

PRE-PUBLICATION DRAFT

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*Kim bilir, neçədir dünyanın yaşı,
Tarixin nə qədər yazısı vardır?
Hər saxsı parçası, hər məzar daşı
Nəsildən nəsilə bir yadigardır.*
- Səməd Vurğun¹

Who knows the age of the world,
How much of a written history exists?
Each piece of pottery, each tombstone,
Is a keepsake passed from generation to generation.
- Samad Vurgun

**NOTES OF MATERIAL IMPORTANCE:
ARCHIVAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS**

Journey into the Archaeological Archives

Tombstones, potsherds, earthen ditches, mudbrick walls: these traces of human activity are the fundamental datasets of the archaeologist, which we use to understand the past. These materials come to us through human intervention, be it the chance find of a coin or the scientific excavation of a site. The interventions that bring us data tend to generate both descriptive and interpretive records: letters, field notes, sketches and photographs, archaeological reports, monographs, and museum exhibits. Over time, a narrow selection of these records (usually final reports and published monographs) is canonized and becomes the authoritative representation of a particular body of archaeological material. In this article, I will explore how the rest of the records—the archaeological archives—help us to understand the process of archaeological inquiry and interpretation.

My work in archaeological archives has developed in the course of research about the archaeology of the South Caucasus, a territory roughly corresponding to modern Georgia,

Azerbaijan, and Armenia. I study the centuries stretching from the fall of the Achaemenid Empire to the fall of the Sasanian Empire (roughly 330 BCE-650 CE) in the northeast of the zone. Too far to the east to catch the interest of most Hellenistic and Roman archaeologists, too far to the north for Near Eastern scholars, and behind the Iron Curtain for much of the twentieth century, this zone has received little attention outside of Soviet scholarship and is essentially overlooked in dominant historical narratives about Hellenistic history and Rome's frontier system.

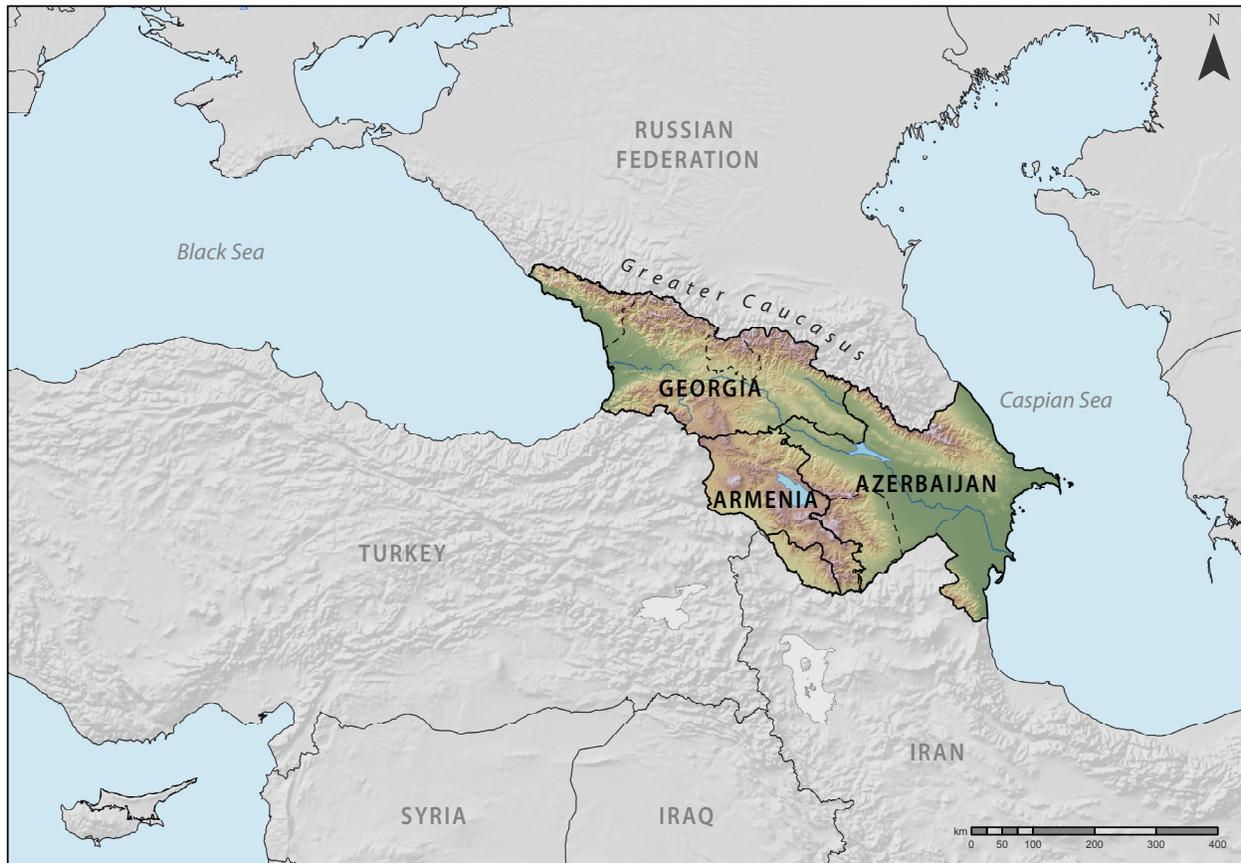


Figure 1. The modern nations of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), with topographic relief shown in color. Map created by author.

Understanding the contours of scholarship on the South Caucasus requires context about the region, which has long been treated as an “unknowable” periphery.² Formative modern roots of this perception lie in the nineteenth century, as the restive South Caucasus was gradually incorporated into the Russian Empire. New scholarly networks borne out of Russian expansion led to some of the first modern research in the region about its own ancient history, as well as some of the earliest archaeological infrastructure.³ At the same time, as part of “Russia’s

Orient,” the South Caucasus became an important site for Russian literary imagination, presented by authors like Pushkin and Lermontov as an untainted, exotic mountain wilderness and a persistently foreign land.⁴ Then, in 1917, during the upheaval of the Russian Revolution, the South Caucasus saw rapid political reconfigurations, with all three republics declaring independence. Their liberty was brief, however, since the three were incorporated into the Soviet Union by 1922. Scholarship in the zone continued for the next seventy years within the context of the Soviet academy. The republics regained independence only in 1991, with the post-Soviet period bringing new types of research and possibilities for collaboration, but also an escalation in border conflicts.⁵

Initially I was exposed to the archaeological material from this region in publications written by Soviet-period and post-Soviet archaeologists, rather than through interactions with actual archaeological objects. Although meeting archaeological material through published reports is not an uncommon situation for archaeologists, I found the literature difficult to interpret. The style of the Russian, Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani publications was vastly different from what I was accustomed to as a graduate student in an American PhD program, training in the Anglo-American tradition of archaeological thought and practice.

The literature was engaged in—and even predicated on—theoretical debates that differed sharply from those with which I was familiar. The data themselves were arranged and prioritized in unfamiliar ways. And, it was difficult to compare material from across the South Caucasus, since material from each modern state has been studied within its own intellectual tradition. In Azerbaijan, for example, an extensive literature was devoted to teasing out the ethnic identification of burial types, but excavated architectural remains were discussed almost cursorily, often without the inclusion of plans of excavated structures. Discussions of the same period in Georgia, meanwhile, paid far less attention to burials but presented lavish descriptions of architectural remains. Nevertheless, I caught tantalizing glimpses that suggested our Anglophone lack of attention was not justified: this zone should clearly be part of broader conversations about Hellenistic and Roman archaeology.

Over time, I developed a better understanding of publication style and a greater exposure to the archaeological material itself, but I nevertheless struggled with the data. Despite understanding the literal language of the texts, I came away feeling that I had grasped neither the archaeological material itself, nor its scholarly context. In my more aggrieved moments, I felt that the archaeology was being intentionally intransigent. I turned to archaeological archives—the broad swath of material excluded from final publications—to address several particular challenges of working in this understudied region: (1) the fragmentation of the archaeological record as a result of over a century of shifting borders and geopolitical confrontations; (2) a seeming chasm between the scholarly approaches of researchers who worked inside and outside of the Soviet Union; and (3) the entanglement of archaeology in heated modern territorial and ethnic debates.

In what follows, I will present two very different examples of how archives helped me understand archaeological material from the South Caucasus and engage with it on its own terms. The first uses archives to explore what archaeological material is available for study today, since the region's twentieth-century geopolitics have resulted in unusually complex configurations of data. The second examines archival excavation reports from Azerbaijan, discussing the process of archaeological interpretation, which leads to new avenues for thinking about old data.⁶

Archaeology as Diachronicity

Although the archaeologist's object of inquiry is the chronological "past," to practice archaeology is to negotiate diachronicity. It could be argued that archaeologists juggle the following schematic temporalities: First, we confront the timeframe of that deep past spanning perhaps hundreds or thousands of years, when our archaeological material was in use and then gradually faded from view. Second comes the moment in the nearer past of excavation or discovery. This is when the once-hidden or overlooked signatures of the past become "materialized" in the present, and are therefore available for study and interpretation.⁷ Third is the post-discovery life of the archaeological assemblage, when it is iteratively interpreted

and reinterpreted, displayed in museums, stored in the recesses of archaeological depots, or thrown out. And finally, fourth is our own temporal moment, when we look back at the body of archaeological data both new and old and continue the cycle of interpretation.

Historically, archaeologists have focused on the first timeframe. As practitioners within the “discipline of things,” archaeologists devote considerable energy to wringing meaning from material traces.⁸ From the earliest typological studies through more modern archaeological stratigraphies and relative chronologies, we have charted the development of things and places over time. More recently, we have engaged with theories of materiality and the semiotics of things to explore how the material world is actually “implicated in the construction, maintenance and transformation of social identities.”⁹ In contrast, the discipline has elided the second through fourth timeframes for a long time, from the moment of excavation up to our own era.¹⁰

It was only with the advent of the post-processual theoretical movement in the late twentieth century that Anglophone and Western European archaeologists began to grapple with the consequences of diachronicity more fully.¹¹ Much of this theorization still focused on the first timeframe: on understanding and nuancing our conceptualization of temporal processes in the past.¹² But, this work has also emphasized the modern subjectivity of the field and brought sustained examinations of archaeological practice to the scholarly mainstream.¹³ One result has been greater attention to the positionality of the archaeologist with respect to archaeological research,¹⁴ first through the incorporation of phenomenology into archaeological practice,¹⁵ and more recently through ethnographic explorations of fieldwork,¹⁶ as well as archival research into disciplinary history.¹⁷ It should be noted that an interest in disciplinary history, although perhaps motivated by different theoretical undercurrents, is also visible in current Russian archaeological practice as well as in the work of scholars from the South Caucasus.¹⁸

Post-processual scholarship has also explored archaeology as a generative discipline, rather than a passive one. For, although it has long been a truism that the act of excavation irrevocably destroys the depositional circumstances of a site, it also creates a new dataset in the form of the archaeological record: a term used to refer to the physical traces discovered

in the course of excavation as well as the records of these traces.¹⁹ Different choices about where to dig, how to dig, and what material to record, save, and study will yield startlingly different information about the past. As such, the archaeological record is itself the product of “an interpretative practice, an active intervention engaging in a critical process of theoretical labor relating past to present.”²⁰ Archaeological datasets are, then, the products of specific archaeologists or groups of archaeologists, and in a wider sense, of particular cultures of scholarship.²¹ It is for this reason that I, an archaeologist educated in the Anglo-American tradition, found myself at first unable to meaningfully interpret archaeology written in the Soviet archaeological tradition. It was embedded in a different epistemological framework that diverged in many ways from the one I inherited.

Over the course of the last decade, discussion of the central strands that I have outlined here—temporality, subjectivity, and the nature of the archaeological record—have coalesced under the umbrella of “assemblage theory.”²² This is a relational approach that sees archaeological practice as a dynamic collection of interlocking parts (“things, practices and interpretations”),²³ all of which are agential, able to shape and reshape each other. In this understanding, archaeologists and the archaeological records that we create are embedded in the process of meaning-creation alongside tombstones, potsherds, and mudbrick walls.

The archaeological archives are the best links connecting the various timeframes and actors of archaeological exploration, helping to bridge the gap between ourselves, our predecessors, and our data. In the South Caucasus, where archaeology developed in an environment of significant fragmentation, where national borders, imperial powers, official languages, and even alphabets changed rapidly and repeatedly, the archives allow us to navigate the rugged landscape of archaeological research.

An Improbable History: Understanding a Collection Through an Archive

My first case study uses archival sources to examine the process of formation of a particular archaeological dataset: a collection of coins from the South Caucasus held by the

American Numismatic Society (ANS) in New York City. I stumbled onto this collection while participating in a workshop for graduate students at the ANS. I was looking at pieces that had been minted in the South Caucasus, when I noticed that many of the storage boxes of coins from this area were stamped “Ex. coll. Gen. Starosselsky” and had accession numbers indicating that they had come into the Society’s holdings between 1922 and 1924. I began to wonder about this Russian general and his coins: had he collected them himself in the South Caucasus? How did they come to be in the ANS?

Epistolary records from the ANS show that this General Starosselsky was part of a network of antiquarian collectors in the Russian Empire. Among aristocrats in the late Russian Empire, as with their peers in Western Europe, antiquarianism and collecting were popular and well-established activities.²⁴ Antiquities like coins moved relatively freely from their source countries to collectors,²⁵ gradually accumulating into the earliest bodies of archaeological material held in museums, universities, and private collections, which were then available for others to study. Antiquarians and collectors, therefore, played a formative role in shaping the priorities and preoccupations of the discipline of archaeology, acting as the vectors that moved material objects out of source countries. This process has been well-studied in the context of Greece, Italy, and the Near East.²⁶ In the South Caucasus, however, which fell outside the sphere of all but the most tenacious European investigators, the distinct networks of (mostly Russian) travelers and collectors has received much less attention.

The examination of Starosselsky’s ANS coins and their archival records demonstrates the value of such an exploration in explaining the scope of our modern collections of South Caucasus material. Starosselsky, it turns out, had assembled a collection of some 10,000 pieces over several decades in the South Caucasus. Following his immigration to the United States in the wake of the Russian Revolution, he sold approximately 25 percent of his coins to the ANS, creating the collection of 2,658 coins I saw in the summer of 2015.²⁷ The rest were sold to other institutions and private collectors. Starosselsky’s collection is, unsurprisingly, very strong in locally minted coins, with one-third of the ANS Starosselsky coins coming from mints in the

South Caucasus.²⁸

Most of the Starosselsky coins in the ANS collection date to the eighth century CE and later (see figure 2)—indeed, the latest coin was minted in 1918-1919. But, around 350 of the coins come from the time that I study—the Hellenistic (late fourth century to second century BCE), Arsacid (second century BCE to second century CE) and late Roman Republican and Roman Imperial (first century BCE to third century CE) periods (see figure 3). Coins from these periods are a central dataset for my research. Pieces minted in imperial centers circulated widely throughout the South Caucasus, demonstrating economic links between the residents of the South Caucasus and their neighbors. At the same time, local powers within the South Caucasus also began minting their own currencies as early as the Hellenistic period, pointing to the subtler adoption of the cultural practice of coin use.²⁹



Figure 2. A medieval Georgian coin, ca. 1300-1400, from the Starosselsky collection at the ANS. This silver coin imitates the asper of John II of Trebizond (ANS 1922.216.341). 21mm. Reproduced courtesy of the ANS.



Figure 3. An ancient bronze coin from the Starosselsky collection at the ANS, minted in Ecbatana 70-57 BC during the reign of Phraates III of the Arsacid dynasty. (ANS 1944.100.82609, bequest of E.T. Newell, previously in the Starosselsky collection) 17mm, 3.86g. Reproduced courtesy of the ANS.

Starosselsky's coins—like most coins in museums and private collections—do not have archaeological provenience, which is to say that their precise findspots are unknown and unrecoverable. These types of objects are difficult for archaeologists, who are interested in things like patterns of circulation and economic interaction, the study of which requires archaeological context.³⁰ Nevertheless, the archives give a glimpse into Starosselsky's collecting priorities, as well as what material was available to him in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century

South Caucasus. They, furthermore, trace how that material was sorted and categorized by an American curator at the ANS in the 1920s, which helps to explain what material was preserved in the modern ANS collection.

Vsevolod Dmitrievich Starosselsky (1875-1935) lived his life on the fringes of the Great Game, which saw Russia and Britain struggle for domination in Central Asia and Iran.³¹ He was born in the oil-boom capital of the South Caucasus, Baku (today the capital of Azerbaijan), where his aristocratic father was a progressive Russian Imperial governor.³² After a childhood in the South Caucasus, he entered the Russian Imperial military and served in the Caucasus and briefly in Ukraine during the First World War. Finding himself opposed to revolutionary factions in Russia after the war, he crossed into Iran to fight against the Bolsheviks.³³ Despite his unfamiliarity with the country, he quickly rose to power within the Iranian Cossack Brigade and became the senior Russian commander in 1918. His tenure was short, however; he was forced out of power by the British in 1920, who gave him twenty-four hours to leave Tehran.³⁴

Starosselsky, his family, and his 10,000 coins set off, likely moving overland across Central Asia to the Pacific and then on to America. They settled in West Riverside, California, and embarked on a series of agricultural endeavors (first as citrus farmers and then, upon crop failure, as chicken farmers).³⁵ Life was difficult for the new émigrés, and the coin collection represented a valuable source of income. In the spring of 1921, just months after his arrival in the United States, Starosselsky was put in touch with Howland Wood, a curator and respected numismatist at the ANS, who agreed to help him sell his collection.

Despite pressing financial need, Starosselsky was regretful, writing to Wood, “If it were not for the present conditions in Russia I would never part with my collection, but the revolution in Russia has deprived us of nearly everything.”³⁶ He recounts that he began to collect coins in his early twenties, in 1898, and that he continued until his final days in Iran (see figure 4).³⁷ His letters paint him as a keen collector—he once traded a horse for a particularly desirable piece. It is not surprising, then, that he wanted his coins to be kept together, writing to Wood, “I would like, if it is possible that all the coins should be bought [sic] by your Museum, even though

cheaper than by a private person, as it makes me very sad to think that the coins I collected with such love and for so long, should all be dispersed.”³⁸

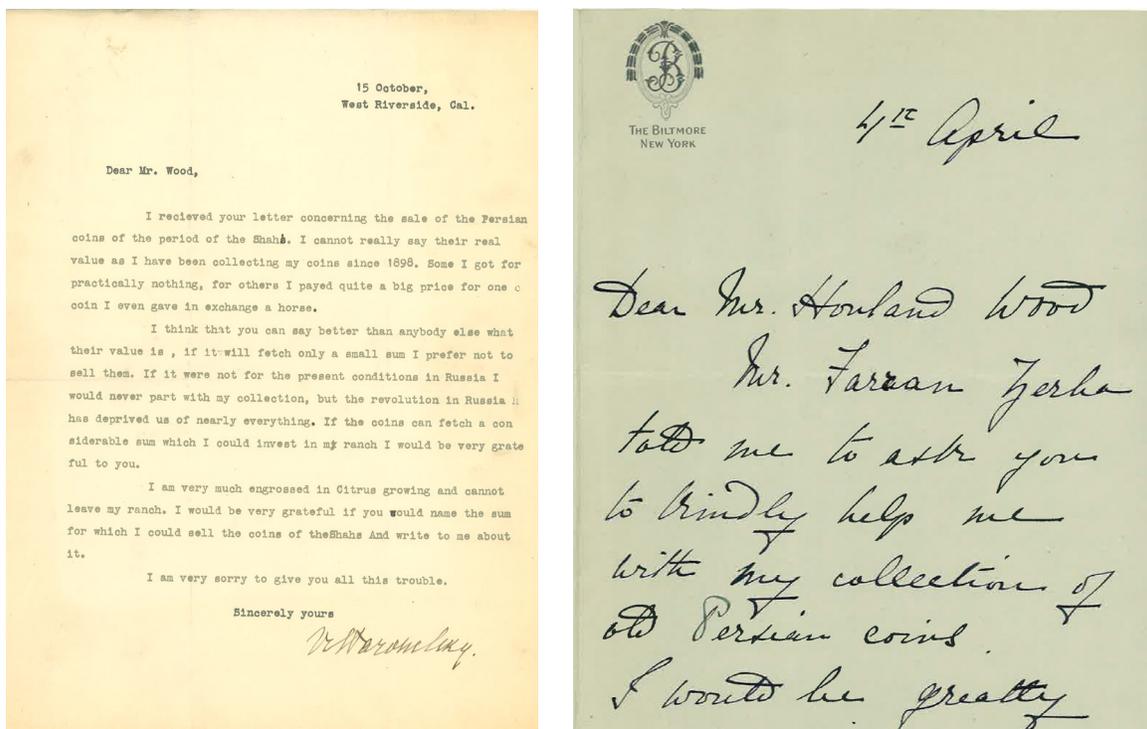


Figure 4. Correspondence between Starosselsky and Wood concerning the sale of Starosselsky's collection. April 4, 1921; October 15, 1921. American Numismatic Society, Record Group 2: Curatorial, 1858-ongoing, Series 9: Howland Wood curator correspondence and other material, 1913-1937. Box 8, Starosselsky, V.D. 1921-1938. Reproduced courtesy of the ANS.

However, as Wood explained to Starosselsky, the ANS did not have the resources to purchase the whole collection, and neither would any private buyers, since “Mohammadean” coins were not in high demand.³⁹ Writing to a colleague from the British Museum, Wood was more blunt, saying that that situation was particularly difficult because Starosselsky had “collected everything in sight,” resulting in an assemblage full of duplicate coins that would need to be sold to different buyers.⁴⁰ American and European clients, after all, generally wanted a single specimen of a piece, not dozens of the same coin. It took many months for Wood to prepare the collection for sale, which included sorting the coins and identifying them. To give a sense of the scale of this project, in the late 1920s, the entire holdings of the ANS were estimated to be about 100,000 pieces,⁴¹ so Starosselsky's 10,000-piece collection was massive.

Furthermore, the collection included many puzzling coins that neither Wood nor his colleagues could attribute to specific rulers.⁴² The coinage of the South Caucasus was not well understood in the early twentieth century, and there was undoubtedly material in the collection that was entirely unfamiliar (see figure 5). Attributed coins were far more attractive to buyers, while the unattributed ones were offered for little more than their metallic value. By the second half of 1921, the collection had been broken up, and over the course of the next years, Wood sold the coins through auctions and directly to institutions and collectors.



Figure 5. Locally minted coin from the territory of Georgia, which is of a type that would likely not have been recognized in New York in the early 1920's. Coins that were not well understood at the time, like this one, would more likely have been broken from the Starosselsky collection. While I have not been able to link this particular example to the Starosselsky collection, it is of a type that we could expect him to have had. The gold coin is an imitation Alexander type stater, from 100 BCE-100 CE (ANS 1944.100.78502, bequest of E.T. Newell) 18mm, 3.25g. Reproduced courtesy of the ANS.

Recognizable coins that were popular, like Greek and Roman examples, sold first to individuals and institutions on both sides of the Atlantic. The president of the ANS, E.T. Newell, nearly immediately purchased a group of Byzantine, Parthian, Roman, and Greek coins for his personal collection.⁴³ Wood also purchased coins from the collection for the ANS, focusing on filling holes in the Society's holdings by acquiring specimens from what he describes as the "smaller dynasties" of the medieval period. After this, Wood arranged for the sale of the rest of the high-quality and attributed pieces, while also offering smaller and inferior lots to

private collectors across the country. By the end of the process, Starosselsky received a total of \$4,637.38 for his coins (around \$62,000 in 2016 inflation-adjusted dollars).

Knowing this history—both Starosselsky’s and Wood’s—allows us to think about the ANS Starosselsky coins in a more nuanced way. We learn that Starosselsky was a voracious collector—gathering everything he could find in the South Caucasus and Iran, and spending rather lavishly in the pursuit of his hobby. His original collection, then, would have been a reflection of coins available in the South Caucasus and Iran. But, the collection that is held today by the ANS is not. It was shaped by market pressures and by Wood’s priorities. The ANS collection has relatively little classical-period material, because recognizable Greek, Roman, and Parthian coins were desirable to private collectors and, therefore, easily sold.⁴⁴ At the same time, locally minted classical-period material that might have been in the collection would not have been recognized in 1922, and therefore would have remained unattributed. These coins were likely sold in lower-value lots.⁴⁵ However, Wood’s interest in collecting coins from what he termed the “smaller dynasties” of the Islamic period may well be responsible for the fact that 34 percent of the 2,658 ANS Starosselsky coins were minted by the comparatively smaller powers in the South Caucasus, making it a truly impressive collection for this underrepresented zone.

The legacy of the ANS holdings for the numismatic scholarship of the South Caucasus, and particularly for Anglophone familiarity with Georgian numismatics, cannot be overstated. Starosselsky’s ANS coins were the foundation for David Lang’s 1955 publication on Georgian numismatics, which remains the primary English-language reference on this subject.⁴⁶ But a consideration of the collection’s history helps us appreciate what is missing. The unfamiliarity of the material culture of the South Caucasus itself caused further misunderstandings and fragmentation of the archaeological record, likely leading to the dispersal of less-recognizable and attributable coins into the hands of private collectors. This process of dispersal left only the faintest trace in the archival records, but had serious ramifications for the shape of the archaeological record that we possess today, and the historical narratives that we build on legacy data.

Stages of Interpretation: Archives and *Antik* Archaeology in Azerbaijan

Having discussed the use of archaeological archives to understand the formation of a particular archaeological dataset, I will now consider how archival reports can help understand the course of archaeological interpretation from the moment of excavation through eventual publication. For this, we move from the airy library of the ANS overlooking lower Manhattan, to the first floor of a resolutely neoclassical building in downtown Baku, which until recently housed the archaeological reports from the archive of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (*Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyasının Arxeologiya və Etnoqrafiya İnstitutu*). This archive holds official reports submitted at the end of each season of fieldwork conducted in Azerbaijan.⁴⁷ The reports that I consulted were written during the Soviet period, with most dating to the second half of the twentieth century. Each report, between twenty and 100 pages of text and images, details the activity of a year's work at a specific archaeological site. I was looking at reports related to what in Azerbaijan is called the *antik* period, defined by the rise of two important local polities, Atropatene in the south and Caucasian Albania in the north, stretching from the fourth century BCE through the third century CE.⁴⁸



Figure 6. The building in the foreground held the archives of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography until 2016. Baku, Azerbaijan. Photograph by author.

The Arxeologiya və Etnoqrafiya İnstitutu (AEİ) reports are an interesting genre of archaeological writing, neither rough-and-ready field notes nor fully digested final publications. They are dry, written by one specialist for other specialists, and they feel almost telegraphic. To read them is to drop into the story of Azerbaijani archaeology *in media res*. There is little framing of the data either theoretically or practically, and the language is both technical and opaque, especially for someone trained outside of the tradition. Photographs are usually of individual artifacts, with each image carefully trimmed to the profile of the object and pasted into the report. Contextualized views of artifacts *in situ* only exist for a few “example” contexts for each report, and site plans or maps are surprisingly rare. Each report also includes two reviews written by a senior member of the Academy of Sciences, which make clear what was deemed praiseworthy or deserving of criticism within the archaeological community.

It is impossible to understand these reports without considering them within their intellectual framework. One of the legacies of Cold War isolationist policies was the development of a sophisticated body of Soviet archaeological practice and theory that matured largely outside of the influence of western European and Anglo-American archaeology.⁴⁹ Although guided by an underlying ideology of Marxist materialism, the discipline was neither straightforwardly ideological nor monolithic.⁵⁰ Instead, the pressure to incorporate shifting intellectual perspectives and understandings of Marxism led to moments of real dynamism and a robust, if often politically charged, theoretical landscape.⁵¹ The ebbs and flows of these theoretical conversations can be tracked through the reports and into published accounts of Azerbaijani archaeology.

Already by the late 1920s, a new and increasingly political cadre of post-revolutionary archaeologists had ushered in a “Marxist history of material culture” in the Soviet Union that was different in scope, structure, and intent from the discipline practiced by pre-revolutionaries.⁵² Part of their critique was explicitly about archaeological practice: they found the typological study that had been such a mainstay of nineteenth-century archaeology to be a form of “naked artefactology” and a “product of bourgeois evolutionism, a method which fetishized objects

and biologized history.”⁵³ The accusation of “fetishizing objects” presented a real challenge for method and theory of the “discipline of things,” where as a matter of practical course, objects are given a place of privilege. One result was the relatively early Soviet interest in using material culture to explain cultural development—a set of questions that would become popular in non-Soviet archaeology only much later in the century.⁵⁴

At the same time, despite the explicit Marxism of much of the theoretical work in the 1920s and especially the 1930s, Soviet archaeology never entirely abandoned the “culture-ethnic” approach that had developed in the pre-revolutionary period.⁵⁵ In this system, artifacts were grouped into “archaeological cultures,” which then became associated with a distinct material assemblage, a territorial space, and a historical tribal population. Over time, this interest morphed into a focus on ethnogenesis,⁵⁶ in which modern populations were explicitly linked to ancient populations inhabiting the same territory,⁵⁷ with theories of large-scale migration serving as one primary explanatory mechanism for cultural change.⁵⁸ Given the great ethnic and linguistic diversity of the South Caucasus, it should not be surprising that such discourses found fertile ground in the region, with disputes arising over precisely who was the inheritor of which ancient culture. Both Georgia and Armenia, for example, initially declared themselves to be the descendants of the Iron Age kingdom of Urartu.⁵⁹ Meanwhile, Caucasian Albania, dating back to the Hellenistic and Roman period, found itself the subject of a harsh nationalist polemic between Azerbaijani and Armenian researchers, which has continued into the post-Soviet period.⁶⁰ In these battles, archaeological material was endowed with ethnic meaning and harnessed in ongoing fights about the territorial extent of modern nation-states.⁶¹

Beyond Marxist social history and the ethnic politicization of antiquity, Soviet research on the *antik* period in Azerbaijan was also shaped by attitudes towards classical antiquity. While the discipline of archaeology was able to chart an ideologically acceptable course for itself within the Soviet system, the specific study of classical antiquity—perceived as the domain of the irredeemable elite—suffered more.⁶² Greece and Rome were relegated to moralizing exempla in Marxist histories.⁶³ The robust nineteenth-century explorations into the classical-period

history of Russian territories fell by the wayside. The South Caucasus, as a late focus of Russian archaeological exploration, never received serious attention as a part of the wider ancient Mediterranean and Iranian spheres.⁶⁴

As a result of an aversion to engagement with “decadent” Classical history, as well as the use of archaeology to bolster nationalist narratives of ethnically-defined polities, *antik*-period archaeological research in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus more broadly remained focused on the local. Therefore, although we know that *antik*-period dynasts from Azerbaijan were interacting with the broader ancient world,⁶⁵ the emphasis within archaeological and historical studies has been on the polity as a historically particular and entirely *local* phenomenon, with external actors largely relegated to supporting roles in the genesis of the state.⁶⁶ Azerbaijani *antik* archaeology does not try to situate the polity within a quasi-universal narrative of classical descent, but rather within a highly local system of interactions, where questions of ethnicity have been of central importance.⁶⁷

This approach necessarily should be contrasted with the traditional strategies of political legitimization in Western Europe, where as Michael Dietler describes, there was a “shared discourse” predicated on a common Greco-Roman cultural heritage.⁶⁸ In that environment, understandings of power—and particularly expansionist colonial power—relied on implicit associations between Greece and Rome and modern local populations, who had inherited the cultural legacy of the great empires. The tendency in early archaeological exploration in Western Europe, then, was to downplay signs of regionalism or resistance to Greek and Roman expansion, and to emphasize Hellenizing or Romanizing traits. In contrast, the dominant narratives about ancient history in the South Caucasus have long foregrounded the experience of local populations—prefiguring the trend towards studying the “local” that would become prominent in Anglophone archaeology only in the late twentieth century.

I turned to the unpublished archival AEI reports to see how much of this historical interpretive framework was explicit in the excavator’s initial reporting of archaeological material; to what extent were excavators using terms like “Caucasian Albanian” or “Roman?”

How were they classifying their material, and periodizing it? What role did Marxist sociology or ethnogenesis play in their initial presentation of the data? My goal was to understand how the data were viewed at the time of its discovery, to be better able to track these themes in later scholarship.

I will discuss these issues as they relate to one typical series of AEI reports, which record the excavation of a site called Xınıslı (*Хыныслы, Khinisli*), located near the city of Şamaxı.⁶⁹ In Azerbaijani archaeological literature, Xınıslı is famous as one of the few examples of an excavated settlement from the *antik* period in Caucasian Albania.⁷⁰ Despite its prominence, very little material from the site has ever been published. Although the AEI reports for Xınıslı are not complete (with some years missing their images and other years missing entirely), the over 300 pages of text and 100 plates of images provide far more detail than what is otherwise available.

The site was excavated by the archaeologist Cabbar Əsədulla Xəlilov between 1958 and 1974.⁷¹ Xəlilov, who authored or co-authored all the reports, was part of the first generation of



Figure 7. Detail map of Azerbaijan showing several important archaeological sites. Map created by author.

Azerbaijani post-war archaeologists. He was trained both in Baku and Moscow and assumed a central role in Azerbaijani archaeology in the late 1950s.⁷² He participated in excavations at Mingəçevir, one of the most important *antik*-period excavations in Azerbaijan, but was also a specialist in much earlier Iron Age to Bronze Age material, and he worked on nomadic groups in the South Caucasus more broadly.⁷³ At the time he began work at Xınıslı, he was a regional specialist as much as an *antik* specialist.

Xınıslı was selected for excavation after a farmer discovered a large hoard of silver coins in 1958,⁷⁴ along with many fragments of building material that suggested the presence of a significant settlement.⁷⁵ This hoard comprised over 330 coins: Greek, Hellenistic, Parthian, and Roman, as well as locally minted pieces, and generated immediate excitement.⁷⁶ Individual specimens of the locally minted coins had been reported in Azerbaijan as far back as 1926, but the Xınıslı hoard made it possible to identify these coins as the product of Caucasian Albania.⁷⁷ This new finding elevated the status of Caucasian Albania, strengthening its claim to parity with its better-researched neighbor Caucasian Iberia, located in what is today Georgia.⁷⁸ But there was a problem: very little *antik*-period architectural material had been found in excavation from Caucasian Albania—certainly less than in Iberia. Instead, the archaeological history had been built almost entirely on material from graves, making it hard to argue for the same level of urban sophistication as in neighboring Iberia.⁷⁹

Thus, excavations at Xınıslı had the potential to reveal a true example of urbanism—a city for Caucasian Albania. The choice of Xınıslı was directly connected to a push to better understand the roots of Caucasian Albania, and to establish its credentials as a developed urban polity. However, while Xəlilov found clear traces of settlement activity at the Xınıslı, including some stone-wall foundations and structural remains—column bases and roof tiles—he was never successful in finding intact monumental architecture or a recognizable urban conglomeration.⁸⁰ It is these traces of settlement—the roof tiles and foundations—that have been emphasized in broad-scale interpretive works on Caucasian Albania. They enshrine Xınıslı as an important Albanian settlement, if one in need of more archaeological research.⁸¹

The original reports on Xınıslı are more cautious about the nature of this settlement than later accounts. Although Xəlilov refers to the fragmentary remains as a settlement (*yaşayış yeri*) throughout, he is transparent about the difficulty and confused nature of the remains, and the lack of clarity about their meaning. In fact, the majority of the reports are dedicated to a discussion of the over 260 graves excavated at the site, rather than the settlement material. At a fundamental level, then, the report emphasizes a different aspect of the site than most later-published accounts.⁸²

A frequent compliment among reviewers is that Xəlilov presents his material strictly in the order it was excavated (top-to-bottom, that is). Given the preliminary nature of his data, one review says, it would be unwise for him try to rearrange it into another format.⁸³ And indeed, the reports do read as lists of excavated strata. The 1959 report, for example, begins with one paragraph about the first year's work followed by one paragraph about the location of the year's excavations. Xəlilov then launches into a list of the twenty-five graves, numbered in the order that they had been excavated (pages 1-11); followed by a discussion of the chronology of the graves (12-14); a description of the excavated strata from the settlement below the graves (14-16, 20-21); descriptions of materials excavated from these settlement strata (16-20, 21-26); and finally, a discussion of the chronology of the material (26-28).

Throughout the reports, Xəlilov tries to avoid interpretation of the data. Culturally descriptive names, such as "Caucasian Albania" (*Qafqaz albaniyası*) or "Parthia" (*Parfiya*) are used extremely sparingly. The 1959 report, for example, uses neither term. Artifacts that were imported from other parts of the ancient world, which in other contexts might receive special attention as signs of international interaction, are treated without fanfare. For instance, two glass vessels found in 1963, which were likely imported from Roman Syria, simply appear in the lists of grave finds, with no mention of their non-local character. At the same time, Xəlilov does use some descriptive terms, like "house" (*ev*) which is his preferred term for structures regardless of evidence of domestic use. In general, the reports avoid assigning precise dates to material, preferring very broad categories like "Medieval" (*orta əsr*), "Bronze Age," (*tunç dövr*)

or “fifth century BCE to first century BCE” etc. The assigning of periods is based as much as possible on stratigraphy rather than the stylistic dating of objects. Over all, Xəlilov attempts to present a neutral record of “archaeological facts” as they were recorded from the ground, without editorializing.

Based on these reports, it is clear that the Azerbaijani scholarly community believed that the act of data interpretation was a separate, second, step in the archaeological process. The reports were the product of the first step—the act of recording. For this reason, there is only minimal discussion of cultural groups or social history in the reports, and there is no explicit Marxism. The unfiltered accounts of excavated strata and objects shows a side of Azerbaijani archaeology that is not visible in any of the published accounts that prefer to focus on interpretation, even in preliminary publications.

This is in no way to deny the impact of underlying ideological frameworks on the generation of the data—on the fundamental choices of where to excavate, and how to categorize material. I have already discussed the reasons for Xınıslı’s excavation, which goes largely unmentioned in the AEİ reports. Furthermore, the ahistoricity of Xəlilov’s language and his lack of attention to imports are likely consequences of the locally focused worldview employed in the study of *antik* archaeology. But the reports are unvarnished compared to later publications, and therefore lay bare these underlying preconceptions and frameworks. Through them, I was exposed to the most basic and neutral vocabulary for describing a site: I learned that in this context, a “house” just refers to a small structure with walls, rather than something identifiably domestic. I also learned that period delineations like “medieval” were very broadly applied on the basis of stratigraphic relationships—in other words, the terms were not being used as precisely as I had assumed.

Reading the Xınıslı reports provided a wealth of new data from the site that never made it into the brief publications. But their real value to me was that they taught me about the process of archaeology in Azerbaijan in the mid-twentieth century, giving me hints to interpret other published data even in cases when the AEİ reports are not available. It is these types of clues that

I was missing at the beginning of my work on archaeology in the South Caucasus, and this is how the archives taught me how to interact with this archaeological material on its own terms.

Archives as Access to the Materialized Past

The archives that I have discussed here are different in period, format, scope, and intent. They address conceptually different questions, and the answers that they offer are asymmetrical. Their commonality, however, is that they provide context for the shape and nature of our inherited archaeological datasets—whether material collections or published accounts. In the examples discussed here, archives provide context for understanding the shape of modern data collections, as well as guidance in understanding and interpreting published literature. The value of these types of explorations is not limited to spaces like the South Caucasus, although the need for them is especially clear in such zones.

The modern geopolitical liminality of the South Caucasus has fragmented archaeological datasets along myriad geographic, linguistic, and historical axes. Archives are critically important in tracking the ramifications that these processes have had on archaeological practice and archaeological narratives. The archives are useful not just because of what they say about an ancient past, but rather because of the clues that they hold about how that antiquity was constructed in our own much more recent scholarly past. As the discipline of archaeology matures and grows beyond its traditional boundaries, we become entangled in increasingly vast and complex assemblages of people, things, and interpretations. The archaeological archives are the threads that connect the scholarly present with the history of its archaeological subjects, and therefore must play a central role in our continuing reinterpretation of the past.

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Summer Seminar, while the research in Baku was conducted with the support of a CLIR-Mellon Fellowship for Dissertation Research in Original Sources, as well as the Kolb Society of Fellows of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Endnotes

- 1 Vurğun, *Əsərləri: Altı cildə*, II c. (Baku: Azərbaycan EA nəşriyyatı, 1960), 28. Translation by author.
- 2 On the “unknowability” of the South Caucasus, see Bruce Grant and Lale Yalcin-Heckmann, “Introduction,” in *Caucasus Paradigms: Anthropologies, Histories and the Making of a World Area*, ed. Bruce Grant and Lale Yalcin-Heckmann (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007), 1–20.
- 3 For archaeological infrastructure, see Lori Khatchadourian, “Making Nations from the Ground up: Traditions of Classical Archaeology in the South Caucasus,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 112, no. 2 (2008): 247. For an example of a nineteenth-century publication about ancient history related to this article, see for example A.O. Ianovskii, “О древней Кавказской Албании” [On Ancient Caucasian Albania], *Журнал министерства народного просвещения* [Journal of the Ministry of Public Education] 52, section 2 (1846): 97–136, 161–203.
- 4 On Russian literary perceptions of the South Caucasus more generally, see Katya Hokanson, *Writing at Russia’s Border* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (Cambridge: University Press Cambridge, 1994).
- 5 For discussion about the state of post-Soviet anthropological scholarship in the South Caucasus, see Tsypylma Darieva and Viktor Voronkov, “Rethinking the South Caucasus. Introduction,” *Laboratorium: Russian Review of Social Research* 2, no. 1 (2010): 17–27.
- 6 This article uses the following conventions for handling Azerbaijani and Russian language names, toponyms and transliterations: Contemporary Azerbaijani spellings are used for place names unless a common English alternative exists (Baku rather than Bakı). Azerbaijani personal names appear in untransliterated Azerbaijani, unless the individual is more commonly known by a Russian form, in which case the transliterated Russian form is used. Azerbaijani titles in the endnotes appear in the original along with an English translation. Authors’ names for works written in Russian are transliterated according to the Library of Congress system with standard alterations, alongside original and translated titles in the endnotes. An unavoidable result of this linguistic complexity is that names for the same author can appear in several forms (Lev Klein for works in Russian, but Leo Klejn for works in English; Dzhabbar Khalilov for works in Russian, but Cabbar Xəlilov for works in Azerbaijani). Other deviations are noted in the text.
- 7 “Materialization” in this sense refers to the process through which the physical materials of the past are brought into our present, see Gavin Lucas, *Critical Approaches to Fieldwork: Contemporary and Historical Archaeological Practice* (Florence, US: Routledge, 2002), 211.

- 8 Bjørnar Olsen et al., *Archaeology: The Discipline of Things* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2012).
- 9 Daniel Miller and Christopher Tilley, "Editorial," *Journal of Material Culture* 1, no. 1 (1996): 1, doi:10.1177/135918359600100101.
- 10 If these periods were addressed at all, it was to bemoan the lack of information about early excavations or criticize the recording practices of prior generations, rather than to engage substantively with disciplinary history or the ramifications of disciplinary practice on our ability to reevaluate old data.
- 11 On theories of time in archaeology in the Anglo-American academy, see Simon Holdaway and LuAnn Wandsnider, *Time in Archaeology: Time Perspectivism Revisited* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2008); Gavin Lucas, *The Archaeology of Time* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005); Tim Murray, *Time and Archaeology* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999). For a Russian perspective on time and archaeology, see Lev S. Klein, *Время в археологии* [Time in Archaeology] (Saint Petersburg: Evraziia, 2012).
- 12 For example, debates about time perspectivism, which consider whether the investigation of different time scales requires different types of data. See Geoff Bailey, "Time Perspectives, Palimpsests and the Archaeology of Time," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 26, no. 2 (June 2007): 198–223, doi:10.1016/j.jaa.2006.08.002.
- 13 On studies of time and their entanglement with notions of subjectivity, see Lucas, *The Archaeology of Time*, chap. 2. On archaeological subjectivity, see Ian Hodder, *The Archaeological Process: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); Lucas, *Critical Approaches to Fieldwork*.
- 14 Gavin Lucas, "Fieldwork and Collecting," in *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, ed. Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 243.
- 15 Christopher Y. Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford: Berg, 1994).
- 16 Matt Edgeworth, *Acts of Discovery: An Ethnography of Archaeological Practice* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003); Yannis Hamilakis and Aris Anagnostopoulos, "What Is Archaeological Ethnography?" *Public Archaeology* 8, no. 2–3 (2009): 65–87, doi:10.1179/175355309X457150; and on the social context of archaeology, see Asa Berggren and Ian Hodder, "Social Practice, Method, and Some Problems of Field Archaeology," *American Antiquity* 68, no. 3 (2003): 421, doi:10.2307/3557102.
- 17 On historiography, see Tim Murray, "Writing Histories of Archaeology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Public Archaeology*, ed. Robin Skeates, Carol McDavid, and John Carman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 135–52; Bruce G. Trigger, "Writing the History of Archaeology: A Survey of Trends," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. G.W. Jr. Stocking (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 218–315. On archives specifically, see Nathan Schlanger, "Ancestral Archives: Explorations in the History of Archaeology," *Antiquity* 76, no. 291 (2002): 127–31, doi:10.1017/S0003598X00089882; Nathan Schlanger and Jarl Nordbladh, eds., *Archives, Ancestors, Practices: Archaeology in the Light of Its History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008).

- 18 From Russia, and of particular relevance to the themes of this paper, see Irina V. Tunkina, *Русская наука о классических древностях юга России (XVIII - середина XIX в.)* [The Russian Science of Classical Antiquities of Southern Russia (18th to Mid-19th Centuries)] (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 2002). For an example of archival research into disciplinary history from the Azerbaijan, see Elmira Dzhaferova, *Вклад Салех Мустафа оглы Казиева в развитие археологии Азербайджана* [The Contribution of Saleh Mustafa Oglu Kaziev to the Development of the Archaeology of Azerbaijan] (Baku: ELM, 2009).
- 19 Gavin Lucas, *Understanding the Archaeological Record* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 6ff.
- 20 Michael Shanks and Christopher Y. Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 103; see also Linda E. Patrik, “Is There an Archaeological Record?” *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 8 (1985): 27–62; Edgeworth, *Acts of Discovery*.
- 21 Of course, this interpretation of the nature of archaeology is itself not uniformly embraced by all communities of archaeologists.
- 22 This is an approach developed from the work of Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980). For an overview of current archaeological usage, see Yannis Hamilakis and Andrew Meirion Jones, “Archaeology and Assemblage,” *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 27, no. 1 (2017): 77–84. For social theory that has been formative for archaeologists working with the concept, see also Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
- 23 Chris Fowler, *The Emergent Past: A Relational Realist Archaeology of Early Bronze Age Mortuary Practices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.
- 24 E.D. Frolov, *Русская наука об античности. Историографические очерки* [Russian Research on Antiquity: Historiographic Sketches] (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2006), 112ff.
- 25 Today both archaeological ethical standards as well as national and international law limit such movement.
- 26 See for example Jonathan Scott, *The Pleasures of Antiquity: British Collectors of Greece and Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Center for Studies in British Art, 2003); Shawn Malley, “Layard enterprise: Victorian archaeology and informal imperialism in Mesopotamia.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 623-646.
- 27 For a fuller description of the ANS holdings, see Lara Fabian, “The Starosselsky Collection: Imperial Histories and Cultural Currencies,” *American Numismatics Society Magazine* 14, no. 4 (2015): 15–27.
- 28 This is a particularly important point. Since scholars outside of the Soviet Union had limited access to archaeological materials from within the Soviet space, the coins housed in the ANS became an important foundation for American explorations of the numismatic history of the South Caucasus, see David Marshall Lang, *Studies in the Numismatic History of Georgia in Transcaucasia, Based on the*

Collection of the American Numismatic Society, Numismatic Notes and Monographs, no. 130 (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1955).

- 29 Ibid., 6ff; Solmina A. Dadasheva, “Местный чекан в монетном обращении Кавказской Албании” [Locally Struck Coins Circulating in Caucasian Albania], *Вестник древней истории* [Journal of Ancient History] 152, no. 2 (1980): 121–29.
- 30 Fleur Kemmers and Nanouschka Myrberg, “Rethinking Numismatics. The Archaeology of Coins,” *Archaeological Dialogues* 18, no. 1 (2011): 87–108, doi:10.1017/S1380203811000146.
- 31 General Starosselsky’s last name (*Старосельский*) is often transliterated ‘Staroselsky.’ Here, however, I follow the English spelling that he himself used in his English-language correspondence.
- 32 For rare accounts of Starosselsky’s life, see Stephanie Cronin, “Deserters, Converts, Cossacks and Revolutionaries: Russians in Iranian Military Service, 1800–1920,” in *Iranian-Russian Encounters: Empires and Revolutions Since 1800*, ed. Stephanie Cronin (New York: Routledge, 2013), 143–86; and C. Cecil John Edmonds, *East and West of Zagros: Travel, War and Politics in Persia and Iraq 1913-1921*, ed. Yann Richard (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 362.
- 33 For the most complete discussion of this period of Starosselsky’s life, see Brian Pearce, *The Starosselsky Problem, 1918-20: An Episode in British-Russian Relations in Persia* (London: Centre of Near and Middle Eastern studies, 1994).
- 34 Ibid., 73.
- 35 “Ex-Russian Colonel Now a Hatcheryman,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 9, 1928, sec. J13.
- 36 Letter, Starosselsky to Wood, October 15, 1921. American Numismatic Society, Record Group 2: Curatorial, 1858-ongoing, Series 9: Howland Wood curator correspondence and other material, 1913-1937. Box 8, Starosselsky, V.D. 1921-1938. (ANS Starosselsky papers).
- 37 Letter, Starosselsky to Wood, October 15, 1921. ANS Starosselsky papers
- 38 Letter, Starosselsky to Wood, January 17, 1922. ANS Starosselsky papers.
- 39 Letter, Wood to Starosselsky, May 10, 1921. ANS Starosselsky papers.
- 40 Letter, Wood to Allen, July 5, 1921. American Numismatic Society, Record Group 2: Curatorial, 1858-ongoing, Series 9: Howland Wood curator correspondence and other material, 1913-1937. Box 2, British Museum (John Allen), 1920-1927.
- 41 Letter, Wood to Smith, September 7, 1928. American Numismatic Society, Record Group 2: Curatorial, 1858-ongoing, Series 9: Howland Wood curator correspondence and other material, 1913-1937. Box 7, Sh-Sp 1921-1929.
- 42 Inquires Wood in one letter, “Where would you place those little coins with the crude bird on them? From the looks of it, he must have had over a hundred of them, all in one find.” Letter, Wood to Allen, April 5, 1922. American Numismatic Society, Record Group 2: Curatorial, 1858-ongoing, Series 9: Howland Wood curator correspondence and other material, 1913-1937. Box 2, British Museum (John

Allen), 1920-1927.

- 43 Letter, Wood to Starosselsky, May 10, 1921. ANS Starosselsky papers.
- 44 Indeed, most of the ANS Starosselsky coins of this type (Hellenistic, Roman, and Parthian) actually came into the collection in 1940, passing from the collection of E.T. Newell that was posthumously donated.
- 45 The attribution of locally minted Georgian coins was possible at this time, but was only known in Russian scholarship and would likely not have been known to Wood. Locally minted coins from Azerbaijan, meanwhile, were not recognized as such until later in the twentieth century. As a relic of the difficulty of correctly attributing these local issues, a coin type minted in the territory of Georgia during the first century BCE is even today stored with “Celtic” coins at the ANS, as this was its attribution at the time of accession.
- 46 Lang, *Studies in the Numismatic History of Georgia*.
- 47 The reports were deposited to the archaeological division of the scientific archives of the Institute of History.
- 48 Nomenclature is confusing here. The period that I study is known in Azerbaijan by its Azerbaijani name, *antik dövr* or its Russian name, античный период (*antichnyi period*). In the context of Azerbaijani archaeology, these terms generally refer to the fourth century BCE through the third or fourth century CE. In this article, I use the term *antik*, following the Azerbaijani understanding. The term is borrowed from Russian, but in common Russian-language usage outside of Azerbaijan, the exact temporal definition is variable. In English, although we refer to “antiquity” in a general sense, we would call this material broadly Classical period (fifth century BCE to third century CE) or Late Antique (fourth century CE to seventh century CE). More specifically, it is likely that we would use culturally-specific terms (Hellenistic or Roman), or terms based on archeological periodization (Late Iron Age).
- 49 Pavel M. Dolukhanov, “Archaeology in Russia and Its Impact on Archaeological Theory,” in *Theory in Archaeology: A World Perspective*, ed. Peter J. Ucko (London: Routledge, 1995), 321–36; Leo S. Klejn, *Soviet Archaeology: Trends, Schools, and History*, trans. Kevin Windle and Rosh Ireland (Oxford: Oxford Studies in the History of Archaeology, 2012); A.A. Formozov, *Русские археологи до и после революции* [Russian Archaeologists before and after the Revolution] (Moscow: Institut Arkheologii RAN, 1995); O.S. Sveshnikova, *Советские археологи в поисках первобытной истории: Историческая интерпретация археологических источников в советской археологии 1930-1950-х гг* [Soviet Archaeology in the Search of a Primordial History: Historical Interpretation of Archaeological Researchers in Soviet Archaeology 1930-1950] (Omsk: Nauka, 2009).
- 50 Vasily A. Bulkin, Leo S. Klejn, and Gleb S. Lebedev, “Attainments and Problems of Soviet Archaeology,” *World Archaeology* 13, no. 3 (1982): 272–95, doi:10.1080/00438243.1982.9979834.
- 51 Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 208.
- 52 Dolukhanov, “Archaeology in Russia,” 324.

- 53 Klejn, *Soviet Archaeology*, 23.
- 54 Leo S. Klejn, “Childe and Soviet Archaeology: A Romance,” in *The Archaeology of V. Gordon Childe*, ed. D. Harris (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994), 75–99; Bruce G. Trigger, “Childe and Soviet Archaeology,” *Australian Archaeology*, no. 18 (1984): 1–16.
- 55 Dolukhanov, “Archaeology in Russia,” 325.
- 56 Victor A. Shnirelman, “From Internationalism to Nationalism: Forgotten Pages of Soviet Archaeology in the 1930s and 1940s,” in *Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 120–38.
- 57 For the most thorough treatment of the topic of deployments of the past in modern history in the South Caucasus, see Victor A. Shnirelman, *The Value of the Past: Myths, Identity and Politics in Transcaucasia* (Osaka, Japan: National Museum of Ethnology, 2001).
- 58 Michael D. Frachetti, “Migration Concepts in Central Eurasian Archaeology,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40, no. 1 (2011): 197.
- 59 Pavel M. Dolukhanov, “Archaeology in Colonial and Postcolonial USSR,” in *Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology*, ed. Jane Lydon and Uzma Rizvi, vol. 3 (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), 119.
- 60 Nora Dudwick, “The case of the Caucasian Albanians: Ethnohistory and ethnic politics,” *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 1990, 377–83; Philip L. Kohl and Gocha R. Tsetskhladze, “Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology in the Caucasus,” in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 149–74.
- 61 Shnirelman, *The Value of the Past*.
- 62 The high standard of Classical studies in the late Russian Empire has been called by one historiographer “the splendid sunset of humanistic culture,” destined to collapse in 1917 (Frolov, *Русская наука об античности. Историкографические очерки*, 247). And so, although Russian universities continued to teach the ancient languages throughout the twentieth century, it was at a much-diminished scope. See for example Olga Budaragina, “Olga M. Freidenberg, Aristid I. Dovatur, and the Department of Classics in Leningrad,” in *Classics and Communism: Greek and Latin behind the Iron Curtain*, ed. György Karsai et al. (Ljubljana; Budapest; Warsaw: Ljubljana University Press, 2013), 3–18.
- 63 For example, since slavery was central to Marxist narratives of social development, the question of slavery in the Roman Empire became the subject of intensive research, and slave revolts came to be seen as the main cause for the fall of the Roman Empire. Frolov, *Русская наука об античности. Историкографические очерки*, 444.
- 64 About the pre-Revolutionary history and the near-entire exclusion of the South Caucasus see, for example, Tunkina, *Русская наука о классических древностях юга России (XVIII - середина XIX в.)*.

- 65 Evidence for this comes from both textual sources (in Greek and Latin), as well as material culture.
- 66 For a clear example of this line of thought, see Il'ias A. Babaev, “К вопросу о возникновении государства Албании (Кавказской)” [On the Question of the Rise of the State of Caucasian Albania], *Azərbaycan SSR Elmlər Akademiyasının xəbərləri: Tarix, fəlsəfə və hüquq seriyası* [Proceedings of the Academy of Science of the Azerbaijani SSR: Series of History, Philosophy and Law], no. 4 (1976): 40–51.
- 67 Shnirelman, *The Value of the Past*, chap. 13.
- 68 Michael Dietler, *Archaeologies of Colonialism: Consumption, Entanglement, and Violence in Ancient Mediterranean France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 39f. See also, for example, research on the British constructions of Roman antiquity, Richard Hingley, *Roman Officers and English Gentlemen: The Imperial Origins of Roman Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2000); Phiroze Vasunia, “Greater Rome and Greater Britain,” in *Classics and Colonialism (London, 2005)*, ed. B Goff (London: Duckworth, 2003), 38–64.
- 69 Cabbar Ə. Xəlilov, Şamaxı rayonunun Xınıslı qədim yaşayış yeri C.Ə Xəlilovun 1958-ci il qazıntılarından. Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyası. Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi Arxivi (AMEA Tİ EA), fond #1, delo #4133 (h. 526); C.Ə. Xəlilov, Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar, 1959-cu ilin elmi hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #10, delo #4863 (h. 524); C.Ə. Xəlilov, Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar, 1960-cı ilin elmi hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #9, delo #4606, (h. 323); C.Ə. Xəlilov, Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar 1961-ci ilin elmi hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #11, delo #4915 (h. 327); C.Ə. Xəlilov, 1963-cü ildə Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #13, delo #5642 (h. 411); C.Ə. Xəlilov, 1964-cü ildə Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #14, delo #5932 (h. 483); C.Ə. Xəlilov, 1965-1966-cı illərdə Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, opis' #14, delo #6346 (h. 31); C.Ə. Xəlilov, Xınıslı arxeoloji ekspedisiyasının 1967-1968-ci illərdə apardığı qazıntıların hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, delo #7498 (h. 49); C.Ə. Xəlilov and A.Ş. Orucov, 1971-ci ildə qədim Şamaxıda Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntıların hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1, delo #7498 (h. 54); C.Ə. Xəlilov and A.Ş. Orucov, Qədim Şamaxıda Xınıslı arxeoloji qazıntıların 1972-ci il hesabatı. AMEA Tİ EA, fond #1 (h. 76).
- 70 Fazil L. Osmanov, *История и культура Кавказкой Албании IV в. до н.э. - III в. н.э. (на основании археологических материалов)* [History and Culture of Caucasian Albania: Fourth Century BCE – Third Century CE (on the Basis of Archaeological Material)] (Baku: Takhsil, 2006), 18ff; Il'ias A. Babaev, *Города Кавказской Албании в IV в. до н.э. – III в. н.э.* [The Cities of Caucasian Albania from the 4th Century BCE to the 3rd Century CE] (Baku: Elm, 1990), 23ff.
- 71 For readers unfamiliar with the Azerbaijani pronunciation, an English transliteration of Xəlilov's name is Jabbar Asadulla Khalilov.
- 72 Roza B. Arazova, “Görkəmli Qafqazşünas alim C.Ə. Xəlilovun anadan olmasının 85 illiyinə” [On the 85th Anniversary of the Birth of the Prominent Caucasian Scholar C.Ə. Xəlilov], *Azərbaycan Arxeologiyası* [Azerbaijani Archaeology] 17, no. 1 (2013): 18ff.
- 73 Cabbar Ə. Xəlilov, *Qərbi Azərbaycanın tunc dövrü və dəmir dövrünün əvvəllərinə aid arxeoloji abidələri (Şamxor və Zəyəm çayları hövzələri)* [Bronze and Early Iron Age Monuments from Western Azerbaijan (Şamxor and Zəyəm River Basins)] (Baku: Azərbaycan SSR EA nəşriyyatı, 1959).

- 74 Evgeni A. Pakhomov, “Античные монеты в Албании (в пределах Азербайджанской ССР)” [Classical Coins in Albania (within the Limits of the Azerbaijani SSR], in *Вопросы истории Кавказской Албании* [Questions of the History of Caucasian Albania], ed. Igrar Aliev (Baku: Izdatel’stvo Akademii nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR, 1962), 48–51; Evgeni A. Pakhomov, *Монетные клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа* [Coin Hoards of Azerbaijan Other Republics, Borders and Territories of the Caucasus], vol. 9 (Baku: Izdatel’stvo Akademii nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR, 1966) n. 2080.
- 75 Dzhabbar A. Khalilov, *Материальная культура Кавказской Албании (IV в. до н.э. - III в. н.э.)* [The Material Culture of Caucasian Albania (4th C. BCE- 3rd C. CE)] (Baku: ELM, 1985), 19. Small-scale excavations in the same general area in the 1930s had revealed *antik*-period graves, see Evgeni A. Pakhomov, “Крепость Гюлистан (Кыз-Каласы) близ Шемахи” [The Fortress of Gülüstan (Qız Qalası) near Şamaxı], *Известия Азербайджанского филиала Академии наук СССР* [Proceedings of the Azerbaijani Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR], no. 3 (1944): 44–49.
- 76 Pakhomov, “Античные монеты в Албании (в пределах Азербайджанской ССР).”
- 77 The conclusion was solidified with the finding of another larger hoard of such coins in nearby in 1966, see Ilias A. Babaev and Saleh M. Kaziev, “Кабалинский клад монет эллинистической эпохи” [The Qəbələ Hoard of Coins of the Hellenistic Era], *Нумизматика и Эпиграфика* [Numismatics and Epigraphy] IX (1971): 16–32.
- 78 Igrar G. Aliev, “К интерпретации параграфов 1,3,4 и 5 IV главы XI книги ‘Географии’ Страбона” [On the Interpretation of Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Section 4 of the Tenth Book of Strabo’s “Geography”], *Вестник древней истории* [Journal of Ancient History] 133, no. 3 (1975): 150–65.
- 79 The period also saw the beginning of excavations at the site of Qəbələ (*Габала, Gabala*), the purported capital city of Caucasian Albania, which would eventually yield some monumental architecture. For a summary in English, see Ilias A. Babaev, “Excavations of Communal Buildings (Fourth Century BC- First Century AD) at Gabala, the Capital of Caucasian Albania,” in *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC: Regional Development and Cultural Interchange between East and West*, ed. Inge Nielsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2001), 285–94.
- 80 Osmanov, *Istoriia i kul'tura Kavkazkoï Albanii*, 18.
- 81 See the conclusion to Osmanov’s description of the site, “To everything noted above, it should be added that, despite detailed archaeological excavations, the historical picture of the existence of the settlement has not been studied sufficiently. While the numerous examples of material culture, certainly, testify to the presence here of an urban center that was large for its time, its structure, its typical urban instillations, and the particularities of its architecture have essentially not been studied” (Ibid).
- 82 The graves are often mentioned in published accounts, but given the much larger number of excavated graves in Azerbaijan, the Xınıslı necropolis occupies a less central place in Azerbaijani archaeology than the settlement.
- 83 Cabbar Ə. Xəlilov, Xınıslıda arxeoloji qazıntılar 1961-ci ilin elmi hesabatı, 2.