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არქეოლოგიისა და ისტორიის
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სარჩევი / CONTENT

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Urbanism under Turco-Mongol Rule: Excavations at Otrar, Kazakhstan

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes archaeological investigation of occupation dating to approximately the 12th-15th centuries AD at the site of Otrar in southern Kazakhstan. It primarily summarises excavation and survey carried out in the summer and autumn of 2021, which aimed to investigate the city's economic, urban and environmental state in the decades preceding the Mongol Conquest of 1219/20 and the changes which occurred over the following two centuries. Focussing on test trenches dug in the *shahristan* and industrial areas as well as investigation of the defensive walls around the raised *shahristan* and lower rabad area, evidence for urban change and continuity was characterised and dated where possible. Initial data suggests that a defensive wall was constructed around the rabad in approximately the 11th or early 12th century. Renovation and conservation work provided the opportunity to study the *shahristan* wall which likely dates to the 14th century. This wall was repeatedly replastered, but probably represents the last major refortification of the city. Excavations in the *shahristan* revealed a period of non-architectural occupation or partial abandonment before a reoccupation in the 14th century, which may approximately coincide with renovation of the walls of the *shahristan*. The preliminary work described here hints at interesting changes in investment and occupation at the city between the 11th and 15th centuries by targeting data from across the site and taking advantage of extensive previous excavation. It forms part of our effort to quantify and describe changes in urban occupation at Otrar, forming a basis to investigate their causes.

INTRODUCTION

The city of Otrar in southern Kazakhstan (42°51'8.64"N / 68°18'9.26"E; (Figure 1) was occupied from around the 4th-5th century AD and abandoned in the 18th century[1] (Akishev, Baipakov, and Erzakovich 1972:81, 1981, 1987; Baipakov 1990). Exploiting the waters of the nearby Syr Darya river to create a fertile hinterland which supported the urban population (Clarke, Sala, and Meseth 2005; Toonen et al. 2020), written sources indicate it was the location of major historical events from the Mongol Conquest to the death of Timur (Bregel 2003:36, 42; Juvaini (trans. J. Boyle) 1997:82–85; Rashid al-Din (trans W.M. Thackston) 2012:170–71; f488-90; Zimin' 1914). Today, the site consists of a raised mound or *shahristan* known as Otrartobe, an 18m tall mound of decayed mudbrick architecture and occupation deposits within a larger urban zone covering around 170 hectares (Akishev et al. 1972:43–50; Fodde, Sala, and Deom 2013). The site has been extensively excavated (Akishev et al. 1972, 1981, 1987; Akylbek 2013; Baipakov 2013; Baipakov and Erzakovich 1991; Campbell 2020, 2021) with ample information about various neighbourhoods, and broad chronological understanding of the character of occupation. Abandonment deposits have been found and equated to the Mongol Conquest but the stratification of the coin hoard used to date this phase was somewhat unclear (Akishev et al. 1987:18) and so the precise chronology of occupation at Otrar and the extent to which it was continuously inhabited remains obscure. The work described here

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1 Dating for the abandonment is based on extensive excavation of the site's upper layers and rests on extensive coinage and ceramic evidence, while the earliest occupation has been deduced from a 'stratigraphic' trench in the northern part of the *shahristan* where ceramics of this period were discovered redeposited in later layers (Akishev, Baipakov, and Erzakovich 1972:82–83, 1981).

presents an initial attempt to further investigate the complex sequence of occupation at the site between the 12th and 14th centuries.

before the arrival of the Mongols (Campbell 2021:109–11). Additionally, few coins minted in the second half of the 12th century and first half of the 13th century have been found during extensive excavation of the
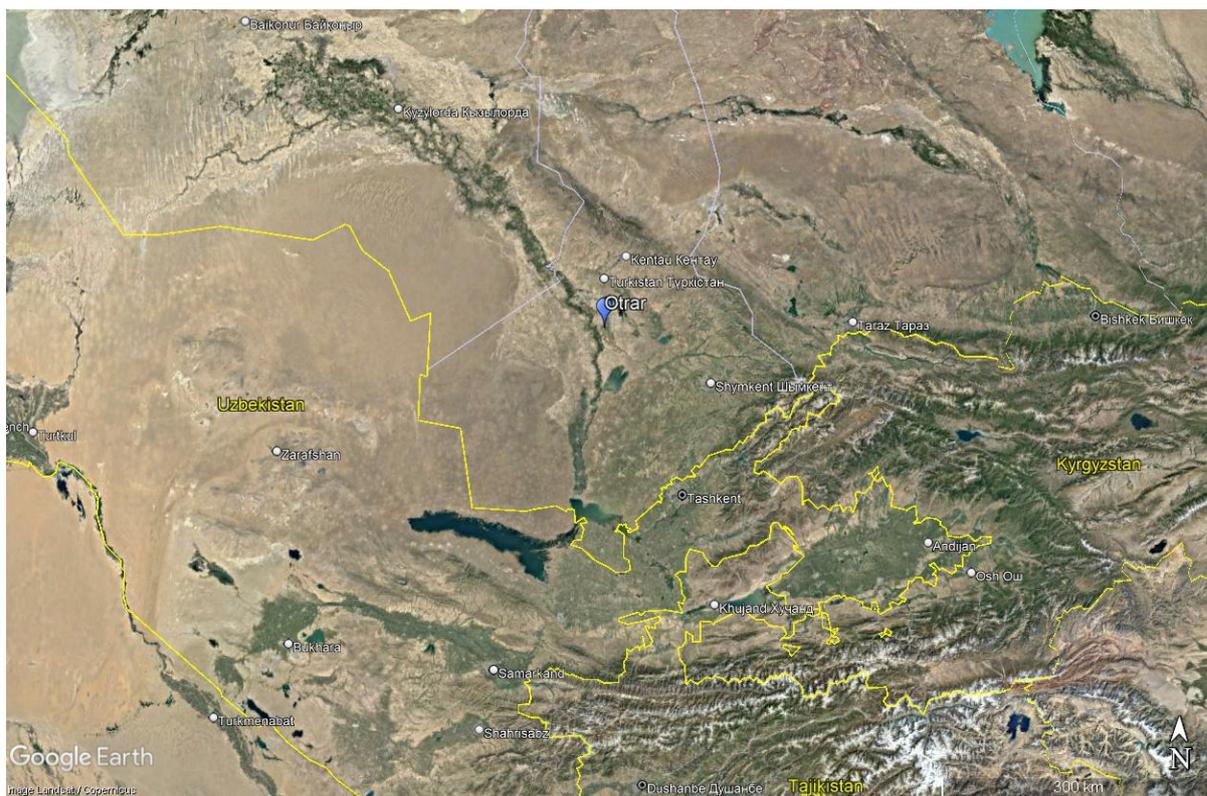
Fig. 1 *Location of Otrar*

Excavation in the 1970s and 80s was extensive enough to remove metres of later occupation and reach deposits dating to the 13th and 14th centuries, the period of the Mongol Conquest of Otrar and its aftermath (Akishev et al. 1987). However, evidence for abandonment following the Mongol disaster of 1219-20, when Chinggis Khan's armies are supposed to have levelled the city's defences and enslaved or slaughtered its inhabitants (Juvaini (trans. J. Boyle) 1997:82–85), was based on evidence from a single occupation area on this 170 hectare site (Akishev et al. 1987:15–30; Baipakov 2013:101–20). Archaeological remains seemed to corroborate the accounts in some respects, with a convincing archaeological sequence of urban abandonment and recovery, which was dated using coin and pottery evidence to the 13th century (Akishev et al. 1987:15–30). Little evidence of a Mongol attack or mass slaughter has yet been found with few recorded weapon finds, catastrophic burning layers or mass graves from the period in the oasis, contrasting with evidence for destruction during the Arab Conquests (Dawkes et al. 2019). Furthermore, recent radiocarbon dating of the abandonment sequence at Otrar suggests that desertion took place almost 100 years

site (Akishev et al. 1987:224–51). The dearth of securely dated occupation of the 12th century has perhaps led the historical narrative to drive archaeological interpretation at the site and the attribution of abandonment layers to the aftermath of the Mongol Conquest in the middle decade of the 13th century.

The work described here aimed to broaden the scope of research at Otrar, with further detailed excavation and dating work on the densely occupied *shahristan* alongside survey and test trenches in the surrounding rabad area. We also systematically collected archaeobotanical samples, especially charred grain, for radiocarbon dating and archaeobotanical analysis. This combined approach aimed to better characterise and date deposits in various parts of the site to chart how the city changed in the period of the Mongol Conquest and more broadly between the 11th and 15th centuries as Turco-Mongol groups took full control of the region.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

Excavation and recording took place at 3 main sites within Otrar's raised *shahristan* and surrounding rabad (Figure 2). The main focus of this work was on the *shahristan*, within a large trench excavated in the 2010s just within the northern wall of the city which had revealed occupation layers dating from approximately the 14th-18th centuries. The earlier phase of the occupation consisted of a neighbourhood of densely packed mudbrick houses, interspersed with narrow alleys. Within the houses, various features such as ovens, benches and washing areas were found (Jorayev 2020). In the later phases, the occupation appears to have been slightly less dense with large pits dug in open areas on the site, for storage and perhaps also the recovery of earlier building material. The sections

SHAHRISTAN

Radiocarbon dating had confirmed that the lowest phase of occupation within the trench likely dated to the first half of the 14th century (Campbell 2021:112) and excavation began from this level to investigate the situation in this part of the city in the 12th and 13th centuries. In particular we aimed to investigate whether abandonments recorded elsewhere (Akishev et al. 1987:15–30; Campbell 2021:209–11) might also occur in this part of the city, where deposits of this period had not yet been archaeologically recorded. The eventual aim of this work is to continue precise radiocarbon dating through deposits of this period and alongside stratigraphic collection of the pottery, reconsider ceramic chronologies which may not have been providing accurate dating of occupation layers at the site. An

Fig. 2 *Map of excavation areas*

of this large trench also show several phases of architecture built on top of each other as later houses superseded earlier ones. Some of these had been destroyed by fire with incidental burning likely the cause of this, rather than a destructive attack (Figure 3).

area in the centre of this previous excavation trench was selected for archaeological investigation. A small, irregularly shaped test trench (5m x 3.5m) was inserted among existing mudbrick architecture and excavated from a maximum height of 204.92m OD to a

Fig. 3   *Two overlying buildings which have been destroyed by fire, charred remains of the roof are visible on the floors of each of them*

maximum depth of 202.92m OD (Figure 4). Excavation followed the MoLAS single context recording system with soil samples taken from contexts considered to have a high potential for the recovery of organic remains such as oven fills, hearths, flues and pit fills.

Small objects were also recovered from samples in the sequence which might not be visible during excavation such as fish bones.

Fig. 4   *Working shot of test trench on the shahristan*

South Facing Section of trench OTR6

Wall from c. 14th century phase

Wall foundations

Probable pit/cut

Eroded mudbrick material

Key
Charcoal
    Mudbrick
    Fired clay
    Ash
– . –   Limit of excavation

Tandoor oven

Pit

Floor surfaces

1m

Pit

Pit

Layers of burnt material
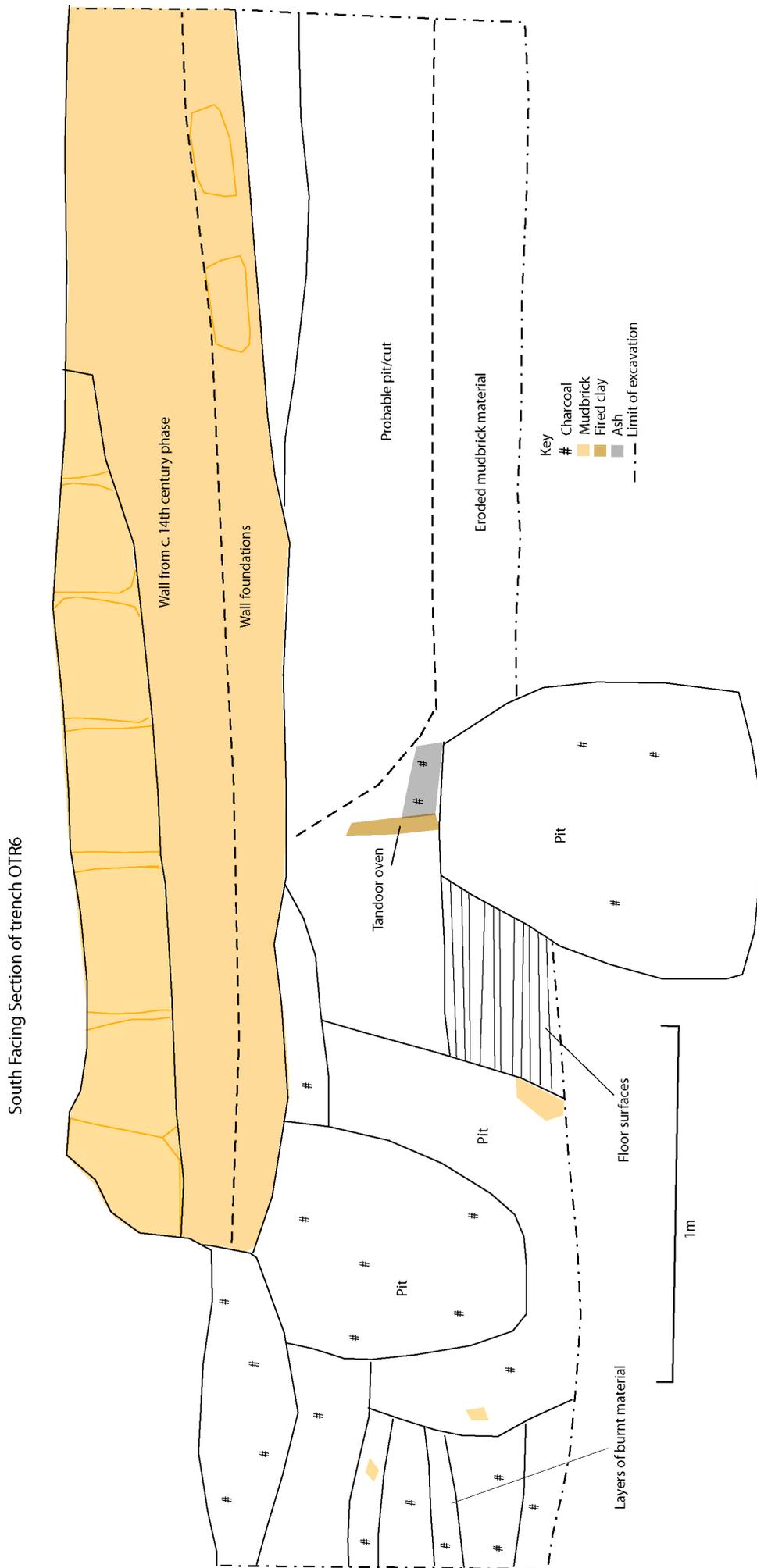
Fig. 5   *The sequence of deposits in the southern facing section of trench*
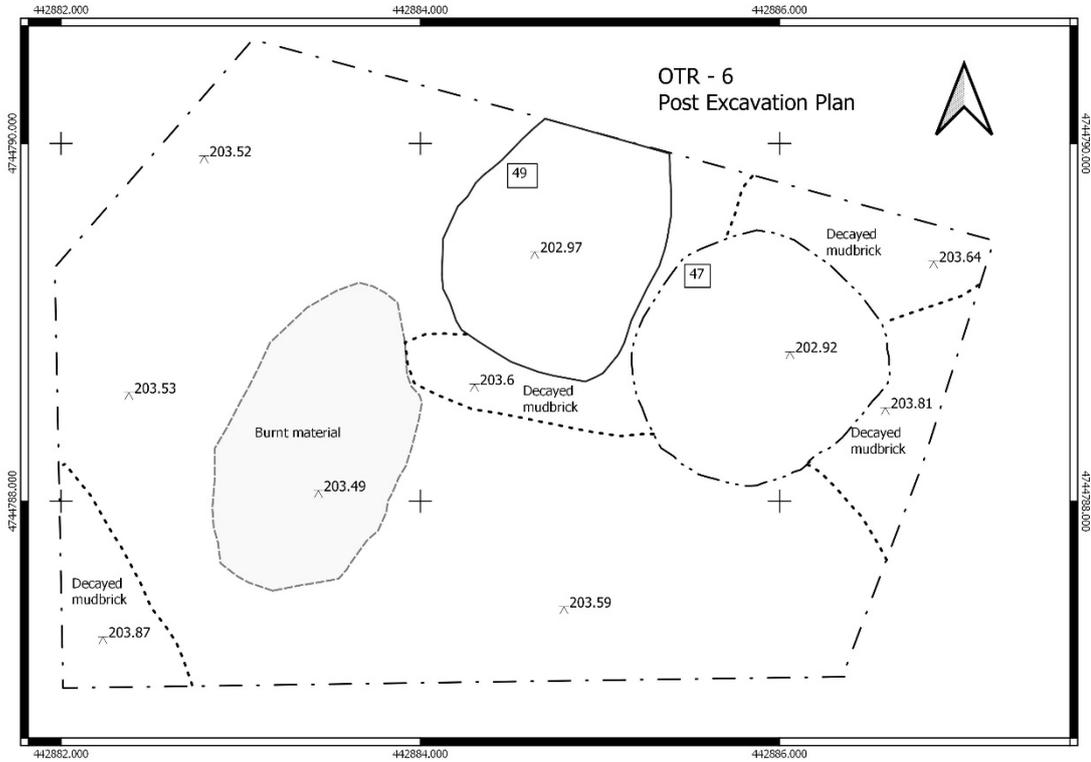
Fig. 6   *post-excavation plan showing the numerous pits cutting mixed occupation and abandonment deposits*

Fig. 7   *A large wall appears during excavation of a pit, the earliest phase encountered in the 2021 excavation*

Four main phases were discovered, including the architectural phase encountered in excavations carried out in 2018 and radiocarbon dated to the middle decades of the 14th century[2] (Campbell 2021:112). These tightly packed residential buildings represented the latest occupation layers excavated and recorded. None of the mudbrick walls appeared to have an earlier building phase below them, which differs from the layers above where buildings in the tightly packed street arrangement were generally rebuilt directly above, on the same plot (Figure 5). The same situation was noted in another residential area of the city investigated through the 1970s and 80s where excavators demonstrated changes in the street pattern and building plots after a period of abandonment (Akishev et al. 1987:18–19).

2   Three samples were dated from this building; collapsed reed roofing (563 ± 20 BP = 95.4% probability 1322-1421 AD cal. (1322-1357 49%/ 1391-1421 46.6%), and two twigs from burnt fuel in tandoor oven (588 ± 18 BP = 95.4% probability 1312-1407 AD cal. (1312-1362 73.1%/ 1387-1407 22.4%) and (604 ± 19 BP = 95.4% probability 1304-1400 (1304-1366 76.1%/ 1382-1400 19.3%). The relative positions in the sequence, based on dates from later buildings indicate that the earlier date ranges are probably the correct ones. Dating was carried out at the Oxford radiocarbon laboratory and has been calibrated using IntCal 20 (Reimer et al. 2020).

Below the buildings, were a series of deposits which suggested that this was an outdoor activity area truncated by pits and rubbish deposits. A few features were found throughout the sequence which indicate cooking and food preservation were taking place, including the remains of three tandoor ovens, none of which appeared to have been within a house. Remnants of small walls, some of which have been constructed with reused bricks are also interspersed in this phase of occupation, but were quite different in character compared to the residential neighbourhood which superseded them. Below this phase was one which appeared to represent a more sustained period of outdoor activity or urban abandonment, with several large pits interspersed with layers of dumped ash deposits and the remnants of floor surfaces. The sequence was truncated by a series of large pits and areas of eroded abandonment deposit (Figure 5; Figure 6). Compacted floor surfaces and rubbish dumping in this horizon indicate that people were present on the site, but no architectural phase is visible. Activity instead seems to be taking place among eroded deposits of mudbrick. The source of this material became clear as we excavated the pits to reveal a large, well-constructed mudbrick wall (Figure 7). Provisional observations therefore indicate that trench OTR6 contains a similar sequence of deposits to the other excavation which encountered deposits of this date (Akishev, Baipakov, and Erzakovich 1987:15–30). Further excavation and dating of these deposits would help to clarify if the dates are also similar.

RABAD WALL

A wall surrounding the lower, rabad area at Otrar was noted in a previous survey of the site (Akishev et al. 1972:48–50), but appears to have suffered considerable erosion since it was initially described in the early 1970s, and no attempts had yet been made to investigate the date or technique of its construction. We therefore decided to clean an elevation of this wall and excavate into its foundation in a northern area of the rabad where the wall had already been truncated by the construction of an access road to the village of Talapty. The surviving earthwork in this area was some 13m wide and more than 2.2m tall. Cleaning of the wall's elevation showed a significant erosion cone of degraded mudbrick surrounding an original wall structure which is approximately 6.2m wide, with its foundations likely to be wider (Figure 8). We excavated a 1m x 1m trench through the base of the truncation at the side of the road to a depth of 1.2m through the mudbrick wall, although did not manage to find the base of the wall or the natural subsoil. The minimum height of the wall is therefore 3.4m, although erosion at the top and foundations below the limit of our excavation means that it would have been somewhat taller. Thanks to this trench it was possible to confirm that the lower part of the wall is built with a different technique compared to the upper 1.45m. The lower 1.6m revealed by our excavation consisted of large pakhsa blocks, made from earthen material,

West facing elevation of rabad wall, Otrar OTR10

Key
— Wall
– · – Limit of excavation
▨ Rammed earth
◇ Cut

1m
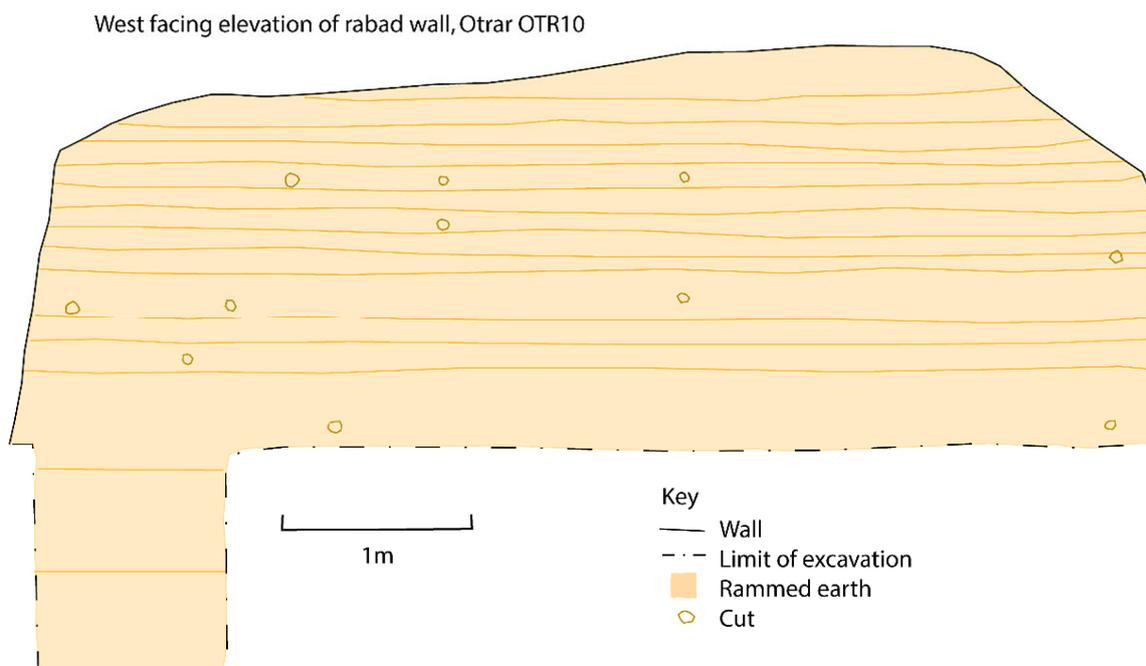
Fig. 8   *The rabad wall*

compressed into wooden shuttering of around 0.5m height. The upper 1.45m comprised layers which may have been hand placed of c. 0.15m to 0.25m in height. Within this, circular holes could be seen which may have been from scaffolding when the wall was built as the upper section would have been more than 2m above the previous ground level. Interestingly these holes are more numerous on the exterior half of the wall, so it is possible that there was some sort of other structure, bank or palisade on the interior side of the wall which helped its builders to reach its upper courses.

Dating mudbrick structures is often difficult, although it is frequently achieved through dating pottery, coins or other artefacts found within the mudbrick used in construction (Herrmann 1999:116; Pugachenkova 1958:134; Williams et al. 2018:164–65). This can be problematic due to the frequency with which earthen structures require renovation and repair (Cooke 2008:118–20; Horne 1994:128–29) and the high residuality of pottery at urban sites with a long occupation history (Wordsworth 2018:238). Pottery was recovered from the test trench, lodged within mudbrick at the core of the wall's structure, and therefore likely to be part of the original foundations or a significant rebuild (Figure 9). The pottery assemblage contained sherds of distinctive slip painted Samanid ware with a dark purple-brown or black and orange-brown painted pattern over a white slip. This can be dated stylistically to the later 10th or 11th century (Baipakov and Erzakovich 1991: 111-117; Henshaw et al. 2007) and therefore it is likely that the lower, pakhsa-block construction of the rabad wall was built in or shortly after the 11th century.

INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Initial survey at Otrar indicated a large industrial area in the eastern part of the rabad, and excavation showed the presence of multiple ceramic and brick kilns, which dated to the post- Mongol period, probably the late 13th century onwards (Qozhaev 1996). One pottery workshop has been reconstructed, and some of the large kilns preserved for visitors to view in the surrounding area. Change or continuity in the location of industrial areas can indicate changing economic circumstances in cities over time, especially if the industrial areas can be seen to be growing, shrinking or encroaching into areas which were previously administrative or residential zones. Pottery kilns also provide reliable and relatively precise dating evidence, with the potential for stylistic analysis of wasters and kiln fuel providing material for radiocarbon dating. At Otrar, the changing economic situation from the 11th to 15th century is difficult to trace as the earlier, pre-Mongol industrial area has not yet been located. One possibility is that it was in the same location, and full

Fig. 9 *Pottery recovered from test trench through the rabad wall*

Fig. 10   *The grave in trench OTR8*

excavation of the later phase of kilns might reveal an earlier phase below. To begin consideration of some of these issues, a 5 x 5m test trench was excavated in the eastern part of the rabad and samples were taken from an area with clear signs of industrial activity just north-west of the *shahristan*.

The trench dug in the eastern part of the *rabad* was selected because of a scattering of fired brick, pottery and fragments of slag and melted mud on the surface, suggesting that the ground had been subject to high heat in this area, most likely from industrial activity. A trench was excavated from a maximum height of 196.05m to 195.55m OD. Finds in the overburden and upper layers also contained material suggestive of industrial activity and the trench's major feature was an elongated brick feature at approximately 0.45m below the current ground surface (Figure 10; Figure 11). Further investigation of the feature showed it to be a brick-lined grave orientated north-south, and so excavation was stopped in this area to focus on other parts of the site. The feet, which were discovered first were at the southern end of the grave and even though the alignment is not perfect for a Muslim burial, it is possible this fits within the normal range of variations for Islamic burial in the region (Petersen 2013) and may date to the last few hundred years. It was decided not to further disturb the feature, and so it was reburied. Samples of industrial material were collected from other parts of the trench, although no kilns or in situ activity were found. Another industrial area was identified in the *rabad* and labelled OTR7 (Figure 2). It was immediately north of the *shahristan* and consists of several circular kilns from which samples were taken. The kilns' date and function were not immediately clear, but there was little evidence of pottery production so perhaps they were for firing brick.

SHAHRISTAN DEFENCES

Extensive renovation work to present the site to the public was taking place at Otrar in the Autumn of 2021, especially around the *shahristan* defences (Figure 12) and along a walkway through the centre of town. To present the city's walls, the mud erosion cone which had formed around the *shahristan*'s defensive circuit had been removed from the outside of part of the wall in the north of the city. A c. 20m long stretch of the fortification had been revealed in the north of the site which we labelled OTR9 (Figure 2). This revealed the outer face of the defensive wall which survived to c. 3.2m in height, with circular towers and an entranceway into the city (Figure 13; Figure 14). The *shahristan* defences have been extensively investigated in the southern part of the site showing a complex cross-section of substantial walls built onto each oth-
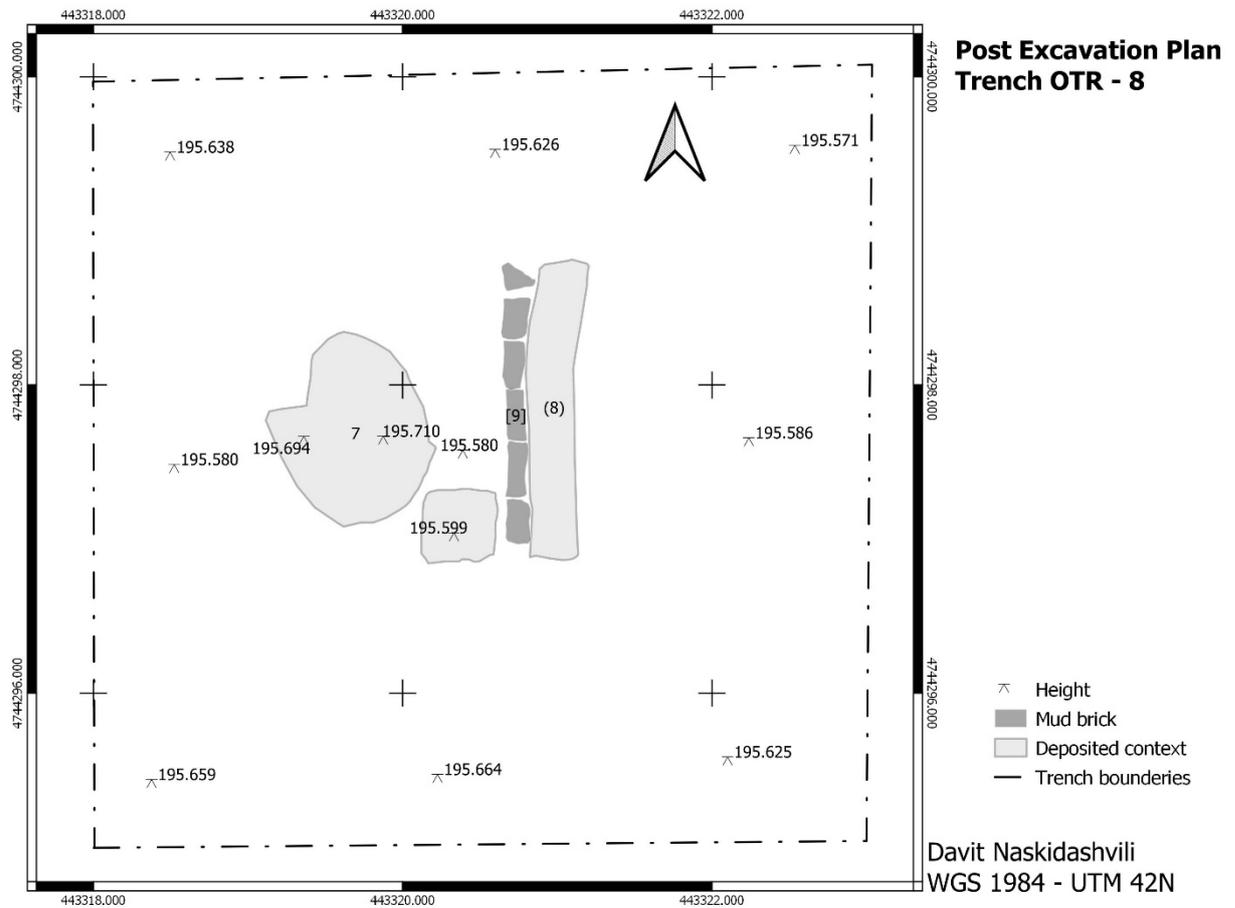
Fig. 11 *Post excavation plan of trench OTR8*

er, dating broadly from the 8th to 15th centuries (Aky-lbek 2013). The wall recorded here likely represents the latest alteration in this sequence, and was prob-ably constructed on the external face of earlier, erod-ed walls (similar to Akylbek, 2013:26). This latest wall was constructed of mudbricks with a stretcher bond-ed foundation segment and more complex bonding above, which included herringbone-style, vertical and irregular courses to incorporate features such as the entrance doorway and towers. The external face was covered in a mud plaster, which had been re-laid on at least two occasions, with indications that the ground level was rising between re-plastering episodes as each episode finished slightly above the previous one. Scars on this plaster showed that structures with pitched roofs had likely been built up against the city wall at some point in its history (Figure 14). The date of these structures is unclear, but this is a common pattern of occupation at such sites, with later build-ings constructed against the semi-abandoned defenc-es of Merv (Herrmann, Kurbansakhatov, and Simpson 2001:44).

From the texture of the mud plaster on the wall's ex-terior, it appeared that the plaster contained organ-ic remains including straw or chaff, which are often

added to control shrinkage and aid adhesiveness (Cooke 2008:87–88). Some of the organic remains were charred and preserved within the plaster and samples were taken to assess potential for radiocarbon dat-ing of the different replastering phases to work out when this wall was first plastered and for how long it was carefully maintained. A 1m wide trench was also excavated against the wall's foundations to investi-gate their depth, what it was built upon, and to find material that might provide a *terminus post quem* for its construction. The foundation of the wall was not substantial, apparently consisting of only 1-2 cours-es of mudbricks, which could mean that it was con-structed quickly and may have been more of a cos-metic renovation of the substantial earlier phase of walls than functional one. Excavation on the southern part of the site has also shown that later phases of wall construction are built onto earlier ones (Akylb-ek 2013) and therefore a substantial foundation might not be necessary as this would be a thickening of the defences rather than construction of an entirely new defensive wall.

Fig. 12   *Overview of site presentation work at Otrar*

Fig. 13   *Section of shahristan walls showing eroded tower and entranceway*

Fig. 14   *External face of preserved part of shahristan defences showing tower and plastered fortification wall with sondage excavated to investigate its foundations*

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The *shahristan* test trench OTR6 demonstrated a pattern of occupation which seems similar to the phases described in a nearby part of the site (Akishev, Baipakov, and Erzakovich 1987:15–30), with a hiatus in the tightly packed, earthen architecture for a period. Further work is needed to ascertain the date and character of the earlier phase of mudbrick architecture, but the return of this style of occupation seems to have happened by at least the mid-14th century in this area. The deposits built up between the two architectural phases show a certain amount of non-architectural occupation in this period, with tandoor ovens, floor surfaces and dumped deposits building up. Continued excavation to the earlier level of occupation may help to clarify if the chronology is similar to earlier observations of an abandonment from around the mid- 12th century (Campbell 2021:109–11) or to the post- Mongol Conquest decades of the 13th century (Akishev et al. 1987:15–19).

Construction of the *rabad* wall probably dates to the 11th or early 12th century, although this date is pre-

liminary and based on pottery found in construction material within the wall. It may form part of a wider trend of wall-building around this time, approximately coinciding with a major renovation of the defenses of Otrar's *shahristan* (Akylbek 2013:26). A similar trend has been noted at sites across the region, with a large wall encircling the suburbs of Bukhara dated to around the 10th century (Rante 2022:266) and a major walling of Merv and its suburbs in the 11th and 12th centuries (Brun and Annaev 2000:24–27, 2001:40–41; Lunina 1969:117). The construction of substantial defences around suburban areas does have precedents in the Otrar Oasis, for example at Kuik Mardan (Dawkes et al. 2019:137–40), and there may be a trend for fortifying *rabad* areas in periods where there is increased competition for resources such as those of rising populations or environmental stresses. It is important to note however that accurately dating these defensive walls remains difficult and further work might be able to contextualise the *rabad* wall at Otrar and similar defences in the region. Overall they remain under-examined and current attempts to see wider patterns in these structures rely on a certain level of conjecture at present.

Small-scale survey and test pitting in industrial areas in the eastern *rabad* have confirmed industrial activity, especially the presence of kilns in these areas. Excavation also revealed a grave of unknown date, and it is possible there are further graves in this area. An additional industrial area was noted in the northern area of the *rabad* not far from the *shahristan* (OTR7), which may have been making fired bricks. Further work is required at both of these sites, as well as to locate further areas of industrial activity across the city. Renovation work provided the opportunity to record and investigate a phase of the *shahristan* wall which was likely built in the late 13th or 14th century, based on dating of wall phases in the southern part of the site (Akylbek 2013:26). Further dating would help to refine the chronology of this wall phase, but multiple replastering episodes were observed which suggest it was maintained for some time. Access into the city appears to have been through a small doorway which was protected by a protruding tower and connected onto a north-south running street across the *shahristan*. Water runoff from this street appears to have eroded a gap in the city wall and it is likely that the original street surface is also considerably eroded from this process.

In this initial season to map and date changes taking place in Otrar's urban organisation between the 11th and 15th centuries, several areas of interest have been identified and further data has been gathered to better understand how the city was changing under Turco-Mongol rule. Preliminary observations suggest that the substantial defensive wall which surrounded the *rabad* was likely built sometime in the 11th or 12th centuries, and that by the end of this century the *shahristan* at Otrar may have been at least partially abandoned. It is unclear how long the *rabad* wall remained effective as a defence or boundary, and how the fortification was defended but further work

aims to investigate these issues. The next step for work at Otrar is to better map the *rabad* area and its surrounding wall. This will be carried out by drone and walkover survey, complemented by geophysical survey (specifically magnetic survey) in certain areas which might provide details on the layout and character of buildings in the *rabad*. At the same time, work will continue on the *shahristan* to date occupation layers and chart changes in the most densely occupied part of the city. This further analysis and refinement of dating will form the basis of a comprehensive analysis and contextualisation of the archaeological evidence to see how Otrar reacted from the various historically attested Turk and Mongol attacks, plague and other natural disasters. It will also consider the extent to which other factors which may not appear in historical accounts such as climatic variation or environmental management may play a role in the changing nature of urban occupation at Otrar.

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Phasis From Arabs to the Russian Empire

(Review of the Written Sources)

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The history antique town of Phasis includes three millennia. Its primary location still is an enigma for Georgian archaeology. The location of the first Hellenic colony is still obscure. We have no researches, which proves the location of Phasis as it was during the period, when Strabo was living, but contemporary researches indicate on the fact that the history of Phasis has been continuous. Fieldworks are mainly focused on the identification of the Antique period Phasis, but most of the publications finishe on the Late Antique period. Written sources about the second part of the chronology, which includes the period from VII century AD till XIX century are scattered sporadically and are not unified into a whole research

An important role in the formation of the ecosystem of Kolkheti lowland has the river Rioni and its affluences. River Rioni and its affluences connected the sea and hinterland. It is obvious that such an important artery would not lose its trade economic function during the Middle Ages as well. It is clear that sailing on river Rioni was possible to the direction of the flow, but sailing to the opposite of the flow from Poti to Kutaisi is controversial. Despite the fact that there is a notice to Jean Chardin about the using of Ottoman galleys were used for sailing to the opposite of the flow of river Rioni **(Jean Chardin 1975:241).**

There are several suppositions about the location of Phasis. Gela Gamkrelidze unified all twelve versions, which are more or less reasoned and have the right for existing **(Gamkrelidze 2012).** From them in none of it is mentioned the location of Medieval Ages Phasis (Poti). Telling of history stops on Late Antique-Early Medieval period. And the main aim of this article to promote the history of Phasis from the Arabs till the Russian Empire and gather schematically those written sources, which indicated the geopolitical importance and character of the city from the Arabs till the Russian Empire.

Complex historical and written sources about Phasis are indicated in three different publications, such are: Otar Lortkipanidze, Maqsime Berdznishvili, Gela Gamkrelidze (for addition see: Berdznishvili 1969, Lortkipanidze 2000, Gamkrelidze 2002).

An important notice is marked in the so called „Book of Epistle" (Universal Epistle), in which is reflected confrontation between Armenian Church to Albanian and Georgian churches. An interesting moment is the list of cursed bishops, which might consist of disfigured toponyms as well.

"... your ancestor the bishop of Kartli blissful Gabriel cursed our blissful parsons with their locum tenens and their names are: Theodoros bishop of Portis,.." **(Jafaridze 2015).**

The main publication of the Book of Epistle belongs to Zaza Aleksidze, who mentions and discusses the interpretations of toponym „Porti" by different authors. For example: Ivane Javakhishvili identifies it to Bort, Sargis Kakabadze identifies to Berta (Cheleti), and Korneli Kekelidze identifies this toponym to Ninotsminda/Berta (**Aleksidze** 1968:161).

Above mentioned toponym Porti is obscure and it might not be considered that under this toponym is meant Poti/Phasis. But other upcoming researches might make understandable this task.

An important and interesting piece of information about the toponym of Phasis-Poti gave us Armenian historian Levondi, in VIII century. Besides this, he names the city Poti and a very interesting geopolitical picture might be read in this notice

„After that, when in Armenian country was died out the ancestral of Sanakhararo, inhabitants as sheep, were grabbed to wolves. Evil, trouble and danger was happened to Armenian country and it was caused by the enemy, the inhabitants were disturbed by difficulties and restive life. Their moan was reached to the sky. Sumbat Courapalates and other Nakhara-

ries left their place and asked for another town to the Greek King for living and pastures for their herds. The king gave them Poti in the country of Egrisi, where they were living for six years **(Tsagareishvili 2012:121)**.

We can say for sure that in those historical sources which we have, toponym Poti is ancient and is used for the first time.

For the historiography of Poti a very important written source is kept in the life of Giorgi Mtatsminde- li- Head of Monastery of Iverion, about who is told by his pupil, Giorgi Mtsire. According to the supposition of K. Kekelidze, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli might be written in 1066-1068, when the king was Bagrat IV **(Kekelidze 1957:248)**.

A very interesting passage for us connected to the town Poti looks like so:

„And when we left and reached to Samison, city located near to the sea and where we sold our donkeys and sailed by boats to Abkhazia, and reached to Poti and then by the donkeys reached to Kutaisi" (Giorgi Mtsire 1994:221).

XII century is a very important century for Black Sea region, when started a new colonization. From this time was activated Genoa, which established trade centers in the Black Sea region. The main town, we can say a gatherer one was Kafa (Khappa), same Feodosia (Teodosia), which was located on the south-eastern coast of Crimean Peninsula. Its trade interests were spread to the Western Georgia. Many bookkeeping notices of Genuan and Venetian traders are kept in archives, such are Archivo di Stato di Venezia – ASV, Maggio Consiglio – MC/CM, Archivo di Stato di Genova – ASGe and Archivo Segreto – AS. Unfortunately we have no direct access to those archives, but scientist- Sergei Karpov uses a big part of those notices in his publications. He mainly in his publications reviews notices about the trade by Genuans in Trabzon Empire and Crimea. And it is obvious that in his publications are spread information about Phasis, where he cites documentation. Among them are important notices for us.

In 1380 Crimean Tatars oppressed Genoa traders who were on the peninsula and this fact caused deficit of wheat stock in Ghazaria[1]. And Genoa traders decided to find an alternative way for purchasing wheat. In bookkeeping notice date to 1386 is mentioned that Genoa traders from Phasis (Poti) and Zichia (Cherkessia) purchased 20 modiod and 3 cantari[2] wheat that is about 5,8 tons. For these they paid about 84,5

Trebizond silver aspros. It is also known that the purchase was done by Bartolomeo di Giulio and O. di Finario. After this trade arrangement their winning was about 5 percent. It is also mentioned that purchased wheat was transported by use of Trepizond ships towards Kapa **(Karpov1993:65)**.

We have other sources, where are mentioned some trade arrangements from Phasis seaport. More precisely trade with wheat and slaves[3], but other accounting details are not known, because the research of Sergei Karpov is dedicated to the crisis in Black Sea region in XIV century, which was caused by activate of Mongols in Black Sea region and appearance of Black Death **(Karpov1997:65-77)**.

Before positioning of Turkish garrison in Poti, a very important notice is given by Venetian diplomat Amrozio Contarini, who traveled in the second half of XV century in the Caucasus. His main aim was travelling in Persia, more precisely to become ambassador on Uzun Hasan door **(Shamilidze 2001:86)**. Contarini passed and described the coast of Black Sea. From Batumi he went to Guria and Poti, through Samegrelo he went in Kutaisi, Skanda and Shorapani **(Shamilidze 2001:86)**. We should mention the fact that Vakhtang Shamilidze certified source published in 1836- *„the journey of Ambrozio Contarini the ambassador of the Venetian Republic to the ruler of Uzun Hasan,- Library of Foreign Writers in Russia, I СПБ., 1836"*. But in this source in original one and the other translated into English is mentioned Phasis. It is obvious that in XV century Poti is a Georgian version of Phasis and for Vakhtang Shamilidze those toponyms have equality. Notices about Ambrozio Contarini by Vakhtang Shamilidze is short one, because his monography is more informative, catalogue type about foreign scientists.

Ambrozio Contarini stayed in Phasis for four days and gave us about the social-economic information about Phasis. So it is relevant to give you some passages about city Phasis.

„on 29th of June we reached „Varti"[4], horses were very tired and landed on the coast, from where they were sent to Fasso".- Fasso in scholium is determined as Phasis **(Ambrozio Contarini 1873:117)**. Probability the determination in scholium belongs to the translator from Italian language- William Thomas.

„1st of July, 147 we arrived at the confluence of river Fasso, and along which are populated Megrelians, which act like crazy. From ship we moved into the boats and then we sailed to the island about which is

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1   Ghazaria-Khazareti. Latin name of Crimea
2   Modioi and Cantari- Byzantine capacity of weight and litres

3   About Genoa traders' colonies see the newest publication by Khvalkov (Khvalkov 2017:3) (Pl.V)
4   Varti- Batumi

said that is was ruled by king Areta, father of poison-ous Medea. We spent this night there and were dis-turbed by mosquitos and could not deal with it" **(Am-rozio Contarini 1973:118).**

„on the morning of 2nd July we sailed by boats to the town, called Asso[5], which is located on the river and is surrounded by the forest. The width of the riv-er is about two shooting distance of arbalest. When we arrived we met Nicolo Capello from Modoni, who settled here and got Islam, Cherkessian woman Marta, who was the slave of Genoans; sister was Genoan as well, who was married and settled here. I was shel-tered by Marta, who take care of me until 4th of July. Fasso belongs to Megrelians and the head of them was Bendiani (Dadiani). It has no big territories, only three days are necessary to see it. Here are many forests and mountains. Men are very rude, they shave off their hair like Franciscanium monk. Here are many quaries, they produce small amount of cereals and wine, which has low quality. Habitants are poverty, they eat millet porridge. A little amount of wine and salted fish is im-ported from Trabzon and salt is imported from Kappa. They produce with little amount of wax and fabric. If they were hardworking they should have enough fish for them. They are Christians and follow to the rules of Greek church, but they have many heretical **(Ambrozio Contarini 1873:118).**

Ottoman archive notice date to 1582.

„Repair of Poti fortress.

I order to the Beylerbey that:

Poti fortress, which is located on the sea coast and is built by the wooden materials and after a very long rains is was seriously damaged, that is the rea-son why I requested its repair and restoration. your request was considered admissible and I order:

After arriving this order, you will go to the Poti fortress and will study the condition. After this you will repair necessary places and will make a restoration. Moreover, another notice reached to me that the ene-my raids in this side, be on the alert!

I warn you, not to make an offender step of my country caused by negligence!" **(Iildiztash 2012:89).**

Ottoman archive notice dates to 1584

„for repair of demolished Poti fortress.

You informed me that Poti fortress, which was built by wood and clay was damaged and it is neces-sary to be built by the stones. I order:

After arriving the order, above mentioned fortress should be repaired with the help of military forces." *(Iildiztash 2012:93)*

Above mentioned two Turkish archive, report like notice is the direct statement that before stone built fortress, there was a wooden fortress, which was de-molished after heavy rains. Presumably the ruler of Batumi Beylerbey reported to the sultan Murad III (1574-1595).

We can say that in this wooden fortress was Am-brozio Contarini in XVI century.

THE MAP OF PIRI REIS

Except an Ottoman archive notices, in the same con-text will be interesting to be discuss compass like map (Portalan) of Black Sea created by the Turkish trave-ler Piri Reis, dates to 1525. And it is obvious that the map is earlier notice than the archive sources. It is interesting that on this map toponym/hydronium is mentioned with the name of Pasha. As it seems name „Pash" was a common name before Ottoman inter-vention. **(Piri Reis 1525: Map of Black Sea) (Pic.1).** the map is created to the northern direction, but the in-scriptions indicated to the eastern Black sea region is marked inside out. From south to the north is clear Turkish inscriptions with Arabic transcription: „Ba-tum", „Pash", „Kamkhal"[6] and „Ankel". We should men-tion the fact that on this map is also to see the delta of river Rioni, which subdivides in two branches and among them might be an island.

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5   There might be a mistake in the translation of William Thomas and might be meant Fasso

6   Revaz Papuashvili identifies Kamkhal to Khulevi. For addi-tion see his publication. Except this, the author
indicated the notices of French trader Jean Chardin (Pap-uashvili 2017:16-77)

NOTICE ABOUT THE FORTRESS PASHI DATES TO 1578

One more interesting notice dates to 1578. In it is mentioned Mustafa Lala Pasha who commanded the campaign against to Safavid dynasty and he sends notice in Istanbul, where he describes that in Guria are located two towns, Pashi and Batumi **(Aidin 1986:69).**

The notice about invasion of Poti fortress by Ottomans is given by Jean Chardin in his journey. Except this, we have some idea about the landscape on the lower flow of river Rioni in XVII century.

„at the confluence of this river is located one rounded shaped island covered with the forest that hampers of sailing big ships, which are forced to stop at the distance of three or four miles from the confluence. From these islands on one of them that is much bigger than others, from the western side is visible remains of the fortress, which was built by Ottomans. It was built in 1578 under the order of sultan Murad III. More precisely this fortress was built by the commander of the army Mustafa, during the war between Ottomans and Persians. The emperor of Ottomans intended to conquest northern and western sides of the Black Sea, but is was impossible. He ordered the galleys[7] to sail up to Phasis, but the king of Imereti on this place, where the river is narrow ambushed and injured Murad's galleys. One of them was sank and others were escaped. In 1640 the fortress of Phasis was conquest by the united armies of Imereti, Guria and Samegrelo and was destroyed to the ground." **(Journey of Jean Chardin 1975:241).**

At the same time was built fortress by Ottoman Empire as it is mentioned in Turkish archive notice and dates to 1578 and which was discussed above. We can suppose that the reconstruction of the fortress organized by Mehmed Aga in 1723 might connect to the destruction happened in 1640, but about this task is necessary to look for other sources as well.

A big importance has also two maps date to the first half of XVIII centuries, which were published by Alan: Map A and B[8].

Map A consists of the regions of Abkhazia, Guria and Samegrelo, which has no a specific gradation (calibration) characterized for the map, but Map B is a realistic copy of Map A, which is kept in France in the Bibliotheque Hydrographique de la Marine (Alan 1953:99). Map is bilingual, it is fulfilled as in French as Georgian-Mkedruli inscription. In some cases map also has Russian inscriptions, it depends on how important the territorial unit is described.

Above mentioned map except the cartographic information, is a very important historical document. We should emphasize the inscriptions written on the legend of Poti fortress. The fortress is square-shaped, but the corner towers are subdivided like contrefort from the general corner. There is an inscription on inner perimeter of the fortress: fortress of Poti, in Georgian is called Fassu, was an old town. Here sits Pasha with double Tugh[9]: built it in 1723, *50 guns located: 50*[10] (Alan 1953:114). In 1723 the reconstruction was undoubtedly made by an architect Mehmed Aga[11] (Aidan 1986:71-72).

On the plan of the fortress is clearly remarked three gates, on which are Georgian inscriptions: on the eastern gate- „Georgia Gate", on the western gate, to the sea- „Istanbul Gate", and on the northern gate had an exit to the seaport and we can call is Seaport Gate **(Alan 1953:114) (pic.3).**

RUSSIAN INSCRIPTION:

город Потиско в которм Дву-бунчуской туретскоы Паша и построен в 1723 годы, а до тово времини на оном месте била древнаыа милитинскаиа. а в том городе 200 человек янчар и 50 пушек - *translation-* „Town Potisko , which ruled by Pasha with double tugh and was built in 1723, and old Milethian [town] ... and in this town are 200 janissaries and 50 cannons".

FRENCH INSCRIPTION:

La vile de Potinsk dans laquelle il y a un bacha de boucousouche. Translation- town Poti where is Pasha with double tugh.

So, we can say that Pasis/Poti has a many century-old history, which has not lose actuality during the Medieval Ages. I think that researches to this direction will give us a crucial information about Phasis.

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7 Galley- wooden spaded military ship (dictionary of unknown words)
8 Conditional divide of the map is given by the author-Alan

9 Double Tugh- an Ottoman high rank, which was only given to Beylerbeys'
10 Alan was helped to read and interpret Georgian texts by David Jafaridze (Alan 1953:101)
11 About the journey of Mehmed Aga and the reconstruction of the fortress is discussed in the paragraph of the plan and architecture of Poti fortress

Bartmann Jugs from Tbilisi
– Import and Local Imitations of the German Stoneware in Georgia

Lana Chologauri   (Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University)

Large amount of the archaeological materials has been revealed in Gudiashvili Square within the large-scale rehabilitation project in Old Tbilisi. [1] Archaeological discoveries are of a significant importance for the study of the history of medieval Tbilisi. Architectural remains from Gudiashvili Square mainly belong to the late middle ages (14th-18th cc) while ceramic assemblage dates to the period from the 9th up to the 19th centuries. A very important group of vessels has been discovered in the late medieval wine cellar located underneath the basement of 20th century building at Akhospireli St. N4 (fig.1). The vessels have been found in the context of an archaeological treasure, deliberately hidden in one of the Kvevri, among six, buried in the ground, sealed with circular stone lids (fig.2).[2] The treasure consist of five ceramic jugs (two decanting and three drinking vessels), bronze plate and silver Azarpesha (wine drinking vessel) (fig.3). Composition and ornamentation are two very specific details that all these ceramic vessels have in common - ornament of a schematized bearded man face made with a stamp or a mould. Fragments of one additional jug with similar design and bearded man face mask have been found in a dumped deposit nearby the cellar (fig.4)[3]. Ceramic vessels with a bearded man mask ornament are known as Bartmann or Bellarmine jugs/bottles. Even though, Bartmann jugs from Gudiashvili Square deserved much attention from the time of their discovery, scientific analysis has yet to be com-

pleted on this assemblage. A short article about their discovery, context and general description has been published in 2018 (Giorgadze, Niniashvili 2018: 95-98). Hence, this article is a first attempt to bring together their parallels, study origins and provide an interpretation of their distribution and production in Tbilisi.

Bartmann jugs discovered in Gudiashvili Square together with the ones from other archaeological sites of Georgia are identified as import and local imitations of the German (Rhenish) Stoneware. Before describing Bartmann jugs from Tbilisi in details, it is important to draw a short picture of the history of German stoneware in order to study the chronology, technology and interpret the value of them for the local society.

'Rhenish Stoneware' – is the most important pottery produced by Germany in 16th-17th centuries made of a very specific type of white clay which could be found in Rhineland (Valentiner 1911: 159). This term unites several groups and subgroups of pottery which was widely spread around the Europe and elsewhere during the late middle ages. Stoneware production in Germany began in the 13th century, but quickly developed into a major industry of the central and Northern Europe. Stoneware production centres' locations were mainly determined by the access on the white, stoneware clay deposits, sources of salt for glazing, timbers for firing the kiln, and of course the trade routes (Hinton 2012: 6, fig.2). One of the most important groups includes the vessels with a stamped bearded man face ornaments and is known as Bartmann (Germ. Bartmanner – bearded man) or Bellarmine jugs (related to the name of cardinal Robert Bellarmine, though the clear association of this pottery with his name is uncertain) (Gaimster 1997: 209) (fig.5). This group is mainly represented by jugs/bottles for decanting and storage (with spherical/ovoid body, tapered neck and a small, ridged loop handle attached from neck to the shoulder), and ale mugs/beer steins for drinking. Apart from the bearded face mask ornament, these vessels often have a stamped medallions depicting floral motives, coat of arms and etc. Bart-

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[1] Permanent archaeological monitoring and rescue works are being carried out since the beginning of the project in 2018 till today. The project is funded by Tbilisi Development Fund. First stage (2018) of the archaeological monitoring has been completed by the team of the National Agency for the Cultural Heritage preservation of Georgia. Second stage (2019-today) is being carried out by myself and Tatia Butsuradze.

[2] Works performed by T. Niniashvili, Z. Giorgadze, T. Gurgenidz (NACHPG) & the employees of the construction company IN-SI (Kh. Buzaladze, L. Kharebashvili, I. Tabatadze, G. Iluridze, L. Tabatadze, G. Buzaladze. Special thanks to Tsira Elisashvili for her support during the works & research.

[3] Vessel have been restored by Nino Kamkamidze.

mann jugs became the most popular ceramic forms in 16th-17th centuries Europe. One of the most distinctive detail of Bartmann jugs, apart from their décor is fabric, which was made of a white fine clay fired to a very high temperature (1200-1400°C). Pottery fired on such a high temperature became extremely dense, impervious to liquids and harder than steel (Draper 1984: 33; Hinton 2012: 5). This group of the ceramics is further divided into subgroups/categories, according to the glaze colour. Important group for us is a 'brown salt-glazed stoneware' since the supposed imported Bartmann jugs found in Georgia belong to this category. Brown glazed pottery is very characteristic for medieval ceramics, but the difference between Bartmann jugs and other brown glazed pottery is the glaze composition. Brown German stoneware is a salt-glazed production, while there were mainly tin and lead used for the glazing of medieval pottery. German stoneware was glazed by throwing the salt to the ceramic pieces while firing in a kiln. Dampened salt was added to the pottery through the kiln roof openings, when the heat inside was at its most intense (Hinton 2012: 10). Salt was forming a grey thin shining coating with a pitted texture like orange peel. Often the surface was covered with an iron-rich wash which fires to a mottled tan (Draper 1984: 33). Therefore, brown-glazed Bartmann jugs, bottles and mugs have a very specific mottled, brown surface which makes their identification very easy (fig.6).

Originated in Rhineland (Germany), Bartmann jugs soon became one of the widest spread ceramic group across the world. Reasons for this expansion and development can be deduced from examining the social-economic life in Europe during late Middle Ages. Rapid growth in trade-economic relations between the countries and regions soon demanded the need of the vessels which would be practical and solid for storage and transportation at a long distance. Big barrels were not always useful for transporting liquids on the long distance, therefore, demand on the small vessels increased. Characteristic details of the German stoneware such as shape, size, firm structure and imperviousness, were suitable for transporting, storing, decanting and drinking, which also increased its popularity. Increased demand on the pottery was also due to the developing visual culture of the Renaissance and a growing market for household objects and luxury items (Hinton 2012: 6). Therefore, Bartmann jugs/bottles which originated in Germany (Rhineland, Cologne, Frechen and etc.) was the first producer and original country of export of such production. Accordingly, Bartmann jugs first appeared in the countries to which Germany had intense trade-economic relations. First, distribution area of the German stoneware was to central and Northern Europe (Netherlands, France,

England), but in later centuries expanded to the New World, the colonial world and elsewhere. Presently an as of today, Bartmann jugs have been discovered worldwide, which must have been caused by the large web of trade and colonization process during 16th-18th centuries (Gaimster 1997: 105, 100-101, 109-110).

In order to study the Bartmann jugs from Gudiashvili Square, archaeological context of these particular vessels is noteworthy. As previously stated, they have been found 'in situ' in one of the wine storage vessels buried in the ground and sealed with stone lids. It appears that an owner deliberately hid these precious objects in anticipation of oncoming danger (safekeeping of precious belongings was usually caused by various dangers, expecting robbery, invasions, or unstable situation in the country). The danger, supposedly, could have been one of the devastating invasions in late medieval Tbilisi. The cellar, as well as other architectural remains on Gudiashvili Square, must have been destroyed by the conflagration and massive destruction. This assumption is based on the archaeological data from Gudiashvili Square: large burnt deposits, collapsed roofs and walls, traces of fire on top of the paved floors, abandoned and demolished dwellings and etc. (fig.7). According to the archaeological and art historical studies, these architectural complexes must have been demolished by the end of the 18th century. The battle of Krtsanisi (1795) was the devastating event in the history of Tbilisi as a result of which Tbilisi was plundered, demolished and burnt to the ground by Persian (Qajar) invaders. According to the written sources and studies, after 1795, Tbilisi was rebuilt and reborn on the ashes of its own ruins. As suggested, locals must have used surviving underground basements as dwellings after this devastating invasion. It is considered that only some years later, they managed to rebuild the city on the top of existing remains (Mania 2003: 150-167). It is due to this fact that many of the basements in Old Tbilisi which are preserved to present day, belong to the period of the 17th-18th centuries. I speculate that the cellar in which the 'treasure' was discovered must have also been destroyed in the end of 18th century. Although, we shall not exclude the possibility of the cellar being survived and reused in the beginning of the 19th century, which would expand the chronological frame of our vessels up to the first half of the 19th century. Thus, it is more believable that Bartmann jugs were produced before 1795, when ceramic production in Georgia was highly developed and which must have been interrupted after the devastating Battle of Krtsanisi.

Bartmann jugs from Gudiashvili Square (three decanting and three - jug-like drinking vessels) must have been produced by same craftsman in the same workshop (due to the shape and design motifs) (fig.

11-12). They are made of a red clay (considered as local), have a thin fabric, identical glazed surface and stamped medallion ornaments (bearded man head, floral motif) (table 1). They were possibly made in the ceramic workshop discovered in the basement of the adjacent building. Furnace and a large amount of unfinished pottery, as well as defective product and glazed stones points to the existence of the ceramic workshop from the high Medieval times (figs.8,9,10). Clay fabric, as well as glazing style of the Bartmann vessels from Gudiashvili Square are distinct charac-teristics of the pottery production of East Georgia in late 18th and 19th centuries (fig.11). Detailed description of the Gudiashvili Square Bartmann jugs is given below, in the Table 1.

Bartmann jugs from Gudiashvili Square should persuasively be considered as local imitations of the late medieval European pottery. A very important question arises when studying the origins and chronology of these vessels - what social-economic or cultural activities introduced the European ceramic forms to the local craftsman? Answer to this question is to be

Table. 1.   *Detailed description of the Bartmann jugs from Gudiashvili Square*

Find N	Address	Context	Small description	Long description
გმ046	Akhos-pireli str. N4	Basement with wine cellar. Treasure hidden in Kvevri (wine storage vessel)	Jug	Glazed jug with. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim and a spout, long cylindrical neck, vertically elongated spherical body and wide flat base. handle attached from the neck to the shoulder. Attached handle transfers in a relief line on both side under the rim low relief concentric lines are made around the neck. incised lines are made on the shoulders of the jug. opposite of the handle, below the neck there is four stamped ornaments made on the shoulders of the jug. 3 medallions of a schematized bearded man, of which middle one is bigger and dominant, and one of a floral ornament below them. Surface of the jug was fully painted with white engobe, on which shapeless ornaments/lines are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.
გმ047	Akhos-pireli str. N4	Basement with wine cellar. Treasure hidden in Kvevri (wine storage vessel)	Jug	Glazed jug with a handle. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim and a spout, long cylindrical neck, vertically elongated spherical body and wide flat base. handle attached from the neck to the shoulder. Attached handle transfers in a relief line on both side under the rim low relief concentric l lines are made around the neck. incised line is made on the shoulders of the jug. opposite of the handle, below the neck there is three stamped ornaments made on the shoulders of the jug. 3 medallions of which central one is a schematized bearded man, and other two on the sides of a floral ornament. Surface of the jug was fully painted with white engobe, on which shapeless ornaments/lines are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.
გმ048	Akhos-pireli str. N4	Basement with wine cellar. Treasure hidden in Kvevri (wine storage vessel)	drinking vessel	Glazed jug shape drinking vessel with a handle. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim and a spout, cylindrical neck, spherical body and wide flat bottom. handle attached from the neck to the shoulder. opposite of the handle, below the neck there is a stamped schematized bearded man medallion ornament made on the shoulder of the vessel. Surface of the jug was fully covered with white engobe, on which shapeless ornaments/lines are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.
გმ049	Akhos-pireli str. N4	Basement with wine cellar. Treasure hidden in Kvevri (wine storage vessel)	drinking vessel	Glazed jug shape drinking vessel with a handle. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim and relief concentric lines on it (for metal cap?), cylindrical neck, spherical body and wide flat base. handle is attached from the neck to the shoulder. one stamped schematized bearded man medallion ornament made on the shoulder. Surface of the jug was fully covered with white engobe, on which shapeless ornaments/lines are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.
გმ050	Akhos-pireli str. N4	Basement with wine cellar. Treasure hidden in Kvevri (wine storage vessel)	drinking vessel	Glazed jug shape drinking vessel with a handle. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim, cylindrical neck, spherical body and wide flat base. handle is attached from the neck to the shoulder. Surface of the jug was fully covered with white engobe, on which shapeless ornaments/lines are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.
გმ051	Akhos-pireli str. N4 / Gudi-ashvili Square N7/2	Bulk	jug	Glazed jug. restored. Made of a red clay. With rounded rim and a spout, long cylindrical neck (restored according to გმ046), oval body and wide flat base. handle attached from neck to the shoulder. A medallion of a schematized bearded man head stamped on the shoulder. Surface fully painted with white engobe, on which ornamets are made of a greenish paint, after that whole jug is covered with transparent glaze.

found after studying the economic history of late medieval Georgia and with a help of comparative methodology. Unfortunately, no petrographic analyses have been applied for the Gudiashvili Square finds, which is caused by various reasons (lack of laboratory studies on local raw materials (clay); lack of petrographic analyses being done on the medieval ceramic of Georgia and etc.).

Apart from the Gudiashvili Square, Bartmann jugs have been discovered in five different locations of Georgia based on the information of scientific literature and archaeological collections of local museums. They come from Narikala Fortress (Old Tbilisi), Kote Apkhazi street and surrounding areas (excavations of Synagogue Tkavi dead end, Old Tbilisi), Samtavisi (Kartli region) and Dmanisi (Kvemo Kartli region) archaeological sites (Mitsishvili 1974: 193-194, plate VI, VIII; Mindorashvili 2015: 268, plate III 9-13; Mindorashvili 2008: 78, plate XVI-55). Apart from the archaeological discoveries, there are Bartmann jugs preserved in the ethnographic collections of the Georgian National Museum.

Bartmann jugs from Narikala Fortress, represented by six pieces with different glaze and stamp décor are studied by M. Mitsishvili (Mitsishvili 1974: 193-194). All of them are made of a red clay, their surface is fully painted with white engobe and are covered with green, blue, yellow or yellowish-brown glaze (fig.13-14). Each has a bearded man face mask stamped on the upper body (fig.14). The Bearded man stamps on each piece vary which supports Mitsishvili's hypotheses that the craftsman may have worked with several different stamps (Mitsishvili 1974: 193-194, plate VI, VIII). However, various stamps may actually propose a theory that the vessels were produced in different ceramic workshops of Tbilisi. Another local imitation of the Bartmann jug is preserved in the History Museum of Tbilisi (discovered on Kote Apkhazi street) (fig.15). [4] This is a small green glazed drinking vessel very similar to the ones from Gudiashvili Square (shape and stamp), but very different from the Narikala's fragments (Mitsishvili 1974: 193-194, plate 8).[5]

One more Bartmann jug is preserved in the History Museum of Tbilisi. It was discovered in the late medieval architectural complex located underneath the Synagogue on Kote Apkhazi street (Tkavi Dead End) excavated by D. Mindorashvili. The jug, possibly used for storing liquids (because of its proportions), has a narrow circular rim, short tapering neck, oval body,

narrow flat base and a small loop handle attached from the neck to the shoulder (fig. 16). There are four stamped ornaments depicted on the salt-glazed mottled surface of the jug: Bearded man face on the neck and three medallions of a double schematized sun symbols on the lower body. According to the characteristic details this jug, must belong to the group of the ceramics produced in the workshops of Rhineland (Germany). D. Mindorashvili also suggests the German origins of this vessel (Mindorashvili 2008: 78-79, plate XVI; Mindorashvili 2009: 45-46, plate XXIX-55.

Fragments of the similar brown mottled surface Bartmann jug have been discovered in the late medieval dumped deposits at Akhospireli steet N2/4, Gudiashvili Square (approximately hundred metres away from the cellar). These two pieces (Find N: გმ500 & გმ501) can be identified as imported Bartmann jug's fragments and find their parallels among the Bartmanns found worldwide (fig.17). Exact date of these finds cannot be specified as they come from the dumped deposit which accumulates materials of 9th-18th centuries.

Eight Bartmann jugs with brown salt-glazed mottled surface are preserved in the ethnographic collections of the Georgian National Museum out of which four are of a small (used for decanting), while another four of a large proportion (used for storage) (fig.18). Shape of these jugs resembles the one from the History Museum of Tbilisi described above. Each of them has a bearded man face ornament stamped on the neck and various coat of arm depictions on the body. One of the jugs has a small, incised ornament of two hearts on each shoulders. It is persuasive that these Bartmann jugs from the ethnographic collection were made in Germany in 16th-17th centuries. Further research is required in order to confirm about precise origins, workshops and date, which may be achieved by focusing on the coat of arms' identification. Details about the exact provenance of these Bartmann jugs are unknown to us. According to the information given by the curator of the ethnographic collection, these vessels have been handed over to the museum in the beginning of the 20th centuries and probably belonged to the German families living in Bolnisi & Tbilisi in 19th-20th centuries.

Apart from Tbilisi, Bartmann jugs have been discovered in the late medieval deposits of Dmanisi and Samtavisi archaeological sites. Unfortunately, the information about Samtavisi discoveries is unknown to us as it has not yet been published (Mindorashvili 2008: 78-79). Bartmann jug's fragment from Dmanisi is preserved in the Dmanisi archaeological collection in the Georgian National Museum (Find N405).[6] This

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[4] I would like to express my gratitude to the Georgian National Museum for the permission to access the materials. © GNM

[5] I would like to express my gratitude to the Tbilisi History Museum of the Georgian National Museum for the permission to access the materials. © GNM

[6] My gratitude to the Georgian National Museum for giving

is a neck fragment of the salt-glazed stoneware with blue cobalt decoration of a bearded man face (fig.19). The fragment was discovered in 1937 and studied by D. Shelkovnikov. Shelkovnikov identified this find as a German stoneware produced in the ceramic workshops along the river Rhine and dated it to the 16th century (Shelkovnikov 1950: 163-164). Different version is suggested by D. Mondorashvili who thinks that the fragment must belong to the 18th century (Mindorashvili 2008: 78). Dmanisi Bartman jug has also been identified as an import of the German stoneware made in the Westerwald's ceramic workshops by N. Rezesidze (Rezesidze 2021: 85, fig. 15.2). In her doctoral research she considers the fragment as one of the most important items for the study of the late medieval Georgia's broad trade-economic relations. Indeed, Bartmann jug fragment from Dmanisi finds its close parallels with one of the Westerwald's production known as the 'jug of *Anselm Franz von Ingelheim, Archbishop-Elector of Mainz*' (City in Rhineland, Germany) (Hinton 2012: 42, table 28). The jug has a long narrow neck with the bearded man face mask, flattened spherical body, high foot and the surface covered with blue cobalt glazed relief ornaments (fig. 22). Depiction of the coat of arms, with an inscription around it, is stamped in the centre of the body. Name of the owner and exact date (1680) of production is mentioned in the inscription. Noteworthy is that the group of the German salt-glazed stoneware, with blue cobalt decoration, bearing portraits, names and coat of arms of the German elite, is produced in Westerwald production centres during 17th – early 18th centuries (fig.21-22). Therefore, Dmanisi fragment shall not be dated earlier than late 17th - early 18th centuries.

Salt-glazed Bartmann pitcher with cobalt and manganese decoration from Wasterwald is preserved in the ethnographic collection of the Georgian National Museum, together with the eight brown salt-glazed jugs described above (fig.20). This pitcher with a star decoration is very similar to the ones from Westerwald (fig.21) (Hinton 2012: 34, plate 20). There is the fragment of a lower part of the bearded man face preserved on the neck segment. This part of decoration resembles the one from Dmanisi.

After studying and describing the original German production and their local imitations similarity and difference between them becomes noticeable. It is obvious that the local potters tried to imitate German ceramics unknown to Georgian pottery production, but due to the lack of necessary raw materials they had to improvise - instead of a specific white clay they

have used locally accessible red clay and fired pottery on lower temperature; Instead of a salt they have used the glaze consisting of tin and lead; Georgian artisans did not aim to imitate exact shapes of the German ceramics. Instead of copying the forms, they have used the characteristic shapes for the late medieval Georgian pottery, moreover, they have added a spout to the jugs to make them more practical for decanting. Together with decanting jugs, Georgian potters also made small drinking vessels with traditional form of a wine vessel *Tchintchila*. As for applying the ornament and finishes, since the local artisans did not have the stamps used by German potters, they had to make a stamp/mould of a bearded man face on their own. Furthermore, a traditional high medieval technology of glazing was applied (white engobed surface glazed with green, blue, yellow or brown glaze; or white engobed surface painted with green ornaments and covered with transparent glaze). In conclusion, the main differences between the German stoneware and its local imitations are: fabric, raw materials of clay and glaze, firing technology and temperature, glazing technology, colours of the glaze, shapes of the vessels and details of the bearded man face stamps/moulds. Despite all the differences the main detail that makes innovative Georgian pottery be called the imitations of Bartmann jugs, is a bearded man face mask depicted on the neck or shoulder. Noteworthy is that Georgian Bartmann vessels are categorized into the group of the wine vessels according to their shape, size and archaeology context (found in wine cellar on Gudiashvili Square). If we consider a very long tradition of the Georgian winemaking and a very long list of the unique forms of wine vessels, it shall not be surprising that Georgian potters tried to create wine vessels which would have been different and innovative, inspired and influenced by European culture and yet had still traditional shapes.

To address the questions of how and when the European production appeared in the territory of Georgia, and when local potters started to imitate them, it is vital to explore the economic history and political situation in Georgia during the late middle ages.

The fact that some of the Bartmann jugs (Narikala Fortress, Kote Apkhazi street, Dmanisi, Samtavisi) were discovered in the 17th-18th centuries cultural deposits suggests that German stoneware must have been known for Georgians from late 17th-early 18th centuries. Earliest Bartmann vessels should have been imported in Georgia already in late 17th early 18th centuries through the trade-economic relations with Europe. Strong trade-economic relations between Georgia and surrounding countries is described by the French traveller Jean Chardin who travelled in

Georgia in 1670s. According to him, Tbilisi was crowded with merchants from many different countries, and that he has never witnessed any other place where so many different nationalities were gathering for a trade (K'aukhchishvili 1975). He also mentions that many Europeans lived in Tbilisi and in west Georgia (Radiani 1935: 85) and were engaged in trade. As we can see, based on the information given by Chardin Georgians were engaged in the trade-economic relations with Europe already in the second half of the 17th century. Although, in the 16th-17th centuries, economy and international trade of Georgia was very much in decline due to the geopolitical situation in the region (Persian and Ottoman Empires expansionism) and an inner political disorder in Georgia (The collapse of the Kingdom of Georgia and disintegration into the independent states and semi-independent principalities) (Tabuashvili 2020: 179). East Georgia was politically and economically depended on Persia, while west Georgia on the Ottoman Empire during the 16th-17th centuries (Tabuashvili 2020: 181-182).

Trade-economic relations of Georgia with outer world was broadened during the reign of Vakhtang VI in the early 18th century (Tabuashvili 2020: 183; Kikodze 1973: 390-393). Noteworthy in this period, is the diplomatic mission of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1713-1716) who travelled from Georgia to Europe for the political assistance. We can assume that the cultural and political impulses with Europe must have strengthened from this period. Georgia becomes an important country in the worldwide trade from 1740s and it is related to the reforms of the king Erekle II who reunited two East Georgian kingdoms (Kartli & Kakheti) (Tabuashvili 2020: 202). King Erekle II applied important measurements in the politics and economy of East Georgia to make Tbilisi become the key ring in the long and important chain of the worldwide trade routes crossing the Caucasus (Tabuashvili 2020: 203-207). The idea of Tbilisi becoming the centre of trade in the region was first conceived in the 1750s (Tabuashvili 2020: 203; Kakabadze 1940: 119). In fact, in the second half of the 18th century, Tbilisi became an economic centre of the Transcaucasia, reaching the trade-economic relations to India. One of the main trade routes connecting Ottoman and Persian empires crossed Tbilisi, in the meantime it is via this route, that the European goods were being imported to Tbilisi (Tabuashvili 2020: 210).

Unlike the Bartmann jugs from archaeological sites of Georgia, the ones preserved in the ethnographic collections of the GNM, have been imported as a result of the Germans migration in Georgia starting in 1819. German families coming from the Baden-Württemberg region established several colonies in Georgia and left important traces in Georgian culture. Together, with many different elements of their culture, Germans have brought their ceramics. Presumably these German families have brought the Bartmann jugs decorated with the family coat of arms and used them not only as vessels, but also as heirlooms. These Bartmanns bearing the cultural and ethnical identity must have had a huge importance to their owners. Indeed, studying the coat of arms depicted on each Bartmann jug may open another important page full of information for the study the history of the Caucasian Germans.

European ceramics and their local imitations are of a great significance for the study of a social-economic picture of the late medieval Georgia. These discoveries prove that in 17th-18th centuries Tbilisi was a part of the international trade despite the fact of being politically and economically depended on Persia. They also prove that Tbilisi was the place where European and Asian cultures met and exchanged their elements, where the demand on the imported luxurious and practical objects was remarkable in local aristocracy. Bartmann jugs which usually indicates the worldwide international trade proves that Tbilisi was an integral part of it. The fact that Georgian craftsmen tried to imitate European ceramic design details points to the local's aspiration not to lag behind the tendencies of the surrounding world. The interpretation of locally made Bartmann jugs as wine vessels once again indicates that production of Georgian wine vessels at a long stage of its development was adopting innovations along with the traditional forms. Late medieval ceramic assemblage from Georgia which unites Persian & Ottoman pottery, Kashan faience, Chinese porcelain, German stoneware and etc. is a mirror reflecting Georgia's broad relations with surrounding world. Bartmann jugs from Tbilisi is the important group of the archaeological materials, that highlights the early stage of the cultural and economic relations between Georgia and Europe.

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Figures

Fig. 1.   *Remains of the wine cellar from Akhospireli str. N4 Gudiashvili Square*

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Fig. 2.   *Discovery of the vessels in wine cellar. 'Treasure' hidden in Kvevri.*

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Fig. 3. *'Treasure' from the cellar. Five ceramic vessels (Bartmann jugs), bronze plate and silver Azarphesha.*

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Fig. 4. *Bartmann jug's fragments found nearby the cellar in the basement of Gudiashvili Square N7/2*

(restored by Nino Kamkamidze; photos by National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia & Lana Chologauri).

Fig. 5. *Rhenish Stoneware. Bartmann/Bellarmine jugs.*

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Fig. 6. *Rhenish Stoneware. Bartmann/Bellarmine jugs.*

After Hinton 2012: plate 8

Fig. 7.   *Late Medieval (most likely 18th century) basement & dwellings' ruins from Gudiashvili Square.*
Demolished & abandoned buildings with collapsed walls, ovens, storage pits, burnt floors and etc.

(photos by L. Chologauri & T. Butsuradze)

Fig. 8. *Ceramic kiln remains from the Gudiashvili Square N7/2 basement (yet unstudied in very details).*

Photo by L. Chologauri & T. Butsuradze.

Fig. 9. *Defective pottery from the dumped deposit next to the kiln. Gudiashvili Square N7/2*

(Photo by L. Chologauri & T. Butsuradze).

Fig. 10. *High Medieval (9th-13th cc) pottery fragments from the dumped deposit next to the kiln. Gudiashvili Square N7/2*

(photo by L. Chologauri & T. Butsuradze).

Fig. 11.   *Bartmann jugs. Gudiashvili Square, Tbilisi. Late 18th - Early 19th century.*

Drawings by Lana Chologauri
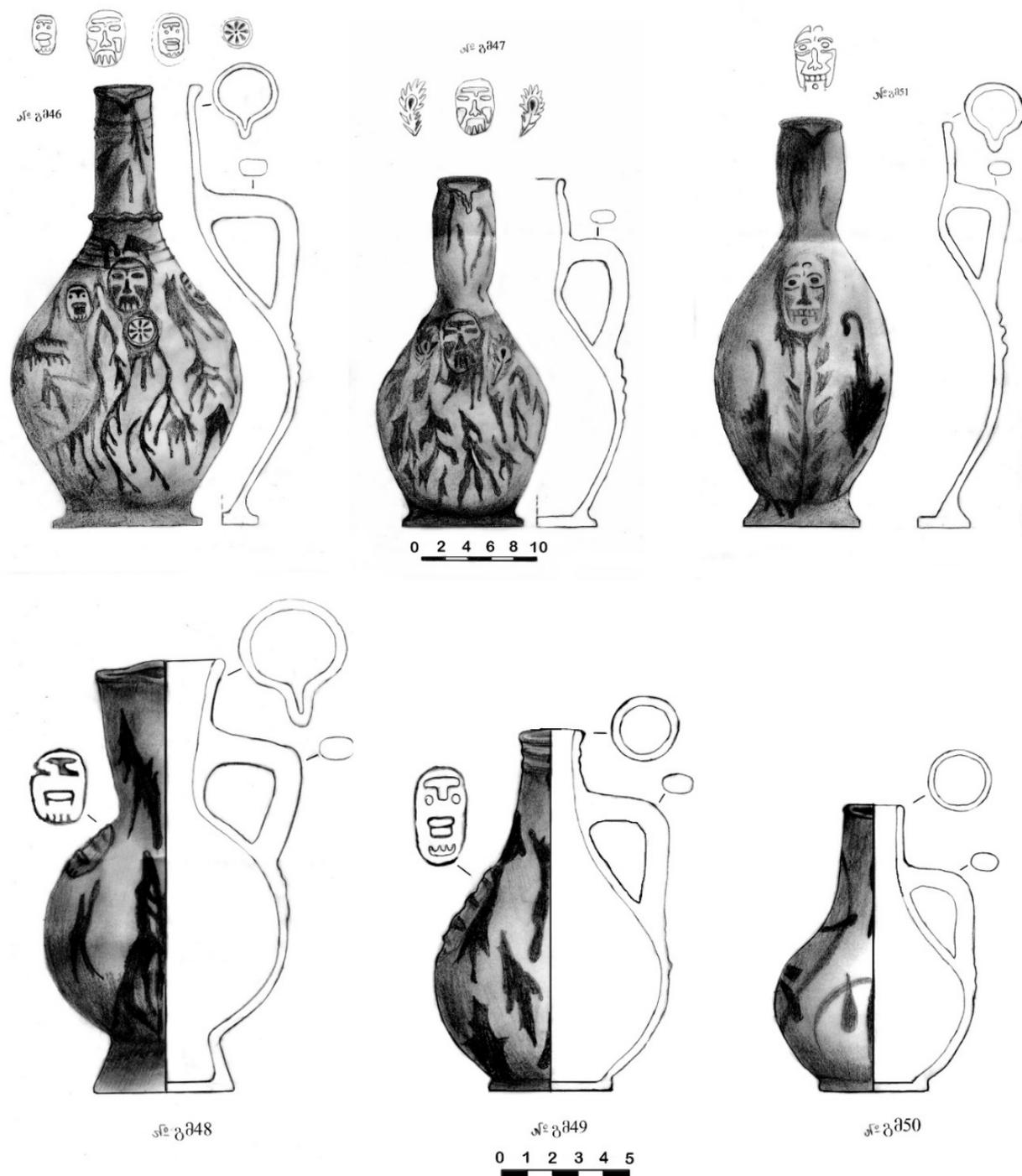
Fig. 12. *Six Bartmann jugs (Three decanting, three drinking vessels). Akhospireli street N4, Gudiashvili Square*

Fig. 13. *Bartmann jug. Narikala Fortress.*
After Mitshishvili 1974: plate VII.

Fig. 14. *Bartmann jugs' fragments. Narikala Fortress.*
After Mitshishvili 1974: plate VIII.

Fig. 15. *Bartmann jug. Kote Apkhazi str.*
© History Museum of Tbilisi, GNM

Fig. 16.   *Bartmann jug. Synagogue Excavations, Kote Apkhazi street.*

Photo by L. Chologauri with © of the History Museum of Tbilisi, GNM. Drawing by David Mindorashvili after Mindorashvili 2008: plate. XVI.

Fig. 17.   *Fragments of a brown salt-glazed Bartmann jug from Akhospireli street N2/4 Gudiashvili Square.*

(photo by L. Chologauri)

Fig. 18.   *Brown salt-glazed Bartmann jugs from the ethnographic collections of the Georgian National Museum.*

Photos by L. Chologauri with © of the GNM

Fig. 19.   *Bartmann jug fragment with cobalt decoration from Dmanisi.*

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Fig. 20.   *Bartmann jug with cobalt and manganese decoration.*
© GNM Ethnographic collection

Fig. 21.   *Bartmann jugs/pitchers with cobalt and manganese decoration.*
After Hinton 2012: plate 20

Fig. 22.   *Pitcher with the coat of arms of Anselm Franz von Ingelheim, Archbishop-Elector of Mainz*
After Hinton 2012: plate 20

Pontus Limes: Romans in Eastern Black Sea Region

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INTRODUCTION

The Ponto-Caucasian frontier defence system began functioning after the modernization-reorganization of the entire eastern defensive line by Vespasian (69-79)[1]. 72-76 significant forces began moving on the entire regions of the Roman Empire eastern borders. Created by Vespasian, the Cappadocian complex[2], which included Colchis, received two legions. These legions were stationed on the Cappadocia-Little Armenia line, at Satala and Melitene[3][4].

In Melitene was stationed the Legio XII Fulminata (Lightning) transferred from Syria, and in Satala the newly formed XVI Flavia Firma, which later been replaced by the XV Apollinaris. Satala and Melitene were considered as part of Cappadocia and, from a military-strategic point of view, the main distribution base of Roman forces in the Caucasus under the Cappadocian Legation. To the south of Melitene was beginning the Syrian Limes[5].

Trabzon was the Rome's hub and the military-economic center in eastern black sea region. From 64 AD it became the main center of the Roman garrison - Classic Pontica. Trabzon get to be starting point of the Roman defence system - the Ponto-Caucasus border line, which included the castellums of Hisos, Rize, Athena, Apsarus, Phasis, and Sebastopolis[6].

Until the middle of the 2nd century, the Ponto-Caucasian border line extended only to Sebastopolis. But between the years 132-152, the area of this defence system expanded to Pitsunda. The material and technical provision of the castellums located on the Ponto-Caucasus line was carried out from Trabzon[7].

It is known that the Romans built temporary wooden fortifications before the construction of permanent, long-lasting castles, 'Pilum Murale'[8][9]. We assume that it is possible the Romans built the same temporary wooden fortification in Apsarus as Flavius Arian (95-175 AD) mentions in Phasis. According to recent studies the construction of a permanent, long-term fortress in Apsarus begun in the second half of I century. The Apsarus castle over the next two centuries was one of the most significant military center in eastern Black sea region.

During the reign of Hadrian (117-138), as Ariane describes, a permanent 'Castella Murata' type defensive structure was already functioning in Apsarus, with five cohorts stationed there.

The presence of such a significant military force in Apsarus was due to its strategical circumstance. The fort was a main crossroads from the Colchis lowlands to the interior of East Asia Minor and, at the same time, closed the coastline. Its main function was to prevent the nomads of the North Caucasus and to Roman provinces of Minor Asia. The geostrategic importance of Apsarus increased even more from 20-s of second century, when kingdom of Iberia conquered a part of the Colchis coast.

Through the Ponto-Caucasian border defence system,

1 Bowersock, G.W. 1973: 'Syria under Vespasian' Journal of Roman Studies 63: 133–40
2 Crow, J.G. 1986: 'A review of the physical remains of the frontiers of Cappadocia' in Freeman, P.W.M., Kennedy, D. (eds), The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East. Oxford: 77–91
3 Bennett, J. 2002: 'The Cappadocian frontier: from the Julio-Claudians to Hadrian in Freeman, P.W.M., Bennett, J., Fiema, Z.T., Hoffmann, B. (eds), Limes XVIII. Oxford: 301–12
4 Sinclair, T. A. 1989: Eastern Turkey: an Architectural and Archaeological Survey III. London
5 Speidel, M.A. 1998: 'Legio IIII Scythica, its movements and men' in Kennedy, D.L. (ed.), The Roman Army in the East. Ann Arbor MI: 163–204
6 Dabrowa, E. 1998: The Governors of Roman Syria from Augustus to Septimius Severus.

7 French, D.H. 1988: Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor 2
8 Dobson, B. 1986: 'The Roman army: wartime or peacetime army?' in Eck, W., Wolff, H. (eds), Heer und Integrationspolitik. Die römischen Miliärdiplom als historische Quelle. Cologne: 10–25
9 Fink, R.O. 1971: Roman Military Records on Papyri. Cleveland

which successfully maintain military and economic stability in the region until the middle of the 3rd century. The attacks of the North Caucasian nomads on the Colchis and other Roman provinces ceased; Piracy and robbery were prevented; the security of the distant provinces of the empire was ensured and the local tribes also came under the real control of Rome.

From the beginning of the 4th century, the Roman border defence system, damaged by the barbarians, was renewed in the Eastern Black Sea region with its usual force, and its functioning lasted until the second half of the 4th century.[10]

1. PONTUS LIMES: ROMANS IN EASTERN BLACK SEA REGION

As a result of global foreign expansion, Rome faced a new geopolitical reality. In the east, his immediate neighbour became the powerful kingdom of the Parthian Empire. It was the only strong state bordering Rome[11]. The Parthian Empire did not recognize the Roman claims to world domination and fought for centuries to regain the great legacy of the Achaemenid Empire. The border between Rome and Parthia was crossing the Euphrates River.

The specific political situation near the border of the Euphrates had a huge influence on the Colchis[12], which from 65 B.C. was involved in the political system of Roman Empire. It is true that Colchis was territorially far from the Euphrates border and was not directly adjacent to the Parthia, but it played a significant role in Roman geopolitics[13].

Colchis bordered on Armenia, which were the main cause of the Parthian-Roman controversy and the main area of endless wars between them. In the ongoing permanent wars for supremacy in Asia, Colchis had to provide a powerful backing for Rome against the Parthia in the fight for Armenia[14]. In addition, the Eastern Black Sea coast had some strategical-communication significance for the East Black Sea region

and North Caucasus. Due to such a geostrategic position, the political status of Colchis changed several times during the frequent reorganizations carried out by the Romans in order to establish a powerful anti-Parthian large enough buffer zone in the eastern border regions. However, Roman garrisons did not appear in Colchis until the 60s of the Ist century, and the military-political interests of the empire in the region were defended by the kingdom of Pontus[15].

From 63 of the Ist century Emperor Nero (54-68 AD) finally rejected the system of "buffer" states and abolished the Pontus kingdom. Its territory, along with Colchis, was annexed to the province of Galatia. At the same time, the Bosporus kingdom was influenced under the direct protection of Rome. Roman garrisons were stationed on the Crimea and the Caucasus coast by Nero's decree. According to Flavius Josephus (37-95 AD), the aims of the empire in South and East Black Sea region were defended by 3,000 heavily armed warriors and a fleet of 40 ships. As it turns out, these ships belonged to Raven's squad. It is documented that at the time of Nero, Roman garrisons were stationed on the Colchis coast at three points - Apsarus, Phasis and Sebastopolis[16].

It is well known that before the construction of permanent, stationary military camps-castellums, Romans built the 'Pila muralia', temporary wooden fortifications. Remains of similar wooden structures have been found in Britain, the Netherlands, and the Rhine-Danube region. They are predominantly typical for the 1st century AD. It seems that even in the coastal areas of Colchis, the Romans had to build temporary fortifications of this kind of wood. In any case, this is not in doubt as far as Flavius Arian (95-175 AD)[17] is concerned, the wall of the first-century fortress of Phasis was made of clay and wooden towers stood on it. However, the Roman empire seems to have soon begun to modernize the fortification system of the eastern Black Sea.

The reorganization of the Roman border-defence system of the Eastern Black Sea, as well as of the whole of Asia Minor, is associated with the name of Emperor Vespasian (69-79 AD)[18]. In 72 AD, in order to increase the defence capabilities of the eastern borders, the provinces of Galatia and Cappadocia were united and

[10] Luttwak, E.N. 1976: The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: from the First Century AD to the Third. Baltimore

[11] Edwards N. Luttwak. The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire. From the First Century A.D. to the Third. Baltimore. 1981, pp.. 192-193; Tedo Dundua, Nino Silagadze. European Industrial Complexes of I Cycle of Capitalism and the Georgian Western Affiliations. Historical and Numismatic Tale. Tb. 2005, pp. 5-7;

[12] Crow, J.G., French, D.H. 1980: 'New research on the Euphrates frontier in Turkey' in Hanson, W.S., Keppie, L.J.F. (eds), Roman Frontier Studies XII. Oxford: 903–13a

[13] Braund, D. 1996: 'River frontiers in the environmental psychology of the Roman world' in Kennedy, D.L. (ed.), The Roman Army in the East. Ann Arbor MI: 43–47

[14] Blockley, R. 1987: 'The division of Armenia between the Romans and the Persians at the end of the fourth century AD' Historia 36: 222–34

[15] Mitford, T.B. 1974: 'Some inscriptions from the Cappadocian Limes' Journal of Roman Studies 64: 160–75

[16] Lekvinadze 1969, 87; Kiguradze / Lordkipanidze / Todua 1987; Speidel 1992, 204–208; Mamuladze / Khalvashii / Aslanishvili 2002, 34–35; Kakhidze 2008, 313, figs. 19 and 20; Gamkrelidze, 2014, 11–15; Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski / Mamuladze, 2018.

[17] Bosworth, A.B. 1971: 'Arrian and the Alani' Harvard Studies in Classical Philology 81: 217–55

[18] French, D.H., Lightfoot, C. (eds) 1989: The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire. Oxford

established the Cappadocian Limes"[19]. Colchis also included the Limes. The establishment of the Cappadocian Limes was due to the complication of the circumstance on the eastern borders of Roman Empire, which was caused by the activation of the nomadic tribes of the Alans, the actual loss of Roman influence in Armenia and the impending threat from the Parthian Kingdom[20].

The importance of Cappadocia as a border province was especially heightened by the fact that in the same year 72, Vespasian abolished the 'buffer' kingdoms of Little Armenia and Commagene. Consequently, huge attention was paid to the fortification of the Cappadocian border line. The Cappadocian Limes received two legions stationed directly near the border, Cappadocia - on the line of Little Armenia, Satala and Melitene. The XII Fulminata (Lightning) Legion from Syria was deployed in Melitene, and the recently formed XVI Flavia Firma in Satala, which was later replaced by the XV Apollionaris Legion transferred from Pannonia.

The last part of the Upper Euphrates border-defence system was Satala and Melitene. They were considered to be the main distribution base of Roman military units in Cappadocia and, in military-strategic terms, under the command of the Cappadocian commander-in-chief in the Transcaucasia (currently five Roman fortresses have been identified on the Satala-Trabzon region)[21]. The Syrian Limes began south of Melitene, while Satala was connected to Trabzon by a network of fortifications. From this last point originated the next Roman frontier-defence system, which controlled the whole of Colchis. This system also began functioning actively in the Vespasian era[2223].

Trabzon was the basis of Rome's Caucasian policy and an important military-political and economic center of the region. From 64 AD, it became the main base of the Roman fleet - Classic Pontica. Later, parts of the Classic Pontica had to be stationed in the harbours of Colchis. The material and technical provision of the castellums located on the border of the Eastern Black Sea coast was supplied from Trabzon.

To the east of Trabzon, on the seashore, small garrisons were stationed at Hisos, Rize, and Athena. In addition to these points, 63 AD years later, Roman garrisons were stationed at Apsarus, Phasis, and Sebastopolis. Until the middle of the 2nd century, Sebastopolis was the farthest outpost of Roman Eastern

Empire in the north western Caucasus. Between 132 and 152 AD, military garrisons were stationed in Pitius, thus completing the organizational modification of the Ponto-Caucasian border.

The main purpose of the Ponto-Caucasian border system was to strengthen Rome's positions in the region, to restrain the expansion of Iberian kingdom to the coast, to control the crossings of the North Caucasus. In addition to its strategic functions, its responsibilities included fighting piracy and securing trade.

The geopolitical importance of Colchis increased exponentially at the beginning of the 2nd century, when Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD)[24] began preparations for an expedition against Parthia-Armenia. The Eastern Black Sea coast was a favourable strategic area for Armenia and, if necessary, the Romans could invade Armenia from here as well. In addition, Roman garrisons fighting in Armenia were supplied with food and additional forces from the Black Sea, mainly from Trabzon.

It seems that some changes should have taken place in the Ponto-Caucasian border system during Trajan's time. Given the strategic importance of the Meotida-Colchis route, and especially the harbour of Trabzon, it is possible that Trajan placed additional forces in the Roman forts on the eastern Black Sea coast.

After the Eastern campaign of Trajan, the foreign policy of Rome formed during the reign of Hadrian (117-138 AD). The empire exhausted all resources for beginning any of global wars and was forced to move to total defenses along the entire areas of the borders. Adrian renounced the provinces established by Trajan in the territories of Armenia and the Parthia, and returned to the Euphrates frontier, although the Parthian kingdom was unable to take advantage of the situation. After defeat during Trajan's campaign, he also found no strength to go on the counterattack in former Asia.

In 129, Emperor Hadrian personally visited to Cappadocia, where he also visited Trabzon when he visited the province. It seems that after Hadrian became acquainted with the situation on the ground, the modernization of the Roman border-defence system of the Eastern Black Sea began. 131 During a business trip to the Black Sea coast by Flavius Arrian, Consul of the Province of Cappadocia, the process of upgrading and strengthening Roman outposts along the Trabzon-Sebastopolis line was not yet complete. The construction of the port, which began under Adrian's order, was still going on in Trabzon.

According to Arrian, Apsarus looked particularly impressive from the Roman forts of the eastern Black Sea. Apsarus has long been identified with present-day Gonio[25]. The castle is surprisingly well preserved. It is

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[19] Mitford, T.B. 1980: 'Cappadocia and Armenia Minor: historical setting of the Limes' Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt 2.7.2: 1169–228

[20] Matthews, R. (ed.) 1998: Ancient Anatolia

[21] Mitford, T.B. 1998: 'The Roman frontier on the upper Euphrates' in Matthews, R. (ed.), Ancient Anatolia. London: 254–72

[22] Isaac, B. 1992: The Limits of Empire: the Roman Frontier in the East

[23] Kennedy, D.L. (ed.) 1996: The Roman Army in the East

[24] Keppie, L.F.J. 1986: 'Legions in the East from Augustus to Trajan' in Freeman

[25] Weber, E. (ed.) 1976: Tabula Peutingeriana

rectangular in plan, with towers and a castle fence showing traces of multiple restorations. During the reign of Emperor Hadrian, Apsarus had the strongest Roman garrison in the eastern Black Sea coast.

2. A RECENT TILE STAMP IMPRESSIONS FROM APSARUS FORT

Imprints of stamps on ceramic building materials were found at or near most garrison places of the Roman garrisons in Colchis.[26] Recent archaeological researches and a study of the surviving epigraphic materials from the Roman fort of Apsarus that was established under Nero on the Southern Colchian coast has revealed recent stamp impressions and led to revised readings of previously known specimens[27][28].

jacent to it (some also with fragmentary stamp impressions), discovered during previous expeditions, belong to the same destruction layer. The distribution of this debris indicates that the collapsed roof was never cleared away and therefore that the room it once covered (and most probably the entire building) was no longer in use when the roof came down. Thus, this entire layer consists of debris from the collapsed roof of the early second-century praetorium, parts of which fell into the building while others dropped to the ground just outside[29].

Unfortunately, the Roman ceramics from Apsarus usually have an eroded or softened surface due to chemical reactions with the local soil. When excavating tiles in this state, it is therefore very easy to overlook fragmented or badly preserved imprints on their surfaces.
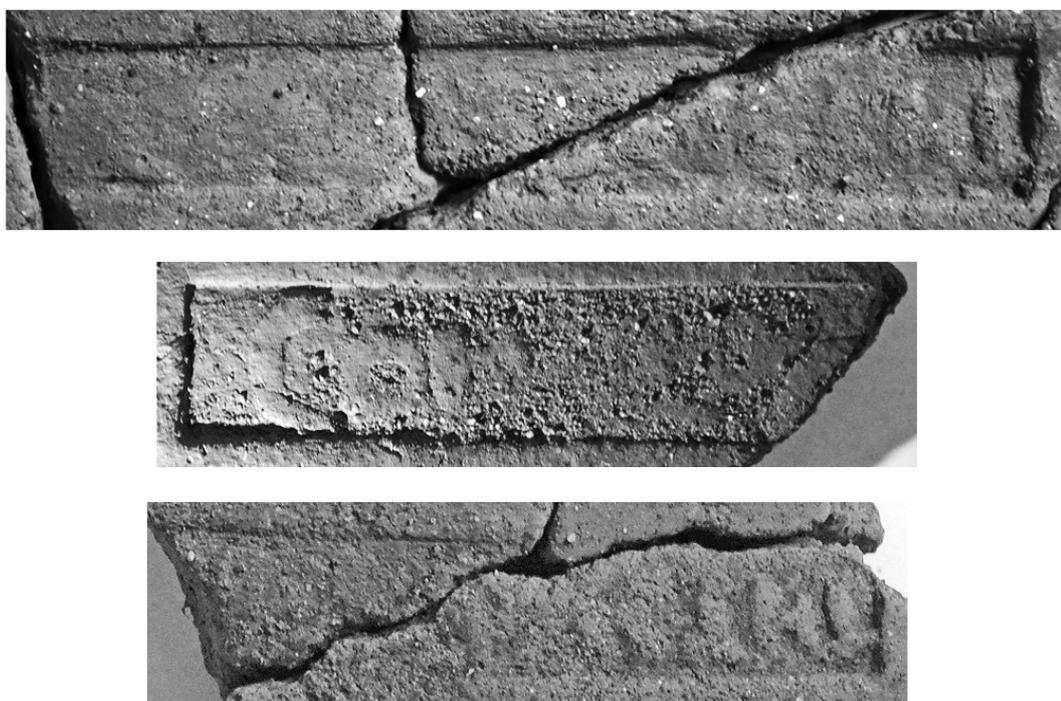
Fig. 1.   *Recent stamp imprintings from Apsarus*

The latest stamp imprints was found during 2017-2018 Archaeological expeditions in Apsarus. These damaged tiles belong to the remains of the praetorium that was built during the first decades of the second century. The stratigraphy reveals that other roof tiles covering the Roman time 'mosaic' and the area ad-

It was thus possible to identify 8 fragmentary impressions of a Latin stamp impression. 3 This includes one specimen, which could be put together from three fragments and which, although in part badly abraded, preserves some letters and the complete dimensions (fig. 2A). The original impression thus has the shape of a simple rectangle of 146 × 22 mm. It helped to identify all the other fragmentary impressions as products of the same die. With the complete outline at hand and the known position of some of the letters, it was possible to reconstruct the original imprint (fig. 2):

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[26]   Lekvinadze 1969, 87; Kiguradze / Lordkipanidze / Todua 1987; Speidel 1992, 204–208; Mamuladze / Khalvashi / Aslanishvili 2002, 34–35; Kakhidze 2008, 313, figs. 19 and 20; Gamkrelidze 2014, 11–15.

[27]   Lander, J. 1984: Roman Stone Fortifications: Variation and Change from the First Century to the Fourth. Oxford

[28]   Speidel, M.P. 1983a: 'The Roman army in Asia Minor: recent epigraphical discoveries and research' in Mitchell, S. (ed.), Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia. Oxford: 7–34

[29]   Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski, R., Mamuladze Sh., Speidel M.A. New and Revised tile Stamps from the Roman fort of Apsaros (Gonio, Georgia). 2022.
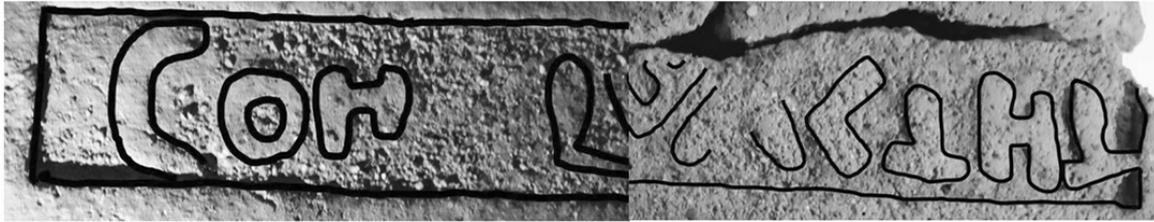
Fig. 2. *The complete recent stamp impression (According to Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski, R., Mamuladze Sh., Speidel M.A. New and Revised tile Stamps from the Roman fort of Apsaros)*

With the help of such fragments, it is possible to arrange a composite image of the complete original stamp impression (fig. 2):

The inscription takes up one line and consists of 10 visible Latin letters and symbols. The first 3 letters clearly read COH (fig. 2 A–B) and appear to be followed by a gap. A punctuation mark or a number may have stood here. The following group of 4 letters appears to read LVMC, with the right hasta of the V "leaning" on the left hasta of the M. From the middle of the right, oblique hasta of the V, a small vertical stem with a slightly circular end seems to be rising (fig. 2 B–C). Its meaning is unclear. Perhaps it is a clumsy or failed attempt at inserting a short horizontal stroke over the numeral V, or the result of a random local damage to the die's surface. The three final letters resemble THT written upside-down (fig. 2 A and C). All surviving impressions appear to stem from the same die. Thus, the letters of the new stamp impressions can be read (cf. fig. 2):

<div align="center">COH [.] LVMC⊥H⊥</div>

The Latin letters and the find spot firmly establish a military context. Hence, COH is no doubt to be read *coh(ors)* or perhaps rather *coh(ortis)*, with the genitive indicating the cohort's ownership or production of the tiles. The next four letters seem to refer to *le-*

gio V Macedonica and can be read *l(egionis) V M̂ac(edonicae)*, probably with MA in ligature (unless *M(a)c(edonicae)* was intended). At any rate, similar stamp impressions of *legio V Macedonica* are well attested. The position of the V, which is "leaning" on the M, recalls other stamps of *legio V Macedonica* (fig. 4):

Typically, stamps with both terms *cohors* and *legio* appear on bricks and tiles at sites that lie far away from the legions' base camps and were therefore produced by detached cohorts. In nearly all known cases the term *legio* takes pride of place and *cohors* is followed by an ordinal number. Thus, for instance, such tiles of *legio V Macedonica* bear the following inscriptions:[30]

– leg(ionis) V Mac(edonica) coh(ortis) I [-] – (Ivanov 2017, p 91b: Variana, Moesia Inferior)

– l(egionis) V M(acedonicae) c(ohortis) II – (AE 2002, 1237a4: Romuliana, Moesia Superior.

   AE 2016, 1357b: Almus, Moesia Inferior)

– *l(egionis) V M(acedonica) c(ohortis) III* – (AE 1944, 66: Sucidava, Dacia. AE 2002, 1237a5: Romuliana. Moesia Superior)

– *l(egionis) V M(acedonica) c(ohortis) IIII* **– (**AE 1976, 582b. ILD 117da. 117db: Sucidava, Dacia. AE 2002, 01237a6: Romuliana, Moesia Superior)

– *l(egionis) V M(acedonica) c(ohortis) V* **– (**AE 2002, 1237a7: Romuliana. Moesia Superior)

Fig. 3. *Stamp of l(egio) V M(acedonica) from Potaissa, Dacia (P. Pilhofer, CC BY-SA 3.0)*

[30] Cf. also AE 1115b (Transdrobeta, Moesia Superior): leg(ionis) V Mac(edonica) I coh(ors).

Fig. 4. *1 and 2 Fragmentary tile stamps of legio XV Apollinaris*

Fig. 5. *Tile stamps of legio XV Apollinaris from Satala (from Mitford 1997, 142 nos. 5 and 2)*

3. LEGIO XV APOLLINARIS AT APSARUS CASTELLUM

A survey of the archaeological materials from Apsarus Museum fund turned up two previously unpublished fragmentary tile stamps (fig. 4). Unfortunately, these are finds from earlier excavations at Gonio-Apsarus, and there was no information to be found concerning their exact find spot and stratigraphic context. In both cases, the right end of a stamp impression survives with the last two letters of the inscription [-] OL:

The military nature of the find spot and the Latin letters leave little doubt that we are dealing with fragments of tile stamps produced by a military unit. Most likely, this was *legio XV Apollinaris*, the legion stationed nearest to Apsarus. This legion was transferred to Satala in Armenia Minor (and thus to the command of the Roman governor of Cappadocia) at the beginning of Hadrian's reign, and is still attested there at the end of the fourth century. [31] At its base at Satala, the legion produced similar tile stamps reading LEG XV APOL (fig. 6): [32]

The most likely reading of the fragments from Apsarus is therefore *[leg(ionis) XV Ap]ol(linaris)* [33]. Stamp impressions with the same succession of letters are well known from sites on the Danube where they are related to the legion's 1st c. and early 2nd c. stay at Carnuntum [34]. The vast majority of stamps the legion produced in the East, however, merely read LEG XV (or LEG XV A). [35] These were still produced and used in Colchis in the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries. [36][37] One might therefore speculate that the legion's stamps from the East reading LEG XV APOL date to the earlier phases of its stay at Satala. Be that as it may, the hitherto unattested (but hardly surprising) presence of a group of soldiers from *legio XV Apollinaris* in the 2nd (/ 3rd) century AD at Apsarus is a welcome addition to the history of this legion and its involvement in Colchian affairs.

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[31] ND or. 38,13. Cf. Wheeler 2000: 282–295. Strobel 2019, 448 with n. 10. Contrary to Ritterling 1925: 1457, CIL III 13630 (Satala) does not attest a new legion (legio II Armeniaca) at Satala: see Mitford 1997, 147f. n. 12. Speidel 2009 b, 599 with n. 19.

[32] Mitford 1997: 142, nos. 6: 2 and 5. Mitford 2018: 538, no. 64.

[33] Duch, M. 2017, Stamps on Bricks and Tiles from Novae. Outline of Chronology. Novensia 28, 99–119.

[34] Wheeler, E.L. 2000: 'Legio XV Apollinaris' in Le Bohec, Y., Wolff, C. (eds), Les Légions de Rome sous le haut-empire. Paris: 258–308

[35] Mitford 1997: 142, nos. 6: 3, 4, 6 and 7–10. Mitford 2018, 551 n. 103. Gamkrelidze 2014, 17.

[36] Tomlin, R. S. O. 1992, RIB 2459–2463. Legionary Tile-Stamps: Introduction. Oxford, 125–127.

[37] 33 Lekvinadze 1969, 87. Kiguradze / Lordkipanidze / Todua 1987, 88. Wheeler 2000, 303f. Speidel 2009b, 604. Mitford 2018, 551n. 103. Karasiewicz et alii 2018, 489–490.

4. THE ROMAN GARRISONS IN APSAR-
US CASTELLUM AS PART OF
PONTUS LIMES

It is generally held that Rome attributed great strategic importance to Apsarus during the late 1st and 2nd centuries. However, the presently available evidence for the strength and composition of Apsarus' garrison during the second and third centuries is limited to records of two episodes during the reign of Hadrian. Thus, when the governor of Cappadocia, L. Flavius Arrian, visited Apsarus in ca. 131 AD, he recorded the local presence of five cohorts.[38] An inscription from Abella (modern Avella) in Italy reveals that a force of presumably similar nature was under the command of one N. Marcius Plaetorius Celer, *primuspilus* of *legio I Adiutrix* a few years earlier: *praepositus numerorum tendentium in Ponto Absaro*.47 Unfortunately, it has so far not been possible to establish the identity of any of these units or to trace any details of Apsarus' military history over any significant length of time.

The new and revised tile stamps from Apsarus presented above are therefore a very welcome addition to the previously available literary, epigraphic and archaeological data. They reveal soldiers of the following five units to have at least temporarily been part of the second-century garrison of Apsarus:

- *Legio V Macedonica*
- *Legio XV Apollinaris*
- *Cohors Aurelia c(ivium) R(omanorum) ∞ (milliaria)*
- *Cohors ∞ (milliaria) equitum c(ivium) R(omanorum)*
- *Cohors III (Syrorum) sagittariorum (?)*

If the reconstructions and readings of the stamp impressions presented above are correct, no local documentary sources remains for a *cohors II Claudiana* at Apsarus, which most researchers have so far counted among its garrison. Soldiers of *legio V Macedonica* and *cohors III sagittariorum* appear to have supplied ceramic building material for the early second-century *praetorium*, and a detachment of *legio XV Apollinaris* may also have been present at some point during the first half of the second century. Yet none of these units and detachments can be firmly related with the garrisons mentioned by Arrian[39].

A long-lasting garrison of 5 cohorts would have made Apsarus one of the most powerful strongholds in the eastern Black Sea frontier, excepting, of course, the legionary fortresses. By analogy, Apsarus has therefore been compared to the Roman fort at Syene on Egypt's border with Nubia, where, according to Strabo and the documentary evidence, three auxiliary cohorts were permanently stationed "as a guard to that region" (φρουρὰ τοῖς τόποις).[40] However, it is not certain whether Apsarus' military garrison was permanently of extraordinary size or whether it was just temporarily increased due to regional political and military tensions during the reign of Hadrian. In fact, not long ago it has even been suggested that Arrian's mentioned five cohorts were merely the result of a scribal error, and that Apsarus' "sole significance lay in affording the last safe anchorage before the hazardous mouth of the Acampsis River" (albeit not as a base of the *classic Pontica*). Yet denying the strategic role of the fort at Apsarus altogether is unwarranted and clearly goes too far. The evidence presented above rather betrays Rome's significant interest in the region throughout the entire second century and supports the view that it judged Apsarus to have been of strategic importance. Though, many questions remain and it is therefore to be hoped that future studies will provide further information on the history of East Black Sea region Roman time forts and this remote part of the Roman world.

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[38] Speidel 2009b, 606 and 619–620. Eck and Pangerl 2014, 244.
[39] Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski, R., Mamuladze Sh., Speidel M.A. New and Revised tile Stamps from the Roman fort of Apsaros (Gonio, Georgia). 2022.
[40] Strabo 17,1,12. 17,1,53 and CIL III 14147,2. Cf. Speidel 1984, 283. Speidel 1992, 243ff., esp. 247

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Mashaveras Gora: New investigation of Neolithic Shulaveri-Shomutepe Culture Settlement

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Southern Caucasus with it's profitable diversity of natural sources and geographical environment was attractive for late prehistoric populations. Intensive appearance of early farming societies in the area started from VI millennium BC, that first of all was due to useful environment which was strongly connected to the neolithic lifestyle. Developed river basins and plains, deep forests, suitable climate, and natural resources helped Neolithic societies spread across the Southern Caucasus.

A dramatic warming occurred in the Southern Caucasus from around 10 000 – 8 000 B.C. (Messager *et al.* 2013:135; Baudouin E. 2019:116) that served as a turning point in the transition from hunter-gatherers to early farming societies. In the territory between Black and Caspian seas geomorphological research demonstrates fluctuations of the Caspian Sea level and it's impact on the formation of the alluvial terraces of the Kura River and it's tributaries, this process had a crucial impact on landscape change and alluvial terrace organization and influenced the choice of human settlement locations, [Baudouin E. 2019:116] based on the locations of the majority of Neolithic settlements. Dynamic development of early farming societies in the Near East and accordingly to the South Caucasus became like a trigger for further demographic expansion, settling in a vast territory, exploitation of long-distance natural sources and we can say appearance of first trade too.

Technology and innovations from the Neolithic period arrived late in the South Caucasus, when compared with it's southern regions, Near Eastern cultural impulses contributed to Neolithisation in the area and lasted one millennium or possibly longer (Sagona 2018 :84). The define groups have brought full package of neolithic way of life. Starting from tradition of settled life, land and fields use, idea of agriculture,

mud brick architecture, pottery technology and assemblage of specific stone or bone tools. This process was mainly expressed in Southern Caucasus by the domination of so called "Shulaveri-Shomutepe" neolithic culture.

The Shulaveri-Shomutepe Neolithic culture is highlighted by the Tell-like mound settlements that is characterized by a clear dominance of agro-pastoral economy (Dzhaparidze & Dzhavakhishvili 1971 :81; Kiguradze 1970,1986; Chubinishvili 1973; Hansen et al. 2007; Chikovani *et al.* 2015; Hamon et.al 2016: 155; Sagona 2017) In the last few decades, we have made significant progress in understanding the neolithic farming economy life in the Southern Caucasus mainly through studies of sites discovered and described in the second half of the 20th century (Dzhaparidze & Dzhavakhishvili 1973; Kiguradze 1986, 1970; Batiuk et.al 2017; Badalyan et.al 2007; Helwing *et al.* 2018; Hamon 2008; Baudouin E. 2019). (Fig. 1)

The Shulaveri-Shomutepe (or Shulaveri-Shomu[1]) culture was identified in the 1960s in South Georgia and Azerbaijan (Narimanov 1966 :121-125; Ritchie *et al. 2021*; Poulmarc'h & Le Mont 2016:184). Name of the culture came after excavation of two key sites in the late 1950s and early 1960s – Shulaveris Gora, on the Marneuli plane in Georgia and Shomutepe – in the Kazakh region of Azerbaijan [Sagona 2017: 93-94]. Later, Aknashen and Aratashen neolithic mounds have been excavated in Armenia (Badalyan 2007). Since then, plenty of international archaeological teams conducted surveys and excavations on neolithic settlements in the Southern Caucasus. As a result, archaeological record contains valuable information of socio-economic life of late prehistoric populations.

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[1] In scientific literature there are different names used for describing this culture.
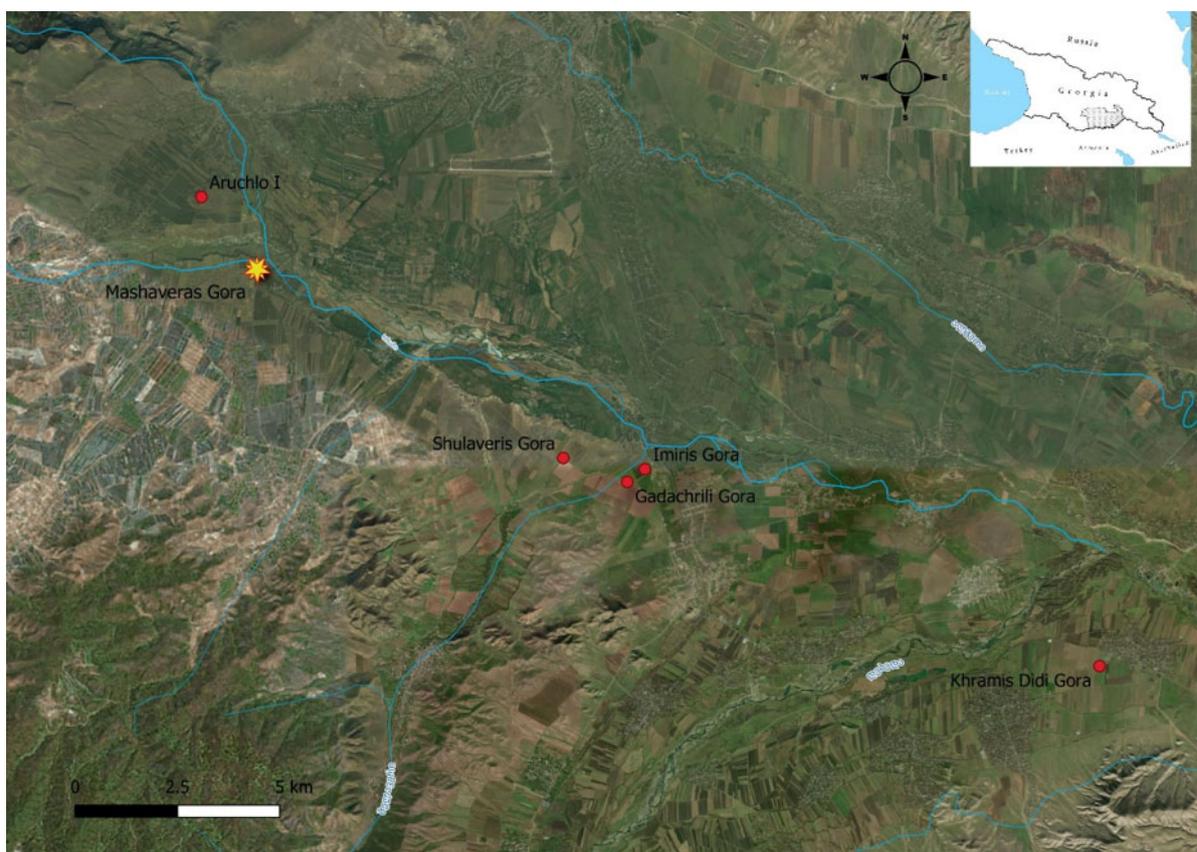
Fig. 1 *Investigated Neolithic "Shulaveri-Shomutepe" settlements in South Georgia*

According to recent analyses, the emergence of the Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture dates to the end of the VII millennium or the very beginning of VI millennium (Hamon 2008:85). Neolithic Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture mounds represent artificial hills with the result of long-term dwelling place made by several building horizons. Villages were mostly circular in plan. Mudbrick circular architecture was the building concept for South Caucasus neolithic people. All the structures were clustered together, overlapping walls with the sign of multiple reparations and renovations. As the walls were not weather-stable, they had to be repaired constantly. As a result, the settlement was rising from the landscape. (Japaridze & Javakhishvili 1971: 38)

Group of the Neolithic settlements had been discovered and excavated in central part of the Transcaucasia. Middle part of Mtkvari river, and continuing west part of Azerbaijan steppes, Eastwards until Armenian Ararat valleys in Nakhichevani region. In the Georgian territory the settlements are mainly concentrated in Bolnisi and Marneuli valleys along the rivers: Khrami, Mashavera and Kura. During the decades research from 1960s "Shulaveri" and "Aruchlo" groups of neolithic settlements have been revealed. (Japaridze & Javakhishvili 1971; Chubinishvili & Kushnareva 1967, Kiguradze 1976, 1986; Chelidze and Gogelia 2004; Hansen

et.al 2006; Hansen et.al 2007) Also in these years there was excavated one of the significant neolithic settlement - Khramis Didi Gora that played a crucial role for the future researches of this culture. (Javakhishvili et.al 1975)

Despite the remarkable work, done by Georgian and other international archeological excavations during the last 60 years for researching the first farmers of the South Caucasus, there still remain a number of questions concerning socio-economic life, the architecture, exchange of different materials, relationships between settlements of the culture, among many others, which require more archaeological data and future investigations

This article focuses on the recently excavated Mashaveras Gora neolithic settlement, which belongs to the above mentioned Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture. The article introduces preliminary result of 2020-2021 field seasons. Our aim was to gain a deeper understanding of architecture in the neolithic of Southern Caucasus.

FIRST EXCAVATIONS OF MASHAVERAS GORA

Discovery of Mashaveras Gora is related to the construction of Soviet animal farm in 1988. During the soil cutting with heavy machines, it was damaged north

part of the mound. Settlement is located in Bolnisi Municipally Lower Kartli (Aruchlo) 2 km North-West from village Khataveti. First excavations were carried out by Davit Gogelia. The mound is located in the confluence of the two main river Khrami and Mashavera. (Fig. 1) With the reason of the close location of the mound with the river it was called - Mashaveras Gora.

As it appeared during the construction it was damaged settlement/mound of Shulaver-Shomutepe neolithic culture. There was made the first plan of the mound. (Fig.) The expedition conducted small-scale excavations and according to the field reports they have cleaned and fixed mudbrick circular houses and several small storage buildings. (Fig. 2) Archaeological data overall were interesting, but because of the political situations in early 1990s in Georgia excavations were stopped. After that, Mashaveras Gora first was noted in scientific publication (Chikovani et.al 2015). Thanks to the authors they have collected basic information about the site from Lower Kartli expedition (1988) field reports, which was kept in archive of

Ot. Lordkipanidze Archaeological Centre, but never been published and the site was not known for scientific society during decades.

NEW INVESTIGATION OF MASHAVERAS GORA

In 2020-2021 Georgian National Museum (including Author of this Article) conducted archaeological excavations at Mashaveras Gora. In the absence of GPS coordinates, we started searching for the location of the site. Using old photographs and descriptions of the excavated area, we found the mound.

Research Methods

At the very beginning of the excavation new aerial photos were taken and a new topographic plan was created. (Fig. 3-4) It's possible to detect the shape of the mound, old trench, and can even distinguish excavated circular houses from 1988.
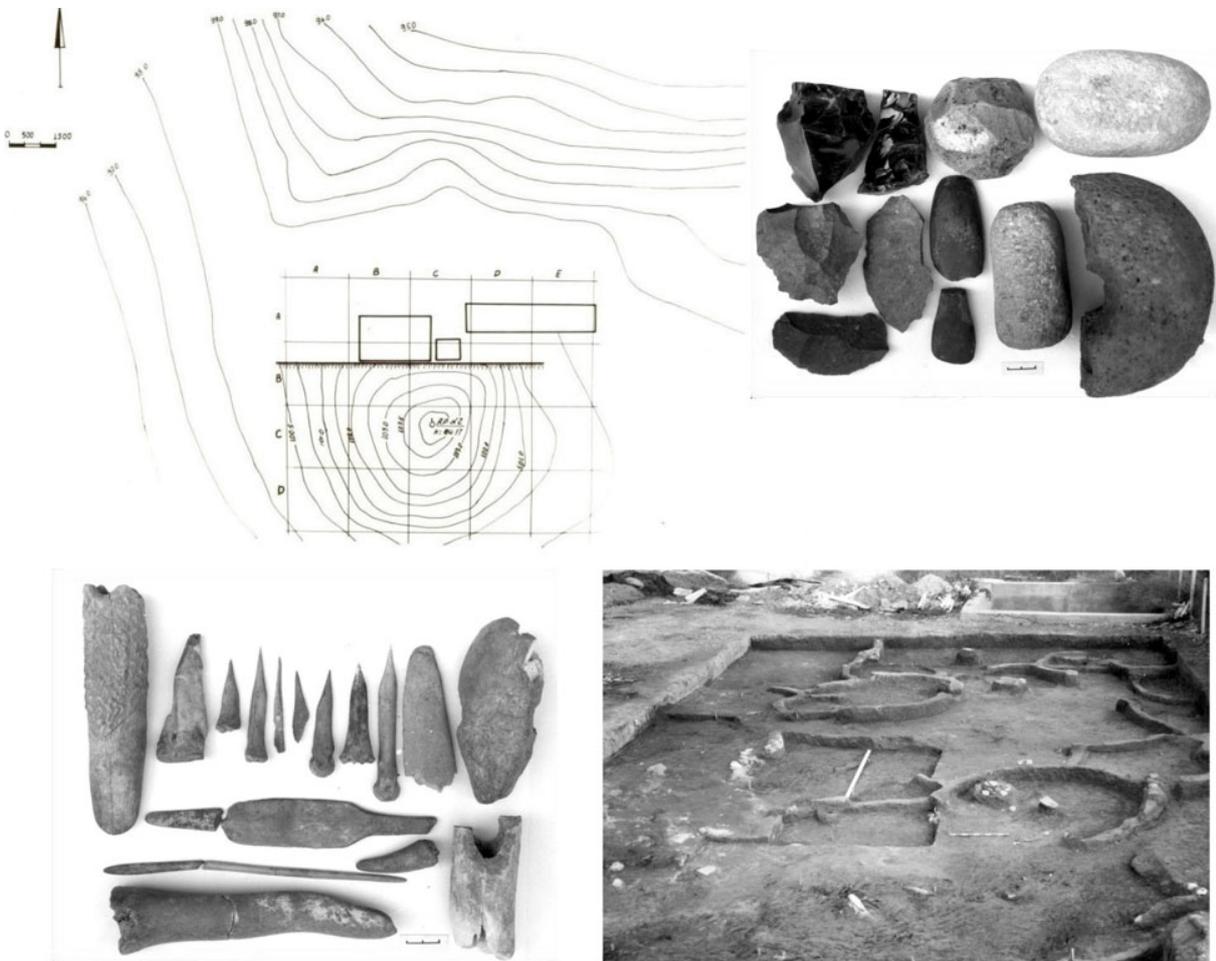
Fig. 2.   *First topographic plan of Mashaveras Gora, excavation and artifacts.*

(Photos from Archive of Ot. Lordkipanidze Archaeological Institute)
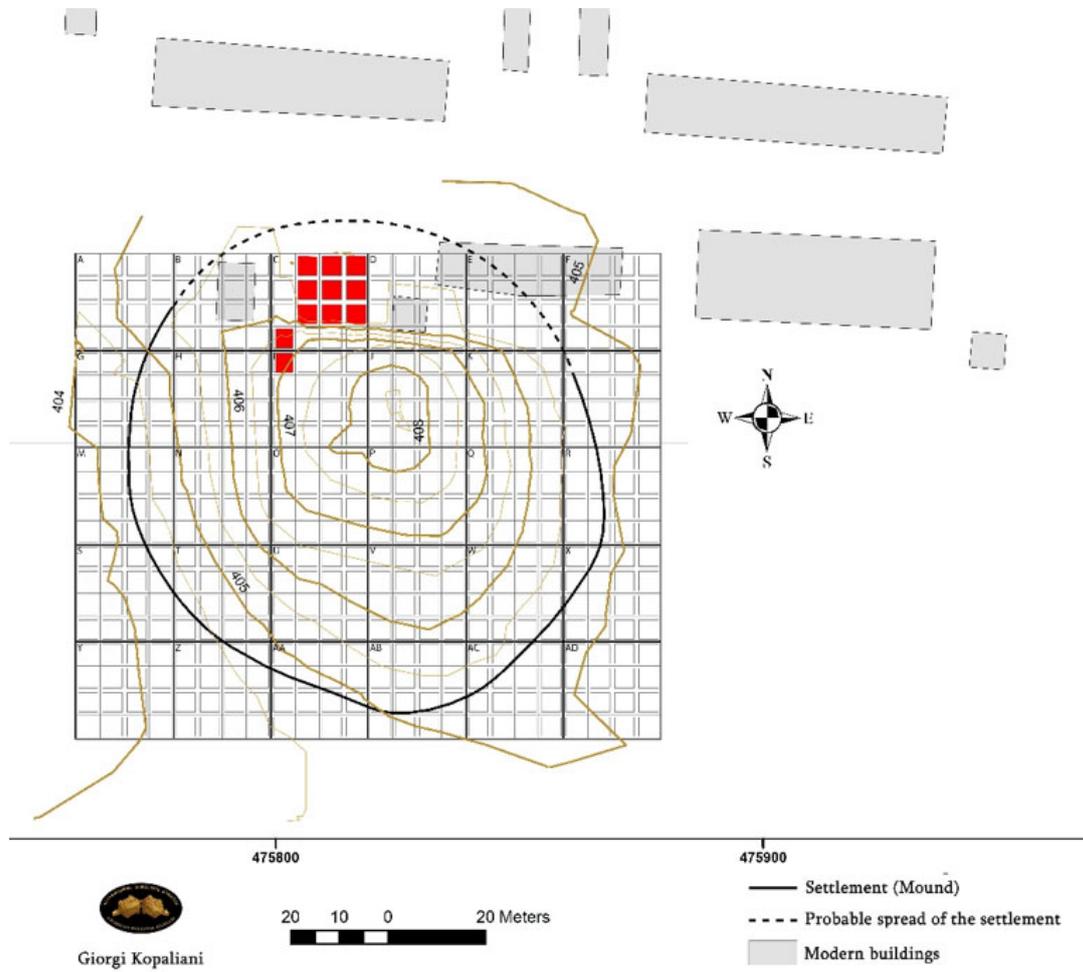
Fig. 3.   *New topographic map of Mashaveras Gora*

(After Abuladze 2020:16; Made by G. Kopaliani ; Modified, Red Squares indicates 2020-21 excavated areas)
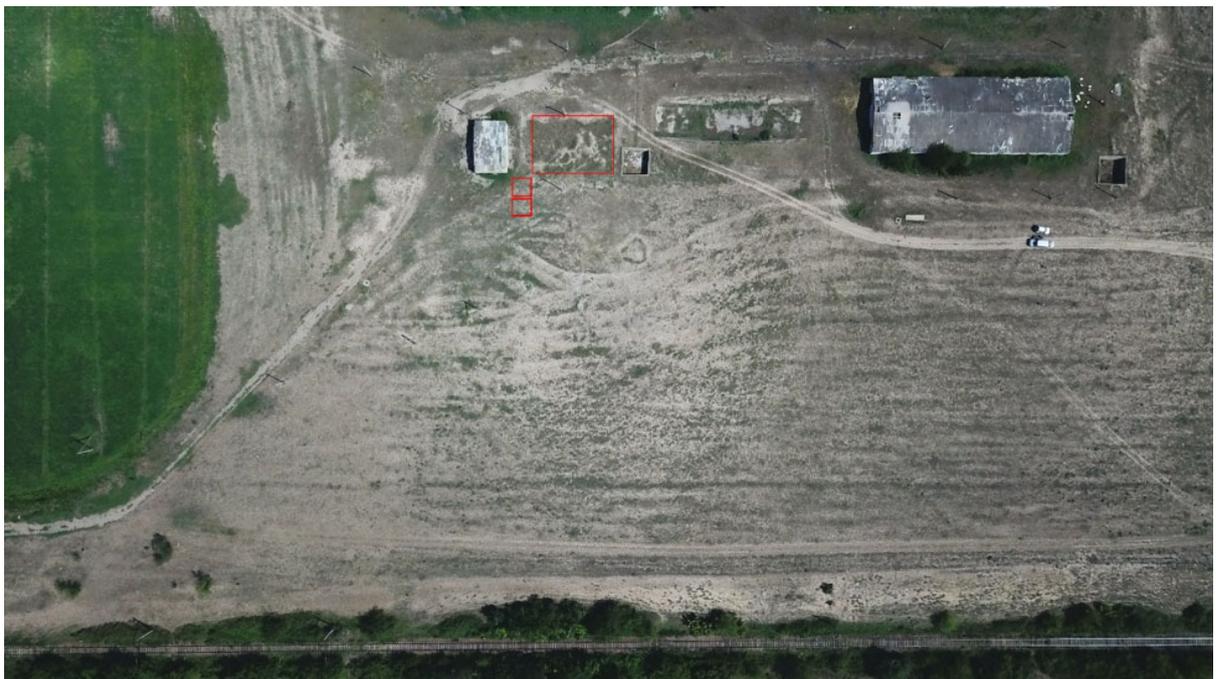
Fig. 4.   *New aerial photo of Mashaveras Gora 2020.*

Mashaveras Gora 2020-2021

C2 C3 C4
C6 C7 C8
C10 C11 C12
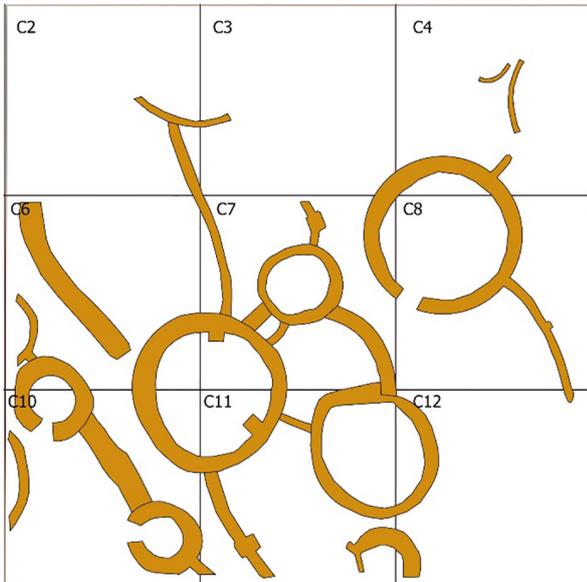
—— Ground grid of 2020-21 excavations
▮ Mudbrick walls excavated in 2020-2021

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Fig. 5. *House 1*

Our excavation area included old trench of the settlement and two new trenches in west part of the mound for understanding stratigraphy. (Fig. 4) It has been used 5X5 m trenches with half meter yoke for each side of the trench. After methodological documentation of all side profiles, we took 1 m yoke between trenches. During the excavation we gave unique number for every context on the excavated surface. The numeration of contexts started from 001 for each trench. After the depth of 15-20 cm layer excavated areas were scraped and drawn by hand, also we used orthophotos for documentation.

During the 2020-2021 field seasons there have been excavated nine squares (5X5m) in the area of old trench and we opened two new squares in the west part of the mound. In total there were exposed 3 big circular mudbrick houses, 4 small storage buildings, several binding walls and different fragments of the walls.

House 1

House 1 is located in C11 square south-east part of the old trench. On the top of the circular building, it was 30cm disturbed layer of the mixed soil probably from old excavations. After cleaning the wall, we found thick walls made of two lines of mudbrick architecture.
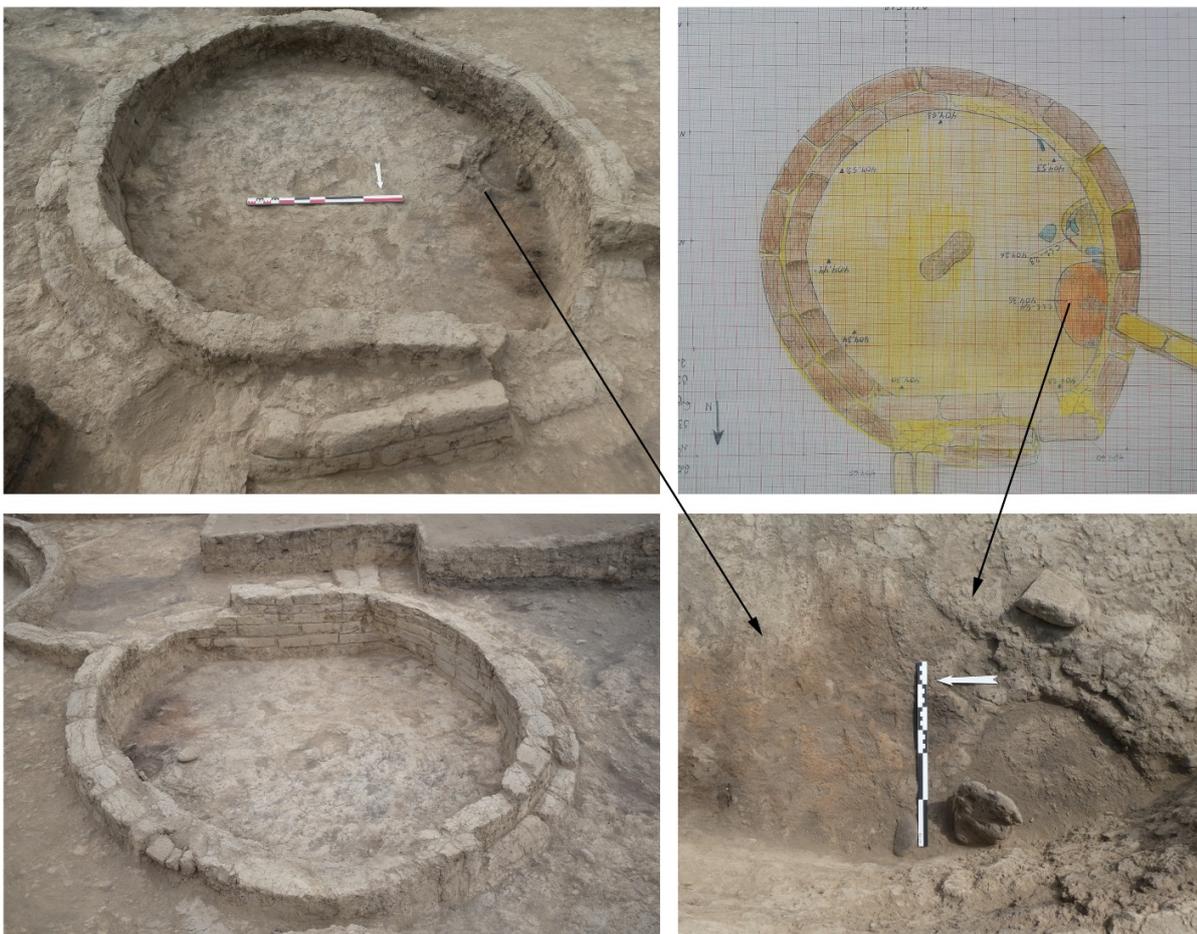
House 1 is around 3m in diameter. External row of the mudbricks are plano-convex in shape with around 48X22X24cm sizes. The floor is slightly bend (around 20-25cm) in the north part of the building. This can be caused by another building horizon underneath. Due to the collapse of the north wall, House 1 has an arch-shaped plan. It appears that the damaged north part of the building has been restored with straight wall. The highest remained wall from the floor is around 56cm. In the center part of the house 1, there were excavated two small postholes with concave shape. Postholes were probably used for the roof before and after the collapse of the north wall. In the west part of the building at 404.26 MASL, reddish burnt clay has been detected with an adjacent small hole that was full of ash. House 1 is connected to House 2 with two massive mudbricks as binding wall. (Fig. 5)

House 2

House 2 became special not for only Mashaveras Gora but also for building tradition of Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture. It is located in C12 square. The upper part of the building was detected during old excavation. The surface of the building had clearly already been exposed to sunlight and was slightly damaged. During the cleaning, we found very massive walls which are not typical for Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture. (Fig. 6) As it appeared House 2 was made up with double row and in west and south-west parts even three row of mudbrick architecture. Thickness of the walls ranges between 65-50cm in different parts. Structure is 4.30 m in diameter and the highest remained wall in north parts is around 85 cm. Bricks are typical plano-convex shape with length of around 42-45cm, width 18-20cm, thickness 10cm. Building is plastered inside and outside with around 2-3cm thick yellowish, grayish clay render. In the South wall which is the best-preserved part of the House 2 use of the yellow and grey bricks are random. The outside brick row is mostly dark brownish and the clay render is a light yellowish color.

House 2 in the North and South-East parts are stabilized with two counterforts. Two dark brown mudbricks are installed perpendicularly to the wall. Small parts of the counterforts are incorporated into the building structure, while the majority are located in the interior. (Abuladze 2020:26)

House 3

In the central part of the C8 square we have excavated remains of House 3. On the level of 404.95 MASL identified another circular building with two row mudbrick architecture. The most upper level of bricks

Fig. 6.   *House 2*

Fig. 7. *New excavations on Mashaveras Gora (2020-21. View from North*

(Photo by S. Jokhadze)

was again in bad condition with the same reason that building were ones already revealed during old excavations. Thickness of the walls are 45-50cm, there is 10cm space between internal and external rows of the bricks which is full of clay fragments. House 3 has 3.5 m diameter build with yellowish mudbricks. Sizes of the bricks are standard for this building horizon. Dark brownish clay render is used. There was excavated clay installation with 52 cm diameter in the central part of the building. Thickness of the clay is 2-4 cm and it's getting narrow to the bottom. (Fig. 7)

Small Storage buildings

During 2020-2021 field seasons four small storage buildings have been excavated. They are located in C7, C10, C11 squares. Diameter of the structures changes between 1-1.20 meters. As the larger houses storage buildings are also built with double row of mudbrick walls. Wall thickness varies between 40-45 cm. (Fig. 8) Remained height of the storage circular buildings is around 30cm. For the basement of upper buildings, the building horizon was likely cut at the same time on the same level. Only a few pottery sherds, charcoal, and bone fragments are found in storage buildings.

Fig. 8. *Small Storage Buildings №1 MA20.C11-06, №2 (C10-07)*

FINDINGS FROM MASHAVERAS GORA

During 2020-2021 field seasons there have been re-vealed around 1000-unit diagnostic artefacts. 330 – pottery sherds that include also medieval ceramics from upper levels. 90- bone tools, 10- red deer antler tools. 140 – massive stone tools, mostly querns and grinders, hammers and etc. 260 – obsidian tools that were diagnostic for typology (Abuladze 2020,2021).

(Fig. 9) Despite architectural differences in building methods material culture from Mashaveras Gora are totally characteristic for Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture.

Fig. 9. *Neolithic artefacts from Mashaveras gora : 1-7, Pottery sherds; 8-11, Red Deer antler tools; 12-16, Bone tools ; 17-21, Massive stones; 22, Obsidian tools; 23, Cornelian beads.*

(After Abuladze 2021: 48)

C14 dating

After complete archaeological excavations on Mashaveras Gora 6 bone samples have been sent for dating. Samples were taken from House 1, House 2 and small storage buildings[2]. All six samples were fit for analyses. The result shows that the building horizon which was excavated in 2020-2021 archaeological seasons dates back to between 5600-5480 BC. (Fig. 10)

After palynological analyses from fireplace of House 1 there were revealed three types of wheat (Triticum aestivum, Tritivum dicoccum, Triticum monococcum) (Abuladze et.al 2021: 13). These species represent high level of domestication of wheats on the settlement.

Building horizon which was excavated in 2020-2021 by the C14 dating it has to be slightly earlier to Aruchlo I and co-exists with third phase of Gadachrili Gora

Lab Nr MAMS	Sample Name	¹⁴C Age [yr BP]	±	δ13C AMS [‰]	Kalibrierte Alter		C:N	C [%]	Collagen [%]	Material
					Wahrscheinlichkeit 68%	Wahrscheinlichkeit 95%				
49229	MA1	6589	24	-17.7	cal BC 5604-5482	cal BC 5613-5480	3.2	16.0	1.7	bone
49230	MA2	6547	25	-21.6	cal BC 5527-5477	cal BC 5607-5475	3.2	33.4	7.0	bone
49231	MA3	6645	27	-22.0	cal BC 5621-5557	cal BC 5627-5485	3.2	40.1	11.6	bone
49232	MA4	6648	26	-21.0	cal BC 5622-5558	cal BC 5627-5486	3.2	39.6	9.0	bone
49233	MA5	6588	25	-19.5	cal BC 5603-5482	cal BC 5613-5480	3.2	29.5	8.2	bone
49234	MA6	6600	26	-20.2	cal BC 5610-5484	cal BC 5616-5481	3.2	33.2	9.6	bone

Fig. 10. *C14 dates from Mashaveras Gora.*

CONCLUSIONS

Excavations at Mashaveras Gora revealed quite new concept of understanding Southern Caucasus neolithic architecture. Every structure is made by double or in some cases three row of mudbricks that is unusual for Shulaveri-Shomutepe building tradition. The bricks are similar to the bricks used in the Kvemo-Kartli region settlements of the same period (so-called plano-convex bricks and plain rectangular bricks [Hamon et.al 2016: 157] The circular structures at this building horizon cluster around two different sizes with frequently overlapping walls: larger houses that are from 3 to 4.5 meters in diameter and small storage buildings with diameter 1-1.2 meters. On this level we can distinguish somehow standardization of structures and spatial organization at the settlement. Another crucial point we can consider is that mudbrick sizes fit in standards but compare to other closed excavated settlements such as Aruchlo I, Gadachrili Gora in generally bricks are larger and with much more inclusions inside. (Baudouin E. 2019; Hamon et.al 2016) Possibly, this was one of the reasons of such thick walls on Mashaveras Gora. We don't know yet if this unique building traditions extends all around the tell or in upper occupation levels. Clay installation in House 3 shows use of interior of the structure, such small clay installations were excavated also in different mound of Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture (Hamon et.al 2016: 162); Dzhavakhishvili et.al 1975) and are generally interpreted as storage installations. Palynological analyses from the installation are still processing.

(Batiuk et.al 2017: 180 Fig.4). Besides, characteristics of structures for example floor collapse in House 1 give us assumption that under these buildings there are at least one building horizon before the virgin soil.

Recently investigated Mashaveras Gora describes neolithic village life in VI millennium. Building horizons which we have dated ranges between 5600-5500 BC, it's considered to be peak for early farming societies entering the South Caucasus. If we consider that Shulaveri-Shomutepe neolithic archaeological culture is identified mostly through it's characteristics in mudbrick architecture Mashaveras Gora represents one more vivid example of innovations in Southern Caucasus and future investigation of the site will give us opportunity to better understand socio-economic life which took place in Southern Caucasus.

Acknowledgement

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2   Samples were sent to German Archaeological Institute, Eurasian-Department

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Stamps seals in Georgia and outside of its borders

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As it is known in the end of 2nd millennium BC and beginning of the 1st millennium BC there were changed cultural style and life rule very appreciably on the territory of Georgia. Appearing an Iron in the certain step of this period absolutely changed the situation. In the different regions of the South Caucasus there started to arise new strong cultures too (Lortkipanidze, 2002, pp. 103-123) There were appeared clay stamp seals in a large quantity on the territory of Georgia exactly in this period (pic. 1). Earlier seals on the territory of Georgia are found in the Kura-Araxes layers of Gudabertka, in Bedeni period layers of Berikldeebi and etc. (Shanshavili, Sherazadashvili, 2013, pp. 7-25). But it must be mentioned that they are made of different materials-mostly a stone and it had not been distributed on the territory of Georgia as actively as in Late Bronze-Early Iron age period. Margo Lortkipanidze was the first who studied the stamp seals discovered in Georgia monographically. In 1969 she published "Corpus of old Georgian Glyptic artifacts I" (Lortkipanidze, 1969). But after this there have been discovered many seals that have not been studied thoroughly up to this time.

To make a research about Late Bronze-Early Iron age seals discovered on the territory of Georgia there was done a project which was funded by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (MR-183625). With the mentioned project there have been collected 117 clay seals, mostly stamps that belongs to this period Georgia. moreover, there were established typology and catalogue of those materials. The classification of the Late Bronze-Early Iron age seals is depended on the depictions of their surface. collected materials are divided into 16 types (pic. 2): 1. Arm filled cross; 2. Seals with cross-like depictions; 3. Spiral shape ornament; 4. Twisted spiral; 5. S-shape spiral; 6. Hook-like spiral; 7. Swastika; 8. Rotating swastika (borjghali); 9. Meander-like; 10. Circles placed in each-other; 11. Geometric ornaments made with zigzag and indirect lines; 12. Figurines and scenes; 13. Seals with pseu-do-anthropomorphic depictions; 14. Numerological seals; 15. Seals with astrological signs; 16. Seals with different geometrical motifs; 17. Clay seals which depictions cannot be identified (Chogovadze, 2019). From the statistic study of the Late Bronze-Early Iron age seals it was revealed that almost all of this period stamp seals are discovered in East Georgia, mostly in Shida-Kartli and Kakheti Regions (pic.3). This kind of stamp seals mostly begun to distribute on the territory of West Georgia in the later periods (Kakhidze, Fartenadze, 2017, pp. 13-14). So, it is true that clay stamp seals had been discovered at many important sites of Shida Kartli such as: Grakliani Gora (Licheli, 2019, pp. 71-90) Khovle Gora (Muskhelishvili,1978), Treli Gorebi, Narekvavi (Davliandze, Sadradze 1993), Katlanikhevi (Kakhutaishvili, 1964) and so on.

One of the main parts of this research is to establish new group of the seals: "Kakhetian seals" (Chogovadze, 2019). Kakhetian seals differ from other regions seals with bigger size. Their handle and basis are much more massive than the other seals. It is obvious that some of the seals, which have been discovered on the territory of Kakheti (Fitskhelauri, 1973), (Fitskhelauri, 1965) in each type are creating their own different style of ornamentation. In fact, very close analogues of this type of the seals are discovered on the territory of Azerbaijan (Ganja-Kazakh region), from same period sites, like Babadervich, Sari-tepe, Mingechaur, etc. (Hasanov, 2018, pp. 52 – 79) because of this I think that it is possible to include above mentioned seals form Azerbaijan in Kakhetian seals group and make the name of it "Central Transcaucasian seals". In addition, same period seals from east Europe and east side of North Caucasus finds few resemblances with Kakhetian and Azerbaijan seals (Hasanov, 2018, pp. 52 – 79), but not so much to include them in the same group. Existence of visual difference between Kakhetian group seals and other seals from East Georgia, in my opinion, is due to the fact that they belonged to the different cultures. I think like this, because the

area of Kakhetian seals distribution fits the borders of Ior-Alazani basin culture (excepting: one seal discovered in Kaspi district at Lamiskana and one seal preserved in Kutaisi History museum which discovery place is unknown (Chogovadze, 2019) and other seals of East Georgia is discovered on the territory, where there had been distributed Samtavro culture (pic. 4). Concerning on West Georgia, there have been discovered few seals and in addition they are different from Kakhetian seals with visual characteristics and are more like to Samtavro culture seals (Chogovadze, 2019). We see arm filled cross depiction on Samtavro culture seals very often but there have not been discovered seals with this depiction on the territory of Kakheti. This ornament is also carved on the seals discovered in West Georgia. it follows from the above-mentioned facts, that for Colchian culture clay stamp seals were not typical. First of all because there had not been spread stamp seals on the territory of West Georgia as massively as in East Georgia. and the seals that are discovered in West Georgia, in my opinion, were local imitations of Samtavro culture, or imported ones from the area of this culture distribution.

After the usage of comparative method for searching the analogues of the Late Bronze-Early Iron age Georgian stamp seals it was revealed that in most cases their surface depicts the ornamental motives which were very spread in the other ancient cultures in different periods (Collon, 1997) but at the same time some of the depictions are local. As it is known societies which had been living on the territory of Georgia had intercultural and trade relations with different cultures, such as Anatolian, Aegean, Mediterranean, Near Eastern and so on and these relations could be seen on different materials discovered during the archaeological excavations. Probably this type of seals had been entered on the territory of Georgia from these cultures. it is true that before appearing in Georgia stamp seals had been spread in some other ancient cultures earlier. For example: very close analogues of Georgian Late Bronze-Early Iron Age stamp seals come from the European Neolithic and Copper Age (Makkay, 1984), Minoan and Mycenean (Matz, Biesantz, Pini. 1964), Anatolian (Sagona, Zimansky, 2009), Iranian (Buchanan, Moorey. 1988), Levantine (Freikman, Garfinkel. 2017), Indus Valley (Collon, 1997) and etc. archaeological sites. It is very important to ascertain from which territory, with which way and when it started to distribute stamp seals on the territory of Georgia. but it is a subject of a future studies.

There exist different considerations about the function of the Late Bronze-Early Iron age Georgian clay

seals between the scholars. M. Lortkipanidze considered the bulla discovered in Khovle as trust worth argument for the fact that there had been used sealed bulla for locking vessels and store rooms at our place. In her opinion it was a routine using a bulla in Khovle, and she explains the fact that only one bulla has been discovered there with the argument, that it used to be broken as soon as the store room or vessel was opened. In addition, the site incurred kind of catastrophe and destruction that it is not surprising that there had been survived only one bulla. She also thought, that part of the stamp seals was used by craftsman for making impressions on the pottery (Lortkipanidze, 1969).

Sh. Mamuladze in his article about the functional usage of the seals mentions the consideration of Krupnov, that the seals with embossed ornament on the surface was used for tattooing the body (Mamuladze, 2010). But in Sh. Mamuladzes opinion this kind of the seals presumably were used for making imprints on the holy breads (Mamuladze Sh. 2010).

In D. Khakhutaishvilis point of view the seals with swastika ornamentation found in the cultic building of Katlanikhevi was possession of the shrine and had been used to make sealings on sacrificial breads and other items. In his opinion, sealing the holy bread was the honorable duty of the shrine priest and the seal with the swastika portrayal had been the main element of his insignias (Kakhutaishvili, 1964).

Some of the seals mentioned above discovered in the North-West side of Azerbaijan has the traces of soot. According to V. Aliev, there was greased oil on the surface of the seal and then set fire on it. He thinks that it was one of the family rituals (Алиев, 1971).

On the surface of the seals that have been collected by me on the territory of Georgia are depicted the ornaments that were spread in almost all ancient worlds civilizations from Neolithic period and it covers a large time span and territories. The fact shows that these seals cannot be used for proofing the personal property, because their depictions are repeating. With this purpose can only be used a seal which depictions don't have the analogues. For example, from the above-mentioned seals this function could have the stamp seal preserved in Oni museum (see the type 12: N1 in Chogovadze, 2019) and the stamp seal discovered at Grakliani Hill (see the type 17: N8 in Chogovadze, 2019). the seals which depictions are repeating I think, could be used for proofing the property of religious union, or some priests. If the depiction on the seal is an expression of the god and the

same god is worshiped in other places and they also portray it in the same way, then it is possible to occur the repeatability of the seals depictions.

Concerning on V. Aliev (Алиев, 1971) consideration about setting a fire on the surface of the stamp seals, in my opinion, it was not common on the territory of Georgia, because we have not seen any traces of soot on the seals and also we could not find any information about it in the literature which mentions Georgian seals. I can neither refuse or confirm the idea about using such kind of seals for tattooing the body. In this case too it is not seen any traces of the dye with naked-eye and also there does not exists any of this information in the scientific literature about Georgian seals.

I also cannot confirm M. Lortkipanidzes opinion about using this period stamp seals for making imprinted ornamentations on pottery (Lortkipanidze, 1969), because among the thousands of the vessels and their fragments which have been discovered on the territory of Georgia belonging to the Late Bronze-Early Iron age I have not seen the depiction of the same ornaments which is portrayed on the surface of above mentioned seals or sealing of the stamp. To proof this idea M. Lortkipanidze also brings the example of one stamp seal discovered in Khirsa pottery workshop, but it must be mentioned that this seal was not discovered during the archaeological excavations, more over it is a chance found in the thrown-out ground of excavator (Fitskhelauri, 1965). as it follows from above-said, it is not possible to appoint exactly if there existed any connection between this seal and the pottery workshop at Khirsa. It also should be taken into account, that in the book of this site excavations head K. Fitskhelauri, where he talks about the Khirsa pottery workshop, there are not mentioned any vessels imprinted with the seal and we also could not find any fragment of pottery with the sealing on the drawings of the publication (Fitskhelauri, 1965).

Concerning to the next opinion by M. Lortkipanidze, that seals could be used for locking vessels or storerooms with sealing (Lortkipanidze, 1969), I agree to it partially. To justify this opinion, she mentions the bulla from Khovle Gora (Lortkipanidze, 1969). It is true that there have not been found the seals with the same depiction that is on Khovle bulla, but we cannot deny that the imprint was done by the seal. It is a fact that we have a case of locking something by sealing, because on the bottom of the bulla there are kind of traces like it was stick on the valve of the vessel. In spite of this, I don't agree to M. Lortkipanidze that locking the vessels and storerooms with sealed

bulla was a routine in Khovle. It is the true that only one bulla has been found there, despite the fact that, there have been found lots of the seals on this site. It is not far from reality that after opening the locked item the bulla was broken, but if it was happening systematically, there could be discovered not only one, but the several fragments of the bulla. It must be mentioned that except of the above-mentioned bulla, we do not have any other cases of finding it in this period on the territory of Georgia, in spite of excavations of a many Late Bronze-Early Iron Age sites. It follows from the above mentioned, that locking something with the sealing didn't occurred systematically not only in Khovle, but also on the territory of Georgia in the late Bronze-Early Iron age.

In my point of view, in his work Sh. Mamuladze more agrees to the idea that the clay Stamp seals were used for sealing the dough, than to the above-mentioned consideration of Krupnov. As I have already written above, he brings some examples to strengthen this argument, in addition from ethnographic reality too. (Mamuladze Sh. 2010). D. Khakhutaishvili also supported the idea of printing the holy breads by clay stamp seals. He thought, that the holy breads were baked in the ovens situated at the shrines and sealed with clay stamp seals there. In his opinion this ritual was connected to the religious celebrations (Kakhutaishvili, 1964). This consideration is supported by the fact that most of the clay seals discovered in Shida Kartli were placed near to the Khovle type ovens, which are rightfully recognized as a bread baking oven. Mentioned ovens are discovered not only in the dwellings, but also in the temples and shrines (Kakhutaishvili, 1964). This fact shows us that the making imprint on the holy bread was connected to the religious believes.

It is also interesting fact that concertation of this period seals is evident on the lowlands of Kakheti and Shida Kartli. Presumably, in Late Bronze-Early Iron age period in these regions there were growing cereals in a quite large quantities, and it is proved by finding many grinding stones and sickle blades there (Tetruashvili, 2018), (Fitskhelauri, 1965). As it seen, there have been fine climatic conditions to grow cereals on these territories from ancient times.

As follows to the above-mentioned facts in my opinion, most of the Late Bronze-Early Iron age clay seals discovered on the territory of Georgia was used for sealing the dough. Sealed breads as D. Khakhutaishvili thought, was sacrificed to the goddess (Kakhutaishvili, 1964). This consideration is also supported by ethnographical data (Бардавелидзе, 1957); by the fact of discovering most of the seals near to the bread baking

ovens, and in some cases finding them in the temples; by the concentrations of the seals discovery places in the kind of the regions where there is convenient climate for growing the cereals from the ancient times; and lastly we don't have enough and strong arguments to proof other considerations about the function of the clay seals. Moreover, we can boldly deny some of them. So, due to all above mentioned, I think that there is left only one consideration which is more logical and correct than others: Late Bronze-Early Iron age clay seals discovered on the territory of Georgia mostly were used to make imprints on the holy breads and this act was connected to religious believes.

In conclusions, from the study of Late Bronze-Early Iron age seals discovered on the territory of Georgia it was revealed that these items played an important role in the life of this period people. It gave us important information about Late Bronze-Early Iron age of Georgia. it is obvious that this period seals are divided into 2 groups: Samtavro culture seals and Ior-Alazani Basin culture seals. Existing the analogues of this seals in different cultures outside of the territory of Georgia proved the fact that local communities had varied cultural relations with ancient world's civili-

zations. But on this stage of research it is unknown from which territories and with which ways had distributed stamp seals in Georgia. unfortunately, the research is complicated by the fact, that there does not exists enough interests about these artifacts and due to it there are a few literatures about them, if we do not take in account M. Lortkipanidzes monographic work about seals. This book is mostly a catalogue, and there have passed many times after the publication of it. So, there did not existed fundamental research about Late Bronze-Early Iron Age Georgian seals up to this time. And to conclude the function, it is obvious that most of this period seals were used to imprint the holy breads as a sacrificial item for goddess by the priests. In connection to this, it is interesting and needs to be investigated, if the function of the seals belonging to the culture where from it started to distribute seals on the territory of Georgia were the same as ones discovered in Georgia. finally, I must say that the above-mentioned questions about seals is possible to be answered in the future and for this it is planned for research to be continued and also to grow its scales.

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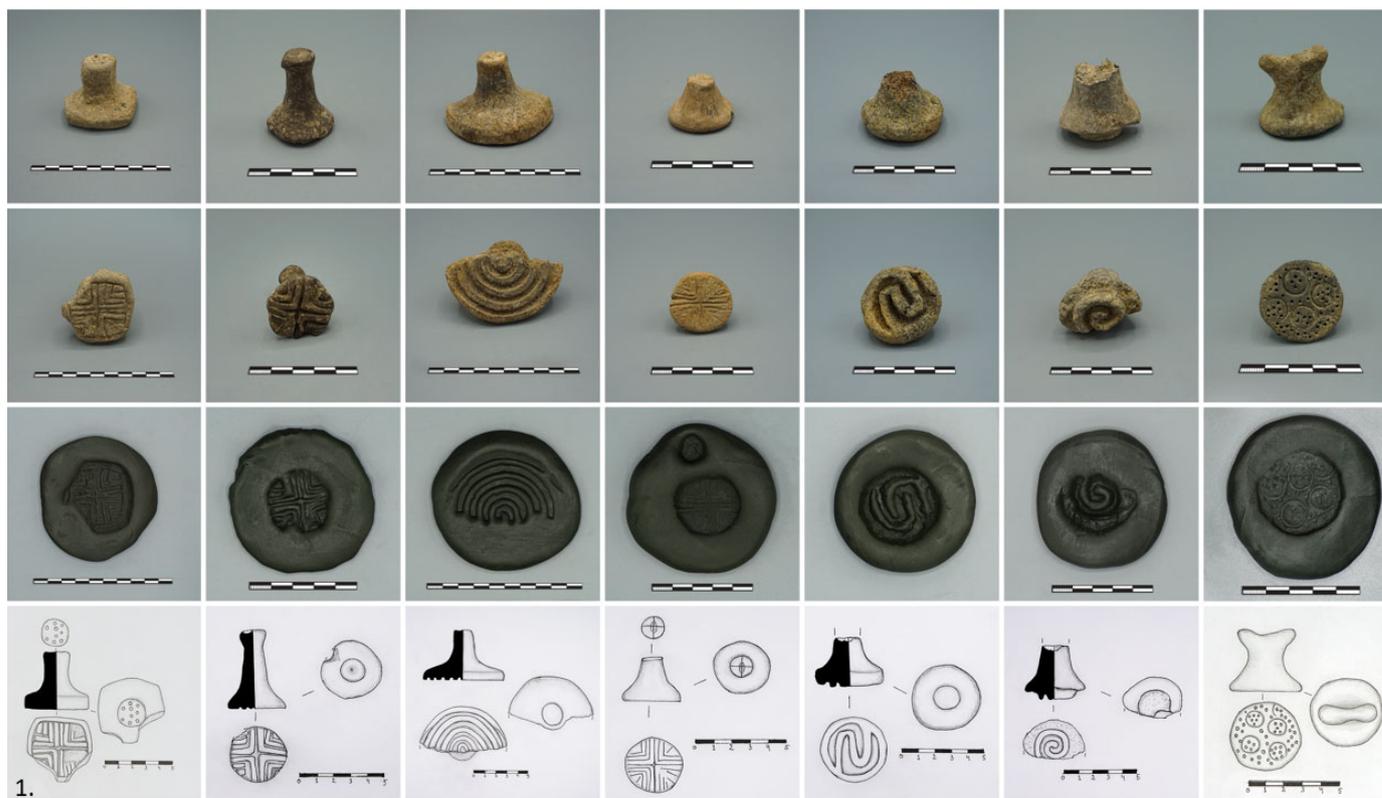
Picture 1. *1. Stamp seals from Grakliani Gora with different ornamentation; 2. Stamp seal discovered on Grakliani Gora with Arm filled ornamentation; 3. Stamp seal preserved in Lagodekhi local lore museum. 4. Stamp seal preserved in Lamiskana Jambakur-Orbeliani palace-museum.*

Picture 2 *Classification of Late Bronze-Early Iron age seals discovered on the territory of Georgia.*

Classification of Late Bronze-Early Iron Age seals

1. Arm filled cross..
2. Seals with cross-like depictions................................
3. Spiral shape ornament ....
4. Twisted spiral ....
5. S-shape spiral ....
6. Hook-like spiral ....
7. Swastika ....
8. Rotating swastika (Bordjghali) ....
9. Meander-like...
10. Circles placed in each other ....
11. Geometric ornaments made with zigzag and indirect lines
12. Figurines and scenes ....
13. Seals with pseudo-anthropomorphic depictions ....
14. Numerological seal ....
15. Seal with astrological signs ....
16. Seals with different geometric motifs ....
17. Clay seals which depictions can not be identified......

TYPES
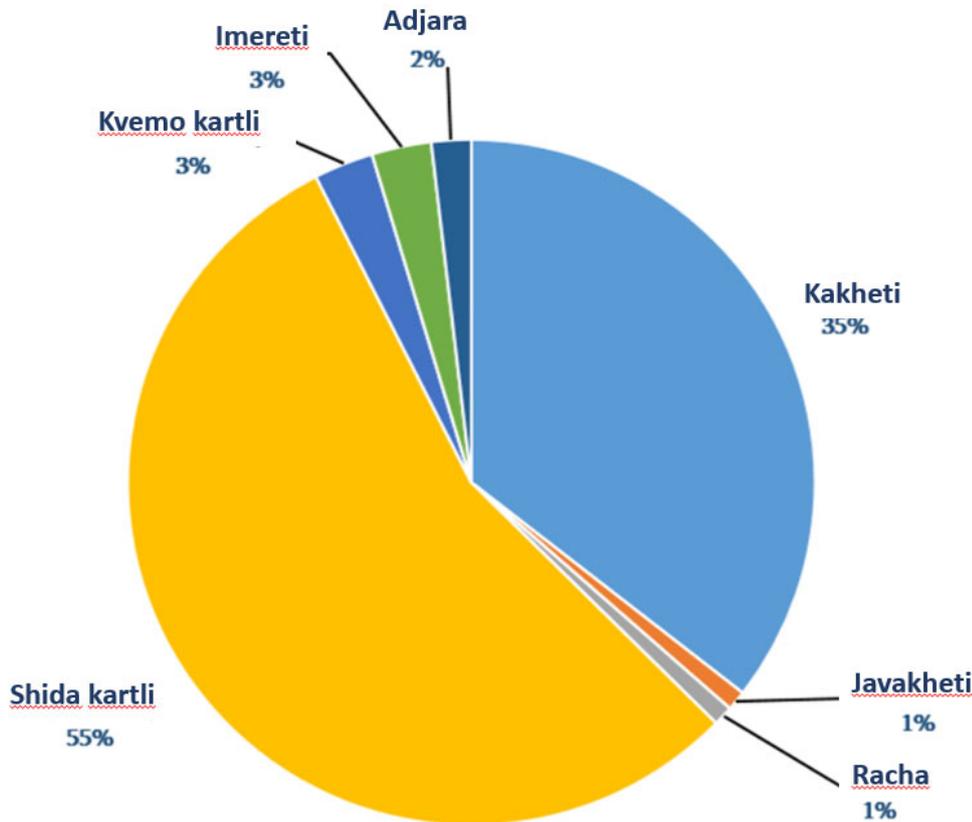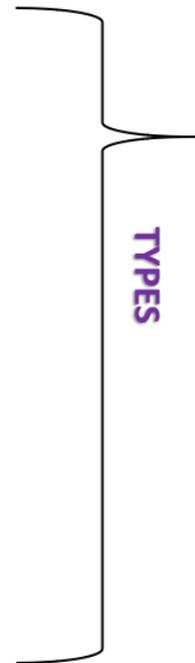
Picture 3. *Statistic chart showing the percentage dividing of the seal quantity in different regions of Georgia.*
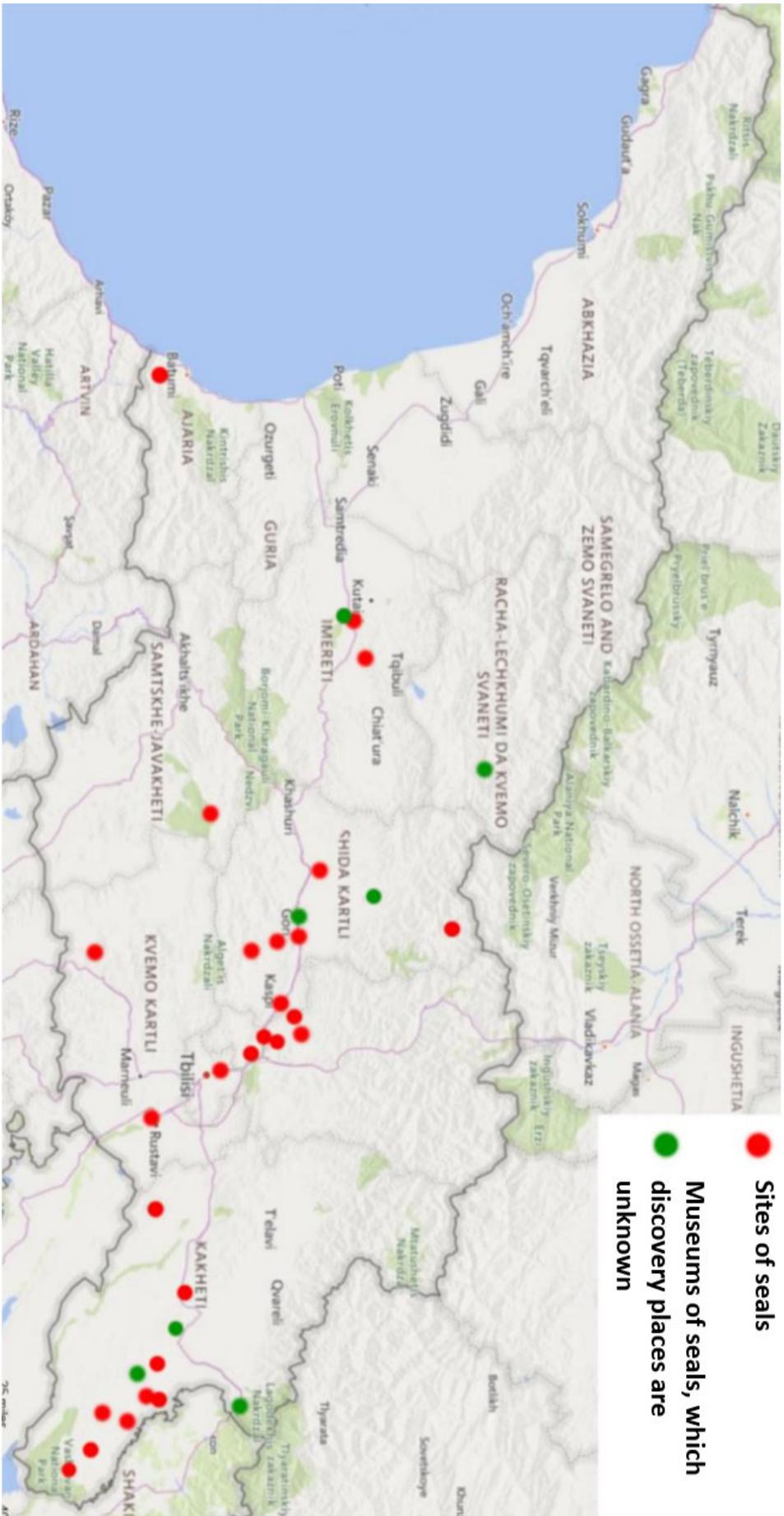
Picture 4. map showing the distribution of Late Bronze–Early Iron age seals discovered on the territory of Georgia.

Innovative Significance of Research of Traditional Architectural Features of Ganja

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Ganja - an ancient center of urban culture with old history, that situated on the old Great Silk way, is rich with many historical and material-cultural monuments, which have their typical, unique trade and architectural characteristics. This city has more than 4000 years old and here there is one of the main and ancient historical monuments of Muslim East civilization – Imamzadeh tomb, Jomard Gassab mausoleum. This important monument is situated 7 kilometers from the city of Ganja, on the right shore of Ganjachai river. Imamzadeh complex is one the main symbols of Ganja city and important example of medieval architecture of Azerbaijan. At the present time, as one of the most valued places of pilgrimage of the Islamic world, Imamzadeh tomb-complex in Ganja is a sacred place for local population, as well as pilgrims that come from different foreign countries. Imamzadeh mausoleum, situated in one of the ancient scientific and cultural centers - Ganja State History-Culture Reserve, was built in 739, on site of the grave of mevlana Ibrahim. The historic monument of Ganja - Imamzadeh tomb-complex attracts the attention of a number of features from the point of multiculturalism view. Ganja Imamzadeh is an important pilgrimage shrine. This place is visited by thousands of people every year. It should be noted that the number of visitors is increasing every year as well as foreign countries. Interesting fact is that non-Muslims are also among that memorial. The mausoleum, built around the grave of mevlana Ibrahim in the VIII century, was enlarged in the XIV-XVI centuries, and subsidiary buildings around it were erected in the XVII-XVIII centuries. The tomb is the most important part of the Imamzadeh complex. The area of Imamzade complex was included in the property of the Sheykhzamanlis – the descendants of Nizami Ganjavi, the great Azerbaijani poet and philosopher.

During several centuries the city grew, flourished and finally turned into one of the key regional centers of economy and culture. At different stages of the history of the capital city of Ganja status while maintaining the traditions of the ancient statehood and independence was of great importance. In spite of numerous destructions suffered through the history, Ganja remains a beautiful city with many ancient sites. Among them are the Big and Small Bridges (XII century), towers, the Friday Mosque, the madrasah, hamams and caravanserais, as well as Imamzadeh complex-a picturesque building with blue domes, constructed as a Mausoleum of Imam Bagir ibn Ibrahim. The historical and architectural complex, built in the XVII century by Sheikh Bahaaddin, is also worth mentioning. It includes Juma Mosque (called Friday or Shah Abbas Mosque), Chekak-Hamam (medieval bath) and a caravanserai.

Ganja - an ancient center of urban culture with more than 4000 years history, that situated on the old Great Silk way, is rich with many historical and material-cultural monuments, which have their typical, unique trade and architectural characteristics.

Ancient city Ganja is one of the first centers of urban civilization (urbanization) not only of the Muslim East, but whole of the World. The ancient center of tolerance and multiculturalism, Ganja is the second city of the East, where to this day hundreds of Muslim, Christian, Lutheran and pre-Islamic tombs, tombstones, mausoleums in the ancient sanctuary Imamzadeh and the cemetery Sabizkar are preserved.

One of the main historical monuments of Ganja - Imamzadeh tomb-complex attracts the attention of a number of features from the point of multiculturalism view. Ganja Imamzadeh is an important pilgrimage shrine. This place is visited by thousands of people every year. It should be noted that the number of visitors is increasing every year as well as foreign countries.

The above facts prove that, since ancient times Ganja was famous for its high development of trade, crafts,

was considered one of the main centers of science, education, culture and was noted for its intellectual potential.

Starting from the VII-VIII centuries there were such prominent scientific and educational centers as Ganja's Houses, "Centers of Healing" in Ganja, in addition there were quite a few madrasah schools in mosques. It was in such centers of science that numerous teacher-pedagogues, outstanding figures of science of their time, were taught (4, p. 201-207; 6, p. 17, 19-21).

This ancient cultural and scientific center – Ganja city has more than 4000 years old and here there is one of the main and ancient historical-architectural monuments of Muslim East civilization - Sabizkar. This ancient grave-yard is recognized as one of the basic symbols of city.

At this monument were found some important historical sources – epitaphes. Sabizkar was completely built in the end of XVII century – the beginning of XIX century 99, p. 342; 10, p. 63-65).

This main historic-cultural complex has more than 500 years old. But in XVII-XVIII centuries there were built a mosque, some temples and other constructions. On the territory of the ancient historical and architectural complex of modern times to store more than 100 ancient and unique tombstones. These tombstones are mausoleums Serdabe (local sarcophags) (1, p. 7-11).

During the centuries many visitors, guests from different parts of Azerbaijan, also from the other Muslim countries visit Ganja Sabizkar monument (grave-yard).

This monument is one the main samples of multiculturalism and tolerance. The modern functioning of multicultural categories is directed towards socially adapted multicultural landmarks. The concept of multiculturalism is based on an important methodological paradigm in Azerbaijani science, according to which the binary concept of multiculturalism is primary.

Thus, the ideas of multiculturalism in Azerbaijan appeal to the ethnogenetic ability of the people to integrate cultural ethnocodes, on the one hand, and to preserve their national identity, on the other hand. We emphasize that the internal consistency of the multicultural model has significant potential.

Modern society of Azerbaijan is a society of open dialogue with representatives of other nations and religions, for multiculturalism in Azerbaijan is both a state policy and a way of life. Thus, a close relationship is born between society and the priorities of socio-political development. In the light of the foregoing, we emphasize that multiculturalism in Azerbaijan has deep historical roots and is closely connected with the mentality. The tolerance of the Azerbaijani people was formed over a long historical time (1, p. 18-19; 3, p. 56-59, 78-82, 114-120).

As a natural result of the historical process of the development of urban culture in Ganja in the early Middle Ages, along with Muslim burial rituals, a new type of tombs and especially tombstones gradually spread. These gravestones can be classified as follows:

– tombs of the sarcophagus type;

– gravestones;

– tombstones.

One of the important features of both the sarcophagus and tombstones and tombstones, along with their structure, was the epitaph in the Arabic alphabet, as well as the carving and embossing of floral and geometric patterns. Graves and tombstones, which are distinguished by their originality, especially by their bulge (or, more precisely, by their reliefs, reliefs and patterned elements) and are considered new for the first medieval period under consideration, are very important in the study of urban culture in Islam.

Despite the widespread use in the geographical region, religious and national values that have developed on the basis of centuries-old traditions in the territory of Azerbaijan, especially in the city of Ganja, which has always maintained its position as a cultural center, have not passed over funeral customs. As a result, our centuries-old craft and architectural traditions have enriched Muslim funeral customs and rituals from the medieval period, creating the conditions for the erection of tombstones, provided that the new functions relate to ancient traditions (3, p. 45-51; 9, p. 344).

Ganja is one of the oldest corners of our country's culture. Azerbaijan is located between Europe and Asia and has a favorable natural-geographic economy, mild climate, fertile soil, rich mineral resources. This territory is actually famous as the first shelter of human civilization. Two million years ago there were every condition for the habitation, life, creation, development and advancement of primitive people. The ancient city of Ganja is one of the first centers of urban civilization (urbanization) is not only the Muslim East and the world.

Ganja has a history of at least 4000 years of the Muslim Orient and here are old monuments, tomb of Aposlels, a valuable sanctuary. Sabizkar tomb is considered to be the most important symbol of the city. Important historical source of the yearbook was revealed from this monument.

On the territory of the ancient, historical and architectural complex of modern times to save more than 100 ancient and unique tombstones. These tombstones are mausoleums Serdabe (local sarcophags). Ganja Sabizkar tomb was for centuries the sanctuary of the Muslims, who had come not only from Azerbaijan, but also from other countries (6, p. 17-21; 9, p. 342-343).

Here you can follow the development of the craft and architecture based on the study of the grave. The architectural monuments of this ancient city preserve the traditions of multiculturalism and tolerant values. This cemetery is included in the list of protected cultural and historical monuments in the country.

The decorative art applied mainly relates to everyday life. The field is divided into two parts in terms of raw materials: metal, ceramics, textiles and wood and technology: carving, casting, embossing and weaving (1, p. 119-124, 189-192; 5, p. 12-16).

Examples of epigraphy also show that architecture and craftsmanship in Ganja have been formed since ancient times, enriched with new features over time, thus relying on previous traditions, and thus the elements of urban culture are based on very ancient historical periods. Among the most important historical features of Ganja Imamzada and Sebzikar epitaphs, ancient tombs, tombstones are the creation of conditions for the study of ancient religious views and ideas of Ganja, our people as a whole, beliefs and convictions about the hereafter (2; 3).

In Sabizkar complex one of the important features of both the sarcophagus and tombstones and tombstones, along with their structure, was the epitaph in the Arabic alphabet, as well as the carving and embossing of floral and geometric patterns. Graves and tombstones, which are distinguished by their originality, especially by their bulge (or, more precisely, by their reliefs, reliefs and patterned elements) and are considered new for the first medieval period under consideration, are very important in the study of urban culture in Islam (7, p. 3-4; 10, p. 64-65).

Despite the widespread use in the geographical region, religious and national values that have developed on the basis of centuries-old traditions in the territory of Azerbaijan, especially in the city of Ganja, which has always maintained its position as a cultural center, have not passed over funeral customs.

As a result, our centuries-old craft and architectural traditions have enriched Muslim funeral customs and rituals from the medieval period, creating the conditions for the erection of tombstones, provided that the new functions relate to ancient traditions.

The architectural traditions of Ganja city, both for the ancient and antiquity periods, as well as for the early Middle Ages and later, were gradually assimilated by the Arabs who ruled in the territory of Azerbaijan in the VII-VIII centuries. In later historical periods, Azerbaijan was founded by most of the other peoples included in the Arab Caliphate, which included a very large geographical area - the Atlantic Ocean from the west, the Iberian Peninsula, as well as North Africa, as well as from East to Central Asia and China. Erected in ancient cultural centers such as Ganja, mastered the art methods of construction traditions and successfully applied in the construction of magnificent monuments.

Respect for the spirits of ancestors in the Ganja Sabizkar cemetery is considered to be a sign of respect for the tombs, where they slept forever, and in most cases belongs to the first millennium BC (V-IV centuries BC) and the first medieval stages of our era. The main features of Albanian cemeteries are obvious.

In this regard, it is necessary to pay attention to several valuable historical and ethnographic points such as preservation of important features of pre-Islamic national customs and traditions related to funerals (1, p. 6-8), coincidence of some stable features of the tomb structure typical of the Albanian necropolises (this type of our ancient tombs, which existed in pre-Islamic historical periods) and to observe the regularity of the arrangement of the graves, which our ancestors protected from generation to generation as an important trust, as it has been for thousands of years.

In Ganja, as it was many centuries ago, far from the notion of familiar and foreign graves, no distinction is made in the grave where each deceased person is buried, preserving the tradition of treating all graves with equal respect.

Performing funeral rites, provided that they do not contradict the most important rules and instructions of Islam, and pass on the foundation of our very ancient religious ideas, including a number of traditions and ideas related to Zoroastrianism and fire-worship, as important values to future generations (2, p. 27; 4, p. 56-58).

Ganja Sabizkar cemetery has not only the oldest preserved tombstones, but also many tombs built in later historical periods, as well as tombstones with special mastery by Ganja artists of different floral (vegetative) or geometric elements of local Arran architectural school traditions engraving. In tombstones of Ganja Sabizkar cemetery, which have unique construction features, separate cosmogony, astral images, embodying the ancient religious-mythological worldview and imagination of our people, as well as the ancient history of urbanization culture of Ganja people.

Both tombs and other epigraphs - visual applications in tombs. In Ganja Sabizkar cemetery, various epigraphic ornaments, as well as abstract, as well as anthropomorphic (having a human image) preserved and preserved in the folklore of many Turkic peoples and ethnic groups associated with fire worship, Zoroastrianism, on the one hand, and pre-Islamic Albanian culture on the other and zoomorphic (in the form of animal depictions) to one degree or another during the construction of the above-mentioned tombstones.

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Understanding the Evidence for the Silk Roads in Georgia and its Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, various international bodies have adopted many declarations, charters, conventions and programmes to protect and promote cultural heritage worldwide. European Cultural Routes by the Council of Europe, the World Heritage List and the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Memory of the World Register of the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) are those frameworks in which efforts have been made to preserve and manage heritage across the globe. Within the UNESCO World Heritage Programme, a relatively new Silk Roads Transnational and Serial Nomination appears to be another platform for international heritage management and cultural diplomacy (Williams, 2016, p. 12).

The term "Silk Road" is commonly attributed to a prominent German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen, who worked in China from 1868 to 1872 to design a potential railroad line from Shandong to Germany (Hansen, 2012, pp.6-8; Clements, 2017, p.1-3; Whitfield, 2015, pp.1-2). However, recent research suggests that German Geographer Carl Ritter invented the phrase in 1838 (Winter, 2022, p.1). After a while, in 1938, Swedish Geographer Steve Hedin used the term as the title of the English translation of his book about his Central Asian explorations (Hansen, 2012, p.8). Over the last couple of decades, the phrase "Silk Road" gradually gained remarkable popularity. It is often used in international relations to describe bilateral and multilateral ties in Asia (Millward, 2013, 86). According to British historian and Silk Road researcher Susan Whitfield, the term has become a widely used brand inside and outside academia (Whitfield, 2015, pp.1-7). Australian sociologist Tim Winter reasonably believes that Silk Road is the most potent geo-cultural concept of the twenty-first century, yet it remains poorly understood (Winter, 2022, pp. 141-148).

The UNESCO Silk Roads Nomination strategy focuses on the heyday of the Silk Roads between the 2nd century BC and the 16th century CE (Frankopan, 2015, pp. 27-242) to reflect the scale, diversity and complex chronologies of the concept (Williams, 2014, pp. 6-16). In addition, it clears the misconception about the term Silk Road which has often been conceived as a single line with direction from East to west between China and Rome and silk as the only trade good on this route (Millward, 2013, p.21). Thus, the metaphor "Silk Road" is used in plural tense in the UNESCO Nomination strategy to demonstrate that the concept encompasses multiple routes through which the trade goods and ideas were exchanged (Williams, 2014).

UNESCO Silk Roads Transboundary and Serial Nomination strategy is based on a "corridor approach", following the thematic study on the Silk Roads undertaken by Tim Williams on behalf of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the Advisory Body of UNESCO (Williams, 2014, pp. 27-30). The approach opts to identify movements and their impact on the landscape between the nodes and encompass a more comprehensive range of sites than the grand monuments. It envisages the inclusion of caravanserais, inns, waystations, forts, bridges, smaller towns, industrial/production sites, religious sites, agricultural systems, and natural and cultural landmarks linked by an overarching concept of the Silk Roads.

The UNESCO Serial Transnational World Heritage Nomination of the Silk Roads project has already gained currency in several countries' political and cultural agendas. In 2014 the World Heritage Committee inscribed a joint nomination "Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor" of the State Parties of China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan with the thirty-three components, including cities, trading settlements, fortifications, and religious buildings on the World Heritage List at its 38th session (UNESCO, 2014, pp.198-203). Furthermore, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan State Parties submitted the nomination dossier "Silk Roads: Zarafshan-Karakum Corridor" to the Tentative List last year (UNESCO, 2021). In addition, the South Asian Silk Roads (China, India, Nepal and Bhutan) and the Fergana-Syrdarya Silk Roads Heritage Corridor (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

and Uzbekistan) are under preparation (Jing & Denyer, 2019, 13).

This article aims to understand how Georgia can, if at all, fit in such a nomination strategy. First, this article reviews and synthesizes evidence for the Silk Roads in Georgia and its long-distance connectivity from the ancient period to the 16th century. Second, it discusses the opportunities of the sites and landscapes for framing a corridor for the nomination strategy. Last, it concludes that further research and collaboration seem indispensable to cope with the issue.

1. A SHORT SYNTHESIS FOR THE LONG-DISTANCE CONNECTIVITY FROM THE ANCIENT PERIOD TO THE 16TH CENTURY

According to Greece (Strabo, citing Aristobulus and Patroclus) and Roman authors' (Varro, Pliny) records, one of the long-distance trade routes connecting India to the Black Sea passed through the Transcaucasia (Albania, Iberia, and Colchis). Namely, the westernmost section of the route ran along the Valley of the River Mtkvari, then crossed over Surami pass and from Sarapana (Shorapani) fortress went on to the River Phasis, present Rioni-Qvirila branch, towards the Black Sea at the city of Phasis (Strabo XI, 7, 3; Pliny 6, 52). From here, goods were shipped to the ports of Amisos and Sinope (Strabo XI, 2, 17).

The Caucasian segment of the route had been established already in the pre-Hellenistic period due to Greek settlements founded on the east coast of the Black Sea playing a significant role in trade relations with the Mediterranean (Lordkipanidze, 2002, p. 8). The topography of Greek imports dating back to the 6th-4th centuries BC attests to the trading activity of Phasis already in the Archaic and Classical periods. Greek imports are discovered in every significant settlement between Phasis and Vani, namely in Simagre, Dapnari, Dablagomi, and Mtisdziri (Mikeladze, 1978, pp. 62–68; Tolordava, 1983, pp.136–138; Tolordava, 1983a, pp.129–135; Gamkrelidze, 1983, pp.127–128). Furthermore, the dissemination of Greek ware in the inner part of Colchis (Kutaisi, Brili, Sachkhere, Sairkhe, Chognari and Itkhvisi) indicates that the main overland trade routes were developed along the Rioni and the Qvirila Rivers. Archaeological evidence suggests that Greek imports were penetrated from Colchis to Iberia (eastern Georgia) through the route segment between India and the Black Sea. In Iberia, imported Greek objects were found in the valleys of the Kura River (Uplistsikhe and Khovle) and its tributaries, the Rivers Prone (Takhtidziri, Rustavi, Avlevi) and Aragvi (Qazbegi) (Lordkipanidze, 2002, pp. 12–13; Gagoshidze, 2020, pp. 19–55). The Greek black glazed pottery pieces have recently been found at Grakliani Hill (Licheli, 2022, p. 351).

The mentioned international route was used in the 2nd century BC in South Caucasia, according to numismatic data. A hoard of more than 500 coins, including five Bactrian silver coins (one issued by a founder of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom, Diodotus I, and four silver tetradrachms by the Bactrian King Eucratides (169–159BC), was discovered in Gabala, Azerbaijan (Lordkipanidze, 2002, p. 7). In addition, seven Bactrian coins have been unearthed in ancient Iberia. Six coins dating back to the 2nd century BC were found in Tbilisi during the construction of a school in the 1970-s. A 1st century BC Sogdian imitation of a tetradrachm was discovered near Pasanauri (Dundua, 2013, p. 115).

A historian, numismatist Dundua (2019, p.13) defines a chronological range of the Transcaucasian transit route as follows:

1. Phase: III century BC - the first half of the II century BC, until 65 CE. The Transcaucasian transit seems to have been disrupted during the Flavian (69-96) era;

2. Phase: the beginning of the principle of Tiberius (14-37) - a period of its re-functioning.

Usage of this road decreased in the late Hellenistic period. It was then revived in Roman times, as hostile relations between Rome and Parthia blocked the road via Parthia and Armenia to the Western Roman World (Melikishvili, 2006, 56).

Notably, the majority of the settlements during the ancient and early middle Ages developed along the routes of the Rivers Rioni-Qvirila (Shorapani, Kldeeti, Vardtsikhe, Vani, Shuamta, Partskhanaqhanevi, Mtisdziri, Dablagomi, Dapnari, Sajavakho, Tchaladidi) and Mtkvari (Zghuderi, Urbnisi, Uplistsikhe, Qhanchaeti, Dzalisa, Tsikhiagora, Nastakisi, Samadlo, Sarkine, Mtskheta) in the West and East Georgia, respectively (Gamkrelidze, 2021, p. 228; Braund et al., 2009). Moreover, archaeological excavations have uncovered products (pottery, jewellery, coins, metal and glassware) of different centres of the Roman World in these settlements (Gamkrelidze, 2021, pp. 221-226). Among them, the capital of Iberia, Mtskheta, was located at the intersection of strategic roads coming from and to Armenia (Artaxata), Albania, Colchis and the North Caucasus. These roads passing the territory of Mtskheta described by Strabo (XI, 3, 5) are also illustrated on the Tabula Peutengerianna – a 12th-century copy of a map named after its former owner. However, the original model dating back to the 4th century is based on the 1st century AD sources (Fellmeth, 2006).

The tribes of Siraces and Aorsi living between the Azov and Caspian Seas were importing the Indian and Babylonian merchandise from the Armenians and Medes, as stated by Strabo (XI, 5, 8). Therefore, they could have been using a trade route from Artaxata to Mt-

skheta and the North Caucasus via the Valley of the River Aragvi and Dariali Gorge. The discovery of Gotarzes drachmas in the North Caucasus, widely used in Iberia, and Bosporus staters in Iberia, supports this opinion (Lordkipanidze & Muskhelishvili, 2011, pp. 158-159). Notably, the "Historical Monuments of Mtskheta" is already on the World Heritage List as a single property.

From the end of the IV century to the beginning of the VII century, new destinations have emerged along with the developments of some old ones in Transcaucasia, such as Dvini in Armenia, Bardavi in Azerbaijan, Nokalakevi and Vardtsikhe in Egrisi (west Georgia), Ujarma, Cheremi, Urbnisi and Tbilisi in Iberia (Chilashvili, 1970, 34-60).

During the V-VII centuries, trade with silk becomes very popular in the Near and Middle East and one of the main factors for defining the international politics of the Byzantine Empire. As Sassanid Iran controlled the import of silk to the Byzantine Empire, the latter was trying to find new ways to import goods from the East. The records of a Byzantine historian, Menander Protector, describe the intense diplomatic exchanges between Sogdians, Türks and Byzantines in the exchange of silk via the passes of the Caucasus (De la Vaissière, 2005, pp. 234-242). In addition, the discoveries of the VI-VII centuries of Byzantine golden coins in Abkhazia, Svaneti and Racha and along the pass of Cherkessia, Balkaria and Ossetia suggest that Byzantine was using alternative routes in the north Caucasia for the economic relationship with the Middle East (Lordkipanidze & Muskhelishvili, 2011, pp. 158-159). Lortkifanidze and Murgulia (2014, pp. 95-115) examine the role of Svaneti in the relationship between the Byzantine and Sassanid Iran in the V-VI centuries from a military and commercial standpoint in their relatively recent article.

Trade seems to be developed between Transcaucasia and the newly established Arab State from the VIII century, specifically in its II half. Mints producing Arabs silver coins Dirhams appear to have been established locally in the following cities of Transcaucasia: Tbilisi, Dvini, Bardavi, Ganja, and Derbend (Lordkipanidze & Muskhelishvili, 2011, p.173).

Transcaucasia became a part of the trade route connecting the Baltic Sea countries to the Arab State and India to Byzantine from the II half of the IX century. Artanuji was one of the new cities founded along the trade routes (Giviashvili & Koplatadze, 2004). Byzantine golden and silver coins spread over the whole territory of Transcaucasia, and reaching the Caspian Sea proves the engagement of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the trade activities (Chilashvili, 1970, p. 80).

During the XII-XIII centuries, Georgia is one of the most robust states in the Near East, developing intensive international trade. Trade between Iran and Transcaucasian cities Dmanisi, Samshvildze, Tbilisi and Ganja was developed in the mentioned period. Silk is supposed to be exported from Dmanisi, kars and Bardavi to Iran. From Tbilisi, saddles, bridles designed with elephant's bones, glass bowls, crystal productions, honey, wax, different types of cloths, felt cloaks, carpets, wool and silk were exported (Chilashvili, 1968).

Byzantium glazed vessels and white earthenware pots were found in Kutaisi, Vani, Tsikhisdziri, Gonio, and Sokhumi in the XI-XIII centuries. At the same time, Iranian and Armenian faience were discovered in Rustavi, Dmanisi, Tbilisi and Ujarma (Lordkipanidze & Muskhelishvili, 2011, p.179). In Dmanisi, along with Iranian fiancé and Palestinian pottery, archaeologists have also unearthed Chinese pottery pieces and different types of beads supposedly imported from Yemen (Kopaliani, 2017, pp.120-123). Georgia was connected with the Byzantine through Artanuji, while with the South (Tabriz) via Dvini-Anisi, and with Ardebil via Barda (Chilashvili, 1970, pp. 170-171).

The Mongols' invasions during the 13th and the 14th centuries in Georgia, followed by the division of the United Kingdom of Georgia into small kingdoms in the XV century, triggered a trade activity decline. However, from the second half of the 15th century to the beginning of the 17th century, the Kakheti Kingdom and its capital Gremi became more advanced than other kingdoms in Georgia due to its proximity Ghilan-Shamakhi-Astrakhan trade route (Suny, 1994, p.46).

2. GREMI HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE AS A DESTINATION ON THE TRADE ROUTE

In 1466, Gremi was founded at the Caucasus Mountains and Alazani Valley junction. Situated at the crossroad of these two different geographical landmarks, Gremi served as a connecting bridge between the socio-economic life of the two regions (Chilashvili, 1980, pp. 12-13). Culturally and economically developed, Gremi ceased to exist in 1616 due to the devastating invasions by Iranian Shah Abbas I with his army and never regained its former glory (Suny, 1994, p. 50). The strategic and economic centre of the independent Kingdom of Kakheti is one of the most short-lived cities in Georgia. Nevertheless, it has a remarkable history for which it is cherished today. The State Party has submitted Gremi Church of the Archangels and the Royal Tower to the Tentative List since 2007. However, the historical landscape of Gremi encompasses a much wider area and consists of four main parts, including the citadel, the royal area, the commercial quarter, and the Holy Trinity fortification (Chilashvili,

1980, pp. 44-46). The citadel encompasses the Church of the Archangels, a royal residence with a bell tower and a surrounding defensive wall (Zakaria, 1975, pp. 21-50). The manufacturing facilities, such as wine cellars and a wine press, are also found here (Chilashvili, 1980, pp. 44-45). The Church of the Archangels and the adjacent dwelling tower with the belfry occupy a dominant position among surviving medieval buildings (Mepisashvili et al., 1979). The Church of the Archangels was built in 1565 by King Leon I of Kakheti (1518-1574), according to a Greek inscription carved above the western door of the church (Zakaria, 1975, pp. 21-23). The church is characterized by a traditional cruciform dome with two detached piers, with a distinct emphasis on height. The interior wall paintings date to 1577 (Mepisashvili et al. 1979, p. 179). Both the Church of the Archangels and the royal tower are built using brick, densely arranged patterns instead of stone, which testifies to the Iranian influence. The decoration of the facades with pointed arches reflects the spread of Iranian form and taste. The Church of the Archangels is significant in religious, cultural heritage, architectural, historical, scientific and aesthetic value (Jamburia, 2019).

Like the Church of Archangels, the historical and cultural heritage values can be attributed to the royal tower. It is a three-storey building designed for residential use with living and reception rooms and a belfry, a later addition. Since 1975, the building has served as a museum where visitors can see archaeological artefacts and portraits of the royal members and watch the slideshow and animation showing the chronological reconstruction of the city of Gremi (Jamburia, 2019). In the royal tower, on the right of the corridor, a toilet has its plumbing system. Its exceptional organization takes a visitor by surprise even in the 21st century. From the top floor of the tower, there is a panoramic view of Alazani Valley and the peaks of the Caucasus Mountains (Mepisashvili et al. 1979, p.179), revealing the beauty and aesthetics of the Gremi historical landscape.

In the royal district (20 ha), archaeologists uncovered remnants of a palace complex, the residential houses, a pavilion with water fountains, pools, baths, a bakery, a wine storage facility, and the remains of some other buildings (Zakaraia, 1975, pp. 51-91; Chilashvili, 1980, pp. 86-104). Although all the buildings here were destroyed, the royal district preserves archaeological and historical significance for the current and future generations, regardless of the condition of the remaining structures.

The most significant part of the city appears to be the commercial quarter (30 ha), where trading caravans and travellers from foreign countries used to trade (Chilashvili, 1980, p. 45). The architectural complex of the market, the caravanserai, residential houses and

manufacturing buildings, a public bath-house, two inns, several parish churches, and the Tarsa wall were situated in this lively part of the city (Zakaraia, 1975, pp. 92- 114; Chilashvili, 1980, p. 46-72). Merchants of different ethnic groups (Georgians, Armenians, and Jews), artisans and servants (Chilashvili, 1980) were its primary inhabitants. The architectural complex of the market occupied 1,400 square m in total. It consisted of 30 trading arcades of pointed arches built with cobblestones and mortar and had small balconies in front. The fireplaces found in each shopping arcade suggest that they operated throughout the year. Some of the markets were two-storey buildings with deep basements that might have been used as cold storage rooms. Each of the arcades served a different purpose. Some accommodated shops and workshops, others, located at the entrance, were used by guards and customs officers. In one of the markets, a discovery of coins and the remains of a furnace with burnt copper items indicates the presence of an ironsmith's workshop. One room in the middle of the market with a swimming pool is thought to have been used for leisure activities by local and foreign merchants who stayed at the adjoining caravanserai.

According to the reconstructed plan of the caravanserai, it was 75m long, with 32 rooms situated on both sides of its corridor. Between the architectural complex of the market and caravanserai, a three-metre passage facilitated the markets to be supplied with goods (Chilashvili, 1980:48-56). The commercial district of Gremi reflects the socio-economic and political values of its heyday. In the present day, it can be associated with historical, archaeological, and cultural heritage values. Despite its lack of physical integrity, the market district is as part of Gremi's historical and cultural heritage as the Church of Archangels (Jamburia, 2019).

The fourth part of Gremi, the Holy Trinity fortification, was a defensive complex situated on the ridge on the opposite side of the Church of the Archangels. It encompassed the Holy Trinity Church, a hall, a tower, the workshops, a water system and a perimeter wall (Zakaraia, 1975, pp. 132-138). In addition, it was a vantage point from where one could see the other three parts of the city, the gorge, the Caucasus and the Alazani Valley.

Arguably, Gremi's central cultural heritage and historical significance lie not only in the architecture of the Archangels' church and the royal tower but also in the biography of the place and in its attributes formed out of the interactions with the different nodes of that time. In addition to this, it is against the comparative study of the existing World Heritage Sites, and it would be difficult to justify why "Gremi Church of Archangels and the Royal Tower" would bring Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in comparison with other cultur-

al sites. In addition, it is not in compliance with the Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced, and Credible World Heritage List (Jamburia, 2019).

One of the essential biographical facts of Gremi's bustling life derives from its trade connection with Persia and other oriental countries as part of the Silk Roads, which, in turn, defines the associative and symbolic values of the place (Jamburia, 2019). Here, archaeological excavations uncovered imported artefacts from various trading centres of Persia (Kerman, Kashan), including various types and colours of glazed ceramic ware, fiancé, copper and silver items. Among remarkable discoveries were fragments of Chinese porcelain and celadon (Mindorashvili, 2015, pp. 207-208).

In the 15th and 16th centuries, the export of Kakheti consisted of silk and carpets, gold cloth, rubia (a plant used to make paint), wine, horses, sheep and precious furs (Chilashvili, 1980, pp. 151-152). Ensuring the infrastructure provision to facilitate trade and transportation was highly important for the Royals of Kakheti. Archaeologists have discovered a three-metre-wide red brick road starting from Gremi and stretching over the several dozen kilometres in Kakheti (ibid, p.233).

Gremi was connected to Persia, Dagestan and Russia via Shamakhi (Azerbaijan) (Fig.1). The journey from Gremi to Shamakhi took ten days at an average rate of 30 kilometres per day, while the distance from Shamakhi to Derbent was covered in six days. The total travelling time between Gremi to Derbent thus was 16 days. Taking into account known topographic and cultural features and reports of some foreign Ambassadors, Chilashvili (1980, pp. 237-238) reconstructed the route from Gremi to Shamakhi. The first overnight stop for travellers after Gremi would be Gavazi, then Areshi, Togha, Zagemi, Qakh and Sheki until they reached Shamakhi.

Remnants of buildings in Gavazi, Areshi, and Togha are deemed to be caravanserai or halting places. The remains of a defensive tower and the old road were identified between Gavazi and Togha (Chilashvili, 1980, p. 238).

On the route from Gremi to Shamakhi, Zagemi (Bazari), another prominent economic and political centre of Kakheti Kingdom, emerged due to the commercial activities in nowadays Zakatala region of Azerbaijan, in the village of Aliabad. It represents an under-researched area: archaeological excavations have not taken place here, only field surveys. According to Russian and Turkish sources, Zagemi consisted of three districts: the Church District, which included the royal quarters as well as the main church; the Rabat (outskirts) and the Market District, which was a walled trading area encompassing the caravanserai and restaurants. Except for these buildings, a mint has been located in Zagemi since the end of the 13th century.

The tradition of minting coins here seems to have been revived by the 16th century: 189 coins minted at ten different locations were accidentally found here, of which eight coins were minted at Zagemi. Among the revealed coins were European ducats which testify to the connection between the European and local traders. Zagemi ceased to exist simultaneously as Gremi in 1616 (Zakaraia, 1975, p. 94).

One of the leading destinations for the traders from Gremi was Shamakhi - an important centre of culture and trade and the royal seat of Shirvan shahs from the 9th to 18th century. According to Adam Olearius (1599-1671), a German traveller and diplomat who visited Shirvan in the 1630s, Shamakhi consisted of two parts, the southern and northern, each surrounded by walls. In the northern part of Shamakhi, Turks, Armenians, and some Georgians lived, but all the inhabitants spoke Turkic, which was common all over Persia. Spinning, weaving and embroidery with silk and paper were inhabitants' activities of this part of the city (Mustafayev, 2018).

The main markets of Shamakhi were in the southern part, which was more significant than the northern one. Here, a large market with several covered streets, dotted with shops of local merchants, offered silk and cotton fabric, silver and gold brocade, bows, arrows, and other handicrafts for a reasonable price (Mustafayev, 2018, p. 39). In addition, two large caravanserais with chambers and galleries, where foreign merchants stayed and traded, were situated in the southern part of the city. In one of the caravanserais, named after Shah, mostly Russian merchants used to stop and bring tin, leather, copper, furs, and other commodities for trading. In another one, the so-called Lezgi caravanserai, traders from the North Caucasus from Circassia and Dagestan, offered horses and enslaved people for purchase (Mustafayev, 2018, pp 39-40).

According to the Dutch traveller Ian Streis (1670), Georgians also played a significant role in the economic life of Shamakhi. For example, in one of the parts of the city, there should have been Giurji-bazaar, the Georgian market, which is preserved in Ermakov's photo documentation of Shamakhi, destroyed by an earthquake on January 31, 1902 (Chilashvili 1980, p. 249).

Indeed, Shamakhi was not the final destination of the merchants coming from Gremi and other places. Commonly caravans used to carry on to the south towards Ardabil (modern Iran), one of the main cities on the territory of southern Azerbaijan (Mustafayev, 2018, p. 39-40) and towards other nodes. The trip from Shamakhi to Ardabil took eight days (Matthee, 1999, p. 55); thus, the journey from Gremi to Ardabil lasted 18 days (Chilashvili, 1980, p. 252).

According to the Dutch traveller Jan Streiss (1670), Ardabil was a famous and excellent trade city where merchants came and went from Gilan, Kurdistan, Georgia and other countries (Chilashvili, 1980, p. 252). From Ardabil, two roads diverged: the western route towards Tabriz and the south-eastern to the cities of Qazvin and Kashan. Silk from Gilan province was also ferried across the Caspian Sea to Astrakhan (Matthee, 1999, p. 54). While a trip from Shamakhi to Naziabad took five days, the distance between Naziabad to Astrakhan was covered by a boat in five to nine days, depending on the season and circumstances (Matthee, 1999, p.55).

In the increasingly globalized World, cultural heritage is recognized not only of national but potentially international importance too. The significance of each heritage site is determined by the values that are ascribed to the place (Jamburia, 2019). The deconstruction of Gremi's biography showcased its future international potential in a somewhat different way than it is featured on the Tentative List. The concentration on material and tangible manifestations of culture confine the imagination and interpretation of landscapes (Baird, 2017, pp. 5-6). The biographical approach to Gremi's landscape makes apparent that focusing predominantly on the best-preserved parts of the city, such as the church of Archangels and the adjoining royal tower, considerably limits the representation and expression of the very essence of the place. Alternatively, framing Gremi as an outcome of the Silk Roads makes it possible to fully represent its history and capture all values that one might ascribe to it. However, it is also evident that the Gremi historical landscape cannot be individually seen as a manifestation of an exceptional response to the Silk Roads. Therefore, developing a serial nomination that reflects a particular geo-cultural system can be relevant to discuss in this case (Jamburia, 2019).

Considering cultural, historical, and eco-geographic reasons, Gremi can form the basis for two serial nomination projects combined with some sites in Azerbaijan, Iran, and, theoretically, Russia. The first option for the project to develop could be the Gremi-Shamakhi-Ardabil route combined with relevant sites in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran, respectively. The second option would be the Gremi-Shamakhi-Derbend route in collaboration with the State Parties of Azerbaijan and Russia. However, the latter does not seem viable considering the existing political tension and frozen conflict between the Russian Federation and Georgia. Furthermore, the significant issue here, which is relevant to both routes, is demonstrating physical evidence on sites and the scale of archaeology (Jamburia, 2019).

The potential for the Gremi-Shamakhi-Ardabil Silk Roads corridor to be submitted to the Tentative List depends on proper knowledge of heritage resources and their condition and ability to demonstrate the OUV.

Further research and surveys using modern technologies need to be undertaken with the involvement of local experts for the identification of potential heritage resources in the section between Gremi and Sheki, particularly in Gavazi, Areshi, Togha, Zagemi, Qakh, also between Shamakhi and Ardabil, and beyond it in Iran. The main challenges with this route are that many potential sites are under-researched, and some are in poor condition. In contrast, those well-studied and well-preserved, such as Sheki, Ardabil and Tabriz sites, have already been individually inscribed on the World Heritage List (UNESCO, 2022).

The nomination of Gremi as part of the Silk Roads transboundary project is a difficult task, and it poses many challenges, which may not be overcome due to the decay or extension of the physical embodiments of the Silk Roads' concept. However, the complex values of Gremi's historical landscape and trading centre on one of the branches of the Silk Roads should not be ignored but enhanced if nominated. It would be helpful for Georgia to work closely with Azerbaijan, another under-represented country on the World Heritage List, to identify and evaluate the potential of the sites within the proposed corridor to justify OUV and find a feasible solution together to developing future intercultural cooperation in this regard.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, the historic Silk Roads gain new values and importance in contemporary society. One can attribute historical, cultural, social, economic, and political values to the Silk Road within the current heritage discourse. Place branding, regional competitiveness and attractiveness, niche tourism, image and symbols creation, sense of place, identity building, community participation, social cohesion, and return on investment are benefits of identifying and managing the Silk Roads heritage for the development strategy worldwide. Thus research should continue to shed more light on the evidence of the long-distance connectivity that existed in the past to embrace cross-cultural collaboration in the present and future. In a world full of wars and tension, cultural heritage can and should be used as a source of mutual understanding and cultural diplomacy.

Even discussion on the possible joint nomination opens a horizon and platform for cooperation between countries and creates room for cultural diplomacy since it requires a joint effort from the beginning at a research stage.

Figure 1. *Route from Gremi to Persia and Russia via Shamakhi. Map compiled by Salome Jamburia*

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The Early Bronze age cultural sequence: New investigations in Adigeni Municipality, Samtskhe Region, southwest Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

The prehistoric period has been the one of the main focus of research throughout the years, but even though the Samtskhe Region has received less attention. The majority of basic archaeological data from the area is the result of salvage work conducted during the Soviet period.

Broadly speaking, the 20th century was especially rich in Caucasus archaeology, with many discoveries made during this time period. Several prehistoric cultures have been unearthed through archaeological excavations. One of these was Kura-Araxes, which is one of the most important culture not only for the Caucasus, but also for the Near East. This was a culture that destroyed ideas about cultural boundaries and limitations in space over time. Although its history of research spans nearly 100 years, many questions still exist, especially its origin is enigmatic. Its relation to the following Early Kurgan culture is unclear as well. Studies conducted in Samtskhe over the past few years have shed new light on these issues and provide a perspective for understanding these problems.

Over the years, archeological science has been dominated by the idea that the Kura-Araxes community, because of difficult landscape conditions, was less approachable on the Adigeni side. This conclusion was based on the results of small-scale archaeological survey conducted by professor. O. Japaridze in the 1970s. The expedition did not identified any traces of Kura-Araxes culture in the region (Japaridze et al.,1981:15). However, later archaeological surveys rejected this theory, including at the sites of Amkheris Gora, Benara, Farekha, and more (Orjonikidze 1983; Gambashidze & Kvizhinadze 1981:63). Moreover, recently studied Orchosani settlement has shown that the Early Bronze Age Kura-Araxes had strong Chalcolithic cultural prior in the region that overlapped chronologically with the Kura-Araxes culture (Gambashidze et al., 2018:146-449; Gambashidze 2021:133-158).

It should be noted that from 2013 an archaeological survey was initiated in the region and more than 50 archaeological sites have been found (Chilingarashvili 2021:40-98). Among them was Irmis Rka settlement, which is excavating since 2020 by the Georgian National Museum. Two years of work have uncovered traces of Kura-Araxes occupation, stratigraphically followed by a layer of Bedeni culture. This is extremely important for EBA research for several reasons: First and foremost, the Bedeni culture was completely unknown to Adigeni area, and before that, only one site in Samtskhe region Zveli's Rabati was known (Bedianashvili et al., 2019:1-133). Thus, the settlement confirms the cultural continuity of the early Bronze Age and indicates that Samtskhe, including the Adigeni region, is a participant in the cultural processes that took place in the second half of the III millennium BC. in territory of Georgia. The settlement provides an opportunity to observe the transformation of these cultures, including when and how the Kura-Araxes was replaced by the Bedeni culture (Makharadze et al., 2016:11), in addition to the causes of this change, and whether any cultural elements were transferred from the previous period to a later culture. Geographical factors also play an important role, because this area presents the first evidence of this culture. And provides the westernmost limit known to this day for the spread of Bedeni.

METHODOLOGY

The discussed issues are based on findings from the 1970s and 1980s, as well as results obtained from archaeological excavations conducted in the past ten years. Many of the data have been compiled through my fieldwork over several years. Which includes two areas: the first is the results of an archaeological survey project (AAS – Adigeni Archaeological Survey) and the archaeological excavations at Irmis Rka settlement, which includes the results of a two-season large-scale excavation. Radiocarbon dates were used to date the main layers of the settlement. Stratigraphic data were used to date individual complexes based on pottery, its shape, fabric and ornamentation.

AN EXCAVATION AT THE IRMIS RKA SETTLEMENT AND A MAJOR EBA CONTEXTS

The Irmis Rka settlement is located on the Erusheti Mountain in south-west Georgia in the Samtskhe Region, about 2 km south from the village Tsarbastubani, close to the border of Turkey, at an altitude of 1560 m. The site is a high mountain with a flatten summit. Which overlooks the adjacent area and controls the main valleys of the local region (fig.1). Archeological excavations on the settlement were initiated in 2020 by the Georgian National Museum due to the construction work of pipeline and the excavations continue as a scientific project. Since then, a total of three Kura-Araxes structures have been studied in the settlement. the architecture is characterized by dry stone walls. Because the settlement is located on a steep slope, it causes erosion, and only the back walls are preserved (fig.2). The Irmis Rka buildings should also have semi-subterranean construction with rounded corners based on the architectural evidence of the Chobareti settlement of the same period in the region (Kakhiani et al., 2013:1-138). Inside the buildings, a variety of pottery, stone and bone tools, grinders, and more have been found (fig.3).

Additionally, significant materials and information from the same period were collected from the pits. 35 Kura-Araxes pits have been studied in different parts of the settlement (fig.4). Which should have had different functions depending on their contents.

The stratigraphic trench made on the settlement was particularly productive. It was a steped trench to determine the stratigraphy of the settlement. In total 5 steps were made, but only three of the steps confirmed presence of cultural layers (fig.5).

The first step was on the edge of the summit, which was slightly sloping to the east. It covered an area of 10X2.5 m. At a depth of 30 cm from the surface, in the southern part of the trench a 4,30 m length stone wall was exposed. In the north-west corner, a large concentration of pottery was found, which extended in the unexcavated part in the west and north profile. From this concentration, up to ten vessels of various sizes and shapes have been partially restored (fig.7) (Chilingarashvili 2021B: 252-263).

Later, the first terrace was expanded and covered an area of 150 square meters where in the central part of the trench, a building with rounded corners was identified, which comprised about 30 square meters area (storage room N1). In the interior, clay ovens were installed in both corners of the building (fig.8). The first oven was built on a rectangular platform with a clay floor in the southwest corner, its back, clay wall and remains of roof were also found which had a semicircular shape. Additionally, a vessel was found on the roof, which had been partially damaged by the collapse of the house wall (Chilingarashvili 2022).

The north corner of the building contained a second oven. A semicircular tray made of baked clay was used for the base of the oven, one side of which has been opened. On the 10 cm high and 2 cm thick side walls, a dome-shaped clay roof was built, which partially rests on the structure's back wall. There have been more than 20 vessels discovered *in situ* in this structure that belong to the Bedeni culture. Three of vessels were located along the back wall, while the rest were concentrated in different parts of the interior (fig.8). The pottery repertoire includes cooking and storage vessels. Most of these vessels have their original form and decoration, Relief ornament is especially dominant, although incised and impressed motifs are also present. Aside from the vessels, several small objects were also found in the same context, including single zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figurines, sickle blades, andirons, grindings and a bronze knife.

From the north with an exit, the discussed structure is connected to storage room N2. As the back wall of the second room, bedrock was used. There were some places where stones were preserved on top of the rock. In the mentioned storeroom, near the north profile, a hearth consisted by rectangular stones was exposed, which was filled with ash. A tall, narrow-shouldered jar was found in its original condition in the hearth. There was also a lid which belonged to the same vessel. At the back of the vessel, another intact, relatively small double-handled jar was found on a hearth stone in an inverted position. Only part of this vessel was in the excavated area while the other half continued in profile. Totally, eight pots were found

across the floor of this storeroom, including some near the hearth. There was a stone mortar, flint sickle blades and bone tools as well. It is noteworthy that in the center of the room was found a large flat slab, which presumably supported a roof pillar. It should also be noted that in contrast to the N1 storeroom, N2 mainly contained small kitchen utensils, which clearly illustrates their functional difference.

As we have seen, the east walls of the buildings have not been attested, which is presumably due to the natural relief. In this regard especially noteworthy is the large stone wall exposed along the eastern edge of the trench, oriented toward the S-N line and extending almost to the northern profile of the trench. At this point, it is difficult to determine the purpose of this wall. However, according to orthophotos and drawings, it appears to be a continuation of the earlier, massive building found on the second terrace. This wall may have later been used as a foundation for the eastern wall during the Bedeni occupation. At this stage, it is clear that the separating wall between the N1 and N2 rooms sits directly on top of this large wall. This is significant from a stratigraphic perspective.

As mentioned on the second step/terrace which cover 10X2 m area, a stone wall was exposed. A small part of the large wall, the angle of the building, was attested in the excavated part. The wall consists of a single row of massive blocks, the longest part is almost 2 m, it's running on the S-N line and in the North direction extends in the profile of the first step. The short wall extends 1 m to the west and goes in the profile of the first terrace as well. From the south of this wall is attached relatively smaller wall which follows all the way down the profile then continues horizontally 1m toward the north and joins to the massive wall, for the moment, it's unclear what this wall is, but it almost certainly belongs to the Kura-Araxes culture (fig.9). On this step at depth of 1 m in the south-western part well-preserved ashy deposit was attested, which contained fragments of Kura-Araxes pottery, fragments of an andirons and an obsidian arrowhead were found. While cleaning the interior of the identified building, only Kura-Araxes pottery was found as well. Relying on the materials this layer with the architectural remains belongs to the Early bronze age Kura-Araxes period.

The final step confirmed the presence of the LBA defensive or terrace wall which disturbs early bronze age deposits (fig.5); therefore, no early bronze age contexts were found; however, its profile clearly demonstrates the presence of Kura-Araxes layers to a depth of almost 2 meters, which also points to long-term occupation at the site.

From the excavated part of the settlement at this time particularly noteworthy is existing on the first and second terraces the evidence of stratigraphical sequence. The profile indicates that a homogeneous grayish-yellow deposit extends to a depth of 1 meter and there is no dividing stratum between the level belonging to Bedeni and the level where the Kura-Araxes was attested (fig.9). This can be explained that the settlement was soon re-occupied during the Bedeni period. Currently, three radiocarbon dates have been made from the settlement, two of them come from the Kura-Araxes and one from the Bedeni pit. The settlement represents the early and developed stages of the Kura-Araxes culture, based on the dates. The earliest date is 3353-3101 BC, the second is 2884-2639 BC, and the last for Bedeni culture is 2460-2213 BC, which coincides with the dates from other Bedeni settlements Berikldeebi and Rabati (Sagona 2018:302, fig.7; 320-322, Bedianashvili et al., 2021:1673-1713). Overall, given the dates, there is about a 200-year gap between those two cultures, although in the central part of the settlement, where the stratigraphic sequence of these cultures has been confirmed, no interval can be observed between them. The second step's archeological material, unfortunately, is small in quantity and does not allow for comparison studies. However, it should be noted that except for the individual elements observed on the vessels, the pottery assemblages of both cultures are completely different. As for the other artifacts, it is notable that the andiron is a characteristic element of both cultures. On the one hand, there are several fragments of andirons in the Bedeni layer, which are obviously Kura-Aaraxes, so we have to consider the second use of the material. However, on the other hand, we also find andirons which with their fabric are very similar to Bedeni pottery and distinctly belong to this period.

The continuation of the Kura-Araxes traditions is most clearly expressed in architecture. The above described Bedeni house directly replicates the features of the previous architectural traditions - a slightly curved back wall and rounded corners are identical to Kura-Araxes single-room buildings from the region (fig.10). In this case, the difference is the additional room on the north side. It is also significant to note that some elements of interior have earliest roots. A similar clay oven was found in the Kura-Araxes settlement in Toloshi, from the same region (Chilingarashvili & Perello 2020: 386-396). It is difficult to speak more broadly at this time. The continuation of these traditions can be seen in other regions or if it is only a local case, since the architecture of this period is found only on the Berikldeebi settlement (Javakhishvili 2017).

CONCLUSION

Recent studies in Irmis Rka have revealed a stratigraphic relationship between early Bronze Age Kura-Araxes and Bedeni cultures. There are some connections between the architecture and some of the artefacts, possibly reflecting a continuation of traditions. Thus, the Irmis Rka settlement represents the Early Bronze Age cultural sequence. Additionally, it is noteworthy that some materials from the Bedeni house clearly indicate a connection with the local culture of the Middle Bronze Age, best known for the Kurgans. Moreover, the existence of the LBA is also confirmed in the settlement. This issue has not been discussed in our interests. However, it clearly indicates that not only the EBA cultural sequence but also the full cultural continuity of the Bronze Age is fully demonstrated. which shows *longue durée* of the settlement.

As we have mentioned, in the same region, which is located 1 km from the Irmis Rka, the Orchosani chalcolithic settlement, which is the prior of the Kura-Araxes culture, has been studied. Thus, the region, which for years has been a *terra incognita* in terms of archeology, has made significant discoveries in the past decade and provides an opportunity to understand a number of problematic issues related to the prehistory of the Caucasus.

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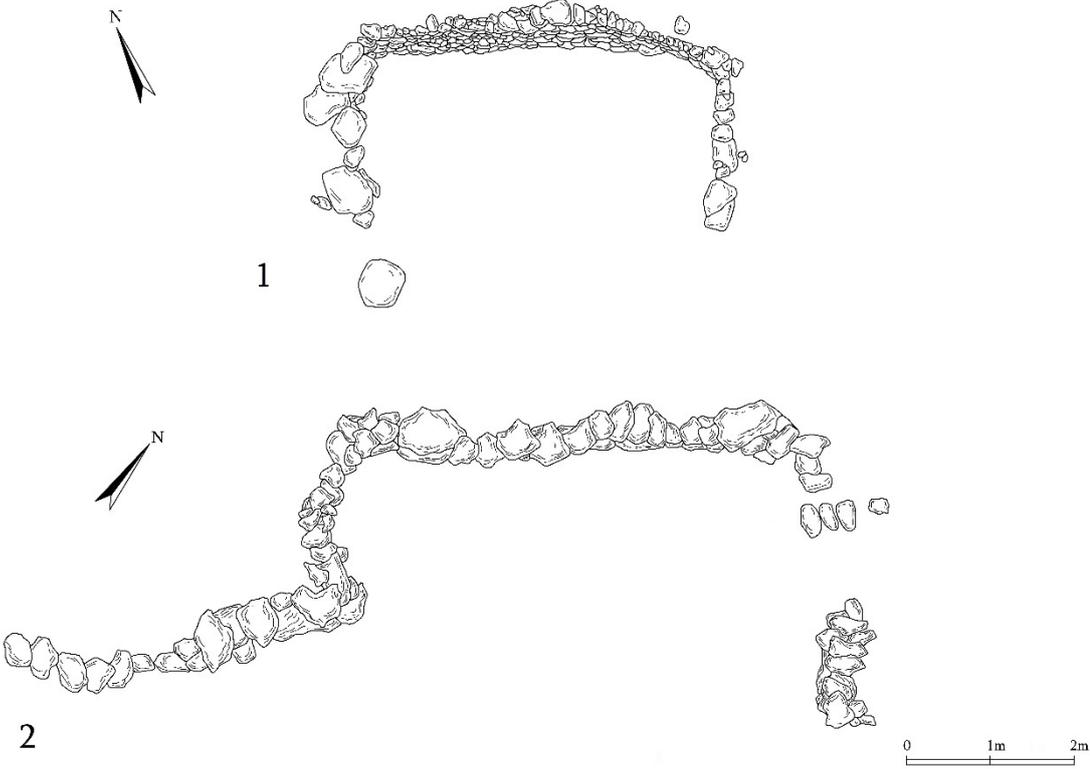
საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის საოლქო ორგანიზაცია და მისი როლი რეგიონის საზოგადოებრივ-პოლიტიკურ ცხოვრებაზე 1930-იან წლებში
საარქივო მონაცემების საფუძველზე

დევან სამსონია (შოთა რუსთაველის ბათუმის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი)

შესავალი

საბჭოთა კავშირში არსებული ხელისუფლების დანაწილების მიუხედავად, აღნიშნული პრინციპები უაღრესად ფორმალურ ხასიათს ატარებდა, ვინაიდან ერთადერთ, წარმმართველ პოლიტიკურ ძალას კომუნისტური პარტია წარმოადგენდა. კომპარტიის საკავშირო ყრილობების დადგენილებების უპირობო განხორციელება მთელი სახელმწიფო ხელისუფლების მთავარ ამოცანას შეადგენდა. მიმდინარეობდა ბრძოლა ძალაუფლებისათვის. ამ დაპირისპირების სასტიკ შედეგებს ხშირ შემთხვევაში თავად კომპარტიის მაღალჩინოსნებიც იწვნევდნენ ხოლმე. საქართველოს კომპარტია საბჭოთა კავშირის კომუნისტური პარტიის ნაწილი იყო, შესაბამისად, აჭარის საოლქო ორგანიზაცია საქართველოს კომპარტიის სტრუქტურულ ერთეულს წარმოადგენდა. საბჭოთა წარსულის ობიექტური გააზრების გარეშე შეუძლებელი იქნება სწორი ორიენტირების დასახვა, რომელზეც სახელმწიფოს უნდა ჰქონდეს სწორება. ამიტომაც დიდი მნიშვნელობა ენიჭება წარსულის ობიექტური შესწავლის ნების მიერ მცდელობას სხვადასხვა მიმართულებით და ასპექტით. სტატიაში ყურადღება გამახვილებულია იმაზე, თუ რა ტიპის პოლიტიკური სისტემა არსებობდა და როგორ ხორციელდებოდა მართვა კომუნისტური პარტიის მიერ. კომუნისტური პარტია წარმოადგენდა ერთადერთ მმართველ პოლიტიკურ ძალას საბჭოთა კავშირში და სწორედ ეს უკონკურენტობა იწვევდა თავად პარტიის შიგნით სხვადასხვა ტიპის, ხშირ შემთხვევაში ერთმანეთისადმი დაპირისპირებული დაჯგუფებების წარმოქმნას. ეს ასპექტები კი როგორც ფარულ, ისე ღია დაპირისპირებას აღრმავებდა, ვინაიდან არ არსებობდა არავითარი შემაკავებელი და გამაწონასწორებელი ინსტიტუციური ორგანოები. ამიტომაც ვფიქრობთ, რომ საბჭოთა კავშირში და

მათ შორის საქართველოში განხორციელებული ტერორი და მასობრივი რეპრესიები განპირობებული იყო მმართველ, კომუნისტურ პარტიაში არსებული ბრძოლით ძალაუფლებისთვის და მის შესანარჩუნებლად ნებისმიერ ფასად. კვლევისას ჩვენ მიერ გამოყენებულ იქნა აჭარის ცენტრალურ არქივში არსებული შესაბამისი ფონდის საქმეები, რომლებიც საკმაოდ საინტერესო ცნობებს შეიცავენ იმ პერიოდის რეგიონის საზოგადოებრივ-პოლიტიკური ვითარების დადგენის თვალსაზრისით. ასევე გამოყენებული გვაქვს სხვადასხვა პერიოდის ავტორთა შრომები, რომლებიც საკვლევ პერიოდს ეხება.

ლიტერატურის მიმოხილვა

ნაშრომში გამოყენებულია დოკუმენტები, რომლებიც დაცულია აჭარის ავტონომიური რესპუბლიკის საარქივო სამმართველოს ცენტრალურ სახელმწიფო არქივში. გამოყენებული მასალები მოიცავს სხვადასხვა ფონდის ათეულ საქმეზე მეტს. მათგან აღსანიშნავია ფონდ პ-1-ში დაცული მონაცემები, რომლებიც ეხება საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის საოლქო კომიტეტის თვისებრივ-რაოდენობრივ შემადგენლობასა და საქმიანობა. შესწავლილია აღნიშნული ფონდის N4 აღწერის: N 108; 113; 109; 227; 226 და სხვა საქმეები. მოცემული მასალა, გარკვეულ წარმოდგენას გვიქმნის საოლქო პარტიული ორგანიზაციის ხელმძღვანელი როლის, მუშაობის სტილისა და საქმიანობის შესახებ. აღსანიშნავია N4 და N109 საქმეებში დაცული მონაცემები ე.წ. კონტრრევოლუციონერთა საქმიანობაზე. საიდანაც ირკვევა, რომ 1937 წლისათვის მხოლოდ ბათუმიდან პარტიის რიგებიდან გარიცხა 133 წევრი და 89 კანდიდატი. პარტიიდან გარიცხვა კი საკმაოდ

სერიოზული განაჩენი იყო, მითუმეტეს მასობრივი რეპრესიების პერიოდში, რაც სასიკვდილო განაჩენის ტოლფასი იყო. აჭარის სახელმწიფო არქივში დაცული მონაცემები უმნიშვნელოვანეს წყაროს წარმოადგენს რეპრესირებულთა ვინარბისა დადგენის და საერთო მდგომარეობის შესწავლის თვალსაზრისით. აღნიშნული ფონდის მასალები შეიცავს ასევე საინტერესო ცნობებს პარტიის საქმიანობაზე მთლიანად რეგიონის მასშტაბით. საყურადღებოა ფონდ პ-12 დაცული მონაცემები, რომლებიც ეხება საკუთრივ ხულოს რაიონის სკ(ბ) რაიკომის საქმიანობას. მოცემული საარქივო დოკუმენტაციის შესწავლა, რომელიც ეხება რაიონის პარტიული კონფერენციების, ყრილობების და ბიუროების მუშაობას, საკმაოდ დეტალურ სურათის აღდგენის შესაძლებლობას იძლევა, თუ როგორ ვითარდებოდა მოცემული რაიონი და რა სირთულეები არსებობდა.

წყაროების სახით გამოყენებული გვაქვს როგორც საბჭოთა, ისე დამოუკიდებელი საქართველოს პერიოდის უახლესი კვლევები. მათგან აღსანიშნავია: ალ.ბაუჟაქის „აჭარის მშრომელთა ბრძოლა საკოლმეურნეო წყობილების გამარჯვებისთვის“, ბათუმი 1962. გამომცემლობა „საბჭოთა აჭარა“. მიუხედავად არაერთი ნაკლისა, მნიშვნელოვანია ის ცნობები, რომლებსაც ვხვდებით აღნიშნულ ნაშრომში კულაკობასთან დაკავშირებული საკითხების განხილვისას, ასევე ინდუსტრიალიზაციისა და კოლექტივიზაციის საკითხების გაშუქებისას. საყურადღებოა მერი გოციرიძის ნაშრომი „აჭარის ქალები ახალი ცხოვრების მშენებლები“ გამომცემლობა „საბჭოთა აჭარა“ ბათუმი 1971. ჩვენთვის საინტერესო ნაშრომში დაცული მონაცემები ქალთა უფლებრივი მდგომარეობის თაობაზე. განხილულია რეგიონის ქალთა ჩართულობა საზოგადოებრივ წარმოებასა და პოლიტიკურ ცხოვრებაში. ნაშრომში ასევე განხილულია ქალთა განათლების ევოლუცია აჭარაში საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების დამყარებიდან 30-იანი წლების ჩათვლით. მოცემული პერიოდის შესწავლის თვალსაზრისით ასევე საყურადღებოა შემდეგი გამოცემები: „საქართველოს კომპარტიის ყრილობები-ცნობარი“ პროფ. გ.კ.ყვანიას საერთო რედაქციით, გამომცემლობა საბჭოთა საქართველო, თბილისი 1985ნ. ასევე, საინტერესო მასალებს ვპოულობთ „საქართველოს პროფესიული კავშირების ისტორიის ნარკვევები 1905-1970.“ გამომცემლობა „საბჭოთა საქართველო“, თბ.1972. ფაქტოლოგიური მასალის შესწავლის კუთხით საინტერესოა ასევე „აჭარის საბჭოების ყრილობები, დოკუმენტებისა და მასალების კრებული 1921-1937 ნნ. გამომცემლობა „საბჭოთა აჭარა“ ბათუმი 1971ნ.

თანამედროვე ისტორიოგრაფიის კუთხით საყურადღებოა ო.თურმანიძის არაერთი კვლევა

და სხვადასხვა ნაშრომი, მაგ. „საბჭოთა რეჟიმი და მასობრივი რეპრესიები აჭარაში (1921-1952) ბსუ გამომცემლობა, ბათუმი 2019. საინტერესოა ასევე იმავე ავტორის ნაშრომი „ერთი სოფლის რეპრესირებულთა ისტორია, ნ.ბერძენიშვილის სახელობის ინსტიტუტის შრომების კრებული. ტ.XII ბსუ გამომცემლობა, ბათუმი 2016. და სხვ. საკვლევი პერიოდის ვითარების დასადგენად საინტერესო ცნობების შემცველია მაია კობიაშვილის დისერტაცია თემაზე „პროლეტარული ნარატივი ქართულ მწერლობაში“ (1921-1940), ქართული უნივერსიტეტი, 2019 ნ. რეგიონში არსებული საზოგადოებრივ-პოლიტიკური ვითარების დადგენის თვალსაზრისით საინტერესოა რ. სურმანიძის კვლევა „ტრაგედია ბათუმში“ (1937-1938), გამომცემლობა „ივერიონი“, თბილისი 2014. ძალზედ საინტერესოა ავტორთა კოლექტივის მიერ (ს. კურტუა, ჟ.ლ. პანე, ა. პაჩკოვსკი, კ. ბარტოსეკი და ჟ.ლ. მარგოლენი) 2011 წელს ილიას სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის გამომცემლობის მიერ გამოცემული კვლევა „კომუნიზმის შავი წიგნი, დანაშაულები, ტერორი, რეპრესია.

ნმენდა პარტიულ ორგანიზაციებში, კოლექტივიზაცია და ბრძოლა ე.წ. კულაკების წინააღმდეგ

კომუნისტური პარტიისთვის საკადრო საკითხი მნიშვნელოვან თემას წარმოადგენდა. საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის საოლქო ორგანიზაცია ზემდგომი პარტიული ორგანოების დირექტივების შესაბამისად მნიშვნელოვან მუშაობას ეწეოდა კადრების მოსაზიდად და მოსამზადებლად. 30-იან წლებში აჭარის პარტიული, სახელმწიფო და საზოგადოებრივი ორგანიზაციების კორპუსი შეივსო მოსკოვის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის, აღმოსავლეთმცოდნეობის ინსტიტუტის, თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის კურსდამთავრებულებით. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღნ.1, საქმ.2,ფურც.10-39). 1930 წელს რეგიონის პარტიულ ორგანიზაციაში ირიცხებოდა 2095 წევრი, ამავდროულად სისტემური ბრძოლა მიმდინარეობდა ყოველგვარი ოპოზიციური გამოვლინებების წინააღმდეგ პარტიაში, რასაც „ნმენდა“ ეწოდებოდა. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღნ.1,საქმ.982,ფურც.3).

საკავშირო კომპარტიის ცენტრალური კომიტეტისა და ცენტრალური საკონტროლო კომისიის 1933 წლის 12 იანვრის გაერთიანებული პლენუმის რეზოლუციის თანახმად იწყებოდა პარტიის „ნმენდა“ არასაიმედო, მერყევი და მიტმასნილი ელემენტებისაგან, ამასთანავე პარტიაში მიღება შეჩერდა ნმენდის დამთავრებამდე. ამ საკითხს მიეძღვნა საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის საოლქო ორგანიზაციის სპეციალური თათბირი,

რომელიც ბათუმში გაიმართა 1933 წლის 21 თებერვალს. პარტიის რაიონულ კომიტეტებს, პირველად პარტიულ ორგანიზაციებს, მიეცათ მითითება მერყევი და არამტკიცე კომუნისტების პარტიიდან გარიცხვის შესახებ, რომელიც უნდა დამთავრებულიყო 1934 წლის პირველი ნახევრისათვის, მაგრამ ამ პირობის მიუხედავად პარტიიდან გარიცხვები გრძელდებოდა. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-8,აღწ.1, საქმ.42,ფურც.1-4). შეცდებული გლეხი, მინის მფლობელი, მონათაული იყო როგორც კულაკი, რომელიც საბჭოთა ხელისუფლებისთვის მთავარ საფრთხის შემცველად აღიქმებოდა სოფლად, ვინაიდან მიწაზე კერძო საკუთრების არსებობა ფუნდამენტურად ეწინააღმდეგებოდა ბოლშევიკების პოლიტიკურ-ეკონომიკურ ფილოსოფიას.

კომუნისტურ პარტიაში მასობრივი გარიცხვების მორიგი ტალღა 1936 წლიდან იწყება. ამ მიზნით დაიწყო პარტიული ბილეთების შემოწმება, პარტიულმა ხელმძღვანელობამ ამ პერიოდისთვის პარტიიდან გარიცხა 389 პარტიის წევრი. პარტიიდან გარიცხულთა დიდი ნაწილი განწირული იყო სხვადასხვა ტიპის სასჯელისათვის. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1.აღწ.4,საქმ.227,ფურც.10). ხოლო 1937-38 წლებში აჭარაში კომუნისტური პარტიიდან გარიცხულთა საერთო რაოდენობამ შეადგინა 439 კომუნისტი. (ასსცსა, ფ.პ-1, აღწ.4,საქმ.227,ფურც.1)

პარტია კოლექტივიზაციისათვის აქტიურ ბრძოლაში რთავდა პროფესიულ კავშირებსაც. „...სოციალისტური ინდუსტრიის შექმნამ ...უშუალო ზემოქმედება მოახდინა სოფლის მეურნეობის სოციალისტურად გარდაქმნისათვის ბრძოლაში...არსებობდა სიძნელეები, ამ სიძნელეების გამოყენებას ცდილობდა კულაკობა, რომელიც კოლექტივიზაციის ...შიგნიდან დანგრევის ტაქტიკაზე გადავიდა...“ (სპკინ,1972,გვ.386). პროფკავშირების ცენტრალური და ადგილობრივი ორგანიზაციები ძალზედ აქტიურობდნენ ამ საკითხში. 1930 წლისათვის კოლექტიურ მეურნეობებში გაერთიანებული იყო ქობულეთის რაიონის მთავარი გლეხობის 23,3%,ბათუმის რაიონის 21,2%, ქედის-11%,ხულოს-10,5%. ხოლო კოლექტივიზაციის საერთო დონემ 1935 წლისათვის ქობულეთის რაიონში მიაღწია 68,2%, ბათუმის რაიონში-37%, ქედის რაიონში 47%, ხულოს რაიონში კი 45,2%. 1937 წლისათვის ქობულეთის რაიონში კერძო სექტორის წილი სოფლის მეურნეობაში 12 %-მდე დავიდა. (ასსცსა,ფონ.რ-4.აღწ.1. საქ.552, ფურც.32)

საბჭოთა სახელმწიფო იყო ერთი დიდი საპოლიციო აპარატი. მე-20 საუკუნის ოციანი და ოცდაათიანი წლები არის საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს ჩამოყალიბებისა და მისი სახელისუფლებო ინსტიტუტების ძალადობრივი განმტკიცების პერიოდი. „...უხეში შეცდომები გახლდათ დაშვებული საშუალო გლეხობის მიმართ პარტიის პოლიტიკის ძირითად დებულებებში. რესპუბლიკის

უმეტეს რეგიონებში საკოლმეურნეო მშენებლობის საქმეში ნებაყოფლობის პრინციპი დავიწყებას მიეცა...რასაც თან სდევდა ადმინისტრაციული ზეწოლა და მუქარა, ასეთმა არასწორმა მიდგომამ გამოიწვია ის, რომ საშუალო გლეხობა ყარს აცხადებდა კულაკობასთან ბრძოლაშეც...“ (ქვანია,1985,გვ.136). ნათელია ის ფაქტი, რომ ამ პერიოდის ისტორიოგრაფია გვერდს ვერ აუვლიდა და დამალავდა ღრმა სოციალურ კრიზისსა და საზოგადოებრივ დაძაბულობას, რომელიც არსებობდა მთლიანად სახელმწიფოში და მათ შორის რეგიონებშიც. „...მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ აჭარაში კულაკობა სოფლის მოსახლეობის მხოლოდ 1,65% შეადგენდა, ის მაინც საგრძნობ რეაქციულ ძალას წარმოადგენდა...“ (ბაუჯაძე,1962, გვ.68).

საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის ორგანიზაციის მიერ მე-20 საუკუნის 30-იანი წლების პირველი ნახევრის მუშაობა შეაჯამა XV საოლქო პარტიულმა კონფერენციამ, რომელიც მიმდინარეობდა 1934 წლის 5-8 იანვარს. საანგარიშო მოხსენება გააკეთა საქართველოს კომპარტიის აჭარის საოლქო კომიტეტის პირველმა მდივანმა არტემ გეურქოვმა. მოხსენებაში განხილულია სოციალურ-ეკონომიკური და საზოგადოებრივ-პოლიტიკური ცხოვრების თითქმის ყველა ძირითადი საკითხი. კონფერენციამ საჭიროდ მიიჩნია აჭარაში შექმნილიყო საკოლმეურნეო წარმოების მარტივი ფორმა, მიწით საზიაროდ დამმუშავებელი ამხანაგობები. კონფერენციამ მოითხოვა კოლექტივიზაციის გაძლიერების მიზნით პარტიის ხელმძღვანელი როლის გაძლიერება. 1933 წლის კოლმეურნეობებში პარტიული უჯრედები არ ყოფილა. პარტიის რაიკომის მიერ ჩატარებული მუშაობის შედეგად 1934 წლის დასაწყისში რეგიონში არსებული კოლმეურნეობებიდან პარტიული უჯრედები იყო ჩამოყალიბებული 54 კოლმეურნეობაში. კონფერენციამ დაავალა პარტიის საოლქო და რაიონულ კომიტეტებს სასოფლო-სამეურნეო არტელებზე გადასვლისას არ გამოეყენებინათ იძულების მეთოდი.(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.3, საქმ.228,-ფურც.141-145)რაც ჩვენი აზრით ფორმალური ხასიათის მოთხოვნა იყო, ასე ვთქვათ, სახის შესანარჩუნებელი ტრიუკი. საბჭოთა სახელმწიფო თავისი არსებობის პირველივე დღეებიდან მკვეთრად უპირისპირდებოდა ნებისმიერ, კერძო ხასიათის გამოვლინებებს საზოგადოებრივ ურთიერთობებში. „...1929 წლის 12 ოქტომბერს ბათუმში მოეწყო აჭარის საშეფო საზოგადოების გაერთიანებული ბრიგადების სხდომა, აქტივი შეჰპირდა საქართველოს კ.პ.(ბ) აჭარის საოლქო კომიტეტს სრულ მხარდაჭერას და დაადგინა ...მთელი ძალებით ემოქმედათ სოფლად საბჭოთა წყობის გამარჯვებისათვის...“ (გოცირიძე,1971,გვ.93-94). აჭარის საბჭოების მე-9 ყრილობაზე, რომელიც 1930 წელს ჩატარდა, დაადგინეს, შემუშავებული-

ყო გარკვეული ზომები აჭარაში წერა-კითხვის უცოდინრობის სწრაფად აღმოსაფხვრელად და სოციალური გარდაქმნების დაჩქარებული ტემპით წარსამართავად. (ასყდმკ,1971,გვ.304).

ქედისა და ხულოს რაიონებში პარტიული კომიტეტების საქმიანობა მთელი რიგი თავისებურებებით და სირთულეებით ხასიათდებოდა. პარტიის რიგებიდან გარიცხვებისა და ახალი წევრების მიღების შედეგად რაიონულ კომიტეტებში კომუნისტთა რაოდენობა ცვალებადი იყო. 1940 წლის იანვრისათვის ქედის რაიონში კომუნისტთა რაოდენობა 329 -მდე გაიზარდა, მათგან პარტიის წევრი იყო 114, ხოლო წევრობის კანდიდატი კი 215. (ასსცსა, ფ. პ-8, აღწ.1, საქმ.58,ფურც.22)

არ არსებობდა საკითხი, რომელიც პარტიის ყურადღების მიღმა იყო დარჩენილი. განსაკუთრებული მნიშვნელობა ენიჭებოდა ბრძოლას განსხვავებულად მოაზროვნე ადამიანების წინააღმდეგ არამარტო პარტიის რიგებში არამედ გარეთაც. „...რუსეთის 1917 წლის ოქტომბრის გადატრიალების შემდეგ კომუნისტური პარტია სახელმწიფო ხელისუფლების ხელმძღვანელი და წარმმართველი გახდა. ამ ვითარებაში ახალი წყობილების მშენებლობის თეორია, იდეოლოგია და პოლიტიკა შეჯერების, შეთანხმების ნაცვლად დაპირისპირების, თვითგაჯერების, სიმულვილის ფსიქოლოგიით ხორციელდებოდა...“ (თურმანიძე,2019,გვ.32-33). ყველგან ექებდნენ ოპორტუნისტებს, ტროცკისტებს, კონტრრევოლუციონერ დივერსანტებს, მემარჯვენე უკლონისტებს. მაგალითად, ტროცკისტობის ბრალდებით გარიცხეს პარტიიდან აკაკი მეგრელიძე გერასიმეს ძე, ჯალადონია დომენტი ლუკას ძე, სილაქაძე როფოს ალექსანდრეს ძე, გაბიჩვაძე ვასილე ივანეს ძე, პოლიექტოორ კუტუბიძე ჯამულეთის ძე, იაკინთე კვიტაიშვილი, ანდრო დიმიტრის ძე ჟღენტი, ვასილ ანდრიას ძე მეგრელიძე, ვარლამ კუნჭელია გრიგორის ძე, ტარას სიხარულიძე ეპიფანეს ძე, მეგრელიძე ბესარიონ როსტომის ძე, პორფირე ესაკია ფილიპეს ძე, ვლადიმერ თოდრია იოსების ძე, მეგრელიძე ვასო ანდრიას ძე, მათე ლომთათიძე და სხვ. (ასსცსა ფ.პ-1.აღწ.4. საქმ.108,ფურც.1-3) ბოლშევიკებისთვის სამყარო შავ-თეთრ ფერებში არსებობდა. მათთვის მიუღებელი იყო ნებისმიერი განსხვავებული აზრი. ადამიანის შემოქმედება მხოლოდ სოციალისტური რეალიზმის ამსახველი უნდა ყოფილიყო. „...კომუნისტების მიზანი იყო კულტურა რაც შეიძლება პრიმიტიული ყოფილიყო, ისინი კატეგორიულად ურყოფდნენ აზრთა შეჯამებას, ...აღიზიანებდათ მრავალფეროვნება...“ (კობიაშვილი, 2019, გვ.20).

პარტიიდან გარიცხვის სხვადასხვა მიზეზი არსებობდა. ბოლშევიკები ამ საქმეს უნდოდდნენ რევოლუციურ სიფხიზლის გამოვლინებას და მისი მოდუნება იყო ე.წ. თვითკრიტიკის

ერთ-ერთი შემადგენელი ნაწილი. პარტიიდან გარიცხულ გრიგოლ ნუცუბიძეს ბრალად ედებოდა ის, რომ იგი 1918-1919 წლებში იყო მენშევიკური პარტიის წევრი, რომელმაც თითქოს გაფლანგა 40 ათასი მანეთი, ინგლისელების დროს კი სპეკულაციით იყო დაკავებულიო. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.4,საქმ.108,ფურც.4) ოპოზიციონერთა ვრცელი სია მოცემული ამ საქმეში, რომლებიც დაკავებულები და გარიცხულნი არიან, ზოგი მაგალითად ე.წ. „ლაყბობისათვის“, ან წარსულში სხვა პარტიასთან კავშირის გამო. უდიდესი მნიშვნელობა ჰქონდა პარტიული დოკუმენტების შემოწმებას, ამ პროცესმა განსაკუთრებული ხასიათი მიიღო დიდი ტერორის პერიოდში. პარტკომიტეტების ამონაწერები და ცალკე განკარგულებები განსაკუთრებულად უნდა შენახულიყო პირად საქმეში და არავითარ შემთხვევაში არ უნდა დართვოდა საბჭოთა და პროფკავშირთა საქმის წარმოების დროს. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.4. საქმ.113, ფურც.39)

პარტიული დოკუმენტების განმეორებითმა შემოწმებამ, რომელიც განხორციელდა აჭარის საოლქო კომიტეტის მიერ, მათი აზრით, საერთო ჯამში ვერ შეასრულა პარტიის მტრებისაგან „განმენდის“ ამოცანა. პარტდოკუმენტების შემოწმების შედეგად კ.პ.(ბ) აჭარის ორგანიზაციის რიგებიდან ქ.ბათუმში გაურიცხავთ პარტიის 133 წევრი და 89   კანდიდატი.(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.4,საქმ.109,-ფურც.5-6) პარტია ხელმძღვანელობდა „ხალხის მტრებთან“ ბრძოლის საერთო სტრატეგიას. ასე მაგალითად 1936 წლის 29 იანვრით დათარიღებული კპ(ბ) ცა დახურული წერილი, ავალდებულებდა ბოლშევიკებს, რათა ხალხის მტრებთან წინააღმდეგ ბრძოლაში ყოფილიყვნენ ფხიზლად. (ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.4,საქმ.109,ფურც.6). ამ კუთხით საინტერესოა ვარლამ ხუჭუას საქმე, რომელიც იყო ბათუმის ელ.სადგურის მუშაკი. პარტიულ დოკუმენტებში იგი მოხსენიებულია, როგორც ამ საქმის კარგი მცოდნე. ვარლამი გარიცხეს პარტიიდან, როგორც არასასურველი ფიგურა და არასანდო ელემენტი, მაგრამ მიუხედავად ამისა, ოლქკომმა მას აღუდგინა პარტიის წევრობა, იმიტომ, რომ მისი შეუცვლელი არ ეგულებოდათ. ამავდროულად საქმე, რომელიც მას ჰქონდა ჩაბარებული, ფასდებოდა როგორც სტრატეგიული მნიშვნელობის სფეროდ. მოგვიანებით ოლქკომის ეს ქმედება შეფასდა, როგორც შეცდომა და სტალინური კურსიდან გადახვევა. „პარტიაში ბევრმა ალბათ დაივიწყა რომ შეუმოწმებელი და განსაკუთერებით კონტრრევოლუციონერები არ შეიძლება გვყავდეს სახელმწიფო და თავდაცვის მნიშვნელობის ობიექტებზე...“(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღწ.4,საქმ.109,ფურც.9)

საოლქო კომიტეტი იხილავდა მნიშვნელოვან სახელმწიფო საკითხებს. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ იგი პარტიულ ორგანიზაციას წარმოადგე-

ნდა. საბჭოთა კავშირში კომუნისტური პარტია ნებისმიერ საბჭობზე თუ აღმასრულებელ ორგანოზე მაღლა იდგა. იგი აღდგდა ყველა დანარჩენ სახელმწიფო სტრუქტურას მოქმედების გეგმების და ა.შ. აღნიშნულ საკითხებზა საჭირო აჭაროლ-ქკომის ბიუროს 1936 წლის 13 ივნისის N107 ოქმში **(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღნ.4,საქმ.109,ფურც.50)** ოლქკომის კომისიამ რომელშიც შედიოდნენ: ხ.ლორთქი-ფანიძე, ჯიმშელეიშვილი, გაბუნია, ბეჭანიძე, ა. გეორქოვი და სხვები, განიხილა მოქალაქე გრი-გორიანის საქმე, რომლის შესნავლითაც ნათლად დგინდება თუ რა ვითარება იყო ქედის რაიონში, როგორ ურთიერთობდნენ ოფიციალური პირები ერთმანეთთან საყოველთაო სიდუხჭირის და რეპრესიების პერიოდში. გრიგორიანის განცხადებით ქედის რაიონის რიგი ხელმძღვანელი პი-რები ეწეოდნენ არამართულზომიერ ცხოვრებას. ბრალდების მთავარი ადრესატი იყო რაიკომის მდივანი ა.ხალვაში. ოლქკომის კომისიამ დაადგინა ა.ხალვაშის არაეთიკური საქციელი, რო-მელიც შეუფერებელი იყო კომუნისტისთვის და ხელმძღვანელი მუშაკისთვის. **(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1, აღ-ნ.4,საქმ.109,ფურც.15)** ოლქკომის კომისიამ კრიტი-კის ქარცეცხლში გაატარა ადგილობრივი პარტი-ული ორგანიზაცია ფაქტების მიჩმალვის გამო. ა.ხალვაშსა და ჩკ-ს ხელმძღვანელ სამატაძეს ასევე ბრალად დასდეს ერთმანეთის ხელშეწყო-ბა და მფარველობა.**(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1,აღნ.4,საქმ.109,-ფურც.15-17)**. 1936 წელს პარტიის ოლქკომმა სა-ყვედური გამოუცხადა ა.ხალვაშს, პარტიული დისციპლინის დარღვევის გამო, ასევე საყვედუ-რი ითვალისწინებდა მის მიერ 1936 წელს სამე-ურნეო საქმიანობის არაპარტიული ნიშნით წარ-მართვისაც. აღნიშნული სანქციები მოცემულია საქ.კ.პ.(ბ) აჭარის საოლქო კომიტეტის დადგენი-ლებაში. დადგენილებით აღინიშნა, რომ ქედის რაიონის პარტიული ხელმძღვანელობის საქმია-ნობით ირღვევა შიდაპარტიული დემოკრატია. **(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1.აღნ.4,საქმ.109,ფურც.70-71)** შესაბა-მის საარქივო მასალებში არსებული დოკუმენტე-ბის შესწავლის შედეგად ირკვევა, რომ აღნიშნულ რაიონებში არცთუ სახარბიელო მდგომარეობა ყოფილა ამ მხრივ. ფაქტია, რომ პარტიას საკმა-ოდ უჭირდა და მას ბევრი იდეური მოწინააღმდე-გე ჰყავდა. აგიტატორები არ გამოირჩეოდნენ დიდი განათლებით. ხშირ შემთხვევაში ისინი ძალზედ ზერელედ ეკურობოდნენ საგიტაციო საქმის წარმოებას აგდილობაზე. აცდენდნენ ე.წ. მეცადინეობებს, ქოხ-სამკითხველოებს ვერ აკ-მაყოფილებდნენ ნაყენებულ პირობებს, განიც-დიდნენ საიგატიცო მასალის ნაკლებობას და სხვ. **(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1, აღნ.4, საქმ. 109, ფურც. 74-75)**.

პარტიაში „ნზენდა" წარმოადგენდა კომუ-ნისტებისთვის მნიშვნელოვან საქმესა და ამო-ცანას. აღნიშნული საკითხი კიდევ უფრო მეტი

სიმძაფრით დაისვა დიდი ტერორის პერიოდში. აჭაროლქკომის 1938 წლის 10 თებერვლის ბიუ-როს ანგარიშში, აღნიშნულია, რომ პარტიის რი-გებიდან გარიცხეს 439 პირი. ამათგან „ხალხის მტრის" იარლიყით გაირიცხა 428 პირი. ანგა-რიშში ასევე აღნიშნულია იყო ყოფილი პარტიუ-ლი მაცალი ფუნქციონერების, ან უკვე ხალხის მტრებად შერაცხულების მიერ, როგორებიც იყ-ვნენ ა. გეორქოვი, ზ. ლორთქიფანიძე, ცქვიტი-ნიძე, ნუცუბიძე და სხვების მიერ ე.წ. პარტიული დისციპლინის დარღვევის შესახებ.**(ასსცსა,ფ.პ-1.აღნ.4.საქმ.227ფურც.1-3)**

დიდი ტერორი

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ზე აღმოჩნდებოდა ეს თუ ის პირი მოცემულ მო-
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ცხოვრებისთვის დამახასიათებელი, არსებითი
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„მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის“ მოღვაწეობის ერთი ნაკლებად შესწავლილი საკითხი
(ბრძოლა შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ)

მიხეილ ქახვედიშვილი (ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი)

თანამედროვე ეტაპზე, საბჭოთა კავშირის კომპლექსურ შესწავლას განსაკუთრებულ მნიშვნელობას ექცევა, როგორც ქართულ, ასევე რუსულ და დასავლურ ისტორიოგრაფიაში, სადაც გამორჩეულ ადგილს იკავებს საბჭოთა რელიგიური პოლიტიკის მიმართულება, რადგან სრულიად აშკარა ხდება, რომ მისი სათანადო განალიზების გარეშე პრაქტიკულად შეუძლებელია გაგაზრებულ იქნას საბჭოთა იდეოლოგიის, საშინაო თუ საგარეო პოლიტიკის ცალკეული მნიშვნელოვანი და ფუნდამენტური საკითხები.

საბჭოთა რელიგიური პოლიტიკის შესწავლის დროს ბუნებრივია განსაკუთრებული ყურადღება ექცევა „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირს“ ორგანიზაციას, რომელთანაც დაკავშირებულია საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების მიერ გატარებული არაერთი ღონისძიება.

მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირი“-ს დაარსება, მისი მუშაობის სპეციფიკა, ძირითადი მიმართულებები და ცალკეული მნიშვნელოვანი მახასიათებლები ქართულ (ხუციშვილი, 1987, გვ. 202-228; პავლიაშვილი, 2008, გვ. 464-474; სილაგაძე, 2014) და დასავლურ ისტორიოგრაფიაში (პოსპიელოვსკი, 1988, გვ. 61-90; პერისი, 1998; სმოლკინი, 2018, გვ. 31-57). საკმაოდ კარგად არის შესწავლილი, იკვეთება გაურკვეველი საკითხები, რომელთა განალიზებასსაც ნაკლები ყურადღება აქვს დათმობილი, არადა მათ სათანადო გააზრებას შესაბამისი ყურადღება უნდა მიექცეს.

წინამდებარე ნაშრომში განხზრახული გვაქვს შევისწავლოთ „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის“ ერთი კონკრეტული მიმართულება ბრძოლა ქრისტიანული დღესასწაულის, კერძოდ შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ. შევეცდებით გავაანალიზოთ თუ რა იყო საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების მიზანდასახულობა ამ მიმართულებით, როგორ ცდილობდნენ ისინი მათთვის სასურველ შედეგზე გასვლას. ბუნებრივია, ერთი სტატიის ფარგლებში

ამ უაღრესად საინტერესო საკითხის ამომწურავად შესწავლა პრაქტიკულად შეუძლებელია ჩვენ უბრალოდ განხზრახული გვაქვს გამოკვეთოთ საკითხის ძირითადი მახასათებელი.

საკვლევი პრობლემის აქტუალობას განაპირობებს რამდენიმე ფაქტი. კერძოდ პირველ რიგში, როგორც ზემოთაც უკვე აღვნიშნეთ ეს საკითხი მეცნიერულად ნაკლებად შესწავლილთა კატეგორიას განეკუთვნება, გარდა ამისა საბჭოთა წარსულის სათანადო შესწავლა აუცილებელი თანამედროვე ეტაპზე, რადგან სრულიად აშკარად იკვეთება, რომ ამ პერიოდში ჩამოყალიბებული დამოკიდებულებები თუ სტერეოტიპები ჯერ კიდევ მდაფრად არის ქართული საზოგადოების მსოფლმხედველობაში ფესვგადგმული, სწორედ ამიტომ საბჭოთა იდეოლოგიური პოლიტიკის შესწავლას განსაკუთრებული ადგილი უნდა დაეთმოს, სადაც კომუნისტური ხელისუფლების დამოკიდებულებას რელიგიისა და ეკლესიისადმი მნიშვნელოვანი ყურადღება უნდა მივაქციოთ.

ნაშრომში შესწავლილი გვაქვს საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების მიერ გადადგმული კონკრეტული პრაქტიკული თუ იდეოლოგიური პოლიტიკა ქრისტიანული დღესასწაულებისადმი, რა გამოხატულება ჰქონდა მას, რა ღონისძიებებს ტარდებოდა ამ მიმართულებით. საგანგებო ყურადღება გამახვილდება ისეთ მნიშვნელოვან საკითხზე, როგორიც არის ცენტრალური ხელისუფლებიდან მომდინარე დირექტივა თუ როგორ სრულდებოდა რუსეთში და გამოხატვის რა თავისებურებები გააჩნდა ქართულ რეალობაში.

„მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის“ სხვადასხვა კამპანიების შესასწავლად შეგვიძლია გამოვიყენოთ სხვადახვა საისტორიო წყაროები:

ბეჭდური მედია, რომელიც თავის მხრივ ორ ნაწილად უნდა დაიყოს კერძოდ მხედველობაში გვაქვს ერთის მხრივ ცენტრალური ხელისუფლების გამოცემები, მაგალითად გაზეთი „კომუნისტი“, ხოლო მეორეს მხრივ თავად მებრძოლ

უღმერთოთა კავშირის გამოცემული პერიოდიკა („მებრძოლი ათეისტი", „მებრძოლი უღმერთო"), სადაც გადმოცემული მასალა დიდი განსაკუთრებით საინტერესოა.

საარქივო დოკუმენტები, რომლებიც დანაწილებითა და დეტალურ წარმოდგენას გვიქმნიან თუ როგორ იგეგმებოდა და პრაქტიკაში როგორ ხორციელდებოდა ცენტრალური ხელისუფლების მიერ დაგეგმილი ბრძოლა რელიგიის წინააღმდეგ ჩვენ ამ შემთხვევაში გვაინტერესებს თუ რა ღონისძიებები ტარდებოდა შობის ბრწყინვალე დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ. საარქივო დოკუმენტები საინტერესოა იმ თვალსაზრისითაც, რომ მათი მეშვეობით ჩვენ შეგვიძლია მეტ-ნაკლები სიზუსტით განვსაზღვროთ თუ როგორი იყო მოსახლეობის დამოკიდებულებები ხელისუფლების მიერ გადადგმული ნაბიჯებისადმი.

საagიტაციო ბროშურები და სალექციო მასალები, ეს არის მასალა, რომლებსაც „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირი" გამოსცემდა ძირითადად ორი მიზნით, პირველ რიგში მათი გავრცელებით მოსახლეობის ფართო ფენებში უნდა მომხდარიყო საზოგადოების დარწმუნება კომუნისტური იდეების ჭეშმარიტებაში, ხოლო მეორეს მხრივ კი ეს ყველაფერი აქტიურად უნდა გამო�ყენებულიყო სხვადასხვა ლექციების ორგანიზებასა და ჩატარებაში, ამ ყველაფერს უნდა ჰქონოდა აქტიური და კამპანიური ხასიათი, რათა არ მომხდარიყო საქმიანობაში ჩავარდნა.

ნაშრომში შესწავლილია ის ღონისძიებები, რომლებითაც ხელისუფლება ცდილობდა მოსახლეობაში გაეფერმკრთალებინა მოსახლეობის დამოკიდებულება ამ უდიდესი ქრისტიანული დღესასწაულისადმი. კომუნისტური რეჟიმი „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" მეშვეობით ფართო, აქტიურ და მრავალფეროვან აგიტაცია-პროპაგანდას და პრაქტიკულ მუშაობას ეწეოდა ამ მიმართულებით. კერძოდ მიმდინარეობდა ანტირელიგიური შინაარსის მასალის პუბლიკაცია, როგორც ცენტრალურ ასევე ორგანიზაციის პრესის ფურცლებზე, იბეჭდებოდა ანტირელიგიური თემატიკის ბროშურების გამოცემა და მათი მოსახლეობის ფართო ფენებში გავრცელება, აქტიურად ტარდებოდა შობის დღესასწაულის საწინააღმდეგო შინაარსის მქონე საჯარო ლექციები, როგორც თბილისის ასევე რეგიონების მასშტაბით. ამგვარ ღონისძიებებზე დასწრება მოსახლეობის დიდი ნაწილისთვის სავალდებულო იყო, რისი კონტროლის აქტიურად მიმდინარეობდა, ასევე საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების წარმომადგენლები აქტიურად ცდილობდნენ ჩაეშალათ დღესასწაულისადმი მიძღვნილი წირვა-ლოცვა, ეს მიმართულება განსაკუთრებით აქტიურად რაიონებში იყო აქტიური, რადგან უღმერთო აქტივისტებს ადვილად შესძლებოდათ ადგილობრივ

მოსახლეობასთან მარტივი გამკლავება.აქტიურად მიმდინარეობდა საზოგადოების ყველა ფენის დაშინება და ტერორი.

დასაწყისში, აუცილებლად მიგვაჩნია აღვნიშნოთ, რომ ქრისტიანული დღესასწაულებისადმი ასეთი უარყოფითი დამოკიდებულება მხოლოდ „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" დაარსებას არ უკავშირდება და იგი კომუნისტურ ხელისუფლებას მანამდეც ახასიათებდა. ამ შემთხვევაში ბრძოლის წინა ხაზი კომკავშირულ მოძრაობაზე გადიოდა, რომელიც ამ ბრძოლის აქტიური შემოქმედი იყო. ჩვენ მხედველობაში გვაქვს 1922-1923 წლების ანტისაშობაო კამპანია, რომელიც ფართოდ აისახა გაზეთ „კომუნისტის" ფურცლებზე.

გაზეთ „კომუნისტის" 1922 წლის 31 დეკემბრის ნომერში დაიბეჭდა ორი საагიტაციო შინაარსის სტატია: ერთის ავტორი გახლავთ იმ დროს საქართველოს კომკავშირის ცენტრალური კომიტეტის განყოფილების გამ გე დავით გვაზავა, რომელიც თავის წერილში „ანტირელიგიური კამპანიის დასაწყისი და კომკავშირის შობა" წერდა რომ ათეისტურ კამპანიაში განსაკუთრებული ადგილი კომკავშირს უნდა შეესრულებინა (გვაზავა, 1922, გვ. 1), ხოლო მეორე „როგორ იბადებიან ღმერთები. თეზისები ახალგაზრდათა კომკავშირის შობის დღესასწაულისათვის" საინტერესოა იმ კუთხით, რომ მასში გადმოცემულია ის ძირითადი მიმართულებები, რომლის მიხედვითაც კომკავშირს თავისი მუშაობა უნდა ეწარმოებინა (როგორ იბადებიან, 1922, გვ. 1). 1922 წლის მიწურულს კომკავშირის მიერ დაწყებული ანტირელიგიური კამპანია 1923 წლის დასაწყისშიც გაგრძელდა და შემდგომ პუბლიკაციებში: „საეკლესიო დღესასწაულები: შობა ქრისტესი" (საეკლესიო დღესასწაულები, 1923, გვ. 2) და „კომუნისტური ახალგაზრდობის შობის დღესასწაული" (ს. მ. 1923, გვ. 3). ვხედავთ ხელისუფლების მიერ წარმოებული პოლიტიკის აუცილებლობის დასაბუთებას.

ანტირელიგიური კამპანიები შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ გაგრძელდა 1924 წელსაც, რაც ბუნებრივია ცენტრალური პრესის ფურცლებზე ასევე აისახებოდა. სტატიაში „კომკავშირის შობისათვის" გადმოცემულია აზრი, რომ ხელისუფლებას ანტირელიგიურ მუშაობაში აქტიურად უნდა გამოეყენებინა სასოფლო-სამეურნეო წრეები და ქოხ-სამკითხველოები, სადაც ნაკითხული უნდა ყოფილიყო შესაბამისი თემატიკის მოხსენებები, ლექციები, დადგმულიყო წარმოდგენები, რომლებიც დროთა განმავლობაში მოსპობდა ძველ ზნე-ჩვეულებებს და აზროვნებას (შ. ა. 1924, გვ. 2), მეორე სტატიაში კი ყურადღება გამახვილებულია კომკავშირის განსაკუთრებულ როლზე

ამ კუთხით მუშაობაში, მას უშუალო ხელმძღვანელობა უნდა გაეწია პარტიული მუშაკებისათვის (კეკელია, 1924, გვ. 2)

საagიტაციო მუშაობის შესწავლის თვალსაზრისით დიდ მნიშვნელობა უნდა მივაniჭოთ რამდენიმე გამოცემას, სადაც ძალიან მკაფიოდ არის გაშლილი მსჯელობა თუ როგორ უნდა ყოფილიყო მუშაობა გაშლილის შობის ბრწყინვალე დღესასწაულის წინააღდეც.

როდესაც მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის მიერ გატარებულ სხვადასხვა ღonისძიებებზე ვსაუბრობთ საინტერესოა აღვნიშნოთ, რომ 1930-1931 წლებში სოლომონ ყუბანეიშვილის ავტორობით სამჯერ გამოიცა ბროშურა „შობის დღესასწაული" მისი მნიშვნელობა იმაში მდგომარეობს რომ მასში რეალურად ხელისუფლების დამოკიდებულებაა ასახული, კერძოდ ავტორი ცდილობდა განსაკუთრებული ყურადღება მიექცია მისი აზრით სხვადასხვა რელიგიურ ტექსტებში არსებულ უზუსტობებზე, რომლებიც ანტირელიგიური პროპაგანდისთვის გამოდგებოდა, ამ კუთხით განსაკუთრებით საინტერესოა მესამე გამოცემა, რომელიც შევსებულ და გადამუშავებულ გამოცემას წარმოადგენს და ავტორს წინა გამოცემებისგან განსხვავებით ყურადღება აქვს მიქცეული ცალკეულ ადათებზე, რომლებიც შობის დღესასწაულს ახასიათებს (ყუბანეიშვილი, 1931, გვ. 42-50).

1938 წელს გამოვიდა ნიკოლოზ რუმიანცევის წიგნი „ქრისტეს შობა, მისი წარმოშობა და კლასობრივი როლი", სადაც ავტორი ასევე მეცნიერული მეთოდების მოშველიებით ცდილობს გამორკვიოს ისეთი საკითხები, რომელთა შესწავლასაც მისი აზრით განსაკუთრებული ყურადღება უნდა მიექცეს, ამ თვალსაზრისით განსაკუთრებულად თვლის, რომ „აუცილებელია გავაცლიეროთ ახსნაganმარტებითი მუშაობა, ვუჩვენოთ საშობაო ზღაპრების მავნეობა და უაზრობა - გამოვამჟღავნოთ მათი კლასობრივ-ექსპლოტატორიული დედარსი. ამასთან ერთად აუცილებელია გამოვარკვიოთ შობის დღესაჩაულისა და მასთან დაკავშირებული თქმულებათა და ჩვეულებათა ნამდვილი ისტორია (რუმიანცევი, 1938, გვ. 9).

მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის გამოცემებში დასახელებულია ის გეგმა რომლის მიხედვითაც უნდა ყოფილიყო აგიტაცია შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღდეც, პირველ რიგში უნდა ითქვას, რომ თვითონ ბოლშევიკებიც კი აღიარებდნენ რომ ეს დღესასწაული მორწმუნე საზოგადოებისათვის განსაკუთრებულად ძვირფასი და მნიშვნელოვანი იყო, მიტომ მუშაობა უნდა განსაკუთრებული ყურადღებით ჩატარებულიყო.

მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის გამოცემაში შობის დღესასწაულის წარმოშობა და კლასობრივი არსი თვალსაჩინოდ არის გადმოცემული

სალექციო მუშაობის ის მინიმალური სტანდარტი, რომელსაც აღნიშნული ორგანიზაცია ამკვირდებდა ანუ როგორ უნდა აგებულიყო ლექცია.

პირველ რიგში უნდა მომხდარიყო ლექციის მიზნების და ამოცანების მკაფიო განმარტება კერძოდ ლექციის მიზანი უნდა ყოფილიყო თუ როგორ წარმოიშვა ეს დღესასწაული, თუ როგორია მისი ნამდვილი დედაარსი და როგორ იყენებდნენ მას ექსპლუატატორული კლასები, რაც შეეხება ლექციის გეგმას მასში განსაკუთრებული ადგილი უნდა დათმობოდა, იმ საკითხის გაშლას, რომ შობა წარსულის მავნე ნაშთია და აუცილებელია მის წინააღმდეც ბრძოლა, ეს ბრძოლა კი მხოლოდ და მხოლოდ მაშინ იქნებოდა შედეგიანი თუ მასში საკითხის სიკალდის ისტორიული ფესვები იქნებოდა გამოაშკარავებული, მითითების მიხედვით აუცილებელი იყო მოსახლეობისათვის მიეჩვენებინათ და განემარტათ რელიგიის შესახებ, მარქსის, ენგელსის და ლენინის შეხედულებები, დაერიგებინათ ათეისტური შინაარსის ბროშურები.

აგიტაციისა და სალექციო მუშაობის დახვეწისათვის დიდი მნიშვნელობა ჰქონდა ბროშურას „ქრისტეს შობის" დღესასწაულის წარმოშობა და რეაქციული როლი (მასალები მომხსენებელთათვის), სადაც ლექციის მასალები თეზისების სახით არის მოცემული და განსხვავებით წინა ბროშურისგან აქ დამატებულია ის პუნქტები, რომ მასში განსაკუთრებული ყურადღება დაეთმო რელიგიის წარმოშობის საკითხის გაშლას, ასევე რელიგიის კრიტიკის პარალელურად ყურადღება მიექცა საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების მიღწევებზე ყურადღების მიქცევას რაც მოსახლეობისათვის განსაკუთრებულად მნიშვნელოვანი უნდა ყოფილიყო იმის გათვალისწინებით, რომ აქ თვალნათლივ უნდა გამოჩენილიყო მატერიალისტურად მოაზროვნე და მოქმედი ხელისუფლების უპირატესობა მის წინამორბედებთან შედარებით. ასევე ნათქვამია, რომ საჭიროა გაღრმავებულიყო ანტირელიგიური პროპაგანდა, რომლის მიზანიც იყო „მოსახლეობის გათავისუფლება რელიგიური ცრურწმენებისაგან" („ქრისტეს შობის", 1938, გვ. 19).

ჩვენი კვლევისათვის საინტერესოა „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" თბილისის საოლქო საბჭოს პრეზიდიუმის 1929 წლის 12 დეკემბერს გამოქვეყნდა მოწოდება, რომელიც იმდროინდელი ქართული პრესის ფლაგმანში გაზეთ „კომუნისტში" გამოქვეყნდა, კერძოდ მასში საუბარია, რომ ამ ორგანიზაციის წევრების ვალდებულება იყო „თავდადებული და დაუღალავი შრომით საუკეთესო მაგალითი მიეცათ ყველა მშრომელისათვის, ებრძოლათ მღვდლების მიერ მოგონილი დღესასწაულების წინააღმდეც" („შობის" წინააღმდეც, 1929, გვ. 2.) ამავე ნომერში გამოქვეყნდა სტატია „გადავაქციოთ „შობის" დღე ინდუსტრი-

ალიზაციის დღეთ", მასში დაბეჭდილია სხვადა-
სხვა ფაბრიკა-ქარხნების წარმომადგენლების
აზრი, რომლებიც მზად არიან შობა დღეს იმუშაონ
და მათთვის რელიგიური დღესასწაულები არაფე-
რს არ წარმოადგენ (გადავაქციოთ „შობის", 1929,
გვ. 2). აღნიშნული პუბლიკაცია, რომელიც ცალ-
სახად ხელისუფლების მიერ იყო ინიცირებული
მთავრობა ცდილობდა შეექმნა ისეთი გარემო
თითქოს მის მიერ წარმოებული კამპანიების უკან
რეალურად მოსახლეობის ნება-სურვილი იდგა.

საარქივო დოკუმენტების შესწავლა ცხად-
ყოფს, რომ მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის მუ-
შაობა შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ რე-
გიონებში ძალიან აქტიურად მიმდინარეობდა,
მაგრამ იქ მნიშვნელოვანი ხარვეზების, ხელი-
სუფლება ადგილობრივ დონეზე მნიშვნელო-
ვნად უჭირდა მოსახლეობის მობილიზაცია, იყო
წინააღმდეგობის, შეხლა-შემოხლის შემთხვევე-
ბიც რასაც ხელისუფლება აქტიურ რეპრესიებს
უპირისპირებდა.

საქართველოს ეროვნულ არქივში „მებრძოლ
უღმერთო კავშირის ფონდში დაცულია საინტე-
რესო დოკუმენტი, რომელიც ანტისაშობაო კამპა-
ნიის ინსტრუქციას წარმოადგენს და მისი შესწავ-
ლა ძალიან საინტერესო წარმოდგენას გვიქმნის
ხელისუფლების მიერ გატარებული პოლიტიკის
მრავალმხრივობაზე და მასშტაბურობაზე, რაც
თავისი არსით დამყარებული იყო მოსახლეობის
მაქსიმალურ დარაზმულობაზე და დიდი რაოდე-
ნობით ჩართულობაზე. თავისი არსით ეს დოკუ-
მენტი არის ცირკულარული წერილი-მითითება,
რომელიც 1936 წლის 12 დეკემბერს დაეგზავნა
საქართველოს მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის
ყველა სასოფლო და რაიონულ საბჭოებს, მასში
გადმოცემულია ის ძირითადი მიმართულებები,
რომლის მიხედვითაც ორგანიზაციებს უნდა ემუ-
შავათ, განსაკუთრებული ყურადღება გამახვი-
ლებულია სასკოლო დონეზე მუშაობაზე, ანტირე-
ლიგიური წრე, რომელიც აქტიურად იმუშავებდა
უნდა გახსნილიყო ყველა სკოლაში. აგიტაციის
დროს უნდა გამოყენებულიყო, როგორც საჯარო
ლექციების კითხვა ასევე შესაბამისი შინაარსის
კინოფილმების ჩვენება. ეს დოკუმენტი სრულად
ასახავს და ზედმიწევნით ზუსტად გვიჩვენებს
ხელისუფლების მიერ დაგეგმილი მუშაობის მას-
შტაბურობას და ყოვლისმომცველობას.

საკითხის მნიშვნელობიდან სტატიაში მას
სრული სახით ვიბჭდავთ:

საქართველოს   მებრძოლ   უღმერთოთა
კავშირის

ყველა სასოფლო და რაიონულ საბჭოებს

ა.წ. 15 დეკემბრიდან 1937 წლის 20 იანვრამდე
ტარდება ანტისაშობაო კამპანია. ეს კამპა-
ნია ყოველ მხრივ უნდა იქნეს გამოყენებუ-

ლი რაიონებში ანტირელიგიური მუშაობის
გასაძლიერებლად.

ამიტომ წინადადება გეძლევათ ჩაატაროთ
შემდეგი ღონისძიებები:

მიაღნიოთ რატა საქ. კპ /ბ/ რაიონულმა
კომიტეტებმა გამოყონ მომხსენებლების
საჭირო კადრები, ჩაატარდეს მათთან საინ-
სტრუქციო თათბირი და განაწილდეს ისინი
კოლმეურნეობებში.

მოეთხოვოს განათ. განყოფილებას ყო-
ველმხრივ უზრუნველყოფილი იყოს საქ. გა-
ნასახკომის ცირკულარული წერილი ანტი-
საშობაო კამპანიის სკოლებში ჩაატარების
შესახებ. გაეცანით განასახკომის აღნიშნულ
ცირკულარს, დაეხმარეთ სკოლებს მის გა-
ნხორციელებაში და აღრიცხეთ ყველა უღრე-
დები და ანტირელიგიური წრე, რომლებსაც
დააარსებენ სკოლებში.

მოელაპარაკეთ ადგილობრივ დრამ-წრეებს,
რათა მოამზადონ და ჩაატარონ ანტირელი-
გიური დადგმები შობის წინა დღეებში.

პროფეს. ორგანიზაციები და კომკავშ. რაი-
კომები აგრეთვე მიიღებენ ზემდგომ ორგა-
ნიზაციებისაგან მოწერილობას ანტისაშო-
ბაო კამპანიის ჩაატარების შესახებ, საჭირო
დაუკავშირდეთ მათ და შეადგინოთ მათთან
ერთად მთლიანი გეგმა რაიონში ანტისაშო-
ბაო კამპანიის ჩასატარებლად.

დაევალოს ადგილობრივ კინოებს, რათა მო-
ითხოვონ სახკინომრეწვიდან ანტირელიგიუ-
რი სურათები,

მოაწყონ მომძრავი კინო, მიამაგრონ მომხსე-
ნებლები და გაგზავნონ რაიონებში განათ.
განყოფილების და პროფორგანიზაციების
ხარჯზე.

გადიერდეს მუკ-ის ახალი უჯრედების ჩა-
მოყალიბების საქმე და საწევრო წიგნაკების
და მარკების გამოწერა საქართველოს მებ-
რძოლ უღმერთოთა საბჭოს ცენტრალური
საბჭოსაგან.

ჩაატარეთ ხელისმოწერა რუსულ ჟურნალ
„ბეზბოჟნიკ"-ზე /ხელის მოწერის წლიური
ფასი 6 მანეთი/, ჟურნალ „ანტირელიგიობ-
ნიკ"-ზე /ფასი 12 მან. წელიწადში/. ეს ჟურ-
ნალები უპირველეს ყოვლისა უნდა გამოი-
წერონ სამკითხველოებმა, სკოლებმა, კლუ-
ბებმა, ქოხ-სამკითხველოებმა და წითელმა
კუთხეებმა.

მოხენებისათვის გირჩევთ შემდეგ თემებს

– სტალინური კონსტიტუცია და რელიგიის
საკითხები.

– რელიგია ფაშიზმის სამსახურში.

– ქრისტიანობის წარმოშობა.

– იყო თუ არა ქრისტე.

პირველი ორი თემისათვის მასალა გამოქვეყნებულია „ანტირელიგიოზნიკ" და „ბეზბოჟნიკო"-ს ჟურნალებში, დაწყებული ა/ნ. აგვისტოდან ყველა NN-ში.

შემაჯამებელი ცნობები კამპანიის ჩატარების შესახებ აუცილებლად გამოაგზავნეთ არაუვიანეს 30 იანვრისა, ცნობებში აღნიშნულ უნდა იქნეს, რამდენი მოხსენება ჩატარდა, რამდენი კაცი დაესწრო, რამდენი უკრ ედი, რამდენ წრე ჩამოყალიბდა, წევრთა რიცხვი და მუშაობის სხვა სახეები. (სუიცა, ფ. 1547, ს. 52, ფურც. 15-16).

როდესაც საარჩევ მასალებზე გვაქვს საუბარი ყურადღება უნდა მივიაქციოთ კიდევ ერთ დოკუმენტს, რომელიც ძალიან ნათელ შთაბეჭდილებას გვიქმნის ხელისუფლების მიერ წარმოებული პოლიტიკის საორგანიზაციო მხარეზე, კერძოდ საუბარი გვაქვს, ხელშეკრულების ნიმუშზე, რომელიც უნდა გაფორმებულიყო ერთის მხრივ „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირსა" და მეორეს მხრივ ლექციის წამკითხავ პირს შორის.

„ხელშეკრულება

ქალ. ტფილისი. 1937 წ. იანვრის " " დღე ერთის მხრივ საქართველოს მუკ-ის ცენტრალური საბჭო - ამხ. ………. სახით და მეორეს მხრივ ……… სახით ვდებთ ამ ხელშეკრულებას, რომლის თანახმად ამხ. ……… ვალდებულია ჩაატაროს ანტისამშობაო კამპანიასთან დაკავშირებით ანტირელიგიურ თემაზე „……" მოხსენებები …… რაოდენობით ……… რისთვისაც საქართველოს მუკის ცენტრალური საბჭო ვალდებულია გადაუხადოს ამხ. …… მოხსენება ლექციაში ….. მან ამხ.…… ვალდებულია წარმოადგინოს ყოველგვარი ცნობები ჩატარებული მუშაობის შესახებ. საქა. მუკ-ის ცენტრალურ საბჭოში პირველ თებერვლამდე 1937 წლისა" (სუიცა, ფ. 1547, ს. 52, ფურც. 85).

აღნიშნული ორგანიზაციის მუშაობის ანტისამშობაო მუშაობის შესწავლის კუთხით ძალიან საინტერესოდ გვეჩვენება „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" ოფიციალურ ბეჭდურ ორგანო - ჟურნალ „მებრძოლ ათეისტში" დაბეჭდილი ორი პუბლიკაცია, ორივე მათგანს აერთიანებს ის რომ მათში გადმოცემულია ის ძირითადი მიმართულებები, რომლის მიხედვითაც ჟურნალის მესვეურებს უნდა ემუშავათ პირველი მათგანი წარმოადგენს მასალას მომხსენებლებისათვის თუ რა მიმართულებით უნდა ემუშავათ

ამ თვალსაზრისით განსაკუთრებით საინტერესო და მნიშვნელოვან პუბლიკაციას წარმოადგენს საქართველოს მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის ხელმძღვანელის სტეფანე სახაროვის სტატია „რატომ და როგორ უნდა ვიბრძოლოთ შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ". ამ უკანასკნელის ჩვენთვის სამეცნიერო ღირებულებას წარმოადგენს ის ფაქტი, რომ ერთის მხრივ აღწერილია რეალობა, რომლის მიხედვითაც მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის წარმომადგენლების მიერ ამა თუ იმ რელიგიური დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ ბრძოლა შემთხვევით ხასიათს ატარებს (სახაროვი, 1940, გვ. 11), რის საპირისპიროდაც უნდა მომხდარიყო, როგორც ძირითადი რელიგიური ასევე ადგილობრივი დღესასწაულების სისტემატური მხილება და მორწმუნე საზოგადოების დარწმუნება რელიგიის მსახურთა საქმიანობის მცდარობაში, რაც სტეფანე სახაროვის მიხედვით გააადვილებდა მოსახლეობის „რელიგიური ტყვეობიდან განთავისუფლების პროცესსს" (სახაროვი, 1940, გვ. 13).

აღნიშნული კიდევ ერთხელ ადასტურებს რომ ხელისუფლების დამოკიდებულება რელიგიის წინააღმდეგ იყო რადიკალური და იგი არ აპირებდა თუნდაც მცირედი კომპრომისი დაეშვა ამ მიმართულებით. მიუხედავად ამისა, მდგომარეობა რადიკალურად შეიცვალა 1943 წლიდან, როდესაც შექმნილი მდგომარეობიდან გამომდინარე ხელისუფლებამ განიზრახა ეკლესიისადმი დამოკიდებულება შეეცვალა და აქცენტი რადიკალური დაპირისპირებიდან მასთან თანამშრომლობაზე აიღო. აღნიშნულის გამოხატულებად თავდაპირველად „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" საგიტაციო მუშაობის მიმართულების ცვლილებით აღინიშნა, ხოლო 1947 წელს კი ეს ორგანიზაცია საერთოდ გაუქმდა.

შობის დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ ბრძოლა განახლდა ნიკიტა ხრუშჩოვის მმართველობის დროს, როდესაც მან მკვეთრად „მეცნიერულ ათეისტური" სახე მიიღო, რის დასტურსაც წარმოადგენს 1954 წელს აკადემიკოს კორნელი კეკელიძის ავტორობით გამოსული ბროშურა მეცნიერება ქრისტეს შობის შესახებ (კეკელიძე, 1954), რომელიც საზოგადოება „ცოდნას" ეგიდით ჩატარებული საჯარო ლექციის სტენოგრამას წარმოადგენს. ამავე სერიით 1958 წელს გამოვიდა ფილოსოფოს ბიძინა ლუტიძის ბროშურა „ადგილობრივი ქრისტიანული დღესასწაულები და მათი მავნე ხასიათი" (ლუტიძე, 1958) , სადაც დასახულია გზები, თუ როგორ უნდა მომხდარიყო რელიგიურ დღესასწაულების წინააღმდეგ მოსახლეობის ჩამოშორება. აღსანიშნავია, ისიც, რომ აღნიშნული ორგანიზაცია 1947 წელს სწორედ „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" ბაზაზე დაარსდა.

დასასრულ შეიძლება ითქვას, რომ კომუნისტური ხელისუფლების ათეისტური პოლიტიკის ერთ-ერთმა ყველაზე აქტიურმა ფლაგმან-

მა – „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირმა" თავის მრავალმხრივ და მრავალფეროვან მუშაობაში ერთ-ერთი გამორჩეული ყურადღება მიაქცია ბრძოლას საეკლესიო დღესასწაულების წინააღმდეგ, თავისი მნიშვნელობიდან გამომდინარე განსაკუთრებული ადგილი ამ მიმართულებით დაიკავა ღონისძიებებმა, რომლებიც შობის ბრწყინვალე დღესასწაულის წინააღმდეგ მიმდინარეობდა, რაც თავის მხრივ იმით იყო გამოწვეული,

რომ ასეთ მნიშვნელოვან დროს ხელისუფლების აქტივისტებს მეტი შესაძლებლობა ჰქონდათ თავიანთი ძალის დემონსტრირება მოეხდინათ. საეკლესიო დღესასწაულებზე და მათ შორის შობის დღესასწაულზე „მებრძოლ უღმერთოთა კავშირის" მოღვაწეები აქტიურად ახერხებდნენ თავიანთი სააგიტაციო მუშაობის გაშლას, რასაც ორგანიზებული და მასშტაბური ხასიათი ჰქონდა.

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ლეონიდ ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკა

(1965 - 1982 წწ.)

ეთერ ბოკელავაძე (ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი)

საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების რელიგიური პოლიტიკა თანამედროვე ქართულ, რუსულ და დასავლურ სამეცნიერო ლიტერატურაში განსაკუთრებული აქტუალობით სარგებლობს. იქმნება საგანგებო გამოკვლევები, რომლებიც საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოში არსებული რელიგიური ორგანიზაციებისა და კონკრეტულად, მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიის მდგომარეობის შესწავლას ეძღვნება. აღსანიშნავია ის, რომ არსებულ გამოკვლევათა დიდი ნაწილი გასული საუკუნის 20–60-იანი წწ-ის საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის კვლევას მოიცავს. მხოლოდ უახლეს პერიოდში შესრულებულ მონოგრაფიებში ვხვდებით 70–80-იანი წლების საბჭოთა იმპერიაში ეკლესიისა და სახელმწიფოს ურთიერთობების მეცნიერულ შესწავლის მცდელობებს.

ქართულ სამეცნიერო რეალობაში წარმატებით მიმდინარეობს საბჭოთა პერიოდის რელიგიური პოლიტიკის საკითხების კვლევა, თუმცა, საკვლევ საკითხთა ქრონოლოგიური ჩარჩო აქაც ძირითადად XX ს-ის 20-60-იანი წლებით შემოიფარგლება. უფრო კონკრეტულად კი, მისი ზედა ზღვარი ნიკიტა ხრუშჩოვის მმართველობის ბოლო პერიოდით, კერძოდ, 60-იანი წლების პირველი ნახევრით განისაზღვრება. ნაკლები ყურადღება ეთმობა და პრაქტიკულად შეუსწავლელია ლეონიდ ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკა და მისი განვითარების ტენდენციები.

ჩვენი ნაშრომის მიზანია, ლეონიდ ბრეჟნევის მმართველობის პერიოდის საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის საფუძვლების, ძირითადი ასპექტების, საშინაო და საგარეო ფაქტორების და მათი გავლენის შედეგების გაშუქება. თანამედროვე რუსულ, ევროპულ, ამერიკულ და ქართულ ისტორიოგრაფიაში არსებული შრომებისა და საარქივო დოკუმენტაციის ანალიზი და შეფასება.

კვლევის მეთოდოლოგიის თვალსაზრისით, ნაშრომი ეყრდნობა ისტორიულ-შემეცნებით, კონტენტ-ანალიზის, ისტორიულ-ტიპოლოგიური, შედარებითი, ბიოგრაფიული, რეტროსპექტული, ინდუქციური, დედუქციური და სისტემური კვლე-

ვის მეთოდებს, რაც თავისთავად, გულისხმობს საკითხის ირგვლივ არსებული საისტორიო წყაროების მრავალმხრივ, კომპლექსურ შესწავლას და ჩატარებული კვლევის საფუძველზე, ისტორიული სურათის რეკონსტრუქციის მცდელობას.

გასული საუკუნის 60-იანი წლების შუა ხანები მნიშვნელოვანი მოვლენებით აღინიშნა როგორც მსოფლიოს, ისე საბჭოთა კავშირის ისტორიაში. 1964 წლიდან ხელისუფლებაში განხორციელდა ადმინისტრაციული ცვლილებები, რასაც ნ. ხრუშჩოვის თანამდებობიდან გადაყენება და სკკპ ცენტრალური კომიტეტის პირველი მდივნის თანამდებობაზე მისი ლეონიდ ბრეჟნევით ჩანაცვლება მოჰყვა. ცვლილებებს თითქოს უნდა შეექმნა ნიადაგი საბჭოთა სისტემის განახლებისთვის, რომელსაც ქვეყანა ხრუშჩოვის დესტალინიზაციის პოლიტიკა შედეგად მომწიფებული კრიზისიდან უნდა გამოეყვანა. თუმცა, აღნიშნული არ გულისხმობდა საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს ოფიციალური იდეოლოგიისა თუ საშინაო და საგარეო პოლიტიკის რადიკალურ გარდაქმნას. ის მიზნად ისახავდა საბჭოთა იმპერიის წინაშე მდგარი შიდა საკავშირო, თუ გლობალური გამოწვევების დაძლევას უფრო ფრთხილი, თანმიმდევრული ნაბიჯებით. ხელისუფლების მთავარი საზრუნავი კვლავ კავშირში შემავალი ერების პოლიტიკური კონსოლიდაცია, ეკონომიკური ინტეგრაცია და სოციალიზმის განმტკიცება იყო. (გურული, 2003)

ახალი ხელისუფლების კურსი, მისი კომპლექსური ხასიათიდან გამომდინარე, ცხადია, მრავალ სფეროსა და მიმართულებას მოიცავდა, თუმცა, ჩვენი კვლევის ობიექტიდან გამომდინარე, მოცემულ ნაშრომში მის რელიგიურ ასპექტზე გავამახვილებთ ყურადღებას. ჩვენთვის განსაკუთრებით საყურადღებოა მოცემული პერიოდის საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების დამოკიდებულება რელიგიურ ორგანიზაციებისა და კონკრეტულად, მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიისადმი.

რუსულ ისტორიოგრაფიაში დიდი ხნის განმავლობაში ფართოდ იყო გავრცელებული მოსაზრება, რომ ბრეჟნევის „უძრაობის“ ხანა, „ხრუშჩოვისეული დათბობის“ რეფორმებისგან

განსხვავებით, წარმოადგენდა სტაბილურობის პერიოდს და უფრო მეტიც, გარკვეულ დათბობას სახელმწიფოსა და ეკლესიას შორის ურთიერთობებში. (Сазонов, 2015) რომ ეკლესიამ მიიღო მნიშვნელოვანი თავისუფლება და ათეისტური პროპაგანდა პრაქტიკულად არ იგრძნობოდა (Цешковский, 2013).

აღნიშნული მოსაზრების დამკვიდრებისა და გავრცელების საფუძველს წარმოადგენდა ის ტონისძიებები, რომელთა გატარება ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლებამ ქვეყნის სათავეში მოსვლის პირველივე წლიდან დაიწყო. კერძოდ, 1964 წლიდან რუსულ პრესაში უკვე იწყება ანტირელიგიური სტატიების რიცხვის შემცირება; მათი ტონიც ხდება ნაკლებად შეურაცხმყოფელი, სუსტდება რელიგიისა და სასულიერო პირების დისკრედიტაციისკენ მიმართული, ცილისმწამებლური კამპანია, ეკლესიების დახურვას აღარ აქვს მასობრივი ხასიათი; მცირდება მოქალაქეთა დააპატიმრების რელიგიური ნიშნით; იწყება მორწმუნეთა გათავისუფლება ბანაკებიდან და სხვ. (Anderson, 1994/2002, p. 68; Сазонов, 2015)

სსრკ-ს უზენაესმა სასამართლომ გადახედა მორწმუნეთა უფლების მრავალრიცხოვან დარღვევებს. გათავისუფლებულ იქნენ სამღვდელო პირებიც და უფრო მეტიც, ხელისუფლებამ ოფიციალურ დონეზე აღიარა, რომ მორწმუნეთა მისამართით განხორციელდა უკანონო ქმედებები. (Цешковский, 2013).

ხელისუფლების ოფიციალური პოზიცია საუკეთესოდაა წარმოჩენილი რელიგიის საქმეთა საბჭოს თავმჯდომარის, ვლადიმერ კუროედოვის ნაწერებში. (კუროედვი რელიგიის საქმეთა საბჭოს 1965-1984 წწ-ში მართავდა).

მისი აზრით, არსებითია პრინციპი, რომელიც მართავს ეკლესია-სახელმწიფოს ურთიერთობებს, იყო ჩაურევლობის პრინციპი, თუმცა ეს არ ათავისუფლებს რელიგიურ გაერთიანებებს იმ ვალდებულებისგან, რომ დაიცვან საბჭოთა კანონები. ხაზს უსვამს რა მის ზრუნვას მორწმუნეთა უფლების დასაცავად, კუროედვი აღიარებს, რომ წარსულში იყო შეურაცხყოფა, მაგრამ ამტკიცებდა, რომ როდესაც ეს მოხდა, მისი საბჭო სწრაფად ჩაერთო მათ გამოსწორების საქმეში (Anderson, 1994/2002, p. 78).

ახალი ხელისუფლების ამგვარ კომპრომისულ პოზიციას, ცხადია, თავისი მიზეზები და მიზნები ჰქონდა.

ლენიდ ბრეჟნევი, აცნობიერებდა რა რელიგიის გავლენისგან მოსახლეობის გათავისუფლების საქმეში წინამორბედი ხელისუფლების მიერ ნაცადი, ხისტი მეთოდების წარუმატებლობას, საჭიროდ თვლიდა, ეკლესიასთან ურთიერთობის სფეროში არსებული სტრატეგიების გადასინჯვას.

უკვე 1965 წლის აგვისტოში „Комсомольская правда" იუწყებოდა სახელმწიფო პოლიტიკის ცვლილებას:

„დღეს ჩვენ ისევ ვიმშვიდებთ საკუთარ თავს (იმ ფიქრით, რომ) ჩვენს ქვეყანაში ბევრმა მორწმუნემ დატოვა ეკლესია და რელიგია. ეს არის თავის მოტყუება. სიმართლე ის არის, რომ საბჭოთა კავშირის ტერიტორიის დიდ ნაწილში არც ეკლესიებია და არც კულტის მსახურები არიან, მაგრამ მორწმუნეები არიან.... მრევლის შემცდევა და დახურვა მორწმუნეების ათეისტებად არ აქცევს. პირიქით, ის უფრო იზიდავს ადამიანებს რელიგიისკენ და კიდევ უფრო მეტად აძლიერებს მათ გულებს." (Conquest, 1968, p. 62)

აშკარა იყო, რომ ხელისუფლება სულაც არ აპირებდა ათეისტურ იდეოლოგიაზე უარის თქმას და რელიგიასთან ბრძოლის შეწყვეტას. პირიქით, იგეგმებოდა გაცილებით უფრო ეფექტური, დახვეწილი სტრატეგიის შემუშავება, რომელიც მიმართული იქნებოდა საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს მოქალაქეთა ცნობიერებიდან რელიგიის, როგორც წარსულის გადმონაშთის შედარებით უმტკივნეულოდ აღმოფხვრისკენ.

1965 წლიდან იწყება რელიგიური პოლიტიკის მნიშვნელოვანი გადაფასება და ქმედითი ნაბიჯების გადადგმა ოფიციალური კურსის ერთგვარი „დემოკრატიზაციისკენ". ლ. ბრეჟნევმა რელიგიურ გაერთიანებებზე პირდაპირი დარტყმის ნაცვლად, ფოკუსირება მოახდინა ათეისტურ განათლების გაძლიერებაზე. ის საკავშირო ხელისუფლებას მოუწოდებდა, რომ მომხდარიყო ხრუშჩოვისტროინდელი პროპაგანდისტული ძალისხმევის კომპლექსური გადაფასება და რწმენის სისტემის ყოველმხრივი შესწავლა, იმისათვის, რომ შესაძლებელი გამხდარიყო უფრო ეფექტური პროპაგანდის შექმნა.

მისი მიზანი იყო „იდეალური საბჭოთა ადამიანის" ჩამოყალიბება, ანუ პიროვნების, რომელიც წარმოაჩენდა ლენინურ იდეოლოგიას ყველაფერში, რასაც აკეთებდა და სწამდა. მისი აზრით, რელიგიისგან ნამდვილი ჩამოშორება მხოლოდ მაშინ მოხდებოდა, თუ თითოეული მორწმუნე შეიცვლებოდა ფსიქოლოგიურად და ამ ცვლილების მაპროვოცირებელი ძალა იქნებოდა არა ფიზიკური განადგურების საფრთხე, არამედ ათეისტური განათლების ხარისხის ამაღლება.

ლ. ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის ფასადურ ლიბერალიზაციას, წინამორბედი ხელისუფლების სტრატეგიის კრახის გარდა, კიდევ უფრო მნიშვნელოვანი მიზეზები ჰქონდა. პირველ რიგში, მხედველობაში გვაქვს მოცემული პერიოდის საერთაშორისო ვითარება და „ცივი ომის" პირობები. კერძოდ, „დაძაბულობის განმუხტვა" („Detente") დასავლეთთან და სსრკ-ის მიერ არჩეული ღია, თანამშრომლობითი პოზიცია. ბრეჟნე-

ვის ადმინისტრაცია ცდილობდა, ერთი მხრივ, ბირთვული საფრთხის თავიდან აცილებას, მეორე მხრივ, კი, ნ. ხრუშჩოვის მიერ დასავლეთთან პოლიტიკურ და სამხედრო კრიზისში შეყვანილი საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს საერთაშორისო იმიჯის რეაბილიტაციას, რაშიც მას კავშირში არსებული სხვადასხვა და განსაკუთრებით, რელიგიური ორგანიზაციების მხარდაჭერა სჭირდებოდა, ვინაიდან მისთვის კარგად იყო ცნობილი, რომ დასავლეთი ზედმიწევნით კარგად იყო ინფორმირებული სსრკ-ში არსებული რელიგიური ორგანიზაციებისა და ზოგადად, ადამიანის უფლებათა საერთო მდგომარეობის შესახებ და ამას ხშირად იყენებდა მეტოქის მაკომპრომეტირებელ საშუალებად. განსაკუთრებით ეს ეხებოდა რელიგიურ გაერთიანებათა და მორწმუნეთა ჩაგვრას, რის გამოც სსრკ-ს ხელმძღვანელობა დასავლური სამყაროს მხრიდან არაერთხელ გამხდარა საჯარო კრიტიკის ობიექტი.

სწორედ აღნიშნულით იყო განპირობებული ლ. ბრეჟნევის ფრთხილი, მოზომილი დამოკიდებულება ეკლესიის მიმართ. თუმცა, რელიგია კვლავ რჩებოდა ათეისტური იდეოლოგიის მთავარ ოპონენტად და ხელისუფლებაც აქტიურად ინარჩუნებდა მასზე კონტროლს.

ლ. ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკა პირობითად შეგვიძლია 2 ეტაპად დავყოთ:

ა) XX ს-ის 60-იანი წლების II ნახევრიდან - 70-იანი წლების II ნახევრამდე,

ბ) XX ს-ის 70-იანი წლების II ნახევრიდან - 1982 წლამდე.

თითოეული ეტაპი ერთმანეთისგან განსხვავებული ტენდენციებით, საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს წინაშე არსებული საშინაო და საგარეო გამოწვევებით, ორიენტირებითა და შედეგებით ხასიათდება. მაგალითად, თუკი მმართველობის დასაწყისში ლეონიდ ბრეჟნევის სახელისუფლებო აპარატი პრიორიტეტულ მიმართულებად ნიკიტა ხრუშჩოვის რეპრესიული საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის გმობასა და რელიგიურ ორგანიზაციებთან ურთიერთობაში გარეგნულად შედარებით კომპრომისულ კურსის გატარებას მიიჩნევდა, 70-იანი წლების მეორე ნახევრიდან, დისიდენტური მოძრაობის გაძლიერების, საზოგადოების ეკლესიასთან დაახლოებისა და დასავლეთის სახელმწიფოთა დიპლომატიის წარმატების პირობებში, არჩეული კურსი იცვლება და ბრეჟნევის დახვეწილი პოლიტიკა ხდება უფრო რადიკალური და ხისტი. ხელისუფლების საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის ფორმის (და არა შინაარსის) ტრანსფორმაცია ცხადია, გარკვეული მიზეზებით იყო განპირობებული და შესაბამის მიზნებს ემსახურებოდა. წინამდებარე ნაშრომში თანმიმდევრულად განვიხილავთ ოფიციალური ხელისუფლების კურსის

ტრანსფორმაციის გზას 60-იანი წლების მეორე ნახევრიდან - 80-იანი წლების დამდეგამდე.

როგორც ზემოთ აღვნიშნეთ, ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლება მმართველობის პირველი წლებიდანვე იწყებს მორწმუნე საზოგადოებასთან და რელიგიურ გაერთიანებებთან ურთიერთობაში „დაშვებული შეცდომების" აღიარებას. ჟურნალ „Наука и религия" - ში იწყება ხრუშჩოვის პოლიტიკის კრიტიკის გამოქვეყნება და იმ უხეში, რეპრესიული ტაქტიკის გმობა, რომელსაც ის იყენებდა.

ერთგვარ „დეხრუშჩოვიზაცია" რელიგიურ სფეროში, მოჰყვა პოზიტიური ცვლილებების განხორციელება ეკლესიისა და მორწმუნეთა მიმართ. 1965 წლის ოქტომბრიდან ხელისუფლებამ დააანონსა, რომ ამიერიდან რეგისტრირების შესაძლებლობა მიეცემოდა ყველა იმ რელიგიურ თემს, ვინც გამოთქვამდა მზადყოფნას, დამორჩილებოდა რელიგიის შესახებ საბჭოთა კანონებს. დაიწყო სასულიერო და რელიგიური ნიშნით დაპატიმრებულ საერო პირთა გათავისუფლება; შესუსტდა ძია ანტირელიგიური პროპაგანდა; შემსუბუქდა საკანონმდებლო შეზღუდვები; გაიზარდა ეკლესიის ტრადიციული ფუნქციები, როგორებიცაა: ჯვრისწერა, ნათლობა.. (Childers, 2012, pp. 73-74).

ხსენებულ ცვლილებებს როგორც ქვეყნის შიგნით, ისე ქვეყნის ფარგლებს გარეთ უნდა წარმოეჩინა ხელისუფლების კეთილგანწყობილი, თანამშრომლობითი დამოკიდებულება რელიგიური თემების მიმართ და შეექმნა რელიგიის სფეროში მდგომარეობის სტაბილიზაციის შთაბეჭდილება. ფაქტობრივად ასეც ჩანდა. თუმცა, ზემოთაღწერილი პოზიტიური ღონისძიებების პარალელურად, ხელისუფლების მიერ პარალელურ რეჟიმში მიღებულმა ზომებმა და გადაწყვეტილებებმა, ჩანასახშივე დააზიანა სტაბილიზაციის გეგმა. ასე, მაგალითად: თუკი ბრეჟნევმა რელიგიურ თემებს დარეგისტრირების შესაძლებლობა მისცა, იმავდროულად შეიქმნა საზოგადოებრივი კომისიები, რომლებსაც კულტების შესახებ საბჭოთა კანონმდებლობის დაცვის კონტროლი, სხვადასხვა დასახლებებში რელიგიური ცხოვრების შესწავლა და სასულიერო პირთა საქმიანობის მონიტორინგი დაევალათ. (Цешковский, 2013). ღვთისმსახურთა და საერო პირთა პატიმრობიდან და ბანაკებიდან გათავისუფლების პარალელურად, კვლავ გრძელდებოდა მორწმუნეთა ჩაგვრა სოციალური და ეკონომიკური ცხოვრების ყველა დონეზე, დისკრიმინაცია სამსახურში მიღებაზე, შეზღუდვა საკუთარი მრწამსის ღიად გამოხატვაზე და სხვ. (Сазонов, 2015, стр. 47).

თუკი ხელისუფლებამ ეკლესიებს მისცა რელიგიური რიტუალების ჩატარების საშუალება, პარალელურად, სცადა ალტერნატიული ცერემო-

ნიების (შრომასთან და ხალხურ ტრადიციებთან დაკავშირებული) შექმნა, რომლებსაც კონკურენცია უნდა გაეწია საეკლესიო რიტუალებისა და ტრადიციებისათვის.

რელიგიურ თემებთან თანამშრომლობის საფარველქვეშ, ბრეჟნევის ადმინისტრაციამ გადაწყვიტა, ეკლესიაზე და განსაკუთრებით, საბჭოთა კავშირის ცენტრალურ, ანუ რუსეთის მართლმადიდებელ ეკლესიაზე კონტროლის გადიდერება, ამ მიზნით, 60-იანი წლების შუა პერიოდში განხორციელდა მნიშვნელოვანი ცვლილებები: რუსეთის მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიის საქმეთა საბჭო და რელიგიურ საქმეთა საბჭო გაერთიანდა სსრკ მინისტრთა საბჭოსთან არსებულ რელიგიის საქმეთა საბჭოში. უკრაინელი მკვლევარის და სასულიერო მოღვაწის, მღვდელ ვიქტორ ცეშკოვსკის შეფასებით, ამით „ფაქტობრივად, რუსეთის ეკლესია მოექცა ხელისუფლების სრული კონტროლის ქვეშ. ახლა ეკლესია ვალდებული იყო გაეკრიტიკებინა კათოლიციზმი, როგორც კაპიტალიზმის მსახური და ყველა დასავლური ქვეყანა, რომლებიც საბჭოთა ხელმძღვანელობის მიერ მტრებად იყვნენ წარმოჩენილი. იმპერიალიზმის წინააღმდეგ ბრძოლამ პირველ პლანზე გადმოიწია. ფაქტობრივად, ეკლესია გახდა „მებრძოლი ვერდი ” მშვიდობისთვის ბრძოლაში. თუკი მანამდე მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიის საქმეთა საბჭო მხოლოდ კოორდინაციას უწევდა რუსეთის მართლმადიდებელ ეკლესიას, ახლა საბჭოს მაკონტროლებელი ფუნქცია გააჩნდა. ამჯერად ხელისუფლება ცდილობდა ეკლესიის სრულ კონტროლს.“ (Цешковский, 2013).

ჩვენი აზრით, ეკლესიასთან ურთიერთობის ბრეჟნევისეული სტრატეგიის ყველაზე საინტერესო ასპექტს წარმოადგენს ე.წ. ისტორიული „დაკავი და იბატონეს“ პრინციპი, რომელსაც ეკლესია, როგორც ინსტიტუცია, შიგნიდან უნდა გაეტეხა. კერძოდ, მხედველობაში გვაქვს ის იდეოლოგიური მუშაობა, რომლის საშუალებითაც მოხდა საბჭოთა კავშირის მორწმუნეთა დიფერენცირება. კერძოდ, მათი დაყოფა ორ ძირითად ჯგუფად: 1) ნორმალურ მორწმუნეებად (რომელთა კატეგორიაშიც მორწმუნეთა უმრავლესობას მოიხსენიებდნენ) და 2) მცირერიცხოვან რელიგიურ ფანატიკოსებად, რომლებმაც პირველ კატეგორიას „ცუდი რეპუტაცია შეუქმნეს“. დღის წესრიგში დადგა საკითხი „გაგება - დახმარებისთვის“. „ათეისტ მუშაკებს შეახსენებს, რომ მორწმუნეთა უმრავლესობა იყო პატიოსანი მშრომელი, რომელიც მთელ საბჭოთა ხალხთან ერთად აშენებდა კომუნიზმს“. (Childers, 2012, pp. 73-74)

ბრიტანელი მკვლევარი, ფილიპ უოლტერსი, თავის ნაშრომში „საბჭოთა რელიგიური პოლიტიკის მიმოხილვა“ იშველიებს რელიგიის საქმეთა საბჭოს ჩინოვნიკის, ფუროვის საიდუმლო მოხ-

სენებას 60-იანი წლების რუსეთის მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიის მდგომარეობის შესახებ, რომელმაც დასავლეთში შედარებით გვიან, 70-იან წლებში შეაღწია. ხსენებული დოკუმენტის საფუძველზე, მკვლევარი შენიშნავს, რომ ხელისუფლება სასულიერო იერარქებს 3 კატეგორიად ყოფდა: 1) იმ კატეგორიას, რომელიც ყველაზე მისაღები იყო ხელისუფლებისთვის, მიეკუთვნებოდნენ ისინი, ვინც მინიმუმს აკეთებდა რწმენის გასაზრდისთვის, მაგრამ მზად იყო საზღვარგარეთ გამგზავრებულიყო და საბჭოთა პოლიტიკის სასარჩებლოდ ესაუბრა, როგორც ქვეყნის შიგნით, ისე მის ფარგლებს გარეთ. 2) მეტ-ნაკლებად მიუღებელი სასულიერო პირები იყვნენ ისინი, ვისი პრიორიტეტებიც იყო ამ ყველაფერთან დაპირისპირება/შენინააღმდეგობა. 3) „ერთგული“ სასულიერო პირები და რელიგიური გაერთიანებები იყვნენ ისინი, რომლებიც მზად იყვნენ შემოფარგლულიყვნენ რეგისტრირებულ შენობაში ღვთისმსახურებით და უარი ეთქვათ უფრო მეტ აქტივობაზე და მორწმუნეთა მებრძოლ ჯგუფებზე. შესაბამისად, ცენტრალური ხელისუფლება აქტიურ და საჯარო დემონსტრირებას ახდენდა იმ „უპირატესობების“ და პრივილეგიების, რომლითაც სარგებლობდნენ მათი უფრო „კანონმორჩილი“ ძმები, რათა ფართო რელიგიური საზოგადოებისთვის ეჩვენებინა, როგორ შეეძლოთ „რელიგიური თავისუფლების“ გარანტიის მიღება „ერთგულ საბჭოთა მოქალაქეებს.“ (Walters, 1993/2005, p. 25).

ფაქტია, რომ მორწმუნეთა და სასულიერო პირთა დიფერენცირება, ერთი მხრივ, ხელისუფლების მიმართ კონფორმისტულად განწყობილი ნაწილის გამოვლენასა და მხარდაჭერას, მეორე მხრივ კი, მათი მეშვეობით, შეურიგებელი და დისიდენტური (როგორც საეკლესიო, ისე საერო) ძალების დასუსტებას ისახავდა მიზნად. მათ ურთიერთდაპირისპირებით კი, საზოგადოებაში ეკლესიისადმი ნდობისა და გავლენის დაკარგვას იმედოვნებდა, რომლის ლოგიკური შედეგიც რწმენის ადგომფხვრა და რელიგიის კრახი უნდა ყოფილიყო.

უოლტერსის შეფასებით, მორწმუნეთა ბრეჟნევისევისეული დევნა უფრო დისკრიმინაციული იყო, ვიდრე ნ. ხრუშჩოვის მმართველობის პერიოდში. ასე, მაგალითად: ხრუშჩოვის ანტირელიგიური კამპანიის დროს ყველა მორწმუნე - ახალგაზრდა თუ მოხუცი, განათლებული თუ გაუნათლებელი, საერო თუ სასულიერო პირი - ერთნაირად განიცდიდა დევნას. ბრეჟნევის დროს კი, გაუნათლებელი და მოხუცები იყვნენ ნებადართულნი ეკლესიაში დასწრებისთვის, კრიტიკისა და შეურაცხყოფის გარეშე. მხოლოდ ყველაზე აქტიური სასულიერო პირები იღებდნენ ხელისუფლებისგან დარტყმას. ასევე, ის ახალგაზრდები, განათლებული და საპასუხისმგებლო ადმი-

ნისტრაციულ თანამდებობებზე მყოფი პირები, რომლებიც ავლენდნენ რაიმე სახის აქტიურ ინტერესს რელიგიის ან რელიგიური უფლებების მიმართ. (Walters, 1993/2005, p. 26).

როგორც ვხედავთ, ლ. ბრეჟნევის სტრატეგია ეკლესიასთან ურთიერთობის სფეროში გაცილებით უფრო რაციონალური და პლურალისტური იყო. დეკლარირებულად, ხელისუფლება პატივს სცემდა საკუთარი მოქალაქეების რელიგიურ გრძნობებს და თანამშრომლობდა თითქმის ყველა დენომინაციასთან, თუმცა, სინამდვილეში, ძალისხმევას არ იშურებდა საზოგადოებაში რელიგიისადმი ნიჰილისტური და ინდიფერენტული დამოკიდებულების დანერგვისა და მათი ცნობიერების გარდაქმნისთვის. გარდა ზემოთ ჩამოთვილი აქტივობებისა, ბრეჟნევის ადმინისტრაცია დიდ ყურადღებას უთმობდა ანტირელიგიურ განათლებას.

საჯარო ანტირელიგიური პროპაგანდის შესუსტების საპირწონედ მთავრობამ ათეისტური პროპაგანდის გაძლიერება და შესაბამისი განათლების ხარისხის ამაღლება მიიჩნია. 1966 წელს დაიწყო ჟურნალ „Вопросы научного атеизма" (სამეცნიერო ათეიზმის კითხვები) გამოცემა. (Childers, 2012, pp. 73-74). 1969 წელს ჩატარდა თითქმის 10. 000 ლექცია ათეიზმის საკითხებზე. (Цешковский, 2013). ნამდვილი „საბჭოთა მოქალაქის" ჩამოყალიბება, ხელისუფლების იმედით, სწორედ ამგვარი მექანიზმებით იყო შესაძლებელი. თუმცა, უკვე 70-იანი წლების დამდეგისთვის ცხადი გახდა, რომ ლ. ბრეჟნევის მიერ შემუშავებულმა პლურალისტურმა სტრატეგიამ ვერ გაამართლა შექმნილი მოლოდინები და უფრო მეტიც, სრულიად საპირისპირო შედევი გამოიღო. კერძოდ, ოფიციალურ დონეზე მისმა კომპრომისულმა დამოკიდებულებამ მოქალაქეთა რელიგიურ ცხოვრებასთან, ხელი შეუწყო საზოგადოების და განსაკუთრებით, ახალგაზრდა ნაწილის დაახლოებას ეკლესიასთან. უკვე 1971 წლის 8 სექტემბერს, გაზეთი "Ленинградская правда" დანანებით აღნიშნავდა იმ ფაქტს, რომ ქრისტიანული ცერემონიების [როგორიცაა ნათლობა და ქორწინები] რიცხვი გაიზარდა... და ასეთი რიტუალების მონაწილეები ძირითადად, ახალგაზრდები იყვნენ. „ის ფაქტი, რომ საბჭოთა ახალგაზრდობა სულ უფრო და უფრო შორდება კომკავშირს, ცდილობს სემინარიაში შესვლას, დაქორწინდების, ეკლესიებში სიარულს და შვილების მონათვლას, სერიოზულ პრობლემას უქმნის ხელისუფლებას". (Kowalewski, 1980, p. 282).

თუმცა, პრობლემას მხოლოდ ეს არ წარმოადგენდა. ხელისუფლების ფართობითომა „ლიბერალიზმმა" გაცილებით სერიოზული გამოწვევის წინაშე დააყენა მისი შემომქმედი. მხედველობაში გვაქვს დისიდენტური მოძრაობის ნაახალისება,

რომელიც შემდგომ ცალკეულ რესპუბლიკებში განვითარებულ ეროვნულ მოძრაობას დაუკავშირდა. რელიგიურმა დისიდენტებმა ამ პერიოდში უფრო და უფრო მეტი ჯგუფი შემოიკრიბა. მინისქვეშ ორგანიზაციებმა დაიწყეს ლეგალური მოღვაწეობა. 70-იან წლებში დისიდენტები გაჩნდნენ სხვადასხვა რელიგიურ ჯგუფში: ბაპტისტებში, ორმოცდათიანელებში, ადვენტისტებში, კათოლიკეებში, ბუდისტებში. 70-იანი წლების შუა ხანებში გაძლიერდა მართლმადიდებლური დისიდენტობაც. (Anderson, 1994/2002).

დისიდენტური მოძრაობა განსაკუთრებით გააქტიურდა 1975 წლის შემდეგ, როდესაც სსრკ-ს წარმომადგენლობამ ხელი მოაწერა ევროპაში უსაფრთხოებისა და თანამშრომლობის ფედამენტურ დოკუმენტს, ე.წ. „ჰელსინკის დასკვნით აქტს". ჰელსინკის დასკვნითომა აქტმა განამტკიცა მეორე მსოფლიო ომის პოლიტიკური და ტერიტორიული შედეგები და სახელმწიფოთა შორის ურთიერთობის 10 პრინციპი (ჰელსინკის დეკალოგი), (ნერგაძე, 2010). რომელთაგან ჩვენთვის განსაკუთრებით საყურადღებოა „ადამიანის უფლებებისა და ძირითადი თავისუფლებების პატივისცემის" პრინციპი, რომელსაც ეხმიანება დოკუმენტში შემავალი სხვა შეთანხმებაც. კერძოდ, ადამიანის უფლებებისა და ძირითადი თავისუფლებების საკითხებში პოლიტიკური ვალდებულებები — მათ შორის, გადაადგილების, კონტაქტების, ინფორმაციის, კულტურისა და განათლების თავისუფლების საკითხებში — და პრაქტიკაში მათ განხორციელებაზე მეთვალყურეობა.

აქტის მიხედვით, იმ სახელმწიფოების ფარგლებში, რომელთაც ადიარებული ჰქონდათ აღნიშნული დოკუმენტი, არსებულ რელიგიურ კულტებს, დაწესებულებებს და ორგანიზაციებს ეძლეოდათ თავიანთი მოღვაწეობის სფეროში კონტაქტების დამყარების, ინფორმაციისა და ვიზიტების გაცვლის საშუალება. აქტში ხაზგასმით იყო აღნიშნული, რომ ადამიანის ძირითად თავისუფლებას აზრის, სინდისის და რელიგიის თავისუფლება წარმოადგენს, ამიტომ შეთანხმების მონაწილე ქვეყნების პატივს უნდა სცემდნენ ადამიანს, მიუხედავად მისი რასისა, სქესისა, კანის ფერის, ენისა და რელიგიისა. (ლორია და სხვანი, 2006).

ჰელსინკის შეთანხმებასთან შეერთებამ გარკვეულწნილად დააკმაყოფილა სსრკ-ს ტერიტორიული ინტერესები (აღმოსავლეთ ევროპის ქვეყნებზე), რის გამოც ხსენებული დოკუმენტი ბრეჟნევის ადმინისტრაციაში საბჭოთა დიპლომატიის გამარჯვებად იქნა აღქმული, თუმცა, პრობლემები მხოლოდ დაიწყო.

ჰელსინკის შეთანხმებამ სერიოზული ბიძგი მისცა ადამიანის უფლებათა დამცველი ორგანი-

ზაციებისა და დისიდენტური მოძრაობის გააქტიურებას მთელი საბჭოთა კავშირის მასშტაბით.

1975 წლის შემდეგ საბჭოთა ხელისუფლება განსაკუთრებული სიფრთხილით ეკიდება რელიგიურ თემებთან ურთიერთობის საკითხს. ამჯერად, ბრეჟნევის ადმინისტრაციამ გადაწყვიტა, მიეცა მათთვის საერთაშორისო ასპარეზზე გასვლის შესაძლებლობა (ცხადია, საკუთარი საგარეო პოლიტიკური ინტერესებისთვის) და სწორედ მათი მეშვეობით წარმოეჩინა საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების მხაობა ჰელსინკის შეთანხმების რელევანტური ქმედებებისთვის.

1976 წლის 18 ივნისს, ვ. კუროედოვის მიერ სსრკ-ის მინისტრთა საბჭოსადმი გაგზავნილი წერილიდან ვიგებთ, რომ 1976 წლის 9-19 მაისს ამერიკული სოციალურ-რელიგიური ორგანიზაცია "სინდისის ხმა" მოწვევით, აშშ-ს ეწვია სსრკ-ის სხვადასხვა რელიგიურ ორგანიზაციათა წარმომადგენლობითი დელეგაცია (რომელიც შედგებოდა 10 კაცისაგან და ხელმძღვანელობდა რუსი მართლმადიდებელი მიტროპოლიტი იუვენალი (ვ.კ. პოიარკოვი) - მოსკოვის საპატრიარქოს საგარეო საეკლესიო საქმეთა დეპარტამენტის თავმჯდომარე). დელეგაციის წევრთა შორის იყვნენ რელიგიური ფიგურები რუსეთის მართლმადიდებელი ეკლესიიდან, იუდაისტური თემიდან, ლიტვის კათოლიკური ეკლესიიდან, ლატვიის ლუთერანული ეკლესიიდან, სომხური ეკლესიიდან და ევანგელისტ ქრისტიანთა და ბაპტისტთა სრულიად საკავშირო საბჭოდან. ეს იყო პირველი შემთხვევა, როდესაც ასეთი ინტერდენომინაციური დელეგაცია გაემგზავრა აშშ-ში.

კუროედოვი აუწყებს მინისტრთა საბჭოს, რომ „დელეგაციის ამოცანა იყო ორივე ქვეყნის რელიგიურ მოღვაწეებს შორის თანამშრომლობის გაფართოება საყოველთაო მშვიდობის დაცვის საქმეში და სსრკ-სა და შეერთებულ შტატებს შორის დაძაბულობის შემდგომი შემცირების ხელშეწყობა, ასევე, დელეგაციის მიზანი იყო, ამერიკელებთან კონტაქტის პროცესში, ხელი შეეჩხოთ იმ მცდარი წარმოდგენებისა და კონცეფციების გავანტკვაში, რომლებიც სსრკ-ში რელიგიისა და ეკლესიის მდგომარეობას ეხებოდა და რომლებიც აშშ-ში ფართოდ იყო გავრცელებული. (Corley, 1996, p. 276).

საინტერესოა ის, რომ ვიზიტის ფარგლებში, სსრკ-ის დელეგაციას რელიგიური მოღვაწეების გარდა, შეხვედრები ჰქონდა ამერიკელ პოლიტიკურ და სახელმწიფო მოღვაწეებთან. ისინი მიიღეს აშშ-ს სახელმწიფო დეპარტამენტში, გაეროში და ეწვივნენ თეთრ სახლს. დელეგაციის მიღებისას აშშ-ს სახელმწიფო მდივნის მოადგილემ, [არტურ] ჰარტმანმა განაცხადა: „მე დიდ მნიშვნელობას ვანიჭებ რელიგიათაშორის კონტაქტებს, რომლებიც ხელს უწყობს ორივე ქვეყანას შორის

ურთიერთობების განმტკიცებას და ჩვენ აშშ-ში არ განვასხვავებთ ამ კავშირების ეკონომიკური და პოლიტიკური კონტექსტის კონტაქტებისგან. (Corley, 1996, p. 276). აღნიშნულს ეხმიანება ორგანიზაცია 'სინდისის ხმის' პრეზიდენტის, რაბინ არტურ შნაიერის კვალიფიციური შეფასებაც: „კონტაქტები რელიგიურ მოღვაწეებს შორის არანაკლებ მნიშვნელოვანია, ვიდრე თანამშრომლობა პოლიტიკურ, ეკონომიკურ, სამეცნიერო და კულტურულ სფეროებში. რაც მთავარია, ურთიერთგაგებასა და ნდობის კონტაქტების პროცესში, შეუძლია მოიტანოს თანამშრომლობა, მიუხედავად აზრთა სხვადასხვაობისა გარკვეულ საკითხებზე." (Corley, 1996, p. 276).

წერილის დასასრულს, კუროედოვი იმონმებს შეერთებულ შტატებში საბჭოთა საელჩოს განცხადებას, სადაც აღნიშნული ვიზიტი იყო შეფასებული: - სსრკ-ს რელიგიური მოღვაწეების დელეგაციის ვიზიტი აშშ-ში "სასარგებლო და პოზიტიური მოვლენა იყო, განსაკუთრებით იმასთან დაკავშირებით, რომ რელიგიის სფერო აშშ-ში გამოიყენება ყველა სახის ანტისაბჭოთა ქმედებებისთვის". (Corley, 1996, p. 276).

როგორც ვხედავთ, რელიგიის სფერო მხოლოდ აშშ-ში არ იყო გამოყენებული სახელმწიფოს საგარეო პოლიტიკური ინტერესებისთვის. მისი გამოყენება ყველაზე მეტად, საბჭოთა ხელისუფლებას სჭირდებოდა საკუთარი ინტერესების დასაცავად. ვინაიდან, სწორედ რელიგია იყო საბჭოთა „ძლევამოსილი იმპერიის" ყველაზე სუსტი წერტილი და იმავდროულად, ერთ-ერთი ყველაზე ძლიერი ბერკეტი დასავლეთის სახელმწიფოთა ხელში, პოლიტიკური მეტოქის დასასუსტებლად. აქედან გამომდინარე, სრულებით არ არის გასაკვირი ის ფაქტი, რომ XX ს-ის 70-იანი წლებიდან ლ. ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლებამ ფართო ასპარეზი გაუხსნა რელიგიურ პირებს საერთაშორისო მასშტაბით მოღვაწეობისთვის (ცხადია, შესაბამისი სამსახურების კონტროლის ქვეშ).

ჰელსინკის აქტის პრინციპების პრაქტიკაში რეალიზების და მოქალაქეთა რელიგიური უფლებების დაცვის საჯარო დემონსტრირებას ისახავდა მიზნად 1977 წელს სსრკ-ს ახალი კონსტიტუციის მეშვიდე თავი, რომელიც ეხებოდა სსრკ-ს მოქალაქეების ძირითად უფლებებს, თავისუფლებებსა და ვალდებულებებს. კონსტიტუციის 52-ე მუხლში ეწერა:

„საბჭოთა სოციალისტური რესპუბლიკების კავშირის მოქალაქეებს აქვთ სინდისის თავისუფლება, რაც ნიშნავს იმას, რომ მათ აქვთ უფლება, აღიაჰრონ, ან ამ აღიაჰრონ ნებისმიერი რელიგია, ჩაატაჰრონ ღვთისმსახურება, ან ათეისტური პროპაგანდა. მტჰული გამოკიდებულების წაქეზება, ან სიმდევილი რელიგიურ საფუძველზე, იკხძაღება. საბჭოთა სოციალისტუ-

*hი რესპუბლიკების კავშირში ექცესია გამოყო-
ფიდია სახელმწიფოსგან, ხოლო სკოლა - ეკდე-
სიისგან." (Конституция, 1985, стр. 20).*

თანამედროვე შვეიცარიელი მკვლევარი,
სლავისტი, ულრიხ შმიდი, თავის სტატიაში „საბ-
ჭოთა კავშირისა და რუსეთის ძირითადი კანონე-
ბის რიტორიკული და ჟანრული გამორჩეულობა",
1977 წლის საბჭოთა კონსტიტუცია „განვითარე-
ბული სოციალიზმის სახარებას" უწოდებს და სა-
ვსებით სამართლიანად შენიშნავს: „ახალი კონ-
სტიტუცია საკმაოდ ფიქციური და კვაზირელიგიუ-
რი იყო. მას არ ჰქონდა საერთო რეალობასთან."
(შმიდი, 2013). მართლაც, მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ
საბჭოთა კანონმდებლობა ქვეყნის მოქალაქე-
ებს დეკლარირებულად აძლევდა ნებისმიერი
რელიგიის აღიარებისა და ღვთისმსახურების ჩა-
ტარების უფლებას, პრაქტიკაში ამ უფლების რე-
ალიზების საშუალება მათ ძალიან შეზღუდული
ჰქონდათ. ამ მხრივ ძალიან საინტერესო დოკუმე-
ნტია იმავე წლის (1977 წ.) ნოემბერში, ლიტვის სს-
რ-ის მინისტრთა საბჭოს კომისრის - კ. ტუმენასის
მიერ გაცემული მიმართვა, სადაც ნათლად ჩანს
თუ რელიგიური ცხოვრების რომელ სფეროებს
აკონტროლებდა ხელისუფლება:

„რელიგიური მდგომარეობა რაიონში, ქა-
ლაქში. რელიგიური თემების საქმიანობის აღ-
წერისას, სასულიერო პირების მიერ რელიგიური
ცხოვრების გასააქტიურებლად გამოყენებული
მეთოდები, ქადაგების შინაარსი (დაურთეთ ნე-
ბისმიერი ჩაწერილი ქადაგების ასლები), ეკლე-
სიებსა და სამლოცველოებში დასწრება; კრების
ნომრები და მომსახურე პერსონალი (შესაბამი-
სად თანდართული ფორმა); დაბადების, ქორწი-
ნებისა და გარდაცვალების სტატისტიკა რაიონ-
ში, ქალაქზე. რელიგიური თემების საერთო ფინა-
ნსური მართვის საქმიანობა (თანდართული ფორ-
მის შესაბამისად). საკულტო კანონების დაცვაზე
მონიტორინგის ორგანიზაცია; ამ საქმიანობის
მონიტორინგის კომისიების საქმიანობა; საკულ-
ტო კანონების დარღვევისა და დამნაშავეებთან
მიმართებაში მიღებული ზომების ანალიზი. მი-
ღებული საჩივრები და განცხადებები რელიგიურ
საკითხებზე; მათი თემები და მათი შემოწმების
შედეგები. (Corley, 1996, p. 277).

როგორც ვხედავთ, 1977 წლის დასასრუ-
ლისთვის ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლება კვლავ გა-
ნაგრძობდა ორმაგი სტანდარტით ხელმძღვანე-
ლობას. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ ეკლესია გაუშვებ
ფართო საერთაშორისო ასპარეზზე, მას არ მიეცა
სოციალური ბაზის გაზრდის უფლება და უფრო მე-
ტიც, გიზარდა რელიგიურ თემებზე კონტროლის
ხარისხი. დაიწყო ტაძრების მასობრივი დახურვა.
რელიგიური ლიტერატურის ოფიციალური გამო-
ცემა მკაცრად იყო შეზღუდული. ხრუშჩოვის მიერ
დახურული არცერთი მონასტერი ან სემინარია

არ გახსნილა და მხოლოდ მინიმალური რაოდე-
ნობის ეკლესიები. (Ramet, 1993/2005); (Сазонов,
2015).

მიუხედავად აღნიშნულისა, 70–იანი წლების
II ნახევრიდან საბჭოთა კავშირის მთელი რიგი
რესპუბლიკების მოსახლეობაში (განსაკუთრებით
ინტელიგენციაში) ჩნდება სერიოზული ინტერესი
მართლმადიდებლობისადმი, ვინაიდან საზოგა-
დოება მართლმადიდებელ ეკლესიაში ხედავდა
ეროვნული ტრადიციებისა და კულტურის დამ-
ცველსა და შემნარჩუნებელს. გაჩნდა ჟურნალე-
ბი, რომლებიც რელიგიურ თემატიკას განიხილა-
ვდნენ. მოსკოვში, ლენინგრადში, კიევში, სმოლე-
ნსკსა და სხვა ქალაქებში ახალგაზრდები იკრი-
ბებოდნენ ე.წ. რელიგიურ–ფილოსოფიურ სემი-
ნარებზე, სადაც ყურადღება გამახვილებული იყო
რწმენისა და რუსული რელიგიური ფილოსოფიის
საკითხებზე. შეიქმნა აგრეთვე ქალთა მართლმა-
დიდებლური ჯგუფები და სხვ. (Штриккер, 1995).

ქრისტიანული ეკლესიისადმი საზოგადოე-
ბის მზარდი ინტერესი ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლე-
ბას შეშფოთებას იწვევდა. სამთავრობო გუნდი
კარგად ხედავდა და იაზრებდა იმ გარემოებას,
რომ არჩეულმა სტრატეგიამ ვერ გაამართლა.
საზოგადოებაში ათეისტური ცნობიერების გან-
მტკიცების ნაცვლად, მან პირიქით, მოსახლე-
ობის რელიგიასთან უფრო მეტად დააახლოების
პროვოცირება მოახდინა და დროსთან ერთად, ეს
პროცესი შეუქცევად ხასიათს იძენდა.

კრემლისთვის კიდევ ერთი დარტყმა იყო
1978 წლის ოქტომბერში პოლონელი კარდინალის
- კაროლ ვოიტილას (იოანე პავლე II) რომის პა-
პად არჩევა, რამაც დიდი შეშფოთება გამოიწვია
რელიგიური პოლიტიკის მესვეურებში. საქმე იმა-
ში მდგომარეობდა, რომ საბჭოთა ხელისუფლე-
ბა შიშობდა ქვეყნის ტრადიციულ კათოლიკურ
რეგიონებში (განსაკუთრებით, ლიტვაში) კათო-
ლიკური საქმიანობის მოსალოდნელი აღორძი-
ნების გამო. 1979 წლის ზაფხულში, ახალი პაპის
ტრიუმფალურმა ვიზიტმა პოლონეთში, გაამართ-
ლა მოსალოდნელი საფრთის შიში. (Anderson,
1994/2002). ბრეჟნევის ადმინისტრაცია გრძნობ-
და, რომ საჭირო იყო სწრაფი რეაგირება აღნიშ-
ნული საფრთის განეიტრალებისთვის.

საბჭოთა კავშირის კომუნისტური პარტიის
ცკ-ის სამდივნოს 1979 წლის 13 ნოემბრის დადგე-
ნილებიდან ირკვევა, რომ სსრკ საგარეო საქმეთა
სამინისტროს და სსრკ კგბ-ს დაევალათ, შეესწავ-
ლათ ვატიკანის ახალი „აღმოსავლეთის პოლიტი-
კა" და მისი ნეგატიური ასპექტები და საჭიროების
შემთხვევაში, წარედგინათ შესაბამისი წინადა-
დებები. (Corley, 1996, p. 279). ასევე, ლიტვის, ლა-
ტვიის, უკრაინისა და ბელორუსიის კომუნისტური
პარტიების ცენტრალურ კომიტეტებს დაევალათ
ქმედითი ნაბიჯების გადადგმა. სახელმწიფო ტე-

ლევიზიასა და რადიოს, რელიგიის საქმეთა საბჭოს დაევალათ ქვეყნის შიგნითა თუ საზღვრებს გარეთ, საჭირო საინფორმაციო-პროპაგანდისტული ღონისძიებების გატარება. (Corley, 1996, p. 278).

მოცემული დადგენილება ცხადყოფს, რომ კრემლი საფრთხეს მხოლოდ ბალტიისპირეთიდან და სხვა კათოლიკური ტერიტორიებიდან არ ელოდა. გარდა იმისა, რომ დადგენილება წარმოადგენდა პასუხს, ვატიკანის გამოწვევაზე, ეს დოკუმენტი შეგვიძლია საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების რელიგიური პოლიტიკის ახალი ეტაპის ოფიციალურ დასაწყისადაც მივიჩნიოთ. დადგენილება, სახელმწიფო სტრუქტურების გარდა, სსრკ მეცნიერებათა აკადემიას, სოციალურ მეცნიერებათა აკადემიასა და სამეცნიერო ათეიზმის ინსტიტუტს ავალებდა თავიანთი კვლევების სპექტრის გაფართოებას მეცნიერული ათეიზმის სფეროში. აგრეთვე, ყურადღების გაზრდას ეკლესიების და რელიგიური გაერთიანებების საქმიანობის შესწავლას. სსრკ მინისტრთა საბჭოსთან არსებულ რელიგიურ საკითთა საბჭოს, სსრკ მეცნიერებათა აკადემიასთან და სოციალურ მეცნიერებათა აკადემიასთან ერთად, ევალებოდათ ეკლესიების ქმედებებისა და სოციალისტურ ქვეყნებში რელიგიური გავლენის შესახებ ცნობების შეგროვება და მიწოდება. (Corley, 1996, p. 279).

აშკარა იყო, რომ ხელისუფლება იწყებდა ქვეყნის ინტელექტუალური ძალების მაქსიმალურ მობილიზებას რელიგიასთან ბრძოლაში და ეს მხოლოდ ვატიკანისგან მომავალი საფრთხით არ იყო გამოწვეული.

ბრიტანელი პროფესორი, ჯონ ფილიპ ანდერსონი ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკის რადიკალიზაციის ერთ-ერთ მიზეზს 1979 წელს ირანში აიათოლა ხომეინის დაბრუნებასა და ისლამური რევოლუციის გამარჯვებაში ხედავს. მკვლევარი მიიჩნევს, რომ ირანში განვითარებულმა მოვლენებმა გაამძაფრა საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების შეფოთება მობილიზებული რელიგიური ძალებისა და იმ პოტენციური საფრთხის მიმართ, რასაც ის უქმნიდა საბჭოთა სისტემას. „1979 წლის აგვისტოში ცენტრალური კომიტეტის სამდივნოს დასკვნა ეხებოდა იმას, რომ ამ სფეროში პროპაგანდისტული საქმიანობის შესუსტებამ ხელი შეუწყო ახალგაზრდების რიცხვის გაზრდა რელიგიურ რიტუალებში ან არალეგალურ რელიგიურ სკოლებსა თუ ბანაკებში. (Anderson, 1994/2002, p. 86). არარელიგიური წარმომავლობის ახალგაზრდებიც რელიგიური გავლენისადმი მგრძნობიარენი აღმოჩნდნენ. გაიზარდა მართლმადიდებლურ ღვთისმსახურებაზე დამსწრე ახალგაზრდების რიცხვი. ასევე, მასწავლებლების, ინჟინრების. იზრდებოდა განათლებულ მორწმუნეთა რიცხვი. შეიცვალა საზოგადოების დამოკიდებულება რელიგიისადმი და 70-იანი წლების მიწურულს ის

უკვე წარმოადგენდა განახლებულ რელიგიურ საზოგადოებას." (Anderson, 1994/2002, p. 86).

როგორც ვხედავთ, 70-იანი წლების მეორე ნახევრიდან ლ. ბრეჟნევის კომპრომისული, ფასადურად „ლიბერალური" დამოკიდებულება რელიგიური თემებისა და ეკლესიის მიმართ იცვლება რადიკალური, მკაცრი პოლიტიკით, რაც მეტწილად, შემდეგი მიზეზებით იყო განპირობებული:

ა) საზოგადოებაში ეკლესიის მიმართ ინტერესის გაზრდა,

ბ) დისიდენტური მოძრაობის გაძლიერება,

გ) პოლონელი კარდინალის იოანე პავლე II-ის რომის პაპად არჩევა და კათოლიკური პროპაგანდის გაძლიერება სოციალისტური ბანაკის ქვეყნებში,

დ) სსრკ-ს საზღვრებთან ახლოს რელიგიური (ისლამური) რევოლუციის გამარჯვება

ყოველივე აღნიშნულის ნიადაგზე, საბჭოთა ხელისუფლება იწყებს ხისტი, რეპრესიული ზომების გატარებას დაუმორჩილებელი, აქტიური მორწმუნეების მიმართ. 1978-1979 წლებში იწყება ადამიანის უფლებათა დამცველი და ცნობილი რელიგიური აქტივისტების დაპატიმრება, ციხეებსა და შრომით ბანაკებში გამოკეტვა. (Walters, 1993/2005, pp.26-27). გრძელდება 1975 წელს დაწყებული, ეკლესიების მასობრივი დახურვა. სტატისტიკური მონაცემების მიხედვით, 1982 წლისთვის (ბრეჟნევის გარდაცვალების დროისთვის) რუსეთის ეკლესია მხოლოდ 7001 სამრევლოს და 16 მონასტერს ითვლიდა. (Сазонов, 2015, стр. 47). უოლტერსის ცნობით კი, 80-იანი წლების დასაწყისისთვის მოქმედი მართლმადიდებლური ეკლესიების რაოდენობა პრაქტიკულად იგივე იყო, რაც 1964 წელს ხრუშჩოვის გადაყენების დროს. ციხეებსა თუ შრომით ბანაკებში გამოკეტილ მორწმუნეთა რიცხვი კი, 1979 წლიდან - 1985 წლამდე 180-დან - 411-მდე გაიზარდა. (Walters, 1993/2005, pp. 26-27).

ადამიანის უფლებათა დამცველი აქტივისტებისა და მორწმუნეთა მიმართ რეპრესიული პოლიტიკის შესახებ საუბრობს ქართველი მკვლევარიც, ისტორიის დოქტორი - ლელა სარალიძე: „საბჭოთა კავშირში ადამიანის უფლებათა დარღვევები, რეპრესიები და საკუთარი მრწამსის გამო დაპატიმრებები, განსაკუთრებით მას შემდეგ გაძლიერდა, რაც საბჭოთა მთავრობამ ჰელსინკის შეთანხმებას მოაწერა ხელი. სამოცდაათიანი წლების მიწურული და ოთხმოციანი წლების პირველი ნახევარი საბჭოთა ხელისუფლების ანტიჰელსინკური მოქმედებით ხასიათდებოდა. სახელმწიფო უშიშროების კომიტეტი, შენიღბულად, მილიციის სახელით მოქმედებდა და სხვადასხვა პროვოკაციას მიმართავდა, ხოლო შემდეგ, შეთითხნილი ბრალდებებით, ვი-

თომდა ხულიგნობის, ქურდობის გამო, სისხლის სამართლის დამნაშავეთა ბანაკებში გზავნიდა სინდისის პატიმრებს. საბჭოთა უფლებადამცვე ლები თავისსავე მიღებულ კანონებს უგულებელ ჰყოფდნენ. (სარალიძე, 2015, გვ. 50).

ამგვარად, მმართველობის დასასრულს, ლ. ბრეჟნევის რელიგიური პოლიტიკა მისი წინამორბედის პოლიტიკის პრაქტიკულ გაგრძელებად იქცა, თუმცა, შედარებით მცირე მასშტაბებით. აღინიშნულს, როგორც ზემოთ განვმარტეთ, თავისი გამომწვევი მიზეზები ჰქონდა, თუმცა, ხელისუფლებამ ვერ შეძლო ამ გამომწვევებთან რაციონალური მეთოდებით გამკლავება და საგრძნობლად დაშორდა მოღვანეობის დასაწყისში არჩეულ კურს. 60-იან წლებში შემუშავებული ფრთხილი, კომპრომისული სტრატეგია, რომელსაც რელიგიის აღმოფხვრა ვერა, მაგრამ სახელმწიფოს საერთაშორისო იმიჯის გარკვეულ დონეზე რეაბილიტირება შეეძლო, უგულებელყოფილ იქნა და ჩანაცვლდა რადიკალური, რეპრესიული პოლიტიკით, რომლის გმობაც ლ. ბრეჟნევის ძალაუფლების ფუნდამენტს წარმოადგენდა. სახელისუფლებო აპარატმა თავად დაიწყო იმ ზომების გატარება, რომლის წარუმატებლობის შესახებაც ჩიოდა მმართველობის დასაწყისში. ერთი შეხედვით, აღნიშნული ცდება რაციონალური მოქმედების საზღვრებს, თუმცა, ნაკლებად სავარაუდოა, რომ 70-იანი წლების მოვლენებმა და რელიგიური და დისიდენტური მოძრაობების აღმავლობამ ხელისუფლებას დააკარგვინა ვითარების რეალისტურად შეფასებისა და რეაგირების უნარი. დილემა აშკარა იყო, მაგრამ მისი არსი, ვფიქრობთ, მდგომარეობდა არა იმაში, რომ ბრეჟნევის ხელისუფლებამ ვერ შეძლო რეპრესიების ალტერნატიული გზის მოფიქრება (და ეს ალტერნატივა შეიძლებოდა ყოფილიყო ეკლესიასთან რეალური შერიგება და თანამშრომლობა), არამედ იმაში, რომ სწორედ ეს ალტერნატივა შეიძლებოდა გამხდარიყო მისი ძალაუფლების კოლაფსისა და ხელისუფლებიდან ჩამოცილების საწინდარი. რაც საVსებით მოსალოდნელი იყო, ვინაიდან რელიგიასთან შერიგება კატეგორიულად ეწინააღმდეგებოდა საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს ოფიციალური, ათეისტური იდეოლოგიის მრავალწლიან, ფუნდამენტურ პრინციპებს.

კვლევის შედეგების შეჯამების მიზნით, შეგვიძლია ვთქვათ, რომ ლ. ბრეჟნევის საეკლესიო პოლიტიკა XX ს-ის 60-იანი წლების მეორე ნახევრიდან - 80-იანი წლების დამდეგამდე, გარდამავალი ტენდენციებით ხასიათდებოდა, რაც სრულიად არ შეესაბამება რუსულ ისტორიოგრაფიაში ფართოდ გავრცელებულ კონცეფციას მისი სტაბილურობის შესახებ.

მისი ძირითადი მახასიათებლები შეგვიძლია შემდეგი ნიშნებით გამოვყოთ:

60-იანი წლების II ნახევრიდან - 70-იანი წლების II ნახევრამდე:

ა) ფრთხილი, კომპრომისული ტაქტიკა რე ლიგიურ თემებთან და ორგანიზაციებთან ურთიერთობაში,

ბ) ხრუშჩოვის ანტირელიგიური, რეპრესიული პოლიტიკის გმობა და რეპრესირებულ პირთა რეაბილიტაცია,

გ) ანტირელიგიური პროპაგანდის შესუსტება,

დ) საკანონმდებლო შეზღუდვების შემსუბუქება რელიგიური ორგანიზაციებისა და მორწმუნეთათვის,

ე) ეკლესიისთვის გარკვეული თავისუფლების მინიჭება ღვთისმსახურების და ტრადიციული ფუნქციების აღსრულებისთვის

ვ) მორწმუნეთა და სამღვდელო პირთა დიფერენცირება „დაყავი და იბატონეს"-ს პრინციპით,

ზ) ათეისტური პროპაგანდისა და ეკლესიაზე კონტროლის გააქტიურება

70-იანი წლების II ნახევრიდან - 1982 წლამდე:

ა) ეკლესიაზე ტოტალური კონტროლის დამყარება,

ბ) რელიგიურ მოღვანეთა ჩართვა საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს საგარეო პოლიტიკის წარმართვის საქმეში

გ) ათეისტური პროპაგანდის განსაკუთრებული გაძლიერება აკადემიურ და სამეცნიერო დონეზე

დ) რელიგიურ ორგანიზაციათა და მორწმუნეთა მიმართ ღია, პირდაპირი რეპრესიები

დასასრულს, შეგვიძლია თავისუფლად ვთქვათ, რომ ლ. ბრეჟნევის არაერთგვაროვანმა, ტრანსფორმაციულმა რელიგიურმა პოლიტიკამ 70-იანი წლების მიწურულს და 80-იანი წლების დამდეგს კვლავ ჩიხში შეიყვანა ეკლესია-სახელმწიფოს ურთიერთობები, რამაც სერიოზული ზიანი მიაყენა როგორც ეკლესიათა საერთო მდგომარეობას, ისე ხელისუფლების ავტორიტეტსა და ზოგადად, საბჭოთა სახელმწიფოს განვითარების პერსპექტივებს. მართალია, მისი დარეგულირების მცდელობებს მოგვიანებით, მ. გორბაჩოვის ე.წ. „გარდაქმნის" პოლიტიკაში ვხვდებით, თუმცა, აშკარა გახდა, რომ რელიგიური და დისიდენტური მოძრაობების წარმატება გარდაუვალი იყო.

ბუნებრივია, ერთი ნაშრომის ფარგლებში შეუძლებელია ამ კომპლექსური საკითხის ამომწურვა, თუმცა, ვფიქრობთ, მოცემული გამოკვლევა ხელს შეუწყობს ქართულ სამეცნიერო სივრცეში ამ მიმართულებით კვლევების შემდგომ განვითარებას.

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Autonomous Political Economies: winemakers, national heritage, and the ethnographic mapping of geopolitics in the Republic of Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

Every November, the American Georgian Business Council and the Georgian Wine National Agency host an annual Ghvino Forum, "celebrat[ing] 8000 years of GEORGIAN wine culture" (American Georgian Business Council, 2021 emphasis in original). The event brings in hundreds of wine professionals, connoisseurs, and academics – tastemakers who then disseminate these narratives to the general public through tastings, books, journal articles, academic papers, or simply oral recollections over a bottle of Georgian wine with family and friends. During the 2021 Forum, held on Zoom, the well-known Georgian archaeologist David Lortkipanidze stated:

> Wine has always had this important role: from wine as a product of exchange, to royal beverage, and then ritual drinking. And from Christianity, this was an important part of our identity, you know? When we had invasion, they were keeping cellars not just for wine but also an altar; so keeping wine was more than just a tradition.

Lortkipanidze traces wine into the foundation of Georgian culture, but more importantly, he creates a link between wine, social traditions, economic trajectories, and histories of invasion. He shows the polyvocality (Mankekar, 2002) of wine in the fabric of Georgianness and why it remains so important to be protected and uplifted in projects that assert Georgian national identity.

In the 2021 Forum, Lortkipanidze and Minister of Agriculture Levan Davitashvili emphasized not only the nationalistic sentiment connecting Georgia and wine, but also spoke about the autonomy of Georgian markets and the increase of wine quality after the Russian embargo in 2006. These claims to an expressly Georgian market have been reified by supra-organizations,

such as UNESCO. The recognition of Georgian *qvevri* winemaking as intangible cultural heritage exemplifies how this association defines certain practices as distinctly Georgian: *qvevri* coming from Georgian clay and affiliated with particular geological locations builds an explicit connection between place and material substance. Winemaking in clay *qvevri* then implicates viticultural practices into this linkage, crafting an explicit "taste of place," or *terroir* (Trubek, 2008) of Georgian wine. Expanding outward, intangible heritage also becomes connected to narratives, advertising schemes, and tourism. Intangible heritage, therefore, becomes a marketable distinction.

In the Georgian context, I see heritage as being reconfigured: Russian-led heritage regimes, wherein for centuries Russia has co-opted the heritage of its colonies as its own, continue to be taken back by Georgia (Scott, 2017). The fact that Georgians continue to claim an older and more mature history, Bruce Grant suggests, prompts the question: "Who then, was to civilize whom?" (2009 p. 137).[1]

In contemporary day, these same foundations of intangible heritage – *qvevri* winemaking – establish new autonomous national identities, despite contentious

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1 An interesting anecdote from Grant's work speaks to the tenaciousness of historical claims. During fieldwork in one Armenian village, a farmer complained to Grant that he would dig up "earthenware pots of significant vintage, once used for storing grains or wine in another age" and Georgian archeologists would buy them off the farmers. The same pots would show up later in a museum, in Tbilisi and labeled Georgian. Armenians would make similar arguments about food dishes that they claim as theirs. Grant concludes: "That is to say, how people assert their differences can indeed follow remarkable patterns, especially among peoples whose geographies and histories have left long legacies of borrowings, stealing, and sharing" (2009 p. 65).

historical trajectories. Under the frame of intangible heritage, food is also used to safeguard these autonomous connections amidst uncertain geopolitical power dynamics. Georgian viticultural heritage exemplifies this phenomenon in that Georgians are using claims of intangible heritage to legitimatize Georgian wine as expressly theirs. Returning to Lortkipanidze's quotation above, Georgian wine and viticultural practices have been secured from occupation and invasion through purely Georgian materiality: wine presses, *qvevri*, and the secret preservation of indigenous varieties represent Georgian autonomies in contested territory. Yet, the irony is that many Georgian winemakers still rely on Russian markets to sustain their business. At Zero Compromise in May 2022, I spoke to a Rachian winemaker, who said their biggest market remains Russia, even given the war in Ukraine. When I asked her about the implications of the war, she shrugged her shoulders: they were still "exporting" to Russia, though these supply chain route find new ways of transporting wine across a precarious border.

In this paper, I historical analysis to examine how historic cartographic practices implicated Georgia in imperial expansion projects, and how Georgians simultaneously used mapping as claims to autonomy. I juxtapose this analysis with a conversation of contemporary forms of distinction in the Georgian wine economy. By utilizing cartography and ethnographic methods, I argue that historical mapping practices and current day political tensions continue to play out in the Georgia's wine economy. I show that Georgians have contested imperial practices to control the land, and these tendencies are emulated in current economic trends within the framework of ongoing Russian occupation.

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODS

This paper builds on an analysis of historical maps of Georgia to explore contestations of empire throughout Georgian history. I ethnographically assess these maps in their historical context, pulling from literature and contemporary understandings of Georgian claims to autonomy and territory. Mapping positions wine practices in political and cultural realities and visualizes local "geographies of self-reliance" (Safri, 2015; Reese, 2018). By situating my discussion in historical mapping projects, I use cartography in a contemporary sense to understand the overall landscape of the wine economy and how it "engage[s] a cultural politics of the different global value attributed to wine production" (Wilmott, 2019). This approach emulates geopolitics in the political-economic sphere by considering how winemakers express their geopolitical views. Further, mapping visualizes how regional

identities might be enacted, such as *terroir*, and what these distinctions provide to the winemaker.

I couple my cartographic analysis with ethnographic data from twelve months of fieldwork in the Republic of Georgia, and online during the COVID-19 pandemic, between 2019-2021. Through participant observation at wine festivals, apprenticeship at local wineries primarily in the Imereti region of Georgia, and informal interviews with winemakers, consumers, and others in the wine industry, I explore how historical tensions are mediated in intimate spaces. I make use of what Ramona Lee Pérez (2017) calls "deliberate listening" and permission to "sift through memories" (p. 47). Food and wine provide a space where people tend to open up about challenging topics, such as imperial histories, current Russian occupation, and the struggles around economic autonomy. Further, I use these methodologies to understand how domestic and foreign wine connoisseurs and tastemakers who help bring Georgian wines into international markets establish a Georgian *terroir* (Trubek, 2008; Colman, 2008; Jung, 2014; Feiring, 2016).

IMPERIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF SOIL INTO CONTEMPORARY CONSIDERATIONS OF TERROIR

This section backgrounds some of the cartographic initiatives of the Russian Empire and their implications in the conception of a Georgian national state and identity. I show how these projects provide the foundations for contemporary claims to Georgian *terroir*, appellation demarcations, and a broader national identity in winemaking. Historical mapping projects show the tensions in geopolitics that continue into present day. An exploration of old Georgian maps and mapping project, further exemplifies how Georgians have been contesting imperialism and fighting for their sovereignty for centuries.

Mapping as a Russian state project dates to the start of the Russian Empire. As far back as the sixteenth century, Siberian cartographer Semen Remezov created maps that highlighted the ethnodiversity of Siberia, a project utilized by the Russian state to expand its territory (Kivelson, 2006). At time time, Remezov was illustrating and embracing ethnofederalism by acknowledging the cultural nuances of peripheral regions. An ethnographic approach would become a major facet of later imperial state building throughout the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (Jones, 2014; Hirsch, 2014).[2] Under Peter the Great (1694-1725),

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[2] Charles King (2008) also argues similarly about Russian imperial expansion projects in the Caucasus, in that Russian imperialist recognized they could not change the ethnodi-

cartographers composed *The Book of the Great Map (Kinga bol'shomu chertezhu)*, with maps that "were of increasing significance to rising states, a key instrument in the control and defense of territory in the stable world of early modernity" (Shaw, 2005 p. 423). On a local level, scholars show how cadastral maps were utilized to reorganize the agricultural and environment formations within state territories as a way for imperial authorities to bundle local power (Scott, 1998). However, these mapping practices also created a means for peasants to negotiate their relationship with the state, determine their property lines, and recraft their realities (Kivelson, 1995). Thus, local mapping projects placed the state in a contradictory position between establishing an exterior territorial rule and simultaneously managing its internal power dynamics, while more expansive mapping projects provided the bases for imperial expansion.

In the same time frame, Georgian cartographer, geographer, and historian Vakhushti Bagrationi (1696-1757) contributed to a body of knowledge that would constitute an autonomous geographical and topological placemaking of Georgianness. Also known as Vakhushti[3] of Kartli, Bagrationi was a royal prince and the son of King Vakhtang VI. Bagrationi's ancestors established a Georgian cultural life in the Tao-Klarjeti region in the ninth century when fighting off the Arab occupation and are known to have settled Georgians there. Vakhushti Bagrationi's most famous map is "Description of the Kingdom of Georgia" (1735); a reproduction is shown in Figure 1. In this map, Bagrationi divided up the country into five botanical-agricultural zones. The reproduction does not explain these designations; however, the abridged text at the top states:

Vahushti had done great services to his country and his merits outstand from the fact, that he generalized previous cartographic works, analysed them, made strict evaluation, he himself directed cartographic works in Georgia and was their permanent participant and on this basis he prepared a volume of maps consisting of the two atlases.

In his time highly skilled in the field of cartography Vahushti was capable of making the maps of Georgia and Caucasia according to the high scientific level, his maps by their meaning and by decorative design were scientifically perfect in its time, during the whole century formed the basis of Georgian cartography they played prominent role in studying Georgia and Caucasia.

Unfortunately, the lack of descriptive information about this reproduction limits understanding its context. However, the text clearly shows a connection in Georgian intellectual and public circles between Bagrationi and the establishment of cartography as a scientific body of knowledge, alongside a strong nationalistic pride of Bagrationi and his publications. Bagrationi's map would become the basis for later distinctions in Georgian soil studies and establish an affiliation between soil and Georgianness (Matchavariani, 2019). This explicit connection was reified by Prince Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, a writer and diplomat who composed a Georgian dictionary in 1754, heavy in soil terminology (Matchavariani and Kalandadze,2019).
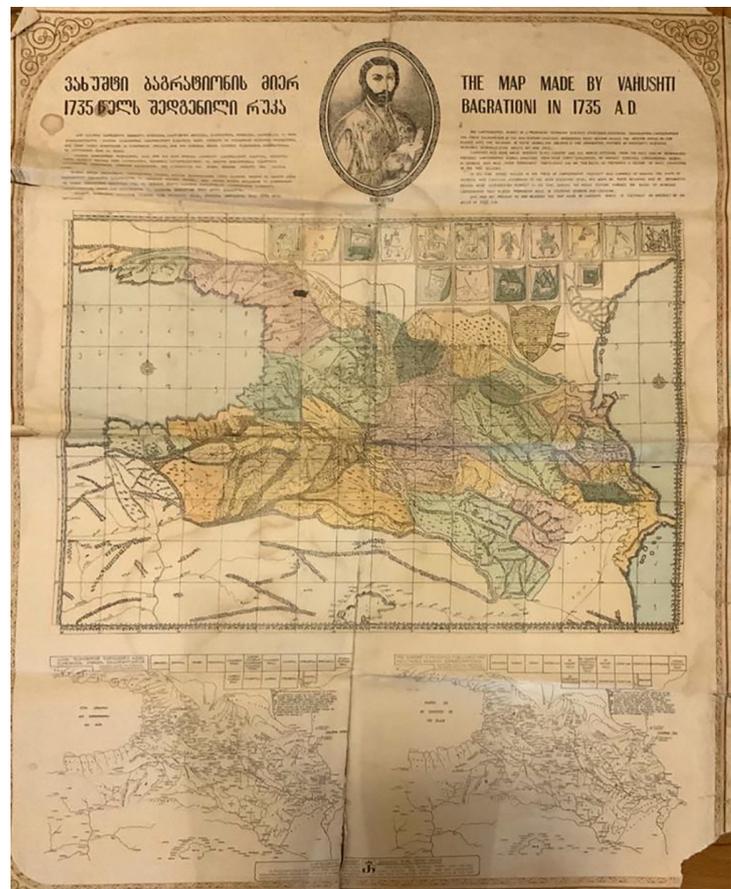
Figure 1.   *A reproduction of Vakhushti's original map of Georgia dated 1735. Text above is the text on the map itself. Date of republication unknown. Map obtained in Georgia by author, October 2021.*

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verse nuances of Caucasian peoples and instead shifted their methodologies to absorbing these peripheries as they were.

[3] The transliteration of Bagrationi's first name varies. Most likely, the spelling Vakhushti is correct but probably appeared in later decades. Thus, the reproduced map spells his name without the -k-.

Nineteenth-century Geologist Vasily Dokuchaev (1846-1903) capitalized on Bagrationi's botanical-agricultural regions for imperial economic gain. The Free Economic Society of Russia commissioned Dokuchaev to conduct agricultural research in Georgia and "find a model that could predict the 'regularities' of an ideal soil pattern" (Johnson and Schaetzel, 2015 p. 179).[4] His main research question was: "How can we predict where good agricultural land can be found for mapping, classification, yield, and taxation purposes?" (Johnson and Schaetzel, 2015 p. 182). Thus, Bagrationi and Dokuchaev paved the way for cartographic endeavors of imperial expansion into Georgia: where could imperialists potentially find land and plant foodstuffs?

Even though imperial projects attempted to extract resources from the land, Georgians found ways to respond and protect their land and foodstuffs. When the Soviet Union absorbed Georgia, it also obtained its local knowledge, vineyards, wineries, and agricultural experts (Scott, 2017 p 164). Under Stalin's collectivization plans, the state sought to industrialize the vineyard land for wine production. However, they continued to choose Georgian indigenous varieties to plant because party leaders "may have been Bolsheviks, but they were still Georgian; one cannot discount the Georgians' deserved pride in their native grapes" (Granik, 2020 p. 28). Georgian peasants then found ways to work around the state and make their own wines, part of the so-called "shadow economy" (Walker and Manning, 2013). Before state-regulated harvests, they would often pick the best plots the night prior and make homemade wines from secretly harvested grapes (Granik, 2020 p. 31). Further, in emphasizing wine production, by extension, the state provided winemakers with cultural and social capital and access to a scarce commodity.

In the current day, much of these tensions play out in the wine market through *terroir*. The multivocality of *terroir* shows how it can provide information about the taste of place, and thus is implicated in place-making practices, or the winemaking process that create that place (Basso, 1996). "*Terroir* talk" (Prudham and MacDonald, 2020) lends insight into how place is made while also creating a hegemonic discourse around what wine should be to participate in global markets (Jung, 2014). For Georgians, *terroir* might be a form of Bourdieuian (1986) "distinction" that can drive the social value of their wine in global markets. Yet, distinction lends to *habitus*, which is a form of culinary power, in that it creates a hegemony that is normalized and regulated (Avieli, 2018). Further, distinction does not account for the broader public; instead, removing assumptions of class consumption, "discernment"

establishes new ways of judging and evaluating the quality of foodstuff and considers the temporality of space and place (Weiss, 2016 p. 80). Thus, the consumer gains the power to recraft the meaning of foodstuff (cf. Bowen, 2015; Besky, 2014).

For *terroir,* this becomes a reality through "tastemakers," who determine a wine's potential to succeed in global markets (Trubek, 2008). *Terroir* is complicated by the idea that materials are connected to the land, when in fact consumers are often determining *terroir* distinctions. Nevertheless, what *terroir* does allow for is the recrafting of meaning in the land. If we take Brad Weiss's point of view that place and space are temporal, then we can follow with the question Heather Paxson (2013) asks, in thinking about *terroir* distinction in cheese: "what might *terroir* become" (p. 210)? Wine's potentiality for becoming something different, makes it an "unfinished commodity," leaving space for producers to recraft value (Paxson, 2013 p. 13). The instability of an unfinished commodity opens up possibilities to explore the land, derive old and new meanings from it, and create sustainable futures for ecologies of production.

To bring the discussion of *terroir* back to mapping practices, we see the contested nature of boundaries and demarcations through histories of empire. Though I accept the Georgian movement to distinguish their *terroir*, I question the assumption from Western tastemakers and some Georgian winemakers that *terroir* is necessary to define Georgian winemaking practices and economic values (Teil, 2012). Comprehending a Georgian notion of *terroir* is also murky: with over dozens of different soil types throughout Georgia, and microclimates, the idea of a Georgia *terroir* seems hegemonic and disadvantageous for considering regional, even micro-regional differences in wine production and grape growing. As I have shown above, mapping Georgian regions and their soil composition have been utilized in imperial projects, thus reifying their hegemonic nature. In addition, a distinction of *terroir* fails to account for viniculture techniques: how does one account for the use of *qvevri* when speaking about *terroir*? Although *qvevri* comes from the soil itself, for most winemakers, the *qvevri's* clay is not the clay from their soil, but that of the *qvevri* maker.

And yet, these distinctions between *terroir* and its heritage of *qvevri* winemaking continue to interact with one another, in often unlikely ways. As one winemaker discussed with me, as we walked through the vineyards, she is kind of opposed to using *qvevri*, "if it was up to me, I'd just make wines in stainless steel because it would be a real expression of *terroir*. With *qvevri*, the *terroir* isn't really there, you know. But my co-winemakers really like *qvevri* and that it's important for us to keep using it." I was struck by this comment, as I had taken it for granted that *qvevri* was sim-

ply part of their winemaking; moments like this call attention to the performance of identity and the tension within winemaking conglomerates about what being a distinctive Georgian winemaker truly entails.
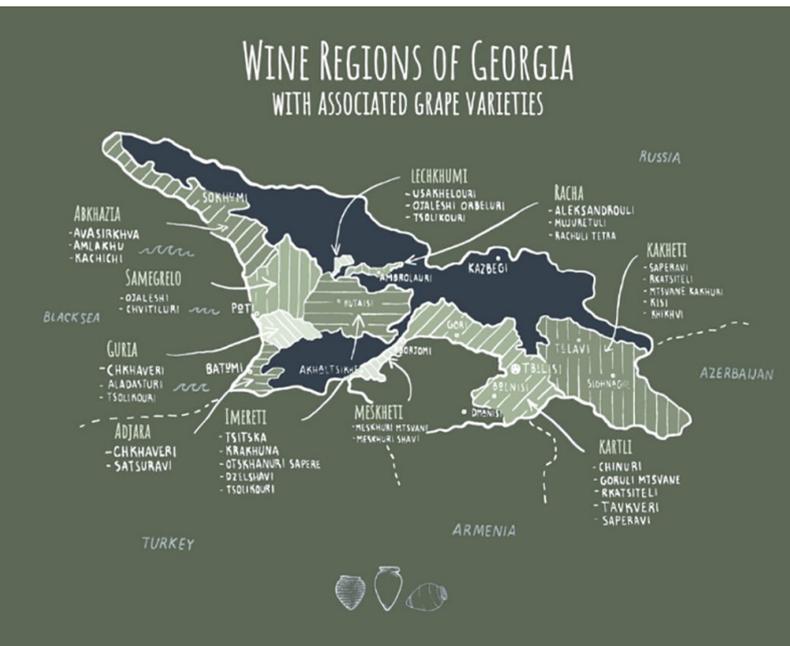
Figure 2. *Wine Regions of Georgia, taken from Wines Georgia (winesgeorgia.com).*

Further, the relationship between *terroir*, *qvevri* and the land is still not clear in labeling distinctions. Considering the shifting of private property lines throughout, and after, the Soviet Union (Bruisch, 2015; Granik, 2020), notions of ownership of particular plots does not seem to translate well into labeling practices. Georgian Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) have been around since 1998, they do not seem to be common practice and are rarely denoted on small production labels; however, the winery's location is always listed on the label's back material.[5] Similar to my questions above, how can PDOs account for the use of material heritage, such as *qvevri* in winemaking? Further, labeling practices are in and of themselves, hegemonic: gate-keeping industries, regulating practices, and often overlooking the producers, or laborers, themselves (Guthman, 2007; Bowen, 2015; Besky, 2014). In Georgia, the Kakheti region has significantly

more PDOs than other parts of Georgia, though why this might be the case is unclear. Instead, this trend might only reify the idea of Kakhetian wine as Georgian, where in actuality, other regions are making stunning representations of their indigenous grapes that should deserve similar recognition. Rather, as these mapping projects have shown, Georgians historically contested their geographical placement on the periphery of the empire(s) through establishing their own internal systems of regulation and identification. Thus, instead I ask what *terroir* does for Georgians to help them craft their national narratives and how *terroir* might be more geopolitical than pedological (cf. Matchavariani, 2019).

This discussion also extends into non-regulated categorizations. On the global scale, Georgian wine is frequently referred to as "orange," a derivative of the natural wine categorization. Yet, "amber" better evokes the characteristics of wine given by fermentation in *qvevri*. With other Western terminologies, I noticed my interlocutors frequently intermix organic, biodynamic, and natural, mainly utilizing the term "natural" to describe their viniculture, such as "natural winemaking techniques." However, these terms are often used to gate-keep elite niches in the Georgian wine market. The Zero Compromise wine festival has often prohibited certain wine makers from participating, stating that they spray their vines with copper and add sulfites to their wines to export. In 2019, one of my interlocutors frustratingly told me about the conflict: "We *have* to use them [sprays and sulfites]," she said, "I just don't understand how winemakers
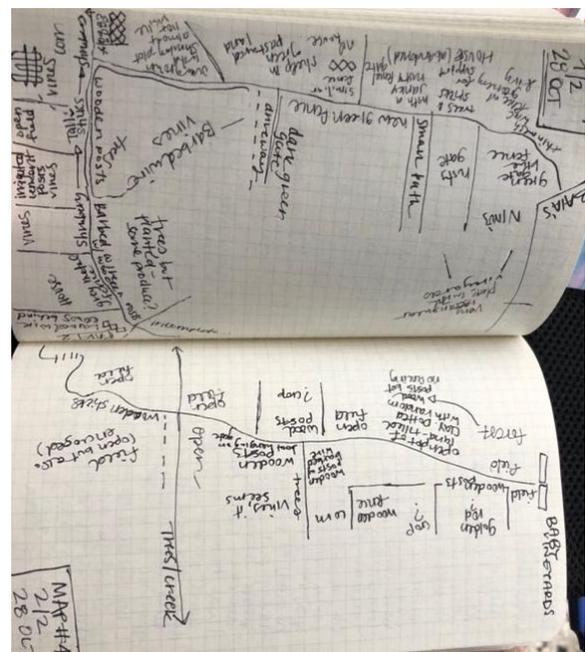
Figure 3. *My attempt to sketch private property demarcations in the village of Obcha, Imereti. Sketched by author October 2021.*

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5   The Natural Wine Agency (NWA) in Georgia is tasked with regulating wine quality and labels; however, it is not entirely clear what the processes are or the extent to which they are implemented. An NWA employee has told me that they do quality tastings for the exportation of wines. Lisa Granik (2020) also states that an intellectual property organization named Sakpatenti (Georgian patents) oversees the PDO appellation system; however, I have rarely heard my interlocutors speak about this designation, nor this institutional body. Further research will explore these agencies and their role in the Georgian wine economy.

can claim they are bad or harm plants, they help to protect our baby vines and make our wines are safe during export." As with *terroir*, the categorization of wine tends to reduce winemakers' practices, claims to heritage winemaking, and the processes through which they build associations of place and space. Thus, perhaps, the choices to document or market PDO, or which characteristic distinctions winemakers emphasize, express views that are not solely based on soil, but rather show a more complicated picture of how winemakers construct their identities Georgian wine markets.

APPEALS AGAINST IMPERIAL TERRITORIALITY

Shifting back to historical mapping analysis sheds light on another facet of identity formation within the Georgian wine market: that of religion and geopolitical tensions. Bagrationi's impact on mapping practices was not solely agricultural. A map titled "Christian Georgia," printed in 1990 (figure 4), shows how the region where Bagrationi's family first inhabited and established Georgianness becomes contested territory throughout centuries. The text on this map tells the history of the Georgian Orthodox church, which the authors date back to the fourth century. The map demarcates different religious monuments around the country, mainly cathedrals, patriarchal residences, Episcopal residencies, and Diocese boundaries. The

fascinating part is some added pen notations that suggest an intimate connection between the church and boundary demarcations and is ridden with nationalism. In the text on the top right, someone crossed out *metauri*, translated as "commander of the Church" and wrote *mmartveli*, "manager" or "ruler."[6] In the bottom left of the map, in what is current-day Turkey, the person demarcated an additional region using the same lines that the key designates as "Diocese boundaries." The crafted boundary would fall in modern-day Turkey, and they labeled the region *T'ao-Klarjetis Diocese*.[7]

Religion in Georgia became the defining factor for many imperial projects from the Khanates to Ottoman, then Russian. Georgia, being home to Christians and Muslims, amongst other religious factions, made

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[6] All translations are my own.

[7]   In Georgian, ტაო-კლარჯეთის ეპარქია. Not only is Tao-Klarjeti where Bagrationi's family protected Georgia from early Arab occupation, but the region contains monuments of Georgian Orthodox heritage that date back to the ninth century. The Ottomans conquered Tao-Klarjeti in 1551 converting Christian churches into mosques. After the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878, Tao-Klarjeti was returned to the Russian empire and again associated with Georgian orthodoxy. However, in 1918, the Turks once again acquired this province. During World War I, Georgia regained this territory, and then yet, once again, in 1921 the Soviet Union gave Tao-Klarjeti back to Turkey, where it has remained since (Suny, 1994). I illustrate the history of Tao-Klarjeti to show how complicated this region is and why it remains so influential in Georgian religious discourses.

these projects more challenging. Political scientist Charles King (2008) defines this as the "ethnodiversity" of the Caucasus. However, as King argus, ethnodiverse groups reacted differently to the infiltration of imperial powers. King recounts how the Christian regions of Georgian, mainly the regions of Kakheti and Kartli, would be the first to happily acquiesce to Russian imperial rule in 1801. Other regions near the Black Sea, which were more heavily Muslim, required the Russian empire to create local allies and attempt to garner power in the region.

The "Christian Georgia" map, printed in 1990, was crafted just before the fall of the Soviet Union when Georgians were already actively constructing national identities outside of imperial borders. The additions to this map speak to an underlying nationalism that emphasizes the Patriarch as the ultimate ruler while also highlighting an orthodox diocese in historically predominate Muslim spaces. The complications of Georgia's geographic, cultural, and linguistic diversity are present in this representation and persisted throughout decades of imperial rule.

Figure 5. *A closed qvevri in Kakheti, Georgia.*

Photo by author, November 2021.

This persistence is also paralleled in the wine economy. In the Kakheti region, archeological findings date the Alaverdi Monastery to the sixth century, and material artifacts identify that winemaking took place as early as 1011 (Granik, 2020). Under the Soviets, the monastery was reconstructed to store agricultural equipment, and the *qvevri* were filled with gas and farming chemicals. After the fall of the Soviet Union,

Alaverdi resumed operation and winemaking. In 2006, a large-scale Georgian winery renovated the monastery and equipped the cellar with Italian technology and new *qvevri* for winemaking. The monk who was making wine at the time became a "visionary" for the Georgian wine industry (Granik, 2020 p. 155). My fieldwork has shown that monasteries throughout Georgia continue to make wine in *qvevri*, and many of these wines are characteristic of the distinction of "amber" wine.[8] Thus, monasteries call attention to the historical practices of winemaking and how they relate to formations of identity in the past and present. Many of the traditional practices that current winemakers rely on have been preserved and passed between generations through these monasteries (figure 5). When Georgians speak about wine, the narratives often include ties to the Church, and contemporary wine making practices continue to include Orthodox traditions.

Other maps tell us that even early in Soviet rule, Georgians were crafting cartographic appeals to imperial sovereignty. Figure 6 shows an early depiction of the Republic of Georgia's boundaries. Likely dated around 1920 or shortly after (there is no production date on the map), the map is theorized to appeal to the League of Nations for recognizing what they claimed as Georgian borders (Gzoyan, 2018).[9] The map legend includes labels for the "Russian-Turkish Occupation Zone" but highlights that this does not include any border shifts consequential from the 1918-1920 (Georgian-Ossetian) conflict. Regardless, from this it can be deduced that imperial rule, and the establishment of borders, was not always assumed or constricted to imperial rule, but that Georgians from early on were invested in establishing their autonomy and laying claim to territo-

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8   The Georgian Orthodox Church also played a crucial role in the makings of the Russian Empire, as the primarily Orthodox regions of Kartli and Kakheti (historically part of current-day Tbilisi) became part of the Empire in 1801. During the 2008 war with Russia, leading to the occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Orthodox Christianity became one of Georgia's claims for the territories (King, 2008). The current relationship between the Orthodox Church and the state is also political. Many who oppose Georgia's current political regime also claim that the ruling party's strong ties to Russia have infiltrated the Church, especially during the 2019 political incident I discussed above (Menabde, 2019).

9   It was very hard to gather any additional information about the lineage of this map. I sleuthed around Google for quite some time and could only unearth a few op-eds on questionable sources that discussed Georgia's relationship with the League of Nations, and most of these pieces attempted to un-do the Russian claim to Georgian territories. The best recount I was able to find is this article from Gzoyan, which still fails to truly bring together the events of the time or make any inferences to the production of a specific map.
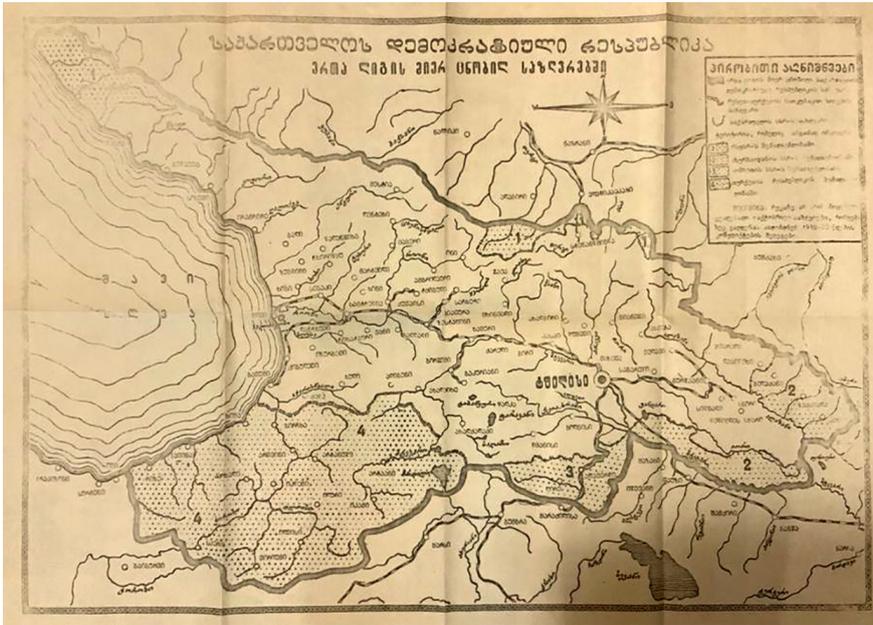
Figure 6. *Map titled "Georgian Democratic Republic: As Recognized by the League of Nations," date of publication unknown. Map obtained by author in Tbilisi, Georgia, October 2021.*

ries they believed were culturally historically theirs. In doing so, Georgians tend to flip the narratives of the center-civilizing-the-periphery that perpetuated Russian political and social discourses.

These historical tensions have also existed for centuries in the Russian wine market. After the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) and well into the Russian Empire, Russia was one of the French producer, Clicquot's top markets for champagne (Guy, 2003). French champagne became emblematic of a peaceful transition between violent pasts and post-war presents. Clicquot utilized official biographies of producers, the land, and the wine to market a distinct taste in the French and Russian social imaginaries. However, under Stalin's regime in the early 1930s, the state quickly destroyed plots of "inferior" French varieties growing in the Black Sea region of Russia. It replaced them with their own "indigenous" varieties extracted from Georgia - Rkatsiteli, Saparavi, and Mtsvane – to mass-produce a Soviet Champagne that they marketed as vastly superior to the French version (Gronow, 2003). Yet, the state relied on the appropriation of Georgian grapes and French viticultural knowledge and techniques. To fulfill champagne production quotas under Stalin's five-year-plans, the state built "wine factories," or large-scale wineries, which made wine according to orders from Moscow and labeled all their products under the state-owned monopoly Samtrest (Самтрест) (Granik, 2020 p. 30-31; Gronow, 2003 p. 153).[10] Thus, in 1936 after destroying agricul-

tural land, creating class tensions, establishing public campaigns of Soviet superiority, Soviet Champagne was born and marketed as a product of a Soviet "good times" (cf. Klumbytė, 2010). As the detailed history of champagne and its relationship to Russia shows, for centuries, foodstuff has been playing a crucial role in identity creation and has been used in periods of political turmoil when the state needed to reify a national identity.

Figure 7. *Photo of winemaker Keto Nindize during a protest. Taken from Facebook with permission*

In the current day, winemakers are now using their wine as a way to continue to contest imperial endeav-

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[10] The "wine factory" is related to the Georgian word for winery, marani (მარანი), though this is not a direct translation as Georgian does not have a word for winery. Various "trusts" throughout the Soviet Union produced, regulated, and distributed wine and spirits; Samtrest was Georgia's designation (Gronow 2003, 21-22). My fieldwork this spring will start with an Open Research Library Associateship at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where I hope to find more primary sources on Samtrest and wine distribution in the Soviet Union.
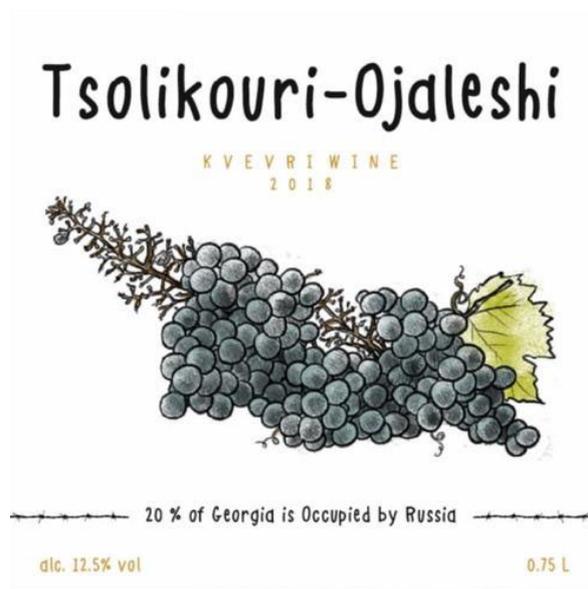
Figure 8. *A wine label of Keto Ninidze in production from 2018 – present. The occupied territories are represented by the "dead" sections of the grape bunch, label collected by the author.*

ors. After Russia embargoed Georgian wine in 2006, the local wine market shifted significantly. Many call the 2006 embargo period a "golden era" for Georgian wine, wherein winemakers could not rely on the Russian market and, in turn, were able to make the styles of wine they desired (Figure 7). However, the embargo ended in 2013 and exports to Russia returned: over 60% of Georgian wine was sent to Russia that year (Granik, 2020). Nevertheless, the wine economy shifted considerably during the embargo, providing a new space for smaller wine producers to make wine in more traditional viticultural styles. These same winemakers have also been speaking up against the Russian occupation of Georgia and utilizing their own form of mapping to visualize occupation through their wine (Figure 8).

Imperial histories of cartography help understand the shift in meaning as empires expand, transition, and collapse. These histories then become implicated in foodstuffs: where remembrances of the past are contested, reformulated, and utilized in economic markets. All of this is bundled into the power of the land (Aistara, 2018), a power that is transferred into material objects and shapes how they move through global markets and contemporary supply chains.

Figure 8 – A wine label of Keto Ninidze in production from 2018 – present. The occupied territories are represented by the "dead" sections of the grape bunch, label collected by the author.

CONCLUSION

As the accounts above show, Georgia's complicated history with occupation continues into the present day and has led Georgians to proactively reconstruct their nation and identity (Batiashvili, 2018). After periods of Russian and Soviet imperial influence, claims to Georgian autonomy, sovereignty, and distinctive national identity are being blended into contemporary formations of what it means to be Georgian – as a human, a state, and a player in geo-economic markets. Wine, for Georgians, is more than just a beverage, but an economic source of national identity-formation and market outlet to express autonomy from Russia. Georgian heritage tourism and the wine industry are interconnected markets through which Georgians formulate national identity and seek independence from imperial pasts. Wine becomes a conduit for independent heritage-making and a platform for negotiating sovereign identities in the complicated context of imperial territoriality. Yet, this Georgian nationalism is imagined constructed through historical claims to winemaking and land ownership, and I inquire how *qvevri* winemaking has been co-opted for this identity, how it interacts with the larger political economy, and what this means to consumers as this identity is performed throughout supply chains.

These considerations have led to further outlets of exploration and mapping: What types of identities are being created and associated with Georgian winemaking practices? Specifically, what makes these identities "distinctive" and how do Georgians incorporate viticultural and vinicultural practices into building these distinctions? As I expand this project into mapping Georgia's "Wine Route" and analyzing wine labels from Georgian winemakers, I intend to ask how identities are applied to products such as wine and wine-related commodities. Examining the Georgian wine supply chain will bring about an understanding the different ways that Georgian winemakers distinguish themselves, how this is translated to consumers, and what that means for the relationship between Georgia's autonomous political economy and its geopolitical tensions with Russia

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The Religious Toleration Policy of the Mongols and its Diplomatic Significance for Relations with the Holy See in the Thirteenth Century

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The appearance of the Mongols on the world's stage was perceived differently. The Catholic realm obviously had its own attitude towards it. By virtue of the fact that the Mongols put an end to the Islamic Empire of the Khwarazmshahs, this new people won the favour of Europeans and even persuaded them to think about coming together to form an anti-Islamic alliance. Nevertheless, there were still indeed serious suspicions regarding the identity and intentions of the Mongols. In the present article we will attempt to find out what the Pax Mongolica is and what it resulted from as well as how the Mongols' religious toleration policy affected relations with the Catholic realm. The article is also concerned with the role played by Georgia in the establishment of relations between the Holy See and the Mongol Khanate.

Before turning to the reasons for the religious tolerance of the Mongols, it is necessary to address the question of those particular religions towards which the Mongols practiced tolerance. As noted by Christopher Pratt Atwood in his article, there were four privileged religions in the Mongol Empire: Buddhism, Daoism (these two were not distinctly separated from each other), Christianity and Islam (Atwood, 2004, p. 248). Religious toleration of the Mongols manifested itself not only in allowing their free practice, but also in providing tax exemptions for them (Atwood, 2004). Although the right of freedom of worship was commonly exercised in the Mongol Empire, it differs from the policy of bestowing privileges and tax exemption, e.g., though Jews were never forbidden to practice Judaism, they were rarely exempted from taxes or received state patronage (Atwood, 2004, pp. 246-247). In order to explain the above discussed religious attitude of the Mongols, first it is necessary to deal with their spiritual beliefs, about which we learn from the accounts of European travelers to the newly risen empire.

In 1245 the Italian Franciscan Missionary Giovanni da Pian di Carpine along with a multilingual interpreter Friar Benedykt Polak took his journey to the Golden Horde on behalf of Pope Innocent IV. Exactly in consequence of this trip, he wrote his treatise "The Story of the Mongols Whom We Call the Tartars". In the aforementioned account Pian di Carpine deals with the settlement area, appearance and clothes of the Mongols as well as their spiritual beliefs. He points out two noteworthy things. It should be first noted that two years of his stay in the Mongol Empire enabled Carpine to talk about the Mongols' religious tolerance. According to him: "*They force no one, so we understand, to break their own faith or law*[1]*, with the exception of Michael*[2] *discussed above* (Carpine, 1942, p.12)." It is also worth mentioning his interesting report with regard to the religious beliefs of the Mongols. As pointed out by Pian di Carpine: "*The Tartars believe in one God whom they think is the creator of all things visible and invisible, and they believe he gives rewards and punishments in this world. Even so, they do not worship him with praises or ritual* (Carpine, 1942, p.10)." Pian di Carpine is not the only author who puts an emphasis on recognition of the One God by the Mongols. A similar note is found in the account of Willem van Ruysbroeck as well.

On behalf of the King Louis IX of France the Flemish Franciscan Friar Willem van Ruysbroeck set out for eastern countries from 1253 to 1255. The traveler arrived at the Mongol capital of Karakorum and paid a visit to the Khagan Möngke Khan. He is the author of the extensive report entitled "The Account of the Journey of French Brother Willem van Ruysbroeck from

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[1]   ***All underlines*** by me, G. E.
[2]   Ref. to ***Prince Mikhail Vsevolodovich*** of Chernigov. According to the author, when the Prince ***came to bow to Batu Khan, he refused to worship the image of*** a dead man, ***Genghis Khan himself. Hence Batu sent one of his bodyguards to him, who kicked him in the stomach until he died (Carpine, 1942, p.11).***

the Order of Friars Minor in the Year 1253 to Oriental Lands". In his account Willem describes a theological dispute between Christians, Muslims, and Tuins (Buddhists) held at the Khagan's court. Apparently, the author also participated in the debate with the aid of an interpreter. Fascinated by the Friar's discourse, the Grand Khan summoned him and conversation took place between them. Rather interesting is the Khan's reasoning which we learn from the Franciscan Friar's report.*"We Moal [Mongols],"* - said Möngke Khan, *"believe that there is only One God, by Whom we live and by whom we die, and for whom we have an upright heart. But as God gives us the different fingers of the hand, so he gives to men divers ways* (Ruysbroeck, 1942, p.147) *."*

The journeys of these two Friars to the Mongol Empire are separated by almost ten years. Nevertheless, both authors state that the Mongols believed in one God. According to their belief, God is the One who gives life and takes it away. How did the Mongols imagine God? To answer this question, we can cite Möngke Khan's letter to Louis IX which reads*: "The commandment of the eternal God is, in Heaven there is only one eternal God, and on Earth there is only one lord, Genghis Khan. This is a word of the Son of God, Temüjin, "sound of iron"* (Ruysbroeck, 1942, p.157)." It is evident from the quotation that for the Mongols, the Khan was the supreme Lord of the Earth, Son of God, i.e. the one who brought about God's will on the earth. In view of the foregoing it is easy to identify the cause of the Mongols' tolerance towards different religious beliefs. From our point of view, exactly an Emperor (Khan) is the One who fulfills the words of the Heavenly God referred to by Möngke Khan, while fingers given by God are nothing but divers religions allowed in the Mongol Empire by Genghis Khan, the visible God. Perhaps that is what the British historian David O. Morgan meant when stating that the tolerance of the Mongols resulted not so much from their spiritual dispersion as from their presupposition that one of these religions may have been true and hence it would have been prudent on their part to urge everyone to pray for the Khan (Atwood, 2004, p.238). This is indeed merely a hypothesis that needs further scrutiny.

Yet it would not be just to explain the religious tolerance of the Mongols in terms of religion alone. It would be fairer if, behind this policy, we detect not only religious, but economic and political reasons as well.

First we shall address economic reasons. Discussing about the religious tolerance of the Mongols, we should not lose sight of their trade interests that made the conquerors treat the religious beliefs of subjugated people with respect. In the process of their conquests, the Mongols captured the Silk Road. This road was of great importance not only to the Catholic West, but to Eastern, Islamic and Buddhist, countries as well and hence the holders of the Road tried to make the most of it. It is not unreasonable to think that if the Mongols had pursued an aggressive religious policy with respect to the Catholic West, they would have lost not only an ally in further expansion against the Mamluk Sultanate, but also a trading partner (Rossabi, 2012, p.23). Europeans, on their part, had their eye on. After European travelers and merchants learnt that "the barbarians", instead of banning trade, supported and developed the network of trade routes, their attitude towards the strangers became more favourable. This is particularly true in relation to Venetian and Genoese merchants who had actively traded in territories under the control of the direct descendants of Genghis Khan throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Ciocîltan, 2012, pp. 1-2).

As for the political motives behind religious tolerance, the Mongols practiced it towards different religions mainly with a view to ruling the subjugated people more easily. The invaders rapidly seized vast territories, and in order to hold them for a long time, political shrewdness was needed. The Mongols did not pursue a traditional nomadic way of life and did not base their authority merely on military power. This fact was demonstrated, among other things, by a well regulated taxation system as well as diverse and effective military tactics. It is noteworthy that such policy had been pursued by the Mongols since the time of Genghis Khan and continued to be actively implemented during the reign of his successors. This points to the fact that the religious toleration policy was endorsed by the majority of the Khans (Rossabi, 2012, p.40).

Another thing that should not be overlooked when it comes to the religious tolerance is that the Mongols did not affiliate themselves with any confession. They professed neither Christianity nor Islam nor Confucianism and Buddhism. Hence practicing religious intolerance, indeed, would have seemed unreasonable on their part.

To sum up all the above in a few words, the religious tolerance of the Mongols resulted not only from religious, but also political and economic reasons. This can be confirmed once more by the fact that after the conversion of Ghazan Khan to Islam and declaring Islam as the state religion, a conflict between the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Sultanate did not cease. By that time both sides had positioned themselves as true defenders of Islam. For that very reason, the Egyptian Mamluks were suspicious of the Khan's fidelity to Islam (Rossabi, 2012, p.70). Actually it can be said that the religious policy of the Mongols confused

Europe that did not give up hope for the conversion of the Ilkhans and the Golden Horde to the Catholic faith. Before turning to this issue in greater detail, we would like to highlight another significant aspect thanks to which this new people gained the papal favour shortly after manifesting themselves on the international scene.

Since the twelfth century, a legend about the great King Prester John, who set out along with his warriors from a distant eastern kingdom to protect the Holy See and Jerusalem, spread across Europe. The pontiffs of Rome always referred to this legend whenever they found it necessary to spirit Crusaders up in the face of adversities. The Fifth Crusade was no exception, during which Pope Honorius III appealed to this narrative. After the Crusaders began to lose their positions, rumours spread about a certain King David of India. At the same time, word went around about the demolition of the Khwarazmian Empire by the Mongols. This was quite enough for friars to recollect once again the "forgotten" legend of Prester John and identify the legendary King with Genghis Khan (Gogoladze et al. 2015, p.272).

Even Georgians confused the Mongols with Christians (Tabagoua,1984. p.176-179). At first this might seem surprising, but it is enough to recall rumours concerning Prester John and King David of India, and it will make perfect sense. The Georgians as potential allies for crusaders should have been aware of the Crusader-King Presbyter coming from the East. In view of the foregoing, it should come as no surprise that they took Mongols for the warriors of the aforementioned Prester John or King David, and welcomed them hospitably as their allies in the deliverance of the Holy Land from the Infidels (Mamistvalishvili, 2014, p.96).

Thus Europe was confused by the appearance of the Mongols as well as by reports coming from the East on the Indian King David. Notwithstanding, there should have been no doubt about the falsehood of the rumours regarding the Mongols after they familiarized themselves with the letters of the Queen and the Amirspasalar. It naturally begs the question: Then why did not Europe in general and the Pope in particular view the Mongols as their foes, as was the case with the Mamluk Sultanate?

Let us now move on to the main part of the article and figure out the role of the policy of religious toleration pursued by the Mongols in relations with the Catholic realm. As noted above, when the Mongols first revealed themselves, Europeans regarded them as their allies and Genghis Khan as a hero. However, these misperceptions were soon dispelled after receiving reports from Georgia in 1223. The information provid-

ed by Queen Rusudan and Amirspasalar was coupled with the fact of the vanquishment of the Cumans (Kipchaks) and their brothers in arms from Kyivan Rus'. At that time Europe, like the Islamic world, assumed the position of an outside observer. Who were this new people and what were their intentions? Further westward conquests of the Mongols were temporarily halted due to the death of Genghis Khan. However, in 1235 a new Khagan Ögedei trod in his father's footsteps. In 1235 the Mongols appeared not for conducting reconnaissance, but for the conquest of these lands. In 1240 they vanquished the Ukrainians, Poles and Hungarians at Kyiv, and the following year - near the Silesian city of Liegnitz. At that time the religious and secular leaders of Europe were well aware of the intentions of the Mongols. Nevertheless, Europe was not concerned with the Mongols until 1245 due to the conflict between the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen and Pope Gregory IX. During this period the Mongols invaded Poland, Bohemia, Moravia and Meissen. They ultimately defeated the Hungarian King Béla IV and in 1242 even crossed the frozen Danube, making raids not far from the Austrian border. The Catholic realm was delivered from the Mongol threat mainly thanks to the death of Ögedei Khan and the dearth of pastures for their horses. The threat coming from "the barbarians" was properly assessed in the papacy of Innocent IV. In 1245 he convened an ecumenical council in Lyon. Apart from the excommunication of Emperor Frederick II, the Tartar[3] issue and the liberation of the Holy Land were on the agenda of the Council (Bird, 2013, pp.306-308). At the great Council it was decided to urgently send an envoy to the Mongols to deal first with the religious issues. Specifically for this purpose Innocent IV sent Giovanni da Pian del Carpine to the Tartars. This is evidenced by a papal letter the content of which is recounted by the Franciscan himself. According to him, the Pope's only wish was that Tartars and Christians lived together in peace. He wished for the Tartars to rise spiritually and have salvation, i. e. to embrace Christianity (Carpine, 1942, p.48).

Despite great efforts on the part of Europe, the only thing that the Mongols demanded from the Catholic realm was submission and acknowledgement of their superiority. This was demonstrated by a letter that Willem van Rubroeck brought from Tartary to Louis IX, wherein Möngke Khan himself unequivocally stated: *"And when you shall have heard and believed ["the commandment of the eternal God"], if you will obey us, send your ambassadors to us; and so we shall have proof whether you want peace or war with us. When, by the virtue of the eternal God, from the rising of the*

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[3] *Mongols were referred to as "Tartars" in western European sources.*

Sun to the setting, all the world shall be in universal joy and peace, then shall be manifested what we are to be. But if you hear the commandment of the eternal God, and understand it, and shall not give heed to it, nor believe it, saying to yourselves: "Our country is far off, our mountains are strong, our sea is wide," and in this belief you make war against us, you shall find out what we can do. He who makes easy what is difficult, and brings close what is far off, the eternal God He knows (Rubroeck, 1942, pp. 158-159)." The Mongol threat is particularly apparent in the last sentence. It is also evident that the Mongols did not regard the West as an equal ally. When was that change made in their foreign policy and what was the reason for it?

We think that the main reason for Europeans to perceive the Tartars as their allies was that they learned about the faith of the Mongols through the envoys sent to them shortly after their appearance (since 1240). The Catholics were informed that the Tartars believed in one God and looked favourably on Christianity. Soon subduing Mamluk Egypt became a common goal for both the Catholic realm and the Ilkhanate (Jackson, 2014, p.256). This was primarily related to the first serious defeat of the Mongols in the way of their westward conquests that took place in the Battle of Ain Jalut. This can be regarded as a starting point for the strengthening of ties between the West and the Mongols (Bird, 2013, p. 310, Aigle, 2005, p.152). *"So, there was a mutual longing for cooperation that stemmed from their willingness* to *fight against the common enemy."* (Evaniseli, 2019, p.80) It should be noted here that the desire to fight jointly against the Mamluk Sultanate was shared only by the Ilkhanate and Europe. As for the relations between the Golden Horde and the Catholic realm, they were predominantly based on trade and economic cooperation.

From our point of view, the relations between these two worlds were facilitated by virtue of the fact that the Mongols were still pagans and since the reign of Hülegü Khan it had felt like "the barbarians" would soon embrace Christianity. As early as April 1262, the Khan of the Ilkhanate sent his envoy to Europe, who had to deliver a letter to Pope Urban IV, the French king Louis IX and to other European sovereigns. However, as it seems, the letter was lost en route due to the efforts of the Sicilian King Manfred[4]. Nevertheless, John the Hungarian paid a visit to the Pope presented him Hülegü's letter, wherein he expressed his com-

mendation. In this letter the Khan called upon the King to blockade Egypt. As it seems from the letter, Hülegü himself was planning to attack the Mamluks from the east. He recounted all those cases where he spared Christians and even made concessions to them. Evidently, thus he hoped to assure the Catholic sovereigns of his esteem and interest in Christianity (Jackson, 2014, pp. 165-166). Notwithstanding the above, it should be also noted here that the Mongols never renounced their claims to world domination. At that time they positioned themselves as divinely sent friends of Christians who sought to bring the Muslims to their knees and give the Holy Land back to Christian Europe (Aigle, 2005, pp. 152-153). Although this letter was not enough for the Pope to have great confidence in the sincerity of the Mongols' avowed intention[5]s, from thence lengthy diplomatic negotiations started that continued up until the fourteenth century, even after the Ilkhans accepted Islam.

Abaqa Khan's letter sent thereafter to the Second Ecumenical Council of Lyons in 1274 was dramatically different from that of Hülegü Khan in the sense that there was no speech about the divinely granted right of Genghis Khan and his heirs to dominate over the world. Accordingly, there was not stated anywhere in the letter that Europe should have acknowledged the supremacy of the Mongols (Aigle, 2005, p. 153). Softening the tone apparently stemmed from the fact that Europe would have never accepted such terms of alliance, that is to say, the acknowledgement of Mongol world supremacy.

The letter also recounted how Hülegü Khan became benevolent towards Christians. It identified Hülegü's wife Doquz Khatun as a daughter of Prester John. Yet the letter is written in such a manner that makes Hülegü Khan himself akin to Prester John and even to Moses in one place. It also duly appreciated the merits of the Dominican Friar David of Ashby, who had been sent to Hülegü's court and stayed there to acquaint the Khan with the Catholic faith. According to the author of the letter, due to the reasons set out above, the Khan started to patronize Christians, which was reflected in tax exemptions, guaranteeing the inviolability of their property and allowing them to conduct religious rites in all churches (Aigle, 2005, pp. 153-154).

Apart from the letter, the Catholics were particularly impressed by witnessing the baptism of two members of the Mongol delegation from the hands of Pierre de Tarentaise, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia and the future Pope Innocent V, at the Second Council of Lyons. Both

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[4] ***King Manfred of Sicily*** was at ***feud with the Pope***, who ***even proclaimed a crusade against*** him. At the same time, the ***offspring of the Hohenstaufen dynasty*** had ***relations with the Mamluk Sultanate. Therefore,*** an ***alliance of Christian Europe*** and ***the Mongols against them did not play into the hands of Manfred*** (Jackson, 2014, p. 166).

[5] ***In July of the same year Pope Urban IV referred to the Mongols as*** cruel ***foes of the Christians***, ***putting them on the same level with the Mamluks*** (Jackson, 2014, p. 166).

envoys were baptized voluntarily and publicly (Jackson, 2014, p.167). It may be reasonably assumed that this fact would have further solidified the hopes of the Catholics for the conversion of the Mongols to Catholicism. The same was pointed out by George Lane, viewed this baptism as an ostentatious act to win the favour of the Catholic ecclesiastics (Lane, 2005, p.50). This expectation would have been reinforced by the fact that in 1276 the Khan sent his envoys to the West to express his willingness to join a new Crusade that Pope Gregory X had proclaimed back to 1274 (Mann, 1931, p. 40; Jackson, 2014, p.168). A desire for the conversion of the Mongols to Christianity was so strong among the Europeans that there were rumours as if "the King of the Tartars" attended the Second Council of Lyons in the flesh, where he received baptism and the crown from the papal hands . In c. 1280 word was out about the hideous shaggy offspring of Cassanus, King of the Tartars, and his wife, the beautiful Armenian princess, who appeared smooth and the most beautiful of infants as soon as he was immersed thrice in the sacred baptismal font. Thereafter the Khan reached out to the Christians and began to prepare for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the hands of the Mamluks (Jackson, 2014, p.172).

Abaqa Khan's policy of rapprochement with Europe and ostentatious acceptance of Christianity was continued by his successor Arghun Khan. During his reign it felt like the Ilkhanate was about to embrace Christianity. The new the Ilkhanid ruler four times sent his envoys to Europe - in 1285, 1287, 1289-1290, and 1290-1291. Although Hülegü and Abaqa Khan had been also willing to form an alliance with the West, they had not endeavoured in this direction so much. Hence the question naturally arises: Why did the Ilkhanid prioritize this issue? The apparent reason for this was the Second Battle of Homs that took place 29 October 1281. Abaqa Khan's army led by his brother Möngke-Temur suffered a severe defeat fighting against the Mamluks. This defeat ultimately convinced Arghun Khan that it would be impossible to subdue Egypt without enlisting the support of the Catholics (Jackson, 2014, p. 169). This is exactly why he increased the number of diplomatic missions to the West. The diplomatic journey of the Nestorian Monk Rabban Bar Ṣawma was of particular significance. He succeeded in convincing Pope Nicholas IV that the Khan's intention was to bring Jerusalem back to the Christians and receive baptism there, and consequently the Pope became far more optimistic with respect to the conversion of the Mongols (Jackson, 2014, p. 175).

It might seem at first sight that the attempts to bind ties between these two worlds should have been abandoned after Ghāzān Khan's conversion to Islam.

In reality, however, the situation was rather different. Not a lot changed in the religious policy of the Mongols. Just the fact that two Islamic powers, the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Sultanate, were still at enmity with each other may be cited in confirmation of the above. Each of the two claimed to be a true defender of Islam. So as we can see, territorial and economic disputes were of greater interest to the Mongols than religious ones (Rossabi, 2012, p.72). To some extent, the Europeans saw their guilt in the Islamization of the Mongols. For instance, the Catalan mystic Raymond Lully claimed that during his journey across Asia Minor he learnt about Ghāzān Khan's aspirations for Christianity. The Khan wanted to know more about this religion, but he did not get this knowledge and consequently accepted Islam (Jackson, 2014, p.176). Although at first Ghāzān Khan mistreated the Christians, the problem was resolved soon and prior to launching an anti-Egyptian military operation he appealed to the West for aid. A military campaign conducted in 1299-1300, as a consequence of which Ghāzān Khan delivered a crushing defeat to the Mamluks and entire Syria and Palestine bowed beneath the yoke of the Mongols, was perceived by Europe as the triumph of Christendom. Some ascribed this victory to the Jubilee of 1300 proclaimed by Pope Bonifacio VIII, while others associated Ghāzān Khan with Prester John (Jackson, 2014, p.172). The succeeding khan Öljaitü did not abandon the line of policy pursued by his brother and, despite religious differences, maintained the ties with the West. In consideration of this, Peter Jackson arrives at the conclusion that the policy pursued by both Ghāzān and Öljaitü Khan was never influenced by their religious beliefs. To sum it up, Christianity as well as Buddhism was accepted by the Mongols more in practice than in theory. Properly speaking, the conversion of the Ilkhanids to Islam was largely due to the fact that it was deemed the wealthiest and the most culturally refined religion within the territory under their control (Jackson, 2014, pp.177-178).

As we can see, the religious policy pursued in the Ilkhanate, one of the Uluses formed due to the division of the Mongol Empire, enhanced relations between the West and the newcomers. The Catholic realm did not give up hope that the Ilkhanids' favourable attitude to Christianity would be reflected in both theory and practice, but these hopes were forlorn. The Mongols on their part used their religious policy as an effective tool in forming an alliance with the West. Besides, they understood well that the Silk Road would have lost many of its former functions in case of pursuing an aggressive religious policy.

Here we should briefly touch upon the religious policy of the second power formed after the dissolution

of Genghis Khan's Empire, the Golden Horde, with respect to the Christians. It should be noted at the very outset that the Ulus of Jochi and the West did not have the common enemy represented by the Mamluk Sultanate. The most bitter enemy of the latter was none other than the Ilkanid Empire. So what set the stage for the cordial relations between the Golden Horde and the Catholic realm?

In spite of the adoption of a line of policy different from that of the Ilkanids, neither did the Golden Horde abandon religious toleration inherited from Genghis Khan's rule, with all that it implies. This refers in particular to the exemption of ecclesiastics and churches from taxation. Furthermore, the proselytizing activities of Catholic missionaries were never restricted within the territory of the Horde. Quite the contrary, they were even encouraged. As was the case after the conquest of Georgia, a population census was conducted throughout the lands of Rus, which was followed by the imposition of taxes. Only the Churches of Rus were exempted from the tax. According to the Laurentian Codex, *"The year 1257. That winter tax-gatherers arrived here and conducted a census in all of the lands: the Principalities of Suzdal, Ryazan, and Murom. They brought here the chiefs of ten, chiefs of hundred, chiliarchs and myriarchs and went back to the Horde. They did not count only hegumens, monks, priests and acolytes, all those who behold the Most Holy Theotokos and the Lord* (Grekov, 1950, p. 218).*"* There is a similar account regarding the Church of Georgia, which shall be discussed below in greater detail.

Möngke Temür, the first khan of the Golden Horde, was exceptionally tolerant in religious matters of all rulers of the Ulus of Jochi. He did not impose taxes upon the Orthodox churches and the churchmen of Rus. Moreover, he supported the Genoese merchants to set up a trade factory at Theodosia (Caffa) on the Crimean peninsula (Rossabi, 2012, p.72). That having been said, Möngke himself was inclined to Islam. This raises the question of the reason for his favourable attitude towards the Christians.

While discussing the benign relations between the Golden Horde and the West, it would be appropriate to say a few words about the economic ties that bound these two realms to each other. Here it should be noted that before the Mongols took possession of an access to the Black Sea, the local Cumans had actively traded with the Catholics. Not a lot changed in this respect after the appearance of the Mongols, who continued to support the policy of an active trade (Ciocîltan, 2012, pp. 141-147). This is also confirmed by the accounts of Willem van Ruysbroeck who, whilst journeying in the city of Sevastopol, notes: *"In the middle,*

at the summit of the triangle as it were*, on the south side, is a city called Soldaia, which looketh across towards Sinopolis: thither come all the merchants arriving from Turkia who wish to* go *to the northern countries, and likewise those coming from Roscia and the northern countries who wish to pass into Turkia. The latter carried vair and minever, and other costly furs. Others carried cloths of cotton or bombax, silk stuffs and sweet-smelling spices."*, *"Toward the end of this province are many and large lakes, on whose shores are brine springs, the water of which as soon as it enters the lake is turned into salt as hard as ice. And from these brine springs Baatu and Sartach derive great revenues"* (Ruysbroeck, 1942, pp.12-17). Further Ruysbroeck mentions certain Constantinopolitan merchants, who gave him some useful advice. They should have been evidently well acquainted with these places (Ruysbroeck, 1942, p.15). From the above cited extracts we can conclude that the economic exploitation of the Black Sea region was carried on in the Ulus of Jochi only thanks to the once given impetus. Although Batu Khan made greater efforts to gain possession of the City of Tabriz and the trade route along which it lay, than access to the Black Sea, "Pax Mongolica" supported and even advanced trade in this area (Ciocîltan, 2012, pp. 141-148).

The formation of the Ilkhanate and the subsequent annexation of Tabriz by it changed the policy of the rulers of the Ulus of Jochi. A conflict arose between the two Mongol Empires. Soon the third power represented by the Mamluk Egypt became embroiled in the conflict. The root cause of the confrontation, indeed, was of an economic nature. A dream of the Khans of the Golden Horde to take Tabriz, city of huge economic significance, and bring the Silk Road under their control was not destined to come true. The vanquishment of Berke Khan in the 1262 military campaign against Hülegü Khan made the rulers of the Ulus of Jochi abandon their attempts to gain control over the Silk Road and concentrate on trading with the Christian and Muslim realms through the Black Sea (Ciocîltan, 2012, pp.148-150).

Owing to the conclusion of the 1261 Treaty of Nymphaeum, Genoa was the first which entered into serious trade relations with the Golden Horde. The Treaty was concluded between the Most Serene Republic of Genoa and the Nicaean Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus against the Most Serene Republic of Venice. However, Venice soon resumed its former position and made the city of Tana its main outpost in the northern Black Sea region, while Genoese-controlled Caffa was its principal trade rival (Ciocîltan, 2012, pp.150-160). The enhancement of trade relations was followed by setting up missionary activities in the area. Guided by

the principle of religious tolerance, the rulers of the Golden Horde treated the missionaries with courtesy. They never restrained them and even supported them in the course of their arguments with Muslims. A 1287 letter written by Franciscan Friar Ladislaus Custos testifies to this. In his letter the friar tells about Nogay Khan's support for Christians in the Crimean town of Solkhat (Hautala, 2013, p.275). The aforementioned Nogay had married illegitimate daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII, Euphrosyne Palaeologina. Nogay's chief wife Yaylaq even received baptism. However, Nogay Khan himself gave precedence to Islam (Tanase, 2018).

The West had great expectations regarding the conversion of both the Golden Horde and the Ilkhanate to Christianity. After the Islamization of the Hülegüids became an irreversible process in the fourteenth century, missionaries refocused their efforts on bringing the Golden Horde to Christianity (Hautala, 2014, pp.82-83).

As we can see, the Europeans hoped to convert the Golden Horde to Christianity just as much as they did with respect to the Ilkhanate, but none of these expectations were eventually met. In historiography there is a widely held view that the conversion of the nomads to Islam was predestined due to a number of social and economic factors. Speaking of the Ilkhanate, the Islamization of the Mongols can be seen as a process of ideological convergence of the Mongol government and the local Persian population. As for the Golden Horde, in this case historians again speak of the inevitability of the conversion of the steppe chiefs by the Muslim merchant elite (Hautala, 2013, p.273). It would be relevant to deal with the territorial issues along with social and economic ones, in particular, to say a couple of words about the geographic area across which the Hülegüid State lay. As is known, the Ilkhanate covered the territories of Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan and the eastern part of Asia Minor, where Islam was the dominating religion, and hence the attempts of the Catholic missionaries did not bring the desired results. So it becomes apparent that "Pax Mongolica" had a strategic significance for the Mongols in the establishment of relations with the Catholics. The latter continuously perceived the nomads as their allies, not as their foes.

The role of Georgia in this political context should necessarily be considered here. The question of to what extent Georgia experienced the religious toleration policy of the Mongols that always accompanied their conquests is also a subject of particular interest. "A Hundred Year Chronicle" by the unknown chronicler contains an account of the exemption of the Church of Georgia from taxation. It reads: *"He did not impose the tax and qalan upon priests, neither upon monks, nor upon any other ecclesiastics. He also exempted Darwīshes, Sheikhs and representatives of all religions"* (Kaukhchishvili, 1959, p.235). We find some interesting information regarding the Georgian Church in the accounts of the Persian historian Juwaynī. Thence we learn that Möngke Khan ordered to collect taxes from the weary peasantry in correspondence with the financial situation of each family. It did not apply to those who had been exempted from all taxes under Genghis and Ögedei. *"From the Muslims [they were] the great Sayyids and pious Imams, and from the Christians who are referred to as Arkehums - monks and clergymen* (Juwaynī, 1974, pp.54-55)".

As we can see, Georgia also experienced the religious toleration policy of the Mongols, which was manifested in the exemption of the Church from taxation. Both Georgian and Armenian chronicles testify to this. Unfortunately, due to the dearth of sources, It is hard to know for certain whether the Mongol ruling elite understood the difference between Nestorians, Orthodox Christians and Catholics. Nevertheless, one thing we know for sure is that they had a clear idea of which country was on good terms with the West and which one could be their ally regardless of their understanding of the doctrines of this or that religion. Georgia was among such countries which subsequently began to act as an intermediary between the realm of Western European Catholicism and the Mongols. This can be further confirmed by the fact that in 1276 Abaqa Khan sent Georgian brothers, Johannes and Jacobus Vassalli, to Europe (Evaniseli, 2021, pp.24-28). Georgia had its aim, namely to participate in a crusade against the Mamluk Sultanate for the liberation of the Holy Land. The religious policy pursued by the Mongols made the establishment of relations with them easier. They did not demand a denial of our faith, neither did they burden the Church with payments. Therefore, the Georgians did not regard fighting alongside the Mongols as a betrayal of their identity.

In conclusion it can be said that the religious policy of the Mongols considerably facilitated relations with the West and subjugated peoples. Pax Mongolica not only resulted in the prolonged stay of the subjugated peoples beneath the imperial yoke, but also greatly contributed to the enhancement of trade relations between the West and the East. Exactly from this period the Europeans begun to actively familiarize themselves with the cultural mores of the Oriental peoples. Certainly, it would have been impossible if the Mongols had practiced religious intolerance.

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An Historical Sketch of the Idea of Caucasian Unity and Common Defense Arrangements

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With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Caucasus witnessed a resurgence of nationalist strivings. Being union republics, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), Georgian, Azerbaijan and Armenian Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) quickly transitioned to independent states with international recognition, whereas violent conflict erupted over the status of various autonomous republics and districts within them. These "ethnic conflicts" in the Caucasus have yet to be satisfactorily resolved down to today. This has caused many observers to think of the Caucasus as a place where nations with wildly different cultures and roots were simply tossed together through time and will never be able to get along. However, corollary to the nationalist ideologies and rhetoric which helped inflame the violence which erupted in the wake of the Soviet failure, the idea of a Caucasian confederation was also put forward by certain politicians. Where did this idea come from and why a confederation? This paper traces the history of the idea of Caucasian unity from antiquity to the present. It is not an exhaustive study but summarizes some of the research I am doing for other projects, which I expect to provide a road map for this topic's further exploration.

This question contains two main elements: whether the Caucasus can be considered a region in the proper sense of the term, rather than just an artificial construct imposed from outside, and, if so, what kind of possibilities have "Caucasians" themselves imagined for the region's political organization which might include some kind of politically unified state. Interestingly, the ambiguity surrounding the attempts to define the Caucasus as a region that we notice today in academic and policymaking circles remind us of the patterns found in the ancient and medieval texts, as well as in debates during the time of Russian Revolution (1917).

In the ancient Greek and Roman texts, we can discern three major tendencies in how the ancients viewed the Caucasus: 1) as a coherent region in which resided numerous different nations (kingdoms, tribes, etc.),

2) as two different regions (the northern Caucasus, or mountain itself, and the southern Caucasus, which contained several different provinces), and 3) a geographical space where there lived different nations. It should be mentioned, however, that some of these texts seem to present more than one of these tendencies at the same time, highlighting the incredible difficulty of coming to a concrete answer to the question of how exactly to define the Caucasus. In fact, I would posit that the answer of its definition lies in this very ambiguity. Before evaluating the views of medieval Georgian and Armenian authors, i.e., indigenous perspectives, I will provide some examples of the three major tendencies found in the ancient sources.

From the ancient Greek and Roman authors, as an example of listing the nations separately, Ptolemy (*Geography*, 5) and Pliny (*Natural History*, 6.5-19) refer to the Caucasus mountain chain and list the countries or tribes in and around it separately. Herodotus appears to distinguish between the northern and southern Caucasus because he says, "many and all kinds of nations dwell in the Caucasus," referring to the range itself (*Histories*, 1.203.1.) in one section but lists the Saspires ("Georgians") and Colchians separately. Interestingly, he notes that the Mares and Colchians shared a commander and the Saspires, Colchians and "Alarodians" were armed the same.[1] Strabo (*Geography*, 11.2.15-19), who was himself originally from Trabzon, called the inhabitants of the range and the Albanians and Iberians all "Caucasians". He writes:

"This mountain lies above both seas, both the Pontic and the Caspian, and forms a wall across the isthmus that separates the two seas. It marks the boundary, on the south, of Albania and Iberia, and on the north, of the plains of the Sarmatae... Now in general the tribes in the neighborhood of the Caucasus occupy barren and cramped territories, but the tribes of the Alba-

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[1] Hecataaeus of Miletus says that the Mares were an ethnos near the Mossynaeci (Fragment 192, Digital Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, available at https://www.dfhg-project.org/DFHG/digger.php?what%5B%5D=author%7CHECATAE-US&onoffswitch=on). The Mossynaeci lived around the Black Sea (Pliny, Natural History, 6.4.1)

nians and the Iberians, which occupy nearly all the isthmus above-mentioned, might also be called Caucasian tribes."

Regarding the Armenian and Georgian authors, based on the texts I have evaluated so far, there seems to be a clear difference of perspective between the two, with the Armenians showing less of a regional perspective and the Georgian author strongly emphasizing it. The Armenian geographer Ananias of Shirak (7th century) places the North Caucasian peoples in Sarmatia and lists Colchis, Iberia, Albania and Armenia separately (Ananias, 1992, pp. 55-76, 110-119; Vacca, 2020, p. 43). The 8th-century Armenian historians pay little attention to the North Caucasus and list Armenia, Iberia and Albania separately while yet placing them together (Ghewond, 2006, pp. 1-47). In contrast, a regional identity for the northern and southern Caucasus is highlighted in the first book of the Georgian Chronicles ("The Lives of the Georgian Kings") Whether the author was reporting actual legends believed at the time or was using the metaphor of familial ancestral ties for political purposes (Sanadze, 2017, pp. 207, 209, 214-217, 222-224), the text still gives the reader considerable insight into the nature of political and defense relationships between the Caucasian nations in the eleventh century.

I will not repeat what must be by now to everyone a familiar story about how the eight nations of the Caucasus shared a common patriarchal ancestor—Targamos. Rather, I will point out that the story describes the relationship between the brothers and their descendents as fluctuating between being highly interconnected ("living in peace and love with each other") and united against external threats, both in battle and in the construction of defense works, to lapsing into fratricidal war. In one episode, North Caucasians helped the first two Georgian kings establish their rule but their descendents later started raiding during the time of the third king. This highlights the ongoing tension between collaboration and mutual support interspersed with "fraternal" warring and feuding. In the story, the nature of intra-Caucasian political relationships also appears to fluctuate between defensive alliances or confederation to possible federation ("living in peace and love with each other" but one brother being king over the others, i.e., more centralization than in a pure confederation).

Returning to the observations of outsiders, we find the same three tendences as in the Classical texts in the Islamicate sources. For example, the 14th-century Hamdallah Mustawfi al-Qazwini, in chapters ten and sixteen of his *Nuzhat al-qulūb* (Pleasure of the hearts), lists the countries of the Caucasus separately, although he does connect Georgia and Abkhazia,

saying they border on Armenia and Arran (Albania) and also mentions the "so many different peoples" of the Lezghian mountains. The 12th-century Muhammad al-Idrisi also seems to list the Caucasian nations separately, saying that the inhabitants of the mountain spoke mutually unintelligible languages, in his *Kitāb nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq* (The book of pleasant journeys into far-away lands). In *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-al-Mamālik* (Book of Countries and Kingdoms), however, the 10th-century author Ibn Hawqal lists Armenia, Albania and Azerbaijan as separate countries at the same time as referring to them as a single country and the North Caucasians separately. Al-Istakhri (10th century) explicitly states in *Kitab al-masalik wa-al-mamalik* (Book of Roads and Kingdoms) that "we will start with the countries of Armenia, Arran and Azerbaijan, considering them a single oblast (region or district)." Maybe the 10th-century al-Masudi is the Strabo of the Islamicate sources. Like the other authors, he points out the great diversity of kingdoms, nations and languages in the Caucasus "mountain" but he also includes the North Caucasus and Transcaucasia at least as far as Tiflis (Tbilisi) in a distinct section titled "The Caucasus."

Once the Russian imperial conquest of the Caucasus began, we see reflections of a regional mindset in several attempts to coordinate military action against the common threat from the north although there does not appear to have been any talk of political unification. In the late 18th century, Sheikh Mansur tried to unite the North Caucasians against Russia. According to the historian Potto (Potto, 1887, p.142), "One of Sheikh Mansur's passionate and enduring goals was to unite all the mountain peoples into one. And all the strength of Russian weaponry was directed towards preventing this." Then, in 1812, the Georgian prince Alexander Batonishvili was joined by at least a thousand Daghestanis when he fought the Russians in Kakheti. After their defeat by the superior Russian forces, Batonishvili went to Khevsureti, where he successfully rallied the local mountain Georgians and North Caucasians (Kabardians, Daghestanis and Vainakh) to his liberation effort. But these efforts were to no avail. Relying on intercepted intelligence, the Russian generals made a mad dash into Khevsureti to stop this rebellion before it could begin (Berzhe, 1873, vol. 5, nos. 88, 97, 552). In the 1820s another rebellion broke out in the North Caucasus, which is associated with the Chechen Bej-Bulat Tajmiev (Tajmi Bibolt) but included the coordination and involvement of other North Caucasians too (Anchabadze, 2009; Baddeley, 1908, pp. 94, 99, 107, 112-113, 123, 148-149; Tovsultanov and Galimova, 2016, pp. 109-113; Fedorov, 1991, pp. 410-411; Xozhaev 1998).

In 1832, the young Georgian patriots were well aware of their regional context when they conspired to drive the Russians out by murdering many of their key administrators and officers at a ball. Part of their calculations included the fact that the Russian forces were currently struggling with the Murid resistance in Daghestan (Jones, 1987, p. 72; Lang, 1957, 280-281). These Georgians too hoped for a coordinated regional resistance—although they did nothing to actually organize it (Jones, 1987, p. 72). As Aleqsandre Orbeliani wrote, "The plot was supposed to unfold in such a way that the entire Caucasus from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea, all the mountain and lowland people, all of us were to unite and create a unified upheaval" (Gozalishvili, 1935, p. 86). There were also some failed efforts to unite between the North Caucasians resisting the Russian forces in the Caucasian Wars, which ended with the defeat of Imam Shamil in 1859 and the culmination of the genocidal war against the Circassians in 1864.

By this time, young men from cooperative families in the Caucasus were already beginning to obtain educations in Russia, and the question of regional versus national identity emerged under a new guise as early as 1861 in the Georgian students' discussions about whether to form a regional mutual aid society (*zemljachestvo*) or separate national ones with close ties between them. The majority followed the idea of Ilia Chavchavadze, who argued for the second option (Nikoladze, 1927, p. 34). A proponent of the idea of a regional *zemljachestvo*, Niko Nikoladze, appears to have been devoted to a regional vision since he was found in Europe just over a decade later, editing the journal *drosha* (flag), which declared as its ultimate goal the creation of a "free federation of all the Caucasian peoples" (erobis tvit martveloba, 1873). The Georgians in Switzerland in 1871-1872 were also eager to create a Caucasian federation (Dzhabadari, Aug. 1907, pp. 269-289). And at a congress of Caucasians (mostly Georgians but a Daghestani and Armenian too) in Zurich in 1874, the majority of the delegates favored the project of a Caucasian federation. However, the split between those who wanted to fight for a particularly Caucasian future and those who wanted to join the emerging all-Russian revolutionary movement now appeared (Dzhabadari, Sept. 1907; Suny, 1994, p. 137)

This split between those favoring a regional solution and those who wanted to merge with the all-Russian revolutionary movement continued through the First World War and the short period between the demise of the Russian Empire and rise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). At first, however, the line of division was fairly blurry, and it appears the goal of creating a Caucasian confederation was actively discussed among Georgian and other Caucasian groups through the turn of the century. According to national-

ists writing at *qartuli gazeti* (Georgian gazette) in 1916, the revolutionary movement in the Caucasus was always interested in a Caucasian federation, with the exception of the Social Democrats who had wanted a unitary Russian republic from the beginning. This seems to contradict the observation of Stephen Jones that the Georgian Marxists had been interested in federalism until pressure from the Russian Social Democratic Party cured them of this "sin" in 1903 (Jones, 2005, pp. 109-117). Further research will surely sort out the details.

Based on my research so far (including reference to the secondary literature), the 1880s saw continued interest in the idea of a Caucasian federation, confederation or defensive alliance against Russia alongside the increasing consideration of populist and Marxist ideas (Suny, 1994, p. 132). An interesting point about the 1880s is that Oliver Wardrop mentioned in 1887, after a stay in Tiflis (Tbilisi) that if Russia were to enter into a war against the British then the descendants of Targamos, with a history of helping each other against outside enemies, would probably "form a defensive alliance for the protection of common interests" (Wardrop, 1887, p. 166-168). Wardrop was undoubtedly informed by local patriots.

In the early 1890s, Georgian youth formed the Georgian Liberty League, with members of varying ideological tendencies. The main goal of the league was Georgian national liberation but obtained through the other Caucasian nations also cooperating to drive out Russia and the creation of a Caucasian federation (Bendianishvili, 1980, 154-155, 163; Giorgadze, 1929, pp. 99-103; Lang, 1962, p. 125; Jones, 2005, p. 56 , Shvelidze, 1993, 108).[2] In 1894, a Georgian also petitioned the Ottoman Sultan to allow for the publication of a journal promoting a Caucasian liberation movement (Bendianishvili, 1980, p. 162; Giorgadze, 1929, pp. 99-100). Although the tsarist government rapidly suppressed this league, the 1890s saw the rise of a new current among the Georgian intelligentsia—committed Marxists. The Caucasian Marxists formally joined the Russian Socialist Democratic Party in 1903 with the demand for regional autonomy within a centralized Russian state (Jones, 2005, pp. 104-117; Suny, 1980, 163-164).

By this time, concerned about the growing division in the Georgian revolutionary movement, Archil Jorjadze had already proposed the Basis for Common Action Theory, which presented points of compromise on which the Marxists and the rest of the intelligentsia could work together for the good of the Georgian na-

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2   See also: "mixeil xeltuflishvili," National Parliamentary Library of Georgia (NPLG), accessed 17 January 2022, http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00017176/; "anṭon gelazarishvili," NPLG, accessed 17 January 2022, http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00015034/; "iakob fancxava," NPLG, accessed 17 January 2022, http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00001687/.

tion and society. However, the Marxists completely had rejected his proposal, which also received criticism from more conservative elements (Jones, pp. 17, 66-71; Shvelidze, 1993, pp. 15-18, 28-31, 37-41, 47-49). Jorjadze then co-founded the journal *saqartvelo* (Georgia) in 1903 at the press of the anarchists in Paris (Shvelidze, 1993, pp 105-109). This situation is a good illustration of how the division in the Georgian political scene mirrored the European one, with the socialist movement ultimately splitting into Marxist "centralists" and Bakunist "decentralists" (anarcho-federalists). The Georgian revolutionary intelligentsia was perfectly aware of this fact, and that is why at the 1904 congress in Geneva, which established the Georgian Socialist-Federalist Revolutionary Party, a resolution was passed which explicitly stated that the congress was worried that the revolutionary movement could lead to the establishment of a centralized Russian republic and that it rejected Marxist-centralism, siding with the Bakunist-decentralists instead (Shvelidze). The Georgian Social Democrats only came to the congress to announce their refusal to cooperate and walk out, with the exception of one who stayed, likely Vladimir Darchiashvili, who went on to found the national autonomist faction of the Social Democratic Party (Shvelidze, 1993, pp. 127, 144, 146).

The Armenian revolutionary movement was also divided between centralists and decentralists, a fact reflected clearly in the names and structures of its two major parties: the social democratic Hunchak Revolutionary Party, which insisted on a centralized hierarchy and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF, Dashnaktsutiun), which had a more horizontal structure (Berberian, 2019, pp. 125-127, 134, 136, 142; Libaridian, 1983, pp. 187, 190; Ter Minassian, 1980, 9-10). Although some North Caucasians were interested in the populist-Marxist current in the Russian revolutionary tradition, the North Caucasians were generally interested in a regional union for the Caucasus. As stated in the memorandum submitted to the Peace Conference in Paris by the delegation of the Mountain Republic, "All the Caucasians who met abroad [SS: during tsarist times] united on the ground of community of aspirations aiming at an independent Caucasus, politically united, based on the principles of a confederation of all the nations which compose it, without any distinction of origin and creed." (Bammate, 1919, p. 13).

The split between the centralists and decentralists in the Caucasus is continued during the Russian Revolution of 1905-1907, when we also find the emergence of a federalist (decentralist) movement among the Eastern Transcaucasian Muslims (Azerbaijanis) alongside the growth of Social Democracy. At this time, all of the local political currents, including liberals, were also thinking in terms of region. We see this from the testimony of the Ingush political figure, Vassan-Girej

Dzhabagiev, who wrote in 1905 that "the demand for regional autonomy was on every lip" (Dzhabagiev, 1905). Unfortunately, as Dzhabagiev warned in 1906, those demanding regional autonomy (with the exception of Georgian nationalists) had not given sufficient thought to the questions of national identity and decentralization (Dzhabagiev, 1906). Thus, despite the best efforts of the revolutionary parties to coordinate across national differences, the period still witnessed tragic events which made future cooperation more difficult.

The RSDLP and its allies strongly opposed the empire's decentralization along national lines. In *chveni kvali* (our furrow), one of the journals associated with Vladimir Darchiashvili, who is introduced above, we find strong evidence that the disagreement between centralists (essentially pro-Russians) and decentralists (territorial-autonomists or independentists) was at the core of the political debate in the Caucasus. Here, the author writes that the "subject of our dispute and debate" is that the centralists rejected autonomy for the Caucasus and expected the nations to be satisfied with a common regional self-government, i.e., local administrative self-government, while the autonomists wanted a "defined political self-government." (ra aris, 1908). Despite this difference, Stalin himself insisted on regional autonomy in *Marxism and the National Question* (1913) for the Caucasus because he considered it to be a "crystallized unit."

The start of the First World War witnessed once again an effort by patriots of different national origin to unite for the liberation of their common homeland and create an independent regional federation. Two of the key players in this effort were the Georgian Leo Kereselidze and a Chechen who went by the name "Murad Gazavat" (Bakradze, 2020, p. 62; Baqradze, 2010, p. 47; Kuromiya and Mamoulia, 2016, pp. 75-77; Zürrer, 1978, pp. 31-33). Although their efforts met with no direct success, it was not long before the Russian Empire's autocratic regime spontaneously collapsed and the Caucasians were suddenly presented with the possibility of redefining their relationships with Russia and each other in a fleeting moment of perfect freedom.

Once the February Revolution took place and the tsarist government collapsed, the Caucasian political and intellectual leaders remined divided as to how to define the constitutional relationship between the different nationalities and the region to each other, and to the Russian center. Federalists and nationalists, who had a mix of socialist and capitalist ideas, argued for national-territorial autonomy though they were divided on whether there should also be a Caucasian autonomy. The Socialist Federalist Party, for example, wanted a regional federation within the larger Russian Federation, while the Georgian National Dem-

ocrats, Union of Allied Mountaineers and the Azerbaijani Musavat Party preferred to leave out the regional level while cultivating extra close ties between the different nations in the Caucasus specifically. The reason for this was not the rejection of a sense of regional identity corollary to the national one but because direct ties to the federal center meant more freedom in self-government than if competencies were divided between the federal and national levels and an intermediary regional level (saqartvelos avṭonomia, 1917). So, this was the most decentralized solution possible barring the declaration of full independence. By contrast, the Kadets and Marxists were centralists. In the middle but leaning more towards centralism were the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Dashnaktsutiun. Even though both had a federalist program before the revolution and continued to do so after February 1917, they became more centralistic as the year went by due to factors including apparent Russian chauvinism and concerns about preserving order.

After the October coup, it became impossible to continue relying on Russia's central government for leadership, so the leading forces in the Caucasus decided to declare autonomy in the form of the Terek-Daghestani Provisional Government (Ter-Dag), which was comprised of the Terek Cossack autonomy and the Mountain Autonomy, and the Transcaucasian Commissariat. Then, in the spring of 1918, pressure coming from decisions made by the Bolshevik government in combination with the threats, demands and proposals of the Central Powers essentially forced the Mountain government and the Transcaucasian Seim (a representative body) to declare independence from Russia. Although the newly minted Mountain Republic intended to join the Transcaucasians in the new Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic (TDFR) and the TDFR government gave assurances that this would be possible, the Transcaucasian Federation broke up a month later when the independence of the Georgian Democratic Republic was declared followed by similar declarations from the Azerbaijani and Armenian governments.

Thus, the theoretical question of whether the Caucasian nations ought to remain tightly bound to each other in a regional autonomy inside a unitary Russian state, create a regional federation within a Russian federation; form separate national-territorial autonomies tied directly to a Russian federal center with limited powers or break off from Russia entirely in the form of an independent regional federation was answered in practice with an extreme decentralist solution, the founding of four independent republics. But the Caucasians would not enjoy their newfound freedom for long. Centralists in Russia, and their sympathizers in the Caucasus would fight to bring them back under their control. Thus, the Caucasus found

itself caught in the war between the General Anton Denikin's Volunteer Army, which was open about its goal of restoring Russia "united and indivisible" and the Soviet forces who set up a vertical system of rule where power was factually concentrated in the hands of the Communist Party while at the same time giving the Soviet state the formal structure of a federation.

Aware of the danger awaiting them at the hands of the White or Red imperialists, the Caucasian republics made a few unsuccessful attempts to discuss the possibility of forming a united front ranging from a defensive alliance to a federation. These discussions were held at two regional conferences and at the Versailles Peace Conference in Paris. Although steps were taken towards resolving contentious territorial and legal status issues at the conference in April 1920, the Red Army's entry into the North Caucasus in early 1920, Azerbaijan in April 1920, Armenia in December 1920 and Georgia in February 1921 prevented the Caucasian leaders from following through to the end on their promising progress.

Despite the Bolshevik Social Democrats' traditional dislike of federalism, the effect of regional and federalist thinking on the Caucasian Bolsheviks' minds is impossible to ignore. This impact is reflected in the structure of the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. It bears reminding that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Russian Socialist Federalist Soviet Republic were also both federal structures in principle, and Stalin was responsible for preserving this formal structure, which had originally been encouraged by Lenin. Ultimately, however, with the adoption of the Stalin constitution of 1936, the TSFSR was dissolved and replaced with the separate union republics. The Mountain ASSR had disappeared by 1924.

Nevertheless, the idea of a united Caucasus did not die out with the arrival of Communist power. The years 1921 to 1924 witnessed several furtive and failed attempts to coordinate a regional rebellion, and one of the main themes in the political life of the Caucasian émigré community was the attempt to unite so that together, with the help of outside powers, they could drive the Soviets back out of their shared lost homeland and, reclaiming it, create an independent and united Caucasian state. Alongside the extremely adversarial geopolitical conditions, the bitter division within the community itself was a contributing factor to the failure of this romantic project. Tellingly, however, the political community was not split along national or religious lines so much as ideological. Generally speaking, those who had been centralists (Mensheviks, White collaborators, Baku Musavatists) clustered around the journal *Prométhée : organe de Défense Nationale des Peuples du Caucase,*

de l'Ukraine et du Turkestan (Prometheus: Organ for the National Defence of the Peoples of the Caucasus, Ukraine and Turkestan*),* while the decentralists (federalists and nationalists from the North Caucasus, Georgia and Azerbaijan) rallied behind the journal *and Kavkaz (Le Caucase): Organ nezavisimoj natsionąlnoj mysli (Kavkaz [Le Caucase]: Organ of independent national thought)*. By the end of the Second World War, however, all hopes were lost as the generation of political émigrés involved in the founding of the independent republics in 1918 gradually faded away. Yet the idea remained alive for quite some time, as we can see with the publication of the journal *United Caucasus: Organ of North Caucasian national thought* as late as 1964.

In conclusion, this paper indicates that the idea of Caucasian unity that was briefly resurrected during the chaos surrounding the dissolution of the USSR has a solid basis in the intellectual history of the region, particularly in the traditions of political and revolutionary thought that stemmed from the European liberal and socialist currents of political thought in the nineteenth century but also in the medieval Georgian conception of regional unity that is revealed in the Georgian Chronicles. Even when the idea of Cau-

casian unity or interconnection was not articulated on paper, over the centuries it has still been expressed intuitively in repeated episodes of spontaneous efforts to unite in defense of a common enemy. Some of these efforts have been recorded not only in the legends of the Georgian Chronicles but also in the modern era. Although this paper is simply a summary of work which I am presenting in more detail in a forthcoming book chapter and my dissertation, which I hope to expand into a book, I hope that this survey has provided sufficient information to convince the reader that the idea of Caucasian unity has indigenous roots and considerable longevity. Moreover, as this paper highlights, one of the most interesting features of the Caucasian concept of regional unity is its tendency to emphasize unity while still jealously guarding the right to the internal sovereignty of each of the unique Caucasian nations, usually through promoting the formation of some kind of defensive alliance, confederation or federation. Considering the flexibility that such structures can provide, perhaps the Caucasus holds the keys to squaring the circle between the two opposing principles of states' rights to preserve their territorial integrity and nations' rights to sovereignty over their own destinies.

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The Concept of Pax Russica, Russian Strategic Narratives and their Possible Impact on Populist Movements and the Russophone Community in Estonia[15]

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. 1. The aim of article

This review article focuses on studying the informational influence of Russia through strategic narratives that were disseminated to target audiences in Estonia, including several populist movements and the Russophone community. I will examine which Russian strategic narratives were disseminated before and during COVID-19 with the purpose of impacting political movements and society, especially the Russophone population of Estonia.

1. 2. Data sample and methodology

This research is primarily based on the qualitative media analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of several pro-Kremlin media outlets in the Russian language through 12 semi-structured expert interviews (Lepik et al., 2014) with opinion leaders, political figures, security experts (law, media and communication, political science, defence studies) and several representatives of the Russophone community in Estonia as well (Flick, 2006). These expert interviews revealed several issues and threats to Estonian society in the informational enviroment.

Seventeen articles from various Russian media sources (*Baltnews.ee, Sputniknews, REX Information Agen-*cy, *Regnum, Komsomolskaya Pravda, Inosmi.ru* and others) were analysed, covering the period 2014 until 2021. The criterion for selecting these articles was that their target audience should be Russophone people in Estonia. Qualitative content analysis (Flick, 2006) was used in current study to analyse the empirical data (interviews and articles published in mainstream media) by using a hidden pilot sample (Kuckartz, 2014)[3].

1. 3. Some notes on Russian information warfare and strategic narratives

Putin's authoritarian regime is trying to account for the characteristics of each country in the Western world and, even more broadly, is striving to damage the democratic and liberal system as a whole (Karlsen, 2019) with several different types of manipulative and harmful disinformation by trying to influence political, cultural and economic circles in the West, among them far-right forces (Weiss, 2020), leftist forces (Paier & Sazonov, 2019; Weyland, 2013) and even some liberal circles in the Western world. For that reason, Putin's authoritarian regime considers the characteristics of each state and nation being targeted with information warfare (see more Mölder & Sazonov, 2018; Lucas, & Pomerantsev, 2016; Darczewska & Żochowski, 2017). The main aim of the Kremlin's information war against the Western world and its liberal and democratic system and values is to create fear, mistrust and instability. Russia's goal is to divide Europe and, in particular,

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3   Four articles from four different publications and different media outlets from which primary coding was performed.

the Kremlin tries to destabilize using these same manipulative methods, messages and tools of destabilization (Winnerstig, 2014), including hostile propaganda (Spriņģe, 2018; Mölder & Sazonov, 2020), cyber-attacks and many other hybrid means and tools.

For a better understanding of the nature of Russian information warfare, we should accentuate that the Kremlin is waging a hybrid war against the Western world on all levels through the use of disinformation campaigns, cyber-attacks, organized crime, political blackmail, money-laundering, espionage, energy dependence, facilitated migration, etc.[4] Moscow also uses economic and political pressure in an attempt to influence the Western political and economic environments. Over the last decade, or even longer, Russia has increased its aggressive rhetoric and imperialist ambitions. One of Russia's hybrid warfare dimensions is Russian information activity which could be designated as Russian Global Knowledge Warfare. As Eric Shiraev and Holger Mölder correctly pointed out, Global Knowledge Warfare (GKW) *"is the purposeful use and the management of knowledge in pursuit of a competitive advantage over foreign opponents. Knowledge is information that has a purpose or use and requires the awareness or a form of understanding of the subject. Knowledge warfare is about what people know, how they interpret this knowledge, and how they use it in their actions"* (Shiraev & Mölder, 2020, p. 2).

Strategic narratives which are most crucial and existential tools in the GKW are, according Mölder and Shiraev, built on effectively visualized images and strategic narratives which can influence wide target audiences; they can influence the decision-making process of political or economic elites or shape public opinion (Mölder & Shiraev 2021, p. 16).

What are strategic narratives? Why they are so powerful tools of influence? The concept of strategic narratives has been actively adopted in international relations and also used in political communication (Roselle et al., 2013). Strategic narratives consider stories that exist in the collective memory of people and also other factors which frame interpretation, including political agendas and ideological views (Ventsel, et al. 2021, p. 6; also Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 85). As Roselle et al. (2021) rightly argue, our era's soft power is a strategic narrative. The strategic narrative began with a starting point similar to Nye's idea, based on an understanding of fundamental change in the international system and the question of how to influence international relations.

Already Antoniades et al. (2010, p. 5) argues that strategic narratives are representations of a sequence of events and identities, a communicative means by which the political elite seeks to give a meaningful significance to the past, present, and future in order to achieve political goals. Roselle et al. (2013) argue that strategic narratives can affect the following areas:

- an international system that expresses how political actors shape perceptions of the organization of international relations
- identity, meaning how political actors want to project their identity in international relations
- policies, for example the desire of political actors to influence international negotiations

Thus, if political actors are able to align narratives of the international system, politics and identity with their own strategic orientations and goals, the greater the opportunity becomes for them to increase their influence in the international arena (Miskimmon et al., 2018, p. 3). Strategic narratives created by Russia are aimed at various target groups. Creating narratives exploits several populist political movements as well as politicians. To this end, various strategic narratives were created that amplify or shape perceptions of the world in line with the goals of Russia (Sazonov, 2022).

At the end of this subchapter I will mention that populism, according to Ernesto Laclau (2007), is a never-ending discursive struggle for hegemony through infusing meanings in key concepts which are inherently open to interpretation (see also Makarychev & Sazonov, 2021).

2. PAX RUSSICA AS A TOOL OF INFLUENCE IN ESTONIA

In 2007 Russian authoritarian leader Vladimir Putin founded the Russkiy Mir Foundation led by Viacheslav Nikonov (Member of the State Duma).[5] On April 2007 Russian dictator Putin declared the following about *Pax Russica*:

> *The Russian language not only preserves an entire layer of truly global achievements but is also the living space for many millions of people in the Russian-speaking world, a community that goes far beyond Russia itself. As the common heritage of many peoples, the Russian language will never become the language of hatred or enmity, xenophobia, or isolationism. In my view, we need to support the initiative put forward by Russian linguists to create a National Russian Language*

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[4] See more Radin, 2017; Mölder, et al., 2021; Mölder & Sazonov, 2022.

[5] The grandson of Viacheslav Molotov was a famous Soviet politician from Stalin's epoch.

Foundation, the main aim of which will be to develop the Russian language at home, support Russian language study programmes abroad and generally promote Russian language and literature around the world.[6]

Pax Russica ('Russian World') (Itshenko, 2014) is the fundamental idea of the ideological basis of Putin's Russia. This idea or concept has been actively developed and disseminated by various PR companies and information campaigns in the mainstream media and social media for a Russian audience, and also for Russophone communities around the world (Expert I, 2021; Expert J, 2020).

The concept of *Pax Russica* has been used by Russian political elites as a powerful ideological tool of pressure and influence with the aim of uniting all Russian-speaking people in the world. The wish is to create a global Russian-speaking ideological, cultural, historical, political, economic and informational space which will be controlled and governed by the Kremlin. It is important to note here that *Pax Russica* is very closely related to the Putin regime's compatriot policy in which the Kremlin has declared that its duty is protect Russophone people not only in Russia but also abroad, particularly in Estonia (Sazonov & Mölder, 2022). As Holger Mölder and I write in our article:

"The fundamental ideas of Pax Russica have been vigorously used by Moscow for expansionist purposes, lately regarding aggression against Ukraine, later widely disseminated for justifying the annexation of Crimea and the invasion of the Donbas area in Ukraine. The concept was promoted by abundant information campaigns in mass media, social media, etc. The Kremlin blamed the Ukrainians for fascism and for discrimination against Russians. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, imperialist ambitions became an effective tool of the Russian political elites to unite the irredentist movements of Russian-speaking people in neighboring countries and to create a powerful Russian-influenced cultural, ideological, social, political, and informational area on the territory of post-Soviet space. It was also used to develop its own compatriot policy" (Sazonov & Mölder, 2022).

What does *Pax Russica* mean for Estonia? Over the last two decades, or even earlier, the Kremlin has been influencing the Baltic states, including Estonia. Their arsenal of asymmetric activities includes infor-

mation and psychological influence (Arold, 2015, pp. 9–14), cyber-attacks, exploitation of crime to influence societies, radicalization, incitement of riots, and the involvement and the exploitation of activists to destabilize Estonia's internal security and important state functions (Expert A, 2019).

In Estonia the concept *Pax Russica* was exploited though compatriot policy and the Kremlin's strategic narratives used to undermine and discredit the Estonian government, Estonian state and society. The Kremlin does this though promoting pro-Kremlin propaganda narratives like Russophobia (see e.g., Baburin, 2020), discrimination against the Russian-speaking population, and flourishing Nazism in Estonia, to name but a few. According to Expert C's (2019) opinion, we can still see signs of the old paradigm when the old hostile narratives used by the Kremlin—such as discrimination against Russophone people in Estonia, Estonia as a failed state, and the glorification of Nazism and Fascism—are still actively used and promoted on Russian TV and in other Russian media, while on social media, "We also had a significant attempt to start a Russian-initiated false flag anti-European movement" (Expert C, 2019).

Concerning Russian federal TV channels which were presented on Estonia (until 2022), Expert C accentuates that Russophones in Estonia mostly watch Russian federal TV networks that are under the control of the Kremlin administration. According to Expert C, *RT* does not occupy the same position in Estonia that *RT* occupies in other Western countries (United States and Western Europe) because Estonian Russophones have free access to the many Russian federal networks and TV channels (Expert C, 2019; Expert B, 2019). Expert C claims:

"It means that the Estonian Russian population is directly influenced by the same media space as people in Russia. The Estonian language audience considers RT a foreign channel because of the language" (Expert C, 2019).

Several propaganda narratives from Russia, or created by pro-Russian actors, are quite popular among a significant part of the Russophone population of Estonia.[7] Local discourses were often or sometimes mostly transmitted through Russian-language main-

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6   See Russkiy Mir Foundation; see also Sycheva 2007.

7   The Russian-speaking population makes up 26–27% of the Estonian population of 1,300,000, approximately 80% of them living in two counties: Harjumaa (including the capital Tallinn) and Ida-Virumaa (northeast of Estonia). It has been a valuable target for information and influence operations coming from Russia. See also Wlodarska-Frykowska, 2016.

stream media (Russian media channels, but also some local Baltic and Estonian Russian-language media channels as well). The Russophone audience of Estonia constantly receives messages and narratives from Russia's channels—e.g., about the "immorality" of the West or about the "misdeeds" and "aggression" of NATO (Eslas, 2017) - stoking the fears of migrants and refugees and spreading other harmful narratives about the foundations of the architecture of European security, values, and the identity of the EU. Russia constantly accuses Estonia, its government and people of encouraging fascism, xenophobia, discrimination of minorities and Russophobia (Baranov & Afonina, 2016; Baltnews, 2020a).

Russia's governmental TV channels like *RTR, NTV, PBK (Russian First Channel)*, several Russian newspapers, and even some Baltic Russian-language channels transmit information in line with the compatriot policies of Russia, promoting the idea of *Pax Russica* and often producing disinformation and fake news (Expert H, 2020). The presence of the whole range of the Russian media in Estonia until February 2022 was one more cause for concern. Russian TV channels like *NTV or RTR*, newspapers like *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, and some Baltic Russian-language media (*Baltnews. ee, RuBaltic.ru*) give information in line with the Kremlin's policies (negative views on NATO and the EU) (see e.g., Baltnews, 2017).

In February 2016 the Russian propaganda channel *Sputnik* opened a branch in Estonia and started publishing fake news and propaganda messages, reproducing Russophobic narratives (Rooda, 2017). *Sputnik's* actions in Estonia were terminated in 2019 after sanctions were brought against the Kremlin propaganda channel *Rossija Segodnya* (Russia Today) which owns the agency (Err.ee, 2019). However, elsewhere in the Baltic states Sputnik's representative office continues to operate in Latvia. The server for the Lithuanian audience *Sputnik Lietuva* is located in the Russian Federation (Spriņģe, 2018; Mölder & Sazonov, 2020).

Estonian opinion leader Expert D (2020) pointed out that the Russophone diaspora in Estonia is a myth. According to him, there are many opinions covering a large variety of different points of view. Nevertheless, many Russian-speakers in Estonia have problems with integration into Estonian society, often remaining nostalgic about Soviet times, and Moscow uses that to further its own interests, especially in propaganda. Several Russians living in Estonia are not politically educated, do not believe in democracy and do not consider that participation in elections can change

anything. Many of them are disappointed in the Centre Party (Keskerakond) and do not participate in elections. The Centre Party, however, uses the resources of Tallinn media channels such as the newspapers *Pealinn.ee, Stolitsa.ee, Vceherka.ee,* sometimes in addition to the Russian TV channel PBK, to promote their views (Expert D, 2018; Expert D, 2020; Expert E, 2019; Expert F, 2019; Expert G, 2021). Luckily, Russian TV and many Russian online media portals were banned in early 2022 when Russia attacked Ukraine.[8] Several pro-Russian organizations long active in Estonia are also worthy of attention because of their anti-governmental actions. The so-called media club *Impressum* (Impressum, 2021) is also worth special attention because of its clearly anti-Estonian actions and activities associated with the Kremlin (Makarychev, 2020).

In addition to *Impressum,* there are also several military-historical societies (Postimees 2011) and NGOs related to 'Russkiy Mir' (*Pax Russica*). The *Impressum* Media Club has invited Valery Tishkov, the famous pro-Kremlin Russian historian and academic Director of the Russian Ethnology and Anthropology Institute, to Estonia. Professor Tishkov is one of the most prominent people in Russia 'fighting' against the falsification of Russian and Soviet history by Western scholars. The Estonian authorities banned Tishkov from entering Estonia in November 2014, which was shown in Russian propaganda in a negative light (Tass, 2014).

In addition, threats could come also from social media. Social media (Nissen, 2015) such as VKontakte and Odnoklassniki, very popular among the Russian-speaking residents of Estonia, are also an important instrument of influence, but Facebook, Twitter and others play an important role as well (Robotrolling, 3/2018; Robotrolling, 2/2019). Robotrolling was used prior to elections (e.g., European Parliamentary elections in May 2019) (Robotrolling, 2/2019, p. 6).

3. RUSSIAN STRATEGIC NARRATIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF *PAX RUSSICA*

One characteristic feature of Russian strategic narratives that they are destructive. Their aim is to destroy their potential adversary and, besides the Russophone community, the Kremlin very often targets various populist movements and groups in Europe (also in Estonia as well) from left to right, etc. Interestingly,

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[8]   The Estonian government stopped broadcasting several Russian TV channels in Estonia, among them Rossiya 1, Rossiya 24, NTV, REN TV and some others. Several harmful pro-Kremlin online portals and web sites were also banned, including RuBaltic.ru, ntv.ru, ren.tv, 5-tv.ru, 78.ru, 1tv.com, lenta.ru and tass.ru (Err.ee, 2022).

Russia claims to protect and promote worship against liberalism and tries to promote idea that Russia is protecting conservative and family values (Sazonov & Mölder 2022).

Thus, in this subchapter I will briefly look at the Russian strategic narratives that the Kremlin create and uses as tools for influencing target audiences in the West, and particularly Estonia before and during the first waves of COVID-19. One tactic they use is the dissemination of strategic narratives as a soft power tool (Roselle et al., 2014) which the Kremlin deploys with a Western audience in mind, including the Baltic states and particularly Estonia (Ventsel et al., 2019).

In a recent study, Holger Mölder and I (2020) examined pro-Russian media outlets during the escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020. In our article we showed that strategic narratives created and disseminated by the Russian Federation in early 2020 for target audiences in the Baltic states (Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania) tried to emphasize three things. Firstly, they evoked political and economic motives related to government policies in all three Baltic states. Secondly, they used status-related motives to disrupt the international system and Western-led political institutions (e.g., NATO, EU etc) throughout the Baltic states. Thirdly, conflictual motives were highlighted, indicating opposing identities between the Russian and Baltic nations, identities that have often emphasized a perceived Russophobic context in Baltic identity building. These strategic narratives were created and spread by the Kremlin and they are part of Kremlin's strategic aim to destroy unity of Western world. Its goals are the creation of ideological and also political tensions within the European Union and NATO, within EU and United States. The Baltic states have become an important target of information operations conducted by the Russian Federation due to their geopolitical location (close to Russian border) and last but not least strategic importance (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020).

During the first wave of COVID-19 in 2020 pro-Kremlin channels actively transmitted anti-European hysteria and fears related to coronavirus and its impact. Several topics were circulated, e.g., that the European Union would not help the Baltic states and that COVID-19 had destroyed the unity of the European Union (Piatrinis, 2020; Armazanova, 2020) or that the economy would soon collapse (see, e.g., Krugley, 2020; Nosovich, 2020). These were promoted alongside the old topic of Russophobia in Estonia and the other Baltic states (Nikolayev, 2020; Baburin, 2020; Vinnikov, 2020). In our recent article, Holger Mölder and I showed that Russia's official strategic narratives no longer speak about Estonia and the whole Baltic region as a part of the Russian state, but they are certainly still interested in their connection with the sphere of influence of the Russian Federation in which the Baltic states would possibly become a "window to Europe", allowing the Kremlin to put pressure on the EU and NATO (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 89). This is probably the reason why the Kremlin is interested in fostering instability and chaos in this region using quite visible and strong Eurosceptic and anti-NATO ideas (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020). As Holger Mölder and I argue, "the main goal of Russia's information activities and influence operations is to widen the political gap between Europe and the United States and to reduce the US contribution to NATO and European security. The second purpose is to shape public opinion and to mobilize populist movements in the Western societies that oppose the liberal democratic principles and are sceptical about the constitutional guarantees of minorities and the protection of individual rights on behalf of the Kremlin strategic interests" (Mölder &Sazonov, 2020, p. 84).

The Kremlin's disseminated strategic narratives, that describe the West and its democratic institutions as something very corrupt and in need of reform, are the reason why Moscow supports and promotes alternative formats of international cooperation excluding the West and its representatives—such formats as BRICS[9] (Hinck et al., 2018, p. 27; see more Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 87). The Baltic states are, in general, portrayed by Russian strategic narratives as a failed states, a poor and unsuccessful periphery of the European Union, abandoned by their new Western hosts. According to these Russian strategic narratives, the Baltic states are currently facing very serious issues and deep problems in the economy, in social system, demography etc that appeared and became more and more serious after leaving the Soviet Union. The political strategic narratives which were constructed and disseminated by Moscow emphasize the role of the Russian Federation as holder of traditional conservative (family) ideas, values, rescuing the world from the bad influence of Western liberal ideology and democrasy which exists in the declining West (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 87; Laruelle & Radvanyi, 2018, p. 126).

As we can see, the strategic narratives disseminated by the Kremlin are an integral and important part of the Russian information war which Russia is conducting against the West.

In the next subchapter I will briefly focus on Russophobia which the Kremlin actively uses in its information warfare.

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[9] Brazil, Russia, India, China, Republic of South Africa.

4. RUSSOPHOBIA AS A TOOL FOR PRESSURE

One common topic in Russian influence activity is Russophobia (Darczewska & Żochowski, 2015). Russophobia has been promoted by Russia for decades "for both domestic and foreign policy purposes, and historically the Kremlin's elite has concentrated much of the negative flow of information on Russia under the narrative of Russophobia" (Ventsel et al., 2018, p. 118; Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 87, 92, 93). This quite popular narrative of the oppression of the Russophone community in Estonia and in the Baltic states generally presents local Russian-speaking people "as a hated minority deprived of many fundamental rights because of their national identity" (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020, p. 87; Lucas & Pomerantsev, 2016). The topic of Russophobia is still very actively used by the pro-Kremlin media and by pro-Kremlin opinion leaders and authors (e.g., Baranov & Afonina, 2016; Baltnews, 2020a), including promoting the idea that journalists are oppressed in the Baltic states Russian (Baltnews, 2020b). I now present one illustrative example of how pro-Russian oriented opinion leaders try to use and promote the topic of Russophobia in the context of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In October 2020 Dmitri Klensky, an Estonian Russian-speaking opinion leader, ex-politician and journalist (during the Soviet period he worked in "Pravda") published an article entitled "Coronavirus exposed the Russophobia of the Estonian media or the technology of manifestation of mild xenophobia" in which he highlighted how some Russian-speaking Estonian opinion leaders use Russophobic ideas for their own benefit. Klensky accentuates:

> Let us compare two news headlines about the same event: "Popov does not rule out that COVID-19 is spreading more in the Russian-speaking community" and "Popov: there is a tendency for an increase in the incidence of COVID-19 in Tallinn and Harju County." Feel the difference! It turns out that something is wrong with the Russians, they are dangerous for Estonia. The first news was published by the portal rus.postimees.ee, the second by rus.err.ee. The first was published by a private media outlet, the second by public and legal, practically state-owned. Both appeared immediately after the broadcast of the Russian-language ETV+ "Who will win?" on the topic "Is there a negative attitude towards certain nationalities in the Russian media in Estonia?" (Klensky, 2020)

Klensky uses the issue of Russophobia in the context of COVID-19 to paint the editor-in-chief of the portal Rus.postimees.ee O. Lagashina in a negative light, accentuating that she "almost swore on air" that the Russian editorial office she headed was the ideal place for covering issues involving an ethnic motive. Nevertheless, this belies the headline of the news in question. The headline already provocatively states that the "Russian community" of Estonia is objectively more prone to the infection than the rest of Estonia. At the same time, such an assessment is attributed to Arkadiy Popov, head of the ambulance service of Tallinn North Estonian Regional Hospital and the medical headquarters for combating coronavirus created under the Health Department. He said this on the morning program *Terevisioon* of the Estonian-language channel ETV (Klensky, 2020).

As we can see, the Russophobic topics promoted and disseminated by the Kremlin and pro-Kremlin opinion leaders were created to show that there are serious issues with discrimination against the Russophone community in Estonia. Thus, the Kremlin tries to create a negative image of the Estonian state and its people for Western and Russian-speaking audiences alike. The next issue which should be discussed is conspiracy theories which Russia uses as a tool of disinformation for their influencing target audience (Expert K, 2020; Expert L, 2020).

5. SOME RIGHT, LEFT AND CENTRIST POLITICIANS AND PRO-KREMLIN DISCOURSE: ARE THERE SOME SIMILARITIES?

It is often very difficult to make clear and thus claim that some populist politicians share the views or narratives of the Kremlin, while it is known that such politicians exist. Cases where populist ideas (right or left) (Wodak, 2015; Weyland, 2015; Paier & Sazonov, 2019) coincide in some places with the Kremlin's narratives, or are somewhat similar to Kremlin discourse, are likely to be more frequent. Nevertheless, I pick out some examples where we can find some similarities with the Kremlin strategic narratives which Russia disseminates.

Expert D points out a certain pattern of asymmetric threats in Estonia. In the beginning, there is an escalation of a certain situation in a political area that may be related to a change of government or, for example, elections. According to Expert D, Estonia has never had as close relations with Russia as Ukraine or Georgia, but the Russian Federation is nevertheless trying to influence the political situation in Estonia and try-

ing harm it (Expert D, 2020). In Expert D's opinion, this work of the Russian Federation is quite successful:

> "In the beginning, Russia tried to create ethnic (Russian) parties that received some funding from Russia. At one point, it was realized in Russia that it was not working. There were more serious attempts to use existing political force to influence the situation in the country" (Expert D, 2019; Expert D, 2020).

Some politicians or members of the Centre Party partially show their sympathies with pro-Kremlin discourse. There are also some other politicians and Russian-speaking opinion leaders in Estonia who promote Kremlin discourses (see, e.g., Klensky, 2016; Klensky, 2017; Grigoryan, 2014).

Among left-winged parties I will mention here the Estonian United Left Party which known for its pro-Kremlin orientation (Makarychev & Sazonov, 2019). It should be noted here that Estonian left-wing politician from the Centre Party Oudekki Loone is famous for her Soviet nostalgia and some positive attitude to the Soviet Union and Russia: *"Estonia would provide Ukraine with missiles and artillery, which are rationally expected to victimize the people of Donbass"* (Loone's Facebook post, end of 2021). She was later quoted in pro-Kremlin media. Loone also accentuates that it *"is clear to everyone that these weapons will be used to kill the Russians".* Loone explained that sending Javelin ammunition to Ukraine would emphasize the need for a military solution to the conflict, which is not in line with the Minsk agreements. She considers that the Russian army have been on the Ukrainian border for quite some time and does not see any significant increase in the threat. Loone also stated: *"When Ukraine stopped supplying water to Crimea, I was seriously worried that stronger steps could be expected from Russia".* According to Loone, Putin has been looking for an agreement with the West all the time, and he has not succeeded: *"Rather, we could support win-win situations such as a more general gas agreement with the launch of Nord Stream 2"* (Paris, 2022). Loone was also among some other Centre Party members in the Estonian parliament who on 22 February 2022 did not join with supporting Ukraine in face of the upcoming Russian invasion (Saarniit, 2022).

Right-wing politician Mart Helme from EKRE[10] and Member of the Estonian Parliament said in the Estonian parliament in early April 2022 that war refugees from Ukraine bring infectious diseases to Estonia and may start engaging in prostitution: *"I have one son, a doctor, I communicate with doctors. The doctors say*

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10   The Conservative People's Party of Estonia

that this picture of health is terrible. HIV is coming back. Infectious diseases are being brought in from Ukraine, which we have thought will never be available in Estonia again. No, they're coming back to us because tens of thousands of people are coming and bringing us here." (Delfi, 2022)

But in this case we should note that Russian propaganda disseminated similar narratives for years, claiming that Ukrainian women are prostitutes, etc (EuroMaidan Press 2014). Makarychev and I write that populism of the EKRE is oriented against liberalism of the West with the EU. The EKRE also is targeting the political establishment of Estonia that bases its "policy on the principle of European solidarity, and on Russia as the main protector of its 'compatriots' residing in Estonia" (Makarychev & Sazonov, 2019).

Additionally the Kremlin can also use nationalists and ultra-right forces, and Expert F used the Soldiers of Odin as one example of the use of extremist groups. Expert F admits that radical nationalism is a threat (Expert F, 2019).

Expert C added one interesting example about the narrative "Estonia exit EU" (#ESTexitEU) (Propastop, 2019) used on social media which was promoted with anti-EU purposes:

> "Can we say that #ESTexitEU was a centrally-planned and executed operation? I do not know. In this new paradigm, the telling indicator is the use of big numbers. Many desired effects become possible if the operation achieves a critical mass of messages. A targeted person may then perceive that everybody around him thinks a certain way and those messages are massively repeated. For the analyst, it means that if you can record growth in numbers of posts or accounts that carry certain narratives then we can really talk about serious interference" (Expert C, 2019).

CONCLUSION:

In this article I have mentioned only some examples of the Kremlin's channels, and tools of influence used in Estonia and especially among Russophone community. The Kremlin's propaganda uses all opportunities and possibilities and COVID-19 well illustrates this issue how it works.

Russia's influence operations disseminated strategic narratives for promoting narratives of "Pax Russica" among Russophone community in Estonia for years trying influence whole Estonian society, to split it, but also to influence political environment. Therefore we should also consider that the Russophone community of Estonia is not homogenous, as is sometimes

presented in some researches or in media outlets; it is visibly fragmented, with several Russian-speaking minorities made up of different people with different views. However, large sections of this group belong in the field of Russian media discourse, as they are the target audience of Russian information activity and could be potentially influenced by the Kremlin in the promotion of *Pax Russica*. Russian strategic narratives shaped perceptions of the world and political preferences in line with the Kremlin's foreign policy goals during COVID-19 (Sazonov et al., 2022).

Last but not least it should be notice here that the Kremlin's strategic narratives are aimed at potential target audiences, among them populist movements, radical (but also non-radical) political figures and forces, several international target groups, alternative or anti-establishment groups, anti-US, anti-NATO movements, anti-EU, etc. (Mölder & Sazonov, 2020; Sazonov, 2022).

Interviews

Interview with Expert A, Tallinn, 08.05.2019.

Interview with Expert B, Tallinn, 13.05.2019.

Interview with Expert C, via e-mail, 26.06.2019.

Interview with Expert D, Tartu, 28.02.2019 and 15.05.2020.

Interview with Expert E, via e-mail, 17.06.2019

Interview with Expert F, Tallinn, 21.05.2019.

Interview with Expert G, 18.08.2021

Interview with Expert H, via Skype, 22.05.2020.

Interview with Expert I, 15.3.2021

Interview with Expert J, 13.10.2020

Interview with Expert K, 22.09.2020.

Interview with Expert L, Tallinn, 17.08.2020.

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The Use of Psychology as Strategy in Hybrid Warfare

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1. INTRODCTION: FROM SUN TZU TO MAO: THE GUERRILLA WAR

An elderly gentleman asked his personal doctor, who descended from an ancient family of healers, who, among them, was the best in the medical art. The famous doctor, whose name was synonymous of the Chinese medical science, replied:

> the firstborn sees the spirit of the disease and removes it before it takes shape, so his name does not cross the confines of his house. The second son cures the disease when it is still in its infancy, so his name is not known beyond the neighborhood. As for me, I practice acupuncture, I prescribe potions and massage the body; so sometimes my name reaches the ears of the powerfuls.

Just as the Eastern medical art neutralizes the disease before it can harm the body, also according to Sun Tzu the pinnacle of understanding and of war strategy is to make the conflict useless. Defeating the enemy without a fight is the greatest skill. In the *Art of War*, Sun Tzu proposes different levels of warrior skills, indicating as the best the one who manages to frustrate the enemy's plans even before starting the conflict. By virtue of the *Suntzuist* philosophy it is also possible to rethink about the period of the Cold War: on one hand the threat to use nuclear weapons would have frozen the conflict since on one hand it was not convenient even for the winner and on the other hand the mutual arms race could have caused the destruction of both contenders, helping to make a generalized, impossible and improbable conflict.

After the conclusion of the Second World War, hopes were kindled for a new era of peace and justice, even if the growing tensions between the ideological blocs of the United States and the Soviet Union provided little reasons to be assured. The term *Cold War* was popularized by Lippmann in his book *The Cold War*, but it had also previously been used by George Orwell in one of his unpublished article (George Orwell, 1945) where he described the possibility of some super-states possessing a weapon capable of wiping out millions of men in a few moments, dividing the world into two enemy parts.

Despite a war was still possible, it could be avoided thanks to «a tacit agreement never to use the bomb against each other». The threat about the use of this device would have produced a new form of absolute power among the states.

The era of large-scale wars was in the twilight (L. Freedman, 2013) while a horrible stability unfolded, and a peace that was not a real peace.

The culture of the atomic bomb amplified existing fears and technological aspirations. The bomb became paradigm of the state power, the American hegemony, technology and death.

The threat to use nuclear weapons made them prefer to resort the strategy of an unconventional war, stimulating the use of tactics such as guerilla warfare.

The ideological and unorthodox wars of Mao, General Giap and Che Guevara, were the forerunners of the new forms for irregular warfares, whose protagonists, looking out from the fissures of modern conflicts, would have laid to the foundations of a new type of hybrid threat.

The fall of Berlin wall, which symbolically represented the end of the Cold War, produced a watershed inside the international politics giving life to a new conception of conflict characterized by technique (F. Coticchia, 2015).

2.   THE FIRST UKRAINIAN CONFLICT

On the night between 22 and 23 February 2014 the «satrap» Yanukovich, deposed and put to flight, was replaced thanks to German, French and Polish pressure, by the «passional» Julija Tymosenko, who returned to power (E. Di Rienzo , 2015, p.18). After the expulsion of Yanukovych, on March 18, 2014, Russia, following the referendum[1], annexed Crimea[2]. In the previous weeks, Moscow had put its military apparatus on alert (E. Di Rienzo, 2015, p. 40) by deploying troops along the Russian-Ukrainian borders, sending special and armored units to Sevastopol. In order to achieve his goal, Putin did not resort to a blatant «open conflict» as in the Georgian case, but he rather opted for a direct and indirect support operations of the breakaway eastern provinces of Ukraine, and at the same time used a more traditional strategy than in Crimea. While on the Crimean peninsula Putin used hybrid tools such as covert operations, information warfare and eventually a conventional invasion to take control, in the eastern regions he used a mix of political warfare, support from paramilitary groups and conventional forces. (Treverton, Thvedt, Chen, Lee, & McCue, 2018, pp. 13-14).

On the night between 21 and 22 November 2013 in Kiev's Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti), young university students animated a spontaneous and colorful protest against the suspension of the agreements between Ukraine and the European Union. The pro-European street protests, better known as «Euromaidan» had initially taken a peaceful dimension. But due to the square's demands for the resignation of the president and the consequent government responses, the demonstrations became increasingly violent.[3]

The Russian fear was that the United States would extend its geopolitical influence even further east by transforming Ukraine into a satellite state, pushing it towards NATO and preparing the ground for the ultimate disintegration of Russia (E Di Rienzo, 2015, p .7).

Ukraine has always been strategic for Moscow and it would be unthinkable that it could become a foreign or even adverse country. In the past Ukraine was part of Russia and for centuries their stories intertwined, so Putin didn't wait long to claim his leadership and influence over Kiev. Moscow will never allow Ukraine to join NATO – as argued by Kissinger in March 2014 - nor could have tolerated that its prerogatives over Crimea were not guaranteed or fulfilled. Odessa and Sevastopol[4] are two very important military and commercial ports for Moscow. Putin would never have renounced the use of these two strategic outposts with outlets on the Black Sea and indirectly on the Mediterranean, fundamental for Russian economy (A Ferrari, G. Cella, 2014, pp. 153-155).

The Kremlin implemented a two-headed strategy by organizing two different campaigns simultaneously and distinctly: one in Crimea and the other in Donbass[5], easily adapting to contingent events. In each case, the tools and goals pursued by Russia in the war on Ukraine have been very different from each other, but nevertheless useful to understand the new type of «hybrid» threat brought into play.

In Crimea, Russian military operations were brilliant. In fact in just under a month, without bloodshed and firing a shot, Russia managed to conquer all the military bases of the peninsula. The new premier of Crimea, Sergei Aksenov, on March 1st set the date for the referendum to decide about the secession of the Republic of Crimea from Ukraine on March 16. Russia in Crimea resorted to non-military and paramilitary elements in order to confuse the conflict zone, also special forces and other infiltrated elements were

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[1] «Dear friends, we are gathered here today by virtue of a question of vital and historical importance for all of us. On 16 March a referendum was held in Crimea in full compliance with the democratic mechanisms and international norms. More than 82% of those entitled took part in the vote. Of these, over 96% spoke in favor the reunification with Russia. These numbers speak for themselves».Cf. excerpt from President Vladimir Putin's speech, at http://www.limesonline.com/cartaceo/la-crimea-e-russia.

[2] «The Black Sea peninsula had belonged to Russia since January 1792, according to what was established by the Treaty of Iasi, signed by the Tsarist and Ottoman Empire. It was wickedly devolved to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic by Nikita Khrushchev, against the will of its inhabitants in 1954. It took place on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Treaty of Perejaslav of 1654», cf, E Di Rienzo, The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict, op. cit., p.40

[3] «At about four o'clock in the morning on Saturday 30 November 2013, the berkut, the "golden eagles", special anti-terrorism units of the Ministry of the Interior set up on the model of the Russians Omon, were hurled at the demonstrators. Security groups trained and never reformed, with a Soviet conception of public order and the rule of law. The berkuts hit the demonstrators as hard as they

could with batons and kicks, smashing the head even of a Reuters videographer». Cf. http://www.limesonline.com/cartaceo/cronaca-di-una-rivoluzione-improbabile

[4] Sevastopol naval base, home of the Russian Black Sea fleet, was another thorny issue of the Ukrainian crisis. In 1997, with the Treaty of Splitting the Black Sea Fleet, the Russian and Ukrainian governments established two independent national fleets in the base in Sevastopol and in other places in Crimea; Kiev also granted the lease of the base to Russia until 2017. Subsequently, with the Kharkiv treaty dated 2010, the lease of the naval base was extended until 2042, in exchange for trade and gas. Sevastopol base had military and above all commercial importance for Moscow, as about 30% of total Russian exports would pass through the ports of Odessa and Sevastopol.

[5] Cf. Kathy Lally, William Booth and Will Englund, "Russian forces seize Crimea; Ukraine's interim president decries 'aggression, "cf. «The Washington Post », March 1, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-deeply-concerned-obama-warns-russia-against-action- incrimea.

used, giving the impression of being supported by both militias and local security.[6] Russian troops initially began to exert psychological and propaganda pressure to provoke defections in Ukrainian soldiers. Furthermore Crimea was isolated by cutting off communications and electricity in some military bases. The goal was to consolidate the Russian presence until the total evacuation of the Ukrainian forces. The outcome of the referendum was overwhelming in favor of annexing the peninsula to Russia, although some European and American election officials contested the results. While the Russian troops were conducting operations in Crimea, the Kremlin launched a media campaign on the Russian population of Crimea, with multiple goals: the first was to discredit the government in Kiev by making it appear illegitimate and «fascist», besides the propaganda machine conveyed the message that ethnic Russians could be in danger. The control of the national media[7] by Russia would have allowed the Kremlin to orient Russian opinion on the events in Crimea, also thanks to the fact that the vast majority of citizens of eastern Ukraine and Crimea used as their main source of information the Russian TV channels, preferring them to the Ukrainian-speaking ones.

The final control over the media by Moscow came on 9th March when the military interrupted the television programming, leaving the Russian channels as the only alternative. Moscow had also managed to infiltrate the pro-Russian popular movement born in opposition to the «Euromaidan» square, called «Stop Maidan». Although the pro-Russian protesters have always denied any connection, instead there were several links[8]. In addition to targeted messaging and propaganda, Russia also allegedly aimed cyber attacks against the pro-Maidan movement[9] and Kiev

government.

In addition to targeted messaging and propaganda, Russia also allegedly aimed cyber attacks against the pro-Maidan movement and Kiev government. Between 2013 and 2017 Kiev suffered at least five cyber attacks, as well as the electoral system which was penetrated in October 2014. As consequence the dissemination of the electoral results was delayed.

During the Russian-Ukrainian conflict both political and economic pressures were exerted on Ukraine. Moscow's predatory political campaign had begun long before the military one. Already in 2013 Putin had «lent a hand» to the now President Yanukovych, trying to exploit Ukraine's financial instability and vulnerability by offering $15 billion and significant discounts on natural gas imports, with the aim of bringing Ukraine back into the orbit of Russian influence.

Russia had also managed to capitalize on the transitional period during which Kiev was without a government. After the expulsion of Yanukovych due to the inexperience of the Ukrainian administration and the slow response to the events in Crimea, all this allowed Russia to consolidate control over the peninsula.

On the Ukrainian eastern front, Putin encouraged the rise of an anti-government movement, launching a campaign of political war rather than sending special troops. His goal was to destabilize the southeastern territories of Ukraine by increasing control over the region and trying to persuade local authorities to accept a federal regime. After the initial deployment of a massive military force on the Ukrainian border made up of about 40,000 men, tanks, heavy artillery and aerial reconnaissance[10], on April 28th, 2014 Mos-

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6 Russian intelligence allegedly organized self-defense units made up of local militias, Cossacks and former members of the special police as well as Russian troops who began wearing police uniforms to disguise themselves as part of the local security forces. Among the volunteers there were army veterans, boxers and members of the biker gang called the «Night Wolves».

7 In 2013, «RIA Novosti e Voice of Russia», two state-owned media agencies, were replaced by «Russia Today», further implementing the government's propaganda machine. Cf. Stephen Ennis, «Putin's RIA Novosti Revamp Prompts Propaganda Fears», BBC Monitoring, December 9, 2013.

8 Cf. Robert Coalson, «Pro-Russian Separatism Rises in Crimea as Ukraine's Crisis Unfolds, Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, 18 February 2014, https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-crimearisingseparatism/25268303.html. Other Anti-Maidan protesters reported being paid or pushed to take part in the protests, cf. Allison Quinn, Why Moscow's anti-Maidan protesters are putting on an elaborate pretence, «The Guardian», February 26th, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/26/russia-anti-maidan-protest-moscow».

9 The Pro-Maidan pages about the two largest social media platforms in Ukraine, VKontakte and Odnoklassniki, were

blocked as they were hosted on Russian servers. Cf. Michael Kofman and others, Lessons from Russia's Operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, RAND Corporation, 2017, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1498.html.

10 On November 18, the commander of the Ukrainian security services (Sbu) Valentyn Nalyvajčenko accused Russia of having set up training camps for separatists in the Ukrainian south-east and of arming pro-Russian militiamen with weapons and ammunition that arrived in Donbass on board trucks of two "humanitarian convoys" of the six that had crossed the border in the recent months. The general secretary of the Atlantic Alliance, Jens Stoltenberg, announced on November 18, on the basis of gathered information, of the increase of the military forces of Moscow both inside Ukraine and on the Russian side of the border. OSCE observers also reported a large number of Russian columns and armored vehicles, including T-72 tanks, which had entered eastern Ukraine since early November, reinforcing the perception that new military operations are in preparation. The strengthening of the separatists seems to correspond to an equal strengthening of the lines held by the forces of Kiev with the dispatch of new units of recent constitution to the front, announced on November 4 by President Petro Poroshenko "to protect citizens from pro-Russian separatists. Ctr, G. Gaiani, The Mosaic of the

cow withdrew the force by negotiating an agreement with the Ukrainian authorities (G. Gaiani, 2017 , p.78).

The withdrawal of the Russian troops was functional to the fact that the Kiev government should not have turned its armed forces against the Russophile population of those regions. The commitment was not honored by Kiev, which with retaliatory actions launched itself against non-belligerent women, children and civilians.[11]

The Kremlin, in order to buffer this humanitarian emergency, continued to send small but qualified contingents of military intelligence and special forces belonging to the Spetsnaz in the Oblast' of Charkiv, Doneck, Luhans'k and Dnipropetrovs'k, including veterans of the Russian army. The Russians also resorted to a dense and uneven network of politicians, businessmen, criminal elements and powerful oligarchs to oppose the new Ukrainian government. The Ukrainian government inadvertently escalated the conflict by arresting the protest leaders, thus sparking a separatist insurrection. The escalation continued until the protest movement swerved into an irregular war with Russia sending conventional reinforcements in support of the separatists. Combined with the annexation of Crimea, the situation in Donbass became a powder keg. The pro-Russian protesters[12] did not limit themselves to demanding federalism pushed in such a way as to avert the threat of Ukraine's entry into NATO, but they also advanced the desire to reunite the Luhans'k region with Russia (E Di Rienzo, 2015, p. 44).

The leaders of the protest movements initially proclaimed themselves governors and mayors of the Eastern Oblasts as they appeared thus disappeared. Some of them were arrested by the Ukrainians, while the other was replaced[13] with local leaders who could legitimately support the independence cause. In mid-April 2014, the Kiev government tried to launch an attack on the separatists who were gaining ground,

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Vanquished: Journey into the Donbass War, Limes, n. XII, 2014, p.78.

[11] Prime Minister Jacenjuk had unleashed a massacre of civilians, the atrocities of which did not arouse particular reactions from the European and American chancelleries.

[12] Formerly marginalized political organizations on both the right and the left have mobilized, calling themselves «mayors of the people» and «governors of the people». Protests erupted in eastern Ukraine in response to the success of the Maidan movement in Kiev and the uncertainty surrounding Ukraine's political future. Although Russian intelligence probably played a role in inciting and organizing the protests, the public agitation and protests would be genuine. However, Russia was also accused of paying the Russians to protest.

[13] Moscow initially provided many of its officers and military intelligence officials (G.R.U.) to the cause of the separatists, then began in August 2014 to replace them with local leaders. See, http://www.limesonline.com/cartaceo/il-mosaico-dei-vinti-viaggio-nella-guerra-del-donbas

but the Ukrainian army was ineffective. This is because part of the 130,000 soldiers in Kiev refused to fight against the separatists; many infantry, artillery and air force regiments passed through the Russian ranks, surrendering without fighting. Defections were frequent and the Russians' tactic was to try and bribe or defect Ukrainian soldiers. Many Ukrainian army commanders spoke Russian and were hesitant to order the attack of other soldiers who spoke their own language. Ukrainian soldiers were subjected to a barrage of spam messages which content was this warning: «Your battalion commander has withdrawn. Take care of you» and others like, «you will not regain the Donbass. Further bloodshed is useless» and again, «Ukrainian soldier, it is better to retire alive than to stay here and die». The tactic was very effective and the whole 25th division surrendered to the pro-Russians (G. Gaiani, 2014, p. 79).

Moscow's support to the separatists from June to August 2014 was considerable. It provided ammunition, armaments, mechanized equipment and medium-sized air defense, but despite heavy losses to the Ukrainian Air Force, Kiev army had managed to recapture part of the disputed territory (Treverton, Thvedt, Chen, Lee, & McCue, 2018, pp. 23-24). The Russian strategy was failing, forcing Moscow between 14 and 24 August 2014 in a conventional war operation sending humanitarian convoys, armored vehicles, tanks, anti-aircraft weapons systems and some contingents of militants already trained on Russian territory. The concentration of thousands of Russian soldiers forced the armies of Kiev to withdraw from the Luhans'k territories, allowing the rebels to reclaim Novoazovsk and proceed with the offensive towards Mariupol. The purpose of this operation was to open a new southeastern front in the Sea of Azov, where the famous «Azov battalion» operated. With the military success of the regular troops and their supporters, Putin on August 31st began negotiations to create an independent state in the Ukrainian south-east. In this way the «Tsar» had opened a «war wound» on the eastern front of Ukraine in order to prevent any attempt to escape to NATO.

3.   THE HYBRID WARFARE OR POLITICAL WAR.

The intervention in Ukraine showed a range of war tools not owned by Russia, among which: information warfare, cyber warfare, economic warfare, guerrilla warfare with the relative use of militias and contractors. All these tools go beyond the previous concepts of unorthodox warfare and limited asymmetrical warfare. In fact from the beginning of the Ukrainian war

and the capture of Crimea in March 2014, the concept of *hybrid warfare* began to be conveyed in all international security circles as a new concept to define the contemporary conflict.

Contrary to what is often said, war is not the continuation of politics by other means, but it is politics that continues in any case, also using military tools (C. Jean, 2016, p. 87). The term *political warfare* had been used in the past by both Clausewitz and Kennan, intended as the use of all means at the disposal of a state and a «non-state» to destabilize its opponent.

In 1997, General Charles Krulak commander of the US Marine Corps coined the term *Three Block War* to indicate the special requirement in the modern battlefield.

> First our soldiers - reports the general - will feed and provide clothes to the displaced refugees. They will later keep two warring tribes apart, conducting pacification operations, and finally they will fight highly lethal medium-intensity battles, all that on the same day.[14]

In 2005, General James Mattis and Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hoffman described the *four-block war* as the additional block that dealt with the psychological and operational aspect of information. They were simply describing the hybrid warfare.

The peculiarity of political warfare (L. Freedman, 2018, p. 223) or hybrid, is that of using a certain type of violence and its external implications, which would remain below the threshold beyond which a ferocious reaction would be unleashed. Hybrid warfare was defined by General Breedlove[15] as a «new» form of conflict where the narration and the related means of communication are even more decisive than military means, because they would be able to further blur the boundary between war and peace. The security of the Russian Federation has always been of vital importance for the Kremlin and the decisive document that identifies the possible threats, defines the strategies to counter and contain them is the military doctrine. It claims that the world has become more dangerous and with it military and non-military threats. We have gone from a virtual global war (*the Cold War*) to real local and regional network conflicts. The new Russian military doctrine presented in January 2013 by the Chief of Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, General Valery Gerasimov at the Russian Academy of Military

Sciences, represents an important document to understand Russian strategy in the 21st century. Gerasimov in his long article increasingly emphasized the use of non-military tools in contemporary conflicts, explaining how new technologies, internet and social media, can be used for psychological operations and to destabilize another state, with the goal to create a permanent situation of internal conflict.

General Gerasimov's document has had different interpretations by the West. Some believed that the article describes the Russian perception of the threat, while some NATO countries thought the so-called «Grasimov doctrine» in addition to having descriptive purposes, has above all prescriptive purposes, or better said, it indicates what actions Russia should take against other states and against the West. Some former members of the Warsaw Pact have declared that the use of non-military tools such as cyber attacks, propaganda and the exhortation to political instability in the countries of the alliance could be considered as precursors for a military attack.[16]

In fact, even the Russians have interpreted some Western attitudes towards them as actions of a *hybrid warfare*, such as the orange or rose revolutions. Russian politicians would see these «colorful demonstrations» as tools for importing exotic values, imposing them under the pretext of «exporting democracy».

They are strategic mirroring attitudes where from one side the Russian General Staff accuses the West of manipulating the media, individuals, institutions and states, using unconventional tools, while NATO takes the same opinion towards the «new forms of Russian war», citing the examples of Crimea and Ukraine. Returning to the doctrine, it gives ample emphasis to the technological aspects of future conflicts and the globality of the strategy, the potential of *information warfare*, cyber warfare and drones is declined, the need to prepare for the volatility of the economy and of the company that would be implemented only during the course of a conflict and not before, as happened in the past.

Hybrid warfare is defined as the combined and synergistic use of different tools of power available to a state or a non-state, to achieve a single political-strategic purpose. These tools can be military, non-military, diplomatic, political, technological, intelligence, economic, media, psychological, direct and indirect, and serve to influence or destabilize the adversary or competing country. The idea is to use a multitude of tools simultaneously and strategically to maximize their effect. The typical form of political warfare is

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[14] Cf. Lawrence Freedman, The future of war, Penguin Books, Canada, Ireland, Australia,2018, p. 223
[15] Philip Mark Breedlove, born September 21, 1955, is a retired US Air Force general who headed the US European Command, and was NATO's 17th Supreme European Allied Commander - SAUCER.

[16] Cf. W. Park, NATO and Russia: Managing the Relationship, Conference Report, 21-23/10/2015

precisely that one which aims to sharpen the divisions and socio-political polarization within a state, trying to feed the distrust of a population towards institutions and to weaken the opposing state and its international alliances.

Even the manipulation of electoral processes is one of the tools used by *Hybrid warfare*, as is the use of political corruption, organized crime used to destabilize the opponent, and as the last, the possible use of biochemical and biogenetic warfare tools. In hybrid conflicts the dividing line between military activities of defensive nature and aggressive actions fades into vague even disappearing. It is still increasingly difficult to discern the differences between a state of war and one of peace.

4.   THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONING OF RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA.

At the beginning of 2007, due to the request of the Estonian nationalist front to remove the statue of the «Soviet soldier» from the park in Tallinn, old tensions had re-emerged between Russia and Estonia (Marta Federica Ottaviani, 2022, p. 75). A few months later, oddities began to happen in Estonia.

At the end of April Tallinn was hit by a wave of violence, the report was of 150 injured, around 1000 people arrested and a demonstrator of Russian origin lost his life. Later, towards the end of May, the whole country was paralyzed by a cyber attack. The blockade and the riots had been supported by the Kremlin, although this was not possible to ascertain precisely due to the complexity of the network. In 2007, for the first time, Russia used cyber attacks to hit another country.

In 2008 it was Georgia's turn to be attacked. On that occasion, Russia used not only hacker attacks, but also armored vehicles; while in 2014 - as already mentioned - the target of the Russians was Ukraine.

Do not forget, however, that the main antagonist of the Russians has always been the United States, in fact in 2016 the Soviet cyber attacks were used to condition the primary and the American vote. The American political figure most damaged in its credibility by the Russian cyber campaign - as claimed by special prosecutor Robert Mueller - was undoubtedly Hillary Clinton who lost the race for the US presidency against the Republican candidate Donald Trump.

Attorney Mueller's 2019 report found that hackers in March-April 2016 had penetrated the electoral computer network of some 500,000 Georgia, Iowa and Arizona voters. They also managed, thanks to a malware, to exfiltrate sensitive data and e-mail documents of the Democratic candidate for the presidency of the United States.

Thanks to a 2003 research carried out by Anna Polyaskaya, Andreij Kirov and Ivan Lomko it emerged that between 1998 and 1999 almost 80% of the interventions on the Russian web had a liberal and democratic orientation. Only four years later xenophobic, racist, homophobic comments would have appeared and a real incitement to violence are more and more prevalent. This coincided with President Putin's first period in power. While General Gerasimov can be considered the one who laid the foundations in the military sphere of the Infowar, Vladislav Jur'erevich Surkov could be considered the one who did it in the field of information and the manipulation of consciences.

Surkov worked by manipulating the Russian information machine in order to standardize the thinking of public opinion, polluting the truth through a scientific use of social media and a considerable use of trolls.

Since 2013 Russian trolls and hackers have started their disinformation campaign also in international social networks, in fact the first pro-Putin comments appeared in some forums of the main online newspapers in Poland. The goal was to convey a positive image of Russia and justify its aggressive policy towards Ukraine.

In Finland, again in 2013, thanks to the investigative work of the journalist Jessikka Aro, it emerged that Russian trolls had begun to attack the country's social networks and forums. The Kremlin trolls - explained Jessikka Aro wisely - were working to condition Finnish public opinion with an extremely calibrated disinformation campaign to reach different social and cultural groups.

During the conflict against Ukraine, attacks by Russian hackers and trolls on the network served to change the narrative in favor of Russia. The war against Kiev was the first complete example of a non-linear warfare.

Between 2016 and 2017 some Ukrainian hackers managed to get hold of over 4,000 emails probably belonging to Surkov and his entourage, and others owned by Alla Aleksandrova, leader of the Communist Party of Kharkiv, paid by Moscow to support and encourage separatist actions from Kiev in the region. The emails describe all the active measures taken by Russia to destabilize Ukrainian democracy: use of regular special forces without the use of badges, financing the guerrilla, bribing local politicians to support the Russian cause, demonstrations by the secret services to foment actions of separatists in the Donbass making them appear as a spontaneous will to sepa-

rate from Kiev and get closer to Moscow. Russia tried in every way to interfere in the Ukrainian elections by financing and supporting a campaign that envisaged a «soft federalization of the country», and where its supporters most of the time were paid people. Thanks to this, Moscow managed to create the illusion of a spontaneous support by a part of the local population and also deceived a part of the Western public opinion. From the emails stolen by Ukrainian hackers it became clear that Moscow's goal was to enter the minds of Ukrainians in different ways, as well as to make international opinion believe that in the south-eastern part of Ukraine most of the population nourished a sincere and spontaneous will to reunify with Russia. The Kremlin worked on this type of operation for months long before hostilities with Kiev began.

Russia proceeded step by step, first of all a careful analysis of Ukrainian society was made, identifying those who were ideologically pro-Russian. Then other categories were identified such as those with which it was possible to initiate total interactions, and others with which interactions could be partial.

The most intense work of the Russian trolls, aimed at mystifying reality, took place during the massing of military vehicles on the Ukrainian borders. Moscow was not supposed to have any responsibility for the violence perpetrated, especially those against civilians.

The number of posts, tweets and profiles used by the Russians to falsify the narrative was staggering during the period leading up to the invasion of Ukraine. No doubt those actions were a structured attempt at psychological warfare, where there is an attacked subject and an invisible enemy (Saran V. 2016).

5.   THE THREAT OF BIOTERRORISM AS A TOOL OF HYBRID WARFARE

Among the tools used in hybrid warfare, as seen, it is certainly possible to include terrorism which is also a form of warfare conducted in an «asymmetrical» manner, between two or more enemy parties, which do not comply with the same rules.

Terrorism can also be understood as the systematic use of violence to influence companies or governments in their choices. «Bioterrorism» is nothing more than a form of terrorism exercised through the use or threat of biological agents or biological weapons.

The international community of the United Nations is bound by international treaties that prohibit the use of biological and chemical weapons, while terrorists believe they can use them deliberately and without constraints.

In the last twenty years, bioterrorism has increasingly represented a distressing problem for public health, and a challenge for the health systems of the most advanced countries (C. Orlando, R. Silvia, C. Mariachiara, D. Fabrizio, 2013, pp. 111-129).

The spread of infectious diseases, which consequently explains the affirmation of bioterrorism in the last decade, has led to a great interest on the part of the mass media, increasing both public interest and further fears. Through the psychological lever, a multiplicative factor of the negative effects of bioterrorism is constituted. The media sounding board of the fear generated by a possible bio-terrorist attack is one of the main objectives of terrorist groups that intend to target a particular society. This instrument of struggle would be part of the most evident asymmetries with respect to the traditional concept of *regular* warfare.

All this is further aggravated by the progress of biotechnologies and their possible *double use* which can give rise to new threats deriving from new agents obtainable with genetic modifications of pre-existing biological agents, to be used as new biological weapons.

Any roughly equipped microbiology laboratory would be able to produce large quantities of pathogens.

Other reasons are the considerable complexity and difficulty in the detection and identification procedures, a circumstance that makes the biological weapon particularly dangerous and easily usable in sabotage actions. Again, the opportunity to carry out a destructive action that essentially affects living beings, leaving infrastructure and materials intact. To be added is the flexibility of use, with the possibility of contaminating big areas if contagious biological aggressive agents are used, or of hitting specific targets if non-contagious biological aggressive agents are used, disseminated on specific substrates; and also to be able to choose or create (through the innovative techniques of genetic engineering) diseases with biological and technical requirements suitable for the specific purpose of use.

It should be remembered that following the anthrax letters sent to America in 2001, beyond the small number of victims, the most relevant finding was that FBI took eight years to close the investigation, with however scarce and shaky evidence. The bacteriological attacks have exposed the great vulnerability of the population and, more importantly, the difficulties of institutions to find those responsible.

The threat posed by traditional biological agents has been increasing since the beginning of the 20th century but presumably will not grow further thanks to

advances in medicine and pharmacology. Conversely, in case of genetically modified organisms the threat is increasing, and its growth is proportional to the developments and advances in biotechnologies able to produce new threats.

The consequences of a biological threat are disastrous. Just remind the Spanish flu of 1918-1919 which caused about 50 million deaths, equal to those of the Second World War and 5 times those of the «Great War» of 1914-1918. A pandemic due to a new avian influenza virus such as H5N1 modified in the laboratory by just 5 mutations could cause the deaths of hundreds of millions of people.

A genetically modified viral agent such as the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is certainly a threat and a potential biological weapon. Its genetic mutations were discovered making it potentially capable of causing a much worse pandemic than the Spanish flu of 1918.

Scientific branches such as molecular biology and genetic engineering, which study the possibility of building new DNA molecules to give new characteristics to organisms thus modified, have revolutionized the concept of *biological weapon*. It is no longer a weapon consisting of natural biological agents, but aggressive biological agents designed and built according to operational needs. Current technical-scientific knowledge, already used in the biomedical, agronomic and veterinary fields, could be used for war purposes to increase the virulence of pathogens already naturally present in the environment.

Furthermore, it is conceivable to obtain biological aggressors with such a highly specific pathogenic power that they can only affect a specific breed within the same species (Black, J.L, 2003, pp. 864-871).

The flue is certainly very different from other biological agents used in terrorism such as smallpox. It is readily available and, being a fairly common disease, a cluster of cases would not prompt the authorities to initiate a more in-depth investigation. Influenza is also more difficult to eradicate, having various reservoirs: sheep, pigs, mice, and avians. Finally, it poses a greater threat to world leaders, because they are older and more susceptible to disease and its cardiovascular complications than other pathogens against which they are immunized and often frequent public and crowded places.

Do not forget that even a natural flu epidemic can be enough to undermine the health system and make society more vulnerable to terrorist attacks of all kinds.[17]

The global struggle to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed societies' vulnerability to natural and man-made biological threats thus prompting experts to warn of a potential increase in the use of biological weapons, such as viruses or bacteria, in a post-world. coronavirus. The European Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CDCT) was one of the first to warn that the coronavirus pandemic could increase the use of biological weapons by terrorists. The committee said in May 2020 in a statement that: «the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light how vulnerable modern society is to viral infections and their destructive potential» and added that «the deliberate use of agents pathogens as an act of terrorism «could prove to be extremely incisive». All countries are exposed to bioterrorism, and the damage associated with it is rapid and potentially global, said a spokesman for the European Council.

According to a report published on May 5, 2020 by *Pool Re* (an insurance company against terrorism that collaborates with the British government) and written by Andrew Silke professor at Cranfield University, the Covid-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on global terrorism. the real concern - said Silke - is that Covid-19 could redirect terrorists towards the use of chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear weapons.[18]

Silke writes that some terrorist movements would have been interested in bioterrorism by planning a few attacks, but which have been successful thanks to the use of these weapons. The Pool Re report states that the enormous impact of Covid-19 «could rekindle some interest in biological weapons [precisely because] the pandemic will leave governments and security resources severely damaged.»[19]

The twentieth century was that of physics, where scientists learned about atomic fission, and in this way created weapons so powerful as to destroy entire civilizations - said the American political scientist Walter Russell Mead - who adds:

> *now the perspective has changed because: the twenty-first century seems to be the era of biology, where the ability to unleash genetic engineering diseases towards the enemy will give to some nations enormous advantages.*[20]

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[17] Cf. Giammarco Troiano, Guerra batteriologica e bioterrorismo: ancora una sfida per la sanità pubblica, Working paper of Public Healt 1/2016, www.ospedale.al.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Working_Paper-01_2016.pdf

[18] Cf. https://www.poolre.co.uk/reports/covid-19-and-terrorism-report

[19] Idem

[20] Cf. https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-century-of-bioweapons-11588025901

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Soldier and Education in the Democratic Republic of Georgia
(1918-1921)

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INTRODUCTION

The starting point of the Georgian authorities was to transform the Georgian army, not only from a military-professional point of view but also they aimed to raise their educational and national consciousness. Before that, i.e. until 1918, such a thing was unimaginable for the Georgian soldiers, who were the main backbone of the Russian imperial court and the executor of its will. The national government, in turn, focused primarily on strengthening the soldier's national self-awareness.

CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDEA

 "He (the soldier) should have at least an elementary idea of foreign countries, big states and more detailed knowledge of the geography of his homeland; he should get acquainted with the history of his nation; he should know the current economic and social prospects of his country. He is especially obliged to know the state structure of his homeland, the difference between the old and new political and social State systems. It is especially interesting to study the merits of the eminent persons of the homeland, i.e. the figures of modern Georgia, which will greatly contribute to the awakening of a patriotic feeling. Famous military actions, even of small warriors, will especially strengthen the sense of military self-confidence, which is necessary for the success of all endeavors, and at the same time will strengthen the love for the homeland in each rider" (Army of the Republic, 1918, p.6.). Georgian political and cultural elite believed that those who understood the essence of freedom could fight for freedom and independence of the homeland, so cultural work was of special importance to the army.

It was not accidental also, that Giorgi Mazniashvili estimated the improving of order and combat readiness of the army, as the merit of the Commander-in-Chief and therefore, he considered it an honorable duty and responsibility to perform this function. For an army to be strong and patriotic, a soldier must be constantly in good form and, most importantly, have a high cultural and intellectual awareness. For centuries, a strong army has been the mainstay of any state, and Georgia has been no exception. After the restoration of independence, the revival of the Georgian army in a new form was on the agenda. The Georgian cultural and political spectrum was aware of many unresolved issues and problems threatening Georgia from all sides. They considered that the formation of a strong army was a decisive factor for the security of the country. The expression of this was, first of all, the fact that desertion was eliminated and Georgian soldiers were sent to serve in the homeland. "The Constituent Assembly of Georgia recognized the education of soldiers as necessary. They founded 2 schools of military education, which are headed by well-known among us: Colonel, Tite Artmeladze and teacher Alexander Zhorzholiani. Each brigade was given one instructor and one teacher per detachment; under their guidance, a team officer taught the men of troops reading, writing, and calculation. The teachers of the detachment teach the soldiers Georgian literature, Georgian history, and geography due to the first and second grades of public schools and talk about other fields of science. Each detachment has its own library-reading room, a theater is arranged, where soldiers systematically organize performances and lectures with the help of specially invited people. The step has been taken. Culture and education are deeply rooted in the army. We need more attention, more work, and shortly our military, with its development and education, will ensure the prosperity of our nation and the freedom gained by the revolution" (CSAG. Sheet. 20). Although at first the situation in the Georgian army was not favorable, as a result of the active work of

the government, the situation has improved to some extent. Georgian historiography focuses mainly on the fact of desertion in the armed forces, when the soldiers used to return from the war and did not have a national attitude. The memoirs of Giorgi Kvinitadze and Giorgi Mazniashvili corroborate that they were quite antipathetic towards the government, which can be explained by their nihilistic attitude towards them. Therefore, this infor-mation cannot be used as a mainstay. It's worth of interest the archival documents giving statistical information. It is necessary to reconcile the existing information and carry out the complex analysis. It should be envisaged also, that for three years it was not easy to bring the thinking of the society in general and the soldiers, in particular, within the state borders. According to the Fund of 1863, Case # 9: "The government paid great attention to promoting enlightenment work in the troops, as it was expected in the Democratic Republic, and it is worth saying that the present service of a soldier greatly differs from that of last year and the year before. I remember 1918-1919, from the life of our battalion when soldiers were enlisted in a unit to get clothes as quickly and bluntly as possible and then be recorded in the second time and then in the third where they would behave similarly and with such malice rendered service to the homeland.

I remember April 1, 1918, when we were announced that we had to leave for Batumi the next day and had to get ready. The next day not even half of the battalion came at the appointed time. Then, most of the soldiers were living in their flats, and they used to come to the battalion only for dinner. We left with about 15 soldiers and a few officers. Fleeing soldiers were found, armed with various items, at almost every station. The rifles were not left anywhere because they could be used in the family. They had not seen the enemy yet, during the Ottoman invasion in the village of Likhauri, when the soldiers of the #detachment dismantled the machine gun, dropped it on the shoulder, and set off in separate parts on the way home. All this was done with the participation of the soldiers, many of whom are still in service today. But no one can even dare to think of such behavior today. At that time, no military magazines or newspapers were received from the government, no enlightenment work was done in the units. The soldier did not understand his duty and the aim of his job. He did not know the past and future of his homeland, and assuredly, it was difficult to talk about the victory of such an army" (CSAG 1863, sheet. 90). It seems that the condition of the soldiers has substantially improved as the result of the reforms carried out by the government of the Democratic Republic, which implied primarily raising their educational level. "… Lectures are given to sol-

diers every day from 11 am to 1 am, except on Sundays. The subjects of the lectures are as follows: on Mondays and Thursdays - the current situation in Georgia, on Tuesdays and Saturdays - Georgian literature, on Wednesdays – geography, and on Fridays the history of Georgia. The Georgian military leadership tried to have the same high level of cultural and educational work in all military units. For example, the information about the Akhaltsikhe Coast Guard, preserved in the historical archives is interesting. "Recently, our detachment was visited by Captain Alexander Gorgadze, the instructor of cultural and educational affairs. From the very first day, he started to organize cultural and educational affairs in the detachment, formed a cultural-educational board, whose members are: Major Kutelia, chairman, captain Mgeladze, Archil Avalishvili and soldier Gurgenidze. The board aimed to carry out cultural work; arrange lectures, talks, and pay attention to the order of the Chief of the Coast Guard, concerning the compulsory training in literacy and its fulfillment" (CSAG 1863, sheet. 197).

GEORIGIAN NATIONAL IDEA AND ARMY

The letter of Colonel Tite Artmeladze sent to the Minister of Defense is interesting, where he outlines that for protection of the security it's important for the country to have own military forces. For this, it is necessary to create such conditions in the army, that the service to the homeland was both a duty and a title for a soldier. In his opinion, training in the army should be set so that a soldier was allowed to perform his duties to the homeland during his service and to acquire knowledge and education. For this purpose, special departments are created, which are responsible for resolving the mentioned problem. 1. Choral school. "The technical arrangement of the choir schools is the responsibility of the heads of battalions. They are also responsible for ensuring that not a single illiterate soldier is left in the battalion entrusted to them. Choral schools teach literacy and calculation under the guidance of a teacher in the battalion of officers. 2.Battalion school. This school is the second stage where the training is conducted through conversation and can develop both literate and non-literate, as well as soldiers with three or four classes education. The mentioned school will be a direct addition to Soldiers University. All the materials from the Georgian literature, Geography and History of Georgia that were preliminarily explained at the battalion school, or in the auditorium of the same Soldiers' University, will be read in the form of a lecture by the teacher. The role of this school will be the same in all other fields" (CSAG 1833, sheet. 19). 3. Soldiers' University.

It's important for the lecturer to give the necessary and precise information to the soldier and to speak in a language he understands.

When reading a lecture, the aim of the lecturer should be, on the one hand, the moral and mental development of the soldiers and the expansion of their worldview in general, on the other hand, the introduction of a sense of duty. And most importantly to facilitate the formation of an organized army. Soldiers' training at the University should be as follows:

I Separate Questions from Modern Life: 1. International War and Its Causes. 2. The Russian Revolution, its economic and national causes. 3. Two periods of revolution: The Interim Government and the October Coup. 4. Causes and consequences of the Bolshevik coup. 5. Breakdown of Russia, leaving the front by troops and the tragedy of the Transcaucasia. 6. Transcaucasian Seym and the reasons for its incompetence. 7. The need to declare Georgia's independence. 8. Historical facts on the matter. The last days of old Georgia / Irakli II /. 9.The reasons of accession of Georgia to Russia. 10. Violation of the treaty by Russia. 11. The situation in Georgia under Russian protection during the nineteenth century. 12. Historical significance of leaving the front of Caucasus by the Russian troops.13. Two ways: Russia and us. 14. Democratic Republic and Soviet Republic. 15. The State Work of Our Nation: The Work of the Constituent Assembly. 16. Basic laws and local self-governments. 17. Agrarian issue: possible forms of its solution. 18. A detailed explanation of our agrarian policy. Principle of Private Property and Allocation. 19. The financial state of our republic. 20. Paper money and the reason for falling currency. High prices of food and lack of goods. 21. The wealth of our country. The consequences of their application 22. Versailles Conference, the truce, and our international situation. 23. Matters, that contributed to our recognition by Europe. 24. Temporary nature of the economic and financial crisis of our state. 25. From agronomy. 26. From medicine. 27. From Cooperation" (CSAG 1833, sheet. 22).

From a separate field of science. A) Shota Rustaveli 1. A brief summary of the tiger-skin orally, 2. The first and second chapters were read by the lecturer himself, 3. A few sententia orally. B) N. Baratashvili 1. `Fate of Kartli`. Definition of significant places from the content. C. R. Eristavi 1. A poem from the life of a peasant. / Berua's complaint, Sesia's lamentation and etc. 2. Aspindza war. Oral presentation of content and sample reading of some notable places /. D) I. Chavchavadze 1. Dimitri Tavdadebuli, Kako Kachaghi, is a man a human? and a story of a beggar, / orally conveying the content and reading some important places as an example /. E) A. Tsereteli 2. Alex, 2. Bagrat the great, 3.

Tornike Eristavi, 4. Natela, 5. Natsarkekia and 6. Kikola's story. Oral presentation of the content and sample reading of some important places /. F) A. Kazbegi 82 3. Elguja, 2. Eliso, 3. Confessor, / Oral presentation of the content and sample reading of some important places /. G) Eg. Ninoshvili 1. Moses the Writer, 2. Paliastomi Lake, 3. The ordinance, 4. Gogia Uishvili, / Oral presentation of the content and sample reading of some important places /. H) G. Tsereteli 2. Kikoliki, Chikoliki, and Toffee nosed, / oral presentation of content and sample reading of some important places /.

Geography of Georgia: 1. The sky and the earth, sea, and land. 2. The Sun, the Moon, and Stars. 3. Cloud, rain, hail, snow, wind, and rainbow. 4. Heat in the heart of the earth, earthquake. 5. The face of the earth and its rotation around its axis. 6. Borders of Georgia, rivers, mountains and climate. 7. Kartli / Physical and cine-matographic review/. 8. Kakheti. 9. Western Georgia: a) Imereti, b) Samegrelo, c) Guria, d) Svaneti, e) Adjara. 10. Abkhazia. 11. A brief overview of neighboring peoples, states- Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ottoman, Russia (compared to Georgia). 12. Brief geographical, economic, and state information about the life of educated peoples of Europe and America.

History. 1. King Tamar. 2. Division of Georgia into kingdoms and principalities. 3. Shah Abbas's attitude towards Georgia. 4. The Adventures of Giorgi Saakadze. 5. King Erekle. 6. History of the agreement with Russia / in Amereti and Imereti principalities/. 7. Fight against Russia / Mtiuleti, Imereti, Conspiracy of Nobles in 1830 /. In the form of conversation. 1. Where did the army come from, what is discipline? Discipline as an express condition for the existence of an army. 2. The army and the people, their mutual relations. 3. The existence of strong discipline in the army is in the soldiers' interests. 4. The importance of instilling fear in the camp of the enemy for gaining victory 5. What kind of attack is necessary against the enemy to cause fear in the enemy camp? 6. Actions needed during repulsion. The importance of a sense of fear in a fighting army. The importance of adapting to the location and quick spreading in the plain during battle. 7. The importance of maintaining order and spiritual peace during the retreat. The crushing result of a disorderly retreat. 8. The importance of fast restoration of order, and attacking battle in maintaining the victory. 9. The importance of the prompt and correct execution of the order in the matter of saving the lives of the soldiers and etc. Chief of Staff Colonel Artmeladze (CSAG 1833, sheet. 23).

In 1919, the Board of the Officers' Economic Society decided to nationalize the clerical work in the community so that correspondence and reporting could be in the state language. To achieve this goal, the board

dismissed up to 20 employees due to ignorance of the state language (CSAG 2016, sheet. 188).

Culture, Education and Army. Theatrical performances served to raise the cultural awareness of the soldiers. For example, "A group of student-actors from the Moscow Art Theater stopped in Tbilisi for a few days and expressed a desire to have some free performances there specifically for local garrison soldiers. The desire and idea of the actors were gladly received by the board of propagandists and the actors organized a performance for several days ... The performances took place on July 14 in the hall of the Real School, on July 15 in the Vera Political Club, and on July 16 in the hall of the People's House. Before and after the performance, talks were held; the panel speakers described the importance of theater. The performances had great success and the soldiers were very satisfied. Everyone expressed great desire to organize performances often, because they have great cultural and educational significance" (CSAG 1840, sheet. 55)

On July 12, 1917, a library-reading room was opened, which housed more than 2,300 books of various denominations. According to the catalog, all books include 14 sections: 1. Political Economy - 98 titles; 2. Law, state structure, political parties - 525 names; 3. History of Culture and Sociology _ 186; 4. The issue of workers, the state of the working class, the movement of workers _ 300; 5. Agrarian issue _ 150; 6. History of the Revolutionary Movement _ 175; 7. Collections and magazines _ 350; 8. Criticism, publicism, bibliography _ 50; 9. Biography, Memoirs, Records _ 90; 10. Fiction _ 100; 12. National Question _ 35; 13. The issue of women _ 25; 14. Cooperation _ 10" ((CSAG 1840, sheet. 55).

Alexander Zirakishvili, the priest of the Georgian Cavalry Regiment, sent a letter to the senior priest of the Georgian army: The letter received on January 28 of the headquarter officer of the day of the Georgian corps informs that I was assigned to the Georgian Spare Cavalry Regiment stationed at Tukurmisha. The military government ordered the commander of the mentioned regiment, Colonel Natsvalov, to take over all the property of the Tversky Cavalry Regiment in Tukurmisha and, consequently, the Molk Church, but to this day, parish priest, Al. Tuberozov is still enrolled in the Tversk regiment and serves in the above-mentioned Tukurmish parish. It depends on his will when I can have liturgy and prayer.

On the 10th of this year, on the day of the transfiguration of the Holy Spirit, in liturgy at the Regiment Church, the priest Al. Tuberozov, during his sermon, cursed the Georgian nation and called them: savages, beasts, etc. ... He called on the Russian parishioners not to obey any orders of local and national govern-

ments, not to obey government orders or decrees, and to pray for the restoration of Russian sovereignty in Georgia and etc.

He never mentions the Georgian government, the Catholicon-Patriarch, or the bishop, etc. Instead, he prays again for the Russian autocracy and the chief priest Shavelski..." (CSAG 1863, sheet. 40).

Activating the education factor in the army was aimed at raising its national and political awareness. "Only those who know what freedom is can protect freedom. Our young republic will be defended by an army of Republicans. Therefore, if we want to achieve the goal, military training and cultural work in the army must be carried out in the same way. It should be obligatory for the leadership of the army to know well the army, to introduce academic knowledge to them. Making thorough republicans from them is another question. The time has gone when nobody willed to humanize the soldiers when their self-awareness was averted when blinding books, magazines and newspapers were distributed to the soldier calling to die for the king and homeland, but instead of explaining the essence of those words, they were called up to fight for strengthening the old regime. Today is a completely different situation. It is true that the morning discipline, obedience is necessary and unavoidable, but not blind. It must be based on another consciousness of duty and the result must be mutual love and respect. The army and the schoolboys are one and the same. If a soldier is convinced that the Chief loves him and at the same time the chief is loyal to the homeland, I assure you, that the soldier will love him too" (CSAG 1830, sheet.1-2).

The Georgian political spectrum was well aware of the importance of a strong army, but did not believe only in its military training and armament, and gave the education of soldiers a great role. "International condi-tions forced us to create a state. The state is unimaginable without an army. Armed forces are needed. If we did not have an army, we would appear in a terrible situation. But the main thing is what the army is like. If our army was undeveloped, it would be in constant fluctuation, it would fall on one anchor today and on the other tomorrow, and would ruin not only themselves but ruin hopes of wife, children, siblings, relatives, comrades, and friends. The development and resilience of the army has so far saved our nation from many calamities and, along with its physical existence, preserved the freedom gained through the revolution. The tireless work of the leaders of the democracy of Georgia and the brave struggle of the army have won many victories for our nation, but all this needs to be strengthened and patronized.

Today, the education of most of our armed forces is not satisfactory for our future hard work. Therefore, the Constituent Assembly of Georgia recognized the need for military education. It founded 2 schools of military education, which are headed by the well-known among us: Colonel Tite Artmeladze and teacher Alexander Zhorzholiani. Each brigade was assigned one instructor, and one teacher per detachment The team officer under the guidance of a teacher taught literacy and calculation. The teachers of the detachment teach Georgian literature, Georgian history, and geography to the soldiers through the Baas in the first and second - grade schools, as well as other fields of science. Each detachment has its own library-reading room, a theater is arranged, where soldiers systematically organize performances and lectures with the help of specially invited people" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 20)

Authorities sought to inform the soldier about national issues. "The Artillery Brigade of the People's Guard of the First Mountain Battery has always been on the front since its inception, and with arms in hands stood a faithful watchman over revolution and freedom. Recently, the leaders of the mentioned battery saw that the weapon alone was not enough, they also felt the need for development-awareness along with the weapon and therefore decided to establish a book-reading library. To this end, they elected a commission tasked with resolving the case. The Commission appealed to organizations as well as individuals for assistance. They collected money with donations and opened a reading room. In memory of the famous former head of this battalion Valiko Sharashidze" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 20).

As I have already mentioned, for the development of the soldier's national, cultural consciousness, the government purposefully tried to take measures and implement them in practical terms, for strengthening their spirit. "On January 18 of this year, according to the order of the government of the republic, our battalion was taken to the Treasury Theater, where they were to be shown for free of charge the opera" Absalom and Ether ". At two o'clock in the afternoon we were at the mentioned place. I would like to briefly mention how the opera affected the soldiers. B. Potskhverashvili explained the content of the action. The curtain rose and after a while the soldiers were eagerly exclaiming it was really worthwhile for our motherland to go through a thousand hardships and sacrifice your life/give life if required for its interests. We were told about the Georgian culture and our great ancestors but now we have discovered what it was like, said the village soldiers, who have not attended such a great performance once, and it is not surprising that these people are interested in seeing the performanc-

es. Now we have to work hard so that the enemy does not deprive us of a dignified homeland," said the soldiers sitting next to me" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 31-32).

As expected in the Democratic Republic, the government paid great attention to promoting educational work in the army units, and as the contemporary noted, "it must be said that the service of a soldier today is very different from that of last year and that of the year before. I remember 1919 and 1918 from the lives of the battalion when the soldiers were enlisted in one unit to get their clothes as fast as possible so that they could be registered in the second unit, where they used to act similarly, and then in the third, and with such malice render service to the homeland" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 90).

The Ministry of Defense established a cultural section and opened a cultural-educational department at the General Staff of the People's Guard. "It is not long ago that the mentioned cultural department was established, but during its short existence it has done a great job. Literacy schools were set up in the army and in the permanent parts of the Guard, and a library-reading room was opened, where soldiers and guards received almost all periodicals. There have been opened the evening courses, public universities and some more are to be opened. Dramatic performances, operas, cinematographic films and more are held especially for the army and guards. And here we are already seeing a big drawback of this work. The army of our Republic is not entirely like the army of the time of self-government. Our army knows perfectly well and understands his duty to the homeland. He knows what and who he is protecting, he knows that he is defending the independence of the homeland, freedom, peace, the past. By doing so, he protects the working people, his fathers, mothers, children, sisters, brothers, families, and thus enables us to better organize and develop our lives. In short, our army together with the physical armed force possesses a cultural force, and no one can deceive it and exploit it. Everyone can distinguish well between enemy and friend. Our army fights against the enemies of all kinds of the homeland and at the same time lazily pursues self-development. Thus, going to the army today is no longer scary. On the contrary, during the one year and two months that should be spent in military service, our young people can pay their debt to the homeland and return to their own affairs prepared" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 2). "During its long history, the Georgian nation has been surrounded almost continuously by numerous and powerful hordes of enemies, who sought to destroy it from behind. There was nothing left for little Georgia but to fight for maintaining its existence. There were moments when the Georgian nation was

forced to bow before a brute force, suffer from many persecutions from a powerful tyrant; Enslaved people dreamt only of liberation. Such an almost uninterrupted belligerence, of course, could not contribute to the creative work of our nation, cultural advancement, development of science, the flourishing and beautification of the language. All these required the development and flourishing of our political and public life, but we, except for a couple of short epochs, were otherwise deprived of. Within the last 117 years, since our lives and bad luck were connected with Russia, the situation changed for the worth. The harsh Russifying policy of old Russia deprived the Georgian language of the opportunity for natural development. The Georgian language was forced out of schools. It was prohibited in state and civic institutions and even restricted in churches, shortening wings. It would be better for us to face up the reality and admit that we could not resist the implementation of this evil policy enough and it bore its terrible fruit by dominating the Russian language over the Georgian language. Our students were educated in Russian, studied Russian science and literature, got to know the life, morals, history, geography, and economy of the Russian people better than the core nation, and thus were psychologically connected and assimilated to it" (CSAG 1830, sheet. 2).

CONCLUSION

The material corroborates that the government of the Democratic Republic carried out many efforts to strengthen the Georgian army and make it the main pillar of Georgian statehood. Despite many problematic and contradictory questions that may arise quite rightly, we have to take into consideration the fact that within three years, it was not so easy to form a centralized and nationalized army due to objective reasons, which we have already discussed.

Sources

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CSAG 1830, census 1, Acts. # 9, sheet. 20

CSAG 1830, census 1, Acts. # 9, sheet. 20

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CSAG 1830, census 1, Acts. #25, sheet. 90

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Byzantine Influences on the Otkhta Monastic Church in Tao-Klarjeti: A Social Research Article

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, Georgians have always held the southern gates of the Caucasus in their hands and gained a great commercial power in some periods, therefore they were invaded by the great powers of the period in almost every century. Throughout history, they have been exposed to Roman, Sassanid-Persian, Byzantine, Arab and Turkish raids. In the Middle Ages, a power struggle between the Arabs and the Byzantines had a negative impact on Georgia. Especially as a result of the great Arab raids in the seventh century, the Kingdom of Iberia weakened and was disintegrated with the establishment of an emirate in Tbilisi in 736 (Margarian & Asatrian, 2004). In this period of turmoil, the heir of Iberia, Ashot I (813-826) (Toumanoff , 1956), took the title of "curopolates" (Kazdhan, 1991) from the Byzantine Emperor and came to Klarceti, which was his father's legacy, and proclaimed his kingdom (Metreveli, 2014). He found and repaired the Ardanuç Castle, which was built by the Iberian King Vahtang Gorgaslan (Huxley, 1982) in the 5th century, had a city built on the outskirts of the rest, and strengthened the economy by re-establishing villages

destroyed by epidemics such as typhoid (Canöz, 2019). Due to the support of Byzantium and being a closed area to raids, his kingdom grew rich in a short time. After his death, his kingdom expanded to the inner regions of Kartli such as Tao, Javakheti, Samske, Adjara, Lazeti, Tsalka. During this rich and peaceful period, many monasteries and churches were built in the valleys of Artvin (Metreveli, 2014). One of these churches is the Othta Monastery (Dörtkilise Monastery), which is located in the Tekkale Village hamlet of Artvin's Yusufeli district, which is the subject of our article.

1.   THE HISTORY OF THE MONASTERY AND THE CONSTRUCTION PHASES OF THE CHURCH

Othta (Dörtkilise/Tekkale) Monastery is located in a valley in the hamlet of Tekkale Village in Artvin Province, Yusufeli District. Remains of the church, dining hall, seminar room, workshops, four chapels and other places of the monastery have survived from the monastery (fig. 1).
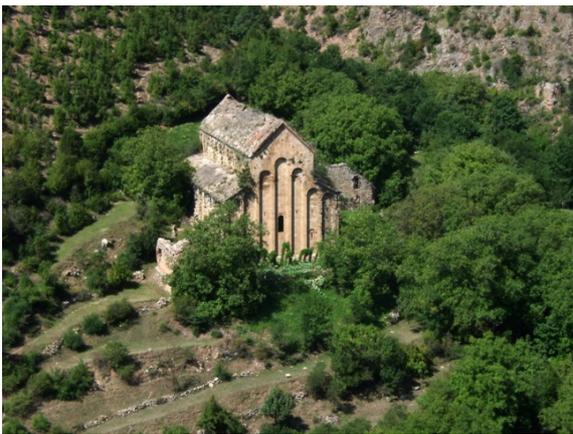
Fig. 1.   *Its current state and its situation in 1917* [1]

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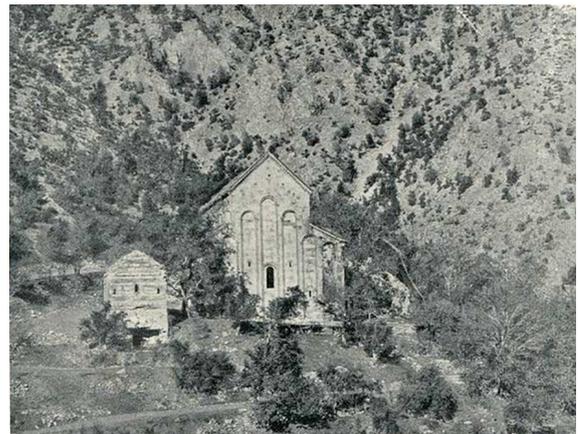
[1] http://www.dzeglebi.ge/dzeglebi/o/otxta/otxta_02.jpg and from the Takaisvili archive.

The church has three epitaphs that have survived to the present day. However, no information about the date of construction can be obtained from the inscriptions. However, based on the content of the writings and the construction phases, a date can be made as a century. The manuscript of the 11th century named "Life of Iovane and Eythemius" written by Giorgi Mtatsmindeli has survived as the only written source mentioning the monastery (Baumgartner, 1996; Dvali, 2011). In the manuscript; It is said that Iovane Mtatsmindeli, who founded the Georgian Monastery on Mount Athos, lived here for a while in the last quarter of the 10th century. From this point of view, it is understood that the monastery was active in the 10th century (ზაქარაია, 1990).

Being far from the settlement prevented it from being converted into a mosque and largely preserved its old texture. It is not known when the monastery was abandoned. In accordance with the decision numbered 3058 taken on 20.03.1987, it was registered and taken under protection by the Trabzon Cultural Heritage Preservation Regional Board (Artvin Kültür Envanteri, 2012). Researchers who came to the region and worked on the building think that the building went through at least two construction phases.

The researchers agreed that there was no change in the plan during the construction phases. As a result of his investigations, Takaishvili determined that the construction of the building started in the 9th century and ended in the second half of the 10th century. In this context, Takaishvili stated that in the second construction phase of the building, that is, in the second half of the 10th century, its exterior was covered with smooth cut stones (თაყაიშვილი, 1960). N. Thierry, on the other hand, argued that the whole of the building was built at the end of the 9th century and the beginning of the 10th century, as a result of his investigations (Thierry, 1960). W. Djobadze, on the other hand, stated that there are at least two layers as a result of his studies on the wall layers. According to his evaluations, he stated that the entire construction of the building could have been completed between 961-965 (Djobadze, 1992). Djobadze argues that its second phase took place during the reign of King David III (961-1001). This determination was made on the basis of the one-line inscription on the pediment of the eastern cross arm (Djobadze, 1992). Djobadze stated that in its second phase, the nave was raised about 2 meters and a second coating was made on the facades. The fact that the windows on the north and south facades contain more than one pediment supports these coatings. It also states that the frescoes in the apse may have been made during the repairs at the end of the 10th century.

Buba Kudava and Zaza Skhirtladze stated that the building may have been built in 960 as a result of their studies. While Kudava gave this dating by citing historical developments and stone analysis as an example (Kudava, 2017), Skhirtladze showed his analysis on the frescoes as an example (Skhirtladze, The Frescoes of Othkta Eklesia, 2009).

Based on this information, we think that the building went through at least two construction phases. In the first phase, the building was built as a basilica with three naves, and in the second phase, the heights of the naves were increased. Probably in the second phase, the pastophorion cells were divided into two parts and new coatings were made on the exterior facades. As a result, I think that the construction of the building started in the 9th century and that it was finished in the last quarter of the 10th century.

Three epitaphs of the church have survived to the present day. The first inscription is located in the lower east corner of the south façade. The seven-line Georgian inscription written in the Asomtavruli alphabet, which remains under the ground, cannot be read today (თაყაიშვილი, 1960).

Asomtavruli:

1. Ს-ᲧᲗᲮᲖ�1ᲓᲚ Ი–ᲔᲓᲚ ᲝᲚᲔᲧ ...
2. ᲝᲒ�3ᲛᲓ Ⴌ–Ⴇ ᲒᲓᲬᲓᲚ Გ1 .....
3. ...... ᲡᲚ ᲡᲚᲖ–ᲒᲚᲒᲛ1 Ⴝ–ᲝᲚ ....
4. .... Ი–ᲮᲡ........Ⴅ ...
5. ....ᲡᲚ......Გ–ᲒᲠ ᲧᲙᲡ...... ᲝᲚ...
6. .... ᲒᲡ..... Ი–Ⴌ ᲧᲗᲠ–ᲝᲠ....
7. ᲓᲗᲠ ᲡᲕᲚ ᲑᲖ–ᲒᲡ Ი–Ⴌ Ⴝ.Ⴊ.Ს.

Transcription: "In the name of God, we pray to the Father of the Four Churches... This is forever... Such is it for us Eristavus Khursi. And whoever prays to God, God will stay with him, and whoever does not pray, God will punish him."

The second inscription is located in the upper right corner of the door arch that provides the exit to the gallery on the west façade. Only the first line of this three–line inscription has survived to the present day.

Asomtavruli:

1. ... Ⴚ (Ⴑ) ᲚᲧᲗᲮᲖ1ᲓᲚ Ი–ᲓᲚ
2. ....Ⴅ (?) ᲚᲚᲝᲙᲡᲚ
3. .... Გ (?) Ⴚ — ᲚᲒᲡ..

Transcription: "... in the name of God the son of God (?) Gayane (?)."

The third inscription is located on the pediment of the east façade, below the cross figure. The inscription consisting of one line has been shortened and symbolized.

Asomtavruli:

1) †–Ⴈ Ⴑ–Ოᲊ Ლ–Ⴌ Ⴅ–ᲖᲣᲞᲀ.

Transcription: "Jesus glorify King David Kuropalat".

2. PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Approx. 18.00x28.00 m from the outside. building with dimensions; It was built with a three-nave basilical plan (Fig.2). The naos is divided into three naves with four rows of cruciform piers. The middle nave is higher and wider than the side naves. The naves are connected to each other by round arches. A gallery

in the middle of the apse. In the lower part of the window, there are two niches in the north and south. Pastophorion cells are located on both sides of the apse. Pastophorion cells are arranged in two layers. The cells are divided into two sections by a wall in the middle. Deep niches were dug in the eastern corner of the interior rooms in the apse. The entrances of the Pastophorion cells are given from the side naves.

The narthex(?) or burial chamber in the west was designed in a rectangular plan in the north-south direction. It is divided into three parts with an internal pier. In the lower part of the middle section, a rectangular-planned and vaulted crypt is placed. To the west of the place are other places connected with the monastery.
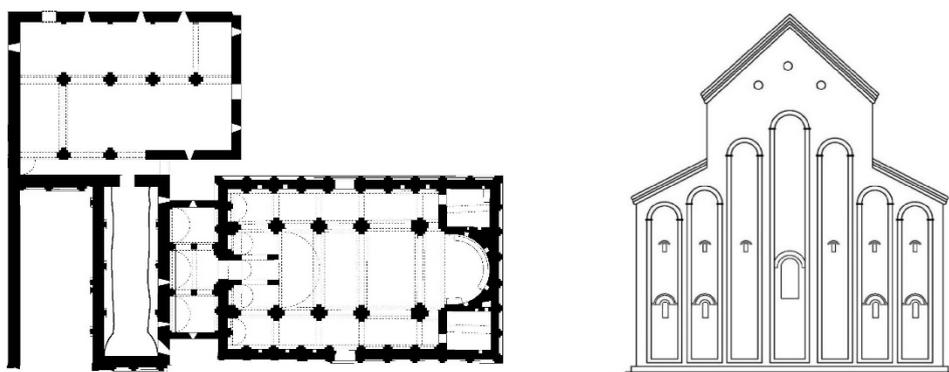
Fig. 2. *Plan of the monastery and the east façade of the church (Canöz's Archive).*

floor was added to the west of the naos, located in the north and south directions. The gallery was supported by two small piers apart from solid cross-like piers. The apse to the east of the naos; It is designed as a half-round inside and is limited by a flat wall from the outside. A large round-arched window is placed

The monastery complex is located on a sloping land in the east-west direction. Due to the slope of the land, the church was seated on a stepped platform. This platform can be partially seen on the east and north facades. Due to the fact that it was empty for many years, the south façade of the building remained under the ground. Soil, stone, etc. from the hills. mate-

Fig. 3. *General view from the north(Canöz's Archive).*
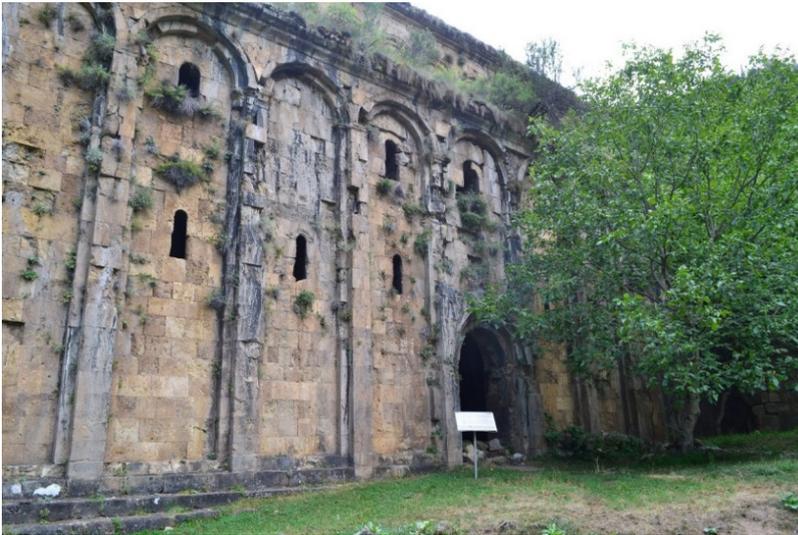
Fig.4. *The south façade of the church, the entrance gate and the arcade layout (Canöz's Archive).*

rials were filled from the south door into the middle of the building. Due to the intense destruction, many cladding stones on the facades were removed. The naos is double chamfered, and the side naves are covered with a sloping roof. The roof covering has deteriorated to a large extent (Fig.3).

When we look at it from the point of view of the façade layout, the east façade has the same characteristics and quality as the west façade, and the south façade is similar to the north façade. On the east and west facades, arcades rising gradually towards the middle nave can be seen. The interiors of the arcades were designed with crenellated windows arranged in two-floor order, and aesthetic concerns were eliminated with arch layouts. A rectangular window with a round arch was placed on the east façade, which is the apse façade, at the level of the middle nave, emphasizing the "holiness of the east".

Undoubtedly, the Renaissance understanding of the period and the perception of pure beauty are of great importance in this symmetry. As a feature of the plan typology of Georgian church architecture, the entrance doors are placed in the middle of the north and south facades. While the gate in the south is heavily damaged, it is more solid than the other in the north. The northern entrance door draws attention with its three-stage arch system.

3. DECORATION FEATURES

The decorations in the Othta Monastery Church mostly consist of sashes on the window arches and arcades. The decorations in the building are mainly located on the eastern façade. In terms of genre, it is seen that stone decorations and wall paintings are included. In stone decorations, mostly herbal (palmette, rumi, curled branch, etc.) and geometric (knitted, interlaced, etc.) compositions were preferred. The murals are only seen on the apse wall.

Fig.5. *A view from the north side (Canöz's Archive).*

No detailed explanation will be given here for stone ornaments. Since our subject is direct interaction, it would be a more accurate and appropriate explanation to give a few examples for decorations according to their types. Among the examples of stone decoration that have survived to the present day, the window arch decorations on the east facade are among the examples that can be given.

(Fig.7). The paints in the western corner have largely deteriorated today.

In addition to vegetal and geometric depictions, cross reliefs are included in the ornament groups. Cross reliefs, on the other hand, are grouped separately as Greek Cross and Maltese Cross (Fig.8).

Fig.6. *Ornaments on the east façade (Canöz's Archive).*

The reciprocal "S" curved motifs on the window arch of the diaconicon room and the interlacing motifs consisting of circles on the arch surface of the apse window are important examples for stone ornaments (Fig.6).

Perhaps the most interesting one among these stone ornaments is the motif that Turkish researchers call "çintemani" (Korkut, 2018)(fig.9). There are many debates about the origins and identification of this

Fig. 7. *Bicolor paint decorations on the east façade (Canöz's Archive).*

In addition, it appears as a period feature in the decorations made with paints. Although the arches of the windows on the arcade surfaces of the north nave, which reflect on the eastern façade, were kept simple, the ornament program was carried out by obtaining a passionflower motif with blue and red root paints

motif, which is seen on the window pediment on the south façade (Bulut, 2018).

There are frescoes only in the apse part of the church. A The frescoes, which are largely destroyed today, were carved in sections on the apse half-round and

Fig.8. *Ornaments on the west façade (Canöz's Archive).*

Fig. 9. *The motifs of Çintemanî (Canöz's Archive).*

apse dome. The frescoes are located on five generations horizontally. Based on old publications, "Christ the Redeemer" is depicted in the sky inside the mandorla on the apse dome. Alongside the Messiah, the scene called "The Hand of God" is featured in this episode (first episode) (Skhirtladze, The Frescoes of Othkta Eklesia, 2009). In the middle of the second part, the holy throne placed in a halo is carried by two angels. In the scene defined as "Hetoimasa"[2], there are sixteen angel figures on both sides of the throne (Skhirtladze, The Frescoes of Othkta Eklesia, 2009). In the third section, which coincides with the middle of the apse, there are frescoes on the Virgin Theotokos and the Apostles (Skhirtladze, The Frescoes of Othkta Eklesia, 2009). Today, however, these frescoes have largely disappeared. In the sash in the fourth section, there is an apse window in the middle. The murals on the apse window have survived to the present day, mostly intact. On the right and left of the window, the prophet and church fathers are depicted in their traditional

the figures belong to. In the lower part of the apse, there are scenes from the lives of Jesus and Mary, which have largely disappeared today. Researchers have listed these scenes as follows: Appearance of Jesus to Women, Anastasis, Transfiguration, Baptism, Crucifixion, Birth, Annunciation, Presentation of Mary to the Temple, Mary at the Empty Tomb (Skhirtladze, 1995).

The frescoes in the fourth section consist of wall paintings that have survived to the present day and contain the most remarkable subjects. The first figure on the left of the window represents King David, while the figure on the right of the window represents King Solomon (Skhirtladze, 1995). The figures that follow them are the church fathers. Perhaps the most striking element at the point of iconographic analysis is the depiction of King David as a young man and the emphasis on individuals with gray halos. Even from this point of view, it shows that a rich "Tao-Klarjetian

Fig. 10. *The Church Presentation of St. Zion[3] (Canöz's Archive)*

clothes. The figures are depicted standing facing the audience. A total of 16 figures are placed, eight on the right and left. It cannot be determined exactly who

Painting School" (Soltes, 1999; Didebulidze, 2006) has emerged in the region, which has the power to distinguish itself stylistically from Byzantium. In addition to these, the figures are dressed in clothes such as dibetesion, epicrochelion, stikharion, epimanikia, loros and omophorion (Kılıç, 2004), which are often worn by religious characters in Byzantium.

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[2] Hetoimasa consists of an empty throne figure decorated with some motifs. In Christian Art it is associated with the figure of Jesus and the Kingdom of God. Often there is a cross motif on the throne and an open Bible. See: Alexander P. Kazdhan, The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, II, p. 936.

[3] Illustration taken from Zaza Skhirtladze.

There are three separate scenes on the inner surface of the window. "The Church Presentation of St. Zion" is placed on the upper part, "King Melchizedek's Eucharist Rite" on the lower left part, and "Moses and the Ten Commandments" scene is placed on the right part (Skhirtladze, 1995).

The most discussed scene is The Church Presentation of St Zion (Skhirtladze, 1995)(Fig.10). On the right side of the figure's head, "Sion" is written in the Asomtavruli alphabet, largely destroyed. The great destruction of the name engraved on the side of his head, by researchers, the figure of St. Sophia, St. Katherina or the Georgian Queen St. Nana has also caused it to be interpreted (Michel & Thierry, 1977; Skhirtladze, 1995; Dvali, 2011). The figure holds a three-aisled basilica, similar to a model of Othta, between its hands. As a result of their studies on the saint figures holding church models in their hands, the researchers came to the conclusion that this scene is related to the sanctity of the church and that the saint is the guardian of the church (Dvali, 2011; Skhirtladze, 1995).

4.   MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE

In general, smooth volcanic cut stones were used in the construction of the church. The brick materials in the arches in the interior are quite remarkable. As a construction technique, the infill wall technique, which is frequently repeated in the region, was applied. It was mixed with mortar and rubble stones inside, and it was covered with quality smooth cut stones on the outside. The interior is covered with coarse cut stones and bricks. It is seen that low relief and carving techniques are applied in stone decorations. In addition to these, it is seen that the "painting" technique has emerged with the use of ornament compositions obtained by painting the stone surfaces in different colors.

5.   EVALUATION OF BYZANTINE INFLUENCES DETECTED IN THE CHURCH

5. 1.   Plan

The basilical plan scheme applied in the Othta Monastery Church has been a scheme encountered in almost every region since the early periods in the Byzantine lands. In most of the basilicas built, the nave was emphasized and elevated. Longitudinally developing schemes have been indispensable elements of basilicas. Pastophorion cells and narthexes were the main elements in the basilicas built in the Byzantine lands.

Othta Monastery Church, with its plan scheme, incorporates all the features of Byzantine type three-nave basilicas. However, when evaluated as of the date of construction, it is seen that different plan types are popular in the Byzantine lands. However, it would be wrong to consider the historical order as the most basic in determining the influence of the structures on each other. Because in this structure, all the features of the Byzantine type basilica scheme can be followed (Canöz, 2019).

Othta Monastery Church has the effects of basilica style mostly in Syria and its surroundings (Fig. 11). In particular, highlighting the longitudinal nave phenomenon in the building, ensuring the separation of the nave with the numerous piers arranged in two rows, keeping the middle nave twice as wide as the side naves are some of the most basic features of the early Syrian basilica style (Krautheimer & Ćurčić, 1986).

The fact that the pastophorion cells of the Othta Monastery Church have two floors and a gallery floor reveal their differences with the Syrian type basilicas. Pastophorion cells in Syrian type basilicas are mostly arranged in a single layer.
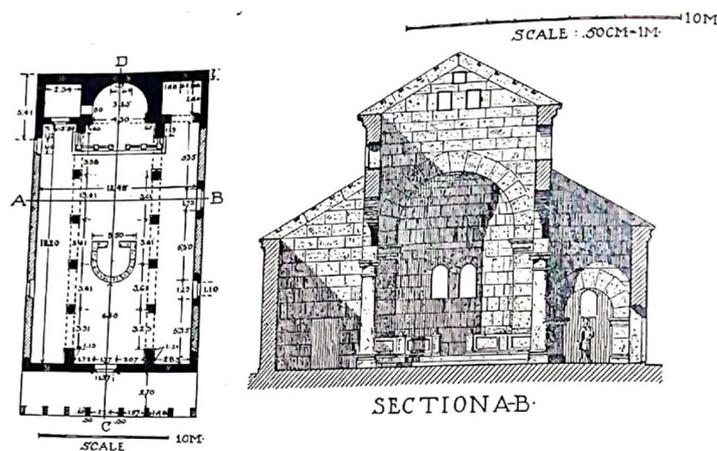

Fig.   *11: Plan and Section of the Kharab Shams Basilica in Aleppo (Butler's Archive).*

From Syrian basilicas; The proportion of the side naves to the middle nave of the Kharab Shams Basilica (5th century) (Butler, 1929) in Aleppo is similar to the Othta Monastery Church in terms of many other features, such as the clear light floor, the flat reflection of the apse wall, and the connection of the piers to each other with huge round arches. Similarly, Dar Qita St. Paul and Moses Church (418), Umm-es-Surab Monastery Church (489), and Rusafa St. Sergius Basilica (520) (Krautheimer & Ćurčić, 1986). The monumen-

a crypt. It comes to mind that its multi-functional and worship-oriented structure such as the food warehouse, the burial area and the narthex may have emerged as a place where liturgical items used in the Eucharist ritual are generally stored (İşler, 2010). When this space is evaluated in terms of form, it reminds of the narthexes in Byzantine churches and the jamatuns[4] seen in Armenian architecture. The practice of burial in jamatun, which is frequently seen in Armenian architecture, strengthens the possibility that the

Fig. 12.   *Syria Basilica of Mushabbak*[3]

tal appearance, the systematic of the materials used and the similarities in the plan typology prove that the Georgians learned "church building" by the Syrian Church Fathers a few hundred years before the construction of this church. At the same time, he conveys to us that although a few centuries have passed, the architectural tradition has been preserved by clinging to it.

5. 2.   Architectural Elements

5. 2. 1.   Additional Space (The Narthex?)

The additional space to the west of the church should be considered as a burial chamber rather than a narthex. Similar texture patterns are also seen in contemporary Tao-Klarceti churches. The arrangement of these adjacent to the church suggests that a narthex may have been used. However, it is not known exactly for what purpose these additional spaces were built. There is a wine jar buried in the ground in the annex of the Khakhuli Monastery Church. From this point of view, it is understood that it actually functions as a supply warehouse. One of the statements put forward is that the additional space in the Othta Monastery Church functions as a burial chamber because it has

additional space of the Othta Monastery Church was built for similar purposes. However, these additional spaces seen in Byzantium and Armenians have an independent door. However, it complicates the situation as there is no such practice in the church we examined. Their mere association with naos strengthens the possibility that it could have been used purely for religious purposes (Djobadze, 1992).

5. 2. 2.   Naos

The spatial setup of the Othta Monastery Church is a continuation of the traditional early basilica styles. Here, the spatial setup of the monumental three-aisled basilica scheme of Byzantine architecture stands in all its splendor. The nave, which is the main place of worship emphasizing the bema and the apse,

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4   In Armenian church architecture, these places called gavit or jamatun, which are added to the west of the main church and can sometimes be designed larger than the church, were basically built for religious purposes. In addition, it is stated by researchers that it is used for socio-political needs.. See: Y. Karaca, Doğu Anadolu Bölgesi Hristiyan Dini Mimarisinde Jamatun Yapıları, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Yüzüncü Yıl University, 2004.

5   https://syrian-heritage.org/ mushabbak-byzantine-basilica-general-view-from-south-west/

is emphasized like the basilicas of the Syria and Cappadocia regions. The monumental cross-like piers separating the naves are connected to each other by round arches. Qalb Lozeh, Al-Mushabbak (Fig.12), Kharab Shams and other Syrian-type monumental basilicas have similar spatial setups to Othta, if not contemporary.

In the buildings here, the middle nave has been raised, the light floor has become clear and plenty of windows have been used. However, the brick arches and windows seen on the northern and southern facades of the side naves bring to mind the alternating brick and stone structures that are commonly seen around Istanbul and Bursa. The tomb chapel application, which we see in the early Syrian structures in Byzantine architecture, is in a way similar to Othta. From a fictional point of view, the fact that there is a crypt in both applications and that they are dependent on the church also shows that Byzantium could be effective in this regard. When we look at it from a general point of view, the Syrian influences in terms of architectural form and plan typology strengthen the possibility that this place may be of Syrian origin. As a result, it would be a more correct approach to search for the typological and fictional meanings of the space in Early Byzantine architecture.

5. 2. 3. Apse-Bema

The bema, emphasized by a platform in Othta, is similarly arranged in almost all Byzantine buildings. It is unthinkable for the Georgians, who had similar liturgical traditions until the 10th century, to design a holy place like the bema differently from the Byzantines (Canöz, 2019).

The apse setup was designed with three or five naves from the inside in the cultures around the Mediterranean, reflected outside or limited as a flat wall according to the architectural understanding (Leeming, 2018). The apse of the Othta Monastery Church is arranged in a semicircle from the inside and is limited by a flat wall from the outside. The tradition of concealing the semicircular apses from the outside and projecting them out as a flat wall constitutes the stylistic feature of Anatolian and Syrian churches. Kharab Shams Basilica (5th century), Djeradeh Church (5th century) and Ruweha Basilica (5th century) in Syria are similar examples in terms of apse forms (Butler, 1929). Alahan Monastery Eastern Church (6th century) (Gough, 1968), which is one of the structures in Anatolia, and Anavarza chapels and churches from the Rough Cilicia Region (5-8th centuries) (Edwards, 1983) are some of the similar examples that are limited from the outside in the form of a flat wall. As a result, it can be clearly stated that the apse applications, which are

reflected outside as a flat wall, are of Byzantine origin. The fact that the tradition has not been spoiled here also proves that Byzantium is still an important power center in terms of culture.

Apart from the examples mentioned above, the apse walls of some Assyrian churches, especially in the Tur Abdin Region, are bordered by a flat wall from the outside. The similar design of the eastern walls of Syriac churches, which share common borders with Northern Syria, is interpreted as a product of a regional style (Korkut, 2019). Among these, Midyat Mor Gabriel Monastery Anastasia Church (5th century), Midyat Mor Abrohom Monastery Mor Hobil Church (5th century), Midyat Altıntaş Village (Keferzi) Mor İzozoel Church (700) and Midyat Anıtlı Village (Hah) Virgin Mary Church (740) can be given as an example with apse forms (Keser, 2002). Thus, we see that the ancient tradition of the Syrian region became Christian and over time created an area of influence from the south to the north, and its borders reached the Black Sea (Leeming, 2018). All these factors show that the traditionalist structure in the Middle Ages did not actually have a radical view, and in this context, borders and art were perceived differently from today's mentality.

5. 2. 4. Pastophorion Cells

In the Othta Monastery Church, a wall divides the pastophorion cells in the middle. However, these walls descend from the top to half of the body walls and do not reach the floor. From this point of view, these spaces are arranged in two parts within themselves. This two-story arrangement was repeated in the cathedral-sized churches in the region. Pastophorion cells, which are the starting point or protector of many liturgies in the main churches of monasteries where religious sensitivity is more intense, are the dimension of religious perception reflected in architecture. There are also pastophorion cells in Byzantine churches.

Byzantine church architecture has always had a strong liturgy. From its beginning until its collapse, it tried to shape many cultures that it was a neighbor of through its own liturgical perceptions. It is undoubtedly inevitable that these shaping works influenced Georgian church architecture. Considering that the liturgical traditions in the Byzantine and Georgian churches began to separate after the 10th century, we can say that the construction of the pastophorion cells traditionally passed from Byzantine architecture to Georgian architecture.

The closest examples with their two-storey layout can be seen in churches in Syria. Of these; Syria Qalat Seman St. Simon Stylites Monastery Baptistery (476-490) (Gary, 1982), Gerasa St. Theodore's Basilica (496) (Ken-

nedy, 2006), Rusafa St. The Basilica of Sergius (520) (Burns, 2009), the Basilica of the Virgin Mary of Sheikh Suleiman (602) (Burns, 2009) and the Basilica of Bishop Genesios of Gerasa (611) (Scheck, 1997) have similar characteristics with the two-storey pastophorion cells.

5. 3.   Ornaments

Georgian churches have a strong tradition of stone decoration in the Middle Ages. However, most of the stone decorations in the Othta Monastery Church were destroyed. When we look generally, compositions with herbal characters such as palmette, curled branch, rumi, lotus and geometric compositions such as crossing and knitting have been the main characters of stone decoration. When we look at the early periods of Byzantium, a very high level of workmanship is seen. The rich stone decoration tradition of the ancient world continued until the 8th century, when Byzantium was in partial collapse. During this process, a wide variety of floral and geometric compositional patterns emerged.

Herbal compositions from Byzantium; two column capitals from the Tirilye Panagia Pantobasilissa Church for the curved branch (Mango & Sevcenko, 1973); for palmette, on the column capitals and lintels of the Lycian Alakilise, Karabel and Muskar Churches (6th century) (Serdar, 2010); for rumi the ambon balustrade from the Middle Byzantine period in the Afyon Museum (Parman, 2002); A plate belonging to the Dereağzı Church (9-13th century) (Morganstern, 1986) can be given as an example. Likewise, for geometric compositions; templon architrave and ambon balustrade (10-11th century) in Antalya Archeology Museum for the circle motif (Serdar, 2010); a plate (5-6th century) in Kocaeli Museum for the passage; The column capital of the İznik Koimesis Church (9-13th century) (Dennert, 1997) can be given as an example for knot & knitting.

In addition to the geometric characters, the depictions of the cross, which is the holy of Christianity, also found a place in the stone decoration. There are three Greek and Maltese Cross motifs in the Othta Monastery Church. Two of them are made with low relief technique, while the third is made with paint. It is unthinkable that the depiction of the cross, which is seen in almost all architectural areas of Christianity, did not exist in Byzantium as well. Of course, at this point, the existence of the interaction dimension is open to discussion. However, when evaluated in terms of form and typology, these decorations, which are considered as "Greek" and "Maltese" crosses, do not deny their Byzantine roots. Greek and Maltese crosses

on the surfaces of two plates in the Anamur Museum can be given as an example (Aydın, 2008).

Along with stone decoration, wall paintings have an important place among the decoration elements. The works that are the product of the painting style called Tao-Klarceti Painting School were mostly in connection with the Byzantine world. In particular, the stylistic features in the Pontus region, which is connected with Cappadocia, have similar characteristics with the Tao-Klarceti Painting School. Especially in single figures, similarities and interactions increase. For example, for the Prophet Solomon; It has similarities with Göreme Kılıçlar Church (9th century), Ortahisar Cambazlı Church (11th century), Elmalı Church (1190-1200) and Dark Church (13th century) (Koyun, 2014).

The scene of the Presentation of the Church of St. Sion has a very special place among the wall paintings. The figure is depicted as a portrait. The female figure wearing a maphorion-like dress like the Virgin Mary is holding a three-nave basilica. Scenes that repeat each other stylistically are interpreted as an indication of the painting school in the region. Similarly, a scene related to the "Church Presentation of St. Sion" could not be determined in the Byzantine period churches. For this reason, it is thought that this presentation scene has the characteristics of a regional style. The Presentation of King Melchizedek and the Ten Commandments, which are of Torah origin and adorn the apse window, occupy a quite different place in the Byzantine tradition. Torah-themed scenes are not very common in Byzantine art. However, the king is depicted in portrait on the surface of the western arch of the parakhlesion (14th century) of the Chora Monastery Church and on the eastern wall (Akyürek, 1995). Although it is late, it is important for the awareness of the scene. However, when we evaluate it from a stylistic point of view, all of the wall paintings are one of the important works of the "Tao-Klarceti Painting School" skillfully.

CONCLUSION

This church, which is the subject of our article, has survived until today as an important product of interaction built in Artvin in the Middle Ages. Church; It has a great importance in terms of history, architecture and decoration. It is also important in terms of showing the architectural activities of the Tao-Klarceti Kingdom, which ruled in the Middle Ages. When the evaluations made on the plan features are examined, it is seen that the basilical scheme has preserved its Byzantine roots by improving its existence. It is understood that the Byzantine period basilica styles predominate in Syria and its surroundings. At the same

time, it is very important that it blends and presents local styles. When we look at it in terms of architectural design, it can be seen that especially the designs with arcades are of Syrian and Mediterranean origin. However, as the arcades, which contain very intense ornamental elements, expanded their area of influence towards the north, they became simplified and their dimensions grew.

When the spatial setup is examined; The close relationship with the building traditions in Syria, Karaman-Montenegro, Cilicia and Cappadocia comes to the fore. Especially the apse arrangements are an important space that shows the dimensions of the effect. The outer boundary of the apse by a flat wall is directly similar to the spatial arrangement of the Syria and Cilicia regions. The fact that the gallery floor, which is common in Byzantium, is not preferred in Georgian churches and that it is located in Othta, makes the layout and design of the place special.

Ornamentation, which developed depending on the architecture, developed within the limits allowed by the Christian faith. It is seen that the ornamental elements in the buildings in Tao-Klarceti rose especially in the 9th century and a general ornamental style was formed. When evaluated in terms of composition, it is understood that it has connections with Anatolian and Caucasian cultures. In the selection of the motifs, the nature of the geography in which they are located is mostly inspired. However, geometric compositions seem to be in the foreground.

As a result, it is understood that the Othta Monastic Church is in a position to adhere to local traditions and open to the traditional styles of other cultures. The fact that artists and architects do not completely reject external influences can be considered as the main factor that reveals this cultural interaction.

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Acknowledgement

The Royal Text in the History of Abyssinia during the reign of Emperor Amda Seyon (1314-1344): translation and analytic study

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers divide Ethiopian history into two main eras, the first of which begins in the fourth century AD with the entry of Christianity into Ethiopia during the era of King Ezana (1). The history of this period depends on a group of inscriptions and excavations. Some historical news continues until the end of the fifth century AD, almost until the era of Caleb and his campaigns to southern Arabia, then Ethiopia enters its dark ages, which extended until the middle of the thirteenth century AD, through which we do not receive any documents, manuscripts or inscriptions that tell what happened in those days. The historical period, except for some scattered news about the Agawi dynasty that ruled Ethiopia from the tenth century until the thirteenth century AD.

With the middle of the thirteenth century AD, the second era of Ethiopian history begins with the emergence of what is known as the Solomonic dynasty, that appeared in Showa region at the hands of one of its princes called Yekuno Amlak, which was able to seize the throne of Ethiopia based on a historical legend that says that they are the descendants of Solomon from the Queen of Sheba and they are the owners of the legal and priestly right to inherit the throne of Ethiopia, through a book they wrote bearing the name "Kebra Nagasht", which means the glory of kings, promoting this legend (2).

(1) King Ezana: He is the son of King Al-Ameeda, his father died and he was still young, so his mother ruled as his guardian with the help of Frumentius and Edysius until the child prince grew up and ascended the Ethiopian throne in 320 AD and the rule of Ezana continued until the year 356 AD – the date of his death is uncertain – it took ten years of his rule, he fought wars against the Beja and some other tribes in order to reorganize his kingdom. Ezana also minted a coin bearing his pagan slogans. Ezana is the first king of Aksum to convert to Christianity, around the year 330 AD. Among the titles of Aiyana, the king of the Aksumites and the Himyarites, and Constantine of Africa.

– Fawzi Abdel Razek Beyli Makkawi: The Kingdom of Aksum, a study of the kingdom's political history and some aspects of its civilization, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, Institute of African Research and Studies, Cairo University, July 1947, pp. 64-70.

– Richard Pankhurst: An introduction to the economic history of Ethiopia from early time to 1800, sidgwich and Jackson LTD., First Edition, London, England, 1961, pp.28-29.

(2) Many Ethiopian legends traced back to the lineage of the ruling family from the descendants of Solomon bin David, peace be upon them. And they organized this legend in a book they called Kebra Nagasht (The glory of the Kings). They keep it in their holy city of Aksum. No one is allowed to see it except those who are trusted. The content of this legend is that Makeda – who is the Queen of Sheba – visited Solomon, peace be upon him, married her, got pregnant with him, then returned to her country. The covenant in which Solomon preserved the divine tablets that God had written for His Prophet Moses, peace be upon him. And Menelik returned to Ethiopia and ruled it, and from him the chain of emperors of Ethiopia =

With the Solomonic dynasty taking over the rule of Ethiopia in the thirteenth century AD, Ethiopian history took a new picture, which is the historical picture supported by documents, which moved it from obscurity to clarity, as a new position was created in the royal court entrusted to its occupant the recording of historical events that occur in the era of the king and the wars witnessed in the era and struggles, achievements, and the holder of this position bears the name (Sahafi Te'zaz) (1), which means the writer of the will, which is meant by "the king's historian". The emergence of the Solomonic dynasty was a turning point

in Ethiopian history, as the kings of this family were keen to record their history at the hands of historians of the clergy who took the reins of education and cultural life, and who received a sophisticated religious education and a measure of historical culture that qualifies them to undertake the task of writing down the royal histories that varied in its value and size. These historians lived in the royal court, accompanied the king in his movements and wars, and enjoyed his care and generosity, so they recorded the events that occurred in his time as eyewitnesses to them (2).

These royal histories focused on the king's actions and wars, not the people. The historian pays attention to the king's official life, preparing him to take office, his coronation, his wars and campaigns, appointing or dismissing state officials and officials, and issuing orders. The historian is also interested in building cities, buildings, churches, religious stability, religious disputes, and problems related to succession (3).

– Thus, the Solomonic dynasty is attributed to Menelik bin Solomon bin David peace be upon them. The Ethiopians portrayed the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and made it a national story because it is related to their regime. It seems that motivated the Ethiopians to publish it was due to their desire to return their lineage to ancient origins, and to convince the Ethiopian people of their divine right as long as their origin goes back to the prophet of God Solomon, peace be upon him. As long as Solomon is the one who crowned Menelik as king of Ethiopia, every revolution against any ruler of his dynasty is forbidden, but rather a disbelief in God.

– Ibn al-Atheer (Izz al-Din Abi al-Hassan Ali bin Muhammad bin Abdul Karim al-Shaibani, 630 AH / 1233 AD): Al-Kamel fi Al-Tarikh, Volume One, investigated by Abi Al-Fida Abdullah Al-Qadi, and Hamad Youssef Al-Daqqaq, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyya, Beirut Lebanon 1385 AH / 1995 AD, p. 229, 238.

– Zaher Riad: History of Ethiopia, Anglo Library, 1966, pp. 26-34.

(1) It is noticeable that this position is considered a civil and religious position, but it was included in the religious footnote because its owner is chosen from among the monks, and the credit for creating a press position is attributed to the emperor as an angel, which can be called the "Diwan of History."

– Muhammad Khalifa Hassan: The Ethiopian Text in the History of Ethiopia from 1769-1840 AD, translation, commentary and study, unpublished MA thesis, Department of Oriental Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University 1968 AD, p. 5.

(2) Abeer Muhammad Ali: The Royal Text in the History of Abyssinia during the rule of Sarsa Dengel (1563-1597), translation and analytical study, unpublished master's thesis, Cairo University 1991, p. B.

(3) Ibid, p.B.

-Zaher Riad: History of Ethiopia, p. 84.

Definition of the Ethiopian text and the era of Amda Seyon:

The text under study is part of an Ethiopian royal chronicle now preserved in the British Museum under the title: Brit. Mus.Orient.821, folios 39-64. Referred to as (Orient.821). Which is part of a general manuscript of the kings of Ethiopia, starting from Amda Seyon to Sahla Dengel (1830 AD). The period of the reign of King Amda Seyon existing in section No. 39, while the previous sections include what is related to the first detailed history appears in the Ethiopian chronicles known to us, but it was limited to a description of King Amda Seyon's campaign with Adal in 1332 AD (1).

This study is an attempt to shed light on an important period in the region of the Solomonic dynasty that ruled starting from the period of the emperor Yekuno Amlak (1270-1285 AD) and reaching his grandson the emperor Amda Seyon (1314-1344 AD). The study is based on the text achieved and translated into Germany by professor Manfred Kropp, which was published in1994 in the collection (C.S.C.O) in part No. 538 under the title " DER SIEGREICHE FELDZUG DES KONIGS AMDA SEYON GEGEN DIE MUSLIME IN ADAL IM JAHRE 1332 N.CHR "(2) professor Manfred Kropp indicated in the introduction to the text that he relied, in his search of the text, on copies of a group of manuscripts:

– A copy of the (Hello) group: its classification is attributed to Eduard Roble in 1833, and it was obtained from the Church of Walt Peter.

– Manuscript copy (Antoine Dabadi 118): This manuscript was published briefly by Arnold Dabady, quoting from the original sample in the possession of (Daj Azmat Mar'ad) from Gudjam, obtained from the Atronsa Mariam Church, and it is a separate text from the texts of the Hailo Group. It was composed between the years 1840-1849 AD.

– Collection version (Mondon Vidailhet 27).

– The Bruce Codex: This manuscript dates back to the reign of (Sosenius 1610 AD) and the era following it, and it contained a text of references, as well as a chapter on the history of Sarsa Dengel.

– Richard Pankhurst(ed): The Ethiopian royal chronicles, Addiss Abab, 1967, p.12.

(1) G.W.B.Huntingford: The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, king of Ethiopia, Oxford, University press,1965, pp.4,32.

(2) Manfred Kropp: Dear Siegreiche Feldzug des konigs Amda Seyon Gegen Die Muslim in Adal Im Jahre 1332N. chr, Lovan II, 1994.

This is in addition to a number of researchers publishing and translating some of these manuscripts, because of their great historical and literary importance. Through their work, the researchers pointed out at some length to the differences contained in the texts, as well as the shortage in some manuscripts, in the hope that these new translations would lead to make progress in researching the history of Ethiopia. Huntingford translated it into English in 1965 (1). Which helped in revealing the geographical facts contained within the text. Jesuit Pedro Paez also provided a summary of this text from an Ethiopian manuscript dating back to 1620 AD, which is called "The History of Amda Ceon" (2). Al-Maida relied on it and transmitted it word for word in his special account called "The Victories of Amda Ceon"(3). Likewise, Perruchon translated the text, adding to it his briefing of its literary nature. However, the investigator points out that the historical evaluation of his translation revealed the absence of the historian's view (4).

It should be noted that some researchers link the formation of Yekuno Amlak and the emergence of the History Diwan, but others believe that the royal annals actually began in the era of Amda Keyon (1314-1344). And before that, it was just an oral narration that circulates among people. Perhaps this belief is supported by the fact that among the published royal annals we do not find specific annals of Yekuno Amlak. Rather, the published royal annals begin with the Annals of Emperor Amda Seyon, the subject of this study, Amda Seyon has a group of manuscripts that dealt with his royal annals, differing in their importance, value and historical authenticity.

The importance of this historical text stems from the importance of King Amda Seyon and the importance of his era and the events that took place in it that require standing, analyzing and comparing them with what came on the tongues of contemporary historians. As Amda Seyon is the great king of legend due to his victories over the Muslims in Ethiopia, and according to the European historians he is the true founder of modern Ethiopia, with the organization he introduced into the affairs of the state, consolidation of its feet and extension of its borders at the expense of the Islamic kingdoms in Ethiopia(5). And this situation remained for several centuries after his death. Also the emperor conquests helped in the spread of Chris-

tianity to the border areas with Islamic kingdoms. The name of King Amda Seyon still remains in the Ethiopian historical heritage, and his name is still associated with many archaeological sites today in Ethiopia, such as his stone sarcophagus located next to a pillar of a church in Addis Ababa, the current capital of Ethiopia, and in Nasrah (6), the walls and dome of the building attributed to him are still left.

(1) G.W.B.Huntingford: The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, king of Ethiopia, Oxford, University press,1965.

(2) Historia de Ethiopia, in Baccari,vol.III , Brit. Mus. Orient.820 folio 7.

(3) G.W.B.Huntingford: op.cit., p.27.

(4) Perruchon,J : Histoire des guerres de Amda Seyon, Rai d'Ethiopie, in J.A, ser.8.T.XIV.1889.

(5) Edward Ullendorf: The Ethiopians, London, 1960, p 64.

(6)The city of Nasrah: It is located seven kilometers southwest of the city of Addis Ababa "Ethiopia", and the name of the city of Nasrah is one of the names quoted from the Bible. It is worth noting that the aforementioned city of Nasrah differs from the city of Nasrah in the north of Palestine, which was the home of Christ, peace be upon him.

Disagreement about the time of writing the text:

The opinions of researchers differed about the time of composing the text – the subject of this study. Both Dillmann and Perruchon believed that the time of writing the text came much later than the fourteenth century AD, so Dillmann referred it to the era following the kings Galawdewos and Teodros, depending on what was mentioned in the text of the names of each From Galawdewos and Theodorus (1). Which Dillmann considered the names of the so-called kings of Ethiopia, Teudros (1409-1412 AD), and Galawdewos (1540-1559 AD). However, this last sign was for the two martyrs Teudros and Galawdewos, whose names are found together not only here but also in a document preserved in the "Madkhani Alam" church in Lalibala (2). And this paragraph's reference to these two saints confirms what was also mentioned during King Lebna Dengel's recording of the granting of an estate to items of prostration in memory of his father and the age of prostration, who died on July 29, 1531 (3).

While Huntingford pointed out that the history of Baptism was organized in the fourteenth century AD (4), he explained that it was found in an oriental man-

uscript dating back to 1851 AD, and kept in the British Museum under the title: Brit.Mus.Oriental 821 . It was copied by Hailo in 1785 AD. This was done from an older manuscript, which was lost when (Beta Mengisht) was burned in Gondar by Mikael Sihol in the middle of the eighteenth century AD. This manuscript was found or copied when Pedro Paez made a summary of it in Portuguese in 1620 AD (5). Huntingford adds that the style of writing the simple manuscript confirms that it was written in the era of King Amda Seyon or very soon after his era (6).

– International Arab Encyclopedia, Volume 25, Second Edition.

– Manfred Kropp: op cit., p.1.

(1) Manfred Kropp: Der Siegreiche Feldzug des guerres de Amda Seyon, p. 56.

(2) Lalibela: le Chiese ipogee egli altri monumenti medievali del lasta, Rome, 1940, p.xxxv.

(3) Bodleian Ms.Bruce 88.folio ugv, conzelman,chronique de Galawdewos 1895 p.66.

(4) G.W.B.Huntingford: The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, p. 27.

– The royal annals were destroyed when Mikael burnt "Beta Mengisht" in Gwandar, and he controlled the kingdom during the reigns of Iyasu II (1730-1755 AD), and Iyoas (1755-1769 AD), so Hailo made a renewal of the three texts(Orient 821- Eth 147 – d'Abbadie 118) with the help of the "Makhdara Mariam" group, with a banner from the Dag Azmat Hailo Eshtayeh. He collected from several monasteries material for the replacement of Beta Mengeshet at the beginning of the reign of Ieyasu III (1784-1788 AD).

– G.W.B. Huntingford: The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, p. 26.

(5) G.W.B. Huntingford: The Land Charters of Northern Ethiopia, translated with an introduction and notes, Oxford Uni Press, Addis Ababa Nairobi, 1965, pp. 3-4.

Objectives of the study

1 – present study aims at translating, studying and analyzing one of the Ethiopian royal chronicles known as " royal annals" into Arabic, a translation that cares about the meaning and preserves the spirit of the Ethiopic text due to its historical importance. which is the real beginning of the blogging era in Ethiopia. Where the so-called "Sahafi Te'zaz " appeared, the author of the royal will and intended " king's historian". Who recorded events in his country from an official point of view.

The present study reveals one of the most important of these royal annals, the text of the Ethiopian Emperor Amda Seyon (1314-1344), because of the historical importance of this emperor surpassed his predecessors, and the importance of his era because of the religious conflict between Christianity and Islam and accompanied by a crusade had it's impact on the relations between Egypt , Ethiopia and other neighbors countries, which necessitates studying the text of the era, including important political, religious and economic events, this is in addition to the work of a careful linguistic study of the Ethiopian text that monitors it's rhetorical methods, structures and implications.

The methods used are the historical method and the descriptive analytical method, as the importance of this historical text comes from the importance of the emperor Amda Seyon and the importance of his era and the events that took place in it that require standing , analyzing and comparing them with what was mentioned by contemporary historians.

2 – The study also aims to make an accurate linguistic study of the presented Ethiopian text, through which it monitors its rhetorical methods, structures and connotations, and the phonetic developments that occurred in it, especially since the text represents a transitional stage from the ancient Ge'ez language to the Amharic language that prevailed in the thirteenth century AD. And the foreign influence on the language of the text and its style are of great interest in the context of the comparative linguistic lesson, in addition to studying the historical and literary style of the text. As well as provide the Arabic library with an original Ethiopic chronicle with translation into Arabic.

3 – In addition, the study presented each of internal conditions of Ethiopia during the reign of Emperor Amda Seyon , and it's political, religious and economic relations with Egypt, Arabian peninsula and Southeast Asia.

4 – The study followed a detail of the campaigns of Amda Seyon against Christians, Muslims and Jewish in the Horn of Africa and showed the reasons for the defeat of the Islamic kingdoms. Also presented the case of thieves and bandits who spread in Abyssinia starting from the fourth century AD and throughout the era of Solomonic dynasty, and how the emperor Amda Seyon confronted them.

The struggle of King Amda Seyon with the rulers of the Ethiopian regions and his reorganization of the kingdom

First: Amda Seyon and how he reached the throne of Ethiopia

A-The life of Amda Seyon before he took power:

The references and sources are silent about talking about the life of King Amda Seyon before he ascended the throne of Ethiopia, and no information was mentioned about that even in his royal text, which makes us face great difficulty in knowing this period of the life of this king, but in any case we can say that the king Amda Seyon intentionally did not spend this period of his life before assuming the rule in what is known as "Amba Geisha / Juba of Kings"(1)

In Light of the competition between the princes to reach the Ethiopian throne, one of the greatest exceptional customs in Ethiopia arose. In it , all the males of the royal family are isolated from the court, in order to protect the ruling king and his sons and grandsons from the plots of those who would like the throne. Hence, the king's male relatives and brothers had no right to claim the crown. The ascension of any king to the throne immediately means that his brothers are exiled to an impenetrable fortress called "Amba" and there they and their families live indefinitely (2).

(1) Amba Geisha: The inherited folk traditions usually trace the origins of the royal prison back to the era of Abraha, as one of legends traces it back to King Merhih, one of the ancestors of King Lalibala, and that he built it based on divine inspiration. It is reported that the Jewish queen Judit had besieged the princes' mountain and was in "Debra Damo" at the time and killed all the intruders from the Solomonic dynasty, except for a boy who belonged to him Yekuno Amlak , then she abandoned this custom after this disaster to return with one of the grandchildren to the vast territory of Showa, a mountain with a huge peak, where it was customary for the emperor sitting on the throne to imprison the rebellious princes with their families. Amba Geisha" located in Amhara Province, which was originally a place of pagan worship, then King Lalibala built two churches on it. After the invasion of Amba Geisha at the hands of Imam Ahmad Garani, the princes' prison was shifted to "Jabal Wakhna" and remained there until 1773 AD, when the royal wars overthrew it. Dr. Zaher Riad points out that there is a mountain of kings at the border the vast territory of Showa, a mountain with a huge peak, where it was customary for the emperor sitting on the throne to imprison the rebellious princes with their families. Lake Hayek.

– Magdy Abdel Razek Suleiman: The Royal Text in the History of Abyssinia during the Ages of the two Emperors Zara Yaqoub (1434 - 1468) and his son Ba'id Mariam (1468 - 1478), translation and analytical study, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of Oriental Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University 1991, p. 3.

– A H.M.Jones & Elizabeth Monroe: A History of Ethiopia, Oxford at the Clarendon press, 1935, p.11.

– Encyclopedia AEthiopica Edited by Siegbert Uhlig, volume1(A-C), Wiesbaden,2003,p.220.

– Zaher Riad: History of Ethiopia, pp. 88-89.

(2) Magdy Abdel Raziq Suleiman: op.cit, pp. 3-4.

– A H.M.Jones & Elizabeth Monroe: op.cit.,p.71.

Guarded by several hundred warriors trusted in their loyalty. These individuals were treated negligently, befitting members of the ruling family, and enjoyed various kinds of pleasures within the borders of "Amba Geisha". They were isolated from the outside world and effectively deprived of any real political or social relationship with the rest of the kingdom, and when the ruling king was dying without leaving an heir from among his immediate relatives, they would choose one of the princes of "Amba Geisha" to ascend the throne. Thus, the mountain of the Kings represented a constitutional tool that contributed to maintaining the stability and continuity of the Christian kingdom (1).

B- Amda Seyon and how he attained the throne of Ethiopia:

The historian of King Amda Seyon's chronicle has mentioned that there was a struggle for power in the Kingdom of Ethiopia, and King Amda Seyon managed to come to power with the help of armed rebellion against his predecessors (2). The matter was confirmed by the endowment document mentioned by Taddesse Tamrat, where it contained orders to confront the king "Wedem Ar'ad." It is possible that this gift mentioned that because "Wedem Ar'ad" had seized power from his nephews after he arrested them, and from here it is likely that the king and Wedem Ar'ad spent his reign in conflict with the rebels, the supporters of his deposed nephews, and they were the ones who were deliberately confronted by Amda Seyon. (3) Concerning the coronation ceremonies, mentioned a manuscript now preserved in Paris under the title " Bibliotheque Nationale. Ms.Ethiopien 104 ". Amda Sion, whose rule name was "Gabra Masqal – Abdel Salib", became king twenty-nine years after the death of Yekuno Amlak (4). The first king of the returning Solomonic dynisity. Amda Seyon defeated his father, King

Wedm Ar'ad (1297AD – 1312), one of the seven sons of Yekuno Amlak. Amda Seyon ruled for thirty years at the time of "Madkhanina Egezi, the spiritual son of St. Teklahaimanot (5).

– A   H.M.Jones & Elizabeth Monroe: op.cit.,p.71.

(1) T. Tamrat: The Horn of Africa "The Solomons" in Ethiopia and the Countries of the Horn of Africa, General History of Africa, UNESCO, Volume IV 1988, pp. 432-433.

(2) Manfred Kropp: Der Siegreiche Feldzug Des Konigs Amda Seyon, p.32 (text).

(3) Taddessi Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1972, p.503.

(4) Encyclopedia AEthiopica, edited by: Siegbert Uhlig, volume 1 (A-C), p.227.

Manfred Kropp: op.cit, p.1.

(5) Teklahaimanot: He is considered one of the most famous disciples of Iasus Moa', with whom he spent nine years of education, and after receiving the monastic custom from St. Iasus Moa', he decided to visit the ancient monastic centers in northern Ethiopia, so he went to Debra Damut and some areas in Tigray, where he stayed for ten years, then returned with many of his followers. Then Iasus Moa' advised him to return to his headquarters in Showa and start a new monastery center there, so Teklahimanout returned to Showa, and after several years of Christian activity, he founded the Asbu Monastery in Showa at the end of the thirteenth century AD, which was renamed in 1445 AD as the Debra Libanos Monastery, and it became the most important monastery in Ethiopia.

Who set himself up in Pankwal in Tigray, and on the same sum he was confessed by seven eminent monks, namely Samuel ben Wadiba, etc. On the next day five others confessed him in the presence of Aaron Ben Keter, etc (1). It is said that at his time there was the activity of Anba Eustatius and Anba Georges, the owner of watches. As for the imperial residence, Arab and Ethiopian sources indicated that the king had established his capital in Tagolat, which is called Mara'di (2). Where Al-Maqrizi mentioned regarding it: "It was Sahart"(3).

Sources and references differ about the year that Amda Seyon took over the rule, as some sources mentioned that the king Amda Seyon was in the year 712 AH / 1312 AD, but the Ethiopian chronicle for King Amda Seyon stated that he made a campaign against the Sultanate of Adal in the year 1332 AD, and that year corresponds to the eighteenth year of his reign,

which confirms that he took power in 714 AH / 1314 AD.

– Christine Shayo: The Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Tewahedo), A Brief Introduction to Its Life and Spirituality, Foundation for Supporting Dialogue between the Families of Orthodox Churches, Paris, (without date), p. 209.

– Stripling, G W.F: The Church of Ethiopia, panorama of history and spiritual life, Addis Ababa, A publication of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, 1970, p.21

– Sergew Hable Sellassi: Ancient and Medival Ethiopian History to 1270, Addis Ababa, united printers, 1972, p.282.

(1) G W.B.Huntingford: The glorious victories of Amda .Seyon , king of Ethiopia, pp 5-6.pp

(2) (Mar'adi): It is located in Amhara region, and it is the capital of the kingdom during the reign of King Amda Seyon, as mentioned in his chronicle. This region extends east of Lake Tana until it connects to Showa region. It was mentioned in the Badan calendar as "Jeremy". It is a city mentioned by most of the authors in the books of paths, kingdoms, lengths and widths, and it is the seat and base of the Kingdom of Abyssinia. Sergo adds to the existence of a distinctive feature of the emperors of the old and new Solomonic dynasty, which is that they do not give great importance to buildings and monuments, as it turns out that the emperor does not reside in a specific place, but chooses one region (the capital) in which he resides during the rainy season, while the rest of the year he spent it on moving during his empire.

– Taqweem al-Buldan by Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Imad al-Din Ismail, Royal Printing House, 1850, p. 156 – 157.

– Sergew: op. cit. pp. 291-292.

(3)Sahart: It is the historical district of Tigray in the east of Indarta, and its ruler bore the title "Shioma Shum" and was attributed to the Aksumite ruler "Gabra Masqal". The emperor's rule would be a revolted angel, a ruler bewitched against the emperor. It also belonged during the reign of King Amda Seyon I to the northern provinces, and its ruler was one of those who demanded to fight the unidentified rebel "Nadkhan". Ibn Fadlallah al-Omri appointed Sahrat Bethgray and appointed its capital, Axum. And Emperor Lebna Dengel led a series of war battles in Sahart in 1533 AD, the battle took place between emperor Glaudius and the forces of Imam Ahmed bin Garani al-Ghazi in 1541 AD.

– Encyclopedia AEthiopica, Edited by: Siegbert Uhlig, vol 4 (O-X), Wiesbaden 2010,p.461.

Regarding the imperial residence, Arab and Ethiopian sources indicated that the king established his capital in Tagolat which is called Marady. Where Al-Maqrizi mentioned abouthiy saying: "iy was bewitched by the city of the Kingdom in the old days, it is called Akhshram, and it is also called the Ferta River, and in it was the Negush " the king", then the province of Amhara, and it is now the city of the kingdom, and it is also called Maradai." (1) This is confirmed by the King's chronicle, which included the reat of Saber al-Din prior to King Amda Seyon's raid on his kingdom "Ifat" and sabotaging it in 1332AD. (2) It was also his religious refuge at the time in Deir Dabra Hayek Estefanos (3).

(1) Al-Maqrizi: Al ilmam bi Akhbar mn bi Ard Alhabasha min molok Al Islam, printed in the Al-Tutub Press in Egypt, 1895, p.2.

(2) Manfred Kropp: Der siegrieche feldzug des konigs Amda Seyon , pp. 3-4.

(3) Hayek Estefanos: The monastery of Debra Hayek Estefanos was built in the middle of Lake Hayek. It is the monastery of St. Stephen, which was settled in the middle of the thirteenth century by Iasus Moa', one of the most famous Ethiopian monks at this stage, after he moved from Debra Damo to establish his famous school in Haig, and establishes one of the most influential monastic centers in the history of Ethiopia. St. Stephen appeared during the thirteenth century AD and was the father of Nasihit Mariam, affiliated with Emperor Nakweto, the father of one of the kings of the Agawi dynastyy. It is reported that King Lalibala had asked for the hand of his only daughter to his nephew, King Naquito La'ab.

– Magdy Abdel Razek Suleiman: op.cit.,p. 104.

– The Dictionary of Ethiopian Biography, editors: Belaynesh Michael, s.Chojnacki& Richard Pankhurst, volume1, p.60.

Second: King Amda Seyon struggle with the rulers of the Ethiopian regions:

Christian Ethiopia witnessed serious internal disputes during the period which King Amda Seyon ascended the throne, and its lands were limited to the old possessions of the Agawi dynasty and some of the less important areas that joined recently in the Showa region. At that time, its borders extended approximately in the south to the northern provinces of Showa, in the west to the area east of Lake Tana and the upper course of the Blue Nile, and in the east to the edge of the Ethiopian plateau. The absence of safety prevailed in all directions, as there were many political entities within the Solomonic kingdom, there were the

Falasha tribes, and the pagan Agaw tribes, which extend from the northwest to the southwest and south (1). The kingdom of Gudjam (2) was also born which was found in the mountainous sector south of Lake Tana. However, the most important of these entities was the kingdom of Damut in the southwest, which controlled large lands south of the Blue Nile strait, and the accounts indicate that its kings controlled the entire Showa plateau long before the emergence of the Islamic and Christian kingdoms (3). This is in addition to the presence of many Islamic kingdoms or as they are called (Islamic-style kingdoms) along the coast extending from the archipelago of the Dahlak Islands (4) the Red Sea to the Somali city of Barawa (5).

(1) T. Tamrat: The Horn of Africa "The Solomons" in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, pp. 423, 433.

(2) Guidgam Kingdom: One of the oldest provinces of the Christian Empire, bordered to the east and south by the strait of the Al Abai River, which originates from Lake Tana. The process of Christianizing the founding Agaw began during the twelfth century AD, but had no effect until the beginning of the era of King Amda Seyon (1314-1344 AD), and before the middle of the eighteenth century, all areas of East Guidgam were inhabited by Amharic-speaking Christians.

- Chris Prouty& Eugene Rosenfeld: Historical Dictionary of Ethiopia, p. 80.

(3) Karam Kamal al-Din al-Sawy: Baptism and its internal reforms in Abyssinia (1314-1344), Institute of African Research and Studies, Cairo University 2000, p. 5.

- Tamrat: op cit., p.423.

(4) Dahlak Islands: mentioned by Yaqut al-Hamawi by saying that it is an island in the Sea of Yemen, and it is an anchorage between the countries of Yemen and Abyssinia, and it was mentioned in some other sources that it is a group of islands in the Qalzum Sea - currently called the Red Sea - towards the port of Massawa, and it consists of (Dahlak, Harran, and bridges, Darkah, Noura, Nafara, and Kamran), and the largest of them is Kamran. Islam entered it from an early age through Muslim merchants, and the Umayyad state occupied it in the year 83 AH / 702 AD. The Islamic Encyclopedia stated that it was an exile and a prison for the gang during the Umayyad and Abbasid eras, and it was taken over by the Yemeni Zabid family in the ninth century AD. Currently, most of its residents speak the Tigri language.

- Yaqut al-Hamawi (Shehab al-Din Abu Abdullah al-Hamwi al-Rumi al-Baghdadi, 626 AH / 1229 AD): Mujam al-Buldan, volume 2, edited by: Farid Abdulaziz al-Jundi, Dar Sader, Beirut, 1986 AD, p. 492.

- Chris Prouty&Eugene Rosenfeld: Historical Dictionary of Ethiopia, p44.

(5) Barawa City: It is located on the Somali coast and belongs to the Mogadishu commercial empire, and there were regional commercial exchanges between them.

   - T. Tamrat: The Horn of Africa "The Solomons" in Ethiopia and the Countries of the Horn of Africa, pg. 429.

Overlooking the Indian Ocean, in addition to the increasing influence of the nobility class "local rulers", the important parts of Ethiopia during that stage of the history of the Solomonic ruling family consisted of: Tigray, Lasta and Amhara (1). As a result of the successful Yekuno Amlak revolution, Lasta not only lost its importance in the kingdom, but also lost much of its leadership, making Tigray and Amhara two prominent parts in the formation of the Christian power. However, the local rulers took over the leadership of the Tigri immediately after the strengthening of the angelic power, and the most important of these new local rulers was Indarta ruler. He also retained the title "Hasgwa" (2) and "Aqabi Sensan"(3).

Engida Egzi family may gather an independent authority and an influential force in their local area of Indarta, especially during disputes and conflicts between the sons and grandsons of the king to be property. There is evidence of the influence of this family. It was mentioned in a lands chart dated (705 AH / 1305 AD) that Tsfana Egzi refers to his local area by saying, "My private kingdom". Both King Yegabe' Seyon, and king Wedem Ar'ad had weak authority to control the situation, as it seemed that they recognized the influence of that family (4). Therefore, King Amda Seyon took it upon himself to personally, without delay, and methodically address each of these problems. His first steps were to extend his influence and control over the regional rulers who were threatening the unity of the kingdom (5). Where he tended to annex the ancient provinces of Aksum and bring the natural tributaries of the center to the west, south and southeast of Ethiopia under his control (6).

(1) The Abyssinian plateau is divided into several regions, most of whose people embrace Christianity, and they are from north to south: Tigray region, which contains the city of Aksum, the ancient capital of Abyssinia, and Amhara region, which contains the capital of the kingdom during the time of Al-Omari, and it is called (Maraadi). Guidjam province is located in the south of the province

   - Rajab Muhammad Abdel Halim: Political Relations between Al-Zayla' Muslims and Christians of Abyssinia in the Middle Ages, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya, Cairo University Press, 1405 AH / 1985 AD, pp. 29-30.

(2) Hasgwa: The title of Hasgwa, as Tamrat indicates, appeared after 1225 AD, and the official who held this title was the one who collected taxes for the king in Tamben.

   -Taddesse Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia, p.97.

(3) Aqabi Sensan: This title indicates that he is an ancient Axumi, and during the rule of Zara Ya'qub in Aksum, the ruler of Tigray bore the title of Aqabi Sensan.

   -G.W.B.Huntingford : The land charters of northern Ethiopia, p.104.

   -Taddesse Tamrat : op.cit, p.97.

(4)Taddesse Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia, p. 73.

(5)Karam Kamal al-Din al-Sawy: op.cit., p. 9.

(6) Roderick Grierson: African Zion, The Sacred of Ethiopia, Yale Uni Press, New Haven and London, The Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addiss Ababa, p 36.

According to the feudal system of government, Ethiopia is divided into several regions, each of which is held by a general ruler called (Ras), and he is an absolute ruler who monopolizes the rule of what he wants and does not return to the emperor except with regard to recruitment and some imposed fees. As is the case with independent kings. Each region is divided into centers whose affairs are managed by rulers. Among the men of administration and soldiers, and they are entrusted with judging people, collecting taxes, and informing the head of all matters and incidents related to his boycott. With this familiar system in Ethiopia, the authority gradually descends from master to master, and the king comes at the head of this feudal system. He is the absolute ruler of the country. His authority is not restricted by a constitution, nor is he commanded by law. Either administrative, social, literary or otherwise. It represents a massive force. But despite this absolute power that he enjoys, he has nothing of the kings in the constitutional kingdoms from controlling the governors of the regions and the chiefs, because these rulers are keen on what they enjoy from the power of the Sultan and do not owe the emperor with obedience as long as they did not see his strength and brutality, they are forced to acknowledge his authority, and therefore you see them attack him at the first sign of weakness that appears to them from him, either to gain more power in their homes or to greed for the throne and other purposes that they aim at in order to achieve private interests that are not related to the public interest (1).

In every region there was an army subordinate to it and subject to the authority of the governor of the region, and this military power that was owned by the rulers of the regions, in addition to the great material wealth that they enjoyed, often encouraged them to revolt in the face of the king, and a declaration of disobedience to greed for rule and from here wars broke out between the king and the governors of the provinces(2). The status of the regional rulers varies, as not all of them are of the same degree. Rather, their status varies according to their strength, the elevation of their provinces, and the manner in which they reach power. It can be said that the most prominent ruler is the governor of Tigray province, who was called "Al-Bahir Nagash" (3), as his province derived its strength in the past through its presence within the Aksum region and its religious monuments that did not support its protection, in addition to the presence of the Ark of the Covenant in it. It also gained its strength recently through its geographic location on the sea coast, which gave it an economic richness. What confirms the prestigious position of the ruler of Tigray is that he added to his authority several other areas towards the coast of

(1) Pauls Massad: Abyssinia in a turning point from its history, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Masryah, Al-Asriya Press in Faggala, Egypt, without date, pp. 28-29.

(2)Levine, Donald.N: Wax and Gold, p 156.

- Abeer Muhammad Ali: op.cit., p.6.

(3) Bahir Nagash: The Bahir Nagash is also called "the judge," and Jones Elizabeth Monroe mentions that the rulers of the Bahir Nagash who ruled the coastal province bordering the sea were called kings, but they ruled according to the king's will. Huntingfort adds that the Bahir Nagash had ruled the areas north of Tigray, Hamasin, Sarawi, and even east of the sea, and he abolished this position in 1580 AD.

- Jones and Elisabeth Monroe : op.cit., p. 64.

- G.W.B.Huntingford: The land charters of Northern Ethiopia, p. 9.

Massawa, such as Siri (1), Soruri(2), Hamasin (3) and Bor(4). Whatever the position of each ruler, the only guarantee of his survival was his perseverance in the payment of tax and the performance of feudal duties. The other to the emperor, as well as his obligation to attend at the head of his military squad in case the emperor goes to war or when he is required to do (5).

Amda Seyon's control over northern Tigre:

Ethiopia lost control of some Islamic and Christian regions after the death of Wedem Ar'ad, so King Amda

Seyon, at an early stage of his rule in A.M. (1316-1317 A.D.), launched a series of large and successful military campaigns against Hadiya, Damut and Gudjam to subdue the revolutionaries from the Islamic kingdoms, and this victory was recorded – A few years after his power increased – through one of the land grants issued in 1317 AD (6). Similar to the inscription of King Adulis and King Ezana(7).In which King Amada Seyon explained: " I went out to war..., and the Lord delivered all the people of Damut into my hand, its kings and princes, its rulers and its people countless men and women, whom I had banished to another people's land. After that the Lord gave me a gift people, men and women without limit. And then the Lord delivered a king Gudgam into the hands of he and all hissoldiers..., and then the Lord gave into the hands of the ruler of Indarta, he and all his army, his people, his relatives, and all his country beyond the Aksumite Church." (8)

(1) Siri: It is a district in Tigray, in the north of Abyssinia, located near the Takazi River, and the main city in it is Daburabadi.

   - Magdy Abdel Razek Suleiman: op.cit., p.15.

(2) Soruri or Sarwa: a district located in the north of Abyssinia, near Hamasin and Siri in Tigray.

   - Magdy Abdel Razek Suleiman: op.cit., p. 15.

(3)Hamasin: a northern province which together with Ken Siri and Akala Gozai constitute the central region of Eritrea. It was part of the Aksumite Empire until the eighth century AD.

   - Chris Prouty&Eugene Rosenfeld: Historical Dictionary of Ethiopia, pp.88-89.

(4) Bor: an emirate located between Sarwa and Hamasin at the Ma'rib River.

   - G.W.B. Huntingford: op.cit., pp.97-98.

(5) Both Jones and Elizabeth Monroe state that the king's power was absolute, and the rulers were responsible for paying the tax for their entire provinces, as Alvarez testified to pay the tax of the kingdoms of Guidjam, Tigre, and Bahir Meder (the coastal province), and Alvarez often saw the heads and rulers arriving at the court. Royal escorts teams to send them to the battlefield.

   - and Elisabeth Monroe : op.cit., pp. 64-65.

(6) Taddesse Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia, p.135.

(7) Roderick Grierson: African Zion, p.36.

(8) Taddesse Tamrar: Church and State in Ethiopia, p.73.

According to what Tamrat said, King Amda Seyon during his campaigns in Hadiya in 1316/1317 AD was not fighting against Islamic groups, by describing the kingdom of Hadiya: "The kingdom of Islamic Hadiya was probably a pagan kingdom and a number of Muslim merchants resided in it who worked to convert some of the local population," and it seems that the effect of the Muslims in the region were strong and they worked to weaken the strength of the Christians there. So, before the year 1332AD, King Amda Seyon led a military campaign against the Kingdom of Hadiya in order to curb these hostilities (1).

The historian of the chronicle - the subject of the study - explained the reason for the king's invasion of the kingdom of Hadiya before the year 1332 AD in the compliance of Amano, the ruler of Hadiya with the opinion of one of his advisors called Balaam, whom the chronicle historian describes as a false prophet, in refraining from paying the tax to the king. In her family murder and capture and brutality (2). Then he turned to the rulers of the northern provinces, who achieved a great deal of independence. In 1320 AD, King Amda Seyon overcame Yaibeka Igzi, the governor of Indarta and the representative of the local Tigri. Which sought to form a coalition from the northern regions (Amba Shaniti, Bilhat, and Tamben), in the face of the Amharic Kingdom. As he appears to have held tight control over northern Tigray, the Abbots of Aksum and Debra Damu were prominent members of his court, and he invited the governor of Tamben to join him in his rebellion against King Amda Seyon , and though he failed to enlist further support by the departure of those responsible for obedience the king, but his rebellion was well organized. Therefore, it is not surprising that we note that King Amda Seyon in the face of Yaibeka Igzi and his followers was marked by cruelty and brutality(3).

In Amba Shaniti – the center of the rebellion – the king established a military colony, and used it as a base for other military campaigns directed to the north of the Red Sea, and ordered the elimination of the rebels, overthrowing and isolating them, and in order to erase their honor as kings appointed on their countries, men who are not from the descendants of Adam and Eve called Halastiot (4). He retained the governor of Amba Shenaiti, but changed his title from "Sheium" to "Khodug", meaning the chief of the Helasteo. And he retained the governor of Amba Shaniti, but he changed his title from Sheium become "Khadija", meaning

(1) Taddesse Tamrar: Church and State in Ethiopia, p.136.

(2) Manfred Kropp: Der Siegreiche Feldzug des konigs Amda Seyon, pp. 6-7.

(3)Taddesse Tamrar: Church and State in Ethiopia, pp.73-74.

(4)Means individuals of low or mixed origin, and these halastiotas did not accept Helastiotas the partial rule of Ya'bika Egzi'. but rather they preferred the military colony established by Amda Seyon. Huntingford refers to the meaning of this nickname as a type of monkeys.

-Taddesse Tamrat: op.cit, p74.

-G.W.B.Huntingford: The glorious victories of Amda Seyon, p.13.

The head of the Helastio. He also entrusted many of the positions that were seized to his followers and relatives in an attempt to form the government, a tradition followed by the previous kings (1). Until King Lebna Dengel (1508-1540 AD) came and worked to restore some of the titles that his predecessor, King Amda Seyon, had revoked with regard to the rulers of the northern regions, through a Ge'ez document dating the period of King Lebna Dengel's rule, in which echoes of King Amda Seyon's campaign in 1320 AD. This document was included by Conti Rossini in the book (Liber Axumae) (2).

The war campaigns that Amda Seyon directed against these rebellious provinces gave him the ability to impose his will on his local rulers. This was shown by a land grant in Debra Hayek in which it was stated that God gave in the hands of the ruler of Indarta, and all his army, followers, relatives and lands, as happened in the Aksum cathedral. By the year 1320 AD, and after less than ten years of deliberately taking over the throne, Amda Seyon found himself at the head of a Christian kingdom that included large provinces (3).

(1) Encyclopedia AEthiopica, Edited by: Siegbert Uhlig, vol 1 (A-C), p 22.

(2) K.Conti.Rossini: Documenta and Illustrandam History I.Liber Axumae,Louvain,1954,pp.30-31.

(3) T. Tamrat: The Horn of Africa, "The Solomons" in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, pg. 434.

(B) **Amda Seyon subjugated the Eritrean Valley:**

The new Amharas replaced the Agaw family as soon as Yekuno assumed the property of the throne of Ethiopia, which resulted in the emergence of anti-popular movements from Lasta to the northeast of Tigray (1) to where the Eritrean region, which included the counties of Akala Gozai, Hamasin and Sarai. Where the situation became a conflict between the new authority and some local residents, which resulted in the transfer of control and domination from the Christian Palau tribes to the hands of Adkama Malaga, who controlled a large part of the Christian settlers in that region,

and the Palau tribes trace their origins back to the Beja, as they were at the beginning of the thirteenth century AD had extended their hegemony over the Eritrean Valley region, as well as some provinces south of Ma'rab Valle (2).

Their fall in the hands of the Adkama Malaga created a power vacuum in the region, which gave the former feudal rulers the last opportunity to assert their independence before Adkama Malaga consolidated his power in the region. At the same time, Daqi Minab (3) Christian tribes began spreading from its center, Geishnachim, to the northwestern lands of Asmara. In the early years of the fourteenth century AD, some branches moved into what is known today as the areas of Gernachem, Dambalas and Akala Gozai. In addition, groups of Hazutero belonging to the province of Showa were able to move in the north direction of Samhar, and took control of the area north of the Bogos people(4). The armies of these tribes

(1)Tigray, or Tigray: Its people speak the Tigrinya language. Tigray included not only the ancient capital of Aksum, but also seventeen districts between Sirai and Wag, and through Tigray the trade route that led to the port of Massawa passed. The sea, and after 1580 AD, the provinces of the Bahir-Nagash were added to the areas of influence of the Tigrayan ruler. The kingdom of Tigray is adjacent to the Simin region (the country of Falasha) on the southwestern border, and the Salmat region.

- G.W.B.Huntingford: The land charters of northern Ethiopia, pp.9 , 109.

- Simon,K.M: The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Addiss Ababa, w.d, pp. 13-14.

- Magdy Abdel Razek Suleiman: op.cit.,p. 9.

- Karam Kamal Al-Din Al-Sawy: op.cit., pp. 12-13.

(2) Taddessi Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia, p.75.

(3) Daqi Minab: One of the ancestors of this tribe, their origin goes back to Dambia, north of Lake Tana. It is believed that Daqi Minab traces its origins back to the original inhabitants of the Eritrea Valley region, and they were influenced by recent population movements from the north and south. This tribe was politically under the control of the Palau, and between the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century AD, some of the branches of this tribe moved to the areas that are now known (Dambia, Akala Guzai, and Gernachim). The first during his journey from Jerusalem to Abyssinia.

- Karam Kamal al-Din al-Sawy, op.cit., p. 65, 66.

- Taddesse Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia,pp. 75, 77.

(4) Ibid, p.75.

Rebelled and cooperated with the Muslims who controlled the kingdoms of Showa, Ifat and Hadiya, which led to the growth of the Muslim authority in the Eritrean Valley (1).

This made Amda Seyon worried about the growing power of Muslims in the Eritrean Valley,and also made him aware of the importance of restoring Christian sovereignty in Ethiopia, and that this would not happen unless the Muslims in their kingdoms felt his military strength, so he sent an expedition to Ifat, east of Showa, and it seems that the Muslims they had cooperated with the rebel army in the north of the Tigray, which prompted King Amda Seyon expand and invade the Eritrean region until he was able to defeat them and bring them under his control (2).

From the foregoing, it becomes clear to us that King Amda Seyon managed to subjugate the internal authority under his influence and his will, after there were strong families with influence and semi-independence (3), so he was able to extended his influence over the province of Gudgam, which is surrounded by the Blue Nile, and his influence crossed this river to the region of Begamedr, thus consolidating the feet of the well-known Kingdom of Ethiopia on the plateau and defining its features, and uniting it under one framework under the rule of his family, after ten centuries of the rule of Ezana, the first founder of the faith and the Christian kingdom in Aksum united the Ethiopian kingdom and consolidated its dominance inside without any clear and dangerous challenge from any other kingdom, and King Amda Seyon became thus able to direct his attention to confronting the Islamic advance and working to stop the danger that began to appear in the south (4) and his wars extended to the rest of the surrounding kingdoms. In his kingdom from the east and south those wars that continued throughout the following two centuries.(5)

(1)   Encyclopedia AEthiopica, Edited by: Siegbert Uhlig,vol 2, Wiesbaden, 2005, p. 355.

(2)   Taddesse Tamrat: The Abbots of Dabra Hayeq 1248-1535, in Jes, VIII, no 1970, pp. 95,96.

– Taddesse Tamrat: Church and State in Ethiopia, pp.76-77.

– Karam Kamal Al-Din Al-Sawy: op cit., p. 13.

(3)   Ibid, p 9.

(4)   Roderick Grierson: African Zion, p.37.

(5)   Fathi Ghaith:op.cit.,p. 126.

CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to shed light on an important period in the history of the Solomonic dynasty that ruled Ethiopia from the beginning of being a property, which is the historical period supported by written documents. According to historical sources, the era of codification began in Ethiopia with the beginnings of the rule of this dynasty. However, the detailed news of the rule of the Solomonic dynasity during the first hundred and sixty years is almost missing, with the exception of the annals dated for the wars of King Amda Seyon against the Muslims of Adal in 1332 AD, which the researchers considered full of events. The study explained in detail the king's famous conquests, as well as highlighted his most important works and achievements on all social, political, economic and religious levels, and his relations with the outside world, especially his relationship with Egypt. Among the most important findings that we reached in this study:

First: On the political level:

(1) The study presented a detail of King Amfa Seyon's early military campaigns against the rulers of the Ethiopian Christian regions to consolidate his control and consolidate the foundations of the kingdom. The study explained his campaigns against Gudgam, Damut, Hadiya, the northern Tigray region, and the Eritrean region.

(2) The study clarified the state of the Islamic kingdoms in Ethiopia, those independent entities in emergence and power during the first fifty years of the rule of the Solomonic dynisity, and during the reign of King Amda Seyon in particular, and the relationship of Christians with Muslims.

(3) The study presented, through the presented text, the campaigns of King Amda Seyon against the Islamic kingdoms of Ifat, Adal, and Al-Zaila in 1332AD, with a presentation of the factors of defeating the Islamic kingdoms, which were represented in the political, military, geographical, economic and religious factors.

(4) The study explained the campaigns of the king towards the Falasha Jews in the northern provinces of Semin, Wagra, Salamit and Sajadi, in order to pursue those who converted to Judaism.

(5) The study explained the case of the gangs of thieves and bandits who spread in the Ethiopian kingdom starting from the fourth century AD during the reign ofJudais Ezana, and they continued throughout the reign of the Solomonic dynasty, who are called the "shifta", with a presentation of the factors of the emergence of these gangs, and how King Amda Seyon confronted them .

(6) The study showed a set of administrative arrangements made by King Amda Seyon to control the administration of the new regions of the kingdom.

Second: On the economic level:

(1)The study showed the extent to which King Amda Seyon's political control over the Islamic kingdoms within his rule was achieved, and the economic consequences that resulted from them, especially since historical sources consider him to be the first among the kings of the Solomonic dynasty who reaped economic benefits from the growing power of the kingdom.

(2)The study monitored the internal trade systems of Ethiopia at the time of King Amda Seyon. It indicated the diversity of goods and commercial transactions within the Ethiopian Christian regions and the Islamic Zaila kingdoms, the internal trade systems, and the most important commercial markets during that period.

(3)The study monitored Ethiopia's foreign economic relations with Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula with its well-known divisions in the Gulf, Yemen, Hijaz and Oman. With an explanation of the most important roads, ports and commercial goods.

Third: On the religious level:

(1) The study monitored the vigilance witnessed by the church at home and the commitment of the Solomonic emperors to support the efforts of the Ethiopian clergy and the accompanying expansion in establishing monastery centers to spread the Christian religion in all areas, starting from the last quarter of the thirteenth century with the Solomonic dynasty assuming the throne of Ethiopia 1270 AD.

(2) The study presented the religious conflict that exists between the most important monastery institutions during the reign of King Amda Seyon, namely, the monastery of Debra Libanos and the monastery of St. Eustatius, with a presentation of the causes and results.

(3) The study was supported by four original documents of the lives of contemporary saints, with a translation of their texts into Arabic, which served to clarify the causes and events of the religious conflict that existed at the time between King Amda Seyon and these saints during his reign.

(4) The study presented the stages of growth and extension of the Christian movement in each of the regions of Amhara, Showa, and the region of Lake Tana. And the consequent expansion in building churches and establishing monastic unions.

Fourth: On the linguistic level:

(1) A translation that preserves the spirit of the Ethiopian text and the Arabic style, also I have investigated the text and verified many of the names of Ethiopian cities and regions, and I found it difficult to achieve the names of some other cities in that period, which may no longer exist or have changed their name.

(2) The study highlighted through the style of the text after his historian about moderation, where his religious fanaticism appeared through his position on Muslims, which is a hostile position, as the historian sees them as enemies of Christianity who must be fought in defense of Christ and Christianity. This seems clear across the lines of the text, both in wording and in content, which is what the study worked to clarify.

(3) The literary study of the text showed that its writer was influenced by the style of epics literature, and how the writer appeared as one of the folk epics writers who sing of the heroic deeds of the king, and how he crushed his enemies and saved his people. The historian included in his text a literary epic in which he investigated the sobriety of style and the strength of the language, using the miracles mentioned in the biographies of the saints to praise the strength, courage and intensity of the faith of his hero, King Amda Seyon, and elevate him to the ranks of saints.

(4) The study highlighted the clear rhetorical character for the Ethiopian text, which was represented in its main purpose, which is excitement and suspense, with the aim of highlighting the main character "King Amda Seyon", and the use of rhetorical tools such as simile, metonymy, and metaphor, although the text is dominated by the use of declarative sentences.

(5) The study clarified the foreign linguistic influences in the text, such as the influence of the Arabic language in terms of Arabic terms and styles contained within the Ethiopian text, the effect of the Hebrew language despite its lack of occurrence within the text, the influence of the Amharic language in terms of words, structures and syntax, and the effect of the Greek language.

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