

## Prejudice as the control method of the Soviet Union (example from the modern history of Georgia)

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A lot of papers have been written on the ideological methods of the Soviet politics within the Georgian scholarly field and beyond it and their analysis is rather interesting. The aim of this article is to discuss how historiography was used for creating history, desired for the Soviet policy.

During 1918-1921 there were three uprisings of Ossetian Bolsheviks, but in 1920 there was the most important by its dimensions and requirements one. It aimed at separating a part of Shida Kartli, Tskhinvali region (now the so-called South Ossetia) from Georgia and becoming it a part of Russia.

In the 1990's Georgian scholars had the chance to research the thematic of 1918-1921 freely. But the prejudice that was created at the period of the Soviet Union seemed so true that it was copied in the modern Georgian historiography. Presumably, the Soviet Union used for this the purpose Valiko Jugheli, who was one of the significant figures of the leader party and the general of Georgian public army and was described as the leader who put down the uprising in 1920.

In the scholarly monographs or articles published in the 1990's, the attitude towards the first Democratic Republic of Georgia has changed. There was no restriction by the Soviet policy and it made it possible to write works without the Soviet censorship. That is why in the scholarly literature, published after gaining the independence of Georgia, the uprising is considered not as the attempt of self-determination of the Ossetian people and justified requirement of territorial allocation, but as the action inspired by the Russians and directed against the Georgian state.

I have several sources for studying the Georgian-Ossetian conflict in 1920. The first is the archival materials (Georgian and Russian), the second one is the memories of leaders (Giorgi Kvinitadze's and Valiko Jugheli's). There are also periodicals that are a significant source for my research. According to this material I studied this issue again and the picture became rather different. In fact, the leader of the Georgian military operation against the uprising was general Giorgi Kvinitadze and not Valiko Jugeli. He was the leader of the right flank only.

Why was the Soviet regime interested to announce Valiko Jugeli as the leader of Georgian army? My answer is simple. As I mentioned, Valiko Jugeli was one of the important figures from Georgian leader party – Social Democrats. Showing Valiko Jugheli as the leader of the Georgian army and making him an oppressor would show the same policy of the Georgian state too. Of course, this helped the Soviet political ideology to show Georgian-Democratic Party as oppressor in people's eye. This prejudice was spread by Soviet ideology very easily as the access to archives was limited at the time of the Soviet Union. But this prejudice can change real history understanding in ways how it can be used by state in future and how it can be used by state for subjective reasons.

**Keywords:** *Soviet Union, the first republic of Georgia, conflicts, so-called South Ossetia, historiography, ideology, modern history.*

## Упередження як метод контролю Радянського Союзу (приклад з новітньої історії Грузії)

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Було написано багато праць про ідеологічні методи радянської політики в грузинській науковій галузі та поза нею, і їх аналіз досить цікавий. Мета цієї статті - обговорити, як історіографія використовувалася для створення історії, бажаної радянській політиці.

Протягом 1918-1921 рр. Відбулося три повстання осетинських більшовиків, але в 1920 р. Було найважливіше за своїми розмірами та вимогами одне. Вона мала на меті відокремити частину Шіда-Картлі регіону Цхінвалі (нині так звану Південну Осетію) від Грузії та перетворити її на частину Росії.

У 1990-х роках грузинські вчені мали можливість вільно досліджувати тематику 1918-1921 років. Але упередженість, яка була створена ще за часів Радянського Союзу, здавалася настільки вірною, що вона була скопійована в сучасній грузинській історіографії. Імовірно, Радянський Союз використовував для

цього Валико Джуглі, який був однією з значущих діячів партії лідерів і генерала грузинської громадської армії і був названий лідером, який затримав повстання 1920 року.

У наукових монографіях чи статтях, опублікованих у 1990-х роках, ставлення до Першої Демократичної Республіки Грузія змінилося. Радянською політикою не було обмежень, і це давало можливість писати твори без радянської цензури. Ось чому в науковій літературі, опублікованій після здобуття незалежності Грузії, повстання розглядається не як спроба самовизначення осетинського народу та виправдана вимога територіального розподілу, а як акція, натхненна росіянами і спрямована проти грузинська держава.

У мене є декілька джерел для вивчення грузинсько-осетинського конфлікту в 1920 році. Перше - це архівні матеріали (грузинські та російські), друге - спогади лідерів (Джорджі Квінітадзе і Валико Джуглі). Є також періодичні видання, які є вагомим джерелом для моїх досліджень. Відповідно до цього матеріалу я вивчив це питання ще раз, і картина стала зовсім іншою. Фактично, керівником грузинської військової операції проти повстання був генерал Джорджі Квінітадзе, а не Валико Югелі. Він був лише лідером правого флангу.

Чому радянський режим зацікавився оголосити Валико Джугелі керівником грузинської армії? Моя відповідь проста. Як я вже згадував, Валико Югелі був однією з важливих фігур партії лідера Грузії - соціал-демократів. Показати Валико Джуглі як керівника грузинської армії та зробити його гнобителем, було б показано таку ж політику і грузинської держави. Звичайно, це допомогло радянській політичній ідеології показати Грузино-Демократичну партію як гнобителя в очах людей. Ця упередженість була поширена радянською ідеологією дуже легко, оскільки доступ до архівів був обмежений ще за часів Радянського Союзу. Але цей забобон може змінити розуміння реальної історії способами, яким вона може бути використана державою в майбутньому та як вона може бути використана державою з суб'єктивних причин.

*Ключові слова:* Радянський Союз, перша республіка Грузії, конфлікти, так звана Південна Осетія, історіографія, ідеологія, новітня історія

## Предубеждение как метод контроля Советского Союза (пример из новейшей истории Грузии)

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Было написано много работ об идеологических методах советской политики в грузинской научной сфере и за ее пределами, и их анализ довольно интересен. Целью данной статьи является обсуждение того, как историография использовалась для создания истории, желаемой для советской политики.

В течение 1918-1921 годов было три восстания осетинских большевиков, но в 1920 году было самое важное по своим размерам и требованиям одно. Он был нацелен на отделение части Шида Картли Цхинвальского региона (ныне так называемой Южной Осетии) от Грузии и превращение его в состав России.

В 1990-х годах грузинским ученым была предоставлена возможность свободно исследовать тему 1918-1921 годов. Но предубеждение, которое было создано во времена Советского Союза, казалось настолько правдоподобным, что оно было скопировано в современной грузинской историографии. Предположительно, Советский Союз использовал для этой цели Валико Джугели, который был одной из значительных фигур лидера партии и генерала грузинской общественной армии и был описан как лидер, подавивший восстание в 1920 году.

В научных монографиях или статьях, опубликованных в 1990-х годах, отношение к первой Демократической Республике Грузии изменилось. Советской политике не было никаких ограничений, и это позволило писать произведения без советской цензуры. Вот почему в научной литературе, опубликованной после обретения независимости Грузии, восстание рассматривается не как попытка самоопределения осетинского народа и обоснованное требование территориального распределения, а как действия, вдохновленные русскими и направленные против грузинское государство.

У меня есть несколько источников для изучения грузино-осетинского конфликта в 1920 году. Первый - это архивные материалы (грузинский и русский), второй - воспоминания о лидерах (Георгия Квинитадзе и Валико Джугели). Есть также периодические издания, которые являются важным источником для моих исследований. Согласно этому материалу я снова изучил этот вопрос, и картина стала совсем другой. Фактически руководителем грузинской военной операции против восстания был генерал Георгий Квинитадзе, а не Валико Джугели. Он был лидером только правого фланга.

Почему советская власть была заинтересована объявить Валико Джугели лидером грузинской армии? Мой ответ прост. Как я уже говорил, Валико Джугели был одной из важных фигур лидера грузинской партии - социал-демократов. Показ Валико Джугели как лидера грузинской армии и превращение его в угнетателя также продемонстрировали бы ту же политику грузинского государства. Конечно, это помогло советской политической идеологии показать грузино-демократическую партию угнетателем в глазах людей. Это предубеждение было очень легко распространено советской идеологией, поскольку доступ к архивам был ограничен во времена Советского Союза. Но это предубеждение может изменить понимание реальной истории таким образом, как оно может использоваться государством в будущем и как оно может использоваться государством по субъективным причинам.

**Ключевые слова:** Советский Союз, первая республика Грузии, конфликты, так называемая Южная Осетия, историография, идеология, современная история

### **Problem definition.**

A lot of papers have been written on the ideological methods of the Soviet politics within the Georgian scholarly field and beyond it and their analysis is rather interesting. Ideological models and mechanisms are various, of course, including both political activities and Soviet repressions. Obviously, it has been aimed at spreading the ideology of the ruling power. One of the interesting mechanisms was the control of the scientific field and spreading of the desired information by creating the alternative reality or history. At the time of the Soviet Union the access to archives in Georgia was limited for scientists and researchers. Due to this reason, historians could get completely different information, which was far from reality. The aim of this article is to discuss one of such examples, namely how the historiography was used for creating the necessary history for the Soviet policy. How the prejudice, composed by the Soviet influence in the period of the first Georgian Republic of Georgia have been made on us.

Studies about First Democratic Republic of Georgia in 1918-1921 were based on the Soviet censorship. Historical researches, focused on the period between 1918-1921, were either banned or were influenced by Bolsheviks' propaganda. That is why the modern history was limited in the twentieth century. The Georgian-Ossetian conflict emerged exactly in 1918-1921. For historians it was not easy task to write real history. Among the uprisings, the most distinguished one was in 1920, when Ossetian Bolsheviks intended to separate part of Shida Kartli (now it is called South Ossetia) Region from Georgia and unite it to the Soviet Russia. Soviet Historiography not only disfigured reality but composed prejudices towards political figures. Russia turned Ossetian Bolsheviks against Georgia. It was necessary to create "face of enemy" that would encourage Ossetians to struggle against Georgians. But why in 1918-1921?

After more than 100 years of annexing, Georgia

declared its independence in 1918. New government did not weakened forces to make Georgia more Europeanized. Great success was in gaining De jure recognition of Georgia from the League of Nations in 1920. But the independence did not last long. International recognition did not prevent Georgia from being attacked by the Soviet Russia in 1921. Historians' interest towards this period is great, as its evidences were tabooed during the Soviet era. Studying the real history of the First Democratic Republic of Georgia was not quite possible for researchers. During the Soviet period such studies were simply prohibited or had some shades of the Bolshevik propaganda. This situation, of course, kept researchers off studying the history of the First democratic republic of Georgia.

### **Analysis of researches and publications.**

Actually, I am interested in the history of the First Democratic Republic of Georgia and Ossetian issues. In this paper I intend to focus on very important topic that describes the prejudice which was inspired by the Soviet ideology at the time of the first democratic republic of Georgia. In spite of the very interesting and significant aspects from the history of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, I want to present you the inner conflict that is actual nowadays too. Part of Shida Kartli region, that is very important historical region in Eastern Georgia, self-declared as South Ossetian state, recognized by Russia and several other states. Conflict was inspired by Ossetian Bolsheviks who aimed to separate part of Shida Kartli from Georgia. These conflicts were risen exactly in 1918-1921. These uprisings are good examples how the Soviet prejudice created history that was acceptable only for it.

In 1918-1921 there were three uprisings of Ossetian Bolsheviks that were aimed at separating a part of Shida Kartli, Tskhinvali region (so called South Ossetia) from Georgia and making it a part of Russia.

The issue of territorial integrity of Georgia

is quite actual nowadays too. That is why, the discussions about these conflicts are rather interesting. The key issue of our research is to identify the leader of Georgian military units who opposed the Ossetian Bolsheviks uprising in 1920 (Guntsadze, 2013/2014).

At the first glance it must be not too difficult and everything should be cleared earlier, if we take into consideration that since 90-ies of the twentieth century Georgian scientists had the chance to research the thematic of 1918-1921 freely. But prejudice that was composed at the period of the Soviet Union seemed to be so truly that it was copied in Modern Georgian historiography. For instance, Menshevik Valiko Jugheli's, who was one of the significant figures of the leader party and the Commander of Georgian public army (People's Guard), was considered to be a suppressor of Bolshevik Ossetians uprising. That was not right. It was not coincident that Soviet policy promoted Valiko Jugheli as a negative person who was responsible for all the cruelty that took place while fighting against Ossetian Bolsheviks in 1920. Explanation for this prejudice will be shown below. But let me show how the uprising is described in Soviet and modern historiography.

It is very interesting to know who was responsible for suppressing in mentioned conflict, as these confrontations left its important traces in the newest history of Georgia.

In the part of Georgian scientific researches Giorgi Mazniashvili, who was one of the famous generals in Georgia, is described to be the leader of Georgian army at this conflict. But it was not true as he was not involved in this conflict at all.

Now I will show chronologically some researches from Soviet and modern Georgian historiography that are dedicated to this issue. Why? Because in these works the soviet prejudice have been accepted as reality.

One of such works is a monograph Relations of Georgians and Ossetians, published by G. Togoshvili in 1969. There the Georgian army is criticized and General Valiko Jugheli is called an "Archi-bandit" (Gibe name of Valiko Jugheli, negative way to represent him as archimandrite of bandits) (Togoshvili, 1969). This was made according to the norms established by the Soviet Union policy, and in such way it showed Valiko Jugheli as enemy and Georgia as state-oppressor.

The same idea is shown in the sixth volume of the Georgian History's Essays published in 1972: "Menshevik forces with cavalry battalions, two regiments and national guard members attacked Tskhinvali region on 9th June, it was the huge trouble for whole Ossetians" (Surguladze, 1972).

There the activity of the Georgian military units is perceived as aggressive steps towards Ossetian people and Valiko Jugheli is called as the leader of suppressing the uprising again.

Of course, my goal is not to criticize the gaps written in Soviet period (maybe they were caused by the inaccessibility of the sources as well as censorship and subjective reasons), but I try to considerate historiographic approaches that was given by the Soviet regime.

Soviet historiography is repeated in the post-Soviet period as well. Though, in the scientific monographs or articles published after 90-ies of the twentieth century, the attitude towards the First Democratic Republic of Georgia have changed. There was no control of the Soviet policy that allowed scientists to study the Soviet past freely. That's why, in the scientific publications, published after restoring the independence of Georgia Ossetians, uprisings are not considered as the attempt of self-determination of the Ossetian people and justified requirement of territorial allocation, but are considered as the action directed against the Georgian state inspired by Russians.

Georgian researcher – Dodo Chumburidze in her National-Liberation War of the Georgian People at the beginning of the twentieth Century (1918-1921) (published in 2003) has argued that Ossetian uprisings were brutally suppressed by Valiko Jugheli and Giorgi Mazniashvili (Chumburidze, 2003). Giorgi Mazniashvili was prominent military figure. Tsar Nicolas II awarded him with St. George's Cross for his bravery in Russo-Japanese War. During the First Democratic Republic of Georgia he was the noble Georgian general. All his life he devoted to the struggle against the Soviet Regime and Georgian territorial integration.

According to Sul Khan Aleksia's monograph The Anatomy of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Regions Conflicts (2012) and his doctoral dissertation The Conflicts of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Regions and Their Regulation Problems (2013) Valiko Jugheli is called to be the leader of the Georgian army against the Ossetian Bolsheviks in 1920 (Aleksia, 2012; Aleksia, 2013).

In 2014 Boris Kvaratskhelia published Russians Undeclared War to Georgian State (Abkhazia, "South Ossetia") and International Concord. In this work Giorgi Mazniashvili and Valiko Jugheli are named again to be the leaders of Georgian military units (Kvaratskhelia, 2014). There are much more articles or monographs that indicate Valiko Jugheli and sometimes him with Giorgi Mazniashvili oppressors of uprising in 1920, but that is not true. For instance, from October 1920, Giorgi Mazniashvili was the commander of Tbilisi' garrison. It means he could not participate in Tskhinvali

Region's events in 1920. Why was vague the question on Georgian commander? Even in the reminiscences of Valiko Jugheli and general Giorgi Kvinitadze, Valiko Jugheli is not considered to be the commander of Georgian army (There are so many works dedicated to this issue, but we cannot considerate all of them in the article) (Jugheli, 1920; Kvinitadze, 1998). This task was quite uncertain in Georgia historiography. That is why I decided to research this issue again.

### Conclusions.

We have several sources for studying the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict in 1920. The first is the archival materials (Georgian and Russian), the second one is the reminiscences of Georgian generals (Giorgi Kvinitadze's and Valiko Jugheli's memories). There are also press materials that are quite important while studying the modern history as they represented daily life, official decisions and facts. According to these materials, the reality was quite different. In reality, the leader of the Georgian army military operation

against the uprising was general Giorgi Kvinitadze and not Valiko Jugheli. Valiko Jugheli was the leader of the right flank only (Guntsadze, 2013/2014).

Main question. Why Soviet regime was interested to call Valiko Jugheli as the leader of Georgian army? My answer is simple. As we mentioned, Valiko Jugheli was one of the important figures from the Georgian leader party – Social Democrats. Naming Valiko Jugheli as the leader of the Georgian army and making him an oppressor would mark the same policy for Georgian state too. Of course, all these should help the Soviet political ideology to show Georgian Social-Democratic Party as oppressor in people's eye. This prejudice was spread by the Soviet ideology very easily as the access on archives was limited at the time of The Soviet Union. But these prejudices were quite powerful in the modern Georgian historiography till today. That is one example how prejudice can change real history for a long time and how it can be used for subjective reasons.

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