

The Roman fort *Apsaros* is a place known outside of Georgia, as one of the symbols of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. Tourists and people interested in the Roman fortifications know that the walls of the fort are one of the best preserved Roman fortifications. However, specialists are aware that walls and towers visible on the surface were formed mostly during the Byzantine period. Only their foundations most probably were built during the late Roman period (i.e. at the end of the 3rd century or later). It is known that the Roman army stationed in this area since probably half of the 1st century.

How did the early fortifications, buildings inside the fort and its surroundings look like? Why was this place chosen? How did the fort *Apsaros* function as a key base for the Roman armies on the border of Colchis? For these and many other questions, we do not have answers until today.

The proposed project "The Roman fort *Apsaros* - a place in the local environment and role in the Roman border control system" is a chance to gain new information.

As part of the planned research, it is anticipated to supplement and organize information from written (ancient) sources about *Apsaros* as well as cartographic sources (mainly modern maps) relating to the area of the fort.

Also, will be a prepared compilation of the published scientific (bibliography) papers on *Apsaros*.

Collected and analysed will be information on all archaeological discoveries made in the area. In addition, the project foresees scanning of the area around the fort from the air (LIDAR). The result will be the three-dimensional mapping of the terrain that can reveal to us the traces of fortifications and Roman structures hidden underground. All collected data will be used during the preparation and implementation of next research stages. Information applied on maps (and the three-dimensional terrain model) will be checked and supplemented by the so-called surface surveys. As part of this work, archaeologists and geologists will walk the entire accessible area around the fort.

On maps and terrain model will be plotted places with visible on surface different types of monuments, quarries, clay pits, water sources ... which could be used by the Roman army. Gathered will be also information on similar places not seen today, but known to the population.

At the end of this phase of the study will be decided how many archaeological surveys, geological drillings and outcrops will be done. Optimal places for further work will be selected to enable the verification of collected data and to answers research questions set at the beginning of the project.

With the implementation of the planned tasks and the analysis of the collected data, will be possible to reconstruct the environment in times when the fort was built. We will also be able to answer at least some of the questions about the role of the garrison in the Roman border control system in the region.

The results of the research will be available in the form of scientific publications (articles and books) and popular materials. Will be produced statements and articles for media. The results of the research will also be popularized and disseminated via social media, including the profile Gonio-Apsaros Polish-Georgian expedition. It is also planned to present research results at scientific conferences, including international ones.