

The family and marriage relations in historical Tao-Klarjety from very ancient period up to now

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Abstract

Marriage is based upon equality and free will. This constitutional principle recognizes the family as the basic cell, whose strength depends not only on family well-being, but also the successful development of the society. In a marriage great significance is given to the equality of spouses that implies the equality in both legal and social status, and public ownership.

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth". We read this important passage in the scriptures, but Lord God felt pity for Adam and his loneliness, The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him". Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man".

Scripture referenced indicate that none of the human relationship is not as important as the marriage, and marital union. This connection is the oldest and it takes its rise from the creation of mankind and is based on the law that God had established and imposed on human nature.

According to Jewish philosophy, unmarried person is considered to be incomplete, he has not still realized the huge potential was invested in him at the birth moment, and the realization of which happens only when he finds a partner; this applies not only to human existence issue, but to the main great thing – acquisition of their own dignity, the access to sanctity of life and application of law aspects.

In the history of mankind, the culture of every country, people and nation takes its origin from the family, which originates from a marriage and family relationships.

For residents of foreign ethnic environment marriage is one of the most important factors of national identity. Undeniable, it is family-marriage that preserves ethnic identity. The family

is the place where social traditions, moral norms, the rules of hereditary are passed to following generations.

One of the cultural centers of historical Georgia is Imerkhevi, the part of Klarjeti-Shavsheti, a historic Upper Kartli densely populated by autochthonous ethnic Georgians which is now a part of Turkey.

Social relations of the people living in historical Georgia have never been studied by anyone before and there is no research on the ethnographic description of the marriage either. That is why my research topic is marriage and family ties from the beginning of Tao - Klarjeti ancient period to the present. The purpose of my research is to expose old - Georgian customs and rituals in their marital relationships. Although some of the rituals have Turkish names, but the content is Georgian. That is why we have to note and describe such rituals and ceremonies which are transformed into Georgian reality, lost, but preserved in the Turkish population.

During a complex scientific-research expedition I was given an opportunity to witness and write down unique ethnographic data on this topic. At this stage, I will only look at Bazgireti and Zios, since it is doubly interesting in the sense that Georgian life and archaic elements of culture are preserved there, as well as old Georgian customs and traditions regarding marriage. The local wedding ceremonies make up the largest part of the Georgian sacred customs and they are still preserved in the population to this day.

Keywords: family, marriage, relations, historical Tao-Klarjety, very ancient period, now

In our ethnographic peculiarities there may not be all original nature, some of them undoubtedly have been learned from others, but in both cases they are an invaluable treasure for researchers who reveals our nation's cultural contribution over the centuries and shows the stages of development of this culture.

All ethnographic details, simple and unimportant things have great importance for researchers. Our duty is to collect at least some small things that science should be given the opportunity to study and research.

Muslim Georgians learned nearly a century, kept their mother tongue and Kartvelian consciousness. Their descendants became aware of the dangers of ethnic assimilation (in the 20th century, for 70 years), tried to share the Georgian roots. They established the Georgian "Deda ena" and the journal "Chveneburebi".

According to ancient sources, the part of Tao, the current Yusupeli Region was considered as the Georgian princes - the Kavkasidzes' estate. Tao ecclesiastically was the property of Georgian Church - the bishop of Ishkhani.

Today, the historic Tao is included in Republic Turkey, in Yusufeli Ilche, a part of Artvin Ili district (Yusufeli, Republic of Turkey).

During complex scientific - research expedition I have been given the opportunity to see and write down a unique ethnographic data around this topic. However, at this stage, only I'll concretize on Bazgireti and Zios, since it is doubly interesting in the sense that here old Georgian customs regarding marriage - rules and traditions are preserved.

Ziosi is a mountain village. Forest road climbs steep ascent; the most beautiful village is laid out in the plain, here all of our expectant Georgians we consider as a Georgian world. Native inhabitants - Georgians are also our Georgian treasure.

In Zaosi we visited a family, whose Georgian second name was Baladze. The family was marrying "bakhala" and had wedding alarm. They were preparing a variety of dishes and particularly hit me in the ear (meat food) "qopte" and dolma "filavi".

According to the hostess the guest comes in that case if the family invites him/her, "in other case the guest doesn't come". If a close relative doesn't come, he/she is after all obliged to give a gift to the bride. We were told about an interesting wedding tradition. It turns out that they secretly bring a mullah into the house; a groom and a bride are get out of other room alone and are blessed in "jamesh". The ceremony was attended by only best man and woman, there is no way anyone else, especially a foreign one, because probably a bad eye will get on them, and a pair according to the legend won't be able to be happy.

Here a wedding ceremony can be held day and night. There are cases - a guy's wedding party lasts three days, and a girl's wedding ceremony goes only a day.

A lot of the dish is prepared for laying the table. Nowadays, wine is not used and only tea or so-called "Kola" is available as drink, because all submit to the strict law of the government. Alcohol ban was caused by frequent bad cases during a wedding party.

The narrator established her family on love: "My husband and I were classmates, just then we liked each other. We confidentially agreed and so got married".

For her dowry a lady is given everything she needs at home: a bed set, various household items, gold, money and so on. The bride carries away the presented money at a wedding. Here, too, as well as in Georgia the so-called, "Chasidzebis" cases take place. If we haven't a son in the family and married a daughter, we may receive a husband to live in his

wife's family - "chasidzeba" (as so-called "zedsidze" - son-in law - living in the family of his wife).

Later, we visited a very interesting family, and subject of my interest was still the wedding traditions. Surprisingly, the head of the family married his cousin, because from a woman's side (implied the mother's side) if they marry a blood relative, there will be no obstacle for them. It is forbidden to make a marital relation from a father's side, because they have heard from doctors that in such case a child will be born defective and invalid.

According to the family head's definition, in the past the marriage age was 17-year-old for men and 16 year-old for women. Today, it is forbidden a girl's marriage to 18 year-old age, and if married, this marital relation will not be deemed official.

In the court a statement is made about the divorce. In case of divorce mother takes a child till seven years and father pays brings alimony. If a man is wealthy, and his initiative is the splitting of the family, the woman takes half property. The reasons for divorce are mainly listed as: disobedience, infidelity, incompatibility, and economic problems.

A violator husband is taken to prison by a policeman and he is detained in prison without interrogation for 15 day. During this time investigation and consideration of the case is made. Trial date is set by the prosecutor. Attorney's fees are assumed by the party financial and in case of indigence the state does not grant a free attorney.

A man has a right to marry a younger woman, but a woman is not allowed.

In Georgia, founded earlier the so-called "matchmaker" - "machankli" institution, we couldn't "discover" among the population despite a lot of long searches and, apparently, it did not exist.

Bazgiretis water gorge is located in the historic Georgia, Shavsheti district. All villages in this ravine (Ziosi, Zakieli, Ube, Daba, Khevtshruli, Bazgireti) are sharply defined features of all-Georgian life and culture. This is especially striking in remote villages.

At a marriage our folks (cveneburebi) prefer the Georgians: in case of marriage with the Gurji girl, nobody will be against and the family will stay as the Gurji. We have Gurji mother and father and that's why I possess the Georgian language. It is clear that marriage is the most important factor in preserving of the National originality and serves to protect the Georgians.

Imerkhevelebi call married son as "delikans" and a marriage is called as "the settlement". The noted terms are also spread in mountainous Adjara.

In the modern period girl and guy's marital age is 18 years. The aged, unmarried woman is called as "damchals" (remained). Previously marriage age was considered 13-14 years. In the woman's abduction case relatives complicated situations and instead of reconciliation, in exchange they asked for some money ("Razi"-agreement).

Parents carry out a decisive role on their children's marriage. Before nobody asked bakhala (girl) and gharch (boy) about their marriage. According to People's faith if at the age of maturity a girl and a boy dreamed an opposite sex youth and during the dream they made a sexual relation with him/her, this means their physical and sexual maturity. Our folks called them as "tavmostsrilebi" and the similar term is referred to them in Adjara.

In choosing of the approved fiancée the priority is given to the mother, sister, daughter-in-law and close relatives. Sometimes gharchi (guy) is active in the process of choosing "bakhala". Particular attention is given to the woman's quick wits, purity, origin, etc. One of the most important steps for the local Georgians was the search of information about a girl or a guy's identity.

An ambassador was selected after a girl's approval. The process of Ambassador's selecting was held on Thursday evening. In many cases future father-in-law took upon himself the role of Ambassador. Ambassador may have been a mother's brother, a neighbor, or even a relative, or some influential man. It's mainly happened if a guy did not have a father. Unlike the Turkish settlements, the first day the Gurjis don't carry anything to a girl's home. Ambassadors maybe went on for two - three days, if a fiancé's family was rich. The sign of agreement was considered the services to Ambassador: drinking of water, or bringing coffee from a girl's side. In case of agreement the ambassador leaves an engagement ring and the engagement time will be agreed. The agreed day in the woman's family is prepared: erishta, khavitsi, makarina, qopte and etc. At engagement a number of attendees is not defined and both the guy and girl's close relatives attend. The bride is presented: money, clothes, jewelry, etc. Their number should be odd.

Before the engagement period before marriage also lasted 5 years. Today, this period is reduced to a few months, or weeks, but may last one or two years.

The engagement age was different. It existed the engagement before birth and in the cradle. In this case, the main thing was a preliminary agreement between the parents, the greatest sin was considered its breaking. The delivering of engagement items took place after reaching the matrimonial age. The similar phenomena are confirmed in Adjara and other parts of Georgia.

It should be noted that in some historic villages of Georgia is still remained the old tradition of appointment between a girl and guy in home of a father-in-law, which in Georgian ethnography is known as “nishanloba”.

In some families there took place “chasidzeba”- living in the family of his wife. Chasidzeba from a guy’s side is caused by economic need and possession of many sons in the family. In case of “chasidzeba” of other family name, zesidze should take the second name of father-in-law and sometimes they were mentioned as “gatkhovlebi” which is evidenced by their subordinate status; “chasidzebas” our folks call as taking the rank of son-in-law “sidzeod tsasvla”.

In Bazgireti such a tradition exists: if there is no cow in the dowry, after a parent's death, “the soul cannot be remembered”, because the memory of soul will not be able to reach to dead parents delivered from her husband's family.

The important element is the block of the road to best men by children in Imerkhevians’ marriage relationship. By gun repeatedly fired into the air is expressed the newly-married couple’s desire for happiness and the joy. The bride does not participate in the wedding ceremony. She sits in her room (gerdegi) and the table is laid for her. The men and women attending the wedding party sit separately. Sometimes men and women’s feast takes place different days.

In the Imerkhevians’ wedding a woman “dade” stays with a bride till the end of the wedding (bridesmaids).

Three days after the marriage bed and linens should not be changed. After the first night (bridesmaids) at the moment of bride and groom’s absence enters the room and checks the linens - whether there is or not a sign of virginity.

The data have been presented by me is only partly related to the questions connected to the Imerkhevians’ marriage. Many of the problems require further research and observation. These data only partially represent the Imerkhevians’ marriage-related issues.

During visiting Imerkhevi we felt the amazing feelings and sensations. It was such a non-earthly, but native... we have been taken great feeling and joy after the meeting with our past reality. In each monument, a fresco or the ruined castles of this Land - our ancestors’ blood and sweat and bones are mixed.