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Special Section Editor

PAST AND PRESENT DIRECTIONS IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TRANSCAUCASUS

TRANSKAFKASYA ARKEOLOJİSİNDE GEÇMİŞ VE GÜNCEL YÖNELİMLER

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ABSTRACT

From the perspective of Anatolia, the Transcaucasus (or the southern Caucasus) has always been viewed as a region of primary significance. Yet for a variety of reasons the archaeology of this region has remained elusive, accessible for the most part by syntheses in Western languages. This paper outlines the major trends in archaeological thought in the Transcaucasus before and after glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructure). It concludes that contemporary archaeology in the region, sampled by the papers in this issue, has much to offer Near Eastern and Eurasian archaeology in general, and Anatolian archaeology in particular.

ÖZET

Ermenistan, Azerbeycan ve Gürcistan'ı kapsayan Transkafkasya, Avrasya ile Yakındoğu'nun arasında bir ara bölge niteliği taşır. Soğuk Savaş döneminde bölgede Sovyetler Birliği tarafından yürütülen çok sayıda çalışma, Batı dünyasından soyutlanmış ve kopuk olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bölgedeki ülkelerin bağımsızlıklarını kazanmasıyla yeni bir süreç başlamış, çalışmalar farklı bir boyut kazanmıştır; TÜBA-AR bu sayısıyla bölgede yapılan önemli araştırmaları tanıtmayı amaçlamıştır. Her ne kadar bu dosya, bölgede süren araştırmaların tümünü ayrıntılı olarak kapsamasa da, en azından ortaya çıkan bilimsel sonuçları ve bunların kültür tarihine olan katkılarını yansıtılmaya çalışılmıştır. Transkafkasya arkeolojisinin tarihsel süreç içindeki yeri en iyi bir şekilde Leo Klejn ve Adam Smith tarafından değerlendirilmiştir.

SOVYET ARKEOLOJİSİ: 1917-1991

1871'de kurulan Kafkas Arkeoloji Komisyonu arkeolojik çalışmalarda önemli bir başlangıç noktası sayılabilir. 1881'de Tiflis'de yapılan 5. kongrenin ardından yapımına başlanan müzeler kadar yayımlanmaya başlayan arkeoloji dergileri, arkeolojinin ön plana çıkmasının göstergeleridir. 1917'de sosyalist devrimin ardından arkeoloji kurumsal açıdan büyük bir değişim geçirmiş ve Marksist bir bakış açısı içinde değerlendirilmeye başlanmıştır; bu süreçte arkeolojinin tarihsel olguları yansıtmaktan çok politik bir araç olarak kullanılma kaygısı ağır basmıştır. Bu kapsamda St. Petersburg'da Nikolai Marr'ın başkanlığında kurulan Maddi Kültür Tarihi Akademisi, o yıllarda Batı arkeoloji düşünce sistemi içinde ağırlık kazanan insan odaklı yayıncılık, göç ve kültürel değişim kuramlarının yerine Marksist bakış açısına göre farklı bir yaklaşım benimsemiştir. Söz konusu yaklaşımda göç olgusu besin ve üretim ekonomilerinin gelişim aşamalarının yansınması olarak ele alınmaktadır.

Stalin'in başa gelmesiyle birçok bilim adamının çalışmalarına son verilmiş, dolayısıyla, arkeologlar devletin de önerileri doğrultusunda kuramsal değerlendirmeye yönelmeden yalnızca veri tanınmasına yönelmiş, arkeolojik çalışmaların sayısı hızla artmıştır. Her ne kadar zaman zaman arkeoloji etnik köken arayışında politik bir araç olarak da kullanılmışsa da, süreç içinde göç ve yayılma olgusu yeniden benimsenerek Marr'ın geliştirmiş olduğu kuramlara karşı çıkmıştır. Sovyet Birliği döneminde arkeologlar hızlı gelişen yapılaşma sürecinde yoğun olarak kurtarma kazısı yapma olanağı bulmuşlardır.

1970'li yıllar Batı arkeolojisinde kuramsal ya da veriye dayalı belgeleme yapan yaklaşımlar arasındaki kırılganlığın belirleştiği, tartışmaların arttığı bir dönemdir. Sovyetler Birliği'nin son dönemlerinde arkeolojide birbirinden farklı iki yaklaşım belirginleşmiştir; bunların biri kalıplaşmış kuram ve görüşleri benimserken, diğeri ise daha yeni kuram ve görüşlere yönelmiştir. İlk görüşü benimseyen arkeologlar, arkeolojiyi ve buluntuları tarihsel süreçte özellikle etnik köken arayışına yönelik olarak ele alırken, diğerleri yenilikçi bir yaklaşım kaygısıyla bilimsel arkeometrik analizlere ağırlık vermişlerdir. Bu bağlamda Sovyet arkeolojisinde yontmataş ve maden teknolojilerini inceleyen önemli araştırma birimleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Aynı şekilde geçmiş toplumların doğal çevre ortamları içinde değerlendirilmesine ağırlık verilmiş ancak eldeki çevresel verilerin kültür tarihini anlamadaki sınırlılığı göz ardı edilmiştir.

Sovyetler Birliği'nin yıkılmasından sonra yeni bir yapılanma sürecine girilmiş, ancak yeni birimlerin gerek duyduğu parasal kaynağın sağlanması gecikmiştir. Her ne kadar Sovyetler'in eski akademisi St. Petersburg ve Moskova olmak üzere iki ayrı birime ayrılmışsa da, yeni oluşan Kaskas cumhuriyetlerindeki yapılanma daha sınırlı ölçüde olmuştur. Örneğin Gürcistan'da arkeolojik çalışmalar Ulusal Müzenin başkanlığı altında devam etmiş, Sovyetler Birliği zamanındaki yarı özerk arkeolojik kazılar tek kurum altında birleşmiş, araştırmalar daha dene-timli bir yasal süreç içinde ilerlemeye başlamıştır. Belki de bu değişimin en olumlu tarafı TÜBA-AR'ın bu sayısında da görüldüğü gibi yerli ve yabancı arkeologlar arasında güçlü bir iletişimin başlamış olmasıdır.

INTRODUCTION

The modern lands comprising the Transcaucasus – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – together cover an area no more than 200,000 sq km, approximately 1/4 the size of Turkey and 1/8 the size of Iran, their two southern neighbours. Essentially an isthmus connecting the Near East with the vast expanse of the Eurasian steppes, these relatively small pieces of real estate collectively exerted from time to time a profound influence on the cultural development of surrounding regions. At the same time, they spawned distinctive complexes, which appear to have travelled little further than the Transcaucasus itself. Yet any attempt to access the multiplicity of its archaeological cultures may well cause some dismay.

The history of archaeology in the Transcaucasus, like that of the other former socialist countries of the Soviet Union, was formed in response to specific and complex socio-political and economic conditions. The course of Soviet archaeology was neither smo-

oth nor straight. During the Cold War the academic isolation of Soviet researchers and their Western counterparts prompted some to refer to the archaeological potential of the Soviet Union in general, and Russia in particular, as the 'Great Unknown' (Struve 1955). Even now, 20 years after *perestroika*, most western researchers have only a vague understanding of the accomplishments of Soviet archaeology. Although the archaeology of the Transcaucasus is no longer a *great* unknown, it nevertheless remains a rather shadowy and elusive area for many Near Eastern archaeologists.

This special issue of TÜBA-AR showcases some of the exciting research that is currently being carried out in the region. Although only a small representation, it is hoped that these papers will serve to promote academic discourse and engagement. To help the reader appreciate these new developments, a few brief words on the accomplishments of Soviet archaeologists will serve as an historical backdrop. The

summary that follows draws heavily on the studies of Leo Klejn, who over more than three decades has sought to demystify Soviet archaeological thought for Western researchers (Bulkin et al. 1982; Klejn 1977, 2001). For a history of archaeological discoveries and intellectual traditions in the Transcaucasus, especially Armenia, readers are directed to Adam Smith's excellent appraisal (Smith 2005: 234-251; see also Gamkrelidze 2004 for early work in Georgia, and Kohl 2007 for short biographical sketches of key researchers).

MILESTONES IN SOVIET ARCHAEOLOGY: 1917-1991

If we look at the history of archaeology in Russia from its formative stages through the Russian Revolution to the collapse of the Soviet Union, we can discern some clear trends in archaeological thought. Even though pre-revolutionary archaeology in Russia was, as in many places, very much an antiquarian pursuit, the foundation of both the Imperial Archaeological Society (est. 1851) and the Imperial Archaeological Commission (est. 1859) oversaw the fledgling stages of professional investigations (Klejn 2001). The establishment of the Caucasus Archaeological Committee in 1871 was a significant turning point in archaeological activities. In that same year, Austrian researcher Friedrich Bayern began investigations at Samtavro near Mtskheta (see article by Sagona et al. in this volume), as did E. Yeritsov at the cemetery site at Akner in Armenia (Smith 2005: 238). In Azerbaijan, Valdomar Belk, a German, drew attention to the mountainous region of Gedabey (Guliyev n. d.)¹. A welter of activities ensued, especially after the Imperial Archaeological Commission held its 5th congress in Tbilisi in 1881 (Virchow 1882). Around this time, chronology became a serious concern. These were most clearly expressed in the studies of Jacques de Morgan, who, for the first time, compared the material remains from the Transcaucasus with those in the greater Near East and Aegean (de Morgan 1889). Whereas private collections of antiquities were fashionable, grand museums like the Hermitage were established to house an emerging body of antiquities which were the subject of discussion in archaeological periodicals and congresses. In the Caucasus, the Russian Imperial Geographic Society established, in 1852, a museum for its Caucasian Department, which was re-named the Caucasian Museum in

1865, and is now known as the Simon Janashia Museum of Georgia, Tbilisi. Despite these many activities, the late nineteenth century saw no major advances in conceptual or analytical paradigms comparable to those in Western Europe, especially Scandinavia (Klejn 2001: 1127-1132).

From the time of the 1917 Revolution to about 1924 archaeology experienced major institutional change, if not thinking. Tsarist organizations such as the Archaeological Commission and the Moscow Archaeological Society, seen as the playground of the wealthy, could do little in arresting the dramatic slump in fieldwork and research. Antiquarianism continued until the late 1920s, when a new generation of young archaeologists attempted for the first time to explain material culture in terms of Marxist social history. These first attempts to find social value in the remains of the past saw a sharp reaction against earlier empiricism. Typological studies, it was said, turned artefacts into fetishes. For this revolutionary generation, bristling with political ideals, the emphasis was on the here and now. Antiquities, it was thought, needed to elucidate issues on historical economics and production, rather than be seen as objects from a remote past. To that end, even the term archaeology was avoided in preference to 'the history of material culture'.

Out of this ferment and thinking emerged the powerful Academy for the History of Material Culture in St. Petersburg, headed by Nikolai Marr, which replaced the Archaeological Commission. Marr, a linguist by training, became known as the founder of 'the theory of stages' or 'Japhetic theory' (Matthews 1948)², which explained socio-cultural changes as fundamental economic transformations. He rejected notions of migrations, cultural adaption, and diffusionism because they were seen as pandering to Western European humanism, and not serving Marxist political ideology and the concept of pre-class societies (Bulkin et al. 1982). Even clear instances of population movements were explained as developmental stages in the subsistence and productive economies of the same communities. Though this school of thought created a simplistic framework to interpret human behaviour, it did, nonetheless, focus attention for the first time on indigenous developmental change and the role of technology in ancient societies. These tumultuous times had a tremendous impact on developments in Armenia, Azerbaijan,

and Georgia, which were incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1922. The Yerevan State Museum (est. 1919) and the Azerbaijan State Museum of History (est. 1920) were among the institutions founded.

With Stalin's rise to power and his subsequent tyrannical rule, many intellectuals perished. Archaeologists turned their attention to 'facts', and were well advised by the State to explain material culture (sources) in terms of history and not to stray into theory. Accordingly, a period of historical materialism ensued. New methods were developed that were used to infer social relations from material culture. Out of this milieu emerged what is arguably the greatest legacy of Soviet archaeology, namely the introduction in the 1930s of lithic microwear and taphonomic analysis spearheaded by the work of Sergei Semenov on Palaeolithic tools. Throughout that decade there was a voracious appetite for archaeological data and knowledge. Expeditions proliferated, as did publications, including the foundation of *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, which became the most prestigious archaeological periodical of the USSR (Beliaev et al. 2009).

It was also during the late 1930s that Soviet archaeologists became captivated with the archaeology of the outlying regions of their Union, the Caucasus among them. Discoveries such as the spectacular Trialeti kurgans by Boris Kuftin (Kuftin 1941), and investigations at the Urartian fortress at Karmir Blur by Boris Piotrovskii (Piotrovskii 1950) presented researchers with a cultural diversity that was difficult to accommodate into the 'theory of stages'. Although Kuftin was himself exiled from St. Petersburg to Tbilisi, he went on to make one of the most enduring contributions to Caucasian archaeology. Using a culture-historical approach, he defined a number of archaeological cultures and produced a coherent regional periodisation for the southern Caucasus. His articulation of the Kura-Araxes horizon and Trialeti assemblages, in particular, formed the basis of subsequent investigations on the late prehistory of the region.

The great and threatening stress that the various peoples of the USSR faced during this period and the ensuing decades was expressed by a surge of studies that resulted "*...in a growth of national self-consciousness, the expression of national pride and the fostering of the best indigenous traditions*" (Bulkin et

al. 1982: 276). In archaeology this was expressed through ethnogenesis, a theoretical framework used to examine the ethnic origins of the various nationalities starting from their prehistoric roots. Concepts such as ethnicity, migration, and continuity were back on the agenda, and Marr's 'theory of stages' was pushed into the background until it was finally rejected in 1950. Ancient material culture suddenly had a direct link to contemporary communities because it was seen as a tangible expression of the productive activities of ancestral societies.

By the late 1950s, new forces began to shape archaeological theory. The growth of infrastructure projects throughout the USSR prompted another legacy. Just as Soviet researchers had pioneered forensic analysis in the 1930s, so too did the Soviet state introduce aspects of what we now call Cultural Resource Management, by requiring construction companies to fund salvage excavations of archaeological sites threatened by building activities. Expeditions ballooned in the 1960s and 1970s in excess of 500 expeditions a year with a commensurate publication output of 3,000 studies a year. In the Transcaucasus, a number of fundamentally important sites were investigated: Kvatshelebi (Dzhavakhishvili and Glonti 1962) and Shulaveris Gora (Dzhaparidze and Dzhavakhishvili 1971) in Georgia, Kültepe (Abibullaiev 1959) and Shomutepe in Azerbaijan (Narimanov 1965) in Azerbaijan, and Artik (Khachatrian 1979) and Mestamor (Khanzadian 1995) in Armenia to mention but a few. As research standards improved across all disciplines in the 1960s, so too did self-evaluation. Scientific objectivity gradually began to replace the subjectivity that had fuelled the ethnogenetic paradigm. Yet these useful studies remained compartmentalised. Rarely were they dovetailed with material culture into persuasive accounts of cultural change. Even so, major themes emerged during this period and included the earliest agricultural settlements (the so-called Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture), copper and bronze metallurgy; and, in Georgia, the distinctiveness of its western lowlands (ancient Colchis of the Graeco-Roman authors) was becoming increasingly apparent.

The period of détente in the 1970s broadened the intellectual perspectives. Intensive debates, especially between those who adhered to historical materialism and those who saw value in the emerging field of sociology, resulted in a more sophisticated theoretical framework that was not adverse to views

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expressed in the West. In the decade before the collapse of the Soviet Union, archaeology had differentiated itself into a number of categories that have been divided into two groups. One group continued to pursue established traditions, whereas the other sought new approaches. Briefly, they have been summarized as follows (Bulkin et al. 1982):

Group I (Traditional)

Archaeological history:

Harking back to one of the earliest phases of Soviet archaeology, researchers of this category firmly believed that archaeology came under the umbrella of history. Narrative histories such as the multi-volume *Archaeology of the USSR* provided a broad yet quite detailed sweep of regional surveys. Historical methods, it was argued, were appropriate for the interpretation of archaeological artefacts. Critics of this approach pointed to the lack of understanding or engagement with specialized approaches such as the analyses of archaeological science. The historicisation of archaeology, it was said, lent itself to impressions rather than detailed examination of the evidence.

Archaeological ethnogenetics:

In the USSR, an approach developed that very deliberately addressed the question of origins through the identification of 'ethnic indicators' that linked past and present communities. This proposition of 'ethnogenesis' was applied most vociferously to the origins of the Scythians and Slavs (Artamanov 1971), though it also found favour in the Transcaucasus (Dzhaparidze 1976). Conceptually, it essentially assumes that the development of human behaviour has been somehow fossilised, enabling ethnic indicators to be transmitted over the millennia. Soviet ethnographers were the harshest critics of this approach and their research all but debunked this paradigm. At the same time it intensified the debate over whether ethnicity is retrievable from archaeological cultures.

Archaeological sociology:

A derivative of archaeological history, this approach developed in an attempt to explain the complex societies of the Caucasus and central Asia. Championed by V. M. Masson, researchers readily accepted the approaches defined by Western archaeologists such as Vere Gordon Childe, Robert Braid-

wood and Robert McC. Adams. Influenced by neo-evolutionism and the early applications of 'new archaeology', especially systems theory, these archaeologists were most interested in explaining socio-political processes and structures. Their critics argued that, on the whole, this approach did not adequately link material culture with theory.

Group II (Innovative)

Descriptive Archaeology:

According to Bulkin, Klejn and Lebedev, "*the term 'descriptive' is not used simply in the sense of seeking to describe, or limiting itself to the description of, archaeological data but implies a strictly objective tendency that is based on factual materials.*" (Bulkin et al. 1982: 228). As such, it is distinguished from normative archaeology, but is akin to David Clarke's analytical archaeology (Clarke 1968). Opponents of this approach have argued that the objectives are too narrow, and that its adherents have not been able to translate their formalist results into past human behaviour.

Archaeotechnology:

As a reaction against the subjectivity of the humanist (historical) and typological (descriptive) approaches to archaeology, researchers following the lead of S. A. Semenov and E. N. Chernykh believed that the best way forward in explaining the past was through materials analysis. They viewed the application of new scientific methods to extract the constituent elements of artefacts as the most objective approach to studying cultural dynamics. Soviet archaeology invested much effort into archaeotechnology and developed sophisticated centres for the analysis of stone tool industries and ancient metallurgy (Chernykh 1992)

Archaeological Ecology:

This approach shares many similarities with the functionalist ecological approach of Grahame Clark and some later New Archaeologists. Like Clark, this group of Soviet archaeologists believed that the primary function of culture was survival, and, in turn, this was influenced to a certain degree by the constraints of the natural environment (Bulkin et al. 1982: 283). Ancient communities and their material manifestations were seen as products of an ever-changing interaction with ecology. Yet this multi-disciplinary school of Soviet archaeology differed from

its Western counterparts by stressing productive forces in their framework of socio-cultural relations.

Sequential and theoretical Archaeology

The final and most embracing category of Soviet archaeology proposes an overarching theoretical framework that draws on many of the above approaches, but does not over emphasise any one aspect. Leo Klejn is the leading representative of this group, whose adherents believe that archaeologists must above all appreciate the limits of the archaeological record. The complexity of the past, they argue, can be unlocked only if there is an appropriate bridge that links material culture with human behaviour. Whereas this group stresses that the diachronic nature of archaeological cultures needs to be transformed into a meaningful developmental sequence, it also believes that cross-regional connections are imperative.

As Bruce Trigger aptly observed
(Trigger 1989: 242):

Soviet and Western archaeology have developed in ways that contrast with each other. Yet over time both appear to have come to address the same range of problems.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE CAUCASUS SINCE PERESTROIKA

The collapse of Communist rule and the painful transition to capitalism and democratization brought with it some major transformations in the organization of academic and funding of academic centres. Within Russia, archaeological research was markedly decentralized, and various local centres emerged. The Institute of Archaeology, with its headquarters in Moscow, was divided in two independent institutes: one based in St. Petersburg, whereas the other remained in Moscow, changing its name back to the Institute for the History of Material Culture (IHMK), by which it was known before 1956. With the radical economic changes, financial support for archaeology from the government decreased.

The changes in the southern Caucasus were no less dramatic. In Georgia, for instance, a major restructuring has seen the administration of archaeological research come under the umbrella of the Georgian National Museum. The patchwork of semi-autonomous archaeological expeditions that

characterised archaeology in the Soviet Georgia has given way to a centralized system. More broadly, as its website states:

The establishment of the Georgian National Museum is considered to be the beginning of structural, institutional, and legal reforms in the field of cultural heritage. The reform envisages introducing modern management schemes and establishing a homogeneous administration system. This initiative aims at elaborating a coherent museum policy, improving the safety conditions for preserved collections, strengthening the education policy in the museum field, and coordinating academic and museum activities.

(Georgian National Museum http://www.museum.ge/web_page/index.php)

One of the most positive aspects of post-*perestroika* archaeology is the collaboration and dialogue that now exists with foreign researchers as the papers collected in this volume amply show. Several themes have emerged in the last twenty years. First, there are new methodologies and trajectories. The Project ArGATS, co-directed by Ruben Badalyan and Adam Smith, one of the first major collaborative ventures, introduced new techniques to explore the concept of landscape archaeology in Armenia. Initially focused on the Late Bronze Age period and the dynamics that existed in the centuries before the rise of Urartu, the project has since extended its parameters to earlier periods. Landscape archaeology is also examined by Jessie Birkett-Rees, who, through a combination of field survey and evidence from earlier excavations (legacy data) from the Tbilisi-Mtskheta region, demonstrates the value of studying the human past as part of a dynamic landscape. The re-interpretation of early data also forms the subject of Giorgi Bedianishvili's and Catherine Bodet's paper that re-constitutes materials from Koban Tombs 9 and 12, arguably the most significant of graves from the Koban cemetery, which are now housed in a number of museums in France. The Samtavro project is also concerned with the re-interpretation and preservation of legacy data, but it is doing so with fresh evidence provided by renewed excavations.

Boris Gasparyan's wide-ranging overview of the Lower Palaeolithic in Armenia provides a significant benchmark for future fieldwork. Given the proximity of Dmanisi to Armenia, it is surely a matter of time

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before Armenian researchers discover a comparable sequence extending back into remote prehistory. The Neolithic period, a major focus during the Soviet period in the 1960s and 1970s, has re-emerged as a field of research in the Transcaucasus. The report on the settlement of Aknashen-Khatunarkh by a multi-national team is a significant contribution to our understanding of the early agricultural communities in the Plain of Ararat. Equally, important is paper by Bertille Lyonnet and Farhad Guliyev, who report on the latest Neolithic and Chalcolithic discoveries in western Azerbaijan, linking them with comparable discoveries in Georgia and Armenia. Catherine Marro and her Azerbaijani colleagues (Bakhshaliyev, Sanz, and Aliyev) report on a most intriguing site - the vast salt mine of Duzdagi in Nakhichevan. With usage extending back to the middle of the 4th millennium BC, the most obvious

question to ask is 'Why did the ancients need so much salt?' Finally, a team from Tel Aviv University in collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Yerevan, use ceramic technology to compare vessel manufacture from Bet Yerah (Israel) with those from Aparan (Armenia), with fascinating results. Their ongoing research is a major contribution to the question of migration during the Kura-Araxes period.

To this sample of current archaeological field projects should be added many others that are listed in Table 1³. As can be seen, every period from the Palaeolithic to the mediaeval period is under investigation. The collective evidence that is gradually accumulating together with genuine multi-national collaboration augurs well for archaeology in the Transcaucasus and, in turn, for Anatolia.

NOTES

¹ I would like to thank sincerely Ferhad Guliyev for sending me his unpublished manuscript on the history of archaeological research in Azerbaijan.

² The term 'Japhetic', derived from Japheth, the name of one of the sons of Noah, was applied to the Kartvelian (Georgian) languages. It was Marr's belief that 'Japhetic languages' were sub-stratum languages, which pre-

dated Indo-European languages.

³ I would like to express my gratitude to Ruben Badalyan (Armenia), Ferhad Guliyev (Azerbaijan) and Giorgi Bedianishvili (Georgia) for providing me the information in this Table. It would have been virtually impossible to compile it without their assistance.

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Table 1: Current archaeological excavations in the Transcaucasus

ARMENIA**Palaeolithic**

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
AGHITU-3	Armenian-German	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), and Andrew Kandel, University of Tübingen
Hovk, Yenokavan	Armenian- Irish-British	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), Ron Pinhasi (University College Cork, Ireland; Roehampton University, London, United Kingdom)
Kalavan-1	Armenian-French	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), and Christine Chataigner (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon)
Lori Plateau and Javakheti Range	Armenian-Russian	Stepan Aslanyan (Center of Strategic and Political Investigations, Saint-Petersburg), Ashot Piliposyan (Ministry of Culture, RA)
Lusakert-1, Nor Geghi-1	Armenian-Irish-American	Benik Yeritsyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), R. Pinhasi (University College Cork), and D. Adler (University of Connecticut).
Debet	Armenian- American	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), Ch. Egeland (University of North Carolina, Greensboro, USA)

Neolithic and Chalcolithic

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Aknashen	Armenian- French	Director(s) Ruben S. Badalyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), C. Chataigner (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon)
Aparan depression (sites of Kmlo, Kuchak, Gegharot, and Tsaghkahovit)	Armenian-French	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), and C. Chataigner (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon)
Areni	Armenian-American-Irish	Boris Gasparyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), G.Areshyan (Cotsen Institute of Archaeology UCLA), and R. Pinhasi (University College Cork).
Godedzor	Armenian-French	Pavel Avetisyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia), and C. Chataigner (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon)

Bronze and Iron Ages

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Agarak (Early Bronze Age settlement)	Armenian	Pavel Avetisyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Aghavnatun (Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, and Early Iron Age cemetery)	Armenian	Levon Petrosyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
ArAGATS Project	Armenian-American	Ruben S. Badalyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia) and A. T. Smith (University of Chicago)
Aramus (Urartu)	Armenian-Austrian	Hayk Avetisyan (Yerevan State University) and W. Allinger-Csollich (Innsbruck University)
Erebuni (Urartu-Achemenian)	Armenian -French	Ashot Piliposyan (Ministry of Culture, RA), S. Déschamps (University of Rennes 1)
Erebuni (Urartu-Achemenian)	Armenian-American	Felix Ter-Martirosov (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Academy of Science/ Yerevan State University, Armenia), D.Stronach (University of California, Berkeley)

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Karashamb (Late Bronze Age cemetery)	Armenian	Firdus Muradyan and Vardui Melikyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Lori Berd (Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, and Early Iron Age cemetery)	Armenian	Seda Devedjyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Mets Sepasar (Early Bronze Age settlement & Medieval)	Armenian	Larisa Yeganyan (Regional Museum of Shirak, Gyumri)
Nerkin Naver (Middle Bronze Age cemetery)	Armenian	Hakob Simonyan (Ministry of Culture)
Sevan regional survey	Armenian-Italian	Simon Hmayakyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia) and R. Biscione (Institute for the Aegean and Near Eastern Civilizations, Rome)
Shengavit (Early Bronze Age)	Armenian- American	Hakob Simonyan (Ministry of Culture), M. Rothman (Weidner University)
Teghut (Iron Age cemetery and Medieval settlement)	Armenian	Seda Devedjyan and Suren Hobosyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Tsaghkalanj (Early Bronze Age cemetery)	Armenian	Firdus Muradyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Tsaghkasar (Early Bronze Age settlement)	Armenian	Pavel Avetisyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)

Classical, Hellenistic and Roman Periods

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Armavir	Armenian	Inessa Karapetyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Artashat	Armenian	Zhores Khachatryan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Tigranakert (Artsakh)	Armenian	Hamlet Petrosyan (Yerevan State University).
Yervandashat	Armenian	Felix Ter-Martirosov (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science/ Yerevan State University)

Medieval Period

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Dvin (settlement)	Armenian	Aram Kalantaryan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Getap	Armenian	Husik Melkonyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Yeghegis	Armenian	Husik Melkonyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Tsaghkadzor - Iron Age cemetery and Medieval settlement	Armenian	Husik Melkonyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Science, Armenia)
Haykadzor	Armenian	Hamazasp Khachatryan (Regional Museum of Shirak, Gyumri)
Yerazgavors	Armenian - French	Hamazasp Khachatryan (Regional Museum of Shirak, Gyumri) and J.-P. Mahe (CNRS)

AZERBAIJAN**Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age**

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Goytepe	Azerbaijani-Japanese	Farhad Guliyev (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Baku), Yoshihiro Nishiaki (Japan, Tokyo University)
Mentesh Tepe	Azerbaijani-French	Farhad Guliyev (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Baku), Bertille Lyonnet (CNRS, Paris)
Ovchulartepesi	Azerbaijani-French	Veli Bakhshaliyev (Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Nakhchivan Branch, Dept. of Archaeology), Catherine Marro (CNRS, Lyon)
Kamiltepe	Azerbaijani-German	Tevekkul Aliyev (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Baku), Barbara Helwing (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Eurasia Abteilung)

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Iron Age

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Oglankala	Azerbaijani-American	Veli Bakhshaliyev (Veli Bakhshaliyev (Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Nakhichevan Branch, Dept. of Archaeology), Safar Ashurov (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Baku), Lauren Ristvet (University of Pennsylvania)
Karacamirli (Achaemenid)	Azerbaijani-German	Ilyas Babayev (Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences), Florian Knauss (Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, München)

GEORGIA**Palaeolithic**

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Dmanisi	Georgian	David Lordkipanidze (Georgian National Museum) Partners from Spain, Switzerland, and the USA
Dzudzuana	Georgian- Israeli-American	Tengiz Meshveliani (Georgian National Museum Ofer Bar-Yosef, (Harvard University) and Anna Belfer-Cohen (Hebrew University)
Sagvarjile	Georgian	Nikoloz Tushabramishvili (Georgian National Museum and Ilia University-Tbilisi)

Neolithic and Chalcolithic

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Arukhlo	Georgian-German	Guram Mirtskulava (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi) and Sven Hansen (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Eurasia Abteilung)

Bronze and Iron Ages

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Chobareti Early Bronze Age settlement and cemetery) Salvage archaeology	Georgian	Khakha Kahiani (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)
Gudabertka (Early Bronze Age settlement)	Georgian	Gogi Mindiashvili (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)

Guraklian Gora (Bronze Age and some Hellenistic period graves and settlement) Salvage archaeology	Georgian	Guram Kvirkvelia (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)
1. Guraklian Gora. (Early Iron Age and Hellenistic graves and settlement) 2. Urbrili (Medieval period settlement) 3. Vardzia (Middle Bronze Age Kurgan) 4. Orta (Middle Bronze Age Kurgan) Four sites in close proximity; salvage excavations	Georgian	Vakhtang Licheli (Javakhishvili University)
Nakulbakevi (Early Iron Age and Early Medieval, with some Early Bronze Age)	Georgian	Mikho Abramishvili (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)
Sakdrisi and Balich-Dzedzevi (Early Bronze Age mining site and settlement)	Georgian-German	Irine Gambashidze (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi), and Tomas Shtodner and Andreas Hauptman (Bochum, Bergbau Museum)
Santa Middle Bronze Age Kurgan	Georgian-German	Goderdzi Narimanishvili (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi) and Ingo Motsembeker (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Eurasia Abteilung)
Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki road salvage project (multi-period, including Bronze and Medieval)	Georgian	Goderdzi Narimanishvili, Revaz Davlianidze, and Bidzina Murvanidze (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)
Treligorebi (Late Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement)	Georgian	Giorgi Bedianashvili (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)

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Classical, Hellenistic and Roman Periods

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Nokalakevi (Late Hellenistic onwards; ancient Archaeopolis)	Georgian-British	David Lomitashvili, (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi) and Ian Colvin (Cambridge Archaeological Unit)
Pichnvari (Classical)	Georgian-British	Michael Vickers (Oxford University) and M. Kakhidze (Batumi Museum)
Samtavro (Late Roman and Medieval cemetery)	Georgian-Australian	Vakhtang Nikolaishvili (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi), and Antonio Sagona (The University of Melbourne)
Vani	Georgian	Darejan Kacharava (director), and Dimitri Akvlediani and Guram Kvirkvelia (all from the Georgian National Museum)

Medieval

Site	Collaboration	Director(s)
Kutaisi and its adjacent area. (Gelati, Bagrati), Motsameta)	Georgian	Omar Lanchava and Ronald Isakhadze (both from Kutaisi Museum)
Nekresi (Monastery complex)	Georgian	Nodar Bakhtadze (Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi)