

	Science, Education and Innovations in the Context of Modern Problems Issue 1, Vol. 9, 2026 RESEARCH ARTICLE <h2 style="margin: 0;">Traumatic Memory in the Literary Discourse of Female Authors: A Georgian Example</h2>
Lali Tsitsagi	Doctoral student Sokhumi State University Georgia Email: lali@mail.ru
Issue web link	https://imcra-az.org/archive/389-science-education-and-innovations-in-the-context-of-modern-problems-issue-1-vol-9-2026.html
Keywords	Historical Trauma , traumatic memory, Great Terror/Great Purge, testimony of a repressed witness.
Abstract <p>In the 20th century, the impact of historical trauma on individuals and society has been immeasurably great. The art of this period presents itself as a kind of representational space of traumatic experience, where the horrors accompanying trauma are presented, understood, and ways of overcoming are sought through literature and other fields of art. The essence of traumatic memory in fiction lies in the reflection of the long-term effects of traumatic experience and the interpretation of narratives reflecting the deep psychological consequences of trauma. One of the theoretical foundations of traumatic memory is considered to be trauma studies, which examines how traumatic events disrupt traditional narrative structures and challenge the constraints of representation. Unlike ordinary memories, which are easily integrated into the historical fabric of life, traumatic memories often remain unprocessed and can quite easily resurface in the background, in the form of nightmares and intrusive thoughts. Traumatic memories often resist narrative coherence, which is a kind of echo of the traumatized person's inability to fully process and articulate the traumatic event . In this study, based on the above theoretical considerations, we analyze the non- fiction novel “The Maestro’s Return. Chronicles of the Life of Evgeni Mikeladze” by the Georgian female author Shorena Lebanidze, in which the author adds significant touches to the historical reality - the Bolshevik repressions carried out in the Soviet Union in the 1930s - by describing events documented and enriched with archival material. The author recounts less publicized, but valuable and noteworthy details from the life and professional activities of the Tbilisi Opera’s chief conductor, Evgeni Mikeladze, and his family, and presents in depth the reasons why they turned out to be unacceptable to the Soviet system and, like millions of other people, became victims of the so-called Great Terror/Great Purge.</p>	
Citation Tsitsagi L. (2026). Traumatic Memory in the Literary Discourse of Female Authors: A Georgian Example. <i>Science, Education and Innovations in the Context of Modern Problems</i> , 9(1), 291-300. https://doi.org/10.56334/sei/9.1.26	
Licensed © 2026 The Author(s). Published by Science, Education and Innovations in the context of modern problems (SEI) by IMCRA - International Meetings and Journals Research Association (Azerbaijan). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).	
Received: 11.09.2025	Accepted: 15.11.2025
Published: 25.12.2025 (available online)	

Introduction

The idea that traumatic Research History (Trauma studies history), as Scientific The direction , to some extent, represents XX. Century Culture as " Insanity" " Study of Philosophy " Tradition . Row In the opinion of the authors , any Closed And In a society with limited freedoms Life Presents a traumatic , unchanging sequence of events The situation And Such Society Subjects are permanently in post-traumatic Neurosis In this situation , it becomes clear that Why? It already represents half of it. About a century More Long time During the research of both " clinicians " (psychoanalysts , psychiatrists...) and " critics " (post-Freudians , post-structuralists...) Interest No Only (and Neither so much) Individual Psychological A situation that suffered Terrible event , but collectively, Society A situation that Response caused various types of disasters Through release from trauma and normalization .

1990s From the years of Oshana Fellman (Shoshana Felman) , Cathy Caruth , and Dory Laub 's research With merit Appeared Term Historical Trauma , who Various definitions and Features By updating Possible Made it Traumatic On experience , as Sociocultural And Historical Reality On the event, Discussion . Interest Historical Trauma , as Society Condition Study Methodological Instructions of unity, Towards Seriously Increased since September 11, 2011 Events Then . Twin Towers The destruction of various Humanitarian Directional Representatives Returned to Fellman by Sounded With the idea Media And In general, Society Formed and established in analysis Critical Regarding the review of approaches; that Historical Injury To overcome It is necessary In a new way Let's take a look. National History Features And Self-identification In connection with the above, an individual Traumatic Experience And Historical The need to study the issue of event correlation .

In this study, by discussing and analyzing the narrative we selected (Shorena Lebanidze's "If necessary, I will make you speak")) We attempted to identify common patterns and individual (taking into account national specifics) approaches in women's traumatic memory; to show how women have historically expressed their traumatic experiences; to reveal the narrative approaches and themes that the Georgian national dimension adds to the global discourse on traumatic memory. We believe that by placing women's narratives in their specific historical and cultural context, a relevant answer will be given to the question of how external factors influenced the representation of trauma and how these narratives contributed to women's participation in the broader social dialogue. Thus, we believe that the study will make a certain contribution to the study of the aesthetics of trauma and the concepts of traumatic memory; It will offer those interested in the issue a perspective on how Georgian female authors express traumatic experiences in their works and how these articulations have developed over time; what impact it has had on the wider society.

Methodology

research on the analytical novels mainly using the comparative method; we needed the comparative-typological method to group and divide the texts to be analyzed, to sort the retrieved material, on the basis of which we summarized the main, general and specific issues of the research problem. Also, the topic of the research determined the consideration of the conceptual interpretation method and interdisciplinary methods. The use of the above-mentioned methods helped us to present our basic thesis that The novel by the author we have selected is, to some extent, a source of the latest history of Georgia; the charm of the narrative presented in the novel is that it considers subjectivity (which academic science does not recognize) to be a virtue. In the analyzed novel, an event saturated with the concept of traumatic memory - the Great Terror/Great Purge of the 1930s - is presented through a subjective prism, pedaling on sensitivity and sensitivity, sometimes presenting such details and marginalized facts and characters that would never fall into the field of view of academic science ; this is precisely what strengthens the reader's interest in this type of fiction.

Results and discussion

Yale University The professor Shoshana Fellman in the 20th century Post-traumatic called And For him/her Characteristic Main Discursively As a model a priori The testimony was given by the work , which Medicine Professor Dory Near Laub Together It was written. And in 1992 Published in , scientific It is quite difficult for society Questions to put , which To this day , it remains somewhat unanswered; e.g., what represents Display Traumatic Event About ? How is it transformed ? Display fact (which Authors No Only Holy Legal Discourse In

terms of perceive) Flexibel A historical narrative that Nowadays Unimaginable As a document Experienced Prose Without, etc. This Questions existence , on which Unambiguous Answer No There is , inevitably causes The difficulties that in front of All The critic sometimes turns out to be traumatized. Narrative At the same time , nowadays Fellman , Laub And Their Colleagues by Society Historical And Cultural Condition To study Proposed Such Concepts such as Testimony , post-traumatic Stressful Syndrome And Historical Trauma , Widely Used by many scientists by (Felman Sh. & Laub D., 1992) .

Exactly The figure of the witness , as a condition for the origin of representation, returns To the public The ability to see traces of memories that have been erased from memory. According to Dutch researcher Franklin Rudolph Ankersmit , " The past" Overcoming Only That Conditionally Maybe to happen that We We will be able to That Final History A story that we will refuse Exactly This History To tell Ability thanks to " (Ankersmit, 2003, pp. 467-468.) ; This means that Only Of the past Objectification Witnessing what happened And Current Events Collective Identity Between Differences Discovery gives Historical Census Opportunity . Thus , the witness It makes us feel " Without " myself , that is Impartial , objective As an observer , whose Responsibility Apply No Only Of the past about events , but Our History All Possible It is on the basis of the above theoretical framework that we will discuss the representation of the largest wave of repressions carried out in the USSR in the 1930s in historical terms. Trauma , as Society Condition In the perspective of study . It The Great Purge/The Great Terror¹ went down in history by name. We note that Bolshevik terror, repressions, and the labeling of individuals undesirable to the Soviet dictatorship as "traitors to the nation" or "children of the enemy" It was not alien to the Soviet Empire in its early stages, in the 1920s; but in the 1930s of the last century it acquired a completely different scale. During this period, not only the so-called people's Enemies, But their family members. The Bolshevik dictatorship suppressed common sense in society; general fear and uncertainty reigned in society; people lost faith in the future, a sense of perspective. In this study, various Features We will discuss, with update , how the historical Trauma in women's narratives , which made it possible to discuss the work under analysis Traumatic On experience , as Sociocultural And Historical Reality About the event .

In the 1930s, the word Algeria in the USSR² Associated with no Not with an African country , but with the Akmolín women's camp located in the steppes of Kazakhstan . Total, Algeria About Eight thousand Woman was present , whose spouses, ironically, Several By year Previously, a significant contribution They were included in the industrialization and collectivization of the Soviet Union . Similar camps existed in the Trans-Polar region, in Vorkuta, where thousands of A woman , the so-called Chesir (ЧСИР- член семьи изменника родины - a member of the family of a traitor to the homeland) was serving a sentence. Since 1937 Algeria up to one hundred and fifty Georgian The woman passed; including: silent film star Kira Andronikashvili , whose husband, the German-born Russian poet Boris Pilnyak, was executed in 1937 for supporting Stalin Writers Protectable Letter He wrote to; Ketusia Orakhelashvili , whose husband, the chief conductor of the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theatre, Evgeni Mikeladze , and his parents, Mamia and Mariam Orakhelashvili, were shot in 1937; actress Tamar Tsulukidze , whose husband, Shota Rustaveli The theater's artistic director and director Sandro Akhmeteli was shot in 1937; Tamar Bagrationi ,³ whose husband, writer Niko Mitsishvili, was shot in 1937; the first Georgian director The woman Nutsa Ghoghoberidze-Khutsishvili, whose husband, party functionary Levan Ghoghoberidze, was shot in 1937, and others.

of the Great Terror/Great Purge of the 1930s , below is a document from the project , which was called “ Information Freedom Development Institute (IDFI) of Georgia Internal Affairs Ministry And International In collaboration with the Society " Memorial " " Stalinist " Lists " From Georgia " - represents Georgia First Electronic Data The base , which was built in 1937-1938 Repression Victims About Short Biographical Information Contains (in total, information is presented on 3,616 repressed about) . This He/She There are people whose On repression Stalin Personally Signed Hand . The above-mentioned document gives us a clear idea of the scale of the tragedy, which Georgia Only One In the month of 1937 In September, Stalin's Direct By order It hit. September per month Stalinist With lists Of the repressed Statistics Miscellaneous The indicator looks like this : 485 - person Convicted; 420 - shot (410 men /

10 women); 65 - sentenced to 10 years Exile Labor - corrective In the camp (61 men / 4 women). The oldest / youngest of the repressed (men/women) Age : Revaz Levani Son Mchedlishvili - 17 years old School Student ; sentenced to 10 years Freedom Deported ; exiled Solovetsky In prison , where in 1938 Died; Jacob Ivan's Son Mechelson - 71 years old Gardener ; Shot; Tamar Beglar's Daughter Tevdoradze - from Akhospir - 21 years old Haberdashery Factory Calculate ; sentenced to 10 years Freedom Prevention In exile ; Mariam Plato's Daughter Orakhelashvili - 50 years old Education Public Commissariat Higher School Department Chief ; shot .

Given the scale of the repressions carried out by the Bolshevik system, it is natural to ask when the topic of the repressions of the 1930s entered Soviet literature, both in a dominant and non-dominant form. The taboo topic of the Great Terror was more or less openly discussed only after Stalin 's death, during the so-called thaw. (thaw) It became possible in the period. Considering that, according to statistics , up to 1200 members of the USSR Writers' Union were killed during the repressions of the 1930s was sacrificed, and six hundred were released from the camps after Stalin's death , it becomes clear how important it was for writers and artists in general to raise the topic of political repression; among them, we mean the young writers who came on the wave of the "thaw". (Eggeling, 1999, p. 19).

As for Georgian writing, the theme of the repressions of the 1930s constitutes a rather interesting niche in the work of female authors; in one case, the narrators/witnesses are the children of the repressed, who have been living with the trauma they suffered in childhood for decades, and in the other case, the narrators/witnesses are young authors who realize how important it is to Intergenerational connection Recovery ; Total Little , knowing what It happened. Yours ancestors. Different family members may have different attitudes towards what happened and their assessments may differ. It may be contradictory , but young authors are interested in memory. to maintain , more Correctly , his Restoration , own They consider it a duty; Some kind of In an attempt , somehow They coped. The trauma that They Ancestors Come to me. And Which , indirectly , they themselves feel. In both of the above cases, the narrators convey the family history, because Of the past About Truth Knowledge brings some relief. will bring what No I must Terrible Or Unacceptable to be He/She.

Regarding the representation of the traumatic experiences of the 1930s, we would first of all single out non-fiction 'literature; it is This Category The text represents In 2020, the Saba Literary Prize laureate (nomination - Best Essay and Documentary Prose of the Year), Shorena Lebanidze's book "If Needed, I Will Make You Say It", which united the personal tragedy of three people who were sacrificed to the Soviet regime . The collection reflects the personal tragedy of the victims of the Soviet totalitarian regime in different years. The author presents a distinctive feature of the repressive regime - to use, subjugate and, in case of resistance, physically destroy people who think differently. Taboo Archives Because of, 1930s period Last one was not available until now ; however, changes in recent decades have made it possible Made it Archival Access to documents; consequently, there has been an increase in interest, on the one hand, in prominent representatives of Georgian culture (musicians , writers , directors ...), who They were victims of the Great Terror/Great Purge. and, on the other hand, their family members , as Events To the eyewitnesses who shared with us the tragic era Wrist beat .

In terms of the theme of the repressions of the 1930s, the novel "The Return of the Maestro. Chronicles of the Life of Evgeni Mikeladze" included in the collection is noteworthy for us, the axis of which is formed by the diaries found by Evgeni Mikeladze's daughter, Tinatin Mikeladze, in the family archive of her mother, Ketusia Orakhelashvili, who died in 1975. Tina Mikeladze hoped that through these diaries she would be able to get closer to her mother, who had been estranged from her in life, and to return her; through her mother - to return her father, the chief conductor of the Tbilisi Opera Theater, Evgeni Mikeladze, and through both - to the years of childhood torn from her hands. However, as soon as she read the first faded pages of the manuscripts, it became clear to Tina Mikeladze that she herself was part of the failed dialogue with her mother; A part of the memories, which originated from one faceless day in November, when unknown men in black coats came to arrest his mother and arrested his twenty-three-year-old mother in front of the three-year-old child, whom he later saw at the age of seventeen. In fact, two women in the

novel give testimony about the 1930s Traumatic Events About : Mother - Ketusia Orakhelashvili and daughter - Tinatin Mikeladze. It is their testimonies that The fact is transformed before the reader's eyes into a flexible It is not difficult to imagine the scale of its generalization, given the documents cited above, as a historical narrative.

The diary begins with Ketusia Orakhelashvili recounting an ominous, somewhat prophetic dream ⁶; she directs her daughter, Tinatin Mikeladze, to her first traumatic memory: the scene of her mother's arrest and her own terrifying voice - "Mother, mother, mother!" - which accompanied her throughout her life. This was accompanied by an unconscious pang of conscience; living with a sense of guilt that she was the child of "traitorous" parents and should be grateful for being allowed to live in Soviet society; for being allowed to live in the pantry of her parents' house with her one and a half year old brother and a nanny. However, this too soon came to an end. People's Artist of the Georgian SSR, opera soloist Ekaterine Sokhadze, who moved into the five-room apartment of the Mikeladze-Orakhelashvilis, could not stand the fact that a three-year-old child was chasing her, shouting "Mom, Mom" and trying to cling to her skirt (what was a child supposed to do when he saw a woman dressed in her mother's clothes, shoes, and other accessories - a bag, jewelry... - in her apartment?!); ⁷At Ekaterine Sokhadze's request, the "enemy children" and the nanny were soon forced to leave their apartment.

Tina Mikeladze recalls the years of living on Sovho Street, in her father's childhood home, with her aunt Tamar; it was she who brought to life the images of Yevgeni's childhood and youth, his first successes. Yevgeni Mikeladze and Ketusia Orakhelashvili came from completely different social circles; Yevgeni Mikeladze's father was a Baku police chief; his older brother, Grigoli, was a personal adjutant of the Shah of Iran, a general; after 1921, his sisters - Anastasia and Ketevan - emigrated (to France and America); only Tamar and Yevgeni remained on Sovho Street, with their mother - Mariam Eristavi. As for Ketusia Orakhelashvili, her father, Mamia Orakhelashvili, was one of the creators of Bolshevik Georgia, a member of the Revolutionary Committee, in 1932-1937 - in Moscow Marx - Engels - Lenin Institute Director's Deputy ; 1934-1937 - of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Audit Commission Member And Soviet Union Central Executive Committee was a member ; her mother - Mariam Orakhelashvili - was the head of the women's department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. However, it is beyond the competence (and interests) of Tina Mikeladze to distinguish between truth and falsehood; she describes the political situation in Georgia and the cruel totalitarian regime that no one wanted; which sacrificed her family members - both supporters (the Orakhelashvilis) and opponents (the Mikeladzes).

Evgeni Mikeladze and Ketusia Orakhelashvili first met in Leningrad in 1930, when the 27-year-old maestro conducted a Strauss waltz on the open stage of the Stella Garden Summer Theater; after the concert, he met 16-year-old Ketusia Orakhelashvili. Tinatin Mikeladze tells us about her parents' dizzying love affair, which culminated in marriage three years later; And all this took place against the backdrop of the young maestro's successful career (Brahms's first performance in Tbilisi, Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty", conducting "Carmen" by heart, Donizetti's "Don Pasquale", Debussy's "Nocturnes", Tchaikovsky's "The Queen of Spades", Prokofiev's works first performed, etc.).

The novel details a scene that took place outside Ketusia's house, which, as the narrator later realized, proved fatal for at least four members of her family. Ketusia was on her way to the premiere of "The Queen of Spades" at the Tbilisi Opera House when a black car stopped in front of her house ; USSR Internal Affairs Public Commissar Lavrentiy Beria politely invited her into the car: "I'll take you wherever you want." However, Beria's smile froze on his face as he noticed the People's Commissar of Education coming out of the entrance, who did not respond to the greeting and addressed his daughter sternly: "Tell me, how do you allow yourself to be so frivolous with this...<...> toad? You have nothing to do with it?" (Lebanidze, 2021, p.73). Obviously, Lavrentiy Beria would not forget this scene and as soon as the opportunity arose (in particular, after the promotion of Mamia and Mariam and their transfer to Moscow) he himself would become the leader of Georgia. Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) Committee First of all The secretary would not hesitate to take revenge.

To the author of the novel, it should be said that the work is devoid of cheap gossip; documents are cited on the political situation that developed in the USSR after the assassination of Sergei Kirov (renewed mass arrests, open trials, the search for traces of criminals and traitors among the first generation of Bolsheviks ...). It was against this background that Beria was able to eliminate his competitors and gain Stalin's unconditional trust. Returning from a brilliant decade in Moscow, Yevgeny Mikeladze was perfectly aware of the changing political climate; an endless series of denunciations and condemnations began in Georgia : he was arrested Rustaveli The artistic director of the theater , director Sandro Akhmeteli; "Durujeli", "Tsipsperkantseli" disappeared from creative life every day; "No one mentions the names of Paolo Iashvili, Titian Tabidze, Mikheil Javakhishvili, Sandro Akhmeteli anymore. Mentioning them means signing one's own sentence. Fear is reigning in the city. Fear is reigning even under the Mikeladzes' roof" (Lebanidze, 2021, p. 120).

In June 1937, Mamia and Mariam Orakhelashvili were arrested in Moscow; the "traitors to the homeland" were imprisoned in Ortachala, Tbilisi. On November 5, at dawn, footsteps were heard in the hallway of Sololaki's apartment. The people who had come climbed two floors and headed for the third. Ketusia, frozen in her blood, thought that they were going to the mistresses (later, she would regret this momentary shortness of breath for the rest of her life). Eric and Nina Bedia were moved into their apartment after Mamia and Mariam were arrested; only a thin wall separated the families, and Ketusia and Nina were friends. Eric Bedia had been a comrade-in-arms of Lavrentiy Beria in the not-so-distant past, but their paths parted when Beria wanted to author Eric's book, "The History of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia." Beria chose the shortest way to claim authorship: he killed Erk Bedia and then sent leather gloves to his wife. As Ambo Ben said, during interrogation in his office, when Beria asked another question: who wrote the "History of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia", Nina threw an ashtray and shouted: "Erik, Eric". Beria shot the woman on the spot. Ketusia heard this story in prison.

In the Tbilisi Opera, the situation was getting worse day by day; Opera director Akaki Chkonია was shot dead in his own office by the Opera Party Committee four months after the end of the Moscow Triumphal Decade. The same Party Committee "for just a minute" took Yevgeni Mikeladze out of the meeting of the Arts Council into the corridor, where the members of the Party Committee were already waiting for him. This happened on the night of November 4. The directive for the campaign to discredit the maestro came from the authorities; Beria's right-hand man, Major Kobulov, was in charge of the case; MIA Commissioner Sergo Goglidze was appointed as the investigator. Not only protecting the "enemy of the people", but also silence and non-interference in the denunciation meant complicity. Even in these harsh conditions, individual individuals, at the risk of their lives, managed to protect the maestro. The novel cites an episode when, during the next session of the enemy denunciations , one of the opera soloists noted that the maestro made fun of Soviet orders, because while in Moscow, during the decade, in the evening, he advised a singer standing in front of the theater in a jacket to go inside the building and put on a coat, otherwise he would catch a cold, and medals and medals would not help. "Evgeni Mikeladze was making fun of the Soviet order," the soloist concluded with a solemn grin, which was followed by an immediate reaction from Davit Andghuladze; he grabbed the "useful idiot" by the throat and shouted: "He cared about your voice, Viro, you are making fun of him..." (Lebanidze, 2021, p.136). Also memorable is the display of human generosity on the part of Davit Gamrekeli; at a meeting of the theater's management organizers, which was also attended by Lavrenti Beria, he stated that the Opera House was having a hard time without Evgeni Mikeladze, to which Beria received a cold response: "We'll manage somehow." (Lebanidze, 2021, p.136).

Before the repressions hit, Tinatin and Vakhtang lived on Sovo Street with their aunt Tamar and nanny. Ketusia managed to come to Tbilisi from Kazakhstan several times with the permission of the camp commander. Tinatin tried to say "mother" every time, but she couldn't; she finally managed to say it later, at the age of seventeen. Fate did not satisfy Tina and Vakhtang even with their fatherless childhood; on the night of December 1951, they, along with their aunt Tamar, as relatives of an "enemy of the people," were deported to the Kazakh steppes along with other families (the Menagharishvilis, Gabashvilis, Kvarianis, etc.). Ketusia managed to get them to the Kazakh village of Zerenda, where she lived with her newly formed family. After Stalin's death, the amnesty primarily affected political prisoners. Those who returned to Tbilisi were officially informed that Mariam and Mamia Orakhelashvili had been shot in Ortachala prison; and Evgeni Mikeladze had been executed on the forty-first day of his arrest.

Ketevan learned the news about her parents and husband during the high-profile, month-and-a-half-long trial of the Chekists; she learned that Mamia could not bear to watch her wife suffer and signed everything; Mariam did not break down, did not sign a confession, for which she was tortured using medieval methods. During the trial, Ketevan heard how the head of the investigation department, Nikita Krimyan, had whispered in her ears,⁸ Rifle Cleaning Shompol (Russian : Шомпол) to his wife Only Because With batons When beating , other From prisoners In contrast , it looks Yes No , ears. It was hard for Ketevan to listen to all this; she was taken out of the proceedings on a stretcher, but the next day she stubbornly went to court again to listen to new witnesses herself. According to Tina Mikeladze, her mother could not learn to live with the pain; the wounds inflicted remained unhealed and painful. It is noteworthy that Ketevan Orakhelashvili's face was preserved for us in film footage; she created her mother's face in Lana Ghoghoberidze's film "Several Interviews on Personal Matters". We should also note that the script for Tengiz Abuladze's "Repentance", the prototype of whose main character, Sandro Barateli, is Evgeni Mikeladze, and individual scenes - the episode of baking cakes and the dream described in detail in her memoirs - are based on Ketevan's biographical details.

Ketusia Orakhelashvili's diaries are yet another testament to the indecipherable nature of traumatic memory; the horrors endured in the steppes of Kazakhstan and in the camps over the years could not dull the bitterness of the first day of her imprisonment. This woman's life ended on the morning of November 5, when she was dragged from her home, her hair disheveled, her stockings disheveled, her hair unkempt, her dress unbuttoned, and the hysterical cries of a three-year-old girl: "Mom, mom, mom!" Despite her physical existence, Ketusia Orakhelashvili remained in the past; for her, life with the Maestro was a time gone forever, never to be returned. The novel ends with the last diary entry: "The days following November are the hardest, most hopelessly hard. Are they sad? No, they are full of truly terrible memories. Three decades have passed, but I remember everything from the beginning and more intensely. Perhaps because the pain has also matured. I am writing you a letter, although I know that you have not been alive for a long time. I am writing you a letter, although I do not know what you would be like today, if you had trusted fate and people. I am writing to ask you: why did you wake me up that night and not let me see that terrible dream to the end? Maybe then my death would not have been so long..." (Lebanidze, 2021, p. 150).

Conclusion

Thus, based on Shorena Lebanidze's non-fiction novel, we can draw the following conclusions:

- ✓ Traumatic Discourse The issue of representation is very important; it represents an eternal In memory Motive of reincarnation The possibility that comes with the past Unspeakable/unspeakable With experience Return Motive ;
- ✓ Traumatic Experience Update Creates a narrative through memories A structure in which the central place is occupied by the witness who carries memories Figure;
- ✓ In the novel under analysis, the author presents the Great Terror/Great Purge of the 1930s through the eyes of two different generations of witnesses. Based on the testimony : on the one hand, of his mother, Ketusia Orakhelashvili - the wife of the chief conductor of the Tbilisi Opera, Evgeni Mikeladze, who was exiled from her homeland for ten years after her husband was shot Traitors In the Akmolin camp located in the Kazakh steppes, intended for wives , and her daughter - Tinatin Mikeladze, who spent her childhood as the child of enemies of the homeland , was deported to Kazakhstan during her adolescence and only met her estranged mother at the age of seventeen;
- ✓ It is precisely the testimonies of the witnesses - mother and daughter - that The fact is transformed into a novel in a flexible way. It is a historical narrative, the scope of which is not difficult to imagine, given the documents cited in the study. In addition, the author of the novel Provides Cultural To create a space in which Historical Injury Feeling Individual Processes They become victims of collective trauma.

Ethical Considerations

This study is based on textual analysis of published literary works, archival documents, and historical sources. It does not involve human participants, interviews, surveys, or the collection of personal data. Consequently, ethical approval from an institutional review board or ethics committee was not required. The research was conducted in accordance with established principles of academic integrity, including respect for intellectual property, accurate representation of historical sources, and responsible scholarly interpretation of traumatic narratives. Particular care was taken to approach sensitive historical and traumatic material with scholarly rigor and ethical responsibility.

Acknowledgements

The author expresses sincere gratitude to the academic staff of Sokhumi State University for their intellectual support and scholarly environment, which contributed to the development of this research. Appreciation is also extended to researchers and historians whose archival work and prior studies on Soviet repressions and trauma studies provided valuable foundations for the present analysis.

Funding

This research did not receive any specific grant from public, commercial, or non-profit funding agencies. The study was conducted independently by the author.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest. The research was carried out without any financial, personal, or institutional relationships that could be perceived as influencing the objectivity or integrity of the study.

References:

1. Ankersmit, F. R. (2003). *History and tropology: The rise and fall of metaphor* (M. Kukartseva, E. Kolomoets, & V. Kataeva, Trans.). Progress-Traditsiya. (Original work published 1994)
2. Eggeling, W. (1999). *Politics and culture under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, 1953-1970*. Progress-Traditsiya.
3. Felman, S., & Laub, D. (1992). *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. Routledge.
4. Lebanidze, S. (2021). *The return of the maestro: Chronicles of the life of Evgeni Mikeladze*. In *If needed, I will make you say*. Artanuj.
5. Rekhviashvili, J. (2003). How the Soviet system destroyed Evgeni Mikeladze. *Radio Tavisupleba*. <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31919464.html>
6. Alexander, J. C. (2004). Toward a theory of cultural trauma. In J. C. Alexander et al. (Eds.), *Cultural trauma and collective identity* (pp. 1-30). University of California Press.
7. Assmann, A. (2011). *Cultural memory and Western civilization: Functions, media, archives*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
9. Caruth, C. (Ed.). (1995). *Trauma: Explorations in memory*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
10. Herman, J. L. (1992). *Trauma and recovery*. Basic Books.
11. LaCapra, D. (2001). *Writing history, writing trauma*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
12. LaCapra, D. (2014). *History, literature, critical theory*. Cornell University Press.
13. Felman, S. (1995). Education and crisis, or the vicissitudes of teaching. In C. Caruth (Ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in memory* (pp. 13-60). Johns Hopkins University Press.
14. Whitehead, A. (2004). *Trauma fiction*. Edinburgh University Press.
15. Luckhurst, R. (2008). *The trauma question*. Routledge.
16. Hirsch, M. (2012). *The generation of postmemory: Writing and visual culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press.
17. Kaplan, E. A. (2005). *Trauma culture: The politics of terror and loss in media and literature*. Rutgers University Press.

18. Schwab, G. (2010). *Haunting legacies: Violent histories and transgenerational trauma*. Columbia University Press.
19. Applebaum, A. (2003). *Gulag: A history*. Doubleday.
20. Figs, O. (2007). *The whisperers: Private life in Stalin's Russia*. Metropolitan Books.
21. Getty, J. A., & Naumov, O. V. (1999). *The road to terror: Stalin and the self-destruction of the Bolsheviks*. Yale University Press.
22. Khlevniuk, O. V. (2004). *The history of the Gulag*. Yale University Press.
23. Conquest, R. (2008). *The great terror: A reassessment*. Oxford University Press.
24. Ricoeur, P. (2004). *Memory, history, forgetting*. University of Chicago Press.
25. Nora, P. (1989). Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire. *Representations*, 26, 7-24.
26. Suny, R. G. (1994). *The making of the Georgian nation*. Indiana University Press.
27. Jones, S. F. (2005). *Socialism in Georgian colors*. Harvard University Press.

Endnotes

1. The Great Purge / The Great Terror

The terms *Great Purge* and *Great Terror* entered scholarly circulation after the publication of *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* by British historian and Sovietologist Robert Conquest in 1968. Since then, these concepts have been widely used to designate the mass political repression carried out in the Soviet Union during the late 1930s, including arrests, executions, forced labor, and deportations targeting millions of people.

2. ALZhIR Camp

ALZhIR is an acronym derived from the Russian phrase *Akmolinskii Lager Zhen Izmennikov Rodiny* (Akmolinsk Camp for the Wives of Traitors to the Motherland). It was one of the most notorious camps of the Gulag system, specifically established to imprison women—primarily wives and family members—of men accused of political crimes against the Soviet state.

3. Tamar Bagrationi and Cultural Iconography

A portrait of Tamar Bagrationi dressed in the ceremonial robes of Queen Tamar was painted by the Georgian artist Gigo Gabashvili. Additionally, her photograph, representing the image of a “typical beautiful Georgian woman,” was widely reproduced and circulated in the form of postcards, contributing to the construction of a national-cultural visual archetype.

4. Non-Fiction Literature

Non-fiction refers to a category of literature and media content based on real events and authentic historical figures rather than fictional narratives created solely by the author's imagination. Despite its documentary foundation, non-fiction literature, like fiction, possesses strong emotional and aesthetic potential and can exert a profound psychological impact on the reader.

5. Trauma of Return from Exile

Ketusia Orakhelashvili, who returned from the ALZhIR camps, carried an unresolved traumatic experience for the remainder of her life. According to the recollections of Tinatin Mikeladze, even when mother and daughter lived under the same roof, an invisible emotional distance separated them—characterized by prolonged silence and a sense of coexistence without true closeness. Similar patterns have been noted by other Georgian writers and filmmakers who describe strained relationships with mothers returning from exile, including both female authors (e.g., Lana Ghoghoberidze) and male writers (e.g., Chabua Amirejibi, Nodar Dumbadze).

6. Cinematic Representation of Trauma

A recurring traumatic dream described in memoir literature later served as the basis for a nightmare experienced by the character Ketí Barateli in Tengiz Abuladze's renowned film *Repentance* (1984). The film itself achieved international recognition, receiving multiple awards, including prizes at the 40th International Film Festival and a special award from the Italian National Association of Cinematographers for Best Foreign Film (1988), among others.

7. Testimony of Tinatin Mikeladze

In a 2003 interview with Radio Liberty, Tinatin Mikeladze recalled the moment of her family's arrest: “They took what they caught—clothes, dishes—and left the rest. In the family... Catherine Sokhadze, a singer, later settled in our home and wore my mother's dresses. I was three years old, but I recognized my

mother's dresses. I knew I would follow her. Sometimes I mistook a strange woman for my mother and stayed with her. These were moments of hysteria." This testimony illustrates the deep psychological scars inflicted on children of repressed families (Rekhviashvili, 2003).

8. **Lavrentiy Beria and the Culture of Violence**

Lavrentiy Beria, a leading figure of the Soviet security apparatus, was later executed. Russian historian Lev Lurie described Beria as a "completed sadist" (*zakonchennyi sadist*), emphasizing his role in institutionalized violence. Other figures associated with the repressive system, such as Chekist Nikita Krymov, continued their careers within Soviet law enforcement structures, with some later appointed to high-ranking positions, including posts within republican police administrations and deputy commissariats of internal affairs.