

## MIMOZA ZHORZHOLIANI

### SEAL WITH BIRD IMAGE FROM KUTAISI MUSEUM

A bronze seal is part of pitcher-grave complex dated to the beginning of the 3rd century BCE preserved at the archeological fund of Niko Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State History Museum. The seal depicts an image of an eagle.

The eagle image is related to the most ancient religious folk beliefs about the fairytale magical birds that had been assigned supernatural features. Eagles fly higher than other birds. An eagle personifies a solar deity, and it might be the deity's companion at the same time. In pagan mythology an eagle – the king of birds is an attribute of the highest deities.

Eagle represents strength in the art of the ancient eastern peoples, being generally a symbol of victory. In ancient Rome, and Islamic world and Christian Byzantium in the Middle Ages an eagle was assigned a meaning of a state emblem.

An artistic image of an eagle has been applied by the Christian world. The eagle motive has the most ancient tradition in Georgia; it has been attested in archeological materials excavated on the territory of Georgia and dated to the period of antiquity and beyond.