

## Armaziskhevi

After the tombs of the high hierarchs of the Kartli kingdom and Greco-Aramaic inscriptions were discovered during the archaeological excavations of Armaziskhevi at the end of the 30s of the 20th century, scientific interest in the socio-political institute of Pityakhsh did not slow down. Many researchers tried to clarify its essence, Armaziskhevi's opinion was expressed in many scientific works. In general, about the Pityakhsh Institute.



## Armaziskhevi

Asparug is a key figure in Armaziskhevi's Pithiakshsh house. All the famous people of Armaziskhevi Necropolis revolve around him, and Asparug is the key to all of them, so to speak. Karpak is buried next to her, who, obviously, cannot be considered her husband because

of the inscription "Zevakh My life". This woman is buried next to Asparug. Therefore, it is clear. She is a member of his family, that is, we can consider her a daughter.

Karpak is wife of Zevakh. This Zevakh must be the father of Seraphita, that is, Seraphita is the grandson of Asparug and the daughter of Karpak.



Tombs of Asparug and Rarpak

On the other hand, Seraphita's father Zevakh is in a small pitiakhs. Due to the lack of proper facts, we do not know where this Zevakh is buried. There is no grave of him in Armaziskhevi. That is, we can think that small pitiakhshis had their own necropolis? So why is his wife buried next to her father and not him?

Even more confusing is the fact of Seraphita's burial in Armaziskhevi. After all, she is a married woman, and her husband is Yodmangan, the epitropos, who is higher in rank than the Pityakhshes.

There can be only two assumptions here: both Karpak and Seraphita died during Asparug's lifetime, and Asparug took care to bury his son and grandson in the ancestral cemetery, or, simply, it was the custom of the Kartli aristocracy at that time to bury women in their father's estate. It is true that Zevakh is also in Pythiach, but it seems to be of lesser Pythiakshsh rank.

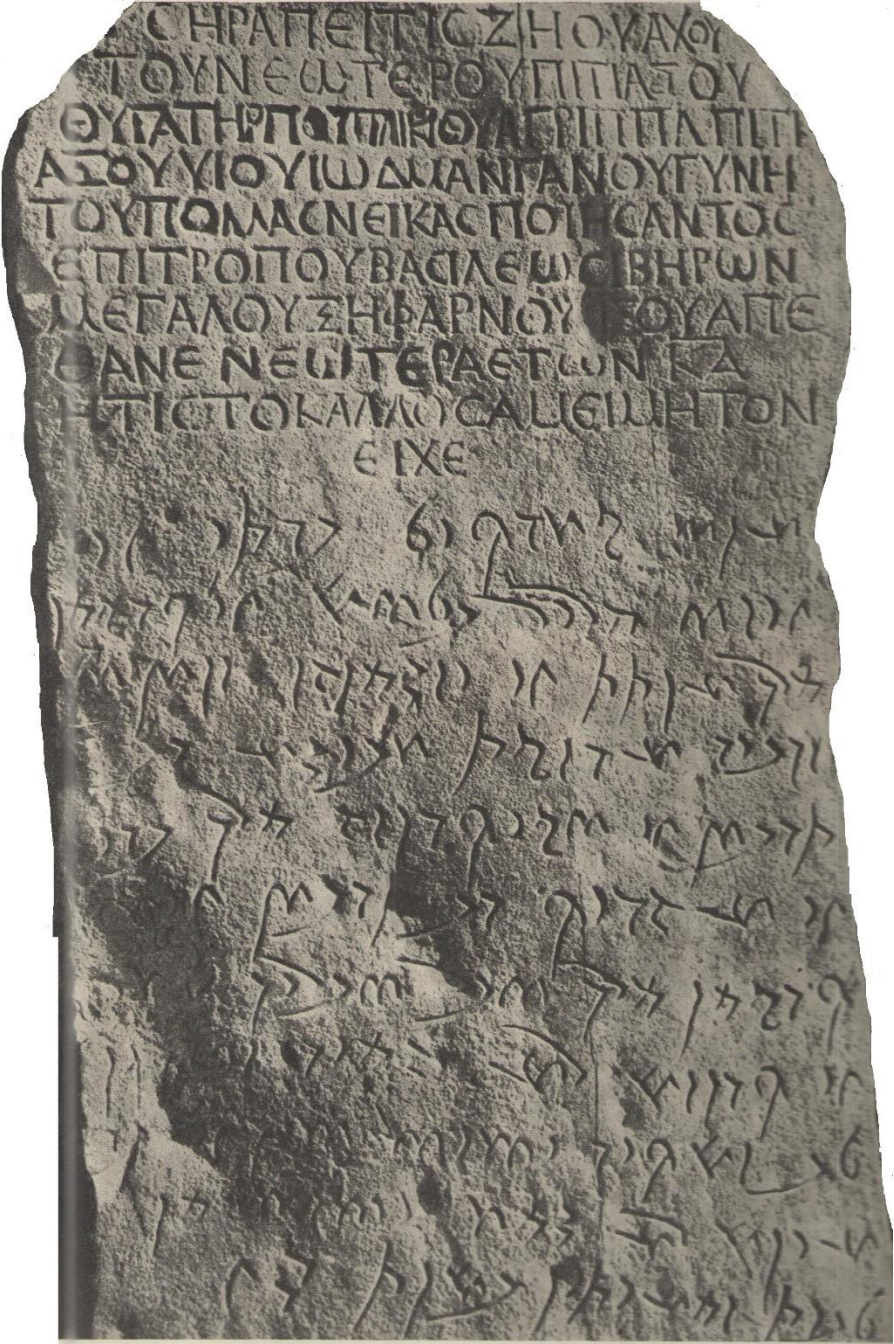


Zevakh and Karpak

The second pitiakhsh there is Bersuma on this cemetery. He is probably in the next pithiakshsh of Asparug and his son, and Asparug himself is the son of Sharagas.

Academian G. Tsereteli also did not rule out the ownership of Zevakh mentioned in the Karpak golden buckle inscription and Zevakh of the Seraphita inscription. However, he did not share

the assumption about the identity of this Zevakh and the Zevakh mentioned on the Sharagas Stela due to the one centuries-old difference between them.



Stela of Seraphita

By declaring the Asparug tomb as the Javakhi tomb, A. Apakidze carved out the Pityakhsh dynasty of Kartli, the same as the Javakh dynasty, which looks like this: Sharagas' father is Javakh, Sharagas's nephew is Javakh Jr., and Asparug's granddaughter is Seraphita.

According to A. Apakidze's opinion, the Sharagas stela should have been erected in Mtskheta. A similar opinion was repeated by G. Abramishvili and he considered the stela to be a memorial of the Iberian king Mithridates II.

However, it seems more plausible that the stele of Sharagas, as well as the epitaph of Seraphita, stood at the necropolis of Armaziskhevi from the beginning, and it was not brought here from anywhere.

Taking into account the fact that the stelae are embedded in it, the archaeologists who discovered the monument, consider the fourth tomb to be the tomb of Pityakhsh. The tomb has been completely looted and not a single artifact has been found in it.

Most likely, he should have been buried in the second tomb in Pityakhsh. From this point of view, the presence of a silver pinak with a portrait of a Sasanian noble in this tomb is important and decisive. The special attention of researchers is drawn to the pinak inscription written in the Middle Persian (Phalauri) language. According to G. Tsereteli's translation, the mentioned inscription looks like this: "The divine (Papak?) son in the pitiakh of the divine Ardashir". According to G. Tsereteli, the noble Sasanian depicted in the center of the pinak should be Ardashir I., the founder of this dynasty.

We get a picture according to which there are a total of three pitiakhshes known in Armaziskhevi Samarovan, and their tombs are I, II and III tombs, and the chronological order of the pitiakhshes will be as follows: Asparug (Tomb I), Bersuma (Tomb III) and Papak's son (Tomb II). The heyday of Armaziskhevi pityakhshs is defined as the second half of the 1st century - the second half of the 3rd century.

It is true that the graves of Sharagas and his father - Pityakhsh Zevakh, who worked in the 1st century, have not been traced, but there is no doubt that Zevakh belongs to the first Pityakh of the Pityakhsh family of Armaziskhevi. Therefore, the sequence of Armaziskhevi pityakhshes will take the following form: Zevakh-Sharagas-Asparug-Bersuma-Papak"s son. So, a total of five pityakhshs are buried in Armaziskhevi, which is quite an acceptable event for two centuries. The tombs of three of them are known, and Zevakh and Sharagas may have been buried in two of the looted tombs.

The buildings of Armaziskhevi and the tombs of pityakhshs are not contemporaneous, and the buildings were used for burials at a time when the buildings were already destroyed. Therefore, by the second half of the II century, the existing buildings here were already destroyed, and the researcher (K. Khimshiashvili) determines the date of their existence as AD. year At the beginning of the 1st century and the beginning of the 2nd century.

The mentioned opinion of K. Khimshiashvili is the closest to the truth. Leaving aside the architectural context, it is simply unimaginable or very difficult to imagine that a residence of pityakhshs, a bathhouse and a cemetery functioned simultaneously in such a small area at the same time. If there is no chronological inconsistency, from the sanitary-hygienic point of view, the establishment of a cemetery just a few meters from the residence and the bath is very questionable. Such a practice is unknown for the Hellenistic-Roman era and, obviously, Armaziskhevi cannot be an exception from this point of view.

The mentioned opinion of K. Khimshiashvili can be clarified considering the data of the second monument of Shida Kartli - Dedoflis Gori. The date of the destruction of the buildings of Armaziskhevi and the causes of this event are taken into account.

It is mentioned in the scientific literature that the Palace of Dedoflis Gors must have been destroyed in AD. As a result of a strong earthquake at the end of the 1st century (Iu. Gagoshidze).

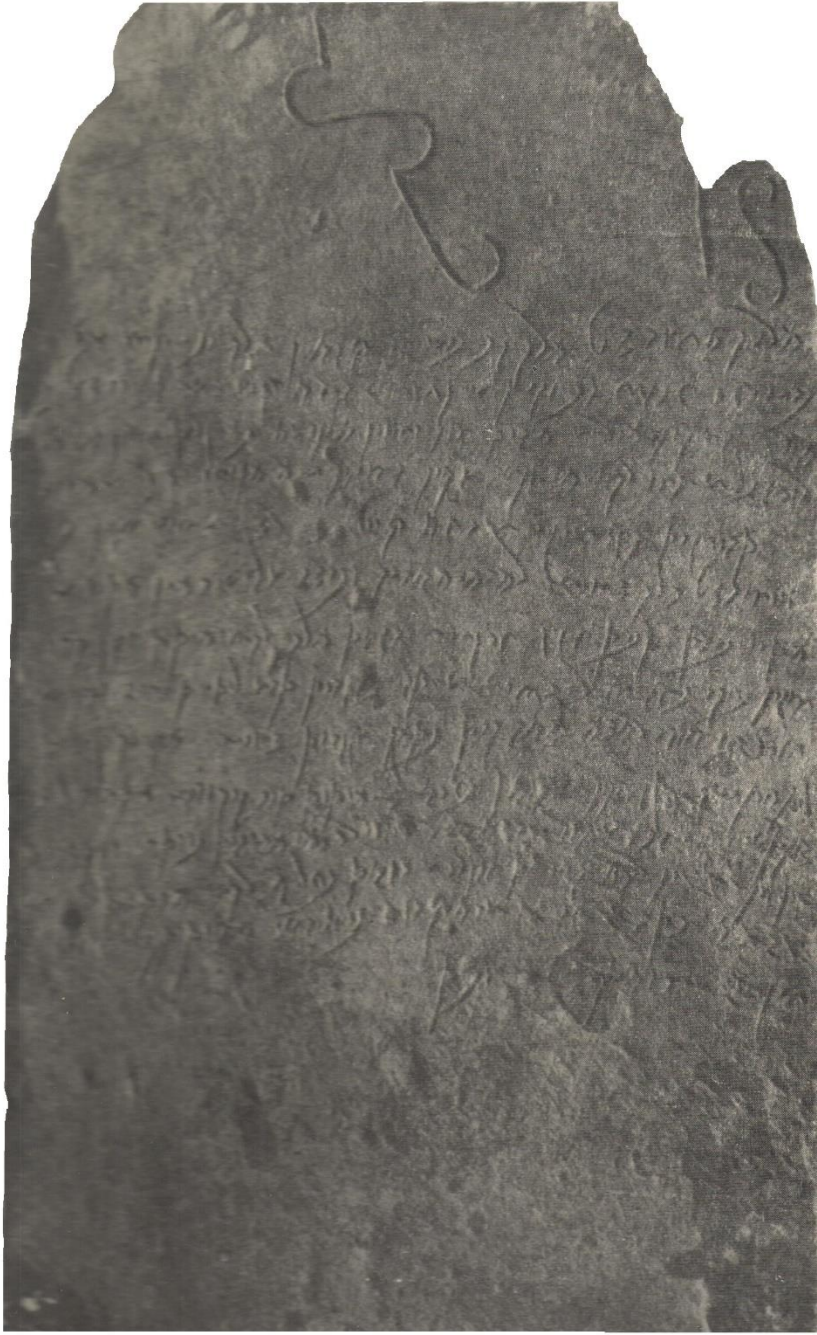
Written sources do not confirm any great destruction or catastrophe in the Kartli kingdom of this era, which would be related to military actions. This is the age of the great kings Parsman I and Mithridates II.

From the inscription on the stele of Sharagas found in Armaziskhev, it is clear that the kings of Kartli of this period are "winners of many victories". Therefore, I. Gagoshidze is quite right when he connects the destruction of the Dedoflis Gora's palace not to military actions, but to the earthquake.

Apparently, the mentioned seismic event was so strong and destroyed the Dedopli Gori Palace that no one thought about its restoration. It cannot be ruled out that the aforementioned earthquake caused the destruction of the buildings of Armaziskhevi. If this assumption is correct, then everything falls into place, the date proposed by K. Khimshiashvili related to the buildings becomes more accurate, and we are given the opportunity to think that the buildings of Armaziskhevi were functioning from the end of the 1st century BC Until the 70s of the 1st century AD.

Here we can also think that in the famous Vespasian inscription found in Mtskheta in 1867, it was about strengthening the walls damaged by this earthquake. If this is true, then it turns out that the strong earthquake in Kartli, which destroyed the residences of Dedoflis Gora and Armaziskhevi and thoroughly damaged the retaining walls of Mtskheta, must have occurred in 70s AD , no later than 75 years old AD .

The mentioned area of Armaziskhevi was from the beginning the land belonging to the pityakhshes, where at the end of the 1st century BC - AD Until the 70s of the 1st century, their residence, bathhouse and other auxiliary buildings were functioning; As a result of the earthquake, almost all buildings were destroyed and they have not been rebuilt; From the end of the 1st century AD, it has been the resting place of the Pityakhshses and their family members, and the location of their residence in the 2nd-3rd centuries is still unknown.



Sharags Stela