

International Conference

**PERCEPTION OF CAUCASUS
IN MYTHS AND LITERATURE
FROM ANTIQUITY TILL CONTEMPORANEITY**

The project was supported by Shota Rustaveli National Science
Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG) [grant number MG-ISE-22-414]

A B S T R A C T S

საერთაშორისო კონფერენცია

**კავკასიის აღქმა მითებსა და ლიტერატურაში
ანტიკურობიდან თანამედროვეობამდე**

პროექტი განხორციელდა შოთა რუსთაველის საქართველოს
ეროვნული სამეცნიერო ფონდის მხარდაჭერით
[გრანტის ნომერი MG-ISE-22-414]

თ ე ზ ი ს ე ბ ი



20-22 September 2023

20-22 სექტემბერი 2023

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ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის
თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი
კლასიკური ფილოლოგიის, ბიზანტინისტიკისა და
ნეოგრეცისტიკის ინსტიტუტი



Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany

ფრიდრიხ შილერის სახელობის იენის უნივერსიტეტი



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ISBN 978-9941-9856-5-2

პროგრამა „ლოგოსი“

ილია ჭავჭავაძის გამზირი 13, თბილისი 0179

ტელ. 225-02-58, ფაქსი 222-11-81

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**Batumi as the “Second Trabzon”
in the Memoirs of a Greek Politician**

The Memoirs of Theophylaktos Theophylaktos (1885-1962) written in Greek have been completely unknown to Georgian scholars. This extensive text, part which refers to Georgia, is especially important. The author was an outstanding representative of the Pontian independence movement, who, after the 1922 massacre was an active supporter of refugees from Pontus.

Theophylaktos studied medicine first in Athens, then at the University of Paris. After accomplishing his studies, he opened his own clinic in Trabzon and helped his fellow citizens using all means possible. He also served as the Minister of the Thrace Region in the Eleftherios Venizelos government.

Theophylaktos' memoirs are a precious source of the period from the 1890s to the 1920s, not only because he was actively involved in all the processes he describes, but he also added relevant documents (exact and whole texts), photos, protocols and maps. For example, on the map of Pontus every village is indicated. It is a very rare and exceptional example of memoirs as a genre of literature. Information provided by Theophylaktos is reliable and very accurate.

The Memoirs, entitled “Around the Inextinguishable Flame”, are made up of 500 printed pages. The second chapter bears the title “Batumi (Batum) – where the national Greek-Pontic movement was transferred”. Georgia’s different regions are presented in other chapters as well. Besides the facts and the text’s historical value, its emotional background is very important, reflecting how Georgia and Georgians were perceived by Theophylaktos.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century there were many Pontians in Batumi and the surrounding area. It is also obvious that this littoral region was very close, not only geographically but also in terms of traditions and mentality. According to Theophylaktos, there were 15,000 Pontians who settled there during that period. “Batum was the second Trabzon for me and my family”, he wrote. As politician and doctor, the activist and a great philanthropist he knew very well the importance of human solidarity.

All passages from the memoirs that concern Georgia – and especially Batumi and the its surroundings – are presented and analysed broadly in the current paper. It will be an important contribution to the study of the Greek refugee movement from the Pontus region to Georgia.

Die Amazonen am Kaukasus: Eine mythographische Spurensuche

Die Amazonen gehören unbestreitbar zu den schillerndsten Gestalten der griechischen Mythologie. Die Vorstellung von den Männern ebenbürtigen – oder gar überlegenen – Kriegerfrauen hat die Menschen der griechischen Antike ebenso fasziniert wie abgeschreckt. Dementsprechend reich sind nicht nur die Geschichten über Begegnungen zwischen panhellenischen Heldenfiguren mit Amazonenköniginnen – angefangen von Herakles' Raub von Hippolytes Gürtel über Achilleus' postmortale Liebe zu Penthesilea bis zur pseudo-historischen Begegnung zwischen Alexander dem Grossen mit Thalestris –, sondern auch die Nachrichten bezüglich der geographischen Verortung des Amazonenvolkes, die von Skythien über Thrakien und Kleinasien bis nach Libyen reichen. Einige griechische Quellen berichten auch von Amazonen am Kaukasus: Erstmals greifbar bei dem nur fragmentarisch überlieferten hellenistischen Elegiker Zenothemis, finden sich entsprechende Nachrichten später v.a. in den Schriften von Strabon und Plutarch (spätes 1. v. Chr. bzw. frühes 1. Jh. n.Chr.) sowie bei dem spätantiken Geschichtsschreiber Jordanes (6. Jh. n. Chr.). Obschon die Vorstellung kaukasischer Amazonen vergleichsweise schwach bezeugt ist, sind die existierenden Zeugnisse doch höchst aufschlussreich. Dies gilt besonders für den Bericht Strabons

(*Geographie* 11.5.1-2), der – unter Bezugnahme auf ältere Gewährsmänner – davon berichtet, wie die Amazonen ursprünglich zusammen mit den Gargariern aus der im nördlichen Kleinasien gelegenen Stadt Themiskyra in den nördlichen Kaukasus ausgewandert seien und sich dort von diesen getrennt hätten, sich aber immer noch jährlich zwecks Zeugung von Nachwuchs mit ihnen trafen. Strabon verknüpft diese seine ethnographischen Ausführungen mit einer Grundsatzreflexion über das Verhältnis zwischen Mythos und Historie und bietet somit Anlass für eine mythographische Spurensuche, die in diesem Vortrag geleistet werden soll. Es soll gezeigt werden, wie die Vorstellung des ausgewanderten Amazonenvolkes und die damit einhergegangene Geschlechtertrennung in Zusammenhang steht mit der für griechisches Denken typischen Auffassung der Kaukasusregion als Grenzregion zwischen ‚zivilisierter‘ Ökumene und ‚barbarischer‘ Aussenwelt. Bedingt dadurch, dass die Amazonen mit ihrer Lebensart eine Bedrohung für das griechische Selbstverständnis darstellten, gleichzeitig aber mit ihrer Andersartigkeit auch eine konstante Faszination auf die Griechen ausübten, sind Überlieferungen über Kultur und Normen der Amazonen im Grenzbereich zwischen Mythos und Historie allgegenwärtig. Der Kaukasus mit seiner Grenzfunktion stellt dabei ein geradezu paradigmatisches Fallbeispiel dar, in dem Fragen nach geographischen Grenzen (Zentrum vs. Peripherie), Gattungsgrenzen (Geschichtsschreibung vs. Mythographie) und Geschlechterrollen (Patriarchat vs. Matriarchat) aufeinandertreffen und diskutiert werden.

Melissa Beattie

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**Film-As-Myth and Mythic Films:
Lost in Karastan, Myth(s) and the Conflation
of Post-Soviet Landscapes**

Myth... expresses shared beliefs and perceptions of reality. A mythological system is a complex formation of images expressed in words or other symbolic representations, which are neither descriptive nor metaphorical in nature, and which function as a communicative system with the aim of rendering the inexplicable reality which presents itself as a system of undeniable facts, which are actually totally fictitious... but are believed to be strongly and soundly proved and justified by collective experience (Hovhannisyan 2015: 187).

Film can both convey a constructed version of myth and be itself part of mythic construction. This duality (and dichotomy) are expressed clearly in the British film *Lost in Karastan* (2014, dir. Hopkins). Filmed primarily in Georgia, but containing visuals which evoke or mimic many cultures of the Caucasus, follows British film-maker Emil Forester (Matthew Macfadyen) as his special guest turn at the (fictional ex-Soviet republic) Karastan film festival becomes an offer from the local dictator Abashilev (Richard van Weyden) to direct a film version of the national foundation epic. While this national origin myth (and nation) are fictionalised, both the film and the construction and context of the film-within-the-film

illustrate important points about how media constructs a representation of national and other identities (Anderson 2010, Billig 1995, Beattie 2020, *inter multa alia*) as well as the construction, transmission, reinforcement and modification/manipulation of national symbols and myth for political, economic and other purposes (Billig 1995, Beattie 2020, Hovhannisyan 2015). The film illustrates the complexities which can often be elided or erased by media, especially when practitioners are unaware of wider contexts and/or State-controlled media are actively engaged in manipulating media messaging (cf Hovhannisyan's 2015 semiotic analysis of Armenian presidential inaugurations as political, media spectacles). This illustrates how media, in its multimodal form and through discourse analysis, not only works for such myth-building and manipulation in live events but also that such analyses, common to media studies (Ledin and Machin 2020, Beattie 2020, *inter multa alia*) are applicable to the Caucasus as well.

This film also illustrates and engages in social commentary on a number of linked points. As a British production, it offers commentary on British foreign policy and the penchant for British/Western filmmakers to engage in work for governments (authoritarian, extremely corrupt and/or otherwise) without thinking about the political and manipulative power of media or without understanding the complexities of the cultures in which they are working and filming. 'Karastan' itself is a melange of Central Asian and Caucasian post-Soviet republics, with a rebel movement evocative of Chechnya, Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as a strongman

dictator who is evocative of the Azeri Aliyevs, the Kazakh Nazarbayev and the Turkmen Turkmenbashi and Berdimuhamedov who similarly engaged in myth-building through a cult of personality. The use of a fictional post-Soviet republic allows the film's production team to critique a mix of authoritarian governments' actions (and British/Western interactions with them) whilst also taking advantage of Georgia's economic incentives and commensurate greater freedom of expression for filming within the country. The economic aspect of film-making is addressed as well, with the budget of the film-within-the-film being diverted by local fixer, rebel leader and Emil's love interest Chulpan (MyAnna Buring). The ambiguity of the ending also illustrates the ambiguity and mutability of myth and politics both within and without the post-Soviet sphere as well as the links between money, power and myth-as-propaganda.

Olga Beridze

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**Armament, Military Structures and Organization of
Armies of Opposing Parties in the Lazic War
(According to the Data of the Works of Procopius and Agathias)**

The aspiration of the Emperor of Byzantium Justinian (527-565) to expand the borders of the Empire and preach Christianity on the

expanded territories was met with vigorous opposition by the King of Persia, Khosrow Anushirvan. From 542 to 562 the war between the Byzantine and the Persian Empires was fought on the territory of Lazica. Under pressure from the two great military forces, King Gubaz II tried in vain to protect his own interests and those of his nation by taking advantage of his opponents' weaknesses. To realize these goals, he was assisted by the still-numerous army of the Laz and by his excellent knowledge of the territory of his country and its landscape. His attempt to turn either Byzantium or Persia into an ally and defender of his country ended in failure. To the contrary, deviating to the side of his opponents for purposes of self-defence was considered a betrayal of the King of the Laz. In searching for a solution, King Gubaz made diplomatic mistakes, for which he was ultimately killed by Byzantine generals. After the long wars waged by the Byzantine and Persian Empires and interspersed by fruitless truces, the "fifty-year peace treaty" was concluded in 562. This obligated Emperor Justinian to pay tribute to the Persian King and prohibited him to preach Christianity on the territories of his subordinated countries. As a result of the treaty, Byzantium was able to retain Lazica despite the tense and threatening situation. These wars are described in two most detailed written sources – historical works by Procopius of Caesarea and Agathias Scholasticus. Analysis of the data of their writings and their comparison, similarities and differences (taking into account the stylistic features of the historians of the Early Byzantine period) is the topic of this article, in order to understand how the army was

organized and what kind of military forces supported the King of Persia in the battles against the military forces of Byzantium or Byzantium-Lazica. The article discusses the war tactics of the Greeks, the Persians and ethnic minorities based on the study and comparison of information from various sources. The military weapons of infantry and cavalry detachments are described (spears, arrows, battle axes, bows, angons (the heavy javelin of a Roman footsoldier), «σπαλίων» (or “wicker roofs” as they are called), swords and long-range devices, etc. Attention is drawn to fortification as an important factor in war; military resources such as army supplies and socio-economic problems; intelligence-gathering before battle; the dissemination of false information as an important tactic; as well as Emperor Justinian’s diplomatic moves during the war – psychological factors and military tricks: “First scare, instil fear, then win”. Many contemporary researchers note that the history, glory and fall of the country cannot be perceived properly without a detailed and comprehensive study of the military organization of its army. This article addresses these issues based on evidence of historical works by Procopius of Caesarea and Agathias of Myrina.

Montserrat Camps-Gaset

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**The Ancient Greek Mythical End of the World:
The Journey of the Hero to the Palace
of the Sun in East and West**

In Ancient Greek Myth, one way to express the end of the world was through the four cardinal points which defined the real world from the unknown, obscure place of the afterlife, where the gates of the Great Beyond were placed. Sunrise and sunset defined the edges of the known world, where the Sun had its dwelling place and started or finished its daily course. Almost all Greek heroes had to undergo at least one journey there and back from the borders of the underworld, and there are two Greek heroes especially reputed for their journeys to the Palace of the Sun in search of an impossible reward. Jason searches for the Golden Fleece, kept in a sacred garden and guarded by a dragon, next to the Palace of the Sun in the East. Heracles travels to the West, in search for the Golden Apples in the sacred garden of the Hesperides, also guarded by a dragon. They succeed and return from an expedition from which there is no return for ordinary mortals. Apollonius of Rhodes bears witness to both tales, but, although his *Argonautica* is the longest and best-preserved text of Jason's journey to Colchis, there are many other witnesses of both journeys, reflected in literature as well as in Greek pottery and art. Both stories show strong parallels in text and image, and are comparable as narratives about the limits of the world, not

situated on a real, historical map, but in the collective imaginary of myths about the afterlife.

Ana Chikovani

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The Caucasus through the Lens of the Modern Greek Writer, Dimitris Nollas

The present paper focuses on the study of perceptions of the Caucasus, especially the volume “Small travels” (“Μικρά Ταξείδια”) and other prosaic works by Dimitris Nollas, and explores the literary and cultural aspects of perceptions of the Caucasus in modern literary works. We draw attention to challenging images and experiences of reality that the writer presents about the Caucasus. Literary critics point out that Nollas’ “Small travels”, especially his trip to mythical Colchis and to the Baku and Caspian Seas, reveals the special talent and so-called cinematic vision of the writer. Topics related to the Caucasus that the writer touches on are many and varied. He presents a wealth of information about people, food, relationships between people, and even roads. He points out, that “Meeting the other is what excites in travel”. In the words of the writer, this trip to the Caucasus is like visiting pilgrimage sites. Close reading as well as interpreting literary sources are used as a foundation for the research, while cultural analysis is employed that

is explicitly committed to understanding the framing of texts and images process. It pairs close-readings with attention to wider social and political implications of cultural imagination.

The analysis of Dimitris Nollas' work shows how the portrayal of places, people, art and human relationships in the Caucasus are closely linked to a cultural identity approach. Special emphasis is placed in the narrative around interchangeability and the alteration of the images in the narrative. The richness of the travelogue lies in the descriptions of the Caucasus that Nollas presents, but also the exploration of the inner world that the journeys prompt.

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On One Instance of the Confusion of the Ethnonyms in Ancient Sources

Ancient sources paint the following picture of Aegean demographics during the Bronze Age: Initially, the Aegean was inhabited by pre-Greek tribes, then the earliest Greeks appeared and occupied the region alongside other peoples. Finally, the Hellenes became the dominant group in Greece, having assimilated or expelled the others. Different labels are used in the ancient sources to refer to the groups inhabiting the Bronze Age Aegean. We can assume that the majority of these designations must have been used for either pre-

Greek, or Greek tribes. The remarkable fact is that in certain cases the names are mixed up with each other in the sources.

This paper reviews the label “Minyans” (Μινύαι), which has been used as a synonym for the Achaeans, Danaans, or even Hellenes in general. However, it should be noted that the ancient authors often used it to refer to the Pelasgians, one of the non-Greek tribes. The following hypothesis can be advanced for this: Evidently, a certain tribe inhabited the territory of Orchomenus, Iolcus and the surrounding area, that must have had its own name before the reign of the Minyas. Since the ancient sources do not specify what exactly they were called, it can be reasonably supposed that they were referred to as “Pelasgians”. With this in mind, it must not be surprising that the Greek population residing in these regions came to be sometimes denoted by the same name that was possibly used for the pre-Greek tribes inhabiting the same area. Therefore, the identification of Minyans, i.e. Argonauts, with the Pelasgians cannot be said to necessarily imply that the ancient authors considered them to be non-Greek, i.e. Barbarian.

Since a part of the Pelasgian tribe was assimilated following the domination of Hellenes in the Aegean, over time they came to be thought of as a Hellenic tribe in the Greek consciousness, and the label “Pelasgian” was used as an ethnonym denoting the Greeks in a way that was similar to the “Argives”, the “Achaeans”, or the “Danaans”. This may be another possible reason for the mix-up of the names we have previously discussed.

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Les articles ‘Caucase’ et ‘Géorgie’ de l’Encyclopédie de Diderot et D’Alembert: sources et fortune littéraire

L’Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, est un ouvrage majeur des Lumières et il représente un travail éditorial considérable ayant nécessité la collaboration de très nombreux savants. Diderot est l’auteur de l’article ‘Caucase’ (vol. II, 1752) alors que le cavalier de Jaucourt, médecin de son état, rédigea l’article ‘Géorgie’ (vol. VII, 1757). Ma communication aimerait analyser ces deux articles en étudiant les sources anciennes et modernes sur lesquelles ils se fondent (Hérodote, I ; Strabon, XI ; Philostrate, *Vie d’Apollonios de Tyane*, II ; Chardin, Tavernier, Thévenot, Tournefort et La Motraye, ...), en particulier à propos de certains *topoi* ethnographiques, comme celui de la réjouissance au moment de la mort. On étudiera également la fortune littéraire de ces deux articles dans le cadre de l’accueil que l’Europe du XVIII^e siècle accorda à cette immense entreprise.

Perception of the Caucasus by Ammianus Marcellinus

Ammianus Marcellinus, historian of the 4th century AD, is the author of "Res Gestae", which is treated as a continuation of the historical works of Tacitus. The work consisted of 31 books and covered the period from 96 to 378 AD; however, the first 13 books have unfortunately been lost. In the books that have survived, Ammianus Marcellinus describes the events of 353-78 in detail. This work is interesting for us because it contains information about the war that the Romans conducted with the Persians for Armenia and Iberia. Besides, Ammianus Marcellinus gives other information about the Caucasus, thus we can find different regions and places connected with the Caucasus or the location of the people living in this area and their way of life.

With the expansion of the Roman Empire, the boundaries of the main scene of world history also widened, significantly increasing the role of the Caucasus – Iberia and Armenia – in the confrontation between the big empires. These historical narratives are treated from different perspectives by the Roman historians of the 1st century AD (Pliny the Elder, Pomponius Mela). Our aim is to introduce Ammianus Marcellinus as a historian and politician and to observe how this last great Roman historian perceived the Caucasus in his work.

Irine Darchia

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**Medea Back to the Caucasus,
According to the “Medeas” by Andreas Flourakis**

The influence of the Colchian Medea on human thought and her profound impact on global literature and artistic expression are enduring and unmatched. Medea continues to serve as an endless wellspring of inspiration for countless artists, and presents a plethora of opportunities for diverse interpretations. A Greek writer, Andreas Flourakis, inspired by the Argonauts’ myth, devoted three plays – a kind of trilogy – to Medea’s multifaceted image. His works, “Medea’s Feet”, “Medea’s Burqa” and “Medea’s Cities” describe her life in Colchis before falling in love with Jason, and before her adventure in Corinth, her emigration to New York and her trips back to Batumi and Corinth. These works are significant in many ways, as a postmodern and rather unusual, even provocative, interpretation of the myth of the Argonauts. In the trilogy, Medea sends her children back to Colchis by boat instead of killing them, and she returns to Batumi to recover from the amnesia she suffers with after the tragic events in her life. This paper addresses the representation of the Caucasus in the “Medeas” by Andreas Flourakis within the context of several of the plays’ main motifs – exile, emigration, alienation, and others.

**Πολιτική ανασημασιοδότηση του
αρχαίου μύθου του Προμηθέα στο έργο *Οι Εκτελεστές*
του Γιώργου Σκούρτη**

Η δραματουργία του Γιώργου Σκούρτη εστιάζει στον καθημερινό άνθρωπο. Ανήκει στη γενιά των συγγραφέων που θα μπορούσε να ονομασθεί γενιά του '70, ζει τις έντονες ανακατατάξεις που συντελούνται στην Ελλάδα αυτή την εποχή και, όπως και άλλοι της γενιάς του, τοποθετείται απέναντι στα κακώς κείμενα της πολιτικής κατάστασης. Η θεατρική του γραφή δύσκολα μπορεί να κατηγοριοποιηθεί, αφού διαρκώς εξελίσσεται και περνάει από την παρωδία, τη σάτιρα, το ιστορικό θέατρο, το θέατρο ντοκουμέντο. Ορισμένα έργα του βασίζονται σε αρχαίους μύθους και σε αρχετυπικές μορφές. Σε αυτά μέσα από νέες δραματουργικές φόρμες χρησιμοποιεί την παρακαταθήκη των αρχαίων μύθων και ιστοριών και καταφεύγει σε ιστορικά και μυθικά πρόσωπα προκειμένου να γράψει για τις τεχνικές της εξουσίας στο σύγχρονο πολιτικό σκηνικό της χώρας του. *Οι Εκτελεστές* είναι έργο που θα μπορούσαμε να το εντάξουμε στα αρχαιόθεμα θεατρικά έργα του συγγραφέα. Πρωτοανεβάζεται το 1988, έχει πρωταγωνιστές καθημερινούς ανθρώπους, καθώς δραματοποιείται η ιστορία τριών ληστών που εμφανίζονται εγκλωβισμένοι από τα δεσμά της κοινωνίας. Ο Γιώργος Σκούρτης με μαεστρία σχολιάζει τη βία της εξουσίας και στηρίζει τη ιδεολογική του θέση πάνω στον Αισχύλειο

Προμηθέα. Στόχος της παρούσης εργασίας είναι να ανιχνεύσει τα μυθικά θέματα και μοτίβα, την επανερμηνεία του μύθου του Προμηθέα στο νεότερο θεατρικό έργο με λογοτεχνικά και δραματουργικά εργαλεία, υπό το πρίσμα της σημειωτικής. Ο φακός της εστίασης θα στραφεί στις νοηματικές πτυχές του μύθου που προκρίνονται με βάση το συγκείμενο συγγραφής.

Tina Dolidze

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The Apocryphal Narratives of Apostles' Journeys in Georgia

In all medieval apocryphal narratives that record the itineraries of the apostles, Apostle Andrew consistently appears as the central figure in the missionary journey to West Georgia, accompanied by other apostles and disciples as his companions. The various Acts of St. Andrew specifically mention Apostle Matthias/Mathew (in early and later records) and Simeon the Canaanite or Zealot (in later sources) as fellow participants in Apostle Andrew's Christian mission.

The obscure term "Scythians" has been mentioned since ancient times as the objective of the apostolic mission. According to the context such records mostly place these tribes along the southern, eastern and northern shores of the Black Sea. Moreover, the context

of these narratives suggests that the ethnonym Scythai (correspondingly “Scythia”), while indicating the obscure belief of Greeks in who are virtually ethnically Scythians and where they live, also functions metaphorically to denote Barbarians, i.e., uneducated, uncivilized people. Similar connotations can be observed in the use of ethnonyms such as “Ethiopians” and “inner Ethiopians”, which, parallel to the references to Scythians/Scythia, are applied to the population inhabiting the territory of West Georgia in early narratives. Later sources dating from the 9th century onward, provide detailed descriptions of toponyms and ethnonyms related to the territory of West Georgia, which can still be associated with present-day locations.

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Georgian Hostages at the Byzantine Court (10th-12th cc): Reflection and Perception in Written Sources

Georgian hostages in Byzantium were Georgian nobles who had been taken captive during political and military conflicts between the two regions. They were usually members of prominent noble families, and their captivity in Byzantium could last for years. While in captivity, the hostages were often educated in the Byzantine court, and many became fluent in Greek and familiar

with Byzantine culture. Despite their captivity, the Georgian hostages played an essential role in facilitating cultural exchange and diplomatic negotiations between Byzantium and Georgia. They served as intermediaries between the two regions and helped to establish and maintain political alliances and cultural ties. In the 10th and 12th centuries, the Byzantine Empire took several Georgian captives, primarily members of the royal family and aristocracy. Information about them is reflected in Byzantine and Georgian written sources, which often offer a different perception of events. Among the hostages were very famous historical figures. One of them was Bagrat IV, the king of Georgia from 1027 to 1072. Giorgi I's three-year-old son and heir to the throne was treated as a hostage. He spent a total of six years in Constantinople: three years Bagrat was a hostage at the court of Basil II as a youth (1022-1025) and was a prisoner of honour for three years (1051-1054) with his mother, Queen Mariam. During their time at the Byzantine royal court, three emperors were replaced in a dynastic struggle for the throne: Constantine Monomachos (1041-1055), Queen Theodora (1055-1056), and Michael VII Duka (1056-1057). Bagrat studied the Byzantine court and culture and then used this knowledge to strengthen his own house. It is also worth noting that Queen Theodora asked Bagrat for his young daughter "to raise her as her own child", which expresses the queen's attitude towards the Georgian hostage. In response to this, in 1056, Martha, the daughter of Bagrat IV, was brought to Constantinople. Queen Theodora was executed shortly before her arrival, and Martha was soon returned

to her homeland. One more significant example is the representative of aristocracy, nephew of Tornike Eristavi, Euthymios, who was son of John the Athonite taken as a political hostage to Constantinople. When John came to the imperial court several years later to secure his son's release, he realized that Euthymios had received a brilliant education. Eventually, he became the leader of the Georgian Iviron Monastery that his father had founded. George Hagiorite was also a hostage at the Byzantine imperial court for 12 years. The practice of hostage-taking was an important aspect of medieval diplomacy and politics; however, the role of hostages was not limited to that. They often spent years in their captors' courts, giving them the opportunity to learn about their captors' culture, language, and customs. In the case of Byzantine-Georgian relations, hostages served as catalysts for developing cultural relations.

Fatima Eloeva

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Perception of the Caucasus in Zyranna Zateli's Novel “And with the Light of the Wolf They Return” (1993)

This paper analyses the theme of the Caucasus in one of Zyranna Zateli's most famous novels, “And with the Light of the Wolf They Return” (1993). The theme of the Caucasus is regarded as one of the archetypes of Greek tradition. Based on Carl Jung's theory of

archetypes, the work of Zyranna Zateli is perceived as a unique amalgam of ancient Greek and modern Greek traditions. “Life is essentially a slow memory (*lenta memorisazione*) of childhood“, wrote Umberto Eco. In one of her rare interviews, the modern Greek writer Zyranna Zateli, says that she “had a chance” to feel and listen to the reality of peasant life as it was five hundred years ago. The writer shifted the colourful and real world of her childhood several decades back into chronological depth as her novel is set in the fin de siècle period. Thus, the sense of mystery is enhanced, the focus is loosened, and the biographical nature of the narrative is completely modified. In Zyranna Zateli’s case we deal with her own, personal mythology. Sometimes it seems that Zateli is unaware of the existence of ancient Greek mythology, since within the mythological milieu of ancient Greece she creates her own personal mythology.

Zateli was born in Soho, not far from Thessaloniki, in a mountainous countryside where people cultivated land and looked after animals from times immemorial; where in early spring you could see the games of hares and wolves in the night fields; where snakes lived in the fields, and bears, deer, squirrels and ferret inhabited wooded mountains. All these animals, along with people, become equal protagonists of her books. They are all members of her extended family. Sigmund Freud with his book on totems and taboos, Carl Gustav Jung with the theory of archetypes, and James George Fraser with his compendium of magic and witchcraft would learn a lot from her texts.

Zateli is usually compared to Marquez, and of course, not by accident. Like Marquez, she seems to open an invisible door and introduce the reader to another, yet completely tangible, dimension. She draws on Marquez and Edgar Allan Poe, just as Marquez drew on Faulkner and Kafka. But if Marquez breaks down the boundaries between the world of reality and fantasy, reproducing the atmosphere of his childhood spent in his grandfather's house in the town of Aracataca in northern Colombia, Zateli seems to continue the tradition of Greek materialism dating back to Democritus. Her amazing stories allow the possibility of the miraculous transcendent element, but never lose the possibility of realistic interpretation.

The paper aims to analyse the theme of the Caucasus in one of Zateli's most famous novels, "And with the Light of the Wolf They Return" (1993). The Caucasus is viewed like one of the archetypes in the Greek Weltanschauung.

We aim to consider the character of Persephone from this point of view. Persa, the third wife of the novel's protagonist Christophoros; In Zateli's novel we meet a number of original and bright female characters, but even against their background, Persa stands out by her mystery, exoticism and gifts for witchcraft and healing.

It seems that Persa can be compared with the archetypal images of the exotic sorceress Medea from Greek mythology and, possibly, Satana from the Nart epic tradition, who both share some similarities, particularly in their depiction as powerful – and at times – destructive women. The paper will show how, through the

personal mythology of Zateli, Persa transforms from an evil sorceress into a good one.

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Achaemenids in the Caucasus: Traces of Iron Age and Monumental Architecture in the Alasani Plain

The Achaemenid Empire (539–333 BC) was the largest political entity of antiquity. Archaeological research from funerary context had demonstrated the influence of Achaemenid imperial culture on the South Caucasian elites of the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Occasionally discovered architectural fragments such as the bell bases found along the middle Kura River at Saritepe and near the Alazani at Gumbati suggested the presence of monumental buildings. But this material had never been found in situ, leaving open the question precisely what degree of dependence they were indicative of.

A major breakthrough in this research field was the excavation of an Azerbaijani-Georgian-German team at the site of Karacamirli near Şamkir on the middle Kura River. For the first time an imperial Achaemenid construction with large monumental building complexes was unearthed in the Caucasus. The layout of the reception palace on the Gurban Tepe near Karacamirli, which are nearly identical

with those of the Hadiš on the Persepolis terrace, the quality of architectural fittings and our large-scale magnetometer measurement (ca. 1 square kilometre) proved, that this site embodied Persian rule in the conquered territories.

Together with Azerbaijani, French and Georgian colleagues we launched a research project to investigate the spatial organization of Achaemenid administrative centres by means of further large-scale geophysical prospection projects in the Southern Caucasus. In the frame of a DFG-project we selected two Achaemenid sites in the Southern Caucasus: Karacamirli and Gumbati in the Alazani Plain. The key to our approach at both sites was to combine geophysical and archaeological survey by operating in the same 40×40 m grid as the basic data recovery unit. At Karacamirli, we proved that the occupational pattern of the administrative centre very much resembles that of the Achaemenid capital of Pasargadae. Individual monumental complexes enclosed by a wall, surrounded by large “empty space” probably gardens, which in turn was bordered by local or non-elite settlements and burial sites. Our research proved that the site is not densely covered by features, but rather characterized by open space, which is a key structuring principle of imperial Achaemenid planning. The geophysical findings are complemented by the distribution of surface pottery respectively through their absence. Concentrations of ceramics were found beyond a circle of administrative buildings, in settlements and are therefore be considered indicative of space usage intensity, but not for any degree of importance of the respective areas.

Since 2018 we concentrate our project to the southern Alazani Plain (Georgia). Here besides to the Achaemenid sites of Gumbati and Saaklemo, we enlarged our studies and surveyed some of the major Iron Age settlements on the plain. Our investigation resulted in a very interesting finding from the periphery of the Achaemenid empire. Two kilometres north of the known site of Gumbati, we discovered a large so far completely unknown site with a set of monumental buildings, incorporating large-scale water management facilities. Excavations revealed planned mudbrick architecture and in situ bell bases attest a new occupational design of the Achaemenid empire period in the Southern Caucasus. The pattern of destruction over an area of more than 2 ha hints to a violent end of the complex and a volatile degree of control of this border region. The narrow time frame for the erection, usage and destruction, all within the 5th century BC, could provide a uniquely dense insight into the political developments in the heartland of the later kingdom of Iberia.

The Holy Garment of Christ: A Mythical Foundation of Legitimacy for the Royal House of Russia and its Impact on 17th-century Georgian-Russian-Persian Relations

Sometimes certain pieces of information are accepted as facts without being questioned, and are never regarded as mythology. These falsehoods can lead communities and even entire nations towards a misguided understanding of their political, religious, and missionary destinies. Therefore, it can be argued that political motives often underlie the creation of myths.

In Georgian history, the Holy Garment, also known as Christ's Chiton, has been a cornerstone for the Georgian kingdom for many centuries. However, after the abolition of the Georgian state by the Russians in 1801, the Georgian Apostolic Church was subordinated to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the Georgian church's independent status again only in 1989.

For over 21 centuries, the central symbol by which Georgians represented themselves to the civilized world was the Holy Garment, which is believed to have been brought to Georgia by Jewish repatriates in the 1st century AD. According to "Kartlis Tskhovreba" (The Georgian Chronicles, 10th c.), the Holy Garment was buried with a woman who hugged it and immediately died outside the walls of Mtskheta after meeting her brothers who had

returned from Jerusalem. Since then, it is believed that the Holy Garment had been buried underground, beneath the spot where a tree had grown. In the 4th century, after the official conversion to Christianity of Iberia (Kartli) by St. Nino, the main temple, Svetitskhoveli, was built on that spot. This temple was where the kings of Georgia were anointed and where the Holy Myrrh has been made since the 7th century, after the 6th Ecumenical Council approved the autocephalic Georgian Church.

In Sir Oliver Wardrop's book "Kingdom of Georgia – Travel in a Land of Women, Song and Wine" (Wardrop, 1888), he attempted to draw the attention of the British government to Georgia's importance, which he believed was at least equal to that of the French and German governments. He highlighted the route towards Russia, also known as the Military Road, and monuments of the Georgian kingdom as places of interest. His first sight after the capital was the city of Mtskheta, the ancient capital of Georgia, and its central temple, Svetitskhoveli. Wardrop describes the temple briefly and recounts the story of Georgia's conversion to Christianity: "*The sacred garment was preserved in the cathedral until the seventeenth century, when Shah Abbas sent it as a present to the Tsar of Russia, Mikhail Fedorovich. It was solemnly deposited in the Cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow, where I saw it last autumn*" (p. 39).

The mention of the location of the Holy Garment caught my attention, as Sir Wardrop appeared to be certain that he saw the garment in Moscow the previous year. My knowledge of the Christ's

Chiton, combined with admiration for Oliver and Marjory Wardrop, inspired me to investigate the issue of the myth of relocation of the Holy Garment to Moscow, to the Cathedral of the Assumption. This article attempts to understand the origin of the myth and explore the reasons for its creation. Thus, I will try to show whose political interests have been at the core of this particular myth.

Ketevan Gardapkhadze, Manana Phkhakadze

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Jacob Reineggs and Georgia

The 18th century German traveller, adventurer Jacob Reineggs (1744-1793) was Emissary of Russia to the Palace of the King of Kartl-Kakheti, Erekle II in 1777-1781. In addition to performing his special duties such as the study of mineral resources, mineral waters, metals, semi-precious stones and petrol in Georgia, Reineggs made a certain imprint on the cultural-educational and natural science-technical life of the country. He introduced many European technical novelties into Georgian practice. He successfully accomplished his mission, convincing King Erekle to sign the Treaty of Georgievsk and enhanced his contribution to this achievement by his signature.

**Semiosis Burla from the Middle Ages to Antiquity,
or about the Essence of Things**

This research investigates the linguistic cluster as a semiotic sign, “dressed up as an alien” – the image of Burla Khatun and the associated words in Italian – *burla* – and the French *burlesque*.

The semiotics of the name *Burla Khatun* from the Oguz-Azerbaijani epic “Kitabi Dede Gorgud” (16th c), and the episode in the plot about her reappearance in military attire, lead to a linguistic chain of associate words in Italian – *burla* – and French – *burlesque* – in the discourse of travesty (a type of burlesque, or distorted meaning). *Burla* in Italian implies a joke, but a harmless one; *burlesque* involves the comedy of a sublime hero, dressing up as someone else, buffoonish, although this could be a high-ranking hero from ancient literature, like the heroes of the Aeneid, or romantic knights, such as Don Quixote. Burla Khatun complements this semantic line with the fact that a great hero who dresses up as an alien is not always comical. On the contrary, it gives more sublime status and reflects the previous antique cultural layer – such as the ancient exalted status of a warrior maiden from Norse mythology and the Caucasus, who was transformed in the epic into the status of a warrior-protector fighting with a squad to rescue her captured son.

There are many cases in linguistics when the very meaning of a word or phrase becomes burlesque-travesty-inside-out. For

example, within the same language group: *urod* (Russian) – ugly and *urod* (Polish) – beautiful; Lucifer as Prometheus or as a cursed angel monster; ashes on the head – a sacred holiday such as Ash Wednesday and some Christian confessions and swearing (in the meaning of idiots) in some Turkic languages.

The same can be attributed to the words Burla (khatun), burla and burlesque.

The research questions are: What factors predetermine the perception of these words? How does the discourse of experience impact the perception of the same anthropological model *dressed up into another image*?

For restoration of previous / ancient cultural strata (semiosis), this study explores *various pre-medieval discourses* in which the interpreter, the experience of the interpreting individual or society (behaviourism) was formed. Perception of a sign (semiosis) implies “what appears as a sign; what the sign refers to; the effect by which the corresponding thing becomes familiar sign to the interpreter. These three components of semiosis can be called sign vehicle, designate (designatum), and the interpreter can be introduced as the fourth factor. These terms make explicit factors that... *a sign indicates something to someone*, giving impetus for branching of the same sign, and the diversion of meanings (Чарльз Уильям Моррис. *Основания теории знаков*. // Семиотика. Сборник переводов. Под ред. Ю. С. Степанова. М.: Радуга, 1982. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120403135611/http://elenakosilova.narod.ru/studia/sinn/morris.htm>).

Sur les traces de la Toison d'or

Comme nous le savons, la conquête de la Toison d'or était le but principal de l'expédition des Argonautes. Pour étudier la Toison d'or et ses parallèles, il nous semble pertinent d'aborder séparément les sujets suivants : l'expédition des Argonautes (datation, destination, *etc.*) et la Toison d'or (symbolisme et fonction), ainsi que la survivance du mythe dans une tradition postérieure.

À notre avis, la popularité du mythe des Argonautes dans le monde grec de l'époque classique ou hellénistique montre uniquement le fait qu'à ce moment – là le mythe a dû faire partie du savoir commun chez les Grecs et, par conséquent, ne sert pas à dater, ni à localiser avec précision l'origine du mythe et de ses éléments.

Nous admettons que le motif de Toison d'or n'était originellement pas lié à la saga des Argonautes, qui reflétait probablement la première apparition des Grecs dans la mer Noire à l'âge de bronze, et ces deux motifs ne pourraient être réunis en un seul récit que depuis la colonisation grecque.

Dans notre communication, une attention particulière sera accordée aux parallèles que l'on peut déceler dans le matériel colchique (artéfacts archéologiques, folklore) ainsi que dans les sources remontantes à l'Anatolie de l'époque hittite. Que peuvent nous dire ces similitudes ? Nous tenterons de montrer comment cet

objet tant convoité rapproche trois différents mondes ethnoculturels – grec ancien, anatolien et kartvélien / géorgien.

Ilona Gorņeva

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Medea and Theatre Life in Latvia:

Between the Self and the Other

Due to its inherent contradictions, the character of Medea, along with its reception and interpretation has always attracted the attention of both the literary and theatrical environments. The essential part of Medea's character and identity is her origin – a foreign land and remote place, a sense of belonging to the distant, barbaric, non-Greek. In a way, there is a similarity with Hyperbo-reans who also embody the sense of distance and a kind of alienated edge of the world.

When thinking about the Latvian theatrical environment, one notable production is the staging of Jean Anouilh's play "Medea" by the Latvian director Māra Ķimele (a representative of psychoanalytical theatre) in 1975, where the Latvian actress Ināra Ieviņa played the title role.

Jean Anouilh changed the perception of the ancient Greek tragedy, but M. Ķimele's production, in a way, has rewritten the history of the Latvian theatre. The archive of the Latvian Cultural Canon states that

M. Ķīmele's production of "Medea", which featured significant ritual elements, took place in the St. Sīmanis Church in Valmiera (Latvia), thus becoming the first production in the history of Latvian theatre to be staged outside of conventional theatre space (Treile M. Režisore Māra Ķīmele (1943) un viņas psihoanalītiskais teātris. Available: <https://kulturaskanons.lv/archive/maras-kimeles-psihoanalitiskais-teatris/> (30. 05. 2023)).

In a way, the change of space – going beyond the boundaries of the theatre – indirectly reflects Medea's journey from Colchis to another cultural environment, creating a unique encounter between the self (or the familiar) and otherness, with its acceptance and rejection. The dimensions of the familiar and the foreign also implicitly appear when considering the production of Euripides' "Medea", with the Latvian actress Guna Zariņa in the main role.

The paper focuses on the representation of the character of Medea in the theatre life of Latvia: how the Colchian Medea is portrayed on stage (the text and its interpretation in various productions), and what approaches are used in constructing the character of Medea. In addition, the author pays special attention to the perception of Medea's portrayal on stage by the press and critics, who often play with the contradictory, ambiguous and even speculative dimensions of the self / the familiar and the other, contemplating whether the staging of Medea is indeed a kind of journey to the edge of the world (or to otherness as such).

Edith Hall

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A Cultural History of the Caucasian Eagle

The eagle which Zeus sent to torture Prometheus on the Caucasus has held an honoured place in the cultural imagination since ancient times. Mountaineers speak of a rocky outcrop high on Dykh-Tau that looks like a huge bird of prey, and legends still circulate about sightings of a mystery eagle in connection with mountaineers who never return. This paper traces some different manifestations of the Caucasian eagle in both ancient and more recent literature and art. The ancients believed that the eagle of Zeus was originally a primeval, virtuous Athenian named Periphas, turned into an eagle, and his wife into a vulture, at the request of Apollo. Zeus made him king of all the birds and gave him the role of sceptre-guardian. Zeus' eagle had a separate genealogy as the offspring of Typhon and Echidna; a fascinating alternative tradition claimed that it was a kind of mechanical robot made by Hephaestus and only given organic life by Zeus himself. Other origin stories say that Zeus first adopted the eagle as his symbol during the war against the Titanes. But Zeus' own eagle and the Caucasian eagle he sent against Prometheus were often confused in ancient sources: Zeus' eagle may have become associated with the Caucasus, often the far eastern boundary of Greek imaginary cartography, because it was believed to be the only bird which tries to fly straight into the rising sun. The first translations into modern languages of the

Aeschylean *Prometheus Bound* in the late 18th coincided with debates about the abolition of slavery, leading to the identification of the eagle with plantation owners in political cartoons. Subsequently, this iconography has been adapted to fit numerous political contexts; the Caucasian eagle has represented censorship, monopoly capitalism, party-political rivals, and even bad moral habits that threaten the very autonomy of the human moral agent.

David Hernández de la Fuente

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The Origin of the Golden Fleece between Myth and Folklore

The plot of the myth of the Golden Fleece is deeply related to folk tales about a brother and a sister harassed by an evil stepmother, such as in the famous story of Hänsel and Gretel by the Brothers Grimm. In the Greek myth it is Phrixus and Helle, brother and sister, children of Athamas and Nephele, who are badly mistreated by an evil stepmother, Ino. As the story goes, brother and sister will finally have to flee from Greece across the Black Sea riding a magical ram with a Golden Fleece. The outcome is very well known as Phrixus manages to arrive in the magical land of Aetees, or Colchis, while Helle tragically falls into the sea where the strait is named after her, the Hellespont. Yet beyond myth and

history, this fascinating story has been analysed as a typical example of this kind of leitmotif by folklorists and historians of literature alike. Some years ago I wrote a novel in Spanish, later translated into Italian and French, where I “contaminated” the original Greek myth with this motif in the folklore of diverse ages and cultures. This contribution is an interdisciplinary approach to the myth of the origin of the Golden Fleece, both scholarly, and with a personal literary approach as a fiction writer.

Dimitar Iliev

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The Caucasus in Plutarch: a Place of Conquest and Fortune

The proposed paper examines all the textual attestations of the toponym “Caucasus” (Καύκασος, together with all of its forms and derivatives) in the corpus of the most significant Greek author between the Hellenistic period and the age of the Second Sophistic – one of the most prolific and significant writers in the history of Greek prose, Plutarch of Chaeronea.

If we exclude the five mentions in the minor geographical treatise *De fluviis* falsely ascribed to Plutarch from our scope, the toponym is attested in the Plutarchean corpus twelve times. These occurrences, all mentioned in passing, can be roughly divided in

two groups. The first group are mentions of “Caucasus” in the biographies. There, the mountains and its region are mainly present as the background against which important military clashes and geopolitical conflicts take place between the Greco-Roman world, and on the other hand between influential rivals from the East such as the Persians or the Parthians. Such attestations are found in the lives of figures such as Demetrius, Lucullus, and Pompey. The second and rather more interesting group is found in several passages from the *Moralia* discussing a world conqueror’s fortune (τύχη): be it as a part of an individual’s fate (*De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*), or of the history of an entire nation (*De fortuna Romanorum*). In such instances, Caucasus is usually mentioned as a part of a series of *topoi*, together with their connotations, which can also include India, Arabia, Bactria, etc. Thus, the Caucasus stands as one of the proverbial *fines terrae* with their remote locations and alien cultures which, however, are eventually subjected to a sort of familiarization and “domestication” thanks to a great conquering agent’s fortune (or, perhaps, also virtues?).

The paper will scrutinize all the relevant passages in Plutarch’s corpus and will also make a methodological point about the passing mentions of the Caucasus in ancient authors. While providing fewer possibilities to examine an author’s view on a given subject, such mentions present the subject as a part of a background knowledge of the author and his audience. This gives interesting insights about what the culture that produced the text considered as self-evident notions and facts that need no further clarifications.

Amiran Kakhidze, Nino Samsonia, Emzar Kakhidze

*Museum of Adjara, Tbilisi State University
Batumi Archaeological Museum, Georgia*

**Innovations in the History of Metallurgy of Precious
Metals: Legendary Colchis –
the Cradle of the Golden Fleece**

The Batumi Archaeological Museum had the opportunity to discover a completely new culture in Eurasia, related to the metallurgy of non-ferrous metals (5th-2nd millennia BC). For example, in the region of Adjara, more than 60 ancient centres have been traced, where innovations bring to life a whole new kind of megalithic culture. It has been confirmed that in accordance with the increase of demand for metals in the international market, creative metallurgists of the South Caucasus introduced innovative techniques and methods using water energy to speed up the processes of flotation and crushing raw materials from the deposits, and increasing labour productivity to an almost industrial level. The first creation of a simple machine in the history of metallurgy belongs to them. The area this new culture spread to is wide (Georgia, Turkey, India, Spain). The contribution of the South Caucasus, which is rich in polymetals, to the formation processes of Eastern civilizations is great, where contacts spanned thousands of years, and the prospects for research are great, with no doubt that the latest discoveries give rise to research of the most pressing problems of the transcontinental mega-culture.

The most recent discoveries echo the scientific studies carried out in this area of research, for example the outcomes of laboratory research of the rich tombs uncovered in the city of Ur in Troy, ancient Mesopotamia, by Heinrich Schliemann and those of the masterpieces of jewellery art from the Island of Lemnos. Research was conducted using portable laser devices and concluded that the gold used in the items of these sites has the same origin, purchased from remote countries, and one hypothesis appears to be Georgia. Furthermore, in accordance with our interpretation, mining precious metals is related to washing gold-bearing alluvial deposits that wash down from the hills and slopes of river gorges.

With the example of Svaneti, it is obvious that ancient empirical knowledge in the art of collecting precious metals used sheepskin, techniques which are similar to those widespread in the civilizations of both the Ancient Near East and the Aegean world. This subject is evoked in lines 420-434 of the Sumerian epic *Enmerkari and the Lord of Aratta*, which still not clear for researchers. The text refers to the victory of the King of the Uruk I dynasty (27th-26th centuries BC) over the distant country Aratta. The versions that have reached us are dated to the period of the Third Dynasty of Ur (21st century BC) or the Old Babylonian periods (20th-18th century BC). Based on the context of the existing text, we must be dealing with an unknown ritual of Alchemy, where the Uruk King Enmerkar fulfills the task given him by the Lord of Arata: to make a sceptre from a special material. As the text tells us, “If Enmerkar makes a sceptre of such material, then Aratta will be handed over to city-state of

Uruk”. This part of the epic evokes the existing level of knowledge of alchemy in Uruk, which the text describes in detail. The King must create a special material to make the sceptre, which will be neither wood nor ordinary silver and gold.

In the report, we discuss this episode in detail, in the text up to lines 420-434 including the meaning of the composites and the approximate readings. The episode begins with presenting hidden wisdom by Enki to Enmerkar (420-21).

On p. 423 we read: 423.lugal-e / *munšub* (sumur₃?)\ [...]šu ba-ra-an-ti

The King took the one covered with hair [...]

The king begins to act, when we see that “the king picked up an unknown object covered with hair”. Only these words, which are very important for the issue of interest to us, can be recovered from the damaged line of the text. After twisting the *munšub*, he crushes the material obtained in a pestle like a plant. Here it becomes obvious that we are dealing with an ancient, well-known method of crushing metals. The next lines of the text tell us about the knowledge of obtaining certain materials, admixtures and chemical processes.

Our attempts to re-create this technique is based on the contexts of the existing text and also on four poems of the Arata cycle to specify the word recorded in the alchemy ritual presented in the text, which looks like a furry skin and is also related to the Sumerian knowledge of alchemy. Could we be dealing with the Colchis method of extracting gold from the Enguri Basin and then using

various impurities and the knowledge of alchemy to obtain a certain precious material?

We will also focus on the artistic features recorded in these pages, which are comparisons and metaphors that point to a certain location in another context which also remains unexplained to this day.

The noting of “furry weapons” (leather?) in the Sumerian cuneiform text within the context of metal mining and processing, should be interesting for both ancient Caucasian and Near Eastern relations, which is a matter of future research.

Mariam Kaladze

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Caucasian Productions of “Medea”

by A. Suvorin and V. Burenin

in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Among the 19th century interpretations of “Medea”, the prevailing version is one that presents the Colchian woman first and foremost as an abandoned and insulted wife and victim of circumstances. Medea’s victimization was already obvious in Franz Grillparzer’s trilogy “The Golden Fleece” (1821), though this trend of Medea’s image is especially prominent in the version of the French dramatist, Ernest Legouvé’s play “Medea” (1856). As it is known,

this play had a huge influence on Legouve's contemporary dramatists reworking the Medea theme, including Russian authors, Suvorin and Burenin, who presented their version of "Medea" on St. Petersburg's scene in 1883.

The aim of our paper is to explore the play "Medea" by Suvorin and Burenin performed at both Georgian and Armenian theatres in Georgia at the turn of the 20th century with three objectives (1) to study the novelties the directors introduced while interpreting the play itself, and Medea's character in particular; (2) to discuss how Medea's image was portrayed by two outstanding actresses – Nino (Nutsa) Chkheidze and Merope Kartarjian (known as Siranush), including aspects of this heroine they strove to accentuate; to what extent they perceived the importance of presenting Medea's vulnerability both as a woman (a mother and a wife) and as an "Other" (an alien in Greek society). The paper will discuss the artistic means that make Medea, totally defenceless as she is, a person displaying remarkable strength of will. It should be mentioned that she was considered one of the most successful tragic roles of both actresses (Siranush was even compared to such prominent artists as Eleonora Duse and Sarah Bernhardt); (3) to analyse the play's contribution to the comprehension of the patriarchal stereotypes dominant in Georgian society at that time. In this respect, the local press of the subsequent period will be discussed, including the noteworthy issue of the magazine "Kvali" (N 44, 1900) that offered a critique of the Georgian performance of "Medea". Alongside this review, attention will be paid to the

evaluation of Siranush's stage career that embodies a deprived woman's struggle for defending a woman's dignity.

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A Cowcasus on Caucasus:

Io's Encounter with Prometheus in Attic Drama

The text explores the dramatic interpretation of Io's story in *Prometheus Bound* with the focus on her appearance in the play. Bringing a transformed figure on the stage is most likely unprecedented in the history of Greek drama. It is even more surprising given the usual interpretations of metamorphic myths in pre-Aeschylean sources.

Despite being quite popular in the Hellenistic and Roman literature, the mythological motive of (irreversible) human metamorphosis into a non-human form (animal, plant, rock, etc.) is rarely attested in earlier literary sources. First evidences of the motive are scarce, obscure and often differ substantially from their better known later literary versions. Hesiod is the first author to exploit the motive of a human being transformed out of pity or anger by the gods. Unluckily, all the metamorphic myths belonged to Hesiod's fragmentary preserved works and are not helpful for reconstructing the mythological stories they were part of. The story of the maiden

Io is no exception. Still, presenting a person in a transformed or semi-transformed form on stage must have been challenging in terms of dramatic appearance and by all means was an invention by the tragic poet, for which he did not follow any existing narrative model. Besides, no other pre-Aeschylean literary source (or any preserved tragic fragment) has been shown that implies that after metamorphosis the transformed person retains his or her human mind and memories. It could be argued that *Prometheus Bound* is the first literary work to use this motif.

The current analysis finds a possible explanation of the surprising poet's decision in the setting of the play. Prometheus is chained to a rock in a Scythian mountain whose name is not mentioned. Although in verse 719 he enumerates the Caucasus as located somewhere else, the mythological tradition places him precisely on that mountain. The discrepancy is easy to explain, since the geographical details in the play are quite obscure and contradictory.

Mountains are regarded in mythology as places of reversing habitual social roles, places of wild nature and spots for encounters with the Divine. This is especially valid for marginal mountains surrounding the Greek *oikoumene*, for instance Rhodope mountain in Thrace, etc. The unusual episode with the transformed Io in *Prometheus Bound* could be explained only through the notion that the Caucasus belonged to that group of places considered on the verge between geographical reality and fantasy. Only there would it be possible to “reverse” the metamorphosis and bring Io back to her normal human state of mind, when she would be otherwise

driven to madness. The setting of the play in the Caucasus (or on imaginary mountain – a functional double of it) enabled the poet to present an unprecedented scene of temporarily reversed metamorphosis.

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The Caucasus and Related Symbols in Modern Greek Literature

The topic of the Caucasus has attracted the attention of Greek authors since ancient times. Quite interesting symbols are related with the Caucasus region. In addition to being the homeland of Aeëtes and Medea – Colchis and the Golden Fleece, Greek authors identified the region as a place where refugees and criminals were sent as punishment or found shelter. Indeed, Prometheus was chained to a rock in the Caucasus Mountains; the golden ram also took a path from Greece to Colchis to save Phryxus and Helle, doomed to die. Also, according to one version of the myth related to Typhon, who was exiled by Zeus, Typhon came to the Caucasus to find shelter. This is explained by the fact that the Caucasus was considered as the easternmost and hardest-to-reach point for the Greeks. It used to be considered as an unknown place with an unexplored

sea, an unoccupied coastline, deep, long rivers and a gloomy mountain range, which awed the Hellenes. It was why the region was linked to a number of fantastic stories and myths. This perception of the Caucasus was so strong that despite the foundation of numerous Greek colonies on the Black Sea coasts and the establishment of direct and intense relations between the Greeks and Caucasians, the symbolism associated with the Caucasus remained relevant.

This paper presents research on how the Caucasus, especially Georgia, is presented in modern Greek literature; why the Greek authors are interested in it; whether the symbols have changed and what new historical reality lies beyond it. The old and the new perceptions are compared, and the Caucasus now becomes a shelter for the Pontic Greek refugees. The paper will also examine how the Caucasian people are seen by modern Greek authors – as one whole nation or as many different ethnicities with different identity markers, although with a common geographic location.

The research methods used in the study include in-depth and typological analysis of the texts. The research topic is relevant because, although the Caucasian writers give us a lot of information about the social, political or cultural life of the region, we often get information from foreign authors that is either not found in the writings of the peoples of the Caucasus themselves, or is viewed and presented differently.

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**Religious Beliefs and Customs
of the Legendary Aia Colchis
in the “Argonautica” by Apollonius of Rhodes**

The ancient sources about the legendary Aia Colchis usually provide us with rather scant information, and in most cases such data contain extremely vague and undoubtedly contradictory information. This is particularly true of Colchian religious beliefs and customs, which are rarely referred to in ancient sources. In this respect, *The Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes shows a relatively diverse picture. Because of this, since the 1920s, the poetic lines of the poem that describe the religious beliefs and customs of the Colchians have become the subject of observation by many famous Georgian and foreign scientists, including I. Javakhishvili, G. Tsereteli, T. Kaukhchishvili, A. Urushadze, R. L. Hunter, M. Campbell, F. Vian, P. Green and others.

In particular, the attention of researchers is drawn to several passages from *The Argonautica* in which Apollonius of Rhodes mentions some of the Colchian religious beliefs and customs. These passages include lines 1271-5 from the second book of the poem and lines 200-9, 697-700, 714-7 from the third book. In fact, considering the above passages, foreign and Georgian scholars (and, importantly, often independently of each other) actually come to a unanimous conclusion: in the words of A. Urushadze: “Apollonius

Rhodes is the earliest source that acquaints us with the oldest cult of the Colchians, [that is,] Earth and Sky”. On the other hand, the source of Apollonius of Rhodes himself, according to the scholiast of lines 202-9, was Nymphodorus, a contemporary of Apollonius, and who wrote the treatise on “Barbarian Customs”.

These circumstances undoubtedly raise extremely important questions which cannot be fully answered solely on the basis of the interpretations of the researchers listed above. How can such an exact correspondence between the religious beliefs of the Colchians and the religious system of the ancient Greeks be explained – namely the fact that both peoples actually start their pantheons with Heaven / Sky, that is, Ouranos, and Earth, that is, Gaia, the mother of the gods? Should this be explained only by considering Apollonius as an imaginative artist interpreting some ancient manuscripts in the Museum of Alexandria, or also by an additional hypothesis? I think priority can be given to the second answer. This means that in addition to information about the religious beliefs and customs of the Colchians, other types of evidence in Apollonius’ *Argonautica* should also be considered in order to clarify the issues.

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Ostia Inscription on Visit of Pharsmanes the Valiant in Rome

This inscription found in Ostia in 1958, which belongs to the series of “Fasti Ostienses”, is an important monument for the history of Georgia, because it contains information about the visit of the Iberian king, Pharasmanes II, called the Valliant, to Rome. It is true that the inscription itself and the issue of the Iberian king’s visit to Rome at the invitation of Emperor Antoninus Pius has attracted the attention of many Georgian and foreign researchers, but some issues still are unexplored and undetermined.

One of the most important issues which is still uncertain today remains the approximate date of the visit of the King of Iberia and his retinue to Rome. The situation is complicated by the fact that the latest results of the reconstruction of the inscription have not been included in Georgian scientific circulation. This article shows the modern state of restoration and interpretation of the inscription, analyses the report kept with Dio Cassius regarding Pharasmanes’s visit to Rome, and based on the comparative analysis of epigraphic and literary sources, presents our arguments regarding the exact dating of the inscription. The report also examines the role and significance of Iberia for Roman foreign policy during the reign of Antoninus Pius.

**Πρόσληψη του μυθιστορήματος
της Μαρίας Ιορδανίδου «Διακοπές στον Καύκασο»
στο ευρύτερο ιστορικό και πολιτισμικό πλαίσιο**

Το ταξιδιωτικό μυθιστόρημα της Μαρίας Ιορδανίδου «Διακοπές στον Καύκασο» βασίζεται στα προσωπικά βιώματα της Ελληνίδας συγγραφέως. Η Άννα, η πρωταγωνίστρια του μυθιστορήματος, ξεκίνησε το 1914 από την Κωνσταντινούπολη για ένα ταξίδι αναψυχής στον Καύκασο. Τα αρχικά της σχέδια όμως ανατράπηκαν στη δύνη του πρώτου παγκόσμιου πολέμου, της Οκτωβριανής Επανάστασης και του εμφύλιου πολέμου που ακολούθησε, και από ένα μήνα, όπως αναμενότανε, το ταξίδι μετατράπηκε σε μια οδύσσεια πέντε ολόκληρων χρόνων.

Το μεγαλύτερο μέρος της αφήγησης αφιερώνεται στην διαμονή της Άννας στην Στάβροπολ (Σταυρούπολη) που την ονομάζει καρδιά του Βόρειου Καυκάσου. Αυτά τα μέρη σχετίζονται στη φαντασία της συγγραφέως με τον Προμηθέα Δεσμώτη. Το αρχέτυπο του Προμηθέα με έναν πολύ ειδικό τρόπο χρησιμοποιείται στην αφήγηση για να δοθεί μια παραπάνω διάσταση στις καταστάσεις που περιγράφονται. Η αναφορές στην Ελληνική μυθολογία, καθώς και στη Βίβλο, επιτρέπουν στην Μ. Ιορδανίδου να προσθέσει βάθος στο έργο της, να δείξει διαφορετικό νόημα ή ερμηνεία, να αποδώσει φόρο τιμής στη σημασία των μύθων και της Άγιας Γραφής για την ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου πολιτισμού και

επίσης αποτελεί ένα αναπόσπαστο χαρακτηριστικό γραφής της Ελληνίδας συγγραφέως.

Είναι πολύ σημαντικό ότι τα ιστορικά γεγονότα της εποχής που περιγράφεται παρουσιάζονται μέσα από τη ματιά της γυναίκας η οποία είτε τα έζησε η ίδια ως αυτόπτης μάρτυρας, είτε είδε τις επιπτώσεις τους στην κοινωνία την οποία αυτά τα γεγονότα αφορούσαν άμεσα. Η πρόσληψη του ιστορικού, του πολιτισμικού και του κοινωνικού πλαισίου της εποχής που περιγράφεται στο μυθιστόρημα από την ίδια τη συγγραφέα έχει μεγάλο ενδιαφέρον, καθώς πρόκειται για ένα συνεχή διάλογο πολιτισμών, αυτού της συγγραφέως και της πρωταγωνίστριας και αυτού του Βόρειου Καυκάσου.

Η καταγωγή της συγγραφέως από μια πολυπολιτισμική πόλη, η ελληνοχρηστιάτικη ταυτότητά της, οι εμπειρίες της κατά τη διάρκεια του ταξιδιού στον Καύκασο, τα βιώματά της σε έναν ξένο τόπο στις πιο δύσκολες στιγμές της ιστορίας του και η απόσταση 45 χρόνων ανάμεσα στα γεγονότα και τη συγγραφή του μυθιστορήματος που τα περιγράφει αποτελούν στοιχεία της προσωπικότητας της Μ. Ιορδανίδου που αποτυπώνονται στο μυθιστόρημά της και λειτουργούν ως κλειδιά στην πρόσληψή του από τους αναγνώστες / τις αναγνώστριες.

Greek Architectural Details at Grakliani Gora ***(Caucasian Iberia)***

Perceptions of the architectural image of Iberia – one of the most significant parts of the Caucasus – occurred rather late in Greek literature, in Strabo's time. Describing Iberia in his 'Geography' (XI, 3, 1), he wrote: 'Furthermore, the greater part of Iberia is so well developed in respect to cities and farmsteads that their roofs are tiled, and their houses as well as their market-places and other public buildings are constructed with architectural skill'.

The assumption that this description of Iberia relied upon that of Theophanes of Mytilene – a participant of the eastern campaign of Pompei which happened much earlier, namely, in the 60s of the 1st century BC – seems reasonable. Presumably, these tidings obtained from Theophanes of Mytilene and Strabo, reflected the existing reality, since remains of buildings with tiled roofs were found on the territory of Iberia. Besides, utilization of tiles had been evidenced much earlier than Strabo's or Theophanes' lifetime – from the turn of the 4th-3rd cc BC. However, they were used to cover Achaemenid-type buildings (in this context the Greek tile with letters found at Tsikhia-Gora should be mentioned. It represents evidence in favour of Greek artisans' activities in Iberia. This ethnic identification is strengthened by the fact that from the 4th century

BC local artisans, instead of using Greek letters, were using letters of the local script. Usage of mud bricks cannot be ascribed to the impact of Greek architectural tradition, since it has been connected to the Achaemenid one. This construction material was used at the Tsikhia-Gora temple complex and the fire tower at Samadlo. In both cases the Achaemenid architecture is evident, well proved by the utilization of mud bricks in the course of archaeological excavations of the “provincial” Achaemenid palaces (Gumbati, Sari-Tepe, Karajamirli, Sabatlo). Even in Colchis, where contacts with the Greek world started during the course of the Greek colonization, i.e. much earlier than the beginning of the 6th century BC, the earliest evidence of the use of the Greek architectural order system has been seen only as a Doric capital at Sairkhe, which belongs to the Hellenistic Period, 4th century BC. However at Vani – a drastically Hellenized site – Greek decorative elements were attested only from 3rd-2nd cc BC. Simultaneously, it is commonly known that on the territory of Iberia the use of architectural elements of Greek order started only from the 2nd century BC (in the Ionian capital at Sarkine).

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Colchis in Greek Mythology and Archaeological Discoveries from Georgia

According to Greek mythology, the mountain to which Prometheus, symbolizing the progress of humanity in European culture, was bound, was situated in the region where the Argonauts had travelled in their quest for the Golden Fleece.

The quest for the Golden Fleece, the first long-distance marine venture in the history of humankind, has captivated the imagination since antiquity. From ancient times, attempts were made to rationalize the myth as two phenomena: gold and knowledge about gold. The followers of the Greek philosopher and mythographer, Euhemerus, tried to interpret the Golden Fleece as a scroll describing a method of writing in gold, or as a book about obtaining gold with the help of chemistry.

Both myths contain deep symbolic meanings of secret knowledge; these myths also specify the Greeks' practical interest in the country's wealth in gold, silver, iron, and copper, which actually prompted the Argonauts' expedition (Strabo, Geography 1, 2, 39). The secret knowledge in these myths was of fire, the essential component in metal production and metal working. The Caucasian mountains have been an inexhaustible source of metals from ancient times, and the region was the nucleus of metallurgical knowledge.

Why did the Greek myth of the Golden Fleece take place in Colchis? The myth lived on in Mediaeval Europe as alchemy, and has come down to modern times in the Order of the Golden Fleece, established in 1430 by Philip the Good. The answer to this question might be found in the Greek historical sources that mention Colchis as ‘rich in gold’, along with the cities of Mycenae, Sardis, and Babylon, famous for their wealth. More significantly, the answer may be found in the knowledge of how to obtain gold, working with gold, and employing gold for high spiritual goals that has been discovered in Colchis and elsewhere in Georgia. Based on the archaeological discoveries from Georgia, the main goal of the presentation is to describe the historical background of the myths of the Golden Fleece and Prometheus.

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Shifting Perceptions of Colchian Ethnicity in Greek and Roman Argonautic Literature

This paper surveys major renditions of the Argonautic myth from Homer to Dracontius to chart changing Greco-Roman perceptions of Colchian ethnicity. The ethnic Otherness of the people of Aea has always been core to the myth of Jason’s quest for the Golden Fleece, but the way that their ethnicity was conceptualized

shifted together with the geopolitical outlooks of the authors who told and retold this saga over the centuries. I identify at least five phases in this complex story, in which the originally fantastical people of Aea were identified with the historical Colchians and then variously linked or conflated with the Greeks, Medo-Persians, Egyptians, and Scythians. In greater detail, these phases are:

1. Fantastical. In Homer (*Od.* 10.137-139) and Mimnermus (fr. 11 West), Aea appears to have originally been a fabulous locale set at the eastern edge of Ocean and associated with the rising sun (Lesky, *pace* Lordkipanidze 31-33). Its inhabitants are thus comparable to the Homeric Ethiopians (*Od.* 1.22-24), and perhaps for similar reasons could be traditionally pictured as black-skinned (Pind. *Pyth.* 4.212, Hdt. 2.104).

2. Colchian and Quasi-Hellenic. Eumelus' seventh-century epic *Corinthiaca* may have been the first source to identify Aea with Colchis (Allen 90), but with a significant twist: Aeetes, Aea's eponymous founder, had originally come from Corinth (fr. 3 Bernabé). This Hellenization of at least the Colchian royalty may reflect early Corinthian aspirations in colonizing the Black Sea littoral (Huxley 63-65, Fowler 202).

3. Medo-Persian. Hes. *Theog.* 1001, which may be a later interpolation (West 398, 430), gives Jason and Medea a son Medeus, whom later sources confirm as the eponymous ancestor of the Medes (De Siena). Euripides was fundamental in altering Medea's connection with Corinth in order to foreground her "barbarian" character (Hall 35) and probably helped to precipitate

her newly exoticizing iconography in vase painting (Zinserling-Paul 420-423). Apollonius reflects these ideas by alluding to the Persian Wars (Priestley 149-155) and basing his Aeetes partly on the model of the “Oriental tyrant” (Hutchinson 107; Morrison 167-172).

4. Egyptian. Apollonius’ is the first poetic treatment to endorse the Herodotean view that Aea was an Egyptian colony founded by Sesostris (4.257-278) – unsurprisingly, given that Egyptian themes are specially pertinent in his Alexandrian epic (Stephens; cf. Morrison 160-166). But the interpretative consequences of this identification are ambivalent: if Jason’s victory over Aeetes could symbolize Greco-Macedonian domination of Egypt, his (doomed) marriage to an Egyptianized Medea presents a more ambivalent datum (cf. Braund 32).

5. Scythian. Colchis’ physical proximity to Scythia had already conditioned aspects of the Argonautic myth in the Classical and Hellenistic periods (e.g., Sophocles’ *Scythians*, Diod. Sic. 4.47.5), but among Imperial-era Greek and Roman poets, the Colchians were expressly identified as a Scythian subgroup (McPhee 369-370). Rome’s frequent conflicts with the Scythians give this identification political salience, and Valerius Flaccus pointedly connects Jason’s capture of the Golden Fleece to the progressive westward shift of hegemonic power on the world stage, from Asia to Greece and ultimately to Rome (*Arg.* 1.531-560; Danelia 130-131). Scythian Colchians remain traditional into Late Antiquity, as in Dracontius’ *Medea*.

As this survey shows, these different ethnic frameworks were not always kept entirely discrete, as earlier paradigms remained embedded in the Argonautic tradition inherited by later poets (e.g., Apollonius' Colchians are coded as both Persian and Egyptian). It is unclear to what extent any of these traditions reflect the ethnic self-understanding of the Colchians themselves; rather, this survey illustrates the malleability of ancient ethnic discourses, which enabled the Argonautic myth to remain politically relevant for over a millennium of Greco-Roman history.

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How Did All these Barbarians Get Here?

The (Im)Permeable Caspian Gates in Late Antiquity

Scholarly interest on the Caspian Gates¹ in Late Antiquity has focused on questions of historicity, rather than rhetoric. This has included attempts at determining which of the numerous passes in the Caucasus were referenced by sources and the degree to which these passes were fortified. Scholarship about the literary pedigree of the Caspian Gates usually centres on the Quran or the seventh-century CE Syriac Alexander Legend which associates the Caspian

¹ Here used as an all-encompassing term for the Rhagae, Derbent and Darial passes.

Gates with the biblical apocalyptic tradition of Gog and Magog. This paper will address this gap and will explore the rhetorical importance of the Caspian Gates as grounding late antique tropes about the distinction between the *oikoumene* (the known world) and the savage, sometimes fantastic peoples living beyond it.

Throughout Antiquity, the Greco-Romans imagined the Caspian Gates as a barrier built by Alexander the Great to prevent ‘savage’ peoples from bursting into the *oikoumene* (E.g. Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.4.4, *Jewish War* 7.7.4; Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica* 5.125; Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae* 23.6.13; Jerome *Letter* 77.6; Claudian *In Rufinum* 2.23-32.). Although ancient sources recount certain moments when barbarian groups such as the Scythians, Massagetae or Alans entered the Caucasus through these passes and made their way westward, the crossing of the Caspian gates was usually only possible when aided by another ‘more civilized’ kingdom. For instance, the western court poet Claudian (c. 370-404 CE) accused the eastern consul Rufinus of scheming with the Huns and guiding them through the Caspian Gates. Consequently, the Caspian gates were understood as impermeable barriers that barbarians could not traverse without help.

Often juxtaposed to mentions of the Caspian Gates in late antique sources are archaic ethnonyms, the outdated names of groups which had disappeared, but were nevertheless used to designate 4th and 5th century CE barbarian groups. For instance, Synesius of Cyrene (c. 370-414 CE) referred to the Goths threatening the Eastern Roman Empire as ‘Scythians’, a people living to the north

and east and renowned for their uncivilized customs. Yet Scythian history had ended in the 3rd century CE, when Scythian Neapolis was abandoned. Synesius justified his use of the ethnonym ‘Scythian’ by arguing that the barbarians who terrorized the Roman Empire in his own times were the same as those the Empire had been fighting for centuries. They had only taken up new names and modified their appearance to appear more fearsome to the Romans. The Christian writer Jerome (347-419 CE) provides further insight into how these barbarian groups could be the same as those described in the past. He justified the use of another archaic ethnonym (the Massagetae – a people mentioned by Herodotus – to designate the Huns) by mentioning that the Gates of Alexander prevented new barbarian tribes from beyond the Caucasus from entering the *oikoumene*.

I shall argue that the imagined notion of the Caspian Gates as impermeable barriers in Greek and Latin sources from Late Antiquity functioned as a rhetorical tool which anchored two literary tropes: first, the use of archaic, outdated ethnonyms to denote contemporary 4th and 5th century CE barbarian groups and second, accusations of treason and collusion with barbarians stemming from helping barbarian groups traverse the Caspian Gates. Myths about the Caspian Gates featured as justifications bridging the classicizing tendency of late antique sources and the desire to depict historical reality. My paper will explore the historical context of the barbarian migrations that generated the phenomenon of employing the Caspian Gates as a rhetorical tool and will place this in dialogue

with late antique rhetoric about barbarian groups originating from the Caucasus.

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Hospitalis Caucasus:
The “World Campus for the Humanities”
and its Relation to the Caucasus

Since its foundation, the Academy *Vivarium novum* has drawn inspiration from the schools of the Italian Renaissance, where communities of scholars, bound by a deep and shared interest in the classical humanities, tried to find a light through the works of the ancients to shed on their present reality. To make that model fit to our modern times, it was imperative to implement innovative and more effective ways of teaching the classical languages, and to put forward an approach to the Classics that could meet the challenges of a world that could still benefit greatly from the timeless messages of the great thinkers of the past. After more than three decades of activity, the *Vivarium novum* made a crucial step when it arrived at its present headquarters in the Villa Falconieri of Frascati, the very place where Cicero had his famous *Tusculanum*, and from where he launched a cultural model that linked the Greek ideals of παιδεία and φιλανθρωπία, and stressed the importance of literature, philosophy,

and the liberal arts for promoting and fostering a good and virtuous life: *bene beateque vivere*. Here, the *Vivarium novum* has been putting forward a ‘World campus for the humanities’, where students from the five continents, although each one with different background, language, culture and religion, are able to live in a context of συνουσία where everyone brings the best of their own culture (that which is truly ‘classic’) and searches along with the others for the common roots of our humanity, hoping to build upon them a future that fosters peace and understanding, and refuses war, conflict and other disharmonious means as a way to relate to one another. In this context, the Caucasus region could offer an important contribution, because of its historical role of cultural crossroad, and its centuries of experience creating an environment where otherness is not felt as a threat for the single, but as a way of enriching the whole.

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Identity Issues of the Kartvelian Peoples

**by the Greek Authors Memnon, Appian, Cassius Dio,
Plutarch and Strabo**

Interest by the West towards the Caucasian region noticeably increased during the Roman Empire, owing to its expansive Eastern foreign policy. Concern with Caucasian politics was immediately

reflected in the accentuated discussion over the political and cultural orientation of populations inhabiting this region, including the ancient Kartvelian tribes.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the geopolitical and cultural identity issues of the Kartvelian tribes of the Roman period as represented by the Greek authors Memnon, Appian, Plutarch, Cassius Dio and Strabo. The research showed that the geopolitical preferences of the Kartvelian people are widely discussed by these authors when writing about the Mithridatic wars. Additionally, Cassius Dio considers the issues of the political orientation of the Georgian kings: (1) in the Roman-Parthian military conflict (AD 35) and (2) during the complicated relationship between Iberia and the Roman Empire (AD II c.); on the other hand, Strabo discusses the various forms of the political relationship existing between Rome and the different Kartvelian tribes.

The study of a cultural identity discourse of the Kartvelian peoples revealed that: (1) the Caucasian region still interested the Western audience as a locus in which the main action of the Argonauts and Prometheus myths took place; (2) the above writers frequently accentuated the themes reflecting the cultural relationship of the Caucasian peoples with Europe as well as the topics discussing the genesis of the Kartvelian peoples and their kinship to other tribes and regions; (3) they displayed a remarkable interest for the elements of material culture as well as ethnic traits and habits / rules of the Kartvelian peoples. We encounter a differential

approach towards the cultural development of the various Kartvelian tribes in representations of these peoples by Strabo.

The outcomes of the paper will suggest useful insights for research into the identity issues of the Kartvelian peoples. Additionally, these insights will facilitate studies of the *Other* in regard to the discourse of *xenostereotypes* – the traits of the alien, other people, different from us.

Dali Nadibaidze

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**On Some Aspects from the History
of Georgia and Armenia
According to the “Life of St. Nino”**

The *Life of St. Nino* is an important hagiographical and historical narrative containing noteworthy information about the history and culture of not only Georgia, but also Armenia. Out of the surviving versions of the *Life of St. Nino*, I draw on Leonti Mroveli’s version from *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (*The Georgian Chronicles*). A number of scholars find the text of outstanding significance because it appears in the principal historiographical compendium of medieval Georgia. The narrative is conventionally referred to as the *Life of St. Nino*. In Simon Kaukhchishvili’s edition, the part containing stories related to St. Nino is called “Conversion of Kartli by St.

Nino”. I will only dwell on those narratives that describe the Saint’s life, activities and death. These are seven consecutive texts, the first entitled “Conversion of King Mirian and the Entire Kartli by our Saint and Blessed Mother Apostle Nino” and the last one – “The Message Written by the Patriarch of Rome and the King of the Branjis to Nino and King Mirian and the entire People of Kartli”.

I will focus on the following: the early life of St. Nino; her arrival in the Caucasus along with the First Martyrs of the Church of Armenia, Hripsime and Gayane, and the martyrdom of up to forty virgins by King Trdat (Tiridates) of Armenia; St. Nino’s miraculous escape to Kartli; the conversion of King Mirian and Queen Nana of Georgia and the entire Georgian people – i.e. the Conversion of Kartli; the official foundation of the Church of Georgia; Emperor Constantine’s sending of Holy Relics to Iberia at the request of King Mirian; the death of St. Nino, King Mirian and Queen Nana and the location of their graves. Thus, the *Life of St. Nino* is a very important source relating the circumstances of the first martyrs of Armenia and the Christianization of Georgia.

Regarding the dating of the text, the narrative opens with a statement that the text was dictated by St. Nino herself and recorded by King Mirian’s daughter-in-law, Salome of Ujarma. Thus, its initial version must have been composed in the 4th century, during St. Nino’s lifetime, which suggests the viability of dating the creation of the Georgian alphabet, as repeatedly noted by scholars, to an earlier period than the officially established date. However, as the original version of the *Life* did not survive, as either lost or

destroyed, we can only avail ourselves of several later versions dating from the 10th century onwards, thus the work is not currently recognized as the earliest literary text composed in Georgian. Furthermore, according to K. Kekelidze, I. Abuladze established that Leonti Mroveli's description of the martyrdom of Hripsime and Gayane draws on a Greek source. This, however, does not diminish the relevance of the text for the study of the history of Georgia and the early Christian world in general.

After 1990, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the restoration of the independence of Georgia, the narrative has attracted considerable international attention as new opportunities opened up for its scholarly study. In addition, a monastery reopened in Ninotsminda village near Sagarejo, on the way to Bodbe (Bodbe is the place where St. Nino passed away and was buried). The earliest church in Ninotsminda dates from the 6th century; archaeological excavations were carried out in the Transfiguration Church at the Samtavro Monastery in Mtskheta, the site where St. Nino's chapel is found, dating from the 4th century.

Archaeological research was also carried out in Svetitskhoveli; the monuments of the Mtskheta cultural heritage were added to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Monasteries opened near Paravani Lake where St. Nino stayed overnight upon her arrival in Georgia and where a 10th-11th century church survives; restoration works were carried out around St. Nino's grave during which an old gravestone was unearthed. In my paper, I present the latest scholarly findings available to me that are related to the events

described in the *Life of St. Nino* and discuss their correspondence to the medieval hagiographical narrative.

Michele Nardelli

University of Rennes 2, France

Le mythe d'Hercule sur le Caucase, de l'antiquité à Alexandre le Grand

La présente communication vise à explorer les légendes d'Hercule sur le Caucase, et leur utilisation par la propagande macédonienne à l'époque d'Alexandre le Grand et par les historiens hellénistiques du I^{er} siècle av. J.-C. A titre préliminaire, il convient de noter que dans la tradition grecque, le nom de Caucase désigne l'ensemble des massifs montagneux situés entre la mer Noire, la mer Caspienne et la mer d'Aral, du Pont oriental au Pamir, du Caucase proprement dit à l'Hindou Kouch et à l'Himalaya.

Dans la mythologie ancienne, le Caucase est décrit comme un lieu infranchissable et lointain, éloigné de la civilisation et de la culture : ainsi, Hercule libéra le Titan Prométhée, emprisonné sur le Caucase pour avoir volé le feu ; de même, les Argonautes aperçurent les sommets de ce massif avant d'arriver dans la région barbare de la Colchide. De plus, le Caucase était la frontière du monde connu, du moins jusqu'à l'époque d'Alexandre le Grand : à l'ouest du Caucase, il y avait l'Empire Perse et les régions méditerranéennes ;

à l'est s'étendaient plutôt les régions de l'Inde, dont les Grecs ne connaissaient que les légendes et les événements prodigieux (“*mirabilia*”).

En 329 av. J.-C., Alexandre et son armée avancent vers le Caucase, puis vers le nord de l'Inde : Ératosthène (dans *Arr. An.* V, 1-3) indique que les Macédoniens ont identifié en chemin quelques traces du passage d'Hercule sur le Caucase, à savoir la grotte où Prométhée a été emprisonné, le rocher d'Aornos, attaqué sans succès par le héros grec, et le peuple des Sibes, qui se disaient descendants de l'armée d'Hercule. Selon le géographe, la propagande macédonienne avait inventé toutes ces légendes pour célébrer Alexandre comme celui qui avait franchi les confins du monde connu et surpassé les exploits d'Hercule sur le Caucase.

D'après mes recherches, ces mêmes légendes ont été reprises de manière originale par les historiens d'Alexandre du I^{er} siècle av. J.-C., cités par Strabon dans *Geog.* XV 1, 8-9 : ils auraient étudié le texte cité de la propagande macédonienne, particulièrement bienveillante à l'égard du général macédonien, et l'auraient réécrit dans un style littéraire, dense en citations homériques et figures rhétoriques. En même temps ils auraient modifié certains détails sur la base de correspondances avec des expressions de l'épopée archaïque, ennoblissant le contenu de ce mythe. En d'autres termes, ces historiens auraient construit la première version littéraire des légendes d'Hercule sur le Caucase, afin d'amplifier la célébration d'Alexandre par rapport aux exploits du héros grec.

Silva Petrosyan

Yerevan State University, Armenia

**Rethinking the Perception
of Armenia and Armenian Culture
in Some Antique Sources**

There are numerous ancient sources mentioning Armenia and Armenians. For this paper, we will discuss some works of Xenophon, a myth told by Plato in the dialogue “Republic” and some episodes of Plutarch’s parallel lives. In ancient times Armenia was regarded as a part of the barbarian world, not the Oikumene, and had never been a separate object for investigation. Armenia and Armenian culture were mentioned in the works of Western philosophers and historians in a cursory manner, but even taking this into account we can say that ancient authors preserved other remarkable moments of Armenian history and very interesting analyses of Armenian mentality and culture.

This paper will discuss mainly the second and third books of Xenophon’s “Cyropaedia”: the discussion between Cyrus the Great and Tigranes, the Prince of Armenia, after the Persian Emperor’s conquest of Armenia and Scythia. Though the aim of Xenophon is to praise the “techne bazilike” of Cyrus the Great and criticize the Armenian King, he retained the pattern of thinking of a ruler of a small kingdom near a powerful state. Of course there were political mistakes made by Armenians, but the fact that philosophical dialogues existed with the powerful Persian Emperor is notable. Also,

thanks to Xenophon, the reader can see the Armenian Prince's wisdom and mastery at debates and disputes. Being situated between the Western and Eastern empires, Armenian culture was influenced by both, and from time to time it became a battleground for lovers or deniers of Hellenistic culture. A father of Armenian historiography, Moses of Khorene, being himself a Hellenophile thinker, blamed the Ancient Armenian kings for not writing their own history. We are thankful to Greek authors for preserving valuable information about Armenians for future generations.

Annegret Plontke-Lüning

Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany

The Caucasus in the Work of Gustav Radde, Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of Radde's Death

Gustav Radde (1831 Gdansk – 1903 Tbilisi), biologist, geographer and polymath from Gdansk, was the Director of the Caucasian Museum in Tbilisi from 1867 and in this capacity made significant contributions to the geographical and scientific exploration of Caucasia. Radde was also a science manager, he recognised starting points very quickly and always thought conceptually and goal-oriented, and he was a networker who knew how to use his extensive international contacts wisely for the cause. Geology, biology, ethnography and archaeology in the Caucasus owed him an ultra-

modern museum for its time, which stimulated the visitors' imagination with its furnishings and thus promoted their understanding of the objects.

At the same time, Radde was very concerned with the dissemination of knowledge about the Caucasus in Western Europe where the regions of Caucasia were all too often and easily subsumed as Russian. Although the old cultural lands of the Caucasus were incorporated into the colonial empire of the Russian tsars and Radde was a Russian official, he saw and taught very clearly the specific developments and cultures of Georgia and Armenia. This lecture highlights Radde's activities to disseminate knowledge about the Caucasus in Western Europe, including the Caucasian exhibition he curated at the World's Fair in Vienna in 1873.

Nicolas Preud'homme

University of Florence, Italy

**The Caucasus in Greek and Latin Epigraphy
from the Mediterranean World and
the Cimmerian Bosphorus**

Ten Greek and six Latin inscriptions contain attestations of the geographical term designating the Caucasus or about individuals

and deities bearing the epithet “Caucasian”.² This quite varied epigraphic file, which extends from Hellenistic times to the Late Antique period, includes an inscription concerning a sale of priesthoods and evoking Apollo Kaukaseus and Artemis Kaukasis in Ionia, another document regarding the mythical hero Kaukasos whose tradition was particularly alive on the island of Chios, a short inscription on the torture of Prometheus found at Orange in former Gallia Narbonensis, funerary documents mobilizing aristocrats and freedmen where the Caucasus appears as a home country or as a borderland of human existence – notably the monument of the soldier Caius Iulius Mansuetus, known to have participated in an expedition during the Antonine period on the banks of the Caucasian River Alutus, and also the less known funerary eulogy of a Bosporan aristocrat Phanomachos to his father Antistasis. Finally, an inscription glorifying the exploits of Constantius II on the obelisk of the Circus Maximus carries the feat of moving this Egyptian monument by comparing it to the mass of the Caucasian Mountains. All these documents testify to a relative diffusion of knowledge of the Caucasus throughout the Graeco-Roman world and contribute to a common familiarity maintained by myths, cults and human movements.

² Latin inscriptions: AE 1996, 1767 ; CIL XII, 5687, 15; CIL XIII, 8213; CIL VI, 1163; CIL VI, 14605; CIL VI, 25426. Greek inscriptions: SEG 47:954; CIRB 113; IG XII,5 1078; Chios 8, 37, 40, 68, 75, 499 and Erythrai 60.

Karen Radner

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, Germany

Holy Mountains: Perspectives from the Assyrian Empire

While the existence of the mighty kingdom of Urartu made sure that the Caucasus remained firmly outside of the regions dominated by the Assyrian Empire in the early first millennium BC, the concept of the Holy Mountain is central to Assyrian myth and literature. As we will explore in this paper, this cultural phenomenon links the northern Mesopotamian state firmly with Anatolia and the Caucasus region.

Andreas Rossius

Independent Scholar, Germany

“Armenian Narrative” in the “Cyropaedia”: a Greek View of Moral Ideas among the Peoples of Ancient Caucasus or a Literary Convenience?

The whole “Caucasian” line in the plot of the *Cyropaedia* needs to be approached with caution, taking into account that the term Caucasus has only been retrospectively (and on political grounds) applied to a part of Armenian highlands inhabited by “Armenians”, i.e. the population of Urartu; moreover, the Median counterpart of the “king of the Armenians”, Cyaxares II seems to have been

invented by Xenophon in place of a non-existent historical figure, apparently in order to frame the various stories from Cyrus's young age, with the Armenian narrative prominently among them. These and similar reservations notwithstanding, those proto-Armenians are still related to their descendants and to Caucasus in general, which warrants an attempt to examine Xenophon's story under this conference. It is in the Armenian narrative that one sees Xenophon setting and discussing the most interesting ethical problems within his education novel. After defeating the king of Armenia who has failed to honour his obligation to support the Medes, Cyrus puts the king to trial where he by means of an elenchos forces him to acknowledge his guilt and to accept whatever penalty would be imposed on him. Then, famously, the latter's son Tigranes intervenes to defend him by using a way of arguing not unlike Socratic dialectics. Later, at the reconciliation feast, Tigranes recounts to Cyrus the story of his beloved teacher, a "sophist" put to death by his father for making himself more dear to Tigranes than the father: the wise teacher advises Tigranes against blaming the father for his death, for the father's actions are dictated by ignorance and not by evil mind, since no one commits an evil act voluntarily. Now the question is, do the Armenians in the *Cyropaedia* stand, as per Xenophon's intention, for representatives of a different ethical culture, or they are simply disguised Greeks; whether the moral principles they are guided by in their actions are something special or they merely do the things any Greek would do in their place. If any noticeable difference can be established, it would only mean,

with no claim to objectivity, that such is the perception Xenophon had formed, and decided to depict, of the morality of “Caucasians” as he imagined them, but nevertheless it would be a meaningful fact in the history of morality.

Vassilios Sabatakakis

Lund University, Sweden

**The French Botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort’s
Journey to the Islands of the Greek Archipelago and
Georgia during the Years 1700-1702**

The French botanist and physician Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656-1708) travelled to 38 Aegean islands, Asia Minor, Georgia and Armenia in the years 1700-1702. His journey, which took place under the auspices of the French King Louis XIV and resulted in the publication of his travel account in 1717, is widely considered to be a milestone in travel literature because it presents the work of a scientific traveller. In this case he presents the flora and fauna of the regions that he visited and, at the same time, he provides numerous details about the lands and people he encounters. He presents systematically various administrations, topographies, manners and customs, ethnicities, ways of life including both commercial and economic activities. He draws connections between the regions and their histories and geographies. The

richness of the engravings included in the book, which depict, among other things, cities, monuments, peoples dressed up in their national costumes and plants, made his account widely known to other scientific travellers and has since been elevated to a point of reference for many of those who described and published their own impressions in travel books. First, he visited the islands of the archipelago and this lasted a year. He visited Tbilisi in the summer of 1701. He gives us information about the life of the Georgians, the economy of the land, the religiosity of its inhabitants, the customs from birth to funeral, the education of girls in monasteries and their attire, as well as much more. Tournefort's travelogues are also a brilliant example of the public demand for travel manuals, a form of guidebooks for travellers that developed since the 16th century and was called "apodemic literature". In our speech we will show where Tournefort focuses his attention on the Greek archipelago and Georgia and how his travel journal constitutes an excellent and useful example for later travel journals.

Feudalismus im Antiken Kaukasien?

Zum Iberischen Amtsadel im 5. bis 7. Jahrhundert

Der älteste Teil der Georgischen Chroniken (*K'art'lis C'xovre-ba*) beschreibt die Konstituierung des k'art'velischen Staatswesens durch den (mythischen) ersten König P'arnavaz im 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Zentrales Element der Organisation des Staates ist die Einsetzung eines Dienstadels, der vom Königtum und dessen Macht abhängt. Das von P'arnavaz regierte Gebiet wird in Distrikte untergliedert, die jeweils einem Amtsträger (*erist'avi*) unterstehen. Von diesen Oberbeamten ist jeweils ein niederer Militäradel abhängig. Den regionalen Amtsträgern wird als Vorgesetzter der *spaspet* übergeordnet, der seinerseits direkt dem König untersteht. Funktionen dieses Dienstadels waren die Erhebung der Abgaben und die Bereitstellung von Truppen für den König.

Für die Jahrhunderte nach P'arnavaz verwenden die Georgischen Chroniken zwar die Begriffe, die staatliche Gliederung spielt aber kaum eine Rolle. Das ändert sich erst in den Berichten über die Regierungszeit des Königs Vaxtang I., dessen Person sich historisch in die zweite Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts einordnen lässt. An gleich zwei Stellen dieses ‚Romans‘ erwähnt der Verfasser die Gliederung des iberischen Staatswesens in (im Vergleich zur Ordnung des P'arnavaz) geringfügig veränderter Form. Hinzu kommt die Gliederung des Landes in Bistümer sowie die Einsetzung der

jeweiligen Bischöfe. Dem Zeitalter Vaxtangs wird von den Autoren der Chroniken demnach eine ganz besondere Bedeutung für die Konstitution des k'art'velischen Staatswesens beigemessen.

Dass ein solcher Dienstadell im Iberien der Spätantike existierte, gilt als gesichert. In der Forschung wird hierbei von feudalen Strukturen gesprochen, die parallel zu den dynastischen Strukturen des alten Grundadells bestanden.

Die Frage ist allerdings, wann sich dieses System in Iberien entfaltete. Eine solche Reform erfordert Voraussetzungen, die allein aus den Entwicklungen im iberischen Staat nicht zu erklären sind. Zuerst musste die Zentralgewalt mächtig genug sein, sich gegen den Grundadel nachhaltig durchsetzen zu können; ist doch die Einführung eines Dienstadells nichts weniger als dessen Entmachtung. Das iberische Königtum selbst verfügte zu keiner Zeit über eine solche Macht.

Interessant ist, dass in der ersten Hälfte des 6. Jahrhunderts die Entmachtung des Grundadells anderswo gelang: Ḥosrau I. konnte im Sāsānidenreich das System eines von ihm abhängigen Dienstadells etablieren, weil der alte Grundadel durch die Mazdakiten-Bewegung nachhaltig geschwächt war. Nur durch diese Schwächung gelang es ihm (so berichten es die arabischen Historiker), die fiskalische Kontrolle über alles Land im Reich zu erlangen. Damit war auch dem alten Grundadel eine wichtige Machtbasis entzogen und dieser wurde vom König der Könige direkt abhängig. Der neue iranische Dienstadell hatte die Aufgabe, die Abgaben von allem

Reichsland zu erheben und dem König (dauerhaft) Truppen zur Verfügung zu stellen.

Die Reformen, die von der arabischen Geschichtsschreibung mit der Person Ḥosraus verbunden werden, begannen schon mit dessen Vater Kavadh; es handelt sich also um eine längerfristige Entwicklung. Da eben dieser Kavadh in Südkasien besonders aktiv war und die Entwicklungen überregional das ganze Imperium erfassten, kann die dem König Vaxtang zugeschriebene Neuordnung des k'art'velischen Staatswesens wohl mit den iranischen Entwicklungen verbunden werden.

Ich möchte in meinem Vortrag Argumente präsentieren, die dafür sprechen, dass man die strukturellen Entwicklungen in Südkasien gemeinsam mit denen im iranischen Kernland betrachten muss. Am Beispiel des k'art'velischen Dienstadels soll gezeigt werden, dass nicht nur dessen Einführung zeitlich mit den Reformen Kavadhs und Ḥosraus I. korreliert, sondern dass auch dessen spätere Entwicklung hin zu einer eigenen politischen Macht verbunden mit dem Wunsch, die eigene Stellung verbriefte erblich zu erhalten, im Iran und Südkasien parallel verlaufen.

Leukothea in Kolchis

Über die mit dem mythischen Namen Kolchis bezeichnete Landschaft sind für die spätklassische und für die hellenistische Zeit nur wenige schriftliche Nachrichten erhalten. Dazu gehören kurze Berichte darüber, dass der Göttin Leukothea dort ein wichtiges Heiligtum geweiht sei. Otar Lordkipanidze hat die These vertreten, dass diese Kultstätte mit dem damals blühenden Ort Vani zu identifizieren sei, dessen reiche archäologische Hinterlassenschaft auf enge, im Einzelnen zu spezifizierende Verbindungen mit der griechischen Welt verwiesen. Diese Ansicht ist nicht unwidersprochen geblieben. David Braund etwa sucht das Leukotheion am Oberlauf des Mtkvari in der Nähe von Borjomi an der Grenze zwischen Kolchis und Iberien zu.

Jüngst hat nun Altay Coşkun die Debatte neu aufgenommen. Er erkennt in Leukothea eine wesentlich mit dem Meer verbundene Gottheit, deren Verehrung dann vor allem an der Küste ihren Ort gehabt haben müsse. Auf dieser Grundlage entwickelt er eine Lokalisierung als wichtige Landmarke auf dem Seeweg von Trapezous zum Phasis in der Gegend des heutigen Batumi. Seine Rekonstruktion sieht er durch weitere Beobachtungen zur Ereignisgeschichte und zur Geographie der Gegend bestätigt. Die Ortsbestimmung ist Teil eines umfassenden Rearrangements kolchischer

Topographie, das Coşkun in zahlreichen weiteren Beiträgen entfaltet.

Nachdem ich kürzlich schon Coşkuns Vorstellungen von Dioskourias-Sebastopolis-Soxumi einer kritischen Überprüfung mit dem Ergebnis unterzogen habe, dass man hier an den traditionellen Auffassungen festhalten sollte, sollen nun ähnliche Erwägungen zu Leukothea und zum Leukotheion angestellt werden. Diese Revision soll die Tragfähigkeit der verschiedenen Lokalisierungsversuche vor allem unter methodischen Gesichtspunkten in den Blick nehmen. Eine solche Analyse erlaubt es, trotz Kritik an der bisherigen Forschung im Einzelnen und an deren Ergebnissen, auch die jeweils weiterführenden Gesichtspunkte aufzugreifen.

Tassilo Schmitt

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Zum Projekt einer Neuedition der griechischen und lateinischen Inschriften des Südkaukasus.

Probleme, Forschungsstand, Perspektiven

T'inat'in Qauxč'išvilis "Korpus der griechischen Inschriften in Georgien", das nun in einer erweiterten dritten Auflage vorliegt, war eine Pionierleistung. Mit großer Akribie und Umsicht hat sie die bekannten Texte gesammelt, geordnet und herausgegeben. In

der internationalen Forschung hat ihre Edition aber aus vielen Gründen nie die gebührende Beachtung gefunden. Das hängt auch damit zusammen, dass man sich dort nicht hinreichend klar gemacht hat, dass Qauxč'išvili mancherlei wichtige Standards und Diskussionen gar nicht kennen und deswegen auch nicht anwenden konnte. Vieles im Einzelnen ist inzwischen auch überholt.

Eine Neuedition muss also integrieren, was erreicht worden ist, zugleich aber konzeptionell und methodisch neue Wege beschreiten. Wenn es darum geht, die epigraphische Hinterlassenschaft eines Raumes für die allgemeine altertumswissenschaftliche Forschung umfassend zu erschließen, kann dessen Zuschnitt nicht aus modernen Staatsgrenzen abgeleitet werden. Aufnahmekriterium ist also nicht, dass ein Text irgendwie zu "Georgien" gehört, sondern dass er in einem Territorium gefunden wurde, das im Norden an den Großen Kaukasus, im Westen und im Osten an das Schwarze und das Kaspische Meer reicht. Die naturräumlichen Gegebenheiten bilden zwar nirgends unüberschreitbare Schranken, schaffen aber doch verkehrsgeographisch und politisch verschiedene Räume. Schwieriger ist die Abgrenzung im Süden. Wenn man aber beachtet, dass sich seit der hellenistischen Zeit die Beziehungen der griechischen und dann auch römischen Kerngebiete zu Armenien institutionell politisch und wohl auch kulturell anders gestalteten als zu den Gebieten weiter im Norden, lässt es sich rechtfertigen, den Südkaukasus hier ohne Armenien zu behandeln. Chronologisch bereitet es keine Schwierigkeiten, mit den ältesten erhaltenen griechischen Texten einzusetzen. Die arabische Eroberung des Raumes

hat viele Rahmenbedingungen so stark verändert, dass man trotz mancher und auch wichtiger Kontinuitäten hier eine Zäsur setzen kann. Vielfach fehlt eine detaillierte Dokumentation der epigraphischen Denkmäler (Zeichnungen, Fotos) und der Forschungsgeschichte. Gerade deswegen ist es nicht selten zu Missverständnissen gekommen, die eine umfassende Zusammenstellung leicht aufklären kann. Zu hoffen ist, dass auch verschüttete Erkenntnisse wiedergewonnen werden.

Schon diese Entwurfsskizze zeigt, dass Qauxč'išvilis Rahmen räumlich erweitert, zeitlich aber beschränkt werden soll. Die vielleicht wichtigste konzeptionelle Änderung besteht aber darin, dass das Material nicht auf die griechischen Texte der Region beschränkt werden kann. Die wenigen lateinischen gehören gewiss dazu. Perspektivisch müssen auch anderssprachige Inschriften einbezogen werden. Bei der Arbeit und für die Edition sind die Möglichkeiten der Digitalisierung umfassend zu nutzen.

Die Textedition soll durch Übersetzungen in moderne Sprachen leichter zugänglich gemacht werden, zu denen aus pragmatischen Gründen auf jeden Fall Englisch gehört. Nur eine nach einheitlichen und den aktuellen Standards verpflichteten Kriterien gestaltete Neuausgabe kann die Erträge der älteren Forschung für die internationale wissenschaftliche Arbeit produktiv erschließen und zugleich einen wichtigen Beitrag dazu leisten, die Isolation und Blockaden zu überwinden.

Jason in Modern Greek and Georgian Literature (The Distinct Perception of a Hero)

A myth of Argonauts and its characters – predominantly Medea and Jason – began to appear in the literary works of Georgian, as well as Greek writers and poets towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries.

While Apollonius of Rhode's *Argonautica* and Euripide's *Medea* typically serve as the principal sources of the Argonaut myth, a spoken version of the narrative is often used as a source, (when in the original work, the author does not build upon, or may not even be familiar with the ancient texts, as it is mentioned by Euripides Gharantoudis). Thus it should be emphasized that Georgian and Greek authors' attitudes towards Jason, the Argonaut protagonist, are vastly divergent.

The purpose of the present article, consequently, is to explore the contrasting representation of Jason and the Argonauts by the Greek and Georgian poets of the period. Akaki Tsereteli's play *Medea* and the poems authored by other Georgian literary figures of the same era will be examined. For a Greek perspective, we present works by Stefanos Mardzokis and Petros Vlastou, as a comparison.

Preliminary analysis of these works revealed a significant, yet consistent, contrast in the portrayal of Jason: Georgian writers exhibit a markedly hostile point of view, while their Greek counterparts' treatment of the same character is decidedly favourable. The article will attempt to expose the underlying factors beneath such contrasting viewpoints, delving into the phenomena through which a single character is portrayed as a hero in one culture – and why it metamorphoses into an antagonist – in another. Within the scope of the research we'll demonstrate how Jason is portrayed as a heroic figure in the Greek literature and why Georgian authors represent him as a cunning, deceitful and fraudulent thief.

Matthew Shipton

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The Mountains Enchained: Prometheus and the Frosty Caucasus

Around 150 years ago the British Alpinist Douglas Freshfield published his account of the first recorded ascent of Mount Kazbek, the Caucasian peak associated with the myth of Prometheus. Freshfield's work contains many references to ancient myth, as was common in mountaineering literature of the period (see Girdlestone (1870), Stephen (1871), Tyndall (1862), Whympers (1871), Mummery (1895) etc.) The widespread use of classical sources in this

genre can be explained in several ways: to signify the author's erudition, to locate their works within a particular social or cultural context, to illustrate otherwise pedestrian accounts, or to appeal to wider audiences. These works show the climber's self-identification with figures and events from ancient myth, allowing the creation of a heroic narrative. Illuminatingly, a contemporary of Freshfield's, Florence Grove, chose a quote from Shakespeare, one that can be considered to reference Prometheus, for the subtitle of his book on his ascent of Mount Elbrus – *The Frosty Caucasus*.

Of all the figures from the ancient world, that of Prometheus, I shall argue, was one with which these Alpinists could best identify. Both climber and titan exist in a topographically liminal space, both represent (though self-defined) civilising influences within elemental realms, the forces of *Bia* and *Kratos* ever present, the experience of both is defined by struggle, and metal work ties both to the mountainside. Equally, both occupy a mythic space between life and death, immortality and mortality and their stories are by turn self-serving, compelling and inspirational. While the influence of Shelley's *Prometheus*, and his other works on mountain landscapes cast a long shadow over the period, by the end of the nineteenth century, these stories had become commonplace enough to become the subject of satirical work.

To the Alpinist of 1869, climbs in the Caucasus represented mountaineering at the geographical and physical limits of possibility, the range occupying a not dissimilar place in the popular imagination as in the ancient world. The Alps had become 'the

playground of Europe’ and ambitious mountaineers looked eastwards for more challenging grounds in which to test themselves through the first recorded ascents of mountains or difficult enchainments of multiple peaks. Indeed ‘conquering’ mountains could be considered an imperial imperative, considering the territorial rivalries between Britain and Russia (prefiguring later Himalayan expeditions, as the final endeavours of a fading colonial power).

This paper explores the ways in which British Alpinists drew on the myth of Prometheus in their writings and I conclude that the Caucasus would provide the ultimate arena in which to seek immortality through self-mythologization.

Timo Stickler

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König Vaxtang Gorgasali zwischen Legende und Geschichte

König Vaxtang Gorgasali ist eine zentrale Persönlichkeit in der historischen Überlieferung Georgiens, wie sie uns insbesondere in der Chronik *K'art'lis C'xovreba* entgegentritt. Dabei vereinigt sein Profil Gegensätze, die nur schwer miteinander zu harmonisieren sind: Vaxtang Gorgasali ist ein großer Kämpfer, erliegt aber schließlich den Persern. Er ist ein mächtiger Herrscher, fungiert aber desgleichen als Vasall des sāsānidischen Großkönigs. Er ist ein eifriger

Anhänger des Christentums, unterhält aber durchaus zwiespältige Beziehungen zum byzantinischen Kaiser und strebt nach kirchlicher Autokephalie.

Seit langem ist der Forschung aufgefallen, daß Vaxtang Gorgasali, so prominent er in der altgeorgischen Überlieferung erscheint, in den griechisch-römischen Quellen überhaupt nicht (will man nicht den in Prokops *Bella* erwähnten Gurgenes mit ihm identifizieren) und in der altarmenischen Geschichtsschreibung nur bei einem Autor (nämlich Łazar P'arpec'i) erwähnt wird. In dem vorgesehenen Vortrag geht es nicht so sehr darum, die Historizität des berühmten Königs zu untermauern und in ihren Details näher zu fassen, es geht vielmehr darum, sein widersprüchliche Profil in der altgeorgischen Überlieferung zu beschreiben und den Ursprung der einzelnen Aspekte, aus denen es zusammengesetzt ist, zu ergründen. Dabei wird sich u. a. erweisen, daß das altgeorgische Geschichtsdenken der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters den Prinzipien der historischen Überlieferung Irans mindestens ebenso viel verdankt wie der klassischen antiken und der altarmenischen Historiographie sowie der christlichen Kirchengeschichtsschreibung in der Tradition Eusebs von Caesarea.

Antonis Tsakmakis

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The Prometheus Trilogy and Athenian Hegemony: Uses of the Caucasus in Classical Athens and Beyond

In Greek mythological topography the Caucasus was believed to be situated very close to the end of the earth (imagined as a discus which was surrounded by the ocean). Consequently, the Caucasus was an appropriate place for Prometheus to be captivated and bound. The Titan who donated fire to mankind and made the passage from a pre-civilized condition to civilization possible, was expelled to the marginal area between civilization and primitivity. The liminal character of the mountain and its association with mythical figures such as Prometheus and Heracles facilitated its use in propaganda. The most notable example is the use of its name by the Macedonians for the last high mountain Alexander crossed, namely Paropamisus, modern Hindu Kush. In this way, it was suggested that Alexander had reached the end of the world. Later, rational explanations of the fact include the theory that the new Caucasus was supposed to be part of the same mountain system as the real Caucasus. Thus, the Caucasus was given a pivotal role in the schematic representation of the ecumene. This also holds for the earliest mention of the mountain in Greek literature, in 5th century drama.

In Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* (unlike the lost *Prometheus Unbound*, probably part of the same trilogy), the setting of

Prometheus' punishment is not the Caucasus, but some unidentifiable place in the far North. The Caucasus, however, is mentioned twice in the play, in passages which map a topography of the real world which is kept apart from mythical space. The moral and political implications of the play's imaginary topography will be discussed in detail against the background of Athenian history of the 5th century. The analysis will lead to a re-appraisal of the political message conveyed by the tragedy. In parallel, it adds a further argument in favour of Aeschylus' authorship of *Prometheus Bound*.

Rusudan Tsanova

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Aeetes, Cadmus, Dardanus

Although Theban, Argonautic and Trojan cycles are separated by mythical time and space, they are nevertheless connected by “invisible threads”: Theban Ino is the stepmother of Phrixus and Helle; Aeetes keeps the teeth of the dragon which Cadmus slaughtered when founding Cadmea; the fathers of the heroes fighting in the Trojan War were on board the Argo; Odysseus spent a year on the island of Circe, etc.

The comparison of the three mythical cycles reveals parallels as well as differences: like Cadmus and Dardanus, Aeetes too is an “immigrant”, a “settler”. According to the Corinthian version of the myth, Aeetes arrived in Colchis from Greece – Corinth. We know

nothing about the route he undertook or how he settled in Colchis. Sources provide different locations for Colchis.

Cadmus' brothers went in four directions to found cities. Dardanus' ancestors too were known as city builders. Sources are silent about the building of the capital city of Aea in Colchis, though Apollonius Rhodius gives a detailed description of Aeetes' palace and its surroundings in his *Argonautica*. Aeetes' two sisters, Pasiphae and Circe, are prominent figures in the Mediterranean. The geography of the dispersion of Aeetes and his siblings convincingly aligns with the recent hypothesis on the distribution of the Kartvelian tribes in the Mediterranean in the 2nd millennium BC.

Cadmus and Dardanus descend from Zeus, while Aeetes is an offspring of Helios. This is an important point in establishing the degree of "legitimacy" the heroes enjoyed. Helios was never included among the twelve Olympian gods and the Greeks' veneration for him was modest. Studies reveal that Greeks never worshipped celestial bodies, while the Greek sources unanimously describe Aeetes and the Colchians as worshippers of the Sun, Hecate (the moon goddess, the correlate of the Magna Mater), the Heaven and Gaea. It should not be ruled out that Aeetes could have brought from Corinth the insignia of the Sun to empower it and spread the cult in Colchis.

Cadmus' and Dardanus' progeny continued and further expanded the deeds of their forefathers, building walls around the cities their ancestors had founded and acquiring new territories. Unlike the two heroes, Aeetes only had a daughter, who left Colchis and

after many adventures, returned to her fatherland to restore Aeetes to the throne.

Vitalii Turenko

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The Exploits of Heracles in the Pontic Littoral: Between Georgia and Ukraine

Ancient mythology and literature are full of “traveling” stories, epics, and personalities. In particular, these are the “Odyssey” by Homer and “Argonauts” by Apollonius of Rhodes. Both plots are united by one of the most famous figures of antiquity – Heracles, who in his heroic travels did not miss the territories of the modern Caucasus and Ukraine.

First of all, we discuss the eleventh labour of Heracles, namely to steal the golden apples of the Hesperides, because the way to the Hesperides goes from the extreme north to the extreme west [See: A. Pr. 195-199], thereby passing by the lands of the Scythians (who lived in the Northern Black Sea region), freeing Prometheus who was chained precisely in the mountains of the Caucasus (Vandiver, E. (1991). Vandiver Heroes in Herodotus. The Interaction of Myth and History. Frankfurt am Main; Bern; New York; Paris, p. 67; Braund, D. (2010). Kimmerians, Kerberians and Kerberion: Reflections on Herakles at Asiatic Kimmerikon, Gaudeamus igitur, p. 98).

The image of Prometheus was received into Georgian mythology as Amirani, a cultural hero who challenged the main god and, like the Greek titan, was chained to the Caucasus Mountains, where his organs were eaten by birds (Furtwangler, *Die Antiken Gemmen*, 1910, I, pl. V, no. 37). As for finding Heracles in the land of the Scythians on the territory of modern Ukraine, there are still various coins from the 5th-4th centuries BC, on which there are various kinds of scenes with this ancient Greek hero.

Secondly, we should point to the text of the *Argonauts*, which mentions Heracles, associated with the Argonauts' voyage to Colchis for the Golden Fleece. According to Herodotus, this voyage began when Heracles was enslaved by Omphala, to keep the hero from taking part; however, most sources mention him among Jason's companions, along with his brother Iphicles and nephew Iolaus. According to Apollonius of Rhodes, Heracles arrived at the Pagasean harbor immediately after capturing the Erymanthian boar (Apollon. I, 121-129). It was Heracles who the Argonauts wanted to make their leader, but he refused in favour of Jason. Only Dionysius Scytobrachion claims that the son of Zeus led the campaign. When the ship "Argo" stopped on Lemnos, then was delayed due to the beautiful Lemnian women, Heracles (according to one version of the myth) insisted on continuing the journey.

In the context of the research topic, we will also follow Theocritus, who claims that Heracles was able to reach Colchis on foot and had already joined the participants of the campaign there. At the same time, the author of the scholia to Theocritus writes that

Hera, who took care of Jason, prevented the hero from going there. Finally, there is a version of Demaratus, dating back to a tragedy that has not survived, according to which Heracles travelled all the way to Colchis and back on board the Argo.

Thus, we can see that the image of Heracles is not only purely Greek but also cross-cultural, whose influence we see throughout the entire Black Sea region, including the Caucasus and the territory of modern Ukraine.

Giorgi Ugulava

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Pliny and the Perception of the Caucasus in the Roman Literature of the 1st Century AD

This paper focuses on the perception of the Caucasus in the work of Pliny the Elder, his geographical, political and cultural peculiarities and discussions about these within the context of other authors of the period. Roman sources of this period are particularly interested in the Caucasus because the Caucasus became the epicentre of the Roman-Parthian conflict in the 1st century AD. This led to almost annual campaigns by Roman troops in the Caucasus, visits by explorers, officials, and political figures, and increased awareness of the region.

Pliny stands out among the sources whose geographical and political perception of the Caucasus differs from other authors of the period. The paper will focus on the features that distinguish Pliny's perception of the Caucasus from other authors of this epoch.

Karina Vilela Vilara

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Translating the Caucasus to Brazilian Portuguese

Atahualpa Yupanqui (1908-1992), poet and songwriter, was one of the most important artists to promote Argentinian folk music in the 20th century. In the *"Destiny of songs"*, one of his poems, he wrote: "Yes, the earth marks its own elected. The soul of the earth, as a shadow, haunts the ones chosen to translate it". Brazil has set a solid foundation for translation through the work of important, internationally recognized names, such as the São Paulo brothers, Augusto and Haroldo de Campos, virtuosos of Brazilian concretist poetry since the second half of 20th century. The translation approach elaborated by them is centred on rendering into Portuguese some authors and literary works that were instrumental in expanding the scope reformulating the inherited canons prevailing until the 1960s.

However, the issue of how to "translate" a distant or unfamiliar place (a particular space), a key reference or symbol, whose significance goes beyond the identity of a concrete author and work of

art, has not yet been sufficiently problematised in Brazil, nor have there been adequate solutions proposed. This research paper reflects on possible translation approaches focused on bringing forth the imaginary of a place, the tectonic vocabulary at the disposal of the author of an artwork, and thus to make these lands real and knowable to a different public. How can one translate the “the soul of the land”, such as the Caucasus, for example? This distant land has been only an occasional reference in the Brazilian literary field, except for some mentions in the translations of classical Greek Tragedies and in the novel, *A Hero of our Times*. The present work suggests a preliminary approach to translating literary texts where the relevance of the Caucasus as a powerful poetic image can be established in a manner that can overcome the temptation of orientalist exoticising. Works by Pushkin, Lermontov and Mandelstam have been chosen for translation into Portuguese in view of these authors’ descriptions of the Caucasus’ landscapes. The present investigation into methods of translation and presentation of foreign places into Portuguese entails establishing a dialogue with Brazilian artistic expressions that can be categorized as “the song of the Earth” such as, for example, the oral improvisations of traditional Brazilian North-eastern folk poets, or the evocative prose of Guimarães Rosa, the lyrics of the internationally renowned musicians, Chico Buarque and Milton Nascimento, among others. “Translating the land”, giving it an autonomous voice and standing depends, among other things, on the selection of the concrete works to be translated.

Making the Caucasus real and recognizable for the Brazilian public requires embodying the majesty of that land in the melody of a foreign tongue. Yupanqui ends his poem stating that those who were chosen by the land to “translate it”, are nameless, for no grave will bury their song. In other words, the “songs of the earth” gain independence from their creators and translators to soar abroad freely. When a place comes to embody a memory, it is possible then to grasp it as a myth and a living presence. And this is precisely the aim of this work: to frame the Caucasus as a memory in the South American tropics through the language of poetry and translation.

Ivo Volt

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**Medea and her Songs:
A Contemporary Estonian Theatre Adaptation
of “Medea” by Euripides**

This paper focuses on a black box theatre adaptation of Euripides’ “Medea” by the contemporary Estonian stage director and actor Tiit Palu (b. 1970). The play premiered in 2018, ran for two seasons, and in 2020 was also recorded as a radio play. The cast consisted of four women, playing respectively the roles of Medea, Jason, Creon, and the chorus (the latter comprising also other roles of the original play).

The play is an adaptation in more than one sense, as the tragedy of Euripides had not yet been published in Estonian, and although a prose translation exists, it was not available to the director at the time. Thus, English and German translations of the play were used as a basis of the text, and several new passages were added, so that Palu himself is mentioned as the author of the text in the programme. This paper addresses key topics emphasized by the director in the play, as well as major changes made in comparison with Euripides' version, including original poetic passages. It also touches upon the dramatic structure and the most striking visual elements of the play, illustrated by stage photos. The paper is based on the comparison of the published text of the play, the video recording of the premiere (not available publicly), and the audio recording of the radio play (available publicly), as well as on comments from the director himself, and an analysis of several reviews of the play (and, last but not least, on my own memories from watching the play three times).

Arnaud Zucker

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Les connaissances grecques et byzantines sur la faune du Caucase

Depuis au moins le 7^e siècle avant J.-C. et la colonisation milésienne de la Colchide, le monde grec est en relation continue avec les régions caucasiennes. Notre intervention portera sur les connaissances et les descriptions d'animaux situés dans cette région intermédiaire, dans la représentation antique, entre l'espace scythe et la Médie. Dans un essai de zoogéographie, rendu délicat par la mobilité des peuples, qui servent souvent de marqueurs à la faune dans les récits antiques et médiévaux, ainsi que par le zonage approximatif des noms de région, nous essaierons d'analyser les descriptions, la diffusion et la spécificité de la faune caucasienne (principalement colche et cimmérienne dans la nomenclature antique). Au-delà de quelques vedettes, comme le faisan ("oiseau de Colchide"), le béliér, le cheval et l'aigle, les auteurs antiques et byzantins signalent comme typiques de la région un certain nombre d'animaux, comme les lynx, les taureaux, les cerfs, les loups, les renards et d'autres animaux carnivores. Dans cette enquête, qui partira d'un inventaire systématique des sources (TLG) nous ne nous limiterons pas aux textes naturalistes et historiques mais inclurons la documentation littéraire grecque (Apollonios de Rhodes, Nonnos, Procope...) et éventuellement latine. Nous envisagerons l'espace caucasien de manière large, et surtout la faune

transcausienne liée aux espaces à l'occasion définis par les toponymes d'Arménie d'Albanie, d'Ibérie ou de Lazique (voir e.g. Strabon, 11.5.6). Cette localisation peut être affinée dans certains cas, comme pour les chevaux, entre lesquels sont nettement distingués par leurs qualités les arméniens, les ibères et les sauromates (*Hippiatrica*, fr. pseudo-timothéen). Nous tâcherons également de déterminer si certains animaux localisés au nord de la mer Noire et relevant *lato sensu* de l'espace scythe seraient des candidats possibles pour une localisation également plus méridionale, comme le bison. Nous essaierons enfin de proposer quelques pistes d'identification d'animaux équivoques, comme les oiseaux de la Caspienne (Elien, *NA* 17.33 et 38) ou les rats de la Caspienne (*ibid.* 17.11).

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