

**AVTANDIL NIKOLEISHVILI**  
**MARTINA MINGEGI BILBAO –**  
**THE SPANISH (BASQUE) WRITER IN GEORGIA**

The Basque writer, Martina Mingegi Bilbao takes her rightful place in the history of the twentieth century Georgian literature due to the piece of travel literature written while being under the impressions during her journey in her motherland, the Basque country.

Martina, who at the age of ten due to the Spanish Civil War found refuge in the former Soviet Union in 1937, was for the first time allowed to visit her motherland as a tourist only after twenty-nine years in 1966; she paid another visit to her homeland, the Basque country three years later.

The very circumstances were conditioned not only by the complicated political situation due to the victory of the followers of the Franco regime in the Spanish Civil War but also by the politics that promoted isolation between the capitalist countries and the Soviet powers.

The book written by Martina Mingegi Bilbao has gained immense recognition throughout the literary community, furthermore, growing into a matter of vivid interest among a wider audience of readers.

Such interest towards the book has essentially emerged against the background of the Caucasian-Basque hypothesis concerning ethnic and linguistic kinship.

The author of “My Basque Land” offers compelling facts about the above-mentioned issues. Bilbao is the only Spanish writer who became so fluent in Georgian during the period of her life spent in Georgia that her literary works were composed in the Georgian language.