



კორნელი კეკელიძის სახელობის საქართველოს
ხელნაერთთა ეროვნული ცენტრი
KORNELI KEKELIDZE GEORGIAN
NATIONAL CENTRE OF MANUSCRIPTS



განათლების მეცნიერებასა და ახალგაზრდობის სამინისტრო
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND YOUTH OF GEORGIA



ახალგაზრდა მეცნიერები კლანდის უკეთესი მომავლისთვის
YOUNG SCIENTISTS FOR THE BETTER FUTURE OF THE PLANET

UCLouvain

ლუვენის კათოლიკური უნივერსიტეტი (ბელგია)
UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN (BELGIUM)



საერთაშორისო საზაფხულო
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KORNELI KEKELIDZE GEORGIAN NATIONAL
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2025



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**ახალგაზრდა მეცნიერები პლანეტის უკეთესი
მომავლისთვის
YOUNG SCIENTISTS FOR THE BETTER FUTURE OF THE PLANET**



**ლუვენის კათოლიკური უნივერსიტეტი (ბელგია)
UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN (BELGIUM)**

პროექტი ხორციელდება საქართველოს განათლების, მეცნიერებისა და ახალგაზრდობის საინისტროს ფინანსური მხარდაჭერით ახალგაზრდა მეცნიერთა კვირეულის „ახალგაზრდა მეცნიერები პლანეტის უკეთესი მომავლისთვის“ ფარგლებში

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საერთაშორისო საზაფხულო სკოლა

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Editing and publishing team

Lana Grdzelishvili
Sophiko Menteshashvili
Tamta Janashia

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MEDIEVAL GEORGIA: A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Georgia and Georgian culture are important to the world for their unique contribution to cultural diversity, history and civilization. Georgia's strategic location (located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia) has made it a crossroads of cultures, and its people have managed to maintain their identity.

Georgia's contribution to world heritage:

1. Ancient history and cultural heritage.

Outside of Africa, ancient hominid remains have been found in Georgia (Dmanis), indicating an early human migration route. The fragments of the human skeleton found in Dmanis are the oldest in all of Eurasia, their age is 1,800,000 years. This is a Georgian man (lat. Homo georgicus) - a type of person, a transitional form between a right-handed person (Homo habilis) and an upright person (Homo erectus). At first, scientists thought that the bones they found belonged to Homo ergaster, but later they were convinced that they belonged to another species, and had to adopt a new term - Homo Georgicus.

The country's rich history is reflected in its traditions, ancient churches and UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which provide invaluable information about human history and cultural development. Georgian civilization originates from the ancient kingdoms of Colchis and Iberia, which arose in the 1st millennium BC.

Colchis is known to the Western world from the Greek myth of Jason and the Argonauts - the "Golden Fleece". According to the same myth, Medea, the daughter of the legendary king of ancient Colchis Aietus, was considered a goddess in the ancient and pre-antique world, and temples were built in her honor. Medea had amazing healing skills and knowledge. The term medicine itself comes from her name.

Iberia, located in the east, became an important political and cultural center BC. in the 4th century Georgian civilization embodies a rich picture of history, culture and sustainability. Its unique language, traditions and contributions to world heritage fascinate scholars and visitors alike. Georgian civilization, despite its deep roots in the ancient past, remains dynamic and developing. The Christianization of Georgia at the beginning of the 4th century was a decisive moment in its history, making it one of the first countries in the world to adopt Christianity as a state religion. This event had a great influence on the development of Georgian culture, including its literature, art and architecture. In the Middle Ages, the Georgian lands were united under the leadership of the Bagration dynasty; this state reached its zenith of development during the reign of Kings David

IV „Aghmashenebeli“ (the Builder) and Tamar, respectively, in the 11th and 12th centuries. This era, known as the “Golden Age”, was marked by significant achievements in architecture, literature and the consolidation of Georgian Orthodox Christianity.

2. Unique language and scripts.

The Georgian language, which has a unique Georgian root, stands out in the world as one of the few languages that has its own written language. Georgian writing, consisting of three types (Asomtavruli, Nuskhuri and Mkhedruli), is a testament to the country’s rich literary tradition and intellectual history. This linguistic uniqueness increases the linguistic diversity of the world, highlighting the importance of preserving linguistic heritage. Georgian writing is more than a means of communication, it is proof of the resilience and creativity of the Georgian people. Its evolution from Asomtavruli to Mkhedruli reflects the history of the country, embodying its struggles, achievements and enduring cultural heritage.

3. Georgia – the cradle of viticulture

Georgia is considered the oldest wine region in the world, the traditions of winemaking here are more than 8000 years old. The traditional Georgian method of making wine in „Qvevry“ is recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage of mankind. Georgian wine culture has influenced the world practice of viticulture and contributed to the variety of wines in the world.

4. Georgia - an ancient Christian state.

Georgia was one of the first countries to adopt Christianity as a state religion at the beginning of the 4th century. Its ancient churches and monastic traditions have played an important role in the preservation and dissemination of Christian theology and art, contributing to the enrichment of the world’s Christian heritage. The Georgian Orthodox Church, with its unique liturgy and traditions, diversifies and enriches the world’s mosaic of Christian beliefs.

5. Culture and art

Georgia is an ancient country, so Georgian culture also dates back to the era of the first civilizations. It reflects a mixture of eastern and western influences with a unique style that has evolved over the centuries. From the stunning frescoes and icons of ancient churches to the characteristic polyphonic chants recognized by UNESCO, Georgian culture enriches the world’s heritage. Combining elements of Byzantine, Persian and Arabic influences, the country’s architectural marvel offers a unique synthesis of cultures.

6. Geopolitical significance

Georgia’s geopolitical position has made it a strategic bridge between Europe and Asia, facilitating the development of important historical trade routes such as the Silk Road. This also means that Georgia has historically played an important role in regional politics, influencing cultural and political dynamics between Europe and Asia.

7. History of statehood

The history of Georgian statehood is characterized by a continuous struggle to preserve sovereignty and culture. Despite invasion and domination by many enemies, Georgia has managed to maintain its unique identity throughout its history, which is a testament to the resilience and determination of the Georgian people. The state political entities of Diaoch and Colhi were created at the end of the 2nd millennium BC. In the 6th century, the Egris or Colchis kingdom was formed. It almost completely covered what is now western Georgia. BC. In the 4th century, the Iberian kingdom was founded in Eastern Georgia. From this moment on, the history of Georgian statehood goes back 3000 years.

8. Bagration Dynasty

The Bagration dynasty is one of the oldest ruling dynasties in the world. They ruled the Georgian state from the 6th to the 19th centuries - until the annexation of Georgia by Russia. The influence of the Bagration dynasty on Georgia is indelible, a symbol of unification, cultural progress and resilience in the face of external threats. Despite the loss of sovereignty, the legacy of the dynasty remains in the cultural and national consciousness of Georgia, embodying the spirit of Georgian independence, faith and cultural achievements.

Georgia and Georgian culture are important to the world because they represent the resilience, diversity and richness of human culture and history. The country's unique contribution to world culture, art and architecture, language, and religion not only enriches our global heritage, but also reminds us of the importance of preserving and developing cultural diversity. Thanks to its rich heritage and contribution to world culture, Georgia continues to actively participate in the development of world civilization.

* * *

Kingdom of Kolkheti

Colchis is mentioned in Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions from the 12th century BC. Cattle breeding and metallurgy, especially iron production, are widely developed here. The transition to the industrial use of iron accelerated the development of society and the formation of the state. Local Kartvelian tribes, such as the Khalibs, were famous for working with iron.

Archaeological excavations indicate a high level of development of Kolkheti. In the 11th-9th centuries BC, the powerful Colchis kingdom arose in western Georgia. In the 9th-8th centuries BC, the Colchis kingdom extended its influence over the entire territory of Western Georgia. The power of Colchis is reflected in the ancient Greek myth of the Argonauts.

The Greeks founded a number of new settlements on Georgian territory, for example Phasis (near the city of Poti), Gienos (Ochamchira), Dioskuria (near the city of Sukhumi), and there were also Greek settlements near Kobuleti. The Greeks also founded new settlements in the Northern Black Sea region (Pantikapaeon, Olbia, Chersonesus, etc.). As a rule, the Greeks influenced the

local population with such new buildings and conquered them, but in Colchis everything happened the other way around, they came under the influence of Colchis.

On the territory of Western Georgia, in addition to new Greek buildings, there were many local cities: for example, a city on the territory of Van, the capital was located not far from present-day Kutaisi - the city of Kutaya (Kvataya). In Kolkheti during this period there was money - "Kolkhuri Tetri". Despite the scant information available in historical sources, it is indisputable that during this period Kolkheti was ruled by a king who, according to the Greeks, was a descendant of the legendary Ayet.

The Colchian kingdom enjoyed high prestige both in Greece and in East Asia, where the Medes and Persians occupied a dominant position.

Herodotus writes: "The Persians live and reach the southern sea, which is called the „Purple Sea." Above them, to the north, live the Medes, above the Medes the Sasperians, above the Sasperians the Colchians, who reach the northern sea, into which the river Phasis flows. These four nations live from sea to sea."

During this period, Media and Persia were the strongest states, and the existence next to them of the independent Colchis kingdom speaks of its strength.

Kingdom of Kartli (Iberia).

Since ancient times, the territory of Kartli was inhabited by several related tribes, which ancient authors collectively called Iberi (Eastern Iberi), and local residents called their country Kartli (after the mythical ancestor "Kartlosi"). The most important of these settlements was Mtskheta, which became the capital of Iberia.

Since the Hellenistic period, Kartli (Iberia) was already a state that included the lands and waters of eastern-southern Georgia. This area was mainly inhabited by East Georgian tribes - Karts (Iberians). Meskhetians also played an active role in political life. At the turn of the 4th-3rd centuries BC, the Kingdom of Kartli was able to extend its power to Shida Kartli (inner Kartli).

At the beginning of the 3rd century BC, Farnavaz became king in Kartli (Iberia), who is the founder of a new dynasty of Iberian kings - the Farnavaz. Under him (3rd century BC), Iberia achieved great strength and became a fairly extensive state. In addition to Shida Kartli, Kakheti and Meskheti, it included part of Western Georgia (Argveti, Adjara). It includes the historical regions of Gogarene, Khordzene, as well as the Pariadri Mountains (according to Strabo, they were captured by the Armenian kingdoms from the Iberians only in the 2nd-1st centuries BC). The power of the Iberian kingdom also extended to the mountains of Eastern Georgia and the regions of Western Georgia.

In the 2nd century and the first half of the 1st century BC, Iberia weakened and lost part of its territories in the battle with the strengthened Armenian kingdoms. In 65 BC. Roman commander Pompey invaded Kartli. Despite resistance, the Iberian king Artagijs surrendered to the Romans. Soon an alliance was concluded between Rome and Iberia. In the 1st-2nd centuries AD, Iberia regained its strength and often acted as a rival to Rome in Transcaucasia and the Middle East. The strengthening of Iberia was facilitated by the establishment of control over the roads of the Caucasus and the use of nomadic tribes of Transcaucasia in foreign campaigns. Iberia managed to

completely return the lands previously captured by Armenia, and in the 30-50s of the 1st century (during the reign of King Farsman I and his son Radamist) for a short time subjugated all of Armenia.

In the second half of the 1st century, Iberia maintained friendly relations with Rome. In the 30-50s of the 2nd century, the territory of Iberia reached the Black Sea and became part of the Roman possessions. At this time, Kartli (Iberia) was at the peak of its power. Relations between Rome and the Kingdom of Kartli became strained. The Kartlian king Farsman II refused several times the invitation of Emperor Hadrian and arrived in Rome with his wife and son only during the reign of Anthony Pius. The Romans were fascinated by the military training of the Iberians. The emperor erected a statue of Farsman in the capital and recognized the expansion of the borders of Iberia.

Spread of Christianity

Christian teaching spread as a result of the preaching of the apostles. Iberia became part of the Virgin Mary, but Christianity was preached here by Andrew the First-Called, Simon the Canaanite and the Apostle Matata. Before this, the Robe of Christ was already kept in Kartli, which, according to the narrative, was brought to Mtskheta by Jews from Mtskheta - Elioiz from Mtskheta and Longinoz Karsnel after the crucifixion of Christ. Elioiz's mother is considered one of the first martyrs for Christ. In Georgia, Apostle Andrew founded the first episcopal diocese in Atskuri. According to sources, he brought to Georgia an icon of the Mother of God, the robe of the Mother of God, boards of the Cross of the Savior, nails and other relics. Simon Kananeli and Matata are buried in Georgia.

Christianity was declared the state religion in Kartli in the 4th century, but archaeological material from the 2nd-3rd centuries confirms the life of Christians here. Saint Nino preached Christianity in Georgia in the 4th century. She was from Cappadocia, an eastern province of the Roman Empire. She converted Queen Nana and King Mirian to Christianity. King Mirian, who had recently converted to Christianity, proclaimed Christianity as the state religion. John, sent to Kartli by Emperor Constantine, became the first head of the church in Kartli.

In 325, Constantinople was declared the capital of the Roman Empire. Shah Shapur II of Iran began a war against Rome. In a truce concluded in 363, Rome finally ceded provinces, including Armenia, to Iran. The Kingdom of Kartli was opposed by Iran, which entered Armenia. The Iranians invaded Kartli, overthrew the Roman ally of King Saurmag II and installed Varaz-Bakur as king instead. Iran established control over Kartli and appointed an Iranian official there in Pityakh.

The Egris kingdom occupied all of Western Georgia (Byzantine historians called this kingdom Lazika, and the Georgians called it Egris. Egris formally remained subordinate to Rome and guarded the roads of the Caucasus).

Vakhtang Gorgasali

In the first half of the 5th century, Sasanian Iran continued its policy of conquest. In 428 he abolished the reign in Armenia. Shah Yazdegerd II began to spread Zoroastrianism in the Caucasus. In 451, the Church Council of Chalcedon took place, recognizing Dyophysitism as the

true faith - the dual nature of Christ. In Kartli, as in Byzantium, Dyophysitism established itself. Iran, unlike Byzantium, supported Monophysitism. In this situation, Vakhtang Gorgasali became the king of Kartli.

At the age of 15, Vakhtang successfully fought in the North Caucasus. He expelled the Byzantines from Western Georgia. Vakhtang founded the fortified city of Artanuj; Thanks to successful diplomacy, he managed to make peace with Byzantium and Iran. Vakhtang managed to appoint Peter Catholicos in Kartli, which meant autocephaly of the Kartli Church. In 482, Vakhtang Gorgasali rebelled against Iran. The Armenians also supported him. The united army of Georgians and Armenians was defeated in a battle that took place in 483. In 484, the Iranian army entered Kartli. Vakhtang was mortally wounded in the battle near Samgori. He died in Ujarma and was buried in Svetitskhoveli, where, by order of Vakhtang, a basilica-type temple was built.

During the reign of Vakhtang Gorgasali, the borders of the Kingdom of Kartli expanded significantly. It already includes Hereti, Svaneti, Takver and Argveti from western Georgia. Vakhtang Gorgasali built Artanuji, Ujarma, Khornabuji, Nekresi and, most importantly, under him the construction of Tbilisi began, which became the capital under his successor Dacha.

6th century

In the VI century, both Iran and Byzantium reached the zenith of their power. Iran claimed the Kingdom of Kartlia, while it fought for the occupation of the Kingdom of Egrisi and wanted to gain access to the Black Sea. Byzantium emperor Justinian placed Byzantine garrisons in the fortresses of Egrisa — Scande and Shorapani. He also built the fortress of Petra.

In 542, the Iranian shah Khosro I, at the invitation of the king of Egris - Gubaza II, entered Egris with a large army and occupied the fortress of the Byzantines - the castle of Petra. Soon the real secret plan of the Shah of Iran was revealed; He commissioned one of the local noblemen - Farsansa - to kill Gubazi, king of Egris. Farsans, despite his disagreement with the tsar, did not betray the state interests of Egris and informed Gubaz about the intention of the Iranians. Tsar Gubaz turned to Byzantium for help. Finally, the Iranians left Lazika and returned to Kartli.

In 554, the Byzantine generals killed king Egrisi Gubaz II. The murder of Gubazi caused outrage among the residents of Egris. A meeting of high-ranking persons of Egris took place; There were two points of view at this meeting. Part of it stood for the orientation of Iran, part of Byzantium; Politicians of that time and wonderful orators, outstanding kolkhs - Ayet and Fartaz - spoke at the meeting. Their words in the assembly are examples of classical eloquence. Ayet turned to the gathered community and characterized the Byzantine rule; He revealed all the negative sides and facts created by the Byzantines in Egrisa. Finally, he called people to support the Iranian orientation. After this, Fartaz proinosis speech; He agrees with Ayet and himself points out the negative sides of the Byzantines, but, taking into account the interests of the state, he urged the people to support not Iran, but again Byzantium as a more acceptable ally. In the end, the opinion of the supporters of Byzantium prevailed on the condition that the murderers of King Gubazi would be punished. Emperor Justinian fulfilled this promise. Tsate II, brother of Gubazi, became the king of Egrisa. In 562, the war ended. Iranians left Western Georgia.

Abolition of royal power in Kartli.

In 510 Iran abolished the reign in Albania, as well as in Armenia. It was clear that Iran was going to do the same in Kartli. The Shah used the religious factor and demanded that the then king of Kartli, Gurgen, renounce Christianity and accept Zoroastrianism. Gurgen was forced to rebel, was eventually defeated and went to Byzantium. The kingdom in Kartli was abolished. Marzpan, an Iranian official, was appointed ruler of Kartli.

Georgians did not adapt easily to the loss of statehood. That is why the history of Georgian statehood goes back 30 centuries. In 571, when the great anti-Iranian uprising began in Armenia, the Georgians also supported the Armenians. The rebels turned to Byzantium for help. In this situation, a certain representation gathered in Kartli and elected the head of the nobility (the same Erismtavari). Traditionally, in the Kingdom of Kartli, the king stood at the head of the nobility. In fact, through the election of erismtavar, royal power was restored in Kartli. The first erismtavari was Guaram, from the Bagration family. The Byzantine emperor gave him the title Kurapalata as a sign of recognition. In fact, the Bagratians were in the supreme power of Kartli from the 6th century.

In 579 Khosrow I died, the new Shah Hormizd IV was forced to adapt to local rule in Kartli.

Arabs in Georgia

Arabs appeared in the Caucasus in the 30s of the 7th century. In 654, the Arabs defeated the Byzantines in Armenia and came to Kartli. Erismtavari Kartli - Stepanoz II agreed with the Arab commander Habib ibn Maslama. A "protective act" was signed between Kartli and Arab Sakhalfi. The Arabs presented such a letter to the voluntarily submitting population. According to the act:

- The conquerors left the faith of the population intact;
- The population was subject to tribute - jizya, one dinar per family;
- both parties were prohibited from dividing or merging the family in order to reduce or increase payment;
- The Georgian population was ordered to serve in the army;
- A person who converted to Islam of his own free will was declared a brother of the conquerors and was exempt from payment, but if he converted to Christianity again, he was punished by death for betraying Islam.

This kind of agreement was a completely new form of gaining influence over countries, and many countries viewed the Arabs not as conquerors, but even as allied saviors. This led to the success of the Arabs in a short time. But later their invasions were distinguished by great cruelty.

At the end of the 50s of the 7th century, wars broke out in the Arab Caliphate. Nerse I, erismtavari of Kartli, took advantage of this and expelled the Arabs not only from Kartli, but also from Armenia. In 697, Byzantium abolished the kingdom of Egris in Western Georgia and awarded its ruler the title of Patrikia. Because of this, an uprising against Byzantium began in Egris. Patrikios Sergi Barnukisdze led the Arabs to Western Georgia. In the 8th century, all of Georgia came under the influence of the Arab Caliphate. Byzantium was able to maintain its position only in Abkhazia. The campaigns of Murvan the Deaf in 735-737 were the most difficult. He conquered Kartli, moved to Argveti, where he tortured local princes - brothers David and Konstantin Mkhed-

ze, took Tsikhegodzhi and Tskhum; Murvan was unable to take Anakofia, which was defended by Mir, the erismtavari of Kartli, his brother Archil and Leon I, the eristav of Abkhazia. Murvan in Tbilisi appointed an official - Amir.

Georgian kingdoms-principalities and the formation of a unified Georgian monarchy

At the end of the 8th century, in parallel with the weakening of the Arab Caliphate, the process of restoring Georgian statehood began. The Arab emira, located in Tbilisi, ruled Georgia from here, but in reality he was limited to Tbilisi and its environs, so the process of creating and forming new kingdoms-principalities begins on the periphery of the country. The Principality of Kakheti was one of the first to be created. Its center was Tianeti. The principality was headed by a chorebishop. In the second half of the 8th century, the Principality of Hereti was founded in the east of Kakheti. At the end of the 9th century, the leader of Hereti received the title of "King of the Rans". At the beginning of the 8th century, the strengthening of Abkhazia began. During this period it was part of Byzantium. In the 2nd half of the 8th century, the ruler of Abkhazia, Leon II, took advantage of the weakening of Byzantium, extended his power to the entire Egrisi and declared himself king of the Abkhazians. The capital of the Abkhazian kingdom was the city of Kutaisi. This state included all of Western Georgia; It was divided into saeristavos. Abkhazian kingdom was a western-Georgian state. In 888 the Kartvelian kingdom was founded. It was formed on the historical territory of Tao-Klarjeti, and also included part of modern Southwestern Georgia: in the west Tao, Klarjeti, Nigal, Shavsheti, in the east Meskheti, Erusheti, Javakheti, Artaan, Abots, Kola and Basiani.

Most importantly, the political class operating in these kingdoms played an active role in the formation of a unified Georgian state. These politicians are headed by the Eristavi of Kartli, Ioane Marushidze. At the beginning of the 9th century, a plan was implemented in the Georgian kingdoms and principalities, the goal of which was to unite the Georgian countries into one monarchical state. The foundation was laid for the creation of a unified Georgian feudal state, and its first king was the legal heir of the Abkhazian and Kartvelian kingdoms - Bagrat Bagrationi. Having carried out the political plan and through a dynastic marriage, Bagrat Bagrationi turned out to be the only legal heir of the Abkhazian and Kartvelian kingdoms (his father Gurgen was the son of the Kartvelian king Bagrat II, and his mother was the sister of the Abkhazian king Theodosius, who had no other heir); Bagrat was the successor of David Kurapalat, the then owner of Tao, who at that time was a man of great political influence in the Middle East; With his help, Bagrat also received the saeristavo of Shida Kartli. In fact, Bagrat became the legal heir to most of the historical territories of Georgia. Although during the time of Bagrat the historical regions could not be completely united into a single Georgian state (this was done later, at the beginning of the 12th century during the reign of David IV the Builder), he is considered the first king of a united Georgia, because Bagrat III symbolizes the idea of the unity of Georgia and the legal process of unification countries; He is the legal heir to most of Georgia's territories. This is the period when the formula for the unity of Georgia has already been voiced in Georgian hagiographic works; in the 10th century work "The Life of Grigol Khanzteli" it is said: A single state will be created from Kartli, in which services will be performed in the Georgian language.

In the titulary of the kings of united Georgia, the title “king of the Abkhazians” comes first, since this title was first received by the first king of united Georgia, Bagrat Bagrationi. The title of Bagrat III finally became this: “King of the Abkhazians, Kartvelians, Rans, Kakhs, Kuropalat”.

Golden age

David the Builder

David Agmashenebeli (Builder) ruled in 1089-1125. He began his reign by organizing an army. In 1096 the first crusade began. They pursued the Seljuks. David took advantage of this and began to attack the nomadic Seljuks in Kartli. In 1104, David IV convened the Council of Ruis-Urbnis, removed the noble church hierarchs from their posts and appointed the faithful in their place. David combined secular and ecclesiastical offices (m^tsignobartukhutsesi-chkondideli). This position was occupied by the king’s closest adviser and educator. Church reform strengthened the strong and centralized power of the king. Of great importance was the creation of a police function, which allowed the king to know everything that was happening inside and outside the country. Mandatartukhutses stood at the head of this institution. Agmashenebeli created a royal guard consisting of 5 thousand horsemen - Monaspa.

David defeated the Emir of Ganja. Since 1110, David began an open military confrontation with the Seljuk state. The king resettled 40 thousand Kivchak families to Georgia with the condition that each family would produce one warrior.

In 1110-1118, David IV practically besieged Tbilisi, capturing various fortresses. At that time, Tbilisi was a city-state with its own self-government. Since Arab times, the Arab official of the Amir sat here, and Tbilisi and the surrounding area were in the hands of the Arabs. The upper class of the city turned to the Seljuks for help. A coalition army was created led by the Seljuk commander Ilghazi. On August 12, 1121, Georgians under the leadership of David Agmashenebeli won a great victory in the Battle of Didgori. In 1122, David took Tbilisi, abolished the city’s self-government and declared it the capital of the kingdom. In 1124, David also took Dmanis. After this, David began to expel the Seljuks from neighboring countries. He marched against Shirvan three times and annexed it to Georgia. The Principality of Darubandi also surrendered to Georgia. In 1124, a delegation from Anis came to David and asked for the liberation of the city from the Seljuk Turks. David occupied Anis, captured Anis’s Emir. David annexed Vanandi and Ararat districts to Georgia. The borders of Georgia were expanded from Nikofsia to Darubanda and from Ossetia to Spera and Aragatsa.

In addition to military and political successes, David IV left to his descendants the Gelati Academy and the poetic work “Galobani Sinanulisani”. David IV, nicknamed Agmashenebeli, died on January 24, 1125 and was buried in the Gelati Monastery.

The title of David IV was: “King of the Abkhazians, Kartvelians, Rans, Kakhs, Armenians”

Queen Tamar

During the reign of David's successors, Demeter I and George III, the struggle against the Seljuks continued. George III again annexed Anis and Dvin. In 1177, he defeated the uprising of noble feudal lords - the Orbels and promoted low-ranking loyal people to the ranks. In 1184, the daughter of George III, Tamari, became king. For the first time in the history of Georgia, a woman became the ruler of the country. Immediately after her enthronement, one of the viziers, the head of the state treasury, Kutlu-Arslan, rebelled, which Tamar suppressed with the help of large feudal lords. This group demanded restrictions on the rights of the monarch and legislative changes; Participants in the uprising demanded the creation of a body completely independent of royal power, parallel to the royal court. The king was not supposed to participate in the work of this body; he only had executive power. Such a change in the distribution of power was foreign to Georgia at the time (in fact, what was required was the same changes that later gave rise to parliament in England). Despite the victory over the rebels, Tamar was forced, at the request of the same nobles, to marry Yuri Bogolyubsky, heir to the princely throne of Vladimir-Suzdal, in 1185. In Georgia his name was Giorgiy Rus. He was expelled from Georgia to Byzantium in 1187 on charges of sodomy. In 1188, Tamar married again to David Soslan, who was raised by Tamar's aunt - Rusudani. George Rus, exiled to Byzantium, returned to Georgia in 1191 and rebelled. Tamar, together with her supporters, defeated the rebels and George Rus was finally expelled from Georgia.

In 1195, the Georgian army defeated the Selchuk at the Battle of Shamkor, and in 1203 at the Battle of Basian. In 1204, on the initiative of the Georgian royal court, a buffer state was created - the Empire of Trebizond. In 1205 Georgia took Kars.

The title of King Tamar was: "King of kings and queen of queens of the Abkhazians, Kartvelians, Rans, Kakhs and Armenians, Sharvansha and Shahansha, self-ruler of the East and West, North and South."

At the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries, Georgia reached the zenith of its power.

Georgian culture of the Middle Ages

In the 4th-8th centuries, against the backdrop of a difficult political situation, Georgian culture and art actively developed. According to the Greek philosopher Themistius (317-388), both he and his father Eugenius studied at the Colchis High School of Rhetoric, Colchis Academy of Phasis, and received a rhetorical education there. It was a higher educational institution in Kolkheti in the 3rd-6th centuries.

In the 5th century, the hagiographic work "The Martyrdom of Shushanik" was written, which is considered the first literary work that has come down to us. In the 6th century, "The Martyrdom of Eustathius Mtskheteli" was written, in the 7th century - "The Life of Serapion Zarzmel", and in the 8th century - "The Martyrdom of Abo Tbileli". The spread of Christianity developed architecture and built basilica-type temples. In the 5th-6th centuries Bolnisi Zion, Shiomgvi, Urnisi, Anchiskhati were built; And in the 6th-7th centuries - the Monastery of the Mtskheta Cross and the Aten Zion... Secular buildings include the castle of Ujarmi and Narikala. A relief sculpture

was developed, the first examples of which were preserved in Zion of Bolnisi (the head of a bull with a cross in the middle of the horns). The compositions are depicted on the Mtskheta cross.

The mosaics in the monasteries of Palestine and Bichvinti are of a high standard.

In the 9th-11th centuries, Georgian culture reached a high level of development, which is confirmed by important literary and historical works. Works were distinguished by “The Martyrdom of Constantine Kakha”, “The Martyrdom of the Children of Kolael”, “The Life of Grigol Khantsteli” by George Merchule and other works. Hymnography includes works by Ioann-Zosime, Mikael Modrekili and other authors. In the 11th century, such historical works as “The Life of the Kings” by Leonti Mroveli, “The Life and Service of the Bagrations” by Sumbat Davidisdze, “Matiane Kartlisa” (Life of Kartli) by an unknown author and others were created. These works were included in the collection “Kartlis Tskhovreba” (“History of Georgia”).

Churches and monasteries were important centers of Georgian education and culture. Original works were created here and ancient manuscripts were translated. Southern Georgia was distinguished by an abundance of churches and monasteries. Grigol Khantsteli, who stood at the head of monastic life, served here. Important cultural centers of this period are: Khantsta, Opiza, Shatberdi, Ishkhani, Oshki and others.

In the 9th-11th centuries, Georgian churches and monasteries were founded abroad: the Lavra of the Holy Saba in Palestine, the Georgian monastic colony on Mount Sinai, the Ulumbo monastery, founded by Hilarion of Georgia in Asia Minor, at the end of the 10th century under the leadership of John Mtatsmindeli, the construction of a Georgian monastery began on Mount Athos in Greece. After John, his son Ekvtime became the abbot of the monastery. He translated the “Wisdom of Balavari” from Georgian into Greek, and the “Psalter”, the Gospel, and the writings of the holy fathers from Greek into Georgian. Giorgi Mtatsmindeli continued the work of Ekvtime. He defended the autocephaly of the Georgian Church before the Patriarch of Antioch in 1057.

In 1083 Grigol Bakurianisdze founded the monastery of Petritsoni. There was also a Georgian monastery not far from Antioch, on the Black Mountain, where Ephraim Mtsire, distinguished for his translation activities, served.

Construction of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem began in the 11th century.

In the 9th-11th centuries, Georgian architecture was enriched with unique monuments. In the 8th-9th centuries, the two-domed Gurjaani temple was built. In the 9th-11th centuries, the churches of Circoli and Armazi, as well as the churches of Opiz, Kumurdo, Oshki, Khakhuli, Bedia and others were built in the Ksani valley. In the 11th century, three great churches of Georgia were built: the Bagrati Temple in Kutaisi, Svetitskhoveli in Mtskheta and Alaverdi in Kakheti. During the same period, the Zion temples of Samtavisi, Nikortsinda, and Manglisi were built.

During the period under review, painting, both church and book painting, developed. The paintings of temples of this period (for example, Zion of Aten) and miniatures of handwritten books (Gospels of Adishi, Dzhruchi etc.) are unique.

An excellent example of the development of jewelry is the Bedia Chalice.

In the XII-XIII centuries, Georgia, as a country at the crossroads of cultures, achieved a synthesis with Christian-Greek and Islamic-Eastern cultures; In 1106, on the initiative and support of David Agmashenebeli (the Builder), a medieval Georgian theological school, the Gelati Academy, was founded near the Gelati Monastery. Ioane Petritsi and Arsen Ikaltoeli served here. Gelati Academy was called "Asuad Atin", "the second Jerusalem of the East". The curriculum mainly included the study of subjects of the trivium (geometry, arithmetic, music) and quadrivium (philosophy, rhetoric, grammar and astronomy) cycles. During the same period, another higher educational institution operated in Georgia - the Ikalto Academy. Its first rector was Arsen Ikaltoeli, who moved here from the Gelati Academy. At the Ikalto Academy, teaching mainly involved the subjects of the Trivium-Quadrivium cycle; Blacksmithing, ceramics, viticulture and winemaking were also taught here.

During this period, Ioane Shavteli and Chakhrukhadze served, who created beautiful poetic works ("Abdul Messiah", "Tamariani"); During the same period, the crown of Georgian literature was created - "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" by Shota Rustaveli, which occupied an important place in world literature.

In the XII-XIII centuries, unique monuments of architecture and art were created: Ubisa, Kintsvisi, Gelati, Betania, Bertubani, etc.; The frescoes of this period are unique; Priceless examples of engraving art have been preserved from the same period (the icon of Anchiskhati and Khakhuli, engravings of the Gospels of Tskarostavi and Berti, works by Beka and Beshken Opizars).

The monastery complex of Vardzia, carved into the rock from the same period, is of epochal significance.

Georgia of the 12th-13th centuries was a politically and economically strong state with a rich, highly developed culture. In Georgia, the characteristic features of this era become the basis of the Renaissance in Europe in subsequent centuries.

* * *

Georgia in the XIII-XVIII centuries

The Mongols first appeared in Georgia in 1220. In 1220-1221 they fought with the Georgians three times and returned. In 1235, the Mongols came to Georgia again. Queen Rusudan appealed to the Pope for help, but to no avail. After this, she recognized the supremacy of the Mongol Khanate. Georgia was obliged to pay 50 thousand perpera a year and participate in the Mongol campaign.

In 1259, an anti-Mongol uprising began, led by King David VI Narin. The Mongols were unable to suppress the uprising. In 1260, David VII rebelled and refused to go into Egypt with the Mongols. The uprising ended unsuccessfully.

In 1238, King Giorgi V took advantage of the unrest at the court of the Ilkhans, defeated the Mongol army, expelled them from Georgia and stopped paying tribute. The country was liberated from Mongol rule.

In 1386-1403, the Central Asian commander Emir Tamerlane invaded Georgia eight times. Eventually he was forced to make peace with King Giorgi VII. Most importantly, he recognized

Georgia as a Christian country. This was a great victory for the Georgian people, achieved at the cost of great sacrifices.

In 1453, an event of world significance took place - the Byzantine Empire fell. Sultan Mehmed II captured Constantinople on May 29, 1453. Constantine XI, the last emperor of Byzantium, died in battle. Constantinople became the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

This event did not only mark the end of a thousand-year empire; This also led to the re-distribution of geopolitical, religious and cultural influences throughout Europe and beyond, which especially affected the development of Russia and its position in the Orthodox Christian world. The struggle to replace the role of the Byzantine Empire has begun.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 left a vacuum in the Christian world, especially among Orthodox states that looked to Byzantium as a spiritual and cultural beacon. During the decade after the fall of Constantinople, the idea of "Moscow-Third Rome" attracted attention. This ideology was based on the belief that after the fall of Rome, and then Constantinople, Moscow became the legitimate successor of the center of Orthodox Christianity. The marriage of Ivan III to Sophia Paleolog, the niece of the last Byzantine emperor, strengthened this statement, symbolically linking the Russian state with the ruling dynasty of Byzantium.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which gained independence from the Patriarchate of Constantinople shortly before the fall of the latter, played a decisive role in promoting Moscow as a new center of Orthodoxy. The support of the Church contributed to the strengthening of Moscow's position as the spiritual leader of the Orthodox world, a status that had a significant impact on Russia's self-perception and foreign policy.

The fall of Byzantium also had a serious impact on other European states, especially on Italian city-states, which lost important trade routes and were forced to establish new relations with the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the threat from the Ottoman Empire forced European states to seek new alliances and military strategies, which led to significant changes in the balance of power in Europe.

The struggle to replace Byzantium in Europe and Russia has led to political, religious and cultural changes that emphasize the empire's lasting influence on world history.

Relations between the Byzantine Empire and the Georgia in the Middle Ages were complex and multifaceted, including diplomatic, military, religious and cultural aspects. Both states, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, controlled the problems of regional politics, foreign invasions and striving for hegemony in the Caucasus and eastern Anatolia.

Diplomatic and military relations between Georgia and Byzantium were often characterized by alternating alliances and conflicts, which greatly influenced the geopolitical situation in the region. In periods of external threats (such as Arab invasions of the VII and VIII centuries or Seljuk Turks in the XI and XII centuries) Georgia and the Byzantine Empire acted in common interests. For example, the Bagrationov dynasty in Georgia, striving to strengthen its power and expand its territories, often concluded alliances against common enemies with the Byzantine Empire. However, these relations were not without tension. Territorial disputes, especially over the control of strategic regions in Eastern Anatolia and Southern Caucasus, led to a military confrontation between two Christian states. Despite these conflicts, diplomatic marriages and agreements often helped to

ease tensions and ensure peace, reflecting the pragmatic approach of both parties to their common interests.

Religion played an important role in the relations between Byzantium and Georgia. They had a common religious heritage that contributed to cultural exchange and church cooperation. During its independent rule, the Georgian Church maintained close theological and liturgical ties with the Byzantine Orthodox Church. An example of this connection was the work of Georgian monks in Byzantine monastic centers, such as Athos and others, as well as the influence of Byzantine art and architecture on Georgian church architecture and frescoes.

Byzantium culture and education also had a great impact on Georgian society. The Byzantine system of education, literature and legal codes influenced the development of Georgian secular and religious and philosophical science. The translation of Byzantine texts into Georgian language contributed to the spread of Orthodoxy and Byzantine cultural norms in the territory of Georgia.

In the 11th century, the Turkish-Seljuk invasions became an important challenge for both the Georgia and Byzantine empires. The Battle of Manaskert in 1071, in which the Byzantines suffered a catastrophic defeat, was a turning point in Byzantine influence in Anatolia. This fact forced Georgia to take a more active role in protecting Christian interests in the region. Under King David IV "Agmashenebeli", Georgia experienced a military and cultural renaissance, reclaiming territories from Seljuk control and establishing Georgia as a regional power.

Relations between the Byzantine Empire and Georgia in the Middle Ages were characterized by a combination of cooperation and competition. Through diplomatic marriages, military alliances and shared religious and cultural values, both powers overcame the challenges of the times and left a lasting legacy in the historical and cultural landscape of the region. Byzantine-Georgian relations reflect the complex content of medieval diplomacy, where shared beliefs and mutual interests often outweighed political rivalries.

By the beginning of the 16th century, three independent kingdoms were formed - Kartli, Kakheti and Imereti. These states created their own administrative apparatus. Later the same thing was repeated in the principalities of Guria and Odisha. The Tsar and the princes were considered the highest commanders.

In the XV-XVII centuries, cities fell into decay, their population decreased. Some cities turned into rural areas, some were completely destroyed. The cities of Kakheti were completely destroyed as a result of the campaigns of Shah Abbas. Urban life also fell sharply in Western Georgia.

Relations between Georgia and Russia in the Middle Ages were characterized by both direct and indirect interactions, which were shaped by the broad geopolitical, cultural and religious dynamics of the time. These relations were influenced by the geographical location of both regions, their common Orthodox faith, as well as the political aspects of the development of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

In the Middle Ages, both Georgian and early Russian states became Christian. Georgia adopted Christianity at the beginning of the 4th century, Kievan Rus - in the 10th century. The Christian faith, especially devotion to the Eastern Orthodox Church, laid the foundation for cultural and

religious ties between the two regions. The Orthodox Church played a decisive role in relations between Georgia and Russia in the Middle Ages.

During the Middle Ages, relations between Georgia and Russia were shaped by their shared Orthodox faith, as well as common issues such as the Mongol invasions, and diplomatic and cultural relations. Relations between Georgia and Russia cover the period from the 15th century to the present day. In the XV-XVIII centuries, the Georgian kingdoms-principalities tried to establish relations with Russia as an Orthodox state and gain its support against neighboring aggressive Muslim states. Relations were first established in the 15th century; In 1483, the Tsar of Kakheti, Alexander I, turned to the Moscow ruler Ivan III for help, but to no avail. In the 16th century, the Kakhetian Tsar Levan again turned to the Russian Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible. In response, Russia sent a Cossack detachment to Kakheti in 1564, but in 1571, due to protests from the Ottoman Empire, Russia withdrew the detachment. In 1587-1589, a political union was concluded between the Kakheti kingdom and Russia. The Tsar of Kakheti, Alexander, swore allegiance to the Russian Tsar, but, despite this, Kakheti did not receive real help from Russia.

In the 17th century, the kings and princes of Imereti and Samegrelo tried to improve relations with Russia. Russia also hoped for them, but they also did not find real military assistance.

In the first half of the 18th century, King Vakhtang VI of Kartli was unable to receive help from France; After this, he turned to Russia and received a promise of military assistance; Russia invited Vakhtang to gather an army for a campaign in Persia. In 1722, Vakhtang led a 20,000-strong army to Ganja, where the Russian army was supposed to unite; Peter I did not fulfill his promises and betrayed Vakhtang; The King of Kartli was forced to leave the country; Ottoman rule was established in Kartli, and then Kizilbashoba.

In the 50s of the 18th century, a new stage of relations with Russia began: the kings of Kartli, Kakheti and Imereti (Teimuraz I, Erekle II, Solomon I) promised to join Russia in the war against the Ottomans and Persia. In 1770, a corps of 4,000 people sent by Catherine II arrived in Georgia; In Kartli-Kakheti and Imereti it was assumed that the commander Totleben would help the Georgians liberate Meskheta, conquered by the Ottomans since the 16th century. Totleben did not help Erekle II in the battle of Atskura and Aspindza. Moreover, he tried to stage a coup against Erekle. In 1772, Russia withdrew its army. In 1782, Erekle II turned for help to Austria, France, the rulers of Sardinia, Naples and Venice, but to no avail. Finally, on July 24, 1783, in the Georgievsk fortress in Russia, an agreement was signed between Russia and the Kartli-Kakheti kingdom. The Russian army entered Kartli-Kakheti in November 1783. Erekle II defeated the Leks at Suram in 1785, but the Russian army was not enough. In 1787, Catherine II withdrew her army from Kartli-Kakheti before the Russo-Ottoman War and left Erekle II alone to face the Ottomans.

The Russian Empire tried to use the Georgian principalities against the Ottomans and expand territories, and in the first half of the XIX century, they gradually annexed and occupied them. Instead of protecting Georgian statehood, Russia itself became the conqueror of Georgia.

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KORNELI KEKELIDZE GEORGIAN NATIONAL CENTRE OF MANUSCRIPTS