Achtung!

Attention!
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Jost Gippert, Frankfurt 2018
KARTVELOLOGY IN THE DIGITAL AGE:
ON THE TRACK OF MZEČABUĞ

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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.¹ The notes have turned out to be personal rogations,² probably written by a certain Kirile who was the page of a person named Mzečabuğ; the latter obviously bore the rank of an atabag-amirspasalari, which used to be the title of the rulers of Samcxe-Saatbago. In a first attempt at verification, I proposed to identify this person with Mzečabuğ, son of Quarqūare 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 19th century. The materials, which have been accumulated with the support of many colleagues from Georgia, first within the projects TITUS³ and ARMAZI,⁴

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¹ 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.
² The available catalogues ignore the secondary notes (Cagareli 1888, 198, no. 7) or confine themselves to a formal description (Javaxisvili 1947, 38, no. 16: “В рукописи имеются позднейшие приписки гражданскими буквами”; Garitte 1956, 51, no. 16: “... une grossière écriture xuc’uri minuscule”).
⁴ “Caucasian Languages and Cultures: Electronic Documentation”, http://tinygu.de/armazi.
and since 2012, in the project of a “Georgian National Corpus” (GNC), 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 (გზეჭაბუკ) in the Old and Middle Georgian text material yields a total of 134 attestations in different case forms. By far the greatest number (66) is from the 10th chapter of the Amirandarežaniani, 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. 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, plus eleven passages with the “split” compound form. 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 (and the Mzečabuk appearing in it may represent the same personage).

6 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.
8 Cf. http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk. For the other attestations of the “split” compound cf. below.
10 Cf. http://tinygu.de/mzechabuk; 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 mzisčabuksa (ch. 11: 17, l. 7).
11 Cf. Stevenson 1958, xiv, who assumes “a fairly recent dating”.

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

“They took counsel as to look for a suitable one and to bring him as a husband... like Tamta for Tumiani, like Amiran for Khorashani, like Shah Khosro for Banu, like Mzečabuk 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 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 Amirandare ǯaniani: the first one invokes the central hero of the romance, Amiran Dare ǯanisze together with a princess named Xvarešan in the text, and the second one, Mzečabuk, the hero of the 10th chapter, together with the (nameless) daughter of the Khazar king Khvasro, whom he married after much effort. 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. In this way, the passage in Queen Tamar’s chronicle can only be counted as just one more reference to the legendary Mzečabuk of the Amirandare ǯaniani, and

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12 Cf. http://tinygu.de/mzechabukkc2; the underlying edition is Q auxćishvili 1959.
13 Ch. II: Q auxćishvili 1959, 35, l. 12 – 36, l. 4.
14 Cf. Gen. 29.18ff. for Jacob and Rachel and Gen. 41.44–50 for Joseph and Asenath.
15 The marriage of the two is described in ch. 8 of the romance (Lolashvili 1960, 361, l. 17 ff.).
17 Cf. Kekełeże 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 Amirandare ǯaniani (the name forms used in the edition by Qauxćishvili are those restored by Kekełeże, cf. the edition, 36 n. 10). The question of a possible Persian source for the Amirandare ǯaniani (cf., e.g., Stevenson 1958, xviii–xxi) cannot be dealt with here.
the same is true for a verse in the 17th 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: ობჰ ჟარბო ობჰ კახეთში დაჰვშჰრთდა ვახტანგი!\(^{18}\)

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.\(^{19}\) Among these attestations, there is one where the person named Mzečabuḵ bears the title of an ātabagi; the passage in question, which is dated to the chronicon (ქრონიკონი) 198, i.e., the year 1510,\(^{20}\) 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 Mzečabuḵ, together with king Vakhtang of Kakhetia, supported David but was defeated by Bagrat on the 3rd June: \(^{21}\)

“...the king of Kartli, Davit, was supported by Vakhtang, the king of Kakhetia, and Mzečabuḵ the ātabagi. King Davit did not arrive in time. In Moxisi, Vaxṭang and Mzečabuḵ were attacked by Bagraṭ, and he was victorious on the 3rd June.”

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

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

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18 Cf. the edition Leonize 1939, 4: strophe 10, verse d.
19 Cf. Qauxčišvili 1959, 477–540. The heading used in the edition is ქრონიკო-ზარახირა, ქართლის ქართული (“New Kartlis Cxovreba, third text”); however, the manuscripts provide ქართული მაჭიდდობა, ფეხური (“The Life of the Bagratids’ rule”; ib. 477).
20 Cf. Gippert 2016, 62 as to the Georgian time reckoning system.
22 Qauxčišvili 1959, 672: “მზეჭაბუკი I, ქართლის მეფის ოფიციალური”
23 Qauxčišvili 1959, 672: “მზეჭაბუკი, ქართლის მეფის ოფიციალური და დამოუკიდებლობა, 2168–2188”
24 Qauxčišvili 1959, 693: “გუძაძის II., ქართლის მეფი (1451–1466); ” ქართლის მეფი III., ქართლის ოფიციალური (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: 25

“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: 26

... Sultan 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 Acquperi, he lifted him up and threw him ruthlessly on the ground.”

25 Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 5–9.
26 Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 15–28.
27 Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, l. 18 has the plural form დამახმარებელი instead, which makes no sense here.
28 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 (Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 11–13) for a short time and who was succeeded by his brother Yaqub (spelt partly აყუბ, partly იაყუბ in the Chronicle: 479, l. 12 vs. l. 33).
By consequence, Mzečabuğ is allowed to return home together with Konstantine:29

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

All this must have happened in the year 1478.30 After this, the name of Mzečabuğ 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:31

“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 Mzečabuğ and Baadur heard this, they assembled their troops and camped at a fortified place on a stony mountain so that they could decide 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: 32

“In the chronicon 163 passed away Baadur the atabagi, 21 years (old), on the 10th October, (in the year) from Creation 6982.”33

Consequently, the index of the edition assumes two Baadurs (just as it assumes two Mzečabuks), 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.34

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29 Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, ll. 31–33.
30 In the Chronicle, the event is reported after the death of Uzun-Hassan (Q auxčišvili 1959, 479, l. 11), which is usually dated the 6th 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).
31 Q auxčišvili 1959, 482, ll. 3–7.
32 Q auxčišvili 1959, 478, ll. 17–18.
33 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 1st September 5509 B.C., we arrive at (6982 – 5508 =) 1474 A.D.
34 Q auxčišvili 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 Mzečabuḳ of the Sinai Gospel codex can be identified with one of the two Mzečabuks it mentions. Both remain possible candidates: Mzečabuḳ the atabagi because of the title he bears, and Mzečabuḳ the son of Quarquam 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 Mzečabuḳ 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 18th century. Within this remarkable oeuvre, we find 14 attestations of the name Mzečabuḳ in a subtext which is devoted to the “Life of Samcxe (and) Klarjeti”; two further attestations are met with in the “Description of the land Egrisi, or Apxazeti, or Imereti”, and another six, in the “Chronological Table” concluding the work. Again, two different persons are assumed to be meant here, one Mzečabuḳ atabagi, who is styled “Mzečabuḳ I” and “son of Kaixosro”, with the time-span of his reign given as “1502–1516”, and a second “Mzečabuḳi son of Kaixosro”, who died in 1572 and who is “not known from other sources”.

2.1.1 It is clear right from the beginning that the first Mzečabuḳ 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 “Mzečabuḳ 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:

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36 აღწერა ეგრისის კუეყანისა, ანუ აფხაზეთისა, ანუ იმერეთისა, Q auxčišvili 1973, 742–893.
37 ქრონოლოგიური ცხრილი, Q auxčišvili 1973, 894–914.
39 Q auxčišvili 1973, 1046: “1. მზეჭაბუკ ათაბაგი (მზეჭაბუკ I. ქაიხოსროს ძე)”.
40 Q auxčišvili 1973, 1046: “2. მზეჭაბუკი ქაიხოსროს ძე ... მოკუდა 1572წელს ... სხვა ... წყაროებით ცნობილი არ არის”.
41 Q auxčišvili 1973, 710, II. 26–27.
“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 “Mzečabuki the Great” and his reign of 14 years, with a total of nine attestations of the name, we further learn that the atabagi made peace with Kostantīne (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:

“This Mzečabuk made peace with king Kostantīne ... This Mzečabuk made peace with the Ottomans on the basis of subordination. ... But after the year 1512 C.E., in Georgian (in the chronicon) 220, Sultan Suleiman sent out (his) supreme commander ... with a big army ... They came and arrived in Saatabago. Thereupon Mzečabuk fortified the castles and fortresses ... But the commander granted him honour and asked him, Mzečabuk, 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 friendship 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.”

42 Q auxčišvili 1973, 710–711: “ბ. თბილმოქალახი დამა, ოდ წულა შაქრობა”. 43 This information (Q auxčišvili 1973, 711, l. 4) is incorrect; cf. below.
Two of the events described here are also mentioned in the Chronological Table:

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

"(Chronicon) 204. The atabagi, Mzečabuḵ the Great, died. Enthroned was his son Qvarqvare."

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. Vaxušti himself repeats the latter dating in another subtext of his work, the Description of Imereti:

"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 Samcxe. Mzečabuḵ 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 Vaxţang sojourning at Moxisi. Vaxţang attacked him, and a heavy battle arose. Finally Vaxţang was defeated, but by mediation of King Davit, they made peace."

Note that different from the Description of Samcxe-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.

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44 Q a u x ʻ i ʃ ʼ i v i 1973, 898–899.
45 Q a u x ʻ i ʃ ʼ i v i 1973, 810, ll. 6–24.
The fact of Mzečabuš the atabagi conducting the Ottoman army into Imeretia is thematised two more times in Vaxušti’s text, under the date of the year 1534, in both the descriptions of Samcxe-Klarjeti and Imereti; the wording is but slightly different:

“But after this, Bagraṭ the King of the Imerians remembered the envy of Mzečabuš the atabagi when he brought the Ottomans up into Imeretia ... and again he saw Samcxe damaged and destroyed by Shah Ismail”

“The same event is also listed in the Chronological Table, under the year 1535:

(Chronicon) 223: The king of the Imerians remembered the envy of Mzečabuš the atabagi and entered Samcxe. And King Bagraṭ and Quārquāre the atabagi clashed in Murcxi, and Bagraṭ was victorious. Bagraṭ seized the atabagi, took him prisoner to Gelati and conquered Samcxe.”

2.1.2 The remaining attestations of the name Mzečabuš in Vaxušti’s work concern a later period, and therefore a different person indeed. Of the second Mzečabuš, 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:

47 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.
48 The general named Ḍeḻval is introduced in the Description of Samcxe (Q auxčišvili 1973, 712, l. 6).
49 Q auxčišvili 1973, 899.
“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 Mzečabuks death is reported for the year 1572 (chronicon 160):\textsuperscript{51}

\textit{(Chronicon)} 159: Mzečabuk, the son of Kaixosro the atabagi, married Rodam, the maiden of the Gurian king. \textit{(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:\textsuperscript{51}

\textit{(Chronicon)} 161: Kaixosro the atabagi died in Qazwin. And here, his son Qvarqvare 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 “Meskhian 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\textsuperscript{52} and which was published by Kr. Šaraşiţe together with several other documents in her “Materials for the History of Southern Georgia”.\textsuperscript{53} Here we read:\textsuperscript{54}

\textit{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 11th January, a Friday, by the 6th hour of the day, God became angry about his parent, and...}

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\textsuperscript{51} Q auxčišvili 1973, 901.
\textsuperscript{52} Cf. Bregaţe et al. 1959, 614–615 for a description of the codex.
\textsuperscript{53} Šaraşiţe 1961, 36–56. The first edition of the Chronicle was provided in Taqaišvili 1890, 81–115.
\textsuperscript{54} Šaraşiţe 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 რად. 5. In Taqaišvili 1890, the text is found on p. 82.
Lord Mzečabuš 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 Mzečabuš’s death, the present text differs from the information provided by Vaxušti in naming not Giorgi (II) but his father and predecessor Rošom (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. On the other hand, the text in the Chronicle strongly reminds us of the characterization of Mzečabuš, 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 Mzečabuš, it yields us one more candidate for the identification of the Mzečabuš from the Sinai Gospel codex. We are thus left with three possible candidates, representing a time-span of ca. 100 years: Mzečabuš, the son of Quarquare II in the second half of the 15th century, Mzečabuš the atabagi, son of Kaixosro, in the beginning of the 16th century, and Mzečabuš, son of Kaixosro, who married Rodam, in the second half of the 16th century.

2.2 Beyond the information on the latter Mzečabuš, Kr. Šarašize’s “Materials” contain five further attestations of the name. One of them,
in which the Mzečabuḵ under concern is styled a “lord” (patroni) again, is from a personal document written by one Gerasime, Archbishop of Kumurdo, which was preserved in Mcxeta; in accordance with Evagri, Patriarch of Georgia, being addressed, the event in question can be assigned to the years 1500–1503:59

... ესე პირი ღაწიგნი გკადრეთ და მოგახსენეთ თქუენ, ქრისტეს ღ თისა მიერ ქართლის ათალიკო ზსა ევაგრის მე, კუმურდოელ მთავარებისკოპოზმა გერასიმე, მას ჟამს ამბამ მაკურთხეთ და თქუენ შემოსავლეთ და საკურთხევლად გამოგუზავეთ 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 Kumurdo, at the time when Lord Mzečabuḵ had mercy on me and granted me the see and power of Kumurdo and sent me to you for a blessing, and you, too, had mercy on me and blessed me ...”

Considering the geography (Kumurdo is located in Samcxe) and the given time-frame, it is probably a priori that the Mzečabuḵ 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 Mzečabuḵ 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 “Mečeti Triodion” allegedly of the 16th century.60 Here, the two brothers are addressed after their parents, who are named Quarquare and Anna:61

“(May there be commemoration) of the devout and orthodox Lord Quarquare and his spouse, Lady Anna, and their sons, Lord Mzečabuḵ and Kaixosro, forever.”

59 Cf. Šaraşıże 1961, 27, who names the shelf number Hd-2130.
60 Cf. Šaraşıže 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 Bakrāďez 1878, 212–213.
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):62

“(May there be commemoration) of the orthodox king Aleksandre and his wife, the queen Lady Tamar, forever, 
(and) of their son, the great king of kings Bagrat, and his devout brothers, Giorgi and Vaxţang, 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 16th century.63

“Of Lord Quarquare and his (lit. their) spouse Dedisimedi and their sons, Lord Kaixosro and Lord Mzečabuţ, may their commemoration and blessing be forever!”

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

“Of the atabag-amirşasalari, great and noble and renowned for (his) courage and famous and invincible by his enemies, our believing Lord Quarquare, may his commemoration and his blessing be forever!

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62 Šaraşiţe 1961, 22, nos. 15.–16.
64 Šaraşiţe 1961, 15–16, nos. 8.–11; as to the ms. in question cf. Bregaţe et al. 1958, 381–382.
Likewise of his wife, the glory of women and a monument of beauty, a member of the holy bringers of myrrh and a seal of faith and a benefactor, the devout Lady Dedisimedi, may her commemoration and blessing be forever!

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!

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 angel’s schema, our Lord Iacob, formerly called Mzečabuk, may his commemoration and blessing be forever!

2.2.3 Immediately after this, the commemoration in ms. Q-969 continues with the family of the latter Mzečabuk’s “nephew” (zmişculi), who is called Quarquare again:65

“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 terror of enemies and a firm holder of the true faith of Christ and (our) present sovereign, Lord Nav Quarquare, may his

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

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!

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”. 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Quarquare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Dedisimedi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st son</td>
<td>Kaixosro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd son</td>
<td>Mzečabuk (&lt; Iaḵob)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd son</td>
<td>Kaixosro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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-

66 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. 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 8th March of the chronicon 172:

“Blessed be God! This holy Tetraevangeliion has been accomplished on the 8th March of the chronicon 172 in the 14th cycle, by the hand of sinful Aḳaḳi.”

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):

... 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 Mze čabuk:

“Of the great and Christ-loving Lord, her (lit. their) brother Mze čabuk, 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 Desidismedi, may their commemoration be forever! Also of his (lit. their) Christ-

67 Cf. B r e g a ʒ e et al. 1958, 347–349 as to the description of the codex.
68 The colophon is edited in Š a r a ʒ i e 1954, 262.”
69 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-att.
70 Šaraşzi e 1954, 262 , ll. 22–23 has ნებაჲ წადილთა.
71 Šaraşzi e 1954, 262 , l. 24 has ღოროს.
loving brothers, Lord Kaixosro and Lord Baadur, may their commemoration
and blessing be forever!”

Akāki’s colophon, which was first thematised as early as 1851 by M.F.
Brosset,\(^72\) ends with a listing of the dates of death of four of the family
members:

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

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

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

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 Mzečabuḳ was the only (named) member of
the family that was still alive when Akāki accomplished his work. Giv-
en the date of the Gospel codex, the suggestion imposes itself that this
was actually the “Mzečabuḳ 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 Vaxuştı as
we have seen above (cf. 2.1.1).

Taking the available dates into account, we further arrive at the sug-
gestion that the two Mzečabuḳs of the Chronicle were actually one per-
son – and, by consequence, the two Quarquares 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

\(^{72}\) 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 ႰႮႨႡ, 192, par un certain
Acaci, par ordre de la très pieuse reine Thamar. Le copiste recommande à Dieu, Mzédchabouc, frère de
Thamar, 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 Vaxušti) by the age of 53 (as indicated by Vaxušti, 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:73

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

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

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

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

The differences between the dates given in *Kartlis Cxovreba*, Vaxušti’s Description, and Aḵaḵi’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 Vaxušti’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 1st September, not on a 1st January, which implies that properly speaking, the 1st 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 Mzečabuš (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

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73 Q auxčišvili 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 Mzečabuk and Kaixosro with his wife Anna, the latter information is likely to be correct. What we cannot decide is whether Mzečabuk 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 Mzečabuk 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 Akaqi’s colophon, we may thus establish the record of the family members as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>born</th>
<th>died</th>
<th>reign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarquare (father)</td>
<td>ca. 1417</td>
<td>ca. 1500</td>
<td>ca. 1451–1500 (with interruptions?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedisimedi (mother)</td>
<td>ca. 1430</td>
<td>ca. 1489</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaixosro (1st son)</td>
<td>ca. 1447</td>
<td>ca. 1501</td>
<td>ca. 1499–1501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mzečabuk (2nd son)</td>
<td>ca. 1450</td>
<td>ca. 1516</td>
<td>ca. 1501–1516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baadur (3rd son)</td>
<td>ca. 1453</td>
<td>ca. 1474</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamar (daughter)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>ca. 1510</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Mzečabuk’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 Mzečabuk the atabagi with Mzečabuk “the Great”, son of Quarquare II, we are still left with two possible candidates for the identification of the Mzečabuk 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 Kirile, we cannot decide this with certainty. However, as there are no indications that the younger Mzečabuk 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 aγaπις, 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 aγaπις from Jerusalem had found their way to Leipzig via the bequest of Constantin Tischendorf. One of these aγaπις, which is found in ms. V 1095 of the Leipzig University Library, is devoted to Mzečabuk the atabagi and his brother Kaixosro as benefactors of the Monastery of the Holy Cross:

74 P er a d z e 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.”


75 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 aγaπις. In contrast to this, Ass-fa l g (1963, 60–72: no. 15, III.) provides a full transcript. In 1914, N.Ja. Marr had published some of the aγaπις 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 aγaπις dealt with below is not among them.

76 Cf. Metr ev el i 1962, 77 (no. 90); Ass-fal g 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).
... we, the brethren and sisters of the (Monastery of the) Cross and (our) di-
vine congregation, deposited this docu-
ment 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 Am-
brose 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
agaπi (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 for-
giveness shall be pronounced undimin-
ishedly. May God forgive Lord Kaix-
osro, 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 Jeru-
salem himself; of the Ambrose who was sent out as a deliverer, nothing
else is known. Interestingly enough, however, Mzečabuk’s and Kaixos-
ro’s brother Baadur is also commemorated in one of the Jerusalem 
agaπis,
under the date of the 21st October: 77

77 Mevertisei 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”,\(^7\) we read:\(^7\)

... by the beginning of the eighth millennium, (in the year) which is 1492,\(^8\) 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 Kaci-\(\hat{a}\)abu, Go-\(\hat{a}\)farin and Gikin, 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 ...

\(^7\) “მოთხრობაჲ უმშუენიერესი მონასტრისათჳს ივერთაჲსა, რომლისა თანა მონაზონთა მის მომანსტრისათაჲ იყო ფიქრი ...”

\(^8\) The year 1492 was year no. 7000 of the Byzantine era.
Κ. Κεκελιზέ, who edited this text in 1955, correctly identified its Greek source, which was authored by a Hieromonk named Theodosios; here the relevant passage runs:81

... τοῦ ὀγδοοῦ ἀρχομένου αἰώνος, ἦτοι εἰς τῶν a.u.b’ απῆλθον τινες ἕκ τῶν εὐρισκομένων μοναχῶν ἐν τῇ τῶν Ἰβήρων αὐτοκρατορίᾳ καὶ τῇ εὐσεβεί ἐκείνῳ ἐντυχόντες αὐθέντη κύρ Γοργοράνη καὶ συνομιλήσαντες ἀπαντα τά τῆς Μονῆς ἱκανώς ἐπεκούρησε καὶ βεβοήθηκεν. Ἀλλὰ τούτῳ τοῦ βασιλέως πρὸς Κύριον ἐκδημήσαντο, οἱ τούτῳ υἱοὶ διάδοχοι τῆς αρχῆς καὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐγένοντο· ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα Καϊχοσρός καὶ Μεζτζετζαμπούκ, οἱ εὐσεβεῖς αὐθένται καὶ βασιλεῖς, οἵτινες μεγάλως συνήργησαν εἰς τὴν τῆς Μονῆς ἀνέγερσιν ...

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

Ἐν ἔτει 7022 ἀπὸ Ἀδὰμ, ἐν μηνὶ μαΐῳ 2, ἀπὸ δὲ Χριστοῦ α.φιδ’, καὶ οἱ ἐντυχόντες εὐφρενᾶται μοι διὰ τὸν Κύριον.

“In the year 7022 from Adam, on the 2nd 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 Quarqūare, the father of Kaixosro and Mzečabuk. The sons’ names were correctly “restored” by the translator, the strange Greek spelling of the latter notwithstanding,83 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.84

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

81 Geđeōn 1885, 173, ll. 21–29.
82 Geđeōn 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 Keķelizë 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 Maisura ("გადმოწერილ ძველი ሐთონიაშ იოანე მღვდელ მაისურაძისაგან"); Keķelizë 1955, 71–72).
83 Instead of Geđeōn’s strange “Μεζτζετζαμπούκ”, Theodosios’ autograph, which is kept at the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos, has the adequate spelling “Μζεζζαμπούκ”. My thanks are due to the librarian of the Iviron, Theologos, who made this autograph accessible to me on April 28, 2017.
84 Cf. Keķelizë 1955, 78.
his grandnephew. The first one of them is contained in the travel report of
the Georgian writer Giorgi Avališvili (1769–1850), who sojourned in Je-
rusalem in 1819–1820. Under the date of the 28th July 1819, he writes:85

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

The same Mzečabuḳ Orbeliani is also mentioned in the work by the
18th century poet Besarion Gabašvili, better known as Besiḳi (1750–
1791). Being a poet himself, he is even the addressee of two (satirical)
poems here, which are entitled “To” and “On” Mzečabuḳ Orbeliani, resp.
(მზეჭაბუქ ძეჲ ორბელიანს და მზეჭაბუქ ძეჲ ორბელიანზედ).86 For an
identification with the Mzečabuḳ 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 Mzečabuḳ the grandnephew
of the atabagi, so that the latter remains the only valid candidate.87

Reviewing the materials investigated here, a final remark seems ap-
propriate. Considering that the digital corpus provides a clear diachronic
perspective on the use of the name Mzečabuḳ, the assumption imposes
itself that it actually originated from the Amirandareẓaniani, i.e., in me-
dieval epics, before it entered the onomasticon of the Georgian aristoc-
racy during Queen Tamar’s time. The fact that our atabagi adopted the
Biblical name Jacob (Iaḳob) 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 remain-
ing associated with non-Christian traditions. Whether the choice of Iaḳob
was induced by Queen Tamar’s chronicle, where the eponymous Biblical
patriarch is mentioned right after the hero from the Amirandareẓaniani
(cf. 1.3 above), must be left open.

86 Gorgase 1912, 183–188.
87 For further information on Mzečabuḳ the atabagi cf. Xalvash 2011, 76–143.
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