

· NAILE MIKELADZE

THE CUSTOMS RELATED TO THE CULT OF WATER IN ADJARA

It is widely recognized that the water element is among the natural phenomena that the humans (since time immemorial) regarded as having divine powers. Similar view about water is still preserved in the folklore of both highly civilized and developing nations.

Georgian folklore, ethnographic materials and lifestyle assures us that the beliefs about the magical power of water have become the basis for many public holidays and religious festivals. Among them is one of the traditions symbolizing water worship and cult ritual preserved in Upper Adjara is of particular interest.

The work focuses on the traditional customs preserved among the inhabitants of the village Akhaldaba in Shuakhevi region, which has retained its features and is still relevant as far as its meaning and purpose is concerned.

Based on the foregoing, contaminated elements of both Pagan and Christian customs (that believe in the divine power of water) occur in current ritual bathing.