

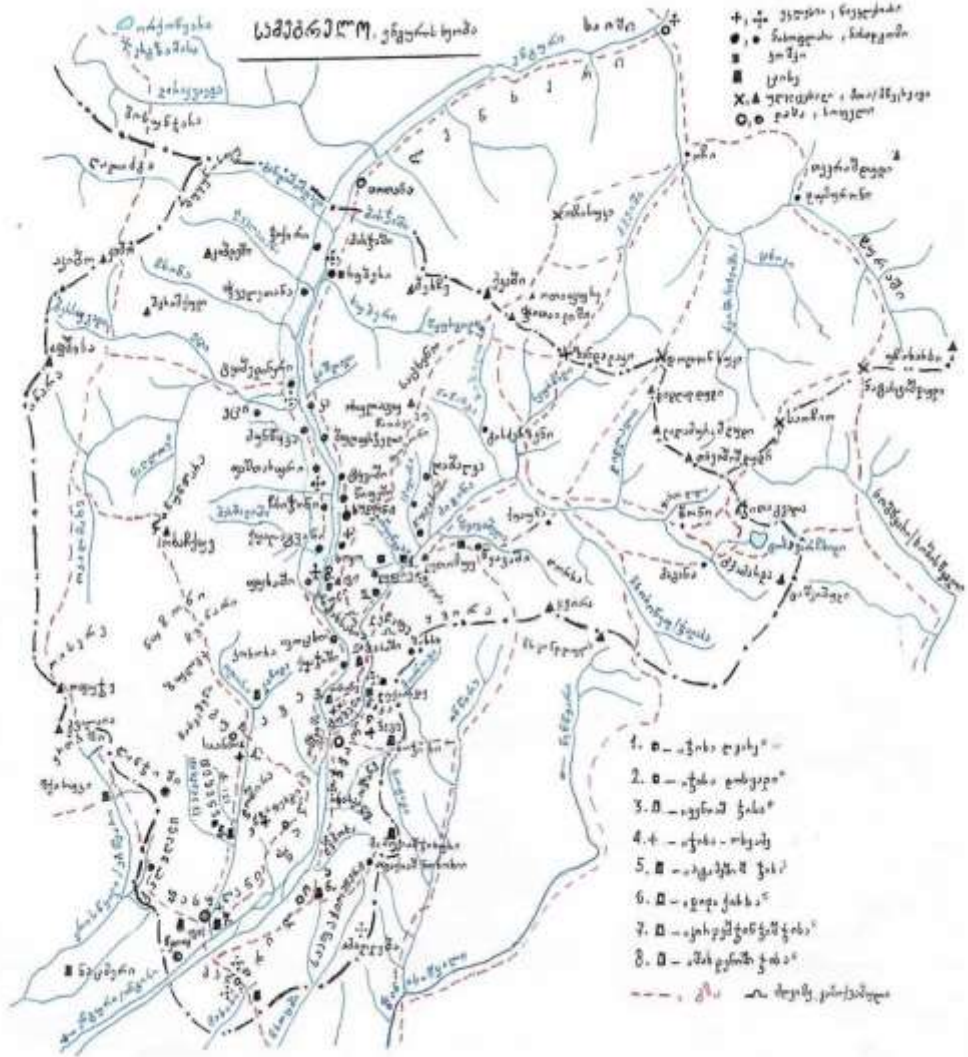
Material for Historic Geography of Enguri Valley

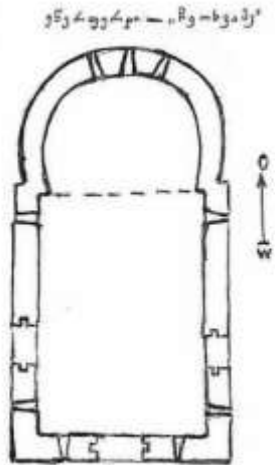
Abstract: This essay, based on the findings collected during the field trip in 1984, offers an analysis of the political and ethnic boundaries of the northern part of the Enguri Valley (boundaries, roads, fortifications, towers, toponymics-onomastics), church-related history (churches and monasteries), and issues of historical geography; this contribution is going to significantly advance the study of the history of the region (Samegrelo) as well as the western part of Georgia.

Key words: Pakhulani, Chale, Muzhava, Ilori, Magana, Tskhoushi, Lanjishi, Paluri, Lia, Jvari, Khudoni, Saaphakio Etseri, Tkabedineri, Etsi.

Avtandil Tordia

Materials for Historical Geography of Enguri Valley





Muzhava

Muzhava, also known as Muzha, is situated in the upper part of the Olori Valley. The village is divided by a river, with the right-bank side being referred to as **Nashamgou**. Unfortunately, historical literary sources provide no information about the village under this name.¹ The contemporary population of the village is believed to have migrated from Jvari village, similar to the residents of Chale village. Notably, the names of different neighborhoods within the village are derived by the "sa-" suffix (e.g., Sachkhapelio, Saantio, Salemonjo, Sakardo, Saarkanio), rather than the more common "le-" suffix. This leads to the question of what happened to the population that had lived here since ancient times? The residential cave from the Lower and Upper Paleolithic era can be found within the village's territory (7; 11-12). The fortress at the furthest part of the village, atop a considerably elevated hill where the Olori River converges with its left tributary, **Lachoda**, near the peninsula, stands as a remarkable monument to the feudal era. The fortress benefits from natural defenses, with an impregnable rock cliff shielding it from the north-west (NW), west (W), and south (S). Access to the fortress is most straightforward from the eastern (O) side, where rock-hewn stairs lead to the sole entrance. On the north-east (NO) side, the fortress is isolated from a higher peak of the hill by a rather profound saddle, making it challenging to approach from that direction: Within the fortress, a two-aisle church is constructed on the most elevated section on the north (N) side; its dimensions measure

¹ It is noteworthy that the term 'muzh' or 'mvzh' signifies 'sun' in the Svanetian language, which corresponds to 'bzha' or 'mvzha' in the Megrelian language, denoting 'sunny'."

7 by 8 meters. Due to the inability to orient the altar to the east (O), the church's builder shifted the church walls by 0.5 meters to align them with the fortress wall. The dome and a significant portion of the walls of the church have deteriorated over time, with some sections deteriorating to their foundations (it is plausible that the interior of the church is filled with earth and stones covered with plaster up to 1-1.5 meters) Originally, the church was adorned with finely carved stones on both sides, but only fragmentary remnants of this decorative finish have survived. The church features a single window on each side of the apse, each of which is narrow and rectangular in shape. The apse of the main nave exhibits a distinctive horseshoe shape, while the second aisle on the north side (prothesis) lacks an apse. The entrance to the church is situated on the southwestern (SW) side, suggesting that it may have led from the main hall into a prothesis. Adjacent to the southeastern (SE) wall, at a lower level near the foundation, there is a building constructed symmetrically. This building features a circular dome and walls with dimensions of 8 by 15 meters and is believed to serve as a crypt. Based on the available evidence, the church can be reasonably dated to the early medieval period, most likely the 9th to 10th centuries. Ruins of a sizable structure measuring 12.5 by 6.5 meters are visible at a distance of 10-11 meters from the church, within the fortress grounds. The northeastern (NO) and southwestern (SW) walls of this structure are integrated into the natural rock formation. This building comprises two distinct sections, complete with an exit door. Both the NO and SW walls feature a single niche each. The third section of the building has been largely destroyed, nearly down to its foundations. It is plausible that a small tower once stood on the southeastern (SO) side, with a niche situated in the SW corner, likely serving as a lavatory. The southern (S) and southeastern (SE) walls of the fortress are further fortified with counterforts. Adjacent to the entry door in the eastern (O) corner, measuring 1.8 meters in width, a substantial rectangular residential tower with dimensions of 7 by 5 meters can be found. The ground floor of this tower lacks windows. The walls, similar to those of the previously mentioned buildings, are evenly positioned at ground level and appear to be of uniform elevation, suggesting that the first and upper floors of the structure were constructed using wood. The Muzhava fortress does not appear in any known historical literature. The identity of the fortress's lord, the timing of their rule, and the specific functions they held remain elusive. What is evident, however, is that the lord of the castle likely exercised dominion over the valley, at least its upper portion, if not the entirety of it.

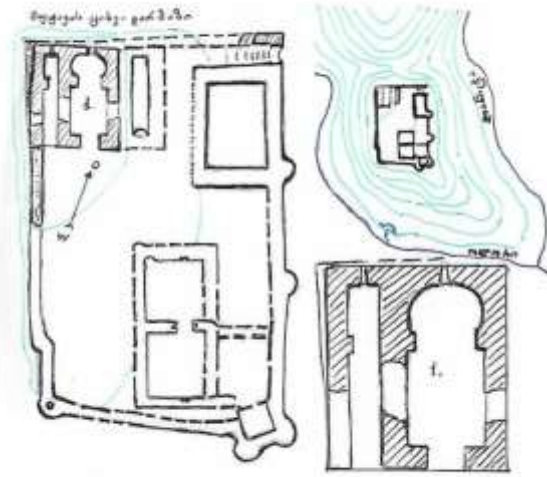


Exhibit 5

Within the village of Muzhava, specifically in the Saantio neighborhood, on the right-hand bank of the Olori River, one can encounter the remains of a hall church measuring 8 by 5 meters, locally known as **Jikha-Okhvame**. This church has two ravines on its sides, both of which flow directly into the Olori River. The church was originally enclosed by a protective wall, and it is from this wall that the church derives its name: *Jikha-Okhvame*. The northern (N) wall of the church has endured since the original construction of the church, and it is adjacent to the ruins of the flat apse (altar) with an undistinguished shape on the eastern (O) side. The church was constructed using broken rocks of a considerable size.

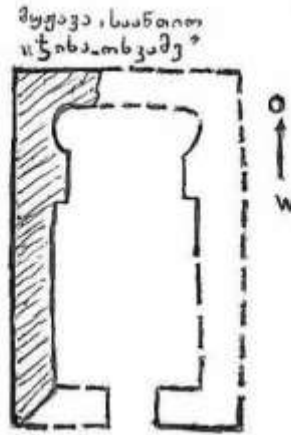


Exhibit 6

In Muzhava, another location referred to as **Naokhvamu** exists. This location was once a place of worship for the Arkania, but regrettably, it has been entirely demolished. Situated between **Nojikh** and **Naokhvamu** is a place known as **Akardama**. We were unable to identify any additional medieval-era monuments within the village. We encountered difficulty in comprehending the reference made by T. Beradze to a "late feudal era monastery complex" (12; 6 69

Jvari

Jvari is situated on the right bank of the Enguri River, where this river emerges from a narrow, rocky valley. Evidences of human habitation in this small town and its environs can be traced back to the Paleolithic era. Several archaeological sites corroborate this historical continuity, including Jvari I, Jvarzeni I and II (Lower and Upper Paleolithic habitation areas), Jvari - **Ophachkhaphu** hill, Jvarhesi cave (now submerged beneath a water reservoir), and Jvari fortress (monuments from the Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras) (7; 11-12). The **Maskhania Cave**, examined in 1964, appears to have functioned as an inn on a caravan route during the Hellenistic era (14). Notably, an ancient road passed through Jvari, connecting Colchis and Egrisi, as well as Samegrelo and Svanetia to the Northern Caucasus regions (same; and 13; 341). In 1639-1640, envoys of the King of Russia, Fedot Elchin and Pavel Zakhariyev, traversed this area (same). This marks the first literary reference to Jvari. **Güldenstädt** also includes Jvari in his list of Samegrelo villages.

The toponymics of Jvari and its surrounding areas are also important in relation to the road. **Kartlashi** (Georgian troops), **Dedophalish Miknakira** (where the queen...tied to), **Dedophalish Nakuru** (Queen's footprint), **Dedophalish Shara** (Queen's Road), etc., are traditionally associated with Queen Tamar's trip to Svanetia.

Usually, Jvari is divided into neighborhoods, some of which used to be separate villages in the past.

1. **Gubani** village is located at the confluence of the Enguri and Magana rivers. The village is divided into two parts: Upper (Tsikhis Ubani), also known as Omune, and Lower (Eklesiis Ubani).

In the Lower Gubani area, the remnants of two churches can be observed. One of these churches is a substantial domed structure, measuring approximately 16.5 by 10 meters, is located on the southern side of this section of the village. It features a semi-circular apse, with two load-bearing pillars situated along the wall adjacent to the altar. On the north side of the altar (left) a prothesis is found, while a crypt is located on the southern side, both accessible from the west side. The interior of this church lacks openings, niches, or windows. A third distinctive feature is a dodecagonal pillar situated to the north, approximately 1 meter away from the first pillar. The fourth pillar is obscured by debris that has fallen from the side opposite to the south and is currently not visible. This observation was made by T. Beradze in 1964, as documented in T. Beradze's doctoral dissertation (T. Beradze, candidate dissertation, pp. 219-220). It appears that the church originally had three entrances. Unlike the northern door (1.2 meters wide) and the western entrance, which serves as the main entrance and is 1.6 meters wide, there are no signs of a door on the southern side, based on the fact that while the northern and western walls remain mostly intact, the remnants of the southern wall and the dome have collapsed into the interior of the church. The windows are positioned at the center of the apse, directly above the northern and western entrances, with two windows on each side. These windows are crowned with semi-circular arches measuring 1.5 by 0.5 meters, with their narrower sides facing outward. Further examination of the structure's details will be possible once the exterior area is cleared of rubble. It appears that an inscription in the 'papaluri' (*khutsuri* or *asomtavruli*) script once adorned the top of the northern door, comprising several lines. However, the stone bearing that inscription has been removed to an unknown location, as conveyed to us in the spring of 1984 by Marian Kardava (82),

who had resided near the church. The church originally featured a cuboid stone finish, which has largely eroded over time. The monument has been dated to the 11th to 12th centuries by P. Zakaraia.

In proximity to the first basilica church, there stands another basilica church of smaller dimensions, measuring approximately 9 by 9 meters. This church is constructed using river stones, with exterior stones that were carved. T. Beradze's description labels it as a "single-aisle basilica," "with a small door on its northern (N) side leading to the crypt"... And "the construction of the church points to the late feudal era"... (T. Beradze, candidate dissertation, p. 220), this description warrants additional clarification for the following reasons: 1. Contrary to the description, the church appears to have not one but two aisles, or at least what remains. It is conceivable that a third aisle may have existed on the southern side, as a fragment of a wall can be observed in the south-eastern corner. 2. 1.

Commencing from the northern aisle, the entrance leads not to a crypt, but rather to a smaller aisle, which effectively functions as a smaller church. It has a horse-shoe-shaped apse, a centrally located window (with the exterior side of the window bricked up), and very small niches on the sides. Additionally, this aisle is divided into two distinct sections. The apse is rectangular in shape and measures approximately 4 by 2 meters, making it twice as large as the second square-shaped section (2 by 2 meters), which may have functioned as a crypt with a narrow entrance measuring 0.8 meters in width. The northern wall and arch of the second section are well-preserved. The main aisle, which is not divided, spans dimensions of 7.6 by 4 meters, making it almost twice the size of the first section. Other features, especially the altars of both aisles, exhibit similarities in the plan of the building. The door has an arch, which is shaped as cornice with carved crumbly rock. The absida of the first aisle is also semi-circular. Similar to the first aisle, the entrance to the first aisle is blocked with stones at an approximate height of 1-1.5 meters. The external portion of the northern aisle is situated below the ground level. Since the floor inside the church remains at ground level, it creates an impression that this area may serve as access to a crypt. 3. Based on its architectural features, the church appears to be dated much earlier than the late feudal era and aligns more closely with early medieval times. According to tradition, it is believed that a nunnery was once housed here. It is conceivable that this location may be associated with Andrew the First Called, who purportedly installed a cross on his journey to the "Scythian land." Although there may be a probability that the tower known as **Kheniash-Jikha** now occupies the spot where the cross was originally placed.

(NO) and south-eastern (SO) corners. Its walls are constructed with a thickness of 1.2 meters, employing broken rocks of substantial size and lime mortar. It is probable that the tower originally had three stories; however, the existing remnants allow us to discern only two stories. The inner walls of the tower feature slots designed for timber support. Notably, there are no remaining traces of a fortified wall surrounding the fortress and we believe it never had one, as both sides of the fortress appear inaccessible. The fortress itself is encircled by a fortified wall that measures 1.5 meters in thickness. T. Beradze's dates the fortress to the early feudal era (11,44), a dating we concur with, as the fortress evidently served to control the road leading from Svanetia. The so-called Kheniash-Jikha likely had a similar function and . was possibly constructed as a replacement for the former fortress

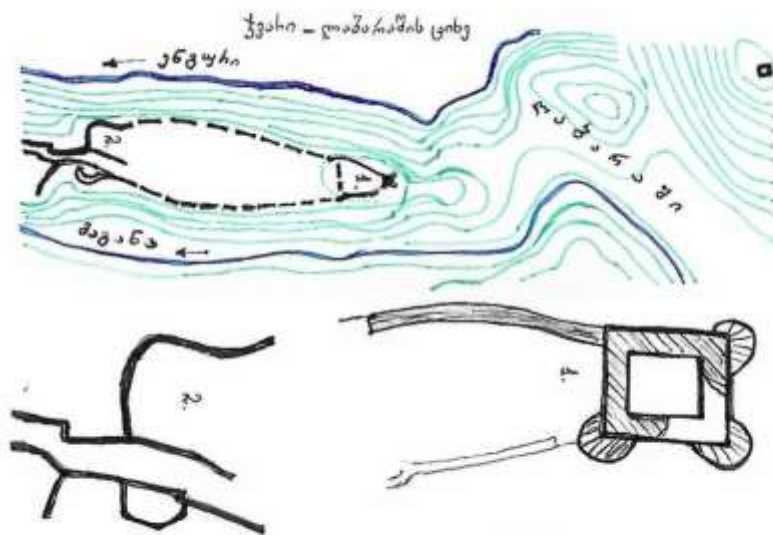


Exhibit 8

1. **Jvarzeni** Jvarzeni is located in the upper part of the Jvari village, and historical records do not recognize it as a separate village. However, it is occasionally confused with the populated area referred to as Kursein in Gldenstdt's list of Samegrelo villages (15; 323). We maintain that Kursein is a contemporary village of Gurdzemi, within the Martvili municipality.

To the north-east of Jvarzeni, on the right-hand side of the road leading to Chkvaleri, the remnants of St. George (Jege/Jege) church can be found. This church remained in use until the 1930s of the

20th century. The church was demolished around that time, along with its bell tower (even its foundation is not visible) situated to the southwest of the church. [a photograph of the church taken prior to its demolition exists; this information was provided by a grandchild of the former pastor, named Getia] The church follows a triconch architectural design, a style of monument found in Georgia dating from the 7th to 10th centuries. Archaeological investigations conducted in 1964 by R. Abramishvili and T. Mikeladze revealed a graveyard adjacent to the church. Within this graveyard, stone boxes and other artifacts were discovered, and they have been dated to the 7th and 8th centuries as documented in T. Beradze's doctoral dissertation. It is noteworthy that the area surrounding the church continues to be utilized as a graveyard.

According to local tradition, it is believed that Andrew the First Called and Simon the Canaanite once erected a cross (referred to as "jvari" in Georgian) at the location where the St. George Church in Jvarzeni now stands. Consequently, the village derives its name from this sacred act. Jvarzeni and was considered a spiritual sibling to the St. George Churches in Ilori and Kuli. While there are numerous churches in the vicinity, the Jvarzeni St. George Church stood out as the sole church where sacrificial rituals were conducted. This suggests certain antiquity, possibly as a site of pagan worship prior to the advent of Christianity. The primary celebration at the church took place on the 23rd of November, in honor of St. George.

The St. George Church in Jvarzeni has been reduced to near its foundation, with only scant remnants of the walls remaining on the southern and southwestern sides, making it difficult to reconstruct the church's. Exhibit 9 The church appears to have been of the domed architectural style, featuring a carved limestone finish. Stones from the church were later repurposed to construct a school located to the west of the original site of the church. The construction of the church utilized travertine stones, with some of these still visible on the site. A bell tower once stood to the southwest of the church. The church also featured a fortified wall, and remnants of this wall can be observed on the eastern side, at a distance of approximately 25 meters. A cornice circled around the church at the foundation level. Support for the dome came from four pillars, each measuring 1 by 0.8 meters, positioned adjacent to the conches. The altar of the church had dimensions of 5.5 by 4 meters, with walls measuring 1 meter in thickness, the overall dimensions, including apses and conches, reached 16 by 13.5 meters.

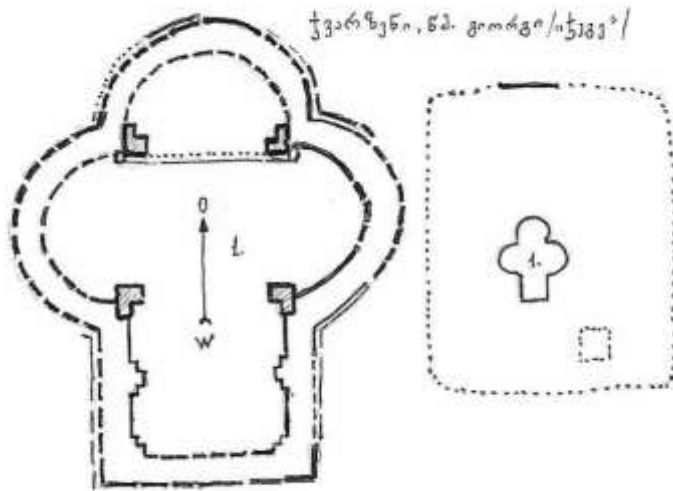


Exhibit 9

3. **Lekarde**, one of the neighbourhoods of Jvari, once functioned as an independent village, as indicated on a five-verst scaled map. In the past, a wooden church was present in this village, but regrettably, it was dismantled during the 1920s. Additionally, between **Menjere Ghals** and **Kanjara Ghals**, there is a location known as **Naka**, meaning a meadow, groves, or a flat area adjacent to a river in Svanaetian language. At this site, one can encounter the remnants of a rectangular tower and a cave on the southern slope of the **Lechaphe** mountain.

Furthermore, within the village of Jvari, several neighborhoods bear names that begin with the "le-" prefix, including **Lekharchile**, **Lekhubute**, **Lekhurie**, **Lekantare**, **Lemanie**, **Lekhasaie**, and **Letsimente**. During our time spent **Letsimentesh Dudi**, a local storytellers made reference to a **Jikha** fortress. Unfortunately, we were unable to pinpoint its exact location. It is possible that this is the same location marked on the archaeological map of Jvari, which was prepared by Akaki Chanturia and featured accompanying inscriptions: (**Jvari**, **Najikha**, **Naokhvamu**, **Nokhori**), **Lesamule**.

4 The locality of **Okharkalu**, which translates to a "rattling site," forms part of the Jvari region and was once an independent village in the past.

1. **Ochane**, according to old narratives, was known as the residence of the Chania people. Presently, only the Pipia families, who originated from Chkvaleri in the past, continue to inhabit the area. Without their migration to this location, Ochane would likely have been abandoned. Nevertheless, if the Chania indeed dwelled in this vicinity in earlier times, it would be expected that the name of the settlement would have been Lechanie or Sachanio. This assertion is based on the observation that the prefix "o-" is not utilized to form location names in the Megrelian language. Similarly, the ethnonym "-chani" does not align with the customary naming conventions. However, given the proximity of Ochane to the Chanistskhali River and the association of Otskhe (or Odzrkhe) with a Meskhetian identity (Omeskhe, akin to Samtskhe and Sameskhe) within the broader Georgian context, we cannot entirely discount a possible connection between Ochane and the Chania people.

Lia.

The village of Lia is a sizable settlement situated to the south of Jvari, on the left bank of the Enguri River. According to Sul Khan-Saba Orbelia, the term "lia" is associated with a swampy area or mud (16,414). We propose that the village's name is linked to the Megrelian word signifying an abandoned site characterized by stagnant and marshy waters, referred to as "liampali" (for comparison, "paluri"). This interpretation gains support when considering other geographical names along the Enguri River and in the immediate vicinity of the village.

Lia is divided into two distinct sections: Upper (*zhin*) and Middle (*shka*) Lia. It is conceivable that there was also a Lower Lia (possibly denoted as "*Paluri*"). Two wooden churches once stood in the middle of Lia. One was located in the center of the village, while the other was situated at the St. George cemetery (The latter church was likely dedicated to St. George) It was positioned in the proximity of the road connecting Lia to Jvari, near the boundaries of **Upper Lia**. This church was commissioned by Grigol Dadiani during the 1860s. The Dadiani residence stood in close proximity to this church, along the banks of the Enguri River, a site now known as **Nadokhoru**.

Remnants of a fortress can be observed to the north-east of the center of Lia, on a hill known as **Dida Kirsa**, which translates to Mother of God. This archaeological site has not been extensively studied,

although excavation efforts were carried out in 1968-69 (17;126-134). These excavations unearthed uninterrupted cultural layers from various historical periods, ranging from ancient times through the medieval ages and extending to the late 18th century (same; 126). Inside the fortress's courtyard, the remains of a church constructed with riverstones and right-angled bricks were discovered. J. Jghamia proposes that the church likely fell into ruin during the early medieval period, offering a plausible explanation for the absence of local knowledge about it (same; 128-129). Nevertheless, it remains possible that the church was destroyed in later times, potentially during the 17th century, as Turkish and Abkhaz-Circassian raids against the Odishi principality grew in frequency. Additionally, the excavations revealed faience pottery of Turkish origin, dating back to the 18th century (same). J. Jghamia's assessment suggests that the towers within the fortress, two of which were integral parts of the fortress and one that stood separately (although now largely demolished - A.T.), can be traced back to the early feudal era. It was during the late feudal era that the first two towers were encompassed by a fortified wall (same; 127). J. Jghamia's conclusions are based on several features, including: "variations in wall thickness and construction techniques, indicative of multiple episodes of destruction and subsequent reconstruction... The lower sections of the walls exhibit a horizontal stone layout, incorporating carefully selected riverstones of substantial size... with the stone construction measuring approximately one meter in height (same; 127-128). The entrance door to the castle is no longer discernible, but it is presumed to have been positioned on the north-western side of the structure, where the walls have since deteriorated. J. Jghamia's sequence of construction unfolded as follows: first, the church was built, followed by the towers (IV-VI centuries), with the fortified wall erected in the late medieval period (XVI-XVIII centuries) (same; 128-132). Upon examining the fortress site, it appears that J. Jghamia's conclusions may not be sufficiently substantiated for the following reasons: 1 There seems to be an inconsistency in his text, for instance, when he mentions, "the walls differ in thickness as well as construction technique..." and "the lower parts demonstrate a horizontal stone layout..." 2. The first two towers are situated in such close proximity and are aligned in a way that suggests their construction would have been impractical without the presence of a fortified wall. 3 The site that would have been deemed strategically valuable in the early feudal era is significant. A small river called **Gochish Ghali** passes the fortress on its southern and eastern sides. The nearby Gorgorkhili (bottlenecked place) site to the south of the fortress creates so-called *Khldekari* road,

passage. The location was well-suited for controlling access to the roads originating from Jvari, Phakhulani, the south and the east.

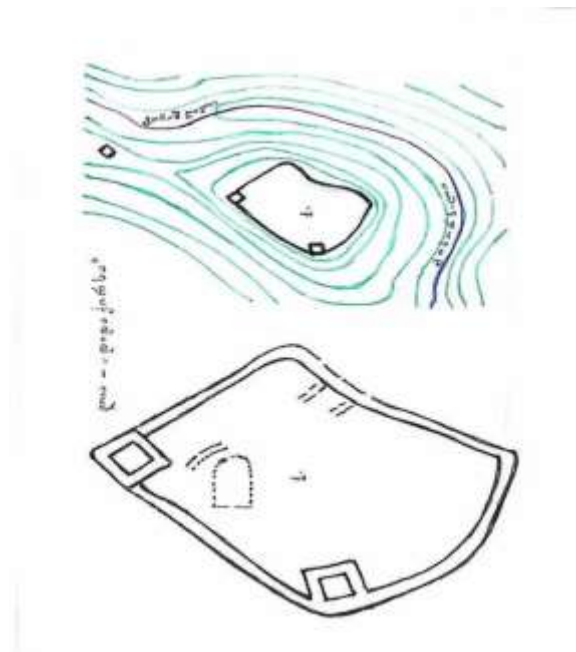


Exhibit N10

Paluri

Paluri is renowned for its archaeological discoveries, particularly a settlement site dating back to the Neolithic era (18; 30-31, 35-41), as well as a burial site from the 6th to 5th century BC that was uncovered by archaeologists in 1964 (14;15). Paluri served as a significant crossroads for important roads. However, it appears that there are no remaining monuments from the feudal era, and it is believed that such structures did not exist in this location. In the past, a wooden church once stood at the heart of the village, but it was dismantled during the 1930s. The St. George church was situated at the site of the current graveyard, which has also been destroyed. A celebration dedicated to St. Peter used to be held at this location on June 29th (according to the old calendar), locally referred to as **Petroba**.

A site known as **Makharia**, located 100-150 meters away from the headwaters of the river with the same name, is situated to the south-east of Paluri. On the elevated area to its left, covered with bushes and thorns, known locally as **Naokhvamu**, there is an encircling fortified wall, although this wall has been partially demolished down to its foundation. The height of the wall on the western side reaches 1-1.5 meters. On the southern side of the fortified wall, there is an extension of the wall that suggests the presence of either a tower or an altar with an entrance on the ground floor. Inside the fortified wall, nearly in the middle, one can find the remnants of an unidentified construction. Given the name *Naokhvamu*, it is conceivable that this site was a church. This assumption is further supported by the presence of scattered carved stones, including travertine (*shebotia*), in the vicinity.

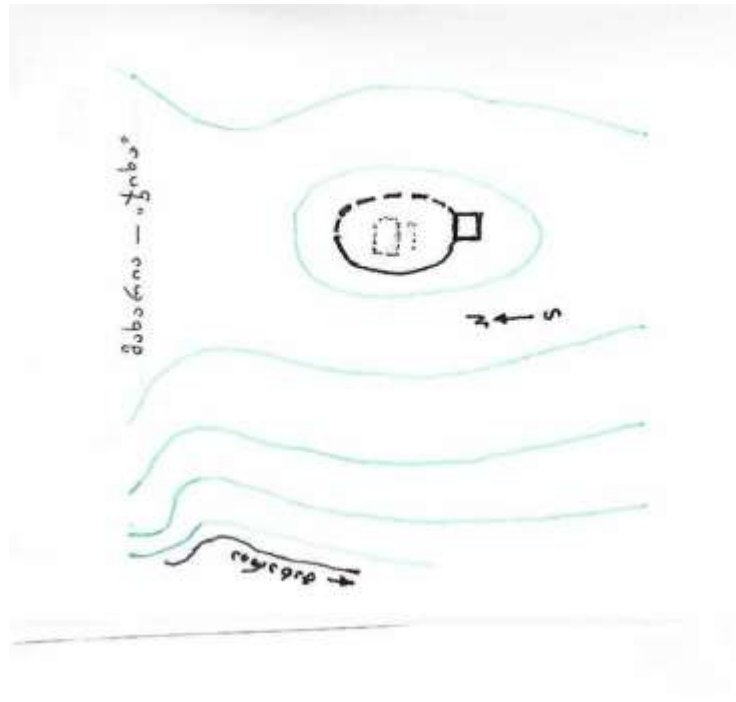


Exhibit N11

Saaphakio Etseri

The village is situated between Lia, the headwaters of the Chkoushi, and Intsara Valley. Until the 1930s, the wooden Ascension Church used to stand in the Letsemente neighborhood. The Ascension Day was celebrated annually in the village. The noble Aphakidze family resided in the **Lachenturie** neighborhood of the village, in a location referred to as **Aphakiash Nakhore**; There are no other historic or architectural monuments to be found within the village's territory. However, there

is interest in a Mesolithic-era dwelling site in this area (18;5). The so-called *Mamukia Nojikhuri*, also known as the fortress of Mamukia Aphakidze, is located at the confluence of the Enguri and Chanistkhali rivers. The Lia fortress can be observed to the southwest of this location. The Nozhala River, the right-hand side confluence to the Intsra, flows 400 meters to the east, and the small river Skurefia flows to the west. The fortress is constructed with river stones, and there is a tower of considerable size measuring 7.4X7.4 meters on its western side. The remnants of the third floor are visible on the western wall. The ground floor of the structure is filled with earth. The fortified wall is still intact on the western, southern, and eastern sides, although it is overgrown with bushes and thorns. However, on the northern side, both the tower and the wall have collapsed.

656.12

Abandoned Village Sites in the Mountainous Area

The villages that were once situated in the middle and lower slopes of the Egrisi Range in the Enguri, Magana, and Ilori valleys experienced a significant depopulation in the early part of the last century. The residents of these villages migrated to settlements on the lower hills and in the valleys (such as Jvari, Lia, Phakhulani, Chale, Muzhava), or to towns and to Abkhazia. Many of these former villages can now only be remembered by their old names, as a considerable number of them have been submerged under the waters of the Enguri Reservoir.

The boundary between the villages of Samegrelo and Svanetia used to run along the left and right banks of the **Gandishi Ghali** and **Barjashi Tskhali**, respectively. The first village after Jvari along the Enguri was **Photskho** (contemporary Photskho Etseri). **Phurashi** (submerged under water, including its stone church), **Kualagvani**, **Phashtakhiri** (which had a church in use until the 1930s), **Muntskva**, **Etsi**, **Tkabedineri**. **Chanturiephish Okhvame** was a church in this area; together with **Chveletana**, **Chikiri** (meaning a rock pillar) it was submerged on the right bank of the Enguri River. In terms of the abandoned villages on the left bank of the Enguri River, on top of the **Tsulishi Hill** (according to old stories, there was a tower on top of the hill and an iron ring could be seen in the area below it, known as **Salkde**, indicating that the site was a harbor for ships during the "elevation" of the sea), the first one is **Khoko**. In the vicinity, you can find ruins overgrown with trees and thorns, located

10-15 meters to the right of the new Jvari-Mestia road. This is believed to be the church that, according to various sources, was active in the 19th century. Travertine was used as a construction material for it. Some remnants of the fortified wall can still be found, but there isn't much else that can be confirmed at this time. The main settlement of the area, Khudoni, used to be on top of Khoko. In 1639, Russian envoys, after passing the Donghuz-Orun Bashi (Nakra) pass and Iskari village in the Nakra valley, reached Khudoni village in Samegrelo (13;318). Using this historical record, T. Beradze concludes that **Khudoni** was the last populated area within the Odishi principality (11;42). If this is true, the Megrelian villages along the Enguri River were established after that. Alternatively, the Russian envoys may not have followed the Enguri River from Iskari to Khudoni but instead traveled on a road that passed through the **Ochisuki**, **Zandalaki**, **Dolon**, and **Suki** passes, eventually reaching the road near Khudoni.

The other villages that were part of Khudoni included **Chkhichoni**, **Tkhvishi**, and **Tsipi**, which were somewhat remote from the Enguri River. **Bughurjeli** was located on top of **Tkhvishi**, while **Ka** and **Khuberi** were situated about 5-6 kilometers away. D. Bakradze noted that the “old tower could be found in Khuberi only” (19:13), and the last village of the Megrelians was **Barja**. In a description of this section of the Enguri Valley from 1860, Bakradze also mentioned the following: “**Etsi**, a right tributary of the Enguri River, located 15 versts away from Jvari, is considered to be the boundary between Samegrelo and Svaneti”. People live 10 *versts* deep along the valley, and this area is referred to as Khudoni [i.e D.Bakradze considers the section from Jvari to Etsi to be a part of the Khudoni Valley - A.T.] and its population are the integral part of the Jvari population. Megrelian-style houses can still be found in small numbers on both banks of the Enguri River(A.T). Fields for growing foxtail millet and corn are visible in the region, and there are individual *khutors* in the distance. The forested areas are mostly devoid of human habitation, with the exception of an old tower in Khuberi (indicating control over the road coming from the north and serving as a boundary, possibly leading into Svaneti. But it is not clear when. We can answer this question only after defining the date of use of the tower -A.T) and the ruins of the old church in Khaishi, with more ruins of residential building(s) around it. The presence of walnut and fruit trees in the vicinity suggests past human settlement, but much of the area is now uninhabited and barren. (19;12-13).

Magana Valley

Lephie (Lephiphie/Saphophio) is the first abandoned village in the Magana Valley. On the left side of the river, within its boundaries of the village, you can find the ruins of three square towers (*jikha*) 1. **Lephiesh Jikha**, located in the middle of the village, is fully destroyed. 2 **Jikha Dokhvadi** (meaning "face them") is situated on the right bank of the Magana, south of the village. The third tower, Jikha Ghvare (meaning "shout"), stands on top of the river and its right tributary - Latskhundaras Khertvishi. The tower measures 5.5x5.5 meters and is constructed using cut riverstones and lime mortar, with an even layout. The remaining wall is 3.5-4 meters tall and 1.5 meters thick. There are no visible entrance signs on the tower, suggesting that it was at least three stories high. Other features like arrow slits or embrasures were not observed. Based on these characteristics, the tower can be dated back to the early feudal era. It likely served to protect the road leading from the **Zandalaki, Dolonsuki, Natakhdash-Dudi**, and **Saochio** mountain passes from Svanetia.

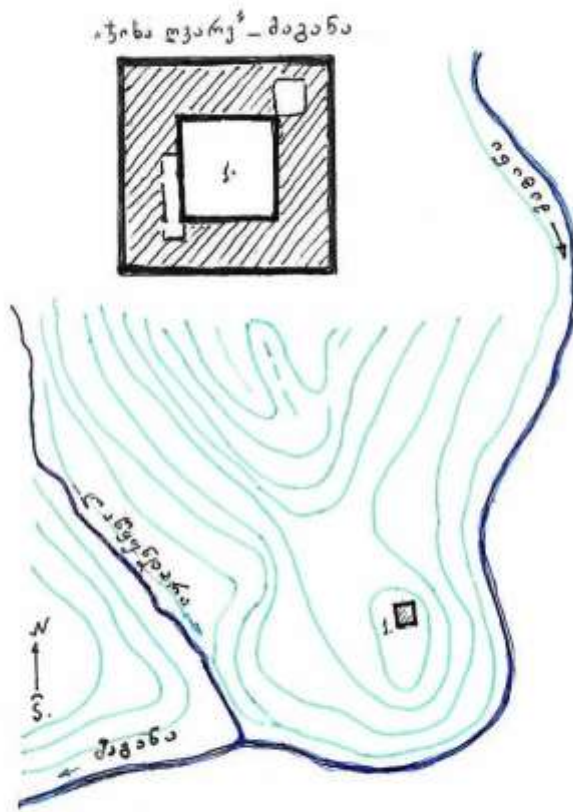


Exhibit 13.

Other abandoned villages in the Magana Valley are: **Letomnte**, **Labaghva** (obviously abandoned earlier than others, iron ore leftovers can be found here), and the ruins of a rectangular tower (*jikha*) can be found on the bank of the right tributary of the **Tskhavashela** River in the abandoned village of **Tskhavashshi**.

Megrelian toponyms: commonly found both to the north of the Egrisi Range and along its course, as well as on the right bank of the Enguri, including **Ochi** (paddock), **Ochi-suki** (mountain pass), (k)**Umroni** (paddock), (k)**Urashi** (valley), **Tekrash-dudi** (mountain), **Kveishi** (river), **Otephura** (mountain), **Tkheishi/Kheishi** (river), **Tskhiki** (river), **Saochao** (mountain pass), **Natakhtash-Dudi** (mountain and its pass), **Uchakharkhi** (mountain), **Chita Gvala** (mountain), **Tkheishish-Dudi**

(mountain), **Laghamurash-Dudi** (mountain), **Didlagh Dudi** (mountain), **Dolon Suki** (pass), **Zandalaki** (pass), **Chita Alishi** (mountain), **Kvabi** (mountain), **Berche** (mountain), **Lara Kvakva** (river), **Orkotskari** (lake), and more, suggest that the territory, which is now the Mestia District, remained uninhabited for several centuries, particularly on the other opposite side of the Egrisi Range. Herders from Samegrelo utilized the territory as pasture, and this eventually resulted in the settlement of the Megrelian Chkaduas from Khaishi and the subsequent settlement of the Svanetian population here. (Stories from the Russian envoys in the 17th century and the analysis by D. Bakradze concerning this territory (19, 12-13) are particularly noteworthy in this regard)

References:

- L.Akhaladze Epigraphy of Abkhazia, as historic source, I, Tbilisi , 2005.
- T. Beradze Map of Odishi of the 1st half of XVII century, Dzeglis Megobari, N21, Tbilisi 1970.
- T.Beradze, Vakhushti Bagrationi and Odishi, Esseys in Historical Geography, IV Tbilisi, 1971
- G.Grigolia, M.Baramidze etc. Findings of archaeological inquiries by 1963 research and archaeological expedition related to the constructio of the Enguri HPP (stone and bronze era monuments), Tbilisi 1964.
- N.Dadiani, Life of the Georgians, ed Sh.Burzhanadze Tbilisi, 1962.
- Vakhushvti, Atlas of Georgia (XVIII) Tbilisi, 1997
- Avt.Tordia, The Dadiani, Essays of the History of Georgia, section I (XI-XV centuries) Tbilisi, 2019.
- Sh. Lukava, Lets protect cultural monuments, Dzeglis Megobari N43-44, Tbilisi 1976-1977.
- El. Metreveli, Material for the history of the Georgian colony in Jerusalem, Tbilisi, 1962.
- I. Meunargia, Material and documents regarding the last period of Samegrelo Pricipality Davit Dadiani, ed Sol. TsaishVili, Tbilisi, 1939.
- Literary Sources of Svanetia, Historic Documents, Memorial Books; text prepared for publishing and supplemented with references by V. Sologava,

1986

Monuments of the Georgian Law, III, ed. I.Dolidze, Tbilisi, 1970

S. Belokurov, *The embassy of Deacon Fedot Yelchin and Priest Pavel Zakhariev to the Land of Dadiani (1639 - 1640)* The Journal Readings by the Society of Ancient Russian History of at Moscow University; Moscow 1887

R. Abramishvili, T. Mikeladze. *Archaeological works at the Enguri HPP construction sites* 1969, Joint scientific session of Zugdidi State Museum and I. Javakhishvili Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography, theses, Zugdidi, 1965.

Travels of Gldenstdt to Georgia, volume 1 German text with Georgian translation published and supplemented with research material by G. Gelashvili, Tbilisi 1962

Sulkhan-Saba Orbelia, *Georgian Dictionary*, I, Tbilisi, 1991

J. Jghamia, *Old fortresses of Lia village*, Matsne magazine, Series of History, Archeology, Ethnography and Art, N1, 1980.

G. Grigolia, *Findings derived from the research conducted by the Stone Age Material Research Team of the archaeological expedition at the Enguri in 1965*, XV scientific session dedicated to the findings of the archeological expedition in 1965 (stone and bronze age monuments) Tbilisi, 1966.

D. Bakradze, V. Uvarova, *Svanetia*, translated, prepared for publishing and supplemented with comments by K. Chilaia, Tbilisi, 2023