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## ОТНОШЕНИЯ ВОСТОЧНЫХ ХРИСТИАН СО СВЯТЫМ ПРЕСТОЛОМ: ЛИОНСКИЙ СОБОР 1274 г. И ГРУЗИЯ

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Исследуются вопросы взаимоотношений Грузинской православной церкви и Грузинского царства с Римской курией и папством, а также попытки грузинских царей поддерживать отношения с Европой через католические миссии в период монгольских и хорезмских нашествий. Отмечается, что в отличие от Византии Грузия, руководствуясь политической мотивацией, имела собственное отношение к решению Лионского собора 1274 г. относительно унии.

**Ключевые слова:** уния; Вселенский собор; Лионский собор 1274 г.; Римско-католическая церковь; Грузинская православная церковь.

## АДНОСІНЫ ЎСХОДНІХ ХРЫСЦІЯН СА СВЯТЫМ ПРАСТОЛАМ: ЛІЁНСКІ САБОР 1274 г. І ГРУЗІЯ

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Даследуюцца пытанні ўзаемаадносін Грузінскай праваслаўнай царквы і Грузінскага царства з Рымскай курыяй і папствам, а таксама спробы грузінскіх цароў падтрымліваць адносіны з Еўропай праз каталіцкія місіі ў перыяд мангольскіх і харэзмскіх нашэсцяў. Адзначаецца, што, у адрозненне ад Византыі, Грузія, кіруючыся палітычнай матывацыяй, мела дачыненне да рашэння Ліёнскага сабору 1274 г. адносна уніі.

**Ключавыя словы:** унія; Усяленскі сабор; Ліёнскі сабор 1274 г.; Рымска-каталіцкая царква; Грузінская праваслаўная царква.

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## RELATIONS OF EASTERN CHRISTIANS WITH HOLY SEE – THE LYON COUNCIL OF 1274 AND GEORGIA

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The article presents the issues of close relationship of Georgian Orthodox Church and Royalty with the Roman Curia and Papacy and the attempts of Georgian kings to maintain relations with Europe through Catholic missions in the period of Mongol and Khwarezm invasions are considered in the paper. Also, it is highlighted that, unlike Byzantium, Georgia operating with political motivations had quite different attitude to the solution of the Lyon Council about Union.

**Key words:** Union; Ecumenical Council; the Council of Lyon; Roman Catholic Church; Georgian Orthodox Church.

### Introduction

Ancient Christian traditions and the culture of the Georgian Orthodox Church have a distinguished place throughout the Christian world. Its relation with the Roman Catholic Church is as old as the Georgian Orthodox Church itself. Along with all the Churches of Europe, Georgian Church looking forward to joining the European family must do its bit in reinforcing the foundations of Europe. It is quite possible given the fact that the past history created a strong foundation based on the Christianity of Georgian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. Therefore, the problem posed in the paper is very important not only today but also for the future.

In order to understand the essence of the problem, from the very beginning it is necessary to consider the factors that led Georgian Church to establish direct contact with the Roman Catholic Church in the 1220s, which permanently continued till the end of the XV century. Those factors were as follows:

1) since the great «Schism» the Georgian Church did not move away from the Oriental Orthodox Churches; did not recognize the «Filioque»; did not

obey the Roman Church but maintained loyal relationship with it and did not denounced dogmas and rites of the Catholic Church. The common foundation of the two Churches (that was really common) was not regarded as a specific and quite different in Georgia [1, 94–95];

2) during the Crusades the Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land canonically obeyed the Latin Patriarchate, but it did not have any influence on their individuality. This indicates that a significant difference between the Georgian and Latin Churches was not noticeable yet or was not observed<sup>1</sup>;

3) on the Holy Land the Georgians met the crusaders with the pre-Schism spirit that made the differences between the two Churches imperceptible, though the Romans should have been aware that Georgians' «...read the scriptures in Greek and performed sacraments according to the Greek rules» [8, p. 106];

4) during the Crusades I–V, Georgia was a natural ally of the crusaders, who had the following strategic objectives [9]: to defeat the enemy together with Georgia to final victory [10, p. 100].

### Main part of article

Among the factors determining the relationship of Georgian Church with the Roman Catholic Church, it was the Crusade V that gave a start to direct relationships between the two Churches. As is known, King George IV Lasha decided to support the Fifth Crusade campaign [11, p. 77–79] under the appeal of Pope Honorius III, but after the defeat of the Latin Crusaders at Damietta (1219) he decided to take part in the campaign led by the Hungarian King Andras II [12, p. 76; 7, p. 354] though his goals remained unrealized. Getting ready for the campaign, George IV Lasha died in 1223 from a fatal wound that he received in the battle against the Mongols.

The policy of George IV Lasha in relation to crusaders was continued by his sister, Queen Rusudan. In the early 1224 Queen Rusudan sent David, the

Bishop of Ani, to Rome with a special mission to take two letters to the pope,<sup>2</sup> one written by her and the other by the military leader Ivan Mkhargrdzeli. In regard to Georgia's participation in the Crusade, Queen Rusudan promised the pope to support the political course of her brother. The letter is interesting for us from a certain point of view, in particular, it shows that in the moment of the letter writing (1224) Georgia continued ecclesiastic relationship with Rome. This is clear from the words she writes to the pope: «To the Most Holy Pope, to the Father and Lord of all the Christians, seated in the church of St. Peter. Me, the humble Abkhaz Queen Rusudan, your faithful servant and daughter, bow down before you and greet you» [13, p. 7]. Her words clearly show that the King of Georgia regards the Pope of Rome as «the father

<sup>1</sup>See [2, p. 135–136, 138; 3, p. 255–259; 4, p. 94; 5, p. 69–95; 6, p. 1233–128; 7, p. 345–346].

<sup>2</sup>For detail see [13, p. 8; 14, p. 416; 15, p. 475; 16, p. 177; 11, p. 79–80].

and Lord of the Christian world». Hardly these words of Rusudan could have implied any political sense, because in those days Georgia was not in need of such a kind of policy. In this regard, M. Tamarashvili is quite right to conclude: «From the letter it is clear that Rusudan recognizes the Pope to be the Father and the Lord of all the Christians. It is quite obvious that Georgian Church and the Pope are in close relationship and alliance» [13, p. 8]. The author provides the following argument: «If in that moment the Georgian Church was divided from Rome, Rusudan would not have written such a letter to the pope... Such a letter and preparation of Georgia to execute the papal decree can be explained by nothing else except by the fact that they were still in alliance by that time. And those, who were divided from Rome in that moment, did not obey the pope, rather they fought against him» [13, p. 8]. It is impossible not to agree with these arguments and to reject the author's deductions, but a question arises: exactly in ten years after writing such a letter what could have happened that the same Queen Rusudan revealed the breakage of the alliance between the two Churches. Before answering the question we will specify when the Georgian Orthodox Church separated from the Roman Catholic Church.

First of all, it should be noted that because of a lack of the direct sources it is very difficult to specify when Georgian Church allocated from the Roman Catholic Church: we do not have anysynodal decision of the Georgian hierarchies, by the virtue of which the alliance with the Holy Throne was broken. If we had it, there would be no doubts. All in all, in the historiography there is not a common opinion on the matter yet. As far as this problem needs a separate study, we will not delve into it here. So, according to M. Tamarashvili, the alliance between the two Churches was broken since 1230 [13, p. 8]. According to M. Tarkhishvili, «Georgia moved aside from the Holy See later and it happened gradually. The first information about it is found in 1240» [17, p. 148]. Historian Raymond Janin believes that in 1233 Georgians were not finally separated from Rome yet [18, p. 75]. M. Papashvili extended M. Tamarashvili's and M. Tarkhishvili's supposition and relying on some additional arguments supported them [11, p. 52, 83–84]. There is some opinion that «Georgian church separated from Rome in 1054, during East-West Schism»<sup>3</sup> but we do not have valuable arguments to prove that and this position relies just on an inaccurate translation of the source. Other Georgian scholar considers that the Eucharistic ties between Georgia and Rome broke in the XIII century [19, p. 301]. We have various versions that the Schism

between Rome and Georgia took place in the period between 1234–1240 [20, p. 28–35] or the split date should be in the period after 1230 [21, p. 193]; Stephan Rapp believes that Georgian Church joined the Schism of the Byzantine Church in the first half of the XIII century [22]; Georgian scholars T. Beradze and M. Sanadze even dated the event by 1318 without any convincing arguments [23, p. 193]; researcher G. Macharashvili considers the Schism to be the phenomenon taking place between XII and XIII centuries, though there are not sufficient arguments for that<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, most of the researchers advocate the idea that the Georgian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches separated gradually and it took place within 1230–1240. We also share this idea and we will consistently prove it explaining the reasons in further discussion that will answer the question posed above: when and why Queen Rusudan revealed the Schism.

As is known, in 1225–1230 Georgia suffered from the Jalal ad-Din<sup>5</sup> devastating invasions. Georgia, the ally of the crusaders, was in trouble itself. In such a situation, in 1233 the Holy Throne decided to send Franciscan missionaries to Georgia who worked in Syria and Egypt since 1217<sup>6</sup>. One of the letters of Pope Gregorio IX «shows that he received the information about Georgia from a Franciscan missionary, an obedient brother Giacomo da Rosano, who had been in Georgia together with his friends as the Papal Nuncio» [16, p. 16]. Although the document is not dated, it must be written around 1232. What gives the ground to think so? P. Marcellino da Civezza describing the events of 1232 in his history writes: «In the moment, when Gregorio was sending his legacy to German Nikea, suddenly the Friar Minor Giacomo da Rosano appeared in Rome coming back from the most mysterious part of Asia... Friar Giacomo as a good preacher worked in those regions, and he asked for sending new missionaries there, because there was an abundant job to be done there. The King [Queen Rusudan, A/N] of Georgia was asking for sending the apostles there. Touched with these words the Pope embraced the monk Giacomo»<sup>7</sup>. The same source says: «After that [the pope] ordered to give special power and privileges to a large group of Friars Minor in that part of Asia together with the letters of apostolic blessing to take with them. The God's servant Bishop Gregory to the beloved children of the Order of Friars Minor, who are leaving for Georgia, to Saracens and other unbelievers: health and apostolic blessing!»<sup>8</sup>

According to this source, Giacomo da Rosano, the Franciscan missionary returned from the East in 1232. It was he, who told the Pope that Queen Rusu-

<sup>3</sup>Javakhishvili I. Relationship of Georgian Orthodox Church with the Roman Catholic Church in XI–XIV centuries: diss. abstr. ... PhD (history). Tbilisi, 1997. P. 105 (in Georgian).

<sup>4</sup>Macharashvili T. The Great Schism and Georgia: diss. ... doctor of hist. sci. Tbilisi, 2014. P. 12 (in Georgian).

<sup>5</sup>Jalal ad-Din Mungburnu (died 1231), last ruler of Khwarizmi Empire.

<sup>6</sup>Marcellino da Civezza. Storia universale delle missioni francescane. Roma: Tipografia Tiberina, 1857. P. 169–171.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. P. 215.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

dan was asking for sending missionaries to Georgia. As one of the sources shows, Giacomo visited Georgia in 1228 [24, p. 113; 16, p. 16]. This missionary had been in Georgia before that. Our supposition relies on the following information: in 1221 (and not in 1211, as I. Tabagoua writes) [16, p. 74] «Georgia was visited by the beloved son Giacomo da Rosano of the Dominican [must be Franciscan – A/N] Order, who highly appraises Georgians in his notes»<sup>9</sup>. According to Marcellino da Civezza, Francis of Assisi «had numerous children including Rosano, who disseminated the words of Jesus in certain countries, leaving his generous life he reached every part...»<sup>10</sup>

The sources referred to allow us to say that a missionary Franciscan Giacomo da Rosano visited Georgia twice, in 1221 and 1228. He «highly appraised» the attitude of Georgians to the Roman Church. This must be implying Queen Rusudan, who admitted the Pope to be the head of the Christian world, as mentioned above. Such an attitude and relation of the Georgian king to the Roman Pope was directly coming from the goal of the Crusades: «to rescue the Holy Land from the grasp of the “Infidel” and to save the Eastern Churches from the dangerous enemies [25, p. 14]». If we consider the mentioned information to be reliable, and consider that in 1228 Giacomo da Rosano was in Georgia, presumably, it was he, who took Queen Rusudan’s letter to Pope Gregory IX, which did not reach us. Giacomo da Rosano arrived in Rome in 1232 and probably gave the letter of the king of Georgia to the Pope.

As it was said, the letter of Queen Rusudan to Pope Gregory IX is still unknown. However, the addressee’s answer is preserved. On 16 April 1234, the mentioned Pope wrote to the king of Georgia: «From my best beloved Friar Minor Giacomo da Rosano, who is bringing you this letter I have learnt: You believe the glory of the throne you are sitting on, you received from the omnipotent. You have received the monks of this Order with great honor. We believe, you understand and concern about the fact that those, who defend Friars today from the indecent abuse of heretics, adorn the Catholic Church with more beauty and miracles. They have laid down their life for poverty and misery, and the more they are raised by him, who gives honor as a reward for obedience of a virtue. Thus, in order to be given an award of a fair prophet, as the king for the Lord, who will judge the living and the dead in the fire, you should accept the action of the simple people with mercy. If you are wise, you will coordinate your goodwill and mercy to their deeds, you will help them in trouble with tolerance. In our apostolic letter, we would ask you, assure you and refer your royal glory about forgiving the sins already committed; the above-mentioned friend of ours, the obedient friar and

other monks of the Order are volunteer legates under the yoke of poverty going to the Christian people as well as to those, who do not admit the Lord and do not mention his Blessed name in vain. Receive them well and treat them with compassion for the sake of the great creativity of those, who laid their life for us and redeemed our generation from slavery calling us for freedom of our children. With the help of which you will inherit eternal glory» [16, p. 185].

According to this letter, we can hardly say whether the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church are divided. Neither has it been clear whether Queen Rusudan is writing the pope about reunion of the churches. In such a case the addressee would have replied to the Georgian king in his letter. Neither has it been clear whether the Georgian king was asking him a help against the foreign enemies that would have been reflected in the pope’s reply. However, the same source clearly shows that Queen Rusudan received Giacomo da Rosano well, who must have arrived in Georgia on his own incentive. As we have already said above, it must be in 1228. The more so, Queen Rusudan was well aware of the missionary activities among the heretics. Just that idea is expressed in the following passage of the letter: «We believe, you understand and concern about the fact that those, who defend Friars today from the indecent abuse of heretics, adorn the Catholic Church with more beauty and miracles». Now, the question arises: who are the supposed heretics mentioned in the Pope’s letter? Indeed, the Pope does not mean the Georgians. Why? Because if the Pope thought (probably knew very well) that the Georgian Church was the follower of the Greek Schism, then he would have used the word «schismatics» rather than «heretics». Supposedly, in «heretics» the Pope meant Nestorians living in Iran and Asia Minor, who «for their ruthlessness were finally attacked» [26, p. 136] by the catholic missionaries in the 1370s. If our opinion is right, then we can make two conclusions based on the mentioned source: First, catholic missionaries were sent to Georgia for preaching among the heretics rather than for catholicizing the Georgians. This conclusion is based on the fact that the Pope’s letter does not show that the missionaries used to be sent to Georgia «for purification and for reinforcing the true faith» that should have been the mission of the missionaries. This is the very argument for us to say that: the Holy See did not consider Georgia and its Church to be heretic like Constantinople, rather they were regarded as the followers of the Greek Schism, which must be caused by the fact that Georgian Church was not in open dispute with Byzantium. Therefore, there was no reason for conflict relationship between these two Churches. Second, Georgian king supporting the missionaries was able to adorn the Catholic Church

<sup>9</sup>Wadingo L. *Annales Minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum. 1221–1237. Vol. III. Saint Francisco* : Arcona, Gustav Sartorius Cherubin, 1931. P. 358–359.

<sup>10</sup>Marcellino da Civezza. *Storia universale delle missioni francescane. Roma* : Tipografia Tiberina, 1857. P. 214.

«with her miraculous action», i. e. Rusudan «devoted to the Roman Church», who asked for sending the missionaries, had to act for the common goal. To put it in a simpler way, the Georgian king was given the missionary rights for the common interests. Indeed, it was Queen Rusudan's initiative that stimulated Gregory IX. In short, at that stage neither side emphasized the difference between the two Churches. However, Giacomo da Rosano, who had been in Georgia twice, must have known about the difference, more precisely, must have been aware of the fact that the Georgian Church was the Schism follower. This fact could not have been unknown to Rusudan either. In any case, neither part directed attention to the difference between the two Churches. The main reason of that must be the fact that Georgian Church had the same attitude to Rome as it had before the Schism, and the Holy See did not consider the Georgian Church to be a part of the Schism. We are not going to consider this problem here as it requires further research.

Thus, after Giacomo da Rosano's arrival in Rome a decision was made to establish a Franciscan mission in Georgia. Under the resolution of the council of elders «Cum sit omnis» of 11 April 1233, Pope Gregory IX decided to send Giacomo da Rosano and his friends to Georgia [24, p. 299; 16, p. 16]. Exactly one year later, the same Giacomo da Rosano took the Pope's letter written on 16 April 1234 to Queen Rusudan. Thus, the Franciscan missionaries began working in Georgia not in 1230 [14, p. 424; 15, p. 482] or in 1233 [16, p. 16; 10, p. 100] as it was regarded in our historiography up to now, but in 1234. So, as we have no more doubts in regard to the date of the Pope's letter, then it is clear that Giacomo da Rosano brought the letter written by Pope Gregory IX on 16 April 1234 and consequently the Franciscan missionaries began working in Georgia in the same year.

All in all, in the second half of 1234 Franciscan missionaries settled in Georgia. We do not know exactly how many fellows accompanied Giacomo da Rosano arriving in Georgia. According to one of the sources, Giacomo da Rosano «was sent by the Father of Apostles (Pope Gregory IX –A/N) ... to his vineyard together with 11 workers»<sup>11</sup>. The Friars were given the letter-instruction from Pope Gregory IX written on 19 April 1234. «We believe you fulfill your duties as tenacious workers trying to uproot the weeds from the God's grassland. Therefore, we believe that your effort will bear great fruit. We are ready to grant you the right: to give communion to the outcast from the church in the mentioned lands. Even with regard to Salvation we are giving you the permission to enjoy personal right in accordance with the proper rules to solve the problems against those who belong to Latins and obey the apostolic throne. After hearing the confession and saving

repentance they can also be given the right to reasonably discuss the minor sins together with the obedient brothers of your Order»<sup>12</sup>.

Thus, since 1234 the Franciscan missionaries settled down in Georgia. A year later (1235) Georgia was conquered by Mongols. We do not know anything about the first steps of the Franciscan Friars in Georgia. Given the fact that Queen Rusudan sent Giacomo da Rosano with her letter to the Pope in 1240, we can believe that the Minor Brothers successfully began to work in Georgia. The missionary work was led by the above-mentioned Friar himself, who was the Pope's legate in the Rusudan's Royal Court [11, p. 83]. Mongols conquest of Georgia did not cause any problems in their activities. However, Georgia being under the Mongol yoke regarded the Pope as their only ally. Therefore, the doors were more widely opened to Catholic missionaries in Georgia [10, p. 100]. In such circumstances, the doctrinal and ritual differences existing between the two Churches could not have been unnoticeable. Thus, we consider the conclusion below is correct: «We believe that with the arrival of the missionaries the dogmatic differences gradually introduced in the rules of the Roman Catholic Church since 1054 and accepted and approved by the Ecumenical Council of Lateran in 1215 became vivid for the Georgian Church...» [21, p. 193]. However, there is no source confirming that the parties had a dispute over that. Therefore, it is hard to agree with the view point that «the cause of the conflict between the two Churches...» was connected with the «dispute over the dogmatic issues, which had been unnoticed before» [7, p. 333]. Moreover, in the period of the Council of Lyon there were no disputes between Rome and Constantinople over the dogmatic issues and even the *Filioque* was not mandatory. So, at this particular stage no dispute between the two churches was observed. The more so, it would be impossible from the part of Georgians as the Latin Empire already existed in Byzantium.

Apparently, Queen Rusudan sent her letter to Pope Gregory IX in Rome before 1240, which was brought to Rome by Giacomo da Rosano [11, p. 84]. This is confirmed by the pope's reply written on 13 January 1240 [15, p. 488; 14, p. 430]. Georgian King's letter to the Pope is still unknown, but the addressee's reply shows what the Queen of Georgia was asking him. First, to provide military assistance against the Mongols and second, to unite her people in the Catholic Church. To the first request, the Pope answered with regret that the army could not help Georgia, because the powerful Muslims located between their countries would not let the army pass. There were also mentioned some other reasons: the fight against heretics in the West; complicated relationship with Friedrich II and the long distance [13, p. 15; 14, p. 427–428]. As for the second

<sup>11</sup>Marcellino da Civezza. Storia universale delle missioni francescane. Roma : Tipografia Tiberina, 1857, p. 215.

<sup>12</sup>Registro Vaticano // Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Vol. 17. F. VI.

request, the intention of Queen Rusudan about uniting the Churches, the Pope «called it the best example of the divine foresight». Naturally, against the background of the Papacy's fight in the West against the Catharism and the reformist flow of Friedrich II, the Pope could not hide his joy and admiration. Because, while the «disastrous Schism was raging» in Europe, the «unknown kings (unknown for Europe –A/N) and people, so distant from him, were asking him to unite them in his Holy domain». Since Rusudan was asking him to unite the Churches («...the reason you are») Pope wrote: «Join Him and the Roman Church and regret that you are so late»<sup>13</sup> [13, p. 16; 14, p. 429]. M. Tamarashvili inaccurately translated this passage from the pope's letter, while its accurate translation is highly important. Afterwards, Researcher I. Tabagoua translated the same passage of the letter obtained from the Vatican Archive as follows: «As for your offer and request of uniting your spiritual house with ours, we approve your generosity, because this wish of yours will strongly and properly help your salvation and our delight with you...» [16, p. 189–190]. As is seen, I. Tabagoua's translation says nothing about that Queen Rusudan was late to join the Church of Rome and she would worry about it. This passage is very important because it allows the researchers to conclude that the Georgian Orthodox Church divorced from the Roman Catholic Church from the very first moment of Schism. We also have a copy of the original letter<sup>14</sup>. Comparison of I. Tabagoua's translation with the original showed that except a slight stylistic mistakes the translation accurately expresses the idea of the original.

Apparently, Queen Rusudan asked the Pope of Rome to unite their Churches. However, nothing is said about whether it would happen through the Union. Also, we cannot say anything about what kind of an idea the Queen of Georgia had with that respect. Most likely we could suppose that King and the royal court intended to unify the Churches on the ground of the Seven Ecumenical Councils. At least one thing is clear: dogmatic and ritual differences between the two Churches (Roman Catholic and Georgian Orthodox) must have been noticeable for them, but they did not mention it. The missionaries sent to Georgia did not act with the principles of the Union. They arranged their Catholic Church on the basis of the Typicon<sup>15</sup>. It means that Georgian Orthodox Church was not going to lose its independence. However, the missionaries had no problems in their work in Georgia.

This is confirmed by the fact that in 1240 together with the Franciscans the Dominic missionaries also settled in Georgia [15, p. 488]. It should have been the mission of a new flow of missionaries sent to Georgia in 1245–1258 years to strive for unification of the

Churches [16, p. 177; 27, p. 244–245], but it is unknown what kind of relationships were molded in that direction. Given the fact that the Popes periodically but still were sending the missionaries to Georgia, we could suppose that Georgian politicians, who were under the yoke of the Mongols, might see an alleged ally in Pope and hoping for that they created favorable conditions for missionary activities. As for the Union of the Churches, Georgian ecclesiastic hierarchies did nothing in that direction as far as the «unification had political goals for Georgian ruling class rather than religious» [28, p. 111]. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two confessions did not obtain any specific character and there were no disputes over the doctrines. If there were any the conflict would have been inevitable and it would have been reflected in missionary relations and in the Popes' letters sent to the King of Georgia. No such facts are confirmed in any source so far. Otherwise the Catholic missionaries would not have established «St. Martin Georgian Monastery» in Tbilisi and four more monasteries in the 1260s [16, p. 90; 11, p. 86]. This fact shows that the Catholicism had certain achievements in Georgia for at least 31 years. Indisputably, it became possible thanks to positive tolerance of the heads of the Georgian Church and the confession and cultural relation of Catholics to the orthodox religion in Georgia.

After the East-West Schism of 1054 there were several attempts to unite the Churches of Rome and Constantinople [29, p. 141], but in vein. In this regard the Council of Lyon in 1274 was especially important, which is fundamentally studied in foreign historiography but that cannot be said about Georgian historiography. We are not going to review the special literature on this subject but we will consider the question as much as it is necessary in relation to the problem posed in the present work. To better outline the essence of the problem let us make a brief historical introduction. As is known, in 1261 the Latin Empire of Constantinople fell. Michael VIII Palaiologos, the Emperor of Nicaea (1259–1282) took over Constantinople from Latins and restored the Empire. But the Empire and the Emperor himself were in a very difficult situation. The last Latin emperor Baldwin II exiled in West was asking for help. Pope Urban IV concerned with losing Constantinople was on the side of Baldwin and called on a new Crusade. Charles of Anjou (1226–1270), the father-in-law of Baldwin II, who took over Naples and Sicily in those days, was getting ready for a war against Michael VIII Palaiologos [30, p. 41–53]. At the same time, the Bulgars and the Latin princes of Achaia and Peloponnese becoming independent attacked Constantinople [31, p. 164]. Within the newly restored Byzantine Empire the disorder continued, as they considered

<sup>13</sup>Highlighted by us.

<sup>14</sup>Registro Vaticano. Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Vol. 19. F. XL.

<sup>15</sup>Liturgical book which contains instructions about the order of the Byzantine rite office.

that Michael Palaiologos illegally seized the throne [31, p. 164].

In such a situation Michael Palaiologos felt main threat from Charles of Anjou [30, p. 55]. The Emperor immediately applied to Pope Gregory X suggesting him convening of the Ecumenical Council to solve the disagreement. Actually, the Latins were ready to accept the proposal though in new circumstances they had their own point of view about the Council, in particular, they gave a special form to the ecumenical council because the discussion on disputable doctrinal issues was impossible. Despite this, Rome did not pose question of Filioque yet, rather they just asked recognition of the primacy of the Pope in the Catholic Church and commemoration of the Pontiff on diptychs by the Orthodox Patriarchs [29, p. 319–320].

Pope Gregory X, who was eager to unit the Churches, successfully launched negotiations with Michael VIII Paleologues [30, p. 52–54; 31, p. 163]. The Pope praised the Emperor in writing for his desire to obey the Holy See inviting him to the Lyon Council of 1274 to eventually solve the problem of unification of the Churches [30, p. 55; 31, p. 163]. From the point of view of Michael Palaiologos the terms suggested by the Holy See were quite acceptable. First of all, the Pope's reconciliation with Charles Anjou, the King of Sicily, practically guaranteed prevention of the threat. Second, the Union would most likely determine to help the Christians of the West against the Turks. Third, as for the theological side, in such favorable conditions, the Union could provide a reliable foundation to solve the disputable issues in compromise in future [32, p. 108].

Long preparatory negotiations between Rome and Constantinople continued for three years before the Lyon Council gathered [33, p. 76]. As for the questions under consideration, there were no insuperable problems arisen around them, but the Eastern episcopacy did not accept the Union despite the simplest conditions. The Emperor assured the clerics that they had no other alternative. Palaeologos' arguments that another attack of the Latins would cause the fall of Constantinople and with that «the rules and dogmas would be easily destroyed», were unacceptable for the clergymen [32, p. 109]. Rome was carefully observing all that and the pontifex made the terms of the Union stricter. Pope asked the Emperor and the Patriarch to send him the Filioque, the symbol of faith in writing [30, p. 54; 31, p. 164]. Under such circumstances, the Emperor managed to create a group of supporters and included them in the Byzantine delegation.

In short, after a great effort and a lot of difficulties, on 7 May 1274 an «Ecumenical» Ecclesiastic Council gathered in Lyon, which held 7 sessions and ended its work on 17 July. The council was attended by Latin Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch, 15 cardinals, 300 bishops, 60 Abbots and over a thousand of prelates. The Council was headed by Pope Gregory X.

These sessions were also attended by the ambassadors of the kings of France and England. The Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologos and his delegation (35 Metropolitans and Archbishops, Royal and Patriarchate representatives) did not have accreditation from the Greek Church [33, p. 76–77]. It should be noted that this was the only Council after the great Schism that was included in the list of the ecumenical councils [33, p. 76; 26, p. 171–172]. In our opinion, the Councils of Lyon and Ferrara-Florence should be called «ecumenical» union ecclesiastic councils. Why? We can provide the following argument: As is known, the first seven Ecumenical Councils recognized by the Churches of the Orient and Occident were held mainly against the false teachings. The participants of those councils were fighting against the representatives of heretic minorities. But at the Lyon and Ferrara-Florence Councils there was a confrontation on dogmatic issues between the two opposite parties, between the Church of the East and that of the West. Their union could be possible on the ground of compromise solutions and it can be said that it was achieved. Therefore, we consider it more reasonable to call those councils the Ecumenical Unitary Councils. This can be the subject of a separate research therefore we are not going to consider it here.

In short, the Greek delegation arrived in Lyon on 24 June and took part in the Papal Mass, which was held in the Lyon cathedral for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. This was the only Liturgy in the course of the Council, when the Greeks chanted the «Symbol of faith» (Nicene Creed) [33, p. 77] in Latin and Greek. Thus, after considering the secondary problems, the Council began to discuss the problem of the Union. It should be noted that there was no discussion about *Filioque*, as the *Latins* would not allow it. Pope waited for Byzantines to pronounce Roman edition of the Symbol of faith. At his request, the Greek ambassadors read the Emperor's Epistle, where the Symbol was not mentioned at all. In another part of the Epistle the Emperor recognized the Papal primacy calling him «the First Pope and the King of the Catholic Church», «the Ecumenical Pope» and «the Father of all Christians». There was nothing new in it, as in the East the Pope was always considered to be a plenipotentiary bishop of Rome. The Epistle of the Bishops of the Eastern Church contained more obscure expressions. Archiereuses admitted the contribution of the Roman Church but no more [34, p. 146].

Having read the epistle, the Byzantine ambassador George Acropolit (1217–1282) took an oath on behalf of the emperor to accept the Latin Symbol of faith [35, p. 924] and to be devoted to the Holy See [35, p. 924]. When Pope Gregory X requested a written copy of the oath, Acropoli replied that he had lost it in the sea storm while travelling to Lyon. Finally, the Byzantines asked permission on behalf of the Emperor

to use the Symbol in the East edited so as it was close to their traditions [35, p. 924]. Pope solemnly proclaimed that «the Greeks freely and without any time-limit obeyed the Apostolic Cathedral, and now confirmed their obedience by their presence» [35, p. 924]. On 6 July 1274 the Bishop of Rome held a Grand Session dedicated to the unity of the Churches and, in his turn, he promised the Greek delegation that the invasion of Charles Anjou's army to Constantinople would be prevented [35, p. 924].

As is seen, the Greeks insisted on having the Symbol of Faith [31, p. 164] without *Filioque*. Great Logothete George Acropolit took an oath on behalf of the Emperor to resist to any kind of split of the Churches and promised steadfastly to defend the Confession of Faith and the Papal Primacy [32, p. 359–360]. The clergymen took the same oath on behalf of the Greek people [31, p. 164].

Thus, the two Churches concluded an agreement on the Union. It can be said that the basic doctrinal issue of *Filioque* was not mandatory for Greeks at that stage. Here, the main thing was the Papal Primacy to be admitted by the Church of Constantinople. Pope Gregory X could not help expressing his joy and gratitude saying that the Greeks returned back to their family [36, p. 259–261]. Pontiff himself was well aware that the Byzantine Emperor took that step in favor for political goals. Nevertheless, the fact that the Union was agreed in Lyon was the Pope's great victory, and for Michael VIII Palaeologos it was a diplomatic triumph [36, p. 261–264]. However, this primary effect was overshadowed by the political consequences.

After the return of the delegation from Lyon to Constantinople there was a great Liturgy in Greek and Latin languages and the new Patriarch John Bekkos decided to defend the concept of *Filioque* [26, p. 173], now the main thing was to inculcate the Union in the Byzantine Church. It seemed to be the most difficult thing to do because the Greek clergy did not easily accept it [30, p. 60–70]. The Emperor himself tried to persuade the Greek Bishops that admission of the Papal primacy in the Catholic Church was just an empty promise. «Does anyone seriously believe that the Pope will arrive in Constantinople to lead any council?» – asked Emperor the Bishops. It is not difficult at all to admit the Pope's right on appeal. «Will any bishop go to the East to seek justice? It is unlikely» – said the Emperor. «And, finally, as for the papal commemoration on the diptych, what is wrong or unfair with that? The priests of the Church used to put up with that before, did not they?» If now we reasonably consider the risks of threat, it must not be regarded as sin – Emperor tried to persuade the opponents [37, p. 243–244], but it did not help. Then the emperor used every means including the force to persuade the Greek clergy to accept the Union.

All this complicated relationships, on the one hand, between Rome and Constantinople, and, on the other

hand, within the country, where the opponents of the Union formed strong resistance in the capital<sup>16</sup>. When all the persuasive ways were tried out, the emperor introduced a regime based on the terror. The opponents of the Union were punished with expulsion, property confiscation, while the clergymen were punished more severely [36, p. 298]. As for the officials of the Empire, they were given a penalty of death if they came out with the pamphlets against the Emperor [30, p. 131–132]. The Emperor's sister Theodora and her mother were expelled from Constantinople as the instigators and were imprisoned in St. George fortress on the Black Sea coast [30, p. 132].

There are no primary sources so far to assure us that Georgia also participated in the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Lyon. Consequently, we do not have any direct information about the position of the Georgian Orthodox Church with respect to the Union. There is some position between Georgian scholars based on secondary sources according to which Georgian Church did not support the Lyon Union and «supported Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem» instead [30, p. 5–6]. We do not agree with this position and consider given arguments to be unconvincing. To prove that the Georgian Church «did not support the Lyon Union» the author of this point of view refers to one source. Namely, according to Nicephorus Gregoras (the Byzantine historian of the XIV century), some brave people were fighting against the violence of Michael VIII Palaeologos. Those «who were zeal and brave enough to defend their point of view (and those were few), steadfastly and courageously resisted and tolerated and withstood anything the Caesar did against them. But most of the people did not have a sensible approach – those were common people and a group of merchants...», they «cast the wool cloaks over the shoulders as if they were going to the show and scattered throughout various places wherever they could find Christian tribes: I mean the Peloponnese and Thessaly, Colchis and any other place, where the Caesar power did not reach. They were moving from one place to another wandering scattered not willing to maintain peace neither with the West, nor with each other» [39, p. 133–134]. Basing on this source he writes: «Apparently, the Georgian Church did not support the Union. It is less likely that those escaping the Union could have found shelter in anti-union Georgia» [40].

First of all, it is not evident that those «common-people and a group of merchants» who did not support the Union took shelter in Georgia mainly because of its anti-union attitude. Second, the source clearly shows that they scattered mainly in the areas, where the power of the Byzantine emperor did not reach, i. e. They chose the places, where the imperial power could not reach, rather than anti-union places. Apparently, they found Western Georgia to be such a place, but we do not know whether they really took shelter there or not.

<sup>16</sup>For details see: [30; 36; 26; 38].



Third, if the antiunion Greeks really took shelter in West Georgia, it does not mean at all that Georgia stood on the antiunion principles. In this regard, the case is just the opposite: First of all, in the very period the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries successfully continued their activity in Georgia and five Catholic monasteries [11, p. 86–87, 90] operated there. Second, if Georgia stood on the antiunion position, then Pope Nicholas IV (1288–1292) in his letter of 1289 to the King Demetre II, his son, the king David VI Narin, the Patriarch of Georgia and other hierarchies would have emphasized the fact of resistance to the Union of Churches. Moreover, in 1289 Pope wrote to the Catholics of Georgia Abram I: «Our beloved son Giovanni da Montecorvino, the monk of Minorities delivering this letter told us about lots of wonderful activities of yours and we are happy to hear that» [13, p. 20]. Giovanni da Montecorvino arrived to Georgia after 1280 and left it in 1288 [11, p. 86–88]. Obviously, if Georgian Church was really against the Union, he would not have concealed the fact from the pope. And if it was so, then why was the pope happy when he wrote: «We are happy to hear about lots of wonderful actions of yours».

The point of view that in antiunion movement «the Georgians greatly supported the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem», is based on a single source, namely, on an «official» report [41, p. 36] of the Jerusalem Patriarchate of 1200–1308. The idea of researcher can be easily repudiated on the ground of the same source. Therefore, we cite it completely. «Georgians, – says the source, – came here approximately in 1200 through Mamluks and Circassians. They greatly helped the Greek Patriarchate, therefore the Greeks gave them the Nicholas Cathedral at first and later the Monastery of the Cross. As there were too many Georgians they received from us the Cathedrals of St. Jacob, St. John the Divine, St. Theodore, St. Demetrius, St. Tekla, St. Catherine, and in 1308 the Calvary» [41, p. 36]. On the basis of this source we see conclusion: «This document shows that in the period of the Union, Georgians supported the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem, i. e., the Orthodox Patriarchs of Jerusalem» [40, p. 6, note 5]. This is followed by the following conclusion: «And this kind of attitude was very strong (as the document shows, it lasted for over a hundred years). That is why the Greek Patriarchate gave Georgians more and more cloisters. Thus, the alliance between the Jerusalem's Greek (Orthodox) Patriarchate and Georgians in the period of the Lyon Union is an indisputable fact. And in its turn, this fact indicates the Georgians' antiunion attitude...» [40, p. 6, note 5].

First of all, the source does not clearly show what kind of support the Georgian clergy provided to the

Greeks on the Holy Land that in return they received 9 monasteries until 1308. The period of Lyon Union lasted from 1274 to 1282 and the source is the official report for the period of 1200–1308. Therefore, we cannot say that Greeks gave those nine monasteries to Georgians in return of the support in antiunion fight in the period of Union. It is most likely to think that the Georgians might receive those monasteries thanks to Mamluks and Circassians. However, this is the subject of a separate research and we will not continue to discuss it here. All in all, the mentioned source in no way gives the ground to conclude that in 1274–1282 the Georgian clergy fought against the Lyon Union on the Holy Land together with the Greeks.

As is known, Michael VIII Paleologos called the whole East for recognition of the Lyon Union. Number of Byzantine Churches did not agree with that. At first the Union and then the repression of the opposition made a strong impression on the Monks of Mount Athos<sup>17</sup>. As soon as the agreement on the Union was concluded, they sent a letter to the Emperor politely declaring that acceptance of Filioque, unleavened communion bread and the Saturday's fast was not right. Therefore, they urged him to have mercy «upon the poor monks who truly loved the Emperor...»<sup>18</sup>. In 1278, the Emperor's rival political forces led by John I the Angelus, the Bastard of Thessaly decided to convene a council with participation of the monks of the Olimpo and the Athos in order to give the Emperor, the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome to the Anthem in the name of Orthodoxy [26, p. 176]. After that the Emperor ordered to implement the Union by force. To the resistance of the monasteries on the Mount Athos the Emperor responded with violence. Supposedly, in 1280 the papists might have his permission, when they attacked the Athos insisting on acceptance of the Union. All the monasteries accepted it with the exception of the Iviron Monastery. The source says: «The Latins went to the Iberian Lavra and asked the monks to join them. But the monks of the monastery did not deign revealing the depraved ones and damned them for the innovation. Upon hearing that the illegals became furious and abusing them made everyone leave the monastery, put the elderly monks on the board of the monastery ship and drowned them [in the sea], ... the younger monks from Georgia sharing the fate of the Judas were taken in captivity and together with the monastery's property were sent to Italy, where they were undressed of the monk's garment and sold to the Judas»<sup>19</sup>.

It is hard to prove how reliable is the fact provided in the source about selling the young Georgian monks to Judas in Italy, because we do not have any other ma-

<sup>17</sup>Христианский Восток. 1892. Т. III, вып. 2, № 5. С. 622–633.

<sup>18</sup>Там же. С. 633.

<sup>19</sup>Рассказ о нашествии папистов на Святую голуафонскую // Афонский патерик или жизнеописания святых на святой Афонской Горе просиявших. Санкт-Петербург : Центр православной книги, 1897. с. 234–235 ; *Silogava V. I.* Iviron Monastery on the Holy Mountain. Athos [Electronic resource]. URL: [www.setmizda.ru/text/994827.html](http://www.setmizda.ru/text/994827.html) (date of access: 20.04.2017).

terial to check it. It might be quite tendentious because given the events and attitudes of the antiunionists it is quite possible on the part of a Greek source. However, we are interested in quite a different thing: Why did they save the young monks? The source does not say anything about it. Nor do we know anything about whether they were uncompromisingly against the Union. Evidently, they really had a hard lot from the papists. But why did they show mercy to them? The following is highly possible: the papists might take into consideration that after the crusaders conquered

Constantinople (1204) the Athonite Georgians admitted the jurisdiction of the Pope and began performing conduct with the unleavened bread due to which the Greeks broke ties with them [17, p. 43]. It is also possible to assume that the monks were not really against the Union, and this was the reason of their sending to Italy. At any rate, the mentioned fact (raid on the Iviron Monastery and taking the Georgian monks to Italy) is a very weak argument for considering it as one of the reliable sources to prove that the Georgians were against the Union [40, p. 7].

### Conclusion

Thus, we do not have any tangible source about the negative attitude of Georgia and its Church to the Lyon Union. Therefore, to talk about the sympathy or antipathy of Georgian Church to Lyon Union and about its acceptance or unacceptance is impossible, because its official position is not shown in any document anywhere. However, the antiunion processes going on in Byzantine Empire did not have any impact on Georgia. As a reliable proof, we will cite the following source. On July 7, 1289 Pope Nicholas IV wrote to Abraham the Catholicos of Georgia: «We hope that you, who, as I was told, have a great number of people in your nation, will take care with great devotion and try for your nation to be virtuous to their creator with their generous deeds and to become worthy of eternal life; they will not be able to achieve that unless they defend the faith, which will sanctify the sinners and wipe out their sins. Therefore, with the fatherly

love of Jesus Christ I call on you and encourage you to defend the Catholic faith, which, as I have already told you, is accepted by the Roman Church. Cope with all the difficulties appearing on the way of joining it, strive for it with great diligence, eagerly and immediately address to it, go closer and try to attract others too... well and easily in order to be able to teach others the mentioned faith of Christ, therefore, we denote the articles of the faith right here...» [13, p. 20]. Unfortunately, we do not have the citation of «articles of faith». Supposedly, it was the Act of Faith accepted at the Lyon Council. As the source shows, the Pope could not have sent such a letter to Georgia if there was an antiunion attitude to Lyon. Therefore, we assume that the Georgian Orthodox Church continued its loyal attitude to the Holy See, maintained independence, and did not prevent the activities of Catholic missionaries in Georgia.

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