

Georgian literary fiction

## ADIBAS

**Novel.** Bakur Sulakauri Publishing. Tiflis 2009. 197 pages**Publishers:** Albania - Ombra, Czech Republic - Dobrovsky, Germany - Blumenbar, Italy - Odoya, Macedonia - Antolog, US - Dalkey Archive Press

War is waging in Georgia. The Russian fighter planes are thundering over Tiflis. Yet the sun worshippers at the open air pool register the tremors as no more than ripples on the surface of the water. The vibrations from the Russian combat helicopters over the Were Park are no more than the rattling of a spoon in a Cappuccino cup. Was the youtube video on the computer turned up too loud? And President Saakashvili's smile on a photo calendar, is that merely a Photoshop effect? There is not a single combat scene in the novel, the war is nowhere and yet everywhere. People are dying in the Russian-Georgian war, atrocities are being committed, yet in Tiflis there is no longer any difference between the real and the fake.

ADIBAS is a drastic satire of urban Bohemia in a globalised world. With what are in fact the two main heroes of the novel, war and sex, Shako – journalist, actor in Georgian Pepsi ads and cynical member of the Georgian "in" set – describes the progressive falsification of his living environment from branded goods through to sex and the medialised war – from "fuck me" to "fake me".

Even though, in concrete terms, the novel is set in Tiflis in August 2008 during the Russian-Georgian conflict, even though it targets the national indifference, a half Soviet, half Georgian legacy, demonstrating the lies and hypocrisy at all levels of society, using short sentences to reveal a kind of cultural anatomy behind the coloured facades of Tiflis, as one critic put it, the book's key message extends well beyond the borders of Georgia.

Burchuladze's publisher Bakur Sulakauri on ADIBAS:

"War is described here in a manner completely different to what we have seen in literature to date. Burchuladze is also one of the best stylists in Georgian literature today. He is a cosmopolitan author and he writes in exceptionally polished Georgian. ADIBAS is a highly tragic novel. It is told with obvious sadness, and although individual passages are full of irony, tremendous tragedy prevails in the background, it is not only about war but, against the background of war, also about the 'Feast in Time of Plague'."

"We are not used to 'war prose' looking like this; no literary canon is bestowed with eternal life, however." *Lev Danilkin*

"... the bold undertaking to tell of war in the glamour language of city novels, in the style of Frederique Begbeider and Bret Easton Ellis." *Russian Vedomosti*

Burchuladze, born 1973 in Tiflis, started writing after graduating from the Tiflis National Academy of Arts. He translates Russian authors, including Dostoevsky, Sorokin and Bitov, into Georgian. Burchuladze is considered one of the most important writers of post-Soviet Georgian literature. As an underground writer he initially provoked outrage within Georgian society with his scandal topics and language experiments and was long ignored by critics. Since the appearance of his novels he has become a leading intellectual and one of the most promising authors, and is beginning to achieve fame beyond the borders of Georgia. After aggressive press, a severe insult on the radio by former president Saakashvili, physical attacks on the street of Tiflis and ultraorthodox publicly burning his books, he emigrated to Germany. Since 2014 Burchuladze lives in Berlin.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
8 languages

**awards**

Best Georgian Novel 2011  
Iliia State University Award 2011  
Bakur Sulakauri Award 2008  
Tsinandali Literary Award 2003

**samples available**

full english  
full german

**other works**

Instant Kafka  
Mineral Jazz  
The Inflatable Angel

## Zaza Burchuladze