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**From the history of Georgia in the Middle Ages:
Qutlu-Arslan's conspiracy against Georgian royal power**

The rebellion of Qutlu-Arslan is one of the most interesting and, at the same time, controversial issues in the history of the Kingdom of Georgia. It can be said that, in its aim, it was uniquely different from other revolts directed against the central government. Practically, this was the first and last protest against the government, whose demand was political reorganization. Although this issue has been the subject of study by a lot of researchers, many questions are still relevant.

When discussing this rebellion, many Georgian historians believe that, in order to understand the nature of the rebellion, we must first clarify the issue of the leader's social standing, whether he was noble or not.

Regarding this issue, several opinions have been expressed in historiography. Academician Ivane Javakhishvili believed that Qutlu was the representative of the merchant class. According to other points of view, Qutlu-Arslan belonged to the aristocracy and his purpose was to limit the power of the king and to create something like the Parliamentary institution in medieval Georgia (N. Berdzenishvili). The general assessment regarding the rebellion of Qutlu can be formulated as follows: during the reign of Tamar, the rebellion of Qutlu-Arslan was sympathized by both nobles and representatives of the third rank.

Foremost, it should be mentioned that we have very brief historical notes for determining Qutlu's class affiliation. He is only mentioned two times in *Kartlis Tskovreba* (life of Kartli).

However, still, what does it give us to understand the character of rebellion? Let us assume that Qutlu was a noble. In favor of this opinion, speaks the fact that, after extinguishing the rebellion, he was not among the punished people, and we also know that he had previously held the position of the *Mechurchletukhutsesi* (Royal Treasurer in medieval Georgia), and are these facts enough to claim that his rebellion had a class nature and was aimed at the weakening of the central government? Or, if we assume that he was a merchant, does this directly mean that the content of the rebellion had a social nature? According to the demands, it does not seem that their program was determined by class belonging and had a socio-economic nature. In our opinion, it is obvious that it was a political conspiracy, and the program of the participants of this rebellion aimed to find a solution to the political crisis by reorganizing the political system. What gives us the basis for forming such a point of view?

The 12th century, taking into account the processes developed in the royal family is a key period. A series of significant events begins during the reign of Demetre I (1125–1156). His younger brother Vakhtang, as well as his son David V, oppose him. In the first case, Vakhtang's rebellion as an action against the government was brutally suppressed. David V (King of Georgia 1155) was the legitimate heir to the throne, he, like his grandfather Davit IV Agmashenebeli (1089-1125), forced his father to resign from the throne. However, just a few months, after he died in suspicious circumstances, Demetre, who at that time was a monk, sat on the throne again. This fact in itself says a lot, especially considering that Demetre seems to have done this to create a legal foundation for his desired successor, Giorgi (Demetre's youngest son), to reign.

However, the conflict did not end between the members of the royal family. David V had a legal heir, Demna, who grew up in the family of Ivan Orbeli. He believed that Demna, as a legal heir, would get the throne after reaching the age of adulthood, and helped Giorgi III (1156–1184) to consolidate his position. Instead of this, Giorgi III, after the defeat of the rebellion of Ivane Orbeli, arrested Demna (1177), who was dead after the injuries she received as a result of his punishment. And after that, Giorgi III named his daughter Tamar as *locum tenens*. We think that the step of Demetre I created the problem of the legitimacy of the owners of the throne. We believe that the speeches against the central government, which did not slow down in the next period either, point to this.

A new wave of protests against the royal authority is connected with the reign of Tamar (1184–1213). In 1184, immediately after her enthronement, part of the nobles confronted her. What follows is the appearance of the Qutlu-Arslan party and finally the rebellion of Tamar's first husband and Georgian nobles in 1191 and 1193. We think that considering these events, to understand the nature of Qutlu-Arslan's rebellion, it is necessary to take into account the above-mentioned circumstances related to the problem of legitimacy.

The rebellion of the Qutlu-Arslan's supporters and their goal to create the so-called *Karavi* (in Georgian, it means Palace; which was, as historians claim, something like a body of parliament), which in turn meant limiting the power of the king, should be understood in light of these prerequisites. We think it was inspired, not empowered by the desire of the third class, to expand their power, or by the wish of political elites to limit the power of the king, but from the desire to make such political decisions that could solve the crisis.