

"Stream of Consciousness" and Otar Chiladze's Novels

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Otar Chiladze is one of the Georgian writers who developed Georgian prose on the basis of numerous theories and doctrines to better present reality, characters of heroes, and their own worldviews in literary works produced in the interdisciplinary environment of the 20th century. Correspondingly, almost all main trends characteristic of the 20th-century literature can be seen in Chiladze's novels. These include clear-cut Mythologism or Remythologisation, elements of "Magic Realism" characteristic of the Latin American prose, deep psychologism - an attempt to understand the spiritual world of humans, which the author managed to show, taking into account the theories of depth psychology by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. His works in the genre of new historic prose are also noteworthy. The characteristic manner of writing should also be mentioned. Narration proceeds from the subjective perspective and attempts are periodically made to go deep into not only the conscious, but also the unconscious of heroes by means of the method of the "stream of consciousness".

The expressive forms of the literary method of the "stream of consciousness" helped Otar Chiladze to set problems for his prose and make his style more diverse. The method becomes visible in several novels by the author. Initially, it occupied an almost insignificant place in the work entitled *The Iron Theatre* (1981), became stronger in *A Rooster of March* (1987), and reached its peak in the last novel by the author entitled *Godori* (2002).

The term "stream of consciousness" that was first used by the American psychologist William James in his *Principles of Psychology* published in 1890 was not linked to literature, but it was in that work that the problem of the uninterrupted flow of the human unconscious was raised. It should be noted that the term is tentative, because this type of literature is interested in the human unconscious rather than the conscious [6, p. 56-80].

Elements of the method of the "stream of consciousness" emerged back in the prose of the 18th century. However, Edouard Dujardin was the first to use it as a method (1887) [10, p. 5-17]. It took the shape of a method in the 20th century, being promoted by Henri Bergson's intuitive philosophy and the Freud-Jung school of psychology. Bergson regarded consciousness as a leading force in life. He introduced such important terms linked to consciousness as "duration" and "continuum" that express uninterruptedness and fluidity. In one of his works, he formulated a teaching on spiritual memory as the contemplation of the past. It can be said that Freud "rediscovered" the human unconscious and concluded that it

plays a decisive role in human life. The literary method of the "stream of consciousness" set the goal of expressing precisely the uninterrupted and constant unconsciousness. Like the classical method of psychoanalysis, it was to find human problems and ways of resolving them [2, p. 24; 5, p. 18-22].

It is important for the "stream of consciousness" to show how a thought emerges and the processes underway in the unconscious before a concrete thought emerged. Accordingly, its function is to go deep into the unconscious. It is impossible to express the unconscious, because it is not based on speech and there are no forms that could communicate it in written form. Therefore, what an author offers us is just an approximation of a psychological phenomenon [7, p. 5].

The artistic method that helps to achieve the effect of the "stream of consciousness" is an internal monologue, which is the main compositional element of artistic texts in the literature of the 20th century. For its part, internal monologue is a literary analogue of a complicated psychological phenomenon - internal speech, which has no recipient and listener, so it is not meant for someone else's perception. Therefore, in realistic novels, internal monologue aims at shaping psychological realism and in the literature of the "stream of consciousness" it tends to be closer to psychological naturalism [11, p. 163-169]. For their part, internal dialogues are based on associative thinking, which implies thoughts and memories illogically linked to each other only associatively. These thoughts are kept in the unconscious and certain emotions of characters serve to revive them. This is true of James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, where the author, conditionally speaking, elaborated the concept of the "stream of consciousness" (a method not supported theoretically).

Later, William Faulkner renounced the content of the "stream of consciousness" and used it only to attain an artistic effect, which deprived the method of its function of looking into the unconscious, leaving its form alone [12, p. 35-45]. Since then, this method has actively been used in works of various periods and genres, continuing to function in a newly-interpreted shape (*Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon - 1973, and *By Night in Chile* by Roberto Bolano - 2000).

There are effectively no works in Georgian literature written using the method of the "stream of consciousness" (in its classical sense). However, elements of the "stream of consciousness" can be seen in stories written by the Georgian writer Chola Lomtadze in 1907-1914 (*Facing the Gibbet, In Prison, The First of May, My Diary, The White Night*). The movements of the consciousness of characters are in the foreground in these works and the stories are based on internal monologues, which, for their part, are based on "free associations". In addition, the timeframes are blurred and the plot is passive [4, p. 80-88].

Opinions on the relation of Otar Chiladze's prose to the method (or rather technique) of the "stream of consciousness" have been expressed on a number of occasions, but the problem remains unexplored. After his novel *Everyone That Findeth Me* came out, one critical essay said that discussing a novel by Virginia Woolf in his book *Mimesis*, Erich Auerbach differentiated between "individualistic subjectivism" and "multilayered consciousness". In the critic's opinion, "multilayered consciousness" is precisely what we can see in William

Faulkner's *The Noise and the Rage*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and the aforementioned work by Otar Chiladze, because reality is seen in these novels with the eyes of several characters [1, p. 21-22]. Due to this, reality is presented from various angles and sometimes, the same event is presented from various viewpoints. It is obvious that it is the question of the technique of the "stream of consciousness" and the novel by Otar Chiladze is compared with the works of the authors who used the method of the "stream of consciousness". In addition, such "modern technique" is regarded as one of the leading factors of the author's style.

The problem of the "stream of consciousness" technique used in the novel *Godori* is also raised and it is noted that this technique, as a unity of methods and a means of expression, is well adjusted to Otar Chiladze's style. Free associations in the conscious of the characters alternate with reality. Characters recall the past and invent a possible future or a past that has never existed, but could have existed [8, p. 27].

Otar Chiladze is not an author, who uses the method of the "stream of consciousness", and this is natural, because there are many years between him and the method. The author uses only the technique of the "stream of consciousness" in several novels in cases when he tries, like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, to go deep into the most secret ideas of his characters - their unconscious. Only the external side of the literary method of the "stream of consciousness" is emphasised in Chiladze's prose. Like William Faulkner, the author uses only the technique as an efficient artistic device in order to better depict the spiritual state of his heroes. I will consider two novels by the author - *A Rooster of March* and *Godori* - from this angle.

In his novel *A Rooster of March*, which was first published in 1987, we can speak only about the influence of the method or technique of the "stream of consciousness", because the technique is not so functional here and the emphasis is more or less laid on the content of the method of the "stream of consciousness". The spiritual world of characters and their conscious or unconscious desires are shown by means of internal monologues, the chronology of facts is mixed up and the plot is reduced to the minimum. The novel is one long internal monologue of the main character and reality in the background only serves to confirm the physical existence of the hero and the people surrounding him. The empiric reality of the work is passive and what happens or, more precisely, what has happened can be seen only in the thoughts of the character - Niko. It can be said that the past determines the plot and the action at "present" depicted in the novel.

Because of war and father's illness, mother sends 15-year-old Niko from Batumi to his grandparents in Sighnaghi, where he happens to see a murder. This had such a deep impact on the teenager that he felt sick for a month, lying on his bed without moving and going deep into his own thoughts. The internal world of the character is as difficult as simple is the plot. It is from his memories, imaginations and dreams that we learn about various details and events of his life and his attitude towards other characters. The work is so subjective that the thoughts of other characters are also depicted as experienced by Niko. The latter imagines himself as his grandfather, who deserts war and attends Ilia Chavchavadze's death. Niko

suffers instead of both the victim and the murderer. Like his young aunt, he is hopelessly in love with a young man, who went missing in war. In addition to being himself, Niko is all the characters we encounter in the work.

In his internal monologue, Niko is constantly on the verge of associative thinking, because he recalls specific stories in an associative, not direct manner. Depending on the author's involvement in the text, the character's internal monologue often resembles a monologue in a traditional realistic work. However, Niko's monologues do not aim at developing one specific issue straightforwardly together with the author (like in a realistic work). Their aim is, like in internal monologues of the "stream of consciousness", to go deep into his spiritual world and his unconscious, which is supposed to help him in resolving problems. The cause of Niko's illness and the main associative issue raised in the work is Niko's relations with his parents. The fact that mother sent him to Sighnaghi because of his father's illness, makes Niko unwillingly and unconsciously opposed to his father. He "forgives" his father only through the anonymous man, who has become a brigand in the forest and who reminds him of his father. Niko finally recovers from his illness. The denouement also takes place in the subjective world - Niko's dream, in which he manages to understand his role through allusions and symbols.

There are several reasons for regarding *A Rooster of March* as a work using the method of the "stream of consciousness": 1. The novel is one large monologue, where the subjective and objective layers are intertwined, with the subjective obviously prevailing; 2. The work does not have a clear-cut plot and the realistic background is passive; 3. The novel is based on associatively connected facts and memories; 4. All this serves to unveil the internal world of the main hero and possibly to go deep into his unconscious, which was ultimately expressed in Niko's dream, which is the culmination of the work and precisely a message from the unconscious. Given all this, it can be said that the influence of the method and technique of the "stream of consciousness" is obvious in *A Rooster of March*. The novel is not a traditional realistic work, but it is not fully subordinated to the concept of the "stream of consciousness" either. Correspondingly, it is the author's interpretation of the merger of the traditional method and the method of the "stream of consciousness". Since Faulkner, numerous authors have done so.

Otar Chiladze's *Godori* is the author's last novel and can be regarded as a kind of summary of his creation. Like in other novels, the author considers the problem of the crisis in his homeland, post-Soviet Georgia. The tense plot is about relations within a family in order to unveil the spiritual world of his "fallen" and "de-glorified" characters of his era. As regards the technique of writing, in this novel, Chiladze significantly deviates from the traditional manner of narration (that is more or less characteristic of his previous novels) and actively uses the technique of the "stream of consciousness".

There is no single narrator in the novel, so we become familiarised with the plot from individual characters' subjective opinions. Father-in-law Razhden Kasheli establishes sexual relationships with his daughter-in-law Liziko. This becomes known first to the mother-in-law and then Liziko's husband Anton. Embittered Anton kills his father and goes to the

police to admit guilt, but it turns out that the son did not kill his father and it was probably the wife, Anton's mother, who killed him. It is also probable that no one has killed him. After all this happens, Liziko slashes her wrists and finds herself in a hospital for the insane. Anton and Liziko's father become involved in the war in Abkhazia, where he is killed.

After a long introductory narration, in which the author tells the story of the Kasheli family against the background of Georgian history, characters start narrating and until the end of the novel, the author becomes involved only indirectly by using remarks and allusions. The second episode is devoted to internal monologues of Razhden Kasheli and his daughter-in-law Liziko, depicting two sides of one event. The monologues are effectively characters' thoughts loaded with the plot and logical conclusions. This part emphasises the realistic layer of the novel.

The third part is presented from the positions of Liziko's stepmother Eliso. In the empiric reality, Eliso and Liziko are talking to each other and at the same time, there are numerous thoughts and memories in Eliso's mind. The following episode is about the internal monologue of Liziko's father and Eliso's husband Elizbar, where the realistic development of the plot is reduced to the minimum. A memory comes after a memory, but the narrator often becomes involved in the reasoning of the character, expressing his opinions. The tenser the characters' spiritual drama is, the more intensive the technique of the "stream of consciousness" becomes.

The second and third parts of the novel completely consist of the characters' internal monologues, where action mostly unfolds in the heroes' conscious. Tension culminates in the final episodes, where the critical condition of the characters is shown by means of the method of the "stream of consciousness".

The novel *Godori* consists almost entirely of internal monologues. In my opinion, these monologues can be called internal monologues proper, not internal monologues of the "stream of consciousness", but from time to time, mostly at moments of culmination, when characters find themselves in extremely critical situations, monologues switch to associative thinking that leads us to the unconscious, where the logic and chronology of narration are violated and the character becomes lost in his own texts. It is in such passages that the technique of the "stream of consciousness" becomes outlined, which is logically justified, as illogical thinking is natural in conditions of spiritual drama. Otar Chiladze uses the technique of the "stream of consciousness" in internal dialogues only when this serves to emphasise the hero's complicated internal state.

The sentiments of Liziko, who is in a hospital for the insane, are shown by means of an internal monologue, in which we can encounter ordinary sensible reasoning too, but from time to time, the author switches action to the character's conscious, making the text misty. For example: "As soon as I leave this place, I must speak to her, sincerely... There is no more time for this, mother, who is better than mother... Who said this? Who she told this? I don't remember. I don't know. I don't know anything. I know only what I don't know. Both of us should say everything clearly. It is a misfortune to constantly stand on a pedestal. If only someone would look at you. Who needs you!? Who takes account of you? People have

already digested it. They need new victims every day, alive, full of blood... Take off your crown, wash off your make-up, and sit on your father-in-law's knees... Follow the stream of life, from Iberia to Hibernia and back from Hibernia to Iberia... One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six. Seven. Eight. Nine, Ten. Eleven. Twelve. Thirteen. ... [3, p. 365].

The hero realises how grave her behaviour is, but does not assume full responsibility, holding society also responsible, as they enabled Razhden Kasheli to establish such relations with his daughter-in-law. These phrases reflect Liziko's spiritual state in time of extreme despair. Therefore, it was the best way out for the author to present them in the shape of amorphous thoughts. In addition, such a condition is the only one that can justify Liziko's behaviour and gain the reader's sympathy for her.

Associative thinking is important and determinative for the "stream of consciousness". Such thinking is necessary to describe how consciousness works, as consciousness receives numerous impressions, selecting most important from them and establishing associative connections with them [9, p. 369]. Associative thinking is binary in nature. In some cases, associations in the mind of the narrator or a character are based on events that are not connected with each other. Landmarks become related here, giving rise to additional new associations. The other type of associations is thought out by the author and, to a certain extent, makes part of his concept. These are writer's comments added to character's thoughts in order to connect dispersed associations of a character with the main thing the work has to say. As an example, we can refer to Stephen Dedalus mentioning the Vico road in *Ulysses* by James Joyce. Vico is not an associative landmark for Stephen Dedalus, but he is important for the author, because Vico's cultural philosophy points to the main thing the author has to say: The critical conditions, which 20th-century humans full of suspicions found themselves in. The character's and author's associations often intersect and these passages are the main plot developments in the novel [2, p. 21-22; 5, p. 18-22].

Let us revert to Liziko's internal monologue as an example. In her unconscious speech, Liziko thinks about her stepmother Eliso. Then her association reaches the essence of the word *mother* and she starts regarding Eliso as her mother, who is probably the only person who can support her daughter in such a situation. This points to the fact that the character is helpless.

However, at the same time, Liziko's monologue comprises associations that do not belong to the character alone, but also to the author or only to the author. As we said above, the author needs this to establish a connection with the main thing he has to say. For example: "Who needs you!? ...People have already digested it" [3, p. 366]. These phrases are common for the author and the character, because Liziko means her own ordeal and the author emphasises the indifference and injustice of the public, which is one of the most important problems for this author not only in *Godori*, but also in all his novels.

Liziko's mentioning Iberia in the same passage is the writer's association. The problem of his homeland Georgia - Iberia - is one of the leading issues in Otar Chiladze's works. Therefore, Iberia leads us to the main line of the work: The homeland is in trouble and the country once called Iberia is now facing unresolved political and moral problems. In case of

another explanation, it would indeed be surprising for Liziko to think about Georgia in the situation she found herself. She seems to have recalled this word accidentally, but in reality, *Iberia* takes us back to the first page of the novel, where Georgia is described as "a country renowned for its chivalrous nobility and belligerent boldness [3, p. 10].

Of course, the monologue of Anton, who speaks about the fall and revival being in the war, cannot be an association of the character alone, because this is one of the principles of shaping characters in Otar Chiladze's creation. Only the people, who have reached the extreme verge and fallen, can transform in his works. "I am the most freckled girl on the whole coast... It seems that you should reach the peak of vileness to revive again. There is indeed salvation. It is quite close, somewhere here... [3, p. 327].

Likewise, various associations are connected with and determine each other in Elizbar's internal monologue: Kvishkheti - insects - Elizbar is an ant that never sleeps - there are squirrels in the trees - squirrels do not trust humans - humans are killers by nature (this can be regarded as an association common for the author and the character). The next thought that emerges against the background of rattling weapons definitely bears signs of the author's concept: "If there is something that is burning, that something is good. Bang. Homeland. Bang. You can cede anything for this smell" [3: 333]. The author emphasises the complicated situation in Georgia (the homeland is burning) and Elizbar's attitude towards it.

The technique of the "stream of consciousness" that exists independent of the method as a form of expression and an artistic device is most evident in the novel *Godori*, which is completely built on internal monologues, some of which remind us of internal monologues in realistic works, but at the moment, where the plot becomes tense and the tension of heroes reaches a culmination, the technique of the "stream of consciousness" emerges in internal monologues expressed in associative thinking, simple sentences, repetitions, syntactic tautology, and mixed chronology, bringing the character's internal world to the fore. However, it is not the classical understanding of this notion like with Joyce, who uses the "stream of consciousness" to lay bare the mindset of humans in general and in particular, that of the crisis-stricken humans of the 20th century. Chiladze uses only the external and technical side of this method, which William Faulkner purposefully used in his novels. In such cases, both Chiladze and Faulkner aim at showing a character's tragic sentiments and going deeper into his nature.

In the novel *Godori*, the technique of the "stream of consciousness" made it easier to show the features of characters and highlight problems raised in the work. In this work: 1. The technique of the "stream of consciousness" periodically emerges in traditional internal monologues; 2. The author uses the technique to achieve artistic effects at the moments, when heroes are in crisis and associative thinking is the best method for expressing their sentiments; 3. The author does not overload internal dialogues with the plot, which helps him to sometimes go deep into the unconscious and get closer to Joyce's conception.

It is also noteworthy that Chiladze resorted to this technique in the novel *Godori*, when the spiritual troubles of heroes reached their peak. Things are somewhat different in *A Rooster of March*. The main hero of the work is constantly obsessed by emotions and

tensions. Hence, he is blunt. His spiritual drama does not become more acute against the background of the realistic layer of the work and his own memories. It does not develop dynamically, being fixed at a certain moment. The character is in a complicated, emotional, and partially sensible search for his own self. Therefore, in my opinion, the author used the "stream of consciousness" as an expressive method in this work only to the extent necessary to emphasise its content, because that was necessary for the logic of narration and the character's nature. The method of the "stream of consciousness" does provide an opportunity for such manoeuvring.

We can see that the technique of the "stream of consciousness" has a significant role in Otar Chiladze's prose, helping the author to make his style more varied and to better describe his heroes. We encountered the technique of the "stream of consciousness" quite rarely in the author's early novels. However, as time passed, Chiladze started giving preference to internal monologue among other forms of expression and such monologues later became an artistic feature of his prose. Otar Chiladze managed to merge traditional internal monologues and monologues of the "stream of consciousness". As a result, we received a kind of interpretation by the author: The technique of the "stream of consciousness" within traditional internal monologues, which, for their part, are based on associatively connected thoughts and memories that improve the description of the internal world and deep problems of individual characters.

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