

EXPLANATION OF SOME POINTS OF MIKHAIL PANARETOS “TRAPESUND CHRONICLE”

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Rezumat: *Explicarea câtorva chestiuni legate de „Cronica de la Trapezunt” a lui Mikhail Panaretos*

Articolul analizează un izvor semnificativ din secolul 14, așa-zisa „Cronică de la Trapezunt” a lui Mikhail Panaretos. Este arătată importanța acestei surse pentru istoria Imperiului de la Trapezunt, Georgia, Bizanț, Orientul Apropiat. Sunt explicate câteva chestiuni legate de „Cronica de la Trapezunt”, care sunt discutabile și nerezolvate până în prezent.

Abstract: *The article deals with the significant source of the 14th century so-called “Trapesund Chronicle” of Mikhail Panaretos. It’s shown the importance of this source for the history of Trapezund Empire, Georgia, Byzance, Near East. In the article are explained some points of the “Trapesund Chronicle” which are disputable and are not settled till now.*

Résumé: *L’explication des quelques questions de “Chronique de Trébizonde” de Michel Panaretos.*

Dans le présent article est examiné la source significative de XIV^e siècle dit “Chronique de Trébizonde” de Michel Panaretos et son importance dans l’histoire de Trébizonde, Géorgie, Byzance et Proche-Orient. On précise de même quelques questions en suspens discutées jusqu’a présent.

Keywords: *Trapesund, Georgia, Chronicle, Ilkhanate*

The so called “Trapesund Empire” was founded in 1204 on the Southern coast of the Black Sea, with the center in the city of Trapesund. Several factors have contributed to its establishment: the desire of the economic independence expressed by the region; weakening of the Bizantine Empire; geographical space etc.¹. But the major event, significantly determining the decline of the Byzantine Empire was the 4th Crusade, capturing the city of Constantinople. The event turned out to be profitable for the royal nobility of Georgia and its queen Tamar (1184-1212). Queen Tamar sent troops to these territories and contributed to the creation of the buffer state².

The Georgian influence remained significant over the Trapesund Empire till the very last days of its existence (1461). Meanwhile, the Trapesund Empire was mainly populated by the relative Georgian tribes, Lazs and Chans.

During the existence of the Trapesund Empire several famous historical writings were created, the “Trapesund Chronicle” of Mikhaïl Panaretos being the one among them, describing the history of existence of the Trapesund Empire from its establishment to the middle of the 15th century. There are no information records on the author – Mikhaïl Panaretos. He belonged to one of the most influential families of the Byzantium alongside with some other five families of the empire³.

The Chronicle is conserved in the form of the only one manuscript, dating back to the 1608, kept in the library of the St. Markoz Monastery (Venice). The manuscript was found by the German orientalist I. Fallmerayer, in the beginning of the 19th century, although it was published on the very first time in 1832, by other German scientist, Taffel. Since then, the chronicle was published several times, including in Georgian.

The presented paper aims at commenting on different parts of the chronicle. The first point interesting for us is dated to 1336 (Byzantine Chronology 6844). Chronicle informs us that: “On July 5, on Friday, Sheikh Hasan son of Tamarta came

¹ С. П. Карпов, *Трапезундская империя и Западноевропейские государства в 13-14 вв.* [S. P. Karпов, The Trapesund Empire and West European States in the 13th – 14th Centuries], Москва, 1981, с. 5.

² Irakli Beradze, *Trapizonis imperiis daarsebis sakitkhisatvis* [On the Foundation of the Trapesund Empire], Tbilisi, 1971, pp. 5-38 – in Georgian.

³ M. Panaretos, *Trapizonis khronika*, berdnuli teksti kartuli targmanit, shesavali cerilit, shenishvnebita da sadzieblebit gamosca Al. Gamkrelidzem, masalebi sakartvelosa da kavkasiis istoriasatvis, nakveti 33, Tbilisi, 1960 – In Georgian [M. Panaretos, The Chronicle of Trapesund, the Greek text with Georgian translation, introduction, commentaries and indices published by Al. Gamkrelidze in the “Materials of the Georgian and Caucasian History”, no. 33].

to Trapesund and the battle took place at st. Kviriak, Akhantaka and Mintrion”⁴ (stressing is mine, V. K.). The personality of “Sheikh Hasan” mentioned in the “Trapesund Chronicle” is not explained in any publication of the text. Besides, “Tamarta” is explained only etymologically, as an “Iron Man”. The publishers only, mentioned, that “it is not clear who is Sheikh Hasan.” Although, in the appendix of the chronicle edited by Al. Gamkrelidze is explained, that “Sheikh Hasan, son of Tamarta” is a Turkish invader.⁵

The paper aims at highlighting who is this personality. As it was turned out, he is not a Turkish invader, but the grandson of Choban-Noin, well known personality in the Ilkhan (Hulaguian) Mongol State, Sheikh Hasan, called as “Khuchukh” - “The Small”. The research aims at determining his personality and the real name of his father “Tamarta.” Sheikh Hasan was grandson of Choban-Noin and son of Timurtash. As we could see, the name “Tamarta” is the disfigured form of “Timurtash”. Father of Hasan, Timurtash, was appointed by Mongols as the head of the Rum Sultanate. In 1322 he rebelled against the central government, although the rebellion was easily subdued but he was not convicted as being afraid of Choban his grandfather. But in 1327, when Choban-Noin was set the death penalty and executed under the order of Abu Said (1317-1335), Khan of Ilkhans, Timurtash was detained in Egypt and killed⁶.

His son, Sheikh Hasan escaped and gradually strengthened his positions after the death of Abu Said. Sheikh Hasan “Kuchuk” and s. c. (i.e. so-called) “false Timurtash” appeared on the political stage from 1336. They were confronted by representative of the Jalairian tribe, Hasan Buzurg (“The Great”). Later on, Hasan and “false Timurtash” were confronted as well. By 1338 Hasan “Khuchukh” became the factual governor of the main area of the former kingdom of Ilkhanate.

Thus, the 1336 campaign of Sheikh Hasan in Trapesund, mentioned in the “Trapesund Chronicle”, deals with the abovementioned moment of Ilkhanate history. So, we could conclude: Sheikh Hasan, son of Tamarta, mentioned in the Chronicle, is the grandson of Choban-Noin and son of Timurtash⁷.

⁴ M. Panaretos, *Trapizonis khronika*, edition 1960, p. 21; The mentioned geographical points were located around the city Trapesund. The new Turkish name of “Minthron” is “Boz-Thepe.”

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 96.

⁶ Hafizi Abru, *Introdcution in Cronique des Rois Mongols en Iran*, edition par Khanbaba Bayani, vol. II, Paris, 1936, p. 106.

⁷ V. Kiknadze, *M. Panaretosis trapizonis kronikis erti adgilis ganmartebisatvis, istoriul-ethnographiuli shtudiebi* [V. Kiknadze, On the Issue of One Aspect of the “Trapesund Chronicle” of M. Panaretos, The Historical-Ethnographyc Studies], tome II, Tbilisi,

The “Trapesund Chronicle” of Mikhail Panaretos helps us to identify the personality of “Khosia, Son of Baidar”, one of the Turkish invaders mentioned in the Family Chronicle of the governing branch of Khsani gorge (Inner Kartli). It seems, the name of the Turkish Amir (ruler) – Khajimir son of Bairam – was disfigured in the Georgian Chronicle. Amir Khajimir, son of Bairam, is continuously mentioned in the Chronicle between 1357-1382 years. His lands comprise the area on the western parts of Kerasunt⁸. Khajimir’s kingdom was notorious for its strength and frequent attacks against its neighbors⁹. Thus, we consider that “Khosia, son of Baidar” mentioned in the Georgian source s.c. “Chronicle of Eristavs” is “Khajimir, son of Baidar” mentioned in the “Trapesund Chronicle”.

The third moment, related to the “Trapesund Chronicle”, is the visit of the King of Trapesund to Batumi in 1372. Mikhail Panaretos writes: “On August 6 we went to Lazika and by the end of the month met with King Bagrat, in 1372. The trip went on crossing Batumi. The tents were arranged outside of the city, under the sky ... we had a conversation with Gurieli, who came to respect the king.”¹⁰

There are many interesting moments in the note. It informs us that in Lazika, i.e. in the Western Georgia, the King of Trapesund and his suit, meets with the King of Georgia, Bagrat the Great (1360-1393). Meanwhile, Batumi is also mentioned in the note, being the subject of Gurieli, the governor of West Georgian district of Guria. Only one moment comes as a matter of contention in this respect; a group of scientists (D. Khakhanashvili¹¹, S. Karpov¹² etc.) considers that the shown respect of the King of Trapesund by Gurieli, represents his attitude to the King of Trapesund.

As Al. Gamkhrelidze, the last editor of the “Trapesund Chronicle”, mentions the Greek word “proskunesis” means “showing respect”, thus the reasoning that Gurieli became the subject of the King of Trapesund, is not a right approach¹³. It

1985, p. 76-78.

⁸ M. Panaretos, *Trapizonis khronika*, Al. Gamkhrelidze’s edition (1960), p. 32-33.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32-33.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹¹ Михаил Панарет, *Трапезундская хроника*, греческий текст с русским переводом и комментариями издал Ал. Хаханашвили [M. Panaretos, *The Trapesund Chronicle*, the Greek text with Russian translation commented by Al. Khakhanashvili], in “Восточные записки Лазаревского Института” [The Oriental Essays of the Institute of Lazarev], том. XXIII, Москва, 1905, с. 39.

¹² С. П. Карпов, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

¹³ M. Panaretos, *Trapizonis khronika*, Al. Gamkhrelidze’s edition (1960), p. 82, remark no. 145.

should be mentioned that this word in Ancient Greek means *showing respect* on the one hand, although at the same time it could be understood as “Greeting in a kneeled position”¹⁴. But as we think, the reasoning over the vassal attitude of Gurieli to the king of Trapesund could be excluded due to the following reasons: 1. If Gurieli (Kakhaber Gurieli, mentioned in the inscription of the Icon of Likhauri, is meant here) accepted the vassalage of the Trapesund Empire, the fact would have been directly mentioned by Mikhail Panaretos; 2. Besides, the Trapesund Empire is deeply weakened by the Turks, thus it could not make the new land as its vassalage; 3. If this is true, there ought to be shown protest against the actions of Gurieli from the side of the Georgian King Bagrat V; 4. If the King of Trapesund is the direct suzerain of Gurieli, he should not be camped under the open sky, outside the city, rather being stayed in the palace of Gurieli.

In order to prove the vassalage of Gurieli to the King of Trapesund, S. Karpov provides some interesting materials additionally, but according to our opinion, the materials do not serve as a reasonable basis to share with the statement. As S. Karpov writes, by 1444 the Burgundian marauder sailors attacked to the port of “Vati” (Batumi). The local residents of Batumi and Gurieli managed to counterweight the attack of Burgundians, detaining one of the leaders of Burgundians Joffrua d’Tuassi¹⁵. Afterwards, the head of the Burgundian naval, V. Wavrin, appealed to the Emperor of Trapesund to send people to Georgia in order to investigate the fate of J. Tuassi. The King of Trapesund Ioann immediately responded over the matter and arranged the case. This is an unique information on those days history of Batumi in itself, but we think Ioann IV is a mere mediator in this case and serves in terms of the international diplomatic mission. The fact that Gurieli set his captive free as being promised his kingdom not being attacked by Burgundians, serves as an indirect prove of the abovementioned statement¹⁶. Thus, if Gurieli is the vassal of the Trapesund Empire, no one would let him to set conditions in the negotiation. The fact preserved in the “Trapesund Chronicle” over the shown respect of Gurieli to the King of Trapesund in 1372, does not point to his

¹⁴ *Древнегреческий-Русский словарь* под редакцией Н. Дворецкого [The Ancient Greek-Russian Dictionary under edition of N. Dvoretskii], том. II, Москва, 1959.

¹⁵ С. П. Карпов, *op. cit.*, p. 157; See also V. Wavrin, *Anciennes Croniques d’Engleterre*, vol. II, Paris, 1859, p. 95-96.

¹⁶ С. П. Карпов, *op. cit.*, p. 157-158.

vassalage to the one [King of Trapesund]. This is more the matter of the economic and political collaboration.¹⁷

Concluding, it should be stressed once again, that the “Trapesund Chronicle” of Mikhail Panaretos is an unique source providing us with the basis to set the unknown details from the history of Byzantine, Trapesund, Georgia and the states of Asia Minor.

¹⁷ Tamaz Beradze, *Sakartvelos sazgvao vachrobis istoriidan XIII-XIV saukuneebshi* [From the History of Georgia Sea Trade in the 13th-14th Centuries], in “Matsne”, istoriis, ethnographiis, arkeologiis da khelovnebis istoriis seria [The Series of History, Ethnography, Archeology and Art History] no. 2, Tbilisi, 1983, p. 38 – In Georgian.