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## PREISLAMIC TURCS AND GEORGIANS

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The earliest evidences concerning the Turkic peoples in the North Caucasus are preserved in the Armenian and Georgian sources, interpretation of which is a hard labor. It's not easy an identification of toponyms and ethnonyms, revealing of anachronisms, dating of the facts, which are positioned in wrong contexts.

Settled on the North Caucasus the Turkic peoples actively contacted with those who lived in the North as well as the South Caucasus - including Georgians. Various kinds of relations can be traced in this regard: cultural and economic interaction as well as warlike clashes, which took place often throughout the early Middle Ages. Since the North Caucasus had been densely populated and frequently filled up by new comers, migrations to the South were a regular process. Looking for new fertile lands was not a peaceful activity and was accompanied by invasions and onslaughts, resistance from natives, massacre or expulsion of people from both sides.

In the first centuries AD the Georgian territory was divided into two main parts - western and eastern. In time on which our interest is focused, western and eastern Georgia were under political control accordingly of Byzantium- and Sassanids or Arabs. In such a confrontation both superpowers applied to the third force using it against each other. During the wars - necessary condition for survival in those remote times - involvement of Turkic peoples on one or another side depended on award, since the war was the main source of their income. In such a traditional triangle the Georgian authorities followed their own interests trying to benefit from the current situation. In such a complicated junction of interests the Turkic peoples were not just invaders, but often allies and reliable support for their southern neighbors. Thus the historic sources reflected not just negative, but also positive experiences of the relations of Georgians with Turkish speakers such as Huns, Khazars and Kipchaks.

The Armenian historian Agathangelos is the first, who tells about such an alliance in the first years of the Persian king Ardashir (224-241), when the Armenian king Khosrov Arsacid (216-236) "gathered the armies of the Albanians and the Georgians, opened the gates of the Alans (Daryal- G.A.) and the stronghold of the Chor (Derbend – G. A.), he brought through the army of the Huns in order to attack Persian territory and invade Asorestan...There quickly

arrived in support great numbers of strong and brave cavalry detachments, Albanians, Lpink, Chilpk, Kaspk and others from those regions in order to seek vengeance for the blood of Artavan <sup>1</sup>. The same story is included in the Georgian source, although the Georgian author put it in two different places with some discrepancies. The first evidence is included prior to ascending of the first Christian king Mirian. It's said there: " This king Kosaro launched a campaign against Kasre, the Persian king. Aspacur, the king of Georgians, supported him. That Aspacur opened the gate of the Caucasus and brought Osetins, Lezgians and Khazars and came to Kosaro, the Armenian king to fight Persians"<sup>2</sup>. The Armenian king is still Khosro (Kosaro), he once again fought Persians. Anyway the Caucasian gate was opened by the Georgian king. Who are Khazars, mentioned in the evidence, we don't know, since "Kartlis Tskhovreba" means various peoples under this name, that was commented on by scholars previously. The Armenian source mentions Huns in the related story. The Persian king in the Georgian source is Kasre and not Ardashir. This obstacle is easily overcome, taking into consideration that the name of the first Sassanid king as well as that of the following kings by "Kartlis Tskhovreba" is also Kasre.

The same evidence is placed after the Mirian's reign, in connection with Varaz-Bacar, who is identified with Aspacur (368/9 -382/3)<sup>3</sup>: "The Persian king sent the *eristavi* (the ruler) with the numerous troops. Armenians sent envoys to Varaz-Bacar and asked him to gather, joining the Greek forces, opening the Caucasian gates to Osetins and Lezgians against Persians. His nobles asked him to rise against Persians too. He listened neither to Armenians, nor to his nobles, since he was a coward"<sup>4</sup>. As we see, Khazars are not mentioned in this case and the Georgian king doesn't participate in this revolt. Probably the Georgian historian mingles two different events or uses the different versions of one story. At the same time the above-mentioned shows some resemblance with other evidence, which is included a little earlier and retails about the Kartlian king Amazaspus (230- 265) : "The Kartlian king didn't participate in the coalition, which was initiated by the Armenian king: "The Armenian king with the numerous force went to Kartli, joint the Greek forces, was supported by Osetins and Osetins came joyfully... Amazaspus called Persians, gathered also Georgians, the ones, who were left. Osetins and Megrs passed over the minor mountain and gathered those and the separatist

<sup>1</sup> Agathangelos. *History of the Armenians. Translation and Commentary* by R.W. Thomson. Albany, State University of New-York Press. 1976, p. 37. Yu. Jafarov. *Huns and Azerbayjan*. Baku, 1985, p. 15 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> *History of Kartli ("Kartlis Tskhovreba"*, prepared for publication with introduction and explanation of terms by I. Antelava and N. Shoshiashvili, Tbilisi, 1996, p. 76 (in Georgian).

<sup>3</sup> V. Goidadze. *Chronology of the Christian kings of the Parnavazian family*. 1990, p. 85; M. Sanadze. *The Kartli chronicle and the ancient time of the Georgian history (from Kartlos to the king Mirian)*, Tbilisi, 2001, see the table (in Georgian).

<sup>4</sup> *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, p. 129.

rulers of Kartli and came to the Armenian king"<sup>5</sup>. The evidence by Favstos Buzand is somehow close to this information, although the first is placed chronologically in a different time ( late 30s of the 4<sup>th</sup> c.). It's about the activities in the North by Gregorius the Enlightener of Armenians, his murdering during the time of the Armenian king Khosrov, the invasion of Armenia by the Mascut king Sanesan, his remaining there during one year, defeat and murdering of the latter . It's said in the source, that before the invasion of Armenia Sanesan "gathered all troops of Huns, Pokhs, Tabasparans, Hechmaks, Ijzmakhs, Gats, Glmers, Gugars, Shichbs and Chilbs, Balasachs and Egersvans."<sup>6</sup> As we see, Georgians are also mentioned among others - the western (Egersvans) as well as the eastern (Gugars) settlers. Similarity of all above - mentioned evidences, persistent repetition of the same ethnonyms in the different contexts testifies of some very firm tradition. The question posed in this regard: level of integration and involvement of the Turkic massif in the Caucasian events, even if their existence in the North Caucasus by the considered time proceeding from the evidences of Dionisius Periegetus is not questionable<sup>7</sup>. Similarity of the evidences, frequent coincidences of plots in the Georgian and Armenian sources, anachronisms, replacement of one ethnonym by another (Alan- Osetins by Huns, Huns by Khailandurs, Barsils, Khazars and so on) arises the argumentative doubts about the reliability of the respective sources. In this regard it's noteworthy that some evidences of "Kartlis Tskhovreba" concerning the first Christian king Mirian (the end of the 3rd- beginning of the 4th cc.). clearly show activating of some forces in the North Caucasus by that time. The Georgian author by the way provides us with information that "Much of his campaigns were to Daruband. since Khazars came and entered Daruband, took and opened the gate widely and through it launched onslaughts on Persians. When they came to Daruband, Mirian went to help Daruband . Sometimes Khazars avoided Mirian without the fighting, sometimes he made them retreat by fighting"<sup>8</sup>. It was supposed in the Georgian scholarly literature, that Mirian, the first Georgian Christian king, was murdered at the battle with Huns<sup>9</sup>.

Unlike these evidences nothing is questionable in participation of Huns in time of the Persian king Yazdegerd II (438- 457). The Armenian author Egishe (the 5<sup>th</sup> c.) knows them under the name Khailandurs and according to his information the Turkic people came from the North through Derbend as well as

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 75.

<sup>6</sup> Armenian history by Phavstos Buzand. Translated from ancient Armenian and commented by S.A. Gevorgian, introduction by L. Khachikian, 1953, p.15 (in Russian).

<sup>7</sup> Yu. Jafarov. Huns and Azerbayjan, p. 23-24 (see the different opinions about the question).

<sup>8</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> T. Benadze M. Sanadze, The Georgian History, Tbilisi, 2002, 70 (Georgian).

Daryal<sup>10</sup>. The chronicle written by Eghishe was deliberately dedicated to the Armenian revolt against Persia in the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century. The question raised is the participation of Kartli. The recent scholarly literature answers this question negatively (N. Janashia, V. Dondua, R. Suny)<sup>11</sup>. Anyway there was another opinion (S. Eremian K. Trever),<sup>12</sup> which seems to be more close to reality. Scarce information about Georgia seems not to be an obstacle for the positive response, since the Armenian chronicles explore the Armenian history omitting information concerning Georgia and Georgians. For instance, the Armenian chronicler Ghazar Parpetsi (the 5<sup>th</sup> c.), one by one naming the Armenian nobles, who were summoned to the Persian king, mentions only the viceroy of Gogarene, Arshusha distinguishing him from the other Georgian nobles, whose names are omitted in his information. Another Armenian chronicler Eghiche in the same context doesn't mention Georgians at all and speaks just about Armenians<sup>13</sup>. Anyway the Armenian sources provide us with information representative for supposition of the Georgian participation in the revolt. The latter is mentioned in the related Armenian sources just twice.

During the 7-year war of the Persian king Yazdegerd II against Hephthalites on the north-east the South Caucasian peoples, much of whom were forced to fight on the Persian side, took advantage and rebelled. They applied to the Greeks and after rejecting the request for help, they decided to act independently. All forces were divided into 3 parts. The first was sent to defend the south border, the second headed by the marspan of Armenia Vasak Suinik remained in Armenia for garrison service, the third, headed by Vardan Mamikonian went to Albania. The latter defeated the marspan of Chor (Derbend), destroyed the gate of Huns and handed it over Vahan, the member of the Albanian royal family. The same Vahan was charged by negotiation with the northern Huns, which anyway showed up just one year later. It's said in the same source, that Vardan, the leader of the rebellions had to cross Iberian borders entering Albania via Kartli<sup>14</sup> Just close to the Kartlian border, in Khalkhal, he fought the Persian viceroy and defeated him. Entry of Kartli and crossing its territory wouldn't be possible without cooperation and correlation with local rulers and consent to their intentions. Anyway in this case the

<sup>10</sup> Eghishe. About Vardan and the Armenian war. Trans. from ancient Armenian by I. A. Orbeli, prepared for publication, introduction and comments by K.N. Yuzbashian, Erevan, 1971, p.76 –116) (in Russian).

<sup>11</sup> L.-N. Janashia. Evidences of Ghazar Parpetsi concerning Georgia, Tbilisi. 1962, p. 128-129 (in Georgian); V. D. Dondua. Some remarks on the collection "History of the Armenian people".- "Mimomkhilveli" III, Tbilisi. 1953, p. 314 (in Russian); R.G. Suny. The making of the Georgian nation, Indiana University Press, 1994. p.23.

<sup>12</sup> S.T.Eremian. War on liberation of Armenians against Persians in 450-451. – Proceedings of ancient history ("Vestnik drevney istorii").1951, IV, p. 55 (in Russian); K. V. Trever. Survey on history and culture of the Caucasian Albania in the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC- 7<sup>th</sup> c. AD, Moscow-Leningrad, 1959. p. 206-227 (in Russian).

<sup>13</sup> L.-N. Janashia. Evidences of Ghazar Parpetsi, p.117,123.

<sup>14</sup> Eghishe, p. 76.

northern Huns are allies of the southern Caucasians against Persians. Kartli and its inhabitants together with<sup>15</sup> Huns once again are mentioned in the same source. This case of alliance must be attributed to the earlier time, that is seen from the message of Vasak Suinik to Vardan Mamikonian: "When I was the marspan of Kartli and the gate of Albania was in my hands, I established contacts with Huns". The alliance is confirmed by Eghiche, talking about accusations towards Vasak: "He made friends with Hun Heran in consent to the king of Balasakan in time when Heran was destroying the Persian troops, devastating Albania and reached in his onslaught the Greek country and many captives and booty sent from Greece, Armenia, Iberia and Albania. Even the king, when he had learned about those actions, put to death the king of Balasakan. Vasak Suinik was the marspan of Armenia that time and was joint to the harm made by the enemies of the king"<sup>16</sup>. All these events were going on probably in the 40s of the 5th c. and not during the revolt, organized by the Armenians in the mid 5th c.<sup>17</sup>

The next case of alliance of Georgians and the Turkic people was in the 80s of the 5th c. in time of the most powerful king of Kartli Vakhtang Gorgasali, who initiated a new revolt against Persia in the South Caucasus. Prior to that "Kartlis Tskhovreba" informs the reader about his campaign to the North Caucasus - to "Oset", "Pachaniget" and "Jiket" and taking of the passes<sup>18</sup>. Several Georgian sources preserved the evidences about Vakhtang's invasion of the North Caucasus<sup>19</sup>. The Armenian chronicler Ghazar Parpetsi confirms the relations between the Georgian king with Huns. According to the latter Vakhtang trying to entice Armenians promised them: "I ordered Hun's troops to come. They didn't show up yet. Before your coming they will get here and after that; you, us and Huns will destroy them"<sup>20</sup>. Although Huns couldn't send the promised troops then, anyway Vakhtang had at his disposal at least 300 Huns whom he sent to the Armenians, although he needed them short time for himself<sup>21</sup>.

The Arabian author Baladhuri (the 9thc.) gives information<sup>22</sup>, that Jurzan (Kartli- G. A.) and Arran (Albania- G. A.) were in Khazar's hands, the rest of Armenia - was in Rum's hands. "Khazars frequently invaded. That forced Qobad (Qavad) to send one of his greatest commanders-in chief with 12000 troops against them. He went to the places between Arrass and Sharvan. He was followed by Qobad who had built the towns; Baylaqan in Arran and Bardhaah... and Qabalah,

<sup>15</sup> L.-N. Janashia. Evidences of Ghazar Parpetsi, p.130.

<sup>16</sup> Eghiche, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> Yu. Jafarov. Huns and Azerbaijan. p.42.

<sup>18</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p. 140, 145.

<sup>19</sup> L.-N. Janashia. Evidences of Ghazar Parpetsi, p.144

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 249.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 248.

<sup>22</sup> From the chronicle by Baladhuri "The book of the conquest of the countries. Text and translation from Arabic by P.K. Jzuzze, Baku, 1927, p. 5 (in Russian).

which is Khazar. After that he built a defense of unburned clay between Sharvan and Alan's gate and 360 towns". The same evidence is repeated by Yaqubi, Ibn al-Athir,<sup>23</sup> Yakut<sup>24</sup>. It's noted in the scholarly literature that mentions of Khazars here is an anachronism and actually Hun-Sabirs are meant.

Several sources present evidence concerning the invasion of the south by Huns in the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. – Zakharia Rhetor, Ammianus. Marcellinus, Ioannes Malalae, Procopius of Caesarea, Theophanes. In spite of indication of the various places (Persian or Byzantine lands) and different dates (503-4, 508, 515, 516) the evidences are identified in the scholarly literature (N. Pigulevskaya, K. Czegledi, M. Artamonov)<sup>25</sup> the beginning of the war is considered to be 503-4. According to Z. Buniyatov; that took place not later than 531<sup>26</sup>. Yu. Jafarov dedicated special paper to the same question. He dated back to 503-508 - the war between Persia and northern invaders, those invaders were considered to be Sabirae, which entered through Derbend<sup>27</sup>.

The precise date of the death of Vakhtang is not known. Since it's said in the Georgian chronicle that Vakhtang died from injury which he inflicted at the battle against Persians and that battle was considered to be during the Perso-Byzantine war in 502-506, the date of the death of Vakhtang was accepted to be 502<sup>28</sup>. Recently another date was suggested -491<sup>29</sup>. Sharing the first option and taking into consideration the previous contacts of Vakhtang with Huns, we can presume that the latter were brought to the Persian lands by the Kartlian king, even if the Georgian chronicle doesn't mention this. We can recall that the same source ignores relation with Huns during the revolt of Vakhtang against Persia and we know it from the Armenian source. According to the Georgian chronicle, "Persians empowered since all their enemies were brought into their submission after the invasion of Vakhtang... (The Persian king) rose against Greeks and sent an envoy to Gorgasali": "Lead us to Greece..". The king said: "Tell your king Khosro: first be ready to fight us"... and he sent an envoy to Caesar and informed him"<sup>30</sup>. Anyway,

<sup>23</sup> Evidences on history of Azerbaijan from Tarikh al-Kamil by Ibn al-Athir. Baku, 1940, p. 3 (in Russian).

<sup>24</sup> Evidences concerning Georgia and Caucasus by Yakut. Arabic text with the Georgian translation and introduction published by E. Sikharulidze. Tbilisi, 1964, p. 13 (in Georgian).

<sup>25</sup> Chronicle by Zakharia Rhetor, in book N.B. Pigulevskaya. Syrian sources on the history of the Peoples of USSR, Moscow- Leningrad, 1941, 65-66 (in Russian); 149; M.J. Artamonov. History of Khazars. Leningrad, 1962, p. 69-70. (in Russian).

<sup>26</sup> Yu. Jafarov. The first appearance of the Sabirae in the Caucasus, - Vestnik Drevney istorii, 1979, 3, p. 163-172.

<sup>27</sup> Z. Buniyatov. Azerbaijan in the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> cc. Baku, 1965, p. 40.

<sup>28</sup> L. Janashia. Vakhtang Gorgasali. – Georgian Soviet Encyclopaedia. III, Tbilisi. 1978 (in Georgian).

<sup>29</sup> V. Goiladze. Vakhtang Gorgasali and his chronicler. Tbilisi, 1991, p.201 (in Georgian).

<sup>30</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p. 179-181.

Greeks didn't help. "Khosro came and destroyed the town Kambechovani, the fortress Cheremi, Velistsikhe and reaching Kakheti was disposed on the Iori bank. Persians learned that Vakhtang was worse.., plundered Tbilisi and Armazi, Kartli, couldn't take Mtskheta". According to the Syrrian tradition, which was established by Zakharia Rhetor, Huns, rising against Persians, were pitied by Romans."<sup>31</sup> They passed the gate, which was defended by Persians and over the mountains reached their lands". Huns and Romans were still allies until the death of Vakhtang and his last message to the Georgian nobles was "Don't abandon the love of Greeks"<sup>32</sup>. It's noteworthy that Qavad was fighting the Northern invaders in the Kartlian and Albanian lands and after the war erected the defense between Shirvan and Daryal, from where the children of Hun Amvazuk were evicted<sup>33</sup>. According to Zakharia Rhetor, in the 13th year of Anastasius (503) Hun entered the gate, which was defended by Persians ( Derbend)<sup>34</sup>. This evidence can be incorrect as it is in case of a name of the Persian king, which is Peroz by Zakharia.

Procopius preserved important evidences concerning the good relations between the inhabitants of western Georgia and the northern peoples. In the mid 6th c. the Georgian king Gubaz II allied with Allans and Sabirs, who promised him for fee to defend his lands from Persians and also to devastate eastern Georgia sealing it up for Persians. According to the same author, the separatist ruler of Abkhazia took shelter in the Huns' lands during the Byzantine expedition<sup>35</sup>.

In the 1st half of the 6th century Persia abolished the institution of kingship in eastern Georgia (Kartli), which was replaced by the institution of erismtavari (military governor, viceroy) later.

In 567-571 Turks conquered the North Caucasus and in spite of long negotiations with Byzantines and sending envoys from the both sides, they menaced Byzantine lands. Since 576 during the negotiations with Persiz Byzantium was ready to cede Kartli. In 680 military actions were renewed.

Among the events of 570 Menandre provides us with the following information: "There were many reasons for the war between Romans and Persians. Turks strongly pitied Romans against Persians. They attacked the Median lands, devastated it, after that sent envoys to Justin and asked him to fight together against Persians, together to defeat the common enemy, from one side, Turks would attack, from another side, Romans would attack and doing so they would

<sup>31</sup> N.V. Pigulevskaya. Zakharia Rhetor , p. 149.

<sup>32</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p. 182.

<sup>33</sup> Georgica, II, Evidences of the Byzantine writers concerning Georgia. Text with translation and comments published by S. Kaukhchishvili. Tbilisi, 1965, p. 45-46 (in Georgian).

<sup>34</sup> Zakharia Rhetor... 149.

<sup>35</sup> Georgica, II, p.103, 154.

destroy the Persians"<sup>36</sup>. Some connection between the Turkish invasion and what was going on in Transcaucasus might be traced.

In the early 70s of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. or even prior to it, south Caucasus once again rebelled against Persia. According to Theophanes, "Iberians seceded from Persians and headed by Gurgen joint Romans"<sup>37</sup>. The Syriac author John of Ephesus mentions sending of the envoys to Turks in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Justin, in 571. By Menandre the same was in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Justin - in 568. Among the events of 572 Theophanes the Confessioner writes, that "Huns, whom we usually call Turks, sent an embassy to Justin via Allan's lands (Daryal) Being scared and by the reason of the Armenian revolt and their joining to Romans demanding the deserter back... That was the reason of the Perso-Roman war"<sup>38</sup>.

According to Menandze the Persian king sending the envoy to Justin in 57 pretended that he didn't know what hapfen in Persarmenia (403)<sup>39</sup> anyway during the negotiation the envoy said that the king informed him about some turmoil in Armenia<sup>40</sup>.

It means that the revolt took place prior to 571. In spite of the supposed connection between the revolt in the South Caucasus and Turks some northern Huns participated in those events on the Persian side, while Byzantium and its allies were joint by Alans. According to Theophanes "On the Armenian side Kolkhs, Abazgs and the king of Allans Saroe were fighting, on the Miran's side - Sabirs, the Danan and Dilman's tribes"<sup>41</sup>. As the Armenian chronicler Sebeos says, Mihran, the commander-in chief of Khosro had the 20000 armed troops with a number of elephants. The numerous people from the Hun tribes, who lived in the Caucasian Mountains, supported him. "That Mihran had one battle in Georgia and was defeated..."<sup>42</sup> Finally the rebellions were defeated and their leaders as it's supposed, took shelter in Byzantium.

The leader of Ibers, Gurgen, attracts attention. Identification of Gurgen with the first erismtavari in Kartli Guaram is still disputable in the Georgian scholarly literature. Arguments in its favor are - the inscription on the coin minted by Guaram -"GN" and replacement of the name Guaram in one manuscript of the chronicle "Conversion of Kartli" by Gurgen in the other copy in the same

<sup>36</sup> Menandre the Byzantine. – in the book "Byzantine historians", translated from Greek by S. Destunis, commented by G. Destunis, S-P, 1861 (in Russian), p. 398.

<sup>37</sup> Georgica III, Tbilisi, 1936, p. 257 (in Georgian).

<sup>38</sup> I. S. Chichurov. Byzantine historic works. "Theophanes, Chronographia... Moscow, 1986, p. 53-54 (in Russian).

<sup>39</sup> Menandre, p. 403.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.404.

<sup>41</sup> Georgica III, 258.

<sup>42</sup> History by the Bishop Sebeos. Translated from the fourth corrected Armenian text by Malkhasian, 1939, p. 3 (in Russian).

context<sup>43</sup>. Some Georgian scholars share opinion that Guaram became an erismtavari in 572 and he ruled until 588;<sup>44</sup> his coin was minted in 586. L.Gumiliov thinks Guaram was enthroned by the Turkish support in 575<sup>45</sup> as it is in the chronicle by Vakhushti Bagrationi.<sup>46</sup> Anyway the Georgian chronicle depicts another picture. It knows nothing about the revolt in 569- 570. The only revolt known by the Georgian chronicler took place in time of the Perso-Turkish war when the king of the latter was Save: "When Persians were busy all rulers of Kartli - of the Upper as well as of the Lower - gathered and decided to send an envoy to Byzantine king and to ask him to appoint the king from the royal family of Kartli...The Caesar carried out their wish and gave them the king, the grandson of Mirdat, the son of Vakhtang, whose name was Guaram, who ruled in Klarjeti and Javakheti..."<sup>47</sup> According to Theophanes, by 588 Turks were already defeated<sup>48</sup>. In "Shah-name" by Firdousi that occurred in the 10th year of Hormizd, which is 589<sup>49</sup>.

Although no official treaty between Byzantium and Turks was concluded, L.Gumiliov assumes the king of Kartli to be a mediator between them. By his help all anti-Persian forces were coordinated<sup>50</sup>. V. Goiladze shares this opinion: "Invasion of the Turkish king Save took place in connection with the Georgian world"<sup>51</sup>. Evidences about the participants of the coalition are preserved in "Shah-name". In the 10th year of Khormizd, which is 589 Iran was attacked by the enemies from all sides: from the east Save came, from the west -the Caesar, from the Khazar road - Khazars, who reached Ardebil and were defeated, from the Arabian lands - Amr and Abbas. Mentioning of Khazars here is an anachronism and instead - western Turks and their Caucasian allies are meant<sup>52</sup>. According to the Georgian chronicle, "The Caesar sent a lot of treasure to Guaram Curopalat for bringing the northern troops who would join the Georgian forces and together would invade the Persia. Guaram did so: he brought Osetins, Durdzucs and Didos, let the Kartlian rulers lead them. They entered Adarbadagan and started to plunder it". By that time Bakhram Chubin killed the Turkish king Save, defeated

<sup>43</sup> N.Yu. Lomouri. Explanation of the evidence by Constantinus Porphyrogenitus. –Proceedings of the Tbilisi State University, 1955, 59, p. 135-145.

<sup>44</sup> A. Bogveradze. Political and economic development of Kartli in the 4<sup>th</sup> –7<sup>th</sup> cc. Tbilisi, 1979 (in Georgian). The same date is in M. Sanadze The Kartli principality on the border of the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> cc. (from the political history). – Collection "Meskheta. History and today", 2000 p.).

<sup>45</sup> L. Gumiliov. Ancient Turks, p.48.

<sup>46</sup> Vakhushti Bagrationi. Description of the Kartli kingdom. –Kartlis Tskhovreba IV. text, prepared by all manuscripts by S. Kaukhchishvili, Tbilisi, 1973, p.

<sup>47</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p.186.

<sup>48</sup> I. S. Chichurov, Byzantine historic works, p.54

<sup>49</sup> Exploit of Bakhram Chubin. The sources, prepared for publication, translated, introduced and commented by n L.N. Gumiliov, Leningrad, 1962, p. 16-19, 37 (in Russian).

<sup>50</sup> L.N. Gumiliov. The ancient Turks, p.120.

<sup>51</sup> V. Goiladze. The great silk road and Georgia, Tbilisi, 1997, p.86 (in Georgian).

<sup>52</sup> Exploit of Bakhram Chubin, p.16-19, 37.

invaders... Since Persians got free from Turks the northern people returned as they were afraid... all Kartvels were in horror<sup>53</sup>. Anyway that time Guaramians were fortunate. The Byzantine-Persian relations improved and Persians acknowledged Guaram's son as an erismtavari (viceroys) in Kartli.

Thus in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. one part of Georgians were twice in the coalition with Turks - in 569-70 and in 586-88.

The Byzantine emperor Heraclius had different allies during the 6-year war against Persia. Georgians: Lazs, Abazgs and Ibers were among them. When they didn't approve the military plans of the emperor and left him, Heraclius decided to look for other allies - which were the eastern Turks, whose khakan brought to him 40000 troops. It's said in the source, that Lazs and Abazgs seceded (Theophanes)<sup>54</sup>. It means Ibers, like the Armenian nakharars<sup>55</sup>, remained with Heraclius. The evidences concerning participation of Georgians on the Heraclius' side is considered to be reliable<sup>56</sup>. Parallel between the events of 589 and 627-28 years is justified. As V. Goiladze asserts, in 627-628 as well as 589, Kartli was a subject of Persia, nevertheless it was among the countries of the anti-Persian coalition<sup>57</sup>. In this case one part of Georgians together with Byzantines and Turks were in one coalition against the other Georgians, who strongly resisted to Byzantium and especially Khazars. That's the reason why the Georgian historic memory keeps two completely opposite visions towards Heraclius - positive and negative. Just this situation is reflected in the second part of the evidences from the above - reviewed Arabic sources<sup>58</sup>, in which is said, that Jurzan and Arran once again befell Khazars - "Khazars reconquered what the Persians had taken from them and it remained in their hands for a time...". It happened so according to the Byzantine-Khazar agreement, which is supposed to be initiated by Heraclius. Jurzan is presumably the part of Kartli, which under the Byzantine-Persian treaties of 591, 628 fell to Persia. Such a situation was probably before the coming of the Arabs<sup>59</sup>.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 7<sup>th</sup> c. several missions from the South were sent to the North for spreading Christianity there and to some extent they even succeeded<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> Kartlis Tskhovreba, p.186-187.

<sup>54</sup> Georgica IV, p.1, 1941, p. 94.

<sup>55</sup> History by the Bishop Sebeos, p.61.

<sup>56</sup> S. Kauhchishvili. Lectures on Byzantine history in the 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> cc., I, Tbilisi, 1948, p. 153; V. Goiladze. The great silk road...p.70.

<sup>57</sup> V. Goiladze. The great silk road, p.69-70.

<sup>58</sup> From...Baladhuri, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> G.G.Alasania. Caesar Heraclius and Georgia. - Philological-historian researches, dedicated to T. Kauhchishvili. Tb., 1999, p. 21-32. D. M. Dunlop. The History of the Jewish Khazars (Princeton 1954).

<sup>60</sup> Movses Kalankuatvatsi, History of the Albanian country. Translated from ancient Armenian, introduced and commented by L. Davlianidze, Tbilisi, 1985, 110-128 (in Georgian). A.N.Ter-Gevondian. Armenians and the Arabian chaliphate, Erevan, 1972, p. 58 (in Russian).

Anyway in 684-5 Khazars once again invaded Transcaucasus. According to the chronicles, in the second year of the Arabian caliph Abd al-Malik (685-765) Georgians, Armenians and Albanians stopped to pay tribute to Arabs after the 30 year of obedience<sup>61</sup>. In the same year Justinian II sent his commander-in chief Leonti to Transcaucasus; 8000 people were seized in Armenia. He conquered Armenia, Kartli and Albania and levied them. The Georgian scholars assert that Byzantine authorities acted in consent to the Georgian rulers<sup>62</sup>. The question left is if there was any connection with the previous Khazar invasion?

In the 30s of the 8<sup>th</sup> c. the numerous troops of Khazars invaded Azerbaijan. By the evidence of Tabari, which is repeated by Yaqubi and Ibn al-Athir, Khazars invaded from the Allan's country (It means through Daryal). According to Ghevond, the Khazar troops passed the Hun lands, the Chor's pass, the Maskuths' lands, crossed Araks, invaded Paytakaran, everywhere killed Moslems, wherever they were<sup>63</sup>. B. Silagadze considered Khazars to be invaded from both passes -Derbend and Daryal<sup>64</sup>. Khazars were informed by the Georgian ruler, who had contacts with the khakan's son. The viceroy of Armenia and Azerbaijan al-Jarrah was murdered at the battle.

In the 60s of the 8<sup>th</sup> c. there was the reverse situation, when the Khazar khakan sought for alliance with the Georgian ruler. The romantic story concerning the time is preserved in "Kartlis Tskhovreba" Juansher, the son of the king Archil, killed by Arabs, together with two sisters remained in eastern Georgia - Kartli and Kakheti, while his brother Ioane with their mother and two sisters moved to western Georgia. The Khazar khakan learned of the beauty of their sister Shushan, was eager to marry her, "sent an envoy and promised to help against Arabs. Juansher informed his brother and mother but they rejected the offer. After 3 years the khakan sent his commander in-chief Bluchan, through the Lezgian road (Derbend), reached Kakheti; seized Juansher and his sister, attacked Tbilisi, plundered Kartli and moved through Daryal. Shushan poisoned herself and Juansher remained at Khazars and after 7years was sent to his country with a lot of gifts<sup>65</sup>. It's impossible not to see the connection between the anti-Arabic movement in the south Caucasus and the Khazar's invasion in 763 - 764<sup>66</sup>, though eventually Arabs defeated Khazars, subdued Transcaucasus and even in the early 70s

<sup>61</sup> History of chaliphs by the vardapet Ghevond, the writer of the 8<sup>th</sup> c., translated from Armenian, S-P., 1862, p. 9 (in Russian).

<sup>62</sup> G. Abramishvili. Mural inscription of Tsephanoz mampal in the Ateni Sioni, Tbilisi, 1977, p. (in Georgian).

<sup>63</sup> Ghevond, p.71; M.I. Artamonov, History of Khazars, p.211-213.

<sup>64</sup> B. G. Silagadze. Domination of the Arabs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 1991, p. 94-95 (in Georgian).

<sup>65</sup> Kartlis Tshovreba, p. 204; P. B. Golden. Khazar studies, vol. 1 Budapest, 1980 p. 65.

<sup>66</sup> I. Chichurov, Thcophanes, p. 116.

established the emirate in Tbilisi<sup>67</sup>. Anyway being the erismtavari of Kartli in the early 70s, Nerse, who is acknowledged the leader of the new revolt in eastern Georgia, finally was forced to leave the country and to move to the North, to Khazars as well. The latter extended the warm hospitality to Nerse, treated him well, anyway couldn't provide him with troops, but helped him to move to western Georgia, to Abkhazia.

In the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> c. the Abkhazian ruler Leon II seceded Byzantium, got independence and started to unite the Georgian country. His main support in his endeavours were Khazars as it's said in "Kartlis Tskhovreba": "When the Greeks became weak the eristavi of the Apkhazs broke away from them. His name was Leon, the nephew of the eristavi Leon, to whom Apkhazeti was given hereditarily. This second Leon was the grandson of the king of the Khazars and with their aid he broke away from the Greeks and conquered Apkhazeti and Egrisi to Likhi. He proclaimed himself the king of Abkhazs, since Ioane died and Juansher grew old"<sup>68</sup>.

In 853 the Arabian commander-in chief Bugha Turk invaded Tbilisi. After that he fought Abkhazia and after that Tsanars in Gardabani. The latter applied to Byzantines, Khazars and Slavs for help. According to the Georgian chronicle it seems the northern people were punished for that alliance but in fact they were granted by Bugha. It's said in "Kartlis Tskhovreba", that Bugha brought the 300 Khazar families settling them in Shamkor and the 100 Osetin families settling them in Dmanisi<sup>69</sup>.

In the early 12<sup>th</sup> c. the Georgian king David the Builder married a Qipchak princess, invited Qipchak warriors to Georgia and completed the unification of the Georgian lands. But this is another story to which a number of the articles are dedicated.

<sup>67</sup> G. G. Alasania. The date of establishment of the Tbilisi emirate. –Analebi 1999,1, p. 21 (in Georgian).

<sup>68</sup> Karalis Tskhovreba, p. 205.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p. 207-208.