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THE "WEST" AND THE "EAST" OF THE GEORGIAN WRITTEN SOURCES

The medieval thought usually divided the world on two parts. That was the "West" and "the East" for Georgians, which was reflected in the title of the united Georgia since the 11th c. (since Giorgi II - 1072-1089). The king of the united Georgia styled himself the "King of kings" and the "King of the West and of the East". According to the scholarly literature "West" meant Byzantium, "East" covered Georgia, while "the West and the East" together was interpreted as "the Orthodox world of the East".

The present paper traces such a thought back to the ancient world, connecting it not with the concept of the "world kingdom", but with the oriental ideal of the universal king. Alexander the Great Macedonian implemented the idea of the two countries by a great marriage feast at Susa, at which all Alexander's officers were wedded to Persian wives. In the mid-11th c. the caliph al-Kaim welcomed the Seljuk Toghrul bestowed on him the title of Sultan of the West and of the East.

Emergence of the considered tradition in the united Georgian kingdom was a confirmation of the political and cultural links with the ancient oriental world and the ambitious message, which manifested identification of the relevant society.