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## THE HELMET FROM THE WAWEL ROYAL CASTLE MUSEUM AND ITS PLACE IN THE EVOLUTION OF ORIENTAL HELMET

Abstract:

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In Krakow, Poland, a very rare helmet has been preserved in the Museum of the Wawel Palace. The scholars, Polish among them, are unanimous about this helmet's Persian provenance. Some of them consider that the Wawel helmet represents a significant stage in the development of the turban helmet. In author opinion, the Wawel helmet is an independent line of evolution, which was developed in Georgia parallel with the turban helmet. During research, the 17<sup>th</sup> c. Georgian inscription of the Wawel helmet was read: *God and the Valiant Warrior, Great St. George, may Sazvereli Chijavadze be victorious*. From the inscription we have learned that the helmet belonged to Sazvereli Chijavadze, a representative of a powerful feudal family in Imereti (Western Georgia). The Wawel-type helmet was very popular in Georgia and they were in use during three or four centuries, until the end of the feudal epoch. The Wawel helmet remained in Georgia at least until the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 17<sup>th</sup> c. and only after that it was taken abroad. In author opinion, it must have been bought by the Polish noblemen in the period when they were keen on the East.

Key words: Wawel helmet, turban helmet, Georgian helmet, Sazvereli Chijavadze

The helmet is an essential element of the warrior's defensive equipment, which was undergoing permanent transformation and perfection in the course of centuries.

The spherico-conical helmet emerged in the Mesopotamia in the latter half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC. It had acquired its final shape by the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium in the region of Syria-Palestine (Горелик 2003, 135-136). M. Gorelik notes that of all the territories associated with the Near East, it was only in the Transcaucasia, that the presence of the metal helmets was attested from the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium (*ibidem*, 139).

As to the technology of one-piece helmet, it seems to have been lost by the year AD 500, after the fall of the Roman Empire, which resulted in the popularity of segmented helmets (Nickel 2002, 112). The weak point of the segmented helmet is the places where the segments join. It is the rivets that link the segments to each other that bear the brunt of the blow. It is also difficult to give the segmented helmet a curved shape which is good to repel the strike (Williams, Edge 2004, 123-124).

Therefore, in the Middle Ages, when the technology and the level of metallurgy provided an appropriate precondition, the segmented helmet was superseded by its one-piece metal counterpart. The object of the present study occupies a special place in the history of the Oriental helmet.

In Cracow, Poland, the helmet, originally belonging to the Krasieński family, has been preserved in the Museum of the Wawel Palace since 1946 (Żygulski 1982, 219).

Polish authors are well aware of the Wawel helmet and its most complete description is presented in their works<sup>1</sup>. Z. Żygulski, a well-known Polish scholar, published its photos in 1979 in a collection dedicated to Islamic armament, calling it a most valuable 14<sup>th</sup> c. Persian helmet (Żygulski 1979, 231, fig. 240-241).

In his subsequent works Żygulski describes an oviform helmet with a trefoil ornament, culminating in a rosette with an inscription engraved on it; the helmet has shaped eye-slits and is equipped with fastenings for the now lost nasal and aventail (Żygulski 1982, 219). In his

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<sup>1</sup> I am deeply grateful to Michał Dziewulski, Curator of the Military Department of the National Museum in Cracow for his considerable assistance in locating and translating the Polish sources.



Fig. 1. The 14<sup>th</sup>-c. helmet from Wawel Museum – front side. *Photo by St. Michta.*

Ryc. 1. XIV-wieczny hełm z Muzeum na Wawelu – strona przednia. *Fot. St. Michta.*

opinion the dome of the helmet is a real masterpiece created by the armourer. It is made of one piece of steel, the surface being polished to a silvery sheen (Żygulski 1986, 62). The surviving specimens of such perfect military equipment dating from the 14<sup>th</sup>-c. are very rare and Żygulski is justly proud of the fact that one of the most significant specimens of this period is preserved in Poland (*ibidem*, 62).

Indeed, even in the photographs the helmet preserved in Wawel is very impressive (fig. 1-2). Polish experts, who directly dealt with it, cannot conceal their admiration: A. R. Chodyński calls it unique (Chodyński 2000, 32), which, in his view, dates to the 14<sup>th</sup>-c. and is Persian; it is a one-piece steel helmet forged in a good workshop; especially

well-made is the dome, perfectly polished like silver (*ibidem*, 30). L. Kobylński also refers to it as one of the oldest Persian helmets that has come down to us (Kobylński 2000, 69).

H. R. Robinson, whose contribution to the study of Oriental weapons is great, mentions the Wawel helmet in the context of the evolution of the Oriental helmet. In 1967, in his book dealing with Oriental armour, he published a drawing of the helmet, assigning it to helmets of Persian provenance (Robinson 1967, 28, fig. 16:A). He was the first to notice its resemblance to Khusrau II's helmet carved in stone on the Taq-i Bustan relief (the year 620) (*ibidem*, 27-28)<sup>2</sup>. Robinson dates the Wawel helmet to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> and

<sup>2</sup> In order to be more precise, we can speak with certainty about the resemblance of the aventails of these two helmets. Other scholars are of the same opinion, considering the Taq-i Bustan representation to be the prototype of this type of aventail, which was secured to the helmet (Nickel 2002, 114).



Fig. 2. The 14<sup>th</sup>-cent. helmet from Wawel Museum – right side. Photo by St. Michta.

Ryc. 2. XIV-wieczny hełm z Muzeum na Wawelu – prawa strona. Fot. St. Michta.

early 14<sup>th</sup> c., pointing to its resemblance to two other helmets (fig. 3), dating from the same period, which are preserved in Istanbul (*ibidem*, 27-28)<sup>3</sup>. In his view, these helmets are an earlier form of the so-called turban helmet<sup>4</sup>, which evolved from the Persian helmet (*ibidem*, 61). Thus, Robinson presents the evolution of the helmet in general lines (Istanbul helmets – Wawel helmet – turban helmet), which, in spite of some inaccuracies<sup>5</sup>, seems to be logical and acceptable.

Robinson's views on the evolution of the Oriental helmet were specified, extended and

systematized by M. Gorelik in the 1980s. On the basis of this scheme Gorelik considers the way of evolution of one type of sphero-conical helmet according to the following common features: oviform dome, broad crown, shaped eye slits, "brows" forged of steel and fixed to the helmet, flat, sliding nasal and long aventail. He singles out four helmets of this type: two are preserved in Istanbul, the third is the helmet once belonging to Golitsin and preserved in the Armoury of the Kremlin<sup>6</sup>, the fourth belonged to Baqatar from Ossetia. In Gorelik's opinion the oldest is the one

<sup>3</sup> He considers erroneously that both helmets in Istanbul are segmented (Robinson 1967, 60). Robinson also mentions the helmet preserved in the Hermitage which greatly resembles the Wawel one, though, for some reason, he dates it to the 15<sup>th</sup> c. (*ibidem*, 32), for which he was justly criticized by Gorelik (Горелик 1983, 263).

<sup>4</sup> Turban-helmet is a big helm, usually put over the turban, a piece of fabric wound around the head (Robinson 1967, 78); or, which is more trustworthy, it was named so because of their spiral flutings reminiscent of turban folds (Mohamed Bashir 2008, 292).

<sup>5</sup> Considering both Istanbul helmets segmented; dating the Hermitage helmet to a later date, different from that of the Wawel helmet.

<sup>6</sup> Gorelik thinks both helmets of Istanbul and that of Golitsin to have been made in Persia in the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. (Горелик 1987, 192).

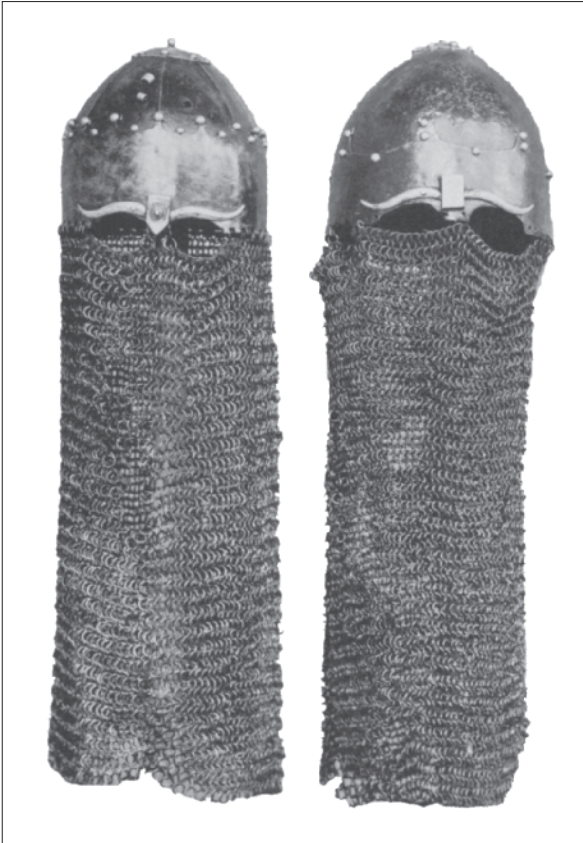


Fig. 3. Helmets preserved in Istanbul (after *Stöcklein 1934, fig. 3*).

Ryc. 3. Hełmy przechowywane w Istantbule (wg *Stöcklein 1934, fig. 3*).

helmet from Istanbul, whose dome consists of several sectors. Then come Golitsins's helmet and the second one of the two helmets of Istanbul whose domes are forged of one piece of steel, but the old sector-structure is presented as decoration<sup>7</sup>. The latest must be Baqatar's helmet whose entire dome is smooth (Горелик 1983, 261-263)<sup>8</sup>.

Gorelik thinks that the following stage of the evolution is the Wawel and Hermitage helmets, which differ only in insignificant details (*ibidem*, 293). And finally, the evolution of this type of helmets is completed by the turban helmet (*ibidem*, 266).

I partially agree with this scheme of evolution, though, in my opinion, certain points call for specification. For instance, I cannot completely

accept Gorelik's dating of the helmets: the Istanbul segmented helmet may be dated to a later period than the one-piece helmet because it is correctly constructed and the shaped eye-slits and the brows are correctly fixed. The other one of the pair, though forged of one piece of steel, bears clear traces of a later alteration. D. Nicolle noticed that the contour of its wide crown is not in symmetry with the nasal<sup>9</sup>, therefore it may be presumed that the eye-slits, the nasal and the brows are a later addition (Nicolle 1999, 216). This means that the dome of the one-piece steel helmet belongs to an earlier period and it was altered only subsequently in keeping with the new tendencies in armament. Nicolle dates the Istanbul helmets to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> c., which is more convincing, though I consider the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. acceptable as well. As I have already said I cannot agree with the dating of Baqatar's helmet either. Which is most important, the Wawel helmet is not necessarily an indispensable stage in the evolution of turban helmets. Moreover, as we shall see below, it is a separate, independent line of evolution.

To determine the provenance and history of the Wawel helmet the inscription it bears is of considerable importance. For a long time even the origin of the inscription had been unknown, to say nothing of its content, which hitherto remained unclear (fig. 4).

In Gorelik's view, the inscription on the helmet resembles Armenian and is impossible to read; it was made in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. by an Armenian from Lvov, who imitated the old Armenian. For an "Ancient Eastern" inscription should add more value to it. Subsequently, the helmet found its way to the Krasinski's (Горелик 1983, 265).

Originally the provenance of the inscription seems to have been unknown even to the Polish authors. Only in the second edition (1984; 1986) of his works (*Stara broń w polskich zbiorach, Broń Wschodnia*) Żygulski writes that the inscription is in Georgian and considers it to be a later addition<sup>10</sup>. It should be said at once that his surmise is correct and, in fact, the inscription was made later, in the 17<sup>th</sup> c.

The inscription on the helmet is really Georgian, its first part (appeal to God and St George) is easily

<sup>7</sup> Imitation of vertical sectors on the one-piece helmet must have come into popular use in the Near East under the influence of Mongols (Горелик 1987, 191).

<sup>8</sup> This dating is somewhat artificial and does not take into account the fact that one-piece steel and segmented helmets were present simultaneously. I do not think it correct to date Baqatar's helmet to the middle or the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. only on the basis of this scheme. Further I shall revert to Baqatar's helmet.

<sup>9</sup> As I have observed, neither are the so-called decorative "eye-brows" fixed in their right place, they also reveal traces of a later alteration.

<sup>10</sup> *The rosette with a Georgian religious inscription added later* (Żygulski 1984, 219). *On the top of the helmet there is a copper plate, evidently with a Georgian inscription added later* (Żygulski 1986, 62).

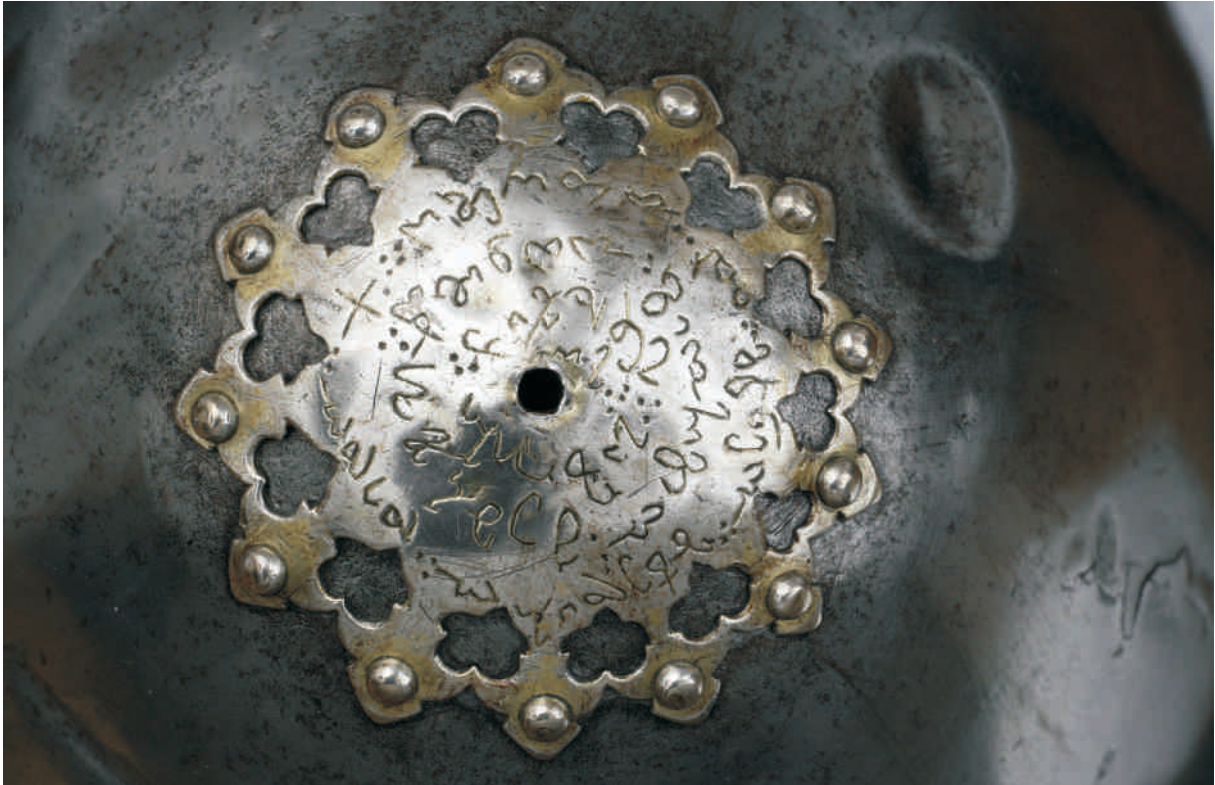


Fig. 4. Wawel helmet rosette with a Georgian inscription. Photo by St. Michta.

Ryc. 4. Rozeta na helmie wawelskim z gruzińską inskrypcją. Fot. St. Michta.

read, in the other part the letters are twisted and interlaced so much that they are very difficult to make out. At my request it was read by Prof. Valery Silogava, a well-known paleographer, for which I owe him deep thanks. The inscription reads as follows, *God and Valiant Warrior, Great St George, may Sazvereli Chijavadze be victorious*. Silogava dated the inscription to the 17<sup>th</sup> c. As we see, the inscription on the Wawel helmet contains much information and provides precise evidence on the identity of its owner.

The Chijavadzes were a powerful feudal house in Imereti, quite often mentioned in the chronicles (Prince Vakhushti 1973, 36). Georgian history knows two Sazvereli Chijavadzes in the 17<sup>th</sup> c.<sup>11</sup> In 1619 one Sazvereli Chijavadze killed Baadur, the former Eristavi (duke) of Aragvi, who had been deported to Imereti, and abducted his wife. Baadur's brother Zurab Eristavi, a well known person in Georgian history, attacked Chijavadze, killing and beheading him (*ibidem*, 428-429). The other Sazvereli Chijavadze participated in the

internecine war waged in Imereti in 1679 and was killed in a battle in Racha (*ibidem*, 843).

As we see, both Chijavadzes lived and were active in Imereti in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. The inscription on the helmet may have been engraved in the period when the helmet belonged to one of them. This means that the helmet forged in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. had remained in Georgia at least for more than three centuries and had been actively used till the very end<sup>12</sup>.

Having identified the owner's name, it is interesting to determine whether this helmet is really Persian, finding its way to Georgia by chance, or it is a logical stage in the evolution of the Georgian helmet.

The spherico-conical helmet of Wawel is adorned with a low crown with a trefoil ornament; it has shaped eye-slits with traces of decorative "brows" which are lost. Between the eye-slits is a socket in which the flat nasal slid up and down, the nasal itself is lost. On the lower edge of the helmet dome there are hooks from which the

<sup>11</sup> *Sazvereli* is the name often occurring in the Chijavadze family house. The name must be associated with the old name of the custom-house – *sazuere* (Berdzenishvili 1964, 188-192). Sazvereli Chijavadze first appears in a document dating to 1401-1407 (Zhordania 1897, 213).

<sup>12</sup> Testifying to this are numerous dents inflicted in fighting, their traces are clearly seen on the helmet.



Fig. 5. Icon from Shemokmedi, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. (after Cowe 2006, fig. 235).

Ryc. 5. Ikonka z Shemokmedi, 2. połowa XI w. (wg Cowe 2006, fig. 235).

aventail was suspended, each of the hooks is secured to the helmet by means of rivets. Through the hooks was passed a metal wire to which the upper rings of the aventail were secured. The long aventail, which is also lost, covered the whole face except the narrow eye-slits and, extending downward, protected the shoulders as well. On the top of the helmet there is a rosette formed of trefoil ornaments, with a Georgian inscription; in the middle there is a small hole probably to fix the globule<sup>13</sup>. The helmet weighs 985 grams, its height is 20 cm, diameter 21.5 cm<sup>14</sup>.

As noted above, the resemblance of the aventail to the Sasanid prototype is evident. Nor

is this surprising, since fastening the mail aventail to the edge of a helmet is Iranian and steppe tradition (Nicolle 1999a, 39).

Nevertheless, I cannot concur with those who unquestionably consider it to be a product of Mongolian Iran and speak of its clear Mongolian characteristics (Горелик 1983, 260-266). Many details of 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> c. helmets, that were considered to be Mongolian, after a thorough study can no longer be thought as such.

The globule ending, characteristic of the helmets found in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. Persian miniatures, is not Mongolian at all (*ibidem*, 261). Warriors' helmets have similar globules in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. Pavnisi fresco

<sup>13</sup> If we judge by the size of the hole and certain analogies.

<sup>14</sup> Here I would like to thank Krzysztof Czyżewski, Curator of the Military Department of the Wawel Museum and Marta Golik-Gryglas, from the Photographic Department of the same museum for their helpfulness and assistance with the photographs.

(Privalova 1977, pl. VI:2). The case is the same with the helmets depicted in miniature 186v of the 12<sup>th</sup> c. *Second Tetraevangelion of Jruchi*, preserved at the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. In these miniatures of 27 helmets 26 (!) are adorned with globules<sup>15</sup>, which indicates that this tradition had existed in Georgia (and probably in the whole Transcaucasus as well)<sup>16</sup> before the appearance of Mongols.

Also, in Gorelik's opinion, helmets with a ring fixed on the top with two leather tongues suspending from it were widespread in Mongolian Iran. He even considers the latter to be a dating element. In his words, this detail is attested for the first time in the Tabriz miniatures dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. and on the Mosul metal of the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> c. (Горелик 1987, 194). Neither is this surmise of the scholar correct, the leather tongues are attested as far back as on the helmet depicted on an Arthukid coin<sup>17</sup>. Apart from that in the Azerbaijani miniatures, created at the turn of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> c., helmets with large leather tongues are depicted (Nicolle 1999, fig. 558:be-bf). It speaks of the presence of the regional tradition before the advent of the Mongols and of the fact that in many cases the roots of the features characteristic of Ilkhan-Mongolian armament must be looked for in the local, Transcaucasian traditions as well<sup>18</sup>.

Helmets terminating in a rosette, which is considered to be a specific detail characteristic of the Mongolian epoch and unknown to the western part of Asia (*ibidem*, 189), is not alien to Georgia

Fig. 6. Warriors with one-piece and segmented spherico-conical helmets from *The Second Tetraevangelion of Jruchi*. Manuscript H1667, fragment of folio 186v. National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 6. Przedstawienia wojowników z hełmami wykonanymi z jednego kawałka metalu i segmentowymi hełmami sfero-konicznymi z *Drugiej Tetraewangelii Jruchiego*. Rękopis H1667, fragment folio 186v. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.

<sup>15</sup> The helmets of the warriors of miniatures 231r and 236r are also crowned with globules; in each of these miniatures three such helmets are represented.

<sup>16</sup> At the turn of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> c. a helmet furnished with a globule can be noticed in a couple of Azerbaijani miniatures (Nicolle 1999, fig. 558:u,x).

<sup>17</sup> On the copper dirhem struck in 1200 by Husam ad-Din Yuluq Arslan, the Arthukid ruler of Mardin, the helmet with two tongues can be seen clearly.

<sup>18</sup> A slightly different decoration can be noticed in the 14<sup>th</sup>-c. Georgia, where the helmet ends in a traditional globule through which a knotted thong is passed. This thong may have had some practical function too, it was used for the helmet to hang on. It cannot be ruled out that such a decoration may have existed earlier, and due to less concentration on details, they were not represented in the earlier miniatures.





Fig. 7. The so-called Jalal ad-Din's helmet. Georgian State Museum. *Photo by M. Tsurtsumia.*

Ryc. 7. Tzw. hełm Dżalal ad-Dina. Gruzińskie Muzeum Narodowe. *Fot. M. Tsurtsumia.*

either. Rosette termination of the helmet occurs several times in miniature 186v of *Jruchi*, executed in the 12<sup>th</sup> c., much earlier than the first appearance of the Mongols.

Most importantly, it is not right to assert the spreading of one-piece steel helmets in the region only on the basis of Iranian data. In Gorelik's opinion helmets forged of one piece of metal became widespread in Iran from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. (*ibidem*, 261). This date should be shifted to an earlier date: one piece sphero-conical helmets were widespread in the Transcaucasian region before they began to be depicted in the 14<sup>th</sup>-c. Persian miniatures.

The three warriors, portrayed on the Shemokmedi icon dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 11<sup>th</sup> c., wear one-piece helmets (Cowe 2006, 348, fig. 235): they are lower and more conic than the high, sphero-conical helmets characteristic of the following period (fig. 5). Of great interest is

the lengthened part of the helmet which covers the back of the head and the upper part of the neck, this is characteristic of later helmets. The warriors, depicted in miniature 111r of the *Second Tetraevangelion of Jruchi* dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> c., have similar features.

Numerous one-piece helmets occur in miniatures 111r, 118r and 186v of the *Second Tetraevangelion of Jruchi*. In miniature 186v the warriors wear one-piece and segmented sphero-conical helmets provided with an aventail and a narrow band resembling a crown; the helmet dome culminates in a rosette topped with a globule (fig. 6). Most certainly they are predecessors of the Wawel-type helmet.

At the same time, the Wawel helmet differs from Islamic specimens for it has less European-style ornamentation. There is no ornament which might cover the dome completely or even partially, it bears no inscriptions from the Koran either in





Fig. 8. Helmet depicted in the Redeemer's Church in Chazhashi. Photo by S. Sarjveladze.

Ryc. 8. Hełm na ścianie kościoła Odkupiciela w Chazhashi. Fot. S. Sarjveladze.

Arabic or Persian. The shape of the helmet dome continues the local, Transcaucasian tradition rather than that of the Mongols; a rosette on the top and a globule as well as a complete aventail had been in popular use before the coming of the Mongols<sup>19</sup>. In the Mongolian period shaped eye-slits with decorative eyebrows must have been widespread, though thanks to the Qipchaks (or other nomad tribes) it also may have been known before.

The presence of one-piece and wide-crowned helmets in Georgia is proved by material evidence as well. The so-called "Jalal ad-Din's helmet" is preserved in the Georgian State Museum; according to the evidence found in the *Charter of the Amirejibi house* of the years 1401-1415, it was taken away from the defeated Jalal ad-Din himself in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. and subsequently donated to the Mravaldzali Monastery (Zhordania 1897, 210-211). Although this report is not true<sup>20</sup>, the Mravaldzali Monastery did really possess a helmet, that has come down to us (fig. 7).

The so-called "Jalal ad-Din's helmet" has a wide crown, secured by rivets and furnished with a wide scalloped crown; the system of fastening of the aventail is similar to that of the Wavel helmet, a metal wire passed through the suspending hooks. The helmet is damaged and deformed, but it can still be conjectured that it had neither the shaped eye-slits nor the nasal. The dome

apex is damaged and it cannot be seen how it terminated. Now the helmet weighs 964 grams, the original weight must have been more than 1 kg (without the aventail). Its diameter is 21 cm, height 13.8 cm, though the original height may have been at least 17-18 cm<sup>21</sup>.

In spite of its present condition, it is still possible to draw definite conclusions. Its dome is forged quite well, which must be indicative of the existing tradition, though a number of features such as the not-so-accurate securing of the crown to the dome, the irregular rows of the crown rivets, point to not a very masterly skill of workmanship<sup>22</sup>. The helmet had not yet achieved the exquisite form characteristic of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. And this may be indicative of the initial steps of the wide crown coming into use in Georgia. It cannot be ruled out that here we may be dealing with local, provincial craftsmanship of the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.

As can be seen, on Jalal ad-Din's helmet, alongside the local features that had already become widespread in the region (one-piece steel helmet, aventail) a new motif – a wide crown instead of the narrow band, which was characteristic of the 12<sup>th</sup> c., can be noticed<sup>23</sup>.

For the sake of comparison, in place of scallops the Wavel helmet is adorned with frequent trefoil ornaments; its crown is much lower. If we

<sup>19</sup> The fact that the mail face guard covered the whole face of the Georgian warrior is supported in Shota Rustaveli's *The Knight in the Panther's Skin: They were hid under aventails which covered their faces* (stanza 1379).

<sup>20</sup> Georgians never defeated Jalal ad-Din in any of the battles, to say nothing of depriving him of his helmet.

<sup>21</sup> I am deeply grateful to Mamuka Kapianidze, Curator of the Armour Fonds of the Georgian National Museum, who provided excellent conditions for my work.

<sup>22</sup> The quality of the helmet excludes its ever belonging to Jalal ad-Din.

<sup>23</sup> The crown scallops, similar to those on "Jalal ad-Din's helmet", can be seen in the Amiran-darejaniani composition depicted on the exterior north façade of the Chazhashi church in Svaneti (fig. 8). The helmet, represented here, terminates in a rosette. It cannot be ruled out that the long band drawn over the crown could be a crudely painted nasal slid up. If it were a band separating the segments it should be concealed under the crown.

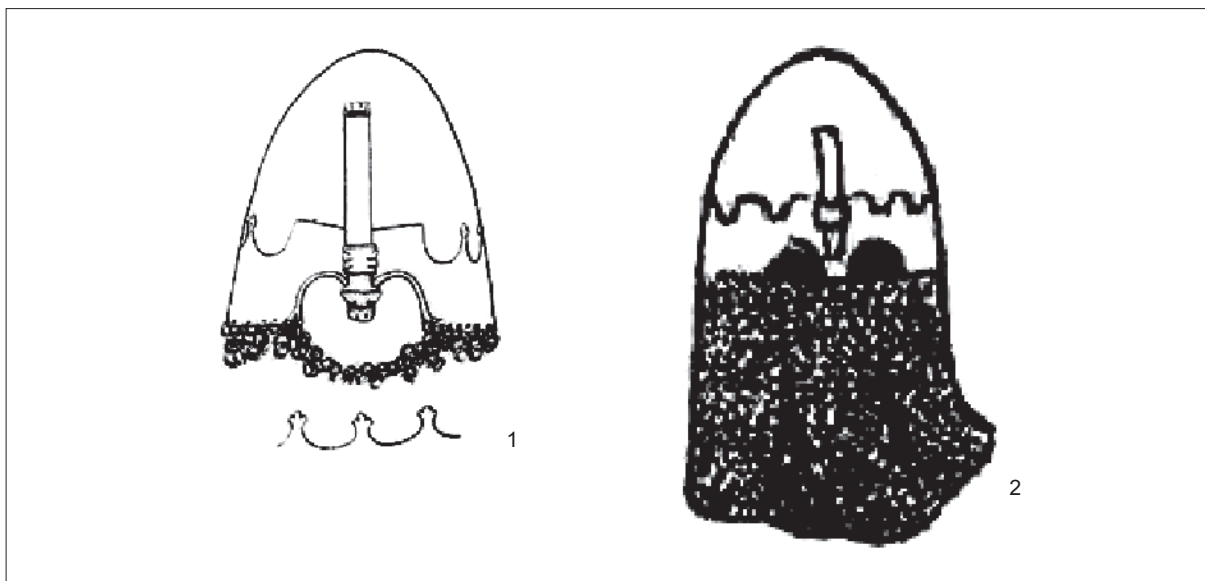


Fig. 9. Baqatar's helmet: 1 – V. Pfaf's sketch of 1869; 2 – A. Miller's sketch of 1928 (after Кузнецов 1990, рис. 18:4-5).

Ryc. 9. Helm Baqatara: 1 – szkic V. Pfafsa z 1869 r.; 2 – szkic A. Millera z 1928 r. (wg Кузнецов 1990, рис. 18:4-5).

judge according to these traits, the Baqatar helmet may be considered a transitional form, for on this helmet the trefoil ornament is already used to embellish it, though rarer than on the Wawel and Hermitage helmets (Горелик, 1983, 263). Its crown is still high, manifesting a similarity with Jalal ad-Din-type helmet.

After “Jalal ad-Din's helmet” the next stage in the evolution is the so-called “Baqatar's helmet”, whose resemblance to the Wawel helmet is quite evident. In Nicolle's opinion the construction of both of these helmets *betrays considerable metallurgical skill and an ability to deal with large pieces of plate metal* (Nicolle 1999, 240). Since Baqatar's helmet plays an important role in my research, it would be interesting to get better acquainted with its history.

The well-known Ossetian temple Rekom is situated in the Tsei valley near Georgia. Numerous offerings (weapons among them), which had a historical value, accumulated here in the course of centuries. Among other things there were Georgian icons, a large bell bearing a Georgian inscription donated to the temple in 1688 by Giorgi, son of Vakhtang V, King of Georgia (Кузнецов 1990, 5-6). The link of this temple (whose name must have originated from the Georgian word “rkoni”) with Georgia is unquestionable (*ibidem*, 9). The temple per se bears resemblance to other Georgian churches built in Ossetia (*ibidem*, 25).

As late as the 19<sup>th</sup> c. in Rekom there was a helmet which, according to tradition had belonged to Baqatar, a legendary Ossetian hero. According to travelers' descriptions (V. Pfaf, A. Miller), with its drawings (fig. 9:1-2), it was a steel helmet with a sliding nasal and an aventail. In Kuznetsov's opinion, who made a study of Rekom, here we deal with a historical person, who really existed and lived at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> c. and participated in battles in Georgia (*ibidem*, 37). And, indeed, a Georgian chronicler narrates the history of a family driven out of Ossetia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. by the Golden Horde; the young sons of the family Parejan and Baqatar settled in Georgia (Zhamtaaghmtsereli 1987, 136). Baqatar became the leader of the Ossetians living in Georgia, gaining considerable power. He took an active part in the wars waged on the territory of Georgia, and died in one of the battles near Dzama fortress in 1306 or 1307 (*ibidem*, 198, 210-212). After his death he was apparently taken to Ossetia where he was buried in his family crypt, his equipment (helmet, lance and quiver)<sup>24</sup> was donated to Rekom (Кузнецов 1990, 40).

As I have said above, the dating of “Baqatar's helmet” to the middle or the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. seems rather far-fetched (Горелик 1983, 263; Nicolle 1999, 240)<sup>25</sup>. By the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> c. all the features characteristic of “Baqatar's helmet” had already existed: the sphero-conical dome forged

<sup>24</sup> According to some other evidence, also, the vambraces and the mace.

<sup>25</sup> D. Nicolle himself considers his dating rather doubtful, which, indeed, is not based on anything real.



Fig. 10. Helmet preserved in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Inv. no VO-1235. Copyright © by The State Hermitage Museum. *Photo by P. Demidov.*

Ryc. 10. Helm ze zbiorów Państwowego Muzeum Ermitażu, Sankt Petersburg, nr inw. VO-1235. Copyright © Państwowe Muzeum Ermitażu. *Fot. P. Demidov.*

of one piece of steel<sup>26</sup>, shaped eye-slits<sup>27</sup> and the sliding nasal<sup>28</sup>. It is noteworthy that the renowned researcher into Russian armour A. Kirpichnikov concurs with the dating of Baqatar's helmet to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. (Кузнецов 1990, 39). E. Narozhny, a researcher into the armament of the Northern Caucasus also assumes that Baqatar's armament was really preserved in Rekom and dates the helmet to the period contemporary with Baqatar (Нарожный 2003, 118).

In my opinion, the armament and the helmet preserved in Rekom did belong to the Ossetian prince Baqatar. Naturally, he may have gained possession of it (purchased or obtained) in Georgia<sup>29</sup>. A. Salnikov does not rule out the possibility of spreading the armament to the Northern Caucasus from Georgia either, though he considered it to be a territory under the influence of the armament of Mongolian Iran (Сальников 2008, 68, 104).

<sup>26</sup> See the representations of the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c. Georgian helmets.

<sup>27</sup> The arched cut-outs above the eyes were attested in Syria-Palestine as far back as the middle of the second millennium (Горелик 2003, 137). Subsequently these characteristic details of the helmet spread to the entire Eurasian continent and continued to be used as late as the 17<sup>th</sup> c.

<sup>28</sup> The sliding nasal, which could be raised, was invented to make arrow-shooting easier, so that the bowstring should not get caught on the nasal (Nicolle 1993, 10). The sliding nasal was first undeniably attested at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. on the helmet of the Mameluk Sultan Muhammad ibn Qalaun (Nicolle 1976, 42, f. 134).

<sup>29</sup> By the way, according to its description Baqatar's mace, a massive cylinder put on a handle with six flanges and a globule on top – greatly resembles the type of the mace widespread in Georgia, its numerous representations can be found in Psalter H1655. It is proved by the material evidence as well. The weapons attested by E. Taqaişvili in the churches of Svaneti show that the six-flanged maces was very popular: two such iron maces were preserved in St George's church in the village of Saqdari, a six-flanged copper mace was in the church of Chukuli, two six-flanged maces – in the Redeemer's church of Chvabiani, a six-flanged iron mace – in the Redeemer's church of Laghami (Taqaişvili 1937, 101, 119, 248, 291). This is another argument in favour of the Georgian provenance of Baqatar's armament.



Fig. 11. One-piece sphero-conical helmets of *Psalter*. Manuscript H1665, f. 233r. National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 11. Jednoczęściowe sfero-koniczne hełmy w *Psalterzu*. Rękopis H1665, folio 233r. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.

“Baqatar’s helmet”, after slight alterations (the dome is perfected finally, the crown is lowered, the trefoil ornaments are more frequent, each attached separately, a rosette appears) is transformed into a Wawel-type helmet in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. The perfectly

forged helmet, preserved in the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg (fig. 10), is of the same kind, it beyond doubt belongs to the Wawel type, differing from it only in insignificant details: here the trefoil ornament is enclosed from the above



Fig. 12. Goliath with helmet, nasal is not visible. *Psalter*, manuscript H1665, fragment of f. 230r. National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 12. Goliat w hełmie, nosal niewidoczny. *Psalterz*, rękopis H1665, fragment folio 230r. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.



Fig. 13. The same helmet with the nasal, next to beheaded Goliath. *Psalter*, manuscript H1665, fragment of f. 230v. National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 13. Ten sam hełm z nosalem obok pozbawionego głowy Goliata. *Psalterz*, rękopis H1665, fragment folio 230v. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.

as well, the dome is a little lower, terminating in a plain cone instead of a rosette<sup>30</sup>. The nasals, shaped eye-slits and brows, trefoil ornaments, fastening system of the aventail and suspending hooks, each with a separate rivet, are also similar<sup>31</sup>. The Hermitage helmet weighs 1456 grams, its height is 18.2 cm, the diameter – 20.6 cm<sup>32</sup>. As can be seen, in spite of slight differences, the resemblance between the Hermitage and Wawel helmets is so great that we may think of their belonging to one and the same workshop; but I refrain from drawing such a conclusion first of all because of their difference in weight: in spite of the slightly small dimensions, the Hermitage helmet is almost half a kg heavier than its twin helmet. Though we can easily suppose that both of these helmets were made side by side, in one region and at the same period.

There are many representations of helmets characteristic of this epoch in *Psalter* H1665, dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c., preserved at the National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia

(fig. 11). The helmets of the *Psalter*, especially the shape of their domes, greatly resemble the Wawel helmet. They differ only in the aventail and the nasal, though this can also be accounted for. The absence of the mail face guard and the nasal in the *Psalter* miniatures may be explained by the tradition accepted in ecclesiastic painting. As is known, depicting people with their faces covered is not characteristic of the Orthodox iconographic tradition (Жуков 2005, 26). More often than not sliding nasal is not depicted in miniatures either (Бобров, Худяков 2002, 131). Nasals were represented rarely in Persian miniatures too (Robinson 1967, 28). This is corroborated by two miniatures of the *Psalter* H1665, representing the fight between David and Goliath, which offers us a unique opportunity to compare the helmets worn on the head or removed: miniature 230r shows Goliath, fully equipped for fighting, but no nasal can be seen on his helmet (fig. 12), in the miniature 230v there is a helmet lying on the ground next to the beheaded Goliath, this time the nasal is clearly seen, especially

<sup>30</sup> E. Lenz, for some reason, refers to the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>-c. European ornament present on the dome of the Hermitage helmet (Ленц, 1908, 134). The same is repeated by Gorelik (Горелик 1983, 265). Having studied the digital photos, sent from the Hermitage, I came to the conclusion that the helmet is not covered with any kind of ornaments.

<sup>31</sup> They complement each other to a certain extent: the decorative brows surviving on the Hermitage helmet give some idea about the lost ones of the Wawel helmet, the socket of the nasal, still present on the Wawel helmet, fully “complements” the holes left on the Hermitage helmet. All this provides valuable evidence for their reconstruction.

<sup>32</sup> The photographs of this helmet are published for the first time (if we do not take into account the lithograph), for this I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the employees of the Hermitage Museum, my special thanks to Tatyana Kireeva, for her helpfulness and gracious permission to publish them gratis.



Fig. 14. Avtandil with Wavel-type helmet secured to the saddle pommel. Tavakarashvili's copy of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, manuscript H599, f. 255. National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 14. Avtandil z hełmem w typie wawelskim przytroczonym do siodła. Kopia *Księcia w tygrysiej skórze* według Tavakarashviliego, rękopis H599, folio 255. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.



Fig. 15. Vakhtang Gurieli (after Castelli 1976, pl. 44).

Ryc. 15. Vakhtang Gurieli (wg Castelli 1976, pl. 44).



Fig. 16. Mamia Gurieli (after Castelli 1976, pl. 43).

Ryc. 16. Mamia Gurieli (wg Castelli 1976, pl. 43).

its lower part (fig. 13). There is no doubt that there must have been open helmets without a mail face guard as well, but the fact that all the helmets in the Psalter are open should “be blamed” on the artist<sup>33</sup>.

The Wawel-type helmet was very popular in Georgia and, slightly modified, it was in use for three or four centuries, until the end of the feudal period. This fact is referred to simultaneously and independently of each other by two sources in which the Georgia of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 17<sup>th</sup> c. is described: Mamuka Tavakarashvili’s miniatures of *The Knight in the Panther’s Skin*<sup>34</sup> and Christophoro Castelli’s albums.

Tavakarashvili, Secretary of the King of Imereti, when kept prisoner at the court of Levan II Dadiani in Samegrelo in 1646, copied *The Knight*

*in the Panther’s Skin*. In his miniatures two types of helmets are represented: the turban helmet (comparatively rarer) and the Wawel helmet with a slight modification. In miniature 255 a helmet secured on to the pommel of Avtandil’s saddle, is analogous to the Wawel helmet: the shape of the dome, decorative eyebrows, aventail, rosette on the top of the helmet, shape of the crown, its upper part exactly repeating the ornament of the Wawel helmet<sup>35</sup> (fig. 14). The warriors, depicted in a whole group of miniatures (138, 187, 199, 319, 341 and 429), also wear such helmets. A slight modification was introduced into the back of the helmet whose metal part extends downward, completely covering the back of the head, the upper part of the neck and the ears<sup>36</sup>. In separate cases in

<sup>33</sup> This is further corroborated by the representations of the Wawel-type helmets dating from a later period, they confirm my conjecture and refer to the fact that the artists were under a certain limitation when depicting helmets of a covered type. The discussion of the 17<sup>th</sup>-c. examples connected with this iconographic problem is presented below.

<sup>34</sup> Manuscript H599, preserved at the National Centre of Manuscripts.

<sup>35</sup> It is understandable that due to the small size, the artist’s presentation of the trefoil ornament is simplified. It is noteworthy that Avtandil’s outer garments are entirely covered with trefoil ornaments (miniatures 255; 300 and 310); in *The Knight in the Panther’s Skin* Levan Dadiani’s, Tariel’s, Nestan Darejan’s and Rostevan’s clothes are also adorned with trefoil patterns.

<sup>36</sup> It means that the Georgian helmet underwent the same transformation the European bascinet had undergone in the 14<sup>th</sup> c., beginning with the year 1330, it extended downward, covering the ears and the neck (Blair 1958, 67). It is difficult to say when it happened in Georgia, because, as a matter of fact, no information is available about the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>-c. helmets.



Fig. 17. Sabakhtar Avalishvili (after Castelli 1976, pl. 48).

Ryc. 17. Sabakhtar Avalishvili (wg Castelli 1976, pl. 48).

place of a globule, the top of the helmet is adorned with a small flag, which was popular in the late Middle Ages.

The Italian missionary Don Cristoforo de Castelli resided and was active in Georgia during the years 1624-1654. His drawings are a unique source of information about the Georgia of his time. The helmets, represented in Castelli's album, bear great resemblance to the Wawel helmet, practically repeating Tavakarashvili's miniatures (fig. 15-16; Castelli 1967, pl. 43-44, 48). Like Tavakarashvili's miniatures, Georgian helmets depicted by Castelli bear traces of a later modification and are characterized by a lengthened neck guard. The



Fig. 18. St. Demetrius' armour with lilies, Lahili (after Чубинашвили 1959, puc. 432).

Ryc. 18. Zdobiony liliami pancierz św. Dymitra, Lahili (wg Чубинашвили 1959, puc. 432).

helmets are also additionally furnished with a flag and a crest. In other respects Castelli's drawings reveal surprising resemblance to the helmet under consideration.

The information provided in these sources is interesting from another viewpoint as well: in most cases Castelli describes western Georgia,



Fig. 19. King Teimuraz II's cannon with trefoil ornaments. Georgian National Museum. *Photo by author.*

Ryc. 19. Działo króla Teimuraza II z trójlistnym ornamentem. Muzeum Narodowe Gruzji. *Fot. M. Tsurtsunia.*



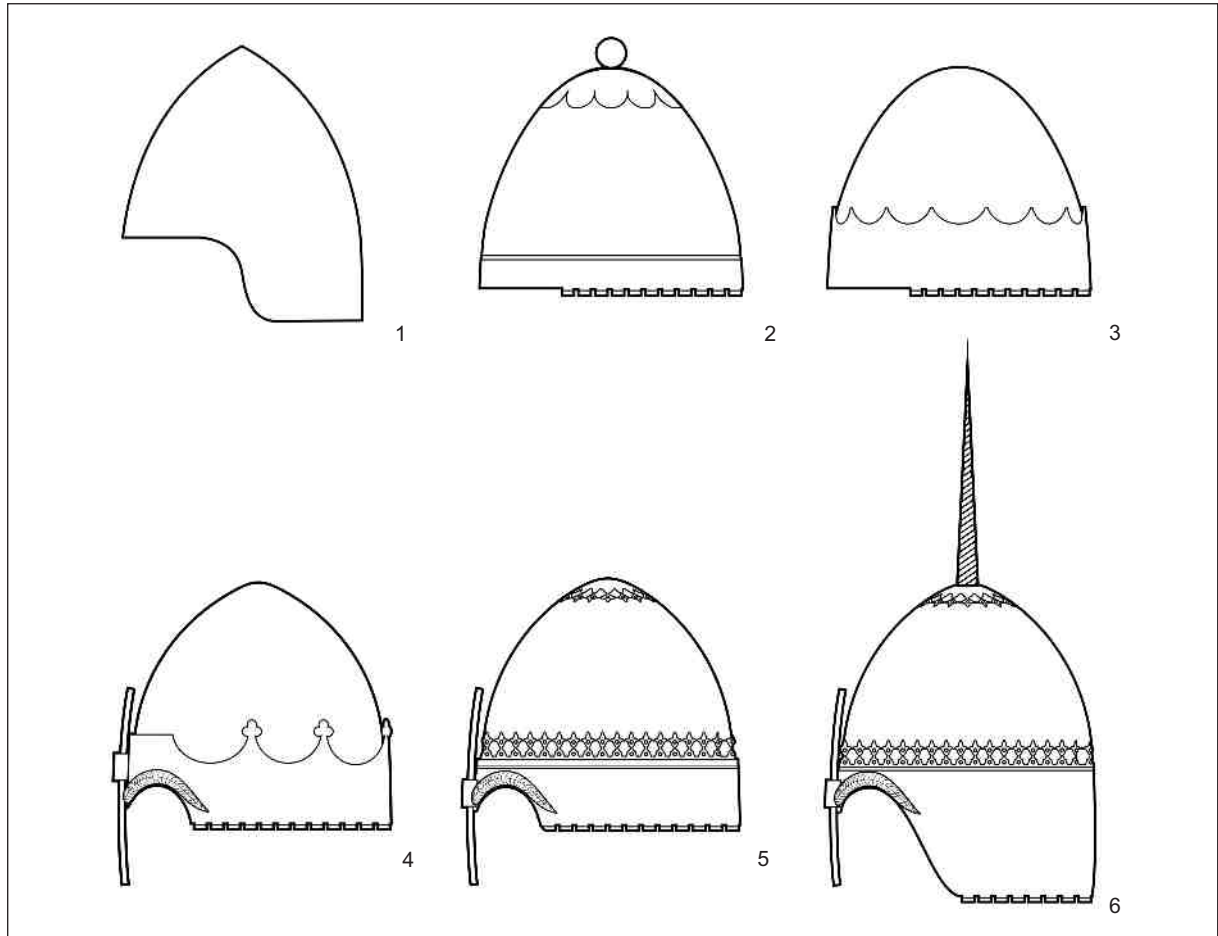


Fig. 20. The evolution of the sphero-conical helmet in Georgia: 1 – Shemokmedi icon, 11<sup>th</sup> c.; 2 – *Second Tetraevangelion of Jruchi*, 12<sup>th</sup> c.; 3 – “Jalal ad-Din’s helmet”, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.; 4 – “Baqatar’s helmet”, end of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.; 5 – Wawel helmet, 14<sup>th</sup> c.; 6 – Castelli’s and Tavakarashvili’s sketches, 17<sup>th</sup> c.

Ryc. 20. Ewolucja hełmów sfero-konicznych w Gruzji: 1 – ikonka z Shemokmedi, XI w.; 2 – *Druga Tetraewangelia Jruchiego*, XII w.; 3 – „hełm Dżalal ad-Dina”, 2. połowa XIII w.; 4 – „hełm Baqatara”, koniec XIII w.; 5 – hełm z Wawelu, XIV w.; 6 – szkice Castelli’ego i Tavakarashvili’ego, XVII w.

and Tavakarashvili, too, was active in this part of the country. Therefore in their works they both reflect the reality of Western Georgia. Unlike Eastern Georgia, its Western counterpart never experienced Mongol-Persian influence. The fact that Wawel-type helmet is most highly developed in Western Georgia cannot be accounted for by the possible Mongolian provenance and Persian influence.

After looking at Tavakarashvili’s and Castelli’s works we can come to an unequivocal conclusion that Wawel-type helmets had gained firm ground in Georgia and they were made and used in various forms and modifications.

The works just cited are also of great assistance in solving one iconographic problem. I have already spoken about the issues of a covered face in Orthodox art. The miniatures of *The Knight in the Panther’s Skin* offer a unique opportunity to make certain that because of the iconographic rules and traditions the warrior equipped with a helmet and a full aventail was still depicted with

his face open. The faces of the characters, portrayed in Tavakarashvili’s miniatures are always open, their aventails protecting only their throats and necks. At the same time, in miniature 255, Avtandil’s similar helmet, suspended from the pommel of his saddle, is represented with a complete aventail, showing only the eye slits. In the same manner, Tariel’s face is always visible when he wears a helmet, but after capturing the fortress of the Kajis in miniature 429, his removed helmet is depicted with a full aventail which can also cover the face.

Similar artistic treatment can be noticed in Castelli’s album too. He portrays Georgian historical figures with their faces open, so all of them wear Wawel-type helmets. But the same helmet, suspended from Sabakhtar Avalishvili’s saddle pommel, is equipped with an aventail which covers the whole face except the eyes (fig. 17). This proves once more that the artist avoided covering the face and one should not be misled by the helmet



Fig. 21. Massacre of Clergymen by Doeg. In the foreground – warrior with turban helmet. Manuscript H1665, f. 192v, National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia.

Ryc. 21. Doeg urządza rzeź duchownych. Na pierwszym planie wojownik w hełmie turbanowym. Rękopis H1665, folio 192v. Gruzińskie Narodowe Centrum Rękopisów.



Fig. 22. Shirvanshah Farrukh-Siar's (1464-1501) turban-helmet. The nasal, the brows and the aventail are lost (after *Turkish... 1995, pl. 91*).

Ryc. 22. Helm turbanowy Shirvanshaha Farrukh-Siara (1464-1501). Nosal, brwi i czepiec kolczy zaginęły (wg *Turkish... 1995, pl. 91*).

depicted in this manner: the same helmet, but already removed from the head, is depicted with a full aventail.

Apart from similar shapes, the Wawel, Baqatar's and the Hermitage helmets have another trait in common: they are adorned with the ornamental lily or trefoil patterns. In spite of the

fact that the lily (or trefoil) ornaments are quite widespread<sup>37</sup>, for my research the representations of the trefoil motif used in Georgia are the most significant.

It transpires that the motif of the lily (or trefoil) is not alien to Georgian art. Even without special research, just after a superficial look,

<sup>37</sup> It should be noted that the motif of decorating the helmet with lily ornaments occurs in Europe too; it is depicted on Sir John Marmion's (West Tanfield, Yorkshire, 1386) and an unknown knight's (Much Marcle, Herefordshire, c. 1410) bascinets (Blair 1958, fig. 24:B-C). The lily ornaments are disposed here as they are on the Wawel helmet. I am sure that a special research will reveal more of such European helmets. This raises a question about the introduction of this type of helmet ornament from Europe. If this is true, it can be presumed that one of the directions of its spreading was from the Black Sea European colonies into and via Georgia. It may have been the European lily that the local trefoil ornament was adapted from.

numerous specimens of this ornament can be found both on architectural monuments, in icons and miniatures<sup>38</sup>.

In the church of the Archangels in the village of Zemo Krikhi, built at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> c., the arch on the east wall is adorned with lily ornaments (*Racha...* 2008, 65); the ornament of lilies extends along the whole length of the chancel apse in St George's church of Achi (*Georgia's...* 2005, 215).

A band of lily ornaments runs along the central part of the icon of Simeon Stylites (Cowe 2006, 345, fig. 233). It is lilies that cover the frame of the Anchi icon, adorned and inlaid with precious stones by Beka Opizari in the 12<sup>th</sup> c. St. Stephane's garments are adorned with trefoil ornaments on the 14<sup>th</sup>-c. fresco in the church of Archangels in Lashkhveti (*Svaneti...* 2008, fig. 22).

The trefoil ornament embellishes the miniature of Psalter H1665, narrating the story of the romance between King David and Bathsheba (Amiranashvili 1961, pl. 114).

The main point is that the lily (trefoil) ornament is characteristic of Georgian military equipment as well. For instance, such is St Demetrius' quilted armour with lilies on the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>-c. icon of Lahili (fig. 18; Чубинашвили 1959, 261, pl. 432). The decoration of the band on the Warrior Saint's shield with lilies on the 12<sup>th</sup>-c. fresco of Pavnisi is also of considerable interest (Привалова 1977, pl. XIV:5). A later but very characteristic specimen is attested on King Teimuraz II's cannon of the year 1750, on which a full analogue of the ornament depicted on the Wavel and Hermitage helmets can be seen (fig. 19).

Another point should also be underlined: in Tavakarashvili's and Castelli's drawings the helmets of the warriors are adorned with trefoil ornaments. Whereas in the miniatures of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* this ornament is presented more schematically, in Castelli's drawings, copied directly from nature, the trefoil ornament of the helmet crown is clearly seen, so that there is no doubt about it. This is a kind of helmet the ruler of Guria Mamia Gurieli wears, the same may be said about Vakhtang Gurieli and Sabakhtar Avalishvili (Castelli 1976, pl. 43-44, 48). In my opinion, proceeding from its being in popular use, adorning helmets with trefoil patterns must be considered a national trait of the Georgian helmet.

As can be seen, in the evolution of the Georgian helmet per se, which acquired its complete form in the 17<sup>th</sup> c., the most significant are the helmets of Shemokmedi, Jruchi, Jalal ad-Din, Baqatar and Wavel; the crowning point of this process is the helmets described by Castelli and Tavakarashvili (fig. 20).

Now we shall have a brief look at the turban helmet, which developed in parallel with the Wavel helmet. The earliest form of the turban helmet emerged in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus in the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> c., in the 15<sup>th</sup> c. it was widespread in Iran (Nicolle 1990, 38). It is noteworthy that the first appearance of turban helmets is attested in the miniatures of a Georgian Psalter dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. The artist represents turban helmets in the form of twisted spirals in miniatures 192v, 204r, 213v (fig. 21).

The earliest surviving specimen of the turban helmet is the so-called "Sultan Orkhan's helmet", dating from 1326-1360, it is now preserved in the Military Museum in Istanbul. Such helmets are characteristic of 15<sup>th</sup> c. Moslem armies (Nicolle 1998, 164).

D. Alexander studies a group of the surviving turban helmets which had already attained their final form and were the earliest after Sultan Orkhan's helmet. They are associated with Aqqyunlu (White Sheep) Turkman tribes and Shirvan and date to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. (Fig. 22; Alexander 1984, 98-101). It is evident that Aqqyunlu nomad tribes could not have been able to forge helmets of such complex technology<sup>39</sup>. These helmets were apparently made in Shirvan. The Venetian ambassador Barbaro narrates that Aqqyunlu tribes obtained the greater part of their armaments in the Caucasus, namely – in Shirvan (Alexander 1984, 99; Barbaro, Contarini 2009, 66).

Thus, most of the earliest turban helmets are connected with Shirvan; at the same time in its neighbouring Georgia the sphero-conical helmet evolved. No doubt, there must have been active exchange of armament and innovations between these territories. These processes were localized in one region – Transcaucasia, which was an important centre of armament making (helmets among them). A lot of direct or indirect evidence points to the active role of Transcaucasian (Georgian in particular) smithies in the process of making armaments of that time<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> V. Kuznetsov also notes that the ornaments present on Georgian architectural monuments bear great resemblance to the one represented on *Baqatar's helmet* (Кузнецов 1990, 38).

<sup>39</sup> It is noteworthy that one-piece sphero-conical helmets are not characteristic of Central Asian nomads either, which must have been due to the complexity of the forging process (Бобров, Худяков 2008, 461).

<sup>40</sup> It is interesting that one type of the sphero-conical helmet, in wide use in Russia in the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> cents. (Russian "erikhonka"), was called Georgian, which, in Lenz's opinion, was caused by the high quality of the helmets brought from the Caucasus (Шервашидзе 1964, 55; Винклер 1992, 278).

In my opinion, at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. Transcaucasia witnessed further evolution of the Jalal ad-Din type helmet, developing in two directions: in Christian Transcaucasia (especially in Western Georgia) the so-called Wawel line developed and Jalal ad-Din's helmet evolved into Baqatar's and Wawel's (also of the Hermitage) ones; in the Islamic Caucasus (Shirvan and Azerbaijan) the turban helmet developed<sup>41</sup>.

Finally, the only question to be answered is how our helmet may have found its way to Poland.

As already ascertained, the Wawel helmet remained in Georgia at least until the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 17<sup>th</sup> c. and only after that it found itself abroad. In my view, it must have been bought by Polish noblemen in the period when they were keen on the East. B. Baranowski, a Polish historian, writes: *In the seventeenth century the Caucasian fashion exercised great influence on the Polish fashion; it immediately leapt to the eyes of foreigners. West European travelers, who, in the seventeenth century, especially during its second part, visited Istanbul, noted that the garments of the Polish envoys were almost similar to those of Georgians or Circassians. Jan Sobieski, King of Poland, was usually clad in Caucasian attire. By means of special envoys he found out about the fashion in Circassia or in Georgia. Horse saddles and harness were also made according to Circassian or Georgian specimens* (Барановский 1979, 256). The process of orientalization of the Polish armament had gone so far that in 1683, in the battle for liberating Vienna from the Turks, Jan Sobieski ordered his warriors to gird themselves with bands of straw so that their Austrian allies be able to distinguish them from the Turks (Nadolski 1964, 171). It must be remembered that a certain number of Georgians were engaged in the military service in Poland and took part in wars as well (Барановский 1979, 259-260).

Thus, it cannot be ruled out that the helmet which once belonged to Chijavadze and after his

death fell into the hands of another person, may have been sold in Poland, where, eventually it found its way to the Krasiński family. It is quite possible that this may have happened in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 17<sup>th</sup> c.

Summing up, the picture is as follows:

a) The Wawel helmet does not bear any traits characteristic of the work of Moslem craftsmen, such as lavish ornamentation, Persian or Arabic inscriptions; neither is there any indisputable evidence which may give ground to ascribe it to Persian art. Just on the contrary, we know for sure that the Wawel helmet remained in Georgia as late as the 17<sup>th</sup> c. and was in possession of a Georgian feudal lord;

b) The one-piece helmet was attested many times in the 12<sup>th</sup>-c. miniature of Jruchi and in the Georgian 14<sup>th</sup>-c. Psalter.

c) Baqatar, the owner of the helmet, which was the predecessor of the Wawel one, lived in Georgia, fought and died there;

d) Wawel-type but modified helmets are present in two independent, Georgian and European 17<sup>th</sup>-c. sources: miniatures of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, created by Tavakarashvili and in the album of Cristoforo Castelli; this fact points to the firm tradition of making helmets of this shape in Georgia;

e) The trefoil ornament, represented on Georgian helmets in Castelli's album, strictly repeat the ornament of the Wawel helmet.

f) The helmets of Jalal ad-Din, Baqatar, Wawel and Tavakarashvili-Castelli give an idea of the process of evolution, every component of which was associated with Georgia in one way or another.

Proceeding from the foregoing, I think that it would be right to speak of the Georgian provenance of the Wawel helmet, also about the continuous process of the evolution this type of helmet has undergone on the territory of Georgia.

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Tbilisi  
Georgia

<sup>41</sup> The Wawel-type and turban helmets differ from each other in the system of fastening of the aventail: on turban helmets there are no suspending hooks through which the metal wire of the aventail is passed; here the wire is passed through the small ringlets fixed on to the dome.

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*Mamuka Tsurtsunia*

## HEŁM Z MUZEUM ZAMKU KRÓLEWSKIEGO NA WAWELU I JEGO MIEJSCE W EWOLUCJI ORIENTALNEGO HEŁMU

Streszczenie

W Muzeum Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu w Krakowie (Polska), przechowywany jest bardzo rzadki hełm (ryc. 1-2). Według badaczy, głównie polskich, panuje jednomyślna opinia odnośnie perskiej proveniencji zabytku. H. Russell Robinson i M. Gorelik uważają, że hełm wawelski reprezentuje znaczący etap w rozwoju hełmów turbanowych (ryc. 3), natomiast według opinii autora, hełm ten jest elementem niezależnej linii ewolucyjnej, która rozwinęła się w Gruzji równoległe do hełmów turbanowych.

Hełm wawelski odróżnia się od zabytków islamskich tym, że posiada mniej rozbudowaną ornamentykę. Brak tutaj ornamentu pokrywającego w całości lub częściowo dzwon, jak również inskrypcji z Koranu w językach arabskich, czy perskich. Kształt dzwonu hełmu kontynuuje też lokalne, transkaukaskie tradycje.

Obecność na terenie Gruzji jednocześnie, stalowych hełmów zwieńczonych koroną jest dobrze udokumentowanym faktem. Liczne hełmy tego typu

występują na miniaturach *Drugiej Tetraewangelii Jruchiego*, datowanej na XII w. i w *Psalterzu H1665*, datowanym na 2. połowę XIV w. (ryc. 5-6, 11-13). W Gruzińskim Muzeum Narodowym znajduje się tzw. hełm Jalal ad-Dina, który wydaje się być tworem lokalnego wytwórcy z 2. połowy XIII w. Kolejnym etapem w ewolucji tego typu hełmów jest tzw. hełm Baqatara, którego podobieństwo do okazu wawelskiego jest ewidentne, a którego właściciel żył, walczył i umarł w Gruzji. W XIV w., hełm Baqatara, z niewielkimi zmianami, przekształca się w typ hełmu wawelskiego. Doskonale wykonany okaz, przechowywany w Ermitażu w Petersburgu reprezentuje ten właśnie typ, odróżniając się od zabytku wawelskiego tylko drobnymi szczegółami.

Wawelski typ hełmu był bardzo popularny w Gruzji, gdzie używano go przez trzy lub cztery stulecia, aż do końca epoki feudalnej. Fakt ten potwierdzają dwa źródła, w których przedstawiona jest Gruzja z 1. połowy



XVII w. – miniatury Mamuki Tavakarashvilię w eposie *Rycerz w tygryskiej skórze* i albumy Christophoro Castelliego. Potwierdza to również umieszczona w XVII w. na szczycie wawelskiego hełmu gruzińska inskrypcja (ryc. 4): *Bóg i Mężny Wojownik, Wielki św. Jerzy, niech dadzą Szazvereli Chijavadzemu zwycięstwo*. Inskrypcja ta wskazuje na fakt, iż właścicie-

lem hełmu był Szazvereli Chijavadze, członek potężnej rodziny szlacheckiej z Imereti (Zachodnia Gruzja).

Hełm wawelski pozostawał w Gruzji aż do początków 2. połowy XVII w., kiedy to „wyjechał” z kraju. Wedle opinii autora został on zakupiony przez polskich szlachciców, którzy przybyli wówczas na wschód.

Tłumaczył: Piotr N. Kotowicz