
Interview: Prof. Vakhtang Goguadze

The IMF destruction is like nothing Georgia has ever seen in its history

Mr. Goguadze is a doctor in science, a professor, and former rector of the Tbilisi State University. In the early 1990s, he took an active part in the national movement in Georgia, was a member of the National Congress of Georgia, and Speaker of the Parliament. Today, among those in opposition to the ruling party, the Civic Union of Georgia, Mr. Goguadze is known as a politician who rejects radicalism. He is a member of Parliament, and deputy director of the "Laborist" parliamentary group. The interview excerpted here, was conducted in April by Dr. Vladimir Kilasoniya for EIR.

EIR: Mr. Goguadze, we are interested in your vision of intellectual and spiritual life, culture, and the contemporary world.

Goguadze: I don't know whether it is a help or a hindrance for me, that I am a specialist in philosophy, in aesthetics, and a doctor of sciences. True, I defended my *kandidat* and doctoral dissertations in the Soviet period, but I did not encumber my scientific life with Marxist conjuncturalism, and I kept Marxism out of my dissertations. I managed to work primarily on the basis of theology and philosophy. With this vision, I did a lot of work on European philosophy. I was especially interested in the philosophy of Hegel, Hegel's view of universal history, and I worked on the history of philosophy and the philosophy of religion.

I am telling you this, because it is possible today, of course, to proceed strictly from everyday concerns, and to live just for the present day, with its needs and requirements. If, however, one can discern a whole, behind those episodes, everything will look different.

Because I was attracted to the philosophy of Plato and Hegel, my vision may lack immediacy, but I return, besides to Hegel, to such works as Spengler's *Decline of the West*, in which Spengler argues that civilization destroys culture. Many of us, here and in Russia, have not understood this. I have circulated this thesis quite widely, not only among specialists in philosophy, but also among politicians, at meetings in the framework of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. Sometimes, in talking about a country in terms of its attributes of civilization, people discuss how developed it is, with respect to technology, but they forget that that country has a very high spiritual potential and spiritual-intellectual culture.

The fact that Russia is listed as a developing country, as is Georgia, means that we have an incorrect concept of culture: In the notion of "developed," certain criteria of what it means to be "developing" are incorporated, while the question of whether a people has culture or not is considered insignificant. Culture is that spiritual basis, which subsequently transforms into the rational, and the country finds its place. . . .

I would like to share with your readers, my attitude toward America. It is very dramatic. God forbid, that I should not love the American people and culture. I do not love American financial imperialism, which relies on the power of money, the power of the oligarchy. Of course, I do not love such an America. Nor did I love the Soviet empire, and therefore I took part in the national movement. . . .

I am especially glad that my attitude toward the American worldview is differentiated, not one-sided, in the sense that I would say I hate one country, while another country makes a favorable impression. In this regard, Mr. LaRouche's very important conception helps me. I am disturbed by pop-culture, pseudo-culture, what is connected with people's everyday life, connected with money, let's say, or is of a mass nature, and thus loses any spirituality. This brings profit, and then ruin. [Russian: *pribyl*, *gibel*.] Degeneracy is sweet, and more easily accessible than a stern, strong character, a moral character, a spiritual character. The attraction of youth to degeneracy is the horror of our age. And the very greatest horror, is that the pseudo-ideologues offer society precisely such values, as a concept of freedom. Spiritual tempering and education are more difficult. . . .

Therefore, when Mr. LaRouche and the Schiller Institute propose the conception of a universal humanistic, harmonious culture, meaning not some exquisite, decorative thing, it is a question of a worldview, a new conception, a new philosophy — how mankind should save itself, how humanity should return to morality, and to spirituality. Of course, this goal is difficult to attain. Therefore, it may sometimes seem impossible to realize this conception in the near future. But it would be impermissible, for humanity, for a highly developed society to reject moral purpose. Mr. LaRouche's ideas are of great significance, and will have a great history. . . .

EIR: Our readers would like to know about the problems of Georgia today, particularly the economic situation.

Gogvadze: Concerning our economy, experts from the West imported an economic schema, by which we should live, and according to which we should build our so-called economy. In reality, they brought us a schema which has virtually destroyed our national economy. We were told: Why produce your own wines? Better to import from European countries, buy it there, become a market for imported foreign wines. For anybody who even slightly respects our culture, or who knows, say, mythology—even just Greek mythology, about the cult of Dionysus—or for anybody who knows anything about viticulture, or the symbolism of the grapevine, it is an elementary fact, that to tell Georgia to cut down its vineyards—I cannot imagine a greater crime. . . .

Under the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, we adopted this non-market market economy. That is, by means of tariffs, customs barriers, and excises, our possibilities for real integration, real market relations with our main market, the Russian market, were destroyed. We used to sell citrus fruit, wines, tea, essential oils, fruits, and many other products to Russia, while we imported from Russia such products as wood products, grain, fuels, machinery, and so forth. I would like to say that, before the beginning of the 1990s, before the destruction of everything began, Georgia's wealth was assessed (exclusive of the value of land) at 86 billion current rubles, or over \$100 billion. Today, one-third of that wealth (or as much as \$35 billion) has been destroyed, looted, and carted off; the country's economy is being destroyed. Georgia has not known such a barbarous theft and destruction of its resources, not during the invasion of the Mongols and other conquerors, not under Jelal-ed-din, not under Shah Abass, or Aga-Mohamet Khan. There was never anything like this in the history of Georgia.

Under such conditions, we were offered a new conception: financial stabilization, whereby it costs us \$35 million per year to maintain the rate of our national currency, the lari, to the dollar. This is the maintenance of artificial stabilization. Such stabilization is a joke, a bitter joke, a big irony—the only thing that's incomprehensible, is why it should be called stabilization of the currency. Usually, it is considered stabilization, if the population has money in its hands. We are told that the lari has been free of inflation. This is like saying that a dead man does not have the flu. Meanwhile, if a person's pension is \$8 per month, and this is called a pension—this is just a way of mocking humanity, and not just our people. People must not be mocked in this way. How many loaves of bread can you buy for \$8—16, or 20, and then what else? . . .

When we have wages of \$10, \$15, or \$20 per month, and this is called a wage, it is nothing but a slave-labor level. This has brought about genocide, against Georgian culture

and science.

We came out of Soviet science, where billions were spent on science, culture, education, medicine, and so on, and we came from the great culture of our forebears. Georgian cinematography was known throughout the world, on a par with America and Europe. We had world-famous filmmakers, and theater. This has all been destroyed. Now, we have the stabilization of the graveyard. Until recently, there was not even this appearance of stabilization—there was chaos and destruction on all sides. How it happened—I don't think that it was somebody's accidental mistake. There is a deliberate process, of destroying learning: Fees for education are being introduced. This means that, if, after ninth grade, a student has no money to pay, his education ends. And 80% of the population in Georgia lacks money, if not 90%. In any event, if part of the population does have the means, it is only about 20%, but for most of them, they only have enough money, to put it crudely, for bread—never mind spending money for education, or anything else. Therefore, the destruction of Georgian science, Georgian culture, and Georgian education, has put Georgia, the Georgian nation, into hellish circumstances. Georgia has a population of 5.5 million. Now, over 1 million of our fellow citizens have emigrated. They are going even to Australia, to work as shepherds. Our people are working as laborers in various corners of the world, our people, with tears in their eyes, dreaming of their homeland. Engineers and physicians are working, not at the jobs for which they were trained, but performing the lowest-paid labor. Georgia remembers no such hell in its entire history. The Georgian nation stands at the threshold, asking: To be, or not to be? . . .

I want to say one thing—that two years ago, Mr. LaRouche wrote that what America has done to Russia, will come back like a boomerang.

I used to like the old American movies, like "The Great Waltz," or "Sun Valley Serenade." Those were examples of culture, spreading courage, kindness, and the best human qualities. It was through that cultural prism, that we saw America, and American life. But when these horror films have come our way, and all this pseudo-culture, which has so poisoned and sickened our youth, so that it will be very difficult to turn the younger generation away from this, then, again, Mr. LaRouche and his colleagues offer a beautiful recipe for a cure for the up and coming generation, thank God. I welcome the Platonic conception of harmony, the idea of an interconnection of soul and body, rather than the unrestrained notion of freedom, or a bestial aesthetic. That is not freedom. It takes mobilization of forces, for a person to change in a human way. That is, in brief, my vision of the problems facing society.

The world is a small place, and our common task is to make it better. In this, I am in full solidarity with the activity and the ideas of Mr. LaRouche and the Schiller Institute.