

SOURCE STUDIES

## The Hymn on Tiflis from the Wardā Collection

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**1. The Wardā, a hymn-collection, from the Syriac Renaissance period.** In the liturgical literature of the Church of East (the so-called Nestorian) the *Wardā* collection holds a special place. Even judging by the titles of the hymns many men of letters living from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century participated in its creation besides Gīwargīs Wardā to whom most of the hymns are ascribed. Besides, the collection is meant for the liturgical performance on night services of the festival days and Sundays of all the liturgical year. These two peculiarities make it the main monument of East Syrian liturgical poetry. Its numerous copies are known in different collections of the world. Strophic hymns – ‘*ōnītā*’ (pl. ‘*ōnyātā*’) contained in the collection are still a part of the liturgy of the East Syrian Church. Altogether there is over 120 hymns in the collection, most of which are ascribed to Gīwargīs Wardā whose name provides the name of the collection. Due to their content one can distinguish the hymns as: exegetic, hagiographic, apocryphal narratives, describing historical events and calamities, dedicated to other subjects (such as personal penitence). The number of existing manuscripts of this hymn-collection forms several dozens, which represent either a short or a full recension.<sup>1</sup>

There is no information concerning the life of this hymnographer but it is traditionally considered that he lived in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century as in the hymns related to his name there are descriptions of the terrible events which took place in the

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<sup>1</sup> For the detailed classification of the manuscripts as well as the analysis of their content see: Pritula 2013/1. It is also discussed in the critical edition to be published in the nearest future: Pritula 2013/2 (English version); Притула 2013 (Russian version).

1220s and 1230s of the century. However no thorough attribution of the hymns contained in the collection has been made, therefore it is possible that they were included later.

Most of the hymns included in the collection are rhymed and reflect a stage in the development of Syriac poetry when it had already begun interacting with the poetry of Muslim surroundings (Arabic and Persian). This period of the second birth of Syrian literature has been recently characterized as *The Syriac Renaissance*. The term, first introduced by Anton Baumstark, originally included the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>1</sup> Moreover it mostly concerned West Syrian literature.<sup>2</sup> Later the notion was expanded: the East Syrian circle of authors was included and the chronological limits extended. According to the periodization of Herman Teule, the Syriac Renaissance begins with Eliyā of Nisibis (975-1046) and ends with the outstanding East Syriac encyclopaedist 'Abdīšō' bar Brīkā (died 1318).<sup>3</sup> The terms offered by this researcher are accepted also in the publications of the younger generation of scholars.<sup>4</sup> The most detailed analysis of the various genres of this period of Christian Syriac culture is presented in the recently published volume *The Syriac Renaissance*, edited by Teule.<sup>5</sup> There one can find also several articles on the poetry of the period.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding the differences in the views of the researchers, there might be singled out as the main features of the period: an encyclopaedic character, eclecticism, influence of Arabic literature from the point of view of form. It is significant that according to Herman Teule, the role of Arabic language was much stronger in the East Syriac tradition than in the West Syriac.<sup>7</sup> He explains this by the fact that till 1258 AD the residence of the catholicos of the Church of East was in the capital of the caliphate, Bagdad. He also notices that the Arabic influence on the West Syriac tradition was more perceptible in the eastern dioceses than the western ones (Syria). That is why East Syriac authors used to write in Arabic more often.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the military invasions, in the first place that of the Mongols, in the period of the 13<sup>th</sup> – early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries a whole constellation of first-class poets appeared: Yōḥannān bar Zō'bī, Yōḥannān of Mosul, Ḥāmīs bar Qardāḥē, Gabriel of Mosul, 'Abdīšō' bar Brīkā. In this period, probably under the influence of Arabic poetry, the sphere of Syriac poetic usage expands. Many poets also wrote commentaries on the Scripture, theological tracts, and grammars in verse.

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<sup>1</sup> Baumstark 1922. S. 285, 286.

<sup>2</sup> Kawerau 1955, 1960; Leroy 1971.

<sup>3</sup> Teule 2002. P. 176; Teule 2010. P. 5.

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance: Кессель 2010. С. 271; Толстолуженко 2009, С. 357-358.

<sup>5</sup> *Syriac Renaissance* 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Reinink 2010; Tamcke 2010; Teule 2010; Taylor 2010; Younansardaroud 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Teule 2010. P. 9-11.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* P. 6-8, 10.

Among the hymnographers of this period Gīwargīs Wardā and Ḥāmīs bar Qardāḥē are most renowned. In this period special attention was paid to hymnography by the Church authors, and the Wardā collection is the most valuable source for studying this genre. Owing to the collection of the hymns by the patriarch Yahballāhā II, the famous Church author Šlēmōn of Basra, Ḥakkīm of bēt Qaššā, Mārī bar Mšīḥāyē, Sabrīšō' bar Paulōs of Mosul have been retained.

**2. The publication of the hymns from the Wardā.** The first publications of hymns included in the collection began already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two of them entered the collection of Syriac poetry by Gabriel Cardahi:<sup>1</sup> the one on the Virgin Mary<sup>2</sup> – complete, and the other only in part. In the anthology of Jaques Eugène Manna there are two hymns ascribed to Gīwargīs Wardā.<sup>3</sup> These are: a hymn dedicated to the Virgin Mary, a hymn on the Nativity, and also a hymn on Man as a microcosm. The latter was later published by Philippe Gignoux, together with the French translation.<sup>4</sup>

An English translation of a hymn by Wardā was included in the famous book by John Badger. This is a hymn of the Holy Virgin.<sup>5</sup> A German translation of the hymn on the Nativity was published together with the hymns of other authors on the *Book of Childhood* by Bernhard Vandenhoff.<sup>6</sup> In the book by Isaac Folkmann containing Syriac hymns on the martyr George there are two included from the Wardā collection?<sup>7</sup>

In Aladar Deutsch's dissertation three hymns of the *Wardā* collection were published and translated into German.<sup>8</sup> In particular, one of them describes the terrors of the capture of the village Karlmla (Karmliš) by the Mongols in 1235;<sup>9</sup> others are dedicated to the prophet Jonah<sup>10</sup> and are meant for the service of the Rogation of the Ninevites (a particular three-days' fast anticipating Lent). The edition by Heinrich Hilgenfeld, which includes the original Syriac text and the translation of nine hymns, remains the main publication of the hymns.<sup>11</sup> Among the hymns included in the book there are four on famine and other disasters,<sup>12</sup> among which is the one on the capture of the village Karmela (Karmliš),

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<sup>1</sup> Cardahi 1875. P. 51-53.

<sup>2</sup> Here and further on, in the brackets are given numbers of the hymns according to our table (see below, 1.6). If a hymn is being published in the present edition, the number is given in bold.

<sup>3</sup> Manna 1901. Vol. 2, P. 295-322.

<sup>4</sup> Gignoux 1999. P. 95-189.

<sup>5</sup> Badger 1852. P. 51-57.

<sup>6</sup> Vandenhoff 1908. P.395-405.

<sup>7</sup> Folkmann 1896. S. 34-50.

<sup>8</sup> Deutsch 1895.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. S. 15-22.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. S. 22-29.

<sup>11</sup> Hilgenfeld 1904.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. S. 23-49.

published earlier by Aladar Deutsch.<sup>1</sup> In addition, there are the following hymns: the one reproaching the deacon who converted to Islam,<sup>2</sup> those on John the Baptist,<sup>3</sup> on the martyr Tahmazgerd,<sup>4</sup> and on the martyr Jacob of Bēt-Lāpāṭ.<sup>5</sup> This edition was strongly criticized by Anton Baumstark, who published a review on it.<sup>6</sup> Hilgenfeld's edition included less than 0,1 of the whole collection's volume and was based only on the Berlin manuscripts and the Vatican one.

Finally, for the third time, the same hymn of on the capture of the village of Karlmlīš was published by the Italian Syriacist Pier Georgio Borbone, with a translation into Italian and a historical research.<sup>7</sup>

Several hymns from the *Wardā* collection were published by me. Particularly, six hymns are edited with the original text with a Russian translation.<sup>8</sup> Among them there are the two on Jonah, published earlier by Aladar Deutsch,<sup>9</sup> the two on famine and other disasters, published by Heinrich Hilgenfeld,<sup>10</sup> as well as two which are published for the first time: hymns on the Cross<sup>11</sup> and on Noah.<sup>12</sup> Separately elsewhere I have published the hymn performed on Wednesday of the *Rogation of the Ninevites*<sup>13</sup> and other hymns performed on the days of the Rogation: at the grave,<sup>14</sup> on the inequality of human society.<sup>15</sup> Besides, four hymns were published in the original and translated by me into English. This is a Christmas hymn based on an apocryphal *Book of the Childhood*<sup>16</sup> whose German translation was published earlier by Bernhard Vandenhoff,<sup>17</sup> the hymn on the Rogation of Ninevites *On himself*,<sup>18</sup> the hymn on the capture of Tiflis, also translated for the first time

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<sup>1</sup> Deutsch 1895. S. 15-22.

<sup>2</sup> Hilgenfeld 1904. S. 60-65.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. S. 65-74.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. S. 74-80.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. S. 80-86.

<sup>6</sup> Baumstark 1904.

<sup>7</sup> Borbone 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Притула 2009/2. P. 152-253.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. P. 166-192.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. P. 193-224.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. P. 225-237.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. P. 138-153.

<sup>13</sup> Притула 2006. P. 147-159.

<sup>14</sup> Притула 2007. P. 93-102.

<sup>15</sup> Притула 2009/1. P. 167-178.

<sup>16</sup> Pritula 2005. P. 145-176; see also: Притула 2010.

<sup>17</sup> Vandenhoff 1908.

<sup>18</sup> Pritula 2004. P. 229-243.

by me (being republished below with the Georgian translation),<sup>1</sup> the hymn on Wednesday of the Rogation, which I had published earlier with a Russian translation.<sup>2</sup>

There are also the hymns attributed to Wardā in the liturgical printed editions of the book of the Church of East, first of all in the edition of the *Ḥūdrā* book,<sup>3</sup> and also in the nineteenth-century edition of the Urmia publishing house containing the service of the Rogation of the Ninevites.<sup>4</sup>

**3. Studies on the Wardā hymnologic collection.** So far there has been no special monograph concerning the works by Gīwargīs Wardā; a prefatory article in the Heinrich Hilgenfeld edition remains the only study of the poetical peculiarities of Wardā's hymns.<sup>5</sup> In this study the researcher is concerned with the hymnographer's biography,<sup>6</sup> the meter used in the hymns, and he analyzes the pieces published in the book.<sup>7</sup>

The content of some hymns attributed to Gīwargīs Wardā is noted in David Bundy's article, on the basis of which he reaches a conclusion on Wardā's philosophical views.<sup>8</sup> At the same time all the hymns included in the collection are taken for granted as having been written by Wardā himself, without any textual or literary-critical evaluation. For instance, the most popular "world-view" hymn – on the capture of Karmlīš – is not found in copies of the Wardā collection, except for Berlin Ms. orient. fol. 619, 1715 AD.

A number of articles by Martin Tamcke concern Gīwargīs Wardā's works.<sup>9</sup> Two of them concern a hymn on the patriarchs of the Church of East; the first article gives the most detailed survey of the bibliography on Wardā so far, and it also analyzes the reflection of real historical events in the hymn.<sup>10</sup> In the second, Tamcke shows how the Islamic epoch and coexistence with Islam is reflected in the same hymn.<sup>11</sup> There, referring to Theodor Nöldeke, he also questions the authorship of the hymns and the possibility of their later addition to the collection.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4 'Ōnītās and historical events: A Hymn on Tiflīs

##### 4.1 *General composition of the hymn and its place in the text collection*

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<sup>1</sup> Pritula 2012/1.

<sup>2</sup> Pritula 2012/2.

<sup>3</sup> Khudra 1960

<sup>4</sup> Rogation of Ninevites 1896.

<sup>5</sup> Hilgenfeld 1904. S. 1-22.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. S. 1-4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. S. 14-21.

<sup>8</sup> См., например: Bundy 1993. P. 7-20.

<sup>9</sup> Tamcke 2004; Tamcke 2005; Tamcke 2006; Tamcke 2008/1, Tamcke 2008/2, Tamcke 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Tamcke 2004. P. 203-229.

<sup>11</sup> Tamcke 2006. S. 139-152.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. S. 139, 140, 142.

Among the hymns ascribed to Wardā several describe historical events. The two most famous of them are the one on the conquest of Jerusalem by Muslims in 1187 AD<sup>1</sup> and about the capture of the village Karmlīš in 1235 AD.<sup>2</sup> Both texts survive only in the manuscript *Ms. orient. fol. 619* (Berlin State Library), which represents the short recension of the *Wardā* collection. These hymns have been published for several times, and in the last years carefully studied. For the *ʿōnītā* on Karmlīš historians have compared it with the data contained in the Syriac *History* by Bar ʿEbrōyō.<sup>3</sup>

The hymn on the capture of Tiflis, published here, is one of so-called ‘catastrophe’ hymns, a group describing different calamities, such as famine, locusts, plague, foreign invasions. This group of texts, except for this one, was studied by Martin Tamcke.<sup>4</sup> In the *Wardā* collection these hymns are placed in the section dedicated to the Rogation of the Ninevites.<sup>5</sup>

The hymn being discussed can be found only in Cambridge Add. 1983, 1550 AD, which also represents the short recension of Wardā. The manuscript does not contain the whole group of the ‘catastrophe’ hymns met in the others. Except for the hymn being published here there is only one of that group to appear in this manuscript. It has an incipit ܩܘܡܘ ܕܥܡܘܢ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ. And, thus, this is the only hymn of this ‘catastrophe’ block in common with the other manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> Its position here is no less interesting: it features in the commemoration of the Four Evangelists (fol. 41r), and not in the section on the Ninevites. As the whole set of those ‘catastrophe’ hymns is not present in the earliest copy, it is also very likely that it is a later addition. In any case, their attribution to Gīwargīs Wardā is not so indisputable from a textual point of view.

## 4.2 The historical context of the hymn

The historical context of the hymn is of particular interest. It describes the events that took place in 1220–1226 AD, a period when several different invaders encroached upon the Georgian people. These events were described in Arabic, Persian, Armenian and Georgian sources, and hence, there is enough information with which to compare the hymn.

The list of the invaders in the hymn (stanza 4) mentions many nationalities including the Tatars, the Persians, and the mysterious Magians (ܡܘܨܘܠܡܐܢܐ). The Tatars (Mongols), with

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<sup>1</sup> Noeldecke 1873; Mengozzi 1910.

<sup>2</sup> Deutsch 1895. S. 15-22; Hilgenfeld 1904. S. 60-65; Borbone 2010.

<sup>3</sup> See: Hilgenfeld 1904. S.14,15; Borbone 2010. P.205. For the edition of the *Chronicle* by Bar ʿEbrōyō see: Bedjan 1890. P.469.

<sup>4</sup> Tamcke 2006. P. 139-140.

<sup>5</sup> Add. 1982, fols. 102r–109v; Vat. Syr. 567, fols. 88r–98v. In Add. 1983 only one hymn of this group is found (fols. 41r–43v).

<sup>6</sup> In other copies: Add. 1282, fols. 108r–109v; Vat. Syr. 567, fols. 96v–98v.

Sübeta (Subudey) at the head, appeared in Georgia in 1220 AD accompanied by Turks and Kurds led by Aqush, a local Turk.<sup>1</sup> It is for this reason probable that the Turks are mentioned in the hymn. According to Ibn al-Asīr, a contemporary of the events, there were two battles with the Mongols, both ending with the complete defeat of the Georgians.<sup>2</sup> In the first battle that took place in the month Zū-l-Qa'da, 618 AH (28 Dec. 1220–26 Jan. 1221 AD) the number of the Georgian casualties is estimated at about ten thousand,<sup>3</sup> while in the second one their losses numbered thirty thousand.<sup>4</sup> Kirakos Gandzaketsi, also a contemporary of these events, mentions only one battle, which he describes in detail.<sup>5</sup> It is the battle in the valley called Hunnan, which is dated in his chronicle to 1220 AD, but his compatriot Vardan the Great believes it was in 1221 AD,<sup>6</sup> which corresponds to the date mentioned by Ibn al-Asīr. At first the Georgians, led by the king Georg Laša and the commander Ivane, seemed to gain a victory. They were pursuing the Mongol troops, but suddenly another part of the enemy sprang out of an ambush, having surrounded the Georgian army, which was finally exterminated.<sup>7</sup> Such a manoeuvre was a usual method employed by the Mongols.

The first battle mentioned in the hymn is most likely the one which took place at Hunnan. Some episodes mentioned in it confirm such identification:

Դ՛ զի զ՝ Երես յառաջ . Դ՛ ինչ զ՝ արեւելոցն զ՝  
 \* Դ՛ ինչ զ՝ արեւելոցն զ՝ . Դ՛ զ՝ արեւելոցն զ՝

He destroyed a part of their army,  
 And all day long was pursuing them,  
 But the other part arose against him,  
 And took him and his troop (stanza 10).

After this battle, none the less, the Mongols did not capture Tiflis, but instead departed.<sup>8</sup> So, it is clear that the devastation of Tiflis, and all the terrors following it, described in the hymn should be an act of some other conquerors. And indeed, such was an invasion of the army led by Khorasmshah Jalāl ad-Dīn in 1225–1226 AD. At the beginning of the hymn the events are dated to 623 AH / 1226 AD (stanza 1). Jalāl ad-Dīn, a talented commander originating from a Turkic dynasty, united Western Iran and had the ambition of conquering the Caucasus lands. He waged a war against ‘unfaithful’ Georgia. The Georgians formed a

<sup>1</sup> Тизенгаузен 1884. С. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. P. 15, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. P. 15; Rašīd ad-Dīn, a great Persian historian and a prime minister of the Ilkhans (1298–1317), also mentions thousand as the number of the Georgian army (Рашид ад-Дин 1952. Т. 1, ч. 2. С. 227). He follows Ibn al-Asīr, whose book he used as one of the basic sources for the events being described.

<sup>4</sup> Тизенгаузен 1884. С. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Киракос 1976. С. 138.

<sup>6</sup> Вардан 1861. С. 174.

<sup>7</sup> Киракос 1976. С. 138.

<sup>8</sup> Рашид ад-Дин 1952. P. 227; Киракос 1976. P. 138.

sixty-thousand strong army,<sup>1</sup> which was concentrated near the fortress of Garni. Šihāb ad-Dīn Muhammad an-Nasawī, a personal secretary of sultan Jalāl ad-Dīn, the author of his suzerain’s biography, renders the details of this battle.<sup>2</sup> As the sultan reached Garni he saw the Georgians having settled on a mount “like a high mountain on a mountain”. “But the sultan feared them no more than wolves are afraid of the sheep grazing independently [...]”.<sup>3</sup> The combat ended with the complete victory of the Khorasmians.<sup>4</sup> It is very likely that the second battle of the hymn is that of Garni, for some parallels are evident:

دینداران کسب از کوه گارنی . دینداران کسب از کوه گارنی  
 دینداران کسب از کوه گارنی . دینداران کسب از کوه گارنی

The rest, about three thousand,  
 That had risen to the top of the mount  
 Gathered against them in gatherings,  
 And formed against them formations (stanza 16).

After this battle Jalāl ad-Dīn’s army went to Tabriz, after which it came back to Georgia and marched to Tiflis. They defeated the Georgian troops in several smaller battles. Rusudan, the queen of the Georgians, left Tiflis for Kutais together with her court.<sup>5</sup> After an assault the city was taken:

سزایه ایفایه کسب از کوه گارنی . سزایه ایفایه کسب از کوه گارنی  
 سزایه ایفایه کسب از کوه گارنی . سزایه ایفایه کسب از کوه گارنی

They encircled Tiflis with no fear,  
 For there was neither a king nor a queen in it.  
 And the heathens came and opened it up from inside,  
 And the Magians entered from outside (stanza 18).

Here, by the heathens the Muslims of Tiflis are meant, who helped their coreligionists to capture the city.<sup>6</sup> The reason for calling them Magians and pagans will be discussed below.

The atrocities caused by Khorasmshahs’ army to Tiflis were described in different sources. Even Jalāl ad-Dīn’s secretary An-Nasawī reports that after the storming of the city

<sup>1</sup> Буниятов 1986. P. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Ан-Насави 1973. P. 157.

<sup>3</sup> Ан-Насави 1973. P. 157.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P. 157; Буниятов 1986. P. 167; Киракос 1976. P. 149; Вардан 1861. P. 175-176; Баратов 1871.

Ч. 4-5. P. 123; История Грузии 1962. Т. 1. P. 223.

<sup>5</sup> Буниятов 1986. P. 169.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P. 169. After the first unsuccessful storming of Tiflis the Muslims of the city sent a messenger to the sultan promising him to open the gate by dawn. The sultan’s army came to the gate to get in. But the defenders of the city knew nothing of the treason, and were ready to fight. Then one of the Muslims killed Memna, and an intestine battle started. Using the chance Jalal ad-Dīn’s troop entered the city (Баратов 1871. P. 126)

all the Georgian and Armenian population was exterminated.<sup>1</sup> The Georgian chronicle compares the massacre in Tiflis with that made by the Roman emperors in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the terrible descriptions made by the author of the hymn (stanzas 19-46) are not a poetic exaggeration. Kirakos Gandzaketsy describes the devastation of the churches, the breaking of crosses, the raping of women at Tiflis,<sup>3</sup> and so does the author of the hymn (stanzas 26-28, 33-34, 42-43). It is also known from different sources that Jalāl ad-Dīn forced the people to adopt Islam. Those that refused were killed on the bridge over the Kura River, called later *The Bridge of the ten thousand martyrs*.<sup>4</sup>

Neither is the detailed description of plundering an exaggeration in the hymn (stanzas 35, 38). Even Jalāl ad-Dīn's secretary mentions that "the Sultan got everything that had been collected over the ages. The fingers of the most skilful man could not calculate all this, and in the piles of the lists it would have been too tight to number it".<sup>5</sup>

The brave hero Šarwā mentioned in the hymn (stanzas 9-15) is Shalva Akhaltsykheli, a brother of Ivane Akhaltsykheli, both famous Georgian warriors. But in fact Shalva was captured in the battle of Garni by the Khorasmians (1225 AD), not at Hunnan, fighting the Mongols (1221 AD) as it follows from the hymn (stanza 10). These two events are confused in this poetic text, and so are the two different invaders' armies. They have been merged and transformed into one mysterious Magians' force. The historical Shalva was captured by the Khorasmians and, according to An-Nasawī, he was killed because of the letters he had addressed to the Abkhaz princes warning them of Jalāl ad-Dīn's raid on them.<sup>6</sup> The letters were captured by Jalāl ad-Dīn's agents. Shalva was torn in two on the bank of the river by Jalāl ad-Dīn's order.<sup>7</sup> Jūvainī and Rašīd ad-Dīn do not mention anything about the letters. According to them the sultan treated Shalva with respect, and the latter promised to help him in capturing Tiflis. But in fact he deceived Jalāl ad-Dīn and tried to send the Khorasmians' army to the ambush he had prepared for them. Having known about his plan Jalāl ad-Dīn 'stood up and with the sword in his hand he struck at Shalva's waist and cut

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<sup>1</sup> Ан-Насавӣ 1973. P. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Буниятов 1986. P. 169. Two famous Georgian chronicles narrate about these events, namely Qartli Tskhovreba (General Chronicle) and the Century Chronicle. The former represents probably a compilation, including also the latter chronicle, which is dedicated specifically to the events of the Mongol time (See: Tvaradze 2007. S. 90-92, 100).

<sup>3</sup> Киракос 1976. P. 150. Rašīd ad-Dīn also narrates that Jalāl ad-Dīn ruined several Churches (Рашид ад-Дин 1952. P. 243).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P. 150; Буниятов 1986. P. 169.

<sup>5</sup> Ан-Насави 1973. P. 168.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P. 167.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. P. 167.

him in two so that his blood polluted the sword'.<sup>1</sup> Unlike these two authors of the late 13<sup>th</sup>-early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries An-Nasawī was a witness of the events, and hence his information seems more reliable. This raid was not the last one made by Khorasmshahs against the Christian cities. It was in 1244 AD that the Khorasmians undertook a raid to Syria, Palestine, and having captured Jerusalem killed most of the Christian population. They also burned the churches along with the relics.<sup>2</sup>

### 4.3 An epic aspect of the hymn: transformation of the Muslims into Magians

In the hymn the episode with the letters is also mentioned (stanzas 12–14), but with a specific pathos. The Muslim Khorasmians have been transformed into Magians, i.e. Zoroastrians, represented as pagans (stanzas 12–15), and Šarwā (Shalva) as a protector of Christianity from paganism (stanzas 12, 15). Killing the hero seems to be represented in the hymn as a part of some heathen ritual (stanza 15). And, besides, the Persians (پارسیان) are named in the same hymn in the list of the invaders side by side with these *Magians* as a different nation (stanza 4).

The term *magianism* (Մագիական) also means ‘magic practicing, sorcery’.<sup>3</sup> It is very tempting to suggest that here it could be a reflection of the fact that the Mongols at this period were shamanist, and in this case we face a complete merging of the Mongols and the Khorasmians in the text. A special article by John Boyle is devoted to the Turkic and Mongol rituals of the period.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, it is well-known, that the Mongols were acquainted with Christianity already in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, namely the tribe of Keraites, were completely Christianized long before the raids of the Mongols in the Caucasus and Near East.<sup>5</sup> The first generation of the Mongolian empire’s ruling élite (early 13<sup>th</sup> century), had a traditional world-view, which tolerated different confessions.<sup>6</sup>

That is why another possibility seems to be more likely. The term *Magians* (Մագիական), whose main meaning is Zoroastrians, is reported to mean also *Persians* as a nationality.<sup>7</sup> Since the Sasanian period they were associated by the Christian communities with Zoroastrianism and sporadic persecutions. Anyway, there is no evidence tht it was ever

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<sup>1</sup> Juvaini 1958. Vol. 2. P. 428-429; Рашид ад-Дин 1952. P. 243. These two sources are the only ones saying that Shalva’s brother Ivane was also captured. All other chronicles report that he was killed in the battle of Garni. It is believed that Rašid ad-Dīn here follows Juvaini (Кикнадзе 1980. P. 65).

<sup>2</sup> Буниятов 1986. P. 192.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. P. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Boyle 1977. P. 177-193.

<sup>5</sup> See: Tamcke 1992. S. 137-138; Tamcke 1997. P. 28-30; Baum 2012. S. 13-15.

<sup>6</sup> Most detailed problems of religious tendencies of the early 13<sup>th</sup> century were described in an article by Martin Tamcke (Tamcke 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Մագիական և արևելյան: “The Persian people”; and other examples (Thesaurus 1879. T. 2. P. 2008, 2009).

applied to Muslims.<sup>1</sup> The Khorasmshahs' state with its capital at Tabriz could be perceived by the Christian neighbours as a sort of Persian military Renaissance, which might be reflected in the hymn. The fact that the Persians and the Magians are listed in the hymn side by side as invaders (stanza 4) does not disprove this suggestion, because we are not dealing with a historical text in the exact meaning of the term. Poetic rows of synonyms are often met with in such hymns even when this contradicts the sense.

What could be the reason of such a transformation? Was it done deliberately or not? To answer this important question we need to define an approximate date and location of its composition. *A priori* it appears quite natural to see in the author a witness of the events being described. But taking into consideration the serious confusions in their interpretation, this does not seem to be so evident. All this indicates that the author was not a witness of the events he described. He could even have lived in a rather distant location, Syria or Iraq for instance. If by the term ܠܘܟܝܢ the Kartvelians are meant (stanza 4),<sup>2</sup> then mentioning it in the list of the invaders confirms this suggestion. As it is just a name of the ethnic group the Georgians belong to, such a confrontation makes no sense.

It is also possible that using this term the text also involves a kind of contamination, as in the case with the *Magians*, which may reflect an important feature of this genre. The author had no ambition to name precisely the ethnic term, instead he just noticed the usual enemies of the Christians in the East.

Neither did the poet use historical chronicles for those events. All the transformations and confusions would become comprehensible if we assume that the author used a source of a different genre, namely an epic one. It is also possible that the hymn was not written immediately after those events. So, some tradition or a legend concerning them might have appeared by that time, be it an oral or a written one. The massacre at Tiflis was such a

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<sup>1</sup> Thesaurus 1879. T. 2. P. 2009.

<sup>2</sup> None the less, this term seems to be rather obscure.

J. M. Fiey, in his book speaks of ܠܘܟܝܢ as *Kurds* (Fiey 1965. P. 153, 216), and places ܠܘܟܝܢ *le Pays de Kurds* to the North of Adiabene. The meaning *Kurds* for this word is given also in: Wörterbuch 2000. P. 149.

This term is also used in the biography of the patriarch Jahballāhā III and Rabban Šaumā and is translated by the editor Pier Giorgio Borbone as *Kurds* (Borbone 2009. P. 98, 99, 104, 116, 120, 123, 124, 125, 132, 210). This text, however, was written a century later than the hymn.

In an article by G. R. Driver all the forms meaning *Kurds* were gathered. He found no problem with *k-q*, and one can find in his list many terms with both consonants, but it gives no evidence of the form ܠܘܟܝܢ (Driver 1923. P. 393–403).

With this problem I also addressed several experts. Sebastian Brock, who pointed me the literature on the issue, believes that treating this form as the term for the Kurds, normally written ܠܘܟܝܢ, faces evident phonetical problems (*k-q*, *d-t*). Prof. Witold Witakowsky believes that this form was not used in the meaning 'Kurds'. In his opinion, this term, most likely, means *Kartvelians*, i.e. the people of Kartli (Georgia). Prof. Elena Mescherskaja thinks this term cannot be used for the *Kartvelians*, as it lacks the final l.

terrible tragedy that it stayed in people’s memory, just as the ‘ten thousand martyrs on the bridge’ did. And unlike the historical sources, ‘people’s memory’ sometimes reflects historical events in a very queer way. It seems, a feature of the ‘*ōnītā*’ genre is to render sources of that kind, as in these hymns many episodes unknown elsewhere are met with.<sup>1</sup> Shalva Akhaltsykheli was a popular hero of Georgian legends; he is also celebrated as a martyr by the Georgian Church together with *the ten thousand martyrs*.<sup>2</sup> In Shalva’s hagiography based on the legends, his captivity is described in terms very similar to the hymn under discussion. Shalva is shown as a confessor of Christianity, his brave confessing was a reason for his being slaughtered, and there is no record of the letters or the ambush in the text.<sup>3</sup>

This suggestion is also confirmed by another hymn, also within the same “catastrophe” group, namely the second one on the capture of Jerusalem, published by Th. Nöldeke. It was pointed out by him that the hymn contains many mistakes concerning different historical facts. Theodor Nöldeke suggested that it had been composed long after this historical event by a person, whose only source was an oral narrator of the folk tradition.<sup>4</sup> These mistakes and transformations are studied in more detail in the articles by Alessandro Mengozzi, who also comes to the conclusion that the author of the Jerusalem hymn used a kind of oral tradition and completely ignored the historical sources.<sup>5</sup> Such a tradition of reflecting historical events will definitely have appeared many centuries earlier.<sup>6</sup> But it is owing to the ‘*ōnītā*’ genre that it first became a part of the Church liturgy.

The further development of such a ‘historical’ method can be observed in Neo Aramaic poetry, namely in the *dorekta* genre. Thus, a *dorekta* by Stefan from Alkosh, written also in seven-syllable metre, deals with the Ottoman-Russian war in 1876-1878 AD.<sup>7</sup> With regard to its poetical features and syntax, it is even closer to the oral tradition than the ‘*ōnītā*’.<sup>8</sup>

Text

<sup>9</sup> ܡܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ [fol. 48v]  
 ܡܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ [1]  
 ܡܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance the hymn on John the Baptist (Hilgenfeld 1904. P. 65–74); or a hymn on Childhood of Christ (Pritula 2005. P. 145–176).

<sup>2</sup> Сабинин 1877. Т. 3. P. 141.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. P. 146–147.

<sup>4</sup> Noeldeke 1873. P. 493.

<sup>5</sup> Mengozzi 2008. P. 4–7; Mengozzi 2010.

<sup>6</sup> One could remember a legend about Sennacherib, who was reported to have been converted into Christianity and to have found a monastery (See: Takahashi 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Mengozzi 2008. P. 6–9.

<sup>8</sup> Mengozzi 2009. P. 69–70.

<sup>9</sup> marg. ✥ ܡܠܝܢܐ ✥ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ✥ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ✥ ܕܥܠܝܢܐ ✥

تصویر هر چه در آن  
فستی که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[fol. 49r]

نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[2] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[3] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[4] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[5] نیز که در آن  
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[6] نیز که در آن  
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[7] نیز که در آن  
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[8] نیز که در آن  
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[9] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[10] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن [fol. 49v]

[11] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[12] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[13] نیز که در آن  
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[14] نیز که در آن  
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[15] نیز که در آن  
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[16] نیز که در آن  
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[17] نیز که در آن  
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[18] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

[19] نیز که در آن  
نیز که در آن

- ❖ اخله لکمه جتک زک . اچوگه نم جتک زک
- [20] کجک : اچک . ک . کوهلک اچوگه ک
- ❖ جرم نم کوهلک اچوگه . لک اچوگه اچوگه
- [fol. 50r; 21] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ اچوگه اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [22] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [23] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [24] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [25] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [26] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [27] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [28] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [29] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [30] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [fol. 50v; 31] کوهلک اچوگه / کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [32] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [33] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [34] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [35] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [36] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [37] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [38] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [39] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- [40] کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه
- ❖ کوهلک اچوگه . کوهلک اچوگه



❖ ڀڳل ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو . ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو  
 [63] ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو . ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو  
 ❖ ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو . ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو  
 [64] ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو . ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو  
 ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو  
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 ❖ ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو ڀڳو

**Translation**

1. In a year full of evils,  
 as a completion of the three long years,  
 when all the disturbances increased,  
 locust and cricket, and hunger, and death,  
 and devastation, and terror, and sedition  
 fol. 49v Ruled over all the lands,  
 there was an ominous rumour heard,  
 that came to Tiflis city:  
 Ever since Christianity began,  
 there was neither people nor folk,  
 against whom evils took their fill.
2. How bitter the story of Tiflis is,  
 for disobedient people entered it,  
 neither thought of nor expected,  
 and not listening to persuasion<sup>1</sup>.
3. In the year twenty three by the Arabs  
 and six hundred by the Ishmaelites<sup>2</sup>  
 it happened with the Georgian people  
 as it had with the people of Amalek. <sup>3</sup>
4. The barbarians' force came,<sup>4</sup>  
 and the Persian people together with it,

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. this disobedient people.

<sup>2</sup> The Arabs and Ishmaelites are meant here as synonyms for the Muslims. In the Thesaurus such a meaning for ڀڳو ڀڳو is registered (Thesaurus 1879. T. 1. P. 172). Thus, the year mentioned in the text is 623 AH (by Hegira) / 1226 AD.

<sup>3</sup> King David attacked them while they were banqueting, none of them escaped. All the belongings the Amalekites had taken from Israel were taken back (1 Sam 30: 11–21).

<sup>4</sup> By the barbarians' force here, most likely, the Mongol invaders are meant.

and Tartars, and the Magians,<sup>1</sup>  
and the Kartvelians with the Turks.<sup>2</sup>  
5. They were more numerous than locusts,  
and more terrible than wasps,  
and worse than serpents,  
and more ferocious than devils.  
6. Any land they were crossing  
they cast to the flames.  
And any city they were entering  
they used to leave like Sodom.  
7. The people, resembling beasts,  
evil and noxious,  
entered those lands,  
abundant in faith.  
8. Indeed <sup>3</sup> they exposed the city to trial,  
giving sentence without any judicial process  
to Kingly Tiflis,  
The glorious and illustrious.  
9. A brave man, Šarwā,<sup>4</sup>  
having heard the news of them  
led out about seven thousand,  
and they fought with them unremittingly.  
10. He destroyed a part <sup>5</sup> of their army,  
and all day long was pursuing them,  
fol. 49v but the other part / arose against him,  
and took him and his troop.

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<sup>1</sup> By the Magians (مغیاری) not only Zoroastrians could be meant, but sometimes the Persian people in general, even after their conversion to Islam. The supposed origin of this term here was suggested in the preface.

<sup>2</sup> Persians and Turks and different nationalities formed the army of Jalal ad-Dīn, the Khorasmshah (Kirakos 1976. P. 146). Tatars are also mentioned in this list, but in fact their invasion to Georgia took place in 1220–1221 AD.

<sup>3</sup> ⲛ seems here to have a positive emphatic sense. Such a meaning has been recorded in many texts and in the hymns ascribed to Warda as well (see: Vilsker L.H. Ob utverditel'nom znachenii chastiyisy lā v sirijskom jazyke, in: *Ksina*; 86 (1965). p. 25–50).

<sup>4</sup> Here probably Prince Shalva Akhaltsykheli is meant. He took part in many battles, and was captured in the battle at Garni by Khorasmshah Jalal ad-Dīn in 1225 AD (Buniyatov 1986, p. 167).

<sup>5</sup> Or “troop”, if ⲛⲓⲛ was here originally with first ⲡ (a), not ⲡ (e); the vocalization here sometimes is dubious.

11. And they were put into chains,  
like cattle or beasts.  
As [the man] full of braveness saw  
the evil of magianism,  
12. He wrote messages hastily  
to the people: 'Rise in haste,  
and everyone get together,  
before paganism has overcome!  
13. For very strong this people are,  
and they are gathered like sea water.  
seize them before they have arisen  
and exterminated our people!'  
14. The messages fell into their hands,<sup>1</sup>  
and they brought the just man straight away.  
And as they asked him about the letters,  
he confessed with no fear:  
15. 'It is not proper that I should hold paganism  
To be greater than (my) baptism!'  
And as they heard this, a slaughter  
was made by all of them at a gathering.<sup>2</sup>  
16. The rest, about three thousand,  
who were standing at the top of the mountain,  
gathered against them in gatherings,  
and formed against them formations.  
17. From below armies climbed up,  
like black clouds,  
and heavy whirlwinds.  
They all fell down and died immediately.<sup>3</sup>  
18. They encircled Tiflis with no fear,  
for there was neither king nor a queen in it.  
And the heathens came and unlocked from inside,  
and the Magians entered from outside.  
19. At the beginning of the Great Day<sup>4</sup>  
There was a great mockery in Tiflis,

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. into the hands of the invaders.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the hero was killed.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. the Georgian troops

<sup>4</sup> Probably Easter, as Tiflis was captured by Jalal ad-Dīn on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Rabi 1, 623 AH / 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1226 AD (Buniatov 1986, p.170).

and a large crowd entered it,  
and it was the undoing of the great people.

20. At the time when the Churches sound  
Halleluiah and the songs,  
there sounded in poor Tiflis  
the voice of weeping and lamentations.  
fol. 50r 21. It was a day, full of oppression,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
and that of mist and cloud,  
as blessed Amos said.<sup>1</sup>

22. The day when groans became strong,  
and tears of eyes poured forth.

The day when the noble women fell  
into the hands of the evil pagans.

23. They made their city alike Shiloh<sup>2</sup>  
and their capital alike Zion,  
and their kings fell like Saul,  
and their sons were killed like his sons,<sup>3</sup>

24. And their priests like the sons of Eli<sup>4</sup>  
and their deacons he brought low like the sons of Korah.<sup>5</sup>  
And like Jericho fell all  
their towers and walls.<sup>6</sup>

25. They were ruined like Jonathan,<sup>7</sup>  
and slain like Abner.<sup>8</sup>

Their kings' crowns were taken off,  
as well as the bracelets and diadems of their nobles.

26. They destroyed their crosses with hatchets,  
pulled out the altars with spades

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<sup>1</sup> A paraphrase of Am 1:14.

<sup>2</sup> Jer 7:12; 26:9.

<sup>3</sup> Saul, the king of Israel was killed at the battle of *Mount Gilboa* together with his sons (1 Sam 31).

<sup>4</sup> Chief priest Eli's sons were killed at the battle with the Philistines (1 Sam 4:17).

<sup>5</sup> Levite Korah and his sons were swallowed up by the earth together with their dwellings for their opposition to Moses (Num 16:32).

<sup>6</sup> During the assault of Jericho by Israel its wall fell down (Josh 6:1–8).

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan was one of Saul's sons killed at the Battle of Mount Gilboa (1 Sam 31:2).

<sup>8</sup> Abner was a commander who supported David in his struggle against house of Saul. He was treacherously murdered by Joab (2 Sam 3:26).

ruined the sanctuaries with axes,  
and cast their precious things to the ground.  
27. They brought the dogs into their temples,  
and the mules into their altars.  
And the horses neighed in their chapels,  
and the steeds rose onto their pulpits.  
28. They burned their Scriptures in fire,  
and their Books in flames.  
and they overthrew the pillars of their cloisters,  
and of their glorious convents.  
29. Their chiefs fell like Samson,<sup>1</sup>  
and their least like Asahel.<sup>2</sup>  
And their brave men like Goliath,<sup>3</sup>  
and there is no one to bury them.  
30. Like reapers they reaped them,  
and threw down their elders like shocks,  
and their youth like standing corn,  
and their children like ears of wheat.  
fol. 50v 31. And / they gathered them like grapes,  
and they collected them like berries,  
and like treaders of grapes they trod them down.  
“Hurrah, hurrah!”, and they trampled them.  
32. The birds ate their corpses,  
the animals sated themselves with their flesh.  
And the ground was saturated with their blood,  
and the smoke reached heaven.<sup>4</sup>  
33. Their virgins were dishonored,  
and their respected [women] desecrated,  
and most important of them were left naked,  
and their great [women] were uncovered.  
34. They led the girls out of the chambers  
and the brides from the nuptial beds  
and the noble women from the rooms  
and made of them maidservants

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<sup>1</sup> Judg 16:28–30.

<sup>2</sup> Asahel was Joab’s young brother, who was very handsome. He was killed by Abner (2 Sam 2:18–23).

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam 17:48–50.

<sup>4</sup> Such a smoke appeared after the extermination of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:28).

35. They took crosses from the Churches,  
and chalices together with the objects of worship  
they sent them to [their] cities  
as presents and gifts.

36. And the bishops were put into chains  
like villains.

And the head of all episcopacy  
was like Daniel in captivity.<sup>1</sup>

37. The Catholicos was bound,  
and the bishop was muzzled,  
and the chief priest and the chorepiscopus  
they were dragging along, yoked like bulls.

38. They made amulets<sup>2</sup> of their censers  
and spears of their hosannas,<sup>3</sup>  
and they gave their stoles<sup>4</sup> to the slaves,  
and their robes to the whores.<sup>5</sup>

39. And they threw their Prophets into the fire,  
and their Apostles into the flames.<sup>6</sup>

And the King's Gospel  
was scorned by them.

40. The hermits in their cells,  
and the monks in their chambers  
like gazelles they came to them,  
and skinned them alive.

41. The saintly nuns,  
that had avoided matrimony -  
They used them as cup-bearers,  
and as whores in brothels.

42. And they violated those who had been virgins,  
fol. 51r and captured those /who were beautiful.  
And they tore apart those who were pregnant.  
And they had no mercy on those who were suckling.

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<sup>1</sup> It is described in the Book of Daniel (Dan 1–12).

<sup>2</sup> Or plates.

<sup>3</sup> I. e. palm-branches.

<sup>4</sup> Stoles of different shapes are worn by deacons of both Georgian and East Syrian (“Nestorian”) Churches.

<sup>5</sup> One of the meanings of ܪܘܒܝܥ is a vestment of clergymen.

<sup>6</sup> I. e. the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles.

43. Some of them they stripped of their clothing,  
and left them like jackals.  
And there are some, whose dear ones they slaughtered  
like chickens in their wombs.  
44. And some they burned inside their houses  
together with their babies.  
And some of them watched the torments of their children,  
and their souls left them through the sufferings.  
45. And some of them climbed up a mountain  
and threw themselves down from there.  
And some of them hid in the caves,  
and died of hunger and thirst.  
46. And some were bound to horses,  
which they drove together with them.  
And they were clamoring, like the Rich Man<sup>1</sup>  
but they were not given a drop.  
47. Who is able to tell about them,  
how and how many attacked them?  
And about the number of their persons,  
also about the number of their families?  
48. Psalm forty four,  
in which there are fifty four phrases,<sup>2</sup>  
and another one is seventy four,  
in which there are forty seven phrases.<sup>3</sup>  
49. The third one is number ninety nine,  
in which there are twenty nine phrases,  
these were said of the Maccabees,  
and are very suitable for the Georgians.<sup>4</sup>  
50. Our Lord! Our Lord! For what reason  
did You neglect Your people so?

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<sup>1</sup> Lk 16:24-6.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 44 (according Peshitta numbering) contains 26 verses. But following the punctuation it is divided into 54 sentences, which correspond to one of the meanings of **ܫܘܒܐ** (sentence, phrase). This psalm tells about the defeats of Israel and its disgrace.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 74 containing 47 sentences also relates about the defeats and destruction of Israel. It is particularly close to the descriptions of the devastation and burning of the sanctuaries, placed in strophes 26-28 of the hymn being published (compare to Ps 74: 4-7).

<sup>4</sup> This Psalm, according to tradition, was written by David on the defeat of the Midianites from Moses (Num 31:1-12). In Peshitta this is also noted in the title of this Psalm. But in some apocryphal titles it could be connected with Maccabees.

And have forsaken it like a flock of sheep  
that has neither a shepherd nor a leader?

51. Were they not confessing Your name,  
and celebrating Your Feasts?

And were they not exulting Your Mysteries,  
and glorifying You all the time?

52. Why are there moles in their houses,  
fol. 51v And hedgehogs inside their chambers?

And lamentation in their yards,  
And jackals in their rooms?

53. Why are there devils in their Churches,  
and the filthy in their Holy of Holies.

Why are their nobles buried,  
and their bodies being trampled in the streets?

54. Their graceful and handsome sons,  
why did You hand them over into their haters' hands?

And also their beautiful daughters,  
why did You leave them to their foes' hands?

55. And if they angered You with their sins,  
and irritated You with their deeds,  
they called You with their mouth,  
and their hearts did not forget You.

56. The Righteous One heard those words,  
and He was like an accuser for me:

'Fall silent and calm down, o sinner!  
Whom have you judged?

57. Have you not read the book of the Gospel,  
that is full of lively words?

Why have you strayed from what is proper,  
and spoken like those who are misled?

58. Have you not heard the vivifying mouth  
say this to His friends:

'The sons of the right hand are pursued  
all the time by the sons of perdition.

59. From the houses they will drive you away  
and in the streets they will beat you,  
and they will consider you as sacrifices,  
your impudent killers.

60. But if they kill the body on earth,  
they are not able to kill the soul.

Your bodies will be resurrected by me,  
and will rejoice in my Kingdom for ever.  
61. If you are my disciples,  
you are not better than your Lord.  
So, what they did to me, they will do to you.  
Be glad that you are my companions!' <sup>1</sup>  
62. You did not promise mirth  
fol. 52r in the world full of evil,  
but rather sufferings and sorrows.  
And incorruptible life is in the next world.<sup>2</sup>  
63. Our Lord, crown of the slaughtered,  
and bringing torment to the killers,  
have mercy upon the head of the sinners  
the composer of these words!  
64. And pity his weakness,  
and his perdition,  
and forgive and remit his debts,  
and pour Your grace on those like him!  
And glory to You from all mouths,  
the Concealed Being, forever!

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<sup>1</sup> Paraphrase of Mt 10:24; 24:9; Mk 13:9; Lk 21:12; Jn 15: 18–21; 16:2.

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrase of Jn 16:33.



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### **ჰიმნი თბილისის აღების შესახებ ვარდას კრებულიდან**

#### **ანტონ პრიტულა**

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