

Daimones in the Georgian Mythic-Ritual System

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Daimones as they are known is a Latinized Ancient Greek term and denotes *supernatural beings, spirits*. Initially they were perceived as good, evil and neutral beings. The sphere of their activities is mythology (the term used in Malinowski's sense, i.e. narrative of primordial reality). Traditional mythologies, according to J. Campbell's definition, serve, normally, four functions from which the first might be described as reconciliation of consciousness with the preconditions of its own existence (i.e. the mystical or metaphysical function); the second formulates and renders an image of the universe, a cosmological image, in which the range of all things should be recognized as parts of a single great holy picture, an icon as it were: the trees, the rocks, the animals, sun, moon and stars, all opening back to mystery, and thus serving as agents of the first function as vehicles and messengers of the teaching (the cosmological function); the third – traditional function is the validating and maintaining some specific social order (the sociological function) authorizing its moral code as a construct beyond criticism or human emendation. And the last fourth function, which lies at the root of all three as their base and final support, is the psychological¹.

In Georgian tradition (as well as in many other traditions), the universe was perceived as the unity of different spheres, the unity of worlds, which were surrounded by the invisible borders. From the spatial point of view, according to the mythological beliefs (which is reconstructed through the studies of myth, ritual, language and the other levels) the cosmological pattern of the Georgians on the vertical plane are comprised of: **(i)** the upper, celestial world of supreme deities (at first represented by the Sky God, who in the course of religious development was replaced by the Weather God (whose name as preserved in oral tradition, is Zhini Antari, i.e. *the one who is above*) and who, after the spread of Christianity, was substituted by the Christian allomorphic personages of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, St George, Elijah, and others; **(ii)** the underworld, which was represented at first by pre-Christian female deities, personifications of natural elements (earth and water) which after the conversion to Christianity coexist and partially exist in the image of the God Mother; and

¹ Campbell, 1988, 138.

(iii) the world of the living, the societal community with its cultivated plants and domestic animals.

But the cosmology in question also implies the horizontal plane in which outer/inner spaces, non-cultivated/cultivated lands, microcosm/macrocosm, nature/culture are opposed to each other through the correlated personages. Also, the outer world was stretched on the horizontal plane, though at the same time it implied the vertical dimension, whereas the cultivated inner world of the living was perceived as surrounded from all sides (above, under and from outside) by the dangerous world of the unknown². According to the native beliefs these worlds, these zones, were enclosed by invisible borders. Humans constantly attached to these boundaries could recognize kind, evil or neutral spirits – daimones – which moved from the sacred sphere to the profane and vice versa, especially in *liminal* periods of the year i.e. when the one season was changed by the other.

Thus the change of the seasons (together with the attached to them festivals) represents a liminal phenomenon (the term used in van Gennep's and Turner's sense) from the perspective of both space and time. At this periods of the year the thresholds of the inner and outer worlds become vulnerable and, as a result, open for the various undesirable and desirable powers and forces which can penetrate through these passages. In order to prevent such accidents from happening or to protect one against them, particular precautions were taken. The ritual performed in the spatial structure perspective on the horizontal plane is intended to adjust to a broad spectrum of attitudes between the world of the living and the world of the dead and between the past and present. The boundaries of the inner world are constantly changing: it might be a dwelling but also a country, cultivated land, etc. The *centre*, consecrated through rituals, chants and prayers, was the place from where the communication with the supernatural beings (daimones) was possible.

The rituals classified by spatial and temporal archaic principle reveal the constituent parts (realms) of the universe. In addition to the above ordered reality, in the Georgian terms *ukanaskneli* (lit. which is behind the central/middle world and cannot be seen and has the connotation of darkness and dread) and *tsinaskneli* (lit. the realm which is in front of the inner realm) the final and frontal worlds had been revealed, correspondingly³.

As is known, the different modal levels separating one world from the other are not hermetically sealed from one another, though imaginary boundaries are built between the cultivated and non-cultivated (woods, cliffs, sea, etc. / culture / nature areas). In the topography of the *inner world* the borderlines of different

² Abakelia, 2008, 103-104.

³ Surguladze, 2003, 36-84.

realms extend along farmsteads, dwellings, temples, and so on. In the *outer world* they run across the woods, cliffs, seas, lakes, rivers, mountains, etc.⁴. According to local beliefs, there are various passages in the imaginary and built form boundaries (holes, gates, doors, windows, chimneys, etc., which weaken their tightness) and transition from one sphere to another becomes quite possible.

Thus the border symbolism which is associated with the symbolic organization of space (both *inner* and *outer*) is directly based on the cosmological system, results from it and on its turn, forms the icon of the ordered world⁵. Thus fenced with and limited by temporal, spatial and causal factors, the community was surrounded by the so called *outer sphere* which included in itself the kingdoms (realms) arranged around and on the vertical and horizontal planes (the netherworld, the upper world and on the horizontal plane all the unexpected, uncultivated and unknown places) inhabited by dangerous and harmful forces⁶.

On the microcosmic level the picture of the universe is repeated in the symbolism of dwelling house (compare the symbolism of separate loci e.g. that of hearth, vault, the mother pillar in the vertical section of the house and in the horizontal section – on the right, with the so called *samamatso* i.e. the space for men and on the left, *sadiatso* the space for women. The macrocosmic borders are sea, mountains, river, woods, uncultivated lands.

The above mentioned worlds (realms) are inhabited by various kinds of creatures with whom definite symbols and symbolism are associated. According to the psychological interpretation, symbols mostly work on the three levels: in the psyche, traditionally called the microcosm; in society, traditionally the *mesocosm*; and in the universe, in nature, formerly called the *macrocosm* or *cosmos*⁷. Generally humans do not live isolated in shattered little fragments, but in the whole universe and permanently communicate with different spheres. And this is served with symbolism. On their turn, symbols picturesquely and clearly describe the most important things of their concern – the connection between their inner nature and the outer surrounding world. Inner visions seek expression and outer facts seek meaning, for man, and at best symbolism mediates and combines these two. Some symbols are taken direct from nature – for example, snakes, bulls, trees... Other symbols – such as dragons and gods – erupt from the psyche⁸. As is known, on the physical level ideas (thoughts) represent just ideas (thoughts). On the psychic level thoughts are turned into creatures. They walk in the world and influence surroundings. They are dynamic and seek for the materialization and actualization in the visible world of the

⁴ Lévi-Strauss, 1985, 64-76.

⁵ Abakelia, 2005, 22-33.

⁶ Abakelia, 2008, 151-167; Abakelia, 2011, 32-36.

⁷ Chetwynd, 1986, 389.

⁸ Chetwynd, 1986, 389.

living. As spiritual creatures they influence (affect) humans, and modify their relationship with the sacred and the holy. They might be half-human or human-like creatures, non humans, or ghosts, etc.

In mythological beliefs the concepts like *native / alien, familiar / unfamiliar, inner / outer, house (cultivated place) / forest (uncultivated place), day / night* are opposed to each other; and more generally – *world / beyond world*.

From the structuralist approach, the organized world is associated with the inner world / *socium* and the unordered world – with chaos. The personages of both worlds try to transcend each other's borders and reach the opposite world by various means. In *shina* i.e. in the inner world, enclosed, encapsulated by time and space, as in the microcosm the borders are clearly seen and its hermeticity becomes vulnerable by doors, windows and chimneys⁹. And as for the macrocosmic borders they stretch from uncultivated, unknown places. As for the sensuous world it cannot be *a closed system* according to Rene Genon's definition¹⁰. Narrow openings from where the destructive powers might penetrate, according to the traditional symbolism, might appear in the *great wall*, which surrounds and defends this world from the destructive influence of the low, thin infernal layer.

For better understanding of this symbolism in all its assets, it is important to note, that the wall simultaneously defends and limits; and in a certain aspect, it has conveniences as well as inconveniences. But as far as it serves repulsion of infernal attack (in our case, from above, from bellow and from beyond – *n.a.*) then its defending function is expressed more clearly¹¹.

It is remarkable that humans inhabit with the above-mentioned spirits not only the unknown, but familiar and thoroughly cultivated places, as well. E.g. in houses, which represent the microcosm, they have their special loci (predominantly in the right corner of the dwelling place) and are called *saxltangelosebi* which in translation means the *angels of the house* or the patrons of the house (angels here mean supernatural powers and not Christian hierarchy)¹².

Time symbols of the beyond world, which have capacities of negative influence, or good influence cyclically penetrate through the narrow openings of the hermetically sealed with borders space, which are open during the changes of the seasons. (E.g. on the fire festivals during which the huge fires were built on the Maundy Thursday of the Holy week, on *elioba*, i.e. on the holiday of Elijah (2.08), on the Assumption of Virgin Mary (28.08) on the *day of chinkas* appearance (spiritual hairy beings from the beyond world who look like

⁹ Abakelia, 2002, 32-40.

¹⁰ Genon, 2002, 356-357.

¹¹ Genon, 2003, 356-357.

¹² Abakelia, 2007, 23-40.

children) in Spring and Autumn, on *the day of the appearance of Mesepe*, the *sea folk* and during the “visitation” of the spirits of the infectious diseases, called *batonebi*, i.e. lords, etc.

The attacking creatures are simultaneously described as giants (called *devi* or *ochokochi*) and dwarfs (called *chinkas*, who are the guardians of hidden hoard, *Kaji – Smiths* i.e. infernal fire holders, who have quite disastrous aspect). The real world is represented by a hero (who might be a hunter, a fisher...) and as for the revelations of the beyond world, they are revealed in the images of the above mentioned *devi*, *kaji*, *chinka*, *mesepe* and the definite spirits of the wood: *dikhas koch* (earthman), *ochokochi* (giant) *ochopintre*, *tqash mafa*, *Dali*, *kali*, *rokapi*, *mizukhu*, *the mother of the sea*, etc. Personages of both worlds (domains) try to penetrate into the opposite world with different goals. In the “foreign” space *daimones* (*chinkas*, *qajs*, the spirits of the woods) are recognized by high squeaky voices and strange sounds, but they remain invisible for humans.

In certain cases, *daimones* in *anti-space* are visible for supersensitive persons (in our case such individuals predominantly are hunters, fishers and priests) and remain invisible for the rest of the society. Returned from the anti-world the hero receives as a gift marvellous abilities, knowledge, but sometimes, after such experience he goes out of his senses. As is well known from the special literature, humans and spirits (or as we call them *daimones*) communicate with each other by means of dreams or visions in the *liminal* (i.e. border) zones, such can be the above mentioned sea, cliff, cave, different sorts of water reservoirs (sea, lake, river), woods, etc.

The *daimones* which penetrate into the real world change their true face into the face of a man, an animal or a thing. They often reveal themselves as were-animals. They can take the face of a stag, an aurochs, a dog, a cat... Daemones’ characteristic features when they take human face are long, dishevelled hair and white garments (such creatures are called *tqashi mafa*, the queen of the forest, *dali*, the patroness of beasts, *ochokochi*, the patron of beasts...) ¹³.

It is noteworthy, that as the antagonist tries to lure the hero into his world, similarly humans try to entrap, subdue and bend *daimones* under their control and make them serve for their prosperity. E.g. *chinka*, a little long-haired and long-nailed creature, one of the evil spirits is generally harmful. But if he is caught and his hair and nails (the containers of his power) are cut and hidden, he can be used as a servant; as *chinkas* possess their own forms of magic, which they use in the service of their masters, they bring prosperity and welfare for the family. He obediently serves the family until his hair and nails are hidden from him, but as soon as he finds them he becomes free and at the same time

¹³ Abakelia, 1991, 83-116.

malevolent and dangerous. He destroys everything on his way and sometimes even kills the children of his master and runs away.

One can observe such occurrences, when the representatives of the beyond world such as *mesepebi*, *chinkas* and others rhythmically penetrate in real world at one and the same time (in October-November, when their powers are strongest) and affect it. At that time they are met with special rituals and festivals (fire festivals). It also can be partially extended to the folk festival *berikaoba* (mummers' festival) in which some infernal elements can be traced and everything is inverted, reversed and travestied (roles, status, garments, and law infernal tendencies figuratively are materialized through the zoomorphic masks). In such cases, the measures of precautions are taken against them (defensive fires are built on crossroads or in front of the houses, thorns are attached to the windows and doors, crosses are painted by charcoals on entrances, candles are lit, etc).

Humans, on their turn, also penetrate into the anti-world, but with a special observance of rules (for that purpose the recollection of the hunting taboos followed by hunters and special rituals performed in the woods i.e. before entering the realm of the Patron of Beasts are enough). Besides the inner and the outer worlds, *daimones* themselves are incorporated in humans. According to the Georgian traditional beliefs, good and evil spirits constitute a personality. Good spirit or angel stays from the right side of a man directing his/her thoughts, senses and actions towards good deeds. As for the evil spirit, it sits on his/her left shoulder and tries to turn the man away from the right path and to incline him to sin¹⁴.

With good spirit, light and day are associated, with the evil one – darkness and night. Spirits operate both on collective and individual planes. Individual plane is more dangerous (for they cause madness and illness) than the collective one, which lasts only for two or three days and as a rule occurs at cheerful festivals.

According to the views widely spread among the Georgian mountaineers individual goes out of his senses when angels and saints leave him. In such cases, evil spirits haste to grasp the doomed person and make him crazy¹⁵ and the person becomes *daimon possessed*. Studying the illnesses caused by various reasons ethnologists came to the conclusion, that the *possession* of a human being includes several phases and each phase is revealed in a special form of disease. At first, evil, malicious and greedy person is chosen as a victim. Then the evil spirit tries to tempt prosperous and wealthy person and to take away from him his guardian angel. The tempted person in return is asked to sell his soul to him. If the *possessed* person follows the evil spirit's will he will become

¹⁴ Bardavelidze, 1950, 124-155.

¹⁵ Mindadze, 2005, 232-244.

his “portion” and consequently, his obedient wicked servant, called *mzakvari* (morally wrong and evil).

Humans fall ill by the sent ghosts, visions or by the physical effects such as the knock of a hand on the shoulder, etc. or when a person accidentally crosses evil spirits private territory called *nazrakhi adgili* (i.e.damned place) in the evening or at night i.e. at wicked time¹⁶.

If the above brought data reflect traditional Christian views (and they do), the mythological beliefs about Ochopintre (the patron of beasts) in eastern mountainous Georgia reveal more archaic characteristics. According to one version invisible Ochopintre is a male creature, the shepherd of Beasts. Before going hunting, hunters take permission from him.

If the patroness of beasts (called *Dali*) and the Queen of forests (*tqashi mafa / tqis dedofali*) according to the wide spread beliefs, demand love affairs from mortal hunters, the patron of beasts (*Ochopintre*) requires the soul of a human. The natives believed that those who killed a lot of beasts, had sold his soul to Ochopintre”... The alliance had to be kept in secret as the love affair with the *Queen of woods*. If a mortal broke the given oath and betrayed *Ochopintre*, he would be severely punished. As is noted, in the special literature, the hunter, who had given his soul to *Ochopintere* was not happy in his private life. In exchange for given enormous luck and success he was doomed to be childless. Good luck in hunting is given by the *shepherd of Beasts (the patron of beasts)*, as for the procreation, it is a gift of the God. According to the local (Eastern Georgian mountaineers beliefs, the God hates the patron of beasts and wildlife or game animals for they belong to the Devil. Beasts are Devil’s share, his parish¹⁷. Here the utmost (extreme) opposition of inner and outer worlds is observed: the God is the potential patron of domestic animals and that is why they are sacrificed to him. Wild beasts are quite opposite of this. The shepherd of the domestic animals is the god (*ghvtisshvili*), the shepherd of the wild beasts – the Devil. *Ochopintre* sometimes reveals itself before hunters as a little woman. Little shoes made of goat’s or bull’s skins are specially made for her and left on top of the high cliff. According to the beliefs spread in many parts of Georgia beast are in turn protected by a male and female patron (sometimes brother and sister). The same beliefs are spread in the plain: the patrons of beasts are watching them in turn. When it is the female’s turn, it is very difficult to hunt the beast, because the woman watches them carefully; on male’s turn, who is not so cautious, beasts are easily killed¹⁸. According to some versions in the plain Georgia, if a hunter was not fortunate during his hunt he would ask his

¹⁶ Mindadze, 2005, 244.

¹⁷ Kiknadze, 2005, 190-199.

¹⁸ Virasaladze, 1976, 279.

wife to sew a shirt for *ochopintre* and would made an offer to him, hanging it on top of the tree and would ask him: “the angel (patron) of beasts, do not be angry with me, give me your blessing, please, many beasts for you and few for me!”¹⁹. The footprints of *ochopintre* had often been seen and were compared with the footprints of a child. One more characteristic feature of *ochopintre* is found in the religious beliefs of the Georgians: if the hunter dreamed a boy in his dream he had to sell him his soul. *Ochopintre* gave the chosen hunter the hunting gun as a sign of the guaranteed and successful game with the following words: “let’s go hunting”. *Ochopintre* in hunting is the sworn brother and partner of the hunter. The hunter gives him his soul in turn and for that reason he is punished by the Lord¹⁹. The person called *mzakvari* (evil person) or *kudiani* (lit. caudate) is left by the good spirit and becomes entirely possessed by the evil one.

The main characteristics of the caudate are: greediness, harmfulness, biliousness, evil eye. Their helping servants are: wolf, cat or cock. The term caudate implies both: man and woman. They, according to the folk beliefs, possess two souls: one is pure, the other is impure and they likewise have two hearts. The evil spirit becomes active at night when pure soul and heart are asleep. It rides wolf or a black cat, etc.). It gallops to catch its victim and when it grasps it takes out of the victim heart and lever and makes an offering to its patron, called *rokapi* (the head of the witches), who sits on top of the mountain called *tabakoni* and receives different kinds of offerings at Sabbath gatherings). She has black teeth and long nails and is the embodiment of absolute evil. As was mentioned above, caudated were thought to be the were-animals. As the saying went, *mzakvari* transformed into a cat might secretly sneak into somebody’s house to harm the household and such a were-animal would be chased by the household with a firebrand or hot spit and would be stamped. The stereotypes of witches also appear in the church documents. In Georgia witch-hunts were not so severe as it used to be in mediaeval Europe, but still it is remarkable that according to the 1853-1854 accounts, the existence of such facts are attested. According to the mentioned account, failure of the crop in the village of *Jichaishi* was ascribed to the number increase of witches. In order to avoid the disaster, the society decided to serve a mass which had to be attended by the population of the four villages (*Jikhas kari, Kulashi, Ianeti and Etseri*). According to the agreement those who would not attend the event, they would be announced as witches. For various reasons a lot of people could not manage to come. Then, the arrangement was repeated and everybody (both nobles and peasants) gathered near the river. The two wooden beams were put across the river and two men stood on each of them. The legs and hands of the suspected in witchcraft were at first bound with cords and then plunged into the river. Those

¹⁹ Kiknadze, 2005, 190-199.

who would sink in the presence of the gathered society would be justified and those who swam on the surface were announced as witches. After pulling them out of the water, their bodies were cauterized by the red-hot horseshoe and they were thus stamped²⁰. If possessed person is thought to be taken over by the evil spirit, those who fall ill with the children's infectious diseases are thought to be taken over by good spirits.

Children's infectious diseases in Georgia were perceived as a group of wandering spiritual beings, who from time to time were visited the world of the living. These spirits were called *batoni-angelozebi* (lit. Lord's angels). According to the wide spread belief in Georgia, the illness called *batoni-angelozebi* (the abbreviated form of which is simply *batonebi*) are caused by the angels of God. That is why the illness itself is called the "Lord's angels". According to the ethnographic data fixed in 19th and 20th centuries, the Lord sends his angels to people and these diseases are thought to be something *obligatory* which must be overcome. Their immediate distributors are the angels, the messengers of the Lord and consequently the population meets them eagerly and with festive mood.

The special Patrons of these diseases are St. Barbara (in the plain Georgia and mountainous western Georgia), John the Baptist (only in Khevi, i.e. in one of regions in mountainous Eastern Georgia)²¹, and Kviria (the Christ) in Pshavi and Khevsureti (i.e. the mountainous eastern Georgia). The mythic-ritual *visits* of the Lord's angels from the *outer world* takes place in *shina* (the Inner world). So that, the habitation place of Lord's angels might be heaven, woods, underground, sea and crossroads while all these zones are integrated in the outer world, which, on its turn is opposed to the Inner world²². They, according to some eastern Georgian versions, also live in the three tricolour (white, red, black) aquatic belts (seas) that encircles the cultivated space of the world, the world of the living²³.

The *cyclic guests* (as I define them) in western Georgian reality are the so called *meseferi* which at different times cause misfortune or fortune. According to the Megrelian and Acharian (Western Georgian) local ethnographic data *Meseferi* are represented by the anthropomorphic (male and female) creatures which come in turn at definite time of the year (from October 28 till November 3). They generally come out of the sea and visit the living (according to the other versions they live on land). Their visits are accompanied either by good or bad weather and consequently with good or bad harvest. They (or, in the other

²⁰ Teptsov, 1894.

²¹ Mindadze, 2005, 232-244.

²² Abakelia, 2007, 23-40.

²³ Abakelia, 2008, 15-28.

version, the staffed Mother of the sea) are followed by a black, clever dog. On their way *mesepe* turn everything upside down. *Mesepe* also check the beast. At that time hunters generally do not go for hunting. During this period beasts are gathered at one place. *Mesepe* mark them with signs and only after that a hunter is allowed to kill a signed animal. Fortunate hunting depends on who has marked the beast, female *mesepe* or male *mesepe*. *Mesepe* themselves are good hunters. They hunt beasts with bows and arrows and then feast with the killed game animal. According to the Georgian religious beliefs, the bones of the game animals miraculously return to life. This happens in the following way: the bones of the eaten game animals are thoroughly gathered and put into the stripped skin of the killed animal which is then hit with a special staff brought with them from the sea and the animal resuscitates). On their way home, they steal cattle from peasants and together with them return to the bottom of the sea... After their departure the rain stops and the weather is established (cleared up)²⁴. At the time of their arrival, i.e. in the Spring and in the Autumn, the society is prepared for their reception. They close all doors and put iron (predominantly sickle and hatchet) on them.

The term *mesepe* was differently interpreted at different times, though all these interpretations seem complementary. Some scholars considered *mesepe* to be the Patrons of beasts (Tandilava, Virsaladze). Others thought them to be the rain-giving little deities (Nadaraia). Some scholars thought they were the spirits of the dead, who usually accompanied humans and protected them from the wild beasts (Makalatia). *Mesepe* was explained as an identical form of *veshapi* (whale) (I. Javakhishvili, N. Marr), as a manager (Tsanava), etc. There exists folk etymology as well, according to which: as far as in Megrelian language May is pronounced as Mesi, and as far as according to some narratives, *mesepe* arrive on May their name is thought to be derived from the name of Spring month – May²⁵. To my mind, in order to understand the essence of *mesepe*, their plurality, innumerable multitude should be taken into account. It is meaningful and significant, that in the term *mesepe* can be singled out *sepe*, which in Georgian has the meaning of both king's court and king's men...cannot this be referred to the fact that there must be a king or a queen perhaps at the bottom of the sea, whose staff (the insignia of royal power) they carry out of the Black Sea and whose commands they obediently perform? I think the personification of this aquatic spirit is the Mother of Sea (*zghvis nene*) whose attributes are black dog and the staff. From that perspective *mesepe* seem to be the thiasos of the

²⁴ Virsaladze, 1976, 227-302.

²⁵ Tandilava, 1986.

Queen of the sea, who sends them on the shore to perform her orders: to regulate weather and the number of beasts²⁶.

Besides the above mentioned spirits, there also exist the so called *haeris mcvelni* – air guards, who are thought to be the fallen angels. When the god banished the renounced angels from heaven, the earliest ones were casted down to Hell; the weaker ones were disseminated in the air. In oral folk tradition the term *air guards* is not attested. But it is used in original hagiographic monuments and also in civic juridical documents²⁷. The air guards are the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places²⁸. There are *the customs* which the soul of the deceased has to overcome and where it has to answer for the sins. From the spatial point of view, these heavenly places are placed between the earth and heaven. From the Christian eschatology they are understood as dangerous daemonic spiritual zones²⁹.

In Georgian mythic-ritual system one more group of *daimones* is attested. They are called Qaji. The religious beliefs on them are found throughout Georgia. In western Georgian tradition qajs do not harm humans. They only faithfully guard the devil's hoard and turn out everybody, who dares to approach it. At first encounter, they slightly fight with humans, at the second time, the struggle between them is fiercer, but if they meet the human for the third time, they knock him to death³⁰. Generally they whistle and throw stones when they meet humans. *Qajs* and *chinkas* are afraid only of St George. The mention of his name frightens and they run away.

In eastern Georgian tradition the names of *qaji* and *St. George* once again come across in the legend of *St George's campaign against the Qajs*. According to the legend, in Pshavi and Khevsureti (eastern mountainous Georgia) the Sons of God (i.e. saints) went on a trip to qajaveti (the land of *qajs*). Together with them went mortal Gakhua Megrelauri, the servant of the St George's sanctuary (called Khakhmatis Jvari i.e. the Cross of Khakhmati. Khakhmati is a place name). After they passed a certain distance the soul of gakhua megrelauri had been taken out of his body (for he would not be allowed to cross the borders of the outer world) and his body was left under a tree (or according to the other version at the entrance of a cave) i.e. at the centre of the world (in Eliade's sense) from where he could journey through the different worlds. When they arrived at the village of qajs, St George transformed himself into a fly (by the other version – into a dove) and with this image entered the land. After the heavy struggle the Sons of the God overcame the qajs (the fight was accompanied

²⁶ Abakelia, 2010, 20-21.

²⁷ Mindadze, 2005, 232-244.

²⁸ Ephesians, 6, 12.

²⁹ Averinzev, 2006, 319-320.

³⁰ Teptsov, 1894, 194.

with cat's heads and different impurities) and returned to the realm of the living with the captured goods (golden stringed *fandyr* i.e. stringed instrument, bell with nine clappers, very thick chain, anvil, tongs, qajs' cattle) and women. Gakhua's soul was soundly returned to his already decaying body and he was revived³¹. St George took from the *qajaveti* (*qajs' land*) together with the other women the king's daughter, called *Samzimari qelghiliani* and inhabited her at the sanctuary.

There exists another version concerning *Samzimari*, while travelling across Javakheti (southern Georgia), Gakhua met the princess of qajs, who was to be eaten by the dragon. St George approached her and told her: "tell your father, that I'll free you, but in turn I'll take you with me". In this plot, as is noted in the literature, St George of Khakhmati repeats archetypal action of St George. Qajaveti substitutes the pagan town, which was saved from the act of violence by St. Rider, and the Qaj princess takes place of the nameless princess which was saved from the terrible dragon and was converted to Christianity. The princess Samdzivari thanks to St George was elevated to the higher rank and took the unique place among the sons of the God. She was taken to khakhmati (one of the sacred places of St George in eastern mountainous Georgia) in the capacity of the sworn "brother" of St George. St George and Samdzivari (representing totality) are one and the same individuality in the perception of the natives. Two faces of one sanctuary, one son of the God, as anima-animus totality³².

The question of *qajaveti* (the land of qajs) had been discussed by several scholars. Some of them considered *qajs* as the people of the North Caucasus (Bardavelidze, Ochiauri), the others thought them to be tale personages, some associated it with another place of St. George, called *qashueti* (Shanidze), some identified them with the metaphor of underground (Gamsakhurdia), etc. The above mentioned data opens one more possible interpretation. The fact that mortal Gakhua accompanied immortal powers implies that he together with them had transcended from the inner to the outer world. In order to enter the Nether world essential rules had been carried out. The rules were followed by both: the immortal St George (who hid himself in the image of a fly or a dove) and by Gakhua, who left his body at the sacred centre. For us it is of special interest that Gakhua dreamt the sanctuary of Samdzimari in the female image and even had love affair with her. But still who can journey through the supernatural worlds? It can be done by the sons of the God (in this case immortal saints) or Gakhua (who is also a son of the God, but a mortal one) from whom the soul is taken out i.e. by those who can step over the death border and return back. Gakhua who is the elect of the sons of the God, the spirit

³¹ Ochiauri, 1967, 22.

³² Kiknadze, 1996, 121.

himself, can *see* the spirits and can communicate with them. Thus Gakhua is the individual who can transcend together with the sons of the God in the nether world (in our case in Qajaveti) i.e. Gakhua is the individual who while dreaming or being in trance transcends in the nether world and when returns back narrates about it. His ecstatic journey's account animates *the anti-world* and explains it for the mortals.

Thus the article organized on multiplicity of daimone forms (visible or invisible, evil or good, earth, air or, aquatic spirits, guardian angels, lord's angels, visible and invisible microcosm in macrocosm etc.) revealed their spatial belonging and spatial reality which occupies a definite place in the archaic world pattern of Georgians.

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