

Symbols in Georgian folklore with Comparison of World People's Imaginations

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Abstract

It is a brief overview of how the symbols in the world people's life, in folklore, in rituals, in omens were spread, to show their thinking, ideas. Folklore as the source of inspiration. As folklore is the spiritual life of society and lives in language, language can be source of imagination. Words are signs themselves and they have meanings, sometimes they can make sense of inspiration. What can inspire society to make some emblems, rituals, symbols and how much they are true and strong? These are the main interest of work and it is done by looking after astral beings and solar system as they were main inspiration for people to hope the sky will send to the earth warmth and cold, gay and sad, colours, light and darkness, fire, energy and thunder, life and death, thus the everything on the earth was connected to the sky and to the inhabitant of the sky.

Keywords: symbols, colours, red, rainbow, snake, the sun, the moon, the stars

All societies have myths and that myths are beyond science, transcend history, may have truths which come in different forms and can be tested and that myths can enhance humanity. The main aspect of myths are symbols. To think about symbols something like to try to represent ideas. To give very easy explanation of symbols it is something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible. It is sign stands for something to know. Semiology, or semiotics, is the scholarly term for the science of signs indicating ideas or symbols and the Oxford English Dictionary defines symbols in two ways: one as "*something that stands for, represents, or denotes something else... esp. A material object representing something...something immaterial or abstract...*" People have their own interpretation to symbols, also they can create personal symbols that represent their understanding of their lives, environment. Symbols can be born and die, change meanings time to time. Symbols can be international, national, ethnic, for each person. The fact that many symbols have more than one meaning in accordance with different kinds of experiences which can be connected with one and the same natural phenomenon. For example the fire in the fireplace is a source of pleasure and comfort, but when we see the building on fire it conveys to us an experience of threat and terror. Symbols aroused the admiration and interest of many scholars due to the very interesting points it contains and are very ancient. Now we will try to give some examples how the symbols were been understood in folklore. In people's life, belief. As folklore is a imagination of different people from the different countries and environment, it is inspired of free emotions of people, never lies, very naive, sometimes strict, gay, colourfull, always alive, never die without reason, belongs to society not only autor, always easy to understand, difficult to imagine, very symbolised. It seems how folklore can be the source of inspiration.

The main interest of my search are the symbols and I will begin with symbols of colours. Of course, they are field of interdisciplinary study. Also there is the study of colour perception by the human vision. Colours are studied by different arts, psychologies, linguistics and this last one is mostly interesting because words are itself the great symbols, they are signs of their meaning and words keep the sense of the very ancient non-written period culture. The melos and logos of the words are signs with the meaning, what we hear and what is under this sound hidden. Every particular thing has particular name and we not always are able to connect this thing to the name. We learn this connection as children by the repeated experience of hearing the word in reference to the thing until the lasting association is formed, but not every words are the same, some names of the things has very meaningful explanation of their nature and even history. Later we will try to give some examples from the Georgian words experience. I read the very interesting article of Virve Sarapik "Red: The Colour and The Word". He came to a very interesting conclusion to look after some researches and define primary colours and the other ones which are coming from the mixing of the colours.

There are, however, some interesting points concluded from these results (see Berlin, Kay 1969: Figure 2,3, and Appendix I). First - the most similar or identical foci in different languages were those of white, black and red.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Kay and McDaniel's article was that they did not deal with mere focal colours, but with the three-dimensional colour space. However, they disregarded the differences of the colour domains corresponding to different colour terms, and thus the results concentrated on the centres of colour domains only. The neurophysiological explanation of the origin of colour terms was added, which was absent in Berlin and Kay's treatment, and the analysis was conducted with a mathematical method, the fuzzy-set theory. According to Kay and McDaniel, the neurophysiology of colour perception has given rise to (or, to be more exact, the opponent colour perception corresponds to) six (primary) colour terms: black, white, red, yellow, blue, and green. The rest of the basic terms have arisen in the intermediate space between these primary colours. Thus:

pink=red+white

purple=blue+red

grey=black+white

orange=red+yellow

brown=yellow+black

Obviously, the origin of derived categories is the most questionable part of Kay and McDaniel's hypothesis. Especially the last, the development of brown as an intersection between yellow and black, seems to be disputable to anyone who has ever dealt with the mixing of colours, since brown can be obtained by blending various colours. Certainly, brown does contain an element of red. The reason, of course, is also the three-dimensionality of colour space, which enables to place intersections between different domains of primary colours. (Virve Sarapik 1997, 75-92)

On this interesting matter worked Barbara Saunders and after some very interesting overview of this problem she said:

Almost all cultures had words for "white", "black" and "red", very few of the "primitive" cultures had both a word for "blue" and one for "green". (Saunders 2000;85)

After this overview she came up to a very interesting conclusion:

The B&K programme is a knowledge practice built on a reified cultural image (eleven basic colour terms) a pseudo-history (seven evolutionary stages) and a naturalizing theory and its scientific language (The theory of BCTs).

But if, as I suggest, colour is not a natural thing (made of reflectances, retinal pigments, opponent processes) but exists through noticing and reportings as an ensemble of social relations then to obtain it needs socio-historical and cultural specificities. Colour then would not be simple, as in the idealist story but a concentration of many determinations. Divest of idealist trappings, conceptualized as a concentration of determinations, it could then be conceived as materials historical and concrete reality. (Saunders 2000;93)

Now I want to deal you through some Georgian experience how the basic, primary colours were given and how the Georgian language mark other colours. First look some interesting points: In Georgian the word colour is called as *Feri* and when you say the word *everything* you are saying *Kvela-feri*, (*kvela* means every) *Nothing* is *Araferi* (*ara* means non), It seems things are called as colours, as *Feri*. If we agree the fact that language, word is a sign of its meaning (but it is not always clear), we will notice the meaning of the word colour in Georgian language. Now look after names of the colours in Georgia. The names of colours white (*Tetri*), black (*Shavi*), red (*Tsiteli*), yellow (*Kviteli*), green (*Mtsvane*), blue (*Lurji*) have names and they can have variety of embodiment, like: white- light, blue- light blue, red- pink- purple and so on but all other colours, in Georgian comes from the sign. For Example: Pink is *Vardisferi*, *Vardi* is *Rose*, so *Vardisferi* is the colour of rose, as like rose, Grey is call like colour of ash, like Ash, Ash is *Natsari* and *Natsrisferi* is Grey, brown is called as a colour of coffee which makes me feel strange, coffee is not Georgian plant and what was the first name for brown colour and when and how coffee become the sign of the brown colour for Georgians and there are many colours given like this. In *Megruli* (the sister language of Georgian)

green colour is called as blue. People in Samegrelo (west part of Georgia) do not differ them from each other, when they say green they mean even blue with the green. To look after Georgian belief, religion, holy writings, hagiography, language you will see the very interesting practice of interpretation of colours.

The great Georgian writer Shota Rustaveli in his classical poem “The Knoble in the Tiger’s Skin”, in prologue gave interesting interpretation how the God created the world with the power of word and this creation was given to us: “*Has grunted us the mortals this world, with its endless diversity*” this abstract gives direct explanation what was said in the poem. Shota Rustaveli claims that the world given to us with its uncountable colours (diversity) and in this colours he means the things, whole worlds itself, the creation. The last creation of the God was man and after this the God stopped creation himself, because after him the man was the creation from the God with free spirit, just to continue that process of creation and make things spiritual, alive. Thus this colourful world given to us must be changed by the man, we must make this world, (In Georgian world called as “*Samkaro*” or “*Sa-mkar-o*”, “*mkari*” in Georgian means hard, only thing without spirit and prefix-suffix *sa-o* the place where this hard, only things are kept, situated or the world), the place for non-spiritual, only hard things. If the God is the first and the God is covered with light and kindness it seems the basic colour white comes from the nature of the God and white is the main basic colour from which comes others. The white colour has meaning of light and the opposite of white is black, which is mainly bad colour connected with death and devil. In Megrelian language there is very interesting name of the black colour, it comes from white and means not-white. For example white is *che*, the prefix-suffix *u-o* means *non, without* in common Georgian languages and the black in Megrelian language is called *uch-a*, which means *not-white*.

Just continue to red colour, white, light colour has no visible sign, it is colour without colour and it comes from fire. Fire makes warm and light also. Before going on this let’s look one abstract from Virve Sarapik “Red: The Colour and The Word”

And so we can speak about six colour terms, in fact, primary colour terms, the evolution of which is determined by neurophysiology: black, white, red, yellow, blue and green. Their origin is best explained by Berlin and Kay's hypothesis, so that in conclusion we can speak about four stages of development of languages, as far as the basic colour terms are concerned; there seem to be no inconsistencies with respect to these stages:

Stage 1: the language has words to denote black (the whole dark-cold area), white (light area) and red (warm area). This stage can be composed of two steps, i.e. the category of red develops later.

Stage 2: yellow is separated from the composite category of warm, and blue or green is separated from the category of black to denote the cold area (the exact order may vary in different languages). In this stage the word for grey may also come in.

*Stage 3: green and blue, grey, and the word denoting the warm unsaturated colour (brown; in Estonian *pruun*, ruske, ruuge)*

Stage 4: the basic terms for other intersections come in. (Virve Sarapik, 1997, 75-92)

To look after development of colours in Georgian people’s belief it looks like: White, black, red, yellow, green/blue. Red comes from white. We mentioned before the white is non-colour itself, when you lit the fire you will see the first step of fire is invisible and it becomes visible in red and we call it flame. So the red colour is the visible part of white and these three basic colours themselves are the colours of three parts of the world. Black is for underground world, red and diversity of colours emphasize the middle stage of univers, the world where we live and white for heaven where the supreme god and goddess are situated. In some magical rituals within Georgian people’s life you will find magic things like amulettes made from skin, small triangle bags sewed with thread of three colours: white, black and red. Those three colours emphasize abovementioned three stages of the world. The death body must be covered with robes of three colours: white, black and red. In folklore, in healing spells these three colours are mainly used ones. The red plants and their branches on the gate of the houses are for being safe from the devil spirit and bad eyes.

To talk about this three colours (mainly basic, primary colours) it is not easy to say which is first and second and follow, but one special thing is clear, they are not against each other, even black with comparison the white, before the God begun creation the world was covered with dark and it was not the devil spirit dark, it was chaos, nonvisible world from which the light was born. (Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters). In some Georgian tales even chthonic greater like Devi, are called as black also white colours: „*You daughter is with black Devi and to kidnap her trying the white Devi from the underground world*” (Kifshidze 1994, 267). When we are thinking about Georgian people’s relation with colour we must be very close to the religion because they are very strong orthodox and religion people. With white, black and red the other colours seems somehow differs from them. The yellow colour represents the illness. Shota Rustaveli in his poem for character to show their bad mood and illness saying that they have yellow face, it means to be pale. To have yellow skin in your face, to become pale means you have illness, you look like you are going to die. Even illnesses are shown in different colours in Georgian folk-lore. There are some kind of illnesses which comes from other world and have white, black and red colours. They are called as „Batonebi“ or Lords, even contemporary belief this „batonebi“ are coming to young people, especially to children and you must follow some rules to admire these „batonebi“, make all wishes of sick person, members of family must not drink, must not cry or go to funeral, they must give presents to sick, sing songs and after some times (it depends of illness, may be forty days or more and less) this illness will leave the sick happily and he/she will recover. In the room, decorated with pieces of coloured cloth and flowers, full of the fragrance of rose water, and beautiful chanting is aimed at pleasing, flattering and coaxing out the wicked spirits „batonebi“, that are nesting in the body of the sick child. This illness is called like „Tsiteli Batonebi“ Red Lords and for medicine they are some infection illnesses must be done vaccination already. Even after recovering you must take red cock and go to the oak tree and sacrifice just to emphasize you are thankful to the „batonebi“ or Lords that they leave you in peace and save.

Now I want make a list of omens emphasize the Georgian attitude with red colour. It is the colour of fire, makes warm and light, colour of blood, colour of gold, high quality gold, gold itself emphasized the money in Georgian past. In Shota Rustaveli classical poem Avtandili tells to Vizier of the king Rostevani to tell the King Rostevani that he wants to go to help Tarieli and bless him on this hard way:

„Now speak thus to the king till others come in to inform him, pleasantly entreat for me my congee, summon up thy courage, and a hundred thousand red pieces shall be bestowed on thee as a bribe.” (Rustaveli, 739)

These *hundred thousand red pieces* are gold as a present to the Vizier of the king. Gold and precious stones not only for money were used in the past, they were connected with happiness and there are several omens that make sure that the gold has magical function with connection the moon not only for Georgian:

For the latter end it should be enough to jingle coins in the pocket upon seeing a new moon or show money to the moon. (Ülo Siimets, 2006, 136)

In Georgian belief you must touch the gold when you see the new moon and say rhyme: “*New moon, God you make me happy*”. To touch the gold late was changed you must touch the coins, money because in the early past gold were the money. Even in the healing customs, it is said that it is useful to heal when the moon is full. People worship the sun and the moon both, but they emphasize the love to the sun and they were afraid of this moon, of course, the reason of this their nature, the sun gives warm, life, energy and the moon for its changable nature was considered as a magical ruler of the darkness but there are many facts which shows that the sun and the moon are not against each other, sometimes the moon is called as the sun of the night, in Megrelian white, light night is called as *Tutarchela* or white moon, or sunny moon (Tuta is the moon, Chela is white). In one Georgian folk poetry morning is called as the *morning like the colour of the moon*. Here is the abstract from the poetry: *It was coming the morning of the colour of the moon, in that miracle Monday (Gudava 1975, 23)*. Monday in Megrelian is called as the moon day, *Tutashdga* or *Tuta* is the moon and *dga* is the day. Now let’s carry on about colours.

Red has variety of expression dark red, light red, purple, flame, pink and so. Red has meaning of death, the red colour of the sunrise and sunset was considered as a prediction of death because of

this no-one can be buried after sunset, everyone must be buried before the sun will go down for that reason that soul must be risen from the death to the heaven and the death sun will make die him/her. „Hercules is torn limb from limb: and in this catastrophe we see the blood-red sunset which closes the career of Hercules” (Doane 1882,485). In Georgian balad „Tavfaravneli Chabuki“ (The boy from Paravna), he was in love with the girl who lived in opposite seashore and to see her he must have swum along the sea but one witch will him to die and he was sink in the sea and the narrative tells „Red silk shirt was upper him“ which emphasize the death. Red sun and the red colour of the sky means the windy weather. People wore red thread on their wrist to save their skin from the hot sun in spring and red is just to defeat the sun.

Especially the blood is connected to the red colour. The Christian eggs of Easter celebrity. People even contemporary belief took these red eggs to the cemetery in Easter and roll them on the ground where the body buried just they believe it helps to the spirit to raise from the death. When the very close relation die you must cut or scratch your face or hand and let the blood out and it was omen which emphasize the blood help the death to raise from death to life. After christianity this omen has changed and people roll these red eggs with the same meaning. Carrying eggs to the cemeteries is not only Georgian tradition: „For many countries there is usual on the day of pominoveniia klast on am cemetery eggs, especially the red eggs, like blood colour, represented life: eggs _ newborn life, resurrection of dieth body” (Freidenberg 1998, 185). In the very popular omen of fraternization the young people cut there finger and connect these bleeding fingers and after that they were brothers like from one mother. There is a very strange omen for pregnant lady, If during her pregnancy she will touch the spleen of the animal, no matter it will be bull or pig, and she will touch this bloody finger to any part of her body the baby will have red sign in the same place where the mother put the blood.

Now after overviewing the matter of the colours it is obliged to talk about the rainbow with seven colours as it is believed in the world people. The rainbow is appears when it is the rain comes and the same time the sun shines. In the Bible rainbow is a sign of the covenant between Jehovah and Noah: „I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and earth” (Genesis 9.13). Georgian writers in a very usual manner use the rainbow as a symbol of peace and hope the God will never leave the world in trouble. Virve Sarapic gave full information about etymology of rainbow:

The etymology of the Estonian word vikerkaar - 'rainbow' is rather ambiguous. Word viker has several derivation possibilities, it could have originated from the following meanings: from 'multicoloured', 'scythe' or 'thunder', as its name is in Livonian - a cognate language to Estonian - pit'kiz kor 'thunder bow'. In other Balto-Finnic languages the rainbow is usually connected with rain: Finnish, Ingrian and Karelian sateenkaari, Izhorian vihmakarDo. Swedish regnbåge, Old Norse regnbogi, Danish regnbue. Widespread is the connection with heaven - German dialectal Himmelring, French arc-en-ciel. In Latin there are several different expressions denoting rainbow: arcus pluvius 'rainbow', arcus caelestis 'bow of the heaven or gods', arcus coloratus 'coloured bow'. One can also refer to the Greek word ἶρις. In Greek mythology Iris was the daughter of Thaumas and Electra, the sister of harpies and a messenger of Olympian gods. Since Hesiodos she has been represented both as a goddess of rainbow and its impersonation. At the same time the rainbow could be the belt of Iris and a footpath between heaven and earth. The original meaning of the word iris is 'path, band'. Interesting is also the Latvian word for rainbow - varavīksne, meaning literally 'copperelm'. So is the Estonian word vikerkaar compared with other languages rather curious. It is not quite clear if the meaning of the word viker 'multicoloured' is secondary, derived from rainbow or vice versa, but nevertheless it is an unique word referring probably to the colours of rainbow. (Sarapik 1998,7-19).

Thunder is associated with rainbow (modern Estonian word vikerkaar is derived from the word pikkerkaar, or „arch of thunder“), the belt of thunder god. (Tarmo Kulmar 2005, 26)

In Georgian the name of the rainbow sounds like the belt of the sky. *Tsisartkela* is divided in two parts *Tsa* and *Sartkela* which means *Tsa* is the sky and *Sartkeli* is the belt. It is very interesting to follow some parallels with world people imaginations of thunder stones

Thunder stones, stone axes and hammer have been considered thunder symbols not only in the prehistoric Indo-European religion but also in Proto-European religion. (Tarmo Kulmar 2005. 28).

It remind me the stone with the hole on it within Georgian belief as a magic thing to defend people, house from devil, because such stones considered as a stones from the sky as they have hole from the thunder, even they are called thunder stone. In Georgian folklore materials rainbow representation is the same as almost in the European cultural area, it is the version from the Bible. To talk about the number of colours of rainbow there was three-colours rainbow theory, four-colours theory connected with the four elements (earth, air, water, fire) but mostly seven colours for the rainbow I think comes from the meaning of number seven, which is believed to be the representation of perfection and plenty. *“With the sun and moon were often associated the five visible planets, forming a sacred seven _ a figure which is continually cropping up in religious emblems” (Thomas Inman 1884, 113).* Seven stars to whom was talking Avtandil were the hope and faith of him who was going on his way to rescue friend Tariel. In Shota Rustaveli’s poem “The Knoble in the Tiger’s Skin” seven represent the perfection of kingdom of the king Farsadani:

THOU knowest, as every man knows, of India's seven kings. (310)

These seven kings do not represent only the number of kings, it is also the number which emphasize the heaven, perfection.

Now to talk about astral beings (the sun, the moon, the stars). There is one poetry in Georgian folklore which is considered very ancient poetry about the sun, moon and stars:

*The sun is my mother, the moon is my father
And the lighr stars are my sisters and brothers.(Kipiani 1925, 392).*

Thus it is considered as a very ancient one but always it remaind me the Jacob and his twelve sons often represented on Christian churches from the Old Testament. Some figures from the church symbolism are given by F. R. Webber where is given the sun and the moon and twelve stars from the Old Testament to represents Jacob with his family (Webber, 1927, 31). Now about the gender of the sun and the moon: *“It is well known that the ancients personified the sun female as well as male” (Doane 1882, 486).*In Georgian folklore almostly the sun is the female and the moon is male, but it is not against each other.Now about the symbols of the sun. In every primitive culture they were very important as the sun was the source of life, light, warm and in every family in Georgian people the fire in the middle of the house has the same meaning as the sun for the world, even there were some charms to save and keep this fire because if the fire once would be blown down it was bad and people had even curses to will each other to be there fire blown down. These omens are spreaded in literary heritages of Georgians. Great Georgian writers of 20th century Konstantine Gamsakhurdia and others. As the sun in the world, this fire in the fireplace just in the middle of the house is the mood of energy, lightness, movement, grace, gaiety. The sun is warm, life-giving, protecting, has loving power but in the same time the sun and fire can be dangerous and even threatening from which man must protect himself.

To look after symbols of the astral beings in the habits of peoples and in literary heritage become the sphere of my interest from the very earlier time when I decided to make my PhD in folklore. There is one very interesting poetry in Georgian folklore, Megrelian materials, where it is mentioned the sun in the middle of the night or midnight sun. Here is the poetry itself:

*Have you ever seen the sun was sitting in the sky
in the middle of the nigh?
New man was pleaded to see this,
There were birds sitting and telling stories,
Mother bird light the candle to the God for her children.
There are too many miracles like this in the world,
You must be the more then a man just to see this.(Gudava, 1975, 161)*

It is not usual for folklore to have such poem but it is not literary version. In Georgian literary heritage there are three examples of using the “sunny night” as a symbol of the God, in the Shota Rustaveli’s “The Knoble in the Tiger’s Skin”, as a mystical-allegoric name of the God in Davit

Guramishvili's "Davitiani" (XVIII century) and when it is said about David the Builder, the great king of Georgian state in the XII century, in the working of Petre Laradze (XII century). By Shota Rustaveli and other philosophers the sun was called as the visible icon of the God. "*Out of the Universal Logos proceeds the "invisible light" of the spirit, the truth, Law and the life embracing and penetrating the cosmos, while the visible light of nature is only its most material aspect or mode of manifestation, in the same sense as the visible sun is the reflex of its divine prototype, the invisible centre of power or the great spiritual sun*" (Magic, White and Black, 2010, 7).

Which is the first lighter of the world. From the Bible: "16 God made two great lights --the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, 18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning the fourth day". There are too many pagan rituals connected with the cult of the sun, with the victory of light over the darkness. There is one interesting myth about the sun and the moon:

According to Incan myths the Moon (Killa) was at first brighter than the Sun. The sun grew jealous and threw ashes on Moon's face, so that its brightness dimmed, resembling the moon of today (McKenzie&Prime&George&Dunning 2001.129)

In Georgia there is a myth why the moon is hidden and hiding his face. The Moon and The sun were couples and they were playing together and getting nerves of one lady who milks the cow. The lady took the droppings and threw to the sun and the moon. The sun managed to wash in the milk but the moon could not, so he is hiding his face and appears only nights.

*The common terms used for the moon are **Menulis** and **menou**. The word **menou** means at the same time the celestial body, the moon and the time period of a month. These names directly derive from the indo-European root "men(n)s-", "moon" and "month" and have a more general meaning of me-"measure" (DSS 54). So in the past, the moon was used as the natural cosmic instrument of measuring time. (Jonas Vaiskunas, 2006, 157)*

In Megrelian the word "Tuta" means the moon and the month too. The sun and the moon were called as an eyes of the day and night. The sun is the source of sight and life and there is a very interesting word in Georgian for sight "mzera" mze or the sun and from this "mzera" or glance, able to see. There are too many emblems of the sun in the world folklore.

Snake. I want to continue about symbols of snake. The diversity of this symbol make feeling the snake is mostly symbolised face for people. To these belowmentioned meanings I will add only expectations from Georgian tradition.

"The Estonian tradition concerning snakes contains two kinds of reports: mostly, the snake is used in repelling and preventive magic to help the cattle thrive and people fare well and also to cure people's diseases, while a lesser part contains instructions on how to avoid snakebites in the coming summer".

„The following list presents various cases where a snake can help: success in enterprises, the avoiding of master's wrath, good luck in court, no tiring at work, lots of money, luck with cards, competence in bird language (and the possession of other miraculous powers), prevention of evil witchcraft, means of witchcraft; treatment for snakebites, toothache, boils, swellings, alcoholism, lumbago, stroke, flatulence, rheumatism, rickets, barrenness; it could also be used as a component of a corroborant or an appetizer; a stick with which a snake had been killed was said to protect one from Old Nick, or - if placed under the eaves - from fire, and if stuck into grain it was to secure good crops, to keep the dart moth off the young green crop, etc. Once again one should note the fixed time: the magic powers are attributed to a snake killed before St. George's Day, even if used later (in a dried form, or made into powder, ashes, or infusion in oil or spirits)". (Mall Hiemäe, 1996,9-25)

I will begin from the very important omen in Georgia, especially for the mountarian people and the west part of Georgia, snakes were kept in a milk or close to the fire in the middle of the house in every families as an angels to save for families happiness and good luck. Those snakes were called as

an angels of the families (roots). You should not kill the snakes in the yard not to lose the happiness for your family. Snakes as chthonic creators can become owner of some special magic part of the sun which is the sign on a upper part of the body of man, snake can lick this *natsili* or magic sign after this it has magic power of happiness and killing the snake in the yard is bad thing. The very ancient Georgian myth about Amirani, which was born prematurely to ripen he was placed in a stomach of bull. On shoulders of Amirani: The moon and the sun was represented. Amirani is considered as a prototype of Prometheus." *The story of the crucifixion of Prometheus was the allegorical, for Prometheus was only a title of the sun, expressing providence or foresight, wherefore his being crucified in the extremities of the earth, signified originally no more than the restriction of the power of the sun during the winter month (Doane, 1882, 484)*" Thus the Amirani and Prometheus have the sign of the sun, called *natsili*, the snake can be the owner of the sign as a symbol of happiness. Thus snake will represented the sun. After looking for scholars researches it seems the from the very ancient myths and religions snake was an emblem of the sun, emblem of the evil, an emblem of the beneficent divinity, but if we understand the natures of the myths and emblems we see that it depends on what position are snake represented on the emblem the meaning will be different:

The serpent is an emblem of evil when represented with his deadly sting, he is the emblem of eternity when represented casting off his skin, and an emblem of the sun when represented with his tail in his mouth, thus forming a circle (Doane, 1882, 489).

From the Bible serpent was also the emblem of Christ Jesus, or in other words, represented Christ, among some of the early Christianed. Jehovah ordered Moses to frame a brazen serpent, whose power was so miraculous that those who only looked at it were cured of the evils inflicted by thanatoid snakes. Moses set up a brozen serpent in the wilderness, and Christian divines have seen in this a type of Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Gospel sanction this; for it is written: "*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up*". Even ancient beliefs snake was considered as a symbol of gods: "*From the earliest time of which we have any historical notice, the serpent has been connected with the preserving gods, or saviours; the gods of goodness and of wisdom*" (Doane 1882, 356).

Horseshoes. One very important matter which was interesting for me and now it is clear why the symbol of horseshoes (the iron arc) is very spread between Georgian people, the omen to hang this horseshoes on the gate of the house to defeat the house from bad eye and devil. Symbol cakes of horseshoes are used in new year traditions, families bake these cakes with several forms and within them the horseshoes forms. There comes one explanation why horseshoes could be the magic, it is the witches do not like horses and this is the reason of magic function. I will give one abstract:

Since the 12th century St. George started to be depicted as fighting the dragon from horseback. This has motivated his becoming a substitute for the patron of horses. Reports to that effect have been received from many nations: Germans, Hungarians, Poles (Handwörterbuch III 1930/31, 652), Russians (Propp 1963, 29), Latvians (Shmits 1940, 749-752) a.o. According to visitation reports sacrifices have been made to St. George as the god of horses at Kiidjärve, Estonia, as late as 1680 (Köpp 1902, 14). The custom of honouring horses on St. George's Day we share with our eastern and southern neighbours. Although the Finns, like the Western Europeans, recognize St. Stephen as the patron saint of horses, they also say that St. George's Day is a "horses' holiday." The Latvians and the inhabitants of the western and southern parts of Estonia and also of Saaremaa, share the ban on riding a horse and ploughing with one unless they are prepared to risk losing their luck with horses and being afflicted with other trouble. (Mall Hiemäe, 1996, 9-25)

Now I will try to find the roots of these Georgian traditions connected to the horseshoes. In Georgia there are at least three hundred sixty five churches named of the St. George and there are legend about St. George that after martyrdom he was cut in three hundred sixty five pieces and there was miracle that every pieces went up to the sky and after they fall down to the Georgian teritory and in every places where they fell it must be built churches and because of this so many churches of St. George's names are in Georgia. One can it be the source why the horseshoes become magical, but another one, it has the form of arc and as a symbol of the sun it can be magical too as there are horns

in Georgia magical by their forms. The magical function of the horseshoes as a house defenders may be more ancient than Christianity. In Georgia new moon can predict the weather, when you see the moon in position on the right side is hang on the sky it means there will be nice weather, if the moon is in the position like cup, down, it means it is full of the water and next month will be rainy. These Georgian omens were very interesting for me and I think it comes from the Bible, Noah and his ark, boat. Thomas Inman in a figure 123 (thomas Inman 1884, 85) gave composition from the Bible and there are moon represents ark and said: „Lunar crescent become a symbol of virginity and as such adorns the brow of the Greek Artemis and Roman Diana. This was used as a talisman at a very remote period and was fixed over the doors of the early lake-dwellers in Switzeland, like the horseshoes is to modern side-post” (Thomas Inman 1884, 113), thus flood and weather prediction are the roots of this Georgian omen to hang the horseshoes on the door to defend the house from bad eye or devil.

The Trees of the Sun. The sun was the begining of the New Year. For very ancient people every summer and spring was the beginning of the year after long winter. There were too many rituals connected to the New Year and there are varity of belief for every people. In Geoergia New Year three was „chichilaki” which empasize the tree with cairly spiral hairs made form the nut and on a top of the chichilaki there is a cross and limbs of the cross are of equal length. This chichilaki must be decorated with fruit and leaves of ivy and others. Why ivy? Thomas Inman gave very easy explanation why some trees were adored by people, some of them for their body, some of them for their nature and „fig-tree, because its leaves resembles the male traid, ivy was sacred from a similar cause” (thomas Inman 1884, XXII). For me this tree is symbol of the sun with her spiral, cairly hairs and for the nut was considered as a totem tree for the sun god this chichilaki was made from the nut tree. There are many interesting explanation about chichilaki and I will begin from the cross as a symbol of the sun. The esoteric meaning of the cross is very ancient and the cross has existed as a secret symbol probably thousands of years ago before the christian era. The edoration of the cross has been more general in the world than that of any other emblem:”*The cross, which was so universally adored, in its different forms among heathen nations, was intended as an emblem or symbol of the sun, of eternal life, the generative powers, to the Egyptian the cross was rhe symbol of immortality, an emblem of the sun and the god himself was crucified to the tree, which denoted his fruetifying power”* (Doane 1882, 351,484). The cross which is on a top of the chichilaki represents the movement of the sun in everywhere: North, East, West, South. With connection of the chchilaki there is very interesting omen killing the pig for cristmass. In many country it is tradition to have the pork for christmass. There is interesting parralel with this ritual and chichilaki. As I mentioned before the tree of the totem sun was nut, pig eating the nut and for this pig was considered as an animal of totem sun and every summer to adore the summer must be killed the pig and its head must be given to the sun, thus the pork was not allowed to eat, but there is a legend among Georgian about allowance of pork eating after Christianity. New Year day in Georgia sometimes is called as a day of Saint Basili, for the church celebrate the day of Saint Basili in 1st of January.

After christianity New Year is conneceted to the christmass but all ancient rituals connected to the sun transfered to the christmass and killing the pig or having pork on a Christmass table is still exist in contemporary.

Now about of rare symbols in Georgia in comparison of European people’s life:

An ambiguous intermediate stage between dualistic and Christian conceptions of soul is the belief according to which the soul (which one of them?) is identified with the heart, and upon dying the soul leaves the body, while the heart goes to heaven. Animals have no soul. A recollection of blood as the carrier of something is conveyed by one or two reports saying that if blood palōhtub, the human being will die, and that it is blood that causes dreams in men.(Madis Arukask, 1998)

When the man die it is said soul spills from the body. The same about blood, to pour from the body blood or soul it is death. In Megruli word „ghura” means die and the word in Georgian „ghvra” means spill, pour something.

After death the departed (one’s soul) had to climb high mountains and then show God his nails. The latter was explained with the belief that in the other world God asked for your nails and if you had thrown them away, you

had to come back to look for them. That is why all nails ever cut had to be kept and carried along - then there is no need to come back from the other side to look for them. This probably refers to nails as one of the substances of the soul. The motif of keeping the nails is known in other mythologies as well (e.g. in the Scandinavian end of the world, the ship Naglfar, made of human nails, sails on the sea - see the Younger Edda, Gylfaginning LI - although this is made of the nails of the dead with uncut nails). (Madis Arukask, 1998)

Now about some omens wellknown in Georgia about nails and hair. Some devil spirits can be free of this spirits if you cut them the nails, but you must hidden it because if the devil get these nails again he will become bad soon after getting nails. There are some omens in the West Georgia after relation dies noone from the family cut hair, noone shaves but after forty days hair must be cut, they shave and the person who will be the first to touch the hair and cut it will become the relation like the death one. You can have someone instead of father, brother after they die and it will be the one to whom you will let to cut the hair.. The magical power of hair and nails are very usual thing and has variety of rituals connected to them.

Fish as the symbol of the Christ. The only satisfactory explanation why Jesus should be represented as a fish says Mr. King, in his Gnostics and their Reamins: „seems to be circumstance that in the quaint jargon of the Talmud the Messiah is often designated „Dag” or „The fish” and Mr. Landy in his „Monumental Christianity” says about this. From the Gospel ”Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12;40). I will show the very important epigraphic monument. The epigraphic writing of Georgian alphabet (367 AD).



On this Davati Stele King Pharnavaz and king Mirian holding the fish with Georgian alphabet on its skin and it contains the information about Georgian language coming from the God, Christ. King Pharnavaz was the first King III Century BC who established the Georgian language, invented the Georgian alphabet for Georgian, here is the abstract from the historical writing of Georgian „Kartlis Tskhovreba” (the life of the Kartli): „Pharnavaz was the first king of Kartli descended from Kartlos, who extended the Georgian language and no more was a different language spoken in Kartli except Georgian”. The Iberian King Mirian established Christianity in Georgia as the official state religion in AD 327.

Conclusion

To sum up these symbols in Georgian folklore with comparison of world people’s imaginations, it is true there is very good explanations of interesting points of view , very interesting experience of ancient Georgian cultural life and the question Why the habits, omens, rituals of such different

countries are so similar and which theory can make clear this fact? It is not easy to make conclusion because no theory can make full sense of this fact. I want to summarise all of this by looking in the Bible and tell only one thing. After first sin people who left the source of knowledge, the God and wele left without the wisdom which was inspired from the God, they begin make myths, legends, tales, all this rituals connected to the God and there are even example in the Bible how Jewish people made statues of the dieties in the dessert with Moses who deal them from the Egyptian prison. The mission of the Christ birth was to deal the people to the right way to the God, to the paradise and to rebuilt the destroyed way to the God. All these emblems, rituals, symbols in folklore are the information about spiritual development of mankind full of imagination and great sense of wisdom.

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