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МЕТА-АНАЛІЗ СКАРБІВ ГРУЗІЇ (1121-1230-ТІ РОКИ)

META-ANALYSIS OF GEORGIAN HOARDS (1121-1230'S)

The amount of accumulated numismatic material (information on coin types, monetary circulation data, documentary sources) within the field of Georgian numismatic history requires some novel methodology to proceed with processing the data yielding some new results. Moreover, the very numerousness of the material provides us with an opportunity to apply the relatively novel (with regard to Georgian numismatic studies) methods like statistical processing and meta-analysis of the data.

Correspondingly, our work is devoted to the meta-analysis of 35 hoards comprising exclusively or predominantly Georgian coins minted in copper (dominant currency metal in the region) in the epoch of the united Georgian kingdom (1121-1230s); all hoards being discovered either on the territory of (historical) Georgia / medieval Georgian state or in the neighbouring areas.

The chronological limits of our study were set at 1121, when Davit IV liberated Tbilisi and introduced the mono-epigraphic copper coinage (with Arabic legends) and the 1230s, when Rusudani's administration presumably ceased issuing copper coinage of national type. Georgian coins of the epoch were minted by Davit IV the Builder (1089-1125), who united Georgia and secured its stance of a leading regional Christian state, and his descendants and successors: Dimitri I (1125-1155, 1155-1157), Davit V (1155), Giorgi III (1157-1184), Tamari (1184-1210), Giorgi IV Lasha (1210-1223), Rusudani (1223-1245); as well as by Jalal al-Din, who occupied Tbilisi and eastern provinces of the Georgian state in 1226-1230.

The hoards comprise both regular and irregular coins; the regular coppers constituted a currency of more or less uniform (usually circular) form and weight, functioning as money with a definite piece value (presumably, exceeding the coin metal value); the irregular coppers constituted a currency of diverse form and largely fluctuating weight, functioning as money valued by weight of the minted metal, i.e. with no definite piece value, but with definite *weight unit* value (exceeding, to some extent, the coin metal value?), irrespective of the number of pieces therein. Table 1 reviews the copper coinage of the aforementioned Georgian monarchs.

35 hoards were classified into five groups according to I. Paghava's classification published in 2018 (И. Пагава. *Нумизматическое прошлое Дагестана и Грузии*. 2018), and elaborating D. Kapanadze's classification introduced in the 1969 article (Д. Капанадзе. "Кладмонет XII-XIII вв. изсел. Ничбиси". 1969).

Table 1.

Monoepigraphic copper coinage of Georgian monarchs (1121-1230s)

Monarch	Number of coin types	
	Irregular	Regular
Davit IV	1	
Dimitri I	5	
Davit V		
Giorgi III	2	1
Tamari	2	1
Giorgi IV	1	2
Rusudani	countermarking the predecessors' coins	1
[Jalal ad-Din]	1	

I group comprises 1 hoard of predominantly irregular coppers; the youngest coins being in the name of Tamari (no coins of Giorgi IV); tpqn being 1210.

III group comprises 14 hoards of predominantly irregular coppers; the youngest coins being in the name of Giorgi IV, with many specimens countermarked by Rusudani; i.e. tpq being 1223; but comprising no coins of Jalal ad-Din, i.e. tpqn for depositing the hoards being 1226. The coins were deposited in 1223-1226 time period, presumably, in 1226, due to Jalal ad-Din's invasion. The hoards of this group illustrate well the gradual "wash-out" of the coins issued by previous monarchs from the circulation.

IV group comprises 6 hoards of predominantly irregular coppers; the youngest coins being in the name of Jalal ad-Din (0.1-100% of total number); i.e. tpq 1226. These hoards were deposited presumably in 1226-1230 when eastern provinces of Georgian kingdom were already occupied by Jalal ad-Din.

II group comprises 4 hoards of predominantly regular coppers of Tamari and Davit Soslani, her 2nd husband (17.9-100% of total number), bearing the date 420 of Georgian Koronik'on (=1200); but with no regular coppers of Rusudani (dated 447 of Georgian Koronik'on, i.e. 1227). These hoards were deposited in 1200-1227.

V group comprises 10 hoards of predominantly regular coppers of Rusudani (99.5-100% of total number), i.e. tpq being 1227. These hoards were deposited in 1227-1230s, when the first silver Mongol-Georgian coins were first minted.

The meta-analysis of the hoards provides solid basis for claiming that at least the irregular coins of the predecessors retained their status of legal tender until the 1227 coin reform of Queen Rusudani, who ceased minting irregular coinage; evidently, Georgian administration of the time did not employ the *renovatio monetae* method for any reasons. This seems to be true with regard to irregular coinage, but perhaps not so much to the regular coinage. We might conjecture, that the difference in authorities' approach to the irregular and regular coinage was predetermined by valuing them differently; i.e. the value of the irregular coinage being tied to its weight (metal weight), and the regular coins constituting token coinage (overvalued respective to metal weight).

The meta-analysis of the hoards' composition makes it clear the coins gradually left the circulation; in our opinion, they “washed out” gradually due to *natural* reasons (wear, loss, smelting?), rather than being withdrawn within the framework of some coordinated effort on par of the contemporary authorities.

In the beginning of her reign, Rusudani transformed the currency of her predecessors into her own by countermarking the former. This action could be targeted at gaining profit and should be interpreted as certain *renovatio monetae*. The data suggest that the approach to the coinage of her predecessors was not uniform: the coins of Tamari and Giorgi IV (but not Giorgi III) were predominantly countermarked; the reasons are unclear. We support Yvgeni Pakhomov's original idea that the 1227 reform of Rusudani was evidently predetermined by the need to wage economic war on Jalal ad-Din, occupying the eastern provinces of the realm.

Meta-analysis of the hoards, namely the virtual absence of *mixed* hoards, leaves no doubts that the irregular and regular coins circulated mostly separately from each other; moreover, the topography of the hoard and individual coin finds makes it clear that their respective circulation areas also overlapped only partially. These findings suggest that the economic role of both types of currency was different. However, it still has to be established, which would clarify the reasons for more or less simultaneous issue of both types of currencies in the Georgian Kingdom.

We fully agree with D. Kapanadze that the majority of the hoards (of the III and IV groups) date back to the year of 1226 (and the immediately subsequent years) and were deposited due to the risks associated with Jalal ad-Din's first invasion in 1226. That indicates (understandingly) the abruptly elevated *unexpected mortality* rate of the population. However, what bedazzles us is the virtual absence of the hoards (except for the sole one of the I group) deposited before the reign of Giorgi IV Lasha. That could be interpreted as a testimony to the minimal *unexpected mortality* rate of the population, i.e. the outstanding defensive capabilities of the Georgian state prior to the advent of the Mongols and Jalal ad-Din.

The research of the contemporary money and monetary circulation in Georgian Kingdom based on the meta-analysis of the available hoards awaits further scholarly efforts. We envision (and to the extent possible work personally on) the following:

- Further publication of the yet unpublished coin hoards;
- Further publication of the yet unpublished groups of individual coin finds;
- Analysis (checking) of the already “published” (but with no proper data presentation) hoards, including checking and statistic processing of their composition;
- Analysing the available data on the countermarks employed in the epoch;
- Analysing the topographic distribution of the finds;
- Repetitive meta-analysis based on the reviewed and complemented database; covering more criteria.