

‘Exciled Students’ Letter or a Trap?’



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Ivane Javakhishvili was a Georgian Historian, a public figure, a cofounder of Tbilisi Public University, Doctor of Historic sciences and a professor. A really amazing and unusual fact from his life was a letter from the exiled students.



A lot of young people were killed in 1937 chaos; among them were the students of Javakhishvili University. Some people found it difficult to live in the Soviet manner, and some of them dreamed peacefully on the independence of Georgia. Those ones, who dared to declare about it would find themselves in a jail or in a concentration camp and would never come back alive.



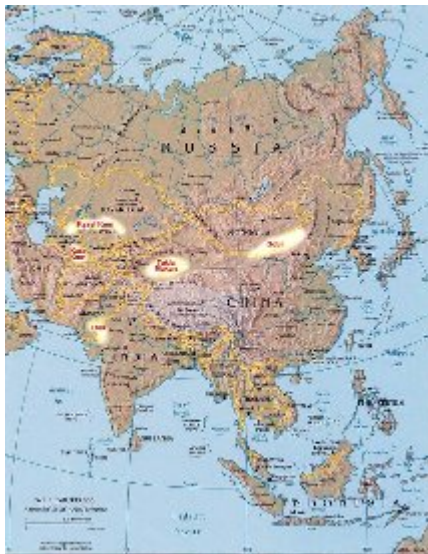
In the Institute of Manuscripts named after Korneli Kekelidze, namely in the private files (archives) of Ivane Javakhishvili, there has been protected a letter, which had been written and had been sent to Ivane Javakhishvili by his exiled students. The envelope had no stamp on it. The address was written in Russian: ‘г.р. Тбилиси, Вак. Уваж. Професору Ивану Джавахишвили. Лично. Из Узбекистана’. It means the following: City of Tbilisi, Vake. In person to Dear Professor Ivane Javakhishvili. From Uzbekistan.” Just on the same envelope it was written by a different

handwriting: 66 Kalilin Street – Ivane Javakhishvili's home address. We could presume that the letter had been brought to the University and then sent to the addressee. And that's why the envelope had the seal of the Post Office.



The following was written in the letter:

“Year of 1938. Our dear professor, Ivane! We welcome you from the deserts of the middle of Asia. First of all, we would like to apologize for taking some minutes of your precious time, but we hope that you'll forgive us. Dear Professor, we, a group of students, who were unjustly arrested and exiled here, decided to apply to you and to ask your assistance in informing our Father, great Stalin, and his faithful student, dear Beria that we are innocent. Dear professor, you are the pride of our country and we respect your nobility and your high liberal feelings and that's the reason why we are sending you this letter. Please, help us, we're getting ruined, many of the young people have already passed away, at the moment of dying the only thing, they were mumbling with their thin lips, was the following: “We were innocent, it is the evil enemy's fault, tell Stalin that we were innocent, we'd never think of treason and now we are dying in this desert though we are the most faithful sons of our country. We would like to make our farewells to the world, farewells to our sweet University, farewells to our poor parents. Give our kind regards to our Professors, especially to our loved and respected Ivane Javakhishvili”



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Now you can see, professor, who we are and why we are suffering in vain. Help us, help those ones who are still alive, we look like skeletons from graves, please, we are begging you, help us. We are like a handful of dust from Stalin's feet. We are dying; we can see the shadow of death, with the sword in its hands. We are hungry, we are thirsty, we are cold as it is minus 45 Celsius grades here. We are naked, and our faces are not the same, legs, hands and our whole body looks awful, we feel the pressure in our blood, our mind doesn't work as before, we have almost forgotten how to read, how to write, we have forgotten how the letters in books look. We have fallen mentally and physically, we have lost our courage. We are not allowed to send letters to our people, our family

doesn't know where we are and we don't know how they are, a year passed, and for the others even 2 years, they haven't seen their relatives, they haven't even heard from their relatives, what is this? We can't imagine that Stalin knows about it and he will do nothing to improve such a barbarity. We don't believe in it, we can't believe it. Stalin, first of all, is a human too, he also has got a heart, he is a parent too, he has humane feelings too. The greater a person is the better and more loyal he is, isn't it so?



There wasn't any fascist organization in our University, we haven't even heard about it, we were arrested in 1938, in January-February and we were shocked. After a horrible judicial inquisition torture we were offered to sign a paper, and later we were exiled. You can ask us, why we have signed it? You are right dear professor, we shouldn't have done it, but we were unable to stand that torture any more, we were scared, we were not adults yet, still children.

We had never tasted a bad life; we have been living under Stalin's and Beria's patronage. And when we tasted such bitterness, we would like to confess that we began trembling, shivering and signed the paper; we don't even remember what we have signed. They have exiled us here, but for what? Why? We don't know the reason up to present. We swear by our youth, we swear by Stalin's guiltless name, we swear by his mother's grave, that we are 100% innocent, we were the best students, public figures, all of us, that are why our enemies have chosen us. Please, help us, we're kissing your hands, do a great thing in history, save our lives. Exiled students. Tashkent."



In this letter the demonstration of the hopeless students' inadequate emotions is obvious – in spite of the inhuman treatment, the students were still praying on Stalin and Beria.

It is still unknown the name of the student who has written the letter, or whether the letter has been really written by the exiled and predestined young people. Or maybe, it was a mousetrap, a snap laid for Ivane Javakhishvili. Unfortunately, it is also unknown how Ivane Javakhishvili has behaved, has he declared it? Or has he tried to help his students? But one fact is obvious, Ivane used to keep his letters at his home and he had not destroyed it, it was heroism.



You can see many students sitting nearby the Javakhishvili statue in the garden of the University. The garden is still full of students, maybe not all of them know about Ivane Javakhishvili's life in details, but they know who he was and they respect him.