

## Folk Motives in Tedo Razikashvili's Novels

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### Abstract

Tedo Razikashvili had studied and internalized Georgian Folk Literature in his young age. He had traveled the whole North-East Georgia and Kakheti region.

He had wide knowledge of traditions of different mountainous regions of Georgia, he also had an expertise in Dialectology as well. This was the primary reason for his use of folk themes in his literary works.

**Keywords:** Folklore, novel, Tedo Razikashvili, tradition

### Introduction

Tedo Razikashvili holds a special place among the prominent researchers of the Georgian cultural realm. He started his diverse and rich research activities during his study in Gori seminary where he was educated by one of the best experts of the Georgian Literature and a writer himself - Niko Lomouri.

Tedo Razikashvili was of a Pshavi origin (region in the North-East of Georgia), a renowned son of a renowned family. Tedo, who was interacting with many writers of his time was not planning to become a writer himself, however, he did believe in an enormous importance of writing and publishing activities for a homeland. In parallel with writing children's stories Tedo used to collect samples of folklore as well.

Studying children's stories by the author reveals his dualistic attitude towards folk literature. In one case he creates stories by remaking a folk motive, in other cases he brings in folk plots into an original writing of his own renewing the narration style.

In renewing folk plots T. Razikashvili applies a traditional way of composing that was known in the Georgian Literature from ancient times.

### A Novel "Gariela"

A novel written in 1892 entitled „Gariela“ depicts one of the episodes of Queen Tamar of Georgia. According to the story, one of the hunters gave a beautiful small bird called Gariela to Tamar as a gift. Queen and the bird liked each other very much and became good friends. After some time the bird got bored. Tamar guessed what the bird's grievance was and decided to set her free. As Tamar released the bird, it flew to the North.

In the following year the bird travelled back to the South with the squad. Tamar attentively watched the birds coming back as she searched for her Gariela. And there came Gabriela to Tamar and greeted her with wings wide open. Tamar hugged the bird and kissed her loyal friend. As Tamar was petting the bird she handled three sticks to her milk white fingers. Seemed like she was paying off for her master's kindness. After this she spread her wings and headed to the sky, leaving her good friend never to come back to her again... Tamar was very much surprised by that behavior and thought that the sticks gifted by Gariela were miraculous.

She decided to test the sticks if they possessed any of supernatural powers. She gave the sticks to her servants and as they threw them into the glass of wine, one of sticks turned into copper, another one to silver and the last one to gold (Razikashvili, 1947).

When creating a plot for a novel the writer refers to the Legend of Queen Tamar, one version of which is written down in the Meskheti region (Sikharulidze, 1961).

The story told in „Gariela“ resembles the Legend of Queen Tamar that was written down and registered by the writer himself in Pshavi region. According to T. Razikashvili's version Tamar's mother predicted the she (Tamar) was going to become the ruler of the world and advised her to care for her motherland and do the best for its preservation. Soon after her mother's prophesy Tamar become the rule of Georgia. She was an absolute ruler who overcame all the barriers as all her enemies were defeated.

There was no one left to challenge her authority. Everyone was to pay contributions to the Kingdom of Georgia. Only the Sea was free from paying the contribution to the Queen of the Queens. But it did not last for too long. Tamar

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could break the will of the sea as well. She ordered the wind to carry hay and brushwood onto the surface of the sea and set it on fire. The sea's surface was set on fire, the sea got scared and together with contributions gave all its diamonds to the Queen of the Queens (ibid, p. 23).

Pathos of T. Razikashvili's story reflects a national pride of believe in Queen Tamar's omnipotence. The writer tries to show the power of Queen Tamar to the reader. Author's work entitled "The Night before Christmas" represents an interesting example of a folk story turned into an ordinary literary narration. The story's plot reflects quite a popular legend in Georgia about the "Journey of Jesus, Prophet Elijah and Saint George".

Jesus Christ, Prophet Elijah and Saint George came together and decided to have a trip around the land. As time came for a meal they met a shepherd on the road. They sent Prophet Elijah to the shepherd to ask for a lamb. The shepherd refused to give a lamb to Prophet Elijah. This time Jesus Christ approached the shepherd to ask for a lamb but he too went back with empty hands. The shepherd only agreed to give not only one of his lambs but his whole flock to Saint George. In return for shepherd's generosity Saint George multiplied his flock into ten (Glonti, 1948).

These types of stories are created in order to show human good heartedness and generosity using religious-spiritual motives. In these stories basically saint characters walk in torn clothing in order not to be recognized.

Tedo Razikashvili followed this literary tradition and introduced Jesus Christ in torn cloths in his story. On the night before Christmas Jesus Christ came to a village in a form of a beggar and asked for a shelter first a landlord than a priest. Both of them refused to give him a shelter in their homes.

Finally, he was accepted by a poor villager to his home and treated him with respect although a poor villager could not offer him any food and drink because he did not have any. Jesus Christ blessed the poor villager and filled his house with food, drink and all the goods. After that the poor man had everything that he needed for living and all the unfortunate and poor man were visiting his house to find a shelter there (Razikashvili, 1947).

### Importance of "The Hunter"

Kind and open hearted people always get rewarded – such is the main idea of a folk story as well as of Tedo Razikashvili's story's. Authors another story entitled "The Hunter" (ibid, p. 194) represents an interesting literary work as well. In this story an author tells us a heroic but at the same time a fatal story of a Khevsurian hunter named Shishia.

The plot of a story is composed upon the Khevsurian legend about one high mountain which was known as a cemetery of hunters. The writer starts telling the story in a fascinating manner from the very start an intrigues the reader. Shishia was an experienced hunter who had climbed all the highest mountains in search of a pray. Only one moun-

tain was left to be climbed and that particular mountain turned out to be fatal for him.

### Conclusion

According to the oldest Georgian hunting rituals, hunters were to offer a sacrifice to the goddess of hunting and forests – Dali, before going hunting. Shishia always gives gifts generously to the one who helps him in hunting. Aurochs and mountain goats horns as Shishias sacrifice to the goddess of forests and hunters were all over the place – on the quarry-stones of the holy places. Those were hunter's gifts to the spirits as a sign of gratitude for getting a good luck from them and as of a fear of being unsuccessful during his hunt.

Writer very scrupulously depicts old Georgian hunting ritual. Rituals and their existence depicted by Tedo Razikashvili not only can be confirmed in ethnographic data but it can be directly linked and identified as ancient Khevsur (and generally – mountainous Georgian traditions) hunting traditions.

Shishias dream place for hunting was a place called Eagles' Mountain. Many famous hunters lost their lives on that fatal mountain in search of a glory but it does not scare him at all. He headed to the top of the mountain following his primordial ambition and interest of a real hunter. Shishia was firmly holding his rifle as he stared to tremble.

Something very scary was entering his soul as he chased aurochs on the rocky sides. He directed his rifle on it, pulled the trigger and wounded an animal. Aurochs started to climb to the top of the mountain. Shishia followed him to the end. Aurochs preferred to die rather than to fall pray to a human and jumped out the cliff down to the deepest ravine.

When Shishia came to his senses he got terrified – there was no way down from the point he had reached: one could climb up the place but it was impossible to go down from there.

During seven days Shishia's rifle's sounds were heard in the mountains and then the sounds ceased. No one was able to find and rescue Shishia in a place that high and dangerous. The brave hunter found his death in harsh colds of a fatal mountain.

Tedo Razikashvili's novels reveals full creative potential of their author.

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