

**SULKHAN-SABA ORBELIANI'S WORK "JOURNEY TO EUROPE" AND ST.  
CATHERINE DE RICCI**

Lela Chogovadze

Akaki Tsereteli State University, Kutaisi, Georgia

Associate Professor

**Keywords:** Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, Renaissance, Western Europe, Louis XIV, Pope Clement XI, Caterina de Ricci, Saint Francis, Stigmata, Catholic Church.

Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1658-1725) was an outstanding Georgian figure of the Renaissance, an excellent poet, lexicographer, translator, diplomat and scientist. He gained great authority not only in his homeland, but also outside of it, as an illustration, we quote the words of the French missionary, Jean Richard: "He is considered the father of all of Georgia". We see Sulkhan-Saba Orbelian in the center of political and public life of the country together with King Vakhtang VI of Kartli. Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani turns to the West for help and travels to Europe. The route of the trip was as follows: Constantinople, Marseille, Paris, Rome, other Italian cities. Finally, Constantinople and Georgia via Turkey. Sulkhan-Saba in Paris was close to Louis XIV. In Italy, Pope Clement XI. They received him as an honored guest. Sulkhan had several audiences with Louis XIV. With his siddarbais, business proposals that spoke of his high diplomatic talent, he left a pleasant impression on the court of Safarangeti. France promised to help Georgia. But the pages of history have not survived the facts confirming this great desire. Soon Louis XIV died. The ruling circles in France changed and the relations with the countries of the Middle East worsened. The specific historical situation made Sulkhan-Saba's trip unsuccessful, his efforts to bring Georgia and Western European countries closer together proved futile, although this visit had one important sequel, Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani conveyed what he saw and experienced in the excellent book "Journey to Europe", which is the first sample of Georgian documentary prose. Sulkhan-Saba observed and described what he saw and experienced, mostly he visited churches-monasteries and other religious institutions, therefore the description of churches-monasteries occupies a large place in the work, it is about the miracles that are connected with the name of this or that saint. He visited the Sulkhan-Saba Dominican Monastery in Rome. When describing the monastery, he writes: "One virgin Enkratis, St. Catherine rested there, in the order of Matthias. Christ would appear and, as for St. Francis, there were five sores, again for this, he seems to be completely asleep" (Orbeliani, 1989:191).

What Christian miracle are we talking about here? This is stigmata. Stigmata are imitations of the wounds on the human body that Jesus Christ received during the crucifixion. Stigmata are of two types - visible and invisible. Visible stigmata appear on the hands, feet and right side of the chest. There are also sores on the rings and sides (stabs inflicted during the crucifixion of Christ), on the wrists (during the tying of the rope to the cross), around the mouth (associated with the moment when Jesus was given a sponge soaked in vinegar instead of water). The most

terrible stigma is considered a wound to the heart, which usually leads to death. In the case of an invisible stigma, only the pain of walking is felt. Saint Catherine of Siena, who had five visible scars on her body, asked the Lord to make them invisible, after which she felt only the pain of these scars.

The first stigmatist was Saint Francis of Assisi (XIII century). It is she who is mentioned by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani in "Journey" with St. Catherine. In 1226, two years before his death, St. Francisco was preparing to leave to fast in solitude. In the morning, during prayer, the Crucified Christ appeared, when the vision disappeared, Francisco felt pains in his hands, legs and sides, bruises appeared on his body, from which blood flowed.

After St. Francis, around 330 people have received stigmata, of which only seven are men and the rest are women. 60 of them were canonized by the Catholic Church. The process of revealing the stigmata on the body of a particular person can last for a long time or periodically, for example, during Lent, Holy Week, or on special days of the week - Thursdays or Maundy Thursdays. Padre Poe, a 20th century stigmatist, bled unceasingly from his hands. Every day a cup of blood was collected from the ulcer that appeared on his heart. Often, the appearance of bloody ulcers is accompanied by various physical sensations - pain, sweating, lameness, even blindness. This happens to those who are sick or fasting. Stigmata were depicted on the bodies of many nuns and saints who observed fasting. Stigmatics often have visions, claim Christ, saints.

The stigmata of La Bienhoroz Lucia da Narn (1476–1544) were applied to the body for seven years. Four years after his death, his body was exhumed. It turned out that the corpse was incorrupt, moreover, it emitted a sweet and pleasant smell. Ulcerative wounds opened and occasionally bled. 1710 The body was found incorrupt again by its exhumers.

The stigmata on the body of Joanna della Grosse (born 1524) were applied every Thursday and disappeared on Saturdays.

St. Veronica Juliana (born 1660) developed a crown of thorns on her head at the age of 33, and on April 5, 1679, five ulcers appeared in places typical of stigmata. Since the 19th century, scientists have been interested in stigmata and started their scientific study. They were convinced of the reality of this phenomenon. Lord Shrewsbury remarks that the stigmata do not lose water, and that sometimes the blood suddenly disappears, and only the scars of the wound remain. Wounds are said to sometimes glow and smell, never fester, and the body does not decay after death.

The Catholic Church has long studied the stigmata of Padre Pio (born 1887). For the first time, a doctor invited by the archbishop, Luigi Romanelli di Bartlei, examined and made the following conclusion: "The wounds on the hands are covered with a thin, reddish-brown membrane. They don't bleed, they don't fester, the tissue isn't inflamed, the wound is deep, the skin around the wound is very sensitive even to a light touch." The doctor tried to grasp both sides of the wounds, hoping to find an opening. He himself wrote that he could not find anything even during this sadistic experiment. After Romanelli, Padre Pio's wounds were

studied by the professor of the University of Rome, A. Binyami studied. He stated that the wounds were not penetrating. He denied their supernatural origin, but he could not deny the existence of the wounds themselves and prove that the Padre had inflicted them on himself. He concluded that the lesions are the result of necrosis of the epidermis and may be neurotic in origin.

Various versions have been put forward to explain Padre Pio's wounds, one being hemophilia, but it turns out that his other wounds healed normally, but these did not. Some thought that the reason for this was hysteria, but Padre Pio was a completely mentally healthy person, open-hearted, cheerful, so the version of hysteria was ruled out. In 1923, the Vatican issued five prohibition orders against Padre Pio. They denied the divine origin of the wounds and their special fragrance. For almost ten years, visitors were not allowed to visit him, religious services were prohibited, after re-examinations, in 1933, Pope Pius XI lifted all prohibitions. One group of scientists suggests that similar wounds on the body can be produced by strong inspiration, and some cases of stigmata may be based on conscious or unconscious self-hypnosis (Prof. John-Martin Charcot).

Essel Chapman, who was paralyzed and had multiple sclerosis, was treated in Britain. Doctor Colin Powell did not find traces of depression, neurosis and psychosis in him. He was a stable and friendly person. He had wounds on Thursdays. According to the physical symptoms of St. Francis, modern doctors have proven the causes of his health problems, namely, St. Francisco had eye problems, trachoma, and also malaria, which damaged his liver, stomach, and spleen, an extreme form of this disease known as purpura. Usually, this disease is manifested symmetrically, on the hands and feet, during fasting, these bloody sores may burst, which led to the appearance of wounds similar to the wounds of Jesus Christ. on Francisco's body. Not everyone shares this opinion, most of them consider it a medical speculation.

#### **Used literature:**

1. Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani, "Journey to Europe", Georgian Literature, vol. VII, 1989.
2. Poulain A., Mystical Stigmata, New York, 1912.
3. Johannes Wilbert, Warao Basketry, Occasional Papers of the Museum of Cultural History, University of California at Los Angeles, No. 3, 1975, pp. 5-8.
4. Ana Mariella Bacigalupo. Shamans of the Foye Tree, University of Texas Press, Austin, 2007, pp. 88.
5. Robert Todd Carroll, Wiley, 2003.
6. Zentropa Real Apps & Wonders unlimited, 2005.

Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani (1658-1725) was an outstanding Georgian figure of the Renaissance, an excellent poet, lexicographer, translator, diplomat and scientist. He gained great authority not only in his homeland, but also abroad. We see Sulkhani-Saba Orbelian in the center of the country's political and public life, he turns to the West for help and travels to Europe, he met the French king Louis XIV and the Pope Clement XI.

Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani conveyed what he saw and experienced in the excellent book "Travel to Europe", which is the first sample of Georgian documentary prose. The work describes in detail the churches-monasteries and other religious institutions, it talks about the miracles associated with the name of this or that saint. In Rome, Sulkhan-Saba visited the Dominican monastery. He was impressed by the sight of St. Catherine's remains, which, like St. Francis and Christ, had five wounds (stigmata) on her body. It must be Saint Catherine de Ricci (1522–1590).

