

THE KAKHETI-HERETI EXPEDITIONS OF GIORGI BOCHORIDZE

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Abstract. The topic concerns the great Georgian scientist, one of the founders of the National Archives, a prominent representative of our historical society, a repressed scientist Giorgi Bochoridze, and the expeditions he conducted in Kakheti and Hereti.

Giorgi Bochoridze was Ivane Javakhishvili's best student, who formed him as a historian, scientist-researcher, and mastered epigraphy, ethnography, and art history, which played an important role in his later life.

As soon as he started working at the Central Archives in the twenties, he began to organize scattered historical sources, managed to transfer unprotected and neglected written sources in various agencies to the Central Archives, and bring them into scientific order. This was an extremely laborious task. As we read in his biography, in 1922-1923, he brought to the Central Archive the most interesting archives from 23 institutions, vital to national history. Under his direct leadership and participation, the archives returned from Russia, which were transferred from the Tbilisi Central Railway Station and preserved in the National Archive: 4 wagons from Krasnodar, 7 wagons from Stavropol, 1 wagon from the Caucasus. He described more than 30 churches, chapels, book depositories and archives in the capital.

After arranging such difficult matters in the capital, he decided to use his knowledge and experience in the regions of Georgia. In 1923-1936, he traveled to Racha-Lechkhumi, Kakheti, Imereti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Saingilo, Kartli. He studied and described historical, material monuments, epigraphic inscriptions from various parts of the country, and collected ethnographic material scattered among the people. He described many churches that no one had seen before, but which were destroyed over time due to neglect.

In the nineties of the last century, a description of the historical monuments of Tusheti, Racha-Lechkhumi, Imereti, and in 2011, Kartli was published. The material found during his expeditions to Kakheti and Hereti in 1923-1929 has not been published to this day. The purpose of this topic is to provide information on the unpublished material of Giorgi Bochoridze's personal fund, preserved in the National Archives of Georgia, since it is impossible to fully present the results of his work in a conference topic.

Keywords: Giorgi Bochoridze, Kakheti, Hereti, historical monuments, description.

Introduction: The topic concerns the great Georgian scientist, one of the founders of the National Archives, the best student of Ivane Javakhishvili, a prominent representative of our historical society, a repressed scientist, Giorgi Bochoridze, and the expeditions he conducted in Kakheti and Hereti.

In 1921-1936, the scientist walked almost all of Georgia on foot, studied and described all the monuments and remains of monuments on the ground, made up the names of cultural monuments and all kinds of inscriptions on the ground with a pencil. He preserved for us stories about historical monuments that have not reached us and rare ethnographic material from different parts of Georgia.

Giorgi Bochoridze was also a member of the commission working on ancient Georgian documents. In addition to finding and bringing documents, he directly participated in their study and registration. In just

three weeks, he brought 3016 documents and 145 book remains from Kartli-Kakheti and recorded them. In 1921-1922, with his direct participation, after the return of the archives taken to the North Caucasus, the Central Historical Archive of Georgia was replenished with ancient documents. The material collected and described by G. Bochoridze formed the basis for the creation of the Historical Archive of Georgia, and his records, which are kept in his personal fund, help all interested persons in restoring the history of monuments in any corner of Georgia. In the twenties of the last century, by decision of the People's Commissariat of Education, a description and study of the historical monuments of the Tbilisi region and the historical objects discovered in them and scattered among the people began. Kakheti begins with Outer Kakheti, which at that time was part of the Tbilisi region. The description of the monuments of Outer Kakheti and the expeditions of the entire Kakheti were organized in 1923-1925, I call it an expedition, otherwise in many cases he had to travel alone. As he himself writes: "Three years - half a year of being outside, with little money and walking all the way, in the winter cold and summer heat, working 16-18 hours a day, avoiding life-threatening situations (rocks, water, people, etc.) 9-10 times¹" (CAORHG, f. 335, a.9, c. 98, p. 64).

The first expedition to Outer Kakheti was organized on May 25, 1925. The first thing he described was the Sagarejo Wall, which the famous German traveler of the 18th century, Guldenstedt, also speaks of in his notes. During my trip to Georgia, the Sagarejo wall had been built for a long time, because part of the population lived outside the fence... "This city is located on the Tvaltskaro River... Sagarejo is surrounded by a wall, although most of the houses are outside the wall. (Guldenstandt, 1962, p.16, 19).

Giorgi Bochoridze also confirms the existence of the fence in the 1920s. Despite its considerable damage, the scientist gave the structure a high rating: "This wall is a real historical monument, which must be inviolable in every way and strictly protected..." The Sagarejo wall, in which, according to legend, the population of Sagarejo, Giorgitsminda and Ninotsminda took refuge during the enemy invasion, was terribly damaged by its inhabitants. They demolished the walls of the wall on all sides, opened doors wherever they wanted, demolished the upper part of the tower walls and built houses on top of them, and sold them to others as building material" (CHAG, f. 1753, d. 1, c. 4, p. 92^a). In the twenties of the last century, during his stay there, only the eastern and southern walls had been preserved. While studying the monument, one of the walls in the eastern part of the wall was a rather damaged inscribed stone, measuring 14/10, was found in the resident's yard, forcibly thrown from the wall, because it was badly damaged, only a few letters remained on it (there is a record), so it was impossible to deduce its contents.

Giorgi Bochoridze attributes the inscription and the construction of the fence to the second half of the 17th century. The scientist immediately appealed to the local authorities and informed them about the deliberate damage to the fence, but the local population continued to dismantle the fence... (f. 1753, d. 1, c. 4, p. 97). It is a pity that today there is no trace of the fence at al

The connection with the David Gareji monastery complex is one of the main reasons why a large number of cult temples have been built in the territory of Outer Kakheti, Sagarejo. The study of these temples began in the 20s of the 20th century.

However, before that, in the middle of the 19th century, David The Gareja monastery complex was visited and described by the Crown Prince of the Caucasus, Commander-in-Chief of the Separate Caucasian Corps and traveler Nikoloz Muravyov¹.

Giorgi Bochoridze walked around, recorded and described the historical monuments of Gareja. He found most of them looted and destroyed: "The hermitages of David

Especially the last one, here the criminals did not leave even a small piece of plank except for two steel-covered doors, which they probably could not avoid due to the weight, wherever there was any wooden material in churches or other buildings, they demolished the walls everywhere and took them away. Almost

everything here is destroyed"....As can be seen from his notes, he had partial information about the sanctuaries of the Gareja desert, because there is such an entry: "Among the historical items, the most perished were in the David Gareja desert... The looters took away a lot of historical items, church treasures and utensils from the time of Giorgi Brtskinvali and Queen Ketevan, among others, a silver icon of the Baptist, a silver chandelier donated by Queen Ketevan, 7 silver crosses.... Bardzim Peshkhumi 7 pieces of silver with inscriptions, jars with inscriptions, about 15 feet of copper, among which there were silver vessels,.... The 5 bells of the main hermitage were taken for sale by Tbilisi craftsmen. As for the main relics of the hermitage: the Stone of Grace, the skull of St. Shio - they were saved by a local resident Giorgi Abashidze, who was entrusted with the supervision of the hermitage"... The employees of the haymaking station located 1-5 kilometers from the monasteries made a great contribution to the protection and supervision of the hermitage, "they carried the marble tombstone of David, donated by Sabinin, broken in two by the desecrators" (f.1753, d.1, c. 4 p.92). On the territory of the David Gareji Monastery, Bochoridze studied the churches of St. Nicholas, the Baptist and the Virgin Mary: what remained and what the scientist was able to distinguish was preserved on the sheets: "Near the Church of the Baptist, near the large pool, which is carved out of stone, there was a large steel door, which had small inscriptions preserved:

In the church of St. Nicholas in the David Gareji desert, two meters from the doors, an inscribed tombstone was preserved. The scientist noted that the inscription was unfinished, therefore it was impossible to determine its date. In a large hall near St. Nicholas, on a stone of the southern wall, there is an inscription mentioning Nikoloz Andronikashvili "(f.1753, d. 1 c.105, p. 14, 16).

In the large rock-hewn church to the south of this church, a fragment of a wall painting was preserved, depicting David Garejeli with a whale under his feet.

In addition to the surviving churches located in the David Gareji monastery complex, the scientist described churches located in settlements. The Church of St. Peter and Paul, located on a hill to the west of Sagarejo, is a single-nave church, built of cobblestone and nave stone. According to legend, the church was built by the Greeks, but the exact date is unknown. A large carved cross is depicted on the window above the doors. The church has a two-step foundation, the roof of the church was damaged, and inside was placed a cherub that had fallen from the roof. On the east side of the church, a relief cross is depicted above the window, and the window stones are also decorated with carvings like the door stones. On the east side, angels and a whale are depicted above the window (f.1753, d.1, c. 105, p. 22).

The building of the St. Dodo Garejeli Church in Sagarejo was less damaged. The eastern doors are a sample of ancient art, but they were damaged. There were 5 small icons preserved in the building, the sixth was lost.

The antiquities stored in the churches brought from Kakheti were transferred to the University Antiquities Depository with an appropriate protocol and attached lists (March 31, 1926). The list mentions the icons and relics taken from the Sagarejo Executive Committee warehouse: a total of 20 items. This description is especially noteworthy, because very few records are available about this church, it is the only church in Georgia where the churches of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary are built in the same yard. (16th, 17th centuries) (f. 1753, d. 1, c. 115, p. 18).

Among the temples of Outer Kakheti, the Ninotsminda monastery complex undoubtedly holds an important place, which was found almost completely destroyed during the study and description by the scientist. The commission, whose The commission, which included Archpriest Alexi Gulisashvili, recognized as historical monuments the two silver icons of St. Nino on a plank, placed in the church, and the old bell tower with lion statues placed in the bell tower. The commission recognized as historical the old church located in the courtyard of the Ninotsminda Church with its fence, the Metropolitan's house, the icons of St.

Nino painted on a plank, of ancient Georgian art, and the old bell tower with lion statues placed in the bell tower. According to the commission's resolution, the items described by the first number should have been left in the local church, while the last (the bell tower) should have been transferred to the appropriate museum in Tbilisi. (f. 1753, d. 1, c. 106, p. 100).

In the 1920s, due to the policies of the government of the time, churches and monasteries were closed en masse and services and prayers were suspended. These icons were taken out of the Ninotsminda Cathedral and their whereabouts remained unknown. Concerned about the fate of these icons, the great Georgian poet Giorgi Leonidze addressed the Main Department of Scientific Institutions of the Georgian SSR: "In Outer Kakheti, along with other churches, the ancient Ninotsminda Cathedral (5th century) was closed, from which, along with other things, the Sagarejo Revkom (took out) two ancient icons.

1. The miraculous icon of Saint Nino, donated by King Archil (Archil I).

2. The icon of Saint Nino decorated with silver carvings, donated by Metropolitan Saba Tusishvili (CAORHG, f. 300, d. 3, c. 44, p. 2).

While describing the cult buildings of Outer Kakheti, Giorgi Bochoridze provided us with important information about the historical monuments located in the territory of Manav-Taraki. Above Taraki, at the foot of Civi,¹ there is one The domed church, according to local tradition, is the Church of the Vedrebi. "The church is built of brick and shirim stone, the foundation is wider than the walls from the inside." After the foundation, the walls are built of brick, shirim stone is used only for cornices. The cornices of the church dome are of lega-colored hewn stone, the arches are slightly broken. The northern doors were removed long ago. The church has windows on three sides: east, north and south, the dome has windows on all four sides. The dome is round from the inside and octagonal from the outside, the roof of the dome is also octagonal. From the outside, near the foundation of the church, it is larger than the walls.

The niches are raised, 80 centimeters high, 89 centimeters from the foundation. The length of the church from the inside is 7 1/2 arsin and the width is 6 arsin. To the north, above the doors, a brick cross is raised in the wall. The door arches are damaged, because the population used wooden material. The middle niches are covered with a sloping rock. The church stands above the village of Tarak, 2 versts away. According to legend, there was previously a palace of Queen Tamar in the village of Tarak, as evidenced by the foundation of a large building. This place is called Natakhtari. There are remains of large and small water pipes near the foundation of the building. There is also a water purification tank. Nearby is a whitewashed building, which was previously used as a water basin. This is a beautiful place, which overlooks the entire outer Kakheti like the palm of your hand" (f. 1753, d.1, c. 105. p. 4,5.) Giorgi Bochoridze mentions the "Tsitikhizani" seat located on top of Manavi, the renovated St. George Church in Kalouban, the seat of the Tarak idol, and the Church of the Virgin Mary among the church buildings. He pays special attention to the Manavi fortress-wall, "The Manavi fortress-wall was a huge building, today only part of it has survived. Many places are damaged, but what has survived, the whole picture can be restored. It must belong to the ancient era. The towers of the fortress are rectangular, the fortress itself occupies an area of approximately 2 dessetins, the walls of the fortress-wall have survived on all four sides. It was a rectangular building with a slope towards the east. The remains of the walls have survived.

Near the northern wall is a stone-walled building, which according to local traditions was a mill, to the south is a large stone pool, today filled with stones, although the water still stands, apparently its flow from the old pipeline has not stopped. Near this pool are churches: the Manavi fortress church, built of shirimi stone, brick and cobblestone; to the south stands The second church, a basilica built of cobblestone. To the east of the latter stands the church of St. George of the Third Fortress, built of rubble stone and cobblestone. The church has a basement floor, with doors to the east, the doors are quite high and there is no staircase to

the basement. This place is suggestive, because according to the local population, it was once a prison. From the building of the first church, people sold tombstones and placed them on graves. Near the eastern wall of this fortress, the famous Fridonov built a chapel for local Armenians, which, of course, caused great damage to the fortress wall, firstly, by digging up the foundation and secondly, by using material from the fortress wall. In the church of St. George of Tsikhistavi, the bell tower has survived. suspended.

I traveled throughout the Telavi region, except for Tusheti, and described almost all the churches, old buildings, ruins... My goal was to see and describe all the buildings near the settlements of the population, because one of them could contain valuable items and inscriptions and be destroyed by human touch... "There were 133 such buildings-ruins in the Telavi region... Despite the fact that upon arrival I warned the chairman of each community that the population of all villages should be ready and not interfere with the inspection of the church, I saw obstacles everywhere, except for the other side of Alazani..." (f. 1753, a. 1, c. 4, p. 3). The church buildings were very dilapidated, the property of each church was located in three or four places. This made the work very difficult. That is why he worked from dawn until late at night (if it was a moonlit night). Some historical monuments (buildings) were in a terrible state, old historical buildings were converted into clubs, hospitals, cattle sheds and various institutions. There were 15 such churches in the entire Telavi district, the Kvareli Church, where I. Chavchavadze's parents were buried, was converted into a bathhouse, all the items removed from the altar of the Church of the Ascension of St. Vejin were burned in the churchyard, two graves were dug up in the old Church of the Virgin Mary to find treasure and left as is, the Kurds, who settled in Old Gremi, two or three churches and three buildings nearby, significantly damaged the beautiful wooden balcony buildings. Also, in Old Gremi, treasure hunters damaged many temples and buildings.

Most of the churches had their crosses removed, icons painted on canvas torn, and icons carved on wood were found cut out. The old church of Pichkhovani, which was distinguished by its wall paintings, was converted into a cattle shed... The old church of the Virgin Mary of Gavazi was converted into a bathhouse.

During his expeditions in the Kakheti region, Bochoridze studied and described 255 churches, fortresses, and buildings. Among the historical monuments of Kakheti, Shuamta, Alaverdi, the Eniseli Archangel Tower - Galavan, Nekresi, and Bodbe hold a special place, but, as he himself says, "I will not dwell on them, because they are widely known and I will only name those that require urgent attention." (f.1753, d.1,c.4. p. 31a).

Near Shuamta, 7 versts from the mountain, an unknown old church was discovered, the seat of st. Kunturi, on the walls of which 7 inscribed stones were preserved. The churches painted with frescoes of St. Pichkhovani the Baptist and the Deity, the inscribed stones and the slate tombstone of the Bishop of Kharchashneli with his own image were interesting.

The old Nekresi is especially noteworthy, with lively painting on its walls, as Bochoridze himself says: "It delights the human eye and heart." (f.1753. d.1, c.4, p. 32a). This is the only temple where pigs are sacrificed instead of cows and sheep.

Part of the church's treasury was badly damaged. The silver and gold frames on the icons were almost everywhere covered with gold. Of the 12 precious icons from the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Telavi, which were said to have been a gift from the Pope, only 7 have survived. According to legend, these icons were taken out of the church, carried away on a cart along with other wooden objects, and were never found again. The beautiful wall paintings of the churches of St. George and Kurdgelaury in Gremi were destroyed. In some churches, the wall paintings were plastered with lime. The living quarters of the monks of the Alaverdi Monastery were destroyed. Ancient Khutsuri manuscripts and several traditional scrolls, which were taken from the St. Nicholas Church in the village of Laliskul, were lost along with the ancient objects. Despite the great efforts of G. Bochoridze, it was impossible to find the mentioned manuscripts.

Despite so many negative aspects, some churches and valuable objects in the region survived. First of all, the items kept in the church of the Telavi district were described, mainly icons and treasures taken from the Shuamta Monastery, which were hidden in the monastery wall and discovered by a local resident, Davit Vashakidze.

During his work as the head of the Department of Ancient Documents at the Central Archives of Georgia in 1928-1929, G. Bochoridze visited the Zakatali, Nukhi and Geokchai regions, part of the Hereti historical province of Georgia, for archaeological research: "The main goal of my trip was to find and photograph historical-epigraphic (written) monuments. Very few such monuments have been preserved in the mentioned area, most of them have not been destroyed by time, but nevertheless, sufficient material was found: in the Nukhi region, on the former territory of Albania, I found a stone with an Albanian inscription, in another place I found a stone with magnificent floral patterns and unknown linear signs (inscriptions?)... The discovery of the inscriptions is of great importance for the study of the restoration of the culture of one of the ancient states, Albania, the significance of which is not only within the framework of Georgia and the Caucasus, but also of world interest. These two discoveries are the first examples of monuments of Albanian writing, other such monuments have not yet been seen anywhere else." (f. 1753, d.1, c. 12, p. 2).

During a trip to the Nakhuri and Saingilo territories, during interviews with the local population, it turned out that mainly descendants of Albanians lived here, the locals believed that they must have been descendants of Georgians, and their surnames were also formed with Georgian roots. Here, on the top of S. Nakhuri, northeast of the village and west of the borders of Chiklari and Muji, was located "Dadian-Piri", the Dadiani shrine. Some mosques on the Nakhuri road were built on the ruined walls of old churches, 5 kilometers from Belakani, the remains of a Georgian church were found in the forest, with frescoes on the walls. The remains of two more churches were found near Belakani, one of which was known as the "Red Church". The church located west of Kakhi was called "White Throne". (f. 1753, d.1, c. 152, p.5). As a result of the first two trips, nothing more was found. No more expeditions were conducted in Kakheti.

Conclusion: To conclude, I will again make an excerpt from his life story, it is amazing to list the work that one person did in 15 years: he recorded 900 historical, monumental monuments, collected 2260 historical items, 540 manuscripts and 200 printed books, 28 inscribed statues, 3550 Gujar seals and old documents, 10 paintings on canvas, three collections of coins, two collections of archaeological items and compiled lists of churches and items preserved there, book manuscripts in all the above-mentioned corners. (CAORHG, f. 303, d.1, c.1237, p.3^a) In the 20s of the 20th century, no other scientist did as much in the preservation of Georgian antiquities as Giorgi Bochoridze did. He described many churches that no one had seen before and that were destroyed over time due to neglect.

His last notes end at the beginning of 1937. On December 28, 1937, the famous three-man team of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Georgian SSR accused the great scientist of Articles N 58-10 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the Georgian SSR. He was tried and sentenced to 10 years in prison... but he never returned from exile... During his exile, on the way, he was treacherously murdered and thrown off a train in the North Caucasus... On September 27, 1939, his soul joined the Georgian saints at the Exaltation of the Cross. It is a pity that his grave was not left for posterity.

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