Localization of some surnames derived from the Kartvelian names, based on the toponymical material of the North Ossetia

Begoidze Omar¹

¹ PhD Student;
Faculty of Sciences and Arts Doctoral Academic Program in History,
Ilia State University, Republic of Georgia

Abstract.
The surnames and their study represent an important source in the researches related to the nations’ ethnogenesis and history. The process of family names formation among the Ossetian people is very similar to other ethnoses, and it was determined by the social processes in the society. It is assumed that the surnames massively appeared in the Ossetia since 17th century. The vast majority of the Ossetian surnames are of the eponymous type, i.e. they come from the name of the founder of the family. The Ossetian anthroponomy was significantly influenced by the Caucasian people, particularly by the Kabardians and Georgians. The writing sources and the toponymical material confirms that the Georgian anthroponyms and the family names derived from them, were massively spread in the Dvaletia region of the present-days North Ossetia. Some Georgian scholars use the onomastic material, namely anthroponymy and toponymy, for strengthening the hypothesis of Kartvelian origin of the ancient Dvals. Information about the history of the families, including migration processes, is preserved in the Ossetian genealogical stories. Thus, when the family, living in the historical Dvaletia and other areas of Dval’s settlement (Maghran Dvaletia, Truso), is mentioned in the stories as an indigenous inhabitant, there is a reasonable assumption about the Dvalian origin of the family. The article describes several examples from the long list of the North Ossetia’s toponym, consisting of surnames with the Kartvelian stem words.

Keywords:
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The study of the processes related to the creation and development of the surnames provides the important information about the history, ethnogenesis and culture of the nation. It is believed that surnames appeared for the first time in Italy in the 11th century, although according to some scholars, surnames originated much earlier, still in ancient Rome. Surname is a hereditary name used by three generations at least (Topchishvili 1997a, 7-8; Topchishvili 1997b, 91). Formation of the family and giving it a hereditary name was largely determined by the social processes taking place in the societies. Surnames were first formed in the ruling elite (nobility), and later in lower social classes (traders, peasants, craftsmen). Process of surnames’ formation among the Ossetians also took place according to this principle. Based on the written sources and ethnographic materials, some of Ossetian scientists suggest that surnames appeared massively in the families of Ossetian nobles in the late 17th – early 18th centuries, while the peasants received surnames only in the early 19th century, that was related to the Russian Empire administrative requirements (Икаева 2014). Another part of Ossetian researchers, referring to the Georgian historical sources and works of Georgian authors, think that Ossetian royal and noble surnames were first created in the 12th -13th centuries (Икаева 2014). Ossetian historians and ethnographers mention noble families and their surnames which existed during the Ossetian kingdom period: Sidamon, Tsarazon, Kusagon, Aguzon, Tsakhilon (Гаглойти 2007, 3-4). According to the ethnographic sources, other Ossetian families are descendants of those 5 big families. Vakhushi Bagrationi’s "Geography" published at the end of 18th century is an important source about the surnames of the Ossetian nobles. According to Vakhushi, "the surnames of Ovs (Ossetians) are the following: Basiani, Badelidze, Cherkesidze, Tagauri, Kurtauli, Sidamon, Chakhelidze" (Vakhushi 1997, 108). As we can see, the listed surnames were created with the Georgian formative -a n-, -dz e, -u r-, -u l-, while Badelidze was probably formed by double Georgian suffixation: the origin suffix -e l- and -dz e- ("son") (Japaridze 2010, 486). Modern Ossetian surnames are formed with the suffix -t- and the ending -ə, which represent them
in the plural, for example Dziboy-t-ə "Dziboyevs", Baska-t-ə "Baskaevs", Esia-t-ə "Esievs" etc. To indicate
the representative of the family, the endings -i or -i are
attached to the suffix -t- (Baska-t-ı), however, in ancient
times, the Ossetian surnames were formed by the suffixes -a
n- and -o n-, which today usually denote the female
representatives of the family, for example Baskı-a n, Esi-o n (Гаглойти 2007, 20).

In the classification system of the Ossetian surnames,
four main types can be identified: eponymous (surnames derived
from a given name or nickname), ethnonymic (surnames derived
from the name of an ethnic group), toponymic (surnames derived
from a geographical name) and professional (surnames derived
from an occupation), however, the vast majority of the
Ossetian surnames are of the eponymous type, based on the
name of the founder of the family. According to the Ossetian
scientists, during the formation of surnames (XVII-XIX
centuries), the influence of Turkic-speaking and Adyghe
tribes was important in the Ossetian anthroponomy, although
the majority of personal names were Old Iranian (Икаева 2014).
B. Kaloev noted, that the Ossetian anthroponomy was
significantly influenced by the Caucasian people, but the
Ossetians adopted a particularly large number of first names
from the Kabardians and Georgians (Каноеа 1999, 220). Thus,
an important layer of the Ossetian anthroponomy consists of
the Kartvelian personal names, nicknames and surnames derived
from them.

The Georgian anthroponym in the Ossetian surname does not
unambiguously indicate the Georgian roots of the family. An
Ossetian surname derived from the Georgian anthroponym, could
appear independently from the similar Georgian surname. Thus,
two categories can be distinguished in Ossetian surnames of
the eponymous type, which contain the Kartvelian stem words:

1. Surnames of the families whose ancestors were ethnic
Ossetians bearing Georgian first names or nicknames;
2. Surnames, which were formed as a result of the ethnic
Georgian families’ assimilation.

The written sources (chronicles, censuses, legal
documents etc.) in combination with the rich Georgian
ethnographic material, allow to identify the surnames of
Ossetian families of Georgian origin. For example, in the
census of 1886, surnames from the Truso Valley are listed with Russian suffixes –е в/о в: Gudiev (Гудиев), Bibilov (Бибилов), Arджинов (Арджинов) and others, although their nationality (народность) is indicated as "Georgian" (грузин) (Topchishvili 2005, 51). The mentioned data confirm that these surnames represent the Georgians from Truso (Gudiauri / Gudia/vili, Bibiluri, Arджинаuli). Ethnographic material about Ossetian surnames of the Georgian origin can be found in the works of Ossetian researchers. However, considering the modern trends, there are attempts to hide the Georgian roots of some Ossetian families, for example, instead of Georgian origin, it is written that the ancestor of the family came to the North Ossetia from "South Ossetia", Maghran-Dvaletia, Kudaro or Ksani valley, which Ossetian scholars wrongly consider to be historical areas of Ossetian settlement.

Ossetian scholar Z. Gagloiti notes that Ossetians, especially in the "South Ossetia", took the Georgian formants -v i l i, -dz e and -u r i on their surnames as a result of the long-term political, economic and cultural relations with Georgians. According to Gagloiti, the Georgian suffix -u r i was especially common among the family names of Ossetians from Dvaletia region (Гаглойти 2007, 21). This is natural, because the native population of this area was represented by the ethnically Kartvelian tribe of Dvals, whose surnames were formed in the same manner as in the mountains of Eastern Georgia. Majority of about twenty surnames of the Dvals, assimilated in the XVII-XVIII centuries, were created with the -u r/-u l- affixe (Tvauri, Bagauri, Gudiauri, Gergauli and others) (Topchishvili 2010, 184). Later, the Ossetian formative -т e was added to the stem of those Georgian surnames in the Ossetian oral forms (Gudia-t е, Bagat т е), but in the Russian written sources and administrative documents, Ossetian surnames were mentioned with Russian endings –е в/–о в (Гуди-ев, Бага-ев).

Important studies on the Ossetian personal names and surnames of Georgian origin have been conducted by Georgian scientist R.Topchishvili, who found out, that according to the population census, the Ossetians of Dvaletia region (historical part of the Georgian kingdom) were still massively using the Kartvelian (Zan and Svan) names in 19th century
(T∫it∫o, Baxa, Xut∫’a, Dot∫i, Dʒaxi, etc.). Referring to the anthroponomy, the scientist strengthens the hypothesis of Kartvelian origin of Dvals (Topchishvili 2010, 180-187; Topchishvili 2021a, 136-161). Georgian scientist V. Gamrekeli pointed out the importance of the onomastics in the study of the Dvals’ origin. Gamrekeli considered the Dvals to be Vainakhs, but later, he expressed an opinion about the Zan origin of the Dvals, which he tried to support with onomastic data. The scientist noticed, that toponyms similar to Dvaletia are recorded in the Western Georgia as well (Gamrekeli 1958, 67). In addition to the population censuses and other written sources, toponymy confirms the massive distribution of the Kartvelian anthroponyms in Dvaletia, where the following Kartvelian names are identified: Bayu, Bebe, Beri / Berø, Bibo, Boti, Boi, Buba, Budz i, Gagi, Gak’a, Gok’o, Gugu, Guts’u, Dore, Zalo, Tiba, Tebe, Toti/Toto, Toi, Lak’o, Maryi, Nani, Salua (∫alva), Sasi (∫a∫i), Sino, Siua (∫io), Susa (∫u∫a), Kalo, Koto, Kora, Dzots’i, Ts’ura, Xela, Xozi, Xut’a, Xut’inà, Xuts’u / Xut∫’u.

The mutual borrowing of anthroponyms between bordering ethnic groups is a widespread phenomenon in the world, however, the exceptionally high concentration of Kartvelian personal names in Dvaletia until the 19th century and their abundance in the Dvaletia’s toponymy, gives us the reason to assume that the Kartvelian-speaking ethnic group lived in this area in the ancient times, which later mixed with the migrating Iranian-speaking element. During a certain period of migration processes, the population of Dvaletia was probably bilingual (Kartvelian-Ossetian). According to V. Abaev, the tribes speaking Caucasian languages (Vainakh, Kartvelian, etc.) met the Alans who migrated to the Caucasus mountains, and the period of their coexistence and mutual penetration was long, therefore, the population was bilingual (Iranian-Caucasian) for a certain period of time, until Ossetian ethnos and Ossetian language were finally formed (Абаев 1949, 75-80). The same opinion was shared by the Russian scientist E. Kuznetsov, and according to V. Gamrekeli, the substrate for the Ossetian language became Dval’s language (Кузнецов 1984, 184; Gamrekeli 1961, 139). Based on the ethnographic materials, the Ossetian and Russian researchers
noticed, that the majority of the Ossetian families in Dvaletia migrated from other valleys of Ossetia in the 16th-18th centuries (Topchishvili 2021a, 185-186). Information about the migration of families is still preserved in the Ossetian genealogical stories. Thus, when the family, living in the historical Dvaletia and other areas of Dval’s settlement (Maghran Dvaletia, Truso), is mentioned in the stories as an indigenous inhabitant, there is a reasonable assumption about the Dvalian origin of the family.

Important information about the geographical localization of the surnames in the North Ossetia, including historical Dvaletia, is provided by the toponymy, which is described in the research of the Ossetian scientist A.Tsagaeva. A surname in a toponym may refer to the area of residence of the families, the belonging of a geographical object to a certain family, an ancestral shrine, etc. Accordingly, toponymy helps us in the process of determining the origin of the families and their names, their customs and settlement area. The development of any ethnos is related to the emergence of the new surnames, which is caused mainly by socio-economic processes (split of the big family, migration, etc.). Unfortunately, the families and the surnames also disappeared, became extinct, due to various reasons (war, epidemic, natural disaster, etc.). Similar processes were developing among the Ossetians and were reflected in the ethnographic and toponymical material. Thus, the North Ossetian toponymy has preserved information about some, including Kartvelian origin, surnames that no longer exist in the present-day Ossetia, which is confirmed by the list of modern Ossetian surnames (“The law about the Ossetian family names”, approved in 31 October 2012 by the so-called parliament of the non-recognised “South Ossetia”). The fact that surnames really appear in the toponyms is confirmed by their structure: anthroponym + Ossetian plural suffix -t- or -a n /-o n + endings ə or ɨ, for exemple, Tsopan-t-ɨ suadon “the source of Tsopan’s family”. When researching the etymology of the anthroponyms and toponyms, it is important to consider the phonetic processes that characterise the relationship between different languages. The regularity of phonetic transformations in the Kartvelian words of the
Ossetian language is explained in the researches of Vaso Abaev and Mzia Adronikashvili (Абаев 1949, 291-308; AndronikaSvili 1984, 30-41).

This article describes several examples from the long list of the North Ossetia's toponyms, consisting of surnames with the Kartvelian stem words.

灣 Vick. Near the village of Tib in Dvaletia, there is a meadow Bayui tiuigarden (Цацаева 1975, 224). A.Tsagaeva explains toponym as "the meadow of the Baghui family" and singles out the anthroponym Bayu. The name could be of Georgian origin. In Megrelian language, bayu means "barn", and bayi means "ritual hut". The existence of the first name Bayu in the Megrelian-Laz anthroponymy is confirmed by the old Laz surname Bayua/i / Bayva/i (bayua + genitive affix – Ы/i). The surname Bayu/vili can also be found in Megrelia. On the other hand, we find the word bayui / bayvi meaning "child" and "son" in the Georgian dialects (Javakhishvili 1994, 186). Thus, the anthroponym used in the toponym of Dvalteia may be of Megrelian-Laz (Bayu) or Georgian (Bayui / Bayvi) etymology. Nowadays, the surname Bayuite does not exist in the Ossetia. On the basis of toponymic data, we can assume that the representatives of the "Baghu’s family" of the Dvals lived in the village of Tib, however, for unknown reasons, this surname disappeared.

Bebet. One of the valleys in Dvaletia, which stretches from the village of Zgil to the Zrug (Zrogo) glacier, is called Bebetikom "Bebe's valley" (Цацаева, 1975, 196). The toponym contains the surname Bebe in the genitive form of Ossetian language. The surname is derived from the personal name Bebe, which is mentioned in the 13th century Svanetian chronicle and 18th century census of the Aragvi valley (Mtiuleti region) (Ingorokva 1941, 135, 138; Takaishvili 1907, 431). In the Svanetia, the word bebe was used in the meaning of “prey”, to scare the children (cf. meadow Bebe near the village of Chelier in Svaneti) (Chkadua 2011, 35). The surname Bebet is not found in the modern Ossetia, however, toponymy gives us a reason to assume that the family was once the resident of the Dval’s village Zgil, and owned the pastures.

Bobote. Near the village of Tib in Dvaletia, there is a
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meadow named Bobotixariste "willows of the Bobo’s family" (Цагаева 1975, 226). The first component of toponym is the surname Bobote in the genitive form of Ossetian language. The name of the founder of the family, Bobo, is also in another toponym, which is near the village of Satat, next to Tib: Bobolisuadon "Bobo’s source" (Цагаева 1975, 208). Toponyms contain the Georgian anthroponym Bobo, which is presented in the Georgian surname Bobosdze, mentioned in the 12th -13th centuries Annals (Enukidze1977, 1988). It should be noted, that there is a village in Imereti called Boboti, which is an eponymous toponym. Thus, taking into account the toponymic material, we can assume that the Dval’s family Bobote lived in the village of Tib, although nowadays no similar surname is recorded in Ossetia.

Boite. In the Tabaghau (Tapanq‘au) valley of Dvaletia, there is a pasture and a meadow called Boitifeten "Boi’s family plain" (Цагаева 1975, 226). The stem of the surname Boite is the Megrelian anthroponym Boia, which is mentioned in the 1790 Western Georgian church document (Chabakua Boia) (Kakabadze 1921, 126). The anthroponym is probably related to the Megrelian word boi, identical to a Georgian katso “man”, which is used to appeal a person,. At present, there is no surname Boite in Ossetia.

Biyulte /Buyulte. In the Khilak valley, which connects Truso with the Kurtat valley of North Ossetia, there is an abandoned village Biyultiq’au "village of the Byghula’s family" (family name Biyulte in the genitive + Ossetian q’au “village”). Only members of Biyulte / Buyulte (Bugulov) family lived in this village (Цагаева, 1975, 112). According to the ethnographic material, the founder of the family was a man from Khilak named Buyul / Buyuli. The anthroponym Buyuli is of Kartvelian origin. In Svan language, buyul / muyul means "beetle" (cf. also Zan word muryul "gadfly" and surnames Muryuli and Muryulia) (Chukhua 2002–2003, 155). Khilak valley is mentioned as "Xevxilak’a" in a Georgian source of the 16th century, and it was on the extreme northern border of Georgia, where Khilak gate was located (Topchishvili 2021a, 23, 40). The toponym Khilak itself is of Svan origin. In the Lentekhi dialect of the Svan language, we have the word xilak’ "breakstone, gravel" (cf. Georgian (dial.) word
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*xalik’i* "breakstone, gravel"). Thus, we can assume that Khilak valley, as well as the Truso, was populated by Dvals. Based on the fact, that there is no ethnographic or other material on the migration of *Biyulte / Buyulte (Bugul)* to the Khilak valley, they can represent the indigenous, dval population there.

*Mamite.* One of the passes in Dvaletia, which connects the Djinat valley to the Zrug valley, is called Mamitikom "the valley of Mami’s (Mamia) family" (Цагаева, 1975, 199). *Mamite (Mamiev)* is one of the old surnames, which is considered by Ossetians to be transformed to *Mamia/vili* in Georgia. In fact, the Ossetian *Mamite* are originally from Dvaletia region (Nara-Mamison) and their old surname is *Mamiauri*. As a result of Ossetian migration to Dvaletia, part of *Mamiauri* was assimilated, but another part of the family moved to the Inner Kartli region of Georgia, where they became *Mamia/vili*. Ironically, part of Dvals *Mamiauri / Mamia/vili* living in the Inner Kartli were also assimilated later by Ossetians migrating in this region of Georgia (Topchishvili 2021, 29-30). The *Mamievs*, living in the Shevardeni village of Khevi region of Georgia, are also Dvals *Mamiauri* by origin (Topchishvili 2021b, 21).

*Mets’ite, Mets’inata.* In Dvaletia region, there are three eponymous toponyms with the stem *mets’-*: *Mets’ite* "Metsi's family" (meadow near the village of Zaramag), *Mets’inate* "Metsina's family" (meadow with settlements near the village of Tsmi), and *Mets’enatig’ed* "Metsena's family forest" in the Vartse valley (Цагаева 1975, 247). Based on toponymic data, it is obvious that the people with the surname *Mets’inate / Mets’enate* lived in Dvaletia, but this surname does not exist today. As for the *Mets’ite* (Metsievs), according to A. Tsagaeva, the family moved from Dvaletia to the north, in the Alagir valley (Цагаева 1975, 247). According to the ethnographic material, *Mets’ite* (Metsievs) living in Digor region of Ossetia, are Georgians by origin and their ancestors came to Digor from Georgia (Kaloev 1999: 236). Thus, on the basis of toponymic and ethnographic material, it is possible to find out the origin and migration processes of the family *Mets’ite* (Metsievs). As for the stem word *mets’/mets’in* of surnames, it is probably of the Kartvelian origin: in Svan
Nanita. In the Vartse gorge of Dvaletia, there is a forest called Nanitiq'ed "Nani’s family forest". Nanite (Nanievs) should be of Dval origin, because according to the genealogical traditions, the roots of the family is in the Kudaro valley of Georgia, where the Dvals lived until the 18th century (Vakhushi 1997, 116). The surname is derived from the man's Georgian name Nani / Nania, which is found in the 13th century Svanetia chronicle, and in the document of 1360 (Tulasdze Naniai) (Ingorokva 1941, 134). Some researchers think, that Nania is an anthroponym of Hurrian origin (Topchishvili 2010, 194).

Tsedgeta. Settlement near Nar village of Dvaletia is called Tsedgeta (Цагаева 1975, 217). According to the structure of the toponym, it represents the surname: the anthroponym Tsedge + the Ossetian formative -t -ə. Thus, the toponym means "Tsedge's family". Taking into account the phonetic processes of the Ossetian language, Tsedge corresponds to the Georgian Tjege. The personal name Tjegi belongs to the oldest layer of the Svan anthroponomy, which is mentioned in the inscriptions of the village Adishi church (Svanetia), dated to the 12th century (Silogava 1988, 81). The person’s name may be related to the Svan word tʃeg "loop bow". Nowadays, the surname Tsedgeta (Tjegeta) is not found in Ossetia, although the toponym (abandoned settlement) means, that this surname existed in the historical Dvaletia.

Dzergeta, Dzerdzian. Toponyms related to the surname Dzerget are located near the villages Kalaka and Tib in Dvaletia: pasture Dzergatik’axir "Dzherga's family ditch", tillage Dzergatitsuryxuimte "Dzherga family's Fields", spring Dzergatisuadon "Dzherga’s family spring" (Цагаева 1975, 209, 234). Nowadays, this Ossetian surname is written as Dzhergaev. The old version of surname, dzergian, is also presented in the toponymy of Dvaletia as forest and meadow names (Цагаева 1975, 234). The Ossetian phonetic version of surname Dzergian was also Dzerdzian, which is found in the name of one of the valleys near the village of Tib in Dvaletia – Dzerdzianikom "Gorge of Dzerdzian". In the words Dzergian / Dzerdzian, we find the old Ossetian formative of the surnames -a n-, which corresponds to the Georgian suffix -a n- of the same meaning:

language, the word mets’e means "helper, supporter, protector" and mets’uin - "right, righteous."
D泽rdзian <- D泽rgian <- Gergian <- Gergiani (Gergianni). As we can see, both, old and relatively late forms of the same surname (D泽rdзian- D泽rgate) were reflected in the toponymy of North Ossetia. The surname D泽rgate (D泽hrgaev) derives from the Georgian first name Gerga / Gergi and its phonetic form D泽rga. Two versions of the etymology of the anthroponym can be considered: the name is related to the Laz-Megrelian word gesture "colt", or to the Megrelian-Svan anthroponym Gerg / Gierg / D泽rgi (variants of the name George) (Kiria and oth. 2015, 44; A6aev 1989, 56). According to the Ossetian documents, another version of the surname D泽rgate (D泽hrgaev) is Gergaulov (“The law about the Ossetian family names”, approved in 31 October 2012 by the so-called parliament of the non-recognised “South Ossetia”), which consists of the stem Gergaul- and the Russian ending - ov. As we can see, Gergaulov is the “russified” form of the Georgian family name Gergauli. The representatives of this family left in the Georgian village Tontobeti, of Inner Kartli. The Gergauli came to this village from Dvaletia. As a result of the migration of Ossetians to Dvaletia, the Gergauli, remaining in the region, were assimilated and today their family name is written as Gergaulov (Topchishvili 2021а, 127), but another part of assimilated Gergauli is known as D泽hrgaev. Thus, the toponymy informs us, that before the migration to the Inner Kartli region of Georgia and assimilation by Ossetian population, the Gergauli, or Gergiani lived in the villages Kalaka and Tib of Dvaletia.

The study of some geographic names in North Ossetia, which contain the Georgian anthroponyms, has shown, that the toponymical material complements the ethnographic data and provides important information regarding the origin of families, their surnames, the geographical localization and migration processes. The eponymous surnames revealed through the toponymy of Dvaletia, together with historical, anthropological, linguistic and genetical material, may strengthen the hypothesis that before the migration of the Iranian-speaking tribes, the population of Dvaletia spoken the Kartvelian language.

References:


