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Article



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CULTURAL HERITAGE OF GEORGIA (THE RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE OF TBILISI)

Abstract: Georgia is the country of the world's oldest civilization. Georgian culture is the treasure of world culture. Over the course of centuries, the history of Georgia has acquired a self-styled and unique standard due to the country's difficult geo-political problems and permanent struggles and, as a result of the constant contact with foreign nations, its culture became rich and unique.

Georgians had close ties with the biggest nations of the Old East- the Urartians, the Assyrians, the Hittites, and later – with the Greeks and the Roman Empire, Armenia, Byzantium, Arabia, Turkey, Mongolia, and Persia. This is proved by the foreign historic sources - the excellent material for the studies of Georgian history. It should be noted that, despite the complex historical processes, Georgian culture was never restricted, rectilinear or narrow - it always combined the best of both the Western and the Eastern worlds, the proof of which is Georgia's unique literature, folklore, architecture, science, poetry.

The existence of the state of Georgia in the difficult geographic area slowed the process of the political and cultural development of the country many times. The fall of the Byzantine Empire was especially hard as Georgia, after the occupation of the Black Sea by the Ottomans, became completely isolated from Europe and left to the Muslim world. This led to the disintegration of the country, followed by a nearly forty-year struggle for regaining freedom and individuality. This battle went on with certain gradations and it finally ended with the annexation of Georgia by Russia. The permanent wars ended and peace was established; though its price was high.

For 117 years Russia has been purposefully pursuing the Russianization of Georgia, fighting the Georgian language, writing, and Georgian Church. In this hard struggle, the Georgian nation was able to maintain its cultural heritage, its traditions, and Christian faith – the tokens defining its identity.

The Revolution of February 1917 was first followed by the revival of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, lost back in 1811, and then – by declaring the independence of Georgia in 1918. Unfortunately, the first Georgian Independent Republic was occupied by Soviet Russia in 1921 and Georgia became part of the Soviet Union. On April 9, 1991, Georgia declared its independence on the basis of the conducted Referendum of the Georgian people's will, which was followed by the opening of the closed borders. The door was opened for all those interested in visiting our country. The country's unique material and spiritual culture, habitual traditions, cuisine, and resorts became available to foreign citizens. It is noteworthy that today Georgia faces many challenges and represents the sphere of interest of foreign partners. UNESCO expresses its special interest in Georgian culture by including its cultural monuments in the World's Cultural Heritage List.

Georgia is a country of distinct traditions in terms of ethnic and religious diversity. Different nations and confessions have lived here since ancient times. The tolerant nature of Georgians and their attitude towards other ethnic groups are well illustrated by the architectural monuments throughout the country which are parts of Georgia's cultural-historical heritage. From this point of view, Tbilisi – the capital of Georgia and one of the oldest cities in the world is unique. It is in Tbilisi where the merging of multicultural and religious diversities is clearly expressed. Orthodox, Gregorian, Muslim, Catholic churches, Jews, and Yezidis temples rub shoulders here.

Based on the above said, this work deals with special attention to the historical and cultural monuments of Tbilisi as well as to the brief history of the city, to its ethnocultural and ethno-confessional links formed over the centuries. Tbilisi was a developed economic center in different epochs due to its favorable location. To our great

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concern, only a small part of the historical monuments of Tbilisi is preserved. The existing residential and public buildings are mainly of the XIX c.

This stylistic change in the city clearly indicates the political, social, and economic changes that took place in Georgia.

Key words: Heritage, Georgia, geopolitical, traditions, Tbilisi, historic, monuments.

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Introduction

Content

Georgia is a hub of ancient civilization and culture. Culture, as a universal characteristic of humanity, includes the heredity of historical experience. Consequently, it is a world of human expression that transcends time. Cultural heritage always has a special place in the process of preserving and developing the nation's identity. The Georgian people preserved their identity based on their difficult historical past and thanks to the national language and culture. In the era of globalization, it is believed that the national culture is losing its diversity, and a cosmopolitan culture is being formed. Located on the border of Europe and Asia, Georgia experienced the aggression of many conquerors, the processes of migration of different ethnic groups often took place, it seems that homogenization of culture should have taken place, although Georgian culture always shared the culture elements of the peoples of the world and sometimes transformed it into its national essence.

Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, has been distinguished by its cultural diversity since ancient times and represented the political, economic and cultural center of the entire Caucasus. The city has always been distinguished by original folk traditions and customs, various ethnic groups of Armenians, Jews, Assyrians, Azerbaijanis, Kurds, Russians, and Ukrainians were carriers of Tbilisi culture, since the Georgian language and culture always had primacy.

The capitalization of Tbilisi took place in the 5th century during the reign of King Vakhtang Gorgasli, which was due to its naturally convenient strategic location, its proximity to the leading regions of the country from the economic and political point of view, and the possibility of convenient connections with neighboring countries. According to the conducted archeological studies, it is established that Tbilisi was a settlement long before Vakhtang Gorgasli. Archeological findings belong to the Neolithic, Early, Middle and Late Bronze Ages. (შოშიაშვილი., 2019, გვ. 6) The ancient period is also well represented, which is confirmed by archeological studies, in particular, the Greek coin of the IV-III centuries B.C., as well as two Roman coins minted during the reign of Emperor Augustus. The abundance of coins indicates that the local population was involved in extensive trade processes, which was

mainly due to the strategic location of Tbilisi and its surroundings. (ნ., ძველი თბილისის ადგილის ისტორიიდან, 1999, გვ. 98) It is worth noting the road map drawn up by the Roman geographer Castorius of the 4th century, the so-called "Tabula Peutingeriana", where among the listed settlements and cities, in the vicinity of Armazi Castle, a fortified point PHILADO is indicated, which is the Latin form of Tphilda. The indicated point with both its location and name should be Tbilisi. Castorius' map was intended for travelers and merchants.

Tbilisi is first mentioned in Georgian historical sources from the 60s of the 4th century when Sasanian Iran was fighting for political supremacy. The Sassanids built a fortress here, which they turned into their residence, and opposed Mtskheta, the residence of the Georgian kings. During the time of the Iberian king Varaz Bakuri, according to Leonti Mroveli, "... and the Eristavi of the Persians built Tphilisi as a fortress against the walls of Mtskheta" (ყაუხჩიშვილი, 1955წ, გვ. 139). The decision to move the capital from Mtskheta to Tbilisi by Vakhtang Gorgasli (443-502 AD) in the second half of the V century was conditioned by social, economic and political factors.

From the later period of the 5th century until almost the 19th century, the city was burned and destroyed several times as a result of enemy invasions. Byzantium, Persia, Arabs, Seljuks, Khazars, Mongols, Ottomans, Safavids, and Russians destroyed and burned the cult monuments and civil buildings of the city. The multi-ethnic residents of Tbilisi were not allowed. They did not mercy the multi-ethnic residents of Tbilisi. Nevertheless, a few ancient buildings have been preserved in the city – Narikala i.e. the mother castle (IV century), the Sion and Anchiskhati i.e. St. Mary Churches (VI century). Information about these ancient architectural monuments is preserved both in Georgian and foreign written sources.

As we mentioned, Tbilisi has been a multi-ethnic city since ancient times, and all residents here had their own temples for prayers. One of the oldest is the Zoroastrian temple of Ateshga, located in one of the old districts of the city - Kldisubani. In the 3rd-7th centuries, in Eastern Georgia, the Sasanians tried to establish the state religion of Iran - Zoroastrianism. At that time, the said denomination was the strongest

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competitor of Christianity in Kartli. In the pre-Christian era, Georgians continuously fought against the politics of Iran. (ქ., 2019, გვ. 51; ქ., 2019) Information about Ateshga in historical documents is quite scarce. We learn about this important historical monument through the sketches of Jean Chardin and Tournefort. They write that Ateshga resembled a cube with a low-necked spherical dome and had a free area (ყოფილი, 2009, გვ. 5-6) In 1724, on the basis of the Treaty of Constantinople signed between Russia and Turkey, Turkey occupied the whole of Georgia and Ateshga was probably converted into a mosque. In 1735, Nadir-Shah conquered eastern Georgia and destroyed the Ottoman mosques, including Ateshga, which was earlier converted into a mosque. Later it was used as a warehouse, and in the 19th century, it was used as a residence. Ateshga is still under private ownership, however, within the framework of the 2007-2009 ICOMOS revitalization project of the Bethlehem district, Ateshga was cleaned and restored, and it was covered with a temporary roof to protect it from atmospheric events. "Ateshga" of Tbilisi is a highly noteworthy historical monument, it is an organic formation of the political processes that took place in Transcaucasia.

Yazidis belong to one of the small ethnic groups in Georgia, a small part of which settled here in the 18th century, in the 19th century they came from Armenia and Turkey, and the last part came in 1919. The first entry was a plea letter on asylum to Erekle II, king of Kartl-Kakheti. Yazidis did not have a temple in Georgia, so they performed religious rituals in their families. Yazidis recognize one god and worship Archangel Malak-Taus, who is represented as a peacock, and Shams, who is the sun deity in Yazidi mythology. They especially respect the rising side of the sun. The religious doctrine of the Yazidis is contained in two holy books - the "Book of Confessions" and the "Black Book". In Yazidism, it is clearly indicated that only God is the creator of the universe, and has entrusted the seven angels the management of the universe.

In 2011, the Yazidi Religious Assembly of Georgia (a legal entity under public law) was founded, which is the representation of the highest religious body existing in Iraq in Georgia, and the Yazidi community was given permission to build a Yazidi cultural center. In the same year, after being registered in Georgia, the religious council chose Sheikh Nadri as rebar i.e. leader. The main Yazidi shrine is the Lalish temple in northern Iraq, and the Georgian Yazidi community also built a small temple similar to Lalish in Varketili. The peacock depicted on the temple is a symbol of an angel. (რ., 2019, გვ. 670)

Armenians, who have been living here for a long time, should be singled out among the groups living in Georgia. Historical information about this is preserved in both Georgian and Armenian historical sources and documents. Armenians are a Christian

nation and their religion is called Armenian-Apostolic. They had their own temples in Tbilisi, a large part of which is still functioning today. The settlement process of the Armenian ethnic group on the territory of Georgia was divided into several stages, but it became particularly intense in the late Middle Ages. At that time, they had long lost their statehood (this happened in the 11th century) and were being harassed on national-political and religious grounds. Therefore, they often sought refuge in Georgia, namely in Kvemo Kartli, in order to return to their historical homeland as soon as a favorable environment was created. In 1780, King Erekle resettled the Armenians persecuted by the Persians from Yerevan Khanate to Tbilisi. The Russian demographic expansion in Tbilisi since the 19th century led to an increase in the Armenian population. Armenians who migrated to Tbilisi not only built their own churches but also made the Georgian Orthodox Church in Armenian. The Russian government also had had its contribution to this, because the materially wealthy part of the representatives of this nation was chosen by the Russian government as a political supporter and the main social base and in every possible way contributed to its strengthening in Tbilisi. Armenians drew up all kinds of documents only in the Georgian language, this continued until the 70s of the 19th century when a new wave of Armenian migration appeared in Georgia and the Russian language began to spread among Tbilisi Armenians. It should be noted that among the Tbilisi Armenians, there were many ethnic Georgians who were called Armenians because they recognized the Armenian-Gregorian faith. (ბ., 2016, გვ. 36)

Today, there is a controversy between the Georgian and Armenian churches regarding the ownership of the churches. On the map of Tbilisi created by Vakhushti Batonishvili (18th century), only 5 Armenian churches are marked with the surrounding cemeteries, and in the explanations attached to the plan of Tbilisi drawn up by the Russian officer, Alexander Pishchev, in 1785, Georgian Orthodox churches are reported as Armenian churches. The origin of the Armenian temples located in Tbilisi is mainly related to the 17th-19th centuries. Artificially aggravating the issue will have really bad results on the relations between both countries. There is already a problem of frozen conflicts in the South Caucasus, which will hinder the security of the region. The dispute process is temporarily suspended. Most of the Armenian churches in Tbilisi have been restored and are functioning. One of the important temples is the Norashen church. Armenian researchers (S. Karapetian) believe that the temple was built in 1467, although there is no documentary material to prove this. During the invasion of Agha Muhammad Khan (1795), the temple was damaged. After the establishment of Russian rule, the central domed cathedral was restored and painted by Mkrtum

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Ovnatanian, an Armenian artist from Tbilisi. 17th-century khachkars are embedded in the inner walls of the church. The famous Armenian merchant and patron Mikheil Tamamshev is buried in the church. (ო., 1940, გვ. 31)

Surb-Gevork, i.e. the same church of Tsikhisdeda, belongs to the number of Georgian churches, which were later taken over by the Armenian church. The church built in the name of St. George is Vakhushti referred to as the seat of the Castle. According to incomplete information, the temple was built in the XIII century by the rich Armenian trader of Mongolian times, there was an inscription of the temple, which has not been preserved. Armenian historians think that the Trader built the temple in 1251 on the basis of the old temple and made it Armenian. The church belongs to the type of domed hall common in Armenia since the 7th century, the dome of which stands on four solid pillars. The Surb Gevorg church is built entirely of bricks, but its foundation and the first row of walls are built of large polished stones. On both sides of the main altar of the church is a two-story chapel, the entrances of the upper floors of which are located in the altar. The building has two entrances - from the west and from the north. The Surb Gevorg Church is distinguished by its frescoes, the oldest of which belong to the 14th-15th centuries. The walls of the temple are painted with Old Testament scenes belonging to the Hovnathanian family of painters. (მათეოსიანი, 2015, გვ. 21)

It should be noted here that during the reconstruction works in 2023, five old stones were found, which were soon identified by the inscriptions on the tombstones. (<http://dalma.news/გელომბური-კვალი-თბილისში-კულტურის-სამინისტროს-შენობის-ტერიტორიაზე-ეკლესია-და-სასაფლაო-აღმოაჩინეს>, 2023) According to historical sources, in the past, there was an Armenian temple in this area and a cemetery nearby. As Armenian public figures point out, here was the Vank temple, which was a three-domed building. Over the centuries, the church was restored many times. The last restoration was carried out in 1902 with the funds of philanthropist Alexander Mantashev. During the invasion of the Bolsheviks, when the Georgian and Armenian churches were destroyed, this Vank temple also became their victim. In 1938, the church and the cemetery were completely demolished and the stones were used as second-hand building materials.

Followers of two directions of Muslims - Shiites and Sunnis - also live in Tbilisi. The Muslim population appeared in Tbilisi after the conquest of the city by the Arabs in the second half of the 7th century. As a result of the occupation of Tbilisi by the Arabs, there would definitely be a cult building in the city, which is evidenced by the existence of the title of Qadi (religious judge) on the door of the Amira of Tbilisi.

In the VII-VIII centuries in Tbilisi, a jameh-mosque should have stood approximately in the place where the mosque stands now. We have no information about when Jameh was destroyed or who dismantled it. During the Arabization, Muslim merchants-artisans, scientists, and representatives of culture gradually increased in Tbilisi. According to Arab historians, Tbilisi Muslims were Sunnis. (კვიციანი, 1984, გვ. 13) Shiite Muslims appeared in Georgia and Tbilisi later in the 16th century. The Shiite mosque founded by Shah Ismail I is considered to be one of the oldest mosques on the left bank of the Mtkvari, near bridge bay. "Shah Ismail built the mosque near the bay," Vakhushti tells us. (ვახუშტი, 1973, გვ. 334)

From the 16th century, Tbilisi was sometimes under the Sunni Turkish Ottomans, and sometimes under the Shiite Iranians. The conquerors of the city destroyed not only Christian churches and monasteries but also Muslim shrines. Shiites destroyed the Sunni shrines and vice versa. The Shah Ismail Mosque was destroyed during almost 30 years of Ottoman rule. Shah Abbas I built a new mosque in 1606, according to Jean Chardin. (შარდენი, 2019, გვ. 13) In the 17th century, during the reign of King Rostom, three mosques were built in Tbilisi. By the end of the 19th century, there were already five mosques.

Currently, in Tbilisi there is one mosque that stands at the foot of Narikala Castle, which was built by the Ottomans in 1724-27, when they ruled Kartli. After the campaigns of Nadir Shah and the establishment of Qizilbash rule in Kartli, the mentioned mosque was demolished. There are five mosques on the plan of Tbilisi drawn up in 1785. In the 20th century, only one of them remained. Many mosques, jamehs, and madrasahs, some of which were works of art, were destroyed during the Soviet regime. (შოშიაშვილი., 2019, გვ. 64)

The Shia mosque, which was built during the reign of King Rostom, near the royal palace and near the Metekhi bridge pier, was demolished during the communist rule for construction work. Its tiles with unique ornaments and inscriptions are preserved in the Art Museum of Georgia. Muslim believers moved to a Sunni mosque. Jumah Mosque of Tbilisi is distinguished by the fact that it has two mihrabs (the mihrab is the place where the imam-leader stands and performs the prayer) - Sunni and Shiite. A similar case does not happen in any mosque in the world. At present, the Muslim believers living in Tbilisi are Sunnis and Shiites. The Sunni mosque is the only functioning mosque in Tbilisi. As mentioned, it serves both Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Originally, the mosque was divided by a black curtain, on one side of which Sunnis prayed and on the other side - Shiites. Today, the mosque is open for all worshippers (ბ., 2010, გვ. 254).

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The history of Catholicism in Georgia begins in the 13th century when the Georgian queen Rusudani (1223-1245) asked Pope Gregory IX for help in the fight against the Mongols. Due to significant international changes, Georgia-Europe relations were limited to missionary activities. The strengthening of the Catholic Church in Georgia started especially in the 14th century during the reign of Giorgi the Brilliant (1318-1345). Pope John XXII was not only interested in religious matters but also engaged in extensive political activities to advance the interests of the Church of Rome. The first Catholic churches in Tbilisi are being built, which were brought from Smyrna. It is not known what happened to the churches founded in this period in Tbilisi, however, Catholic activity in Georgia moved into an even more active phase in the late Middle Ages. (თამარაშვილი, 2011, გვ. 89)

The existing Catholic churches, which were built in Tbilisi at the beginning of the 19th century, was the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Cathedral. The Russian king Alexander I gave permission to the Prefect of Capuchin Order of Tbilisi, Francesco Paduel, to build a church. Catholics were allocated space on the street and 6,000 manats for construction. A church with Gothic architectural elements was built here. The Austrian monarch also contributed to the construction - he financed the construction with 1286 piastres. Since 1829, the number of Armenian Catholics in Tbilisi has also increased. Armenians tried to capture this temple. The Russian government forbade Georgian Catholics to conduct religious services in Georgian, it could only be performed in Armenian or Latin. In 1937, the church was abolished. In 1999, the Cathedral of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary of Tbilisi was opened, to the restoration of which the native city of Georgian Catholic priest Giuseppe, Verona, contributed. On August 15, the day of the Ascension of the Mother of God, the temple was solemnly blessed.

The second Catholic church named after Saints Peter and Paul was founded in Tbilisi in 1870, its construction was headed by Konstantine Zupalashvili, the son of a famous philanthropist and public figure, who was the head of the parish. At the request and consent of Konstantine, Mikheil Tamarashvili's book "History of Catholicism among Georgians" was written. The architect of the cathedral was Albert Salzman, who designed the church in the earlier Baroque style. The railing and the gate of the yard were made in 1891 with the funds of the Jimsherov family, which is reported by the Georgian and Russian inscriptions above the entrance to the churchyard.

There was also an Evangelical-Lutheran church in Tbilisi. During Russian colonialism, the demographic expansion of Georgia began, as a result of which people of different nationalities settled in the country. In 1817-1818, several thousand Germans from Württemberg were resettled in Georgia by order

of Emperor Alexander I. General Yermolov, the commander-in-chief, was assigned to take care of their settlement. The Germans established two colonies in Tbilisi: Neu Tiflis in Kukia and Alexandersdorf in Didube. In 1894, in Neu Tiflis settlement (Marjanishvili Square), the construction of the Lutheran Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul began. The project of the neo-Gothic style temple belonged to the German architect Leopold Bielefeld. Old Tbilisi residents used to call this place Kirichni due to the stone standing in the settlement of Neu Tbilisi (კოკნაძე, 2008, გვ. 9). From the 1930s, the Bolsheviks began to harass and persecute the German colonists. In 1933, the authorities closed the Peter and Paul Church, and Pastor Meyer was shot. The church, which was once an important cultural and public center, was destroyed by the captive Germans during the Second World War.

Jews consider Georgia as their second homeland. Even before the birth of Christ in the 7th century B.C., a part of the Jews who were exiled from Jerusalem, came to Mtskheta and settled. After the conquest of the kingdom of Judea by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, a part of the Jews went to Georgia and asked the ruler of Mtskheta for refuge (ყაუხჩიშვილი ს., გვ. 223). As soon as Georgia was settled, there were already Jewish shrines, and today you can find them in every region. On Vakhushti Batonishvili's map of Tbilisi, for some reason, the synagogue was not given, although according to other scientists and researchers, there must have been a synagogue in the old Bethania area, which was burned down as a result of the invasion of Agha Mohammad Khan. It is a fact that there was no synagogue in Tbilisi in the 19th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were four active synagogues in Tbilisi. Today there are two synagogues: Grand-Akhaltzikhe prayer hall and Beth-Rachel synagogue. The synagogue of Beth Rachel i.e. Tskhinvali was built in 1910 for Jews who came from Iran and Kurdistan (Lakhlukhs), most of whom were deported during the Soviet period. The synagogue is owned by Ashkenazi Jews. Since the building was damaged, the question of its restoration arose. The funds for the restoration were donated by the Jews of Tbilisi and Moscow. Alexander Maskevich, Gabriel Mirilashvili, Temur Sapir and Davit Iakobashvili played a big role in the reconstruction of the synagogue. The Ashkenazi Beth-Knesset was named after Beth-Rachel (in honor of Alexander Mashkevich's mother, and the Aron Hakodesh (the holy tabernacle for storing Torahs) of the synagogue was named after Mikhael Mirilashvili. In 2009, on the days of Rosh Hashan, the synagogue was solemnly opened.

The Grand or Akhaltzikhe Synagogue was opened in Tbilisi in 1903. The construction of the synagogue was widely reported by the Georgian press of that time, from which we learn that Rabbi Levani and Abram Gorelashvili took the lead in starting the

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construction. Georgian Jews appealed to the Governor-General to build a shrine at their own expense. The Governor General allowed them but ordered them to be registered as local Jews, not as Georgian Jews. (Of course, this fact was the discrimination of everything related to Georgian by the Russian government). Georgian Jews built the synagogue at their own expense. In 1911, the synagogue was completely finished. Tbilisi Great Synagogue "Big Prayer" belongs to the Romanesque style - it is characterized by the arrangement of unplastered bricks and details, the trapezoidal crowning of the facade, and the exterior facade is decorated with colorful Star of David stained glass. In the center of the synagogue hall stands the Teba/stage (raised place for prayer) and on the opposite side of it is the Aron Hakodesh (Holy Ark for Sefer Torah). On the second floor of the shrine, there is a traditional "women's gallery" (women and men pray separately) which has an independent entrance. The interior of the hall is completely painted with variations of plants and symbols. The synagogue is periodically restored. The synagogue is an important religious and cultural monument of Tbilisi.

The discussed material well presents the multicultural environment of Tbilisi and the tolerant nature of Georgians. It is impossible not to mention the Georgian Orthodox churches, which are quite numerous in Tbilisi. Many ruined temples were restored and returned to their original appearance. The oldest Christian temples in Tbilisi are the Sion Cathedral and Anchiskhati, the construction of which started immediately after the founding of the city. Anchiskhati is a three-nave basilica building, the building was surrounded by buildings from the south and west. The southern building should probably have been opened with arches. The interior of the church was painted in the 17th century, the remains of this painting were revealed in the apse and on the vertical facade. Later, a bell tower was added to the temple, which is built with bricks.

The Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God of Sion is a central domed building. It is built with cut Algeti stone. The facade is plain and has a color of yellowish sand. Many relics are kept in the Sion Temple: the Stone of Grace, the skull of the Apostle Thomas, and the cross of St. Nino. The cross was inherited by Georgian kings and was placed in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. Before his death, King Mirian coronated his son Bakari with the vine cross. The Temple of Sion was to be built together with the foundation of Tbilisi, as evidenced by Juansheri's report, which informs us that "Guaram Kurapalati

renewed the foundation of Sion of Tbilisi" (ყაუჩიშვილი, 1955, გვ. 223) (VI ს.) The completion of the temple took place during the reign of Adarnese Eristavi in the 7th century. According to narration, Guaram and Adarnese are buried here. The temple has been destroyed and looted by the enemy many times, so it has not been preserved in its original form. Since the 16th century, the Temple of Sion has been looted and damaged several times as a result of Iranian invasions. In 1522, Shah Ismail robbed the jeweled icon of the Mother of God of Sion and threw it into Mtkvari river. After the abolition of the Kingdom of Kartl-Kakheti (1801), the Temple of Sion was repaired several times in the 19th century. The chief governor of Georgia, Pavle Tsitsianov, started its restoration and painted the temple. Unfortunately, the Georgian traces were slowly being lost in the cathedral, which was manifested by the introduction of the Russian architectural style during the restoration. After the establishment of the Soviet government, the churches of Tbilisi were deprived of their property, including the bells of the Patriarchal Cathedral of Sion. Today, the temple has been restored, and it returned to its original appearance, but the painting could not be restored.

It should be noted that it is impossible to limit the religious architecture of Tbilisi to a small article. It is a fact that throughout the long history, Georgian Christian churches in Tbilisi were destroyed by the hands of the enemy with special cruelty. Metekhi, Trinity, Bethlehem, St. Sebastieli, Father of the Cross, and many others have been destroyed more than once. However, they were rebuilt and restored. Returned to the original look. The temples are mainly cross-domed buildings, which indicates that they mainly belong to the X-XI century. e.i. after the end of Arabism, religious architecture was still important for the rulers of the country.

In conclusion, we should note that Tbilisi has always been a multi-ethnic city. The tolerant nature of Georgians is clearly visible in the ritual buildings of many denominations represented in the city. It is worth noting that during the centuries of coexistence, there was no confrontation on religious grounds. However, after the conquest of Georgia by Russia, there was an attempt to do so, which was manifested in the question of the religious affiliation of the temples and in the anti-Semitic manifestation. But the issue did not reach a serious conflict. And it was prevented in time. By studying the architectural monuments of Tbilisi, the political, social and economic changes in Georgia can be clearly seen.

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India) = 6.317	SIS (USA) = 0.912	ICV (Poland) = 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE) = 1.582	PIHII (Russia) = 3.939	PIF (India) = 1.940
	GIF (Australia) = 0.564	ESJI (KZ) = 8.771	IBI (India) = 4.260
	JIF = 1.500	SJIF (Morocco) = 7.184	OAJI (USA) = 0.350

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