

THE ROOTS OF THE
GEORGIAN AND ROMANIAN
SCIENCE AND CULTURE

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**THE ROOTS OF THE
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SCIENCE AND CULTURE**



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FOREWORD

This book, which is a brief overview of the history of the Georgian and the Romanian Science and Culture (material and spiritual formation), and, ipso facto, of their origins and stages of development, it is intended for a wide range of readers, that is both for the scientists (physicists, biologists, physiologists, biochemists, naturalists, physicians, astronomers, economists etc.), as well as for humanists (historians, philosophers, jurists, theologians, philologists, sociologists etc.).

In the first part of this book, the reader will be acquainted about the roots of the Georgian Science and Culture due to the research work made by the Academician prof. PhD. D.H.C. Giorgi Kvesitadze, the President of Georgian National Academy of Sciences, and Foreign Member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists.

In the second part of the book, the same reader will find documentary informations, considerations and assessments concerning the roots of the Romanian Culture, Science and Spirituality due to the contribution of the prof. PhD. D.H.C. Nicolae V. Dură, Full Member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists and Foreign Member of the Georgian National Academy of Science.

By our book, we hope to help our readers to become better acquainted with the historical evolution of the formation

and of the development of the Science, Culture and Spirituality of the forefathers of ours peoples, who are not only among of the ancient ones in the world, but also the real pioneers of the three fields of the human existence.

The Authors

Part I

THE ROOTS OF GEORGIAN CULTURE, SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

The Georgian, as well as Caucasian culture in general, has ancient roots. Every new scientific discovery confirms this thesis and attributes greater significance to it.

An analysis of the hominid skulls found in Dmanisi (Eastern Georgia) attests not only to the existence of the population in the Caucasus in the ancient times, but this geographical area should be considered as one of the centers of anthropogenesis.

After the discovery of the ancient Sumerian culture, researchers have made an assumption about the existence of relationship between Kartvelian languages and the languages spread in Mesopotamia six - five thousand years ago that was confirmed by important coincidences in the sphere of mythology as well as toponymy and onomastics¹. As it turns out, Mesopotamian-Anatolian-Caucasian ethnic and cultural coincidences are not accidental, as evidenced by contemporary

¹ Algaze G., *The Uruk expansion: The dynamics of expansion of early Mesopotamian civilization*, second edition, Chicago, 2004, University of Chicago Press; Ingorokva P., *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1978, (in Georgian).

population genetics and phylogenetic studies indicating the movement and affinity of peoples, the agricultural culture bearers in the mentioned region². They contributed the basic elements of civilization in Europe, and in the first place, it concerns agriculture, metallurgy, written language.

During the archaeological excavations in the ancient settlements of Georgia together with various artifacts related to the winemaking, archeologists also found grape seeds. Based on the results of morphological, ampelometric and genetic studies, it was discovered that we deal with a kind of domesticated grape variety that dates back to 5000-7000 BC and it is the oldest not only in Georgia, but in the world. The scientists consider that in the cultural and economic life of the world's oldest civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Hittite Empire) and later in the ancient world, the winegrowing and wine making spread from Georgia. The oldest bio archaeological material found on the territory of Georgia evidences that a well-developed culture of the viticulture and winemaking had already existed in the Late Stone and Neolithic time in the Mtkvari and Araks rivers valleys. The grape stones have been also found in other regions: Iran, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, however, the age and species' perfection of the materials obtained in Georgia testify to the fact that, here, the cultivation of grapes and winemaking were developed in 7000 BC or even earlier.

During the archeological excavations in the Eastern and Western Georgia, there were found "Marani" (winery) buried

² Adler D.S., Bar-Oz G., Belfer-Cohen A., Bar-Yosef O., *Ahead of the game: Middle and Upper Palaeolithic hunting behaviors in the Southern Caucasus*, in *Current Anthropology*, 47: 1/ 2006, p. 89-118.

in the ground, very similar to amphora, but earless and it had the form of pitcher - "kvevri". The wine aged in these *kvevri*-s by using special technology, today attracts the attention of specialists and businessmen from around the world. This unique Georgian technology of wine making has been recognized as an intangible cultural heritage in 2003 by the UNESCO. There have been also found gold, silver, bronze, clay vessels, which date from III-II millennium BC and represent valuable pieces of art.

In Georgia, the vine and wine had deep sacral meaning. In Kartli, at the beginning of the 4th century St. Nino, who came to advocate Christianity, held the cross made of grapevine and it was tied with her own hair. The cross of such shape has become a symbol of the Georgian Orthodox Church. The doors of Georgian churches used to be made from 100 year-old grapevines. The grapevine is one of the most principle themes in the decor of Georgian churches and monasteries, it carries significant meaning. The feasts and rituals related to grapevine and wine take origin thousands of years ago and they did not lose their significance even after the adoption of Christianity. The wine itself has become an integral part of the most important sacrament of the Orthodox Church.

For centuries, Georgia was an active wine exporter. According to the historical documents, among importer countries were mentioned not only close neighbors, but also very distant ones.

For today, around 4000 grape varieties are known in the world, and about 450 local grape varieties are recorded in Georgia³.

³ Bagrationi V., *Geography Georgia*, 1997, Tbilisi (in Georgian);

The history of wheat - a staple food in Georgia (Caucasus) - is also very interesting. During the excavations on the territory of the ancient Colchis (West Georgia) and Shulaveri (East Georgia), there were found the first samples of wheat dating back to VI - IV millennium BC. Georgian and foreign researchers described and registered 14 natural varieties of wheat in Georgia from the existing 19 ones in the world. Georgia is located in the zone of wild wheat origin, which must have been widely spread in this region as early as Neolithic and Eneolithic period. It is worth mentioning that wheat varieties which evolution stand close to wild species were preserved only in Georgia so far, only here the unique types of proving evolution of the wheat genus can be found. Besides, over 150 of grass family plants were registered and described. All this together with the archeological material testify to the fact that the evolution of wheat in Georgia proceeded rather extensively since ancient times⁴.

In Georgia, along with wine, the wheat and bread have also deep religious meaning and still occupy the most important place in the cultural life of society.

Peoples, who survived through the historical turmoils and inhabited the Caucasus, carried the mystery of thousands of years. The sennumerous ethnographically different peoples and nationalities have passed through tens of centuries and, despite their apparent diversity, retained their undeniable unity. When

Bagrationi T., *New story*, The text prepared for publication, the study has provided pointers and L. Mikiashvili, Tbilisi, 1983 (in Georgian).

⁴ E. Mtatsmindeli, *Georgian National Museum im. S. Dzhanashiya*, Manuscripts: Q-34, p. 175, H-1663, p. 142; B. Grozny, *Hettite nations and Isngusgrs*, 1938, WDI (in Russian); Nutsubidze Sh., *The history of Georgian philosophy*, Vol. 1, Tbilisi, 1956 (in Georgian).

we speak of a single unified Georgian and common Caucasian culture, we mean genetic-anthropological⁵ as well as linguistic and cultural closeness⁶. At the same time, Georgian cultural dominance in the Caucasus was due to the existence of a single alphabet (except Armenian), dominant royal dynasties throughout the centuries and certain religious centralization.

Today, for the vast majority of nations, the national memory begins approximately from the II millennium BC. It is a time of great migrations: merging and separation of gene flows –the emergence of the nation etc., the origin of Babylonian, Egyptian, Anatolian (Hattian-Hettian), Chinese and Indian unique cultures; their script and turning into artifacts are confirmed in this epoch⁷. During the same time period, the great Greek world arises and Georgian (Iberia-Colchis) culture participates in all this⁸.

⁵ Abdushelishvili M.G., *Anthropology of ancient and modern population of Georgia*, Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1964 (in Russian); Barbujani G., Nasidze I., Whitehead G.N., *Genetic diversity in the Caucasus*, in *Human Biology* 66, 4/1994, p. 639-668; Bulayeva K. B., Jorde L. B., Ostler C., Watkins S., *Genetics and population history of Caucasus populations*, in *Human Biology* 75, 6/2003, p. 837-853; Pruidze L., *The history of the Georgian viticulture and winemaking*, Tbilisi, 2014 (in Georgian); *The scientific and cultural heritage of Bagrationis*, Chief editor, R. Metreveli, Tbilisi, 2003 (in Georgian).

⁶ Andreeva M.V., *On the issue of the southern links Maikop Culture*, in *Soviet archaeologists*, 1/1977, p. 39-56 (in Russian); Procopius of Caesarea, *Georgica, the data of Byzantine writers about Georgia*, Vol. I-VI, Tbilisi, 1965 (in Georgian).

⁷ Akurgal E., *The Hattian and Hittite Civilizations*, Ankara, Turkish Ministry of Culture, 2001; Javakhishvili I., *Coll. works in 12 volumes*, Tbilisi, 1980 (in Georgian).

⁸ Berdzenishvili N., Javakhishvili I. Z., S. Janashia, *Georgian history*, Part I, Tbilisi, 1948 (in Georgian); Braund D., *Georgia in antiquity: A history*

As is seen, a single Caucasian ethnic substrate with high base culture was the major one in the Middle East and Anatolia, and it was this substrate that met the peoples speaking Indo-European languages in this area⁹. The problem of contradictions between them and search for relationships are reflected in the poems "Iliad" and "Odyssey" by Homer, the legend about Prometheus chained to a rock in the Caucasus, and generally, a great part of Greek mythology. It is noteworthy that the Greeks tried to "steal" a symbol of divine wisdom "Golden Fleece" from Colchis and with this gain superiority over the tribesmen¹⁰. Medea, who was kidnapped by Jason and his friends to Hellas is a personification of Colchian wisdom. Gold mining and metallurgy, agriculture and medicine, geography and many other things represent the storage of knowledge unattainable to others, what was so much

of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia: 550 BC-AD 562, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994; Ivanenko V. N., *The civil administration of the Transcaucasia*, Tiflis, 1901 (in Russian).

⁹ Bouckaert R., Lemey P., Dunn M., Greenhill S. J., Alekseyenko A. V., Drummond A. J., Gray R. D., Suchard M. A., Atkinson Q. D., *Mapping the origins and expansion of the Indo-European language family*, in *Science*, 337:6097, 2012, p. 957-960; Gonikashvili M., *Settlement and activities of the Bagrationis in Russia*, Tbilisi, 1986 (in Georgian); Gordeziani R., *Greek civilization*, Tbilisi, 1988 (in Georgian); Shalashvili A., Zambakhidze N., Ugrekhelidze D., Parlar H., Leupold G., Kvesitadze G., Simonishvili Sh., *Antioxidant Activity of Grape Bioflavonoids and Some Flavonoid Standards*, in *Advances in Food Sciences*, 24, 1/2002, p. 24-29; Nasidze I., Sarkisian T., Kerimov A., Stoneking M., *Testing hypotheses of language replacement in the Caucasus: Evidence from the Y-chromosome*, in *Human Genetics* 112/2003, p. 255-261.

¹⁰ Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautika*, Tbilisi, 1978 (in Georgian); Nasidze I., Salamatina N.M., *Genetic characteristics of the Georgian population*, in *Gene Geography* 10/1996, p. 105-112.

desired by Greeks. Medea never shared with them this wisdom fully, because the way of gaining knowledge and goals they had, appeared unacceptable to her. Medea and Jason's common children were not happy either – biologically failed the merging of these two genetically and culturally related worlds as one organism¹¹.

Medea's skill of healing appeared long-lasting. The obtaining of poison from natural resources by means of concentration of active substances and their dilution, preparation of medicines– this is the basic principle which is still used by modern pharmacology and medicine. It is noteworthy, that the term "medicine" is derived from the name of Colchis king's daughter. It is likely that only in the Georgian language exists almost complete identity of these two terms: medicine – poison (**camali** – **sacamlavi**). About 30 centuries later, a man of genius Paracelsus would say the same and together with others lay the foundation of modern medical science¹².

The ancient Greek writers and historians frequently mention vast knowledge and skills of the Kartvelian tribes in metallurgy, a great number of contemporary researches emphasize the appearance of this extremely significant cultural marker in the Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia earlier than ever¹³. In Georgia, along with metallurgy the art of jewelry also

¹¹ *The Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia, 1973-1981, (Encyclopedia), published since 1997 in Tbilisi (in Georgian).*

¹² Shengelia R., *The cornerstone of the mysteries of life and Kartli*, Tbilisi, 2009 (in Georgian).

¹³ Gambashidze I., Mindiasvili G., Gogochuri G., Kakhiani K., Japaridze O., *Ancient metallurgy and mining in Georgia (6-3 millennium BC.)*, Tbilisi, 2010 (in Georgian); Gamkrelidze T.V., Ivanov V.V., *Indo-European*

reached its acme, what is evidenced by numerous artifacts kept in the museums¹⁴.

The ancient Colchians were skilled sailors (navigation in Georgia dates back to the II millennium BC) and all territories of their domain was covered with road signs "Kirby", wooden boards inscribed on the skin of a sheep or a solid material which pointed "roads and the boundaries of the sea and land for all people wandering around the world" - they served as the pointers for travelers. The fact that the ancestors of Georgians three millennia ago had the "charts" - is an indisputable evidence of the existence of Georgian traditions of shipbuilding and navigation.

The kingdom of Colchis had intense trading with neighbors near and far, and around 120 bridges were constructed over the Phasis river. Ancient authors pointed out the original Colchian "gold writing"¹⁵. Unfortunately, today, we have to speak about this fact only according to oral accounts, because the texts written on the wooden boards and leather have become obliterated by age, though during archeological excavations in Nekresi, lapidary and epigraphic inscriptions written by old Georgian script Asomtavruli, of pagan content which

and the Indo- Europeans: A reconstruction and historical analysis of a proto-language and a proto-culture. Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs, 2. Vol. Ed. by W Winter, Berlin: M. DeGruyter, 1995, p. 80; Jordania G., Mehurelni, Tbilisi, 1966 (in Georgian); Khintibidze E., The Byzantine-Georgian relations, Tbilisi, 1969 (in Georgian).

¹⁴ Khintibidze E., *The Byzantine-Georgian relations*, Tbilisi, 1969 (in Georgian).

¹⁵ *Studies in the History of Georgia*, Vol. 4, Tbilisi, 1973 (in Georgian); Forbes S.K., *Metallurgy in Antiquity*, Leiden, 1950; Siradze R., *Christian culture and Georgian literature*, Tbilisi, 1992 (in Georgian).

preliminary date II century BC and IV century AD, i.e. before the Christian epoch.

The Georgian alphabet is one of about two dozen ones used as the state original writing. We are talking about Georgian "alphabets", because it concerns three related varieties of writing formed at different historical stages, but existed simultaneously and had definitely different functions (ecclesiastic, civil). In the mountainous regions of Georgia, the cryptograms are found on the stones of buildings of the cult and secular purpose, which are very similar to Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Hittite graphic characters.

The date of Georgian language's separation from Proto-Kartvelian onerefers to the verge of the VI and V millennia BC. As to the Georgian writing, the Georgian chronicle mentions that it emerged in the Hellenistic epoch (III century BC) – in 284 BC. According to the "Kartlis Tskhovreba" (History of Georgia), the first King of Kartli Parnavaz "extended Georgian, and no other language was spoken but Georgian in Kartlisince then". This date as a historical reference point laid in the basis for the Georgian national chronology. The above mentioned Georgian scripts are genetically linked {ancient Asomtavruli (IV - IX), middle Nuskhuri (IX - XI), new Mkhedruli (XI - till present)}, they were improved in Christian epoch, adapted to new Christian faith and developed. By their structure they have certain similarity with Phoenician, Hebrew and Greek alphabets¹⁶. Outside of Georgia, as the oldest ones are recognized three Georgian mosaic inscriptions discovered in 1955 in the Judean

¹⁶ Mellaart J., *Anatolia and the Indo-Europeans*, in *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, 9/1981, p. 135-149.

Desert (Palestine) during Italian archaeological expedition led by Virgilio Corbo, two of them are dated to 30th of the V century, and the third one – 532 – 552 AD. In Georgia, at the end of 90th of the XX century in the village of Nekresi 150 km from Tbilisi, the archaeologists discovered the fragments of stones bearing the inscriptions in Asomtavruli script. Some of them have masdeic character that allows to date these inscriptions at least the III century AD and most likely even earlier (I-II century).

The scientists have been long expected to answer the question as to who lived in the Balkans or the Aegean islands, and Asia Minor before the Hellenes came. Were they Pelasgians? But then what language did they speak and all those who wrote using linear script? There is a reasoned opinion that it was a language close to the Kartvelian group¹⁷. Among living languages Georgian is one of the oldest in the world: Proto-Kartvelian language coexisted in time and space with the Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Semitic languages – bases, evidenced by finding of borrowings on chronological level occurred as a result of language intercourse. Beginning from V millennium BC, Proto-Kartvelian split from Indo-European language family into three main groups; Kartvelian / Georgian, Zan (Mingrelian-Laz) and Svan. The modern literary Georgian language, which split from Proto-Kartvelian language family the latest, was recognized as a state and literary language in the III century BC¹⁸.

¹⁷ Metreveli E., *Essays on the history of Mount Athos cultural and educational focus*, Tbilisi, 1996 (in Georgian).

¹⁸ Menabde L., *Centres of ancient Georgian literature*, Tbilisi, 1962 (in Georgian).

Despite the fact that the history of Georgia is lost in the mists of ancient time, the Christian traditions have played a major role in the formation of modern Georgian culture. The layers of the pagan period are rather clearly stand out: folklore, traditions, toponyms, onomastics etc. For instance, formal arguments confirm that Christianity and Christian literature, in Georgia, faced with the presence of the pagan Georgian literature, namely, poetry with its traditional forms, but, on the other hand, two-thousand-year-old preserved archeological artifacts, architecture, ethnographical material, literature, music, choreography and the mentality of a Georgian man, which was formed during that time period, are closely connected with the church and hence with Christian religion and moral. All the old, pre-Christian, attainable by human mind has not gone anywhere or lost; it has been kept in historical memory, formed as a scientific thought and manifesting itself over the centuries, eventually, appeared to the mankind as the Renaissance¹⁹.

The Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church is an essential part of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, whose jurisdiction includes Georgia's territory as well as its congregation in the border areas of Turkey, Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Georgian Orthodoxy has become a state religion since IV century.

In Georgia, Christianity was first preached by the Holy Apostles: St. Andrew the First-Called, St. Matthias, St. Thomas

¹⁹ Sharashidze K., *The first printing house in Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian); Shengelia M., *The history of medicine in Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1971 (in Georgian).

(the skull of St. Thomas is kept in the cathedral church of Sioni), St. Simon Canaanite, St. Jude Thaddaeus and St. Bartholomew. The first church was built in Adjara (South-Western Georgia) in 38 years by St. Andrew the First-Called. "According to historical sources, it is considered that the first Episcopal cathedral was founded in Atskuri by Apostle Andrew whom the Holy Mother sent to preach in Georgia" (Orthodox Encyclopedia 2006, p. 192). This is narrated in hagiographical, homiletical composition "Saint Apostle Andria's Homily" by Nicetas David the Paphlagonian (IX), Georgian translation of which was performed by Elkvime Mtatsmindeli in 1005, and also composition by Epiphanes the Monk (IX). It took three more centuries for the Enlightener of Georgia St. Nino of Cappadocia and King Mirian to declare Christianity the state religion of Georgia. The difficulty was quite natural –civilized nations do not easily accept a religious change, and in case of its inevitability, they create immanent religious forms.

The spread of Christianity and its declaration as the state religion of Georgia contributed to the establishment of educational institutions at the churches and monasteries and, hence, the development of the educational system. Naturally, the Georgian scientific thought developed in close connection with Christian religion, in the Early and Late Medieval periods, at the academies situated in the West and East Georgia, which emerged at the base of those educational centers, which traditionally taught theological subjects, astronomy, mathematics, geography, medicine and agricultural sciences²⁰.

²⁰ *Studies in the History of Georgia*, Vol. 4, Tbilisi, 1973 (in Georgian); Berdzenishvili N., Javakblishvili I. Z., Janashia S., *Georgian history*, Part 1,

The first mentioning about the existence of a major center of enlightenment in Georgia dates from the fourth century, when the functioning of a rhetorical school was fixed in Phasis (modern-day port city Poti on the Black Sea coast of Georgia). The records of ancient Greek historians confirm the fact that as early as the third century there existed cultural and enlightenment centers, gymnasiums (Gr. *gymnasion*). The Phasis Academy was pre-Christian Poti period, or Colchis High Rhetoric School, based on the educational system of antique schools and in which, according to academicians Simon Kaukhchishvili and Shalva Nutsubidze²¹, teaching operated both in Georgian and Greek languages, the latter was considered as the international language of that time. At the Academy of Phasis where the prevalence was given to the Aristotelian philosophy, the well-known Greek philosophers of IV century got the education: the head of the Syrian school of Neoplatonism Libanius (314 - 397) and Themistos (317 - 388). An Iberian prince Bakur, the adherent of Neoplatonism, who enjoyed great respect among the philosophers of that time hold an active correspondence with them. The Academy existed both in pre-Christian period and later in III - VI centuries.

Greek philosopher Themistios proudly mentions that his father Eugenios and he got an education in Colchis rhetorical school. Themistios praises the founder of the school, calls him "wise" and "kind" and underlines that at school similar to the rules of neighbor barbarians they were taught not archery or races, but the art of rhetoric. According to Themistios, Colchis

Tbilisi, 1948 (in Georgian).

²¹ Sharashidze K., *The first printing house in Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian).

rhetorical school by its direction and content of teaching did not differ from Greek and Roman schools. Here, together with the philosophy and oratory they taught literature, basics of legislation, astronomy, music, elements of mathematics. The Colchis school's alumni distinguished themselves with eloquence at the Hellenistic feasts²².

The earliest surviving monument of ancient Georgian literature belongs to Jacob Tsurtaveli (or Iakob Khutsesi), a fifth-century author who wrote hagiographic composition "The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik" between 476 and 483. It tells about martyrdom of Saint Sushanik at the hand of her spouse Varsaken, the ruler of Kartli who had embraced Zoroastrianism in search of the alliance with Persia. Sushanik refused to follow her husband and for this she was subjected to severe torture and imprisonment in a dungeon, where she died. The author, who was the king's confessor, describes his conversations with Shushanik, so this piece of work is unique as an evidence of an eyewitness.

During the centuries, following the proclamation of Christianity as the state religion, literary and theological centers and schools, scholarly institutions were gradually established both in Georgia and abroad. Educational and scientific activities also took place within the walls of newly founded monasteries which became important centers of education, where all theological subjects were taught, original works were composed and translations were carried out, new manuscripts, icons and other church plate were created. Architecture and mural painting were developed²³. There were

²² Ibidem.

²³ Gamkrelidze T.V., Ivanov V.V., *The migration of the tribes speaking the*

built many churches and monasteries, fortification and secular buildings distinguished with exquisite architecture and high engineering skill²⁴. Many Georgians, being familiar with the Byzantine system of education, local school, received Greek education in those schools. Theological and singing schools functioned at the monasteries.

The beginning of intensive monastic life and the transformation of the monasteries into educational centers - is associated with the coming to Kartli and settlement in remote from each other sketes of 13 Syrian Fathers, later Saints of the Georgian Orthodox Church, led by Ioane Zedazneli (John Zedazeni) in the middle of VI century, who were joyfully welcomed by the people. According to authoritative sources, these thirteen holy Fathers probably were Georgians who got spiritual education in the famous Lavra of St. Simeon Stylite the Wondrous (521 - 596) and in other monasteries of Syria and Mesopotamia, with the aim to return native land and contribute to its Christian education. There are singled out Tbilisi and Mtskheta monastic complexes, especially the Cathedra of the Catholicosate in Mtskheta in Eastern Georgia and in the Western Georgia Gelati and Chkondidi monasteries were leading. As to the South-Western Georgia, almost in all monasteries (Khandzta, Shatberdi, Oshki, Tbeti, Ishkhani, Parkhali etc.) literary and theological work was carried out and educational centers were functioning.

Indo-European dialects from their original homeland in the Near East to their historical habitations in Eurasia, in *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 13/1985, p. 49-91.

²⁴ Potskhishvili A., *History of Georgian linguistics*, Tbilisi, 1995 (in Georgian).

Kartvelian tribes were settled east, north and south-east of Black Sea coast, Kingdom of Pontus and Cappadocia which were the part of the Greek Empire, experienced strong linguistic influence, because the Greek was the language of religion and communication between peoples. Ancient historians and writers mention the strong development of Christian theology in local schools. The Cappadocian Holy Fathers, namely: Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen (IV) are those first thinkers who avoided the path of heresy and successfully managed to introduce neoplatonic ideas into Christianity. This was a kind of reconciliation between Christianity and antique philosophy. Almost a thousand years later, their Neo-Platonism would be recalled in Europe, which, as is known, would become an ideological basis for the Renaissance and lead the world on a new path²⁵.

The relationship between the royal family of Georgia and the Byzantine imperial court continued for ages. In the V century, Georgian prince Murvanos was sent to the Byzantine imperial court as a political hostage, he vigorously started learning the theology. His diligence and talent amazed the imperial court. He refused to ascend the royal throne and took monastic vows. He was given a new name - Peter. Murvanos-Peter was always accompanied by his tutor, friend and kindred spirit Ioane Laz (395 - 465). They soon removed from the luxurious palaces of Constantinople and fled to the holy land.

²⁵ Ivanenko V. N., *The civil administration of the Transcaucasia*, Tiflis, 1901 (in Russian); Lordkipanidze O., *Argonavtika and ancient Colchis*, Tbilisi, 1986 (in Georgian); Sharashidze K., *The first printing house in Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian).

Teaching about the goodness as a single and supreme principle, and evil as unreal, as a denial of goodness, Peter Iberian (411 - 491, Petre Iberi, Georgian) earned great respect among his contemporaries. In Palestine, namely Jerusalem, close to Bethlehem, he built the monastery the remnants of which were found with beautiful mosaics and Georgian inscriptions in 1953 by Italian archeologist Virgilio Corbo. The monastery has withstood centuries and established itself in the treasury of not only in Georgian, but in the world culture. These monasteries with their schools were the most important hearths of philosophical thought of the time. As it was mentioned above, the Bethlehem Georgian monastery is known from inscriptions made in Asomtavruli dating from 433 AD. Peter finally settled in Palestine, Mayuma, learnt Syriac and was consecrated archbishop of Mayuma. By Emperor Zeno's order, he led theological dispute between Monophysites and Diophysites in which Monophysites failed. His reputation was so high that the representative of the defeated party Monophysite archbishop could not dismiss Peter from his position²⁶. The life of Peter was more than once described by many authors, and he was canonized as a saint²⁷.

The authorship question of the theological and philosophical corpus (Areopagitics) ascribed to Dionysius Areopagite has been a matter of dispute among scholars for a long time. This work was created on the verge of I-II centuries and translated into many languages. This is an extremely

²⁶ Lordkipanidze O., *Argonavtika and ancient Colchis*, Tbilisi. 1986 (in Georgian).

²⁷ Nasidze L., Sarkisian T., Kerimov A., Stoneking M., *Testing hypotheses of language replacement in the Caucasus: Evidence from the Y-chromosome*, in *Human Genetics* 112/2003, p. 255-261.

important theological and philosophical monument and along with many others again and again deals with the issues of interrelation between Christian religion and antique philosophy. According to the researches of academician Shalva Nutsubidze and Belgian scholar Ernst Honigman, the author of areopagitic corpus is Peter Iberian.

Christian religion penetrated into Georgia from Palestine. That's why Georgian foreign cultural and educational centers emerged earlier in Palestine rather than else where, and liturgical practice of Jerusalemite type spread to Georgia from there. Georgian manuscripts kept in the scriptoria of Sabatsminda (St. Saba Monastery) and Mount Sinai, contain rich material for studying the earliest period of the history of Georgian literature.

These unique materials, mainly concentrated on the collection of Georgian manuscripts of the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. The striving of Georgians to Syria and Palestine was due to the eastern, Jerusalemite origin of Georgian church. Along with monks from other countries, Georgian monkhood leading ascetic way of life was settled there. Jerusalem, (Sabatsminda), Lavra of St. Chariton the Confessor (Pharan Lavra or Palavra), Mount Sinai, Antioch deserts, Black (Wonderous) Mountain – these are Georgian monastic centers where literary and theological activity was in full swing. Hundreds of manuscripts of religious and secular character were created and translated in Georgian and foreign churches and monasteries, a majority of them is presently kept at the National Centre of Manuscripts of Georgia. Some of

these churches and monasteries were erected by Georgians and in others they led an active spiritual life²⁸.

In IV-V centuries, Lavra was founded by St. Sabbas the Sanctified (Sabatsminda), later named after him. The "Life" of the saint was translated and published in Georgian language. Georgians, who came to Sabatsminda in 30 of VI century, created there a powerful Georgian theological and literary school. The majority of Georgian translations of theological works were done exactly in the St. Sabbas Lavra during the VI-VIII. The following works were translated from Greek and Arabic languages: "Teachings of St. Stephan Sabatsmindeli", "Story about Martyrdom of the Holy Fathers Slain by Barbarians", "The capture of Jerusalem" etc.

Among Georgians, who was in the Sinai in Sabatsminda and Jerusalem a special place is occupied by the eighth-century Georgian hymnographer Basil Sabatsmideli, Makari Leteteli (IX) the disciple of St. Grigol Khandzteli, Giorgi Tbileli, Ioane-Zosime (X). The early Georgian translations of separate biblical books were edited in the St. Sabbas's Lavra. In the IX - X centuries, the most important Georgian hymnographic collections were created in Sabatsminda monastery. Basil Sabatsmindeli is an author of the hymns dedicated to St. Sabbas. The well-known Georgian hymnographer Ioane-Zosime serving in the Lavra in the years between 949 - 965 compiled a *collection* of liturgical texts for the "*Months of the Year*", which includes information about the church organization and monastic life of Palestine, a collection of hymns of a new and old reductions containing a liturgical

²⁸ Nutsubidze S., *History of Georgian philosophy*. Vol. 2. Tbilisi. 1958 (in Georgian).

calendar, the texts of daily services circle (Book of Hours), hymnographic works ("Praise and Grandeur of the Georgian Language") and others. The well-known scientist Gerard Garit called liturgical calendar composed by Ioane-Zosime the scientific research, and that the author was the scientist.

Georgians appeared at the monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai in VI century. Georgian kings and feudal lords supported them and provided financial assistance. In 864, the disciple and associate of St. Grigol Khandzteli-Makari Leteteli copied Polykephalon (Mravaltavi), which became the first collection performed in Georgian church *muskha-khutsuri* script. In Georgian literary and theological centers of Palestine, was compiled a hymnographic collection - ancient *ladgari* (Tropology), reflecting the history of several centuries of Greek and Georgian hymnography Jerusalem it eperiod of worship was compiled.

In X century, Palestine and Sinai monasteries and theological centers created the richest collection of Georgian manuscripts of liturgical character, containing the Lenten Triodions, Paraklitiks, Synaxarions, pre-Athos Menaions under Palestinian redaction, later revised by the Georgian liturgists.

In the IX - X centuries, monks, who labored in Palestinian monasteries, were forced by the Muslim expansion to migrate to Sinai, including the Lavra of St. Sabbas. The Sinai literary and theological school continued the traditions of the Palestinianone. In addition to the Monastery of St. Catherine, the main venue of the Georgians, in Sinai, there also existed Georgian churches of St. John the Divine, St. George the Victorious etc., where the liturgy and divine service were performed in the Georgian language.

The Sinai manuscripts constitute a significant part of the Georgian manuscript heritage: some were brought from

Palestine, while others were copied in Palestine especially for Mount Sinai e.g., Sinai Polykephalon. The activities of Ioane-Zosime's disciples and followers are also associated with Sinai, they are: Kvirike Sokhastreli, Archpriest Mikael, later – Elise.

The manuscripts from Sinai became known for the first time in the XIX century from Bishop Porphyry (Uspensky), who brought from the monastery two sheets of papyrus Psalter. After visiting the Sinai in winter 1883, Aleksander Tsagareli issued a "Catalogue of the Georgian manuscripts of Sinai monastery".

In 1902, the prominent scholars Niko Marr and Ivane Javakhishvili visited Sinai and they found out that the manuscripts described by Aleksandre Tsagareli disappeared. Descriptions of the collection performed by Niko Marr and Ivane Javakhishvili were published in 1940 and 1946. Four manuscripts appeared in the sale of European antiquities market. One was purchased by the Austrian linguist Hugo Schuchardt and bequeathed to the Graz University Library (Austria), another went to America, the third was found in Gottingen library and the fourth is in a private collection.

In parallel with Sinai literary and theological school, there existed Tao Klarjeti (Tao-Klarjeti - political region of the South-Western Georgia on the territory of modern Turkey; the Orthodox churches recognize the jurisdiction of the Georgian Orthodox Church on its territory, it is part of Tao-Klarjeti diocese), theological and literary school, which had many seats: in Ishkhani, Oshki, Khakhuli, Parkhali, Bana, Kalmakhi, Opiza, Khandzta, Shatberdi, Parekhi, Bertha, Midznadzori, Tskarostavi, Anchi (all these cultural and educational centers of Georgia are now in Turkey).

There were close ties between all these centers. The initiator of Tao-Klarjeti theological and literary and

educational school, defining the nature of the Georgian spiritual literature is saint Grigol – the founder of the monastery in Khandzta (which became the center of Klarjeti monasteries), it played a significant role in the development of the juridical literature and hymnography. Having thoroughly studied Constantinople monastic rule and the daily Sabatsmidian rites, blessed Grigol, “illuminated by scientific thought and a certain wisdom”, developed rather “tough” rule intended specially for the Georgian monasteries. At the beginning of the IX century, he compiled a Typikon and an annual hymnographical collection called “ladgari”, which did not survive.

Part of Typikon is included in the hagiographic work “The Life of St. Grigol Khandzteli”, written in 951 in Khandzta by Giorgi Merchule, which reflects the merits of venerable Grigol and his associates. In Tao-Klarjeti school, there were compiled several Polykephalons of the X - XI centuries: Parhali - A-95; Udabno (Guria) - A-1109; Tbeti or Svan - A-19; Klarjeti - A-144.

Among the scholars of church leaders X - XI centuries, who lived and worked at the Ishkhani monastery, Ilarion Ishkhneli, is known as a person who commissioned to copy a collection of ascetic writings and “Mestia Four Gospels”. The manuscripts created in Ishkhani were used for compilation of the Shatberdi collection and Parkhali Polykephalon, as it is indicated in the colophons of both manuscripts.

In 897, the Four Gospels (now called Adish) was copied in Shatberdi by the order of Sophron Shatberdeli. In 936, Gabriel Shatberdeli copied the Four Gospels, now called Jruchi. During 973-975, Ioane Beraya compiled Shatberdi collection, in which he introduced important for Georgia

composition - "Moktsevai Kartlisai" ("The Conversion of Kartli").

The hymnographic collection S-425 ("The Treasure of the X century," Mose Janashvili) was compiled by Mikael Modrekili in 978 - 988, in Shatberdi, familiarizes us with the ancient Georgian translations of Byzantine hymnographers and original works of Georgian hymnographers – Ioane Minchkhi, Ioane Konkozisdze, Stepane Sananoisdze-Chkondideli, Ezra, Kurdanaia, Ioane Mtbevari and Mikael Modrekili himself.

The collection is the latest redaction of the Georgian Iadgari. Mikael Modrekili's colophons are the first scientific experiments on hymnography and polyphony of chanting. It is known that the Georgian and the Greek chants are different in voice, Georgian ones are performed in three voices, i.e. polyphonic and the Greek chants are monophonic. This is indicated in colophons compiled by Mikael Modrekili. All these claims that Mikael Modrekili was a scholar of a very high rank.

Active spiritual work took place at the Oshki monastery of the first abbot Grigol Oshkeli and other inhabitants - Ioane Chirai, Stepane Dekanozi, Giorgi, etc. The most interest pays the Oshki Bible, copied in 978 by Mikael, George and Stepane for Athos. The handwritten Bible is the oldest dated list of the Georgian text of the Bible. In 1849, Platon Ioseliani brought the manuscript to Tbilisi, where two copies were done and the original was returned back to Athos.

Grigol Khandzteli's younger contemporary and adherent was a prominent church father, "unmercenary and healer," the abbot of David Garejji Lavra (in Kakheti) - Hilarion Kartveli (822 - 875), who enjoyed great fame in the oikoumene of that time. A widely educated monk, who also visited Sabatsmida, served in a monastery on Mount Olympus and became famous

for miracles, was soon summoned to Constantinople. Hilarion stayed in Rome for more than two years, he died at the age of 53 in Thessaloniki, and was buried as an equal to the apostles near Constantinople in the Romanos monastery, specially built for the Georgians. He was canonized²⁹.

In the X - XI centuries the enlightenment and scholarly centers sprang up outside of Georgia, where great opportunities for intercultural and interethnic dialogue existed at that time. Conditions both for promotion of the national culture and adoption of foreign cultural heritage were created.

From the second half of the X century, begins a new stage of monastic building in Georgia, during which Chkondidi monastery (now Martvili) was built, Svetitskhoveli was reconstructed, Bagrat III erected a temple in Kutaisi and Cathedral monastery in Alaverdi (beginning of the XI).

In the monasteries operate theological and literary, singing schools, in which scholarly work was conducted. In the 80s of the XX century (980 - 983), the Georgian Iviron monastery was founded on the Athos (Chalcedon peninsula) by St. John of the Holy Mount and St. John-Tornike. The skete, thanks to the work of the older monks of St. Ioane, St. Euthymius and St. George's of the Holy Mount became the largest center of Georgian culture, in particular literature. Here, translations of various kinds of Greek ecclesiastical texts were made and original works were created including the Greek language. In 1005, after the death of St. John of the Holy Mount, the Iviron monastery directed by Euthymius, who enriched Georgian ecclesiastic literature with the translation

²⁹ *The Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia, 1973-1981*, published since 1997 in Tbilisi (in Georgian).

from the Greek various writings in bibliology, exegetics, dogmatics, polemics, asceticism, mysticism, homiletics, hagiography, liturgy, ecclesiastical law, apocrypha³⁰.

Geographical distance from Georgia was not an obstacle for this center to be in close contact with Georgian spiritual and philosophical world. Academician Korneli Kekelidze absolutely correctly indicates that the Monastery of the Iberians on Athos and a school existing there appeared on the bases of Grigol Khandzteli's literary school in Tao-Klarjeti and its traditions.

Here, 300 Georgian monks lived and labored, many of them were engaged in literary, educational and cultural activity under the guidance of Ethymius of the Holy Mountain. This saint father made a great contribution to the Byzantine and, consequently, European literature as a whole, when he translated several very important texts ("Balavarianj", "Abukura" etc.) into Greek. Giorgi Athoneli took 80 orphans from Georgia to Mount Athos, educated them, so after returning back, they could take part in the revival of the native country³¹.

The history of the foundation of the Georgian monastery on Athos, and the activities of the first monks are described in the work of St. Giorgi Atoneli: "Life of St. Ioane and St.

³⁰ Mellaart J., *Anatolia and the Indo-Europeans*, in *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, 9/1981, p. 135-149.

³¹ *Studies in the History of Georgia*, Vol. 4, Tbilisi, 1973 (in Georgian); *The Life of Kartli*, Edited by S. Kauhchishvili, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian); Jobalava R. et al., *Role of P. Bagrationi in the Development of Ferrocyanide Chemistry*, in *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Science*, 3/2000, p. 161; Nutsubidze S., *History of Georgian philosophy*, Vol. 2, Tbilisi, 1958 (in Georgian).

Euthymius". St. Giorgi Atoneli made a significant contribution to the organization and development of the Georgian liturgical rite. In the translations he took into account Georgian church traditions and followed them. As a translator and editor, he had done a great job on editing the final text of the New Testament and the Psalms.

It is interesting to note that three hospitals - for physical, mental and leper patients were functioning at Iviron Monastery. There was a special water supply, and other services determined by Typikon³².

Important records exist concerning the library of the Iviron monastery on Mount Athos. In the XVII century, Russian priests appeared at the monastery. There has been preserved Archimandrite Dionysius's Charter ("Gramota") of February 15, 1660, in which he informs the Emperor Aleksey Mikhaylovich about the books and manuscripts sent by him from the monastery to Russia. In total, it made 170 units of theological literature as well as the oldest folios of secular character in history, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, physics, geography, logic, prose and drama. It should be noted that in two Lavras on Holy Mt. Athos, in the monastery of St. Athanasius Greek philosophers and scholars are depicted. They are Philo, Solon, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Thales, Gallen and Plutarch, and in the Iviron (Georgian) monastery, respectively - Solon, Sophocles, Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, etc. This indicates that theology and philosophy must be always united in one scientific direction. This fact says more about the best traditions, high level and wide horizon of the

³² *The Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia, 1973-1981*, Tbilisi, Georgia (Encyclopedia), published since 1997 in Tbilisi (in Georgian).

monastery servants and perhaps the whole Georgian scientific thought of the time.

For the Georgian world, the foundation of the first institution of higher education in Europe - University of Constantinople on the base of Mangana Academy in 1045 was extremely important. This educational center was called to revive the antique thinking. It has been found that Georgians got an education in higher, well-known educational centers outside Georgia. At that time, Georgia had full information about the educational activities in the world (especially in the Middle East). Undoubtedly, the desire to create a scientific and educational center with an account of the experience of other countries was only up to a strong state with great and multifaceted scientific potential.

At the beginning of the XI century, favorable conditions were created in the Georgian kingdom for the spiritual development of the people, for its cultural revival. The stability in the country paved the way for the creation of a top level cultural-enlightenment center. The prerequisites for this had been formed for centuries: cultural activity unfolded in Tao-Klarjeti, hearths of Georgian culture abroad, prominent Georgian men of letters and strong economy and stable political situation in Georgia created a real basis for the beginning of a new stage of cultural and educational activity throughout Georgia³³.

In the last quarter of the XI century, in the years of 1083 - 1086, the Grand Domestic of Byzantium and church warden

³³ *The Life of Kartli*, Edited by S. Kauhchishvili, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian); *Monuments of Georgian law*, Edited I. Dolidze, Vol. 1-2, Tbilisi, 1963-1965 (in Georgian).

Grigory Bakurianisdze founded Georgian monastery in Petritsoni the (Bachkovo monastery in Bulgaria). There were many Georgians in that time of the Byzantine, who actively worked both on political and cultural area. The Queen of Byzantium Mariam, a daughter of Georgian king Bagrat IV, Georgian military leaders, brothers Grigol and Aba Bakurianisdze supported Georgian scholars and artists³⁴. Grigol Bakurianisdze compiled the Typikon of Petritsioni in Greek and Georgian languages for the compilation of Typikon deep scientific knowledge of theology and canon law was required. The theological seminary was also opened at the monastery. There was taught Scripture, grammar, rhetoric, dialectics. The Petritsoni educational center was an important school and a new stage of science and higher education in Georgia.

An outstanding theologian and translator of the XI century, St. Ephrem Mtsire expressed an idea of the union between theology and philosophy back at that time.

Up to the 70-ies of the XI century in the Athos monastery St. Giorgi the Stylite served as a mentor of Giorgi Mtatsmideli. In the second half of the XI century, theological school on Black (Wondrous) Mount was headed by Ephrem Mtsire, having created a new stage in the translation practice. He introduced a new method, based on the maximum proximity of the Georgian translation to the original. The works translated by him are called formal equivalent of the original. Colophons compiled by the St. Ephrem Mtsire are deep scholarly works on theological issues that have scientific value, by means of

³⁴ Munchayev R.M., *Maikop kultura*, in *The Age of Bronze Caucasus and Central Asia*, M.: Nauka, 1994, p. 158-225 (in Russian).

colophons the questions of authorship or translation of compositions, the possibility of dating the works and translations. In his colophons St. Ephrem Mtsire versification determined the forms of the Georgian chants for the first time in the history of Georgian.

In the XII century, on Black Mountain, in the monastery of St. Simeon the Wonder-worker, there labored about sixty Georgian monks, who had a close relationship with the Greek and Arab scholars and writers. The works created and translated by these monks were widespread in neighboring countries³⁵.

The Georgians went to study to Constantinople, Mangana and Romance academies, where they had an opportunity to get universal education. By the order of Queen Mariam, Teofilē Khutsesmonazoni (2nd half of XII - the beginning of the XIII century) translated from Greek into Georgian metafrastic works. The well-known theologian and confessor of King David Aglunashenebeli Arsen Ikaltioeli studied at the Mangana Academy; later, according to the popular legend, here was also educated Shota Rustaveli. Theological literary activity proceeded in a Georgian Gialia monastery in Cyprus³⁶.

The Cross Monastery in Jerusalem founded in the 30-50s the XI century by Giorgi Prokhore the Georgian, the scattered Georgian community of the Holy Land. According to the "Lives" of Prokhore and Giorgi Atoneli, as well as according to

³⁵ Nutsubidze S., *History of Georgian philosophy*, Vol. 2, Tbilisi, 1958 (in Georgian).

³⁶ Gamkrelidze T.V., Ivanov V.V., *The migration of the tribes speaking the Indo-European dialects from their original homeland in the Near East to their historical habitations in Eurasia*, in *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 13/1985, p. 49-91.

the manuscript colophons of the Holy Cross Monastery and Synodikon of Sinai monastery, Giorgi Atoneli helped Prokhore in construction. At the Cross Monastery, there was created an extensive library, filled with manuscripts and books created on the site, copied in other Georgian monasteries. At the Cross monastery the brotherhood had a monastic rite similar to Typikon of the Sabatsminda Lavra. Georgian King Bagrat IV (1027 - 1072) and his mother, Queen Mariam rendered the monastery financial support. A large-scale literary activity launched in the Cross monastery, where the intensive copying of books took place. The monastery had actually become a center of Georgian culture and science in the Holy Land³⁷.

In the XI century, the monastery of the Holy Cross was the administrative and organizational center of all Georgian monasteries in Palestine. The international prestige of Georgia in the reign of St. David IV Aghmashenebeli (the Builder) (1073 - 1125) strengthened the position of the Georgian monasteries abroad. During the conquest of Jerusalem by the Sultan of Egypt Salah al-Din (1187), Queen Tamar generously endowed the Holy Cross Monastery. In 1244, Georgia lost the monastery of the Cross, which appeared in the hands of the Muslims, and in 1273, the monastery was converted into a mosque. In the XIV century, the cultural life of the monastery revived again.

Georgian manuscripts are kept in the Monastery of the Cross, among them the manuscript of "The Life of Grigol Khandzteli" was found. In the Monastery of the Cross, Georgian scholars of the XX century conducted research

³⁷ *The Life of Kartli*, Edited by S. Kaubchishvili, Tbilisi, 1955 (in Georgian).

works: Aleksander Tsagareli, Niko Marr, Ivane Javakhishvili. The Monastery keeps a fresco of Shota Rustaveli, which was invisible to Marr and Javakhishvili due to the oil paint applied on top at the beginning of the XX century. Akaki Shanidze, George Tsereteli, Irakli Abashidze visited the monastery in 1960, with the help of the abbot of the Monastery the fresco was released from this layer. The name of Shota Mechurchletukhutsesi (Treasurer) is included in the Monastery Synodicon for eternal commemoration. In the XI - XIII centuries, the Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem actually united all Georgian churches and monasteries, located the site adjacent to Jerusalem: in Cappato, Gethsemane, on Calvary.

In the monastery of Palavra named after St. Chariton, Ioane Sapareli, Pavle, Stefane and Tevdore Palavreli were engaged in theological activity. Georgian ascetics Ioane Golgoteli (Calvary), Micaela, Nistereona and Kvirike Agdgomeli, Ioane Vardzieli, Maharebel Agdgomeli and others actively labored in Calvary Monastery.

Literary activities were also conducted in other Georgian monasteries of Palestine: in Gethsemane, in the convents of Cappato, Dertave, Dertpe etc. Apart the divine service, most of the clerics in the monastery created true masterpieces of Christian culture. They were great masters – icon-painters, creators of mural paintings, architects, engravers, skilled craftsmen, masters in cloisonne enamel, miniatures and embroidery, calligraphy and layout, as well as healers and doctors, experts in agriculture and chemistry, mathematics, engineering, astronomy etc.—all this was a constituent part of a monastic community.

It is noteworthy, that David IV Aghmashenebeli (1073 - 1125) had taken upon his shoulders a burden of new undertakings in the country. He actually unified all Georgia

("King of the Abkhazians, Kartvels, Rans, Kakhs and Armenians, Shirvanshah and Shahanshah"), and he was considered a great defender of the Eastern Christianity ("The Sword of the Messiah"). David Aghmashenebeli himself was a deeply educated and versatile personality. The Chronicler ("The Life of David, King of Kings") narrates with amazement about his passion for books. He read a lot in peaceful time and, never parted with books, even in the campaigns³⁸. David Aghmashenebeli is the author of the work "The Hymns of Remorse" expressing medieval Georgian cultural-ideological and aesthetic credo³⁹.

Only such a person with high morals and versatile education could have thought about the rise of culture and education in the country. An Armenian chronicler Vardan Barberdets specifically notes that King David concerned much about the education of his people "the Iberian nation, as a lover of knowledge". Georgian King had chosen forty young men and sent them to Greece to gain knowledge, "so that, they be taught languages and bring home translations made by them there". Later three of them became famous due to their follow-up activity. The word "Aghmashenebeli" itself first of all means spiritual and cognitive growth, construction of the true church, the development of education and science.

King David Aghmashenebeli, being motivated by political, economic level of the country and his own

³⁸ *Monuments of Georgian law*, Edited I. Dolidze, Vol. 1-2, Tbilisi, 1963-1965 (in Georgian); Tsintsabadze M., *Learn millennial Georgia*, Tbilisi, 2015 (in Georgian).

³⁹ Baramidze R., *David the Builder. "Canon of Repentance". The book "The poem, only one poem"*, 1995 (in Georgian); Tsintsabadze M., *Learn millennial Georgia*, Tbilisi, 2015 (in Georgian).