

**A Long-term History of Cross-cultural Transfers
in the Caucasus**

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The Mountains of Languages and Peoples: Interweavings and Transfers in the Caucasus Area

Michel Espagne, Hamlet Isaxanli, Shahin Mustafayev

The cultures of the Caucasus are too often seen as a juxtaposition of identity building, nations and languages. Georgians are not Azerbaijanis nor Ossetians. Armenians are not Chechens. A mosaic of languages and nations attached to their traditions, the Caucasus area can also be approached, in the very long term, in the context of cultures interweaving and creating new forms. Although the development of protohistory does not yet allow a definite answer, clearly there existed links between Mesopotamian and Caucasian cultures. A meeting organized at Khazar University in Baku, Azerbaijan, served as a starting point for the study of characteristic crossbreeds of the Caucasus area in the long term, from Antiquity to the end of the Soviet period. The Kingdom of Georgia took its administrative divisions from a Persian administration. If it is not wrong to say that Azerbaijanis, being of Turkic origin nation, share some elements of Persian culture; that Armenians and Georgians have long had a common history and that perhaps some Cossacks descended from the Cherkess; that the peoples of the North Caucasus were sometimes followers of pagan religions, sometimes Orthodox Christians, sometimes Muslims and that settlements of Jewish or Kurdish populations always played important roles, can these interweavings be the subject of a particular history, an aspect or feature through which to address the complexity of the region? If we observe each of the Caucasian nations or, more realistically, a range of these cultures, some of which, like the Ubykhs valued by Georges Dumézil, supposedly disappeared, we see that they all appear, it seems that for a long time they settled in isolation in the mountains – like the Chechens or Ingush, who established relations with their neighbors or with nations like the Byzantines, Persians, Greeks or Mongols, who had control of the

Caucasus for some periods. The Caucasus was on one of the routes through which the “Silk Road” passed and is therefore labeled by this route of cultural exchange. It was populated partly by people from Central Asia, such as the Seljuks, as well as people sent by Genghis Khan or Tamerlane. It was part of the mysterious Khazar Empire and recognized the suzerainty of the Mongol empire. Invaded by Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, by Turks Mongols, hedging long between Christianity and Islam and, partially, Buddhism, the region has combined many cultural layers to which it is heir. The homeland of Prometheus and Medea, Colchis – the depository of the golden fleece – was an area penetrated by Hellenism and fell under what may be referred to as Pontic Hellenism. While the study of the Caucasus in the context of diachronic transfer implies a relation to ancient mythology, it also involves keeping in mind the seam of Zoroastrianism. The regular repositories of ancient coins reveal the complexity of the commercial exchanges transacted across the Caucasus since antiquity.

Of course, any discussion of cultural transfers in the Caucasus requires first of all that a linguistic perspective be considered. The sixty languages spoken in these mountains by so many ethnic groups are formed notably with borrowed and ‘contaminant’ words that suggest comparisons sometimes with the languages of ancient Anatolia, sometimes with Mesopotamia, sometimes with the Persian world. It was with reference to Caucasian languages that Nicolas Marr, the Kutaisi-born official linguist of the Soviet Union, developed the idea of “Japhetic languages” as pre-Indo-European. This linguistic museum fascinated generations of scholars, especially Germans, and this fascination could itself become a subject of study. There is an ancient or, rather, prehistoric layer in studies of the Caucasus that forces one to leave one’s own subject area to observe the possible substrate value of another. Hattic, Urartian and Hurrian were languages conveying cultures that followed the spread through Anatolia as far as Mesopotamia, without excluding the possibility of a link with the Caucasus, even while historical depth must encourage great prudence here.

The Caucasus has been particularly important for the Russian literary imagination, from Lermontov to Pushkin, or from Griboyedov through Tolstoy to Mandelstam, Tynianov and to Yesenin. Its poets, such as the Georgian Rustaveli or the Persian-speaking Azerbaijani Nizami, are themselves at the confluence of several literatures and Nizami delivered literary models to most cultures of Eurasia. The course taken by Lev Nussimbaum, aka Muhammed Essad Bey and Kurban Said, shows the persistence of literary multiculturalism in Baku in the 20th century.

For all the incredible diversity of the forms it takes, the culture of the various peoples of the Caucasus has a single inner thread running through it. This culture is so

vernacular, so harmonious, that it is often represented by outsiders as being a single entity with minor local differences, or as a kind of diversity in unity. Indeed, the particular features of the lifestyles, original clothing, beautiful music, brave dances and customs of the Caucasian nations are woven into a common cultural tradition. Only this enabled Sergei Parajanov, the Soviet Armenian filmmaker from Tbilisi, to create an amazing love story from a tale by Lermontov, which in turn had used motifs from the Azerbaijani folk epic *Ashiq Qarib*, such that his masterpiece became a manifestation of all Caucasian culture.

A cross-cultural history of the Caucasus may be envisaged from a perspective of places of crossed memories: its cosmopolitan cities like Azerbaijani Baku, one of the Muslim cities where a strong Jewish minority lived, or the Georgian Tiflis/ Tbilisi, which, from Ancient times to the Islamic period, from the Mongols to the Persians, from the Safavids to the Ottomans, knew innumerable occupiers before becoming an administrative and intellectual capital of the Caucasus under the Russian Empire.

Of course, we are not proposing here a general history of the Caucasus; that would require, among other things, addressing the complex issue of recent conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia, as well as Karabakh and Chechnya, that have swept the region; it is rather a question of concentrating strictly on the phenomena of transfer – historical, literary, linguistic, archeological and aesthetic – as a shaping principle in this region over a long history prior to the disappearance of the USSR and conflicts which, in the absence of historical distance, are difficult to deal with. The limits of the territory designated by the term Caucasus are not at all clear. Caucasian Albania expanded far to the south, the Khazar Empire far to the north. The Tabriz region is an integral part of the Azerbaijani cultural area. The Treaty of San Stefano attached an important part of Eastern Anatolia to the Russian Empire and the Caucasus that was lost with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and we do not even speak here of the diasporas of Caucasian nations in Moscow, Jerusalem or Paris.

The challenge here is to apply a new approach to cultural areas of paradigmatic complexity, using the various tools available and the skills of recognized specialists from the relevant regions and from the history of the social sciences to linguistics, through the history of cities and archeology.

Talk of cultural transfers in the Caucasus necessitates a reckoning with the historical representation of the periphery. The crossroads of cultures in the Caucasus is not on the periphery of the Russian or Turkish worlds, nor of Europe or the Middle East. It is a center in its own right. How not to put the oil wells of Baku at the center of the history of Russian and European industrial development, in at the origins of the enrichment of the Nobel family? How not to put a region at the center of the political

dramas of the twentieth century that was a focal point of intense Bolshevik ferment and the birthplace of Stalin, a Georgian of Ossetian ancestry, and Beria, a Mingrelian from Abkhazia, of Ordzhonikidze, a Georgian Bolshevik and later member of CPSU Politburo, of Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Union's last Minister of Foreign Affairs, of Nariman Narimanov, Bolshevik revolutionary, of Heydar Aliyev, the First Deputy Chairman of the USSR's Council of Ministers, both from Azerbaijan, and of Anastas Mikoyan, of Armenian origin and member of the Bolshevik Central Committee? Baku and Tbilisi were very early cosmopolitan metropolises whose importance was not ignored by Napoleon while devising a strategy to conquer India.

Since the mid-eighteenth century, the Caucasus has also fascinated European travelers and scholars seeking to understand the mysteries of its complex territory and the genesis of its languages and nationalities. Most of them were Germans like Friedrich Bodenstedt, strangely forgotten nowadays, whose translations/reinventions of the works of the Azerbaijani poet, 'Mirza Schaffy', met with immense success in Germany, and whose ethnographic works helped to establish a grasp of the region. Understanding the Caucasus is not just about publishing travel stories or literary descriptions in the manner of Alexander Dumas' *Journey to the Caucasus* or Arthur de Gobineau's *Shamakha Dancer*. From the mid-nineteenth century, images were fixed in photographs that served both to organize military positions in the vast Russian Empire, including Central Asia, as well as to recognize the specificities of local customs and lifestyles.

Clearly, this book on cultural transfers in the Caucasus does not claim by any means to be complete. Not all the nations making up the Caucasian puzzle will be mentioned, but there will be discussion of conflicts among the nations, as well as the peaceful relations which mark out their history. We wished only to recall the interest for almost all disciplines within the social sciences in a field of research whose characteristics can be traced from prehistory to the twentieth century, and to test the reliability of a guideline, that of cultural transfers, as an approach to it.

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL AGES

Caucasian Albania: A contact zone of sedentary population and their states with Eurasian nomadic people (V-VII centuries CE)

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Historical conflict of nomads and sedentary

The emergence of nomadism has always been a hotly debated issue of historical science. It should be noted, first of all, that we are talking about the so-called movable cattle-breeding as nomadism could be a way of life of the people and large ethnic groups engaged in a variety of professional occupations - gathering, crafts, divination, jugglery, music, dancing, et al. However, it is nomadic herdsmen and settled farmers who have composed two biggest parts of humanity with antagonistic relationships in the history of civilization. According to popular worldview, nomadism seems like a more primitive form of economic and social organization. However, at the same time, a firmly established fact is that the mobile pastoralism as the main occupation of large groups of the population appeared relatively later in comparison with other industrial occupations of people, and it was a progressive event in the history of the production. It has emerged from a mixed pastoral-agricultural sector as a result of the increase in the cattle production efficiency. Of particular importance was the domestication of large pack animals, horses and camels, which required new additional resources for their breeding.

Specialization in breeding of these animals required new skills of production management and the nomadic way of life associated with it. According to the widely spread expert opinion, a shift to this new lifestyle in the Eurasian steppes and in the Near East has occurred at around the turn of the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE.¹ Since then, the world of nomads and farmers seemed to be separated from each other although, in fact, the elements of these alternative products survived in the economy

¹ G. E. Markov. "Nekotoriye problemi vozniknoveniya i rannikh etapov kochevnichestva v Azii". *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, no. 1 (1973), p. 105

of each of the two societies. Formation of nomadism was accompanied by the consolidation of the military resources of the society since the nomadic life organically corresponded to the development of the military skills of the adult male population, and the search for new pasture lands and booty led to military clashes with neighboring people, both nomads and farmers.

The relationship of the settled population and nomads had a variety of manifestations and features. Military-political and economic aspects of the interaction between nomadic and settled population, of course, had a fundamental importance. They determined the antagonistic nature of the relationship, as the economy of the nomads of the Eurasian steppes was built on the foundation of transhumance and extensive cattle breeding. Both types of pastoralism created a potential conflict between farming and nomadic communities. In the case of outrun pasture, the nomads were partly in need to occupy some arable lands. And in the case of extensive cattle breeding, the viability of nomadic economy was dependent on the volatility of climate conditions. Unfavorable weather and fodder shortages in steppe forced nomads to count for product withdrawal from the agricultural population, i.e. predatory wars became a necessity for them.²

The tightening of the conflict occurs with the emergence of nomadic empires, which could mobilize huge military resources of the Eurasian steppes. The first big state of Eurasian nomads was Xiongnu empire that emerged in II. BCE on the borderland with China. Since then, the conflict of nomads and settled farmers was one of the most important factors that used to shape the existence and development of the ancient and medieval societies. The productive and cultural life in nomadic societies was not located in stable settlements and cities, and thus the nomadic lifestyle was not conducive for generation of written historical tradition and establishment of functional collections of manuscripts or libraries. The nomads used to transmit the historical memory and knowledge mainly via oral communication between people and generations. The emerging empires could leave valuable inscriptions on the stones and rocks which could survive the climate impact and abandonments while the authors of those monuments migrated in steppes. However, those craft pieces and information sources were hardly relevant for accumulation of the details of pastoral life and interactions between nomadic people and settlers. They mostly aimed to make political declarations and prove the legitimacy of ruling dynasties although they could still serve as sources of some scarce information of everyday life and concerns of masses of herdsmen moving in vast deserts and steppes extracted from

² N. N. Kradin. "Kochevniki, mir-imperii i sotsialnaya evolutsiya." In: *Alternativniye puti k civilizatsii*, ed. A.V. Korotayev, N.N. Kradin, D.M. Bondarenko, V.A. Lynsha. Moskva: Logos, 2000. <http://abuss.narod.ru/Biblio/AlterCiv/kradin.htm>, c. 324-5.

concise text of dynastic political statements. That is why the contemporary researchers and curious readers used to take the information about the nomads from written sources created by sedentary people. The emotional background of these news was consequently pervaded by fear and hatred towards the people with alien way of life and culture.

Long walls

Migration of nomads occurred in two main forms: in the form of a billiard ball effect when a migrating nomadic nation pushed another nomadic nation ahead, and secondly, when the nomads passed through the territory of neighboring nations in search of new habitat land.³ Empires of the settled people reacted to the movement of the nomads in different ways, depending on geographic conditions, and the enemy's military power. The policy to use some nomadic peoples against others included the resettlement of nomads on the borders of the empire assigning them border guarding, and so did the emperors of China and Byzantium and Sassanid shahinshahs at their borders with nomads, where they erected immense fortifications. The Chinese Wall is the most impressive monument of this era.

The defeat of the first big nomadic empire of Xiongnu had set the tribes of the Eurasian steppes on motion. About 370 CE, the remnants of the Xiongnu and other Eurasian nomads involved in their movement defeated the Alans in the Caucasus, opening the era of the Turkic??? domination and their permanent pressure on the borders of the Middle East and East European countries. Sassanids, whose share was to come face to face with the increased strength of the nomads in the Caucasus and in Central Asia, started grandiose constructions to protect their borders. Almost simultaneously, they started building long walls in the South Caspian, in Gorgan province, and a fortification complex in the Caucasus.

North Caucasian ridge was a natural boundary between nomads and the settled population. The rising Sassanid empire sought to push its limits to this natural border. That was the boundary the Sassanids tried to keep shut. Of particular importance was the reinforcement of the Derbent pass - a narrow strip between the eastern extremity of the Caucasian mountains and the Caspian Sea. Nomad raids took place across this passage, or alternatively the Daryal passage passed in the central part of the Caucasus. Erection of the fortifications was apparently started in the days of

³ Richard N. Fray, and B.A. Litvinskiy. "Tsentralnaya Aziya i kochevniki: 24.2. Severniye kochevniki, Sogdina, Khorezm." In: *Istoriya Chelovechestva*, ed. J. Herrman and E. Zurcher, 443-84: Izdatelskiy dom MAGISTR-PRESS, 2003, p. 471.

Yazdegerd II (438-451).⁴ However, large-scale construction of the system of fortifications extended from Derbent to the west along the Caucasian ridge which was carried out during the reign of Khosrow Anushirwan (531-579).⁵ Passionate strife of Sassanids to advance to the natural border with the nomadic world was justified by considerations of military-strategic and economic nature. Arab historian al-Tabari informed us that after the completion of the construction of fortification system in the Caucasus mountains a grand military campaign of Turkic Kagan Sindzhibu (probably, Istemi Kagan (d. 576) was easily repelled by Sassanid forces of just 5 thousand soldiers.⁶

Interests of the South Caucasian states

It should be noted that the interests of the big powers and borderland population, especially its military and political elite, did not match up. Caucasian Albania, a country on the border with the nomadic world of the Caucasus, had counted several hundred years of statehood history by the time of the advancement of the Sasanian state to the North Caucasus. Albanians had a strong army, which participated in the battles of Alexander the Great on the side of the Achaemenids of Persia, as reported by ancient sources.⁷

Inclusion of the country into the realm of big power could only partly solve the problem of the nomad raids since the border forces of the empire were not able to fully protect the population from bellicose neighbors. However, the maintenance of the troops, of course, fell on the shoulders of the local population and was added to other charges in favor of the central treasury. On the other hand, being in the political dependence on big powers greatly limited the revenues of the local nobility and the merchants obtained from the profitable trade with nomads.

In the middle of the IV century BCE, Albanian kings officially adopted Christianity. Harassment against the people of other faiths, especially Jews and Christians, by the Zoroastrian clergy and the state had also caused a discontent of the Sasanian rule.

⁴ Vladimir Minorsky and Ahmad ibn Lutf Allah Munajjim Bashi, *A History of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th Centuries* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1958)., p. 87, n. 2.

⁵ M.S. Gadjiyev. "K izucheniyu Limes Caspius." In.: "Severniy Kavkaz i kochevoy mir stepey Evrazii.". V "Minayevskiye chteniya" po arkheologii, etnografii i krayevedeniyu Severnogo Kavkaza., 79-82. Stavropol: Stavropolskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, 2001, p. 80-81.

⁶ Abu Djafar Mohammad ibn Djarir At-Tabari, *Tarikh at-Tabari: Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk*, 6 vols. (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 2005)., vol. 1, p. 251-252.

⁷ M.L. Chaumont, "Albania," in *Encyclopædia Iranica* (1985)., p. 807

Not coincidentally, the state and population of the contact zone with the nomads had every interest in peaceful cooperation with the warlike neighbors in the North. Albanian kings often turned to Caucasian nomads for help in the fight against the Sasanian rule. During the anti-Sassanid uprising in 459-462, Albanian king Vache II destroyed Sassanid fortifications to merge the forces with his Maskut allies⁸, and so did the rulers and the nobility of other South Caucasian states. Georgian king Vakhtang Gorgosal counted on the Huns in the fight against the Sasanian state. They, however, sent only a small force of 300 riders.⁹ Naharars, Armenian noblemen, shortly before the coming of the Arabs sought an alliance with the nomadic *Hons* to struggle against Iran and Byzantium, both striving to extend their power upon the country. Armenian historian Sebeos reports about negotiations of Armenian nobility with nomadic Hons to unite their forces on the left bank of the Kura river.¹⁰

Caucasian Albania - a zone of interaction and trading with nomads

These data point to the territory of Caucasian Albania as a zone of closest contacts with the nomads. Derbent passage was not only a way of movement of military units, but also the caravan route for the goods imported from China and from the northern lands. Strabo tells us that the nomadic people, Aorses, maintained trade with India and the Middle East along the western coast of the Caspian Sea in alliance with local merchants.¹¹ A sufficient number of Roman and Parthian coins unearthed in the hoards on the territory of Azerbaijan indicate the broad involvement of local people in international trade during this period.¹² A large number of Sassanid coins laid in hoards before the coming of the Arabs can be explained by the presence of the Sasanian administration on the territory of Caucasian Albania.

⁸ K.N. Yuzbashyan. *Armyanskaya Epopeya V veka. Ot Avarayrskoy bitvi k soglasheniyu v Nuarsake. Elishe. Slovo o voyne armyanskoy*. Moskva: "XXI vek - Soglasie", 2001, c. 327.; Mamedova, Farida. *Kavkazskaya Albaniya i albany*. Baku: Tsentr issledovaniy Kavkazskoy Albanii, 2005., c. 354.

⁹ Leonti Mroveli. *Zhizn kartliyskikh tsarey*. Moskva: "Nauka", 1976, p. 90.

¹⁰ Sebeos, *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, trans. Robert W. Thomson and Historical commentary by Tim Greenwood with the assistance by James Howard-Johnston (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press., 1999)., p. 32

¹¹ Strabon. *Geografiya v 17 knigakh. Perevod, statya i komentarii G.A. Stratanovskogo*. Moskva: "Nauka", 1964), p. 480

¹² Ilyas Babayev. "Kakiye monetnye upotrebyalis na rinkakh Azerbayjana v I v. do n. e. – III v. n.e." - «Irs», no. 1 (25) (2007), p. 6.; "Denezhnoye obrasheniye Kavkazskoy Albanii v ellnisticheskuyu epokhu (konets IV – pervaya polovina I v. do n.e.)" In: *Muзей Istorii Azerbayjana - 2002*. Baku: Natsionalnaya akademiya nauk Azerbayjana, 2002, p. 182

Albanian rulers minted their coins in imitation of the ancient coinage. Such coins minted probably in Gabala, the first capital of the Caucasian Albania, are abundantly found in coin hoards and attest the patronizing attitude of the Albanian rulers towards international trade.¹³ The scale of trade was so significant that required additional monetary mass, but, at the same time, it is also clear that international trade was the dominant area in the commodity-money operations in the country. As for the money circulation in tax levying and domestic commodity market, it apparently gave in to the international trade. Lesser development of centralizing functions of the Albanian state compared to the neighboring South Caucasus countries of that time can be explained with this feature of Albanian economy. In other words, the confederative principle of state-building in Albania, which can be figured out from the evidence of written sources concerning broader autonomy of the regions and tribes in the Albanian Union, could be explained by the wider engagement of the Albanian population in international trade.

The interaction with the nomads on the northern border and their penetration into the territory of Albania could occur in three different forms, or at three main levels: slow, gradual infiltration of small groups or clans; military campaigns, aiming at the spoils of war and captivity; and the political subordination of the territory, the establishment of administrative and political structures of nomadic unions in subjugated territories.¹⁴ As to Albania's population, Strabo noted that they were more committed to the breeding and stood closer to the nomads, but were not so warlike.¹⁵ This presumably indicates the existence of considerable masses of nomadic people dwelling within the borders of Caucasian Albania, or else to the process of gradual settlement of originally nomadic population of Albania. Both processes could run together.

The Sassanids used to settle the nomadic groups that came to their service predominantly in Albania to assign them border guarding. This has a direct indication in reliable sources. Ibn al-Athir, in particular, reported that after the failure of Istemi Kagan's campaign to the South Caucasus, Khosrow Anushirwan settled down ten thousand Turks in Azerbaijan.¹⁶ At the same time, eighty families of

¹³ "Denezhnoye obrasheniye Kavkazskoy Albanii v ellnisticheskuyu epokhu (konets IV – pervaya polovina I v. do n.e.)".

¹⁴ V.B. Kovalevskaya. "Noviye i traditsionniye podxodi k vzaimootnosheniyam stepnogo mira i mestnogo naseleniya Kavkaza" In.: "*Severniy Kavkaz i kochevoy mir stepey Evrazii. V Minayevskiyey chteniya po arkhologii, etnografii i krayevedeniyu Severnogo Kavkaza.*", Stavropol: Stavropolskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, 2001, p. 3.

¹⁵ Strabon. *Geografiya v 17 knigakh. Pervod, statya i kommentarii G.A. Stratanovskogo.*, p. 501.

¹⁶ Izz ad-Din Abi al-Hasan Ali b. Muhammad al-Jazari Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi Al-Tarikh*, 4th ed., 11 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-ilmiyya, 2006)., vol., p. 337-8.

notable Turkic warriors were moved from the South Caspian region Jurjan to the Caucasian frontier, most probably for the protection of Darband fortifications.¹⁷

The penetration and settling of nomads and the Khazar Turks on the threshold of the Arab conquest took place in the territory of Azerbaijan in ascending order. The description of the events of the Arab-Khazar wars contained stories, which indicated that there were people fluent in the Khazar language among population of many cities. Among the townspeople, the Khazars were found, who converted to Islam. Some of them facilitated the advancement of Arabs. Due to the betrayal of the Khazar warrior, who wished to convert to Islam, the Arabs managed to capture Darband. However, al-Kufi says that immediately after the departure of the Arab commander Marwan, the Khazars came back and "settled in the city of al-Bab as before."¹⁸

Conclusion

Nomads have always helped the local rulers keep their independence vis-a-vis the expansion of the great powers. Obviously, settling of nomads in the territory of Caucasian Albania took place from the time of antiquity, but this process intensified during Sassanid rule. Iranian rulers, while fortifying the boundaries in the Caucasus, resettled large groups of Turkic nomads to guard the borders. This process can be seen in the toponymy of Caucasian Albania, where the names derived from the Turkic ethnonyms are found. Peaceful relations with the nomads had a great influence on the forms of economic activity and the development of international trade through Albania.

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¹⁷ At-Tabari, *Tarikh at-Tabari: Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk.*, vol. 1, p. 251

¹⁸ Abu Muhammad Ahmad ibn Asam Al-Kufi., *Kniga zavoyevaniy (Iz vlecheniya po istorii Azerbayjana VII-IX vv.)*, perev. Z.M.Buniyatov. Baku: Elm, 1981, p. 14-15.

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Summary

Caucasian Albania: A contact zone of sedentary population and their states with Eurasian nomadic people (V-VII centuries CE)

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The paper addresses the issue of antagonistic relationship between sedentary population and movable cattle breeders as experienced in Caucasian Albania - the buffer zone between big empires and Eurasian nomadic people in the early Middle Ages. Evidence of mediaeval Arab sources is provided to justify that the interests of ruling elite and population at the boundary with nomadic people might differ from those of big empires. Nomads used to help the borderland state to struggle for their independence vis-a-vis the expansion of the great powers. Political contacts between elites, cooperation in international trade and border guarding policy of superpowers of the time were the policies used to settle the Turkic nomads in the territory of Caucasian Albania since antiquity, but this was intensified during Sassanid ruling and continued at the time of Arab domination.

Keywords: Nomads and sedentary antagonism, Caucasian Albania, Caucasian Turks, Sassanid fortifications, buffer zone, international trade in Eurasia

Galateia in the Land of the Amazons: The silver plate of Yenikend (Azerbaijan) and cultural transfers between the Greco-Roman world and the Caucasus

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“*His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono: / imperium sine fine dedi... //* For them, I set no limits in space or time: I give them empire without end...” This was Jupiter’s plan for the Romans, in Virgil’s first book of the *Aeneid* (1.278-279). Rome was undeniably the first and only western power that could claim dominion over the extent of the known world before the modern era with some justification. This was not only an echo of the Augustan propaganda consistently encountered in Latin texts before the nostalgic reconstructions of the past at the end of Antiquity. At least two types of sources indicate the influence exerted on the margins by the Roman Empire at its peak: firstly, literary and epigraphic texts mention relationships with barbarian kings loyal to the Empire, beyond its borders. Secondly, archaeological finds have revealed that networks established and used by people, objects and ideas extended beyond direct contact. In some cases, historians find matches between the two types of evidence and observe the barbarian temptation of “Romanisation” across the Empire’s limits and even over natural boundaries that one would imagine to be impenetrable. This “Romanisation” was not only a form of acculturation: it was the result of cultural transfers, that altered the meanings, perceptions and functions of objects on their journey from production to final acquisition. By comparing these types of sources, it is also possible to explain the construction of knowledge about the periphery and ‘the other’, at the center of the ‘civilized’ world. This historical study reminds us that texts and ancient objects do not in themselves reflect an absolute reality that can be used as proof in present-day historical and political debate: ancient literary and archaeological testimonies echo the fantasy, the *imaginaire* of the ancients that is different from ours. We must understand this foreign context by reconstructing the particular intellectual framework and interests of those ancients.

* I am extremely grateful to Profs. Michel Espagne, Shahin Mustafayev and Hamlet Isaxanli for the organization of the Baku workshop, which offered me the opportunity to discover Azerbaijan’s exceptional heritage, and for their full support and patience during the preparation of the publication. I owe special thanks to the native speaker who edited my paper with great knowledge and care, to Annabelle Milleville (Labex TransferS) and to all the persons working in the Museums, who answered and provided the photos and the publication rights.

This inquiry's starting point is one of the most important, if not the most famous, among the ancient archaeological discoveries in Azerbaijan: an object that is often referenced and illustrated in history books concerning the Caucasus, but whose implications in the study of cultural transfer have never been fully explained¹. This is a Roman luxury item – highly valued for the technique of its making and in what it displays. In subsequent pages, I try to explain its presence in one of the remotest regions of ancient Eurasia via the political and military networks that included both Romans and Transcaucasian elites who were sensitive to the Roman lifestyle. The discovery of this item draws our attention to the Caucasus as a frontier zone, thus as a zone of continuous, although difficult, passage between the urbanized states of Europe and Asia to the south, and the nomads' steppes to the north.

In the first part of this article, I will describe the item. In the second part, I will make a critical presentation of all the possible identifications of the characters represented on the plate and comment on its original function, in the context of its making, within the Roman Empire. In the third and final part, I will present some hypotheses on its export from the shores of the Internal Sea and the north-eastern limits of the Roman Empire to the *Barbaricum*, north of the Taurus, on the slopes of the Caucasus. By taking into account all we know about contacts between the Romans and the people of what we call today (from a Russian, northern point of view) Transcaucasia, I will formulate some hypothetical scenarios on the political, military, economic and cultural relationships between Rome and the kingdoms of Caucasian Albania and Iberia. The conclusion will point to what such an object can tell us about the Caucasus as middle ground between nomads and sedentary populations and as contested ground between East and West².

¹ For an introduction to the study of cultural transfer in the Classical Antiquity, see M. Espagne, "Transferts culturels, comparatisme et sciences de l'Antiquité", in A. Dan, F. Queyrel (ed.), "Les concepts en sciences de l'Antiquité: mode d'emploi. Chronique 2014 – Les transferts culturels", *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne* 40.1 (2014), p. 239-305 (p. 247-256).

² In its original meaning (R. White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815*, Cambridge, 1991), the 'middle ground' is a space where two cultural groups interact and exchange for economic, political or military profit. Each group borrows the other's social codes but cannot impose its dominion. I have coined the term 'contested ground' to remind of the rivalry between the hegemonic powers of Rome and Persia (under the Arsacids and then the Sasanians) in the Caucasus, especially south of the Great Caucasus, where ancient writers place the more or less independent states of Albania, Iberia and Armenia. These names have different meanings at different times, depending on interventions by the great powers, as far as we can tell by judging from the fragmentary, indirect and anachronistic sources preserved to our times. In this article, I use these terms following common historiographic practice inspired by Greek and Roman texts, and without consideration of modern debates – which, in my opinion, cannot be in any case based on ancient texts, if these are rightly understood (as I will suggest later).

1. An exceptional object in exceptional location

In 1893, near the village of Yenikend in the district of Göyçay (Geokchai, name given by the tributary of the Kur /ancient Kyros River, in the middle of Azerbaijan, south of Qabala district and south-west of Ismayilli district, (fig.1)), villagers found by chance a most beautiful silver plate of Greco-Roman antiquity. The plate was in

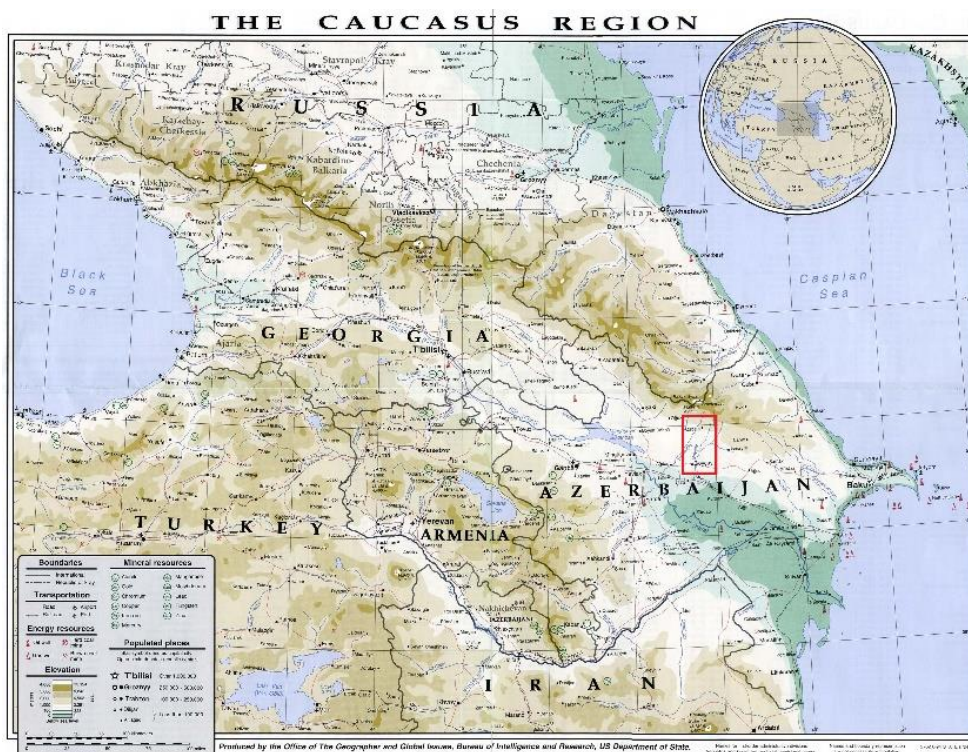


Fig. 1 Map of the Caucasus drawn by the American State Department (2004), showing the regions of Göyçay and Qabala in the red rectangle.

a tomb, together with some weaponry (a sword, a dagger, and part of some armor said to have been sent to the Museum of Tbilisi in 1896, but of which I could find no trace). A gold coin, which could have dated the tomb, but which was, unfortunately, never identified, has been declared lost since 1894³. This loss occurred when the plate and the coin were in the possession of Egor Romanovich

³ Cf. the answer of the Baku governor to a request from the Imperial Archaeological Commission (№ 230/1894, preserved at the Institute for Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint-Petersburg), discussed by P. В. Кинжалов, “Грустная Нерейда”, *Кунсткамера. Этнографические тетради* 12 (1998), p. 293-307 (online http://woman.upelsinka.com/history/antic_4.htm).

Mirzabekyants, a tobacco seller who was forced by the Imperial Archaeological Commission to surrender them for preservation and study. This is why the plate has been preserved, since 1898, in the Hermitage Museum in Saint-Petersburg (Inv. no. K3 5308). Unfortunately, I have not been able to see the object, but I attempt to give here some elements of a description, based on previous bibliography and on photographs kindly provided by the Hermitage Museum (fig. 2).

The plate is round, 24 cm in diameter, and registered as weighing 1030 g. It has a circular base, 8.2 cm in diameter, one-third of the principal diameter, as is often the case for this kind of Greco-Roman dish. If these numbers are precise and if the plate had not lost anything of its original dimensions, its diameter would be 10 Roman *unciae* and its weight c. 3 *librae*. Assuming that the concentration of silver is as high as in similar dishes, one could estimate the original weight of silver at between 300 denarii (for an imperial denarius of 3.4 g, during the reigns of the Julio Claudian emperors) and 500 denarii (for a denarius containing 2.6 g of silver, between the Antonine and Severan dynasties). Since we lack precise analyses of the



Fig. 2 The Yenikend plate, Hermitage Museum.

silver composition and because our statistics for percentages of silver in Roman imperial coinage are not yet very precise, it is difficult to suggest a valid date for the plate on the base of such quantitative criteria. We can only speculate that, if the silver was of sufficient purity, silver equivalent to 500 denarii is a fair figure for the material in this plate (not including the costs of production), between the reigns of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD) and Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) – especially during the reign of Commodus (180-192 AD)⁴. This was the equivalent of the annual (or one-and-a-half-year) stipendium of a legionary soldier, before deducting living expenses in the camp⁵.

The plate is said to have been made from two sheets of silver fixed together by the circular lip, one on top of the other, as was usual for Roman plates before Late Antiquity. First, the artist drew the model on the back of the upper sheet, which was then completely covered by the second sheet of silver, smooth and visible on the back and under the base of the plate. Following the drawing, the silversmith created a relief by hammering from the underside (*repoussé*) and from above, by chasing (engraving or inlaying). Some details were probably made by incision and others with gold plate – either by applying a fine sheet of gold leaf (for example to represent the sea) or by gilding, with a liquid mix of gold and mercury (probably for the finest details). The gilt is pretty well preserved: this indicates the decorative, prestigious function of this show plate, which was probably never used as a functional dish, for bearing food at a dinner. For its beauty and value, it may have been displayed on particular occasions and finally placed in the tomb as a mark of its owner's social position (cf. below).

⁴ Cf. the so-called 'Aulis' silver plate, 1.977 g, which could correspond to 500 denarii by the middle of the 1st century BC: A. Dan, F. Grenet, Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Homeric Scenes in Bactria and India. Two Silver Plates with Bactrian and Middle Persian Inscriptions", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 2014 [2018], p. 195-294. For the weight in silver of the imperial denarii and the successive devalorisations between the Antonine and the Severan emperors, see M. Corbier, "Dévaluations et fiscalité (161- 235)", in *Les "dévaluations" à Rome. Époque républicaine et impériale I. Actes du Colloque de Rome (13-15 novembre 1975)*, Rome, 1978, p. 273-309; M. Corbier, "Coinage and Taxation: the State's point of view, A.D. 193-337", in A. K. Bowman, P. Garnsey, A. Cameron (ed.), *The Cambridge Ancient History XII. The Crisis of Empire, A.D. 193-337*, Cambridge, 2005², p. 327-392; A. Wassink, "Inflation and Financial Policy under the Roman Empire to the Price Edict of 301 A.D.", *Historia* 40.4 (1991), p. 465-493; J. Hiernard, "Une source de l'histoire romaine: la monnaie impériale de Septime Sévère à Constantin", *Pallas. L'Empire romain de 192 à 325* (1997), p. 79-125; cf. J. France, "De Marc Aurèle à Constance II, le système financier de la paix romaine à l'épreuve de la guerre", in J. Baechler, G.-H. Soutou (ed.), *Guerre, économie et fiscalité: l'homme et la guerre*, Paris, 2016, p. 71-84.

⁵ R. Alston, "Roman Military Pay from Caesar to Diocletian", *The Journal of Roman Studies* 84 (1994), p. 113-123; M. A. Speidel, "Roman Army Pay Scales Revisited: Responses and answers", in M. Reddé (ed.), *De l'or pour les braves! Soldes, armées et circulation monétaire dans le monde romain. Actes de la table ronde organisée par l'UMR 8210 à l'INHA (12-13 septembre 2013)*, Bordeaux, 2014, p. 53-62.

Several publications describe the plate and suggest iconographic parallels known in the 20th century⁶. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no scientific analyses of the silver and no studies of the methods, date and craft conditions.

The plate shows a young, naked woman in three-quarter view in the middle of the plate, riding one of the most common monsters in Greco-Roman bestiaries: a hippocamp. This fictional seahorse has a body in two parts: the anterior half is that of a galloping horse - to the right of the viewer; the posterior half, beyond the rider, ends in a long fishtail⁷. The young woman, riding like an Amazon, with both legs on the right side of the seahorse, is in a graceful pose: her body forming an S-shape, corresponding to the opposite borders of the plate. Her head leans delicately forward, towards her left shoulder, as if reacting to the thrust of the animal's leap. Yet, this lean of the head could be a sign of modesty and innocence, befitting a virgin who has just risen from the waves. At some point, the gesture has even been interpreted as an expression of melancholy, or even of a virgin's pre-marital sadness, since the candor of the character and the surrounding decor clearly shows a connection with eroticism (cf. below)⁸.

The woman's face is carefully drawn: she has almond-shaped eyes. The incised irises and pupils look forward, beneath well-arched eyebrows. The nose is long and straight. The tight lips are quite fleshy, a sign of youth and sensuality; although the

⁶ *Отчет императорской археологической комиссии за 1896 год* (1898), p. 113-114, ill. 410; L.A. Matzulewitsch, *Byzantinische Antike: Studien auf Grund der Silbergefäße der Ermitage*, Berlin-Leipzig, 1929, p. 35-36, 43 pl. 5; К. В. Тревер, *Очерки по истории и культуре Кавказской Албании: IV в. до н.э. - VII в. н.э.*, Москва-Ленинград, 1959, p. 24-25, 176-177 pl. 3; D. E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate*, London, 1966, p. 198; К. В. Тревер, "Блюдо серебряное с изображением nereиды: Римская работа II-III вв.," in *Сокровища Эрмитажа*, Ленинград, 1969, nr. 25; О. Я. Неверов, *Художественное ремесло эпохи Римской империи (I в. до н.э. - IV в.): каталог выставки*, Государственный Эрмитаж, Ленинград, 1980, p. 46-47, nr. 127; J. M. C. Toynbee, K.S. Painter, "Silver Picture Plates from Late Antiquity: AD 300 to 700", *Archaeologia* 108 (1986), p. 15-65 (p. 19, 36-37, nr. 37, pl. XVIc); N. Icard-Gianolio, A.-V. Szabados, "Nereides", in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* 6 (1992), p. 785-824, nr. 208; Р. В. Кинжалов, "Грустная Нереида..."; F. Althaus, M. Sutcliffe, *The Road to Byzantium: Luxury Arts of Antiquity*, British Museum, London, 2006, p. 140 nr. 37.

⁷ Cf. e.g. Pausanias 2.1.9; Philostratus the Elder, *Images* 1.8; Servius, *Commentary on Georgica* 4.387. See B. Sauer, "Hippokamp", in *Roschers Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* P² (1890), p. 2673-2677; H. Lamer, "Hippokamos", in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* 16 (1913), col. 1748-1772; A. Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen auf den antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin, 1939 (reimpr. Roma, 1969; *Die antiken Sakralrelief* 5.1), p. 114-117; S. Lattimore, *The Marine Thiasos in Greek Sculpture*, Los Angeles, 1976; Ch. Hünemörder, "Hippokamos", in *Der Neue Pauly*, en ligne 2006 (http://dx.doi.org/janus.biu.sorbonne.fr/10.1163/1574-9347_dnp_e514510); C. Février, "De Γῆπτόκαμπος à l'*equus marinus*. Le cheval de mer, ou les vicissitudes d'une figure double", *Schedae* 3.1 (2009), p. 33-46.

⁸ Р. В. Кинжалов, "Грустная Нереида...".

mouth remains closed and outlines no smile, the face exudes youthful serenity. The slightly sloping chin and prominent cheekbones complete this feminine, somewhat stereotypical face.

She has long hair, separated into lateral locks, turned around a diadem. The viewer sees only the elevated triangular ridge, with some traces of gilding. The circle of the crown remains hidden under the curls, which are brought together behind the nape of the neck, from which they fall onto both shoulders. The chiseled locks become finer and finer lower down, until simple incisions mark wet fringes contiguous to the skin – the young woman is shown immediately following her emergence from the waves. On her right profile, heart-shaped hooks are incised near a delicate ear lobe – signs of the character's femininity, but also of the high quality of the plate's craftsmanship. Three strands of hair raised on the lateral side of the head pass behind the diadem, highlighting the young woman's freshness, perhaps even the sacred nature of the moment in which she is depicted.

The breasts, seen from the front, are perfectly spherical, in line with the Greco-Roman ideal of a virgin's beauty. The musculature of the arms, torso and legs is carved and incised with great care, in order to evoke feminine grace, health and vibrant youth. The rider's legs are slightly crossed, her left foot behind the right one, whose toes are turned towards the viewer. The toes are longer than proportion would dictate: this is normal for some statues of the time but can also be explained by the artist's desire to express the grace of the legs touching the waves. The right arm, gently stretched, seems to rest with open palm on the rump of the hippocamp. The left arm is bent to the right of the viewer, shadowing the curve of the body. The artist wanted to make the left hand's fingers perfectly visible. The gesture is unnatural for someone really holding a horse's reins: the index and little fingers are stretched to the right, while the middle and the ring finger are bent, holding the reins with the thumb. Rather than functional, the gesture is esthetic and highly symbolic: its apotropaic intent, well attested in various ancient cultures from the Mediterranean to Iran and India, persists today. The sign is meant to ward off evil, discord or infidelity⁹. Since the central character makes the gesture while heading to the right, the whole plate was probably thought to be a good sign for a viewer familiar with such a widespread superstition.

The attitude of the hippocamp is strongly dramatized, as is often seen in Hellenistic and Roman decorative scenes, when the artist wants to demonstrate the twists of the different parts of this hybrid body. The hippocamp is galloping, its two forelimbs in the air. The mane, tail and fish fins (on the throat, the webbing and the baleen above the hooves) are clearly visible above the water. By bringing the tail in front of the visible side of the animal, like the tail of a squirrel, also as often seen in this kind of

⁹ C.A. Bromberg, "An Iranian Gesture at Miran", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 5 (1991), p. 45-58; see also the gesture of the *nymphetria* on the Indo-Bactrian vase of Alexandrian inspiration that we published in A. Dan, F. Grenet, N. Sims-Williams, "Homeric Scenes...".

Greco-Roman representation, the artist (identical or not with the craftsman) shows off the extent of his drawing skills. He probably also wanted to express the animal's excitement, supposing that he knew the body language of horses.

The animal raises its head forwards; the beautiful lower jaw pulled down by the bit reveals perfect teeth in the upper jaw. The ear laid back confirms the impression of nervous energy: this powerful young animal snorts, resisting easy submission. Despite its frown, the hippocamp's body remains stable above the waves, so that the young woman can maintain her balance without difficulty. A beardless Triton emerges from the water up to the level of his acanthus-leaf-shaped scaly belt, which covers his lower abdomen, above the junction of his human trunk and fish's tail (the latter remaining entirely underwater)¹⁰. The Triton swims ahead and controls the hippocamp by pulling on the reins, with his left hand: the young woman holds them with two fingers (mentioned above), with one thong loose in the air. The contrast between the domination of the hippocamp by the young male Triton and the graceful control exerted by the young woman is as striking as it is unrealistic.

The artist has displayed an important element of imagination and the great extent of his technical skills by interposing the female body, exposed in full view, between the torsos of two Tritons, who are similar without being identical. While the first Triton, who guides the hippocamp, shows his back in three-quarter pose, revealing his dorsal fin and ridges of the tail fin, the second Triton swims parallel to the hippocamp and displays the frontal musculature of his vigorous torso, from a symmetrical, three-quarter view. The two Tritons look at each other, coordinating their movements, without talking. They each have their left arm stretched out – the first Triton in order to hold the hippocamp, the second to rescue, if necessary, the rider. In the right hand, folded close to the body, the first Triton seems to hold a tiny oar (a rudder in miniature); the second holds a monstrous fish – probably a sea bass or a small dolphin, not well drawn¹¹. Their exaggerated eyebrows and hair – including the ruffled locks over their foreheads, recalling the shaggy appearance of Satyrs – underscore their monstrous, amphibian nature. Thus, as in most Roman representations of high artistic quality, the two Tritons, although different, form a generic and functional couple¹².

¹⁰ A. Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen...*, p. 101-107.

¹¹ Cf. N. Icard-Gianolio, "Triton", in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* 8 (1997), p. 68-73, nr. 8, 11, 22 and 28 for a fish or a dolphin; N. Icard-Gianolio, "Tritones", in *Lexicon Iconographicum ...* 8 (1997), p. 73-85, nr. 3, 7. More generally, on the evolution of the Triton, K. Shepard, *The Fish-tailed Monster in Greek and Etruscan Art*, New York, 1940 (*non uidi*); N. Icard, A.-V. Szabados, "Cétacés et tritons, de la réalité à l'imaginaire", in S. Llinares (ed.), *Avec vue sur la mer. Actes du 132^e congrès national des sociétés historiques et scientifiques, Arles 2007*, Paris, 2011, p. 9-23 (online <http://cths.fr/ed/edition.php?id=5686>).

¹² N. Icard-Gianolio, "Tritones...", especially nr. 88 while framing Aphrodite, but also 31-34, 39, 50, 59, 72, 77-79, 92-93, 97. Generally, see, F. R. Dreßler, "Triton, Tritonen", in

Furthermore, through the golden waves, which cover the lower half of the plate, three dolphins of varying sizes swim to the left, coming to meet the hippocamp. The dolphins always seduced the Greeks and Romans with their grace, friendship and intelligence. In texts and figurative representations, they often brighten the atmosphere of a scene¹³. As in other images of the Roman imperial era, a dolphin is caught by a very plump, winged putto: judging from his raised tail, the dolphin tries his best to escape the grip of the putto. Two other putti, on the water's surface and in the air, complete the picture: the whole is remarkable for the harmony of shapes and numbers¹⁴.

One might think that the artist wanted to highlight the beauty and vitality of a maritime landscape, with its strength, variety of shapes, colors and sounds, but also with its curiosities and even monstrosities. In reality, there is nothing natural or naturalistic in this picture: the articulation of the different characters and gestures follows classical geometrical rules. Thus, half of the inner surface of the plate is decorated with incisions and gilded to represent the waves of the sea; the other half, above, with a smooth background and the original silver color, corresponds to the open sky. On the median line separating the two halves, there are three characters – a putto, the young rider and the Triton preceding the hippocamp; another putto completes a triangle formed by these characters in the upper semicircle, while the second Triton ends an analogous triangle in the opposite, lower semicircle of the decor. These two triangles form the two halves of an imaginary square, which the artist seems to have inscribed in the great circle (by marking the four angles by the two Tritons and the two putti, following the classical pattern of the “triumph” or “Coronation of Venus”, cf. below). The entanglement of these geometric shapes are maybe just a technical artifice, meant to organize a symmetric composition, which had to integrate some formal and structural markers easily discernible by the public. There is, nonetheless, another possible explanation: if one thinks in philosophical terms, the large circle comprising a square composed of triangles may refer to the Platonic (and Neopythagorean) vision of the world, which was conventional in Roman imperial times, being taught in all the schools of rhetoric and philosophy. There is no exaggeration in accepting this philosophical explanation, because the symbolic meaning of numbers and geometric shapes was a very common constituent

Roschers Lexikon... 4 (1909-1915), col. 1150-1207; A. Boulanger, “Triton”, *Le dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines de Daremberg et Saglio* 5 (1912) p. 483-486; A. Ambühl, W. Huß, Werner, “Triton”, in *Der Neue Pauly*, online 2006 (http://dx.doi.org/janus.biu.sorbonne.fr/10.1163/1574-9347_dnp_e1221040); M. L. Neira Jiménez, “De Tritón a tritones. Su iconografía en los mosaicos romanos”, *Tritão – Revista de História, Arte e Património* (Revista de la Câmara de Sintra, Portugal), 2 (2014), p. 1-24.
¹³ Cf. J. Delorme, Ch. Roux, *Guide illustré de la faune aquatique dans l'art grec*, Juan-les-Pins 1987, p. 77-79, 152-155; for the history of the different types: B. S. Ridgway, “Dolphins and Dolphin-Riders”, *Archaeology* 23 (1970), p. 86-95.

¹⁴ For the iconography of the putto, see R. Stuveras, *Le putto dans l'art roman*, Bruxelles, 1969, p. 153-164 (in maritime context); cf. also p. 127-135 (in association with Venus).

of the ‘popular philosophy’ of the Imperial era, learned by all who could have bought this dish¹⁵.

At the center of the plate, the rider is a divine young beauty, intimately linked to the sea from which she has just arisen. Besides the Tritons, hybrid servants with a long literary and iconographic tradition, her companions are other, particular marine animals – dolphins, mollusks and gastropods. Monsters and animals altogether have mythical and iconographic meanings that would have been well known to the Roman or Romanized public when the plate was made. There are five scallop shells (*pecten Jacobaeus* or the most widespread *pecten maximus*), recognizable by their fan-shaped ribs: four shells are drawn in the waves, two seen from the outside and two other half shells, whose interiors are seen. The fifth shell is displayed, with its inner part, above all the heads as an emblem or a crown (cf. below) by a putto floating in the air, in front of the hippocamp¹⁶. These shells are neither alive nor in their original environment – the shallows, where the current is weak. They are carefully represented on the plate because of their shape and symbolism.

This is also the case with the gastropods: the artist did his best to mark the differences between a marine snail used as a musical instrument (as a conch or a whelk) by the putto sitting on the tail of the hippocamp, and the shell snail floating in the waves. The first, at the top left when we look at the dish, is a sea snail from the superfamily *Cerithioidea* – to which belong, among others, the *Turritellidae*. Although they were not the only spiral gastropods – the *Epitoniidae* could also have been used as a model – the identification with one of the *Turritellidae* seems preferable, because of the convex shape of the spiral and of its round opening. This shell appears as an expression of virtuosity – both of the artist who made the drawing and of the artisan who made the plate, if these two were not the same person – and also of the putto who uses it as a musical instrument to communicate a message about the event embodied in the whole of the decoration¹⁷. As for the gastropod floating in the sea,

¹⁵ The Platonic theory of the reduction of the different parts of the world to simple geometric shapes (and thus to numbers) appears in Plato, *Timaeus* (cf. Th. K. Johansen, *Plato's Natural Philosophy. A Study of the Timaeus-Critias*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004). Other texts, which made possible its success at the end of the Hellenistic and beginning of the Roman era, are the treaty of Pseudo-Timaeus (cf. M. Baltes, *Timaios Lokros. Über die Natur des Kosmos und der Seele*, Leiden, Brill, 1972) and of Pseudo-Aristotle, *On the World*, a good example of the ‘popular philosophy’ taught in schools (cf. A. Dan, K. Geus, “Weaving Landmarks in Common Sense Geography: numbers in Pseudo-Aristotle’s *On the World*”, in K. Geus, M. Thiering (ed.), *Common Sense Geography II*, forthcoming). On popular Greek and Roman philosophy, see J. C. Thom, “Popular Philosophy in the Hellenistic-Roman World”, *Early Christianity* 3 (2012), p. 279-295.

¹⁶ For the identification, cf. J. Delorme, Ch. Roux, *Guide...*, p. 21-22, 98-99 (fig. 3-4).

¹⁷ See A. Zucker, “Album mythique des coquillages voyageurs. De l’écume au labyrinthe”, *Techniques et culture* 59 (2012), p. 110-125 (en ligne <https://journals.openedition.org/tc/6578>): “De l’escargot de mer (et du génie du labyrinthe)”.

also spiraled but with a smooth surface, it seems to belong rather to the family of *Neritidae*, quite remarkable for the beauty of their shape and coloring (cf. below).

There is no doubt that all the elements were chosen with care, for artistic and symbolic reasons. A reconstruction of the original context – as far as preserved documentation allows – enables us to appreciate the plate as did the cultivated public (in other words, the ancient ‘Hellenized’ or ‘Romanized’ viewer) to which it was directly addressed.

2. The charm and mysteries of the sea, from the Antonines to the Severans

It is not easy to identify the central character. Yet identification is essential to an understanding of the plate’s history, both within the Roman Empire and on its margins, in the Caucasus. In the following pages, I will try to explain the reasons and the issues arising from possible interpretations.

2.1. *One of Nereus’ numerous daughters?*

For many historians and archaeologists, the identification is clear. Sea monsters in general, and hippocamps in particular, served as means of locomotion or swimming companions to the Nereids from the Greek Archaic era, in painting, sculpture and mosaics¹⁸. The beauty, nudity and link of our rider with the marine world support this thesis: the Nereids are young women, partially unclothed from the end of the Greek Classical period onwards, when they begin to be represented according to the iconographic type of a naked Aphrodite¹⁹. They are completely nude, the body more and more exposed from the 1st century BC – 1st century AD (Figs 3 and 4) until the second half of the 2nd century AD, during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, when they lost completely the veil that served as both clothing and locomotion accessory (Fig. 5). This loss of the veil, however, remains rather rare and, as far as one can judge from documents published today, it seems confined to between the end of the 2nd and early 3rd centuries AD, before the spread of auras in

¹⁸ Cf. *supra* n. 7.

¹⁹ In general, for the evolution of the literary and iconographic representations of the Nereids, see especially P. Weizsäcker, “Nereiden”, in *Roschers Lexikon...* 3 (1897-1902), col. 207-240; G. Herzog-Hauser, “Nereiden”, in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 17.1 (1936), col. 1-23; N. Icard-Gianolio, A.-V. Szabados, “Nereides”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum...*, 6 (1992), p. 785-824; S. G. Miller, “Eros and the Arms of Achilles”, *American Journal of Archaeology* 90 (1986), p. 159-170; M. L. Neira Jiménez, “Representaciones de nereidas. La pervivencia de algunas series tipológicas en los mosaicos romanos de la Antigüedad Tardía”, *La tradición en la Antigüedad Tardía. Antigüedad y cristianismo* 14 (1997), p. 363-402. Cf. the analogous evolution of the representations of the Nymphs: M. Halm-Tisserant, G. Siebert, “Nymphaï”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 8 (1997), p. 891-902; J. L. Larson, *Greek Nymphs: Myth, cult, lore*, Oxford, 2001.



Fig. 3 Silver cosmetic box in the shape of a St. James shell, 2nd half of the 3rd century BC.

the drawings²⁰. Representations of Nereids can therefore be compared to the evolution of the iconographic types of the three *Charitai* / Graces, the companions of Aphrodite / Venus, who exposed their completely naked bodies front and back, as sanitary divinities of the baths, from the beginning of the Roman imperial epoch²¹. Born of the dreams of sailors, who imagined the seduction and dangers of the sea in

²⁰ E.g. N. Icard-Gianolio, A.-V. Szabados, “Nereides...”, nr. 127 (mosaic of Trajan’s baths at Acholla), 237 (golden Egyptian plaque, Louvre X.5340, 3rd century AD). We could add the mosaics of Neptune at Acholla, showing Nereids without veils (nr. 13, 18, 19, 21) or with one veil which has strictly no role in dressing or navigation. Archaeological excavations confirmed the date in the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD: see S. Gozlan, A. Bourgeois, A. El Fourgi, F. Jannin, R. Prudhomme, *La Maison du triomphe de Neptune à Acholla (Botria, Tunisie)*. I. *Les mosaïques*, Rome, 1992; cf. déjà S. Gozlan, “Les pavements en mosaïques de la Maison de Neptune à Acholla-Botria (Tunisie)”, *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 59 (1974), p. 71-135. Also, the mosaic of the birth of Venus at Cártama (Málaga) is dated from the end of the 2nd century AD: see M. P. San Nicolás Pedraz, “Seres mitológicos y figuras alegóricas en los mosaicos romanos de Hispania en relación con el agua”, *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie II. Historia Antigua* 17-18 (2004-2005), p. 301-333 (online <https://doi.org/10.5944/etfii.17-18.2004.4429>), p. 307 et fig. 5.

²¹ E. B. Harrison, “Charites”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum*.... 3 (1986), p. 191-203; H. Sichtermann, “Gratiae”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum*.... 3 (1986), p. 203-210; D. Manacorda, “Per una lettura iconografica delle tre Grazie”, in I. Colpo, G. Ghedini (ed.), *Il gran poema delle passioni e delle meraviglie: Ovidio e il repertorio letterario e figurativo fra antico e risocerta dell’antico. Atti del convegno (Padova, 15-17 settembre 2011)*, Padova, 2012, p. 463-476.



Fig. 4 Fresco of the Villa Arianna in Stabiae, antechamber 8; 4th style, 54-68 AD.

the form of the *Other* – pretty woman and / or monstrous animal – the daughters of the Greek god Nereus appear as models of feminine beauty, just like Aphrodite / Venus and the other marine goddesses, in contrast to the strangeness of the fantastic beings who bear them on the waves. Favorable and pleasing to the gods, heroes, humans and animals of all kinds, the Nereids symbolize the attraction of multiple crossings, from one shore to another of the sea or from one end to the other of one's



1 - N° 53. Medaillon 19.



2 - N° 53. Medaillon 20.



3 - N° 53. Medaillon 21.



4 - N° 53. Medaillon 22.

Fig. 5 Examples of Nereid medallions from Acholla.

acrobatic attitudes. Thus, one notices the success of a pair of riding Nereids, one seen from the front, the other from behind, from the beginning of the Hellenistic era, when the famous cosmetics box from the Taranto Museum was carved in silver in the shape of a scallop shell, gilded and inlaid with garnet stones (Fig. 3). The upper valve of the shell, which serves as lid, has a double carved decoration: on the outside, a Nereid, half-naked, reveals her breasts while riding a marine panther; inside, another Nereid, seen from behind, reveals her thigh as she gallops on a hippocamp²³. In the 1st century AD, in the frescoes in Villa Arianna at Stabiae (painted in the interval between 54-68 AD, in the 4th Campanian style) two similar Nereids reveal their colors: one, brown-haired and seen from the front, rides a hippocamp; the other, blonde-haired and seen from behind, rides and waters a marine panther (Fig. 4)²⁴.

life²². They are decorative elements fitting all kinds of contexts, adaptable to sacred, public or private spaces, to men's meals, women's recreation and to the rest of all those who have died. From the Hellenistic period to the end of Antiquity, artists multiplied the angles of view, Nereids' physical features or the species of monsters they rode, in more or less

²² For the etymology, F. Bader, "Autour de Thétis la Néréide", in F. Jouan (ed.), *Mort et fécondité dans les mythologies. Actes du colloque de Poitiers 13-14 mai 1983*, Paris, 1986, p. 19-37; more generally, L. M. Slatkin, *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the Iliad*, Berkeley, 1991, and J. M. Barringer, *Divine Escorts. Nereids in Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, Ann Arbor, 1995; lately, A. Ambühl, "Nereiden", in *Der Neue Pauly...*, online 2006 (http://dx.doi.org/janus.biu.sorbonne.fr/10.1163/1574-9347_dnp_e820480); on the signification of the nude, M. L. Neira Jiménez, "Desnudo y atracción en los mosaicos. Venus, Europa y las nereidas", in M. L. Neira Jimenez (ed.), *Desudo y Cultura. La construcción del cuerpo en los mosaicos romanos*, Madrid, 2013, p. 32-47.

²³ N. Icard-Gianolio, A.-V. Szabados, "Nereides...", nr. 40.

²⁴ O. Elia, *Pitture di Stabia*, Napoli, 1957, p. 65-69; A. Allroggen Bedel, "Die Wandmalereien aus der Villa in Campo Varano (Castellammare di Stabia)", *Rheinisches Museum* 84 (1977), p. 27-89; I. Bragantini, V. Sampaolo, L. Spina, *La pittura pompeiana*, Napoli, 2009, p. 449 nr. 238a-b (with further literature).



Fig. 6 Five silver medallion plates with Nereids from the Sadovyi treasure.

The same combination appears in the decoration of tableware and in thematic series such as that of the Sadovyi kurgan (1st century AD, Fig.6)²⁵.

Eight gilded silver cups discovered together with a silver basin and two bronze cauldrons, probably to recall a funerary banquet, are decorated with central medallions depicting joyful Bacchic and erotic scenes. Five medallions include Nereids: three (one front view and two identical rear views) ride on the backs of hippocamps, in the company of swimming *putti* (*Erotes / Amores*); two Nereids are led by Tritons carrying arms and a cuirass. Together with the *Erotes / Amores*, *Psychai* and the Silenus of the other medallions, these Nereids and their marine monsters form a veritable series of deities related to the pleasures and the troubles of human life that one can reduce to the tumult of a banquet, of love and war.

²⁵ V. M. Kossianenko, "Les phiales et phalères du kourgane Sadovyi", in V. Schiltz (dir.), *L'Or des Amazones. Peuples nomades entre Asie et l'Europe. VI^e siècle av. J.-C. – IV^e siècle apr. J.-C.*, Musée Cernuschi 16 mars-15 juillet 2001, Paris, 2001, p. 194-202, nr. 219-223.

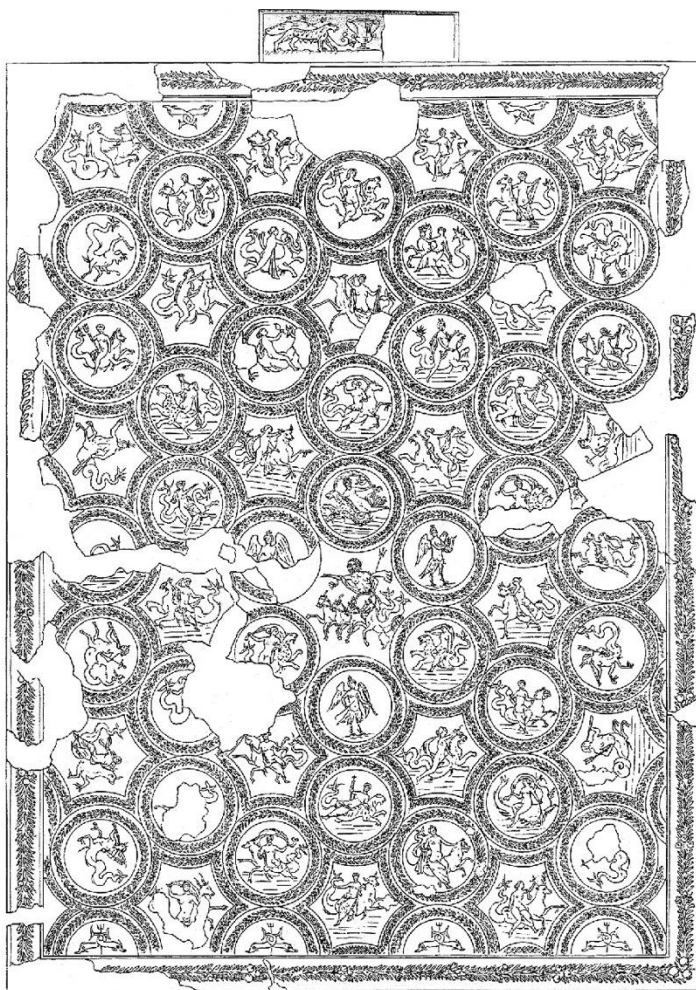


Fig. 7 Drawing of the Nereid mosaic in the *domus* of Sorothus in Sousse.

Until the 2nd century AD, artists multiplied the positions of the Nereids and the monsters to which they could be related. Then they invented huge inventories of various figures, preserved to our times on mosaics. These were real exercises in virtuosity for the artists who drew the best from their imaginations while respecting the frame of a relatively simple iconographic canon (Fig 7)²⁶. Sometimes, the

²⁶ J.-P. Laporte, H. Lavagne, “Sousse: la domus de Sorothus et ses mosaïques”, *Comptes-rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 150.2 (2006), p. 1327-1392. The Nereids catalogue is a Homeric motive, going back to the *Iliad* 18.38-49. For the variety of the attitudes of the *Erotas*, combined with that of the Nereids, see also the mosaic of the triumph of Neptune in Utica (preserved in the Bardo Museum and dated between the 2nd and the 3rd century AD): K. M. D. Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa: Studies in Iconography and Patronage*, Oxford, 1978, p. 153-156.



Fig. 8 The main dish of the Mildenhall treasure.

Nereids came together with *Erotos*, dolphins and other marine fauna. These companions drew attention to the Nereids' power of seduction, or evoked their mythical and transgressive unions with gods, monsters or men²⁷. These literary and iconographic traditions remained alive until the end of Antiquity, in a Christian context, as shown by the great Dionysian dish of the Mildenhall treasure (actually discovered at West Row, Suffolk, UK in 1942, along with 34 other pieces of Roman silver tableware, preserved in the British Museum, Fig. 8)²⁸. Around Oceanus' (the cosmic river's) head, within a circle marked by scallop shells, there is a series of four Nereids, two of whom ride a hippocampus and a deer seen from both front and back, while interposed among

them, two other Nereids come together with a Triton and a marine centaur. The alternation of their positions suggests a complete reversal of the naked body of the beautiful goddess of the depths. This makes us think of a dance including the entire sphere of waters, in which Dionysus / Bacchus plunged to escape Lycurgus and from where he brought Ariadne, after extending his power around the Earth. From the same period, we have a silver pyramid casket with gilded decoration, discovered within the so-called Esquiline treasury (also in the British Museum, Fig. 9). The lid has five sides: on the upper, rectangular surface two *Erotos / Amores* present the joint portrait of two Christian spouses, for whose marriage this work has been made. Of the four trapezoidal and richly decorated panels, on the lateral sides of the casket, one represents the birth and toilet of the marine Venus emerging from a shell, supported by two ichthyocentaurs (marine centaurs) with *Amores* bearing gifts. On the opposite large side, six characters divided into two groups of three facing each other, go to some public baths; one of them holds a box, perhaps to be compared to the one that supports these representations. Between these two large images, on the short sides of the lid, there are two Nereids riding a seahorse and another sea monster (Greek *kêtos*)²⁹. Here, as on other metal objects, frescoes and mosaics, the Nereids

²⁷ Cf. the inventories of sources *supra* n. 19.

²⁸ J. M. C. Toynbee, K. S. Painter, "Silver Picture Plates...", p. 16-17, 22-24, nr. 1, pl. VIIa; lately, R. Hobbs et al., *The Mildenhall Treasure: Late Roman Silver Plate from East Anglia*, London, 2016 (online www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/200_Mildenhall.pdf).

²⁹ For the treasure, see K. J. Shelton, *The Esquiline Treasure*, London, 1981; A. Cameron, "The Date and Owners of the Esquiline Treasure: The Nature of the Evidence", *American Journal of Archaeology* 89.1 (1985), p. 135-145; K. Shelton, "The Esquiline Treasure: The

are a common decorative motif that fill space in a harmonious way, respectful of the usual iconographic canons. Sometimes, they can be more than mere decorations and have strong, symbolic meaning, as aquatic deities of beauty and the strangeness of life and the passage to the Underworld. Whatever the meaning of their representations, weak or strong, varied as they were, the iconography of the Nereid is always easily recognizable.



Fig. 9 The Projecta Casket in the Esquiline treasure.

2.2. *A maritime goddess: Thetis, Amphitrite, Beroe, Amymone or Leucothea?*

On our plate, however, several details – different from the typical iconographic form featuring Nereids – deserve attention: first of all, the young woman, naked and passive, is alone. Nereids are usually represented in larger groups, in active roles, directing, playing or interacting with other characters or, at least, with their sea monster³⁰. Also, our rider does not move by her own means: a Triton leads her hippocamp, while a second Triton escorts her from behind. This scenario is, to my knowledge, without parallel in representations of a Nereid without a strong identity. Moreover, her central position on the plate makes such an assumption unlikely, unless one supposes that the plate belonged to a series, now lost, that displayed other Nereids.

Like other researchers before me, I will try to identify the Nereid: this is a difficult task, since she has no particular symbol. Therefore, I cannot call her Thetis, the most

Nature of the Evidence”, *American Journal of Archaeology* 89.1 (1985), p. 147-155; K. S. Painter, “Il tesoro dell’Esquilino”, in S. Ensoli, E. La Rocca (dir.), *Aurea Roma. Dalla città pagana alla città cristiana*, Roma, 2000, p. 140-146; J. Elsner, *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text*, Princeton, 2007, p. 200-224. For the iconography of Venus’ maritime procession, see, K. M. D. Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa...*, p. 154-159; Sabina Toso, “Il ‘Trionfo di Venere’. Una nuova proposta di classificazione iconografica”, in I. Bragantini, F. Guidobaldi (ed.), *Atti del II Colloquio dell’Associazione italiana per lo studio e la conservazione del mosaico, Roma 5-7 dicembre 1994*, Bordighera, 1995, p. 293-300; A. Papagiannaki, “Nereids and Hippocamps: The Marine Thiasos on Late Antique and Medieval Byzantine Ivory and Bone Caskets”, in L. Kouneni (ed.), *The Legacy of Antiquity: New Perspectives in the Reception of the Classical World*, Cambridge, 2013, p. 71-103.

³⁰ Cf. *supra*, n. 19-20.

famous of Nereus' daughters³¹, despite the numerous representations of Thetis in Greek and Roman art³². Such an identification could only be supported by a representation of the weapons that Achilles' mother ordered from the god Hephaistos/Vulcan and that she carried from Lemnos to Troy, together with her Nereid sisters³³. Another candidate, the other very famous Nereid, Amphitrite, the personification of the sea itself, wife of Poseidon / Neptune and mother of Triton. The presence of Triton(s) at his/(their) parents' wedding is anachronistic but is possible in mythical time and often appears in Roman representations³⁴. From the end of the 3rd century BC, Amphitrite appears on a hippocamp, together with Eros, perhaps on the reverse of a Brettii gold drachma. The identification of Amphitrite on this coin is based on the appearance of Poseidon's face and trident on the obverse.

³¹ W. Roscher, "Thetis", 4 (1909-1915), col. 785-799; M. Mayer, "Thetis", in *Real-Encyclopädie...* II.11 (1936), col. 206-242; L. Séchan, "Légendes grecques de la mer", *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* 14 (1955), p. 3-47 (p. 37-43); R. Vollkommer, "Thetis", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 8 (1997), p. 6-14; L. Slatkin, *The Power of Thetis...*

³² The naked rider on our plate could have been compared with supposed representations of Thetis, mother of Achilles, on an ichthyocentaur with a trident on gold medallions from Aboukir, dated to the 3rd century AD and interpreted as expressions of Caracalla's (188-217 AD) and Severus Alexander's (222-235 AD) *imitation Alexandri*. Nonetheless, despite a significant bibliography (e.g. Elizabeth Carney, *Olympias: Mother of Alexander the Great*, London-New York, 2006, p. 63, 121, 192; K. Dahmen, *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins*, London-New York, 2007, p. 37, 92-93, 166; K. Dahmen, "Alexander in Gold and Silver: Reassessing Third Century AD Medallions from Aboukir and Tarsos", *American Journal of Numismatics* 20 [2008], p. 493-546), these medallions appear to be nothing other than fakes from the end of the 19th century. See A. Savio, "Intorno ai medaglioni talismanici di Tarso e di Aboukir", *Rivista italiana di numismatica e scienze affini* 96 (1994-1995), p. 73-103; A. Savio, *Veri o falsi? I medaglioni di Aboukir*, Milano, 2011, especially see the critical review of François de Callatay in *Revue Belge de Numismatique* 157 (2011), p. 278-280.

³³ As on the plates of the treasure of Sadovyi, mentioned above, n. 25; see also N. Icard-Gianolio, A.-V. Szabados, "Nereides...", nr. 300-416.

³⁴ See S. Kaempf-Dimitriadou, "Amphitrite", in *Lexicon Iconographicum ...* 1 (1981), p. 724-735 (especially nr. 67-74); N. Icard-Gianolio, "Tritones...", nr. 70-72. Amphitrite's name probably comes from the same root as Triton, referring to the crackling (τρίζω) of the sea. Starting with Hesiod's *Theogony* (930-931), they are associated in allegorical interpretations of nature (Cornutus, *On the Nature of Gods* 43 Lang; Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris* 381e; Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Cratylus* 151 Pasquali), in textual and figurative images (Lucian, *Dialogues of the Sea Gods* 15.3; Pausanias 2.1.7-8 = N. Icard-Gianolio, "Tritones...", nr. 72); in mythological texts (Hyginus, *Fabulae. Praef.*; Ps.-Apollodorus, *Library* 1.28; *Orphic Argonautica* 338-339), and more generally in scholarly explanations: J. Tzetzes, *Scholia in Lycophron* 34, 886; Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* III p. 348 van der Valk. More generally, cf. H. W. Stoll, "Amphitrite", *Roschers Lexikon...* 1 (1884-1890), col. 318-321; K. Wernicke, "Amphitrite", in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 1 (1894), col. 1963-1967.



Fig. 10 Gold coin of the Brettii, 4th century BC, with Poseidon and Amphitrite, Aphrodite or one Nereid.

(fig. 10)³⁵. It is true that the hippocamp itself is an animal related to Poseidon / Neptune, but since the god is absent, there is no definite proof that the woman is Amphitrite.

Some have considered the identification of the Nereid on our plate with Beroe-Amymone, the Nymph daughter of Aphrodite and

Adonis promised to Poseidon. She was the eponym of the Syrian city of Beroe and her myth was influenced by a namesake Danaid, equally a mistress of Poseidon, mother of Nauplios and source of the springs at Lerna, in Argolis (Peloponnesus). The particular care that at least one of the two Tritons shows to her encourages us to consider this to be Danaid Amymone, who was brought by Triton to Poseidon on a dolphin³⁶. Nonetheless, our rider lacks a hydria, the water pitcher specific to the Danaids, which would identify her as one of them and, more generally, as a Nymph. Moreover, there is no particular emphasis on the link with a Triton or with Poseidon on our plate.

The representation should, nevertheless, correspond to a goddess before or at the time of the marriage itself. Two details support this interpretation: first, the rider's hairstyle has three braids on each side (thus six braids in all): this could correspond to the Roman hairstyle of the *seni crines*, characterizing Vestals and brides³⁷.

³⁵ B. V. Head, *Historia Numorum: A Manual of Greek Numismatics*, Oxford, 1911² (1^{ère} ed. 1887), p. 91; S. Kaempf-Dimitriadou, "Amphitrite...", nr. 6. Others preferred to see Aphrodite: H. Riggauer, "Eros auf Münzen", *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 8 (1881), p. 71-99 (p. 74-75).

³⁶ P. В. Кинжалов, "Грустная Нереида..." has suggested the connection with Amymone-Beroe. The most important textual sources are: Pausanias 2.37-38 et 4.35.2; Lucian, *Dialogues of the Sea Gods* 8; Ps.-Apollodorus, *Library* 2.14; Philostratus, *Images* 1.8; cf. Nonnus of Panopolis 8.240-242, 42.464-474 and Rufinus, *Greek Anthology* 5.75 for the later development of her erotic symbolism. For more complete inventories of occurrences, see J. Escher, "Amymone 4", in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 1 (1894), col. 2002-2003; O. Waser, "Danaïdes", in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 4 (1901), col. 2087-2091; J. Ch. Balty, "Nouvelles mosaïques du IV^e siècle sous la "Cathédrale de l'Est"", in J. Balty, J. Ch. Balty (ed.), *Apamée de Syrie. Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1969-1971. Actes du Colloque tenu à Bruxelles les 15, 17 et 18 avril 1972*, Bruxelles, 1972, p. 163-185 (p. 174-177); E. Simon, "Amymone", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 1 (1891), p. 742-752.

³⁷ N. Boëls-Janssen, *La vie religieuse des matrones dans la Rome archaïque*, Rome, 1999, p. 103-126; K. K. Hersch, *The Roman Wedding: Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity*, Cambridge, 2010, p. 69-134.

Moreover, the numerous erotic attributes of Aphrodite / Venus may be interpreted as components of an erotic, therefore nuptial atmosphere (see below). Yet, the absence of any trace of a husband – who could have been directly illustrated or at least represented by one of his envoys or by a symbol, like the trident – reduces the wedding hypothesis to pure speculation.

Since the woman has no companion, one could try to identify her with Leucothea, the maritime goddess into which Ino, daughter of Cadmus and Harmonia, and wife of Athamas, was transformed after throwing herself in the sea. Hera drove her insane for having protected the child Dionysus³⁸. This interpretation would fit a Caucasian region, close to Colchis, because, according to Strabo (11.2.17), the indigenous Moschoi had an important cult for this goddess. Moreover, there is no surprise in finding a savior goddess (of castaways in the sea) in a house and finally in a tomb. Yet, there are contrary arguments: the rider looks like a young virgin; she has no veil and the scenario does not fit those into which we usually recognize Ino / Leucothea: during her suicide and her metamorphosis.

2.3. *The birth and triumph of Aphrodite / Venus of the seas?*

The modern viewer, familiar with the numerous representations of the ‘birth of Venus’, at least from Sandro Botticelli onwards³⁹, might identify the young woman as Aphrodite *Pontia* / the maritime Venus, transported by sea beings immediately after her birth⁴⁰. Although this goes against the iconographic and interpretative

³⁸ See the inventories in H. Schirmer, “Leukothea”, in *Rochers Lexikon...* II. 2 (1894-1897), col. 2011-2017; S. Eitrem, “Leukothea 1”, in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 24 (1925), col. 2293-2306; A. Necessian, “Ino”, *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 5 (1990), p. 657-661; also J. P. Darmon, “Joueurs de dés et autres énigmes de la mosaïque aux chevaux de Carthage”, *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France* 2000 [2004], p. 106-118; J. Hajji, “Le plongeur d’Ino dans la mer sur un *emblema* de Carthage”, *Africa* 24 (2017), p. 135-146.

³⁹ Online <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/MQEEq50LABEBVg?hl=fr>. See W. S. Heckscher, “The “Anadyomene” in the Mediaeval tradition: (Pelagia-Cleopatra-Aphrodite) a prelude to Botticelli’s “Birth of Venus””, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 7 (1956), p. 1-38. For our plate, the identification with Aphrodite was already suggested by S. Reinach, *Répertoires de reliefs grecs et romains* III, Paris, 1912, p. 482.

⁴⁰ Besides the geographical names referring to the sea (at Cyprus, Cos), Aphrodite was worshiped as a maritime goddess with the adjectives (*epiclesis*) of “*Pontia*, *Épipontia*, *Pelagia* / maritime”, “*Euploia* / who guarantees a happy sailing”, “*Limênia* / of the harbour”, “*Eplimênia* / littoral”, “*Naos* / naval”, “*Sôsineôs* / who saves the ships”, “*Ourios* / who sends favorable winds”; “*Nauarkis* / of the fleet”, “*Limênarkhis* / who governs the harbour”. In Hellenistic and Roman times, the best-known iconographic type for Aphrodite’s birth from the sea is that of the *Anadyomene*: Strabo 14.2.19; Pliny the Elder 35.87, 91-92; Athenaeus of Naucratis 13.59 (590f). See D. M. Brinkerhoff, *Hellenistic Statues of Aphrodite. Studies in the History of their Stylistic Development*, New York-London, 1978, p. 56-69; A. Delivorrias, G. Berger-Doer, A. Kossatz-Deissmann, “Aphrodite”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 2 (1984), p. 1-151 (nr. 423-455 for the *Anadyomene*; nr. 977-986 on a

traditions that link hippocampi closely to the Nereids and that place Venus on a shell, a dolphin or directly on two Tritons, several reasons plead in favor of such a hypothesis or, at least, approve a strong erotic and sexual reading of the representation.

Firstly, riding was a common ancient metaphor for the sexual act: if the movements of a dolphin on the plate can be interpreted as an attempt to escape Eros' grip, the young woman on horseback corresponds to a character who dominates through erotic love⁴¹. She is completely naked, and she offers all her body to the view of the public, probably suggesting sexual power, unusual for a woman⁴². Secondly, the central point of the plate, from which the artist drew the circle and, within it, the scene, is exactly the uncovered sex of the young woman. This is an 'origin of the world', recalling Venus Genitrix, goddess of love and personification of the creative force of Nature⁴³. As such, the image could correspond to a word play based on the Latin formula *Genitrix orbis*, which characterizes the goddess as well as the empresses who identified themselves with the goddess, beginning with the first emperor's wife, Livia⁴⁴. The goddess 'who gives birth to the *orbis*' is the origin of both the lands

dolphin, nr. 1011-1017, in a shell, nr. 1158-1188 for her birth from the sea); M.-O. Jentel, "Aphrodite (*in periphéria orientali*)", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 2 (1984), p. 154-166 (nr. 40-153); E. Schmidt, "Venus", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 8 (1997), p. 192-230 (nr. 133-207 for *Anadyomene*, 307-311 for her birth, nr. 312-319 for her triumph, nr. 322-323 for Venus' ship, etc.). More recently, K. Schoch, *Die Doppelte Aphrodite: alt und neu bei griechischen Kultbildern*, Göttingen, 2009; M. E. Wardle, *Naked and Unashamed: A Study of the Aphrodite Anadyomene in the Greco-Roman World*, PhD Duke University, 2010. For the identification of Aphrodite Apatouros in the Cimmerian Bosphorus as a water goddess, see Y. Ustinova, "Aphrodite Ourania of the Bosphorus: The Great Goddess of a Frontier Pantheon", *Kernos* 11 (1998), p. 209-226. For a recent synthesis on the sailors' cult of Aphrodite, see A. Fenet, *Les dieux olympiens et la mer*, Rome, 2016, p. 105-136.

⁴¹ See B. S. Thornton, *Eros. The Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality*, Boulder Colorado, 1997, p. 38-40.

⁴² Cf. L. Bonfante, "Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art", *American Journal of Archaeology* 93.4 (1989), p. 543-570.

⁴³ Cf. R. Schilling, *La religion romaine de Vénus: depuis les origines jusqu'au temps d'Auguste*, Paris, 1982² (1st ed. 1952); M. B. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*, Chichester, 2014² (1st ed. 2005), p. 293-303. For the cosmic meaning of the circle in figurative arts, see I. Morand, "La structure des mosaïques romaines et ses rapports avec la pensée grecque", *Revue des études anciennes* 101 (1999), p. 143-159.

⁴⁴ Cf. F. Chaves Tristán, "Livia como Venus en la amonedación de la Colonia Romula", *Acta Numismática* 7 (1978), p. 89-96; M. B. Flory, "The Symbolism of Laurel in Cameo Portraits of Livia", *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 40 (1995), p. 43-68; R. Schilling, "L'évolution du culte de Vénus sous l'empire romain", in *Dans le sillage de Rome. Religion, poésie, humanisme*, Paris, 1988, p. 152-183; R. Schilling, G. Freyburger, "La religion romaine de Vénus sous l'Empire", in N. Belayche, Y. Lehmann (ed.), *Religions de Rome. Dans le sillage des travaux de R. Schilling*, Turnhout, 2017, p. 243-314. More generally, on the influence of the adaptations of Aphrodite's / Venus' iconographic types to representations

surrounded by seas on the terrestrial globe, in the middle of the celestial sphere, and also of the circular plate on which she is represented.

Thirdly, as a sea goddess⁴⁵, Aphrodite is a mistress who calms the waves, at least from Hellenistic times onwards: the absence of a veil – and, therefore, of any wind – and the graceful balance of her pose corresponds well to a goddess called *Galenaie* / *Galene* (“who calms the sea”)⁴⁶. The dolphins support this identification, even if they are not definite proof: as well as their cleverness and artistic sensitivity, dolphins were known for their love (towards their fellow species, but also towards humans). The depth of their feelings could bring them to die when a beloved disappeared. At the beginning of the 2nd century AD, Aulus Gellius was mentioning ancient and more recent stories about the link these animals had with the goddess, through their epithets: *uenereos et amasios*⁴⁷. Several sculptures represent a dolphin, sometimes with Eros riding, with different types of Aphrodite / maritime Venus – like the Medici Venus and the Doidalsas (or crouching) Venus, as part of *nymphaea* and even small fountains⁴⁸.

There is no doubt that, on our plate, the three *putti* presented in various poses – one in the air, another on the hippocamp, the last swimming on the dolphin – are *Erotes* / *Amores*. Two of them have wings that are quite visible. The third one floats with a scarf extended before and behind, left and right, from his left shoulder. He shows his

of mortal women, see J. P. Salathe, *Roman Women Portrayed as Venus: political, social and religious contexts*, PhD Baltimore 1997.

⁴⁵ Hesiod, *Theogony* 188-206; Homer, *Hymn to Aphrodite* (5); Plato, *Cratylus* 406c; Cornutus, *Greek Theology* 24. Cf. V. Pirenne-Delforge, *L'Aphrodite grecque*, Liège, 1994; U. Bittrisch, *Aphrodite und Eros in der antiken Tragödie mit Ausblicken auf motivgeschichtlich verwandte Dichtungen*, Berlin-New York, 2005.

⁴⁶ Callimachus, *Epigram* 5 Pfeiffer, ap. Athenaeus of Naucratis, *Deipnosophists* 7.106 Kaibel 318b-c; (cf. H. W. Prescott, “Callimachus’ Epigram on the Nautilus”, *Classical Philology* 16.4 (1921), p. 327-337; K. Gutzwiller, “The Nautilus, the Halycon, and Selenia: Callimachus’s ‘Epigram’ 5 Pf. = 14 G. - P.”, *Classical Antiquity* 11.2 [1992], p. 194-209; S. Barbantani, “Goddess of Love and Mistress of the Sea: Notes on a Hellenistic Hymn to Arsinoe-Aphrodite [‘P. Lit. Goodsp. 2’, I-IV]”, *Ancient Society* 35 [2005], p. 135-165); Philodemos of Gadara in *Anthologia Palatina* 10.21. Cf. also N. Icard-Gianolio, “Galene I”, in *Lexicon iconographicum*...4 (1988), p. 151-153.

⁴⁷ *Attic Nights* 6.8.1; cf. the Hellenistic and Roman erotic epigrams: K. J. Gutzwiller, “Meleager as Erotic Dolphin: a Reading of ‘AP’ 12.52”, *Hermathena* 173/174. *Studies in Hellenistic Poetry* (2002-2003), p. 91-105. For a complete inventory of references, see R. Wagner, “Delphin”, in *Real-Encyclopädie*... 4 (1901), col. 2504-2510; D’A. Wentworth Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Fishes*, London, 1947, p. 52-56 s.u.

⁴⁸ See G. Becatti, *Ninfe e divinità marine. Ricerche mitologiche iconografiche e stilistiche*, Roma, 1971, who explains the large diffusion of types by their interpretation as Nymphs, even if he admits (p. 27): “tipi di Afrodite chiaramente e intenzionalmente modificati in nuove creazioni con precisa funzione di statue decorative per fontana, per i quali non sappiamo più se fossero considerati ancora come immagini di Afrodite oppure di generiche Ninfe, nonostante la evidente ascendenza iconografica”.

infantine masculine anatomy and raises a *pecten*, a St. James shell with both arms (mentioned above)⁴⁹. These representations are not surprising, given the large number of *putti* / *Erotes* in Roman decorations and the multiplicity of Eros' nature: he is not only a hunter with the bow, but also a fisher – with a line, a net and even his own hands, as in the case of the dolphin on our plate⁵⁰.

As far back in time as we can go, people of different cultures have made analogies between shell valves and the female vulva⁵¹. Moreover, given their hermaphroditic specificity, the ancients believed shells were born by spontaneous generation (Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 3.10.8 761b). Their genesis was thus analogous to that of Aphrodite, born from the sea's foam – Uranus' sperm fallen into the water from the sky⁵². Just like the shells, the original Greek goddess seems to have been representative of sexuality without fertility, different from that of a married couple⁵³. Among all these shells, the beautiful St. James scallop was one of the best-known symbols of Aphrodite / Venus, before receiving its Christian name as a protective symbol for pilgrims on the Way of Saint James, in order to honor the apostle who was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee.

From Classical and Hellenistic times onwards, the *Pectinidae* are present in archaeological domestic and funerary inventories, connected with female beauty care, as cosmetic wrap or as a model for boxes and metal mirrors⁵⁴. The intentional

⁴⁹ It is not possible to find a unique explanation for these variations in representations of *putti* with or without wings: R. Stuveras, *Le putto...*, p. 165-181.

⁵⁰ Cf. N. Blanc, F. Gury, "Eros/Amor", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 3 (1986), p. 850-1049, nr. 301-331, 739-742. More generally, for the literary image, see F. Lasserre, *La figure d'Éros dans la poésie grecque*, Lausanne, 1946.

⁵¹ Cf. the mimes writer Sophron of Syracuse *ap.* Athenaeus of Naucratis 3.32 86e; Fulgentius, *Mythologies* 2.1. This symbol clearly appears on some fountains featuring Nymphs holding a large shell in front of their lower abdomen: e.g. B. Kapossy, *Brunnenfiguren der hellenistischen und römischen Zeit*, Zürich, 1969, p. 12-14, Abb. 1-3. For the relationship with Aphrodite, K. Tümpel, "Die Muschel der Aphrodite", *Philologus* 51 (N.F. 5, 1892), p. 385-402; A. Zucker, "Album mythique..."; for comparisons with other cultures, M. Eliade, "Remarques sur le symbolisme des coquillages", in *Images et symboles. Essais sur le symbolisme magico-religieux*, Paris, 1952, p. 164-198.

⁵² See the sources in F. Dümmler, "Aphrodite", in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 1 (1894), 2729-2787 (col. 2772-2773); for modern criticism, S. L. Budin, *The Origin of Aphrodite*, Bethesda Maryland, 2003.

⁵³ For the functions of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of sexuality who became the Roman goddess of married women, besides the work of R. Schilling (*supra* n. 43-44), see G. Lloyd-Morgan, "Roman Venus: Public Worship and Private Rites", in M. Henig, A. King (ed.), *Pagan Gods and Shrines of the Roman Empire*, Oxford, 1986, p. 179-188; B. Lietz, *La dea di Erice e la sua diffusione nel Mediterraneo. Un culto tra Fenici, Greci e Romani*, Pisa, 2012.

⁵⁴ Among Roman examples, there is the shell of Graincourt-lès-Havrincourt (Pas-de-Calais), L. 43 cm, l. max. 41,5 cm, h. 14,5 cm, weight 1937 g., and the smaller shells in the Saint-Germain-en-Laye Museum, also dated between the 2nd and the 3rd century AD: F. Baratte

confusion between the *pecten* (usually *maximus*) and pearl oysters reinforced the link between shells and Aphrodite / Venus, both born out of a union of Sky and Sea. The holder of the goddess – as well as of the pearl⁵⁵ – the shell became the goddess's main vehicle on the sea by the end of the Classical era, at least if the Pompeian fresco of the goddess in a shell is a close reproduction of Apelles' painting taken by Augustus to Rome (fig. 11)⁵⁶. Yet, during Antiquity the shell was not the goddess's only sea-based vehicle: Aphrodite is also represented riding dolphins, fishes and birds⁵⁷, as well as marine monsters – especially Tritons and, why not, as here, a hippocamp (fig. 12)⁵⁸. One must make clear, however, that this association is hypothetical and that there is no parallel in ancient iconography that is confirmed by a text.

One of the most beautiful sea snails, the '*nerites*' (nerite) – that we still identify as a member of the *Neritidae* family – was born from the metamorphosis of one of Aphrodite's / Venus' lovers. The snail represented in the sea, under the feet of our rider, could be one of



Fig. 11 Pompeii Fresco II.3.3, house of Venus in the shell, southern wall and 8th peristyle; 4th style, 62-79 AD.



Fig. 12 Marble statuette in private collection.

(dir.), *Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romains. Musée du Luxembourg – Paris 8 février – 23 avril 1989*, Paris, 1989, p. 149 (nr. 95), 169-171 (nr. 115-116).

⁵⁵ For Aphrodite's link with the pearl: Propertius 3.13.6 and Pliny the Elder 9.80, with M. B. Flory, "Pearls for Venus", *Historia* 37.4 (1988), p. 498-504, and J. G. F. Hind, "Caligula and the Spoils of Ocean: a Rush for Riches in the Far North-West?", *Britannia* 34 (2003), p. 272-274.

⁵⁶ For the *Anadyomene*, see above n. 40. In Greek iconography, Aphrodite emerges from a shell (oyster), from Classical time onwards: M. Brickhoff, "Afrodite nella conchiglia", *Bollettino d'Arte* 23 (1929-1930), p. 563-569; M. Bratschkova, "Die Muschel in der antiken Kunst", *Bulletin de l'Institut archéologique bulgare* 12 (1938), p. 1-131. In texts, this image is attested only in Plautus, *Rudens* 704 onwards: E. W. Leach, "Plautus' *Rudens*: Venus Born from a Shell", *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15.5. A Special Classics Issue on Myth and Interpretation (1974), p. 915-931; A. Zucker, "Album mythique...".

⁵⁷ *Anacreontea* fr. 57.1-30.

⁵⁸ E. Schmidt, "Venus...", nr. 301.

these fascinating *Neritidae* – univalve, spiraled sea snails, with a smooth surface⁵⁹ – whose myth is quoted by Aelianus (*On the Nature of Animals* 14.28, translation A. F. Scholfield, 1959):

Κόχλος ἐστὶ θαλάττιος, μικρὸς μὲν τὸ μέγεθος, ἰδεῖν δὲ ὠραιότατος, καὶ ἐν θαλάττῃ τίκεται τῇ καθαρωτάτῃ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ὑφάλοις πέτραις καὶ ἐν ταῖς καλουμέναις χοιράσιν. ὄνομα δὲ νηρίτης ἐστὶν αὐτῷ, καὶ διαρρεῖ λόγος διπλοῦς ὑπὲρ τοῦδε τοῦ ζώου [...]. τῷ Νηρεῖ τῷ θαλαττίῳ [...] πενήτηκοντα μὲν θυγατέρας τὴν Ὀκεανοῦ Δωρίδα Ἡσίοδος ἄδει τεκεῖν [...] ἔνα δὲ οἱ γενέσθαι παῖδα ἐπὶ ταῖς τοσαύταις θυγατράσιν ἐκείνοι μὲν οὐ φασί, λόγοι δὲ θαλάττιοι ὑμνοῦσι. καὶ Νηρίτην αὐτὸν κληθῆναι λέγουσι καὶ ὠραιότατον γενέσθαι καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ θεῶν, Ἀφροδίτην δὲ συνδιατωμένην ἐν τῇ θαλάττῃ ἡσθῆναι τε τῷ Νηρίτῃ τῷδε καὶ ἔχειν αὐτὸν φίλον. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀφίκετο χρόνος ὁ εἰμαρμένος, ἔδει τοῖς Ὀλυμπίοις ἐγγραφῆναι καὶ τήνδε τὴν δαίμονα τοῦ πατρὸς παρακαλοῦντος. ἀνιοῦσαν οὖν αὐτὴν ἀκούω καὶ τὸν ἐταῖρόν τε καὶ συμπαίστην τὸν αὐτὸν ἐθέλειν ἄγειν. τὸν δὲ οὐχ ὑπακοῦσαι λόγος ἔχει τοῦ Ὀλύμπου προτιμῶντα τὴν σὺν ταῖς ἀδελφαῖς καὶ τοῖς γειναμένοις διατριβήν. παρῆν δὲ ἄρα αὐτῷ καὶ ἀναφῦσαι πτερὰ, καὶ τοῦτο ἐγῶμαι δῶρον τῆς Ἀφροδίτης δωρουμένης· ὃ δὲ καὶ ταύτην παρ' οὐδὲν ποιεῖται τὴν χάριν. ὀργίζεται τοίνυν ἡ Διὸς παῖς, καὶ ἐκείνῳ μὲν ἐς τὸν κόχλον τόνδε ἐκτρέπει τὴν μορφήν, αὐτῇ δὲ αἰρεῖται ὀπαδόν τε καὶ θεράποντα ἀντ' ἐκείνου τὸν Ἔρωτα, νέον καὶ τοῦτον καὶ καλόν, καὶ οἱ τὰ πτερὰ τὰ ἐκείνου δίδωσιν.

ὁ δὲ ἄλλος λόγος ἐρασθῆναι βοᾷ Νηρίτου Ποσειδῶνα, ἀντερᾶν δὲ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος, καὶ τοῦ γε ὑμνουμένου Ἀντέρωτος

There is in the sea a shellfish with a spiral shell, small in size but of surpassing beauty, and it is born where the water is at its purest and upon rocks beneath the sea and on what are called sunken reefs. Its name is Nerites: two stories are in circulation touching this creature... Hesiod sings (*Theogony* 233) of how Doris the daughter of Oceanus bore fifty daughters to Nereus the sea-god... But they do not state that one son was born after all that number of daughters, though he is celebrated in mariners' tales. And they say that he was named Nerites and was the most beautiful of men and gods; also, that Aphrodite delighted to be with Nerites in the sea and loved him. And when the fated time arrived, at which, at the bidding of the father of the gods, Aphrodite also had to be enrolled among the Olympians, I have heard that she ascended and wished to bring her companion and play-fellow. But the story goes that he refused, preferring life with his sisters and parents to Olympus. And then he was permitted to grow wings; this, I imagine, was a gift from Aphrodite. But even this favour he counted as nothing. And so, the daughter of Zeus was moved to anger and transformed his shape into this shell, and of her own accord chose in his place for her attendant and servant Eros, who also was young and beautiful, and to him she gave the wings of Nerites.

But the other account proclaims that Poseidon was the lover of Nerites, and that Nerites returned his love, and that this was

⁵⁹ While ancient sources agree on the beauty of the nerites' colors and shapes, they are in contradiction over the identification of the species: cf., e.g., Aelianus, quoted here, and Aristotle, *The History of Animals* 4.4.26 530a, with D'A. Wentworth Thompson, *A Glossary ...*, p. 176 s.u.). Therefore, it is most probable that several sea snails were called "nerites". Against a precise identification, see A. Zucker, "Album mythique...".

έντεῦθεν τὴν γένεσιν ὑπάρξασθαι. συνδιατρίβειν οὖν τὰ τε ἄλλα τῷ ἐραστῇ τὸν ἐρώμενον ἀκούω καὶ μέντοι καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐλαύνοντος κατὰ τῶν κυμάτων τὸ ἄρμα τὰ μὲν κήτη τᾶλλα καὶ τοὺς δελφίνας καὶ προσέτι καὶ τοὺς Τρίτωνας ἀναπηδᾶν ἐκ τῶν μυχῶν καὶ περισκιρτᾶν τὸ ἄρμα καὶ περιχορεύειν, ἀπολείπεσθαι δ' οὖν τοῦ τάχους τῶν ἵππων πάντως καὶ πάντη· μόνα δὲ ἄρα τὰ παιδικὰ οἱ παρομαρτεῖν καὶ μάλα πλησίον, στόρνυσθαι δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ τὸ κύμα καὶ δίιστασθαι τὴν θάλατταν αἰδοῖ Ποσειδῶνος· βούλεσθαι γὰρ τῇ τε ἄλλῃ τὸν θεὸν εὐδοκιμεῖν τὸν καλὸν ἐρώμενον καὶ οὖν καὶ τῇ νήξει διαπρέπειν. τὸν δὲ Ἥλιον νεμεσῆσαι τῷ τάχει τοῦ παιδὸς ὁ μῦθος λέγει, καὶ ἀμειψαί οἱ τὸ σῶμα ἐς τὸν κόγχλον τὸν νῦν, οὐκ οἶδα εἰπεῖν ὅποθεν ἀγριάναντα.

the origin of the celebrated Anteros (mutual love). And so, as I am told, for the rest the favourite spent his time with his lover, and moreover when Poseidon drove his chariot over the waves, all other great fishes as well as dolphins and tritons too, sprang up from their deep haunts and gambolled and danced around the chariot, only to be left utterly and far behind by the speed of his horses; only the boy favourite was his escort close at hand, and before them the waves sank to rest and the sea parted out of reverence to Poseidon, for the god willed that his beautiful favourite should not only be highly esteemed for other reasons but should also be pre-eminent at swimming. But the story relates that the Sun resented the boy's power and speed and transformed his body into the spiral shell as it now is...

The identification of the gastropod in the sea with a *Nerita* fits not only the shape it has on the plate, but also explains its position in the waves, together with the Tritons, dolphins and *Erotes*, all faithful companions of the goddess of love.

It is, however, difficult to distinguish between Aphrodite / Venus and a Nereid and even more difficult to affirm that Aphrodite is riding the hippocamp, characteristic of the Nereids. In fact, the whole iconographic tradition concerning the sea-goddesses – Nereids, Nymphs and Charites –, from the 4th century B.C., uses types of Aphrodite / Venus more or less naked, emerging from the water or about to take a bath (announcing seduction and marriage). There are signs enabling a positive identification of Aphrodite – like the characteristic gestures of the *Anadyomene* emerging from the shell or drying her hair, the Aphrodite / Venus *pudica* hiding her sex⁶⁰, the *Pandemos* and the *Epitragia* on a she-goat, especially on copies of the cult statue from Aphrodisias in Caria (in today's Turkey, fig. 13)⁶¹. We easily recognize the goddess of love on a plate, grooming herself with the help of *Erotes* (fig. 14). But none of the characteristic attributes and gestures can be seen on our plate. However, in some cases, many scholars prefer to identify Aphrodite as a young woman who looks like a Nereid. For example, at the beginning of the 3rd century BC,

⁶⁰ Cf. A. Pasquier, *La Vénus de Milo et les Aphrodites du Louvre*, Paris, 1985, p. 55-59; C. M. Havelock, *The Aphrodite of Knidos and Her Successors: A Historical Review of the Female Nude in Greek Art*, Ann Arbor, 1995; R. Kousser, "The Female Nude in Classical Art: Between Voyeurism and Power", in Ch. Kondoleon, Ph. C. Segal (dir.), *Aphrodite and the Gods of Love*, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 2012, p. 149-187.

⁶¹ R. Fleischer, "Aphrodite (Aphrodisias)", in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 2 (1984), p. 151-154; L. R. Brody, *The Aphrodite of Aphrodisias*, Mainz, 2007, p. 89-90.



Fig. 13 Ancient copy of Aphrodite's cult statue found in the Bouleuterion, Aphrodisias, 2nd century AD.

Aphrodite could be represented in the temple of Poseidon in Thasos as riding a dolphin – at least this is the interpretation of the archaeologists who discovered it (fig. 15)⁶². A smiling Aphrodite rides one hippocamp of a group of two, on a Ptolemaic sardonyx cameo.



Fig. 14 Silver scoop discovered on the Esquiline and dating back to the 2nd half of the 4th century AD.



The wind blows the veil wrapped around her

⁶² “Chronique des fouilles et découvertes archéologiques dans l’Orient hellénique”, *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 51 (1927), p. 469-501 (Thasos: p. 488-490); cf. A. Delivorrias, G. Berger-Doer, A. Kossatz-Deissmann, “Aphrodite...”, nr. 978. The identification is questionable, because in most cases the Nereids ride on dolphins: see B. S. Ridgway, “Dolphins...”. Nonetheless, in Thasos, Aphrodite would have already been represented on a dolphin on a 5th century BC relief: A. Delivorrias, G. Berger-Doer, A. Kossatz-Deissmann, “Aphrodite...”, nr. 977 (with bibliography).

left arm and right leg above her head, revealing her naked body (fig. 16)⁶³. This identification was also suggested for a Roman marble statue representing the goddess – if not a Nereid or Amphitrite – riding a hippocamp (fig. 11). Finally, Aphrodite / Venus is identified on a dolphin and even on a hippocamp, together with *Erotos*, on Bithynian coins from the beginning of the 3rd century AD (fig. 17)⁶⁴.

Nonetheless, until now, no written document has confirmed these hypotheses. On the contrary, texts and images exhibit great confusion between the iconographic types of the goddess herself, of her companions the Charites and of the Nereids. We can reconstruct the iconographic genesis of the Nereids, parallel to the undressing of the Aphrodite of the sea / of the baths (and thus of weddings), and to the progressive implication of the goddess in political life, by comparing images and texts of the early Hellenistic epoch. I have already mentioned the famous cosmetic box in the shape of a St. James shell from the Taranto Museum (fig. 3, *supra*). This find from the second half of the 3rd century BC is a good illustration of the shell-shaped objects which may have been in the mind, several decades before, of Posidippus of Pella, who wrote an epigram about Aglaia, the oldest of the Charites, engraved on an oyster (11 Austin-Bastianini, translation)⁶⁵:



Fig. 16 Cameo representing Arsinoe IV or Berenice IV (?) as Aphrodite, BNF Cabinet des Médailles Luynes.1 (inv.116), middle of the 1st century BC.



Fig. 17 Coin of Julia Paula (218-222 AD) from Claudiopolis (Bithynia)

⁶³ E. Babelon, *Catalogue des camées antiques et modernes de la Bibliothèque nationale*, Paris, 1897, nr. 54.

⁶⁴ A. Delivorrias, G. Berger-Doer, A. Kossatz-Deissmann, “Aphrodite...”, nr. 973b.

⁶⁵ C. Austin, G. Bastianini, *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan, 2002; É. Prioux, *Regards alexandrins. Histoire et théorie des arts dans l'épigramme hellénistique*, Louvain, 2007, p. 187, 190-243; É. Prioux, *Petits musées en vers. Épigramme et discours sur les collections antiques*, Paris, 2008, p. 163-164, 171, 178-179.

οὐ[χ]ι λίθο]ς στύλβουζ' ἄγαν ἄργυρον, ἀλλὰ
θαλάσσης
Περσικὸν αἰγιαλῶν ὄστρακον ἐνδέδεται,
οὐνομα μαργαρίτις· ἔχει δ' ἐν γλύμματι κοίλωι
χρυσολίθωι μορφὰς Ἀγλαίης ἰκέλης·
ἤδη δ' εἰς ᾧ]π' ὄγκος ὑπεκτ[έταται δι]ὰ κηροῦ
ἀυγῆν] εἰς γλαφυρὸν γλό[μμα φυ]λασσομένου.

No glint of silver on every side, nor is it [stone]
that's mounted
here, but Persian shell from the shores of the sea –
call it mother-of-pearl: and cupped in the hollow of it
Aglaia is depicted, [with the gleam of topaz].
And there's a film of wax over the surface, keeping
[the light] on the image rising, [now, to our gaze].

It is no simple coincidence that this epigram occupies a central place in the collection of the Milan papyrus (P. Mil. Vogl. 8:309), a collection that Posidippus seems to have compiled at the court of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. The wife and sister of the king, Arsinoe II, was the first Ptolemaic queen to be identified with Aphrodite Zephyritis of Canope while still alive (cf. Callimachus, *Epigram* 5 Pfeiffer)⁶⁶. Her successor, Berenice, wife of Ptolemy III Euergetes, was honored as the fourth Charis / Grace – a sign of dynastic coherence with her mother-in-law Arsinoe, from whom she could nonetheless preserve her identity. A Charis was, at the same time, a companion and a substitute of the goddess of feminine beauty, with whom she had shared a common iconography from the 4th century BC. Just like Aphrodite-Isis in Hellenistic times, a Charis, symbol of Greek euergetism, recalls the attributes of the Egyptian goddess Hathor – with whom Berenice wanted to be identified, also through the story of a lock of her hair taken by the wind from the Zephyrion sanctuary of Aphrodite, before being transformed into a constellation (Callimachus, *Aitia* fr. 110 Pfeiffer; Catullus 66). Other Ptolemaic queens continued to claim identity with Aphrodite-Isis-Hathor until Cleopatra VII Philopator, the first to proclaim herself the “New Isis”, who presented herself and asked to be represented as the goddess herself, accompanied by her son Kaisarion / Eros-Harpocrates, on coins and monuments⁶⁷.

Aphrodite / maritime Venus, her Charites / Graces, the Nereids and even the Nymphs of all kinds continued to share several iconographic features and to be mixed one with another during Roman times. In fact, following R. Schilling's etymology of the Latin Venus, the original meaning of the name was *Charis* (Greek “grace”), because the theonym is derived from *uenus* / *ueniam*, the Latin word for “grace”⁶⁸. This is a good reason to make no distinction between the iconography of Venus and Charis in Hellenistic and Roman times. Aphrodite / Venus was a perfect symbol of Ptolemaic and then Roman thalassocracies, on both the Indian sea (where pearls came from)

⁶⁶ See A. Kuttner, “Cabinet Fit for a Queen: The Λιθικά as Posidippus' gem museum”, in K. Gutzwiller (dir.), *The New Posidippus. A Hellenistic Poetry Book*, Oxford, 2005, p. 141-163 (p. 148-151).

⁶⁷ See W. A. Cheshire, “Aphrodite Cleopatra”, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 43 (2007), p. 151-191; S. Strano, *L'immagine del potere nell'Egitto Tolemaico. Revisione critica dell'iconografia di Cleopatra VII Philopator*, Oxford, 2015.

⁶⁸ R. Schilling, “Les origines de la Vénus romaine”, *Latomus* 17.1 (1958), p. 3-26; R. Schilling, “Controverse à propos de la Vénus romaine (réponse aux observations de P. Boyancé)”, *Revue des études anciennes* (1959), p. 107-110; R. Schilling, “La relation Venus-Venia”, *Latomus* 21.1 (1962), p. 3-7.

and on the Interior Sea, center of the Greco-Roman world. This reciprocal hybridization with her Near Eastern correspondents (Isis-Hathor, Inana-Ishtar-Atargatis-*Dea Syria*) continued throughout Antiquity⁶⁹. Her beauty, power and fecundity made her a successful goddess in Roman private contexts – where the goddess of ‘grace’, already adored as *Verticordia* in Republican times, became the protector of the bride, who brought her, as an *eikon*, in her new home⁷⁰ – but also in public context, where Aphrodite / Venus is procreator, nurturer and finally guarantor of the cosmos’ balance (cf. Lucretius, *On Nature* 1.1-25).

In order to explain the large diffusion of images of the goddess, represented as Aphrodite herself or borrowings of her iconographic type for other aquatic goddess, one could add here the essential part played by Aphrodite / Venus in the divinization of women from the imperial family. Venus’ importance grows from Livia and the Julio-Claudians⁷¹ to the Flavians (with the daughter of Titus)⁷² and to the Antonines, following the restoration of the temple of Venus Genitrix by Trajan (with a new dedication, on 12 May 113 AD) and the construction of the temple of Venus Felix and Roma Aeterna by Hadrian (inaugurated on 21 April 121 AD). Sabina, Hadrian’s wife, and Faustina the Elder, Antoninus Pius’ wife, were represented as Venus, especially in the Genitrix type. Faustina the younger, daughter of Antoninus Pius and wife of Marcus Aurelius, took a further step in identification with the goddess, as mother (*Genitrix*) of Caesar and companion to the victories of the emperor (*Victrix*), guarantor of the well-being of the world Empire (*Felix*)⁷³. She was

⁶⁹ For these relationships with Oriental deities, see D. K. McDonald, J. Karageorghis, “Aphrodite’s Ancestors”, in CH. Kondoleon, Ph. C. Segal (dir.), *Aphrodite ...*, p. 17-40.

⁷⁰ This is attested by Egyptian papyri (F. Burkhalter, “Les statuettes en bronze d’Aphrodite en Égypte romaine d’après les documents papyrologiques”, *Revue archéologique* 1 [1990], p. 51-60) and archaeological discoveries in the Greek world (H. F. Sharpe, “Bronze Statuettes from the Athenian Agora: Evidence for Domestic Cults in Roman Greece”, *Hesperia* 83.1 [2014], p. 143-187). In Rome, Petronius mentioned the statue among Trimalchio’s Lares: *Satyricon* 29.8. Cf. G. Lloyd-Morgan, “Roman Venus...”; A. Antal, *Venus Cult in Roman Dacia*, Cluj-Napoca, 2016, *passim*. During the 3rd century AD, somewhere between Bactria and India, a silver plate representing the wedding of Pasithea, one of the three Charites / Graces, was offered (probably by the husband) to a young bride: two of the Graces and, especially Aglaia, who is the married one of the three, are represented following the iconography of Aphrodite-Isis-Cleopatra: A. Dan, F. Grenet, Nicholas Sims-Williams, “Homeric Scenes ...”. By the middle of the 4th century AD, the silver Projecta Casket, in the Esquiline treasure, is another example of how Venus could accompany the bride, even in a Christian context.

⁷¹ Cf. R. Pera, “Venere sulle monete da Silla ad Augusto: aspetti storico-politici”, in *Contributi di storia antica in onore di Albino Garzetti*, Genova, 1976, p. 241-268, and the publications of R. Schilling quoted above, n. 44-45.

⁷² Martial 6.13; cf. R. Pera, “Venere sulle monete da Vespasiano agli Antonini. Aspetti storico-politici”, *Rivista italiana di numismatica e scienze affini* 80 (1978), p. 80-97.

⁷³ J. Aymard, “Vénus et les impératrices sous les derniers Antonins”, *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 51 (1934), p. 178-196; T. Mikocki, *Sub specie deae. Les impératrices et*

represented not only as Venus of Capua, probably in the statuary group with Mars – Marcus Aurelius (fig. 18)⁷⁴, but even totally naked and *Felix*, following Praxiteles' model of the Capitoline Venus (fig. 19)⁷⁵. The main reasons for this identification and representations were not her attractive look, nor her adulterous lifestyle, which brought so much criticism to Marcus Aurelius and to their son, the emperor Commodus⁷⁶. The sole purpose was her exemplary role as wife and mother of Caesars, inheritors of the Iulii.

Faustina reproduced the statue of Venus Genetrix on the reverse of many of her coins, sometimes together with a rudder and a dolphin (fig. 20). Yet, regardless of this wide diffusion of representations of maritime Aphrodite from the second half of the 2nd century AD, none of the known representations differs from the iconographical stereotypes going



Fig. 18 Statuary group with Venus of Capua and Mars

princesses romaines assimilées à des déesses. Étude iconographique, Rome, 1995, p. 63-65, 112-115.

⁷⁴ The identification of the imperial portraits on a statuary group from the Ostian necropolis of Isola sacra (now in the Museo Capitolino Salone 34, inv. 652, dated to 145-147 AD) remains questionable. In any case, the group preserved in the temple of Mars Ultor from Augustus' Forum appears on Faustina's coins. Cassius Dio (71.31) confirms the link with Venus. Represented as the gods who are at the origin of the Roman people and power, the imperial couple would signify the unity and stability of the Empire. See E. E. Schmidt, "Die Mars-Venus-Gruppe im Museo Capitolino", *Antike Plastik* 8 (1968), p. 85-94, taf. 60-64; K. Fittschen, *Die Bildnistypen der Faustina minor und die Fecunditas Augustae*, Göttingen, 1982, p. 46; more generally, B. Levick, *Faustina I and II: Imperial Women of the Golden Age*, Oxford, 2014. *Contra*, for private portraits, R. Kousser, "Mythological Group Portraits in Antonine Rome: The Performance of Myth", *American Journal of Archaeology* 111.4 (2007), p. 673-691. More generally, for the representation of private women as Venus, L. M. Gigante, "Roman Commemorative Portraits: Women with the Attributes of Venus", in W. Reinink, J. Stumpel (ed.), *Memory and Oblivion. Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art Held in Amsterdam, 1-7 September 1996*, Amsterdam, 1999, p. 447-453. For the Greek origins of the Aphrodite-Ares couple, G. Pironti, "Aphrodite dans le domaine d'Arès. Éléments pour un dialogue entre mythe et culte", *Kernos* 18 (2005), p. 167-184.

⁷⁵ H. Wrede, "Das Mausoleum der Claudia Semne und die bürgerliche Plastik der Kaiserzeit", *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung*, 78 (1971), p. 125-166 (p. 155); D. E. E. Kleiner, "Second-Century Mythological Portraiture: Mars and Venus", *Latomus* 40.3 (1981), p. 512-544.

⁷⁶ Cf. A. Molinier Arbo, "La piété de Commode et les amants de Faustine: réflexions autour de *Comm.*, 8, 1 dans l'*Histoire Auguste*", in N. Belayche, Y. Lehmann (ed.), *Religions de Rome...*, p. 139-153.



recalls Venus' veil, while the shell replaces the crown. The image of two *putti* framing the goddess as she emerges from the sea appears already on the Pompeian fresco which supposedly reproduces Apelles' painting (cf. above, fig. 11). On other

Fig. 19 Venus *Felix* with an Eros, with a woman's portrait (perhaps Faustina the Younger?)



showing Venus Genitrix with a dolphin and a rudder

back to Late Classical and Hellenistic times, and none looks like the women on our plate. Even if the goddess is represented as a Nereid, in a similar attitude to that of our plate (but half covered and with a flowing veil on her back) she is always transported by a vehicle recalling the shell: never by a hippocamp⁷⁷.

Therefore, all these parallels do not allow us to identify our figure with Aphrodite / Venus, but only to explain and date her iconographic type. The gestures of the putto with the *Turitella* snail and especially of the flying putto, presenting a St. James shell, recalls Venus' coronation by two *putti*, often represented from the 2nd century AD onwards, on the mosaics of the so-called birth, triumph and toilet of Venus⁷⁸. On our plate, Eros' charming scarf recalls Venus' veil, while the shell replaces the crown. The image of two *putti* framing the goddess as she emerges from the sea appears already on the Pompeian fresco which supposedly reproduces Apelles' painting (cf. above, fig. 11). On other representations, the function of guide-companions of the newborn goddess is carried out by two Tritons (when their bodies end in fish tails, as on our plate) or by two ichthyocentaurs (when their bodies end like those of the hippocamps, for example on the Projecta Casket, cf. above fig. 9). They frame the goddess transported on a shell, a ship or by themselves, in triumph for a coronation following her birth from the sea and her toilet. An interesting example is the handle of the

⁷⁷ See the mosaic of the navigation of Venus at Volubilis, dated between Commodus and Septimius Severus: R. Thouvenot, "La mosaïque du "navigium Veneris" a Volubilis (Maroc)", *Revue archéologique* 1 (1977), p. 37-52; E. Schmidt, "Venus...", nr. 322-323.

⁷⁸ Cf. G. Charles-Picard, "Le couronnement de Vénus", *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 58 (1941), p. 43-108; J. Lassus, "Vénus marine", in G. Charles-Picard, H. Stern (ed.), *La mosaïque gréco-romaine I. Actes du colloque international sur la mosaïque gréco-romaine Paris, du 29 Août au 3 Septembre 1963*, Paris, 1965, p. 175-190; J. Balty, *Mosaïques antiques de Syrie*, Bruxelles, 1977, p. 16-19 (about Venus' toilet in Shahba-Philippopolis, by the middle of the 3rd century AD); J. Balty, *La mosaïque de Sarrîn (Osroène)*, Paris, 1990, p. 50-53, 76-77 (about Venus' toilet, during the 6th century AD); K. M. D. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, Cambridge, 2001, p. 160-186 (p. 166-167). For a wider inventory, see E. Schmidt, "Venus...", nr. 312-319.

Allan dish (Montélimar, France, fig. 21)⁷⁹: Venus appears from a shell supported by two different Tritons, while two dolphins, two *Erotes* and other maritime animals surround her. One notices here the same number of companions and auxiliaries, comprising a small procession, which has an almost similar composition between the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century AD. Only the vehicle and the gestures that would have allowed an identification of the goddess are different on our plate. This is why, I think, an ancient viewer would never have identified Aphrodite / Venus on the Yenikend plate.



Fig. 21 Silver handle of a dish of the 2nd-3rd century AD

2.4. The literary solution: Galateia

Most Roman viewers who knew the Greco-Roman iconographic codes would have spontaneously identified the young women on the hippocamp with a Nereid. This may be a coincidence not taken into consideration by those who buried the plate, but in the Greco-Roman world the Nereid was the best companion for a dead person traveling to the Other World, beyond the Ocean. Originally, the Nereids accompanied their sister Thetis, the Nereid *par excellence*, bearing either the weapons or the dead body of her son Achilles (cf. above and fig. 6). The etymology of their name and their presence on funerary monuments, as in Lycian Xanthos, or on many Hellenistic and Roman sarcophagi, confirm this essential link between the Nereids and the depths of the sea where the Sun hides at the end of the day, before rising again in the next morning, at the other end of our world⁸⁰. It is probably in this sense that we should interpret one of the first Hellenistic statuary groups including a Nereid riding a Triton near a putto, in the decoration of a fountain: the artist may have intended to represent a procession ready to navigate the Ocean River, travelling to the Islands of the Blessed (fig. 22)⁸¹. Indeed, Transcaucasia, beyond the Caspian

⁷⁹ Preserved in the Louvre, Department of the Greek, Etruscan and Roman antiquities BJ 2065. Cf. F. F. Baratte (dir.), *Trésors...*, p. 229-230, nr. 187. One may compare it with the reliefs: A. Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen...*, p. 36-38, 123-124.

⁸⁰ See the references *supra*, n. 22 and A. Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen...*; S. Lattimore, *The Marine Thiasos...*; S. Muth, "Gegenwelt als Glückswelt – Glückswelt als Gegenwelt? Die Welt der Nereiden, Tritonen und Seemonster in der römischen Kunst", in T. Hölscher (ed.), *Gegenwelten zu den Kulturen Griechenlands und Roms in der Antike*, München-Leipzig, 2000, p. 467-498.

⁸¹ R. Stuveras, *Le putto...*, p. 155, n. 5 and photo 3, following G. Becatti, *Arte e gusto negli scrittori latini*, Firenze, 1951, pl. XXII, fig. 48.



Fig. 22 Hellenistic statuary group composed of a Nereid, a Triton and two *Erotes*

Gates, was not far from the Ocean and the Underworld – as imagined by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Nonetheless, there is nothing to prove that the deposit of this plate in the tomb was related to the Nereids' funerary function.

At the same time, there is no doubt that the Nereid is a particular, well-identified figure: if the plate was displayed at a banquet with educated people, it could inspire stories and poems about the mythical unions of one of the maritime deities, discussions about various geographical and historical realities. The erotic component of the representation is so strong that it must characterize if not Aphrodite / Venus herself, at least a deity that is well known for her love, perhaps another Aphrodite.

There are many such goddesses that could be eligible. In the first half of the 5th century AD, Nonnus of Panopolis compiled a short inventory of the maritime goddesses that his erudite readers could recognize in the different iconographic versions of a beautiful virgin emerging from water. While narrating the rape of Europa by Zeus in bull form, Nonnus compares the Nymph with the different goddesses riding maritime monsters and animals. The image of the group he creates can be compared with the mosaic representing the competition between Cassiopeia and the Nereids Doris, Thetis and Galateia, in the house of Aion in Nea Paphos, from



Fig. 23 Mosaic “Judgment of the Nereids”, 4th century AD.

... ὑπὲρ πόντοιο δὲ κούρη
 δειματι παλλομένη βοέω ναυτίλλετο νώτω
 ἀστεμφῆς ἀδιάντος· ἰδὼν δὲ μιν ἢ τάχα φαίης
 ἢ Θέτιν ἢ Γαλάτειαν ἢ εὐνέτιν Ἐννοσιγαίου
 ἢ λοφιῇ Τρίτανος ἐφεζομένην Ἀφροδίτην.
 καὶ πλόον εἰλιπόδην ἐπεθάμβεε Κυανοχαίτης,
 Τρίτων δ' ἠπεροπῆα Διὸς μυκηθμόν ἀκούων
 ἀντίτυπον Κρονίῳ μῆλος μυκήσατο κόχλω
 ἀείδων ὑμέναιον· ἀειρομένην δὲ γυναῖκα
 θαῦμα φόβω κεράσας ἐπεδείκνυε Δωρίδι Νηρέυς,
 ζεῖνον ἰδὼν πλωτήρα κερασφόρον· ἀκροβαφῆ δὲ
 ὀλκάδα ταῦρον ἔχουσα βοοστόλος ἔπλεε νύμφη,
 καὶ διερῆς τρομέουσα μετάρσιον ἄλμα πορείης
 πηδάλιον κέρας εἶχε, καὶ Ἴμερος ἔπλετο ναύτης.
 καὶ δολόεις Βορέης γαμίη δεδονημένος αὔρη
 φᾶρος ὄλον κόλπωσε δυσίμερος, ἀμφοτέρω δὲ
 ζῆλον ὑποκλέπτων ἐπεσύρισεν ὄμμακι μαζῶ.
 ὡς δ' ὅτε Νηρείδων τις, ὑπερκύψασα θαλάσσης,
 ἐξομένη δελφῖνι χυτήν ἀνέκοπτε γαλήνην,
 καὶ οἱ ἀειρομένης ἐλελίξετο μυδαλέη χεῖρ,
 νηχομένης μίμημα, φέρον δὲ μιν ἄβροχον ἄλμη
 ἡμιφανῆς πεφόρητο δι' ὕδατος ὑγρὸς ὀδίτης,
 κυρτώσας ἐὰ νῶτα, διερπύζουσα δὲ πόντου
 δίπτυχος ἄκρα κέλευθα κατέγραφεν ἰχθύος οὐρή·
 ὡς ὄγε ἔ ταῦρον ἄειρε. τιτανομένοιο δὲ ταῦρου
 βουκόλος ἀγχένα δοῦλον Ἔρωσ ἐπεμάστιε κεστῶ
 καὶ νομῖν ἄτε ράβδον ἐπωμίδι τόξον ἀείρων
 Κυπριδῆ ποίμαινε καλαῦροπι νυμφίον Ἥρης
 εἰς νομόν ὑγρὸν ἄγων Ποσιδίῳν.

the second quarter of the 4th century AD (fig. 23)⁸². In Nonnus' verses, besides Europa and her bull and another Nereid with a dolphin, there are, without any particular distinction, Thetis, Galateia, Amphitrite and Venus on a Triton (*Dionysiaca* 1.55-83, translation W.H.D. Rouse 1940):

High above the sea, the girl throbbing with fear navigated on bullback, unmoving, unwetted. If you saw her you would think it was Thetis perhaps, or Galateia, or Earthshaker's bedfellow, or Aphrodite seated on Triton's neck. Aye, Sea-blue-hair marvelled at the waddle-foot voyage; Triton heard the delusive lowing of Zeus and bellowed an echoing note to Cronos' son with his conch by way of wedding song; Nereus pointed out to Doris the woman carried along, mingling wonder with fear as he saw the strange voyager and his horns. But the maiden, a light freight for her bull-barge, sailed along oxriding, with a horn for steering-oar, and trembled at the high heaving of her watery course, while Desire was the seaman. And artful Boreas bellied out all her shaking robe with amorous breath, love-sick himself, and in secret jealousy, whistled on the pair of unripe breasts. As when one of the Nereids has peeped out of the sea, and seated upon a dolphin cuts the flooding calm, balanced there while she paddles with a wet hand and pretends to swim, while the watery wayfarer half-seen rounds his back and carries her dry through the brine, while the cleft tail of the fish passing through the sea scratches the surface in its course, – so the bull lifted his back: and while the bull stretched, his drover Eros flogged the servile neck with his charmed girdle, and lifting bow on shoulder like a pastoral staff, shepherded Hera's bridegroom with Cypris' crook, driving him to Poseidon's watery pasture.

⁸² W. A. Daszewski, D. Michaelides, *Guide des mosaïques de Paphos*, Nicosie, 1989, p. 63-71; K. M. D. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World...*, p. 223-235 (p. 229-231).

What are the criteria according to which Nonnus or his readers could recognize one of these goddesses around them? Judging by the Nea Paphos mosaic, where the names of the Nereids were written in order to differentiate them, they had no specific attribute⁸³. Only the context of the representation or an expectation determined by the general culture of the public, could indicate an identification.

While we have lost everything about the context of the making and the discovery of the Yenikend plate, we still have a preserved echo of the expectation of a Roman viewer of a plate decorated with a naked Nereid. Four epigrams of the *Latin Anthology* – a collection assembled in Africa during the 6th century AD of poems from different earlier times – refer to Galateia. Three of them are *ekphraseis* of silver vases and, in my opinion, offer an appropriate key for the interpretation of the decoration of our plate (151-154 Riese = 140-143 Shackleton Bailey, translation N.M. Kay 2006⁸⁴):

<p><i>Defugiens pontum siluas Galatea peragrat, Custodem ut pecorum cernere possit Acim. Nam eneros gressus infigit sentibus ardens Nec tamen alta pedum uulnera sentit amor. Ipsa Cupidineae cedunt elementa pharetrae, Cuius et in mediis flamma suburit aquis.</i></p>	<p>Fleeing the sea, Galateia scours the woods to catch sight of the guardian of the flocks, Acis; for in her passion she skewers her tender soles on thorns, yet her love does not feel the deep wounds of her feet. The very elements yield to Cupid's quiver; his flame smoulders even in the midst of water.</p>
<p><i>De Galatea in uase Fulget et in patinis ludens pulcherrima Nais, prandentum inflammans ora decore suo. Congrua non tardus diffundat iura minister, ut lateat positis tecta libido cibis.</i></p>	<p>On Galateia on a salver. The loveliest of Naiads sports playfully and she shines out even on the salver, making the diners' faces blush by her beauty. May the waiter not be slow in splashing around the sauce accompaniment in order that the arousing image may lie hidden, covered by the food on it!</p>
<p><i>Ludere sueta uadis priuato nympha natatu exornat mensas membra uenusta mouens. Comptas nolo dapes; uacuum mihi pone boletar. Quod placet aspiciam; renuo quod saturat.</i></p>	<p>The nymph, accustomed to disport herself in private swimming at the beach, decorates the table, moving her lovely limbs. I do not want fancy food; put down the salver empty, as far as I'm concerned.</p>

⁸³ Cf. also the inscriptions on African mosaics: M. L. Neira Jiménez, "Inscripciones con nombres de nereidas y ninfas* en los mosaicos romanos del Norte de Africa e Hispania", *L'Africa romana* 9 (1992), p. 1013-1023.

⁸⁴ We translate here the text of A. Riese (Teubner, 1894), with the corrections of D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Towards a Text of Anthologia Latina*, Cambridge 1979; D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Anthologia Latina I. Carmina in codicibus scripta 1. Libri Salmasiani aliorumque carmina*, Stuttgartiae, 1982; cf. also N. M. Kay, *Epigrams from the Anthologia Latina: Text, Translation and Commentary*, London, 2006; L. Zurli, *Apographa Salmasiana II. Il secolo d'Or di "anthologia Salmasiana" (continuazione e fine)*, Hildesheim, 2010; Francisco Socas, *Antología Latina. Repertorio de poemas extraído de códices y libros impresos*, Madrid 2011; I. Bergasa, É. Wolff, *Épigrammes latines de l'Afrique Vandale (Anthologie latine)*, Paris, 2016. Bailey's main emendations are: 151.3 *teneros* (for *eneros*); 151.5 *cedunt elementa* (for *laedunt tormenta*), 152.2 *ora* (that we prefer to keep was corrected as *corda*), 152.3 *congrua* (that we prefer to keep was corrected in *pinguia*, *diffundat* as *defundat*); Bailey writes (154.4) *ieiuno lumina tentet / ieiunus inguina tendat* (for *ieiunus lumina tendat*, that we prefer to keep).

	Let me look at what gives me pleasure; I reject what fills me up.
<i>In medio generata salo nunc arte magistra perueni ad mensam; hic quoque nuda nato. Si prandere cupis, differ spectare figuram, ne tibi ieiunus lumina tendat amor. Quae sim, ne dubites: ludens sine nomine lympa quod Galatea uocer, lactea massa probat.</i>	Born in mid-sea, now, by the art of a master, I have come to the dining table; here too I swim naked. If you want to eat, put off gazing at my lovely figure so that your hungry passion does not divert your eyes. Do not doubt who I am: I am a nameless nymph disporting herself – that I am called Galatea the salver’s milky mass indicates.

According to the anonymous poet, a clearly identified Nereid / Nymph on a silver dish, on which food could be served or which could be used as decoration at a Roman banquet, was the loveliest Galatea. Why Galatea? Because she was the only one of the Nereids who, just like the goddess Aphrodite / Venus, had an aquatic origin but became the protector of plants and terrestrial animals⁸⁵. Her name (Greek *gala* = “milk”), derived from the milky sea foam, was later, in Classical times, associated with the milk of the flocks – to which she was directly related herself or through the intermediary of her lovers and herdsman, Polyphemus the Cyclops or the young shepherd Acis (who recalls to some extent Aphrodite’s lover, Adonis). The name of Galatea, the ‘milky / the Milkwhite’ fitted the shining aspect of the body of a young woman shown naked in the middle of the silver plate. The brilliance of the metal was a kind of metonymy of her name. Moreover, its gastronomic sonority was entirely adapted to the dining atmosphere. Furthermore, by the play between the geometric curves, the artist could suggest the Nereid’s steady force of calming down the waves. Finally, her love stories with satiric, tragic and comic accents – echoed in the epigrams by the verb *ludere*, which refers at once to the Nereid’s innocent game in the waves and to sexual frolics – justify the erotic components of the decoration. The

⁸⁵ Galatea is attested in Homer’s catalogue of Nereids (*Iliad* 18.45; Hesiod, *Theogony* 250; Ps.-Apollodorus, *Library* 1.11); she is especially present in etiological stories (Douris of Samos, *BNJ* 76 F58) and in lyrics: Theocritus (*Idyls* 6, 11); Callimachus fr. 378-379 Pfeiffer; Propertius 1.8.17-18, 3.2.7-8; Virgil, *Bucolica* 1.30-31, 3.64-65, 72, 7.37, 9.39; *Aeneis* 9.102-103; Ovid, *Amores* 2.11.34; *Metamorphoses* 13.738-968; *Fasti* 6.733-736; Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica* 1.134-136; Martial, *Book of Spectacles* 30.3-4; Silius Italicus, *Punica* 14.221-226; Statius, *Silvae* 1.4.76, 2.2.19-20; Lucian, *Dialogues of the Sea Gods* 1, *True Histories* 2.3; Philostratus, *Images* 2.18, and *infra* n. 86; cf. P. Weizsäcker, “Galatea 1”, in *Roschers Lexikon...* 1 (1884-1890), col. 1586-1589; G. Weicker, “Galatea 1”, in *Real-Encyclopädie...* 13 (1910), col. 517-519; L. Séchan, “Légendes...”, p. 34-37; S. Montón Subias, “Galatea”, in *Lexicon iconographicum...* 5 (1990), p. 1000-1005; A.R. Ghiotto, “Il mito di Polifemo e Galatea nella pittura della prima età imperiale”, *Antenor* 2 (2000), p. 29-51. For the epigrams in the *Latin Anthology*, S. T. Stevens, *Image and Insight: Ekphrastic Epigrams in the Latin Anthology*, PhD University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1983, p. 132-169; W.J. Schneider, “Zu Tisch mit der Schönen Galatee. Zur missglückten Textkonstitution zweier Epigramme im Salmasianus”, *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 50 (1999), p. 189-192; P. Paolucci, “Il ‘Ciclo di Galatea’ (*Anth. Latina* 140-143 S.B. = 151-154 R.)”, *Bollettino di Studi Latini* 32 (2002), p. 111-127.

St. James shell used as a crown by the floating Eros indicates that the whole scene must be read under the sign of passion: this is the passion through which Galatea transcends her maritime condition in order to join her shepherd. The imaginary sound of the sea snail, used as a trumpet, replaced the hymenaeum song, in this triumphal wedding procession, framed by the two Tritons. The presence of the Nereid's brother, transformed into a *Nerita*, refers to the dangers of love (cf. above). What other decoration would fit better the atmosphere of a Roman diner, then another Aphrodite / Venus, a goddess symbolizing the beauty of the seas, the prosperity of lands, the strength and dangers of love altogether?

2.5. *From Greek models to Roman extensive distribution*

In the previous bibliography, this plate raised two difficult questions: the identification of the Nereid – to which I answer with the name Galatea – and the date of production. Since the inventory of the Yenikend tomb is lost and no study could be done before its dispersion, it is difficult to give a precise date of manufacture or to formulate any hypothesis about the plate's ancient lifespan. Most researchers have remained very cautious and proposed a long-time span, between the 2nd and the 4th century AD, without further detail of earliest or latest date⁸⁶. By a combination of iconographic and historical hypotheses, I will try to reduce this to the period from the second half of the 2nd to the first half of the 3rd century AD, maybe between the last Antonines and the Severi. This refers at least to the elaboration of a model that many artisans could later reproduce for an indefinite period. This model is based on late Hellenistic and early Roman (1st century BC-1st century AD) figures; but the composition of the scene could hardly be earlier than the Antonines. The data we have about the Roman presence in the Caucasus fit this possible date of distribution, especially up to the middle of the 3rd century AD and the Sasanian conquests. Even if the wars did not break the connections with Rome, which even continued to have political influence and attract indigenous elites with its luxurious products throughout the 4th century AD, it is clear that the Albanians, even more than the Iberians, looked more and more towards Persia. This explains the mix of luxurious Roman and Sasanian items already in some Iberian tombs from the middle of the 3rd century AD: a situation which appears different from that of the Yenikend tomb. In fact, if the *aureus* reported lost after the discovery of the tomb was Roman, it should have been dated between the reigns of Nero and Valerian, like other coins found in Albania and Iberia. The latest possible date would be 260 AD, when Valerian was captured by the Sasanians⁸⁷. This date would also fit our knowledge of the diffusion of Christianity during the 4th century AD: even if Christians used Greco-Roman mythological iconography – as on the Projecta Casket, cf. above – the choice of such an isolated object would be strange after the baptism of Caucasian kings.

⁸⁶ Cf. *supra*, n. 6.

⁸⁷ Now see O. Coloru, *L'imperatore prigionero: Valeriano, la Persia e la disfatta di Edessa*, Bari, 2017.

Unfortunately, we lack documents allowing us to be more precise about chronology. We do not know when the epigrams quoted from the *Latin Anthology* were written: our plate – together with a later one (dated to 541 AD) from Carthage, representing a Nereid on a sea panther, with an Eros⁸⁸ – is, to date, the only known illustration of these epigrams. The poems are in Latin, the myth of Galateia was originally connected with Sicily and the representation of the goddess with the Tritons is especially attested in the West. Thus, one should think of an early date, when this type of object, and the whole cultural context in and for which it was decorated, was still shared by the Eastern and the Western parts of the Roman Empire. Such a date would also seem to be supported by the double-shell technique used to produce the plate – even if our present knowledge of the history of the making of Roman plates is not precise enough to use this in a chronological argument⁸⁹.

From the iconographical point of view, there are several details that can be used in a discussion about chronology: first, the Nereid is nude, with no sign of a veil, is better attested by the end of the 2nd century AD (cf. above). The Nereid's hairstyle has historical parallels, especially between the reigns of Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, but not under the Severi, although it is not impossible to have here the reuse of an earlier model for a mythological character during the 3rd century AD⁹⁰. Actually, the golden diadem, around which the hair from above the temples is turned, matches a well-known portrait of Aphrodite from Hellenistic times (illustrated, for example, on Caesar's *denarius* of 47-48 BC, or on the statuettes in the *Sandalbinder* pose). This diadem came into fashion again on Roman copies of the 1st-2nd century AD (when the marble copy of the Aphrodite of Capua was made; this type was used for making the group of Aphrodite and Ares, mentioned above, fig. 18, as well as the 'Marine Venus' of the Ostia Museum, inv. 110)⁹¹.

⁸⁸ J. M. C. Toynbee, K.S. Painter, "Silver Picture Plates...", p. 19, pl. XVIIa; F. Baratte, "La vaisselle d'argent dans l'Afrique romaine et byzantine", *Antiquité tardive* 5 (1997), p. 111-132, fig. 16.

⁸⁹ See D. E. Strong, *Greek...*; for the Greek period, cf. M. Yu Treister, *The Role of Metals in Ancient Greek History*, Leiden-New York-Köln, 1996.

⁹⁰ For the Severan *Melonfrizur*, see J. Meischner, *Das Frauenporträt der Severerzeit. Inaugural-Dissertation ...*, Berlin, 1964. I shall mention also the comparison with the statue of Fortuna of Sainpuits (Yonne), with a bigger diadem, dated to the 3rd century AD by F. Baratte (dir.), *Trésors...*, p. 182-183 (nr. 129). Atalanta and Meleager's silver show-plate in the Hermitage (Inv. W-1), dated by an imperial stamp at the beginning of the 7th century AD, is an excellent example of the models' long life, since its archetype could go back to the 1st-2nd century AD: see J. M. C. Toynbee, K.S. Painter, "Silver Picture Plates...", p. 33 nr. 28 pl. XIII d.

⁹¹ G. Becatti, *Ninfe...*, p. 17-18, tav. I-VI. We should also note Aphrodite's hairstyle on the Arras cup (published in 1568 by Stephan Vinand Pighius), which was dated to the 2nd-3rd century AD: F. Baratte (dir.), *Trésors...*, p. 156-157. More generally, for the type of Venus of Milo, A. Pasquier, *La Vénus de Milo...* p. 66-78; more recently, F. Queyrel, *La sculpture hellénistique. I. Formes, thèmes, fonctions*, Paris, 2016, p. 57-69.



Fig. 24 Marble statue of a Triton; copy of the 1st century AD after a Hellenistic original.



Fig. 25 Double-faced relief with a Triton mask on one side; 2nd century AD.

The young, beardless Tritons, with short locks, a belt of scales shaped like acanthus leaves around their waists – as one can see already in Pergamum and as reproduced during the 1st century AD (fig. 24) – also fits a date early in the Empire. This was a period when the older type of bearded Triton or the ichtyo-centaur, recalling the Old Man of the Sea and his metamorphic skills, had not yet returned to fashion. Also, a hairstyle for the marine gods tangled with seaweed and crustaceans, familiar on Hispanic and African mosaics, was not yet widespread⁹². The torsos of the Tritons are not yet covered by scales – as described by Pausanias (9.21) and as we see on monuments of the 1st-2nd century AD: this is probably a sign that the artist wanted to remain close to his late Classical models (fig. 25)⁹³.

At the same time, the multiplication of the *putti*, with their various, more or less burlesque poses, and the setting of a maritime triumph, with a coronation scene

⁹² Cf. M. P. San Nicolás Pedraz, “Seres mitológicos ...”, p. 310-312, especially fig. 8, the unbearded Triton of the Conimbriga mosaic, dated between the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. For the evolution of the iconographic type, M. L. Neira Jiménez, “De Tritón a tritones...”.

⁹³ Cf. A. Hekler, *Die Sammlung antiker Skulpturen. Die antiken Skulpturen im Ungarischen Nationalmuseum und im Budapest Privatbesitz*, Wien, 1929, Nr. 101; N. Icard-Gianolio, “Tritones”, n^{os} 22-24, 54-55, 62.



Fig. 26. "Rape of Europa" mosaic preserved in the Archaeological Museum in Aquileia; 1st century AD with restoration.

alluding to Venus, seem also more likely in the second half of the 2nd century AD. The silver component, perhaps equivalent to 500 *denarii*, especially following the reign of Commodus – if our interpretation is right – might be a further argument for this date, between the Antonines and the Severi.

The task of the historian trying to date these objects is all the more difficult since the models were used and reused over long periods, supported by the long life of myths and symposiastic tradition. Texts and images can be compared to follow the popular success of Galateia in love and her maritime procession,

between the end of the Classical and early Hellenistic times – when Nicochares and Alexis brought her onto the comic scene and when Callimachus composed the lyric poem which seems to have served as a frame for most of the later traditions. After Praxiteles, the naked love goddess appeared more and more frequently in Greek sculpture; after his contemporary, Skopas, unbearded Tritons became successful not only in the Hellenistic East but also in Rome, from Augustan times onwards. Between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD, a sketch of our maritime procession is already apparent on the so-called 'Abduction of Europa' mosaic in Aquileia (fig. 26)⁹⁴: the goddess is riding a sea bull, accompanied by at least an Eros and a Triton. All have poses similar to those on our plate. At the same time, judging by the evidence preserved, the tragic love of Galateia and Polyphemus was widespread in the private sphere, thanks to Ovid's poetry and paintings in the second and third styles (fig. 27). The artists emphasize the sharp contrast between beauty (white) and the beast (black) therefore the impossibility of a meeting between the divine, aquatic world and the world of barbarian highland monsters or fragile

⁹⁴ The identification with Europa was sometimes questioned, because of an interpretation of the monster's fish tail as a veil, depending on the restorations of this very damaged part of the mosaic: see now F. Ghedini, M. Bueno, M. Novello, F. Rinaldi, *I pavimenti romani di Aquileia. Contesti, tecniche, repertorio decorativo*, Padova, 2017. For the interpretation as a veil, see the critical review of A. Blanchard for "Wattel-de Croizant (Odile). Les mosaïques représentant le mythe d'Europe (I^{er} -VI^e siècles). Évolution et interprétation des modèles grecs en milieu romain, Paris, De Boccard, 1995", *Revue des Études grecques* 112 (1999), p. 274.



Fig. 27 Two frescoes of the 3rd Campanian style, showing the love between Galatea and Polyphemus, one from Pompeii I,7,7, house of Amandus the priest, triclinium b, southern wall.

humans. During the 2nd century AD, Galatea's passion was famous enough to open the series of Lucian of Samosata's *Dialogues of the Sea Gods*: just like the mother, Doris, the public seemed ready to listen to arguments in favour of a sentimental relationship between the Nereid Galatea and the Cyclops. Aulus Gellius (*Attic Nights* 9.9.4-6) compared the erotic provocation of flung apples in Theocritus (*Idylls* 5.88-89) and Galatea's mention by Vergil (*Bucolica* 3.64-65). In 3rd century AD Egypt, at the beginning of Athenaeus of Naucratis' *Banquet of the Sophists*, (1.11 6e-7a), the participants learn the story of the myth of Galatea and Polyphemus: in the first half of the 4th century BC, Philoxenus of Cythera, in love with one Galatea, mistress of Dionysios, tyrant of Syracuse, composed a poem that played an important part in the tradition about the Nereid. Therefore, as late as the 5th century AD, Nonnus is not an isolated witness of late prolongations of these traditions: in sophisticated, well-educated circles, until the end of Antiquity, Galatea remained an elegant symbol of beauty and feminine eroticism⁹⁵.

⁹⁵ E.g. Claudian 30.122-133, *The Rape of Proserpine* 3.335-356; Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca* 1.57-59, 6.229-325, 9.80-81, 14.64-66, 34.79-80, 39.257-291, 40.553-558, 43.266-267, 390-393; Sidonius Apollinaris 11; Paulus Silentarius in the *Palatine Anthology* 5.244, 256; Cassiodorus, *Variarum* 2.40; Dracontius, *Romulea* 30-37; Theophylact Simocatta, *Letters* 33.

I cannot say anything definite about where this plate was made: previous scholars situated it in the East, on the basis of geographical proximity and a hypothesis that many metallurgic workshops would have been active in Roman Asia Minor, Syria and even Alexandria – if one thinks about the diffusion of other ‘Syrian’ / ‘Antiochean’ or ‘Alexandrian’ metal vases on the Eurasiatic steppe⁹⁶. As a matter of fact, without extensive scientific analysis, it is impossible to say anything about the production center, especially since the Galateia myth is anchored rather in the western provinces, mainly in Sicily and on Adriatic shores. Moreover, besides the epigrams in the *Latin Anthology* that support this identification, most of the literary references to Galateia are in Latin. At least until the 3rd century AD, the myth seems to have been well known in the Greek East. At the same time, iconographic models were circulating – as drawings for models or already reproduced on plates⁹⁷. But we ignore almost everything about these transfers between West and East within the Roman world, even if we can be quite sure about the function of the plate: it was coherent with the atmosphere of an aristocratic symposium, in which participants preferred physical beauty in the decorations and more or less erudite discussions about love⁹⁸.

In the end, if the plate was more than a common decoration of a rich person’s table, one could offer or sell it for any occasion. It could even be a wedding gift, in private or more official circumstances, supporting a vow like the one expressed in the refrain of the *Pervigilium Veneris* (“Venus’ Vigil”), dated by R. Schilling to the 2nd century AD:

“*Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras amet!* / Love tomorrow, you who never loved; you who have already loved, love again tomorrow!”⁹⁹.

⁹⁶ For a possible Syrian production, see Ch. Kondoleon, *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City*, Princeton, 2000, nr. 71, 73, 75. For the possible Alexandrian influence during the 3rd century AD, see A. Dan, F. Grenet, N. Sims-Williams, “Homeric Scenes...”.

⁹⁷ This can be noted for the circulation of the mosaics’ models: cf. M. L. Neira Jiménez, “The Sea Thiasos of Nereids and Tritons in the Roman Mosaics of Turkey”, in M. Şahin (ed.), *Mosaics of Turkey and Parallel Developments in the Rest of the Ancient and Medieval World*, Istanbul, 2012, p. 631-655.

⁹⁸ Cf. K. M. D. Dunbabin, *The Roman Banquet: Images of Conviviality*, Cambridge, 2003.

⁹⁹ *Pervigilium Veneris* / “The Vigil of Venus” v. 1, 8, 12, 27, 36, 48, 57, 68, 75, 80, 93 (in the edition of Robert Schilling, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1961². 1st ed. 1944); cf. also the Italian edition of Andrea Cucchiarelli in the BUR collection (2003), who took into consideration the text of D. R. Shackleton Bailey.

3. From the Interior Sea to the slopes of the Caucasus: the multiple issues of contacts with *Others*

3.1. *Approaching cultural transfer through gender studies*

Galatea's plate, made somewhere inside the Roman Empire about the end of the Antonine or the Severan epoch, could have been exported beyond the Taurus mountains (our Lesser Caucasus) and reach the Greater Caucasus (the true western Caucasus of the ancient writers) in at least three ways. First, it could have been sold and bought as a silver object of certain value. Second, it could have been brought as a spoil of war from a neighboring region or directly from the Roman Empire, after a barbarian raid or as a payment for the engagement of a Caucasian soldier as a mercenary. Third and last, it could have been offered as a political or military gift to a member of the Caucasian elite. Although Greek and Roman objects are rarer in Albania (corresponding roughly to present-day Azerbaijan) than in Iberia (today Eastern Georgia) and despite Strabo's testimony about the absence of coins or any coherent system of measurement in Albania (*Geography* 11.4.4), coins and precious metal objects made in the Roman Empire between the 1st and the 3rd century AD, have been found on the territory of Azerbaijan¹⁰⁰. They do not seem to be more

¹⁰⁰ For Roman political manipulation in Strabo's text and sources, see R. Nicolai, "Strabone e la campagna partica di Antonio. Critica delle fonti e critica del testo", in G. Traina (ed.), *Studi sull'XI libro dei Geographika di Strabone*, Lecce, 2001, p. 95-126, and G. Traina, "Roman Representations of Caucasian Albania", in A.K. Alikberov, M.S. Gadjeiev (ed.), *Albania Caucasica I*, Moscow, 2015, p. 42-47; their commentary on Strabo's book XI (2000) remains the reference, despite the more recent notes of S. Radt (2008) and D.W. Roller (2018). For coins discovered in Azerbaijan, see e.g. E. A. Пахомов, "Античные монеты в Албании (в пределах Азербайджанской ССР)", in К. Г. Алиев (ed.), *Вопросы истории Кавказской Албании*, Баку, 1962, p. 48-51. The most important texts about the Albanians are brought together and translated into French by Z. Aleksidzé, J.-P. Mahé, "Découverte d'un texte albanien: une langue ancienne du Caucase retrouvée", *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 141.2 (1997), p. 517-532; in Russian, A. A. Акопян, *Албания – Алуанк в греко-латинских и древнеармянских источниках*, Ереван, 1987. For the history and archaeology of the Albanian kingdom, see especially К. В. Тревер, *Очерки по истории и культуре кавказской Албании. IV в. до н. э. – VII в. н. э.*, Москва-Ленинград, 1959; P. N. Tretiakov, A. L. Mongait, *Contributions to the Ancient History of the USSR*, Cambridge Ma, 1961, p. 72-106; Дж. А. Халилов, *Материальная культура Кавказской Албании (IV в. до н. э. – III в. н. э.)*, Баку, 1985; К. Г. Алиев, *Античная Кавказская Албания*, Баку, 1992; Т. М. Мамедов, *Кавказская Албания в IV-VII вв.*, Баку, 1993; Ф. Л. Османов, *История и культура Кавказской Албании IV в. до н.э. – III в. н.э.: (на основании археологических материалов)*, Баку, 2006; М. М. Расулова, *Торгово-экономические и культурные связи Кавказской Албании с античным и эллинистическим миром: IV век до н.э. – III век н.э.*, Баку, 2008 (p. 177-178 about our plate). For the historical geography of Albania, С. В. Муравьев, "Птолемеява карта Кавказской Албании и уровень Каспия", *Вестник древней истории* 1 (1983), p. 117-147; М. С. Гаджиев, "Кавказская Албания и Дагестан: историко-географический и

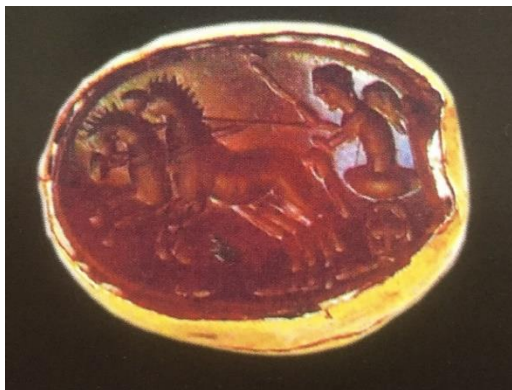


Fig. 28 Golden ring with agate seal
representing Eros driving a two-horse
chariot, 3rd century AD

numerous than Parthian objects, which reflect a longer and stronger connection between Albanians and their Iranian neighbors. But the Baku Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum preserves at least one other luxury item of Greco-Roman origin or at least inspiration and with an erotic topic: a gold ring with an agate, on which a winged charioteer, who could be Eros, was carved to be used as a seal (fig. 28)¹⁰¹.

However, as long as we do not know anything else about the archaeological site of Yenikend and about the other

items discovered in the tomb at the end of the 19th century, we cannot know if the owner of the tomb – a warrior, man or woman – was the first owner of the plate in the Caucasus or if the plate arrived in the region long before¹⁰². We also cannot know if the tomb was part of an aristocratic necropolis – quite far from the Albanian capital of Kabalaka / *Cabalaca* / modern Qabala, situated further to the north in the same valley (fig. 1)¹⁰³. Two reasons could convince this possible member of the military or political elite to be buried with this plate, via a conversion of the plate's original meaning and use to suit local beliefs and traditions: first, the value of silver. According to Strabo (11.4.8), the Albanians used precious metals especially as funerary furniture: “συγκατορύττουσι μέντοι τὰ χρήματα αὐτοῖς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πένητες ζῶσιν οὐδὲν πατρῶον ἔχοντες / they bury all their valuables with the dead; this is why they live very poorly, without any heritage”. In a region in which

административно – политический аспекты”, in A. K. Alikberov, M. S. Gadjiev (ed.), *Albania Caucasica I...*, p. 28-40. For Iberia, see especially C. Toumanoff, “Chronology of the Early Kings of Iberia”, *Traditio* 25 (1969), p. 1-33, and D. Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity. A History of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia 550 BC – AD 562*, Oxford, 1994.

¹⁰¹ See N. Vālixanlı, *Azərbaycanın arxeoloji qızıl və gümüş əşyaları / Gold and Silver Archaeological Items of Azerbaijan*, Baku, 2013. We could not see the previous publication of N. Vālixanlı, *Milli Azərbaycan Tarixi Muzeyinin kolleksiyasının inciləri / Gems from the Collection of the National Museum of History of Azerbaijan*, Baku, 2010. This stone can be compared with some examples listed in R. Vollkommer, “Eros”, in *Lexicon Iconographicum...* 3 (1986), p. 850-942, nr. 280-282; I. Bingöl, O. Bingöl, “Der Kameo aus Magnesia”, *Anadolu / Anatolia* 25 (2003), p. 27-35.

¹⁰² Objects of different times and origins were discovered in Iberian tombs: e.g. A. Apakidze, V. Nikolaishvili, “An Aristocratic Tomb of the Roman Period from Mtskheta, Georgia”, *The Antiquaries Journal* 74 (1994), p. 16-54.

¹⁰³ Pliny the Elder 6.29; Ptolemy, *Geography* 5.11-12, 8.19.7-9. For the history and archaeology of the city, И.А. Бабаев, Г.М. Ахмедов, *Кабала*, Баку, 1980; И. Алиев, Ф. Гадиров, *Кабала*, Баку, 1986.

exchanges of precious metals could be rare and, in an epoch, when the Roman silver coin was losing value, one hoarded gold and coins – perhaps like the gold coin lost after the find – as well as silver vessels. This explains the significant quantities of Roman silver vessels found in tombs and hidden hoards from the 3rd century AD onwards¹⁰⁴. The dead person, her / his relatives, or at least the person who originally brought this object to Transcaucasia must have had some appreciation of Roman luxury. This does not mean that (s)he would have recognized the myth represented on the dish; but (s)he could at least recognize the prestige of a Greco-Roman work of art. Also, if this person took a closer look at the decoration, even without identifying Galateia, (s)he would have seen the water, a woman riding a sea horse, a dominant erotic figure. All these were in sharp contrast with the surrounding realities of Caucasian society, with strongly polarized social spheres for men and women.

This contrast makes us think that the plate was probably not brought by chance to Transcaucasia, nor because of a widespread diffusion of Nereid decoration – especially not of Galateia the Sicilian – in the Eastern Mediterranean. This commercial or prestigious dish could have been exported to the Caucasus, to the mythical land of the Amazons, as part of a subtle intellectual game. For an Albanian man or woman – thus for an ‘Amazon’, a vigorous warrior woman the Romans met on the battlefield during the campaigns of Pompey the Great, in 66-65 BC¹⁰⁵ – this plate illustrated Roman otherness. The beautiful Galateia, without any weapon except the shine of her naked body, rides a horse as a mistress of the seas and of love generating life, and seduces the herdsmen. Nereus’ delicate daughter, famous beyond the seas, ventures into the savage, but rich, mountains of the Cyclops, the barbarian *par excellence* in Homer’s *Odyssey*. Evidence in favour of this interpretation is Strabo’s statement about some Roman writers – including most probably Theophanes of Mytilene, who accompanied Pompey on his Caucasian campaign and whose texts were perhaps echoed by those of Posidonios of Apamea, and Q. Dellius, who took part in the Parthian wars of Mark Antony. These writers described the Albanians as Cyclops and their land, on the edge of the inhabited earth, as a utopia of the savage Golden Age (Strabo 11.4.3, translation H. L. Jones, 1928):

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the inventory of R. Hobbs, *Late Roman Precious Metal Deposits, c. AD 200-700: changes over time and space*, PhD London, 1997, for the Roman West.

¹⁰⁵ Plutarch, *Life of Pompey* 35.5-6; Appian, *Mithridatica* 103; cf. Strabo 11.5 with M. Dreher, “Pompeius und die kaukasischen Völker: Kolcher, Iberer, Albaner”, *Historia* 45 (1996), p. 188-207. For the Amazons, see especially J. Carlier, “Voyage en Amazonie grecque”, *Acta antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 27.4 (1979), p. 381-405, and “Les Amazones font la guerre et l’amour”, *L’ethnographie* 74 (1980), p. 11-33; F. Thélamon, “Amazones et Gargaréens: la disjonction des masculins et des féminins au Caucase”, in *Mélanges Pierre Lévêque VII. Anthropologie et société*, Besançon, 1993, p. 319-338. More recently, the sources on the reality of the Amazons were discussed by I. Lebedynsky, *Les Amazones: mythe et réalité des femmes guerrières chez les anciens nomades de la steppe*, Paris, 2009, and A. Mayor, *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World*, Princeton-Oxford, 2014.

Τάχα μὲν οὖν τῷ τοιοῦτῳ γένοι τῶν
ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲν δεῖ θαλάττης· οὐδὲ
γὰρ τῇ γῆι χρῶνται κατ' ἀξίαν, πάντα
μὲν ἐκφερούση καρπὸν καὶ τὸν
ἡμερώτατον, πᾶν δὲ φυτόν· καὶ γὰρ τὰ
ἀειθαλῆ φέρει· τυγχάνει δ' ἐπιμελείας
οὐδὲ μικρᾶς „ἀλλὰ τάγ' ἄσπαρτα καὶ
ἀνήροτα πάντα φύονται,“ καθάπερ οἱ
στρατεύσαντές φασι, Κυκλώπειόν τινα
δηγοῦμενοι βίον.

Now perhaps a people of this kind have no need
of a sea; indeed, they do not make appropriate
use of their land either, which produces not
only every kind of fruit, even the most highly
cultivated kind, but also every plant, for it bears
even the evergreens. It receives not even slight
attention, yet the good things “all spring up for
them without sowing and ploughing” (*Odyssey*
9.109), according to those who have made
expeditions there, who describe the mode of
life there as ‘Cyclopeian’.

As it appears on this plate, Galateia is the *Other* of the Amazon, who is herself the *Other* of the Mediterranean, Greek and Roman masculine ideal of warrior. Galateia is therefore the civilized answer to anything that the Caucasian-Caspian Amazon, the monstrous woman-warrior invented by the Greeks, could represent for educated Romans in contact with the Albanians.

More than literary sources, archaeological discoveries can nourish reflections on the origin and transportation of this plate to the Caucasus. Without the opportunity to conduct direct analyses of the plate or the rest of the inventory, we only recall some possible parallels and the most important moments in contact between Caucasian peoples and the Romans, as they appear in the texts, before concluding on the difficulties and provocations in current studies on this middle ground.

3.2. *The Iberian parallels from Mtskheta (2nd-3rd centuries AD)*

The closest comparisons with the warrior tomb of Yenikend were discovered on the higher course of the Kyros, in the land called Iberia by ancient authors. Numerous tombs, very rich in luxury objects from the East, Near East and the Roman Empire, from different epochs, have been found near the capital of Iberia, on the site of Armaziskhevi, near the modern city of Mtskheta (at the confluence of the Kyros River and its tributary, the Aragvi, north of Tbilisi, on the road to the pass of Dariali, corresponding to the present-day Georgian Military Road). The tombs of the Iberian elites of Roman times contained various gold and silver objects that could have been ordered or bought by rich members of the Iberian court. Besides these objects, archaeologists also found Roman silver plates whose decoration left no possible doubt: they were diplomatic gifts, offered to client kings by the Roman emperor, governors or military chiefs, at some particular moments in time, as is partially confirmed by literary texts – especially in the case of the Antonine dynasty¹⁰⁶. These objects could have been brought from the nearby Oriental *limes* (from the Euphrates,

¹⁰⁶ For this client-patron relationship, see D. Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King: The Character of the Client Kingship*, London, 1984.

between Syria and Cappadocia) following the usual commercial routes across the Taurus (in present-day Armenia) or through Colchis (today Western Georgia).

There is, however, agreement in texts and archaeological discoveries about a contrast between Iberia and Albania: Iberia, closer to the Roman provinces and to the client kingdom of Armenia, was a sedentary, agricultural country, with a less warrior-like people, mainly loyal to Rome. Its Eastern neighbor and rival, Albania took a longer time to become united in one kingdom; therefore, its people had a stronger tribal identity, characteristic of mountain groups. The land was apparently less urbanized – or, more exactly, was occupied by small urban centers of Parthian inspiration, which were not considered to be real cities by Strabo's Roman sources. The Albanians appeared to the Romans as being mainly herdsmen and hunters, close to a nomadic lifestyle. Yet, during Pompey's invasion, the Albanian kingdom defended itself with an infantry of 60,000 and a cavalry of 22,000 or, at least 12,000 people (Strabo 11.4.4-5, cf. Plutarch, *Life of Pompey* 35.3). From the Greek perspective, this contradiction between the ability to organize a sizeable army and the cliché about the nomads' lack of strength that characterized both Asiatic and northern peoples, could be explained by Albania's remoteness from the civilized world, by the savagery and even the monstrosity of the high mountains of the Caucasus. Indeed, Albania was closest to the Caspian-Caucasian land of the Amazons, companions of the Gargareans (Strabo 11.5). In fact, Albania had already been part of the Achaemenid Empire (because the Albanians are listed in Darius III's army at Gaugamela, in 331 BC., cf. Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.8.4, 3.11.4, 3.13.1). Thus, Albania maintained its attachment to its powerful Iranian neighbors in Parthian times and fully integrated into the Sasanian Empire from the middle of the 3rd century AD, after conquest by Shapur I (240-272 AD)¹⁰⁷. Besides the texts, the discovery of a Sasanian silver plate with a royal hunting scene is further proof of the Persians' political and military domination of Albania (fig. 29)¹⁰⁸. The difference with Iberia, where the

¹⁰⁷ *Res gestae diui Saporis* (ca. 262 AD), and the inscription of Kirder 12-13 (ca. 276-293 AD); translations in M. H. Dodgeon, S. N. C. Lieu, *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars AD 226-363. A Documentary History*, London-New York, 1991, p. 29-30, 56; for the Sasanian influence on Albania in the later period: G. Greatrex, S. N. C. Lieu, *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars II. AD 363-630. A Narrative Sourcebook*, London-New York, 2002. For the archaeological discoveries, Sir J. Simpson, "Sasanian Glassware from Mesopotamia, Gilan, and the Caucasus", *Journal of Glass Studies* 57 (2015), p. 77-96.

¹⁰⁸ Дж. А. Халилов, "Серебряное блюдо с позолотой из древней Шемахи", *Вестник древней истории*, 3 (1976), p. 146-149; P. O. Harper, P. Meyers, *Silver Vessels of the Sasanian Period: Royal Imagery*, New York, 1981, p. 52, 56, pl. 8; К. О. Кошкарлы, *Античная и раннесредневековая торевтика из Азербайджана*, Баку, 1985, p. 63-72. For the analogous influence in Iberia, see Ch. Amiranachvili, "Une coupe en argent du début de l'époque sassanide provenant des fouilles d'Armasiskhevi (Géorgie)", *Rivista degli studi orientali* 34.3/4 (1959), p. 149-162, corrected by Ch. J. Brunner, "Middle Persian Inscriptions on Sasanian Silverware", *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974), p. 109-121; cf. P. O. Harper, P. Meyers, *Silver Vessels* ..., p. 24-25.

elites were more attracted by the Greco-Roman culture, seems real, despite the geographical and historical (dynastic, diplomatic, cultural) links between these two kingdoms and with Armenia (a Roman client kingdom or even province)¹⁰⁹. We lack the sources to answer modern questions about the very complex history of this neighborhood. Therefore, we cannot know if our plate was obtained directly from the Romans or if it was bought or taken from a neighboring zone, following commercial or diplomatic exchange or conflict. In any case, although rare, such a discovery is not totally surprising: the Caucasus has always had an extraordinary strategic importance and Rome was fully concerned with Caucasian issues during the centuries of its maximum expansion.



Fig. 29 Silver Sasanian plate with a royal hunt, 3rd century AD.

3.3. *The crossroads of all frontiers: a rich zone of contacts*

The median zone between the Caucasus and the Taurus played an essential role in the consolidation of a common frontier between the great powers of the Ancient world – the Romans and the Parthians – on the Euphrates and Tigris. This southern Caucasian corridor opened military access to the Black Sea (through the ports listed in Arrian’s *Periplus of the Black Sea*, in 131-132 AD) and offering access to the Caspian, but also to Media (cf. Aelianus, *On the Nature of Animals* 17.32), Syria and Mesopotamia, therefore up to the Red Sea¹¹⁰. The kings of Iberia, Albania and

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the important discoveries of writing tools showing the diffusion of Greek culture between the end of the 3rd and the 4th centuries AD: A. Apakidze, G. Kipiani, V. Nikolaishvili, “A Rich Burial from Mtskheta (Caucasian Iberia)”, *Ancient West & East* 3.1 (2004), p. 104-123.

¹¹⁰ For Rome in the Caucasus, see: M.-L. Chaumont, “L’Arménie entre Rome et l’Iran. I. De l’avènement d’Auguste à l’avènement de Dioclétien”, in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II. 9.1, Berlin-New-York, 1976, p. 71-194; M.L. Chaumont, “Albania”, in *Encyclopædia Iranica* I/8, p. 806-810, online <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/albania-iranian-aran-arm>; A. Giardina, “Roma e il Caucaso”, in *Il Caucaso: cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia sec. IV-XI. Atti delle Settimane di Studio del centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, Spoleto 20-26 aprile 1995*. I. Spoleto, 1996, p. 85-141; E Dąbrowa,

Armenia played an important part in the military and political balance between the Roman and Parthian Empires, but also in the defense of these two sedentary empires in the face of the northern nomads – especially Sarmatians, Alans and Huns. On several occasions these peoples, following trails for transhumance, crossed the Caucasus from North to South, through the Caucasian and Caspian Gates, with or without the permission of Albanians and Iberians, and threatened the safety of all sedentary peoples to the south¹¹¹.

The first Albanian union of tribes, covering territories from the southern slopes of the Caucasus and the Ceraunian mountains to the lower valley of the Kyros-Araxes and to the Caspian, seems no older than the end of the 2nd – early 1st centuries BC. The first contact with Rome goes back to Pompey's Iberian campaign: the Roman leader reached the Caucasian Gates (also called Sarmatian and Alanian at the Dariali passage), during the last Mithridatic war¹¹². Rome's presence in the region was reaffirmed during the Albanian mission of P. Canidius Crassus, in preparation for Mark Antony's Parthian campaign¹¹³. Several years later, Tiberius Claudius Nero and C. Domitius Corbulo, under Nero, were active in the region¹¹⁴. In 75 AD, Roman soldiers helped in the construction of the Iberian fortress of Harmozica / Harmastus,

“Roman Policy in Transcaucasia from Pompey to Domitian”, in D. H. French, C. S. Lightfoot (ed.), *The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire. Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at Ankara in September 1988*, Ankara, 1989, p. 67-76; D. Braund, “Coping with the Caucasus: Roman Responses to Local Conditions in Colchis”, *ibidem*, p. 31-43; D. Braund, “Hadrian and Pharasmanes”, *Klio* 73.1 (1991), p. 208-219; D. Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity...*; M. Bais, *Albania Caucasica. Ethnos, storia, territorio attraverso le fonti greche, latine e armene*, Milano, 2001; more recently, I. Gagoshidze, “Kartli in Hellenistic and Roman Times. General Aspects”, in A. Furtwängler, I. Gagoshidze, H. Löhr, N. Ludwig (dir.), *Iberia and Rome: The Excavations of the Palace at Dedoplist Gora and the Roman Influence in the Caucasian Kingdom of Iberia*, Langenweissbach, 2008, p. 1-40; L. Zerbini, G. Gamkrelidze, T. Todua, *I Romani nella Terra del Vello d'Oro. La Colchide e l'Iberia in età romana*, Soveria Mannelli, 2012. For a comparison between Greco-Roman and Georgian sources: G. L. Kavtaradze, “Caucasica II. The Georgian chronicles and the raison d'être of the Iberian kingdom”, *Orbis Terrarum* 6 (2000), p. 177-237.

¹¹¹ For literary sources on the Alans, see especially A. Alemany, *Sources on the Alans. A Critical Compilation*, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2000; A.B. Bosworth, “Arrian and the Alani”, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 81 (1977), p. 217-255; G. Gnoli, “Il nome degli Alani nelle iscrizioni sassanidi: considerazioni linguistiche e storiche sul tema dell'opposizione tra Iran esterno e Iran interno”, in *Il Caucaso: cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia (secoli IV-XI)*, Spoleto, 1996, p. 831-866.

¹¹² Plutarch, *Life of Pompey* 34-37; Cassius Dio 37.1-7, cf. 41.16; Appian, *Mithridatica* 477-496.

¹¹³ Strabo 11.3.5; Plutarch, *Life of Mark Antony* 34; Cassius Dio 49.24. Following the *Res gestae Diui Augusti* (5), the Albanian king recognized Roman suzerainty.

¹¹⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.6-8, 30-41; 14.23-36; 15.24-31. On Nero's projects, Pliny the Elder 6.40; Tacitus, *Histories* 1.6; Suetonius, *Life of Nero* 19.2; Cassius Dio 63.8.1.

controlling access to the pass of Dariali¹¹⁵. In Albania, on the road to Derbent, between 84 and 96 AD, the *Legio XII Fulminata* consolidated the fortress of Bejuk / Boyuk Dash (in the region of Gobustan), 70 km south-west of Baku. Domitian's involvement in the protection of the "thresholds of the Caspian Gate one must fear" / *metuenda portae limina Caspiacae* finds a direct echo in the poems of Statius (*Siluae* 4.4.63-64). This is not an isolated reference in Latin imperial poetry: more generally, C. Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* answer the interest of the Flavians in the Pontic-Caucasian edges of the Empire¹¹⁶. In 114 AD, Trajan transformed Armenia into a Roman province. He also gave a client-king to Albania and accepted the submission of the Sarmatians from the Northern Caucasus, as well as that of the Iberians. The Roman emperor was actually accompanied by the Iberian prince Amazaspus during his Parthian expedition to Nisibis (*IG XIV 1374 = IGR I 192*)¹¹⁷. Despite a moment of tension between the Roman emperor Hadrian and Pharasmenes II of Iberia, who refused to renew his submission to Rome at Satala in 129 AD, the exchanges of diplomatic gifts continued. They are attested by the *Historia Augusta* and by the discoveries in the royal necropolis of Iberia, mentioned above: in particular, a silver plate with the portrait of Antinous, found in the tomb supposed to have belonged to the high Iberian dignitary Aspaurukis, is a direct proof of these contacts during Hadrian's reign¹¹⁸. Ca. 141 AD, under Antoninus Pius, maybe due

¹¹⁵ *CIL* III 6051 = *OGIS* 379 = *ILS* 8795 = *IGRR* III 133 = *SEG* 20 112 (cf. Strabo 11.3.5; Pliny the Elder 6.29-30); see A.I. Boltunova, "Quelques notes sur l'inscription de Vespasien trouvée à Mtskheta", *Klio* 53 (1971), p. 213-222; H. Halfmann, "Die Alanen und die römische Ostpolitik unter Vespasian", *Epigraphica Anatolica* 8 (1986), p. 39-50; voir aussi G. Migliorati, "L'incarico militare di M. Hirrius Fronto Neratius Pansa e gli interessi militari romani in area caucasica", in A. Valvo-G. Manzoni (ed.), *Analecta Brixiana. Contributi dell'Istituto di Filologia e storia dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore*, Milano, 2004, p. 125-153.

¹¹⁶ *AE* 1951.263; F. Grosso, "Aspetti della politica orientale di Domiziano I. Albania, iberia caucasica e Armenia", *Epigraphica* 16 (1954), p. 117-179; R. Heindereich, "Zur östlichsten lateinischen Inschrift", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 52 (1983), p. 213-214.

¹¹⁷ Arrian, *Periplus of the Black Sea* 11.2-3; Eutropius, *Breviarium* 8.2-3; Rufus Festus, *Breviarium* 20.2; Hieronymus, *Chronicon* (the 223rd Olympiad).

¹¹⁸ *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 13.8-9; 17.10-12 ("... he gave many gifts to many people, but to nobody more than the ones for the Iberians ... / *multis ingentia dedit munera, sed nulli maiora quam Hiberorum...*"), 21.13. The medallion vase showing Antinous' portrait must date from the period following Antinous' accidental death in the Nile, but before Hadrian's death (therefore between 130/131 and 138 AD). In a nearby tomb, archaeologists found a high relief medallion vase showing the goddess Tyche / Fortuna with cornucopia and a vase with a Roman portrait, maybe with Heracles' features. Heracles is one of the mythical characters most connected with the Caucasus, where he was believed to have set Prometheus free. Among the numerous publications, see K. Matchabeli, "Les coupes d'argent d'Armaziskhevi (Géorgie)", *Bedi Kartlisa. Revue de kartvéologie* 29 (1972), p. 291-293; Th. Opper, "Hadrian's Diplomatic Gifts in Georgia", in *Hadrian, Empire and Conflict*, British Museum, 2008, p. 190-193; G. Gamkrelidze, *Archaeology of the Roman Period of Georgia (Essay and Catalogue)*. *Iberia-Colchis (The Journal of the Otar Lordkipanidze Centre of Archaeology of the Georgian National Museum) Supplement*, 2014. For analogous

to the Caucasian mission of Q. Iunius Rusticus, this Pharasmenes II received new territories as well as an equestrian statue in the temple of Bellona in Rome. As a sign of his submission to the emperor, the Iberian king came to Rome with his family; they made a sacrifice on the Capitol and organized a military demonstration¹¹⁹. Following the Parthian invasion of the client kingdom of Armenia and of the Roman province of Syria, during the Roman-Parthian wars of 161-166 AD, Roman troops were brought from the north-western front in order to reinforce the Roman presence in the Caucasus. Under orders from Statius Priscus, parts of the *Legio I Minerua* crossed the Caspian Gates (at Derbent, *CIL* XIII 8213). Over the following two years, the Romans took Seleucia and Ctesiphon and entered Media Atropatene. Under the governor Avidius Cassius, a border was established on the Khabur and Euphrates Rivers; the Romans were also able to reinstall their favorite, Sohaemus, on the Armenian throne until the 180s and the return of the Parthians, under their king Vologases V. As a direct expression of the strong links between Rome and Iberia, in the necropolis of Mtskheta there is also a silver plate with a medallion representing Marcus Aurelius¹²⁰. Under Commodus, in 184-185 AD, the *Legio XV Apollinaris* was still stationed in Armenia (*CIL* III 6052 = *ILS* 394). Without any other historical documents, we tend to consider that the situation was stable under the Severi and, more generally, until the Sasanian invasions of the 250s (cf. above). Afterwards, contacts were not interrupted but were certainly less intensive – although they could be reinforced at certain points, as under the emperor Aurelianus (270-275 AD)¹²¹ or under Domitian, after the peace of Nisibis of 298, when the Romans took control of Iberia. The diffusion of Christianity and the creation of the three Caucasian alphabets were effects of the strong historical links with Armenia and the West. Yet, from the 4th century AD onwards, Sasanian dominion seems strongly rooted in Albania. Its concrete expression was the consolidation of defenses at the passages through which the northern nomads could invade the Empire. Another originality of Late Antiquity was the cultural dimension of the conflicts: Christians seem to have looked for support to Armenia and the Roman Empire during conflicts with the pagan barbarians and Zoroastrians. But altogether, after the mid 3rd century AD, Iranian influence seems to have predominated in Albania.

discoveries in the Bosporan Kingdom, see М.Ю. Трейстер, “Посуда и предметы утвари из серебра и бронзы”, in А.М. Бутягин (dir.), *Тайна золотой маски. Каталог выставки [Санкт-Петербург, 21 апреля - 3 сентября 2009 г.]*, Санкт-Петербург, 2009, p. 43-62; Н. И. Винокуров, М. Ю. Трейстер, “Портретные медальоны краснолаковых чаш I в. до н.э. – I в. н.э. на поселении Артезиан в Крымском Приазовье”, in *Боспорский феномен. Греки и варвары на Евразийском перекрестке: Материалы международной научной конференции (Санкт-Петербург, 19-22 ноября 2013 г.)*, Санкт-Петербург, 2013, p. 270-278.

¹¹⁹ *Historia Augusta*, Antoninus Pius 9.6; Cassius Dio 69.15.

¹²⁰ A. Miron, W. Orthmann (ed.), *Unterwegs zum goldenen Vlies. Archäologische Funde aus Georgien*, Saarbrücken, 1995, p. 313, n° 325, Abb. 181.

¹²¹ *Historia Augusta*, Aurelianus 27.4-5, 33.4.

Caucasian Albania appears therefore as a true *middle ground* between the two great ancient empires, the Roman and the Iranian, in fragile balance during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The situation of the other Caucasian kingdoms, Iberia and Armenia, was somewhat analogous, with some important differences: Armenia remained the main object of conflict, because of its direct access to Syria and Asia Minor; Iberia was readier to join the Roman cause – because of its vicinity with Colchis, Cappadocia and Pontus. On the other hand, Albania was near Media (Atropatene, present-day Iranian Azerbaijan). The frontiers of these three states changed frequently, depending on temporary alliances and conflicts, within these states or with their respective neighbors, or with the Roman and Persian Empires, but we lack the documentation necessary to determine such changes. All we can establish is that the Romans and Persians fought for the intermediary space between the Taurus and the Caucasus, thus for influence upon Iberia and Albania, in order to control the Caucasian passages and to protect their connections with both the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea¹²².

The Albanian kingdom controlled the Derbent pass (fig. 1)¹²³. It was sometimes an ally, at other times an enemy of the Iberian and of the Armenian kingdoms, sometimes being helped by the nomads, at other times by the Romans or the Persians. It took also advantage of the East-West routes between the Caspian and the Black Sea, following the valleys of the Kyros, the Araxes and the Phasis rivers, and their tributaries. This was the last segment of what was considered, rightly or wrongly, a road connecting India and Bactria to the Black Sea¹²⁴. Although incomplete, the

¹²² These two passages are rather like crossroads of mountain passes in a network of ways across the Caucasus. See D. Braund, “Map 88. Caucasia”, in R. Talbert (dir.), *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, Princeton, 2000, and D. Braund, “Notes from the Black Sea and Caucasus: Arrian, Phlegon and Flavian Inscriptions”, *Ancient Civilisations from Scythia to Siberia* 9.3-4 (2003), p. 175-191.

¹²³ For the Sasanian fortification system, see D. Lawrence, T. J. Wilkinson, “The Northern and Western Borderlands of the Sasanian Empire: Contextualising the Roman / Byzantine and Sasanian frontier”, in E. W. Sauer (ed.), *Sasanian Persia. Between Rome and the Steppes of Eurasia*, Edinburgh, 2017, p. 99-125.

¹²⁴ The main Hellenistic and Roman sources are Ps.-Scymnos fr. 20 Marcotte (= 925-237 Diller) *ap.* Pseudo-Arrian, *Periplus of the Black Sea* 45 Podossinov; Strabo 11.7.3; Pliny the Elder 6.52; Procopius 2.25.1-3. See also the debate between, on the one side, the more critical – and even skeptical – voices of D. Magie, “Roman Policy in Armenia and Transcaucasia, and its Significance”, *American Historical Association Annual Report* 1 / 1910, Washington 1923, p. 297-304, and D. Braund, “Indian Traders at Phasis: Neglected Texts on Ancient Georgia”, in M. Faudot, A. Fraysse, É. Geny (ed.), *Pont-Euxin et commerce. La genèse de la “route de la soie” (Actes du IX^e Symposium de Vani [Colchide] 1999)*, Besançon, 2002, p. 287-295, and *Georgia in Antiquity...*, p. 40-41, and, on the other side, those who believe in the existence of this path: M. Wisseman, “Rom und das Kaspische Meer”, *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 127.2 (1984), p. 166-173; P. Callieri, “La presunta via commerciale tra l’India e Roma attraverso l’Oxus e il Mar Caspio: nuovi dati di discussione”, *Topoi* 11.1 (2001), p. 537-546, and P. Schneider, “From India to the Black Sea: an overlooked trade

Peutingar Table is important proof of a network of paths, which made possible, at least at some time, the indirect transportation of exotic products across Asia beyond the Taurus (fig. 30).



Fig. 30 Reconstruction of the network of paths following the *Tabula Peutingeriana*

Yet, this strategic position for control of the northern Asiatic frontiers and passages was only one of Albania's advantages. The land had many other quite exceptional natural resources, which could fully justify the interest of the greater powers in this area and, therefore, the arrival of our luxury plate in Yenikend. Between the high mountains, the great rivers and the sea, the organization of Albanian territory was determined by the valleys of the major tributaries of the Kyros River – like the Göyçay and its hydrographic basin – which were also the connective axes between the highlands and the plain. These valleys were a considerable factor in ethnic fragmentation – as proved by the 26 tribal languages mentioned by Strabo and as it is still shown today by the general map of Caucasian languages and dialects. Nonetheless, the resources of their lands, raw materials, animals and people had already been exploited and coveted from antiquity. They were the objects of laudatory discourses upon Caucasian Albania, which was presented as a Golden Age utopia of the Greeks and Romans (in Strabo's words) and as a Persian *paradeisos*, in the *longue durée* (in the work of Movsēs Dasxurancı, by the middle of the 10th century AD):

route?”, preliminary publication online <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01376630> (where P. Schneider adds not only Procopius but also a new testimony of the poet Persius 5.132-136).

Strabo 11.4.3-4

ποτίζεται δὲ πᾶν τὸ πεδῖον τοῦ Βαβυλωνίου
καὶ τοῦ Αἰγυπτίου μᾶλλον τοῖς ποταμοῖς
καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὕδασιν ὥστ' αἰεὶ πωδὴ
φυλάττειν τὴν ὄψιν· διὰ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ
εὐβοτόν ἐστι· πρόσεστι δὲ καὶ τὸ εὐάερρον
ἐκείνων μᾶλλον. ἄσκαφοι δ' αἱ ἄμπελοι
μένουσαι διὰ τέλους, τεμνόμεναι δὲ διὰ
πενταετηρίδος, νέαι μὲν διετεῖς ἐκφέρουσιν
ἤδη καρπὸν, τέλειαι δ' ἀποδιδόασιν
τοσοῦτον ὥστ' ἀφιασίν ἐν τοῖς κλήμασι
πολὺ μέρος. εὐερνή δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τὰ
βοσκήματα παρ' αὐτοῖς τὰ τε ἡμέρα καὶ τὰ
ἄγρια. Καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι κάλλει καὶ μεγέθει
διαφέροντες, ἀπλοῖ δὲ καὶ οὐ καπηλικοί...

The plain as a whole is better watered by its
rivers and other waters than the Babylonian
and the Egyptian plains; consequently, it
always keeps a grassy appearance, and
therefore is also good for pasturage. In
addition to this, the climate here is better
than there. And the people never dig about
the vines, although they prune them every
fifth year; the new vines begin to produce
fruit the second year, and when mature they
yield so much that the people leave a large
part of the fruit on the branches. Also, the
cattle in their country thrive, both the tame
and the wild. The inhabitants of this
country are unusually handsome and large.
And they are frank in their dealings, and not
mercenary...

Movsēs Dasxurancı, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians*, translation C.J.F. Dowsett,
London, 1961

Chap. 5. The fertility and abundance of the regions of Albania, and what it contains for
the needs of Man

Situated among the towering mountains of the Caucasus, the land of Albania is fair and alluring, with many natural advantages. The great river Kur flows gently through it bearing fish great and small, and it throws itself into the Caspian Sea. In the plains round about there is to be found much bread and wine, naphtha and salt, silk and cotton, and innumerable olive-trees. Gold, silver, copper, and ochre are found in the mountains. As for wild animals, there are the lion, the leopard, the panther, and the wild ass, and among the many birds, the eagle, the hawk etc. And it has the great Partaw as its capital.

Conclusion: The transfer of clichés or how myth makes history

The silver plate of Yenikend is a trace of the Greco-Roman influence on the edges of the known world, most probably between the second half of the 2nd and the first half of the 3rd century AD. Its design must not have been unusual inside the Roman Empire – perhaps especially in the Western part of the Empire – but its transportation to the slopes of the Caucasus must have been intentional, with clear motivation. Its design has allowed different levels of interpretation – from the simple admiration of the physical beauty of a young naked woman to the pleasure of recognizing a Nereid under the influence of Aphrodite / Venus (goddess of the seas, of beauty, of love, nature, unions and fecundity, of the Romans) and finally Galateia herself, for the most educated viewers, those who were also most knowledgeable about the practices of the Greco-Roman symposium.

For the modern historian of the Taurus (Lesser Caucasus) and of the Greater Caucasus, this archaeological find, interpreted in the light of literary evidence, is a

fine illustration of a particular middle ground: a mountainous zone between the great sedentary, urbanized empires to the South and the nomads' steppe to the north. A mountain cuts a space into segments, isolating its inhabitants but also protecting and making the people of the valleys rich. At the same time, the valley crystallizes the tracks of contact through the passages used to circulate that no historical obstacle can block forever.

This plate is an example of cultural transfer because it does not reflect only possible acculturation by the Caucasian elites, who could be attracted by Roman luxury goods. It also shows that the plate had lost its original function – of table vessel – for use according to local tradition, known by Strabo and its sources. Despite the sparse information we have about the plate itself, or the context of its discovery, we may suppose that this transfer was made when contacts between Albanians and Romans were more than one century old. The plate could have been obtained – at least by its first Caucasian owner – not only by purchase, but also as a political or military gift, like those offered to the Iberian aristocrats buried in the same epoch in their capital Mtskheta.

If the plate was chosen to honor, recompense or compensate an indigenous warrior, it necessarily echoes the image the one who chose it had about the land and the people where the plate was meant to go. From the outside, a mountainous land, far from the civilized center, may easily be represented in very contrasting ways. The Albanian country was presented as both savage barbarian dystopia, with monsters like the Cyclops and the Amazons; but also, as a prosperous utopia, inhabited by fair, uncorrupted people. If the two representations contain some aspects of truth, observed at some point by the rare witnesses who reached the country in time of war, they are no less the result of intellectual constructions, nourished by the clichés of classical education¹²⁵.

Strabo clearly explains how, precisely in the case of Albania, it is impossible to distinguish between myth and history, since those who saw the Caucasus and lived its history, did so by taking into account the myth of the Amazons (Strabo 11.5.3):

<p>Ἰδιον δέ τι συμβέβηκε τῷ λόγῳ [τῷ] περὶ τῶν Ἀμαζόνων· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι τὸ μυθῶδες καὶ τὸ ἱστορικὸν διωρισμένον ἔχουσι· τὰ γὰρ παλαιὰ καὶ ψευδῆ καὶ τερατώδη μῦθοι καλοῦνται, ἢ δ' ἱστορία βούλεται ἀληθές, ἅν τε παλαιὸν ἂν τε νέον, καὶ τὸ τερατώδες ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἢ</p>	<p>A peculiar thing has happened in the case of the account we have of the Amazons; for our accounts of other peoples keep a distinction between the mythical and the historical elements; for the things that are ancient and false and monstrous are called myths, but history wishes for the truth,</p>
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¹²⁵ Cf. also G. Traina, “Due note sull’identità politica nel Caucaso antico”, in C. Bearzot, F. Landucci, G. Zecchini (ed.), *Gli stati territoriali nel mondo antico*, Milano, 2003, p. 317-326; L. Fabian, *Examining the Archaeology of 'Antik'-quity: The Eastern Caucasus Beyond*, Phd., University of Pennsylvania, 2018.

σπάνιον· περὶ δὲ τῶν Ἀμαζόνων τὰ αὐτὰ
λέγεται καὶ νῦν καὶ πάλαι, τερατώδη τε
ὄντα καὶ πίστεως πόρρω.

whether ancient or recent, and contains no
monstrous element, or else only rarely. But
as regards the Amazons, the same stories
are told now as in early times, though they
are marvelous and beyond belief.

I interpret Galateia as a Roman response to the Greco-Roman myth of the Amazons: the hippocamp rider, emerging from the sea to walk on the savage grounds of the herdsmen, has no other weapon than her feminine sensuality. Also, Rome, founded and ruled by the descendants of Aphrodite / Venus, wants to seduce the Cyclops of the Caucasus with the charm of Roman luxury. If so, the plate could be the response of someone knowledgeable of Greco-Rome culture and opinions about the Caucasian Amazons. This would be a case of history made by myth, to which the response comes via another myth.

True or false, this mythic-historic reading shows what we can tease out of ancient texts and images. Over recent decades, ancient history and historical geography have become essential references in current debates about frontiers, land rights and ethnic identities in the Caucasus. The history of this plate shows not only what a middle ground means and how complex can be the transfers over long distances, but also the important part played by imagination in making history: ancient texts and images are not pieces of objective realities, from which we can extract objective answers to current questions. We must not forget that ancient histories are creations of another epoch, by authors using partial sources and empirical methods – not adapted to modern methodological requirements – in order to answer interests different from ours. Today, it is not enough to read Strabo to know the past of the Caucasus; one must understand the way Strabo elaborated his work, his concepts, his vision of the world and of the world's evolution, that Strabo shared with his contemporaries, but which are not explicit in his *Geography*. This involves a Homeric filter through which the Caucasian reality was perceived, imagined and represented through the myths of the Cyclops and the Amazons. In the end, past and present historiography is nothing other than a partial, subjective interpretation of the past, depending on the constraints and aspirations of the historian.

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Currency in the South Caucasus

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Introduction

One of the questions in the study of large Empires, is the question of whether to study the center of the Empire or the periphery. Of course, the center seems immediately to be the most important part, the richest one, the place where all the decisions were made and immediately applied. On the contrary, the peripheries were the regions where only the echoes of the same decisions arrived, where they were more or less applied, or even more or less understood.

If we consider the Hellenistic Empire, the Roman Empire, the Chinese Empire and, to be brief, all Empires, it is clear that the study of their centers is rarely done or even that very few people have attempted to study their central regions. For example, from a monetary point of view, Rome is largely unknown. The main part of ancient Rome is under the present city; the enormous amount of coins found in excavations and buildings are still unpublished even if they are preserved². It is the same situation with the Hellenistic Empire³, the Chinese Empire, etc. It is possible to imagine that we will never have a complete view of coin circulation in these urban centers, perhaps only some catalogues of marginal excavations.

In such a situation, we have to realize that the main sources are from secondary urban centers, from borders, and that the situation will be the same for years and generations. A Roman coin found in Poland will always be more discussed than the same coins found in Italy. An Italian hoard will only add some thousands of coins to the flood of remains.

Such a situation is not really an obstacle for the study of the large Empires. After all, it is easier to analyze the industrialization of Europe from the ice of the Poles than from European lands. What is easier for coal dust is also easier for coins. Let us just

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² For example, the coin-finds of the Mussolini period are not catalogued.

³ What about the coins found in Athens, in the main Greek cities around the Aegean Sea or even Alexandria?

hope that future generations will be more efficient than ours and will find a way to inventory all the coin finds.

In the meantime, it is important to do what is possible, and in particular to analyze the coin finds in those regions where they are available.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the political changes in Eastern Europe were so profound that some archaeological remains and some museums were looted. It had been impossible to buy and use metal detectors in these regions and so sites were perfectly protected. The political changes opened the borders to the importation of metal detectors and to the exportation of archaeological objects including coins. This evolution took place in a general framework of strongly decreased salaries and increased unemployment⁴.

Go East!

In the 90s as I was looking for some comparative sites from which to analyze the coin finds in Zilil⁵, and we had the opportunity of meeting colleagues from Transcaucasia. Publications of coin finds in the Middle East are rare and it is difficult to find important archaeological sites to compare with western roman sites. We decided to try to inventory the coin finds from Armenia⁶ and to publish everything in order to promote numismatic research in the region⁷. I did the same for Georgia⁸.

⁴ A monthly salary of 15–25 Euros was not uncommon for museum keepers in the 90s.

⁵ Depeyrot, G., 1999, *Zilil I, Colonia Iulia Constantia Zilil, Étude du numéraire*, Collection de l'École française de Rome, 250, Rome.

⁶ The first visit in September 1998 was followed by others, in April 1999; October 1999; May 2000; October 2000; September 2001; October 2001 and May 2002.

⁷ Mousheghian, A., Depeyrot, G., 1999, *Hellenistic and Roman Armenian, Coinage, (1st c. BC – 1st c. AD)*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Depeyrot, G., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Antiquity*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Besc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Coins from Duin, Capital of Armenia (4–13th c.), Inventory of Byzantine and Sasanian Coins in Armenia (6–7th c.)*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Besc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Coins from Garni (4th c. BC – 19th c. AD)*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Besc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia; Coins from Ani (4th c. BC – 19th c. AD)*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Besc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2002, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Inventory of coins and hoards (7–19th c.), I*, Wetteren.

Mousheghian, A., Besc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2003, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Inventory of coins and hoards (7–19th c.), II*, Wetteren.

⁸ The first visit in October–November 2000 was followed by others, in September 2001, November 2002, July 2009, June 2010 and September 2010.

These publications were followed by similar books in Georgia⁹ and by the publication of the basic books by Kropotkin on coin finds in the USSR¹⁰.

The Armenian documentation that was accessible was composed of a huge number of paper data, rubbings and aluminum casts. This documentation was collected by Kh. Mousheghian, the former director of the Yerevan coin cabinet¹¹. When I saw the collection of papers, some of them were already eaten by mice, including parts of the aluminum casts. We decided to prepare a publication of all the coins in order to save this documentation. Clearly, without the publications the whole documentation would have been lost. The decision was made not to limit the publications to ancient coins, but to include Sasanian coins and all Islamic issues from the Omayyad to the last issues of the 19th century. They included all the European coins found in these regions, such as thalers and even Mongol coins imported from Asia or silver coins struck in Mexico. This decision included the formation of a team joining local and European researchers.

To this documentation we added visits to museum to see, check and analyze the hoards that are included in the final books.

To this paper documentation, it was decided to add all we could find amongst previous publications. The region was very lucky in this respect. In the 20th century,

⁹ Tsotselia, M., 2002, *History and coin finds in Georgia, coins from Tsitelitskaro (AD 641)*, Collection Moneta, 26, Wetteren.

Tsotselia, M., 2003, *History and coin finds in Georgia, Sasanian coin finds and hoards*, Wetteren.

Tsukhishvili, I., Depeyrot, G. 2003, *History and coin finds in Georgia, Late Roman & Byzantine hoards*, Collection Moneta, 34, Wetteren.

Sherozia, M., Doyen, J.-M., 2007, *Les monnaies parthes du musée de Tbilissi (Géorgie)*, Wetteren.

Tsotselia, M., 2010, *Coin finds in Georgia (6th century BC – 15th century AD)*, with the collaboration of G. Depeyrot, Wetteren.

¹⁰ Kropotkin, VI., 2005, *Les trouvailles de monnaies romaines en U.R.S.S.*, éd. par G. Depeyrot, Wetteren.

Kropotkin, VI., 2006, *Les trouvailles de monnaies byzantines en U.R.S.S.* éd. par G. Depeyrot, Wetteren.

¹¹ Khatchatour Artsheovich Mousheghian, 1919-1992, was educated in Leningrad after the Second World War. He worked during those years at the Coin Cabinet. After returning to Yerevan he worked with E. Pakhomov (Евгений Александрович Пахомов), an influential author on numismatics of Azerbaijan, who in the period 1923–1960s published several volumes containing lists of coin finds from Transcaucasia. These volumes are the essential basis for the study of coin finds in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, but also in the Caucasian Republics (Dagestan, Ossetia, etc.). In many cases, this information is the only that remains now that some of these treasures have been looted.

E. Pakhomov¹² published a group of books just inventorying the coins finds from the 3 states in South Caucasia (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), some parts of the northern Caucasian region and some parts of Iran and Turkey. He published 8 volumes, the first one in 1926¹³. I have also been able to visit Georgia many times in order to facilitate the publications of a series of volumes.

For some years this large program was under the auspices of the International Numismatic Commission¹⁴. The group of publications gives a general overview of the coin finds from the region.

An important documentation

The importance of the documentation in this region is clearly linked to the geographic situation of the countries and, in general to the configuration of the Caucasus.

On the eastern side of the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea opens the road to Northern Iran, central Asia, and via these countries to China, India, and the Persian Gulf. It is also the route to Central Russia via the Volga valley and to Northern Russia, and the Baltic countries.

¹² On his life, a. В. Акопян, 2012, Евгений Александрович Пахомов (1880–1965), эпиграфика востока, 30, p. 1-22.

¹³ Монетные Клады Азербайджана. Вып. I. [труды ооиа. Вып. 3]. -Баку: ООИА, 1926. Клады Азербайджана и других республик и краев Кавказа. Вып. II. [труды института истории, языка и литературы. Т. II/41]. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1938. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. III. -Баку: изд - во АЗФАН, 1940. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. IV. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1949. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. V. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1949. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. VI. Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1954. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. VII. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1957. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. VIII. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1959. Монетные Клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа. Вып. IX. -Баку: изд - во ан АЗССР, 1966.

¹⁴ "Programme Transcaucasie", Commission Internationale de Numismatique, *Compte rendu* 48, 2002, p. 22 - 24. *Compte rendu* 49, 2002, p. 88 - 89. *Compte rendu* 50, 2003, p. 34 - 36. *Compte rendu* 51, 2004, p. 73 - 74. *Compte rendu* 52, 2005, p. 75. *Compte rendu* 53, 2006, p. 73 - 74. *Compte rendu* 54, 2007, p. 55.

On the western side, the Black Sea is the traditional route for all voyages between Greece and the Northern nations via Crimea and the Dnieper Valley. It is the historic link between North and South, a route for traders coming with amber, iron, slaves or oriental goods characterized by the dissemination of Arabic dirhams along the valleys.

The Caucasus itself is a very mountainous region. The Northern part (the greater Caucasus is composed of the highest mountains in Europe, over than 5,400 m) the Southern part (the lesser Caucasus) is less high. Close to this region is the famous Mount Ararat (5,100 m). Between the two ranges of mountains is the Transcaucasian region, a very long and large valley cutting the region East-West and making it possible to go more or less easily from the Caspian to the Black Seas.

The region is a perfect crossroads, linking North/South and East/West routes of communication.

For this reason, Transcaucasia was the subject of conflicts between all the various empires, beginning with the first wars between the Greeks and the Persians. The borders and zones of influences always cut the region. From the oldest times, Greek cities established colonies on the Georgian coast. It was told that the Golden Fleece was to be found in this region, an allusion to the rich plains of this part of the Caucasus. The eastern side of Transcaucasia was mainly influenced by oriental empires, first the Persian Empire and after it all the others.

As the border cut the region, it was a place for battles and military actions. Armies were sent to fight and forts were built. The East-West axis of competition was replaced by a North-South axis opened by the Arabian invasion that tried to conquer the Caucasus. This tendency was increased by the Mongol invasion (13th c.) which came from the Orient and crossed the Caucasus from South to North. After this period, the region was dominated by the long conflict between Russia and Turkey.

The coin finds

The first coins¹⁵ came from Greece, with obols from Miletus and at the same time gold or silver darics were imported from Persia. This kind of importation continued during the following centuries. The defeat of Darius in the face of Alexander the Great included Transcaucasia in the Greek part of the world and changed the monetary situation. Looting the treasures of Darius, Alexander took back tons of gold and silver to the main mints in Greece. This metal was used to produce the

¹⁵ I will not list the references to various books again. All the coins finds, hoards, or single finds are published in the volumes quoted above.

considerable amount of coins with his name, used to finance his armies and the organization of his empire. It is now possible to estimate the booty taken to Greece at 200 tons of gold and 3,000 tons of silver¹⁶. Immediately, Greek coinage became common and Transcaucasia received coins from the main mints, including silver coins from Babylon.

The division of the empire of Alexander facilitated the growing influence of Rome. Transcaucasia benefited from the development of the trade between East and West. The Golden Fleece was a Greek myth, and for the Romans the treasures of Armenian kings were very famous.

The influx of Greek and Roman coins certainly came earlier than the first century BC. Nevertheless, it is the conquest by Tigranes II which brought Armenia a monetary economy. Gathering various tribes and the local nobility, Tigranes set out to conquer Syria. Continuing this expedition, he increased his army with mercenaries who had to be paid in cash¹⁷. Tigranes was the first ruler of Armenia to issue coins. The whole Armenian economy used the currency and the standards of Antioch.

During the last century of the Roman Republic, the need for finance by the main competitors to the supreme power pushed Pompey to invade the region and to try to take the reserve of the kings.

The war between Rome and the King of Armenia, Tigranes, ended with the defeat of the Armenian, after 69 BC and the seizure of 6,000 talents of silver (200 tons) in exchange for the restoration of the Armenian kingdom as a kind of protectorate. This amount of silver is given by the main Roman historians, but our studies show that only about 10 tons were transferred to Rome and issued as denarii at the mint.

The defeat of the armies of Tigranes did not result in a return to a pre-monetary economy. Roman occupation brought a modification of the standards: the tetradrachms of the Syrian standard were replaced by a tetradrachm whose weight corresponded to that of four denarii. The looting of the reserves of Tigranes from 69 to 66 BC reduced the precious metal issues of the Armenian kings. By this very fact they facilitated the introduction of Greek and Roman currency which circulated in great numbers. Linked to Rome, the coin circulation was largely dominated by Roman coins, associated with the production of Antioch and other Hellenistic

¹⁶ Depeyrot, G., de Callataÿ, F., Villaronga, L., 1993, *L'argent monnayé d'Alexandre le Grand à Auguste*, Travaux du cercle d'études numismatiques, 13, 1993.

Depeyrot, G., 1995, *Histoire de la monnaie des origines au 18^e siècle, Tome I, Introduction, de l'antiquité au treizième siècle*, Wetteren.

¹⁷ Mousheghian, A., Depeyrot, G., 1999, *Hellenistic and Roman Armenian, Coinage, (1st c. BC – 1st c. AD)*, Wetteren.

kingdoms. The hoards were largely dominated by denarii issued during the first century BC.

The main group of first century BC hoards is composed of coins issued after the Roman conquest. This is not a surprise: the conquest introduced great numbers of Roman coins into Armenia. Moreover, the developments of the late first century BC favored the building up of large hoards.

The wars between the Parthians and Romans in the Middle East, against Marcus Antonius in particular, contributed to the importing of many coins and facilitated the constitution of hoards.

This period (from the first century BC to third century AD) was characterized by the development of the Roman influence in Transcaucasia. Pompey went up to Azerbaijan. Some years after, the legions of Domitian also went to Azerbaijan: the inscription of Qobustan (AD 75) engraved by the soldiers of Legio XII proves this. The Roman temple of Garni (Armenia) was dedicated in AD 77, as the Greek inscription explains. Sometime later, an inscription found in Armenia concerns a building built by the soldiers of Legio III¹⁸.

Inscription of Qobustan

During the third century and the development of the crisis of the Roman Empire, the Sasanians took control of the main part of the region. The large kingdom of Armenia came under the control of Shapur I, and the defeat and capture of Valerian by Shapur I ended the Roman domination on the region. After the 3rd century, the coin circulation was dominated by Sasanian coins, except for the importation of Byzantine coins brought by the armies fighting against them. The most spectacular coin was the hexagram, a large and heavy coin, weighing around 6 grams and specially produced to pay the armies. Hoards of hexagrams are particularly found along the borders as they were struck for the legions, along the Danube and in Transcaucasia. The Arab conquest and the defeats under the Byzantine armies put an end to the Sasanian Empire¹⁹.

¹⁸ Imp caesar divi nervae filius nerva traianus / optimus aug germ dacicus parthicus pon max / trib pot XX imp XIII cos VI per leg IIII sc fecit.

¹⁹ See the maps in Yannopoulos, P., 1978, *L'hexagramme*, Louvain-la-Neuve.

Temple of Garni

Rock relief of Naqsh-e Rostam Shapur I capturing Valerian (260 AD)

A Roman temporary mint in Transcaucasia?

Everyone knows that the denarii struck by Augustus (31 BC – AD 14) with the name of the two Caesars Gaius and Lucius (C L CAESARES) are very common in Transcaucasia. The genuine coins thought to be struck in Gaul are present in all the Roman hoards and the type was widely imitated, during the following centuries. According to the usual chronologies, the issues did not last a long time, and were minted at Lyon. But in Transcaucasia, these denarii are very frequent and widespread. They are present not only in the great urban centers, but also in rural sites or in isolated tombs.

The proportion of denarii of C L CAESARES type is greater in Transcaucasia than in Central Europe. It is as common in Transcaucasia as in the zones close to the mint which is supposed to have produced these currencies.

As the proportions of these denarii are low in Central Europe, it may be concluded that C L CAESARES denarii had an abnormal distribution in Transcaucasia. Two assumptions can be advanced. Either the coins were sent directly from the mint in Lyon to Transcaucasia, or the coins were minted in an area closer to Transcaucasia.

Under the reign of Augustus, the legions stayed in this area of the Empire and fought against the Parthians. During these engagements, Caius Caesar was killed in 4 AD. One may imagine that during these years of warfare an itinerant mint was active in the region. The death of Caius and the withdrawal of the legions that followed put an end to the itinerant mint. Thus, for a period, Transcaucasia received these coins which were produced during the presence of the legions.

The closure of the moving mint of C L CAESAR denarii created a need for new coins. As the official mint was closed, local mints produced imitations. These typical imitations were struck throughout the first century and certainly during the second century AD. Kropotkin²⁰ publishes a very convincing coin with the standard reverse CL CAESARES associated with a bust typical for the second half of the second century AD²¹.

Proportion of coins Caius & Lucius in the denarii of Augustus²²

²⁰ Kropotkin, Vl., 2005, *Les trouvailles de monnaies romaines en U.R.S.S.*, éd. par G. Depeyrot, Wetteren, especially fig. 34, p. 354.

²¹ Sherozia M. 2002, "Spreading of denarii of Octavianus Augustus and so-called drachms of Gotarzes on the territory of Kartli Kingdom (Georgia)", *Bulletin du Cercle d'Études Numismatiques*, p. 173–180

²² India does not figure on this map.

The prototype struck in Lyon and the 2nd c. imitation

Transcaucasian imitations of the C L CAESAR denarii

The medieval and modern periods

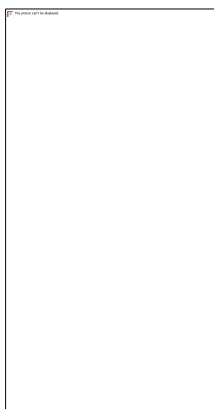
The Arab invasion was linked to the fall of Sasanian power. The political crisis had no effect on the need for a monetary economy. The end of the official mints and issues brought the emergence of more or less illegal coinage, as was already the case with the C L CAESAR denarii.

The main region of Transcaucasia began to produce local "Sasanian" coins, some of them using Sasanian letters (this was the case with the production of the local mint of Duin in Armenia²³) or beginning to strike with the new local alphabet, as in Georgia.

After the installation of the Omayyad and Abbasid dynasty in Transcaucasia, the mint of Duin produced a huge number of silver dirhams that were mainly used for

²³ Mousheghian, A., Bresc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Coins from Duin, Capital of Armenia (4–13th c.), Inventory of Byzantine and Sasanian Coins in Armenia (6–7th c.)*, Wetteren.

international trade. They were found in hoards along the Dnieper and Volga up to the Baltic countries and even in Scotland²⁴.



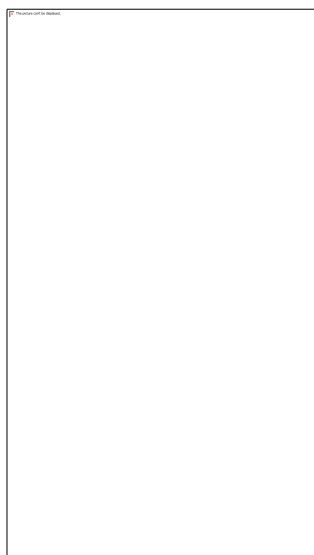
The first Georgian coin, a mixture of Sasanian type and Georgian letters

The first crises of the Abbasid regime gave local rulers an opportunity to revolt against the central administration. A new period of discord and territorial division began with the political crisis. To this period belongs the large hoard of Sunik, composed of more than 2,000 silver coins buried around 815 AD.

The desegregation of the main states opened another period of wars with Byzantium. During the 9th–11/12th centuries, the emperors launched many attempts to once again dominate Georgia. The armies went up to Armenia and besieged Duin. These conflicts were financed by the importation of many byzantine gold coins.

The Mongol invasion after 1213 destroyed all the main cities and contributed to the creation of a situation of anarchy. Step by step the local feudal regions developed into new states based on religion, alphabet, tradition and dynasties. Transcaucasia was reorganized around the Georgian kingdom. The coins in circulation were mainly the issues of the queen Tamar and her successors. The monetary system was based on very large issues of copper coins, perhaps a consequence of the looting of precious treasures by the Mongols and the presence of copper mines in the region. The production was so large that some pieces of metal were not transformed into blanks but were struck directly.

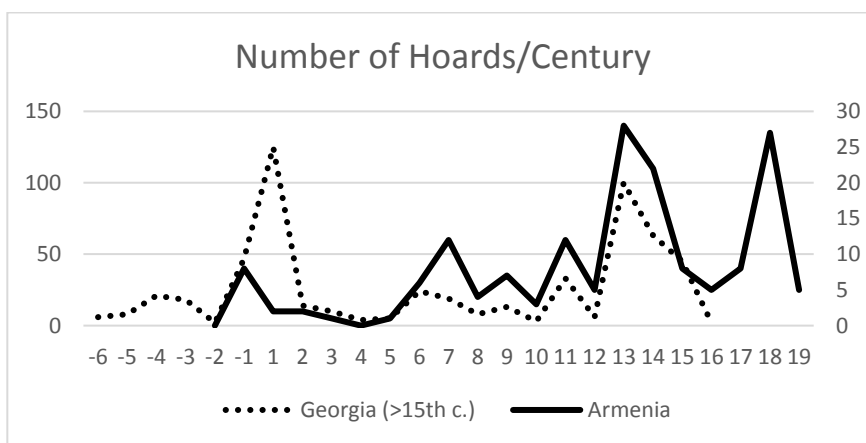
²⁴ Mousheghian, A., Bresc, C., Depeyrot, G., Gurnet, F., 2000, *History and coin finds in Armenia, Coins from Duin, Capital of Armenia (4–13th c.), Inventory of Byzantine and Sasanian Coins in Armenia (6–7th c.)*, Wetteren.



A "coin" of the period of Tamar

The period of the Mongol invasions and the period following the passage of the invaders were characterized by a very great number of hoards.

The stabilization of the region after the 16th century was again followed by a significant period of hoarding, mainly linked to Russian pressure against the Ottoman and Persian Empires during the 18th century.



Conclusion

The three countries of the South Caucasus were always a land of cross-cultural transfers. For this reason, they received coins from everywhere. The number of

hoards is a good way to measure the intensity of wars, invasions, troubles and fears of the population, but also the cost of these events, as these coins were a way to finance the war.

These cooperative programs contributed to the understanding of the history of the region. I only hope that Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani historians will continue this work.

Armenian hoards²⁵

1st c. BC

"Armenia"; Artashat n° 1; Artashat n° 2; Artashat n° 3; Artik; Gumri; Parakar; Sarnakounk.

1st c.

Vardenut-Aparan.

2nd century

Echmiadzin; Garni.

3rd century

Oshakan.

5th century

Yerevan.

6th century

Koghb; Lanjaghbyur; Oshakan; Sisian; Yerevan.

7th century

Armenia; Artsvaber; Duin n° 1; Duin n° 2; Duin n° 3; Duin n° 4; Durtchi; Echmiadzin n° 1; Echmiadzin n° 2; Gumri; Kosh; Stepanavan.

8th century

Dilidjan; Shenavan; Verin Getashen n° 1; Verin Getashen n° 2.

9th century

Duin n° 5; Duin n° 6; Nerkin Getashen; Paravakar; Sunik.

10th century

Duin n° 7; Duin n° 8.

11th century

Artashat; Duin n° 10; Duin n° 11; Duin n° 9; Gavar; Hrazdan; Ohanavank; Vardenis; Yerevan n° 1; Yerevan n° 2; Yerevan n° 3; Yerevan n° 4.

12th century

Armavir; Masis?; Ptghni; Vardenut; Demirgian.

²⁵ Based on our publications; all the catalogue are published in the various volumes.

13th century

Abovian; Abovian; Achajur; Aghavnatoun; Armenia 1225; Artashat; Arzni; Ashnak; Duin n° 12; Duin n° 13; Duin n° 14; Duin n° 15; Echmiadzin; Garni n° 3; Garni n° 4; Garni n° 5; Goght; Gort; Haykavan; Karbi; Karbi; Kartchaghbyur; Stepanavan; Ttujur; Yeghegnadzor; Yeghvard; Yerevan n° 5.

14th century

Armenia; Artik; Changar of Ardahan; Garni n° 6; Garni n° 7; Garni n° 8; Gavar; Goght; Gumri; Haykashen; Meghri; Mets Parni; Panik; Penzashen; Shenavan; Yerevan n° 6; Yerevan n° 7; Yerevan n° 8; Yerevan n° 9; Yerevan n° 10; Yerevan n° 11; Yerevan n° 12.

15th century

Ashtarak; Kosh; Kosh; Saragyugh; Yerevan n° 13; Yerevan n° 14; Yerevan n° 15; Yerevan n° 16.

16th century

Ashtarak; Gusanagyugh; Ohanavank; Sisian; Yerevan n° 17.

17th century

Irind; Nerkin Getashen; Nerkin Getashen; Dilijan; Meghri; Gorayk; Yerevan n° 18; Yerevan n° 19.

18th century

Armenia; Artsvanik; Eranos; Ferik; Gavar n° 1; Gavar n° 2; Goris; Lernatap; Meghri; Meghri; Noragavit; Nouratus; Saragyugh; Sisian; Vardenut; Yerevan Kort; Yerevan n° 20; Yerevan n° 21; Yerevan n° 22; Yerevan n° 23; Yerevan n° 24; Yerevan n° 25; Yerevan n° 26; Yerevan n° 27; Yerevan n° 28; Yerevan n° 29; Yerevan n° 30.

19th century

Aygezard; Gumri; Harich; Vardenut; Yerevan n° 31.

Georgian hoards**Colchis 6th -2nd c BC**

Akhali Abastumani; Akhalsopeli; Anaklia; Bargebi; Batumi; Chitatskali; Chometi; Dablagomi n° 1; Dablagomi n° 2; Dapnari; Dgnorisi; Djagira; Ergeta; Gergeta; Gumistavi; Jumati; Khoni; Kobuleti n° 1; Kobuleti n° 2; Kukhi; Kutaisi n° 1; Kutaisi n° 2; Kutaisi n° 3; Kvirila; Lower Svaneti; Meskheti; Nabakhevi n° 1; Nokalakevi n° 2; Norio; Obcha; Partskhanakanevi n° 1; Partskhanakanevi n° 2; Pichvnari; Poti; Potsko; Racha; Rukh; Saberio; Sajavakho n° 1; Sajavakho n° 2; Satsulukidzo; Sokha; Sukhumi; Takhtisdziri; Tsnisi; Vani n° 1; Vani n° 2; Vani n° 3; Vani n° 4; Vani n° 5; Zarati; Zemo Chibati; Zugdidi n° 1; Zugdidi n° 2; Zugdidi n° 3; Zvaragula.

5th c BC

Pichvnari; Suluri.

4th c BC

Colchis; Gebi; Larilari; Lechkhumi; Pichvnari; Surami; Svaneti n° 1; Svaneti n° 2; Svaneti n° 3; Svaneti n° 4; Sviri; Vachevi; Vani.

3rd c BC

Agaiiani; Ajara; Gori; Koroglistskali river; Makrialia; Reke; Svaneti; Tsebelda; Vani; Zemo Markhi.

2nd c BC

Gerzeul; Gori.

1st c BC

Abisi; Abkhazia; Agaiiani n° 1; Agaiiani n° 2; Agaiiani n° 3; Agaiiani n° 4; Agaiiani n° 5; Agaiiani n° 6; Agaiiani n° 7; Agaiiani n° 8; Agaiiani n° 9; Arkneti; Gori; Gumurishi; Karsniskhevi n° 1; Kavtiskhevi n° 2; Kodistskaro n° 1; Kodistskaro n° 2; Mokhisi; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Mtskheta n° 3; Mtskheta n° 4; Mtskheta n° 8; Mtskheta n° 9; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 1; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 2; Mtskheta-Svetitskhoveli; Mtskheta-Tsitsamuri; Nastakisi; Natakhtari; Pakhulani; Sazodelavo; Sukhumi; Svetitskhoveli; Takhtisdziri; Tbilisi; Uplistsikhe; Vani n° 1; Vani n° 2; Vartsikhe; Zhinvali n° 1; Zhinvali n° 2; Zhinvali n° 3; Zhinvali n° 4; Zhinvali-Bagichala; Zugdidi.

6th -1st c BC

Batumi; Kelasuri River; Pichvnari n° 1; Pichvnari n° 2; Pichvnari n° 3; Pichvnari n° 4.

c 1-50

Agaiiani n° 1; Agaiiani n° 2; Agaiiani n° 3; Agaiiani n° 4; Agaiiani n° 5; Agaiiani n° 6; Aranisi; Avchala; Bagichala; Batumi; Bori n° 1; Bori n° 2; Bori n° 3; Cheremi; Digomi n° 1; Digomi n° 2; Gori n° 1; Gori n° 2; Gori n° 3; Gori n° 4; Gori n° 5; Gremi Monastery; Grmagele; Gumurishi; Karagadji; Kitskhi; Kldeeti n° 1; Kldeeti n° 2; Kldeeti n° 3; Kvirila; Magraneti n° 1; Magraneti n° 2; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Mtskheta n° 3; Mtskheta n° 4; Mtskheta n° 5; Mtskheta n° 6; Mtskheta n° 7; Mtskheta n° 8; Mtskheta-Armaziskhevi n° 1; Mtskheta-Armaziskhevi n° 2; Mtskheta-Armaziskhevi n° 3; Mtskheta-Bagineti n° 1; Mtskheta-Bagineti n° 2; Mtskheta-Bagineti n° 3; Mtskheta-Bagineti n° 4; Mtskheta-Karniskhevi; Mtskheta-Mogvtakari; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 1; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 2; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 3; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 4; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 5; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 6; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 7; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 8; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 9; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 10; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 11; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 12; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 13; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 14; Mtskheta-Svetitskhoveli; Nastakisi n° 1; Nastakisi n° 2; Nastakisi n° 3; Nastakisi n° 4; Nastakisi n° 5; Nazodelavo; Nichbisi n° 1; Nichbisi n° 2; Stirpazi; Sukhumi; Tbilisi; Trani n°; Trani n°; Tsageri; Tsintskaro; Tsitsamuri Mtskheta; Urbnisi n° 1; Urbnisi n° 2; Urbnisi

n° 3; Urbnisi n° 4; Urbnisi n° 5; Vaziani; Zemo Avchala n° 1; Zemo Avchala n° 2; Zguderi n° 1; Zguderi n° 2; Zguderi n° 3; Zhinvali n° 4; Zhinvali n° 5; Zhinvali n° 6; Zhinvali n° 7; Zhinvali n° 8.

c 51-100

Agaiani; Didi Lilo; Digomi n° 1; Digomi n° 2; Ilemi; Khovle; Kldeeti; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Mtskheta n° 3; Mtskheta n° 4; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 1; Mtskheta-Samtavro n° 2; Naoza; Nastakisi; Nichbisi; Stiphraz; Tskhinvali; Vardisubani.

c 101-150

Bori; Chkorotsku; Kldeeti; Mtskheta; Mtskheta-Bagineti; Mtskheta-Samtavro; Takhulani; West Georgia.

c 151-200

Gerzeul Gulripshi; Gerzeuli; Nobakevi; Nosiri; Pichvnari; Tsebelda.

c 201-250

Bori; Sepieti; Mtskheta-Samtavro; Sukhumi; Pitsunda n° 1; Pitsunda n° 2; Gonio.

c 251-300

Mtskheta; Tskhinvali; Ureki.

c 301-350

Agaiani; Modinakhe; Sukhumi.

c 351-400

Pitsunda.

c 401-450

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c 451-500

Andriatsminda; Archiloskalo; Bolnisi; Zhinvali n° 1; Zhinvali n° 2.

c 501-550

Kvemo Alevi; Mtskheta-Samtavro; Tbilisi-Krtsanisi; Tsitsamuri n° 1; Tskhumari n° 2; Zaridzeebi.

c 551-600

Baisubani; Chkhorotsku; Dedoplistskaro; Dusheti; Gamarjveba; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Mtskheta n° 3; Mtskheta-Mtakartli; Nedzikhi; Nekresi; Nokalakevi; Smekalovka; Tolenji; Tsikhisdziri; Tskhinvali; Urbnisi n° 1; Urbnisi n° 2.

c 601-650

Alevi; Chibati; Dedoplistskaro n° 1; Dedoplistskaro n° 2; Kvirila; Marganeti; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Nekresi; Nokalakevi; Odishi; Sarachilo; Svaneti; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi-Sololaki; Urbnisi.

c 651-700

Magraneti.

c 701-750

Mataani; Pitsunda Monastery.

c 751-800

Chikaani; Mtisdziri; Pitsunda; Savane; Tsebelda tower; Zemo Alvani.

c 801-850

Apeni; Avhcala; Chorokhi river; Dilipi; Kavshiri; Leliani; Mtisdziri; Pshaveli;
Savane; Tbilisi; Tergi river.

c 851-900

East Georgia; Pichkhovani.

Islamic hoards of the 9th c

Arkabi.

c 901-950

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c 951-1000

Borchalo; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2.

Abbassid fals 8th -9th -10th c

Mtskheta-Samtavro; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2.

c 1001-1050

Akhaltsikhe; Kvakhvrel; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi n° 3; Tbilisi n° 4; Tbilisi
n° 5; Tsikhisdziri; Tskorda.

c 1051-1100

Bobokvati n° 1; Bobokvati n° 2; Dviri; Gelati; Gubi; Idumala; Kobuleti; Kolkheti;
Likhnigold; Meskheti; Ochamchira; Ozurgeti; Racha; Saphara cloister;
Saphara Monastery; Tsikhesulori; Tsikhisdziri n° 1; Tsikhisdziri n° 2;
Tsintskaro; Tskordza; Unknown; Vani; Vardisubani n° 1; Vardisubani n° 2.

c 1101-1150

Dmanisi; Gurjaani; Sukhumi (Abkhazia); Tsebelda.

c 1151-1200

Djandara; Tbilisi.

Anonymous byzantine copper coins c 11th -12th c

Borchalo; Dmanisi n° 1; Dmanisi n° 2; Gelati; Gonio-Apsarosi; Keda; Nokalakevi;
Tbilisi; Tsikhisdziri.

c 1201-1250

Abanoeti; Abulbog; Agaiani; Anaga; Atotsi; Bolnisi; Dedoplistskaro; Digomi
(Tbilisi); Dmanisi n° 1; Dmanisi n° 2; Dmanisi n° 3; Dmanisi n° 4; Dmanisi
n° 5; Georgia-Racha; Gorana and Kojbaani; Gudarekhi; Khrami ravine;
Kojbaani and Gorana; Krtsanisi; Kutaisi n° 1; Kutaisi n° 2; Martkopi;
Mashavera; Mataani; Mtskheta n° 1; Mtskheta n° 2; Nichbisi n° 1; Nichbisi
n° 2; Patara Dmanisi; Patara Lilo; Pitsunda; Pitsunda Church; Rioni river-bed;
Rodionovka; Rustavi; Rustavi; Samshvilde; Signagi; Sukhumi; Svaneti n° 1;

Svaneti n° 2; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi n° 3; Tbilisi n° 4; Tbilisi n° 5; Tbilisi n° 6; Tbilisi n° 7; Tbilisi n° 8; Tbilisi n° 9; Tbilisi n° 10; Tbilisi n° 11; Tbilisi n° 12; Tbilisi n° 13; Tbilisi n° 14; Tbilisi n° 15; Tbilisi-Avlabari n° 1; Tbilisi-Avlabari n° 2; Tbilisi-Ganjiskari n° 1; Tbilisi-Ganjiskari n° 2; Tbilisi Metekhi bridge; Tbilisi Ortachala; Tsalka; Tsikhisdziri; Tskhneti; Ujarma; Vedjini; Zhinvali n° 1; Zhinvali n° 2.

c 1251-1300

Akhaldaba; Arukhlo; Boslebi; Dmanisi; Iori river; Kardanakhi; Kheoba n° 1; Kheoba n° 2; Korbouli n° 1; Korbouli n° 1; Kura river; Kura river near Tbilisi; Kutaisi n° 1; Kutaisi n° 2; Manavi; Nojiskhevi; Rekhi; Shalauri; Suzi and Zeda Sazano; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi-Telavi; Telavi; Tkviavi; Tobanieri; Ujarma; Zhinvali; Zhinvali-Khertvisi.

Gold concave coins 11th -13th cc ?

Dzansul; Gubi; Ozurgeti; Racha.

c 1301-1350

Avchala; Borjomi; Darchieti; Dedoplistskaro; Djandara; Dmanisi; Grigolati; Kheiti n° 1; Kheiti n° 2; Kodala; Korbouli; Leliani; Pantiani; Patara Gomarteli; Phoka; Signagi; Skhlata; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi n° 3; Tbilisi n° 4; Uraveli; Vazisubani.

c 1351-1400

Bodbe; Bolnisi; Gjukurtau; Karagach n° 1; Karagach n° 2; Karagaji; Kvemo Machkhaani; Podaani; Sukhumi; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Tbilisi n° 3; Tobanieri; Tolo.

The Hulaguids-Ilkanids-Mongols 13th -14th c

Chachari; Dzegvi; Jandara; Kakabeti; Lagodekhi; Sabatlo; Sartichala; Tbilisi; Tsintsarko; Vashlovani.

Georgian coins "Kirmaneuli tetri" 13th -14th c

Akhaltzikhe; Ali; Ambrolauri; Besleti; Chkhikvta; Cholevi; Dusheti; Gogasheni; Gori; Kobuleti; Kopitnari; Koreti n° 1; Koreti n° 2; Krasnaya Besletka; Kutaisi n° 1; Kutaisi n° 2; Kutaisi n° 3; Kutaisi n° 4; Kutaisi n° 4; Kvitiri n° 1; Kvitiri n° 2; Lori fortress; Manea; Nojiskhevi n° 1; Nojiskhevi n° 2; Ochamchira; Patara Jikhaishi; Poti; Sairme; Sukhumi n° 1; Sukhumi n° 2; Sukhumi n° 3; Sukhumi n° 4; Sukhumi n° 5; Tamishi n° 1; Tamishi n° 2; Tbilisi; Tobanieri; Tsebelda and Kraevich; Tsikhisdziri; Vardzia; Zugdidi.

c 1401-1450

Akhaldaba n° 1; Akhaldaba n° 2; Ali; Almati; Borchalo; Boshura; Chailuri; Dmanisi; Kakheti; Kopitnari; Patara Dmanisi; Patskhiskhevi; Tbilisi n° 1; Tbilisi n° 2; Uraveli; Varkhana and Abastumani.

c 1451-1500

Didgori; Sakobo; Tamarasheni; Tbilisi.

c 1501-1550

Gori; Mna.

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Summary

Currency in the South Caucasus

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Transcaucasia is a cross-road of all the communication routes between East and West, but also between North and South.

For some years a cooperative program aimed to inventory coin finds in Georgia and Armenia. The result was an important series of publications that give a complete view of coin finds in that region.

The hoards record the main historical problems, from the fights between Greeks and Persians to those between Russia and the Ottomans. The most important period for hoarding was of course the Mongol invasions and the Ilkhanid wars.

Stereotype-Archetype- Prototype chain and Historical Semiotics of some Azerbaijani literary terms

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Introduction

Like people, families, tribes and countries, words also have their own path of development. On this path people become related to different tribes and settle in different regions. In the same way, words acquire new shades of meaning from the new intonation acquired in a new environment or habitat. Thus, depending on the new intonation they have acquired on their path of development their interpretation gradually deviates and changes, and on this way, they become new words.

At the first glance, they may appear to be completely different words. Let's take lexical series as examples: *səməni* (green shoots – Azerbaijani), *səma* (sky, heaven – Azerbaijani), *Semele* (a god in Greek mythology), *zemlya-земля* (land, earth – Russian), *sem'ya-семья* (family – Russian), *semya-семя* (seed – Russian), *sem'-семь* (seven – Russian), *semen* (English), *seme* (the smallest unit of meaning; like an atom in physics or a gene in biology) – each word here bears a different meaning. Nevertheless, at the first glance they are taken as homophones, as it is not possible to see any common semantics in their roots. In fact, if we penetrate their deeper historical layers, we will see that they all have a common cultural matrix- seme (gene, atom, element) at their root or semantic inception. If over a thousand years after adopting Islam, one of the five pillars of Islam is known in Azerbaijani, Turkish, Kazakh, Kirghiz (Central Asia) and Persian languages as *namaz*, while the Arabic term is *salaat*, or these languages refer to the Islamic ritual of sacrifice as *qurban*¹

¹ *Kurban* (*Hurban* - Semitic) literally means *destruction* and was applied to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 BCE and then by the Romans in 70 CE. Analogue in English *sacrifice* is related to sacred fact.

while the Arabic term is *al-adha*², this means that these peoples associated these words with different rituals before Islamisation. So, when these peoples converted to Islam, they borrowed the rites, but not the words, instead used familiar and associated words for the rites. The same can be applied to other areas of culture, mainly to literature, because serving as a sample for imitation (mimesis), literary language from the East to the West was shaped through translation of main books of dominating religions.

The biography of a word – its history and stages: stereotype, archetype and prototype words

Therefore, an accurate translation requires some knowledge of the word being translated into ancient layers. The term archetype which usually refers to a subject or image can also refer to words. Literary terminology refers to many terms from the medieval era and the context of medieval literature and the etymology and concepts are considered to date from that era – any era (called also *proto-history* or *pre-history*) is taken as the *starting place*. But which proto-era or which proto-history? What are the criteria to determine the starting era? In conjunction with literary and religious laws/rules, the Middle Ages are today considered to be the era in which the majority of modern peoples was formed/emerged.

Archetype and prototype for genres: *ghazal*, *kitab*,

Qəzəl- qazel- ghazāl - ÇaZaL/ HaZal

One of the main genres of classical and modern-day Azerbaijani literature is the *ghazal*. The primary impression is that this word is regarded as a genre in the Islamic classical poetry, including Azerbaijani literature. If to go deeper – what is considered as an etymology, is the medieval Islamic era – *ghazal* genre of Divan literature, derived from Persian, or Arabic: "The word is in Arabic and means "chatting with women".³ The primary meaning is "a good word"; the *ghazal* genre consists of *matla*, *hosni-makta*, *makta*, the most beautiful verse (*beit*) - *beitul-ghazal* and crown verse

² Or *ta+dh+iya* - Muslim kurban rite in Arabic is approved as - *Tadhiya*- ta (as "to" in English in this case, and with **z (dh)** affricate consonant the root as in "hediye" (Azerbaijani) (present, gift). Present tense is 'I sacrifice' - Ada'hee.

³ Sözlük anlamı "**kadınlarla âşikâne sohbet etmek**" olan **Arapça** bir kelimedir". - *Divan edebiyatı nazim biçimleri ve türleri*. - http://www.dilbilimi.net/divan_edebiyati_nazim_bicim_tur.pdf.

with poet's name or pseudonym - Taj-Beit. Another ghazal is translated as a *gazelle* and is one of the symbols of beauty.

When we refer to a more ancient history, it is possible to reveal *saga* – *mnemo-remembering* meaning in the C (H) aZaL / HaZal acronym: **Hak+ha+meinu Zikhr+o+nam Liv'rakha**. The word in this variant comes from the Second Temple period (eighth century BC, -516 BC) and was on the agenda until the sixth century as a function to interpret the Torah (the laws transmitted to Prophet Moses on the Mount Sinay). Translation of the acronym is "The sagas, which praise and glorify our memory", where *saga* has relation to *sage-wise* man, usually narrator, transmitter of the memorial text. The word *zikh* is somehow known to the Azerbaijani audience (remembering God's name) being recited in different forms and these forms as the part of the Sufi rituals, and as funeral ceremonies during some contemporary rites, *Hak-ha + meinu: hak (ak)* reflects the semantics of white (in Azerbaijani and Turkish), holiday, justice; *meinu* related to the semantics of memory, remembering (Greek *mn+emo*, English *com+muni+cation*, Russian *nm+imiy –мнимый, ро+mn+it - помнить*)⁴, most probably through translation of the Biblical text of Judaism into the Greek and then Latin, later by people who adopted Christianity through those texts. However, Judaism Bible also has history of adoption of earlier texts, which can expand prototype for these words.

So, if medieval history assumes derivation of Azerbaijani literary term *ghazal* in Arabic (or Persian), deeper history discovers prototype(s) for the ghazal as a genre, before being genre in medieval Arabic poetry by bringing links to the ancient C (H) aZaL / HaZal acronym: **Hak+ha+meinu Zikhr+o+nam Liv'rakha**.

Between *kitab* (book) and *khitab* (appeal)

One more link to the ancient time reveals the term *kitab* in Azerbaijani literature.

“Kitabi Dədəm Qorqud ala lisani Taifeyi Oğuzan” (“The book of Dada Qorqud in the language of the Oghuz tribes”) is written on the title page of the epic “The Book of Dada Qorqud”, in which the word “book” being used to classify the genre. This name, in modern languages is used to refer to written text already had a history at that time: *ketuvim* (scripture) was the name of the third part of the Tanakh,⁵ the foundation of the Biblical canon of Judaism. The names of the people telling epic tales vary from time to time according to their exact functions: *bard*, *mizzinger*,

⁴ Через перевод Библии - вавилонской-еврейской и христианской (койне диалект древнегреческого, латинскую Вульгата, на английский и др. средневековые европейские литературные языки)

⁵ *Tanakh* is the Hebrew Bible canon, an acronym of *Torah*, *Nevi'im*, *Ketuvim*.

kobzar, *ashig*, *dervish*, *sagi* (*wise man*), *ozan*, (*ozan* of the ancient period is a parallel variant of the ancient Akkadian *ozan* or *hazzanutu*). Their function is not to write but to tell a tale. To tell a tale implies not only telling, but also listening (the audience, audio, to listen) and the making of a *xitab* [khitab] (appeal; later both *khitab* –appeal and *kitab* – the book). In Aristotle’s theory of the epic, the epic, one of the two different forms, is told directly to an audience.

Ozan-hazzanutu

Dada Qorqud is called as an *ozan* in the text of the epic “The Book of Dada Qorqud”. This well-known term, considered as shaman and relevant to *ashug*, also inherited to Azerbaijani folklore epos. But there is another cultural matrix of this word found at the same area – Semitic *azzanu*. Briefly it looks like this: call for prayer taxonomy includes words

-Adnan-Ozan- Hassan-hazzan-khazan- -hez-in-hez.

Call for ritual *namaz* (Muslim prayer) has an alleomorph **azan** (**əzan**). Here is abjad (consonant) comes together for deciphering the word *azan* - **(h)z**.

Azan (**əzan**) -**(a[dh]an)** has two variants for pronunciation of **[dh]**: like *th* in English, and this **passes** to Russian as [д] and Azerbaijani version as [z], like translation of the words *arud* and *aruz*, *ramadan* and *ramazan*. Related to *azan* word *muedzzin* –Mü+add+in - **d[z]** aslo has this phonetic duality. *Muadzín* is the person who calls for prayer from minaret of the mosque, is analoque for в *cantor* ⁶ in synagogue.

"**Hazanu**," "**hazannu** (Assyrian, Akkadian) is a supervisor, controller, regulator ⁷ (and as an analoque for conductor of orchestra function). Thus, explained the role of *ozan* Dada Qorqud in the life of Oguz society, which differs from the role of other narrators-ashugs: both *ozan* and ashugs compose verses, but the authority of the *ozan* is obviously higher from giving the names till being a judge in some cases. And *dada* (in translation grandfather, also later version – wise man) increases his *ozan* status – no any ashug from Azerbaijani or Turkish poetry is *dada*. Thus, **(h)azzan** -

⁶ Семитское *kantor-cantor*- в латыни - *centurion* (commanding officer)

⁷ “*hzy*- Central Semitic, to see. **chazan**, from Mishnaic Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic *hazzān*, superintendent, cantor, from Akkadian *hazannu*, administrator, mayor, perhaps from earlier **hāziyānum*, overseer, active participle of Proto-Akkadian verb **hazāyūm*, to see.” Semitic roots. Web. Derived 26 April 2015.
<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/ /roots.aspx?type=Semitic&root=%E1%B8%A5zy>

counterpart in Turkic languages (ozan, ashıq) – Arabic – the wisdom image of the (h)ozan Dede Gorgud is also considered *shaman* in pre-medieval Turkic myths.

Hazzan (Ladino) means "who recites prayers"⁸. In the past that the basic needs of the *hazzan*, was to have a pleasing voice, along with knowing the Biblical and liturgical works.⁹ In Judaism, the singer-leader should have also a pleasing voice, the same requirement was to a Catholic clergy cantor.¹⁰ In Talmud, "hazzan" refers to the supervisor, the controller (for the sake of the truth). In Talmud "hazzan" refers to the controller of moral rules.¹¹

Hazzan- also *chazzan* [khazan] (Hebrew)¹², "chazzan or haz-zan also chaz-zan A cantor in a synagogue. Origin of chazzan Mishnaic Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic &hlowdot; azzān, from Akkadian &hlowbrev; azannu, administrator, mayor; see &xlowdot; zy in Semitic roots"¹³

Khamsa-Khamesh-Panchatantra; şair şeir and Šīr HašŠīrīm

X(Kh)amsa (khamesh, Hamesh, Megillot or *five scrolls* of the Ketub(v)im in Judaism) is considered as a continuation of the canonical tradition in the classical Islamic literature. It is known that five principles were already existed in the Indian subcontinent as well, for example, the 3rd century BCE Indian epic "Pancha+tantra" consisted of five principles (pancha- five. tan+tra is the principle or doctrine). Oguz epic "The Book of Dada Qorqud" (BDQ) of the XVI century was composed in a framework composition. The BDQ, which is not an example of classical literature, but folklore, consists of 12 tales, as "Gilgamesh" from the same region, rather than five (khamsa). Although Ketuvim is considered a canonical text, it is considered low

⁸ "The *hazzan* who recited the prayers". *Hazzan*. Jewish Encyclopedia. The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. – Web. Derived 4 September 2014. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7426-hazzan>

⁹ "The *hazzan* who recited the prayers". *Hazzan*. Jewish Encyclopedia. The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. – Web. Derived 4 September 2014. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7426-hazzan>

¹⁰ *Hazzan* Jewish Encyclopedia. The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. – Web. Derived 4 September 2014. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7426-hazzan>

¹¹ *Hazzan* Jewish Encyclopedia. The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. – Web. Derived 4 September 2014. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7426-hazzan>

¹² Совпадает со словами в азерб и турецком **xəzan** (осень , время года, которое по Пушкину, «унылая пора, очей очарованье»), унылый или меланхоличный.

¹³ American Heritage Dictionary. <http://www.yourdictionary.com/chazan> Retrieved 26 April 2015

level from the point of view of purely prophecy (a ruler having a lower status than a prophet).

Therefore, the names of the epic are manifestation of tradition, circulated in the area: like religious books, epic brings together information from earlier periods and transform it. The BDQ is a *kitab or khitab*, *Dada* is a wise man, telling a story. *Hamesh* or Chamesh. While the Indian subcontinent has the tradition of Panchatantra (five writings), the tradition was continued in the medieval Islamic poetry similarly named Khamsa/Hamsa.

One more sample of prototype for Azerbaijani literary term can be considered “The Song of Songs” (in the original is the *Šîr HašŠîrîm* – i.e. poetry). In Azerbaijani and Turkish we have *şair* (poet) and *şeir* (verse).

Brunching translations for *ədəbiyyat*: from stereotype to archetype and prototype

Translation of the word *ədəbiyyat* into English first prompts to tell *literature*, which is widely used in translation. When you think deeper it comes to the next associative line: *ədəbiyyat* (moral rules) – *literature* (related to letter)- *Adapa* (sage)-*Philologia* (love concept) - Classic *Philologia* (ancient Greek, Latin, and sacred for non-Christians, as classic Chinese, Sanscrit or Arabic).

The primary association problem or *stereotype*: *adabiyat* (*ədəbiyyat*) – literature

Let’s consider the words *adabiyat* (*ədəbiyyat* in Azerbaijani) and literature, which in the modern time are considered synonyms. *Litera* means writing, script, learning any language from its written form: *Letter* – *literacy* – *literary text*. If the translation of the term *adabiyat* is literature, for western literary critics, literature primarily is the written text. In the Muslim world, *adabiyat* is firstly based on rules of behaviour (*ədəb* – moral, *-at* is th suffix for plural), sharing of written or oral texts is not the most important. The two different names – *adabiyat* and *literature* - later became synonyms.

Association with recent history or *archetypal association* of *Adapa* – wisdom, a symbol of purity and one of the seven sages

Adabiyat is from the word *adab*, while the direct link between the semiotics of *adab* and *Adapa* (or *Uanna*) from the pre-Islamic era is undoubted. *Adapa* is one of the seven sages mentioned in the era of the Babylonian Kassite dynasty, 14 BCE, and in

the *Gilgamesh* epic. Unknowingly, he did not accept immortality.¹⁴ These seven sages survived the Great Flood. Half-god and half-fish, in some versions they were rulers and in other advisers to the rulers. The sages are also called Abgal (Sumerian)¹⁵ or Apkallu (Akkadian). They were sent to the Sumerians by the God Eridu (Ea in Akkadian) to teach them the arts and skills of civilization – writing, law, considered essential in the European study as a part of the Liberal Arts. So, before Islamic civilization, before the Great Flood in monotheism, Adapa/adap was linked with wisdom and literacy amongst the Semitic peoples and exercised the God's (Anu's)¹⁶ authority on the Earth. This is how the idea is expressed:

“He [Adapa] *possessed intelligence*... [resembles Indian *Om*, Greek *Philologia* from M. Capella's book - RG]

His command like the command of Anu ...

He [the god Ea] granted him a wide ear to reveal the destiny of the land, He granted him wisdom, but he did not grant him eternal life...”¹⁷

¹⁴ Joshua J. Mark. *The Myth of Adapa*. 23 February 2011 - <http://www.ancient.eu/article/216/>
This concerns Adapa's refusal of food offered by the god Anu on the advice of his father Ea. This food would have made him immortal. This is the opposite of Adam and Eve who lost their immortality by eating the forbidden fruit.

¹⁵ Ab - water, gal – great, big, Lu – man. Centuries later this tradition was clearly the source for Nizami's *Iqbalnameh* and *Sharafnameh*, the two parts of his *Iskandernameh*.

¹⁶ For the representation of the sages as a pure fish (*parādu*) or fish-man in Mesopotamian literature, see: Dalley, Stephanie. *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the flood, Gilgamesh, and others*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2000. This version recalls one of the ten main avatars of the God Vishnu in Hinduism (in Sanskrit fish is *matsya*) and a symbol of Jesus Christ in Christianity. In this status in Hinduism half-man half-fish Vishnu saves the first man Manu from the great flood. Manu is part of the God the Creator's Brahman caste. The fish is one of the first symbols of Jesus Christ. Conrad's article “*What is the origin of the Christian fish symbol?*” says that the Greek translation of the symbol is *ichthys* from which an acrostic was made Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter, i.e. Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour. See: Elesha Coffman, Conrad, A closer look at the ancient Ichthys. *What is the origin of the Christian fish symbol?* Web. Derived 15 March 2016.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2008/august/what-is-origin-of-christian-fish-symbol.html> ; In Greek letters this is “Iota Chi Theta Upsilon Sigma” - *Origin of the "Christian" Fish Symbol*” Web. Derived 15 March 2016. http://www.albatrus.org/english/religions/pagan/origin_fish_symbol.htm We should note that acronyms from the abjad-consonant alphabet date back to earlier cultures and the Phoenician alphabet.

¹⁷ Rogers, Robert William, ed. *Cuneiform parallels to the Old Testament*. Eaton & Mains, 1912. Based on this work: Joshua J. Mark. *The Myth of Adapa*.

Prototype for Adabiyat or Philology, phil+o+logia and *janan* as love concept

The term philology emerged in the 7th century. It was formed from the Greek *phil(os)* – “love” and *log(os)* – “word”. *Philologos* is presented as “love of discussion or argument” like an attribute or adjective. The expression *philo+sophos* was used for more *extreme love, for wisdom*. This expression spread in the Middle Ages: there was a philosophical-literary term *Sufism* in classical Islamic civilization, word *sophisticated* in modern European languages, and *sofululuq* (sophisticated) in Azerbaijani. This is a related cluster from both the paradigmatic and semantic points of view.

The term *Philologia* is used in scholarship in the 5th century CE by Martianus Capella in his *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (“On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury”)¹⁸. In this work *Philologia* is a maiden who symbolizes *a love of knowledge* or learning. Because of her knowledge she was given the gift of immortality and united with the god Mercury, who represents life and death¹⁹, trade, merchandise, and communication, eloquence, poetry, even divine.²⁰ The two allegorical images in this story – *Philologia* (an erudite, learned maiden)²¹ and Mercury (a god with the status of a husband) – create **parallel associations** with the Sufi movement in Islam (as platonic beloved symbol-image *canan*, who is along with *şərab* provided to reach The Divine) and the older concept of *mokşa* in Hinduism (freedom from joy and sorrow in the physical life and reaching of *pure divine love*). In this context one more word and its philosophy – *jnana* (canan [janan]?) and *abcađ* cluster **jn** from Indian subcontinent continues *canan* [janan] from Islamic Sufism poetry and *Philologia* from Christian curriculum. *Jñāna* – in Sanscrit means knowledge and soul: Krishna explains in “Bhavat Gida” (“Song of the Gods”), that being existed in any body, he knows the difference between *kshetra* (movement cycle or body) and *kshetraJNa* (who understands soul-*jiv*,²² cycle). Those, who observe the world through prism of *jñāna*-knowledge, who knows difference between *kshetra* (the body) and knowledgable in body (or movement

¹⁸ Stahl, William H. "To a better understanding of Martianus Capella." *Speculum* 40.01 (1965): 102-115.

¹⁹ “Gods, Goddesses, and Mythology”, Volume 6, pp. 862-859-862.

²⁰ In ancient Roman mythology the planet Mercury had the meanings of the god of trade, god of oratory and messenger of the gods. *Merch+andise* – a word used more in American English, and later with the context of Mercury deixis *merc+antile* which acquired a negative meaning. Mercury is also the chemical element quicksilver. Buddhism also pays attention to the planet Mercury and considers it the embodiment of Buddha.

²¹ Bəlkə də *fil* [phil] simvol kimi müdriklik simvolu olmaq da *Philologia* sözü ilə əlaqəlidir.

²² Sancrit *jiv* as soul is also in Russian (жив [jiv]) and means *live, alive*, and if from the same lexical and semantic root as жить [jit’], жизнь [jizn’] (life).

cycle), are capable to get rid of being a servant of the materialistic world and able to reach the highest goal.²³

Canan [janan] image in Sufism and relatives

jin – (Arabic) *hidden* spirit, even physical darkness (*invisible*). **Majnun** – hidden intellect, **janin** – hidden in womb) **jan-** (Azerb) Jan [Yan]; the same is in Latin and Greek:

Jana Jāna - (Diana) – goddess of Moon as **Janus [Yanus]** (Latin) – the god of solar rotation, related with the meaning of *gate*, with beginning and ending (circle), with past and future, with young and old face; hidden passage

January – starting of the year as *gate* of the year

Genius – (Latin) the guardian spirit of all person at the birth; *talented person*, with exceptional ability; **genius-** Russian – *гений*

Jannat - (Arabic) -paradise – through Semitic **Jannah** (garden) and *paradise - pairi-daeza* (compare: *peri/fairy*), from Avestian *garden with walls around to hide it from outside*²⁴

Jahannam – (Arabic) hell with fire *walls* (-ha- is the Semitic suffix for noun, analogue for English article (h)a, an; it is traced also on the name **Johann** (Sebastian Bach – 1685-1750))

Jahan - *world*; also traced in the name of the fifth emperor Mugal Empire Shah Jahan (1592-1666)

Jñāna –knowledge, soul (Sancsrit), yoga (yuḡ+a).

And now there are these words for translation of *adabiyyat*, depending on cultural context:

Adabiyyat – *literature*

Adabiyyat-moral rules- Adapa (way, tool for wisdom, like TanTra?)

Adabiyyat – *literature*

Literature – *Letter* – *Literacy*, written

²³ Словари и энциклопедии на Академике.

²⁴ Edward William Lane. An Arabic-English Lexicon. – Beirut, 1968.

Literature – Philologia (academic discipline?)- *Classic Philologia* (only text in sacred and elite languages?)

Philologia – love concept (allegorical) – a possible analogue is *Sufism* – literary-philosophical trend of medieval classical Islamic poetry with the concept of allegorical love and reaching the Divine through love; levels of attainment as in Hinduism and Sufism in Islamic poetry.

Sufism – love concept (allegorical), a medieval Islamic philosophical-literary trend, believed to be mystical

Sofisticate -thinking, discussing about high intellect? *Philo+Sophia*

Prototype (known) for the term *adabiyyat* – Sumerian *Adapa*; relation to *wisdom*, law, city building, law – *knoelwdge*.

Archetype - moral rules as Ketub-im, xitab – appeal to people, Kitab; parallel Western archetype - literacy

Stereotype (contemporary interpretation) -Islamic literary term

All are connected with *cultural matrix for knowledge and wisdom*.

Thus, interpretation in translation-transmission consist of three steps:

- 1) Modern-day or stereotype interpretation– what is the first translation as the first step-stereotype in modern times and in particular space (for example, in Azerbaijan, Turkey or Iran);
- 2) What is associated with recent history - usually medieval period - archetype?
- 3) Non-associative "relatives" or prototype. This non-associative kinship reveals another method of prismatic translation by means of an abjad alphabet. This part of prismatic translation is mostly remains as an area for comparative religions and linguistics and is not a field relevant in the theory and practice of prismatic translation.²⁵

Conclusions or Methods to reconstruct the journey's itinerary

²⁵ This theory on stereotype-archetype-prototype has been submitted at the workshop on Prismatic Translation proposed by Prof. Sowon Park and Prof. Matthew Reynolds for ICLA-2016 in Vienna.

We can now establish *methods* to reconstruct the itinerary, based on the theory of **presentation and representation** and interpretive methodologies.:

- *first impression (immediate response, primary association)* – modern-day presentation
 - *association (known by majority)* – recent history - re-presentation
 - *non-associative relatives - from otherness - what is behind them*

Abjad-consonant alphabet as a translation method (as in case of *gazal; ozan; janan*)

- *Consonant letters as symbols for words*
- *Words as acronyms or letter combinations*

Present day semantics is the first impression – the stereotype, which makes our life easy.

Association with recent history – looks familiar from the medieval period and considered as an archetype, group of recycled elements, such as plots, images, genres. This resembles language groups such as the Roman, German and Turkic groups in linguistics, but every **archetype** has a prototype.

What was earlier – ProtoTypes, starting points (until we don't know what history is behind), when the first sample was coined or shaped. In linguistics, for example, Indo-European is the prototype for the Romance and German linguistic families, or Semitic for Aramaic, Hebrew and Arabic. It emerged later that there was something common behind them. Terms, such as Proto-Indo-European (PIE), Proto-Semitic (PS) and Proto-Turkic (PT) come onto the agenda. It is the same with literary terms as in linguistics PIE, PS are PTS (ProtoSymbol), PTP (ProtoPlot), PTG (ProtoGenre), PTT (ProtoTerm). They are relative prototypes, because any type assumes an already formed module. There is always something behind an assumed archetype, which turns into a prototype with a new layer of history.

Any translation, being interpretation and re-interpretation, presentation and re-presentation, and thus indicate a new wave or circle for the word.

We have used mainly Azerbaijani literary terms in this research. The reason for using terms from Azerbaijani literary theory and literature is that eastern terms in general, literary terms and literary theory are absent from textbooks, dictionaries and encyclopaedia. It is not written in books' titles whether they concern eastern or western literary theory and literary terms, generally they are simply literary terms. In our opinion, this gap can be filled by considering the translation of some of these terms through the prism of their biography.

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Summary

Stereotype-Archetype- Prototype chain and Historical Semiotics of some Azerbaijani literary terms

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Words, like peoples, travel through their own evolutionary path, which can be retraced in one way or another. Like families and tribes, the words acquiring new shades of meaning crossbreed with other interpretations in fresh soil. Later these shades spill out into new words which, at the first glance, have nothing in common with the previous meaning of their progenitor; for example, the lexical series – *semeni-sema-semela-zemlya* – where each word appears to be original, however different cultures enter in new semiotic dimensions through interpretation and translation.

So, interpreting individual words in translation without any knowledge of their cultural context leads to contradictions.

They are evidence of cultural interweaving between far and close people and regions, and the Caucasian people are the important medium in this whirlpool of transfers of ideas, terms, and beliefs. In this work I suggest retracing the path of several literary terms or words, closely related to literary context of Azerbaijani and Turkish literary studies, such as *ghazal*, *khamisa*, *kitab*, *şeir*, *ozan-hazzanutu*, *ədəbiyyat*, which are not mentioned (as well as other appropriate terms from other eastern cultures) in the Western textbooks.

Keywords: ghazal, khamisa, kitab, Adapa, philologia, janan, cultural matrix, reinterpretation, prototype, prismatic translation

The influence of Nizami Ganjavi's heritage on the shaping of the coherent cultural tradition in Oriental literature

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Introduction

The great Azerbaijani poet and philosopher Nizami Ganjavi has towered across the borders of his nation as well as his works have valued beyond the wealth of a single nation and belongs to spiritual treasure of humanity.

One of the definitions of Ganja, the city in historical Arran (the second city of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan), where Nizami was born (1141) and died (1209), which he has not basically abandoned according to medieval sources, is "treasure". In the world literature treasury Nizami's heritage stands on the top of wealth and eternal value.

In his lifetime, Nizami Ganjavi believed that his works would live for a long time and wrote the following:

*If you wonder after 100 years where he is,
Its every couplet will respond: "He is here".¹*

Not 100, but 800 years have passed, and Nizami's longevity has surpassed his own prediction, and his path leads to eternity.

A genius German poet paid a tribute to high modesty of Persian-speaking classical tradition, which selected and elevated to the highest rank only seven great poets – Firdawsi, Anvari, Nizami, Sa'di, Rumi, Hafiz and Jami: "*If the East preferred only seven of all poets, there are many people who are much better than me among those remaining.*"²

پس از صد سال اگر گویی کجا او ¹
ز هر بیتتی ندا خیزد که ها او (Kolliyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami. P. 361)

² Krimskiy A.Y. P. 2

Since Nizami was not just a poet, but also a mature scientist and was ahead of scientists of his time, he was called a “hakim” – a wise person. Although there were quite a few genius persons at the time, only two people, apart from Nizami, had this title: Abu Ali ibn Sina and Omar Khayyam.

Sometimes Nizami affectionately mentioned his son Muhammad, who was born in 1174, in his poems. Today no-one knows how Muhammad’s family extended and whether Nizami had grandchildren or great-grandchildren. However, children of Nizami’s creativity – his poems – are still fresh, living and known to everyone as they were eight centuries ago. This is the great power of the word. Nizami has a couplet in which he gives his son an advice:

*I see that someone wants to guide you
I see poetic habits in you
But don't hang on to poetry and poetic art
Because its most beautiful thing is the most deceitful
Do not seek glory in this art (poetry)
Because this art ends with Nizami
Even if poetry has a higher position
You'd better take up a useful science*³

Of course, Nizami, who was a wise person, understood very well that poetry did not start or end with him. But why did he try to discourage his son in whom he clearly saw signs of a poet? Because he was highly professional, and if his son were to become a poet, he wanted to see him at least as good as Nizami himself. Perhaps he also sensed that being Nizami is a miracle and not a fate of everyone. That's why he encouraged his son, who did not seem able to surpass him in poetry, to engage in a science which was more in need. Nizami also offered another formula of the same thought:

*Good pack-saddle making is
Better than being a bad hat-maker*⁴

گرچه سر سروریت بینم³
و آیین سخنوریت بینم
در شعر میبچ و در فن او
چون اکذب اوست احسن او
زین فن مطلب بلند نامی
کان ختم شده ست بر نظامی
نظم ارچه به مرتبت بلند است
آن علم طلب که سود مند است
پالان گری به غیبت حد⁴

(Kolliyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Leyli va Majnun). P.462)

Nizami is famous with his "Khamsa", which consisted of five masnavis – poems: "Makhzan al-Asrar" – "Treasury of Secrets" written in 1178, "Khosrow and Shirin" written in 1180, "Layla and Majnun" completed in 1189, "Haft Peykar" – "Seven Beauties" – created in 1197 and "Iskandarnamah", which was completed in 1201 and consisted of two parts – "Iqbalnameh" and "Sharafnameh". In fact, Nizami combined his five works under common title "Khamsa" (the Five).

Had Nizami lived longer, he would have written several more poems and his series of poems might consist of 7, 8 or 9 pieces. However, his life sufficed to write only five poems. and after Nizami's death, researches who sensed an organic link between these five poems and saw that the poet's concept began from the Treasury of Secrets and ended with "Iskandarnamah", initially united these five works under the title of "Panj Ganj" – five treasures. Later, these two words were replaced with the Arab word "Khamsa", which means "Five".

Nizami Ganjavi enormously influenced the development of literature and cultural life of the period coming after him. The themes and ideas of his works have been further followed and elucidated during eight centuries after him. Hundreds of poets in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Near and Middle East and even in India located further away from Nizami's homeland reiterated and adapted his thoughtful heritage to local conditions in various languages One can hardly find a poet with similar influence in world literature.

✖

The spread of Nizami's influence over long distances and in such a short time span in the era of slow communication speed and handwritten manuscripts is amazing. If the comparatively quick spread of this influence in Caucasus, Central Asia, Iran and Anatolia is understandable regarding the closeness of distance, then the emergence of responses to Nizami in India earlier than in the places neighboring to his homeland is quite paradoxical. The connection generated via Nizami between India and Azerbaijan is to be considered one of the major factors facilitating the formation of the common cultural environment between Caucasus and India, as

well as Central Asia and India. It is worth to briefly describe the scope of his influence in far away India.

The prose and the poetry written in Persian are inseparable parts of the Indian literature developed over eight centuries in about twenty other local languages. Meanwhile, Indian Persian literature is an important and organic part of the common literature created in Persian in 9-20th centuries in the huge territory from Central Asia to South Caucasus, from Iran to India. While developing over centuries, common Persian literature acquired a number of shared features. The greatest word-wizards which were considered a pride of their national literatures have enabled their nations to value this international Persian language literature as their own national classics.

The creation and formation of Indian Persian literature coincides with 10-11th centuries. The ruler of Gaznavid Empire Sultan Mahmud (998-1030) beginning from year 1000 launched its assaults to India. Having launched 17 assaults, he occupied the big part of North India and included it into his large empire covering such territories as Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Although Sultan Mahmud was Turk by origin, Persian was an official language in Gaznavid realm and the king was fond of this literature. Already in 11-12 centuries such magnificent poets as Abulfaj Runi Datta, Ali Hajviri Lahori, Ata ibn Yagub and Masud Sad Salman gained popularity in Indian Persian Literature of 11-12th centuries.

The person who was the first to write his response to the poems by Nizami thus laying the foundations of Nizami literary school was Amir Khosrow Dehlavi (1253-1325), great Indian poet and musician. His chain of poems entitled “Matla al-anvar” (“Source of lights”), “Shirin and Khosrow”, “Majnun and Leyli”, “Ayine-yi Iskandari” (“Mirror of Iskandar”), “Hasht behisht” (“Eight paradises”) comprised two thousand couplets to which he wrote five *naziras*. His poems became the outset of the literary tradition having no equivalent in world literature. Not counting tiny additions and amendments with no principal feature, Amir Khosrow Dehlavi preserved the structural peculiarities, plot lines, set of characters within the frames put by the genius from Ganja. Amir Khosrow who have put a skillful response to this highest standard of Nizami actually founded a test system and the examine formula for the future Persian literature. In the following centuries writing responses to Nizami has been perceived in the Middle East as one of the unwritten rules for joining the cohort of the great poets.

Despite the fact that in Persian literature there are such types of benefiting by poets one from the other as “*nazira*”, “*taglid*”, “*tatabbu*”, “*istikbal*”, “*javab*” as well as innumerable examples written in this style, the sense and essence of writing responses to Nizami are outstanding. Previously, this experience was formed as a genre with

peculiar qualities and signs. Secondly, this process is not merely an issue of literature and art, but also a problem of reflection of world outlook, esthetic ideals and the concepts of national development in art work which transforms into peculiar thinking system.

“Khamasa” by Nizami Ganjavi and the school established by Amir Khosrow Dehlavi on that foundation rendered invaluable credits in the cause of uniting the humans under the humanist ideals, bringing together various nations on to the supreme moral values, promoting mutual understanding, collaboration and amity between nations and countries.

The first attempt in writing a comprehensive response to “Khamasa” after Amir Khosrow in Indian Persian literature was made by Sheikh Abul Feyz Fayzi (1547-1595), the poet from Agra. In response to Nizami he planned to write his *masnavis* like “Marakiz-advar” (Conjunction of seasons), “Suleiman and Bilgeyis”, “Horse shoe and Lap”, “Haft kishvar” (“Seven lands”), “Akbarnameh”, however he has done only three of them, others were left incompletd⁵.

Muhsin Fani, Kashmiri poet of the middle 17th century (died in 1670), succeeded in completing his four *masnavis* envisaged with regard to “Khamasa” of Nizami. In skillfully written poems like “Meykhaneh”, “Masdar al-Asar” (“Source of influence”), “Naz o niyaz” (“Coquetry and entreaty”), “Haft akhtar” (“Seven stars”) Fani managed to add certain innovations to the tradition of “Khamasa”⁶.

“Khamasa” writing tradition including in Indian Persian literature provided for the followers of Nizami a freedom of writing responses not precisely to all five *masnavis*. For instance, Panjabi poet Sadig wrote his work “Shovgnameh” completed in 1763 to praise the love between Mirza and Sahiba in the mode and style of Nizami as a *nazira* to his master.

Concerning the speedy development of Azerbaijani-Indian relations, 16th century is more abundant. Muhammad Bayram khan (murdered in 1561), who was by origin from Azerbaijani Turkic tribe *Baharli*, was among the influential personalities of Moghul Empire. He was one of the closest associates of Humayun (1530-1556) and the patron of the future emperor Akbar Shah. Muhammad Bayram khan wrote wonderful verses in Turkic and Persian along with serving as supreme commander and grand vizier. He promoted the formation of various literary collections, and the people of art, poets and scholars from Iran, Central Asia and Caucasus were invited

⁵ Aliyev G.Y. *Temi i syujeti Nizami*. P. 213-217

⁶ Aliyev G.Y. *Persoyazichnaya literatura Indii*. P. 136-139

to India in his period⁷. The *tazkira*, anthology entitled “Magalat as-shuara” (“The conversations of poets”) and edited by Mir Alishir Kani (1727-1789), provides an information about almost 700 Indian poets leading literary activities till the 18th century, and considerable part of them has been writing within the area of influence of Nizami literary school⁸.

Among the personas being a bridge between Indian and Azerbaijani literatures Saib Tabrizi (1601-1676) enjoys distinguished position. Being among the founders of literary line named “Indian style” Saib along with gaining too much popularity in India at that time, was known as one of the vehement agitators and spreaders of Indian Persian literature in Near and Middle East.

The Nizami influence to Indian Persian literature continued from 12-13th centuries continues till the 20th century. Celebrated

Indian poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal (1847-1938) praises utopist town of Maragdin identifiable with city of liberty, equality and welfare described in “Iskandarnameh” by Nizami.

Asaf Jafari (died in 1612), who remarkably contributed to Indian Persian literature, Malik Muhammad Kummī and Hakim Ruknaddin Masud Kashani (conducted literary activities in 16-17th centuries), Agha Muhammad Tahir Razi Vasli, Laig Jaunpuri, Sheyda Mehdi bin Muhammad, Tabi Golkondavi, Muhammad Gulu Salim, Sai (17th century), Arshi and Hajji Rabi Anjab Maghrebi (18th century), Moulavi Muhammad Abdurrauf Vahid and Abul Asim Abd al-Halim (19th century), Muhammad Hadi Mirza Rusva (1857-1931) the final great founder of Urdu realistic prose in India, Kartar Singh Duggal⁹, 20th century Indian play writer – all have successfully continued Nizami literary school through the responses written to the *masnavis* of “Khamasa”.

Heritage of Nizami Ganjavi has always enjoyed indispensable position in the system of Indian-Azerbaijani relations which continued in terms of regular reciprocal impact thus acting as one of the major directions of those positive relations. In India, Amir

⁷ Guseynov R. P. 571-610

⁸ Aliyev G.Y. Persoyazichnaya literature Indii. P. 185

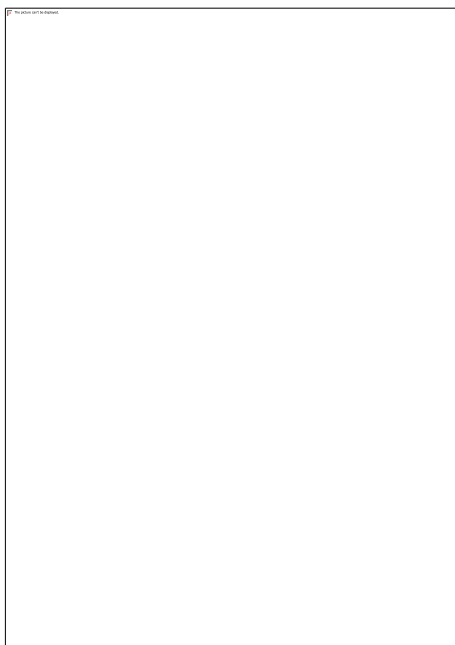
⁹ Serebryakov I. P. 153

Khosrow Dehlavi created the first five, which was a response to Nizami's poems, laying the foundation of following Nizami's tradition and of the Nizami's school. That's to say with the *Khamsa* he created, Amir Khosrow defined the formula of writing a response to Nizami: preservation of the plot, characters and basic principles - the person who responds should demonstrate his skills in the manner of expression, literary proficiency and polishing the words.

To comprehend the essence of school of Nizami and closely notice the reasons of the sphere of its influence and its power we should focus on one of the poet's poems. All poems of Nizami have been read with love, many efforts towards writing replies to each of them have been undertaken, and however the attractiveness of one of them has appeared much more. The poem about the sorrowful love between Leyli and Majnun has been accepted closer to hearts and the replies written on this topic are more numerous.

For never was a story of more woe

*Than this of Juliet and her Romeo*¹⁰



William Shakespeare was characterizing the famous love tragedy of Europe in such way. He was definitely right, as every story of failed love in itself is an unrepeatably sea of sorrow with invisible coasts. Nevertheless, centuries before the literary creation of "Romeo and Juliet" by Shakespeare, a girl called Leyli and a boy called Qais who had turned to Majnun due to his passionate love existed in real life.¹¹ The sources confirm their historical personalities¹². Prior to 12th century, i.e. in Nizami era there were fables in folk literature about the ill-fated love between Leyli and Majnun, so a part of those hearsays had been reflected in three written sources. Naturally, when writing his very popular poem Nizami had benefitted both from the Leyli and Majnun fables in folklore and evidence from three important sources.

An author of the oldest one among these sources is Ibn Quteyba who was born in Merv, taught in Baghdad and died there in 890. In his book "Kitab al-shiir va-l-

¹⁰ Boston Public Library. *Romeo and Juliet*. P. 91

¹¹ See for comparison: Krachkovskiy I.Y. P. 183

¹² Asadullayev S. P. 16-18.

shuara” (“Book about verse and poets”) in accordance with the previous sources he makes words on the young fellow called Qais ibn Muwallah stating that he has obtained the level of insanity due to love¹³.

The fables put forward by Ibn Quteyba describe two children grazing two camel cubs. Majnun, an intelligent and handsome fellow who knows a lot of verses by heart, falls in love with this girl. His love reaches such a degree that he begins running away from people and wandering in desert among the animals. Even when someone told him something on coming across him, he did not hear, or understand, or reply to those words. Only when hearing the name of Leyli, he revived and communicated with his interlocutor.

In his book Ibn Quteyba puts in row the fables of Leyli and Majnun collected from the oral and written sources of 7-8 centuries as well as the verses of Majnun like sparse pieces¹⁴.

Abu-l-Faraj Isfahani who has lived a bit later Ibn Quteyba, in his work “Kitab al-aghani” (“Book of songs”) not only repeats the main fables and verses that the latter owned but also going a little further speaks in detail about the gift of poet of Majnun in addition to his love. Abu-l-Faraj has conducted genuine research on this issue as well as accurately pointed out the majority of the authors and sources he had been benefitting from¹⁵. He informs that although many girls had confessed their love to Majnun, the latter never became close to anyone thus cherishing love solely to Leyli. Meanwhile, Abu-l-Faraj informs of the poetic nature of Leyli along with Majnun and writes about their correspondence through verses. In the opinion of Abu-l-Faraj there was nobody or nothing in the world nicer than Leyli in Majnun’s eyes. He demonstrated special kindness only towards gazelles in deserts due to their reminding him of Leyli. In line with one fable in “Book of songs”, on coming across the hunters who had hunted gazelles through spreading nets, Majnun set free these animals having given the hunters the sheep in exchange of their hunt¹⁶.

The third collection of the stories and verses relating to Majnun which emerged in the Middle Age is entitled “Divan-i Majnun” and it was composed by Abu Bakr al-Valibi (12th century)¹⁷. One of the most interesting stories in this collection is related with introduction of Majnun to Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (685-705) and his recitation of one of his popular odes. Caliph admires the verse and his desire to

¹³ M.J. de Goeje. Ibn Qotaiba. P. 355

¹⁴ Bertels Y.E. P. 242-245

¹⁵ Abu-l-Faraj al-Isfahani. Kniga pesen. P. 12-13

¹⁶ Abu-l-Faraj Isfahani. Rassказы o Kayse ibn Mulavvakhe. P.198

¹⁷ Krachkovskiy I.Y. P.188-189

reward Majnun with valuable gifts encounters poet's refusal and Majnun leaves away. After a while the caliph's messengers riding after him deliver Majnun the caliph's order of not going towards the tribe of Leyli. Majnun informs them of the death of caliph who has given that order. In reply to the messengers' question "Why do you think so?" Majnun says: "Birds let me know". The messengers do not take seriously these words and perceive them as another delirium of the maddened young man. However, when hearing the real death of caliph on their return, they get amazed. And meanwhile Majnun meets two riders who inform the lover of the death of his beloved. Majnun requests the riders to take him to the grave of Leyli. They meet this request and as soon as Majnun reaches the grave of Leyli he dies there on hugging the ground¹⁸.

Prior to Nizami the names of Leyli and Majnun are cursorily mentioned in the verses of several Azerbaijani poets. The 11th century poets like Baba Kuhu Bakuvi, Qatran Tabrizi, Baba Tahir Uryan recall these doves of love as a symbol of the purest love. That Nizami Ganjavi was the first to choose the most impressive and proper ones among the scattered fables arranging them like the beads along the single plot line and giving birth to the perfect love story, demonstrates the literary audacity of poet.

That Nizami Ganjavi did not depend on any palace and lived his simple life in liberty is an aspect distinguishing him from most of his predecessors and contemporaries. On the contrary, when the necessity appeared, palace came to him and Nizami did not display indifference towards the orders on certain universal themes coming from palace. So "Leyli and Majnun" also was written on the order of Shirvanshah Akhsitan¹⁹. In the meantime, Shirvanshah had not requested the creation of the work with a love story, but concretely on the indicated theme. Therefore, to some extent, the role of Akhsitan in upraising the theme of "Leyli and Majnun" into the great literature piece should not be undervalued.

Azerbaijan of 12th century did not lack the mighty poets, prosaists and scholars. Ganja was dwelling place of Qasym Ganjavi, Nizami's brother Qivami Mutarrizi, poet's friend of school years Abu Bakr ibn al-Ustad²⁰, five female *rubai*-masters coming together in the poetesses' assembly headed by Mahsati. In Shirvan such poets as Abu-l-ula, Khagani, Falaki, Qiyasaddin, Izzaddin lived. There were also Mujiradin in Beylagan, Nizam and other powerful word-masters in Tabriz. This was among the most striking periods of Azerbaijani literature and actually each of those

¹⁸ Bertels Y.E. P. 248

¹⁹ Kolliyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Leyli va Majnun). P. 454-457

²⁰ Meredith-Owens G.M. P. 435-441

poets deserved to be the genius of their century via the power of the art. Nonetheless, they were unlucky in one moment that they were contemporaries of Nizami.

In the same poetic atmosphere with Nizami they were like stars surrounding the sun. As if the bright light of the sun made their rays invisible thus shadowing willy-nilly their essentially great creativity. But on the other hand, the performing in the same literary circle with Nizami was a significant factor which always mobilized them thus encouraging these persons to write more and more skillfully. In existence of Nizami, ordering such a monumental theme as “Leyli and Majnun” which had not been so far elucidated in comprehensively in literature was another acknowledgement of the greatness of the poet.

“Leyli and Majnun” was reborn in the pen of Nizami, this love gained immortality in the true sense of the word. “Khamsa” and “Leyli and Majnun” poems by Nizami currently have numerous copies in book-storages, manuscript holdings and archives in various countries of the world, so one cannot find the entirely similar two copies. As usual, the number of chapters in these diverse copies of “Leyli and Majnun” varies between 67 and 70. In the printed copies the number of chapters sometimes is reduced, with no prejudice to the impact power of the work.

Majnun’s father takes the last measure in order to put his son to the right path and make him forget this love. So, he takes his son to Kaaba, the holiest Moslem sanctuary in Mecca. Here he tells Majnun to repent and pray to God for forgetting Leyli who made him lose his mind.

However, instead of repenting and giving up Leyli, Majnun begs God to exite this love even much more. And God heard his prayer. Time was passing, and this love did not cool down but seethed thus teaching the new generations to love with devotion and fidelity.



Notwithstanding Indian poet of 13th century Amir Khosrow Dehlavi who was the first to write a reply to "Leyli and Majnun" by Nizami thus creating the second similar poem on this topic, the cognominal distich of Azerbaijani poet Muhammad Fuzuli (1494-1556) has been awarded the highest praise among the dozens of "Leyli and Majnun" written in Persian, Azerbaijani, Old Uzbek (Chagatai), Ottoman, Kurdish and other languages. The above-mentioned poem of Fuzuli overshadows other "Leyli and Majnun" s with its particular lyricism. It is no coincidence that in 1908 the founder of the contemporary Azerbaijani professional music Uzeyir Hajibekov composed "Leyli and Majnun", the first opera of his nation and in the East based namely on the indicated poem of Fuzuli.

Nevertheless, the distichs with the same plot written in Persian by Ali ibn Nasir Tabrizi, Muhammad Qasym Movji, Hossein Zamiri, Shah Jahan Hindu, Mirza Muhammad Khan Kirmanshahi as well as in Turkic by Alishir Navai, Hamdi, Khalifa, Sevdai, Khayali, Chakari each have a unique value in the row of "Leyli and Majnun" theme in the Oriental poetry. Although the doors of all palaces were open to Nizami during his lifetime, he stayed away from palaces. He preferred to live a quiet and independent life. However, his door was open to anyone and he invited everyone to enter this door and benefit from it. In fact, this invitation, which Nizami made eight centuries ago, is still valid, and anyone who opens that door still benefits from it:

*Do not close my door to anyone
Because it is no good to close the door
Since the word names us a "sea"
Our door should be open like the sea
Let those who seek come
And see the door of the king of poets*²¹

Although the time destroyed the most magnificent palaces of shahs, Nizami's palace of words, despite its age, is becoming fresher, more splendid and more attractive instead of becoming dilapidated.

One of the main reasons for this is probably the fact that Nizami created his poems totally in the name of humanity, respect for people and love.

²¹ در مابه روی کسی در میند

که در بستن در بود ناپسند

چو ما را سخن نام دریا نهاد

در ما چو دریا بیاید گشاد

رها کن که آیند جوینگان

ببینند در شاه گوینگان (Kolliyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Sharafnameh). P. 1094)

*How can a person who creates a human (monument) from stone
Not admire people!*²²

He seems to be saying these words to himself. Since Nizami always admired people and worshiped their highest qualities, he managed to create human monuments from words.

*If you are human, mix with humans,
Because people go well with each other*²³

This idea – the principle of humanism – is the core of Nizami’s art. Nizami carried this high idea from his first to his last rhyme and continued it from his first to his last poem. In terms of reading and understanding, Nizami is one of the most difficult medieval authors. The reason is not that Nizami’s language is complicated. No, although Nizami wrote his poems eight centuries ago, his language has little difference from modern Persian except for some archaic words. What makes Nizami difficult to understand is that he worked on every line and couplet with extremely high precision, was able to include several meanings of one word inside one line and one couplet and combined several meanings in every line. For this reason, it is impossible to just read and forget about him. It is necessary to read every word and word combination in every line and couplet again and again, try to find new meanings and try to understand the general idea of the couplet and fragment in accordance with the new meaning²⁴.

Nizami’s poems are a kind of encyclopedia of the 12th century – the time when the poet lived. “Khamse” can be regarded as the most reliable source for studying the way of thinking of that period, its public-political environment, architecture, art and economic life²⁵.

Since Nizami himself knew better than anyone else what sort of deep heritage he left to the reader, he did not omit to warn that these pieces cannot be regarded and be read just for entertainment:

*I said this and left, but the story remained
This story cannot be read just for fun*²⁶

²² کسی در بند مردم چون نباشد

که او از سنگ مردم می تراشد (Kolliyyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Khosrov va Shirin). P.250)

²³ به مردم در آمیز اگر مردمی

که با آدمی خوگرست آدمی (Kolliyyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Sharafnameh). P.1032)

²⁴ See: A key to the treasure of the Hakim.

²⁵ Ocherki istorii rasprostraneniya islamskoy tsivilizatsii. PP.451, 454

²⁶ من این گفتم و رفتم و قصه ماند

Even the best experts on Nizami have not been able to fully discover all the meanings of Nizami's couplets and have acknowledged that. The meanings of Nizami's words are countless, and if commentaries were to be written, it would be necessary to write whole Khamsas for every couplet of the Khamsa. Therefore, Nizami rightfully says:

*The commentary on the word is greater than the word itself*²⁷

What makes Nizami a poet of global significance is, of course, not just his outstanding ability to manage words with magic and change their forms and meanings. This is just one of the conditions that make Nizami Ganjavi a genius. Nizami was a person who had read a lot. He did not read only Turkic, Persian and Arab sources. As he said himself, he was aware of various Christian and Jewish sources. If not his knowledge of several languages gave him the ability to read those books, it is possible that he familiarized himself with sources in other languages through third party. Such diverse knowledge and world outlook gave

him an opportunity to create a literary world that covered the entire cultural world. Nizami was a resident of the renaissance city of Ganja, and he was one of those who created and maintained the Oriental Renaissance with all his existence and works. Nizami was a genius who was far away from national boundaries and understood his belonging to humanity. The choice of the main characters of couplets is a graphic example of this. This character can be Persian, Arab or Greek. Nizami's goal was not to show what nation or country his character came from. His intention was to find a high literary solution to his idea or goal. But it is no accident that both the main characters and other people in his poems are representatives of dozens of

Kolliyyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Egbalnameh). P. 1453) بیازی نمی باید این قصه خواند

(Kolliyyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Makhzan al-asrar). P. 19) شرح سخن بیشتر است از سخن²⁷

nationalities. Nizami does this deliberately. He demonstrates once again that he writes about people and for people, and his poems should be read not just by one nation, but many nations. And this was the end result anyway.

Nizami is one of the classics whose poems have been translated into many other languages. But there is no doubt that in the course of time, more and more languages will join these languages.

With his works, Nizami created not just a literary model that will be repeated for centuries, but also a model of thinking, nationhood, spirituality and statehood. The ideals promoted by Nizami eight centuries ago are still in demand. Humanity is still struggling to promote even more the qualities that Nizami wanted to see in people and society eight centuries ago.

The city that Nizami described in his last poem – the part of “Iskandarnameh” called “Iqbalnameh” – was a society he saw in his dreams and wanted to become a reality. Whatever progress humanity has made on this path since the time of Nizami, Nizami Ganjavi also made an undeniable contribution to this together with other world geniuses. In this city, everyone is equal, and respect for human rights is the norm in this city and society. Money has already been abolished. There is no police because there is no need for that as there are no violations of the law in a conscious and disciplined society.

*We are peaceful and faithful people
 We have not deviated from the truth even a hair's width
 We have no dealings behind the curtain
 We have nothing other than honest things to do
 If a weak person asks us for help, we will extend our hand
 If we are in trouble, we patiently wait
 We don't have more property than anybody else
 We have divided all our property equally
 We all take each other equally
 If someone else is sad, we don't rejoice
 We are not afraid of thieves
 We don't have supervisors in cities or guards in the streets
 We have no key or lock in our homes
 No-one guards our cattle
 We don't count gold and silver
 Because no-one needs them
 We don't eat a lot like oxen or donkeys
 Nor do we refuse the food that we like*

*None of us dies young
Only old people who lived a long-life die*²⁸

We still have not seen the day when everyone can benefit from the world and life Nizami wished. But humanity was longing for such a happy life for eight centuries, 1,000 years and millennia ago. Not only did Nizami urge next generations to wish such a life and society, he also showed them ways of establishing such a society. Therefore, the light of Nizami's word is still needed today and will be needed tomorrow. Nizami will always be one step ahead of us and will always invite us to a brighter future.

One of the most significant qualities that makes Nizami exceptional is an establishment by him the patterns which have been bringing closer as well as uniting the countries and nations through both his mode of life and his all works. Nizami via his knowledge, language skills and the books which he had read was a successor of science and culture that had been existing prior to him. Namely due to the rising based on such a reliable foundation he could have left after him as a keepsake such a wealth that the most people both in the East and the West accepted themselves to be a rightful heir of this heritage. And this tradition continues.

Cultures had mixed together in his literary activities and "Khamsa" of Nizami became some kind of invitation and appeal to the successive word-masters of the

28 گروه ضعیفان دین پروریم
سر موی از راستی نگذاریم
نداریم بر پرده کج بسیج
بجز راست بازی نداریم هیچ
چو عاجز بود یار یاری کنیم
چو سختی رسد برد باری کنیم
ندارد ز ما کس ز کس مال پیش
همه راست قسمیم در مال خویش
شماریم خود را همه همسران
نخندیم بر گریه دیگران
ز دزدان نداریم هرگز هراس
نه در شهر شحنه نه در کوی پاس
نداریم در خانها قفل و بند
نگهبان نه با گلو و با گوسفند
فریب زر و سیم را در شمار
نیاریم و ناید کسی را بکار
نه بسیار خوریم چون گاه و خر
نه لب نیز بر گشته از خشک وتر
ز ما در جوانی نمی رد کسی
مگر پیر کو عمر دارد بسی

(Kolliyyat-e Khamse-ye Nezami (Egbalnameh). P. 1427)

most various nations. That everlasting invitation and appeal which is gaining more and more urgency over time state that the genuine motherland of human being is a common environment generated by cultural and moral values of his inner world rather than the geography on the ground.

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Cultural Transfers between the Caucasus area, the Ancient Near East and the Eurasian Steppes, from the Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age (6th-3rd mill. BC)

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Introduction

From the very remote past we have evidence of the movement of populations and of exchanges of material, goods or ideas. It is, apparently, one of the specific features of humankind and a major contribution to its extraordinary diversity and complexity. Though mountains, and especially the Great Caucasus, have often been considered as barriers and/or shelters for local groups with their own languages, numerous passes have also been used to cross them over.

In this article we will present several evidences of cultural contacts between the Caucasus area, the ancient Near East and the northern steppes starting from the Neolithic period, in the 6th millennium, until the Early Bronze Age, around the middle of the 3rd millennium. As we will see, these interconnections may have been due, in some cases, to migrations, either of small groups of merchants or of larger population movements, but, until more research on a DNA is done, this cannot be confirmed.

Our evidences rely mainly on material culture, mostly on pottery, one of the most ubiquitous materials found in the course of archaeological excavations. Pottery, or what it contained, can easily be exchanged and its decoration can be copied, but it is usually considered as a cultural marker. However, as we all know, pots rarely equal people. Similarly, languages cannot be reduced to an ethnos or to genes. Furthermore, even in the case of large migrations or dramatic climatic changes, the local population/culture never totally disappears as shown by the numerous evidences of its remains in the succeeding period(s), resulting in some kind of hybridization. Interpretations on the meaning of these cultural “transfers” are, therefore, difficult and very sensitive to handle: they can only be presented as hypothetical. This is particularly important to underline and to remembering the case of the Caucasus, an area that is considered by some as the homeland of the Indo-

Europeans (Gamkrelidze et Ivanov 1984) and of the Hurrians known through Mesopotamian texts.

The Neolithic Period

Compared with Northern Mesopotamia and Eastern Anatolia, the first evidences of Neolithic communities in southern Caucasus date to a rather late period, not before the beginning of the 6th millennium, and present already a full-blown culture with a mudbrick, circular architecture, pottery, and already domesticated cereals and fauna. This is the “Shomu-Shulaveri culture”, named after the two first type-sites that have been excavated, ShomuTepe in western Azerbaijan and Shulaveris-Gora in Eastern Georgia. Two sites of this culture recently excavated, Aknashen in the Araxes valley (Armenia) (Badalyan et Harutyunyan 2014) and Hacı Elamxanlı Tepe in the Middle Kura valley (Azerbaijan) (Nishiaki et al. 2013) give, for the earliest levels, radiocarbon dates around 6000 BC and painted pottery shards that are made of not local clay and painted in a similar style as those of northern Mesopotamia (“Samarra” style). Research on the communities who lived previously in this area has led, up to now, to the discovery of several caves or shelters with hunters-gatherers who do not present direct relations with what follows (Amirkhanov 1987, Petrosyan et al. 2014).

Several indications tend to show that the 8.2ka year climatic event (i.e. around 6200 BC) led to severe transformations in the Near East and that this might be at the origins, a few centuries later, of the foundation of this Shomu-Shulaveri culture that extends between the Araxes and the Middle Kura valley (Lyonnet et al. 2016). The wealth of the local flora and fauna, or of the different raw materials present in the Lesser Caucasus, has also often been advanced to explain the relations between these different areas. Active research is being done on these different themes to prove or refute these proposals. We are also working on the ancient DNA¹ from skeletons coming from a collective grave dating to ca. 5700 BC discovered at Mentesh Tepe in the Kura Valley (Azerbaijan) in order to track the origins of this population.

Besides the circular mudbrick architecture, also known in the Halaf culture of northern Mesopotamia (though, it is, there, usually associated with a rectangular one), other evidences point at relations with this Mesopotamian area in the course of the Shomu-Shulaveri culture development, like the presence of similar grooved stones (Arimura 2010), of applied decoration frequent in early Neolithic cultures, or of Halaf pottery shards along the Araxes river at Aratashen in Armenia (Palumbi

¹ Research made by C. Bon, Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle / CNRS, Paris.

2007) and at Kül'Tepe in Nakhchivan (Abibullaev 1982). Clearly, relations were maintained for several centuries between all these areas.

Nevertheless, despite these intrusions and/or the continuity of exchanges, the Shomu-Shulaveri culture developed its own character, with a specific rich bone and lithic industry. It also established links with other cultures farther east towards the Iranian borderlands (Lyonnet 2017b).

For yet unknown reasons, traces of sedentary life disappear after ca. 5300 BC and were probably replaced by a semi-mobile life.

The Chalcolithic Period

The rare evidences of human life we have for the next thousand years consist mainly in pits and post-holes with a light architecture and little material. Only one site, at Sioni in eastern Georgia, in the piedmont of the Lesser Caucasus, presents a round stone architecture. This data let suppose a possible semi-mobile way of life. However, many of these discoveries come from a period when the practice of radiocarbon dates was not used, and we lack firm data on which to rely. The few known recent dates place them from 4800 to ca. 4000 BC. The pottery shows some continuity with that of the Shomu-Shulaveri culture, together with the introduction of new shapes (Lyonnet 2017a, in press). This material culture has been named "Sioni", on the basis of the first site that was excavated. No sign of exterior relationship is visible at that time, except, probably at the end of the period, relations with the northern side of the Great Caucasus, with similar pottery found at Zamok (Korenevskij 1998).

Recent discoveries, however, have shown that, during the last third of the 5th millennium (from about 4350 BC to 4100 BC), at the time when some of these Sioni sites are attested, a few settlements, like Mentesh Tepe, present a totally different layout, with a very well built rectangular mudbrick architecture previously unknown in this area but recalling that of tripartite buildings in Mesopotamia (Lyonnet et al. 2012). The abundant pottery production found at this site also presents features, both in shape and decoration, known in northern Mesopotamia, though it is not totally identical. The "Sioni" pottery is present there but represents only the cooking ware (Lyonnet 2012). The site testifies of important local metallurgical activities based on copper sources that lie not far from it, in the Lesser Caucasus (Courcier et al. 2016), but we have not been able yet to identify precisely why and by who such a settlement was established.

A few centuries later, during the first half of the 4th millennium, other settlements attest of an even more visible northern Mesopotamian influence, like Leilatepe in Azerbaijan (Narimanov 1987) or Berikldeebi in Georgia (see fig. 1). This is again evident in the architecture and in the pottery, which is, now, totally identical to that known at sites in northern Syria or Iraq (Akhundov 2007, Makharadze 2007). There too, metallurgy seems to have played an important role. But a few contemporary sites, like Boyuk Kesik, show a more local/traditional architecture with oval shapes (Museibli 2007), perhaps pointing at the cohabitation of different populations over the same territory.

At the same time, in the same southern Caucasus area, kurgans (tombs under a stone tumulus) make their first apparition. Such funerary customs had started to appear a little earlier in the steppes north of the Caucasus and are usually linked with mobile groups (Rassamakin 1999). At Soyuq Bulaq, close to Boyuk Kesik in western Azerbaijan, in a rather rich tomb of this kind, beads of gold, silver-copper alloy, lapis-lazuli, carnelian and paste have been discovered together with a copper dagger and a stone scepter with an equid head (Lyonnet et al. 2008). The pottery found in these kurgans also clearly relates to that from the Leilatepe culture. From the several kurgans that have been excavated, it seems that no full skeletons have been retrieved and that a possible ritual of exposure was already in use at that time (Lyonnet 2009). Similar kurgans are known at SéGirdan, south of Lake Urmia in Iran (Muscarella 2003), and in Georgia, not far from Berikldeebi (Makharadze 2007).

It is also at that time that the Maikop culture, essentially known through its kurgans, develops north of the Great Caucasus. Very few settlements are known of this culture, and for long, it has been wrongly dated to a much later time (Andreeva 1977, Lyonnet 2000). Nevertheless, relations with the Leilatepe culture and northern Mesopotamia are obvious and it is now dated also to the first half of the 4th millennium, both on the basis of radiocarbon dates and of comparisons in the material culture (Trifonov 1996; Lyonnet 2000, 2007). Maikop kurgans are also famous for their incredible wealth in gold, silver and exotic beads.

To sum up, for about 800 centuries during the Late Chalcolithic period, starting around 4300 and until 3500 BC, intense relations involved northern Mesopotamia with the Caucasus area and spread even over its northern side. Though some claim that this was due to migrations (Akhundov 2007), it might have only concerned small groups of merchants dealing with the local population who was, at least for a part of it, mobile, and could have access to materials from far away, as attested by the presence of lapis-lazuli coming from NE Afghanistan. The raw or finished materials that were looked for by these foreign southerners are unknown, even if metal

probably played a major role. But wool or wood might also have been already searched for at that time.

The Early Bronze Age

A long break in the external relations of southern Caucasus follows this period. It corresponds to the time of the “Uruk expansion” from southern Mesopotamia, during the second half of the 4th millennium. This economically-based expansion mainly followed the road of the Euphrates up to Arslantepe in Eastern Turkey and resulted in the foundation of several colonies or of a strong influence on other sites (Algaze 1993). In southern Caucasus, for one or two centuries after the break with the previous external relations, no change is visible in the material culture at the few sites that have been excavated and date to this period. This is the case at Godedzor, in Armenia, up to around 3350 BC (Palumbiand Chataigner 2014).

However, from about 3300 BC, a new culture appears in the hills and mountains of the southern Caucasus area, mainly characterized by a new brownish and/or black polished pottery and, later, by specific andirons and hearths. This culture is named Kura-Araxes since it is mainly distributed between the two rivers. Up until now, its origins remain obscure (Sagona 2014). It is, however, clear that the Uruk phenomenon is responsible for its venue, even though no direct contacts between them is visible.

Since the previous population did not disappear, it is quite right that some features of the local cultures are still present, but most of the others are new. The population lived, at first, in rather light wattle and daub and round structures following the local traditions, while various types of burials are attested, either collective under kurgans, or individual in pit graves of different shapes. Later, the houses became rectangular with round corners, but most had the same plan over a large territory. This population settled at different altitudes and practiced both cattle-breeding and agriculture. The economical emphasis was on the household or on small scale production without evidence of exchange with the exterior and of hierarchy among the people. Metallurgy seems to have continued to play an important role, as shown by the recent excavations made at the gold mine of Sakdrisi and Dzedzvebi (Gambashidze and Stöllner 2016). Slowly, starting with the beginning of the 3rd millennium, regionalization appears in the decoration of the pottery, the architecture or the burials.

During the first half of the 3rd millennium, from around 2900 BC onwards, part of this population moved in two directions, towards the Zagros (Rothman 2011) and

the Levant (Greenberg et al. 2014), where it has been identified at several sites. This movement is even traceable up to Turkmenia in the Kopet Dagħ (period Namazga IV). The reasons behind this migration – here clearly involving groups of people – are again puzzling and different hypotheses have been advanced (pastoralism, metallurgy, trade, search for new land, etc.) but no proof supports any of them up to now.

Around the middle of the 3rd millennium, a new small group of people appears in the southern Caucasus, mainly along the Kura Valley in Georgia and Azerbaijan. They clearly lived together with the local population and borrowed from them at least their pottery. Their first remains are those of rich and large kurgans with wooden chambers, most of which contain four wheels wooden wagons (Makharadze et al. 2016, Pecqueur et al. 2017). Only very few settlements are known that can be related to them, and they date to a later phase. Though most of these kurgans have been grabbed in antiquity, they almost all contain exotic and luxury items coming from a very wide area (from amber beads of the Baltic sea, *conus* shells of warmer seas, to indented beads well known in central Asia) and can be attributed to groups of northern (steppe) traders rather than to those of warriors as previously thought. Many features relate them to the fabulous graves of the ‘Royal Cemetery of Ur’ (Lyonnet 2016). These people and the changes they bring will slowly put an end to the Kura-Araxes culture.

Conclusion

The Caucasus area has long been considered as an isolated area and it has also long been forgotten by many scholars due to the political situation of previous USSR. The short presentation given here shows, on the contrary, that it was a crossroad of many different intercultural relations during a long period in the protohistoric times.

Its wealth in raw materials and its opening on the wide Eurasian steppe to the north has certainly created the basis for most of these relations. Exchange and trade in different materials can be proposed for many of the visible connections, but this also led to cultural “transfers” both inwards and outwards and contributed to an intense development.

There are still many obscure points in the proto-history of the Caucasus area. A major problem is the total absence of writing, and our ignorance of the languages that were spoken at that time. A lot of research is now being investigated for these early periods in the environment, the paleo-fauna and flora, metallurgy, a DNA, etc. and we hope

that the results will help understanding better both the local and the exterior components of the successive cultures that developed there.

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Structure and socio-dynamics of Chechen culture

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Introduction

The understanding of culture is as diverse as its manifestations, and it depends on the amount of knowledge accumulated about it and on the specificity of the perception of one community or another. Attempts to study the national culture in a variety of aspects and from different angles of vision contribute to an increasingly holistic vision, which makes it possible to more clearly understand its underlying foundation.

Chechen culture in a broad, panoramic review has never been the subject of a special academic study. Our task is to consider it at the key historical periods, not in separate fragments, but in a holistic relationship with the fate of the ethnos through the prism of time and transformation.

In our article the structure of culture is understood not as a set of different spheres of culture (material, spiritual, etc.), but in separation into different cultural and historical layers, a complex symbiosis of which somehow led the Chechen ethnos on the eve of the third millennium to a painful search for a cultural identity of the nation.

The formation of the structure of culture is associated with its social dynamics, which should be understood as the process of the development of a particular ethnic culture in time and space and in interrelation with the social structure and social transformations.

Culture is inextricably linked “with history, always implies the continuity of the moral, intellectual, spiritual life of man, society and humanity. And therefore, when we talk about our modern culture, perhaps, without knowing it ourselves, we are talking about the great way this culture has passed”.¹

¹ Lotman YU.M. *Besedy o russkoy kul'ture*. Sankt-Petersburg: 1994. P. 8

We are used to talking about spiritual and material culture, about ancient and modern culture etc. and do not think at all about the fact that culture is not only different areas of reality, but the very reality of man in these areas.

Each ethnos for millennia forms not only its culture, but also its own understanding of culture. The specificity of national cultures depends on a number of factors: geographical determinants, historical development and ethnic and mental attitudes.

The Chechen direct concept of culture is focused around two lexemes (words) – “*Gillakh*” and “*ozdangalla*”. Traditionally, under the notion of *gillakh* (politeness, kindness, culture), Chechens, in the first place, have in mind the culture and ethics of communication, behavior in interpersonal, group, interethnic relations.² In a word, this is an external culture, i.e. it is directed from the individual to the surrounding world, the society. The term “*ozda*”, derived from which is the word “*ozdangalla*” (educated, noble, cultured). Moreover, “*ozdangalla*” is the purity of the body, heart, thoughts of a person inextricably linked with faith in God and the surrounding world. Culture manifests itself not only in the behavior and character of a person but must first of all be present in his soul and consciousness.

This concept emphasizes the inner world of individual culture, its spiritual and moral appearance. If you take into account all of the above, the meaning of the words will become clear: “The culture of behavior (*rillkh*) came out of paradise”. This means that noble norms of behavior between people have a sacred nature.

In a more detailed form, this idea is set forth in the Chechen proverb: “The culture of behavior has come from paradise, and in paradise it will return with the people carrying it”. These words show the great importance that Chechens attached to ethics and culture. In one of the Chechen religious songs (*nazma*), so the connection between reason and ethnic norms is transmitted:

*It is known that the apple falls under the apple tree,
But would there be an apple if there was no apple tree?
Gillakh is a tree, and a mindset is the fruit of that tree,
Is knowledge possible where there is no gillakh?*

Here, the “mind” is set according to ethical norms. This is always true when it comes to a mind that benefits people.

² Mezhidov D.D., Aliroyev I.Y. Chechentsy: obychai, traditsii, nrawy. Sotsial’no-filosofskiy aspekt. Grozniy: 1992. P. 196

Whatever abilities a person possesses, no matter how valiant and talented he was, he has the same moral responsibilities as any other person.

In these two concepts the quintessence of the Chechen understanding of culture is concentrated. The "inner world" and the "external manifestation" are interconnected by thousands of threads, they are interdependent and complement each other. In the Chechen ethnic understanding, initially culture is not a mass, public, to a certain extent, impersonal phenomenon, or a set of achievements. For the people, whose highest values included personal dignity, honor, conscience and freedom, the concept of culture had and has a concrete personal, individual perception and understanding.

The philosophy of the Chechen vision of culture appears as a model, the "external-internal code" of the individual, a kind of standard of actions that every Chechen must meet if he is the true bearer of his ethnic culture.

Here, culture is interpreted as characterizing a person's properties in the sphere of individual and social behavior, including tact, internal dignity, respect for other people, delicacy, the ability to always find the measure of one's actions. It is used as a form of regulation of their personally and socially significant actions.

In its structure, Chechen culture has a symbiotic character, which is the aggregation of several cultural and historical layers. The first, archaic, Nakh autochthonous layer (*nokhchalla*), which is the core, the core of culture; the second layer is an Islamic, religious component of culture (Iman – Islam); and, finally, the third - the Russian layer, which was the result of the Westernization and colonial expansion of Chechnya and the Chechen ethnos by the Russian Empire, since the XVIII century.

This multi-layered cultural synthesis testifies to the complex historical process traversed by the Chechen ethnos. Each of the selected cultural-historical or civilizational strata has its own heterogeneous structure too. They are "amalgamated" from various cultural components.

The oldest layer of Chechen culture is the Nakh cultural layer of the North Caucasus. Nakh, Vainakh ("people", "our people") – the common name of the Chechen and Ingush peoples. Archeology dates the Nakh antiquities in the second half of the III millennium BC, i.e. an early bronze epoch, to the monuments of which are ancient settlements near the village Serzhen-Yurt of the Shalinsky district of Chechnya, mound (*kurgan*) burials near Bamut village and others.

The close-knit nature of the material culture of the Early Bronze Age in the Northern and Southern Caucasus can be explained by the existence of a single ethnic mileu of

the Caucasus in the III millennium BC. Maykop and Kuro-Araz archeological cultures reflect the oldest Caucasian ethno-cultural community at the stage of its disintegration and the close affinity of autochthonous peoples - carriers of North Caucasian languages. The isolation of the Nakh languages began precisely during the Early Bronze Age.³

Archaeological materials make it possible to study religious views of ancient Nakhs. At this time, solar cults are associated with archaic cosmology, as indicated by stone rings around the graves in the Bamut burial mounds, ornaments in the form of relief spirals and concentric circles on ceramics.

The ancient Nakh pantheon was quite extensive. The supreme god here was *Dela*, which served as the patron saint of the sun and sky. This theonim consists of two parts: *De* and *Ela*. *De* – day, light and *Ela* – the lord, the patron. The other cult found in Vainakhs beliefs was *Hal* – the deity of the sky, which was identical to the Khurri-Urartian god *Khald*, revered in Urartu and in some other areas of the Ancient East.

In the pagan beliefs of the Vainakhs, as in other archaic cultures, there were ideas about the duality of the world associated with the opposition of the earthly world, which was called *Dela Malche* (divine, sunlight), to the underworld, the realm of the dead, called *Dela Late* (divine, underworld). The afterlife in accordance with the ancient ideas of the Nakhs was ruled by a deity named *Elda*, *El* – the underworld of the dead and *Da* – the father, patron.

The ancestors of the Nakhs in the process of developing their horizons, expanding the knowledge of the surrounding world and the cosmos, gradually transferred the deities to heaven, turning them into the sun, the moon, the stars, thunder and lightning. Historically, the ancestors of the Nakhs realized that the Sun is life. Its rise was personified by the awakening of nature, the beginning of life and the cause of flowering. The sun is a symbol of purity and beauty. Perhaps this alone can explain that the legendary Malkh-Azni (Sun-Beauty) is one of the main heroines of the Nakh myths and legends. The history preserved even the name of the Nakh ancient tribe or clan (*taip*), which especially revered the sun - the Malkhistoy (Melchistins), and the cemeteries, consisting of stone crypts where they buried their deceased to this day called “Malkhan keshnash” – solar graves.⁴

It should be noted that the processes of growth and development of Chechen *taipes*, development of foothill and flat areas, contributed to the strengthening of tendencies towards ethnic consolidation of Vainakh tribes, which could not be answered by

³ Ocherki istorii Checheno-Ingushskoy ASSR. Groznyi: 1967. T. I., p. 12

⁴ Istoriya Chechni s drevneyshikh vremyon do nashikh dney: T. I. Groznyi: 2008. p. 68

motley, religious and mythological ideas. They only retarded ethnogenetic and socio-cultural processes.

The patriarchal character of the social structure of the Nakh ethnic massif, which broke up into dozens of independent *taipes* naturally dictated the need for some cementing force, a system of higher values capable of completing the long process of ethnopolitical consolidation of Vainakh groups into a single ethnos. Islam became such a force. Acquaintance and acceptance of Islam by the Nakh tribes stretched for several centuries, from the 8th-9th centuries (acquaintance) to the 16th-17th centuries (approval), which is explained by the absence of external or internal coercion. The Chechen land did not know the Arab missionaries, the main conductors of Islamization were local proselytes, who accepted Islam from merchants, shepherds and mullahs of neighboring Dagestan.

So, the archaeologist M.B. Muzhukhoyev believes that in the Auch area (“Gachalk” necropolis) Muslim monuments are dated to the beginning of the 16th century, the early Muslim cemeteries of Eastern Chechnya (Nakhch-Mokhk) back to the 17th-18th centuries. No later than the 17th century there also occurred the first Muslim burials in the mountainous region of Cheberloi (Makazhoy Hollow) bordering on Dagestan. The author refers the successes of Islamization in the Argun gorge to the 18th century, in the Galanchozhsky gorge (along the Fortang River) to the beginning of the 19th century, and in the mountainous Ingushetia, Islam, in his opinion, has been affirmed throughout the entire 19th century.⁵ [5]

In general, such a picture is relatively close to the characteristics of written sources, under correction of, as noted above, the well-known “delay” of material artifacts behind spiritual changes in the ideology of society.

Thus, in the 16-18th centuries Islam was spread in the plains, foothills and most of the mountainous zone of Chechnya as the dominant social ideology that affected all aspects of the life of the mountaineers and led to the unprecedented universalization of formerly isolated self-sufficient unions of “free societies”. The broad national liberation and religious movement under the leadership of the sheikh and Imam Mansur in 1785-1791 undoubtedly had a great influence on this process.

This movement can not be viewed outside of the connection with the social, economic and political processes taking place in the Chechen society, painfully seeking the answer to the challenge of the northern empire, which brought its borders

⁵ Muzhukhoyev M. B. Srednevekoviye kul'toviye pamyatniki Tsentral'nogo Kavkaza. (K istorii religioznykh verovaniy v X-XIX vekakh). Grozniy: 1989. P. 165-169

to the banks of the Terek and Kuban. The answer was given in an attempt to create a Chechen and common state on the ideological basis of a single religion - Islam.

In general, the process of development of the new religious consciousness of the Nakhs within the borders of Chechnya in the 16th-17th centuries was associated with the adoption of Islam and the emergence of common goals for all genera, *auls* and societies, and acquired the form of political genesis - the process of folding state entities. The emergence of some new phenomena in the organization of the Nakh (Chechen) society was the result not only of its inherent natural development, but also a response to the external challenges that great powers such as Russia, Iran and the Ottoman Empire had shown over three centuries.⁶ [6]

Islam dictated a spiritual-value order common to Chechen society, the most important principle of which was monotheism, inner faith and brotherhood in the community. Islam gradually penetrated into all parts of Chechnya, absorbing the established folk customs and traditions, but eventually did not become a "way of life" for each individual Chechen.

The culmination of the Islamization of Chechen society was the 18th-19th century, when the titanic efforts of Mansur (late 18th century), Udi-Mullah and Tashav-Haji (20-30s of the 19th century), Imam Shamil and Sheikh Kunta-Haji (40-60s of the 19th century) created a solid Islamic base in the system of life and the general structure of the Chechen people.

Russian expansion in the North Caucasus, which rigorously advanced in the second half of the 18th century, to some extent stimulated the internal potentials of the Islamization of the region, in general, and in Chechnya, specifically.

The creation of a Muslim state in the territory of Chechnya and Nagorno-Dagestan – Imamatus was a kind of institutionalization of the anti-Russian liberation movement, which was held under Islamic ideas. And, despite the unsuccessful finale, it left a notable mark in the historical memory of the people. The conquest of Chechnya by the Russian Empire in 1859 meant a gradual strengthening of the policy of Westernization on the "Russian model". This policy has repeatedly changed from peaceful, economic and "civil-educational" forms, to aggressive, military-colonial, sometimes transferring into a radical form of genocide policy.

The Chechen people who survived two hardest military campaigns, are facing today a difficult task to preserve their unique national culture, which developed over

⁶ Akhmadov Y.Z. Ocherk istoricheskoy geografii i etnopoliticheskogo razvitiya Chechni v XVI-XVIII vekakh. Moscow: 2009. P. 240-256

thousands of years, having acquired and at the same time rejected various cultural influences. And the future development of Chechen culture depends on the degree to which the compromise between all the components of the civilizational strata of the single ethno-cultural world will be organically realized.

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Summary

Structure and socio-dynamics of Chechen culture

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The structure of Chechen culture, which includes various cultural and historical layers (Nakh, Islamic, Russian) is of a symbiotic nature. The ethnic core of culture in the process of formation has accepted and at the same time rejected various civilizational influences.

Keywords: culture, ethnos, structure, Chechens, Nakh, religion, Islam.

Outlines of the Mongolian supremacy in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus

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The period of Mongol invasions and domination in the history of the Middle East and the Caucasus which lasted about two hundred years, still keeps causing the discussions and controversial evaluation so far. This is not just by chance. The phenomenon of Genghis Khan and *Pax Mongolica*, the universal empire he established, is one of the key phenomena of world history. After the Mongol conquests the world could no longer return to the state that existed before, since the Mongols fundamentally changed the historical destiny of many regions and peoples; no less important is that the Mongols appeared on the historical arena so unexpectedly. They emerged from the depths of Inner Asia and within a short time conquered the most powerful empires of Eurasia, where few had heard of them before. For many conquered nations, including those in the Caucasus, the Mongols were so unfamiliar, exotic, different in culture, way of life and appearance, that they composed a plenty of legends and myths about them.¹ In this respect, a number of aspects related to the ethnic, cultural and religious consequences of the Mongol conquests of Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus are of interest.

The Mongolian conquest of the Middle East and the Caucasus occurred at a time when the confrontation between Islam and Christianity in the region reached its peak. Crusades and bloody wars for the Holy Land between Western European knights and Muslim rulers have lasted for more than a century. The peoples of the Caucasus, despite their remoteness from Palestine, were also involved in this struggle on different sides of the front. The Christian kings of Georgia and the Armenian rulers

¹ In fact, the first encounter with the Mongols caused a shock among the Christian nations of the region as well as in the Muslims. The Armenian monk Grigor Aknertsi wrote the "History of Tartars" (or Mongols) and called them the "Nation of Archers". He described them in the following way: "The first who came against our country were not like [ordinary] people. They were awful to see and impossible to describe. They had large heads, like a buffalo, narrow eyes like a chick, short noses like a cat, protruding chins like a dog, narrow waists like an ant, and short legs like a pig. They are completely beardless, possessing the strength of a lion and a screeching voice like an eagle. Death does not appear among them, and so they can live for three hundred years". (Grigor Aknertsi. P. 3)

of Cilicia repeatedly assisted the Latin principalities of the Levant, while the Turkic Atabeks of Azerbaijan were in league with the main fighters against the Crusaders – the Atabeks of Aleppo and Mosul, and the Saljuq Sultans of Asia Minor. And representatives of the North Caucasian peoples found their place in the ranks of the Mamluk army in Syria and Egypt, fighting with the Latin principalities. During these years of intense confrontation between Islam and Christianity an unexpected event occurred that reversed the entire history of the Middle East and the Caucasus. It is a question of the formidable Mongols who emerged from the steppes of Inner Asia, conquered a multitude of peoples and tribes in the first half of the 13th century and created on the wide expanses of Eurasia the most extensive empire in the history of mankind that stretched from China to Eastern Europe.

The history of the Mongol conquest of the Caucasus is quite well known. After the defeat of the most powerful state of the Muslim world – the Empire of Khorezmshahs, the Mongolian expeditionary corps led by the military commanders Jebe and Subutay in the persecution of the last Khorezmshah invaded Iran and attacked Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus in 1220. Undoubtedly, it is impossible to deny the terrible destructive consequences of the first Mongol conquests for the local peoples, which finds many confirmations in authentic sources, including the Mongolian ones. Rashid ad-Din, the grand vizier and historian of Ilkhanids, admits that since the time of the emergence of mankind “*no sovereign has been able to conquer as many countries as Genghis Khan and his family conquered, and as many people as they killed, no one killed*”.² This fate did not bypass the territory of the Caucasus. Among the cities of Azerbaijan, whose population was exterminated by the Mongols during the campaign of Jebe and Subutay, sources point to Zanjan, Qazvin, Maragha, Ardebil, Bailaqan, Barda, Ganja.³

Passing with fire and sword through the territory of Azerbaijan the Mongols stopped at winter pastures in the Mughan steppe. According to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, they accumulated all the seized treasures in a swampy area located between Barda and Bailaqan, most likely at the confluence of the Kura and Araks rivers, from where they made swift raids to various regions of the country for robbery.⁴ In early 1221, Jebe and Subutay moved towards Georgia, apparently having received information about possible joint actions against them by the Atabek of Azerbaijan Muzaffar ad-Din Uzbek, the Ayyubid ruler of Akhlat Malik Ashraf and the Georgian King Giorgi

² Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 556-557 (Persian text), P. 320 (Russain translation)

³ According to A. Alizade, Ganja did not suffer during the first campaign of Jebe and Subutay, having paid off them, and was destroyed by the Mongols during the “second Mongolian invasion” under the command of Chormagun in 1231 (Alizade. p. 102-103).

⁴ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 166

Lasha.⁵ According to Vardan, “*some unknown hordes, speaking in an unknown language, called Mugal and Tatars*”, came from the countries of Chin and Machin, and with 20,000 people they penetrated to the Gugark plains from the side of Agvania; having destroyed all life on their way, they quickly turned back; King Giorgi Lasha with all his strength rushed to pursue them and overtook them on the banks of the river Kotman, but defeated by them sought salvation in flight.⁶ Indeed, in January or February 1221, a fierce battle took place between the Mongols and the Georgian army, led by the Giorgi Lasha. The Georgians and Armenian detachments which were the part of their army were defeated and forced to retreat.⁷ After that, the Mongols again approached Tabriz and got a ransom from the city, seized and destroyed Maragha in late March, moved towards Diyarbakr and Erbil. The Mongols stayed in the spring months of that year in Hamadan, where they were supposed to suppress the uprising of the townspeople, and then again returned to Azerbaijan, engaged in seizing new lands and mass destruction of the population.⁸ Jebe and

⁵ Alizade. p. 98-99

⁶ Istoriya mongolov. p. 2.

⁷ It should be noted that, in general, assessments of the events of the Mongol conquests of the South Caucasus in local sources are quite contradictory. Even in the Georgian chronicles of “Kartlis Tskhovreba” there is no agreement about the results of the battle between the Georgians and the Mongols. Thus, the author of the “The Chronicle of Giorgi Lasha and his time”, without naming the Mongols and speaking of them as “foreign troops”, writes about the victory of the Georgian king over the latter in two battles – first in the battle of Somkhiti and Hereti, where George received the first wound, but “*the enemy fled King Giorgi, and those who tried to escape were exterminated*”, and then, when “*next year (the enemies) came again and pitched their tents on the bank of the Bardavi (i.e. Barda, here Kura River – Sh.M.)*” he again defeated them, and they “*retreated, passing through Darubandi (Derbend – Sh.M.)*” (Kartlis Tskhovreba. P. 204-205). Certainly, the context of the story leaves no doubt that it deals with the first raid of Jebe and Subutay. It is important that the author of the chronicle is a contemporary of the events described, as he raises a prayer for the health of the reigning queen Rusudan, the sister of Giorgi Lasha, who ruled after his death (Ibid.) At the same time, the “The Hundred Years’ Chronicle” says about the catastrophic defeat of the Georgian army in the battle near the river “*Berduji, which is now called Sagimi*” (most likely, Zegam-chay in the territory of Azerbaijan), and the author writes about how “*the wrath of the Highest fell upon us for all our sins and lack of faith, and the Georgians took flight, their soldiers and King Lasha as well. Many Christian souls perished that day*” (Kartlis Tskhovreba. P. 321). After that, according to the chronicle, the Mongols reached Samshvilde, “*then turned back and did something wonderful: they went by the road of Daruband*” and passed the “gates” of Derbend and entered the “Qivchakia”, i.e. the North Caucasian steppes, which the Kipchaks owned at the time (Ibid.).

⁸ Alizade. p. 100

Subutay sent a message to Genghis Khan about the advisability of continuing one or two years of conquest and returning to Mongolia through the Caucasus Mountains.⁹

Indeed, the Mongols at that time seized and plundered Ardebil, Nakhichevan, Khoy, Salmas, Bailaqan, then passed through the territory of Shirvan to Derbend, so that the areas between them, including the capital of Shirvan, Shamakha, were completely devastated, and the population was killed or fled.¹⁰ The Mongols failed to seize Derbend by force, and they had to make their way along the mountain paths through the Caucasian ridge, where many battles with local tribes occurred. Nevertheless, they were able to make their way to the North Caucasus steppes, where they faced the united army of Alans and Kipchaks. Jebe and Subutay managed to come to terms with the Kipchaks and inflict a heavy defeat on the Alan forces, thereby putting an end to the existence of the Alanian Kingdom in the North Caucasus. A lot of Alans were killed, many disappeared in mountainous and inaccessible places. Then the Mongols ravaged the camps of the Kipchaks, forcing them to leave the North Caucasus steppes and move to the northern Black Sea steppes. Jebe and Subutay returned to Mongolia through the Volga region, reporting to Genghis Khan about their victories and the opening of new lands for conquest.

The contemporary of these events Ibn al-Athir drew a vivid picture of the terrible devastation and destruction that accompanied the rapid raid of the Mongolian corps crossing the Caucasus from the south to the north. The author reports that the Mongols “*rushed to the cities of Azerbaijan and Arran, destroyed them and killed most of their inhabitants. Only a few of them survived, remaining homeless. And all this in less than a year! This has never been known. Having finished with Azerbaijan and Arran, they went to Derbend of Shirvan and captured its (Shirvan’s) cities. Only one fortress survived, where the king of Shirvan was. From there they crossed into the country of the Alans and Lakzes and various other peoples who lived in this area, fiercely exposing them to slaughter, robbery and destruction. Then they rushed to the country of the Kifchaks, and this is among the most numerous Turkic tribes. They killed everyone who came to them, and the rest fled to the thicket and to the tops of the mountains, leaving their country. Tatars seized it as soon as possible*”.¹¹

The next stage of the Mongol conquests of the Caucasus is connected with the name of the closest associate and military commander of Genghis Khan Chormaghun Noyon, “a wise and learned man, successful in warfare”, according to Kirakos Gandzaketsi.¹² The expedition of Chormaghun to the east was undertaken by the

⁹ The Cambridge History of Iran. Vol. 5. p. 311

¹⁰ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 557-558 (Persian text), P. 320; Alizade. P. 102-103

¹¹ Ibn-el-Athiri Chronicon. p. 234

¹² Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 195

order of the great Khan Ögedey against Jalal ad-Din, the last representative of the Khorezmshah Anushteginid dynasty, who fled Khorezm because of the Mongolian threat, but was able to create his own realm in the Middle East with the center in Azerbaijan. However, in 1231 Jalal ad-Din was defeated by the combined forces of the Saljuqs of Asia Minor and Ayyubids and was soon killed. Thus, Chormaghun did not encounter a serious resistance in the east, as Jalal ad-Din could have done to him, for it was “Jalal al-Din and his army formed a wall between Islam and the Tartars. That wall had now been breached and neither Ayyubid nor Saljuq was capable of stemming the flood”.¹³

After the capture of Khorasan, Rey and Isfahan, the Mongols invaded Arran (or the “Agvania” or “Agvank” – Caucasian Albania, as this area is called in Armenian-language sources) and broke their tents in the fertile Mughan steppe, making it their winter base and a springboard for conquest of the entire South Caucasus. “*In springtime they spread out in various directions, looting and destroying, and again returned [to Mughan] and settled*” there.¹⁴ Soon Ganja, Shamkhor, Lori, Dumanis, Tiflis, Ani, Kars and other cities were taken, where Mongols were “*taking everything as booty, destroying or enslaving, spreading their raiding expeditions everywhere with merciless attacks, ravishments and destruction*”.¹⁵ The conquered areas, according to Vardan, were divided between Mongolian commanders. In particular, Chormaghun captured the areas of Ani and Kars, Chaghata was given possession of the Lori district, Dolat – the fortress of Kaen, Gataga took over the northern regions of Mountainous Karabagh and Gedabek, Molar received the Shamkhor fortress and the district.¹⁶

The South Caucasus finally became a part of the Mongolian realm when these territories were incorporated into the Ilkhanid Empire, established in 1256 by Hulagu Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan.

The main principle of the Mongolian governance in the conquered lands was the establishment of a balance of power that would guarantee their political dominance. As a rule, the Mongols resolutely destroyed all traces of the previous authorities and created their own control system on the lands where they established direct rule. The consequences of such a policy are well traced in Azerbaijan, where direct Mongolian

¹³ The Cambridge History of Iran. Vol. 5. p. 335

¹⁴ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 197

¹⁵ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 216

¹⁶ Istoriya mongolov. p. 5-6; Grigor Aknerts'i writes that the Mongols “*held a quriltai and great meeting by the command of Chormaghun and divided the countries among the one hundred and ten chiefs. This land was divided into three parts: one extending northward, one to the south and one through the middle of the country, which they still hold*” (Grigor Aknerts'i. P. 5).

rule has gradually erased all evidences of the political system of the previous Saljuq era. At the same time, Azerbaijan occupied the metropolitan position within the Ilkhanid realm, and the vast possessions of the Mongol Empire in the Middle East were managed from Maragha and then from Tabriz. In the areas where the vassal and tributary relations were established, they practiced a gradual and consistent undermining of the system of pre-Mongol political relations through the creation of a dual power or competitive relations between local rulers. This time-tested method was used in many subordinated countries, for instance, in the Saljuq Sultanate of Asia Minor, which eventually led to the complete collapse of the latter. In the Caucasus this practice was applied in Shirvan and Georgia. Thus, the Mongols refrained from completely destroying the Georgian statehood, while retaining the reign of the local dynasty of the Bagrationi. However, two kings were erected in the throne in the 1240's, and both of them Davids. One of them, the son of Queen Rusudan, was nicknamed David Ulu ("Elder"), and the second, her nephew and the son of her brother King Giorgi Lasha – David Narin ("Junior"). Subsequently, this dual power led to the disintegration of Georgia into two parts – the eastern (Kartli), led by the senior David, and the western – to Imeretia, led by the younger David. At the same time, as was customary in Mongolian political practice, the right to rule could only be granted by the supreme ruler of the whole empire; the Great Khan in the period of the existence of a single empire, for which the candidates for the throne had to personally visit Karakorum, or for Ilkhans in Tabriz, after the collapse of the empire into different "*uluses*".

The Armenian political existence at that time was represented by the Cilician kingdom, located in southern Anatolia. The dynasties of the Rubenids, and then of the Hetumids were at the head of this state. The Cilician ruler Hetum I quickly realized that only an alliance with the Mongols could save him from the Mongol threat. Therefore, in 1247 he sent his brother Sempad to Karakorum to the court of the Great Khan Guyuk. And in 1253 Hetum himself went to Mongolia, where he appeared before the next Great Khan Mongke. He was given a guarantee of the integrity of the Cilician kingdom, and the Great Khan also promised to exempt all Armenian churches and monasteries from taxes on Mongolian domains.¹⁷

Generally speaking, the Christian nobility of the Caucasus and Anatolia, represented by the Georgian kings, Armenian rulers of Cilicia and the princes of the ancient Caucasian Albania or Khachen principality quite quickly submitted to the Mongol suzerainty, demonstrated loyalty to them and tried to use the protection of the highest Mongolian Christian nobility to strengthen their own political positions as well as positions of the Christian church. Another Christian ruler, the Prince of Khachen

¹⁷ A History of Crusades, Vol. II. p. 652-653

area in Mountainous Karabagh Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla was also forced to acknowledge his vassalage to the Mongols. Around 1257, Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla accompanied Sartak, the son of Golden Horde Khan Batu, and made a trip to the court of Batu. And, the Mongols acknowledged Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla's power in Khachen and drafted a document "*guaranteeing freedom for Lord Nerses, Catholicos of Albania, for all his properties and goods*".¹⁸ Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla and his wife Mama Khatun are also famous for the construction of the church in the Gandzasar monastery in Karabagh, which is a fine example of Christian architecture of Karabagh in the Mongol period. It was consecrated in 1240, in the presence of many priests including Nerses, the Catholicos of Albania. The monastery went on to become the residence and sepulcher of the Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla's family as well as the house of the catholicoses of Albania.

Christian nobility of the South Caucasus sought to strengthen its alliance with the Mongols also through the establishment of matrimonial ties. We know many cases of marriages between members of the Christian dynasties and the Mongol nobility. For instance, Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla's daughter Ruzukan was wed to Bora, son of Chormaghun; king David Lashaeen married lady Khawand Esugan, a relative of Chormaghun; Georgian king Demetre's sister Tamar was married to Mongol emir Arghun's son; Demetre's daughter Rusudan, to the son of emir Bugha; king Vakhtang married Arghun Khan's sister, Oljat, who subsequently was wed to Vakhtang's successor king David, and so on.¹⁹

The South Caucasus and especially Azerbaijan had a special, metropolitan position within the Ilkhanid Empire. The founder of the empire Hulagu has chosen Maragha and later Tabriz as the capital of the state, and as the wintering grounds – Arran in northern Azerbaijan, or Karabagh of Arran, as it is called in Persian sources. Indeed, most often the Ilkhanid court spent the winter months in Karabagh. There were also some ceremonies of inauguration of the supreme khans according to the Turkic-Mongolian steppe custom. For example, Ghazan Khan settled on the Ilkhanid throne in Karabagh in November 1295. According to Rashid ad-Din, "*all the court ladies (khavatin), princes, warlords (umara), pillars of power and court magnates gathered*

¹⁸ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 296

¹⁹ Bedrosian. p. 189-190. However, eventually even matrimonial alliances did not always guarantee the safety and power of Christian rulers, as well as, Muslim ones. For example, the same Hasan Jalal ad-Dawla became the victim of hostility of the Mongolian Emir Arghun, he was arrested, severely tortured and executed in Qazvin in 1260. The same fate befell some other Christian rulers of the Caucasus, who expressed their obedience to Ilkhanids.

in Karabagh of Arran and without pretense and hypocrisy they agreed to the reign of the sovereign of Islam (Ghazan Khan - Sh.M.) and gave that commitment”.²⁰

Indeed, the Mongols preferred Azerbaijan, or rather the territory of Arran and Karabagh of all the regions of the South Caucasus, and also Shirvan, where they spent most of the winter months. They found there the usual entertainment, especially during hunting. So, Ghazan Khan spent the winter months of 1301-1302 in Karabagh, but he did not stay there for long and went to the mountains of Shirvan and southern Daghestan, where he was hunting for several days. He went from there to the district of Gavbari, which is near Derbend, for hunting birds, especially swans, and fishing. There is a bay in this area, which the Mongols called in Turkic “Kush-koyun”, and the former habitat of numerous migratory birds. The rulers of the neighboring mountain tribes of Daghestan arrived at the rate of Ghazan Khan and expressed their obedience at that time. They were ordered to catch and execute those fugitives from Azerbaijan who had taken shelter from the Mongols in the inaccessible mountains of the South Caucasus, which was done. After finishing the hunting for birds and fishing, Ghazan Khan went with his bet through Bilasuvar to Talish and Ispahbad regions, where a grandiose hunting for wild animals was also undertaken. There he ordered to build a long hedge from the poles and brushwood (*divar ez chub ve khashak*) in the form of a wide wedge and a length of one day’s journey. After that, his warriors began to drive game – mountain buffaloes, wild goats and donkeys, jackals, foxes, wolves, bears and other predatory and wild animals, which were trapped being between two hedges. Ghazan Khan and his beloved wife Bulghan Khatun sat on a platform built in the middle and admired this spectacle of a huge “zoo”. Then, some of these animals were killed, and the rest were released to freedom.²¹

The region of the South Caucasus retained their attractiveness for the Mongolian elite in the post-Ilkhanid period as well. In particular, the summer pastures of the Emir Choban, the famous regent of the last great Ilkhan Abu Said, were located in the Gökche-deniz region (the present Sevan Lake), “which in the summer was truly an extremely beautiful place”.²² As is known, after the fall of the Hulaguid dynasty, the large Mongolian clans began to challenge from each other the power in the former Ilkhanid realm, and this struggle was fought, among other things, in the territory of northern Azerbaijan. Thus, in 1344 in the Akhstabad steppe, a bloody battle took place between the troops of Chobanid Malik Ashraf and his rivals the emirs Yagibasty and Surgan, in which the first won and secured his supremacy in

²⁰ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 301-302 (Persian text), p. 170

²¹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 344-345 (Persian text), p. 193

²² Zayn ad-Din ibn Hamdallah Qazwini. p. 96

Azerbaijan for a full 13 years. As was the custom with the Mongol rulers, Karabagh remained their favorite wintering place, and Malik Ashraf did not change this tradition. From the reports of the chroniclers we learn that in the winter of 1344-45 his rate was again located in Karabagh, where the ruler of Shirvan Kavus arrived to him with the expression of obedience. Malik Ashraf gave him many honors. However, his stern temper and cruelty frightened the Shirvanshah so much that he secretly escaped from Karabagh. Since the end of winter was coming and it was time to leave Karabagh, Malik Ashraf did not dare to take military action against Shirvanshah and departed for Tabriz. But in 1346-47 a terrible epidemic of cholera, an echo of the "black plague" of Europe, erupted in Tabriz. The plague also led to a multitude of deaths in Azerbaijan, and the Mongolian court hid from it in the mountains. Before the winter Malik Ashraf was again in Karabagh, from where he decided to attack Shirvan and punish the unruly Kavus. However, Kavus took time with his troops to cross the coast of the Kura River. Malik Ashraf was forced to conclude a truce with the Shirvanshah and retreat. In the winter of 1347-48 years Malik Ashraf, nevertheless, achieved his goal. Once again in Karabagh he sent an army led by his vizier to Shirvan. Kavus could not organize resistance, took refuge with his entourage in mountain fortresses, and the Mongolian troops subjected the country to terrible ruin.²³

First of all, the significant impact of the Mongol conquests on the ethnic situation in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus should be noted. The predominant ethnic element in the flat areas of Arran and Mughan was the Turkic population on the eve of Mongolian expansion, as evidenced by some authentic sources, in particular the Persian geographic work "Aja'ib ad-dunya" and the chronicle of Nasawi. A more mixed population lived in some territories of Shirvan, Derbend, where there was also a significant Caucasus-speaking and Iranian-speaking component, as well as in the mountainous part of Karabagh, in particular, in the principality of Khachen, where the Christian population predominated. During the campaigns of Hulagu and in the subsequent times of the Ilkhanid rule new numerous tribes (*aymaks*) of the Mongols and Turks came to these territories from Central Asia, a considerable part of which settled and took root there. Significant changes in the ethnic composition of the population as a result of the Mongol conquests in the Caucasus can be obtained from sources. Firstly, it was already said about the extermination of large masses of the population as a result of the Mongol conquests, when whole cities and regions were physically devastated, their inhabitants were either destroyed or left their places. At the same time, the number of Turkic and Mongolian population increased manifold, as they represented the victorious party, and they were assigned new places to live. For example, to strengthen the borders in the north of the empire against the Golden

²³ Zayn ad-Din ibn Hamdallah Qazwini. p. 96-102

Horde, Hulagu Khan transferred the Kipchaks, who were the former Turkic guard of the caliphate, to the areas of Derbend and Shirvan to settle there. They moved to the Caucasus from Baghdad with their families. However, after crossing the Euphrates, they turned in the direction of Syria in order to join the Mamluks, to their relatives and the enemies of the Mongols.²⁴ It is also known that the first Ilkhanid governor of Arran and Shirvan was Yushumut, the son of Hulagu Khan, who arrived in these regions and settled there with subordinate troops.²⁵

These processes, on the whole, contributed to a significant strengthening of the Turkic element both in Azerbaijan and other areas of the South Caucasus, since, as is known, most of the Mongols quickly became Turkicized and integrated into the local Turkic milieu after the conversion to Islam. So, during his trip from Kuhistan to the Caucasus in early 1281 the poet Nizari observed a large concentration of Mongolian troops on caravan routes. On the way from Saray to Baku for ten days the way was blocked by a Mongol army led by Abaka Khan who was heading against Mengu Timur, the ruler of the Golden Horde. As Nizari noted, the Arran valleys were full of people “from the army of the Turks” (i.e., the Ilkhanid warriors), and the whole army crossed the Kura River for a month.²⁶ There are many evidences in the sources of how the Mongol commanders (*noyons*) appointed in the region were sent to the place of service with their own troops, which often consisted of tribal warriors accompanied by numerous families. According to the researchers, in the XIII-XIV centuries about 20 large Mongol tribes settled in the territory of Azerbaijan, among which the *Suldus* and *Jalair* tribes stand out.²⁷

Nowadays abundant Mongolian toponyms on the territory of Azerbaijan are clear traces of the Mongol tribes in these lands, and their impact on the ethnic formation of modern Azerbaijani nation. Even without going beyond the rather small Absheron peninsula where the capital city of Baku is located, it is evident how deeply the Mongolian element had penetrated into the ethnic and cultural layers of Azerbaijan.²⁸ Thus, the name of one of the largest cities in the country Sumgait is coming from the

²⁴ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 92-93 (Persian text), p. 62-63

²⁵ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 91 (Persian text), p. 62

²⁶ Ashurbeyli. p. 159

²⁷ Piriyeu. p. 261

²⁸ It should be noted that the Ilkhanid rulers chose Absheron peninsula as one of the winter pastures. For instance, Gazan Khan spent the winter months of 1297-98 in Baku. He moved there from Tabriz with his camp on November 7, 1297. On the way he sent Emir Kutlugshah to Georgia, from where rumors of an uneasy situation were heard, and soon Kutlugshah brought with him Vakhtang, the brother of King David. Vakhtang received an award from the Ilkhan and was sent back. Gazan Khan stayed in Baku for about four months and in April left via Bilasuvar for Tabriz (Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 324-325 (Persian text), p. 182-183).

name of the Mongolian tribe *Sugaut* (*Sagait*). And it is located in the distance of only 30 km from Baku. Close to Sumgait the Jorat settlement is situated (from the Mongolian tribe *Joyrat*). There is also Saray settlement in their neighborhood (it is sufficient to remind the name of the capital of the Golden Horde Saray-Berke, etc.). South of Baku the town of Alat is gradually turning into a major port and industrial center, and its name also comes from the Mongol tribe *Alat*. Such a concentration of Mongolian toponyms in the territory of Absheron is not accidental, since the peninsula was a regular place of winter pastures of many Mongolian tribes, which gradually settled there.

In general, a wide stratum of Mongolian toponyms spread to Azerbaijan not only due to the settlement and rooting of Mongol tribes there led to the appearance of new names of places. Very often the old toponyms were either replaced or started to be used alongside with new Mongolian toponyms. For example, Rashid ad-Din talks about the battle between the Ilkhanid and the Golden Horde armies in the territory of Arran on the bank of the Aksu River, whose name in Mongolian sounded as “Chagan Muran”. In fact, the Mongolian name was a calico from the Turkic toponym and translated as “white water” or “white river”.²⁹ Or in South Azerbaijan, the Persian name of the Zarinarud River in Mongolian sounded as Chaghatsu and Naghatu.³⁰ This toponym is still preserved in the region of Urmia.

It should also be noted that along with the terrible destruction that accompanied the Mongolian expansion at the initial stage, grandiose construction work began to be carried out later in the region under the Ilkhanid rule. In particular, there is an extensive literature on the rise of Maragha, Tabriz, the foundation of the empire’s new capital – Sultania. Most likely the Mongols also founded in Arran a new city called Saray-Mansuriye. At least, the Ilkhans often spent the winter months there. One can assume that this may be a modern settlement of Saray near the city of Sumgait, which was mentioned above. The fact that Saray is not located on the territory of the historical Arran, but on Absheron peninsula, should not be confusing, since Mongols often considered the territory of Shirvan as a part of Arran. However, this hypothesis requires additional research. In any case, the city of Saray-Mansuriye was popular among the Ilkhanid rulers, who often visited it. The Mongols founded other large settlements in the territory of modern Northern Azerbaijan. Rashid ad-Din reports that on March 31, 1294, Geihatu Khan founded a large city on the bank of the Kura River and gave it the name Kutlugh-Balygh, which in Turkish means

²⁹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 104 (Persian text), P. 69

³⁰ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. P. 90 (Persian text), P. 62

“Happy (or blessed) city”.³¹ Undoubtedly, the task of modern historians and archaeologists is to seriously look for traces of this city.

Speaking about the participation of the Mongols in shaping the modern image of the Azerbaijani people, we must take into account not only the profound influence of the Ilkhanid period on the political and economic processes in Azerbaijan, but also the evolution of the ethnic and cultural traditions of the Azerbaijani people. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to assume that without the Mongolian period in the history of the Middle East and the Caucasus, we could hardly have the ethnic and cultural panorama of today in the whole region and in Azerbaijan in particular. It is sufficient to mention that the rapid development and spread of literature in the Azerbaijani Turkic language is precisely the consequence of the Mongolian period. Turkic ethnic consciousness and culture flourished during the reign of the Ilkhanids and the post-Mongol states, which inherited their traditions.

The Mongolian domination had an equally profound impact on the spiritual and religious life of the local peoples. In general, the Mongol conquest of the Middle East had mixed consequences for the Muslim and Christian communities, not only in the Caucasus, but in the entire Middle East. For Islam, the capture by the Mongols of Baghdad in 1258, the assassination of the last caliph and the destruction of the Caliphate was a catastrophe of universal proportions. It led to the disintegration of not only the political system of the Muslim world, inherited from the time of the Prophet Muhammad, but also of its entire ideological and spiritual format. The Islamic world was shocked and depressed by the loss of the legitimate center of Muslim power in the person of Caliph. This catastrophe had an extremely long-lasting impact on the fate of the Muslim world, which was not able to restore its former power and integrity until the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the early 16th century. At the same time, ideological and spiritual ferment after the fall of the Caliphate opened and cleared the way for the spread of unorthodox currents in Islam, the progress of Shi'a, and, finally, the formation of the Shiite Safavid state in the central Muslim lands.

For Middle Eastern Christianity the Mongolian period was a time of inspiration and hopes at first, but no less severe disappointment at the end. Most of the Mongols, like Genghis Khan himself, were pagans and adherents of the Turkic-Mongolian shamanism.³² There were also a number of followers of Buddhism among them, spread by the Uyghurs, Tibetans, Chinese, Indians. However, a number of the Mongol tribes, such as Kerait, Naiman, Merkit, Ongut and a large part of the Kara-

³¹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 238 (Persian text), p. 136

³² See: Boyle J.A. Turkish and Mongol Shamanism in the Middle Ages.

Khitays, and many influential people among them professed Nestorian Christianity.³³ In the initial period after the conquest of the Middle East and Caucasus, the Mongols for political purposes relied on the Christian and, in general, non-Muslim element in the management of the conquered lands, as these groups were for a long time under Muslim dominance and were inclined to support the new Mongolian power. Thus, Cilician Armenians, Georgians and Nestorian Christians in Azerbaijan and Persia were pro-Mongolian.³⁴

It is not by chance that the first appearance of the Mongols in the Caucasus, previously unknown to the local peoples, was accompanied by a multitude of contradictory rumors that brought confusion and indecision to the local Christian milieu.³⁵ The fact that the Mongols were not Muslims and rather quickly defeated the Khorezmshahs, the most powerful rulers of the Muslim world, instilled in Christians the hope of finding in their person allies in the struggle against the “Saracens”. In the historical chronicles of both Armenian and Georgian origin there is certain benevolence towards the Mongols. For example, an Armenian historian called them a people who are “*acquainted with the religion of Christ and greatly love Christians*”.³⁶ Or the Georgian “The Hundred Year’s Chronicle” says: “*All kinds of wisdom resided amongst them, and they were in full possession of reason and self-control. There was no place for lies among them; they were servile in the face of no man, neither great, nor small, or even before a council; they submitted to the good order created by Genghis Khan*”.³⁷

Moreover, according to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, “*False information arrived concerning [the Mongols], to the effect that they were mages and/or of the Christian faith, wonder-workers, and that they had come to avenge the Christians from the tyranny of the Tachiks*”, or Muslims. These rumors actually disarmed the Christians against the Mongolian blows, and they did not take serious measures to protect themselves, so that “*one lay priest took his people and even went before them with hooded crosses. The enemy put them to the sword, one and all*”.³⁸

³³ Kadirbaev. p. 57

³⁴ A History of Crusades. Vol. II. P. 720. Stepannos Orbelean confessed that as Hulagu Khan, who established the Ilkhanid Empire, “*greatly loved Christians, all the nations of believers willingly submitted to him and gave him active assistance*” (Step’annos Orbelean. p. 208).

³⁵ On the historical dynamics of the perception of the Mongols and the Mongolian authorities by the Caucasian Christians, see: Pogossian.

³⁶ Step’annos Orbelean. p. 207

³⁷ Kartlis Tsokhvreba. p. 318

³⁸ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 166

The Mongols themselves, despite their power and the shock they caused to the peoples of the Middle East and the Caucasus, were only a huge chunk in the millstones of the historic confrontation between the two civilizations in the Middle East – Christianity and Islam. Sooner or later they had to be “grinded” by these millstones. The question was only in which direction. The sharp rivalry between local Christians and Muslims for the conversion of the Mongols into their religion was to determine, as a result, the historical destiny of the region. In the writings of Christian and Muslim authors there is much evidence of this acute rivalry. For instance, the appearance in Europe of the legend of the Presbyter John, in fact, was an expression of the ardent desire of Christians to find in the face of the Mongols unexpected, but so desired allies that would bring the mission of the crusades to a logical conclusion and re-erect a cross in the Holy Land.

Thus, the religious policy of the Mongols and their relations with various religious groups in the Middle East are essential for understanding the role of Mongolian supremacy in the history of the Caucasus in the 13th-14th centuries. As Barthold notes, “In all Mongolian possessions there was a struggle between Christians, Buddhists and Muslims who tried to attract the khans to their side; but the enmity between Christians and Buddhists was much weaker than their common hatred of Islam, the struggle with which they often led by the combined forces. The first khans, remaining shamanists, stayed neutral in this struggle and interfered with it only when it too severely violated public peace; only some of them, subject to the influence of their Christian and Buddhist advisers, issued orders directed against Muslims. There were some news about every Mongolian khan who showed hatred towards Muslims, that he was a Christian (Chagatay, Guyuk, Kubilay, Baidu); we find similar news even about those khans who equally patronized all religions (Mongke)”.³⁹ Indeed, for example, Stepannos Orbelean reported that the Great Khan Mongke was supposedly a legitimate Christian, and therefore, he had at his palace a church and priests who were continually offering mass and services without interruption, and that he loved Christians and his country entirely practiced the Christian faith.⁴⁰

The formation of the Ilkhanid Empire in 1256 did not at first change the character of the Mongolian government’s relations with local Christians. The latter were still full of hopes for the acquisition of a powerful patron in the face of the Mongols in their struggle against Muslims. The favor of the first Ilkhanid rulers towards Christians was noticed already during the rule of Hulagu Khan. Many authors see the reason for this in the influence on Hulagu’s elder wife Dokuz Khatun. According to Rashid ad-Din, Dokuz Khatun was the granddaughter of Ong Khan, the ruler of Keraites. She

³⁹ Bartold. p. 263

⁴⁰ Step’annos Orbelean. p. 210

was ambitious and powerful lady, and being Nestorian provided strong support to Christians who achieved high positions and influence in the Ilkhanid realm thanks to her patronage.⁴¹ In particular, one of the Christian rulers who achieved a high position thanks to the protection of the Ilkhanids was the Syunik prince Smbat. He was a vassal of the Georgian King David, and according to Stepannos Orbelean, “*in all faithfulness served him, and showed many acts of kindness toward him in the presence of Hulagu Khan and the grandees, and even more so at the great court*”, as Hulagu “*so heeded him that whomever he wanted could be put to death, and whomever he chose could be granted life*”.⁴² Hulagu followed the advice of Dokuz Khatun and built churches in all his possessions, and at her court he always erected a marching church where they constantly beat the bell.⁴³ This testimony of Rashid ad-Din is confirmed by Vardan’s information. According to the Armenian historian, Dokuz Khatun was a Christian of Syriac, or Nestorian doctrine. Although she did not know all of its subtleties, however, like Hulagu himself, sincerely loved and caressed all Christians, and asked for their prayers. Behind them they carried everywhere a tent made of canvas in the form of a church, priests and deacons served the mass every day at the sound of bells and singing; they also had schools in which they freely taught children the doctrines of the Christian church. In the same place, the clergy of various Christian countries, who came to ask for peace, found shelter. They often received it, and being satisfied returned home with presents.⁴⁴ The same author notes that after the capture of Baghdad by the Mongols, the Christian population of the Muslim caliphate’s capital was spared by the intercession of the “great queen” Dokuz Khatun.⁴⁵ She was able to survive her husband by only three months, and after her death the Christian subjects of Ilkhanid realm plunged into deep mourning, as she “was the culprit of all the blessings rendered to Christians”, and her hopes were connected with the fact that “Christianity will live to a more blossoming state”.⁴⁶

Stepannos Orbelean calls Abaka Khan (1265-1282) who ascended the throne after his father Hulagu, a good, mild, peace-loving person and a lover of Christians.⁴⁷ Indeed, this Ilkhan also provided protection to Christians. In particular, Tarsayich, the brother and successor of the Syunik prince Smbat, enjoyed his confidence. In any case, the same Stepannos Orbelean trying to exalt his relative and falling into obvious exaggeration declared that Abaka Khan supposedly so honoured Tarsayich

⁴¹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 7 (Persian text), P. 16

⁴² Step’annos Orbelean. p. 215

⁴³ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 7 (Persian text), P. 16

⁴⁴ Istoriya mongolov. p. 11

⁴⁵ Istoriya mongolov. p. 12

⁴⁶ Istoriya mongolov. p. 25

⁴⁷ Step’annos Orbelean. p. 215

that on many occasions he removed his own royal garments and dressed Tarsayich in them from head to toe and put around Tarsayich's waist a belt of pure gold adorned with precious stones and pearls.⁴⁸

The short-term rule of the next Ilkhan Tekudar (1282-1284) disconcerted the Christian population of the South Caucasus, which saw this as a bad sign, as he was the first of the Ilkhanid rulers who converted into Islam. At the same time, he received the Muslim name Ahmad. Most likely, Tekudar's religious views were far from orthodox Islam, for according to Rashid ad-Din, he revered the Sufi sheikhs, especially Abd ar-Rahman, whom he called "father", and brought very close to himself Ishan Mengli, follower of another Sufi sheikh Baba Yaqub from Arran. The house of Mengli was close behind the camp of Tekudar, who often came to him, calling him "brother" (*karyndash*), and there he indulged along with the dervishes with music and dances (*sema*).⁴⁹ However, as a result of the internecine struggle, Tekudar was overthrown, and Arghun (1284-1291), the son of Abaka Khan, ascended the Ilkhanid throne in Tabriz. Armenian historians unanimously say laudatory words about him and note that "*he was a good, mild, and peace-loving man, and a lover of Christians*".⁵⁰

Perhaps one of the most vivid examples of cultural interpenetration in this period is the history of two Nestorian monks who made the journey from the Far East to the Middle East in the second half of the 13th century. It is about Rabban Bar Sawma and Rabban Marcos. According to Bar Habraeus, they were both of Uyghur origin,⁵¹ although, according to the Chinese tradition, they could have been from the Christian Onguts, the Turkic tribe that had joined the Mongols.⁵² Bar Sawma and his young disciple Marcos during the pilgrimage to the holy places were warmly received by the head of the Nestorian Church Mar Denha I in Maragha in Azerbaijan. Soon Marcos was ordained bishop, and after the death of Mar Denha in 1281 he took his throne under the name of Mar Yaballaha III. The real reason for the rapid rise of Marcos was not so much his ardent and sincere devotion to the faith, as his Uyghur or Turkic-Mongolian origin and his arrival from Khanbalyk (Peking), the center of the Mongolian (Yuan) Empire. An experienced Nestorian patriarch Mar Denha could reasonably have assumed that the ethno-cultural closeness of the young monk to the Mongols could bring considerable benefit to the Nestorian Church and the spread of Christianity among them. Indeed, Bar Sawma and Marcos were favorably received by Ilkhan Arghun in Maragha, Marcos was approved as the new patriarch of the

⁴⁸ Step'annos Orbelean. p. 216

⁴⁹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 173 (Persian text), P. 104

⁵⁰ Step'annos Orbelean. p. 215

⁵¹ Nöldeke. p. 249-250

⁵² Phillips. p. 82

Nestorian Church, and Bar Sawma was sent in 1287 with the embassy to Europe to establish a Franco-Mongolian alliance against the Mamluks. In Europe he negotiated with Pope Nicholas IV, King Philippe of France, King Edward I of England and other European monarchs. Thus, the first Ilkhanids were so benevolent towards their Christian subjects, especially the Nestorians, that the years 1258-1295 were considered a period of prosperity for the Nestorian Church.⁵³

The general anti-Muslim attitude of Mongolian politics in the initial period after the conquest promoted the nomination of other non-Muslim elements in the Ilkhanid realm, including the Jews. In particular, the example of Saad ad-Dawla, who professed Judaism and was the chief financial officer and then the grand vizier during the reign of Arghun Khan, is widely known. In the new state apparatus of the Ilkhanid Empire organized by him a significant number of officials were Jews and Christians. Thus, his brothers Fahr ad-Dawla and Amin ad-Dawla became governors (*hakim*) of the largest cities of the empire – Baghdad and Diyarbakr, and his cousin was appointed chief financial inspector (*mushrif*) in Tabriz. However, this could not but cause rejection and protests from the Muslim bureaucracy. Therefore, after a sudden illness and the death of Arghun, Saad ad-Dawla was accused of poisoning Ilkhan and executed. All his protégés were removed together with him.⁵⁴

At the same time, the prevailing Muslim milieu in the Middle East and, in particular, in Azerbaijan, the metropolis of the Ilkhanid Empire, should sooner or later outweigh the scales in the competition between Islam, on one hand, and other religions, on the other, in favor of the former. Ilkhanids could not stay long outside the influence of Muslim culture. This fundamental trend of the cultural transformation of the Mongols in the Middle Eastern milieu is well illustrated by the history of Ilkhan Baidu, who took the khan's throne after Geihatu, again as a result of internecine struggle. Being originally a Christian, he converted to Islam. It is not by chance that Stepannos Orbelean notes that by the end of the 13th century all the Mongols “generally, had abandoned their native faith and had come under the faith of Muhammad”.⁵⁵ The beginning of the reign of Ghazan Khan (1295-1304) in 1295 marked the final conversion of the Mongols in the Middle East and the Caucasus to the Muslim religion, which had a decisive influence on the evolution of the entire cultural and political image of the region.

In general, the Mongol conquest led to the emergence of a surprisingly diverse ethnic, cultural and religious panorama in the region. Mosques traditionally neighbored there with Christian churches of various congregations, and synagogues.

⁵³ Phillips. p. 79

⁵⁴ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 217-226 (Persian text), p. 125-130

⁵⁵ Step'annos Orbelean. p. 238

However, the Mongols brought to this picture a completely new element that was not previously characteristic of the religious life of local peoples – these are Buddhist temples. Information on the construction of numerous Buddhist temples has been preserved in the sources. For instance, Rashid ad-Din reports on the construction by Hulagu Khan “idol houses” (*butkhane*), i.e. Buddhist temples, in the city of Khoy in Southern Azerbaijan.⁵⁶ It is also known about the existence of a Buddhist temple in Maragha. During the religious ceremony here in the presence of the entire Mongolian court Abaka Khan announced major state decisions.⁵⁷ We can assume that the same temples were erected in Arran, places of long wintering of the Ilkhanid court. However, as we know, Buddhism did not take root on the soil of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus and remained only the religion of a certain part of the conquering Mongols. During the reign of Ghazan Khan and Oljaitu in the late 13th – early 14th centuries the positions of Islam were restored again, and all Buddhist temples were burnt in the fire of the Muslim “revenge”.

It should be noted that Buddhist monks had an extremely strong influence on the first Ilkhans. For example, according to the testimony of Vardan, Hulagu himself so blindly believed the so-called *Toins*, who in fact were Tibetan lamas who arrived in Azerbaijan together with the Mongols, that according to their instructions he “went or did not go to war”.⁵⁸ Vardan had a personal meeting with Hulagu Khan, who received him benevolently during the *kurultay* or *khurultay*, i.e. “a holiday of meetings”, as the Armenian historian translates this word. Although, as Vardan observes, Hulagu treated Christians with respect and affection, he himself was not a Christian. On the contrary, he relied too much on the Buddhist monks – *Toins*, these “*astrologers and priests of the idol*”, called Shakmonia, who allegedly deceived the Great Khan and assured him that “*he will long abide in this body, and when he grows old, he will put on another body*”.⁵⁹ Certainly, these words of Vardan are caused by the negative reaction of the medieval Christian monk to one of the fundamental concepts of Tibetan Buddhism – the doctrine of rebirth or reincarnation. However, Vardan involuntarily recognized the “strong” sides of Buddhist lamas who were adept at divination and deception and even allegedly could force to say “*felted images and horses*”, but “*were restrained in food and clothing, chaste and moderate in marital relations*”.⁶⁰

Arghun Khan respected Buddhism as much as his grandfather Hulagu. According to Rashid ad-Din, he very much trusted Buddhist monks (*bakhshi*, in the Muslim

⁵⁶ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 90 (Persian text), P. 61

⁵⁷ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 160 (Persian text), P. 97

⁵⁸ Istoriya mongolov. p. 22

⁵⁹ Istoriya mongolov. p. 22-23

⁶⁰ Istoriya mongolov. p. 23

tradition) and their rules, constantly giving them patronage and support. Rashid ad-Din also links the death of this ruler with excessive confidence in this *bakhshis*. He writes that one day a certain *bakhshi* from India arrived in Azerbaijan to the court of Arghun and assured him that he (*bakhshi*) was durable, i.e. he lived a long life thanks to the reception of a special drug. Arghun asked him to prepare this drug, which included a large amount of sulfur and mercury. And then Arghun took it for eight months. As a result, it caused a serious illness in him, from which he died some time later.⁶¹

In general, during the reign of the first khans, Buddhism spread fairly quickly on the Ilkhanid lands, of course, mainly among the Mongols themselves. Rashid ad-Din reports that Buddhism has found such widespread use, because it was the belief of the ancestors of the Ilkhans. A large number of Buddhist monks from India, Kashmir, China, Eastern Turkistan and Tibet were invited to the country, and they were preachers of this teaching in the Middle East.⁶² The number of Buddhists there was great before the religious reform of Ghazan, since Rashid ad-Din writes about “*idolaters (butperestan), infidels (kuffar) and Mongols, whose number was more than grains of sand*”.⁶³ Meanwhile, both Muslims and local Christians perceived Buddhists only as idolaters, whose faith had nothing to do with monotheism. Kirakos Gandzaketsi wrote, referring to the stories of the Cilician king Hetum, about “*a land of many idol-worshippers who worship extremely large clay idols named Shakmonia*”, that is, Shakyamuni Buddha.⁶⁴

The upbringing of the Ilkhanid princes was also in the hands of Buddhist *bakhshis*. Rashid ad-Din indicates that when the future Ilkhan Ghazan was five years old, his grandfather Abaka directed him to the Chinese (Uyghur) *bakhshi* Yaruka, so that he brought him up and taught Mongolian and Uyghur letters, sciences and “their good methods”.⁶⁵ Sources show that Ghazan in his youth was a zealous Buddhist. In Khorasan, which he ruled in his youth, he built many “magnificent idol houses”, i.e. Buddhist temples. So zealously he fulfilled the precepts of this religion, engaged in mortification of the flesh and religious asceticism that struck even the monks. However, after the adoption of Islam in June 1295 Ghazan began to authorize the construction of Muslim religious centers – mosques, *madrassas* and *khanakas*. By the autumn of that year a decree was issued that “*in the capital city of Tabriz, Baghdad and other cities of Islam, all the temples of bakhshis (ma’abed-e*

⁶¹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 223-224 (Persian text), P. 128-129

⁶² Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 373 (Persian text), P. 209

⁶³ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 377 (Persian text), P. 211

⁶⁴ Kirakos Gandzaketsi. p. 307-308

⁶⁵ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 252 (Persian text), P. 143

bakhshiyān), *idol houses, churches and synagogues were destroyed*".⁶⁶ Initially all Buddhist monks were ordered to convert to Islam, but soon it was realized that many of them, doing that under duress, did not adhere to the prescriptions of the new religion and secretly remained adherents of their faith. Then Ghazan Khan allowed those who did not want to become a loyal Muslim, to leave the borders of the Ilkhanid realm and return to their homeland – India, Kashmir, Tibet, and all others under threat of death in no way remain hidden Buddhists, and sincerely profess Islam.⁶⁷

Even after the conversion of the Mongols en masse to Islam under Ghazan Khan, it is believed that part of the supreme nobility, the spouses of Ilkhan (*khatuns*) and the higher warlords (*emirs*), who had a significant influence on government's affairs, was dissatisfied with this radical change in the religious and cultural orientation of the Mongols. In any case, we see attempts to preserve at least a small part of Buddhist monuments and architecture. The fact is that even the Buddhist temple built by Ghazan's father Arghun for himself was destroyed. The interior walls of the temple were decorated with murals, on which Arghun himself was captured. After the demolition of the roof and some walls of the temple, these murals with Ilkhan's images began to be exposed to weather conditions. Representatives of the highest nobility appealed to Ghazan Khan with a request to reconstruct this former building so that snow and rain did not damage the portraits of his father, and thus his spirit would find comfort. However, Ghazan refused to do so. Then his courtiers asked him at least to restore this building in the form of a palace, which was also followed by a firm refusal. Ghazan answered them that if this temple would be restored in the form of a palace, but with images of people on the walls, it will still be like a temple, which it is not proper to do. And if he needs a new palace, it can be erected elsewhere.⁶⁸

At the same time, it can be assumed that Ghazan's conversion to Islam still did not completely erase from his soul the traces of Buddhism, to which he was so zealously committed in his youth. In any case, towards the end of his life, especially after the death of his young wife Keremun Khatun, he fell into thoughts on the meaning of life and the sacrament of death and confessed to his associates that "*the salvation of the soul*" passes through deliverance "*from the narrow nature*", for "*no fetters and prisons, hell and pain are not worse than ignorance and love for world, if only because the world is the hell of the people of God, and the afterlife is paradise*".⁶⁹ Is there no trace of acquaintance with the fundamental ideas of Buddhist philosophy,

⁶⁶ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 300 (Persian Text), P. 168-169

⁶⁷ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 397 (Persian text), P. 224

⁶⁸ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 397 (Persian text), P. 224

⁶⁹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 366 (Persian text), P. 205

in particular, the doctrine of the denial of “Maya”, as an expression of material life, condemning man to the eternal circle of suffering, the salvation of which consisted in detachment from material life and the attainment of nirvana? Apparently, it was not just by chance that Rashid ad-Din considered it necessary to emphasize especially that “*the surrender to God and the faith of the sovereign of Islam Ghazan Khan were sincere, free and clean from the mud of pretense*”.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the adoption of Islam by Ghazan Khan and the ardor of the neophyte manifested by him in the fulfillment of the prescriptions of the new religion could not completely tear him from his ethno-cultural roots, beliefs and spiritual customs of the Mongolian steppes. He still remained faithful to some ancient pagan Turkic-Mongolian cults and did not see this as a contradiction with the demands of Islam. By the way, some of these cults have survived to this day in the Turkic milieu of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and those who traveled to these regions, probably met the so-called “Sacred trees”, the branches of which are tied with numerous multicolored ribbons. Rashid ad-Din reports that during the rebellion of the Emir Nowruz, Ghazan Khan was very worried by these events and once, together with several people he had to spend the night without a tent in the open field, where a large shady tree grew. To get rid of spiritual anxieties, he surrendered himself in the shadow of this tree to deep thoughts, and a joy came into his soul from the other world (*‘alem-e gheyb*). After much time, when Ghazan Khan visited again those places with his retinue, he remembered that event and came to that tree. There he told the people about the incident, was touched and burst into tears, again surrendering to the prayers of the Almighty God and promised to do good deeds. After that, he and all present attached ribbons to the tree, and this tree became revered as sacred becoming a place of pilgrimage. It is noteworthy that after this ritual “buffoons” have played music, and the emirs started to dance. Ghazan also indulged in this dance and music together with them. For sure, this ritual was part of the ancient tradition of the Turkic-Mongolian shamanism. Emir Pulad Chingsang, who was present at the event and arrived earlier from Mongolia, told an identical case about Kubilai Khan. During the campaign against his enemies, the Merkites, he reached one tree, dismounted and offered a prayer to the “ancient god” (*khoda-ye qadim*), asking for his help and intercession. After the victory over the enemy, he came back to that tree on the way back and decorated it, as he promised, with “colored robes”, turning it into a place of pilgrimage. Then he offered a thanksgiving prayer to the Almighty God, and along with the warriors he set off under a tree for

⁷⁰ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 296 (Persian text), P. 167

ritual dancing. As Pulad Chingsang recounted, they so stamped their feet that the earth around the tree was in potholes.⁷¹

Be that as it may, the establishment of Islam as the official religion of the Ilkhanid Empire at the end of the 13th century was a turning point in the history of the Mongols in the Middle East and the Caucasus which conduced to their gradual assimilation in the Turkic milieu of Azerbaijan and Anatolia and the restoration of the positions of Muslim culture in the region, including the South Caucasus. At the same time, the Mongolian rule has left an indelible and profound trace in the history of Azerbaijan and the peoples of the South Caucasus. The Mongols put an end to the political structure of the Islamic world, in the center of which the institute of the caliphate actually or nominally was standing. In fact, these renovations changed the whole political philosophy of Islam and the evolutionary line of Islamic statehood in the late Middle Ages. All the subsequent Muslim state entities centered in Azerbaijan, which dominated the history of the Middle East for two centuries after the fall of the Ilkhanid Empire – the Jalairids, the Qaraqoyunlu, the Aqqoyunlu, the early Safavids – were political heirs of the Ilkhanids. Since then they developed without much care on the political traditions of Islam that preceded the Mongols. Mongolian rule at the initial stage gave to the Christian principalities of the South Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia unrealistic hopes for newcomers to revenge on Islam, to revive the Christian church and enhance it in the region. Having come from Inner Asia, strongly influenced by the Far Eastern culture, and carried steppe traditions, the Mongols, in general, brought new elements to the religious and cultural panorama of the region that had not previously been inherent in local peoples. The brief existence of Buddhism under the shadow of the Mongolian authorities in Azerbaijan and Iran, the practice and dissemination of the Uyghur alphabet at the state level for almost two centuries, the penetration of Chinese painting traditions into the artistic and applied creativity of the Muslim and Christian peoples of the region, as a whole, contributed to the formation of a more pluralistic culture in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus.

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⁷¹ Fazlallah Rashid al-din. p. 350-351 (Persian text), P. 196-197

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Summary

Outlines of the Mongolian supremacy in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus

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The Mongolian conquest has changed abruptly the historical evolution of the peoples of Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus. The political, economic, ethnic and cultural consequences of Mongolian supremacy in the region were so significant that they were felt for several centuries. So, the traditions of the Ilkhanid Empire, established by the Mongols with the center in Azerbaijan in 1256, largely determined the appearance of the entire Middle Eastern region in the 13th and 14th centuries and in the subsequent period. This time also marked the resurgence of political and trade ties between the Middle East and Far East along the ancient Silk Road, which gave a powerful impetus to the cultural exchange between the peoples of the two regions. It is quite natural that many elements of Chinese, Mongolian and Uighur cultures penetrated in this and subsequent periods into the culture of Azerbaijani Turks, Armenians and Georgians.

Keywords: South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Mongols, Buddhism, Arran, Karabagh

Genetic and Areal Classification of Languages in Anatolia and Caucasus

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Linguistic classification has always been a very controversial issue, especially for languages for which we have insufficient documentation or for which we can only speculate about their prehistorical or even sometimes historical localization. As far as Antiquity is concerned, we have extensive information on the Graeco-Latin cultures and relatively detailed sources on the cultures bordering the Mediterranean region as well as on Near East and Ancient Anatolia, but our information on more remote areas, e.g. on Ancient Caucasus, are by far more limited. Intuitively, we are often tempted to locate languages where they are spoken today, unless we have evidence for migrations in the past, and to transpose our picture of the modern languages to previous periods of history. In addition, if we know that different languages belong to the same family, we often build a pre-written scenario to account for their present-day localization based on our vision of the spread of the entire family. My aim in this paper is to discuss some elements that enable us to understand language diffusion in Ancient Anatolia and Caucasus. My research area *stricto sensu* is the Indo-European family, but I will try to address the issue from a broader perspective.

First of all, I would like to draw attention to a preliminary difficulty when dealing with linguistic proximities, the difficulty of determining the relative share of common inheritance in terms of genetic subgrouping and of intensive convergences in terms of linguistic contact. This is a very difficult challenge especially for Anatolia and Caucasus since it has been repeatedly claimed that each of these two regions forms a distinct linguistic area. The notion of linguistic area (or *Sprachbund* in German) is used when neighboring, but unrelated languages exhibit similar phonological, morphological and syntactical features. The idea of a Caucasian *Sprachbund* was promoted by different scholars and is still subject of discussion today. On the other hand, with the discovery of the archives of the Hittite empire, at the beginning of the 20th century, Ancient Anatolia has become more familiar to us, and scholars have pointed out striking similarities between Hittite, an ancient Indo-European language, and the other languages surrounding it. More tentatively, attempts were made to

argue for an organic link between the Caucasian and the Anatolian linguistic areas. It was claimed, for example, that some of the features that characterize the present-day Armenian language derive from the impact of Ancient Anatolian areal features, with Urartian as a medium. It was also claimed that Hurrian and Hattic, two languages spoken in Ancient Anatolia, have some connection with the East Caucasian or with the Kartvelian families. The question raised by these assumptions is the extension of linguistic contacts between Anatolian and Caucasus and how they can help us explain the evolution of the languages attested in the Caucasus region.

Let us start with two maps illustrating linguistic diversity in Ancient Anatolia and in Modern Caucasus. The first map presents Ancient Anatolia in a simplified form:



Ancient Anatolia (from Watkins 2008:50)

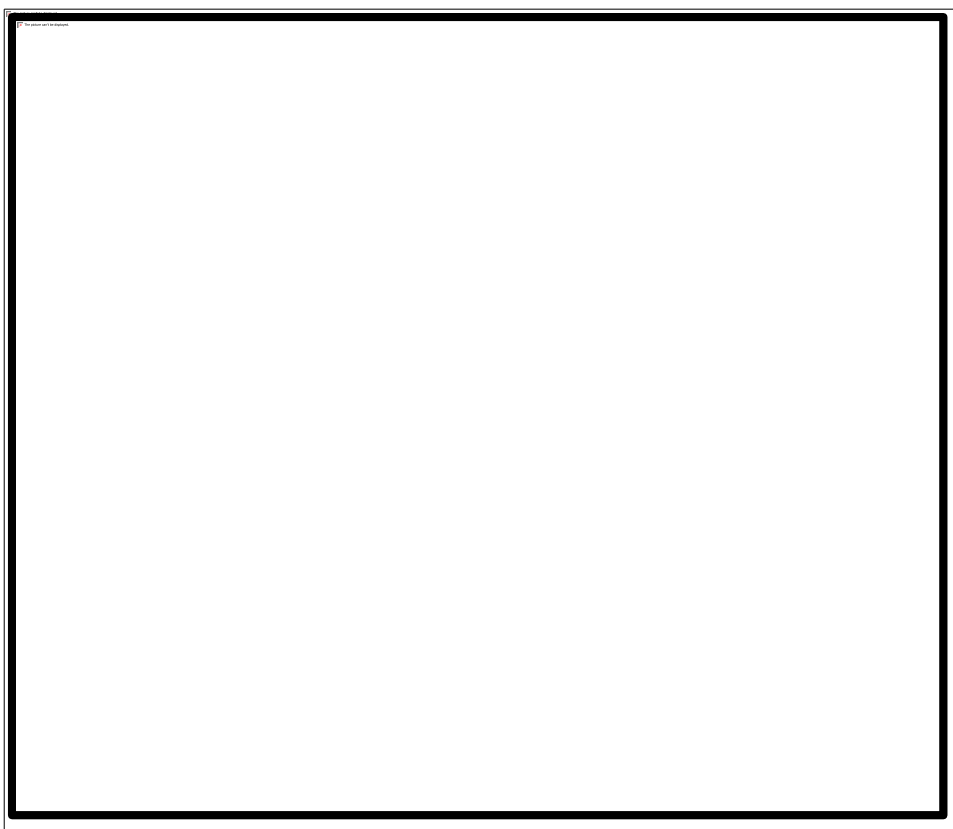
Ancient Anatolia has a complex history with three leading cultures in the past. In the second millennium BCE we have the Hittite empire with Hattušaš as its capital; the Hittite language was an Indo-European language belonging to the so-called ‘Anatolian’ subgroup. It did not survive the collapse of the Hittite empire around the 13th century BCE. A cognate language was Luwian, which was spoken mostly on the southern and western fringes of Anatolia and survived as such or through its descendants (Lycian, Lydian, Carian, Pisidian and Sidetic) up to the first millennium BCE. Another Indo-European language documented in Anatolia during the first millennium BCE was Phrygian, attested in two different forms (Old and New Phrygian) in western Anatolia. None of these languages have survived the turn of the Christian era. Other, non-Indo-European languages spoken in Ancient Anatolia were (a) Hattic, a non-Indo-European language of uncertain genetic affiliation, which was spoken in the same area as Hittite and has left a few words and phrases scattered in Hittite texts; (b) Hurrian, which was spoken in southeast Anatolia and Northern Mesopotamia (mainly in Mitanni) and is said by some to have connections

to Proto-East-Caucasian; and (c) Urartian, which seems to belong to the same family as Hurrian as part of the Hurro-Urartian family and was spoken in the region of the Lake Van, in eastern Anatolia. In the southern part of Anatolia, we find Semitic languages such as Ugaritic, Assyrian and Eblaite as well as Sumerian, a language isolate spoken in southern Iraq. This picture could be supplemented by other languages which had only a more limited presence in Anatolia, e.g. Ancient Greek (on the coasts of Asia Minor and in Pamphylia) or even Old Indic (sporadically attested in Mitanni). From this overall picture of Ancient Anatolia, we go to present-day Anatolia through two major linguistic and cultural events. First, there was the arrival of Iranian tribes probably from Central Asia somewhere during the 2nd millennium BCE and the creation of large empires, especially the Persian Empire which culminated during the Achaemenid period (550-330 BCE) in present-day Turkey and Iran, and elsewhere. The second major event was the arrival of Turkic languages which, originating from Central Asia or even further afield, conquered a large part of Anatolia during the Middle Ages (ca 6-11th centuries CE).

We have much less information about the linguistic situation in Ancient Caucasus. It has been claimed that the ancient language of the kingdom of Colchis (gr. Κόλχης *Kólkhis*), mentioned by some Greek authors (5th century BCE) in connection with the legend of the Golden Fleece, was a Kartvelian language or even an early form of Georgian. We also have evidence about Armenians in Antiquity, culminating with the Orontid dynasty (6th-2nd century BCE), but the Armenian language itself is documented only later, since the 5th century CE. Ancient sources of the 1st millennium BCE also mention other peoples and languages, Caucasian Albanians, ancestors of the modern Udi language, in present-day Azerbaijan (called *Ardhan* in Parthian sources), Caucasian Iberians in present-day Georgia (probably speaking a form of Georgian). Finally, there were Cimmerians, probably Iranians, around the Black Sea, but their precise localization is disputed, reaching present-day Ukraine and various regions of Caucasus.

Turning to modern Caucasus, the first thing to say is that this region is renowned for being a textbook case of linguistic diversity. Already in the 10th century an Arab traveller, Ibn Haukal, reported the existence of 360 languages in the Caucasus, which is certainly an overestimation, but actually points to a real language diversity¹. This diversity can be illustrated by the following map:

¹ See Catford (1991:233).



Modern Caucasus (from Beroutchachvili, Radvanie 1996)

There are in the Caucasus at least 5 linguistic families: (a) Kartvelian (with Georgian, Laz, Mingrelian and Svan); (b) Northeast Caucasian or Nakho-Dagestanian (with Nakh, Chechen, Avar-Andic, Tsezic, Lak, Dargi, Lezgian and Khinalugh); (c) Northwest Caucasian or Abkhazo-Adyghean (with Abkhaz, Abaza, Circassian and the now extinct Ubykh); (d) Turkic languages (Azeri, Kumik); (e) Indo-European languages (Armenian and different varieties of Iranian languages including Ossetic, Kurdish or Tat Persian). There is also evidence for Semitic (Neo-Aramaic) and Mongolic (Kalmyk) languages. Superstrate languages are Turkish, Persian, and, more recently, Russian. All this is well-known and the reason why I made these points was only to ensure that the picture is as clear as possible to everyone.

What emerges from this is the great linguistic diversity of Ancient Anatolia, to which one should add languages of more recent attestation (mostly Iranian or Turkic), and the even greater linguistic diversity of Modern Caucasus.

Both for Ancient Anatolia and for Modern Caucasus the existence of a linguistic area has been postulated and the attention was drawn to a number of linguistic

peculiarities shared by some, if not most of the languages of the area, despite their different genetic affiliation. The notion of *Sprachbund*, first formulated in the 1930th for the Balkans, was transposed by some scholars to our two areas. The idea of an ‘Anatolian Sprachbund’ was developed quite recently, prominently by Calvert Watkins (2008). Among the peculiarities shared by Hittite and other, non-Indo-European languages spoken in Ancient Anatolia there are the following features:

1. **Consonant devoicing in absolute word-initial position:** the voiceless/voiced opposition in consonants (e.g. T / D), probably realized as a tense / lax opposition (e.g. TT or DD / T or D) was eliminated word- initially in favour of the fortis/voiceless member (T-, no *TT-, no *D-, no *DD-). This feature occurs in Hittite, Luwian (both Indo-European Anatolian) as well as in Hurrian (non-Indo-European). In Hittite², voiceless stops are noted by gemination of voiceless stops, voiced stops by single writing of voiceless stops (Sturtevant’s Law), i.e. *tt* [t], vs. *t* [d]; word-initially, we have only *t*, and this is not only a writing convention of the cuneiform syllabary, but a real phonetic distribution, as shown by Lycian (Lyc. *tideimi* ‘son, child’ < **d^hi-d^heh₁-*, cf. Hitt. *tēta-* ‘breast, teat’, Cluw. *tītan-* ‘breast, teat’, *tittaimma/i-* ‘suckling’). We have exactly the same distribution in Hurrian³; the situation in Hattic and Urartian is unclear.

2. **Laryngeal consonants:** the conservation of one of the PIE laryngeals in Hittite (tense *ḫh*, lax *h* < PIE

**h₂*) is paralleled by the existence of similar sets of consonants in Hattic (e.g. *ḫukur-* ‘observe, see’, *ṣaḫaw* ‘god’), Hurrian (e.g. *ḫaš-* ‘hear’, *paḫi* ‘head’) and Urartian (e.g. *ḫini-* ‘son’, *naḫu* ‘bring, carry’).

3. **Vocalic length and stress:** there is a strong correlation between vocalic length and stress, shared by Hittite, Hurrian and Hattic: stressed vowels are lengthened, unstressed vowels are shortened. In the Hittite cuneiform script, following an Akkadian habit, vocalic length and stress are indicated by the so-called ‘plene writing’ or *scriptio plena* (i.e. the use of a distinct vocalic sign), cf. Hitt. *ne-e-pi-iš* ‘sky’ [nēbis] from PIE **neb^h-es-*. The same link between vocalic length and stress is found in Hurrian⁴ and Hattic; the same was probably true of Urartian.

4. **Ergativity:** the subject of transitive verbs is marked differently from the subject of intransitive verbs, which is marked in the same way as the object of transitive verbs. Hurrian, Urartian and Hattic are ergative languages. The Anatolian languages (Hittite, Luwian) are split-ergative languages with grammatical gender as the line of division: common gender nouns display nominative-accusative alignment (as in the other Indo-European languages), but for neuter nouns there is a special (common gender) ergative form (Hittite *-anza*, Luwian

² Pozza (2011).

³ See Speiser (1941:35-36).

⁴ Thiel (1975:99).

-antis) functioning as subject of transitive verbs.

5. Development of enclitic chains of particles in the second position of the sentence: the second position in the sentence is usually filled by enclitic chains of particles; this feature is predominant in Hittite, Hattic and Hurrian. In Hattic the verb is sentence-initial, but there is also the possibility of using a sentence initial particle *pala/bala*, which has a striking functional parallel in Hittite *nu*.

6. Possessive constructions and case copying⁵: in possessive noun phrases, there is a strong tendency towards copying the ending of the head noun in the genitive form, transforming it into a possessive adjective. This tendency predominates in Cuneiform Luwian, e.g. *zaššin DUMU-aššaššin annin* ‘this child’s mother’ (where the possessive noun phrase ‘this child’ has adopted the ending of the head noun ‘mother’), and case copying is likewise regular in Hurrian and Urartian⁶.

7. Vocabulary: there is evidence for loan relationships between Hittite, Hattic, Hurrian and Urartian. Hittite has numerous loanwords from Hattic (e.g. *daḥanga-* ‘shrine’, *tabarna-* ‘ruler’, *purulli-* ‘earth’) and Hurrian (e.g. *zurki-* ‘blood [offering]’, *huprushu-* ‘crucible’, and *puhugari-* ‘substitute’, ultimately from Akkadian *pūḫu*)⁷. Note that there is between Hurrian and Urartian a large body of etymological cognates, going back to the Hurro-Urartian proto-language (e.g. Hurrian *ar-* = Urartian *ar-* ‘give’, Hurrian *pab(a)ni* = Urartian *babani* ‘mountain’).

These linguistic convergences were produced to support the assumption of intensive linguistic interactions between the different languages of Ancient Anatolia, but they raise a fundamental problem. As with other textbook cases such as the Balkans or Mesoamerica, the assumption of a linguistic area is usually based on positive evidence in terms of shared features, but the negative evidence is usually discarded, and the discrepancies found between the different languages are swept under the carpet. It cannot be denied that the languages spoken in Ancient Anatolia display a profoundly different typological structure: to take just one example, Hittite is a suffixing language, whereas Hattic morphology heavily relies on prefixes. It will always be necessary to take into account the bias introduced by this difference in perspective.

Let us now turn to the Caucasus region. The reconstruction of a ‘Caucasus linguistic area’ is old, but still remains a controversial issue. Already in the 19th century, the Russian caucasologist Peter von Uslar (1816-1875) noted striking similarities between the different languages of the Caucasus region⁸ and the claim for a Caucasian

⁵ Luraghi (2008).

⁶ Pozza (2011).

⁷ Wilhelm (1995).

⁸ Cf. Catford (1991:241).

Sprachbund was clearly made during the 20th century by different scholars, e.g. by Polák (1950:400), but it was rejected by others, e.g. by Tuite (1999). The evidence for a Caucasian linguistic area was collected by Klimov (1978), Catford (1991:241sq.) and Chiribka (2008). It potentially includes the following features:

1. Extremely rich system of consonants, characterized in particular by the existence of glottalic consonants⁹: there are 29 consonants in Georgian and up to 80 consonants in the now extinct Ubykh or even 110 consonants in Sadz Abkhaz¹⁰. Chiribka (2008:43) speaks of ‘consonant-type languages’. Besides the usual labial, dental, velar and uvular stops (e.g. *p, t, k, q*) and two affricates (*ts* and *tʃ*) there is in the Caucasian linguistic area a large array of alveolar, postalveolar and uvular fricatives, as well as bilabial and dental nasals, bilabial or labiodental approximants, palatal semivowels, lateral approximants. Most striking is the existence of *glottalic* stops (e.g. *tʼ*) opposed to voiced and voiceless stops: glottalized obstruents are shared by indigenous Caucasian languages as well as by East Armenian and Ossetic (Indo-European), some dialects of Azeri and Kumyk (Turkic) and even the Neo-Aramaic dialects of Caucasus (Semitic).

2. Agglutinative morphology: predominant in the Turkic languages, with a spillover into East Armenian and Ossetic (originally fusional Indo-European languages).

3. Group-inflection: in groups of syntactically related words, only one of them is morphologically marked, e.g. Laz *didī žal-epe-s* ‘to the big trees’ (‘big tree-PL-DAT’)¹¹. We observe the same feature in Ossetic and Modern Armenian, where it is originally foreign to Indo-European morphology, compare Ossetic *mæ zæronð fyð* ‘my old father’ (nominative singular) and *mæ zæronð fyð-æn* ‘to my old father’ (dative singular, with the dative marker *-æn* expressed only at the end of the group)¹².

4. Order of morphological markers: number markers precede declension markers, e.g. Lezgi *ruš-ar-iz* ‘to the girls’ (‘girl-PL-DAT’), Turkish *köy-ler-in* ‘of the villages’ (‘village-PL-GEN’). This order was extended to Ossetic and Modern Armenian, in contrast to the more usual reverse order in the Indo-European languages (declension+number). Compare in this respect Classical Armenian (*ban-iw-k* ‘by the things’ < ‘things-INSTR-PL’) and Modern Armenian (*ban-er-ow* ‘by the things’ < ‘things-PL-INSTR’).

5. High degree of polysyntheticism: a striking feature of the languages of Caucasus is their richness in ‘cases’ (or ‘bound morphemes’). It was argued, for example, that Tabasaran (Northeast Caucasian) has more than 50 cases and that Tsez (Northeast Caucasian) reaches the extreme number of 126 cases. These numbers, however, are questionable because, first, they include a rich system of postpositional locative cases and, second, the different case markers can be combined together, which significantly increases the number of possible forms;

⁹ Cf. Catford (1991:242-248).

¹⁰ Cf. Catford (1991:242-243), Chiribka (2008:43).

¹¹ Cf. Chiribka (2008:55).

¹² Abaev (1964:124).

Comrie & Polkinski (1998:105) ascribe to Tabasaran only 14 or 15 and to Tsez only 18 cases. This does not invalidate the fact that bound morpheme marking is particularly rich in many of the languages spoken in the Caucasus region. In comparison, Georgian has 7 cases, Svan 6 cases, Mingrelian 9 cases (both Kartvelian); Azeri (Turkic) has 6 cases, like Turkish. It is striking that the Indo-European languages of the Caucasus have best preserved the richness of the PIE case system (7 cases in Modern Armenian) or have even developed new cases (9 cases in Ossetic, some of them being of postpositional origin). Note, however, that there are only 3 cases in Ubykh and 2 cases in Abkhaz (both Northwest Caucasian).

6. Category of evidentiality: the morphological encoding of evidentiality, expressing the speaker's attitude towards the information or providing an indication about its source, is attested in nearly all Caucasian languages (Northeast Caucasian, Northwest Caucasian and Kartvelian); it is also found in Modern Armenian, but absent in Ossetic. Compare Abkhaz *jə-s-z-aj+lə-m-k'+aa-jt'* 'I did not understand it' and Abkhaz *jə-s-z-aj+lə-m-k'+aa-zaap'* 'apparently I did not understand it'¹³. It is often argued that the development of evidentiality in the Caucasus region is due to Turkic influence, but it can be traced back to Proto-Abkhaz, at a time when there was no contact with Turkic languages (see Chiribka 2003b:266). Both in Georgian and Armenian evidentiality is restricted to perfect tenses ('split evidentiality'), which is not the case in Svan, Mingrelian and Laz.

7. Potential verbs: existence of special verbal forms 'to express ability to produce an action', e.g. Abkhaz *də-z t^wa-wa-m* '(s)he cannot sit down', Chechen *kxossa-vala* 'to be able to jump' or Mingrelian *a-č'ar- e(-n)* '(s)he can write it'¹⁴. In Archi (Northeast Caucasian), the potential form of the verb is derived from the evidential form followed by *χoqi*.

8. Ergativity: nearly all Caucasian languages are ergative, or display ergative features, with the exception of the Mingrelian dialect of Zan. In Kartvelian, ergativity appears contextually limited and thus realized as a split-ergative alignment.

9. Synthetic marking of causativity: suffixal causatives are shared by many Caucasian languages. In Lezgian (Northeast Caucasian), for example, causativity can be marked by a special suffixal formation (e.g. *kwaχun* 'to get lost' → *kwadarun* 'to lose')¹⁵; in a similar way, Chechen (Northeast Caucasian) has a suffixal causative (e.g. *dada* 'to run, flee' → *daduo* 'to steal' < 'to cause to run, to flee'). In Georgian (Kartvelian), causatives of intransitive verbs are built from the addition of a prefix *a-* and a suffix *-eb-* (e.g. *duγ-s* 'it boils' → *a-duγ-eb-s* 'he boils it, he makes it boil'), causatives of transitive verbs from the addition of a prefix *a-* and a suffix *-in-eb-* (e.g. *çer-s* 'he writes' → *a-çer-in-eb-s* 'he makes X write'). See also Azeri *ye* 'to eat' → *ye-dir* 'to feed, to make X eat' (with a second causative *ye-dir-t* 'to make Y feed X'). Synthetic marking of causativity is also found in Modern Eastern Armenian: *jeral* 'boil (intrans.)' → *jerac'nel* 'boil (trans.)'. Note, however, that Ossetic does not have a synthetic, but a periphrastic causative using the auxiliary *kənnin*

¹³ Example from Chiribka (2003:252).

¹⁴ Chiribka (2008:52). More details on the Caucasian causatives see Hewitt (1980).

¹⁵ Haspelmath (1993:165).

‘to make’ (+ inf.).

10. Use of directional and orientational preverbs: locative preverbs are abundantly attested in nearly all subgroups. They are prolific in Lezgian (Northeast Caucasian), e.g. *aq̃-udun* ‘take out’, *ag-udun* ‘approach’, *al-udun* ‘take off’, *ak-udun* ‘take away’, *xk-udun* ‘take away’, *k-udun* ‘start’, *g-udun* ‘split’, *gal-udun* ‘detach’, *kak-udun* ‘put under’, *q̃aq̃-udun* ‘take off’, *hal-udun* ‘cover, put on’, *agal-udun* ‘lean’, *acal-udun* ‘fill’^{16,16}. Compare also Georgian (Kartvelian): *mi-di-is* ‘is going’, *mi-mo-di-s* ‘is coming and going’, *mo-di-s* ‘is coming’, *a-di-s* ‘is going up’, *a-mo-di-s* ‘is coming up’, *ga-di-s* ‘is going out’, *ga-mo-di-s* ‘is coming out’, *gada-di-s* ‘is going over/across/through’, *gad-mo-di-s* ‘is coming over/across/through’, *še-di-s* ‘is going in’, *še-mo-di-s* ‘is coming in’, *ča-di-s* ‘is going down (into)’, *ča-mo-di-s* ‘is coming down (into)’, *da-di-s* ‘goes regularly, goes down’¹⁷. There are, however, languages with a minimal set of preverbs (e.g. Ubykh) or without any preverb at all (Armenian).

11. Postpositions: e.g. Georgian *mta-ze* ‘on the mountain’ (< ‘mountain=at’)¹⁸, Abkhaz (Northwest Caucasian) *s-qə nt* ‘from me’ (< ‘me=from’), *yə-qə nt* ‘from him’ (< ‘him=from’)¹⁹. Armenian and Ossetic, originally prepositional, have lost many of their prepositions and replaced them by postpositions, cf. Modern Armenian *jeṛk’i meṛ* ‘in the hand’ (< ‘hand in’)²⁰, *im ēnkeroj het* ‘with my friend’ (< ‘my friend with’)²¹, Ossetic *xəzar-y sər* ‘on the roof’ (< ‘roof on’). In some cases, the preference for postpositions can be due to their nominal origin (e.g. Arm. *het* ‘footstep’, Oss. *Sər* ‘head’), but in most cases an areal influence cannot be ruled out.

12. Double coordination: coordination attached to both members of the coordinated structure, e.g. Lezgian *zi buba-ni bubadin buba-ni* ‘my father and my father’s father’ (‘my father=and of the father the father=and’)²², Abkhaz *war-g’ə sar-g’ə* ‘you and me’ (< ‘you=and I=and’), Chechen *vaša a jiša a* ‘brother and sister’ (< ‘brother=and sister=and’), Svan *m-i s-i* ‘you and me’ (< ‘I=and you=and’)²³.

13. SOV word order: predominantly attested in all languages spoken in the Caucasus.

This list, based on Chiribka (2008), is only intended to provide a representative sample of features considered by some scholars to be potentially diagnostic for the reconstruction of a pan-Caucasian *Sprachbund*. It goes without saying that such a broad-spectrum presentation leaves itself wide open to criticism, for at least three

¹⁶ Haspelmath (1993:167 and 171).

¹⁷ Hewitt (1995:148-149).

¹⁸ Chiribka (2008:53).

¹⁹ Hewitt (2000).

²⁰ Chiribka (2008:53).

²¹ Dum-Tragut (2009:300).

²² Haspelmath (1993:327).

²³ Chiribka (2008:53).

reasons. The first one is that it ignores fine-grained differences between the individual languages by focussing on excessively broad parameters without taking into account their language-specific realizations. The second reason is that such a panoramic view of a linguistic area does not provide a clear picture of the linguistic interactions existing on a smaller scale between the individual languages. It is, for example, well-known that the Tsezic languages were influenced by their contact with Georgian; there are between Georgian and Armenian special relationships; there is a Northwest Caucasian substrate in Ossetic, and probably in West Kartvelian (Mingrelian, Laz); etc. The degree of multilingualism has always been very high in the Caucasus region. All these linguistic contacts, realized at different times and in different contexts, are overlooked by overall presentations of the Caucasian linguistic area. The third reason why we should handle this list of shared features with due caution is that the selected features are of unequal status, some of them being too trivial to be used as a piece of evidence for a linguistic area.

At this point, I have presented what has been claimed to be two different linguistic areas, the Anatolian and the Caucasian linguistic areas. Not surprisingly, considering their geographical contiguity, there have been several attempts at reconstructing organic links between these two linguistic areas. These attempts immediately run into serious problems. A first problem is due to the considerable time-lag between the available data. The Anatolian linguistic area is reconstructed on the basis of ancient languages of the 2nd or 1st millennium BCE, whereas the Caucasian languages are of more recent attestation: Georgian and Armenian are documented from the 5th century CE onwards, and we now have Caucasian Albanian texts from the same period; we have Azeri texts at least from the 16th century; but the majority of the Caucasian languages are only known from very recent times (19th or even 20th centuries). Any comparison between Anatolia and Caucasus must take this time difference seriously. In addition, some of the languages now spoken in the Caucasus region are newcomers and may have been affected by areal features to a lesser extent. A second difficulty results from the background of the linguists who proposed these comparisons. Depending on their degree of expertise in the different language families, they can be tempted to overemphasize the position of the language family they know best or, even more seriously, to misrepresent data of languages they know least about. A third problem is that linguistic contacts often imply more or less explicit assumptions about territorial extensions or population migrations, which opens the door to all kinds of ideological blinkers. Political conflicts between Caucasus countries can result in the urge to minimize the presence of ‘enemy languages’ in a disputed area or to exaggerate the implantation of one’s own language in larger territories than it actually is the case; this is perhaps understandable from a purely psychological point of view, but linguistics has nothing to do with psychology.

A final problem is the distinction between genetic and areal relationships. Both types of relationships have been advocated in the scholarly literature between Ancient Anatolia and Modern Caucasus. The first step in this direction was given by scholars who claimed for the unity of all Caucasian linguistic families (Kartvelian, Northwest Caucasian, Northeast Caucasian) — an assumption difficult to prove beyond any doubt. Even the assumption of a common origin of Northwest and Northeast Caucasian is to be regarded as controversial despite its crystallization in the *North Caucasian Etymological Dictionary* by Nikolayev & Starostin (1994). An extreme example was Nikolaï Marr (1864-1934) with his ‘Japhetic theory’, postulating a common origin for Caucasian taken as a whole, Semitic and Basque. More modestly, it was sometimes claimed that Hurrian and Urartian, two members of the Anatolian linguistic area, are related, in one way or another, to the Northeast Caucasian languages; this view was recently defended by Diakonoff & Starostin (1986). All of this is uncertain. By way of illustration, let us compare the numeral system in Ancient Anatolian and Modern Caucasian languages²⁴:

	Hurrian	Urartian	Lezgian	Avar	Abkhaz	Georgian
1	<i>šukki</i> ,	<i>šusi-ni</i>	<i>sa(d)</i>	<i>co</i>	<i>ak'ə aʒə</i>	<i>ert-i</i>
2	<i>šin(a)</i>	<i>šî-šə?</i>	<i>q'we(d)</i>	<i>k'i. go</i>	<i>j°-ba, j°ə-ž'a</i>	<i>or-i</i>
3	<i>kig(a)</i>	?	<i>pud</i>	<i>lab. go</i>	<i>x-pa, x-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>sam-i</i>
4	<i>tumni</i>	?	<i>q'ud</i>	<i>unq'. go</i>	<i>pš'-ba, pš'-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>otx-i</i>
5	<i>nariy(a)</i>	?	<i>wad</i>	<i>šu. go</i>	<i>x°-ba, x°-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>xut-i</i>
6	<i>šeže</i>	?	<i>rugud</i>	<i>anl. go</i>	<i>f-ba, f-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>eksv-i</i>
7	<i>šindi</i>	?	<i>irid</i>	<i>antl. go</i>	<i>bəž'-bá, bəž'-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>švid-i</i>
8	<i>kira/i</i>	?	<i>müžüd</i>	<i>mitl. go</i>	<i>aa-bá, aa-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>rva</i>
9	<i>tamri/a</i>	?	<i>k'üd</i>	<i>ič'. go</i>	<i>ž°-ba, ž°-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>cxra</i>
10	<i>eman</i>	?	<i>c'ud</i>	<i>anc'. go</i>	<i>ž°a-bá, ž°a-j°ə(-k')</i>	<i>at-i</i>

At first glance, there is nothing common between the different sets of numerals. Such a comparison, however, does not really make a lot of sense, since it is based on a selection of individual languages and not on the intermediate proto-languages of each group, as it should be. As a result, all that could be done is to rely on superficial similarities, not on regular correspondences, which is definitely not the right way of practicing the comparative method. To illustrate the problems raised by such uncontrolled lexical comparisons, let us have a look at an extreme example, the reconstruction of the Hurrian numerals by Blažek (2010), who operates within the framework of a common North Caucasian linguistic unity and proposes the

²⁴ Sources: for Hurrian see Speiser (1940-1941:82), Wilhelm (2004:115) and Blažek (2010:118), for Lezgian see Haspelmath (1993:230), for Abkhaz see Chiribka (2003a:34), for Georgian see Hewitt (1995:29-30). See also van den Berg (2005:166). Note the distinction in Abkhaz between non-human and human sets of numerals.

following comparison between Hurrian and other languages, including Caucasian languages:

- (1) Hurro-Urartian *šu-, vs. North Caucasian *cHš
- (2) Hurrian šin(a), vs. North Caucasian *šina-. But compare also Eblaite (Semitic) šina
- (3) Hurrian ki-, vs. Nakh' *qo-, obl. Chechen qaza-, Bats qay-. Blažek adds Etruscan ci
- (4) Hurrian tumni < *tamu (-) ni-. A connection is proposed with Semitic *tamānāy- '8' (cf. Ugaritic tmn, Syriac tmāne)
- (5) Hurrian nariy(a), vs. North Caucasian *rānĀE '6' (if a compound *rān- '5' + *ĀE from a verb *-āĀĒw 'to lie, to put, to lead', with the meaning 'six' = '(one) put upon five')
- (6) Hurrian šeže loanword from Akkadian (šeššet)
- (7) Hurrian šindi from *šin- and *na- '2+5'
- (8) Hurrian kira/i from *ki- and *nariy(a) '3 + 5'
- (9) Hurrian tamri/a from *tum- (< *tamu-?) and *nariy(a) '4 + 5'
- (10) Hurrian eman. Blažek compares Basque hamar '10' or, alternatively, speculates about a noun meaning 'hand' found in North Caucasian *mēhwV (Lak k^{wi}-jama 'handful', Akusha meh 'hollow of hand, handful', Udin aIm 'arm, wing', Abkhaz *ma in a-ma-c'á 'finger', a-ma-χ'ár 'arm') or *mHōχi (Tsezian *mχV 'handful', Lezgian *χ:am 'hand(ful), palm of the hand').

As pointed out by Blažek himself (2010:122), the Hurro-Urartian-Caucasian connection would be visible only for some of the Hurrian numerals; most numerals would have different etymologies either on an internal or on an external basis. It is clear, I believe, that broad spectrum etymologies of that sort are completely flawed by their overhasty reliance on uncontrolled linguistic material and by their lack of precise comparative methodology.

Just as Hurro-Urartian was sometimes connected with Northeast Caucasian, Hattic was sometimes linked to, or even considered an ancestor of, Northwest Caucasian. This position was defended by different scholars, e.g. Ardzinba (1974), Ivanov (1985) and before them by Mészáros (1934), but it is based on a small number of doubtful lexical convergences. The Hattic language is too little known to be amenable to any kind of etymological macro-comparison: we do not even have any reliable descriptive dictionary of the language²⁵. Parallel prefixes were attributed to Hattic and to Northwest Caucasian, e.g. Hattic a- (demonstrative), vs. Abkhaz a- (article), but they are too trivial to have any value at all. One example often produced to support the Hattic-Northwest Caucasian connection is the name for 'God', Hattic

²⁵ See Simon (2015:212).

wa-šhaw compared to Circassian (Cherkess) *uas* 'ho' 'God' (archaic), but it was shown that this equation is false: Hattic is a collective to *a-šhab* and originally means 'thunder' (hence 'thunder god, god'), whereas Circassian *uas* 'ho' originally meant 'sky' and has a different prehistory²⁶. Other equations proposed by Ivanov (1985) are the following²⁷:

Hattic *herta* 'to hide', vs. Ubykh *qarda* 'id.'

Hattic *kuwa* 'to catch', vs. Ubykh *q'°a* 'id.'

Hattic *hun* 'large', vs. Proto-Abkhaz *šx°a-, *čx°a- 'id.'

Hattic *šepšep* 'shoes', vs. Proto-Abkhaz *c': ā qa 'id.' (in fact, *a-c°á* 'leather')

Hattic *bu-* 'to make', vs. Abkhaz (*a-*)*u-ra* 'id.'

Hattic *štib* 'door', vs. Abkhaz *a-šə* 'id.'

Hattic *tauwa_a tupi* 'fear and horror', vs. Kabardian *štajudagəe* 'fear'

Hattic *izzi-* 'good', vs. Kabardian *fly*, Adyghe *šlu* 'id.'

These comparisons are very uncertain, since they are not based on regular sound correspondences, but on superficial similarities. Moreover, some of the Hattic data used to produce them have been shown to be unreliable or even false. There is no clear evidence for any kind of cognacy between Hattic and Northwest Caucasian.

On the other hand, there have been attempts in the literature to connect Hattic with Kartvelian²⁸. The first scholar who promoted this idea was Deeters (1963) on the basis of the comparison of two pluralizing prefixes of Hattic *le-* and *še-* with corresponding prefixes in Georgian (*sa-*) and Svan (*la-*, *le-*), but it was shown that these prefixes have different semantic values. Girbal (1986) and Gabeskiria (1998) supported the same assumption with a list of alleged lexical cognates²⁹:

Hattic *tette* 'big', vs. Georgian *didi* 'id.'

Hattic *tuhhukuru* 'to see', vs. Georgian *q'ur* 'id.' Hattic *šama* 'to hear', vs. Proto-Kartvelian **sm-* 'id.' Hattic *tumail* 'rain', vs. Georgian *c'vima* 'id.'

Hattic *šawa_at* 'apple tree', vs. Georgian *vašli* 'tree'

Hattic *karam* 'wine', vs. Georgian *kvevri* 'pithos in which wine ferments'

²⁶ Cf. Simon (2015:224).

²⁷ See the discussion by Simon (2015:228-229).

²⁸ See the discussion by Simon (2015:249sq.).

²⁹ Cf. Simon (2015:251-252).

As shown by Simon (2015), most of these comparisons are ill-founded, either on the Hattic side or on the Kartvelian side or on both of them. No evidence proves any genetic connection between Hattic and Kartvelian.

Apart from the question of genetic cognacy, linguistic contacts have been supposed by different scholars between the Anatolian and Caucasus linguistic areas. A first direction often taken in this debate is the investigation of loanword relationships between the two areas. It was claimed, for example, that the Armenian language possesses a fair number of loanwords from Hittite, Hattic or Hurro-Urartian. The first who postulated the existence of Hittite borrowings in Armenian was Austin (1942), soon contradicted by Kerns & Schwartz (1942); the same view was repeatedly advocated by John A.C. Greppin (e.g. 1980). Among the examples often produced in the literature are the following:

Armenian *targal* ‘spoon’ < Hittite *tarḫ-āli-* ‘pestle’

Armenian *olol-* ‘inundation’ < Hittite *alalam(m)a-* ‘roar (of a river)’

Armenian *hasteay* ‘a kind of pastry’ < Hittite *ḫaz(z)ita-* ‘a kind of cake’

Armenian *brut* ‘potter’ < Hittite *purut-* ‘clay’

Armenian *hazar* ‘lettuce’ < Hittite *ḫašuššara-* ‘a garden vegetable’

Armenian *towp* ‘case, box, chest, censer’ < Hittite *tuppi-* ‘ark, container’

The evidence was recently critically discussed by Simon (2013), who claimed for a limited number of Anatolian loanwords in Armenian, and only of Luwian provenance. Most of this evidence is uncertain. Phonetic similarities between Anatolian and Armenian were also pointed out, such as the preservation of the PIE second laryngeal as *h* both in Hittite (*ḫanna-* ‘grandmother’, *ḫuḫḫa-* ‘grandfather’) and in Armenian (*han* ‘grandmother’, *haw* ‘grandfather’); but the status of initial *h-* in Armenian is disputed and certainly not unreservedly to be equated with Hittite *ḫ-*. The assumption of loan relationships between Hurro-Urartian and Armenian is more promising; it is often based on the assumption of a link of continuity between Urartian and Armenian, spoken in the same area. This idea was developed by Diakonoff (1985), who gives the following examples of Hurro-Urartian loanwords in Armenian:

Armenian *astem* ‘to reveal one’s ancestry’ < Hurrian *ašte* ‘wife’ Armenian *caṛay* ‘slave’ < Hurrian *sarre* ‘live booty, captives’ Armenian *owlt* ‘Bactrian camel’ < Urartian *ultu*

Armenian *xn̄jor* ‘apple(-tree)’ < Hurrian *ḫinz-orā* ‘apple’

Armenian *caṛ* ‘tree’ < Hurrian *sar-me* ‘wood’, Urartian *ḫârā* ‘orchard’

Armenian *cov* ‘sea’ < Urartian *ḫûā* ‘(inland) sea’

Armenian *xarxarem* ‘I destroy’ < Urartian *ḫarḫar-* ‘to be destroyed’

Diakonoff also postulated loanwords in the reverse direction, from Armenian towards Urartian, which would be very surprising considering the early date of the Urartian evidence:

Urartian *Arsibə*, name of a horse, presumably ‘Eagle’ < Armenian *arcowi* ‘eagle’ Urartian *burg-ana-* ‘column(?)’ < Armenian *burgn* ‘tower’ (< PIE **b^hrǵ^h-*) Urartian *ulgušə* ‘health, life’ < Armenian *olj* ‘whole’

Urartian *me(i)* negative < Armenian *mi* prohibitive negative (< PIE **meh₁*)

Some of the proposed lexical convergences might have further connections in Caucasian languages, for example³⁰:

Armenian *art* ‘field’, vs. Hurrian *arde*, Urartian *ardi-ne* ‘town’, vs. Chechen *urd* ‘peasant’s share of land’, Ingush *urd* ‘district’

Armenian *kowt* ‘grain’, vs. Hurrian *kade* ‘barley’, vs. Lezghian *gad* ‘grain’, Lak *č: ati* ‘food made from flax seed’, Andi, Tindi *ççetu-* ‘(flax) seed’

Armenian *maxr*, dial. *marx* ‘resinous conifer, pine’, vs. Hurrian *maḫri* ‘fir, juniper’, vs. Chechen *max* ‘aspen’, Ingush *mixa* ‘aspen’, Avar *maxx* ‘birch’, Dargwa *maq* ‘birch’, Tabasaran *murx* ‘birch’, Budukh *märx* ‘birch’

Finally, there is the vexed question of the relation between Armenian and Hattic. The identification of the indigenous name of the Armenians, *Hayk* ‘’, with the name of Hatti has been the subject of a very emotional debate and can hardly be regarded as broadly accepted. A handful of Hattic loanwords in Armenian were also reconstructed by several scholars, but their plausibility is not very high: one of them would be Armenian *kamowrj* ‘bridge’ related to Hattic *ḫamuru(wa)* ‘beam’, but the comparison is extremely weak, and one could prefer to connect the Armenian word with Greek γέφυρα *gép^hura* ‘bridge’ (which, to be honest, cannot be taken for granted either).

The best one could say about these comparisons is that there might be a grain of truth in some of them, but the problem is that we cannot assess their scope properly since we know almost nothing about the linguistic interactions between Ancient Anatolia and Armenian. The comparisons made between all these languages are most often completely uncritical, far away from the traditional comparative method, sometimes even from common sense. A crucial problem is that such comparisons are usually based on lexical material, which is the least suitable for this purpose, since shared lexemes between two languages can either reflect common inheritance (in terms of genetic affiliation) or loanword relationships (in terms of geographic and

³⁰ Examples from Greppin & Diakonoff (1991:724sq.).

cultural proximity). As a result, when we find between Hattic and Northwest Caucasian, for example, lexical convergences, we are not able to determine whether these convergences are due to the common origin of these languages or to linguistic contacts between two unrelated languages. Moreover, we are not even sure that linguistic contacts, if any, really took place between these two languages directly and not through the medium of a third, unknown language. In my own field of research, Indo-European linguistics, progress has only been made once attention has turned to the comparison of grammatical material.

A last question is whether there can be an organic link between the Anatolian and the Caucasus linguistic areas. In genetic linguistics, there have been many attempts at establishing distant forms of cognacy between clearly defined linguistic families, e.g. between Indo-European and Uralic (macro-families), with its share of exaggeration and uncertainty, but it seems even more difficult to follow a similar way of proceeding with linguistic areas and globally speaking there is no way of reconstructing macro-linguistic areas, unifying two clearly defined linguistic areas. The reason for this is probably that a linguistic area is a bundle of shared features which were formed at a particular time in history and at a particular location, due to a specific cultural environment, which precludes the existence of wide-ranging linguistic areas (macro-areas). What is striking in this case is that the features considered to be diagnostic for the establishment of the Anatolian and the Caucasus linguistic areas are completely different and there is no common set of features shared by the two linguistic areas. The only potentially shared peculiarities are ergativity and the existence of postpositions, but they are trivial in themselves and cannot provide evidence for a link between the Anatolian and the Caucasus linguistic areas. Even worse, there are in each one of the two linguistic areas features that are completely absent from the other one: for example, the category of evidentiality, which is widespread all over the Caucasus as well as in Modern Turkish, is not found at all in Ancient Anatolia. The conclusion is that there might have existed cultural interactions between Ancient Anatolia and Caucasus, resulting in linguistic proximities, but first we cannot link together the Anatolian and the Caucasus linguistic areas on the basis of shared structures and, second, given the current stage of knowledge, the existence of linguistic relationships between these two regions in terms of linguistic cognacy or linguistic contact cannot be proven beyond doubt. What should be done in the future is to establish as precisely as possible the linguistic prehistory of each of the subgroups attested in both regions, and this requires a strict application of the comparative method and a good dose of critical mind. Then we have to investigate all linguistic contacts really observable on historical grounds. For this, historical linguistics is not sufficient; it needs to be supported by other sciences such as archaeology and history. Only a cross-cutting approach based on all available evidence can bring a fresh perspective on the linguistic prehistory of

Ancient Anatolia and Caucasus.

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Multicultural world in the poetry of Shota Rustaveli and the issue of paradigm shift in the multicultural world context

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When we speak about multicultural world in the poetry of Shota Rustaveli, we have to take into consideration two key aspects: 1) importance of this work in the context of the Georgian culture and 2) the multicultural world context around this work that means picking out the alteration dynamic of the idea of love and freedom in the cultures of Orient and Occident in different epochs as a central theme. Every epoch has its own love-ideal, that is canonized or in terms of Niklas Luhmann has its own “symbolic code” (symbolischer Code), which encourages one to have appropriate feelings (entsprechende Gefühle)¹ and which mirrors the sequence of transition from traditional to modern forms of society. Since the love as central motive has become the object of art, the history of evolution of the “semantics of love” knows various stages of development. This phenomenon becomes the content and topic of art once the object of the love or romantic interest, the so-called love interest. Hence it becomes not only an object of romantic admiration and attraction but the destiny as main plot element. The natural and organic basis of sexuality is concealed and refined by feeling, emotion and passion. And these feelings are described, reflected and suffered in the works according to the changeable artistic tradition and canon of literature of different ages.

In words of Max Weber, the medieval „Ritterminne “as an „erotischer Vasallendienst”,² as sublimation of sexuality "to eroticism" in contrast to the „nüchternen Naturalismus der Bauern “(sober naturalism of peasants) is elevated to the “bewußt gepflegten und dabei außeralltäglichen Sphäre” (to the conscious cultivated and nontrivial sphere)³. Eroticism as “größte irrationale Lebensmacht” (as greatest irrational power of life) appears thereby as a gateway to the most irrational and coevally the most real quintessence of the life (eine Pforte zum irrationalsten und dabei realsten Lebenskern)⁴.The final result of this exceeding elevation of the

¹ Niklas Luhmann, *Liebe als Passion, Zur Codierung von Intimität* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994), 9

² Max Weber, *Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen*, in: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, {Paul Siebeck} 1988) 559

³ *Ibid.*, 556

⁴ *Ibid.*, 558

sexuality as love into the domain of the irrationality has become the central theme in medieval, noble, aristocratical Minnekult. Europe transformed the oriental ideal of the furious and raging love-obsessed knight in its own way and made it to an "erotic vassal servant" in the Ritterminne or courtly love. In accordance with the norms of the knightly concept of honor and the casuistic duty code, the servant of love, who does his service without reflection, cannot even ask for the rational reason of the irrational wishes of the mistress. But what happens with the medieval slave-of-the love knight, who according to the rules of love was supposed to lose his mind long ago, suddenly appears an emancipated citizen of the Enlightenment epoch? Of the epoch when the carnal desire as Aestheticism of love got incorporated into the universal connections of the rationalization and intellectualization of culture?

The answer is findable in the poetry of Friedrich Schiller.

"Before his lion-court, / Impatient for the sport, / King Francis sat one day; / The peers of his realm sat around, / And in balcony high from the ground / Sat the ladies in beauteous array."

With these lines, Friedrich Schiller, the German poet and Kantian representative of the Weimar Classicism, begins the description of the horrifying scene in his famous ballad "Der Handschuh" (*The Glove*), where the "furchtbare Zwinger" is filled with loud roaring wild "fierce beasts". Associatively, these images are reminiscent of the cruel and bloody tragedies organized in ancient Rome. The participants of which were professional gladiators, the slaves schooled under harsh conditions and mainly constituted under strict discipline, who were compelled to fight either life or death, either against each other or against wild animals. In Schiller's ballad, as well, the medieval times slave, the knight Delorges, is forced by the beautiful lady "in tone of jest" (spottenderweis) to descend to the terrible "Zwinger" and perform a heroic act when she asks to retrieve her glove which she let down from the balcony as a proof of his proclaimed love:

"To the knight, Sir Delorges, then speaks young Cunigund fair;
"Sir Knight, if the love that thou feel'st in thy breast
Is as warm as thou'rt wont at each moment to swear,
Pick up, I pray thee, the glove that lies there!"

And the knight accepts the challenge, enters the circle and recovers the glove that has been thrown by his capricious mistress Fräulein Kunigunde.

He "Jumps into the lists, nor seeks to linger,
And, from out the midst of those monsters' dread,
Picks up the glove with a daring finger."

The court is impressed by his bravery and cranky mistress who looks at him with a promise in her eyes but Delorges throws the glove in her face and declares: “Den Dank, Dame, begehre ich nicht!”⁵ (The thanks, lady, I do not desire)

That is Schiller’s version of Answering the Kantian Question: “What is Enlightenment?” For whom Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred, self-inflicted immaturity. And as Immanuel Kant, one of the most famous teachers of his epoch, taught: „Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit. Unmündigkeit ist das Unvermögen, sich seines Verstandes ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen ... *Sapere aude!* Habe Muth dich deines eigenen Verstandes zu bedienen!”⁶ In the light of this Kantian appeal perhaps could be more comprehensible the words "The thanks, lady, I do not desire" of Schiller's rebelling slave of love. It could be regarded as the reason of his refusal to serve the lady. By the rejection of the irrationality of love Schiller will achieve the true ideal of the Enlightenment that is the idea of love and freedom, because everything that is unreasonable is alien to freedom. It means that the great model of the raging, weeping, and love-obsessed Oriental "Medshnun" or "Midshnur" is from now on absent.

Not the lack of physical fearlessness or bravery but the lack of fortitude and courage to use one’s reason is the main point in this case - mental audacity signifies genuine freedom from fear. To dare to be wise or to react reasonably to unreasonable chicanery of the fastidious mistress means for the “servant” of love the exoneration from the slavery of the love enchantment. This disenchantment of love or the restoring of the “medjnun” – madman to sanity (such as the love itself is for Ariosto a form of insanity) is the preliminary stage of the disenchantment of the world which is ideal of the European Enlightenment. It has its own history and as mentioned above it starts in 18th century. It shaped a specific bourgeois-enlightened form that was characterized with keyword like rationality. This rationality collided – sometimes abruptly – with existing aesthetic traditions.

As Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer argued the disenchantment of the world was the program of the Enlightenment (Das Programm der Aufklärung war die Entzauberung der Welt. Sie wollte Mythen auflösen und Einbildung durch Wissen stürzen)⁷. Schiller’s ballad “Handschuh” is to a certain extent the realization of this personality emancipation program as the rationalization of the irrational passion of love.

⁵ Friedrich Schiller, *Der Handschuh*, in: *Der deutsche Balladenschatz*, (München: Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, 1978) 81.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?* In: Kant’s gesammelte Schriften, (hrsg. von der (Königlich) Preussischen, später Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1910–1968, Bd. VIII), 35.

⁷ Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), 9

However, Schiller's Ritter Delorges is not a socially marginalized pupil of the fencing school for gladiators, but the noble knight of times Middle Ages. He is a voluntary slave of the love and the medieval knightly code or chivalric code, which is the code of conduct associated with the medieval institution of knighthood developed in Europe. That means the moral system involving a warrior ethos of military bravery and knightly piety combined with gallantry and the devotion of a knight to his Lady. This voluntary obedience of the faithful servant of the courtly love – Domnei or donnoi also Minnekult, as the "tender look of love" (zärtlicher Liebesblick) of his Fräulein Kunigunde, promises to him, would be rewarded by happiness and "coming joys" (nahes Glück); Only the unusually harsh reaction of this rebelling slave of the love destroys the whole traditional ethical value system, which for centuries shaped the entire culture of the Occident and was refined to emphasize social and moral virtues more generally. The words of the courtier who "threw the glove point-blank" in the face of his high mistress: "Lady, no thanks from thee I'll receive!" (Den Dank, Dame, begehrt ich nicht!) sound like a magical formula, disenchanting the world and hurting the courtly etiquette, busting the high ring wall of the medieval Zwinger - dungeon, of the "gentlemen" school of the "grandmother of Europe", Eleanor of Aquitaine, where her creations, the first gentlemen were forced into the performance of the hard, stylized "Minnedienst" (homage rendered by a knight to his lady). This intelligent and independent woman, whose name is directly linked to the development of the splendid idea of courtesy and gentleness, was one of the first who through the participation in the crusades conducted by her first husband Louis VII, experienced in person the close contact of Western Europeans with the highly developed culture of the Orient that considerably influenced Occident's spiritual life during centuries.

Through this first touch, Europe was flooded by one of those three streams, which according to Schiller's coeval thinker Herder (cf. *Journal meiner Reise im Jahr 1769 – Journal of my Voyage in the Year 1769*) gently descends from the Orient to Greece and Italy to southern Europe bringing along an equal gentle mild southern religion, a poetry of imagination, music, art, good manners, science of the Eastern South (aus dem Orient, über Griechenland und Italien sich ins südliche Europa sanft senkt, und auch eine sanfte, südliche Religion, eine Poesie der Einbildungskraft, eine Musik, Kunst, Sittsamkeit, Wissenschaft des östlichen Südens erfunden hat)⁸. The Orient, Morgenland, the homeland of the most ancient poetry, art, science and mysticism, played a decisive role in shaping the taste and the way of thinking of the Southern Europeans. The Western European form of the culture of the Occident (Abendland) is the end result of the contact between the South and the Orient: it is the Spanish-Italian-French world. Here we have the crossing of the elements of Oriental mysticism being the relicts of the Saracen and Moorish conquests with the stern, majestic and sublime solemnity of Catholicism. By touching the fairytale

⁸ Johann Gottfried Herder, *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769*, in: *Werke in 5 Bänden*, hrsg. von den Nationalen Forschungs- und Gedenkstätten der Klassischen Deutschen Literatur in Weimar, (Berlin/Weimar, 1978), Bd. 1, 17f.

world of ancient Persian-Arab poetry, the deafening clamor of the heroic, saber-rattling battle and murder stories of the songs of heroes (such as the one over Hildebrand and Hadubrand, or that of the God and crusade striker Roland) is subdued by the harmony of the highly stylized homage and the price to the Minnedame (lady) is increasingly culturally refined.

In order to present the transformation processes and ways of the love as a generalized symbolic medium of communication within different cultures, it might be useful to list a number of works which on the one hand, characterize the peculiarity of the particular culture, but on the other hand are evidence of the contact between the cultures. Of course, the following scheme cannot claim for completeness or absolute exactness. As an example of the beginning and the end of this series, formed more or less by chronological sequence, could be named "*The Song of Roland*" or "*La Chanson de Roland*" and Ariosto's "*Orlando Furioso*" or "*The Frenzy of Orlando*" more literally *Raging Roland*; Among them are the examples of the "*Shah name*" of Firdoussi, "*Vis and Ramin*" of Gurgani, "*Chosrov and Shirin*" and "*Leil and Medshnun*" of Nisami, as well as work on Arthurian subjects of Chretien de Troyes, and the "*Tristan und Isolde*" by Gottfried von Strassburg, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* - ვეფხისტყაოსანი by Shota Rustaveli or "*Farhad and Shirin*" and "*Leil and Medshnun*" by Navoi or "*Parzival*" written by Wolfram von Eschenbach and finally "*Orlando Innamorato*" or "*Orlando in Love*" more literally "Roland In love" by Boiardo as precursor of Ariosto's "*Orlando Furioso*".

Apart from an astonishing similarity between genre and structure, it is to be noted that the series of all these poems are held together by the most important strong element of extraordinary binding power. It is the principal theme of love relationships and the madness caused by them which often have socially destructive consequences and can create a social chaos. The reasons for the obvious similarity of the different versions of these medieval masterpieces could not be seen in a more or less purely "accidental" or "outward-structural" and "typological" kinship (as it is proclaimed in the exposition by the Russian researcher Meletinski⁹, which is an obvious simplification of the problem) but in the borrowing of the fables of the Persian original texts, mediated by Arabic and Provençal sources. In this context it becomes much clearer and more distinct how, according to the Oriental model and ideal, the lovers become slaves to their passionate love. Because for the general type of the hero of this epoch, whether it be in the East, or in the West, the consistent characteristic trait is the suffering and weeping "Medshnun" (Arabic) or "Mijnur"- მთჯნური (Georgian), which is, the love-obsessed insane, who has lost his reason for love. Rustaveli tries to give an exact definition of this phenomenon:

"In the Arabic tongue a lover is called a madman.

⁹ Е. М. Мелетинский, *Введение в историческую поэтику эпоса и романа*, (Москва: Наука, 1976) 154.

Because of non-fulfilment and futile longing for her. " (V. Urushadze)¹⁰

or

“To describe a lover, the Arabs use a word that means insane,

Because when a lover’s beloved leaves, his reason starts to wane” (Lyn Coffin)¹¹

Liebender heißt auf arabisch ein vom Wahnsinn Befallener;

Wahnsinn befällt ihn, falls man ihn hindert, den Liebesdurst stillen “(Hermann Buddensieg)¹²

„Le mot arabe de "midjnour" désigne le “fou”, “le dément”,

Il se démène de dépit: amour entendement dément. “(Gaston Bouatchidzé)¹³

or

“Называется миджнуром у арабов тот влюбленный,

Кто стремится к совершенству, как безумец иступленный” (Н.Заболоцкий)¹⁴

“По-арабски однозвучны и "безумен" и "влюблен":

Кто влюблен и кто безумен – тщетной грезой омрачен” (П.А.Петренко)¹⁵

მიჯნური (midjnouri) შმაგსაგვიქვიანარაბულითაენითა,

მით რომე შმაგობს მისისა ვერ-მიხვდომისა წყენითა¹⁶

The national peculiarity of the respective culture and literature expresses itself in the way in which the type of "Medshnun", madman, the love-obsessed one, is modified. Under permanent reference to pretended, for example pseudo-Persian original texts,

¹⁰ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Tbilisi: “Sabcjta Sakartvelo”, 1986. Translated by Venera Urushadze), 17

¹¹ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Tbilisi 2015, Printed in Turkey by: MEDCEZIR MEDYA MATBAACILIK SAN: VE DIS TIC: LTD: STI. Translated by Lyn Coffin), 14

¹² Schota Rustaweli, *Der Mann im Pantherfell*, (Tbilisi: “Sabcjta Sakartvelo”, 1976. Nachgedichtet von Hermann Buddensieg) 17

¹³ Chota Rustaveli, *Le Chevalier à la peau de panthère*, (Moscou: Radouga, 1989. Traduit par Gaston Buatchidzé) 14

¹⁴ Шота Руставели, *Витязь в тигровой шкуре*, (<http://www.lib.ru/POEEAST/RUSTAWELI/rustave1.txt>. Перевод Н.Заболоцкого)

¹⁵ Шота Руставели, *Витязь в тигровой шкуре*, (<http://www.russianplanet.ru/filolog/epos/vityaz/text.htm> Перевод П.А.Петренко)

¹⁶ შოთა რუსთაველი, *ვეფხისტყაოსანი* (თბილისი: მერანი, 1992) 12

the great model of oriental "Midshnur" appears including the image of the Orient as a paradigmatic category in the poetry of the Eastern Christianity which seems to have remained alien to the Western crusades, as a kind of unrealized (or perhaps even unrealizable) project.

"I have found this Persian tale, and have set it in Georgian verse

Until now like a peerless pearl it was rolled on the palm of the hand. "(V. Urushadze)¹⁷

"An ancient Persian tale I took, and in the Georgian tongue retold

Until that time, it was an unset pearl; from hand to hand it rolled" (Lyn Coffin)¹⁸

"La présente histoire persane en géorgien fut transposée,

Perle solitaire, avec soins de mains en mains redéposée" (Gaston Bouatchidzé)¹⁹

"Diese Geschichte aus Persien, wiedergeboren georgisch:

Wie eine kostbare Perle rollte sie mir durch die Hände" (Hermann Buddensieg)²⁰

Эта повесть, из Ирана занесенная давно,

По рукам людей катилась, как жемчужное зерно. (Н.Заболоцкий)²¹

Сказка персов по-грузински мною песенно дана, Перешла из рук на руки, как жемчужина, она; (П.А.Петренко)²²

ესე ამბავი სპარსული, ქართულად ნათარგმანები,

ვით მარგალიტი ობოლი, ხელის-ხელ საგოგმანები²³

This paradigmatic level as a certain facade or oriental disguise is almost like a fidelity confession to the Persian-Arabic-Oriental narrative tradition and is opposed to the syntagmatic level prevailing in Western culture. Wherein the world and cultural image of the Orient becomes syntagma, in other words, quite often differently sized

¹⁷ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Venera Urushadze), 16

¹⁸ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 12

¹⁹ Chota Rustaveli, *Le Chevalier à la peau de panthère*, 12

²⁰ Schota Rustaveli, *Der Mann im Pantherfell*, 16

²¹ Шота Руставели, *Витязь в тигровой шкуре*, (Перевод Н.Заболоцкого)

²² Шота Руставели, *Витязь в тигровой шкуре*, (Перевод П.А.Петренко)

²³ შოთა რუსთაველი, *ვეფხისტყაოსანი*, 8

elements of Oriental culture are woven rather opaque in the language netting of the Occidental poetry.

For example, in the form of a certain utopian synthesis of the Orient and the Occident in Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parzival". Here, as in Rustaveli's poem the allegedly oriental source of an imaginary author is reproduced. Wolfram who largely adapted the Grail romance, *Perceval*, by Chretien de Troys claimed that a certain Kyot supplied additional material drawn from Arabic sources. This Provençal author was supposed to have found the first version of this narrative in Toledo "in an Arabic manuscript" (pagan writings). But most scholars now consider Kyot to be Wolfram's invention and part of the fictional narrative. And despite the fact that the oriental image interpreted by Wolfram von Eschenbach in his own way becomes an indispensable fundamental element and a component of the "Parzival", one cannot speak of its paradigmatic function.

Once again, a medieval Christian poet refers to a supposed oriental original text, but this vocation is no longer a paradigm. In Rustaveli's epic poem, the original text is compared with a "precious pearl," the pathos of this discourse is not comparable with the subtle irony of the German poet. Wolfram doesn't need in his derisive game of artistic hide-and-seek this paradigmatic level of loyalty to the Arabic-Persian-Oriental narrative tradition, because it is not an organic inherent matter, but only recently discovered model and semiskilled discourse. That is the crucial difference between Wolfram and Rustaveli. But the image, the idea of the Orient, is undoubtedly present in the masterpieces of poetry of both Eastern and Western Christianity.

Hence through the first experiences, gained in numerous crusades, the Western Europeans, primarily convinced by their own intellectual and spiritual superiority, discovered the splendor and magnificence of noble life and flowering of the cultural achievements of the Orient which could be regarded rather as a model for the Occident. In this period started an absolutely unique tradition of the incessant perception of Orient. This could be considered as epochal threshold then distinct shifts in emphasis within the field of the semantics of love as central element of culture become discernible.

The smell of the sensual-fragrant beauty of the woman for whom Kais of Nisami, Tariel of Rustaveli, or Roland of Ariosto lost their mind and reason in a more or less similar manner came in harmony with the odors of foreign civilization. But entire cultural worlds separate these love-obsessed "Medshnuns" from each other. In contrast to Rustaveli, who is most enthusiastically enchanted by the love-madness and the exuberance of his bitterly weeping hero, Tariel, Ariosto in his poem continually discerns the slight smirk and shows the ironic side glance. However, Ariosto has an ironic tone for Orlando's madness, rarely present in Rustaveli, who treated the ideals of chivalry love much more seriously. Between them lie not only centuries, but also entire cultural worlds, and the giggling sound of Ariosto's timid

smile a short time later is drowned by the din of the carnivalesque Rabelaisian laughter. Through laughing, the entire culture has been raised to skepticism, self-irony, and self-discipline since the Renaissance era.

It was just the ritual laughter with which Europe had endeavored, in the early Middle Ages, to overcome fear and death during the Carnival (Fasching) period with unbridled cheerfulness and deafening noise, in contrast to the ritual weeping or public mourning rituals of Ashura, which is an indispensable part of the month of Muharram and commemorates the death of Huseyn. Then according to a popular Shi'a saying, "a single tear shed for Husayn washes away a hundred sins". This is the singular "feast", celebrating the martyrdom of the sons of Fatima (Mohammed's daughter).

Every year, Hussein is buried in tears and crying, this is a farewell until the next year, until the next commemoration. Consciousness is entirely concerned with the idea of death that alone is celebrated. It is characteristic that in contrast to this unique doctrine of suffering, Christian Europe confronts the passion, crucifixion, and the death of the Savior with the unbridled joyous laughs of the carnival, with the exhilarated hope for an early resurrection.

The antonymic pair of ritual weeping and ritual laughter is not just two different masks of the different cult drama but produces an absolute inversion of the social hierarchy. For both the "strictly organized" act of ritual weeping (from the lowest strata to the spiritual leader of the nation) or the ritual laughter of the carnival as well occurs the unique unity, freedom and community experience of all strata of society.

The Orient has transformed the cult of suffering into the celebration, a kind of anti-carnival. The Occident, on the other hand, has half-reflectively ritualized the anxiety suppressing and death transcending power of laughter. However, in the end, we are concerned with the essentially one, namely, the various forms of manifestation and modes of presentation of the world's conception of the festivity in different cultures. The gap between carnival and anti-carnival, which at first glance cannot be bridged, is abolished in the collective act of eating. If, on the eve of the fasting season, the European carnival is almost turned into a gigantic feast, Ashura is crowned with a meal organized by the rich people for the poor (Sham e ghariban = the main night in Muharram).

It is characteristic that, in several cultures bread and wine acquire a special inner logic in the act of collective eating and drinking and thanks to their inner nature, dispel fear and free the word. And perhaps just the word of the banquet as pronounced toast, is precisely the phenomenon which makes an appearance of Georgian culture that is not coined by the tradition neither of the western carnival nor of the Eastern anti-carnival with its sacred play and data, with firmly established ritual components such as mysteries or processions. The activity of festively weeping or laughing processions is replaced here by the perpetual dynamic statics or static

dynamics of the company at table. In the word, in the speeches of the toastmaster (tamada) leader of the table the always bad, hopeless present, the dream of the idealized splendid and glorious past and the equally idealized future, almost overwhelmed with utopian hopes are intertwined. For this pathetic earnestness of rhetoric, the admiration for Tariel instilled into Georgians collective memory at the school desk and from the schoolbook means admiration for the tearful “midjnur” a lover who is called a madman. Tariel of Rustaveli, is declared as an eternal, inviolable symbol and exemplary ideal. This pathetic seriousness has not yet accepted the ironic, skeptical smile of Ariosto, with which the Western culture bowed out gradually of the idealized medieval knightly minne cult and the exalted suffering of love-obsession which was praised in all above-mentioned masterpieces of poetry.

At the same time the glorification of the love-madness by Rustaveli thanks to the certain interior logic will be legitimized. By the medium of huge amount of different metaphorical elements with evident oriental coloring and tonality: “rose unfaded”, “face as bright as the sun”, “eyes lakes of ink”, “the rose-cheeked crystal”, “ruby-and-jet one entered”, “slim as a poplar” and “face...like the moon” the love and even the love-madness will be justified and motivated by all this attributes of idealization. This ideal of love comes forward with the unique rationality of a cultivated irrationality. As long as in this case love is thought of as an ideal, a knowledge of the characteristics of object’s beauty is crucial. Through hypertrophic superlative description of the beauty the love is not only idealized but even the love-madness will be sanctified. On the other hand, several centuries later in the other time and other cultural space we have an example of absolute inversion of the entire set of all this metaphorical element in William Shakespeare’s famous sonnet 130 who is paradoxically reversing and abnegating all these well-known allegorical depictions:

“My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.”²⁴

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *Sonnet 130*, (<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/130.html>)

This is a remarkable exemplification which illustrates how the form of symbolic code changes from idealization to paradoxalization during the centuries in different cultures. The beauty of the beloved ceased to be imperative reason for love. This is the long way from the 12th century to the 17th of the self-justification of the love. Thanks to this paradoxical codification occurs a certain self-reference of love and the object's characteristics like "coral...red" of lips and "snow... white" of breasts or "roses damask'd, red and white" of the cheeks are not essential and required anymore. Due to these transformations in the semantics of medium the love reached autonomy and became self-sufficient energy. It is inner-directed and self-motivated autotelic phenomenon, complete in itself a kind of l'amour pour l'amour – love for love's sake. At the same time thanks to the negative dialectics of these transformations love semantic lost its power to make mad, it ceased to be reason of madness. Therefore, Shakespearean Hamlet couldn't be the love-obsessed "Medshnun" Furioso and love couldn't be "The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy"²⁵. Hence it is definitely dubious and absurd his presentation as the victim of love-madness by Polonius:

"This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven

.....

That hath made him mad"²⁶

Hamlet or in terms of Paul Valéry, "Hamlet européen ... un Hamlet intellectuel" has totally different concerns and nagging doubts than lovesickness: «Il médite sur la vie et la mort des vérités. ...Il songe à l'ennui de recommencer le passé, à la folie de vouloir innover toujours. Il chancelle entre les deux abîmes, car deux dangers ne cessent de menacer le monde: l'ordre et le désordre».²⁷

Hamlet as one of the distant ancestors of European intellectuals is more tormented by his famous question: "To be, or not to be"²⁸ than by lover's grief. But Hamlet on his part has also a legendary precursor. He is descendant of Wolfram's Parzival who as one of the first in the western medieval world veered away from the ideal of the frenzied, weeping, love-obsessed Oriental "Medshnun" or "Midshnur", and who lacks utterly the most substantial features of this great Oriental model.

In case of Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival as an exemplary hero of Occidental culture crucial is his individual-spiritual self-perfection as the maturation process. It

²⁵ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, (Tbilisi: Free University Press, 2011), 86

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 82

²⁷ Paul Valéry, *La Crise de l'esprit*,
(https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/La_Crise_de_l'esprit)

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 130

is distinguishing that the emergence from his immaturity begins by the separation from the feminine force as the motherly love of the "noble woman" (edle Frau) Herzloyde, the personification of "a right mother, ... a root of true goodness, a tree trunk of female humility" (einerrechten Mutter...einer Wurzel wahrer Güte, eines Baumstammes weiblicher Demut).²⁹ From now on, not the Minne or slavery of love (Liebesknechtschaft) and the highly stylized humility of devoted service to the lady no longer formed the inspiration for his heroic struggles, but the pursuit of development, the maturity of personality, and absolute perfection. The iconic image of the beloved beautiful lady moves thereby into the background, in a similar vein as Anfortas who after his healing, as "Knight of the Grail" (Gralssitter) was fighting only "for the Grail and no longer for the service of women"³⁰. Political and religious utopian harmonic synthesis of the Orient and the Occident is precisely achievable after the overcoming of the Minnekult or the servitude of the love at the end of the poem in the fraternal union of Parzival and Feirefiz.

With the ruthless destruction of the feminine-maternal principle Wolfram's Parzival becomes the forbear of a new generation heroes who seek the true light and are fully oriented towards the idea of self-perfection. And the quite large genealogical table of this ancestral portrait gallery plausible is represented by Goethe's Faust as key figure. In this world of the systematic transition from ignorance and mental blindness to knowledge, intelligent awareness and cognition based on being, Plato's παιδεία concept becomes pivotal.

In this context one should note that for Rustaveli the highest idea of light and goodness is directly connected with Plato's use of the Analogy of the Sun. The "Good" in Plato's doctrine is compared with the sun which is on his part a metaphor of goodness. Through emulation this platonic analogy of the Sun Rustaveli comes to the realization that the Goodness=sun is of inestimable value, being both the source of defeating of evil and eternal light.

Ultimately, the Good itself is the whole point. The Good (the sun) provides the very foundation on which all other truth rests. Rustaveli uses the image of the sun to help define the true meaning of the Good:

Now that the sun is approaching there exists no darkness for us.

Evil is vanquished by good for the essence of good is enduring. (V. Urushadze)³¹

Or

²⁹Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival*, (Hrsg. von Karl Lachmann, Bd. 1, Stuttgart: Sammlung Metzler 1998), 221

³⁰ Ibid., 665

³¹Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Venera Urushadze), 180

Darkness is no more dark for us; the sun has come and is displayed.

Evil is defeated by Good. Good will forever be our aid. (Lyn Coffin)³²

მზე მოგვეახლა, უკუნი ჩვენთვის აღარა ბნელია,

ბოროტსა სძლია კეთილმან, არსება მისი გრძელია!"³³

Plato's παιδεία notion which German analogy "Bildung", according to Heidegger, as quite inadequate and inexact equivalence, is connected with the names of Goethe and Klopstock.³⁴ The idea of education comes to the fore in the greatest works of German literature, from Wolfram to Goethe and to Thomas Mann. The Minnekult (love cult) is replaced by the Bildungskult (education cult). The love motif becomes a second-rank binding element of the fable, to the pretext, but not to the true collision ground. And that is the very crossroad at which the parting of the ways for Georgian poetry starts. The love as front-ranking central theme remains in this poetry essential and constitutive. In *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* the Minnekult (love cult) can't be substituted for any other phenomenon.

It seems enlightening the continuation of the reviewing of Rustaveli's poetry against the cultural world background. The analysis of the correlation with different tendencies in the world literature depicts the complicated transition process of symbolic code of love semantic and serves as certain construction of the reference and reasoning framework. In this context it appears almost as a curious paradox when the figures of Faust and Don Juan are juxtaposed as coequal "Seducer" in reference books on literary history. However, this paradoxical neighborhood of both unressembling seducers is to be found already in the 19th century in the study of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard - "Either / Or". To speak of a paradox here is probably justified for several reasons. Don Juan, the symbol of the irresistible lover, succumbs to the disastrous passion of seducing women. After each won battle, this fateful passion makes his victim uninteresting to him, but simultaneously due to the permanent insatiableness it turns himself into the real doomed victim of this fatality which finally leads Don Juan to his bitter end. Ultimately, he becomes genuine victim of alleged victim=woman. How entitled is the question of Kierkegaard who is "stronger", Don Juan, the man "who is self-sufficient,"³⁵ or Elvira, the woman whose "dialectic is ... strange",³⁶ and how revealing is Kierkegaard's skeptical remark in this case: "Is he stronger?"³⁷ But here the question may perhaps be asked

³²Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 290

³³შოთარუსთაველი, ვეფხისტყაოსანი, 292

³⁴Martin Heidegger, *Wegmarken*, (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1967), 122-123

³⁵Søren Kierkegaard, *Entweder-Oder*, in: *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd.1, (Jena: Verlegt bei Eugen Diederichs, 1922), 185.

³⁶Ibid., 182

³⁷Ibid., 179

whether Don Juan, the man, is or can be indeed “self-sufficient”. The character substance of this Spaniard, whose prototype Tirso de Molina has probably discovered in an Arabian source, is contested without the woman of any existential or aesthetic validity. And in this case, it is indifferent whether his passion for seduction is reflected or unreflected, outside or amid the love-affection. Ultimately the “Don Juanism” of Don Juan is directly conditioned by the woman; without her his Don Juanism is annihilated. Hence the substance of this character is determined solely by the love affair. It loses all relevance and validity without the feminine phenomenon or in terms of Goethe, without the “Eternal-Womanly” (das Ewig-Weibliche). But the content of this illustrious magical formula with which Goethe ends a long history of the Faust’s self-perfecting, can in no case make sense and substance for the Faustian world. Than Gretchen’s tragedy, one of the most beautiful and sorrowful love stories in the world literature, is doubtless graceful and admirable but it is only a single episode in the huge micro- and macrocosmic experiment of the purely male, self-sufficient striving after self-perfection of Faust. The sensual experience is one of the stations on this long journey. According to Kierkegaard, Faust is a “reproduction of Don Juan”; He is “a demon like Don Juan, but a demon of higher order” who is searching in the sensuality “not as much a pleasure as a distraction.”³⁸ Perhaps the higher order of Faust’s demonic nature could be explained additionally also by the fact that the Goethean hero, in contrast to Don Juan, is actually really self-sufficient. The love experience with a young woman is one of the possibilities of the dazzling variety and the colored reflection of the diversity of the world affairs which allows his doubtful substance to dwell, to “stay awhile”. Gretchen thus becomes part of the experiment without any evil intent. Even without her and without any further love story this experiment would be continued as the whole plot of “Faust II” shows later. For the entire tragic event the story of Gretchen’s misfortune is almost the decoration and the ornament scented with the sensual-feminine flavor; it is interwoven in the absolute masculine adventure of the search for the highest idea of the true light. With her story to the terrific pact with the devil which was experienced in very German way, was given international elegance and fascination, that to paraphrase in the terms of Thomas Mann makes “selbst einem Esel von Ausländer das Deutschtum interessant” (even for a donkey as foreigner the Germanness interesting)³⁹.

Faust as Albert Camus argues - “réclamait les biens de ce monde: le malheureux n’avait qu’à tendre la main. C’était déjà vendre son âme que de ne pas savoir la réjouir. La satiété, Don Juan l’ordonne au contraire. S’il quitte une femme, ce n’est pas absolument parce qu’il ne la désire plus. Une femme belle est toujours désirable. Mais c’est qu’il en désire une autre et, non, ce n’est pas la même chose”⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., 188

³⁹ Cf. Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, in: Politische Schriften und Reden, hrsg. von Hans Bürger, Bd. 1, (Frankfurt am Main/Hamburg: Fischer, 1968), 57.

⁴⁰ Albert Camus, *Le mythe de Sisyphe*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 101

Faustian grave intention to search for the true light is linked to the German tradition of development and education. According to the judgment of Nietzsche, the Germans, who escape any definition and are "damit schon die Verzweiflung der Franzosen"(already the despair of the French), are mentally at home everywhere where is "das Ungewisse, Unausgestaltete, Sich-Verschiebende, Wachsende jeder Art"(the uncertain, the unpredictable, the shifting , Growing of every kind); Due to that "Der Deutsche selbst *ist* nicht, er *wird*" he "*entwickelt sich*"(The German is not, he becomes, he is developing). "Entwicklung" (Development) is, therefore, the "real German find and insertion in the great realm of philosophical formulas."⁴¹

But as Nietzsche argues the modern Europe needs more to wit "prickelnde und beizende Speise" (prickling and caustic food), which is flavored "mit dem Gewürze des ganzen Orients und Occidents" (with the spices of the entire Orient and Occident)⁴², and smells very interesting of the "ganzen Orient und Occident"(whole Orient and Occident)⁴³. Only such exotic dishes could correspond to the cultivated and refined taste of the spoiled European. In this respect according to Nietzsche "die berühmtesten Küchenmeister dieser modernen Menschen ... bekanntlich bei den Franzosen, die schlechtesten bei den Deutschen" (the most famous chefs cuisinier of these modern men ... as well known among the French, the worst among the Germans)⁴⁴ due to the genuine "bäurischen Gleichgültigkeit" (peasant indifference) of the "deutsche Seele" (German soul)⁴⁵ regarding the taste.

It was one of the most famous "chefs cuisinier" of Europe - the French writer Alexandre Dumas- who discovered a unique meeting place of different oriental and occidental phenomena. The mediating function of this liminal region attracted his attention and he experienced this in an inimitable spiritual ambiance of Tbilisi, capital of Georgia which had crucial importance within the Caucasus as the model of a multiethnic and multiconfessional city, characterized by an active exchange between the cultures.

We can affirm that it was Alexandre Dumas who started an absolutely unique tradition of the perception of Georgia. During the next two centuries, this perception has become determinative not only for all Europeans, but also for the Georgians' auto-identification of their own existence as a culture situated at the hinge of Occident and Orient. It is distinguishing that Dumas' perception of the Tbilisian boundaries between East and West is explicitly musical. The polyphonic palette of

⁴¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse / Zur Genealogie der Moral*, in: Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Bd. VI/2, hrsg. Von Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968), S. 192.

⁴² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*, in Sämtliche Werke in 15 Bänden, Bd. 1, hrsg. Von Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980) 389.

⁴³ Ibid., 390

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse / Zur Genealogie der Moral*, 194.

its tonal colors becomes even more patent against the background of the Persian poems of Saadi sung in the district of the sulfur baths as well as of the execution of Verdi's "Lombards" at the opera house. Thus, it was between the belcanto of Italian opera and the Ghazal sung Persian poetry that the 19th century French writer perceived the multinational Tbilisi resounding in the context of the Tsarist Empire. In Dumas Travel Impressions Russia as a "dark ruler" (sombre souverain) stands to such an extent morose before Georgia, this "festive slave" (joyeus eesclave)⁴⁶ with almost indispensable Georgian stereotypical attributes that Dumas had listed "adornment, war, wine, dancing, music," (la parure, la guerre, le vin, la danse, la musique)⁴⁷ which later became, thanks to the strong stagnation, eternal clichés in game rules of Georgian - Russian alliance or political misalliance of years.

At the same time Dumas feminine image of Georgia is totally different from the Russian 19th century imperial canon contributed to symbolization of Georgia as an oriental woman and to legitimation of its feminization. It deals with a cultural mythology that justifies the domination of Georgia by the Russian Empire. In contrast to the Russian tradition (its establishment is related to the names of Pushkin and Lermontov) for Alexandre Dumas Georgia is not an oriental "woman" which raises the need for a Russian man dominant, a fiancé or a sovereign but it is adorned with a Greek refinement profile or rather a Georgian refinement profile which for French artist means much more, because it is "life added refinement to the Greek." *Greece is still the marble Galatea, Georgia is already animated, is lively Galatea and become an animated woman (La Grèce, c'est Galatée encore marbre, la Géorgie, c'est Galatée animée et devenue femme).*⁴⁸

Thus, Dumas found the embodiment of Georgia in Pygmalion's creation a symbol of femininity and beauty since antiquity. Hence it is no coincidence either that he begins the description of his journey named "Voyage to the Caucasus" by a very significant subtitle - "From Prometheus to Christ," (De Prométhée au Christ). According to him, it is precisely in this ambience related to the antique-Christian culture on the horizon of the emerging world, the man discerned the gallows of the first benefactor of mankind (à l'horizon du monde naissant, l'homme aperçoit le gibet du premier bienfaiteur de l'humanité)⁴⁹. Consequently, Georgia as an integral part of antique Christian world is a singular meeting place of different cultures with strong mediating function.

Precisely this was Dumas work which gave birth to the European tradition of Georgia's perception as an intersection between East and West, as a borderline and a passage. This space is more eligible for the pathos of Goethe's words from "West-

⁴⁶ Alexandre Dumas, Impressions de voyage. {3}, *Le Caucase*, ([http:// gallica. Bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9935c/f432.image](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9935c/f432.image)), 347

⁴⁷ Ibid., 414

⁴⁸ Alexandre Dumas, Impressions de voyage. {3}, *Le Caucase*, 378

⁴⁹ Ibid., 12

Eastern Divan" (West-Östlicher Divan) "Gottes ist der Orient! / Gottes ist der Okcident! / Nord- und südliches Gelände/ Ruht im Frieden seiner Hände"⁵⁰ (God's very own the Orient! God's very own the Occident!) then for the words Rudyard Kipling's: "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."⁵¹ For his Divan Goethe borrowed this words from the second surah (ayah N115) of the Qur'an: "To Allah belong the East and the West".⁵² In this verses an universal unity of spatial perception of the world and the knowledge of God has already been achieved where all opposites are abolished, all contradictions have already been overcome. This is Enlightenment Universalism, almost conterminous to the modern globalization idea, with perception of all-embracing unity of the space and the experience of God in Goethe's "West-Eastern Divan" which presupposes that all the directions of heaven belong to the divine sphere, to the kingdom of God: "Denn vor Gott ist alles herrlich"⁵³ (As for God is all glorious). They are ideally homogeneous and unreachable for the typical mechanism of the splitting of the world into qualitatively and valuedly heterogeneous „good" and "evil" categories. This is the esthetically comprehended miraculously successful synthesis of ethics and astronomy.

The esthetical comprehension of Astronomy, this indispensable constituent of the early civilization takes central stage in Rustaveli's poetry. Poetic talent and imagination refers to this oldest of the natural sciences dealing with celestial objects as planets, moon, stars and galaxies:

"Behold, the stars bear witness; yes, all seven confirm what I say:

The sun, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, pity me as I go my way.

And Venus, Mercury, and the Moon, bear me witness as they may.

All seven of these will let her know what fires consume me today." (transl. by Lyn Coffin)⁵⁴

” აჰა, მმოწმობენ ვარსკვლავნი, შვიდნივე მემოწმებან:

მზე, ოტარიდი, მუშთარი და ზუალ ჩემთვის ბნდებან,

მთვარე, ასპიროზ, მარიხი მოვლენ და მოწმედ მყვებან.

⁵⁰ Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *West-östlicher Divan*, Werke in 6 Bd-n, (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1977), 239

⁵¹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Ballad of East and West*, (<http://www.bartleby.com/246/1129.html>)

⁵² The Holy Qur'an, *The Cow*, (<http://www.wright-house.com/religions/islam/Quran.html>)N115

⁵³ Goethe, *West-östlicher Divan*, 321

⁵⁴ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 208

მას გააგონენ, რანიცა ცეცხლნი უშრეტნი მდებიან”.⁵⁵

All astronomical phenomena are within the purview of Rustaveli’s poetical cosmology that is concerned with the presentation of the Universe as a whole, as harmonious unity of spatial perception of cardinal points and multicultural diversity of the multiethnic “colorful earth”.⁵⁶ Inside this absolute untroubled harmony of the multicultural world model from Maghreb (West) to Mashrek (East) there is no room for ethical valuation and judgment by dint of ethical opposition between principal directions of heaven:

All the world’s creatures came to praise him. From far and near, they drew nigh.

Bears came from the woods; fish, crocodiles from the sea, birds from the sky.

Indians, Arabs, Greeks, Slavs, from East and West, of low birth and high,

From Persia, Europe, Egypt’s kingdoms, no one did the chance deny. (transl. by Lyn Coffin)⁵⁷

მოვიდიან შესამკობლად ქვეყნით ყოვლნი სულიერნი:

კლდით ნადირნი, წყალშიგ თევზნი, ზღვით ნიანგნი, ცით მფრინველნი,

ინდო-არაბ-საბერძნეთით, მაშრიყით (Mashrek) და მალრიბელნი (Maghreb),

რუსნი, სპარსნი, მოფრანგენი და მისრეთით მეგვიპტელნი.⁵⁸

Placing his poem in the fictional settings of exotic India and Arabia Rustaveli, a medieval Christian poet, uses this replacement for his unique way of Modeling the world and simulation of dynamic events of “The Knight in the Panther’s skin”. However, besides the paradigmatic reference to a pretended oriental original text this could be considered once again as a quasi-confirmation of the congenital cultural-historical loyalty to the Arabic-Persian-Oriental narrative tradition in Georgian medieval epic poem. This is a recognition of a quite familiar and well-known but alien phenomenon. The acknowledgement of the alienness. Though this mode of operation remains determinant and trend-setting tendency during the centuries in Georgian culture.

Rustaveli’s poem that is deemed to be an embodiment of the traditional romantic ideal of chivalry is about war, friendship, and love. Many themes are interwoven in its complicated episodic structure, but the most important are the stories of love of

⁵⁵ შოთა რუსთაველი, *ვეფხისტყაოსანი*, 214

⁵⁶ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 11

⁵⁷ Ibid., 208

⁵⁸ შოთა რუსთაველი, *ვეფხისტყაოსანი*, 215

two couples: Tinatin and Avtandil from Arabia on the one hand and of Nestan-Darejan and Tariel, the titular "Knight in the panther's skin", from India on the other. This both stories are heterogeneous as diverse are the countries themselves they represent. The national peculiarity of the respective culture expresses itself in the way in which the type of the lover is modified. Is that literally a madman, love-obsessed "Medshnur" similar to Tariel or well-adjusted like Avtandil who while reasoning the lovers "great torment" demands from Tariel to be "wise":

If you are wise forget not the wisdom taught by the sages:

Firmness of mind and spirit sinks not beneath afflictions

But like a rock stands firm amidst all misfortunes and troubles. (transl. by V. Urushadze)⁵⁹

Or

If you are wise, with this teaching of the sages, you will agree:

To be a manly man, it is better to weep infrequently.

One should strengthen himself like a rock when he meets adversity. (transl. by Lyn Coffin)⁶⁰

As some scholars argue the Arabs are portrayed as more rational, as the king Rostevan and his knight Avtandil. Conversely, the Indians appear to be more emotional and impulsive and cause unintended disasters, as of the image of Tariel and Nestan.⁶¹ According to Avtandil's rationalism the love couldn't be vindication or excuse for insanity acting rationally is the safest way: "Through his reason, a man comes to trouble, whoever he may be"⁶². Because lack of reason even due to love means self-inflicted trouble and "sink down in a sea of disaster".⁶³

Two worlds confront each other: Arabia represents the principle of order, strictness and stability, of consistent form of existence in contrast to India which exemplifies the principle of disorder, instability and chaos. In this context it is particularly characteristic, that the image of India in Rustaveli's poem is connected with the world of delirium and disorder of the terrifying element of sea. With the sea this

⁵⁹ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Venera Urushadze), 123

⁶⁰ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 189

⁶¹ Gijs Koolemans Beynen, *Adultery and Death in Shota Rustaveli's The Man in the Panther Skin*, in: *Courtly Arts and the Arts of Courtliness*, Edit. by Keith Busby, Christopher Kleinhenz (Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004) 219

⁶² Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Lyn Coffin), 189

⁶³ Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, (Translated by Venera Urushadze), 123

dangerous, insecure, powerful element is the idea of disastrous damage connected because Nestan-Darejan was placed on a boat and adrift on the seas.

In the context of the traumatizing sea adventure we could say that this plotline may mirror the way how Georgian cultural mythology archetypically structured itself by means of the dichotomy of Sea and Mountain as a model of the vernacular retelling or concealing of Occidental legends. This rather unreflecting Georgian cultural perception between Sea and Land or to be more precise, mountain, enables also to determine which conditions require the historical success or the failure of the respective mythologem in Transformation of Georgian cultural self-perception in context of collective memory. This leads to several questions and for this reason it is decisive to identify: Which images dominant paradigm has most strong impact as cultural construction? How is this collective image depicted in memory, cultural perception and in art? And primarily who constructed this image: is that a portrait, a picture of another culture created from foreign authors to define the unknown Other or is it a self-portraiture as self-representation of the Georgian culture itself?

In this regard one should note that the nations of the Caucasus found their way from the faraway periphery into the sight and memory of the Old World in two directions: firstly, over the mountains and secondly, over the sea. According to the myth, Prometheus, a hero of Greek culture, was chained to a rock. But Greek mythology tells us about another myth, which is connected not with mountains but with the sea. It tells the myth of Medea from Colchis. While in Georgia the originally Greek subject of Prometheus found its reflection and materialization in numerous mythological and poetic versions, since antiquity is rather in Western culture than in Georgia that the fate of Medea has been a popular subject of the fine and dramatic arts. If the figure of Georgian folklore called Amirani became the Caucasian Prometheus. Georgian culture does not know a similar *interpretatio graeca* (at least until the pre-modern era) of the Argonauts subject which connected with sea and navigation served as source of inspiration for many European artists of the most diverse epochs. In Georgian cultural memory the Medea subject is tabooed, and the narrative is blocked for a very long time. This culture does not dare an ironical-skeptical glance towards the sea, the waves of which transport Medea into foreign myths and masterpieces. The crossing of the sea means merely separation and abolition of memory, merely the negative.

To that effect not Medea but Prometheus mythologem could be considered as an archetypal portrait, a verbal picture or description of Georgian culture's searching for its identity. For a dominant position of Promethean mythological image especially since the Romantic nationalism it is essential that exactly identifying its tragic fate with distinctly masculine mythological character the Georgian culture seeks in a courageous act of eternal stubborn resistance its absolute identity. This culture uses it for depicting itself in Titans's own likeness who became a sort of patriarch of the search and acquisition of the historical identity. So Georgian culture likes to portray this hero and the fatalistic melancholic imbued story as the

embodiment of its own tragic historical fate. This culture is self-complacent delighted in the role of a chief character and the principal performer in an eternal spectacle of struggle and suffering, of permanent revolt and constantly failed tireless effort, of permanent victimization and self-victimization what was thought throughout the decades, the realization of the tragic historical destiny Georgia's.

Archetypically manifestation of the fact that unlike Medea, Prometheus gained numerous admirers and versions throughout Georgia could be associated with the fundamental importance for Georgian cultural self-perception of the idea of the rock rooted to the ground and to its consistency. The root age of men in the patriarchal steadiness of the valley was decisive. The sea remained for a long time an unrealized, unused potency. One was inclined to turn his back on this terrifying element in order to gaze with respectful fascination at the mountains. This fascination produced an ethos completely alien to the world of delirium and disorder of the sea.

In this context it is particularly characteristic, that in his "Philosophy of History" Hegel speaks about the coalescing, unifying nature of the waters in the form of seas. According to Hegel's conviction, nothing can unify so powerfully as water can. Unlike this dangerous, insecure element, which invites man to conquest and robbery, encouraging him to victory and gain, land, upland and valley "fixes" man to the ground. As Hegel asserts, the Asiatic states lack this "Hinaus" ("beyond")⁶⁴ of the sea out of the limitedness of the soil, even though they are adjoined to the sea and they do not have any positive relation to it. In dependence on Hegel's conception philosophy of geography always sees in the water a dominant and structuring factor of different political-geographical cultures.

Correspondingly Georgia as a typical Near Eastern land - the mountain range of the highland and the stream valleys are what is physically and spiritually characteristic for country. Not the sea but the river is crucial as its territorial waters. In this context it is very symbolic how in Ilia Chavchavadze's *Letters of a Traveller* (1861) for example the "space" consciousness of Georgia is subordinated to great historical changes. In this case the opposition of Mount Kazbek/Mkinvari and of the Terek River appears as a national artistic perception model generally of the universe on the one hand and of the own geographical space pattern on the other.

Rustaveli's *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* could be supposedly considered as poetical rediscovery of geography. Placing his poem in the locations (Arabia, India, Khataeti probably as China) far away from his homeland, in geographically distanced areas, the poet of the Georgian Golden Age depicts the miscellaneousness of his multicultural world from a particular international perspective. This perspective presumes as advanced step, the constant necessity of translating between

⁶⁴ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Werke 12, (neu editierte Ausgabe, hrsg. von E. Moldenhauer u. K.M. Michel, Frankfurt am Main, 4.Aufl, Suhrkamp-Verl, 1995), 118

one's own and foreign cultures the meaning of which can be expressed by the formula of sociocultural proximity, despite spatial geographic distance. Mentioned proximity is real but not a creation of the illusion. This fact is also valid regarding to undoubtedly important role of mediation which Georgian culture played during the centuries in the dialogue of different cultures as the mediating function of this country is evident.

According to Hegel Asia Minor (and Georgia is a typical Asia Minor country) "has never kept to itself what is exceptional in it but has sent it to Europe. It represents the beginning of all religions and all state principals, but their development only took place in Europe" (denn was darin hervorragend ist, hat dieses Land nicht bei sich behalten, sondern nach Europa entsendet. Den Anfang aller religiösen und aller staatlichen Prinzipien stellt es dar, aber in Europa ist erst die Entwicklung derselben geschehen).⁶⁵

Georgia situated at the hinge of Occident and Orient or "At the frontier of Asia and Europe"⁶⁶ (An der Grenze Asiens und Europas) as Egon Erwin Kisch marked, called "Wonderland" by Knut Hamsun, as integral part of the ambience related to the antique-biblical world provokes a felicitous question of a young German author: "what kind of a country where the women are so called, Medea and Salome" (Was ist das fürein Land, in dem die Frauen so heißen, Medea und Salome). And the answer is found quickly: "Just seems to be there, a fairyland". (Genau das scheint es zu sein, ein Märchenland).¹

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⁶⁵ Ibid., 132

⁶⁶ Egon Erwin Kisch, *Zaren, Popen, Bolschewiken*. In: *Zaren, Popen, Bolschewiken; Asien gründlich verändert. China geheim*. Bd.4; (Berlin: Aufbau-Verl., 1993), 201

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Summary

Multicultural world in the poetry of Shota Rustaveli and the issue of paradigm shift in the multicultural world context

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The paper scrutinizes the thematic diversity of the seminal piece of the medieval Georgian poetry by Shota Rustaveli. The rich set of spiritual some emotional values of the poetry is placed within the broadest context of the Oriental and Occidental traditions of classical poetry and world outlooks. The important point is made about moving themes and poetic instruments from Orient to West. Linkages of the epical poems of Western poetry and the Orient are argued to demonstrate the thematic convergences in creativity of Western and Oriental genius poets of the classical period. Representation of richest variety of values and eternal thematic diversity in the poetry by Shota Rustaveli are explained in highlights of cultural diversity of the medieval Georgian society.

Keywords: Rustaveli, Oriental poetry, Schiller, Love and Freedom, Madness and Love

XIX – XX CENTURIES

Baku as a crosscultural center in the 19th – early 20th centuries

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After the invasion of the Caucasus by Russia in the early 19th century, the whole Muslim Caucasus, and Azerbaijan in particular faced alien civilization values and entered the zone of cultural transformations, which tore the country out of the context of its gradual historical development. This transformation took place throughout the 19th - early 20th century and touched almost all aspects of social and cultural life. Metropolitan policy led to a complete change of the existing social status and differentiation within the various social groups, and to the diversity of the national composition of the population of Azerbaijan, especially Baku. “Broad communicational areas were being created, in which industry, being actively developed around Baku, the centre of oil production and processing, tried to acquire mobile labour force with a single standardized culture and, which is particularly important, with a single standardized colloquial language. This new situation set new tasks before the broad masses of population, and particularly before the elite”.¹

Despite all the negative aspects of the conquest, the Muslim nations of Russian Empire, including Azerbaijanis, were able to get acquainted with culture and socio-political doctrines of Europe. According to G. Gubaydulin, the pressure of the European capitalism stimulated the modernist movement in Egypt, Iran, Turkey and India, while the East of the Russian Empire was influenced by the advancing Russian capitalism.² Along with political, legal, social and economic changes, the Russian conquest brought some innovations into the spiritual and cultural field. Firstly, the Muslim peoples included in the empire could familiarize with the culture and social and political doctrines of Europe. It should also be noted that the contact between

¹Аух Е-М. Между приспособлением и самоутверждением. Ранний этап поисков национальной идентичности в среде мусульманской интеллигенции и возникновение нового общества на юго-восточном Кавказе (1875-1905) // Азербайджан и Россия: общества и государства. / Отв. ред. и сост. Д.Е.Фурман. – М.: Летний сад, 2001. p. 51

²Губайдуллин Газиз: «К вопросу об идеологии Гаспринского»// «Гасырлар авазы» (Эхо веков) – Научно-документальный журнал, 1998, № ¾, p.7

the two civilizations, the European one represented by Russia and the traditional Muslim civilization, resulted in the appearance of a new social stratum – the Azerbaijani intelligentsia.

The aspiration of the Russian Empire for Russification and Christianization of the Muslim population in the Caucasus and, particularly, in Azerbaijan faced with big problems. According to the Russian ethnographer Lurie, “the main disadvantage of this policy was that ‘Russian’ Muslims were considered in the context of the internal relations of the Russian Empire, which was why they were supposed to get accustomed to new conditions, to become closer to the Russian Christian population and, finally, to wish to join with it. However, the fact that the Muslims were a part of the Islamic world, with which they would under any circumstances feel affinity and try to keep relations, was completely ignored”.³

Subsequently, however, this factor had to be considered. Carried out in 1840, the administrative reform abolished the military commandant's management in the Caucasus, has established a system of provinces and thereby eliminated the traditional ethnic and political borders in the region. In addition, representatives of the local Azerbaijani aristocracy – Becks and Aghalars were deprived of their lands, were eliminated from power and replaced by Russian officials.⁴

As a result of the reform all management was conducted exclusively in Russian, the number of Russian officials has increased more than two times.⁵ Administrative reform has not coped with the tasks, and royal officials had realized that they needed a stronger social base. M.S. Vorontsov appointed in 1844 as the first governor of the Caucasus was trying to decide on this problem. He returned many Azerbaijani feudal lords of their land rights, making them privileged class, and concluded an alliance with them.⁶

In addition, in 1849, "Regulations on the education of the natives of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia to the Treasury in higher and specialized secondary educational institutions of the Empire", bill was adopted, which was intended to prepare officials

³Лурье С. От древнего Рима до России XX века: преемственность имперской политики. Общественные науки и современность. 1997. № 4. р. 131

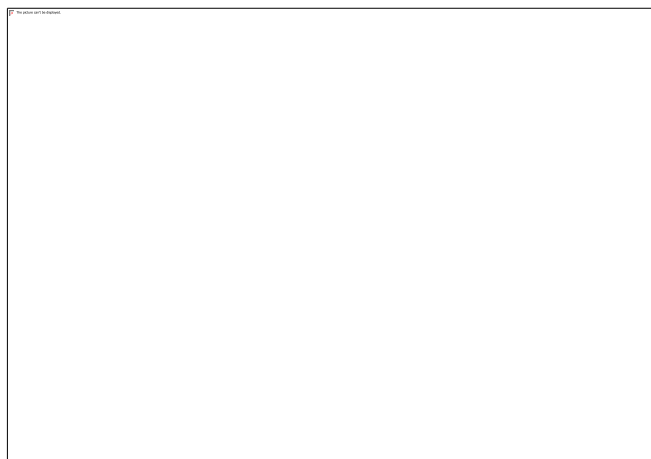
⁴Петрушевский И.П. Система русского колониального управления в Азербайджане в перв. половине XIX века. Колониальная политика российского царизма в Азербайджане в 20-60-х годах XIX века . – М.-Л., Изд-во АН СССР, 1936, Ч. 1. р. 23

⁵ Из записок барона Корфа. Русская старина. 1900. Январь. Т. 101. р. 43.

⁶ Эсадзе С. Историческая записка об управлении Кавказом. – Тифлис, 1907, Т.1, р. 80-81.

for the public service.⁷ Although this provision applies primarily to Christian peoples of the region - Armenians and Georgians, to some extent this also affected the Azerbaijanis of the highest nobility. During this period, schools were established, cultural and educational institutions, and publishing institutions were set up. In 1870, City Duma, elected for 4 years based on the property qualification, started operating for the first time in Baku.⁸ The number of deputies from non-Christian voters in the Duma was one half of the votes. Therefore, in 1877, as the result of the election of the first Duma, 2900 Azerbaijanis, 499 Russian and Armenians had the right to choose the same number of votes,⁹ i.e. ethnic discrimination was evident. But on the other hand, the Muslim population for the first time got the right to be elected to local authorities.

The Industrial Revolution, which happened in 19th century led to the need to use energy resources for the economic development. Since that time the conversion of the most important energy resource - oil, in an economic and political weapon, which causes inter-state relations began. Azerbaijan, in whose history oil had a great impact on the socio-economic and political processes, was not an exception.



Oil rigs of Nobels in Baku

After the abolition of tax farming system in 1872, rapid development of the oil industry began. The lack of domestic capital forced the Tsarist government to attract foreign capital, and in 1872, foreign citizens given the same rights as the citizens of the Russian Empire in oil production. Since that time the rapid inflow of foreign

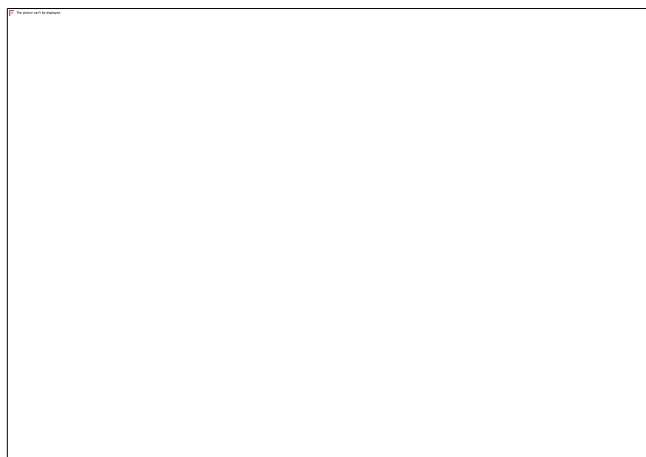
⁷ Полное собрание законов Российской империи. Изд. 2-е. – СПб., 1847. Т. XXIV. Отд. 1. № 23307.

⁸ Оджагова К. Городское самоуправление Баку в конце XIX- начале XXвв. Баку, 2003, С.26

⁹ GIAAR (The State Historical Archive of the Azerbaijan Republic), F. 50, L. 1, R. 4, P. 41.

capital to Baku oil industry began and turned Baku into an oil Klondike beyond Russia.

The most prominent representative of the oil capital in Baku became "a partnership of Nobel br.", which was founded by Swedish businessman Ludwig Nobel and Baron P. Bildering. Within a short time period, the company became the leading Russian monopoly both on production and export of oil.¹⁰



Oil refinery of Nobel brothers in Baku

In May 1883, one of the largest oil company in Baku – “Caspian-Black Sea Oil and Trade Association” (abbreviated as "Caspian-Black Sea society"), headed by the famous Parisian bankers Rothschild brothers started it's work.¹¹ In a short time, "Caspian-Black Sea society" and "Partnership of br. Nobel br." turned into a major monopoly in the Russian oil market.

An interesting fact is that the chief engineer at the Rothschild company was David Landau - the father of Nobel Prize winner Lev Landau, and one of the heads of the company was the famous chemist, a member of the Imperial Russian Technical Society Adolf Gukhman.¹²

¹⁰ Монополистический капитал в нефтяной промышленности России.1883-1914. Документы и материалы. М.Л., 1961, р.689

¹¹ Мир-Бабаев М.-Ю. Транскавказский трубопровод и братья Ротшильд «Азербайджанское нефтяное хозяйство».2007.№11-12.р.68

¹² Sadıqlı F. Azərbaycan hələ XIX əsrin sonunda neft ixrac edən ölkə kimi tanınırdı. Azərbaycan.2013.17. sentyabr.

For the export of Baku oil to the world markets, Rothschilds financed construction of the Baku-Batum pipeline, which was completed in 1907.¹³

The activities of the Rothschild's company in Russia and Azerbaijan was completed in 1912, when they sold all of their enterprise to English-Dutch "Royal Dutch Shell" trust. Since the late 19th century the English capital became more and more active in Baku oil market. If in 1898 there functioned 6 British companies, already in 1903 their number increased to 12 with a total capital of 60 million rubles.¹⁴

"Baku Russian oil company", "B.M. De Boer", "European oil company" were among the most prominent companies. In 1897, a major Azerbaijani oilman G.Z. Tagiev sold his company for 5 million rubles to British G. Gladston and J. Moore. On the basis of it, a joint-stock company "Oleum" was established.¹⁵ At the same time, Tagiyev managed to keep 13.7% of the shares in his hands and became a member of the board of directors of the company's board of directors, together with E. Gubbart - the director of the Bank of England.¹⁶

At the beginning of the First World War, "Corporation of the oil industry and finance", bringing together all the British oil company started its activity in Baku and London. Trading activity of the company was fully controlled by the "Shell", and its total capital was 28 million rubles.¹⁷ Thus, the trust has become the biggest oil producer in Russia, second only to the American "Standard Oil" in the world market. Naturally, each private company is guided by its own interests and the maximum exploitation of the labor force, there was no exception in Baku. However, at the same time, investments and latest technology, which brought these companies to the region, had a major impact both on the economy and other spheres of life.

After the earthquake in Shamakhi in 1859, Baku became a province center and in the second half of the XIX century rapid growth of the city began with the development of the oil industry. If in 1826 there lived only 4,5 thousand people, then in 1903

¹³ Пригула В.А. Транспорт нефти и газа. М., Гостехиздат, 1848, С.72

¹⁴ Ибрагимов М.Дж. Нефтяная промышленность Азербайджана в период империализма. S.103

¹⁵ Ibid, p.16-17

¹⁶ Ibid, p.68

¹⁷ Садыхзаде СМ.. Проникновение английского капитала в нефтяную промышленность Азербайджана (1896-1914 гг.): Автореферат дисс. канд.ист.наук. Баку., 1967, p. 31.

already 155,786 and in 1913 - 214 679 people.¹⁸ The number of new buildings in the early twentieth century was 878, and in 1910 had reached 1404.¹⁹

The development of oil fields, refineries, the shipping company in the Caspian region, shifting the capital to Baku, and the construction of the railway to the Black Sea (Baku-Batum) changed Baku beyond recognition. No city in Russia was not developed and did not change so quickly. However, ethno-demographic picture of the city had changed very much. From all parts of Russia and Iran, thousands of workers came here in search of work. In addition to local Azerbaijani workers, number of Russian, Armenian and immigrants from South Azerbaijan increased from 1903 to 1917 to 65.1%, 77.8% and 132%, respectively.²⁰ In addition, the engineering staff and the banking sector was replenished by specialists from England, France, Germany, Finland and other countries.²¹

Most of the population of Baku were Azerbaijanis, who were represented in all social strata - from workers and peasants to merchants and oilmen. Many of the laborers in oil fields came from South Azerbaijan (Iran). The second place was occupied by Armenians, in who possess a large part of trading and oil fields. Even the chairman of the Council of the Congress of oilmen was an Armenian M. Gukasov. Russians are also made up a significant part of the population, these were mostly officials and the military. There were also a lot of Russians among owners of oil fields and other manufacturers, they were presented and Molokans - Russian sectarians, who settled here in the mid-19th century, who composed most part of the group were the workers and artisans, cabbies in Baku.

In this regard, the construction of Christian churches began. In the early twentieth century, there were several churches for Christians and mosques for Muslims in the city: 6 orthodox and 2 Armenian Gregorian Churches, a Catholic church, a Jewish synagogue, two Lutheran churches.²² However, some of these temples were built in account of Azerbaijani businessmen. For example, the Cathedral of the Holy Bearers was built in 1909 with the support of philanthropist Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev, a prominent son of Azerbaijani people, and private donations of the believers.²³ It is

¹⁸ Известия Бакинской городской Думы, 1915, №5-6, p.7

¹⁹ Бретаницкий Л.С. Баку в крепостных стенах. М-Л.: 1976, p.93,95.

²⁰ Покшишевский В.В. Положение бакинского пролетариата накануне революции 1917 г. - Баку: 1927, p.8.

²¹ Ростовцев Г.И. Болезненность населения бакинских нефтяных промыслов (по данным обращаемости населения в лечебницы в 1909 и 1910 гг.). Баку: Типография «Труженик» А.А.Куинджи, 1912, p.16.

²² Томсон Г. Бакинские воспоминания 1914-1917 гг. Баку: «QHT Nəşriyyatı», 2013, p.20

²³ Юницкий А. И. История церквей и приходов Бакинской губернии. 1906, С.15;
<http://baku.eparhia.ru/church/cathedral/>

characteristic that in our time, in 2003, reconstruction of the the church was financed by Azerbaijani businessman and philanthropist A. Kurbanov.

Within two decades Baku had become a major cosmopolitan center, wherein not only industry, but also cultural life developed. A new way of life as a bizarre combination of Asian and European elements was created by the representatives of the Azerbaijani bourgeoisie – H.Z. Tagiyev, M. Nagiev, Sh. Asadullaev etc. and came from European and Russian bourgeoisie - L. and E. Nobels, S.M. Shibaev, A. Benkendorf etc., the royal bureaucracy, as well as a multinational technical and humanitarian intelligentsia with reformist, liberal and socialist ideologies.

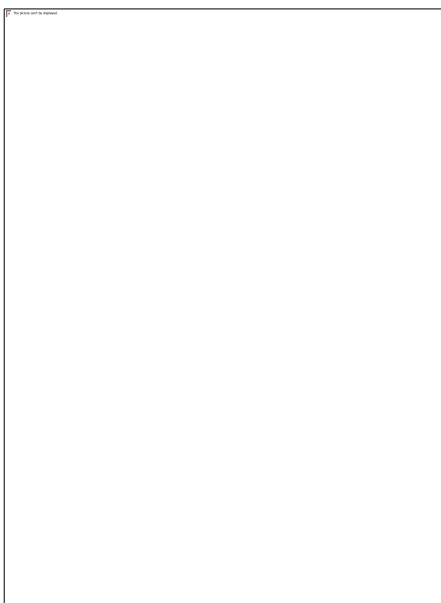
Increase in oil revenue, and population led to demand for construction of houses, and facilities. And, with oil money in abundance, European and Russian architects were hired to design and build new buildings paying homage to classical, and baroque style.

On the embankment, where there was a large marina society "Caucasus and Mercury", was located the house of the governor, and next to it the Khan's garden. Behind the waterfront there were well-paved streets with houses built in European style. On the slope of the hill Asian city with flat roofs made of thin boards with Cyrus (oil underground) and narrow streets was built. There were ruins of the Khan's palace with beautiful Islamic architecture of the XV century, and next to it was Shah's mosque, built in 1078. On the seashore, near the fortified walls of the old town, stood the Maiden Tower, the theme of many oriental legends, which was used as a lighthouse then. So-called Black City, where oil refineries were concentrated, was not far from the pier of the beach. Its name comes from the thick black smoke released during heating oil remains.

In the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, great contributions to the construction of the most beautiful buildings in Baku was made by Polish architects. Most prominent representatives were Y. Goslavsky, Yu. Ploshko, K. Skurevich, E. Skibitsky and others.

From 1893 to 1904, Josef Goslavsky was the chief architect and engineer of Baku, designed and built a great number of buildings in the city center. After graduating from the St. Petersburg Institute of Civil Engineers in 1891, a young specialist was sent to the oil capital - Baku - for construction of the Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral.

This cathedral, built in 1898, was the largest Orthodox church in the city, it was demolished under Soviet rule in 1936. Admirer of the classics, he paid tribute to other style trends, so widespread among architects of the second half of the XIX century. During the creative activity, Goslavsky, managed to prepare projects and build 12 fundamental objects in seven years; it is striking. House-museum of Taghiyev in Gorchakovskaya str. (now Taghiyev, 4), three-storeyed apartment house in Nikolaevskaya str. (now Istiglaliyat, 7), Villa of Taghiyev in the village of Mardakiani in Absheron, building of the Baku Technical School in Stanislavsky str. (now Azadlig, 20), the building of Baku branch of the Imperial Technical Society in Torgovi street (now Nizami) were among these buildings.



Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Baku



At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Baku millionaires, having traveled to famous resorts in European countries, decided to organize resort zones at home. The village of Mardakian in Absheron was the most favorable for this purpose. Soon the Mardakan became the residence of local business men. One of the most interesting buildings of Mardakan is Taghiyev's Villa, designed by Goslavsky in 1893-1895.

The end of the 19th - the beginning of the 20th centuries also witnessed construction of industrial structures in Azerbaijan. There include a textile factory in the town of Zikh near Baku, designed by Goslavsky and built with the order of Taghiyev, who decided to create a light industry factory because of the cheap fuel-oil, cotton and sales (in Iran and Central Asia). This textile factory was located on the seashore, and

the right choice of territory for building provided direct communication with ports of Iran, Central Asia and Russia.²⁴



Institute of Manuscripts of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan



Baku City Duma

One of the best works of Goslavsky was the women's Muslim school of Taghiyev in Nikolaevskaya street. (now Istiglaliyat, 8). The school had a closed courtyard, formed due to the fortress wall, which was on the south side of the site. This perfectly suited to climatic and domestic conditions of the city. In this building, in 1918-1920, the parliament of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was located, and now the Institute of Manuscripts of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan functions therein.

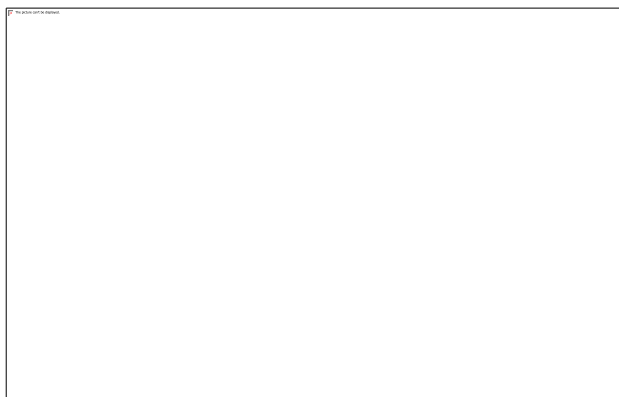
The last architectural masterpiece of Goslavsky was the building of the Baku City Duma. The building bears the features of a classical composition and was the only purely administrative building in the city executed in this style, in which original interpretation of architectural motifs of the Baroque were used. Currently, the Baku

Mayor's Office is in this building. Goslavsky died in 1904 at the age of 39.

In 1897, at his invitation, another Polish architect, Józef Ploshko, arrived in Baku. He was the author of the most beautiful and monumental buildings in Baku and occupied the position of chief urban architect after Goslavsky's death. The style of architectural works of Ploshko was European classicism, Venetian and French Gothic style of high class and especially modern at the beginning of the twentieth century. The architect's customers became well-known local millionaires, who was admiring his creative imagination. Ploshko was an approximate architect of the

²⁴ Фатуллаев-Фигаров Ш. Юзеф Гославский. <http://www.polonia-baku.org/ru/goslowski.phtml>

millionaire Aga-Musa Nagiyev, but Murtuza Mukhtarov, Nuri Amiraslanov, the family of the Polish rich man Rylsky and others were also among his customers.



“Ismailia”

The first and most famous work of Ploshko in Baku was the monumental building "Ismailia". In 1907, Baku oilman Aga Musa Nagiyev asked the architect to build a public charity building in memory of his deceased son Ismail. The work of the Polish architect became a real decoration of the city.

The magnificent Palazzo "Ismailia", executed in the

style of Venetian Gothic, is very harmonious, evokes admiration for the mastery of the architect and the art of masons, who embodied a true symphony of stone. Today, the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan is located in the building of Ismailia.



Catholic Church of the Blessed
Virgin Mary

Another, very interesting cult work of Jozef Ploshko was the Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baku, whose construction was completed in 1912. The church was called "Polish" and was built in the Gothic style. Its main sponsors were the Rylsky family - oil owners of Polish origin and Vitold Zglenitsky - the founder of oil production from the Caspian seabed. The building was located in the prestigious district of Baku and was a real decoration of the city. The church was demolished in the 1930s.

As bourgeois were getting richer due the oil boom, by ordering more and more magnificent villas and palaces for themselves they started to compete in the field of architecture. Murtuza Mukhtarov, already mentioned, decided to create a palace in the Gothic style and approached to Ploshko

for construction of it. Murtuza Mukhtarov was married to the hereditary Ossetian noblewoman Elizaveta Tuganova, daughter of Colonel Aslan-bek Tuganov and presented this palace to her as a token of his love. The building of the Mukhtarov Palace on Persian Street (now M. Mukhtarov str.) was built in different architectural styles, Art Nouveau, Baroque and Classical style were also represented there.



Mukhtarov Palace

Mukhtarov's palace was the best building of the city in the second decade of the 20th century. The fate of the owner of this palace was tragic. When Baku was captured by the Bolsheviks in 1920, Mukhtarov himself stood up for his defense and fired by soldiers of the Red Army until they occupied the palace, then he committed suicide by shooting himself with revolver.

After the establishment of Soviet power in 1920s, Ploshko worked in Baku as an engineer and, together with Z. Akhmedbekov participated in the discussion of the project of city-gardens in Absheron. In 1925, after almost thirty years living in Azerbaijan, he left for Warsaw, and then - for France.²⁵

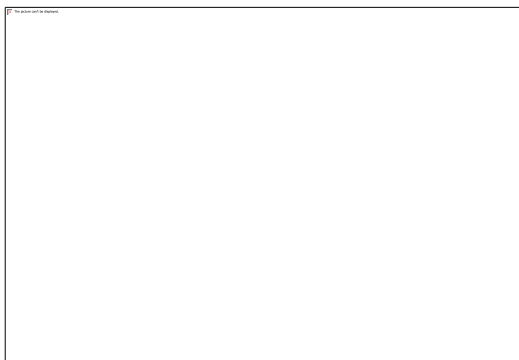
The building of the railway station was also originally designed by the Polish architect Eugene Skibinsky. The popular and spacious deli (former Tagievsky

²⁵ Фатуллаев-Фигаров Ш. Йозеф Плошко. <http://www.polonia-baku.org/ru/ploshko.phtml>

passage) was designed by Kazimierz Skurevich. He also owned Baku Boulevard project.

In total, about 500 buildings were built in Azerbaijan based on the projects of Polish architects. Thus, the Poles played a significant role in formation of a unique architectural appearance of Baku, which became native for them.

A huge contribution to formation of oil industry in Azerbaijan in the early twentieth century, was made by a talented Polish origin engineer Pavel Pototsky. He was invited in the early twentieth century from St. Petersburg to Baku to lead the work on filling Bibiheybat Bay. This was due to his engineering talent and the project developed by him, a part of the sea was reclaimed and the basis of oil extraction from the depths of the sea was laid. Already being blind, in 1922 he drafted a backfill of nearly 100 hectares of the sea and, moreover, personally supervised all works, accurately and precisely guided in the chart. P. Pototski did not live enough to see end of all the works, but he bequeathed to bury himself on that very land in Bibiheybat Bay on the Caspian coast.²⁶



In addition to the development of oil industry and trade, due to the convenience of its harbor and the fact that there was a central point of the Caspian Shipping Company, Baku became a reserve clause of Caucasus and Persian goods coming to internal province of Russia and partly abroad via the Black Sea.²⁷

A related factor in economic development was a kind of cultural renaissance that took place in Baku in the beginning of the twentieth century. Modernization, a transition from traditional to modern society, i.e., from pre-industrial to industrial, from closed to open, from undifferentiated to a high level of structural differentiation, from corporatism to individualism, from despotism to democracy, and so on,²⁸ was typical for the Azerbaijani society of that period.

The era described above was primarily turning point in the cultural transformation of the traditional Oriental society. Despite thousands of negative consequences of

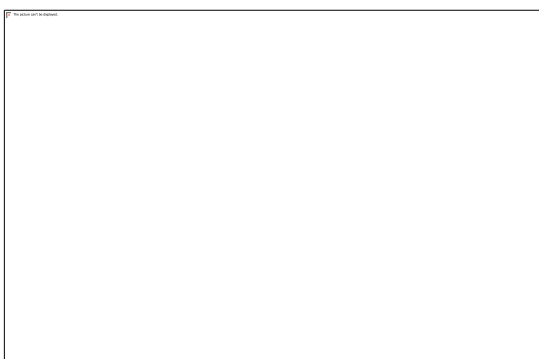
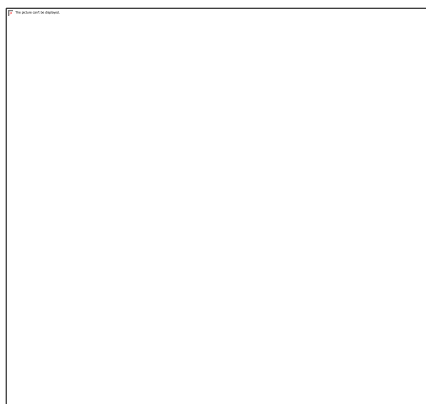
²⁶ Ханджанбекова Ф. Бакинские шедевры руками польских архитекторов. <http://www.1news.az/society/20121223034936267.html>

²⁷ <http://www.ourbaku.com/index>.

²⁸ Никитин М.Д. «Ориентализм» Э.Саида, теория колониального дискурса и взаимодействие Востока и Запада: к выработке нового понимания проблемы.

Russian colonization - breaking traditional forms of life and value systems, stealing of national natural resources - Muslim nations increasingly fell under the influence of Russia, and through it, Western civilization, it was drawn into the system of global relationships, gradually mastered the ideological and political institutions, created a new economic infrastructure.

However, when inexhaustible richness of the cultural heritage of the eastern society that had created new forms of literary, philosophical and historical works and unknown hitherto genres of theatrical and musical art was opened to the world, the real revolution took place in the cultural sphere. One of the peculiar bearers was A.O. Chernyaevsky, an outstanding teacher, inspector of Transcaucasian Gori Teachers Seminary, who played a great role in familiarizing of Azerbaijani youth to the Russian and European culture in the late 19th century. Born in Shamakhi and perfectly knowing the local language, he was the author of one of the first books of the Azerbaijani language - "Vatan Dili" (Native language). Together with S. Velibekov he published the second part of "Vatan Dili", in which the majority of fables and poems were composed by G. Karadagski and content of fables was taken mainly from the works of the great Russian poet Krylov, since in Azerbaijani literature there was not that kind of poems. Famous Azeri writers, educators and journalists, such as Firidun bey Kocharli, Rashid bey Efendiyev, Safarali bey Velibekov Mahmud bey Makhmudbekov, Teymur bey Bayramalibekov, Suleyman



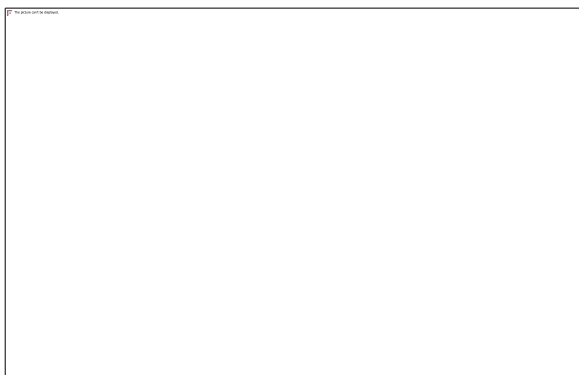
H.Z. Taghiyev's theater

Sani Akhundov, Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Nariman Narimanov and others studied in the Gori seminary with his direct supervision. Chernyayevsky's name assigned to the school in the Maraza village of Shamakhi region, and his bust was set in front of it. His image was embodied in the novel of I.Shikhly, famous Azerbaijani writer of Soviet period ("Dali Kur" (The tempestuous Kura)).²⁹ Uzeyir Hajibeyov, outstanding Azerbaijani composer, the

²⁹ Заплетин Г., Ширин-заде Г. Русские в истории Азербайджана. Баку, 2008, С.156

creator of the first opera in the East- "Leyli and Majnun"-, was also the graduate of the same seminary It is interesting fact that the composer was inspired from Chernyaevsky's "The Barber of Seville" opera, which he watched at Tiflis Rossini's opera³⁰. For the first time the synthesis of European symphonic music and eastern mugham improvisation was embodied in Baku on the stage of the H.Z. Taghiyev's theater in 1908.

As Muslim women were not allowed to appear on stage, the role of Leyli played by A. Faradzhev and the role of Majnun – by well-known singer H. Sarabski.³¹ This



The theater group of Hajibeyovs brothers

opera is still sold out marks in many countries, and in 2008 the 100th anniversary of the opera was held in the framework of UNESCO.³²

With specific regard to the theatre, for the first time in Baku, theatrical performance in Azerbaijani language was made in 1873 based on the play written by M.F. Akhundov "Vizier of Lankaran khanate". Throughout

the several years in Baku and Shusha (Karabakh), playwrights of G. Vezirov and Akhundov, who has repeatedly been thwarted by fanatical mullahs and believers who considered the theater contrary to Islamic canons and brought here by Europeans devil sin, were staged.

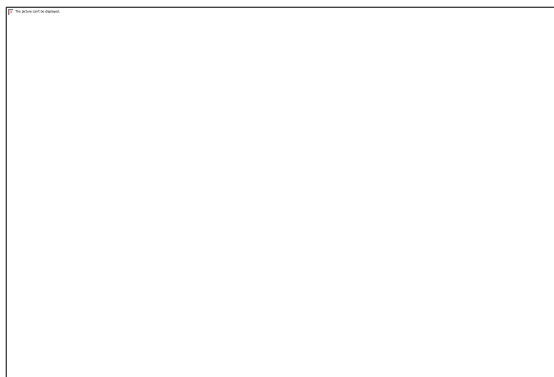
Despite all the obstacles, staging performances continued, and the first professional team- "The Muslim drama troupe" was formed in 1897. They staged works of Azerbaijani, Russian and European classics - Shakespeare, Schiller, Moliere there. In 1919, during the First Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan State Theatre was established.³³ Mailov's theater was also functioning in the city and Russian and Armenian plays were being staged there. The famous Russian and foreign artists

³⁰ Toumani Meline. For the love of Layla. The New York Times, February 27, 2009.

³¹ Абасова Э., Касимов К. Узеир Гаджибеков – музыкант-публицист. «Искусство Азербайджана», Баку, 1968, Т.ХІІ, р.17.

³² Celebration of anniversaries with which UNESCO is associated in 2008-2009. Sector for External Relations and Cooperation (ERC), UNESCO – Paris,20

³³ Алиева А.А. Азербайджанский театр за 100 лет. Азерб.гос.изд-во, 1974, р.35



Theatre “Phenomenon” (now Puppet theatre)

often went on tour in Baku. For example, in 1904, an inimitable American dancer Isadora Duncan performed on the Baku stage as a part of her Russian tour.

This period is characterized by an unprecedented flourishing of the press, about 60 newspapers and magazines in different languages were published in Baku. According to French historian A. Benningesen, between 1875 to

February 1917 in Russian Empire, Muslim newspapers and magazines in 172 names, more than 66% - in Azeri and Tatar languages were printed.³⁴

emerging in Russian newspapers "Caspian" and "Baku" were also popular and published in Tiflis "Caucasus", "New Review", whose pages were published works of many well-known Russian educated Azerbaijani progressive-minded leaders, such as A. M. Topchibashev, E. Sultanov, M. E. Rasulzade, G. Minasazov, S. Mehmandarov, F. Kocharli and others.³⁵ They introduced a wide range of Russian-speaking readers with the problems of the nation and all Muslim nations, trying to convey to them the diversity of cultural -historical past and present issues of the day.

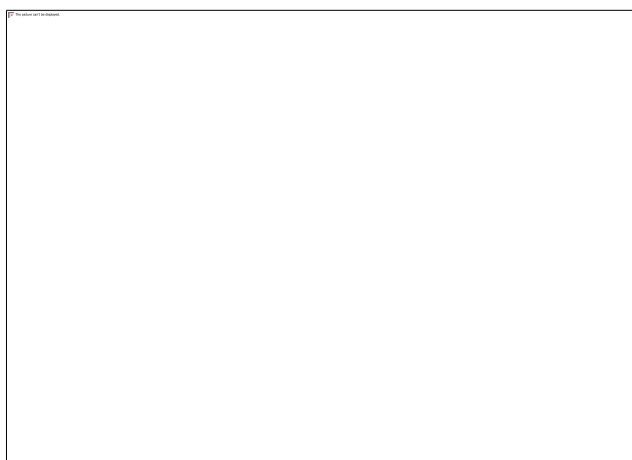
Multinational face of Baku was not limited to the three main ethnic groups. Germans, Poles, Jews, Estonians, Latvians and others with their trading houses and charities resided here as well. A major role in the development of local industry was played by German settlers relocated to Azerbaijan in the beginning of the 19th century by the order of Tsar. They were particularly distinguished in the field of wine production and copper smelting. Wines of merchant houses “Forer Bro.” and “Hummel Bro.” won numerous awards at international exhibitions, their collection champagne was delivered to the Russian royal court and Europe. In the late 19th century, famous electrotechnical concern "Siemens" built Kedabek’s copper smelting plant in Azerbaijan. Large contributions were made by the Germans in development of science and culture of Azerbaijan. They marked the beginning of the archaeological research; famous archaeologist Y. Gummel published a number of

³⁴ Беннинген А. Печать и национальное движение русских мусульман до 1920 года. Пер. с франц. С.М. Полякова. Баку, 1971. р. 7, 49-50, 58.

³⁵ “Закавказье”, 1907, 10 апреля; 22 мая; 1908, 16 сентября.

articles and created a local history museum in the German colony Elenendorf (Shamkir).

V.Abih, academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, physicist E. Lents, who studied the reasons of the Caspian Sea level fluctuations,³⁶ played a major role in the origin of geological science in Azerbaijan. Germans made notable contributions in the creation of the architectural masterpieces of Baku, the most famous architect was N.A.fon der Nonne - urban architect and military engineer, who served in the 1889-1902 biennium as the mayor and created an architectural plan of the city. The role of the German Cultural Centre also played an incredibly beautiful role in German Lutheran Church, located in the heart of the city.



German family in Elenendorf, 1910.

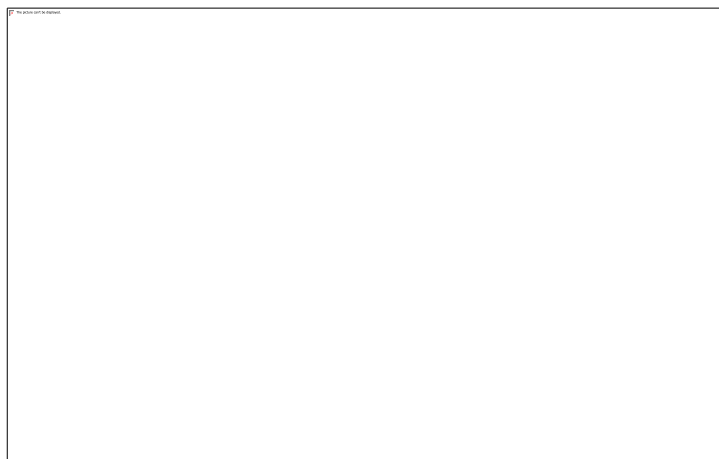
In the early twentieth century, huge mass of the Jewish population came to the South Caucasus fleeing the massacres of Kishinev and Belostok in 1906, as the most developed industrial and cultural center much of them settled in Baku. They took an active part in the cultural life of the city and at the same time created public and political organizations. Baku group of Jewish Social-Democratic Labour Party - "Poalei Zion" (Workers of Sion), the Bund, the Zionist-socialist organization³⁷ were among them. Zionist cultural and educational society "Kadima " functioned here,

³⁶ Венгеров С. А. Абих, Герман Вильгельмович. Критико-биографический словарь русских писателей и ученых (от начала русской образованности до наших дней). СПб.: Семеновская Типо-Литография (И. Ефрона), 1889. Т. I, с. 8-11; Ленц Э.Х. Русский биографический словарь А.А.Половцева. СПб, 1896-1913,р.192-194

³⁷ Багирова И.С. Политические партии и организации Азербайджана в начале XX века. Баку, Элм, 1997, р. 287

whose purpose was to support the local public interest in the works of national art. In addition, the society held a lecture "on Zionism and Palestinian history".³⁸

In 1908-1909, Latvian and Estonian societies uniting representatives of these nationalities and organizing public and charity events appeared in Baku. Following the February 1917 revolution that toppled the monarchy of the Romanovs in Russia, a noticeable revival occurred in the social and cultural life of Baku.



Jewish synagogue in Baku

In March 6, one of the first acts of the new post-revolution government was declaration of the abolition of all religious and national restrictions for citizens living in Russia. This news caused unprecedented enthusiasm for all non-Russian nationalities hoping to get full civil and political rights under the new democratic system. National councils and committees, which subsequently became unification of public organizations and political parties began to emerge in Baku and Elisavetpole (Ganga), as well as in many other cities of Russia, in addition to the local authorities. In the second half of March, the Armenian National Council consisted of 50 people was formed, it composed of 17 representatives of "Dashnaktsyutun" party.³⁹ It had quite big impact on the Armenian community, issued the newspaper "Arev", had its representatives in IKOO (Provisional Government Authority) and in the Baku Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

In 21 March, Jewish National Council was formed, which included several members of the "Bund", the Cadets and the Jewish community. In March 22, an organizational meeting of the Ukrainians was held, they decided to establish a national group called

³⁸ "Каспий". 1906, 21 янв., 8 сент.

³⁹ Ibid, 1917, 18 марта

"Ukrainian Gromada of Baku". The main provision had been made about the structure of Ukraine on the principles of providing the best form of political, cultural and national development. It was also decided to harmonize its activities with the Ukrainian Central Rada.⁴⁰

In March 26, a meeting of the workers - the Kazan Tatars, which decided to create a special organization, whose task would be to popularize among the Tatar proletariat ideas of democracy and was part of their preparation for the elections to the Constituent Assembly was held in Balakhani.⁴¹

A characteristic feature of all the national councils and organizations of that period was their loyalty to the new authorities and limiting the claims in the main requirements of cultural-national autonomy. The Committee of Muslim non-governmental organizations, which consisted of well-known Azerbaijani public figures⁴² played an important role in Azerbaijani society as one of the first agencies of the national government created in March.

Government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, formed in 1918 and overthrown by Soviet troops in 1920, continued to carry out the policy of tolerance and full support towards representatives of other cultures and ethnic groups. For instance, in spite of the bloody events of March 1918, when the Bolsheviks killed more than 10 thousand of Azerbaijanis in Baku with the support of Armenian Dashnak forces, all nationalities living in Azerbaijan, including Armenians were represented in a multinational parliament, which was formed in December 1918.

Kurban Said's novel "Ali and Nino" became an outstanding cultural phenomenon, which reflected all dramatic events of that time, and embodied the mutuality of East and West. In 1937, the novel was published in German language in Austria and told the story of Baku in early 20th century. The novel is set in the Caucasus and Iran and tells the story of love between two people: Azerbaijani-Muslim Ali Khan Shirvanshir and Georgian-Christian Nino Kipiani. The novel describes the life of different nationalities in Baku in details took place at the background of such events as the first world war, revolution, civil war and the bloody events of March 1918, arrival of the British army in Baku and their care, establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, occupation Baku by the Bolsheviks and suppression the centers of national resistance.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 24 марта

⁴¹ «Баку», 1917, 29 марта

⁴² Baghirova I.S. Ibid, p. 317

fate of the authorship of the novel, which was published more than 100 times and translated into 33 languages of the world, is more interesting. The author is still unknown, as Kurban Said is a pseudonym. Many researchers believe that the author of the famous novel is Azerbaijani writer and publicist Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli, whose biography is similar to the biography of the main character of the novel. However, the view that the author was a German writer of Jewish origin, the son of the Baku oil magnate Lev Nussimbaum⁴³ is also quite common. Another version claims that the novel was written by Baroness von E. Erenfels Bodmerskhof, for whom there is fixed a pseudonym Kurban Said in German publishing catalog of 1935-1939.⁴⁴

In the novel, topic of the confrontation and interaction between the West and East, Asia and Europe, Islam and Christianity, two different and at the same time, similar cultures of the Caucasus particularly is presented.

Thus, all the troubles and disasters, incredibly eventful beginning of the 20th century, played a huge role in the formation of a multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan cultural image of Baku. The Industrial Revolution and the oil boom transformed Baku from a provincial town into the multiethnic megalopolis. The important role in this process was played by the mutual influence of cultures of the Muslim and Christian nations, stimulated an incredible leap of civilization providing to Baku a worthy place among the developed cities of the rich in political and socio-cultural processes of 20th and early 21st centuries.

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⁴³ Гусейнов Ч. Кто же автор «Али и Нино»? Роман о нации «Бакинцев полон тайн и загадок». «Эхо», 2004, 9 октября, N196.

⁴⁴ Ehrenfels L. “Ali & Nino”. “Azerbaijan International”, 2004, P.10,14-15; Наринская А. Роман одного неизвестного, журн.Коммерсант- N43 (89), 2008, 07.11.

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Summary

Baku as a crosscultural center in the 19th – early 20th centuries

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The article describes the process of cultural transformation that occurred in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, completely changing both the industrial and ethno-social image of Baku. The contact between the two civilizations - European, represented by Russia, and traditional Islamic, resulted in the formation of a new social stratum - the Azerbaijani intelligentsia. An accompanying factor of economic development was a kind of cultural renaissance that occurred in Baku in the early twentieth century, turning it into a center of different ethnicities.

Keywords: Russian Empire, Caucasus, Azerbaijani intelligentsia, the Baku oil industry, Baku-Batumi pipeline, the local and foreign business men, Christian's churches, Muslim mosques, Polish architects, Transcaucasian Gori Teachers Seminary, Azeri writers and composers, cultural phenomenon.

Tbilisi as a Center of Crosscultural Interactions (The 19th– early 20thCenturies)

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The city of Tbilisi – the capital of Georgia, during its long period of existence, has been an interesting place of meeting and interaction of different cultures. In this context, the present paper deals with one of the most interesting periods in the history of the city. From the beginning of the 19th century, when the establishment of the Russian imperial rule started in the Caucasus, Tbilisi became an official political center of the region; political and economic changes, occurring during the second half of the 19th century, significantly influenced ethnic and religious composition of Tbilisi, its cultural lifetime and mode of life in general.

For centuries-long period, Tbilisi, like other big cities (how much big does not matter in this case), was not only the *Georgian* city in ethnic terms; but also, it represented a blend of different religious and ethnic groups. Not only in a distant past, but just a couple of decades ago, when the phenomenon of the so called ‘city yards’ (which are often called as ‘Italian yards’ and which have almost disappeared from the city landscape) still existed in Tbilisi, their residents spoke several languages fluently. Ethnically and religiously mixed families were not rare. Such type of cities, termed as *Cosmo-policies* by some researchers, has an ability to transform a visitor, at least temporarily, into a member of “in-group”, in our case – into *Tbilisian*. This happens without any integration politics, through the inherent force of integration owned by these cities.¹Tbilisi managed to melt and transform external influences into its peculiar feature – “Tbilisian mode of life”, to be termed as “Tbilisian subculture”.² It has been remained as a city of Georgia, and could be called as the Georgian city at the same time, even at those periods when ethnic Georgians were not in a majority

¹ Zaal Andronikashvili, *Tbilisi – Cosmopolis* (Tbilisi, Edition of the Institute of Tolerance and Diversity, 2015), 227.

² Revaz Gachechiladze, R. “Tbilisi at the Beginning of the 20th Century”. *Tbilisi in the Era of Changes. Sociocultural Dimensions of Urban Space and City Planning* (Tbilisi, Tbilisi University Press, 2010),77.

of the city population.³ For centuries long period, including the 19th century, Tbilisi was the only “city”⁴ for Georgians and it was simply called as the *city*.⁵

Tbilisi was a political and cultural center not only for Georgians, but for Azerbaijanis, Armenians and other Caucasian people as well. A group of scientists refers to the cultural reality of Tbilisi as *multicultural cosmopolitanism*.⁶

The paper aims to track the process of transformation and change of this “*multicultural cosmopolitanism*” across the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

The historical context

Beginning from 1801, when the Georgian kingdom of Kartl-Kakheti was abolished, the Russian Empire incorporated all Georgian kingdoms and principalities within its borders. The process lasted up to the 1860s. During this period, the Georgian society substantially changed. New loyalties to the new rulers were formed among the Georgian nobles, part of which passed through anti-tsarist rebellions and plots in the first decades of the 19th century. The failed conspiracy of 1832 deeply affected their national feelings. Many Georgian noblemen entered the state or military service of the Tsarist Empire and “found a comfortable accommodation with the Russian rule”.⁷

Russian administration “encouraged aristocratic patriotism and limited the autonomy of local nobles” at the same time; dismissed from their traditional posts, the nobles were invited to enter the state service. On the one hand, this policy should make Caucasian administration more effective through recruiting loyal persons with the knowledge of local languages and peculiarities; on the other hand, this would ensure direct and strict subordination of the former authorities to the central power.⁸

³ Jozeph Salukvadze, “Tbilisi at the Crossroad of History and Cultures”. *Tbilisi in the Era of Changes. Sociocultural Dimensions of Urban Space and City Planning*. Tbilisi (Tbilisi University Press, 2010), 11.

⁴ Revaz Gachechiladze, “Tbilisi at the Beginning of the 20th Century”, 10.

⁵ Ronald G. Suny, “Tbilisi in the Russian Empire: On the Ethnic, Social and Class Composition of the Population”. *Tbilisi in the Era of Changes. Sociocultural Dimensions of Urban Space and City Planning* (Tbilisi, Tbilisi University Press, 2010), 43.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁷ Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors. The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883-1917* (Harvard University Press, 2005), 6.

⁸ Ronald G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation* (Indiana University Press, Hoover Institution Press, 1988), 68.

In the first half of the 19th century, numerous features of the earlier times were still maintained in the city life of Tbilisi. Traders and artisans were organized into guilds; together with them, citizens (*mokalakeni*) and city nobles represented the main social estates of Tbilisi;⁹ the first two groups were diverse in terms of ethnicity and religion. Appearance of the Russian army and administration significantly increased the demand on various goods, primarily on agricultural products and craft industry. The number of Russian and European artisans rised; consumers of their production were citizens who adhered to the European way of life and gradually emerged to the front stage of the city life.¹⁰

In 1821-1865, the population of Tbilisi increased from 15.374 to 67.770, comprising 5,6 per cent of the total population of Georgia;¹¹ according to the statistical information, it happened mainly at the expense of influx of peasants from the Eastern Georgia. Apart from this, workforce arrived from different parts of Transcaucasia and Persia, joined by Russian migrants from inner provinces of the Tsarist Empire.¹² The territory of Tbilisi was extended, incorporating its suburbs. New style constructions – houses and administrative buildings – appeared. The problem of planning of the city development became actual.¹³ Although, even after half a century of the Russian rule, Tbilisi life did not change much.

Period of the rule of Viceroy Michael Vorontsov (1845-1854) became a turning point in this respect. As Stephen Jones notes, “Vorontsov, an intelligent administrator, “Europeanized” Georgian civil life... The empire promised stability, protection, power and civilization, whether it was in the form of ballrooms or books... Chastened ex-conspirators appreciated these gains.”¹⁴

Vorontsov started implementing a long-term plan of the development of Tbilisi. The city became more comfortable, with apparent elements of the European style. Wealthy citizens travelled by carriages; national dresses were substituted with the European fashion, old wooden furniture – with the soft one, *chianure* and *zurna* (national and oriental musical instruments) – with piano and grand piano.¹⁵

⁹ *Essays in the History of Georgia*, volume 5 (Tbilisi, Publishing House “Sabchota sakartvelo”, 1970), 107.

¹⁰ Shota Meskhia, David Gvritishvili, Mamia Dumbadze, Akaki Surguladze, *History of Tbilisi* (Tbilisi, “Sakhelmcipo gamomcemloba”, 1958), 385-386, 401.

¹¹ *Essays in the History of Georgia*, volume 5 (Tbilisi, “Sabchotas akartvelo”, 1970), 109-110.

¹² *Ibid.*, 112-113.

¹³ Shota Meskhia et al., *History of Tbilisi*, 396.

¹⁴ Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors. The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883-1917*, 8.

¹⁵ Shota Meskhia et al., *History of Tbilisi*, 409.

In the same period, Caucasian educational district was created; new schools – from elementary to pro-gymnasia – were opened. Beginning from 1849, statute granted 160 stipends per annum were delivered to the Caucasian students to study at the universities of Russia. Official newspapers were issued, library and Russian theatre established. Although these efforts were aimed at spreading the Russian language and strengthening Russia's influence, they have indirectly contributed much to the advancement of cultural level of the city life. Some old suburbs were incorporated in the city, new houses of nobles and rich merchants as well as public buildings were constructed.

After the agrarian and subsequent reforms of the 1860s, important changes took place in the economic life of Georgia. An increasing economic link between different parts of the country ended previous isolation and created foundations for the emergence of common national self-consciousness. A railway, first line of which (Tiflis-Poti) was completed in 1872, linked Western and Eastern parts of Georgia. In 1877, Kutaisi joined this line, and in 1883, Batumi was linked to the Caucasian railway network. It was a fact of great importance: migration became active between different parts of Georgia; isolated Georgian villages, once largely self-sufficient and only distantly related to towns, came in relation to each other.¹⁶

A portion of Georgian nobility failed to meet the new challenges and their economic and political positions rapidly declined. Looking for the better life, they migrated to cities, especially to Tiflis/Tbilisi, entered state service or tried to join public life of the capital. Their estates passed into the hands of rich merchants or wealthy peasants. Together with nobility, a portion of peasants who got freedom as a result of Agrarian Reform of 1864 also moved to the cities in order to solve economic problems they were facing under the new reality. In the cities, Georgians - representatives of various classes - came face to face with a well-entrenched, financially secure, urban middle class, which was not ethnically homogenous; they spoke different languages, went to different churches, and held different values. Cultural and linguistic differences reinforced social distinctions between the classes.¹⁷

In 1886-1897, population of Tbilisi (Tiflis) increased by 103 percent; it became a predominantly migrant city: in 1897, only 43.7 percent of its residents were born and brought up here.¹⁸ The percentage of different ethnic groups in the total population of the city gradually leveled, but the economic and political positions of ethnic

¹⁶ Ronald G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 122.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹⁸ Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors. The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883-1917*, 25.

Georgians still were not strong.¹⁹ Russians dominated in the sphere of city's administration, whereas Armenian bourgeoisie held leading positions in the field of economy and strived to take control over the management of the city.²⁰

As Stephen Jones notes, the modernizing Russian Empire helped to create conditions for Georgian national development: local intellectuals, an increasingly literate Georgian public, urbanization, improved communications between town and village; contacts with Europe contributed much to this process.²¹

Romance of Asia and Europe

By the beginning of the 19th century, the life of Tbilisi city was punctuated by holidays, festivals and public games, which continually interrupted the rhythm of the workweek;²² it had little to offer but card games, wrestling and drinking. In several decades, "From an "Asian" backwater ... Tiflis was transformed into a city where Georgian nobles could read European newspapers, mingle with Russian literary, and show off their wives in the latest French fashions."²³ Thus, already at the end of the 1850s, the Asiatic rust was removed from the Georgian Soul.²⁴

Two American missionaries, who traveled in Georgia in 1830, were impressed by the diversity of the population of Tbilisi who spoke different languages, wore different clothes and represented different nationalities: Russians, Armenians coming from the Ottoman Empire, Georgian and Armenian clergies, Armenian merchants of various cities, Georgian peasants, Laks, Persians, Circassians.²⁵

Alexander Duma who visited Georgia at the end of the 1850s, had described the Asian part of the city: "The main caravanserai in Tbilisi is built by the Armenian... It is occupied by all representatives of the Eastern world: Turks, Armenians, Persians, Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Kalmyks, Turkmens, Tatars, Circassians, Georgians, Siberians, and only God knows the full list of these peoples! All of them have their own appearance, dress, weapon, peculiar character and physiognomy. Entire network of trade routes and streets of the city, different from its aristocratic

¹⁹ Ronald G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 116.

²⁰ *Essays in the History of Georgia*, volume 5, 700.

²¹ Stephen F. Jones, "Georgia: The Long Battle for Independence". *M. Rezum (ed.), Nationalism and the Breakup of an Empire: Russia and its Periphery* (Praeger Press, Westport, 1992), 80.

²² Ronald G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 90-91.

²³ Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors. The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883-1917*, 6.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁵ Ronald G. Suny, "Tbilisi in the Russian Empire: On the Ethnic, Social and Class Composition of the Population", 42.

part, merges at the caravanserai. Each of this street has its own “specialization;” I do not know their Georgian titles, whether they have Georgian names at all, but I’d call them as streets of silver, merchant of weapons, traders of vegetables, dressmakers, shoe-makers and that of hatters ... There is nothing more interesting than walking in these streets; foreigner could hardly be tired of this adventure.”²⁶

As it was mentioned previously, the city was gradually enlarged in the 19th century, and the European style came into its architecture; although it maintained its Eastern nature. “Meidan, located in the Eastern part of the city, market, guilds – all were of Iranian origins; the newly constructed railways and districts of workers located at the Western part of the city resembled that of traditional industrial city of Europe.”²⁷

Out of those buildings, which have not lived through present times but played a crucial role in the city life for a long period, was a bridge connecting the left and right banks of the river Mtkvari from the 15th century onwards. It was called the Kakheti Bridge. The bridge was destroyed with time and was rebuilt only in 1851 by the Russian officials Gagemeister and Rais. They imposed tax for those who would use the bridge. After a year, a citizen of Tbilisi, trader Ivane Mnatsakanov paid 25 thousand rubles for the bridge and hand it over to the city. As a result, the imposed tax was abolished. Afterwards, the bridge and adjacent street were called as Mnatsakanov’s bridge and rise. After 30 years, the wooden construction of the bridge was changed with the iron one, whereas in 1950s, after the total reconstruction of that area of the city, the bridge was destroyed.²⁸

On the present-day territory of Tbilisi Botanical Garden, there was a Muslim cemetery named as Gorkhana (which means *a house of grave* in Persian). During the Soviet time, most part of the cemetery was levelled off by tractors and nearby Mosque was demolished as well. Only couple of graves of renowned persons were maintained; later on, a status of pantheon was granted to them. These are the graves of Mirza Shafi Vazeh, Mirza Fatali Akhundov, one of the founding fathers and the prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan Fatali Khan Khoisel (Khoyski) and couple of other personalities.²⁹In 2006, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation renovated gravestones and surroundings of the burial places of the above-mentioned

²⁶ Alexander Dumas, *The Caucasus* (Tbilisi, Publishing house “Merani”, 1988), 168.

²⁷ Ronald G. Suny, “Tbilisi in the Russian Empire: On the Ethnic, Social and Class Composition of the Population”, 43.

²⁸ Alexandre Elisashvili, *How Tbilisi has been Changed* (Tbilisi, Bakur Sulakauri Publishing House, 2013), 11.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

as well as some other outstanding Azerbaijani public figures buried in the Pantheon.³⁰ Today the pantheon is well maintained.

In the Sololaki district of the city, at the crossroad of modern-day Tchonkhadze and Gergeti streets, from the second half of the 19th century until the 1920s, the Catholic cemetery was located, together with a small church and church tower. They were placed in the middle of the territory, which was a property of St. Rosaria Brotherhood and was under the subjugation of the Roman-Catholic Church of Tbilisi, named after the Dormition of Virgin Mary. The Georgian Catholics – families of Andronikashvili, Zubalashvili, Tumanishvili, Djakeli, Chikovani, Mizandari, etc. had family graves at the cemetery. There was a marvelous garden of roses brought from India and Shiraz by the English military engineer, colonel-lieutenant Monsini. In the 1920s, Bolsheviks abolished the cemetery and replaced it with residence buildings and other functionary constructions.³¹

There was Shia Mosque close to the Metekhi Bridge, built by the Shah of Persia Ismail, although Tbilisians called it as Shah-Abas Mosque or Blue Mosque (due to incrustation of dome and Minaret). In 1950-1951, under the pretext of reconstruction of the Metekhi Bridge, the Mosque was destroyed; nowadays only remnants of the blue incrustations are preserved at the National Art Museum of Georgia; the wooden pulpit from the Shia Mosque – Mimbar – is maintained as well.³² Today only a Sunni Mosque remains in Tbilisi, where Sunni and Shia Muslims pray together.

European architects designed and constructed public buildings; most of them define the image of the city until present times. In 1835, under the order of Jacob Zubalashvili, Swiss architect Bernadotte constructed “Palace Hotel,” which was of classicist style being popular in those-days Russia. Firstly, the building housed a hotel. In 1840, it was purchased by the Exarchate, and Spiritual Seminary was placed there. Until 1905, the seminary remained in this building. In 1917, the building was restored to its primary function and “Hotel Palace” was placed there again; the hotel continued functioning after the establishment of the Soviet rule in 1921 until 1950. Then the building was reconstructed and from 1952, the Art Museum of Georgia named after Shalva Amiranashvili is placed there.³³

³⁰ Restoration of grave monuments to eminent persons of Azerbaijan in Tbilisi. <http://heydar-aliyev-foundation.org/en/content/view> (accessed 24.09.2016).

³¹ Alexandre Elisashvili, *How Tbilisi has been Changed*, 65.

³² *Ibid.*, 21.

³³ About the Theological Seminary. Laboratory for the study of the Soviet past. <http://sovlab.ge/ka/node/362> (accessed 24.09.2016).

From the beginning of the 19th century, on the Freedom Square, at the place of the modern-day City Council, the two-storied building of Polizeimeister was located. Later on, the fire tower was built on it. In 1882-1886, under the initiative of the mayor of the city Alexander Matinov and according to the project of the architect Alexander Ozerov, the building went through full restoration. One more store was added to it and the fire tower was transformed into the city hall tower. From 1884, the main clock of the city is placed there. The building was reconstructed, and different segments were added, making it into the present-day image.³⁴

In 1840s, the Viceroy Mikhail Vorontsov came with the initiative of building Italian opera in Tbilisi, in the middle of the modern-day Freedom Square. Three-storied caravanserai would be built; opera would be placed on the second and third floors, whereas the first floor would be occupied by shops. Vorontsov referred to the merchants of Tbilisi to support the construction of opera, however, the only person - a merchant Tamamshev responded. He fully financed the construction of the building. It was built in 1847-1851 by an Italian architect Jovani Scudieri; the curtain was painted by the famous Russian painter Gagarin. The opera house was impressive and caught an eye of by-passers. Italian opera became common for the Tbilisi public; even children in Tbilisi yards sang Italian melodies.³⁵ Opera house became the place of expression of national feelings. In 1867, the students of classical gymnasium waved Georgian royal flag in one of its pits. For some time, the Russian administration prohibited to play Italian opera and substituted it with the Russian one. Although, later on, it had to bring back the Italians. In October 1874, when performance "Norma" was played at the Opera, fire was set at one of the shops of the building and the entire construction was burned. Nowadays, those time basements of the Opera are located under the pavement of the Freedom Square.³⁶

In 1895, German architect Paul Stern, under the order of Prince Oldenburg, built a palace on the territory of the German colonists. Presently, it is the house of Museum of Theater, Music, Cinema and Choreography.

The Polish architect Alexander Shimkevich, who in 1885-1891 was the chief architect of Tbilisi and was elected as a deputy of the city for several times, constructed the building of court in 1894. In 1905-1906, he taught architecture and painting at the Tbilisi School of Arts. Nowadays, those times building of court is a seat of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

³⁴ Alexandre Elisashvili, *How Tbilisi has been Changed*, 72.

³⁵ Shota Meskhia et al., *History of Tbilisi*, 441.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

Shimkevich is the author of project of the building of “Artistic Society,” elaborated together with the chief engineer of the province Korneli Tatishchev. It was built in 1898-1901, with the financial support of the trading house “Isaya Pitoev and Company”. From the period of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, the building became the house of the Shota Rustaveli Theater.³⁷

In 1892, in the so-called “New Garden” (at the modern-day Freedom Square) opening of the monument of Alexander Pushkin was celebrated. Niko Nikoladze, representative of the second generation of *Tergdaleuli* movement, came with the initiative to raise funds for the construction of the monument and for granting his name to the street where the Russian poet lived during his stay in Tbilisi. The monument was made by the Polish sculptor Felix Khodorovich; pedestal was made by Italian mason Vinchentso Pileji, who lived in Tbilisi at those times. Nowadays, the monument of Pushkin is the oldest monument in Tbilisi (the earlier one was the monument of Mikhail Vornotsov, erected in 1867 and later on demolished by Bolsheviks).³⁸

In 1910, opening of a hospital was celebrated in Tbilisi, which was financed by Armenian merchant Mikhail Aramyants. The hospital is still called as Aramyants Hispoital. Aramyants also financed construction of the hotel “Majestic.” Its building was started in 1911 according to the project done by the Russian architect Alexander Ozerov, who was working in Tbilisi at that time, and was completed in 1915 according to the project of Tbilisian architect Gabriel Ter-Melikov. Nowadays, the hotel “Tbilisi Marriot” is located in this building.³⁹

In 1913-1916, the building of the Bank of Nobility was constructed according to the project prepared by architect Anatoly Kalgin and painter Hainrich Hrinevski. The decor of its facade is made by Neofite, Vladimer and Lavrenti Agladze. Presently, the building is the house of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia.

Tbilisi had the most developed social infrastructure among the cities of the Caucasus. According to the annual publication “Caucasus Calendar” („Кавказский календарь “), in 1913, there was a private higher education institution in Tbilisi –higher courses of studies for women, as well as 5 Gymnasiums for men and 5 for women. Altogether, there were 150 different educational institutions in the city. A great majority of newspapers and journals of the Northern and Southern Caucasus was printed in Tbilisi, among them 19 Russian, 10 Armenian, 6 Georgian, 2 Azerbaijani and 1 German language editions. The city had 5 theaters, 8 cinema halls, 10 hospitals,

³⁷ Revaz Gachechiladze, R. “Tbilisi at the Beginning of the 20th Century”, 80.

³⁸ Alexandre Elisashvili, *How Tbilisi has been Changed*, 80.

³⁹ Revaz Gachechiladze, “Tbilisi at the Beginning of the 20th Century”, 79.

around 20 pharmacies, 37 hotels, dozens of banks and insurance companies; there were 10 public libraries, Orthodox and Armenian churches, Catholic and Lutheran Churches, 2 Synagogues and 2 Mosques; telephone network was also operating in the city and from 1904, tram also served its citizens.⁴⁰By the beginning of the 20th century, there were around 600 manufactures and factories, including textile, match and tobacco producing, that of lather and beer.

Caucasian Tbilisians

Numerous renowned personalities of different Caucasian people were active in Georgia. In 1861, the work of first Kabardian historian Shora Nogmov titled as “History of Adige People” was published in Tbilisi. Famous Ossetian thinker Ioane Ialghuzisdze-Gabaraev (1770-1830) got spiritual education at the royal family of Erekle II and Giorgi XII. He mastered Georgian, Ossetian and Russian languages. He was active teacher and missionary. On the basis of the Georgian graphic, Ialghuzisdze created Ossetian alphabet in 1802, which was used by both Ossetians living in the South as well as in the North Caucasus. He translated liturgical books from Georgian into Ossetian language and played a crucial role in the Christianization of Ossetians living in the South Caucasus. The Georgian writer Daniel Chonkhadze (1830-1860) compiled Georgian-Ossetian and Ossetian-Georgian dictionaries, which were published later by Shiffner.

Since 1900s, Ossetians were launching their national cultural center in Tbilisi. In 1906, Ossetians living in Tbilisi established “Ossetian Publishing Society.” Giorgi Jioti and Vaso Tsbaiti were active members of this society. On the same year, publishing house “Ir” was founded in Vladikavkaz and Tbilisi.

The above-mentioned society launched Ossetian theatrical group, which staged performances in Ossetian language until 1980s. The leaders of the society appealed to the government several times with the request to establish Ossetian newspaper and got permission in 1907 (February 13). On the same year, on March 6, the first Ossetian newspaper “Nog Tsard” was printed in Tbilisi (this was the second Ossetian language newspaper; the first one was published in 1906 in Vladikavkaz, titled as “Iron Newspaper”). Even before the publication of the first issue of the newspaper, the Georgian newspaper “Isari” announced: “From the beginning of March, subscribers are available in Tbilisi for the Ossetian newspaper “Nog Tsard”, which will be published twice per week.” The circulation of the first issue was 400, later on reaching 1800. The first editor of the newspaper was Petre Tedeti; later on, this responsibility was assumed by Gaioz Tskhvrbat. The newspapers and journals published in Tbilisi printed the works of Ossetian writers in Ossetian language,

⁴⁰ Ibid., 75.

including those, which were banned or was impossible to publish in Vladikavkaz.⁴¹ In 1913, secondary school was opened in Tbilisi for ethnic Ossetian children.⁴²

In the 19th century, Tbilisi was a center of Azerbaijani culture and intellectual life. Azerbaijani poet, calligrapher and enlightener Mirza Vazeh, known through pseudonym Mirza Shafi (1792/96-1852), widely known as “Tbilisian Wise” lived and worked in Tbilisi. He was born and grown up in Ganja. In 1840, he passed exam at the Tbilisi Gymnasium in Tatar language and started to work as a teacher of Persian and Azerbaijani (or Tatar – as it was called at that time) languages at the local secondary school. His pupil was a famous Georgian journalist, writer and poet, editor of the journal “Tsiskari” Ivane Kereselidze. In 1844, Mirza Shafi founded literary-philosophical circle in Tbilisi. After two years, he was back to Ganja and started to work at the district school. Before leaving the city, he dedicated to it one of his famous poems – “Farewell to Tbilisi.” In 1850, he was back to Tbilisi and delivered lessons in Persian and Tatar languages at the Classical Gymnasium and at the boarding-school of Raeovski and Hakke. He created “Tatar-Russian Dictionary” and “Reader”. He also built a garden in Sololaki and granted it to the city. He died in Tbilisi and was buried on the territory of the present-day Botanical garden.⁴³

His pupil, the German writer and translator Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt translated poems written by Mirza Shafi into the German language. During his stay in Tbilisi (in 1844-1845), Mirza Shafi was his teacher delivering lessons in Azerbaijani, Georgian, Armenian and Persian languages. The translations named as “Songs of Shafi” were included in the book “Thousand and One Days in the Orient”, written by Bodenstedt and published in 1851. Later on, this book was translated into many languages, including Georgian.⁴⁴

Azerbaijani writer, enlightener, philosopher and playwright Mirza Fatali Akhundov (1812-1878) was a pupil of Mirza Shafi. He spent almost half of his life in Tbilisi and died there. He was born in Shakhi (Nukha) and got traditional Persian-Arabic education. From 1834, he worked in Tbilisi, at the chancellery of the viceroy as a translator of oriental languages; at the same time, he was a teacher of the Turkish

⁴¹ David Matsaberidze and Ivane Tsereteli, “Armenian Identity Narrative”. *Identity Narratives in Georgia: at the Origins of Multiethnic Georgian Nation (1860-1918)* (Tbilisi, 2014), 162-163.

⁴² *Ethnic Groups in Georgia* (Tbilisi, Library of the Public Defender of Georgia, 2008), 73.

⁴³ Eka Makharashvili, “Mirza Vazeh Shafi and Mirza Fatali Akhundov – Azerbaijani writers who were in love with Georgia”. *24 saati Weekend*. 27 February 2010. <http://www.24hours.ge/weekend/story/3791> (accessed 22.10.2016).

⁴⁴ Friedrich M. Bodenstedt, “One Thousand and one Days in the East”. Short translation from German. Introductory letter by Akaki Gelovani (Tbilisi, Publishing house “Sabchota sakartvelo”, 1965).

and Persian languages at the district school of Tbilisi. During his stay at the chancellery of the viceroy, he became a friend of the well-known Georgian public figures Platon Ioseliani, Dimitri Khipiani, Giorgi Eristavi. He started his literary activities in the 1830s. With the stage of a play “Vizier of Lenchoran’s Khan” (1873, Baky, in Azerbaijani language), the professional Azerbaijani theater was born. Akaki Tsereteli, who studied Azerbaijani language during his study at St. Petersburg University, translated this play of Akhundov into Georgian. Mirza Fatali Akhundov was one of his beloved writers. Translation by Akaki Tsereteli was printed in 1898 in the Journal “Krebuli” under the title “Vizier of Khan” and was played at the Georgian stage on the very same year. In 1898, Akaki Tsereteli wrote in the newspaper “Tsnobis Purceli”: “This play is written by Tatar writer Mirza Fatali Akhundov, whose writings are translated into foreign languages. At some point, he became under the scope of Russian writers, and those-days literary critic Apolon Grigoriev ... compared him to Moliere. As we, Georgians, are neither familiar with this writer nor aware of life of our neighbors – Tatars, I decided to translate one of the plays of Akhundov - *Vizier of Khan*.”⁴⁵

Comedies by Akhundov were published first time in Tbilisi, in Russian and Azerbaijani languages. Mirza Fatali Akhundov was a close friend of the famous Georgian poets and public figures Alexander Chavchavadze, Grigol Orbeliani, etc. Grigol Orbeliani played a crucial role in the decision to bury Akhundov on the territory of the present-day Botanical Garden when Muslim leaders of the city opposed his burial on the Muslim cemetery or somewhere close to it.

Famous Azerbaijani enlightener, writer and historian Abbas-Kuli-aga Bakikhavov spent several years in Tbilisi, where he entered the service of general Ermolov's chancellery as a translator and interpreter. Here he met and became friend with Alexander Chavchavadze, Nikoloz Baratashvili, Grigol Orbeliani as well as Russian and Armenian writers and public figures.⁴⁶

From the beginning of the 20th century, Azerbaijani journals were published in Tbilisi; these were the satirical journals “Mulla Nasreddin” (published from 1906 by Jalil Mamed-Guli-Zadeh) and “Tartan-Phartan.” The government had banned publication of “Mulla Nasreddin” several times due to its critical publications. The journal was positively assessed by the German writer Arthur Leist, who lived and worked in Tbilisi at that time. In 1908, he wrote a special letter on the journal: “What was not protested for centuries and was criticized only by some wise persons like

⁴⁵ Levan Bregadze, “Mirza Shafi Vazeh, Friedrich M. Bodenstedt”. *Enlightenment in Georgia. Ideas and Personalities*. <http://nateba.net/index.php/biographies/251> (accessed 22.10.2016).

⁴⁶ Shota Meskhia et al., *History of Tbilisi*, 442.

Mirza Shafi, what was hidden and unpublicized, was attacked by “Mulla Nasreddin” with word and caricature, strongly and brightly, what makes some laugh and some angry”.⁴⁷

Famous Armenian public figures lived in Tbilisi and several Armenian newspapers were published, just to name a few: “Mshak,” “Nordar,” “Horizon”. Armenian schools existed in the city.

Hovhannes Tumanyan was born in 1869, in the district of Lore. He died on March 23, 1923, in Moscow. After completing his primary education in the village, he moved to Tbilisi to continue his study at the Seminary of Nerses but did not manage to complete it due to financial shortage. He became active among writers’ circles in 1886. He wrote poems, fairytales, stories, allegories and ballades. Tumanyan dedicated numerous works to Georgia and to his Georgian friends (“Reconciliation,” “On Georgia,” “Soul of Georgia,” “To Georgian Poets”, etc.). Famous Georgian poet Titsian Tabidze wrote: “Georgian’s believed in Hovhannes Tumanyan’s sincerity and this was proved in Tbilisi at his anniversary. His patriotism did not hinder him to be that of Georgian orientation... Hovhannes Tumanyan’s influence on his people resembled that of Ilia Chavchavadze’s authority ... He had unique relations with Georgian poets. Hovhannes actively attended public speeches of Georgian poets and praised them ... He did not miss anniversaries and celebrations of Georgian poets and always appeared with written speeches. He was often hosting Muslim poets; Hovhannes was beloved one of them.”⁴⁸

Armenian writer Gabriel Sundukyan was very popular in Tbilisi. His play “Pepo” which was written in 1871 was staged at the Georgian theater in 1875; the following year, its Georgian translation was printed in the newspaper “Droeba” (N2, 1876), whereas in 1880 it was published as a separate book. Gabriel Sundukyan (1825-1912) spent his life in Tbilisi. He studied at different boarding schools and gymnasiums, graduated from the faculty of history and philology of the St. Petersburg University and afterwards joined chancellery of the viceroy in Tbilisi. Later on, he became a head of the special division taking care of the roads in the Caucasus and was awarded the rank of civilian colonel. He was actively involved in the city council. Sundukyan started his literary activities in the 1860s and was attached to the Armenian theater. He was one of its founding members. Sundukyan wrote on the Georgian dialect of the Armenian language, which contained lot of

⁴⁷ Levan Bregadze, “Mirza Shafi Vazeh, Friedrich M. Bodenstedt”.

⁴⁸ Titsian Tabidze, “Hovhaness Tumanyan”. <http://litklubi.ge/biblioteka/view-nawarmoebi> (accessed 22.10.2016).

Georgian words and phrases; he also widely referred to the Georgian folklore and translated his own works from Georgian into Armenian.⁴⁹

The founder of the new Armenian literature and Armenian literary language Khachatur Abovian (1805-1848) lived and worked in Tbilisi. He studied at Nerses Seminary and later on, in 1837-1943, worked as a supervisor of the local school.⁵⁰ Influential Armenian writer and political activist of the 19th century, Arfiar Arfiaryan (1852-1908) also lived in Tbilisi; in 1877-1878, during the Russian-Turkish War, he was a correspondent of the “Mshak” newspaper in Constantinople and during 30 years wrote on cultural and political affairs of the Western Armenians. Armenian writer, teacher and public figure, Ghazaros Aghayan (1840-1911), who was born and died in Tbilisi, conducted his pedagogical activities in Tbilisi and Armenia. He is the author of a textbook of Armenian Language. Michael Hovhannisyanyan, known under pseudonym Nar-Dos (1867-1933), who also lived in Tbilisi, was granted the status of public writer during the Soviet times.⁵¹ Writer Alexander Movsesyan (1858-1935), known under the pseudonym Shirvanzadeh, acted in Tbilisi from 1883. He lived in Paris in 1905-1910 and again in Tbilisi in 1910-1919. Later on, he emigrated again and was back in 1926 to the Soviet Armenia. He was granted the status of public writer of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Soviet times.⁵²

The life and activities of the Armenian thinker and essayists Grigor Artsruni (1845-1952) should be mentioned in particular. His grandfather was deported in 1813 from Turkey to Georgia; his father was a colonel of the Russian Army and during 2 years, in 1866-1868, was a head of the city council of Tbilisi. Grigor was born in Moscow and graduated from Tbilisi Classical Gymnasium; later on, he studied at famous universities of Europe. In 1872, he founded literary-political newspaper “Mshak” (worker) in Tbilisi, which was published until 1920. The newspaper played a crucial role in the formation of ethnic identity of Armenians.⁵³ As G. Suny mentions, the newspaper was a serious challenge for the religious-centered traditional conservatism of the Armenian bourgeoisie.⁵⁴ His opponents blamed Artsruni for cosmopolitanism and negation of the peculiarities of the Armenian nation. Artsruni was a close friend of Georgian public figures Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli,

⁴⁹ *Essays on the History of Georgia*, volume 5, 836.

⁵⁰ Gevork Abov. *Khachatur Abovyan. Life and Activities* (Yerevan, 1948).

⁵¹ *Essays in the History of Georgia*, volume 5, 835.

⁵² Hrach Tamrazyan, *Shirvan-Zade* (Moscow, Publishing House “Sovetski pisatel”, 1967).

⁵³ For more details see chapter 3 in the book: “Identity Narratives in Georgia: at the Origins of Multiethnic Georgian Nation (1860-1918)”. Tbilisi, 2014.

⁵⁴ Ronald G. Suny, “Tbilisi in the Russian Empire: On the Ethnic, Social and Class Composition of the Population”, 57.

Giorgi Tsereteli, Ivane Machabeli, Alexander Jabadari. In 1879, after the appeal of the masters of the Georgian theater, Grigor Artsruni transformed a portion of his caravanserai, which was situated at the present-day location of the Griboyedov Theater, into the permanent house of the Georgian troupe. According to the memories of the famous dramatist Avksenti Tsagareli, Artsruni gave serious financial privileges to the Georgian troupe and provided artists with financial support.⁵⁵

Tbilisi served as a center for scientific investigations in the Caucasus. In 1851, the Caucasian branch of the Russian Geographical society was formed in Tbilisi. In 1864, Archaeographic Commission was created, which issued twelve-volume “Acts of the Caucasian Archaeographic Commission” with extremely important materials on the history of the Caucasus.⁵⁶

In 1862, the Museum of the Caucasus was created in Tbilisi. A bit later, Caucasian Archaeological Committee was organized, which was transformed into the “Society of Lovers of Archaeology” in 1873.⁵⁷ Young Georgian intellectuals actively participated in the activities of the above-mentioned societies.

In 1878, it was decided to convene the 5th Archaeological Congress of Russia in Tbilisi. The organizational committee was headed by the Georgian historian Dimitri Bakradze, who presented a paper on the Georgian paleography at the congress. The congress started its work on 3 September 1883. It was an important event in the scientific life of the Caucasus.⁵⁸

Experience of urban life contributed much to the comprehension of ethnic, religious and cultural differences and their political expression in the form of nationalism. From the second half of the 19th century, a new generation of the Georgian intellectuals came to the fore. Returning to homeland from the Russian universities, they introduced the ideas of European and Russian thinkers to the Georgian public and contributed much to the creation of a new political and cultural framework for the further development of the Georgian society.

According to the modernist theories of nationalism, intellectuals are the central actors who employ the rhetoric of nationalism. They are the creators not only the nation itself but also of the universal discourse and meanings in which nations could

⁵⁵ Levan Bregadze, “Grigor Artsruni”. *Enlightenment in Georgia. Ideas and Personalities*. <http://nateba.net/index.php/biographies/251> (accessed 22.10.2016).

⁵⁶ Shota Meskhia et al., *History of Tbilisi*, 444.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 445.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 446.

be formed.⁵⁹ They play central role in the emergence of national consciousness, propagation of national values, bounding the people, defining its constituent parts and boundaries. Intellectuals do the “imaginative ideological work that brings together disparate cultural elements, selected historical memories, interpretations, while silencing the inconvenient and unheroic”.⁶⁰ Philologists, historians, poets, novelists, teachers and journalists play the most important role in this regard”.⁶¹

The young Georgian intellectuals of the 1860-70s were called *Tergdaleulebi* (those who have drunk from the river Tergi/Terek, the traditional border between Georgia and Russia). They defined contours and main directions of the Georgian national project. Their activities fit in its best with the first stage of the formation of nationalism as offered by Miroslav Hroch: struggle for the formation of cultural identity, reformation of language and rise of interest toward the national history.

Issues of the language, fatherland and past/history were the most significant points of the above-mentioned national project. History was considered as one of the main tools for the national consolidation; the new democratic public language was developed, which was understandable for all; it was promoted as a standard one through the Georgian newspapers and journals (“Iveria”, “Matsne”, “Droeba”, etc.), public schools, theatres, libraries, “Society for spreading literacy among Georgians”, “Historical-ethnographical Society”, etc.

While the problem of self-identification through defining borders of the *in-group* became the main issue for founders of the Georgian national project, they tried to eschew a danger of ethno-narcissism and called for the respect of other nations. Renowned poet and thinker of the same generation, Vazha-Pshavela, mentioned: “Some people think that true patriotism excludes cosmopolitanism. This is a mistake... When nations learn to respect their traditions, they will in their own separate ways increase the collective strength and beauty of the entire world... A person who claims to love every nation to the same degree is a liar... Patriotism is more a matter of feeling than of intellect; cosmopolitanism is a matter merely of the brain... Listen to the needs of your country, heed the wisdom of your people, dedicate yourself to their wellbeing, don’t hate other nations and don’t envy their happiness, don’t prevent other nations from achieving their goals. Work towards the

⁵⁹ Michael D. Kennedy and Ronald G. Suny, “Introduction”. *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*. Ed. by Ronald Grigor Suny and Michael D. Kennedy (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 2-3.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ronald G. Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 123.

day when no one will subjugate your nation and work for its progress until it equals the leading nations of the world”.⁶²

Activities of Tergdaleulebi contributed to the consolidation of the Georgian society. Now different parts of the country were joined together and united under the concept of “Georgia”, which, although divided into different parts, still formed a complete entity. Different classes acknowledged their common identity as “Georgians”, which should have been regarded as more important and fundamental than any other identity.⁶³

The same process took place among other ethnic groups as well. Coming in the close contact with each other, they faced a need of self-identification. According to Ronald Suny, Tbilisi was formed as a cradle not only for the Georgian but for the Armenian nationalism as well.⁶⁴ Armenian newspapers published in Tbilisi, especially Grigor Artsruni’s “Mshak” played a crucial role in the self-identification of Armenians and construction of the Armenian national project. As in the case of Georgians, the issues of language, fatherland and religion were the main points for the Armenian intellectuals collaborating with “Mshak”.⁶⁵ As for Azerbaijanis, notwithstanding the fact of their active participation in the cultural life of Tbilisi, they did not display any sign of ethnic mobilization or economic and political activism during the same period.

Thus, through extensive contacts with their co-citizens and foreigners residing in the cities, the process of ethnonational identification started among the Caucasian people; they thoroughly comprehended existing linkages with their ethnic brothers and tried to distance from those who were not aware of their language and customs.

⁶² Vaja-Pshavela, “Cosmopolitanism and Patriotism”. *Works* (Tbilisi, 1986), 41; for English translation see: Pshavela, V., & Gould, R. R., (Trans.) (2016). *Cosmopolitanism and Patriotism*. Asymptote (Oct 2016), University of Bristol, http://research-information.bristol.ac.uk/files/90452374/Cosmopolitanism_and_Patriotism_Asymptote.pdf

⁶³ Levan Gigineishvili, “Post- reform History Textbooks in Georgia: Changing Patterns and the Issue of Minorities in Georgian History”. *History Teaching in Georgia: Representation of Minorities in Georgian History Textbooks* (CIMERA. Geneva, 2007),8.

⁶⁴ Ronald G. Suny, “Tbilisi in the Russian Empire: On the Ethnic, Social and Class Composition of the Population”, 40.

⁶⁵ For more detailed analysis of the problem see: Marieta Bazinyan, “Constructing a Nation: Identity Markers of Armenians (According to the “Mshak” Periodical Published during 1872-1892)”. *Analytical Bulletin 8* (Yerevan, 2015), 67-80.

The newly born intelligentsia, under the influence of the Western ideas, embraced the new conception of nation⁶⁶ and started to construct new nations.

After imposition of the Soviet rule, due to the complex and contradictory Soviet nationality policy, the republics of the South Caucasus became more homogenous. In the Soviet and post-Soviet Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani narratives, the history and culture of the dominant ethnic groups are highlighted in some details and are detached from each other to the extent that some shared elements are neglected. Although, according to Ronald Suny, even at the time of nationalist triumph, the colorful palette of people composing population of the city not in a distant past, becomes a source of nostalgia.

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Summary

Tbilisi as a Center of Crosscultural Interactions (The 19th– early 20thCenturies)

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The paper highlights the cultural life and the multiethnic community of Tbilisi city population in the turn of XX-th century, when the economic growth in the South Caucasus urged the urban development and urbanization in entire region. Evidence is provided for the existence and active performance of cultural centers of various Caucasian nations in Tbilisi that used to be the political and cultural center of the South Caucasus under Tsarist Russia administration. The role of Tbilisi and its social environment in search for identity and growing nationalistic sentiments of a number of South Caucasian nations is justified in provided data and testimonies.

Keywords: Tbilisi, urban life, national identity, South Caucasian nations.

Sheikh Shamil in the Caucasus, Russia and the World

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On the first day of the month Muharram of 1212 H. (1797) by the Muslim Calendar, a boy was born in Gimry – an Avar village in Dagestan. The authors wishing to convey to readers the amazing biography of Imam Shamil used to start their story by statement of this event¹. “Shamil was born – a poor mountaineer, who received world-wide recognition, and who was destined to take more than one page in the history of Russia...”, – write others, aiming to intrigue the readers from the first pages².

Frequent diseases in the early years, the change of his name “Ali” to “Shamil”, or more correctly “Shamuil” which was rare at that time, unusual circumstances of his childhood – all these seem to have put some mystery around the future imam, who made people talk about him. Discarding all the mystique, it must nevertheless be recognized that 1797 marked the beginning of the astonishing fate of this person. In the same year an Austrian composer F. Schubert; Wilhelm I - the future king of Prussia and the Kaiser of Germany; F.P. Wrangel – Russian navigator and polar explorer; A.A. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky – Russian writer, critique, a Decembrist exiled to the Caucasus and took part in the battles against the first Imam Ghazi-Muhammad were born. Quite plausible is an assumption that the Decembrist and Shamil might met at the battlefield, since the latter, as a faithful companion, was often near the Imam Ghazi-Muhammad. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky found his death in the Western Caucasus in 1837, when Shamil already was the imam of Dagestan, gained his

¹ Mukhammad Takhir al-Karakhi. Khronika Mukhammada Takhira o dagestanskikh voynakh v period Shamilya. Moscow – Leningrad: 1941; Bushuyev S.K. Bor’ba gortsev za nezavisimost’ pod rukovodstvom Shamilya. Leningrad: 1939; Khalilov A.Y. Natsional’no-osvoboditel’noye dvizheniye gortsev Severnogo Kavkaza pod predvoditel’stvom Shamilya. Makhachkala: 1991; and others.

² Gadzhi-Ali. Skazaniye ochevidtso o Shamile // Sbornik svedeniy o kavkazskikh gortsakh. Vyp. VII. Tiflis: 1873; Chichagova M.N. Shamil’ na Kavkaze i v Rossii. Sankt-Petersburg: 1889; Bartol’d V.V. Shamil’ // Sobraniye sochineniy v 9 tomakh. Vol. II. Part I. Moscow: Izdatel’stvo vostochnoy literatury, 1963; and others.

political power. Even since then, he had made the tsar administration nervous, who tried to force the imam to bow to the Emperor Nicolai I during the visit of the Sovereign to the Caucasus in the same year.

The year 1797 was abundant with significant political events in the world. In Europe, a lucky star of Bonaparte flashed, who routed five Austrian divisions at the heights of Rivoli in winter, after which Northern Italy was de-facto conquered by the French. The victorious conduct of the future emperor continued in Europe and beyond, and at the close of the outgoing year in the honorary court of the Luxembourg Palace, a solemn commemoration of General Napoleon Bonaparte took place.

New monarchs, presidents, and ministers come to the international arena: the throne of the King of Prussia was occupied by the 27-year-old Friedrich Wilhelm III; in the US, George Washington's successor became the second president, John Adams; on July 16, Charles Maurice Talleyrand was appointed as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, the coronation of Paul I was held in Moscow. The on succession to the Russian throne was issued the same year, and in St. Petersburg Saint Michael's (Engineers) Castle was laid, which Shamil would visit 62 years later.

What was happening in the Caucasus and particularly in Dagestan in this year? With the death of Catherine II, her successor Paul I changed the foreign policy towards the Caucasus by abolishing Zubov's campaign and returning troops. Taking advantage of this, Agha-Muhammad Khan Qajar invaded the Caucasus and occupied Shusha but was soon killed in a conspiracy and the Iranian troops returned home. In January 1797, the St. Petersburg royal court decided to create a federative alliance under the Russian protectorate from the domains of Dagestan and Azerbaijan declaring as the backbone of its policy in Transcaucasia the federation of domains leaning towards Russia³. Thus, on May 2, 1797, the Tsar credentials were sent to Tabasaran ruler Rustam-kadiy compiled with gratitude for his loyalty to Russia during the invasion of the Caucasus by Agha-Muhammed Khan; and about entitling Mehti-bek of Tarki the title of Shamkhal⁴. In the summer of the same year, Shamkhal swore an oath of allegiance to Russia, vowing to "faithfully and unilaterally serve and obey in everything"⁵. However, it didn't work with the federation, "in those

³ *Istoriya Dagestana s drevneyshikh vremen do nashikh dnei*. Tom 1. Moskva: Nauka, 2004. p. 453

⁴ *Arkhiv vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy imperii*. F. 77. Op. 77/6. 1791-1800 gg. D. 472. L. 195

⁵ *Shamkhaly Tarkovskiye. Sbornik svedeniy o kavkazskikh gortsakh*. Vyp. I. Tiflis: 1868. p. 62

specific historical conditions the political forces in the Eastern Caucasus domain were not capable to rally together and were torn by internal contradictions”⁶.

The eighteenth century was about to end. The next century in Russia began with regicide, the bright era of Napoleon came and gloriously passed, the star of fascinating happiness of the Decembrists flared up and gone away.

Meanwhile, the Caucasus gradually entered the Russian political reality and thinking: in 1801 Alexander I signed a manifesto on Georgia's joining to the Russian Empire. The following year, at the Mint in St. Petersburg, a medal for the participants of the Caucasian expedition under Count Musin-Pushkin was coined “for ore mining in the ranges of the Caucasus and Ararat mountains”⁷. On February 1804, a unit of tsarist troops ravaged dozens of villages (*auls*) in the area of Pyatigorsk and brutally suppressed the uprising that broke out there, in honor of which the silver medal was also coined. In 1816, there began cruel story of the “proconsul” (as General Aleksandr Petrovich Yermolov called himself) who also for some reason was called “the conqueror of the Caucasus”, although beside the extinguished spirits and devastated settlements he left also, the smoldering fire of problems that soon broke out as the brightest flame of the long national liberation struggle.

A.S. Pushkin, having visited the Caucasus in 1820, composed his poem “The Prisoner of the Caucasus”, which was “inflamed with a passion for the Caucasus” and would be read stealthily in future by Caucasian officers in the cadet corps. Meanwhile, the “Amalat-bek”, “Mulla Nur”, “Letters from Dagestan” written by Decembrist Bestuzhev-Marlinsky in exile, became the favorite books of youth. The mountainous region was in the center of attention.

“But the big, long, stubborn and restless thought about the Caucasus – as Kazbek Sultanov rightly points out – entered and remained in the culture precisely in Shamil's era, whose struggle, within the historical and cultural perspective, was perceived as a message to humanity, as a truly crucial stage, as an accurate indicator of the vital problems of minor nations. The freedom theme and idea in the Russian and European consciousness began to sound with a clear Caucasian accent”⁸.

In 1834, providence gave Shamil the rod of the Commander-in-Chief, from which he refused, understanding the greatest responsibility. However, the providence was

⁶ Gadzhiyev V.G. Rol' Rossii v istorii Dagestana. Moscow, 1965. p. 173.

⁷ Acty Sobrannye Kavkazskoi Arxeograficheskoi Komissiei. Pod Redakciei A. Berje. Vol. I. Tiflis: Tipografia Glavnogo Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskogo, 1866. p. 313

⁸ Sultanov K. Chelovek-legenda. Novoye delo. № 48.1997. p. 8

persistent and inevitable, and after several refusals and reflections, Shamil agreed to become imam. From that point the Great Caucasian epic begins.

For many years, it has been a subject of close attention for scientists, writers, poets. A lot of documents extracted from archives and private collections have become indicators of the heroic struggle of the peoples of the Caucasus and major changes in the mountain society, led and run by their leader Shamil.

Life of Shamil can be divided into two parts.

His first part of life, where he emerged as a warrior and public leader, ended in August 1859. Imam Shamil was an embodiment of this tragic and heroic era of the history.

The second, which began with Gunib and ended in Arabia, is exclusively his personal life, full of reflections on the past, thoughts about the future of his family and the loss of his loved ones; “Diplomatic” relations with the St. Petersburg office and the main goal – to perform the pilgrimage (*Hajj*). In this part Shamil belonged to himself, while his name has long been the property of world history.

However, if the first part of Shamil’s epic had been studied relatively in detail, then the second, in general, presented tenuously. Basically, these are separate essays, memoirs of contemporaries, in scientific works – a modest piece. What caused such “no attention” of the authors to the Russian period of Shamil’s life extended as much as 11 years?

Especially the Dagestan historiography does not favor the Russian period of the Imam's life, not to mention the fact that local “history lovers”, far from science, often do not want to recognize Shamil’s capture. They call his meeting with General Baryatinsky on Upper Gunib on August 25, 1859, just as agreement conclusion and his residing in Kaluga factual constraint.

One may get an impression that captivity, forced living away from homeland, the voluntary loyalty oath of Imam to Russia is perceived by people as a simple sequence of events in Shamil’s life, without any desire to dive into the political component of these events, which determined to a large extent the future fate of the peoples of Dagestan and the nature of formation of Dagestan statehood as a whole.

Obsessed opponents with a simplistic and primitive view of Shamil with amazing perseverance inclined to suggest that the imam had to die on Gunib, which would be the easy solution. But the Imam even in these dramatic moments thought about his people, their fate and decided: to yield to the world and save Dagestan!

It is hard not to agree with Rasul Magomedov, who once expressed the following opinion: “To tell the truth about history, no matter how bitter it may be, is to relieve tension and pacify the illness. The truth must serve us, so that we can learn these lessons for ourselves”⁹.

However, if someone thinks that the Russian period of the honorary prisoner in Shamil’s life conceals something shameful or unworthy of Imam, is deeply mistaken. In Shamil’s life there were many difficult and seemingly desperate situations, but in none of them did he discredit his name, by contrast the Imam went through all the trials of war and captivity. He lost a lot, witnessed many injustices and at the same time bewildered companions and followers, opponents and rivals with the profound wisdom of the decisions he made.

Anguish of mind, psychological breakdown after August 1859 and the transition to a completely different world, the world of steam engines and foundry factories, large cities and magnificent palaces, boundless fields and sea spaces, encouraged the highlander from Gimry to reconsider his vision of the world. There is no happiness in the war, the Imam more than once undertook actions towards a peaceful settlement but was not heard by the autocracy. Only fool may believe that Shamil craved for fight.

Many of the people surrounding the Imam in Russia wanted to see expressions of surprise and admiration on his face from what he saw, but they did not. Imam could hide his emotions, excitement and feelings. The richest storehouse of these feelings would tell us about many things, and, most importantly, would explain many things.

For some Shamil is a subject of sweet panegyrics, for others – impartial libels. The larger is the historical personality, the more multifaceted it is for perception, its deeds are difficult to explain because they do not fit into ordinary ethical sentiments. The meaning of an individual worthy of being called historical is that it repeats itself in every new generation but participates in future life not as a guest from afar, but directly as a teacher of life.

In any case, the dignity and weakness of this bright personality can only be measured from the global historical viewpoint.

Meanwhile, Shamil is not imposed on high pedestals, the best monument to him would be the adherence to his instructions and covenants. “He reflected, like in

⁹ Magomedov R.M. Dva stoletiya s Shamilem. Makhachkala, 1997. p. 3

convex glass, the virtues and defects of the world development process, which was destined to be woven most precisely in the Caucasus”¹⁰.

Pathos and drama of the Caucasian war ... Triumph and the tragedy of Shamil ...

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¹⁰ Donogo H.M. *Imam Shamil'. Posledniy put'*. Makhachkala: 2016.p. 5

Cultural Transformation in the Northern Caucasus at the turn of XIX – XX centuries (A case study on Ingush people)

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Civilizational development of ethnic culture is accompanied by quite noticeable processes of transformation and contradictions, that dictate “the following questions: how culture should be developed to combine both universal and local ones; how the principle of the dialogical relations between cultures should be realized in practice and where the border of interaction must pass, beyond which there begins the loss of the original cultural identity; where the division between cultural influence and cultural expansion happens; how to preserve the cultural specificity and to be on modern lines entering the information society; if it is possible to consider the technological progress as cultural progress; whether the latest means of communication has any impact on the quality of consciousness and perception, and if they influence, then how”¹.

Interest in ethnic, territorial phenomenon of culture is widespread among scholars and practitioners. This, in particular, is because of the growth of ethnic consciousness of society. It is stimulated by resistance to unification of lifestyles of different social, especially ethnic subjects in line with the process of universalization of culture and simplification of its phenomenal institutions.

It is necessary to establish a logical sequence of historical events which forge the progress or regressive trends of social life influenced by conscious patterns alternatively conducive to either integration or degradation of the cultural level. Making an empirically reliable generalization based on the primary material for the philosophical understanding of the problem, which will help to form an objective conception in the future, is also essential.

¹ Kostina A.V. Natsional'naya kul'tura – etnicheskaya kul'tura – massovaya kul'tura. P. 3

The Nakho-Caucasian culture originated in the early stages of the formation of the proto-Ingush ethnos and managed to preserve its originality and uniqueness for centuries. The Ingush (*Glalgay*) as a socio-historical subject, in certain times had its own interests, the purposes and objectives of the social and cultural implementation, and, like any ethnic group depended on the historic changes.

The genesis of cultural norms is essentially a continuation of formogenesis that in the process of integration of forms into the social practice, part of which acquires the status of the new norms and standards of activity, and the interaction in this ethnic group (institutional – with an imperative function, conventional – with a “permissive” character, statistical – with an uncertain type of regulation). Some forms enter with new elements in the current system of identity that perceive these forms of people’s collective, primarily at the level of a social micro-groups like a big family.

As the first micro-group, large family in the Ingush played a major role in shaping of the kin (*teip*), then the society (*shahra*) and the ethnos (*kiam*). The structure of public relations was formed in the same manner, from the family to the society and the state. Each Ingush society, at times, and the whole mountain gorge was a democratic micro-polis that voluntarily entered into a single union (*мох/к*), taking on the very real liabilities, depending on the interests of the entire pole of federation enjoying equal rights. The most important element of interrelations supporting social and political structure of the union was the reciprocity principle of social connection and interaction.

Till the beginning of the 19th century, an institution of the public association of Ingush society such as *Mekhk-Khel*² (Council of the country) played an important role, which made its decisions equally binding for all; including the decision on the assembling of the people's volunteer corps. People's volunteer corps were called together within a single society in the appointed place, and those who refused to appear were punished. In exceptional cases, the volunteer corps were created throughout the country.

Mekhk-Khel performed functions of the supreme legislative³, judiciary and the executive⁴ power for the Ingush in the past. Forum used to be assembled from the representatives of various societies under the leadership of Chairman (*bachcha*), at

² Istoriya Checheno-Ingushetii. P. 76

³ Popov I. Ichkerintsy. P. 262-263

⁴ Tsentral’niy gosudarstvenniy arkhiv Respubliki Dagestan. Fond 1406, f. 294, l. 4-8

least, biannually⁵. In *Mekhk-Khel* Ingush elders established procedure⁶ of land ownership and land tenure, and agreed on standards of behavior and penalties for violating them; they made decisions on the questions of war and peace, domestic (establishment of units of measurement, prices of livestock, and so on) and foreign trade⁷, took defensive measures, collected material resources for public need and determined various taxation and duties⁸. Apparently, this saying indicates the power that was possessed by *Mekhk-Khel* in the past: “It was not avenged for activities of the country, but actions against the country were not forgiven”⁹.

The Ingush ethnos, as the real organization of individuals, engaged in certain geographical space in the Central Caucasus and was characterized by biological reproduction. In addition, its basic cultural values were expressed in the external unity of cultural forms, unified semantic fields of communication and interaction, symbolic and semantic contacts of identification focused primarily on the constitutionalization of the ethnic group¹⁰.

The culture of the Ingush, as a whole, encompasses the whole scope of the forms of human activity, acquired knowledge, images of self knowledge and symbolic signs of the world around. It functioned as a structure-forming basis to ensure the integrity of the ethnic group and the ability to cause autonomous, sustainable development and social self-organization in various historical situations. Stone architecture as the reflection of the past conveys the characteristic features of the previous culture to us. Notable artifacts of Ingush material culture are unique tower complexes, terraces, water conduits and other structures on the territory of mountainous Ingushetia. Monuments of material culture indicate a high level of stone architecture. We won't dispute the fact that the towers, mountain roads, unique terraces for growing a variety of cereals, water mills and other systems were created by the ancestors of the Ingush, some to protect the territories from numerous hostile hordes from the north and the south that attacked the Caucasus, others for providing their own population with food, even in the most difficult mountain conditions.

“In the economic activity.... handicraft industry, especially pottery and metalworking played an important role. Burial and household monuments represent large numbers

⁵ Saidov I.M. Obshchestvenniy byt vaynakhov v XIX v. P. 202

⁶ Laudayev U. Chechenskoye plemya. P. 92

⁷ Akty Kavkazskoy Arkheologicheskoy Komissii. Vol. VII. P.917-918; Tsentral'niy gosudarstvenniy voyenno-istoricheskiy arkhiv. Fond 26, c. 152, f. 514, l. 126-127. Raport generala Rtishcheva voyennomu ministru Barklayu de Tolli ot 6 oktyabrya 1811 g. № 1858

⁸ Saidov I.M. Obshchestvenniy byt vaynakhov v XIX v. P. 202

⁹ Kharsiev B.M. Ingushskiye adaty kak fenomen pravovoy kul'tury. P. 71

¹⁰Albakova F.Y. Sovremenniye problemy natsional'no-etnicheskogo soznaniya na Severnom Kavkaze. P.3

of pottery. here were found several kilns.... Metalworking played a significant role. Weapons, labor tools and adornments were manufactured from the metal. The local craftsmen were familiar with such techniques of the metalworking as casting, forging, embossing, carving, stamping, incrustation and wire drawing”¹¹.

In the early Middle Ages, the Nart epic tradition of the Ingush took its final shapes in the territory forcibly torn away from the Ingush by the neighboring nations.

Material and spiritual culture of the Ingush is a phenomenon of national identity, which belongs to the category of axiological values, the study of which is necessary for the development of both historical and cultural themes, as well as social philosophy as a whole.

From the mid 16th century on, the North Caucasus fell into the orbit of geopolitical aspirations of the Moscow State and since then Russia has made great efforts to join the Caucasian lands to the Russian state.

As the result of a purposeful policy pursued by the tsarist authorities in the Caucasus, and the vigorous activities of the representatives of the Ingush joint societies, in 1770 (March 17, New Style), the Ingush noblemen signed a petition for entry of Ingushetia to the Russian Empire¹².

Mountaineers of the Caucasus were ready to bear patiently the yoke of Russian rule, provided that the immunity of their religion, customs and way of life were insured¹³, i.e., the preservation of spiritual values and cultural traditions, as well as the protection of their moral and material interests by the Russian state. The Ingush population of the Caucasus accepted and understood Russian citizenship exactly so. The understanding of the nature of the Russian-Caucasian mutual relations by the parties that signed this important historical act was different.

In the second half of the 18th century, the Russian Empire was in need of allied relations with the mountaineers of the North Caucasus in order to consolidate its political positions in Transcaucasia (South Caucasus). Firmly established its dominance in Transcaucasia, Russia could no longer back out from the “influence” on other peoples of the Caucasus, the land of which separated it from the new domains. I.Y. Kutsenko notes: “It was necessary for us to maintain the Russian

¹¹ Anchabadze G.Z. Vaynakhi. p.26

¹² AVPRI DID MID. L. 4180

¹³ Natsional'naya politika Rossii. p. 92

domination in the Caucasus - at any cost to provide our only road passing just through these mountains”¹⁴.

Features of cultural development of an ethnos or people are directly related to conditions of its existence. The changed conditions dictate new rules in the interrelations between the ethnic communities and different peoples. Dynamic interaction of ethnic cultures actualizes the necessity for finding of admissible forms of development and modernization in the common space. The search of true forms of interrelations and the common life-supporting interests bring the ethnic groups together. However, the Caucasian policy of the Russian state was unable to find a basis for dialogue between the cultures, which would ensure peace and mutual understanding between the metropolis and the outlying districts.

For the realization of its interests in interrelations with small nations, Russia can adhere to any integration or assimilation policies. Russian Empire adhered to the assimilation policy with regard to the Caucasian peoples. Those who resisted Russification were subjected to severe oppression.

Starting from the first years of Russia’s “possession” over the Caucasus, there began distinctive problems in mutual understanding between Russian authorities and the mountaineers. Being traditionally accustomed to serf management, the Russian power system could not understand and accept the free disposition of the Ingush society, as the Ingush refused to give implicitly their property, fodder and cattle to the needs of the army, as well as to hand over personal weapons, unquestioningly obey orders of the new Russian authorities, “... the people, who carried out the conquest of the North Caucasus and the initial colonization of conquered territories, do not have a clear picture about the motives of their activities and stay here. This fact is very important for understanding the essence of the problem, because Russia has never had any clear doctrine for colonial policy (such as it was in England). It should be emphasized that, in the whole, the national consciousness correlated with the policy of the ruling tops” in this question”¹⁵.

Russia mostly was building its relations with the conquered (or voluntarily joined) nations in a different way, for example, then her contemporaries England or France. Colonialism had its own characteristics, i.e., its individuality in Russia. The European colonialism can be defined as an economic, but the Russian colonialism as a socio-cultural one.

¹⁴ Kutsenko I.Y. Kavkazskaya voyna i problema preyemstvennosti politiki na Severnom Kavkaze. p. 55

¹⁵ Lur’ye S.V. Rossiyskaya imperiya kak etnokul’turniy fenomen. p. 57

Essential distinctions had the ultimate aims. European metropolis considered its colonial territories, first of all, as a source for well-being of the residents of their states, as well as one of the ways for intensive development of its economy. In the period of shaping the statehood and formation of the foundations of historical and cultural type Russia did not know the “tight” European borders and, consequently, the geographical isolation of colonized territories.

Ethno-cultural ties of the settlers were not interrupted but expanded, mainly to the east and the south from places of their historical homeland. The obvious truth that with the loss of areas people lose their culture is the case linked with the destiny of the Ingush people. The land, mineral wealth, the graves of the ancestors were taken by occupiers as trophies, and after the generations all these treasures are perceived by invaders as part of their historical heritage. The process of the formation of the Russian super-ethnos that had absorbed many ethnic groups of non-Slavic origin identified the extensive nature of Russian colonialism. The use of the term “extensive” to the phenomenon of colonialism has a certain share of conditionality, however, considering ways to expand the ethnic area of the Russian, as well as the significant ethnic and cultural assimilative tendencies in the process of construction of the super-ethnos is quite acceptable. In other words, if for Europe money is important, then the land, more specifically, the space is essential for Russia¹⁶.

By applying the repressive measures of oppression for nationalities out of favor, such as the destruction of the settlements, the eviction of ethnic groups from the inhabited lands, as well as promoting the class and group division of ethno-sphere by different methods, the tsarist authorities systematically carried out the policy of expansionism in the Caucasus.

“Culture is not the whole scope of historical events themselves (phenomenon, occurrences, products, etc...), but their specific forms”¹⁷.

Axiology of the Caucasus and the metropolis was so different that the process of acculturation, for example, had no reason in relation to the Ingush. The concept of culture, just like the concept of society is many-sided and diverse. Public life - first and foremost, is the intellectual, moral, economic, and religious life. It covers all the features of peoples' life living together¹⁸.

¹⁶ Stone W.F., Shtufiner P.E. *The Psychology of Politics*. p. 97

¹⁷ Fliyer A.Y. *Kul'turogenez*. p. 13

¹⁸ Tabliashvili Z.A., Goroziya V.Y. *Chelovek: sootnosheniye natsional'nogo i obschechlovecheskogo*. p. 243

The whole set of values, beliefs, traditions and customs by which the Ingush society was guided, predominant or dominant culture of this society was totally unacceptable to the colonial power. The dominant culture can be national or ethnic, depending on how complexly this society is organized and how populous this country is.

The Ingush society, which never knew the foreign slavery, was just not ready to recognize the humble domination of autocratic power. Almost everyone at the individual level recognized only the power of God over him and believed that only He who gave life to all living world has given to his people a beautiful land, wise laws, and to every man - a brave heart to protect the sacred world of ethnic values. Impetuous yearning for freedom, subjected only to the sacred belief was characteristic feature of a mountaineer forming his mentality. The complex of axiological distinctive values defined the way of thinking of the ethnic Ingush.

In comparison with other components of culture, values are generally regarded as the more fundamental formations, as “abstract ideals... not associated with a particular object or situation, as a kind of a human idea about the ideal models of behavior and the ideal ultimate aims”¹⁹.

Anthropological patriotism as genetic nature is based on devotion of biological and geographical propinquity to the family, generation, community, ethnos and the native land. It is formed on a subconscious level, under the influence of cultural traditions and is projected in the value, ideological constructions. Native land, customs and traditions, will and freedom for centuries have been the highest value for the Ingush.

In the Caucasus, authorities did not need the consensus; brute force is not able to create value structures.

The current problems of the Caucasian peoples were created by the Russian Empire from the beginning of the 19th century. The ideological nepotism against the Caucasian peoples has demonstrated for two hundred years its inability to a constructive dialogue, but traditionally, every time perceived as a reliable method of governance by a new government it continues to direct a devastating injustice.

In various publications it is written a lot about the progressive influence of the Russian Empire on the culture of the Caucasian peoples, including the culture of the Ingush. One can hardly agree with all the arguments uttered by the supporters of this paradigm. If the policy of humiliation, oppression, expulsion of the Ingush people can be called an evolution, then it is necessary to agree with the thesis of the

¹⁹ Stone W.F., Shtufiner P.E. The Psychology of Politics. p. 63

progressive role of Russian the development of Ingush culture and ethnos. If not, then the truth must be said, in order to continue to avoid the political destructivism, to make it easier to find ways for mutual understanding and to overcome the burning problems.

At the same time through the Russian language, the Ingush gained access to the world literary treasure, to the technical culture. Russian language has become the interethnic language as a means of intercourse for the people living in Russia, and as the main official language for the standard education. Ethnos can change its adaptive strategies, continuously generating new forms of culture for solution of urgent problems.

Political repression and military pressure on the Ingush led to deformations of their ideological and conscious level. The constant struggle for survival has launched a process of crisis of consciousness, therefore, increasingly in the value consciousness began occurring failures facilitating to the substitution of the spiritual values with material one, which had an impact on the priorities of the ethical value system.

Processes of family disorientation, debilitating at the primary level, the foundations of the Ingush family, historically existed on the patriarchal values, acquire a quality of a new phenomenon caused by bicultural ambivalence of consciousness, trying to meet both national spiritual values and the modern way.

“The old system of values is subjected to powerful pressure and destruction, and the interim frames of adaptation do not allow new characters to adapt to the traditional values of sense. The systems of values and traditions that prevailed for centuries are being frustrated. New values differ from the traditional culture so that their culture forming meaning is not always clear”²⁰.

To sum up, it should be stated that the 19th and 20th centuries became for the Ingush a period of political and financial instability, a period of national disaster and shocks.

Violations in the sphere of identification are the indication of the crisis. When the crises become radical, a real mechanism of degradation of culture, division in the ethnic sphere is created; only temporary structures incapable for reproduction, which do not carry any stable ethnic and cultural stereotypes of behavior, appear on the stage. As a consequence, the ideal conditions for permanent conflict are made up, scouring the spiritual and moral bases of the ethnic group, its phenomenal cultural essence. The social system unable to maintain the minimum needs of life sustenance

²⁰ Mironov V.V. Transformatsiya kul'tury v prostranstve global'noy kommunikatsii. p. 104

urges the consciousness on the search of new values that can serve the existential needs.

The new morality promoted by media world and the predominance of information has changed ethics. All that makes a profit without violating state laws, that is, the laws invented by man for his creative activity became a moral. Ethics purposefully estranged from the fundamental moral and religious grounds has lost the sacral base and hence the qualities of high moral -spiritual anguish inherent to the dual world of an individual.

Neglect of vital problems turns out to be a loss of faith in human being, which makes his helplessness and insignificance clear to him before the grand achievements of civilization. “The abundance of goods and information, incentives to meet the elementary requirements lead not to the personalization of an individual as the ideologues of liberalism assert, but to the shatter of social foundations and to the spread of indifference and apathy. There is an actual disintegration of society, destroying the very motivation of productive activities and leaving only the simplest forms of material exchange”²¹.

Ingushetia is experiencing a new round of cultural development, and it is important to preserve valuable traditions rooted into the national culture for further progress of the family and society, and the entire nation.

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Summary

Cultural Transformation in the Northern Caucasus at the turn of XIX – XX centuries (A case study on Ingush people)

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Civilizational development of ethnic culture is accompanied by quite tangible transformation and contradiction processes. It is necessary to establish a logical connection between the historical events bringing the progressive or regressive social phenomena to life. The process of formation of the Russian super-ethnos, which has absorbed a great number of non-Slavic groups, has defined extensive character of the Russian colonialism. Modern problems of the Caucasus people have been ignited since the beginning of the 19th century by the Russian Empire. Today, while Ingushetia experiences a new phase of cultural development, it is important to preserve precious traditions of the nation.

Keywords: Culture. Ethnos. Ethnogenesis. Historical events. Colonial territories. Axiology. Values and traditions. The dominating culture

From Julius Klaproth to Friedrich Bodenstedt: German scholars of the 19th century discovering the Caucasus

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When European science began exploring the space of the Caucasus in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it found itself before an extraordinarily diverse array of languages and ethnic groups among which it set out to classify the differences and similarities in order to recognize a coherent system. These coherences were constructions aiming to understand and therefore to justify Russian dominance. Paradoxically, this work was primarily carried out by Germans in the service of Russia. The work of these, mostly Orientalists, travelers consisted in establishing typologies, but also in contextualizing them within a historical process beginning in Antiquity and leading up to the Russian occupation. Transfers through time among the dominant religions or ethnic groups which left their mark on the history of the Caucasus are superimposed upon the exchanges and passages between one given culture and another. In their concern with legitimizing the Russian Empire's hold over the Caucasus, these German travelers also presented the Russians as heirs to Caucasian culture. In the same way that the Georgians are a bit Tartar, the Cossacks are a bit Circassian. These travel writings reveal more a pattern of circulation than a typology.

When Catherine of Russia decided in 1767 to send members of the Academy of Sciences throughout all parts of her Empire in order to describe the inhabitants, the characteristics, and the products of each region, the Caucasus and Georgia fell within the share of Johann Anton Gldenstdt (1745-1781)¹, of Riga, who journeyed throughout the country between 1769 and 1775. His death prevented him from publishing the results of his work, which were edited in a first volume by Pierre Simon Pallas (1741-1811), a Berliner who was a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, in 1787 and 1791, and another edition was seen to by Julius Klaproth (1783-1835), another Berlin native, in 1834. Gldenstdt's enterprise,

¹ Julius von Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus und nach Georgien unternommen in den Jahren 1807 und 1808*. Halle und Berlin, In den Buchhandlungen des Hallischen Waisenhauses, 1812-1814, p. 2

which would be cited regularly by all his successors, corresponds to a traditional mode of exploration of the Russian Orient thanks to German scholars in the service of the Russian state. After Güldenstädt, it was the German adventurer Jacob Reineggs (1744-1793) of Eisleben, who voyaged across the Caucasus several times in the 1780s and was able to obtain privileged contacts through his conversion to Islam, assembling notes that he would not publish himself, but which would be published after his death. The next stage is represented by Simon Pallas, the great explorer of Siberia, who traveled into the southern regions of the Empire in 1793 and 1794, having passed through the southern Caucasus but concentrating on the line in the northern Caucasus that corresponded to a military surveillance cordon overlooking the region. After Pallas, the Pole Jan Potocki (1761-1815), known to history for his *Manuscript found at Saragossa*, traveled through the Caucasus in 1797-1798 and assembled notes. The writings from his travels were assembled and published after his death by the German Orientalist Julius Klaproth, who was in Potocki's debt for having taken him under his protection and encouraged him to move to Paris in order to study with him and follow his work on the Orient. We find Julius Klaproth himself traveling the Caucasus in 1807-1808. He used the writings of his predecessors as sources for his own remarks, among which were the documents of Christian Aron Lehrberg (1770-1873), of the Russian Academy of Sciences, on the history of Russia, and who was from Dorpat.² We must also mention the voyage to the Caucasus by the Dorpat/Tartu Professor Friedrich Parrot (1792-1841), who was to climb Mount Ararat with the Armenian poet Khatchatur Abowian (1809-1848) in 1829. Or still the 1826 journey to the Caspian and into the Caucasus by the Professor in Wilna and Dorpat Eduard Eichwald (1795-1875), who recounts episodes of the Russo-Persian war.

Friedrich Bodenstedt (1819-1892), who was a private tutor in the Galitzin family in Russia in 1840 before arriving in the Caucasus in 1843 to teach at the Tiflis lyceum, is part of a long tradition of Germans in Russia curious about the mysterious world of the Caucasus³. He willingly drew inspiration from this type of German travel and scholarly writing which attained its classical form with his own writings. He devoted at least four works (*The Peoples of the Caucasus* [*Die Völker des Kaukasus*], *A Thousand and One Days* [*Tausend und ein Tag*], *Memories of My Life* [*Erinnerungen ausm einem Leben*], *Mirza Schaffy*) to this region that fascinates him and which he approaches not so much as an explorer as a pupil eager to learn languages (he already knew Russian and made efforts to acquire Tartar, Georgian and Persian), and to

² We might also draw attention to Gustav von Ewers (1781-1830), rector of the University of Dorpat, who placed at Russia's origin not the Varangians but rather the Khazars.

³ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus und ihre Freiheitskämpfe gegen die Russen*, Frankfurt am Main, Verlag Hermann Johann Keßler 1848, p. VII.

enrich German poetry with the poetry he discovered in the Caucasus. He thought of himself less as an explorer than as a translator, notably of the works of Mirza Schaffy (1796-1852), but also of German poetry into the languages of the Caucasus. The Germans of Russia developed a science of the Caucasus in the service of the Empire which would take about fifty years to take shape and which corresponded as much to Russian interests as it did to German ones.

When he arrived in Tiflis, Friedrich Bodenstedt tried as hard as anyone to immerse himself in the cultures of the Caucasus, although this did not make him any less attentive to the German colony from Georgia set up in the Awlabar section of Tiflis. They turned out to be Swabians, and Bodenstedt was filled with enthusiasm for these broad-shouldered, heavy fisted Argonauts of the Neckar who'd crossed the Hellespont, traversing the forest of Colchis before settling in these far-flung vineyards of Georgia⁴. These Swabians had their own hostel, Salzmann, in this city of Tbilisi whose inhabitants Bodenstedt estimated at 35,000 but where he counted about fifteen nationalities. The German colony, which bore the name "der Sand", included the best wine-makers in Georgia according to him. But there are other groups of Germans, such as the colony of Helenendorf, in the Khanat of Gandja, or Katharinenfeld, which he toured with a German officer of the Russian army. He was told sad stories like that of the daughter of the mayor of Katharinenfeld who, carried off by the Persians, joined a harem in Tabriz. Missionaries sent by the mission house of Basel tried to convert the Tartars to Protestantism.⁵ Klaproth observes that wine-making is a mode of interaction between the cultures or rather between the religions of the Caucasus: "The owners of the vineyards being Muslim, they do not want to take care of the business of wine-making and sell their harvest in kind to the Jews and the Christians. These latter make the wine, and then sell it back to the followers of Islam whose consciences were shocked at the thought of pressing the grape and fermenting its juice themselves."⁶ Katharinenfeld looks like a Swabian village, with nothing in it reminiscent of its Asian environment⁷. Bodenstedt feels however like he is the only German in Tiflis who cares about exchanges between the communities: "At this time I was the only German in Tiflis who cared about Oriental languages and I began with the Tartar language since it was the most important for exchanges with the people of the country with their multiple languages. It was possible to use Tartar to make oneself understand everywhere where Russian was no longer sufficient. Tartar was familiar to all the Persians and Armenians, and most Georgians

⁴ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Gesammelte Schriften I, Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, Berlin, Verlag der königlichen Hofbuchdruckerei, 1865, p. 114

⁵ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, Berlin, allgemeiner Verein für deutsche Litteratur, 1888 p. 281.

⁶ Julius Klaproth, *Tableau du Caucase*. Paris, Ponthieu et Cie libraires, 1827, p. 139

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

understood it at least a little. “⁸ The interlocking histories of Armenia and Georgia⁹, relations with the Persian and Ottoman Empires made it such that all these ethnic groups were present in Tiflis. Aside from the Swabians, Bodenstedt encountered another sort of German in Tiflis, the Prussian officers, generally of Baltic noble stock and directly involved in the Russian conquest of the Caucasus and of Central Asia. Their names were Grabbe, Neidhart, Kotzebue, Krusenstern, and although they are German, they are veritable subjects of the Russian Empire¹⁰. In Tiflis Bodenstadt even made the acquaintance of General Konstantin von Kaufmann (1818-1882), who was to become the first governor of Russian Central Asia but also, in his own way, a promotor of local cultures.

In his memoirs, Bodenstedt insists on the German presence in the Russian Empire in general. The Germans or not even cut off from German literary and cultural life and can even follow the latest publications at the “severinsche Buchhandlung”.¹¹ But this German presence was especially visible in the universities, which were all founded in the first half of the 19th century along the German model. This is especially true for the university of the Baltic Germans, Dorpat, which became Tartu, where the entire faculty was German. One finds a great number of explorers of the Russian Orient, from the Caucasus to Siberia, in this university. One of the most important for the Caucasus was Friedrich Parrot, whose journeys to the Caucasus centered around Armenia and Mt. Ararat. It was not, moreover, pure scientific curiosity that drove Parrot and the professors of Dorpat, but a particularly loyalty to Russia’s political strategies. Climbing Mt. Ararat had a symbolic value and Bodenstedt, even though he didn’t go to the peak, followed in the footsteps of Parrot when he toured Armenia which had just barely emerged from Persian domination and is a juxtaposition of diverse nationalities. At Erevan he met Abowian, a former monk from Etchmiadzin who had studied at Dorpat¹², had left with a good knowledge of French and German, and had met Parrot during his visit to the Caucasus. This Abowian was now a German teacher in the Caucasus. He was the only Armenian in Erevan who knew German and his only possible local interlocutor to speak German with is the commandant of Erevan, a certain Colonel von Kiel, a Baltic German¹³. From the Baltics to the Caucasus Bodenstedt emphasizes the strong German

⁸ Ibid., p. 290.

⁹ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994. — Annie et Jean-Pierre Mahé, *Histoire de l’Arménie des origines à nos jours*. Paris, Perrin, 2012.

¹⁰ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 564.

¹¹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p.135.

¹² Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, I, p. 153.

¹³ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 298.

component to Russian colonial expansion, at least in its scientific and military dimension.

When German scholars and travelers were given the mission of studying the Caucasus, the first problem they were confronted with was that of classification. This perplexity is noticeable as early as Güldenstädt's notes, when he notices while in Georgia the Turks, Armenians, Ossetians and Jews there and he remarks that the number of these four nationalities taken together might actually be greater than the number of Georgians.¹⁴ But above all, these languages and peoples are perceived as an inextricable mix of groups among which it is difficult to define stable boundaries, or to distinguish mother-languages from dialects. Many groups are obviously the result of ethno-linguistic mixing. In order to try to get a hold on this complexity, Güldenstädt enumerated the districts and their characteristics, establishing the vocabulary register: "A collection of Mingrelian words made for the sake of comparison showed me that the language is a crass Georgian dialect mixed with many foreign words. It has the same relation to eastern Georgian as Dutch has to German."¹⁵ The Abkhaz language and the Circassian language seemed to him to have a common origin even if this latter was very difficult to see¹⁶. Wild hypotheses became very common. For Güldenstädt, the Ossetians were probably what was left of the Polovtsian population after their defeat by the Russians on the Don in the 11th century¹⁷. Lesgian languages such as Chechen were thought to be isolates¹⁸, whereas the Karabulak were migrating peoples without a clear territorial home¹⁹. This perplexity is also clearly present for Jacob Reineggs, who wonders whether the Kabardians are descendants of Gypsies²⁰, or whether the Circassians are too mixed a people to have an identifiable physiognomy²¹. The Lazi people were thought to speak a very corrupt dialect of Pontic Greek²², while the Jews were indistinct from

¹⁴ Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Beschreibung der kaukasischen Länder* aus seinen Papieren gänzlich umgearbeitet von Julius Klaproth, Berlin, im Verlage der Stuhrschen Buchhandlung, 1834, p. 4.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 105.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 131.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 148 et 154.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 154.

²⁰ Jacob Reineggs, *Allgemeine historisch-topographische Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, hrsg. Von Friedrich Enoch Schröder, 1. Teil, Gotha und Sankt Petersburg bei Gerstenberg und Dittmar, 1796, p. 239.

²¹ Ibid., p. 241.

²² Jacob Reineggs, *Allgemeine historisch-topographische Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, hrsg. Von Friedrich Enoch Schröder, 2. Teil Hildesheim und Sankt Petersburg bei Gerstenberg und Dittmar, 1797, p. 14.

the Georgian milieu in which they lived²³. Simon Pallas supposed that the Kabardians who saw themselves as Arabs were the remainder of the armies sent towards the Caucasus mountains by the early Califs²⁴ and that the Abkhazians were a population from the north-west that had been driven into the mountains by the Circassians. Potocki suggests simpler classifications: “I include in the Caucasian class 4 families of peoples living in the Caucasus: 1 the Lesgians, 2 the Misjeghi, 3 the Circassians and 4 the Abkhazians.”²⁵, and Klaproth thought there were six, the Lesgians, the Misjeghi or Kist people, the Ossetians, the Abkhazo-Circassians, the peoples of Georgian origin, and the Turkish tribes²⁶. Classifications were barely really carried out during the time of Bodenstedt, who observed that the Caucasian Kurds were in part Christian, in part Muslim, and that the Gypsies spoke according to him a corrupt form of Armenian²⁷. But he observed the movements of contemporary peoples with much greater attention, in this Caucasus where the city of Tiflis is an example of cosmopolitanism: “After the conquest of the Pashalik of Achalzig by General Paskievich almost all its Turkish residents left the capital and moved to Anatolia so as not to remain under Russian domination. The Turkish emigrants were in large part replaced by Armenian immigrants who, as Christians, preferred the domination of the white Czar to that of the representative of Mohammed.”²⁸

Attention is focused on certain peoples, such as the Ossetians for example. Güldenstädt sees in them the descendants of the Polovtsian Turks²⁹, Potocki sees them as descendants of the Medes and Alans who were pushed back from the banks of the Don, where they had primitively settled, into the Caucasus.³⁰ Klaproth was happy to adopt this explanation which, in a context that was witnessing the development of Indo-Europeanism, at least recognized in the Ossetians a people liable to be assigned to the Indo-European tree and to the Iranian language-branch –

²³ Ibid., p. 76. — On the Jews of the Caucasuseenotably V.A. Dmitriev, Les Juifs des montagnes: un groupe ethnique et confessionnel stable, in Baryam Balci et Raoul Motika (éds.), *Religion et politique dans le Caucase postsoviétique*. Paris, Maisonneuve et Larose, 2007, p. 313-328.

²⁴ Peter Simon Pallas, *Voyages entrepris dans es gouvernements méridionaux de l'Empire de Russie dans les années 1793 et 1794*, traduit de l'allemand, T.1, Paris Deterville et à la librairie économique, 1805, p. 427

²⁵ Jean Potocki, *Voyage dans les steppes d'Astrakhan et du Caucase. Histoire primitive des peuples qui ont habité antérieurement ces contrées. Nouveau périple du Pont-Euxin*, t. 1, Paris, Merlin, 1829, p.18.

²⁶ Julius Klaproth, *Tableau*, p. 55.

²⁷ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus* p.163

²⁸ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, II, p. 30.

²⁹ Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Beschreibung*, p. 138.

³⁰ Jean Potocki, *Voyage*, p. 111-112

a reassuring parentage in the indecipherable complexity of the Caucasus. “The Ossetians call themselves Ir or Iron, which does not have any particular meaning in their language, whereas their country is called Iron-sag or Ironistan. This distinction proves that they are of Medic origin, since according to Herodotus the Medes called themselves Arianoi, and today still their country and the part of Persia over which they were spread is named ‘Iran’ in neo-Persian”³¹. Bodenstedt was happy to adopt Klaproth’s idea that the Ossetians and Alans are related but denied any particular importance within the Caucasian mosaic of peoples to this people which he considered to be uncultured, dominated by the Russians, and lacking a literary tradition. In particular he believed that the Ossetians, always following the dominant tendency, had gone easily from Islam to Christianity all while preserving still-palpable elements of paganism.³²

Along with the Ossetians, the Chechens are also often the object of attention, not only because they are among the war-like Caucasian nations corresponding to the traditional image of the Caucasus mountains, but also because of the difficulty of placing them among the categories the German travelers were struggling to establish. Güldenstädt was one of the first ones to be upset by this: “the Kist or Misjeghian language – or as it is called after one of its noblest districts, the Chechen language – is not, as my linguistic samples show, related to any Caucasian language nor in general to any language known to me, and is thus a completely particular language.”³³ Potocki suggested relating them to the Ingush and to the Karabulaks, but he noted that they are Muslims whereas these peoples have remained pagans.³⁴ As far as Klaproth is concerned, he thought that the Chechens were too often taken to be an autonomous people whereas they are a branch of the Caucasian Misjeghi family, but he also saw in them the oldest inhabitants of the Caucasus and rejected the hypotheses of certain of his predecessors, Pallas and Potocki, who thought they saw in them the descendants of the Alans.³⁵

Despite the ethnic mosaic of the Caucasus, the most present group, forming a bond and providing a language of broad communication, are the Tartars – a term designating all the Turcophone populations of the Caucasus regardless of their different languages. Bodenstedt considers this population to be more cultured than the Russian one. Of course, they arrived later than others, and when, accompanied by Mongols, they spread across the Caucasus in 1262, they notably pushed the

³¹ Julius Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, p. 586.

³² Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 236.

³³ Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Beschreibung*, p.148.

³⁴ Jean Potocki, *Voyage*, p. 122.

³⁵ Julius Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, II, p. 143.

Armenian populations toward the region of Astrakhan.³⁶ The level of cultural development of certain peoples of the Caucasus undermines the image of conquest of underdeveloped lands connected to the history of colonialism. In the end the journey to the Caucasus and especially the confrontation with the Muslims of the Caucasus is an opportunity to explore the genesis of Russian cultural history itself, and to examine its Oriental contributions.

Baku is certainly the city where their presence is the greatest, but it is also, like all of the cities of the Caucasus, like Tiflis, a city that reproduces in a small space all the complexity of the cultural interweavings that characterize the Caucasus in general. It's precisely in Baku that the connections between Turkish and Persian culture can best be observed. Klaproth observed that in the old city, where the Persians seemed to him to be the most numerous, the houses were all full of naphtha.³⁷ As early as the 1820s, the Caucasus was perceived as a petroleum extraction site: "The annual harvest of black naphtha is estimated at eighty thousand quintals. Of this quantity, Persia alone takes more than seven eighths."³⁸ While the German travelers take note of the citadel built by Shah Abbas (1571-1629), the petroleum is generally what most fascinates them. It is connected to the cult of fire-worshippers who had made Baku a sacred city that Reineggs also considered to be a sacred site for Indian Brahmins.³⁹ Bodenstedt established a link between Zoroastrianism and fire-worship: "Behind the Tartar city of Baku on the beak-shaped isthmus of Apcheron lies the famous eternal fire whose flames carry the prayers of Zoroaster's last disciples in this land toward the heavens."⁴⁰ Allusions to a Zoroastrian layer in the cultures of the Caucasus are frequent. But above all, Baku is along with Derbend the main city of the Muslims of the Caucasus, and among the ethnic dispersion the reference to Islam, and to an Islam that is close to Sufi traditions, was a factor of cultural unification which explained in Bodenstedt's eyes the phenomenon of Imam Schamyl, who was at once priest, legislator and war-lord: "The people at whose head he has been placed is only a people because of him, and this fusion of the most heterogeneous elements into a single indissoluble mass, this rallying of the masses by means of *mores*, traditions and inherited hatreds for separate tribes was no easier to direct than it would be to create a unified

³⁶ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus* 157.

³⁷ Friedrich Klaproth, *Tableau*, p. 148.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

³⁹ Jacob Reineggs, *Allgemeine Beschreibung*, p. 144.

⁴⁰ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, I, p. 173-174. — Presentation of Marie Lecomte-Tilouineat the international Kolloquium Interactions in the Himalayas and Central Asia, Vienna (November 25-27, 2013): «Is there a network of Sacred Fires across the Himalayas and Central Asia? From Baku to Nepal, and Back »

Germany.”⁴¹ Not only does the Turkish element among the ethnicities of the Caucasus operate a certain unification on the basis of Islam and of a privileged connection with Persian civilization, but this unification could be useful for a Germany still far from being unified itself. And, while what was happening was certainly a military expansion, it was at the same time, as is implied by the term Tartar itself, a return to one of the basic components of Russian cultural history.

To the German scholars tasked with describing it, the Caucasus seemed to be a series of stratifications, with each one suggesting a particular division. Where there were interferences among ethnic groups, the travelers would attempt generally to find an explanation in the past, or even in Antiquity. For Güldenstädt, the Caucasus was to be analyzed as a sum of residual peoples who had taken refuge in the mountains during the great invasions at the margins of Europe. Others moreover came from Europe, and traces of the Genoese, whose implantations could be found on the banks of the Black Sea go back to the 12th century. In each district, one can find a plurality of languages and peoples, but also of political forms. Some residents thought of themselves as living under a despot, others living without any form of authority.⁴² Klaproth looked among the Circassians for a tradition having to do with the Amazons. Alexander the Great was supposed to have left traces, certain adversaries of his having been pushed into the mountains, conserving their religion and their way of life.⁴³ The hypotheses of ancient authors such as Arrian concerning the Pontus Euxinos are generally not taken into account.⁴⁴ For the name “Caucasus” itself appears for the first time in the theatre of Aeschylus, the binding of Prometheus being one of the great Greek legends connected to the Caucasus, and as early as the 7th century B.C. the Milesians sent colonies to the eastern shore of the Black Sea, notably founding Tanaïs at the mouth of the Don.⁴⁵ Without bringing any theory of his own concerning the origins of the Caucasus, Reineggs gives reports of tales according to which the descendants of Noah were supposed to have occupied the Caucasus just after the flood or those according to which ancient immigrants from the Iberian peninsula were supposed to have brought metallurgic techniques with them to the Caucasus.⁴⁶ Potocki relates an old legend according to which the Armenians were the descendants of an ancient Anatolian people, the Phrygians.⁴⁷ For Bodenstedt, it was the Phoenicians who opened the sea route to the Caucasus for the first time, and the city of Kutaisi, on the banks of the Phasis, which became the

⁴¹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 469.

⁴² Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Allgemeine Beschreibung*, p. 125.

⁴³ Julius Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, p. 295

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 226

⁴⁵ Julius Klaproth, *Tableau*, p. 10

⁴⁶ Jacob Reineggs, *Allgemeine Beschreibung*, II, p. 116

⁴⁷ Jean Potocki, *Voyage*, II, p. 259.

Rioni, was supposed to have been the site of the Golden Fleece: “The ruins of the fortress of Kutaisi, famous since ancient times, offer a particularly splendid view; ruins which, on the right bank of the Phasis, sit atop a steep mountain that dominates the city and upon which is supposed to have stood the palace of the legendary king Aeëtes who received Jason and his companions with such hospitality when they disembarked in the capital of Colchis, Kytaiia.”⁴⁸ Thus the Mingrelians were supposed to be the descendants of the companions of Jason.⁴⁹ The reference to Classical Antiquity was an indispensable auxiliary for the first analyses of the Caucasus where Greeks and Persians, Romans and Parthians were the protagonists of permanent conflicts.

The stratifications of which the different population groups of the Caucasus are composed led the German travelers to observe traces of groups in their neighboring groups. For Bodenstedt, the dominant population is that of the Tartars “The Turco-Tartar tribes which under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane flooded and subjugated the regions of the Caucasus still represent today the largest portion of the population, and that explains why their language, which they still designate as the “Turkish language” (turkidschedil) remains dominant. The language which we habitually call veritable Turkish is called the Ottoman language (osmanlidil) by the Turks and has the same origin as the language known as Tartar.”⁵⁰ Whereas the Armenians under Persian domination had largely preserved their traditional ways and customs, the Armenians under Tartar rule had been largely assimilated.⁵¹ The superposition of Persian and Tartar references among the population is of great interest for the German travelers: “In the Persian province of Azerbaijan (the Land of Fire), whose capital is Tabriz, the languages mix like Russian and Polish in the Ukraine, and most of the folk songs that my Mirza sings to me in order to explain them have their origins in Azerbaijan”⁵². For the Tartar poets, the Persian poets were as important a reference as the Greeks were for the Romans.⁵³ Bodenstedt recalls in passing that Turco-Tartar is a carrier of essential elements of Arab culture, and that among the regions of Terek occupied by Tartars one finds Armenian villages, whereas Karabagh was occupied according to him by 2/3 Tartars and one third Armenians. In the cultural history of the Caucasus the Tartars represent a general cultural layer linked to the invasions of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, and it is by their differences with respect to these

⁴⁸ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 351. Anca Dan presented recently the debate on the location of the river Phasis: “The river called Phasis”, in *Ancient West and East* 15-2016, p. 245-277.

⁴⁹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 63

⁵⁰ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 291.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 331.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 31.

groups that the identities of other groups are distinguished, just as the Caucasus overall is distinguished in opposition to Greco-Latin testimonies and settlements.

At least as important as the linguistic and ethnic layers in the Caucasus, such as the German travelers tried to understand them, were the religious layers. The religions came from elsewhere, and when the Georgian king Mirian converted, he brought, with Constantine's help, a bishop who is thought to have been Eustathius of Antioch.⁵⁴ Georgia became Christian in 320; and Armenia under king Tiridates as early as 302. An original religion came to be constituted out of these imports. For example, the Armenians separated from the Greek Church in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon⁵⁵. The Christian religion in the Caucasus accords an important place to the prophet Elias, for example, to whom many places of worship are dedicated. Religious appearances often change over the course of time. Güldenstädt observed that the Czar had obtained the conversion of the Circassians to Orthodoxy and that crosses and churches could be found on their territory. And while Orthodoxy subsequently disappeared among them, it was not really in order to be replaced by another religion: "Today, the majority of the nobles are Muslim, but they have neither priests, nor mosques, not Koranic schools, and so they are quite ignorant. The people live without religion."⁵⁶ As for Islam, it did not arrive with Genghis Khan in the 13th century nor with Tamerlane in the 14th century but much earlier "Murwan Agarian, the general of Omar, Muhammed's successor, crossed the ravines of the Caucasus with the glorious flag of the Prophet of Mecca."⁵⁷

But what was much more striking in the 19th century was the presence of pagan beliefs underneath the monotheistic religions: "As a singular example of the way in which these peoples are attached to their ancient pagan faith, we might cite the fact that the Ingush people, when they accepted the rule of the Russian scepter, took their oath of allegiance on their idol Galjerd."⁵⁸ Aside from Galjerd they seem to have had other idols such as Daile, in whose honor they held festivals in spring and in autumn.⁵⁹ More than the Georgians, the Armenians seemed to have preserved the remains of a folk religion that was a mixture of Zoroastrianism and Greek myths.⁶⁰ In various regions of the Caucasus, the encounter between fire worship and

⁵⁴ Julius Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, p. 160

⁵⁵ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 151.

⁵⁶ Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Beschreibung*, p. 136.

⁵⁷ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 48.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

Christianity or Judaism seemed to have given rise to syncretisms like Manicheanism or the cult of Mazdak along the Caspian Sea.⁶¹

The dominant presence from the beginning of the 19th century, at least from a military standpoint, was the Russian presence. But the Germans who studied the space of the Caucasus didn't insist on the fact that the Russians were foreigners. They attempt on the contrary to see in them the result of a deep cross-breeding which would render their presence in the Caucasus more natural. These Russians were notably the Cossacks. And Bodenstedt associates the Cossacks with the Khazars. The empire of the Khazars, which stretched from the shores of the Caspian to the steppes of southern Russia was a melting-pot of peoples. The term Cossack itself means nothing if not a free, independent, wandering warrior⁶². As a mixed people from the very start, the Cossack, representing Russia in the Caucasus, carried, for Bodenstedt, this mixing into the present day: "Due in part to frequent mixing with Circassian women who had been carried off, in part to their Caucasian customs and way of life, they have become so similar to the mountain peoples that an uninformed eye would not be able to distinguish them."⁶³ We can certainly speak of a Russian expansion into Asia and even of a Russian attempt to reach India⁶⁴. But Russia is itself the result of mixing. Bodenstedt refers to Russian historiography: "In a work on 14th century Russian literature the famous philologist Buslaeff calls Rurik's Moscow a half-Tartar encampment from which all the Slavic countries of the North-East and especially the powerful Novgorod were fought in the interest of and with the help of the Mongols."⁶⁵ Gerhard Friedrich Müller one of the first members of the Russian Academy of Sciences, published his book on *Origines gentis et nominis Russorum* in 1749 in order to recall that the Muscovites were not Slavs, and he was joined in this by another member of the Academy, Johann Gotthelf von Stritter (1740-1801), whose book *Populi antiquae Russiae* took up the thesis of Tartar origins. Although the Russians, often under the command of Germans such as Kaufmann the first governor of central Asia, were having difficulty traversing central Asian deserts or the wild spaces of the Caucasus in order to reach India, Bodenstedt was in possession of all the elements allowing him to prove that the Russians were in fact returning so to speak to an original space, that of the Mongols, the Tartars or the Khazars. The conquest of the Caucasus was not simply a colonial enterprise. It was also a return to the forgotten origins of Russian culture itself.

⁶¹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, I, p. 174.

⁶² Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 239-240.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 253.

⁶⁴ Friedrich Bodenstedt refers notably to the book by the French functionary of the Russian Empire Félix Fonton, *La Russie dans l'Asie mineure* 1840.

⁶⁵ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 251.

The interwoven layers that characterize the space of the Caucasus also manifest themselves in toponyms and ethnonyms. It is rare for a people, a language, a dialect to have only one name. Take the Circassians: “The inhabitants call themselves and their country Adigi, the Turks and the Tartars Cherkas, the Georgians Cherkesiani, the Russians Cherkessy, the Germans Tcherkassien, but the Ossetians call it Kasach, which was perhaps the common name in Constantine’s time.”⁶⁶ Overwhelmed by the diversity of the groups, the Russians are happy to speak of “Gorsky”, mountain people, which become “Tawli” in Turkish mouths.⁶⁷ The group of 647 homes in which Muslims, Armenians, Georgians and Jews live in the town of Derbend which Alexander is supposed to have founded is also called Darband, Derre-Deri, or Derrebend, designations which refer to the image of a closed door and corresponds to the term “portae caspiae” of the Ancients⁶⁸. The place names, in their diversity, also carry meanings. Elbrus is also called Ellborus or Elebo Rous, but one also finds El-bourogh, after the camel on which Mohammed is said to have ascended into heaven, since the slope of Mount Elbrus looks like a camel’s back. Place names that carry meaning are so diverse that they allow us a clear portrait of the different groups. The Mountain of Languages evoked by the Arab historian Abul-Fida (1273-1331) is also for this same reason a mountain of peoples.

The Caucasus is for the German travelers a place to be explored and described as a coherent system, but also as a collection of traditions, of texts from which new knowledge can be extracted and transposed to other contexts. This is especially Bodenstedt’s perspective. Settled in Tiflis at the foot of Davidsberg, Bodenstedt is at first in a state of admiration before the city’s cosmopolitanism: “next to the Georgian woman in a chador walks the wife of a Russian bureaucrat. Next to the Kurdish savage from Ararat rides the Cossack from the Don. Next to the grey tunics of the Muscovites the Merschals (carriers) push through, having come from Imereti, from Ossetia, from Leghistan.”⁶⁹ In contrast to the travelers who came before him, he put himself not only in the position of observer but also of student. And his main teacher was to be the poet Mirza Schaffy. With his poems in the Tartar language but inspired by Persian models, Mirza Schaffy did not even intend to publish them. They lived in the mouths of Georgians and of Tartars without anyone thinking to commit them to writing. Bodenstedt gave himself the task of insuring their transmission and their translation. Let us recall in passing that Bodenstedt was also a connoisseur of Russian poetry and was one of the first translators of the Lermontov’s texts on the Caucasus. In Tiflis he met the widow of Griboiedov, the friend of Pushkin who was

⁶⁶ Johann Anton Güldenstädt, *Beschreibung*, p. 135.

⁶⁷ *Ibid* p. 135.

⁶⁸ Jacob Reineggs, *Allgemeine Beschreibung*, p 113.

⁶⁹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, I, p. 112.

murdered in Teheran, and he recalled, regarding this, Pushkin's meeting with the funeral procession.⁷⁰ For the German observer, the Caucasus was obviously a privileged place for Russian literary memory. But Bodenstedt in Tiflis was mostly interested in the poetry of the Orient, that of his friend Mirza Schaffy. In the mid 19th century one has to mention August von Platen, Friedrich Rückert as translators of Persian and Turkish poetry. But in the case of Bodenstedt, it is also important to show the relation between a master and a disciple to whom the former explains Near-Eastern literature, and how the latter creates as much as he transposes when publishing the poems of Mirza Schaffy in German. Whether they are laments, celebrations of wine or of women (Zuleikha, Hafifa), or portraits of Tiflis, Bodenstedt's poems, which were immensely popular in their day, corresponded to the formal rules of German Romantic poetry. Bodenstedt learned from Mirza Schaffy how to distinguish between the poetry of the great masters and the imitations of imposters: "the following meeting of the Divan of Wisdom was devoted to Mirza Schaffy explaining to me some of the most charming ones by Ghazels of Hafiz which, like authentic diamonds taken from the crown of the king of the Persian poets, find their place here."⁷¹ Bodenstedt happily recalls an Eastern habit of choosing a poem at random from Saadi or from Hafiz for a friend whom one is about to leave, which is to accompany him in his journey⁷². The relationship to the wise man of Gandja was not limited to publishing his works in German, but Bodenstedt wanted him to discover German and English poetry as well, in a sort of exchange, and took pains for example to translate the poems of Heinrich Heine into Tartar⁷³. And Mirza Schaffy took particular pleasure in the reading of the poems of Goethe (*Do you know the country where lemon-blossoms bloom...*) and Heine (*The Fisherman's Song*). And when linguistic problems presented themselves, Bodenstedt and Mirza Schaffy had recourse to a certain Budakoff, the Persian teacher at the Tiflis Gymnasium, who happened himself to be Armenian. The problem of translation is often present in Bodenstedt's writings on the Caucasus. He mentions for example the translation of *Shah nameh* by Firdusi published by Cotta, while he was himself making the effort, with Mirza Schaffy's help, to read it in the original⁷⁴. He was interested in the translation by Georg Rosen (1820-1891), an Orientalist passing through Tiflis, of Dshalal-ed-din Rumi.⁷⁵ It was through the Ukrainian inspector of the Tiflis Gymnasium that he met the Tartar historian Abbas Kuli-Chan who was originally from Baku and who, in imitation of the Georgian kings, had written contributions to

⁷⁰ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 278.

⁷¹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, II, p. 70.

⁷² *Ibid.*, I, p. 127.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 75.

⁷⁴ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 331

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

the history of the peoples of the Caucasus and had had them published in Russian⁷⁶. His model was certainly the great chronicle written in Moscow in the 18th century by the Georgian king Vakhtang VI – by whom, Bodenstedt points out, the German historians such as Güldenstädt and Klaproth who had presented the culture of the Caucasus had been largely inspired⁷⁷.

Learning from the Caucasus means listening to Mizra Schaffy's advice, but also following the progress of a science, Orientalism, that was developing radically during the first half of the 19th century. Most of the accounts written by the German travelers are contributions to Orientalism in its various forms since they give a glimpse into the *mores* and the history of the peoples and often even offer lists of words in the different languages heard. But Bodenstedt passes in review more scholarly contributions as well. He references the work of Marie Félicité Brosset (1802-1880) who wrote on Georgian literature, was one of the founders of Georgian studies, and published in French a first catalogue of the Etchmiadzin library.⁷⁸ Bodenstedt came across the Danish Orientalist Westergaardt on the way back from Persia, bringing books that Bodenstedt would read in part with Mizra Schaffy's help⁷⁹. He met the British Orientalist Henry Danby Seymour and became friends with him⁸⁰. Sometimes Orientalist work relies on open collaboration between a European and a Caucasian Scholar, as when the Frenchman residing in St. Petersburg Charmoï and the Kabardian prince Murzin Nogma came out with a grammar of Kabardian.⁸¹ But the Orientalists he met were above all German, and Bodenstedt became particularly close to Georg Rosen (1821-1891), who came from Istanbul and who best embodies German Orientalism: "Georg Rosen studied in Berlin in 1839 Sanskrit with Bopp, Persian with Rückert, Armenian with Julius Heinrich Petermann, and then Arabic at Leipzig with Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer. He published in 1843, as a first fruit of his studies, his *Rudimenta persica*, and following this received from the Academy of Sciences the means to travel to the Caucasus to do research."⁸² He studied Georgian in Tiflis, analyzed the documents of the Etchmiadzin library, and also published a book on the Laz language. Using the vocabulary compiled by Klaproth, he also wrote a grammar of Ossetian⁸³.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁷⁷ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 44.

⁷⁸ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausend und ein Tag im Orient*, I, p. 186.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, II, p. 130.

⁸⁰ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 321.

⁸¹ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 230.

⁸² Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 292.

⁸³ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Völker des Kaukasus*, p. 236

Rosen had been asked by Johann Friedrich Cotta, the owner of the main German newspaper at the time, to write articles on his voyage, but the writing of his Ossetian grammar prevented him from writing these articles, while he was supplying material to Franz Bopp, the father of comparative grammar, so that he could study the Indo-European component of the languages of the Caucasus, and so he was replaced so to speak by Bodenstedt. Bodenstedt's first poems on the Caucasus were also published through this Orientalist conduit: "The poems were supposed to be published in Cotta's *Morgenblatt*, which was then the best literary newspaper in Germany, on the recommendation of his poet friends Gustav Schwab and Gustav Pfizer."⁸⁴ A German from Tiflis, Leist (1852-1927)⁸⁵, translated Georgian songs whereas knowledge of Armenian literature came from translations done by the Mechitarist monks of San Lazzaro in Venice.⁸⁶ The visitors to the Caucasus he met in Tiflis were sometimes botanists such as Karl Koch (1809-1879) of Jena or mineralogists such as Hermann von Abich (1806-1886) of Dorpat whom, in addition to their specialty were also interested in the culture of the populations they met⁸⁷. The movement begun by Catherine II bore fruit and the Caucasus became, through the scholarly contribution of travelers and especially German travelers, the object of intense curiosity. At a time when central Asia was still inaccessible, the Caucasus was to become the place where new knowledge liable to transform the perception of literatures, languages and the history of peoples was to be sought.

The discovery of the Caucasus is contemporary to a model of the Human Sciences linked to comparativism between Indo-European languages. With the exception of Armenian and Ossetian, the languages and cultures of the Caucasus do not fit into this vast schema. They invite one to establish alternative typologies and above all to pay less attention to hierarchical classifications than to the connections among the countless parts of this complex whole. Since the Caucasus possess a historical depth that goes back to the myth of Prometheus and the episode of the Golden Fleece, diachronic transfers complete these synchronic interweavings in the attempts to explain the complexity of this space. But the Caucasus was, for the Germans attempting to explain it, a place of learning and discovery: they discovered languages that were difficult to classify, a specific religious history, and customs going back to very ancient times. It is also the place of the discovery of these Oriental poems which established the reputation of Mirza Schaffy's translator Friedrich Bodenstedt. Russia is not only in the position of conqueror of these spaces which were themselves

⁸⁴ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 302.

⁸⁵ Arthur Leist was publisher of the *Kaukasische post*, the monthly magazine of Germans from kaukasus.

⁸⁶ Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 298-299.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

often heir to more ancient cultures – she herself, through the pen of these German scholars passing through, became Caucasian.

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Friedrich Bodenstedt on the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity of the Caucasus

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Introduction

Many geographic names that have been passed down to us through history do not carry just one simple, clear meaning. The word “Caucasus” is one of the terms which needs a commentary. Initially the mountain range extending from the shores of the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea was called the Caucasus or the Greater Caucasus mountains (whatever the word “Caucasus” really means). Then the land to the north and south of these mountains (between the Black and Caspian Seas) also became known as the Caucasus.

The Caucasus region is made up of the autonomous provinces of Russia, located in the northern part of the Greater Caucasus mountains (the North Caucasus), as well as of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia that are located in the south of the Greater Caucasus and that are collectively known as the South Caucasus. There is another name for this region that is anything but neutral, Transcaucasus, a name reflecting a Russian bias from the Russian word “Zaqafqaziya”. The mountain ranges in the South Caucasus are known as the Lesser Caucasus. Some authors refer to the South Caucasus as the Central Caucasus, stating that it would be more appropriate to assign the name South Caucasus to provinces of Turkey and Iran, which border on the Central Caucasus; from this perspective, the region called the Greater Caucasus includes Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia as well as neighboring provinces of Russia, Turkey and Iran.

The border between Europe and Asia also passes through the Caucasus, although its exact location is not clearly defined. Is this the Greater Caucasus Range, or perhaps the Kuma-Manych Depression to the North? New agreements still leave the question unanswered whether the South Caucasus (the Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia) count as Europe. (This brings to mind the Europe-Asia comparison in Kurban Said’s book “Ali and Nino”). Even though there was something of a Caucasian Union at times, it didn’t last long. Instead, the Caucasus has always been

a hot spot where neighboring powers collided: most notably, the Roman Empire, then the Byzantine Empire (from the West) and Ancient Iran (from the South). They were followed by the Turks (from the North) and the Islamic Caliphate (from the South). Later came the Ottomans (from the West), Iran (from the South) and Russia (from the North). Many empires had the goal of conquering and maintaining power over the Caucasus. The Caucasus also appears in the mythology of the Ancient Greeks, Iranians, Turks and the Caucasian people. In reality, Caucasians have covered the globe. Caucasian is the name of a race, which is the same as Europid. This term was invented in Germany in the late 18th century to denote a South Caucasus or Caucasian which then served as European archetype. In the USA, “Caucasian” is generally used to refer to white people. Caucasus, this multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual region is one of the richest areas in the world in terms of diversity both in human cultures and in nature, and it is a paradise for researchers in these fields. The Caucasus has an abundant history that includes periods of a harmonious coexistence of nations living peacefully side by side and cooperating economically, politically, humanistically and culturally, but that is also characterized by internal contradictions, conflicts and wars (including the current internationalized ethnic conflicts) and, of course, by long-lasting wars throughout history aimed at conquering the Caucasus.

First and foremost, the contact between cultures takes place via travelers, who learn about regions, compare what they see with their own home cultures, and write down memories (observations) of their journeys. By this means, impressions and many different perspectives on regions, countries and people are spread, including praise, expressions of amazement and surprise, prejudices and criticisms.

There were many European travelers who visited the Caucasus and wrote memoirs of their experiences. Their number began to increase especially in the 17th century, and many of these travelers were German. Some of these travelers were well educated (including historians, archeologists, philologists, writers, literary translators, etc.); some were diplomats or missionaries, and there were also businessmen and merchants. All of their notes shed light on the history and geography, people and traditions, language and literature, domestic life and culture of the Caucasus, and they are valued as significant sources of Caucasian Studies. Many articles, books and dissertations have been written about these travelers’ memoirs. In general, the Caucasus offered opportunities to creative people from different countries and cultures to express themselves, and this was the reason for the emergence of certain famous belles-lettres and memoires.

Some of the European travelers traversed the Caucasus with the objective of reaching Iran, and they wrote about the Caucasus on their way. Others (mainly in the 19th

century and later) went to visit Russia and included the Caucasus in their work and travel itineraries. Russian scholars and people of arts came to the Caucasus not only on business but also as exiles of the government (to “Warm Siberia”), to live, work and perform their creative activities. Alongside the government’s Russification policy of the Caucasus, Russians were also “Caucasianized” to a certain extent. Europeans and Russians visiting the Caucasus in the 19th century-built relationships with Caucasian intellectuals and people of art and consequently, those relations played an important role in cultural transfers.



Portrait of Friedrich Bodenstedt

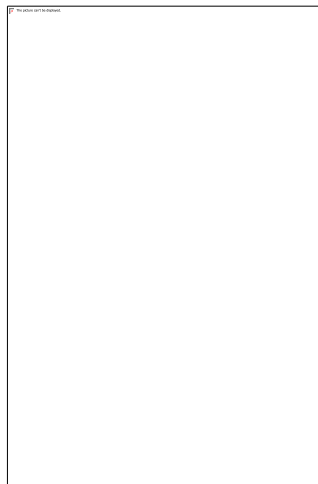
Friedrich Bodenstedt (1819-1892), a young German intellectual, was one of the Europeans who had been invited to Russia for teaching and who, after living there for a while, moved on to the Caucasus. In the Caucasus, he learnt Azerbaijani Turkic and partly Persian, worked as a teacher and was involved in diverse creative activities. After returning to Germany, he wrote many works about the Caucasus. About 14-15 years after Bodenstedt had left the Caucasus, famous French writer Alexander Dumas (1802-1870) also arrived there from Russia and afterwards published his artistic memoirs (1858-59); those memoirs have been published in full translation into Azerbaijani Turkic in 2010.

From the works of Bodenstedt on the Caucasus, only the part about his mentor, Azerbaijani educator and poet Mirza Shafi Vazeh, has been in the limelight so far (although contradictory views have been expressed regarding the identity of Mirza Shafi). Yet all of his works can ultimately be considered as the most rigorous and valuable source of information on the Caucasus, notwithstanding the fact that they have not received much critical attention.

Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt: A Brief Vita

Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt (1819-1892) was a German poet, writer, translator, scholar of literature and culture, ethnographer and historian (see, [1] – [8]). He was

born in Peine near Hannover, and he traveled to many different countries but always returned to Germany. After completing his education at university where he studied literature, languages, philosophy and history, he traveled to Russia in the fall of 1840 and lived there for around three years. He visited St. Petersburg and went from there to Moscow (and later to other cities of Russia). In Moscow, he taught private lessons to two sons of the Prince (Knyaz) Mikhail Galitsin (other forms: Golitsyn or Galitzine), cousin of Moscow's general-governor. He became proficient in Russian, got acquainted with Gertsen and Lermontov (he left valuable memoirs of meetings with Lermontov [9]) and corresponded with well-known Russian writers such as Fyodor Tyutchev, Leo Tolstoy, Ivan Turgenev and Nikolay Nekrasov. Bodenstedt accepted an invitation to work as director



Statue of Bodenstedt in
Peine

of Tbilisi Teachers' Institute (Tiflisskaya Aleksandriyskaya Gimnaziya) and to teach Western languages and literatures at the Institute (he set off to the Caucasus between mid-October and mid-November of 1843. Yet, after some time he resigned from the post of director, apparently in order to have more opportunities for traveling, learning, and writing. He was patronized by the then chief or superintendent (главнокомандующий or главноуправляющий in Russian, сардар in Persian) of the Caucasus, Alexander Neidhardt (their close relationship can be traced back to Bodenstedt's stay in Moscow). Bodenstedt lived in the Caucasus for about a year and a half, where he also participated in the ceremonial welcome of Neidhardt's successor Viceroy Vorontsov in Tbilisi (in March of 1845). In April 1845, Bodenstedt left Tiflis ("where he had spent the most impressive time" [1]) to return to Leipzig, passing along the Black Sea coast and through Crimea, Istanbul (where he spent "several pleasant weeks"), the Aegean Sea coast, and Italy.

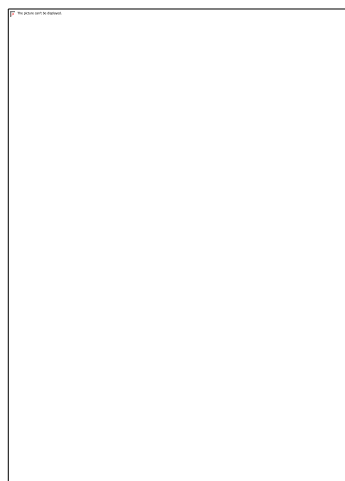
After having lived abroad for a comparatively long time and after having returned to his native country, Bodenstedt began to write profusely and enthusiastically, mainly producing literary translations from Russian, English and Persian, as well as composing poems, stories, plays, academic works in history and literary studies, travelogues and memoirs. Bodenstedt was given the authority to represent the Germans at international meetings. At the International Free Trade Congress held in Paris in 1849, when Victor Hugo asked for a speech, Bodenstedt replied that the lack of a German flag among all participating countries made him feel disinclined, an objection that Hugo in turn refuted by stating: "Monsieur, vous êtes le drapeau vivant de l'Allemagne!" [1].

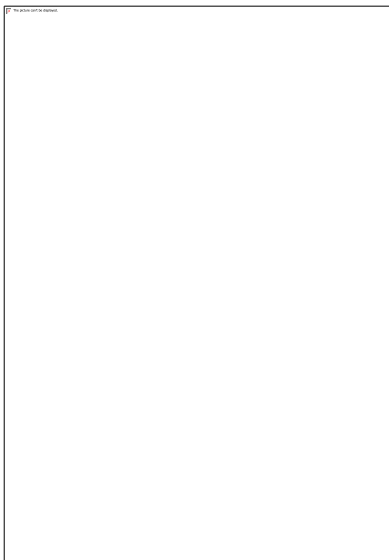
Bodenstedt worked as professor of Slavic languages and literature, later also of English literature (at the University of Bavaria, Munich), as theatre director and newspaper editor. According to his biographers, he was a tall blond man, humble, slightly naïve, but with solid self-esteem and an occasional tendency towards self-praise [1] - [8].

Works of Bodenstedt on the Caucasus and on Caucasians

Bodenstedt began his creative activity by publishing translations of Russian and Ukrainian (malorus) poetry (1843 and 1845). This article discusses only Bodenstedt's activities in the Caucasus. Bodenstedt's first book written in this context, "Die Völker des Kaukasus und ihre Freiheitskämpfe gegen die Russen" (The Peoples of the Caucasus and their Struggle Against the Russians), published in 1848 in Frankfurt on the Main, is a large work of two volumes that consists of 572 pages with a 16-page introduction and technical publishing information ([10]). As indicated by the title, the book covers the history, modern lives and struggle for freedom of the peoples of the Caucasus (mainly focusing on the North Caucasus). There is detailed information about Sheikh Shamil (1797-1871) and the first part of the resistance movement he led (in 1834-1859), as well as about the movement's beginning, which took place before Shamil's time. There are also separate sections on Sufism, which Bodenstedt explains and comments as a movement of humanistic thought. The book furthermore contains a certain number of interesting pictures of Caucasian people and the Caucasus. Qualitative and quantitative analysis is carried out on various cities and regions of the Caucasus. There is also a chapter on "Caucasus Tatars who descended from the Turkish Race" (pages 122-147). "Tatars" was the common name of people speaking in Turkic languages in Russia (Kazan, Crimea, Astrakhan, Siberia, etc.). In Russian sources of that time, it was also applied to people living in the Caucasus who had only recently been subdued by Russia (Caucasian Tatars) and who are currently called Azerbaijani people or Azerbaijani Turks.

According to Bodenstedt's book, the vast majority of the 28 thousand-strong population of Derbend consisted of Shia Tatars. The Karabakh population was 60 thousand, of which 2/3 were Tatars and 1/3 were Armenians. The population of Ganja (the Elizavetpol province) was 55 thousand, of which 9 thousand were Armenians.





This significant work was expanded and re-published in 1855, and its translation into French was printed in Paris in 1859 [11]. Only a few chapters of Bodenstedt's interesting book were translated into Russian, and unfortunately, the majority of the work was never translated into major languages (except French) or into the languages of the Caucasus.

Bodenstedt's second book on the Caucasus was entitled "Tausend und ein Tag im Orient" (Thousand and One Days in the Orient), and it was published in 1950 in Berlin [12]. It revolved around its main character, the Azerbaijani poet, calligrapher and teacher Mirza Shafi. This book ("his most successful prose work" [1]) of three

volumes and 53 chapters was a subject of great interest, even more so than his previous book. The personage of the wise Mirza won the favor of readers because of his sincere and beautiful speech, poetry, agreeable sense of humor, character and life philosophy. A translation of "Thousand and One Days in the Orient" into English was almost immediately published in London in 1851 [13]; Bodenstedt read and made corrections to the most difficult parts of the English translation himself. Those memoirs were also incorporated into the first three volumes of a 12-volume collection of selected works published in 1865-1869 [14].

Rudolf von Decker, director of the press where the book was published, suggested printing a separate book of Mirza Shafi's poems translated by Bodenstedt, and soon this was published under the title "Die Lieder des Mirza Shaffy" (Songs of Mirza Shafi) in 1851 [15]. Bodenstedt claims that "I have translated the songs of Mirza Shafi into German without damaging the originals," and "I have repeated the songs I heard" (Was ich erlauschte, sang ich wieder; 1851: 54). This book of songs was the top-selling book in Germany during that period (the late 19th and early 20th century). It was printed 142 times before Bodenstedt's death in 1892, and the 168th edition with rich illustrations was published in 1921! It earned extraordinary fame. Drawing on the poems ("songs" in Bodenstedt's translation) of Mirza Shafi, famous (German and Russian) composers wrote numerous songs as well as music belonging to other genres. The German *Songs of Mirza Shafi* and the English translation *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* by FitzGerald lead to an enormous popularity and eventually even to a cult of Mirza Shafi and Omar that bordered on mania [16, pp. 316-317]. *The Songs* was translated into many European and other languages; in 1880, it was translated into English by the writer, translator and educator Elsa D'Esterre-Keeling

[17]. By contrast, the book “Thousand and One Days in the Orient” was printed only 5 times during the author’s life (in 1850, 1853, 1859, 1865, and 1891).

After this introduction to Bodenstedt and his three books, I would like to spend some time on “Thousand and One Days in the Orient”. This book is interesting for at least two reasons: first of all, due to the colorful persona of Mirza Shafi that Bodenstedt created (“...the badly arranged book would have long since been forgotten if not ... Mirza Shafi” [1]) and, secondly, from the perspective of Caucasus Studies (it also somehow represents Russian Studies). This two-volume book has not been translated into any other language in its entirety (the translation closest to the original is the translation into English). The parts of the work dealing with Mirza Shafi were translated into Azerbaijani with some abridgements and errors [18], but the long and interesting descriptions of the Caucasus have never been translated.

Bodenstedt, who used the terms “Land of Morning” as a symbol of the East and “Land of Evening” to connote Northern countries, notes that his previous book was more academic but that the new book would include brief descriptions and summaries as well as lively and poetic additions. I believe this book is just as important for Caucasus Studies as his previous one. His “Die Völker des Kaukasus und ihre Freiheitskämpfe gegen die Russen” (The Peoples of the Caucasus and their Struggle Against the Russians) consists of historical and geographical studies which mostly draw on pre-existing sources, but “Thousand and One Days in the Orient” is mainly based on his own observations and on his ethnographic research of people, nations, regions, and cultures during his travels; it thus contains more original thoughts.

In 1861, he published the book “Aus Ost und West” (From the East and West) which contains six lectures [19]. The third lecture is named “Die Stellung der Frauen im Orient und Occident” (The Status of Women in the Orient and Occident). Here he cites an example from the play “Monsieur Jordan and Dervish Mastali Shah” by M.F. Akhundov that compares women in Azerbaijan and Paris. Bodenstedt also translated poems by A. Bakikhanov, an Azerbaijani polymath of the first half of 19th century whom he referred to as “another great poet” [20], and they were published under the title “Aus dem Divan des Abbas-Kuli-Khan von Baku” (From the Divan of Abbasgulu Khan of Baku). One famous poem from this work (“Fatma Plays the Tar”) has not survived in the original language, but its translations into Russian and German are available.

In 1882, Bodenstedt published another book of poetic translations from Eastern literature, “Aus Morgenland und Abendland. Neue Gedichte und Sprüche” (From East and West. New Poems and Aphorisms), in which he included translations of

poets like Saadi, Rumi, and Jami as well as aphorisms of Mirza Shafi [21]. In general, Bodenstedt, who was a remarkably productive translator of foreign literature and “who is the same for Germans what was Vasily Zhukovsky for Russians” ([2], p. 409), translated and published selections of classic works from Russian, English and Persian literatures (among them Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, Shakespeare, Khayyam, Saadi, Rumi, Hafiz, Jami) as well as from Azerbaijani literature into German. He also carried out research and taught classes on these topics.

In 1874, he published a book entitled “Aus dem Nachlasse Mirza Schaffy’s” (From the Papers of Mirza Shafi) that was considerably larger in volume than “The Songs of Mirza Shafi” [22]. In this book’s long epilogue, entitled “Erläuternder Nachtrag” (“Illuminating Supplement”), he wrote that Mirza Shafi was not a poet and the songs were not a translation of Mirza Shafi’s songs, but that they were in fact Bodenstedt’s own original works. On the front page of the next edition of “Die Lieder des Mirza Schaffy”, published in Berlin in 1875, he introduced himself as an author (Bodenstedt) that used Mirza Shafi as a pseudonym. In reality, Mirza Shafi, who wrote his poems in Persian and Azerbaijani Turkic (see, for instance, [23], [24]), was a gifted poet but not that famous.

Before Bodenstedt’s surprising announcement, Russian Caucasus scholar Adolf Bergé (1828-1886; his father was French, and his mother was German) had written an article on

Mirza Shafi (1870, [25]) which played a crucial role in promoting the idea of Bodenstedt’s authorship (if Bodenstedt had been famous as a poet himself, he would probably not have denied Shafi’s authorship). The great friendship between Mirza Shafi and Friedrich Bodenstedt, described and praised by Bodenstedt himself, had been turned into a great separation, and Bodenstedt’s claim to authorship caused confusion in German and Azerbaijani literatures, and has even developed into a topic of debate and a mystery of literature studies. The scope of this paper does not allow me to delve further into the relationship between Mirza Shafi and Friedrich Bodenstedt, as interesting as this might be. Research on this problem, done by both German and Azerbaijani scholars, is not free from prejudice and bias ([7], [24], [26]).

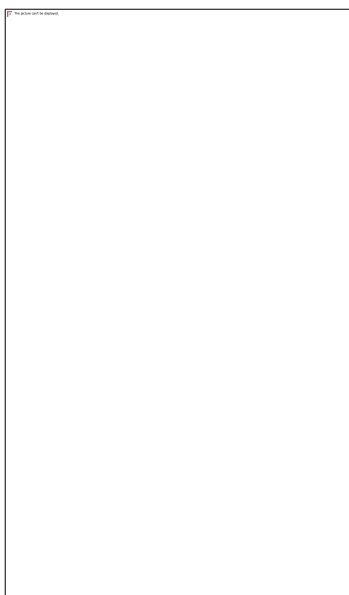


Fredrich Bodensdedt and Mirza Shafi

Here, it is necessary to abandon the thought about giving brief information on numerous works of F. Bodenstedt which are not related to the Caucasus.

Bodenstedt on the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity of the Caucasus

Bodenstedt's book "Tausend und ein Tag im Orient" that will be discussed now can be considered to be one of the most valuable sources of Caucasian Studies. This work, which was written in the mid-19th century, offers not only descriptions of historical processes in that period and of previous centuries, but also comprehensive information on cultural and social life as well as on historical persons whose names have not (or only in passing) been mentioned in other sources. In the following, I will describe and analyze the ethnic and cultural diversity and colorfulness of the Caucasus predominantly based on this book that has (as mentioned above) not been studied with this aim in view.



1.Ubykh 2. Jiget 3.Abasech
4.Greek 5. Turk in colonial
trade on the Circassian coast

I would like to scrutinize the book from the viewpoint of attitude towards different issues related to the subject rather turning over the pages of the book from the beginning to the end. In this case, it probably will be very exhausting to show repeatedly each page of quotes. The reader himself can see the pages of quotes easily by looking through the original of the book in German language or its translation into English.

In my analysis, I will from time to time also refer to other appropriate works of Bodenstedt that are related to this issue.

Bodenstedt was an accurate and careful observer. "I could have written a novel, softened some of the unpleasant elements, filled in the gaps with interesting episodes, created sentimental and virtuous protagonists, made the situations more complex and said beautiful expressions through the tongues of the characters. But I, on the contrary, bring reality in its nakedness before the eyes of the reader and turn a deaf ear to the calls of fantasy." While Bodenstedt was living in Tbilisi, socializing with Mirza Shafi and other people, and while traveling the Caucasus, he recorded thoughts and observations about issues as diverse as history and geography; myth and religion; language, literature and music; traditions and lifestyles; material culture; women; and he also frequently drew comparisons between Europe and the Caucasus.

On Languages

“My first object in Georgia was to secure an instructor in Tartar (another spelling of the word “Tatar”- H.I.) that I might learn as quickly as possible a language so indispensably necessary in the countries of the Caucasus” (1850), “the lingua franca of the East” (1874). He also learned Persian from Mirza Shafi. Some authors, as for example Kurt Sundermeyer [7], erroneously assumed in the 1930s that Mirza Shafi taught Bodenstedt Tatar and Persian as well as Georgian and Armenian languages, and even before that, in 1887, the same mistake was made by “Russkaya starina” [2]. However, in 1874, Bodenstedt personally noted that he learnt only Tatar and some Persian from Shafi (in 1850 and 1874), which becomes obvious in his following statement: “On the road (in Western Georgia – H.I.) I met a Georgian priest riding a donkey (I didn’t see horses in Akhalkalaki; everyone was riding donkeys) and I said a few words in Georgian but didn’t know the language, and then we switched to Russian”. In addition, it is acknowledged that Mirza Shafi knew only Tatar, Persian and Arabic languages.

1. Shapsug
2. Chechen
3. Imeretian
4. Leader of Adyghs
5. His daughter
6. A Persian in Baku

Bodenstedt observed that Armenians spoke Tatar as well as their native language. Their popular songs were in the Tatar language, and while speaking, Georgians and Armenians used many Tatar expressions. He writes down the Azerbaijani (Tatar) words exactly based on their pronunciation (this was before Akhundov’s plays, where some literary prose writing style was established). Some examples taken from Bodenstedt’s notes are “axşamınız xeyir olsun” (good evening), “vallah, elədir” (wallah, it’s like this), “yaxşı yol” (have a nice trip), “yaxşı oldu” (it was good...), “çox” (many), “çörək” (bread), “atlar hazırdır”/“atlar haserler” (the horses are ready), “Allah verdi” (The God gave/granted; Caucasians used to say it after the toast in the sense of “have a nice trip”?), “kef eləmək/keef elimäkj” (to have fun), “dilbilir” (philologist; Bodenstedt claims that he and Budagov invented this word together with Budagov in order to explain the word ‘philologist’), “eşşək” [ischekj] (donkey), “çubuq” (stick for cigarettes), “qəlyan” (hookah), “qələmdan” (pencil-box), “saləm alekem – alekem saləm” (hello-hello), “bülbul” (nightingale), “qızılbaşı” (“redhead”; name of supporters of Shan Ismail I, founder of the Safavid ruling

dynasty - H.I.), “Gürcüstan” (Georgia), Göyçə gölü (Goycha lake), Alagöz dağı (Alagoz mountain), “Asslan-Bey, or Arzlan-Bey” (he notes that the pronunciation is “Asslan bey” whilst the correct spelling is “Arzlan bey”).

Bodenstedt and Mirza Shafi spoke with each other in Tatar (in Azerbaijani Turkic) – this can be inferred from many expressions of “Tausend und ein Tag im Orient”. At the same time, both Persian and Tatar languages were used for poetry at Mirza Shafi’s poetry meetings “Divani-hikmet” (Assembly/Circle of Wisdom). “When we had trouble with languages, our friend L. Budagov helped us (he, an ethnic

Armenian, was a philologist - H.I.). He was a Persian language teacher in the gymnasium, and he spoke German, English and French well. He especially enjoyed interpreting the songs of these languages in an Eastern style. This was when I realized how many intelligent men like Mirza Shafi were missing out on the pleasures of other nations’ literatures because they didn’t know foreign languages.” It is interesting to note that in this quote, Bodenstedt seems to refer to European languages when he uses the term “foreign languages”.

At this point, I want to draw attention to some simple mistakes made by Johann Christoph Bürgel both in his lecture delivered during the conference at the State Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg) in 2004 and in his corresponding

Friedrich Bodenstedt and Mirza Shafi

article [27]. In general, Bürgel’s article is biased and far from being saturated with critical thought. In the end, he only repeats assumptions and statements from previous publications, including thoughts taken from Bodenstedt’s attachment written in 1874. A good example is when he falls back on old claims that the poems of Mirza Shafi (Bodenstedt, as Bürgel claims) were a reaction against Prussian political processes of his period (p.4). Ludwig Fränkel [1], however, decidedly opposes (with well-grounded arguments) the idea that the songs of Mirza Shafi were meant to be a covert criticism of the political environment in Prussia. He claims that

one of the main reasons why these songs had been admired was that they were not political. Here, I will restrict myself to expand only on language inaccuracies. Bürgel's unfamiliarity with Turkic languages and his confusion of Azerbaijani Turkic with Ottoman Turkic seems obvious. Bürgel made a blunder by stating that the Tatar language in the Caucasus was Ottoman Turkic rather than Azerbaijani Turkic. In order to confirm his thesis, he draws on the expression "axşamınız xeyir olsun" ("axschaminiz cheir olssun", that is "good evening"), claiming that it is irrelevant to Azerbaijani Turkic and instead related to Ottoman Turkic. What he did not seem to know is that "axşamınız xeyir olsun" is a purely Azerbaijani ("tatar") expression; the same expression in Ottoman Turkic would be "iyi akşamlar".

On Literature, Poetry and Music

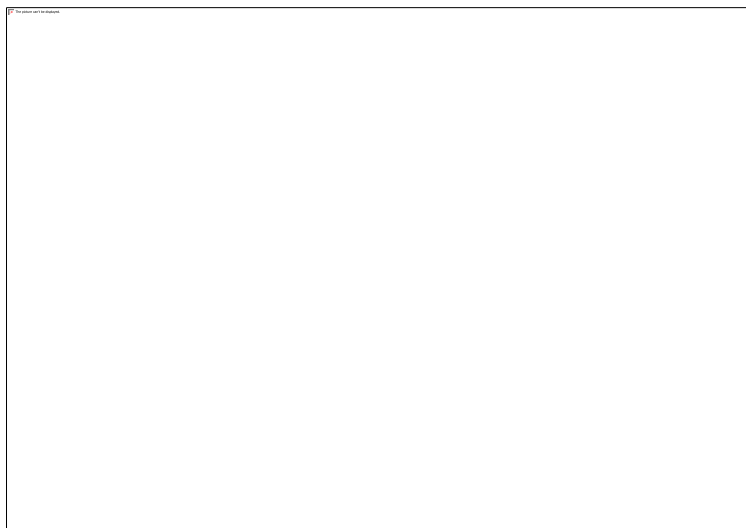
Bodenstedt reiterated that the main language classes he took from Mirza Shafi were contingent on poetry. Mirza Shafi was reciting and analyzing his own verses as well as poems of Persian literature classics and of Fuzuli, one of the classics of Turkic-language literature. Bodenstedt always presented Mirza Shafi's recitations as if "he was singing a song". It seems as if the tradition of reciting poems (in Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages) with special intonation and pathos that is so widespread in the Orient evoked the impression of listening to music. "Mirza Shafi recited the poem with special expression. When I poorly read poems, I have translated from foreign languages, Mirza Shafi gets angry."

Later, in 1874, he described Mirza Shafi and Tatar literature as follows ([22]): Mirza Shafi was born a Tatar but received a Persian education. The Tatars do not have the rich and colorful literature of the Persians, but their language is the French of the East; it was moreover heavily influenced by Persian.

Bodenstedt was right about the richness of Persian Poetry. As far back as the 11th and 12th centuries, not only Persian but also Turkish-speaking poets (and even some writers from the Indian subcontinent) had been writing wholly in Persian. Others wrote both in Persian and in their native languages, and a gradually increasing part of them wrote only in their native languages. Mahammad Fuzuli wrote in three languages: mostly in Azerbaijani Turkic, but also in Persian and Arabic. 19th-century poets Abbasgulu agha Bakikhanov and Mirza Shafi, despite the fact that they had written some beautiful pieces of poetry in Azerbaijani Turkic, mainly wrote poems in Persian.

Works of Hafiz and other Persian writers as well as of Fuzuli from Turkic-language literature were quoted to Bodenstedt by Mirza Shafi. As other prominent Turkic-

speaking poets (Imadaddin Nasimi, Alishir Navai, Molla Panah Vagif and others) were not represented in Mirza Shafi's program, Bodenstedt was not aware of them. Bodenstedt and numerous other travelers and creative people visiting the Caucasus expressed similar thoughts about the fact that the Tatar language was widely used. Bodenstedt was also right about the idea that the Tatar language was subject to Persian influence. In addition, it is worth mentioning that both Tatar (Turkic) and Persian languages had previously been influenced by Arabic.



ANAPA: The famous Turkish slave market

Bodenstedt repeatedly expressed his admiration for Eastern poetry both in his book "Tausend und ein Tag im Orient" and in his other works. While meeting Omar Afandi, one of Mirza Shafi's friends, Bodenstedt paid a compliment to Afandi with a quote from Fuzuli: "I came to you as a hungry outcast, like a drop of water mixing into the ocean." Bodenstedt discusses the literary issues related to gazals, quatrain/rubais, the rhyme system, and translation, giving some patterns for each of them in the attachment of his work "Aus dem Nachlasse Mirza Schaffy's" [22].

Bodenstedt touched upon Mirza Shafi's emphatically negative attitude and his long and impassioned speech against printing books: "He didn't have many books in his house. Printed books really irritated and angered M. Shafi." At this point, it is necessary to comment on the emergence of and the reason for this negative attitude towards printing books. Mirza Shafi and numerous other mirzas (clerks) earned their living by copying books, demonstrating beautiful handwriting and mastery in calligraphy. Their economic status and their creative achievements were closely related to this occupation. Writers like Abbashgulu agha, on the other hand, were not

hampered by issues of that kind; on the contrary, he tried to publish his works as soon as possible. He knew the importance of book printing.

Bodenstedt in passing also wrote about Georgian and Armenian literature: “Georgian literature is rich in theology, history and geography (my knowledge is weak; I don’t speak Georgian) with its rich poetic traditions; it is significantly different from Armenian literature. I read Rustaveli in a Russian translation but didn’t really like it, but, little songs (of Georgians) are very nice...”

Starting with his first day in the Caucasus, the colorfulness and diversity of the region amazed Bodenstedt. Referring to a welcome banquet, he remarked: “Georgians, Armenians, Tatars, smart and beautiful-faced musician singing from Hafiz ... everything was new – like Thousand and One Nights!” So, it was this idea that gave the name to Bodenstedt’s book. While visiting Yerevan, Bodenstedt met with Khachatur Abovyan (Bodenstedt: Obovyan):” Khachatur Obovyan gave me Tatar, Kurdish and Armenian songs.” Later on, Bodenstedt brought some of these songs to discussions at the Divani-Hikmat of Mirza Shafi: “Together we learned Tatar songs of blind Keshishoglu and the competition between Keshishoglu and Allahverdi (Obovyan spoke a little bit about Keshishoghlu)”. Bodenstedt also provided information on poetry and music events. He refers to the singer Gayitmaz in Yerevan and an Armenian merchant’s son Yusif that, in the merchant’s house in Akhalkalaki, sang beautiful songs and accompanied themselves on the ‘saz’ or ‘tengir’.

On Intellectual culture, Lifestyle, and Traditions

Above all, Bodenstedt talks about his favorite teacher Mirza Shafi and about his personality, thoughts, life-style, attitude toward colleagues and women, and he also touches upon other interesting issues.

Mirza Shafi praised Abbasgulu khan and Omar efendi; it becomes obvious that he did not envy them. He maintained good relationships with people and scholars, both Sunnis and Shias. Shafi briefly answers the Bodenstedt’s question about being tolerant to such an extent by stating that everyone should mind his own business. On the other hand, however, and according to Bodenstedt, Mirza Shafi offended religious people, particularly by stating that “the cry of an innocent baby sounds nicer to me than the call to prayer of an old religious person..., and they in turn called Mirza immoral.” The words of Omar Afandi, who was presented by Mirza Shafi as “the wisest man after me”, are also interesting: “There is no intelligence in the head of a fool just like a tree can’t grow on top of a rock. There is nothing more difficult than to teach intelligence to a fool or to take away the intelligence of a smart person”.

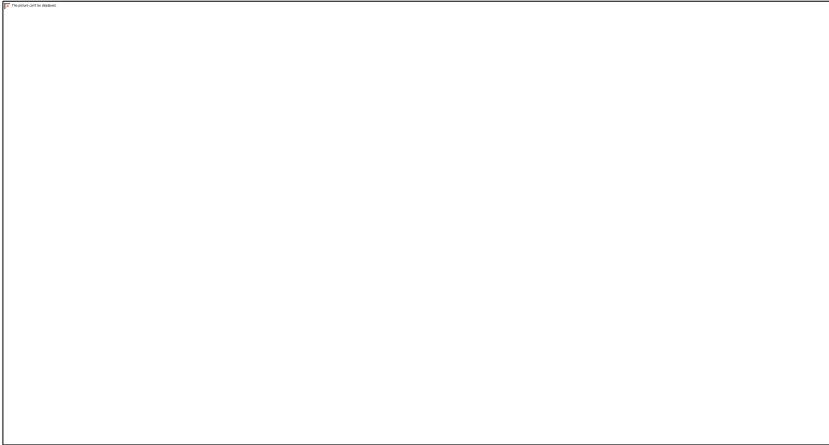
Bodenstedt also wrote about Tbilisi's elite society, its images and events: "Russian functionaries and officers are in central positions in Tbilisi and were surrounded by rich Georgian and Armenian families (Eristaf, Tumanov, Chavchavadze, Karganov, Andronikov, Orbelian, etc) ... Daniel, Sultan of Jelussui (now "Ilisu" in Azerbaijan-H.I.), was dancing lazginka with the princess Orbelian in the big Sardar Palace. All women were looking on and deriving pleasure from his beautiful posture and pleasing movements. Notwithstanding the hatred that faithful Muslims felt, this dance was worth of his country and his crown. Later, I heard that his fellows killed Russians and expelled him. Daniel went under the patronage of Shamil, and since that time became his first regent." Let me add to the words of Bodenstedt: The name of Daniel was frequently mentioned in a letter of Vorontsov to Ermolov, and it was stated in that letter that Daniel's daughter was engaged to Shamil's son.

Bodenstedt also reflected upon his observations of the lives of Russians and Europeans as well as of local people living in Tbilisi and in the Caucasus as a whole. He remembered a remark made by a Russian officer serving in Gagra city about war and dangerous life in the Caucasus, and especially about the inhospitable shores of Abkhazia:

"Siberia is much nicer than here. There you can make a living without fear of death, and you don't have to worry about any danger except natural death. Here, the sun rises over the shores of the Black Sea and brings with its death and corruption; if Destiny takes pity on us and we remain alive, we end up missing an arm or leg..."

Bodenstedt's praise is, mixed with some irony when he comments on the Russian soldier: "Russian soldiers can learn quickly, and they work like slaves to do whatever you tell them..." He also states the Russian officer's reply to a German officer who participated in the Russian-Turkish war and who was convinced that it is impossible to move forward and meaningless to attack: "What do you mean, not possible?! The emperor gave an order!".

Bodenstedt divided the doctors working in Tbilisi into two groups: Germans, whom he supposed to be extraordinarily conscientious (which he at the same time considered to be their largest drawback), and allegedly cunning and irresponsible Russians and Poles. Without any reference to the source of his information, he classified nations residing in Tbilisi into groups, and this according to the degree of cunning that he claims to perceive in them. According to him, the Greeks are the craftiest, slightly craftier than the Jews (Tatars were not mentioned for some reason, maybe he did not see them as being crafty?). In Bodenstedt's enumeration, two Jews are equal to one Russian, two Russians to one Persian, two Persians to one Armenian, and two Armenians to one Greek.



Temple Derbis in Pitzunda

The temple built under Emperor Justinian, shortly after the introduction of Christianity into Abkhazia

Bodenstedt made an attempt to account for the issue of migration and its aftereffects which was caused by the wars to conquer the Caucasus. He for examples states that “after Paskevitch conquered Achalzich, the majority of the wealthy Turks went to Anatolia, and many Armenians in Turkey moved to the Caucasus (the ones who wanted to be subjects of Russia) and filled more spaces than that the Turks left empty.” He also observes that “Greek and Turkish ships carry slaves between Cherkessia and Turkey; they trade slaves”.

Bodenstedt, who had traveled to Georgia and lived in Tbilisi, was obviously very familiar with the life of Georgians and openly expressed his thoughts:

“Georgians don’t have European-style cleanliness (“with some exceptions” - this is implied in some of his own words – H.I.). In street sports and games, including tightrope walking, it seems that Georgians forget their inborn laziness, and they participate enthusiastically. Georgian dances look like Greek dances; they sing as they dance... They don’t want baby girls to be born, especially not for the first baby and not in a row (the same was true for other Caucasians – H.I.) ... People of Imereti live for the moment like most Eastern peoples; they don’t worry about the future. There is almost no theft or robbery here. They are peaceful at home and brave in a battle... The Georgian people are made up of thavads (lords), aznavurs (nobles), vadshars (merchants), mtshaxurs (bond-servants), olexis (masses), and monas (slaves) ...”

In his first book, Bodenstedt paid particular attention to the life and struggle of nations living on foothills of the Greater Caucasus mountains, especially in the

northern part of it. "Tausend und ein Tag im Orient" is no exception in this matter. Yet, most of the information provided here was written as if it was not based on first-hand observation but rather on hearsay. Here are some fragments from the writings about Derbend and about Kaytakh or Kara-Kaytakh to its northwest: "In this wild region of the Caucasus they have not read Werther yet; their love is not as sentimental as ours. Asians don't sacrifice themselves for love; they just kill whomever hinders them." In this context, I would like to point out that the stereotypes of Eastern romanticism and Western rationality are deeply ingrained in both the East and the West. Here, Bodenstedt promotes a different concept and allegedly seems to back it up well. Bodenstedt also wrote about "intrigues upon intrigues, betrayals upon betrayals, weddings and more weddings..., blood feuds ..., marriage processes" that he claims were typical for this region.

On Women

Women are among the favorite topics of Bodenstedt – in general as well as related to the Caucasus. He wrote a special work on Shakespeare's female characters (1874). Heart-to-heart talks with Mirza Shafi about women and love and about the latter's amorous adventures play an important role in Bodenstedt's book. It is very difficult to determine which of the related adventures are real, which are invented. In the following, I am not going to discuss the love stories of Mirza Shafi. It is his thoughts on women that are very interesting.

Bodenstedt, who had just come back from a trip to Yerevan, narrated the following to Mirza Shafi: "In Armenia, I passed through dirty villages; there the Armenian women's hands were really dirty. It's good that they don't have the tradition of kissing ladies' hands in this country." M. Shafi answered in a proper manner by highlighting the dignity of women: "Shame on the men whose wives have dirty hands. Teach a woman that men kiss her hands, then she will always keep her hands clean. If you kiss her feet, then she would keep her feet clean".

Mirza Shafi talks about the wisdom and strength of woman. By drawing a remarkable comparison, he puts forward the idea that women deserve the highest love. He compares it to the singing of an anthem: "Sunnis consider the Sultan to be God's shadow on earth, while Shias feel the same way about the Shah. Actually, it's women who are God's essence on earth".

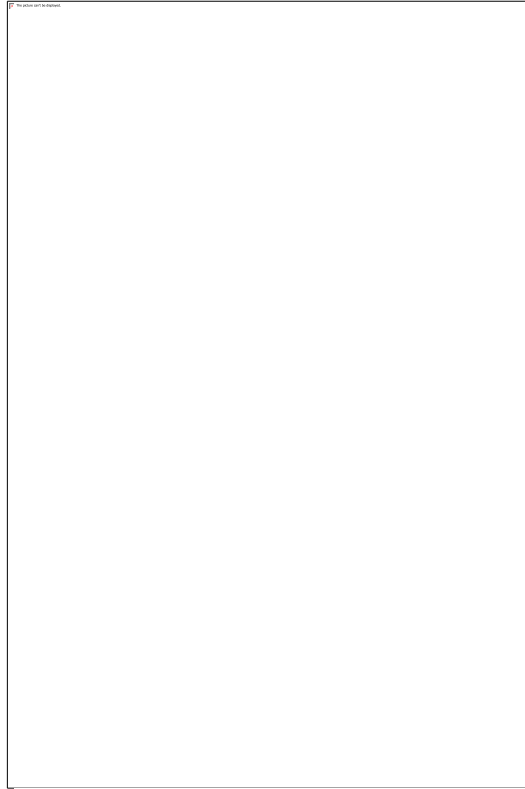
The thoughts of Bodenstedt on women's beauty are fairly few. Bodenstedt considered the women of Novocherkassk to be the most beautiful women in Russia ("good wine and good women" ..., "there aren't women like that in any city of Russia"). When it comes to Georgian girls and women, he states different ideas and uses various expressions, and he claims that "Georgian girls are beautiful, but they

get uglier as they get older”. Emphasizing the difference between the women he encountered in David church and on the marketplace, he considered the women in the church to be beautiful throughout, but he also remarked that in the marketplace, Georgian and Armenian girls expressed their dislike of the women in the church. Women without children come to pray for children in the David church. Mirza Shafi comments on this scene: “I’m amazed that David can still gather so many beautiful women together even after his death. Is it possible to see so many naked and beautiful women’s legs anywhere else in the world?”

Bodenstedt talks about meeting with a girl that belonged to the Georgian elite in Gori, a Russian garrison, and he reflects on images of Georgian

women that were common to Europeans: “I met Martha Eristaff, the young princess with an attractive face and thick hair, who was the main talking point in Georgia. In Europe, they imagine Georgian women as tall, thin creatures with attractive figures, long hair, broad noble foreheads, and mysterious black eyes. It is as if they bring joy and delight with them when they come, and they leave behind longing and fascination when they walk away. Most people who come here from Europe are disappointed; some of them see everything as quite the opposite (and ugly). The truth is somewhere between these two. Georgians, as a whole, are one of the most beautiful races in the world. But I prefer the Georgian men. I still haven’t been smitten by a Georgian woman’s face (when they cover their heads, their narrow foreheads can’t be seen, and they don’t look good). But Georgian women have charm. Their noses are very long.” He continues by stating that “the girls lift their veils so skillfully that onlookers can see them” (as is the case in modern Iran - H.I.).

Bodenstedt paid special attention to the issue of women in his book “Aus Ost und West” ([19]), and he entered into a polemic debate with the great Azerbaijani thinker and writer Mirza Fatali Akhundov (1812-1878). He took seriously the view



Eastern Woman

Akhundov had on female and male relations in Paris and the East and which was voiced half-jestingly, half-seriously in one of his comedies. Trying to answer him, Bodenstedt came to an interesting conclusion: “Famous Tatar comedy poet M.F. Akhundov said freely through the words of his character (Hatamkhan agha from “Monsieur Jordan and Dervish Mastali Shah” – H.I.): “Our polygamy is not left

behind by French polyandry in any way. Polygamy means that one wife is not enough for a man; polyandry means that one man is not enough for a woman. The first tradition is popular here (in the Muslim East – H.I.); the second in Paris. There is a truth to this that is impossible to deny (even outside the city of Paris). But it is also possible to add, that for us polyandry is impermissible, illegal and punishable. Its opposite is based on Eastern religion and traditions and for this reason it continues to have destructive results, because it fears no law and it goes unpunished. But that doesn’t mean that women in the East wouldn’t like to engage in polyandry! They have the desire and a high level of talent – the only thing missing for them is opportunity! Even if there were an offer, it would be hard to take advantage of it.”

Resident of Kabardah

On Material Culture

While travelling the Caucasus, Bodenstedt described natural scenery, different seasons, monuments of material culture, agrarian and agricultural work, daily life and the welfare of people. He refers to Marie-Felicite Brosset (1802-1880) and the Swiss French archaeologist and ethnographer Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux (1798-1850) to specify his descriptions and the geographical terminologies used in his book. Brosset, who was mostly engaged in creative activities in Russia, travelled to the Caucasus in 1847-1848 and compiled a Georgian history ([28]) in seven volumes (1849-1858). Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux had been to the Caucasus and the Crimea in 1831-1834 and he afterwards wrote a valuable work in six volumes on this topic ([29]), which was published in 1839-1949. He enriched it with visual tools, maps, schemes and pictures, gave images and descriptions of numerous monuments (including those that did not survive into the modern age). In this context, the personal observations of Bodenstedt are also of a great interest.

Bodenstedt gives descriptions of houses everywhere in the Caucasus and does not refrain from going into detail. In general, his book “Tausend und ein Tag im Orient” is a rich source of interesting ethnographic information. He classifies and describes houses in Tbilisi as “large and modern Russian houses built by the government, comfortable Armenian houses, and crude, half-finished Georgian, Persian and Tatar houses.” He wrote on the famous Tatar assembly (which includes the mosque) and the former Sardar Palace in Yerevan, situated at the highest point of the city. He was particularly impressed by the latter building: “There were paintings depicting the Shah and his subjects, mythological scenes, Catherine II and her son, and the later emperor Pavel. Inside there were eye-catching fountains and beautifully decorated glass.”

Bodenstedt describes a number of castles, mosques and churches as well as simple houses, and he also made observations on the architecture of Akhale-Tsikhe: “Turks called it Akhiska Fortress, while Georgians called it Akhale-Tsikhe (new fortress); it is a mixture of Georgian and Turkish architecture, and Turks added some adornments to it.” Bodenstedt evaluates the surroundings of Kutaisi in terms of its agrarian culture: pleasant weather, good water, fertile soil, but weak agriculture and a poor population. He gives detailed information about farming methods, fruits, berries, and animal husbandry, and this alongside of elaborate descriptions of buildings in Akhalkalaki: “Similar to other Georgian areas, houses in Akhalkalaki are windowless, flat-roofed, with a hole in the roof for light.”

Bodenstedt makes a particular point of the fact that, according to his observations, European visions of Eastern luxury misrepresented the realities of the Caucasus. He mentions that he saw only very few really valuable objects in the houses: “I didn’t see what is referred to as “Oriental luxury” in books and travelogues about Persians, Tatars and Georgians. They live in their houses like in stables. The houses of the richest people don’t compare to middle-class houses in Europe. There are only three valuable things in their houses: carpets, weapons, and clothing.” Bodenstedt also notes that “there are no coffee houses in Tbilisi like in Istanbul and Izmir”.

On Beverages - Wine

While traveling from Russia to the Caucasus, Bodenstedt was interested in everything he saw languages, women, architecture, music, lifestyle, but also wine. From his observations of the steppes in the South of Russia he draws the following conclusion: Don Cossacs get drunk, they are lazy, their wives work. Novocherkask is a land of good women and wine.

Bodenstedt writes that in the very first days when he crossed the Caucasus Mountains and moved toward Tbilisi, he felt as he was in the fairy land of One Thousand and

One Night, being a guest at wine and music assemblies and surrounded by beautiful nature and interesting people: “Kakhet wine, dark red as blood, doesn’t give headaches”. About Mirza Shafi he writes: “When he wanted me to write (at his dictation – H.I.) a poem or anything he wishes, at first, he used to drink of Kakhet wine slowly, sink in thoughts after drawing smoke from a pipe filled with fine tobacco. Then, he used to read a poem.”

Bodenstedt comes to the conclusion that Christians in Russia and the Caucasus consume too much alcohol: “They drink more than a camel drinks water.” He observes that “Christians in the Caucasus say ‘he drinks water like wine’, while we say it vice versa.” He asks his mentor Mirza Shafi who knew the taste and limits of wine: Why is it that if drinking brings wisdom Georgians and Russians are not wise? (It is worthwhile noting that in a Soviet translation into Azerbaijani in 1961, it was translated as “people living here” instead of “Georgians and Russians” [18]). As always, Mirza Shafi’s answer was unique: Russians are not so stupid – if they were, they would not be able to subdue and rule over so many nations. Then again, when it comes to Georgians, there is a poem about wine and smart people drinking wine (you have to have a knack for drinking wine - H.I.).

One of the most interesting passages in the memoirs of Bodenstedt is the one about Abbasgulu khan (the son of the last khan of Baku and a prominent Azerbaijani polymath - poet, philologist, historian, theologian and philosopher; his full name was Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov) who was visiting Mirza Shafi at his Divani-hikmat. From this meeting, Bodenstedt remembers the battle of poems (the participants were reciting poems to each other) between Abbasgulu khan, who was “one of the prominent people for his knowledge and erudition, had a passion for the Russian country, knew Russian well, wrote about the history of Dagestan (actually, the Eastern part of the Caucasus, otherwise the history of the Eastern parts of the Caucasian Azerbaijan – H.I.)”, and Mirza Shafi. Bodenstedt also refers to their citations from the Quran, their recitation of poems by Saadi, Hafiz and Fuzuli, and finally, to the conversation between himself and Abbasgulu khan. After Abbasgulu khan’s leave, Bodenstedt asks Mirza Shafi: “Why didn’t you drink in front of Khan?” The answer of Mirza Shafi was simple: “Abbasgulu khan is a religious man, he is older and more powerful than me, he is a big man; I had to respect the guest, thus I didn’t drink.”

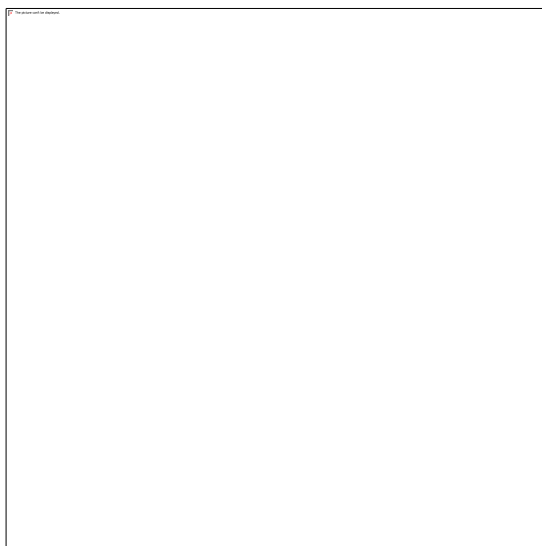
On a Comparison of Europe and the Caucasus

As we can see from the above, Bodenstedt draws comparisons with Europe when writing about the lifestyle of the Caucasians, and he in particular comments on matters like Georgian and Dagestani love and marriage customs and ceremonies (since nobody read Wherter, no Wherteresque concept of love existed in the

Caucasus). In his book, we also discover polemics about women, agrarian culture, welfare, luxury and wine. Despite his distinct interest in the Caucasus, Caucasian history and culture, Bodenstedt was purely eurocentric. In his writings, he maintained that the East is backward and expressed this thought in various ways. During his next journey to Tbilisi, where he came across a gymnasium, he remarks: “This gymnasium reminds us of Europeans among troglodytes.” In the tradition of European orientalist of the 19th century, Bodenstedt did not refrain from using bold expressions. He also claims that, compared to Europe, Russia is far behind, and this despite its culture and the positive and negative effects of Russians in the Caucasus that he takes notes of.

He analyzed and criticized what the East had selected and imported from Western culture (including Russia). “What have Georgians learned from Russians, whose own civilisation is not so well-known?! Not much, the clothing which is not inherent to the country, forks and knives usage instead of fingers, sitting on chairs, etc. Despite the schools that Russians have opened, it would take a whole century before Georgians actually begin to participate in real culture. Nations on the lower levels of civilization are like children; they learn everything from the nation ruling over them, whether it is necessary or not.”

On the verge of returning to his homeland (Germany) from the Caucasus, Bodenstedt observed the ceremonial welcome of the governor of the Caucasus (Mikhail Vorontsov) in Tbilisi. Assigned on 27th December 1844, the new governor



Memorial to Friedrich von Bodenstedt in Wiesbaden by sculptor Hugo Berwald

(“namestnik”) of the Caucasus came to Tbilisi on 25th March 1845; Bodenstedt left Tiflis in April of 1845. Bodenstedt depicted this welcome ceremony as flamboyant and unprecedented in Europe: “Some fountains had been filled with the blood-red wine, the town was covered with light and fire... Bengal fireworks, the environs were like a sea of flames, it looked as if a volcano was erupting on the surrounding mountains”.

Altogether, Bodenstedt contributed to a cultural transfer that went both ways. He did not only distribute information about the East in the West (in written form, beginning from 1848, and during the rest of his

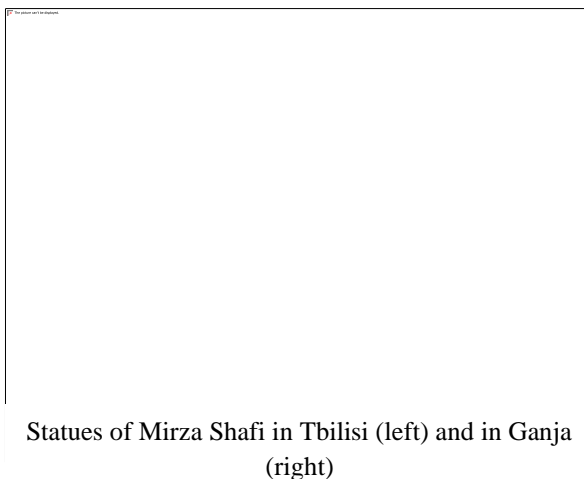
life). He also told his Eastern friends about Western culture and attempted to help them understand the history, literature, education, religion, and everyday issues of the West.

Conclusion

The Caucasus is one of the richest and most colorful and diverse regions of the world, and this due to its nature, languages and religions. In the course of their history, the Caucasian nations were in continual cultural contact and exchange with the surrounding Persian, Turkic and Russian people – in ancient times with the Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, later with the Arabs. At the time when Europe became a world power, Caucasian interest for Europe increased, as did European interest for the Caucasus. After the Russian conquest and a long Russian dominance in the Caucasus, the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the formation of three independent states in Southern Caucasus. Both of these geopolitical events were turning points in the political, economic and cultural development of the Caucasus. Unexpected encounters and cultural exchanges created new patterns and left traces in the colorful life of the Caucasus.

Members of the military, diplomats, missionaries, businessmen, scientists and people of art, teachers, travelers with different professions and areas of interests came to the Caucasus and wrote substantial memoirs about the region and their experiences and observations. They thus contributed valuable information to the historiography of the Caucasus that, in many cases, can hardly be found in other sources. A 24-year-old German, the admirer of literature Friedrich Bodenstedt, was among them. He came to Tbilisi in the autumn of 1843, lived there until April of 1845, learned Azerbaijani Turkic (the “Tatar” language) as well as Persian from Mirza Shafi, himself a poet, educator and calligrapher from Ganja. Bodenstedt furthermore traveled to many regions of the Caucasus.

After his return to Germany, Bodenstedt immediately began to work creatively, and he received considerable attention with his book “Die Lieder des Mirza Shaffy” (Songs of Mirza Shafi) that he published in 1851. Mirza Shafi, the book, and Bodenstedt as its translator – all three became famous. Later, the idea emerged that “the real author of this book” might be Bodenstedt himself,



Statues of Mirza Shafi in Tbilisi (left) and in Ganja (right)

and this idea complicated matters and led to controversies and disputes about authorship and identity.

Probably the most important legacy of Bodenstedt are his interesting historical, ethnographic and literary works that he wrote on the theme of the Caucasus. His first book, written in 1848 (“Die Völker des Kaukasus und ihre Freiheitskämpfe gegen die Russen” – The People of the Caucasus and their Struggle Against the Russians) and the second book, written in 1850 – (“Tausend und ein Tag im Orient” – Thousand and One Days in the Orient) can be considered to be immense contributions to Caucasian studies. The Caucasus remained his favorite topic in later years, and he published several further works on the region.

As Bodenstedt had not been drawn into research as an expert on Caucasian studies, it is of paramount importance to systematize and analyze the information which he provided on the Caucasus, and this applies especially to his personal observations. He was sometimes critical of information he gained, yet he occasionally also just repeated it. This becomes obvious particularly in episodes where he lacked personal experience. He compared the “Land of Morning” (as he called the East), most notably the Caucasus, to the “Land of Evening” (which alluded to Europe). Notwithstanding the fact that both regions were involved in a bilateral cultural transfer (which mostly introduced the East to the West), Bodenstedt ultimately represented a Eurocentric position.

He reflected on European stereotypes about the East and on Eastern stereotypes about Europe (even though he himself was not entirely free of these stereotypes). Based on his observations, he came up with conclusions about the existence of phenomena among the Caucasians such as, on the one hand, a tradition of wisdom and tolerance (Mirza Shafi and others) and, on the other hand, the dominance of “intrigues, betrayals in ... the wild regions of the Caucasus”.

There can be no doubt that the works of Bodenstedt are very valuable sources for studying history. They present the ethnic and cultural colorfulness of the Caucasus; its geography, languages, literature and music; its material culture, customs, lifestyle and welfare; its myths and religions; its women and wine; but also, its wars, the topic of migration and other many other issues.

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Friedrich Bodenstedt und Mirza Schaffy.

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Summary

Friedrich Bodenstedt on the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity of the Caucasus

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Caucasus, one of the most multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual regions of the world, has been influenced by different cultures and has, in turn, affected distinct cultures. People from different cultural backgrounds came to live in the region. Their experiences and observations played an important role in these cultural transfers.

Friedrich Bodenstedt, a young German philologist arrived in Tbilisi in the autumn of 1843 and left again in April of 1845. Bodenstedt wrote a number of works on the Caucasus, and he made interesting observations in the fields of history, literature, languages, music, lifestyles and traditions, women, and material culture of the Caucasus.

This article aims to draw attention to the remarks made by Bodenstedt on the Caucasus and to retrace the explorational journey that he took through the region.

Keywords: Caucasus, Friedrich Bodenstedt, Mirza Shafi, Cultural diversity, Caucasian languages, Caucasian literature, Caucasian women.

Lev Nussimbaum and Banine, from Baku to the Golden Horn

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The year 1905 saw the birth in Baku of a man and of a woman that nothing predestined to literary career: Umm-al-Banu Asadullayeva, better known under the name she adopted later in Paris, Banine; and Lev Nussimbaum, who became known during the interwar period in Germany and Italy under the pseudonyms of Essad Bey and Kurban Said. Even if one was born into the Muslim community in Baku and the other one in a Jewish family in the same town, the two shared a prosperous and cosmopolitan childhood. Granddaughter of two oil tycoons, Shamsi Asadullayev and Mirza Agha Musa Naghiyev, daughter of Mirza Asadullayev who was Minister of Trade and Industry during the short interlude of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, Banine, arrived in Paris in 1924, left two books of memoirs written in French, and *Caucasian Days* and *Parisian Days*, published respectively in 1946 and 1947 by the publisher René Julliard. Both are autobiographical narratives, but the second one is more romanticized than the first. Neither book has been translated into English, but I think *Caucasians Days* has been translated into Azerbaijani.

Banine, who died in 1992, was her own biographer. Her executor, a German painter named Rolf Stürmer, will maybe write the story of her life, but until now, only her two memoirs can track her eventful journey from a palace in Baku to a « chambre de bonne » (maid's room) in Paris. As for Lev Nussimbaum-Kurban Said, who died in 1942 in Southern Italy, he had the extraordinary opportunity to find a prodigious biographer in the American journalist Tom Reiss. Reiss was not starting from nothing, since the formidable inquiry that he published in 2005 is based in part on unpublished notebooks written by Nussimbaum in Positano, on his deathbed, entrusted to Tom Reiss by the last representative of the publisher of Kurban Said in Vienna, Therese Kirschner-Mögle. From this fragmentary posthumous autobiography, Reiss has delivered a fascinating reconstitution, who raises a whole era and a whole environment, including the Jewish orientalist in the Berlin of the twenties. Lev Nussimbaum as Banine were complex characters. They were both fascinated by sulphurous characters: Nussimbaum by Ezra Pound, at the end of his life, while writing a biography of Mussolini; Banine by Ernst Jünger, champion of the Conservative Revolution.

I certainly will not talk to you, here in Baku, about Kurban Said's famous novel, *Ali and Nino* (1938), which tells the love story between a Muslim Azeri and Georgian Christian, Romeo and Juliet in the Caucasus. The notoriety of the book was recently reinforced by its film adaptation and in 2011 the excellent *Azerbaijan International Magazine* dedicated two volumes to this major work¹. The novel that caught my attention, *The Girl from the Golden Horn*, was published in 1938. Unlike *Ali and Nino*, the book has not been heavily studied or commented although it is of great interest.

Their birth in Baku in 1905 is not the only event that brings together Lev Nussimbaum, the Azerbaijani Jew who maintained to be a Muslim prince in the Europe of the Roaring Twenties, and Banine, the emancipated Muslim girl, whose memoirs open on this eloquent sentence: «Unlike some worthypeople, born in poor but 'good' families, I was born into a family not 'good' at all, but very rich.» The sarcastic tone of Banine immediately strikes her reader, exactly as the insolence and the freedom of Asiadeh, the heroine of *The Girl from the Golden Horn*. It is certainly no coincidence that Kurban Said chose that name, the name of the heroine of the famous novel by Pierre Loti, *Aziyadé*, published in 1879. The popularity of this story, which tells the forbidden love of a British officer and a young Circassian slave in the harem of an old Turk, has exceeded the borders of France. In 1906, Pierre Loti published *The Désenchantées (Disenchanted)*, a survey on contemporary Turkish harems, where he was the spokesman of young Turkish women recluses and cultured, nourished by Western literature. His painting of the «Madame Bovary» of the Bosphorus was not unambiguous. Indeed, recognizing the suffering of these prisoners of the harem, Loti could not help regretting the old days. The education of women is, after all, one of the ravages of modernity.

Kurban Said's Asiadeh is the antithesis of Pierre Loti's Aziyadé. Similarly, Banine defies the prejudices attached to the Eastern woman. The interest of Banine's memoirs, which portrays herself self, and Kurban Said's novel, which features a double female, is to present to the Western reader an oriental woman freed from all the clichés ordinarily attached to her. A reverse, opposite vision: the Eastern woman as seen from the Caucasus and specifically from Baku, mosaic city disrupted by the course of history. Banine and Asiadeh are the product of this acceleration.

The title of Kurban Said's novel, *The Girl from the Golden Horn*, may mislead the reader. At first glance, this title has all of the exotic cliché. But the content immediately thwarts the expectations of the title. Asiadeh is a modern young woman who studied oriental languages at the University of Berlin, in the ambition to become

¹Azerbaijan International, vol. 15.2-4 (2011)

the ambassador of lost multiculturalism. Kurban Said transposes his own experience of studying in Berlin in the twenties. Tom Reiss wrote:

But why had an increasingly prominent group of Jews chosen the Islamic world as the solution to their dilemma? [Zionism or European ideals] They came to see themselves as being *of* the Orient – specifically, the Islamic Orient – in some very special and attractive way. Figures as diverse as Disraeli and the philosopher Martin Buber played a part in this relocation of the Jewish spirit to the realm of pan-Asia. They reinvented the historical Muslim Orient as a place free from clear ethnic and sectarian lines, and most especially free from anti-Semitism – no matter that the reality was more complex than that².

The tone is set, from the caustic opening:

«And this ‘i,’ Fraulein Anbari? »

Asiadeh looked up, her gray eyes thoughtful and earnest. «This ‘i’? » she repeated in her soft, gentle voice. She thought for a little while and then said decidedly and desperately: «This ‘i’ is the Yakut gerund, similar to the Khirgiz ‘barisi.’ »

Professor Bang rubbed his long, hooked nose. Behind the steel-rimmed glasses his eyes looked like those of a wise owl. He wheezed softly and disapprovingly.

«Yes, » he said. «But I still cannot really understand why the ‘a’ should be missing in the Yakut form. » And he sadly leafed through the dictionary.

Goetz, another of his students, whose speciality was the Chinese language, proposed to explain the mysterious «a» form as being a petrified Mongol instrumental. «When I was young, » said Professor Bang severely, «I too tried to explain everything as being a petrified Mongol instrumental. Courage is a young man’s privilege. »

Bang was sixty years old and the Chinese expert forty-five. Asiadeh suddenly felt a sharp scratching pain in her throat. The sweetish air of the yellowing old books, the tortuous flourishes of the Manchu and Mongol letters, the barbaric forms of the petrified languages—all these were unreal, hostile, numbing her senses. She sighed deeply when the bell rang. Bang lit his pipe, a sign that the seminar for Comparative Turkish Languages had finished. His long, bony finger tenderly caressed the yellowed pages of the *Uigur Grammar* as he said dryly: «Next time we will discuss the structure of the negative verb, using the machinaean hymns. » His words seemed both promise and threat. Since the great Thomsen in Copenhagen had died, philology

²*The Orientalist. In Search of a Man caught between East and West*, London, Vintage Books, 2006, p. 229.

had lost its meaning for him. The young people of today did not understand anything and explained everything as being a petrified instrumental.

His four students bowed silently. Asiadeh went out to the wide staircase of the seminar for Oriental Languages. Other doors opened, bearded Egyptologists appeared, and idealistic youths who had dedicated their lives to the endeavor of deciphering Assyrian cuneiforms. Behind the closed door of the Arabic lecture room, the sobbing sounds of a ghazel by Lebid died away, and the lecturer's voice said, ending his discourse: «A classic example of the modus apokopatus. »

The Girl from the Golden Horn is a kind of philosophical fable, where Asiaseh plays the role of a modern and female Usbek, the traveler of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*.

The novel is both moving and hilarious. Asiadeh Anbari is the daughter of a Turkish pasha in exile following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Promised as a bride to the heir of the throne she never saw, Asiadeh now studies the oriental languages in Berlin. When ill, she meets Dr. Hassa, a Viennese laryngologist, distant heir of a Bosnian family, the Hassanovic, whose attentions prove both terrifying and entrancing. Though Hassa and his Western ways are at times bewildering to Asiadeh, the two fall in love. Kurban Said masterfully captures the fragility of their cultural boundaries, and the resulting love story is hectic and disappointing. Asiadeh pens a desperate letter to her former betrothed, the Ottoman prince, asking him to release her from her obligation to him. Miraculously, the letter reaches the prince in hiding, who, overwhelmed by his own sorrow and loss, responds, urging her to follow any path that may grant her peace: the prince, drowned in whiskey and cocktails, has become an American scriptwriter and lives in New York assisted by Sam Dooth, who is actually a Phanariot Greek, Perikles Heptomanides. Both represent the lost Ottoman Empire. Asiadeh and Hassa marry, although neither proves truly unencumbered by the past. They go on honeymoon in Belgrade, homeland of Hassa's family. But Hassa feels homesick and disoriented, while Asiadeh feels the deep nostalgia of Istanbul. On settling in Vienna, Asiadeh seems to lose both her language and bearings, trapped in a cold country in which she is continuously and profoundly misunderstood. It is then that the prince, alone and hungry for his homeland, comes to claim her. Asiadeh divorce Hassa who remarried his first wife Marion, and embarks for New York with her prince scriptwriter, the Phanariot Sam Dooth and her father.

We rediscover many episodes of Kurban Said's life in this novel: the exile from the eastern and cosmopolitan hometown, the sufferings of the old father displaced, downgraded and ruined, the stay in New York where the obscene luxury shocked

him, in the wake of the wealthy family of his wife, Erika Loewendahl, and the final divorce. However, and very significantly, the city whose Asiadeh originated is not Baku but Istanbul: it is indeed here that Lev Nussimbaum changed its skin, there he left his old clothes of Azerbaijani westernized bourgeois to put on a real Western costume, before he disguised himself in a theatrical Easterner. For Kurban Said as for Banine, Istanbul appears both as a lazaretto and as an incubator. It is in this city that the writers as their characters are born to new life, Lev in 1921 among the Russians of the Wrangel army, Banine in 1924 with her hated husband Balabek Gojayev [renamed Djamil in her memoirs] that she abandoned, leaving him losing his last money at poker meanwhile she took the Orient-Express to join her family (father, stepmother and sisters) already exiled in Paris. In this perspective, which contrasts with the usual eurocentrism, Istanbul is not the first step towards the East but the first step towards the West. A city where the exiled from Baku is stripped in every sense: from its illusions, its eastern culture and its economies quickly spent in luxury hotels, in Russian restaurants and casinos. However, a final sight moves Banine when leaving the East, the cemeteries. This is the only moment in her autobiography where she renounces her corrosive irony:

Encouraged by our transient opulence and by a sky of legend, I went also to some excursions; I visited Prinkipo, Therapia, and other traditional places of pilgrimage.

But nothing moved me as much as cemeteries around Constantinople, with their straight cypresses, their straight stones, too, on the graves. Nowhere have I felt myself as Muslim as there: the crosses, the rich and complicated mausoleums, the flowers, irritateme in a place dedicated to peace. I like simplicity in death: I like the ascetic aspect of a Muslim cemetery. The last one I visited in Islam was on a hill from which we could see the Bosphorus. The beauty of the sky, the place, the sea, combined to create an immense beauty. This perfection, much more than fun, gives suffering. But suffering from a strange quality: beyond it, joy arises. We first experienced the feeling of the evanescence of beauty, but then the certainty that a certain degree perfection reached eternity, where it remains an unalterable fixed point.

[...] Moments I lived on this hill, you will never leave me; suspended somewhere in my memory, you will die with me. And even if, as I hope, the beauty that we reflected returns after our death to eternity, you will become immortal³.

This rare parenthesis in Banine's fierce and stripper account meets the vision of Western travelers, fascinated, like Pierre Loti and Claude Farrère, by Muslim

³*Jours caucasiens, op. cit.*, p. 251-252.

cemeteries. The only difference lies in the internalisation of their feelings, although the cemeteries of Istanbul have managed to touch travelers beyond picturesque.

Although he was not a Muslim, Lev Nussimbaum-Essad Bey-Kurban Said managed to carry of his false identity in death. His tomb overlooks the Tyrrhenian Sea at Positano. Tom Reiss described the small Italian cemetery:

«Eccola» said Hercules in a gentle singsongy voice. We stood before a narrow white tombstone with a turban on top. «It is the Turkish style, » he said. [...] The name read MOHAMMED ESSAD BEY⁴.

In the memoirs of Banine, Istanbul is the only place that escapes the mockery that hits the small world of Baku as well as Parisian society. The first is described as an assembly of farmers «nouveau riches», social climbers brutal and grasping, acculturated because they have lost the sense of customs and of Islamic traditions and because they mimic with awkwardness and vulgarity the habits and Western fashions. The same pitiless statement applies to the second city, as a concentrate of hypocrisy and social inequality.

In the same way, for Lev Nussimbaum in *The Girl from the Golden Horn*, Istanbul is the city of the fantasized origins:

Asiadeh was silent. Steadfastly unsmiling, she looked at Rolland. So, there he was. The exiled one, the lost one. Pines were growing in his palace. She had seen their branches and tops over the broad wall. [...] She belonged to him, every fiber of her body was his. For him she had once learned Persian poems and Arabic prayers, for him she had listened the sound of barbaric words.

«Your Highness, » she said, and then could not go on. The present was confused, a wild dream. [...] The house on the Bosphorus, home, the blood-red sunsets of the Golden Horn, all that was reality again, embodied in the strange man who had narrow, evil lips and staring eyes. [...]

She walked around the Ring, and the asphalt felt like a soft carpet. Happiness – the One – the Unthinkable – here it was, suddenly. It had pale eyes and narrow lips and spoke in the soft dialect of Istanbul. Suddenly it was hers – inseparable, like a limb – happiness⁵.

⁴ Tom Reiss, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

⁵ Kurban Said, *The Girl from the Golden Horn*, [1938], translated from the German by Jenia Graman, Woodstock & New York, The Overlook Press, 2001, p. 162-163.

Despite the lively rhythm and all the twists and turns, *The Girl from the Golden Horn* is a melancholic novel. Asiadeh's linguistic frenzy reminds the avidity of the young Nussimbaum crossing Berlin at dawn every day to learn oriental languages at the university. It was a way, the only way to apprehend, to rebuilt and to preserve the past. Behind the multiculturalist Berlin of the Twenties, cacophonous Babel, one can figure out the nostalgia for lost Caucasus, mixed up with the Turanianism or the pan-Turkism. In this perspective, it is normal that Istanbul, the capital of the federation of Turkic peoples is identified as the place of the origins, rather than Baku. For Westerners, Istanbul is the largest exchanger before they jump into the unknown. But seen from the Caucasus, Istanbul is the ultimate landmark. That's the way Lev Nussimbaum and Banine perceived it, and expressed it with humour, irony, and the politeness of despair.

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Early photography as cultural transfer in imperial Russia: visual technology, mobility and modernity in the Caucasus and Central Asia

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Introduction

Our paper will present an overview of photography as a mode of cultural transfer from Europe to Asia. Specifically, it focuses on examples from Russia to the Caucasus and Central Asia in the imperial context of the nineteenth century and discusses the social and political implications of these transfers juxtaposed to other contemporary global exchanges of this visual technology. Our case studies are based on substantial scholarly literature on global histories of photography, including that in the rapidly growing field on Russian photography, and they incorporate each author's own original research conducted in archives of Uzbekistan, the Republic of Georgia, the Russian Federation, France and Switzerland.

When we selected this topic, we chose the theory of cultural transfer as our method of analysis.¹ This theory is one of numerous approaches that can describe the circulation of ideas, technologies, material goods and people, as well as the interaction of different cultures within history, be they global, transnational, comparative, connected, shared or entangled.² Contrary to a common Eurocentric view of history, that assumes a unidirectional spread of the "Civilization" and its "benefits" from a "Creative Center" to a "Passive Periphery," the theory of cultural transfer offers a more nuanced vision of these interdependent contacts.

¹ Espagne and Werner, 1988 ; Espagne, 1999; *idem*, 2013.

² Among the many studies devoted to this problem (e.g. A. Stanziani, K. Raj, R. Bertrand, S. Gruzinski, Y. Cohen), see, in particular, Werner and Zimmermann, 2003; Werner and Zimmermann (eds.), 2004.

In particular, one of the fundamental concepts defining cultural transfer, which is simplified here, suggests that a “culture-inventor” (identified below as Culture A) cannot impose some ideas or technologies onto another culture (Culture B) in a way that the latter will passively accept this innovation. According to the theory of cultural transfer, the central idea is that cultural exchanges are multidirectional, since any Culture B as a receiving agent can take an active role in selecting innovations that complement or conform to local conditions and customs. Selected ideas or technologies, therefore, can be accepted, while others rejected. In this process, cultural transfer can pass through both institutional channels and individual carriers. From this more complex relationship emerges a technology that has been adopted, adapted, and assimilated for varying social, political and economic applications.

Applying this theory to our case study on early photography in imperial Russia, we consider the agents and processes of transfer that originated from Western Europe and initially spread to Russia, then subsequently moved from Russia to Asia. We will first briefly sketch the standard history of photographic inventions and their global reach, and then more specifically detail its dissemination from France, England and Germany to Russia, where it moves from the imperial centers of power in St. Petersburg and Moscow through the Caucasus and Orenburg to finally reach Central Asia. Our examination here fits into the latest scholarly framework that considers a broader geographical range than previously applied to this theory of cultural transfer: already elaborated within an exclusively European context, this theory has more recently been advanced to include Russia,³ the Central Asian⁴ and Altai⁵ regions, and China.⁶

It is well known that this unprecedented visual technology based on light-sensitive chemical processes was simultaneously developed in two imperial nations and having two distinct formats. In France, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851) invented the daguerreotype, a delicate mirror-like image produced on a silver-plated sheet of copper that was officially revealed to the world in August 1839. At that same time in England, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) was perfecting what he called *photogenic drawings* that eventually resulted in the calotype, a paper-based

³ Dmitrieva and Espagne, 1996; Dmitrieva, 2011.

⁴ Espagne, Gorshenina, Grenet, Mustafayev, and Rapin (eds.), 2016.

⁵ See the conference “Transferts culturels dans l’Altai”, June 12-17, 2017: <http://transfers.ens.fr/transferts-culturels-dans-l-altai-707>.

⁶ Siyan and Ledru (eds.), 2016. See also, in particular, the research project, “Les transferts culturels entre la Chine et l’Europe (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles): échanges, esthétiques de la chinoiserie et constructions identitaires”: http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/projet-anr/?tx_lwmsuivibilan_pi2%5BCODE%5D=ANR-12-JSH3-0002

image announced in 1841 that paved the way to printing from negatives — an essential element of modern photography.⁷ These early innovations spread fast and far. Within weeks of Daguerre's announcement in Paris, he drafted a small booklet that was translated into English and German;⁸ and within that same year, daguerreotypes were being made all over Europe and on at least three other continents, as wealthy travelers had already begun to haul cameras, chemicals and other equipment to the Mediterranean and the Middle East to document ancient cultures of Greece and Egypt as well as sites of the Holy Land.⁹ This rapid international focus on the daguerreotype is punctuated by the fact that cameras were available as far away as Calcutta, India, being sold by private firms as early as January 1840;¹⁰ and by March, images were already being shown at a meeting of the Asiatic Society.¹¹ According to the French scholar, Chahryar Adle, the British officer Arthur Conolly (1807-1842) tried to bring a camera to Bukhara on his second trip to Turkestan (1841-1842); but this exotic technological apparatus backfired on Conolly, and the emir, unimpressed, had him executed in 1842.¹²

Within a decade of Daguerre's and Talbot's developments, a more revolutionary process would deeply impact the continuing cultural transfer of photography within society and across empires. Invented by Frederick Scott Archer in 1852, the wet-plate collodion process allowed for the sharp detail of a daguerreotype combined with the ability to make an infinite number of print reproductions from the negative of the calotype. By this time in Europe, such advances in the technology — already significantly more improved, simplified and cost-effective — made photography a fascinating and favored phenomenon of the middle class. Many ventured abroad in search of new impressions, and the "Grand Tour" became as fashionable as it was exotic for travelers who wished to "discover" the legendary cities of Europe, North Africa (mainly Egypt), the Middle East (Holy Land, Syria, Turkey, Iran and Iraq) and North America. The first photographic "discoveries" to be made of the Caucasus and Turkestan, however, were to a great extent overlooked by the European middle class; rather, they would be made by Russian military and members of the colonial administration traversing, surveying and settling the regions with their cameras.

For Russia, this period of photographic development and transfer intersected one marked by dramatic imperial expansion. In the mid-to-late 18th century, the three

⁷ Sixou, 2000; Watson and Rappaport, 2013.

⁸ Watson and Rappaport, 2013, p. 157.

⁹ Pérez González, 2014; Ryan, 2013, p. 9; Aubenas, 2001, p. 19.

¹⁰ Dehejia, 2000, p. 14.

¹¹ Pinney, 2008, p. 9. Also, Falconer, 1990.

¹² Personal communication between Adle and Gorshenina. Documentary evidence for this incident is still unfortunately lacking.

nomadic Kazakh hordes that once formed *Independent Tartary* were gradually taken over, and these territories were reorganized into tsarist districts that included the Orenburg province. Administered out of the capital city by the same name, this province became the leading post of the subsequent Russian conquests in southern and eastern Asia. Beginning in the early 19th century, parallel maneuvers occurred in the Caucasus, where Russia gradually possessed the territories of the Ottoman empire. In 1844, the conquered territories in this region would form a Caucasus governorship (*Kavkazskoe namestnichestvo*), which was later divided into regional governorates and districts. The defeat of the Crimean War in 1856 led to a series of further military campaigns that, largely under Alexander II, resulted in the north Caucasus and all Central Asian khanates to be subjugated. In the wake of this intensified period, the transfers of photography from Russia to the Caucasus and Central Asia occurred primarily under colonialism;¹³ these colonial situations, or encounters, were defined by institutional channels of the Russian empire and individual carriers, who were essentially Russian officers and administrators. In other words, the relationship between Culture A and Culture B was not equal. In general, the transfers of technology passed without any prior agreement from the recipients. In this case, photography can be seen as an instrument of power in conquest and submission, and the process of initial appropriation of this modern technology assumes a unidirectional path between the “colonizer” and the “colonized.”

Photographic transfers to and from Russia, 1840s

The rapid dissemination of this new invention was equally met with a growing acceptance for the myth of photographic accuracy and its ability to truthfully replicate the real world on paper. Causing widespread excitement, social elite and royals alike sought to get their hands on it as soon as possible, and the Romanovs were no exception. It has been rumored that Nicholas I (1796-1855) offered 500,000 francs for Daguerre’s secret, prior to the inventor’s formal announcement in January 1839; the foreign sovereign later that year instead received three daguerreotypes as a gift from the Frenchman.¹⁴ Outside of diplomatic transfers, the first photographic exchanges within the Russian imperial sphere were largely initiated by educated elite, commercial entrepreneurs and government officials. Within six months after Daguerre officially presented his process, I.Kh. Hammel (1788-1862), a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences working in the Department of Chemistry and Technology, was sent to both London and Paris, where he was expected to learn more about the calotype and daguerreotype and to return to St. Petersburg with

¹³ Balandier, 1951.

¹⁴ Watson and Rappaport, 2013, pp. 153, 169, 270.

examples and equipment.¹⁵ Several faculty members at the Academy, like Karl von Baer (*infra*), had serious interest in photography for its research applications for natural history.¹⁶ By autumn of the same year, *daguerrotypomania* had also hit Moscow: it was possible to buy the first daguerreotype camera in the shops of Charles Bekkers and Michael Smirdin; the caricaturist, Nikolai Stepanov, had already written a detailed brochure on the “practical use” of these mirrored images; and it was even possible to order daguerreotypes from professional photographers.¹⁷ The following year, the photographer Alexei Grekov, who improved this technology, opened the first commercial studio there.¹⁸

Russia quickly became not just a “talented appropriator” of this new technology but an active agent of its transmission to “eastern” countries. Hence, it began to engage in its own diplomatic transfers. For example, the Persian sovereign Mohammad Shah (1810-1848) contacted both the Russian mission in Tehran and the Asian Department of the Foreign Ministry to request a Daguerreian camera for his personal use. In the autumn of 1842, Russia delivered: a camera, materials, and a specially “photo-trained” officer of the Asiatic Department were sent by the Moscow office of the Foreign Ministry, and via Tbilisi received in Tehran at the Golestan Palace.¹⁹

Russia also dispatched the daguerreotype to the Caucasus in the service of imperial geographical expeditions. In 1843, Sergey L. Levitsky (1819-1898), well before gaining status as a court photographer for the Romanovs, was working as a clerk for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, when he was sent to the northern Caucasus to document local sources of spring water. Hired for a special commission, he was assigned to accompany a group of General Staff officers and scholars from the Imperial Academy of Sciences²⁰ to make landscape views that could be used for future development of the region. Levitsky’s daguerreotypes (among the first series of photographic landscapes taken in Russia²¹) can be regarded as pivotal in promoting photography as a technology of cultural transfer: they provided a new model for field operations that involved dispatching photographers on state-sponsored military expeditions within the empire; and, because they received gold medals at the 1849 French photographic society exhibition in Paris, Levitsky’s

¹⁵ Elliot, 1992b, pp. 11 and 26-27, respectively.

¹⁶ Barkhatova, 1992, p. 26.

¹⁷ Abramov, undated; Bunimovich, 1950, pp. 5-6.

¹⁸ Elliot (ed.), 1992a, p. 15.

¹⁹ Sheikh and Pérez González, 2013, p. 1; Tahmasbpour, 2013, p. 7. Citing Yahya Zoka, Ali Behdad writes that cameras were gifted to the Shah between 1839 and 1842, and almost simultaneously by Nicholas I and Queen Victoria: Behdad, 2001, p. 144.

²⁰ Sonntag, 2011, p. 128; *Eadem*, 2012, p. 9.

²¹ Loginov, 2008, p. 853.

Caucasian views dramatically (and emotionally) showed how Russian technological mastery could be exported to the world stage.²² This active transfer of photography for both expeditions and exhibitions increased significantly after the Crimean War, as the empire expanded further into Asia and the state perfected the technology for military purposes. It is this military association that would come to largely characterize the early history of Russian photography in the age of modernity.

European transfers & the first Russian imperial photographic establishment

By the early-to-mid-1850s, photography became an urgent state affair. While Nicholas I had always been an avid proponent of photography for its mystery and novelty, he also began to understand its importance for new applications of military strategy and surveillance. No event underscored this more than the Crimean War, where Russian self-representation paled in comparison to the two leading photographic nations, France and Britain.²³ Archival collections show us that very few Russian or Russia-aligned photographers documented Russian interests between the outbreak of war in 1853 and the nation's defeat in 1856. Among the few examples are well known and virtually unknown photographers: the famous Hungarian Carol Szathmari (1812-1887), acclaimed at the time by Russian and British royals alike, compiled albums of nearly 200 prints that pictured both sides of the war, including notable Russian generals like Gorchakov and Soimonov; Vasily Timm (1820-1898), editor of the *Russian Art Gazette*, published a lithographic reproduction from a photographic portrait of nurses that he made during the war;²⁴ and Fedor Orlov (1844-1909) documented destruction in Sevastopol, Inkerman and Balaklava among other locales after the war in 1856, as pictured in a small album of thirty-three existing prints.²⁵ These examples (few in number largely because of Russian state censorship) hardly compare to the multitude by Allied photographers, who made thousands of negatives using the latest wet-plate collodion process to document heroes, camp life, military supply lines and consequences of the conflict. Ill-equipped to counter this optical disadvantage, Nicholas I ordered the General Staff in the Military Topographical Department (*Voенно-topograficheskii otdel*, *VTO* henceforth) to immediately begin research and experimentation with this process in 1854.²⁶ This order would spur a new wave of cultural transfer on photography between Russia and its European counterparts.

²² Sonntag, 2011, p. 128.

²³ For more on the visual representation of this war, see Keller, 2013.

²⁴ Kerr, 1997, pp. 23, 70, 84.

²⁵ Sonntag, 2012, pp. 4-7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Responding to Russia's dismal outcomes and the growing costs of war, the tsar's principal motivation for officially promoting photography as an instrument of the state was to modernize mapping,²⁷ which would effectively modernize the empire. Scholars have routinely identified Russian "backwardness" as a cause for its military defeat in the Crimean War, its technological shortcomings amounting to antiquated weaponry and an absence of railways. Yet, given the ascendancy of the collodion process, we can argue that there was a third technological disadvantage:²⁸ Russia, unlike its adversaries, simply lacked a rapid mechanical means of reproducing copy upon copy of maps that relayed strategic geographical knowledge. Nicholas I, therefore, accepted what other global military institutions had already begun to adopt: that, as an innovative visual technology, photography could both improve and speed up cartographic printing and reproduction; and that this state-of-the-art technology could be adapted and perfected for military purposes. Because of the sovereign's patronage, formal training for photographers would begin in earnest by the end of the war through an official photographic establishment set up in St. Petersburg at the General Staff.

After his father's death, Alexander II (1818-1881) continued the pursuit to modernize cartography, and in the autumn of 1855, the tsar ordered the opening of the first imperial photographic establishment (*fotozavedenie*) to be housed in the General Staff's *VTO* next to the Winter Palace.²⁹ This establishment, or "pavilion" consisting of a chemical laboratory and photography studio (*fotograficheskii pavi'ion*) — installed at rooftop levels with south-facing glass ceilings to allow for natural light — would be overseen by a Captain Pisarevsky from 1856 to 1861, and then by his successor, Artillery Lieutenant Nikolai A. Sytenko from 1862 to 1867.³⁰ During their consecutive five-year tenures, Pisarevsky and Sytenko adequately equipped the studio workshop and lab to run intensive experimentation, such that it advanced with precision and speed, and was based entirely on European materials, instruction, and application.

Each officer was sent abroad to gather intelligence on the military photographic establishments of their western counterparts. Pisarevsky returned from Germany with lenses, glass plates for negatives, chemical solutions and other supplies and from France with an architectural plan of the studio at the Imperial Naval Department.³¹ This initial mission would furnish the *VTO* establishment with a

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁸ Sonntag, 2011, p. 32.

²⁹ Sonntag, 2012, p. 4; *Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossijskoi imperii*, No. 29663 (September 21, 1855), Petrograd: Gosudarstvennaja Tipografiia, 1856, pp. 596-599.

³⁰ Sonntag, 2011, p. 128.

³¹ *Eadem*, 2012, p. 4.

working laboratory, storage spaces, thirteen workshops and two large studios with five cameras.³² He additionally designed formal lectures on chemistry for the *VTO*, modeled on pedagogical methods developed in the various European photography establishments he toured, most notably that of the British Royal Engineers³³ (these lessons on technique were combined with classes on composition and pictorial design taught by Professor I.A. Bogdan from the Imperial Academy of Arts).

Sytenko directed the photography pavilion on similar guidelines as Pisarevsky, but intensified transfers in technology and information through a heightened frequency of open interaction that suggests mutual exchange with his European colleagues. Making several trips to England which also included France, Belgium and Austria, he returned with the latest in technical information and equipment³⁴ and what would be his greatest contribution: a new design plan for the *VTO* pavilion renovation based on that for the British Royal Engineers.³⁵ In brief, we have a Russian establishment founded on the best European photographic developments available at the time: German and French optical instruments and materials combined with British printing technologies, instruction and studio-lab designs.

When fully operational, this *VTO* establishment quickly and efficiently produced maps that would rationalize military operations in the field. Yet, this specialized knowledge in “military photography” (*voennaia fotografiia*) produced more than just maps: It also produced the more conventional genres of photography — landscapes and portraiture — translated for military purposes (ie., to survey land for planning infrastructure, exploiting natural resources, positioning for surveillance and classifying ethnic groups). Previous methods of visualizing local places and people had been hand-drawn by military draftsmen, who typically rendered “views and types” as imagined, picturesque fantasy. Photography, however, permanently displaced this medium as it captured tack-sharp detail, conveying an immediate and undeniable accuracy, not to mention authenticity. The highly trained group of *VTO* military photographers consisted largely of those attached to engineering and artillery units, and their technical services were invaluable.³⁶ Representatives in institutions like the General Staff Academy, the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, the Academy of Sciences and the Naval Ministry actively sought after their newly Russian photographic expertise.

³² “Peterburgskaia letopis’,” *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, No. 117 (May 31, 1859), cited from Barkhatova, 2009, p. 72 (fn. 64).

³³ Sonntag, 2011, pp. 36-37.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

As many scholars have well documented, photography became an instrument to serve the chief scientific disciplines as a means to visually translate, promote and spread research data and theoretical ideas that influenced state policy and guided empire-building. The collodion era came on the heels of the European “era of statistical enthusiasm” (1830-1848);³⁷ and in Russia, statistics invigorated the dominant field of geography, giving rise to “military statistics” which has been attributed to a powerful proponent of photography, Dmitry A. Miliutin (1816-1912), who would become Minister of War and key architect of the Central Asian conquest.

Similarly, photography would significantly shape ethnology and anthropology, two burgeoning fields that entered Russia with transfers of scientific communication and exchange. In St. Petersburg, co-founder of the Geographical Society and eminent German naturalist, Karl Ernst von Baer (1792-1876) remarked on the “real utility [of photography] for ethnological study”: for him, photography was a useful technological tool for classifying the diverse peoples of the Russian empire.³⁸ He specifically relied on guidelines for ethnic portraiture that were set by Paul Broca (1824-1880), president of the French Anthropological Society. Broca proposed a set of imaging standards that became widely and formally adopted across Russia to inventory people as “types” using the perspectives of *en face* and profile; this French anthropological practice specifically called for the subjects to be photographed naked, which Russian photographers (military, scientist and entrepreneurial) categorically rejected in favor of picturing nationalities with their native dress, coiffure, and even daily implements.

The transfer of these adapted ideas also spread across the foremost Russian intellectual circles in the 1860s and 1870s. For example, in 1866, Alexei Fedchenko (1844-1873), head of the photographic committee and of the Turkestan Pavilion for the 1867 *All-Russian Ethnographic Exhibition* in Moscow (which was overseen by anthropologist, Anatoli P. Bogdanov [1834-1896]), obtained a translation of *Broca’s General Instructions (Obshchii instruksii Broka)*; these would be used to establish specifications for ethnographic photographs that would be gathered from varying provinces for display.³⁹ And, as photography became integral to science, the Imperial Russian Geographical Society published a variation of these “instructions” in their journal in 1872.⁴⁰

³⁷ Holquist, 2001, pp. 112-114.

³⁸ Sonntag, 2011, pp. 47-49.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴⁰ Sonntag, 2011, p. 49; for these distinctions and guidelines, see Anonymous, 1872, pp. 86-88.

Once perfecting this technology and recognizing its applications, *VTO* photography became a modern mode of mapping strategic information for the state by providing reliable and comprehensive pictorial information about the territories and their populations. Consequently, the state authorities quickly deployed it to map outlying regions of the empire, particularly the Asian borderlands of the Caucasus and Central Asia. One critical outcome of this internal transfer that combined military and intellectual cultures was a veritable proliferation of albums, largely initiated during the reign of Alexander II when Russia modeled this global era of album-mania that spanned from the 1850s to the 1880s.⁴¹ Albums — as unique photographic objects which began to appear regularly as portable image galleries and pictorial inventories of newly controlled Asian possessions — epitomized and encapsulated this cultural transfer of technology and ideas that were carried across the empire into ministerial hands, intellectual institutional and libraries and were even showcased abroad in exhibitions.

***VTO* photographers and studios to the Asian margins of empire**

Transfers to the Caucasus

Photographic transfers and field activity by *VTO* staff occurred in the Caucasus, before moving into Central Asia. If Sergey Levitsky first brought photographic technologies to the northern Caucasus for state purposes, Colonel Alexander Ivanitsky (1811-1872) first brought them to the southern Caucasus. There, as a chief mountain army engineer, he produced more than what were among the earliest photographs of that region: he spearheaded the installation of a permanent studio for the Russian regional administration to be operated by a highly proficient staff known as the Caucasus Army Corps of Photographers.

As Pisarevsky was travelling to Europe on a buying trip for the *VTO* photographic establishment in St. Petersburg, his counterpart in Tbilisi, Ivanitsky, was making a substantial purchase in Paris from Charles Chevalier in 1857.⁴² Ivanitsky was tasked by “the commander-in-chief of the Caucasus Army,” Viceroy Aleksandr Baryatinsky (1855-1881), to completely furnish a “photographic establishment” equipped with dark room, laboratory and studio. Trunks arrived two years later holding 119 items, like chemicals, dark room lamps, glass plates, storage boxes, cardboard mounts, English and French “positive” paper, and lenses for landscapes and portraits. By 1862, the establishment would be staffed by officers and topographers sent from the Caucasus army, who had been trained in St. Petersburg

⁴¹ Sonntag, 2011, pp. 8, 51.

⁴² *Eadem*, 2012, p. 9. Personal gratitude to Gia Gersamia for his sharing this information with the author [Sonntag] on June 8, 2012.

“in the photographic art” (*fotograficheskoe iskusstvo*) for the following areas: “copying, enlarging and reducing maps and plans, as well as making photographic and stereographic views from nature.”⁴³ Serving in many respects as a VTO satellite pavilion to the one in the imperial capital, it officially opened in January 1863, advertising the photographic services of the “Caucasus Army photographic establishment of the General Staff.”

Before Ivanitsky retired from the military in 1866 as Major General of the Caucasus Mountain Engineers, he successfully facilitated an impressive inter-regional technology transfer that shaped a highly specialized, very productive and new unit of officers collectively known as the Caucasus Army Corps of Photographers. Some of these military photographers, who later opened very successful studios after their service, were Vladimir V. Barkanov, Dmitry Ermakov and Dmitry Nikitin. Such officers applied photo-technologies to countless geographical surveys to map and gather statistical data on geology, hydrology and communication routes as well as on tangible cultural heritage (as seen in ancient monuments and church estates) and ethnographic knowledge of the diverse population. Working under the auspices of local administrative districts, they moved across the trans-Caucasian territory documenting Kuban, Tersk, Dagestan, Kutaisi and Yerevan (which overlap modern-day Chechnya, Dagestan, Georgia, Ossetia and Armenia).⁴⁴ Moreover, like Levitsky, they accompanied scholars from the capital and regional branches of the Russian Geographical Society and Archaeological Commission as well as members of the Caucasus Statistical Committee;⁴⁵ these researchers equally shared the growing interest in photography’s capacity to convey and disseminate knowledge visually.

Once transferred from the field to the pavilion, staff of the army photography corps printed geographical maps and military sensitive “situational images” (*situatsionnye snimki*).⁴⁶ For these pictures, the photographers designated spots that were specifically chosen as strategic interest or as important local heritage fitting the general categories of “views, types and archaeological subjects.” They could then compile albums from hundreds of negatives and panoramic plates (*s'emochnye listy*).⁴⁷ For example, in 1866, the army corps surveyed the Kutaisi province to update maps, while also making nearly 1,300 negatives that would be narrowed to about five-dozen to print for a single album.⁴⁸ Working within an imperial paradigm, their images had to appeal to Russian state interests: it is important to note, that in the

⁴³ Sonntag, 2012, pp. 9-10; *eadem*, 2011, p. 126.

⁴⁴ *Eadem*, 2012, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11; *eadem*, 2011, p. 132.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

background and foreground of many photographs, there is an unmistakable Russian administrative presence represented as newly added infrastructure (ie., forts, roads, bridges, hospitals, customs houses, police and postal stations, lamp posts along wide boulevards, and Orthodox churches). By the 1870s, many photographs, like those showing construction development along the Georgian Military Highway, would also conspicuously include telegraph poles and railroad tracks. These symbols of modern European civilization contrasted with the traditional life of so many local ethnic communities.⁴⁹

Although a seemingly topographical project, the Army Corps of Photographers were also involved in an orientalist enterprise. This orientalist view dictated a field practice that documented local populations according to nationality types, local customs and architectural antiquities. In this context, *VTO* military photography can be construed as a technology of power. By collecting images that exaggerated exotic beauties or menacing mountain warriors, these images translated traditional Russian literary perceptions of the Circassian “Noble Savage” into a visual-visible Georgian “Other”; these perceptions then effectively merged all the “Caucasian” cultures into a single sensational trope. If violence and fear functioned as instruments of the military campaign, photography served to picture Russian legitimacy over a culturally rich, multi-ethnic, and orientalized region.

Several albums produced by the Caucasus Army Corps of Photographers circulated nationally and internationally to exhibitions, where they received high recognition. They were viewed from St. Petersburg to Moscow and Berlin in 1865 to Paris in 1867.⁵⁰ As noted above, albums served to synthesize elements of photographic transfer as much as to symbolize cultural competence in their technical presentation and visual wealth. Once the *VTO* began to mobilize photographers to Central Asia, this transfer would be initially wrought with technical and political tension but end in what was perceived as Russian imperial triumph.

Transfers to Central Asia

While Ivanitsky had begun to develop a state-run photography establishment in the Caucasus by 1857, no such facility existed anywhere near or in Central Asia, yet. Technically, the remoteness and aridity of the region posed problems for making pictures with wet-plate collodion negatives; but the larger problem was political: Russia had not fully vanquished the territory of foreign sovereigns. Establishing a *VTO* photographic presence in the region would take several years longer than in the Caucasus; but serving as a model, the Tbilisi-based *VTO* satellite pavilion and its

⁴⁹ Sonntag, 2012, p. 10.

⁵⁰ *Eadem*, 2011, pp. 121-155; Sonntag, 2012, pp. 12-13.

image output directly influenced provincial governors to the east, and in the end, two photographic establishments would be set up to document the vast Central Asian territory.

In 1861, when the General Staff *VTO* in St. Petersburg officially began to transfer trained military photographers to its Caucasus pavilion, it simultaneously focused on Central Asia. As in the Caucasus, a Central Asian state-run studio was crucial for military surveillance, and the first officers trained in photography (*fotograficheskoe delo*) were dispatched from the capital to a burgeoning establishment in Orenburg to renovate cartographic printing capabilities.⁵¹ Because Orenburg served as a staging ground for military and scientific expeditions to the southern Kazakh Steppe and the Central Asian oasis regions, this provincial capital was strategic for the *VTO* studio. Yet, due to the aggressive onset of expansionist campaigns in 1863, the pavilion temporarily paused field and printing activity. Finally, in 1865, the newly appointed Orenburg governor-general, Adjutant General N.A. Kryzhanovsky (1818-1888) requested advanced instruction for his officers from Sytenko, and by 1866, the Orenburg *VTO* began conducting surveillance work in newly conquered lands and making the first modern maps of the region.⁵²

These maps would begin to delineate the growing territorial strength of the Russian empire in Asia and show how tsarist troops “closed the lines” of the steppe frontier, when the southern oasis cities fell in rapid succession from 1863 to 1867, diminishing the Kokand khanate. In time, these cities would be added to the Orenburg *krai* and largely consolidated within the Turkestan *oblast'*, a new imperial district formally established in 1865 stretching from the Aral Sea to Issyk Kul. This *oblast'* was initially governed out of Tashkent by Mikhail G. Cherniaev (1828-1898), then Dmitry I. Romanovsky (1825-1881), and finally overseen by Kryzhanovsky until 1867, when the *oblast'* would form part of the Turkestan *krai*, ruled by Konstantin von Kaufman (1818-1882). Under Kaufman, who was also an enthusiastic proponent of photography having witnessed its development in the imperial capital given his long experience in high positions of state government, a *VTO* photographic establishment would be set up in Tashkent by 1869. Like his administrative contemporaries and close colleagues, Kaufman well understood the power of photography to map, classify and inventory, and he actively and ambitiously commissioned *VTO* photography to promote Russia's only colony and largest province through such album projects as *The Turkestan Album, 1871-1872*.⁵³

⁵¹ *Eadem*, 2011, pp. 164-165.

⁵² *Eadem*, 2012, pp. 13-14.

⁵³ Gorshenina, 2007; Sonntag, 2011.

Tensions, combining state and regional politics that were wrapped up in the making of this vast borderland territory, would be played out in the activities of VTO photographers, who like their counterparts in the Caucasus, served as intermediaries to map and picture the region as commanders ordered. Photography albums and their production histories can demonstrate the early shortcomings and subsequent successes of transporting this visual technology to the khanates, which were not met without certain conflicts.

Two VTO Photography Albums and Contexts of Tension

In 1857, War Minister Nikolai Sukhozanet (1794-1871) recommended that officers organizing the imminent diplomatic mission to Khiva and Bukhara include “the photographic apparatus for the khanate expedition.”⁵⁴ The lack of a localized pavilion in the region did not prevent expeditions from hauling camera equipment and accessories to the desert by camel-drawn cart and boat on the Aral Sea. Neither did the possibility of local tensions from native populations encountered in the Ust Urt plateau, Khiva or Bukhara deter the photographer, Artillery Lieutenant Anton S. Murenko (1837-1875). Rather, resistance to including photography on this high-profile mission originated with the campaign commander, Nikolai P. Ignatiev (1832-1908), who seemed simply ignorant to the optical advantages of the new apparatus and was suspicious of its cumbersome presence.

Ignatiev was charged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its auxiliary Asiatic Department as well as the Ministries of War and Navy to lead what would be a six-month diplomatic mission to secure commercial and political relations with the independent Central Asian states. In what amounted to an international probe, the mission was intended as a measure to assess, and potentially counter, British influence in the region. In this climate of espionage, Ignatiev expressed his frustrations with Murenko, who was hired to accompany two topographers for gathering visual data and testing the technology in the desert climates of Khiva and Bukhara.⁵⁵ The young leader saw the presence of a photographer as a security threat, able to draw immediate and unwanted suspicion (recalling the tragic fate of Stoddart and Conolly). Ignatiev’s disdain was also one of expedition logistics: he simply regretted that one of the carts used to carry the photographer’s equipment had been originally intended to haul artillery shells that would be used for sounding on the Aral Sea.

The resulting album contained twenty-seven salt prints under the title *From Orenburg across Khiva to Bukhara, Photographic Drawings of Artillery Lieutenant*

⁵⁴ Read Sonntag, 2011, p. 62.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56.

Murenko.⁵⁶ It represents a survey that can be divided into six successive locations of the mission itinerary: Orenburg, the Ust Urt plateau, Aral Sea and Amu Darya, Khiva, Bukhara, and, Fort No. 1 (Kazalinsk) on the Syr Darya.⁵⁷ Combining photographic technologies developed by Archer and Talbot, Murenko's images are underwhelming in their lack of sharpness, which required retouching that rendered them more reminiscent of watercolors than photographs. Yet, they succeeded, too, for several reasons.

First, Murenko was the first to photographically document a naval expedition on the Aral Sea, one that was specifically commissioned by the head of the Imperial Navy, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich (1827-1892), to commemorate the very first naval expedition of Aleksey I. Butakov (1816-1869). That maritime campaign occurred in 1848 and was depicted in "an album of drawings" compiled by the poet and painter Taras G. Shevchenko (1814-1861).⁵⁸ Second, it demonstrated how local populations reacted to this innovation. Upon arriving to Khiva, Ignatiev's mission was placed under house arrest for the first three weeks in a palace garden courtyard, where they were constantly watched day and night with armed guards positioned on the ground and rooftops. It is under these conditions of the photographic encounter that Murenko made his Khivan portraits. Because the camera was initially perceived as a weapon, sitters were tentative at first, which is perhaps why "types" include the gardener and dragoman; once the magic of the image was known to be benign, Murenko photographed the khan's sons with their favorite Borzoi hounds among other inhabitants of the royal compound.

Finally, the album earned Murenko a silver medal at a meeting of the Russian Geographical Society back in the capital, which created a precedent for the state to deploy photography on future surveys of Central Asia as a campaign instrument. Moreover, this album gave Murenko authorial recognition that also garnered prestige for the *VTO* photographic establishment. This public acknowledgement would be denied to Captain Mikhail K. Priorov, a *VTO* engineer and sapper from Orenburg whose photographs of the Steppe Commission in 1865 were used to compile the second album of the region, *Out of Central Asia, 1867 (Iz Srednei Azii, 1867)*.

Commissioned by Orenburg Governor-General Kryzhanovsky himself, this album of thirty-nine photographs represents the first most important campaign in the region after conquest, documenting the Steppe Commission of 1865 and 1866. Led by

⁵⁶ Morozov, 1953, p. 14; Devel', 1994, pp. 259-271; Dluzhnevskaya, 2006, pp. 282-291; *eadem*, 2011, pp. 32-34. The album copy at the Institute for the History of Material Culture (FA, op. Q211) has 24 photographs.

⁵⁷ Sonntag, 2011, pp. 54-89.

⁵⁸ *Eadem*, p. 66.

Fedor K. Giers (1824-1891), the Steppe Commission was organized to gather information on the economic, social, legal, and political institutions of the Kazakh populations. Kryzhanovsky assigned Priorov to accompany commission members in the second year, when surveys took place in the southern parts of the Orenburg province and specifically covered new Central Asian colonial possessions. Significantly, this Commission also included an archeological mission led by Petr I. Lerch (1828-1884), who was the same orientalist on the 1858 Ignatiev Mission to Khiva and Bukhara. Part of Priorov's assignment was to follow Lerch on what would be a five-month archaeological expedition to produce plans and sketches, in addition to making photographs.⁵⁹ While there are several portraits of local elite, the album images largely picture these surveys and scientific observations made at Forts No. 1 at Kazalinsk and Perovsky as well as in the cities of Shimkent, Turkestan, Tashkent, Khujand and Ura Tiube (today Istaravshan in Tajikistan).⁶⁰

In considering the reasons for Kryzhanovsky to officially dispatch Priorov, and effectively photography, on this Commission, several points stand out. First, Kryzhanovsky may have been reacting to the call for the 1867 International Exposition in Paris as well as the Ethnographic Exhibition in Moscow held that same year; given the recent introduction of photography in Central Asia, he knew that its representation would be severely lacking.⁶¹ Second, Kryzhanovsky was pressed to exploit the new medium, given that he invested much in the organization of the Orenburg pavilion. Third, Lerch's inclusion on the geographical surveys suggests that the governor-general may have reacted to a request by the Imperial Archaeological Commission to investigate the significance of the discovered archaeological site of Djankent. And finally, as a special committee member of the Steppe Commission together with Fedor Giers, he was personally and politically interested in the proposals that would reorganize Central Asia. Despite the importance and expense of photographic applications to ruling Central Asia at the time, Priorov (unlike Murenko) was outwardly ignored for his visual contributions.

Using modern terminology to describe that era, we can say that the "media impact" of *Out of Central Asia* was very high, despite the fact that his name was practically

⁵⁹ Lerch, 1870.

⁶⁰ Sonntag, 2011, pp. 175-188.

⁶¹ For the Paris exhibition, Kryzhanovsky was able to send only a few collection items of agricultural tools belonging to the Khwaja Yusupov of Tashkent; in Moscow, Central Asia was already displayed by drawings of "primitive" (*diko-kamennikh*) Kyrgyz and the Greater Horde of Kazakhs by P.M. Kosharov, several mannequins dressed in traditional costumes and various items collected by Captain A.A. Kushakevich, the Governor of War for Khujand district, and it seems a few photographs by Priorov. See Gorshenina, 2009, pp. 136-137; Sonntag, 2011, pp. 159, 184-185.

never mentioned in the following context: Lerch included these photographs during a presentation at the Russian Geographical Society in 1867, but he failed, however, to focus on the role of the photographer, with whom he had developed a strained relationship. Priorov was again disregarded a year later, when some of his photographs were published by Petr I. Pashino in his description of a journey to Central Asia entitled *Turkestan in 1866*.⁶² Again, in 1869, some of his images depicting archaeological sites were anonymously displayed in an exhibition that was organized at the Ministry of State Domains.⁶³ While ignoring or simply overlooking any acknowledgement to the photographer, this exhibition was due to the efforts of Vasily V. Vereshchagin and none other than Konstantin von Kaufman.⁶⁴ Indeed, he would become in the subsequent fifteen years the living personification of Russian Turkestan, which, as previously stated, resulted from the 1867 Steppe Commission. Drafted in two statutes that proposed separate administrations for the Steppe region and for the newly conquered regions of the Turkestan *oblast'*, this outcome entirely opposed Kryzhanovsky's view and dashed all hopes for his rule in the southern Central Asian khanates. All land stretching the extent of the Syr Darya in the Turkestan *oblast'* — represented in Priorov's album — was reallocated to form the new Turkestan governor-generalship. The first governor-general of this newly consolidated Turkestan province was handed to Kaufman, based on the recommendation of his friend, War Minister Miliutin.

Photographic Transfer among Local Asian Populations

During this colonial period, officials of the Russian military administration represented the majority of carriers involved in the transfer of photography to Central Asia. Uniquely acting as both patrons and proponents effectively of Culture A (culture-inventors) and Culture B (transfer adapters), they used political influence to promote photography as a technology new to the region and borrowed an established set of European theories and applications as well as themes and topics. The role of the local population in this process as a receiving agent, able to take an active role in selecting innovations that complemented or conformed to native conditions and customs, ranged from negligible to none.

Arguably, the initial reaction to this cultural transfer from the local point of view was rejection. Photography failed to find a worthy place at the court of the emirs of Bukhara as well as that of the khans of Khiva. Outside of Murenko enjoying freedom after experiencing a short-term house arrest in a Khivan palace when on the Ignatiev mission in 1857, most examples by Europeans to introduce this technology to the

⁶² Pashino, 1868, figures 5-8.

⁶³ Sonntag, 2011, 164-175; *eadem*, 2012, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁴ Gorshenina, 2009, pp. 136-147.

Central Asian population ended grimly: British officers, Stoddart and Conolly, were beheaded by the Bukharan emir in 1848 (*supra*); Frenchman Henri de Coulibeuf de Blocqueville was jailed in Khiva in 1860⁶⁵; and Italian expeditioners, Modesto Miro Gavazzi, Count Pompeo Litta Biumi Resta and Ferdinando Meazza, were imprisoned in Bukhara in 1863.⁶⁶ All had tried to bring the magic and utility of photography to Central Asia, but failed. Even when Central Asian sovereignties had been officially reduced to Russian protectorates in the late 1860s and early 1870s, efforts to introduce photography transpired with little to no avail.

Unlike the photographic exchanges that defined the decades-long technological transfers of the Persian kings, Mohammad Shah (r. 1834-1848) and Nasreddin Shah (r. 1848-96),⁶⁷ the Turkestan rulers could not surround themselves with Western instructors and officers trained in photography. They could neither create their own court workshops, like those opening in Tehran as early as 1848, nor could they introduce specialized training courses on photography, like those held in institutions resembling the Tehran College Dar ul-Funun which added photography and chemistry to its mandatory curriculum in 1851. The khans and emirs could not send their subjects to study photography in Europe, while the first group of Iranian students from Tehran had already reached Paris by 1858.⁶⁸

The restrictive situation in Central Asia also contrasts with that of the Ottoman empire. There, since 1863, the Armenian Abdullah brothers (*Abdullah Frères*) operated an atelier that also served as the official studio for the Sultan's court. They produced both state images authorized by the Ottoman Porte and touristic, orientalized photographs for European travelers. So, captivated by the art, Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909) later installed a personal dark room at his Yildiz Palace; and in 1892, he issued a decree to regulate the manner in which European travelers could photograph his subjects.⁶⁹ Moreover, in the same photographic representations that he himself created, Abdulhamid II visibly attempted to depict the Ottoman empire as a modern equivalent to European powers. His photographs conveyed a desire to assert himself on the world stage as the monarch of a great country that spanned both Europe and Asia. In fact, according to modernization trends that were defining and reshaping the late-nineteenth century, the sultan was also developing contemporary technologies and modernizing education. His "imperial self-portrait" did not play into picturing an exotic extravagant power, but

⁶⁵ Blocqueville, 1980; Tahmasbpour, 2013, p. 8.

⁶⁶ Gorshenina, 2003, p. 348; Gavazzi, 2007, pp. 64-97; Bitto, 2014, pp. 161-173.

⁶⁷ Behdad, 2001, p. 145.

⁶⁸ Tahmasbpour, 2013, p. 7.

⁶⁹ Gavin, Ş. Tekin, and G. Alpay Tekin, 1988; Pinguet and Gigord, 2011; Roberts, 2013, pp. 53 (citation), 54-74; *eadem*, 2015; Deringil, 1999, p. 152.

one rather of regal prestige that naturally displayed symbols of his own personal wealth and success like his collections of yachts and horses (collections that were not uncommon among European monarchs).⁷⁰

Unlike the Persian or Afghan shahs,⁷¹ Ottoman sultans or Ethiopian rulers⁷², the emirs of Bukhara and khans of Khiva did not create on their own initiative any visual record of their possessions for their own status. Since they failed to maintain independent diplomacy, they also could not control and export a reputable likeness to Russia or to Europe (although Bukharan emirs actively participated in exhibitions with their own ethnographic collections, themselves often being part of the display!). They relied entirely on images produced and purveyed by Russian photographers. For example, the Bukharan emir, Muzaffar (1834-1885), spent several months — from February to June 1884 — negotiating at multiple colonial, ministerial levels to obtain twenty-five photographs for himself made by one Savenkov on a journey through the emirate.⁷³

We cannot, however, speak of a complete absence of precedents. In 1872, according to the studies of Valeriya Prishchepova,⁷⁴ the ruler of Kokand, Khudoyar Khan (1845-1875), and his son, Nasireddin Bek (the governor of Andijan), had become interested in photography since their encounters with Lieutenant G.E. Krivtsov, who took portraits of the khan and his palace for the *Turkestan Album*. Soon after, the khan requested that Krivtsov sent to Kokand and Andijan the following: cameras, photo equipment, and detailed instructions (to which Krivtsov added oral instructions for the khan's envoy named "Kokandian Berdykul"). Unfortunately, the first independent experiments failed. And by 1876, the Russian conquest of the Kokand khanate postponed further darkroom discoveries until a much later date.

From our discussion of this case study on cultural transfers of early photography in imperial Russia, it is difficult to speak at length about successful and equitable transfers in the southern periphery of the Russian empire.

⁷⁰ Deringil, 1999, p. 152.

⁷¹ Seraj and Dupree, 1979; Hanifi, 2014.

⁷² Sohler, 2012.

⁷³ Tsentral'nyj Gosudarstvennyj Arkhiv Respubliki Uzbekistan (TsGA RUz), F. I-5, op. 1, d. 1378.

⁷⁴ Prishchepova, 2011, pp. 21-22.

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Summary

Early photography as cultural transfer in imperial Russia: visual technology, mobility and modernity in the Caucasus and Central Asia

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Photography is well understood as a global technology that rapidly circulated by the mid-nineteenth century, but the history of its early transfer to and within the Russian imperial context has been overlooked. This paper will focus on the technological transfer of photography from the 1840s to the 1870s, applying the theory of cultural transfer to examine various case studies of modernity along a trajectory from West to East. It considers exchanges of this visual technology from its European origins to Russia, and then from Russia to colonized territories in Asia. Specifically, this route of transfer assumes that from France, England and Germany to Russia, St. Petersburg and Moscow, and then, through the Caucasus and Orenburg, to Central Asia. This study brings to light new and original research on the general history of photography, its imperial relationship and applications for colonial power as well as its development and circulation within contexts of the late Russian empire.

Keywords: Photography, Visual technology, Modernity, Transfer, Colonial Situation, Russia, Caucasus, Central Asia.

A Caucasian Utopia in Russian Literature and Politics: Alexander Griboedov and Iuri Tynianov

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Introduction

The protagonists of my paper are the Russian writer and diplomat Alexander Griboedov (1795-1829) and the literary critic Iuri Tynianov (1894-1943). Tynianov was one of the foremost representatives of Russian Formalism. Griboedov was the author of the comedy “Woe from Wit,” which all Russian schoolboys know by heart. He also wrote a “Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company,” which he considered, if one can believe some sources, the main achievement of his life. However, usually this work is hardly ever even mentioned. The “Project” was written by Griboedov in collaboration with Petr Demianovich Zaveleiskii, the soon-to-be governor of Tiflis, and it was signed by both of them in Tiflis on 17 July 1828. Two months later Griboedov, in the rank of Resident Plenipotentiary Minister representing Russia, was sent to Tabriz which at that time was a foreign mission, and from there to Persia, where he was to perish, torn to pieces by a mob of Muslim fanatics.

Approximately 100 years after the death of Griboedov Iuri Tynianov wrote his fictionalized biography.¹ By that time, Formalism had come under criticism by the Soviet authorities and those who considered themselves to be representatives of the movement had started looking for other ways to pursue their professional activities. Some, such as Tomashevski and Eichenbaum, focused on academic studies. Tynianov turned to fiction and began writing biographical novels. Prior to working on the life and career of Griboedov, he had already written a biography of Wilhelm Kuchelbecker, a Lyceum friend of Pushkin, later a Decembrist, who in the early 1820s traveled to Germany, where he became involved in a critique of German

¹ Tynianov Yuri. *Smert Vazir-Muhtara* (The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar). Leningrad: Priboj, 1929.

Romanticism, in particular, of Novalis' novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. In 1826 he was imprisoned and later exiled to Siberia for his part in the Decembrist uprising.² Until the end of his life, Tynianov worked on a fictionalized biography of Pushkin.³

Unlike Tynianov's other two novels which were in the full sense of the word biographies, *The Death of Vasir-Mukhtar* (the title of the Griboedov biography) deals, with a few retrospective digressions, with the last eleven months of Griboedov's life. To this end Tynianov transposes various earlier episodes of his life to the year 1828. There is almost no mention of Griboedov the writer, and all of the action revolves around the Caucasus Project, with which, according to Tynianov, Griboedov signed his own death sentence.

Here the question naturally arises: why did Tynianov, forced, after the defeat of Formalism, to turn to fiction and literary heroes, shy away from questions of literature, focusing instead on matters of Russian foreign policy and diplomacy? Why was the Caucasus a key topic for him? And should we not see in the biography of Griboedov a hidden message, a story, not so much about *the affairs of bygone days*,⁴ but rather about Tynianov's own time and its problems?

However, this story has still another mystery: what role did the Caucasus Project actually play in the fate of Griboedov and what really were the goals he pursued with it?

Way of Life and Life's Journey

Before we turn to the Caucasus Project which, according to Tynianov, played such a fatal role in his life, let us review some of the major facts of Griboedov's biography. Born in Moscow, Griboedov graduated the Moscow Noble Boarding House (pension) and studied at Moscow University from 1810 to 1812. He attended lectures on ethics and politics and clearly demonstrated a penchant for archeology and history as well as literature. His first burlesque comedy "Dmitry Drianskoi" (which has not survived) ridiculed the brawls between Russian and German professors at Moscow University. Griboedov then obtained a commission in a hussar regiment. 1815 was a year of his numerous literary debuts; by this time, he had resigned from the military and was living in St. Petersburg. That year he translated Creuzé de Lesser's play "Family Secret" ("Le Secret du ménage," 1809) and published the parody of French

² Tynianov Yuri. *Kuehla*. Leningrad, Cubus, 1925.

³ Tynianov Yuri. *Pushkin*. Part 1. Leningrad, Hudozestvennaja Literatura, 1936.

⁴ From Pushkin's "Ruslan and Liudmilla."

comedy, "A Young Couple." In the spring of 1816 he published an article "On the Analysis of a Free Translation of Buerger's Ballad 'Lenore.'"⁵ This was an attack on Zhukovskii's translation of the ballad and a defense of one by Katenin, which put him in the camp of the so-called literary "archaists."⁶ In the same year Griboedov's name appeared on the list of full members of the Masonic Lodge "Les Amis Réunis."

In 1817 Griboedov entered the civil service in the College of Foreign Affairs, leading a Bohemian lifestyle in a circle of writers and actors. In the same year a "four-person duel" (partie carrée) between Zavadovskii-Sheremetev and Griboedov-Iakubovich over Istomina, the ballerina who Pushkin immortalized in *Eugene Onegin*,⁷ took place. Istomina's lover, Sheremetev, was mortally wounded in the stomach. Since Zavadovskii had to take Sheremetev immediately to the city, their seconds, Iakubovich and Griboedov postponed their duel (it took place the next year in Tiflis; Griboedov was wounded in the left hand). Popular opinion condemned Griboedov for the tragic outcome of events. He accepted an appointment as secretary of the Russian legation in Persia, which may have been a kind of disguised exile.

In August 1818 Griboedov left for Tabriz where the diplomatic mission was located. Concerned about the fate of Russian soldiers in Iranian captivity, he wrote in his travel diary of 1819: "Hassles over the prisoners. Rage and sadness... I would give my life for my unfortunate compatriots." From January 1820 to 1823 Griboedov alternately lived in Tiflis and in Persia. He studied Arabic, Turkish, Georgian and Persian. At the same time, he began to work on his comedy "Woe from Wit." From February 1822, he was Secretary in the diplomatic section of General A. P. Ermolov, head of the Russian troops in Tiflis and the chief commander of Georgia. In the same year he is thought to have worked on a drama entitled "1812," apparently meant to mark the tenth anniversary of Russia's victory over Napoleonic France.

In early 1823 Griboedov took a leave from service and returned to Russia, where he lived for about two years. He wrote the first version of his famous waltz in E minor

⁵ *Syn otecestva* (Son of The Fatherland), 1816. No. 30.

⁶ Tynianov Yuri. *Arhaisty i novatory* (The archaists and innovators). Leningrad, Priboi, 1929.

⁷ Cf. in Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*:

Блистательна, полувоздушна,
Смычку волшебному послушна,
Толпою нимф окружена,
Стоит Истомина; она,
Одной ногой касаясь пола,
Другую медленно кружит,
И вдруг прыжок, и вдруг летит,
Летит, как пух от уст Эола

and completed work on a free translation of the "Prologue in the Theatre" from "Faust" and, together with Viazemskii, wrote the opera-vaudeville "Who's the Brother, Who's the Sister, or Deception after Deception." After moving to St. Petersburg, he completed "Woe from Wit" in the fall of 1824. Despite the fact that he was unable to publish or stage the comedy, it was read in salons and became widely known from handwritten copies; the literary world erupted in debates over it. However, discouraged by the fact that it was rejected by the censors, Griboedov returned to the Caucasus. He saw the play staged only once, by the officers of the Russian garrison in Erevan.

On the way to Georgia, in Kiev, Griboedov met his friends M. P. Bestuzhev-Riumin, A. Z. Murav'ev, S. I. Murav'ev-Apolstol and S. P. Trubetskoi, members of a secret society. This meeting almost had serious consequences for him: after the Decembrist uprising, during the investigation, Trubetskoi and E. P. Obolenskii named him as a member of the society. He was arrested at the fortress in Grozny on suspicion of belonging to the Decembrists and brought to St. Petersburg, but the investigation failed to find evidence of his affiliation to them. Ryleev, one of the ringleaders, defended Griboedov, declaring that he had sounded Griboedov out and had not found him suitable. Griboedov himself categorically denied any involvement, referring to the fourth act of his comedy in which he ironically depicted the conspirator Repetilov. Griboedov was released from custody with a "certificate of good health"; he was received by Nicholas I and raised to the rank of court counselor, although for some time he was kept under secret surveillance. And in early September 1826, he returned to his diplomatic post in the Caucasus, where war with Persia had broken out.

It was from this moment that the period in Griboedov's life that is of special interest to us began. General I. F. Paskevich, who was married to Griboedov's cousin, was appointed to replace Ermolov as the chief commander of Georgia, and this opened new career possibilities for him. In 1828 Griboedov took part in drawing up the Torkamānčāy Peace Treaty⁸ which was particularly favorable to Russia and when he delivered the text to St. Petersburg he was rewarded and elevated to the rank of Plenipotentiary Minister, resident of Russia in Persia. After returning to Tiflis, in July 1828, as already mentioned, he signed the "Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company," which outlined a plan for a bold economic transformation in the Caucasus. Just after he departed for Persia, to Tehran, to carry out provisions of the Torkamānčāy Treaty: to recover indemnities and to send

⁸ It was a Treaty between the Russian Empire and Persia (Iran), which ended the Russian-Persian war of 1826-1828 on terms that were favourable to Russia. It was signed in 1828 in the village of Torkamānčāy (near Tabriz). According to the terms Russian gained the territory of Eastern Armenia - Erevan and Nakhchivan khanate.

Russian subjects' home to Russia. He also presented himself to the Shah, as one of the conditions of the Turkmanchay Treaty was the Russian government's recognition of Abbas Mirza, who signed the treaty with Russia, as the heir to the Persian throne. On the day he set out for Persia, September 9, 1828, Griboedov gave Paskevich for his review an additional note concerning the "Project" that Zaveleiskii had dictated to him.

Subsequent events are well known. In the aftermath of the war and the humiliating Treaty of Torkamānčāy there was a strong anti-Russian sentiment in Persia. Soon after Griboedov's arrival in Tehran, a mob stormed the Russian embassy. The incident began when an Armenian eunuch escaped from the harem of the Persian shah and two Armenian women fled from that of his son-in-law. All three sought refuge at the Russian legation. As agreed in the Treaty of Torkamānčāy, Georgians and Armenians living in Persia were permitted to return to Georgia and Eastern Armenia. However, the Shah demanded that Griboedov return the three asylum seekers. Griboedov refused. This caused an uproar throughout the city and several thousand Persians encircled the Russian compound demanding their release.

On January 30, 1829, a crowd of Muslims emerged from mosques and stormed the Russian mission. The escaped eunuch and Griboedov, who defended himself with his sword, were among the first to be shot to death. Griboedov's mutilated body was identified by the scar on his left hand that had been wounded in the duel with Yakubovich.⁹

It would seem that Griboedov's biography could easily qualify for a novel or, in any case, for a novelized biography. And yet Tynianov, in creating his fictionalized biography of the writer, concentrated on the last two years of his life, and more precisely on his "Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company." There were many objective reasons for this decision, as the history of the "Project," as well as of the additional note, themselves constitute a kind of detective novel, and even more of one than Tynianov could have guessed.

⁹ Russian sources claim that British agents who feared Russian influence in Teheran and Persian reactionaries who were not satisfied with the Torkamānčāy Treaty were responsible for inciting the mob. English sources claim that Griboedov's behavior in Persia as the ambassador was provocative and offensive, that he ridiculed local customs. The last statement is unlikely, because he knew the customs of the country very well. In a move to compensate Russia for the attack and the death of its ambassador, the Shah sent his grandson Khosrow Mirza to St Petersburg to avoid another war and he presented the Shah Diamond to Nicholas I as a gift.

Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company: Quid pro quo

Griboedov's visible social success, his career advancement, and even his marriage to the woman he loved, the beautiful Nina Chavchavadze, daughter of his friend, the Georgian writer Alexander Chavchavadze—all of this, judging by his letters, could not make up for his troubled civic and artistic consciousness in the mid-1820s. On one hand was his comedy's lack of success; which despite the interest it aroused could not be published. On the other hand, was the tragic fate of the Decembrist rebels, many of whom were his friends. It has been suggested that "Griboedov sought to combat the atmosphere of stagnation by asserting certain principles of civil behavior.... of service to a cause, not to particular people, and to try to accomplish progressive reforms within the realm of the possible."¹⁰ Such an attempt was the project to establish the Russian Transcaucasian Company.

In fact, the idea to exploit the natural resources of the Transcaucasus dates back to 1823, when Griboedov, together with A.V. Vsevolozhskii and T. Ethier, conceived of an enterprise to exchange goods with Persia.¹¹

Griboedov's duties required that he make frequent visits to Georgia and the Caucasus. This gave him the opportunity to explore the region, its industries, agriculture, commerce, culture, way of life and local customs. Griboedov was aware that industrial development in the South Caucasus lagged behind Europe, so he had the idea of organizing a large commercial and industrial enterprise for trade with Persia modeled to a certain extent on the East India or the Russian-American Company.

In July 1828 the "Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company" received final clearance. It was aimed to ensure the strengthening of Russia's position in the Caucasus, the integration of the Caucasus into Russian economic, political and cultural space, and to unite Russia and the Caucasus into a single country. As noted, on the day of his departure to Persia, on 9 September 1828, Griboedov submitted an additional text to I.F. Paskevich entitled "Note on the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company." Griboedov had only four months to live and so apparently never found out about the fate of his project.

¹⁰ Grishunin A. L., Markovich V. M. Griboedov Alexander S., in *Russkie pisateli. 1800-1917. Biograficheskij slovar'*. Vol. 2. Moscow, Fiant, 1992. P. 22.

¹¹ See: Calma N. Kommerceskie zamysly Griboedova (Commercial plans of Griboedov), in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, t. 19-21. Moscow, 1935, p. 143-173.

After his death his co-author Zaveleiskii made an attempt to create a Trans-Caucasus trade company in Tiflis in 1831, an attempt to carry out at least a part of their joint project. In this connection, he published in the "Tiflis News" (Tiflisskie novosti Vedomosti) a slightly modified "Introduction" to the "Project" which included almost a half of the text he conceived together with Griboedov.¹² Yet this plan also remained unfulfilled.

Russian readers only became aware of the project after I.A. Shliapkin's publication of the "Introduction" in 1889 and another in 1891 together with Griboedov's "Note" in the journal "Russian Messenger" (Russkii Vestnik).¹³ The latter publication was by A. Malchinskii, a man of dubious reputation who carried out assignments for the secret police.¹⁴ In addition to the fragments of Griboedov's text, this publication also included a retelling of the missing part of the project based on an unknown source as well as negative comments on it which Malchinskii presented as belonging to Colonel I.G. Burtsov, a former Decembrist, and to Paskevich.

It has been suggested that Malchinskii's bad reputation was the reason that when in 1911-1916 the first academic edition of Griboedov's works was prepared in Russia, his publisher Nikolai Piksarov did not include either the "Note" or the "Project" but only mentioned them briefly.¹⁵

It was this dubious publication in the "Russian Messenger" that fell into the hands of Tynianov in the mid-1920s and, as we shall see, to a large extent determined the plot of his novel about Griboedov, where Burtsov's criticism of the project plays an important role. Burtsov was a man of Decembrist views whom Griboedov had perceived as a like-minded person.

In the subsequent collection of Griboedov's works published in 1940, the texts of the "Project" and "Note" were included. The editors, headed by Vladimir N. Orlov, generally accepted Malchinskii's version of events and explained the project's failure as due to Burtsov's sharp criticism, that determined Paskevich's decision to definitively reject the plan.¹⁶

¹² *Tiflisskie gubernskie novosti* 1831. № 18, 19, 20. P. 137-155.

¹³ Malsinskij A. Neizsannaja zapiska P.D; Zaveleiskogo (Unpublished note by P. D. Zaveleiskij), in *Russkij vestnik*, 1891. № 9, p. 3-7.

¹⁴ Griboedov A. S. *Polnoe sobranie socinenij*, (3 vol.). T. 3. Ed. edited by S. A. Fomichev. SPB., 2006. P. 568.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Griboedov A. S. *Socinenija*. Ed. by Vladimir Orlov. Leningrad, Goslitizdat, 1940. P. 585-608, 645-646.

This version influenced the future perception of Griboedov's project by the experts, causing them to doubt the nobility of his intentions that allegedly contradicted the "humane ideas of the Decembrists." Burtsov's "critical review" was seen in this context as evidence of disagreements that existed between Griboedov and the Decembrists. Some researchers labeled the "Project" as "the clearest evidence of the exploitative [tsarist] policy of the first half of the nineteenth century", and the goal of the Russian-Transcaucasian Company - "the organized colonization of the region».¹⁷ A shadow fell on Griboedov as an imperial colonialist.

Over time, however, the tendency to oppose Griboedov to the Decembrists gradually faded and, on the contrary, a tendency to view the "Project" as a work created from Decembrist positions came to the fore. The Decembrist pathos of the project was allegedly the reason for its rejection: "The government rejected Griboedov and Zaveleiskii's project and did not recognize it as 'their own,' which is completely understandable," commented the Soviet historian Netchkina.¹⁸

In the early 1950s in the Department of Manuscripts of the Historical Museum another document was found, entitled: "Notes of the Actual State Councilor Zhukovskii on the Draft of Griboedov and Zavileiskii's Project Concerning the Establishment of the Transcaucasian Company. 1828." Its publication by O.P. Markova, strangely, both confirmed Malshinskij's version and contradicted it.¹⁹ The document, containing summary notes by General Zhukovskii, for the first time provided the opportunity to judge the full "Project of the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company." It included the "Introduction," published in 1831 by Zaveleiskii (see above), as well as the previously lost part of the project about the conditions and rules for the future company. The text of Zhukovskii's notes was divided into paragraphs. The last three paragraphs contain information about Burtsov's review, which confirm his participation in the discussion of the project (the text of Burtsov's review has not survived, but Zhukovskii summarized it in a general form: "After consideration Colonel Burtsov gave an indecisive response but was highly concerned [uzhasalsia] by the scale of the enterprise, from which he feared unfavorable consequences for the company due to the incompatibility of the means for the undertaking with the very nature of things."²⁰)

¹⁷ Calma N. *Kommerceskie zamysly Griboedova*. Op. cit. P. 173.

¹⁸ Netchkina M. V. *Griboedov i dekabristy* (Griboedov and the Decembrists). Moscow, 1951, p. 522, 525. Cf. the comments by S. A. Fomichev: *Polnoe sobranie socinenij*, (3 vol.). T. 3. Op. cit. P. 568.

¹⁹ *Istoriceskij arhiv*. 1951. Vol. 6. P. 324-390.

²⁰ *Ibid*.

It turned out that Zhukovskii's critical notes on Griboedov's project partially coincided with those which in Malshinskii's publication of 1891 were attributed to Burtsov. This lessened suspicion concerning Malshinskii, who by that time had begun to be suspected of falsifying documents. On the other hand, it showed that although he had based himself on some other actual document, he put his own spin on it and incorrectly attributed authorship. The main conclusion that the newly discovered document revealed was that the one who rejected Griboedov's Caucasus Project was General Zhukovskii, who referred sharply and sarcastically to it, and not the former Decembrist Burtsov, whose response was apparently only "indecisive."²¹

However, the mystery concerning Griboedov's lost project did not end there. In 1954 the archivist I.K. Enikopolov published two more documents, also found in the Historical Archive in the Paskevich Foundation, relating to the Griboedov project: "Comments" ("Zamechaniia") and "Opinion on the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company" ("Mnenie ob uchrezhdenii Rossiiskoi Zakavkazskoi kompanii").²² From remarks on the margins of the "Comments" that coincide with the critical remarks on the draft in the article by Malshinskii, it was established that this was the very document that Malshinskii used in 1891. And it was this document that he declared was "a review of Burtsov," but which in fact was General Zhukovskii's.

Enikopolov ascribed the second published document, entitled "Opinion on the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company, to Burtsev. As evidence he cited coincidences between the economic and political opinions stated in it with views of the Decembrists as reflected in the charter of the "Union of Welfare" and in the "Practical Principles of Political Economy" ("Prakticheskikh nachalakh politicheskoi ekonomii") compiled by P.I. Pestel'. This attribution to Burtsov was seconded by several other scholars. Subsequently, however, a textual comparison of the documents showed that the "Opinion" also belonged to General Zhukovskii and not to Burtsev, and that it had been written as a summary based on Zhukovskii's notes on Griboedov's project. Scholars were left with three documents: 1) "Comments on the creation of the company..." ("Zamechaniia na sozdanii kompanii..."), Zhukovskii's criticism of various parts of the text of Griboedov project that had not survived, published by Enikopolov in 1954; 2) The "Opinion on the Establishment..." Zhukovskii's final response to the draft, summarizing some of his notes, also published in 1954 by Enikopolov; and 3) "Notes of the Actual State Councilor Zhukovskii," published in 1950 by Markova; this is a later version of the "Comments" prepared by the same Zhukovskii at the request of G. V. Rosen, the

²¹ *Polnoe sobranie socinenij*, (3 vol.). T. 3. Op. cit. P. 569-570.

²² Enikopolov I. K. *Griboedov v Gruzii* (Griboedov in Georgia). Tbilisi, 1954. P. 102-129.

commander-in-chief of Georgia from 1831, who was deeply interested in the ideas of Griboedov's project. As we have already seen, the "Notes" also contained a summary of Burtsov's response.²³

The "Project for the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company": Between Philanthropy, Economic Calculation and Ambition

What can we make of Griboedov's "Project," the full text of which has not survived and which we can only judge on those parts that were published in 1831 (in Tiflis), in 1891 in the journal "Russian Messenger," and in the subsequently discovered notes of General Zhukovskii, who had been commissioned to evaluate the draft proposal²⁴? First, it should be kept in mind that for all its "fantasy," noted by those who were charged with its evaluation (Burtsov and Zhukovskii), the Griboedov project did take into account the experience of long-established trade companies. In the original text of the project's "Introduction" the companies that served as a reference point were explicitly named - the East India and North American Companies, which enjoyed "exclusive privileges."²⁵ (When published in the "Tiflis News" in 1831, Zaveleiskii had left this paragraph out.) The powerful East India Company had its own government and diplomatic representatives and was little submissive to the British government in its actions. The charter of the Russian-American company was also well-known in Russia, and Griboedov was friendly with Ryleev, head of the company's chancellery, so could have thus known details about its activities.

Indeed, many of the privileges that were proposed for the Russian-Transcaucasian Company by Griboedov and Zaveleiskii corresponded to the charter of the Russian-American Company. Among them: to assign land to the Company in all of the counties of the Transcaucasian provinces; to give the Company the right to what that land produced, including anything found beneath the surface; preferential terms of trade on Russian and foreign goods; the right to use native people in service of the company; and a monopoly on all of these privileges. (For the American Company

²³ Tarhova, N.O. "Proekte Rossijaskoj Zakavkazskoj Kompanii (Po materialam arhiva I.F. Paskevica (About the "Project of the Russian Transcaucasian Company (On materials of archive of I. F. Paskevic in the Russian state historical archive) in *Problemy tvorcestva A. S. Griboedova* / Ed. by A. S. Fomicev. Smolensk, 1994. P. 285-295. About the identity of Burtsev see: Makarov, V. B. *Decembrist Ivan Grigorevich Burtsev*. Saratov, 1982.

²⁴ The preserved text and notes were recently published in Griboedov A.S. *Polnoe sobranie socinenij*, (3 vol.). T. 3. Op. cit. P. 325-346.

²⁵ Ibid.

privileges were renewed every 20 years; Griboedov sought the monopoly right for 50 years.²⁶⁾

At the same time, the Griboedov project contained items that significantly distinguished it from existing companies. It also dealt with the development of local productive forces and local industrialists, and with trade mediation between Europe and Russia. Among the proposed privileges was also that the Company have diplomatic freedom in its relations with the nine Transcaucasian khanates ("To enter into relations with the proprietors of the Transcaucasian provinces ... to establish institutions and trade in them"). This contradicted the interests of the state, which sought to use the Caucasian and Asian markets for its own goods. It is thus no accident that Zhukovskii criticized the project from the point of view of developing Russia's productive forces, and not those of the Transcaucasus. And Zaveleiskii, who, as mentioned, tried to create a Transcaucasian trade depot in 1831, excluded the development of local industry from his program.

To this day there is still no unambiguous evaluation of Griboedov's project. Of course, it was imbued with a concern to develop the economy of this paradise and envisaged the creation of its own productive forces, setting not only economic goals, but also planning to be civilization and enlightenment to the Caucasus. The company was intended to enrich not only the Transcaucasian elite (landowners and merchants), but also ordinary people. The Russian army provided native peoples a peaceful life, protecting the South Caucasus from Turkish and Persian invasions; as a result, each local resident would be guaranteed security of life and personal well-being. The Caucasian population's participation in the company would automatically start the process of refining their manners. Griboedov described in detail the mechanism of this process in different social strata.

The Transcaucasian Company was intended to inflict a heavy blow on British trade in the Middle East and thus to seriously weaken the colonial position of the British Empire in this key region of international politics. Most likely the British were well aware of this threat. And that is why there a suggestion that perhaps they incited the Persian attack on the Russian embassy in Tehran that Griboedov personally headed. Nevertheless, the most problematic aspect of the project was the question of the status that Russia itself was assigned. On the one hand, the activities of the Transcaucasian Company had to ensure the strengthening of Russia's position in the Caucasus, the integration of the Caucasus into Russian economic, political and civilizational space, linking Russia and the Caucasus into one single country. On the other hand, the freedoms and privileges sought for the company testified to the

²⁶ Ibid. P. 574.

contrary: a desire to obtain almost unlimited power and to distance itself from the Russian autocracy.

According to one researcher, "The Griboedov-Zaveleiskii Project, which gave the government a minimal role in the life of the region, was wholly designed for private initiative and activity, and was contrary to the colonial policy of the government, and that is why it was certainly doomed to failure in advance."²⁷ On the other hand, although the draft of the project presumed there would be four "presidents" in its ruling body, it is obvious that had it been implemented, Griboedov himself would have been endowed with almost unlimited powers.

And yet, unlike the already existing East India and the Russian-American Companies, from the start the project for a Russian-Transcaucasian Company was a utopia, and so it is not accidental that the government rejected it. Griboedov and Zaveleiskii wanted to create a kind of "ideal" state- within-the-state. It is precisely the utopian nature of the project which inscribes it, in an unexpected way, not so much into economic and political history, as into the Russian *literary* assimilation of the Caucasus. Here we need to turn briefly from the historical aspect of the project and consider instead the so-called "Caucasian text" of Russian literature, the utopian space that literature of the time allocated to the Caucasus, into which, in fact, Griboedov's project seemed to fit very harmoniously.

Caucasian Utopia

The origins of the Caucasian theme in Russian literature are very old. At the end of the fifteenth century, when Moscow began diplomatic relations with Georgia, a text called "The Story of the Georgian Queen Dinara" was written by a circle of Moscow scribes. 130 copies of this text have survived, which testifies to its popularity. It is a military novel which depicts an ideal queen and her wonderful victory over the Persians as a result of the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. It is believed that the prototype of Queen Dinara was Queen Tamar (or, Tamar, the Great, c. 1160-1213).²⁸

An important aspect of Russian-Caucasian relations was that of pilgrimages, since the route to the Holy Land ran through the Caucasus. The sea route passed along the Volga to the Caspian Sea and then on to Persia, while the land route passed across the North Caucasus, Dagestan, Derbent, Tiflis and Trabzon to Jerusalem. A number

²⁷ Markova, O. P. *Novye materialy* (New materials), in *Istoriceskij arhiv*. 1851. Vol. 6. P. 344.

²⁸ Gudzij, N. K. *Povest o gruzinskoj carice Dinare* (Tale of Georgian Empress Dinara) in *Istorija drevnerusskoj literatury*, Moscow, 1953. P. 255.

of texts suggest that the apostle Andrew stayed in the Caucasus and also describe the activity of the apostle Simon Kananit.²⁹ During the eighteenth century, the Russian-Turkish Wars proved to be important not only politically, but also poetically. With his "Ode on the Taking of Khotin" Lomonosov established the syllabo-tonic system in Russian poetry, displacing the syllabic system which had been widely used thanks to Polish and French influence.

The Kuchuk-Kaynadzhirskii peace that ended the Russo-Turkish War in 1774 provided the poet Derzhavin with an epithet to glorify Catherine II. He named her "Felitsa, Princess of the Kuchuk Kaisak hordes."³⁰ Under this name that Catherine the Great figures in Russian poetry up at least until 1800. One could also mention Derzhavin's ode in which he describes Count Zubov's campaign in Persia. Here one finds a new formula for poetic descriptions of the Caucasus, namely as the "Terrible land of miracles" (Uzhasnyi kraj chudes).³¹ This formula would be used for nearly a century.³²

The first prose work on the Caucasus was the novel by Vasilii Narezchnyi *Black Year, or Mountain Princes* (Chernyi god, ili Gorskie kniaz'ia). A graduate of Moscow University, in 1801 Narezchnyi was appointed to the newly formed Georgian government in which he became secretary to the first Russian ruler of Georgia Kovalevskii. Inspired by his reading of Schiller, in 1803 he began work on a novel in the spirit of German tales about brigands and robbers. The novel was finished in 1803 but published only in 1829 (when the Caucasian theme was already firmly established in Russian literature). The main reason that the author did not want to publish it during his time is usually given as follows: that his satirical image of Georgia, described allegorically, was fundamentally at odds with the official point

²⁹ See more: Bagration-Mukhraneli I. L. *Drugaja zizn i bereg dalnij* (Another life and a distant shore), Tver, Ed. Marina Butasova, 2016. P. 26. See also: Ram, Harsha. *The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire*. Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003; Layton, Susan. *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

³⁰ The poem *Feliza* (1782).

³¹ The poem «Zubov's return from Persia» («На возвращение Зубова из Персии», 1797). Cf. : О юный вождь ! Сверха походы,
Прошел ты с воинством Кавказ,
Зрел ужасы, красы природы.

³² The poem of Pushkin «I saw Asia's barren limits» («Я видел Азии бесплодные пределы», 1820). Cf: Ужасный край чудес! там жаркие ручьи
Кипят в утесах раскаленных...

of view, and that Nareshny's allegory, especially that concerning Kovalevskii's abuse of power, could have been all too readily understood by his contemporaries.³³

There is a strong opinion that with the development of Romanticism the Caucasus in Russian literature received "a voice." Since that time the extraordinary natural beauty, colorful manners and customs of the region, which was already considered part of the Russian Empire, became increasingly attractive to Russian poets and novelists. The Caucasus began to play an important role in Russian social and intellectual life as well. As the Russian historian Natan Eidelmen wrote, "All of Russia went to the Caucasus: exiles as well as the free, the Bestuzhevs and the Pushkins. At that time [the 1820's] the Caucasus was one of Russia's spiritual centers."³⁴

After the War of 1812, following the return of the Russian army from Paris, a new doctrine appeared concerning the Caucasus, - a civilizing and humanistic one, dictated by the logic that having liberated Russia from Napoleon, a civilizing "light" could be also be brought to the Caucasus. Of course, we should not forget that the motive for strengthening Russia's eastern policy (or, simply put, the conquest of the Caucasus), was also supported even among liberals and the opposition. As the Decembrist Lunin declared during the Russian-Turkish War in 1828, "taking Akhaltskh is much more important than the occupation of Paris. Here the main enemy was defeated on the main line."³⁵ Let us also recall the words of Pushkin: "Submit, Caucasus, Ermolov is coming" (Smiris', Kavkaz, idet Ermolov)³⁶.

The paradox lies in the fact that the war in the Caucasus, the longest in the history of Russia, lasting from 1817 to 1864, not only opened up the Caucasus as a theme in Russian literature, but also elicited love for the Caucasus. Although a river of blood had been spilled over the Caucasus, Russian literature still wrote with love about it. In *Prisoner of the Caucasus*, for instance, Pushkin described the Caucasus as the "new Parnassus." In 1827 Bestuzhev-Marlinskii, himself exiled in Siberia (Yakutia), wrote to his younger brother, Michael, exiled to the Caucasus: "Have you become a

³³ Bagration-Mukhraneli I. L. *Drugaja zizn i bereg dalnij*. Op. Cit. P. 43.

³⁴ Eidelman Nathan. "Byt' mozet za hrebtom Kavkaza..." *Russkaia literaturlaja I obsdestevennaja mysl' pervoj poloviny XIX veka. Kavkazskij kontekst* ("Perhaps, over the ridge of the Caucasus...". Russian literature and public thought in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Caucasian context). Moscow, 1990. P. 253.

³⁵ See: Yakov Gordin. *Kavkaz: zemlja i krov'. Rossija v kavkazskoj voine XIX veka* (The Caucasus: land and blood. Russia in the Caucasian war of the XIX century. SPb., Zvezda, 2000. P. 20.

³⁶ Pushkin. The epilogue of the *Prisoner of the Caucasus*.

poet, having looked at the Caucasus? It seems impolite not to become a poet, being so close to the sky."³⁷

Another paradox: the conquered Caucasus is often depicted in Russian literature as a land of freedom. Heroes professing the cult of freedom were organically linked with it. The Caucasus essentially became the Russian East for Romantics. For example, in Pushkin's poem "The Prisoner of the Caucasus" the Caucasus plays the same role as Louisiana in Chateaubriand's *Attala*. But this is where the duality of the Caucasian myth becomes all the more apparent. Pushkin's poem, written in part on the model of Byron's *Childe-Harold*, partly on *Attala*, affirms freedom as an absolute value. Freedom is something the hero is looking for "in a desolate world" (cf.: "Свобода, Он одной тебя Еще искал в пустынном мире"). He goes to the Caucasus, but it's precisely there, a place that is thought of as place of absolute freedom, where the hero is taken prisoner (in fact, the theme of the Caucasian captive appears for the first time not in Russian literature, but in French. *Les captifs de Caucase*, written in 1815 by Xavier de Maistre, told the story of the captivity and escape of Major Kaskambo for whom the Chechens had demanded a huge ransom of 10 000 rubles).³⁸

As is well known, Pushkin's character was saved from captivity by a Circassian woman who fell in love with him. But it was precisely she, "a child of the mountains," who, not finding a response to her love, dies in the denouement of the poem. In this way, Pushkin merges the themes of freedom and captivity, the beauty of Caucasian nature, and death brought about by the actions of a European, enacted upon the free peoples of the Caucasus. Later this theme appears again in *Hero of Our Time*, the story of a virgin of the mountains who perishes, having fallen in love with a person of another culture and another religion. And yet - strange to say - it was precisely Pushkin's "The Prisoner of the Caucasus" which rooted the idea in the public consciousness that the people of Caucasus liked (or even loved) them³⁹.

One can say that the Caucasus as it appears in Russian literary classics has all the features of a utopia - a place of exceptional freedom, the Russian East, a paradise on earth and, last but not least, a place where it is possible to enact special laws, free

³⁷ Russkij vestnik. 1870. № 5. P. 259. Cf. Bagration-Mukhraneli I. L. *Drugaja zizn i bereg dalnij*. Op. cit. P. 101.

³⁸ Takho-Godi, M. A. *Kavkaz i kavkazskie plenniki glazami putesestvennikov nacala XIX veka* (The Caucasus and "Caucasian captives" through the eyes of travelers in the early nineteenth century). E-access: http://www.darial-online.ru/2001_1/taxogo.shtml

³⁹ Bagration-Mukhraneli I. L. *Drugaja zizn i bereg dalnij*. Op. cit. P. 85-152.

from the state. The image of Caucasus as a dangerous place began to give way to the notion of a “spa” of sorts, a place for healing the body and mind.

In fact, one of the first political utopias associated with the Caucasus goes back to the reign of Paul I, who, unlike his mother, wanted to maintain a policy of peace in the Caucasus. He wanted to create a federation of mountain princes in order to transform the trade, economic and military rivalry between Persia, Russia and Turkey into cooperation.⁴⁰

In 1830-1840 peacemaking efforts conducted in the midst of the war in the Caucasus also helped foster the emergence of utopian projects and utopian literature. Together with representatives of the Georgian intelligentsia A. Chavchavadze, R. Eristavi, the writer Vladimir Sollogub, an aristocrat in service to the governor of the Caucasus, and Count Vorontso, set about creating a new branch of Russian literature – a Caucasian literature. Vorontsov himself tried to institute a new policy of education for the Caucasus.⁴¹ That said, we have to admit that none of these ideas and projects came to fruition. Cultural peacemaking of the Russian Empire in the Caucasus turned out to be illusory.

Leo Tolstoy, who was the last major Russian author to write about the Caucasus, composed his early story “The Cossacks,” in which he expressed the hope that the Caucasus would be an area of just rule by the Cossack community. But this utopia was refuted by historical circumstances. In a later story, the famous “Hadji Murad,” Tolstoy showed no mercy, drawing the Caucasus as a special geopolitical space where proud, strong people lived, but which was destined to become part of a vast empire. Religion, which at first had united Russia and the Caucasus, receded into the background. In Tolstoy’s novel, both Nicolas I and rebel leader Shamil are described as quite ambivalent, and the noble hero who represents the best qualities of the Caucasian people dies.

But even before Tolstoy, the Decembrist Bestuzhev-Marlinskii, mentioned above, resisted idealizing the Caucasus, since he knew all too well the danger this contained: “Poets have made of this giant with a crown of ice... some kind of a pastry on which almond streams flow.”⁴²

All this quite complex context directly relates to the subject of this paper. The issues of statehood and freedom in the region are associated with exile and punishment, yet

⁴⁰ Ibid. P. 37.

⁴¹ See particularly the sections “The Motives of utopia in the work of count V. A. Sollogub»and «Motive of cultural peacemaking in the monograph of Bagration-Mukhraneli. »

⁴² Bestuzhev-Marlinskij A. *Socinenija* (2 vol.) T. 2. Moscow, GIHL, 1958. P. 201.

at the same time it is a place of possible Utopia. All this can be seen as a framework within which we may understand both the last year of Griboedov's life and the picture Iuri Tynianov made of it.

A Historical Error that Proved Fatal for Russian Literature

In conclusion, I return to the question put at the beginning of my paper: why did Tynianov, otherwise so deeply interested in Russian literature, give the central place in his novel, written a hundred years after the described events, not to Griboedov's great comedy "Woe from Wit" but to the project for the Transcaucasian company? Why did he center the intrigue of the novel around "Project of the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company," presenting it as a voluntary gesture on Griboedov's part, and one for which he ultimately sacrificed his life? The situation has certain similarities with, for example, Pushkin's acceptance of the duel with Dante. It was gesture, as described by Tynianov, that inscribed Griboedov into the martyrology of Russian literature.

It would seem that the history of the "Project of the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company" and the accompanying "Note" are of narrowly textological interest. Why has so much controversy arisen about who is the author of the criticism that doomed the project, the former Decembrist Burtsev or the officious General Zhukovskii? The discovery made in the 1950s that the sharply negative feedback on the project belonged to Zhukovskii and not to Burtsev made the mysterious story easier to solve. If previous researchers who considered Griboedov's main opponent the Decembrist Burtsev had to invent complex reasons to explain the disagreement between the former associates, the research of 1960-1980s assigned the role of the destroyer of the project to the reactionary Zhukovskii, while the "indecisive" opinion Burtsev has been considered as almost positive, compared to the sarcastic Zhukovskii. In this way, the failure of the project could be associated with the suspicious and unfriendly attitude of "official circles" toward Griboedov.

Of course, Iuri Tynianov, who died in 1943, could not have known anything about these later discoveries. But it was precisely Malshinskii's wrong version (from an historical point of view) that attributed the project's failure to Burtsev that became central to the plot of the Griboedov's novel which was based on a conflict between former Decembrist confederates who found themselves forced apart by life and coming into harsh conflict over the project to transform the Caucasus. According to Tynianov, Griboedov hoped to implement, and at the same time to improve upon, what the Decembrists had planned and failed to do.

Tynianov himself believed that "every era foreground those past events which are common to it and forgets about the others." A recurrent issue in Tynianov's novel is

the betrayal of Decembrism that at the same time still retains a certain loyalty toward it. Tynianov describes Griboedov as a radical who survived the crushing of the rebellion and a person who reconsidered his former Decembrist ideals. He describes Griboedov's connections with the Decembrists as well as what divided them. He emphasizes the ways in which Griboedov differed from the Decembrists and notes his vision of what might have been had the insurrection of 1825 been successful. Tynianov claims (via Griboedov) that the victory of the Decembrists could only have led to the replacement of one form of tyranny for another, of one despotic police regime by another despotic police regime.

The heroes of pre-1825 Russian Romantic poems went to the East, to the Caucasus, hoping to escape "the bondage of the stuffy city." Tynianov's Griboedov goes to the Caucasus to a state which does not yet exist. He goes to the Caucasus, which Alexander called "a scorching Siberia" and which Nicholas made a place of exile for the Decembrists. But Tynianov compares the Caucasus with the New World and Griboedov goes there hoping that maybe here (or at least here) something might still be possible. These hopes, these thoughts become Griboedov's "Project for the Russian Transcaucasian Company," which he now considers his life's work. And here something quite amazing is revealed. As Tynianov shows, it turns out that like the projects of the Decembrists, Griboedov's project could not offer anything new or better. In the end, all they offer is merely a new form of enslavement.

This was clearly reflected in the experience of the French Revolution, of the Jacobin dictatorship, and this is what Tynianov's Griboedov contemplates. In the same way, considering Griboedov's "Project for the Russian Transcaucasian Company," Tynianov himself cannot help but think about the 1917 Revolution. Tynianov's Griboedov is vaguely aware that tyranny, despotism, autocracy and oppression will always have their fatal power.

"Maybe that is the reason why it is pointless to create something new with the hope that what one creates will be better than before, and one vaguely senses that tyranny, despotism, autocracy and fatal oppression will always exist." This conclusion belongs to Tynianov's biographer, the dissident Arkadii Belinkov who, saw in Tynianov's works something, in turn, in tune with his own epoch – the epoch of the 1950s.⁴³ Or, to put it another way, Griboedov's Caucasian Utopia resulted in the same impasse as would the Soviet Utopia for Tynianov some hundred years later, and as would Khrushchev's thaw some 30 years after that.

In all this, notable is how Griboedov's "Project of the Establishment of the Russian Transcaucasian Company" remains a litmus test which assesses the possibility of

⁴³ Belinkov Arkady. *Yuri Tynianov*, Moscow, 1961.

constructing a perfect state "in a country taken separately." And at the same time, it fits into the tradition of utopia that Russian literature did not cease to confer on the Caucasus.

In conclusion, I will cite an episode from the Tynianov`s *Death of Wazir –Muhtar* that to some extent sums up the collapse of the Caucasian Utopia. Tynianov depicts a group of sectarians from Württemberg who believe that the Second Coming is immanent and that God will appear in Georgia, Turkey and Persia. Hence, they move to Russia and settle in the Caucasus. One of these sectarians meets Griboedov:

Alexander [Griboedov] saw a strange man with a German red mustache.

- Exellenz, - said the German - I am a poor sectarian of Wuerttemberg. We are sent here. Today I finish my quarantine. I know that you are going to Persia.

- What do you need? - quietly asked Griboedov.

- We believe in the coming of Christ from Persia. And if you, Exellenz, hear about it there, write me about it. My name is Meyer.

Alexander looked at the poor German with red mustache. And said in German very seriously:

- Give me your address, Mr. Meyer, and if I meet in Persia *den lieben Gott*, I will tell him to write a letter to you. But do you know Hebrew?

- No, - said the German, and his mustache swelled like sails.

- In this case, I strongly doubt that *der liebe Gott* knows German. You probably will not understand each other.⁴⁴

Obviously neither Griboedov with his Caucasian project nor the new revolutionary state with its Communist utopia could find an adequate language to communicate with *dem lieben Gott*.

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Summary

A Caucasian Utopia in Russian Literature and Politics: Alexander Griboedov and Iuri Tynianov

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The protagonists of my paper are the Russian writer and diplomat Alexander Griboedov, the author of the “Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company,” which he considered, if one can believe some sources, the main achievement of his life. Approximately 100 years after the death of Griboedov, Iuri Tynianov wrote his fictionalized biography where all of the action revolves around the Caucasus Project, with which, according to Tynianov, Griboedov signed his own death sentence. Here the question naturally arises: why did Tynianov, forced, after the defeat of Formalism, to turn to fiction and literary heroes, shy away from questions of literature, focusing instead on matters of Russian foreign policy and diplomacy? Why was the Caucasus a key topic for him? And should we not see in the biography of Griboedov a hidden message, a story, not so much about *the affairs of bygone days*, but rather about Tynianov’s own time and its problems? However, this story has still another mystery: what role did the Caucasus Project actually play in the fate of Griboedov and what really were the goals he pursued with it? The paper tries also to underline the utopian nature of the project which inscribes it, in an unexpected way, not so much into economic and political history, as into the Russian *literary* assimilation of the Caucasus and the so-called “Caucasian text” of Russian literature, the utopian space that literature of the time allocated to the Caucasus, into which, in fact, Griboedov’s project seemed to fit very harmoniously.

Keywords: Alexander Griboedov, Iuri Tynianov, Project for the Establishment of the Russian Caucasian Company, “Caucasian text” of Russian literature, utopia.

Georgia between France, Russia and Iran Seen by French Diplomats

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Information of French emissaries about Georgia

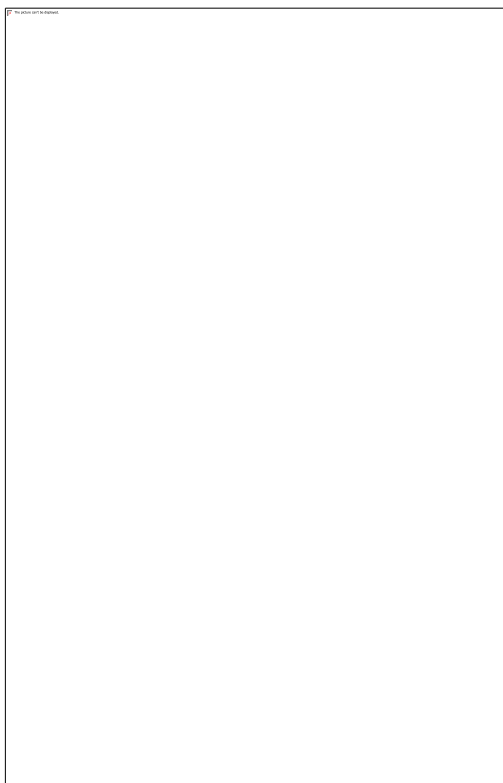
As a result of much negotiation and a battle of wills between France, represented by Hugues-Bernard Maret, Secretary of State and Persian Plenipotentiary Mirza Mohammad Reza Khan Qazvini, a Treaty of Alliance between France and Persia was concluded on May 4, 1807, in the campe Imperial de Finkenstein, in Eastern Prussia. This treaty was composed of a preamble and 16 Articles. Articles 3 and 4 focused on the issue of Eastern Georgia.

What information did the Emperor of France have about Georgia that he promised to Shah?

It is a fact, that until 1805, before Napoléon sent French emissaries to Persia, Georgia was not included in the sphere of political interests of France, but by this time the French government already had some information about Georgia. We found the documents, dated 1795/96-1804, dealing with this theme in the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France. The authors of these references were the General Consul of France in Bassora Jean-Francois Rousseau, Guillaume-Antoine Olivier, who was sent by the Directory to Agha Mohammad Khan in 1796, and the French Consul in Synop Pascal Fourcade.

Analysis of the above-mentioned documents shows that Georgia became known to Frenchmen as “a beautiful and wild country”, which was in the dominion of Russia, and which before 1783 was under the governance of Persia, and always paid tribute to it. When Agha Mohammad Khan the Ruler of Persia, learned that Erekle (Prince Heraclius) and his heirs recognized the supreme power of Russia, he became furious and ruined the capital of Georgia – Tiflis/Tbilisi. His warriors committed there

unbridled cruelty and barbarity¹. Russians did not participate in this war and continued trading via the Caspian Sea from Astrakhan to Rasht, Daruband and Baku, this fact was assessed as the Barbarian policy of Russia towards Georgia as the former had abandoned Georgia to Agha-Mohammad-Khan to loot and kill and later, to use their own military forces to conquer and retain it within its borders permanently. This news were aggravated by the escape of the Prince Alexandre to Persia provoked by the entering of the Kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti to Russia after the death of Erekle (1798). It is worthy of attention, that in the reports of Fourcade, Rousseau and Olivier the aspiration of Russia from 1783 is stressed to establish itself on the territories from the port of Trabizond on the Black Sea in the Ottoman Empire to the port of Astarabad on the Caspian Sea in Persia because of their advantageous military and commercial locations².



This information was completed by references from the letter of Alexandre Romieu and the reports of Amédée Jaubert. Romieu who were very surprised by the

¹ Tiflis always attracted attention of the descendants of Agha Muhammad Khan. The book *Les* by the late Head of the Qajar Imperial Family, Soltan Ali Mirza Qajar, has the only illustration: “Agha-Muhammad-khan is depicted while taking Tiflis. In the Prologue the author writes: “In the house, we lived in the thirtieth years of the 20th century, my grand mother Malekeh Jahan, spouse of Mohammad Ali Shah, ordered to an Iranian painter a monumental picture, which represents Agha Muhammad Khan, the first great sovereign of our dynasty, while conquest of Tiflis, the capital of Georgia. We have this picture always with us and I made transport it to my new residence. Agha Muhammad Khan looks towards spectator and everybody feels the same I felt during my childhood...” Prince Ali Kadjar, *Les Rois oubliés, l'épopée de la dynastie Kadjare* (Paris: Kian, 1992), 7. The hand of the khan – eunuch on horseback, – stretched towards Tiflis reminds us too much the famous gesture of Bonaparte on the painting of David.

² Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères: Mémoires et Documents, Perse, vol. 2, doc. 29, fol. 141r-147v; Correspondances Politiques, Perse, vol. 8: doc. 156, fol. 384r-384v; doc. 157, fol. 385r-385v; doc. 158, fol. 386r.

weakness of the Persian militia. He stressed the that Russia did not have more than 10-12 thousand soldiers in Georgia, but with these few forces it resisted successfully the army of Persia, which contained from forty to eighty thousand soldiers³. According to the information of Jaubert, Russia kept the territories that it occupied between the rivers of Aras and Kura. The wintering place for the Russian army was Tiflis. The people in Georgia were extremely displeased of the domination by Russians and because of the “lecherous habits and shameful corruption” of their army, the Russians lost the sympathy of a great part of the population of Georgia⁴.

The manuscript *Tableau General de la Perse Moderne* written at the request of Napoléon by Joseph Rousseau, the son of the commissar of the commercial relations of France in Baghdad Jean-François Rousseau, was in the hands of Talleyrand already in August 1806⁵. There, Rousseau gives information about the frontiers of Georgia, its climate, its fertile area, its population, touches upon the invasion of Agha Mohammad Khan in Georgia, and finishes the subsection with the following conclusion: “The Georgians awaken from their idea about the moderateness of Russian rule. They are already complaining because of the severity of the Russians and are waiting impatiently the opportunity to take off their heavy yoke, similar to that of the Persians, but one that they themselves put on”⁶. The separation of the theme of Georgia as a subtitle together with the theme of the Kingdom of Qandahar and Zabulistan, which had strategic importance in the itinerary of the expedition against India⁷, underlines once more the geopolitical importance of Eastern Georgia, which was already part of Russia.

The third volume of *Voyage dans l'Empire Ottoman, l'Égypte et la Perse* by G.-A. Olivier, which was persistently demanded by Napoléon⁸, was issued in 1807 when the Financhenstein contract was signed. In Chapter XX there is information about the relations of Persia with Georgia. Olivier note that after the conquest of the southern provinces of Persia “Agha Mohammad Khan could not give up his rights that he had upon Georgia, as otherwise he would compromise his honor and the crown would be usurped by him”. This reference of Olivier clearly shows how important the integration of Georgia as part of Persia was for the new dynasty of the Qajars from a moral and political point of view. The mentioning of the kingdom of

³ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 9, doc. 27, fol. 58v, 59v-60v.

⁴ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 8 doc. 133, fol. 334r-334v; AN, AF IV, 1686, doc. 16, fol. 5-7, 15.

⁵ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 9, doc. 41, fol. 83r-83v.

⁶ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 6, doc. 19, fol. 167r-168r.

⁷ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 8, doc. 165, fol. 399r.

⁸ Paul Gaffarel, *La politique coloniale en France de 1789 à 1830* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1908), 391.

Kartli and Kakheti as the “Georgia of Persia” by the French author⁹, reinforced in the mind of Europeans the idea that Georgia was a country which belonged to Persia and was taken away by Russia by force.

The French Press on Georgia

In response to the missions sent to Persia by Napoléon, in March 1807, the Ambassador of Fath-Ali Shah, Mirza Mohammad Reza Khan Qazvini, arrived to Warsaw, and Napoléon decided to conclude an alliance with Persia. As early as January 1807 French newspapers started publication series of articles about Persia and showed it as the potential ally of France in an extremely positive light¹⁰. It is very significant, that information about Georgia was published also in March and April in three issues of *Journal de l'Empire*. The author of these large articles the famous scholar Conrad Malt-Brune presented to readers quite wide review of the Georgian history, religion, culture and civilization. In all probability, the profuse elucidation of the Georgian theme was not accidental and served the interests of the French government: in the introduction of the first letter (March 10, 1807), Malt-Brune mentioned that the official documents of the government of France indicated the expansion of Russia in the direction of the Caucasus. While turning attention to the Caucasus, one could see that Georgia was turned into a province of Russia, and that the rebellious peoples of the Caucasus were surrounded by “the army of Moscow” from all sides. Because of this, Persia and Asian Turkey had no more natural frontier with Georgia. According to his comments, in this beautiful country, conquered by the Russians, geographers, nature historians, historians and men of letters could find interesting events, beautiful nature, ancient people, less known languages, and finally a wide field for scientific research. In addition, the Malt-Brune gave general information about the Caucasus¹¹.

Thus, the French press showed the potential ally of France – Persia- in an extremely positive light and at the same time it published several important articles about Georgia, a country, which was far less known in Europe. By means of these articles Georgia was fixed in the minds of the European reader not only in its connection with Persia, the Ottoman Empire and Russia, but also with India. The fact, that it was Malt-Brune, who wrote these articles, makes us think, that the profuse elucidation of the theme of Georgia before the conclusion of the Franco-Persian Treaty, served the

⁹ Guillaume-Antoine Olivier, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, l'Égypte et la Perse, fait par ordre du Gouvernement, pendant les six premières années de la République* (Paris : Chez H. Agasse, 1807), III, 404,409, 420.

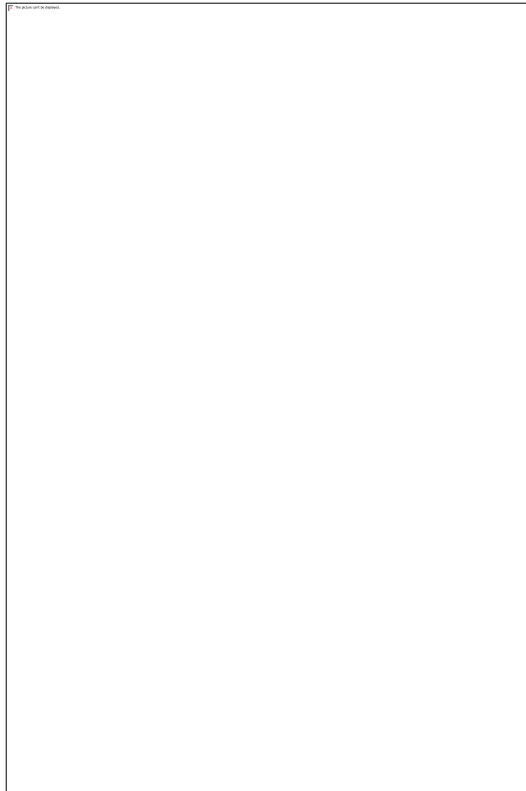
¹⁰ *Le Moniteur*, 1807: 13.01; 27.01; 22.02; 23.03; 2.04; 19.04; 19.04; 31, 1807: 26.02; 22.03; 27.03; 16.04; 20.04; 27.04.

¹¹ *Journal de l'Empire*, 1807: Vendredi, 10 Mars; Samedi, 18 Mars; Samedi, 6 Avril.

interests of the government. This testifies how important the powerful weapon of propaganda was in influencing public opinion. Napoléon was perfectly aware of this and took advantage of it when he needed to¹². At the same time, it is clear, that the Emperor of France was so sure of his own invincibility that he was not afraid to exasperate England or Russia by publishing information of this kind.

The Issue of Georgia in the Franco-Persian Treaty Draft and in the Franco-Persian Treaty

But before the final formulation of the text of the Finkenstein Treaty, in April 1807 (the day is not mentioned) in Warsaw the government of France elaborated the Franco-Persian Draft Treaty – *Projet du Traité entre S. M. l'Empereur des Français Roi d'Italie et S. M. l'Empereur de Perse*, Avril, 1807. These documents consisted also of 16 articles, the third and the fourth articles concerned to Georgia, and were formulated as follows: “Article 3. In case the Persian army takes Georgia from



Russians and takes possession of Tiflis, His Majesty the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, undertakes to help to have stipulated in the treaty a guarantee of the full and entire sovereignty over this province for His Majesty the Emperor of Persia. Article 4. In this same case his Majesty the Emperor of Persia will agree to send to his Majesty the Emperor of France annually the necessary quantity of Georgian Mameluks for the purpose of having full complement of Mameluks attached to his guards”¹³.

Most probably, while including Tiflis into article 3 of the Draft Treaty, the above-mentioned information about the destruction of Tiflis by Agha Mohammad Khan was taken into consideration. Thus, for the French,

this city was associated with a totally ruined city, the conquest of which would not

¹² Jean Tulard, *Napoléon ou le mythe du sauveur* (Éditeur: Fayard 1995), 35.

¹³ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 9, doc. 94, fol. 161r-163v.

be difficult. We suppose, that in the process of elaborating of Franco-Persian Treaty, Napoléon took into consideration the reference of Amédée Jaubert to the fact that the wintering barracks of the Russian army during the Russo-Persian war (1804-1813) were located exactly in Tiflis¹⁴, and thus that the city would be properly defended.

The Article 4 of the Draft Treaty is worthy of attention as it reveals Napoléon's interest to have Georgian soldiers, called Mameluks, in his personal guards. It seems that Bonaparte, at the time of his being in Egypt, became convinced of the martial merits of Mameluks, bought in the Caucasus and Georgia, whom he calls slaves in his famous *Manifesto*. Also, Jaubert, who accompanied Napoléon in his Egyptian Expedition, calls Mameluks the famous brave warriors¹⁵, and Joseph Rousseau emphasized that Persians appreciated the courage and faithfulness of Georgians¹⁶.



Thus, Napoléon's opinion that the Georgian soldiers would fight in India much better than European soldiers was not far-fetched.

According the Franco-Persian Treaty, it was an "equal obligation for peace, friendship and union" between France and Persia (Art. 1). Napoléon guaranteed to the Shah of Persia "territorial integrity

of his land of that time" (Art. 2), recognized Georgia as the legal property of Shah (Art. 3), charged himself to force the Russians to leave the territories of Persia and Georgia (Art. 4). Consequently, modified articles 3 and 4 touched Georgia again.

It should be noted that the Articles 2 of the Treaty defined only vague obligations towards Persia, because Napoléon guaranteed the Shah of Persia the inviolability of his territory at that time, and this logically implied the territory that was within the borders of Persia during the preparation of the Treaty, and not the territory obtained afterwards. In the Treaty the territory of Georgia was not precisely defined, because

¹⁴ AN, AF IV, 1686, doc. 16, fol. 5.

¹⁵ Pierre-Amédée Jaubert, *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse, fait dans les années 1805-1806* (Paris: Chez Pélicier, 1821), 179.

¹⁶ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 6, doc. 19, fol. 98v-99r.

there were no maps or any other identification documents of Persia or Georgia. It is highly likely that the Persians understood Georgia as the Kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti i.e. Eastern Georgia, which, from 1801 was already a part of Russia. Thus, articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty¹⁷, which were made to incite the interest of Persia, were made very farsightedly by France: the Article 2 from the beginning gave France the possibility of maneuvering according to its own interests as the political events of the world developed, and afterwards things happened exactly in accord with France's anticipation.

In Articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty, Napoléon seems to have paid no attention to the plans of the Russians in the Trans-Caucasus (South Caucasus) and the Caspian Basin reported by French emissaries. It seems that Napoléon was in such a hurry to intervene in India, that he gave preference to Fath-Ali Shah's message communicated to him by Jaubert, that if after driving the Russians to their own desert, Napoléon would decide to pass with his army through his lands, the Shah would prove his true friendship to him, and he, himself, would participate in this expedition¹⁸. It is very important to note that the only opponent of Jean-François Rousseau (who proposed to Napoléon the plan on how to drive away the Englishmen from India¹⁹), *l'Adjudant-Général* Alexandre Romieu, was already dead, but J.-F. Rousseau's plan for the Indian expedition was still of urgent importance. The eye-witness emissary of Napoléon who brought news from Persia was Jaubert, who had several conversations with two persons who were supporting France – Crown Prince Abbas Mirza, the greatest enemy of Russia, and the First Vizier of Fath-Ali Shah – Mirza Shafi. The main issue of their discussions was the Russo-Persian war. Concerns, expressed by Fath-Ali Khan, the Naib of Azerbaijan's Beglarbegi, in a conversation with Jaubert, in May 1806, indicates the stereotypical attitude of Persian high officials towards Georgia: "As our present-day Lord (Fath-Ali Shah – I.N.) has taken possession of the reins of power, with his high and mighty hand he has united everything, all Persia obeys him, excluding Georgia, the province, which, actually is not a part of the Empire for a long time²⁰. It should be taken into consideration that the Emperor trusted Jaubert very much who had accomplished a

¹⁷ "Article 3: His Majesty, the Emperor of France, the King of Italy, recognized Georgia as belonging legitimately to His Majesty, the Emperor of Persia. Article 4: His Majesty, the Emperor of France, the King of Italy, undertakes to direct every effort toward compelling Russia to withdraw from Georgia and Persian territory. This withdrawal will be the constant goal of his policies" (AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 9, doc. 95, fol. 164r; Jacob Coleman Hurewitz, *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record*, Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975) I, 184.

¹⁸ AN, AF IV, 1686, doc. 16, fol. 8, 21-24.

¹⁹ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 8, doc. 64, fol. 182r-189v.

²⁰ Jaubert, *Voyage*, 163, 225.

number of Napoléon's diplomatic assignments in different parts of the Ottoman Empire, after returning from Egypt. It is noteworthy that the copy of the Franco-Persian Treaty was entrusted to Chevalier Jaubert²¹.

So, by giving the first priority to the issue of Georgia in this treaty, Napoléon outlined the prospect of resolving the most important issue for Persia – liberation of Georgia for Persia and built his relations with Persian Empire upon this promise.

The Issue of Georgia in the Diplomatic Negotiations of General Gardane (1807-1809)

A few days after the conclusion of the Finkenstein Treaty, on May 10, 1807, Napoléon gave to General Gardane detailed instructions about his mission in Persia. Gardane was charged to get complete information particularly about Persia and the routes to India, to organize a vigorous diversion near the Russian frontier at a suitable moment, to provide opportunity to Persia to return the provinces of Georgia, robbed of them by the Russians by means of "army and intrigues," that the Russians made the "last prince of this country (Georgia) to give up." Persia was considered as the enemy of Russia and the way by which they could go to India for an expedition²².

And yet, 65 days after the conclusion of the Finkenstein Treaty with Persia, on July 7, 1807, in Tilsit a treaty of peace between Napoléon and the Emperor of Russia - Alexander the First was concluded²³. There was no mention of Persia at all, and in fact it canceled the Franco-Persian Treaty. Thus, Napoléon did not take into consideration the following will of Fath-Ali Shah: "I will ask him (Napoléon) to make an alliance based on our interests, according to which no peace will be established by the King of Persia with Russia without participation of the French Emperor. On the other hand, Napoléon will not negotiate with this state without taking into account the interests of Persia"²⁴.

In spite of the conclusion of two contradictory treaties, the French Mission arrived in Tehran on December 4, 1807. The instructions about the Indian expedition were not changed, but at this time the General Gardane was charged to arrange peace between Russia and Persia²⁵. On February 20, 1808, during the negotiations of the Plenipotentiary Minister of France and the First Vizier Mirza Shafi, in answer to the

²¹ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 9, doc. 97, fol. 166r-167v.

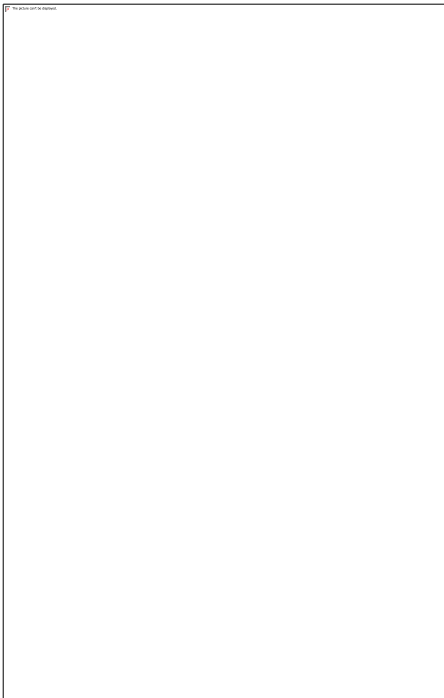
²² AMFAE, Protocoles. Copie des instructions verser M. le général Gardane. Au camp Imperial de Finkenstein, le 10 mai, 1807, fol. 2-3.

²³ Albert Vandal, Napoléon et Alexandre Ier, l'Alliance Russe sous le Premier Empire, De Tilsit à Erfurt (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie: 1891), I, 499-504.

²⁴ Archives Nationales, France. AF IV, 1686, doc. 16, fol. 22.

²⁵ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 8, doc. 2, fol. 50v.

question of the General: “What does his Majesty know about the sympathy of Georgians towards him?” - the Vizier answered as follows: “As many of the children of Heraclius Khan (Erekle the Second) and most of the senior noble Georgians are at the court of Abbas Mirza, many families sympathize with us, but the majority of people went over to the Russian side, as they joined them only because of their religion, which draws them together with the Russians”. Mirza Shafi exaggerated the number of Erekle’s sons because only the mentioned Princes Alexandre and Teimuraz were at the court of the Prince. At the same time the Vizier did not hide the main reason why the Eastern Georgians took the Russian side – it was the common religion. In answer to the question of the Frenchman: “What was the purpose of his



Majesty Fath-Ali Shah when he entrusted his interests to his Imperial Majesty the Emperor Napoléon”? – Mirza Shafi answered: “As his Majesty handed his fate to his brother, Emperor Napoléon, the greatest will of ours is to return Georgia, Dagestan and Erevan by the most acceptable way to Persia, and also that the Russians would not saddle us with indemnities for the war against them. They will never achieve this. At last we trust in the fairness, sincerity and attention of our brother”. This answer of the First Vizier of the Shah shows that the main condition of the relations between Persia and France was the returning of Georgia to Persia together with the territories conquered by Russia during the war and not participation in the Indian expedition.

During the same negotiations, the attitude of the Tehran Court towards the application of a European (French) military system to the Persian army was as follows: the Vizier cited the example of the Ottoman Sultan Selim the Third, who had applied the European military system to his army only to be dethroned by the said army when it rebelled against military innovations. That’s why the Persians were very prudent with this issue. By the decision of Fath-Ali Shah, this reform would be carried out at first only by Abbas Mirza in Azerbaijan, and “when the Persians would become convinced in advantage of this reform and the eye get accustomed to this new rule”, the Shah would apply it to the whole Empire²⁶. The

²⁶ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 6, doc. 25, fol. 177r-178r.

reason of Fath-Ali-Shah's prudence was not only the Ottoman example. According to the information of the Secretary of the Embassy of England in Persia in the years 1807-1811, James Morier "The French at this time were very anxious to proceed to Shiraz, to drill the new-raised corps; but as the king prevented them in a former instance from sending a resident to Bushire, lest they should have found that the English factory was still in Persia, he now equally prevented their advancing to Shiraz, lest the English in their turn should discover the arrival of their competitors"²⁷. So, Fath-Ali Shah was not only waiting for the Persians to get accustomed to the European military style to "apply these reforms", but also tried to avoid antagonizing his southern neighbor, the leaders of the East-Indian company. The Shah made a pragmatic decision by applying the new military rules in Azerbaijan. He hoped to liberate the territories occupied by Russians and to "regain control" over the territory of Georgia.

After the Treaty of Tilsit Russians were free in their actions towards Persia. On May 1808 the Marshal Gudovich demanded that the court of Tehran recognize the territories already occupied by Russia and in exchange suggested concluding an armistice for a year. The Shah categorically rejected this offer, and the government of France rejected peace negotiations with Russia in favour of Persia²⁸. The position of France towards this issue is obvious from the letter, sent in June 1808 from the Minister Champagny to Gardane. The Minister pointed out to the General, that the Finkenstein Treaty "confirmed only the territorial integrity of Persia of that time", and because "they had lost Georgia already, after the Treaty of Tilsit France could not interfere in the issue of returning of the territories occupied by Russians"²⁹. For his part the General Gardane warned Champagny, that Persia would do nothing against India before he did not arrange its relations with Russia³⁰.

Lack of consideration from France for the Russo-Persian issue complicated the situation of the Plenipotentiary Minister of France. In such circumstances, on August 20, 1808, during the audience the Shah demanded from the General Gardane to clarify with Napoléon the issue of driving away of Russians³¹. That's why on August 26, Gardane wrote to Champagny that "as long the territory of Persia would be open

²⁷ James Morier, *A Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, in the Years 1808 and 1809* (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1812), 30.

²⁸ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 8, doc. 25, fol. 245v-246r.

²⁹ Edouard Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon – Les missions de Sébastiani et de Gardane, 1806-1809* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1904) 329.

³⁰ Alfred de Gardane, *Mission du Général Gardane en Perse sous le Premier Empire* (Paris: Librairie de Ad. Lainé, 1865) 182.

³¹ Dumas, *Un fourrier de Napoléon vers l'Inde*, 62-63.

for Russia, the Shah would do nothing against Hindustan, and would do nothing on the whole, as long as Georgia would still be in possession of Russia". Persians considered that the Russians were transgressing their territorial integrity by marking the limits near Kura, Araks and Arpachay, despite the fact that, in the Article 2 of the Franco-Persian Treaty, Napoléon had guaranteed the territorial integrity of Persia.³² Moreover, the Shah demanded fulfillment of the Articles 3-4 and required the Russians to leave Georgia and return "without a shot" the territories occupied by them³³. General Gardane had a very complicated situation.

On September 14, 1808 the Marshal Gudovich sent an ultimatum to Abbas Mirza. Gudovich urgently advised him to ratify the treaty he had suggested before and warned that Russia was the kind of state that could not be stopped by anything. Concretely, this meant that Persia had to give up Georgia forever and cede the Yerevan fortress and Echmiadzin.³⁴ In case of acceptance of the peace proposed by him, the trade between Russia and Persia would give the Prince more profit than war, the Russia would recognize Baba-Khan as the Shah of Persia, and Abbas Mirza as the heir to the throne. Gudovich promised to help Persia while conquering Baghdad, and the provinces of Basra and Bayazed, and noted that accepting his offer the Prince would benefit most of all regarding the fact that he had not the full right to claim the throne, as his elder brother Mohammad Ali Mirza *Dolatshah had*³⁵ to claim to the throne of Persia³⁶. Abbas Mirza rejected the offer of Russia. At the same time with these events, at the end of September 1808, Napoléon was negotiating with European monarchs against England in Erfurt. In October 1808 they published the details of

³² The lands which Russia actually claimed from Iran were the territories of semi-independent principalities (khanates) with multiethnic Muslim and Christian population ruled by local Turkic (Azerbaijani) dynasties.

³³ Gardane, Mission, 182-184, 186-187, 192-194.

³⁴ Yervan was a political center of Yerevan (Erevan, Irevan) Khanate ruled by a local branch of Qajar dynasty. By the time of Russian expansion, the majority of population of the Yerevan khanate (80%) were Muslims (Azeri Turks, Kurds and Persians) with Christian minority (mostly Aremnians). – Kettenhofen Erich, Bournoutian George A. and Hewsen Robert H. Erevan, *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Vol. VIII, Fasc. 5, pp. 542-551. (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/erevan-1#ii>)

³⁵ Mohammad Ali Mirza Dolatshah (1789-1821) the governor of Mountainous Kurdistan, Kuzestan and Lorestan from 1806 till his death in 1821, was the firstborn son of Fath Ali Shah. His mother Zibachehr Khanum was a Georgian slave girl of the Tsikarishvili family. Zurab Sharashenidze, *Iranis shinapolitikuri vitareba da sagareo urtiertobani XIX saukunis dasackisshi* (Tbilisi: Mecniereba, 1984), 36.

³⁶ Akty, vol. III, doc. 836, pp. 464-465; doc. 849, pp. 475-476.

the meeting of Erfurt in *Journal de l'Empire*, and expressly noted the kind relationships between the emperors of France and Russia³⁷.

As a result, on September 25 the Marshal Gudovich camped near Erevan and commenced military operations. After the beginning of the siege of the Yerevan Fortress, the English demanded that the Shah receive the British Envoy Sir Harford Jones Brydges, and establish relations with England. The Envoy promised him assistance and the return of the territories occupied by the Russians, including Georgia³⁸. In case of failure they would support the Zand's claim on the Persian throne and will go to war against Fath-Ali Shah³⁹.

On November 23, during which Fath-Ali Shah declared that he no longer had doubts about the friendship of France and Russia and reminded the General about the contents of the Finkenstein Treaty, that he himself had brought in the name of France and of which no point had been fulfilled⁴⁰. The Shah demanded new troops from the French for the liberation of Georgia⁴¹.

Although the Marshal Gudovich could not take the Yerevan stronghold⁴², and blamed Gardane's activities against Russia as a reason of this failure, Abbas Mirza complained, that the General Gardane was not helping him, because he had not received Napoléon's order on this issue⁴³. Thus, both parties were blaming the General Gardane, who was using his discretion to follow two contradictory treaties, both concluded by Napoléon.

Under these circumstances Fath-Ali Shah decided to receive the British Envoy Sir Hartford Jones Brydges. The general Gardane, who was in a hard situation from all points of view, was insulted by this decision and on February 13, 1809 left Tehran for Tabriz.

On March 12, 1809 a treaty was concluded between England and Persia, which annulled all other agreements concluded earlier with any other countries⁴⁴. Sir Harford Jones Brydges appealed to the court of Tehran, to renew the war with Russia with all force, and assured him that by means of innumerable treasures of India the

³⁷ *Journal de l'Empire*, 1808: Lundi, 7 Octobre; Lundi 10 Octobre; Mardi 11 Octobre; Mercredi 12 Octobre; Samedi 15 Octobre; Dimanche 16 Octobre.

³⁸ Gardane, *Mission*, 247–252.

³⁹ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 10: doc. 220, fol. 440r–443v; doc. 225, fol. 450r–452r.

⁴⁰ Gardane, *Mission*, 230–248.

⁴¹ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 11, doc. 65, fol. 110r–112r.

⁴² *Acty*, vol. III, doc. 895, pp. 508–510.

⁴³ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 10, doc. 279, fol. 470r.

⁴⁴ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 6, doc. 40, fol. 221r.

army of Persia would easily conquer Georgia⁴⁵. So, the British Envoy used for his policy the primary political course of France chosen in order to interest Persia in liberating Georgia from Russia. Thus, in this short period of history the defense of India – the “best pearl of the King of England” – from the possible Indian expedition of Napoléon via Persia, in a sense was secured via Eastern Georgia i.e. the former kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti, which already was a part of Russia, and which was compared to an “ornament” by Mirza Bozorg⁴⁶, the First Vizier of Abbas Mirza.

On his own decision on April 17 General Gardane accompanied by his mission members left Persia for Europe via Erevan and Tiflis⁴⁷. Here the importance of the city of Tiflis became clear as transit center between Persia and Europe, which was the result of the French-Russian Treaty of Tilsit.

Lieutenant Trézel’s report “Notice on Georgia”

In the archives of the Ministry of Defense of France is kept one manuscript, entitled “Notice sur la Géorgie”, dated by 31 May 1809, and signed by the lieutenant Camille-Alphonse Trézel⁴⁸, the aide-de camps of the General Gardane. Lieutenant Trézel describes in details the itinerary of the French mission from Yerevan to Mozdok via Tbilisi/Tiflis in May 1809. “Notice” gives information about the landscape, roads, population (amount, nationality, religion, occupation), small settlements, agriculture, military forces of Russia and relations of the Russians with Georgians and Caucasian mountaineers.

Lieutenant Trézel draws a vivid picture of Tiflis which gradually adopted some traits of the European cities under the Russian rule. He wrote: “After two years of life in

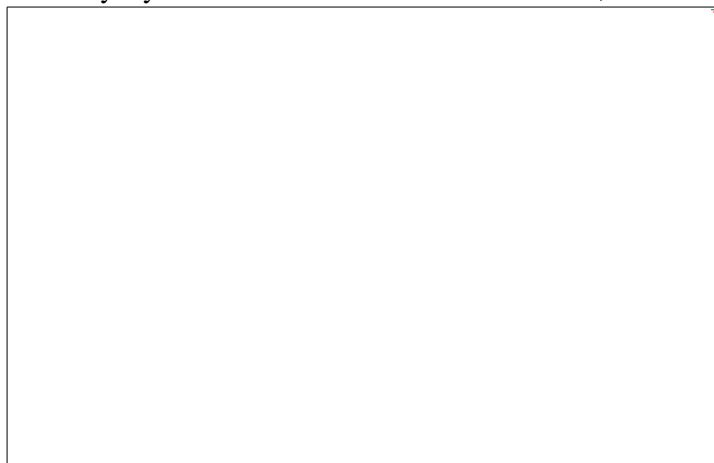
⁴⁵ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 14, doc. 289, fol. 294r-297r.

⁴⁶ James Morier writes: “In one of our conferences with Mirza Bozork, in which the utility of Georgia to Persia as a possession was discussed, he made a remark that was truly characteristic of an Asiatic logician. Taking hold of his beard, he said, “This is of no use, but it is an ornament”. James Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor to Constantinople, Between the Years 1810 and 1816* (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1818), 217.

⁴⁷ On August 17th, 1809 the General Gardane wrote to the Minister Champagny that he accomplished the instructions, received in Finkenstein, but as he had no indications about the arrival of the English to Persia, and their reception at Tehran’s Court, he had nothing to do in Persia and he was unable “to drive away the English, the Persians were in ecstasies over” (AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 12, doc. 81, fol. 145r). On his arrival to France on September 29th, Gardane again sent Champagny a very short card, in which he wrote that he had “by leaving Persia had taken care of the dignity of France and the interests, entrusted to him” (AN, AF, 1686 IV¹, doc. 11).

⁴⁸ Camille Alphonse Trézel (1780-1860) was General of division (1837), (1837), Peer of France (1846), and Minister of War (1847-1848).

silent Asian towns, we enjoyed the life of a Christian city very much and those thousand things, we did not pay attention to before or considered as annoying. The noise of bullock-carts, charged with food, arms and ammunition, fast motion of several expensive carriages, uneven sound of church bells, noisy markets, where Georgians, Armenians, Persians⁴⁹ and very many Russian soldiers are mixed together, songs, music of troops – a jumble of innovations, everything like this reminded us our native country and caused a strange emotion for us”. He describe the everyday life of Tiflis inhabitants. Unlike Asia, the houses in Tiflis had not high



fences, and Every family passed their evenings in open and slightly elevated terraces. These families were looking and seeing each other and were talking. The ladies, after going out from the churches were walking and this made beautiful the

environments gardens. It was also a pleasure to look at Georgian ladies, adorned with natural beauty, walking by the river in a beautiful evening of May. Their forehead was encircled by a small white diadem with a long flax voile, which fell behind to the ground and made their bodies slim and brilliant. Such a detailed description of Tiflis women was one of the examples of European customs and one of the signs of principally important differences from the oriental urban life for the French officer: there the women did not appear on public among men at all and for visiting relatives or going to baths came out from houses only covered with chador and accompanied.

The Emperor Alexander the First, informed about General Gardane's desire to go to France via Tiflis, ordered to the a commander-in-chief in the Caucasus (1809-1811) General Tormasov to receive the French mission with great respect. At the gala dinner, arranged by General Tormasov for the French mission, Trézel met the former

⁴⁹ Muslim population, overwhelmingly of Turkic ethnicity in the lands of the South Caucasus disputed between Russia and Persia used to be referred in reports of clashing superpowers of the time and external actors as Persians due to their Muslim, mostly Shiite identity and political links of ruling local dynasties to Qajar dynasty of Iran. Majority of Muslim community in Tiflis that time were Azerbaijani Turks.

queen of Imereti⁵⁰, then on the eve of taking his son⁵¹ to a college in St. Petersburg; Prince Anton⁵², wearing the dignity of catholicos; and the princess, his sister⁵³ - both children of the last vâli Heraclius [Erekle the Second]; the Armenian Patriarch⁵⁴; and a Georgian Seignior – brother of the General Prince Bagrationi. None of the guests understood either French, or Russian, but it was evident that everybody did well at the European dinner. Tormasov wanted to demonstrate to the envoys of Napoleon a good relation between the Russian authorities and the most brilliant and outstanding Georgians. Also, he showed that the political orientation of the royal family was not unanimous. The Russians knew that the most important personalities had relations with the Persians, and two Georgian Royal Princes Alexandre, son of the king Erekle the Second, and Teimuraz, the son of George the Twelfth, were emigrants in Persia.

The last chapter of the “Notice”, entitled “The Condition of the Russians in Georgia” deserves a special attention. Like other French agents, the Lieutenant Trézel also touches upon conclusion of the treaty with Russia by the King Erekle the Second in 1783, devastation of Tbilisi in 1795 by Agha-Mohammad-Khan and taking young Georgian boys and girls to Persia as captives, a great part of whom served on low posts in government and army during his being in Persia.

Trézel writes that all mountain peoples separately struggled against Russia, that needed to put many small fortified garrisons for protecting the carriages, which were coming from Mozdok to Tiflis via the still impassable roads. Communication of the headquarters with the military units, connected with the everyday provision with food of the Cossacks, dislocated in different places, was also dangerous. The Cossacks could not leave their posts because of fear of attacks of Lezgins, Ossethians or Turks, that was justified: a little earlier before coming of the French mission to Tiflis the Lezgins had stolen all the horses of Kherson Infantry, located in a league from the city. Bambak and Gyumri regiments dislocated on the Kars way, getting food and ammunition from Tiflis were also detached from the other part of the army. They would get in a very critical situation, if Persians and Akhaltsikhe Turks

⁵⁰ Here is meant the daughter of the prince Mamuka Orbeliani Anna, a spouse of the King of Imereti David the Second (1784-1789).

⁵¹ Their son – the prince Constantine was participating in the Patriotic war of 1812, and was awarded the Order of Vladimir. In Russia his sons were called “Imeretinski” or “Bagration-Imeretinski”.

⁵² Anton II (1764-1827) – Catholicos-Patriarch of the East Georgia, a son of Erekle the Second. His laic name was Teimuraz Bagrationi. In 1811 he was summoned to Russia, he lived in Nijni-Novgorod, he is buried there, in the Temple of Announcement.

⁵³ We assume that the princess whose name was not mentioned was the Princess Teklé, the youngest daughter of Erekle II, and the wife of the Colonel of the Russian army Vakhtang Orbeliani,

⁵⁴ Armenian Catholicos Nerses (1760-1857).

attacked them simultaneously from the both riversides of Lori for taking away a carriage and running after them. The lieutenant was sure unifying Persians' and Turks' forces in Georgia would cause a very dangerous war for the Russians, as the Russians still had not occupied the towns of Akhaltsikhe, Kars, Bayazid, Yerevan and Nakhtchevan.

Lieutenant paid attention to that important fact that the Generals, sent to Caucasus, had received order from the Russian Government to treat local population gently and with respect for gaining confidence of the recently conquered country. The French officer was disgusted when experienced Russian officers, holders of orders, were giving all kind military honors to a chief of any tribe, who allowed himself to accept the rank of a major or a colonel in the army. The Russian officers were forced always beg their support when they had to pass a military vehicle via their property: the safe-conduct, as big and strong it were, would be annihilated, if the chief of the Ossethians himself or together with his armed robbers did not strengthen it. For this service they always paid them very well.

According to Camil Trézel's information, the main families of the Georgians had increased rights and positions. Many so called "tavadi" (princes) received pension from the Russian Government. In Tbilisi were established a seminary and a military school, noted also by General Gardane⁵⁵. The Russian Emperor had depensed much money for constructiong the roads for carriages from Tbilisi to Mozdok. The Russian troops, dislocated in Georgia paid more than prices were for everything; they brought food from Russia and left all their money in Georgia. The Government could not gain even tenth part of the expenses, needed for keeping this conquest. In Trézel's opinion, "despite all these advantages the Georgians revealed very few eagerness for their new homeland". From the noblemen only Orbelians (Orbelianof), Tsitsianovs (Sitzianof) and Bagrations were on the side of Russia, others were feeling that instead of formation of a State of Georgia, Georgia was becoming a small province of Russia and their pride was hurt because of this humiliation. The Georgians support was so insignificant that the Russians could make only a battalion of 400-500 men, and in the lieutenant's opinion they even did not dare to arm them.

The Russian army, dislocated in Georgia consisted of 35 battalions of the linear infantry, three dragoon and five Don cossacks' regiments. Army personnel were 30,000 persons. These military units were dislocated in Imereti, Daghestan, Shirvan, all Georgia and Bambak Region. Several military units guarded Astara and Lenchoran Khan, that came under Russian protection. The garrisons, arranged on the

⁵⁵ Château de Vincennes, Service historique de l'Armée de Terre (Shat). Perse 1807-1857, 1M n°1673, Cracovie, non paginé, 11.08.1809, 4/52., fol. 1.

cite could carry into campaign only 17 batallions, 2 dragoon regiments and part of Cossacks – 12 thousand persons. These forces at that time were enough in battle against Persians, but it was necessary to take into consideration the expectations of the Gouvernments of Russia and Persia from this war. The Petersbourg court would never use great forces, but Fath-Ali shah, on the contrary, would send there all his forces. The Persians were still able to take Georgia away from Russia, if they guaranteed the Georgians to restore the old Government and better arranged internal administration, and the Georgians would restore with pleasure those weak relations, they had with the Persian Empire. According to the French officer, it would be good for the Russians to be well established in Georgia and to quietly take control of the Caucasus⁵⁶.

So, unlike the above-mentioned notes of the French consules in the Ottoman Empire and Napoleon's envoys in Persia, it is clear from the report of Lieutenant Trézel that he has a positive attitude towards the Russian Empire's policy, conducted in connection with Georgia and Caucasus in general.

The Letters of the Georgian Royal Princess to Napoléon

The Royal princes Alexander and Teimuraz gave their letters for Napoléon to the Generale Gardane, when the latter was returning in Europe. It is evident, that the Franco-Persian Treaty gave a certain hope to the Bagrations, who escaped to Persia, that Napoléon would support them. While comparing the Persian versions of the letters of the Royal Princes with their French translations, it is clear, that Amédée Jaubert translated these letters quite easily. In the French translation both Royal Princes, who escaped to Persia because of the persecutions of the Russians, are mentioned as refugees, and the main issue of their letters was to ask Napoléon to help them and return to them their kingdom, "unfairly conquered" by the Russians⁵⁷. The Royal Prince Teimuraz calls Napoléon "the distributor of crowns" and presents himself to him as the potential king of Georgia, and in the case of returning to "his former dominions", promises Napoléon to serve him with fidelity⁵⁸. But the political events in Europe developed faster than this information arrived to Persia, and the situation of the Georgian Royal Princes in Persia was so hard, that they did not take full notice of the failure of the political mission of General Gardane to Persia. Thus, it turned out, that the hope of Princes Alexandre and Teimuraz that Napoléon (and Christian Europe in general) would help the royal family of Bagrations to return their kingdom, was in vain. Prince Alexandre stayed devoted to his ideas but failed to

⁵⁶ Château de Vincennes, Service historique de l'Armée de Terre (Shat). Notice sur la Géorgie, 1M n°1486, Russie jusqu'en 1811, non paginé, 31.05.1809, doc. 13, fol. 32-76.

⁵⁷ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 12, doc. 122, fol. 231r-231v.

⁵⁸ AMFAE, CP/Perse, vol. 11, doc. fol. 222v-222r.

reach his goal and died in extreme poverty in Tehran in 1844. As for Prince Teimuraz, it is evident, that he understood, that the aim of his escape to Persia – to drive away Russians from Georgia to restore the throne there, and also the hope that Napoléon would assist him in this, was an illusion. On October 16, 1810 Prince Teimuraz left for Russia and on January 12, 1811 settled in St. Petersburg. It is interesting, that Prince Teimuraz, the member of the descendant of the last King of Georgia, who was called “Timurat Khan, Georgian Senior, the chief of the artillery in the army of Abbas Mirza”⁵⁹, after his emigration from Persia to Russia became famous in Europe as a scholar. In 1831 he became a member-correspondent of the “Société Asiatique” of Paris, and in 1837 – Honorary Member of the Academy of Sciences of Russia. He died in St. Petersburg in 1846.

King Solomon II of Imereti (1789-1810), grandson of Erekle II, escaped from Russian captivity in 1810 and asked Fath-Ali Shah for help against Russians. Shah did not meet him but gave a small pension and advised to seek support from the Ottomans. Under these circumstances Solomon II wrote a letter to Napoléon. He had already sent a letter to the French Emperor but got no reply. The king decided to make another attempt. In the new letter, Solomon II called Napoléon “the arbiter of the universe” and asked to release him from the intolerable yoke of “the Emperor of Moscow” and take kingdom of Imereti under the Emperor’s protection⁶⁰. The letter was handed to French diplomat, George Outrey. King Solomon’s fight against the Russian occupation got no results. He emigrated to Turkey, and died far from his homeland, in Trabzon on 7 (19) February, aged 43.

Conclusion

In the first decade of the 19th century the interests of the greatest states – England, Russia and France – went beyond Europe, and crossed in Persia. The Franco-Persian Alliance Treaty, which in fact was the first military and political agreement between a European State and Persia at the beginning of the 19th century, attached to Georgia international importance. After concluding the Treaty of Tilsit, Georgia which was already included in the geopolitical space of the Russian Empire lost its importance for France but was still important for Persia. This has also been proven by the notes of the member of Sir Harford Jones Brydges mission, dated February 28, 1810. The source says that when the Russian Envoy Artillery Lieutenant-Colonel Baron Wrede reminded Mirza Bozorg that Persia broke the Treaty with France, the Vazier replied that “it was not Persia that broke it, but France as the essence of that treaty was the

⁵⁹ Joseph Michel Tancoigne, *Lettres sur la Perse et la Turquie d’Asie* (Paris : Nepveu - Libraire, 1819), II, 165-166.

⁶⁰ AMFAE, Russie, vol. 10: doc. 24, fol. 292r doc. 26, fol. 296r-296v.

restitution of Georgia for Iran. France either would not or could not perform her promise. We determined not to be trifled with any longer and formed an alliance with England”⁶¹. The issue of the restitution of Georgia to Persia was still actual during the negotiations carried out by Fath-Ali Shah’s Ambassador Mirza Abul Hassan Khan in 1809-1810 in London⁶².

After three decades, in 1839, Lefebvre de Becours, – the French historian, commented on this step of the Emperor of France as follows: “The Finkenstein Treaty was directed against England and Russia. The most precious, almost the only useful articles were about Georgia, the remainder was just the extra load (des charges). (...) While signing the Treaty of Tilsit with Russia, Napoléon did not take into consideration article 4 of the Finkenstein Treaty about returning Georgia to Persia”⁶³. Thus, the mission of General Gardane in Persia was doomed at the very moment of the conclusion of the Tilsit Treaty because of the double-cross policy of Napoléon. It turned out that at Tilsit, Napoléon’s political goals also no more coincided with Fath-Ali Shah’s plans and Persia and Georgia ended up as casualties of the Great Game between the European empires. While signing the Treaty with Persia in Finkenstein, Napoléon did not take into consideration that on the one hand Russia in the Caucasus and the Caspian Coast and on the other hand England in India would never give up their positions.

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⁶¹ Sir Harford Jones Brydges, *An Account of the Transactions of His Majesty’s Mission to the Court of Persia, in Years 1807* (London: Printed for James Bohn, 1834), I, xxiv-xxv.

⁶² Mirza Abul Hassan Khan, *A Persian at the Court of King George, 1809-10*, trans. & edit. Margaret Morris Cloake. Introduction Denis Wright (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1988), 60, 64, 69, 119, 164.

⁶³ AMFAE, MD/Perse, vol. 8, doc. 25, fol. 241v-243r.

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Summary

Georgia between France, Russia and Iran Seen by French Diplomats

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Georgia

At the turn of the 19th century in order to include Persia in the plan of the Indian expedition Napoleon inserted the issue of Eastern Georgia which was annexed by Russia in 1801. According to the Franco-Persian Treaty (4.05.1807), Napoleon recognized Georgia as a legal property of Fath-Ali Shah (Art. 3), charged himself to force the Russians to leave the territories of Georgia (Art. 4). What information did the Emperor of France have about Georgia that he promised to Shah?

Some manuscripts dealing with this theme are kept in the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France. Their authors were J.-F. Rousseau – the General Consul in Bassora (Basra), G. Olivier – French naturalist, P. Fourcade – the Consul in Synop, Joseph Rousseau – the Consul in Alepo (Aleppo), Napoleon's envoys the General Romieu and orientalist Jaubert. The mentioning of the former kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti as the "Georgia of Persia" reinforced in the mind of the French the idea that Georgia was a country which belonged to Persia, taken away by Russia by force. In some manuscripts the aspiration of Russia is noted to establish itself on the territories from the port of Trabizond to the port of Astarabad because of their advantageous military and commercial locations.

During all negotiations (1807-1809) the Tehran court demanded from the French Ambassador General Gardane the liberation of Georgia in favor of Persia. Unlike the mentioned diplomats, from the Aide-de-camp of Gardane, Lieutenant Trézel's report it is clear, that he has a positive attitude towards the Russian Empire's policy in Georgia and the Caucasus.

Keywords: Napoleon, Georgia, Persia, French Diplomats, archive material

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dans le Caucase**

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