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ONE SET OF SILVER JEWELRY FROM THE TOMBS OF VANI

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ABSTRACT

The article examines several types of silver jewelry unearthed at the Vani site during 2002-2005, which include spherical beads, tubes of various sizes, group of hemispherical items with corrugated surfaces and pyramidal objects.

These small silver jewelry items were discovered during archaeological work in burials N22, N24, and N11, concentrated both in the area of the deceased and among other numerous burial inventory.

In Burial N22, the silver artefacts were confirmed in a cluster north of the gold-containing jar and among the horse harness assemblage.

In Burial N24, similar small silver jewelry, better preserved, were recovered near the main deceased, in one cluster, topped by a gold tube decorated with granulation.

In Burial N11, which is earlier and dates to the mid-5th century BC, small silver jewelry was represented in relatively large quantities. A group of tubes and beads was concentrated near the right arm of the main deceased. The tubes were arranged in three rows lengthwise, while the beads were in four rows.

In all three burials, the jewelry manufacturing technology is analogous, differing primarily in size. The spherical beads are smooth, slightly elongated along the axis, made by soldering two hemispheres. The silver tubes were formed by circular bending of a sheet so that the ends overlap and are not soldered. The pyramid-shaped pendants have no base, have a hole at the apex, while the edges and corners are decorated with stamped dots.

The small silver jewelry found in the Vani burials shows great similarity with the jewelry complex from Sairkhe, which is the earliest and dates to the first half of the 5th century BC. In this burial, silver jewelry was found in the head area of the main deceased, together with a gold diadem, a pair of crescent-shaped earrings, and a sewing plate.

The study provides valuable insights in several respects: 1. The arrangement of jewelry

within the burials suggests their use in decorating fabric (headdress, mantle) or horse harness; 2. The silver items closely correspond to objects made of other metals (gold, bronze, iron), attesting to a long-standing tradition of jewelry forms (spanning from the 8th century BC to the 3rd century AD); 3. The discoveries once again confirm the accounts of Greco-Roman authors concerning the abundance of silver in the region.

KEYWORDS: VANI SITE, SAIRKHE, BURIALS, JEWELRY, SILVER OBJECTS.

Archaeological excavations in the town of Vani in 2002-2005 have uncovered numerous pieces of gold and other materials, as well as several types of small size silver jewelry. Particularly, heap of silver artefacts were detected to the north of gold items containing Jar in burial N22. From above was placed a golden tube, richly decorated with Tsvara technique (granulation). Two clusters of Colchian trioboles were found there (Fig. 1-2). Unfortunately, the silver items are badly damaged, although pyramidal jewelry, spherical beads, and pipes have been identified. The tubes (inv. N07: 1-03: 1707) were obtained in the form of fragments. The length of the longest fragment reaches – 2.1 cm. A fragment of one bead (inv. N07: 1-03:1708) is preserved (dm – 0.6 cm). The bead was obtained by the soldering of two hemispheres, it is spherical and slightly elongated, 2 whole samples are left (height – 1 cm, width – 1 cm). From the jewelry of the side-shaped pyramid (Inv. N07: 1-03:1709), which has a hole on the top, the rest of other samples are highly fragmented (Fig. 3-5).

In Tomb N22, similar silver jewelry (with the exception of beads) was found in another pile of inventory – a horse harness – but in small quantities (Fig. 6). In particular, pipes (inv. NN07:1-03:1816, 1823) were found near the silver belt in this pile, three of which are whole (length – 4.4 cm, dm – 0.3 cm) and two – fragmentary. A silver wire is selected in one fragment (length of the wire – 2 cm). Here was found a piece of jewelry with a side-shaped pyramid, with a hole on the top (inv. N07:1-03:1817), two pieces, whole (height – 1 cm, width of the trunk – 1 cm) and hemispherical, folded jewelry (inv. N07:1 – 03:1819), three pieces (height – 1.2 cm, dm – 2 cm, Fig. 3, 5-6). the last one is damaged. As it seems, they were attached to the edges of the silver belt with the silver and bronze miniature bells and glass and glassy glasslike beads. In addition, the silver barrel is adorned with hemispherical jewelry. It is noteworthy that among the gold jewelry found in the same tomb N22, the grooved hemispherical jewelry was also confirmed – 4 pieces (10; p. 69, tab. III, 16; inv. N 07: 1-03: 1677, 1678 and 1681, mus. NN31-2006 / 44, 45, 47, Fig. 7). It seems that such thin jewelry was made not only of silver but also of gold.

Silver jewelry similar to the one we discussed above was found in Tomb N24 in much better condition. At that time silver jewelry was observed in the area of the main corpse, at its eastern edge, in a single pile (Fig. 8-9). On the top of the silver jewelry there was a golden tube, decorated with Tsvara technology, similar to the one found in tomb N22. A similar gold pipe was found in the area of the main corpse at the level of the, they were decorating the shroud.

The pile consisted of pipes, spherical plain beads, grooved hemispheres, and pyramidal jewelry; nearby was found paste minute beads. The following alternations of them were observed: pipe, two paste minute beads, spherical bead, two paste minute beads pipe, and so

on (Fig. 11). Similar silver pipes, spherical beads, groomed hemispheres, and pyramidal jewelry were also found in small quantities in the area of the main corpse. In particular, a series of alternating pipes and spherical beads, as well as Paste beads, passed over the silver vase (Fig. 10) and joined the pyramidal jewelry; Pyramidal jewelry was found on both the right (one) and left wrist area (five pieces).

Spherical beads of tomb N24 (Inv. N07:1-04: 642, 1858, 1928, Mus. N13-2007:45), which are also slightly elongated along the axis, are plain; was obtained by the soldering of two hemispheres. The diameter of the beads is 0.4 cm (Fig. 12). There are preserved 89 whole beads and fragments. The length of modern casting of more or less whole beads is 1.46 m. The silver pipes from the same tomb are obtained (inv. N07:1-04: 612, 641, 1404, 1540, 1658, 1857, 1928, 2296, mus. N13-2007:44) by circular bending of the plate in the way that the ends of it are crossed over each other was not obtained by the soldering of two hemispheres, but they are smaller than the pipes in tomb N22. Their maximum length reaches 2.5 cm, minimum – 1 cm, and their diameter varies between 0.3 cm and 0.15 cm (Fig. 13). The length of modern casting of more or less whole patterns reached 3.80 m.

Concave sided Pyramid-type silver jewelry (N07:1-04:1404, 1859, 1668, 2065) 10 is preserved in the form of whole patterns and fragments. Their height is 0.6-0.7 cm (Fig. 14). As for the grooved hemisphere face jewelry (N07:1-04:1541), It is represented by only one or more whole patterns (height – 1 cm, dm – 1.6 cm) and several fragments (Fig. 15). The type of abovementioned silver jewelry was also found in tomb N11, in Vani, which is from the earlier period. It dates back to the middle of the 5th century BC. Thin silver jewelry was found in large quantities in this tomb, with a wider assortment and well-preserved. These are spherical beads (more than 2000 pieces), pipes of different sizes, with notches and with wire-decorated ends (approx. 1300 pieces); Various hemispherical jewelry (392 pcs.), most of which (353 pcs.) are grooved surface; Pyramidal jewelry (35 pieces), bipyramidal jewelry (54 pieces), hangers with wild pig image (5 pieces) – Inv. NN10-975:74-85). Our areas of interest include beads, plain tubes, hemispherical and pyramidal jewelry. The beads are spherical in shape, slightly elongated on the axis; obtained by the soldering of two hemispheres (axis length 0.8 cm, dm – 0.7 cm; inv. N10-975: 74, Fig. 16). The tubes come in two different sizes. The length of one group is 1.5-1.7 cm, dm – 0.20-0.25 cm. The length of the second larger pipes is 2.3-2.5 cm, dm – 0.3 cm (inv. N10-975:75, Fig. 17). The pipes of both groups are obtained by circular folding of the plate, the edges of which are not soldered with each other and pass over each other. Many hemispherical jewels with a hole in the middle are found in the same tomb, which are presented in two variants: 1. grooved body, hemispherical, with three different embossed ornament (8, 9 or 10 grooves; height – 6.7mm, dm – 10.5-12mm, Inv. #10-975:79, Fig. 18); 2. Slightly flattened grooved body pendant, with 12-13 grooves. Most of them have a circle around the hole, which is surrounded by embossed points. There are dots directly on the hole (height – 8-9 mm, dm – 17-18 mm. N10-975: 80, Pict. 19). Pyramid-shaped hangers were also found in tomb N11 among the silver jewelry. The pyramid has no base, there is a hole at its tip; The edges and faces of it are decorated with embossed points (height – 9 mm, page width – 24-25 mm. N 10-975: 85, Fig. 20). The jewelry discussed above was only confirmed in the area of the main corpse.

It is noteworthy that near the right arm of the main corpse was concentrated one group of pipes and beads (inv. N10-975:78), which confirms a certain alternation of pipes and beads.

In particular, the pipes were arranged in three rows in length, and the beads in four rows. The length of the pipes is 5.6 cm, dm – 0.4 cm. As in all the cases mentioned earlier, the pipes are obtained by circular folding of the plate; The edges move over each other, it isn't soldered (Fig. 21). The beads are spherical, slightly elongated on the axis; obtained by the soldering of two hemispheres. The length of the axis of the beads is 1.0 cm, dm – 0.9 cm (Fig. 22). Apparently we are dealing with a similar case of the silver jewelry of tomb N 24.

It is almost of the same composition, only the elements of the concave sided pyramids are missing, a set of silver jewelry from the tomb of Sairkhe, namely tomb N13, which is one of the earliest and most luxurious tombs discovered here – belongs to the first half of the 5th century BC. Silver jewelry was found on the head of the main corpse, with a gold tiara, a pair of beam earrings and a sewing plate. Thus, this time the function of this jewelry is clear – they decorate the headscarf. An Arrangement of them is also certain: There are a pipe on the four layers thread, followed by glasslike paste three minute beads, a silver bead, then glasslike paste three minute beads and a pipe, and so this sequence is repeated. Several such spills are joined by hemispherical ends. Remains of fabric are preserved, which may be a sign that castings were sewn onto the fabric. As mentioned above, similar alternation of elements in the casting of silver jewelry was confirmed in Vani tomb N22 and N24.

Thus, based on the materials obtained in Sairkhe, it should be said that even in the case of Vani N22 and N24 tombs, we are dealing with a headscarf or a mantle.

Here we should mention once more, one of the most recent excavations in Vani: The silver belt of tomb N 22 shows that the pipes and the hemispherical jewelry with a grooved surface were used for another function – to decorate the silver belt of the horse.

It should also be noted that the types of silver jewelry described above finds analogies with contemporary gold jewelry, although such analogies are relatively rare, much less proven, and mostly found in an earlier context. In particular, in Tomb N11, 10 tubes of gold were found on the chest of a third corpse, with a single pile of 16 spherical beads and one of the bipyramidal jewelry. The tubes are plain, obtained by circular folding of the plate, the edges are crossed, it isn't soldered. Their length is 1.6-1.8 cm, dm – 0.2 cm. A bipyramidal hanger is obtained by joining two pyramids together; There are holes along the axes, around which are twisted wire (length of the axes – 0.9 cm and 1.1 cm); The beads are plain, spherical (dm – 0.45 cm, axis length – 0.5 cm). It is also noteworthy that the only gold pyramidal jewelry in tomb N11 finds an analogy with the silver bipyramid jewelry of the same tomb, the number of which is much larger. As already mentioned, the analogies of the silver jewelry discussed above, made of gold, were also confirmed among the gold jewelry placed in jar in tomb N22 in Vani. This is the grooved hemispherical jewelry.

The analogies of the silver jewelry which are made of bronze, are also proven in the Vani, but in extremely small quantities. It should be noted that such bronze jewelry is very rare in Eastern Georgia. In particular, such items were found on nearby “Kasraantmitsa” and “Dachrilebi's” burial mounds (Kavtiskhevi Municipality). The first of them is the 30 burial mounds which is dated back to the VI-IV centuries BC. It contains only one thing from our interest sphere. In particular, bronze jewelry was found in tomb N24, which is described in the publication as a “button, star-shaped, pierced in the middle” and corresponds to the jewelry in the shape of a concave sided pyramid of our description. As for the “Dachrilebis” cemetery, which is generally

dating back to the IV-III centuries BC. Bronze jewelry, which is the subject of our interest, was found in only 2 of the 25 tombs excavated here. Both of them are children burial. The jewelry found in tomb N6 (1 piece) is also pyramidal, concave sided. It is considered to be a button. The exact location of its discovery is not specified in the publication. In tomb N14 (child) the inventory was buried along with the bones on the north side of the pitcher. The inventory included one such bronze piece of jewelry („rectangular, notched, pierced in the middle“), this time with a hanger. The jewels in the shape of a concave sided pyramid have been confirmed on another monument – namely, in a tomb accidentally discovered in the Upper Gostibe, which dates back to VI-IV centuries BC. According to the excavators, these are fragments of bronze star-like “buttons” that have a hole at the point where ridges connect.

To say briefly, the types of silver jewelry discussed above are different. It was also made of metal in the Pre-antique period. In particular, gold spherical beads, tubes, grooved hemisphere-shaped jewelry have been proven concave sided pyramidal species made of gold have not been found so far, although bronze specimens are known.

It is very interesting that the two types of silver jewelry discussed above are also confirmed in earlier monuments, but all of them are made of bronze. Thus, in our description, the concave sided pyramidal jewelry made of bronze is found in eastern Georgia, in Trialeti, Maralderesi cemetery, which belongs to Vani era (VIII-VII centuries BC). This is a four-sided seam with a hole in the middle. From the prehistoric tombs of Samtavro N11(1938), as A. Kalandadze says it belongs to the XI-VI centuries BC. 7 pieces of “Rossete” was confirmed there too; In tomb N 38 of the same cemetery, which R. Abramishvili Belongs to the first half of the VIII-VII BC a bronze rosette in the shape of a concave sided pyramid is found. It is noteworthy that bronze rosette was also found in the tomb N215 of Samtavro (stone box), which belongs to the Adre-antic era. In the tomb N13 of Tsikhedidiskhevi near Mtskheta, bronze jewelry of a concave sided pyramid was found. It should also be noted that the excavators says that the tomb belongs to the second half of the second millennium BC. However, the specialists say that buckle found in this tomb belongs to a later period. In particular, L. Pantskhava dates it back – VIII-VII centuries. Similar jewelry has been found in Lower Kartli, on the cemetery, which was belonged to the first half of the first millennium BC. Such jewelry is also known from Bornigele N32 tomb, which is dated back to the VIII-VI centuries BC., as well as from the Madnischala cemetery. This type of larger size bronze jewelry, was found in Knole Cemetery, which belongs to the VII-VI centuries BC. It is noteworthy that in recent times two that kind of iron jewelry have been excavated near the station of Marabda cemetery which is dated back to the VIII-VI centuries BC (Information from the excavator of the monument Guram Kvirkvelia, for which I thank him). It is noteworthy that the only such jewelry was found in Tlia Cemetery. It was found in tomb N74a. It is dated back XII-X centuries BC by B. Tekhov (30; p. 22, Tab. 52, 6).

The abovementioned jewelry is also confirmed in prehistoric complexes in Western Georgia. In particular, concave sided jewelry made of bronze was found in the tomb of Tsiteli Shuqura N21 (23) which was belonged to the VIII-VI centuries BC, by excavator and the jewelry was considered as hanger. Similar bronze jewelry was found on Eshera city site, in a damaged tomb.

A hemispherical bronze grooved piece of jewelry (“Rossete”) is found on the Narekvavi cemetery, which belongs to the VIII-VII centuries BC, in both tomb, in particular in 29th tomb, as well as among the occasional findings. Such kind of 28 jewelries (Mus. N14-54:5017) are

called “Rossete” by R. Abramishvili from the tomb N191 of the Samtavro cemetery, which was belonged to the second half of VII century BC. One hemispherical piece of jewelry was also found in the Dmanisi cemetery, which was dated back to XI-X centuries BC by G. Nioradze.

It is noteworthy that one or two specimens of the abovementioned jewelry are also found in pre-Roman times. For example, in Tsitsamuri cemetery of II-I centuries AD, tomb N14, there is explored a bronze “Rossete”, rectangular, twisted, with a hole to fasten the clothes” on the chest area of the corpse, this is the concave sided pyramidal jewelry of our description. And in western Georgia on the Dzevri cemetery, which was dated back to the II-I centuries AD, three pieces of bronze were found in a tomb, corrugated, similar to Vani hemispherical grooved jewelry.

The purpose of hemispherical and pyramidal jewelry at this early stage of their production (VII-VII centuries BC) is not well defined. Excavators sometimes call them stitches, sometimes “Rossete” or hangers, or buttons. As for the early antiquity period, based on the Sairkh data, we should think that small pieces of silver jewelry in the form of spherical beads and pipes together with pastelike mass minute beads were sewn on fabric (mantle, headscarf), and hemispherical and pyramidal jewelry were used to attach beads.

It is worth to mention that in tomb N22 there was a gold pipe on a pile of silver items, ending with beads on both sides; Enlargement on one side is followed by two ridges (Fig. 25). This item is richly decorated with granular geometric shapes: The tube itself is completely covered with triangles, the bead-shaped enlargements are adorned with rows of tsvara, and the ridges are decorated with triangles. Such pipes were also found in tomb N24: One pipe was placed on a pile of small silver items, and two of them were found in the area of the main corpse at the level of beads that adorned the shroud. Except Vani, that kind of pipe is known from the tomb of Sairkhe N8, which dated back to the middle period of IV century BC. The purpose of these tubes is unclear. However, their location in Vani tombs allows us to find connections with tiny silver jewelry embellishment.

The materials discussed above confirm the popularity of certain types of fine jewelry grooved hemispheres, concave sided pyramids over a long period of time. Continuity lasts for several centuries.

The systematic character of silver jewelry as well as gold was revealed. The gold jewelry of the honorees is usually presented in the form of a whole set. This set includes: Combined jewelry (consisting of a tiara, and / or forehead jewelry, and / or a central bracelet, blades, earrings, sewing plates), necklaces, bracelets, signet-rings. As for the silver personal jewelry set of the elite, that kind of thing has not been confirmed on our monuments yet. From personal jewelry only tiaras, necklaces, bracelets, and rings were made of silver; Earrings are very rare, there are no silver earrings and necklaces. It should also be noted here that a silver tiara on the head of the main corpse has not been confirmed yet, although there is a known case where a silver tiara was placed on the chest of the main corpse (e.g., in Sairkhe N13 tomb. There is one well-known case in Vani (Tomb N6) where a representative of the elite, who is buried without accompanying persons, has a silver tiara with him. The silver tiara was usually worn by the persons who were buried with the elite representative (for example, in tombs N5 and 13 in Sairkhe); The second corpse was found with two silver tiaras in the tomb of Vani N11, and only one in the third.

Three of the seven accompanying persons buried in Vani Tomb N12 were found to have a silver neck ring (two of these are published as bronze, but a restoration-refinement operation in 2017 revealed that they were made of silver); In tomb N16, where the number of burials could not be determined and the main corpse could not be identified, silver and bronze Torques. In collective tomb N22, where the main corpse is not identified, a silver neck ring was worn by 3 out of 5 corpses (N1, 4 and 5), and in tomb N24, where the main corpse is easily identifiable by its central location and luxurious burial inventory, a silver bearing ring was worn by 4 corpses. So the silver tiaras and neck rings in Vani usually belong to the persons accompanying the main corpse as the silver neck rings on Sairkhe cemetery – The first and second companions of N5 burial. The silver neck ring was found in several individual tombs belonged to a non-elite representative: in particular, in Modinakhe cemetery, tomb N3 and in Shromisubani, tomb N2. There is an opinion that the neck rings must be indicator of their status.

Silver bracelets are often worn by both the accompanying persons and the main corpse. For example, a silver bracelet was found in Sairkhe on the main corpse in tomb N8 and on accompanying person in tombs N5, 10 and 13, in tomb N3 (woman), in Vani – silver bracelets (along with bronze and iron bracelets) were found, the main body of tomb N9 had three silver bracelets, the child buried in tomb N10 – one, the second corpse in tomb N12 – one, and the third corpse (co-buried) in tomb N11 – five. 5 of the 27 bracelets found in tomb N16 were silver; in tomb N19, where one individual was buried, only silver (and iron) bracelets were found, in tomb N22 – 2 co-buried (N2 and 3) had silver bracelets.

As for the silver rings in Vani, they were found in the following tombs – in tomb N9, the main corpse was found with two silver signet-rings, in tomb N10 – a child with one silver signet-rings, in tomb N16, one silver seal was found, in N19, in an individual tomb, which dates back to the second half of IV century BC. Two silver signet-rings were found; In tomb N24 the main corpse and co-buried has silver seal. A silver-signet ring was also found on the main body of Sairkhe in tomb N8.

Silver earrings are found, though much rarer than other types of jewelry. In particular, silver earrings were found in tomb N24 in Vani (with co-conspirators). In tomb N22 the corpse N5 had a silver ring as well, it was also confirmed in tomb N28. We should underline the discovery of silver crescent shape plate-like earrings in tomb N23 in Vani.

Finally, in addition to the listed types of personal jewelry, small pieces of jewelry were made from silver – which is the object of our interest, is indicated to adorn the fabric. It has already been mentioned that usually this jewelry repeats the shape of the same type of gold patterns. It should also be noted that silver jewelry is usually found only in the tombs where the elite people were buried.

It can also be said that the newly obtained materials prove once again that Colchis was not only rich in gold but also in silver. It is not coincidence that the wealth of the country is also confirmed by Greco-Roman. For example, Strabo and Pliny. Data from tomb N11 still allowed us to talk about the quantity of silver jewelry – it contained more than 5,000 pieces of silver jewelry.

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DESCRIPTION OF TABS:

Tomb N22, General View.

Tomb N22, a pile of silver jewelry.

Tomb N22, silver jewelry – tubular, pyramidal, hemispherical.

Tomb N22, silver jewelry – pyramidal.

Tomb N22, silver jewelry – worn hemispheres.

Tomb N22, a pile of horse harness.

Tomb N22, gold jewelry – worn hemispheres.

Tomb N24, General View.

Tomb N24, the area of the main deceased.

Tomb N24, silver vase and fine jewelry.

Tomb N24, a pile of silver jewelry.

Tomb N24, silver beads.

13. Tomb N24, silver pipes.

Tomb N24, silver pyramidal jewelry.

Tomb N24, silver hemispherical jewelry.

Tomb N11, silver beads.

Tomb N11, silver pipes.

Tomb N11, silver hemispherical jewelry, worn.

Tomb N11, silver hemispherical jewelry, worned and ornamented.

Tomb N11, silver pyramidal jewelry.

Tomb N11, silver pipes.

Tomb N11, silver beads.

23. Tomb N11, Gold Necklace.

Tomb N11, silver bipyramidal jewelry.

Tomb N22, Gold Jewelry.

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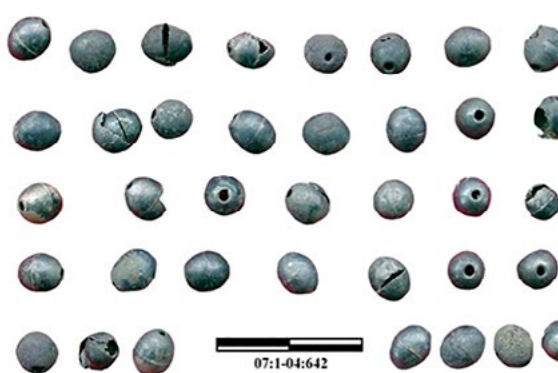
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FOR THE ATTRIBUTION OF HISTORICAL- ECONOMIC TERMS IN PALEOMETALLURGY

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ABSTRACT

The article is dedicated to the problematic issues of defining and differentiating terminology related to paleometallurgy. The aim of the research is to conduct a comprehensive analysis and systematization of technological processes involved in ancient metallurgical production, grounded in historical-economic data.

It should be noted that certain terms denoting ancient metallurgy and metal production acquire distinct meanings depending on the technological and operational characteristics of mining-metallurgical associations. Their content often reflects the methodological approaches of historical-metallurgical studies of a given metallogenic region and in most cases does not reflect the historical process to which the studied objects belong. Consequently, the clarification and precise explanation of these terms become essential.

The research area focuses on the Caucasus region during Bronze Age, which, from a historical-cultural perspective, is divided into three major metallurgical centers: The North Caucasus, Central, and Lesser Caucasus metallurgical centers.

The research employs an interdisciplinary method – integrating archaeology, geology, mining, chemistry, engineering-technical and mathematical statistics criteria for the metallurgical achievements.

The developed terminological system, which is based on the analysis of the work-organizational structure, production scales, and geographical distribution of paleometallurgical sites, enables an objective evaluation and classification of metallurgical achievements. Individual terms can be effectively applied both to present the achievements of metallurgical centers operating on the territory of Georgia and to assess the cultural achievements of the Caucasus-Western Asia region and the metallurgical province around the Black Sea.

KEYWORDS: PALEOMETALLURGY, METALWORKING, ORE, CAUCASUS, BRONZE AGE.

The historical economic data has attached special importance for the definition of the working-organizational structure of the old metallurgical production and for the complex analysis of the basic technological processes, which derive from the historical peculiarities of the functioning of the ancient copper-bronze and iron-steel enterprises.

In connection with the problem, some terms of ancient metallurgy and metalworking are essential which are at the present stage of the study of the history of metallurgy. At the present stage of the study of the history of metallurgy, these terms undergo the appropriate differentiation according to the principles of determining the working technical-technological aspect of mining and metallurgical associations. The content of the terms is related to the method of historical-metallurgical research of a particular metallogenic region and, in many cases, does not reflect the historical process to which the object of study belongs. Thus it is necessary to clarify the terms, to differentiate their meaning (Черных Е.Н., 1976: p. 166; Inanishvili G. and others 2010: p. 48).

The existence of forms of prehistoric societies' collective ownership characteristic also extends to metallurgical production. At the same time, a precondition is created for the development of a mechanism for the division of labor and the created product. Metallurgical production is separated from other areas of economic agriculture and develops with a different organization of production, with a centralized demand for the product, taking into account the regularities of the external market.

The geographical area of distribution of the Transcaucasian metallogenic ores, their geological-geochemical data, determined the scope of the ancient metallurgical production in these areas. The geographical proximity of the mining facilities to the copper and iron production zones, in the foothills and coastal zone, facilitates the formation of ore processing and metallurgical hotspots. The mining production monuments related to the historical development of non-ferrous and ferrous metallurgy in the Transcaucasia are united in a similar, uniform system with basic working schemes and engineering-technical characteristics (Mujiri T. 1994: p. 6).

Historically, current organizational-technological changes in metallurgical production require differentiated terminology to define the functional, geographical-expansive, trade – cultural relations and area of operation of industrial associations.

The modern stage of the study of the history of metallurgy has established the meaning of the terms denoting the technological process of the corresponding stage of metal fabrication. We will discuss about the using of some of these terms. Accordingly, first of all, there are defined the relevance of the terms to the historical information embedded in them – “Metallurgy” and “Metalworking”.

The term “metallurgy” refers to a set of production processes related to the extraction of metal from an ore, its casting and the creation of a primary product. The term metalworking encompasses a combination of technological processes used to obtain finished products from semi-finished or primary molds by molding and forging complex items (combat, agricultural and ritual weapons, jewelry). At the advanced stage of metalworking, it combines the use of metal casting and subsequent forging processes to create versatile products.

Discussion of the above terms as a process, in any historical period and in a certain geographical area, presents such historical-metallurgical and historical-technological terms

as “metallurgical hearth”, “metallurgical center”, “mining metallurgical center”, “metallurgical province” (Inanishvili G. 2018: p. 50).

In terms of the history of technology, metallurgy and metalworking are based on natural data in a certain geographical area, which is typical for this zone. The ancient metallurgical centers developed primarily in the geographical area where there were rich metallogenic zones: copper, iron, lead, arsenic, tin, antimony, and other metals. The conception and development of paleometallurgy also required a supply of fuel, water, and refractory clays. The population living in a region rich in such natural resources is aware of the nature of the metal, its properties, creating a precondition for the existence of metallurgical hotspots. The metallurgical tribes formed by these natural-economical conditions spread their influence on the neighboring communities. They preceded the people living there in agricultural activities, and actively influenced their way of life. This influence is especially evident in the distribution of their products outside of the metallogenic region. The products of the metallurgical tribes are distributed in the neighboring regions in the form of finished products or molded rods. A society that does not have a metallurgical production is forced to import or manufacture products in imitation with the imported ones.

In some cases, metallurgical tribes' impact on the neighbor's geographical environment is generated by local metal processing centers, which begin to exist by processing imported materials. If the required amount of ore resources are discovered in the region, it will be possible to establish local metallurgical production centers. The existence of inter-tribal contacts, in the subsequent historical section, leads to their industrial expansion, expansion of the scope, and unification of separate metallurgical centers. In this case, a metallurgical center or a mining – metallurgical association is established. With the further increase of the geographical area of their activity and production scale, a more substantial cultural-economic union – Metallurgical Province is created. (Inanishvili G. 2018: p. 51)

“Metallurgical hearth” creates its own metallurgical production, within the chronological and geographical boundaries of the products it is part of the area of a larger paleometallurgical union. A population with a homogeneous culture is located within its borders. Production samples are characterized by special (different from other) typological and technological features, signs. The metallurgical hearth has its own zone of influence for its technological scheme. Across the South Caucasus region, metallurgical hub unification systems are distinguished at different stages of Bronze Age economic development: on the southern slopes of the Central Caucasus – the metallurgical hubs of Abkhazia, Svaneti, and Racha; In the Lesser Caucasus – the centers of the Chorokhi Basin, Adjara-Guria and Bolnisi-Dmanisi.

The “metallurgical center” includes rich and multifaceted metallogenic areas, which are located in one adult geological-geographical region, where are developed the main part of the existing ore production and the mining system. Exploited ores are characterized by homogeneous, single-system geochemical data. The region combines several synchronously operating metallurgical centers, the products of which create a common-uniform look of the production. Metallurgy is one of the main activities of the local tribes. Archaeologically the region includes well-dated metallurgical production facilities, which are a direct argument for the existence of metallurgical production here historically. The products of local metallurgical production have a certain territorial area of distribution, which may change during the

whole period of operation of the metallurgical center. Such a region, from a historical-metallurgical point of view, can be considered as a permanent object. Thus, monocultural (ethnic) homogeneity may not be characteristic of that era.

Caucasus region, from the historical-cultural point of view, in bronze era is divided into three main metallurgical centers: The North Caucasus, the Central and the Lesser Caucasus metallurgical centers.

The “Mining-Metallurgical United Center” has the same historical-metallurgical and geological-geographical characteristics as the “Metallurgical Center”. The difference between them is manifested in the scale of production. Geographically, the metallurgical center is part of the Mining and Metallurgical Association. The combination of several metallurgical centers forms a large formation – “Mining-Metallurgical Association”. In the Eurasian Paleometallurgical system, the Caucasus region is considered as one of the mining and metallurgical joint centers.

“Metallurgical Province” is an association of several metallogenic geographical regions, which includes mining and metallurgical associations created by people of different ethnocultural origins. The metallurgical complexes united in the metallurgical province are characterized by different data of means of production. Despite the territorial distance, the elements of the “metallurgical province” are characterized by the related typological-technological unity of the products, which influences the development of the overall system of the province. The Caucasus is considered to be one of the mining-metallurgical associations of the metropolitan province of the cultural circle around the Black Sea, known in the Eurasian metallurgical system, which has a great influence on the formation of the main stages of the metallurgical production development in the Old World (IV-II millennia BC).

The production categories reflecting the work-organizational equipment of the above – mentioned mining-metallurgical production, define the separate stages of the historical development of the metallurgical associations functioning in different geographical areas and trade-economic spaces. They are considered in terms of the synchronous operation of metallurgical hearths. Individual terms can be used successfully to describe the metallurgical centers’ achievements in the territory of Georgia, as well as to assess the cultural achievements of the metallurgical province around the Caucasus-Asia Minor region and the Black Sea (Черных Е.Н., 1976. pp. 168; Муджири Т.П., 2008. pp. 60-61; Inanishvili G. 2010: p. 53).

The system of paleometallurgical production is considered by the historical-metallurgical functioning of the monuments on the basis of a joint analysis of the processes of secondary ore enrichment, metallurgical processing, and product making. The category of terms allows us to combine the monuments discovered and studied on the territory of Georgia, according to the scale of production and geographical distribution, into one system: Metallurgical hearth (Abkhazia, Svaneti, Racha, Adjara-Guria, Bolnisi-Dmanisi, Alazangama mountainous Kakheti); Metallurgical Center (Central Caucasus, Lesser Caucasus); United Mining and Metallurgical Center (Caucasus); Metallurgical Province (Circumpontium Zone); Metallurgical production of the Old World (Caucasus, Central Asia, Balkans, Mediterranean Basin, Egypt, etc.).

According to the modern terminology of paleometallurgy, for the historical-metallurgical evaluation of the ancient metallurgical monuments and the system, an interdisciplinary research method is adopted, taking into account the achievements of archaeology, geology, mining, chemistry, metallurgy, and engineering-technical and mathematical statistics.

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GEM WITH THE IMAGE OF RIDER FROM ZHINVALI CEMETERY

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ABSTRACT

The present article is dedicated to the study of a sardonyx gem-intaglio set in a bronze ring, which was discovered in 1983 in burial N552 of the Zhinvali cemetery. The gem depicts vertically a rider wearing a headdress mounted on a rearing horse. Both figures shown in profile.

Comparative analysis reveals that the Zhinvali gem finds analogies with two groups of gem-intaglios discovered in Georgia: Group I (Urbnisi, 1st-2nd centuries AD) includes glass gems with images of riders without divine attributes; Group II (Urbnisi, Samtavro, Karsniskhevi, Kutaisi, 3rd-4th centuries AD) is represented by compositions featuring a radiate Phrygian hat, altar, and tree of life.

Remarkably, the Zhinvali gem combines features characteristic of both groups and at the same time represents a distinct iconographic variant of the rider.

It should be noted that images similar to the compositions united in Group II are attested on the reverse of copper city coins of Trapezunt from the 2nd-3rd centuries AD, which were discovered in Bichvinta. According to scholars, the horseman represents a syncretic deity, with attributes of the sun god Mithras and the Cappadocian moon god – Men.

Riders and horse motifs also appear on polyhedral casts of blue glass, which were produced in Iberia from the 2nd-1st centuries BC to the 2nd century AD and are considered as a late, independent group of "Greco-Persian" glyptics (the so-called Bern group).

According to the conducted research, the rider depicted on the Zhinvali gem also represents a syncretic deity, specifically Mithras, which combines powerful local traditions and new cultural tendencies introduced by the spread of Mithraism. The gem is dated to the second half of the 2nd century AD and is considered as a local glyptic work, while the ring is a product of the 4th century, indicating the gem's secondary use within a Christian context. The study emphasizes the long evolution of the rider motif, which ultimately served as the foundation for the iconography of Saint George.

KEYWORDS: ZHINVALI, GLYPTICS, GEM-INTAGLIO, MITHRAS, RIDER.

In 1983, the Zhinvali Archaeological Expedition (head of the expedition R. Ramishvili), has found a bronze ring with a reddish cornelian gem – with intaglio in tomb N552 of Zhinvali Cemetery, among other items (ring, earrings, bows, beads). There were two corpses in the tomb – a man and a woman. The man wore a ring on his ring finger. He rested on the chest, in a Christian manner, generously picked hands on the chest. The tomb is dated back to the IV century AD [Chikhladze 2015: 109-156. Tab. X]. The item was examined by Marg. Lortkipanidze, considered the ring and the gem to be contemporaneous with each other and she dated it back to the IV century AD [Lortkipanidze M. 1990: p. 188]. The abovementioned jewelry is currently kept in the National Museum, in the Glyptics Foundation of the S. Janashia Museum of Georgia (Inv. N1854).

The ring arc is a round-shaped with the ends attached to an oval socket (Tab. I-1). The edges of the nest are now broken and only a flat, oval base remains from it (Tab. I-2). The intaglio is oval, the mouth is slightly convex, and the back is more convex (Tab. I-4). A horseman is carved vertically on the surface of gem (Tab. I-2). Both the man and the horse are conveyed in profile. The rider sits upright and firmly on the horse, wearing a short cloak, its three plot, radially unfolded end flutters in the air behind the horseman. He holds the reins in his right hand. He wears a headscarf on his head, the gem in this area is flaked. However, the tire is also wrapped around the face. The facial features are not visible due to the intaglio injury. The horse is very graceful and proportionate. Torso (chest, abdomen, groin, and head) with voluminous plastic shapes is quite realistically conveyed, however, the thin hind limbs are executed in relatively low relief and are somewhat schematic. The animal's shut and the low, parallel, embossed beams are decorated sharply. The horse has a high neck and long legs. The joints of the foot are sharply profiled, with a distinctly convex front, a raised leg, and a long, protruding, rounded, and enlarged part of the tail, which is also lined with relief beams. The tail then runs in a faint line to the soil strip. The horse has the left front leg raised, and the right – not visible, so that the rider's leg is not visible, because the gem is flaked in this place too. The upper part of the image (Horse Torso, rider, ponytail, and upper part of the ponytail) is realistically and clearly modeled, while the lower half (ponytail and lower part of the tail) is relatively schematic and pale. intaglio is also damaged in the horse's rump. The intersection is not deep, but the image on the fingerprint is quite clear (Tab. I-3). Dimensions: length of Intaglio – 15 mm, width – 10 mm, ring dm – 21 mm, arc dm – 5 mm.

One (I) group of gem – intaglios the image of a rider similar to Zhinvali is known from the tombs of Urbnisi Cemetery NN189, 165, 129, 164. These four gem are currently located in the National Museum S. Janashia Museum of Georgia Glyptics Foundation (inv. NN1040, 1010, 1074, 1009). These gem – intaglios were used as seal wheels (Tab. I-5,6; 7,8; 9,10; 11,12). They are made of glass, oval-shaped, and on the flat surface of all of them, is depicted a rider on a footrisen horseback, in profile, which wears headscarf (like Kabalakhi) and the end of a cloak flutters in the air. The images of the rider are homogenous typologically, compositionally, and in style of performance – all four riders are depicted in profile without attributes denoting divinity. And it's executed as realistically as possible; Stylized elements (eg. horse legs, tail, etc.) are moderately mixed with this. The images of the riders differ from each other only in small details (Remains of metal fragments of NN1009 and 1010 iron seals and bronze seal of N1074 in full). The gems are dated back to I-II centuries AD. [Javakhishvili K. 1975: pp. 76-78; pp. 107-111].

There is known another slightly later group (II) of oval gem – intaglios used as ring wheels. On

their surface, there is carved an iconographically very similar rider like, which is also in profile, he sits on a standing horse and the last part of his short robe flies in the air, however, the composition of the gem collapses horizontally, making it more complex and visibly different. The rider wears a beamed Phrygian hat, a fiery bonnet stands in front of him, the horse has the front leg erected in front of him, there is a life tree behind the rider, a snake is wrapped around the rider's leg. The material is also different – the image is cut not on the flat surface of the intaglio, but on the slightly convex surface. Six such kind of gem are known, four of them – have been found in Georgia: the first – in Cemetery N1 of Urbnisi (Tab II-1) cemetery (kept in the Glyphics Fund of the Georgian State Museum, Inv. N1107), dated back to the III century AD [Lortkipanidze M. 1969: p. 145; Javakhishvili K. 1975: pp. 77-78]; [Chilashvili L. 1964: p. 61, 82, 83, Tab. XXVI – 2; Javakhishvili K. 1972: pp. 82, N135], dated back to the III century AD [Lortkipanidze M. 1969: pp. 145; Javakhishvili K. 1975: pp. 77-78]; The second is inserted in the silver ring found in the stone tomb N600 of Samtavro Cemetery (Tab. II-2) (kept in the Glyptics Fund of the Georgian State Museum [Lortkipanidze M. 1954: p. 34 – 35, Tab. III – 29], dated back to the III-IV centuries AD [Lortkipanidze M. 1969: pp. 145, Tab. X-137]; Third – is found in Karsniskhevi N27 tomb and sits in an iron ring (Tab. II-3), dated back to the at the end of the II century AD and the beginning of the III century [Nikolaishvili V 1993: pp. 72, 86, tab. X Ch V-5]; Fourth – found near Kutaisi (Tab. II-4 – imprint) (kept in the Moscow Historical Museum) [Кибальчич Т. В. 1910: pp. 49, Tab. VIII – 267], dated to the beginning of the III century [Lortkipanidze M. 1969: pp. 144, Tab. X-136]; Fifth – has the unknown origin (Tab. II-5), belonged to collector Rosen, maybe he has bought the gem in Constantinople, as he purchased most of his collection there. The gem is currently housed in the Berlin Museum [Furtwangler A. 1896: pp. 9, 132, Tab. 25 – N2935]. The sixth gem is housed in the Bonn Museum of Ancient Art (Tab. II-6) and is included in Mueller's private collection, it is dated back to the end of the 2nd century and the first half of the 3rd century [Zweirlein-Diehl. 2003: pp. 88-89, Tab. 82]. Unlike other gems, the gems of the Karsniskhevi, Berlin, and Bonn museums additionally has depicted a star and a crescent moon in the free area above the rider. Group II images are made in a similar carving manner and style, the details are processed in the same way, which is why they are considered to be the products of one workshop. Therefore, the origin of the ship preserved in the Berlin Museum is also traced to L. Chilashvili assumed from the territory of Georgia [Chilashvili L. 1964: p. 82]. It should be noted that such gems have not been found anywhere except in Georgia, which further strengthens the idea that the gems in the museums of Berlin and Bonn may have arrived from Georgia.

As for the Zhinvali gem, the composition is depicted vertically on the oval gem, as well as on all (all four) Group I intaglio, however, it is sardion like Group II gem-intaglios and the composition is also carved on the slightly convex mouth of the gem. Enlarged above the horse and with a long tail at the bottom, as well as disproportionately elongated legs of the rider and a radiant cloak, the Zhinvali rider looks more like images of the second group. The image on the Zhinvali gem completely fills the picture plane, and here the existence of a life tree behind the rider is impossible. Intaglio is broken under the horse leg. Thus, we may have thought of the existence of an altar in this place, which we do not consider permissible due to the scarcity of space. For all gem of the second group, the altar is given along or above the horse's foot, and not below, this gives us the thought that there is no altar depicted on the Zhinvali gem. Therefore, the Zhinvali rider is devoid of attributes of divinity and is compositionally more archaic – resembling Group I urban horsemen. It is difficult to find out what kind of headscarf is worn by a Zhinvali rider, because it is in this place that the gem is broken, but with the surviving part of the headscarf and the face mask wrapped around the rider's face, he resembles

a rider depicted on a second-class urban gem between the tree of life and the altar (Comp. Tab. I-2 and Tab. II-1); Thus, we think that a Zhinvali rider might also wear a Phrygian headscarf, but not a radiant one, as if it's so a beam coming out of the occipital area would inevitably appear, as evidenced by all the images in Group II. Thus, the rider bears a resemblance to the images of both groups on the Zhinvali gem, and it turns out that it depicts another, different iconographic variant of the rider, although it is also noteworthy that in composition it is closer to the images of group I. Therefore, glass intaglio made by molding, the vertically depicted horsemen of the gem without the attribution of divinity, except Urbnisi, are also confirmed in the second point of the Kingdom of Kartli – the Sardioni gem found in Zhinvali. As for the second group of gem-intaglio, on which the radiant Phrygian hats are placed between the tree of life and the burning altar, their distribution area is much wider and includes both Eastern Georgia – Kartli (Mtskheta, Karsniskhevi, Urbnisi) and Western Georgia (Kutaisi).

It is important to note that similar images of the compositions united in Group II are evidenced on the back of Trapezunt copper city coins of II-III century AD (Tab. II-8) found in Bichvinta. There are many opinions expressed on the origin, place of manufacture, dating, and identification of rider-deity coins found in Trabzon: According to the F. Cumon opinion, the rider depicted on the Trabzon coins is Syncretic deity who united the sun deity Mithras and the Cappadocian moon deity Man [Макимова М.И. 1956: 404, 3]. According to M. Maximova, the rider depicted on these coins is Mithras, because the rider depicted on the Trapezoid coins has only the attributes of Mithras and does not have such a necessary sign of the Cappadocian deity Man as the Crescent Moon [Макимова М.И. 1956: pp. 399, 404, 3]. According to him, Mithras is the chief deity of Trabzon, which has non-Greek origin and is not found anywhere else in other Greek cities in Asia Minor [Макимова М.И. 1956: pp. 399-402, 404 tab. II 15], and his victory in the Pantheon of the Gods of Trabzon was due to a different ethnic background from other Greek cities in Asia Minor: The core of the population of Trabzon, as it is suggested, was the Colchian population [Макимова М.И. 1956: p. 402, Melikishvili G. 1959: p. 378; Dundua G. 1968: p. 18-19]. The coins were thoroughly examined by G. Dundua, he also analyzed the gems of both groups with the image of a knight (except Zhinvali) and made many important conclusions [Dundua G. 1975; 1978; 2006]. Dundua shared F. Cumon's view on the syncretism of the deity, which combined the functions of Mithra and the Cappadocian moon deity – Men, as Mithras was very rarely depicted on horseback, and images of equestrian Men were widespread. G. Dundua believes that the star and crescent moon depicted above the rider on the gems preserved in the Berlin Museum and on the Karsniskhevi gems have been replaced by another attribute of the moon – a bird of prey on the Trabzon coins [Dundua G. 1968: p. 29 – 30]. The scholar notes that the copper city coins – depicting the chief deity of Trabzon – Mithras, doesn't have any parallel in the numismatics of other cities and kingdoms, as well as, the rider Mithra is cut only on the synchronous gems found in Georgia, and the Trapezoid coins, as well as on the gems found in Georgia (both groups), depict the same rider-deity, who is not Mithra in the Puritan sense, but is a syncretic deity – the unifier of the functions of the deities of the sun, moon, and stars, their unified face, and it's called as – Mithra. The scholar notes that, the so-called Mithra is a direct predecessor of the St. George cult in the Kartvelian world [Dundua G. 1977: 343-344]. According to the abovementioned, the scholar suggests the origin of this deity on Kartvelian soil and he puts the Trabzon so called Mithra copper city coins in the arc of Georgian numismatic monuments. G. Dundua closely relates the images given on coins and gems of both groups and the ancient Kartvelian belief-representations [Dundua G. 1975: 338-334; 2006: 106-108]. He does not exclude the possibility of local origin of ships either [Dundua G. 2006: p. 107].

For the correct dating of the Zhinvali gems it is interesting to note that, at first on the Trabzon coins there is depicted a so called Mithras bust with a beamed Phrygian hat, then an image of a horse-head is added on it, and only since the end of the II century AD he can be seen riding a horse [Dundua G. 1975: p. 334; 2006: p. 105].

The images of the rider in the Georgian glyptic material already appear to be established and are confirmed by the Early Hellenistic period, Vani N9, on the golden seal found in the tomb of so called "excellent warrior" (Tab. IV-3). The seal is a legal print and despite the general influence of the traditions of ancient Greek sculpture, it is considered to be a product of local, Colchian sculpture and it is dated back to the V-IV centuries B.C. [Lordkipanidze M. 1975: p. 93-96], and the plot is related to the cults spread in Colchis [Lordkipanidze M. 1975: p. 111]. A rider from Vani with a conical headband (maybe even a helmet) is sitting on a horse, both man and horse are in profile. The rider holds a spear in his right hand, while the fingers of his left hand are conveyed like a bird's claw, which should indicate a close connection between the horse and the rider's bird. In our opinion, this fact is well explained by the similar images on two silver seal's round fences, which was found in Eastern Georgia, Kanchaeti and is date back to IV-III cc. BC. one of them is depicted a spearman sitting on a horned horse with a rised hoove (maybe wear a headscarf/Kabalakhi), which on the second signet ring is replaced by a bird sitting on the horseback. The seals, in contrast to the Vani seal, are considered to be a local work made in the style of one of the groups of Greco-Persian sculpture, in particular, Greek-Oriental sculptural patterns [Gagoshidze I. 2009: p. 14-17, Tab. I-II]. A fantastic horned horse is represented as the sun deity, often accompanied by a bird. "If a horse was considered as a sun animal in Georgia, the bird must have been as a moon" [Gagoshidze I. 1964: pp. 36-37]. Therefore, we think that the gold ring of tomb N9 in Vani also depicts the same rider-deity, which must be the prototype of the rider depicted on the Kanchaeti print ring, and which was closely associated with the cult of the sun and the moon. The signet rings with similar icon (horned horse with rised hoove, horsman, tree of life, crescent moon and solar symbols) dated from IV-III century BC are known from Qviana, Sadzeguri, Algeti, Kushch, Takhtidziri, Batnaokhoru and etc. Although the rings found in Vani and, a bit later, in eastern and western Georgia belong to different glyptic schools, they are united with the existence of a common cult of horse and horseman [Ramishvili K. 2007: p. 24-25], its roots can be traced to Colchian and Caucasian culture in general, and which is so well and widely reflected in the Colchian artistic bronze monuments made in the Caucasian graphic style dated back in VIII – VII cc. BC and in the decor of the Central-South Caucasian bronze belts, Where images of a horse and a horseman are depicted accompanied by birds and surrounded by lights [Pantskhava L. 1988; Khidasheli M. 1982].

Images of a rider and a horse are also found on multi-layered casts of blue glass (Tab. IV-6), made locally in Iberia in the II-I centuries BC and they are considered as a later, independent group of "Greco-Persian" sculptural monuments, which stands very close to one of the group of Asia Minor prints and which is known as the so-called Bern group [Javakhishvili K. 2002: p. 74-76, Tab. I – 2-14; Gagoshidze I. 2009: p. 16]. It is very noteworthy that the stylized images of the spearman and the horse are given in bronze large prints, representing a rectangular or triangular thick plate with rounded corners and a massive handle resting on the back. The rider with a headscarf, who holds a flexible spear in his right hand and rests on a horse's neck in the left, is depicted on a rectangular bronze print which was accidentally found in Samtavi. In front of the horse is a man holding a harness. The galloping horse, which has raised its right front leg, is also depicted on a bronze triangular print, it was accidentally obtained in Tsagvli in front of the horse, between the legs, we see a glow. Seals are dated back to the

III-I cc. BC and it is considered a local product [Javakhishvili K. 1997: p. 221-229, Tab. I-5; Tab II-8]. One such bronze rectangular seal was found in Kaspi district, village – Ertatsminda (Tab. IV-7), the spearman is schematically depicted on the surface (kept in the Glyptics Foundation; Inv. N1704). The bronze handle bearing signet ring with impression of horse and crescent moon found in Atskuri is also very interesting [Licheli V. 2011: p. Tab. I]. The depiction of a rectangular (seal) rider found in Mtskheta was locally made by bone. It is similar to the abovementioned bronze rectangular (seal) in terms of shape and style of execution of the image [Javakhishvili st. 1997: p. 228, Tab. I-5A]. Also, the pyramidal print of a bone found in the Zhinvali cemetery, the lower, rectangular ridge of which depicts a foot horse with a radial mane, looks very interesting. (Tab. IV-8). The item is locally made and it's dated back to the I c. BC – I c. AD [Lortkipanidze Marg. 2003: pp. 103-107]. Based on the cited examples, it seems that from the Early Hellenistic period, various forms of seals and signet rings decorated with images of horses or rider were made locally in Georgia. The images (riders) carved on them continue to exist in Roman times and they should be placed in the local cultural circle formed in the early Hellenistic period, which was simultaneously influenced by both Asia Minor – Greek and Persian art [Lortkipanidze Marg. 1975: p. 112; Gagoshidze I. 2009: p. 16].

From the earliest centuries of the AD, there has been some innovation in fine arts, including sculpture, which has manifested itself in a new revival of the cult of the horse and the rider, which, in addition to the traditional, has been nurtured by new external factors. There is mentioned the widespread of the Mithraic cult in the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin, which has penetrated quite strongly in the South Caucasus as well. We suppose that the multiplication of images of horses and rider should be explained by this event, as in the Mithraic religion the cult of horses and riders reached the highest stage of development in the first centuries AD [Ramishvili K. 2010: 193-194].

The rider on a mounted horse (without the tree of life and the altar) wears a radiant Phrygian hat like the Zhinvali rider is depicted on the golden buckle (N7) discovered in Gonio treasure and is dated back to the II c. AD. The buckle is rectangular plate decorated with gems and granulation (Tsvara technique), the upper part of which is crowned with two triangles decorated with each image of a bird, while the lower part is covered with flat and round plates attached to a braided snout. The central part of buckle is decorated with Tsvara technique and it is framed by horsman's impression – Rossete. A rosette on the horse rump is depicted with similar technique [Lortkipanidze N. 1980: pp. 13-20; Kakhidze A. 2015: pp. 78-102]. Buckles of similar embellishment are found in Kldeeti cemetery – dating back to the II century AD [Lomtadze G. 1957: pp. 103-104], in Armaziskhevi [Apakidze. 1955: p. 22, Tab. 1 – XXXIII], near the Sochi, in the luxurious tomb of Daba Loo [Ivanova M.I., Golubev P.M. 1961: pp. 284 – 292, Figs. 7-2; Fig. 8-2]. With general typological, artistic-stylistic and symbolic signs, despite the differences in some details, it is quite obvious that they are homogeneous and belong to the series of jewelry that was widespread in the early centuries of the AD. The abundance of this type of buckles on the Kldeeti cemetery is very important. It belongs to the middle of the II century, or its second half [Lomtadze G. 1957: pp. 169-174]. The embellishment of the buckles N7 with the image of a rider discussed here, including the artistic-stylistic, as well as the symbolism of the images, is genetically closely connected with the traditions of old Colchian goldsmithing [Lortkipanidze O. 1980: p. 22]. We have in mind the image of a rider in the Colchian goldsmithing of the Early Antic period, e.g. The earrings with figure pendants found in the tomb N6, in Vani with the image of riders standing on a four-wheeled cart (Tab. IV-11) [Chkonია A. 1977: pp. 96-99]. They are associated with the mythological notions of the “Great Mother” and her rider, widespread in the ancient world. On the horse rump of Gonio's N7

buckle the solar symbol – Rosette is depicted and a swastika is seen – on the earrings from Vani we have already mentioned above. which is also considered as a symbol of the sun [Lordkipanidze O. 1980: p. 23, Sk. 54-56]. The rider with the Phrygian headscarf is not strange to the even earlier Colchian bronze artistic makers, we mean the statue of a horsman found in Lechkhumi, Tsageri treasure (Tab. III-4) (VI-II-VII centuries BC.) [Sakharova L. 1976: pp. 8, 36-38, Tab. VII-1]. Also noteworthy is a Colchian ax found in the village of Sulor; the horn of which is adorned with a pair of statues of Phrygian-like helmeted horsemen, which is considered to be the horsemen of the deity “Great Mother” [Lortkipanidze Ot. 2002: p. 131, Fig. 121]. Also noteworthy are the horse sculptures on the ax found in Gudauta, which are made in a style typical of Colchian-Koban art. Axes with sculptural images are dated back to the 7th century BC. [Pantskhava L. 1988: p. 65].

The spread of the Mithraic cult in Georgia, its merging with the local cult of the sun and the horse, speaks of the Late Roman period. Another local group of archaeological materials which are dated back to the II-III centuries AD – silver cups, with the image of a horse standing in front of the altar at the bottom. Such a bowl (Tab. VI-3), besides Armaziskhevi, Bori, and Zghuderi, is also found in Aragvispiri cemetery near Zhinvali [Ramishvili R. 1975: 7-15]. The raising of the foot by an animal is an ancient, ritual posture and symbolizes worship, reverence, and in compositions is most often associated with an altar or a tree of life, but often this posture is manifested independently, in this case, the risen leg means protection, blessing [Machabeli K. 1976: p. 86]. At the same time, the Zhinvali horsman (as well as the rest of the horsemen) reveals his proximity to local, contemporary monuments. We can confirm it by Iberian openwork buckles dated back to the (I-III cc.) AD, On which there are depicted stylized fantastic rised hooves horses [Khidasheli m. 1978: Tab. XIII – 158, 159, 160] and images of horsemen (Tab. VI-1) in profile with birds and solar signs. Bronze horsemen similar to Zhinvali and other horses, especially horses united in group I. A manner of sitting on a horse, exaggerated, almighty hands placed on the horse’s neck and rump (Tab VI-2) are found in Kldeeti cemetery (II century AD) [Lomtadze G. 1957: p. 73-76, Figs. 12]. Relatively less closeness is observed with the silver figures of fully bridled, without horseman horses decorated with solar signs (Tab. VI-4) from Aragvi valley (Nedzikhi and Badrian cemeteries). These items have the function of the fibula and are dated back to the III-IV centuries [Ramishvili K. 2007: Tab. XXII-2, 4, Tab. XVII, XVIII].

Thus, according to the abovementioned facts, we think that the Zhinvali rider is a syncretic deity – so-called Mithra, which on the one hand is associated with strong local traditions, and on the other hand – with new cultural trends, which was established in the early centuries of AD. in connection with the spread of Mithraism throughout the world, including Georgia, on the basis of Asia Minor, Roman, Trapezoid-Cappadocian, or Iranian cultural-religious experience. An inevitable synthesis was taking place, which was not strange to Georgia at any stage of its existence, situating at the crossroads of the Western and Eastern worlds. Considering the dates of the gems of the first group (I-II centuries AD.) and the second group (III-IV centuries AD.), as well as Trabzon coins (II-III centuries AD.) and similar synchronous artifacts (II c.), we think that the Zhinvali gem should be dated back to the second half of the II century AD., and consider it as local glyptic sculpture as the rest of the cavalry. As for the ring, it must be from the 4th century AD, as this form of the ring, was one of the most common types spread in that period [Henkel F. 1913: 274, 276, 281]. Apparently, we are dealing with secondary use of the gem which is not uncommon in glyptic. We are also supported by the fact that in the Zhinvali ring the gem was inserted with the mouth (image) below and above the back (Tab. I-4), i.e. the ring left the impression of a plain twig. Upon discovery, the nest was dismantled and it was found that the image of the

rider at the bottom of the nest was invisible on the surface. It seems that for the buried Christian the so-called Mitra-rider turned out to be unacceptable, for which he placed at the bottom of the ring. We might have thought that the horse's long history ended here, but as we know a similar image became the basis of the Holy Riders iconography which is well known to the Near East. It appeared lately as St. George's image.

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TAB. I



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6



Fig.7



Fig.8



Fig.9



Fig.10



Fig.11



Fig.12

TAB. II



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6



Fig.7

TAB. III



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6



Fig.7



Fig.8



Fig.9

TAB. IV



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4

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RENDERING THE NAME OF EREKLE II ON THE ROYAL SEALS

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the variations in the writing of Erekle II's name on royal seals and numismatic materials. The research is based on more than 10,000 documents preserved in the Georgian archives and the seals found on them. Eight identified seals have been analyzed, which chronologically cover the period from 1729 to 1797. These seals differ both in form (octagonal, rectangular, oval), as well as in size and imagery. The first seal belongs to 9-10-year-old Prince Erekle (1729), while the rest appear on various documents issued throughout his reign.

It should be emphasized that the king's name is written on two seals in Asomtavruli script as “**ᲠᲚᲗᲗᲗᲗ**” (Erekle), on three seals in Mkhedruli script as “Erekle” and on one seal in Asomtavruli as “**ᲠᲚᲗᲗᲗᲗ**” (Irakli). Particularly remarkable is the five-language seal (N7), in the center of which “Irakli” is written in Asomtavruli, while around it the same name is rendered in four languages (Latin, Greek, Armenian, Persian). It is also interesting that on all copper coins, the king's name is indicated as “Irakli”. In historical documents (e.g., the Treaty of Georgievsk) and in the memoirs of close relatives (Alexandre Orbeliani), the king is frequently mentioned by the name “Irakli”.

The study also reviews relevant scholarly literature. Notably, M. Barataev, E. Pakhomov, D. Kapanadze, and N. Tarkhnishvili read the name “Irakli” on coins and seals but write “Erekle”. The only exception is Ana Bakradze, who accurately rendered the name as “Irakli”.

The research demonstrates that Erekle II's official name, especially on documents and coins, should properly be recognized as “Irakli”. This issue truly requires consideration and verification of existing information.

KEYWORDS: EREKLE II, SPHRAGISTICS, ROYAL SEALS, NUMISMATICS, NAME SPELLING.

1. Octagonal seal, size: 10 x 11 mm. Asomtavruli legend in the center “Batonishvili Erekle” (ⴒⵀⵏⵓⵛⵔⵉⵕⵅⵊ ⴌⵑⵔⵉⵗⵍⵉ) “Batonishvili Erekle”. Erekle is 9-10 years old at the moment, chronologically this is his first seal. Seen on the Deed of Mercy of 1729 and 1739 years, document N556 (See Figure N1).



Charagma on this seal is read as follows:



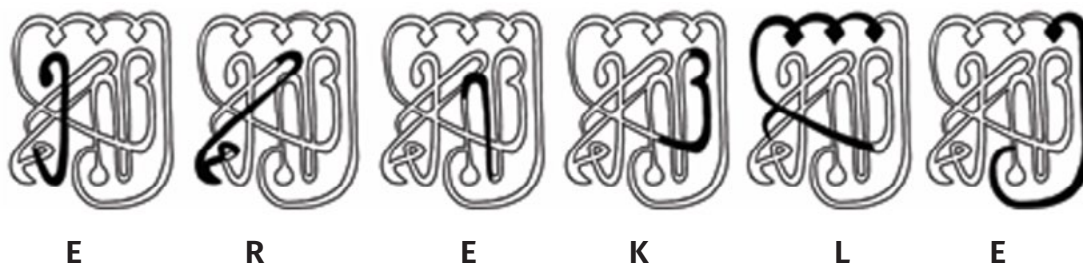
GOGA GABASHVILI

2. Rectangular seal, size 11 – 12 mm. Mkhedruli (Georgian script) in the center “Erekle” (see Figure N2). This seal can be found on economic-type documents from 1738 to 1796yy.



Figure N2

Caligraphy signature (Khelrtva) on this seal is read as follows:

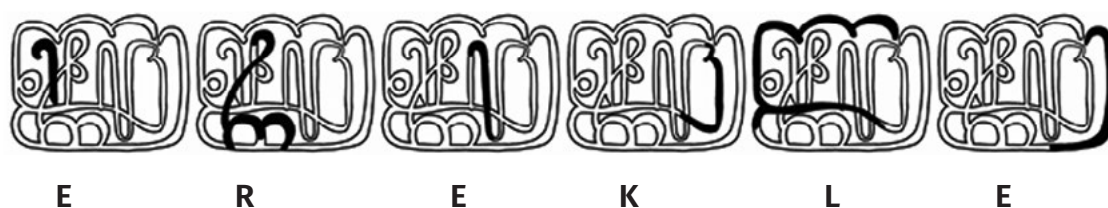


3. Rectangular seal, size 17 – 15 mm. Surrounded by a mkhedruli inscription: „სული შენი მომბერე კლებულს იესო“ / “Jesus, bestow your spirit to the deprived”, Asomtavruli Charagma “” is placed among last two word (deprived – Jesus) evidently, date with K’oronikon. Mkhedruli letters “Erekle” in the centre “Erekle” (See Figure N3). This seal is on various documents from 1749, 1743 and 1781 years. Documents: 187, 507, 511, 2428.



Figure N3

Caligraphy signature in the middle of the seal is read as follows:

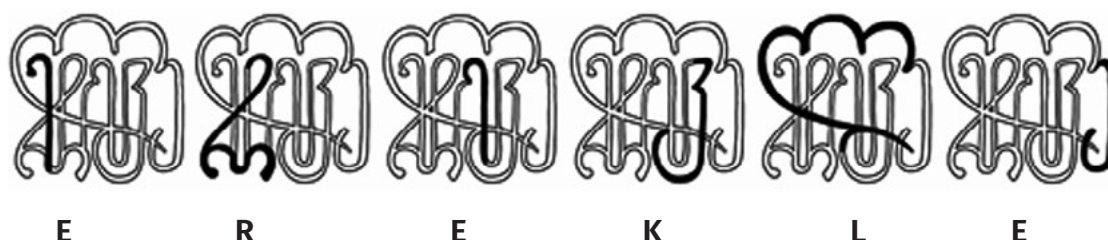


4. An octagonal seal, size: 23 – 22 mm, surrounded by the Mkhedruli inscription: „ქნარს მიცემს, დავით მიწმობს ძედ კახეთის მეფედ ცხებულს“ / „He gives the harp, David call upon me anointed as king of Kakheti“. This seal can be seen from 1744 to 1797 and documents of different types and purposes (documents 583, 5532, 512, and many others).



Figure N4

Caligraphy signature in the middle of the seal is read as follows:



5. Octagonal seal, size: 20 – 18 mm. Surrounded by a military inscription: „მე ფეხთ განბანილთა მიერ ეკლესია ვადიდე“ / „I glorify the church by means of those whose feet have been washed“. the Asomtavruli Charagma “Erekle” in the center (see Figure N5). This seal is found from 1750 to 1797 and is affixed to various purposes (documents 169, 87, 125 and many more).

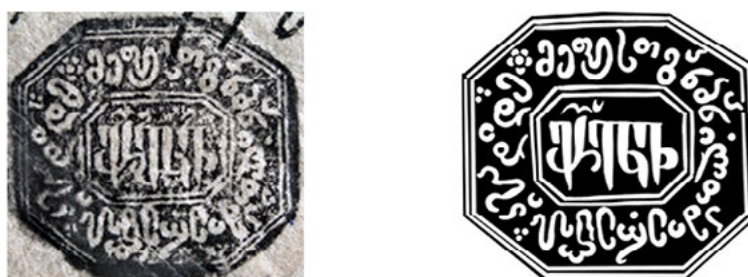


Figure N5

Caligraphy signature in the middle of the seal is read as follows:



6. Oval seal, size 34 – 27 mm. Surrounded by a mkhedruli inscription: “ძე ცხებულისა უფლისა მეფის თეიმურაზისა [მეფ]ე ერეკლე” / “King Erekle, son of the anointed lord king Teimuraz”. The royal coat of arms is depicted in the center, showing a crown, two lions, arrows and a bow (See figure N6) The seal was used twice in total, in 1746 (Documents 162 and 1317).



Figure N6

7. Octagonal ring with the legend in five languages. Size 15 x 17 mm. King’s name “Irakli” in four languages.

Latin inscription: “HEPCLUS” “Irakli”.

Greek inscription: “HRKS” “Irakli”.

Armenian inscription: “ՀԵՐԱԿԼԷ” Hirakli.

Armenian inscription: “ՀԵՐԱԿԼԷ” Armenian caligraphy signature (Khelrtva) is read as follows: (See the figure 7a) “Herakli” same as Irakli.



Figure N7a

Persian inscription: “مونا مني ايراکلی” / “Irakli, his servant”, “مونا უფლისა ირაკლი” / “Servant of the Lord, Irakli”.

The text reads as follows: (Figure 7 b).

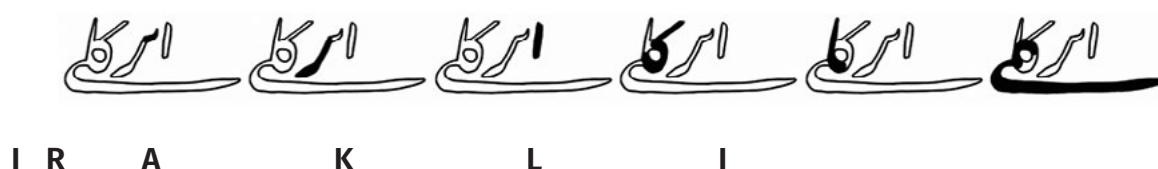


Figure N7b

Asomtavruli ქარაგმა in the center: “irakli” („ირაკლი“) „Irakli“ (Figure N7). This seal, along with other seals, is depicted on the letter written by King Erekle to Tekla Batonishvili, in 1781 (Col. 1448, document 189). The central Asomtavruli charagma of the ring is boldly and unquestionably read as “irakli” („ირაკლი“) “Irakli” (Figure 7c).



Figure N7

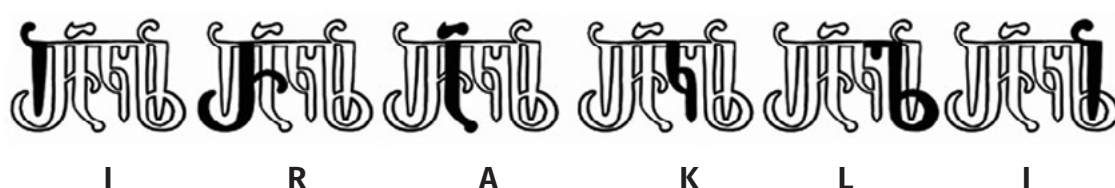


Figure N7c

8. Rectangular seal. Size 13 – 11 mm. Persian inscription in the center: „îĈÂGnéqjâDÂ,, “მოწმე მისი ირაკლი” / “Irakli, his witness”, “მოწმე უფლისა ირაკლი” / “Irakli, witness of the Lord”. The seal, along with other seals, is depicted in the letter written by King Erekle to Tekla Batonishvili, in 1789 (Col. 1448, document 189), (Figure N8).

In this case, too, the king’s name is undoubtedly read as Irakli (see Figure 8a).



Figure N8a



Figure N8

ჩვენი ბატონი ერეკლე
ერთი პატარა კახია
ჯაჭვის პერანგი ჩააცვებს
გაკრა ხელი და გახია.⁵
(ხალხური)

Little Kakhi is another name for King Erekle, which is often seen in folk poems and legends. The king is not mentioned by this name (nickname) in any personal letter, state document, or deed of any kind.

We find the name of King Irakli on quite serious documents, for example, the treaty of Georgievsk (“აზრიტა ამით სიმდაბლედ შთამოსრულმან თხოვასა ზედა უგანათ ლებულესისა მეფისა ქართლისა და კახეთისა ირაკლი თეიმურაზოვიჩისა...” / “With the intention, having descended in humility upon the request of the most enlightend king of Kartli and Kakheti, Irakli Teimurazovich...”).

On all the copper coins of Erekle II, the Asomtavruli charagma “irakli” („ირაკლი“) is read as “Irakli” (see Figure N9).



Figure N9

Charagma on the coins are read as follows:



5 The folk story tells of a little Kakhetian warrior (Erekle) who, when dressed in chain mail, demonstrated such strength that he could split it with his hand.

Erekle II is also often referred to as Irakli by close relatives. Tekla Batonishvili's son, Alexander Orbeliani, writes in his memories: "Before the age of 16, my mother wore man clothes and her father, King Irakli, took her with him."

On the eight seals described above, the name Erekle is engraved in the Asomtavruli alphabet on two of them: Picture N1 and N5, and on the three seals – in Mkhedruli caligraphy signature Figure N2, N3 and N4: The king's name "Irakli" is engraved with Asomtavruli charagma on Figure N7. Around it, there is King's name in four languages – Greek, Latin, Armenian and Persian. Also on the seal N8 the name of the king "Irakli" is depicted in Persian (see Table 10).

Writing	Asomtavruli charagma	Mkhedruli caligraphy signature (Khelrtva)	Asomtavruli charagma	Latin	Greek	Armenian	Persian
King's name	Erekle	Erekle	Irakli	Irakli	Irakli	Irakli	Irakli
Quantity	2	3	1	1	1	1	2
Seal N	N1. N5.	N2. N3. N4. N6	N7.	N7.	N7.	N7.	N7. N8.

Table N10

It is quite difficult to say with certainty which of the above names of the king is most frequently mentioned in documents, seals, or personal correspondence, because of the stereotype around the name of the king, scientists, scholars and readers also read the name "Irakli" and write Erekle. An example of this is M. P. The first study on Georgian numismatics published by M.P. Varataev – „Нумизматические факты Грузинского царства“⁶. There is also a discrepancy between reading the name and writing it e.g. In Pakhomov's work

„Монеты Грузии“⁷ and in D. Kapanadze work "Georgian Numismatics"⁸. We face a similar problem with N. Tarkhnishvili above-mentioned article – "Seals of King Erekle II"⁹. Only Ana Bakradze has read correctly the Central Asomtavruli dialect of the seal and wrote the name "Irakli"¹⁰ correctly. Because of it, there is a need to verify the read information and spend time on it.

I hope that King Erekle II will appear again in Persian or any other foreign language seals, as scholars still have a lot of work to do in the field of sigillography.

I thank to Mr. Giorgi Kalandia for his collegial support.

6 Нумизматические факты Грузинского царства", Разряд IV. Санкт – Петербург 1844, ст.11-12.

7 Е.А. Пахомов. Монеты Грузии. Тбилиси 1970, р. 261.

8 D. Kapanadze, "Georgian Numismatics". Tbilisi 1969, pp. 151-152.

9 N. Tarkhnishvili (Archival Division under the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR, Scientific-Informati – on Bulletin N13-14), p. 12.

10 A. Bakradze "Materials for the History of Georgian Sphragistics", Book I. Tbilisi 1978. p. 39. Cat. N55.

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ON IBERIAN IMITATIONS OF GRECO-ROMAN MONEY

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ABSTRACT

The present article examines locally produced imitations of Greek-Roman coins discovered on the territory of ancient Georgia, which are preserved in the Georgian National Museum.

The study focuses on three types of imitations: staters of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC), the staters of Lysimachus (306-282 BC), and the denarii of Octavian Augustus (27 BC – 14 AD) with images of Gaius and Lucius Caesar. Particular attention is devoted to the representation of birds on these imitations – a feature absent from the original prototypes found elsewhere. This unique detail was noted by E. Pakhomov and A. Zograph, while D. Kapanadze dedicated a special study to the subject, considering the bird image as a symbol of power and a characteristic sign of local origin.

Regarding this issue, among archaeological finds, the imitations of Octavian Augustus's denarii are noteworthy, specifically, the image of three birds identified on the emperor's diadem. Also, the imitation of Augustus's denarius (1st century AD) discovered in 2004 and 2013 at the Dedoplist Gora palace complex and a votive offering of 15 coins found at the altar (13 denarii of Augustus and 2 imitations of Alexander the Great's staters made of electrum), which must have been placed in a glass vessel. The imitations of Augustus's denarius discovered at Dedoplist Gora were presumably produced from the second half of the 1st century AD and were in circulation alongside with original denarii. The discovery of Augustus's denarii as hoards has been confirmed in Mtskheta, Bagineti (22 coins), and on the territory of present-day Azerbaijan (12 coins).

According to the conducted research, the bird image on the imitations must have been passed down through hereditary tradition from the early imitations of Alexander the Great's staters (Vani site) to the imitations of Lysimachus's staters and subsequently to the imitations of Augustus's denarii.

Archaeological evidence indicates that from the 2nd century BC throughout the ancient period, Georgia maintained a systematic production of Greek-Roman coin imitations. In the early feudal epoch, this process continues in the production of Georgian-Sasanian money, which is ultimately crowned by the unification of Georgia by the Bagrationi dynasty and the implementation of Georgian currency emission.

KEYWORDS: GEORGIAN NUMISMATICS, IMITATIONS, ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S STATER, LYSIMACHUS, AUGUSTUS'S DENARIUS.

Among the coins found on the territory of Georgia, special attention should be paid to locally made coins, imitating the coins of foreign countries that were actively involved in local coin circulation. Such an event is no exception – such a thing is observed in many places on the periphery of the ancient world. For Georgia, whose history is insufficiently covered by written sources, the study of local coin emissions is relevant.

An important role in the coinage of ancient Georgia was played by staters minted in the name of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC.) and his knight Lysimachus (306-282 BC.), the ruler of Thrace-Macedonia, as well as the first Roman emperor Octavian Augustus (27 BC.-14 AD.) Denarius (with images of Guy and Lucius Caesar on the back) [Zograf A.H., Dundua G. 1987: 55-102; Kapanadze d. 1969: 33-38, 42-44; Sherozia M. 2009: 61-71; Sherozia M. 2013: 13] and imitations of the Roman Imperial Aureus [Sherozia M. 2015: 38-61]. Most Russian and European scientists are still skeptical of the local origins of imitations [Пахомов Е.А. 1970: 13; Брайчевский М.1959: 84-91; Крopotкин В.1961: 16; Giard J-B. 2001: 228, 229].

While the research of gold imitations, E. Pakhomov [Пахомов Е.А. 1926: 38] and A. Zograph [Зорграф А.Н. 1951: 101] were the first who observed that on one part of the imitation, namely on the obverse, the emperor's diadem is decorated with images of a bird. This detail is not on the original. No such thing is observed in similar imitations of these monetary found in other countries. D. Kapanadze devoted special research to the image of birds on the imitations of Alexander the Great and Lysimachus staters as a symbol of power, where he underlines that because of this important and characteristic detail, it is possible with complete conviction that these imitations could be considered as local products.

Prolonged observation of the imitations led us to an interesting discovery, namely, in our opinion, in ancient Georgian territory, in late Roman times, on the widespread denar of Octavian Augustus (27 BC. – 14 AD.) (Fig. 1), on which the emperor's grandchildren and Lucius Caesar are depicted, one part of the imitation, the emperor's diadem being decorated with images of three birds (Tab. Figs. 2,3,4¹). It is evident that on the earliest group of these imitations, which has been dated back to the end of the first century AD, three birds were depicted (Figs. 2, 3, 4). The bird is also depicted on a specimen made of very low-grade silver preserved in the Svaneti Historical Museum (Fig. 5), which should be considered as a late specimen [Sherozia M. 2013: 233]. It is clear that the image of a bird was inherited from the Roman gold imitation as a legacy from the local gold imitations as an established tradition.

At first, the image of a bird probably appeared on the earliest, first-generation imitation of

1 Graphic works performed by artists L. Pavlenishvili and Ts. Turkiashvili.

Alexander the Great, found on the territory of the city – Vani. There are three such cases today, two of them are found in Vani, on the “Akhvlediane bis Gora”, one is without a passport (G.F. N5252, 5088, Q.dz.f. N3759. Fig.7,8).

The bird is depicted on most of the imitations of Lysimachus. Their number is from one to five (Figs. 8,9,10,11). The image of birds can be seen on the latest and at the same time the most degraded version of these imitations, found in the village of Aghaiani in the Kaspi district of eastern Georgia, in the Rikiani Valley cemetery – tomb N4, tomb N4 (9) [Mirianashvili N. 1983: 27; Dundua G.F. 1987: 155] (Fig. 11).

The inclusion of the image of a bird in the imitations is related to the beliefs of the local tribes. In general, the decoration of a human (ruler, king, emperor) with a bird (bird) head or crown as a symbol of celestial, heavenly power is not new. The image of a bird has not only an artistic-aesthetic character. First of all, as mentioned, it is a reflection of a variety of beliefs and has a cult-ritual purpose [Бардавелидзе В. 1957; Tsereteli M. 2010: 44-47].

Miniature images of birds are typical of Colchian goldsmithing: Gold necklaces composed of hangers with images of birds, gold earrings decorated with images of birds, and so on [Chkonia A. 1981: 54-59; Chkonia A. 1977: 81-100].

Generally, the decoration with the image of a jewelry bird takes its origin earlier. Late Bronze-Early Iron Age bird-shaped bronze hangers are known, which are found in the tomb dated back to the XIV-XIII centuries BC. [Ramishvili K. 2005: 48.49; Sulava N. 1996: 56]. Also, many bronze ornaments decorated with the image of a bird have been found in Meskheti, Borjomi municipality [Gambashidze O., Gambashidze I. 1995: 57-73. tab.62. N4]. Using the image of a bird on numismatic artifacts of the ancient period, the fact of adorning a diadem or a crown is not known to us. The only localized imitation of a passported, well – dated Octavian Augustus with a clear image of a bird has been found at the “Dedoplis Gora” settlement.

At the end of the I century AD, the fire, which may have been caused by an earthquake, destroyed the palace on the “Dedoplis Gora”, which was operating during the period of – I c. BC. – I c. AD. [Gagoshidze I. 2004: 41]. All coins found in the palace area are damaged due to the fire.

In 2004, an expedition found a badly damaged silver coin in the ruins of Room 15 on “Dedoplis Gora”. After the cleansing-restoration it became clear that the price indicator was a local imitation of the denarius of the first Roman emperor, Octavian Augustus (cut in 2 year BC – 4 year AD) [Sherozia M. 2013: 233]. Although the coin is terribly damaged, the image of birds is still clearly visible (Fig. 5). This specimen is important in other respects, as evidenced by the findings of subsequent archaeological work.

In 2013, during the preparation of the altar in the area of the 20th storehouse, there was discovered a pile of coins welded to each other while fire, presumably placed in a glass vessel. It was situated along with various items and small statues of the Greco-Roman pantheon of deities, a pile of coins welded to each other, their presence in the fire, was discovered. There were 13 silver and two electrum coins in the pile. These are: 2 pieces of local imitation made of Alexander the Great’s stater electrum and 13 pieces of Octavian Augustus denarius [Fig. 13].

The simultaneous discovery of the denarius of Octavian Augustus and his imitation is very informative. This fact allows us to draw the following conclusion:

As mentioned above, at the end of the 1st century the palace was destroyed by fire. This allows us to say that as soon as Augustus became intensively involved in the circulation of this

type of denar, from the second half of the 1st century, its local imitations emerged. Octavian Augustus's denar and its imitations, particularly those holding bird images, rotate simultaneously.

Another circumstance that makes these discoveries interesting is that the Roman denarii were discovered as treasures. Such cases are very rare. Although this type of denari was widely used in the entire civilized world of that time, including the Kingdom of Iberia. This is more than half of the valuables of the Roman period mined on the territory of the Kingdom of Kartli, mostly burial material. So far, only one case of treasure has been confirmed. In 1944, during archeological excavations in Mtskheta, on Bagineti (inner fortress), at the bottom of the defensive wall, 22 Denarius of Augustus were discovered [Mtskheta I. 1955: 179].

In the South Caucasus region, we have another Augustus's denarii found in the territory of present-day Azerbaijan. Near the town of Zhdanov (Tazakend district) a treasure consisting of 12 units was discovered [Халилов Дж. 1985: 154].

The first case of the use of these price indicators as a ritual contribution was revealed on "Dedoplis Gora". The coins were presumably placed in a purse and then put in a glass vessel (Fig. 13).

In different periods, on this monument, there were also found Republican denarii on this monument, minted in 67 years BC. In 67 [Дундуа Г. 1987: 146] and the stater of the ruler of Thrace, Lysimachus (306-282 years BC.) [Sherozia M. 2008: 242].

"Dedoplis Gora" is considered to be the residence of the royal family or a nearby social class. The combination of coins found here reflects the socio-economic situation. The involvement of imitations in the circulation of coins indicates an important issue such as the involvement of the royal government in the implementation of the issue. It is obvious that high social circles are consuming them. A clear example of this is the abovementioned monument, as well as the shrine discovered in Mtskheta in 1951, which belonged to a woman of an advanced circle. 63 coins were found here: 9 – gold, 54 – silver. It is noteworthy that four of the 9 gold medals are Roman imperial aureus, and five are local imitations of the statera of Alexander the Great [Kapanadze D. 1955: 82; Matiashvili N. 2016: 18].

In our view, the authorities were involved in the making of the early bird imitations of the August denarii.

In conclusion, it can be said that, since the 2nd century BC imitations of Greco-Roman money were made on Georgian territory. It has a rather broad and long character. This happens throughout the ancient period. This process continues in the pre-feudal era, in the making of Georgian Sassanid money by Georgian nobility. Later, this process was crowned by the unification of Georgia by the ruling Bagratians of Tao-Klarjeti and the implementation of the Georgian money issue.

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DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Denarius of Octavian Augustus (27 BC-14 AD).

Fig. 2. The imitation of the denarii of Octavian Augustus.

Fig. 3. The imitation of the denarii of Octavian Augustus.

Fig. 4. A graphic sketch of an imitation of the denarii of Octavian Augustus.

Fig. 5. The imitation of the denarii of Octavian Augustus discovered on the Dedoplis Gora.

Fig. 6. An imitation of the denarii of Octavian Augustus, preserved in the Svaneti History Museum.

Fig. 7. Imitation of the statera of Alexander the Great from Vani, Akhvlediani hill.

Fig. 8. Imitation of Alexander the Great's stater from Van, graphic sketch.

Fig. 9. Imitation of Lysimachus Statera.

Fig. 10. Imitation of Lysimachus Statera.

Fig. 11. Imitation of Lysimachus statera.

Fig. 12. Imitation of Lysimachus statera.

Fig. 13. A hoard of coins found on Dedoplis Gora, along with fragments of pottery.



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THE ANCIENT OLYMPIC GAMES COMMEMORATIVE COINS

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the study of the ancient Olympic Games based on the analysis of numismatic materials. It presents the history of the Olympic Games held in Elis from 776 BC to 394 AD and highlights their significance in the socio-political life of the ancient world. Attention is focused on the ancient tradition of minting Olympic coins, which was established in 471 BC.

The study provides a detailed description of Olympic coins of various denominations – staters, hemidrachms, tetradrachms, and hemiobols – minted in Elis from the 78th to the 143rd Olympiad (468-208 BC). Special emphasis is placed on the iconographic features of these coins, including the depictions and symbols represented on obverse and reverse, such as the eagle, Zeus, Hera, Nike, and the olive wreath, among others.

In parallel, the research discusses the history of the revival of the modern Olympic Games, which is connected with the name of the French educator, historian and public figure Pierre de Fredi, Baron de Coubertin. It was precisely through his efforts that in 1894, at the Sorbonne Congress, the historic decision was made to revive the Olympic Games. The Olympic Charter was also developed. Since 1952, the foundation was laid for the issuance of commemorative coins of various themes related to the Olympics by the host countries.

The conducted research once again emphasizes the fact that the history of issuing commemorative coins is an extremely vast topic and represents an important part of cultural heritage.

KEYWORDS: OLYMPIC GAMES, ELIS, OLYMPIC COINS, NUMISMATICS, STATER.

The name of the Olympics is derived from the location where the games were held. It was a city of Olympia, located in the west of ancient Greece, in the Elis region. This area was distinguished for the rich and fertile land. There were temples, stadiums, and buildings for athletes. Every four years, in Olympia, there were held athletic games, and the inhabitants of Elis were responsible for organizing these games. About 45,000 spectators were gathered at the Olympic Stadium, indicating the widespread interest of the population in these games.

The Olympic Games represented the oldest and most popular holiday and competition in ancient Greece. They were held in honor of Zeus. As we know, the first Olympic Games in the ancient world were staged in the city of Olympia, in 776 BC. The interval between each of the subsequent Olympic Games was 1417 days (about 4 years). The Olympic Games played a significant role in the public and political life of the ancient world. The Olympic Games in Elis were held regularly for 1170 years, and a total of 293 Olympic games are known today, which were held until the year 394 BC, when the Roman Emperor Theodosius I abolished these games, because he believed that the Olympic Games were associated with excessive idolatry. Athletes from the Elis region were gathered to take part in the Olympics. During the Games, all wars were stopped, since the competition was considered to be a grandiose and glorious event.

The ancient Olympic Games represented a more important event than simple sports competitions. It was a profitable business and provided a political and cultural forum, as there were held many events during the Games. It was necessary to accommodate athletes, their trainer, and spectators and provide them with food and souvenirs. The Games have united thousands of citizens from every region of Greece, bringing them together at fairs, shows, and concerts.

The core constituent elements of the Olympics were sports competitions and religious rituals. On the first day of the Olympics, athletes took an oath and brought donations to God. The referees were also taking an oath to umpire fairly justified, and then, the competitions were held during the next three days.

The ancient tradition of the Olympic Games also implies the oldest experience of the minting of Olympic coins. Ancient Greeks believed that the creation of Olympic money brought society closer to the Olympic Games. Those, who could not attend the Games, could have memorable souvenirs and Olympic coins. Olympic coin practically was not being used as ordinary money, but there was still an exception, already at the time of the modern Olympic Games.

According to various versions, the first Olympic money had been appeared since the year 471 BC. The Olympic coins were either silver or golden staters (the unit of currency), on the one side of which, there was initially an image of Zeus, a heavenly creature headed the heaven and mountains, or his wife Hera, and later. They began depicting images of athletes on coins, competing in particular competitions, and also, various sports and theatrical scenes were portrayed. On the other side of the special Olympic money, as a rule, there was an image of Nike, the goddess of victory in ancient Greek mythology, or the eagle as a symbol of strength, since its size, strong claws, and sharp eyes were considered to be the king of the air, and of course, a crown of olive leaves, which was traditionally placed on the winner's head.

The most popular rider in the Olympic Games was a racer on a horse and with horse-drawn carts (quadriga). Only rich people could take part in the competition because they were able to keep and ride horses.

The exact date of the Olympic Games is unknown, but the written records begin from the year 776 BC.

Some of Olympic coins issued during the antique Elis Olympic Games have survived until the present time:



Elis, 78th – 80th Olympiad. The years 468 – 460 BC, statera, weight – 11.800 grams. Obverse: the image of eagle flying left, whose wings spread above and below, grasping serpent in its beak. Reverse: an image of the bird's bottom part in the darkness above and wings below. On the right side, vertically from top to bottom, there is marked caption "F-A".



Elis, 78th – 82th Olympiad. The years 468 – 452 BC, statera, weight – 11.750 grams. Obverse: an image of eagle flying left, rending hare in talons. Reverse: the bird's wings are spread above and the bottom part – below, on the right and left sides, in parallel, there is marked caption "F-A".



Elis, 87th – 90th Olympiad. The years 432 – 420 BC, hemidrachm, silver, weight – 2.650 grams. Obverse: eagle standing right on Ionic main column with spread wings, the head is turned left and talons are raised above. Reverse: the bird's spread wings are turned above and the bottom part – below, on the right and left sides, in parallel, there is marked caption F – A. This coin is very rare.



Elis, 87th – 90th Olympiad. The years 432 – 420 BC, stater, silver, weight – 11,51 grams, diameter – 23 mm. Obverse: an image of eagle flying right grasping serpent in its beak and talons. Reverse: the bird's bottom part is spread in the darkness above and wings – below, on the right and left sides, in parallel, there is marked caption “F-A”.



Elis, 93rd Olympiad. The year 408 BC, stater, silver, weight – 11,51 grams, diameter – 23 mm. Obverse: an image of eagle with piercing eye left, and under the eagle, there is poplar or ivy leaf. Reverse: on the above, there is an image of the bird's bottom part, with wings spread below, on the right and left sides, in parallel, there is marked caption “F-A”, all within olive-leaf crown.



Elis, 98th – 100th Olympiad. The years 388-380 BC, hemiobol, silver, weight – 0.460 grams. Obverse: eagle head right, underneath – indistinct details. Reverse: on the above, there is an image of the bird's bottom part, and wings spread below, on the right and left sides, in parallel, there is marked caption “F-A”.



Elis, 101st – 102nd Olympiad. The years 376-372 BC, hemidrachm, silver, weight – 2.610 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera wearing a crown. Reverse: eagle standing and head is turned left, on the right and left sides, there is marked caption “F – A”.



Elis 103rd Olympics. 368 BC, Hamidrah. Silver, 2,770 grams. Obverse: depicts Hera's head, face to right. Reverse: An eagle stands with its wings turned to the left.



Elis, 105th-107th Olympiad. The years 360-352 BC, hemidrachm, silver, weight – 2.560 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera's head, the face is turned to the right. Reverse: eagle standing, and head is turned left.



Elis, 108th Olympiad. The year 356 BC, tetradrachm, weight – 14.500 grams. Obverse: an image of Zeus's head, face is turned to the right. Reverse: an image of a rider on the horse, who is rushing about, rearing up horse, headed to the left, holding a long palm-branch in his right hand. Under the horse, there is the Olympic Cup.



Elis, 109th – 110th Olympiad. The years 344-340 BC, hemidrachm, silver, weight – 2.980 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera's head, the face is turned to the right. Reverse: eagle standing, whose head is turned to the right, on the left side, there is marked caption "F – A"γ. Very rare coin.



Elis, 111th Olympiad. The year 336 BC, stater, silver, weight – 11.580 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera's head, face is turned to the right, with a wreath on the head having caption "FAΛEIQN", and wearing earrings. Reverse: an image of eagle with open wings, standing on rock, looking to right, all within olive wreath.



Elis, 112th Olympiad. The year 332 BC, stater, silver, weight – 11.710 grams. Obverse: an image of head of Zeus turned to the right. Reverse: eagle standing right and wings are closed, thunderbolt behind, and in the front – "H" and coiled serpent, on the left side, there is marked caption "F-A". Very rare coin.



Elis, 113th – 115th Olympiad. The years 328-320 BC, hemidrachm, silver, weight – 2.770 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera's head with hair in a roll and face turned to the right. Reverse: an image of eagle with open wings looking backwards. Extremely rare coin.



Elis, 114th Olympiad. The year 324 BC, silver, weight – 11.750 grams. Obverse: an image of Hera's head turned to the right, below, on the right and left sides, there is marked caption "F-A". Reverse: eagle standing right, with open wings and head turned back to the left, all within olive wreath.



Elis, 112th – 142nd Olympiad. The years 330 – 250 BC, Pamphylian drachm. Aspendos (Greek city, on the territory of Contemporary Turkey), silver, weight – 10.160 grams. Obverse: in the center of coin, there are minted the images of the wrestlers participating in the competition at the start of the wrestle. Between them, in the lower part of coin, there is marked a Greek letter "E", which is the first letter of the word "Elis". Reverse: in the center, there is an image of a participant of competition, who raises his hands above head and expresses the moment of flinging an item, and in its background, two parallel lines are marked horizontally. In the front of athlete, near the hand, there are the images of three fragments of the leg, in a bent position from the upper joint of the leg, including the foot, the lower part of the right leg knee, jointed to each other at the place of the femur, is bent. Under this fragment, there is an image of a wooden, circular baseball-like bat, near the thick part of which, on both sides of the bat, there the images of four balls on each side. Presumably, it was a flinging item of athlete participating in the competition. Behind athlete, there is marked, vertically, from bottom to top, caption: "E TFEDIY". The coin is circular in shape, on both sides of which, there are the balls creating a relief shape. This coin has been minted in quantities large enough. Presumably, it performed the function of money as well.



Elis, 134th/135th – 143rd Olympiad. The years 244/240 – 250 BC, stater, silver, weight – 4.620 grams. Obverse: eagle flying with hare in the catches. Reverse: below, there is an image of the bird's bottom part with wings spread above, on the right and left sides, there is marked caption "F – A".

The convening of the modern Olympic Games is primarily associated with Pierre de Fredy, Baron de Coubertin (01.01.1863 – 02.09.1937), French sports and public figure, historian, educa-

tor and writer. He has been giving lots of thought to organizing the international games aiming at the advancement of sport, because he had seen the public interest in the ancient Olympic Games, and he had drafted the revival of the Olympic Games. On November 25, 1892, at the famous Sorbonne University in Paris, he gave a speech "Reviving the Olympics". His attempt has not been lost and has been a success. On June 23, 1894, a historic decision was made at the Sorbonne Congress – to revive the Olympic Games, since it was demanded by contemporary life. The basic rules and provisions (the Olympic Charter) have been developed and approved at the Congress. The decision was made on the establishment of a single authority, which was designated the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Coubertin assumed the position of a Secretary General, and his friend Demetrius Vikelas was appointed President of this Committee. It was also decided to hold the symbolically first modern Olympic Games in Athens in the summer of 1896 (6-15 April, 1896). Baron de Coubertin was the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1896-1916 and in 1919-1925.

During the period from the I Olympics to the XV Olympics, there was no attempt on the part of the host and organizing country of the Olympic Games to issue commemorative coins. For the first time, such Olympic coins were minted in 1952, at the Games of the XV Olympiad in Helsinki, Finland, and then, at the Olympic Games in 1956 and 1960, commemorative Olympic coins were not issued. Starting with the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, commemorative coins were issued during every Olympiad by the host country of the Olympics.

The Olympic games are being held in both summer and winter sports and are called the Summer and Winter Olympics. They were also supplemented by the Paralympic Games, the World and European Youth Olympic Games. The Olympic commemorative coins have been issued not only by the countries that host and organize the Olympic Games, but also by almost every country in the world, including even small states.

Thus, the history of commemorative coins is too large an issue, and we have tried to describe all the Olympic coins that the host country of the Olympics issued in Antiquity.