

Last days of Zviad Gamsakhurdia (murder or suicide)

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Abstract:

“The Roman Empire is extinct but Georgia stillexists.” No one knows the origin of this phrase, but it is frequently repeated in Georgia. It expresses a publicpride in the idea that the country has possessed a historical continuity of statehood since ancient times that has been interrupted but never extinguished.

Georgia won independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and was admitted to the United Nations in July 1992. Georgians’ pride in their statehood has shaped a collective memory of the country’s history since 1989.

The story told in Georgia’s public domain about its modern history has a strong focus on the struggle for freedom from Russia and the preservation of independence. Georgians are proud to see their country as an established democracy. Yet, thirty years on, the mainstream historical narrative still portrays the country as vulnerable and facing existential threats to its statehood. That means there is little debate about what mistakes may have been made in 1989–1992 during what is known as Georgia’s national liberation struggle.

1991, 9 April - Act of Restoration of Independence of Georgia, signed by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia and the Members of the Government. On April 9, 1991, the Supreme

Council of the Republic of Georgia declared the restoration of Independence of Georgia on the basis of the Independence Act of May 26, 1918.

The Appeal of the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia to the people of the world. Zviad Gamsakhurdia informs the world community that a universal referendum was held in the Republic of Georgia on March 31, 1991, during which the population unanimously supported the recognition of Georgia's independence on the basis of the Act of the Independence of Georgia of May 26, 1918.

The first president of Georgia Zviad Gamsakhurdia is one of the most significant figures of contemporary Georgian history. It was due to his great efforts and leadership that national movement resulted in freeing Georgia from the Soviet Regime and restoring its independence.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia stands as an iconic figure in Georgia's history, with his presence in Georgian society dating back to the 1950s. His legacy remains a perpetual source of interest and discussion. Although his presidency was brief, he left an indelible mark on Georgia, and his name is forever intertwined with the resurgence of the country's statehood.

In May, 1991 for the first time in direct elections, Gamsakhurdia, the most popular politician in republic was elected as president. On a press conference, after being elected president, Gamsakhurdia declared that his priorities will be strengthening Georgian independence, and achieving international recognition, deepening relations with those republics [1] the did not sign 9+1 agreement, and intensifying relations with West.

Born 1939, Zviad Gamsakhurdia is a son of the most beloved modern Georgian novelist Konstantine Gamsakhurdia. He graduated from Tbilisi State University and worked in the Institute for Georgian Literature. From 1950's Gamsakhurdia was involved in dissident movement, and as 17-year-old sentenced to 5 years (suspended). According to the document many Georgian nationalists calls Gamsakhurdia, along with Merab Ksotava, "godfather of Georgian nationalism". In 60's and 70's he was arrested several times, fired from work and expelled from the Georgian Writers Union for nationalist activities. In 1976, participated in formation of the Georgian Helsinki group Gamakhurdia's arrest, and following public repudiation, made a lot of Georgian nationalist suspicious about him; however, Gamsakhurdia said that he did it "for the sake of the nationalist movement". After April 9, 1989 he was arrested for 40 days.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia served as Georgia's inaugural president, scripting a new chapter for an independent nation. However, his life took a tragic turn, culminating in his death on the night of December 31, 1993, in the village of Khibula, where he had sought refuge with the Ghurtskaya family. The circumstances surrounding his demise remain obscured in a shroud of uncertainty. A gunshot rang out in the Ghurtskaya house that fateful night, but the identity of the shooter remains an enigma, even after many years. While Gamsakhurdia's death was later classified as a murder, the true perpetrator remains elusive, leaving behind a trail of unanswered questions, speculations, and concealed facts.

A thorough examination of the materials pertaining to President Gamsakhurdia's assassination reveals numerous inconsistencies and contradictions in witness accounts. These discrepancies pertain to the president's attire in his final days, the number of individuals in his company, the circumstances of his stay in the houses leading up to his death, and the state in which he was found in bed. Ambiguities further extend to the alleged suicide weapon, with hidden facts and incongruities.

Reconstructing the president's movements and intentions unveils a consistent adherence to his plans, discrediting the notion of suicide. A comprehensive review of primary documents, testimonies, investigations, expert opinions, hearings, and interviews overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that the first president of Georgia did not take his own life.

Forensic evidence substantiates the theory of murder, as it is implausible that a person lying in bed could inflict a range of injuries on themselves. Moreover, the purported "Stechnik" automatic firearm, weighing 1 kg, would naturally have fallen from the deceased's hand after the fatal shot. Additionally, medical specialists' descriptions of the injuries do not align with the dimensions of a 9mm "Stechnik."

Notably, this case was initiated by the first deputy general prosecutor, A. Baluashvili, without specifying a particular article of the Criminal Code. The case number and related information were never dispatched to the information center. Despite the ambiguities and unanswered questions in witness testimonies, the case remains unresolved, with no concrete evidence produced.

Examining the criminal law materials from 1994-2004 reveals that the investigation primarily pursued the version presented by Robinson Margvelian and others, as it was abruptly terminated just two months after initiation. There appears to be a lack of genuine interest in conducting a comprehensive and objective investigation into the case, even after its resumption. This is evident in the inconsistent and delayed investigative actions taken by the authorities.

For Gamsakhurdia's family, the identities of the alleged assassin and those who may have ordered the hit are apparent but never disclosed, owing to the gravity of the allegations. They assert, with supporting evidence, that the national hero did not take his own life.

The news of Gamsakhurdia's death was officially declared by the Georgian government on January 5, 1994. However, some of his supporters remained skeptical until his body was discovered on February 15, 1994. His remains were laid to rest in Grozny on February 24, only to be later confirmed by Russian experts in Rostov-on-Don and returned to Georgia on March 28, 2007.

On April 1, 2007, Gamsakhurdia's remains were interred in Mtatsminda Pantheon, alongside other eminent Georgians. His memory was honored with a chapel ceremony, attended by thousands from across the nation.

In a tribute to his unwavering dedication to Georgia, on September 26, 2013, the President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, posthumously bestowed upon Gamsakhurdia the title of National Hero of Georgia.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia was, indeed, a national hero of Georgia who sacrificed himself for the welfare of the Georgian people and their nation. The destinies of Georgians and Gamsakhurdia were so intimately entwined that harming the first president and national hero of Georgia was an affront to

the entire country. Gamsakhurdia symbolized a torch of freedom, sent by fate, which the people of Georgia, regrettably, allowed to flicker out. During his presidency, Georgia shone brightly, finding its unique place on the world map, and for this, Georgians owe him a debt of gratitude. Gamsakhurdia gave everything for his people, but the people, in turn, lost their own luster and failed to recognize the profound contributions of this remarkable leader.

In today's modern times we hear the word hero all of the time. What exactly is a hero? - Hero is: One invested with heroic qualities in the opinions of others. Every person has a chance to be hero in their life and if you catch it you should make your best. My Hero's life was very hard, full of dramatic stories, but he is national hero of Georgia. Zviad Gamsakhurdia was the first president of Georgia and also he was the founder of the independence of my country. He became the defender of human rights and fighter for the freedom of his country.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia is not an ordinary event in the history of our country. He was the greatest national hero and the first president of independent Georgia. We hope that Georgia will be a united, independent and strong state. And Zviad Gamsakhurdia will be a story for all generations about how to love your homeland.

In conclusion, people evaluate the period of Gamsakhurdia positively, because this period brought us the main value in the country - independence, freedom, as one of the respondents said, the world learned that Georgia is a separate state and not a part of Russia, that "Georgia" is not a part of America, but is free, an independent state.

used literature:

1. Gamsakhurdia K. 2013, the case of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Ed. "Artanuji";
2. Heads of the state of Georgia, official documents, appeals and interviews, President of the Sakathvelo Republic during the exile period (1992-1993), Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Volume II, Tbilisi 2013;
3. Heads of the state of Georgia, official documents, appeals and interviews, President of the Republic of Sakhatvelo during the exile period (1992-1993), Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Volume III, Tbilisi 2013;
4. https://ka.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E1%83%96%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%90%E1%83%93_%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%9B%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%AE%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A0%E1%83%93%E1%83%98%E1%83%90.