

---

# On the issue of the Georgian Renaissance

**Giorgi Sibashvili**


Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University  
Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, Business and Law  
[givi.sibashvili@tesau.edu.ge](mailto:givi.sibashvili@tesau.edu.ge)  
Tel: +995591116511

---

## How to Cite

On the issue of the Georgian Renaissance. (2025). *Tax Policy Journal*, 21(1), 38-45. <https://taxpolicyjournal.org/index.php/tpj/article/view/4>

Copyright © 2025 Tax Policy Journal

TPJ is open access and licensed under  CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Submitted: 27 March 2025 | Revised: 21 April 2025 | Accepted: 9 May 2025

**Abstract---** The concept of the Renaissance or revival refers to the era of cultural upsurge in Europe in the 15th-16th centuries, the ideological content of which is humanism. It means the revival of the ancient understanding of worldly reality. The influence of Christian-religious values of the Middle Ages is also important in it. According to the prominent English scholar Howard Turner, Muslim artists and scientists, craftsmen and princes together created a unique culture that directly and indirectly influenced all continents. The Islamic Renaissance, which Muslim scholars refer to as the "Golden Age of Islam," spread widely not only in countries that followed the Islamic religion, but also throughout the world, especially in Asian-African countries, and, in their opinion, made a considerable contribution to the development of science, philosophy, art, and the revival in general, or the world's Renaissance culture. A typical example of the Eastern Renaissance is the Georgian Renaissance. According to Ivane Javakhishvili, Georgians absorbed the samples of Hellenic creativity and learned from that life-giving Hellenism, the deep and thorough study of which gave rise to the so-called "Renaissance" in Western Europe. Georgia began this movement already in the 12th century, but its completion was hindered by the Mongol-Tatar invasion. The development of the Renaissance theory began in the second half of the 1930s with Shalva Nutsbidze's recognition of the Byzantine Renaissance. The Byzantine Renaissance, he noted in his study ("Ioane Petritsi"), was one of the great currents from which Western Europe received a stimulus for renewal; it prepared the Western European Renaissance. But the Byzantine Renaissance stopped and this cultural movement continued in Georgia, where it found suitable conditions. According to Shalva Nutsbidze, these conditions include the economic, political and cultural upsurge in the 11th-12th centuries and, in particular, the work of Ioane Petritsi and Shota Rustaveli. Grigol Robakidze develops a different opinion about the Georgian Renaissance. He considers the Georgian Renaissance to be the 20th century. In his opinion, it is precisely in the history of Georgia of this century that the signs of the Georgian Renaissance are visible. It should be noted that skeptical views about the Renaissance have emerged in modern science. They view the modernity of the Renaissance with skepticism. They do not consider the Renaissance to be a historical era. In their opinion, the Renaissance is a cultural program or trend based on humanism and classicism, and not a completely historical era. Grigol Robakidze's "fulfilled prophecy" about the development of the Georgian Renaissance in the twentieth century and the achievement of Georgia's independence in the twentieth century, which has already become a reality, requires special attention. Grigol Robakidze's stated opinion provides a basis for more hope and optimistic assertions for Georgia, in the XXI century, about the strengthening and development of the Georgian Renaissance based on national traditions. Georgia is territorially located in the vicinity of two continents. That is why it has always been faced with a choice. Even today, despite the biggest world problems and the most difficult regional challenges, it will not be difficult for it to choose the right path for its future. The basis for such a conclusion is its great historical-cultural, past

experiences and facts. At the same time, signs of compatibility of Georgian national-cultural values with fundamental human-cultural values are emerging and strengthening. It should also be noted that in most parts of modern Georgian spiritual culture, such as science, art, sports, etc. Signs of successes of the most important scale with world resonance are visible. Based on the above-mentioned success factors, as well as against the background of reasonable, balanced international political relations guided by fundamental human values, new contours and opportunities for the rise of all spheres of culture, the flourishing and development of culture as a whole will be revealed in Georgia. Accordingly, the Renaissance, or the revival of the entire culture, will become realistically feasible in 21st century Georgia.

**Keywords**---Renaissance; Humanism; European Renaissance; Eastern Renaissance; Byzantine Renaissance; Islamic Renaissance; Georgian Renaissance.

### **Introduction**

The concept of the Renaissance or rebirth refers to the era of cultural upsurge in Europe in the 15th-16th centuries, and its ideological content is humanism. It is a revival of the ancient understanding of worldly reality, although it also has the influence of Christian-religious values of the Middle Ages.

The concept of the Renaissance was first used by the great Italian artist Giorgio Vasari in the sixteenth century. And in its modern meaning, this term was introduced by the French historian Jules Michelet in the nineteenth century. Accordingly, Italy is considered the birthplace of the Renaissance.

Renaissance is a French word and means "rebirth", while Rinascimento is an Italian word and means "rebirth". The Renaissance was established in science after the Middle Ages as a concept denoting a historical turn in culture and is anthropocentric in nature.

The doctrine of values reflecting Renaissance culture considered man to be the center of the world, as part of nature and the most perfect creation of nature. That is, man becomes the main value. Accordingly, the main motto of the Renaissance era and the center of public interests is "a real person, in a real environment". The Renaissance spreads from Italy throughout Europe and is celebrated under the name of the European Renaissance. The Italian or European Renaissance is sometimes identified with the beginning of the modern era. At the same time, doubts are arising in Europe about the signs of a non-European, or Eastern, Renaissance. In this regard, the book by the Swiss orientalist Adam Metz with the impressive title: "The Renaissance of Islam" is noteworthy. The author of this book expresses his views on the existence of a whole range of cultural phenomena containing material and spiritual values that developed in the 9th-10th centuries of the Arab Caliphate. Which were

considered by many scholars as signs of Islamic cultural upsurge, or Islamic Renaissance culture.

The Islamic Renaissance, which Muslim scholars refer to as the "Golden Age of Islam", was widespread not only in countries adhering to the Islamic religion, but also throughout the world, especially in the countries of Asia and Africa with Muslim faith. According to them, the Islamic Renaissance made a significant contribution to the development of Renaissance culture throughout the world, in various fields of science, art and culture.

Similar views are developed by the prominent English scientist Howard Turner. According to him, Muslim artists and scientists, craftsmen and rulers together created a unique culture that directly and indirectly influenced all continents.

A typical example of the Eastern Renaissance is the Georgian Renaissance. About which, Ivane Javakhishvili is the first to note that Georgians tasted the samples of Hellenic creativity and learned the life-giving Hellenism, the deep and thorough study of which gave rise to the so-called "Renaissance" in Western Europe. According to Ivane Javakhishvili, Georgia This movement began already in the 12th century, but its completion was hindered by the Mongol invasion.

The criticism of "Eurocentrism" and the development of the theory of the Eastern, in particular the Georgian Renaissance, are associated with the name of Shalva Nutsubidze. Nutsubidze's recognition of the Byzantine Renaissance creates the idea that the Eastern Renaissance existed earlier than the European Renaissance and that the Byzantine Renaissance was one of the great streams from which Western Europe received a stimulus for renewal, which prepared the Western European Renaissance. The Byzantine Renaissance stopped and this cultural movement continued in the economic, political and cultural upsurge of Georgia in the 11th-12th centuries, in particular in terms of the work of Ioane Petritsi and Shota Rustaveli. Grigol Robakidze develops a different idea about the Georgian Renaissance. He predicts a Georgian Renaissance, or a total cultural revival, in the 20th century. In his opinion, it is precisely in the history of Georgia of this century that the signs of the Georgian Renaissance are visible.

Of these signs, he considers the "Tsitsamuri Valley" to be the most important and mystical symbol of the birth of the Georgian Renaissance, the greatest national tragedy of Georgia in the 20th century, the murder of Ilia Chavchavadze. Even today, his soul-stirring words are perceived as a mournful call and an unhealed, eternal wound: "A Georgian killed a powerful commander of Georgia." "And when he looked at his own blood-stained hand, the murderer saw the face of Georgia, and never had a Georgian felt Georgia so intensely as at this tragic moment, when his immortal, devoted, and loyal son was sacrificed by his homeland." (Robakidze, 1917).

According to Grigol Robakidze, the Renaissance era in twentieth-century Georgia began with this great national, tragic event and will be strengthened as an era of great change, great upsurge, or the Renaissance era in twentieth-century Georgia.

According to him, in this century Georgia will either completely perish or flourish. However, despite the awareness of many difficulties that exist against the Georgian Renaissance, he predicts the prosperity of his own homeland. For this, he considers it the task of Georgian history to overcome these difficulties. And for overcoming, he considers it necessary to understand the causes of these difficulties. The first difficulty named by Grigol Robakidze is more anthropological in nature. According to him: "Not a single people initially It was not molded into a plasma:" (Robakidze, 1917).

To support this opinion, he cites the history of the Greeks, the French, and the Russians. However, he believes that in this respect the example of the ancient Greeks among the peoples is a brilliant exception.

In his opinion, Georgia also experienced this process, one of the signs of which he considers the particularism existing in Georgia: "In us, Temur particularism manifests itself with terrible intensity: Imereli, Kartli, Kakheti, Guruli, Mingreli and others, each of them is a branch of the same tree. This is a kind of diversity, a rich variety." (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, the second difficulty is that: "Our history does not know cruel absolutism. And he believes that absolutism is both necessary and necessary in history, because along with many cruel sides, it has one very important side: "It creates a single whole psyche. It embodies the will of the nation. Robakidze, To support this opinion, he cites the history of the Greeks, the French, and the Russians. However, he believes that in this respect the example of the ancient Greeks among the peoples is a brilliant exception.

In his opinion, Georgia also experienced this process, one of the signs of which he considers the particularism existing in Georgia: "In us, Temur particularism manifests itself with terrible intensity: Imereti, Kartli, Kakheti, Gurian, Mingrelian and others, each of them is a branch of the same tree. This is a kind of diversity, a rich variety." (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, the second difficulty is that: "Our history does not know brutal absolutism. And he believes that absolutism is both necessary and necessary in history, since along with many brutal sides, it also has one very important side: "It creates a single whole psyche. It embodies the will of the nation. (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, due to the fact that in Georgia there was no brutal absolutism, this event contributed to our national fragmentation. In addition, he continues, "there is another oddity in our history. In Western Europe, absolutism was built on the ruins of feudalism, and in us, after weak absolutism, feudal tendencies gradually strengthened." (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, the third difficulty concerns the sphere of influence: "Our history often knows the influence of others, the invasion of the Mongols, the Arab-Persian influence, the Byzantine "interference", the Russian "entry". It is clear that every nation experiences influence. But it is also clear that every healthy nation has an offensive force that copes with this influence. In this struggle, the creativity of the nation is formed." (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, Georgia had an offensive force. This offensive force was not always sharp and steady in Georgia. Our culture, in every sphere, has many "influences" not only embodied and transformed, but also attached to the flesh. This influence - "flesh" is the third difficulty raised against the Georgian Renaissance. (Robakidze, 1917).

In his opinion, the tragedy of culture is also that at some point in history, being under the "glory" is necessary and necessary. And he believes that in this opinion the Marxists are right when they claim that the unity of Georgia was strengthened under Russian rule. Which he calls a "terrible strangeness".

In his opinion: "In political life we have not been able to create a strong and powerful government. This has contributed to the development of an anarchic nature in us". (Robakidze, 1917). However, he believes that the conditions for the Georgian Renaissance are gradually improving. And today or tomorrow Georgia will be liberated, united, unified and the whole of Georgia will overcome many difficulties. There is only one thing that is necessary for us, which we must remember every moment. We are more a people of impulse than of feeling. And the real feeling is our own head and head. Especially now the Georgian must feel Georgia with chivalrous creativity. Only in this case will the Georgian Renaissance flourish. (Robakidze, 1917).

### **Conclusion**

In order to understand the true presentation of the problem of the Renaissance discussed above, it is difficult to distinguish among the different points of view which author's opinion is more correct about the essence of the Renaissance. Since all of them contain true values.

Renaissance, or a complete cultural revival, is possible and quite canonical, based on the emergence of appropriate conditions, to be implemented both in European-

Western culture, and in Asian-Eastern, American or African culture. Also, in any Alcaean state, and not only once, but even twice, etc.

The rise and fall of culture and again a new rise, or the revival of the older one, can be considered as a process operating in accordance with the law of the unity of opposites and the dialectic of struggle. Such a process can arise everywhere in different eras and in different countries, as a result of the establishment of a civilized order in their state, both material and spiritual forms of culture. The positive influence of ancient Greek civilized culture on medieval culture and its consideration as the basis of Renaissance culture raises the question of the foundations of the formation of ancient culture itself. Should we look for it only in the depths of Greek mythology, or among other older or earlier, disappeared without a trace, but preserved in some form, civilizations. Among them, among religious civilizations (it is known that Plato, during his travels in Egypt and Syria, became acquainted with and was somewhat influenced by the wisdom of Jewish rabbis. However, he hid it for fear of being accused of the influence of another religion on him).

From this example, we can see the presence of signs of the Renaissance in religion as well. Which, in our opinion, is the mutual influence of two similar and at the same time different forms of spiritual culture, mythology and religion, on the background of which a new Christian worldview is created. Accordingly, the influence of the earliest monotheistic religion of Judaism on the ancient Greek polytheistic religion ends with the creation of a more progressive, humane, Christian monotheism. Which takes the form of a dialectical triad and, accordingly, the essence of the Renaissance or revival process becomes possible to be explained on the basis of the laws of dialectics.

Accordingly, the Renaissance is not generally the revival of a single state or era, but it can potentially be considered as a relatively more civilized form of the synthesis of cultures formed as a result of the mutual influence of the old and new cultures of any state, continent, era. It should be noted that in modern science a skeptical view has emerged.

Grigol Robakidze's "fulfilled prophecy" about the development of the Georgian Renaissance in the twentieth century and the achievement of Georgia's independence, which has already become a reality, requires special attention.

Grigol Robakidze's mentioned opinion provides more hope and grounds for optimistic assertions about the strengthening and development of the Georgian Renaissance based on national traditions for Georgia in the twenty-first century.

Georgia is territorially located near two continents. That is why it has always faced a choice. Even today, despite the greatest world problems and the most difficult regional challenges, it will not have difficulty choosing the right path for its future.

The basis for such a conclusion is its great historical-cultural, past experiences and facts. At the same time, signs of compatibility of Georgian national-cultural values with fundamental human-cultural values are emerging and strengthening.

It should also be noted that in most parts of modern Georgian spiritual culture, such as science, art, sports, etc., signs of success of the most important scale with world resonance are visible. Based on the above-mentioned success factors, as well as against the background of reasonable, balanced international political relations guided by fundamental human values, new contours and opportunities for the rise of all spheres of culture, the flourishing and development of the entire culture will be revealed in Georgia. Accordingly, the Renaissance, or the revival of the entire culture in 21st century Georgia, will become realistically feasible.

### **References**

- 1) Tevzadze, G. (1995). Shalva Nutsunidze and the Problems of the Eastern Renaissance, in the collection: Philosophy. Tbilisi State University Publishing House.
- 2) Iremadze, T. (2019). Georgian Philosophy of the Middle Ages. Publ. "Favorite Style."
- 3) Makharadze, M. (2003). Renaissance, Humanism and Georgia of the XI-XII Centuries. Publ., "Elfi".
- 4) Robakidze, Gr. (1917). Georgian Renaissance. Newspaper "Georgia". N. 257. 5. Khidasheli, Sh. (1988). History of Georgian Philosophy. Publ. "Science".