

**Tedo Dundua**

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### **Deities and Pagan Shrines on Money: Case of Georgia\***

*For Pagan republics there were the gods to justify a legitimacy of a coin. For pagan monarchies and empires there were also rulers' effigies to justify the same. First persons are often shown with divine symbols. Those symbols alone and pagan shrines could serve for a purpose of identification of a coin. Pagan attributes on modern money is a certain respect towards history. The pattern suits many countries, Georgia among.*

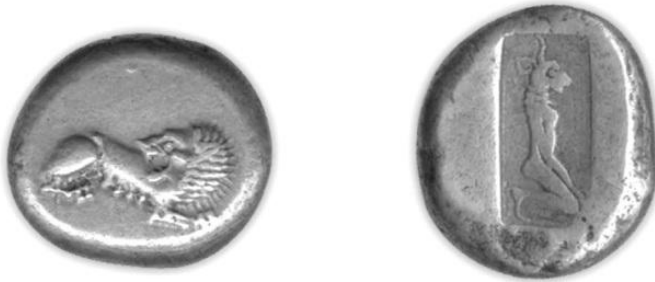
I type Colchian/Phasian (Western Georgian) didrachm (5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.) shows lion as a symbol of **Apollo**, and Greek **Hecate**, mixed with local goddess of fertility and male moon.

**Obverse:** Lying hermaphrodite lion (hermaphroditization is due to Apollo's merge with the local female sun) to the right/left with a head turned back.

**Reverse:** Kneeling female figure with a bull's head (bull's head is an attribute of the moon) to the right/left in *quadratum incusum*.

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\* [https://www.academia.edu/43821050/Deities\\_and\\_Pagan\\_Shrines\\_on\\_Money\\_Case\\_of\\_Georgia](https://www.academia.edu/43821050/Deities_and_Pagan_Shrines_on_Money_Case_of_Georgia)



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=4>

II type didrachm shows three-faced Hecate.

**Obverse:** Archaic female head to the right within the linear circle.  
**Reverse:** Two identical archaic female heads facing each other each in *quadratum incusum*.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=9>

III type didrachm shows three-faced and zoomorphic Hecate.

**Obverse:** Archaic female head to the right within the linear circle.  
**Reverse:** Two bulls' heads facing each other each in *quadratum incusum*.

<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=10>

II type hemidrachm's typology is also identical.

**Obverse:** Archaic female head to right/left within the linear circle or in border of the dots.

**Reverse:** Bull's head to right within the linear circle. Some of the coins are with the Greek letters – MO/ΣO, Φ, A, O, E, Π, Δ.

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<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=13>

The goddess of fertility in Colchis was at the same time the goddess Hecate.

Lion is a symbol of Apollo/Helios. The lion depicted on I type didrachm repeats in every detail the lion on the Greek (Milesian) numismatics. Identical are the lion heads on the so-called Colchian tetradrachm and I type hemidrachm.

The so-called tetradrachm (5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.).

**Obverse:** Exceptionally depicted lion's head to the left/right.

**Reverse:** Winged Pegasus to the right in *quadratum incusum*.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=2>

I type hemidrachm (5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.).

**Obverse:** Lion's head to the right/left, showing teeth.

**Reverse:** Lioness' protome to the right in *quadratum incusum*.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=12>

Bull-headed, or ram-headed schematic **Nike** appears on Georgian (Colchian) imitations to Alexander's type staters (1<sup>st</sup> c. B.C.-1<sup>st</sup> c. A.D.).

**Obverse:** Non-naturalistic head, right.

**Reverse:** Bull-headed, or ram-headed schematic Nike, facing.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=15>

Municipal copper coins of Dioscurias (modern Sokhumi, Western Georgia) have the effigies of **Dioscuri's** caps and thyrsus placed on them (105-90 B.C.).

**Obverse:** Caps of Dioscuri, surmounted by six, or eight-pointed stars.

**Reverse:** Thyrsus of **Dionysus** in the center of the coin, Greek three-line legend on both sides ΔΙΟΣ/ΚΟΥΡΙΑ/ΔΟΣ.

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<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=22>

Anonymous copper coins struck in Surion (modern Vani, Western Georgia) show the effigies of lotus and an eight-pointed star (84 B.C.).

**Obverse:** Stylized effigy of lotus – **Isis'** decoration.

**Reverse:** Eight-pointed star.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=23>

Next is drachm of Aristarchus the Colchian with the portray of Gnaeus Pompejus (52/51 B.C.).

**Obverse:** Head of beardless man, diademed and crowned with the rays, right (**Helios** with Gnaeus Pompejus' features).

**Reverse:** **Tyche** seated on a throne, wearing a tall crown, right. Vessel in her left hand, right hand resting on a rudder. Greek inscription on both sides of depiction and below – ΑΡΙΣΤΑΡΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΠΙ ΚΟΛΑΧΙΑΟΣ/ΒΙ ("of Aristarchus, the viceroy of Colchis, or of Aristarchus, who is ruling over Colchis"; and the date – 12, which corresponds to the 12<sup>th</sup> year of his rule, i.e. 52-51 B.C.).



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=18>

Municipal copper coins of bilingual (Graeco-Colchian) Trapezus with the effigy of **Mithras**.

**Obverse:** Bust of Gordian III, right. Legend – ΑΥΓ ΑΝΤΩΡΔΙΑΝΟCCEB.

**Reverse:** Mithras as equestrian. Tree of Life behind the equestrian. Column in front of him with crow sitting on it. A star above a bird. Horse has its right leg raised. Snake below the line. Legend – ΤΡΑΠΕΖΟΥΝΤΙΩΝ.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=26>

Coins of Bagadat, son of Biurat, duke of Klarjeti (Southwest Georgia). II type (second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. B.C.).

**Obverse:** Head of Bagadat r., bearded, with moustache, and taenia on forehead; wears satrapal head-dress (kyrbasia) with double tie behind, and flaps fastened over top; earring in ear; border of dots.

**Reverse:** Fire-temple, with double panelled doors, podium, pilasters, and architrave; above, three battlements, each with two horns; on l., Bagadat, in satrapal head-dress and long garment, standing right, r. raised in adoration; on r., a bull.

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r., standard; Aramaic inscription, on r. downwards and in exergue, inscription on l., if any, off the flan; border of dots.



<http://geonumismatics.tsu.ge/en/catalogue/types/?type=17>

Pagan attributes on modern money:

- a) golden lion from the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C. barrow, Eastern Georgia.
- b) Borjgali (symbol of the sun).







[https://www.academia.edu/31559754/Money\\_in\\_Georgia\\_Tbilisi\\_2003](https://www.academia.edu/31559754/Money_in_Georgia_Tbilisi_2003)