

IA VASHAKIDZE

THE QUESTION OF RESTORING THE NATIONAL IDENTITY IN ACHARA ACCORDING TO 'OMRI,' PRIDON KHALVASHI'S NOVEL

In his autobiographical novel – *Omri*, Pridon Khalvashi, an eminent Georgian writer, tells about the situation in Achara after the liberation of the province from the Turkish rule on the background of the Soviet regime.

The childhood memories of the author reflect the negative influences on the Georgian mentality caused by the forceful conversion to Islam. In spite of the long period under the Ottoman rules Islam could not find footing in Achara to the degree that would have expunged the language and ethnic identity of Acharians.

Pridon Khalvashi pays special attention to the love of the birthplace as the basis for the survival and the credit for the integrity of the common national consciousness, generalized through the prism of the love of Achara.

The novel puts forth the idea about autonomy as the artificial formation aimed at disintegration of the national awareness and sensibility. The author seeks the reason of the incorrect historical definitions of Achara in the imposed political division of one and the same people into two entities that had been nourished with imperial scam to wield its power (in the same methods as having been done with relation to Abkhazia and Ossetia regions); and later on, under the pretext of restoring of Islam, invigorating the fraud by the opponents of the Kartvelian consciousness.

Pridon Khalvashi's novel *Omri* stirs readers' lively imagination about the people's efforts to intensify the sense of national identity under the squalid conditions of the Soviet rule.