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## **NEW MATERIALS ABOUT CHORCHANELI AND KHURTSIDZE FEUDAL FAMILIES (GEORGIAN LAPIDARY INSCRIPTIONS OF UDE CHURCH; AGAPE SYNODIKONS OF JERUSALEM AND SAINT CATHERINE'S MONASTERIES)**

The village Ude is located in the historical Samtskhe, Adigeni region, in the valley of Kvabliani. A large Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God is erected in the center of the village (picture 1.)

In 1886 Praskovya Uvarova referred to the Basilica church instead of the Catholic church. During his trip to Samtskhe - Javakheti in 1932-1933, Giorgi Botchoridze added the following about the Ude church: "in the old times there was an old building (church) in the place of the present (a big new) Church of the Mother of God. The material of the old church was used for the new one"<sup>2</sup>. The opinion of Giorgi Botchoridze was once again documented last summer, when we visited the Ude Church of the Mother of God within the framework of the project (The historical and cultural monuments of Samtskhe region) financed by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia. We paid attention to the fragment of the stone with the inscription on it, located at the bottom of the pilaster in the interior of the cathedral (picture 2-3).

Archeographic description of the text is as follows:

The inscription is engraved on dark grey stone; the size of the stone: 47 X 75 cm.; the area of the inscription: 13 X 75; asomtavruli (old Georgian writing system); 1 line; the size of the largest grapheme: a (the 7<sup>th</sup> grapheme of the 1<sup>st</sup> line) - 7,5 X 5,8 cm.; the size of the least grapheme: s (the 4<sup>th</sup>

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1 This research [grant number HE-21-1739] has been supported by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG).

2. Giorgi Botchoridze, *Traveling in Samtskhe-Javakheti*, text was prepared for publication, notes and references and an introduction were added by: D. Berdzenishvili, L. Melikishvili, L. Khutsishvili (Tbilisi, 1992), 64-65.



(Pic. 1) Church of Our Lady of Ude (photo by Giorgi Maghradze)

grapheme of the 1<sup>st</sup> line) - 5,2 X 2,8.; no signs of განკვეთილობა is used in the inscription; A figurative image of two triangular shapes or straight diametrical line with quadrangular figures at the both end is used. The beginning and ending of the inscription is missing.

os~ne s~l sa f r ~smnsa]

The following can be clearly read on the survived part: „---უსნე სლსა ფრსმნსა...“, which can be read as: „[უ(ფალ)ო, გ(ან(უ))ს(უ)ენე ს(უ)ლსა ფ(ა)რსმ(ა)ნ(ის)სა...“ (“rest in peace, GOD, the soul of Pharasmanes ...”)

While speaking to the head of the temple archimandrite Grigol (Qurt-sikidze) , we found out that due to damage to the roof (2018-2019), water was entering the temple and the layer daubed by the Catholics in the beginning of the XX century started to tear down. As a result of the damage, the inscribed stone appeared at the bottom of one of the pillars of the northern wall of the church. It was obvious that the inscribed stone had been used for the secondary purposes.

The name Pharasmanes leads us to the name Pharasmanes which was spread among the members of the Chorchaneli feudal family and it also reminds us of the lordship of the Chorchaneli aristocratic family in this area. In this regard, the stone-pillar at the left door of the church, which was discovered by the head of the Moscow archeological expedition Praskovya Uvarova , is very interesting. Later in 1932-1933 it was described thoroughly by Giorgi Botchoridze. The researcher gave accent to the in-

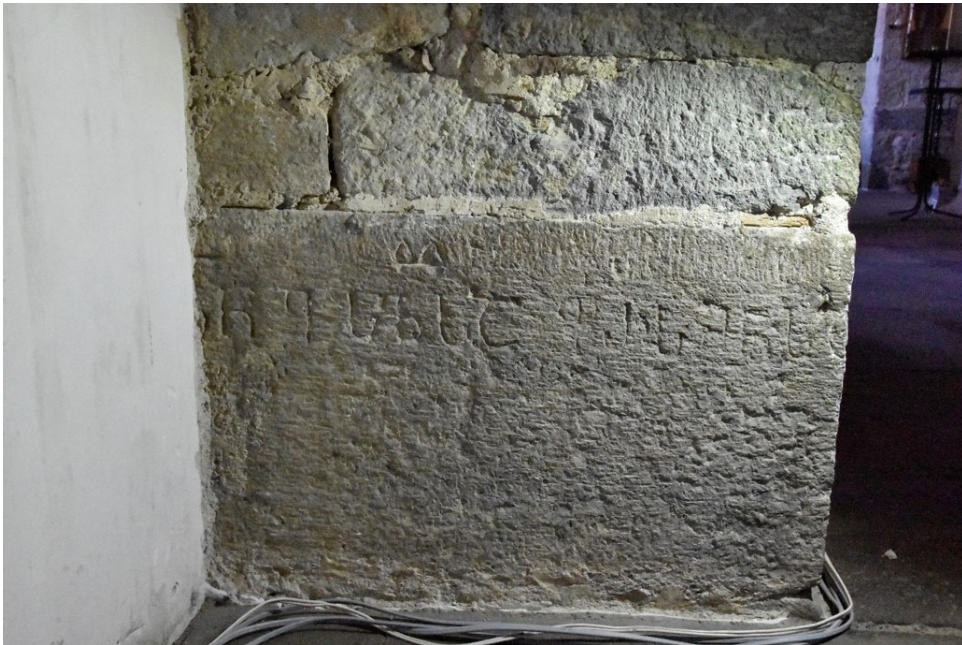
scriptions on the stone-pillar which are often cited in Georgian scientific literature. We can chronologically discuss the study of the history of inscribed stone.

The first historian, who read the inscription that was interesting for us, was Giorgi Botchoridze. The scientist dates the inscription back to the first half of the VI century and reads it as follows:

„წმიდაო ღვთის მშობელი დედაო ღვთისაო მიოხე ბასილევს მეფე ფარსმანის და სულსა მანანაისა ესეც გაბრიელ ანგელოზი ეტყვის ? გობრონის მიმა“.

Lela Shanidze offers to read the inscription in a different, new way: : „ღვთისმშობელი. დედაო ღვთისაო, მეოხ ეყავ სულსა ... ფარსმანისსა და სულსა მანანაისი. ესე არს გაბრიელ ანგელოზი, ეტყვის: გიხაროდენ, მიმადლებულო“.

Lela Shanidze dates the stela of Ude to X-XI centuries. She cites Pharsmaneus Tmogveli from the written documents, mentioned in the Georgian Chronicles, who was the contemporary of Vakhtang VI; she also mentions the builder of Satkhe Church - Pharsmaneus and the name Pharsmaneus carved on the სამწერობელი of Zarzma in the beginning of the XI century. She avoids identifying the name Pharsmaneus mentioned in the sources with the name Pharsmaneus carved in the inscription of the stela of Ude.



(Pic. 2) Inscription of Farsman Chorchaneli from the Church of the Virgin of Ude from the X-XI centuries



(Pic. 3) Inscription of Farsman Chorchanel from the middle of the X-XI centuries, a fragment from the Church of the Mother of God in Ude

Nodar Shoshiashvili's reading of the Ude inscription is given in Volume I of the corpus of Georgian inscriptions:

„[წ(მიდა)ო ღ(მრ)თ(ი)]მშ(ო)ბ(ე)[ლო] | მ(არია)მ, | დ(ე)დ(ა)ო ღ(მრ)თ(ი)ს(ა)ო, მ(ე)ოხ (ე)ყ(ავ) ს(უ)ლს|ა ფ(ა)რსმ(ა)ნის | და ს(უ)ლსა | მანანისა. | ესეა გ(ა)ბრ(ი)ელ - ან|გ(ელო)ზ]ისგან მ(ა)მ(ა)ა“.

The historian dates the inscription back to the X century and he regards Pharsmaneus mentioned in the inscription as the noble of Javakheti.

It must be mentioned here, that Valeri Silogava tried to read the inscription in a new way: „წმიდაო ღმრთისმშობელო მარიამ, დედაო ღმრთისაო, მეოხ ეყავ სულსა ფარსმანისა და სულსა მანანისა. ესე არს გაბრიელ ანგელოზი, რომელი ეტყვს: „გიხაროდენ, მიმადლებულო“.

According to paleographic signs V. Silogava initially considered the inscription as the monument of the XI century; And Pharsmaneus mentioned in the inscription - as the member of the Chorchaneli feudal family. Later the researcher identified Pharsmaneus mentioned in the inscription to Pharsmaneus Eristavi who lived at the end of the X century. Like Lela Shanidze, V. Silogava defined the chronology of the inscription at the turn of X-XI centuries.

We fully share the opinions of previous scholars regarding the dates of the inscription and trace it back to the turn of X-XI centuries. Pharsmaneus mentioned in the inscription might be living in this period. If our version



(Pic. 4) Church of Saint Nino of Ude (photo by Giorgi Maghradze)

of reading the inscription is right („[უ(ფაღ)ო, გან(უ)ს(უე)]ნე ს(უ)ლსა ფ(ა)რსმ(ა)ნ(ი)ს(ს)ა...“), then it turns out, that at the date of X-XI centuries while making the inscription, Pharsmanus Chorchaneli had already been died. Due to the fragmentary nature of the inscription, it's difficult to say exactly which Pharsmanus of Chorchaneli feudal family should we refer to in a newly discovered inscription. But if we compare the outline of the stella of Ude and the pray inscription, which we have found to each other, then based on their similarity we can assume, that Pharsmanus mentioned in both of them must be the same person.

In 1932-1933 Giorgi Botchoridze saw the inscribed stone at the Ude cemetery and he put it in the yard of Virgin Mary church. The researcher gives us the archeographic description of the inscription, rewritten by the original letters and his version of reading:

„ქრისტე, წმიდამ ეკლესიამ მოიხსენე სულითა პეტრე“.

In 1987 David Berdzenishvili found the interesting inscription in the peribolos of Ude Saint Nino church (Picture 4, 5). He rewrote it and took a photo of it. This material is preserved in his private archive.

Valeri Silogava reads the inscription in the following way: „ქ წმიდამ ეკლესიამ, მეობ [ეყავ] სულსა პატარი[სასა]“, and dates it back to X century.

In our opinion, the inscription must be read in this way:

q. wd-o eks-o mox | sl ~a p-tr i -- ანუ „q. წ(მი)დ(ა)ო ეკ(ლე)ს(ია)

ო, მო{ი}ხ[სენე] | ს(უ)ლა პ(ა)ტრი[კი]“.

We fully agree with the dating of Valeri Silogava and determine the chronology of the inscription by the X century. Like the previous inscription, here Sula Patrick - another representative of the Chorchaneli feudal family - must be mentioned as well. We consider that Sula Patrick mentioned in the inscription may be identified with the father of Jovane - Sula - mentioned in the inscription of Zarzma near 980. According to the inscription of St. Nino church of Ude he held one of the most honorary military ranks of Patrick at the door of the Byzantine Empire.

It's a well-known fact that the Khurtsidze family is one of the family branches of the Chorchaneli feudal family. The list of Samtskhe princes of the XVI century informs us that the estate of Eristavteristav Chorchaneli belonged to Khurtsidze. The names common in the Chorchaneli feudal family also moved to the Chorchaneli feudal family: Sula, Giorgi, Pharasmanes and et al. The construction inscription (1577) of Pharasmanes Khurtsidze in the Zarzma church of John the Apostle is the clear proof of it. This inscription has been published several times in Georgian scientific literature (M. Brosset, D. Bakradze, Eq.Takaishvili, S. Kakabadze, G. Botchoridze, V. Beridze, V. Silogava). We represent here the latest edition (with minor corrections):

„ქ. აღეშ(ენა წ(მიდა)ჲ ესე ეკ(ლე)ს(ია)ჲ | ს(ა)ხელსა ზ(ედ)ა წ(მიდ)ისა ი(ოვან)ე მ(ა)ხ(არე)ბლისასა, ნ(ე)ბითა ღ(მრო)თისა(დ)ითა და ბრძან(ე)ბითა ყ(ოველ)ს(ა) ქ(უე)ყ(ა)ნასა | ს(ა)ხელგ(ა)ნთქ(უ)მ(უ)ლისა, ა(გარი)ანთა პირისა დამყოფ(ე)ლისა, ხ(ერ)ც(ი)ძისა პ(ატრო)ნისა ფ(არ)ს(მა)ნისითა; ს(ულ)სა მისსა გ(ა)ნ(უ)ს(უ)ნ(ე)დ და შ(ეუნდო)ს ღ(მერთმა)ნ; მლ(უ)დ(ელ)თ(მთ)ავ(ა)რთ მთ(ავრო)ბასა ხ(ერ)ც(ი)ძისა პ(ატრო)ნის | მ(ა)წყ(უერელ)ისა ს(ერა)პ(იო)ნისსა. ქ(რონი)კ(ონ)ს სჲ“.

The last publisher of the inscription - Valeri Silogava - paid attention to the fact that the king and the prince of Samtskhe was not mentioned and he expressed the opinion that this might be explained by the oppositional attitude; he adds: “Pharasmanes Khurtsidze is described as “ყოველსა ქუეყანასა სახელგანთქემული” (famous of all) and აგარიანთა პირის დამყოფელი~(the one who silenced Agarians). In general, Agareani/Agariani means the follower of the Muslim faith, and ‘პირის-დაყოფა’ meant “to silence”, defeating them in the theological debate. It is not clear what Pharasmanes Khurtsidze meant in silencing Muslims. This expression might mean an exceptionally active struggle of Pharasmanes against the Muslims, the conquerors of the country. May be that's why he was known as the “ყოველსა ქუეყანასა სახელგანთქემული” (famous of all).

Tedo Jordania was the first historian to define the date of the inscription of Zarzma John the Apostle Church to 1577. But the scientist didn't

give any arguments on the basis of which he dated the inscription back to 1577. Dimitri Gordeev fully shared the dating of T. Jordania.

Unlike Tedo Jordania, Sargis Kapanadze solved the issue differently in his work published in 1920 - "Ioseb Matchutadze - the Unknown Catholicate of Abkhazia of the XVI Century ". The researcher found out the political orientation of the persons mentioned in the inscription based on one of the agape inscriptions rewritten by Ivane Javakhishvili.

Sinai agape can be read as follows:

„საუღასა ზარაზმსა წინამოადღარასა ჯაურაციძესა საერაპიონსა ღამერათამნა შეუნდოსა. მაჭაურაძესა ქართალიკოვზა იოსაებასა ღამერათამნა შეუნადნაესა. რასათაენი საქართაველადაღამნ სამალაცველო ჯემითა ჯელითა ამომივიდა ყოვაველათავე ღამერათმნა: შეუდოსა“.

According to agape, the head of Zarzma Serapion Khurtsidze together with the catholicate of Abkhazia Ioseb Matchutadze had provided for the donation of Saint Catherine Church of Sinai. S. Kakabadze properly associates the head of Zarzma Serapion Khurtsidze mentioned here with the father Serapion depicted in the fresco of the same church. Thus, he believes that Serapion Khurtsidze, head of Zarzma, mentioned in Sinai agape must be depicted on the northern fresco of the main church of Zarzma with the inscription on it: "Father Serapion". The king Bagrat, awarding deeds and Politsa to Serapion Khurtsidze is also depicted on the fresco. As it is known, Ekvtime Takaishvili considered historical portraits depicted here - the king Bagrat and father Serapion bowed before him as the figures of the XI century. Sergis Kakabadze pays attention to the important circumstances - considering the Khurtsidze family as the descendants of the Chorchaneli family. Furthermore, the historian pays attention to Serapion Khurtsidze of Matskveri mentioned in the inscription of Zarzma church of John the Apostle. Ekvtime Takaishvili dated the last chronicler „სღე“ in the inscription to the XIII year after Christ (მე-13 მოქცევა) and, accordingly, determined the date of the inscription as 1045. S. Kakabadze regarded that the inscription should be dated to the XIV century AD (მოქცევა) and, therefore, dates the inscription to 1577. Here his reasoning seems to be contradicted by the deed of 1572, issued by Vakhtang Gurieli. We learn from the deed that by that time Ottomans had destroyed the Zarzma monastery and hence the sanctities of Zarzma monastery were moved to Shemokmedi monastery. The scientist correctly thinks that christianity had been persecuted in Samtskhe-Saatabago and this historical-geographical province was emptied much later, in particular, in 1578, "when Dedisimedi and her son Kvarkvare (heads of Samtskhe - T. G. ) were forced to surrender to the Ottomans". Taking the fact into consideration, the researcher assumes that the king depicted here can only be the king Bagrat III of Imereti. Based on other written materials the king



(Pic. 5) Sula Patrick's prayer inscription from St. Nino's Church in Ude (Devi Berdzenishvili)

Bagrat III owned Samtskhe in 1535-1545. Also the researcher considers the Catholic Ioseb Matchutadze to be the ruler of Abkhazia and places his work between Abkhazian Catholics Malakia Abashidze and Evdemon Chkhetidze and that is the reason why he dates his work and the Sinai agape to 1540-1550. S. Kakabadze has an opinion that, “the beginning of the work of the head of Zarzma, Serapion Khurtsidze, as the head of Zarzma Monastery can be attributed to the time when Bagrat III owned Samtskhe-Saatabago”. Vakhtang Beridze believes that the opinion expressed by S. Kakabadze about the king Bagrat and father Serapion depicted on the north wall of the temple is correct.

We consider that another Juresalim agape 244 (M-239) should be related to the same Serapion Khurtsidze; We read the following in the agape: „[თუესა მაისსა კე]. ჩ(უე)ნ, ჯ(უარ)ისა მ(ამა)მ(ა)ნ მ(ო)ძღუარმ(ა)ნ და სრულად მონასტერმ(ა)ნ, გაუჩინეთ მაისსა ოცდახუთსა ალაპი საუკუნო ხურსისძესა სულა-ყოფილსა სერაპიონს. ც(ო)დვანი მ(ა)თნი შეუნდვენ. ღმერთო. მოგუივიდა ას ოცი ფლორი ვენეტიკური, გამათავებელ[ნი აკურთხეს ღმერთმან, ან]“.

According to the publisher of agape, Elene Metreveli, agape should be dated back to the XV century; the researcher leaves the question of the identification of Sula - former Serapion Khursidze mentioned in agape open.

In case, our reasoning is correct, it turns out that agape was estab-



lished for Serapion mentioned in the 1577 construction inscription of Zarzma. Before becoming the head of Zarzma and then the head of Atskuri Eparchy, Serapion led secular life under the name Sula. After becoming a monk, his church name became Serapion.

As mentioned in the text of agape, Sula former Serapion Khurtsidze had donated 120 florin to the monastery of the Cross of Jerusalem; in return, the head of Jvari monastery and the assembly had established agape after his name on 25<sup>th</sup> of May. Unlike Elene Metreveli, we date the agape back to XVI century instead of XV, more specifically to the period before appointing Serapion to the head of Zarzma by the king Bagrat III - the second half of 1520s and the beginning of 1530s.

We can read the following in the book of devotion (1427-1438) of Serapion Matskvereli to Theodore the Catholic of Georgia: „...ესე წიგნი გკადრეთ და მოგაწსენეთ თქუნ, ... ქ(ართლი)სა კ(ათალიკო)ზსა თე(ოდორე)ს მე, მანყუერელი მთავარეპისკოპოზმან სერაპიონ, მას ჟამსა, ოდეს მანყუერელობა მიბოძეთ და მაკურთხე[თ] და მე ესე საერთგულო წიგნი მოგაწსენე .... (“...I, the Archbishop of Matskuri, Serapion has brought this book to you - the Catholic of Kartli Theodore as you honored me with the title of Matskureli and blessed me and I, myself, brought this devotion book to you. ..”)

Although it's not stated in the documents specifically of which family representative bishop Serapion was but if we connect the name Serapion and Khurtsidze family to Zarzma monastery, we can assume, that the devotion book of 1427-1438 to the Catholic of Kartli was brought by the representative of Khurtsidze family - Serapion Khurtsidze of Matskveri.