

TRADITIONAL SPORTS and GAMES
ASSOCIATION of GEORGIA



Ferdinand Verbiest

GEORGIAN
TRADITIONAL SPORTS
TYPES AND GAMES

**Historical
Sources and Brief
Description**

First edition

2023

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Koba Chumburidze

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საქართველოს
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და ახალგაზრდობის
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National Sports Types and Games

The history of the Georgian statehood is actually the history of wars. People here have not lived in peace for several decades consecutively. This was primarily conditioned by its strategic location. After all, Georgia has always been the gateway to Eurasia and the crossroads of caravan routes since time immemorial.

In such difficult geo-political circumstances, one of the principal prerequisites for the survival of the country and the nation was a sophisticated system for raising a warrior, and if we take a great number of the enemy into consideration, only one or two exceptional masters were not enough - all able-bodied men had to be such a warrior. Armed Georgians used to go to work and, even to the fields to cultivate lands; since childhood, by playing games, they had been physically trained and skilled in martial arts.

Many interesting facts about our nation can be found in the ancient historical sources. Let's once again take a look at the fragments that are impressive in terms of martial art.



To begin with, our native soil was determined to be one of the earliest hubs of the human race. This is evidenced by the oldest European hominid fossil found in Dmanisi, dating to 1.8 million years ago. Maybe his descendants were bred and spread within the territory from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf, and later, having slightly variegated, for a number of reasons, this offshoot shrunk back to the „initial point” and began to be established as a Georgian ethnos.

This spearhead, which is 100 centuries old, was found during the excavation works somewhere nearby, in the Gubazeuli valley. Along with it, various agricultural tools and even a manual grinder made of stone were discovered, which is a proof that ten thousand years ago, our ancestors, in addition to hunting, were already engaged with farming and were native inhabitants of this area.

At the end of the second millennium, Colchis is already mentioned as a country in written sources. Since then, the Georgian statehood has withstood the test of three thousand years. During this time, many great ancient civilizations were swept away from the face of the earth; and many magnificent cultures have been preserved only in the museums.

Georgia sustained itself, and the most important prerequisite for its survival was gaining the magnificent knowledge of martial art.

Based on some Greek myths, metalworking was started by the Dactyls, who lived near Troy, in the vicinity of the Mount Ida. The tribe of the Dardanos living in this region is considered the ancestor of the Romans, since their king was Anchises, the grandson of Ilos, the king of Troy, and the father of Aeneas.



According to this version, Ilos, who won the Phrygian athletic games, founded the city by the will of Zeus; and it was named Ilion (the second name of Troy) after him. Thus, the Phrygian athletic games must have been held around the 14th century, that is, six centuries before the establishment of the Greek Olympic Games.

The name of the legendary city of Troy is related to the name of Tros, the son of Erichthonius, the king of Phrygia. And Phrygia, as is known, was inhabited by the Mushki [Mushkebi]. Maybe this explains that a part of the Georgian tribes fought on the side of the Trojans in the Trojan War (Homer in the Iliad directly refers to the Halizones (Khalibs), who were commanded by Odius and Epistrophos).

In addition to the fact that the Khalibs were known for mining silver, the ancient world also credits them with the first mastery of iron metallurgy.

When the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser initially mentions the Mushki [Mushkebi] in his inscription (1100 BC), the latter were so powerful that they planned to conquer the Assyrian dominions. The country of the Mushki

[Mushkebi] consisted of several kingdoms, but as the inscription shows, they acted together, when necessary.

The Assyrian cuneiform texts mention the tribes against which Assyria fought from the 11th to the 8th century BC. Together with the Mushki [Mushkebi], a reference is also made to the tribes of Tubals and Kaskians.

Urtu is an Assyrian name and it means perfected people in this language. The Urtians themselves called their country Biainili. Based on the sources of King Sargon II, the Urtian army had the best-trained horses, which „never become uncontrollable, while being attacked, drawing the chariots, retreating or deploying to combat.”

Ancient Assyrian, Sumerian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman or Persian historical sources provide us with more information about how much attention the Georgians paid to their physical education and military training. To give an example, we can name the works of Herodotus, Xenophon, Strabo or other authors of ancient times...

The Prophet Ezekiel, who lived in the 6th century, describes the Mushki [Mushkebi] and Tubals in the Old Testament, as follows: „Magnificently dressed troops, wearing chainmails and wielding shields and swords..., all riding on horses."

During this period, the Colchians form a powerful kingdom, which is referred to as Kulkha/Kolkha in the Urtian cuneiform inscriptions. Strabo gives us the following information about Colchis: „How prominent this country was in ancient times, this is evidenced by the myths about Jason's campaign, and before that Phrixus's [battle]... The real reason for these combat operations was the wealth of this country, which included gold, silver and iron.”

King Ayet of Colchis is mentioned by Hesiod (VIII century BC), while the oldest version of the myth of the Argonauts is given in „Corinth” by Eumelus of Rhodes (VIII century BC). According to Eumelus, King Ayet of Colchis was originally from Corinth. As the myth says, the king inherited Corinth, but he chose Colchis. This point of view shows the knowledge about the migration of pre-Georgian tribes from the Mediterranean Sea zone to the east.

As Herodotus (480-426 BC) informs - „The Moskhs carried wooden helmets, shields and short spears with long iron. The Tibarenes, the Makrons and the Mosinikis used to march with weapons similar to those of the Mushki [Mushkebi].

- „The Khalibs wore copper helmets with a bull's ears and horns made of copper.”
- „The Mars wore locally woven helmets and were armed with small leather shields and demi-lances.”
- „The Colchians carried wooden helmets, small shields made of raw bull hide, short spears and fighting knives.”

Xenophon (431-354 BC) tells us the following about the Khalibs: „They were the bravest people among those, whom even the Hellenes had to deal with during their campaign. Those who participated in hand-to-hand combat with them [the Khalibs] experienced this best. The Khalibs wore linen armor. The lower part of this armor consisted of thickly woven straps. They also had anchors and helmets, and swords of about the size of the Spartan ones were hanging on their belts. The length of their spears reached 15 Greek arshins and they had a sharpened iron on one side. The Khalibs lived in their own places, and when the Hellenes passed by, they chased and fought them.”

The Drilai [Drilebi], according to Xenophon, „live in hard-to-reach mountains and are the most warlike people of Ponta.”

„When the Hellenic army entered the country of the Taokhs, all the people were ready to immediately begin combat operations. Women were struggling alongside men. The Taokhs preferred death to loss of freedom in order not to surrender to the enemy.”

The Kardukhs were „excellent archers; Their bows were almost three arshins long, and their arrows were more than two arshins long. When shooting, they stretched the string and placed the left leg at the lower end of the bow. Their arrows could pierce the shield and armor”.

We can find the following information about Dionysius Periegetes in the comments of Eustathius: „Dionysius speaks that the Cadusians live there, whose

country is mountainous; Strabo says that they can climb the mountains in a quick manner; they are excellent at throwing spears and successfully fight on foot against horsemen in rocky places.

The Tibarenes were hooked on games. It is said in the 5th book of Eufron - the Tibarenes play with joy and amuse themselves, and they consider spending time in such a manner a great happiness. The scholastic Apollo of Rhodes notes that the Tibarenes are the fairest of all. They never engage with a battle until they have determined the day, location and time of the fight.

Strabo tells us: „The Soanes... are more famous for their bravery and military strength than almost all the peoples. They live on the uplands of the Caucasus, above Dioscuria, and rule over the whole neighbourhood.”

Ariane (100-160 BC) writes about the Sans (Tchans): „The peoples, whose countries we passed through, are the following: the Colchians - bordering the Trebizonds, as Xenophon says; Xenophon calls the other people, more warlike and hostile to the Trebizonds, the Drilai [Drilebi]. But I believe that they are the Sans, because they are still extremely belligerent and aggressive towards the people of Trebizond. These people dwell in inaccessible places and they are not ruled by kings”.

A Byzantine historian Agathias Scholasticus writes about the Laz people: „The Laz were a strong and courageous tribe and also guided the other powerful ones; they were proud of the Colchians' previous notability and were excessively arrogant, perhaps, not groundlessly. Among the tribes that are controlled by another state, I can not find any other people so reputable and distinguished by their wealth, and the abundance of servants, a vast amount of soil giving high-yield crops, as well as the beauty of the character and the vivacity.”

Agathias Scholasticus refers to Theodore, the Romans' Commander, belonging to the Georgian tribe, who „ranked 1st among the Roman Generals”. He notes the Laz people were very skilled sailors.

Evkapi Sardosiani mentions the Commander of the Roman spearmen, Subarmarkhi, who was originally from Phazisi (in ancient Georgian, this name might mean a skilful and powerful subari).

A Roman historian Tacitus describes Radamist, the son of King Pharasmanes, as „a beautiful, impressive man with superhuman strength, proficient at all secular exercises and renowned in all the neighboring nations.”

- A Greek writer Timonakisi alludes to the training schools (gymnasiums and discus throwers) while describing a Colchian city of Ea;
- The fame of the national training system is confirmed by the inscription carved on the monument (which was found in the Bosphorus), telling us about the untimely death of the gymnastics teacher
- Farnak, the son of Farnak, who was invited from Colchis. „The land of the Bosphorus preserves his skill; all the gymnasts mourn him with silent tears,” - the inscription reads.

A Roman writer and public figure Dion Cassius (153-230 BC) tells us that when the Parthians denounced the King Pharasmenes of Iberia to the Roman emperor Hadrian, Pharasmenes left for Rome with his family and noblemen. He defended himself there before Emperor Hadrian and the Senate and was acquitted; consequently, the emperor extended his dominions and greatly honored him, one of the demonstrations of which is that an equestrian statue of King Pharasmenes was erected in 138 in the Field of Mars, Rome.

Exceptionally interesting facts are described in the Argonautics by the ancient Greek writer Apollonius Rhodius - „the Valley of Ares was located in front of the city and was slightly away from the river bank. A vast arena was laid out on the Valley of Ares and was surrounded by a railing. The Colchians used to organize battles and equestrian competitions here in order to commemorate brilliant heroes. This place, as is known, was located in the vicinity of Kutaisi.

Depending on the historical experience, physical and military training has always been our priority, and therefore, extremely interesting experience has been accumulated in this regard. The analysis of the sources leads to the conclusion that the entire population of Georgia was engaged with the physical and military training as much as possible.

At the end of the ancient era, four ranks were distinguished in Georgia: royalty, priests, free people and peasants. During this period there were also slaves, but they were not considered the members of society.

The ancient oriental type of physical education was available mainly to the military aristocracy and primarily served military purposes, but it is undeniable that this system was also accessible to the third class in Georgia. Infantry and surprise teams were represented by the third class to the king's army.

The fourth class, i.e. people burdened with hard physical work, was only allowed to participate in certain types of physical games (wrestling, running, jumping, Jilādu/Jildaoba [a kind of weightlifting], moving games, dancing and so on) only on holidays.

According to The Life of the Kings, King Parnavaz, who was „a wiseman, a valiant horseman and a martial artist”, divided his kingdom into military and administrative units – duchies [a territorial unit of medieval Georgia]. At the time, Kartli included 7 duchies: 1. Margvi; 2. Kakheti; 3. Khunani; 4. Samshvilde; 5. Tsunda; 6. Odzrkhe; 7. Klarjeti. The polity of Egrisi (dominion of Kuji) was ruled as the eighth duchy by the king under special conditions.

Vakhtang Gorgasali's chronicler presented the 5th century Kartli in accordance with the same structure: it is again divided into duchies, headed by hereditary feudal lords, who exercise both military and civil power. The primary duty of feudal lords was to withdraw the appropriate army from the zone prescribed for administrating and command them, that is, it can be said that the military and organizational principle prevailed in the state system.

The last conqueror, the Russian Empire, apart from ideological pressure, did not refrain from drowning numerous rebellions in blood and did not shy away from extremely severe repressions, killing the patriots devoted to their homeland and forcing them to emigrate, uprooting the national traditions, fighting against the Georgian language and mother church in order to consolidate its power...

One of his most treacherous efforts was aimed at putting the fighting spirit of Georgians to sleep, throwing away the tradition of military upbringing and, instead, establishing the perverted „customs”.

Martial art means not only a combination of tactics, but also the establishment of the governing system of the country, the priorities introduced into existence, ideology, upbringing system and other related concepts. Traditional dancing, singing and showmanship are also closely connected to military upbringing.

The fighting spirit and skilfulness of Georgians were distinguished amongst the best and, naturally, erasing this knowledge or taking it out of Georgia was one of the main tasks of the empire.

At the end of the 19th century, fist-boxing was banned, followed by prohibiting to participate in the fertility festival [Keenoba], since the patriotic spirit of this game scared the servants of the empire. The motive of the mentioned ban seemed to be very „paternal” - „care” for the health of the Georgian people...

Upon the annexation of the First Democratic Republic of Georgia, one of the primary targets of the Bolshevik Empire was the sports society Shevardeni [Falcon], which stood out for its patriotic spirit and continued to fight against the invaders for a year and nine months starting from Sovietization to the liquidation [of the system].

Shevardeni [Falcon] magazine of the Kutaisi branch (#1, 1920) reads: „Besides gymnastics, Shevardeni aims to introduce military training as well. With the help of the government, it wishes to organize military training in weapons for its members, promote the formation of such an army that should be unrivalled in training, conscious discipline, endurance and combat capability, and which so far only exists in a dream. It is self-evident that such gymnastic societies will create a powerful military force and incomparably reduce the costs that burden the republic.” From our perspective, these words have not lost their relevance even today.

Thus, it is clear why the studies previously carried out in this direction are so scanty, and the merits of those scientists who, despite dealing with a great number of resistances and persecutions (let’s recall, the history of Georgia was

not taught at schools), tried to bring the knowledge about the unique features of Georgian existence to us, which is called the Georgian martial art.

When a small group of enthusiastic researchers, headed by Kakhaber Zarnadze, Nodar Lursmanashvili and Levan Kikalishvili, started regaining the surviving knowledge back in 1985, few believed that this effort would bear any fruit, but time was running out. Judge for yourself - most of the old people, who gave us many techniques, exercises and denominations are no longer alive today.

In addition to cultural and scientific value, the Georgian martial art is a unique means of physical and moral training of the next generation. Simultaneously, it is probably clear how much it is necessary for our future generation to realize that it is the heir of such a culture that there is no need to replace it with eastern and western systems, which are out of the Georgian character.

The work will also significantly help those trainers, who want to work in this direction, have already opened or are planning to start the Georgian martial art clubs or circles.

Subsequently, we hope that a certain part of this system will be introduced to the school curriculum, which will contribute to the healthy spiritual and physical education of our future generation.

The present brochure is of an introductory nature and is intended to provide a general idea of the research activities carried out by our team. It generally describes and explains the directions given in the scheme, which will be formed into separate papers as a consequence of further research.

Relevant research works are currently underway, and this year several types will be already described and recorded in a proper system, that is, in a form that will make it possible for future generations to learn them easily. Since it is difficult to decipher the results of several studies preserved from the past, an extraordinary form of material processing was created based on this experience, and the samples presented are the first attempt to do so.

In conformity with the material collected so far by the research group, the basic framework and directions that need to be further studied and require the appropriate placement of this material can be tentatively determined.

Physical training

A trainer should undergo the general physical training before starting to master any sport. Such training minimizes injuries and also puts a consequent wrestler in a proper physical condition, giving him the appropriate skills.

In order for a juvenile to be actively involved in physical exercise before the age of 12-13, it is necessary to give this activity the form of a game. Dozens of such games have been developed and research in this direction is still carrying out intensively. Within a short time, the association will develop children's games, which combine old, well-tested games and modern stories to arouse more interest of a minor.

The analysis of historical sources and ethnographic materials leads to the conclusion that the entire population of Georgia was engaged with military exercises as much as possible. A woman was not an exception either (let's recall the basic definition of frivolity by Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani: - Women's frolicking by force of habit).

Unlike Europe, in Georgia, even the theological institute students also underwent physical training. The biography of a famous figure of the 11th century Giorgi Atoneli indicates that he had a habit of allowing his disciples „to run about the fields for singing" (frolicking and sports games is meant).

It would also be appropriate to remember that the didactic system of Ioane Petritsi, one of the greatest scholars and pedagogues of his time, who was specially invited to the Gelati Academy, consisted of four main parts: mental, physical, aesthetic and moral education.

Youngsters started training from an early age and it was mainly adapted to natural obstacles. From then on, a trainer got used to keeping his balance while

running on a bumpy ground or jumping on hard rocks; in the high jump, a trainer had to go over a man's head, not over a lath, and in the long jump, while pole vaulting, he had to cross a ravine and a river in order to be trained at extreme close range to the combat situation. All this is highlighted in academician Vasil Elashvili' work entitled the Physical Education of Mountaineers.

The population skilled in this way formed a fairly high-quality army (if necessary, with the participation of all able-bodied men). The mentioned system of military training included special rituals and rather strict traditions.

The Description of Samegrelo by Arcangelo Lambert tells us: - „Children carry weapons, shields and bows as if they were used to fighting from birth. All are so earnestly engaged with this activity that they are always fully prepared for the campaign; They will not make the best horse be drained of strength, if it is not used in the march; They also store the best food away for battling.

They have arranged every weapon in such a way that they can march out at the first call of the commander. In addition, even when resting, bows and arrows, shields and swords, armor and wristbands are kept near the headboard so that they are ready for battle as needed...

Children and juveniles did not wear shoes even in severe winters and they are made get used to walking barefoot in the snow. They go hunting during a terrible heatwave and, being naked, often cross the biggest rivers. They act in such a manner in order to become frisky and sportive and adapt to the hardships that war brings.”

An initial Sepuri [a physical activity] is a group of exercises that includes children's games and general physical training.

Sepuri itself includes exercises by which a trainer deepens and maintains the physical readiness, which is necessary for mastering the sports types, and while increasing it, attention should be paid to the military and patriotic education of a trainer.

Dancing

The only fact that doesn't require proof that most Georgian dances are martial rituals and, at the same time, exercises and it is also reflected in their names. In addition to the ability to physically and mentally training, they comprise such elements of combat action as – Pekhmonatsvleba (changing the direction)



turning, changing the position, falling upon, betraying, false manoeuvre, Arini (avoiding an opponent's attack), Saprtkholi [a tactic causing momentary fright] and others. Morminkela, a three-story martial Svan Perkhuli [a round dance with linked arms], requires considerable gymnastic skills from performers.



Dancing has been dominant among our forms of exercises since ancient times, and this can be simply explained. A people, who waged constant war, therefore, had to be persistently trained to improve their physical fitness and hone their skills. It is natural that through [dancing], this tedious activity was changed into a relatively entertaining form,

moreover, it connected part of the exercises with the religion and gave it a ritual character. A clear example of this is the word that has become one of the synonyms of dancing today - Shushpari (shush means moon, while pari - perkhuli).

Improvised dance performance

If the elements of singing predominate in the dance, an improvised dance performance [Rokva] is more like an exercise shown with the accompaniment of some rhythm or tune and is intended to improve this or that movement in order to master extraordinary rhythmic gesture and appropriate breathing.

In the immemorial past, any deity was transformed into an icon through an improvised dance performance. Similar type of dancing was known in ancient Greece and Rome and was performed both with or without weapons.

Georgia still maintains the old custom of the improvised dance performance of wrestlers before the start of wrestling.

Throwing weapons

The technique of using a catapult is especially developed in those areas where, due to poverty, other munitions were less accessible. However, no warrior of any class refused to own this extremely convenient and effective weapon. The catapult itself is depicted on the royal coat of arms.

This issue has not yet been thoroughly studied. Nevertheless, the first stone thrown by a man is considered the forerunner of all weapons.

Since time immemorial, competitions were held in Georgia in throwing a rock far, and throwers were also highly valued. It was also popular to shoot a small stone at a target quickly. There is even such a story – for a man from Okriba, fortitude means that when a quail flies off him while in a field, he bends down to pick up a stone just afterwards.

„...was filled with many types of foreign weapons and catapults...” – King David Aghmashenebeli’s historian writes about the victory in the battle that took place at Didgori valley. It is interesting that a catapult that is, the ballista used for destroying fortifications, is rarely mentioned in our sources.

According to the French traveler Jacques François Gamba „...another ancient church can be found in Ilori, where catapults, pile drivers and other weapons used before the invention of gunpowder were placed just a few years ago...” (in the twenties of the 19th century).



As for the ingenious development of the catapult in our country, Khrikola [a kind of catapult] is sufficient as an example of this. It is a hollow cylinder with a groove cut on the side. Several stones are arranged in it previously. The last one is fixed with the thumb, and the last one is flung, then it is followed by the next one and so on.

The study entitled *The Stone Cult and Stone Weapons* carried out by Father Avtandil Giorgobiani tells us about these and other extremely interesting ballista: Riktapa, Riktopa, Gogrichi and Gvritchila [kinds of ballista]. Let's quote a small excerpt from this article:

„- In the past, there were quite skilled stone-thrower wrestlers, in whose hands a catapult was no less valuable than a shoulder firearm (very similar to a musket) and a bow.

Bow and arrow

A bow is one of the ancient weapons. The archaeological materials confirm that it appeared in Georgia in the Late Paleolithic.



One of the first images of a bow in Georgia can be found in the petroglyphs of the Little Khram (Patara Khram) Valley, dating back to the Mesolithic Period (10,000-6,000 BC). Refinement and development of this weapon covers a huge part of human history - from the Paleolithic to the 19th century.

One Bronze Age belt shows a bow of human height, which is not bent like an arc as it is characteristic of a simple bow, but it is buckled towards the string in the middle, which indicates that this bow is composite. This means that in our country, already in the Bronze Age, the bow was at a fairly high level of development.

The arrowheads of the same age also catch the attention. The shape of one of them clearly specifies that it was intended to be dipped in poison. From this point of view, Strabo's information arouses curiosity – the Svans use such an exceptional poison on their arrows that even those, who are not wounded, suffer from its smell.

In our sources, the gun appears at the end of the 15th century, but the bow „did not give up its position“ for a long time. The knowledge of making and using a bow was at such a high standard in our country that it worthily rivalled even the firearms of the 19th century.

In terms of long-range shooting, it was not much inferior to the rifle of that time, and it even surpassed it with regards to rapid shooting (a skilled shooter could throw up to twenty arrows per minute).

In the case of hurting an opponent, it also had a certain advantage - it was noiseless during the intelligence operations, and an arrow dipped in special poison, even in the case of a minor scratch, caused a sudden paralysis.



There are many types of bow material. Vakhushti Batonishvili, while describing Gudamakari, says: - „The bowmakers make bows from the horns of bumpkins, goats and oxen”.

According to D. Saladze, in Upper Racha, he saw a three meter-long iron bow, with a two arshin-long and one inch-thick iron arrow.

Considering the complexity, the bow should be divided into three main types - simple, complex and complex composite.

Arrow: Arrow sharpening was a separate craft. The arrowheads gathered in the corresponding illustration clearly show that a fletcher, i.e. the man of this craft, would not be displeased with his skill and imagination. This is also confirmed by rather rich material given in *The Bouquet of Words* by Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani.

The ancient arrowhead found in the territory of Georgia is flint and belongs to the Paleolithic period.

Chidaoba (Wrestling)

„The Georgian wrestling is as much a national treasure as folklore, Georgian songs, Georgian architecture” - Niko Ketskhoveli.

During the millennia, Georgia represented especially favorable natural trade corridor or crossroads for the world at that time. This was both our luck and misfortune, since a greedy tyrant has been induced by such kindness more than once.

Along with various kinds of goods, all types of knowledge also went in and out on these roads. The „river” of people and time always carried this enlightenment, and the local people’s minds, like the Golden Fleece, collected, renewed and formed it as bars. This is how the ancestor became a sharer and creator of the advanced human experience of his time.



Martial art is one of those skills that the ancestor had been improving and enriching over the centuries. This is visibly manifested by the amazing Georgian wrestling.

This type of wrestling is particularly popular in our country. Georgians have improved all international sports through their special methods and different style of wrestling. Consequently, our athletes have not achieved as much success in any sport as in wrestling.

What is the secret of such success of our wrestlers? What enabled them to conquer virtually every peak on the global stage? The basis of these achievements is the ancient and unique phenomenon - Georgian wrestling and its varieties.

It is completely unacceptable to assume that wrestling in Georgia was a „style of the peasants”. Even these two historical facts are enough to deny it:

In 1048–50, the great feudal lord Liparit IV Bagvashi, an ally of the Byzantines defeated by the Seljüks, became a prisoner of Sultan Torgul Beg. As per the Armenian chronicler Mate Urhaeli, Liparit performed heroic deeds in captivity, which is why, two years later, the Sultan released him and gave him gifts, as

well. One such heroism was wrestling with a Negro wrestler, who had been killed by Liparit, while contesting.

At the end of the 16th century, Sultan Murad made Atabag of Samtskhe Kvarkvare Jakeli (who was on a mission to Istanbul) agree to wrestle with the foremost wrestler of the vast Ottoman Empire. Immediately after the encounter, Kvarkvare put his opponent on the shoulders with a wrestling leg trip. It happened so quickly that the viewers did not realize anything and they demanded to repeat the fighting, but the Ottoman wrestler confirmed the victory of Kvarkvare.

Thus, wrestling was widespread in all strata of the Georgian society, and it did not become unfamiliar and a shameful character for the Georgian nobles either. Especially since this type was an integral part of combat training and was less similar to today's sporterized variety. Even at the end of the 20th century, it represented a battle-hardening.”

In the last century, the Georgian wrestling was intensively being transitioned to „Sambo”. As a result, „Sambo” (Self-defense without weapons) which was nourished by it, conquered the world today and clearly confirmed its superiority in the fights „with no limits”. Even the „father” of „Sambo” - Kharlampiyev did not try to conceal the importance of the Georgian wrestling. He frequently and emphatically mentioned the advantages of the Georgian wrestling compared to other sports.



Fortunately, in the thirties of the 20th century, the leaders of the Georgian wrestling created its sports variety and preserved it for posterity in this way.

Even the traumatic tactics that remained outside of wrestling, partially, surprisingly, in the form of prohibition, were recorded in the sources and are now invaluable material. However, since the tradition of wrestling was not broken, many forbidden techniques were still maintained, which brought it to us.

Types of Wrestling

Since ancient times, there have been the local varieties of wrestling in all parts of Georgia, which, to a certain extent, have reached us, although most of them are on the verge of being lost.

Today, by summarizing the materials obtained in the expeditions and sources organized by research groups in different parts of Georgia, several local types of wrestling were highlighted. Those that have not been described before can be noticed among them, and we could find only superficial information about some of them:

These are: „Majura” (restricted type of wrestling), „Kisruli” (using only one hand), „Mkerdaoba” (without using hands), „Ighlighora”, „Tchedoba”, „Tekoba”, „Rkineba”, „Wrestling by gripping the shoulders”, „Mosh da Mosh” and „Muqasrisa”, „Ghojuri” (by gripping the waist area) and „Khatsuri” (by grabbing hold of the arm), „Liburdzgvál”, „Lijirtiel” and „Librgiel”, Ingilo wrestling, Meskhetian wrestling, „Colchian” (wrestling in the parterre position), „Mklavmobmit” [wrestling by binding to the arm], „Khrinkuli” (by tripping up) and others.

These types of wrestling are so sophisticated and spectacular that they have the full right to exist as an independent category, but if we recall the definition of „Khardiorda“ (a collection of exercises to improve one of the leading positions in wrestling) by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, it becomes clear that the limited wrestling should have been primarily an exercising and demonstrative type intended to determine the wrestler’s preparation level.

Simultaneously, a careful examination of the forceful Gurian, Rachian and Khevsurian wrestling leads to the conclusion that these types should have developed the ability of strong and long-term thrusting movements for the fighter, in other words, they originated long before the sword.

This information at our disposal regarding the local types of wrestling mentioned above allows only their general description, and the arrangement requires additional materials and a considerable amount of time.

This time, it is possible to present the types of wrestling found in Kakheti, Mtiuleti and Imereti in a more or less complete form; their distribution area is so extended that we can consider them to be generally Georgian. These are the types of the limited wrestling: „Majura”, „Tsalkhela” (using only one hand), „Mkerdaoba”.

Majura Chidaoba (Hand in hand wrestling)

It is likely that it must have had a certain ritual purpose at that time. A type of wrestling „Majura” is performed with one hand, first with the right, then with the left one. Opponents face each other and shake hands. At this time, the other hand should be placed behind the waist and it is prohibited to use it. Bringing your hand forward is allowed (to avoid injury) only at the moment of falling down.



The wrestler has the right to change the position of the grip in order to perform the tactic better without letting go of the hand. This type of wrestling is not banned in any other way. Performing any tactic through the leg or hand is allowed (without letting go of the wrist). Some of the tactics found can not be seen in any other type of bout.

A type of wrestling „Majura” is abundantly rich in techniques and, therefore, it is the best system for training a fighter. This kind of wrestling, along with everything else, primarily develops the wrist strength, which is necessary not only even when fighting with bare hands. The skillful use of a sword or other cold weapon truthfully depended on the strength of the wrist.

„Tsalkhela” Chidaoba (Wrestling with one hand)

Wrestling, as the name itself suggests, is performed with one hand. Similar to „Majura”, it is prohibited to use the second hand in it, and the wrestler, except at the moment of falling down, has no right to bring it forward. „Tsalkhela” (using only one hand) applies to all the tactics that are usually

used in wrestling, but since it is performed with one hand, they have acquired a peculiar nuance.

One of the tactics of „Tsalkhela” (using only one hand) has been preserved - a century-old photo of „Chakhtomili Kisruli”. In this type of wrestling, as usual, „Mogverdebi” (thigh throws) „Tseruli” (thumb wrestling), „Kisruli” (a wrestling trick, when the attacker lifts the opponent on his back and turns over the shoulder with his neck), „Chakhvevebi” (wrestling by clinging) and others were accepted.



In addition, „Pekhdabijebebi” (the attacker places one of his feet on the opponent's corresponding foot), „Mokintsvebi” (a neck wrench, where the wrestler faces a bent-over opponent), a wrestling type, when the attacker sets against the opponent with the forearms” and „Chatekhvebi” (break-off techniques) were used.

„Mkerdaoba” (Wrestling without hands)

This fight, with its tactics and rules of fighting, is fundamentally different from the types described above and, in general, from all of the Georgian bouts.

In this type of wrestling, both hands are placed behind the back, and, therefore, any passing over the hand from the front is excluded, but the wrestler, if he gets a favorable situation, can put his hands behind his back and perform a corresponding trick move. It is also allowed to hit the opponent's chest or stomach with the head or shoulder to prepare the trick move.

Another peculiarity of this wrestling is that almost all trick moves are performed with the feet.

Armless or one-handed wrestling forces the fighter to focus more on performing trick moves using his legs and body. This improves his stability and fighting ability. Thus, these bouts still have the great practical value today.

Krioba (Boxing)

The ancient origin of the Georgian boxing is also confirmed by archeological materials – a fragment of the statue dating back to the 1st-2nd centuries (BC) was found in Vani's Nakalakevi - the right hand of a boxer with a leather glove, metal buckles and a strap wrapped around the wrist.

This is not surprising, because boxing was the most important military discipline from then on. Subsequently, many historical and literary sources refer to the boxing-related subject.

The popularity of boxing in our country is indicated by the diversity of its types: boxing gloves; „Mushtaoba”, combat ring („Satiteni” – one-finger-, two-finger-, three-finger-combat ring), fist-boxing in a tree, a group fist-boxing in water, kicking (using only the legs), kicking (fighting without using the hands), „Laghami boxing”, „Livishdiel” (kicking; footwork – using the legs and feet, while fighting) and „Lijgubil” (fighting with the hands), „Saldasti boxing” (fighting with a short stick), „mixing boxing” (this type of boxing includes leg kicks and wresrtling elements), a cityish „fist-boxing”, „Khridoli boxing” (using only one hand) and others.

The chronicler gave us an interesting information about the use of boxing in martial arts. In the battle of Marabda, „Mr. Teimuraz broke every weapon and there was nothing left; he also smashed the rings by punching.”

Researcher V. Sidamonidze says that „about five thousand men, if not more, participated in the team boxing, which was more common in our country.”

Before imposing the ban on boxing by the Russians, a large-scale boxing tournament was held (using wooden swords and catapults) in Tbilisi, around the years 1802-1806, under the leadership of the Vicehent Pavle Tsitsishvili.

Fist-boxing remained in Tbilisi until the end of the 19th century as one of the most favorite entertainments of the townspeople, and if earlier it was held only during the cheese week, it gradually became a crowning event on all holidays,



where people gathered in large numbers and everyone could try their skills. Boxing had a lot of spectators.

They boxed a bare-chested without a hat, picking a hem of the chokha (Georgian national attire) up; they were wearing just a Caucasian tunic [the so-called akhalukhi]. The referee sitting on a horse led the fight. Boxers stood in several rows according to their age and strength. As I. Grishashvili describes, minors started boxing, then juveniles joined, and finally married men tried their mastery.



Often the fans also continued with hand-to-hand fighting. At that time, wooden swords were also used. Sometimes everything they could get their hands on was involved in the fighting. After finishing the boxing, the participants used to go to the bathhouse and relieve their bruised bodies with a scrubbing mitten.

After one of these clashes, the Russian authorities banned this spectacle, which resulted in great dissatisfaction of the people. The petition of the Tsar's Deputy Vorontsov requesting the cancellation of this ban was preserved, where he writes:

„It was amusing and entertaining for everyone, starting with the royal family and the nobility, ending with the ordinary people... The complete ban of fist-boxing, not only inside the city, but also beyond its borders, will discourage the local population, since the practice of their favorite pastime has been passed down from father to son unchanged and it is so closely related to the character and heroism of the people, which is so characteristic of the Georgians and makes them capable of fighting to protect their borders”.

Khanjlaoba (Fighting with a Dagger)

In the Early Bronze Age, one of the first metal items that our ancestor created was as big carving tool as possible. About five thousand years have passed since then.

The material we found is mainly based on the culture and tradition of the use of a dagger preserved in the Caucasus and mountainous regions of Georgia. In Georgia, there were many local dagger fighting schools.

These courses differ from each other mainly by the rules of the bout, i.e. the prerequisite of the restriction, which includes: fight with restriction of gaze (blindfolded), fight by limiting the use of hands and weapons (with one dagger, two daggers, one dagger against two opponents, etc.).

The similarity of the types found is determined by the shape of weapons and ritual customs, which have reached us almost unchanged after the distant thousands of years.

The varieties discovered can be conditionally divided into two main groups - blindfolded and sighted dagger fighting [Khanj]laoba].

A blindfolded dagger fighting, in turn, is divided into two major types:

- a fighting with a dagger in one hand, a „Sachkhrialo” (one of the fighters is blindfolded, while the other has to make a sound in order to be found) or two daggers in the other;
- The fight of a blindfolded person with a sighted one (the tradition also preserves the fighting of the blindfolded person with bare hands or with a head-gear in one hand against the sighted, armed opponent).

A blindfolded dagger fighting was known differently in almost all parts of Georgia and, in addition to special training, it also represented a kind of duel. Due to the difficulty of the fighting, they would say about the winner: „He is an honest man and God protects him”.

It is true that such a bout was very dangerous, but a struggler who could win several such fights was ready not only for combat, but also for the most difficult intelligence task.

Farikaoba (Fencing with shield and sword)



While working on this material, academician Vasil Elashvili's research extended with those techniques that for some reason could not be included in his early works.

Additionally, the research was supplemented by information obtained in the expeditions, preserved in the memory of the elderly, and today, based on the present material, it can be safely said that the basic outline of the Khevsurian fencing and fighting techniques have been gathered, which is enough for the

restoration of this type of fighting.

Unfortunately, it is still not possible to distinguish family and lineage schools separately, but we think that the work carried out is a step forward in this most unfairly forgotten field.

The Khevsurian fencing is a unique type in many ways, which makes us think that it is of indigenous Georgian origin.

On the basis of the historical sources, a fencing school with a distinctive technique was found in Mtianeti already at the beginning of our era.

Corresponding to the source, even the omniscient Commander of the Romans, Pompeius, was fascinated by the fencing mastery of the Pshav-Khevsurians.

The Khevsurians trained their sons militarily from the age of five. The training structure remained almost unchanged in the mountains until the 50s of our century, which allowed us to become aware of it relatively fully.

Juveniles were mostly trained in the gathering place, where the future warrior was demonstrating what he had learned at home from his forefathers before strict and impartial elders.



As it is characteristic of a true master, a Khevsurian used the terrain, as well as all the objects at his disposal in battle. So, on the one hand, we can consider it a clearly organized type, and on the other hand, a free style of fighting, which, stemming from the fighter's experience and circumstances, often is completely developed in an unexpected manner.



This kind of fighting is so sophisticated that it completely eliminates the possibility of serious damage. Fencing is carried out on the no retreat principle.

Generally, from the very beginning of the training, the Khevsurians made a habit of making one minor resist two rivals in order to consequently become adapted to the superiority of the enemy.

The main groups of tactics of this type include carrying out attacks in advance and repulsion and counterattack. As all the masters known to us state, while beginning an assault, the fencing practice was considered to develop more proficiency in the presence of the opponent and then only to repel the attacks.



Moreover, the smaller the wound depth, the more it was valued. And the grandmasters, in a violent battle, shaved the hair from the opponent's arm with a sword.

In this extremely sophisticated swordsmanship, the saving of strength was also highly valued - „frequent swinging of the sword indicates a fighter's cowardice,” - the masters taught the novices.



Generally, training used to start with familiar weapons. When a young fighter showed proper skill, he was given his father's sword and dagger in a special manner, and he became the protector and breadwinner of the family.



This technique, modified to some extent, can be found in all sword fighting and fencing schools. The differences are basically derived from the shape and origin of the weapon, as well as the dynamics of the tactics and the customs of the region.

Over the centuries, a large supply of highly developed techniques allowed a warrior to deal with a numerically superior enemy and emerge victorious from the battle in most cases.

Satiteni (Combat rings)



A name „Satite” – combat ring - combines small steel ring-like beating and slashing weapons of various kinds and prickers. This weapon was mostly spread in the mountainous regions of Eastern Georgia.

Over the last century, it was slowly falling out of use, and, nowadays, the techniques and methods of using the combat rings are preserved only in Khevsureti, and only too in the memory of extremely elderly people.

A Khevsurian combat ring to be put on one finger is quite a ferocious weapon in a close combat. A fighter chose it according to his own handwriting and skill, and perhaps this circumstance should explain its diversity.

In Khevsureti alone, more than 12 varieties of combat rings have been found. Folk poetry also evidences its popularity - „Put a combat ring on his hand, a combat ring cut with a long riffler, move it up and down, so that scar or cut his head and face.”



In contrast to the Khevsurian, we find „sajjgvela” to be put on two fingers (a forefinger and middle finger) in Mtiuleti. If the Khevsurian combat ring is

extremely unrestricted and designed for arc movement, „Sajjigvela”, on the contrary, mostly „Jija”, was used in linear kicks.

The Tushetian four-finger combat rings are enhancing the interest, as well. One of the Khevsurian combat rings is also called „Ghajia”, but unlike the Tushetian one, it is designed for placing on one finger. Four-finger combat rings can be seen in Guria, too.

In addition to its specially characteristic tactics, a combat ring also allows for the possibilities of many boxing punches, as well as wrestling grip and flinging down. It is characteristic of combat rings to carry out a quick circular or arc-shaped attack, which makes the latter very agile, tense and unexpected.

Combat rings are found almost throughout the Caucasus. In its time, it must have been used in some kind of cultic ritual, which is clearly indicated by their [some of them] shape.

Lelo Burti (Traditional Team Game)

The team game Lelo Burti (a prehistoric ritual team ball game) is particularly noteworthy among the national types of sports; it has been preserved to this day in Western Georgia, particularly, in Guria.

Not any great holiday would pass without playing this game. The middle-aged people and even the elderly themselves actively participated in it.

The name „Lelo” itself may be derived from the Sumerian God of the Sun „Lil” (remember the Svan „Lileo”, as well) and be an ancient ritual dedicated to the God of the Sun.

As the newspaper „Droeba” (#74, 1882) reports: „1500 infantrymen and 500 horsemen participated in the Lelo Burti competition held in Kulashi under the leadership of the Mikeladzes themselves... Of course, spectators would have been ten times more”.



Tskhenosnoba (Equestrianism)



Our ancestor was one of the first to help domesticate the horse. A small-sized petroglyph (found in Patara Khrami) depicting a herd of horses dates back to earlier than 100 centuries. In Georgia, the wild horse (*Equus ferus*) is found in the cultural strata of the Upper Paleolithic former settlement, while in the Bronze Age (III millennium BC) - it is already domesticated and, therefore, has a great influence on the development of society and, in particular, military affairs. Individual elements of horse harness (bridles, spurs were discovered), as well as cult statues and various jewelry belong to the same period of time.

As Ivane Javakhishvili said - „the Tubals were famous for the best breed of tall horses: according to Ashurbanipal, the Tabals should have to pay tall horses bred in their country in compensation”. Such interest of the Tubals expressed towards the tall horses makes us believe that no one would discard this breed for extinction and disappearance. At the same time, the researchers suggest that the most beautiful breed of horse was called Arabian later, since the breed is older than the term „Arab”. So, it is quite possible that the ancestor of the Arabian horse was the „praiseworthy tall horses of the Tubals”.

A 3400-year-old Hittite text written by Kikkuli the Mitannian describes the horse training techniques, and also tells about equestrian activities and war chariots. The Kikkuli Text reads that the horse training lasted seven months. Kikkuli is Mitannian, and the sources confirm that the Hittites recognized the priority of the Mitanni in equestrian affairs. According to researchers, the country of the Hurrians named Mitanni (the same as Maittani, Subartu in Sumerian) is Matiene mentioned by Herodotus.

And one of the colors of horses named by Kikkuli - „Babru” - can be found in the Georgian vocabulary even today (for brownish, straw-coloured).

As for the Hittite three-person (one charioteer, two fighters) war chariot, it exactly matches the one described by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani in the definition of „samdgomi”. Sulkhan-Saba mentions a charioteer as Iniakhi (according to the Greek sources, the Georgian tribe was called Heniokhs because of the charioteer ancestors).

The 9th century (BC) Urartian stone stela informs us: „By the power of the deity Khaldi, Minua son of ISpuini says: From this place the horse named Artsibi (eagle), ridden by Minua leapt 22 cubits” (11,20 m.). (modern record 11,40 m.).

Apollonius of Rhodes (3rd century BC) writes in the *Argonautica*: „the Valley of Ares was located in front of the city (Kutaisi is meant) and was slightly away from the river bank. A vast arena was laid out on the Valley of Ares and was surrounded by a railing. The Colchians used to organize battles and equestrian competitions here in order to commemorate brilliant heroes.

Let's recall here the facts given by Pausanias in his *Description of Hellas*: „The ancient sanctity in Sparta is the sanctuary of Ares with a statue, which the Dioscuri were said to have brought from Colchis.”

In addition to the excellent skill of using a sword and spear, a cavalryman of Alexander the King of Kakheti had to be able to sit on a horse without using his hand, dismount while moving, ride a horse without putting a bridle on it and gallop it uphill and downhill. Simultaneously, he had to be capable of caring for and even treating a horse.

As it is known, *The Book of Horse Knowledge and Medical Treatment* was penned by the Georgian King Vakhtang VI. The fact that this kind of manual is written directly by the king and it is unprecedented in itself and once again confirms the great importance of the horse and the culture associated with it for our existence.

In conclusion, let's recall an excerpt from the press sheets of the time about the famous group of the Gurian horse riders:

„The world-famous horseman and popular William Frederick Cody - known as Buffalo Bill, first showed

America the Gurian horse riders as iconic, unfamiliar and genius players; After the horse race, the Gurians represented fighting with axelike weapons, mounted archery, galloping, Marula (a long-distance horse-race) and Tarchia (a game on horseback).”



Equestrian Types

According to Sul Khan-Saba, the general name of equestrian types is „tkereba”, which is interpreted as a horse’s prancing.

Marula [a long-distance horse-race] is the oldest type of equestrian activities. The horse participating in this race was specially trained in endurance, as it had to cover a distance of about 30 kilometers. In terms of endurance, Georgian horse breeds are really outstanding. Even at the age of 25, they are capable of withstanding a lot of load (mainly, it refers to the Magrelian and Tushetian horse breeds).



Tarchia [a game on horseback] is a type of equestrian activities closely related to Marula. The main task of the game is to chase and seize a prey (a headscarf, in this case) of an opponent.

Marula-like another type of equestrian activities spread in the eastern highlands is **descending the mountains**. Despite the simplicity of the rule, it is one of the

most difficult types – a horseman rides a horse without a bridle and bit, only using a rope attached to its belly, and while giving a signal, he gallops it down a steep slope.

Isindi (jousting) is also interesting and spectacular type of an equestrian sport, which is more like a military style. Naturally, this game consists of a large number of fighting elements (for example, catching a spear thrown at the back into the air while galloping and counterattacking).



Kabakhi (A mounted archery) is one of the oldest games. At the same time, it is the greatest military exercise. Based on the sources that have come down to us, aside from the bow and arrow, this form of an equestrian sport also included a short jousting lance (isindi).

“Observe this charming type of horsemanship, how well they ride their horses. This is an art of horsemanship rarely achieved. It requires the coexistence of manoeuvring and being mindful [of the danger],” - the Italian traveler Christopher Castelli made an inscription on the painting depicting the „mounted archery”.



In „**Mkerdaoba**”, a type of the Georgian wrestling - the task of a competitor is to kick an opponent's horse out of the designated area at a playing field. The content itself shows that it is a purely martial training. The aged King Luarsab, left unarmed, fought just in that way in the Battle of Garisi.

Mokneva (Flicking) is the art of halting sharply a galloping horse from a high speed. It is clear that this type is a combat training and despite the simplicity of the rule, it is extremely difficult to perform and spectacularly interesting.

Chekhva (Fighting with axelike weapons) - this type is also for a combat training purpose and serves to train a rider in sword cutting. Some riders performed a combat activity of this type using two swords, as well. The competitor's task is to cut various objects (clay vessels, a bundle of rods, tree trunks, etc.) off prepared for an encounter on the way by twisting a dagger in the wrist while riding a galloping horse.



Skhapi (Dressage) means a horse dancing with a man riding on its back and shows the high skill of horse training.

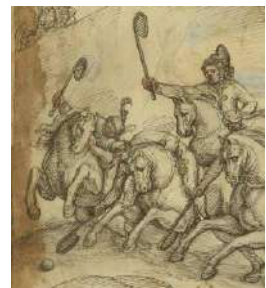


An interesting type of horse training is **Tanasoba**, when a rider is required to perform various difficult gymnastic elements on a galloping horse.

Mipatizheba - One of the types of equestrian competition with the participation of women is closely related to it, but it must be definitely separated. In this case, the female rider calls out the man and offers him to repeat the exercise performed by her. This type of sport in itself speaks of the highly-developed military skills of women.

Among the equestrian types, horseball stands out in terms of spectacularness, which is the general name of the four types restored today.

Tskhenburti - A prehistoric ball game with the participation of horsemen, which also corresponds to these types of sports games, is described in the chapter Team play. Common categories were Sadgini (determining the physical capabilities of a juvenile in the population, where he grows up, and showing his professionalism in equestrian activities), Kidiri



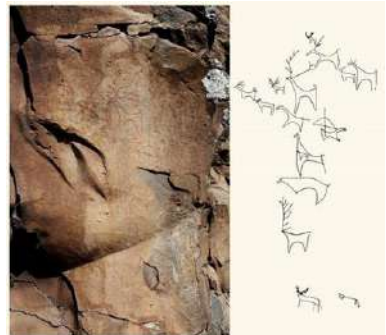
(Kuduroba), Kartashi Lakapi, a short-course horse race (ritual horse race held in honor of the god of war Kopala), crossing the sign of the boundary (a competition is accompanied by horsemen, who try to enter a certain territory; this locality is defended by women equipped with sticks, trying to scare the horses so that they cannot cross the boundary), seizing a prize, steeplechase, equestrian activities, lichazh (Svan) and others.



Nadiroba da Garisoba (Hunting and survival in natural and extreme conditions)

Hunting, in addition to its daily purpose, was one of the most important components of physical education from then on, and this is confirmed by many sources.

One part of the Prehistoric rock art of Trialeti (the Little Khram/Patara Khram Valley) depicts hunting scenes. In all paintings, it is emphasized that the main thing in hunting does not refer to chasing and catching game animals or the hunting weapon itself, but the pre-hunting ritual.



The key figure of the composition is a hunter holding a switch - a ritual weapon of that time - in his hand, while a bow and arrow is depicted nearby.

In terms of hunting, the portrayals of a deer and a horse caught in a net are also very attractive, which evidences that these totemic animals are possessed by the hunter and indicates the emergence of the function of the priest in the hunter. The ancient petroglyph belongs to the Mesolithic Period (XII-IX millennia BC)

Arcangelo Lambert („Description of Samegrelo”) tells us that hunting is „the major activity of the Megrelians and it is carried out by the Megrelians of every rank and position...” and there he cites a Megrelian proverb - „Happy is the one who has a good horse, a better dog and the best sparrow-hawk”.

According to Ivane Javakhishvili (The Economic History of Georgia), a hunting duty was related to the military service: - „Hunting had not only the character of a private entertainment, but it was also a substitute for the military training and represented a military obligation like a duty”.

„King Alexander II of Imereti subjugated the Dadianis and the Gurielis and other chieftains for serving them in the battles, hunting and summoning them upon the order of the king,” - Vakhushti Batonishvili mentions.

Vakhtang VI donated three villages to the Monastery of St. John the Baptist spread over the Gareja semi-desert, but - „they were engaged with the campaign and hunting” - that is, we did not provide them with the full serfdom, because „the army is the solidity of the country and the hunt is a teacher of the campaign”.



We can consider a similar example in Imereti: King Bagrat gave the Navenakhevi village to Gelati and said: „you are untouchable and free, however, never reject to hunt together with me. In ancient times, the New Year's Day appeared to inspire bravery, and a high rank was attached to [a warrior] on this holiday, as if it were the day of the battle or a military training... Hunting was the soul and heart of the New Year's Day.

Such a spirit reigned in Georgia just a century and a half ago.

„I think there is no other region that can be compared to the Caucasus, where hunting is so developed and where it is represented in so many amazing varieties, starting with the simplest and ending with the most perfect methods”, - the author of the Caucasian Huntings, printed in 1900, A. Kalinovsky says with amazement in the introduction to the book.



This topic is also a separate and special subject of study. Simultaneously, since no significant break has taken place in the hunting culture, it is likely that many interesting materials can still be found.

Appendix

In 1940, Ivane Javakishvili wrote in the article entitled „About the Study of the Georgian National Sports”: „The Georgian sports have a long and rich history. Let's study the individual types of the national sports developed by our ancestors over many hundreds of years.

This is undoubtedly a useful and honorable work. It will contribute to the physical and mental development of our youth, cultivate a strong determination, make them patient and courageous.“

The military readiness, army training and improvement of martial arts have always been the cornerstone (based on its historical experience) of our existence.

Obviously, the Georgian martial art should not be considered as the knowledge gained behind closed doors. Humans are most similar to people of other nationalities in terms of the structure, and the fights they create are quite similar.

Moreover, martial art belongs to that field of knowledge, which should protect and save the connoisseur's life (be it a person, a family or a country), and thus,

it boldly applies the progressive experience (all the skills that have been achieved in this direction) to the other fields.

In addition to the behavior, this refers to the weapons and armament obtained in the form of the loot, and the ancestor, obviously, did not refuse to use them due to its non-Georgian origin (it is known that the population of poor areas had to be practised at using agricultural tools in combat activities due to the dearness of military weapons).

We found the materials mainly through carrying out the ethnographic research and, in a parallel manner, we obtained the respective information in libraries, archives, foundations and museums.

The research process continues, as it is still possible to timely discover and save dozens of tactics, exercises, stories or other knowledge.

Such can be a legend, a poem, a folk game, a custom, a name, a tactic, exercises, a description of a weapon, vocational competence, clothing and equipment, treatment and others.



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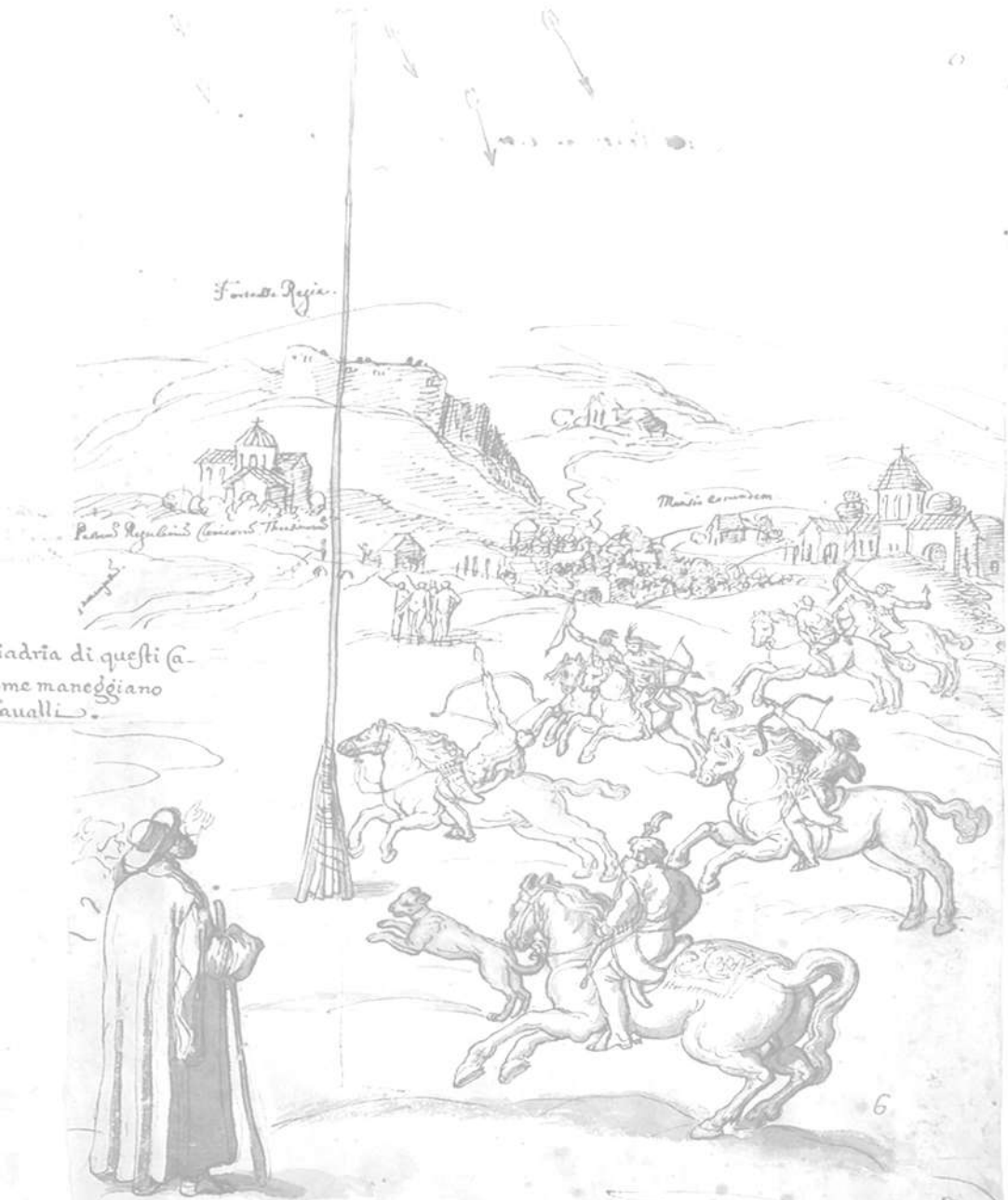
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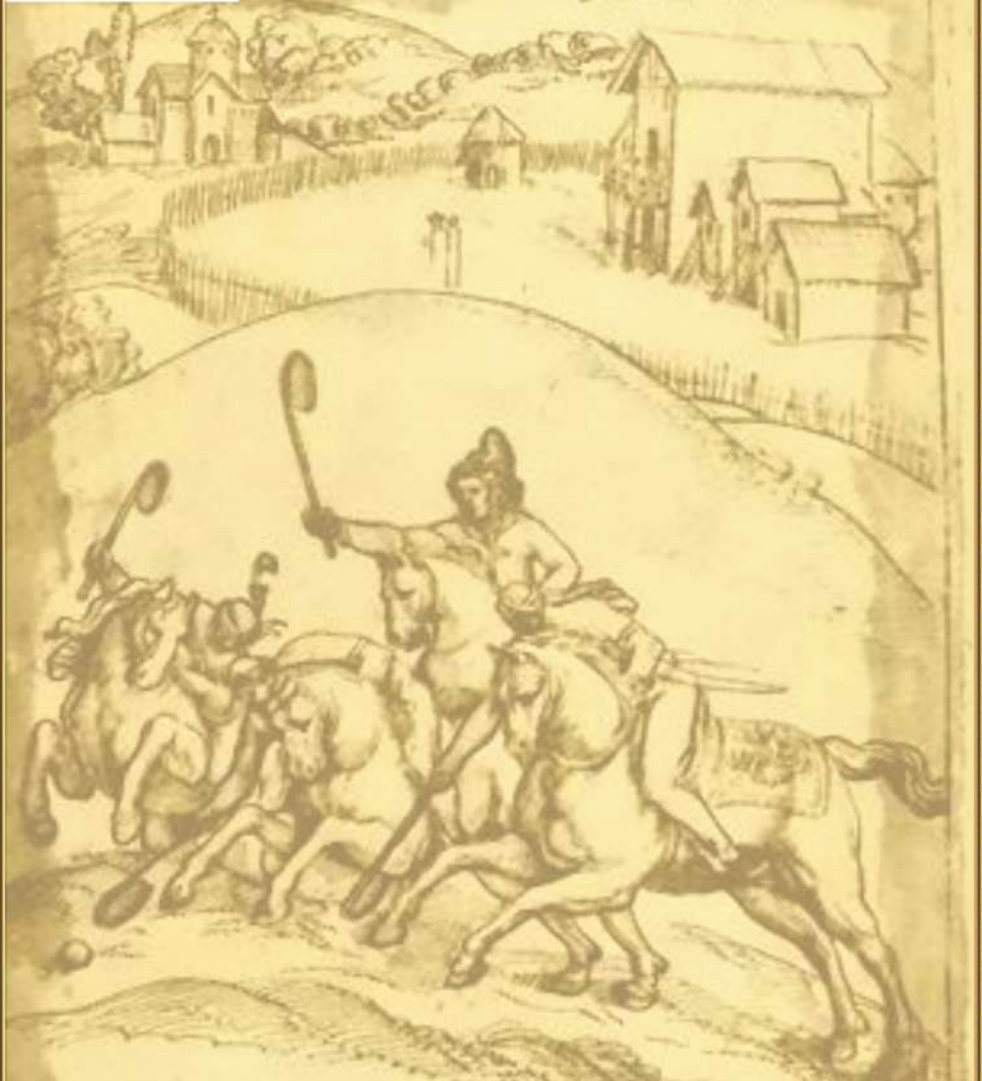
*Hinc spectantur Jovis Regis cum Levitastibus Nobilibus Præcipuis iustitiam 208. etiam ad signum in hoc
 primo, ubi qd. Petra Regalis: qui locus appellatur Cadis.*

De Ludis.
 Equites ludentes hoc pacto ut aspicias rarissimi sciunt se ipsos gerere requiritur agili-
 tas quedam cum cerio determinato impulsu spirituum itaut si plus aut minores ponit-
 tur spiritus non bene ludunt sepeq. quasi novi fetontes cadunt in terrâ ab altisequis
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