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Secularization and Its Vicissitudes in Georgia

The formation of modern nations is directly linked to the parallel and mutually dependent processes of secularization and modernization. It is impossible to speak of the formation of Georgia as a nation state without discussing these. A reading of modern Georgian history from this angle should assist us in answering many still unanswered questions, to the extent that current political development is directly linked to that historical process which began in the nineteenth century, the aim of which was the formation of a new Georgian national and state self-awareness. In the present paper, it is particularly through the prism of secularization that we will discuss the history of the establishment of the Georgian state.

Let us first of all recall several significant moments in recent Georgian political history which, in our view, are directly linked to a complex of themes at whose poles we may place secularization and counter-secularization.

On 11 October, 2007, the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia, Ilia II, announced a political initiative which was supported by a large portion of the population and by the majority of opposition parties. In the Patriarch's view, the restoration of the monarchy (the introduction of a constitutional monarchy) would become a decisive factor in the restoration of territorial integrity and in national integration. The Patriarch's initiative might have appeared as a chance occurrence in Georgian political discourse had it not been one of a series of political articulations. This series superficially demonstrates a confrontation between the authorities, the opposition and society, and hints at a profound unity on the level of the mechanism of political thinking.

Following his inauguration in 2004 as the new Georgian president, Mikheil Saakashvili took an oath on the grave of Davit Aghmashenebeli. On a visit to Germany shortly afterwards, in response to the question as to which Europe Georgia belonged – Old or New – he replied that Georgia belonged to the Oldest Europe.

For its part, Mikheil Saakashvili's inauguration was a continuation of a resacralization implanted by Eduard Shevardnadze in a political representation (Shevardnadze's inauguration was held in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in 1995), which means the introduction of historical and religious legitimacy on the other side of the façade of the modern state.

It is difficult to consider this series of political statements as a chance occurrence. All these statements and performative acts have one common char-

acteristic: their vectors are orientated towards the past and they strengthen the customary form of legitimacy for a democratic state (elections), from time to time exchanging these for forms of historical and religious legitimacy. It is insufficient simply to call historical or religious legitimacy an anachronism, and a deeper analysis is required. Here we are directly approaching our topic: secularization and its role in the formation of the modern state.

The process of secularization began in Western Europe in the Late Middle Ages and its ultimate outcome was to alter the paradigm of the whole socio-political order, which culminated in the formation of new nations and civil societies. The first portents of this process are apparent in Renaissance culture, when secular or earthly themes broke the monopoly of sacral themes in the fine arts and literature, and set about making them earthly¹.

This process of making earthly soon spread to political thinking, something which provoked the collapse of medieval political theology. Collective identity in the Christian world is based on two basic postulates. First and foremost is the Eucharistic unity of the Christian people, which is built on the words of the Apostle Paul 'you are the body of Christ' (1 Corinthians 12:27) and whose embodiment is the Church². A new term – *corpus mysticum* – appears in twelfth-century Europe to denote this³. The second fundamental postulate is the loyalty of the Church to the consecrated monarch. The 'king's immortal body'⁴ is his kingdom. According to priests in fifteenth-century England, the realm in particular is considered *corpus mysticum*, where *intencio populi* (the people's will) already occupies a central position⁵. This already signified the start of secularization. The Enlightenment played a decisive role in this direction. Medieval Christian political theology is discredited by the theoreticians of the Enlightenment in particular as the main ideological principle of the authorities, as is the monarchical absolutism that harmonized with this as the authorities' sole legitimate form. Particularly noteworthy is Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of *le peuple souverain* ('the sovereign people') who occupy the place of the monarch as the sole legitimate ruler. In France 'the sovereign people' condemn the king to death which, on a symbolic level, has the character of a **sacrificial offering** to create a new subject of loyalty, *patria*, expressed almost word for word by Robespierre: 'Louis [Louis XVI, King of France – *authors' note*] must die so that the country may live'. As Pierre Klossowski says, sentencing the king to death is a simulacrum of the killing of God⁶. With the 'killing of God', political theology as a theocentric ideological system loses a buttress. The fatherland occupies the place of God as the highest subject of legitimacy. This makes earthly – that is to say, makes secular – the state as the form of the political unity and organization of the sovereign people. It is on such earthly soil that new

nations are created, who already invent their own new national narratives. However, this invention for the most part repeats the structure of sacral narratives and has the appearance of being a kind of 'translation' of these – in other words, sacral symbology is replaced by the national. This process followed its own particular path in every country.

'A Present Born of the Past'

Unlike Europe, the idea of Georgian statehood up to the beginning of the nineteenth century knew only a single form, that of a monarchy based on medieval political theology and linked inseparably to the Bagrationi dynasty. The abolition of the Georgian monarchy in 1801 assumed in the collective memory the character of a kind of traumatic fixation and, to a significant extent, this became a determinant of those processes which occurred in Georgian political consciousness during the subsequent two centuries and which also occur today. We borrow the term 'traumatic fixation' from the lexicon of psychoanalysis and, in our case, it denotes a certain psychic mechanism which directs spiritual and intellectual endeavours towards the creation of a symbolic order within which it would be possible to continue a process that has been artificially broken off. Such an orientation is expressed by inadequate reactions to political reality, which means the domination of the political by the imaginary. The inadequacy of the imaginary in connection with reality is its attempt to rescue something whose existence no longer has any foundation in reality. Thus the present is no longer born of the past, but is transformed into an arena of the past, that is to say, of a projection of something that no longer exists. History is no longer separated from modern life, and an imagined continuity occupies the place of both. Grigol Orbeliani in his poem *Oh, Iberia!* written in 1832 well expresses this attitude. In this poem, Georgia is compared to a 'sheep that has no shepherd [monarchy, the sacralized representative of the state – *authors' note*]. The abolition of the monarchy is imagined as a 'terrible ruination', and its restoration as a 'divine duty' and a 'path of honour'. The ideal of statehood is placed in the past, in the era of Tamar and Davit (*Tamar's face in Betania Church; To Iarali*), while the project of the future is the restoration of the past: 'Who might bring to us the days of yore!'

‘Language, Fatherland, Faith...’

The first person who radically changed the existing paradigm and who attempted to acknowledge the existing reality as a point of departure was Ilia Chavchavadze, to whose name is linked the beginning of the process of secularization.

Ilia’s secularization project has a literary basis. Its development is directly linked to the ‘Struggle between Fathers and Sons’ over the literary language. In Ilia’s article ‘A few words on Prince Revaz Shalvas dze Eristavi’s translation of Kozlov’s *The Insane*’ published in *The Dawn* in 1861, fatherland, language and faith are mentioned as sacral signs. All three are ‘divine treasures’, but Ilia’s conception of the sacral differs radically from the ‘sacral’ of the ‘Fathers’.

***Language*⁷**

The ‘Fathers’ conception of the literary language relied for support on Anton Bagrationi’s grammar and rhetoric. As a principle of the structuring of language and literature, Bagrationi’s grammar and rhetoric had a meta-structural core within itself in a compact form which, in its loose form, gives us a certain cosmogony. This core is not only specifically linked to linguistic and literary issues, but in the same way expresses the medieval Georgian world, the reality of which no longer existed in Ilia’s period. Ilia contrasted the idea of progress with the past of the ‘Fathers’ generation, a world view aimed at the restoration of forms that were already inadequate for that time. By his conception of history as progress, Ilia on the one hand treats it in the context of modernity, while on the other hand he is laying the foundation for a fundamental re-evaluation of Georgian history. Let us first of all focus on the general context. If we rely on the German philosopher Karl Löwith’s thesis, the philosophy of the history of modernity is concentrated on a universal conception of progress and, for its part, it represents the outcome of the secularization of the Christian ‘theology of history’. In this revolutionary time, progress occupies the place of Fate, and Man – the absolute subject of history – that of God. In spite of this, historical theology and its secular expression, a belief in progress, have a common ‘future-centric’ conception of time. According to this model, time hurries cumulatively and without hindrance towards its future goal. In Karl Löwith’s view, it is impossible to comprehend this model without its links to the Judaeo-Christian matrix of modern times: ‘that modern philosophy of history will fit in with a biblical belief

in future fulfilment, and that it will end with the secularization of the eschatological ideal⁸. For Ilia, the abolition of the Kingdom of Kartl-Kakheti signifies a radical break in the historical sequence and is equivalent to an eschatological catastrophe: 'The incremental chain of life has burst, the bridge between the present and the past has fallen, the following hour has broken with the first... The natural double flow of life has ceased, has stopped.' This collapse was the outcome, not of an evolution or revolution, but rather of an eschatologically understood political catastrophe. In Ilia's view, the sequence between the Bagrationis' kingdom and the new Georgia has been discontinued. A radical caesura separates these two Georgias⁹.

Making sense of this eschatological catastrophe leads Ilia to a radically different opinion from Grigol Orbeliani. Ilia recognizes a return of the past is impossible – 'We have killed grief over past times' (*Mother Georgia*) – and stresses the project of the future. The philosophy of the history of modernity has preserved the idea that developments only make sense when they are linked to some goal or other, which brings about their transcendence. The secularized philosophy of Ilia's history deals with the same subject matter, but in the same way Ilia's 'future-centric' subject matter has totally differing aims from the general European. Killing thought of past time, in the final analysis, serves a certain future goal, which means the pursuit of alternative principles of political unity. For Ilia, the concept of fatherland became such a principle, a common concept (an idea) and a goal that motivates history and creates its subject matter. That 'collective, lofty, whole idea which each one of us should see in Georgianness' is the 'fatherland', which means the 'homeland of the whole people'. In his language reform, instead of medieval ecclesiastical Georgian, Ilia turns the vernacular into the literary language, and creates Georgian secular discourse. This splits the ecclesiastical and the national languages. The new literary language is already comprehensible and acceptable to the broad masses, which turns literature into the most powerful mass medium. And if we imagine the new literary language as the main media instrument, then it is through its channels that dissemination of the national narrative should happen. The new language instils in particular a new world and its centre, the 'fatherland'. The concept of fatherland is indeed the basis of the existence of the nation state, which in the new political lexicon follows directly from secularization.

‘My Fatherland, My Beloved, When Will You Blossom?’

“Fatherland” (*mamuli*) is based on a common heritage in Eastern and Western Christendom. From a terminological perspective, this word derives from the Greek *patris* and the Latin *patria*, although it originally denoted native city or place. This term had already undergone its first essential alteration in the Roman Empire, when in the Latin formula *pro patria mori* (the heroization and apotheosis of warriors fallen for the fatherland) it already meant not only a place of origin but also the Roman Empire with all its institutions and system of values¹⁰. In early Christianity, this conception was replaced by the paradigm of the crucifixion of the Saviour as the ‘perfect sacrifice’. The classic emotional values of fatherland experienced a renaissance in Western Christendom in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (basically as a consequence of the Crusades), and slightly earlier in Byzantium and Georgia. ‘The conception of “fatherland”... overstepped the old limits of the town and came into contact with the national kingdom, with the “royal crown”, as a visible symbol of national and territorial unity.’ Fatherland as a conception of one’s own country or homeland appears in eighteenth-century Europe, where it loses the essence of feudal land ownership and is transformed into the designation of collective identity and into the subject of loyalty. This gives rise to the term ‘imagined community’, where it occupies a central place. The particular subject of loyalty towards this unity is not the monarch, who personified the state in medieval times, but homeland or fatherland. To illustrate the secular essence of ‘fatherland’, Carl Schmitt has the French revolutionary writers paraphrase the famous words of Louis XIV ‘I am the state!’ as ‘La patrie, c’est moi’ (‘I am the fatherland’)¹¹. At a time when in Western Europe secularization occurred with the transfer of the term *corpus mysticum* to the people and the ‘fatherland’, in Eastern Christendom the possessor of the sacral was not the ‘fatherland’ but the king, more correctly, fatherland and king were equated with each other.

The task that faced Ilia Chavchavadze was to establish a principle which would serve to unify Georgians and to define their collective identity. A fragmented Georgia within the Russian Empire, albeit with the status of one of its provinces, did however become unified. A politically united people did not find themselves in their own state, that is to say, their unity did not assume the form of a political subject. Under such circumstances, a unifying factor had to be found which, in colonial conditions, unites the people through a common cultural memory and purposefulness (*intentio populi*). If the loss of the state is an eschatological catastrophe, Ilia confronts this with the so-called counter-present method. This method is directed towards the creation

of a type of mythos which casts light on the present and gives hope for the future by promoting certain emphases on the past¹². This is the central principle of Ilia's 'fatherland' narrative, which attributes an intentional sense to a mythical past and, on the basis of this, creates the project of the future (The poem *The Shadow* is an almost direct illustration of this principle.) The main mythological image (or mythologem) of the narrative of the strategy of the future in particular and, consequently, of the 'fatherland' as a whole, is Ilia's invention of 'Mother Georgia' (The fact that the subtitle of Ilia Chavchavadze's poem *Mother Georgia* is 'A scene from future life' is no coincidence) who, in Ilia's mythopoeic context, is a secular substitute for the Virgin Mary, something which derives its legitimacy from Nikoloz Gulaberisdze's idea of Georgia being under the auspices of the Virgin Mary¹³. 'Father' as the representational symbol of the state and the sovereign is to be found in the semantics of 'fatherland'. The function of its revival or resuscitation ('Georgia, my fatherland, is reviving today!') passes to 'Mother Georgia', who must rear brave men for the fatherland who are prepared to sacrifice themselves ('Darling child, you sacrifice for the fatherland, you little Georgian!').

Several fundamental substitutions which occur in the process of the creation of a new Georgia in the heart of literature are significant for our paper. If the function of literature in Anton Bagrationi's grammar and rhetoric was to convey the 'divine truth', in the case of Ilia, literature acquires a radically different function. The function of literature becomes conveying the idea of 'fatherland'. 'Fatherland' occupies the place of divine truth, and it is owing to this substitution in particular that the sacralization of the fatherland and its subsequent transformation into the religion of a secular 'fatherland' occurs¹⁴. In Ilia's narrative, a 'restored fatherland' gives birth to 'love of the fatherland' and to 'patriotism' (*mamulishviloba*). Self-sacrifice for the fatherland is considered the core value, the highest duty, and the aim of all patriots. In this model, not only is reliance on the Christian paradigm of martyrdom significant, but also a more ancient and fundamental link between the sacral and the offering: in the eschatological struggle the offering acquires the function of a constituent factor of national unity¹⁵. The apotheosis of the patriot means self-sacrifice for his fatherland, it turns him into a hero and opens the way into a 'heavenly Georgia', a secular paradise in which immortality is shifted into history.

The next significant substitution concerns the figure of the king. Following the catastrophe of 1801, that sacral place which was occupied in Georgian political theology by the Bagrationi dynasty and king was vacated. In this respect, the context of secularization in Georgia differed from Western Europe and Russia. The placing of the poet and, later, the craftsman and

intellectual on the same level as the sovereign occurs in Western Europe in parallel with the political theories of the High and Late Middle Ages. Moreover, after Dante at the latest, the well-known *aequiparatio* of the poet with the sovereign is based not only on the classic example but also on Justinian law¹⁶. Unlike the European Enlightenment, Georgian intellectuals did not have to struggle against the royal court or the Church. Secularization in Georgia did not follow a revolutionary path and, in actual fact, established itself in an empty – more correctly, vacated – space. With Ilia, the sacral space of the king is occupied by the secular figure of the poet-prophet-genius, who in the same way fulfils the functions of *pontifex maximus* of the secular ‘religion’ of the ‘fatherland’¹⁷. From the 1860s on Ilia created a new paradigm of Georgianness, which began with the desacralization of the high, ecclesiastical style of the ‘Fathers’ and ended in the transfer of the idea of the sacral to the ‘fatherland’. The ‘fatherland’ is Ilia’s faith, and the language, from whose heart the fatherland was born, is the expression of its ‘idea’. Ilia’s secularization project is linked on the one hand to a secular idea of progress imported from Europe, which makes its appearance to us as one of the central motifs of Ilia’s social and political journalism, and on the other hand to the application of this model to Georgian reality, which is manifested in the desacralization of faith and the sacralization of the national.

Georgian society did not see through to a conclusion the secular project of the fatherland as the principle of the unity of political society. An expression of this was the interpretation of Ilia Chavchavadze’s life with the help of an old, monarchical theme. In Ilia’s own lifetime he was christened Georgia’s Uncrowned King and ‘Father of the Nation’ (*Pater Patriae*), that is to say, the function of representing the (non-existent) state was again conferred on the king and not on the ‘fatherland’. Thus Georgian political discourse again returned to a presecular and premodern paradigm which lasted until the Soviet period. Paradoxically, however, in the formally radically secular Soviet Union the monarchical paradigm found its expression in the form of Stalinism. All the same, the monarchical paradigm had several independent sources in Soviet reality, first and foremost, Russian messianism which is based on the idea of Moscow as the third Rome. According to a historiosophical tradition which originates from Berdyaev, it was in the conditions of Soviet Russia that the idea of the Russian Empire as the Third Rome was truly realized¹⁸. It was in the Soviet Union in particular that medieval Eastern-Christian political theology was revived in a secular Soviet form which, in the final analysis, ended in the Stalin period as Soviet Byzantinism. The phenomenon known as the cult of personality means in particular that Stalin became the sole representative of the state and supplanted not only the soviets, which had

already been left functionless, but also the very idea of the state (and of the homeland). Apart from the context of a general Soviet, basically Russian, political tradition, Stalin as a figure of a monarchical tradition also had a local Georgian context which, in the national discourse, directly connected him with Ilia Chavchavadze's reception. It is no coincidence that Ilia Chavchavadze's Soviet 'renaissance' begins in 1937 with a celebration of Ilia's jubilee on a nationwide Soviet scale. In the Georgian context, Stalin is legitimized in the form of a continuer of Ilia Chavchavadze's tradition in particular. (For this legitimization a mythos is formed about the discovery by Ilia of Stalin as a poet.) According to Zurab Kiknadze, in the Soviet Georgian mythos 'there arose a messianistic interpretation of Ilia's patriotic works'¹⁹. The infant lying in the golden cradle in Ilia's *Bazaleti Lake* 'whose name cannot be said' and whom Georgians 'long for with a silent yearning' is equated with Stalin in Soviet Georgian messianistic discourse. Thus Stalin to a certain extent became a symbol of national identity and a representative of Georgian messianism. The burial of Stalin's mother, Ekaterine Jughashvili, in Mtatsminda Pantheon symbolically meant the 'nationalization' of the messiah's mother, her promotion to eminence in the national pantheon. The Georgian public perceived the criticism of Stalin's personality cult by the Twentieth Congress in 1956 as an attack on Georgia, underlining once more the figure of Stalin as the identification of the Georgians. It can be said that a renaissance of Georgian nationalism began in post-Stalin Georgia, which for its part was the product of the mingling of already heterogeneous cultural codes. Ilia's heroics in this discourse merged with Stalin's heroics. The theocentric cult of personality shifted in its essence into the national discourse. If Ilia placed emphasis on the people's history, in Soviet Georgia the political history (the 'history of kings', in Ilia's words) concentrated on specific figures again came into the foreground²⁰. In the fine arts there are monuments depicting the same symbol as both an historical character and as a mythological character linked to history, from Vakhtang Gorgasali down to Mother Georgia²¹. Such a space created by historical and mythological monuments brings about an extrapolation of the past into modern times and, at the same time, it becomes the centre of the present. In spite of the active use of Ilia's symbolism, Georgian discourse after Stalin breaks the link with the future and transfers the symbolic centre to the past. Medieval Georgia and its heroes who have been transformed into monuments become the objects of society's self-identification. Thus the national discourse again becomes the expression of the pre-secular paradigm.

The idea of Georgian statehood is linked, on the one hand, to Ilia Chavchavadze's secular discourse, which is again described with the help of a

presecular model and, on the other, to an idealized medieval Georgian statehood, similarly as an historical space created by the characters of Georgian political and cultural history and which, for its part, bears serious traces of a Soviet historicism of Stalinist vintage. Secular and presecular forms are confused in the perception of Georgian society to such an extent that a secular figure (Ilia Chavchavadze) is perceived as perpetuating a presecular tradition (Saint Ilia the Righteous) and not as a reformer, and historical space takes the form of a secularized pantheon. Such syncretism creates that cultural environment in which the national movement and the modern idea of Georgian independent statehood are born. The Georgian national idea (the so-called 'forgotten idea') for its part is orientated towards the past. This idea implies a messianistic re-evaluation of the medieval political discourse. Georgian messianism, as whose authors we may regard Akaki Bakradze and Zviad Gamsakhurdia, is the outcome of a whole range of projections in which medieval political models are refracted in the prism of Stalin's secular messianism. In this very context, the demand for Ilia Chavchavadze's canonization by the future leaders of the national movement and his canonization in 1987 constituted, in actual fact, the founding act of the building of the new Georgian state. Its interpretation is particularly interesting owing to this status. On the one hand, the Georgian Orthodox Church absorbs the 'author' of Georgian secularization, appropriates him and thus levels the whole secular discourse. In actual fact, it takes back that dominant role in discursive and symbolic functions which Ilia Chavchavadze had taken away from it. Thus the modern Georgian state begins with a symbolic countersecularizational act. However, the Georgian Orthodox Church is itself transformed by this act. If the fatherland held the status of the sacral in Ilia Chavchavadze's secular discourse, and he fatherland itself had turned into church and (national) unity, by canonizing Ilia Chavchavadze the Church became the upholder of the discourse on the fatherland in secular space and, in actual fact, thereby appeared as a national (secular) Church. The nationalization of the Church was nicely expressed by the term 'Heavenly Georgia', which the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia, Ilia II, introduced. 'Heavenly Georgia' meant particularly the transposition of Georgian historical space into sacral space. 'Heavenly Georgia' responds to the concept of a 'Heavenly Jerusalem' following the Judgement (Revelation 21-22). In the Georgian context, this meant the creation of an ideal state following the eschatological catastrophe of the loss of statehood, one which, for its part, was a reflection of the idealized medieval Georgian state. The most radical expression of the secularization and syncretization of Christian theology was the new formula introduced by Ilia II from Easter Night, 1989: 'Christ has risen, Georgia has risen!' which implied equating *Corpus Christi Mysticum*, the Body of Christ, with Georgia.

By this the Church had, in actual fact, confronted secular messianism with its own messianistic idea, so the secularization of the sacral 'Heavenly Jerusalem' – its being made earthly – took the form of its nationalization.

The nationalism of the Church did not remain solely in discursive space. The Church filled an ideological vacuum in the post-Soviet period. The new Georgian state attempts to use Church as an ideological instrument. This process is directly linked to Georgia's second president, Eduard Shevardnadze. Shevardnadze's inauguration in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral served to strengthen his political legitimacy, and carried a nuance of the revival of the form of state representation abolished in 1801. An alliance between the state and the new ideological force was formalized in a Constitutional Agreement in 2003 which acknowledged the special role of the Church in Georgian history and also granted significant privileges to the Church.

The model of modern Georgian statehood, conceived in the heart of the national movement and of the Georgian Orthodox Church, sees the future Georgia in an antiquated paradigm. Such a model in itself assumes the existence of a strong charismatic leader, a reincarnation of Davit Aghmashenebeli, Ilia Chavchavadze or Ioseb Jughashvili. The political history of Georgia has evolved over the past eighteen years around the particular theme of the creation and overthrow of such leaders (to the extent that the ideal conception of a charismatic leader and the consensus of real political groups differ radically from each other). In these conditions, the Georgian Orthodox Church attempted to find an alternative 'solution' within the framework of the existing model, and to bring the idea of a charismatic leader to its logical conclusion. Since Georgian society cannot agree on the 'identity' of the leader, the identification figure, the representative of the Georgian state, must once again be a member of the Bagrationi dynasty who will be brought up in the bosom of the Church. Ilia's 'Heaven appoints me and the people rear me' changes its mode and is transformed into the triteness of medieval political theology. The Church and sacral unity again occupy the place of the nation and secular unity. Support for this initiative by society at large is an indicator that the political and social elites made use of modern democratic ideals and values on a rhetorical level only.

The formation of a modern state is directly linked to conceptualizing its founding principles; as for Georgian political thought, it is locked in the vicious circle of a totally different presecular paradigm. Ilia Chavchavadze's secular project directed toward the future has been replaced by national-religious syncretism orientated toward the past. This in itself implies a fundamental ideological unsuitability for the project of modernization which is essential for the formation of a modern state.

Notes:

1. Erich Auerbach already sees the incipient triumph of 'earthly' literature in Dante. See Erich Auerbach, *Dante als Dichter der irdischen Welt*, Berlin and Leipzig, 1929.
2. Cf. Alfred Winkenhauer, *Die Kirche als der mystische Leib Christi nach dem Apostel Paulus* (Münster, 1937), 84-88.
3. *Corpus mysticum* is the body of the Church, while Christ himself is its head. See Ernst Kantorowicz, "Pro patria mori", in *Götter in Uniform*, (Stuttgart, 1998), 305.
4. Cf. Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, Princeton, 1957.
5. Eric Voegelin, *Die neue Wissenschaft der Politik* (Munich, 2004), 57-59.
6. Pierre Klosowski, *Sade mon prochain*. We have made use of the German translation of this work: *Sade, mein Nächster* (Vienna, 1996), 85-88. The physical destruction in 1918 of the last Russian emperor, Nicholas II, and of members of his family must have had this kind of ritual content. This brought to an end to the drawn-out process of secularization in Russia: Holy Russia is replaced by Great Russia.
7. For a detailed treatment of this, see Zaal Andronikashvili, "The birth of the fatherland from the soul of literature: Language reform as a secularization project" In *Ilia Chavchavadze 170: An anniversary collection*, ed. Irma Ratiani, Tbilisi, 2007 [In Georgian].
8. Karl Löwith, „Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen: Die theologischen Voraussetzungen der Geschichtsphilosophie“, in Vol. 2 of *Sämtliche Schriften* (Stuttgart, 1953), 12.
9. Loss of identity will follow an historical catastrophe as understood eschatologically. 'As the world was split in two between the past and the then present, we have lost everything together with past testaments. We have even forgotten who we are and what we are.' A loss of identity means for Ilia the loss of the language. He reaches the despairing conclusion in his article *A few words* (1866-76) that both Georgianness and the Georgian language have been lost. 'Where is the Georgian language now? Or do we even want Georgian at all when we ourselves have self-destructively given up our Georgianness? Now that we no longer live by our mind, how can we use the Georgian language to express a thought?' For Ilia, the 'old' language that was used to describe past reality is not only obsolete, it has been rendered 'mute': in actual fact, it is a dead language.
10. Ernst Kantorowicz, "Pro patria mori", in *Götter in Uniform*, 292-3.
11. Carl Schmitt, *Politische Romantik* (Berlin, 1998), 69.

12. In Jan Assman's view, the function of this myth is 'counter-presentual': it contrasts a wretched present with an heroic past, thus breathing life into lost, extinct or forgotten moments. View Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* (Munich, 1999), 79.
13. For a detailed treatment of this, see Giorgi Maisuradze, "Fatherland" and "Mother Georgia": Secular symbology in Ilia Chavchavadze's poetic works" in *Ilia Chavchavadze* 170.
14. Cf. Zurab Kiknadze, „Ilia's fatherland“, in *Georgia at the boundary of the millenia* (Tbilisi, 2001) and Giorgi Maisuradze, op. cit.
15. Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretation altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Berlin and New York, 1997), 16.
16. Ernst Kantorowicz, "Die Souveränität des Künstlers: Eine Anmerkung zu Rechtsgrundsätzen und Kunsttheorien der Renaissance" in *Götter in Uniform*, 329-348. (Here: p.343.)
17. This idea of the writer and the craftsman was current in Georgia up to the end of the twentieth century.
18. Nikolai Berdyaev, *The origins and meaning of Russian Communism*, Paris, 1955 [in Russian].
19. Zurab Kiknadze, „Ilia's fatherland“, in *Georgia at the boundary of the millenia*, 42.
20. Probably the grandest expression of this is Levan Sanikidze's epic historical pop-novel *Swords without scabbards*.
21. The monument *They will grow up again* is directly linked on the one hand to Ilia's *Mother Georgia*, and on the other to the Stalinist symbolism of the Great Patriotic War. The mother's function in both cases is to rear heroes ready to lay down their lives for the fatherland, patriots whose sole task is to sacrifice themselves for the fatherland.

English translation by PJ Hillery