

JAMBUL KASHIBADZE

ON THE CULTURAL-HISTORICAL LINKS BETWEEN THE MOUNTAINOUS AND PLAIN REGION POPULATIONS IN THE LATE FEUDAL PERIOD OF GEORGIA

In the late feudal period of Georgia when the country was disintegrated into small kingdoms we find documental evidences of cultural and historical relationships between principalities remote far away from each other. An example is the relationship between Kakheti and Svaneti. Kakhetian kings Alexandre and Devid, father and the son, in different periods donated church bells cast in Kakheti for the upper (Balszemo) free Svaneti region, that some historians may regard it as an unexpected gesture.

The question why the Kakheti kings should have been interested in the region can be answered after the due consideration of the historical situation of the period. In the 16th century Georgia as different from the other Georgian provinces Kakheti enjoyed peaceful development in economic and political spheres. That is why the kingdom was in need of the free seasonal labor force. Such human resources were not available in the plain regions. But the mountainous region population as of Svaneti and Racha seemed to be interested in such employment owing to the fact that their natural environment and resources were not as rich as of the plain and lowland provinces. That is why, mountain region population even in the periods of hardships tried to maintain active contacts with the plain regions. In spite of the poor farming conditions of the mountain environment their population always retained high agrarian culture as a result of their active involvement in the low regions economy, and with this they kept the pace with the developed regions and would never suffer from the qualitative backwardness.