts: One is Vasily Barnov’s the beautiful and distinctive style and another Javakhishvili’s powerful and rich, realistic style ; If there is one other thing, it is more fashionable, literary fashion, even more, faster transient and without leaving a trace (Chkheidze 2009: 1).

It is noteworthy that in the beginning of XX century, both flows _ Modernistic and Neorealistic _ contributed to the creation of important works. Modernist novels was written by: Grigol Robakidze “Snake’s’ Shirt”, Konstantine Gamsakhurdia’s “Dionysus’s Smile”, Demna Shengelaia’s “Sanavardo”, On the other hand, Mikheil Javakhishvili’s Neorealistic novels: “Jaqo's Dispossessed”, “Kvachi Kvachantiradze”, “Givi Shaduri“, “White Collar”, “Arsena Marabdeli”.

Mikheil Javakhishvili through his Neorealistic works left a big, deep, interesting, unique trace in Georgian literature.

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