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Archpriest Pkhakadze – the Disciple of the Grand Inquisitor:

Apocalypse, Power and Religion in the Short Story *The Drought* by Aleksandre Kutateli

The Drought, a short story by Georgian writer Aleksandre Kutateli (1898-1982), draws a picture of one of the regions of Georgia at the beginning of the twentieth century when the country was a part of the Russian Empire and the revolutionary unrest was gradually stirring up there.

The story describes a Georgian village where the drought and the epidemic outbreak is raging, ruthlessly destroying the plants, the animals and the people. Such state of affairs inspires apocalyptic fears and feelings among the village residents.

The characters in the story fall under two categories: the people with religious sentiments and apocalyptic expectations, on the one hand, and the characters with a revolutionary spirit, who plan to change the existing order in state and are getting ready to establish a new political order, on the other hand. As the epilogue of the story tells, it is the young revolutionary forces that achieve victory when the communist government is already established in the country.

One of the protagonist of the story is an archpriest named Iakob Pkhakadze, a well-educated clergyman with no personal belief, who uses the religious feelings of the others in order to gain power over the people and to control them. This character seems to understand religion the same way as the Grand Inquisitor from the novel *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) did. It seems plausible to suggest that Kutateli, while perceiving Dostoevsky's Inquisitor and creating his own image of archpriest Pkhakadze, was inspired by the work of Vasily Rozanov (1856-1919), namely *The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*, as this book had a notable impact on the twentieth-century modernist writers in general, and on the Georgian modernists in particular.