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On Location of XI and XV Satrapies of Achaemenid Persia

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The Father of History Herodotus, touching upon the XI Satrapy of the Achaemenid Persia, writes down: “The eleventh [province] comprised the Caspii, Pausicae, Pantimathi and Daritae, paying jointly two hundred talents”.¹ The Father of History refers to the Caspians in the XV Satrapy too: “The Sacae and Caspii were the fifteenth [province], paying two hundred and fifty talents”.² The author refers to the Caspians also in the scope of tribes and peoples taking part in Greek invasion of Xerxes: “The Caspians in the army wore cloaks, and carried the reed bows of their country and short swords. Such was their equipment; their leader was Ariomardus, brother to Artyphius”.³ According to the Father of History the Caspians and Paricanians assigned also riders, armed like their infantry too.⁴ Herodotus tells that the Sacae participated in the invasion too: “The Bactrians in the army wore a headgear most like to the Median, carrying their native bows of reed, and short spears. The Sacae, who are Scythians, had on their heads tall caps, erect and stiff and tapering to a point; they wore breeches, and carried their native bows, and daggers, and axes withal, which they call “sagaris.” These were Amyrgian Scythians, but were called Sacae; for that is the Persian name for all Scythians. The commander of the Bactrians and Sacae was Hystaspes, son of Darius and Cyrus’ daughter”.⁵ As we see there are particular contradictions in the given evidences. If Herodotus mentions about two separate groups of the Caspians in the list of Satrapies, but during the Greek invasion of Xerxes the Caspians are recorded as one unite group, acting under one rule. However, as we will see below, the other part of the Caspians is also touched upon during that invasion, but with the other name.

The investigators of the XI Satrapy’s Caspians usually make them separate from the XV’s. The great part of investigators, studying the Caspians of the XI satrapy, locate them in the southwestern shores of the Caspian Sea, to the south of the Apsheron Peninsula.⁶ The Caspians are also located near the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, northwest to Media.⁷ E. Herzfeld locates the Caspians in the southwestern and southern parts of the Caspian Sea, suggesting that the so-called “Caspian Gates” derives from the name of the Caspians.⁸ In fact, there are two Caspian Gates—one near Raga-Ray, the other—in the Talish Mountains. We must point out that the investigators confirm these standpoints according to the data of sources. However, the investigation of the sources serves the base for H. Svazyan, e.g., to locate the XI Satrapy in Transcaucasia, which was surrounded by the southern feet of the Caucasian Mountains on the north, by the Caspian Sea on the east, by the river Kur on the south, and by the river Alazan on the west. According to the author in this territory we must look for the Pausicians, Pantimathians and the Daritans referring to the Caspians.⁹ But, if we take into account only the fact that the location of the Daritans is clear in the sources (see below), however, this viewpoint is beneath criticism. I. Diakonoff considers the clothing and armament of the Caspians typical to the Mannaeans and the Medes of the 1st millennium B.C.¹⁰ it means he considers them

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¹ Herod. III 92.

² Herod. III 93.

³ Herod. VII 67.

⁴ Herod. VII 86.

⁵ Herod. VII 64.

⁶ ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 196, n. 101.

⁷ ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 196.

⁸ HERZFELD (1968) 196.

⁹ SVAZYAN (1983) 89.

¹⁰ ДЬЯКОНОВ (1956) 103, 364.

an transcaucasian tribe. The author makes an assumption that the Pausicians, Pantimathians and the Daritans might have been the separate tribes of the Kadousioi (the Katishes-Kh. H.) and of the other Anariakai, which were lived in the north, as if in the territory nearby the Caspian seashore, between the Utians and Albanians and Hyrcanians in the east.¹¹ I. Aliev places all the three tribes in the neighbourhood of the ancient Caspiane.¹²

In the circle of investigators the opinions concerning the location of the XV Satrapy are divided too. Some investigators assign the Caspians of the XV Satrapy the territories south to Hindukush (Kafiristan-Nuristan and Chitral).¹³ V. Struve locates the Caspians of the XV Satrapy to the east of the Aral Sea (and viewing it as the continuation of the Caspian Sea). He suggests that the Caspians are identical with the Sacae, living beyond Sugda, and in the reign of Darius I they make up the special province of the Sacae, living beyond the sea. According to the author the Sacae, living to the east from the Aral Sea, are named the Massagetae and the Dahi by the Greek authors, and those living in the territories of seashores are called the Caspians.¹⁴ There have been attempts in historiography at changing Κάσπιοι into Κάσπειροι, Κάσιοι, Πάκτυες.¹⁵ H. Shtein rejects to solve the relation problem of the Caspians to Κάσπειροι or Κασπεραῖοι or to Kasparyrus-Kabul and proofreads as Πάκτυες.¹⁶

But these suggestions give birth to new questions more often rather than give answers to the discussed issues. There have been attempts in the circle of investigators at placing the XV Satrapy in Transcaucasia.¹⁷ However, as the latest investigations show, every attempt at placing both the XI and the XV satrapies in Transcaucasia has failed. Touching upon the problem of the Caspians, B. Haroutyunyan has shown that there was the XVIII Satrapy between the Caucasian Mountains and the river Kur.¹⁸ So, the suggestions of the investigators to place the XI and the XV satrapies in Central Asia must be right.

W. How and J. Wells assume that the Caspians of the XV Satrapy might be the inhabitants of Kashmir, though such location is considered doubtful. At the same time they assume that the Caspians of the XI Satrapy substitute the Hyrcania, and its absence from the list of satrapies causes surprise.¹⁹ Agreeing with this assumption, B. Haroutyunyan tries to prove that the XI Satrapy has been in Hyrcania and in its surrounding territory.²⁰ A. Hakobyan also thinks that the XI Satrapy has been in Hyrcania and he identifies the Sacae of the XV Satrapy with the “Amyrgian Scythians” of Herodotus, which are the “Haumavargian Sacae” of the Behistun Inscription and locate them to the north from the Hyrcanians, in the internal territory of the Western Turkmenistan. According to him the Caspians of two satrapies must be neighbours, as they fight in the same detachment of Xerxes army.²¹ But the assumption of the author is not hard to reject according to the following important fact. Herodotus tells that, “He (Darius I-Kh. H.) united each nation with its closest neighbours, and beyond these nearest lands, assigned those that were farther off some to one and some to another nation”.²² We can conclude from the information, that the aim of the Persian Court has not been the division of any ethnos between the different satrapies, but to join some of them in one administrative district. So, we cannot accept A. Hakobyan’s location of XI Satrapy in the neighbourhood of the XV Satrapy.

I. Diakonoff places the Caspians of the XV Satrapy to the east of the Caspian Sea, in the neighbourhood of the Sacae, living nearby the Caspian Sea, and the Sacae of the same satrapy are

¹¹ ДЪЯКОНОВ (1956) 447.

¹² АЛИЕВ (1960) 104, н. 9.

¹³ ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 196, н. 101.

¹⁴ СТРУВЕ (1968) 55, 110.

¹⁵ ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 395, н. 764.

¹⁶ ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 196, н. 101; 395, н. 764.

¹⁷ ТЕР - МАРТИРОСОВ (1998) 140; МЕЛИКОВ (2003) 103.

¹⁸ HAROUT'YUNYAN (1999) 45-114.

¹⁹ See ДОВАТУР, КАЛЛИСТОВ, ШИШОВА (1982) 196, н. 101.

²⁰ HAROUT'YUNYAN (1999) 87-98.

²¹ НАКОВУАН (1983) 91; АКОПЯН (1987) 45-46.

²² Herod. III 89.

the nation of Sakā country of the Behistun Inscription. Whatever, the investigator considers the issue of the XV Satrapy unsolved²³, and we will try to solve this matter with the results of our examination.

Let us discuss few matters concerning the location of the XI and XV satrapies. From the tribes of the XI Satrapy the Daritans are more clearly located, whom Ptolemy locates to the south of the Caspian Sea, in the neighbourhood of the city Rey (historical Raga).²⁴ As for us, the Pausicians are the Pestici of Pomponius Mela, they are referred to between the Amardes and the Derbikes. On the other occasion the historian, speaking about Jaxartes and Oxus, writes down that the second, flowing from east to west turns near the Dahi for the first time and directing the stream to the north, opens the river mouth between the Amardes and the Paesicas.²⁵ There leaves hardly any doubt that the Paesicas of Melas' second reference are the same Pestici. The Amardes or Mardes are located in the territories of the middle and lower stream of the river Qizil-Uzen (historical Amardus) till the river mouth, and the Derbikes has lived in the coastal territories of the Caspian Sea, to the north from the Hyrcanians. According to the ordinal number of the tribes of the XI Satrapy, the Pausicians must be located to the south and southwest from the Caspians. In the second record of Mela Oxus is not identified with today's Amu-Darya, but with Atrek or more precisely with Gurgan. Pliny the Elder refers to the Pestici as a scythian tribe.²⁶ The Ptolemy's Pasikai are also identical with the Pausicae.²⁷ According to what has been said, we can suggest that the Pausicae have been located in the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, at least to the east from of the Daritans and have been scythian tribe.

In the above part we have pointed out that according to the opinion of the literature of historical sciences, the Caspians of the XI Satrapy substitute Hyrcania. Which are the bases of the following viewpoint? Though the Hyrcanians have not been mentioned in the Herodotus' list of satrapies, the Father of History is informed about their existence. According to Herodotus: "There is a plain in Asia shut in on all sides by mountains through which there are five passes. This plain was once the Chorasmians', being at the boundaries of the Chorasmians, the Hyrcanians, Parthians, Sarangians, and Thamanaei, but since the Persians have held power it has been the king's".²⁸ According to the next record of the Father of History: "The Hyrcanians were armed like the Persians, their leader was Megapanus, who was afterwards the governor of Babylon".²⁹ It is clear from Herodotus' first records that the Hyrcanians, recording between the Chorasmians and the Parthians, have been located in the southeastern part of the Caspian Sea, and in the second record the same armament shows the Iranian general origin of the Hyrcanians and Persians, besides this, it's important to take into account that the Hyrcanians are recorded in Xerxes' army after the Persians, Medians, Cissians, which shows their role and place in the Achaemenid Empire.

The Behistun Inscription is an important source for the clarification of Herodotus' information, where Hyrcania is not mentioned in the row of subdued countries, but it is mentioned in another part of the same record: "Parthia and Hyrcania became rebellious from me (Darius I-Kh. H.), called themselves (adherents) of Phraortes".³⁰ As we can note, Parthia and Hyrcania make up one country, whose ruler was Hystaspes, the father of Darius I. After putting down the rebel Darius announces that this is what he has done in Parthia. So, we must think that Hyrcania has entered into Parthia. For the comparison let us mention, that after putting down the rebel in Margiana country, Darius announces again that this is his deed in Bactria.³¹ So, Margiana has entered into Bactria, and it is not by chance, that it is not mentioned in the row of subdued countries of the Behistun Inscription. After putting down the rebel of Phraortes, Hyrcania (arm. Vrkan) makes separate from Parthia, and

²³ ДЪЯКОНОВ (1956) 360.

²⁴ Ptol. VI 2. 6.

²⁵ ЛАТЬШЕВ (1949. 1) 284-285.

²⁶ ЛАТЬШЕВ (1949. 2) 306.

²⁷ Ptol. VI 12. 4.

²⁸ Herod. III 117.

²⁹ Herod. VII 62.

³⁰ KENT (1953) 124, 127; LECOQ (1997) 200.

³¹ KENT (1953) 127; LECOQ (1997) 201-202.

the last enters into the XVI Satrapy. But in the reign of Darius III Hyrcania and Parthia appear again in one satrapy.³²

B. Haroutyunyan touches upon the Caspian-Hyrcanians identity from the following viewpoint. According to him, the Georgian Varjan (Iberia or Virk'-Kh. H.), mentioned in "Ašxarhacoyc" ("Armenian Geography") must have close relations with Vrkan or Varkan country-name, it is also interesting to note that the name of Varjan of Virk is accompanied by the names of Caspi city and "The Caspian Mountains" given to the Caucasian Mountains'. Going on with the idea, the author comes to the conclusion that Varkan or Vargan must be derived from the word "wolf" and meant "Country of The Wolf", so the ethnic name comes from the word "wolf", being the tribe totem. B. Haroutyunyan assumes, judging by the disconnected indirect material, that one part of Caspian-Hyrcanians resides in the territory of the Eastern Georgia giving them the names Vrkan-Varkan-Varjan, and one of its city's name of Caspi, and we can conclude that this movement probably takes place after the administrative reconstructions of Darius I and the invasions of Alexander the Macedonian, having the existence of the Caspians in the Northern Caucasia as the base.³³ What has been said proves that the possibility of the Caspian-Hyrcanians identification is logical for the people of Hyrcania and it is real also concerning Virk-Iberia. There are certain materials in the sources recording the existence of the Hyrcanians in Transcaucasia. Josephus Flavius writes down: "The Alani - a race of Scythians, as we have somewhere previously remarked, inhabiting the banks of the river Tanais and the lake Maeotis - contemplating at this period a predatory incursion into Media and beyond, entered into negotiations with the king of the Hyrcanians, who was master of the pass which king Alexander had closed with iron gates. Being granted admission by him, masses of them fell upon the Medes..."³⁴ Yet H. Manandyan considers the king of the Hyrcanians being the king of Georgia.³⁵ As in our opinion it is not excluded, but the existence of the Caspian-Hyrcanians in the east of Transcaucasia can essentially refer to them, if we identify the pass with the Derbend Gate, if it is, of course, not about the Alanian Gate. Dionysus gives more interesting information, he writes: "(the River) Phasis starts from the Armenian Mountain. To the north-east from it between Caspian and Euxine Seas, falls the neck. There lived the Iberians, who are the eastern nation, there were times when they came to the east from Pirenei and entered into a rage war with the Hyrcanians..."³⁶ The same evidence is retold by Eustathius, and according to him the Armenian Mountain, where the Phasis starts from, the beginning of Hyrcania ("where starts Hyrcania") is situated, and considers the Hyrcanians as the natural enemies of the eastern Iberians.³⁷ The Armenian Mountain maybe corresponds to the Moschian Mountains, and the Phasis is the tributary Ghvirila of the river Rioni at the present time and Hyrcania or Virk is situated in the northeast to it. For sure the Iberians cannot be identified with the Pireneian Iberians in the given material, though many authors identify them, and essentially that is the reason that the Hyrcanians seem to be aborigines, as judging by the sources they have been migrated to Transcaucasia. According to Pomponius Mella, the Cyrus (Kur-Kh. H.) and Cambyses (Iori-Kh. H.) rivers flow separately through the plants of the Iberians and Hyrcanians, then not far from the sea they are falling into the same river and reaching till the Hyrcanian Gulf with one stream.³⁸ We can also understand the Albanians under the Hyrcanians, as one of the Albanian tribe and if we take into account the middle and the lower streams of the river, but taking into account that the upper stream of the river Iori is found in Virk, it means that the Hyrcanians will be situated again in Virk.

³² Arr. III 22. 1; V 20. 7.

³³ HAROUT'YUNYAN (1999) 96-97. See also АРУТЮНЯН (2005) 143-147. The Caspiae Station (today's Khospia) of the Tabula Peutingeriana to the south of the city Akhalkalak [see МАНАНДЯН (1984) 226], in our opinion is connected with the Caspians. H. Manandyan corrects the Aspis of Dio Cassius into Κασπίς and identifies with the Station Caspiae [see МАНАНДЯН (1984) 235]. It is interesting that E. Herzfeld wants to see the name of Casp in the name of Kazbek Peak [HERZFELD (1968) 197].

³⁴ Josephus VII 242-246.

³⁵ MANANDYAN (1978) 14. See also НАКОВЯН (1982) 125.

³⁶ ЛАТЫШЕВ (1948) 240.

³⁷ ЛАТЫШЕВ (1948) 253.

³⁸ ЛАТЫШЕВ (1949. 1) 289.

As we notice some authors still divide the Hyrcanians from the Ibrians, when later on the two ethnos are particularly identified. The interesting fact is that the Hyrcanians are expressed with the different names, like the Borkanians³⁹, the Barkanians⁴⁰ in the sources, though they are expressed as the different tribes in those statements. Maybe the fact of having two names for the same people testifies about the movement of the Hyrcanians, whose expression is the fact of regarding the same people as the separate tribes.

The detailed examination throws a new light upon Herodotus' informations. The fact that the Hyrcanians are mentioned during Xerxes' Greek invasion, proves that the tribes of the XI Satrapy, besides the concrete identification of the Caspian-Hyrcanians, are expressed with the joint entirety under the name of the Hyrcanians. At the same time we can insist on that the other tribes of the XI Satrapy, like the Pausicians, Pantimathians, Daritans, also have had an Iranian origin and have been expressed with one name. So, we can state that the two groups of the Caspians are not joined together under one command in Xerxes' army, as one part of them is referred with the main ethnic name, but the other part is referred with the name "wolf" which is the tribe totem and gradually becomes ethnic name. The tribes of the XI Satrapy, having a general origin, are expressed with the collective Hyrcanians-"wolves" name in Xerxes' army, meanwhile they are mentioned separately in the list of satrapy. The indication of the Caspians firstly in the XI Satrapy shows that they have been of great number among "the Hyrcanians" and the other Hyrcanians became united around them, like the Pausicians, Pantimathians, Daritans, so we may conclude that till the formation of the satrapy the given tribes make up a tribe-union. At the same time clarification of the very Caspian-Hyrcanians identification makes it possible to accurately locate the XI Satrapy.

Judging by the logical description of both the data of Herodotus and by the Persian cuneiform inscriptions, there is no doubt that the XV Satrapy also was located in the Middle Asia. In the Behistun Inscription Darius I enumerates his subdued countries, according to the geographical order there comes Chorasmia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Saka (Scythia-Kh. H.), Sattagydia, Arachosia, Maka.⁴¹ The Chorasmians, who are one of the essential ethnos of the XVI Satrapy, with the other people, according to Herodotus, are located in the territory of Khwārizm. Bactria (in the XII Satrapy) includes the modern South Tajikistan and the North Afghanistan. Sogdiana (in the XVI Satrapy) with Marakanda centre has been in the territory of modern Samarqand and Bukhara. As we see Sogdiana was between the Chorasmians and Bactria and must be referred after Chorasmia and before Bactria, according to the geographical order. Gandara (in the VII Satrapy) was spread between the territory of Kabul and Taxila. Sattagydia (the Sattagydiens in the VII Satrapy) is found to the south of the Gandarians. Arachosia is distinguished in the place of the modern Qandahar. Arachosia, which is absent from Herodotus' list of satrapies, administratively can be entered into the XVII Satrapy, where there were the Paricanians and Ethiopians of Asia, as to Herodotus. Saka, is mentioned between Gandara and Sattagydia in the inscription, must be located north of Gandara and east of Bactria, as only in this case we will have the free space, where Saka country and the XV Satrapy mentioned by Herodotus can be placed. The given territory corresponds to the modern North Tajikistan and to the territory of the upper stream of Amu-Darya, spreading to the south till the Hindukush Mountain. It is notable that Herodotus also mentions only one part of the so-called Sacae both in the list of satrapy and in the row of tribes, taking part in the Greek-Persian war, which are obviously connected with Middle Asia in the both statements (III, 93; VII, 64). It means that both the Sacae of Behistun (inhabitants of Sakā country) and the Sacae of Herodotus are absolutely identical. That identification is reflected in two different sources in the following way. In one of the Persepolis inscriptions of Darius I

³⁹ Diod. II 2. 3.

⁴⁰ Ruf. III II. 5. About the issue of the Borcanian-Barcanians and Hyrcanians see ПЬЯНКОВ (1965) 44-45. There have been attempts in the historiography at the identification of the Paricanians of Herodotus with the Hyrcanians, taking into account the absence of Hyrcania from Herodotus' list of satrapies [see OLMSTEAD (1960) 291], which is considered needless by I. Pyankov, as Hyrcania has been in the structure of Parthia [OLMSTEAD (1960) 45, n. 79].

⁴¹ LECOQ (1997) 188; KENT (1953) 117.

the Haumavargian Sacae and “the sharp hat” Sacae are referred after Gandara and Hindush.⁴² We have already described the location of Gandara above. Hindush (or Sind) is the country of the Indians, inhabitants of the western coast of the river Indus. The Haumavargian and tigraxaudā Sacae are in fact corresponding to Sakā country of the Behistun inscription according to their geography. This reality is reflected clearly also in Herodotus’ work. The Father of History mentions in the same statement though not directly about two groups of the Sacae-“with sharp high hats” and the Amyrgian, and there are referred especially after the Bactrians.⁴³ Though in this data Herodotus speaks only of the Sacae-Scythians in the general way, there is a certain restriction (the Amyrgian Sacae) and the Haumavargian Sacae are also reflected with them, which are in reality the same Amyrgian Sacae referred by Herodotus, and the tigraxaudā Sacae, which are the Sacae-Scythians of Herodotus, described by their “sharp high hats” in the description. The following inscription of Darius I speaks in favour of the location suggested by us about the Sacae: “Saith the Darius king: This is the kingdom which I hold, from the Scythians who are beyond Sogdiana, thence unto Ethiopia; from Sind, thence unto Sardis-which Ahuramazda the greatest of the gods bestowed upon me. Me may Ahuramazda protect, and my royal house”.⁴⁴ As we see the country of Scythia-Sacae, beyond Sogdiana (to the east-Kh. H.) really corresponds to the Sacae of the XV Satrapy. In this connection it’s notable to point out that Arianus and Rufus also have innumerable data about the Scythians, who are mentioned both with the Bactrians and with their neighbourhood (in the right shore of Tanais-Jaxartes, today’s Syr- Darya) and in the neighbourhood of the Sogdians.⁴⁵ Though their data about the Scythians have general nature and large geography, it is obvious that in some statements the Scythians have been in the territories of the XV Satrapy located by us. As to our mind, Alexander should have dealt with the inhabitants of Sakā country during the foundation of Alexandra Eschate (Further).

And what concerns the Caspians, whose one part is referred in the XV Satrapy, according to Herodotus’ data they should also be located in the further northeastern part of Persian Empire in the neighbourhood of the Sacae, Gandarians and Bactrians. As it is notable from their armament the Caspians can be compared with the Bactrians (reed local bows) in some degree, with the Sacae (local bows), and the Caspians, being armed with acinaces, testifies about their scythian origin. It is not by chance that Herodotus refers to them after the Gandarians and Dadicae, and after the Caspians he mentions the Sarangae. The lasts have been in the XIV Satrapy, spreading to the southwest of the VII Satrapy. So, we can locate the Caspians in the neighbourhood of the Gandarians, to the north of them, to the south of Hindukush, on the borders of Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. Maybe the Caspians have substantial number in the XV Satrapy, for, being the Scythian tribe, to be mentioned separately by the other Sacae, or they “owe” the Caspians of the XI Satrapy for their reference. Judging by the results of investigation we can accept the two groups of the Caspians have a general scythian origin, which is obvious from the ancient sources.⁴⁶

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⁴² KENT (1953) 137. Cf. also the other inscriptions.

⁴³ Herod. VII 64.

⁴⁴ KENT (1953) 137.

⁴⁵ Arr. III 8. 3; III 11. 4, 6; IV 3. 6; IV 16-17; Ruf. IV 6. 3; VII 7. 1-7; VII 8. 22; IX 2. 33.

⁴⁶ Naturally, in the case of such an approach, the viewpoint of the identification of the Caspians with the Kassites become absolutely unacceptable [see ДЪЯКОНОВ (1967) 87].

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Summary:

On Location of XI and XV Satrapies of Achaemenid Persia

So, what we have said allows us to conclude that the Caspians and Hyrcanians are being identified, according to the data kept in the sources: the first has been the name of the tribe itself, and the second has been the totem of the same tribe, which gradually becomes as the ethnic name and has a collective nature in separate cases. As a result of the movement the Caspian-Hyrcanians appear also in Transcaucasia, which shows the sources. Later on the Hyrcanians, assert living in the territory of the Eastern Georgia, give the name Vrkan-Varkan-Varjan to it. So, the XI and XV satrapies have been located in the Middle Asia, but in the separate geographical territories and every attempt at their movement in Transcaucasia does not correspond to the historical reality.

Keywords: Satrapy, Caspians, Scythians, Hyrcanians, Totem