

About the Divine Origin of Bagrationis Royal Dynasty

*“from The Stem Of David The Psalmist Are We
By Origin, And, Therefore, Divine Right Of Kings
We Have – Bagrationis And We Are King And
Prophet David’s Tribes”
“new Kartli life”*



The tomb of the biblical King David
in Jerusalem

According to Venice merchant Marko Polo’s source “Georgian kings were born with eagle on the right shoulder” (1. Marco Polo. *Travell. Edition of Magidovicha. Moscow, 1954, str.153*). The theory of divine origin of Bagrationis royal dynasty is one of the peculiarity. According to the Bible, God chooses Jewish people, where the kingdom he establishes: “Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness” (2. Bible. *Publication of the Georgian Patriarchate. Tbilisi, 1989, str.249 - Kings And, Chapter 10, Section 1*) (in Georgian). After theory of Divine Origin of Bagrationis Royal Dynasty historian Sumbat the son of David, royal family of Bagrationis considered themselves as heir of Jesse-David-Solomon and, therefore, they called as “Jessian-Davidian-Solomonians” (3. *Sumbat Davitis dze. History and the story of Bagration. In: Kartlis Tskhovreba, Volume 1 st.*

Text published S.Kauhchishvili. Tbilisi, 1955, str.378) (in Georgian).

The surname of Bagrationis appeared earlier at the political stage and various legends created in the Georgian and Armenian environment about it. (4. *N.Adonts. Armenia in the era of Justinian. St. Petersburg, 1908, str.413, M.Lordkipanidze. Legend about the origin of Bagration. In the book “History of Peoples of the Caucasus.” Tbilisi, 1966, p.144-149. ; I.Bichikashvili. the divine origin of the royal dynasty of Bagrationi. Almanach “Bagratovani”, № 1, Tbilisi, 2000, p.9-16*) (in Georgian).

Legend about Georgian Bagrationis relationship with Biblical David toughly connected with Armenian royal family’s Bagratunis isotheims. (5. *B.Kupatadze. Historical Foundations and izoteizma Bagrationi dynasty. Magazine “Artanuji”, № 1, Tbilisi, 1994, p.24-30*) (in Georgian).

Announcement about theory of Bagrationis’ origin from Biblical David is beard out in “History of Armenia” (in chronicles of Ani Bagratunis), after Ovanes Draskhanaketsi, X century, which is the unifying power of two traditions about origin from Shambat



The Biblical King David
(fresco from Ateni)



Christ blessing the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenet

and Biblical David. Ovanes Draskhanaketsi wrote: “Valarshak, Armenian king proved Bagrat (Bivrat after Movses Khorenatsi), who came from Shambat Uri and was said to be David’s relative”. (6. I. Abuladze. *Iovannes Draskhanakertsky. Information about Georgia. Tbilisi, 1937, page 3 (in Georgian); Iovannes Draskhanakerttsi. History of Armenia (786-925 gg.). Yerevan, 1986, p.55*). The theory of Bagrationis’ origin from Biblical David is cited from Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus “De administrando imperio”: Must know that Iverians, namely - the people of Curapalates, priding, assert that originate from the wife of Uri (Hit-

tite), committing adultery with David, prophet and basileus. They take place, according to them, from David’s children, they are the relatives of David, prophet and basileus, and the same and All-Holy our Lady, because it originated from a seed of David. As they talk, they take place from Jerusalem, as great respect they feed to him and to the coffin Lord our Jesus Christ, and from time to time generously send money to patriarch of the sainted hail and local Christians. Since migration them from Jerusalem in the country now inhabited by them passed to this pore, to 10 indiction 6460 from creation of the world (952), to the reign of Constantin and Romana, God lovers and crimson wearing Basilius of Rome - 400 years or even 500”. (7. *Porphyrogenet Constantine VII (Porphyrogenitus). On the control of the empire. Edited G.G.Litavrina. Moscow, 1991, str.193-195*).

First notification of about theory of Bagrationis’ origin from Biblical David or about their divine origin is kept in Giorgi Merchule’s “life of the Saint Grigol”; Grigol Khandzteli said to Ashot Curapalates: “Called son of David the prophet and anointed king, kingdom and virtue strengthens the Christ to you” and legitimate Ashot the Ist Curapalates right on Tao-Klarjeti. (8. *George Merchule. Life of Grigol Khandzteli. In: Monuments of Georgian hagiographic literature, Book II, Tbilisi, 1963 (in Georgian); George Merchule. Life of Gregory Handztiyskogo. Georgian text, introduction, edition, translated from the Diary N.Marra travel to and Shavshiyu Klardzhiyu. “Texts and finding on the Armenian-Georgian literature.” Book VII, St. Petersburg., 1911, p.96*).

Kartlian dukes consider themselves as heirs of Georgian kings. “Kartli Convert” and Sumbat son of David considered Adarnase Curapalates as a representative of Kartlian dukes house and their member. In one of Georgian historical source tradition, promotion of Bagrationis family is dated back of VI century, and founder of Georgian Bagrationis dynasty is considered Guaram (Gurgen) the duke (hence, they



Grigol Khandzteli (Miniatures of the XII c.)

call it as a Guaramian house). That notice of Sumbat son of David refers Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetos (913-959) information about 400-500 years ago dwelling of Bagrationis in Iberia. By those sources Dukes of Kartli Bagrationis are. Georgian historical compositions of late middle ages and representatives of Bagrationis family, princes, rise of their family they dated back of VI century and connected it with Kartlian dukes. (9. *Porphyrogenet Constantine VII (Porphyrogenitus). On the control of the empire. Edited G.G.Litavrina. Moscow, 1991, p.195.*)

In the “Book of Relatives” after king Vakhtang VI Georgian nation considered as heirs to the Japhet, son of Noah, and Bagrationis—as heirs to the Noah’s elder son—Sem: relativity is presented here as main direction of “Creation”: Noah-Sem-Abraham-Jacob-Jesse-David king-Solomon; Bagrationis are proclaimed as direct heirs of those arch-fathers and kings. (10. *Georgian antiquities found in the Gorky region. “Literary findings” Vol.IV. Tbilisi, 1947, see Appendix № 1 (in Georgian) Georgian kings Biblical genealogies compiled by King Vakhtang*



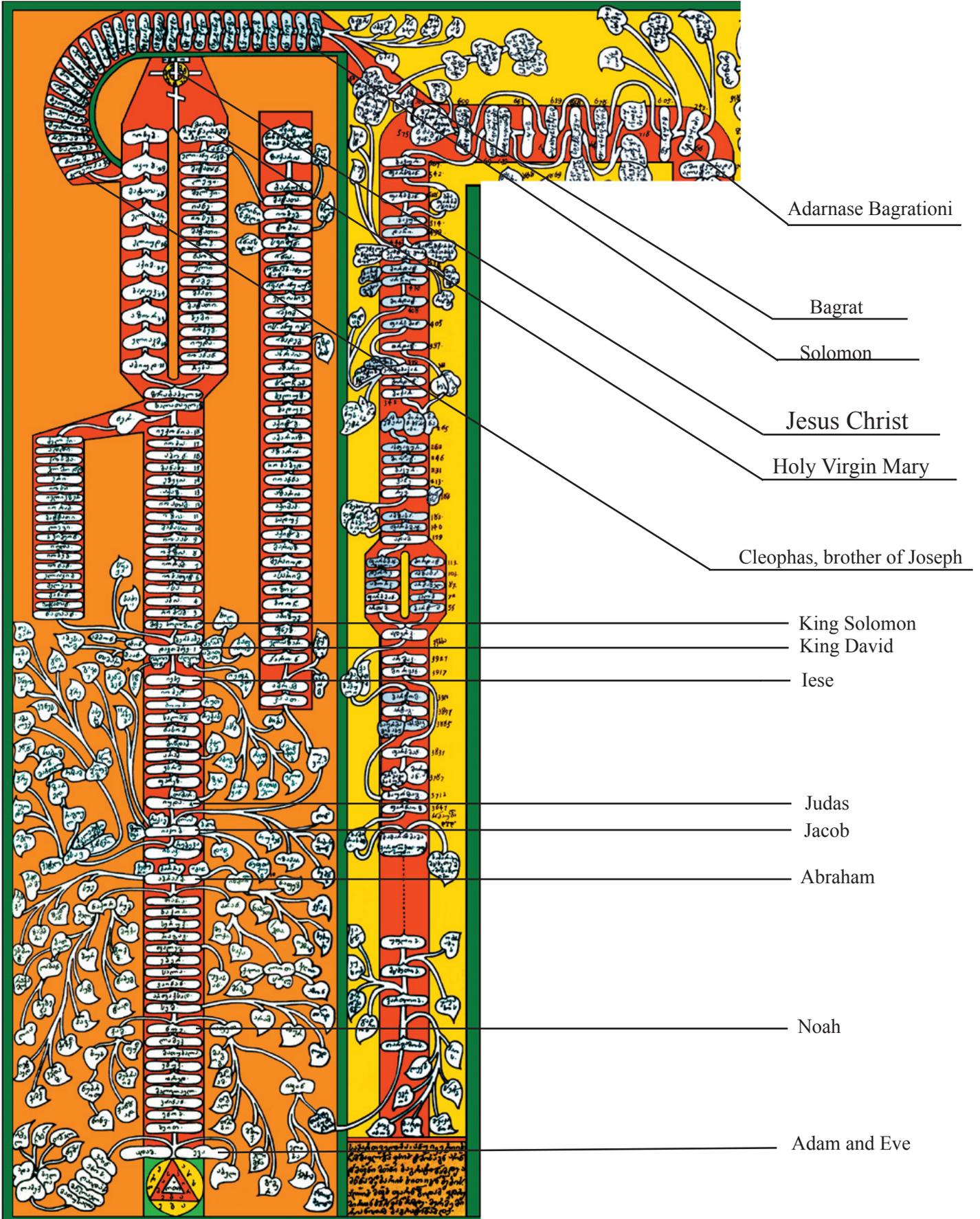
the icon with biblical genealogy of the Bagrationis (XVIII c.)

VI. In: “*Bagrationis. Scientific and cultural heritage*”. Tbilisi, 2003, p.256-257 (in Georgian).) For example, historian of David the Builder king David IV is considered as the 78th heir of Jewish king David: “in the darkness raised sun of all kingdom, great by name and the greatest by acting, name of nobles, David, from God’s Father and seventy eighth child of this David himself, David”. (11. *Life of the King of Kings David. Text prepared for publication, research, vocabulary and pointers supplied Mzekala Shanidze. Tbilisi, 1992, str.165 (in Georgian).*)

After inserting the reconstructed appendix of “Kartli life” by the commission of King Vakhtang VI, “Prince of Kartli Guaram” was Khosroyan (Parnavazian) from the mother and the Bagration from father.”The nearly same refer has prince Vakhushti; thus, they say about relationship between those families. Armenian anonym of historian Sebeos connects Bagrationis to royal dynasty of Kartli and considered themselves as Parnavazian branch. Historical traditions kept in ‘life of Kartli’ relates Kartlian dukes with Parnavazian dynasty. (12. *Vakhushti. Description of the Georgian kingdom. In: “Kartlis Tskhovreba”, Volume IV. Text published S.Kauhchishvili. Tbilisi, 1973, str.565 (in Georgian).*)

Legend about Bagrationis’ origin from Biblical David aimed to strengthen of idea Georgian state independence and originality. That stipulated “habit of Georgians not to have the any proprietor, otherwise, they have hair of Kings relative” and if pretender of “kingdom” was not ‘king’s relative

Genealogical fragment of Bagrationi dynasty compiled by King Vakhtang VI of Kartli in 1735





Elios Mtskheteli with the Tunic of the Christ (Svetitskhoveli cathedral)

he “couldn’t take liberties to call the king or equal to it and not a royal surname”. (13. *Vakhushti. Description of the Georgian kingdom. In: “Kartlis Tskhovreba”, Volume IV. Text published S.Kauhchishvili. Tbilisi, 1973, str.565 (in Georgian).*) In genealogy made by Vakhtang the VI further branches of Solomon circled ovals. There is the genealogical line represented from Biblical Adam to Noah, from Noah to David the prophet, from David to Georgian kings till XVIII century. Thus is stressed Bagrationis direct relativity with Biblical David. (14. *Georgian antiquities found in the Gorky region. “Literary finding” Vol. IV. Tbilisi, 1947, see Appendix № 1 (in Georgian) Biblical genealogies of Georgian Kings compiled by King Vakhtang VI. In: Bagrationis. Scientific and cultural heritage. Tbilisi, 2003, p.256-257 (in Georgian).*) Georgia coming under the auspices of Saint Virgin and owner of the Christ tunic. After Georgian historical sources “there were sent Elios Mtskheteli and Longinos Karsneli and they met the crucifixion there”; after Jesus Christ was “nailed to the cross” “the tunic was apportioned to Mtskhetians: took Elios and brought in mtskheta (Ancient capitol of Georgia)”, in the town called “the second Jerusalem”. After Ascension Day: “as the apostles casting lots, than Holy Virgin apportioned the country of Georgia to convert”; when the Savior appeared to her, he said: “Oh, mother of mine, I don’t

deny the eminent nation above all to be under your protection. And you send the Saint Andrew to your apportion and give him your icon reflected after you put your face. And instead of you the icon protects them forever”. (15. *Monk Arsene. Life decent and on par with the apostles referred to the worthy Saint Nino. Edition of the Church of the museum. Tbilisi, 1904 (in Georgian).*)

Really “in time of Aderk reign Andrew and Simon Canaanites came in apportioned to her country – Georgia, from twelve apostles”. Georgian catholicos Nicolas Gulaberisdze (XII century) stressed that Georgia auspices to Saint Virgin – “it was part of the Mother of God”. Old mistress told to Saint Nino about terrestrial torment of the Savior: “Annunciation and Epiphany, Crucifixion and Easter, and the Shroud and Materials, and Cross and Tunic”. Saint Nino asks: “where the tunic is?”, she was replied: “that was shared among Mtskhetian Yids”. Equal to the Apostles Saint Nino “all time long prayed toward the Holy Virgin icon in the cell”, to see the first holiness of Christianity – the Savior tunic (shirt). “The Holy Virgin took heed her imploring and mentioned about apportion of Georgian nation, when apostles shared the countries and therefore prepared worthy and Saint Nino as an Apostle, and blest we are and yearned for being part of Holy Virgin”; “And Holy Virgin appeared to worthy Saint Nino in the dream at night and said to her: “Go to the North country and preach the Gospel of my son and you find out grace before God and I’ll be your guard helper”. (16. *Monk Arsene. Life decent and on par with the apostles referred to the worthy Saint Nino. Edition of the Church of the museum. Tbilisi, 1904 (in Georgian).*)



The most earliest portrayal of the Coat of Arms from the gravestone of Queen Tinatin, wife of the King of Kakheti Levan I, XVI c.)



The stamp with the Coat of Arms of Bagrationis belonging to Queen Tamar Gurieli, wife of the Imeretian King Alexander III(1620 r.)



The Coat of Arms of King of Kartli Vakhtang VI (1722)



The Coat of Arms of King Giorgi XII of Georgia (1799)

Bagrationis especially stressed tunic possession. Georgia and Royal Family possess one of the first relic and holiness, which is marvelous for any nation or country because its possession and divine theory of Bagrationis origin reflected on the Bagrationis royal emblem (also on the state flags and stamps). That is notable that tunic all time puts on the special place. Possession of the Tunic and divine origin of Bagrationis family display on the Royal emblem inscription: “Royal Tunic Davidic Georgia”. Besides the Savor Tunic there is a sling of David the prophet killed the Goliath on the Royal Emblem, his Harp, also there are royal regalia on the emblem – sphere, scepter, sword and scales. They represented elements revealing Bagrationis Family’s divine origin. (17. T.Asatiani. *Coat of Arms of Georgia. Magazine “Artanuji”, № 5, Tbilisi, 1996, p.41-42 (in Georgian) Georgian flags and emblems according Vakhushti Bagrationi. Compiled N.Gamtsemlidze, T. Kiknadze. Tbilisi, 1991, page 7, 9.11 (in Georgian); I.Bichikashvili. About Georgian historical state flag and crest. magazine “Гербовед”, № 29, Moscow, 1998, page 134, 141).*

That is confirmed inscriptions on their family emblem as follows: “The Lord swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: “one of your own descendants I will place on your throne”. (Ps.131.11) “This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom” (John, 19.23).

In respect to the Tunic of the Virgin, the king Bagrat IV of Georgia in 1030 married the niece of the Byzantine emperor Romanus III Argyrus Helen. According to one of the legends, she brought a rich dowry in Georgia, among which was the Tunic of the Virgin. (18. David Bakradze. *Caucasus in the ancient monuments of Christianity. Tiflis, 1881*). According to Georgian sources, the Tunic of the Holy Virgin is not mentioned in any of them, even in the 12th century, the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia Nikoloz Gulaberidze in his work, along with the Tunic of Christ does not mention the Tunic of the Virgin. In 1386, the Russian Mitropolit Pimen during his visit to Constantinople, while examining shrines, which were placed in local churches and monasteries. During a visit to the cathedral of Vlakherna he was shown coffin in which lay the Tunic and the belt of the Holy Virgin (19. S.Snesorova. *“Earthly Life of the Holy Virgin Mary and a description of the holy miracle-working icons of her.” Yaroslavl, 1997, p.83*). There is also a legend that the Tunic of the Mother of God is stored in Georgia. In particular, after the fall of Constantinople Greek monks (refugees), along



The Tunic of Holy Virgin Mary

with other relics, was brought this holy relic in the western part of Georgia - Megrelia. They found shelter in various convents Samegrelo, where they could be saved from the destruction.

In 1639, Russia's ambassador visited the Duke of Samegrelo Levan II Dadiani, in his subsequent description of the embassy, he gives evidence that he visited monastery of Khobi, where he was shown the Tunic of the Holy Virgin (20. *Description of the Embassy of Zakharyin on the land of Dadiani. In the book: “Russian travelers in XVI-XVIII th centuries”. Moscow, 1956, p.87*). According to the catholic missionary - Patri Dzampi, who visited Mingrelia in the 40s of the XVII th century, during his visit to the monastery of Khobi, he was shown the Tunic of the Virgin (21. *Giuseppe Dzheduche from Milan. Letters about of Georgia. From Italian to Georgian was translated, also made introduction and notes by B. Giorgadze. Tbilisi, 1964, str.156, G.Kalandia. Bishopric of Odishi. Tbilisi, 2004, str.193-194 (in Georgian)*).

Today, the Georgian Orthodox Church, in every year, during the celebration of the Holy Virgin Mary makes accessible for believers to worship the Holy Tunic.

Therefore, His Royal Highness Prince Nugzar of Georgia in his new Coat of Arms made some changes and added a Tunic of Holy Virgin.



The Coat of Arms of HRH Crown Prince of Georgia Nugzar Bagrationi-Gruzinski
Designed by Emir Burjanadze