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PRINCE TEIMURAZ AND HIS ESSAYS
ON GEORGIAN SPHRAGISTICS AND NUMISMATIC
HISTORY (AT THE DAWN OF NATIONAL
GEORGIAN NUMISMATIC SCHOLARSHIP)

Abstract

Prince Barataev (Baratashvili), author of the “Numismatic facts of the Georgian kingdom” (1844), has been considered to be a founder of Georgian numismatics [numismatic research]. However, despite the indubitable significance of the aforesaid treatise, prince Barataev was not the first scholar to develop an interest into Georgian numismatic past. He was certainly preceded by M. Brosset. Moreover, there was yet another scientist, of Georgian origin, who dealt (albeit in a fragmentary way) with numismatic aspects of Georgian history. Our article is focused on the personality and numismatic scholarly heritage of prince Teimuraz Bagrationi, son of Giorgi XII, the last king of the united [east-Georgian kingdom of] Kartl-K’akheti (1744-1801). We studied the lengthy letters / essays by prince Teimuraz (dated 1832 and 1834, i.e. prior to the publication of prince Barataev’s book) addressed to M. Brosset and covering various aspects of Georgian numismatics and sphragistics.

Keywords

Prince Teimuraz, history of numismatic research, Georgian numismatics



“Ts’ina k’atsi uk’ana k’atsis khidiao”
“The man in the lead is a bridge for the man behind”

Georgian Proverb

INTRODUCTION

The first numismatic activities in Georgia can be traced back at least to the 2nd half of the 18th century: Two recent publications¹ discussed the collecting activities of Irak’li (Erek’le) II (1744-1798), King of K’akheti and later Kartl-K’akheti (eastern Georgia), the first Georgian numismatist (collector) whom we know.²

The first *scholarly* (albeit erroneous) publication of a Georgian coin dates back to the same epoch, namely year 1782, when J. Adler published the regular copper coin of Giorgi IV Lasha (1210?-1223) in his *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris*.³ However, Georgian numismatics became an established specialty only later on, in the 19th century. 1844 witnessed a major breakthrough in the field: Prince Mikhail Barataev

¹ Джавахишвили 2010; ჯავახიშვილი 2011.

² Taking into account the vast cultural interests of Vakht’ang VI of Kartli, we would conjecture that he could be interested in numismatics as well, but this is a mere supposition, as we have absolutely no data on this issue.

³ Пахомов 1970: 99-100, примечание 1.

(Baratashvili), Russified noble of Georgian origin⁴, and avid collector of antiques and particularly coins (including the Georgian ones), published his *Numismatic facts of the Georgian kingdom*, a voluminous work of more than 600 pages, in Russian, French and (partially) Georgian, with extremely clear and precise coin illustrations. Although having become mostly obsolete by now, this book certainly constituted a major scholarly achievement for the contemporary epoch and state of Georgian studies. It is certainly understandable to some degree, therefore, that Mikhail Barataev has been acknowledged in the modern Georgian numismatic literature (and even popular culture) as a *founder* of Georgian numismatic studies.⁵

However, we would strongly object this postulate. Despite the unquestionable significance of the treatise he authored, Mikhail Barataev was naturally not the first scholar to develop an interest into Georgian numismatic past. Long before he visited Georgia in 1839 for the first time and started collecting Georgian coins, to serve as a basis for his (certainly quite remarkable) work, Georgian coins had already been studied *en masse* by Marie Brosset, renowned French kartvelologist. M. Brosset is a venerated figure in the field of Georgian, and, generally, Caucasian studies; among other works, he devoted several remarkable articles and monographs to various issues of Georgian numismatic history; we would list here some of his early works, published before 1844⁶, all dealing (entirely or partially) with various aspects of Georgian numismatics *and sphragistics*⁷:

- *Additions au Mémoire sur les documens originaux concernant la Géorgie (Journ. asiat. Mars, Avril, Mai 1832)* – 23 pages (1832);
- *Dissertation sur les monnaies Géorgiennes, traduite d'une lettre du prince Théimouraz avec des éclaircissement* – 45 pages (1835);
- *Dissertation sur les monnaies Géorgiennes* – 31 pages (1836);
- *Note sure quelques monnaies Géorgiennes du Musée Asiatique et sur une inscription Tibétaine d'Edchmiadzin* – 4 pages (1837);
- *Monographie Géorgienne de Moscou* – 123 pages (1838);
- *Monographie des monnaies Arméniennes*⁸ – 46 pages (1839).

⁴ His ancestor emigrated to Russia in the retinue of Vakht'ang VI in the 1720s.

⁵ დუნდუა, დუნდუა 2006: 15; პატარძე 2013.

⁶ Marie Brosset published several articles on Georgian numismatic history after 1844 as well. Хантадзе 1970: 200-209.

⁷ BROSSET 1832; BROSSET 1835; BROSSET 1836; BROSSET 1837; BROSSET 1838; BROSSET 1839. For the numismatic activities of Marie Brosset cf. also Хантадзе 1970: 111-112, 114, 156-157; Буачидзе 1983: 150-154.

⁸ This monograph deals with some aspects of Georgian numismatic history as well.

It is hard to say, what induced the Georgian historiographic predilection for Mikhail Barataev / Baratashvili at the expense of Marie Brosset.⁹ It could be a “patriotic” fervour (some unrightful solidarity with yet another ethnic Georgian); romantic figure of Mikhail Barataev himself – his reversion to national roots while returning to motherland of his ancestors, albeit for several years only; or perhaps linguistic and bibliographic issues – articles and short monographs of Marie Brosset were almost all written in French, being scattered in different volumes of various journals, and constitute bibliographic rarities nowadays, whereas single volume by Mikhail Barataev contains all of the text in Russian and Georgian¹⁰, while its scanned pdf version is easily available on the Internet. In either event, as we can see, it was Marie Brosset who covered the Georgian numismatic legacy also in a systematized way, but certainly prior to Mikhail Barataev.¹¹ Certainly, the works of the former, written solely in French, were not as verbose as those of the latter, with parallel texts in Russian and French, and some short excerpts in Georgian. Nevertheless, with all the due respect to Mikhail Barataev’s outstanding input, it would not be correct to entitle him *the founder* of Georgian numismatic studies. Mikhail Barataev authored what surely became one of the most significant milestones in Georgian numismatic research, but he was not the first scholar, who devoted his expertise to Georgian monetary past, let alone Georgian seals.

However, there was yet another scientist, interestingly enough, a Georgian, who also dealt (albeit in a fragmentary way) with the numismatic aspects of Georgian history, and did so at a relatively early stage. That was prince Teimuraz, representative of the royal Georgian dynasty of Bagrat’ioni.

The goal of our article is precisely to focus on the personality and numismatic scholarly heritage of Teimuraz Bagrat’ioni, and to define his role and place in the history of Georgian numismatic studies.

TEIMURAZ BAGRAT’IONI: LIFE STORY

Prince Teimuraz was a son of Giorgi XII, the last king (1798-1800) of the united [east-Georgian] kingdom of Kartl-K’akheti (1744-1801). He was born on 23 April, 1782, in Tbilisi, the capital of the state. His mother was Ketevan Andronik’ashvili,

⁹ Shota Khantadze was the only one to ascribe to Marie Brosset the origination of Georgian numismatics. Хантадзе 1970: 75-77.

¹⁰ Georgian scholars having to live / survive within the USSR were mostly forced or at least induced to limit their linguistic proficiencies to these two languages.

¹¹ For the review of Mikhail Barataev’s work by Brosset (et al.) cf. BROSSET 1846; BROSSET 1847; Устрялов, Дорн, Броссе 1846.

who had become famous for commanding in person her cortege guards in a 1778 battle against outnumbering detachment of Daghestanian pillagers, while travelling to Tbilisi for the wedding.¹²

Prince Teimuraz was mostly reared by his grandfather, the legendary Erekle (Irak'li) II (1744-1798), and educated by Davit Aleksii-Meskhishvili, rector of the Telavi seminary.¹³ Later on, at the age of 13 years, Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni attended the K'rts'anisi battle of 1795, when the Qajar army under Agha Muhammad Khan defeated Georgians and sacked their capital.¹⁴ In 1800 prince Teimuraz married Elene Amilakhvari. The couple has never had children.¹⁵ By the end of the 18th century prince Teimuraz already became involved in governing the state: He was first designated a judge, later an administrator of Kartli.¹⁶

In 1801 the old world of Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni was brought to an end: In violation of 1783 Georgievsk treaty, the east-Georgian Kingdom of Kartl-K'akheti was annexed by the Russian Empire. The family members of the national Georgian royal dynasty were one by one more or less forcibly deported to the inner *guberniyas* of the Empire.¹⁷

Prince Teimuraz decided to join the anti-Russian political-military resistance. He started plotting against Russians already in 1802¹⁸, and later decided to fight them overtly. Later he wrote to his eldest brother Davit, who was ruling Kartl-K'akheti for a brief period in the beginning of 1801, after the demise of their father, Giorgi XII, and should have become a king, if not the Russian annexation, but had already been deported to St. Petersburg: "What can I do, my heart can not bear this disrespect for my family. Some madman to sit in your place and you stay a prisoner – why and for whom? If they want to attract us to themselves, they should make one of our family a king, give us Georgia..."¹⁹ Pretending to leave for the north, Teimuraz fled from Tbilisi on 18 February, abandoning his wife and belongings. However, he was seized by marauding Daghestanians along his way; nevertheless, prince Teimuraz managed to

¹² შარაძე 1972: 8-9.

¹³ Ibid.: 10.

¹⁴ Ibid.: 12.

¹⁵ Ibid.: 12-14.

¹⁶ Ibid.: 13, 15-16.

¹⁷ Ibid.: 16-18.

¹⁸ Ibid.: 21.

¹⁹ "რა ვქნა, ჩემი გული ჩემი ოჯახის ამ უპატიურობას ვერ ითმენს. თქვენს ადგილზედ ერთი ვილაცა გიჟი კაცი იჯდეს და თქვენ ტყვეთ იყვნათ, რათა და ვის გულისათვის. თუ რომ ჩვენი თავიანთთან მიყვანა უნდათ, ერთ-ერთი ჩვენი ოჯახიდან მეფედ დასონ, საქართველო მოგვცენ." Ibid.: 30.

join in Ch'ar-Belakani²⁰ his uncle, prince Aleksandre, who enjoyed a support of local Daghestanians and was trying to rally against Russian yoke the Georgian nobility too. However, Russian army along with Georgian militia (led by general Gulyakov) defeated the princes and their predominantly Daghestanian troops on 9 March. Both Teimuraz and Aleksandre had to flee further to the south, first to Qarabagh, and later to Tabriz, from where they were sent to Tehran, and appeared before Baba-Khan Qajar.²¹

1803 saw the start of Prince Teimuraz's Persian period of life. He joined Qajar army, and fought against Russians in several battles in 1804-1805 and was even severely wounded in 1805.²² Teimuraz's responsibilities were not limited to military service only. He continued his efforts to raise an anti-Russian revolt in eastern Georgia, and went on a diplomatic mission to Akhaltsikhe, in south-western Georgia, occupied by Turks since the 16th-17th centuries, in an attempt to secure support from the Ottoman empire.²³ Later Teimuraz participated in Russian-Persian negotiations in 1809.²⁴ However, Teimuraz built also a successful military career within the ranks of the Qajar army. By 1807-1809 he became a commander of all of Persian artillery, which was re-established on a more or less regular (western) model with the support of the French military mission sent to Iran by Napoleon.²⁵ Prince Teimuraz fought against Russians as Persian military commander also in 1808-1810.

Teimuraz's field service was accompanied by the more theoretical military work: While in Iran he wrote two military manuals.²⁶ Generally speaking, his Persian period of life was quite remarkable also in terms of both personal development and scholarly and cultural work. While in Iran, Teimuraz mastered Persian, Turkish, French and Italian, also seemingly English languages (in addition to Georgian, Armenian and some basic Greek he already knew). Apart from treatises he composed the *Italian-Persian-Turkish Lexicon*; some short poetry, mostly ecclesiastical²⁷; a historical work on the Qajar dynasty and its origins (now, regrettably, lost); he was also translating from Persian.²⁸

²⁰ South-eastern part of K'akheti, occupied by Daghestanians.

²¹ შახსადგ 1972: 18-23.

²² Ibid.: 29-30.

²³ Ibid.: 31.

²⁴ Ibid.: 34.

²⁵ Ibid.: 33

²⁶ Ibid.: 36.

²⁷ Interestingly enough, Teimuraz did not convert to Islam while in Persian, and remained Georgian Orthodox. Ibid.: 36-37.

²⁸ Ibid.: 32, 35-38.

By 1810 Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni became disappointed by the prospects of Georgian cause and / or his personal further stay in Iran. Accompanied by his immediate Georgian retinue, and abandoning his belongings once again, he went over to the Russian side, fleeing from the Persian military camp at Irawan (modern Yerevan, Armenia) on 14 September. On the following day he yielded to the proximate Russian outpost.

Russian authorities accepted the Georgian prince indulgently (two Georgian princes – Aleksandre and Levani were still staying with Persians, and it was of some significance not to antagonate them unnecessarily²⁹). Teimuraz was sent back to Tbilisi and joined his wife. He was given some allowance of 300 silver roubles per month as well as one-time grant of 200 roubles to purchase necessary luggage.³⁰ Russian authorities were planning to persuade prince Teimuraz to leave Georgia for St. Petersburg, but he seemingly sensed there was no other choice himself; on 4 October of 1810 prince Teimuraz asked for permission to do this, and left³¹ Georgia forever.³²

The trip took up to 3 months³³. Prince Teimuraz and his retinue arrived to St. Petersburg in January 1811 and were immediately shown much consideration by the Russian emperor: Teimuraz was given an audience, as well as Order of St. Anna, 1st class, and 150,000 roubles. Family and retinue members were granted variously as well.³⁴ Later on, prince Teimuraz was still in attendance of the Russian imperial family, and had particularly good relationship with emperor Nicholas I.³⁵

Ever since 1811 prince Teimuraz lived in St. Petersburg, the capital of the empire now incorporating his motherland (except for a short trip to European resorts in 1836³⁶).

He settled on the Vasilyevski island in a house purchased with granted money³⁷ and devoted all of his life to organisational, literary and scholarly work to the benefit of cultural progress in Georgia and elsewhere.

²⁹ Ibid.: 40.

³⁰ Ibid.: 40-41, 45.

³¹ The trip was sponsored by the Russian authorities: Teimuraz was given 4,500 roubles in banknotes (rate of rouble in silver or in banknotes was different). Ibid.: 46.

³² Ibid.: 46-49.

³³ His travel diary *Trip from Tiflis to St. Petersburg* constitutes a remarkable example of the early 19th c. Georgian travelogues. Ibid.: 50-51.

³⁴ Ibid.: 51-55.

³⁵ Ibid.: 61.

³⁶ Ibid.: 127-136.

³⁷ Later the prince had to sell it and rent another one to live in because of financial hardship. Ibid.: 55-59.

It would not be inappropriate to review prince Teimuraz's activities in St. Petersburg. Firstly, one has to say that he became one of the major cores of attraction for the local Georgian diaspora, as well as a focus of Kartvelian (Georgian) Studies in this Russian city: Teimuraz set up a Georgian church in St. Petersburg, with all public worship in Georgian language³⁸; patronized the young Georgians studying in St. Petersburg, of which we have to name Plat'on Ioseliani³⁹, Davit Chubinashvili⁴⁰ and Solomon Dodashvili⁴¹, who became prominent figures in the proximate years⁴², facilitated and stimulated Kartvelological activities of Marie Brosset,⁴³ translated into Georgian works by Aristotle, Cicero, Voltaire, Napoleon, Pushkin etc.,⁴⁴ collected Georgian folk materials⁴⁵, also Georgian manuscripts and sponsored their copying; even copied some of them personally⁴⁶, organized and sponsored the casting of the Georgian type created by himself in France, and authored work on the origins of Georgian alphabet,⁴⁷ Prince Teimuraz also composed historical and lexicographical works,⁴⁸ short poetry as well as a poem, and a play⁴⁹.

Prince Teimuraz's cultural and scholarly achievements were acknowledged by his election to the Russian Byblical Society (1814), Société Asiatique, Paris (1831), Russian (St. Petersburg) Academy of Sciences (1837), French or Russian Academy of Free Arts (1837), Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift Selskab (Denmark) (1844).⁵⁰

Prince Teimuraz expired in St. Petersburg on 25 October 1846, from dropsy.⁵¹

³⁸ Ibid.: 64-71.

³⁹ Publisher, editor, historian, philologist (1809-1875). "The history of kings has to be written by a king" – used to tell me Teimuraz, son of a king. This saying has its idea, power and significance.", recalled Plat'on Ioseliani. „მეფეთა ისტორია, მეფემან უნდა ჰსწეროსო, – ხშირად მეტყოდა მეფის ძე თეიმურაზ. თქმასა ამას აქუს თავისი ჰაზრი, ძალი და მნიშვნელობა“. Ibid.: 92.

⁴⁰ Lexicographer, philologist, established a department of Georgian language and literature at the St. Petersburg University (1814-1891).

⁴¹ Editor and philologist, one of the leaders of the 1832 anti-Russian plot; was imprisoned and died in deportation (1805-1836).

⁴² Ibid.: 92-95, 103.

⁴³ Ibid.: 104-118; Буачидзе 1983: 51-65; Хангадзе 1970: 75-77.

⁴⁴ შარაძე 1972: 72-73, 136-137; შარაძე 1974: 147-192.

⁴⁵ შარაძე 1972: 382; შარაძე 1974: 6-18.

⁴⁶ შარაძე 1972: 137.

⁴⁷ Ibid.: 118-127; Буачидзе 1983: 82-88.

⁴⁸ შარაძე 1972: 137; შარაძე 1974: 211-256.

⁴⁹ შარაძე 1972: 137; შარაძე 1974: 193-210.

⁵⁰ შარაძე 1972: 138-141.

⁵¹ Ibid.: 141-147.

TEIMURAZ BAGRAT’IONI: SCHOLARLY NUMISMATIC HERITAGE

Prince Teimuraz’s historical interests extended also to numismatics and sphragistics. He did not write much on these issues, but was certainly knowledgeable person with enough data for review and scholarly capacity to do this.

Teimuraz’s numismatic heritage is limited to his letters sent to Marie Brosset, who used to consider himself an apprentice of the expatriate Georgian prince: The correspondence between the two was very active and the surviving letters constitute one of the major sources on the history of Kartvelian (Georgian) studies in the 1st half of the 19th century.⁵²

One of the lengthy letters of prince Teymuraz (dated 1834, i.e. 10 years prior to the publication of prince Barataev’s book)⁵³ is devoted to the coinage of Kartl-K’akheti, as well as foreign currencies circulating within this Georgian state, and to the local units of measure. This information constituted the basis for one of the best numismatic works published by Marie Brosset in the 1830s. Specifically, prince Teimuraz reviewed (and clarified to M. Brosset) the monetary terms employed in the body of laws by king Vakht’ang VI; discussed in detail the “money weights”⁵⁴ and various denominations (being minted and circulating in eastern Georgia in the 17th-18th centuries); provided extremely valuable and very precise information on the monetary situation in the kingdom of Kartl-K’akheti, established and ruled by his great grandfather and grandfather, including the minting of gold, silver and copper coinage, as well as foreign coins circulating within the kingdom; reviewed the numerical system based on the letters of Georgian alphabet, employed by Georgian merchants in the 18th and even early 19th centuries to write down various sums; in addition, he provided detailed information on the local units of weight, volume and length.⁵⁵

Certainly, the data indicated in prince Teymuraz’s essay were not always precise. For instance, he claimed that no national gold coinage was minted in Kartl-K’akheti kingdom: “Whatever gold arrived from Georgian mines, our kings did not make it be minted... as it was pure and good gold, merchants purchased it at a high price, traded some to European and some to Asian lands, and had profit themselves and our kings and their fisc also had more profit this way, than they would have had by minting it and selling as such”.⁵⁶ However, we have proved that the so called *gold shauris* were

⁵² ბაგრატონი 1964.

⁵³ Ibid.: 38-50.

⁵⁴ „საფასეთა საწონნი“. Ibid.: 40.

⁵⁵ Ibid.: 39-47.

⁵⁶ „რაც ოქრო საქართველოს მადნებიდამ შემოდიოდა, იმას ჩვენი მეფეები არ აჭრევიებდნენ... უფრო წმინდა და კარგი ოქრო რომ იყო, ვაჭრები ძვირად ყიდულობდნენ,

issued in Tbilisi at least since 1783.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, generally, prince Teimuraz's letter constitutes an excellent and reliable primary source on the above-said issues. It is a significant work not only in terms of Georgian numismatic history, but also history of Georgian numismatic thought.

No wonder, that Marie Brosset made good use of it, translating prince Teimuraz's letter into French and publishing it in an almost unaltered form, "*avec des éclaircissement*" in the following (1835) year: *Dissertation sur les monnaies géorgiennes, traduite d'une lettre du prince Théimouraz avec des éclaircissement*.⁵⁸

90 years later, in 1925, the major part of prince Teimuraz's essay was published as such by Sargis K'ak'abadze⁵⁹, prominent Georgian historian and numismatist, who also made an attempt to analyze the scholarly value of this essay and its historical significance.⁶⁰

In 1964 the abovesaid letter by Teimuraz was published in full by Solomon Qubaneishvili, along with the rest of Teimuraz's correspondence addressed to Marie Brosset.⁶¹

In addition to studying the numismatics, prince Teimuraz was also the first Georgian scholar who paid scholarly attention to *Georgian sphragistic heritage* as well.

A collection of Georgian seals (seal imprints) of various representatives of the royal family as well as officials has been mentioned by Ana Bakradze.⁶² It is not quite clear when they were collected precisely, and who did this, but the collection was not reviewed in any way, and constituted a mere assemblage.⁶³

However, prince Teimuraz tackled Georgian seals in a scholarly way in yet another of his letters to Marie Brosset, sent in January 1832⁶⁴, which essentially constitutes a short essay on the subject of Georgian sphragistics. Marie Brosset had examined the Vakht'ang VI's seal on a letter sent to Louis XIV of France, but could not read

ზოგი ევროპის მხარესა და ზოგს აზიის მხარეს ავაჭრებდნენ და თითონაც სარგებლობა ჰქონდათ და მეფეთა ჩვენთა და მათს ხაზინას უფრო სარგებლობა ჰქონდათ ამითი, ვინემ რომ მოეჭრათ და ისე გაეყიდნათ“. Ibid.: 42.

⁵⁷ ფაღავა, ბიჭიკაშვილი, ჩაგუნავა 2014.

⁵⁸ BROSSET 1835.

⁵⁹ Sargis Kakabadze found this letter (?) in Marie Brosset's belongings in the Asiatic Museum back in 1907. კაკაბაძე 1925: 31. The publisher considered that the letter was composed in about 1840 (was not the letter dated?). Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.: 31, 35,

⁶¹ ბაგრატიონი 1964: 38-50.

⁶² ბაქრაძე 1978: 4.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ ბაგრატიონი 1964: 13-20.

/ understand the legend, and approached prince Teimuraz asking for clarification.⁶⁵ The latter responded, explaining that the legend constituted a calembour, and clarified its meaning. In addition, Georgian prince discussed more Georgian seals, providing more instances of puns employed; specifically, he discussed the seals of his great grandfather and grandfather, Teimuraz II (1709-1715, 1733-1762) and Erekle (Irak'li) II (1744-1798).

Teimuraz II's seal was furnished with the following legend⁶⁶:

„უფლისად მიერ მეფედ ცხებული თეიმურაზის დამტკიცებული”

“uplisa mier meped tskebuli teimuraz zis damt'k'itsebuli”

The first 4 words mean

“By Lord as King anointed”

while the second may be read either as “Teimurazis damt'k'itsebuli” – “*approved by Teimuraz*”, or, if we divide “Teimurazis” into two words and add one more “z”, “Teimuraz zis damt'k'itsebuli” – “*Teimuraz sits [on a throne] approved*”, so the seal legend could be read either as

1. “*Approved by Teimuraz, by Lord as king anointed*”, referring to the document, approved by king's seal.

or, as

2. “*By Lord as king anointed – Teimuraz sits [on a throne] approved*”, referring exclusively to the monarch.

The seal of Erekle II displays already a *triple* pun, albeit somewhat strained:

„მე ფერხთ განბანილთა მი-
ერ ეკლესია ვადიდე”

“me perkht ganbanilta mi-
er ek'k'lesia vadide”

⁶⁵ შარაძე 1972: 108-109.

⁶⁶ ბაქრაძე 1978: 41, #78, plate III, ##20-21.

The legend can be read in several ways:

1. As written – “*me perkht ganbanilta mier ek’k’lesia vadide*” – “*I exalted the Church by (?) the feet-abluted [i.e. the apostles’]*”, referring to the Church only;
2. Eliminating the particle “*mi-*” and joining the first two words of the second fragment – “*me perkht ganbanilta [mi] er-ek’k’lesia vadide*” – “*I exalted the Nation and Church of the feet-abluted [i.e. the apostles’]*”, referring to the Georgian nation and Church;
3. Joining the first two words of the first line, but eliminating the second / last syllable of the second word as well as the rest of the text in the first line, and joining the first two words of the second fragment, but in a different way – “*mepe r~~kht~~ ganbanilta mi Ere k’k’lesia[,] vadide*” – “*King Ere k’le’s, I exalted him*”, referring to the document approved by the king by applying his seal, and simultaneously eulogizing the king.

Prince Teimuraz also provided an instance of medieval Georgian seal (of Davit IV Aghmashenebeli⁶⁷) without any calembour:

„ჯვართა მტერთა მძლეველი
მე დავით ვარ უძლეველი”

“jvarita mt’erta mdzleveli
me davit var udzleveli”

“With Cross the enemies defeating
I Davit am undefeatable”

Last, but not least, prince Teimuraz provided both early 13th and 17th-18th centuries literary parallels to the calembours employed in the Georgian seal legends.⁶⁸

We would employ an opportunity to express our idea, that Georgian sphragistic puns were somewhat strained in some cases, and even looked unnatural in terms of Georgian language even then, let alone the modern Georgian. Notwithstanding the natural influence of the ploys employed in Georgian poetry, we consider that the Georgian sphragistic formulary was also heavily influenced by the Persian versicular seal and monetary legends. It would not be inappropriate to mention that Georgian kings employed the seals with exclusively Persian legends too, and started doing so quite early; for instance, we know the 16th century Georgian seals of the kings of

⁶⁷ For a discussion on attribution of this seal cf. შარაძე 1974: 69-70.

⁶⁸ ზაგრატიონი 1964: 17-20.

Kartli and K'akheti, both with Persian legends (verses of Hafez).⁶⁹ Teimuraz also found it necessary to point out similarity of the Persian approach to this issue: "There was a custom on the seals of the kings of Georgia: Some verses were written in a regular way, and some as a riddle... the same custom have also the Persians, who describe something on their seals poetically, according to their customs, and something correspondingly as a riddle and verse"⁷⁰

M. Brosset translated prince Teimuraz's notes and published them along with some additional data on Georgian seals ("Sur le cachets géorgiens, avec l'extrait d'une lettre de Prince royal Théimouraz"), as part of his bigger work ("*Additions au Mémoire sur les documens originaux concernant la Géorgie (Journ. asiat. Mars, Avril, Mai 1832)*") in the same year.⁷¹ Interestingly enough, the personal seal of prince Teimuraz was also reviewed in the same work ("Armoiries du prince Théimouraz, servant de cachet, servant à une lettre que ce prince nous a écrite a mois d'âout 1830").⁷² Later, in 1838, M. Brosset reverted to Georgian seals once again in his *Monographie Géorgienne de Moscou*.⁷³

TEIMURAZ BAGRAT'IONI: FOUNDER OF GEORGIAN NUMISMATIC STUDIES

By means of a somewhat lengthy conclusion we would state that prince Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni was certainly not the most prolific writer in the area of Georgian numismatic and sphragistic history. All of his heritage in this field is certainly limited to just two letters to Marie Brosset, yet another prominent Kartvelologist of the time. And we have to acknowledge that Teimuraz's essays were actually inspired by Brosset's inquiries. Nevertheless, as far as it regards the precedence issue, prince Teimuraz was the first Georgian, and even seemingly generally the first scholar to review the Georgian coins and seals.

Certainly, prince Teimuraz's scholarly contribution "published" by means of personal letters to Marie Brosset was overshadowed by the scientific publications of the

⁶⁹ BERADZE 2013.

⁷⁰ „საქართველოს მეფეების ბეჭდებზედ ჩვეულება იყო: შესაბამს რასმე ლექსსა დასწერდნენ წყობილად და რომელსამე გამოცანით ... ესევე ჩვეულება აქვსთ სპარსთაცა, რომელნიცა ბეჭედთა თვსთა ზედა აღსწერენ ლექსთა რათამე, ჩვეულებათამებრ მათთა, რომელსა შესაბამად გამოცანად და ლექსად“. ბაგრატიონი 1964: 15.

⁷¹ BROSSET 1832: 177-190.

⁷² Ibid.: 185-188. For the seals of prince Teimuraz cf. შარაძე 1972: 152; ბაქრაძე 1978: 41, ##79-80.

⁷³ BROSSET 1838: 294-302.

latter. Marie Brosset always acknowledged the source of his information in either the title or subtitle of his articles, but never bylined prince Teimuraz.⁷⁴ And certainly Marie Brosset led the Georgian numismatic and sphragistic research much further that it had been done by prince Teimuraz, even before the publication of prince Barataev's treatise in 1844. Perhaps this accounts for the almost complete oblivion of the contribution made by the representative of Georgian royal dynasty to the numismatic and sphragistic research of Georgian history. Solomon Qubaneishvili published the corresponding letters of Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni, but did not underline the significance of their contents. However, already in 1925 Sargis K'ak'abadze acknowledged Teimuraz's input, as did Guram Sharadze.⁷⁵ Sargis K'ak'abadze even realized, that Teimuraz's letter was "chronologically the first essay" on Georgian coinage.⁷⁶ However, regretfully, as we have already seen above, K'ak'abadze's explicit indication was forgotten.

Its out debt of gratitude and appreciation, to reevaluate prince Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni's accomplishments and service he did to the Georgian numismatics research. Numismatic history encompasses the history of numismatic research too. Now we know that the history of Georgian numismatic research started with Teimuraz Bagrat'ioni, son of a king.

⁷⁴ Which seems to be a questionable approach to cooperation with fellow scholar, at least in terms of modern scientific ethics. Albeit, we have to say that prince Teimuraz himself was evidently happy with what happened with the information with which he supplied Marie Brosset – their friendly correspondence lasted till the very last year of Teimuraz's life. Cf. ზაგრატიონი 1964. We fully agree with Guram Sharadze's approach, who listed the corresponding articles by Marie Brosset among the publications of prince Teimuraz. შარაძე 1972: 153-154.

⁷⁵ კაკაბაძე 1925: 31, 35; შარაძე 1972: 5, 108-109.

⁷⁶ კაკაბაძე 1925: 31.

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