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von Jost Gippert (2016).

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Jost Gippert, Frankfurt 2018

## KARTVELOLOGY IN THE DIGITAL AGE: ON THE TRACK OF MZEČABUḲ

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*Frankfurt / Main*

0. In a recent article, I have provided the first edition of three secondary notes that were added, in a very clumsy nuskhuri hand and in an extremely faulty orthography, to the manuscript Sin.georg. 16 of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, a Gospel codex that was composed in the Monastery of the Holy Cross near Jerusalem in 992 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The notes have turned out to be personal rogations,<sup>2</sup> probably written by a certain Ḳirile who was the page of a person named MzečabuḲ; the latter obviously bore the rank of an *atabag-amirspasalari*, which used to be the title of the rulers of Samcxe-Saatabago. In a first attempt at verification, I proposed to identify this person with MzečabuḲ, son of Quarquare II (the Great) who was the ruler of Samcxe in the second half of the fifteenth century. In the present article, I shall use this example to show how digital means can be applied successfully in Kartvelological research concerning secondary information contained in Georgian manuscripts, historical persons mentioned therein, and the circumstances of their life.

1. Since 1987, I have been involved in building up a diachronic corpus of Georgian which is meant to comprise, at the end, all written material that has come down to us from the beginning of literacy up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The materials, which have been accumulated with the support of many colleagues from Georgia, first within the projects TITUS<sup>3</sup> and ARMAZI,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gippert 2015, 127–130 (3.4.1); the article can be accessed online, including images of the notes in question, in <http://tinygu.de/jg2015g>.

<sup>2</sup> The available catalogues ignore the secondary notes (Cagareli 1888, 198, no. 7) or confine themselves to a formal description (Žavaxišvili 1947, 38, no. 16: “В рукописи имеются позднейшие приписки гражданскими буквами”; Garitte 1956, 51, no. 16: “... une grossière écriture xuc'uri minuscule”).

<sup>3</sup> “Thesaurus Indogermanischer Text- und Sprachmaterialien”, <http://tinygu.de/titus-georgian>.

<sup>4</sup> “Caucasian Languages and Cultures: Electronic Documentation”, <http://tinygu.de/armazi>.

and since 2012, in the project of a “Georgian National Corpus” (GNC),<sup>5</sup> today comprise about 6 mio. tokens for Old Georgian and 2 mio. tokens for the Middle Georgian period, which means nearly 90% of the text material available in scholarly editions. And indeed, the corpus thus established provides plenty of information that can be used for the present purpose.

1.1 Searching for the name of Mzečabuk (მზეჭაბუკ) in the Old and Middle Georgian text material yields a total of 134 attestations<sup>6</sup> in different case forms. By far the greatest number (66) is from the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Amirandarežaniani*,<sup>7</sup> a medieval romance in which Mzečabuk is the name of one of the main heroes; the fact that the name represents a compound, lit. “sun-squire”, is manifest in this text by another set of 130 attestations where the two elements, *mze* “sun” and *čabuk-* “squire”, are inflected (and spelt) separately, mostly in the ergative and genitive cases appearing as *mzeman čabukman* and *mzisa čabukisa*.<sup>8</sup> For the identification of a historical person addressed in notes in a Sinai Gospel codex, these attestations seem worthless at first sight even though the *Amirandarežaniani* represents the oldest textual witness in the sample; however, there is indeed a possible connection with the Mzečabuk of the notes as we will see below.

1.2 A second bulk of attestations is from another fictional text concerning the Middle Ages, the so-called *Dilariani* by Sargis Tmogveli; here, the name Mzečabuk appears in 25 text passages,<sup>9</sup> plus eleven passages with the “split” compound form.<sup>10</sup> For our “historical” Mzečabuk, these attestations have not more a bearing than those from the *Amirandarežaniani*, all the more since the *Dilariani* is usually regarded as a secondary continuation of the latter text<sup>11</sup> (and the Mzečabuk appearing in it may represent the same personage).

<sup>5</sup> <http://gnc.gov.ge>; cf. Gippert/Tandashvili 2014 (online in <http://tinygu.de/jg2014e>) as to the methods applied during time.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk> for the search with the TITUS search engine; the GNC search, which is still under construction, yields 74 of these attestations so far.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk-amirandar>. The underlying text edition is L o l a š v i l i 1960.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mze-chabuk>. For the other attestations of the “split” compound cf. below.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk-dilariani>. The underlying text edition is Č i ĭ i n a z e 1897.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mze-chabuk>; note that different from the *Amirandarežaniani*, the “split” spelling here also occurs in the nominative and dative sometimes spelt as *mze čabuki* and *mze čabuksa* (ch. 13: Čičinaze 1897, 42, l. 18–25). This is an inconsistency of the underlying edition as it provides compounded forms as well, both with a hyphen and without (e.g., *mze-čabuki* 29, l. 3; *mzečabuki* 47, l. 15), even in the genitive *mzečabukisa* (e.g., 46, l. 18, vs. *mzisčabukisa* in 28, l. 31 and 43, l. 17) and the ergative *mzečabukma* (e.g., 44, l. 28); note also the curious dative form *mzisčabukša* (ch. 11: 17, l. 7).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Stevenson 1958, xiv, who assumes “a fairly recent dating”.

1.3 The way towards “historical” persons is opened by *Kartlis Cxovreba*, the Georgian Chronicle extending from prehistoric times up into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which yields all in all eight attestations of the name Mzečabuḡ within two of its subtexts.<sup>12</sup> The first one is found in the anonymous chronicle of Queen Tamar’s time (13<sup>th</sup> c.), ისტორიანი და აზმანი შარავანდედთანი, which relates in connection with the search for a convenient husband for the queen:<sup>13</sup>

ზრახვა ყვეს ძებნა წაღმართისა  
და მოყვანა ქმრისა ...

“They took counsel as to look for  
a suitable one and to bring him as  
a husband...

ვითარ თამთა თუმიანისთვის,  
ვითარ ამირან ხორაშნისთვის,  
ვითარ ხოსრო შანშა ბანუსთვის,  
ვითარ მზეჭაბუკ მზისათვის  
ხაზართასა,  
ვითარ იაკობ რაქელისთვის და  
იოსებ ასანეთისთვის...

like Tamta for Tumiani,  
like Amiran for Khorashani,  
like Shah Khosro for Banu,  
like Mzečabuḡ for the Sun of the  
Khazars,  
like Jacob for Rachel and  
Joseph for Asanet ...

It is clear that the last two pairs mentioned here are taken from the Bible<sup>14</sup> whereas the others pertain to secular traditions. As a matter of fact, two of them are taken from a text we have already dealt with, viz. the *Amirandarežaniani*: the first one invokes the central hero of the romance, Amiran Darežanisze together with a princess named Xvarešan in the text,<sup>15</sup> and the second one, Mzečabuḡ, the hero of the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter, together with the (nameless) daughter of the Khazar king Khvasro, whom he married after much effort.<sup>16</sup> The other two pairs are taken from Persian sources: that of Tamta and Tumiani, from Firdousī’s *Shāhnāme* (with Tamta reflecting Tahamtan, an epithet of Rostom), and that of King Khosro and his wife (Pers. *bānū*), from Nizāmī’s romance *Khosrow and Shirin*.<sup>17</sup> In this way, the passage in Queen Tamar’s chronicle can only be counted as just one more reference to the legendary Mzečabuḡ of the *Amirandarežaniani*, and

<sup>12</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabukkcx2>; the underlying edition is Q a u x č i š v i l i 1959.

<sup>13</sup> Ch. II: Q a u x č i š v i l i 1959, 35, l. 12 – 36, l. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gen. 29.18ff. for Jacob and Rachel and Gen. 41.44–50 for Joseph and Asenath.

<sup>15</sup> The marriage of the two is described in ch. 8 of the romance (L o l a š v i l i 1960, 361, l. 17 ff.).

<sup>16</sup> L o l a š v i l i 1960, 431–432.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. K e k e l i z e 1962, 229–236 for a thorough treatment of this passage, including a discussion of the distortions of the names involved in the manuscripts of the *Amirandarežaniani* (the name forms used in the edition by Qauxčišvili are those restored by K e k e l i z e, cf. the edition, 36 n. 10). The question of a possible Persian source for the *Amirandarežaniani* (cf., e.g., Stevenson 1958, xviii–xxi) cannot be dealt with here.

the same is true for a verse in the 17<sup>th</sup> century poem *Didmouraviani* by Iosep Tpileli, where the name appears in parallel with the “hero Rostom” in an example of persons who were dismounted by treachery: მზე ჭაბუკ და გმირი როსტომ ღალატითა გარდამხდარა!<sup>18</sup>

1.4 In contrast to this, the seven remaining attestations in *Kartlis Cxovreba* do refer to historical persons. All seven attestations are contained in one other subtext of the compilation, viz. the so-called Bagratids’ Chronicle, which covers roughly the time between 1450 and 1615.<sup>19</sup> Among these attestations, there is one where the person named Mzečabuk bears the title of an *atabagi*; the passage in question, which is dated to the *chronicon* (ქრონიკონი) 198, i.e., the year 1510,<sup>20</sup> is about a battle between king David (X.) of Kartli (r. 1505–25) and the newly inaugurated king Bagrat (III) of Imeretia (r. 1510–64), in which Mzečabuk, together with king Vakhtang of Kakhetia, supported David but was defeated by Bagrat on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June:<sup>21</sup>

ქრონიკონსა რ~ჟმ ... მოეგმარნენ ქართლის მეფეს დავითს კახეთის მეფე ვახტანგ და ათაბაგი მზეჭაბუკ. დავით მეფე ველარ მოესწრო. მოხისს შეება ზაგრატ ვახტანგსა და მზეჭაბუკს და გაემარჯლა თუესა ივნისსა გ~.

“In the *chronicon* 198 ... the king of Kartli, Davit, was supported by Vakhtang, the king of Kakhetia, and Mzečabuk the *atabagi*. King Davit did not arrive in time. In Moxisi, Vaxtang and Mzečabuk were attacked by Bagrat, and he was victorious on the 3rd June.”

In the index to S. Qauxčišvili’s edition of *Kartlis Cxovreba*, the *atabagi* referred to here is styled “Mzečabuk I, son of Kaixosro”, and 1502–1516 is given as the time-span of his rulership.<sup>22</sup> The remaining five attestations of the name Mzečabuk in the Bagratids’ Chronicle are grouped under a different entry in the index, which introduces a “Mzečabuki” as the “first-born child of Quarquare II” without indicating a date;<sup>23</sup> the father, in his turn, is filed as an *atabagi* ruling from 1451–1466 (and thus preceding a third Quarquare, son of Agbuğa, who reigned from 1487–1500).<sup>24</sup>

The information the Bagratids’ Chronicle provides for the second Mzečabuk is remarkable indeed. The first-born child of Quarquare, he

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the edition Leonize 1939, 4: strophe 10, verse d.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Qauxčišvili 1959, 477–540. The heading used in the edition is ახალი ქართლის ცხოვრება, მესამე ტექსტი (“*New Kartlis Cxovreba*, third text”); however, the manuscripts provide ცხოვრება ზაგრატიონთა მეფობისა (“The Life of the Bagratids’ rule”; ib. 477).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Gippert 2016, 62 as to the Georgian time reckoning system.

<sup>21</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 487, ll. 11–14.

<sup>22</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 672: “მზეჭაბუკ I ქაიხოსროს-მე (1502–1516)”.

<sup>23</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 672: “მზეჭაბუკი, ყვარყვარე II-ის პირმშო შვილი”.

<sup>24</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 693: “ყვარყვარე II., ათაბაგი (1451–1466)”; “ყვარყვარე III., აღბულას მე (1487–1500)”.

is taken, by Konstantine II of Kartli, to the Tartars under sultan Uzun-Hassan (r. 1423–1478) after Giorgi (VIII) of Kakhetia (r. 1446–1476) had died.<sup>25</sup>

მიიკვალა ძე მეფისა ალექსანდრესი მეფე გიორგი კახთა ... და წარვიდა კოსტანტინე თათარშიგან, ... და წარყვა მზეჭაბუკცა, პირმშო შვილი ყუარყუარესი.

“Giorgi, son of king Aleksandre, the king of the Kakhians, died ... and Konstantine went into Tartary... and he took (with him) Mzečabuk, too, the first-born child of Quarquare.”

Being well-trained in the relevant languages and educated in both Christian and Muslim scriptures, he impresses everybody intellectually in the controversy of the two religions, but is also successful in a wrestle with a huge Tartar named Malani:<sup>26</sup>

... სულთანი და მკითხველნი სჯულისა თათრისანი უქადაგებდნენ სჯულსა თვსსა. ხოლო იცოდა მზეჭაბუკ არაბული და სპარსული და თათრულიცა. ესეოღენ სწავლულ იყო ენითა და წიგნითა მათითა, ვითარმედ ყოველსავე ღრმად\*<sup>27</sup> სცნობდა და მისგან ესრეთ აღმოვიდოდეს საღმრთონი სიტყუანი პირით მისით; და სჯულისა მათისაგანცა ყოველივე ზედამიწევნით უწყოდა და მათისავე სჯულისა წიგნთაგან დაუყოფდა მედგარსა პირსა მათსა და მიერ დღითგან ვერღარა-ვინ იკადრა ამის პირისათვის სიტყვსა ყოფად წინაშე მისსა. ხოლო მიეცა ძლევაცა ესევეითარი რამეთუ იყო უსჯულოსა მის მთავრისა კაცი ერთი, ფალავანთა თავი, დიდი და გოლიათი, რომელსა სახელად მალანი ეწოდებოდა, და ჰმატდა ყოველთა კაცთა სიდიდითა, ვითარ წყრთა ერთი ანუ უფროსცა, და არავინ გამოჩინებულ იყო სიმრავლესა მას შინა მრეკინობელ მისსა. ამან ინება ოდესმე განმცდებოდა მზეჭაბუკისი და, ვითარცა ცნა ესე, არღარა ჰპოვნა, არამედ ვითარცა ლომმან მსწრაფლ შეშმა უყო და მინდობილმან ღმრთისა და ყოვლად-წმიდისა აწყურისა ღმრთისმშობელისამან აღიყვანა და უპატიოდ მიწასა ზედა დასცა.

“...Sultan<sup>28</sup> and the propagandists of the faith of the Tartars preached their faith. But Mzečabuk knew Arabic and Persian and also the Tartar (language). He was so (well) educated in their language and scriptures that he knew everything deeply, and in this way the divine words used to come out of his mouth, but beyond that, he knew everything of their religion, too, and (by quoting) from the books of their faith he shut their fierce mouths, and because of this, nobody dared dispute with him ever after. But he achieved even a victory, for that infidel ruler had a man, the chief of the wrestlers, tall and huge, who was called Malani by name. He outclassed every man in height by about one cubit or even more, and there was nobody in that crowd who would have wrestled with him. This (man) now wanted to tempt Mzečabuk who, when he learned about that, did not hesitate but attacked him fast like a lion, and trusting upon the (icon of the) all-holy God-mother of Acqueri, he lifted him up and threw him ruthlessly on the ground.”

<sup>25</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 5–9.

<sup>26</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 15–28.

<sup>27</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, l. 18 has the plural form ღრმათა instead, which makes no sense here.

<sup>28</sup> Sultan here must mean not the title but the name of Sultan (Mirza) Khalil Beg, the son of Uzun Hasan who replaced him after his death (Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 11–13) for a short time and who was succeeded by his brother Yaqub (spelt partly *agub*, partly *iagub* in the *Chronicle*: 479, l. 12 vs. l. 33).

By consequence, Mzečabuḡ is allowed to return home together with Konstantine.<sup>29</sup>

ბრძანა ღმერთმან და წარმოავლინა ღიღითა  
პატივითა სულტანმან კოსტანტინე და  
წარმოატანა თანა მზეჭაბუკცა; და მოვიდა  
კოსტანტინე თათართათ, ყაენისგან  
შეწყალებული.

“By order of God, Sultan sent Kostantine  
with great honour away, and he took  
Mzečabuḡ with him; and Kostantine  
came home from Tartary, pardoned by  
the Khan.”

All this must have happened in the year 1478.<sup>30</sup> After this, the name of Mzečabuḡ appears only one more time in the Chronicle, in an event dated to the *chronicon* 173 which equals 1485. Here, the son of Quarquare appears together with a brother of his, Baadur:<sup>31</sup>

ქორიკონსა რ<sup>ე</sup>ოგ: მოვიდეს და  
მოადგეს ტაშირზედა, მოუძცნეს მეფესა  
ქართლისასა, რათა ქუეშოთ ქართველნი  
შეუკლენ სამცხეს. ვითარცა ესმა ესე  
ყუარყუარეს და ძეთა მისთა მზეჭაბუკს  
და ბაადურს, შემოკრიბნეს სპანი თვსნი და  
დაადგურეს სიმაგრესა ადგილსა ქვიანისა  
მთისასა, რათა უკუე მიიწივნეს რა მათდა,  
მყის განეწყვნენ და შეებმა უყონ.

“In the chronicon 173, (the Turkmens)  
came and arrived at Taširi. They informed  
the king of Kartli that the inhabitants of  
Lower Kartli should enter Samcxe. When  
Quarquare and his sons Mzečabuḡ and  
Baadur heard this, they assembled their  
troops and camped at a fortified place on  
a stony mountain so that they could de-  
cide instantly and attack them when they  
would approach them.”

Interestingly enough, a person by that latter name appears in the Chronicle a few pages before, with the title atabagi, but with the information that he died aged 21 on the 10th October, 1475:<sup>32</sup>

ქორიკონსა რ<sup>ე</sup>გ: ათაბაგი ბაადურ  
გარდაიცვალა წლისა კ<sup>ე</sup>ა, ოკტომბერსა ი<sup>ე</sup>,  
დასაბამითგან ქორიკონსა ექუსიათას  
ცხრაას ოთხმოცდორსა.

“In the chronicon 163 passed away  
Baadur the atabagi, 21 years (old), on  
the 10<sup>th</sup> October, (in the year) from Cre-  
ation 6982.”<sup>33</sup>

Consequently, the index of the edition assumes two Baadurs (just as it assumes two Mzečabuḡs), one styled “Baadur I, son of Quarquare, atabagi”, with his reign dated from 1466–1475, and the other one, simply “Baaduri, son of Quarquare”, with no further information and with no attempt to distinguish the two fathers named Quarquare.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 31–33.

<sup>30</sup> In the Chronicle, the event is reported after the death of Uzun-Hassan (Qauxčišvili 1959, 479, l. 11), which is usually dated the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1478, and the ascension of Konstantine II. to the throne of Kartli, which is dated to the *chronicon* 166, i.e. 1478, too (Qauxčišvili 1959, 480, l. 4).

<sup>31</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 482, ll. 3–7.

<sup>32</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 478, ll. 17–18.

<sup>33</sup> This dating is not in accordance with the Georgian but with the Byzantine era, which differed by 94 years (cf. Gippert 2016, 62); calculating with the latter, which begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 5509 B.C., we arrive at (6982–5508 =) 1474 A.D.

<sup>34</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 637.



2. Leaving this open for a moment, it is clear that the Bagratids' Chronicle alone does not suffice to solve the question whether the Mzečabuḡ of the Sinai Gospel codex can be identified with one of the two Mzečabuḡs it mentions. Both remain possible candidates: Mzečabuḡ the *atabagi* because of the title he bears, and Mzečabuḡ the son of Quarquare II because of his brilliant mastership in religious matters. However, by consulting the attestations of the name in other historical sources that are included in the digital corpus, we arrive at a much clearer picture, not only concerning Mzečabuḡ himself.

2.1 A considerable bulk of material is provided by the "Description of the Kingdom of Georgia", which was compiled by Vaxuṣṭi Baṭonišvili, a son of King Vakhtang VI (1675–1737), in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Within this remarkable oeuvre, we find 14 attestations of the name Mzečabuḡ in a subtext which is devoted to the "Life of Samcxe (and) Klarjeti"<sup>35</sup>; two further attestations are met with in the "Description of the land Egrisi, or Apxazeti, or Imereti"<sup>36</sup>, and another six, in the "Chronological Table"<sup>37</sup> concluding the work.<sup>38</sup> Again, two different persons are assumed to be meant here, one Mzečabuḡ *atabagi*, who is styled "Mzečabuḡ I" and "son of Kaixosro", with the timespan of his reign given as "1502–1516",<sup>39</sup> and a second "Mzečabuḡi son of Kaixosro", who died in 1572 and who is "not known from other sources".<sup>40</sup>

2.1.1 It is clear right from the beginning that the first Mzečabuḡ is identical with the *atabagi* we met in *Kartlis Cxovreba*, and it must indeed be Vaxuṣṭi's information on his father being named Kaixosro that was taken over into the index of S. Qauxčišvili's edition, given that it does not appear anywhere in the Chronicle itself. As a matter of fact, Vaxuṣṭi mentions the descent of "Mzečabuḡ the Great" explicitly both in the description of Samcxe-Klarjeti and in the Chronological Table, which names *chronicon* 190 ~ 1502 A.D. as the year of his enthronement:<sup>41</sup>

<sup>35</sup> ცხოვრება სამცხე კლარჯეთისა, Qauxčišvili 1973, 691–741.

<sup>36</sup> აღწერა ეგრისის კუეყანისა, ანუ აფხაზეთისა, ანუ იმერეთისა, Qauxčišvili 1973, 742–893.

<sup>37</sup> ქრონოლოგიური ცხრილი, Qauxčišvili 1973, 894–914.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk-vakhusti> for the attestations.

<sup>39</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 1046: "1. მზეჭაბუკ ათაბაგი (მზეჭაბუკ I. ქაიხოსროს ძე)".

<sup>40</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 1046: "2. მზეჭაბუკი ქაიხოსროს ძე ... მოკლდა 1572 წელს ... სხვა წყაროებით ცნობილი არაა".

<sup>41</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 710, ll. 26–27.



ამის ქაიხოსროს შემდგომად დავდა ძე  
ამისი ათაბაგად დიდი მზეჭაბუკი.

რ<sup>ე</sup>. თ. მოკუდა ქაიხოსრო ათაბაგი წლისა  
ნ<sup>ე</sup>. გ. მაისს ვ<sup>ე</sup>. დავდა ძე მისი მზეჭაბუკი.

“After that Kaixosro, his son Mzečabuk  
the Great was enthroned as the *atabagi*.”

“(Chronicon) 190. Kaixosro the *atabagi*  
died aged 53 on the 6th May. Enthroned  
was his son Mzečabuk.”

From the description, which devotes a complete chapter to “Mzečabuk the Great” and his reign of 14 years, with a total of nine attestations of the name,<sup>42</sup> we further learn that the *atabagi* made peace with *Ḳostantīne* (which must mean Konstantine II, King of Kartli), arranged himself neatly with the Ottoman court, befriended Konstantine’s son and successor, King David (X, r. 1505–1525), and that he died in the year 1516, having been well respected:

ესე მზეჭაბუკი დაეზავა მეფეს  
კოსტანტინეს ... ესე მზეჭაბუკი დაეზავა  
ოსმალთა მორჩილებისა პირსა ზედა. ...  
ხოლო შემდგომად წელსა ქ(რისტე)სა  
ჩვიბ, ქარ(თულსა) ს<sup>ე</sup> წარმოავლინა  
სულთან სულეიმან სარასკარი ... სპითა  
დდიტა ... ესენი მოვიდნენ და მოადგნენ  
სათაბაგოს, მაშინ მზეჭაბუკი განამაგრა  
ციხენი და სიმაგრენი ... ხოლო სარასკარმან  
პატივით შეიწმენარა და ითხოვა  
მზეჭაბუკისაგან საზრდელი და ყოლაუზობა  
იმერეთსა ზედა, ამან მზეჭაბუკი აღუსრულნა  
ყოველნი და წარუძღუა იმერეთს. ...  
ამით დაეზავა ესე მზეჭაბუკი ოსმალთა და  
აღუთქუა მორჩილება და მსახურება. ... ესე  
მეგობრობდა დავით მეფესა ქართველთასა.  
არამედ ამას დიდს მზეჭაბუკს ამისთვის  
უწოდდნენ, რამეთუ დღეთა თვისთა არა  
აღაფრინა ქათამიცა უსამართლოდ  
სათაბაგოსა შინა და სცხორებდა თვისთა  
მეზობლებთა თანა სიყვარულითა და  
მეგობრობითა. ... კუალად მძლავრთა  
ოსმალთა დეწყო და ჰყო ქუეყანა მათგან  
უენოდ, შემდგომად მოკუდა დიდი მზეჭაბუკი  
ქ(რისტე)სა ჩ<sup>ე</sup> ფივ, ქარ(თულსა) ს<sup>ე</sup> დ.  
დავდა შემდგომად მზეჭაბუკისა ძე ამისი  
ყუარყუარე ათაბაგად.

“This Mzečabuk made peace with king  
*Ḳostantīne* ... This Mzečabuk made  
peace with the Ottomans on the basis  
of subordination. ... But after the year  
1512 C.E., in Georgian (in the *chroni-  
con*) 220, Sultan Suleiman<sup>43</sup> sent out  
(his) supreme commander ... with a  
big army ... They came and arrived in  
Saatabago. Thereupon Mzečabuk forti-  
fied the castles and fortresses ... But the  
commander granted him honour and  
asked him, Mzečabuk, for victuals and  
guidance into Imeretia. He, Mzečabuk,  
fulfilled all this and led him into Imeretia. ...  
In this way, he, Mzečabuk, made  
peace with the Ottomans and promised  
them subordination and service. ... He  
was (also) friends with Davit, the King  
of the Georgians. But the reason why  
he was called Mzečabuk “the Great”  
is that during his days, he did not even  
kill a hen against the law in Saatabago,  
and he lived in love and friend-  
ship with his neighbours. ... Again he  
set up against the Ottoman tyrants and  
made the country unharmed by them.  
After this, Mzečabuk the Great died in  
the year 1516 C.E., in Georgian (in the  
*chronicon*) 204. After Mzečabuk his  
son Quarquare was enthroned as the  
*atabagi*.”

<sup>42</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 710–711: “ვ. მზეჭაბუკი დიდი, ოდ წელი მთავრა”.

<sup>43</sup> This information (Qauxčišvili 1973, 711, l. 4) is incorrect; cf. below.

Two of the events described here are also mentioned in the Chronological Table:<sup>44</sup>

ს. მოვიდა სარასკირი, მზეჭაბუკ ათაბაგი მიეგება, იმერეთს ჩავიდნენ, თათართ ქუთაისი და გელათი დასწვეს. და ბაგრატს ვახტანგ ზედ გაემარჯვა მოხისს.

ს.დ. ათაბაგი დიდ მზეჭაბუკ მოკუდა. დაჯდა ძე მისი ყვარყვარე.

“(Chronicon) 200. The supreme commander came, Mzečabuḳ welcomed him, they went into Imeretia, the Tartars burnt Kutaisi and Gelati. And Bagrat was victorious over Vaxtang in Moxisi.”

“(Chronicon) 204. The atabagi, Mzečabuḳ the Great, died. Enthroned was his son Qvarqvarē.”

Remarkably enough, the information on the battle at Mokhisi matches that appearing in the Bagratids’ Chronicle (cf. 1.4 above), except for the dating: there it is subsumed under the *chronicon* 198, i.e., 1510 A.D., not 200 ~ 1512 as given here. Vaxuṣṭi himself repeats the latter dating in another subtext of his work, the Description of Imereti:<sup>45</sup>

წელსა ქ(რისტე)სა ჩ~ფიბ, ქარ(თულსა) ს~, მეფობასა ბაგრატისასა მეორესა, გამოვიდა სპასპეტი სულტან სელიმისა სპითა უამრავითა და მოადგა სამცხეს. ამას მიეგება ათაბაგი მზეჭაბუკ, მოუძღუა და ჩამოიყვანა ფერსათსა ზედა იმერეთს. ... მოსრულთა ოსმალთა დაწუეს ქუთათისი და გელათი. ... ამასვე წელსა წარვიდა მეფე ბაგრატ დასხმის გუარად სპითა ქართლს ... მიუჭდა ბაგრატ მეფე მოხისს მყოფს ვახტანგს. ეწყო ვახტანგ და იყო ბრძოლა ძლიერი. მერმე იძლია ვახტანგ. არამედ შუამდგომელობითა დავით მეფისათა ზავ-ჰყვეს.

“In the year 1512 C.E., in Georgian (in the *chronicon*) 200, during the reign of (King) Bagrat II, came a general of Sultan Selim with a huge army and arrived in Samcxē. Mzečabuḳ the atabagi welcomed him, led him the way and conducted him over the Persati (mountain) into Imeretia. ... Having arrived, the Ottomans burnt Kutaisi and Gelati. ... In the same year, King Bagrat entered Kartli ambush-style with an army ... He encountered Vaxtang sojourning at Moxisi. Vaxtang attacked him, and a heavy battle arose. Finally Vaxtang was defeated, but by mediation of King Davit, they made peace.”

Note that different from the Description of Samcxē-Klarjeti (cf. above), the Ottoman sultan is here named Selim, not Suleiman, and the *chronicon* is given as 200, not 220. As the latter *chronicon* would match the year 1532, not 1512, and Sultan Suleiman (I) ruled from 1520 to 1566, we probably have to assume a confusion of two similar events here, one concerning the latter sultan in 1532 and one, his (father and) predecessor, Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520), in 1512. In the given context, only the earlier dating can be correct.

<sup>44</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 898–899.

<sup>45</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 810, ll. 6–24.

The fact of Mzečabuḵ the *atabagi* conducting the Ottoman army into Imeretia is thematised two more times in Vaxuṣṭi's text, under the date of the year 1534, in both the descriptions of Samcxe-Klarjeti and Imereti; the wording is but slightly different:<sup>46</sup>

არამედ შემდგომად ამისა მოიკსენა შური იმერთა მეფემან ბაგრატ მზეჭაბუკ ათაბაგისა, რაჟამს მიჰყვა ოსმალთა იმერეთსა ზედა ... და კულადგა იხილა შეავება სამცხისა შაჰისმაილისაგან და მოოკრება ...

ქ(რისტე)სა ჩჳლდ, ქარ(თულსა) სკზ ... შემოიკრიბნა ბაგრატ მეფემან სრულიად სპანი იმერთანი ... ვინადთგან იხილა შეავება სამცხისა შაჰისმაილის დევალისაგან და კულად მოიკსენა შური მზეჭაბუკ ათაბაგისა, რაჟამს მოუძლუა ოსმალთა ... და წარვიდა დაპყრობად სამცხისა.

“But after this, Bagrat the King of the Imerians remembered the envy of Mzečabuḵ the *atabagi* when he brought the Ottomans up into Imeretia ... and again he saw Samcxe damaged and destroyed by Shah Ismail<sup>47</sup> ...”

“In the (year) 1534 C.E., in Georgian (in the *chronicon*) 222 ... King Bagrat assembled the complete army of the Imerians ... because he saw Samcxe damaged by Deval,<sup>48</sup> (the general) of Shah Ismail,<sup>47</sup> and he remembered again the envy of Mzečabuḵ the *atabagi* when he conducted the Ottomans ... and went off to conquer Samcxe.”

The same event is also listed in the Chronological Table, under the year 1535:<sup>49</sup>

სკვ: მ(ე)ფემ(ან) იმერთამ(ა) ნ მოიხსენა შური ათაბაგის მზეჭაბუკისა და მივიდა სამცხეს. და მურჯახეთს შეიბნენ მ(ე)ფე ბაგრატ და ყვარყვარე ათაბაგი, ბაგრატს გაემარჯვა. ათაბაგი შეიპყრა, გელათს ტყვედ მოკულდა და სამცხე ბაგრატ დაიპყრა.

“(Chronicon) 223: The king of the Imerians remembered the envy of Mzečabuḵ the *atabagi* and entered Samcxe. And King Bagrat and Quarquare the *atabagi* clashed in Muržaxeti, and Bagrat was victorious. Bagrat seized the *atabagi*, took him prisoner to Gelati and conquered Samcxe.”

2.1.2 The remaining attestations of the name Mzečabuḵ in Vaxuṣṭi's work concern a later period, and therefore a different person indeed. Of the second Mzečabuḵ, son of Kaixosro, we learn that he died two years after marrying a certain Rodam, daughter of the Gurian ruler Giorgi (II, r. 1566–1583 and 1587–1600), in 1571:<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 712, ll. 12–16; 811, ll. 19–24.

<sup>47</sup> In the given context, this must mean Shah Ismail I (r. 1501–1524), the founder of the Safavid dynasty, given that his grandson, Shah Ismail II, was enthroned only in 1537.

<sup>48</sup> The general named დევალი is introduced in the Description of Samcxe (Qauxčišvili 1973, 712, l. 6).

<sup>49</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 899.

<sup>50</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 811, ll. 19–24.

ბოლო აქა ძემან ქაიხოსროსმან მზეჭაბუკ იქორწინა გურიელის გიორგის ასულს როდამსა ზედა ქ(რისტე)სა ჩფოა, ქარ(თულსა) სნთ და მეორესა წელსა მოკუდა მზეჭაბუკ.

“Here, now, the son of Kaixosro, Mzečabuk, married Rodam, the daughter of Giorgi (king) of Guria, in (the year) 1571, in Georgian (in the *chronicon*) 259, and in the second year Mzečabuk died.”

In the Chronological Table, this Mzečabuk's death is reported for the year 1572 (*chronicon* 160):<sup>51</sup>

სნთ: მზეჭაბუკ ქაიხოსრო ათაბაგის ძემ ქორწილი ქნა გურიელის ქალს როდამზედ. სდ: ... კ(უალა)დ მოკუდა ქაიხოსრო ათაბაგის ძე მზეჭაბუკ.

“(Chronicon) 159: Mzečabuk, the son of Kaixosro the *atabagi*, married Rodam, the maiden of the Gurian king. (Chronicon) 160: ... After that died Mzečabuk, the son of Kaixosro the *atabagi*.”

This Mzečabuk could not receive the dignity of an *atabagi* himself, given that Kaixosro survived him; the Chronological Table continues under the year 1573:<sup>51</sup>

სდა: მოკუდა ქაიხოსრო ათაბაგი ყაზმინს. და აქ დაჯდა ძე მისი ყვარყვარე ათაბაგად.

“(Chronicon) 161: Kaixosro the *atabagi* died in Qazwin. And here, his son Qvarqvar was enthroned as the *atabagi*.”

In contrast to the statement in the index of the edition, further information on this Mzečabuk does exist. This is provided by the so-called “Meskhan Chronicle”, which is appended in form of successive notes to the 16th c. prayer codex S-947 of the Korneli Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts<sup>52</sup> and which was published by Kr. Šarašize together with several other documents in her “Materials for the History of Southern Georgia”.<sup>53</sup> Here we read:<sup>54</sup>

პატრონმან მზეჭაბუკ, წლისა კ~ბ-ისამან იქორწინა და მოიყვანა ასული როსტომ გურიელისა პატრონი როდამ სახელით. და ცხოვრ[ო]ბდა მასთან ერთ წელ და ორ თუჭ. იანვარსა ი~ა, დღესა პარასკევსა, დღისით,

“Lord Mzečabuk, aged 22, married and took as his wife the daughter of Rostom the ruler of Guria, by the name of Lady Rodam. And he lived with her one year and two months. On the 11<sup>th</sup> January, a Friday, by the 6<sup>th</sup> hour of the day, God became angry about his parent, and

<sup>51</sup> Qauxčišvili 1973, 901.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Bregaze et al. 1959, 614–615 for a description of the codex.

<sup>53</sup> Šarašize 1961, 36–56. The first edition of the Chronicle was provided in Taqaišvili 1890, 81–115.

<sup>54</sup> Šarašize 1961, 39–40, no. 17; the first lines of the text as appearing on p. 9 of the codex are visible at the bottom of the image printed ib. as ტაბ. 5. In Taqaišvili 1890, the text is found on p. 82.

ჟამსა ვჲ, გარისხდა ღმერთი მისის მშობლისათჳს და პატრონი მზექაბუჲ მიიცვალა ამიერ სოფლით საუკუნეთა მათ განსას[უჭ]ნებელთა, წლისა კჲგ-ისასა ორი თუჲ აკლდა, საღ(მრ) თოთ-საკაცობომდი ყოვლად სრული და ზნე-უკლები. სიყრმითგან ღ(მრ)თისმოყ[უ]არე და ქრისტეს სარწმუნოებ(ა) ძედა აღზრდილი, სრული მწიგნობარ-მგალობელი და რიტორი, ჳმა-მუჴნიერი, ენა-ტკბილი, ეკლესიათა და ღ(მრ)თისმოყუარეთა კაცთა პატივისმცემელი. ხოლო იცოდა სპარსული წიგნი და წერა და ენა თათრული, სპარსული და არაბული. ისლა<sup>55</sup> მოზურთალ-მოასპარეზე ქუ[ჭ]ყანასა ზედა მისებრი არ გამოჩენილა. ქ(რონი) კ(ონ)სა სჲ მიიცვალა.

Lord Mzečabuk passed over from this world to the eternal resting places, at the age of two months less than 23, (a man) fully accomplished both spiritually and secularly and of high principles. From his childhood on, he had been grown up as a lover of God and in the faith of Christ, a consummate man of letters and singing and a rhetorician with a beautiful voice and a sweet tongue, honoured by churches and devout people. But he (also) knew to read and write in Persian and (to speak in) the Tartar, Persian, and Arabic languages. Also in ball-playing and wrestling, nobody met his match on earth. He died in the *chronicon* 260.”

Besides adding noteworthy information as to Mzečabuk's death,<sup>56</sup> the present text differs from the information provided by Vaxuštī in naming not Giorgi (II) but his father and predecessor Roštom (r. 1534–1566) as Rodam's father; an information that deserves being taken seriously if we consider that Giorgi may still have been too young four years after ascending the throne to have had a nubile daughter.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, the text in the Chronicle strongly reminds us of the characterization of Mzečabuk, the first-born child of Quarquare in *Kartlis Cxovreba*; if this is independent information and not just the repetition of a popular tradition linked with the name Mzečabuk, it yields us one more candidate for the identification of the Mzečabuk from the Sinai Gospel codex. We are thus left with three possible candidates, representing a time-span of ca. 100 years: Mzečabuk, the son of Quarquare II in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Mzečabuk the *atabagi*, son of Kaixosro, in the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Mzečabuk, son of Kaixosro, who married Rodam, in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

2.2 Beyond the information on the latter Mzečabuk, Kr. Šarašize's "Materials" contain five further attestations of the name.<sup>58</sup> One of them,

<sup>55</sup> Šarašize 1961, 40, l. 10 has "ობა (!)"; Taq aišvili's ობა (1890, 82, l. 17) seems to be intended here.

<sup>56</sup> The 11<sup>th</sup> January, 1572 (Julian calendar) was indeed a Friday.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Šarašize 1961, 116 as to the relationship between the Chronicle and Vaxuštī's text.

in which the Mzečabuk under concern is styled a “lord” (*paṭroni*) again, is from a personal document written by one Gerasime, Archbishop of Ḳumurdo, which was preserved in Mcxeta; in accordance with Evagri, Patriarch of Georgia, being addressed, the event in question can be assigned to the years 1500–1503:<sup>59</sup>

... ესე პირი ღა წიგნი გკადრეთ და მოგახსენეთქუენ, ქრისტეს ღ(მრ)თისა მიერ ქართლისა კ(ათალიკო)ზსა ევაგრის მე, კუმურდოელ მთავარეპისკოპოზმან გერასიმე, მას ჟამსა, ოდეს პატრონმან მზეჭაბუკ შემიწყალა და კუმურდოსა საყდარი და ჳელი მიბოძა და თქუენს წინაშე საკურთხეულად გამოგუზავენა და თქუენ შემიწყალეთ და მაკურთხეთ. ...

“... this document and letter I dared submit to you, Evagri, Catholicos of Kartli by Christ (our) God, me, Gerasime, Archbishop of Ḳumurdo, at the time when Lord Mzečabuk had mercy on me and granted me the see and power of Ḳumurdo and sent me to you for a blessing, and you, too, had mercy on me and blessed me ...”

Considering the geography (Ḳumurdo is located in Samcxē) and the given time-frame, it is probably a priori that the Mzečabuk mentioned here was the *atabagi* we have known before, freshly enthroned in 1502.

2.2.1 In two further attestations from the “Materials”, the name Mzečabuk appears alongside that of Kaixosro. However, there is no instance of the latter denoting the father of the former; instead, the two persons in question are declared to be brothers. This is true, first of all, of rogations for them added to ms. Q-642 of the Kekelidze Centre, the so-called “Mečietī Triodion” allegedly of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>60</sup> Here, the two brothers are addressed after their parents, who are named Quarquare and Anna:<sup>61</sup>

ღ(მრ)თისმოყ[უ]არისა, მართლ-მორწმუნისა პატრონისა ყ[უა]რ-ყ[უა]რესი.

“(May there be commemoration) of the devout and orthodox Lord Quarquare

და თანამეცხედრისაჲ მისისა პატრონისა ანასი და მეთა მათთა პატრონისა მზეჭაბუკ და ქაიხოსროსი ს(აუ)კ(უ)ნ(ო)ჲ.

and his spouse, Lady Anna, and their sons, Lord Mzečabuk and Kaixosro, forever.”

<sup>58</sup> Cf. <http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk-hmsg>.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Šarašige 1961, 27, who names the shelf number Hd-2130.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Šarašige 1961, 20–23 as to the rogations contained in the codex and Bregaze et al. 1958, 93–95, as to its description. A Russian translation of the rogations appeared in Bakradze 1878, 212–213.

<sup>61</sup> Šarašige 1961, 22, nos. 17.–18.



The time frame of these two entries is indicated by the preceding commemoration of king Aleksandre (II of Imeretia, r. 1484–1510) and his family members, including his wife Tamar and his son and successor Bagrat (III, r. 1510–1565):<sup>62</sup>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| მართლმადიდებლისა მეფისა<br>ალექსანდრესი და მეუღლისა<br>მისისა პატრონისა დედოფალისა<br>თამარისა ს(აუ)კ(უ)ნ(ო)დ. | “(May there be commemoration) of the<br>orthodox king Aleksandre and his wife,<br>the queen Lady Tamar, forever, |
|--|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| ძისა მათისა, დიდისა მეფეთ-<br>მეფისა ბაგრატისი და ძმათა<br>მისთა ღ(მრთ)ისმოყ[უ]არეთა<br>გიორგი და ვახტანგისი ს(აუ)კ(უ)<br>ნ(ო)დ. | (and) of their son, the great king of kings<br>Bagrat, and his devout brothers, Giorgi<br>and Vaxtang, forever.” |
|--|--|

2.2.2 Another pair of brothers, with the same names but with a mother called Dedisimedi, not Tamar, is mentioned in ms. S 1246, as well of the 16<sup>th</sup> century:<sup>63</sup>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| პატრონისა ყუარყუარესი<br>და მათისა მეცხედრისა<br>დედისიმედისა. | “Of Lord Quarquare and his (lit. their)<br>spouse Dedisimedi |
|--|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| და ძეთა მათთა პატრონისა<br>ქაიხოსროსი და პატრონისა<br>მზეჭაბუკისი საუკუნომცა არს<br>საქსენებელი და კურთხევა მათი. | and their sons, Lord Kaixosro and Lord<br>Mzečabuk, may their commemoration<br>and blessing be forever!” |
|---|--|

This very family, then, is obviously also commemorated in ms. Q-969, again of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in a more verbose way, with the father, Quarquare, styled an *atabag-amirspasalari*:<sup>64</sup>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| დიდისა და წარჩინებულისა<br>და სიმხნით განთქმულისა და<br>სახელოვანისა და მტერთაგან<br>უძლეველისა ათაბაგ-ამი(რ)<br>სპალარისა, მორწმუნისა<br>პატრონისა ჩუენისა ყუარყუარესი<br>საუკუნომცა არს საქსენებელი და<br>კურთხევა მისი. | “Of the <i>atabag-amirspasalari</i> , great and<br>noble and renowned for (his) courage<br>and famous and invincible by his en-<br>emies, our believing Lord Quarquare,<br>may his commemoration and his bless-<br>ing be forever! |
|--|--|

<sup>62</sup> Šarašize 1961, 22, nos. 15–16.

<sup>63</sup> Šarašize 1961, 18–19, nos. 19–20; as to the ms. in question cf. Bakraze et al. 1961, 111–119.

<sup>64</sup> Šarašize 1961, 15–16, nos. 8–11; as to the ms. in question cf. Bregaze et al. 1958, 381–382.



ეგრეთვე მეუღლისა მათისა,  
დედათა დიდებისა და  
სიკეთისა ძეგლისა, წმიდათა  
მენელსაცხებლეთა მოდასისა  
და სარწმუნოებისა ბეჭედსა და  
კეთილად მოღუაწისა, ღ(მრ)  
თისმოყუარისა პატრონის  
დედისიმედის საუკუნოდცა არს  
საქს(ენებელი). და კ(ურთ)ხ(ევად).

Likewise of his wife, the glory of wom-  
en and a monument of beauty, a mem-  
ber of the holy bringers of myrrh and a  
seal of faith and a benefactor, the de-  
vout Lady Dedisimedi, may her com-  
memoration and blessing be forever!

და პირშმოსა მისა მათისა,  
სიმწნით ქებულისა და  
სიბრძნის გამომეძიებელისა  
და დაუცხრომელად ღ(მრ)  
თის მადიდებელისა პატრონის  
ქაიხოსროს საუკუნოდცა არს  
საქსენებელი და კურთხევად მისი.

And of their first-born son, praised for  
his courage and pursuit for wisdom and  
restless praise of God, Lord Kaixosro,  
may his commemoration and blessing  
be forever!

და შემდგომისა და საყუარელისა  
მმისა მისისა, ღ(მრ)თივ  
განბრძნობილისა, მწნედ  
მქედრ(ისა) და მრავალთა და  
ძლიერთა და სახელდებულთა  
ფალავანთა დამამკობელისა  
და ქედისა შემმუსრველისა,  
საქრისტიანოსა ზღუდისა,  
სრულ(ი)სა ჩოხოსნობისა და  
ანგელოზებრივისა სქემისა  
ღირსად მიმღებელისა პატრონისა  
ჩუენისა მზეჭაბუკ-ყოფილსა  
იაკობისი საუკუნოდცა არს  
საქსენებელი და კურთხევად მისი.

And of his succeeding and beloved  
brother, instructed by God, a brave  
knight and an overcomer of many  
strong and renowned heroes and a  
neck-breaker, a fortification wall for  
Christianity, worthy of being fully clad  
in the Caucasian coat and with an an-  
gel's schema, our Lord Iakob, formerly  
called Mzečabuk, may his commemo-  
ration and blessing be forever!"

2.2.3 Immediately after this, the commemoration in ms. Q-969 contin-  
ues with the family of the latter Mzečabuk's "nephew" (ჰმისწლი), who is  
called Quarquare again:<sup>65</sup>

და მმისწულისა მათისა,  
მწნისა და ახოვანისა და ქველ-  
პირმეტყულისა, აგარიანთა  
მომსრველისა, გულოვნებით  
ს ა ხ ე ლ გ ა ნ თ ქ მ უ ლ ი ს ა ,  
მტერთა შემამრწუნებელისა,  
სარწმუნოებისა და ქრისტეს

"And of his (lit. their) nephew (lit.  
brother's son), the brave and stalwart  
and kindly speaking slayer of Arabs,  
famous for his courage, a terrifier of  
enemies and a firm holder of the true  
faith of Christ and (our) present sov-  
ereign, Lord Nav Quarquare, may his

<sup>65</sup> Šarašige 1961, 6, nos. 12.–13.

ჭემმარიტისა სჯულისა მტკიცედ  
მპყრობელისა და აწმფლობელისა  
ჩ(უე)ნისა პატრონისა ნავ (!)  
ყუარყუარესი საუკუნოდმცად  
არს საცსენებელი და კურთხევად  
მისი, მრავალმცა არიან დღენი და  
ჟამნი ცხორებისა მისისანი.

commemoration and blessing be forever  
and may the days and hours of his life  
be many!

და მეუღლისა მათისა, ღუთივ-  
გვრგვინოსანისა მთიებისა და  
ცისკროვნებრ ბრწყინვალისა,  
სიმშვდის მეძიებელისა და  
წერილთ-მოყუარულისა და  
ჯუართა და ხატთა პირად-  
პირადად მამკობელისა  
პატრონისა ჩ(უე)ნისა ანნადსი  
მრავალმცა არიან დღენი და  
ჟამნი ცხორებისა მისისანსანი.

And of his (lit. their) wife, the day-star  
crowned by God and brilliant like the  
dawn, looking for peace and scripture-  
loving and adorning in person crosses  
and icons, our Lady Anna, may her days  
and the hours of her life be many!

და ძეთა მათთა, სამოთხის  
ნერგთა, ვარდთა სურნელთა  
და გონიერთა, საღ(მრ)თოდ-  
სამკედროდ აღზრდილთა  
პატრონის მზეჭაბუკისი  
და პატრონის ქაიხოსროსი  
მრავალმცა არიან დღენი და  
ჟამნი ცხორებისა მათისანი.

And of their sons, saplings of paradise,  
fragrant and sensible roses, educated  
(both) spiritually and secularly, Lord  
Mzečabuk and Lord Kaixosro, may the  
days and hours of their lives be many!”

It is clear from the wording of these commemorations that they were written during the life time of the family of “Nav” Quarquare, whose name may be interpreted as “the new Quarquare”.<sup>66</sup> It is further probable off-hand that we have the same family here as that commemorated in ms. Q 642, where the parents are simply called Quarquare and Anna. We thus arrive at a larger family structure which can be illustrated as follows:

|                     |                    |   |                     |           |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|---------------------|-----------|
| Father              | Quarquare          |   |                     |           |
| Mother              | Dedisimedi         |   |                     |           |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> son | Kaixosro           | → | Father              | Quarquare |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> son | Mzečabuk (> Iakob) |   | Mother              | Anna      |
|                     |                    |   | 1 <sup>st</sup> son | Mzečabuk  |
|                     |                    |   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> son | Kaixosro  |

2.3 The family of Quarquare and Dedisimedi is attested in one more witness, with important additional information. This is ms. Q-920, a Gos-

<sup>66</sup> With *nav-* reflecting Persian *naw-* “id.” as in *navrozi* < Pers. *nawrōz* “New Year”.

pel manuscript of 1504 written in the cathedral of Bana in the province of Tao-Klarjeti.<sup>67</sup> Here, the family is mentioned not in rogation-like notes as in the manuscripts dealt with above but in the scribe's colophon, which is dated the 8<sup>th</sup> March of the *chronicon* 172:<sup>68</sup>

კურთხეულ არს ღმერთი! სრულ  
იქმნა წმიდად ესე ოთხთავი  
ქ(რონი)კ(ო)ნსა მეათოთხმე[ტე]  
დ მოქცეულსა: რ~პიზ. მარტსა ჳ~:  
ჯელითა ცოდვილისა აკაკისითა:

“Blessed be God! This holy Tetraevan-  
gelion has been accomplished on the 8<sup>th</sup>  
March of the *chronicon* 172 in the 14<sup>th</sup>  
cycle,<sup>69</sup> by the hand of sinful Aḱaki.”

The scribe continues with a rogation for himself and the person who commissioned his work, a certain Tamar, Queen of Queens, who can again be identified with the wife of Aleksandre II, King of Imeretia (cf. 2.2.1 above):

... ჩემთვის, მწარედ ცოდვილისა,  
ლოცვასა ჰყოფდი, მონაო ღ(მრ)  
თისაო, სარწმუნოო, რომლისა  
ბრძანებითა აღიწერა წმიდად ესე  
წიგნი. დიდისა ღ(მრ)თის მოყ(უ)  
რისა და მოწყალისა პატრონისა  
დედოფალთა დედოფალისა  
თამარისნი მრავალმცა არიან  
წელნი სუფევისა მათისნი ნება-  
წადილთა\*<sup>70</sup> ზედა აღსრულებითა.

“... for me, the severely sinful one, offer  
a prayer, (you), the faithful servant of  
God, upon whose command this holy  
book was written! Of (you), the great  
Lady, loving God and merciful, the  
queen of queens Tamar, may the years  
of your (lit. their) rulership be many,  
with fulfilment beyond (your) desires!”

He then includes the members of the queen's family, beginning with a brother named Mzečabuḱ:

დიდისა\*<sup>71</sup> და ქრისტეს მოყ(უ)  
რისა პატრონისა ძმისა მათისა  
მზეჭაბუკის მორჭმითა და  
ამოდ ყოფნითა, და ეგრეთვე  
შუჭნიერთა ძეთა და ძის წულთა  
მათთა ბედნიერობითა და  
დღევეთილობითა საუკუნო იყავნ  
საკსენებელი და კურთხევად  
მათი. ეგრეთვე დიდებულთა  
მშობელთა მისთა: პატრონისა

“Of the great and Christ-loving Lord,  
her (*lit.* their) brother Mzečabuḱ, with  
carefreeness and welfare, and as well  
of his (*lit.* their) beautiful children and  
grand children, with happiness and well-  
being, may their commemoration and  
blessing be forever. Also of his noble  
parents, Lord Quarquare and Lady De-  
disimedi, may their commemoration be  
forever! Also of his (*lit.* their) Christ-

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Bregaž et al. 1958, 347–349 as to the description of the codex.

<sup>68</sup> The colophon is edited in Šarašige 1954, 262.”

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Gippert 2016, 62 as to the cycles of 532 years that are the basis of the Georgian *chronicon* calculation. Note that the number seventy is spelt პი, i.e. 60+10, in the *chronicon*, in agreement with Georgian *samoc-da-ati*.

<sup>70</sup> Šarašige 1954, 262, ll. 22–23 has ნებაჲ წადილთა.

<sup>71</sup> Šarašige 1954, 262, l. 24 has დიდსა.

ყუ(ა)რყუ(ა)რესი და პატრონისა  
დედისიმედისა საუკუნო  
იყავნ ვსენებად მათი: ეგრეთვე  
ქრისტეს მოყუარეთა მმათა  
მისთა პატრონისა ქაიხოსროსი  
და პატრონისა ზაადურისა  
საუკუნო იყავნ სავსენებელი და  
კურთხევა მათი.

loving brothers, Lord Kaixosro and  
Lord Baadur, may their commemoration  
and blessing be forever!”

Aḱaḱi’s colophon, which was first thematised as early as 1851 by M.F. Brosset,<sup>72</sup> ends with a listing of the dates of death of four of the family members:

პირველად პატრონი ზაადურ  
მიიცვალა ქ(რონი)კ(ო)ნსა: რ<sup>ე</sup>დბ:  
ოკდ(ომ)ბ(ერსა) ი<sup>ე</sup> დღ(ესა): ა<sup>ე</sup>.

“First, Lord Baadur passed away, in the  
*chronicon* 162 (~ 1474 A.D.), on the  
10<sup>th</sup> October, by the 1st (hour).

პატრონი დედისიმედი ქ(რონი)  
კ(ო)ნსა რ<sup>ე</sup>ოზ: დ(ე)კ(ემ)ბ(ერსა).  
ი<sup>ე</sup>თ. დღ(ესა). ვ<sup>ე</sup>.

Lady Dedisimedi (passed away) in the  
*chronicon* 177 (~ 1489 A.D.), on the  
19<sup>th</sup> December, by the 6th (hour).

პ(ა)ტრონი ყ(უა)რყ(უა)რე  
ქ(რონი)კ(ო)ნსა რ<sup>ე</sup>ჰზ. ივლ(ისსა).  
ა<sup>ე</sup>. დღ(ესა). ა<sup>ე</sup>.

Lord Quarquare (passed away) in the  
*chronicon* 187 (~ 1499 A.D.), on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
July, by the 1st (hour).

პ(ა)ტრონი ქაიხოსრო ქ(რონი)  
კ(ო)ნსა რ<sup>ე</sup>ჰზ: მაისს(ა): ვ<sup>ე</sup>:  
დღ(ესა): დ<sup>ე</sup>.

Lord Kaixosro (passed away) in the  
*chronicon* 188 (~ 1500 A.D.), on the 6th  
May, by the 4th (hour).”

It is clear from this that Mzečabuḱ was the only (named) member of the family that was still alive when Aḱaḱi accomplished his work. Given the date of the Gospel codex, the suggestion imposes itself that this was actually the “Mzečabuḱ I son of Kaixosro”, for whom 1502–1516 is given as the time-span of his rulership in the index of *Kartlis Cxovreba*. In contrast to the index, however, Kaixosro was his brother and not his father – a misinformation that was obviously taken over from Vaxuṣṭi as we have seen above (cf. 2.1.1).

Taking the available dates into account, we further arrive at the suggestion that the two Mzečabuḱs of the Chronicle were actually one person – and, by consequence, the two Quarquarés named II and III, with their reigns given as 1451–1466 and 1487–1500 in the index, as well. If Baadur died as early as 1474 (*chronicon* 162 as in the present list) or

<sup>72</sup> In a report on St. George’s church in the monastery of Gelati (Brosset, 1851, 42): “Sur l’autel est un joli Evangile, khoutzouri, parchemin, qui fut achevé de copier le 8 mars 1094, 192, par un certain Acaci, par ordre de la très pieuse reine Tamar. Le copiste recommande à Dieu, Mzédchabouc, frère de Tamar, leurs père et mère Qouarquaré et Dédis-Imédi, leurs frères Kaï-Khosro et Baadour.”

1475 (*chronicon* 163 as given in the Chronicle, cf. 1.4 above) by the age of 21 (as indicated in the Chronicle), he must have been born by the year 1453; and if Kaixosro died in the year 1500 (*chronicon* 188 as in the present list) or 1502 (*chronicon* 190 as given by Vaxuṣṭi) by the age of 53 (as indicated by Vaxuṣṭi, too), he must have been born between 1447 and 1449 – for both sons, the Quarquare (II) who was enthroned in 1451 must have been just in the right age to be their father. This, again, is confirmed by *Kartlis Cxovreba*, according to which Quarquare died in the year 1500 (*chronicon* 188) by the age of 82. The Chronicle also gives the dates of death for Dedisimedi (1491), Kaixosro (1502), and Tamar:<sup>73</sup>

ქორონიკონსა რ<sup>თ</sup>: მიიღვალა  
მეუღლე ყუარყუარე ათაბაგისა,  
ბატონი დედისიმედი, წლისა  
ნ<sup>დ</sup>, სექტემბერს ი<sup>წ</sup>.

“In the *chronicon* 179 passed away the wife of Quarquare the *atabagi*, Lady Dedisimedi, aged 54, on the 19<sup>th</sup> September.

ქორონიკონსა რ<sup>ჰ</sup> ... დიდი  
ბატონი ყუარყუარე მიიღვალა  
წლისა პ<sup>ზ</sup>, ივნისს ა<sup>წ</sup>.

In the *chronicon* 188 ... passed away Lord Quarquare, aged 82, on the 1<sup>st</sup> June.

ქორონიკონსა რ<sup>ჟ</sup>: ათაბაგი  
ბატონი ქაიხოსრო მიიღვალა  
წლისა ნ<sup>გ</sup>, მაისსა ვ<sup>წ</sup>.

In the *chronicon* 190 passed away the *atabagi* Lord Kaixosro, aged 53, on the 6<sup>th</sup> May.

ქორონიკონსა რ<sup>ჟ</sup>: მარტსა ი<sup>ზ</sup>,  
მიიღვალა დედოფალი თამარ.  
აპრილსა ა<sup>წ</sup> ამასვე წელსა მეფეთ-  
მეფე ალექსანდრე მიიღვალა.

In the *chronicon* 198 passed away queen Tamar. On the 4<sup>th</sup> April of the same year passed away the King of Kings Aleksandre.”

The differences between the dates given in *Kartlis Cxovreba*, Vaxuṣṭi’s Description, and Aḱaḱi’s colophon are minimal and can mostly be explained as copying errors (December vs. September, July vs. June) in the former texts, given that the colophon was written much closer to the lifetime of the deceased than the Chronicle or Vaxuṣṭi’s work. The differences in the *chronicon* datings may further be due to cross-calculations with other eras, including the fact that a *chronicon* began on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, not on a 1<sup>st</sup> January, which implies that properly speaking, the 1<sup>st</sup> June, *chronicon* 188 was not that of the year 1500 but that of 1501.

There is another divergence that must be accounted for, viz. the question whether the first-born son of Quarquare was Mzečabuḱ (as stated in the Chronicle, cf. 1.4 above) or whether it was Kaixosro (as indicated in Q 969, cf. 2.2.2 above). Considering that Kaixosro was the first successor

<sup>73</sup> Qauxčišvili 1959, 486, ll. 21–22, 28–29, and 30.

of his father Quarquare as an *atabagi* and that it was obviously he who continued the family lineage via a son who was called Quarquare again and who begat another pair of sons named Mzečabuḡ and Kaixosro with his wife Anna, the latter information is likely to be correct. What we cannot decide is whether Mzečabuḡ preceded Baadur or vice versa; but if six years passed between the births of Kaixosro and the latter, there was enough time in between for Mzečabuḡ to be born. For Quarquare's and Dedisimedi's daughter Tamar, the "queen of queens" of Imeretia, who commissioned the Bana Gospel codex to be copied, the position in the order of children remains unclear.

On the basis of Aḡaḡi's colophon, we may thus establish the record of the family members as follows:

|                                | born     | died     | reign                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|--|
| Quarquare (father)             | ca. 1417 | ca. 1500 | ca. 1451–1500<br>(with interruptions?) |
| Dedisimedi (mother)            | ca. 1430 | ca. 1489 |  |
| Kaixosro (1 <sup>st</sup> son) | ca. 1447 | ca. 1501 | ca. 1499–1501                          |
| Mzečabuḡ (2 <sup>nd</sup> son) | ca. 1450 | ca. 1516 | ca. 1501–1516                          |
| Baadur (3 <sup>rd</sup> son)   | ca. 1453 | ca. 1474 |  |
| Tamar (daughter)               | ?        | ca. 1510 |  |

2.4 There remains one problem to be solved in the present context, viz. the question of the second Baadur mentioned in the Chronicle (cf. 1.4 above): If Mzečabuḡ's brother had died by the year 1474 (*chronicon* 163), how could his father Quarquare have taken him together with his brother to an attack against the Turkmens ten years later, in the *chronicon* 173? The problem can easily be solved by assuming that it was not Baadur who took part in that campaign but Kaixosro.

3. Even after merging Mzečabuḡ the *atabagi* with Mzečabuḡ "the Great", son of Quarquare II, we are still left with two possible candidates for the identification of the Mzečabuḡ commemorated in the Sinai Gospel codex, viz. the "merged" one, son of Dedisimedi, and his own grand-nephew, son of Anna. As there are no sources available that would testify to one of the two having visited Mt. Sinai or, at least, having had a page named Ḳirile, we cannot decide this with certainty. However, as there are no indications that the younger Mzečabuḡ was ever appointed as an *atabagi*, he is a priori the weaker candidate. This is corroborated by two further attestations in the corpus that clearly refer to his granduncle and

demonstrate his interest in the sites of the Georgian diaspora.

3.1 In 1962, El. Metreveli published text materials concerning the Georgian “colony” in Jerusalem, which mostly consist of so-called *agāpis*, i.e. commemorations of services to be held for pious persons and their donations, appearing as separate notes in manuscripts; a text genre whose importance had been stated appropriately 25 years before by G. Peradze, who also noted that some manuscript pages with *agāpis* from Jerusalem had found their way to Leipzig via the bequest of Constantin Tischendorf.<sup>74</sup> One of these *agāpis*, which is found in ms. V 1095 of the Leipzig University Library,<sup>75</sup> is devoted to Mzečabuḳ the *atabagi* and his brother Kaixosro as benefactors of the Monastery of the Holy Cross:<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Peradze 1937, 237–238 n. 1: “Apart from ... inscriptions, the mementoes in the Georgian MSS., written by various monks, are also of the greatest importance for the history of the Georgian monks in Palestine. ... In the autumn of 1930, during my work in the Greek Patriarchate in Palestine, I, on the advice of His Holiness, the Jerusalem Patriarch Tymotheos, gave my attention to these mementoes. Fortunately I was able to recover some neglected by Tsagareli and Blake. Perhaps one day I shall be able to publish them. – Apart from these mementoes, the deeds of donations, the so-called Agapae, have been for the history of Georgian monasteries in Palestine of great importance. ... The University Library in Leipzig, a bequest of Tischendorf, has, among the Georgian MSS., the parchment sheets of these little deeds. The text of these Leipzig sheets are much older than those of Palestine, edited by Marr. I possess beautiful photographs of the Leipzig sheets, and when I, time permitting, write *A History of the Colonies of Georgian Monks according to Georgian sources*, I shall certainly go searchingly into the question of these texts.” As to the provenance of his Jerusalem “souvenirs”, Tischendorf himself stated (1850, 69): “Ein enges Seitengemach, in das wir nur tiefgebückt eintreten konnten, enthielt die Bibliothek mit vielen georgianischen, auch einigen syrischen, armenischen und arabischen Handschriften. Griechische fand ich nicht; nur lagen auf dem Boden unter anderen Resten alter Handschriften auch mehrere griechische Blätter. Was ich darunter auf Pergament vorfand, das wurde mir gestattet zur Erinnerung mitzunehmen.” The first longer account of the library of the Georgian monastery is that by J.M.A. Scholz (1823, 148): “Das Kloster des heil. Kreuzes ist 1 Stunde südwestlich von Jerusalem in einem Thale, an dem Orte, wo nach der Tradition der Stamm für das Kreuz unseres Heilandes abgehauen worden ist. Da es in den Zeiten der Georgianer sehr reich und mächtig war, so besteht sein grösster Reichthum an Handschriften auch in georgianischen, gegen 400, meistens Theile der Bibel enthaltend, die aber nach der Versicherung der Mönche bei Strafe des Anathems nicht angesehen werden dürfen ... Alle diese Handschriften, so wie auch die der meisten übrigen genannten Klöster, sind zum Theil von den wallfahrenden Pilgern als Andenken hier zurückgelassen worden. Bei weitem der grösste Gewinn für die Wissenschaft könnte erwachsen aus einer genauen Vergleichung der georgianischen Handschriften, von denen die meisten gewiss sehr alt, aus jenen Zeiten sind, wo diese Nation sehr reich und in Palästina mächtig war. Gewiss würde dadurch die Geschichte dieser Bibel-Uebersetzung entwickelt, und die Geschichte des Textes überhaupt beleuchtet werden.”

<sup>75</sup> The fragmentary manuscript was first described by Tischendorf himself (1855 / 1861, 74: no. XLII); neither his description nor that by Vollers (1906, 432) mentions the *agāpis*. In contrast to this, Assfalg (1963, 60–72: no. 15, III.) provides a full transcript. In 1914, N.Ja. Marr had published some of the *agāpis* that are found in the Leipzig manuscript, but declaredly from a “page of a paper manuscript” he had come across in Jerusalem (Marr 1914, XXV–XXVIII); the *agāpi* dealt with below is not among them.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Metreveli 1962, 77 (no. 90); Assfalg 1963, 70 (no. 12.). Images of the manuscript pages in question (15rv) are available online at <http://tinygu.de/v1095> and <http://tinygu.de/v1095b> (courtesy of the University Library, Leipzig).



... ჩუენ, ჯუარელთა ძმათა და დაძთა და სრულიად საღ(მრ) თ(ო)მან კრებულმან,... დავდევიტ ესე წიგნი პატრონსა ათაბაგსა მზეწაბუკს კურთხეულისა მათის ძმისა ქაიხოსროს სულისა სამლოცველოდ. დიადი საქონელი გამოეგზავნა მათისა გაზრდილისა ამბროსეს ჯელითა. და მთაფშიდას და სრულად საბერძნეთშიგან მრავალი გაეცა, აგრევე ამა საუფლოთა და წმიდათა ადგილთა მოიღო: ას ფლორად ერთი დიდი ყანა იყიდა. გ~ კვრიაკესა მარხვათასა აღაპი გაუჩინეთ ... აგრევე ასი ფლორი ნაღდი მოგუცა, ხაზნაშიგან ჩავდევიტ. მისთვის ერთი კანდელი დაკვიდეთ, სამარადისოდ ენთებოდეს და ზეთი ამა ჯუარის მონასტრისაგან მიეცემოდეს, ვიდრე ესე მონასტერი იყოს, არა მოიშალოს. აგრევე ერთი ვერცხლის ბარძიმი შემოსწირეს საპატიო და თეფში ვერცხლისავე. ლ~ ფლორი სხუად ჩასაწერლად და შენდობად ითქმოდეს დაუკლებლად. პატრონსა ქაიხოსროს შეუნდვნეს ღმერთმან, ძმათა და დაძთაძცა მრავალი მოგუცს ცალკე, შე(უ)ნდვენ ღმერთმან. ...

“... we, the brethren and sisters of the (Monastery of the) Cross and (our) divine congregation, deposited this document for Lord Mzečabuk, the *atabagi*, to pray for his (*lit.* their) blessed brother's, Lord Kaixosro's, soul. Much property was sent (by him) by the hand of Ambrose whom he (*lit.* they) had reared. And in all Greece he spent much, also to these noble and holy places he brought (much): for 100 silver drachmas he bought a big field. On the third Sunday of Lent we appointed the *agapi* (service) for him ... He also gave us 100 silver drachmas in cash, we deposited them in the treasure. For this we placed a candle, it shall burn forever and the oil shall be given by this monastery of the Cross, it shall not be interrupted as long as this monastery will exist. They also donated one precious silver chalice and also a plate of silver. Another 30 silver drachmas for being registered, and forgiveness shall be pronounced undiminishedly. May God forgive Lord Kaixosro, he gave us, the brethren and also the sisters, much separately, may God forgive him. ...”

If the text is understood correctly, Mzečabuk made his donations after Kaixosro's death, i.e. between 1501 and 1516, but without visiting Jerusalem himself; of the Ambrose who was sent out as a deliverer, nothing else is known. Interestingly enough, however, Mzečabuk's and Kaixosro's brother Baadur is also commemorated in one of the Jerusalem *agapis*, under the date of the 21<sup>st</sup> October.<sup>77</sup>

ამასვე დღესა წირვა და აღაპი საუკუნოათაბაგის(ა)ძეუარყუარეს შვ(ი)ლისაჲ ბადურისი, შეუნდვნეს ღმერთმან. მოგუივიდა ფ~ ფლოლი. და ვინცა შეუცვალოს, ღმერთმან ჰკითხოს და[უსრუ]ლებელსა მას ცხოვრებასა.

“On the same day, service and eternal commemoration for Ba(a)dur, the child of Quarquare the *atabagi*, may God forgive (his sins). We received 500 silver drachmas (from him). And whoever will alter this, God will question him in that endless life.”

<sup>77</sup> Metreveli 1962, 82, no. 38; Marr 1916, 9–10, no. 36.

3.2 Apart from Jerusalem, there is another site of the Georgian diaspora that the two brothers can be proven to have supported, viz. the Iviron monastery on Mt. Athos. In a chronicle-like text entitled “Narration about the most beautiful monastery of the Iberians, which all monks are liable to know”,<sup>78</sup> we read:<sup>79</sup>

... მერვისა საუკუნოდსა დასაბამსა, რომელ არს ჩუჳბ, წარვიდენ ვიეთნიმე მათგანნი რომელნიცა იპოვებოდენ მუნ, ივერთა თვთმჰყრობელობათა შინა, და მიემთხვენენ რა კეთილმსახურსა მას ბატონსა და მეფესა, უფალსა გორგორანსა, და თანამესაუბრე ექმნეს მას ყოვლადვე მონასტრისათჳს საკმაოდ, კეთილმსმენელ ექმნა და შეეწია მათ. არამედ მეფე ესე უფლისა მიმართ განვიდა რა, ძენი მისნი მემკვდრენი მთავრობისა და მეფობისა იქმნეს, რომელთა სახელნი ქაიხოსრო და მზეჭაბუკ, კეთილმსახურნი მეფენი და ბატონნი დიდად შეეწინენ მონასტრისა ამის აღდგინებასა და მისთა სანოვაგეთა და სადგურთაცა და დაცემულნი და განხრწნილნი გოდოლთა და სენაკთან ალაგეს და წარმართეს. არამედ დიდი გოდოლიცა მაშინ აღეგო და საფუძველითგან აღშენებულ იქმნა და ეკლესიისა გუმბეთნი და გარე კარისბჭე და სხუანიცა ყოველნი სასარგებლონი საგმარებელნი აღმზადებულ იქმნენ სადიდებელად ღმრთისა, ვითარცა ჩანს და თანამდგომარეობენ ვიდრე დღენდელად დღედმდე. შეწევნა უკუე და წარსაგებელი იყო მუნნითგან, ესე იგი საქართველოდთ, ხოლო ყოველი შრომად აღმრგად ანუ თანდგომად მონაზონთა მის მომანსტრისათად იყო ...

“... by the beginning of the eighth millennium, (in the year) which is 1492,<sup>80</sup> some of those who were found there went away into the autocracy of the Iberians, and when they met the devout master and king, lord Gorgoran, and conversed with him abundantly about the monastery, everything, he listened well and supported them. But when the king (himself) had gone to the Lord, his sons, being the heirs of his rulership and kingdom, whose names were Kai-xosro and Mzečabuk, God-fearing kings and lords, strongly supported the construction of this monastery and its gardens and docks, and they built up and reerected the demolished and destroyed towers and cells. And also the big tower was erected then and built up from the bottom, and the domes of the church and the outer portal and all other useful things were prepared for the praise of God, as it appears, and they stand upright until the present day. Support and expenditure came from there again, that is, from Georgia, but all work was (done with) instigation or assistance of the monks of this monastery ...”

<sup>78</sup> “მოთხრობად უმშუენიერესი მონასტრისათჳს ივერთამსა, რომლისა თანა-მდებ არიან ცნობად ყოველნი მონაზონნი”; *Kekeleze* 1955, 82–86.

<sup>79</sup> *Kekeleze* 1955, 82, l. 30 – 83, l. 5.

<sup>80</sup> The year 1492 was year no. 7000 of the Byzantine era.

K. Kekeleze, who edited this text in 1955, correctly identified its Greek source, which was authored by a Hieromonk named Theodosios; here the relevant passage runs:<sup>81</sup>

... τοῦ ὀγδόου ἀρχομένου αἰώνος, ἦτοι εἰς τοὺς α,υβ´ ἀπῆλθόν τινες ἐκ τῶν εὐρίσκομένων μοναχῶν ἐν τῇ τῶν Ἰβήρων αὐτοκρατορία καὶ τῷ εὐσεβεῖ ἐκείνῳ ἐντυχόντες αὐθέντῃ κυρ Γοργοράνῃ καὶ συνομιλήσαντες ἅπαντα τὰ τῆς Μονῆς ἱκανῶς ἐπεκοῦρησε καὶ βεβοήθηκεν. Ἀλλὰ τοῦτου τοῦ βασιλέως πρὸς Κύριον ἐκδημήσαντος, οἱ τοῦτου υἱοὶ διάδοχοι τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐγένοντο· ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα Καῖχοσρόης καὶ Μετζετζαμποῦκ, οἱ εὐσεβεῖς αὐθένται καὶ βασιλεῖς, οἵτινες μεγάλως συνήργησαν εἰς τὴν τῆς Μονῆς ἀνέγερσιν ...

“... by the beginning of the eighth millennium, in (the year) 1492, some of the monks found there went away into the autocracy of the Iberians, and when they met the devout ruler, lord Gorgoran, and conversed with him (on) everything of the monastery, he listened adequately and supported them. But when the king (himself) had travelled to the Lord, his sons became the heirs of his rulership and kingdom, whose names were Kaixosro and Mzečabuḱ, the God-fearing rulers and kings who strongly cooperated in building this monastery up...”

Different from the Georgian version, the Greek text provides information as to when it was composed:<sup>82</sup>

Ἐν ἔτει 7022 ἀπο Ἀδάμ, ἐν μηνὶ μαῖῳ 2, ἀπὸ δὲ Χριστοῦ α,φιδ´, καὶ οἱ ἐντυχάνοντες εὐχεσθαί μοι διὰ τὸν Κύριον.

“In the year 7022 from Adam, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month of May, and in the year 1514 C.E.; and may those coming across it pray for me before the Lord.”

That the Georgian text is a translation of the Greek and not vice versa is clearly evidenced by the name Gorgoran which appears in both, obviously concealing the name of Quarquare, the father of Kaixosro and Mzečabuḱ. The sons’ names were correctly “restored” by the translator, the strange Greek spelling of the latter notwithstanding,<sup>83</sup> which means that he must have been familiar with them; Quarquare, on the other hand, must have been out of reach to him. Nevertheless the identification with our *atabagis* is beyond doubt given the time frame indicated.<sup>84</sup>

4. Of the 43 non-fictional attestations of the name Mzečabuḱ in the digital corpus, only three remain that do not concern either the *atabagi* or

<sup>81</sup> Gedeōn 1885, 173, ll. 21–29.

<sup>82</sup> Gedeōn 1885, 175, ll. 8–10, at the end of the text authored by Theodosios; the continuation (covering the years up to 7182 ~ 1674) is by another author named Ieremia (cf. ib., 172) and is not contained in the Georgian version, nor is the dating formula. The Georgian text as edited by Kekeleze is a copy dated the 28th June, 1927, from the monastery of Bethany; according to a note at its end, its model had been copied on Mt. Athos by a certain priest named Ioane Maisuraze (“გადმოწერილი ძველი ათონიდან იოანე მღვდელ მასიურაძისაგან”; Kekeleze 1955, 71–72).

<sup>83</sup> Instead of Gedeōn’s strange “Μετζετζαμποῦκ”, Theodosios’ autograph, which is kept at the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos, has the adequate spelling “Μετζεαμποῦκ”. My thanks are due to the librarian of the Iviron, Theologos, who made this autograph accessible to me on April 28, 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Kekeleze 1955, 78.

his grandnephew. The first one of them is contained in the travel report of the Georgian writer Giorgi Avaliṣvili (1769–1850), who sojourned in Jerusalem in 1819–1820. Under the date of the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1819, he writes:<sup>85</sup>

ამათ შორის მოვიდა ჩემდა უფალი  
კაპიტანი ზემოთქმულისა  
პოლკისა თავადი დავით  
ორბელიანი, მედ მზეჭაბუკ  
დივანბეგისა და შემდგომად ამისა  
პოლკისა მისუფ, უფალი მაიორი  
ფეოდორ ალექსიევიჩი მისინი  
და ესრეთ განვატარე დღე ესე  
ამათთანა.

“Meanwhile came to me lord Davit Orbeliani, the captain of the above-named army himself, the son of Mzečabuk the chief judge, and after him, from the same army, lord Feodor Alekseevič Misin, a major, and so I spent this day with them.”

The same Mzečabuk Orbeliani is also mentioned in the work by the 18<sup>th</sup> century poet Besarion Gabašvili, better known as Besikī (1750–1791). Being a poet himself, he is even the addressee of two (satirical) poems here, which are entitled “To” and “On” Mzečabuk Orbeliani, resp. (მზეჭაბუკ ორბელიანს and მზეჭაბუკ ორბელიანზედ).<sup>86</sup> For an identification with the Mzečabuk of the Sinai Gospels, his life-time was probably too late (the year of his death is usually given as 1794), and there is no indication that he had any relationship with St. Catherine’s monastery or any other repository of Georgian manuscripts abroad. As we have seen above, the same is also true for Mzečabuk the grandnephew of the *atabagi*, so that the latter remains the only valid candidate.<sup>87</sup>

Reviewing the materials investigated here, a final remark seems appropriate. Considering that the digital corpus provides a clear diachronic perspective on the use of the name Mzečabuk, the assumption imposes itself that it actually originated from the Amirandarežaniani, i.e., in medieval epics, before it entered the onomasticon of the Georgian aristocracy during Queen Tamar’s time. The fact that our *atabagi* adopted the Biblical name Jacob (Iakob) some time before his death, as ms. Q-969 tells us (cf. 2.2.2 above), is an additional hint as to his birth name remaining associated with non-Christian traditions. Whether the choice of Iakob was induced by Queen Tamar’s chronicle, where the eponymous Biblical patriarch is mentioned right after the hero from the Amirandarežaniani (cf. 1.3 above), must be left open.

<sup>85</sup> Metreveli 1967, 24, ll. 24–28.

<sup>86</sup> Gorgaṣe 1912, 183–188.

<sup>87</sup> For further information on Mzečabuk the *atabagi* cf. Xalvašvili 2011, 76–143.

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