

GEORGIAN PARADIGM OF PEACE

მშვიდობის ქართული პარადიგმა

Zurab Khonelidze

Ph.D. (Political Science)

ORCID: 0000-0002-4625-7632

Zurabkhonelidze@gmail.com

(+995) 597 71 10 80

Abstract

For Georgia, the 30 years of non-systemic dismantling of the Soviet system, and the nation's state-building course has turned out to be full of contradictions. On the outset of the post-Soviet space transformation, we, like several other countries, were betrayed by our political intuition, having not been able to escape the "mines" planted by the empire – especially the imposed ethno political conflicts, whose tragic consequences still affect the Georgian state and society.

The author's interest in the set of issues in question did not arise out of free time, or a passion for politics. The analysis of Georgia's problems, which have accumulated for decades, is urging us to recognize the inadmissibility of the status quo. The Georgia of today is a temporarily divided, politically ill, and morally distressed national body whose future the author sees only in terms of successfully achieving organic unity.

At the same time, as a precondition, we should concentrate on a topic that, taking into account the necessary internal and external factors, will be connected to the realization of the nation's consolidating idea: Georgia's unity and freedom at the highest value–this taking place within the country! We should also focus on Georgia's international standing, and discover how the civilized world perceives the territorial integrity of the Georgian state within its internationally recognized borders–this taking place beyond the country! The topic that meets these criteria is a singular one, and it is connected with the reconciliation of a pseudo-ethnopolitical conflict: the problem of Abkhazia (as well as the so-called South Ossetia). The topic which meets the pertinent criteria features prominently and consistently on the agendas of reputable international institutions; the theme is singular and is associated with a lack of respect not just towards a plain sectoral economic development of one given country, but with a sense of disregard for the state, the national, and even the fundamental norms of international law, thus impairing the resolution of the conflict in Abkhazia (and in South Ossetia).

It is exactly this idea, born of the inner need and the attempt of its realization, that makes the present work, Georgian Paradigm of Peace, not only a theoretical work, but one which has practical value (nothing is more practicable than a good theory). In fact, by way of following the political rules, it creates the possibility of making a profound change in our thinking about peaceful coexistence with other

nations and countries. This is also a chance to create a new and more desirable narrative, to change the existing given and, consequently, to alter the Georgian state, its fate, and, ultimately, its future.

The aim of this article is, partly by means of a brief historical excursus, to review our non-standard vision and our firm statehood-oriented position, based on new knowledge. As a guide to the reader's judgment, let us put forward some central questions that will guide our discourse: how is University Diplomacy (the synergy of the university and diplomacy) manifested in the emerging global space, and what is its importance to the formation of the South Caucasus (whose significance as a whole is far greater than its constituent three parts)? As a peace space, how does the concept/practice boost the expansion and the improvement of the stereotype of their behavior, deepening and developing both public and intercultural relations, changing the surrounding world for the better by using all the pragmatic good that the parties might provide to this end.

The author, despite his passionate beliefs, has no intention of burdening a reader who is already caught up in the monotonous grind of everyday life. Neither does the author wish to impose his beliefs onto this reader. On the contrary, he hopes to offer the necessary respect and consideration for the reader's tradition value system or beliefs. He hopes his use of Western pragmatism and Eastern charm will awaken the jaded reader from his hazy disillusionment— disillusionment in which the political system and cultural biases have so deeply wrapped him. The author wishes to earn the trust of Abkhazians and South Ossetians and introduce them to this work, which the author believes will be valuable for any reader who cares about his own destiny and future of his own people, nation, or state.

Key words: Georgian Paradigm of Peace, conflict, Abkhazia, University Diplomacy.

ზურაბ ხონელიძე

პოლიტიკურ მეცნიერებათა დოქტორი

ORCID: 0000-0002-4625-7632

Zurabkhonelidze@gmail.com

+995 597 71 10 80

აბსტრაქტი

საქართველოსთვის საბჭოური სისტემის 30 წლიანი უსისტემო დემონტაჟისა და სახელმწიფოებრიობის მშენებლობის გზა წინააღმდეგობებით აღსავსე აღმოჩნდა. პოსტსაბჭოთა სივრცის ტრანსფორმაციის ზღურბლზე, რამდენიმე ქვეყნის მსგავსად, ჩვენც გვიღალატა პოლიტიკურმა აღღომ და ვერ გადავურჩით იმპერიის მიერ ჩადებულ „ნაღმებს“, – უპირველეს ყოვლისა, თავს მოხვეულ ე.წ. ეთნო-პოლიტიკურ კონფლიქტებს, რომელთა ტრაგიკულად მძიმე შედეგები დღესაც აისახება ქართულ სახელმწიფოსა და საზოგადოებაზე.

წინამდებარე პრობლემატიკით ავტორის დაინტერესება მხოლოდ დროის მოთხოვნა, ან პოლიტიკით გატაცება როდია. საქართველოში ათწლეულობით დაგროვილი პრობლემების ანალიზი გვიბიძებს არსებული სტატუს-კვოს მიუღებლობისკენ. სახეზეა მოცემულობა: დროებით გაყოფილი, პოლიტიკურად დასწეულებული და ზნეობრივადაც გასაჭირში მყოფი ეროვნული სხეული, რომლის მომავალს ავტორი მხოლოდ ორგანული მთლიანობის გათვალისწინებით ხედავს.

ამასთან, წინაპირობად უნდა განვიხილოთ იმ თემის მოძიება, რომელიც აუცილებელი საშინაო და საგარეო ფაქტორების გათვალისწინებით, ქვეყნის შიგნით ერის მაკონსოლიდირებელ – საქართველოს ერთიანობისა და უმაღლესი ღირებულების – თავისუფლების მარადიული იდეის რეალიზაციას დაუკავშირდება, ხოლო, ქვეყნის გარეთ – საქართველოსადმი, ცივილიზაციული სამყაროს, საერთაშორისო თანამეგობრობის ერთიან მიდგომას–ქართული სახელმწიფოს ტერიტორიულ მთლიანობას, მის საერთაშორისოდ აღიარებულ საზღვრებში. თემა, რომელიც შესაბამის კრიტერიუმებს აკმაყოფილებს, საერთაშორისო რეპუტაციული ინსტიტუტების დღის წესრიგში რჩება, ერთადერთია და იგი, არა ერთი ქვეყნის, არამედ, სახელმწიფოებრივი, ეროვნული, მეტიც, საერთაშორისო სამართლის ფუძემდებელი ნორმების უპატივცემულობისა და სხვა გლობალური მნიშვნელობის ფსევდო-ეთნოპოლიტიკური კონფლიქტის – აფხაზეთის (ასევე, ე.წ. სამხრეთ ოსეთის) პრობლემის დარეგულირებასთან ასოცირდება.

სწორედ ამ შინაგანი მოთხოვნილების წარმოქმნილ აზრსა და მისი რეალიზაციის მცდელობას წარმოადგენს წინამდებარე ნაშრომი – „მშვიდობის ქართული პარადიგმა“, რომელიც არა მხოლოდ თეორიული დატვირთვის, არამედ, პრაქტიკული ღირებულების მატარებელია (არაფერია კარგ თეორიაზე პრაქტიკული). რეალურად, ჩენს შესაძლებლობას, პოლიტიკური წესების დაცვით, სიღრმისეული ცვლილება შევიტანოთ ჩვენს აზროვნებაში, უსარგებლო ინსტრუმენტის – უსასრულო, მოდური და არა საგნობრივი ლანძღვის ნაცვლად, სხვა ერებთან და ქვეყნებთან მშვიდობიანი

თანაარსებობით, შევქმნათ ახალი ნარატივი, სასურველისკენ შევცვალოთ არსებული მოცემულობა და, შესაბამისად, ქართული სახელმწიფოს ბედი – მისი მომავალი.

ნაშრომის მიზანია, მოკლე ისტორიულ ექსკურსთან ერთად, მიმოვინარებით ახალ ცოდნაზე დაფუძნებული ჩვენეული არასტანდარტული ხედვა და მტკიცე სახელმწიფოებრივი პოზიცია. მკითხველის სამსჯავროზე გზამკვლევად გამოვიტანოთ საკითხი: როგორ გამოიხატება ფორმირებად გლობალურ სივრცეში უნივერსიტეტისა და დიპლომატიის, ამ ორი ცნების სინერგიაზე („საუნივერსიტეტო დიპლომატია“) დაფუძნებული იდეის არსი და სამხრეთ კავკასიის (რომელიც არითმეტიკულ ჯამზე (3) მეტი სიდიდეა) სამშვიდობო სივრცედ ფორმირების მნიშვნელობა, რა ღირებულებებსა და ფასეულობებს ემყარება შემოთავაზებული მიდგომები, როგორ უწყობს ხელს ადამიანთა გონიერივი არეალის გაფართოებასა და მათი ქცევის სტერეოტიპის გაჯანსაღებას, როგორც საზოგადოებრივ ისე კულტურათშორის ურთიერთობათა გაღრმავება–განვითარებას, კონფლიქტში მონაწილე მხარეთა პრაქტიკული სარგებლის მიღებით გარემომცველი სამყაროს უკეთესობისკენ შეცვლასა და სხვ.

ავტორი არ ცდილობს, გააკვირვოს მკითხველი, ან არაორდინალური ცხოვრებით ისედაც გადაღლილს, თავს მოახვიოს, თუნდაც შინაგანი მრწამსით გამოხატული, მისეული ორიგინალური ხედვა. სურვილი აქვს, დასავლური პრაგმატულობის, აღმოსავლური გულისხმიერებისა და ტრადიციების სრული დაცვით (რომელსაც ყველაფერი ემორჩილება), გამოაფხიზლოს და გამოიყვანოს იმ გაურკვეველი ბურუსისგან, რომელშიც ასე საფუძვლიანად გაახვიეს, მეტი ნდობა გამოუცხადოს და განაწყოს იგი (უპირველესად, აფხაზი და ოსი) ამ ნაშრომის გასაცნობად, რაც, ვფიქრობთ, სასარგებლო იქნება თავად მკითხველისთვის, ვინც განიცდის საკუთარ ბედ–იღბალს და აინტერესებს საკუთარი ერის უკეთესი მომავალი.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: მშვიდობის ქართული პარადიგმა, კონფლიქტი, აფხაზეთი, საუნივერსიტეტო დიპლომატია.

Introduction

The Georgia of today is a temporarily divided, politically ill, and morally distressed national body whose future the author sees only in terms of successfully achieving organic unity. Although the twenty-first century has been dubbed the age of ideas and has been characterized by a change in the conceptual system of the world order, the indispensable in-depth research in Georgia, instead of pursuing the truth and replacing the old approaches with a new rectifying idea, has led to unjustified public confusion, conformism, and even worse—to the sad fact of impoverishment and victimization of the long-suffering Georgian nation. In fact, the Georgian state has been moving in the same groove for three decades—one that is antithetical to national, state-oriented, cultural, civilizational, geo-economics, and geopolitical interests, all necessary for the country's development.

Methods

The paper explores and analyses a new way of peaceful settlement of the conflict and format of regional cooperation.

The research is based on historical-comparative and content analysis methods, which helps the author to express important issues such as the conceptual mechanisms for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Consequences

The theoretical-methodological postulate (starting point) of our vision is to promote the primary dream of mankind—peace by way of rejecting violence—and to create a “happy space-arena” of global, regional, and national interests.

The author does not represent any of the parties, neither has he expressed the interests of politically oriented populist or revanchist groups. Despite his involvement in the most important processes in Georgia's recent history, he has not participated in the tragic events of Abkhazia and the so-called South Ossetia. Notwithstanding his futile attempts in the past, his motivation and goal remain unchanged to assist the Georgian, Abkhaz, and Ossetian communities, the authorities, the so-called political elite, and the elite in general, in conceiving not only the familiar notion of homeland, for which we keep making unconscious sacrifices, but also the vision of a modern state, which can only be created by our unity and the embracing of Georgian diversity at large. Both of these assets offer the opportunity to serve the homeland with conscious dedication.

Discussion and Conclusions

Instead of dramatizing the problems, Georgians must admit that where there's a will, there's a way. The answers to those petty irrelevant questions like, “What's wrong with us?,” “What ill are we inflicted with?,” “Is there a way out?,” “Who is going to help us?,” should be sought for not beyond us, somewhere in an unreachable profundity, but right here in ourselves, in our way of thinking, in a novel reconsideration of the role of this country, in an inevitable acquisition of the nation's additional function, in the extant ineffectual system, in our society, our state, and in politics which we have turned into anti-politics.

The current unfavourable situation and the actual development of the Georgian state require getting rid of certain harmful habits, such as distancing ourselves from the perpetuated fear of telling the truth, based on the irrefutability of the cause-and-effect law, thus escaping the accusation of treason, keeping in mind that the result is always compatible with the cause. We also have to acknowledge the fact that, from the distant passed up until now, any individual, having worked on a state level in Georgia, is more or less guilty of some wrong because the state of the country depended and depends on the appropriate usage of their political will, knowledge, and vision. For instance, regardless of opinion, there is no doubt that the following principles characterize the condition of Georgia today:

None of the Georgian authorities:

- Have managed to objectively assess the ongoing processes in the world, to

find a suitable natural historical place for Georgia, compatible with its mission, to define the goal and separate it from the means, and to take adequate steps towards meeting the demands of the present because they choose to place emphasis on wrong values, based on a distorted perception of both freedom and politics instead of consolidating the nation around the eternal ideas of liberty and independence. - Have identified the inherent confrontational forces of external factors which are traditionally involved in the future fate of Georgia; have determined the real interests and motivating causes of those forces and factors; have escaped the imminent threat of the fatal verdicts of 1993 and 2008, of the ethnic cleansing of Georgians, and of the continuing Russian occupation, which has become into an aggravated legacy; have become a patron of the integrated Georgian space; have grasped the truth that the existing given, including the territory of Georgia, is insufficient space for the interested countries and forces to act together and bring these interests in line with the interests of the Georgian state. - Fearing to look directly at their own history and realize their own lies, while obsessed with revenge against the erstwhile authorities, have been able to fully understand the essence of the Georgian phenomenon (knowing oneself without intermediaries), limiting themselves to so called reforms instead of radically transforming the country. Thus, they have changed it only in form, which is a completely different task, which calls for different technology and a totally different way of reasoning.

In general, most of the so-called elite, primarily the political elite:

- Are fake and has not been able to elevate themselves to the level of our national essence; they are characterized by low-level political culture, alteration of party affiliations motivated by self-interest, ineptitude of judgment rather than rational and critical thinking, and contagious parasitic lifestyle. All of these classifications affect the entire country and impede democratic development.

- Are inflicted with the virus of selfishness, unable to liberate themselves from the harmful influence of a few destructive politicians and small groups. They affiliate themselves with these groups, which constantly gives way to accusations, false expectations, and imminent danger; together, they manage to polarize society, dividing it into two deficient parts—the elite and the rest.

- Are morally deprived, narrow-minded, and boring. And yet, they are immersed in their own ambitions and often stubbornly continue to preach to society while they wear the mask of a state caretaker, stained by their need for personal gain. Most tragically, they contribute to the aggravation of national resentment in the Georgian society.

Part of the Georgian society:

- Especially the intelligent and educated class, almost does not participate in the political processes. They do not realize that their apathy is yielding the arena to the self-interested and those not mindful of the state, who are unconscionable, irresponsible individuals, to the point of ignorance, dilettantism, and conformism. Part of Georgian society cannot fully utilize its common lore, created by its ances-

tors; it fails to transform the negative energy of the nation into a positive one; and it fails to turn the already deficient vigour into a common national power instead of fighting the worst consequences.

- Instead of demanding a change of the political system and advocating for institutional reform, it found itself in the old psychological captivity of the “father provider,” who has become the idol of a centralized system, and who monopolizes truth and condescends to the people under the guise of “educating” them. It could not reify the truth that the centre of political power should not be formed around a single political figure, even if that figure is supposedly intertwined with the destiny of the nation. Regardless of the merits of those like Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Eduard Shevardnadze, Mikheil Saakashvili, and Bidzina Ivanishvili, the future of the state should not depend on them. Due to a growing politics of personality and trend toward sanctimonious populism, part of Georgian society could not separate itself from those morally and reputedly damaged selfish people—unconscionable, irresponsible individuals—or from systems that have run their course at the political forefront of Georgia.

- Is characterized by a nihilistic attitude towards the main problem of the country: conflict resolution. Georgia’s conflicts do not arise out of disillusionment with the idea of Georgia’s unity, but out of frustration towards the institutions which are instrumental in conflict resolution and which should catalyse the peace process. Finding a way out of a difficult but, certainty, not unsolvable situation, requires a deep ideological breakthrough, strategic thinking (first and foremost, putting together our own way of thinking!), and philosophical changes that bring us back to the ideas and attitudes that form the foundation of the perennial universal values: freedom, justice, righteousness, and a human belief in love. Such a faith, reinforced by intellectual arguments, together with a thorough understanding of the essence of the problem, will give rise to the necessary intellectual confidence, that is, an awareness based not on imitation of others and not on reliance on others, but only on an objective vision, which will include the following tenets:

Georgia is not and cannot be a locked autonomous system. The country, as a cohesive living organism and a spatial phenomenon, creates a political given; it exists, is governed, and lives thanks to this space. It cannot accept the void. It is changeable and characterized by the properties of space: it is born, it grows, and it dies.

The functioning of the state, its well-being, its stability, and the nullification of processes which give way to threats—including the emergence of separate spaces, prone to dying out (implied is the aboriginal population of Abkhazia and the so-called South Ossetia)—must result from a change in the status quo in accordance with the rules of the political game.

The definition of the country’s goal and the formulation of its strategic action plan should be compatible with the achievement of that goal, worldview, environmental conditions, time, and space, all of which will enable Georgia to (1) maintain balance of the key policy regulators, their additional interest, and the 16 entire world order, (2) to redeem the country’s international function, (3) to substantiate

the need for a unified space (including for the outside world), (4) to restore or create a new full-fledged space-environment in which policy officials are patrons of Georgia, an organically unified multi-ethnic state.

It is a fact that the highly intellectual Georgian nation and the Georgian state are faced with a challenge: to ensure unity, prosperity, and a secure, guaranteed future of Georgia. To reach these goals, the primary task is the resolution of the so-called ethno-political conflicts. Using the way of pragmatic reasoning, the achievement of this goal demands the following:

Change the attitude toward the conflict in Abkhazia, which has remained unresolved since 1993, by first of all changing the governmental attitude

Recognize that the reason for procrastinating on a solution to the conflict is not because of a lack of a proposed prospect of settlement, but because our blurred vision and the fact that we do not see the proper way of executing this settlement.

Revive the dialogue surrounding the Abkhazia conflict. This dialogue, if approached correctly, will not put the country in deadlock by heaping additional difficulties on to it; on the contrary, it will be rendered as a latent opportunity to break the existing deadlock, which will lead to a new path forward in transforming Georgia into a full-fledged state.

A new direction in education policy: “University Diplomacy” as a renovated mission of the university, a modern form of peacebuilding, and a new type of International Relations and diplomacy. University Diplomacy makes clear that:

- The way to resolve the main problem of Georgia’s sovereignty and unity-conflict—is peaceful and utilizes universal values based on humanism: education, science (education’s highest achievement), and the healthiest, most motivated and pragmatic part of society—the youth. Clearly, all three components come together and coexist peacefully only in a free university space. Unfortunately, however, in the modern world, the university, which, along with its basic educational function, is an indicator of the peace process, has not adequately developed from its origins to properly situate itself in the greater society, and has failed to realize its historical responsibility.

- The idea of the university is in crisis, however. The university, as a universal model, due to its great possibilities, has the internal resources to prove its viability, and is able to fill the political field of the peace strategy with more university resources, actively involve the political field, and, moreover, transform itself into the epicentre of the peace process. By the example of Georgia, we mean not the university in general, but the Sokhumi State University in particular—the “victim of politics”—that shares the fate of the country, the living organism that connects Abkhazia with the rest of Georgia. The University, issuing from its strategic importance (there are several “refugee universities” in the world with a similar fate) has the opportunity to simply bring into the academic space the theme in question, to unify the non-university community, and to establish a scientific-humanistic dialogue with the parties of the conflict—first and foremost, the government (along with civil society, international organizations, and “parties”), to determine the causes of the conflict and to propose a real settlement of the problem instead of

entering the conflict or using the nation's already-deficient energy on fighting the consequences of the conflict.

- To achieve the goal of peacebuilding, the work of the university must encompass not only the transformation, but also the creation of qualitatively new knowledge–new life. This knowledge will lead to the search for and merging of the university with the second essential subject (the only peaceful one) of diplomacy, as the science of negotiation and the art of communication. The coupling of two compatible entities–university and diplomacy–has created a new paradigm: “from theory to action.” This paradigm is neither a mere formality nor a recasting of a classical model of diplomacy, but a completely new kind of international relations. University Diplomacy is a conflict-regulatory system (not just of ethno-political or indigenous conflicts) that does not merely service or critique the field of International Relations, but stands on its own as a new means of ensuring peace.

“South Caucasus: Geopolitical Space (New Format of Regional Cooperation)–due to the topicality of the theme and the highly vital interests of the Georgian state and a number of other states, offers a reprint of 18 the project, “Georgia’s Choice” (2013). We reaffirm and introduce Georgia’s main geo-political, geo-economic, and cultural-civilizational resources on the plane of integration processes, which, together with its own necessity and indispensability, will give the country an additional and more or less acceptable function as the unifier of the region. At the same time, it will enable the settlement of the conflict, as well as the de-occupation and self-development of the region. This settlement will depend not only on Georgia’s own forces, but also on the support of the United States and the EU, whose backing is strategically important.

Although the modern Caucasus is one coherent region, it consists of two geopolitical “levels.” One is the political entity of the North Caucasus—a part of the Russian Federation. The other is the South Caucasus, which consists of three independent states: Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. However, when speaking about the regional space of the entire Caucasus (which in its own way is a synthesis of Caucasian, Eastern, and Western elements), what is most relevant to us is the South Caucasus, which is not only important for its geographical location and historical-political-cultural development, but also for its morphological significance as what has long been recognized as the organizing centre of Georgia. Thanks to Georgia, the South Caucasus has a natural historical-genetic function as clear actor who balances both West and East. As for the Caucasus—the cradle of world civilization—Georgia belongs in the history of the region and as a part of what is called Caucasian unity. However, the fact is that the unity of the region has not been realized since ancient times.

Thus, Georgia must oppose the old idea, predominant today, that Caucasian solidarity is unacceptable to the accountable foreign powers –chiefly Russia, the real ruler of the North Caucasus—and that the instability of the South Caucasus is a hidden danger for the North Caucasus. Because of this contemporary, if artificial divide, let us consider the Caucasus only as a cultural-civilizational unity of Caucasian peoples, and the South Caucasus as a distinct single regional space consisting of sovereign

states. Without the formation of a global vector of development, these states - the unified security system, dividing and confronting lines, will stand together before the main geopolitical centres, primarily the US, the EU, and, through them, the Russian Federation and other players interested in the region. It is certainly true that Georgia's advantage (which is not limited to its geographical advantage—described by the so-called “corridor” factor) is a significant and historic responsibility, and our destiny goes beyond the boundaries of our country. We must understand that if we digress from international initiatives, accept the policy of a passive observer, or refuse to participate in the electoral process due to the Russian Federation's involvement or Georgia's involvement in the so-called “reintegration” projects (similar to the Caucasus Platform, where the South Caucasus is not represented by the three equal parties—Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and where the US and the EU do not participate in the process as its leader), the Georgian state will limit its scope and lose its function as a religious, ethnic, and cultural connector in the Caucasus.¹⁹ The South Caucasus, which champions the idea of a regional policy, unless the current platform expands and is filled with other players (the United States, the EU and, in the case of a general agreement, China), should not be perceived as a Georgian global reintegration project, since it will create a real threat, namely:

The unified ethno-cultural space of the region will be violated and the countries of the South Caucasus will be restricted to make free and independent choices (sovereignty).

Rather than advocating for the de-occupation of the South Caucasus, we will, in effect, be promoting the process of occupation and of its legitimization.

Instead of integration, the process of separation of states will continue and we will witness the emergence of new types of borders in the region in addition to the existing *de jure* and *de facto* borders

Taking into account these and other factors, we hope that this time, Georgians, whose wisdom is unmatched, will take into account their grave experiences of the past and our actions will be more thoughtful.

The only way to settle the conflict is peacefully; however, our attempts to keep the peace and maintain opportunities for conflict resolution have unfortunately been fruitless for the past three decades. Today, when regional politics is “winning” and the world tends toward nationalism and regionalism, a pattern becomes manifest as states disintegrate and unify (disintegrate on the basis of rationality, unify on the basis of interest). Silence is equal to crime. But now, two new positions—the rector ship of Sokhumi State University, a strategically important institution, and the presidency of the Georgian Academy of Education, (a position enacted “as a debt and a burden, not as a position and honour”¹⁾) – provide addi-

1 Citation from the Iverieli Antimoz. Didacts and Other Writings (Reader) The Reader was produced with the financial support of the LEPL National Science Foundation - Shota Rustaveli within the frame- work of the State Scientific Grant for Fundamental Research (№ FR/454/2-170/13) <https://www.tsu.ge/data/file-db/facultyhumanities/antimusIverieliRideri.pdf>.

tional motivation. Let us turn Sokhumi State University, known as an innovative problem solver among its fans, into a modern educational centre and an example of a qualitative renewal of the peace process.

To make the government and the society more active and purposeful in search for a way of peaceful settlement of the conflict and a new format of regional co-operation: adopting an alternative discourse of peace. In fact, we should all “fight together like our heroic ancestors did to protect our share of Georgia in ourselves and around us. Today that war is your Didgori and your Basiani.”²

It is no accident that Georgia is the place of origin for a Paradigm of Peace. For Georgia is not only associated with, but is an organic and integral part of, Europe. It is, moreover, one of its most important branches, and is a synthesis of the East, the West, and the Caucasus proper, which forms the boundary between the two continents. In fact, Georgia, as the place of the first human civilization, is the progenitor the principles of tolerance and humanism, now essential elements of the European and Asian worldviews. The Georgian state is not a corridor, but a bridge—a junction of civilizations, histories, religions, traditions, and global international activities comprising economy, energy, transport, finances, trade, tourism, education, culture, technology transfer, logistics, international capital formation, etc.

We strongly believe that the Georgian Paradigm of Peace has the potential to be a new (existing, unseen, and still unused) and effective mechanism for ensuring peace. It is one that will help the entire national community, especially the United States, Europe, and even the Russian Federation, become acquainted with Georgia, while they will recognize the need of turning Georgia from a problematic into a predictable state. They will also realize, among other things, that in order to restore spatial integrity to Georgia, it is necessary to form a regional security system.

2 Christmas Epistle, 2007 by His Holiness and Beatitude, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II national community, especially the United States, Europe, and even the Russian Federation, become acquainted with Georgia, while they will recognize the need of turning Georgia from a problematic into a predictable state. They will also realize, among other things, that in order to restore spatial integrity to Georgia, it is necessary to form a regional security system.