

Every once in a while I discover a youtube video so soul-stirring that I scarcely know how to introduce it to you. When Pope Francis visited the Republic of Georgia a few years ago, the local Christians gathered in worship and song. Suggestions contradict each other as to what this text might be. Some suggest this is the Aramaic version of the Lord's Prayer while others suggest this is an Aramaic Psalm setting. What we do know is that Aramaic is a language spoken during the time and locale of Christ. It is also the original language of large portions of the Old Testament, and therefore, presumably, a language Christ, himself, understood and spoke. These Christians are from one of the Eastern Orthodox traditions. When the Great Schism of 1054 split the Church into Eastern and Roman factions, the Eastern faction maintained (even unto present day), that the use of instruments in worship was idolatrous. In this video, you can hear human voices singing a drone in substitution for an instrumental accompaniment of the chant.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3d-Nc0N9jT8>

Another aspect of this video which I find to be especially moving is the symbolic reintegration of Eastern and Western Churches. While neither side is prepared to unify, it is assuring to see that they understand that they worship the same God. You are in my prayers. Jonathan