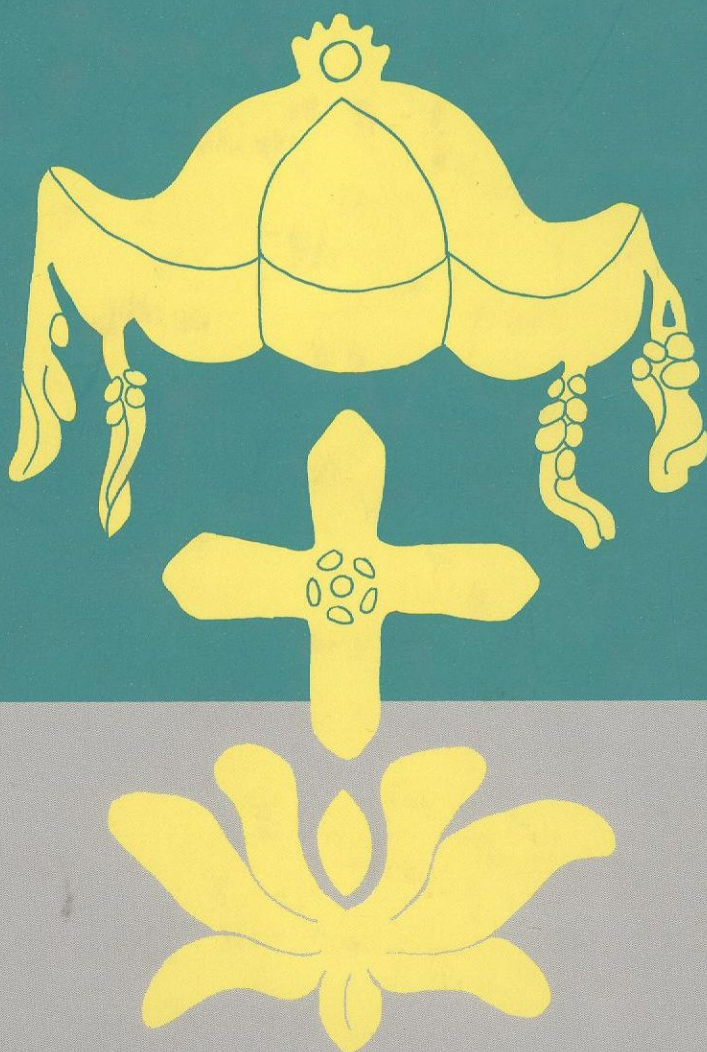


Edited by Tamar Nutsubidze, Cornelia B. Horn, and  
Basil Lourié, with the Collaboration of Alexey Ostrovsky

# Georgian Christian Thought and Its Cultural Context

*Memorial Volume  
for the 125th Anniversary  
of Shalva Nutsubidze  
(1888-1969)*



TSEC VOL II

BRILL



Shalva Nutsubidze

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BSAC	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte</i>
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
ÉO	<i>Échos d'Orient</i>
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JLA	<i>Journal of Late Antiquity</i>
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
OC	<i>Oriens Christianus</i>
OCA	<i>Orientalia Christiana Analecta</i>
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
PG	J. P. MIGNE (acc.), <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca</i> , T. 1–161 (Paris, 1857–1866)
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
PTS	<i>Patristische Texte und Studien</i>
RÉB	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
RHE	<i>Revue de l'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
RTF	<i>Revue de théologie et de philosophie</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SP	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
თუმ	თბილისის უნივერსიტეტის შრომები [ <i>t'bilisis universitetis šromebi</i> (Proceedings of Tbilisi University)]



## RELIGIOUS INCULTURATION AND PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE GEORGIAN LANGUAGE

Nino Doborjginidze

### Introduction

The study of the historical sociolinguistics of the Georgian language is among the numerous fields that emerged and developed on the basis of Shalva Nutsubidze's scholarly initiatives. In his monumental *History of Georgian Philosophy*, Nutsubidze described the translation activities of bilingual Georgian thinkers from the 4th to the 12th centuries and, in particular, the importation of the Oriental (Arabic) cultural heritage into the Greek world via Georgian as the Georgian contribution to this linkage between East and West.<sup>1</sup> He thus pointed to one of the important functions of the Georgian language—that of an intermediary between the East and West.

The identification of this function gave an impetus to important research in the 1980s. Their aim was to study patterns in the historical development of the Georgian language, establish its social and public functions, and reconstruct connections between the language, its speakers, and their activities (translations and original creations) in the Georgian cultural context.

One of the first scholars to engage in this task was the well-known German Kartvelologist Winfried Boeder, whose works shaped an important stage in the study of the social history of the Georgian language.<sup>2</sup> It was

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<sup>1</sup> On bilingual thinkers in the history of Georgian philosophy see III. Ницубидзе, *История грузинской философии* [Sh. Nutsubidze, *Istoriia gruzinskoj filosofii* (*History of Georgian Philosophy*)] (Tbilisi, 1960), 145–153; see 146.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. W. Boeder, "Zur Analyse des altgeorgischen Alphabets," in *Forschung und Lehre. Abschiedsschrift zu Joh. Schröpfers Emeritierung und Festgruß zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, hg. D. Gerhardt, J. Schröpfer (Hamburg: Slavisches Seminar [der Universität], 1975), 17–34; W. Boeder, "Die georgischen Mönche auf dem Berge Athos und die Geschichte der georgischen Schriftsprache," *Bedi Kartlisa. Recueil historique, scientifique et littéraire géorgien* 41 (1983): 85–95; W. Boeder, "Identität und Universalität: Volkssprache und Schriftsprache in den Ländern des alten christlichen Orients," *Georgica. Zeitschrift für Kultur, Sprache und Geschichte Georgiens und Kaukasiens* 17 (1994): 66–84; W. Boeder, "Sprachen und Nationen im Raum des Kaukasus", in: *Über Muttersprachen und Vaterländer*, ed. G. Hentschel, Zur

Boeder who raised the important problem of the functions of Georgian in the Middle Ages and who carried out substantial research in Georgian sources that had never been studied from this point of view. This is particularly true of the important issue of the self-awareness of Georgian monks, who worked in an alien linguistic environment on Mount Athos. As Boeder observed:

If an ordinary linguist compares the history of the Georgian and Oriental languages with that of Western European languages, he will definitely be surprised at the significant difference visible in the development of these languages. For example, the English language has undergone significant transformation over the past 1,200 years, but there have been comparatively fewer changes in the forms of the Georgian language over the same period, which is quite rare in the history of the development of world languages (to the extent they are attested). Historical, linguistic, and social problems also need explanation. How did it happen that Georgian was established not only as a language spreading Christianity, but has firmly maintained its place up to our time? Why did Greek fail to dominate here as an ecclesiastical, liturgical, scientific, as well as literary and official language, which could be expected as an analogy of Latin in Europe?<sup>3</sup>

This article investigates some aspects of these problems, in particular, the process of religious inculturation under way in Georgia from the 4th century and its impact on the development of the Georgian language. It also shows the use of the acculturation model in various cultural and historical contexts and its role in the weakening and loss of social and public functions of Georgian at the beginning of the 19th century.

### 1. *Linguistic Signs of Inculturation in the Christian East*

Before turning to the main problems to be addressed in this article, I would like to explain briefly the essential signs of events such as religious inculturation and acculturation that are closely linked to missionary activities practiced by the church in ancient times. The term "inculturation" is used to denote processes that unfold together with the spread of a new religion

*Entwicklung von Standardsprachen und Nationen in Europa* (Frankfurt a. M., 1997), 183–209; W. Boeder, "Sprache und Identität in der Geschichte der Georgier", in *Georgien im Spiegel seiner Kultur und Geschichte. Zweites Deutsch-Georgisches Symposium: Vortragstexte*, hg. B. Schrader und Th. Ahbe (Berlin, 1998), 68–81; W. Boeder, "Purity of language in the history of Georgian," in *Purism in minor languages, endangered languages, regional languages, mixed languages. Papers from the conference on "Purism in the Age of Globalisation," Bremen, September 2001*, ed. J. Brincat, W. Boeder, and Th. Stolz (Bochum, 2003), 199–223.

<sup>3</sup> Boeder, "Die georgischen Mönche," 85.

and that are reflected in the local culture and traditions in the native tongue of the nation. The term "acculturation" implies missionary activities that establish a common supra-national language of the religion in the liturgy as well as in the culture and other spheres of public life together with the spread of the new religion. From the early Middle Ages, missionary activities among nations in the Christian East were carried out in their native tongues, that is, based on the inculturation model. In the West, however, missionary activities were based on the acculturation model, which was expressed in the establishment of Latin as the language of the Bible and the liturgy.<sup>4</sup>

In this regard, then, the Christian East radically differed from the West. The Eastern trend of missionary activities in native tongues was favourable for the spread of the idea of establishing native languages in the religious space and, hence, the principle of equality of languages. However, the Roman ecclesiastical space in the West was based for a long time on the principle of the functional differentiation of languages, thus the prominent status of Latin as the language of the church and culture and its "spiritual imperialism and sacramental cult."<sup>5</sup> It was due to the supremacy of Latin that the process of the emancipation of local languages and their development into written languages started much later there.<sup>6</sup>

It is noteworthy that the linguistic situation in the Christian East and West had a significant impact on the process of the emancipation of local languages in each of these areas. Latin was the supra-national language of

<sup>4</sup> Theoretical problems and major signs of religious inculturation and acculturation in the Christian West were discussed in detail in works by B. Luiselli. See B. Luiselli, "Cristianesimo e fenomeni regionali dell'inculturazione nei secoli IV–VII," in *Cristianesimo e specificità regionali nel Mediterraneo latino (sec. IV–VII). XII incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana. Roma 6–8 maggio 1993* (Roma, 1994), 7–30; B. Luiselli, "Inkulturativer und akkulturativer Prozeß der Christianisierung: Die Entstehung der nationalen Literaturen und der Latein sprechenden Eliten in Westeuropa," in *Muster und Funktionen kultureller Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung. Beiträge zur internationalen Geschichte der sprachlichen und literarischen Emanzipation*, hg. U.-Ch. Sander und F. Paul (Göttingen, 2000), 146–168. See also F. Faucher, *Acculturer l'Évangile. Mission Prophétique de L'Église* (Montreal, 1973); P. Gordan, hg., *Evangelium und Inkulturation (1492–1992). Salzburger Hochschulwochen 1992* (Graz/Wien/Köln, 1993); L. J. Luzbetak, *L'Église et les cultures* (Brüssel, 1968); P. Poupard, *Église et cultures. Jalons pour un pastoral de l'intelligence* (Paris, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> See H.-B. Gerl, "Zwischen faktischer und numinoser Gültigkeit: Lorenzo Vallas Theorie vom Vorrang der lateinischen Sprache," in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bononiensis*, ed. R. J. Schoeck (New York, 1985), 327–336, see 327.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. "Denn die gesamte wissenschaftliche Literatur des Mittelalters und der größte Teil der religiösen und didaktischen Literatur, der Fach-, der Rechtsliteratur und der Geschichtsschreibung und ein großer Teil der Dichtung waren lateinisch" (D. Kartschoke, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im frühen Mittelalter* (München, 1990), 6).

culture and interethnic relations even before the establishment of Christianity, and it is natural that its functions were further widened under conditions of religious universalism. In the Christian East, however, there was no such supra-national language of culture and interethnic relations. In this situation, the introduction of a written religion created favourable conditions for local languages to expand their social and public functions and spheres of use and to become richer in expressive means and more creative in general.

In the modern Christian world, inculturation is the only form of missionary activity used by all active confessions; its universal nature, however, is not of long standing.<sup>7</sup> B. Luiselli is correct when he notes that inculturation, which missionaries deliberately chose and theoretically substantiated in their current missionary practice, was established and widespread in the East back in the early Middle Ages, and had a deep impact on the religious life and culture of nations in the area. However, it is also true that no systematic study of the problem has been conducted up to now.<sup>8</sup>

It is clear that the influence of religious inculturation on the development of social and public functions of the Georgian language cannot be described as a process of "natural" development. It requires interpretation in the cultural, religious, and political contexts, which is the goal of the present study. This article will consider a number of essential problems in order to clarify processes directly linked to religious inculturation in the Georgian linguistic environment, a process that helped Georgian and other tongues in the eastern Christian world in the Middle Ages to become official languages of the Bible, liturgy, literature and, in general, all spheres of public life.

<sup>7</sup> The Christian world officially recognized local tongues as languages of liturgy quite late, which was a significant factor in the differentiation of languages in the religious sphere and the establishment of Latin as the official language in not only religious, but also in other spheres of social life in states. For relations between Latin and local languages in the Middle Ages, see G. Hille-Coates, "Auffassungen von der Herkunft der Sprachen im Identifikationsfeld der lateinischen Sprache im westlichen Christentum des Mittelalters," in *Internationalität nationaler Literaturen*, hg. U. Schöning, Beiträge zum ersten Symposium des Göttinger Sonderforschungsbereichs 529 (Göttingen, 2000), 129–147; G. Hille-Coates, "Bibelsprachen heilige Sprachen. Zur Legitimierung des Hauptsprachenmodells im Spannungsfeld von Latein und Volkssprache im Mittelalter," in *Muster und Funktionen kultureller Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung*, hg. U.-Ch. Sander und Fritz Paul, Beiträge zur internationalen Geschichte der sprachlichen und literarischen Emanzipation (Göttingen, 2000), 206–238.

<sup>8</sup> Luiselli, "Inkulturrativer und akkulturrativer Prozeß," 146–147.

## 2. *The Process of Religious Inculturation and Significant Stages in the Development of the Georgian Language*

The social history of the Georgian language in the Middle Ages is divided into two significant stages: a) the functional legitimisation of the Georgian language (5th–10th centuries); and b) the so-called qualitative legitimisation of the Georgian language (11th–12th centuries).<sup>9</sup> Below I will touch briefly on major features characteristic of these stages, describe religious inculturation as a factor stimulating the development of functions of the Georgian language, and note some features common to the development of the languages in the Christian East and West.

### a) *The Stage of the Functional Legitimation of the Georgian Language (5th–10th Centuries)*

Missionary activities based on local languages among the nations of the Christian East were naturally accompanied by significant cultural and educational processes, which implied first and foremost creating writing systems for these languages<sup>10</sup> and their literary traditions, working out the liturgy in the local languages, translating books of the Bible and theological literature, and developing scholarship and education. In short, the social and public functions of the languages were legitimised. Finally, local national languages were established as standard languages. In the Christian East, the process resulted in languages that were not particularly prominent

<sup>9</sup> On stages of functional and qualitative legitimisation of the Georgian language, see N. Doborjginidze, "Einige Fragestellungen zur Herausbildung von Schriftsprachen im christlichen Osten am Beispiel des Georgischen," *Le Muséon* 121.3–4 (2008): 353–371; 6. დობორჯგინიძე, "ქართული ენის ფუნქციური და თვისობრივი ლეგიტიმაციის საკითხები შუა საუკუნეებში" [N. Doborjginidze, "Functional and Qualitative Legitimation of the Georgian Language in the Middle Ages"], წახნაგი [caxnagi] 1 (2009): 9–36.

<sup>10</sup> For the cultural and historical role of this common Eastern phenomenon, see Boeder, "Zur Analyse," 17–34; თ. გამყრელიძე, "წერის ანბანური სისტემა და ძველი ქართული დამწერლობა. ანბანური წერის ტიპოლოგია და წარმომავლობა [t. gamqrelidze, *ceris anbanuri sistema da jveli kart'uli damcerloba. anbanuri ceris tipologia da carmomavloba* (T. Gamqrelidze, *Alphabet Writing and the Old Georgian Script. A Typology and Provenience of Alphabetic Writing Systems*)] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1989); T. Gamqrelidze, "Christentum und altgeorgische Kultur," in *Georgien im Spiegel seiner Kultur und Geschichte. Zweites Deutsch-Georgisches Symposium: Vortragstexte*, hg. B. Schrader und Th. Ahbe (Berlin, 1998), 88–90.

politically and culturally suddenly obtaining vast social and public functions.<sup>11</sup>

Khanmeti manuscripts of the 5th through the 7th centuries and Georgian hagiographic works show that the functional legitimisation of the Georgian language was completed in the middle of the 5th century. The main texts used in the liturgy existed in Georgian from that time.<sup>12</sup> The Christian East of the 6th century was well aware of the existence of Georgian as a language

<sup>11</sup> As W. Boeder noted, the idea of establishing local tongues as languages of religion and liturgy came from Syria and was spread throughout the Christian East: "Zur Zeit des Niedergangs des eigentlichen Hellenentums in der hellenistischen Welt der Spätantike entstand vermutlich in Syrien und, davon ausgehend auch in Armenien, Georgien und anderen Ländern des Nahen Ostens eine Art der Volkssprachenidee, die den heimischen Sprachen, die nicht zu den politisch, kulturell oder religiös privilegierten und akzeptierten Sprachen gehörten, eine neue Würde gab, die geradezu im Rahmen eines christlichen Heilsgeschehens verstanden wurde" (Boeder, "Sprache und Identität," 69).

<sup>12</sup> Khanmeti manuscripts are ancient Georgian manuscripts (translations of books of the Bible and lectionaries) of the 5th through the 7th centuries in which the prefix kh- is used in the forms of the superlative and as the marker of the second subjective and third objective persons in verbs. On khanmeti manuscripts, see J. N. Birdsall, "A Georgian Palimpsest in Vienna," *OC* 53 (1969): 108–112; R. Blake, "Khanmeti Palimpsest Fragments of the Old Georgian Version of Jeremiah," *The Harvard Theological Review* 25.3 (1932): 225–272; J. Gippert and Z. Sarjeladze, "Über den sprachwissenschaftlichen Status der Khanmeti-Texte," in: *Caucasica. The Journal of Caucasian Studies* 2 (1998): 86–92; Л. Каджая, "Ханметные палимпсесты" [L. Kadžaja <k'ajaia>, "Xanmetnye palimpsesty"] ("The Khanmeti Palimpsests"), in *Проблемы палеографии и кодикологии в Советском Союзе* [*Problemy paleografii i kodikologii v Sovetskom Sojuze*] (Moscow: Nauka, 1974), 409–427; ღ. ქაჯაია, "ხანმეტის პალეოგრაფიული კრებულები" [L. Kadjaia, "A Khanmeti Hagiographical Collection"], *მრავალთავი* [mravalt'avi] 4 (1981): 41–49; ღ. ქაჯაია, *ხანმეტის ტექსტები* [L. Kadjaia, *xanmeti tek'stebi* (L. Kadjaia, *Khanmeti Texts*)] (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1984); J. Molitor, *Monumenta Iberica antiquiora* (Louvain, 1956); G. Peradze, "Über die georgischen Handschriften in Österreich," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 47 (1940): 223–242; ა. შანიძე, "უძველესი ქართული ტექსტების აღმოჩენის გამო" [a. šanije, "ujvelesi k'art'uli tek'stebis aǧmoč'enis gamo"] (A. Shanidze, "Concerning the Discovery of the Oldest Georgian Texts"), *ტფილისის უნივერსიტეტის მოამბე* [tp'ilisis universitetis moambe] 2 (1922/1923): 282–301; ა. შანიძე, "ქართული ხელნაწერები გრაზში" [a. šanije, "k'art'uli xelnacerebi grac'š'i"] (A. Shanidze, "Georgian Manuscripts in Graz"), *ტფილისის უნივერსიტეტის მოამბე* [tp'ilisis universitetis moambe] 9 (1929): 310–353; ა. შანიძე, *ხანმეტის ლექციონარი*. გამოსცა და სიმღერა დაურთო აკაკი შანიძემ [a. šanije, *xanmeti lek'c'ionari*. gamosc'a da simp'onia daurt'o akaki šanijem] (A. Shanidze, *Khanmeti Lectionary*. Edited and with a Symphonia provided by Akaki Shanidze), ძველი ქართული ენის ძეგლები [jveli k'art'uli enis jglebi (*Monuments of the Old Georgian Language*)], 1 (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1944); A. Kharanau, "Das Chanmeti-Fragment aus Jeremia—Fragen seiner Entstehung und seiner Übersetzungstechnik," *OC* 85 (2001): 204–236. For the main Georgian-language liturgical texts of that period, see კ. კეკელიძე, *ძველი ქართული ლიტურგიკის ისტორია* [k. kekelidze, *jveli k'art'uli literaturis istoria* (K. Kekelidze, *The History of the Old Georgian Literature*)], 1 (Tbilisi: Sabchota Sakartvelo, 1980), 26.

of liturgy. The Greek description of the life of Saint Sabbas, the founder of the Great Lavra of Jerusalem, written by Cyril of Scythopolis, confirms this:

Neither Iberians nor Syrians and Phrygians have the right to conduct a full liturgy in their churches [situated here]. When they assemble in their churches [situated here], they have the right to sing in their native tongues the Hours (ῥα) and the Typica (τὰ τυπικά) and read excerpts from the books of the apostles and the Gospel. After that, they should go to the big church together with all brothers and partake of the secret that bestows divine life.<sup>13</sup>

The fact that the main liturgical texts, i.e., a Georgian-language liturgy, original and translated hagiography, and works of other genres, exist in Georgian from the 5th century, shows that the functions of the language were already legitimised. Although the holy languages—Greek, Hebrew, and Latin—were at a higher level (this is particularly true of Greek)<sup>14</sup> and Georgian and other languages of the Christian East had a comparatively weak expressive force, there were no differences between them in the functional sense, as Georgian fulfilled the same functions and covered all the fields that Greek did, becoming the language of liturgy, education, literature, scholarship, and any other segment of the state both within Georgia and in educational centres active abroad.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> This is an excerpt from *The Life of Saint Sabbas* (J. B. Cotelier, ed., *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta*, T. III (Luteciae Parisiorum, 1686), 353; E. Schwartz, *Kyrrillos von Skythopolis, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 49.2 (Leipzig, 1939), 182.18–23), in which Cyril of Scythopolis writes that before his death in 532, Saint Sabbas named his disciple Melitus as his successor and left him the rules of liturgy described above. The rules also mentioned non-Greek congregations (Syrians, Georgians, and Phrygians). The rules (typicon), which was regarded as lost for a long time, was found by Academician A. Dmitrievsky in one of the manuscripts kept in the library on Mount Sinai; see А. Дмитриевский, "Типикон святого Саввы" [A. Dmitrievskij, "Tipikon svjatogo Savvy (The Typicon of Saint Sabbas)"], *Труды Киевской Духовной Академии* [Trudy Kievskoj Duxovnoj Akademii] (1890, January): 170–192; E. Kurz, "Das Typikon des heiligen Saba," *BZ* 3 (1894): 165–167; კეკელიძე, *ძველი ქართული ლიტურგიკის ისტორია*, 1, 38.

<sup>14</sup> It is known that the topos of three holy languages (trilinguita) was elaborated within the religious context in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. It regarded the initial language of humankind, Hebrew, as the language of wisdom and science and gave a special status to Greek and to the language common in the Western Roman Empire, Latin, on the basis of the so-called "holy arguments." For the special status of the three holy languages and arguments used in this connection in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, see Hille-Coates, "Bibelsprachen heilige Sprachen," 206–238.

<sup>15</sup> The Georgian-language typicon of the Petritsoni Monastery is a good example of this. It is a document signed, together with its Greek copy, by the Greek patriarch and has legal force in a foreign country. This is how the author of the typicon explains the use of the two languages: "The reason why it was written in Greek and Georgian is that the monks in my monastery are Georgians by origin and cannot read in Greek. So it is necessary for them to



Some scholars have suggested that the Greek-Byzantine East of the Middle Ages gave supreme rights to local languages and promoted their development.<sup>16</sup> I think that the differences in the development of vernacular languages in the Christian East and West was not entirely dependent on the different attitudes expressed in these two religious spheres. Both the Christian East and West used similar arguments regarding inculturation, translations of the Bible, and literature in general. Both religious worlds resorted to the same arguments for restricting translations in local languages, but the results of the implementation of these similar prohibitions were radically different in the two areas.

Below, I will briefly describe arguments elaborated in the Christian East and West to counter liturgies in local languages and translations of the Holy Scripture as well as theological, philosophical, and other kinds of literature. I believe that the similarities among these arguments will be visible even in this brief description.

*The Linguistic Argument (the poverty of the local language):* The unified church of the Western Roman Empire believed that popular languages were poor and, unlike the holy languages adapted to philosophy and rhetoric, unable to transmit the most complicated content. Therefore, the translation of the Bible and theological literature into local languages was unjustified.<sup>17</sup>

have a Georgian [typicon] to understand everything that is written in it" (ა. შანიძე, ქართველთა მონასტერი ბულგარეთში და მისი ტიპიკონი. ტიპიკონის ქართული რედაქცია [a. šanidze, *k'art'velt'a monasteri bulgaret'si da misi tipikonis. tipikonis k'artuli redak'cia* (A. Shanidze, *A Georgian Monastery in Bulgaria and Its Typicon. The Georgian Recension of the Typicon*)], აკაკი შანიძე, თხზულებანი თორმეტი ტომად [akaki šanidze, *txzulebani t'ormet tomad* (Akaki Shanidze, *Works in Twelve Volumes*)], IX (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1986), 119–120).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. W. Boeder's arguments (Boeder, "Sprache und Identität," 69) against the opinion of R. Jakobson (R. Jakobson "The beginning of national self determination in Europe," *The Review of Politics* 7 (1945): 585–597, see 590–594). Boeder says that local tongues were established as languages of liturgy and translations of the Bible not due to but despite the attitude of the Byzantine Empire: "Die Volkssprachenidee hat sich nicht wegen, sondern trotz Byzanz durchgesetzt, weil z.B. die Syrer aufgrund ihrer Tradition ein anderes Selbstbewusstsein haben konnten, als die nichtlatinisierten Barbaren der westlichen Kirche und weil starke nationale Randstaaten für Byzanz später durchaus opportun waren" (Boeder, "Sprache und Identität," 69).

<sup>17</sup> One point is noteworthy here. It is not true that the Roman Catholic Church prohibited translations into local languages or that there were no translations before the Reformation. In the German-language area alone, there were eighteen printed translations and many more handwritten translations, but none of them was recognised as a canonical text to be used in liturgies. Their function was rather educational and exegetic, and they aimed at providing simple explanations of holy texts to uneducated people (see K. Stackmann, "Die Bedeutung des Beiwerks für die Bestimmung der Gebrauchssituation vorlutherischer

*The Exegetic Argument (the threat of arbitrary interpretation of theological texts):* This argument is directly linked to the first one. It focuses on the possible results of the translation of the Holy Scripture and theological texts in general, and in particular their distortion and incorrect understanding, which raises the problem of heresy.

The writing of Berthold von Henneberg, archbishop of Mainz, is typical of such prohibitions, clearly demonstrating the links between these arguments against the translation of the Bible. In his censorship edict of 22 March 1484, the archbishop harshly criticised translations of the Bible, and literature in general, into local languages. He substantiated his position in the following manner:

Finally, what can be said about holy books and ecclesiastic canons? No matter how smart and linguistically skilled people who understand the essence of the matters write or translate such books into popular languages, they will be so difficult and inaccessible that even very learned adult people will be unable to understand them. However, some excessively bold people who lack foresight and knowledge have nevertheless dared to translate such books of teachings into popular languages. After many learned people saw these translations, they admitted that they could not understand the translations, because the real meanings of words were changed and distorted. Would such translators claim, assuming that they care about the truth—irrespective of whether they carry out their translations in good faith or with evil designs—that the German language is capable of containing all that Greek and Latin writers have written, in the most careful and distinct way, about the highest ideas of Christian religion and matters of science?! One must confess the poverty of our language, its inability to suffice these writers in the least, and that if these [translators] fabricate unknown words out of their entrails [which means that readers will not understand the translation], or even if they do make use of some ancient [texts], they will inevitably corrupt the sense of the truth—something that we have reason to fear most in the case of Holy Scripture because of the magnitude of the danger posed by this. For what is there to enable the ignorant and unlearned men and women, into whose hands the books of Holy Scripture might then fall, to pick out the true meanings?"<sup>18</sup>

The text of this edict is very similar to what the Greeks said about languages with poor literary traditions. Although the Greeks did not know the lan-

deutscher Bibeln," in *De captu lectoris. Wirkung des Buches im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert dargestellt an ausgewählten Handschriften und Drucken*, hg. W. Milde und W. Schuder (Berlin/New York, 1988), 273–288).

<sup>18</sup> H. Pallmann, "Des Erzbischofs Berthold von Mainz ältestes Zensuredict," *Archiv für Geschichte des Deutschen Buchhandels* 9 (1884): 238–241, *apud* Hille-Coates, "Bibelsprachen heilige Sprachen," 224–225.

guages of nations in the Christian East, they nevertheless accused their churches of translating the text of the Bible without consideration or thinking. The accusations were no milder than the censorship edicts of the Roman Church. Old Georgian translators were concerned about such views, writing that it was impossible "to utter a word from fear of reviling, insults, and reprimanding coming on us. [...] They called us heretics and we were in great trouble."<sup>19</sup>

The Georgian translators, along with those of other Eastern nations, did not deny that their languages were poor in comparison with the Greek language, and they acknowledged that Georgian translations had inaccuracies and misunderstandings.<sup>20</sup> They admitted that the semantic and stylistic potential of their language was greatly inferior to Greek. They even pointed to an example in which the Georgian translation did not differentiate between such important Greek words as *psyche* and *pneuma*: "It should be borne in mind that *soul* has two names in Greek: *psyche*, which denotes *spirit* in most cases in Paul[']s epistles], and there is also *pneuma*, which is the name of the essence of His [God's] soul and is also used for the Holy Spirit. However, Georgian, because of its poverty, has only one word for *soul*."<sup>21</sup>

Admitting the supremacy of Greek as a language extremely rich in expressive means, Georgian and other languages of the East managed not only to legitimise their functions, but also to create a joint *Georgian-Greek* area of communications and to maintain the balance between the lan-

<sup>19</sup> გიორგი მთაწმიდელი, ცხორება იოვანესი და ეფთიმესი, ტექსტი გამოსაცემად დაამზადა ივანე ჯავახიშვილმა [giorgi mt'acmideli, c'xorebay iovanesi da ep'tymesi, tek'sti gamosac'emad daamzada ivane javakhishvili (George of the Holy Mountain, *The Life of John and Euthymius*. Text prepared by Ivane Javakhishvili)], ძველი ქართული ენის ძეგლები [jveli k'art'uli enis jglebi (*Monuments of the Old Georgian Language*)], 3 (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1946), 52.

<sup>20</sup> The well-known Georgian translator of the 11th century, George the Small, wrote: "and made us, whom Hellenes called barbarians because of our illiteracy and ignorance, their equals" (გიორგი მცირე, ცხორება გიორგი მთაწმიდელისა. ტექსტი გამოსაცემად და ლექსიკონითურთ გამოსაცემად მოამზადა ივანე ლოლაშვილმა [giorgi mc'ire, c'xoreba giorgi mt'acmidelisa. tek'sti gamokvlevit'a da lek'sikonit'urt' gamosac'emad moamzada ivane lolashvili (George Mtsire, *The Life of George of the Holy Mountain*. Text edited and the Indices prepared by Ivane Lolashvili)] (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1994), 177).

<sup>21</sup> "შეისწავე, რამეთუ ორსაზე არს ბერძულად სახელი სულისა: ფსიქი, რომელი უმეტესა ადგილსა სამშენებლისა წილ დადებულ არს პავლე სახელსა, და კუალად—პნემა, რომელი-ესე თუთ თავადის სულისა არსებასა უწოდებან და წმიდისათჳს იგივე ითქუმი. ხოლო ქართველთა უღონოებისაგან ერთი სახელი აქეს სულისა" (Manuscript of Fund A of the National Centre of Manuscripts: A 217, 322r).

guages in the joint area. Educated Georgians of the Middle Ages regarded the translation into Georgian of the cultural treasury of the contemporary world as a means of enriching and emancipating the Georgian language. In the biographies of the well-known Georgian translators of the 10th and 11th centuries, John, Euthymius, and George of Athos, they are called educators of the nation and eradicators of the faults of the Georgian language. For example: "They educated our language and country. He [Euthymius of Athos] embellished and developed our language and our country with his translations of holy letters. [...] He [Euthymius] corrected the faults of our language and made us, whom Hellenes called barbarians because of our illiteracy and ignorance, their equals."<sup>22</sup>

#### b) *The Stage of Qualitative Legitimation of the Georgian Language (10th–12th Centuries)*

The most important stage of qualitative legitimisation began in Georgian and other languages of the Christian East precisely in order to overcome their lack of expressive means and, correspondingly, to enrich their power and flexibility. Unlike the previous stage of functional legitimisation, translators were to work on only the best books produced by the "Greeks and Romans," and to accomplish their tasks at the highest professional levels, which implied translating the original texts as precisely as possible. For this purpose, it was necessary to enrich the expressive means of the Georgian language, to improve old translations by reflecting the originals as closely as possible, to create special terminology for the language of ideas, and, as a result, to make Georgian qualitatively equal to Greek.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> "მათ განანათლეს ენა ჩუენი და ქუეყანა ჩუენი. მან [ეფთიმე] ათონელმა შეამკო და აღაყუავა ენა ჩუენი და ქუეყანა ჩუენი თარგმანებითა წმიდათა წერილთათა. [...] მან [ეფთიმე] ნაკლულეკებება ენისა ჩუენისა ადავსო და, რომელნი-ესე ბარბაროს-წოდებულ ვიყვენით ელენთა მიერ უსწავლელობისათჳს და უმეტრებისა ჩუენისა, მათთანავე ადგურაცხნა ღმრთისა მიერ მოცემულითა მით სიბრძნითა თჳსითა." The quotations are taken from the lives of John and Euthymius of Athos and George of Athos. See გიორგი მთაწმიდელი, ცხორება იოვანესი და ეფთიმესი, 14; გიორგი მცირე, ცხორება გიორგი მთაწმიდელისა, 177.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. the argument by the well-known 11th-century Georgian hymnographer John Zosimus, which is given in his famous hymn "Praise and Exaltation of the Georgian Language." The argument is that Greek and Georgian are two sisters. See ს. ცაიშვილი, ქართული პოეზია თხუთმეტ ტომად. ტ. 1: ძველი ქართული პოეზია V–XII საუკუნეებისა [s. c'aishvili, k'art'uli poezia t'xut'met tomad. t. 1: jveli k'art'uli poezia V–XII saukuneebis (S. Tsaishvili, *The Georgian Poetry, in fifteen volumes*. Vol. 1: *The Old Georgian Poetry from the fifth to the twelfth centuries*)], (Tbilisi: Nakaduli, 1979), 72.

For the first stage, it was necessary to transfer the linguistic and cultural experiences of other nations into Georgian. The main objective at the second stage was to produce extremely precise translations, which would be as close to the original as possible. Ephraim the Small, a well-known Georgian translator of the 11th century, used the word of Greek origin გადმოტვირვა (*gadmotvip'ra* into our language)<sup>24</sup> as one of the synonyms of *translation*. The notion denoted by this word is based on the following meanings of the Greek stem τρι-: a) a trace left by something; b) a model or a mould for making something. By making this association, Ephraim the Small minimised the difference between the translation and the original: the translation becomes a full-fledged "substitute and icon of the original."<sup>25</sup>

In the comparatively short period from the late 11th century to the early 12th century, the Bible and the main theological works were translated anew or substantially revised three times, some books even four or five times. However, in the same period, the Georgian language did not undergo any substantial changes at all, which means that the translations did not need linguistic enrichment.<sup>26</sup> One of the main reasons for the renewed translations was to draw them as close to the original as possible, improve the terminology, enrich the expressive means of the language, and, as a result, avoid reprimands from Greeks.

In metatexts appended to the translations, the Georgian translator-editors of the 11th and 12th centuries analysed in detail the shortcomings of the old translations, admitting that the Georgian translations of Greek

<sup>24</sup> Eprem Mcire (Ephraim the Small): The metatext appended to the Georgian translation of a work by John of Damascus; see მ. რაპავა, *იოანე დამასკელი: დიალექტიკა*. ქართული თარგმანების ტექსტი გამოსცა, გამოკვლევა და ლექსიკონი დაურთო მათა რაპავამ [m. rap'ava, *ioane damaskeli: dialektika*. k'art'uli t'argmanebis tek'sti gamosc'a, gamokvleva da lek'sikoni daurt'o maia rap'avam (M. Rapava, *John of Damascus: Dialectics*. The text of the Georgian translation edited and with a study and the lexicon provided by Maia Rapava)] (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1976), 66.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Eprem Mcire: The metatext of the translation appended to the Georgian translation of a work by Theodore of Cyrene. See manuscript A. 689, 187v kept in Fund A of the National Centre of Manuscripts. For the Old Georgian translation theory, see ნ. დობორჯგინიძე, *ლინგვისტურ-პერმენევტიკული მეტატექსტები: პრაქტიკული გრამატიკა და პერმენევტიკა X-XIII საუკუნეების ქართულ წყაროებში* [n. doborjginidze, *lingvistur-hermenevtikuli metatek'stebi: prak'tikuli gramatika da hermenevtika X-XIII saukuneebis k'artul cqaroebsi* (N. Doborjginidze, *Linguistic and Hermeneutic Metatexts: Practical Grammar and Hermeneutics in Georgian Sources of the Tenth-Thirteenth Centuries*)] (Tbilisi: Ilia State University Press, 2012), 164-182.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. კ. დანელია, *ქართული სამწერლო ენის ისტორიის საკითხები* [k. danelia, *k'art'uli samcerlo enis istoriis sakit'xebi* (K. Danelia, *Problems of the History of the Georgian Literary Language*)] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1983), 209-286.

philosophical and theological terms were not precise and that various Greek terms were translated with a single word. As John Petritsi, a well-known Georgian philosopher and translator of the 12th century, wrote, this created serious problems for translators:

It should also be taken into account that the force and action of the soul is different from those of reason. In the language of the Hellenes, each of these words has its own name appropriate for its essence, but none of us, neither translators nor anyone else, has analysed this [problem] and this is a great obstacle for me in my translations, because our people [Georgians] render everything in one manner and with the same [word]. It should be borne in mind that the soul's [force and action] is called *dianoia*, those of reason *noëma*, and those of the Supreme *noëton*.<sup>27</sup>

The inaccuracy of terms and the poverty of the language (in this case, Georgian), that is, the aforementioned linguistic argument, is a precondition for the second argument, that of an inappropriate rendering of the Bible and theological literature in general, which leads to the threat of heresy. John Petritsi mentions some quite problematic examples of such a threat. One of his comments is about the initial phrase of the Gospel of John: *dasabamit'gan i qo sitquay* (დასაბამითგან იყო სიტყუა, "In the beginning was the Word") which is rendered as *pirvelit'gan i qo sitquay* (პირველითგან იყო სიტყუა, "First was the Word"). Petritsi explains how this Georgian equivalent changes the meaning of the text, placing the Word of God among ordinary countable things and creatures, which is inadmissible.<sup>28</sup>

These examples show that it was the scarcity of expressive means in Georgian and the threat of heresy that prompted the attempts to make Georgian equal to Greek and to correct as far as possible all misunderstandings and inaccuracies in the translations through extensive editing and new translations.

Other languages of the Christian East travelled a similar road to emancipation. The Syrian tradition was the first to revise previous translations of the books of the Bible. Philoxenus of Mabbug (505-508) and then Thomas of Harkel (616) substantially revised the ancient Syrian translation of the Bible (Vetus Syriaca), made in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and produced new editions. Philoxenus of Mabbug quotes examples from works

<sup>27</sup> Ioannis Petritzii Opera. T. I. Procli Diadochi ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΩΣΙΣ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ. *Versio Hiberica*. Textum Hibericum edidit commentariisque instruxit S. Kauchschischwili (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1940), 6.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 219-220.



by Ephraim the Syrian and, comparing them with Greek, shows how inaccurate the Syrian terminology is. In the metatexts appended to his translation, Thomas of Harkel elaborates at length on the main goal of the renewed translation—drawing as close as possible to the Greek original and making the terminology more precise.

In the 12th century, the Armenian Bishop Nerses employed the same principles to edit the Armenian translation of the Bible, which included various layers of texts. Later, in the 14th century, Patriarch Euthymius initiated the correction of books (исправление книг) throughout the entire Slavic world. The revision of the translations of the Bible that were widely used in Bulgaria and the southern Slavic region in order to draw them closer to Greek is linked to his name. In 1355 Alexius, the Metropolitan of Moscow, substantially revised translations that were widely disseminated throughout the eastern Slavic tradition, bringing them as close to the Greek original as possible.<sup>29</sup>

Beginning in the 16th century, many European missionaries were active in Georgia. They used the Eastern model of inculturation, rather than the Western model, to spread Catholicism. This important era in Georgian-European relations has been intensively studied from various viewpoints.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> On individual Eastern traditions, see E. Riad, *Studies in the Syriac Preface*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Semitica Upsaliensia 11 (Uppsala, 1988); М. Рижский, *История переводов Библии в России* [M. Rižskij, *Istorija perevodov Biblii v Rossii* (M. Rizhsky, *The History of Biblical Translations in Russia*)] (Novosibirsk: Publishing House of the Siberian Department of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1978); A. K. Sanjian, "Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts," *Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies* 2 (1979): 7–41; G. Zuntz, *The Ancestry of the Harclean New Testament* (London, 1945); G. Zuntz, "Die Subscriptionen der Syra Harclensis," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 101 (1951): 174–196; on the revision of translations and the common Eastern trend of drawing them closer to Greek, see N. Doborjginidze, "Einige Fragestellungen," 369–371; დობორჯგინიძე, "ქართული ენის ფუნქციური," 22–23; N. Doborjginidze, *Die georgische Sprache im Mittelalter*, Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 17 (Wiesbaden, 2009), 39–45.

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the main problems in this field, see მ. თამარაშვილი, *ისტორია კათოლიციზმის ქართველთა შორის* [M. Tamarashvili, *Istoria kat'olikobisa k'art'velt'a šoris* (M. Tamarashvili, *The History of Catholicism among Georgians*)] (Tbilisi: published by the author, 1902) [reprint: Tbilisi: Sesta, 2011]; ე. მეტრეველი, "ათონის ერთი აღაპის გაგებისათვის" [E. Metreveli, "at'onis ert'i aġapis gagebisat'vis" (E. Metreveli, "About One Athonite Meaning of ἀγῶν / 'Funeral Repast'"), in ე. მეტრეველი, *ფილოლოგიური-ისტორიული ძიებანი* [E. Metreveli, *philologiur-istoriuli jiebani* (E. Metreveli, *Studies in Philology and History*)] 1 (Tbilisi: Artanuji Publishers, 2007), 42–50; მ. პაპაშვილი, *სა-ქართველო-რომის ურთიერთობა VI–XX საუკუნეებში* [M. Papashvili, *sak'art'veloromis urtiert'oba VI–XX saukuneebši* (M. Papashvili, *Georgian-Roman Relations from the Sixth to the Twentieth Centuries*)] (Tbilisi: Aghmashenebeli, 1995); ე. ბაბუნაშვილი, თ. უთურგაიძე, *ანტონ პირველის "ქართული დრამატის" და მისი ეროვნული-ისტორიული მნიშვნელობა* [E. Babunashvili, T. Uturgaidze, *anton pirvelis "k'art'uli*

Research on the contribution of Catholic missionaries active in Georgia in the 16th through the 18th centuries to the development of the social and public functions of the Georgian language is based on an analysis of sources in Roman collections.<sup>31</sup> The revival of lexicography and lexicology, and the revival of philology in general, as well as history, theology and philosophy in Georgia is linked to the activities of the missionaries.

### 3. *The Georgian Language in the Era of Religious Acculturation*

The 1783 treaty of alliance between Georgia and Russia was violated in 1801, and Georgia, divided into two provinces, became part of Russia, which claimed to be the heir of the Byzantine Empire and the leader of the Eastern Christian world. In spite of this claim, the Russian Empire sharply changed the Eastern model of religious inculturation and began implementation of a rough acculturation mechanism or, to be more precise, a flexible mechanism of Russification in countries that were its allies initially due to a shared religion, but which were later conquered. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Georgian language was completely ousted from all fields of public, cultural, educational, and religious life.

The acculturation model had an impact on the Catholic missions in Georgia, too. It is known that Catholicism was introduced in Georgia in the Georgian language. European missionaries wrote that from the very beginning, they used old Georgian translations of the Bible and religious books before the schism (the division of the Christian Church into Orthodox and Catholic churches). When Catholic missions were established in Georgia, the Catholics adopted these existing books; thus the Georgian

*grammatika*" da misi erovnul-istoriuli mnišveloba (E. Babunashvili, T. Uturgaidze, "The Grammar of Georgian" by Anthony the First and Its National and Historical Importance)] (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1991); თ. უთურგაიძე, "ქართული ენის შესწავლა იტალიელ მისიონერთა მიერ და მათი მეცნიერული ნააზრევს ურთიერთმომართება" [T. ut'urgaije, "kart'uli enis šescavla italiel misionert'a mier da mat'i mec'nieruli naazrevis urtiert'mimart'eba" (T. Uturgaidze, "Italian Missionaries' Knowledge of the Georgian Language and Its Relation to Their Scholarly Thinking")], *იბერიულ-კავკასიური ენათმეცნიერება* [iberiul-kavkasiuri enat'mec'niereba] 19 (1990): 123–146; ე. ხინტიბიძე, *ქართულ-ბიზანტიური ლიტერატურული ურთიერთობების ისტორიისათვის* [E. xint'ibidze, *k'art'ul-bizantiuri literaturuli urtiert'obe bis istoriisat'vis* (E. Khintibidze, *Toward the History of the Georgian-Byzantine Literary Relations*)] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press, 1982); ა. ჩიქობავა, *ჯ. ვათეიშვილი, პირველი ქართული ნაბეჭდი გამოცემები* [A. čik'obava, J. vat'eišvili, *pirveli k'art'uli nabečdi gamoc'emebi* (A. Chikobava, Dj. Vateishvili, *First Printed Books in Georgian*)] (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1983), and others.

<sup>31</sup> The project initiated by the Georgian Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection implies, among other topics, research on the issue of religious inculturation.



Orthodox and Catholic Christians had common religious books. European Capuchin missionaries, who spoke Georgian, also used these books.<sup>32</sup>

From 1801, the Russian government ousted Georgian from the Catholic liturgy as well. They required that Georgian Catholics, who were citizens of Russia, switch to the Armenian-language Catholic rituals if they wanted to retain their Catholic confession. This action, which was directed against the linguistic identity of Georgian Catholics, is confirmed in numerous sources.

For example, the Georgian Catholic Petre Kharischirashvili wrote to Pope Leo XIII (1878–1903) in Rome: "Your Majesty knows that our liturgy [the Georgian-language liturgy is implied] is one of the oldest liturgies. The Georgian liturgy (*rito liturgico giorgiano*) was deprived of its autonomy only from the 1800s. The Russian government forced Georgian Catholics at that time to switch to the Armenian-language Catholic liturgy (*rito armeno cattolico*), because Russia was not going to tolerate any other liturgy in addition to its own liturgy. Georgian Catholics, who did not want to lose their Catholic confession, mournfully reconciled themselves with their fate and subdued their national sentiments (*amore nazionale*), renouncing the Georgian-language liturgy (*rito liturgico Georgiano*). Thus, Georgian Catholics, who now belong to the Armenian ritual in Georgia, are followers of the ritual by chance and temporarily. They are waiting for a better time and circumstances to revert to their native Georgian ritual."<sup>33</sup>

Demetre Tumanishvili wrote to a cardinal: "After the [Russian] government achieved their goal of forcing Georgian Catholics to switch to the Armenian ritual, Catholics were prohibited from using the Georgian language. [...] I would like to inform you that such decrees are regularly issued against Georgians and some Armenian Mkhitarists are also involved. Thank God, not all prohibitions are implemented, but there is one thing that is strictly implemented: Georgian Catholics do not have the right to print books in Georgian."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Cf. "...e gli stessi missionari cappuccini, che sapevano la lingua giorgiana, si servivano di questi libri stampati in Georgia o in Mosca per leggere il vangelo nella Messa in Giorgiano. Perciò il rito Giorgiano è uno di quei antichi riti, che fa la gloria e splendore della chiesa cattolica, apostolica, e Romana, che abbraccia nel suo seno i popoli di tutte le lingue." Here I use materials found in Rome within the framework of the aforementioned project; *Sacra congregazione per le Chiese Orientali. Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, Georgians 1861–1892, f. 328.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 324–325.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. "In qual magnera procura governo che si faccia passare i georgiani latini al rito armeno, proibendo ai Georgiani catolichi d'usare la lingua georgiana ... simili intenzioni e decreti i quali fu fatto contro i georgiani, aiutano parimente alcuni preti armeni-Cattolici

It became possible to restore the Georgian-language Catholic liturgy only outside the borders of the Russian Empire—in a Georgian Catholic church founded in Constantinople. The Georgian Catholic monastery founded by Petre Kharischirashvili in Constantinople united Catholics of various ethnicities. The monastery asked the Pope for the right to hold Georgian-language rituals, which they obtained in 1864. The document written specifically to give such permission reads as follows: "*ILLmus P. Indulsit, ut omnes religiosi, viri congregationis de quam precibus, qui officium divinum persolvere tenentur illud recitare valeant lingua Georgiana quamdiu in eadem congregatione Constantinepoli permanserint quamvis latinum vel armenum ritum ipsi profitantur.*"<sup>35</sup>

Studies show that the Georgian-language Catholic liturgy and the cultural and educational processes in general that developed after European missionaries appeared in Georgia played a special role in the social history of the Georgian language, first in the period of the Muslim expansion in the 17th century and then during the Russification of the 19th century. This very interesting history of Catholic inculturation is currently a matter of intensive studies carried out on the basis of rich primary source material kept in the Vatican's libraries.<sup>36</sup>

Mechitaristi; Ringraziamo Iddio fin d'oggi non siano tuti eseguiti ii sudetti decreti: (fuor di quello che più non si permettono stampare in lingua georgiana ii libri Ecclesiastici) ..." *Ibid.*, f. 419–420.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 329.

<sup>36</sup> A monograph on the Catholic inculturation in Georgia in the 17th through the 19th centuries is being prepared on the basis of materials kept in libraries of Rome.