

CONFRONTATION OF CUMANS WITH GEORGIA AND SHIRVAN DURING THE REIGN OF GIORGI IV LASHA

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Abstract: Relations between Georgia and Cumans did not cease after the death of David Aghmashenebeli. The Cumans came to Georgia both to settle and for military service. The relations between Georgia and the Cumans were not always peaceful, there were certain conflicts between them. Arab historian Ibn al-Athir and Armenian historians, Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Vardan Areveltsi, wrote about specific confrontation.

Ibn al-Athir was a contemporary author, hence his accounts are more extensive and more reliable. Despite the little information of the Armenian historical sources, they pay attention to some important details.

According to Ibn al-Athir, Cumans, persecuted by the Mongols, came to the Derbent and captured one of the fortresses of *shirvanshah* by deception. Cumans plundered the territories of Shirvan. Also, they pillaged Cabala and went to Ganja. The Cumans told *emir* of Ganja that they do not act together with the Georgians and demand settlements in their territory. The ruler of Azerbaijan, suzerain of Ganja, agreed to their request. After that they marched against Georgia. At first, they had a victory, but later the Georgians defeated Cumans.

According to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the Cumans demanded settlement from the king of Georgia, Giorgi IV Lasha, but the king refused their request. This primary source also accounts about the military campaign of *atabag* Ivane against the Cumans. Vardan Areveltsi dates this event to 671 of the Armenian era.

Based on the presented primary sources, we can date the confrontation between the Cumans and the Georgians to 1222-1223. They were defeated by the Mongols and needed a shelter. They asked to settle in Georgia, this may have happened before the raid of Cabala. The reasons for the rejection of Cuman request could be that there were already enough Cumans in Georgia, and they no longer needed an additional force.

Keywords: Cumans, Georgia, Shirvan, Ganja, 13th century, Conflicts

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the Georgians and the Cumans lasted for several centuries. The Cumans were mostly allies of the Georgians in both small and large-scale battles. The relations between Georgia and the Cumans were not always peaceful. Indeed, there were instances of conflicts between them. One such conflict occurred during the

reign of Giorgi IV Lasha. The Cuman campaign to Derbent and Shirvan and subsequently against Georgia should have taken place in 1222-1223. The appearance of Mongols in the political scene had a significant impact on the course of events. Arab and Armenian historians have provided invaluable insight into the confrontation between the Georgians and the Cumans. The information preserved in these accounts allows us to study not only the reasons and results of the particular campaign of Cumans but also the relations between the Georgians and the Cumans, and the settlement of the Cumans in Georgia. The presented materials supplement the information available in Georgian historical sources and allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the military-political situation in the region.

THE MAIN PART OF THE ARTICLE

Relations between Cumans and Georgians began during the reign of David Aghmashenebeli and even after his death Georgian kings continued to have relations with them. They came to Georgia both to settle and for military service. The policy of the Georgian kings towards the Cumans was different. David IV Aghmashenebeli, Giorgi III, Tamar, Giorgi IV Lasha and Rusudan encouraged the relations with Cumans. Cumans were not seen during the reign of Demetre I. Relations with the Cumans were accompanied by certain difficulties. There were confrontations between Georgians and Cumans. One such conflict occurred during the reign of Giorgi IV Lasha. We want to discuss the reasons for this conflict, as well as the policy of the king of Georgia. We would also like to determine the nature of relations with Cumans and their significance in the military and political arenas of the country.

There is a paucity of historical sources pertaining to the conflicts between the Cumans and Georgians, which occurred in 1222-1223. Georgian historical sources do not mention anything about this issue at all. The Arab historian Ibn al-Athir provided a rather extensive report [Silagadze (1987): 67-68], and the Armenian historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi described this event relatively briefly [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 168-170] and the report of Armenian historian Vardan Areveltsi is very scarce [Vardan Areveltsi (2002): 75]. Beniamin Silagadze considers that all three historians should describe the same event [Silagadze (1987): 72]. There is also another Armenian historian Mxitar Ayrivanetsi, who made a brief mention of this event. He described the Cuman campaign in just one sentence. Furthermore, the accounts of Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi [Japharidze (2012): 233-246] and Rashid ad-Din [Rashid al-Din (1952): 228-229] are also taken into consideration. Rashid ad-Din did not mention Cumans campaign in Shirvan and Georgia but he described the political situation of that period. In his account, he noted the Mongols' invasion in the land of the Cumans and their battle against the Cumans. Regarding the Mongols' invasion in the land of the Cumans, we should also consider the information provided by Russian historical sources.

Before we evaluate the event, we need to know what each author writes. Ibn al-Athir is a contemporary of the event described in his report and his reports can be regarded as a reliable source. Because he described contemporary events, his reports are extensive.

When the Mongols conquered the territories of Qipchaqs, most of the Qipchaqs went to Derbent-Shirvan and came to the country of Rashid, “The Tatars occupied our kingdom and took away our property. That is why we have to come to settle in your country. You will be our sultan, and we will be your mamelukes, and we will conquer countries for you. [Silagadze (1987): 75]. Then Ibn al-athir talks about how the Qipchaqs were able to sneak into Derbent and capture the city. After they took the city, the Qipchaqs marched towards Cabala, which was the vassal of Georgia. The ruler of Cabala began to negotiate with them to pass the time until the help of the Georgians appeared. But the Qipchaqs first raided Cabala and then marched towards Ganja. There they spoke to Qushkhara, the owner of the Ganja [Silagadze (1987): 77]. Attention is drawn to their appeal to the governor of Ganja, in which they explain why they raided the *Shirvanshah* fortress first and then Cabala, to make sure that they are not acting together with Georgians, say: “If we wanted to fight together with Georgians, then we would not have come through the longest, most difficult and exhausting of Shirvan-Derbent road, but we would have entered their country, as we entered before” [Silagadze (1987): 77]. Uzbek, the ruler of Adarbadagan, allowed them to settle. Qipchaqs marched against the Georgians and won. Another ruler of Qipchaqs marched against the Georgians and took the booty, but the Georgians ambushed and defeated them. The Qipchaqs asked Uzbek for an army to march against the Georgians, but the Uzbek refused, and the Qipchaqs began to capture Muslims, but in the end, Uzbek won and the Qipchaqs moved to the country of Leks in the direction of Shirvan, where they were defeated and captured by Georgians, Muslims, Leks and others [Silagadze (1987): 78].

Now let's see how Armenian historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi described the same event, he noted: “Subsequently, after some time had passed, another force of Huns, called Qipchaqs (Xbch'ax) came through the land of the Georgians to King Lasha and the hazarapet Iwane. The Qipchaqs wanted Lasha and Iwane to give them a place to live and in return, they would serve the Georgians loyally. However, the Georgians did not agree to accept them. So the Qipchaqs arose and went to the residents of the city of Gandzak where they were received joyfully, since the people there had been placed into great straits by the Georgian army which ruined their lands and enslaved man and beast” [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 169]. “The Qipchaqs were given the right to settle there and organize a campaign against the Georgians with the help of the population of Gandza. Then Iwane mustered troops and arrogantly went against them. When the two groups clashed, the barbarians calmly emerged from their lairs and put to the sword the wearied and God-forsaken Georgian army” [Kirakos Gandzaketsi 170]. Then the author talks about the horrors caused by the Qipchaqs' campaign. “But after some days had passed, the great hazarapet Iwane once again mustered troops and went to wreak vengeance on those who had destroyed his troops. He attacked them at an unexpected moment and put the barbarians to the sword. He captured their booty and enslaved their children, taking both to his land” [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 170].

Armenian historian Vardan Areveltsi provides relatively brief information. “In 671, (1222) an army of Huns, who were called Qipchaqs, came to Ganja and joined them. When our army marched against them with self-confidence and recklessness, they were defeated, turned back by running, many were killed by the sword, and some were captured. For this, our army took revenge a year later, when they killed a large part of the

Qipchaqs during their attack on the country of Vardanashat [Vardan Areveltsi (2002): 75].

Mkhitar Ayrivantsi described this event in just one sentence. He notes: [in 1221] The Qipchaqs struck at Lasha in Gandzak [Bedrosian (2018): 77].

The Arab historian Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi talks about the same event: “The Turks appeared from the edge of the sky, which did not happen normally. All of them came from the side of Tbilisi and were among those who escaped the swords of Tatars” [Japharidze (2012): 241]. Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi dates this event to 618 A.H. [Japharidze (2012): 241]. Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, like Ibn al-Athir, was a contemporary of the described events and his report on both the Cumans’ campaign and Mongol invasions is reliable.

Persian historian Rashid ad-Din also described the confrontation of Mongols with the Ossetians and Cumans. He mostly repeated the reports of Ibn al-Athir and similarly described this event but Ibn al-Athir’s reports are more extensive and detailed. Rashid ad-Din mentioned the Mongols’ campaign in Georgia and then Derbent. After they raided and plundered the city of Shemakha, they passed Derbent and fought against Ossetians and Cumans but neither of them was victorious. Then the Mongols tricked the Cumans, gained their help and with the help of the Cumans they defeated the Ossetians. After that, the Mongols defeated the Cumans too and took away everything from them. Cumans fled to Russian principalities and then the Mongols defeated the united army of Cumans and Russian Princes [Rashid al-Din (1952): 228-229]. He was not a contemporary author of these events. He should have used the other chroniclers’ reports while writing his account. Therefore, his reports about these events are almost the same. However, his reports are important, because they do not disagree with the information of the other chroniclers. This makes the descriptions of this event by other Authors more believable.

Based on the presented historical sources we should discuss several issues. One of the issues is the reason for the Cumans’ campaign in Transcaucasia and what was their purpose.

The appearance of the Mongols in the political arena led to the migration of the Cumans to Transcaucasia. Ibn al-Athir considered the Mongols’ attack on the Cumans as a reason for the Cumans’ march to Derbent-Shirvan, “The Tatars occupied our kingdom and took away our property. That is why we have to come to settle in your country” [Silagadze (1987): 75]. Both Georgia and foreign historical sources mention the campaign of Mongols against the Cumans. According to Ibn al-Athir, the Mongols arrived in Tabriz at the end of 1220, the ruler of Adarbadagan, Uzbek, surrendered to them without a fight and paid tribute. After that, the Mongols went to Georgia. Georgians confronted them and had a battle but were defeated [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 214]. After that, two more confrontations took place between Georgians and Mongols, the Mongols, despite the victory, did not stay and left. We read about it in the Hundred Years Chronicle: “They went by the road of Daruband, and because neither the *Shirvanshah* nor the Darubandians could resist them they passed the Darubandi Gates, entered in Qivchaqia and engaged the local population in battle; And the Qivchaqs fought in many places with them but the Tatars defeated them everywhere” [The Hundred Years Chronicle (2014): 321]. It seems that, like the Georgians, the Cumans did not submit to the Mongols without a fight. Ibn al-Athir mentions the following about the same event:

The Mongol advanced to Derbent-Shirvan, raided the city of Shemakha and plundered it, and then crossed the Derbent gate, defeated the Leks and marched against the Ossetians. The Ossetians, who already had information about the Mongols, got ready and called the Cumans for help and fought the Mongols together so that neither side was victorious. The Mongols Tricked the Cumans and with their help, they defeated the Ossetians, and then the Cumans themselves [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 222]. The same note about these events is mentioned in the account of Rashid ad-Din, which is presented above. The Arab historian Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi also describes this event: They crossed the Derbent, ran over the Cumans and Ossetians and killed them with a sword [Japharidze (2012): 238]. It is true that Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi briefly describes the defeat of the Ossetians and Cumans by the Mongols, but this brief account confirms the information of the Georgian source and Ibn Al-Athir. The defeat of the Cumans by the Mongols is also mentioned in the Novgorod Chronicle, “the Mongols defeated Yas, Obez, Kasog and Polovcian people” [Michel, Forbes (1914): 64]. In Russian chronicles, the Cumans are referred to as Polovcian. The Russian source dates this event to 1224. It is clear from the text that this conflict between the Cumans and Mongols took place before the battle of Kalka because only after mentioning the defeat of the Cumans by the Mongols, the discussion between Cuman prince Kotian and Russian chief Mstislav is described. This discussion is about the alliance against the Mongols, to which Mstislav agreed. He realized the need to fight together against the common enemy [Michel, Forbes (1914): 65]. Moreover, the Novgorod Chronicle mentions the defeat of Obez by the Mongols, and Georgia is referred to by this name in Russian sources. In the Hypathian Codex, Georgia is also mentioned with the same name [Perfecky (1973): 17]. In the Hypathian codex, there is a brief description of Mongols’ invasion in the land of Cumans this event is dated to 1223. Then the chronicler mentioned the battle of Kalka and his description of this battle is more extensive and detailed [Perfecky (1973): 28-30]. This event is described in another Russian historical source which is the Nikonian chronicle. According to this chronicle, the defeat of the Cumans by the Mongols is dated to 1225 and the event is described similarly [Zenkovsky (1982): 285-288]. This source is a compilation. It was made in the 16th century and used ancient manuscripts. For describing this event the chronicler used the Hypathian codex and the Novgorod Chronicle. Although, the Nikonian chronicle did not take into account the dating of this event according to these manuscripts.

The main reason for the defeat was that the Cumans were greedy for booty and the goods promised by the Mongols, and did not see the danger in an alliance with the Mongols. This is mentioned by Ibn al-Athir and Rashid ad-Din also repeated it in his account. “We will bring you whatever money and clothing you want,” said the Mongols according to Ibn al-Athir. [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 222]. Rashid ad-Din mentioned the same: “We will give you whatever gold and clothing you want” [Rashid ad-Din (1998): 260]. This is a characteristic nature of the Cumans, they plundered the territories of Russian principalities. The main purpose of these campaigns was robbery of the population. All kinds of things they took from them had great importance for the Cumans. Therefore, it is not surprising that they believed in the Mongols and made peace with them. According to these authors after the first defeat by the Mongols, instead of unifying their forces, they scattered away. They believed in peace and did not expect an attack by the Mongols [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 222; Rashid ad-Din (1998): 260]. Thus, another reason for the defeat was

that they were not a united force, they acted as separate groups. According to Ibn al-Athir, Ossetians and Cumans knew about the Mongols. The Chronicler did not mention specific notes about what kind of information would have had Ossetians and Cumans. That was enough for them to make an alliance with the Ossetians and fight together against the Mongols. The relationship between Ossetians and Cumans was not peaceful. The confrontation between those people is mentioned in David's chronicler [c̄xorebay mep̄et-mep̄isa daviṭisi (2008): 319-320]. It was not an easy task to unite the Cumans and Ossetians, before the appearance of the enemy [Tsintsadze (1960): 130]. When the Mongols went to the land of the Cumans, the alliance between Ossetians and Cumans had already been made. We should also take into account that the initiators of this alliance were Ossetians according to Ibn al-Athir [Ibn al-Athir (216): 222]. They were more prepared than Georgia and had enough information to make a necessary alliance with the former enemy. Maybe they were not fond of the Cumans, but their military power was necessary against the Mongols. Although, the Cumans' military campaign was a great problem for Ossetians, but was not as disastrous as the Mongols' invasion would have been. So it seems that both Ossetians and Cumans considered the Mongols a dangerous opponent at first and made the alliance with Ossetians. Unfortunately, the Cumans did not maintain this policy towards the Mongols to the end. We think, that the Cumans should be more cautious with them. The result of their ill-advised policy was more disastrous. Part of them fled to the Russian principalities and the other part found their refuge in Georgia.

Therefore, the reason for the Cumans' campaign in Transcaucasia was their defeat by the Mongols. During the fight against the Mongols, they suffered a lot. One of the Cuman chiefs Kotian asked the Russian chief Mstislav for help in the fight against the Mongols and another part of the Cumans started looking for a new place for settlement. According to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, they asked the king of Georgia Giorgi IV Lasha for a place a residence. [Bedrosian (1986): 168]. According to Ibn al-Athir's report, the Cumans denied their desire to settle in Georgia. We think that the Cumans would have tried to seek refuge in Georgia, this is directly indicated by Kirakos Gandzaketsi and according to Ibn al-Athir's report, the Cumans admitted that they knew the short and easy way to reach Georgia, which they usually used before. Since they received a refusal from the king of Georgia, then they turned to the ruler of Ganja with the same request. The purpose of the Cumans is clear. They are looking for a new safe place to settle, as they realize the superiority of the Mongols and try to escape them. As for the raiding and plundering of the Derbent-Shirvan and Cabala, it must have been caused by the difficult economic situation of the Cumans, they would have lost a considerable part of their property in the confrontation with the Mongols. "The Tatars occupied our kingdom and took away our property", said the Cumans according to Ibn al-Athir. Raiding and plundering the cities and other populated areas were one of the main sources of income for the Cumans.

Besides the reasons for the campaign of Cumans against Shirvan and Georgia, we should pay attention to the date of this event. Ibn al-Athir dates this event to 619 with the Muslim era (Silagadze, 75), which corresponds to 1222 [Silagadze (1987):75]. Vardan Areveltsi dates this event 671 with the Armenian era, which also corresponds to 1222 [Vardan Areveltsi (2002): 160]. As for the reports of Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the author

places the appearance of Cumans after the campaign of Jebe and Subudai, i.e. 1220-1222. [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 168-169]. Mxitar Ayrivantsi dates this event to 670 with Armenian era, which corresponds to 1221 [Mxitar Ayrivantsi (2018): 77]. The Hypathian Codex dated the Mongols' campaign against the Cumans to 1223 [Perfecky (1973): 28]. The Novgorod Chronicle considers the defeat of Georgians and Cumans by the Mongols as the event of 1224 [Michel, Forbes (1914): 63-64]. According to Nikonian Chronicle this event is dated to 1225 [Zenkovsky (1982): 285]. We have to look at the political map of that period. At the beginning of the 1220s, the Mongols appeared both in Transcaucasia and in the territory where the Cumans lived. Before that, the Cumans lived more or less peacefully, were in the service of different countries or organized violent raids against Russian Principalities. Georgian, Armenian and Arabic historical sources mention that the Mongols marched into the territory of Cumans after they left Georgia. The Mongols defeated the Ossetians first with the help of the Cumans and then the Cumans themselves. The last confrontation between the Mongols and the Georgians was supposed to happen in 1222, and during this period the Cumans, harassed by the Mongols, were looking for a new refuge. The year 1222 is a real date, because Kirakos Gandzaketsi mentions the king of Georgia Giorgi IV Lasha, he is no longer alive in 1223. Historian Gocha Japharidze determined the date of Giorgi IV Lasha's death, he considered that this happened on January 18, 1223 [Japharidze (2012): 225-232]. At the same time, Vardan mentions that "our army took revenge a year later" [Vardan Areveltsi (2002): 160], which probably refers to the campaign of *atabag* Ivane. Kirakos Gandzaketsi also talks about the second campaign of *atabag* Ivane, "But after some days had passed, the great hazarapet Iwane once again mustered troops and went to wreak vengeance on those who had destroyed his troops [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 170]. It is completely inappropriate to date this event to 1224 or 1225. The Hypathian Codex correctly dated the battle of Kalka to 1223 but the appearance of the Mongols in the land of the Cumans must have occurred earlier. Most historical sources date this event to 1222. Robert Bedrosian considers the dating of the Cuman campaign in 1222-1223 [Bedrosian (1997): 256]. Historians Gvanca Abdaladze and Revaz Kiknadze consider that this event happened in 1222 [Abdaladze (2005): 123-124; Kiknadze (1979): 537]. Mzia Buniatov also considered that the Cumans' invasion in Shirvan took place in 1222 [Buniatov (1978): 118-119]. It seems that they do not take into account the information of Vardan Areveltsi about the revengeful campaign of *atabag* Ivane, which took place one year after the Cumans attack. We consider that the Mongols defeated the Cumans in 1222 and looking for refuge the Cumans went to Shirvan and then asked Georgians for the places to settle. In our opinion, Cumans' campaign against Shirvan and Georgia should have ended in 1223.

Several other important issues can be distinguished. Only Kirakos Gandzaketsi writes that the Cumans asked to be in service of Georgians. Despite the Ibn al-Athir's extensive information, such a fact is not recorded there. Among three sources, only Ibn al-Athir and Kirakos Gandzaketsi mentioned Ivane *Atabag*, while Vardan Areveltsi did not mention the Georgian army and their commander at all. When should the Cumans ask to come to Georgia for service and have a residential area? Did this happen before they started attacking Cabala? The ruler of Cabala negotiates with the Cumans to buy time and calls on Georgians for help. Maybe the Cumans did the same and asked for the service

from the king of Georgians, but because they were refused, then they raided Cabala and headed for Ganja. Another moment should be taken into account, when the Cumans tell Uzbek that if they wanted to fight together with Georgians, then they would not come through the difficult Shirvan-Derbent road, but the way they used to come to Georgia [Silagadze (1987): 77]. This report confirms that the Cumans did not cease their relations with Georgia after the death of David Aghmashenebeli. The Cumans continued to be in service of the Georgian kings. The Chronicle Giorgi Lasha and his time when describing the reign of Giorgi III mentioned: “And his order many thousands of Ossetians and Qivchaqs came to support him, and the house of Shirvan did the same” [The Chronicle Giorgi Lasha (2014): 202]. The Cumans are in service of Georgians during the reign of Tamar. Tamar’s historian in his account “istoriani da azmani šaravandedtani” mentions the Cumans: “At that time, Savalat, the brother of Sevinj the king of Qipchaqs, was here to serve” and “when they came from Tbilisi, they met Ossetians and New Qipchaqs” [istoriani da azmani šaravandedtani (2008): 435; 436]. In this regard, the situation should not have changed during the reign of Giorgi IV. These reports testify to the existence of active relations between Georgians and Cumans. Therefore, we think that the Cumans should have asked to settle in Georgia because they had a long relationship with Georgians since the reign of David IV. This was the common practice for the Cumans to come to Georgia for settlement and to be in military service of Georgian Kings. Thus, we think that the note of Kirakos Gandzaketsi about the desire of the Cumans to settle in Georgia is true.

If the Cumans are in the service of Georgia, why does Giorgi IV Lasha refuse to accept them? In regarding to this issue, P. B. Golden suggests that the Georgians, perhaps no longer certain they could properly contain such a force or already having a surfeit of Cumans in service. [Golden (1984): 85]. We can assume that at that time there were already a lot of Cumans in Georgia and they did not want a new group of them to come. The presence of the Cumans in Georgia in this period is indicated by the report of Juvaini, according to which there were the Cumans in the Georgian army in the battle of Bolnisi in 1228 during the reign of Rusudan. Juveini also mentions the amount of Cumans: “twenty thousand chosen warriors” [Kiknadze (1974): 35-36]. The number may be exaggerated but their amount would not be very few. We think that these Cumans should have been in Georgia even during the reign of Giorgi IV Lasha.

If the Cumans wanted to settle in Georgia indeed, why did not they use the way they used before? Beniamin Silagadze mentions that the Mongols defeated Ossetians with the help of Cumans and then the Cumans themselves [Silagadze (1987): 67]. It would be difficult for the already defeated and exiled Cumans to pass through the territory of Ossetians, and the Ossetians, despite being defeated by them, would most likely not pass the Cumans going to Georgia. Therefore, they chose the Shirvan-Derbent road, where they first tried to capture the *Shirvanshah* fortress and after they were refused by Georgians, they headed towards Ganja and began attacking the Georgians.

The Cumans received a refusal from the Georgians to settle in Georgia and be in service of the Georgian king. However, the ruler of Ganja, Qushkhara, who was the vassal of Adarbadagan according to Ibn al-Athir, agreed to give territories to the Cumans for settlement. The ruler of Adarbadagan, *atabeg* Uzbek was not against the settlement of the Cumans near Ganja. What could have caused Uzbek’s consent to the settlement of the

Cumans near Ganja? We should pay attention to the relations between Georgia and Adarbadagan during the reign of Giorgi IV Lasha. The matter of discussion between them is the ownership of Ganja. Giorgi IV marched against Ganja at the beginning of his reign. The reason for the campaign was the ceasing of tribute by the *atabag* of Ganja. Ganja was recaptured again but in 1215 Ganja was already in possession of Ildegizians [Abdaladze (2005): 123]. When describing the events of 1217-1218, Ibn al-Athir refers to Uzbek as the “lord of Azerbaijan and Aran”. The same situation was in 1221 [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 172; 230]. The battle for the Ganja was prevented by the appearance of the Mongols, which was followed by the Cuman campaign first against Shirvan, they raided Derbent and Cabala, which was a vassal of Georgia and then attacked Georgia as well. The *atabag* of Ganja and Uzbek the ruler of Adarbadagan had considered the Cumans as the allies against the Georgians. They would have known the Character of Cumans, for the Cumans it was a common occurrence to organize raids and pillage the population. The fact that Qushkhara was familiar with the customs of the Cumans is evidenced by the report of Ibn al-Athir, according to which Qushkhara demanded hostages from the Cumans in exchange for the assistance provided to them [Silagadze (1987): 78]. As it seems, the *atabag* of Ganja did not fully trust Cumans. Such an attitude towards the Cumans is not unknown and is confirmed by other historical sources. According to Anna Comnena the Byzantine emperor Alexios komnenos gave gifts to the Cumans and due to their treacherous nature, demanded to give hostages and swear an oath [Comnena (2000): 142]. Kirakos Gandzaketsi mentions the following: “So the Qipchaqs arose and went to the residents of the city of Gandzak where they were received joyfully since the people there had been placed into great straits by the Georgian army which ruined their lands and enslaved man and beast. The people of Gandzak gave the Qipchaqs a place to dwell within the confines of the city and aided them with food and drink so that with their help they might resist the kingdom of the Georgians” [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 168]. The purpose of the *atabag* of Ganja is clear, with the help of Cumans he should try to stop the Georgians’ attempts to seize Ganja again and turn them into tributaries. Uzbek, the ruler of Adarbadagan, even asked khwarazmshah Mohamad for help [Abdaladze (2005): 122-123]. After the departure of the Mongols, Giorgi IV began to restore and strengthen his weakened positions in the region. Ibn al-Athir talks about the campaign of Giorgi IV Lasha against the city of Baylakan in October-November 1222 [Ibn al-athir (2016): 240]. Gvantsa Abdaladze considers that the raid against Baylakan was carried out by Georgians in February 1222 [Abdaladze (2005): 124]. Regardless of whether the Georgian campaign against Baylakan took place before the appearance of the Cumans or after their arrival, the policy of the Georgian royal court was clear, Giorgi IV was still trying to restore his influence in his tributary and vassal states and subjugating Aran was one of the necessary factor. Therefore, the appearance of Cumans was an opportunity for the *atabag* of Ganja to acquire a new military force and an ally.

The position of Uzbek during the Mongol invasion and towards Aran is interesting too. Giorgi IV Lasha, while creating an anti-Mongol coalition, also called *atabeg* Uzbek for help. According to Ibn al-Athir, Uzbek agreed but when the time came to fulfill the promise and bring out the army to help the Georgians, he did not fulfill the promise [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 214]. Uzbek surrendered to the Mongols who appeared in Tabriz without a fight and paid tribute [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 214]. He did not help Qushkhara, the ruler of

Aran, during the campaign of Georgians against Baylacan [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 240] Ibn al-Athir negatively characterized *atabeg* Uzbek, according to historian, Uzbek was constantly drinking and never sober, he also refers to him as idle *emir*, whenever he heard of any alarm he would take flight in panic. He was the least capable of defending the lands from any enemy who made them the object of his attack [Ibn al-Athir (2016): 214; 220]. Gvantsa Abdaladze considers Uzbek an incompetent ruler based on Ibn al-Athir's report [Abdaladze (2005):119]. Historian Gocha Japharidze also considers the same [Japharidze (2012): 239]. In the current situation, the ruler of Adarbadagan had to take more active actions to protect his territories and vassal states. That is why Qushkhara wanted to use the help of Cumans to protect Ganja from Georgians because he most likely would not have hoped to receive real help from Uzbek.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the confrontation between the Georgians and Cumans should have taken place in 1222-1223. This campaign of Cumans was caused by the Mongol invasion, and the Cumans, who were defeated by the Mongols, were looking for help and refuge. They came to Transcaucasia and asked Georgians for settlement. First of all, they put their hope in Georgia, they came to Georgia to settle even before, therefore, it is not surprising that they chose Georgia for dwelling. However, after the refusal of the Georgians, they addressed the ruler of Ganja with the same request. This time, the Cumans carried out a raid against Georgia, which must be due to their difficult economic situation, they lost their property in the battle with the Mongols. The raids of the Cumans support the policy of the ruler of Ganja and the Cumans appear as their allies to protect Ganja from the Georgians. The refusal of the Georgians to settle the Cumans in Georgia must be due to the large number of the Cumans living in Georgia and therefore, the Georgian royal court no longer wanted to accept the new group within their realm.

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