

Research Article

STALIN AND OCCULT KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract.

It is impossible to publicize previously unknown documents about Ioseb Jugashvili that I have discovered in various archives in Georgia, without the analysis of the already-known materials. To some extent, the content of these new materials is different from the “true” facts that are already known to us. Although the information and documents, examined in this article, are to some extent contradictory, the analysis of them makes it evident that Ioseb Jugashvili’s Biography is not sufficiently studied.

“In the mind of Georgian people St. George has a place of the old main
pagan deity of the Georgians, the moon...”
Acad. Ivane Javakhishvili

The content of unpublished memoirs of Aleksandre (Sandro) Tsikhitrishvili – a son of Ioseb Jugashvili’s Godfather Mikhail Tsikhitrishvili, dated by 1936 is quite interesting. According to his words, “Comrade Stalin – Ioseb Jugashvili was my breast brother and my father Mikhaka* was a groomsman of Beso* together with Jacob Egnatashvili.¹ Keke’s mother Melania was a Godchild of my grandmother. Soso was born in December 1878, my father’s mother Mariam helped Keke during the childbirth”. He wrote, “All these circumstances make me dare to become prudent and consider myself responsible to say all that I know, or I think it will be useful to fill out a biography of our leader. Also, I consider myself obliged to say all that I have heard from my parents”.² I stress this fact, because the memoirs are largely subjective, but defamation of any non-objective information about Stalin at that time was punished at least by forced displacement. Accordingly, these memoirs, to some extent, may indeed be a source of information reflecting the reality.

According to Aleksandre Tsikhitrishvili: “Jugashvili’s ancestors were not born in Gori, they were living in Geri village of Gori province in Liakhvi Gorge and like all inhabitants of this Gorge, they were serfs of Machabeli. Geri St. George’s Icon was their main shrine”.³ Author of these memoirs gives us quite interesting notes about Beso Jugashvili’s origin and his family. We read in these memoirs: “Current South Ossetia

* *Mikhail*

Beso was nickname of father of Stalin, his full first name was – Besarion. Jacob Egnatashvili being groomsman during the wedding ceremony of Besarion Jugashvili and Keke Geladze – Stalin’s parents is not supported by the documents

¹ Archive of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former party archive), fund 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 1-6

² Archive of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former party archive), fund 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 1.

³ Archive of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former party archive), fund 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 2.

was inhabited by the Georgian Mokhevians before the sixties.* After that Ossetians started a mass migration and settlement. Many families became Ossetians, partially Jughashvili as well, to be more precise, Jugashvili".⁴

Herein, initial settlement of the Georgian population on the above-mentioned territories is substantiated by the author as follows: "The Georgians fought long before assimilation, and it is clear from the old Georgian cemeteries with Georgian inscriptions in Java, Gupi and, especially, in Roki Pass. In the following years, especially from the sixties, these inscriptions have been disappeared and they were replaced by the cemeteries with Ossetic inscriptions in Russian transcription and surnames have Russian endings on them".⁵

According to Mikhail Tsikhitrishvili, as a result of Ossetian migrants, a large number of the Georgian population had to move in other parts of Georgia. Children of Zura or Zaza, ancestor of Jughashvili, did the same and they settled in Lilo village, close to Kakheti. "Beso and Keke often mention Geri and used to go there for praying as far as it was their ancestor's shrine".⁶

Tsikhitrishvilis' memoir is interesting to us for other reason, he writes: "The child had a weak appearance that was a reason why parents hasten his baptism. Beso, father of newly born Joseph, made him monk till the three years of age on the name of Geri Icon, a main shrine of their family name – Jughashvili".⁷ In old times in Georgia when newly-born babies were close to death, family members were trying to baptism them as soon as possible, first of all, it was considered that burial of person must take place only after his baptism, and secondly, ceremony of baptism had a function of protection from the illness.

The author of the memories describes the tradition of "child tonsuring" (donation of child to the Church) in Georgia, according to his description, ceremony of "child tonsuring" was as follows: "from the agreed day, child's curls were set to grow... putting on him white garments which were borrowed. Buying a lamb and growing it till the promised day. Beso did the same. They put white clothes on the child and made hairdo.* After three years the lamb became a sheep and Geristoba* was over. Three days before the celebration Beso started his way from Gori with a bullock cart, he visited to Geri icon with his family. Beso was carrying his son Joseph on his shoulders that the icon could give him more blessings and longevity. A priest from Geri held the thanksgiving service, the hair was cut, white clothes were removed, colored clothes were put on and they left the place with the hope that ancestral shrine would grow their child the happiest man".⁸ The author mentions herewith, that "Despite holding the thanksgiving service, Soso (Ioseb) had a weak body structure in his childhood. Especially smallpox affected him, which almost killed him. It is fact that Soso survived, but pockmark was left on his face and hands".⁹

* the 19th century is implied.

⁴ Archive of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former party archive), fund 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 2-3.

⁵ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 2-3.

⁶ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 3.

⁷ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 4.

So, while the child was considered as sacrifice for St. George, his hair should not have to be cut.

Local ecclesiastic celebration in Geri village.

⁸ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 6

⁹ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 6

Stalin's mother, Ekaterine (Keke) Geladze proves her devotion concerning above-mentioned Georgian pagan tradition in her memoir – “The third child was a boy too. We accelerated baptism, not to be deceased without baptism; my mother hangs St. George's shana* to the child's neck and tells to Beso: we should go to Gori for divine sacrifice”.¹⁰ It is interesting, that Joseph Jughashvili's nickname Stalin is formed from the Russian word – “Stal” – steel, which was called a hard iron by the Georgian metalworkers in old times.

About the so called child “monk” tradition is narrated by Ivane Javakhishvili's opuses “in the village Arbo Geristoba, St. George's icon is on 14-15 August this celebration is called as Geristoba. Then it is on 21-22 August for the second time, another is after one week on 28-29 August. There is always too many people gathered there from the whole Kartli they sacrifice heifers, sheep and cocks to St. George and promised is in white color; some people have child monks”.¹¹ Aleksandre Tsikhitatrishvili's mother, Mariam Tsikhitatrishvili* confirms that his spouse Mikhail was a Godfather of Ioseb Jughashvili. According to her, after the death of two newly born children – “wife and husband (Keke and Beso) were afraid to lose the third one and they were going to pray in the village Arbo frequently”.¹²

It is very interesting that in above-mentioned materials included accounts about the tradition that was kept in Georgia from the paganism, from the period of the moon deity worship. According to unpublished memoir by Ekaterine Apshinadze, which I have discovered in the archive, Ioseb Jughashvili visited Telavi, in teacher Ilia Zarapishvili's family. Ilia Zarapishvili was quite educated person, correspondent of Georgian newspaper “Iveria” and public figure. He was collecting ethnographic materials about moon deity, survived rituals and traditions in Georgian region of Kakheti, and he handed those materials to Ivane Javakhishvili.** By the way, famous pedagogues and publicists acting in Telavi at that time, Nikoloz Mtvarelishvili, Vasil Barnovi with Ilia Zarapishvili, were interested in study of moon cult rituals, magic and its extension in Kakheti region.

In Ekaterine Apshinadze's unpublished memories about Stalin we read that E. Apshinadze was grown up in Telavi, at Ilia Zarapishvili's house.** According to Apshinadze “Ilia Zarapishvili had a niece Keto Zarapishvili... a teacher who was an active Social-Democrat”.¹³ Ekaterine Apshinadze was quite close to him and doing her best to help him, even “she was keeping gun bullets (!)”.¹⁴

According Ekaterine Apshinadze, she saw Ioseb Jughashvili (Stalin) at Ilia Zarapishvili's house. She heard from Ilia Zarapishvili that the guest was a good man. In accordance to Ekaterine Apshinadze's description, he was “a swarthy, man with a pockmarked face, and Keto told me that he was Jughashvili, called Koba... There was a meeting in the morning in Mukhiani. It was in the middle of spring”.¹⁴ From the analysis

* A small iron chain.

¹⁰ The Child Brought Up Thanks To Needlepoint (Memories of Stalin's mother). The Archival Bulletin 2008. № 1, p. 45-49.

¹¹ Iv. Javakhishvili. History of the Georgian Nation. Works in Twelve Volumes. Vol. I. Tb. 1979, p. 94. (In Georgian)

* It is interesting that Mariam Tsikhitatrishvili adds, “Soso was six years old when he had smallpox”. It shows the age when Stalin's face became pockmarked.

¹² Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 53, p. 50-54.

* Ivane Javakhishvili wrote a lot books about Georgian history, they also contain interesting information about the Georgian paganism

* This memoir is dated to 2nd of February, 1941

¹³ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 3, p. 273

¹⁴ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 2 (I). Case 3, p. 273.

of other materials we can consider that the story is about spring of 1906 when a social-democratic party meeting was held near Telavi on the place called Mukhiani and Stalin was attending on this meeting. This fact is confirmed by the information available in unpublished memoirs of Telavi residents, old revolutionaries kept in the fonds of party archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. They are about Joseph Jughashvili's (Stalin) visits in Telavi and nearby villages and revolutionary activities held there. Namely, in one unpublished documents whose authors are Telavi residents, it is noted: *"Ioseb Jughashvili visited Telavi in spring 1906 and as we remember Comrade Koba stayed in Telavi more than two months. Comrade Koba was not in Telavi permanently. He was going to different villages of Telavi with Khareba Jibuti, Bitskinashvili Solia, where they were holding peasants' illegal meetings... under Comrade Koba's guidance they formed a Red Detachment against Black Detachments of nobility. Leaders of the detachment were Aleksa Karaulashvili, Khareba Jibuti, Solia Bitskinashvili,*Melitona, Akvsenti Sidamonidze and others".*¹⁵

The ancient imaginations and beliefs of the Georgians were associated with the moon and had been a source of for the Georgian literature for centuries, this is evident by the poetry of the Georgian poets, so-called "Blue Horns" movement and the creative works of famous Georgian writers such as Grigol Robakidze, Konstantine Gamsakhurdia, Chabua Amiredjibi, Nodar Tsuleiskiri etc.

Literary classics who lived in the Russian Empire and later in the Soviet Union as well as representatives of various mystical and secret societies were interested in studying the ancient beliefs and ideas "transformed into folkloric forms", including the moon deity rituals and understanding the perception of the "outer" or "inner" essence of the World, which is partly reflected in their works.

George Gurdjieff, when he lived in Georgia was interested in exploring the preserved rituals and traditions related to the moon culture in Georgia. As the analysis of George Gurdjieff's lectures and books indicate, he was very interested in studying the influence of the moon as the "chief regulator of organic life on earth" on human behavior. He believed that human's life and actions were controlled by the moon and the energy released after the death of a person returned to the moon. It is somewhat reminiscent of the plot of "Master and Margarita", a novel by the famous Soviet writer Mikhail Bulgakov, in which the action develops in the full moon period and the symbols associated with this heavenly body occupy an important place in it.

According to the memoirs of his contemporaries, George Gurdjieff had the resources to influence the people, mastered hypnosis and other skills for human control that revolutionaries needed as leaders for controlling the masses.

George Gurdjieff was personally acquainted with some of the classics of the Georgian and the Russian literature as well as with representatives of various social groups, including the public and the political figures. Gurdjieff's ideas, probably, influenced their worldview. We have information that he personally knew Stalin, but we do not have sufficient material to prove it.

Thus, it is possible to assume, during his youth, maybe Ioseb Jughashvili – Stalin was interested in rituals, legends concerning Georgian faiths and he was able to receive this knowledge from Ilia Zarafishvili. Presumably Stalin was particularly familiar with different elements of moon deity and magic preserved in Georgian everyday life which were used for manipulation of people by priests of cult of the moon. However, above-mentioned is out of my competence and research framework – research concerning those issues requires a researcher with a proper and specific knowledge.

* Above-mentioned Khareba Jibuti was a famous terrorist, leader of so-called "Khareba and Gogia" terrorist group, and Solia (Solka) Bitskinashvili was a famous Social-Democrat Bolshevik terrorist of that time.

¹⁵ Archive of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Division II (former Party Archive). Fond 8. Description 6. Case 17, p. 41-42.

The below mentioned poem will be quite important for the people interested in esoteric issues. I just mention that authors of different books are writing about Stalin, characterizing his personality and considering his interest concerning esoteric knowledge and practice as the basis for his charisma. They mention peculiarities of Stalin's walking, speaking, gestures, skills for having a psychological influence on humans etc.

I assume as a hypothesis – maybe Stalin knew separated elements of moon worship kept in the Georgian tradition which were used by the priest of the moon in Antiquity in order to control people. However, the above-mentioned is out of my research topic and studying this issue requires a researcher having a specific knowledge.

If we add this information to the above-mentioned we assume that maybe Ioseb Jughashvili was interested in old Georgian faith rituals and traditions. I have analyzed a few historical events which were planned by Stalin and I found regularity. When I analyzed dates – the expropriation Tbilisi (Tiflis) Erevan Square (June 13, 1907); the Battle of Stalingrad (started on July 17, 1942); The Battle of Kursk (started on July 5, 1943); the Belarusian Offensive Operation Bagration (started on June 23, 1944) all those events have one common point. Those days are fourth or fifth day from the full moon. I think it will be interesting and necessary to study Stalin's life events and Stalin as a Soviet leader as well as his activities through above-mention information. Who knows, maybe this was Stalin's secret or part his occult knowledge.

Anyway, young Joseph Jughashvili's "positive" attitude towards the moon is well attested in his poetry "To the Moon".¹⁶

To the Moon

Sail on, as tirelessly as ever,
Above an earth obscured by clouds,
And with your shining glow of silver
Dispel the fog that now abounds. With languor, bend your lovely neck,
Lean down to earth with tender smile.
Sing lullabies to Mount Kazbek,
Whose glaciers reach for you on high.
But know for certain, he who had
Once been oppressed and cast below,
Can scale the heights of Mount Mtatsminda,
Exalted by undying hope.
Shine on, up in the darkened sky,
Frolic and play with pallid rays,
And, as before, with even light,
Illuminate my fatherland.
I'll bare my breast to you, extend
My arm in joyous greeting, too.
My spirit trembling, once again
I'll glimpse before me the bright moon.
(Translated from Georgian)

¹⁶ Newspaper "Iveria". October 11. No. 123, 1895 (Published in Georgian)