



KUİRDALÄGON

KUİRDALÄGON (KURD-ALÄGON/ALÄUGON, KURD-ALÄ-UÄRGON), a heavenly patron of blacksmiths in the Ossetian religious-mythological system.

According to the texts of “devotion of the horse to the deceased” that were a part of traditional funeral ceremony (see [BÄX FÄLDISIN](#)), Kuirdalägon should necessarily be invoked to forge steel horseshoes and to secure a beautiful horse blanket and an expensive bridle for the horse of the deceased. These measures would prepare him for the journey to the world of the dead (Miller, pp. 431-32). The celestial smithy of Kuirdalägon is often visited by epic heroes when they want their combat armor and equipment, or even their broken skulls, to be repaired. The entire bodies of some of the famous epic heroes were hardened by him in order to make them totally invulnerable. He is also believed to have forged a plow for the Nart people (see [NARTI KADDŽITÄ](#)), so that every spring they would be able to sow seeds and to harvest the rich crops in autumn (Kaloiev, pp. 361-62).

The first element of his name is, no doubt, identical to modern Ossetian word *kuird* and means “blacksmith.” This word is formed under a *nomen agentis* word-formation model **kur-ta-* or **kur-tar-*, from the verb stem **kur-* ‘to heat,’ ascending to the Indo-European basis **keur-*, **kur-* (Abaev, 1958, p. 610). As for the second part of the name, several different interpretations exist. According to George Dumézil (q.v.) it should be divided into *Aläg-on* and be interpreted as “blacksmith from the Alägatä family,” whom he treated as equivalent of the Brahmans of ancient India, belonging to the *varna* (class) of priests (Dumézil, p. 112). In this case, the second part would correspond to



**āriya-ka-* ‘priest, sage’ (Cheung, p. 151). Therefore, the Ossetian Kuirdalägon can be treated as a functional match for the Persian blacksmith Kāva (q.v.) in the *Šāh-nāma* (Dzitzsoyty, pp. 286-87). Kāva used his apron, made of bull skin, as a flag of rebellion against the tyrant Žaḥḥāk (see [AŽDAHĀ ii. IN PERSIAN LITERATURE](#)). This apron can be compared to the bovine hide of a sacrificial bull from Ossetian ritual prayer, which is usually sent to a blacksmith as his share of honor and from which he is supposed to make bellows. Both attributes, that is, a banner of the uprising and a bovine hide, sent to the blacksmith, can be treated as elements of royal investiture (Salbiev, pp. 130-35).

Vasilii I. Abaev (q.v.) based his interpretation on the tripartite structure of the name, dividing it into Kurd-Alä-Uärgon, where Alä is traces back to **āriya-* ‘Aryan’, which later developed into “Alanian” (that is older Ossetic). At the same time the name of the Alanian blacksmith, Uärgon, he derives from Indo-European **w^l k^w os*, meaning “wolf,” as cognate to Roman Vulcānus and Celtic Olcan (Abaev, 1958, p. 610; 1989, pp. 93-94). The personal name Uärg-on is derived from the same root as the name of the eldest of the Narts, Uärx-äg, who is father of twins, Xšar and Xšärtäg. This name takes on a different suffix with Kuirdalägon, the most convincing etymology of which appears to be reconstruction, put forward by I. Knobloch, who deduces it from **w^l-qw-ā* ‘fire element’ (cf. Old Indian *ulkā*) and **w^l-qw-o-s* ‘wolf’ (cf. Indo-Iranian **w^lrkas*), going back to common Indo-European etymon **w^lqw-āno-s*, present in the personal name of the Old German “God of Fire,” Loki – who is the father of the wolf Fenrir (Knobloch, p. 137).

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