

Tedo Dundua

Professor,
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia

Saints on Money: Case of Georgia*

For Christian monarchies and empires there were Christ, Saints and rulers to justify a legitimacy of a coin. Christian symbols are still there on modern money. The pattern suits many countries, Georgia among.

Coins with the effigy of Christ.

Silver coins of queen Rusudan (1223-1245) with the effigy of **Christ**.

Obverse: Bust of Christ facing, wearing nimbus, pallium and colobium and raising right hand in benediction, holds ornamented book of Gospels in left hand. Greek legend: IC XC. Marginal Georgian Asomtavruli legend: “in the name of God, was struck in the K’oronikon 450 (=1230)”.

Reverse: In the center of an ornamented frame three Asomtavruli letters for the name of Rusudan. Marginal Arabic legend – “Queen of the Queens, glory of the world and faith, Rusudan, daughter of Tamar, champion of the Messiah”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=49>

* https://www.academia.edu/43855203/Saints_on_Money_Case_of_Georgia

Coins with the effigy of St. Virgin.

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – Bagrat IV's (1027-1072) first emission (1055).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Greek legend – “the Holy Virgin”, close to nimbus, in different ways.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt Bagrat, king of the Abkhassians” (i.e. the Western Georgia). In the center – “and Nobilissimos”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=41>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – Bagrat IV's second emission (1068/69).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Greek legend – “the Holy Virgin”, close to nimbus, in different ways.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt Bagrat, king of the Abkhassians” (i.e. the Western Georgia). In the center – “and Sebastos”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=42>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – Giorgi II's (1072-1089) first emission (1073).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Distorted Greek abbreviation for “the Holy Virgin”, to l. and r. from nimbus. Greek legend – MP ΘΥ – appears sometime.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt Giorgi, king of the Abkhazians and the Kartvelians” (i.e. the Eastern and Southern Georgia). In the center – “and Nobilissimos”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=43>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – Giorgi II's second emission (1074).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Distorted Greek abbreviation for “the Holy Virgin”, to l. and r. from nimbus. Some specimens have different legend – “St. Virgin Blachernitissa”.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt Giorgi, king of the Abkhazians and the Kartvelians”. In the center – “and Sebastos”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=44>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – Giorgi II's third emission (1075-1089).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Distorted Greek abbreviation for “the Holy Virgin”, to l. and r. from nimbus. Some specimens have different legend – “St. Virgin Blachernitissa”.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt Giorgi, king of the Abkhazians and the Kartvelians”. In the center – “and Caesaros”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=45>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – David IV's (1089-1125) first emission (1089-1099).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Greek legend – MP – ΘY, to l. and r. from nimbus.

Reverse: Marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt David, the king of the Abkhazians”. In the center – “and Sebastos”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=46>

St. Virgin Blachernitissa type coins – David IV's second emission (1089-1099).

Obverse: Facing bust of Virgin orans, nimbate, wearing pallium and maphorium. Greek legend MP – ΘY, to l. and r. from nimbus.

Reverse: Cross in the center and marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, exalt David, the king and Sebastos (?)”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=47>

Coins with the effigy of two Davids (David Ulugh and David Narin). Issue of 1261/62.

Obverse: Labarum in the center and the kings' effigy in Imperial coat on the both sides. On the left and right, Georgian Asomtavruli legends placed vertically – “King David” and “King of the Kings David”.

Reverse: **St. Virgin** seated upon a throne like on the Imperial issue of Michael VIII Palaeologus, and corresponding Georgian legend on the left and right.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=98>

Coins with the effigy of St. Eugenius.

Kirmaneuli tetri (Georgian imitations to the aspers of Trebizond; they are patterned mostly on the coins of the two Emperors: Manuel I (1238-1263) and John II (1280-1297)), issues with the name of Manuel (second half of the 13th c.).

Obverse: St. Eugenius standing, facing, holding long cross in his right hand. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – O-A-ΓI/EY-ΓE-NI-O.

Reverse: Emperor in loros and stemma (Imperial crown), standing, facing, holding labarum in his right hand and akakia – in his left hand. On the right and above – Manus Dei. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – M-N-A/O-K-MN.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=99>

Kirmaneuli tetri, issues with the name of John (13th-15th cc.).

Obverse: St. Eugenius standing, facing, holding long cross in his right hand. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – Ⓐ-E-Y/ΓE-NI.

Reverse: Emperor in loros and stemma, standing, facing, holding labarum in his right hand and akakia or globus cruciger – in his left hand. On the right and above – Manus Dei. Below – six-pointed star. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – Ω-O K/N-O.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=100>

Kirmaneuli tetri, issues with “Emperor in three-arched stemma” (13th - 14th cc.).

Obverse: St. Eugenius standing, facing, holding long cross in his right hand. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – O-Y/T-E-N-O.

Reverse: Emperor in loros and three-arched stemma, standing, facing, holding labarum in his right hand and globus cruciger – in his left hand. On the right and above – Manus Dei. Below – six-pointed star. On the left and right, Greek legend placed vertically – ΙΘ-O-KO/H-O.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=101>

Kirmaneuli tetri, issues with Emperor’s bust (13th -14th cc.).

Obverse: Bust of **St. Eugenius** facing, holding labarum in his right hand and long cross – in his left hand. Greek legend is traced.

Reverse: Bust of Emperor in loros and stemma facing, holding labarum in his right hand and long cross – in his left hand. On the left, globus cruciger, it looks like a flower. Shield on the right. No sign of the Greek legend.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=102>

Kirmaneuli tetri, issue with Georgian Asomtavruli letters (1389-1392).

Obverse: St. Eugenius standing, facing, holding long cross in his right hand. On the left – some uncertain signs. On the right, above, Asomtavruli letters for the name of Giorgi, below, Greek letters in two lines – ΓΕ-Ο.

Reverse: Emperor (king) in loros and three-arched stemma, standing, facing, holding labarum in his left hand. On the left Asomtavruli letters placed vertically – “king”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=103>

Kirmaneuli tetri, Vamek's money with St. Eugenius' effigy (1384-1396).

Obverse: Georgian Mkhedruli letters for the name Vamek (a mirror image) in ornamented frame.

Reverse: St. Eugenius in stemma, standing, facing, holding either labarum or long cross in his right hand. On the left and right – Greek legend – Ο-Ε/ΤΕ-ΙΝ.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=104>

Coins with the effigy of cross.

Anonymous coins with the depiction of **cross** on altar (586-587).

Obverse: Ohrmazd IV to the right. Legend in Pehlevi – “Ohrmazd Augustus”. This is placed within onefold circle of the dots.

Reverse: **Cross** on altar protected by two guardians. Pehlevi inscription of date and name of the mint are unreadable.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=32>

Coins with the depiction of **cross** on altar. Stephanos I – first emission (591).

Obverse: Ohrmazd IV to the right. Legend in Pehlevi – “Ohrmazd Augustus”. This is placed within onefold circle of the dots. Four Georgian letters (Asomtavruli) on the edge of the coin for the name of Stephanos, with four crescents on the sides.

Reverse: **Cross** on altar protected by two guardians. Date and name of the mint are unreadable, all placed within twofold circle of the dots.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=33>

Coins with the depiction of **cross** on altar. Stephanos I – second emission (592).

Obverse: shah/ruler to the right. Instead of Pehlevi, Georgian inscription (Asomtavruli) – “Stephanos” to the left and right. Twofold circle around it.

Reverse: Cross on altar, protected by two guardians. No Pehlevi inscription. Threefold circle around it.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=34>

David III Kuropalates' coins with the depiction of **cross potent** (979).

Obverse: Georgian legend – “Christ, forgive David”.

Reverse: Cross potent on the four steps and Georgian legend “Kurapalati”.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=40>

David IV's copper coin, type – king in Imperial coat (1118-1125).

Obverse: Bust of a king in Imperial coat – wearing stemma (Imperial crown), division and chlamys; holds in right hand scepter cruciger, and in left, globus cruciger. And Georgian legend – “king David”.

Reverse: Cross in a center and marginal Georgian legend – “Christ, David the king of the Abkhassians, Kartvelians, Ransians, Kakhetians, Armenians” (Rani and Kakheti are very Eastern provinces of Georgia).



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=48>

Coins with the legend “Tamar (1184-1210) the queen” (1184-1186).

Obverse: Three Asomtavruli letters in a frame made up of five semicircles – “Tamar the queen”. **Cross** above.

Reverse: Large dots.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=69>

Coins of Vakhtang III (1297-1308) with the Christian prayer.

Obverse: Uighur legend in four lines – Struck by Ghazan in the name of Qā’ān.

Reverse: Area within linear square – In center, **cross** within linear circle and a Christian prayer in Arabic around cross: “In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit”. There are two Georgian monograms read as king Vakhtang. Between square and outer circle a date in Arabic – “struck in the year 698 (=1298/99) and one of the months of the coin’s issue”.

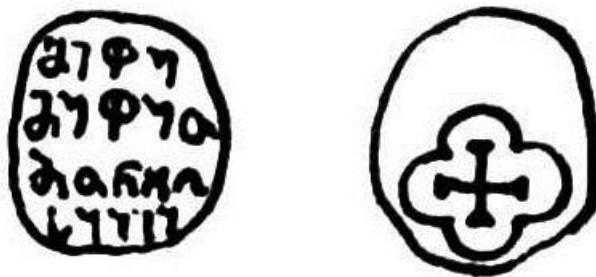


<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=57>

Coins of Giorgi VIII (1446-1466) with the title “King of the Kings”.

Obverse: Georgian (Asomtavruli) legend in four lines – “King of the Kings, slave of God, Giorgi”.

Reverse: Cross.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=77>

Modern Georgian banknotes have the effigies of king David IV, queen Tamar and Ilia Chavchavadze, famous writer and political figure, put on them. All they were canonized much later after the time they had lived.

Lari, national currency of Georgia.





https://www.academia.edu/31559754/Money_in_Georgia_Tbilisi_2003