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FESTSCHRIFT FOR PROFESSOR WOJCIECH MATERSKI
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY

I. ARTICLES AND STUDIES

Question of Authorship of *Corpus Dionysiacum*

Fr. Henryk Paprocki
*Orthodox Theological Seminary in Warsaw,
Poland*

Abstract

This article discusses the state of research on the problem of the authorship of *Corpus Dionysiacum*, with particular emphasis on the findings by Michel van Esbroeck. This outstanding orientalist returned to the thesis of Shalva Nutsubidze and Ernest Honigman after discovering new sources relating to this issue that supported the person of Peter the Iberian. Considering the role of *Corpus Dionysiacum* in the history of Christianity, the question of the authorship of this collection is important.

Keywords: Neoplatonism, theurgy, monophysitism, Peter the Iberian, *Corpus Dionysiacum*.

Who is the author of *Corpus Dionysiacum* supposedly compiled in the first century? Despite repeated attempts to determine who was the man calling himself Dionysius the Areopagite, most researchers believe that this issue cannot be resolved¹. According to Dionysius of Corinthus, he was the first bishop of Athens². However, there is no mention of the Areopagite's collection of works before the 6th century, and there are visible connections between the *Corpus Dionysiacum* and the texts of Proclus (412–485), the defender of theurgical rituals.³ Dionysius also quotes

¹ T. Stępień, "Wprowadzenie," in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, transl. M. Dzielska, Warszawa 2021, VI; M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*, ed. M. Starowieyski, W. Stawiszyński, Poznań 2018 : 276–280; J. Meyendorff, *Teologia bizantyjska. Historia i doktryna*, transl. J. Prokopiuk, Kraków 2007 : 12–14.

² Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia kościelna* (III, 410; IV, 233), transl. A. Lisiecki, Kraków 1993 : 95, 181–182.

³ T. Stępień, "Wprowadzenie," in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, XII. Besides, he is famous *List apokryficzny Dionizego Areopagity do biskupa efeskiego Tymoteusza o męczeńskiej śmierci apostołów Piotra i Pawła*, wyd. G. Peradze, *Elpis* 11(1937), fasc. 1–2, 111–142 = *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu. Apostołowie*, ed. M. Starowieyski, Kraków 2007, I: 461–470 = St. Grzegorz Peradze, *Dziela zebrane*, ed. H. Paprocki, Warszawa 2011, II, 225–234.

Clement and, in this case, it may be St. Clement of Alexandria⁴ because the phrase “the noble philosopher Clement”⁵ refers to him and the treatise *Stromata* rather than to St. Clement of Rome. It cannot be ruled out, however, that the meaning of the name Clement (clemens – *gentle, gracious, calm*),⁶ may refer to Plotinus. The philosopher mentioned by Pseudo-Dionysius supposedly claimed that “patterns are the most primitive thing in beings” and are supposed to lead to the ‘Cause’ of everything. All beings can be attributed to this one unification that is above all things. In particular, the term “offense against simplicity”⁷ clearly points to Plotinus.

Pierre Hadot’s work on Plotinus makes this issue easier to understand. Plotinus “believed in simplicity”,⁸ he also believed that the soul contemplates the world of Forms and that beauty is the beauty of the world of Forms. In the world of Forms, contemplation is direct and Forms contemplate themselves.⁹ One must “become the sight”¹⁰ and make oneself the object of seeing.¹¹ Plotinus used the term ‘One’ to express its absolute simplicity. The first source of spiritual life is the pure, simple and undivided presence.¹² The first ‘Good’ is always *gentle* and blissful.¹³ According to Porphyry of Tire, Plotinus “radiated sweetness.”¹⁴ This interpretation therefore forces us to think primarily about the meaning of the names Dionysius and Hierotheus and their reference to specific characters.

The works of Pseudo-Dionysius are considered difficult. To understand them one must first learn the works of Plotinus, Iamblichus and Proclus, and even Damaskios.¹⁵ Pseudo-Dionysius describes the 5th century Syro-Antioch liturgy in his treatises¹⁶ which, apart from the influence

4 D. P a l l i s, *Re-Thinking Clement the Philosopher of the Corpus Dionysiacum*, „Academia Letters” 2021, 1–8: <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL4344>.

5 Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Imiona boskie* (V, 9), in *Corpus Dionysiacum*: 262. Cf. Klemens Aleksandryjski, *Kobierce zapisków filozoficznych* (VIII, IX, 29.1), transl. J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska, Warszawa 1994, II: 333. Some believe that it may be Clement mentioned in Philippians 4:3, whom part of the tradition considers Pope St. Clement I, author of several letters.

6 *Słownik łacińsko-polski*, ed. M. Plezia, Warszawa 19982, I, 539.

7 “Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Imiona boskie* (V, 9),” in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 262.

8 P. Hadot, *Plotyn albo prostota spojrzenia*, transl. P. Bobowska, Kęty 2004: 31. Simplicity, as the title of the French researcher’s work indicates, is the interpretive key to Plotinus’ thought.

9 *Ibid.* 32–33.

10 P l o t y n, *Enneady* (I VI.9), transl. A. Krokiewicz, Warszawa 20002: 140.

11 *Ibid.* (IV VII.15): 766.

12 P. H a d o t, *Plotyn albo prostota spojrzenia*, 49.

13 P l o t y n, *Enneady* (V VI.12): 559.

14 P o r f i r i u s z z T y r u, *O życiu Plotyna oraz o układzie jego ksiąg* (13), in Plotyn, *Enneady*, 74.

15 T. S t e p i e ń, *Wprowadzenie*, in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, XXV.

16 A. H ä n g g i, I. P a h l, *Præ Eucharistica. Textus e variis liturgiis antiquioribus selecti*, Fribourg 1968, 210–213; H. P a p r o c k i, *Le Mystere de l’Eucharistie. Genese et interprétation de la Liturgie*

of Proclus,¹⁷ is clear evidence that they could not have been written in the 1st century. The first citation of these works in 533 was by Monophysites, from the circle of Severus of Antioch, which immediately raises doubts as to their origin.

In the Eastern Church, the first known commentary on the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius was written by John of Scythopolis before 532. His works were continued by St. Maximus the Confessor in the *Scholia*, and it was he who saved these writings for orthodoxy and included them in the philosophical, theological and liturgical tradition of the East.¹⁸ The treatises of Pseudo-Dionysius were considered important thanks to the commentaries of John of Scythopolis,¹⁹ Maximus the Confessor²⁰ and Thomas Aquinas.²¹ Through these commentaries the Treatises influenced the entire Middle Ages.²² That period's understanding of the world order was based on these works, especially the Celestial Hierarchy and the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy.²³ They were also an inspiration to both theologians and mystics, to name just the famous *Cloud of Unknowing*.²⁴

The widely attributed authorship of *Corpus Dionysiacum* gave his writings an extraordinary position in the Middle Ages. The respect for his writings in the West was almost as great as for the Holy Scriptures and,

eucharistique byzantine, transl. F. Lhoest, Paris 20092, 143–144. Dionysius mentions the Creed (τῆς θρησκείας τὸ σύμβολον, literally: *symbol of religion*, cf. *Słownik grecko-polski*, II: 471) in the Mass, introduced by Piotr Foluszniak around 480, cf. *Hierarchia kościelna* (III. III, 7), in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 116 = PG 3, col. 436C.

¹⁷ Which was proven by Henri-Dominique Saffrey in a series of articles.

¹⁸ S. S wie ż a w s k i, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej*, Warszawa 2000: 362.

¹⁹ M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*, 539.

²⁰ St. Maximus the Confessor, “Scholia in eos beati Dionysii libros qui exstant,” *PG* 4, col. 15–432; 527–576. These scholia are mixed with those of John of Scythopolis, cf. M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*: 675–679. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguorum liber sive de variis difficilibus locis sanctorum Dionysii Areopagitae et Gregorii Theologi ad Thomam sanctum*, PG 91, col. 1031–1418.

²¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *In librum beati Dionysii De divinis nominibus expositio*, ed. C. Pera, Torino 1950.

²² V. L o s s k i, *Teologia mistyczna Kościoła wschodniego*, transl. M. Szczaniecka, Warszawa 1989, 20; J. M e y e n d o r f f, *Teologia bizantyjska. Historia i doktryna*, 12–14, 22–23.

²³ C.S. Lewis, *Odrzucony obraz. Wprowadzenie do literatury średniowiecznej i renesansowej*, transl. W. Ostrowski, Warszawa 1986, 55–59.

²⁴ *Obłok niewiedzy i inne dzieła*, transl. W. Ostrowski, Warszawa 1988: 37–121. The works of Pseudo-Dionysius were translated into Georgian in the second half of the 11th century by Efreim Mcire, cf. St. Grzegorz Peradze, *Die altchristliche Literatur in der georgischen Überlieferung*, ed. B. Outier, H. Paprocki, Warszawa 2015: 27–29.

after the writings of St. Augustine and Aristotle,²⁵ were the most often quoted.

The authenticity of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* was questioned during the Renaissance. The first exposure of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* as a forgery occurred in Lorenzo Valii's *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* in 1457.²⁶ Later in the 18th century, and finally in the 20th century, their inauthenticity was proven when the problem of evil in Pseudo-Dionysius's Divine Names was shown to be dependent on Proclus' work *De malorum subsistentia*.²⁷ Quotations from Proclus could not have appeared in the *Corpus Dionysiacum* until after 462.²⁸ However, despite many hypotheses, the author of the 'Corpus' has still not been identified.²⁹

There were attempts to establish the *Corpus Dionysiacum* as consisting of fourteen works (10 letters and 4 treatises). They would then be similar to those of apostolic times in that they would have the same number of texts as the letters of St. Paul. This attempt is evidence of the late creation of *Corpus Dionysiacum*, and also of the existence of serious doubts as to the authorship of the collection.

In the first century there was no established canon of biblical books! Such a list first appeared in Muratori's canon from around 180. A complete list of Paul's letters appears in the 2nd century Syriac Peshitta Bible. We also have the 85th Apostolic Canon dating from the end of the 2nd or the beginning of the 3rd century.³⁰ Around 323, Eusebius of Caesarea wrote in his *Ecclesiastical History*: "As for the fourteen Pauline Epistles, it is clear and certain. However, it should be known that some have rejected the Letter to the Jews, citing the Roman Church, which does not recognize it as coming from Paul."³¹ In addition to biblical codes, such as *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus* from the 4th century, we have the decisions of the synod of Laodicea from 364 (canon 59 and 60) and the

25 S. Swieżawski, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej*, 362. An important factor in the Western reception of Pseudo-Dionysius's works was his role as a supposed apostle of Gaul.

26 W. Beierwaltes, *Platonizm w chrześcijaństwie*, transl. P. Domański, Kęty 2003: 38.

27 Proklos, "De malorum subsistentia," in *Tria opuscula*, ed. M. von Moerbeke, Berlin 2014: 689–798. On the problem of evil from the perspective of Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius, see: M. Edwards, J. Dillon, *God in Dionysius and the late Neoplatonists*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Dionysius the Areopagite*, ed. M. Edwards, D. Pallis, G. Steiris, Oxford 2022: 142–145.

28 M. van Esbroeck, Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана, trans. S. Khoruzij, „Символ” 39(2007), fasc. 52, 375.

29 R. Roques, *Denys l'Aréopagite*, in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, Paris 1957, III, 249–257.

30 *Kanony apostołskie*, in *Konstytucje apostołskie*, transl. S. Kalinkowski, A. Caba, ed. A. Baron, H. Pietras, Kraków 2007: 292–293.

31 Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia kościelna* (III, 35), 93, cf. III, 252, 123.

synod of Carthage from 397 (canon 33), as well as the statements of three Fathers of the Church: St. Athanasius the Great,³² St. Gregory the Theologian³³ and St. Amphilochus, Bishop of Iconium.³⁴ Therefore, the *Corpus Dionysiacum* could not have been created before the canon of the New Testament books was established, i.e. not earlier than in the 4th century.

In 1942, the Georgian philosopher Shalva Nutsubidze put forward a rather intuitive thesis that the author of the works known under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite is Peter the Iberian (პეტრე იბერი), bishop of Majuma,³⁵ who was at one time venerated in Georgia as a saint.³⁶ Independently of Nutsubidze, such a hypothesis was formulated by the Belgian scientist Ernst Honigmann.³⁷ Honigmann's hypothesis was based on two arguments:

The first argument is based on the vision of John the Eunuch (a close friend and spiritual companion of Peter the Iberian).

The *Euthymiac History*, quoted by St. John of Damascus in one of his homilies, states that the participants of the funeral of the Theotokos were "caught up into the air" and "had an angelic vision and heard the divine melody of the upper Powers. [...] the angels did not stop singing for three whole days". When it was decided to celebrate God's infinite goodness in hymns Hieroteus, "all moved," surpassed all others³⁸. There is a similar description in the Life of Peter the Iberian. He describes how John the Eunuch had a vision of the Last Judgment lasting three days and three nights, when around the judge's throne "there stood an innumerable multitude of angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim"

³² St. Atanazy Wielki, 39 *List paschalny*, in *Kanony Ojców Greckich (tekst grecki i polski)*, transl. S. Kalinkowski, ed. A. Baron, H. Pietras, Kraków 2009, 292–293.

³³ St. Grzegorz Teolog, *Wierszowany katalog ksiąg Starego i Nowego Testamentu*, in *Kanony Ojców Greckich*, 87.

³⁴ St. Amfiloch z Ikonium, *Jamby dedykowane Seleukosowi*, in *Kanony Ojców Greckich*, 89.

³⁵ Majuma is an ancient city near Gaza, on the site of today's upscale Gaza neighborhood called Rimal, 3 km from the city center.

³⁶ Sh. Nutsubidze, *Таїна Псевдо-Дионисия Ареопагита*, Tbilisi 1942; idem, *История грузинской философии*, Tbilisi 1960: 84–107.

³⁷ E. Honigmann, *Pierre l'Ibérien et les écrits du Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite*, Bruxelles 1952.

³⁸ *Historia Eutympiacka* (III, 40), in *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu. Ewangelie apokryficzne*, ed. M. Starowieyski, Kraków 2003, II, 834; St. Jan z Damaszku, 2 *Homilia na święto Zaśnięcia NMP* (18), in *Ojcowie Kościoła greccy i syryjscy. Teksty o Matce Bożej*, transl. W. Kania, Niepokalanów 1981, 256–257.

He writes the following:

“Once upon a time, Blessed John had a vision and spent three full days in it without speaking to anyone. He saw the awe-inspiring and glorious second coming of our Lord with the heavens suddenly opening and the trumpets blowing, the earthquake, the changing of the elements, all full of light and fear of destruction, trembling and confusion. They were preceded by angels and the first orders of the heavenly host, angels, archangels, powers, dominions, glories, hosts of holy apostles, prophets, martyrs, righteous people, cherubim, seraphim, and after all of them the admirable saving sign of the Lord’s cross and the Lord himself, the Redeemer and the Messiah, came with the glory of the Father and with inexpressible power, with thrones prepared and with the divine and awesome judgment which has long been foretold to us many times by the holy prophets and by the Judge and Savior Himself.³⁹

The version of the life written by Zechariah the Rhetor gives a slightly different description of this vision:

“Then blessed John had a vision lasting three days and three nights. He saw how thrones were prepared for judgment, the Wood of the Cross appeared in the clouds of heaven, the Judge sat on the throne, and around Him stood an innumerable multitude of angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim. He also saw the holy apostles sitting on thrones, and the prophets, and all the saints and ascetics standing at the right hand of Christ God.”⁴⁰

John the Eunuch’s vision is not a description of the order of heavenly powers, but a description of the Last Judgment⁴¹ and what the visionary experienced. Pseudo-Dionysius based his triadic (Neoplatonic) order of angelic hosts on that vision. Thus, the division of angelic choirs given by

³⁹ R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts. Syrische Übersetzung einer um das Jahr 500 verfassten Griechischen Biographie* (42–43), Leipzig 1895: 44.

⁴⁰ *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина, который был сыном грузинского царя* (26), transl. N. Marr, in *Православный палестинский сборник*, Sankt-Petersburg 1896, XLVII: 93. The only surviving fragment of the Life of Peter the Iberian by Zechariah the Rhetor does not appear in the surviving Georgian translation: *Fragmentum Vitae Petri Iberici auctore Zacharia Scholastico*, in *Vitae virum apud Monophysitas celeberrimorum, CSCO. Scriptores Syri*, ed. E.W. Brooks, Paris 1907, XXV: 11–12, 17–18. These Lives should be distinguished from the apocryphal Autobiography of Dionysius the Areopagite, cf. P. Peeters, “La Version ibéro-arménienne de l’autobiographie de Denys l’Aréopagite,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 39(1921): 293–313.

⁴¹ See an interesting interpretation of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant painting representations of the parousia: J. Gulkowski, *Trzy wizje paruzji*, ed. A. Górniak, A. Hryniewicka, Warszawa 2023: 124–216.

Pseudo-Dionysius is based on the mystical experience of Hierotheus and *de facto* of John the Eunuch, who had a vision of angels.

John the Eunuch had this vision around 444, after suffering a serious illness. He died twenty years later on October 4th 464. Peter the Iberian remembered the day of his death every year for the rest of his life.⁴²

To this we can add the description of the vision of the Holy Trinity that he had in the Palace at Constantinople as a child. It was a vision of three successive rays of light, having the form of circles like the Sun. These were lights “inaccessible, elusive, unimaginable and incomprehensible”. Only the human figure in the second ray was available. The rays were similar in everything. After the appearance of the third circle St. Peter, who was the Iberian’s guide in this vision, said: “One nature, one essence, one glory, one power, one light, one divinity in three hypostases.”⁴³

This vision is found in the work of Pseudo-Dionysius in the treatise ‘Divine Names’ as follows:

‘Christ enlightens us with streams of the most wonderful lights’⁴⁴

‘The splendour of the supersubstantial light is such that it can neither be understood, nor named, nor fully seen in any contemplation, because it is above all.’⁴⁵

‘The most visible image of divine goodness is our sun, full of rays and always shining’⁴⁶

Peter the Iberian also calls goodness;

“Intelligent light because it is a source of radiation, a focus of brightness, enlightening all intellects with its fullness” and “It is the only source of light higher than light.”⁴⁷

42 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 369–370, 376.

43 Jean Rufus, “Plérophories c’est-à-dire témoignages et révélations (contre le Concile de Chalcédoine). Version syriaque et traduction française (XXXVII),” éd. F. Nau, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, Paris 1912, Turnhout 19822, VIII: 485–487. Peter himself had more visions, when, for example, he consecrated the altar in Alexandria, he clearly saw St. Mark the Evangelist, standing and anointing the altar, R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen-und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (43): 45; *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (27): 94.

44 Pseudo-Dionisy Areopagita, *Imiona boskie* (I, 4), in *Corpus Dionysiacum*: 186.

45 Ibid. (I, 4): 187.

46 Ibid. (IV, 4): 218.

47 Ibid. (IV, 5): 221.

At the same time, it is made clear that it is not guided by the judgments of the ancients that the Sun is the god and demiurge of all creation, and the ruler of the visible world.⁴⁸

The second argument is based on the commemoration of Dionysius the Areopagite and Hierotheus in the calendars.⁴⁹

In the old Monophysite tradition, Dionysius the Areopagite and Hierotheus are commemorated on October 3rd and 4th respectively. It is no coincidence. This may have been a consequence of the relationships between Peter the Iberian and John the Eunuch. It can be conceptualised that Peter the Iberian - Dionysius the Areopagite and John the Eunuch - Hierotheus. No one but John (= Hieroteus) could have inspired Peter (= Dionysius). The relationship between Dionysius and Hierotheus became a model for understanding the relationship between the two.⁵⁰

Honigmann's hypothesis was addressed by many researchers, notably Irenée Hausherr,⁵¹ Hieronymus Engberding,⁵² René Roques⁵³ and Henri-Dominique Saffrey.⁵⁴ Three of those scholars have questioned his thesis.

Hieronymus Engberding argued that the Syrian calendars were dependent on Greek patterns and it cannot be claimed, therefore, that the holiday was established in a Monophysite environment. Irenée Hausherr emphasized that Peter was a disciple of Isaac of Gaza who was an enemy of Greek philosophy and there was a monastic school in Gaza.⁵⁵ René Roques noticed that the order of heavenly powers is different in John the Eunuch and in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.⁵⁶ *We can now look at these problems from a different perspective.*

⁴⁸ Ibid. (IV, 4): 220.

⁴⁹ B. Lourié, "Peter the Iberian and Dionysius the Areopagite: Honigmann - van Esbroeck's thesis revisited," *Scrinium* 6(2010): 143-212.

⁵⁰ M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 370.

⁵¹ I. Hausherr, "Le Pseudo-Denys est-il Pierre l'Ibérien?," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 19(1953): 247-260.

⁵² H. Engberding, "Kann Petrus der Iberer mit Dionysius Areopagita identifiziert werden?," *Oriens Christianus* 38(1954): 68-95.

⁵³ R. Roques, "Pierre l'Ibérien et le «Corpus» dionysien," *Revue d'Histoire des Religions* 145(1954) p. 69-98.

⁵⁴ H.D. Saffrey, "Un Lien objectif entre le Pseudo-Denys et Proclus, „Studia Patristica” 9(1966): 98-105; idem, *Nouveaux liens objectifs entre le Pseudo-Denys et Proclus*, *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 63(1979): 3-16; idem, *Le Lien le plus objectif entre le Pseudo-Denys et Proclus*, in *Roma, magistra mundi. Itineraria culturae medievalis. Mélanges offerts au Père L.E. Boyle à l'occasion de son 75e anniversaire*, éd. J. Hamesse, Louvain-la-Neuve 1998: 791-810.

⁵⁵ Cf. B. Bitton-Ashkelony, A. Kofsky, *The Monastic School of Gaza*, Leiden-Boston 2006.

⁵⁶ M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 370-371.

At the end of the 20th century Honigmann's hypothesis was supported by the famous orientalist Michel van Esbroeck, who based his claim on the following three arguments:

1. the decidedly anti-Chalcedonian attitude of John Rufus of Majuma.⁵⁷ Peter's hagiographer, makes his information about Peter's views unreliable.

2. Peter's rejection of the Christological trisagion of Peter the Fuller that John Rufus indirectly testifies to in his *Plerophoria*. This concerns the formula *σταυρωθεὶς δι' ἡμᾶς* (crucified for us), which gave the Trisagion hymn a Christological meaning.⁵⁸ John Rufus quotes one of the extremely rare texts of Peter the Iberian, namely his letter⁵⁹ to support his view. The letter is, of course, full of nuances and understatements known only to the correspondents.⁶⁰

The letter of Peter the Iberian reads as follows:

After reading the letter of Your Purity, all of us who love You were filled with sadness, anguish and groaning at the sight of the snare of the slanderer who tries and tries by all means to take away Your hope and Your salvation in God and to disgrace the works you have done. for themselves and for orthodoxy. For it is certain from above that if you go to Antioch, you will be disturbed and then persuaded by your friends and by him who rules there, [and then] either you will join him, or you will suffer his hostility and he will send you back. So, act according to your strength, and we will do everything possible here so that you do not offend God, do not deprive yourself of great goods and do not cause pain to us, your friends.⁶¹

The explanation can be found in the letter of Peter the Fuller to Patriarch Acacius in Constantinople. Fuller writes that "it has come to our attention that some monks, envious of the brotherhood that unites us, have

⁵⁷ John Rufus of Majuma (5th/6th century) – bishop of Majuma near Gaza, writer. He was ordained a priest in 477 by the Patriarch of Antioch, Peter the Fuller. In 488 he left Antioch with him. He became bishop of Majuma after the death of Peter the Iberian, whom he met around 479 and stayed with until his death. He is the author of a work in Syriac, *Plerophoria*, directed against the Council of Chaldon, and the *Life of Peter the Iberian* is also credited to him.

⁵⁸ H. P a p r o c k i, *Le Mystere de l'Eucharistie. Genese et interpretation de la Liturgie eucharistique byzantine*: 243–245.

⁵⁹ J e a n R u f u s, *Plérophories* (XXII): 448–454, including Peter's letter: 449–450.

⁶⁰ M. v a n E s b r o e c k, "L'Opposition entre Pierre l'Ibère et Pierre le Foulon (482–491)," *Caucasica. The Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1(1998): 62–64.

⁶¹ J e a n R u f u s, *Plérophories* (XXII): 449–450.

caused certain slanderous allegations to reach your ears, which must have seriously saddened Your Holiness”. This refers to the accusation of Peter the Fuller of excommunicating the Council of Chalcedon. Peter defends himself against this accusation and writes that he invented a formula that is a remedy for divisions in the Church.⁶² This is an addition to the trisagion.

3. The relationship of Peter to Empress Eudocia, who was converted to the Chalcedonian faith by St. Simeon Stylites the Elder and St. Euthymius the Great around 456 shortly before her death (460).⁶³

Empress Eudokia (Elia Eudokia Augusta) was the daughter of the outstanding Athenian philosopher Leontius and before her baptism she was named Athenaida. Peter the Iberian treated her like a mother and their contacts must have influenced the prince’s philosophical development, because Proclus taught her in Athens when she was young.⁶⁴ The Empress made her first trip to Jerusalem in the years 438–439,⁶⁵ and the second in the years 441–460.⁶⁶ When Eudokia turned to Simeon Stylites for advice during the Christological disputes, the ascetic sent her an answer. “You have Euthymius bearing God. Follow his teachings and advice and you will be saved.” After turning to Saint Euthymius the Great, the Empress returned to orthodoxy.⁶⁷

There are serious reasons for the plausibility of the hypothesis in question Georgia’s contacts with Syria date back to the beginnings of Christianity in Georgia, which was dependent on the Patriarchs of Antioch. Lively contacts were also maintained with monasteries in Syria and the Holy Land.⁶⁸ The fact that Pseudo-Dionysius came from a Syrian background is beyond doubt. Georgia remained in the orbit of Syrian influence for a long time. It was only in the times of St. Euthymius the Hagiorite (10th century)⁶⁹ that the Byzantinization of the Georgian liturgy finally took place.

⁶² Ewagriusz Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (III, 17), transl. S. Kazikowski, Warszawa 1990: 126–127.

⁶³ B. Lourié, *Peter the Iberian and Dionysius the Areopagite: Honigmann – van Esbroeck’s thesis revisited*: 148–149.

⁶⁴ On Proclus and the Athenian school, see: G. Reale, *Historia filozofii starożytnej*, transl. E.I. Zieliński, Lublin 2002, IV: 656–679.

⁶⁵ Sokrates Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (VII, 47), transl. S.J. Kazikowski, Warszawa 19862: 561–562.

⁶⁶ Ewagriusz Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (I, 21): 35–39.

⁶⁷ *Synaksarion. Sierpień*, transl. H. Paprocki, Hajnówka 2021: 159–160 (13 VIII).

⁶⁸ D.M. Lang, *Dawna Gruzja*, transl. W. Hensel, Warszawa 1972: 77–78, 127–128.

⁶⁹ St. Grzegorz Peradze, “Świadectwo historii średniowiecznej liturgii gruzińskiej,” transl.

On the other hand, the philosophical relations between Georgia and the Roman Empire date back to the 1st century. There was a Rhetoric School in Colchis from the 3rd century where philosophy was taught. According to Georgian tradition, the famous commentator of Aristotle, the philosopher Themistius, studied at this school. One of the lecturers of this school, Mithridates Lazyk, who came from the Kartvelian Lazy tribe, became the teacher of Prince Nubarnugios (aka Murvan) later known as Peter the Iberian (circa 411–489) ‘The Life’ by Zechariah states that the prince began his education at the age of three.⁷⁰ He was sent to the Byzantine court as a hostage and arrived in Constantinople, after the marriage of Emperor Theodosius to Eudokia on June 7th 421. In 424 St. Melania the Younger⁷¹ met him in Constantinople.⁷² He was accompanied by a teacher who had become involved with Proclus in Byzantium and who remained with the prince until the end of his life⁷³ that same teacher being with him in 438 or 439 when he left the capital for Palestine.⁷⁴ In Jerusalem they met St. Melania the Younger, who sent them to a monastery where they became monks.⁷⁵

After arriving in Palestine, Peter found himself in areas strongly influenced by Neoplatonic philosophy (Origenism was present as a philosophical current in the monastic environment). Origen would not be condemned until 553 at the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Philosophical tendencies developed in both Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian circles. Peter operated in an environment that argued in philosophical terms about Christological issues.

A. Aleksiejuk, in St. Grzegorz Peradzec, *Dziela zebrane*, ed. H. Paprocki, Warszawa 2010, I: 202–210. On Syrian influences on Pseudo-Dionysius, see: A. Golitzin, *Et introibo ad altare Dei. The Mystagogy of Dionisius Areopagita*, Tesaloniki 1994; idem, *Dionysius Areopagites: A Christian Mysticism?*, „Scrinium” 3(2007): 128–179.

⁷⁰ Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (5): 83–84.

⁷¹ St. Melania the Younger (383–439), penitent, Roman matron and ascetic, wife of Valerius Pinnian (ca. 381–431), settled in Jerusalem in 417.

⁷² R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts*: 34, note 2; N. Marg, “Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,” in *Православный палестинский сборник*, Sankt-Petersburg 1896, XLVII: XXXVII.

⁷³ Sh. Nutsbidze, *История грузинской философии*: 71, 73, 85; D.M. Lang, *Dawna Gruzja*: 77.

⁷⁴ P. Devos, *Quand Pierre l’Ibère vint-il à Jérusalem?*, *Analecta Bollandiana* 86(1968), fasc. 3–4: 347.

⁷⁵ R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (27–28): 32–22; Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (19): 89.

John Rufus, bishop of Majuma, presents himself in the *Plerophoria* as “a disciple of Peter the Iberian”⁷⁶ from whose lips he heard much information.⁷⁷ Peter was said to have witnessed a shocking homily by Nestorius, in the Church of the Forty Martyrs in Constantinople, against the title Theotokos in reference to the Mother of Jesus. Nestorius said: “You will not be glorified, Mary, as if you had given birth to God, for, O Glorious One, you did not give birth to God, but to man, the instrument of God.”⁷⁸ After this statement, the patriarch was to be immediately possessed by a demon, which manifested itself in his face and right hand being turned upside down, and he was led to the deaconicon.⁷⁹ John Rufus also states that Peter and Isaiah lived in one monastery and welcomed strangers.⁸⁰ and mentions Peter’s conversations with Isaiah.⁸¹ He also mentions John the Eunuch as being with Peter in Jerusalem.⁸²

The author of the Life states that “from childhood he followed this saint like a faithful son” and describes everything he saw.⁸³ He emphasizes this again at the end of his life:

I, a poor disciple of the saint, followed him from Georgia until his death. Therefore, I have described the life and the miracles which I saw with my own eyes and which I heard with my ears, because the blessed and holy man himself did not hide anything from us for our benefit, just as a good father does not hide useful things from his children and told us about visions. and revelations from God.⁸⁴

He also states that the king of Georgia sent his twelve-year-old son to Constantinople accompanied by other princes⁸⁵ and probably by servants. “A eunuch named John, a holy man and stranger to all evil deeds, who, together with the Georgian prince, decided to go away to serve God”⁸⁶ appears later in the Life.

⁷⁶ Jean Rufus, *Plérôphories* (I): 411–412.

⁷⁷ Ibid. (XVII): 435.

⁷⁸ Sokrates Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (VII, 32): 540–541: „Let no one call Mary the Mother of God. For Mary was a man, and it is impossible for God to be born of a man”; cf. Ewagriusz Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (I, 11): 4–5.

⁷⁹ Jean Rufus, *Plérôphories* (V): 11–12.

⁸⁰ Ibid. (XXII8–10): 448.

⁸¹ Ibid. (XII): 427–428.

⁸² Ibid. (V; XVIII), 416, 437; R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (21): 28.

⁸³ *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (2): 82.

⁸⁴ Ibid. (69): 114.

⁸⁵ Ibid. (6): 84.

⁸⁶ Ibid. (12): 87.

Both became monks, the prince with the name Peter and Mithridates, subsequently called John called the Eunuch⁸⁷. Both were friends with the priest Timothy Elur (αἴλουρος – *cat*), later Patriarch of Alexandria in the years 457–460 and 475–477. Peter the Iberian built a hospice⁸⁸ and two monasteries in the Holy City including one at the Gate of David:

“Therefore, Saint Peter also chose a place above the holy church of Zion, near the tower called David, to build a monastery still known as the monastery of the Iberians and which is located on the left from the second portal of the mentioned tower of the holy church of Zion.”⁸⁹

He built a monastery at Bir-el-Qutt near Bethlehem⁹⁰ and, according to written sources, several monasteries outside the Holy Land.⁹¹ The Life written by Zechariah mentions the building of a church and monastery in the desert in Egypt.⁹²

In 452, Peter was ordained Bishop of Majuma by Bishop Theodosius. According to Zechariah the Rhetor, the inhabitants of Gaza captured Peter and brought him by force to Theodosius, who ordained him as a bishop⁹³. He also became Patriarch of Jerusalem to which position Juvenal was legally entitled. When Juvenal arrived in Jerusalem in the summer of 453, accompanied by the imperial army, Peter fled from Palestine to Egypt, where in 457 he took part in the consecration of the Patriarch of Alexandria.

87 It should be noted here that there are six apophthegmatics of Abba John the Eunuch, about whom nothing is known, cf. *Apoftegmaty Ojców Pustyni*, transl. M. Borkowska, M. Starowski, M. Rymsza, Warszawa 1986, I: 173.

88 Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (20): 90.

89 R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (45): 46; St. Grzegorz Peradze, “Historia gruzińskich mnichów i monasterów w Palestynie w opisach pielgrzymów niebędących Gruzinami,” transl. J. Sopotyń, in St. Grzegorz Peradze, *Dziela zebrane*, II: 66.

90 Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (28): 91–92. V. Corbo, *Gli scavi di Kh. Siyar el-Ghanam (Campo dei Pastori) e i monasteri dei dintorni*, Jeruzolima 1955 = *Раскопки в Хирбет Сийяр эль-Ганам (Поле Пастухов) и близлежащие монастыри*, in W.I. Chachanidze, *Петр Ивер и археологические раскопки грузинского монастыря в Иерусалиме*, Tbilisi 1977: 59–102.

91 T. Mgaloblishvili, “An Unknow Georgian Monastery in Umm Leisum, near Jerusalem”, in *Georgian in the Holy Land. The Rediscovery of a Long-Lost Christian Legacy*, ed. T. Mgaloblishvili, London 2014: 113–114, 116–117, 173.

92 Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (27): 94.

93 *Anecdota Syriaca*, ed. J.P.E. Land, Leiden 1862, III: 126–127; N. Marg, “Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,” V-VI. He’s talking about the same thing Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина (31): 95–96.

He left Majuma after a vision he had during the Liturgy, when he was told to go to his brothers in Egypt⁹⁴. Some testimonies claim he never returned to Majuma. Other testimonies say that around 475 he returned to Palestine as Bishop of Majuma. Zacharias Rhetor reports that Peter lived peacefully thanks to the emperor's order and the empress's protection⁹⁵ and returned to Majuma after receiving a letter from Emperor Leo I Makelles⁹⁶.

Peter returned to Majuma during the reign of Juvenal's successor (451–458), Patriarch Anastasius I (458–478), and again became its bishop. It seems unlikely that Patriarch Anastasius I would reinstate a Monophysite as bishop of Majuma. Peter's protector, Empress Eudokia, had already been dead for 15 years, and had also returned to Orthodoxy a few years before her death.⁹⁷ Michael van Esbroeck suggested that Peter of Iberia renounced Monophysitism as did his patron.⁹⁸ During the reign of Emperor Zeno, he was again forced to leave Majuma, but the Emperor soon allowed him to return.⁹⁹

The Life mentions brother Athanasius, a disciple of St. Zeno of Sketis. St. Abba Zeno was the author of eight apophthegmatics¹⁰⁰ who, around 330 together with a group of monks, moved from Sketis to Sinai and then to Palestine near Gaza. He gained enormous authority and was consulted by Empress Eudokia and Peter the Iberian. Zeno was canonized.¹⁰¹

Zeno told Athanasius: "After my death, go to the holy bishop Peter of Iberia and stay with him, for he who follows him and is humble to him follows the path of truth". Immediately after Zeno's death Athanasius came to Peter and stayed with him for two years.¹⁰² Saint Zeno appeared to Athanasius at night and said that the holy bishop Peter the Iberian would die in a few days.¹⁰³

94 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 372–373.

95 *Anecdota Syriaca*, III, 128; N. Marg, "Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,"; VII.

96 *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (43): 101–102. The emperor died on January 18, 474.

97 Zacharias Rhetor talks about Eudokia's protection in *Die Sogenannte Kirchengeschichte* (III), übersetz. von K. Ahrens u. G. Krüger, Leipzig 1899: 1329–31; 1429–155.

98 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 375.

99 Zacharias Rhetor, *Die Sogenannte Kirchengeschichte* (53): 106–107.

100 *Apoflegmaty Ojców Pustyni*: 139–141 (Abba Zenon).

101 *Synaksarion. Czerwiec*, transl. H. Paprocki, Hajnówka 2019: 281–282 (19 VI).

102 *Ibid.* (62): 111.

103 *Ibid.* (64): 111.

At the end of his life Peter the Iberian, exhausted by fasting and on the advice of the faithful went to warm waters for treatment. The Life by Zechariah states that, when the inhabitants learned that the Saint was going to the hot springs, many young people followed him including many pagans. Then Peter began to teach and baptize them.¹⁰⁴ Peter's missionary activity among the Gentiles is an important element of this life but it is not mentioned in the life written by John Rufus. The Gaza region was a stronghold of paganism in Palestine for a long time. It was only at the turn of the 4th and 5th centuries that paganism was defeated but there is no reason to say that it completely disappeared.¹⁰⁵

The bishop went to the hot springs (now Hammamat Ma'in) in an oasis located 29.3 km from Medeba (now Madaba) and 9 km from Mount Nebo. After treatment in the hot springs, he stayed at the monastery of St. Moses near Mount Nebo. This sanctuary was described by Egeria,¹⁰⁶ and there is also a description of it in The Life of Peter, who is said to have learned much from the local people about this monastery¹⁰⁷ where Moses' grave was supposed to be located.¹⁰⁸ Pilgrims also left descriptions of springs gushing north from the summit of Mount Nebo, whose waters flow into the Wadi 'Ayoun Musa valley. Archaeological discoveries have confirmed the accounts of Egeria and the life of Peter.¹⁰⁹

According to the life written by Zechariah, Peter the Iberian died on Friday, December 2nd during the reign of Emperor Zeno the Isaurian (474–491), which indicates the year 489.¹¹⁰ It could not have been the year 491, because Zeno died on April 9th 491. Yet according to the Life written by John Rufus, he died on Sunday December 1st 491 in the estate in Jamnia that belonged to the tribune Elias who was a confidant and

104 *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (44): 102–103.

105 N. B e l a y c h e, "Pagan Festivals in Fourth-Century Gaza," in *Christian Gaza in Late Antiquity*, ed. B. Bitton-Ashkelony, A. Kofsky, Leiden-Boston 2004: 5–22.

106 E g e r i a, *Pielgrzymka do miejsc świętych* (VIII–XIII), transl. W. Szoldrski, Warszawa 1970: 179–183.

107 R. R a a b e, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (83–85): 81–82; *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (46; 52): 103, 104–105; cf. M. B. Arndt, "Nowe odkrycia archeologiczne w rejonie góry Nebo," *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 42(1989), fasc. 1: 42–43.

108 In Egeria's time this tradition was unknown, otherwise she would not have failed to mention it, as she does in the case of the discovery of Job's tomb, cf. *Pielgrzymka do miejsc świętych* (16,5–6): 112–113.

109 M. B. A r n d t, *Nowe odkrycia archeologiczne w rejonie góry Nebo*: 43.

110 N. M a r r, "Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера," XXXVII; cf. R. R a a b e, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (145): 132.

treasurer of Empress Eudokia.¹¹¹ The Coptic Synaxarion mentions Peter on November 29 and 30 and December 1.¹¹²

Evagrius Scholasticus reported that Peter the Iberian was entrusted with the helm of the episcopal government of the town of Majuma located near Gaza.¹¹³ He also described the ordination of Timothy, surnamed Cat, as Patriarch of Alexandria. The consecration was performed by Eusebius of Pelusium and Peter of Majuma. The historian referred to “a work describing the life of Peter.”¹¹⁴ He also mentioned that Severus of Antioch “began a solitary life in a certain monastery located halfway between the city of Gaza and a settlement called Majuma. In this monastery, Peter the Iberian, once bishop of Gaza and exile companion of Timothy Cat, underwent the same ascetic mortifications and left behind him a very favourable opinion.”¹¹⁵

According to the Life, Peter was supposed to be a disciple of the ascetic Isaiah of Gaza,¹¹⁶ an opponent of the philosophers.¹¹⁷ If Isaiah was a second teacher, it is difficult to consider him an enemy of philosophy. Isaiah’s piety was indeed based on mystical experience and miracles,¹¹⁸ but the presence of philosophy in his works and life cannot be denied. Someone who uses the concept of ‘mind’ (νοῦς) and believes that not only the body has its senses, because he talks about “closing all the doors i.e. the senses of his soul” (πάσας τὰς πύλας τῆς ψυχῆς, ἤγουν τὰς αἰσθήσεις),¹¹⁹

111 R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (123): 114–115.

112 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 379.

113 Ewagriusz Scholastyk, *Historia Kościoła* (II, 5), transl. S. Kazikowski, Warszawa 1990: 60–61.

114 *Ibid.* (II, 8): 66.

115 *Ibid.* (III, 33): 148.

116 St. Izajasz Anachoreta, “O straży umysłu,” in *Pseudo-Antoni Wielki. Izajasz Anachoreta. Wybór tekstów z I tomu Filokalii*, transl. C. Dobak, Tyniec 2017: 109–124 = *Filokalia. Teksty o modlitwie serca*, transl. J. Naumowicz, Kraków 20022: 109–112 (fragments); *Apostlegramy Ojców Pustyni*, transl. M. Borkowska, M. Starowieyski, M. Rymuza, Warszawa 1986, I: 142–143 [Abba Isaiah – 11 apophthegms]; cf. M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*: 491–492.

117 *Жизнь и деятельность святого и блаженного отца нашего Петра Грузина* (52): 105.

118 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 375.

119 St. Izajasz Anachoreta, “O straży umysłu,” (7, cf. 14): 112–113, 116; cf. Pseudo-Antoni Wielki, “Pouczenia o zachowaniu ludzi i właściwym sposobie postępowania” (79), in *Pseudo-Antoni Wielki. Izajasz Anachoreta. Wybór tekstów z I tomu Filokalii*: 74.

and writes that “if the mind is freed, the boundary between it and God disappears”¹²⁰ cannot be an opponent of philosophy.¹²¹

The concept of “rational senses” already known to Didius the Blind as “the eye in the soul” (ὀφθαλμὸς ἐν ψυχῇ), to Clement of Alexandria as “the eye of the soul” (ὄμμα τῆς ψυχῆς) and to Origen (αἱ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄψεις)¹²² is a paraphrase of the Platonic metaphor of “the eye soul” (τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄμμα).¹²³ It came to Christianity through the treatise *De opificio mundi* by Philo of Alexandria who discusses “the eye of the mind” (τῆς διανοίας ὄμμα)¹²⁴ which is, in fact, a Greek philosophical thesis.¹²⁵

Origen speaks of seeing God “with the mind’s eye” (διανοίας ὀφθαλμοί), of hearing God with “spiritual ears” (ᾠτα πνευματικά), and of speaking to God with a disembodied voice (φωνὴ μὴ σώματι). It also describes touch (ἄφῆς) enabling one to touch the “Word of Life.”¹²⁶ Every member of the outer man has its counterpart in the inner man.¹²⁷ Hence, we talk about the eyes and ears of the inner man. The treatise *Against Celsus* refers to forms of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch that perceive “immaterial things” and thus resemble their material counterparts.¹²⁸ St. Gregory of Nyssa also preached the doctrine of the five spiritual senses¹²⁹ and St. Augustine also spoke about the same.¹³⁰

120 St. Izajasz Anachoreta, “O straży umysłu (9),” *Pseudo-Antoni Wielki. Izajasz Anachoreta. Wybór tekstów z I tomu Filokalii*, transl. C. Dobak, Tyniec 2017: 113.

121 P. Gavrilyuk, S. Coakley, *Duchowe zmysły. Percepcja Boga w zachodnim chrześcijaństwie*, transl. A. Gomola, Kraków 2014: 117–138 (P.L. Gavrilyuk wrote the first chapter).

122 Orygenes, *Komentarz do Ewangelii św. Jana* (XX, 32), transl. S. Kalinkowski, Warszawa 1981, II: 73.

123 Platon, *Sofista* (254a), [idem:] *Dialogi*, transl. W. Witwicki, Kęty 1999, II: 482; idem, *Państwo* (519b; 533d), [idem:] *Państwo. Prawa*, transl. W. Witwicki, Kęty 1999: 222, 241.

124 Filon Aleksandryjski, “O stworzeniu świata (71),” [idem:] *Pisma*, transl. L. Jachimowicz, Warszawa 1886, I: 51.

125 D. Szymańska-Kuta, “Koncepcja zmysłów wewnętrznych z perspektywy późnoantycznych teorii percepcji,” *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Series Religioznologica* 30(2006), fasc. 39: 101.

126 P. Gavrilyuk, S. Coakley, *Duchowe zmysły. Percepcja Boga w zachodnim chrześcijaństwie*: 38–39 (the chapter on Origen was written by M.J. McInroy).

127 Orygenes, *Dyskusja z Heraklidesem*, transl. A. Zajkowski, *Studia Theologica Varsaviensia* 5(1967), fasc. 2: 167.

128 Orygenes, *Przeciw Celsusowi* (I, 48), transl. S. Kalinkowski, Warszawa 1977, I: 100–101; cf. P. Gavrilyuk, S. Coakley, *Duchowe zmysły. Percepcja Boga w zachodnim chrześcijaństwie*, 39, 41.

129 *Ibid.*: 57–80 (the chapter was written by S. Coakley).

130 *Ibid.*: 81–89 (the chapter was written by M.R. Lootens).

What is important is that the “intelligent vision of God” that Pseudo-Dionysius writes about¹³¹ is defined by him as seeing “with the immaterial and unmoving eyes of our intellects” (ἄλλοις καὶ ἀτρεμέσι νοῶς ὀφθαλμοῖς εἰσδεξάμενοι) the gift “more than the original light” that does not lose a single unity proper to him.¹³²

Zacharias the Rhetor reported that the philosopher Aeneas of Gaza¹³³ once came to talk to the ascetic Isaiah about the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus.¹³⁴ In the second place he states that someone also visited Peter the Iberian, a disciple of Isaiah, for the same purpose.¹³⁵

Pseudo-Dionysius dedicated all his treatises to Timothy, whom he considers a disciple of Hierotheus. The dedications are definitely authentic. However, this is probably not Timothy known from the Letters of St. Paul, but Timothy Elur, a friend of Peter the Iberian. We can guess that it was the name of his friend that inspired Peter to create the myth of Dionysius the Areopagite as the author of the collection.

In turn, various treatises have been attributed to Peter the Iberian, even the aggressive monophysite *Plerophoria*, of which he is the main figure.¹³⁶ Zechariah the Rhetor¹³⁷ reported that the Alexandrian philosopher John attributed some of his “heretical” works to Peter the Iberian in order to mislead the faithful.¹³⁸ If any treatises were attributed to Peter, he must have been known as the author of works of a similar type.

Peter the Iberian was revered in Georgia from the 12th to 13th centuries when his life appeared, written in Syriac by the Georgian Zechariah. The Georgian translation of the life of Peter the Iberian, prepared by the priest Makar Meshi and re-edited in the 17th century by Paul Dekano-

131 “Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Imiona boskie* (I, 4),” in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 187.

132 “Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Hierarchia niebiańska* (I, 1),” in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 6.

133 Aeneas of Gaza (5th/6th century) – Christian Neoplatonist from the school in Alexandria; his work *Theophrastus, or On the Immortality of the Soul*, was imitated by Zechariah Rhetor in *Ammonius*, cf. G. Reale, *Historia filozofii starożytnej*, IV: 683; M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*: 306.

134 Zacharias Rhetor, *Leben des Isaias*, [idem:] *Die Sogenannte Kirchengeschichte*, 27031–2716.

135 *Ibid.*: 27128–33.

136 M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопagit: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*: 176 (Πληροφορία – collection).

137 Zacharias the Rhetor, also Zechariah of Gaza, Zechariah the Scholastic (died before 553) - Byzantine writer, theologian, philosopher, lawyer, historian and rhetorician. *The History of the Church* (books III-VI) from 450 to 490 was written by him. He was a disciple of Peter the Iberian, initially a Monophysite, converted to Orthodoxy and became bishop of Mytilene, cf. M. Starowieyski, J.M. Szymusiak, *Nowy słownik wczesnochrześcijańskiego piśmiennictwa*, 985–986.

138 *Anecdota Syriaca*, III: 130–131, [za:] N. Marr, “Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,” II-III.

si, differs significantly from the version published by Richard Raabe.¹³⁹ Raabe's text mentions the monk Zacharias.¹⁴⁰

In the Georgian *Horologion*, published in Tbilisi in 1710, under the date December 2, there is "St. Peter, Bishop of Majuma". This information is no longer included in the edition of 1722.¹⁴¹ However, in the *Synaxarion* of 1736 there is a life of Peter the Iberian along with a depiction of the saint.¹⁴² A miniature depicting Peter is also found in the Christmas Menea from 1746, from the church in Zemo-Cchale.¹⁴³ In the first half of the 18th century, Peter's name was removed from Georgian liturgical books by Patriarch Nicholas, Brother Sulchan Sava Orbeliani. Ultimately, he was removed from the holy lists by Patriarch Anthony I Bagrationi.¹⁴⁴

The hypothesis of authorship by Peter the Iberian is also based on the finding that John the Eunuch was the author of some works, possibly including the treatise *Elements of Theology*.¹⁴⁵ *Pseudo-Dionysius does not in any way refer to the work of Proclus Elements of theology:*

When our excellent teacher Hierotheus had prepared his *Elements of Theology* in the most perfect manner, we – as if they were not sufficient – wrote other theological works and this treatise on God.¹⁴⁶

Pseudo-Dionysius even quotes a fragment of Hierotheus' treatise though it does not resemble the writings of Proclus.¹⁴⁷ He owes his knowledge of divine things to Hieroteus, "next to Saint Paul", "stealing" the fruits of his deepest contemplations and research. He also quotes Hierotheus' *Hymns of Love*,¹⁴⁸ *the content of which is clearly influenced by the Neoplatonic thought of the 5th century.*

139 N. Marr, "Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,": XXI-XXII, XXXI-XXXIV; V.I. Chachanidze, *Петр Ивер и археологические раскопки грузинского монастыря в Иерусалиме*: 29–30.

140 R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer. Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (124), 116.

141 N. Marr, "Предисловие к житию Петра Ивера,": XXIII-XIV.

142 Ibid.: XVI.

143 Ibid.: XVII, note 11.

144 V.I. Chachanidze, *Петр Ивер и археологические раскопки грузинского монастыря в Иерусалиме*, Tbilisi 1977: 29–30.

145 "Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Hierarchia niebiańska* (VI, 2);" idem, "Imiona boskie (II, 9; III, 2)" in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 30, 205, 211.

146 "Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *Imiona boskie* (III, 2)," in *Corpus Dionysiacum*, 211.

147 Ibid. (II, 10): 206–207. This remarkable passage speaks of the Divinity of the Son as the source of perfection, the form of all form, but formless because He transcends all form. It is a substance that permeates all substances.

148 Ibid. (IV, 15): 232–233.

We know the name 'Hierotheus' only from the works of Pseudo-Dionysius and from the Greek Menologies which are dependent on the works of Pseudo-Dionysius. Who was this man? We have two options in this case. Either the idea was to make everything similar to the apostolic times, or John's name was changed during his subsequent monastic vows. The description of the Dormition of the Theotokos and of Hierotheus giving praise¹⁴⁹ influenced the iconography of this holiday¹⁵⁰ and was later quoted by the Fathers of the Church¹⁵¹ in the above-mentioned *Euthymiac History*.¹⁵²

*Pseudo-Dionysius writes that in Heliopolis (a Hellenistic city in Lebanon, the main centre of the cult of the triad of gods: Jupiter, Venus and Bacchus) he saw a solar eclipse during the crucifixion of Christ, when the Moon unexpectedly overlapped the Sun, although it was not the time of their conjunction, and from nine o'clock until evening it completely covered the sun.*¹⁵³ Then the pagan rhetor Apollophanes, present with Dionysius, exclaimed that "some unexpected transformation had taken place in the works of God."¹⁵⁴ This event – also from the point of view of Neoplatonism – can be treated as a kind of initiation, just as Peter considered his presence during the Transfiguration of Christ to be such an initiation (2 Peter 1:16).¹⁵⁵

*In the Syrian Life of Dionysius the Areopagite, or rather in the account of "the spectacle which he saw in the city of the Sun, which is Heliopolis in Egypt,"*¹⁵⁶ the presence of Apollophanes is not mentioned in the description of the solar eclipse.¹⁵⁷ This may indicate it is an extension of an earlier version. The author of this life was inspired by the astronomical treatise *The Book of Spheres*, dating from the mid-6th century,¹⁵⁸ so the

149 Ibid. (III, 2): 212–213.

150 M. van Esbroeck, "Gruziński program ikonograficzny Zaśnięcia Bogurodzicy," transl. H. Paprocki, *Pro Georgia* 20(2010): 5–15.

151 St. Jan z Damaszku, 2 *Homilia na Zaśnięcie NMP* (18), in *Ojcowie Kościoła greccy i syryjscy. Teksty o Matce Bożej*: 257; idem, 3 *Homilia na Zaśnięcie NMP* (3), in *Ibid.*: 262.

152 *Historia Eutymiacka*, in "Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu. Ewangelie apokryficzne," ed. M. Starowieyski, Kraków 2003, II: 834.

153 "Pseudo-Dionizy Areopagita, *List VII. Do Polikarpa, biskupa* (2)," in *Corpus Dionysiacum*: 332–333.

154 Ibid. (3): 333.

155 On this topic see: J. Klinge, "Drugi List świętego Piotra Apostoła," [idem:] *Dziela zebrane*, ed. H. Paprocki, Kraków 2023, II: 75–103.

156 M.-A. Kugener, "Une Autobiographie syriaque de Denys l'Aréopagite (15, 11–13)," *Oriens Christianus* 7(1907): 339.

157 Ibid., (7–11), 301–309.

158 Ibid., (10), 328–331.

autobiography dependent on it was probably written at the end of the 6th or the beginning of the 7th century. Like the astronomical treatise, it was written by a Syrian in the Syriac language. This seems to be indicated by the purity of the language, which is free from any Hellenisms.¹⁵⁹ This Life states that St. Dionysius was ordained by the Apostle Paul as Bishop of Athens.¹⁶⁰

According to tradition, Hierotheus from apostolic times was bishop of Athens until 52, and was succeeded by Dionysius. Both of them have liturgical commemorations in the Orthodox Church on the third (Dionysius) and fourth (Hieroteus) of October.¹⁶¹ This contradicts the only surviving testimony already mentioned, namely that of Dionysius of Corinth, quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea. There is no information that Hieroteus left any writings behind.¹⁶²

All this makes Honigmann's hypothesis highly probable, but unproven. Undoubtedly, the author of *Areopagiticum* was one of the last Neoplatonists, Vladimir Losski considered him a Christian thinker in the mask of a Neoplatonist. It wasn't a mask.¹⁶³ The identity of Dionysius is still unknown, but his writings reveal a deep connection with the views of the School of Athens.¹⁶⁴ The friendship of Mithridates Lazycus with Proclus could have seriously influenced the views of Peter the Iberian, who himself had a philosophical education, and contacts with the Empress Eudokia were also important.

The theology of Pseudo-Dionysius cannot be conceptualised without the philosophy of Proclus. Dionysius is essentially Proclus in Christian garb. Dionysius's thinking is clearly influenced by Neoplatonic philosophy.¹⁶⁵ He gave theology – without revealing his identity – a consistently Neoplatonic conceptual and linguistic form, and created a system that closely combined the philosophical and biblical names of God into one. The *Divine Names* treatise aims to provide a philosophical and biblical explanation of judgments about God. "Ev is the most general name."¹⁶⁶

159 Ibid., 293–294.

160 Ibid., (14), 311.

161 *Synaksarion. Październik*, transl. H. Pańcicki, Hajnówka 2022: 49–53, 61–63.

162 An apocryphal work entitled *The Book of Hierotheus* was attributed to him, cf. M. van Esbroeck, *Петр Ивер и Дионисий Ареопагит: возвращаясь к тезису Хонигмана*, 381.

163 V. Losski, *The Vision of God*, transl. A. Moorhouse, London 1963: 99–100.

164 T. Stępień, "Ciało ludzkie i jego udział w szczęściu nieba – koncepcja Pseudo-Dionizego Areopagity wobec poglądów neoplatoników pogańskich," *Vox Patrum* 35(2015), fasc. 63, 199.

165 W. Beierwaltes, *Platonizm w chrześcijaństwie*, 42, 44.

166 Ibid., 50.

The Areopagite had a lasting influence on the development of the science of God's attributes in the positive and negative theology of St. Bonaventure and Nicholas of Cusa.¹⁶⁷

Dionysius tries to define God, his essence and the essence of the world. Through a philosophical analysis of philosophical and biblical predicates he wants to get closer to God through symbols and finally, through negation, realize the unknowability of God. In this he is close to Proclus. Following the pattern of Proclus, he derives the hierarchy of angels and the church hierarchy from One, which is a Christianization of Proclus' triads.¹⁶⁸

Moreover, the influence of Proclus is manifested in the terminology regarding God, such as ὑπερούσιος – *super-essential, super-substantial* or ὑπερουσιότητα – *super-essentiality*.¹⁶⁹ According to this philosopher, "everything that participates is lower than what it participates in."¹⁷⁰ This goes back to Plato, who believed that goodness is not an essence, but something beyond all essence, something much higher and more sublime¹⁷¹. In turn, the dependence on Iamblichus is visible in the terminology relating to theurgy. The word 'theurgy' with its derivatives appears about 50 times in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.¹⁷²

The line separating the views of pagan and Christian Neoplatonists lies at the point where the doctrine of resurrection, as professed by Dionysius, begins. The rejection of metempsychosis is dictated by a change in the perception of the nature of the human soul, of which the Areopagite was aware.¹⁷³ The proclamation of the resurrection led to the rejection of the teachings of St. Paul on the Areopagus (Acts 17:32). Perhaps that is why an unknown supporter of the Athenian Neoplatonic school, when writing his works, adopted the pseudonym of Dionysius the Areopagite, one of those who accepted the message of St. Paul.¹⁷⁴

Pseudo-Dionysius wanted to Christianize the ideas he professed so that they would survive. This was achieved to a much greater extent than

167 Ibid., 17–18.

168 Ibid., 45.

169 Ch.M. Stang, "Dionysius, Iamblichus, and Proclus," in *The Oxford Handbook of Dionysius the Areopagite*, 123, 129–132.

170 Proklos, *Elementy teologii* (24), transl. R. Sawa, Warszawa 2002, 43.

171 Platon, *Państwo* (509 b), [idem:] *Dialogi*, II, 215.

172 Ch.M. Stang, *Dionysius, Iamblichus, and Proclus*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Dionysius the Areopagite*, 123–129.

173 T. Stępień, *Ciało ludzkie i jego udział w szczęściu nieba – koncepcja Pseudo-Dionizego Areopagity wobec poglądów neoplatoników pogańskich*, 214.

174 Ibid., 215.

in the case of Aristotelianism. Neoplatonism still lives in Christianity in the interpretation of the sacraments,¹⁷⁵ in the understanding of the role of hierarchy and in the symbolic interpretation of services.

The treatise *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, a commentary on the liturgy, became a model for later commentaries, starting with St. Maximus the Confessor. Overcoming the Neoplatonic oppositions is the work of Maximus, and the *Mystagogy*. This commentary on the Eucharistic Liturgy, understood as a cycle of images, is particularly significant in this respect. Maksym's lecture is made in the context of the opposition between the noetic and the substantive. Clearly Maximus was strongly influenced by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite¹⁷⁶ as there are many implicit and explicit references to the works of Pseudo-Dionysius in his writings. The most important of them is the formulation that the created cosmos is divided into the noetic cosmos (noetic, i.e. incorporeal beings) and the sensual cosmos.¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, however, the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius on later Byzantine thought cannot be overestimated.¹⁷⁸

Although the created world is divided into the noetic cosmos and the sensual cosmos, thanks to the light of Christ we can see noetic beings, because Christ unites the noetic with the material, the created with the uncreated. The liturgical mystery, presented in images, shows the history of Christ and His body – the Church – on the way to the kingdom of God. History moves towards the future kingdom, towards eschatology, towards the Personal God, which is a reference to the thoughts of the Cappadocian Fathers.

According to Maximus, history is closely related to eschatology. This very moment does not occur in Pseudo-Dionysius, because the opposition of the noetic and the sensual is insurmountable and their mutual relationship does not change.¹⁷⁹ Maximus, on the other hand, believes that history leads to eschatology and it is possible to enter the spiritual world (νοητός κόσμος), which in turn enables the revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) of the mystery of salvation in the current eon. History enters the kingdom, which is tan-

¹⁷⁵ Cf. H. Paprocki, "Sakramentologia prawosławna," in *Znaki Tajemnicy. Sakramenty w teorii i praktyce Kościoła*, ed. K. Porosło, R.J. Woźniak, Kraków 2018, 537–556.

¹⁷⁶ H.U. von Balthasar, *Liturgie cosmique. Maxime le Confesseur*, transl. L. Lhaumet, H.-A. Prentout, Paris 1947: 71–88.

¹⁷⁷ St. Maximus the Confessor, *Mistagogia* (2), PG 91, col. 679; cf. H. Paprocki, "Sztuka ikony wobec zła," *Ikonotheka* 21(2008), 76–78.

¹⁷⁸ J. Meyendorff, "Note sur l'influence dionysienne en Orient," *Studia Patristica* 1(1957), 547–552.

¹⁷⁹ Orygenes, *O zasadach* (I, VI. 2), transl. S. Kalinkowski, Warszawa 1979: 106.

tamount to divinization achieved in earthly life. The liturgy manifests the future kingdom, the universe uniting with the Absolute. Maximus, instead of the two levels – noetic and substantive – that are present in Pseudo-Dionysius's concept, introduces a whole series of interconnected spheres. The pictorial liturgical action as a visible action raises us to contemplation of the noetic. This means that the image returns to the original image, just as the sacraments lead from the sign to the truth.

Maksym shifts the emphasis in the interpretation of the words, the image returns to the primeval image, overcoming the Neoplatonic opposition. Usually, these words were interpreted in the spirit of Origen: man has a part of the Godhead that will return to God after cleansing and liberation from the body, that is, after reconstructing the existence violated by sin, which means the equivalence of the beginning and end of creation. Maksym does not identify the beginning and end of creation, and treats the process connecting the beginning with the end as positive. The triad ἀρχή (beginning) – μεσότης (intermediate state) – τέλος (fulfilment) corresponds to the triad γένεσις (creation) – κίνησις (aspiration) – στάσις (rest), but rest is not restoration of the initial state and the achievement of a new eon.

This allows us to consider the entire creation in terms of intention (σκοπός) and implementation. Adam's sin did not violate the στάσις phase, but the κίνησις phase, i.e. the process of realizing the salvation of the world.¹⁸⁰ God is the origin (ἀρχή) and fulfilment (τέλος) of creation and movement. Images are in motion towards their Archetype and all creation is moving towards its primal images (λόγος). The logos of beings, which exist eternally in God, constitute the intention of creation.¹⁸¹ Images of liturgical action fulfil this idea and are therefore a step towards its implementation. Overcoming all antinomies takes place in deification (θέωσις).¹⁸²

The religious trend of Neoplatonism found its culmination in the decisions of the Synod of Jerusalem in 1672,¹⁸³ repeated in paragraph 10 of the encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs of 1723.¹⁸⁴ The synod defined the

¹⁸⁰ “ St. Maximus the Confessor, “ *Ambiguorum liber* (7), PG 91, col. 1097.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., PG 91, col. 1081.

¹⁸² The later commentaries of Germanos of Constantinople and Symeon of Thessalonica up to Nicholas Gogol are also influenced by Neoplatonism, cf. R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VIIe au XVe siècles*, Paris 1966. These commentaries treat the liturgy as a series of successive symbols.

¹⁸³ E.J. K i m m e l, *Monumenta fidei ecclesiae orientalis*, Jena 1850. I: 437–438.

¹⁸⁴ “Послание патриархов восточно-кафолической церкви о православной вере (1723 г.),” in

bishop as the living image of God on earth and the abundant source of all the sacraments through which salvation is obtained. The bishop is as necessary to the Church as breath is to man and the Sun is to the earth.¹⁸⁵

Nowadays, Neoplatonism is visible in the works of Fr. Paul Florenski, especially in the *Philosophy of Cult*,¹⁸⁶ of which the *Iconostasis* is an important part. Florenski considers the dream as a boundary between two worlds, the icon as a representation of secret and supernatural things and as a tool of supra-sensory knowledge. It is therefore about the problem of the relationship between two worlds, which is a typical Neoplatonic issue.¹⁸⁷

However, the current state of knowledge does not allow us to definitively state whether Peter the Iberian is the author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. The Nutsbidze-Honigmann hypothesis, especially after the corrections and additions made by Michel van Esbroeck, deserves to be taken seriously because there is much evidence that Peter the Iberian of those the author of those works.

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185 N. Milasz, *Правила Святой Православной Церкви с толкованиями*, 12: <https://unotices.com> > books-u > *Епископ (Милаш) Никодим – Правила Святой Православной*.

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Fig. 1. Fresco of Peter the Iberian at the Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem, 17th c.

Etymological Studies on Abkhaz-Adyghe and Kartvelian Numerals from “1” to “10”, “20” and “100”

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is analysis of structure and etymology of the cardinal numerals in Abkhaz-Adyghe and Kartvelian languages. It was divided into three parts. The first one is only a very short introduction, in which linguistic material and applied research methods were characterized.

The second part of the paper and the third one contain studies on structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe and Kartvelian cardinal numerals respectively along with full comparative material from the remaining Ibero-Caucasian languages. Proto-language forms and the intermediate stages of their phonetic development from proto-language to contemporary state were reconstructed. The observed phonetic and morphological changes were meticulously described. Particular attention was paid to internal structure of the investigated numerals in order to detach nominal stems and indivisible roots. Only the indivisible morphemes may be object for historical-comparative research.

It must be emphasized that the present paper by no means does not exhaust the subject of research and gives new opportunities for further investigations.

Keywords: Ibero-Caucasian languages, Abkhaz-Adyghe languages, Kartvelian languages, etymology, cardinal numerals.

I Introduction¹

The present paper deals with historical – comparative studies on cardinal numerals in Abkhaz-Adyghe and Kartvelian languages which are

¹ The present paper is fully based on my unpublished doctoral dissertation: “Historical-comparative studies on numerals in Daghestanian numerals. Cardinal numerals.” The dissertation was prepared due to financial support granted by National Science Centre within the frames of the research project: 2019/32/T/HS2/00325.

treated as a constituent part of the great Ibero-Caucasian linguistic family. Two main research methods, historical – comparative method and internal reconstruction are used.²

II Etymological studies on Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals

Numeral „1”

Abkh. aḱi ; a-ʒ^{wi} / Ab. zaḱi / Ub. za / Circ. zi

Abkh. a-ʒ^{wi}, root: -ʒ^{wi} < *-ʒ^{wa} < *-c^{wa}

Abkh aḱi = a-ḱi < *za-ḱi³

Ab. zaḱi = za-ḱi, root (I): za- < *ʒa- < *ʒ^{wa}- < *c^{wa}-⁴

root (II): -ḱi < *ḱi- < *ḱ^{wi}-

Ub. za < *ʒa < *ʒ^{wa} < *c^{wa}⁵

Circ. zi < *za < *ʒa < *ʒ^{wa} < *c^{wa}⁶

Common Abkhaz-Adyghe numeral should be reconstructed: *ʒ^{wa}, because all the forms attested in contemporary Abkhaz-Adyghe languages may be derived from it. From standpoint of relative chronology (very rare) Abkhaz form: a-ʒ^{wi} looks most archaic.

² Detailed information on classification of Ibero-Caucasian languages, history of research and various methodological problems are given in [Kanarkowski 2023: 72-75].

³ A synchronic analysis of Abkhazian cardinal numerals is given in: [Грамматика 1968: 52-53]. For some remarks on Abkhazian numerals see also [Gvantseledze 2003: 51]. A synchronic morphology of Abkhazian cardinal numerals was investigated also by [Шакрыл 2015: 11-30]. On some peculiarities of numerals in Bzyp dialect of Abkhazian see [Бгажба 1964: 147]. For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “one” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [Ломтатидзе 1944: 99-103]. A synchronic analysis of cardinal numerals in Batumi dialect of Abkhazian is given in: [Махавариани 2010: 139-141].

⁴ A synchronic description of Abaza numerals may be found in [Ломтатидзе 2006: 201-203].

⁵ For some remarks on Ubykh numerals see also [Генко 1928: 239]. On Ubykh numeral: “one” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh cardinal numerals see also [Dumézil 1931: 41-43]. On Ubykh cardinal numerals comp. also [Meszaros 1934: 71-72]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “one” see: [Vogt 1963: 216]. A synchronic description of Ubykh cardinal numerals is given by [Janashia 2015: 39-40].

⁶ A synchronic description of Adyghean cardinal numerals may be found in: [Рогава, Керашева 1966: 77-79]. A synchronic description of Kabardian cardinal numerals may be found in: [Colarusso 1992: 159-160]. A short synchronic description of Kabardian numerals can also be found in: [Matasovic 2008: 26]. Synchronic data on Circassian cardinal numerals are given in: [Кумахов 2013: 101-105].

In all the remaining languages initial affricate was delabialized: *ʒ^w- > ʒ- and simplified to voiced sibilant: *ʒ- > z-.⁷ Primary vocalism: -a was retained in Abkhaz-Abaza and in Ubykh.

In other languages the radical vowel was centralized: *-a > -i.

Abaza numeral: za-ki can be interpreted as a primary compound word which changed into nomen simplex.⁸ The second member may be compared with the root: ki- which is testified in Daghestanian numerals referring to “two.”⁹

Numeral „2”

Abkh.-Ab. ʕ^w-ba / Ub. t̪q̪^wa / Circ. t̪w̪i¹⁰

Abkh.-Ab. ʕ^w-ba, root: ʕ^w- < *ʕ^wa- < *q̪^wa-

Ub. t̪q̪^wa = t̪-q̪^wa, where: t̪-q̪^wa < *d-q̪^wa, root: -q̪^wa¹¹

Circ. t̪w̪i < *t̪-q̪^wi < *d-q̪^wi, root: *-q̪^wi < *-q̪^wa

In Abkhaz-Adyghe the inherited root: -q̪ w a was preserved only in Ubykh. As a result of anticipatory assimilation the preceding consonant (supposedly it is the primary petrified class morpheme by origin) was secondarily abruptivized: *t-q̪^w- > t̪-q̪^w-.

In Circassian languages the inherited radical consonant: *-q̪^w- dropped and only the primary class morpheme in the shape of dental stop was preserved but phonetic traces of the formerly existing radical consonant are secondary abruptivization as well as labialization of this consonant. The whole chain of phonetic changes can be illustrated: *t-q̪^w- > t̪-q̪^w- > t̪^w-.

⁷ On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “one” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумаров 1989: 108]. In NCED Common West-Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) root is postulated: *zV “one.” For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “one” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 25; Chirikba 1996b: 398; Shagirov 1977: 210 (I); Vakhadze 2014: 224]. For etymology of: za- comp. also [Chukhva 2019: 182-183] and [Starostin, Nikolayev 1994: 323-324].

⁸ On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “one” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 75]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “one” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 87].

⁹ On structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “one” and their links with Daghestanian and Kartvelian counterparts comp. also [Kanarkowski 2016: 73-78; Chukhva 2019: 43; 511]. For some general considerations on linguistic connections between Abkhaz-Adyghe and Daghestanian see also [Chirikba 2016: 1-27].

¹⁰ The Abkhaz-Adyghe linguistic material is taken from: [Климов, Халилов 2003: 358].

¹¹ On Ubykh numeral denoting: “two” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “two” see: [Vogt 1963: 193].

Dropping of the radical abruptive: $*\text{-}\acute{\text{q}}^{\text{w}}\text{-}$ may be regarded as a perseverative dissimilative phonetic process.¹²

As far as the anlaut class morpheme: t- is concerned, it should be postulated that it is derivable:

$\text{t-}\acute{\text{q}}\text{-} < *d\text{-}\acute{\text{q}}\text{-}$ [Rogava: 1956]. The sound change consists in desonorization and abruptivization due to anticipatory assimilation.

In Abkhaz and Abaza abruptive pharyngeal affricate was simplified to laryngeal spirant:

$*\acute{\text{q}}^{\text{w}}\text{-} > \text{f}^{\text{w}}\text{-}$. Some intermediate stages of the phonetic development should be postulated. It perhaps may be assumed: $*\acute{\text{q}}^{\text{w}}\text{-} > \text{f}^{\text{w}}\text{-}$. The first stage could be dezabruptivization: $*\acute{\text{q}}^{\text{w}}\text{-} > *q^{\text{w}}\text{-}$. In the next step the affricate was simplified to spirant: $*q^{\text{w}}\text{-} > *b^{\text{w}}\text{-}$. Ultimately the spirant was sonorized in position before the voiced consonant. It may be easily explained as anticipatory assimilation:

$*b^{\text{w}}\text{-}b > \text{f}^{\text{w}}\text{-}b$.¹³ It is obvious that the inherited radical vowel must have disappeared: $*\text{f}^{\text{w}}a\text{-} > \text{f}^{\text{w}}\text{-}$. Syncope of the vowel was probably conditioned by its position in the pretonic syllable.¹⁴

Numeral „3”

Abkh.-Ab. $x\text{-}pa$; Ub. $\hat{s}a$ / $\hat{s}i$; Ad. $\check{s}i$; Kab. $\hat{s}i$

Abkh.-Ab. $x\text{-}pa < *x\text{-}ba$, root: $x\text{-} < *xi\text{-} < *si\text{-} < *\hat{s}i\text{-} < *\hat{s}a\text{-} < *\hat{s}^{\text{w}}a\text{-} < *\lambda^{\text{w}}a\text{-}$

Ub. (1) $\hat{s}a < *\hat{s}^{\text{w}}a < *\lambda^{\text{w}}a$

Ub. (2) $\hat{s}i < \hat{s}a < *\hat{s}^{\text{w}}a < *\lambda^{\text{w}}a$ ¹⁵

¹² For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “two” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 19]. Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was reconstructed in [Chirikba 1996b: 398; Джанашиа 1976: 161; Балкаров 1976: 134]. On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “two” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 108; Шагиров 1977: 86-87 (II)]. For Circassian-Ubykh etymology see: [Kvakhadze 2014: 229; Dumézil 1932: 125]. The author reconstructs Common Circassian-Ubykh form: $*\text{t}\acute{\text{q}}\text{w}i$ and regards the Ubykh numeral as the most archaic one in view of relative chronology.

¹³ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “two” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [Lomtadze 1944: 103]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “two” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 246]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “two” is given in [1996a: 106].

¹⁴ In NCED Common West-Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: $*\text{t}\acute{\text{q}}\text{w}i$ “two.” On structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “two” and their links with Daghestanian and Kartvelian counterparts comp. also [Kanarkowski 2016: 73-78; Kurdiani 2007: 435-436]. For Abkhaz-Adyghe etymology and its connections with Kartvelian numerals see: [Chukhva 2019: 476].

¹⁵ On Ubykh numeral: “three” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to

Ad. šʸi < *š̂i < *š̂i < *š̂a < *š̂wa < *λ^{wa}
 Kab. š̂i < *š̂a < *š̂wa < *λ^{wa}

It is beyond doubt that Circassian and Ubykh numerals are based on the same root which may be reconstructed: *š̂a for Common Ubykh-Circassian and is even really attested in Ubykh. It can be etymologically connected with respective numerals in other Ibero-Caucasian, especially Daghestanian languages¹⁶, if it is assumed that: *š̂a < *š̂wa < *λ^{wa}.¹⁷

In Abkhazian and Abaza the auslaut syllable: -pa is a primary class morpheme by origin. It may be derived: -pa < *-ba due to perseverative desonorization: *x-b- > x-p-.¹⁸ Sound change of the radical consonant: *s- > x- is observed. It may be described as velarization. The final radical vowel was syncopated before the class morpheme: *xi- > x- which was presumably connected with its position in the pretonic syllable.¹⁹

Numeral „4”

Abkh. / Ab. pšʸ-ba / Ub./Circ. p̂λi = p̂-λi²⁰

Abkh./Ab. pšʸ-ba, stem: p-šʸ-, root: -šʸ- < *-š̂wi- < -ŝwi- < *-λ^{wi}- < *-λ^{wi}- < *-λ^{wi}-

Ub./Circ. p̂λi = p̂-λi, root: -λi < *-λi < *λ^{wi}²¹

“three” see: [Vogt 1963: 175].

¹⁶ On structure and etymology of Daghestanian numerals referring to “three” see [Kanarkowski 2023: 84-88].

¹⁷ For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “three” comp. also [Kupers 1975: 38]. On etymology of Circassian- Ubykh numerals denoting “three” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 108]; [Шагиров 1977: 148 (II)]. Other etymologization of the Ubykh and Circassian numerals was proposed by [Kvakhadze 2014: 230]. Comp. also [Chukhua 2019: 348].

¹⁸ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “three” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [Lomtadze 1944:103]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “three” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 190, 232]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “three” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 101].

¹⁹ On structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “three” and their links with Daghestanian counterparts comp. also [Kanarkowski 2016: 73-78]. In NCED Common West-Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *λ:V “three.” Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was reconstructed also by [Chirikba 1996 b: 398; Джанашиа 1976: 161; Балкаров 1976: 134].

²⁰ The Abkhaz-Adyghe linguistic material is taken from: [Климов, Халилов 2003: 370].

²¹ On Ubykh numeral: “four” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “four” see: [Vogt 1963: 163].

In Abkhaz and Abaza numerals the initial labial stop: p- can be regarded as petrified primary class morpheme. The same morpheme is attested in Ubykh and Circassian. Its abruptivization consists in anticipatory assimilation: *p- λ > p̣- λ .

A regular sound correspondence: š^y : λ can be established between Abkhaz-Abaza and Ubykh-Circassian [Джанашиа 1977: 10]. However, intermediary stages of the phonetic development should be reconstructed. The most archaic is Circassian form, in which the primary abruptive lateral affricate is preserved. It is derivable from labialized consonant: - λ - < *- λ^w -.

The Abkhaz-Abaza forms show much more complicated chain of sound changes. At first the inherited abruptive affricate was dezabruptivized: *- λ^w - > *- λ^w -. Subsequently the affricate changed into labialized lateral spirant: *- λ^w - > *- λ^w -, which in the following phase went into labialized alveolar spirant: *- λ^w - > *-s^w- > *-š^w-. In the final stage this spirant was palatalized:

*-š^w- > -š^y-, which was caused by the following frontal radical vowel: *-i. This sound change may be described as palatalization in consequence of anticipatory assimilation.

The above reconstructed nominal root may also be found in Dido²² languages of Daghestanian group and in Archi²³ language.²⁴

Numeral „5”

Abkh.-Ab. x^w-ba; Ub. šxi; Ad. tfi; Kab. tx^wi

Abkh.-Ab. x^w-ba, root: x^w- < *x^wi- < *x^wi-

Ub. šxi = š-xi < *s-xi < *t-xi < *d-xi, root: *-xi < *-x^wi < *-x^wi²⁵

Ad. tfi = t-fi < *d-fi, root: -fi < (*-f^wi) < *-x^wi < *-x^wi

Kab. tx^wi = t-x^wi < *d-x^wi, root: -x^wi < *-x^wi

²² See [Kanarkowski 2023: 90].

²³ See [Kanarkowski 2023: 91].

²⁴ On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “four” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 148, 221]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “four” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 26]. For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “four” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 49]. On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “four” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 108; Шагиров 1977: 49 (II)]. Common Circassian-Ubykh reconstruction: *p̣ λ i is proposed by [Kvakhadze 2014: 227]. A Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was reconstructed by [Chirikba 1996b: 398; Джанашиа 1976: 161; Балкаров 1976: 134].

²⁵ On Ubykh numeral: “five” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19] and [Vogt 1963: 189].

Common Abkhaz-Adyghe root may be reconstructed: *x^wi-. Kabardian and Abkhazian forms can be regarded as the most archaic ones in view of relative chronology. In Kabardian the radical vowel was centralized: *-i > -i like in the remaining Ubykh-Circassian languages. The initial consonant in the stem: t- should be considered as petrified class morpheme. The inherited radical labialized velar spirant: x^w- was preserved also in Abkhazian, but there the following radical vowel fully dropped: *x^wi- > x^w-.²⁶

In Adyghe the primary labialized velar spirant changed into labiodental consonant: *x^w- > f- which may be interpreted anticipatory assimilative phonetic process. The same phonetic change is attested in other words and can be considered regular phonetic correspondence. Labialized labiodental spirant: *f^w- can be tentatively postulated as an intermediate stage of phonetic development although it is not attested in any contemporary Ibero- Caucasian language.

From typological point of view such a consonant is very rare and can be come across only in some African languages. The primary class morpheme: *t- was retained in Circassian languages.

In Ubykh primary voiceless dental stop underwent into alveolar spirant: *t- > š- in consequence of anticipatory assimilation in the anlaut consonantal group: *tx- > šx-. An intermediate stage of this sound change should be supposed: *tx- > *tšx- > šx-. This consists in assibilation of the dental stop which produces the initial alveolar affricate: *tx- > *tšx- [*čx] and subsequently the affricate was simplified to spirant: *tšx- > šx-.²⁷

Numeral „6”

Abkh. f-ba; Ab. c-ba; Ub. fi; Circ. xi

²⁶ On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “five” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtatidze 1976: 190]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “five” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 104].

²⁷ On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “five” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумаров 1989: 108]. For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “five” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 63] and [Kvakhadze 2014: 225], where the root is reconstructed: *txwi. In NCED Common WestCaucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *s-x^wə “five.” The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form is reconstructed also by [Chirikba 1996b: 398; Джанашиа 1976: 161; Балкаров 1976: 134]. On structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “five” and their links with Daghestanian counterparts comp. also [Kanařkowski 2016: 73-78].

Abkh. f-ba, root: f- < *f̥i- < *fi- < *fʷi- < *xʷi- < *kʷi

Ab. c-ba, root: c- < *ci- < *ki- < *kʷi

Ub. f̥i < *f̥i < *fʷi < *xʷi < *kʷi²⁸

Circ. xi < *xi < *xʷi < *kʷi

Common Abkhaz-Adyghe numeral can be reconstructed: *kʷi-. Such a reconstruction should be preferred instead of theoretically possible: *xʷi-, because it lets us to explain etymology of all Abkhaz-Adyghe forms, including the Abaza one. Besides it may be easily compared with corresponding forms in other Ibero-Caucasian languages²⁹ and directly derived from Common Ibero-Caucasian root. The inherited radical consonant was spirantized in all languages apart from Abaza: *kʷi- > *xʷi-.

Further phonetic development was very different. In Abkhaz and Ubykh velar labialized spirant changed into labiodental consonant, including possible intermediate developmental stage of the labialized labiodental spirant: *xʷi- > (*fʷi-) > fi-.

In Circassian languages the labialized spirant was delabialized: *xʷi- > *xi-. The radical vowel was centralized: *xi > xi / *fi > f̥i and fully disappeared in Abkhaz: *fi- > f-.

Phonetic development of the Abaza numeral considerably differs from the remaining forms and require particular commentary. The inherited labialized velar stop was delabialized: *kʷi- > *ki-. Subsequently the velar consonant was subject to palatalization and changed into dental affricate: *ki- > *ci- and ultimately the radical vowel dropped: *ci- > c-.³⁰

The Abaza numeral deserves special attention, because it evidences correctness of the above proposed Common Abkhaz-Adyghe reconstruction: *kʷi- instead of: *xʷi-. The second possibility would be permissible from purely phonetic point of view, but it in such a case the Abaza form would have to be regarded as an exception and could not be derived from the same Common Abkhaz-Adyghe root.³¹

²⁸ On Ubykh numeral: “six” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral “referring to six” see: [Vogt 1963: 121].

²⁹ For example in Daghestanian languages, see [Kanarkowski 2023: 92-97].

³⁰ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “six” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [Lomtadze 1944: 104]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “six” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 177, 179]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “six” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 83].

³¹ In NCED Common West-Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *ʎʷV “six.” For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “six” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 54]. The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form is reconstructed also by [Chirikba 1996b: 398; Джанашиа 1976: 161; Балкаров 1976: 134]. On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “six”

Numeral „7”

Abkh.-Ab. bžʸ-ba; Ub.-Circ. bđi

Abkh.-Ab. bžʸ-ba, stem: bžʸ- = b-žʸ-, root: -žʸ- < *šʸ- < *-λi < *-λwi < *-λwi < *-aλwi

Ub.-Circ bđi = b-đi, root: -đi < *đi < *-λi < *-λwi < *-λwi < *-aλwi³²

Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals may also be derived from common root: *-aλwi. The initial radical vowel disappeared in all languages: *-aλwi > *-λwi. The primary labialized abruptive lateral affricate: *-λw- undoubtedly must have been subjected to numerous phonetic changes, but the very fact that it is synchronically testified in Ubykh and Circassian is crucial for etymological studies.

It justifies the reconstruction of this consonant in the proto-language. The inherited affricate was in the first stages dezabruptivized: *-λwi > *-λwi and delabialized: *-λwi > *-λi.³³

In the later phases phonetic development was different in Abkhaz-Abaza and Ubykh-Circassian subgroup. In Ubykh and Circassian the affricate was retained and underwent sonorization in consequence of perseverative assimilation: *bλ- > bđ-, while in Abkhaz-Abaza it changed into palatalized alveolar spirant: *-λi > *-šʸ and eventually was sonorized under influence of the preceding voiced bilabial stop: *bšʸ- > bžʸ-.³⁴

in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 108; Шагиров 1977: 104-105 (II); Kvakhadze 2014: 231].

³² On Ubykh numeral: “seven” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “seven” see: [Vogt 1963: 91].

³³ In NCED Common West- Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *bəLə “seven.” For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “seven” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 48]. On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “seven” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 108]. See also [Шагиров 1977: 100 (1)]; [Kvakhadze 2014: 222]. On structure and origin of Circassian numerals denoting “seven” see also [Абругов 2011: 219].

³⁴ On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “seven” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 148, 181, 220, 250]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “seven” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 17]. The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was also reconstructed by [Chirikba 1996b: 398]; [Джанашиа 1976: 161]; [Балкаров 1976: 134].

Numeral „8”

Abkh. aa-ba; Ab. aʃ-ba; Ub. γ^w a; Circ. yi

Abkh. aa-ba, root: aa- < *aʃa- < *aʃ^wa

Ab. aʃ-ba, root: aʃ- < *aʃa- < *aʃ^wa

Ub. γ^w a < *a γ^w a < *aʃ^wa³⁵

Circ. yi < *ya < * γ^w a < * γ^w a < *aʃ^wa

On the basis of comparative data is possible to reconstruct Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form:

*aʃ^wa-. Abaza form may be regarded as the most archaic one in view of relative chronology, because it retained the inherited glottal stop, although it was delabialized: *-ʃ^w- > -ʃ-.

In Abkhaz the radical consonant disappeared in the intervocalic position: *-ʃ^w- > *-ʃ- > -/- without having remained any traces.³⁶

The primary labial coarticulation is postulated on account of the Ubykh counterpart, where labialized voiced spirant: - γ^w - is attested. As for the Ubykh radical consonant, it can be derived from the labialized glottal stop reconstructed in Common Abkhaz-Adyghe: - γ^w - < *-ʃ^w-. This phonetic change may be explained as a consequence of weakening or lenition of the consonant in the intervocalic position. All the above postulated consonantal sound changes presuppose intervocalic position of the radical consonant and it is directly confirmed by the Abkhazian numeral, where:

aa- < *aʃa-.

Phonetic change in Circassian languages consists in palatalization of the labialized uvular spirant: * γ^w - > * γ^w ~-. In the next stage the palatalized spirant underwent into glide: * γ^w ~ > y-.

Such sound changes can also be caused by further articulatory weakening of the consonant in the intervocalic position.

The testimony of Abkhaz and Abaza enables us to reconstruct the nominal stem of type: VCV and as a matter of fact later phonetic changes

³⁵ On Ubykh numeral: “eight” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “eight” see: [Vogt 1963: 227].

³⁶ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “eight” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [Lomtadze 1944: 104]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “eight” in comparative view comp. also [Lomtadze 1976: 26, 120]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “eight” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 8].

require such a reconstruction and can be most easily clarified in the intervocalic phonetic context. It means obviously that the initial radical vowel: *a- must have been syncopated in Ubykh and Circassian languages.

It can be added, that an intermediate phase of phonetic development in which the inherited glottal stop underwent into uvular spirant: *-ʕ- > *-ɣ-, like in Ubykh and Circassian, perhaps may be presumed in Abkhaz and Abaza as well.³⁷

Numeral „9”

Abkh.-Ab. ž^w-ba; Ub. bɣ^yi; Circ. bɤ^wi

Abkh.-Ab ž^w-ba, root: ž^w- < *ž^wi- < *ž^wi- < (*č^wi-) < *č^wi- < *č^wi

Ub. bɣ^yi = b-ɣ^yi, root: -ɣ^yi < *-ɣ^wi < *-ɣ^wi < *-g^wi < *-k^wi³⁸

Circ. bɤ^wi = b-ɤ^wi, root: -ɤ^wi < *-ɣ^wi < *-ɣ^wi < *-g^wi < *-k^wi

Comparative data point out, that numerals referring to “nine” in Abkhaz-Adyghe are based on one of two Common Abkhaz-Adyghe roots: *č^wi- (for Abkhazian and Abaza) / *-ɣ^wi (for Ubykh and Circassian).

In Abkhaz-Abaza the inherited abruptive velar affricate was sonorized due to distant anticipatory assimilation: *č^w-b > *ž^w-b. The affricate was simplified to voiced spirant: *ž^w- > ž^w- and the following vowel: *-i- was syncopated: *ž^wi- > ž^w-.³⁹ What is important, the radical velar affricate can be derived from corresponding dental consonant which is attested in the Daghestanian counterparts⁴⁰ and reconstructed for Common Daghestanian and most probably Common Ibero-Caucasian too: *č^wi- < *č^wi-.⁴¹

³⁷ For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “eight” comp. also [K u i p e r s 1975: 83]. On etymology of Circassian- Ubykh numerals denoting “eight” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [К у м а х о в 1989: 108]. See also [Ш а г и р о в 1977: 181 (I)]; [L o m t a t i d z e 1955: 826-827]; [K v a k h a d z e 2014: 232]. On structure and origin of Circassian numerals denoting “eight” see also [А б р е г о в 2011: 219]. The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was also reconstructed by [C h i r i k b a 1996 b: 398]; [Д ж а н а ш и а 1976: 161]; [Б а л к а р о в 1976: 134].

³⁸ On Ubykh numeral: “nine” comp. also [D i r r 1928: 19]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “nine” see: [V o g t 1963: 95].

³⁹ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “nine” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [L o m t a t i d z e 1944: 104]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “nine” in comparative view comp. also [L o m t a t i d z e 1976: 116].

⁴⁰ On structure, etymology and phonetic development of Daghestanian numerals referring to “nine” see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 111-115].

⁴¹ In NCED Common West- Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *bɣ^wə “nine.” On etymology of Circassian- Ubykh numerals denoting “nine” in comparison with corresponding

Ubykh and Circasian numerals may be derived from common nominal root: $*-\gamma^w i$, which can be reconstructed in Common Ubykh- Circassian. However, this root may be further derived:

$*-\gamma^w i < *-\mathfrak{g}^w i < *-\mathfrak{k}^w i$ and in this way can be traced back to Common Ibero-Caucasian.

Numeral „10”

Abkh.-Ab. $\check{z}^w a$ -ba; Ub. $\check{z}^w i$; Circ. $p\check{s}i$

Abkh.-Ab. $\check{z}^w a$ -ba, root: $\check{z}^w a$ - < $*\check{z}^w a$ - < $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ - < $*\mathfrak{c}^w a$ - < $*-\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{c}^w i$

Ub. $\check{z}^w i$ < $*\check{z}^w a$ < $*\check{z}^w a$ < $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ < $*\mathfrak{c}^w a$ < $*\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{c}^w a$ < $*\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{c}^w i$ ⁴²

Circ. $p\check{s}i = p\check{-}\check{s}i$, root: $-\check{s}i < *-\mathfrak{s}a < *-\mathfrak{s}^w a < *-\mathfrak{c}^w a < *-\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{c}^w a < *-\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{c}^w i$ ⁴³

It seems to be beyond doubt that Abkhaz-Abaza and Ubykh numerals originate in the same protolanguage source which may be reconstructed: $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ -. The radical voiceless affricate was first sonorized: $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w i > * \check{z}^w i$ and subsequently simplified to alveolar spirant: $*\check{z}^w i > * \check{z}^w i$.⁴⁴

The sonorization of the affricate seems to be contextually conditioned and is due to distant anticipatory assimilation: $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w b > * \check{z}^w b$, so the numeral under question can be etymologized:

$*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ -ba > $*\check{z}^w a$ -ba > $* \check{z}^w a$ -ba.

The radical vowel was preserved in Abkhaz-Abaza: $\check{z}^w a$ - and centralized in Ubykh:

$*\check{z}^w i > \check{z}^w i$ -. The above postulated root: $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ - may be derived: $*\check{\mathfrak{c}}^w a$ - < $*\mathfrak{c}^w a$ -. Such a reconstruction lets to explain without any phonetic obstacles etymology of the Circassian form and, what is especially important, it entirely agrees with Nakh or Daghestanian linguistic data.⁴⁵

Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Ку ма х о в 1989: 109]. See also [Ша ги ров 1977: 80-81 (D)]; [K v a k h a d z e 2014: 222]. The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form is also reconstructed by [C h i r i k b a 1996b: 398]; [Д жа на ши а 1976: 161]; [Б ал ка ров 1976: 134].

⁴² On Ubykh numeral: “ten” comp. also [D i r r 1928: 19] and [V o g t 1963: 222].

⁴³ On structure and etymology of Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “ten” and their links with Daghestanian counterparts comp. also [K a n a r k o w s k i 2016: 73-78].

⁴⁴ For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “ten” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [L o m t a t i d z e 1944: 104-105]. On Abkhaz-Abaza numerals denoting “ten” in comparative view comp. also [L o m t a t i d z e 1976: 185]. A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “hundred” is given in [C h i r i k b a 1996a: 97].

⁴⁵ On structure and etymology of Nakh and Daghestanian numerals denoting “ten” see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2018c: 87-93] and [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 116-120].

In Circassian the primary dental labialized affricate was simplified to respective spirant:

*-ç^wa > *-š^wa and in the next phase of phonetic development delabialized: *-š^wa > *-ša.

Ultimately the radical vowel underwent centralization: *-ša > -si. The initial abruptive bilabial stop in Circassian: p̣- is a petrified class morpheme. Its abruptivization is caused by anticipatory assimilation: p̣-š- < *p-š-.

Thus basing on comparative data, reconstruction: *-ç^wa- may be assumed for Common Abkhaz-Adyghe as well as Common Ibero-Caucasian.⁴⁶

Numeral „20”

Abkh.-Ab. ɣ^waž^wa; Ub. t̥q^waɫ^wi; Ad. t̥wəç; Kab. t̥wəš

Abkh.-Ab. ɣ^waž^wa = ɣ^wa-ž^wa (2 x 10)

Root (I): ɣ^wa- < *ɣ^wi- < *q^wa- / *q^wi- < *q̇^wa- / *q̇^wi- “two”

Root (II): ž^wa- < *ž^wa- < *č^wa- < *č^wa- < *ç^wa- “ten”

Ub. t̥q^waɫ^wi = t̥q^wa-t̥^wi (2 x 10)

Stem (I): t̥q^wa- = t̥-q^wa- < *t-q̇^wa, root: *q̇^wa “two”

Stem (II): -t̥^wi < *-t̥^wi < [*-ç^wi] < *-ç^wi < *-aç^wi “ten”

Ad t̥wəç < *t̥wəç^w < *t̥wəç̇^w = *t̥wə-ç̇^w (2 x 10)

Kab t̥wəš < *t̥wəṧ^w < *t̥wəç̇^w = *t̥wə-ç̇^w (2 x 10)

Stem (I): t̥wə- < *t̥-q̇^w- < *t-q̇^w- < *t-q̇^wa- “two”

Stem (II): (Adyghean) -ç̇ < *-ç̇^w < *-ç̇^wa < *-ç̇^wa < *-ç^wa < *-aç^wa < *-aç^wi “ten”

Stem (II): (Kabardian) -ṧ < *-ṧ^w < *-ṧ^wa < *-ç̇^wa < *-ç^wa < *-aç^wa < *-aç^wi “ten”

⁴⁶ For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “ten” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 30]; [Шагиров 1977: 54 (II)]; [Kvakhadze 2014: 231]. On etymology of Circassian-Ubykh numerals denoting “ten” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes comp. [Кумахов 1989: 109]. In NCED Common West-Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *b-é^wa “ten” “twenty.” The Common Abkhaz-Adyghe form was also reconstructed by [Chirikba 1996b: 398]; [Джанашиа 1976: 161]; [Балкаров 1976: 134].

Abkhaz-Abaza numeral represents a nominal compound based on the pattern: 2 x 10. The initial segment: $\zeta^w a-$ is here attested in its full phonetic shape with unreduced radical vowel. It may be derived: $\zeta^w a- < *q^w a-$ which consists in simplification of the labialized pharyngeal affricate into spirant. This spirant in its turn is derivable from the inherited Common Ibero-Caucasian abruptive labialized pharyngeal affricate: $*q^w a- < *q^w a- < *q^w i-$.

Basing on comparative data Common Ibero-Caucasian root should be reconstructed: $*q^w i-$. Sound change of the radical vowel: $*q^w i- > *q^w a-$ is a later internal process which took place within the frames of the nominal compound: $\zeta^w a-ž^w a < *q^w i-ž^w a$. This can be expounded as a distant anticipatory assimilation of the vowels: $*i-a > a-a$.

The second constituent morpheme refers to “ten” and is preserved in this compound numeral without phonetic changes.⁴⁷

From phonetic point of view Ubykh numeral is very conservative. In the first stem the inherited abruptive pharyngeal has been maintained without sound changes.

The second stem may be derived from the proto-form reconstructed for Common Ibero-Caucasian. The initial vowel: $*-a$ was syncopated on the intermorphemic boundary:

$*t-q^w a-a\zeta^w i > *t-q^w a-\zeta^w i$. The dental affricate was simplified to abruptive dental stop: $*-\zeta^w- > *-\zeta^w-$

and the final vowel was centralized: $*-i > -i$. The labialized dento-alveolar abruptive affricate: $*-\zeta^w-$ should also be postulated as one of the intermediate stages of phonetic development in reconstructions for Ubykh. It is necessary by virtue of comparative data of quite closely related Kabardian language and the fact that this consonant is known even in synchronic phonetics of Ubykh.⁴⁸

In Circassian the first stem referring to “two” is composed of two morphemes. The initial abruptive dental stop: ζ^w- is a petrified class morpheme. The abruptivization is here caused by anticipatory assimilation: $*t-q^w > *t-q^w$.

The second part comes from the vocalic segment of the nominal root: $*-q^w\text{ə}$. The initial labialized pharyngeal radical consonant dropped, but

47 For peculiarities of the numeral referring to “twenty” in Tapanta dialect of Abkhazian and remarks on its structure and origin see [L o m t a t i d z e 1944: 106].

48 On Ubykh numeral referring to “twenty” see: [V o g t 1963: 193].

its labial coarticulation was transmitted to the preceding morpheme. This process can be interpreted as a anticipatory assimilation: *t̥-q̣^w- > t̥^w-.

The second stem signifies “ten.” In Adyghean and Kabardian the labialized abruptive alveolar affricate was delabialized: *-č̣^w- > -č̣- and the final vowel was apocopated: *-č̣^wa > *-č̣^w > -č̣. Delabialization may be interpreted as a distant perseverative dissimilative phonetic process:

*t̥^w- č̣^w > t̥^w- č̣. It appears that the affricate under question should be derived from Common Abkhaz-Adyghe labialized dento-alveolar affricate: *-č̣^w and this in turn is derivable from Common Ibero-Caucasian labialized abruptive dental affricate: *-č̣^w < *-č̣^w.

Such a reconstruction seems to be all the more believable that it may be easily compared with corresponding Nakh and Daghestanian roots which point at: -č̣- < *-č̣^w-.⁴⁹

Sound change: *-č̣^w > *-č̣^w may be defined as an articulatory backward shift of the consonant under influence of labialization.

In Adyghean language the inherited labialized dento-alveolar affricate went into alveolar one:

*-č̣^w > *-č̣^w and ultimately it was delabialized: *-č̣^w > -č̣.

In Kabardian this affricate was first simplified to spirant: *-č̣^w > *-č̣^w and in the next phase the labial coarticulation dropped: *-č̣^w > -č̣.⁵⁰

Numeral „100”

Abkh.-Ab. ṣ̌^wķi; Ub. ṣ̌^wa; Circ. ṣ̌ə

Abkh.-Ab ṣ̌^wķi = ṣ̌^w-ķi, root: ṣ̌^w- < *ṣ̌^wa

Ub. ṣ̌^wa < *ṣ̌^wa⁵¹

Circ. ṣ̌ə < *ṣ̌a < *ṣ̌^wa < *ṣ̌^wa

Abkhaz and Abaza forms are compound words in which the second segment refers to “one.”

⁴⁹ Compare above on the numeral “ten.”

⁵⁰ For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “twenty” comp. also [Kuipers 1975: 19-36].

⁵¹ On Ubykh numeral: “hundred” comp. also [Dirr 1928: 20]. On Ubykh numeral referring to “hundred” see: [Vogt 1963: 180].

It is testified also in: za-*k̄i* “one.” Thus the structure of the numeral may be interpreted: 100 x 1.⁵² The inherited initial labialized alveolar spirant: *š^w*- is confirmed in Abkhaz, Abaza and Ubykh.

In Circassian languages it changed into dento- alveolar spirant: **š^wa* > **š^wa*.

Subsequently the labial coarticulation dropped: **š^wa* > **ša* and this consonant went into dento- alveolar unvoiced spirant which is attested in contemporary languages as well. In the last phase the radical vowel was neutralized: **ša* > *šə*.⁵³

III Etymological studies on Kartvelian numerals

Numeral „1”

Georg *erti* / Mingr *arti* / Laz *art* ; artteyi / Svan *ešxu*

Georg. *cali* = c-al-i < *ca-al-i, root: ca- < *c^wa- “a piece”⁵⁴

Georg. *erti* = ert-i < *art-i, stem: ert- < *art-⁵⁵

Mingr. *arti* = art-i, stem: art

Laz (1) *art* < *art-i, stem: art- (2) *artteyi* = art- + -teyi, where:

STEM (I): art- + STEM (II): -teyi = -teγ-i, root: -teγ- -teγ-i < *-tex-i < *-tx-i < *-tx^w-i

Svan *ešxu* < *šxu < *sxu < *sx^wu < *sx^wa⁵⁶

⁵² A reconstruction of Common Abkhaz-Abaza form of the numeral “hundred” is given in [Chirikba 1996a: 97].

⁵³ In NCED Common West- Caucasian (Common Abkhaz-Adyghe) is postulated: *š^wV “hundred.” For Common Circassian reconstruction of the numeral “hundred” comp. also [Kupers 1975: 27]; [Шагиров 1977: 145-146 (II)]; [Kvakhadze 2014: 228]. On etymology of Circassian- Ubykh numerals denoting “hundred” in comparison with corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza morphemes see also [Кумахов 1989: 113]; [Джанашиа 1976: 161]; [Балкаров 1976: 134]. On development of vocalism in Circassian languages see [Shengelia : 2006].

⁵⁴ Georg. *cal-i* may be connected with Georg. *carieli* = c-ar-i-el-i “empty” [Chukhva 2007: 579] and comp. also with [Chukhva 2019: 514], where the root under question is connected with Abkh. a-ta-cwə, root: -cwə < *-cwār “empty.” For possible connection between Georg. *cal-i*: *carieli* “empty” comp. also [Kurdiani 2012: 448; 685- 686]. On the nominal stems *ert-* / *cal-* denoting “one” in Georgian see [Ghlonti 2017: 198-214].

⁵⁵ On etymology of Georg. *ert-i* “one” see: [Klimov, Khalilov 2003: 363]. Georg. *ert-i* < art-i and can be associated with *mar̄to* = m-art-o “only, single” [Chukhva 2000-2003: 14].

⁵⁶ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “one” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 89]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “one” see also [Chikobava 1938: 217; Климов 1964: 79, 178; Blažek 1999: 81-82; Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 190; Климов, Халилов 2003: 363].

Georgian, Laz and Mingrelian numerals denoting “one” seem to have no etymological connections with their counterparts in Mountain Caucasian languages and may be regarded as a Kartvelian internal innovation. It can be assumed on phonetic grounds that Laz and Mingrelian numerals are more archaic in view of relative chronology, thus it should be derived: ert-i < *art-i and not conversely.

Phonetic change of the initial radical vowel in Georgian may be explained as articulatory frontalization under influence of the auslaut: -i due to distal anticipatory assimilation: *a-i > e-i.

Svan numeral is based on the other stem and is related to Georgian: sxva “other.” It may be supposed on semantic accounts that primary meaning of this numeral would be rather: “two”, thus at some period of linguistic development a semantic change: “TWO” → “ONE” must have taken place.

Laz variant: arttey-i must be a compound nominal consisted of two parts: (I) art- + (II) -tey-i which deserves special attention, especially its second member. Etymology of this morpheme is not clear. It may be derived: -tey-i < *tex-i as a result of sonorization of the velar spirant in the intervocalic position: *V-x-V > V-γ-V. However, any further phonetic reconstruction remains highly hypothetical. This segment can be derived: *-tex-i < *-tx-i if insertion of the anpatyxis vowel: *-e- would be presumed and further *-tx-i may come from: *-tx^w-i due to delabialization of the inherited velar spirant.

The reconstructed morpheme: *-tx^w-i could have been etymologically connected with Common Kartvelian: *sx^wa “other”, comp. Georg. sxva < *sx^wa “other” if it would be assumed that:

*sx^wa < *tx^wa in consequence of anticipatory dissimilative spirantization of the initial dental stop. Although such a phonetic change is comprehensible from purely phonetic point of view, it is much more difficult to point at parallel examples. Maybe one instance can be adduced:

Georg. msxal-i = m-sx-al-i “pear”, where root: -sx- < *-sx^w- < *-tx^w- which can be etymologically equated with Georg. sitxe = si-tx-e “fluid”, where root: -tx- < *-tx^w-.

Thus etymological meaning of the word “pear” can be reconstructed: “a fruit which is full of fluid (juice), juicy fruit.” Labialization of the radical velar spirant in Common Kartvelian may be postulated on the basis of comparative data: Mingr. sxuli = sx-ul-i < *sx^w-ul-i < *sx^w-al-i “pear”, where root: sx- < *sx^w-.

As for etymologization of this word comp. also [Javakhishvili 1937: 619-620]. The vowel of the determinative suffix was rounded under influence of the preceding labialized radical velar spirant: $*-x^w a-$ > $*-x^w u-$ > $-xu-$.

As for the second analyzed Georgian nominal stem: $-tx-$ = $-t-x-$, it consists of petrified class morpheme: $-t-$ and nominal root: $-x-$ < $*-x^w-$.

Presence of the labial coarticulation in the radical velar spirant may be assumed on account of Ibero-Caucasian comparative data. This consonant is testified in some words referring to water, river or other semantically related⁵⁷.

Svan $e\check{s}xu$ is based on another root which is attested also in Georgian $sxva$ “other”⁵⁸. It can be derived as follows: $e\check{s}xu$ < $*\check{s}xu$ < $*sxu$ < $*sx^w u$ < $*sx^w a$.

The oldest stage of phonetic development is attested in Georgian: $sxva$ < $*sx^w a$. In the next step the final vowel was rounded under influence of the preceding labialized spirant: $*sx^w a$ > $*sx^w u$ and subsequently the labial coarticulation dropped: $*sx^w u$ > $*sxu$. The initial dental spirant changed into alveolar one which is in some examples phonetic correspondence between Georgian and Svan, comp. Georg. asi :: Svan $\check{a}šir$ “hundred”: $*sxu$ > $*\check{s}xu$. In the final stage a prosthetic vowel was added: $*\check{s}xu$ > $e\check{s}xu$.⁵⁹

Numeral „2”

Kartvelian numerals referring to “two” are based on a nominal root: $or-$ and such a root was postulated in special literature for Common Kartvelian: $*or-$. The authors did not try to find any cognates in the remaining Ibero-Caucasian languages. However, it seems to be quite possible, if it is assumed that the root under question may be derived: $*or-$ < $*\check{q}^w or-$. The reconstructed stem can be divided: $*\check{q}^w or-$ = $*\check{q}^w o-r-$ < $*\check{q}^w a-r-$, where the final sonorant: $*-r-$ constitutes a petrified class morpheme, and it may be postulated for Common Ibero-Caucasian stage. This nominal stem is attested in contemporary Daghestanian numerals referring to “two” / “twenty” with other class morpheme. The primary radical vocalism: $*-a-$

⁵⁷ See also [Kanarkowski 2017: 3-17].

⁵⁸ On etymology of Georg. $sxva$ and corresponding words in related Kartvelian languages see also [Chikobava 1938: 247, 374; Ertelishvili: 1952; Климов 1964: 178-179; Machavariani 1965: 89; Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 426].

⁵⁹ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “two” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 51].

is preserved in Daghestanian.⁶⁰ Rounding of the radical vowel: *-a- > *-o- is a Kartvelian internal development and was caused by influence of the preceding labialized radical consonant.

In Kartvelian languages the inherited stem was subject to some phonetic changes. It is possible that in Georgian: or- < *q̄^wor- indirectly due to apheresis of the initial radical consonant. However, taking into consideration comparative data of other Kartvelian languages it is not convincing.

It seems to be more probable that: *q̄^wor- > *wor- as a result of dropping of the initial affricate and phonologization of the labial coarticulation. In the next phase the anlaut labial glide: *w- disappeared which may be interpreted as a dissimilative change: *wor- > or-.

As far as the remaining Kartvelian languages are concerned, at the first stage the inherited stem developed like in Georgian: *q̄^wor- > *wor-. Subsequently the initial labial glide changed into yota: *wor- > *yor-. Such a sound change can be explained as dissimilation in the position before round vowel. Yota is attested in Svan. Laz and Mingrelian counterparts show voiced alveolar spirant: ž which must have been received: *ž- < *y-.⁶¹

Numeral „3”

Georg. sam-i; Mingr. sum-i; Laz sum; Svan semi

Georg. sam-i, stem: sa-m-, root: sa- < *λa- < *λ^wa-⁶²

Mingr. sum-i, stem: su-m- < *sa-m-, root: sa- < *λa- < *λ^wa-⁶³

Laz sum = su-m < *sa-m, root: sa- < *λa- < *λ^wa-⁶⁴

Svan semi = se-m-i, stem: se-m-, root: se- < *sa- < *λa- < *λ^wa-⁶⁵

⁶⁰ On structure and etymology of Daghestanian numerals referring to “two” see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 81-84].

⁶¹ On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “two” see also [C h i k o b a v a 1938: 218-219; К л и м о в 1964: 149; B l a ž e k 1999: 82; F ä h n r i c h, S a r j v e l a d z e 2000: 363; К л и м о в, Х а л и л о в 2003: 358]. On etymology of the Laz and Mingrelian numerals denoting “two” comp. also [M a c h a v a r i a n i 1965: 50].

⁶² For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral sam-i „three” see [C h i k o b a v a 1942: 58-59; passim]. On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “three” comp. also [M a c h a v a r i a n i 1965: 24, 35, 50].

⁶³ For some remarks on the structure of Mingrelian numeral denoting “three” see [C h i k o b a v a 1942: 59, 182, 192]. On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “three” comp. also [M a c h a v a r i a n i 1965: 24, 35, 50].

⁶⁴ For some remarks on the structure of Laz numeral denoting “three” see [C h i k o b a v a 1942: 59, 192].

⁶⁵ For some remarks on the structure of Svan numeral denoting “three” see [C h i k o b a v a

It is beyond doubt that all Kartvelian numerals must be derivable from the same root which may be reconstructed: *sam- in Common Kartvelian. Most archaic phonetic shape was preserved in Georgian. Vocalic sound changes visible in the remaining languages are contextually conditioned. They consist in anticipatory labialization of the radical vowel: *a-m > u-m in Laz and Mingrelian or distant anticipatory frontalization: *a-i > e-i in Svan.

Kartvelian linguistic data may be much more easily compared with other Ibero-Caucasian languages⁶⁶ if it is assumed that the final labial sonant of the stem: -m- represents a petrified primary class morpheme. In this case from phonetic point of view the initial radical spirant: s- can be derived from Common Ibero-Caucasian labialized lateral spirant: s- < *λ^w-. It is obvious that some intermediate stages of the phonetic development must be postulated. It may be most probably delabialization of the primary labialize lateral spirant: *λ^w- > *λ- and subsequently change of the lateral spirant into dental consonant: *λ- > s-.

Lateral consonants were not preserved in any contemporary Kartvelian language but must be reconstructed for Common Ibero-Caucasian and thereby Common Kartvelian spirants ought to be derived from laterals in these cases when comparative data point at that.

Strict sound correspondences between lateral consonants in Daghestanian or Abkhaz-Adyghe languages and their counterparts in Kartvelian languages so far have not been established. This problem require detailed investigations.⁶⁷

1942: 212]. On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “three” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 24, 35, 50]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “three” see also [Chikobava 1938: 219; Климов 1964: 161; Blažek 1999: 82; Fähnrich, Sarjveladze 2000: 395; Климов, Халилов 2003: 368].

⁶⁶ For example Daghestanian languages, see [Kanarkowski 2023: 84-88].

⁶⁷ Common-Kartvelian stem was reconstructed: *sam- by [Klimov, Khalilov 2003: 368-369]. As for etymology comp. also [Chukhua 2007: 468-469; Fähnrich, Sarjveladze 2000: 395-396; Kurdiani 2007: 171, 423].

Numeral „4”Georg./Mingr. *otx-i*⁶⁸Laz. *otxo* = *otx-o* < *otx-i*⁶⁹Svan *wōštxw*⁷⁰

Laz form is very similar to the Georgian counterpart and may be easily derived: *otx-o* < **otx-i* as a result of distant perseverative assimilation of the vowels: **o-i* > *o-o*.

Svan numeral: *wōštxw* considerably differs from the remaining Kartvelian forms and is particularly interesting for etymological investigations. The anlaut labial glide: *w-* is a secondary prosthetic segment before the round vowel: *-o*. The inlaut spirant: *-š-* should also be regarded as an epenthetic consonant. Svan numeral as the only among Kartvelian languages shows a trace of the primary labial coarticulation in the root: *-xw* < **-x^w* which is postulated in the Common Ibero-Caucasian reconstruction and thereby can be considered as a phonetic archaism.

In general Kartvelian data cannot be compared with respective Daghestanian numerals, because they show another root. It seems that Georgian numerals referring to “four” and “five” are based on the same common root which may be reconstructed for Common Daghestanian and Common Ibero-Caucasian: **-x^wi-*. It is testified in Daghestanian and Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals denoting “five”⁷¹, ex.:

Abkh. *x^w-ba*, root: *x^w-* < **x^wi-*Kab. *tx^wi* = *t-x^wi*, root: *-x^wi* < **-x^wi*Rut. *xu-d*, where: *xu-* < **x^wu-* < **x^wi-*Bud. *fu-b*, where: *fu-* < **f^wu-* < **x^wu-* < **x^wi-*⁷²

68 For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral *otx-i* “four” see [Chikobava 1942: 58-59]. On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “four” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33, 70, 96]. For some remarks on the structure of Mingrelian numeral denoting “four” see [Chikobava 1942: 59, 182]. On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “four” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33, 70, 96].

69 For some remarks on the structure of Laz numeral denoting “four” see [Chikobava 1942: 59, 94]. On etymology of the Laz numeral denoting “four” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33, 70, 96].

70 On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “four” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33, 36, 70, 110, 113]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “four” see also [Chikobava 1938: 220; Климов 1964: 150; Blažek 1999: 82-83; Fähnrich, Sarjveladze 2000: 365; Климов, Халилов 2003: 370].

71 On etymology of Daghestanian and Abkhaz-Adyghe numerals referring to “five” see [Kanarkowski 2023: 92-97] and [Kanarkowski 2016: 73-78] respectively.

72 On etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “four” and their possible foreign origin comp.

Numeral „5”

Georg./Mingr. xut-i; Laz xut; Svan woxwišd

Georg./Mingr. xut-i, stem: xu-t-, root: xu- < *x^wu- < *x^wi-⁷³

Laz xut, stem: xu-t, root: xu- < *x^wu- < *x^wi-⁷⁴

Svan woxwišd = wo-xwišd, stem: -xwi-šd, root: -xwi- < *-x^wi-⁷⁵

Georgian, Mingrelian and Laz forms are derivable quite similar like numerous counterparts in Mountain Ibero-Caucasian languages. The final dental stop should be considered as petrified class morpheme: -t < *-d. Common Kartvelian numeral may be reconstructed: *x^wi-.

Svan numeral is very remarkable and from phonetic point of view seems in some respects very archaic, because it directly confirms existence of the labialized spirant: [x^w] which is postulated in Common Kartvelian reconstruction as well. The auslaut petrified class morpheme in preserved in original phonetic shape as voiced consonant: -d. Epenthetic velar spirant: -š- is an instance of an internal Svan phonetic innovations which is also encountered in other Svan numerals. The initial syllable: wo- is a secondary prosthetic segment which might have developed under influence of the preceding numeral: wōšt^w “four.”⁷⁶

[Климов 1994: 59-62]. For Kartvelian etymology comp. [Chukhua 2007: 450], where the author treats the inlaut phonetic segment: -tx- as indivisible part of the nominal root. The same reconstruction was proposed by other authors as well: [Chikobava 1938: 215]; [Klimov, Khalilov 2003: 370].

⁷³ The root under question is dividable: xut- = xu-t- and derivable: xu-t- < *xwi-t- according to [Chikobava 1938: 215-216]. For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral xut-i “five” see [Chikobava 1942: 58-59; passim]. On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “five” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 70]. For some remarks on the structure of Mingrelian numeral denoting “five” see [Chikobava 1942: 59; 192]. On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “five” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 70].

⁷⁴ For some remarks on the structure of Laz numeral denoting “five” see [Chikobava 1942: 94; 192]. On etymology of the Laz numeral denoting “five” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 70].

⁷⁵ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “five” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 70]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “five” see also [Chikobava 1938: 220-221]; [Климов 1964: 262]; [Blažek 1999: 83]; [Fähnrich, Sarjeladze 2000: 704]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 367].

⁷⁶ Common Kartvelian reconstruction: *xut- is proposed also by [Klimov, Khalilov 2003: 367]. For Nakh-Kartvelian etymological connection see: [Chukhua 2007: 654]. As for Common Ibero-Caucasian origin of the root under question comp. also [Javakhisvili 1937: 421].

Numerals „6”

Georg. ekvsi; Mingr. amšvi; Laz anš(i) / aši; Svan usgwa

Georg. ekvsi = ekvs-i, stem: ekvs- < *eskv- < *esk^w- < *ask^w-, root (I): *es- < *es^w- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi- + root (II): *-k^w- < *-k^wi-⁷⁷

Mingr. amšvi = amšv-i, stem: amšv- < *anšv- < *anš^w- < *aš^w-, root: *aš^w- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi-⁷⁸

Laz (1) anši = anš-i < *anšv-i < *anš^w-i, stem: anš- < *aš-, root: *aš- < *aš^w- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi-

Laz (2) aši = aš-i < *ašš-i < *anš-i, stem: anš- < *aš-, root: *aš- < *aš^w- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi-⁷⁹

Svan usgwa = us-gwa < *ūs-gwa < *uns-gwa < *ans-gwa < *ans-kwa < *as-kwa < *as-k^wa < *as-k^wi, root (I): *as- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi- + root (II): -gwa < *-kwa < *-k^wa < *-k^wi⁸⁰

An original conception of etymologization of the Kartvelian numerals referring to “six” is here proposed. Unlike the most widely accepted etymology which assumed that the numerals under question are nomina simplicia, it is supposed that they constitute nomina composita which are based on two roots. These roots are attested not only in Kartvelian but in other Ibero-Caucasian languages as well.⁸¹

The first root may be reconstructed in Common Kartvelian: *aš^w- and it may be further derived: *aš^w- < *as^w- < *as^wi- < *aλ^wi- < *aλ^wi-. As it can be seen, the proposed reconstruction ultimately leads to the oldest Common Ibero-Caucasian root: *aλ^wi-. The radical abruptive lateral affricate was simplified to lateral spirant: *aλ^wi- > *aλ^wi-. The labialized lateral spirant: *-λ^w- went into labialized dental spirant: *aλ^wi- > *as^wi-.

⁷⁷ On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “six” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 98].

⁷⁸ On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “six” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 65, 98, 112].

⁷⁹ On etymology of the Laz numeral denoting “six” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 65, 98, 112].

⁸⁰ For some remarks on the structure of Svan numeral denoting “six” see [Chikobava 1942: 212]. On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “six” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 65, 98]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “six” see also [1938: 221]; [Климов 1964: 80]; [Blažek 1999: 83]; [Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 191]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 370].

⁸¹ For example in Daghestanian languages, see [Kanarkowski 2023: 97-102].

The second root can be reconstructed in Common Kartvelian: $*-k^{wi}$.⁸² In Georgian the final vowel was apocoped: $*-k^{wi}$ > $*-k^w$ - and subsequently the labial coarticulation was subject to phonologization: $*-k^w$ - > $-kv$ -.

In Svan the primary labial coarticulation was preserved and the labialized velar stop was sonorized: $*-k^w$ - > $*-kw$ - > $-gw$ -.

Numeral „7”

Georg. *švidi*; Mingr./Laz *škviti*; Svan *išgwid*

Georg. *švidi* = *švid-i*, stem: *švi-d-*, root: *švi-* < $*š^{wi}$ -⁸³

Mingr./Laz *škviti* = *škvit-i*, stem: *škvit-* < $*švit-$ < $*švid-$ = *švi-d*, root: *švi-* < $*š^{wi}$ -⁸⁴

Svan *išgwid* = *i-šgvid*, stem: *šgvid* < $*škvid$ < $*švid-$ = *švi-d*, root: *švi-* < $*š^{wi}$ -⁸⁵

Georgian numeral: *švid-i* is the most archaic one in view of relative chronology. The auslaut dental stop in Kartvelian stem: $-t$ / $-d$ should be regarded as a primary petrified class morpheme.

Ibero-Caucasian comparative data point that originally old class morphemes were voiced consonants and it is also the case of these contemporary languages in which class system has been preserved.

The primary voiced: $-d$ is attested in Georgian and Svan. Devoicing: $*-d$ > $-t$ in Laz and Mingrelian must be treated as a secondary sound change. The inlaut velar stop: $-k-$ in Laz and Mingrelian is an epenthetic consonant. The same phonetic process took place in Svan, where this consonant was additionally sonorized: $*-k-$ > $-g-$. It may be explained as a result of distal anticipatory assimilation: $*k-d$ > $g-d$.

⁸² On etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “six” and their possible foreign origin comp. [Климов 1994: 53-55].

⁸³ On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “seven” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 20, 39, 57, 104].

⁸⁴ On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “seven” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 115]. On etymology of the Laz numeral denoting “seven” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 20, 21, 89, 104].

⁸⁵ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “seven” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 20, 39, 104]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “seven” see also [Chikobava 1938: 221-222]; [Климов 1964: 216]; [Blažek 1999: 83]; [Fähnrich, Sarjveladze 2000: 554]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 367].

Initial vowel: -i in Svan is a prosthetic segment. On the basis of synchronic linguistic data Common Kartvelian root may be reconstructed: *š^wi-. From phonetic point of view labialized alveolar spirant can be derived from labialized lateral affricate: *š^w- < *λ^w- < *λ^w-.

As an intermediate stage of the phonetic development lateral labialized spirant should be assumed. It results from simplification of the affricate to the spirant: *λ^w- < *λ^w-. Further phonetic reconstruction may look as follows: *-λ^wi < *-λ^wi < *-aλ^wi.

It proves that Kartvelian nominal roots can be derived from the same root which is postulated for Mountain Ibero- Caucasian languages and reconstructed in Common Ibero- Caucasian proto-language.

Numeral „8”

Georg. rva; Mingr. ruo / bruo; Laz orvo / ovro; Svan ara

Georg. rva = r-va < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara⁸⁶

Mingr.(I) ruo < *rwo < *rwa < *arwa = *ar-wa < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara

Mingr. (II) bruo < ruo < *rwa < *arwa = *ar-wa < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara

Laz (I) orvo < *orwo < *arwo < *arwa = *ar-wa < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara

Laz (II) ovro < orvo < *orwo < *arwo < *arwa = *ar-wa < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara

Svan ara = ar-a < *ar-va < *ar-ba < *ara-ba, root: *ara⁸⁷

It may be proposed to reconstruct Common Kartvelian numeral: *ara-ba, where the nominal root is: *ara- and the final morpheme: *-ba constitutes petrified class morpheme.

The primary form was subject to several sound changes. In the initial stages the final radical vowel: *-a- was syncopated: *ara-ba > *ar-ba and later the voiced bilabial stop was spirantized and underwent into labiodental spirant: *ar-ba > *ar-va. Such a phonetic change might be caused by influence of the preceding vibrational resonant: *r-b > *r-v.

⁸⁶ For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral rva “eight” see [Chikobava 1942: 86].

⁸⁷ On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “eight” see also [Chikobava 1938: 217]; [Климов 1964: 44]; [Blažek 1999: 83-84]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 357].

The Georgian numeral can be regarded as the most archaic one in view of relative chronology since *rva* can be derived: *rva* < **ar-va* due to apheresis of the initial vowel: **a-*.

Svan form shows an archaic feature as well, because it has preserved the unchanged inherited initial vowel: *a-*, but the labiodental spirant: **-v-* dropped: *ar-a* < **ar-va*.

Mingrelian form can be considered as phonetically more innovative. The inherited labiodental spirant underwent into labial glide: **ar-va* > **ar-wa* and subsequently after syncope of the initial vowel: **ar-wa* > **r-wa* is received. Afterwards: **r-wa* > **r-wo*, where the final vowel was rounded under influence of the preceding labial glide and ultimately: **r-wo* > *r-uo*.

In the second variant: *bruo* < *ruo* a prosthetic bilabial stop: *b-* is visible.

In Laz the initial radical vowel was preserved, like in Svan, but changed into: *o-* because of distant anticipatory assimilation: **a-o* > *o-o*. Thus the Laz numeral can be etymologized:

**ar-wa* > **ar-wo* and subsequently: **ar-wo* > **or-wo*. Ultimately the labial glide: **-w-* changed into labiodental spirant: **or-wo* > *or-vo*.

The above proposed reconstruction is parallel to the counterpart in most closely related Mingrelian language and that's why it should be regarded as much more likely than assumption that: **ar-ba* > **ar-va* > **ar-vo* > *or-vo*⁸⁸ which would be possible from phonetic point of view. The second variant is derivable: *ovro* < *orvo* due to metathesis.⁸⁹

The Common Kartvelian root is reconstructed: **ara-*. It seems to be possible to connect it with other Ibero- Caucasian roots denoting “eight”, if it is assumed that vibrational sonorant is derivable from liquid sonorant and further from lateral spirant and lateral affricate: *-r-* < **-l-* < **-λ-* < **-λ-*.

Thus the Common Kartvelian root could be etymologized: *ara* < **ari* < **ali* < **aλi* < **aλi*.

The first stages of the phonetic development are similar to Nakh or Daghestanian languages.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Comp. reconstruction: **arwa* in: [K l i m o v, K h a l i l o v 2003: 357].

⁸⁹ For etymology of the numerals under question comp. also [C h u k h u a 2007: 457]. For possible links between Kartvelian and Abkhaz-Adyghe see [C h u k h u a 2019: 177]. The author proposes the Common Kartvelian reconstruction: **warwa*.

⁹⁰ On the phonetic development in Nakh languages see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2018c: 87-93]. As for Daghestanian languages see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 107-111].

In the next phase the lateral spirant changed into lateral sonorant: *a λ i > *ali and subsequently this sonorant went into vibrant: *ali > *ari. The last sound change: *ari > *ara consists in distant perseverative assimilation of the radical vowels: *a-i > *a-a.

Numeral „9”

Georg. cxra; Laz/Mingr. čxoro; Svan čxara

Georg. cxra < *cxara = *cxa-ra, stem: *cxa- (< *cha-) < *čha- < *čaha- < *haça-, root: *-aça⁹¹

Laz / Mingr. čxoro < *cxara, stem: *cxa- (< *cha-) < *čha- < *čaha- < *haça-, root: *-aça⁹²

Svan čxara < *cxara, stem: *cxa- (< *cha-) < *čha- < *čaha- < *haça-, root: *-aça⁹³

Basing on synchronic comparative data the Common Kartvelian numeral can be reconstructed: *cxara = *cxa-ra, where the nominal root is: *cxa-, if it is assumed that the final segment: -ra constitutes a primary petrified class morpheme or numeral particle.

The vowel: *-a- in the radical syllable must be postulated on account of Laz/Mingrelian and Svan forms. It was preserved in Svan and changed into: *-a- > -o- in Laz/Mingrelian which is a regular sound change.

The Common Kartvelian radical consonant: *c- was retained only in Georgian. In the remaining Kartvelian languages: c- > č- which is a regular phonetic development. If genetic relation between Kartvelian and other Ibero-Caucasian languages is considered, the Common Kartvelian root may be further derived in the following way: *cxa- < *cha- < *čha- < *čaha- < *haça- < *-aça- < *-açi-

< *-ač^wi-. The inherited radical abruptive dental affricate: *č is preserved exclusively in contemporary Daghestanian languages. In Kartvelian it was dezabruptivized in the position before velar spirant: *čx- >

⁹¹ On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “nine” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 29, 58].

⁹² On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “nine” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 29, 58].

⁹³ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “nine” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 29, 30, 58, 67]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “nine” see also [Chikobava 1938: 222-223]; [Климов 1964: 232]; [Blažek 1999: 84]; [Fährnich, Sarjeladze 2000: 604]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 359].

cx-. This phonetic change can be regarded as a process conditioned by phonetic context and phonotactic rules, because consonantal groups: çx- are impermissible.

The same is the case of the preceding sound change of the laryngeal spirant into the velar one:

*çh- > *çx-. The indispensable phonetic context was obtained in consequence of syncope of the vowel of the initial radical syllable: *çaha- > *çha-. The postulated proto-form of nominal root: *çaha- can be received by metathesis from: *çaha- < *haça-, which points out that the root under question belongs to reverse order roots.

The radical proto-form: *haça- can easily be compared with Daghestanian numerals referring to “nine” / “ten.” Further etymologization will be: *haça- < *aça- < *açi- < *-aç^wi-, like in other Ibero-Caucasian languages.

It can be assumed that in Common Ibero- Caucasian one nominal root referring to “nine” / “ten” may be reconstructed. It means that numerals denoting “nine” and “ten” in Ibero- Caucasian languages are derivable from the same root. Difference between them is visible in further phonetic development.

In Daghestanian languages the inherited radical consonant – abruptive dental affricate: *-c- was preserved in the numerals referring to “ten” (see below). In the numerals denoting “nine” it changed into alveolar affricate: *-ç- > -č-.⁹⁴

Numeral „10”

Georg at-i; Mingr vit-i; Laz vit; Svan yešd / yešt

As for Georgian counterpart: at-i, perhaps the root may be derived as follows:

at- < *aṭ- < *aṭa- < *aça- < *aç^wa-⁹⁵

One can suppose existence of a proto-language form: *w-aç^wa-, where the initial consonant *w- would be a class morpheme.

⁹⁴ On structure and phonetic development of Daghestanian numerals referring to “ten” and “nine” see [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 116-120] and [K a n a r k o w s k i 2023: 111-115] respectively.

⁹⁵ For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral at-i “ten” see [C h i k o b a v a 1942: 180, 182]. On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “ten” comp. also [M a c h a v a r i a n i 1965: 33]. For Georg. at-i see: [K u r d i a n i 2007: 347, 418, 653].

It can explain the structure and origin of Laz and Mingrelian numerals as well:

Ming. vit-i, where stem: vit = v-it < *w-it < *w-at, root: at- < *at- < *aṭa- < *aca- < *aḱ^wa-⁹⁶

Laz. vit = v-it < *w-it < *w-at, root: at- < *at- < *aṭa- < *aca- < *aḱ^wa-⁹⁷

Earlier phonetic development is to be reconstructed like above for Georgian. Taking into account comparative data, the initial phonetic segment v- < *w- in contemporary Kartvelian languages should be considered as petrified class morpheme.

Svan yešt = y-ešt < *w-ešt < *w-ašt, root: *-ašt < *-ast < *-aṣṭa < *-aca [= *aṭs a] < *aḱ^wa-⁹⁸

Structure of the Svan numeral is fully parallel to the remaining Kartvelian forms and the initial glide: y- is a primary class morpheme which developed from primary labial glide: y- < *w-.

This sound change may be treated as anticipatory assimilative process caused by the following frontal vowel: *w-e- > y-e-. The initial radical vowel should be further derived: *w-e- < *w-a-, because this vowel is attested in phonetically most archaic Georgian form: at-.

Phonetic evolution of the radical consonants differs from all other Kartvelian counterparts. It can be assumed that final abruptive dental stop: -ṭ constitutes a real phonetic archaism and may be derived from the primary abruptive affricate.

The second Svan variant: yešd is younger in terms of relative chronology of phonetic changes. The final voiced dental consonant: -d is derivable: -d < -ṭ due to sonorization in auslaut position. This process can be interpreted as lenition.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ For some remarks on the structure of Mingrelian numeral denoting "ten" see [Chikobava 1942: 94]. On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting "ten" comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33].

⁹⁷ For some remarks on the structure of Laz numeral denoting "ten" see [Chikobava 1942: 197].

⁹⁸ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting "ten" comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33]. As for the anlaut: y- in Svan numeral, comp. [Chikobava 1938: 218]; [Klimov 1964: 45]; [Javakishvili 1937: 422-423].

⁹⁹ For Kartvelian etymology, comp. also [Chukhva 2007: 262-263]. On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to "ten" see also [Chikobava 1938: 223]; [Климов 1964: 45]; [Blažek 1999: 84]; [Fähnrich, Sarjveladze 2000: 80]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 359].

Numeral „20”

Georg. oc-i; Mingr. eč-i; Laz eči; Svan yerwešd

Georg. oc-i < *or-c-i, stem: oc- = root (I): o- + root (II): -c- < *or- + -c

Mingr. eč-i < *ec-i < *oc-i < *or-c-i, stem: oc- = root (I): o- + root (II):
-c- < *or- + -c

Laz eči < *eci < *oci < *or-c-i, stem: oc- = root (I): o- + root (II): -c- <
*or- + -c

Root (I): o- < *or- // *or- < *q̇^wor- < *q̇^wir- = *q̇^wi-r

Root (II): -c- < *-c- < *-či- < *-č^wi- < *-ač^wi-

Svan yerwešd = yer-wešd < *yer-wošd < *yor-wošd < *yor-woš, where:¹⁰⁰

root (I): yer- < *yor- < *or- // *or- < *q̇^wor- < *q̇^wir- = *q̇^wi-r

root (II): -wešd < *-wošd < *-woš < *-oš < *-oč < *-oc

The root: *-oc is further analyzable like above: *oc = *o- + *-c, where:

(I): o- < *or- // < *or- < *q̇^wor- < *q̇^wir- = *q̇^wi-r

(II): -c- < *-c- < *-či- < *-č^wi- < *-ač^wi-

A new interpretation of structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “twenty” is proposed. Common Kartvelian form can be reconstructed: *oc- and it will be point of departure for any further etymologization which will be presented below. In the new light the form under question may be regarded as a nominal compound based on structural pattern: 2 x 10 which is to be divided into two roots: oc- = o- + -c-.

The first root is derivable from: o- < or- which signifies “two” and is synchronically testified in contemporary Kartvelian languages and comes from Common Kartvelian: *or-. This stem may be further etymologized: *or- < *q̇^wor- < *q̇^wir-. The involved phonetic changes can be explained as perseverative labialization of the stem vowel: *q̇^wir- > *q̇^wor- with possible subsequent delabialization of the initial consonant: *q̇^wor- > *q̇or-. In the following stage this consonant dropped: *q̇or- > or-. The above discussed stem is composed: *q̇^wir = *q̇^wi-r, where the first segment is the root and the final sonorant: *-r is a petrified class morpheme.

¹⁰⁰ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “twenty” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 33].

The numeral: *yor-* can be derived: *yor-* < **wor-* < **q̣^wor-*. The first sound change may be described as dropping of labialized abruptive affricate and phonologization of labial coarticulation: **q̣^wor-* > **wor-*. In the next stage the anlaut labial glide went into yota: **wor-* > *yor-* which may be explained as a dissimilative process.¹⁰¹

Numerals „100”

Georg. *as-i*; Mingr./Laz. *oš-i*; Svan. *äšir*

Georg. *as-i*, root: *as-* < **sa-* < **s^wa-*¹⁰²

Mingr./Laz *oš-i* < **as-i*, root: **as-* < **sa-* < **s^wa-*¹⁰³

Svan *äšir* = *äš-ir* < **aš-ir*, root: **aš-* < **as-* < **sa-* < **s^wa-*¹⁰⁴

Dental spirant: *-s* in Georgian must be regarded as the primary radical consonant. Its velarization in Laz, Mingrelian and Svan: **-s* > *-š* is a secondary phonetic development which is attested in numerous other examples. As for the vocalic segments, sound changes: **a-* > *o-* and: **a-* > *ä-* in Laz/Mingrelian and Svan respectively, are regular phonetic correspondences.

Common Kartvelian root may be reconstructed: **as-*, so the most archaic phonetic development has been preserved in Georgian. It can be further derived from Common Ibero-Caucasian root: **s^wa-*. In the first phase the labialized radical spirant was delabialized: **s^wa-* > **sa-* and in the following step the obtained form was subject to metathesis: **sa-* > *as-*.

¹⁰¹ On structure and etymology of Kartvelian numerals referring to “twenty” see also [Chikobava 1938: 223-224]; [Климов 1964: 151]; [Blažek 1999: 84]; [Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 368]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 358].

¹⁰² For some remarks on the structure of Georgian numeral *as-i* “hundred” see [Chikobava 1942: 99, 182]. On etymology of the Georgian numeral denoting “hundred” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 28, 56, 76].

¹⁰³ On etymology of the Mingrelian numeral denoting “hundred” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 28, 76, 109].

¹⁰⁴ On etymology of the Svan numeral denoting “hundred” comp. also [Machavariani 1965: 28, 76, 109]. On structure and etymology and Kartvelian numerals referring to “hundred” see also [Chikobava 1938: 224]; [Климов 1964: 45]; [Blažek 1999: 84-85]; [Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 87]; [Климов, Халилов 2003: 367]; [Chukhua 2007: 268-269]; [Kurdiani 2007: 149, 173] and [Kurdiani 2007: 424], where the author points at possible links with the corresponding Abkhaz-Abaza numerals.

In the light of Kartvelian comparative data there are no grounds to consider the vowel as a secondary anaptyxis segment like it is the case of Daghestanian languages.¹⁰⁵

If the above etymologization is accepted, the Kartvelian root may be compared with semantically corresponding roots in the remaining Ibero-Caucasian languages.

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¹⁰⁵ On structure and etymology of Daghestanian numerals referring to “hundred” see [Kanarkowski 2023: 127-131].

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¹⁰⁶ In this paper Nikolayev and Starostins’s etymologies from NCED are quoted after computer etymological database accessible on: <https://starlingdb.org>, formerly: <https://starling.rinet.ru>

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Phonetic transcription

- ʔ- abruptive laryngeal stop
- ʕ- voiced fricative emphatic laryngeal
- b- voiced labial stop
- c- unvoiced dental affricate
- ç- abruptive dental affricate
- č- unvoiced alveolar affricate
- ĉ- unvoiced dento- alveolar affricate
- ċ- abruptive alveolar affricate
- ċ̣- abruptive dento- alveolar affricate
- d- voiced dental stop
- f- unvoiced labio- dental fricative
- g- voiced velar stop
- ɣ- voiced velar fricative
- h- unvoiced laryngeal fricative
- y- palatal glide
- k- unvoiced aspirated velar stop
- ķ- abruptive velar stop
- l- lateral sonorant
- λ- unvoiced lateral fricative
- λ̣- unvoiced lateral affricate
- λ̣̣- abruptive lateral affricate
- ḏ- voiced lateral affricate
- m- labial nasal sonorant
- n- dental nasal sonorant
- p- unvoiced aspirated labial stop
- p̣- abruptive labial stop
- q- unvoiced uvular affricate
- q̣- abruptive uvular affricate
- r- dental vibrant
- ʁ- voiced uvular fricative
- s- unvoiced dental spirant
- š- abruptive dental spirant
- ṣ̌- unvoiced dento- alveolar spirant
- ṣ̣̌- abruptive dento- alveolar spirant
- ṣ̣̣̌- unvoiced alveolar spirant
- t- unvoiced aspirated dental stop
- ṭ- abruptive dental stop

v- voiced labio- dental spirant
 w- labial sonorant
 x- unvoiced velar spirant
 χ- unvoiced uvular spirant
 z- voiced dental spirant
 ʒ- voiced dento- alveolar spirant
 ʒ- voiced alveolar spirant
 ʒ- voiced dental affricate
 ʒ- voiced alveolar affricate

[C]^w – labialized consonant
 [C]^y – palatalized consonant

i- central close vowel
 ə- central middle vowel
 [ÿ]- umlautized vowel

List of abbreviations

Ab. – Abaza
 Abkh. – Abkhazian
 Ad. – Adyghean
 Bud. – Budukh
 Circ. – Circassian
 Georg. – Georgian
 Kab. – Kabardian
 Laz – Laz
 Mingr. – Mingrelian
 Rut. – Rutul
 Svan – Svan
 Ub. – Ubykh
 NCED – North Caucasian Etymological Dictionary

Colchian Long Headed “Macrocephali” or Alan: An Image of Warrior According to Archeological Material of NW Lazica (Historical Apsilia)

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Abstract

This paper provides an alternative explanation on ethnic potential and innovative combat task of the late 4th century warrior from NW Georgia (historical Lazica), which considers the excavations of Tsebelda in 1977. It combines rigorous debate over topic of long-headed tribes, while the physical features of warrior noted by Voronov lead questions about his nomadic past. Therefore, the primary aim of this article is to examine the funeral, with more focus on burial practice, habitual structure and personal skills to check how they interrelate to that some scholar underpins Tsebedian warrior with Alan. By providing number of its character types, this paper attempts to check the idea behind “long-headed people” in connection with Colchian Macrocephalos (“long-heads”) tribes and provide a case for alternative society been talented in nomadic battle tactic.

Keywords: Macrocephalos, long-headed people, Macrones, Colchian tribes, Apsilia, Alan, Warrior.

If state a question how we would describe the Colchians in roman time, there is a limited understanding of things able to identify multi-tribal Colchian communities in their material culture.¹ This paper presents the late 4th century warrior grave from NW Georgia (historical Apsilia) because of its insight, giving perspectives for speculation about the mysterious skull

¹ Except my PhD thesis, the tribal population of Colchis never has been the subject of archeological research. Therefore, much of the tribal heritage from residential and defensive areas has to be examined.

shaping. The grave is known from Voronov's excavations of Tsebelda in 1977.² What is the most remarkable about the warrior is the fact that the long head of decease has been interpreted by Voronov as a "possible skull deformation."³ This became supplementary to some scholars considering Alan movement through Caucasia. Voronov just raise a question, but without providing essential nuances for his interpretation – "possible skull deformation", at least to some extent as a working hypothesis. We don't know which aspect – physiology and anatomy of decease- intercut with that whether ring-type Sarmatian binding or frontal-bone-bandage that actually defines Alanian identity. And while the essential features have not been studied with scholarly care, and one will never be able to prove it, the warrior is still questionable to assign any ethnicity beyond Colchis. But since a long head puts him in a perspective of long headed people, there is a need to find new ways of reading the evidence and consider the nature of available sources.

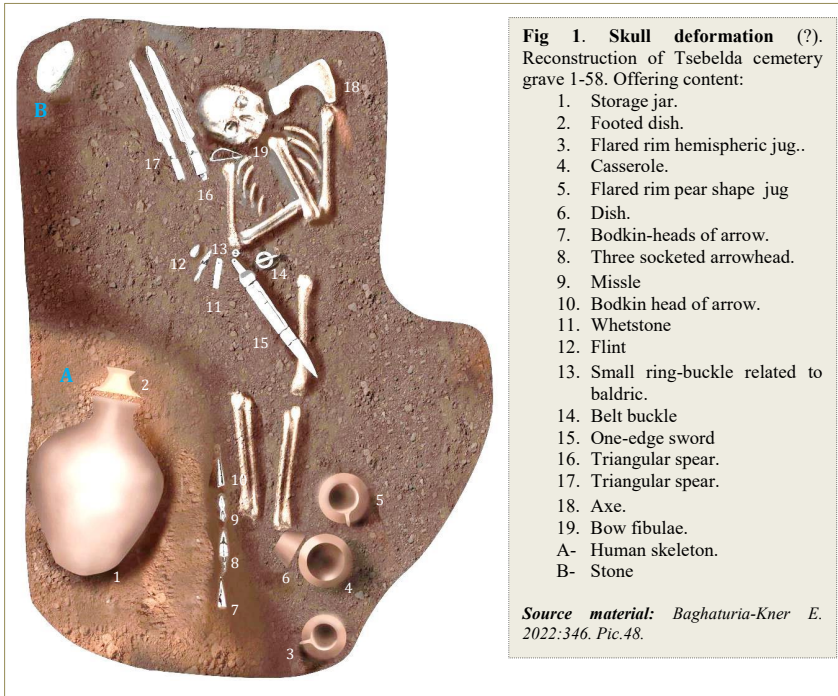
What we see in Fig.1 produces things very different in content, in concept and able to tell a European scale story about the way of life open for new cognitive spaces. This gives a chance to test the concept of Colchian tribe Macrocephali ("long-heads") tribes. Therefore, I will argue about his Colchian origin and his innovative combat task.

From body position, an east oriented decease does not distinguishes with any significant difference: laid on the back, with head tilted to the right near to the shoulder, with both arms are bent on the elbow, with right arm placed on the stomach and left is pulled to the chin, Feet are horizontally displayed.⁴

² Tsebelda fort cemetery grave 1-58. See in: Ю.Воронов, Н.Шенкао, Вооружение воинов Абхазии. *Древности великого переселения народов V-VIII вв.*, Москва 1982:156-157, рис.21. This grave has been mentioned in several later publications of Voronov (1995; In 2003 – printed by Bgazhba), Kazanski (Kazanski, Mastykova 2007:57) and Bierbrauer (2008:60).

³ Voronov added a question mark to the sentence. See in: Ю.Воронов, Н.Шенкао, Вооружение воинов Абхазии. *Древности великого переселения народов V-VIII вв.*, Москва 1982: 156, рис.21.

⁴ E. Baghaturia-Kner Machara and Kodori valleys (historical Apsilia) of NW Georgia in Caucasia in the 1st to 7th centuries AD. (PhD dissertation), Munich 2022, Taf. 86, 87(3-4). Online publication: <https://edoc.ub.uni-muenchen.de/29776/>



If we look at the structure broadly, he becomes much nuanced and personalised in attitudes of covered jar- typical Colchian burial practice, which is more about the origin. Offering implied on the both sides of body is common feature for areal graves. Pottery that is similar to previous period including jugs, casserole, and dish are set at the left on lower foot area. Weapon placing method is similar to other warriors from area: consisting sword, two spears and arrow-heads are placed at the right, but the battle axe is below the shoulder at the left side. Depositing the whetstone and flint (Fig. 2.B-18,19) next to the waist are the same novelty coming out from areal warrior graves. The position of buckle at the waist and fibulae on the right shoulder are similar functional indication.

Unusual is the appearance of a storage jar at the right side, 15 cm above the fill, which is covered with dish. Also, the stone at the corner of the grave as component of internal gavel structure considers certain graves appearing in Tsebelda area from the late 3rd century. But exclusive of this male is particular sign of elongated skull as it mentioned by its excavator Voronov; and here I go several centuries back to the most intriguing

record of Hippocrates in Extensor about the naturally long-headed Colchian tribe Macrones distinctive from the rest population⁵:

“I will begin with the Macrocephali. There is no other race at all with heads like theirs”

But in fact, textual sources are often confusing rather than helping in providing distinctive versions of their identification and localization (**Map.** 1); While ancient authors often name Macrocephalos (“long-heads”) to be descended from *Pelazgoi*, linking with the bravest Macrones once moved from the island Evbea-the Macris (Apoll. Rhod., I, 1024).⁶ Then, the Macrones applying the name *Sanni* in time of Strabo (Hec., fr. 191; Strabo, *Geographica*. XII, III, 18) might be the beginning of their gradual assimilation. Even the Stephanus of Byzantium, and 12th century author Eustathius of Thessalonica (*Commentarii in Dionysium Periegetam*) similarly naming them by Sanni, despite of knowing their previous name and living place south of Bechiers (but Pliny the Elder considers them distinctive tribes). We don’t have any broader information whether Macrones (Μάκρωνες) were direct neighbors of Bechiers or not, but they also considered to be a former neighbors of Maraidni in NW Anatolia (Ps.-Orph., 747), in two days journey south from Trabzon (Xen.Ababaz.). It supposed an area of modern Rize. The most interesting is their first location at borders with Syria and Cappadocia (Maps.1.2) in the south eastern Black Sea coast (Strabo. XII, III,18; Plin. NH, VI, 11; Arr.PPE, 11). They seem step-by-step moving towards the NE shores of Colchis during the 1st and 2nd centuries (Hec.,fr. 191; Strabo, *Geographica*. XII, III, 18).

In any case they are features allows us to speculate about the Colchian origin of Tsebeldian warrior.

⁵ See also: Qavtaradze, Anatolia = Dzveli kolkheti argonavtebis tkmulebashi (About the settlement of the Georgian tribes in Anatolia), Tbilisi 1985:20-22. See also: Apoll. Rhod, Valerius Flaccus. *Argonautica*. V.151; Xenophon; Strabo; Plini (VI.11); Pomponius).

⁶ Urushadze, Argonautus = Dzveli kolkheti argonavtebis tkmulebashi (Ancient Colchis in the legend of the Argonautus), Tbilisi 1964:133.



Map. 1. Map of the Abraham Ortelius, 1624. The Voyage of the Argonautus.

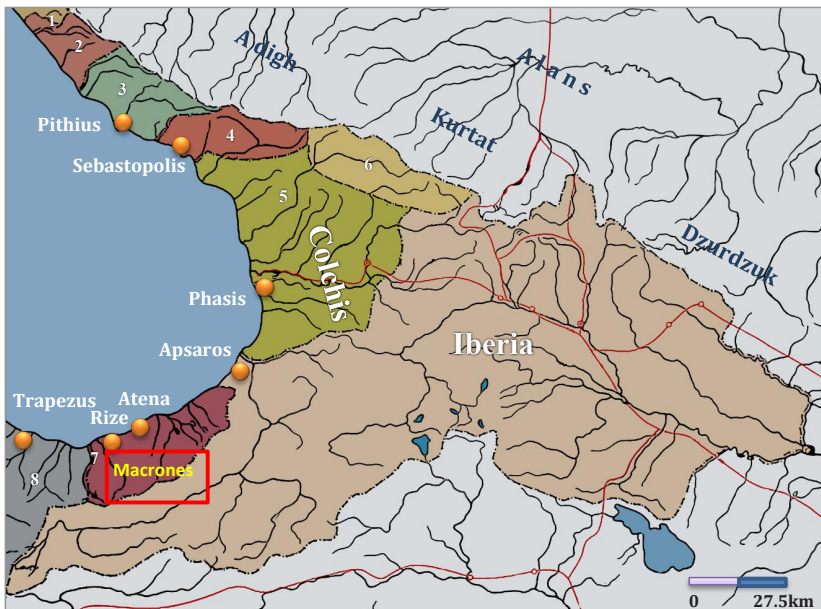
If we judge from actual weapon spectrum, we consider an active warrior of late 4th century that is a version of heavy infantry member, who knew much about the attack strategies, as skilled in distance and close combat fighting. At the right fastened over garment and baldric buckle supporting the sword are particular features of clothing of Romanised warrior, more practical in a close combat fighting. This gives sense of a recruited warrior, but all this boosts speculations.

To judge from proficiency in nomadic missile weapons (shoot of bodkin-headed, socketed arrowheads), also from deposited single stone, which may include a ritual and if we accept the unusual size of skull as sequence of artificial deformation both might build some arguments for the Alan-Sarmatian origin.⁷ But he becomes much nuanced and personalised in attitudes of covered jar- typical Colchian burial practice, which is more about the origin. That is where we find a striking contrast to that some scholar underpins with Alan. But, if we look things from both side and aspects able

⁷ See also: V. Bierbrauer, Ethnos und Mobilität im 5. Jahrhundert aus archäologischer Sicht: Vom Kaukasus nach Niederösterreich. Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse Abhandlungen. Neue Folge, Heft 131., München 2008: 57-63. About the stone placing practice and related rituals see in: В. И. Козенкова, Кобанская Культура, западный вариант. Свод Археологических Источников V, 2-5., Москва 1989.

to provide evidence, one may recognised – a decrease of leading features of Alanian graves. I'm not sure if the regional nature of pottery seeks to understand a reason for enriching the burial, but if he was Alanian what caused using things supportive to Colchian practice? Obviously he doesn't have to perform the funerary tasks and therefore, it is unclear what attitude was more influential. And we have no way of knowing which of them emotional decision of person is since his funeral engaged both burial practices. And while we have basically a mixture of different things, perhaps there is Alternative story which may support this case.

Depositing the whetstone and flint (Fig. 2.B-18,19) are the same novelty coming out from areal warrior graves. But from actual weapon spectrum we consider an active warrior of late 4th century and some version of heavy infantry member who knew much about the attack strategies, as skilled in distance and close combat fighting. This may apply roman forces and give sense of a recruited warrior. At the right fastened over garment and baldric buckle supporting the sword are particular features of clothing of Romanised warrior, more practical in a close combat fighting. But all this boosts speculations.



MAP 2. Map shows approximate location of tribes lived in the territory of Colchis in the 1st-2nd centuries. In colours are given: 1-Zechian. 2-Sanigs. 3-Abasgi. 4-Apsili. 5-Megri/Lazi. 6-Suani/Missimians. 7-Macrones. 8- Zidrits. Modified Map. Source: *Georgian historical Atlas.2003.*

If we check from dated context (Fig. 2), the warrior was buried around the 380-400/410 AD in NE section of early byzantine Tsebile Fort cemetery. Chronologically, his appearance could be linked with Huns invasions over the Black Sea around 376, when western group of Alans joins Empire; and we know its result – forming *comitatus Alani* had been incorporated in to the cavalry of imperial army with own leader *Magister Equitium*.⁸ Therefore, from Alanian perspective, with recruited background, he might fights for the interests of the empire. But what connects him with Apsilia? – Here we go to Areal history, while we do not exactly know what historical episode might consider. But if we dive deeper in areal grave features, we have evidence of well-mobilized workforce from the local warriors to recruited soldiers.⁹

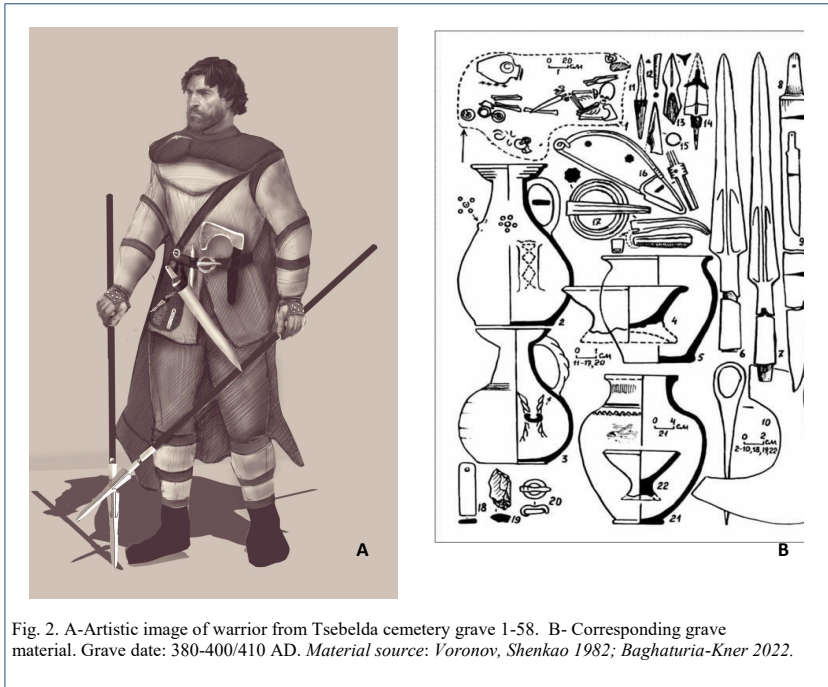


Fig. 2. A-Artistic image of warrior from Tsebelda cemetery grave 1-58. B- Corresponding grave material. Grave date: 380-400/410 AD. Material source: Voronov, Shenkao 1982; Baghaturia-Kner 2022.

⁸ *Magister Equitium* -the commander in chief of the cavalry. They received this rank under the emperor Valens from 369 AD to 374 AD.

⁹ Warriors are buried in Mahajirov hill and Tsebelda cemeteries. See: Ю. Воронов, О. Бгажба, Н. Шенкао, В. Логинов, Новые погребения Апсилов из окрестностей Цебельды. Археологические Открытия в Абхазии. (“АО-1985”), Тбилиси 1990:26, рис.19.1,5; Ю. В о р о н о в, Древности Азантийской долины, Сухуми 1982:143, рис, 1-14. Some warriors from Tsebelda cemetery distinguished by unusual practices may have presenting the German *foederati* (?).

This may suggest that more complex activities began during the years 350–400 AD when we accessed the first evidence of simultaneous matters, advancing the frontier line. Because a similar dynamic assumed the coastal military sites Pithius and Petra/Tsikhisdziri are closely related to the Black Sea littoral. We see a sudden shift of new guarding groups coming to the late 4th century with stuff like Vimose-, Illerup and Ilkjar-type swords and rounded or oval shields with variously fitted bosses (*Csongrád/Zieling L, Zieling K1, Vermand/ Zieling, Dobrodzień/ Zieling, and Malaešty*).¹⁰ The entire logistic and supply sources are considerable imperial investments. This matches the time when import capacity increases in Apsilia and it is causally possible that was developed from the trade system; while the road capacity, its direction, physical aspect and distributed import indicate communication power of the main road (KAR) stretching between the Black Sea and Caucasia. Since the objects from Europe and Asia and bring together here types of markets used for exchange and trade orders, it could be the most plausible explanation for their appearance. But it eventually became a very important while controlling an access to the northern. All this is a theoretically possible and archaeologically evidential.

My point is that, all above discussed details is genetic information and indicative fore a possible intercultural marriages, which provide more colorful details about. But I mean rather direct link with moved Alanian. Because there is no other alternative for their appearance in Colchis at the time, but even he represents Alanian, this single grave does not feature Alanian movements into Apsilia.

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Ideological and Political Aspects of the Early Rule of the Bagratid Dynasty (9th and 10th Centuries)

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Abstract

The article reviews the political ideology of the royal Bagratid dynasty, which established the foundation of its power in Tao-Klarjet'i. The Georgian Bagratids created an ideological program that traced their origins back to the prophet and king of Israel, David. Based on analyzed sources, it is possible to infer how the Bagratid ideology was presented and how it justified their legitimacy. Due to the competition for power among many local aristocratic dynasties, a specific ideological program had to play an important role in defining and legitimizing royal rule.

The ideological reinforcement of the dynasty's supremacy was of great significance, hence the theory of biblical descent justified the dynasty's claims to supremacy. Attention should be drawn to the crucial issue of the title 'King of K'art'velians,' which was introduced in 888 by ruler Adarnase II. This new title played an important role in the history of the principality during the rivalry between other local kingdoms. Adarnase II was the first ruler in Tao-Klarjet'i who, in the ninth century, introduced the ancient title 'King of K'art'velians,' thus referring to the long tradition of the kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia).

Keywords: Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i, Adarnase, Ashot the Great, Bagratid dynasty, King of K'art'velians.

Introduction¹

The Bagratids (Bagratuni, Bagrationi) were a royal dynasty reigning in Georgia from 809–1801 and in Armenia from 861–1045. They originated from the Bagratuni family (mentioned in the 1st century BC).² The

¹ The article is part of the bachelor's thesis defended in 2024 at the Faculty of History University of Warsaw under the supervision of professor Paweł Żmudzki.

² *Kouropalates* (κουροπαλάτης), one of the highest Byzantine titles from the time of Justinian the

issue of the Bagratid lineage is disputed, as there are different theories. From the ninth to the eleventh century, there were two royal lines of Bagratids – the Georgian Bagrationi family and the Armenian Bagratuni. According to some scholars, both families shared a common ancestor, and in the sixth–eighth centuries, they split into two branches that led to the formation of separate royal families. During the Arab expansion in the seventh and eighth centuries, the areas at the foot of the Caucasus were conquered by the Arabs. Moreover, the Emirate of Tiflis was established in the center of Georgia, where an Arab emir was placed. A gradual struggle began between local rulers and the Arabs, led by Georgian rulers from the Bagratid dynasty, who started the process of reclaiming land from the Arabs. During this time, the principality of Tao-Klarjet'i was established in the southwestern part of Georgia, with the Bagratid family at its head. The principality became a great power under the rule of Ashot I the Great (787–826), who united most of the historical southwestern lands of Georgia. Ashot I the Great received the title of *kouropalates* from the Byzantine emperor. During this time, the principality of Tao-Klarjet'i became a strong political entity and was set to play a role in the struggle to unify all Georgian lands, which occurred in the 1070s.

The issue of legitimizing the power of the Bagratid dynasty is extremely interesting. In this context, it is important to consider the concept of identity and its role in the formation of statehood. A crucial aspect of our research is to examine the political and royal ideology of the Bagratid family, which consolidated power in Georgia. Due to the rivalry for power among many local aristocratic families, a specific ideological program must have played a significant role in defining and legitimizing royal rule. Thus, it should not be surprising that the Bagratid dynasty traced its lineage to the kings of Israel, David, and Solomon. The emerging ideology encompassed religious, political, and social elements. It is also worth considering the key issue regarding the title of the King of the K'art'velians, which was introduced in 888 by Adarnase II.³ The new title was significant in the history of the principality, reflecting both his personal ambitions and a stance against the current order. Adarnase II was

Great until the Komnenos dynasty in the 12th century. It was reserved for members of the imperial family and was also granted to important foreign rulers, often in the Caucasus.

³ Adarnase II (888-923), ruler of Tao-Klarjet'i from the Bagratid dynasty, was the son of David I *Kouropalates* and the great-grandson of Ashot the Great. In 888, Adarnase II introduced the new title of King of the K'art'velians, thereby establishing a new Georgian Kingdom, referencing the ancient kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia).

the first ruler in the ninth century to revive the ancient title of King of the K'art'velians.

The name K'art'velians refers to the lands of K'art'li, whose name originates from the legendary ancestor K'art'los.⁴ The name was subsequently adopted to refer to the people of the tribe inhabiting K'art'li. Georgians living in the lands of K'art'li are called K'art'velians, which is why Adarnase II, as ruler of Tao-Klarjet'i, claimed these territories. Historically, K'art'li refers to a part of Georgian lands that included the traditional capitals - Mc'xet'a (Mtskheta) and Tiflis. The name Georgia in the Georgian language is referred to as Sak'art'velo, while Georgians call themselves K'art'velians (plural - *K'art'velebi*). The name Sak'art'velo consists of two parts. The root of the word, *K'art'vel-i*, refers to the native inhabitants of the central-eastern region of present-day Georgia - K'art'li, while the prefix Sa is a geographical designation, where K'art'veli is an ethnonym meaning the area inhabited by the 'K'art'velians.'⁵ In the early eleventh century, the word *Sak'art'velo* was used to designate the entire territory. The name *Georgia* derives from the Persian word *gurğ/gurğān*, meaning 'wolf.'⁶ This name may have originated from the ancient Persian name of the region near the Caspian Sea called Gorgan, the land of wolves.⁷

The theory of the biblical origin of the Bagratid dynasty likely took shape during the reign of Ashot I the Great in the ninth century, during the formation of the principality of Tao-Klarjet'i under his family's leadership.⁸ The ideological strengthening of the dynasty's supremacy was of great importance, which is why claiming descent from the kings of Israel justified their claims to primacy, created a foundation for the family's inheritance, and ensured its superiority over other aristocratic families.⁹ In addition to Georgian writings, Armenian and Byzantine sources also confirm the Jewish origin of the Bagratid, recognizing them as descen-

⁴ K'art'los, the legendary founder of K'art'li, is the mythical ancestor of the K'art'velians (Georgians).

⁵ Stephen H. Rapp Jr., *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography: Early Texts And Eurasian Contexts*, Leuven 2003, 419–423.

⁶ Stephen H. Rapp Jr., *The Sasanian World through Georgian Eyes: Caucasia and the Iranian Commonwealth in Late Antique Georgian Literature*, Oxford 2014, 21.

⁷ See [Rapp 2014: 21].

⁸ D. Ninidze, "Azm" bagratovant'a. Davit'ian bagratovanni" (The dynasties of David and the Bagrationis) in *Nat'eli k'ristesi. Sakartvelo* (The Light of Christ. Georgia), Book 1, Tbilisi 2003; 194–205.

⁹ See [Ninidze 2003: 194].

dants of the prophet David, king of Israel.¹⁰ The legend became the official doctrine of the Bagratid, granting the dynasty unparalleled authority.

In Georgian historical tradition, this legend first appears in the tenth century *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory* by George Merchule.¹¹ In the eleventh century, the story took on a more refined form, reflected in the chronicle of Sumbat Davit'is-dze.¹² Based on an effective political ideology, the Bagratid skillfully maintained power in Georgia over the course of a millennium. Descent from the line of David allowed them to claim kinship with Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, thus confirming their legitimacy as God's anointed.

Georgian ideology became known in neighboring countries – Armenia and Byzantium, as evidenced by works such as those of John Draschanakerttsi and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos. In Chapter XLV of the treatise *De Administrando Imperio*, we read: “The Iberians, I mean, those who belong to the curopalate, pique themselves upon their descent from the wife of Uriah, with whom David, the prophet and king, committed adultery: for they say they are descended from the children she bore to David and are related to David, the prophet and king, and consequently to the most holy Mother of God also, inasmuch as she was by descent of the seed of David.”¹³

A Brief History of Georgia

The oldest political structures on Georgian soil formed at the beginning of the first millennium BC. The first mentioned state known to the Greek world was the Kingdom of Colchis (in Georgian, the Kingdom of Egrisi), which emerged in the 6th-5th centuries BC in the western region of the South Caucasus, located on the eastern coast of the Black Sea.¹⁴ In the Middle Ages, this area included the Kingdom of Abkhazia.

¹⁰ See [Ninidze 2003: 194–196].

¹¹ George Merchule, *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory, the builder of Khandzta and Shatberdi*, edited by I. Abuladze. In *Monuments of old Georgian hagiographic literature I (5th–10th cc.)*, Tbilisi 1963: 248–319.

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¹³ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, transl. R.J.H Jenkins, Washington 1967, 205.

¹⁴ O. Janelidze, “A Brief History of Georgia,” in *Golden Fleece – Art of Georgia*, Kraków 2024, 14.

The Kingdom of Colchis occupied the following western territories: Adjara, Abkhazia, Samegrelo, Svaneti, Racha, Lechkhumi, Imereti, Guria.¹⁵ Greek culture influenced Colchis due to its geographical location and access to the Black Sea.¹⁶ Colchis became part of the Roman Empire as the province of Cappadocia, while the Kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia) gained political hegemony in Georgia, as it was better organized and protected from attacks.¹⁷ It was not until the 3rd century AD, with the crisis of the Roman Empire, that the region of Colchis became independent and the Kingdom of Lazica¹⁸ was established. It is worth noting that it remained politically dependent on the Byzantine Empire. Lazica and Abkhazia officially adopted Christianity in the sixth century during a period of intense Byzantine diplomatic activity on the eastern Black Sea coast. However, Christianity was already well established among the local population by the fifth century.¹⁹ The Church of Western Georgia was subordinated to Byzantine jurisdiction.²⁰

The Greco-Roman world knew of two Iberias: one in the west, on the Iberian Peninsula, and the other in the east, in the Caucasus, in present-day eastern Georgia. Between the 4th-3rd centuries BC, the Kingdom of Iberia (in Georgian, K'art'li) was established, with its first king being Parnavaz,²¹ who founded the Parnavazid dynasty. The Kingdom of K'art'li encompassed the lands of K'art'li, including Georgia's later capital, Tiflis (fifth century), Kakheti, Samtskhe, Trialeti, Javakheti, and Tao-Klarjet'i.²² The capital of the Iberian Kingdom was Mtskheta (founded in the 3rd century BC), located at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari (Kura) rivers. It was the seat of kings and an important center of trade and religion.²³ In the fourth century AD, King Mirian III of K'art'li (284-361) declared Christianity the state religion, making the kingdom one of the first Christian countries. Historical tradition attributes the Christianization of K'art'li to Saint Nino of Cappadocia.²⁴ In the fifth century, the

15 D. Lang Marshall, *Dawna Gruzja*, Warszawa 1972, 59.

16 B. Baranowski, K. Baranowski, *Historia Gruzji*, Wrocław 1987, 24–25.

17 See [Lang Marshall 1972: 64].

18 J. Rohoziński, *Gruzja*, Poznań 2016, 200.

19 T. T. Chmielecki, "Początki chrześcijaństwa w Gruzji (I–VII w.)" in *Vox Partum* 17, no. 32–33, Lublin 1997, 355–356.

20 See [Chmielecki 1997: 355–356].

21 Parnavaz I, the first king of K'art'li (Iberia), is considered the founder of the Kingdom of K'art'li and the Parnavazid dynasty.

22 See [Lang Marshall 1972: 59].

23 See [Baranowski 1972: 25].

24 Saint Nino (c. 268-335), according to Georgian tradition, was a relative of the Jerusalem Pa-

Georgian Church received its first Catholicos²⁵ of K'art'li and gained full independence from the Patriarch of Antioch.²⁶ The idea of the unity of all Georgian lands consciously referred to the traditions of ancient Georgia, particularly the Kingdom of K'art'li, where the historic capital, Mtskheta, was located, from which the influence of Georgian culture and religion spread throughout the country.

During the consolidation of the monarchy, the Christian faith and the Church played a significant role. From the fourth century, the K'art'velian (Georgian) language became the language of Christian worship, and by the fifth century, it had developed its own alphabet, ultimately achieving the status of the dominant language.²⁷ Thus, religion and the Church played a crucial role in the unification of the Georgian nation. The Church in the Kingdom of Abkhazia was subordinate to Constantinople, and the liturgy there was conducted in Greek.²⁸ In the early tenth century, the Abkhazian Church separated from Constantinople and recognized the authority of the Catholicos of Mtskheta.²⁹ The liturgical language was then changed from Greek to Georgian. The establishment of a unified Georgian Church throughout the state strengthened the sense of community. The words of George Merchule in *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory* eloquently describe this matter: "A great country is considered to be Kartli, where the services and all the prayers are carried out in the Georgian language. Only 'Lord have mercy' is said in Greek, which in Georgian is 'uphalo tskaloba kav.' or 'uphalo shegvitskalen.'"³⁰ In the first half of the eleventh century, the Georgian Church was elevated to the rank of the Patriarchate of all Georgia.

triarh Juvenal. In 319 AD, she arrived in K'art'li (Iberia), where she healed the local population, including Queen Nana. King Mirian III went on a hunt, during which sudden darkness fell. He prayed to God, after which light returned. Following this event, the king and his wife accepted Christianity as the state religion in K'art'li (Iberia).

²⁵ Katholikos, the title of the patriarchs of the Armenian Church (Catholicos of All Armenians), the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Georgian Orthodox Church. The title has been used since the fourth century in Eastern Churches outside the Roman Empire, historically associated with the Patriarchate of Antioch.

²⁶ See [Chmielecki 1997: 350–351].

²⁷ J. M. Mayer, Ch. Pietri, L. Pietri, A. Vauchez, M. Venard, *Historia Chrześcijaństwa: Biskupi mnisi i cesarze*, vol. IV, Warszawa 1999, 446.

²⁸ D. Rayfield, *Edge of Empires. A History of Georgia*, London 2012, 62.

²⁹ M. Lordkipanidze, R. Metreveli, D. Muskhelishvili, *Sa k'art'velos istoria IV saukunidan XIII saukunemde* (History of Georgia from the 4th to the 13th Century), Vol. II, Tbilisi 2012, 240.

³⁰ George Merchule, *The life of St. Gregory of Khandzta*, transl. Theophan Eirik Halvorson. The Diocese on Nikozi and Tskhinvali, 2015: 153.

An important unifying factor between the two kingdoms of Egrisi and K'art'li was the reign of King Vakhtang I Gorgasali,³¹ during which the Kingdom of K'art'li also included part of western Georgia (Lazica and Abkhazia).³² From the sixth to the eighth century, the lands of the South Caucasus became a battleground, initially between the Byzantine Empire and Persia, and later between Byzantium and the Arab Caliphate. As a result of constant conquests, the political fragmentation of Georgian states occurred. It was only from the second half of the eighth century, with the weakening of enemies, that local states began to emerge.

As mentioned earlier, in the second half of the eighth century, strong independent political entities appeared in the South Caucasus. On the territory of Georgia, five political structures emerged: the Kingdom of Abkhazia, the Principality of Kakheti, the Kingdom of Heret'i, the Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i (later a kingdom), and the Emirate of Tiflis.

The origin of the Bagratid dynasty is a disputed issue, as there are various theories regarding their lineage. According to historian Ekvtime Takaishvili, the Bagratid first appeared in Georgia in the eighth century during the Arab rule.³³ There was also a view in Georgian and Armenian historiography of the common origin of the Armenian and Georgian Bagratid, who between the sixth and eighth centuries split into two branches, giving rise to separate royal families.³⁴ A manuscript discovered in the library of Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, dated to the second half of the eighth century, indicates that the Bagratids were already present in K'art'li in the early seventh century and were related through marriage to the *erismtavari*³⁵ who ruled in K'art'li.³⁶ Moreover, the manu-

31 Vakhtang Gorgasali (447-522) was a king of K'art'li from the Chosroid royal dynasty. He led a long war against Persia and is considered the founder of the city of Tbilisi, to which he moved the capital of the Kingdom of K'art'li from Mtskheta. 'Gorgasali' translates from Persian as 'wolf's head,' referring to the shape of his helmet. [Juansher Juansheriani, *The Life of Vakht'ang Gorgasali. The Georgian Chronicles of K'art'lis c'xovreba (A History of Georgia)*. Ed. Stephen Jones, Artanuji publishing, Tbilisi 2004, 77–133.

32 See [Lordkipanidze, Metreveli, Muskhelishvili 212: 219].

33 Z. Aleksidze, *Life of Iovane Zedazneli and Martyrdom of Abibos Nekreseli*, Tbilisi 2019, 43; see Stephen H. Rapp Jr, "Caucasia and Byzantine Culture" in *Byzantine Culture. Papers from the Conference 'Byzantine Days of Istanbul'* held on the occasion of Istanbul being European Cultural Capital 2010 Istanbul, May 21–23 2010 Edited by Dean Sakel, Ankara 2014, 217–234.

34 J. Samushia, *Ashot kourapalates*, Tbilisi 2006, 196.

35 *Erismtavari, eristavi* is a term referring to the leader of K'art'li, who ruled from the sixth to the ninth century. This office was introduced after the Kingdom of K'art'li was abolished by the Sasanids. The term *eristavi* is a combination of two words: *eri* meaning 'people' and *tavi* meaning 'head.' *Eristavi* were the leaders of territorial-administrative units. This position was hereditary.

36 See [Ninidze 2003: 196].

script unequivocally refutes the direct kinship of the Georgian Bagratids with the Armenian ones. The manuscript, Sin. geo. N-50, a variant of the early medieval *Life of Iovane Zedadzneli*, provides previously unknown information about the genetic links between the K'art'velian Bagratids and the Guaramid princely houses. A certain Latavri is described as the "mother of the Bagratids and the Kuropalatians" (*deday bagratunianisay da kuropalatianisay*).³⁷

In the early ninth century, a new Georgian state was established in southwestern Georgia, founded by Ashot of the Bagratid dynasty. In Georgian historiography, this state is referred to as the Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i, the land governed by the *Kouropalates* (K'art'velta sakuropalato), or the Georgian Kingdom (K'art'velta samepo).³⁸ For the sake of simplicity in describing the history of the Bagratid dynasty's state, I will use the simplified term 'Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i.'

The origins of the Bagratid dynasty were linked to the *erismtavars* of K'art'li, through whom they obtained this office. At the end of the eighth century, Ashot the Great became the *erismtavar* of K'art'li. With the weakening of the Caliphate and the defeat of the Arabs in their war against Byzantium, he opposed their dominance and led an uprising against them. After the unsuccessful rebellion in K'art'li, Ashot, along with his family, settled in his native province, the sparsely populated land Klarjet'i, which bordered Byzantium and Armenia. He made the town of Artanuji³⁹ his residence, which became a key trade center in the tenth century.⁴⁰ It is worth noting that "the Bagratids remained in a feudal dependency on Constantinople, which entrusted them with the defense and care of its interests in the region in exchange for regularly granting the title of *kouropalates* to one of the family members."⁴¹ As the principality

37 See [Ninidze 2003: 197].

38 Lordkipanidze, *Metreveli*, Muskhelishvili 212: 191.

39 Art'anuji (Ardagan) – town in Klarjet'i, now in Turkey.

40 J. M. Mayer, Ch. Pietri, L. Pietri, A. Vauchez, M. Venard, *Historia Chrześcijaństwa: Biskupi mnisi i cesarze, 456–457*.

41 Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Świat Bizancjum: Cesarstwo Bizantyjskie 641–1204*, vol. II, Kraków 2011, 470.

developed, its rulers expanded their territories into Inner K'art'li (Shida K'art'li),⁴² reaching beyond its borders.⁴³

The history of the Tao-Klarjet'i state stood out significantly among other principalities. The principality was characterized by the absence of centralized rule. After the death of Ashot I the Great in 826, the principality was divided among his three sons. This political fragmentation initially prevented the Bagratids from pursuing an active external policy. Ashot I the Great created a new, vast, and powerful principality, which both Georgian and foreign rulers respected. From the end of the eighth century, he oversaw the expansion of his possessions, encouraging people from other regions to settle in these lands. Ashot was a patron of monastic life, building monasteries together with the clergyman St Grigol Xandzt'eli (Gregory of Khandzta).⁴⁴ For a long time, this region became an important cultural and religious center in Georgia. Besides their cultural achievements, the Bagratid dynasty, under Ashot's rule, developed a theory of biblical origin, which strengthened the family's supremacy and justified their claims to primacy.

In 888, Adarnase II introduced a new title: King of the K'art'velians. This new title had significant importance in the state's history, symbolizing the glory and social status of the ruler, reflecting his personal ambitions, the scope of his power, and the current power dynamics. By establishing the title of King of the K'art'velians, Adarnase II initiated a conflict among the Bagratids. His victory consolidated his position, making him the highest sovereign to whom all princes of the dynasty were subordinate. By the end of the ninth century, two principalities had formed – Tao and Klarjet'i. The residence of the first was Bana, and the second, Artanuji.⁴⁵ The nominal precedence belonged to the Tao line, whose representatives secured the title of King of the K'art'velians. However, the rule of

42 In the Middle Ages, this region was traditionally divided along the Mtkvari (Kura) River into three main areas: Shida K'art'li (Inner K'art'li), with its major cities in Mtskheta and Uplistsikhe, encompassing the entire central K'art'li region both north and south of the Mtkvari (Kura) River, and west of its tributary, the Aragvi; *Kvemo K'art'li* (Lower K'art'li), which included the lands of Trialet'i, Javakhet'i, and Tashiri; and *Zemo K'art'li* (Upper K'art'li), which included the K'art'velian lands of Samtskhe, Klarjet'i, and Tao (which later became part of the province of the Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i). The entire K'art'li region was the center and cradle of the K'art'velian language, an area that housed the historical capitals — Mtskheta (founded in the 3rd century BC) and Tbilisi (capital of the Kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia) since the fifth century).

43 See [Mayer, Pietri, Pietri, Vauchez, Venard 1999: 456].

44 Ibid., 462.

45 See [Bichikashvili 2021: 6].

the Bagratids in Tao and Klarjet'i was based on the principle of equality, with both internal and external policies being independently conducted.

The unification of Georgia was the result of a long and complex process that began in the eighth century and lasted for two hundred years.⁴⁶ The struggle among Georgian noblemen centered around the region of Inner K'art'li (Shida K'art'li). The importance of this area was significant due to its central location and key trade routes. It was a center of Christian culture, a place of significant religious importance, with its ancient capital in Mtskheta. By the end of the eighth century, Inner K'art'li belonged to Kakheti, and at the beginning of the ninth century, it was annexed by the Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i.⁴⁷ From the second half of the ninth century to the 70s of the tenth century, this area was permanently under the rule of the Kingdom of Abkhazia.⁴⁸ The 70s of the tenth century were a turbulent period for the Kingdom of Abkhazia, as civil war and the influence of the aznaurs (nobility) led to anarchy and the weakening of the monarchy. The ruler of Kakheti sought to take advantage of the tense situation to seize Inner K'art'li. Given the turbulent internal situation, decisive actions were necessary to establish a unified monarchy under the rule of one king.

In the 70s of the tenth century, a plan for the political unification of Georgia was developed by Ioane Marushidze⁴⁹ and the aznaurs of K'art'li.⁵⁰ The unification of Georgian lands was to take place under the leadership of Bagrat III (978-1014) of the Bagratid dynasty, who was the heir to three kingdoms.⁵¹ In the tenth century, David III the Great⁵² became the most powerful ruler of Tao-Klarjet'i and adopted Prince Bagrat (the future King

⁴⁶ See [Lordkipanidze, Metreveli, Muskhelishvili 212: 222].

⁴⁷ M. Lordkipanidze, R. Metreveli, *Sa k'art'velos mepeebi* (Kings of Georgia), Tbilisi 2007, 108.

⁴⁸ See [Lordkipanidze, Metreveli 207: 108].

⁴⁹ Jan Marushidze, a nobleman of western Georgia, in the 70s of the 10th century, received the position of *eristavi* of K'art'li from the King of Abkhazia. He was the main initiator in the unification of the Georgian monarchy.

⁵⁰ See [Lordkipanidze, Metreveli, Muskhelishvili 212: 219-220].

⁵¹ See [Lordkipanidze, Metreveli 207: 109].

⁵² David III the Great (979-1001), King of the K'art'velians, who also held the title of *kouropalates*, was from the Bagratid dynasty. He was one of the most distinguished rulers and, alongside John Marushidze, was a proponent of the idea of unifying Georgia. He adopted the future King of Georgia, Bagrat III. David III the Great received Tao in 966 after his older brother Bagrat IV *eristavt-eristavi* (961-966). His expansionist policies ensured his independence from the Byzantine Empire, and he allied with Basil II (976-1025) to defeat the usurper Bardas Skleros, thus becoming the most powerful ruler in the region. The situation changed in 987 when, seeking to make his extensive holdings a hereditary domain of the Bagratids, he joined a rebellion led by Bardas Phokas against Emperor Basil. After they were defeated by Basil in 989, David had to surrender. From the emperor, he received the title of *kouropalates* in exchange for assigning his possessions to the Byzantine Empire.

Bagrat III), installing him as the ruler of K'art'li, although the regency was in the hands of his father, Gurgen II. Bagrat III, on his father's side, belonged to the Bagratid dynasty; his grandfather held the title of King of the K'art'velians, and his mother was Gurandukht, daughter of George II (923-957), King of Abkhazia. In 978, Bagrat III ascended the throne of Abkhazia; after the death of David III, he inherited Tao-Klarjet'i. Some southern lands conquered by David III, including Lower Tao, came under the rule of Emperor Basil II. After his father's death in 1008, Bagrat III became the first king of Georgia. In 1010, Bagrat united the remaining Georgian lands, including Kakheti and Heret'i, except for the Emirate of Tiflis.⁵³ The full title of the first Georgian king, Bagrat III, was: "King of the Abkhazians and the K'art'velians, Tao, Ranta (Heret'i), and Kakheti."⁵⁴

The unification of the lands took place at the beginning of the eleventh century during the reign of Bagrat III, and the final consolidation process was completed in the 12th century under the reign of David IV Aghmashenebeli ('the Builder', 1089-1125).⁵⁵ Several factors contributed to the unification of Georgia, most notably external threats, a sense of community, and the Church. As a result of Georgia's unification, the long process of forming Georgian statehood came to an end, and in the early eleventh century, the term Sak'art'velo (Georgia) emerged, referring to the entirety of the unified country. The inhabitants began to be called K'art'velians (Georgians). They used the Georgian language in writing and liturgy.

Sources

This work illustrates the ideological foundations of the Bagratid dynasty's power (9th-10th centuries) in the light of Armenian, Byzantine, and Georgian sources from the fifth, tenth, and eleventh centuries.

⁵³ Sh. Amiranashvili, *Sztuka gruzińska*, Warszawa 1973, 174.

⁵⁴ M. Bakhtadze, "K'art'uli titulatura Tao-Klarjetis samepos mmartvel bagrationta dinastiashi," in *Sa k'art'velos istoriis institutis shromebi* (Georgian titles in the Kingdom of Tao-Klarjeti under the Bagrationi dynasty in Works of the Institute of History of Georgia), Tbilisi 2015, 89.

⁵⁵ David IV Aghmashenebeli ('the Builder', 1089-1125), King of Georgia from 1089 to 1125, was from the Bagratid dynasty and is considered one of the greatest Georgian and Caucasian rulers. He expelled the Seljuk Turks from his country by winning the decisive Battle of Didgori in 1121. He left behind an original poetic work, 'Galobani sinanulisani' (The Canon of Repentance), which places him among the most distinguished authors of the medieval period, including figures such as Saint Andrew of Crete and Ephrem the Syrian. See [*Life of David, King of Kings* in *The Georgian Chronicles of K'art'lis c'xovreba* (A History of Georgia). Ed. Stephen Jones, Artanuji publishing, Tbilisi 2004, 171-205.

The author of the oldest of these sources is the historian Movses of Khoren, who wrote *The History of Armenia*.⁵⁶ He was born around 410 AD and came from Khoren or Khorian. At the age of twenty to twenty-five, he traveled to Alexandria, where he received an education.⁵⁷ After 440 AD, he returned to his homeland, where he engaged in teaching, translations, and writing his own texts.⁵⁸ In the fifth century, the Armenian Church experienced a crisis related to the conflict between two theological schools. At the end of the fourth century, Armenia was conquered, and the state was divided into two parts – the western Greek (Byzantine) and the eastern Persian.⁵⁹ Movses belonged to the Greek school of Armenian theologians. Around 470 AD, he was appointed bishop of the Armenian Church.⁶⁰ *The History of Armenia* was written after 480 AD at the request of the aristocrat Sahak Bagratuni and contains a detailed description of ancient Armenian history.⁶¹ Movses, called the ‘Armenian Herodotus,’ died in 490 AD.

The History of Armenia by Movsēs Xorenac’i consists of three books. The first book describes the history of Armenia from its beginnings to the establishment of the Arsacid dynasty in 149 BC., continuing with events until the death of Saint Gregory the Illuminator (fourth century). The last book describes events until the fall of the Arsacid dynasty in 428 AD.⁶² Movses’s work is a rich source containing important information about ancient legends and mythological themes. The author used written sources (including foreign ones) as well as folk traditions. Movses of Khoren was a diligent historian who tried to establish the chronology of events accurately.⁶³ The work contains essential information about the history of neighboring countries.

Another work is *The History of Armenia* by Yovhannes Drasxanakertc’i (John of Drasxanakert),⁶⁴ who was born in Drasxanakert, in the province of Ayrarat between 845 and 850 AD. He was educated at Sevanavank un-

56 Movsēs Xorenac’i, *Historia Armenii w trzech księgach*, transl. S. Ulaszek, Kraków 2021.

57 See [Movsēs Xorenac’i 2021: 8].

58 See [Movsēs Xorenac’i 2021: 8].

59 See [Movsēs Xorenac’i 2021: 9].

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., 10.

63 Ibid., 11.

64 Yovhannes Drasxanakertc’i, *History of Armenia*. English translation and study of John Kat’oghikos’ *History* by Translation and Commentary by Rev. Krikor H. Maksoudian. Scholars Press Atlanta, Georgia, 1987.

der the guidance of his relative, Catholicos Mashdotz I.⁶⁵ From 897-929, he served as Catholicos (Patriarch) of Armenia. His activities took place during a difficult political situation in Armenia caused by the Arab invasion. During the Arab invasion, he was captured by the Arab commander Yusuf, from whom he escaped to Georgia, where he stayed at the court of the Georgian ruler Adarnase II. After another Arab invasion, he was forced to settle in Bagaran. The Catholicos played the role of a diplomat for King Ashot II (914-928), including seeking help from Byzantium.⁶⁶ After many changes of residence, at the request of King Gagik Artsruni (904-937/943), he went to Vaspurakan, then decided to return to his residence in Dvin, but the town had already been captured by the Arab commander Wostikan Nesr.⁶⁷ He died around 929 AD.

His work consists of 67 chapters. The work can be divided into two parts: 1) covering the period from the flood to the end of the ninth century; 2) dedicated to the events of the first quarter of the tenth century. In the first part, the author used the works of earlier Armenian historians. According to scholars, the second part of the work is the most valuable, as he was an eyewitness and participant in the events. *The History of Armenia* is one of the valuable sources in Armenian historiography. It is an important work for studying the history of the South Caucasus during the Arab invasions. The work contains a detailed account of Armenia's history in the early tenth century.

A particularly valuable source for finding interesting information about events related to Georgia is *De Administrando Imperio*⁶⁸, authored by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-959). He is remembered in Byzantine history as one of the most creatively literary emperors of Constantinople.⁶⁹ As the ruler of a vast empire, he faced numerous internal and external challenges. His work was written between 948 and 952 and was dedicated to his successor and son, Romanos (959-963).⁷⁰ The purpose of this work was to provide guidance for governing the state, allowing the future emperor to act wisely and achieve success.

65 See [Yovhannes Drasxanakerc'i 1987: 10].

66 See [Yovhannes Drasxanakerc'i 1987: 69].

67 See [Yovhannes Drasxanakerc'i 1987: 17-18].

68 Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, transl. R.J.H. Jenkins, Washington 1967.

69 M. Böhmer, *De administrando imperio. Konstantyna Porfirogenety o strukturze naczelnego dowództwa floty bizantyńskiej w pierwszej połowie X wieku* in *Meritum*, 2016, vol. VIII, 13.

70 See [Böhmer 2016: 13-14].

Constantine VII's work consists of 53 chapters and is divided into four parts. The first part, comprising 12 chapters, describes foreign policy in the most complex area of the contemporary political scene, dealing with the Bulgarians, Khazars, and Pechenegs. The second part consists of only one chapter and concerns diplomacy. The third part is the most extensive and fascinating, providing descriptions of the history, geography, and ethnography of the peoples surrounding the empire.⁷¹ It contains 35 chapters and is divided into three sections: the first two describe various peoples and regions, while the third deals with diplomacy. The final, fourth part summarizes the recent internal history of the empire. The emperor utilized various oral traditions, embassy reports, and works by authors such as Theophanes the Confessor, George the Monk, and Stephanos of Byzantium.⁷²

In Georgian literature, the earliest account containing the idea of the biblical origin of the Bagratid dynasty is preserved in *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory* from the second half of the tenth century, written by the Georgian hagiographer George Merchule.

Merchule belonged to the clergy – he was a monk in the Khandzta Monastery in Tao, founded by St Gregory of Khandzta (759-861) himself. The nickname *Merchule* means ‘expert in canon law’ or ‘theologian.’ His broad knowledge of contemporary canonical literature is evident in his writings. The work was composed in 951, ninety years after Gregory of Khandzta's death.

Gregory of Khandzta was a monk in the province of Tao-Klarjet'i. This area became one of the most important centers of Christian culture in early medieval Georgia.⁷³ Gregory, along with his disciples, founded and rebuilt twelve monasteries, contributing to the revival of spiritual life and education.⁷⁴ In the mid-ninth century, Gregory of Khandzta became the first archimandrite of Klarjet'i.⁷⁵ The significance of these monasteries was immense and invaluable, making Tao-Klarjet'i one of the largest and most powerful centers of Georgian culture.

The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory presents the political and state life of Georgia in the eighth and ninth centuries, depicting monastic life in Tao-Klarjet'i and cultural and educational activities,

⁷¹ See [Constantine Porphyrogenitus 1967: 11–12].

⁷² O. Jurewicz, *Historia literatury bizantyńskiej*, Wrocław 1984, 171.

⁷³ V. Silogava, K. Shengelia, *Tao-Klarjeti*, Tbilisi 2006, 10.

⁷⁴ Sh. Amiranashvili, *Sztuka gruzińska*, Warszawa 1973, 184.

⁷⁵ I. Giviashvili, I. Koplataдзе, *Tao-Klarjeti*, Tbilisi 2004, 207.

and describing the events of Gregory and his disciples. The work was written at a time when the resurgent Bagratid dynasty, in close alliance with the Church, undertook the struggle to unite Georgian lands.

Another source for studying the history of Georgia is *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis* by Sumbat Davit'is-dze. His work is part of the collection of medieval Georgian historical texts *K'art'lis c'xovreba*. Unfortunately, we have limited biographical information about the Georgian chronicler. According to historian Ekvtime Takaishvili, the author was a court historian and representative of the Bagratid family, living in the first half of the eleventh century.⁷⁶

The chronicler wrote the history of the family and presented their genealogy. The work begins with Adam and ends with the early reign of Bagrat IV (1027-1072) in the 1030s. The beginning of the work is based on the Book of Genesis. The historian identifies the Bagratid as descendants of the King of Israel, the prophet David. According to him, the Bagratid arrived in Georgia from Palestine in the sixth century, and one of them was chosen as the *Eristavi* of K'art'li – Guaram (588-c.590), Sumbat Davit'is-dze used local chronicles belonging to the Bagratid family from Tao-Klarjet'i in his work.

The author aimed to present the history of the origin of the Bagratid dynasty and their rule.⁷⁷ The chronicler wrote a detailed description of the family and their genealogy. Sumbat Davit'is-dze's work took its final form in the eleventh century, when the Bagratid family united the Georgian kingdom, and an ideological justification for their power was needed. The work is an attempt to justify the political dominance of the dynasty, which sought to consolidate its authority. The historian advocated for a strong and centralized government, and his chronicle is a valuable source for studying Georgian history up to the eleventh century.

The last of the analyzed sources is *Mat'iane K'art'li* (The Chronicle of K'art'li),⁷⁸ written by an anonymous Georgian chronicler living in the eleventh century. This work is also part of the collection of medieval Georgian historical texts *K'art'lis c'xovreba*. The chronicle dates back to 1072-1073. The work presents the history of Georgia from the eighth to the eleventh century. It is divided into two main parts: (1) from the end

⁷⁶ I. Javakhišvili, *Tkhzulebani tormet tomad* (Collected Works in Twelve Volumes), Vol. VIII, Tbilisi 1977, 195.

⁷⁷ See [Javakhišvili 1977: 195]

⁷⁸ *Mat'iane K'art'li* (The Chronicle of K'art'li) in *The Georgian Chronicles of K'art'lis c'xovreba* (A History of Georgia). Ed. Stephen Jones, Artanuji publishing, Tbilisi 2004, 141–170.

of the eighth century to the reign of Bagrat III (1008-1014), and (2) from the account of the united history of Georgia to the early reign of George II (1072-1089).

The main purpose and idea of the work was to present political events within Georgia. The author was well acquainted with events in the country and in neighboring states. Due to its value, this work is considered an exceptionally valuable source in Georgian historiography.

Titles of Tao-Klarjet'i Rulers

The Byzantine emperors' policy in the early Middle Ages included granting Byzantine titles to foreign rulers, a privilege that was exclusively theirs.⁷⁹ It is worth noting that "the Bagratid remained vassals of Constantinople, which entrusted them with the defense and care of its interests in this region in exchange for the regular appointment of one member of the family as *kouropalates*."⁸⁰ By the end of the ninth century, Georgian titles had emerged in Tao-Klarjet'i, which functioned alongside the Byzantine ones but existed independently without any relationship between them.⁸¹ In the case of Georgian titles, the emperor had nothing to do with their bestowal, and moreover, did not recognize them at all.⁸²

The Byzantine titles granted to the Bagratid dynasty included *magistros*, *antipatos-patrikiōs*, and *kouropalates*.⁸³ The title *kouropalates* first appeared in Georgia in the sixth century and gained particular significance in the ninth and tenth centuries.⁸⁴

The name *kouropalates* derives from the Latin word *cura palatii* [the one in] 'charge of the palace.'⁸⁵ The title first appeared in the fifth century, and it was held by an official responsible for the imperial palace.⁸⁶ Over time, the *kouropalates* lost its official-administrative functions and

⁷⁹ See [Bakhtadze 2016: 208].

⁸⁰ Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Świat Bizancjum: Cesarstwo Bizantyńskie 641–1204*, vol. II, Kraków 201, 470.

⁸¹ See [Bakhtadze 2016: 208].

⁸² See [Bakhtadze 2015: 89].

⁸³ M. Surguladze, *Tao-Klarjetis mcignobruli memkvidreoba* (Manuscript heritage of Tao-Klarjeti), Tbilisi 2018, 17.

⁸⁴ L. Tavadze, *Title of kouropalates in Tao-Klarjeti Bagrationi royal house in Institute of Georgian History*, Proceedings, Special Issue II, Tbilisi 2012, 71.

⁸⁵ S. Fałek, *Słowniczek tytułów i urzędów w Cesarstwie Bizantyńskim* (online)

[<https://www.muzeumtomaszow.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Sl.-Falek-Slowniczek-tytulow-honoryfikacyjnych-i-urzedow-w-Cesarstwie-Bizantyjskim.pdf> (28 maja 2024)].

⁸⁶ See [Tavadze 2012: 68].

became the highest senatorial honor in the entire empire, ranking third in the Byzantine titular hierarchy.⁸⁷ During the reign of Emperor Justinian I (527–565), this title began to be granted to close members of the imperial family.⁸⁸ It's worth noting that the title of *kouropalates* was awarded during a special ceremony, although it was possible to receive it without one.⁸⁹

The title *magistros*, derived from Latin, means ‘master.’⁹⁰ In early Byzantium, it was known as *magister officiorum*, and it was held by the high – ranking officials responsible for state services and ceremonies.⁹¹ From the eighth century onwards, it remained only as an honorary title under the name *magistros*. It was occasionally granted until the tenth century, and completely disappeared by the 12th century.⁹²

The last Byzantine title held by members of the Bagratid dynasty was *antipatos-patrikios*. This title consisted of two components: *antipatos* and *patrikios*. The name *antipatos* meant ‘proconsul’ and was one of the high - ranking titles. It was held by provincial governors.⁹³ After the creation of the ‘*Theme system*’, the office of *antipatos* was replaced by the office of *strategos*; it survived in the title of army reserve supervisors and financial overseers (*eparchoi kai anthypatoi*) and patricians (*patrikios kai anthypatos*).⁹⁴ From the ninth century, it became an honorary title. The title *patrikios* means ‘patrician’ and was established by Emperor Constantine the Great as the highest honorary title. During the reign of Justinian I, it lost its significance and remained one of the highest dignities granted to high - ranking officials, including foreign rulers, but it lost its importance during the Komnenos dynasty.⁹⁵

It is worth noting that the Byzantine titles *antipatos-patrikios* and *magistros* became widespread among the Georgian Bagratid only in the ninth and tenth centuries, indicating that they were honorary titles by that period. The first recorded title was granted to Sumbat I of Artanuji (d. 889) (son of Adarnase, grandson of Ashot the Great), who was appointed *antipatos-patrikios*. Subsequently, this title was held by Sumbat

87 Ibid., 69.

88 Ibid., 68.

89 Ibid., 70].

90 C. Morrisson, *Świat Bizancjum. Cesarstwo Wschodniorzymskie 330–641*, vol. I, 513.

91 See [F a ł e k 2024: online].

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

95 See [F a ł e k 2024: online].

II of Artanuji, son of Ashot II Kekel, Sumbat I, son of Adarnase, King of the K'art'velians (until 958), Ashot the Swift, son of Bagrat I *Mampali* (d. 939) as *patrikios*. Meanwhile, those who held the title of *magistros* included Bagrat I *Mampali*, son of Sumbat I *Mampali* (d. 900), Gurgen IV, son of Adarnase II (d. 941), David II, son of Adarnase, King of the K'art'velians (923-937), Bagrat I, son of Adarnase, King of the K'art'velians (937-946), Adarnase III, son of Bagrat I, grandson of Adarnase, King of the K'art'velians (958-961), David III, son of Adarnase III (979-1001), and Gurgen II, son of Bagrat II of Regweni (994-1008).

The aim of Ashot the Great was to be recognized as the heir to the power of the Guaramid princely house⁹⁶ and to obtain the title of *kouropalates*, which had been granted by Constantinople to the Guaramids since the sixth century.⁹⁷ After they lost power at the end of the seventh century, the highly prestigious Byzantine title of *kouropalates* began to be granted to the Bagratid family from 813 onwards.⁹⁸ Upon receiving the title of *kouropalates*, Ashot the Great gained the right to rule the principality of Tao-Klarjet'i, and he also assumed a leadership role in the family.⁹⁹ Therefore, the Byzantine title was the highest rank in Tao-Klarjet'i for the next three generations.

After the death of Ashot the Great, the title of *kouropalates* was given to his second son, Bagrat I (826–876), who took over power. Since the title of *kouropalates* was conferred by the Byzantine emperor, it never became hereditary.¹⁰⁰ Constantinople selected the most suitable candidate for its own benefit, and by elevating Bagrat to this rank, it defined his dominance and precedence within the ruling family.

After Bagrat's death, his son David 'was made kouropalates after him.'¹⁰¹ Subsequently, 'and he was killed by Nasra, the son of his father's brother Guaram, in Guaram's lifetime in 101 of the koronik'oni (881 A.D.). And the murdered David left behind a young son who was called Adarnase. Nasra, the murderer, fled to the kingdom of Constantinople and spent many years there. And after this Gurgen, son of Adarnase, son

⁹⁶ The Guaramid princely house, a junior branch of the Chosroid royal dynasty, ruled Iberia as *erismtavars*. Three representatives were granted the title of *kouropalates* by the Byzantine imperial court.

⁹⁷ S. Nikolaishvili, *Byzantine and the Georgian World c.900-1210. Ideology of kingship and Rhetoric in the Byzantine periphery (Doctoral dissertation)*, Budapest 2019, 50.

⁹⁸ See [Nikolaishvili 2019:50].

⁹⁹ See [Bakhtadze 2016: 21].

¹⁰⁰ See [Tavadze 2012: 81].

¹⁰¹ Sumbat Davit'is-dze, *Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis*, 211–226 and 214–215.

of Ashot' the Great, was made *kouropalates*.¹⁰² The chronicler adds that Adarnase avenged his father's death, and after defeating Nasra in the Battle of Aspindza in 888, "Adarnase, son of David kouropalates, was made the king of the K'art'vels instead of the murdered king."¹⁰³

The Title of *Kouropalates* and its Impact on Tao-Klarjet'i

After the murder of David, the title of *kouropalates* was not granted to his son Adarnase, but rather to his nephew Gurgen I, who held it from 881 to 891.¹⁰⁴ The reason the emperor bestowed the title upon Gurgen instead of Adarnase, according to *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis*, was due to the boy's young age. Gurgen I was the most influential member of the Bagratid family at that time, prompting Emperor Basil I (867-886) to make this decision.¹⁰⁵

This event marked the first time that the title of *kouropalates* was given to a different member of the Bagratid family, signifying a shift in Byzantine policy towards the dynasty. By the late ninth century, Georgian titles had begun to emerge and function alongside Byzantine ones. It appears that the decentralization and internal dynastic tensions within Tao-Klarjet'i led Adarnase II to adopt the title of King of the K'art'velians in 888, thereby elevating his status and distinguishing himself from his relatives.¹⁰⁶ The coexistence of two distinct titles contributed to internal disputes between family members over precedence. Adarnase ultimately defeated Gurgen and obtained the title of *kouropalates* in 897, granted by Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-912), as documented in the Adishi Gospel.¹⁰⁷ The title of King of the K'art'velians signified tangible power, similar to the *kouropalates* title, which indicated a certain relationship with Byzantium.¹⁰⁸ Despite the establishment of Georgian titles, the *kouropalates* title remained an important honor, as evidenced by Adarnase II's desire to obtain it. He was the last member of the family to hold both titles simultaneously, from 897 to 923.

102 See [Sumbat Davit'is-dze 2004: 214-215].

103 See [Sumbat Davit'is-dze 2004: 215].

104 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 114].

105 See [Tavadze 2012: 81].

106 See [Nikolaishvili 2019: 53].

107 See [Bakhtadze 2016: 213].

108 See [Bichikashvili 2012: 6].

After Adarnase II's death, a conflict arose between Byzantium and the Bagratid, which was reflected in the titular disputes.¹⁰⁹ According to Georgian historians, the Byzantine authorities deliberately refrained from granting the title of *kouropalates* to someone who held the highest Georgian title, to prevent a single ruler from consolidating all power in Tao-Klarjet'i.¹¹⁰ The emperor's decision to grant the *kouropalates* title to another member of the dynasty demonstrated his awareness of the internal situation in Tao-Klarjet'i. The emperor's strategy was to strengthen and elevate his own supporter and counteract the rise of the King of the K'art'velians, thus weakening the eastern neighbor. One notable case mentioned in Emperor Constantine VII's work, *De Administrando Imperio*, involves Gurgen IV the Great,¹¹¹ who sought to obtain the title of *kouropalates* or *magistros* from Constantinople. According to the account, Gurgen personally requested one of these titles from the emperor, and eventually received the title of *magistros*.¹¹²

After the death of Adarnase in 923, his eldest son, David II,¹¹³ received the title of King of the K'art'velians, while the younger son, Ashot IV,¹¹⁴ was given the title of *kouropalates*. This situation is described by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in his work *De Administrando Imperio*. According to his account, Ashot IV the Swift¹¹⁵ was in conflict with his brother-in-law, Gurgen IV the Great, who sought to take control of the town of Artanuji. Ashot the Swift, who also held the title of *patrikios*,

¹⁰⁹ See [Bakhtadze 2016: 214].

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 216–217.

¹¹¹ Gurgen IV the Great (918–941) was a Georgian prince from the Bagratid dynasty and ruler of Tao with the title *eristavt-eristavi*. He also held the Byzantine title of *magistros*. Gurgen was an energetic ruler who amassed a significant amount of territory. His expansion came at the expense of his cousins and neighbors. He was in conflict with his father-in-law, from whom he took the city of Artanuji. Gurgen was married to the daughter of Ashot the Swift. With Gurgen's death in 941, the Bagratid line in Tao ended, and his state was divided among other branches of the dynasty.

¹¹² See [Tavadze 2012: 85].

¹¹³ David II (923–937), King of the K'art'velians from the Bagratid dynasty, son of King Adarnase II.

¹¹⁴ Ashot IV (923–954), appointed by the emperor as *kouropalates*, from the Bagratid dynasty, brother of David II, son of King Adarnase II.

¹¹⁵ Ashot the Swift (d. 939), a Georgian prince from the Bagratid dynasty, had a daughter who married Gurgen IV the Great. Ashot owned the important fortified city of Artanudji. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Ashot was in conflict with his son-in-law Gurgen, who wanted to take the city of Artanudji from him. Ashot ceded the city to the emperor in exchange for his protection. By the order of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos, the Byzantines occupied the city, which led to opposition from the Georgian princes, the sons of Adarnase II. The princes threatened the emperor with switching allegiance to the Arabs if the Byzantine forces did not leave the city. After the city was vacated, Ashot IV regained it, but soon Gurgen IV captured Artanudji and took back some of the lands from his father-in-law, which he later reclaimed.

handed over the town to the emperor in exchange for protection.¹¹⁶ On the orders of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944), the Byzantines occupied the fortress, sparking opposition from the Bagratid family. Gurgun IV the Great and David II united and demanded that the emperor withdraw from the fortress. The emperor complied and returned the castle, taking with him Ashot IV, the brother of David II, whom he granted the title of *kouropalates*.

The emperor's goal was to reward Ashot IV, who, unlike his older brother, pursued a policy more favorable to Byzantium.¹¹⁷ The division of the two titles between the brothers was intended to cause discord. Previously, both titles had been held by a single person, preventing internal conflict. As I mentioned earlier, the conflict between Adarnase and Gurgun I was the first sign of this crisis. Holding the title of King of the K'art'velians signified precedence within the family, something well understood by the imperial court. Granting the dignity of *kouropalates* to a different branch of the Bagratid was meant to destabilize Tao-Klarjet'i.¹¹⁸ Byzantium feared that a Georgian ruler from the Bagratid dynasty holding both highest titles could become powerful enough to break free from the empire's influence.¹¹⁹

After the childless death of David II in 937, his younger brother Bagrat obtained the title of King of the K'art'velians and received the title of *magistros* from the emperor. It is worth noting that the Bagratid did not bestow the highest Georgian title on Ashot IV *kouropalates* due to his pro-Byzantine policy, which could have strengthened the emperor's influence in the Tao-Klarjet'i state. Between 945-958, no member of the family held the title of King of the K'art'velians, which, according to Georgian historians, was due to the growing influence of the empire in Tao-Klarjet'i. The title of *kouropalates* was given to Sumbat I, who simultaneously held the titles of *eristavt-eristavi* and *antipatos-patrikius*. It was only his son, Bagrat II Regweni (958-988), who was granted the title of King of the K'art'velians. The Byzantine policy of not awarding the title of *kouropalates* to a person holding the title of King of the K'art'velians lasted until 994.

116 See [Bakhtadze 2016: 215–216].

117 See [Bakhtadze 2016: 216].

118 See [Nikolaishvili 2019: 53].

119 M. Bakhtadze, "Kartuli da bizantiuri titulaturis urtiertmimarteba bagrationta sagwareulosi IX–X saukuneebsi" (Georgian and Byzantine Titles' Interrelation in the Bagrationi Dynasty in the 9th–10th Centuries), in *Sa k'art'velos istoriis institutis szromebi*, Tbilisi 2016, 213.

David III the Great (966-1001) initially ruled as a *magistros*, and by 994 he held two of the most important titles, both Georgian and Byzantine. This raises the question: why did Byzantium allow him to hold both titles? Primarily, Byzantium had no influence over the choice of the King of K'art'li, as this was exclusively a decision of the Bagratids. Moreover, during this period, David III the Great was the most powerful ruler in the South Caucasus. Furthermore, he bequeathed his wealth to the Byzantine emperor, which influenced Constantinople's decision.

In 1001, Bagrat III became the most powerful and influential ruler in Georgia, and therefore, he was granted the title of *kouropalates*. In *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis*,¹²⁰ it is written: "King Bagrat' of Abkhazeti and his father (Gurgen) came into his (Basil's) presence. And Basil granted to Gurgen the title of *magistros*, and to Bagrat' that of *kouropalates*, so as to cause enmity between father and son. However, Gurgen was a true and righteous man and no envy could be aroused in his heart by these means."¹²⁰ According to the Georgian author, Emperor Basil II (976-1025) violated the principle of seniority in awarding titles, intending to create conflict between father and son. In reality, it seems that the emperor rewarded Bagrat III with the title of *kouropalates* due to his higher position, as he was the King of Abkhazia and K'art'li, while Gurgen held the title of *mepet-mepe*, which was merely an honorary title.¹²¹

Byzantine titles such as *antipatos-patrikios* and *magistros* became common among the Georgian Bagratids in the ninth and tenth centuries, and during this period, these were honorary titles. The princes of Tao-Klarjet'i used Georgian and Byzantine titles interchangeably, some of which are preserved in the foundation inscriptions of churches. There was no strict rule in the use of these titles, but the title of *kouropalates* held the highest rank among the Bagratids and continued to have prestigious significance, being commonly used by the rulers of Tao-Klarjet'i. It is worth noting that later kings of unified Georgia held Byzantine titles until David IV, who renounced them, thus emphasizing the independence of the Kingdom of Georgia.¹²² After David IV, Georgian kings no longer bore any Byzantine titles.

Members of the ruling dynasty held both Georgian and Byzantine titles. By the late ninth century, the Tao-Klarjet'i dynasty had created

¹²⁰ The Georgian Chronicles of *K'art'lis c'xovreba*, (A History of Georgia), Tbilisi 2012, 10, and 217.

¹²¹ See [Bakhtadze 2016: 224].

¹²² See [Bichikashvili 2021: 6].

its own titles, which began to function alongside the Byzantine ones: *K'art'velta mepe* (King of K'art'li), *eristavt-eristavi*, and *eristavi*. In the Principality of Tao-Klarjet'i, the following Georgian titles for rulers were recorded: *mepe* (king), *mampali*, *K'art'velta mepe* (King of K'art'li), *eristavt-eristavi*, *eristavi*, and *mepet-mepe* (King of Kings), which developed in the second half of the tenth century.¹²³

It is noteworthy that in the early ninth century, there were only two Georgian titles in use: *mepe* and *mampali*. *Mepe* was an honorary title and could be used by any member of the Bagratid dynasty.¹²⁴ The origin and development of the title *mampali* are difficult to determine.¹²⁵ After the establishment of the hierarchical system in the late ninth century, it was not included, and after the death of David (d. 943), no member of the Bagratid dynasty bore this title again. The title *mampali* was an honorary one and was abolished at the end of the ninth century, then replaced by two new titles: *eristavt-eristavi*, and *eristavi*.¹²⁶ The title *mampali* was held by Guaram (d. 882), son of Ashot the Great, Sumbat I (d. 889), son of Adarnase (grandson of Ashot the Great), and later his children Bagrat I (d. 906) and David I (d. 946), who received it only after the death of his brother.

The title of King of the K'art'velians referred to the tradition initiated by Parnavaz I, who was the first to title himself as King of K'art'li (Iberia) in the 4th-3rd centuries BC. This tradition must have been deeply rooted in the consciousness of the Georgian aristocracy and was later revived by Ashot the Great, who made it a foundation to which Adarnase II referred. This title was a sign of glory and social status of the ruler, marking his personal ambitions, the scope and current power structure, and the territory over which he actually ruled or aspired to rule.¹²⁷ By adopting this title, Adarnase II was referring to the lands of K'art'li and the Kingdom of K'art'li.

The main idea behind adopting the new title was the desire to strengthen the state and oppose Byzantine policy, which aimed to keep its neighbor weak. One way of confronting the empire's policy was by creating

123 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 89].

124 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 93–94].

125 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 113].

126 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 114].

127 T. Pełech, "Studia nad tytułaturą Baldwina I, króla Jerozolimy (1100–1118)," in *Studia Źródłoznawcze*, vol. LXI, 2023, 12.

one's own titles.¹²⁸ Previously, the highest title was that of *kouropalates*. It seems that the rapid development of events required the creation of a new title. The introduction of the title King of the K'art'velians marked the creation of a new Georgian hierarchical system.¹²⁹ The creation of the new title demonstrated a drive for independence, as well as the ruler's ambitions as a South Caucasian leader. It is worth noting that this was not a matter of abandoning the title of *kouropalates*, as it still functioned within this system and held prestigious significance. The Byzantine side did not accept the title of King of the K'art'velians, considering the holder of the *kouropalates* title to be the most important representative of the Bagratid dynasty.

An important political factor that may have influenced the formation of the Georgian title was the restoration of the Kingdom of Armenia in 886 by Ashot I Bagratuni, as well as the revival of the political activity of the Kingdom of the Abkhazians. Another factor that might have driven Adarnase II was his personal ambition, as he considered himself the rightful successor, being the only direct heir of David, Bagrat I, and Ashot the Great, who all held the title of *kouropalates*.¹³⁰

According to historian M. Bakhtadze, the establishment of the title of King of the K'art'velians was the result of a collective decision by representatives of the Bagratid family.¹³¹ The King of the K'art'velians had the authority to grant the titles of *eristavi-eristavi* and *eristavi*, though this may also have been a joint decision by family members.¹³² There was a hierarchical dependence among the three Georgian titles. The King of the K'art'velians was recognized as the foremost ruler, to whom all the princes of the Bagratid family were subordinate, though all representatives of the dynasty conducted independent policies in their provinces.¹³³ The titles of *eristavi-eristavi* and *eristavi* were honorary titles and did not belong to the administrative hierarchy, but merely emphasized social status.¹³⁴

The Kings of the K'art'velians were: Adarnase II (888-923), David II, son of Adarnase II (923-937), Bagrat I, son of Adarnase II (937-945),

128 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 97–98].

129 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 97].

130 See [Tavadze, 2012: 82].

131 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 100].

132 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 113].

133 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 119–120].

134 See [Bakhtadze 2015: 120–121].

Bagrat II Regweni (958-994), David III the Great (994-1001), and Bagrat III (1001-1014).

The first *eristavt-eristavi* was Ashot III Kuchi (from 888-891 to 918), followed by: David II (896–908), Gurgen IV (908-941), sons of Adarnase II, Sumbat III Artanudjeli, son of David I *Mampali* (until 988), Sumbat I, son of Adarnase King of the K'art'velians (until 958), Bagrat IV, son of Adarnase III (until 966), David III the Great, son of Adarnase III (from 966), Bagrat II Regweni (until 958), and Sumbat II, son of Bagrat II Regweni (from 958-992). In Georgian sources, *eristavis* are also recognized as Gurgen III (d. 923), son of Bagrat I *Mampali* and David II, son of Adarnase King of the K'art'velians (897-923).

The last Georgian title *mepet-mepe* (King of Kings) was created as an honorary title for Gurgen II and introduced in the second half of the tenth century. This title became an integral part of the future titles of the Kings of Georgia.¹³⁵

To summarize, the first ruler to receive the title of *kouropalates* in 813 was Ashot I the Great. After his death, the title of *kouropalates* was bestowed upon his second son, Bagrat I, who established precedence within the Tao dynasty. This title began to play a significant role, and by the end of the ninth century, the title of *kouropalates* clearly belonged to the representatives of the Tao family. According to historians, holding this title indicated a dominant position among the Tao-Klarjet'i.

The acceptance of the *kouropalates* title by Gurgen in 881, followed by Adarnase II proclaiming himself King of the K'art'velians in 888, created an internal struggle for political hegemony. With the introduction of the title of King of the K'art'velians, a new titulature emerged, which shaped an original arrangement in the Georgian hierarchy within the Tao-Klarjet'i principality. This title introduced a dual-power system, destabilizing the family's position. By establishing the title of King of the K'art'velians, Adarnase II initiated a conflict among the Bagratid. His victory solidified his position, making him the supreme ruler to whom all princes of the dynasty were subordinate. Adarnase II also held the title of *kouropalates*, with both states (Tao-Klarjet'i and Byzantium) confirming his status, granting him precedence and dominance within the family.

After his death, these titles were divided among his sons, as the emperor did not wish to acknowledge the supreme political position of the King of the K'art'velians. The policy of the Constantinople authorities

¹³⁵ See [Bakhtadze 2015: 113].

continued until the end of the tenth century. Representatives of the Bagratid dynasty simultaneously held both Georgian and Byzantine titles. The title of *kouropalates* remained prestigious in Tao-Klarjet'i. It seems that the brothers were aware of their positions, as no conflict between them is recorded in sources, indicating that the position of the King of the K'art'velians was well established.

Byzantium did not recognize Georgian titles, with the empire's goal being to weaken its neighbor internally by granting its own titles. The Georgian and Byzantine titles existed separately, parallel to each other, with no connections or similarities. Moreover, in light of the political situation, Georgian titles stood in opposition to Byzantine ones.

Among Georgian rulers, titles such as *mepe*, *mampali*, *eristavt-eristavi*, *eristavi*, and *mepet-mepe* also existed. All of these were honorary titles, with *eristavt-eristavi* and *eristavi* being subordinate to the title of King of the K'art'velians. It is worth noting that Georgian princes in Tao-Klarjet'i operated on a collegial basis within their lands and conducted their policies independently of the family's overlord.

The Emergence of the Ideology of the Bagratid Dynasty

The origins of the Bagratid dynasty have been extensively studied by Georgian scholars. The dynasty's name appears in various forms; in Georgian historiography, the family is referred to as 'Bagratid,' while in Armenian, it is known as 'Bagratuni.' The suffix 'uni' contains an Urartian element, suggesting that the lineage has ancient roots.¹³⁶

There are several theories regarding the origin of the Bagratids family. The dynasty is believed to have originated from one of the oldest regions in Georgia, Speri (modern-day Īspir).¹³⁷ This territory was initially conquered by Armenia, later fell under Byzantine control from the fourth century to the ninth centuries, and was incorporated into the Tao-Klarjet'i principality in the ninth century.¹³⁸ According to the historical tradition preserved in the medieval Georgian chronicles known as *K'art'lis c'xovreba*, members of the Georgian Bagratid family began their political activity in the late sixth century. This was after the Kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia) was abolished by the Sasanian Empire, and the institution

¹³⁶ See [Movsēs Xorenac'i 2021: 58].

¹³⁷ M. Lordkipanidze, *Bagratioenebi – sak'art'velos sakhelmpioebriobis garanti* (The Bagrationi – the guarantors of Georgia's sovereignty), Tbilisi 2016, s. 151.

¹³⁸ See [Ninidze 2003: 196].

of the *erismtavari* was reinstated in K'art'li, with Guaram being chosen for the role. Guaram is considered the founder of the Georgian Bagratid dynasty. He was the grandson of King Vakhtang Gorgasali through his mother, who belonged to the Chosroids (Xosroianis) dynasty,¹³⁹ and his father, who was of Bagratid descent. The Bagratids' beginnings are tied to Guaram, who, according to the Georgian chronicle, was named "And this Guaram eristavi of K'art'li is a progeny of the Bagrat'ionis. And the Bagrat'ionis of K'art'li are grandchildren and kinsmen of this Guaram."¹⁴⁰ This dynastic connection enabled Guaram (from whom the name of the Guaramid princely house is derived)¹⁴¹ to hold the position of *erismtavari*. After him, the office was held by his son and grandson, after which the Chosroid royal dynasty returned to the *erismtavari* throne of K'art'li.

According to some historians, the Bagratids first appeared in Georgia in the eighth century. Without a doubt, the establishment of the Tao-Klarjet'i dynasty and state occurred in the late eighth century during the reign of Ashot the Great. The Bagratids were the only princely dynasty ruling in Georgia to create a political ideology that enabled them to aspire to power in Georgia. The theory of their biblical origin took shape in the early ninth century during Ashot the Great's reign.¹⁴² The emergence of this theory during his rule is also confirmed by a bas-relief on the southern facade of the church in Opiza.¹⁴³ The bas-relief depicts Ashot the Great holding a model of a church, blessed by Jesus Christ, with King David, the biblical ancestor of the Bagratids, praying beside him. In the Middle Ages, the ideology of power was an essential tool for legitimizing authority, referencing the Christian model where monarchical power was granted by God. The Bagratid dynasty traced its lineage to King David of Israel, thereby connecting their origin to Mary and Jesus Christ, who

139 The Chosroid dynasty was a royal dynasty that ruled the Kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia) from the fourth century to the eighth century. The first king of the dynasty was Mirian III, who adopted Christianity and made it the official religion in the fourth century. After the abolition of the Kingdom of K'art'li (Iberia) by the Sassanids in the sixth century, the dynasty continued in two princely branches: the older Chosroids and the younger Guaramids. It is worth noting that representatives of the Chosroid royal dynasty alternated in holding the office of *erismtavari* with the Guaramid princely house until the end of the eighth century.

140 *The Georgian Chronicles of K'art'lis c'xovreba* (A History of Georgia), Tbilisi 2012, 30, and 211–212.

141 The Guaramid princely house, a younger branch of the royal Chosroid family, ruled Iberia as *erismtavris*. Three members were granted the title of *kouropalates* by the Byzantine imperial court.

142 See [Lordkipanidze 2016: 155–156].

143 I. Bichikashvili, *The Bagrationi Dynasty: The Royal House of Georgia and Lesser Houses of Nobility*, Tbilisi 2021, 19.

were also descendants of David. The Bagratids reinforced the supremacy of their family, and the theory of their biblical origin justified their claims to primacy, strengthening and confirming them as God's chosen rulers.

Several works explain the origin of the Bagratid dynasty. In addition to Georgian writings, works from neighboring countries, such as Byzantine and Armenian sources, also contain the Georgian ideology. The earliest source for research is the *History of Armenia* by Movsēs Xorenac'i, written in the fifth century, which exclusively describes the Jewish origin of the Bagratids, without mentioning their biblical ancestry. The first time the Georgian theory was included was by John Draskhanakertsi in his *History of Armenia* from the first half of the tenth century. The Armenian author considered the Bagratid family as descendants of King David, likely encountering this theory during his stay at the court of the Georgian ruler Adarnase II. It is worth noting that Georgian historiographical tradition also regarded the Armenian Bagratids as descendants of the Prophet David.¹⁴⁴ Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, in his work *De Administrando Imperio*, written between 948 and 952, created a different version based on Georgian tradition. The earliest Georgian account that incorporated the idea of the family's biblical origin is found in *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory* from the second half of the tenth century, authored by the Georgian hagiographer George Merchule. In the eleventh century work *Mat'iane K'art'li* (The Chronicle of K'art'li), we find a brief mention of their biblical origin. A detailed description of the Bagratid dynasty's genealogy can be found in Sumbat Davit'is-dze's *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis*, dating from the eleventh century.

The purpose of these works was to present the legend, history of their family, and founders, who influenced both Georgian and Armenian historiographical traditions. A characteristic feature of these stories was the description of the Bagratid genealogy, intended to strengthen their family and create an ideological basis justifying their political aspirations.

The early emergence of the Bagratid family on the political scene contributed to the creation of various legends regarding their origins. One of the earliest works preserved in Armenian historiography is the *History of Armenia* by Movsēs Xorenac'i (Movses Khorenats), written in the fifth century. Movses was the first to ascribe Jewish origins to the Armenian Bagratids (Bagratuni), considering them Jews who practiced Judaism and

¹⁴⁴ M. Surguladze, "Bagrationia carmohobis bibliuri legenda" (The Biblical Legend of the Bagrationi Dynasty) in *Klio* 22, Tbilisi 2004, 3.

originated from the province of Speri, later settling in Armenia and being granted the honor of crowning the kings.¹⁴⁵ Movses' initial narrative describes events during the Babylonian captivity, involving Shambat – a distinguished military figure and future founder of the Armenian Bagratid dynasty. “It is said that Hrachya¹⁴⁶ persuaded Nebuchadnezzar to release one of the Jewish leaders in captivity named Shambat, whom he then brought with great honor and settled in our country. The chronicler claims that the Bagratuni family traces its origins back to him.”¹⁴⁷ After Shambat's release, he arrived in Armenia, and his descendants, including Bagrat, were honored with the right to crown kings due to their loyalty to the King of Armenia. “Above all, out of gratitude for the favor and loyalty shown by the wise man Bagrat, a descendant of Shambat who was of Jewish origin, he was granted the hereditary privilege of placing the crown on the heads of the Arsacid kings, and his descendants were given the right to the honorable name of the Bagratuni family. This family is now one of the highest in our country.”¹⁴⁸ The Armenian Bagratids, through their respect, held a high position in the kingdom's hierarchy.

It is worth noting that Movses refers to the Bible but does not trace their lineage to David. The Jewish origin is also mentioned in Georgian sources, which likely borrowed it from the Armenian historian. Moreover, a different version preserved by the seventh century Armenian historian Sebeos traced the Bagratid origins to Hayk, the legendary mythological hero considered the progenitor of the Armenian nation.¹⁴⁹ The biblical origin of the Armenian Bagratids is initially attested only in Georgian sources. It should be emphasized that the Armenian Bagratid dynasty did not gain power in Armenia until the second half of the ninth century. The Georgian Bagratids created this ideology first when they came to power in Tao-Klarjet'i (in the early ninth century) to ideologically justify the legitimacy of their rule.

The legend of the Armenian Bagratids' descent from the biblical King David is contained in the *History of Armenia* by Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i, written in the early tenth century. The author refers to

¹⁴⁵ The Bagratuni family had the privilege of coronating kings. Aristocrats belonging to this family were hereditary tagadirs, which literally means ‘crown putters on.’

¹⁴⁶ Hrachya, the legendary king of Armenia from the kingdom of Arme-Supria (Nairi) of the Haikazunich dynasty (circa 800–331 BC.). In Armenian, Hracja means ‘fiery-eyed.’

¹⁴⁷ See [Movsēs Xorenac'i 2021: 78].

¹⁴⁸ See [Movsēs Xorenac'i 2021: 104].

¹⁴⁹ See [Lordkipanidze 216: 132].

two historical traditions, Armenian and Georgian, tracing the Bagratid lineage to Shambat and King David. The author adopted this new idea: ‘First he designated as his coronant Bagarat, a descendant of the Jewish Sambat, who, they say, was of the family of David, since he had willingly offered his services to him before most of the others, Vatarsak also appointed him sparapet [and put him] in charge of thousands and myriads of soldiers.’¹⁵⁰

Yovhannes Drasxanakerc’i served as Catholicos (patriarch) of Armenia from 897 to 929. It is worth noting that the author likely became acquainted with the Georgian legend during his stay at the court of the Georgian ruler Adarnase II, King of K’art’li.¹⁵¹ This is the earliest account of this legend. The earliest Georgian source dates only from the second half of the tenth century. This suggests that the legend must have existed in oral or written form, which has not survived. Armenian tradition did not develop the theory of the Bagratids’ biblical origin, as evidenced by the work of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, which did not contain information about the biblical origin of the Armenian family.¹⁵² This work was written a few years after the death of Yovhannes Drasxanakerc’i. The Armenian Bagratids did not show interest in the biblical ideology and its development compared to the Georgian rulers.¹⁵³

In his work *De Administrando Imperio*, the emperor provided interesting information about various peoples bordering the Byzantine Empire. Chapters 45 and 46 are devoted to the events concerning the eastern neighbor, the principality of Tao-Klarjet’i. Constantine begins his narrative with the story of the origin and arrival of the Iberians in the Caucasus: “The Iberians, I mean, those who belong to the *kouropalates*, pique themselves upon their descent from the wife of Uriah, with whom David, the prophet and king, committed adultery: for they say they are descended from the children she bore to David and are related to David, the prophet and king, and consequently to the most holy Mother of God also, inasmuch as she was by descent of the seed of David. For this reason also the great ones of the Iberians take in marriage their female relatives without impediment, believing that they are preserving the ancient ordinance; and

150 Yovhannes Drasxanakerc’i, *History of Armenia*. English translation and study of John Kat’oghikos’ *History* by Translation and Commentary by Rev. Krikor H. Maksoudian. Scholars Press Atlanta, Georgia, 1987, IV, 73.

151 See [Nikolaishvili 2019: 56].

152 Ibid.

153 C. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, Washington D.C., 1967, 329.

they say that they originate from Jerusalem and were warned by an oracular dream to migrate thence and to settle over toward the region of Persia, that is to say, in the country where they live now.”¹⁵⁴

Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus was familiar with the Georgian tradition, which he transformed by tracing the entire Iberian people back to the prophet David. Thus, the emperor defined the Iberians as an exceptional people. The emperor clearly stated that the Iberians were descendants of Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba, who in turn was the wife of King David and mother of Solomon, thereby connecting their lineage to Mary, who was also a descendant of David. They came from Jerusalem, which they left four or five hundred years ago. According to historians, this legend was long spread orally before being adopted in a separate Byzantine version.¹⁵⁵ The emperor affirmed a deeply rooted Georgian tradition. It is worth noting that the Byzantine version differs fundamentally from the Georgian one. First and foremost, the emperor did not include information about the Bagratid dynasty’s biblical origin but emphasized that the Iberians were related by blood and descended from their common ancestor, King David. An interesting and difficult issue to investigate is why the emperor attributed a biblical origin to the people, not just the dynasty. The emperor was familiar with the Georgian tradition, so he discussed it in his work.

The ancestors of the Iberians settled in the Caucasus, and Constantine VII referred to this area as the ‘region of Persia,’ which may suggest that the Iberians settled near the borders of Persia. Certainly, an interesting aspect of the work is the custom of marrying within one’s group, referred to as the ‘ancient custom.’

A particularly interesting and noteworthy issue in the Byzantine work is the familial connection between the two brothers, David and the heroic Spandiatīs. The emperor describes, ‘They who were warned by the oracle and came out of Jerusalem were the former David and his brother Spandiatīs, which Spandiatīs had received from God a boon, as they pretend, that in battle the sword should not touch him in any member of his body save only in the heart, which he used to protect by a sort of covering in battles. On this account the Persians were dismayed at and feared him, and he overcame them and mastered them and settled his Iberian kinsmen in the difficult territories now possessed by them; whence by degrees they

¹⁵⁴ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, transl. R.J.H. Jenkins, Washington 1967, 45, 205.

¹⁵⁵ See [Surguladze 2004: 6].

expanded and increased and grew into a great nation. Thereafter, when the emperor Heraclius marched against Persia, they united and campaigned with him, and as a result, through the dread inspired by Heraclius, emperor of the Romans, rather than by their own strength and power, they subdued a great number of cities and countries of the Persians. For once the emperor Heraclius had routed the Persians and had forcibly brought their empire to an end, the Persians were easily defeated and mastered, not by the Iberians only, but by the Saracens as well.¹⁵⁶

The amazing story of the ancestors of the Iberians, David and Spandiatis, can be described as a piece of literary fiction.¹⁵⁷ There are no Georgian sources that confirm the tales of David and Spandiatis. According to the emperor, they were the ancestors of the Iberians, who left Jerusalem on the advice of an oracle and settled in the ‘region of Persia,’ where they then founded their kingdom. The background to Constantine’s story was the conflict between Byzantium and Persia, which were constantly at war with each other. The valiant hero Spandiatis possessed a unique quality granted by God. He was fearless and courageous, instilling terror among the Persians. Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus admired the legendary ancestor of the Iberians and clearly emphasized that because of his bravery, today’s inhabitants currently live in the lands that were then conquered and subsequently settled by them. The emperor wholeheartedly accepted this vision and referred to them as a ‘great nation.’ In his narrative, Emperor Constantine emphasized the alliance between the Byzantines and the Iberians that took place during the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610–641), who was known for his numerous wars against the Persians. It seems that with the help of Emperor Heraclius, the Iberians expanded their territory and created a strong state.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus highlighted the extraordinary tradition the Bagratids maintained regarding Jerusalem. The memory of the Holy Land was constantly alive among them, evidenced by their custom of sending large sums of money, even though their ancestors had left the town hundreds of years earlier: “And because they originated, as they themselves say, from Jerusalem, for this reason they are very loyal to it and to the sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ, and from time to time they send large sums of money to the patriarch of the holy town and to the

¹⁵⁶ See [Constantine Porphyrogenitus 1967: 205–207].

¹⁵⁷ J. Banaszkievicz, *Młodzieńcze gesta Bolesława Krzywoustego, czyli jak zostaje się prawdziwym rycerzem i władcą*, in *idem, Takie sobie średniowieczne bajeczki*, Kraków 2013, 563–585.

Christians there.”¹⁵⁸ For centuries, Georgian kings of the Bagratid dynasty sent donations to Jerusalem. It is worth adding that a special tax was imposed for this purpose, known as ‘saerusalimo,’ which translates to ‘for Jerusalem.’¹⁵⁹ It seems that for the emperor, this was an exceptional and rare custom, which is likely why he included it in his work. It is worth noting that for the Bagratids, this was also an ideological and political mechanism that allowed them to maintain a bond with the Holy Land and constantly remind the population of their Davidic origin.

The earliest work that contains the idea of the biblical origin of the Bagratids is *The life and work of our Father Archimandrite Gregory*. In his address, Father Gregory spoke to Ashot Kouropalates, saying, “You, a ruler called forth as a child of David, the Prophet, the Lord’s anointed one! May Christ God establish His monarchy and virtues for you, because of which I shall now tell you: May you children and their offspring not be deprived of the governance of this country forever, instead they shall by stronger than the firmest walls and eternal mountains, and be glorious forever.”¹⁶⁰

George Merchule’s work directly references the tradition that existed during the time of Ashot I the Great. According to this tradition, Ashot the Great was recognized as a descendant of the prophet King David and chosen as God’s representative on earth, to whom a kingdom was given so that he might rule it eternally and justly. This narrative is somewhat akin to a prayer and simultaneously serves as testimony to the royal power of the Bagratids, which was becoming increasingly strong and enduring. Ashot I the Great received charisma and blessing from God and was chosen by Him to lead his people. It is worth noting that Gregory of Chandzta also referred to future generations that he blessed.

After Ashot the Great’s death, his second son, Bagrat, was chosen as *kouropalates*. The author of the work explained this decision, stating, “Bagrat was the greatest among them in wisdom, appearance, valor, and in the uttermost perfect oiety. He was similar to the Prophet David, the blessed Apostle Bagrat, and the priest-martyr, the Apostle and disciple Saint Peter, by truly honoring God. Through the grace of Christ, the mon-

158 See [Banaszkiewicz 2013: 207].

159 See [Bichikashvili 2021: 17].

160 George Merchule, *The life of St. Gregory of Khandzta*, transl. Theophan Eirik Halvorson. The Diocese on Nikozi and Tskhinvali, 2015: 55.

archy of the three sovereign brothers expanded, because they seized much land by the sword through the help of God and drove out the Muslims.”¹⁶¹

Bagrat was the second son of Ashot the Great, but he received power over the principality. His characterization was based on qualities commonly regarded as noble, reminiscent of the attributes of King David and Bagrat, the disciple of the apostle Peter. An interesting aspect is the issue of the disciple’s name, which directly alluded to him. Georgian historiography significantly highlighted the figure of the King of Israel, to whom Bagrat was compared. King David was the ideal ruler, an outstanding figure, a symbol of a just leader and religious authority. His reign was a period of military successes that contributed to the expansion of Israel’s territory. During his reign, the kingdom reached the peak of its political, economic, and cultural power. David was a capable politician who united the tribes of Israel, creating a strong and organized state. Besides King David’s military achievements, the divine election of David held particular significance for the Bagratids, as he had a special connection with God and grace. The Georgian rulers Ashot and Bagrat were recognized as descendants of David, who inherited his charisma, and their rule was expected to bring similar achievements. It is important to emphasize that Bagrat also received God’s assistance, ‘with God’s help, he defeated numerous states with his sword.’ Saint Gregory of Chandzta’s words highlight the importance of the Bagratid dynasty, who were held in great respect, considered descendants of the prophet David, and whose power was thus divinely ordained.

The complete description of the legend regarding the origin and arrival of the ancestors of the Bagratid dynasty in the land of K’art’li is presented in the eleventh century work *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat’ionis* by Sumbat Davit’is-dze, who belonged to the Bagratid family. The chronicler provided a detailed account of the family’s history and their genealogy. This work contains the most elaborate version of the Bagratid legend, providing a detailed description of their family tree, tracing their lineage from Adam to the biblical David, and down to Guaram, the supposed founder of the dynasty.¹⁶²

Sumbat Davit’is-dze begins his work with a description: “Adam begat Seit, Seit begat Enos ... Lamek begat Noe, Noe begat Sem. Sem begat Arpaksad ... Iese begat David King, King David begat Solomon. Solomon

¹⁶¹ See [George Merchule 2015, 89].

¹⁶² See [Nikolaishvili 2019: 56].

begat Robuam ... Ierobem begat Mose. Mose begat Iuda ... Dan begat Solomon. Solomon begat seven brothers, whom God gave to him while he was in captivity."¹⁶³ He then adds: "These seven brothers, sons of Solomon (Jews who set out from the land of Palestine and escaped captivity) came to Queen Rakael in Akilisena. They were baptized by her, and they settled in the land of Somkhiti. To this day their descendants rule in Somkhiti. And the other four brothers came to K'art'li. One of them, named Guaram, was elected the *eristavi* of K'art'li. And this Guaram *eristavi* of K'art'li is a progeny of the Bagrat'ionis. And the Bagrat'ionis of K'art'li are grandchildren and kinsmen of this Guaram. Guaram's brother, Sahak', went to K'akheti. He became related to Nerse through marriage."¹⁶⁴

From this description, several interesting facts emerge. First, the author clearly draws inspiration from the Book of Genesis, tracing the Bagratid lineage back to the biblical prophet David. Georgian and Armenian Bagratids share a common Jewish ancestry, and their reign is blessed by God because this lineage inherited charisma and exceptional qualities, and their genealogical connection established the political dominance of the family. Sumbat's work contains a version of the family legend that became the foundation of the Bagratid dynasty's ideological and political worldview.

Next, the author emphasized that they originated from the ancient land of Palestine and 'came out of captivity,' most likely referring to the Babylonian captivity, during which some Jews were exiled to Babylon. Seven sons of Solomon arrived in the town of Eklec and were baptized by Queen Rakaela, highlighting the special purpose of their settlement in the territory of Armenia and Georgia. Thus, the sacred mission of the dynasty was accomplished.¹⁶⁵ After baptism, some of them remained in Armenia, while another group settled in Georgian lands. Neither the town of Eklec nor Rakaela is known to historians. Additionally, Sumbat made Guaram the ancestor of the Bagratids. Guaram was assigned the role of father and founder of the dynasty, directly descending from the biblical King David. This connection allowed the Bagratids to link their dynasty with King Vakhtang Gorgasali, often regarded as an archetypal ruler.

The information provided by Sumbat Davit'is-dze aligns with the details given by Movses and Constantine Porphyrogenitus. A similar anal-

¹⁶³ See [Sumbat Davit'is-dze, *Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis* 2004: 211].

¹⁶⁴ See [Sumbat Davit'is-dze 2004: 211–212].

¹⁶⁵ See [Surguladze 2004: 9–10].

ogy to the Babylonian captivity was used by the Georgian author, who considered the Bagratids to be Jews exiled from Judah who reached the Caucasus. Sumbat likely utilized Armenian tradition for this purpose. There is no doubt that according to the Georgian historian, both families shared a common ancestor and then, upon reaching Queen Rakaela, split into two lines that gave rise to separate royal families. According to the emperor, the Bagratids arrived in Georgian lands around four hundred or five hundred years ago.¹⁶⁶ From the comparison of the two sources, it appears that the ancestors of the Bagratids may have held the position of *erismtavari* of K'art'li as early as the sixth century, so Guaram can be considered the father of the dynasty.¹⁶⁷

In the next passage, we read: “At that time Samoel was the *katholikos* of Mtskheta, and all K'art'li came together and elected Guaram, a descendant of David, who had come together with his brothers Asam and Varazvard, as mentioned above. These [seven] brothers, Jews who escaped captivity in the land of Palestine arrived from Akilisena, where Queen Rakael had baptized them. Queen Rakael changed the names of three of them: one she named Mushel, one - Bagrat', who is the father of the Bagrat'ionis and the third – Abgavar. She (Rakael) made one of them her son-in-law; the other two (she) connected to the kings of Somkhiti through marriage. And these four brothers came to K'art'li, as we mentioned above. And one of them, Guaram, was appointed *eristavi*.”¹⁶⁸

The chronicler repeats earlier information, but it is worth noting the story of Queen Rakaela, who baptized the brothers and gave three of them new names, calling one Bagrat, who is the founder of the Armenian Bagratid line. She made one of them her son-in-law and married two to the rulers of Armenia. It seems that the description of Queen Rakaela's character showed her role as a godmother, who supported the descendants of the biblical prophet in establishing their position in the Caucasus region.

The legend of the biblical origin of the Bagratids is assessed in modern Georgian historiography as an attempt to theoretically justify the political dominance of the dynasty, which sought to strengthen its power. Sumbat Davit'is-dze's legend shares several similarities with the work of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. Sumbat aimed to present the history of

¹⁶⁶ See [Bichikashvili 2021: 19].

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ See [Sumbat Davit'is-dze 2004: 212].

the Bagratid family, while Emperor Constantine sought to depict the origin of the Iberian people. Both versions differ fundamentally in content but also share certain similarities. In both works, the biblical motif was clearly used, which allowed them to theoretically justify their uniqueness.

The last work containing information about the kinship between the Bagratid family and the biblical David is preserved in the eleventh century source *Mat'iane K'art'li* (The Chronicle of K'art'li), written by an anonymous Georgian chronicler. The description at the beginning of the work shows the marriage alliance between the Chosroid dynasty and the Bagratids, "This Juansher married Adarnase's daughter, Latavri by name, a descendant of the Bagratids. Juansher's mother rebuked him for marrying Latavri, for she was not aware that the Bagratids were the descendants of David the Prophet who was called the Father of God in the flesh. But when she saw her son's wife she liked and blessed her."¹⁶⁹ The narrative concerns the marriage between Juansher and Latavri. "Jansher was the son of Archil, the *erismtavari* of K'art'li and prince of Kakheti, who belonged to the older line of the Chosroid dynasty, while Latavri, according to the author, came from the Bagratid family and was the sister of Ashot the Great. The author emphasizes that Latavri descended from a lineage directly related to the prophet David, who was chosen to 'bring forth the Son of God.'" The uniqueness of the dynasty and their selection as the appropriate representatives of God on earth is reaffirmed.

From the fifth century, the theory of the Jewish origin of the dynasty was established and accepted by Georgian and Byzantine works. Later, the idea of the Bagratids was expanded to include a biblical aspect, as reflected in tenth and eleventh century Armenian, Byzantine, and Georgian works. However, the most important source for studying the history of the Bagratid dynasty, which provides the most complete picture, is the work written by Sumbat Davit'is-dze, who deliberately created a legend that became the foundation of the dynasty's ideology and influenced the worldview of the Bagratid family. The theory of the dynasty's biblical origin was also continued by later authors, such as the anonymous historian of David IV the Builder, who lived in the 12th century and recognized the King of Georgia as the seventy-eight descendant of the biblical King David.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ *Mat'iane K'art'li* (The Chronicle of K'art'li) 30, 141–142.

¹⁷⁰ See [Bichikashvili 2021: 13–14].

Among the Georgian rulers of Tao-Klarjet'i, the memory of their descent from King David was cultivated, as evidenced by the tradition of naming their sons David. The first ruler to bear this name was David I *Kouropalates* (876–881), the son of Bagrat I *Kouropalates* and the grandson of Ashot the Great.

Conclusion

The title of *kouropalates* had been established since 813, signifying a dominant role among the representatives of the Tao-Klarjet'i family. In 888, Adarnase II introduced the title 'King of the Kouropalates,' creating a new titulary that reshaped the original structure of the Georgian hierarchy within the Tao-Klarjet'i principality. This new title disrupted the family's position, as it established a dual-power system. By creating the title 'King of the K'art'velians,' Adarnase II ignited conflict within the Bagratid dynasty. His victory solidified his position, making him the supreme ruler to whom all dynastic princes were subject. Adarnase II also held the title of *kouropalates*, further affirming his precedence and dominance within the family. From the first half of the ninth century, the Byzantine authorities began to significantly alter their policies, with the emperor unwilling to recognize the supreme political status of the 'King of the K'art'velians.'

This policy from Constantinople persisted until the end of the tenth century. Members of the Bagratid dynasty held both Georgian and Byzantine titles concurrently. These Georgian and Byzantine titles existed independently, without any connections or similarities. The legend of the biblical origin of the Bagratid dynasty emerged in the early ninth century during the reign of Ashot the Great.

Georgian sources unequivocally trace the Bagratids' lineage to the prophet David, King of Israel. This tradition was preserved and spread to neighboring regions, including Byzantium and Armenia, eventually developing into distinct versions. During the Christian era, the legend of biblical descent was widespread. It is worth noting that the Georgian ideology was not unique for the time; the Bagratids were not the only dynasty claiming direct descent from the biblical David. Medieval rulers often referred to King David, as he was regarded as a prominent monarch, a figure, and a symbol of a ruler ordained by God.

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Fig. 1. Stone relief of the famous Georgian ruler Ashot Kouropalates from Opiza, 829 AD

The History of Tao Monasteries – Oshki, Khakhuli, Parkhali and Otkhta churches

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Abstract

David III Kurapalates (c. 930s-1001) built the monasteries of Oshki, Parkhali, Khakhuli, and Otkhta. These monasteries of Tao triggered a great cultural activity and became significant literary centers. As our research shows, Tao monasteries played a significant monastic and cultural role in the development of medieval Georgia. Tao figures had an active relationship with the great religious and cultural centers abroad.

After the conquest of Samtskhe-Saatabago by the Ottomans, taos monasteries were emptied and the monastic life here ceased.

Keywords: Tao, Oshki, Khakhuli, Parkhali, Otkhta, Samtskhe-Saatabago.

It occupied the middle part of Tao Chorokhi (with right and left tributaries) and was divided into Imieri Tao (Upper Tao) and Amieri Tao (Lower Tao). The border between them ran along the lower part of the river Oltisistskali (today's Oltu Çayı) and Bardusistskali (today's Bardu Çayı). Both Taos (Upper and Lower), in turn, split into even smaller "countries": Gurji-Bogaz, Parkhali / Asis-Pori, Bana Taoskari, Panaskerti, Tortomi, Oltisi, Mamrovani / Bughatakuri, Partizi Ravine, Chakieti. Several administrative centers were formed in Lower Tao in the 9th-10th centuries – Kalmakhi, Panaskerti and Bana, while the center of Upper Tao was the fortress-city of Oltisi.¹

¹ Tao – Tao-Klarjeti, Historical and cultural essays = Burchuladze, N., Gagoshidze, G., Gujejiani, R., Kudava B., Zhghenti, N., Saitidze, G., Poniava, N., Chkhikvadze, N., Cheishvili, G., Khizanishvili, N., Tao-Klarjeti: Historical and cultural essays, Tbilisi 2018.

The main road from Asia Minor to Georgia passed through Imieri Tao. According to later data, there was also customs operating near Tortomi. It is possible that the Tortomi customs functioned in the 10th century as well; “In any case, the flourishing trade and the well organized collection of trade revenues should have created the wealth, which would have given the opportunity to the Georgian Kuropalates to erect the magnificent temples of Oshki, Khakhuli, Parkhali and the Otkhta Eklesia.”²

David III Kurapalates (died in 1001) built the monasteries of Oshki, Parkhali, Khakhuli, and Otkhta. These monasteries of Tao triggered a great cultural activity and became significant literary centers. David Kurapalates showed great interest in the ongoing translation activities at Athos. John of Athens sent Ekvtime’s translations to David Kurapalates. Giorgi of Mtatsminda mentions that the King of Tao was “filled with joy” and asked him to “translate and send” again.³

The monasteries of Oshki,⁴ Khakhuli,⁵ Otkhta Eklesia⁶ should have been of the Lavra⁷ type. So far, we have not been able to find similar

² Cheisvili, Byzantine Commonwealth = *Bizantiuri tanamegobroba da kavkasiuri tanamegobroba, sakartvelo da bizantiuri tanamegobroba: politika, kultura da identoba imperiis sazghvrebze (XI saukune)* (Byzantine Commonwealth and Caucasian Commonwealth, Georgia and Byzantine Commonwealth: Politics Culture and Identity on the Imperial Frontiers (11th Century), Tbilisi 2023: 19.

³ Giorgi of Mtatsminda, *C’xovrebay iovanesi da eptvimesi, red. ilia abuladze, dzveli kartuli agiografiuli literaturis dzeglebi* (The Life of Iovane and Euthymius, Old Georgian hagiographic literature, Ed. I. Abuladze, vol. II), Tbilisi 1967: 61.

⁴ Gospel testament of Mestia – „აღწერე ლავრასა შინა კურთხეულისა წმიდისა და წინამორბედისა იოანესა თქს“ (I described it in the Lavra named after St John the Baptist in Oshkshi) (309v) (*Siloga va*, Svaneti = *siloga va v.*, svanetis tserilobiti dzeglebi, I, istoriuli sabutebi da sulta matianeebi, (*Siloga va*, V., Written monuments of Svaneti: Historical documents and commemoration of souls (Vol. 1). Tbilisi 1986: 42).

⁵ “The Life of Ioane and Ekvtime” – „იოანესა და ექვთიმეს ცხოვრება“ – „მას ჟამსა შინა სანატრელი და წმიდა ბერი იოანე გრძელის ძე ცხოვრებდოდა ვითარცა უჯორცოდ დაყუდებით ოთხთა ეკლესიათა ლავრასა შინა“ (At that time, the holy monk Ioane the son of Grdzeli lived like an angel in the Lavra of the Otkhta Eklesia) (*Giorgi of Mtatsminda, The Life of Iovane and Euthymius = giorgi mtatsmindeli, c’xovrebay iovanesi da ptvimesi*“, red. ilia abuladze, dzveli kartuli agiografiuli literaturis dzeglebi, t. II, (Old Georgian hagiographic literature (I. Abuladze, Ed.) (Vol. II). Tbilisi 1967: 56).

⁶ “The Life of Giorgi of Mtatsmindeli” – „ხოლო ვითარცა ვთქუთ, იხილეს რამ კეთილთა მათ ბერთა ძმისწული თჳსი ესრეთ შემჯული, მიჰყარეს იგი (აქ საუბარია ვიღვნი მთაწმინდელზე) მამასა მაკარის, რომელ-იგი მას ჟამსა ღირსებისათჳს მისისა წინამძღუარი იყო დიდისა შის ლავრისად (იგულისხმება ხახული)“ (As we have already said, when the monks saw the excellence of their nephew, he was taken to Father Macarius, who at that time was the archpriest of this great Lavra because of his dignity.) (*Giorgi mtsire, C’xovreba giorgi mtatsmindelisai*, red. Iliia Abuladze, *Dzveli kartuli agiografiuli literaturis dzeglebi* (Giorgi the Lesser, *Life of Giorgi of Mtatsmindeli*, Old Georgian hagiographic literature (I. Abuladze, Ed.) (Vol. II). Tbilisi 1967: 115).

⁷ In Lavra-type monasteries, hermits lived in separated monk’s cells. They spent the whole week

information about the Parkhali monastery, and therefore we assume that Parkhali could have been a monastery of the Cenobitic type.

In historical Tao, there were two episcopates: Bana and Ishkhani.

According to the chronicle of Sumbat son of David, the Episcopal Cathedral of Bana was erected by the Georgian King Adarnase (888-923) and Kvirike of Bana became the first bishop of Bana diocese.⁸ According to the list of episcopates of Samtskhe-Saatabago, the parish of Bana was “The entire Bani, Taoskari, Panaskerti, Harizi Gorge, All Oltisi, Namurkani.”⁹

According to the author of “The Life of Grigol of Khandzta”, Ishkhani Church was erected by catholicos Nerses.¹⁰ initially he founded the Episcopal Cathedral of Ishkhani.¹¹ In the 20s of the 9th century, Saba restored the Ishkhani church, which was “widowed” at that time. He was appointed as the bishop of Ishkhani.¹² (Giorgi Merchule 1963: 274). In the historical document “The Bishops and Parishes under the Catholicos

praying, fasting and crafting in their cells. On weekends, all the anchorites, except for the hermits and those who lived in a particularly strict ascetic manner – the recluses, gathered in the main church of Lavra to participate in the divine service. Monks in cenobitic type monasteries had daily interactions with each other. They gathered every day in churches for various church services, had a daily common meal (twice a day). One of the types of handicrafts of the monks living in the monasteries of the cenobitic type, who devoted most of the day to various economic work: winemaking, farming, workshop work, was calligraphy and manuscript copying. A subspecies of the Lavra type monasteries is the so-called Hybrid type, i.e. Byzantine Lavra – semi-cenobitic settlements, which unite monks and anchorites living directly in the cenobium, who obey the head of the monastery (Cenobiarch) and the rules adopted in the monastery, but live in hand-made tents or caves located far from the cenobium, and on weekends they join the residents of the cenobium monks to participate in the divine service held in the cenobitic church and to share a common meal (Tseradze, Monastic life = Samonastro c’xovreba da ganstsvla kristianul askezashi (Monastic life and study in Christian asceticism), *Mrvaultavi 19*, Tbilisi 2001: 139-140).

⁸ Sumbat Davit’is-dze, *C’xovreba da utskebai bagrationiantai, K’art’lis c’xovreba*, r. metrevelis redaktsiit (K’art’lis c’xovreba [History of Georgia], Sumbat son of Davit, The Life and Tale of the Bagrationis, ed. R. Metreveli), Tbilisi 2008, 366.

⁹ Surguladze, historical documents = Kartuli istoriuli sabutebi (XVI saukune, kartuli da samtskhe-saatabago), sheadgina da kartuli tekstebi gamosatsemad moamzada Mz. Surguladze m, sparsuli tekstebi moamzada tamaz abashidzem (Georgian historical documents 16th century (Kartli and Samtskhe-Saatabago), Georgian texts prepared by Mzia Surguladze, Persian texts prepared by Tamaz Abashidze, (Vol. IV), Tbilisi 2016, 194.

¹⁰ Giorgi Merchule, Life Grigol Archimandrite = *Shromai da moghuatsebai ghirsad c’xovreba tsmidisa da netarisa mamisa chuenisa grigoli arkimandritisai, khandtisa da shatberdis aghmsheneblisai, da mis tana khsebeba mravalta mamata netarta, dzveli kartuli agiografiuli literaturis dzegebi* (Decent life and works of the holy and blessed father of ours, Grigol Archimandrite, founder of Khandsta and Shatberdi, and all together, narration on many blessed Father, Old Georgian hagiographic literature (I. Abuladze, Ed.) (Vol. I). Tbilisi 1963: 274.

¹¹ Silogava, Shengelia, Tao-Klarjeti = *Tao-klarjeti* (Tao-klarjeti), Tbilisi 2006: 23.

¹² Giorgi Merchule, *Life Grigol Archimandrite*, 274.

in Samtskhe-Saatabago,” dated by the beginning of the 14th century, the parish of Ishkhani was defined as follows: “The entire Tortomi above Gurji-Boghaz, below Taoskari, a place called Sakrulavi, on the side of Artanujstavi, and on the opposite side: the place above the mountain Orjokhi, the entire Sakavkasidzo (implying the domain of the feudal house of Kavkasidze), above the mountain of Ispir-Trebzond.”¹³

The monasteries founded by David Kurapalates should have been under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ishkhani.

Temo Jojua notes that “after 1001, when the Georgian monasteries of Imieri Tao (Upper Tao) became part of the Byzantine Empire, a special mission was assigned to the bishops of Ishkhani who represented the Kartli Catholicosate in Imieri Tao and were considered the highest clerical hierarchs of the region. At the given stage of history, they were instructed, on the one hand, to maintain the relations with the Georgian churches-monasteries of Imieri Tao, separated from the state-political body of Georgia, up to 1001 years, and, on the other hand, to further strengthen these relations and not to allow the politically “Greek” monasteries of this area gradually part away from the unified ecclesiastic-cultural space of Georgia.”¹⁴

However, in the late period, we witness a different picture. According to the historical document of the first half of the 16th century, namely, 1516 – “The Samtskhe parish of the Patriarch of Kartli – Princely Houses and Estates” – Oshki and Parkhali monasteries were considered the parish of the Catholicos of Kartli and the monasteries under the latter’s command.

Scientific research of Tao monasteries begins in the 19th century. The records and diaries of travelers who traveled to Tao in the 19th-20th centuries and studied the cultural heritage of this historical part are vital for the study of this area.

¹³ Surguladze, historical documents = Kartuli istoriuli sabutebi (XVI saukune, kartli da samtskhe-saatabago), sheadgina da kartuli tekstebi gamosatsemad moamzada mzia surguladzem, sparsuli tekstebi moamzada tamaz abashidzem, t. IV (Georgian historical documents 16th century (Kartli and Samtskhe-Saatabago), Georgian texts prepared by Mzia Surguladze, Persian texts prepared by Tamaz Abashidze, (Vol. IV), Tbilisi 2016: 193.

¹⁴ Jojua, Ascetic Collection = Vinme oshkeli mtserlis mier ishkhneli episkoposis, ilarionis dakvetit gadatserili X-XI saukuneebis asketikuri krebuli (xel., A-35) da misi minawerebi (kodikologiuri da istoriul-tskarotmsodneobiti gamokvleva), An Ascetic Collection of the 10th-11th Centuries (NCM A-35) Copied by a Scribe from Oshki on the Commission of Ilarion, Bishop of Ishkhani Its Inscriptions Codicological, Historical and Source Studies, *Mravaltavi* 27, 2021: 325.

In 1874, Giorgi Kazbegi visited the Parkhali monastery and described it. In his travel records – “Three Months in Turkish Georgia” there are important references regarding the paintings of the Parkhali church. At the time of his visit to the Parkhali church, the frescoes were in a better state.¹⁵

In 1917, Ekvtime Takaishvili traveled to historical Tao and studied and described the churches and monasteries. He fundamentally studied the architecture, fine arts and epigraphy of Oshki, Khakhuli, Otkhta, and Parkhali. His travel records are of primary importance today. The materials of the 1917 expedition were published in the Russian language in 1952 (“Археологическая экспедиция 1917-го года в южные провинции Грузии”), and in 1960 in the Georgian language (“The 1917 Archaeological Expedition of 1917 to South Georgia”).

Vakhtang Djobadze made a significant contribution to the study of Tao monasteries. In 1965-1983, he organized eight expeditions to Tao-Klarjeti. In 1992, his work “Early medieval Georgian monasteries in historical Tao, Klarjeti, and Shavsheti” was published in the English language. His work discussed the architecture, fine arts, and epigraphy of Oshki, Khakhuli, Otkhta, and Parkhali. In 2006, and again in 2007, the Georgian translation of the book “Early medieval Georgian monasteries in historical Tao, Klarjeti, and Shavsheti” was released.

In 1985, 1986, 1988 and 1990, Bruno Baumgartner traveled and studied Tao-Klarjeti. He combined the results of the research into a thesis – “For the Study of the Historical Geography of Tao-Klarjeti.” He visited not only well-known places, but also discovered still unknown monuments. Bruno Baumgartner found the upper church of the Otkhta Eklesia, known as the Arseniseuli Monastery.¹⁶

In 2006, Valeri Silogava published the work “Oshki – 10th century Memorial Temple.” The book is dedicated to the publication of two stone stelae and their inscriptions discovered on November 7, 2003 in Oshki Temple. Other inscriptions of Oshki have been also discussed in the monograph, their chronological order has been determined and the issue of the construction of the Oshki temple has been clarified based on a new analysis of the data of the inscriptions. The book is in four languages. In addition to Georgian, the material is presented in the English, Turkish and Russian languages.

¹⁵ G. Kazbegi, *Three months in Turkish Georgia*, 1995.

¹⁶ B. Baumgartner, *Studien zur historischen Geographie von Tao-Klarjeti* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], University of Vienna, 1996.

In 2009, Zaza Skhirtladze published the monograph “The Frescoes of Otkhta Eklesia.” In the work, the frescoes of Otkhta Eklesia are relatively fully described. The author first paid attention to the individual iconographic and stylistic features of the frescoes.

In 2018, under the editorship of Mzia Surguladze (authors: Mzia Surguladze, Nestan Chkhikvadze, Lela Shatirishvili, Maya Karanadze, Nikoloz Zhgenti, Eter Edisherashvili), a monograph was published – “The Tao-Klarjeti Scholarly Heritage.” The existing knowledge about the scholarly heritage of Tao-Klarjeti is collected and generalized in this work. The book discusses the manuscript heritage of Oshki, Khakhuli and Parkhali monasteries.¹⁷

In 2020, a group of researchers from Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University released the monograph “Tao” (authors: Mamia Paghava, Mary Tsintsadze, Maya Baramidze, Malkhaz Chokharadze, Tina Shioshvili, Ramaz Khalvashi, Nugzar Mgeladze, Zaza Shashikadze, Merab Khalvashi, Jimsher Chkhvimiani, Jemal Karalidze). The book narrates and describes the history of Tao, monuments of material culture, literary and scriptural schools, Tao villages in modern Turkey, etc. In the second chapter of the monograph – “Literary and Scholarly Centers of Tao” – the monasteries of Oshki, Parkhali and Khakhuli are discussed.

Oshki

Oshki is located in historical Tao, Erzurum region, Uzundere district, Oshki village (Erzurum İl, Uzundere İlçesi, Çamlıyamaç köyü).¹⁸ The monastery was named after John the Baptist. The testament of the manuscript (an ascetic-homiletic collection) copied in Oshki in 977, states: “This holy book was written for the great Lavra of Oshki, the dwelling place of the Holy Baptist” (Collection of Athos 1986: 47). The construc-

¹⁷ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts 2018: Surguladze M., Chkhikvadze N., Shatirishvili L., Karanadze M., Zhgenti N., Edisherashvili E., Tao-Klarjetis khelnatseri memkvidreoba (Surguladze, M., Chkhikvadze, N., Shatirishvili, L., Karanadze, M., Zhgenti, N., & Edisherashvili, E., Tao-Klarjeti: Heritage of manuscripts (research, texts), Tbilisi 2018.

¹⁸ Bagauri..., catalogue = Tao-Klarjeti – istoriisa da kulturis dzeglebis katalogi, avtorshemdenlebi: Bagauri N., Batiashvili Z., Beridze I., Kudava B., Zhgenti N., Saitidze G., Khizanishvili N. (Bagauri, N., Batiashvili, Z., Beridze, I., Kudava, B., Zhgenti, N., Saitidze, G., & Khizanishvili, N., Tao-Klarjeti: Historical and cultural monuments, catalogue), Tbilisi 2017: 38.

tion of the temple began on 25 March 963 on Annunciation Day and was completed in 976.¹⁹

Apart from the main temple, remains of the refectory and scriptorium have survived from the Oshki monastic complex. The bishop's residence may have been on a hill about 30 meters north of the church. There is a chapel and other ruins to the southwest, one kilometer away, above the church.²⁰

The Oshki church is a complex, richly decorated erection, whose interior length without its west annex constitutes 40.60 meters, while the width is 27 meters and the height is up to 34 meters. Typologically, it is a triconch with a cruciform plan, the dome of which is supported by four freely standing piers. Its eastern, northern and southern arms end in semi-circular apses, while the western arm represents a long barrel-vaulted nave.²¹

On both sides of the three apses of the Oshki temple, there are small apse chambers. The painted chapel to the south of the apse of the altar, according to the inscription on its window, should be an ossuary to the soul of Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi (Duke of Dukes). It is possible that he was buried here. The west wing of the church has a gallery with a pedimented roof built from the south.

Twelve windows illuminate the dome of the church. Domed construction is a popular trompo-pendentive system in Tao-Klarjeti architecture. There is a tile cover on the dome. According to one of the inscriptions of the temple, instead of the damaged old roof, it was rebuilt in the 20s of the 11th century during the Byzantine Emperors – Basil II (976-1025) and Constantine VIII (1025-1028).

Oshki is distinguished by its reliefs. Its facades are decorated with images of a host of angels, saints, donors of the church construction, the head of construction, symbolic birds and animals. The decoration of one of the columns of the south-west gallery of the church is especially noteworthy; it depicts the tree of life, and the figures of saints in its branches. One of the oldest images of Saint Nino was preserved here.

¹⁹ Silogava, *Oshki = X s. memorialuri tadzari (Oshki, 10th c. memorial building)*, Tbilisi 2006: 102.

²⁰ Djobadze, *Early medieval Georgian monasteries, Adreuli shua saukuneebis kartuli monastrebi istoriul taoshi, klarjetsa da shavshetshi*, (Early medieval Georgian monasteries in historic T'ao, Klarjeti and Shavsheti), Tbilisi 2007: 112.

²¹ Djobadze, *Early medieval Georgian monasteries, Adreuli shua saukuneebis kartuli monastrebi istoriul taoshi, klarjetsa da shavshetshi*, (Early medieval Georgian monasteries in historic T'ao, Klarjeti and Shavsheti), Tbilisi 2007: 115.

The facades of the church have preserved a number of iconic images of David Magistros and Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi (Duke of Dukes): on the south wall, the marginal five-figure composition of the prayer scene (Savior, Mother of God, John the Baptist) represents David Magistros and Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi as “members”; The reliefs of the brothers are also carved on the capitals of the royal niche of the dome column. There are images of them above the waist on two stelae, which were built into the wall constructed later in the interior of the church.²²

In 2003, two Oshki stelae were found, erected in the passage between the south-eastern dome of the temple and the south wall. On one stela, in the upper part, the Mother of God with infant Jesus in her hands are depicted, and in the lower part – David Kurapalates; And on the second stela, John the Baptist is depicted in the upper part, and Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi is depicted in the lower part. On the stelae, donors of the construction of church are represented with a frontal image above the waist.²³

To the north of the Oshki temple, the remains of older buildings – a refectory and a library (?) have been preserved. The refectory is an elongated three-aisled building on the south-north axis, which ends in a square, domed building (library?) in the north.²⁴

Fragments of Oshki’s painting have survived. Three stages of the painting of the temple are to be assumed: 10th century (963-973), 11th century (1036), the end of 12th-13th centuries.²⁵

The Oshki temple was not originally intended for full painting, which is evidenced by the arrangement of the walls made of hewn stone in the interior.

The earliest painting appears to be preserved in the South Pastophorium. The conch depicts the glory of Christ: enthroned Christ in a mandorla, archangels and seraphim on fiery wheels; On the walls of the apse, there is a row of monarchs, separated by a central figure of the Mother of God, apparently. A fragment of “Annunciation” can be seen on the part of the arch surrounding the conch, and below it, on the wall, some scene of the royal feast with a small fragment of the figure of the Savior. The

²² Tao-Klarjeti, Historical-Cultural Essay, 346-348.

²³ S i l o g a v a, Oski, 112.

²⁴ Tao-Klarjeti Historical-Cultural Essay, 351.

²⁵ D i d e b u l i d z e, The monuments = “The monuments = Shua saukuneebis kartuli kedlis mkhatvrobis dzeglebi tao-klarjetshi,” *Sakartvelos sidzveleni 19* (The monuments of the Georgian medieval mural painting in north-east Turkey), *Georgian Antiquities 19*, 2016: 51,

painting of this part of the temple is probably contemporaneous with its construction, performed in the years 963-973.²⁶

The painting of the apse of the altar of the cathedral is related to the work of Jojik Patrikios and dates back to 1036, as evidenced by the Georgian inscription made in the apse, between the registers.²⁷

In the western part of the apse there is a fragment of a painting with the image of two large groups of people against the background of architectural buildings, which is defined as the Bana temple by the majuscule (Asomtavruli) inscription on the right. According to one of the opinions, it depicts the coronation of Bagrat IV as king and his wedding with the niece of the Byzantine Emperor Romanos Argyros, Helen, which took place in the Bana Cathedral (1032).²⁸

In the conch of the apse of the southern gallery of Oshki, there is also a fresco preserved, in particular, the enthroned infant Virgin Hodegetria accompanied by angels. The date of this painting should be different from the rest of the fragments, perhaps the second half of the 12th century.²⁹

Among the churches of David Kurapalates, Oshki is distinguished by the abundance of inscriptions.

A twelve-line inscription written in red ink is preserved on the tympanum of the door of the southern arm. The inscription reveals not only the names of the donors of church building (Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi and David Kurapalates) and the name of the construction overseer (Grigol), but also the annual expenses of the monastery (20 000 drams), tax in kind (5 000 jugs of wine and 250 ephahs of grain) and necessary construction materials (sand, sandstone, light porous stone [spondiki] and iron (50 liters). There were 50 permanent workers, builders and blacksmiths: a total of 80 people participated in the construction, 30 oxen pulled the stones, 30 mules brought porous stone, and other livestock was used as well.

The inscription does not include the date of completion of the church construction. It was written during the lifetime of Bagrat Eristavi. The inscription was probably made between the years 963-966.

On the eastern facade, on the south side of the apse, there is a four-line inscription about donors on the wattled window brow. Indented round letters are painted with red ink. In the inscription, Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi,

26 D i d e b u l i d z e, The monuments, 52.

27 Ibid., 52.

28 Ibid., 54.

29 Ibid., 55.

David Magistros, Father Michael, Father Ioane and Grigol are mentioned. Vakhtang DJobadze dates this inscription to 963-966.³⁰

Another inscription about the donor on a worked sandstone slab was used a second time in the wall of the southern arm. The inscription is written in red ink and has twelve lines. The inscription contains important information. It reveals that the construction of the Oshki church was started on 25 March 963, during the celebration of the Annunciation. According to the inscription, on 02 October 966, on Tuesday, Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi died. The inscription was made approximately between 966-973 years.³¹

Grigol, the overseer of the construction of the monastic complex, is mentioned in the red-painted inscription on the architrave of the south main entrance of Oshki named after John the Baptist. In the inscription, Grigol calls himself the “overseer of the works”, which, in the modern sense, means the head of the works.³²

On November 7, 2003, the inscription on the stele of King David found in Oshki, which Valeri Silogava dates to around 966, states an appeal to God about Grigol: “And Grigol, the builder of this icon and the worker in this temple, protect him in both lives and make him worthy to stand at your right hand.” In the inscription on the stele, Grigol is called the builder of the icon and the “worker” of the church.³³

There is an image of Grigol below the relief sculpture of praying on one of the arches of the octagonal column of the southern gallery of the cathedral, on the right. He is depicted kneeling, in a supplicating pose towards the image of praying.³⁴ In 1917, Ekvtime Takaishvili saw an inscription made with red ink, which accompanied this image: “Christ, have mercy on your servant Grigol.” According to Ekvtime Takaishvili, he is the same “Grigol of Oshki, the overseer of the construction of the temple.”³⁵

According to Nodar Shoshiashvili, since three representatives of the Tao branch of the Bagrationis are mentioned in the inscriptions of Oshki:

³⁰ D j o b a d z e, *Early medieval Georgian monasteries*, 157.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

³² S i l o g a v a, *Oshki*, 43.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁵ T a k a i s h v i l i, *Archeological expedition = Takaishvili E., 1917 tslis arkeologiuri ekspeditsia samkhret sakartveloshi (Takaishvili E., Archeological expedition of 1917 to the southern provinces of Georgia)*, Tbilisi 1960: 40.

Adarnase III Kurapalates and his sons Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi and David Magistros, Oshki must have been their common ancestral monastery.³⁶

According to Elene Metreveli, “based on the Georgian narrative sources and the testaments of the manuscripts copied in Oshki, the Oshki Lavra was the own monastery of the House of Great Chordvanelis from the time of its completion (973). In the scriptorium of the Oshki monastery, not only Varazvache and Ioane Tornike – the “lords” of this Lavra – worked in the scriptorium, but also other members of the great family.³⁷

After the death of David Kurapalates in 1001, Basil Caesar, according to the will of the ruler of Imieri Tao, Imier Tao, Basiani and other “upper countries” appeared under Byzantium, including the monastery of Oshki.³⁸

It is likely that the Oshki monastery passed from the Byzantines into the hands of the Seljuks, because an army of Georgians rescued the monastery from the Seljuks. According to the chronicler of Lasha-Giorgi, after the victory in the Battle of Basiani (1202), the cavalry of King Tamar freed Oshki from the Seljuks and took it back.³⁹

In the second half of the 15th century, Qvarqvare II Jakeli (1451-1498) donated the Oshki monastery to Tsmedi Tsmedisdze.⁴⁰

According to the historical document “Samtskhe Parish of the Patriarchate of Kartli – Princely Houses and Estates” compiled around 1516,

³⁶ Sh o s h i a s h i l i, lapidary inscriptions = Shoshiashili N., Kartuli tsartserebis korpusi, lapidaruli tsartserebi t.1: aghmosavlet da samkhret sakartvelos (V-X ss.), sheadgina da gamosatsemad moamzadana. shoshiashvilma (Shoshiashvili N., Corpus of Georgian inscriptions (lapidary inscriptions), eastern and southern Georgia, (Vol. 1). Tbilisi 1980: 55.

³⁷ M e t r e v e l i, Mount Athos = Metreveli E., Narkvevebi atonis kulturul-saganmanatleblo keris istoriidan (Metreveli, E., Essays from the history of cultural-educational center of Mount Athos), Tbilisi 1996, 35-36.

³⁸ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts: Tao-Klarjetis khelnatseri memkvidreoba (Surguladze, M., Chkhikvadze, N., Shatirishvili, L., Karanadze, M., Zhghenti, N., & Edisherashvili, E., Tao-Klarjeti: Heritage of manuscripts (research, texts), Tbilisi 2018: 24.

³⁹ History of Georgia, The chronicler of Lasha-Giorgi = K’art’lis c’xovreba, lasha-giorgis droindeli mematiene, red. roin metreveli, K’art’lis c’xovreba [History of Georgia], The Chronicle of Giorgi Lasha and His Time, (Metreveli R., Ed.), Tbilisi 2008: 354.

⁴⁰ J o j u a, homiletical compilation = j o j u a temo, eprem mtsiris homiletikuri krebulis (S-1276a) 1370-1390-iani tslebis minatseris cnobei monghol sardlebs – ulusis amira sheix hasan bozorgsa da amira ali padishahs shoris 1336 tsels gamartul kara daras brdzolashi taos eristavis amirghambar I panaskertelis vasalis, taoeli peodalis botso tsmedisdzis monatsileobis shesakheb, *saistorio krebuli*, tomi 5, (Accounts about participation of Bots’o Ts’medisdze, feudal lord from Tao province, vassal of Amirghambar I Panaskerteli, Eristavi of Tao, in the Qara Darra battle fought in 1336 between the Mongolian Commanders-in-Chief Shaikh Hasan Bozorg, Emir of Ulus, and Emir Ali-Padishah, found in the colophon (1370–90s) from homiletical compilation (S-1276A) by Ephrem Mtsire]. *Historical Collections*, N 5, Tbilisi 2015: 263.

the Oshki monastery “with its revenues” was the parish of the Catholicos of Kartli.

Oshki Monastery occupies an important place among the cultural and literary centers of Tao. The most learned figures of Tao-Klarjeti worked in Oshki – theologians, hymnographers and translators-editors, most of whom were brought up in Shatberdi. David Kurapalates and the representatives of the Chordvani feudal house, famous for their scribes, worked hard to strengthen the cultural significance of Oshki.⁴¹

In 977, Archpriest Stephane copied the book – “Paradise”, an ascetic-homeletic collection (Ath 9). The patrons of the manuscript are Ioane-Tornike Ioane and his brother (father of Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli) Ioane-Varzvache. At the time of the transcribing of “Paradise”, the abbot of the Oshki monastery was Saba.⁴²

Among the books transcribed in the Oshki Lavra, the “Oshki Bible” copied in 978 is of special significance (Ath 1). It is the oldest dated list among the manuscripts containing the Georgian Bible, and it is of great importance for the study of the translation and edition of the books of the Old Testament.⁴³ The owner of the manuscript is Ioane-Tornike, whose long dated will was written in 978 by Stephane. The copyists of the manuscripts are the best scribes of Tao-Klarjeti at that time: Michael, Giorgi, Stephane, Michael and Giorgi⁴⁴.

In the Oshki Lavra, Iovane Chirai copied Giorgi of Alexandrieli’s “Life of John Chrysostom” (Ath 6). The copying of the manuscript began in 978 and was completed in 979, which is indicated by the mention of Ioane-Tornike in the supplication letters first as Patrick, and finally as Bishop’s attendant monk.⁴⁵

Manuscripts transcribed in Oshki reflect how the idea of establishing the Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos took off, aiming at full assimilation of Greek-Byzantine culture by Georgians. On the long and difficult path to achieving this goal, the Georgian monasticism, which came into the

⁴¹ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 98.

⁴² Georgian manuscripts, Collection of Athos = Kartul khelnatserta aghtseriloba, atonuri kolektsia I, redaktori el. metreveli (Description of Georgian manuscripts: Collection of Athos (Part 1) (El. Metreveli, Ed.). Tbilisi 1986: 34-49; Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 99.

⁴³ M e n a b d e, Georgian literature = Menabde L., Dzvili mtserlobis kerebi sakartveloshi t.I [nakv. 2] (Menabde, L., Seats of ancient Georgian literature, (Vol. I, part 2). Tbilisi 1962: 451.

⁴⁴ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 100.

⁴⁵ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 101; In volume I of the description of the Athonian collection, the date of copying of the manuscript of “The Life of John Chrysostom” is considered to be 979-980 years (Georgian manuscripts, Collection of Athos, 28-29).

Greek environment, would have to repeatedly confirm its identity with the Greek “Orthodoxy” and demonstrate thorough knowledge of the Orthodox faith. This need is reflected in the extensive theological preambles of the Oshki manuscripts, which represent real theological treatises.⁴⁶

It should be an “Ascetic Collection” (National Center of Manuscripts, A-35) copied by the calligrapher from Oshki, Nathanael, commissioned by Bishop Hilarion of Ishkhani.⁴⁷ The mentioned manuscript was studied for the first time by Tedo Zhordania, who assumed that Hilarion from Ishkhani, who commissioned the manuscript, and Hilarion from Ishkhani mentioned in the 973 inscription on the cross of Tsageri church are the same person.⁴⁸ The “Ascetic Collection” was also studied by Temo Jojua, who notes that in the near times when the manuscript was copied, that is, in the 10th-11th centuries, two bishops Hilarion of Ishkhani are known. The researcher writes: “The study of the issue shows that there is no direct or indirect reference, based on which we can say that the “Ascetic Collection” is still the work of Hilarion I (970-1000 AD) or Hilarion II son of Massur (1032/1033 – 1050/1060s) copied by order. As for the material that has reached us, it can be said with equal success that the manuscript was copied by Hilarion I, and that Hilarion II was the patron of the collection.”⁴⁹

Cultural and literary activity in Oshki monastery continued even in the 11th century. In 1033, Gabriel of Oshki the so-called Gospel of Mestia in Oshki monastery by the order of the bishop of Ishkhani, Hilarion II son of Massur.

According to Temo Jojua, “the decision of Hilarion II of Ishkhani son of Massur to copy the desired manuscript by the scribe working in the Oshki monastery was not dictated only by the fact that one of the best Georgian scriptoriums of his time operated in Oshki.” I think there was another important reason for this decision of Hilarion II. It seems that Hilarion II tried not to weaken the connection with the monastery of Oshki,

⁴⁶ Ibid., 101-102.

⁴⁷ Jojua, Ascetic Collection = Vinme oshkeli mtserlis mier ishkhneli episkoposis, ilarionis dakvetit gadatserili X-XI saukuneebis asketikuri krebuli (xec, A-35) da misi minawerebi (kodikologiuri da istoriul-tskarotmtsodneobiti gamokvleva), (An Ascetic Collection of the 10th-11th Centuries (NCM A-35) Copied by a Scribe from Oshki on the Commission of Ilarion, Bishop of Ishkhani Its Inscriptions Codicological, Historical and Source Studies), *Mravaltavi* 27, 2021: 313-314.

⁴⁸ Zhordania, Chronicles = Zhordania T., Kronikebi t. I., (Zhordania, T., Chronicles and other materials of history of Georgia), Tiflis. 1892, 91.

⁴⁹ Jojua, Ascetic Collection, 319.

which was part of the Byzantine Empire, and to strengthen this connection through purely ecclesiastical-administrative relations.”⁵⁰

Ephrem of Oshki, a contemporary of Ephrem the Lesser, is from the literary school of Oshki. Ephrem adds a note to the translation of the explanation of the small psalms: “Pray ... for his father Saba, monk Ephrem of Oshki, because by their guidance... we received everything good from God above us” (Zhordania 1892: 214). According to Levan Menabde, Ephrem the Great moved from the Oshki monastery to the Georgian cultural and educational center of Black Mountain and became a close collaborator of Ephrem the Lesser. The researcher writes that it is conceivable that he also provided information about Grigol of Oshki to Ephraim the Lesser.⁵¹

After the conquest of Samtskhe-Saatabago by the Ottomans, the Oshki monastery was emptied and the monastic life here ceased.

Khakhuli

Khakhuli is located in historical Tao, Arzrum area, Tortomi district, in the village of Khakhuli (Erzurum İl, Tortum İlçe, Bağbaşı köyü).⁵² According to the testament of John Chrysostom’s translation of the Gospel of Matthew (11th century), the Khakhuli monastery was named after the Mother of God.⁵³

In addition to the main temple of the Khakhuli monastery complex, small churches and a fence have survived.⁵⁴

According to Vakhushti Batonishvili, one of the Khakhuli churches was constructed by Bagrat Kurapalates’s son David I (876-891).⁵⁵ According to Vakhushti’s notice, which is confirmed by “The Life of Kartli”, the Khakhuli monastery was built by David III Kurapalates, the ruler of Tao: “This David Kurapalates was glorified more than all the Tao kings, because he was the first to be God-loving and merciful... He built

⁵⁰ Ibid., 326.

⁵¹ Menabde, Georgian literature, 454.

⁵² Bagauri ..., catalogue, 48.

⁵³ Menabde, Georgian literature, 457.

⁵⁴ Bagauri ..., catalogue, 48.

⁵⁵ Batonishvili, Description of the Kingdom of Georgia = Vakhushti Batonishvili, „Aghtsera sameposa sakartvelosa (gamosca S. Kaukchishvilima) K’art’lis c’xovreba (Vakhushti Batonishvili, Description of the Kingdom of Georgia: The Georgian Chronicles (S. Kaukchishvili, Ed.) (vol. IV). Tbilisi 1973: 686.

the monastery and the seat of the Holy Church of God in Khakhuli.⁵⁶ The monastery was named after the Mother of God. Giorgi the Lesser refers to Khakhuli as “Great Lavra.”⁵⁷

To the south-east of the monastery, on the right bank of the Tortumi water, there is another hall church. There is a small church one kilometer west of it, on the top of the rock. According to Vakhtang Djobadze, the number of buildings indicates that there were numerous brotherhoods in Khakhuli.⁵⁸ It should be noted that Giorgi the Lesser refers to it as the “Great Lavra.”⁵⁹

Khakhuli Church is a large cross-domed building with a three-aisled western wing. There are apse pastophorions on both sides of the altar. The west wing of the church is surrounded by buildings of the later period on three sides. A dome with eight windows is erected at the intersection of the arms. The transitional construction from the domed square to the circle is trompe-pendive. There is a haut-relief of an eagle on the south wing of the church. Reliefs are also depicted around the door of the south arm. In the interior of the church, a niche is arranged in both piers under the dome – places for kings and high clergy to attend the service.⁶⁰

Above the southern window of the Khakhuli Cathedral is a haut-relief statue of an eagle, a symbol of the Savior’s royal nature and resurrection. There are images in low relief around the southern door, among which there is a rare iconographic scheme – the composition of the ascension of Alexander of Macedon to the sky, which ideally should echo the idea of expanding the borders and unifying Georgia by David Kurapalates.⁶¹

Khakhuli’s wall painting is ahead of Ishkhani’s wall painting in terms of its artistic solution, it is more linear, graphic, flat, characterized by an excess of straight, clear lines, pictorial modeling is simpler, and the composition is more concise and plain. It is likely that at first only the altar and the dome of the temple were painted, and then, at a certain time, the

⁵⁶ Batonišvili, Description of the Kingdom of Georgia, 686; History of Georgia, Mat’iane k’art’lisay = K’art’lis c’xovreba, „Mat’iane k’art’lisay“, r. metrevelis redaktsiit, K’art’lis c’xovreba [History of Georgia], Mat’iane k’art’lisay (The Chronicle of Kartli), (Metreveli, R., Ed.), Tbilisi 2008: 267.

⁵⁷ Giorgi the Lesser, Life of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, 115.

⁵⁸ Djobadze, Early medieval Georgian monasteries, 164.

⁵⁹ Giorgi the Lesser, life of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, 115.

⁶⁰ Tao-Klarjeti, Historical-Cultural Essay, 385.

⁶¹ Ibid.

entire space of the temple was also painted, although now only separate fragments remain.⁶²

The painting of the dome's neck is impressive, with a huge white cross on a blue background, decorated with precious stones and pearls. It is not the lifting up of the cross by angels, but another version of the glorification of the cross, the "cross of victory." This theme is attributed to the Palestinian tradition.⁶³

In the eastern part of the dome, the "Ascension of St Elijah" is depicted. The Holy Prophet Elijah stands on a chariot of fire, which is ascending by a four-winged steeds. St Elijah is "led" by the archangel St Raphael depicted above him. The chariot is not actually depicted – just two fiery wheels shaped like a blossoming flower. St Elijah's hands over his woolen cloak to St Elisha, he turns back towards him. The figure of St Elisha on bended knees is damaged, almost completely ruined. In the hemisphere of the dome, in the southern and northern parts, there were images of the moon and the sun, currently only the sun is preserved in the form of a disc with bell-shaped rays.⁶⁴

Probably, at first only the altar and the dome of the temple were painted, and then, at a certain time, the entire space of the temple was also painted, although now only separate fragments have remained.⁶⁵

After the death of David Kurapalates in 1001, Basil Caesar, according to the will of the ruler of Imieri Tao, Imier Tao, Basiani and other "upper countries" appeared under Byzantium, including the monastery of Oshki.⁶⁶

According to Basil the Treasurer, Zakaria of Panaskerti⁶⁷ took Bana, Khakhuli and liberated many other famous fortresses and places: "He performed many great acts: he seized Bana, Khakhuli and other glorious fortresses and places).⁶⁸ According to the chronicler of Lasha-Giorgi, after the victory in the Battle of Basiani (1202), the cavalry of King Tamar

62 D i d e b u l i d z e, The monuments, 45.

63 Ibid., 43.

64 Ibid., 44.

65 Ibid.

66 Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 24.

67 In 1191, during the revolt of Giorgi the Rus, Zakaria of Panaskerti was promoted, he took the place of Guzan of Taoskari, the opponent of King Tamar, and became the Duke of Tao-Shavshet-Klarjeti (K l d i a s h v i l i, Khakhuli manuscripts = Kldiashvili d., tislisa da khakhulis khelnatserebis minatserebi (Kldiashvili, D., Colophons of the Tisli and Khakhuli manuscripts, Tbilisi 1986: 55).

68 History of Georgia, B a s i l i E z o s m o d z g v a r i = K'art'lis c'xovreba, basili ezosmodzghuari, „c'xovrebay mepet-mepisa tamarisi“, red. roin metreveli, (K'art'lis c'xovreba [History of Georgia], Basili Ezosmodzgvare, The Life of Tamar, the Great Queen of Queens, (Metreveli, R., Ed.), Tbilisi 2008: 494.

liberated Khakhuli from the Seljuks.⁶⁹ It is conceivable that both works of “The Life of Kartli” state about the same historical fact, and Zakaria of Panaskerti freed Khakhuli after the Battle of Basiani.

In 1210, the Synaxarion edited by Giorgi of Mtatsminda was copied by the order of Eristavt-Eristavi (Duke of Dukes) Zakaria of Panaskerti. According to Darejan Kldiashvili, Synaxarion belonged to the Khakhuli monastery. Most of the testaments begin with an address to the Mother of God of Khakhuli. The researcher assumes that Synaxarion was commissioned and copied for the same Khakhuli monastery.⁷⁰

According to one of the inscriptions in the manuscript of the homiletic collection of Ephraim the Lesser (National Center of Manuscripts, S-1276, 11th-13th centuries), in the second half of the 15th century, Tsmedi Tsmedisdze (the Tsmedisdzes, later Tsmedisdze-Kakhulians, is one of the feudal houses of Tao) in the city of Yerznka (present-day Erzincan) “gained” “Kakhuli” i.e. Khakhuli Monastery and the so-called Khakhuli community from the prevailing trade-religious order.⁷¹

A powerful literary center was created in Khakhuli Monastery. Monks from Khakhuli actively engaged in cultural and educational activities.

A prominent representative of the Khakhuli Monastery is Ioane of Khakhuli (he probably worked in the 10th-11th centuries). Two manuscripts are associated with his name. Both manuscripts were preserved in the Jvari Monastery, and today they are preserved in the library of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. On the initiative of Ioane of Khakhuli, “February Menaion” and the collection, which includes the studies and other writings of Cyril of Alexandria, were rewritten.⁷²

Giorgi the Hagiorite (Mtatsmindeli) was brought up in Khakhuli monastery. According to Giorgi the Lesser, young Giorgi was transferred from the Tadzrisi nunnery to the Khakhuli Monastery. At that time Bagrat III’s son Basil, Hilarion of Tvali, Giorgi’s uncles – Giorgi Mirali and Saba worked in Khakhuli. The archpriest of the monastery was Macarius.⁷³ Giorgi the Hagiorite was brought to Khakhuli approximately in 1019.⁷⁴

The representative of the literary school of Khakhuli was Grigol of Khakhuli, whose name was found in the colophon of the manuscript of

⁶⁹ History of Georgia, The chronicler of Lasha-Giorgi, 354.

⁷⁰ Kldiashvili, Khakhuli manuscripts, 59.

⁷¹ Jojua, homiletical compilation, 263.

⁷² Menabde, Georgian literature, 455-456.

⁷³ Giorgi the Lesser, Life of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, 114-115.

⁷⁴ Menabde, Georgian literature 456.

the October-November Athonian Menaion copied in 1076 (Ath 54, 117r): “Pray, holy ones in God, for me, the unworthy monk Grigol of Khakhuli, who for love of this holy hymnbook desired to write this menaion down.”⁷⁵

From the manuscripts transcribed in Khakhuli itself, the explanation of the Gospel of John copied by David Tfileli in the 11th century is known. The testament of the manuscript mentions that the manuscript was copied in the Khakhuli Lavra. According to Levan Menabde, the colophons of the manuscript make it clear that the figures of the Khakhuli monastery did not engage in literary activities in isolation, away from others, but, on the contrary, had a close and lively cooperation with the monks of their monastery. The manuscript was transcribed by David Tfileli for the Palavra Monastery. It is not known whether David moved to Palavra or not. The manuscript was taken to the Jvari Monastery in Jerusalem. According to Levan Menabde, this fact informs us about the relationship between Tao-Klarjeti and the Georgian Estates of the Middle East.⁷⁶

In addition to Athos, Khakhuli scribes also had literary contacts with the Black Mountain monastic centers. In one of the manuscripts preserved in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Jer 2), there is a report that the “newly translated” lives of the martyrs came from Khakhuli to the Kalipos Monastery on the Black Mountain.⁷⁷

Among the relics of the Khakhuli Monastery, the triptych icon of the Mother of God of Khakhuli is known, which is an important monument not only for the Georgian, but also for the world cultural heritage. It is dated in scientific literature to the 10th century and, therefore, it may have been created by order of Bagrationis of Tao, Bagrat Eristavt-Eristavi and David Kurapalates.⁷⁸

From the original icon of the Mother of God, only the enamel face and the hands remained. They are distinguished from all other samples made with this technique, by large sizes and special colors. They are decorated with a pinkish-wine hue, characteristic only of Georgian products, on which facial features and contours of fingers drawn with thin gold partitions are effectively outlined. To match the position of supplicant Virgin Mary’s hands, a small plate with a frontal image of Christ-Pantokrator is placed on the top right corner of the central icon’s door. It is him that the

⁷⁵ Catalogue of the Georgian Manuscripts = Catalogue of the Georgian Manuscripts Holy Monastery of Iviron, Jost G i p p e r t, Bernard O u t t i e r, Sergey K i m, Mount Athos 2022: 495-498.

⁷⁶ M e n a b d e, Georgian literature, 457.

⁷⁷ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 103.

⁷⁸ B u r c h u l a d z e, icons = Kartuli khatebi (Burchuladze, N., Georgian icons), Tbilisi 2016: 308.

Mother of God is turned towards – he stands in front of her as the guardian and protector of people.⁷⁹

In the upper part of the central board of the door, there is a small fragmentary cross, which contains a part of the Golgotha cross.

From the historical point of view, the cross with the inscription of the king of Kakheti, Kvirike the Great (10th century), arranged symmetrically on the wings, is significant. Its one part depicts the crucified Savior, and the other part – John the Baptist.

Georgian, Byzantine and Russian enamels of the 8th-9th centuries are presented on Khakhuli's folding icon, which are made with three different techniques. This set of partitioned, die-pressed and pictorial enamel products clearly represents the line and character of the development of this field of art both in Georgia and in Byzantium and Russia.

Byzantine enamels occupy the most prominent place on the icon-case (kiot). It is placed at the highest point of the fold, in the center, and is visible even when the folds-wings are closed. The plate depicts Byzantine Emperor Michael Doukas Parapinak and Queen Mariam, who was the daughter of Bagrat IV of Georgia.⁸⁰ Shalva Amiranashvili writes that the enamel icon was brought to the homeland by the Byzantine queen Marta-Mariam, who came to Georgia with her dying father, Bagrat IV.⁸¹

The interior setting of the Khakhuli icon dates back to the first half of the 12th century. On this layer of setting, on the lower plate of the folds-wings, an iambic text is stated, in which the donors of folded icon – David

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Burchuladze, icons, 311.

⁸¹ Amiranashvili, The Khakhuli tryptikh = Khakhulis karedi (The Khakhuli tryptikh), Tbilisi 1972, 29; In 1001, the monasteries of Khakhuli, Oshki, Parkhali and Otkhta became part of the Byzantine Empire. According to Giorgi Cheishvili, the Oshki inscriptions show the spread of the sovereign rights of the Caesars in the Imieri Tao (Upper Tao) and the trend of turning the Bagrationi temple into an imperial temple, replacing the testaments of the Bagrationis with the testaments of the Byzantine emperors (Cheishvili, Byzantine Commonwealth, 37). It is possible that Queen Mariam did bring the icon, but not only the plate with the images of her and the Byzantine Emperor Michael Doukas, but the whole triptych icon. The Khakhuli monastery should have been under the control of the Byzantine emperors during this period as well, and Mariam, as the queen of Byzantium, could adorn the icon of Khakhuli and bring it to Georgia in 1072. It should be also noted that, according to the historian of David the Builder, in the 70s of the 11th century, the eastern or Anatolian side of the Byzantine Empire passed into the hands of the Seljuks. The Seljuks came close to the border of Georgia (History of Georgia, The Life of king David = K'art'lis c'xovreba, „c'xovrebay mepet-mepisa davitisi“, red. roin metreveli, K'art'lis c'xovreba [History of Georgia], The Life of David, King of Kings, (Metreveli, R., Ed.), Tbilisi 2008: 301). It can be assumed that the Tao monasteries were occupied by the Seljuks during this period. In the scientific literature, there is an opinion that David the Builder moved the icon from Khakhuli to Gelati under construction (Burchuladze, icons, 308).

the Builder and his son Demetre I are compared to David the Prophet and Solomon the King.⁸²

Greek inscriptions are preserved on the icon of Khakhuli, the main part of which dates back to the 10th-12th centuries. Yet, the inscriptions of the 8th-9th centuries and the later period of the 12th century can be encountered as well. Two of the Greek inscriptions are of historical significance: one, Kvirike's inscription of the 10th century, and the other, the inscription of the Byzantine Emperor Michael Parapinak and his wife, Queen Mariam, from the second half of the 11th century.

In addition to the explanatory inscriptions of the saints and the Gospel episode depicted on the enamel, there are also some more extensive inscriptions from the Gospel text.⁸³

After the conquest of Samtskhe-Saatabago by the Ottomans, Khakhuli was emptied and the monastic life there ceased.

Otkhta Eklesia

The Otkhta Eklesia is located in historical Tao, Artvin Province, Yusufeli district, the village of Otkhta (Artvin İli, Yusufeli İlçesi, Tekkale köyü).⁸⁴ Giorgi of Mtatsminda in the text of "The Life of John and Ekvtime" refers to the monastery as "the Lavra of Otkhta Eklesia."⁸⁵

Apart from the main temple, four or five small churches, a refectory, a seminary / scriptorium (?), a crypt (the lower floor of the small church), and another building (of uncertain function) have survived from the monastery complex of Otkhta. A small anchorite monastery was subordinated to the Otkhta Lavra.⁸⁶

The Basilica of the Otkhta Eklesia is paved with pure hewn tuff stone. Roughly hewn tuff, cobblestone and brick are used for interior decoration. The temple is divided by four pairs of complex profile piers. On both richly decorated piers, there are two-cell pastoforiums separated by a wall on both sides of the apse of the altar. On the floor above them, there are also two-cell receptacles, with the difference that here these receptacles

⁸² Tao-Klarjeti, Historical-Cultural Essay, 446.

⁸³ *Kaukchishvili*, Greek inscriptions = *Kaukchishvili T.*, *Berdznuli tsartserebi sakartveloshi* (*Kaukchishvili, T.*, *Greek inscriptions in Georgia*, Tbilisi 1951, 151,161.

⁸⁴ *Bagauri*..., catalogue, 35.

⁸⁵ *Giorgi of Mtatsminda*, *The Life of Iovane and Euthymius*, 56.

⁸⁶ *Bagauri*..., catalogue, 35.

end with apses. A choir loft is located at the western end of the church, it can be accessed from the outside through a door in the western wall.

The facades of the Otkhta Eklesia are decorated with decorative arcature. The western and eastern facades are divided by seven arches rising towards the center. Two different stages of construction can be observed in the area of the pediments of the same walls.

Research has revealed that the Otkhta Eklesia was built for the first time by David Magistros, probably in the 60s of the 10th century. The same founder renovated and raised the church between 978-1001. It is worth noting that since 978, the ruler of Imieri Tao held the title of Kurapalates.

To the north-west of the temple there is a large refectory, which has four piers and is divided into two naves by arches over it. It is possible to enter the church from the refectory through an arched-vaulted building constructed between them, which Ekvtime Takaishvili tentatively calls a seminary. There is a two-storey church to the southeast of the temple, with a monastic crypt on the lower floor.⁸⁷

The painting only covers the altar, as it was conventional in the Georgian art of this period, but with the complexity and multipart of its program it already includes the basis of the future painting as a whole.⁸⁸

Conch painting is the most damaged one. A large part of the plastering has been removed. The Savior standing on a pedestal surrounded by an oval mandorla is depicted in the center of the conch. Outside the Saviour's mandorla is a troop of robed and mantled angels holding open scrolls. The second register is occupied by Hetoimasia; In the center, a trapezoidal throne is enclosed in a medallion and is held by two angels. A cross is erected on the throne. On both sides of the seat, along the entire length of the register, there are two groups of angels facing each other. Each of them is presented in a different dynamic movement, covered in cloaks, with their arms outstretched. Between the angels' nimbuses, there are some remains of majuscule (Asomtavruli) inscriptions made with white paint, although the texts cannot be restored.

The frontal figure of the Mother of God standing on a pedestal is depicted in the center of the third register. On both sides of it are angels standing with their heads bowed, dressed in royal robes. Both of them hold a sphere in one hand and a scroll in the other. To the left (south) of

⁸⁷ Tao-Klarjeti, Historical-Cultural Essay, 356-358.

⁸⁸ D i d e b u l i d z e, The monuments, 36.

the Mother of God, St John the Baptist is depicted next to the Archangel. Next to the Mother of God, John the Baptist and the angels, there is an outline of the figures of several apostles dressed in robes and cloaks, all of them holding a book or a scroll in their hands.

The third and fourth registers are separated from each other by a wide ornamental frieze, like a spiral garland. Small figures are included here and there between the branches and leaves of the ornament. Painting in the fourth register is relatively better preserved. It is divided into two parts by a large window. On the two sides of the window, on the walls of the altar, the images of the prophets and high priests are presented.

Next to the window, the figures of David and Solomon are the first in the line of prophets. From the images of other prophets on the walls of the altar, only the outlines of large figures dressed in ancient tunics and long cloaks remained. All figures have one hand raised and the other holding an open scroll. The identification of the images of the prophets is not possible now. The only exception is the Prophet of Amos, the third figure on the south wall, on whose scroll a multi-line text is preserved in a fragmentary form. The inscription should have been drawn from two quotations from the book of the Prophet.

The Fathers of the Church are presented frontally, with the blessing in the right hand and a closed book in the left hand; Just to the south, the third image in the row of high priests holds a half-opened codex.

The only wide window of the sanctuary is also decorated with paintings. In its arch, a frontal half-figure of a crowned woman in a leafy medallion has been completed. The figure is topped by an angular crown with a raised middle. The crown-bearer, covered with a white cloak, holds a model of the Otkhta Eklesia near the chest in the left hand, touching it with the uncovered right hand.

On the south side of the window frame of the altar window, the figure of Moses the Prophet was depicted with the Tables of the Law in his hands. The prophet, King Melchizedek of Salem, is also depicted on the north side of the window frame; A frontal standing figure is depicted next to a communion table; He holds a plate in his left hand extended in front of him, and with his right hand he pours liquid on the plate from the chalice.

The fifth register is dedicated to the scenes of royal feasts. The compositions are arranged according to the Gospel narrative and are “read” from left to right (from north to south).

The first scene near the northern edge of the apse is the Annunciation (only the upper part of the bodies of the angel and the Mother of God have survived). It is followed by the scene of meeting of St Mariam and St Elizabeth; The third scene is Christmas, from which only the upper part of the composition has survived – the Child Savior wrapped in swaddling clothes, St Joseph’s nimb and a fragment of the cattle shed. The last, fourth scene on the northern part of the window – Candlemas is also half destroyed; One can see the upper part of the purgatory, fragments of figures of St Simeon the God-Receiver and St Mother.⁸⁹

Marika Didibulidze writes: “There is almost no program similar to the painting of the apse of the Otkhta Eklesia in the Eastern Christian world, neither in grandeur, nor in the complexity of the theological content of the painting, nor in the multitude of themes, the composition of the window is also outstanding. Everything leaves an impression of uniqueness and specialness and testifies that in this region of Georgia a truly independent, high-level artistic creativity was developing.”⁹⁰

Arguing about the number of painters working in the Otkhta Eklesia and the distribution and separation of work among them is conditional for today. The first master (that is how Zaza Skhirtladze conventionally calls one of the painters) could have been a monumentalist in his artistic vision. The upper half of the painting of the altar should have been performed by him, if not completely, at least two registers with the faces of apostles and prophets. The second master should have been the performer of the lower register of painting. The portrait of the founder on the lower part of the adjacent wall to the south of the altar should have belonged to the same painter. The hand of the third master should be distinguished in the painting of the altar window. Zaza Skhirtladze notes that the figure of Moses the Prophet is relatively better preserved among the images of this part of painting, it is outstanding in terms of fine techniques and differs from the handwriting of both masters mentioned above. Based on the scale of the painting of the altar of the Otkhta Eklesia, it is likely that more than two or three masters should have been working on it.⁹¹

Inscriptions of donor content have been preserved on the temple of the Otkhta Eklesia. On the eastern facade of the temple, on the tip of the front of the middle nave, in the section that belongs to the second stage of con-

⁸⁹ Skhirtladze, Otkhta Eklesia = Skhirtladze Z., Otxta eklesiis preskebi (Skhirtladze, Z., The frescoes of Otkhta Eklesia), Tbilisi 2009, 49-86.

⁹⁰ Didibulidze, The monuments, 41.

⁹¹ Skhirtladze, Otkhta Eklesia, 249-251.

struction, a one-line majuscule (Asomtavruli) inscription crowned with an equal-armed cross encircled in a circle is carved „ქ(რისტე)ე ა(დიდ)ე ღ(აფი)თ მ(ეტყ)ე კ(ურა)პ(ა)ლ(ა)ტი“ (Christ, glorify David Kuropalates).⁹²

The extensive seven-line inscription carved on the eastern half of the southern wall of the church contains important information for the history of the construction of the Lavra of the Okhta Eklesia. “ქ. ს(ა)ხელითა ღ(მერთისა)თა ღაუღვეთ ჩ(უენ) ოთხთა ეკ(ლესიი)[სა კრ]ე[ბუ]ლსა სალ(ო)ც(ა)ვი მ(ო)მ(აფლის)ა [ს(ა)ხლი(ი)სა ჩ(უენი)სა] უკ(უნი)ს(ამდე), ს(ალოკველად)(?) ჩ(უენ)თ[ა][...]სა[...] ე(რისთავთ)-ე(რისთავი)ს(ა) ხ(უ)რს(ი)ს და [ეკ(ლესიი)სა ა]მ(ი)ს [კრ(ებულო)]სა – ღ(მერთმა)ნ შე(ი)წ(ყალ)ენ [...] [და] ვინ არა ულ(ო)ც(ო)ს, ღ(მერთმა)ნ იგ(ი)ცა გ(ან)ნი[კ(ითხო)ს]“ (“In the name of Christ God, we ordain the future monks working here to pray for our family for eternity. May God have mercy on our Eristavt-Eristavi Khursi (Duke of Dukes) and the members of this church, and may God judge those who do not pray”).⁹³ According to Ekvtime Takaishvili, the mentioned inscription should be contemporary with the hewn stone cladding of the Otkhta Eklesia. The scientist dates the inscription to the second half of the 10th century.⁹⁴

According to Zaza Skhirtladze, the main obstacle to the identification of the Khursi Eristavi (Feudal Lord) is the large chronological limit that exists between the Battle of Palakacio and the construction of the Basilica of Otkhta Eklesia. (It is difficult to say whether the inscription was made during the remodeling or during the original construction). The upper limit of the construction of the basilica cannot go much beyond the beginning of the 80s of the 10th century, which indicates that at least four decades must have separated between these two events. However, the researcher cannot rule out the identity of these two persons, because Eristavi (Feudal Lord) Khursi played an active role in the life of the kingdom of Tao-Klarjeti.⁹⁵

Giorgi Mtatsmindeli’s “Life of John and Ekvtime” is an important source for studying the early history of the Otkhta Eklesia. It is known from the writings that in the 60s of the 10th century, Ioane of Mtatsminda was consecrated as a monk in Otkhta. In that period, monks – Moses and Gelasius – were working in the Otkhta Eklesia.⁹⁶ In the 80s of the 10th

⁹² Ibid., 22.

⁹³ Shoshia Shvili, *Lapidary inscriptions*, 289.

⁹⁴ Takaishvili, *Archeological expedition*, 78.

⁹⁵ Skhirtladze, *Otkhta Eklesia*, 25-26.

⁹⁶ Giorgi of Mtatsminda, *The Life of Iovane and Euthymius*, 43.

century, Ioane Grdzelisdze and Arsen of Ninotsminda came to Otkhta.⁹⁷ The inscription of one of the churches of Otkhta informs us that Arsen of Ninotsminda built a temple in Otkhta in 984.⁹⁸ The church is located away from the main cathedral and is referred to as the Arseniseuli Monastery. It is a small anchorite monastery under the jurisdiction of the Lavra.

Unlike the Parkhali, Oshki and Khakhuli monasteries founded by David Kurapalates, the manuscripts found in the Lavra of the Otkhta Eklesia are unknown. No other artefacts (crosses, icons) are known from the church.

After the death of David Kurapalates in 1001, Basil Caesar, according to the will of the ruler of Imieri Tao (Upper Tao), transferred Imieri Tao, Basiani and other “upper countries” to the Byzantine jurisdiction, including the Otkhta Monastery.⁹⁹ It is likely that, like other Tao monasteries, the Otkhta Eklesia was freed from the Seljuks by the Georgians who returned the area during the reign of Tamar, namely, after the Battle of Basiani (1202).¹⁰⁰

There is an inscription in the small manuscript of Canonical collection copied in 1031 (National Center of Manuscripts, A-96) in which the deacon of the “Otkhta Monastery” Avgaroz Mamatsashvili is mentioned.¹⁰¹

It is likely that after the conquest of Samtskhe-Saatabago by the Ottomans, the Otkhta Eklesia was emptied and the monastic life ceased.

Parkhali

Parkhali Monastery is located in historical Tao, Artvin area, Yusufeli district, the village of Parkhali (Artvin İli, Yusufeli İlçesi, Altıparmak köyü).¹⁰² According to the testament of the Parkhali (I) Gospel transcribed in 973, the monastery of Parkhali was named after John the Baptist.¹⁰³

The years 961-973 are considered to be the time of construction of the Parkhali church.¹⁰⁴ Vakhtang Beridze dates the Parkhali temple to the

⁹⁷ Ibid., 56.

⁹⁸ Skhirtladze, Otkhta Eklesia, 32.

⁹⁹ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 24.

¹⁰⁰ History of Georgia, The chronicler of Lasha-Giorgi, 354.

¹⁰¹ Takaiashvili, Archeological expedition, 74.

¹⁰² Bagauri..., catalogue, 40.

¹⁰³ Georgian manuscripts, A Fund (5) = Kartul khelnatserta aghtseriloba, kopili saeklesio muzeumis (A) kolektsiisa, t. 5, al. baramidzis redaktsiit, (Description of the Georgian manuscripts of State Museum of Georgia: The manuscripts of former Church Museum (A collection)] (vol. V) (A. Baramidze, Ed.), Tbilisi 1955: 2.

¹⁰⁴ Zakaraiia, Architecture = Закарая П., Зодчество Тао-Кларджети, Тбилиси 1992; 134;

60s-70s of the 10th century.¹⁰⁵ The donor of the temple was David Kurapalates.¹⁰⁶

Grayish sandstone was used as the building material of the church. According to Vakhtang Djobadze, the construction method is the same as in the majority of Tao-Klarjeti churches. Well-hewn blocks are arranged in successive rows, so that the mortar between the stones is not visible in the external cladding of the walls; The interior walls to be painted are of light-colored hewn stone, except for the carved pilasters, door-window frames, and piers on the outer walls. The gap between the inner and outer layers of the wall is filled with gravel, with the limestone mortar on.¹⁰⁷

Like the Otkhta Eklesia, Parkhali is a three-nave basilica built on a two-tiered foundation. The church has three entrances of the same size (1.86 x 2.8 m.) and arrangement. Of these, only the western door is functional. The northern entrance is completely built up. The simplest mihrab is arranged at the south door.¹⁰⁸

According to the description of Ekvtime Takaishvili, the roof of the Parkhali is rather sloping, which the researcher explains by climatic conditions. According to him, a lot of snow falls in Parkhali, and if precipitation fell on the roof, the building would not be able to withstand it.¹⁰⁹

The inner space of Parkhali church is divided by four pairs of piers. The construction of the arches of the piers is the same as in the Otkhta Eklesia – the width of the arches increases towards the east. From the east, in the second pair of piers, there are niches for the attendance of secular authorities and high clergy. The facades of the church, like the Otkhta Eklesia, are decorated with decorative arcature, but Parkhali, unlike the Otkhta Eklesia, has a more “austere” and less “artistic” look.¹¹⁰

As a result of the transformation of the Parkhali temple into a mosque, the entire interior was covered with oil paint, which is why the painting, unfortunately, no longer exists. Like the painting of the Otkhta Eklesia, the painting here was also divided into 5 registers, with the exception of the row of shielded angels, which were separated by wide ornamental

Siloga va, Oshki, 157.

¹⁰⁵ Beridze, Monuments = Беридзе В., Место памятников Тао-Кларджети в истории грузинской архитектуры, (Beridze, V., Monuments of Tao-klarjeti, history of Georgian architecture), Tbilisi 1981: 167.

¹⁰⁶ Takaishvili, Archeological expedition, 89.

¹⁰⁷ Djobadze, Early medieval Georgian monasteries, 203.

¹⁰⁸ Djobadze, Early medieval Georgian monasteries, 205.

¹⁰⁹ Takaishvili, Archeological expedition, 86.

¹¹⁰ Tao-Klarjeti, Historical-Cultural Essay, 358.

bands; The lower two were probably devoted to royal holidays or, perhaps, one depicted scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist.¹¹¹

Over time, the inscriptions on the temple have been washed away or the paint has faded from the sun. However, one extensive inscription, which contains important information for the Parkhali church, has been completely preserved. The inscription is placed between the 6th and 7th arches of the facade chamber. It is written in 19 lines – 8 lines are in the 6th arch and 11 lines in the 7th arch: “In the name of God, with the help of the Mother of God and Saint John the Baptist, may God glorify Patriarch John of Kartli and all of the East. The dome of the Parkhali church was built by Kurapalates, he decorated it. Eternal glory to him. May the Lord rest the soul of the archpriest Giorgi Ghaghueli, Amen, Amen. Ioane the Leader.”¹¹²

According to Valeri Silogava, the author and possible performer of the inscription was Ioane, the abbot of the Parkhali monastery. At the end of the text, he names another dean – Giorgi Ghaghueli was dead at the time of writing the inscription, because the text states about the forgiveness of his soul. The researcher assumes that Giorgi Ghaghueli must have been the predecessor of Ioane, during which the temple was being built by David Kurapalates.¹¹³

One word of the text of the inscription “chasdudara” (arcade) draws attention, which tells about the embroidering. According to Niko Marr, “chas-dud-ara” means arch, vault, arcade at the same time.¹¹⁴

The inscription mentions two historical persons – Kurapalates without a name and Ioane, the Patriarch of Kartli and all of the East.¹¹⁵ Kurapalates named as the builder of the temple in the inscription must be David Kurapalates, and in the history of the Georgian Church, the contemporary Catholicos of David Kurapalates is known as John I Chrysostom (980-1001). He must have been mentioned in the Parkhali inscription and the Parkhali church was incensed by him. According to Valery Silogava, the inscription should be dated to the end of the 10th century, before the death

111 D i d e b u l i d z e, *The monuments*, 42.

112 S i l o g a v a, *Oshki*, 159-160.

113 *Ibid.*, 159-160.

114 Marr, *Selected Works* = *Март Н., Избранные работы*, III, Тбилиси 1934, 199-218; T a k a i s h v i l i, *Archeological expedition*, 89-91; S i l o g a v a, *Oshki*, 161.

115 According to Ekvtime Takaishvili, he considered the patriarch of Kartli Ioane mentioned in the inscription to be a figure of the later period. In his opinion, he must have been the Catholicos-Patriarch Ioane VIII (1497-1507), and he dated the inscription to this time (T a k a i s h v i l i, *Archeological expedition* 93).

of David Kurapalates (1000/1001 AD), which is confirmed by its palaeographic signs.¹¹⁶

There are numerous small inscriptions on the stones of the Parkhali Basilica Cathedral. Some of them were noticed for the first time in 2003, during the expedition of the South Caucasus and Anatolia Research Center. In 2016-2017, Buba Kudava carried out detailed recording and research of the inscriptions. According to the preliminary observation of the researcher, the minuscule (Nuskhuri) graphemes made with red ink mainly inform us of the names, and by deciphering the inscriptions, the identity of dozens of old masters, stone hewers working during the construction of the temple is revealed.

According to Ekvtime Takaishvili, there were many mural inscriptions in Parkhali. There is a damaged fresco in the area of the north-eastern pylon, which was intended as a living quarters for priests. Most likely, the archpriest of the monastery was depicted on the fresco. Here and there Takaishvili has seen inscriptions in majuscule (Asomtavruli), which mentions the archpriest of Parkhali, Abraham: “God, Christ, have mercy on Abraham, the archpriest of Parkhali, Amen.”

A fragment of a large fresco inscription was preserved on the second northern pylon. Another large inscription was in the altar, below the window on the right. In the middle, the plaster fell off and a large part of the inscription was lost. Only a small part of the inscription is readable. According to Ekvtime Takaishvili, this inscription can be contemporary with the first painting of Parkhali. The second 17-line performed in mkhedruli (modern lay) inscription is relatively late and damaged. Ekvtime Takaishvili conveys the content of the inscription as follows: the archpriest of the Parkhali monastery, Archbishop Saba (in the inscription he calls himself “Patron”), received an order from the Catholicos of Kartli, Nikoloz, to settle the issue of the monastery’s burial place.¹¹⁷

In the Parkhali monastery, the Gospel copied by John Bera in the Shatberdi monastery in 973 was kept, which is known in the scientific literature as the Parkhali (I) Gospel (National Center of Manuscripts, A-1453). The calligrapher copied the Gospel for the newly built Parkhali church. It is clear from the manuscript’s testament¹¹⁸ that by this time the church in

¹¹⁶ Silogava, Oshki, 161-163.

¹¹⁷ Takaishvili, Archeological expedition, 93-94.

¹¹⁸ In 1889, Ekvtime Takaishvili found the Parkhali Gospel and published its description (Takaishvili, E., Three historical chronicles (about Conversion of Kartli, Sumbat of Bagrationis and Meskhetian Davit), Tbilisi 1890.

Parkhali had already been built: “In front of the new church, on the new altar, it should be placed in praise of the King of Kings, may God praise King David Magistros. May the Lord praise the holy Father Ekvtime for his outstanding spirituality....”¹¹⁹ From this colophon it is also known that in 973 Ekvtime was the archpriest of the Parkhali monastery.

It is worth noting that according to the Parkhali Gospel (National Center of Manuscripts, A-1453) and the Parkhali inscription, we learn about the activity of the three archpriests of the Parkhali monastery – Ekvtime, Giorgi Ghaghueli and John – probably from the 70s of the 10th century to 1001.

At the turn of the 10th-11th centuries, Gabriel Patarai worked in the Parkhali monastery, and three of his transcribed manuscripts have reached us. They are: 1) Parkhali Gospel (S-4927), transcribed, probably at the turn of the 10th-11th centuries, the manuscript is 140 pages, written on parchment, with minuscule (Nuskhuri). As the place of activity of the copyist is considered to be the Parkhali monastery, the manuscript is also considered to have been copied in Parkhali;¹²⁰ 2) Klarjeti Synoptic Gospel (A-144), the manuscript has 217 pages, written on parchment, with minuscule (Nuskhuri). Along with the translated homiletics, the Klarjeti Synoptic Gospel also contains samples of original writing: eight sermons of Ioane Bolneli and a story taken about elevation of the St. Cross in Mtskheta from the “Conversion of Kartli” for pentecost reading. The translated texts of the collection are mainly derived from Greek, the chronological range of their translation and further processing is placed in the 5th-10th centuries. Many Greek originals corresponding to the ancient layer are lost today;¹²¹ 3) Parkhali Synoptic Gospel (National Center of Manuscripts A-95), the manuscript has 655 pages, written on parchment, with minuscule (Nuskhuri). It contains recitations by John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa and others, sermons by Ioane Bolneli, texts of Acts of Martyrs Shushanik and Abo.¹²²

The Gospel transcribed in 1241 was probably kept in the Parkhali monastery, which is currently preserved in the National Library of Geor-

¹¹⁹ Georgian manuscripts, A Fund (5), 2.

¹²⁰ Georgian manuscripts, S Fund (6) = Kartul khelnatserta aghtseriloba, kopili kartvelta shoris tsera-kitkhvis gamavrtselebeli sazogadoebis (S) kolektsiisa, el. metrevelis redaktsiit, t. 6, (Description of Georgian manuscripts of the former Society for Spreading Literacy Among Georgians (collection S)] (Vol. VI) (El. Metreveli, Ed.). Tbilisi 1969: 174-175.

¹²¹ Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 106-107.

¹²² Georgian manuscripts, A Fund (1), 361.

gia. In 1879, Dimitri Bakradze saw the manuscript in Artvin. He writes that the manuscript belonged to the Parkhali monastery.¹²³

After the death of David Kurapalates in 1001, Basil Caesar, according to the testament of the ruler of Imieri Tao (Upper Tao), Imieri Tao, Basiani and other “upper countries” were transferred under Byzantium, including the Parkhali monastery.¹²⁴

According to the document “Parish of the Samtskhe of the Patriarchate of Kartli – Princely Houses and Dominions” drawn up in the period of 1516, Parkhali with its revenue and twelve Aznaurishviliz constituted the parish and the serfs of the Patriarchate of Mtskheta.¹²⁵

In 1518, the Atabag of Samtskhe Kvarkvare III (1516-1535) renewed the process of transferring the donation of Pharkhali monastery to Mtskheta church.¹²⁶

After the conquest of Samtskhe-Saatabago by the Ottomans, the Parkhali monastery was emptied and the monastic life here ceased.

As our research shows, Tao monasteries played a significant monastic and cultural role in the development of medieval Georgia. Tao figures had an active relationship with the great religious and cultural centers abroad. We tried to identify the clergy and laity related to these monasteries, their activities and role in the development of the monastery.

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123 Sharashidze, Materials = Samkhret sakartvelos istoriis masalebi (XIII-XV ss.), tekstebi da gamokvelebi momzadebulia kristine sharashidzis mier, (Sharashidze, K., Materials for the history of South Georgia (13th–15th c.): Publication of texts, research and indexes), Tbilisi 1982: 64.

124 Tao-Klarjeti Heritage of manuscripts, 24-25.

125 Surguladze, Historical documents, 55.

126 Ibid., 70-71.

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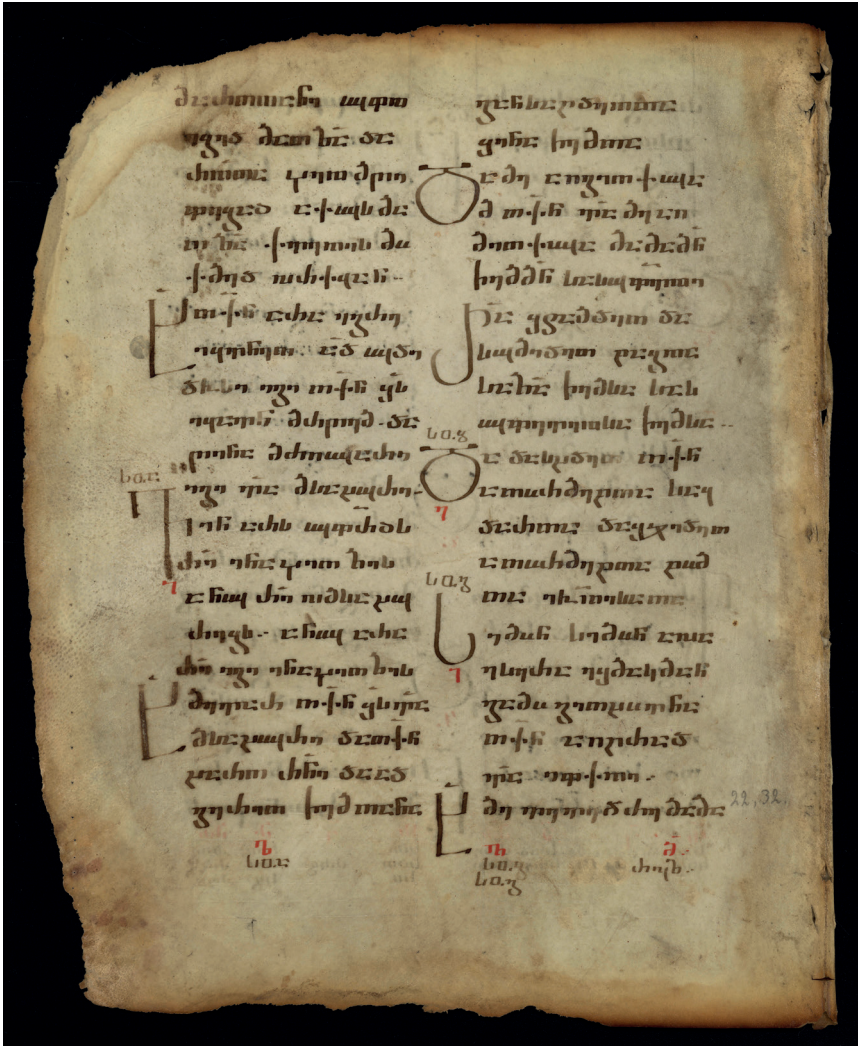


Fig. 1. Parkhali II four Gospels. Kept at Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. (MS S 4927, 098v)

The Ancient Ecclesiastical Hymn in “The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola” by an Unknown Author

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Abstract

As there is not much material about the Early Christian literature and liturgy, the discovery of an ancient ecclesiastical hymn in a Georgian hagiographic work “Tsminda kolalel krmata tsameba” (The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola) by an unknown author that was written in the 2nd-3rd centuries and its analysis is a significant issue for the history of Christianity in general.

The hymn chanted by the priest at the baptism of the children is improvised and carries the signs of folk and Biblical hymns and reveals similarity with the structure of the antiphonic hymns established in the liturgical practice during the period of Early Christianity.

According to the Georgian folk tradition, pagans dedicated hymns to gods, cults, significant events. For the most part, hymns represent glorification or praise and end with the word “Glory!” (“Glory to you!”). As for the biblical tradition, the Psalms of King David also end with “Alleluia,” which means “praise to God.” The hymn chanted by the priest at the baptism of the children from Kola also ends with “Alleluia.” In his improvised hymn, which should be considered as part of the liturgy of that time, the priest glorifies the episode of Christ’s baptism.

Keywords: Hymn, Ecclesiastical, Martyrdom, Biblical, Folklore, Georgian hagiographic work.

After long-term research, I concluded that “Tsminda kolalel krmata tsameba” (The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola) was written between the 2nd-3rd centuries.¹ The hymn chanted by the priest at the

¹ Grigalashvili: გრიგალაშვილი, ი., „უძველესი ქართული საეკლესიო გალობა უცნობი ავტორის წმინდა კოლაელ კრმათა სამებაში“, ჟურნალი ქართველოლოგია 2, თბილისი, 2016 (The Oldes Ecclesiastic Hymn in the Martyrdom of Saint Children from Kola), *The Kartvelologist. Journal of Georgian Studies* 2, Tbilisi 2016.

baptism of the children is improvised and carries the signs of folk and Biblical hymns and reveals similarity with the structure of the antiphonic hymns established in the liturgical practice during the period of Early Christianity.

As there is not much material about the Early Christian literature and liturgy, I consider that the discovery of an ancient ecclesiastical hymn in a Georgian hagiographic work and its analysis is a significant issue for the history of Christianity in general.

From “The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola” we learn that in the gorge of Kola where pagans prevailed and Christians were minority, there were nine children from pagan families who wanted to go to church with their Christian friends, but were barred. Their Christian friends advised them to get baptized if they really wanted to enter the church with them. Thus, the children aged 7-9 decided to get baptized. The priest took them to the source of a large river and baptized them by immersion into the water. After baptism, the children went to their Christian friends’ homes and did not return to their own families in spite of their parents’ threats and promises. Then the parents beat them and took them home by force. The children refused to eat the food offered by their parents because it was laid in front of the idols. The children refrained from eating for 7 days. Seeing this, their parents punished the children: they dug a pit and threw them into it, then stoned them. So, that place became the place of martyrdom. This is the plot of the ancient Georgian hagiographic work.

Platon Ioselian,² Niko Mari,³ Pavle Ingorokva,⁴ Korneli Kekelidze,⁵ Ivane Javakhishvili,⁶ Iliia Abuladze⁷ and Bidzina Cholokashvili⁸ ex-

² П. Иоселиан, *Жизнеописание Святых Прославляемых православного Грузинскую Церковью*, Тифлис 1860: 15.

³ Н. Марр, *Мученичество Девяти Отроков Колаицев, Тексты и Разыскания по Армяно-Грузинской Филологии*, Том V, С. Петербург 1903: 53-54.

⁴ Ingorokva: ინგოროკვა, ბ., თხზულებათა კრებული, IV, თბილისი, 1978 (Collection of the Works), vol. IV, Tbilisi 1978: 351.

⁵ History of Georgian Literature = კეკელიძე, კ., ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორია I, თბილისი, 1960 (History of Georgian Literature), Tbilisi 1960: 516-518.

⁶ Javakhishvili: ჯავახიშვილი, ივ., ისტორიის მიზანი, წყაროები და მეთოდები წინათ და ახლა, ტფილისი, 1921 (The Aim, Sources and Methods of the History in the Past and Now), Tbilisi 1921: 36-38.

⁷ Abuladze: აბულაძე, ი., ქართული და სომხური ლიტერატურული ურთიერთობები IX-X საუკუნეებში, თბილისი, 1944 (Abuladze Iliia, Georgian and Armenian Literary Relationship in the 9th -10th centuries), Tbilisi 1944.

⁸ Cholokashvili: ჩოლოკაშვილი, ბ., უძველესი ქართული მარტილოლოგიური თხზულება, თბილისი 2003 (The Oldest Georgian Martyrdom Work), Tbilisi 2003: 30-31.

pressed different opinions about the date of the hagiographic work. Niko Mari, Pavle Ingorokva and Bidzina Cholokashvili dated the monument to the 4th century, as it mentions the ancient rite of christening.⁹ Other researchers dated the work to the ninth century because it employs the language norms used during the 9th-10th centuries. I consider that the hagiographic work was part of liturgy and the manuscript was re-written many times, thus, with time it incorporated the changed language norms.

I believe that in order to determine the date of the hagiographic work we need to study how Christianity spread in Georgia. Back in 1st and 2nd centuries, the disciples of Christ actively preached Christianity in Georgia. As the Greek author, Nikita from Paphlagon denotes, Saint Andrew the First-Called, one of the closest disciples of Christ, visited Didachara three times.¹⁰ Christianity was mainly spread by *Simon the Canaanite*, Mathata and Tadeoz by preaching about the birth of Christ, His christening, His fables, miracles and crucifixion.

The first confessors of Christ were Bishop Elioze's mother and sister, who were canonized as saints by the Christian Church of Georgia. Their story is included into the Georgian Chronicles "Life of Kartli." During the crucifixion of Christ, Elioze's mother heard the sound of nails and she said sorrowfully: "Uriahe's reign is over as you have killed your Savior. Woe to me as I should have died before this." Having said this, she passed away.¹¹ ("Life of Kartli", (K'art'lis c'xovreba). When Elioze brought Christ's robe to Georgia, his sister grabbed it and died at once. A Jewish community lived in Mtskheta, so they were well aware of the events connected with the coming of Jesus and His crucifixion.

As Bidzina Cholokashvili noticed, in the ancient hagiographic work "The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola" we encounter quotes only from the gospel, which can be explained by the fact that the Georgian King Rev the Truthful was familiar with the gospel and Christian ideals in the 3rd century AC. Moreover, the baptism described in "The Martyrdom of Nine Children from Kola" was performed according to the ancient Christian rite. I would add that baptizing the children by immersion into

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Mimosvla = მიმოსვლა ანდრია მოციქულისა, ძველი ქართული თარგმანისტექსტი გამოსაცემად მოამზადა მალხაზ კობიაშვილმა, თბილისი, 2008 (Old Georgian Translation Text was prepared for publishing by Malkhaz Kobiashvili), Tbilisi 2008.

¹¹ History of Georgia, K'art'lis c'xovreba = ანა დედოფლისეული ნუსხა, გამოსცა სიმონ ყაუხჩიშვილმა, თბილისი, 1942 (K'art'lis c'xovreba [History of Georgia], The manuscript by the Queen Anna, edited by Simon Kaukhchishvili), Tbilisi 1942: 60.

water, placing crowns on their heads, dressing them in white and giving them crosses was typical for the western Christian liturgy, in particular, for the customs of baptism of 2nd-3rd centuries. The Georgian author's stating that the angels dressed the children in blameless clothes can be explained by the cultural and political links with Romans. The blameless clothes mean white clothes, which is the demonstration of similarity to the Roman baptism ritual.

It is noteworthy that in the text of zhamistsirva (Divine Liturgy) by James the Apostle, Jesus' brother, the episode of Jesus' christening is mentioned a few times.¹² The priest addresses God who teaches men as a benign Father, who sent His Son to renew and restore "The image that descended from Heaven and by the Holy Spirit was *incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man; who* was born in Bethlem, Judea, and was baptized by John in the Jordan river; and walked among men and gave up his life to give us life, and became obedient unto death and died willingly for our sins: At night when he was betrayed for the life of the world and he took the bread in His pure and innocent hands..."¹³ The unknown writer says that the children from Kola were baptized at night like Jesus: "Furthermore our Lord Jesus Christ was also baptized by night by John in the river Jordan."¹⁴

In the article "The Ancient Georgian Hagiographic Work"¹⁵ we have extensively discussed the question of dating the work. Therefore, we will refrain from repeating the arguments given there, but will just note that the analysis of the hymn chanted by the priest during Christ's baptism reinforces our point of view about the above-mentioned question. The priest's hymn is given below:

¹² Grigalashvili: გრიგალაშვილი, ი., „უძველესი ქართული საეკლესიო გალობა უცნობი ავტორის წმინდა კოლაელ ყრმათა ნამებაში“ (The Oldes Ecclesiastic Hymn in the Martyrdom of Saint Children from Kola), *The Kartvelologist. Journal of Georgian Studies* 2, Tbilisi 2016.

¹³ *Древне-Грузинский Архиретикон Трузнчнский Текстъ, изданный Комитетом Церковного Музея, Под Редакцией и Предисловием Прот. Корнели Кекелидзе, Тифлис 1912: 27.*

¹⁴ Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature = ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები, ილია აბულაძის ხელმძღვანელობითა და რედაქციით, აბულაძე, ილია. შახიძე, მხეცვალაა., საქართველოს სსრ მეცნიერებათა აკადემია. კ. კეკელიძის სახ. ხელნაწერთა ინსტიტუტი I, (The Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature Monuments / Edited by Iliabuladze, Mzek'ala Sanidze, vol. I, Tbilisi 1963: 184.

¹⁵ Grigalashvili: გრიგალაშვილი, ი., „უძველესი ქართული საეკლესიო გალობა უცნობი ავტორის წმინდა კოლაელ ყრმათა ნამებაში“ (The Oldes Ecclesiastic Hymn in the Martyrdom of Saint Children from Kola), *The Kartvelologist. Journal of Georgian Studies* 2, Tbilisi 2016.

“The Holy Ghost descended
As a dove upon the Jordan
When Christ was baptized,
The angels stood by singing hymns,
Alleluia, Alleluia.”
(Hymn is divided into lines by I.G.).

სული წმიდად გარდამოხდა,
ვითარცა ტრეღი ზედა იორდანესა,
რაჟამს ქრისტე ნათელს იღებდა,
ანგელოზნი თანა-უღვეს,
ამას გალობასა იტყვიდეს:
ალოილუიამ, ალოილუიამ!¹⁶

In the text of the hymn the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist is glorified; the angels stand by Christ singing Alleluia.

According to M. Shanidze, the definition of the word “Alleluia” provided in Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani’s Georgian dictionary must have been taken from Ephrem Mtsire’s exegetical interpretation of Psalms by Athanasius of Alexandria. “Exegetical interpretation by Athanasius: “Praise God”; exegetical interpretation by Kvirile: “because **al** means “praise”, **lu** means “true” and **ia** means “God” or “Lord”, and **iao** means “divine” in the Hebrew language, it means: because it is designated as divine, praise Him who is the God for all of us.

The definition of the word “Alleluia” has to be searched in Exegetic literature. The basic word for it is the Hebrew expression “Praise Iah.” The Greek translators left these words without translation and included them in the inscriptions made on psalms. This is how the word “Alleluia” appeared in the titles of the psalms 106, 110-118, 134, 135, 145-150. In Hebrew texts we encounter these words as a doxology at the end of Book 4 and Book 5, but both in Greek and, respectively, in Georgian they are translated as “so be it” (105,48) and “Praise God” (105,1-6).¹⁷

Hebrews called the psalms Great Alleluia because they were chanted during the holydays of Passover and the *Feast of Tabernacles*. In antic Judaism they were sung as an antiphon by Leviticus choir.

Antiphons are the ancient Christian chants. They were introduced by Ignatius of Antioch (**the God-Bearer**, tortured in 107). When St Ignatius whirled into heaven, he had a vision of two groups of angels praising the Trinity alternately. Therefore, he started the practice of singing antiphonic

16 Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature = ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები, ილია აბულაძის ხელმძღვანელობითა და რედაქციით, აბულაძე, ილია, შანიძე, შანველა., საქართველოს სსრ მეცნიერებათა აკადემია. კ. კეკელიძის სახ. ხელნაწერთა ინსტიტუტი I, (The Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature Monuments. Edited by Ilia A b u l a d z e, Mzek'ala Sanidze), vol. I, Tbilisi 1963: 184.

17 Shanidze, შანიძე, შხ., ეფრემ მცირეს თსალმუნთა თარგმანების ტექსტისათვის, აკაკი შანიძე – 100 (About Ephrem Mtsire’s Translation of the Psalms, in Akaki Shanidze – 100), Tbilisi 1987: 48.

chants at the church and gradually such chants spread to other churches, including the Georgian church of Early Christianity, which introduced antiphonic chant to its liturgical practice. At the baptism service, the priest chanted improvised antiphonic chant. The text makes no mention of the choir of liturgical singers, but, presumably, there was a choir whose singing was heard outside the church and attracted the 7-9-year-old children in the Catechumenate. The chant was like a healing balm to their angelic, pure souls and they decided to get baptized, although they knew that their pagan parents would not approve of such decision.

The beginning of the 150th psalm is quite significant because Alleluia is mentioned twice: “Alleluia, Praise the Lord, God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens” (Ps.150,1).

The resolutions made by the World Council of Churches are also worthy of attention. At the first Council held in Nicaea in 325, the clergymen had a discussion and established the *dogma* of the *Trinity*. In the “Martyrdom of the Nine Young Children from Kola,” the priest uttered “Alleluia” twice, which means that the hagiographic work was written before the Nicaea Council. Since then, the word “Alleluia” is repeated in psalms three times to glorify the Trinity.

Moreover, we can recall the ethnological and folklore tradition in Georgia. In her book “Fairy Tale and Reality” Rusudan Cholokashvili addresses the double-root words in the Georgian Fairy tales. According to her, ethnographic study of Georgian religious names has revealed quite a few names of deities and angels with double-root names, e.g., the Goddess Great Mother Nana, Barbolika–Barbalika, which is the same as Barbale, whom Syrians, Georgians and Armenians considered the patron of farmers. However, for Georgians Barbale has additional functions: in Svaneti she is a patron of fertility, while in Kartli she is a patron deity of children. The researcher brings many examples of main heroes, protector creatures and other characters having double-root names and finally concludes that using double-root words, along with repetition of particular motifs, themes and plots, symbolizes constant movement and activity; in fairy tales it emphasizes life and eternity. All this is opposed to immobility, death, cutting off heads, turning to stone, petrification and sleep. On the other hand, it creates rhythm, the greatest power in the world, which can influence people’s emotions as well.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cholokashvili, Rusudan: ხოლოკაშვილი, რ., ზღაპარი და სინამდვილე (Cholokashvili Rusudan, Fairy Tale and Reality), Tbilisi 2009: 81.

The hymn chanted at the baptism of the children from Kola was inspired by the gospel: “At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove” (Mark 1,9-10). Angels are not mentioned in the above-cited episode of the gospel, while the unknown author uses the motif of praising the angels, which is characteristic of the Georgian ethno culture. It is well-known that the scene of elevation of the cross by the angels is depicted on the inner side of the domes in churches built during the period of Early Christianity or Middle Ages (Jvari Monastery, Samtavisi Cathedral, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral etc.); and praising angels is a dominant motif in Georgian folklore and theological literature. In the cultic and ritual texts, the Sun is praised along with angels. In Eastern highland region, the doxologies uttered by priests contain the praise of the Sun and the angels. “The Sun has all the features of a deity. In the texts glorifying pagan deities the sun is mentioned after the Supreme God: “Glory to God, thanks to God and Glory to the Sun and its follower angels.”¹⁹

See these folk poems:

“The liturgy of angel starts
When Nino strikes the bell,
The chrism is boiled,
the wind will spread
In Mtskheta its sweet smell.
Like vine that’s wrapped
around the pole
It’s wrapped the pillars
and the dome,
Oh, may the grace of prayers
and chants
Find you and fill your heart
and soul.”

ანგელოზის წირვა ღვებდა,
როცა დაპურავს ნინო ხარსა;
მცხეთის ქალაქს მირონი ღუღს,
ყველგნივ მიაქვს ნიაფქარსა.
გარს გუმბათსა, სვეტს ეხვევა,
როგორც ნორჩი ვახი სარსა,
იმის მადლი შეეცნოთ,
რაც იქ წირვა-ლოცვა ღვასა.²⁰

(Translated into English by Ia Griglashvili and Lela Ebralidze).

¹⁹ ქართული ხალხური პოეზია (Georgian Folk Poetry, Mythological Poetry), Part 1, Tbilisi 1972: 28.

²⁰ Georgian Christian Poetry = ქართული ქრისტიანული პოეზია ათ ტომად, ტომი 2, ანგელოზი ქართულ პოეზიაში, თბილისი 2014 (Georgian Christian Poetry, in ten volumes, vol. 2, Angel in Georgian Poetry), Tbilisi 2014: 4.

or

“Your stalk is wet with holy tears,
By angels you’re caressed,
You, sweet and gracious, twisted vine,
By God your roots are blessed.
In altar chalice your wine’s poured,
You’re hope no one could kill,
Sent down from Heaven, holy grace,
Sweet fruit you bear still.”

(Translated into English by Ia Grigalashvili and Lela Ebralidze).

ანგელოზების ნათევრო,
ფესვიდალოცვილო, კეთილო,
ნაკურთხო, რქაცრემლიანო,
გახო თავგადაგრეხილი,
ნძინდა ბარძიმძი ჩადემულო,
იმელო, ვერაჩეხილო,
მადლო, სამოთხით მოსულო,
სულ დახუნძლოლო მესილო.²¹

According to the Easter hymns, angels praise God forever. In many samples of Georgian hymnography, hymnographers speak about angels with love and respect. In his “*ოხითაჲ*” (Okhita) Shio Mghvimeli addresses the Blessed Virgin Mary:

“You are blessed,
Holy Virgin,
Queen Mary,
As Jesus Christ who became incarnate
from you
Freed the world from sins
And all of us became worthy of staying
with angels
And of incorruptibility
And obtained the Eden!”

(Translated into English by Ia Grigalashvili and Lela Ebralidze)

კურთხეულო ხარ შენ,
ყოველან მდილო ღმრთისმომბელო
ქალონულო,
ღედლოვლო მარამ,
რამეთუ განხორციელებითა შენგან
ქრისტემს ღმრთისადათა
სოფელი განთავისუფელდა
ცოდვისაგან
და ყოველნი ზიარ ვიქმნენით
ანგელოზთა,
და უზრუნველგებასა ღირს ვიქმნენით
და სამოთხედ მოვიღეთ!²²

Repeated eulogies of angels in the hymns by Georgian hymnographers (Ioane Minchkhi, Mikael Modrekili, Ioane Mtbevari, Ioane Konkozisdze, Kurdanai, Nikoloz Gulaberisdze and others) reveal one of the main motifs of the Georgian Christian culture.

²¹ Ibid., 5.

²² Georgian Christian Poetry = ქართული ქრისტიანული პოეზია ათ ტომად, ტომი 2, ანგელოზი ქართულ პოეზიაში (Georgian Christian Poetry, in ten volumes, vol. 2, Angel in Georgian Poetry), Tbilisi 2014: 5.

The same can be said about the hymn where angels stand by Christ in the episode of baptizing the children from Kola.

“Then the water gave out great warmth, just like a bath. And by the will of God, angels brought down white robes from heaven and dressed the newly baptized children in them, invisibly to men.”²³ At baptism the angels dressed the newly baptized children in blameless dresses.

The fact that Alleluia sounds twice in the hymn can be explained by the influence of Georgian ethno music. The previously ceremonial song “Iavnana” (“lullaby”) was dedicated to Nana, a fertility deity, but later is became a cradlesong. The hymns dedicated to Nana, Aguna, Bochi and Lile were created in order to glorify the deities.

Iavnana is an old Georgian ceremonial song that is associated with the Sun and the fertility deity Nana. Although it has lost the original ceremonial character, and today is only sung to send children to sleep, its simple but impressive melody is worth noting. I think that the simple melody of the hymn in “The Martyrdom of the Nine Children from Kola” can be accounted for by the influence of older hymns dedicated to pagan deities:

“Iav Nana, Vardo Nana,²⁴
Iavnaninao,
Sleep, my dear,
Iavnaninao” (folk song).

იავ, ნანა, ვარდო, ნანა,
იავნანინაო,
ღაიძინე, გენაცვალე,
იავნანინაო.²⁵

“Alleluia, Alleluia” is repeated twice as a refrain in “The Martyrdom of the Nine Children from Kola.” It is possible, that apart from considering the biblical tradition, the author repeated the melody of folk songs, probably Iavnana, and by humming two words created a refrain, which can be considered as imitation of Georgian pagan hymns.

According to Vera Bardavelidze, Aguna was pronounced as Angurain Racha and Lechkhumi. In Lechkhumi the ceremony of wishing a Happy New Year was held early in the morning. As Mekvle (the first-foot) wished

²³ Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature = ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები, ილია აბულაძის ხელმძღვანელობითა და რედაქციით, აბულაძე, ილია, შანიძე, მზექალა, საქართველოს სსრ მეცნიერებათა აკადემია. კ. კეკელიძის სახ. ხელნაწერთა ინსტიტუტი I, (The Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature Monuments. Edited by Ilia Abuladze, Mzek'ala Sanidze), vol. I, Tbilisi 1963: 184.

²⁴ Literally translated as “Violet Nana”, “Rose Nana” – the deity Nana is compared with violet and rose.

²⁵ K o k e l a d z e: კოკელაძე გრ., ასი ქართული ხალხური სიმღერა, თბილისი, 1984 (One Hundred Georgian folk songs), Tbilisi 1984: 11.

the whole family a Happy New Year, one of the family members went to the vineyard, walked round it and chanted incantation. The literal translation of the incantation is the following: “Angura went down with cardamom and a pipe, with a wine-ladling gourd, with a trick, he went down our estate, broke his leg, made wine flow like a river, yielded, yielded, yielded...grapes on this side and leaves on the other side.” In Racha, the similar ritual has been shifted to Holy Thursday and has mixed with the rituals performed by children. On Holy Thursday, children light a fire near the vineyard, then run around the fire and the vineyard three times, knock pieces of iron against each other and shout: “Angura, Angura, God, save our estate from hail and nail! God, save our estate! Angura, Angura, Aritskina, Aritskina!” Repeating the words Angura and Aritskina twice reminds us of the tradition of chanting ritual hymns, as in old times people thought that by repeating a deity’s name twice they could double that deity’s power.²⁶

In his work “The Problem of Rhythmic Organization of Ecclesiastical Poetry,” Apolon Silagadze notes that “in case of such hymns as, i.e.,” “Old Hymns in the Georgian language” (“People, Come to the Angels and Power of Heaven,” “The Eulogy of the Georgian Language,” or “The Hymns of Father Saba” (by changing the nature and banishing the evil”...) etc., the *easily identifiable* parallel repetition, alliteration and other elements make it obvious that the texts are rhythmic. According to the scholar, there are more complicated cases, e.g., the fourth chapter of “The Martyrdom of Saint Abo” by Ioane Sabanisdze. Finally, Silagadze concludes that the inner rhythm principle identified in particular texts is only characteristic of those individual literary works and not a rhythmic system, because such system does not exist.²⁷

Since “The Martyrdom of the Nine Children from Kola” is a hagiographic work, its text is characterized by a rhythmic pattern. We would like to note that James the Great also observes a rhythmic pattern in his Divine Liturgy. When glorifying God the author of the Divine Liturgy names and praises the whole host of angels. God is praised by the “angels, archangels, churches, rights, rulers and kings, and groups of cherubs.”²⁸

²⁶ Bardavelidze: ბარდაველიძე, ვ., აგუნა-ანგურა, „ძველის მეგობარი“, (Aguna, Angura), *Dzeglis megobari* 16, Tbilisi 1968: 13.

²⁷ Silagadze: სილაგაძე, ა., სასულიერო პოეზიის რიტმული ორგანიზაციის საკითხი (The Problem of Rhythmic Organization of Ecclesiastical Poetry), Tbilisi 1997.

²⁸ Древне-Грузинский Архиретикон Трузинский Текст, изданный Комитетом Церковного Музея, Под Редакцией и Предисловием Прот. Корнели Кекелидзе, Тифлис 1912: 33

It is remarkable that the 59th ruling of the Council of Laodicea (held in 343) forbade the singing of improvised psalms. Because the improvised hymns were forbidden in the fourth century, the fact of the priest's chanting an improvised hymn can be used as an argument while dating the hagiographic monument.

I believe that the hymn was created in Georgia of the Early Christianity period and, consequently, it was influenced by the Georgian folklore as well as the biblical and Early Christian liturgical tradition.

"The Martyrdom of the Nine Children from Kola" describes a conflict between pagan and Christian communities during the epoch when Christianity was not protected by the state.

In "The Martyrdom of the Saint Children from Kola" the hymn chanted by the priest is written in prose, but it can be divided into lines.

According to the Georgian folk tradition, pagans dedicated hymns to gods, cults, significant events. For the most part, hymns represent glorification or praise and end with the word "Glory!" ("Glory to you!"). As for the Biblical tradition, the Psalms of King David also end with "Alleluia," which means "praise to God." The hymn chanted by the priest at the baptism of the children from Kola also ends with "Alleluia." In his improvised hymn, which should be considered as part of the liturgy of that time, the priest glorifies the episode of Christ's baptism.

According to the text of the "Martyrdom of the Saint Children from Kola" by an unknown writer, at the baptism of the catechumens the priest chants an improvised hymn. The canonical rule of baptism adopted by the Christian Church in the fourth century is still valid and hymns of that kind are no longer included in baptism service, as the mentioned rule banned improvised hymns.

I think that the structure and contextual aspect of the Georgian ecclesiastical hymn of the Early Christian period were influenced by the Georgian pagan ceremonial and ritual hymns, biblical psalms and the antiphonic hymns established by Ignatius of Antioch (the God-Bearer) in the liturgical practice in the early period of Christianity, namely, during 2nd and 3rd centuries.

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II. MATERIALS, DOCUMENTS, MEMOIRES

Impact of the Circassian Cultural Linguistics on the Formation of the National Identity

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate how the Circassians use their Cultural Linguistics in different domains and to examine the cultural elements that they have preserved after the Russo-Circassian War (1763–1864). It also sought to reveal the factors that assisted them in preserving some of Circassian cultural aspects. The process of Circassian ethnopolitical mobilization began in the 60s of the 20th century; however, its acceleration came on in the second of '80s. This process was the main part of transferring ethnic identity into national identity through the political point of view. We should not forget that the linguistic identity is largely a political matter and languages are flags of allegiance of the specific nation and ethnic. This means that the instrumental view of language and even culture is fundamentally flawed. Therefore, I can add that the final aim of this paper is twofold – to examine the Circassian Question in the broad of ethnolinguistic context and trace the transformation of its perception by the world community.

Keywords: Circassian Cultural Linguistics; Circassian National Identity; Ethnopolitical Circassia; Ethnolinguistic.

Introduction

The Circassian is one of the ethnic groups in the Northwest of the Caucasus, Northeast of the Black Sea and Southern Russia who speak in Circassian, a branch of Caucasus northwestern languages. This ethnic group is a descendant of Caucasus Adyghean-Abkhazian, which are dispersed in three north Caucasus republics namely Kabardin-Balkar republic, Karachay-Cherkess republic, and Adyghea republic. The Circassians today form a minority of 800,000 people in the North Caucasus region of Russia, while three to six million Circassians are scattered over many

countries, especially in the states of the former Ottoman Empire. The contemporary Circassian ethnolinguistic was formed amidst some geopolitical events, such as the constant conflict between the Russian and Ottoman Empires in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the conquest of Russian in the Caucasus, the fall of the Ottoman Empire and Russian Empire, establishment of the Soviet Union, World War II, and finally collapse of the Soviet Union. Only ten percent of the Circassian population remained on its homeland in the Caucasus by the end of the nineteenth century and the rest counts as the Diaspora.

The Circassian Question enjoys unprecedented interest by those who are interested in the Circassian and Caucasian affairs alike. It seems that an international and regional attention highlights the Circassians, its track and its implications, because of positive elements which influenced the course of events in the past few years, as well as a result of consecutive developments that have happened and still taking place to the Caucasian issues in general and the Circassian Question in particular.

In the process of identity shaping, language functions as a tool that maintains the cultural identity that the language simulates. Actually, the distinctiveness qualities that a culture possessed, for example, its own value, custom, principles, faith, ideology and the ways of life are embedding in its own language. We should consider that the relationship between language and identity is embedded in a culture of Circassian to the variety of status in the Circassian social hierarchy. However, the language plays a role as a cultural identity, which is debatable, because there are some rare cases when some individuals do not identify themselves as an ethnic group even though they speak the language of that ethnic. It can be concluded that ethnolinguistic is not the only tools that embrace identity; there are some other external factors that help the process of identity formation which I will focus on those as well.

This article tries to answer, primary research questions emerge and many related questions, which are nested within each primary question. Although the primary questions remained as the backbone of my research, related questions have changed as the research progressed and new findings and perspectives were discovered. It is the first incentive of every researcher that wants to study and research concerning unknown northern Caucasus ethnic groups and their relation with culture and linguistic identity. We should not forget that the linguistic identity is largely a political matter and languages are flags of allegiance of the specific

nation and ethnic. This means that the instrumental view of language and even culture is fundamentally flawed.

Actually, language use and identity are conceptualized rather differently from a sociocultural perspective on human action. Here, identity is not seen as personal, fixed, and inherent to the individual. Rather, it is identified as socially constituted; a reflexive, dynamic outcome of the social, historical and political grounds of an individual's lived skill. This point of view has helped to set innovative directions for research in practical linguistics.

Therefore, I can add that the final aim of this paper is twofold – to examine the Circassian Question in the broad of ethnolinguistic context and trace the transformation of its perception by the world community. For achieving this, it is needful to recognize the factors that affected the cover of the Circassian question and the actors that characterize the formation of the public viewpoint. The overall purpose in writing this paper is to unveil, present and discuss the rising transnational identity of the Circassians, composed of different but related indigenous minorities in the Caucasus or in Russia as well as diaspora groups in several countries.

Formation Factors of Circassian Question

Historically the eviction of the Circassians from their historical homeland Circassia, in the consequences of the Caucasian War to the Ottoman Empire, was the onset point of a nation formation. The expulsion and eviction as the main result of Russo – Circassian War, was sent before the end of the war in 1864 and it was frequently supplemented by 1867. The Imperial Russian Army rounded up Circassian villagers, driving them to the ports of the Black Sea, where they awaited ships provided by the neighboring Ottoman Empire.¹ This historical process, I mean from the exile and then the settlement in new lands and making the Diasporic Community, have shaped the Circassian Question in the history of Caucasus. Actually, my research indicates that Circassians have also been subject to various exclusionary acts in the nation-building process, one of the best details and research of which are given in Kaya's work.²

¹ A. Leitzinger, *The Circassian Genocide*. Global Politician 2004
(Online access: <https://web.archive.org/web/20131109084500/http://www.globalpolitician.com/default.asp?2243-circassia>).

² Ibid.

From such a perspective, the Circassian Diaspora is an instance of exploring how boundaries of knowledge pertaining to identity, inclusion, exclusion, ethnicity, past and present are challenged, deconstructed, reclaimed and reconstructed within the processes of globalization. By means of these processes, Circassian activists and elites, since the exile, have challenged, changed and problematized the boundaries of knowledge to their identity, their rights, their history and their unity in general.³

Actually, using the term of the Circassian Question is showed up in the process of a nation formation since 1864 as the main axis of their identity. From my point of view, the main factors of this formation are the Circassian Exile or better to call it *Muhajir*⁴ *Memory*, then lost the homeland in their new life and further, the first taste of independent in 1917 under the name of the *Mountainous Republic of the Northern Caucasus*, role of Diaspora and their activities, rising nationalism and patriotism among elites and young generations, and finally transforming ethnic identity into national identity almost in two century.

I should draw the point that Circassians' ties with their homeland have increased markedly since the collapse of the USSR. Recent studies carried out in Turkey, however, demonstrate that a kind of structural exclusion with regard to equal access to political and cultural rights affects not only non-Muslims, *Kurds*, and *Alevis*.⁵ The common belief in Turkey concerning the Circassians is that they are more privileged than other ethnic groups due to their religious affinity with Sunni Islam.⁶ This belief may be correct to a certain extent, but there are not enough data to confirm it.

³ Brandell, I., Carlson M. & Cetrez, Ö., (Ed.) (2015). "Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge." Talking about the silence and the break by Setenay Nil Dogan. Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. vol. 22. (Online access: <http://www.srii.org/content/upload/documents/e7aaef6-2f8c-4c81-b4da-fbef770d50dd.pdf>), 2015: 145-146.

⁴ *Muhajir* or *Mohajir* (Arabic: مهاجر *muhājir*; pl. مهاجرين *muhājirūn*) is an Arabic word meaning emigrant. In English, this term and its derivatives have been applied to a number of groups and individuals: Muhacir (Turkish variant), Caucasian Muslims who immigrated to Anatolia, from the late 18th century until the end of the 20th century.

⁵ *Alevis* are followers of *Alevism* which is a syncretic, heterodox, and local tradition, whose adherents follow the mystical teachings of Ali, the Twelve Imams, and a descendant—the 13th century Alevi saint Haji Bektash Veli.

⁶ A. K a y a, "Political Participation Strategies of the Circassian Diaspora in Turkey." *Mediterranean Politics*, 9 (2), 2004 (Online access: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1362939042000221286>).

Circassian Exile – *Muhajir Memory*

For *Muhajir*⁷ Memory, firstly I want to draw the attention of Russian invasion in Circassia since the 16th century. As I mentioned in previous chapters, the earliest date of Russian expansion into Circassia was in the 16th century, under Ivan the Terrible, who notably married a Kabardian wife Maria Temryukovna,⁸ the daughter of Muslim prince Temryuk of *Kabarda* to secure and seal a contract of alliance with the Kabardians. After the death of *Ivan the Terrible*, Russian interest in the Caucasus quieted down; and then mostly focused on the *Crimean Khanate* and the *Nogai Horde*.⁹ However, in the 18th century, Russia recaptured its imperial ambitions in Circassia, and expanded steadily southward, with the likely purpose of accessing the Middle East and Persia, using the Caucasus as a connection to the region.¹⁰ The first incursion and invasion of the Russian military into Circassia occurred approximately in 1763, as part of the Russo-Persian War.

In due term to a required need for the coastal area of Circassia and a sight that an independent Circassia would prevent their plot to expand into the southern lands, The Imperial Russian Army moved to attach Circassia. Tensions and pressures culminated in the demolishing the Russo – Circassian War, which in its later phases was outshined by the *Crimean War*. in spite of this fact that a similar war was going on the other side of the Caucasus, as well as the efforts of some Circassian princes to Imam Shamil and to Britain to connect the two battles, linking between the Circassians and their Eastern Caucasian counterparts were violated by the Ossetian alliance with Russians.

Animosities peaked in the 19th century and led directly to the Russo – Circassian War, in which its aim was fighting against the Russians to keep maintaining their independence. This armed conflict became entangled with the following the Crimean War, and at various times the Ottomans

⁷ *Émigrés* in historical sources.

⁸ *Maria Temryukovna* in Russian: *Марія Темрюковна* (1544 – 1569) was a Circassian *Tsaritsa* of the Tsardom of Russia and second spouse to Ivan IV of Russia. Originally named *Qochenay bint Teymour*.

⁹ *Nogay Horde*, *Nohai Horde* or *Nogay Yortu* was a confederation of about eighteen Turkic and Mongol tribes that occupied the Pontic-Caspian steppe from about 1500 until they were pushed west by the Kalmyks and south by the Russians in the 17th century. The Mongol tribe called the *Manghits* constituted a core of the Nogay Horde (Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2008).

¹⁰ T. Wood, *Chechnya: the Case for Independence*, Verso 2007.

gave small assistance to the Circassian side. Moreover, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the Circassians succeeded in securing the sympathies of London and even Poles, and in the later stages of the Crimean War, the British provided and supplied arms and intelligence support to the Circassians, who reciprocated by busying the Russians and returning with the intelligence of their own. But, this was not enough efforts to save the Circassians from the forthcoming break and Russian domination. Russia eventually harnessed the Circassians, tribe by tribe. While some tribes accepted Russian rule after being tightly conquered, others continued revolts, even though Circassia as a whole had surrendered.¹¹

By 1860, some Circassians, primarily wealthy pro-Ottoman aristocrats, had immigrated to Ottoman lands in small numbers. The first large scale emigration was by the *Nogais*: in 1858-59, approximately 30,000 left the Northwest Caucasus for the Ottoman Empire.¹² In 1861, approximately 10,000 Kabardians voluntarily emigrated. At the same time, the Russians were driving the *Besleneis*,¹³ *Temirgois*, *Kabardians* who had wished to remain, and a portion of the *Abazins*¹⁴ to the coast.

Some *Beslenei* families were moved in the left bank of the *Kuban* where they formed the base of the modern Circassian Republic of Karachay-Cherkess.¹⁵ By the following summer, 28 Cossack settlements had been built in place of the displaced Circassians. The *Natukhajs*¹⁶ who had given up in January 1860, was ordered to return and settle in the northern Kuban. Cossack settlements began to appear on their territories, and the following year they were driven to the ports for exile. By the time of the deportation of the *Natukhajs*, 111 Cossack settlements had been already established.¹⁷

¹¹ A. L. Narochnitskii, (ed.) *Istoriia Narodov Severnogo Kavkaza* (Konets XVIII v.-1917 g.), Moscow 1988: 280.

¹² A. K. Kasumov, *Genotsid Adygov: Iz Istorii Bor'by Adygov za Nezavisimost' v XIX Veke*. Nalchik 1992: 151.

¹³ The *Beslenei* also known as Beslenei or Baslaney, are one of the twelve tribes (sub-ethnic groups) of the Circassian (Adyghe) people.

¹⁴ The Abazin, Abazinians, or Abaza are a Caucasian ethnic group of the Northwest Caucasus, closely related to the Abkhaz and Circassian people.

¹⁵ A. K. Kasumov, *Genotsid Adygov: Iz Istorii Bor'by Adygov za Nezavisimost' v XIX Veke*, 1992: 151.

¹⁶ The *Natukhai* are one of the twelve main Adyghe tribes. Their areas historically extended along the Black Sea coast from Anapa in the north to Tsemes Bay (now Novorossiysk) in the south and from the north side of the mountains to the lower Kuban River.

¹⁷ W. Richmond, *The Northwest Caucasus: Past, Present, Future*. Central Asian Studies Series; Routledge 2008: 75; T. V. Polovinkina, Cherkessia—Bol' Moia. *Istoricheskii Ocherk. (drevneishee vremia—nachalo XX v.)*, Maykop 1999: 157-158.

Paul B. Henze has raised perhaps the most considerable perspective of the exile: “The great exodus was the first of the violent mass transfers of the population which this part of the world has suffered in modern times. Two generations later, tragedy began to overwhelm the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia. Millions of Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Kurds, and Nestorians were uprooted and hundreds of thousands died, at least during the commotion of the First World War and its aftermath. None of these ethnic disasters is entirely unrelated to the others.”¹⁸

Approximately 1-1.5 million Circassians were killed, and upon order of the Tsar, and most of the Muslim population was deported mainly to the Ottoman Empire, causing the exile of another 1.5 million Circassians and others. This effectively annihilated or deported 90% of this nation. Circassians refugees were viewed as an expedient source for military recruits¹⁹ and were settled in restive areas of nationalist yearnings- Armenia, the Kurdish regions, the Arab regions and the Balkans.²⁰

In the Balkan and Middle Eastern societies, they settled among considered them foreigners and tensions between the Circassians and the natives over land and resources occasionally led to bloodletting, with the impoverished Circassians sometimes raiding the natives.²¹

After 1860, the number of Circassians exiled from their lands to the Ottoman Empire were increased rapidly. The Russian Tsar was anxious about the probability of the Ottoman Empire would not accept any more Circassians. For that reason, the Tsar and his generals in the Caucasus send Loris-Malikov²², an official who is responsible from Terek region to Istanbul for making an agreement with the Ottoman Empire. For his mission, Loris-Melikov made secret negotiations and agreements with the Ottoman Empire to ensure that in no condition the Circassians would be refused and returned to their lands.²³

As a result of the displacing doctrine of the Circassians, most of the Circassians about 90 percent of the population at that time, were dismissed

¹⁸ P. B. Henze, *Circassian Resistance to Russia*, London 1992: 111.

¹⁹ M. Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-2011*. Penguin Publishing Group 2012.

²⁰ C. King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*. New York City, NY: Oxford University Press 2008: 97.

²¹ C. King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*, 97-98.

²² Count Mikhail Tarielovich Loris-Melikov I Russian: граф Михаил Тариелович Лорис-Меликов, Armenian: Միքայիլ Լորիս-Մելիքով; (1824 –1888) was a Russian-Armenian statesman, General of the Cavalry, and Adjutant General of H. I. M. Retinuc.

²³ A. Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: A Multi-Ethnic History*. London: Longman 2001: 301.

from their homeland in a short time period under terrible conditions, and a third of them perished during the exile from disease and starvation. In spite of all oppression, dispersion, and sufferings, the Circassians have survived and protected their identity during *Muhajir Memory*. Actually, *Muhajir Memory*, in my opinion, is their historical memory of this exile and their suffering from Russians.

Lost the Homeland

A homeland generally is the concept of the cultural geography with which an ethnic group holds a long history and a deep cultural association – the country in which a particular national identity began. A homeland can be referred to as a motherland, a fatherland, depending on the culture and language. In the term *Lost the Homeland*, I prefer it as a feeling of losing Circassian history, Circassian identity, and Circassian ethnicity when they left their homeland Circassia by force. As it is mentioned earlier, the Circassians formed many states throughout the time that were known, occasionally falling under brief control of the *Romans*, and later *Scythian* and *Sarmatian* groups, followed by Turkic groups including importantly *Khazars* and being a protectorate of the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, the Circassians, in general, have maintained a high level of autonomy even so far. Due to their Black Sea coast location, owning the important ports of Anapa, Sochi, and Tuapse,²⁴ they were heavily involved in the trade, and many early European slaves were Circassians. Therefore, from the beginning of the history for them, being under the domination of other neighbors was quite a praxis. Circassians have interchangeably used to live under feudalism, tribal-based unions and monarchies to rule their lands, often incorporating local state. Circassia was organized by tribal system, with each tribe having a set territory, roughly functioning as greater than a province, but less than completely autonomous. Not all of the tribes within the confederation were ethnic Circassian: at different times, *Nogais*, *Ossetians*, *Balkars*, *Karachays*, *Ingush*, and even *Chechens* participated as members of the confederation.²⁵ However, this experiment was cut short by the conquering of Circassia by Imperial Russia and the end of independence in favor of the rule of colonial Russia. With this

²⁴ *Tuapse* is a town in Krasnodar Krai, Russia, situated on the northeast shore of the Black Sea, south of Gelendzhik and north of Sochi.

²⁵ L. U s m a n o v, *The Chechen Nation: A Portrait of Ethnical Features*, Washington, D.C. 1999.

introduction, I want to draw attention to the concept of the homeland in their background, which is really obvious in the process of building a nation and formatting an identity.

Mentally, when they lost their homeland after the Russian invasion of Circassia, they had to live in a new land with new regulations, which were not exactly coordinated with them. Therefore, as a diasporic community, they started new tribal format which was similar to their homeland. I think this heritage helped them to keep their identity and homeland memory.

One important issue for *Muhajirs Memory* to the Ottoman Empire was the idea of returning to the homeland. Many Circassians in the Ottoman Empire maintained ties between their places of origin and, when conditions allowed, frequently returned.²⁶ Historically, it seems that the first return demands started in large numbers in the early 1860s. Sometimes, these demands occurred just after months of immigration and sometimes after a span of several years. Frequently, *Muhajirs* applied to Russian consulates elsewhere to return or simply showed up at the Russian border requesting to return to Russia to live. Sometimes people returned because of the severity of conditions on Ottoman Lands, sometimes to work in the Caucasus after gaining an education within the Ottoman Empire, and sometimes for personal and financial matters. Besides Circassians, many people continued their ties with the homeland for years with short visits.²⁷

Actually, *Lost the homeland* for the first time was highlighted in the term of Circassian Question around the early 1990s when Russian Caucasian republics with residual Circassian populations established ties to the diaspora and supported returnee programs. However, aside from a few thousand returnees the contact remained largely restricted to tourism by diaspora Circassians in the historic homeland. Halbach in his article²⁸ says that “nor was a broader returnee movement to be expected, given that Circassian immigrants in many places have been relatively well integrated for several generations. The current exception is Syria, where the escalating civil war represents an acute threat to ethnic and confessional minorities. Circassian organizations worldwide are now calling upon Russia, which in 1999 gave refuge to Circassian families from the war zone in Kosovo, to accept Syrian Circassian returnees. While several

26 J. H. Meyer, “Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship: Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, 1880–1914,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (1), 2007: 16.

27 Ibid., 21.

28 U. Halbach, “The Circassian Question Russian Colonial History in the Caucasus and a Case of “Long-distance Nationalism,” *SWP Comments* 37, 2014, 03.

hundred have already arrived in Maykop and Nalchik, Moscow is generally wary of returnee movements of non-Russian nationalities in the North Caucasus. The Russian leadership has no interest in immigration increasing the Caucasian population in the region after most of the ethnic Russians left during the course of the past twenty years. The Ukraine crisis has heightened contradictions in Russian immigration policy. After annexing the Crimea, the Kremlin offered all citizens of the former Soviet Union Russian citizenship as long as they were able to speak Russian. The language restriction naturally excludes diaspora Circassians. At the same time, Russian-speakers from eastern Ukraine are currently being resettled in the North Caucasus, despite concerns about the security situation there.”

On the other hand, in Diasporic community, the civil society has become more effective in democratizing the public space in new lands, especially Turkey since the mid-2000s, including through the establishment of new Circassian organizations and Web sites. A similar process can be observed in the Russian Federation. Although restrictions imposed by the Putin administration still limit the growth of Circassian organizations. The revival of Circassian organizations in both Turkey and Russia has brought about a new division of labor in which newer organizations tend to specialize in politics and lobbying, whereas older organizations tend to prioritize cultural activities.²⁹

Circassian Diaspora

The Circassians were sometimes seen as military fighters in the regional armies and sometimes as nomads in provincial communities when they became *Muhajir community*. This same divide, as with many other instances, continues in the Republican phase. For Circassians in Turkey, their contribution to the *War of Independence*³⁰ alongside the *Kemalist*³¹

²⁹ L. F. Hansen, “Renewed Circassian Mobilization in the North Caucasus: Twenty Years After the Fall of the Soviet Union”, *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 11, no. 2., 2012: 111.

³⁰ The Turkish War of Independence (19 May 1919 – 24 July 1923) was fought between the Turkish National Movement and the proxies of the Allies – namely Greece on the Western front, Armenia on the Eastern, France on the Southern and with them, the United Kingdom and Italy in Constantinople (now Istanbul) – after parts of the Ottoman Empire were occupied and partitioned following the Ottomans’ defeat in World War I. Few of the occupying British, French, and Italian troops had been deployed or engaged in combat.

³¹ Who were followers of *Kemalism*, also known as *Atatürkism* (Turkish: Atatürkçülük, Atatürkçü düşüncesi), or the Six Arrows, which is the founding ideology of the Republic of Turkey. *Kemalism*,

elite, and Çerkes Ethem's³² affair, as well as the revolt of Ahmet Anzavur,³³ constitute the turning points which have been constantly narrated in both Turkish and Circassian perspectives of Turkish history. Later, with the creation of the Republic and to protect its solidarity, the new regime took some precautions to create the Circassian rebellions, as well as other ethnic rebellions, such as the Sheikh Said rebellion³⁴ in the eastern provinces.³⁵ This was recognized as a major issue that needed to be solved. During the first years of the Republic, many suspected they could never be integrated into the new Turkish society. However, the fact that Circassians were Sunni Muslims, and there were elite officers and officials who were loyal helped to mitigate accusations of being *unfaithful* to the state, particularly in comparison to Alevi, Kurds, or Arabs. Even their population all this time was different.

After the exile during the formation of *Muhajir Memory* and the feeling of *Lost the Homeland* in the second half of the 19th century, the Circassians became a part of the political machine and the Ottoman elite: engaged within the armed forces and the state, the Circassians' relationships with their homeland were also seen as a potential route for the propaganda of *Pan-Islamist*³⁶ thought in Russia.³⁷

as it was implemented by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, was defined by sweeping political, social, cultural and religious reforms designed to separate the new Turkish state from its Ottoman predecessor and embrace a Westernized way of living, including the establishment of democracy, secularism, state support of the sciences and free education, many of which were first introduced to Turkey during Atatürk's presidency in his reforms. (A. Mango, *Atatürk*. London 1999: 157-158).

³² Çerkes Ethem (1886 – 1948) was a Turkish militia leader of Circassian origin who initially gained fame for fighting against the Allied powers invading Anatolia in the aftermath of World War I and afterwards during the Turkish War of Independence.

³³ The Revolt of Ahmet Anzavur was in fact a series of revolts led by the Ottoman gendarme officer Ahmet Anzavur against the Turkish national movement during the Turkish War of Independence. The revolt was coordinated by the British secret service and the monarchist Ottoman government against the republican Turkish nationalist forces. The forces under Anzavur's command were made up of various ethnic groups with the bulk of the forces (including Anzavur) belonging to the Circassian ethnicity. The "revolt" occurred October 1, 1919 to November 25, 1920 and occurred in the regions of Biga, Bandırma, Karacabey, and Kirmastı. Despite some difficulty, the revolts were decisively put down by the nationalist forces. (E. J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*. London 1993: 159).

³⁴ The Sheikh Said Rebellion or Genç Incident was a Kurdish rebellion aimed at reviving the Islamic caliphate and sultanate. It used elements of Kurdish nationalism to recruit.

³⁵ M. M. Van Bruinessen, Agha, Shaikh and State: On the Social and Political Organization of Kurdistan. Utrecht: University of Utrecht (London: Zed Books: 1992).

³⁶ They are the followers of Pan-Islamism idea, which is a political movement advocating the unity of Muslims under one Islamic state – often a Caliphate – or an international organization with Islamic principles.

³⁷ A. Avagyanyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Kemalist Türkiye'nin Devlet-İktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler*. İstanbul 2004 : 98.

Within the Circassian community specifically in Ottoman lands, courageous and privileged positions on one hand and notorious positions, on the other hand, relate to Circassian relations with the indigenous communities and the state structure of the new state. Examination of these relationships is important to understand Circassian Diasporic Community in Turkey in particular and diasporic communities in general, but also the ways the Turkish state considers other ethnic groups in Turkey.³⁸

As the Second Constitutional Period (1908) pointed to the formation of a public scope in the Ottoman Empire in general, it led to the emergence of Circassian organizations and publications in particular. The Circassian Union and Mutual Aid Association,³⁹ established in 1908, declared its aims to be informing Circassians culturally, supporting trade among Circassians and providing the land to be harvested, in addition to serving in the protection of the constitutional regime.⁴⁰ In 1911, the association published the first Circassian newspaper *Ğuaze*, in Turkish and Circassian, which was published weekly and consisted of eight pages. It also established the first Circassian school, *Özel Çerkes Örnek Okulu*, in Istanbul within which there were courses on Circassian history and geography, language and literature, art, and music.⁴¹ The schools and educational activities of Circassians in the Ottoman era remained unique instances: in the new republic, there was to be no publicly used Circassian school, textbook or course until the 2000s.⁴²

In 1910, another organization, the Immigrants Commission,⁴³ was established. The Commission originally dealt with cultural and social activities such as producing alphabets, and elementary books for reading and writing, and searching the settlements of North Caucasian tribes.⁴⁴ In 1914, another organization called the *North Caucasian Association*,⁴⁵ was established and stated its aims to be defending and protecting the national rights of the groups of the North Caucasus, establishing national solidar-

38 M. Ye ğ e n, "Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no.6, 2004: 66. (Online access: <https://ais.ku.edu.tr/course/20203/yegen-citizenship-ethnicity.pdf>).

39 . Çerkes İttihat ve Teavün Cemiyeti

40 Z. A k s o y, Çerkes Teavün Cemiyeti. (in Turkish) Toplumsal Tarih, 2003: 100-101.

41 I. A y d e m i r, Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları. Ankara 1991: 123.

42 Starting from the 1990s, during the 2000s the Turkish state initiated certain policies regarding ethnic groups and the issue of EU membership enlarged the space within which non-Turkish ethnic groups in Turkey are able to express themselves.

43 Muhacir Komisyonu

44 A. A v a ğ y a n, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Kemalist Türkiye'nin Devlet-İktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler. Istanbul: 2004: 132.

45 Şimali Kafkasya Cemiyet-i Siyasiyesi.

ity and cooperation among these groups, developing the national character, developing sciences and applied sciences and especially national education, encouraging art and trade, protecting orphans and families in need of help, increasing the national population by struggling with diseases, and protecting the purity of the line.⁴⁶

The new organization named *Circassian Women's Mutual Aid Society*⁴⁷ was set up in 1918. Between 1920 and 1923, this organization published the magazine *Diyane*, which means *Our Mother* in Circassian. *Diyane* stated his aims for calling the young people to research the national presence in history, language, literature, music, and social life and to develop this presence.⁴⁸ In 1922-23, the society was involved in integrating the North Caucasians who took refuge mainly in Istanbul during the *Russian Civil War*.⁴⁹

The researcher, Setenay Nil Dogan believes that “throughout the period between the second half of the nineteenth century and 1920, relations between the Ottoman state and the Circassians were mostly harmonious. Circassians were well accepted in government institutions such as the palace, the bureaucracy, and the military since the Ottoman state’s foreign policy which identified Czarist Russia as an expansionist force that was threatening the Ottoman lands was in harmony with Circassian interests in the Caucasus. Hence, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with extensive participation in state institutions, the Circassian identity was embedded in Ottoman identity. However, the alliance and the harmony of Circassians with the political system were about to change in the 1920s with the transformation from the multi-national, multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire to the nation-state. The end of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey meant the end of the fellowship on which Circassian-Turkish relations were based.”

Dogan continues with this quotes about the role of Circassian in Turkish War of Independent: “Developments during the Turkish War of Independence constituted the turning point for the Circassians. During the war, two Circassian groups became visible; those who were in favor of Indepen-

46 M.A. T u r a n, *Osmanlı Dönemi Kuzey Kafkasya Diasporası Tarihinden Şimali Kafkas Cemiyeti*. Tarih ve Toplum: 172, 1998: 243.

47 Çerkes Kadınları Teavün Cemiyeti.

48 F. T u n a, *Diyane: Çerkes Kadınları Yardımlaşma Derneği'nin Düşünce Yayınıdır*. İstanbul 2004: 5.

49 L. B e z a n i s, “Soviet Muslim Emigrés in the Republic of Turkey,” *Central Asian Survey*, 13(1).1994: 63.

dence and who later became leading figures in the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, such as Ali Fuat Cebesoy,⁵⁰ Rauf Orbay,⁵¹ Yusuf İzzet Paşa,⁵² Bekir Sami,⁵³ etc.; and those who, with their loyalty to the Caliphate and the Sultan, were against the government in Ankara, such as Ahmet Anzavur⁵⁴ who, interestingly enough, was crushed by yet another Circassian, Çerkes Ethem, the militia leader during the early years of the war.”

However, Dogan believes that two developments took place towards the end of the war, could form the future of the Circassians' role. The first one, the formation of a regular army, Çerkes Ethem who were faced to the War of Independence and therefore the new nation-state. The second one was a small group of Circassians from the *Marmara* area who in 1921 built the organization of *Şark-ı Karib Çerkesleri Temin-i Hukuk Cemiyeti*, in Izmir. They agreed that the final source of extermination for the Circassians had been the *Turkification*⁵⁵ course of the Committee of Union and Progress.⁵⁶ The organization later declared its faithfulness to the Greek forces.

In the 1950s, the Circassians created new institutions and published several journals such as *Kafkasya*, *Marje*, *Nart*, *Yazuları*, *Kafkasya*, and *Kamçı*, which got unbeatable sites of communication. They appeared under the mask of North Caucasian Turks till the 1960s and organized by anti-communism on their ethnic identity.⁵⁷

From the 60s, the discourse of the diasporic activists moved into the idea of Caucasian heritage reengagement (Ibid). The military regime of 1980 closed down all ethnic organization and examined those represent-

⁵⁰ Ali Fuat Cebesoy (1882-1968) was a Turkish army officer and politician.

⁵¹ Hüseyin Rauf Orbay (1881-1964) was an Ottoman-born Turkish naval officer, statesman and diplomat.

⁵² Yusuf İzzet Pasha (1876-1922 in Ankara) was a general of the Ottoman Army and the Turkish Army.

⁵³ Bekir Sami Kunduh (1867-1933) was a Turkish politician of Ossetian origin. He served as the first Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. He was in office during 1920–1921.

⁵⁴ Ahmet Anzavur (1885-1921) was a gendarme officer in the Ottoman Empire. He was of Circassian descent. Anzavur served as a major during World War I. He became a guerrilla leader in Anatolia, who coordinated what is known as Revolt of Ahmet Anzavur during Turkish War of Independence.

⁵⁵ Turkification, or Turkicization, is a cultural shift whereby populations or states adopted a historical Turkic culture, such as in the Ottoman Empire.

⁵⁶ T. Z. Tuna ya, *Şark-ı Karib Çerkesleri Temin-i Hukuk Cemiyeti*. Türkiye’de Siyasi Partiler Cilt II. Doğan Kardeş Yayınları: İstanbul 1952: 606-614.

⁵⁷ L. Bezanis, “Soviet Muslim Emigrés in the Republic of Turkey,” *Central Asian Survey*, 13(1).1994: 141.

ing non-Turkish culture.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the Circassian organizations had been opened and started their activities by 1984.⁵⁹ The Circassian diaspora has achieved scope and popularity since the '90s that have become accessible via the procedure of globalization and the post-Soviet era. Therefore, rather than being taken for supposed, the diasporic identity in Turkey is a phenomenon that should be sought in the term of ethnocentrism.

Doğan gives the interesting point on the post-Soviet era such as: "The meanings and effects of the post-Soviet conjuncture, namely the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, have been twofold for the Circassian community in Turkey. On the one hand, with the politics of the 1990s, the geography and peoples of the diasporic homeland have become accessible to the Circassian diaspora. Though there were some instances and memories of communication with the Caucasus, which had continued during the turbulent 19th century and intensified in the 1960s as a result of the return movement that argued for the necessity of returning to the homeland, for most of the Cold War era there were almost no actual and systematic relationships with the homeland. In the 1990s, the chaotic, haphazard and unexpected encounters with the diasporic homeland in the Cold War era were replaced by direct access to the homeland and regular relations and visits." In Turkey, the *Kaf-Der*,⁶⁰ which was established in 1993 worked as an umbrella organization, constituted the largest Circassian civil network until 2004 when it was exchanged by a bigger institute in the name of *KAFFED*.⁶¹ On the other hand, the drop of the Soviet Union has influenced the Circassian activist groups in Turkey and changed into the discourses with regard to identity, culture, homeland, and nationality,⁶² this phenomenon caused the Circassian NGO's gather under some umbrellas.

The first of this kind of umbrella gathering was the *International Circassian Congress* which was held in Nalchik in May 1991. It built up

⁵⁸ A. Toumarkine, Balkan and Caucasian Immigrant Associations: Community and Politics. In S. Yerasimos, G. Seufert, and K. Vorhoff, eds. *Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism: Studies on Political Culture in Contemporary Turkey*. Würzburg, Germany: Ergon Verlag, 2000: 405.

⁵⁹ I. Brandell, M. Carlson & Ö. Cetrez (Ed.), "Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge." Talking about the silence and the break by Setenay Nil Doğan. *Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul* 22, 2015: 147-150.

⁶⁰ Caucasian Association.

⁶¹ Federation of Caucasian Associations of Turkey

⁶² S. Shami, "Circassian Encounters: The Self as Other and the Production of the Homeland in the North Caucasus," *Development and Change*, No. 29 (4). 1998: 643. (<http://www.circassianworld.com/analysis/1205-circassianencounters-shami>).

the *International Circassian Association* (ICA), whose elected members display the Circassian societies in the three Circassian republics and the diasporic communities. They carried many formations from Turkey, Russia, and other countries, containing Circassian councils⁶³ of the three republics, the Middle East, California, and New Jersey, some charities from Turkey, and a *Circassian Cultural Association*⁶⁴ from Germany says in this regards: “The ICA has, however, not pursued that goal with great vigor. Its offices are staffed largely with members of the bureaucratic elites of the three Caucasian republics, who were concerned to avoid confrontation with Moscow and practically failed to respond to Russian repression against activists who raised the *Circassian Question* in connection with Sochi 2014. Such activists increasingly organize in small autonomous groups outside the ICA, which also missed the transition to the internet age and for a long time did not even have its own website.”⁶⁵

In spite of the primary honor about the homeland, and repatriation, putting these ideas into the application has shown to be challenging for the Circassians situation in Turkey. Therefore, in the 90s the Circassian diaspora in Turkey and the middle east passed a transformation on three interconnected phases. The first phase deals with their homeland: post-Soviet era and relations with the homeland have become different from relations during the Soviet. The second step is relevant to their born community: Circassians’ relations with the Turkish and Middle Eastern states and the Circassians situation in terms of ethnicity and citizenship have been important. The third level is the transformations on the community level and concerns the transformations of the Circassian community’s constructions of its past and future in line with these developments.⁶⁶

Therefore, I can sum up that since the 1990s; Circassian activists in Turkey have appropriated multiple roles in the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish nation-state through the themes of the break and the silence. A reconstructed past based on the themes of the silence and the break transforms the Circassians in Turkey from being a group with no actual historical or geographical links to the homeland, other diasporic

63 Adyghe khase.

64 Tscher-kessische Kulturverein.

65 U. Halbach, The Circassian Question Russian Colonial History in the Caucasus and a Case of “Long-distance Nationalism.” SWP Comments 37, 2014.

66 I. Brandell, M. Carlson & Ö. Cetrez (Ed.), “Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge,” Talking about the silence and the break by Setenay Nil Dogan. *Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul* 22, 2015: 150-152.

communities or the host country into a historical entity which has relationships with the homeland, transnational networks, and the host community.

As the Circassian diaspora is now linked to the homeland and other diasporic communities politically, economically and culturally through touristic travel, conferences, social and political organizations, cyberspace, etc., the narratives on the break and the silence also locate Circassians in the history of the host community and state. Voicing and unveiling the break and the silence becomes a diasporic strategy not only to claim agency for Circassians in the Ottoman Empire and the Republican era but also to redefine Circassian identity and diasporic history. Since the 1990s, the Circassians in Turkey have become a diasporic group with a history and a voice to talk about it, and the diasporic voice changes and reconstructs the boundaries of knowledge about Circassian society, history and identity.⁶⁷

Nowadays the central Circassian demand is recognition of the Russian Empire's crimes against their ancestors. Some leaders and organizations insist Moscow should acknowledge the mass deportations of Circassians as genocide. Others consider a softer formulation would suffice but insist injustices be publicly acknowledged.⁶⁸ The issue gained new prominence in 2007 when Sochi was awarded the 2014 Olympic Winter Games. *Krasnaya Polyana*, the opening ceremony place, was formerly the final battle position and the military parade of the Russian victory in 1864. As part of its strategy to build closer ties with the North Caucasus, Georgia in 2011 became the first state to recognize a Circassian genocide.⁶⁹ Actually, the case of the Sochi Olympics was one of the last role of the diaspora in the Circassian Question.⁷⁰ Therefore, in the modern era of Circassian activist and diaspora, it becomes a rallying point to focus on the Circassian Question.

Other claims are also linked to historical injustices, including a program to repatriate Circassians from the diaspora. A 1999 federal law stipulates that "indigenous peoples of Russia" can obtain citizenship by a

⁶⁷ Ibid., 158-159.

⁶⁸ A. E p i f a n t s e v, Кавказская война: геноцид, которого не было. [The Caucasian War. The Genocide that wasn't], Agentstvo politich-eskih novostey 2009.

⁶⁹ International Crisis Group. Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live Like Neighbors. Europe Briefing N°65 – 8 August. 2011, 9. (Online access: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/file/1502/download?token=F8Qw7VV7>).

⁷⁰ S. Z h e m u k h o v, "The Circassian Dimension of the 2014 Sochi Olympics." Ponars Policy Memo, No. 65 – Georgetown University 2009.

simplified procedure.⁷¹ 200 people resettled from Kosovo to Adyghea in 1999. Repatriation of Syrian Circassians is under discussion between the Circassian movement and Russian authorities since December 2011. On 11 February 2012, around 1,000 activists meeting in Adyghea's capital, Maykop, proposed adjustments to Russian immigration laws to permit fast repatriation. Some 300 people had moved to Kabardin-Balkar and 100 to Adyghea by August, but so far, Syrian Circassians do not seem interested in mass migration.⁷²

Transforming Ethnic Identity into National Identity

The process of Circassian ethnopolitical mobilization began in the 60s of the 20th century⁷³; however, its acceleration came on in the second of '80s. This process was the main part of transferring ethnic identity into national identity through the political point of view. This period is connected with the Gorbachev's political and economic reforms aiming to multinational empire modernization. Unintended consequences of the reforms became absolute soviet power decline leading to the dismantling of Soviet Union. The totalitarian system release and the political decentralization are appeared to be key catalysts of the ethnic clashes with roots lying in ethnic trauma of the last century. Ethno-mobilization has arisen then out of ethnic interactions given by historical reminiscence and asymmetric status of particular groups within the federal system defined by the Soviet authorities during the 20s and 30s of the last century. In its implication, social, economic and cultural discrimination called "internal colonization" occurred which was earlier "Russification." On the contrary, the "ethnic competition" about economic and political resource control within given territory happened in cases of a titular group superior status or equal status of two titular groups. Separatism, irredentism or territorial autonomous were final goals of ethnic-mobilization efforts in both theoretical cases described above. Even in some cases, the mobilization led to armed conflicts, especially in the Kabardin-Balkar Republic. The modernist theories dealing with nationalism stress that social and eco-

⁷¹ Federal law no. 99-F3, "On the policy of the Russian Federation in relation to compatriots abroad", 24 May 1999.

⁷² Caucasian Knot. Темой Дня репатрианта в Адыгее, Кабардино-Балкарии и Грузии стали проблемы черкесской общины Сирии, 2012. [The topic for Repatriant's Day in Agydea, Kabardio-Balkaria and Georgia was the problems of the Circassian community in Syria].

⁷³ Somewhere has been running since the beginning of the Russian colonization by Caucasian War.

conomic societal modernization predates the mobilization and consequently leads to internal ethnic consolidation and nation-formation including of self-determination in face of the other groups.

Since the 1990s Circassian diasporic community, has gained new meanings: it has become a tool for social science to investigate the hybrid, transnational and global sites of identities and politics that challenge the national order of things, the naturalized and normalized understanding of the world of nations as a discrete partitioning of territory.⁷⁴ Rather than referring to particular experiences of certain particular communities, the concept of diaspora has now become crucial for social science to rethink the concepts of “ethnicity” and “nationalism.”⁷⁵ By challenging the conceptual limits imposed by national and ethnic boundaries (Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996) and delineating how the local and global have become intertwined in the processes of globalization, the notion of diaspora opens up new spaces and debates that enable us to understand the dynamics of transnational politics, cultural and economic processes that are formed via the interaction of globalization, and diversity. Dogon in his work (2015) says that “the globalization signifies not only the mobility of people beyond national boundaries and borders but also the problematization of boundaries and borders that creates the possibility of a condition of post-nationality which is marked by the production of *diasporic public spheres* and *non-territorial principles of solidarity*.” It deals with how the Circassian diaspora, a Muslim non-Turkish and non-Arab ethnic group, redefine and transform the knowledge of their own identity, history and diasporic experience in the post-Soviet conjuncture, which overlaps, with the processes of globalization and linking with motherland.⁷⁶

Actually, in the post-Soviet decades, traditionalization⁷⁷ of ethnic communities as a reaction to the crisis of civil society is the main conflict factor. The changing Russian regions continue to search for ways of resolving conflicts caused by ethnic identity. In the North Caucasus, in this

⁷⁴ L. Malkki, National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. In A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, eds. Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology. Duke University Press 2001:5-55.

⁷⁵ S. Shami, “Circassian Encounters: The Self as Other and the Production of the Homeland in the North Caucasus,” *Development and Change*, No. 29 (4), 1998. (<http://www.circassianworld.com/analysis/1205-circassianencounters-shami>).

⁷⁶ I. Brandell, M. Carlson, Ö. Cetrez (Ed.), “Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge.” Talking about the silence and the break by Setenay Nil Dogan, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. vol. 22, (2015): 145-146.

⁷⁷ To make traditional: imbue with traditions or traditionalism.

case of “Circassia”, ethnonationalism indicates the institutional degradation of civic identity and the destabilization of regional democratic processes. The socio-political coalition is remodeled by ethnic mobilization; religious Radicalism becomes a needed tool for identity-based conflicts. Such conflicts are characterized by ruinous power, it is hard to manage, resolve and set them.⁷⁸

From this perspective, I followed Anthony Smith who views modern ethnicity as the continuation of past ethnic revivals. In his opinion, although ethnicity appears as distinguishable from nationalism, ethnic communities can move towards defining themselves as a nation. In this regard, ethnic communities are sighted as self-multipliable cultural entities. This makes ties of ethnicity-specific compared to other allegiance such as economic class since they can easily intersect with various other ideological sources in the construction of present realities. In this respect, ethnicity can form the basis of competing for political or territorial claims, since cultural values and processes are an essential part of the state and nation-building dynamic. Here is good to mention the notion of Tokluoglu,⁷⁹ researcher on ethnicities in turkey: “The cultural field is where new identities are formed and shaped, and in times of social transformation, these competing identities can become part of broader political conflicts and movements, which influence the direction of state and nation building. Ethnicity is an ambivalent source in mobilizing local populations, and, in times of social disturbance, it is difficult to detect the forces that determine the direction of ethnic movements. The respondents’ definitions of modernity reveal how important cultural elements can be in the making of national identities that are exclusive of one another. The contrast between pro-Turk and pro-Russian influence and orientation is marked. Here too, there exist sharp contrasts as well as commonalities that correspond with the conflicting narratives of the government elites and the members of the opposition concerning national and ethnic identity.” This sheds light on some aspects of state formation in Circassia, which was not yet seen as complete during the time the research was carried out.

Summarily, three general premises can be applied when nationalism and ethnopolitical mobilization in the Circassian context are studied. The first one is based on the political and geographical situation of Circas-

⁷⁸ M. P o p o v, “Resolving Identity-based Conflicts in the North Caucasus.” *Periodica Polytechnica Social and Management Sciences* 25(1), 2017, 76.

⁷⁹ C. T o k l u o g l u, “Definitions of national identity, nationalism and ethnicity in post-Soviet Azerbaijan in the 1990s.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Volume 28 – Issue 4., 2005, 723-728.

sia in the history of Caucasus and stipulates that nationalism is strong in such areas where political and ethnic boundaries are not identical.⁸⁰ The second one brings up that strong nationalism or better to say it here Patriotism and high probability of conflicts magnifies national traumas, which later become part of regional ethnic conflicts.⁸¹ These traumas are often misused by politicians when it comes to territorial conflicts with a competing nation.⁸² The third premise is inspired by so-called modernist theories and anticipates that transferring from an ethnic into a nation is preceded by an intensive social modernization, which is understood as economic, social, and demographic changes.⁸³ In addition to these three approaches, the two aspects of the internal and external of this process should be considered. I mean the first mobilization of internal phenomena among *Circassian Society* in Circassia after *Muhajir* memory and second mobilization of external phenomena among Circassian diasporic communities abroad, which was effected on internal phenomena through the process of transforming ethnicity into a nationality.

Circassian Language & Literature in the process of Nation-building

The Circassian is a split of the Northwest Caucasian language group, which also includes in generic form, *Abkhaz-Abaza*, and *Ubykh*. The Circassian itself is divided into two formal dialectal formats: West Circassian which is popularly known as *Adyghean*, and East Circassian which also is known as *Kabardian*. The West Circassian dialect contains *Temirgoy*, *Shapsug*, *Abzekh*, *Hatkoy*, and *Bzhedugh*. In the opposite part, East Circassian consist only of *Kabardian* and *Besleney*.

The most of our knowledge about Circassian literature is based on the report of travelers to the region. They usually have given controversial reports as to the level of extension of Circassian literature. For example, according to F. Bodenstedt, a German traveler in the 19th century, says that "Poetry is both a repository of national wisdom and sagacity, a guide to noble action, and the ultimate arbiter ... It is the moralizer and the

80 E. Gellner, *Nacionalismus*. Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, Brno 2002.

81 L. Jelen, "Spatial analysis of ethno-political mobilisation in the Caucasus in the 1980s and 1990s.," *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-economic Series No. 25*, 2014: 116.

82 V. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind of Aflame*. London: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 1996.

83 P. Dostál, "Ethnicity, mobilization and territory: an overview of recent experiences." In: *Acta Universitatis Carolinae. Geographica 1.*, 1999.

preventer of evil deeds”⁸⁴ Paul B. Henze believes that “Circassians had a rich tradition of oral poetry. Oratory was a highly developed art. Leaders gained as much renowned for their speechmaking ability as for their skill in battle.”⁸⁵ Therefore, it seems that their literature was mostly based on poems or poetry speech, and as well as oral legends. Anyone in this type of society is literally conveying literature, and in this way, literature itself could have had a great impact on identity formation. Oral tradition includes thousands of tales and stories about the life of ancient Circassian life. There are accounts of the origins of the Circassian, with whom they created connections, heroes and anti-heroes, historical events and so on. About their literature, it can be introduced some good works of Circassian scholars. For example, in 1860 Kusikov published a book in the name of *On the Poetry of the Circassians* in Stavropol. Also in 1924, a set of Adyghean literary material was published in Moscow. Another work had been released by 1929 about the history of Kabardian literature by Chamozokov. The literature was formalized in the Soviet era, then many pieces were created. In fact, classic literature was set down that have kept their value up to current time.⁸⁶

In addition, we should consider that the language is one of the most sensible signs of cultural identity. It is the existence phrase of wisdom, of particular cultural and linguistic understanding, a tool for recognizing and realizing the homeland and all the history and accompaniment it maintains, and a clue to future durability. As an alternative to arguing values, faiths, and traditions, it has an important social subsidiary and develops feelings of community identity and alliance.

The language situation among Circassians is difficult and contradictory owing to replacement by Russian in many spheres of communication that has been historically caused by some factors: sociopolitical, historical, cultural, geopolitical, religious, household. For preservation and functional development of the Circassian language, it is necessary to make changes to laws on languages in Circassian Republics on the expansion of spheres of use of languages of all Circassians which in-laws are limited generally to spheres of media and education systems. It

84 A. Jaimoukha, *An Introductory Account of Circassian Literature*. Jaimoukha Synthasite 1998.

(Online access: <http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-literature.php>)

85 P. B. Henze, *Circassian Resistance to Russia*, London 1992: 71.

86 A. Jaimoukha, *An Introductory Account of Circassian Literature*. Jaimoukha Synthasite 1998. (Online access: <http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-literature.php>)

is necessary to develop and approve the State program of preservation, studying and development of the all dialects of the Circassian language. It is the language that displays the ethnic unity and public identity. But, as we know, the language is also exposed to the effects of the environment, adapts to the changing conditions of societies and communities. Today, our consideration should be paid to conserving the successes and values that the people have gathered throughout the historical route, and preserving the experience of previous generations. The protection of the language should be the entitlement of the state, and until that happens, the situation will not change for the major conditions.

The Circassian language itself is under the Northwest Caucasian Linguistic group.⁸⁷ The main area of this group spoken is located in the north-western Caucasus as it mentioned earlier, specifically in three Russian republics: Adyghea, Kabardin-Balkar, Karachay-Cherkess, the disputed territory of Abkhazia, Turkey, and the Middle East. This languages' relationship with other language families even in the Caucasus, is uncertain. One language, Ubykh, became extinct in 1992, while all of the other languages are in some form of endangerment, with UNESCO classifying all as either vulnerable, endangered, or severely endangered.⁸⁸ According to Encyclopedia Britannica, there are five recognized languages in the Northwest Caucasian family: Abkhaz, Abaza, Kabardian or East Circassian, Adyghe or West Circassian, and Ubykh.⁸⁹ They are classified as follows:

1. Abkhaz–Abaza
 - a. Abaza
 - b. Abkhaz
2. Circassian
 - a. Adyghean
 - b. Kabardian
3. Ubykh

In this case, many linguists believe that the Northwest and Northeast Caucasian languages made the North Caucasian family, sometimes called

⁸⁷ West Caucasian, Abkhazo-Adyghean, Circassic, or Pontic

⁸⁸ See: UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in danger in www.unesco.org

⁸⁹ D. H. H o i b e r g (ed.), Abkhazo-Adyghean languages. Encyclopedia Britannica. I: A-ak Bayes (15th ed.). Chicago, IL: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc. 2010.

Caucasian,⁹⁰ which is thought to be unassociated, albeit influenced by their northern neighbors. This hypothesis has been best painted by Sergei Nikolayev and Sergei A. Starostin, who presented a set of phonological communication and shared morphological structure. However, there is no consensus that the relationship has been shown, and many consider the correspondences to be spurious for the reasons mentioned above.

Circassian,⁹¹ also known as Cherkess,⁹² is a branch of the Northwest Caucasian language family. There are two Circassian languages, defined by their literary standards, Adyghe,⁹³ also known as West Circassian, with half a million speakers, and Kabardian,⁹⁴ also known as East Circassian, with a million. The languages are reciprocally intelligible with one another but differ to a degree where they would be noticed clear-cut dialects. The earliest extant written records of the Circassian languages are in the Perso-Arabic script, recorded by the Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi⁹⁵ in the 17th century.⁹⁶

Some linguists such as Henricus Joannes Smeets and Aert H. Kuipers argued that there is a strong consensus among the linguistic community about the fact that Adyghean and Kabardian are typologically distinct languages.⁹⁷ However, the local course for these languages refers to them as accents or dialects. In the Russian language, the Circassian subdivision is treated as a single language and called *Adygskiĭ*,⁹⁸ meaning the Circassian language, whereas the Adyghean language is called *Adygejskiĭ*,⁹⁹ meaning the language of those in the Republic of Adyghea. We should consider that as it is mentioned earlier, the terms “Circassian” and “Cherkess” are sometimes used in several languages as synonyms for the Northwest Caucasian languages in general or the Adyghean language in particular.

90 In opposition to Kartvelian-South Caucasian.

91 *sɜ:r'kæʃən*.

92 *ʃɜ:r'kɛs*.

93 In Circassian: КӀахыбзэ.

94 In Circassian: Къэбэрдейбзэ.

95 Derviş Mehmed Zillî (25 March 1611 – 1682), known as Evliya Çelebi in Ottoman Turkish: *عوليا چيلو*, was an Ottoman explorer who travelled through the territory of the Ottoman Empire and neighboring lands over a period of forty years, recording his commentary in a travelogue called the *Seyahatname*.

96 R. Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*. BRILL. 2004.

97 A. H. Kuipers, *Phoneme and morpheme in Kabardian (eastern Adyghe)*. The Hague: Mouton & Co. 1960: 7; H. J. Smeets, *Studies in West Circassian phonology and morphology*. Leiden: The Hakuchi Press 1984: 41.

98 Адыгский.

99 Адыгейский.

Northwest Caucasian languages have partly simple noun systems, with only a punch of cases at the most, mortised with highly agglutinative verbal systems that can contain almost the entire syntactic structure of the sentence. All finite and limited verbs are marked for agreement with three arguments: utter, ergative, and indirect object,¹⁰⁰ and there are also a wide range of applicative constructions. There is a gap between *dynamic* and *stative* verbs, with dynamic verbs having a largely compound morphology. A verb's morphemes detect the subject's and object's place, person, the manner of action, time, negative, and other types of grammatical classifications.

Some linguistics have seen dependency between the Northwest Caucasian especially Circassian family and the gone Hattic language. It was spoken in Eastern Anatolia, in modern *Boğazköy*, until about 1800 BC, when it was probably replaced by the Indo-European, Hittite language. The name *Hetto-Iberian*¹⁰¹ was proposed by Georgian historian Simon Janashia¹⁰² for a superfamily containing the South Caucasian languages, other Caucasian language groups, Hattic and other languages of ancient Anatolia. Even though in many Circassian family names we can find the prefixes like “Hath” or “Hatti”, and even one of the well-known Adyghean tribes has the name “Hatuqwai”¹⁰³ which seems that from *Hatti*¹⁰⁴+*Kkhye*;¹⁰⁵ meaning “Hattison.”¹⁰⁶

Ancient Literature

Based on my findings and other studies, I dedicate the first part of the literature to the ancient literature. From my point of view, the ancient literature means mostly oral literature and epos which calls in the local term as “Nart.”

The corpus of the Nart epic is arguably the most essential ingredient of Circassian culture. It is as important to the Circassian ethos as Greek

¹⁰⁰ J. Nichols, “Head-Marking and Dependent-Marking Grammar. Language”, *Linguistic Society of America* 62 (1), 1986: 56-119.

¹⁰¹ The Iberian in the name refers to Caucasian Iberia, a kingdom centered in eastern Georgia which lasted from the 4th century BCE to the 5th century CE; it is not related to the Iberian Peninsula.

¹⁰² In Georgian: ბიძინა ჯანაშია; July 13, 1900 – November 5, 1947.

¹⁰³ In Circassian: Хъатыкъуай.

¹⁰⁴ In Circassian: Хъаты.

¹⁰⁵ In Circassian: Кхъуэ, means male or son.

¹⁰⁶ C. Burney, *Historical dictionary of the Hittites. Historical Dictionaries of Ancient Civilizations and Historical Era*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press. 2004, 106.

mythology is to Western Civilization. In fact, NW Caucasians and Greeks on the Eastern Shore of the Black Sea co-existed for more than a thousand years, during which some cultural exchanges must have taken place. This would explain similarities in some of their mythical tales.¹⁰⁷

Though much less known than their Greek counterparts, the Nart epic tales are no less developed. The heroism, sagacity, guile and oftentimes naked brutality of the Nart heroes and demi-gods are more than matches to those of the Greek Pantheon. In the first stanza of the “Song of the Narts,” the double-edged sword is likened to a rabid dog, a graphic illustration of unbridled ferocity:

My great saber is as fearsome as a crazed hound,
Streaming crimson blood down its twosome fangs.

It should be considering that Nart Epos is the oldest surviving literature among Circassians which mostly were oral folklore. The main themes are those usually associated with heroic tales such as truth, honesty, friendship, patriotism, bravery, and struggle against oppression. Those usually use as the collection of songs which assumed the form of ballads, poems, and song-poems. Even the corpus of Nart songs formed the core of Circassian classical music, which has been used in their daily life for centuries. The troubadours forged the Nart tales in song-like forms to make them more endearing to the listeners, which also helped to preserve them through turbulent years. The rhythm was usually fast, reminiscent of dance music and remained unchanged as the music was developed.

Nart songs started to be collected in the middle of the 19th century, and by the late 1960's the bulk of the corpus had been penned down. In addition, the music was set down to paper, and some of it was recorded. A monumental work was published by the record *company Melodiya* in 1987, a four-record opus that included some of the more famous anthems. The legends of the Narts had been transmitted orally by dozens or maybe hundreds storytellers who acted as guardians of national mythology. Although these tales are undoubted of ancient origin, their language underwent some lexical changes that reflected the introduction of new technology and loan words. In addition, the original significance of some terms has been lost. There might have also been some changes in the contents of

¹⁰⁷ Y. Libedinsky, Narti: Kabardinskiëpos. [The Narts: A Kabardian Epos] Moscow: Academy of Sciences of the USSR 1951: 8-18.

the stories, perhaps to suit the purposes and styles of the storytellers. The existence of different and sometimes divergent versions gives credence to this view.¹⁰⁸

There is an ongoing dispute as to the true originators of the epic. The contention is between Ossetic and North Caucasian origins. Dumézil's verdict went in favor of an Indo-European descent, which was hotly contested by Adyghean scholars, such as Asker Hedeghel'e. Even if a non-Caucasian origin were proved, the value of the epic would not be diminished in the least. As time went by, North Caucasian variants assumed a local character as they absorbed the customs and mores of the indigenes, and became a depository of their literary treasures.

Some scholars of Celtic culture are paying more attention to the Nart Epos as a possible connection to the Arthurian and Holy Grail legends is perceived.¹⁰⁹ Jaimoukha later in his research about literature says: "The presence of a Sarmatian legion in the Roman army in the British Isles gives credence to this hypothesis. The Iranian-speaking Sarmatians might have picked up a portion of tales during their sojourn in the North Caucasus and then spread it in Celtic Britain. The tests of strength and worthiness of two of the heroes in the two epics are similar. Sosriqwe¹¹⁰ used to sneak to Lhepsch's¹¹¹ smithy to try to lift the anvil, which was rooted down to the seventh layer of earth, a prerequisite feat for joining the council of the elders. Arthur, on the other hand, had to pull a sword, Excalibur, from a stone anchored by an anvil to prove his claim to sovereignty."

Jaimoukha believes that many of the ancient poems and stories were on historical and heroic themes. Nogmov collected specimens of these works to reconstruct a skeletal treatise on the history of Adyghea. Some pieces of poetry go back to hundreds of years. An epic poem recounts one episode of the bloody wars the Circassians waged against the invading Goths:

108 A. Jaimoukha, *An Introductory Account of Circassian Literature*. Jaimoukha Synthasite 1998: 3-4.

(Online access: <http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-literature.php>)

109 C.S. Littleton, "The Holy Grail, the Cauldron of Annwn, and the Narty-Amonga, a Further Note on the Sarmatian Connection." *Journal of American Folklore* 92, 1979, 326-333; C.S. Littleton and A. C. Thomas, "The Sarmatian Connection: New Light on the Origin of the Arthurian and Holy Grail Legends," *Journal of American Folklore* 91, 1978: 513-527.

110 In Circassian: Сосрыкъуэ.

111 In Circassian: Лъэпщ.

“Oh, Fatherland of Bakhsan son of Dow!
 Though his soul has left his body,
 Do not allow the Goths to ruffle your dignity!
 And if they make to enthrall you,
 Throw their yoke off your shoulders.”

Classic Literature

One of the principal milestones in the development of literature is the birth of plot. According to the Circassian scholar and writer Askerbi T. Shortan, the first evidence of plot can be found in the mythological motifs of the tale *Psherihizchatse*¹¹² a mixture of prose and verse. In a capsule, the evil hunter *Psherihizchatse*, who lived in the forest, was so capricious that he slew all the village boys who were sent to cook for him because they did not wake him with due care. One mangy, but the clever lad was able to escape this mortal fate. When the deer came weeping to the yard, he did not call the hunter; instead, he chanted the song of the chase to awaken him. *Psherihizchatse* arose and hunted. He kept the considerate boy as his menial.

Jaimoukha brings other samples such as: “One of the first instances of dialogue in Circassian literature is in the ancient tale “The Elegy of the Maid Who Refused to Marry her Brother”¹¹³ which gives us a glimpse of those far away days when incest was not yet tabooed. The poor girl begs the members of her family, in turn, to let her inside the house. Such stories are considered the forerunners of Circassian drama.

“My dearest Mother,
 Radiant as red gilt!
 I beseech you: Open this door.
 The chill is killing me.
 If you would just call me mother-in-law,
 I would open it for you.
 How can I call you thus?
 Whilst there is still life in my bones.”

Ethnolinguistic self-identification

112 In Circassian: пшэрыхьыжъацэ.

113 In Circassian: Дэльхум дэжгуэн зымыда хьыджэбзым и уэрэдыр.

Ethnolinguistic identity explains the limit to which one identifies with a specific ethnic and linguistic group. It refers to one's sense of belonging to an ethnic group and that element of one's thoughts, understanding, feelings, and behavior that is derived from ethnic group membership. Ethnolinguistic identity is characterized by the recognition of common cultural, linguistic, religious, and behavioral traits – real or presumed – as indicators of contrast to other groups, where linguistic self-identification forms a crucial component. Questions about ethnic and linguistic self-identification based on the studies of Howard Giles and Patricia Johnson were used to gauge the ethnolinguistic identity of young Circassians. However, linguistic self-identification does not mean that people can actually speak these languages or use them in routine life. John Edwards claims that among minority groups in which a language shift has occurred in the recent past, the symbolic value of language may be maintained in the absence of a communicative function. Rannut says: "Language may be connected with group identity even if it is not used regularly or, indeed, known at all. Interviews with several community members as well as the survey results show that the Circassian language is mainly a symbolic marker and that linguistic affiliation is based more on self-identification than on actual language proficiency and use. The symbolic value of language is maintained, but its communicative function is diminishing. The language is linked to group identity, but it is no longer used at home."¹¹⁴

Formation Factors of Circassian Identity

The Circassian society had been tribal in structure; therefore, the main identity of Circassian comes from their tribal and kinship background. Alongside, there are a lot of overlapping layers of self-conception, but there are by no means confined to, language, religious faith, culture, history, and traditional homeland which I can call it in this term 'ethnolinguistic' identity. In the post-Soviet era, discussions of ethnic and national identity have often brought out many political debates in the new emerging countries and nations. Afterword, 'identity' in its present visualization has a double feeling. It refers at the identical time to social classifications and to the sources of a sole's self-esteem or dignity.

¹¹⁴ U. Rannut, *Maintenance of the Circassian Language in Jordan Self-identification, attitudes, policies and practices as indicators of linguistic vitality*. Amman: IRI Publications, 2011.

Nevertheless, in my point of view, Circassian identity has found the unit meaning through their history that characterized by linguistic & literature, indigenous cultures such as customs, traditions, music & dance, economy, class system & social structure, religion & belief and even their cuisine. Another factor in the formation of Circassian identity is immigration and having a diaspora. Therefore, in this case, the Circassian diaspora has had long-term influences on their community's identity.

For Circassians as a diasporic community, was the idea of returning to the homeland. Many Circassians in the Ottoman Empire kept ties between their origin land and, when conditions allowed, often returned.¹¹⁵ The first return demands started in large numbers in the early 1860s. Sometimes, these requests occurred just after months of immigration and sometimes after a range of several years. Often, immigrants applied to Russian consulates elsewhere to return or simply showed up at the Russian border requesting to return to Russia for staying. Sometimes people returned because of the intensity conditions in the Ottoman Lands, sometimes to work in the Caucasus after taking an education within the Ottoman Empire, and sometimes for personal, family and financial matters.¹¹⁶ For Circassians in Turkey, the *War of Independence* and the Cerkes Ethem Affair carries remarkable importance for the diaspora. There were different groups that followed different ideologies within the *Turkish War of Independence*. There were two basic groups: one who was supporting the independence movement with the *Kemalist* ideas, and one who followed the *Sultan* and *Caliphate* idea. These two groups will be concealed in detail. Moreover, there was one group that tried to create an independent state in Ottoman lands.¹¹⁷ Their devotion to Islam did not prevent them from collaborating with Rums and Armenians on this issue, and for the group, there was no need to embrace *Ottomanism* or *Islamism* as an identity.¹¹⁸

The peak point in the historical processes of identity formation was the breakup of the Soviet Union and the free access to territories of the homeland, many of whom have now traveled to the Caucasus, some intending to settle permanently and it means that the identity still is shap-

115 J. H. Meyer, "Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship: Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, 1880–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (1), 2007: 16.

116 *Ibid.*, 21.

117 R. Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire 1912–1923*. *Oxford Studies in Modern European History*, 1st Edition, 2011: 124.

118 *Ibid.*, 130.

ing.¹¹⁹ In addition, the symbols that Circassians hold central to their sense of collective identity are derived from these historical experiences.¹²⁰

Most of the factors that I mentioned in this paper were a relatively under-researched ethnic and linguistic group. To understand the formation of the Circassian identity within the Ottoman and Russian Empires, there are some pillars each of which has its own effect over the identity that this paper based upon. The first and most important conclusion is the Circassian identity or diaspora as a historical phenomenon with its positive achievements and limitations, shaping and reshaping within the constantly changing political limits that have been set by the politicians and the ruling elite. Within this changing discourse, Circassians identity could not manage to create a homogeneous block to represent the group and to uphold the problems of the people in diaspora, to create a bridge role between the diaspora and homeland, or to influence the policy in lieu towards the right of the ethnic minorities in the North Caucasus with their relations to Russia.¹²¹

The last important conclusion regarding the identity is the homeland for the Circassians, and in the Circassian case homeland are a dynamic construction of political developments, memories, narratives, and various perceptions of individuals as to the nature of “homeland.” Examining the ways that the diaspora imagined a homeland and Circassian community and the internal dynamics of the people are crucial for social science on diaspora and nationalism. Circassians, in this term, form a community in lack of state structure, and even lack of any political or mythical leader.

After all factors and circumstances are considered, Circassians identify themselves with different historical events. The exile is the most prominent one, and Circassians should annotate not just feeling the grief of the event but also teach this history to the next generations and the other groups in Turkey where they all live together peacefully.

These concepts are vital for understanding how places and their meanings are constructed. In order to explore the notion of homeland, a critical conception for ethnoterritorial identity, it is important to examine how place and its many meanings can develop into attachments that eventually

119 S. S h a m i, “Prehistories of Globalization: Circassian Identity in Motion.” *Public Culture*, Vol.12, Issue 1, Winter, 2000: 178-181.

120 S. S h a m i, *Historical Process of Identity Formation: Displacement, Settlement, and Self – Representations of the Circassians in Jordan. Iran and the Caucasus*, Vol. 13, Brill, 2009: 156.

121 A. I l g e n e r, *Turkey and the North Caucasus: an analysis of internal and domestic relations*. Naval postgraduate school Monterey, California 2013: 137-140.

lead to classification and recognition of territory as belonging to a certain group of people or a nation. According to Max Weber (1922), in order to create an ethnic identity, groups must display a common language, a belief that they are descended from common ancestors, a feeling of ethnic affinity, and a shared belief system. He mentions that: “The belief in common descent, in combination with a similarity of customs, is likely to promote the spread of the activities of one part of an ethnic group among the rest, since the awareness of ethnic identity furthers imitation. This is especially true of the propaganda of religious groups.”¹²²

Emergence Factors of Circassian Question

Historically, the exile and deportation of the Circassians from their historical homeland, in the aftermath of the Caucasian War toward the Ottoman Empire, was the important factor of Circassian Question. These historical processes have made the Diasporic Community; have shaped the Circassian Question in term of linguistic and cultural identity in the following year in the Exile era.¹²³

From such a perspective, the Circassian Diaspora is an instance of exploring how boundaries of knowledge pertaining to identity, inclusion, exclusion, ethnicity, past and present are challenged, deconstructed, reclaimed and reconstructed within the processes of globalization. By means of these processes, Circassian activists and elites, since the exile, have challenged, changed and problematized the boundaries of knowledge to their identity, their rights, their history and their unity in general.¹²⁴

From my point of view, the Circassian Question is formatted and is changed by diasporic communities and Circassians from the exile until nowadays. It deals with how the Circassians redefine and transform the knowledge of their own identity, history and diasporic experience in the post-Soviet conjuncture. Actually, using the term of the Circassian Question is showed up in the process of a nation formation since 1864 as the main axis of their identity, which its main part was language and culture. The main factors of this formation are the Circassian Exile or

122 M. Guibernau, J. Rex, *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers 1997: 22.

123 Ibid.

124 I. Brandell, M. Carlson & Ö. Cetrez (Ed.), “Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge.” Talking about the silence and the break by Setenay Nil Dogan. *Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul* 22, 2015: 145-146.

better to call it *Muhajir Memory*, then lost the homeland in their new life and furthermore, the first taste of independent in 1917 under the name of Mountainous Republic of the Northern Caucasus, role of Diaspora and their activities, rising nationalism and patriotism among elites and young generations, and finally transforming ethnic identity into national identity almost in two centuries under the terminology of ethnolinguistic.

Generally, the Circassian Question has lately managed to enter the wider public sphere of Russian mainstream media, following a number of years of circulation in the transnational sphere of the Internet. Particularly in connection with the Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014, that has drawn wider attention in the Russian media. Along of the Sochi Olympics, the Circassian Question has been raised to a higher step on the international sphere as an equal to the situation of 1864 when international media followed the conflict and war in Circassia. The Circassian Question was a term that also achieved considerable international application in the 19th century when the media, followed the long war in the Caucasus and Circassia against the exceeding Russian Imperial Army,¹²⁵ the Circassian researcher believes that despite the wide-spreading use of this term, the Circassian Question is seldom defined. Then he says that according to one recent definition, the Circassian Question of today consists of three main elements: recognition of the nineteenth century war and forced exile to the Ottoman Empire as an act of genocide, repatriation from the diasporic societies to the North Caucasus and homeland, and the establishment of a joint Circassian Republic. According to an analysis of Zhemoukhov, five main strands of the contemporary Circassian movement can be identified with nationalists at one end of the spectrum, proceeding to sovereignists, centrists, and culturalists, and ending with accommodationists at the other end.¹²⁶ Some establishments and activists go one-level further and remark their terminal purpose as the recreating of Circassia as an independent state.

During 2010, the Circassian Question received increased international attention following new interest from neighboring Georgia. This was widely regarded as a reaction to the war with Russia in 2008 and Russia's subsequent recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states. In 2010, another Georgian initiative and self-motivation were to

¹²⁵ S. Zhemoukhov, "The Birth of Modern Circassian Nationalism." *Nationalities Papers* 40 (4), 2012: 505.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 511.

appoint a visa-free regime for Russian citizens registered or born in the North Caucasian republics, which was labeled as a seduction by the Russian side.¹²⁷

The Circassian Question was appointed latter on the international agenda in 2010 when Circassian diaspora institutions and NGO's lobbied in Estonia for recognition of the Circassian genocide. In October 2010, Tunne Kelam, an Estonian member of the European Parliament, declared that he would raise the Circassian Question at the next audition in the human rights session of European Parliament. Mark Mickelson, another Estonian Member of Parliament, promised to hold the 'Circassian Question' on the agenda in the European Parliament.¹²⁸

With this background and summaries, I think the perspective of Circassian Question is clear and it will be recognized by world society as a nation and as a question in the term of Eurasian ethnolinguistic. By observing the level of affinity attached to various places among different ethnic groups based upon their geographical location, it should be possible to gain insight into the regional contemporary meaning of Circassian Question, that is to say, how the young generation see these territorial constructions, after their creation and existence through Soviet and Russian Federal control. Common language and culture will be developed with the emphasis on the unification of the written language by the elite, civil society, and cultural activists, and we will see the formation of Cultural linguistic in the future.

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¹²⁷ L. F. Hansen, *The Circassian Revival: A Quest for Recognition, Mediated Transnational Mobilisation and Memorialization among a Geographically Dispersed People from the Caucasus*. PhD diss., University of Copenhagen 2014: 74.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 75.

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Innovative Contributions of Georgian Composer Nodar Mamisashvili within the Realm of Ecomusicology¹

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Abstract

Since the close of the previous century, global awareness of the detrimental impact of human activities on the environment and the Earth has escalated. Consequently, there has been a heightened interest in a variety of research endeavours focusing on the harmonious coexistence of humanity and the environment. One such area of investigation that has gained attention is the intersection of sounds and the environment, leading to the emergence of an interdisciplinary scientific field known as ecomusicology since the year 2000.

This article delves into the methodological approaches and key issues within the realm of ecomusicology, providing a concise overview of the field. Since 2023, researchers and composers from the Tbilisi State Conservatory, namely Eka Chabashvili, Maka (Maya) Virsaladze, Alexander Chokhnelidze, and Jony Asitashvili, have been actively engaged in fundamental research titled “Implementation of Ecomusicology Research Methodology for the Study of the Georgian Music Ecosystem” [FR-22-8174]. The project is being conducted with the support of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia.

One of the primary objectives of the article is to uncover the principles that preceded the establishment of ecomusicology within the context of Georgian music. The teachings of Georgian composer, scientist, and thinker Nodar Mamisashvili serve as an illustrative example in this regard. The article highlights Mamisashvili’s role in founding the Sound Ecology Center during the 1990s, akin to contemporary ecomu-

¹ This article is a product of the fundamental research project “Implementation of Ecomusicology Research Methodology for the Study of the Georgian Music Ecosystem.” The project is supported by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG) [grant number FR-22-8174].

sicology centres around the world. It explores Mamisashvili's conceptualization of the restoration and casting of Georgian church bells, emphasizing that, for him, the bells were not merely elements of the sonic landscape but embodied the notion of unity with the ecosystem. His inspiration drew from Georgia's culture, history, and ancient rituals.

Within the framework of holistic thinking, the article provides a brief overview of Nodar Mamisashvili's sound field theory, the three-phase composition musical system, and the resultant acoustic event known as "Holophony." Mamisashvili's vast scientific interests and knowledge encompassed diverse fields such as physics, medicine, metallurgy, and mining-engineering technology.

The article underscores Nodar Mamisashvili's significant contribution to laying the groundwork for the integration of ecomusicology, asserting that his theories, research, and inventions will play a pivotal role in advancing ecomusicology in Georgia.

Keywords: Ecomusicology, Nodar Mamisashvili, sound ecology center, Georgian church bells, musical system of three-phase composition, sound field theory, Holophony.

“The sole path to preserve civilization is for a human being
to continually surpass human in himself”
Nodar Mamisashvili²

Introduction

The assurance of ecological processes is found in the harmonious co-existence of diverse elements within the world. However, it's important to note that harmony doesn't always imply uniformity. The ecosystem of sounds, for instance, thrives on the coexistence of various species. Similarly, in the democratic system of our civilization, a significant error lies in the tendency towards standardization across different issues. This approach, aiming to suppress one in favour of another, ultimately diminishes diversity. The departure from a natural state diminishes our capacity to engage in meaningful dialogue with the world and weakens our self-preservation instincts, distancing us from the valuable resources the world provides. This separation leads to a collapse and initiates a crisis in our harmonious relationship with the world. The rapid development of technology, while unprecedented, poses a danger of disrupting this harmony when misused by individuals lacking understanding. Fortu-

² N. Mamisashvili, მამისაშვილი, ნ., მისტიკური ანატომია (Mystical Anatomy), Tbilisi 2023: 30.

nately, the world offers us the chance to recognize and address ecological problems, providing an opportunity for corrective action. This marks the beginning of an active ecological process. This sentiment has been shared by numerous thinkers of the 20th and 21st centuries, including Nodar Mamisashvili. In his philosophical-esoteric work, “Mystical Anatomy,” dedicated to human-world dialogue, he underscores the need to rectify mistakes and emphasizes the active engagement in ecological processes, stating: “And another great warning: think about ecology! Think about the salvation of man!”³

Ecomusicology

Since the close of the previous century, global apprehension regarding the adverse impacts of human activities on the environment and the planet has grown. This situation has, in turn, elevated interest in numerous research endeavors aimed at exploring various aspects of the harmonious coexistence of humans and the environment. The problem of the interaction between sounds and the environment drew the attention of researchers. Since the year 2000, an interdisciplinary scientific field, known as ecomusicology, has been evolving.

In the 20th century, composers like John Cage, Olivier Messiaen, and others embarked on exploring the connection between sound and the environment, manifesting this exploration in their compositions. Building on this interest, several novel directions and genres in music emerged, including zoomusic, biomusic, eco-music, sound installation, and more. The fascination with the acoustic environment as a precursor to eco-music has roots in history, reaching back to the 18th century when composers began incorporating elements of nature into their compositions. A notable example is Ludwig van Beethoven’s “Pastoral Symphony,” a renowned illustration of this trend. It can be argued that the curiosity of composers in these aspects laid the foundation for the establishment of ecomusicology as a distinct discipline.

According to Canadian composer and environmentalist Raymond Marie Schaefer, environmental sounds, including natural and man-made sounds, were a significant aspect of the acoustic environment, and changes in the acoustic environment had substantial implications for human health and well-being. Musicologists, including ethnomusicologists and

³ Ibid., 61.

acousticians, launched a new systematic study of the interaction between music and the environment in the 1990s and 2000s.

As a result, an interdisciplinary scientific subject, ecomusicology, which explores the relationship between music, culture, and the environment, is emerging.

Ecomusicology has experienced swift growth in recent times, marked by numerous conferences, journals, and academic programs dedicated to exploring the interplay between music and the environment. This interdisciplinary field encompasses various themes, delving into areas such as the influence of music on environmental activism, the effects of environmental shifts on musical practices, and the intricate connections between music and the environment.

Yet, at the heart of ecomusicology lies a pivotal question: "...How music may be restored to its primitive, natural essence; let us free it from architectonic, acoustic, and esthetic dogmas."⁴ according to the famous Italian composer, theorist and pianist of the early twentieth century Ferruccio Busoni, the world sounds like music and people should be in harmony with it.

It was by imitating nature that man learned to create instruments, and over time, based on instrumental modifications and many different, artificially created rules, he developed a variety of sounds (including electronic music). With this approach, music also moved away from its real environment and, as a result of the formation of aesthetic norms by a human, was separated from the general sound of the universe. Some composers of the twentieth century tried to use the resources of the sound of nature to create music. Individual composers studied the sounds in the biosphere with great interest and used them in their creations. Let's recall the famous French composer Olivier Messiaen's "Catalogue of Birds" — the collection he devoted a significant amount of his life to. When it became possible to record natural sounds on tape, the music gained a lot of fresh sounds. Recording ambient noise and using it as the main musical material gave birth to a new direction of music 'Musique concrète'. Starting from "L'Arte dei Rumori"⁵ by Luigi Russolo and up to the present day, the study of the phenomenon of noise and the possibility of including it as musical material in a work of art is a topical issue.

⁴ F. Busoni, *Sketch of A New Esthetic of Music*, T. Baker (Translator), New York 1911: 34.

⁵ L. Russolo, *L'Arte dei Rumori. Edizioni futuriste die "poesia,"* Milano 1916.

In the 70s of the XX century, scientists of various directions were interested in the study of the sound environment in North America and the Scandinavian countries. Canadian composer Raymond Murray Schafer coined the term “Soundscape,”⁶ he viewed the world as a kind of musical instrument with ever-renewing tuning. The Working Group ISO/TC 43.SC1 was established in 1981 to study the “acoustic environment as perceived or experienced and/or understood by people in context”⁷ and began discussing a standardization method for assessing soundscape quality. It can be said that there is a natural sound, including the sound field of the Earth, from which the “music of nature” is constructed; the sound environment has a distinct evolution/variability factor that Schaefer described as the transition from Hi-Fi to Lo-Fi Soundscape. Research conducted by R. Schafer confirms that the harmful properties of the lo-fi soundscape affect the overall ecological environment, which also negatively affects human health. According to him „The hi-fi soundscape is one in which discrete sounds can be heard clearly because of the low ambient noise level ... In the hi-fi soundscape, sounds overlap less frequently; there is perspective – foreground and background ... In a low-fi soundscape individual acoustic signals are obscured in an overdense population of sounds ... Perspective is lost ... there is no distance; only presence. There is cross-talk on all the channels, and for the most ordinary sounds to be heard they have to be increasingly amplified.”⁸

Sound, and the music themselves, are part of the Earth’s ecosystem. Therefore, its positive and negative impact research is important for a clean and healthy environment. In modern musicology, there is an inter- and multi-disciplinary direction of music — Ecomusicology. It studies the processes of interaction in the music-society-environment system.

Ful-fledged research in Ecomusicology often correlates with other fields such as anthropology, biology, ecology, environmental studies, ethnomusicology, history, literature, musicology, performance studies, and psychology. The term was coined approximately 10 years ago by the musicologist Aaron S. Allen, he was inspired by an interdisciplinary study of the connections between the literature and the environment called “Eco-criticism.”

⁶ R. M. S c h a f e r, *The Tuning of the World*, New York 1977.

⁷ International Standard Organization (ISO) Acoustics Soundscape Part 1: Definition and Conceptual Framework. ISO; Geneva 2013.

⁸ R. M. S c h a f e r, *The Tuning of the World*, 1993: 43.

In the book „Current Directions in Ecomusicology” edited by Aaron Allen and Kevin Dowe, which brings together articles by various researchers, the following question is asked – What is ecomusicology? The authors answer is:

“The question deserves a succinct answer, such as: Environmental studies plus music/sound studies equal ecomusicology. Our conceit, however, is that one plus one equal more than two: There is no one ecomusicology but many ecomusicologies constituting a dynamic field. One may wander this field leisurely to explore its interesting and relevant areas, or one might prefer to head in a particular direction.”⁹

Ecomusicology is best understood as a multi-perspectival field, rather than a discipline or an interdiscipline (as are musicology and environmental studies).

Ecomusicology is a multifaceted field, but all directions in it intersect with sound ecology; Basically, the research methodology is related to the specifics of the related field, which gives rise to the direction of ecomusicology; Ecomusicology is based on 4 main areas of methodological work: fieldwork, ecological problem, critical analysis and textual.

The subsequent directions can be identified, among others, but are not confined to:

1. Ecology of musical performance;
 2. Ethnomusicology and anthropology plus landscape ecology;
 3. Sound landscape ecology;
 4. Critical theory in ecomusicology;
 5. Ecological imaginations and creativity;
 6. Ecology of creating musical instruments.
 7. Politics of sound and tone/character of the relationship.
 8. Musical genetics and micro world soundscape ecology.
- etc.

In the 1990s, in Georgia, the „Sound Ecology Center” was established through the efforts of composer Nodar Mamisashvili. Under his guidance, the center delved into topics akin to those outlined earlier. Here is a segment from the operational plan of the Sound Ecology Center, as discovered in the archives of Nodar Mamisashvili:

⁹ A. Allen, K. Dowe, *Current Directions in Ecomusicology*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, New York and London 2016: 1.

„Ongoing research involves the identification of sound frequencies, timbre, and intensity and their positive impacts on human well-being. This research is conducted using a unique comprehensive psychosystem developed by Nodar Mamisashvili. It encompasses 240 primary psychotypes and 5760 alternative variations.

The utilization methods include:

1. Maintaining a positive mood
2. Alleviating stress
3. Enhancing the positive impact of medications
4. Therapeutic and preventive purposes
5. Adjusting the waves of noisy household items (such as vacuum cleaners and telephone signals) for a particular individual or group of people
6. Providing advice in the realm of household and street acoustics, among others.”¹⁰

Nodar Mamisashvili and transdisciplinary thinking

The history of humanity teaches us that any processes within society and/or scientific innovations of the current era influence world culture, including music. Nevertheless, it's essential to acknowledge that humanity's connection with nature was considerably more sincere and, one could argue, ecologically pure during the early stages of our civilization. This period was characterized by an intimate communion with intuitive knowledge drawn from the depths of the Earth's information field. While the understanding developed in that era may appear primitive through the lens of today, it holds profound wisdom within the realms of metaphorical and associative thinking. This wisdom extends to the recognition of patterns in the world, serving as a rich source of inspiration for refined thinking among artists and thinkers in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The aforementioned circumstances have given rise to diverse forms of musical thinking throughout human history. For instance, our interpretation introduces three categories of musical thought, each aligned with distinct phases in the evolution of European musical culture:

¹⁰ Quotation from unpublished document (archive of N. Mamisashvili).

Esoteric – intuitive thinking; – before the Baroque
 Logical – functional thinking; – until the 20th century
 Virtual – existential thinking. – in progress

Perhaps different geometric shapes can express the musical Ideas that arise in different types of musical thinking. The dynamics of geometric forms movement can represent the principles of the distribution of musical material in time and space, implemented by the compositional technique of different eras. Since the types of musical thinking are also accompanied by biodynamic features that are characteristic of different eras.

There are three movements of figures that also have an associative connection with musical forms:

Cycle – motion with “delay“;
 Acute-angled – motion with “breaks“;
 Spiral – motion with “acceleration“ and “decrease“.
 Each corresponds with the particular type of musical thinking:

Esoteric – intuitive thinking;	before the Baroque	Cycle – motion with „delay“;
Logical – functional thinking;	until the 20th century	Acute-angled – motion with „breaks“;
Virtual – existential thinking.	in progress	Spiral – motion with „acceleration“ and „decrease“.

Certain composers from the 20th and 21st centuries employ a sophisticated approach to composition. This approach suggests an activation of archaic and medieval esoteric forms of musical thinking, which aligns with contemporary existential musical thought. Consequently, these composers seek inspiration for their works from Eastern, archaic, and medieval cultures and philosophies, naturally sparking an interest in topics related to the ecological and mystical aspects of nature. It’s worth noting that the ecological approach to music is inherent in compositions across various eras, potentially emerging unconsciously in a composer’s work but unequivocally manifesting itself on the levels of both sound and concept.

“Human being is an amazing creature. He “comes” from far space, sun, rainbow, finest flowers, waterfalls, birds, the most beautiful animal world, huge sea waves, volcanoes, unique information field of the planet, distant relatives, parents, their friends, enemies, envy, belief, love and ‘goes’ into his children, grand-children, genealogy, friends, motley-by-variety-of-differences information field, goes and leaves the impulse of strength to those whom he loved and forgiveness to the enemies... goes to cosmos, to the ‘end of skies’ ...where his soul was born.”¹¹

These words are attributed to Nodar Mamisashvili (1930-2022), a Georgian composer, scientist, and thinker of the 20th and 21st centuries. He held the title of honorary academician at the Georgian Engineering Academy, authored HoloStudio, served as a professor and vice-president at the “NooSphere” Academy, taught at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, and worked as a guest professor at the Academy of Arts and Georgian Technical University. Additionally, Mamisashvili was the founder and coordinator of the Sound Ecology Center, a consultant on acoustic matters for the Association “ATU,” and a consultant for Church Singing College at the Georgian Patriarchate. Beyond his academic and professional roles, he was a teacher, poet, and a polymath whose thoughts and interests spanned numerous spheres.

Nodar Mamisashvili, a distinctive thinker, researcher, artist, and educator, embeds numerous yet-to-be-acknowledged mystic elements in his work. The singularity of his contributions arises from his interdisciplinary exploration and breakthroughs across diverse realms of art and science. His remarkable capacity to perceive interconnections among these domains through a shared prism stems from his original and continually innovative thinking, marking his work as both innovative and progressive.

Throughout the past century, the concepts articulated by Nodar Mamisashvili were frequently either poorly comprehended or dismissed as fantastical. However, the “unconventional ideas” conceived by him several decades ago, which he subsequently brought to fruition in his own body of work, have now evolved into a captivating area of focus for the scientific and artistic communities in Europe and America.

Nodar Mamisashvili himself assesses his legacy and identifies what he considers to be the most valuable and distinctive as follows:

¹¹ M. M a m i s a s h v i l i, მამისაშვილი, ნ., მისტიკური ანატომია (Mystical Anatomy), Tbilisi 2023: 30.

“N. Mamisashvili’s unparalleled inventions,
which have no equivalent in the world:

1. Three-phase composition
2. Georgian church bells (the secret of the “weight in gold“ recipe)
3. Biblical polyphony (voice holography -“graph”)
4. Holo Studio
5. Agricultural machinery for subtle energy (grapevine, fruit trees, and more)
6. Virtual architecture and its acoustic versions
7. Mystical anatomy
8. The Apparatus for life-compatible analog modifications
9. Dialogue with a mirror, modified versions of ego doubling and tripling, the intensity of reciprocal exchange of mutual influence
10. Human bioresonance with virtual transformations
11. Relation and harmony of colours of geometry in the transformation of sounds
12. Music as catharsis and longing versions of human emotions, appreciation of the non-ego, as the vision of the ego within itself.”¹²

Thus, decades earlier, Nodar Mamisashvili pioneered:

- a) A centre of sound ecology, which is analogous to ecomusicology widespread in the modern world;
- b) An innovative form of art therapy known as the frequency-resonance method, which also dictates the operation of Mamisashvili’s equipment. This method is progressively gaining attraction in alternative medicine, growing more popular with each passing day;
- c) His contributions to the Georgian artistic realm represent a benchmark in artistic research. Mamisashvili, akin to Leonardo da Vinci, was ahead of his time, being the first Georgian “Artistic Researcher” who consistently grounded his work in profound scientific exploration. Furthermore, “Nodar Mamisashvili was a scientist in music and an artist in science”¹³.

¹² “Nodar Mamisashvili about Nodar Mamisashvili,” *Kartvelologia 1-2*, Tbilisi 2022: 64.

¹³ N. Kavtaradze, ქავთარაძე, ნ., ჩემი დროც მოვა..., *Chemi drots mova* (N. Kavtaradze, My Time will Come...), *Kartvelologia 1-2*, Tbilisi 2022: 9.

He stood as the pioneer among Georgian Artistic Researchers, as his research approach consistently embraced interdisciplinary methods, yielding artistic outcomes that aimed to reveal the often unseen facets of the subject. In his works, the research inquiries across diverse fields such as cybernetics, mineralogy, winemaking, metallurgy, medicine, etc., consistently incorporated connections with musical thinking.

Nodar Mamisashvili’s multidisciplinary approach to research and creation is grounded in the thinking styles of ancient, medieval, and Renaissance eras. Frequently, he delves into astrological calculations and horoscopes to address research questions, a fact substantiated by the introduction to his primary philosophical work, “Mystical Anatomy.”

In exploring his research topic, Mamisashvili draws upon knowledge from diverse scientific and parascientific domains, encompassing ancient esoteric and philosophical wisdom¹⁴, as well as contemporary scientific opinions and discoveries.¹⁵ Despite this, the fundamental underpinning of his research remains an effort to unite the realms of astronomy and astrology. The author highlights that “humans are significantly influenced by two cosmic information sources—astronomy and astrology. Unfortunately, in our social context, they are often pitted against each other. This paradox underscores the imperfections within our society. In reality, both fields are interconnected and mutually enriching. Metaphorically, we could even consider them as a potential barometer of human capabilities”¹⁶.

The array of Nodar Mamisashvili’s viewpoints on music and innovations draws inspiration from esoteric philosophy. However, the phenomena he discusses are elucidated through hypotheses arising from the realm of existential thinking (such as bioinformatics and bio-resonance). Simultaneously, he addresses musical matters aligned with the fundamental principles of musical medicine and eco-music, predating the establishment of Ecomusicology. According to Nodar Mamisashvili, “From ancient times to the contemporary era, an abundance of sound information has been accumulated, and in the present day, it has surged by five billion times compared to archaic times. As civilization advances, the global volume of noise data also escalates, giving rise to a cascade of

¹⁴ Bible, Vedas, Horoscopes, Zodiacs, etc.

¹⁵ David Bohm, Karl H. Pribram, Gia Dvali, Dimitri Uznadze, Stanislav Grof, Niels Bohr, Immanuel Kant, Erwin Schrödinger, Baruch Spinoza, Carl Jung, and many others.

¹⁶ N. M a m i s a s h v i l i, მამისაშვილი, ნ., მისტიკური ანატომია (Mystical Anatomy), Tbilisi 2023: 46-147.

sound impacts, spanning agricultural, commercial, and other spheres. In this context, specific sounds have the potential to evolve into environmental issues.”¹⁷

In the 1990s, during the establishment of the “Sound Ecology Center,” Nodar Mamisashvili crafted the “Church Bells” through extensive scientific investigations in environmental acoustics, ancient Georgian mineralogy and metallurgy, anthropology, ethnomusicology, and medieval Georgian professional church music systems, among other fields. Mamisashvili’s computations suggest that the bell he designed serves as a counterpart to the ancient Georgian bell lost centuries ago, incorporating healing ecological elements into its sound.

In an interview with Georgian composer Maka Virsaladze, Nodar Mamisashvili expresses concern about the escalating pollution of the sound environment, characterizing it as an imperceptible catastrophe for humanity. In his opinion, “to prevent harm to individuals, it is imperative to consider the acoustic characteristics of the city during construction. Special attention should be devoted to resonance and vibration concerns within the urban environment. Notably, any disruption to the natural state leads to imbalances in resonances, resulting in definite negative effects in affected areas. Additionally, interference with the movement of airwaves gives rise to an unseen but genuinely adverse accumulation of sound turbulence.”¹⁸

It is important to highlight that virtually every aspect of the work of the Georgian composer, researcher, and thinker Nodar Mamisashvili is infused with ecomusicological perspectives. Nodar Mamisashvili holds a distinctive position in the Georgian musical realm due to his versatility and individuality.

The church bell’s role within the acoustic ecosystem of Georgia and its connection to Nodar Mamisashvili.

Bells play a crucial role in the auditory landscape of various countries, including Georgia. Church bells, with a history tracing back thousands of years to ancient civilizations like China, Greece, and Rome, hold a rich and captivating legacy. The ecomusicological exploration of city or vil-

17 შამანებიდან სატელევიზიო რეკლამამდე (from shamans to tv advertisements), Interview with Nodar Mamisashvili by Maka Virsaladze, *Tbilisi uskebani* 12-16, November, Tbilisi.1996.

18 Ibid.

lage soundscapes often includes an in-depth study of bells, considering their symbolic significance in diverse cultures where they were perceived as symbols of power and authority. Bells were commonly employed in religious and ceremonial contexts.

In the context of the Orthodox Church, the bell stands out as a key symbol and plays a vital role in the liturgical proceedings of the Georgian Church. Beyond its religious associations, Georgian bells served multiple informative functions in society, such as warning against epidemics or enemy invasions, signaling public celebrations, and more. Interestingly, bells even had therapeutic roles, as evidenced by rituals like the ancient healing ceremony in Guria, Western Georgia, where a young man adorned in vibrant female attire would move through a patient's room with small bells in hand, producing sounds as part of the treatment. Meanwhile, other attendees would sing the therapeutic song "Batonebo" in tandem with the ritual. The provided link showcases the song without the accompanying ritual action.¹⁹

Georgia has a longstanding tradition of crafting bells of various sizes and purposes. Archaeological excavations have unearthed small ritual bells and jewellery bells that predate Christianity. The oldest bells discovered in Georgia can be traced back to the 7th century BC.

As mentioned earlier, a primary function of church bells is to summon people to daily church services and mark significant religious occasions such as weddings, funerals, and baptisms. Additionally, bells can serve as a warning signal for imminent danger, among other purposes.

The ancient Georgians possessed profound metallurgical expertise that extended to the art of bell casting. There was a tradition of crafting sizable bells, which unfortunately became lost over the centuries. A substantial number of old Georgian church bells were lost during the medieval period, primarily due to warfare. For instance, historical records indicate that Shah Tamaz's army removed the bell from the **Vardzia** bell tower and took it away, underscoring the value of Georgian metal as a prized resource for crafting weaponry.

Numerous bells faced destruction in the 20th century, particularly during the anti-religious campaign of the 1920s. Today, only around two dozen Georgian bells remain, primarily in mountainous regions. The old-

¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYC4T4A8XHw>

est among them dates back to the 15th century, while the inception of the first Georgian **bell tower** can be traced to the 13th century.

Some bells are carved with the inscription “**Asomtavruli**” or “**Mkhe-druli**” (Georgian alphabets) of the donor or master name. One of the inscriptions of the 16th century bell preserved the name of the Georgian master (bottler) Dzedan Titadze.

In the 20th century, the Georgian composer and scientist Nodar Mamisashvili undertook the reconstruction of a medieval church bell from Georgia, basing his work on surviving fragments of broken bells and folk legends recounting bell casting rituals. Delving into the habits and thought processes of medieval Georgians, as reflected in folk traditions and chants, Mamisashvili utilized this knowledge to revive the tradition of Georgian church bell casting through a contemporary lens. Nodar Mamisashvili’s unique persona was characterized by his versatility and systematic thinking, evident in the numerous scientific papers and publications he authored.

Within the Georgian musical landscape, the figure of Nodar Mamisashvili holds a distinctive position owing to his multifaceted talents and individuality. He is renowned for compiling and formulating the alloy and acoustics used in Georgian church bells. Notably, under his authorship and guidance, the bell complex of the Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi was replicated in the German city of Heilbronn.

From the ecomusicological perspective, as we engage with Nodar Mamisashvili’s articles on bells, explore his research, and delve into interviews featured in various publications, it becomes evident that, for him, church bells represent more than just one of the sounds within the environmental soundscape. From the intricacies of the alloy formula to the casting process and the ensuing ringing, it embodies a profound ritual symbolizing the harmonious fusion of humanity with nature. In a letter by Nodar Mamisashvili discussing bells, he emphasizes, “Georgia is rich in fractal, anomalous, geopathogenic zones, caves, beautiful canyons with naturally deep ‘palaces’ in the rock, which create a single field of unique vibrating echoes. Therefore, the ringing of church bells is also of special significance.”²⁰

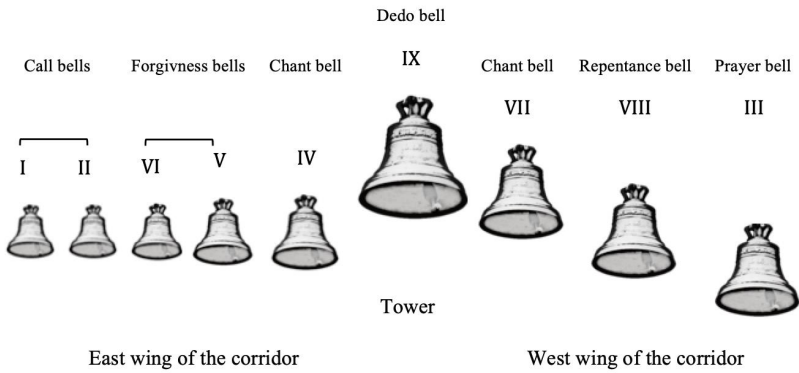
In Tbilisi, on the bell tower of the **Holy Trinity Cathedral** 9 bells hang, the biggest of which – “Dedo Zari” – weighs 8200kg (Mamisashvili

²⁰ N. Mamisashvili, Church Bell and Georgian Bell Mysteries (unpublished letter from his archive).

called it “Golden Weigh” because of the proportions he discovered). They were compiled and created according to Mamisashvili’s calculations.

He was the first in the world to create an acoustic scheme for the resonant distribution of **9 church bells**, according to which the bells were distributed in the bell tower of the Holy Trinity Cathedral. He separated the main root-tones from the Georgian hymnal harmony and transferred them to the sound of 9 bells; He also differentiated the bells according to their functions: 2 call bells, 2 forgiveness bells, 2 chant bells, 1 repentance bell, 1 prayer bell, 1 bell of glory.

Distribution of the Bells in the Holly Trinity Church Tower



When we asked him why he decided to create a nine-bell resonant scheme, he explained that the unique features of the proportion of symmetry can be calculated from the number 9; and then he added that the ancient Georgians possessed a secret knowledge which was reflected in the musical system of Georgian medieval chants.

$$9 \times 9 \rightarrow \overline{81 - 18} \leftarrow 9 \times 2$$

$$9 \times 8 \rightarrow \overline{72 - 27} \leftarrow 9 \times 3$$

$$9 \times 7 \rightarrow \overline{63 - 36} \leftarrow 9 \times 4$$

$$9 \times 6 \rightarrow \overline{54 - 45} \leftarrow 9 \times 5$$

Several Georgian rituals with certain symbols were taken into account during the casting of bells in Germany. According to Nodar Mamisashvili:

“A bell is not a usual instrument and it is not part of the metallurgical achievement. It gives amazing sounds. In them is unified the harmony of spirituality and existence. The rule of casting the bell reached up to us in the form of myths. In different countries, there are different rituals of casting the bell. For example, Italians perform special songs and prayers during the casting the bell. According to Byzantine belief, the strong sound of round dance stipulated the strong sonority of the bell. Very interesting is the Georgian ritual: in the pit for casting the bell they used to throw wheat or barley for the grace of cereals to be passed to the pit. Then they used to spread “salt” on the boiling metal, for which they used three soul-calming minerals, which had cosmological meaning. These minerals were: arsenopyrite (symbolizing the moonlight and its energy), realgar (symbolizing cosmic light and dawn), and auripigment (symbol of golden sunlight). Additionally, one more action was added to all this: they used to uproot a small evergreen pine tree together with its roots and stir with it the boiling metal. These symbols were based on human psychics and deep knowledge.”²¹

Mamisashvili declared that the different rituals were dedicated to the process of the glory and blessing to nature to get mystic information of the cosmic energy; for example, one of the famous round dances “Lileo” in Svaneti expresses a ritual of greeting sunrise. Nodar Mamisashvili thought that Georgian bellmakers had been collecting and including information about the harmonization of the energy of the Moon with the energy of the Sun in the bell as a symbol of Eternity. Svanetian song “Lileo”:²²

Mamisashvili believed that the colour of the aforementioned minerals is also associated with the process of rituals symbolizing the period from midnight to sunrise:

In the process of casting the bell for Trinity Cathedral, adherence to various Georgian metal casting principles was paramount. As declared by His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II, human life is dynamic, continually presenting diverse and evolving challenges. Consequently, the bell casting endeavor involved addressing several issues: the revival of tradition, the creation of a novel sound intricately linked to chanting harmony. The chanting harmony, integral to the

21 T. Jorjadze, *Lighting and Color in Architectural Design*, Tbilisi State Academy of Arts, Tbilisi 2017: 350.

22 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAtgawjkrqM&list=RDtAtgawjkrqM&index=1>

Georgian tradition, necessitates the incorporation of 9 bell compositions, revealing one of the mysteries behind the design of Georgian bells.

Nodan Mamisashvili composed several musical scores for 9 bells, for example, “The Arrival of the Catholicos-Patriarch of Sakartvelo”:

პატრიარქის შემოსვლა
(დასაწყისი)

Consequently, he included in the tuning system of 9 bells associative connection of colours and their nanometers along with acoustic frequencies.

To achieve the desired timbre, Nodar Mamisashvili calculated the spectral combination of each bell; he believed that the timbre of bells and their combination can influence the listeners’ mood. He also calculated intervals between the pitches of bells to reflect the sound of the different birds chirping. The smallest bell is called the Tone Bell, and the biggest one is – “Dedo” Bell. The “Dedo” Bell weight ratio is based on the Golden Ratio. Between the “Dedo” and another bell the distance in terms of acoustics is 900 cents and among other bells – from 500 to 100 cents. Only Georgian bells have such a ratio and it is based on a harmonious system of chanting tones.

It is important to mention that except for Call bells, he connected each of the other 7 bells with prayer time during the day. He explained that

the time is also connected with the mood of the human. He believed that different periods of the day also condition and enhance a person's mood: for example, in the morning a person prays and is grateful, he is more forgiving at dinner, and he regrets in the evening, in the night he should calm down and hopefully wait for the next day, etc.

Classification of the Holy Trinity church's bells:

	Bell	Tone (pitch) and Hertz	Nanometer and colour	Time of prayer
1	Call	b ¹ – 485 Hz	450Nm-380Nm – violet	
2	Call	a ¹ – 430 Hz	460Nm-470Nm – dark blue	
3	Prayer	c ¹ – 256 Hz	640Nm-700Nm – red	6 am
4	Chant – Tone	c ^{#1} – 274 Hz	640Nm-620Nm – red	9 am
5	Chant	d ¹ – 288 Hz	600Nm-580Nm – orange	12 pm
6	Forgiveness	e ¹ – 320 Hz	580Nm-585Nm – yellow	3 pm
7	Chant	e – 160 Hz	590Nm-570Nm – golden	6 pm
8	repentance	a – 220 Hz	460Nm-480Nm – dark blue	9 pm
9	Dedo	G – 96 Hz	500Nm – blue	12 am

A bell is a notable exception among musical instruments, as the harmonic named the fundamental is not its lowest frequency, but it can produce the sound of a lot of partial tones, which defines the colourfulness and richness of the timbre.

The timbre of each of the 9 Georgian bells is different; they have their own character related to their function; for example, Call bells have a bright sound; Chants bells – the beautiful sound that gives the tone to singers; Prayer bells sound quiet and soft; Forgiveness bell sounds sad; “Dedo” Bell has soothing sound. (“Dedo” means Mother in Georgian; as mother should calm the children, the sound of this bell should be soothing).

Mamisashvili calculated the proportion of the Georgian “Dedo” bell's size according to the golden ratio to achieve the desired weight and timbre. For example, the smallest bell's weight is 8kg, middle bell's weight is 12kg; their combination gives the weight of “Dedo” bell.

Biggest “Dedo” bell is $8+(8+12)=28$ kg,

or $12+(8+12)=32$ kg,

or $(8+12)+(8+12)=40$ kg and so on.

Nodar Mamisashvili declared, that the vibration of the bell correlates with human body parts’ vibration, thus the sound of bells carries the information of treatment also.

Bell’s metal consists of tin, zinc, silver (lunar energy) and copper (solar energy). The clapper is made of iron. When the clapper hits the lip, the metal heats up and becomes slightly elastic, which further enhances the vibration of the metal, enriches the tones of the spectrum and increases the smoothness of the bell sound. The ringing of the bells is also carried out in different ways. For example, in the East they push the bells with logs; the Orthodox bells are rung with the clappers, and in Catholic bellfries, part of the bells are rung by shaking the bell-bodies. Georgian bells clapper was made out of iron because clapper material and place of hitting were very important for producing beautiful bell timbre.

When crafting the bells, Nodar Mamisashvili took into account their connection to acoustic medicine, imbuing them with an intriguing function. Notably, the rhythmic period of bell ringing is believed to contribute to the healing of various organs.

Active Time Zones of Acoustic Medicine are:²³

01:00 – 03:00 – Liver

03:00 – 05:00 – Lungs

05:00 – 07:00 – Colon

07:00 – 09:00 – Abdominal Cavity

09:00 – 11:00 – Spleen, Pancreases

11:00 – 13:00 – Small Intestine

13:00 – 15:00 – Heart

15:00 – 17:00 – Bladder

17:00 – 19:00 – Kidneys

19:00 – 21:00 – Pericardium

21:00 – 23:00 – Limbs, Head and Neck

23:00 – 01:00 – Gallbladder

²³ T. Jorjadze, *Lighting and Color in Architectural Design*, Tbilisi 2017: 353.

The bell body is also interesting, as geometric figures themselves have a certain energy. In different countries, this issue was handled in different ways. In this respect, the Georgian bell is also a distinguished one. Tbilisi Sameba (Trinity) Cathedral bell has the shape of a dome, that was taken from a Georgian enamelled fresco of Golden Age (12th century).

The dome bears the noblest energy. Thus, the upper parts of Georgian bells up to the bottom are domed. This sounding part creates some kind of communication with the church dome and they both make an interesting ensemble. The ancient acousticians were well aware of this. The uniqueness of the Georgian bell is conditioned by 3 reasons:

1. The domed shape of the bell is harmonized with the church dome;
2. The dome has wonderful acoustic features – it gives deep, soft, clear sound;
3. The timbre of vibration coming from the dome body is distinguished through its richness and it evokes in us positive emotions.

The sound of Holy Trinity Church's Bells:²⁴

In his discourse, Nodar Mamisashvili examines the Georgian practice of ringing bells, which views a person and their activities in the context of an entire ecosystem. Per this ritual:

1. The grains of wheat, millet, and barley were ceremonially cast into the hollow for the bell, to signify prosperity.
2. Before it was cast in the mould, a living evergreen “Sochi” sapling was laid in the molten lava as a representation of perpetuity.
3. For assurance and serenity, the “Sun” and “Moon” minerals were thrown into the molten bronze while the big bell was being fashioned.
4. The tongue of the bell should have been made of slightly ductile iron, which would hinder the sharpness of the blow on the bronze.

Nodar Mamisashvili established new harmonic-acoustic concepts in addition to taking into account the intricacies of the old ritual. He built an innovative sonic matrix comprising nine Georgian bell ringtones:

1. The horizontal vibro-harmonics of the bell tones were based on the attraction of the Georgian Orthodox hymn's fundamental tones and the sound field of their scale intonation.
2. The bell body's design was inspired by the “Sultmofenoba” product created in Georgian enamel (12th century). The bell, in particular, has an elliptical outline and the shape of a dome.

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0W-QYQqOz0>

3. The “Golden Ratio” is the tone-to-weight ratio of the church bell.

4. The weight of the bells was based on the following hierarchy, which was metaphorically called the family hierarchy, for example, the mother – 30 kg (30 years old), the first child – 14 years old (14 kg) and the second child – 12 years old (12 kg), or mother – 100 kg, first child – 50 kg, The second – 45 kg, the third – 30 kg. There are many variations, the principle is one.

5. The bells are functionally dispersed, and the 9-bell complex produces the most optimal combination. Namely,

				Centre				
Bells of Prayer, Chanting, Forgiveness				Mother Bell	Forgiveness Bells		Summoning Bells	
III	IV	V	VI	IX	VII	VIII	I	II
							Can be moved before the prayer bells	

6. The initial tones and melodic compositions of the church bells were identified depending on the time of the prayers in the unified harmony of the colour and tones of the church bells:

Colour	Bell	Tone	Hz	Prayer Time	Special forms of bell compositions
Crimson ‘Dawn’	III	C	256	6 hours	The arrival of the Catholicos-Patriarch of Sakartelo
red ‘Sun’	IV	C#	274	9 hours	Important holidays of the Lord
Orange ‘Sky’	V	D	288	13 hours	Christmas
dark yellow	VII	E	160	15 hours	Easter
pale yellow	VI	Eb	320	18 hours	Sending off the old year and welcoming the new year
blue sky	VIII	A	220	21 hours	Chapels

deep blue	IX	G	96	24 hours	Special information
Infrared colour pulse bells	I and II	H, A	485-430	-	-

The colour refers to the shade of metal used to cover the bell. To get the desired colour and tone, a suitable mineral is used.

Nodar Mamisashvili outlines the eight mysteries he employed when determining the metal alloy and acoustic formula of the bells in greater detail in another study.²⁵ The mysteries are based on mythological notions from ancient Georgia. These are philosophical-cosmological ideas that consider the earth, man, and his activities in a context related to the cosmos, and the bells with all their rituals are included in the world's harmonious rotation. Nodar Mamisashvili and the bells cast under his direction can thus be considered the beginning of Georgian ecomusicology. Here are a few examples of such mysteries:

The very first secret of Mamisashvili bells is the addition of three minerals to the alloy recipe. Arsenopyrite, realgar, and auripigment are added to the bell's primary material, bronze. The incorporation of these minerals is tied to the day-night cycle, namely the rite of the moon's departure and arrival.

Mamisashvili mentions a traditional song that confirms the idea of family unity between the sun and the moon in ancient Georgia:

“The Sun is my Mother, The moon is my Father
Bright stars are my Sister and Brother.”

He also remembers the cult festivals of the moon and the sun:

“... *Ferkhuli (Round dance) are united and especially on the moon festival they prepare a new ritual scene – the meeting with the sun, the sunrise, that is, the moon Ferkhuli will turn directly into the sunrise hymn – “Lileo.”*”²⁶

The most interesting thing is that the moon and the merging process of the solar ritual scene and the process of casting the metal of the church bell creates a striking metaphorical parallel as if the bell itself were born in this rite of passage.

²⁵ N. Mamisashvili, ქართული საეკლესიო ზარის საიდუმლოება Kartulis saeklesio zaris saidumloeba (Georgian Church Bell's Secrets), *Kartvelologia 1*, Tbilisi 2008: 6.

²⁶ Ibid.

*“The moon and the merging process of the solar ritual scene and the process of casting the metal of the church bell create a strong metaphorical analogy as if the bell itself was born in this rite of passage.”*²⁷

Mamisashvili then describes the procedure, naming the hues that represent the moon’s and sun’s states, as well as the matching minerals. Arsenopyrite is silver and depicts the moon. Realgar is a mineral that signifies daybreak and the reddening of the sky, and golden auripigment represents the rising sun.

A similar metaphorical approach can be found in other mysteries of restored Georgian bells by Nodar Mamisashvili, the second of which links to the concept of eternity and involves the evergreen tree of Sochi as a symbol. A Sochi tree is used for stirring and subsequent mixing of the alloy.

The third secret is related to the bell’s shape and is comparable to the church’s dome. to the fourth – to the iron tongue of the bell, and so forth.

Examining the Church bells cast under the guidance of Nodar Mamisashvili, we can infer that Georgian Church bells, with their historical origin, alloy formula, and other defining characteristics, embody a phenomenon intricately and securely linked to the essence of Georgia, ancient philosophical and religious ideals. They not only enrich the soundscape but also embody the concept of unity with nature and the world at large.

Throughout history, the role of the bell has evolved fascinatingly, combining deep insights into ritual, mysticism, physics, chemistry, and precise acoustical calculations. Fortunately, Nodar Mamisashvili, during the restoration of the Georgian Medieval Bell, was a person who took into account this wealth of knowledge.

It can be affirmed that Nodar Mamisashvili laid the groundwork for ecomusicological approaches in Georgia. By restoring antique Georgian church bells and introducing new embellishments, he drew inspiration from Georgian culture, history, and ancient rites.

In listing his accomplishments, Nodar Mamisashvili regards his distinctive creation, the three-phase composition, as the foremost achievement. Introducing the book on the musical system of the three-phase composition, he initiates with the declaration, “...music is the voiced spiritual state of a person, it is the self-expressive thought of a person conveyed in a song, thus reaffirming the ‘ecomusicological approach.’”²⁸ There exists

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Н. Мамисашвили, *О музыкальной системе трёхфазовой композиции*, Тбилиси 1978: 6.

no music in isolation from humanity, detached from nature. According to Mamisashvili, music is an inseparable component of a unified world, an integral facet of human existence: “Human life resonates with the harmony of sounds, where every narrative carries its distinctive sonic hue, and each event is uniquely ‘sung’ by sounds, thereby constructing an associative backdrop of semantics. Through the associative semantics of sounds, individuals forge a connection with the external world, a bond facilitated by both auditory and visual sensations. To illustrate, consider the sound of the sea. The ‘expression’ of this phenomenon in music can extend beyond merely replicating the noise of the sea, incorporating a wave-like movement of sounds that mirrors the graceful undulation of sea waves.”²⁹

In his book on the three-phase composition, Mamisashvili delves into the intricacies of the music-listening process, giving due consideration to the nuances of human perception. He places a notable emphasis on the conscious or subconscious associative connections that unfold during this auditory experience.

The genesis of Nodar Mamisashvili’s three-phase musical system can be traced back to his exploration of the principles of Georgian musical thought and his distinctive research in Georgian musicology, particularly the “Sound field theory.” This exploration paved the way for Mamisashvili’s groundbreaking innovation – the development of a “Three-phase musical system” rooted in the essence of Georgian national musical thought. Drawing its primary inspiration from the wellspring of Georgian folk and church music, the three-phase musical system is underpinned by Mamisashvili’s acoustic invention, “Holophony,” and his engineering creation, “Holostudio.”

Nodar Mamisashvili introduced a new term – “Holophony” (in Greek it means full sonority). This is a completely new field of musical art, uniting:

1. The 64-sound three-phase musical composition system,
2. The three-phase system of 21-trace electronic sonority,
3. The “phasistry” of acoustic architecture.

Holophonics is a sound field theory explaining the issues of bio-energetic information in the sphere of influence on humans. In this case, a composer not only creates a sound system but becomes a transmitter and knits in the information energy received from the outside. The problem is considered more widely and is connected with acoustic ecology. The holophonic score can be fully realized only in case of having special ar-

²⁹ Н. М а м и с а ш в и л и, О музыкальной системе трёхфазовой композиции, Тбилиси 1978: 6.

chitecture and technical equipment. This kind of building can be called a “HoloStudio.” Nodar Mamisashvili dreamt of finding a HoloStudio and had corresponding schemes, drawings, calculations...

Mamisashvili’s work “Sound Field Theory” is notably intriguing as it delineates the fundamental principles underlying the genesis of the musical system. Mamisashvili proclaimed:

“Sound Field Theory” embodies the ultimate unity of sounds governed by a specific system, be it acoustic, mathematical, or geometric. It forms the foundation of musical discourse and outlines characteristic avenues for its evolution. The distinctive feature of intonation semantics gains both a kilometric regularity and a tangible manifestation of artistic-associative perception within the sound field.

Field theory explores:

1. The natural sequence of sounds as a unique “genetic” program of musical thinking;

2. The structural-functional significance of the intervals in the natural sequence, their role in creating the tension of the sound field and stepwise processes of different types.

3. The principle of sound selection and its connection with the natural tuning.

4. The area of propagation of the sound matter, by determining the unity of the boundary forms of its topophonic structures.

5. The sounds’ marginal series movement and possibilities of its transformation in space (metamorphosis, transposition, rotation, modulation).”³⁰

Nodar Mamisashvili’s “Sound Field Theory” was based on the idea of creating his three-phase composition, according to which the series of natural sounds consists of three phases:

In the first phase, there are pure intervals (octave, fifth, fourth (+tritone))

The second phase consists of relative consonances (thirds, sixths)

The third phase consists of relative dissonances (seconds, sevenths, ninths, untampered small intervals).

In a three-phase composition, the overtone order is considered as the three phases of the grouping of sounds, as mentioned above. Mamisashvili explains:

³⁰ N. Mamisashvili, ბგერითი ველის თეორია (Sound Field Theory), manuscript, library of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Conservatoire.

“In the realm of music, when a fundamental sound is produced, harmonics propagate through space following the principles of acoustic acceleration and compression: octave, fifth, fourth, third, seconds, and so forth.”³¹

In a three-phase composition, the octave is a zonal interval that creates a density coefficient during the systematic arrangement of sound material in space.

Fifths and fourths are 12-note units of measure that form a major and minor 12-note circle.

The tritone is considered an “alternative” to the fifth or fourth.

Therefore, the role of the tritone is completely different than the kilometric, functional interpretation, or the tritone in 12-tone Hauerian constructivism.

In a three-phase system, thirds and sixths are not inverses of each other, so they form different units when producing a chord. Even in the conditions of serial “sameness” they cause various mutations, transpositions and corrections.

Seconds, sevenths and ninths also have a different topophonic meaning in the three-phase composition, because of all of the above, the chord construction method is completely different than in any existing system, although the “procedure” of construction itself is somewhat and formally similar to the construction method of derivative chords.

Concisely describing Nodar Mamisashvili’s three-phase composition technique proves challenging as it was fashioned under the influence of his “theory of sound fields” and the esoteric musical thinking inherent in the traditional Georgian chanting of the Medieval Ages. According to Mamisashvili:

“This arrangement of natural sounds creates a symbolic world of time and space in music. Here, as if, the theoretical hypothesis about the origin of our global universe is coming to life, according to which, upon super-explosion from super-dense points, the universe appeared as a super-galaxy, galaxies, planets – the moon – the earth.”³²

It’s worth highlighting that, before delving into his system, Mamisashvili addresses aspects pertaining to the connection between humans and music, showcasing an eco-musicological perspective. For him, music emerges as a chance, resulting from the symbiotic relationship between

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

humans and the environment, providing the opportunity to live and think in music. He notes, “In music, the role of the wheel was played by the modal sound systems. This acoustic ‘invention’ wasn’t the creation of a single individual. It spontaneously emerged in the spiritual cultures of diverse peoples, arising as a necessity, and serving as the foundational logic for sound composition organization. Within this logic, the possibility not only to live in music but also to think with music was born.”³³

Mamisashvili characterizes his system as rooted in Georgian folk music on one hand and as an extension of the Mahlerian lineage on the other.

Mamisashvili identifies distinctive elements of the three-phase composition within Georgian folk music. In these instances, particularly evident in Georgian folk songs like “Khasanbegura,” “Guruli Makruli,” “Shvidkatsa,” etc., he notes that the primary “phase” of the musical composition involves a three-voice arrangement of melodic lines. These melodies, evolving in a contrasting polyphony style, periodically transition into a complex in motion, conveying the primary mood and overall aesthetic. Mamisashvili further explores the triphasicity within songs such as “Krimanchuli,” “Gamkivani,” “Tsvrili,” and other Georgian folk compositions. Drawing connections from these observations, he asserts that “a three-phase composition program is ‘genetically’ ingrained in the Guruli folk song, which exhibits a comparable musical dramaturgy.”³⁴

As we explore Mamisashvili’s works, we affirm the interdisciplinary essence of his thoughts. He viewed the world within a comprehensive context, seeing man, along with the products of his endeavors, including musical art, as a mechanism intricately connected to the macrocosm – a unified entity in harmony with the external world, according to Mamisashvili.

The quantity of sounds, specifically 21 within the overall structure of modal sound polycomplexes (an integral element of Nodar Mamisashvili’s three-phase composition musical system), serves as evidence supporting the concept of unity with the external world within Mamisashvili’s three-phase composition system. This parallels the genetic code where precisely 21 amino acids are present.

Nodar Mamisashvili’s metaphysical reflections are steeped in the principle of systematic “unified” thinking, a concept elucidated in his philosophical-metaphysical work “Mystical Anatomy.” In his interpre-

³³ Н. Мамисашвили, *О музыкальной системе трёхфазовой композиции*, 8.

³⁴ Ibid., 17.

tation, disparate horoscopes are not seen as contradictory but rather as complementary, as he states, "... complement each other..."³⁵ Within this philosophical-metaphysical work, Mamisashvili also references unifying patterns among horoscopes. Notably, he introduces the element of sound colouring in the interpretation of one horoscope, highlighting how the mysteries of vibrations serve as a pathway for individuals to understand themselves and the world. In the same work, Mamisashvili examines two analogous cosmic chords related to the Libra horoscope through Chinese and European calculations, asserting that "both chords remind us of the sound of a church bell."³⁶ He underscores that these chords aren't composed in abstract isolation but rather encapsulate resonances with the bodily vibrations of individuals born in the Libra calendar period, including chakra spirals, meridians, and more.

The three-phase system encompasses a cohesion of three phases, each serving distinct functions: thematic, background, and contrapuntal, or chordal-contrapuntal.

In his book, Mamisashvili states, "Three-phase composition is a unique polyphonic alignment of three horizontal lines with distinct functions in the dramaturgy of the work."³⁷ Within this system, the activation of the thematic function or phonic function alternates over time, as does the interplay between the thematic and contrapuntal functions. This suggests that the triphasic system is a fusion of functionally diverse yet equivalent phases. Despite the leading function transitioning from one phase to another, the periods of activation may not be uniform. Nonetheless, the noteworthy fact that all three can assume a leading role underscores the concept of equalization.

Examining the example of the "Dedication" in the initial piece of the Lyric Diary Pages" cycle, we can observe how the alternation of phases takes place and the roles played by Mamisashvili's system components: polycomplex, complexes, or segments.

Mamisashvili's book conveys the notion that "the inception of a novel composition can at times give rise to a fresh system for structuring sounds, and conversely, emerging forms of composition materialize during the genesis of a novel logic governing sound unities"³⁸.

³⁵ Mamisashvili, მამისაშვილი, ნ., მისტიკური ანატომია (Mystical Anatomy), Tbilisi 2023: 57.

³⁶ Ibid., 59.

³⁷ Н. Мамисашвили, *О музыкальной системе трёхфазовой композиции*, 108.

³⁸ Ibid., 17-18.

Mamisashvili's sound organization system comprises a polycomplex, which, in its composition, comprises 21 sound complexes. These sound complexes, in turn, are constructed from a combination of 12 foundational sounds and an additional 9 sounds, with the foundational 12 sounds further being composed of 3 or 4 sound segments.

Conclusion

Nodar Mamisashvili's scientific pursuits and knowledge extended across various disciplines, including physics, medicine, metallurgy, and mountain-engineering technology. For instance, he delivered a presentation at the Institute of Geology exploring the semantics of precious stones, their connection to sacred meanings, and their applications in medicine. The geologists were notably surprised by the depth of Mamisashvili's knowledge, questioning how a composer could possess such extensive expertise in these domains.

Mamisashvili holds the distinction of being the author of 49 engineering inventions. His laboratory at the Institute of Cybernetics was adorned with numerous pieces of equipment and peculiar devices, all products of his inventive mind. As visitors listened to Mamisashvili's explanations and definitions, many were astounded to the point of exclaiming, "You aren't a scientist, you are an alchemist!" In response, he calmly remarked, "Don't you know that every inquisitive scientist is an alchemist?!"³⁹

Georgia, as a part of significant civilizations and a country with an ancient culture, has been home to remarkable individuals throughout its history. Figures like Ioane Petritsi, Petre Iberi, Ioane Batonishvili, and others have left indelible marks on the cultural landscape. Rather than comparing their achievements or defining the scope of their contributions, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of such individuals who enrich the realm of thought. Nodar Mamisashvili is one such visionary, whose perspective on the universe transcends conventional norms.

Since 2023, Tbilisi State Conservatoire researcher-composers, including Eka Chabashvili, Maya Virsaladze, Alexander Chokhnelidze, and Joni Asitashvili, have been engaged in a fundamental research project titled "Implementation of Ecomusicology Research Methodology for the Study of the Georgian Music Ecosystem." This project, supported by the

³⁹ Kavtaradze, ქავთარაძე, ნ., ჩემი დროც მოვა... (My Time will Come...), *Kartvelologia 1-2*, Tbilisi 2022: 9.

Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia aims to introduce ecomusicology to Georgia.

Exploring the music ecosystem poses a significant challenge in many civilized countries today, and the Georgian music ecosystem is no exception. Given the multifaceted nature of the music ecosystem, a comprehensive study within a single research project is impractical. Consequently, the focus of their research is on the ecology of ambient sound, specifically the examination of the sound environment in alternative concert locations and the development of forms to incorporate environmental sounds into artworks and performing arts.

We consider the discovery, exploration, and elucidation of principles that preceded the establishment of ecomusicology in Georgian music and culture as a crucial aspect of our research. Nodar Mamisashvili's creative endeavours and contributions serve as a noteworthy example in this context. Emerging in the public sphere in the 1960s, Mamisashvili employed unique composition techniques, introducing the musical system of three-phase composition. Additionally, he calculated the alloy formula and acoustic properties of Georgian church bells, showcasing his interdisciplinary approach as a researcher and artist with interests spanning various scientific domains.

The figure of the Georgian composer, Nodar Mamisashvili, holds a distinctive position in the Georgian musical landscape due to his versatility and individuality. We believe that Mamisashvili played a significant role in laying the foundation for the integration of ecomusicology in Georgia. His theories, research, and inventions are poised to contribute to the advancement of ecomusicology in the country.

Nodar Mamisashvili succinctly articulates the credo of his creative life, expressing that, "The goal of my life is to find my "flow" in the process of globalization with my creative innovations and engineering inventions, guided by the uniqueness of Georgian thinking."

We believe he achieved this goal, and we anticipate that this creative stream will continue to flourish in the future.

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David and Nodar Andguladze – a Bridge between Georgian Vocal School and Italian “Bel canto”

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Abstract

David and Nodar Andguladzes stand as revered pillars in the annals of Georgian opera, leaving an indelible mark through their exceptional performances, educational initiatives, and groundbreaking research. Their life’s work is a testament to a profound commitment to harmonizing Georgian traditional singing heritage with the European (Italian) opera school, all while incorporating the visionary principles of stage dramaturgy reformer Stanislavski and the ethos of the Georgian National Theater.

This article serves as a pioneering exploration into the joint performing and pedagogical-scientific endeavours of the Andguladzes, offering valuable insights into not only the history of Georgian opera but also the broader cultural tapestry of Georgia. By examining their creative and pedagogical-scientific contributions, the article acknowledges the Andguladzes’ unparalleled singing abilities, exemplary vocal techniques, and remarkable stage presence. Moreover, it sheds light on their pivotal role as creators of the Georgian vocal school, a legacy cherished domestically and internationally for over a century.

Of particular significance is our emphasis on the familial continuity of the Andguladzes’ principles, with descendants perpetuating the school’s ethos in contemporary practice, harmoniously blending tradition with modernity. By surveying the Andguladzes’ merits in the context of Georgian opera music, this article underscores their enduring contribution to the development of future generations and their profound influence on the trajectory of Georgian cultural history. This scientific study is an essential resource for scholars, practitioners, and enthusiasts seeking a deeper understanding of the Andguladzes’ legacy and its enduring impact on the world of opera.

Keywords: David Andguladze, Nodar Andguladze, Georgian opera, Georgian vocal school

Tenors – David and Nodar Andguladzes are the most notable figures in Georgian opera history thanks to their distinctive performing, educational, and research endeavours. They devoted their entire lives to bind-

ing the Georgian traditional singing heritage with the European (Italian) opera school, using the principles of the great reformer of stage dramaturgy, Stanislavski, and of the Georgian National Theater. The Andguladzes are distinguished in the history of Georgian vocal music not only by their unique singing abilities, exemplary vocal technique, and outstanding stage presence and skills, but they were also the creators of the Georgian vocal school, a school, the success of which we have been enjoying for more than 100 years, both domestically and internationally.

Our article is the first attempt at the scientific study¹ of joint performing and pedagogical-scientific activities of David and Nodar Andguladzes, which is very valuable not only for the Andguladzes and the history of our national opera music but also for the Georgian cultural history in general. Here we generally review the creative and pedagogical-scientific activities of these two artists, we appreciate their merits in the history of Georgian opera music; most importantly, we demonstrate the contribution and role of the Andguladzes family in terms of the perspectives of the development of future generations. The descendants of Andguladzes' family use the principles of the school as much as possible in their daily practice, of course, in full harmony with modernity.

Proceeding from all of the above-mentioned, the purpose of the article is to study and analyze the performance and pedagogical-scientific work of David and Nodar Andguladzes from one point of view, which has become the precursor of the greatest success of the Georgian vocal school in recent times. The research has logically required the separation of those points in which father and son intersect and differ from each other. It was found out, what traditions were preserved and what innovations were introduced by Nodar Andguladze, who gave a scientific and structural form to the Andguladzes' school. We also analyzed how the main postulates of the school are transferred to the next generations and further developed, having nurtured for over a century not only the Georgian opera music but also the global opera world in both, creative and pedagogical aspects.

David and Nodar Andguladzes are, without any doubt, seen as the reinforcers of Bel canto traditions in the Georgian opera art, and in some cases – even as the founders. Their patriotic contribution to the growth of the history of national music is significant, as is their professional

¹ The article is based on the dissertation thesis titled “The Role of David and Nodar Andguladzes’ School in Modern Georgian Art of Opera,” which was prepared under the scientific supervision of Associate Professor Dr. Nino Jvania at Tbilisi State Conservatoire and successfully defended on 01.12.2023.

responsibility, which both artists felt and mastered flawlessly. They played the greatest role in the final formation of the Georgian vocal school as an independent institution through their creative pedagogical work and scientific research. They dedicated their lives to this great national cause.

In the article, there is generally presented the role of the great Georgian singers and teachers, David and Nodar Andguladzes in the birth and development of operatic art in Georgia. It is not surprising that in the background of the greatest and oldest musical traditions, professional music established itself at a rapid pace in Georgia because it was built on a solid foundation. The naturally musical nation has loved and embraced professional music from the very beginning, and with great traditions, exceptional talent and dedication, it soon gave birth to excellent representatives and examples of professional music.

The establishment of a professional opera theatre in Georgia was a logical continuation of the promotion of cultural life, which Alexander Yermolov, the Russian military and the ruler of the Caucasus in 1816-1827, gave an impetus to. His successor Ivan Paskevich also put much effort into maintaining this rhythm. Despite the tense political situations, small instrumental groups were formed in Georgia that began to perform European music. Against the background of this general cultural progress, a legitimate desire to open a stable theatre and have a Georgian troupe appeared in our country².

In such a ripe situation, Mikhael Vorontsov’s appearance and his steps turned out to be a missing link in the Georgian cultural world. It was at this time that the foundations of the Georgian theatre were laid, the building of the theatre was constructed, and so on. In parallel with all this, a permanent opera theatre was built under the project of the architect Giovanni Scudieri, the doors of which opened for the first time on April 12, 1851, but its presentation as an opera theatre took place later, on November 9 of the same year, when the conductor Barbieri, invited from Italy, performed Donizetti’s opera “Lucia di Lammermoor” with an Italian band and musicians³.

Three decades after the introduction of opera in Georgia, Georgian professional musicians appeared, who gradually began to establish themselves not only on national but also on international stages, often with the

² Kashmadze, კაშმაძე, შ., თბილისის ოპერისა და ბალეტის თეატრი: მასალები ისტორიისათვის, ტომი I-II, [Kashmadze, S., Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theater: Materials for history], vol. I-II, Tbilisi 1950-1955: 14-15.

³ Ibid., 43-48.

education received in Europe. Time brought the necessity and willingness to open Georgian vocational schools, in which, with the assistance of the invited personnel, the talented Georgian musical-artistic nature would be put into a professional bed and would staff the national theatre.

Georgian professional musical education is directly related to the name of the great Georgian figure, Kharlamp Savaneli, who received his education at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He is the first vocal teacher and the father of Georgian vocal pedagogy. He was educated at the Italian school with Maestro Pietro Renato. The very first steps confirm the orientation and aspiration of the Georgian vocal school towards the European family. With Italian education, the Georgian vocal school once and for all becomes a decent branch of the European vocal school in Transcaucasia.

With his own savings, Savaneli opened “Free classes of choral singing”, which caused astonishing interest, and two years later, in 1876, the approved educational bylaws created the first precedent for professional musical education in Transcaucasia⁴. Ten years later, it was transformed into a music school under the leadership of Savaneli, Mizandari and Alikhanov. It was exactly the request sent by the latter in 1915 that was met in 1917 and the school was transformed into the Tbilisi Conservatoire⁵.

Teachers of vocal art in the conservatoire were: Zarudnaya, Usatov, and later, Bakhutashvili-Shulgina, Vronsky and others. David Andguladze, the Georgian opera legend was “born” in Vronsky’s class.

Against the background of drawing the general creative portrait of David Andguladze, we ask the question: what is the formula for such success of David Andguladze as an artist and the main cornerstone of the vocal school founded by him? We try to look at the issues related to David Andguladze from different perspectives:

Special attention is paid to the phenomenon of David Andguladze, as one of the first Georgian singer-actors. Emphasis is naturally placed on his education, close cooperation with famous Georgian and Russian directors, creative development and repertoire; Also the influence of great Georgian (Marjanishvili, Akhmeteli, Pagava, etc.) and Russian (Stanislavski) directors on the development of David Andguladze’s acting art, which, naturally, had also an impact on the creation of unforgettable im-

⁴ Mshvelidze, მშველიძე, ა., სამუსიკო განათლება საქართველოში [Mshvelidze, A., Musical Education in Georgia], Tbilisi 1976: 93-100.

⁵ Ibid., 204-217.

ages by the Georgian singer. Attention is paid both to the main creative principles of the directors themselves and to Andguladze’s interpretation of these principles in the operatic art.

In the acting and singing career of David Andguladze, two handwritings are clearly visible: first – of Stanislavski and the “MKHAT” Georgian alumni (MKHAT – an acronym from “Moskovskiy Khudozhestvenniy Akademicheskiy Teatr” – Moscow Art Academic Theater) and the second – of the great Georgian theatre director Sandro Akhmeteli. Each of them played a great role in the formation of David Andguladze as an actor-singer. Even though he was distinguished by acting talent as well as vocal gifts, it is clear that the experience gained while working in Stanislavski’s studio created a solid foundation for the results that were later achieved while working with “MKHAT” Georgian alumni. His acting talent and experience were unconditionally enriched by Akhmeteli’s theatrical aesthetics, who was authentically the bearer of Georgian national principles.

David Andguladze combined two extremely different aesthetics: the principles of the Georgian dramatic theatre that grew out of Stanislavski’s theatre system and the aesthetics of the Akhmeteli Georgian theatre based on the national spirit. Akhmeteli Theater, Georgian in spirit and flesh, was, of course, close to the Georgian tenor’s heart. In all the roles performed by him, indeed, his singing was almost entirely based on the traditions of the Italian school, but with a refined acting culture, the Georgian genial providence was brought to life in his voice with an original national charm.

David Andguladze’s school in Georgia was based on three pillars: the Georgian singing tradition, the European vocal school and the Stanislavski reformed theatre, to which we would add one more – the Georgian National Theater.

After having a long and successful singer’s career David Andguladze was dedicated to the pedagogical work. He perfectly understood how great the role of his teacher, Vronsky, was in his own success as a teacher. He had been minding Vronsky’s example of selflessness as a standard of pedagogic devotion during all his life, and he treated his students, whose number reached up to 50, with similar dedication and care.

David Andguladze worked with his students not only on vocal technique but also on synthesis with musical dramaturgy, which was very important for him. His pupils were distinguished by the acting discipline that they assimilated from their teacher. Their performance in concert or

opera productions or even in chamber music had to be realistic and convincing. And, above all, in the process of learning, all the details were worked out and improved, which, with the right vocal technique and Stanislavski-style inspiration, created an indelible enchanting image, and not just a beautiful bead of sounds.

It should be noted that David Andguladze attached special importance to the word. In his (or his disciples’) art, the driving force of vocal technique comes from the word itself. The word, as a vocal-technical means, is the main tool.

As a singer, I was always worried about the main question: in the work of David Andguladze, based on Stanislavski’s concept, when talking about an actor-singer, what should be assigned the priority – vocal aspects or the artistic image? I found the answer to this question after an interview with David Andguladze’s disciple, famous Georgian singer and teacher Eldar Getsadze. Mr. Getsadze notes that the musical material had to be vocally sound and technically mastered first, only after that there would begin the work on the concept of an artistic image, which was again and again achieved through vocal techniques⁶.

The tenor Nodar Andguladze the son and the student of David Andguladze systematized the methods of the knowledge acquired from his father, then from the years spent in Italy (Italian years as a novelty and proof of the knowledge received from his father), and later from his creative and pedagogical experience; He shows up not only the great singer and artist but as a scientist-researcher of Georgian and generally vocal art (Intelligence as a singing gift: “I sing, therefore I think” – was his postulate); Nodar Andguladze’s contribution to the development of the Andguladze’s school is immense as that of a singer and teacher.

Nodar Andguladze as a scientist, based on his father’s traditions, Italian education and his own experience, finally summarized and gave a systematic form to the Andguladzes’ school. Our goal is to find out, what the approach of a person with a philological education, coming from the science to the vocal art was, to the formation of the dynastic school in the

⁶ For more details on David Andguladze see Kemoklidze, ქემოკლიძე, ქ., დავით ანდღულაძე – მსახიობი – მომღერალი სტანისლავსკის თეატრალური ესთეტიკისა და ქართველ რეჟისორებთან ურთიერთობის კრილოში [David Andguladze as an Actor-singer in the Context of Stanislavski’s Theatrical Aesthetics and Relations with Georgian Directors], *GESJ: Musicology and Cultural Science* 1(25), Tbilisi 2022 [https://gesj.internet-academy.org.ge/en/list_article.php?b_sec=muz&issue=2022-06].; Atanelov, ათანელოვი, ი., დავით ანდღულაძე: [ცხოვრება და მოღვაწეობა] [tskhovreba da moghvatsheoba], [Atanelov, I., David Andguladze: The Life and Work], Tbilisi 1978.

Georgian vocal art; and to what extent and how Nodar Andguladze used his Italian education and the information received from his father.

Working on the artistic image has always been a pleasant daily routine for Mr. Andguladze, which was based on his amazing vocal and acting techniques, on his amazing sense of musical aesthetics and style. Thanks to these virtues, Nodar Andguladze established himself as an unparalleled performer.

To understand the creative image of Nodar Andguladze, it is important to consider his scientific work and his worldview: Andguladze is the author of several interesting and important scientific works (even serving as landmarks), which are generally related to operatic and vocal topics and problems. He approached the study of the basic principles of vocal art with a systematic and scientific interest. He successfully studied and, at the same time, collaborated with representatives of various branches of science, including such subjects as physiology, psychology, acoustics and phonation.

Nodar Andguladze was actively involved in the achievements of vocal physiology and acoustics of those times or, in general, in the progress of these fields. His work on Rabotnov’s “paradoxical breathing”⁷ should be especially noted. At the same time, Nodar Andguladze was looking for the principles of breathing in the Italian vocal school and in non-traditional trends. In his research, he devotes a lot of space to the Indian philosophy, namely, yoga and prana. Accessing the inner sound for a creative act through prana, that is, searching for a spiritual sound, and mobilizing bodily energy – were interesting and relevant issues for him. In addition to breathing, he considered the ear as a phenomenon to be particularly noteworthy out of the teachings of Yogi.

Nodar Andguladze, with his scientific activities and invaluable studies, has greatly advanced the Georgian vocal school, which needed more attention and maintenance. Among his works, first of all, we should mention the book “Homo Cantor”, which contains information about the vocal art and the Georgian opera music. The author shows well both the creative and pedagogical paths covered in the process of development of the Georgian vocal school, at different stages and in connection with different events.

⁷ Paradoxical breathing refers to a breathing pattern where as one exhales, the lower edges of the ribcage (ribs) expand and move outward, which puts the diaphragm in an active tonic position.

A singer today is required to be interesting and educated because the ability to sing alone is no longer sufficient; yet all of the mentioned helps the art of singing, which Nodar Andguladze predicted with his work and put the singer in front of new requirements: he/she must be intelligent and developed in many ways, he/she must not lose contact with traditions, but also be progressive. In such a case, his/her song will not only be a demonstration of physical talents, but also informative and interesting.

In his pedagogical work, we have to highlight several essential aspects of its vocal and technical foundations: breathing, vocal resonance, word and phonation issues, unity of transitional registers, “*suono coperto*” (covering of the voice) in tenors, vocal physiology, acoustics, vocal-performance discipline.

We have also paid attention to his main vocal and artistic principles: faithfulness to the score, phrasing, full realization of the character (influenced by Stanislavski and Georgian directors, as well as by Austrian director Walter Felsenstein), general informative preparation and research of the opus.

Naturally, Nodar Andguladze developed ways to perfect the aforementioned principles, which were individually tailored and fitted to specific students to achieve maximum results.

The main requirement of the maestro was to understand and know the sound correctly. Through his work, he tried to develop such a thinking vocal system in his students that would help the singer manage creative processes. Therefore, in the work process, he not only concentrated on the sound but also used a number of tools that served to the nascence of the voice and the perfection of the sound. Among them, I will mention fostering imaginative and associative skills, providing unbiased information about the universe and events, discussing the experiences of world-famous singers and vocal schools, introducing various philosophical currents, and giving physiological and acoustic advice. All this helps the singer to achieve a sound close to the ideal.

Nodar Andguladze worked on the contraposition between natural and inverted breathing when the main function is assigned to the latter, that is, natural, correct breathing is achieved with inverted breathing when the oscillation of the diaphragm is different.

Andguladze-Junior (Son), like his father, assigns great importance to resonance in vocal training. He methodically continues and deepens the achievement of vocal resonance by combining head and chest registers, giving the sound unified and rich sonority. At the same time, this reso-

nant sound appears as a uniform sound in all registers. It goes from one to another, imperceptibly for the ear, and gives us a homogeneous sound throughout the whole diapason of the singer. The maestro also attached great importance to the synthesis of musical aesthetics with the music stylistics.

Observing the former pupils of Nodar Andguladze, we distinguish three groups: performers, teachers and performer-pedagogues.

The interviews with representatives of Andguladze’s school from different generations and with the distinct voice type clearly showed us that the Andguladzes’ school provides the most essential basic knowledge of ‘Bel canto’. In the structural triangle of the school, the formation of these two basic components of breathing -- resonators (especially, the head) and sound emission with correct phonation -- is clearly defined. But for such a large-scale person as Nodar Andguladze, these principles of vocal technique are only basic tools that a singer needs to express and convey to the listeners what the music or the artist himself/herself has to say. He is looking for novelty in the song, and this is the sphere where only a developed and educated singer can spread his/her wings.⁸

All the singers who have directly or indirectly worked with the Andguladzes, name the brilliance of sound as the main characteristic of the Andguladzes’ “brand.” A sound that can be high or relatively low in frequency, but it sounds in every hall, with every orchestra when performing works of any epoch. This sound also has a distinctive colour. Based on literary materials, interviews and recordings available to us, there can be defined what characterizes the “Andguladzes’ sound” – it is a “sounding bell”, or, as the Italians call it, ‘squillo’. Among the representatives of the school, it can be found in voices both high and low, with a large or relatively small range, with more or less strength, regardless of sex (gender) and nationality.

All the interviewees agree that this sound is achieved by using the head resonator in acoustics with a resonant sound, which is muscularly supported by a type of breathing based on the principles of “paradoxical breathing.” These seemingly simple vocal-technical points of gravity include a lot of details that are necessary to achieve the result that we call the “Andguladze’s sound.”

⁸ For more details on David Andguladze see Kemoklidze, ქემოკლიძე, ქ., ნოდარ ანდგულაძე – Cantor Sapiens, [Kemoklidze, K., Nodar Andguladze – Cantor Sapiens], *GESJ: Musicology and Cultural Science* 1(27), Tbilisi 2023: 33-59 [http://gesj.internet-academy.org.ge/en/list_artic_en.php?b_sec=muz].

The question arises: why were the Andguladzes such dedicated seekers of the right vocal technique? Why did they pay so much attention to it? Why did they spend so much time working with the students? -- All of these served to create an artistic image. Both vocal and acting techniques are tools with which a singer must create a highly convincing artistic image. The technique helps the performer to overcome the image of the composer's character, which he/she gives us through the vocal line. The singer acts as an ambassador between the composer and the listener, and the technique is a unique means by which the artist takes responsibility for the interpretation.

School as a living organism – its development and challenges of time. Against the background of the issues discussed in the article, the vitality of the school is clearly visible: new generations of singers are growing up, they pursue successful stage careers; and those who are away from the stage are productive in pedagogy. This assures us that the school is based on fundamental vocal values that do not change. They are acceptable and understandable in every corner of the planet where opera music is heard.

The development of the Andguladzes' School is also indisputable: globalization has allowed singers to enrich the basic education of the Andguladzes' School in the best centres of opera education worldwide. It should be noted that in the two streams of La Scala Academy in 2003-2007, 6 out of 24 students were Georgians, and 5 of them were representatives of the Andguladzes' school; which means that among the selected students from all over the world, more than 20% came to the Andguladzes' school. This is happening at a time when the population of our country does not even reach 4 million.

The development of the Andguladzes' school is progressing at a positive rate. David and Nodar Andguladzes would be satisfied with the productivity that the school brings. But, as the interviewees pointed out, there is a need for school representatives to feel as one whole body. We must highlight the need to restore the Nodar Andguladze's meeting-seminars. It would be great to establish a conference named after Nodar Andguladze, for which works would be prepared, in general, about the vocal art, the Georgian vocal art in particular, and the Andguladzes' school. The idea of holding internal masterclasses of school representatives is worthy of attention so that students can get to know different aspects of the school through various representatives of the school. This would contribute to the expansion of their vocal-thinking area. Students should not be attached only to musical notes; this is something the Andguladzes

were so much against. For them, the standard of a singer was a technically and musically competent performer, who with acting skills and rational thinking creates a perfect artistic image, an image that is imprinted in the listener’s mind like an amazing artistic canvas or a good book.

This article is based on the dissertation which is the first attempt to jointly discuss and study the creative and pedagogical activities of two giant figures – David and Nodar Andguladzes. The issue is very large-scale and, of course, cannot be limited to one article. There is a need for a deeper and more detailed study of both artists both separately and together. The school founded by them should also be investigated separately. Branches created by the continuation of school traditions should be studied. The balance between women’s and men’s voices should also be analyzed. An interesting question is how successful the school is for different types of voice.

In the history of the Georgian vocal school, especially, since the second half of the 20th century, the school of Andguladzes have become almost a hegemon, it is a school, thanks to which we are still reaping amazing results on the home and foreign platforms. It is sufficient to look at the national and international competitions, the list of successful performers in opera and concert halls, the list of professors and teachers of national higher and secondary schools, singers working on the stages of the world, as well as Georgian teachers who are engaged in pedagogical work in foreign countries, to understand clearly that the Andguladzes’ school has a high rate of achievements both in qualitative and quantitative terms. The school exceptionally serves the establishment of Italian ‘bel canto’ in Georgia, taking into account the local national nature and character. The Andguladzes have been able to combine European traditions (especially Italian ‘Bel Canto’) with Georgian musical talent in such a way as to get the best results. First by their own example and then by working with their students, they perfectly saw the needs that were necessary for the formation of the Georgian vocal school. They improved the Georgian vocal school as a standalone organism with the best training and experience, as well as with a distinguishing analytical and scientific approach, and brought it to the level where our vocal school is supposed to be, i.e., on the Olympus of world’s best vocal schools.

Therefore, David Andguladze, as a singer-actor, and Nodar Andguladze, as a singer-thinker, were the first great figures in the history of Georgian vocal art. These mentioned two achievements represent the main heights upon which the Andguladzes’ school was built. Their syn-

thesis gave us a formula using which we have to explain the recent successful “migration” of Georgians to the world stages: a singer-actor is added to a singer-thinker, and as a result, we get a singer-actor-thinker. The Andguladze’s merit is the creation of the performer of the following type: a singer-actor-thinker. They were incomparably ahead of their time with these principles; today it is impossible to imagine a successful singer who is not an excellent actor and a thoughtful artist. High competition and acceleration of work rates gave impetus to the training of such singers. This model was already created by the Andguladzes. They established this model not only in their own classes, but also in the whole universe of Georgian vocals, which, in our opinion, has advanced Georgian singers to such high levels, and to which David and Nodar Andguladzes have made such a large contribution.

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III. REVIEWS AND COMMENTAIRES

Activities of the Caucasus Bureau of the Centre for East European Studies (Stacja Kaukaska Studium Europy Wschodniej) of the University of Warsaw at the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, 2007-2020.

Abstract

This report presents the activities of the Caucasus Bureau of the Centre for East European Studies (Stacja Kaukaska Studium Europy Wschodniej) of the University of Warsaw at the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University in the period from 2007 to 2020. The report summarises the scientific achievements related to the implementation of the various projects of the Caucasus Bureau in Tbilisi, as well as indicates potential directions for further research and cooperation with scientific institutions in Poland and Georgia. The Caucasus Bureau is widely recognised and has already established a high profile at the University of Warsaw and beyond. This success of the Caucasus Bureau is undoubtedly due to the commitment and efforts of our entire community of both staff, doctoral and undergraduate students.

Keywords: Caucasus Bureau, University of Warsaw, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission.

I. Introduction

The Caucasus Bureau was established to foster cooperation between the units of the University of Warsaw and other Polish universities and scientific units in the South Caucasus countries: Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

Since its establishment until now, the Head of the Caucasus Bureau has been Dr. David Kolbaia. The position of Secretary (later Coordinator) of the Caucasus Bureau in Tbilisi was held by Aleksandra Gryźlak (04.2007-10.2008); Przemysław Oziński (10.2008-04.2009); Anna Radecka (05.2009-08.2011); Konrad Siekierski (09.2009-06.2010; branch of the Caucasus Bureau in Armenia); Krzysztof Łukjanowicz (10.2011-10.2016); Agnieszka Góralaska (10.2016-10.2017); Daria Szlezyngier (10.2017 – present).

The main tasks of the Caucasus Bureau include establishing cooperation with leading Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani universities and institutions. To date, the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw (CEES UW) has established cooperation with universities such as: Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Ilia State University; Caucasus International University; Black Sea International University; Gori State University, Batumi Shota

Rustaveli State University; Yerevan State University, Brusov State University in Armenia; Baku State University; Baku Slavic University, ADA University, Khazar University in Azerbaijan.

The Caucasus Bureau also cooperates with Polish organisations and institutions operating in the South Caucasus, such as Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, Polish Institute in Tbilisi, Krukowski Interdisciplinary Research Center in Kutaisi, Polish-Georgian Archaeological Mission, Cultural and Educational Union of Poles in Georgia “Polonia”, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Yerevan, Union of Poles in Armenia “Polonia” and Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Baku. The Caucasus Bureau also maintains cooperation with Polish universities that are implementing various projects in Georgia. It also provides logistical and substantive assistance to Polish researchers and students conducting research on the Caucasus.

Among the Polish and Georgian partners involved in jointly organized events are, among others: National Agency for Academic Exchange, Institute of National Remembrance, Pilecki Institute, National Museum in Tbilisi, National Archives of Georgia, Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Soviet Past Research Laboratory (Sovlab). Since its inception, the Caucasus Bureau has also closely collaborated with various units of the University of Warsaw, including the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Institute of Archaeology, Institute of Sociology, Institute of History, “Polonium” Center, and the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies.

The Coordinators of the Caucasus Bureau place significant emphasis on promoting Polish language and culture in Georgia. This is achieved through conducting additional Polish language classes for all interested students (in Tbilisi and Gori), organizing lectures, scientific conferences, and cultural events, such as film screenings and celebrations of traditional Polish holidays. A priority is also given to the promotion of Polish scholarship programs, and anyone interested in studying in Poland can count on assistance in the recruitment process, and all those interested in studying in Poland can count on assistance in the recruitment process (e.g. Scholarship for Eastern Studies, East European Winter School, East European Summer School, Tytus Filipowicz Award, Alexander Rondeli Scholarship, Scholarship Program for Young Scientists, Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program, Stefan Banach Scholarship Program, Summer Courses of Polish Language and Culture NAWA, and Krzysztof Skubiszewski Scholarship). The Coordinators of the Caucasus Bureau also participate in the work of examination committees during qualification interviews for candidates applying to study in Poland. They also maintain contact with recipients of Polish scholarship programs and alumni from Polish universities. In recent years, the Caucasus Bureau has also begun to actively represent the University of Warsaw at educational fairs in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Coordinators of the Caucasus Bureau are also responsible for writing news from the Caucasus for the website of the Centre’s Infor-

mation Bulletin, as well as running the Caucasus Bureau's website on Facebook (posting the most important news published in the Centre's Information Bulletin and spreading knowledge about the countries of the South Caucasus in Poland, publishing information on the activities of the Centre for East European Studies, Polish organizations and institutions operating in Georgia, Polish diaspora centres, organized conferences and scholarship programs recruitment).

II. The Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw (CEES UW), and especially the Caucasus Seminar operating within it, has been dealing with Caucasian affairs for many years. It has developed an extensive network of contacts, hosted scholarship holders, organized the the Annual International Kartvelological Conference in Memory of Saint Grigol Peradze, and published the scientific journal *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies, University of Warsaw*.¹ The Centre has a well-prepared scientific staff specialising in this interesting region. All of this led to the idea of creating an institution that would allow for a permanent presence and activity of the University of Warsaw – Centre for East European Studies – in the Caucasus.

The University of Warsaw signed its first, rather general agreement on academic cooperation with the Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 2000. The agreement provided for various joint ventures of a scientific nature. The CEES, mainly thanks to the excellent contacts of the Head of the Caucasus Seminar, Dr. David Kolbaia, started to cooperate more closely than before with the TSU. After a series of visits, the most important of which was the visit of a delegation from the University of Warsaw led by the Vice-Rector Wojciech Tygielski in autumn 2005, along with meetings and discussions, both sides came to the conclusion that the best solution would be to establish a permanent base at TSU, an office, whose task would be to initiate joint academic and research initiatives. This is how the idea of the Caucasus Bureau of the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw (Stacja Kaukaska Studium Europy Wschodniej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego), based at the Tbilisi State University, was born. The location was not chosen by chance – due to the conflicts in the Caucasus, in particular the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, the Georgian capital seemed to be the only place where such a facility could be placed for the entire South Caucasus.

The Caucasus Bureau itself was not supposed to fund or organize anything – in the initial period, it was more supposed to inspire and facilitate the establishment of Polish-Georgian scientific contacts, promote the possibility of studying at the University of Warsaw, and support Polish researchers (in particular those from UW) in their research in the Caucasus.

¹ *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies*, University of Warsaw – since 1991.

The idea of the Caucasus Bureau was supported by several units of the University of Warsaw, including: the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of Sociology, the Kazimierz Michałowski Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology, the Faculty of History, the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, and the Polish Language Centre “Polonicum.” These units were interested in cooperation with TSU and conducting research in Georgia.

Originally, the authorities of the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University provided the Caucasus Bureau with premises no. 225, and then premises no. 118 in the “first”, most representative university building on Ilia Chavchavadze Avenue. Since October 2008 (in connection with the renovation and a slightly different project for the operation of the “first” building), the Bureau’s office was moved to office no. 161 in the “second” building of the university, and then to the “eighth” building, where it is still located today.

The official opening of the Caucasus Bureau took place during the visit of the President of the Republic of Poland, the late Lech Kaczyński, to Georgia. On April 16, 2007, during a ceremony at Tbilisi State University, President Kaczyński made an entry in the guest book, thus inaugurating its activities.

According to the initial design, the Bureau was formally supposed to be an “outpost in the Caucasus” section of the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw. Dr. David Kolbaia was appointed as its Head. On the spot, the Caucasus Bureau’s affairs were to be overseen by a Secretary elected by competition (initially on an annual basis; the name of the position was eventually changed to Coordinator). The first Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau was a graduate of the Centre for East European Studies, Aleksandra Gryźlak, who held the position from April 2007 to October 2008.

The beginnings of the Bureau’s activity were not easy. The initial plans and “romanticism” quickly collided with the somewhat mundane everyday reality. It’s important to note that the year 2007 was still the early stage of the ongoing economic and social transformation of Georgia, inaugurated at the end of 2003 during the Rose Revolution. This transformation also affected the capital’s university. In this context, transformation largely meant a significant turnover of personnel, both academic and administrative, as well as the need for very careful handling of limited financial resources. The Bureau was given a spacious office in the most representative building of the university, but its technical condition and equipment left much to be desired. Despite the goodwill and support of the TSU employees, many things – connection to the Internet, a telephone line, providing the most basic furniture, or settling the cleaning issue – went very slowly. Additionally, it was difficult for the “debutant” Coordinator to reach out to TSU employees and students with a concrete message – “what is this Caucasus Bureau actually for?” It should be mentioned that the Embassy of the Republic of

Poland in Tbilisi, in particular Ambassador Jacek Multanowski, provided a lot of support to the Bureau in this pioneering period.

On a side note, the term “Stacja” (Station) caused quite a bit of confusion. How to translate it into English and Russian so that it would be clear what it means? And what about the “Secretary”? How to make this position not associated with bygone times or a secretariat? After a brainstorming session at the Potocki Palace, the final decision was made that the Station would be called “Caucasus Bureau” in English and “Kavkazskij Centr” in Russian. Once the elegant letterhead was prepared – the Caucasus Bureau was ready for action...

In the initial period, the Bureau served as an information point for Georgian students and researchers interested in going to Poland to study or for scientific purposes. The Coordinator was to offer assistance in establishing Polish-Georgian scientific contacts. With the support of the “Polonicum” Center and the aforementioned affiliated units of the University of Warsaw, the Caucasus Bureau had a Polish-language library consisting of scientific publications, Polish literature classics, journals, and Polish language learning materials. The Caucasus Bureau was also intended to provide support for Polish scientists (particularly from the UW) who were planning to travel to Georgia for research purposes. A later goal of the Bureau was to promote Poland and Polish affairs in Georgia, through collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi and public lectures by well-known Poles – the so-called “Warsaw Lectures” (Wykłady Warszawskie). An important part of the Caucasus Bureau’s duties was also to integrate and maintain contacts with Georgian graduates of scholarship programs coordinated by the Centre for East European Studies. This was to be achieved mainly by organising regular meetings with them – thanks to the kindness of the Polish Embassy – and inviting them to various events organized by the Caucasus Bureau. Each Coordinator of the Bureau also had, as part of their duties, to compile news from the Caucasus for the Information Bulletin of the Centre (BIS). Initially, the information was published daily (currently three times a week).

As mentioned above, the Centre for East European Studies reached an agreement regarding the Caucasus Bureau with other units of the University of Warsaw and obtained their consent, interest, and willingness to engage in scientific cooperation in the Caucasus. In order to strengthen the effect of the official opening of the Caucasus Bureau and to give its activities a more concrete dimension, the Centre organized two visits to Georgia by a delegation composed of representatives from various interested institutes of UW. The greatest benefit of these visits was the opportunity to establish more personal contacts between Polish and Georgian scientists (which is crucial in the case of the Caucasus) and to discuss possible future directions of cooperation.

The first visit took place on April 17-20, 2008. The participants of the Polish delegation were Dr. Anna Smogorzewska (Kazimierz Michałowski Cen-

ter for Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw), Prof. Kazimierz Lewartowski (Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw), Prof. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk (Institute of History, University of Warsaw), and Dr. h.c. mult. Jan Malicki (Director of the CEES UW). The delegation was welcomed by the then-Rector of TSU, Prof. Giorgi Khubua. During the meeting with him, members of the delegation had the opportunity to learn about the structure and achievements of this university. The Rector presented the areas and foreign partners with whom his university collaborates, emphasized the tradition of Polish-Georgian cooperation, and expressed hope for the development of ties with the University of Warsaw. Subsequently, the delegation members participated in a meeting with deans and heads of various units of the Tbilisi State University: Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Economics and Business, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Research Development, Institute of Caucasology; and Professor Maria Filina, Head of the Department of Slavic Languages and the Polish Language Center, a chairwoman of the Union of Poles in Georgia.

During the second day of the visit, the delegation members gave lectures in their areas of specialization for students and academics at TSU. In addition, they had the opportunity to meet and exchange information with Georgian scientists from their fields of science. The delegation members presented their home research units and areas where the two universities could cooperate. In addition, a meeting also took place at the Ilia Chavchavadze State University in Tbilisi that day. The delegation met with the Rector of the university, Professor Gigi Tevzadze, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and the Director of the Department of Archaeology. During the meeting, the Rector presented his university and also proposed joint projects, especially in the field of archaeology. After the meeting with the university authorities, the delegation went to the Polish Language Center operating at the university. The lecturer of Polish language Dominika Malczewska and her students were already waiting at the Center. During the meeting, the Second Secretary of the Polish Embassy in Georgia, Maciej Dachowski, was also present.

Then, the delegation went to Telavi, in the western Georgian region of Kakheti. Meetings were held there with the Rector of the Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University, Prof. Giorgi Gotsiridze, and the Deans and Professors of the university. Delegation participants presented their scientific units and the topics of their research. The idea of creating a Polish Centre in Telavi with permanent Polish language classes for students of various faculties at Telavi University also emerged. After the meetings at the university, the delegation went to the headquarters of the Telavi National Museum, where objects excavated from the archaeological site of the Natkora Orthodox Church were presented. Later, the delegation visited the excavation site. The delegation also had the opportunity to see other architectural and cultural monuments of the Kakheti region.

The second visit of representatives from UW units to Georgia took place on June 5-7, 2008. The participants of the Polish delegation were: Prof. Lech Mróz, Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology; Prof. Ryszard Kulesza, Director of the Center of Polish Language and Polish Culture for Foreigners "Polonicum", Dr. David Kolbaia (CEES), Dr. Maciej Ząbek (Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology) and Dr. Robert Wyszynski (Institute of Sociology). On the first day of the visit to Georgia, a meeting took place with the Rector of the TSU, Prof. Giorgi Khubua, and with the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Georgia, Jacek Multanowski. During the second day at the TSU, there were meetings within individual scientific fields, lectures by members of the Polish delegation at individual faculties and meetings and discussions with students and academics. On the same day, an official visit took place at Ilia State University, where the delegation met with the Rector, the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and also had meetings with students learning Polish at the university's Polish Language Center.

An extremely important event in this pioneering period of the Caucasus Bureau's operation was the official visit of the Rector of the University of Warsaw, Prof. Katarzyna Chałasińska-Macukow, to the Caucasus. From May 27 to June 3, 2008, Rector Macukow visited three Caucasus capitals sequentially: Baku (Baku State University, Baku Slavic University); Tbilisi (Tbilisi State University) and Yerevan (Yerevan State University). On 30 May 2008, a delegation including: Rector of the University of Warsaw, Prof. Katarzyna Chałasińska-Macukow; Prof. Alojzy Nowak, Dean of the Faculty of Management; Prof. Włodzimierz Lengauer, Dean of the Faculty of History, Prof. Tadeusz Tomaszewski, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Administration, Prof. Lech Mróz, Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology; Dr. David Kolbaia, Head of the Caucasus Seminar and Dr. h.c. mult. Jan Malicki, Director of the CEES UW arrived in Tbilisi, where they met with the Rector of TSU, Prof. Giorgi Khubua. Meetings were also held that day with the Deans of the TSU, as well as with representatives of the Department of Science, the Department of Research and Development and the Department of International Cooperation. After the meetings, the university hosted the premiere of a Polish-Georgian documentary film "W rogatywce i tygryziej skórze", dedicated to pre-war Georgian emigrants – contract officers of the Polish Army. The screening of the film was preceded by an introduction by the co-author of the screenplay, head of the Caucasus Seminar at the CEES UW and editor-in-chief of the academic journal *Pro Georgia*, Dr. David Kolbaia. On May 31, the second day of the visit to Tbilisi, representatives of UW had meetings with representatives of various faculties of TSU.

Following its visit to Georgia, on June 1, the Polish delegation travelled to Armenia, where it met with the Rector of Yerevan State University (YSU), Prof. Aram Simonyan. On June 2, a conference entitled "Armenians in the former

Republic and today” was held at YSU, followed by a meeting between UW representatives and the authorities of the various faculties of YSU. The YSU was represented by: Rector, Prof. Aram Simonyan; Deputy Rectors, Prof. Gegham Gevorgyan, Dr. Alexander Grigoryan and Dr. Alexander Markarov; Dean of the Faculty of Law, prof. Gagik Ghazinyan; Dean of the Faculty of History, Prof. Hayk Avetisyan; Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Prof. Hayk Sargsyan and Dean of the Faculty of International Relations, Prof. Gegham Petrosyan. On the last day, the Polish delegation visited Matenadaran, History Museum of Armenia, Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, Etchmiadzin and Khor Virap Monastery.

The pioneering and successfully initiated period in the activities of the Caucasus Bureau unfortunately concluded with a profoundly tragic event in the history of Georgia. On the night of 7 to 8 August 2008, conflict broke out in South Ossetia, with Georgian forces standing against separatist Ossetian and Russian troops. Fighting continued for five days, thousands of people were left homeless and Gori, among other places, was bombed. The Caucasus Bureau sent reports on the situation to Warsaw several times a day. It should be recalled that on August 12, the late President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, appeared at a huge rally in the center of Tbilisi. Together with the presidents of Lithuania – Valdas Adamkus, Estonia – Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Ukraine – Viktor Yushchenko, and Latvia’s Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis, he encouraged Georgians and warned against Russian imperial aspirations. The aftermath of the conflict proved to be tragic for Georgia – the loss of part of its territory, Russia’s recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The new Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau had to deal with slightly different realities....

III. In October 2008, the post of Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau in Tbilisi was taken over by another graduate of the Centre for East European Studies, Przemysław Oziński, who held the position until April 2009. The priority tasks of the Caucasus Bureau during this period included promoting the institution in Georgia, attracting new partners, and coordinating activities aimed at developing scientific (guest lectures on energy security) and non-scientific activities of the Caucasus Bureau.

To establish cooperation, Przemysław Oziński contacted organizations such as the Alexander Rondeli Foundation (Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies), Georgian Security Analysis Center, The Strategic Research Center, Open Society Georgia Foundation, and Georgia for North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At that time, University of Warsaw concluded a new bilateral agreement with Tbilisi State University on student mobility, on the basis of which, in each semester of the academic year, three students from UW can spend one semester at TSU and, similarly, three TSU students can study at UW for one semester.

In May 2009, Anna Radecka, also a graduate of the Centre for East European Studies, took over the position of Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau in Tbilisi and held this position until August 2011. During this period, great emphasis was placed at the Caucasus Bureau on organising film screenings to promote Polish culture and lectures, as well as conferences to promote Polish science and the history of Polish-Georgian relations. Anna Radecka also organized seminars conducted by Polish lecturers for Georgian students and worked on integrating Georgian alumni of Polish scholarship programs. During this period, additional Polish language classes were also launched for all willing students and the groundwork was laid for the launch of official Polish language courses at TSU starting from September 2011. In cooperation with the “Polonicum” Center, the Caucasus Bureau also hosted an internship program for Polish students. They came to Tbilisi to gain experience in teaching Polish as a foreign language. Additionally, the Bureau conducted the archiving of its library collections.

Among the successful events of this period was the organization of a film screening on December 1, 2009, “W rogatywce i tygrysiej skórze” (directed by Jerzy Lubach, script by David Kolbaia and Jerzy Lubach). The screening was preceded by introduction from Anna Radecka, Prof. Giorgi Khubua – the Rector of TSU, Urszula Doroszevska – the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, Prof. Maria Filina – the chairwoman of the “Polonia”, Prof. Vazha Kiknadze – the Director of the Institute of History and Ethnology, Irakli Tripolski – a co-producer of the film, and Prof. Niko Javakhishvili, who gave a lecture on Georgian officers under the Polish banner.

On 6 May 2010, the Caucasus Bureau, in cooperation with the TSU, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi and the St Grigol Peradze University organized a conference on Polish-Georgian religious relations “At the Crossroads of two Churches” at TSU. The conference was opened by the Ambassador Urszula Doroszevska, TSU Rector Giorgi Khubua, Chairman of the Parliamentary Commission for Diaspora Affairs Nugzar Tsiklauri, Catholic Priest Paweł Dyl and Anna Radecka. The conference was attended by Dr. David Kolbaia, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki (University of Białystok, Orthodox Pastoral Point St Martyr Archimandrite Grigol Peradze), Dr. Gocha Saitidze (Director of the Archives of the Georgian National Center of Manuscripts), Prof. Vazha Kiknadze (Director of the Institute of History and Ethnology, TSU), prof. Iłona Czamańska (UAM, Poznań), Prof. Murman Papashvili (Tbilisi Technical University) and Prof. Bejan Javakhia (TSU). The conference concluded with the screening of the film on St Grigol Peradze „In Search of the White Angel”, directed by Tamar Dularidze and Jerzy Lubach. Additionally, there was an exhibition of photographs and memorabilia related to the life of St Grigol Peradze, titled “The Clergyman Whose Parish Was Europe.”

On June 4, 2010, an international scientific conference entitled “Romanticism and Modernity – History and Perspectives of Polish-Georgian Relations”

took place at TSU under the patronage of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, and the „Polish Community Association.” The conference was dedicated to the 15th anniversary of the Polish Association in Georgia. The organizing committee included: Prof. Maria Filina (“Polonia”), Prof. Darejan Tvaltvadze (TSU), Prof. Vazha Kiknadze (Georgian National Academy of Science), Dr. h.c. mult. Jan Malicki (UW), Prof. David Gotsiridze (TSU), Anna Radecka (UW), Prof. Giorgi Zhuzhunashvili (TSU) and Prof. Maia Tukhareli (TSU). The conference was divided into three thematic sections (literature and culture, history and political science, verbal communication) and gathered a total of 50 speakers.

One of the major initiatives of 2011 was a series of seminars by Polish sociologists from the Institute of Sociology at the UW for TSU students as part of the “Promotion of Polish Sociology” project in Georgia, funded by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi. The seminars were conducted by Dr. Paweł Poławski and Prof. Anna Giza-Poleszczuk and concluded with the publication of booklets containing articles by Polish scientists. In the same year, a seminar was also organized with lecturers from the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology UW, conducted by Prof. Leszek Mróz, Prof. Jerzy Wasilewski, Prof. Maciej Ząbek, and Dr. Iwona Kaliszewska. In November 2011, a day of lectures on geopolitics titled “Where is Georgia?” was organized at TSU, with special guest Adam Michnik.

IV. From September 2009 to June 2010, a branch of the Caucasus Bureau also operated in Armenia and was based at Yerevan State University (YSU). The branch was headed by Konrad Siekierski, whose main tasks included establishing cooperation with Armenian higher education institutions and the academic community, as well as promoting the Polish language and scholarship programs for Armenian citizens.

During his tenure, Konrad Siekierski coordinated cooperation between the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia and the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Warsaw. The initiative resulted in the publication of articles that became part of a book dedicated to Armenian ethnography, prepared as part of the joint project of both institutes. The Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau also participated in discussions with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Armenia regarding the possibility of using Polish foreign aid funds for projects related to higher education training for Armenian universities. Konrad Siekierski also managed to collect and donate a set of Polish-language books (dictionaries, encyclopaedias, teaching aids and Polish-language literature) to the Polish language room located at the Department of Russian Philology at Yerevan State University. At that time, UW also signed a cooperation agreement with the Brusov State University in Yerevan.

During the visit of Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau Anna Radecka to Yerevan from May 25 to 28, 2010, she and Konrad Siekierski exchanged their experiences from working in Georgia and Armenia, discussing both joint and separate plans for the Bureau's activities. In addition, as part of the visit, Anna Radecka and Konrad Siekierski met with Alexander Markarov, Vice-Rector of Yerevan State University, and visited the Polish room and the Caucasus Bureau's office at YSU. Subsequently, the two Coordinators of the Caucasus Bureau visited Brusov State University and met with representatives of the Polish community and Polish language lecturers in Armenia.

From October 2011 to October 2016, the position of Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau was held by Krzysztof Łukjanowicz (who, to this day, remains the only Coordinator who has mastered the Georgian language to perfection).

From November 13 to 19, 2011, a delegation from the CEES UW visited Tbilisi in connection with participation in a Caucasology Conference organized by TSU. The Polish delegation included: Prof. Wojciech Materski, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia and Aleksandra Gryźlak. In relation to the conference, the Caucasus Bureau organized a meeting to promote the journal *Nowy Prometeusz*. As part of this visit, there was also a meeting with Georgian graduates of Polish scholarship programs coordinated by the CEES, held at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi. Ambassador Urszula Doroszevska participated in the event.

As part of this visit, the delegation from the CEES UW also attended a meeting at St Andrew the First-Called Georgian University, an institution under the auspices of the Georgian Patriarchate. The representatives of the Centre were received by Rector Sergo Vardosanidze. Subsequently, the Polish delegation met with Prof. Vakhtang Peradze, the Rector of the St Grigol Peradze Teaching University in Tbilisi. An integral part of the programme was also a meeting with a long-time friend of the Centre, the late Prof. Alexander Rondeli (d. 2015) – a political scientist, director of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies.

Another of the many significant events organized by the Caucasus Bureau took place in 2012. On June 26, Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland Bogdan Borusewicz delivered a lecture at TSU as part of the "Warsaw Lectures" series. The topic of Marshal Borusewicz's speech, closely related to the Georgian audience, was "Poland's path to independence."

On April 4-5, 2014, a Polish delegation participated in events dedicated to the interment of the ashes of Major Vitalis Ugrekhelidze in the Didube Pantheon in Tbilisi. Major Ugrekhelidze served as a contract officer in the Polish Army from 1922 to 1945. The funeral was organized by the Tbilisi City Hall and the Caucasus Bureau of the CEES UW. The delegation included: Dr. David Kolbaia, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Col. Tadeusz Krząstek, Aleksandra Gryźlak, and Major Ugrekhelidze's family from London: his daughter Sevdia Ugrekhelidze-Lukac

(longtime employee of Radio Free Europe in Munich and trusted translator of Jan Nowak Jeżiorański in London), her husband Milan Lukac (employee of Radio Free Europe in Munich), and their son Michał Lukac with his family. On April 4, a debate and a screening of the documentary film “W rogiatywce i tygrysiej skórze”, dedicated to Georgian contract officers in the Polish Army, took place at TSU. A Holy Mass was celebrated at the Church of St Mary on April 5, followed by a solemn ceremony where the ashes of Vitalis Ugrekhelidze were laid to rest in the Didube Pantheon. The initiative to establish a marble plaque commemorating Vitalis Ugrekhelidze came from the CEES UW. On the same evening, there was the opening of a photographic exhibition dedicated to contract officers in the Polish Army, and a literary evening commemorating Vitalis Ugrekhelidze was held at the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia.

V. In the period from January 23 to January 26, 2015, representatives of the University of Warsaw visited Tbilisi State University. The Polish delegation included Prof. Tadeusz Tomaszewski – Vice-Rector for Human Resources and Lifelong Learning, Prof. Jan Michałek – Dean of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, Prof. Andrzej Lisowski – Dean of the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, Prof. Elżbieta Zybert – Dean of the Faculty of History, Prof. Krzysztof Kosela – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Sociology, Director Jan Malicki, and Dr. David Kolbaia. On the first day of the visit, there was an official meeting with the Rector of TSU – Prof. Vladimer Papava. Afterwards, the Polish delegation met at the TSU Library with its director, Zurab Gaiparashvili, and the administration of TSU, including Vice-Rector Prof. Ioseb Salukvadze, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities Prof. Darejan Tvalvadze, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Prof. Teimuraz Beridze, and Dean of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences Prof. Tamar Dolbaia. In the following days, there were separate meetings between UW deans and their Georgian colleagues to discuss in detail the prospects for further cooperation.

In 2015, the University of Warsaw (specifically the Faculty of Polish Studies, Institute of History, Institute of Sociology and Philosophy, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, and the Centre for East European Studies) established close relations with Gori State Teaching University (GSTU)². In January 2015, a delegation from the University of Warsaw led by Vice-Rector Prof. Tadeusz Tomaszewski, along with four deans and representatives from the Centre, made a brief visit to GSTU. In October, a return visit took place, with GSTU Rector Prof. Giorgi Sosiashvili visiting the University of Warsaw. In November of the same year, another delegation from UW visited Gori, including representatives from the Faculty of Polish Studies, Institute of Archaeology, and Centre for East European Studies.

² In the following years, Gori State University (GSU).

Mutual visits and the strengthening of relations between the University of Warsaw and Gori State Teaching University resulted in the decision of Rector Giorgi Sosiashvili to open the “University of Warsaw Center” at GSTU in November 2015, where a small Polish library was later established. Furthermore, starting from the summer semester of 2015, the Polish language became one of the optional language courses for GSTU students, and from the academic year 2016/2017 onwards, Polish language courses became a mandatory subject for selected humanities disciplines.

As a result of the deepening collaboration between the University of Warsaw and Gori State Teaching University, an agreement on in-depth cooperation was signed on March 23, 2016, by Rector Marcin Pałys and Rector Giorgi Sosiashvili. The goal of this agreement was to support the academic and scientific objectives of each institution, fostering formal cooperation to promote better understanding between the faculties and students of UW and GSTU.

Based on the cooperation agreement between the University of Warsaw and Tbilisi State University from 2000, in 2016, Director Jan Malicki signed an agreement with Rector Vladimer Papava regarding the establishment of the Alexander Rondeli Scholarship Program. This program commemorates the distinguished Georgian specialist in international relations, Alexander Rondeli, who was actively involved in Polish-Georgian relations. The program’s aim is to support the exchange of lecturers and researchers specializing in international relations, diplomacy, political science, security studies, history, or Polish-Georgian relations between CEES UW and TSU.

On 12-15 September 2015, a delegation from the Centre for East European Studies paid an official visit to Georgia, taking part in religious ceremonies commemorating the 20th anniversary of the canonization of St Grigol Peradze and attended a ceremonial meeting at the Tbilisi City Council. During this meeting, an act of intent was signed, confirming the intention to name one of the new streets in the capital with the name of Marshal Józef Piłsudski. The project was initiated by Dr. David Kolbaia. The delegation included: Director Jan Malicki, Prof. Kazimierz Jurczak, Prof. Leszek Zasztowt, Dr. David Kolbaia, Aleksandra Gryźlak, Col. Tadeusz Krząstek, Prof. Krzysztof Kosela and Prof. Elżbieta Zybert. The guests of honor were Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Member of the Polish Parliament Małgorzata Maria Gosiewska, and Ireneusz Derek, a member of the Council of the Polish-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce.

On September 12, the delegation began the day by visiting Signaghi and Bodbe, then proceeded to Bakurtsikhe, the hometown of St Grigol Peradze. There, they participated in a liturgy commemorating the 20th anniversary of his canonization. The liturgy took place in the Orthodox church near the ruins of St Grigol Peradze’s house, where his father was buried. Representatives from the family of St Grigol Peradze, local authorities, and residents of Bakurtsikhe attended the service conducted by Father Giorgi.

On September 13, the delegation, along with guests, participated in another solemn liturgy commemorating the 20th anniversary of the canonization of St Grigol Peradze. This time, the liturgy took place at the Tsminda Sameba (Holy Trinity) Cathedral in Tbilisi. After the liturgy, the delegation was received with lunch by the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Ilia II. The meeting with the Patriarch was also attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Cieszkowski, and the Secretary of the Polish Embassy, Michał Żochowski. Dr. Kolbaia presented a gift to Patriarch Ilia on behalf of the delegation. During the meeting, Director Jan Malicki informed Patriarch Ilia II about the purposes of the delegation's visit, including the promotion of the idea of naming one of Tbilisi's streets after Józef Piłsudski, who helped Georgian officers and cadets in 1921. Patriarch Ilia II expressed "highest support" for honoring Józef Piłsudski in Tbilisi. After the meeting, the delegation went to the cemetery and laid a bunch of flowers on the grave of Prof. Alexander Rondeli, a friend of Poland, distinguished Georgian scholar, and a state official. The delegation then participated in a scientific session organized by St Andrew the First-Called Georgian University in Tbilisi on the topic: "Works and Publications of the Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw, on the Life and Work of St Grigol Peradze." Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki and Dr. David Kolbaia presented and discussed the latest publications depicting the life and contributions of St Grigol Peradze.

During the Polish delegation's visit to Georgia, Dr. David Kolbaia donated funds collected during a charity auction organized by the Caucasus Seminar of CEES UW, to the mother of a Georgian hero who lost his life while saving the residents of Tbilisi during a flood. On September 14, a meeting of the CEES delegation with the Vice-Rector Prof. Salukvadze and academic staff from TSU also took place. During the meeting, the deans from the UW and Director Malicki discussed possible forms of closer scientific cooperation with TSU. A Mass dedicated to Marshal Józef Piłsudski was held at the Polish Church of St Apostles Peter and Paul in Tbilisi, attended by the Polish Ambassador.

A crucial step in the procedure for the Tbilisi City Council to decide on naming one of the new streets after Marshal Józef Piłsudski was a meeting between the delegation from the CEES UW and guests, the Polish Ambassador, and the Secretary of the Polish Embassy, with the Chairman of the Tbilisi City Council, Giorgi Alibegashvili, and the Chairwoman of the Naming Commission, Lia Jakhveladze. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct an on-site inspection of the future Józef Piłsudski Street. The delegation saw the proposed location and found the city government's proposal worthy of acceptance. In the afternoon of September 14, the delegation and representatives of the Polish Embassy jointly laid flowers at the monument of the late President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński. The culmination of the day was the official announcement by the authorities of Tbilisi of the decision to name a street in honor of Marshal

Józef Piłsudski. The ceremony was followed by the opening of a photo exhibition by Dr. David Kolbaia, dedicated to St Grigol Peradze and Georgian contract officers of the Polish Army. The ceremony was attended by a large group of Tbilisi residents, representatives of the academic and Polish communities, senior government officials and the diplomatic corps, as well as graduates of Polish scholarship programs. In the evening, the delegation was invited to a formal reception at the residence of Ambassador Andrzej Cieszkowski. The reception marked the end of the official part of the delegation's visit to Georgia.

VI. The next person who took over the position of Caucasus Bureau Coordinator was Dr. Agnieszka Górska, who worked in Tbilisi from November 2016 to June 2017. During this time, cooperation with the TSU Foreign Relations Office was maintained. The promotion of Polish language courses at the university and the promotion of Polish scholarship programs were also intensified. The most significant event of the year was the co-organization of the second meeting of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission, which took place during the visit of the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, to Georgia.

President Andrzej Duda was on a diplomatic visit to Georgia from May 29 to 31, 2017. The reason for the visit was the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Polish-Georgian diplomatic relations after Georgia regained independence. During the visit, the President held talks with Georgian leaders about Georgia's integration with the EU and NATO. The Presidents of both countries signed a declaration to deepen cooperation. Among the members of the Polish delegation was Director Jan Malicki.

On the last day of his stay in Georgia, on May 31, 2017, President Duda participated in the opening ceremony of Marshal Józef Piłsudski Avenue in Tbilisi. Along with naming the alley, at the initiative of Dr. David Kolbaia, a commemorative plaque was unveiled emphasizing the deep, century-old friendship between Georgia and Poland. The plaque featured a quote from St Grigol Peradze, a professor at the University of Warsaw who died in the Auschwitz concentration camp and whose name is given to the International Caucasology Session organized regularly since 2002 by the CEES UW. Honoring Marshal Piłsudski was related to the 150th anniversary of his birth and to commemorate the *Intermarium* idea promoted by him.

“(...) Józef Piłsudski knew and loved our country, so shrouded in magnificent legends of the struggle for freedom and the independence of our beloved Caucasus. He, who himself became the subject of legend through his heroic efforts, and who by his unshakeable resolution and genius won freedom for his people, and who out of a fragmented Poland, created a great and mighty power.

We, the sons of the Caucasus, who found understanding for our suffering and struggles in reborn Poland, deeply sense the feeling of mourning and sadness which has befallen our brother nation. We stood witness to the Marshal's efforts,

when he lifted his motherland from the depths. Now, when the architect of Poland's power has passed away, we must – together with the Poles – continue his ideas for the greatness and good of our mutual motherland. Amen.³³ – proclaims the inscription on the plaque.

President Andrzej Duda, together with the President of Georgia Giorgi Margvelashvili, also assumed honorary patronage of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission, which was established to study Polish-Georgian relations from 1917-1921. The commission comprised seven Polish and seven Georgian historians, and the project is aimed to organize a series of academic conferences, exhibitions, and publications related to Polish-Georgian relations. Director Jan Malicki, in an interview with journalists, emphasized that the establishment of the Commission was prompted by the approaching centenaries of Poland's and Georgia's regaining of independence. The 1st meeting of the Commission was held on March 27-31, 2017, in Warsaw, and its 2nd meeting took place from May 29 to June 2 in Tbilisi.

During the ceremony at the National Library of the Parliament of Georgia on Tuesday, May 30, President Duda presented the Polish translation of the *Canon of Repentance* of King David IV of Georgia to the library's collection. This medieval Georgian literary work was intended to inaugurate the Polish section of the library in Tbilisi as part of the National Library of Georgia. The translation into Polish of the *Canon* was made by Dr. David Kolbaia.

On September 8-10, 2017, a delegation from the CEES UW, included Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia and Aleksandra Gryźlak, participated in the celebrations organized on the occasion of the opening of the St Grigol Peradze House-Museum in Georgia.

On September 9, 2017, Director Jan Malicki and Dr. David Kolbaia, along with Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Georgia Mariusz Maszkiewicz, met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Mr. Mikheil Janelidze. During the meeting, Dr. Kolbaia presented to the Minister dedicated copies of the Polish versions of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* (standard and miniature) and a translation of *Pan Tadeusz*⁴ to Georgian. After the meeting at the Ministry, the delegation went to the National Museum in Tbilisi, where there was a ceremonial presentation of books on Georgian topics published by the CEES UW: a collector's Polish edition of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, the Georgian edition of *Pan Tadeusz*, and the latest, 27th edition of *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies, University of Warsaw*. Dur-

³³ Archimandrite Grigol Peradze. *From a homily delivered on the occasion of the death of the First Marshal of Poland, Józef Piłsudski, 15 May 1935*. in D. Kolbaia, *Under Polish Wings: The Georgian Emigration In Poland 1921-1939*, Warsaw 2016: 45.

⁴ Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz czyli ostatni zajazd na Litwie* (in Georgian). The Polish text and the Georgian translation were compared, provided with an afterword and prepared for printing by David Kolbaia, Warsaw 2017.

ing the ceremony, lectures were delivered by, among others, Mikheil Tsereteli, Director of the National Museum in Tbilisi, Mariusz Maszkiewicz, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Georgia, Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Archimandrite Adam (Vakhtang Akhaladze), Rector of St King Tamar University of Patriarchate of Georgia, and Giorgi Badridze, former Ambassador of Georgia to the United Kingdom.

On the second day of the delegation, on September 10, 2017, the ceremony of the opening of the House-Museum of St Grigol Peradze in Bakurtsikhe took place, along with the unveiling of memorial plaques dedicated to St Grigol Peradze and Georgian contract officers of the Polish Army. The event was organized by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Georgia, and the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw. The ceremony was led by Dr. David Kolbaia, who was also the initiator of creating the plaques. The opening of the museum was preceded by a liturgy delivered by Father Giorgi, pastor of St George's Church in Bakurtsikhe, the parish priest of the Church of St George in Bakurtsikhe, and Father Henryk Paprocki, the parish priest of the Parish of St Grigol Peradze in Warsaw. During the museum's opening ceremony, a commemorative plaque was unveiled in honor of Georgian contract officers of the Polish Army, and another plaque was unveiled in honor of St Grigol Peradze, a professor at the University of Warsaw (1933-1939) and a martyr of the German concentration camp Auschwitz.

During the ceremony, the St Grigol Peradze Award of *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies, University of Warsaw* was presented. The laureate was the Georgian scholar Ilia Peradze. In addition, presentations and seminars on Polish-Georgian relations took place. A presentation on the Georgian publication *Outline of the Military History of the January Uprising* by J. Piłsudski, was given by Aleksandra Gryźlak, Jan Malicki presented Józef Piłsudski's Promethean idea, and David Kolbaia discussed the topic „Saint Grigol Peradze and the Georgian Emigration in Warsaw 1922–1939.” Father Henryk Paprocki introduced the life and work of St Grigol Peradze.

On September 11, 2017, the 2nd meeting of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission took place at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. The meeting was attended by the Commission's chairman, Dr. David Kolbaia, Director Jan Malicki, Aleksandra Gryźlak, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze (TSU), Prof. Otar Janelidze (Georgian National Museum); Dr. Beka Kobakhidze (Ilia State University) and Dimitri Silakadze (National Archives of Georgia). On that day, there was also a meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at TSU, Prof. Nana Gaprindashvili. After the meeting, the participants visited the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Avenue, where the CEES delegation lit a symbolic candle. The day ended with a visit to the Patriarchate of Georgia,

where a dedicated copy of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* was presented to His Holiness Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia.

On September 12, 2017, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Aleksandra Gryźlak and Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze visited Grakliani Hill, where Prof. Vakhtang Licheli, the director of the TSU Institute of Archaeology, personally presented the archaeological site revealing the oldest preserved writing in the Caucasus. On the same evening, at the residence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, there was a meeting between the CEES delegation and graduates and scholarship holders of Polish universities.

VII. In October 2017, another CEES graduate, Daria Szlezyngier, assumed the position of Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau in Tbilisi.

In recent years, the Caucasus Bureau has focused on expanding its cooperation with Georgian universities – not only with Tbilisi State University, Ilia State University and Gori State University, but also with the Caucasus International University and the International Black Sea University. Many projects promoting Polish science and culture were also implemented in cooperation with Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, Polish Institute in Tbilisi, and Krukowski Interdisciplinary Research Center. As part of the jointly undertaken activities in the academic year 2017/2018, the Caucasus Bureau managed to co-organize an open lecture by Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja dedicated to Marshal Józef Piłsudski at the Caucasus International University (April 23, 2018), organize an open lecture by Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze on the history of Polish-Georgian relations at TSU (May 10, 2018), and co-organize a Polish stand during the 5th Cultural Festival at the International Black Sea University (May 15, 2018).

On December 5-7, 2017, a delegation from the CEES visited Georgia, including Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, and Aleksandra Gryźlak. On December 6, the delegation visited Gori, where they met with the Rector of Gori State University, Prof. Prof. Giorgi Sosiashvili, and with students attending the Polish language course. During the meeting with the Rector, issues of past and future cooperation were discussed. On that day, on the initiative of Rector Sosiashvili, it was decided to establish the Polish-Georgian Eastern Summer School in Ateni Valley, with its first edition taking place in July 2018.

After visiting Gori State University, the delegation from the CEES went to Tkviavi Street, where the opening ceremony of the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Square took place. The square was established thanks to the initiative of Dr. David Kolbaia and the CEES, with financial support from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi. Representatives from Poland at the ceremony included Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz, Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Aleksandra Gryźlak, Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau Daria Szlezyngier, as well as representatives from the Pomeranian Voivodeship and Kartuzy County, whose support allowed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to back the

square construction project. The Georgian side was represented, among others, by Gori Mayor Konstantine Tavzarashvili and former Mayor Zurab Jirkelishvili, Inner Kartli Governor Kakha Samkharadze, and Gori State University Rector Giorgi Sosiashvili. During the ceremony, Dr. David Kolbaia was awarded with an *honorary* doctorate from Gori State University, which was later also awarded to Director Jan Malicki.

After the solemn opening ceremony of the square, the CEES delegation, along with Ambassador Maszkiewicz and representatives from the Pomeranian Voivodeship and Kartuzy County, was invited to a meeting with the councillors in Gori City Hall. Both during the square's opening ceremony and at the meeting, all parties emphasized the significance of Polish-Georgian friendship and the role of Marshal Piłsudski in building Polish-Georgian relations. Thanks to him, after the fall of the Democratic Republic of Georgia in 1921, Poland welcomed Georgian emigrants and provided an opportunity for officers to serve in the Polish Army. It is noteworthy that several of these officers came from Gori. The date of the square's opening (December 6) also gained symbolic significance – the day before, on December 5, Marshal Piłsudski was born. Moreover, December 6 is the day of remembrance for St Grigol Peradze – another figure who made a huge contribution to building Polish-Georgian relations.

Straight from the City Hall, the delegation proceeded to a meeting with Bishop Andria, the head of the Eparchy of Gori. During the visit to the rectory, discussions covered both historical topics and contemporary issues, including the need for the return of refugees from South Ossetia to their homes, as well as Georgia's aspirations to join NATO and the European Union.

On December 7, a delegation from the CEES met with the Rector of Tbilisi State University, Dr. Giorgi Sharvashidze. During the meeting, issues of further cooperation between the TSU and UW were discussed (above all, an agreement on the Alexander Rondeli Lecturer Exchange Program, the Centre's participation in the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of TSU and active participation in events such as educational fairs). After the meeting with the Rector, the representatives of the CEES visited the cemetery – Didube Pantheon, where they lit a candle at the grave of Vitali Ugrekheldidze (translator of *Pan Tadeusz* into Georgian),⁵ and then Saburtalo Cemetery, where, together with the President of the Rondeli Foundation, Mrs. Eka Metreveli, they lit a candle at the grave of Alexander Rondeli.

During the celebrations on February 6-9, 2018, the University of Warsaw delegation, including Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Prof. Piotr Węgleński (Rector of the University of Warsaw 1999-2005), and Prof. Katarzyna

⁵ Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz czyli ostatni zajazd na Litwie* (in Georgian). The Polish text and the Georgian translation were compared, provided with an afterword and prepared for printing by David Kolbaia, Warsaw 2017.

Chałasińska-Macukow (Rector of the University of Warsaw, 2005-2012), participated in the events commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the oldest Georgian higher education institution, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. Poland was also represented at the celebrations by representatives of the Jagiellonian University, Rzeszow University, University of Łódź, University of Lublin and Gdańsk University of Technology.

The official celebrations dedicated to the centenary of the TSU began on February 7, with invitations extended to university rectors and distinguished professors from around the world. The celebrations at the presidential palace were inaugurated by the President of Georgia, Giorgi Margvelashvili. The guests were then given a guided tour of the old town of Tbilisi. After the tour, the delegation went to the TSU, where the signing ceremony of the memorandums of understanding and letters of intent took place. In the evening, there was a performance by the TSU Art ensemble and the choir of the Tbilisi State Conservatory. The day concluded with a formal dinner organized by the Rector of TSU Giorgi Sharvashidze.

February 8 began with celebrations in the main building of TSU, where a ceremony was held with the participation of the Rector of TSU, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, as well as ministers and distinguished professors, during which Prof. Katarzyna Chałasińska-Macukow, among others, gave a speech. On this day, Dr. David Kolbaia presented TSU with a gift – the *Canon of Repentance* of King David IV Aghmashenebeli translated from Old Georgian to Polish, published at the University of Warsaw. The unveiling of the TSU logo also took place at this time. Additionally, delegations made entries in the commemorative book and received commemorative gifts. After the visit to the TSU, the delegations attended a meeting in the Parliament and then participated in a holy mass dedicated to the 100th anniversary of TSU, held on behalf of the Patriarch of Georgia Ilia II at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi (*Tsminda Sameba*). The mass was followed by a concert gala at the National Opera and Ballet Theatre. The second day of celebrations ended with a dinner attended by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Kvirikashvili.

On February 9, the symposium „Perspectives on Higher Education: Recalling the Past and Discovering the Future” took place at TSU. The university also hosted a ceremony for the awarding of TSU honorary degrees and the presentation of university medals. The guests were then invited by the Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze, to an evening reception at City Hall. After the meeting with the mayor, there was a night tour of the National Museum of Georgia. On the same night, the UW delegation returned to Poland.

During this visit to Georgia, the Polish delegation decided to establish a new scholarship program – the Tytus Filipowicz Award and five internships associated with the Award. The Award aims to honour the merits of Georgian and Caucasus citizens in the development of science, culture, and public life, in the

formation and development of civil society and in building a democratic Georgia and Caucasus states. The award was established by the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw (initiator) and by the Gdansk University of Technology, Poznan University of Technology, University of Łódź, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, University of Rzeszow, University of Warsaw, the Ossoliński National Institute and the College of Eastern Europe in Wrocław. In the following year, further universities joined the Award: the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow, the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and the Rzeszów University of Technology.

VIII. On April 24-25, 2018, the 9th Promethean Conference took place, organized by the Centre for East European Studies and the Central Historical Archive in Tbilisi in collaboration with the Institute of National Remembrance and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi. The conference commemorated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Transcaucasian Sejm and the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. Within the conference, the 2nd Conference of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission was held, along with the opening of the exhibition „Georgian Contract Officers in the Polish Army” by Dr. David Kolbaia, and the presentation of the latest issue of *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies, University of Warsaw*.

On April 24, a delegation from the CEES, including Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Aleksandra Gryźlak, and Piotr Elwertowski, along with the Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau, Daria Szlezyngier, participated in the 2nd Conference of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission held at TSU. The Commission included: Dr. David Kolbaia (CEES UW), Prof. Wojciech Matercki (Polish Academy of Sciences), Dr. Paweł Olszewski (Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce), Dr. Paweł Libera (Institute of National Remembrance), Prof. Grzegorz Mazur (Jagiellonian University), Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki (Parish of St Grigol Peradze in Warsaw), Shorena Murusidze (representing Prof. Zaza Abashidze; Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts), Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze (Tbilisi State University), Prof. Otar Janelidze (Georgian National Museum), Dr. Beka Kobakhidze (Ilia State University), Dr. Georges Mamoulia (EHESS, School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, Paris) and Dimitri Silakadze (National Archives of Georgia).

The ceremonial opening of the session was conducted by the Chairman of the Commission, Dr. David Kolbaia. Following the official part, there was a consultation of the Commission members during which the achievements to date were discussed along with future prospects and plans (publication of papers and volumes summarising the years of the Commission's work to date, publication of the archival documents found, preparation for the St Grigol Peradze Caucasian Session planned for 6 December this year, and publication of the first book for the occasion).

After the Commission's deliberations, its members and the UW delegation proceeded to the Georgian National Archives, where the ceremonial opening of the 9th Promethean Conference took place, inaugurated by Teona Iashvili (Director of the National Archives of Georgia), Mariusz Maszkiewicz (Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi), Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja (Institute of National Remembrance), Director Jan Malicki and Dr. David Kolbaia. Over the course of the two-day symposium, leading researchers on Prometheism and the history of Polish-Georgian relations delivered their presentations.

The first day of the Conference concluded with the opening of an exhibition dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Transcaucasian Sejm. The exhibition, held in the Conference Hall of the National Archives of Georgia, presented unique photographs depicting Georgian independence and democratic activists and documents related to their activities. The exhibition was accompanied by the presentation of the latest issue of the journal *Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies, University of Warsaw*. The editor-in-chief of the journal, Dr. David Kolbaia, spoke about the latest edition, which gained significant interest among the attendees, as well as the overall concept of the journal. Copies of the latest edition were presented to the audience and to the library in Tbilisi.

On April 25th, the second day of the conference took place at the National Library of the Parliament of Georgia, during which the aforementioned Polish and Georgian speakers gave their presentations. On the same day at the National Library, Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz hosted a reception to celebrate the Polish National Day of May 3. The event was attended by representatives of the Georgian Parliament and Government, the diplomatic corps, as well as the Polish community in Georgia. Irakli Kobakhidze, the Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, delivered a speech during the ceremony. At the last moment, the Marshal of the Polish Sejm, Marek Kuchciński, cancelled his attendance, and the content of his speech was read to the audience by Director Jan Malicki.

The speeches were followed by the official opening of the exhibition „Georgian Contract Officers in the Polish Army”, the result of many years of work by Dr. David Kolbaia in cooperation with Dr. Paweł Libera and Prof. Wojciech Materski, under the patronage of the Institute of National Remembrance. The exhibition featured photographs and copies of archival documents dedicated to Georgian contract officers, their activities in Poland during the turbulent period of the interwar years and World War II, as well as to St Grigol Peradze and Marshal Józef Piłsudski.

On April 26, a meeting took place between the Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Kvirikashvili, and members of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission. During the meeting, the Polish side presented the purpose of the Commission's activities, which included scholarly research on the history of Polish-Georgian relations and, more broadly, on Polish Kartvelology.

On July 16-21, 2018, the first edition of the Polish-Georgian Eastern Summer School took place at Gori State University. The event was attended by 5 students from the CEES and 10 students from GSU. During the School, participants actively participated in numerous lectures and seminars on topics related to the history and contemporary issues of Georgia. Additionally, they had the opportunity to visit Gori, Uplistsikhe, Mtskheta, and Tbilisi.

In the summer of 2018, the Caucasus Bureau established close cooperation with Polish archaeologists from the Institute of Archaeology UW (since 2020, the Faculty of Archaeology) and the newly established Krukowski Interdisciplinary Research Center, whose Director is Prof. Radosław Karasiewicz-Szczygiorski, and Chancellor – Dr. Jacek Hamburg. This center, which is the first foreign archaeological station in the Caucasus, was established on April 17, 2018, in the city of Kutaisi, in collaboration with Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, Polish Institute in Tbilisi, and National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection of Georgia.

In the autumn of 2018 and 2019, the Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau, Daria Szlezynghier, at the invitation of Prof. Radosław Karasiewicz-Szczygiorski, visited the Polish-Georgian Archaeological Expedition to Gonio-Apsaros in Adjara, western Georgia, and then the sites of the Polish-Georgian Archaeological Expedition in Kutaisi (EKAL Project) led by Jacek Hamburg.

Moreover, in September 2018, the Caucasus Bureau collaborated with the Pilecki Institute and the Krukowski Interdisciplinary Research Center in the search for the former location of filtration camp No. 0331 near the Kutaisi Automobile Plant, where Polish prisoners of war were held between 1945 and 1947. The project also aimed to locate presumed burial sites and to help gather material for a documentary film.

On October 27, 2019, the Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau took part in events promoting the presentation of the book *The Gvardjilas Klde Cave in Georgia. Celebrating the Centennial of Polish Archaeologist Stefan Krukowski's Research*. This publication was released in cooperation with the University of Warsaw and the State Archaeological Museum in Warsaw. Concurrently with its presentation, on October 29, 2019, the opening ceremony of the educational path in the Gvardjilas Cave took place. But let's not get too far ahead into the future.

On October 2-3, 2018, a scientific conference „Poland-Georgia: One Hundred Years of Mutual Relations 1918-2018” took place at TSU. The event was organized by the TSU, Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Polish Institute in Tbilisi and Caucasus Bureau.

On October 2, the Polish-Georgian conference was opened by Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze (TSU) and Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja (IPN). During the two-day conference, papers were delivered by: Prof. Suleja, Prof. Otari Janelidze (National Museum of Georgia), Dr. Małgorzata Misiak (University of Wrocław), Shorena Murusidze (Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts), Prof.

Danuta Jastrzębska-Golonka (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz), Dimitri Silakadze (National Archives of Georgia), Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze (TSU), Dr. Paweł Libera (IPN), Prof. Tadeusz Wolsza (IPN), Dr. Dariusz Rogut (IPN), Prod. Paata Surguladze (TSU) and Dr. Dimitri Shvelidze (National Archives of Georgia).

As part of their visit to Georgia, the guests from Poland also visited Batumi, where on October 5 at the Shota Rustaveli Batumi State University, an open lecture was held by Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja and Prof. Tadeusz Wolsza dedicated to the Marshal Józef Piłsudski and the regaining of independence by Poland in 1918.

On October 6, the delegation visited Gori State University, where a debate on Józef Piłsudski took place with the participation of Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja, Prof. Tadeusz Wolsza and Prof. Danuta Jastrzębska-Golonka. The visit to Gori ended with a visit to Józef Piłsudski Square.⁶ All lectures dedicated to Marshal Józef Piłsudski were also a preview of the Georgian edition of the book *Józef Piłsudski* authored by Prof. Suleja.

In November 2018, events took place in Georgia that were a huge success of Polish foreign policy, culminating in the inauguration of the Polish Institute in Tbilisi. On November 5, 2018, Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Marek Kuchciński, as part of an official visit, arrived in Georgia with a Polish delegation, which included, among others, the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Szymon Szyrkowski vel Sęk, Deputy Marshal of the Senate, Maria Koc, Members of Parliament Małgorzata Gosiewska and Magdalena Kochan, Member of Parliament Bartosz Józwiak, and Director Jan Malicki.

The visit began with a meeting between the Marshal of the Sejm and the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, Irakli Kobakhidze, during which the Statute of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Republic of Poland and Georgia was signed. The establishment of this assembly formalized further cooperation between the two countries. The signing of the document was a consequence of the agreement on strategic partnership signed in Warsaw in December 2017, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the resumption of Polish-Georgian diplomatic relations.

On the same day, Marek Kuchciński and Irakli Kobakhidze ceremonially opened the Polish Library: the Henryk Hryniewski Hall of Polish Art and Literature at the National Library of the Parliament of Georgia. Together with the Polish delegation, the event was attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, Mariusz Maszkiewicz, and the director of the National Library, Giorgi Kekelidze.

⁶ J. Piłsudski, *Zarys historii militarnej powstania styczniowego*. Lectures delivered in 1912 at the School of Social and Political Sciences in Kraków. Prepared for publication and provided with an afterword and documents by David Kolbaia. (in Georgian), Warsaw 2017, 98 p.

The opening of the Polish Library in Georgia was connected to the establishment of the Polish Institute in Tbilisi on May 26, with Lech Kończak, current Public Diplomacy Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, appointed as its Director. The official inauguration of the Polish Institute took place on November 5 at the Parliament of Georgia.

During the inauguration, the Director of the Polish Institute introduced representatives of Polish and Georgian organizations and institutions operating in Georgia, including Marcin Mamoń – a correspondent for TVP in Georgia, Prof. Radosław Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski – Director of the Krukowski Interdisciplinary Research Center, Karolina Zaręba – representative of the Polish-Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, members of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission: Prof. Otar Janelidze, Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze, Dr. Beka Kobakhidze, and Dimitri Silakadze; Director Jan Malicki, and Daria Szlezyngier – Coordinator of the Caucasus Bureau.

On November 6, the Polish delegation laid a wreath at the monument of Lech Kaczyński and at the monument of the Heroes Fallen for the Unity of Georgia. They also participated in the unveiling ceremony of the plaque of the Polish Institute at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi. Later, the Marshal of the Sejm met with the Catholicos of Georgia, Ilia II. On the same day, the Polish delegation also visited the demarcation line with South Ossetia in Odzisi.

During the second day of the visit, an exhibition dedicated to the Katyn massacre was opened at the National Museum of Georgia. The exhibition was prepared thanks to the collaboration of Katyn Museum with Polish Institute in Tbilisi, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, National Museum of Georgia, and with the financial support of the Polish National Foundation. The exhibition was inaugurated by Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz, David Lordkipanidze (Director of the National Museum of Georgia), Sławomir Frątczak (Director of the Katyn Museum in Warsaw), and Lech Kończak (Director of the Polish Institute in Tbilisi).

Straight from the events inaugurating the establishment of the Polish Institute in Tbilisi, a delegation of the CEES UW, including: Director Jan Malicki, Dr. David Kolbaia, Dr. Shahla Kazimova, Aleksandra Gryźlak and Daria Szlezyngier, travelled to Azerbaijan, where the 12th Promethean Conference entitled „The Promethean Movement Towards Muslim Nations Before World War II – Promethean Activity in Azerbaijan and Central Asia” took place in Baku on November 7, 2018. The conference was organized by the CEES UW and the ADA University. The Promethean Conference was opened by: Director Jan Malicki, Fariz Ismailzade (Vice-Rector of ADA University), Marek Całka (Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Baku) and Bartosz Cichoński (Deputy Minister). During the conference, presentations were delivered by, among others: Prof. Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, Ambassador Ramiz Abutalibov, Dr. Paweł Kowal, Dr. Georges Mamoulija, Dr. David Kolbaia, Dr. Paweł Libera, and Prof.

Nasiman Yagublu. On the second day of the visit to Baku, the delegation from the CEES met with graduates of Polish universities and scholarship holders of Polish scholarship programs at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland. The day concluded with a reception at the Ambassador's residence.

On November 27, 2018, the Caucasus Bureau organized a concert of sacred songs and Polish patriotic songs performed by the Lubin Men's Mining Choir at the Parish of St Peter and St Paul in Tbilisi. The event, dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Poland's regained independence, was dedicated to the Polish community, Poles connected with Georgia, and enthusiasts of Polish culture.

On December 10-11, 2018, Director Jan Malicki, Anna Wolska, and Daria Szlezynghier visited Yerevan. On December 10, at the Union of Poles in Armenia "Polonia", a meeting was held between the delegation from the CEES and alumni of Polish scholarship programs. Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Yerevan, Paweł Cieplak, and Counselor Marek Reszuta also participated in the meeting.

On December 11, the delegation paid a visit to the Brusov State University, where they met with the Rector – Karine Harutyunyan, the Deputy Rector for Educational Programs – Bella Margaryan, the Head of the Department of Public Affairs and International Cooperation – Kristina Tsaturyan, and the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science, Tigran Torosyan. After that, the delegation had a meeting with the Rector of Yerevan State University – Aram Simonyan, and the Vice-Rector and Head of the International Cooperation Office, Alexander Markarov. During the visits to both universities, the prospects of mutual cooperation in the field of education were discussed. The delegation concluded their visit to Armenia by attending the „Chopin in Jazz Interpretation” concert performed by the Andrzej Jagodziński Trio, which was held under the patronage of the CEES UW.

IX. The year 2019 was full of educational and scientific events in the Caucasus. On February 13, 2019, as part of the “Warsaw Lectures” series, the Polish Institute, in cooperation with the Caucasus Bureau, organized an open lecture by Prof. Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski on the geopolitical significance of Georgia from a Polish perspective. The lecture took place at the Polish Library. On February 22-23, the Caucasus Bureau represented the University of Warsaw at the Educational Fair in Tbilisi and organized the visit of a delegation from the National Agency for Academic Exchange along with representatives from Polish universities, and coordinated bilateral meetings at Georgian higher education institutions. In March 2019, as part of the Alexander Rondeli Exchange Program, a lecturer from the CEES UW, Dr. Rigels Halili, visited the Tbilisi State University for a series of guest lectures. On June 10-15, 2019, the Caucasus Bureau helped to organize Polish Days in Georgia – a series of lectures conducted by lecturers from the Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz at Ilia State University in

Tbilisi, Gori State University, St Queen Jadwiga Polish School in Tbilisi, and at Polish Institute in Tbilisi. On July 17-22, 2019, the second edition of the Polish-Georgian-Turkish Summer School took place at the Gori State University, with students from the CEES participating once again. The academic year 2019/2020 began with the Caucasus Bureau's participation in the Education Fair in Baku in October 10-12, 2019. This summarizes the key events of 2019. Other events of this period, on the other hand, are worth much more attention.

On February 5, 2019, at the Tbilisi State University, a ceremony was held to award two St Grigol Peradze *Pro Georgia* Awards. The laureates of the 6. Edition of the *Pro Georgia* Award were: Metropolitan Andria Gvazava and Gocha Japaridze – a professor, historian, and diplomat. Metropolitan Andria Gvazava was awarded for his outstanding contribution to the development of education in Georgia, for his work in developing scientific cooperation between the Gori State University and the University of Warsaw, and for promoting knowledge about the scientific achievements of St Grigol Peradze. Prof. Gocha Japaridze was honored for his exceptional contribution to the discovery and analysis of Arabic historical, geographical, biographical, and genealogical sources related to the history and culture of Georgia, which are preserved in libraries and archives in Syria and Egypt. The decision to award these prizes was made on December 12, 2018, in Warsaw during a meeting of the Prize Committee at the Potocki Palace. The solemn ceremony for presenting the *Pro Georgia* Awards in honor of St Grigol Peradze was inaugurated with a brief speech by the rector of the TSU, Giorgi Sharvashidze. Next, a speech was delivered by Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz, who also officially presented the Awards and diplomas. At the end, the honored laureates – Metropolitan Andria Gvazava and Prof. Gocha Japaridze – addressed the audience. During the speeches given at the ceremony, the importance of St Grigol Peradze as a symbol of Polish-Georgian cooperation and friendship between the countries was emphasized multiple times. Numerous thanks were also expressed to the University of Warsaw, especially to the CEES, Director Jan Malicki, and Dr. David Kolbaia.

On the 30th anniversary of the transformations in Poland in 1989, an international conference titled “Legacy of Solidarity and the Dissident Movement in the Former USSR” took place in Tbilisi on June 10-11, 2019. The conference, held at the NATO and EU Information Center in the capital of Georgia, was organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi and the Polish Institute in Tbilisi. During these days, Tbilisi became a meeting place for former Polish opposition activists and dissidents from the countries of the former Soviet Union. The conference aimed to commemorate the role of Solidarity as the first independent, legal trade union in communist Poland and to emphasize its influence on dissident movements in the former Eastern bloc countries. Polish dissidents associated with, among others, the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union “Solidarity” (Solidarność), the independent group Freedom and Peace

(*Wolność i Pokój*), the Orange Alternative (*Pomarańczowa Alternatywa*), as well as researchers and dissidents from Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania, Russia, and Germany, participated in the conference. The event was opened by Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Lasha Darsalia. Invited lecturers from the CEES UW delivered their speeches at the conference: Prof. John Micgiel (UW, Columbia University), Aleksandra Gryźlak, and Dr. Rigels Halili. During the conference, particular attention was paid to Georgian dissidents. Georgian anti-communist fighters and independence activists, including Levan Berdzenishvili, Tamar Chkheidze, and Nana Kakabadze, shared their stories of anti-communist struggle.

On September 11-12, 2019, the 1st St Grigol Peradze International Conference titled “Georgia in the Context of Christian Civilization” took place at TSU. The conference was organized in cooperation with the CEES UW, the Georgian National Center of Manuscripts, the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Union of St Grigol Peradze, and the G. Chubinashvili National Research Centre for Georgian Art History and Heritage Preservation. The opening ceremony of the conference was attended by the President of Georgia, Salome Zurbishvili, who honored the session with her patronage. Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz and the Director Jan Malicki, also spoke at the conference. The conference was also attended by Dr. David Kolbaia, Rev. Dr. Henryk Paprocki, and Aleksandra Gryźlak. During the special ceremony, the St Grigol Peradze Award was posthumously presented to Prof. Tamila Mgaloblishvili. The Award was given to the laureate’s grandson. As part of the conference on September 11, 2019, at TSU, there was also a ceremony to present the first edition of the Tytus Filipowicz Award. The ceremony was attended by Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz, Wojciech Wróbel (a member of the Council of the Jan Nowak-Jeziorański College of Eastern Europe in Wrocław), and Director Jan Malicki. The winner of the Tytus Filipowicz Award was Nikoloz Legashvili, and the winners of the Internships associated with the Award were Dr. Pikria Asanishvili, Prof. Mikheil Bakhtadze, Dr. David Devadze, Dr. Vakhtang Maisaia, and Dr. Dali Osepashvili.

On November 22-25, 2019, a series of events dedicated to Polish-Georgian relations took place in Georgia – in Tbilisi, Gori, and Bakurtsikhe. The organizer of these events was the CEES UW and the Institute of National Remembrance in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tbilisi, the Embassy of Georgia in Poland, and the Polish Institute in Tbilisi.

On November 22, the 5th meeting of the Polish-Georgian Historians’ Commission took place at TSU. The meeting was attended by: Dr. David Kolbaia, Prof. Wojciech Materski, Prof. Grzegorz Mazur, Dr. Paweł Libera, Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja, Prof. Otari Janelidze, Dimitri Silakadze, and Shorena Murusidze. In the evening, at the Palace of Youth in Tbilisi, the official opening of the exhibition “St Grigol Peradze (1899-1941) – Martyr, Scholar, Ecumenist” took place. The

exhibition was opened by its author, Dr. David Kolbaia, and the Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz.

On November 23, members of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission and representatives of the Institute of National Remembrance visited the National Defence Academy in Gori. The opening of the scientific event was conducted by Brigadier General Malkhaz Makaradze and Dr. David Kolbaia. As part of the visit, Prof. Włodzimierz Suleja delivered a lecture on Józef Piłsudski, promoting his recently published book about the Marshal in the Georgian language. Later, there was a promotion of the album *Under Polish Wings. The Georgian Emigration in Poland 1921-1939*⁷ by Dr. David Kolbaia. After the album promotion, there was a ceremonial opening of the exhibition "Georgian Contract Officers in the Polish Army." Brigadier General Malkhaz Makaradze and its author, Dr. David Kolbaia, conducted a guided tour of the exhibition.

After the visit to the National Defence Academy in Gori, the Polish delegation proceeded to the Gori State University for an official meeting with the Rector Giorgi Sosiashvili. Following a ceremonial welcome by the university authorities and the exchange of gifts, representatives from both sides gathered around a roundtable to discuss cooperation opportunities. Upon the conclusion of the official meeting, Rector Sosiashvili invited the Commission members to the Warsaw University Center located at the university, where they met with students attending Polish language courses and alumni of Polish scholarship programs. Later, the entire delegation visited the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Square in Gori, where a candle was lit to honor the memory of the eminent Pole.

On November 23, at the St Grigol Peradze House-Museum in Bakurtsikhe, the 4th Conference of the Polish-Georgian Historians' Commission began, combined with the conference "Religious Repressions in Communist States." The conference was opened by Ambassador Mariusz Maszkiewicz and the Mayor of the city Gurjaani, Archil Khandamashvili. Dr. David Kolbaia officially opened the exhibition "St Grigol Peradze (1899-1942)" at the museum.

The year 2020 began with the Caucasus Bureau participating in small educational fair organized on February 27 by the Gori State University, combined with a meeting with students and university authorities. On February 28 and 29, the Bureau represented the University of Warsaw at the International Education Fair in Tbilisi, along with the National Agency for Academic Exchange and representatives from nearly 20 Polish universities. However, this event was overshadowed by the first confirmed cases of COVID-19 in both Georgia and Poland. Due to the pandemic outbreak, the Bureau had to adapt to new, challenging conditions. By March 2020, Georgian universities had switched to remote work, and there were no indications that the situation would change by the end

⁷ D. Kolbaia, *Under Polish Wings. The Georgian Emigration in Poland 1921-1939*, Warsaw 2016.

of the year. Nonetheless, the Bureau's Coordinator, Daria Szlezyngier, bravely remained at her post, providing regular updates on the events in the Caucasus directly from Tbilisi.

The activities of the Caucasus Bureau of CEES UW in Tbilisi in 2007-2020, presented in detail in this article, are a history of building stronger academic relations between Poland and Georgia and, more broadly, the Caucasus. It was a patient construction of institutions, building contacts and coordinating joint projects. These thirteen years were a period of intense work by subsequent Coordinators and its permanent Head – Dr. David Kolbaia. Without their effort all this would not be possible. The results of this hard work have left many lasting marks – publications, academic exchange programs, graduates, joint scientific ventures and cultural events. The Bureau is widely recognised and has already established a high profile at the University of Warsaw and beyond. These thirteen years constitute a solid foundation for the further development of the Caucasus Bureau and cooperation between Polish and Georgian academics and students. And we hope this is just the beginning. So, to be continued...

Daria Szlezyngier, Aleksandra Gryźlak
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