

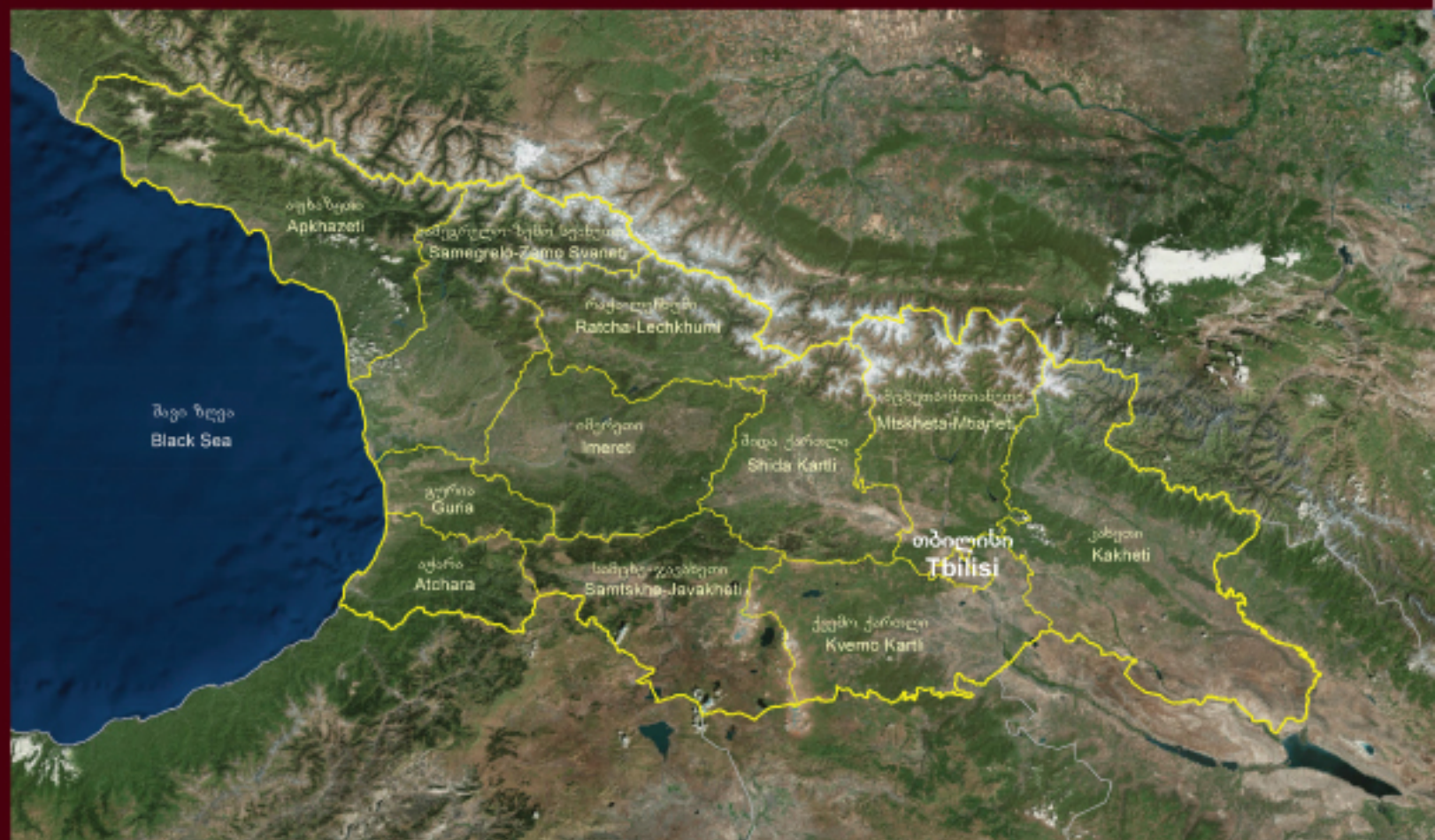
Marina Tumanishvili

# Cultural Heritage of Georgia

at 1900 Paris World Exhibition  
and after 118 years

2018

THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE



**Marina Tumanishvili**

**Cultural Heritage of Georgia  
at 1900 Paris World Exhibition  
and after 118 years**

**Second Edition**

**2020**

## **“Cultural Heritage of Georgia at 1900 Paris World Exhibition and after 118 years”**

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**Author:** Marina Tumanishvili

Part I: Raphael Isarlishvili, Alexander Khakhanashvili: “History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” (“Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900») - Retrospective edition

Part II: Marina Tumanishvili: “Cultural Heritage of Georgia presented at 1900 Paris World Exhibition after 118 years”

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## Foreword to the Second Edition

The book “Cultural Heritage of Georgia at 1900 Paris World Exhibition and after 118 Years’ in Georgian, French and English (three books), authored by Marina Tumanishvili, was published by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia in 2018 – the European Year of Cultural Heritage. The book became highly claimed by readers. As a result, the National Agency decided to publish the second edition of the book to reach wider public.

Both editions were based on the book - „Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900“ (History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis, 1900), the publication that was initiated and edited by Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili (Isarlov) in Paris in 1900. Original of this edition – one of the personal archive relicts of Ms. Marina Tumanishvili - was donated to Simon Janashia Museum of Georgia (Georgian National Museum) to supplement Raphael Isarlishvili’s personal collection.

## Editor’s Preface

The idea of publishing the present work, together with Ms. Manana Vardzelashvili, belongs to the descendant of Rafael Isarlishvili (Isarlov), Ms. Marina Tumanishvili.

A book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900“ (History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis, 1900) that has become a rarity, the reader, we think, will meet with great interest. In the first place, it is interesting from a historical viewpoint as clear manifestation of the level of scientific knowledge of the history of our homeland by 1900. It is also noteworthy to know what Georgian public figures were telling the international community about “extremely interesting country with its geographic location and natural richness, as well as its history full of patriotism” (see introduction – Part I). Arrangement of the Caucasian Corner at Paris International Exhibition with the book “History of Georgia” published in French as one of its exhibits was the great victory of Georgian society on its way towards the European family. This is also evident from responses that followed the exhibition and the book itself.

Attention of specialists would certainly be driven to illustrations attached to the “History of Georgia”. They provide a clear representation of our cultural heritage and landscape.

We have already mentioned that the book (Part I) reflects the knowledge of Georgian history, dominant in Georgian historiography in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is natural that many of the views expressed here have been revised, corrected or rejected today. For instance information about the migration of Georgian ancestors to the existing territory of Georgia in the VII century B.C from the South; claim that the noble houses of the Eristavs of Ksani and Aragvi are of the Dudarov descent, incorrect understanding of correlation of toponyms “Georgia” and “Abkhazia”, etc. Some statements have clear political subtext. “From the twelfth century, the belief of many of them (Georgians - Red) became Catholicism” – most likely the appearance of this phrase was caused by the willingness the Europeans to get more interested in Georgia. Obviously, the reader should take this and many other circumstances into consideration.

## Preface

Publication of the book “Cultural Heritage of Georgia at 1900 Paris World Exhibition and after 118 years” is being considered as one of the activity of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia to celebrate the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

The first part of the publication represents the retrospective of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” (History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis, 1900) that is the prominent example of history of presentation of Georgian cultural heritage abroad. Its importance is fostered by the fact that it is the document reflecting one of the first attempts of presentation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Georgia worldwide. Namely, the book was exposed at the exhibition of the world achievements held in Paris in 1900 (Exposition Universelle de Paris de 1900). Georgia was represented at Paris Universal Exhibition with the individual section. With the exhibits reflecting achievements of the country, the book, composed in French in 1899 particularly for this occasion by famous scientist figure Raphael Isarlishvili and prof. Alexandre Khakhanashvili was published in Paris the following year. Therefore, the book is coeval to the Eiffel Tower, which was by the way also specially built for this World Exhibition as the demonstration of engineering achievements of the time.

The Preface of the book “Histoire de Géorgie” notes that it took immense efforts of Georgian society to gain permission for Georgia, which at that time was ruled by the Russian Empire, to separately present its cultural heritage at the world exhibition. Moreover, as a result of hereof efforts, the initiator and organizer of participation of Georgia in the event – Raphael Isarlishvili was dispatched to Paris in the capacity of the official attaché to represent the exhibits and the book at the World Exhibition.

The importance of hereof book is immense at present as it was the first time when tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Georgia was shown at international level, many samples of which nowadays are recognized as the Outstanding World Heritage, including the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, Gelati Monastery and Georgian Alphabet, etc. The book also includes “Deda Ena” („დედა ენა“) by Jacob Gogebashvili as the best textbook of Georgian language for the elementary school. The book covers history, literature, geography and natural heritage of Georgia as well.

Thus, the book “Histoire de Géorgie” accumulates all those key issues, that are of high significance nowadays. The book introduced tangible and intangible cultural heritage samples of the country in the context of the universal values to the world society a century ago, in the beginning of the XX century.

The retrospective edition (Part I) provides the original version of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” in French, as well as Georgian and English translations. The edition is commented with the respective information about historical facts and dates based on the contemporary surveys.

Part II of the edition, titled as “Cultural Heritage of Georgia presented at 1900 Paris World Exhibition after 118 years”, authored by the Chief Specialist of UNESCO and International Relations Unit at the Na-

tional Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, Marina Tumanishvili, PhD in Architecture, reveals the fact of participation of Georgia in Paris World Exhibition of 1900 and creation of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”. This part also provides biographies of the authors and archival material reflecting responses of the international society on the book. Among archival documents revealed, we shall highlight the original Diploma that certifies awarding Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili with one of the highest merits of French government „Officier du Mérite Agricole” and with the respective decoration, thus recognizing his achievements in Paris in the capacity of the Official Attaché of General Commissariat of Russia to Paris World Exhibition of 1900 and of the Representative of Landlords of Georgia. Part II of the edition also reveals the process of international recognition of the Cultural Heritage of Georgia exposed at World Paris Exhibition of 1900 on the modern stage – after 118 years since the Paris World Exhibition.



**Cultural Heritage of Georgia at 1900 Paris World Exhibition  
and after 118 years**

**Part I**

*“The endeavor you have initiated is of the greatest and glorious importance indeed.  
Reasonable, noble and sincere love of the homeland  
is one of the highest Christian virtues and I believe with my strongest faith  
that our Heavenly Father will never leave the Apostles of  
this Virtue without unfading crown”*

(the extract from the Letter of the Bishop of Imereti Region, Leonid to Raphael Isarlishvili, 1.06.1901  
Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11073)

**Raphael Isarlishvili (Isarlov),  
Alexandre Khakhanashvili (Khakhanov)**

**History of Georgia**

Paris, Tiflis, 1900

(“Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”)

Retrospective edition

- 1900 -

- 2018 -



Histoire  
DE  
GÉORGIE

PUBLIÉE SOUS LA DIRECTION DE

M. Raphaël ISARLOFF

REPRÉSENTANT DES PROPRIÉTAIRES GÉORGIENS  
ATTACHÉ OFFICIEL AU COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL DE RUSSIE  
A L'EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE DE PARIS DE 1900



APERÇU GÉOGRAPHIQUE

ET

Abrégé de l'Histoire et de la Littérature géorgienne

PAR

M. A. KHAKHANOFF

Professeur.



PARIS

LIBRAIRIE DE CHARLES NOBLET  
13, RUE CUJAS, 13

TIFLIS

LIBRAIRIE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ GÉORG.  
DE LETTRES (RUE DU PALAIS)

1900

Droits de traduction et de reproduction réservés.

# History of Georgia

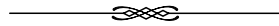
Published with the initiative of

**Mr. Raphael Isarlov**

Representative of Georgian Landlords

Official Attaché of the Commissariat of Russia

at Paris World Exhibition of 1900



**The Essay by**

Mr. A. Khakhanov

Professor

**on geography, history and literature of Georgia**

**Paris**

Charles Noble Publishing House,  
N13, Cujas Street

**Tiflis**

Literary Publishing House of Georgian Society,  
Palace Street

1900

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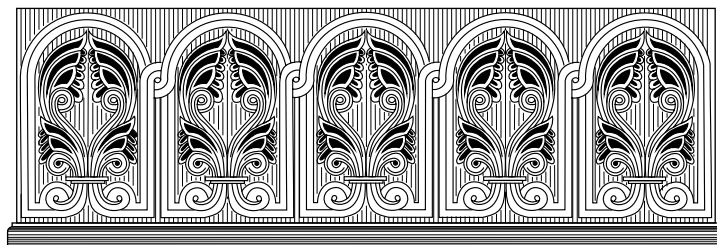
## Avant-Propos.

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*Dès que fut décidée l'ouverture, à Paris, de l'Exposition universelle de 1900, M. Raphaël Isarloff, l'un des membres de l'ancienne noblesse géorgienne, s'occupa activement de faire participer à cette grande manifestation internationale les propriétaires de son pays. Il fit paraître, dans ce but, un grand nombre d'articles dans les journaux et, au moyen d'avis et de brochures tirés à des milliers d'exemplaires, il fit comprendre à ses concitoyens quelle importance cette exposition avait pour leurs intérêts.*

*Pour les décider plus fermement à cette participation, aidé par M. le prince Lévan Djandiéri et M. Alexandre Bakradzé, conseiller d'État, qui lui prêtèrent leur dévoué concours, il fit de nombreux voyages dans toute l'étendue du Caucase. Ses démarches prirent un caractère officiel par suite de la nomination, par arrêté de M. le Ministre des Finances de Russie, en date du 11 novembre 1899, comme attaché au Commissariat Général de l'Exposition.*

*Pénétré de la grande marque de confiance que lui accordait le Ministre, et soucieux en même temps de représenter les propriétaires géorgiens, M. Raphaël Isarloff, dès son arrivée à Paris, s'adonna sans interruption à l'Exposition*



## Introduction

---

*In 1900, as soon as the decision on organization of the universal exposition in Paris was made, the representative of Georgian noble family, Raphael Isarlov set to actively spread this information to ensure participation of Georgian citizens in this significant universal event.*

*Through the information notes edited in thousands of copies and the newspaper articles, he strived to assure Georgian citizens about the high benefits of the exposition for them. Backed by the Prince Levan Jandieri and the State Councilor, Mr. Alexander Bakradze, he has traveled throughout Caucasus to convince Georgian landlords to participate in the international exposition. His activities were officialized on the basis of the ordinance of the Minister of Finance of Russia of November 11, 1899 appointing Raphael Isarlov on the position of the Attaché of the Commissariat General at the exposition.*

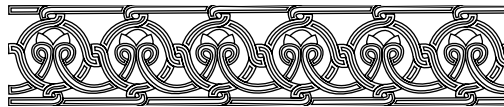
*Equipped with the greatest trust of the Minister and excited with participation of Georgian landlords, Raphael Isarlov has commenced his activities at the international*

*exposition upon his return to Paris, where, supported by Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess Elizaveta Feodorovna, he has established the Caucasus division of the Russian section.*

*He considered it expedient to publish studies on history, literature and science of Georgia in French. Due to the geographical location and natural richness of this extremely interesting country, as well as due to its history full of patriotism, Raphael Isarlov got in touch with Georgian historians, scientists and literary men.*

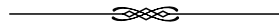
*These brief essays about history, geography, politics and literature of Georgia include the illustrations of the picturesque views and the portraits of the famous historians and writers.*

*Some of the pictures included into the book give the information about architecture of ancient churches, decorative art and ornaments.*





## Geographical location OF GEORGIA



The part of Trans-Caucasus covering Chorokhi, Enguri and Rioni basins, the highland region and the River Mtkvari (Kura) basin up to Alazani valley, is currently inhabited by Georgians. The provinces of Georgia are: Kartli, Kakheti, Imereti, Samegrelo, Guria, Adjara, Lazika, Meskheti, Svaneti, Pshavi, Tusheti and Khevsureti.

The whole territory, partitioned with the mountains and the forests, is divided into three parts: River Mtkvari ravine in the East, Rivers Enguri and Rioni ravines in the middle, and River Chorokhi ravine in the West. Naturally, the different geographic location of the regions had impact on their historical development. Despite the ethnic similarities, they have been developed in different manner in political terms.

Enguri and Rioni basins, inhabited by Western Georgians, are totally separated from Mtkvari and Chorokhi basins by the Lesser Caucasus mountain range and Meskhteti mountains. The mountains located along the main dividing ridge of Caucasus, divide the Black and Caspian Sea shores into several parts and create the inter-independent regions. The province of free Svaneti is

located in the narrow gorge, giving birth to the River Enguri. Svaneti is the administrative-territorial unit of Caucasus, the beautiful oasis with remarkable landscapes and impressive natural diversity. There are no such beautiful landscapes in Rioni ravine as in Enguri, but still it is full of picturesque sites.

Rivers of this basin – Rioni and Tskhenistskali (rich in gold sand in earlier times) source from the Phazisi Mount. The similarity between the Greek name of Rioni – “Phazisi” and the Mount is evident. The mountain range located South and South-East of Surami, dividing Rioni and Mtkvari basins, joins in Lazistani, located West of the described area.

Lazistani where river Chorokhi flows is a real Eden. The population of this region has selected the excellent places for their villages evidencing their particular love for nature. They enjoy never-ending beautiful landscapes: green waving meadows, rocks, streams, waterfalls, groves and houses scattered all around. As to the climate, Trans-Caucasus is attributed to the mild climate zone, most favorable for flora. Thus, it is characterized with particular beauty, bounty and diversity.

Diverse trees, including fruit yielding ones shielded by the Caucasus range against the North-Eastern dry winds and irrigated with frequent rains grow higher on the Southern slopes than in other regions on the same latitude. Thus, nut trees in Svaneti region are common at 5400 feet above the sea level and the vineyards are farmed as high as 3400 feet above the sea level.

In sum, the plants in Trans-Caucasus resemble ones in the riparian line of Atlantic Ocean in France, as well as foli-

age common for the central part of Europe. Locals mostly cultivate corn on the lands located on Rioni river banks, tea plantations -in Lazeti and Adjara; olive trees and pomegranate are popular in Samegrelo, all together creating marvelous aggregation of forests, orchards and gardens.

In the East Georgia, the most beautiful Alazani valley of 120 verst of length and 45 verst of width was destined by the nature for vineyards due to soft climate and extremely fertile soil. Kakhetian wine is the best in Caucasus competing with the wines made in other countries. At the same time, viticulture is not the only activity for the population of East Georgia. Locals are engaged in diverse agriculture and horticulture activities. Highlanders in Kartli region hold animal husbandry.<sup>1</sup> Climate diversity allows cultivation of various fruits and cereals. The forests and rivers teem with various species of birds, animals and fish. As to the mineral resources of the country, Georgia is rich with: coal, manganese, oil, silver, copper and iron deposits, mineral, thermal and spring water basins etc. Mtkvari river basin in East Georgia is inhabited by Kartlelians (locals from Kartli region), which gives the origin to the name of the nation – Kartveli (Georgian).

Kartlelians are connected to Imeretians who live West of Surami, and to Kakhetians in the East. The latter occupy ravines of Iori and Alazani. Borders of East Georgia are inhabited by highlanders: Khevsurs, Pshavs and Tushs. Imeretians occupy Western territory of the country – ravines of the rivers Rioni and Tskhenistskali. Gurians reside in the mountains of North Adjara. Chorokhi

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1. Georgian wool is well recognized on famous European markets.



ravine is inhabited by Lazs, and Svans found shelter on the slopes of Caucasus mountains.

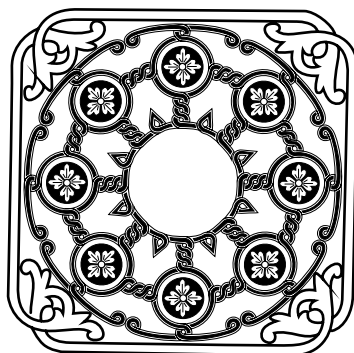
Save the Lazs, following Islam, population of Georgia confesses Greek Orthodoxy. Since XII century, many have changed the religion into Catholicism.

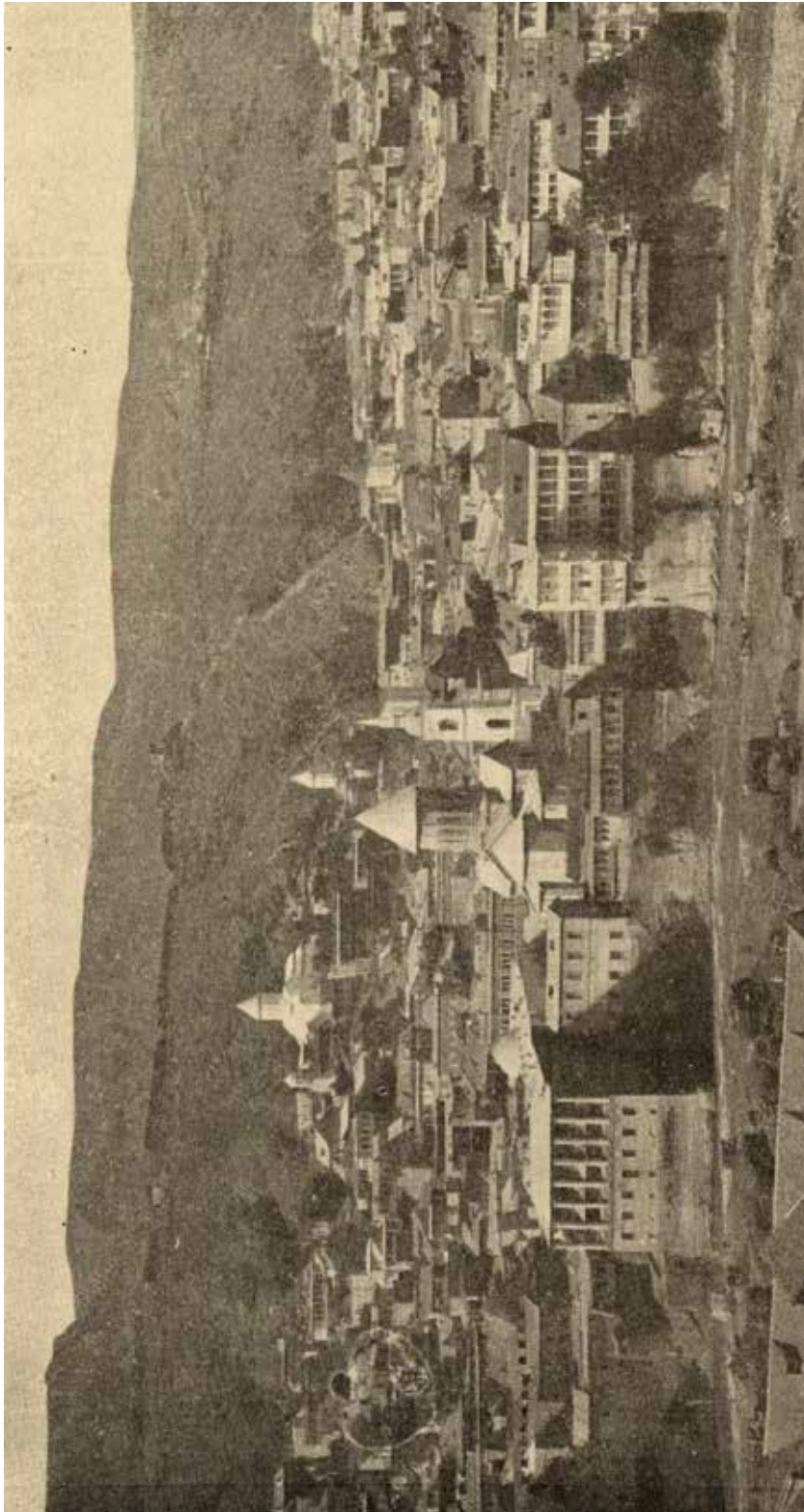
In administrative terms, Government of Georgia mostly occupies Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Zakatala provinces. Population of Georgia including both genders, together with Megrelians, Svans and Adjarians (other than Persians and Turks) comes to 2.5 ml.

The Capital of Georgia – Tiflis (Tbilisi) built on both banks of the River Mtkvari was established in the V century and the name “Tbilisi” derives from the word “Tbili – warm” due to hot sulfur springs.

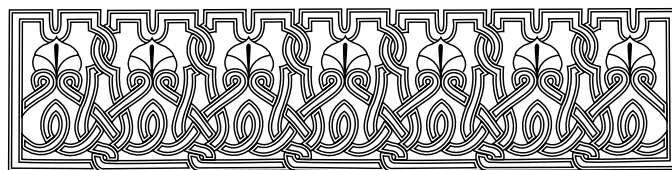
Other important cities are: Kutaisi – former Capital of the Kingdom of Imereti; Telavi – former Capital of the Kingdom of Kakheti; Akhaltsikhe – center of Zemo Kartli; Gori – center of Kvemo Kartli.

Key trade ports are: Batumi, Poti and Sukhumi-Kale.

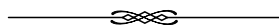




**TIFLIS (TBILISI)**



## **Origin of the Kingdom of Georgia FIRST KINGS OF GEORGIA**



According to the inscriptions discovered in the surroundings of Vani lake, Asia Minor and geographical names of this area, formerly, Georgians inhabited the South-West of this territory making it the arena of their historical residence. Due to oppressions by Armenians and Assyrians, Georgians, grouped in communities or families opted for migration to North in the VII century B.C. finding dwelling in the ravines of Rivers Mtkvari and Rioni, and their tributaries.

According to the legend, Kartlosi has settled on Mtkvari river bank on the spot where Aragvi river falls into it. Here he has established the settlement “Kartli”, which later has become the name of the whole region. Nowadays, it is the Western part under state administration of Tbilisi. The second part of the population has settled in Mtskheta on the bank of the River Mtkvari. Establishment of this city is associated with the name of Mtskhetosi, son of Kartlosi. The groups of Georgians settled in the forests and on the valleys were headed by the foreman (*head of the family*).

Foundation of Greek settlements on the Black Sea shore facilitated trade in Mtkvari and Rioni valleys. Harbors of Dioskuria and Phasis have been converted into the significant trade hubs already famous when the Argonauts set to sail to Colchis (current Samegrelo region) to grab the Golden Fleece. Georgia was in trade relations with India and Egypt as well, from where Colchis people have migrated to Georgia (according to Herodotus).

The peaceful relations with Greece, Persia and Phoenicia were put to end upon invasion of Alexander the Great in the III century B.C. He appointed Azo as the governor of Georgia, who later imposed extremely high dues to the population. Georgians, led by Pharnavaz the son of the foreman killed by Azo, rebelled against the invaders. Pharnavaz joined the sovereigns of the West Georgia, defeated Alexander the Great and restored the previous regime. He was proclaimed the hero who managed to unify split Georgia and liberate the population from foreign invaders. It had the greatest impact on the population, so Pharnavaz was crowned as the first King of the kingdom.

According to sources, Parnavaz established the new cult of Armazi, one of the highest deities of the country, that is considered to be a local version of the Persian fire-worshipping religion of Zoroastrism, where Ahuramazda/Ormuzd is the supreme creative deity.

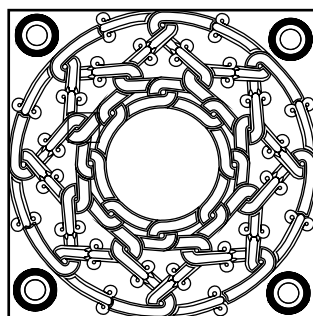
Pharnavaz founded the Pharnavazid Dynasty. Later, for the certain period of time it has been replaced by the Arshacid dynasty represented by the Armenian King Arshaces (I century B.C.). The representatives of hereof dynasties were in constant irreconcilable wars.

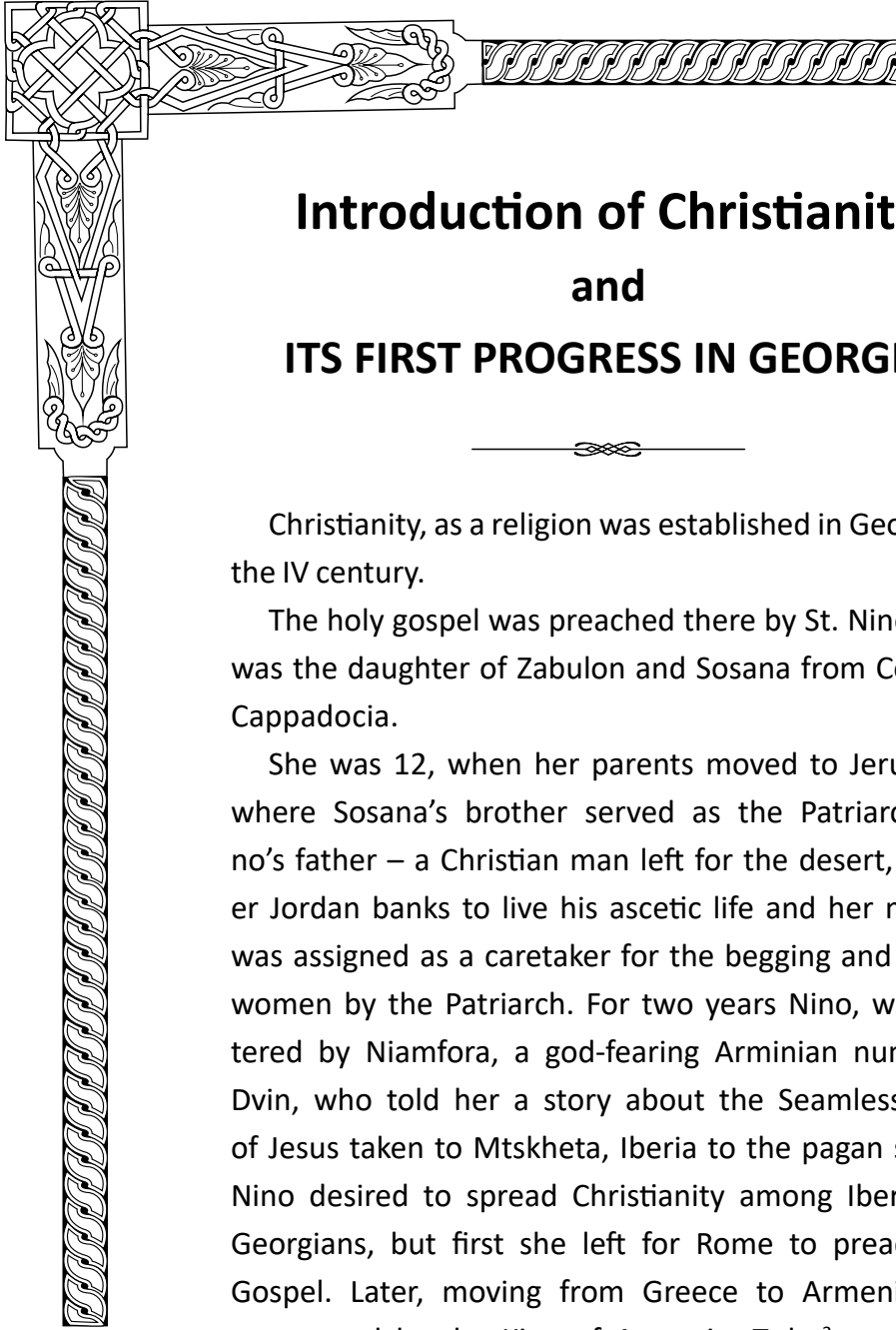
Pharnavazid dynasty was backed by Persians, and Arsacid dynasty was supported by Armenians. The hostility lasted till the establishment of the third, Sasanid dynasty by the King Mirian, who despite invasions by the nomadic Scythians, Khazars and Balkans, took Georgia to the higher stage of social development (IV century).

According to Strabo, the geographer of the I century, this region was famous with the rich cities with blooming sericulture and the textiles made in Georgia were exported far beyond its borders.

During the reign of King Mirian III Christianity was declared the official religion of the country, although it is well known that its dissemination goes back to the times of Apostles.

As tradition claims, Apostle Andrew was one who first preached Christianity in Western Georgia.





## Introduction of Christianity and ITS FIRST PROGRESS IN GEORGIA



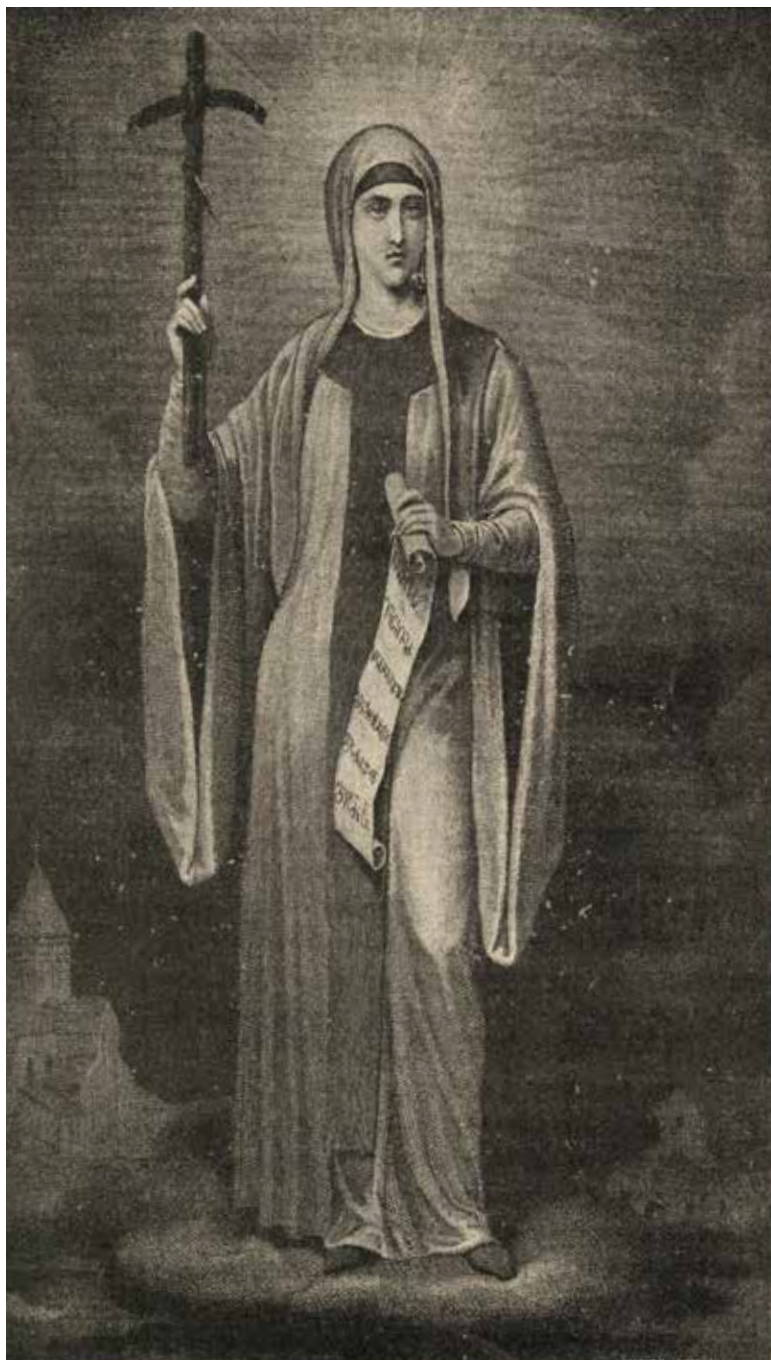
Christianity, as a religion was established in Georgia in the IV century.

The holy gospel was preached there by St. Nino, who was the daughter of Zabulon and Sosana from Colastri, Cappadocia.

She was 12, when her parents moved to Jerusalem where Sosana's brother served as the Patriarch. Nino's father – a Christian man left for the desert, to river Jordan banks to live his ascetic life and her mother was assigned as a caretaker for the begging and feeble women by the Patriarch. For two years Nino, was fostered by Niamfora, a god-fearing Arminian nun from Dvin, who told her a story about the Seamless Robe of Jesus taken to Mtskheta, Iberia to the pagan shrine. Nino desired to spread Christianity among Iberians – Georgians, but first she left for Rome to preach the Gospel. Later, moving from Greece to Armenia and persecuted by the King of Armenia, Trdat<sup>2</sup>, accompanied with two maids – Hripsime and Gayane, St. Nino fled to Georgia and sought shelter in Javakheti mounts

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2. Menas: the King of Big Armenia Tridat III, same as Tiridat, from Arshakid Dynasty (287-330) – Ed.



**ST. NINO**

(currently, Akhalkalaki region, province of Tbilisi), and moving along Mtkvari banks, reached the city of Urbnisi.

In Mtskheta, during the festival of the pagan God, St. Nino aggrieved with incorrect attitude of the people towards the pagan idol, started pray, begging the Lord to show the true religion to this people. The Lord answered her prayers and inflicted terrible storm destroying the pagan idol and the fortress. It put the King and the people in shock.

Nino settled in the area with dense blackberry shrubs and spent three years there.<sup>3</sup> She tied two grapevine reeds with her own hair, made a cross and started preaching the Gospel. Today, her cross is kept in Tbilisi.

The miracles accompanying her preaching attracted attention of the Queen Nana and when miraculously healed from the severe illness by prayers of St. Nino, she was converted into Christianity. Later, when the Queen's brother and the King Mirian were hunting in the woods, they went astray but miraculously survived the evident tragedy. They were struck blind by total darkness in the midday, accompanied with heavy storm, as severe as upon destruction of Armazi shrine. Thanks to prayers of St. Nino they staid save. The King, assured in almighty power of the Lord, believed in St. Nino's God. After the hunt, the King approached the shrubs with tears in his eyes, uttering gratitude and sincerely repenting his evil plots against St. Nino who was called a "Greek Witch".

The King, opting for being baptized, sent the envoy to the Emperor Constantine the Great of Greece appealing for dispatching priests and the Bishop. The Emperor in his sincere excitement designated the Bishop Ioane to baptize King Mirian and his suit in Mtskheta.

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3. Now, it is the very place of Samtavro Monastery.



The baptized King built the Christian church in Mtskheta at the place indicated by St. Nino.

All the people involved in works witnessed the miracle during construction of the church – the seventh pole of the church could not be installed until St. Nino assisted them in erection of the pole through her prayers.

The churches were built in Manglisi and Erusheti and Christianity was officially proclaimed as the religion of the kingdom. Thus, through common faith Georgia directly became linked with Greece and got the holy relics - parts of the True Cross of the Savior from there.

The Sovereign Pontiff sent the letter of appreciation to St. Nino for preaching Christianity.

After baptizing the population of Mtskheta, St. Nino ascended the mounts to preach the Gospel but the population of Tsilkani and Pkhovi was reluctant to accept new religion. St. Nino exhausted of heavy labor, arrived in Bodbe, near Signagi and died there in 338. Now, there is the Nunnery at her grave.

Life of St. Nino according to her narration, is described by her followers and confederates. St. Nino was commemorated as the “Saint Christian Woman” in Champagne, France.<sup>4</sup> Historian Rufinus (IV century) and his Greek followers – Socrate, Sozomene and Theodorite tell about distribution of Christianity in Georgia.

Since 332, the year of recognition of Christianity as the official religion by King Mirian up to 458, Georgian Christian church time to time was subordinated to the Patriarchates of Constantinople or Antioch. In 458, mediated by Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople, appealed by King Vakhtang I and approved by the Emperor Leon I the Great, the independent Episcopacy was established in Mtskheta.

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4. See, the novel by the Baron de Baye about Georgia.

Georgian Bishop became the first Patriarch (Catholicon)<sup>5</sup> whose statute was recognized in 488 by Palladius, Patriarch of Antioch. Till 542 patriarchs of Iberia were ordained by Patriarchs of Antioch, though after 542, the Iberian Church obtained autonomy based on the Order of Justinian I and the decision of Patriarch Menas of Constantinople, that were consented and recognized by all Patriarchs of the East.

Later, self-governance of the Iberian Church was endorsed at the sixth ecumenic council of Constantinople (680). Dignity and authority of Mtskheta Apostolic Church was equalized to dignity of all Catholicos and Patriarchs.

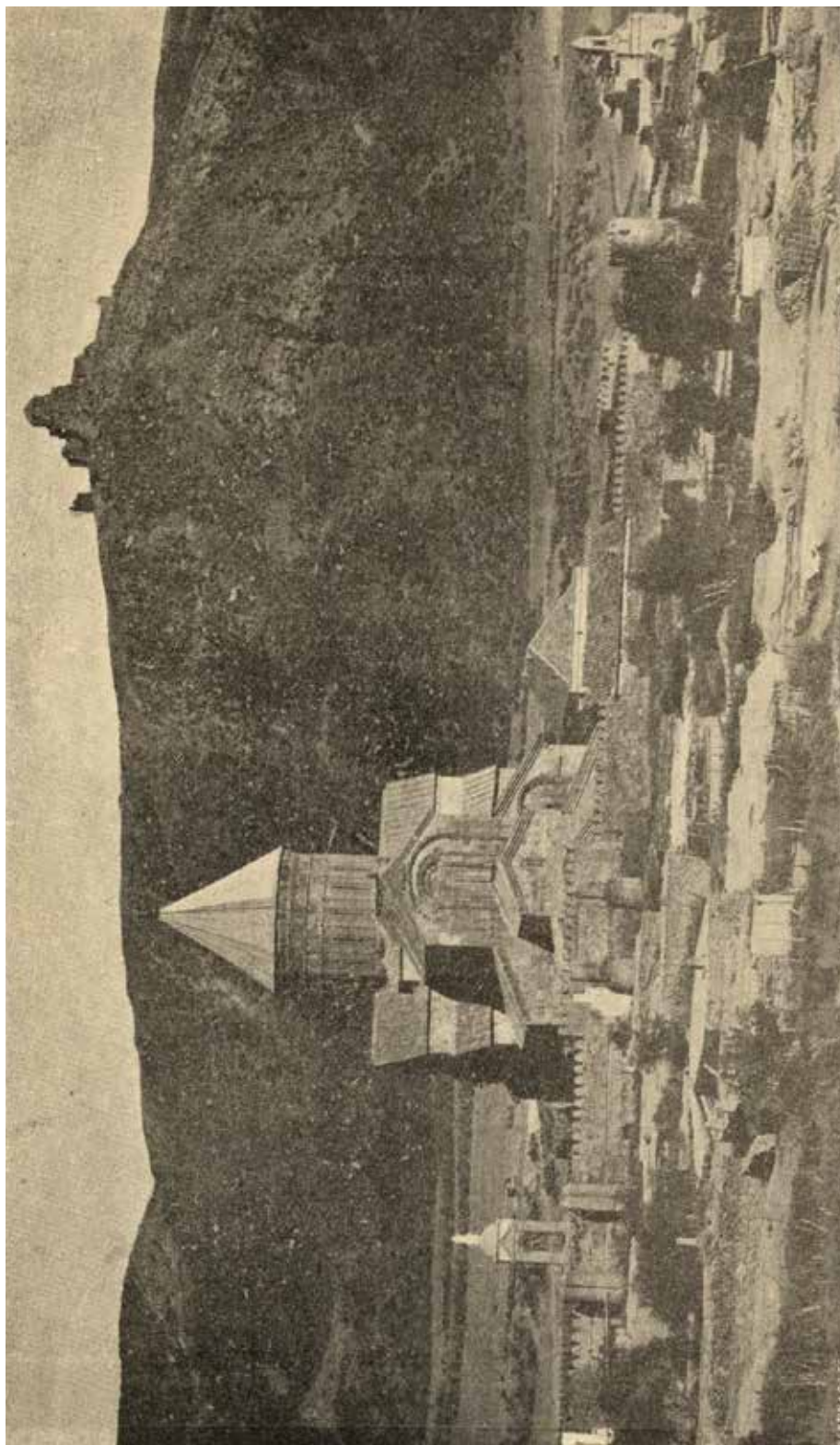
The Catholicon of Iberia was equalized to all other Patriarchs and given supreme authority over all Archbishops, Bishops and Metropolitans of the Kingdom of Georgia and the neighboring Kingdoms in Trans-Caucasus. The Catholicon was also entitled to develop and bless the Myrrh in own church. The canons established by the sixth council were translated from Greek by St. Euthymius the Athonite in the X century as evidenced with the manuscript made by Theodorite in the XI century (History of Bakradze, 258). These were the canons mentioned by the Catholicon Anton as the “Gujari” Charter.

In 950, Episcopacy of Georgia has become the Patriarchate, the leader of the Church was titled as the Arch-Bishop of Mtskheta, Catholicos-Patriarch of Iberia, Kartli and Kakheti. In 1783, after Catherine II of Russia and Heraclius II of Georgia signed the Treaty, Iberian Catholicos became the member of the Holy Synod of Russia. Georgian church gained absolute independence from the King.

The episcopal power had the authority to make decisions on the property of the church. The bishops were the

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5. Patriarch



**MTSKHETA**

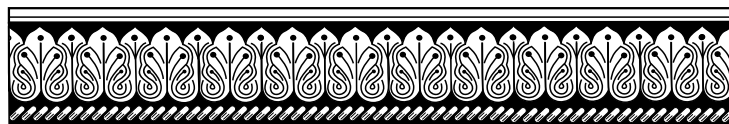
supreme representatives of the ecclesiastical authority in their eparchies holding rights on legal proceedings not only on religious issues but concerning morality of population as well. According to the list of donations of “Gujari Charter” they recognized the oath and the witness statements lawful. The decisions of the church were considered as ultimate and were submitted to King – protector of the church against external enemies – just out of respect.

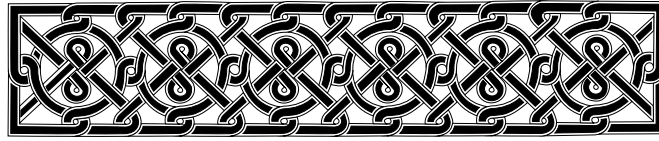
The Consistorial chamber (Mediation Court) (XVIII century) was the first instance court headed by the Catholicos empowered to judge the clergymen breaching the canons. However, in the event of complicated and significant cases, the Catholicos had the duty to appeal to the council the decision of which was mandatory for all Georgia. There are numerous documents and fact in the history of Georgia clearly testifying the competences of the Council.

During the reign of King David the Builder (1089-1125), the Council was convened to define the code of conduct of the clergymen and to eliminate disorders.

King George V the Magnificent (1318-1346) issued the laws for the highlanders, endorsed by the clergymen and reflected in the Code of Laws by Vakhtang VI of Georgia.

The canons of the Catholicos were adopted by the Ecclesiastical Council. Recently issued book-The Bigvam Act completes the collection of laws. On this basis, the role of the church was not limited with the sphere of religion solely but it was the caretaker of legal and moral aspects of the society.





## History of Georgia

### IV-VI CENTURIES



King Mirian, the first Christian King of Georgia has established the Sasanian dynasty. Georgia, previously striving to repulse the invasions of barbarians, has been rapidly developed during the reign of King Mirian.

In 332, conversion of Georgia into Christianity has significantly facilitated progressive processes that benefited Georgia highly. Relations with Byzantium allowed Georgian people the access of Ancient Greek and Christian treasures of knowledge.

Relations with the West were further enhanced due to marriage of the newly widowed King Mirian to the daughter of the King of Pontus, Princess Nana, the first follower of St.Nino from the royal family. The Western civilization was far more attractive to her than the Eastern, pagan world. Along with other Georgian women, she assisted St.Nino in spreading Christianity.

At that, there were two events putting shadow on King Mirian era: invasion of Khazars from Derbent gates; and the war against the King of Armenia, Mithridates.

Arab historians of the IX century gave an account of Caucasus route, which Khazars followed while invading Persia, and of which trace can still be found in Zakatala region.

Khazars, heading to Iran, had the pleasure to overrun Georgia as well on their way.

During the Georgia-Armenia war, Georgia counted on Persia, while Armenia counted on Greece. The war ended with the marriage of Revi, son of Mirian and the daughter of Trdat. Revi became the leader of Kakheti Principality.<sup>6</sup>

Bakar, son of Mirian, resumed the mission of his father: spreading Christianity in Georgia.

Historian Rufinius mentions Bakar as Bakarius. Bakar provided Rufinus in Jerusalem information on spreading Christianity in Georgia.

The followers of Christianity and the followers of paganism set to severe struggle in Georgia in the beginning of the V century. So far that Bishop Mobidan, one of the leads of Georgian Church was converted to Mazdeanizm, he was spreading doctrine of paganism through his writings. Christianity has been undermined. Later, the Gospel was translated into Georgian, but pagan religion still lasted long in Georgia, even during Vakhtang I Gorgasali (V century) the Zoroastrian priests still served in Mtskheta.

King Vakhtang, being a very vigorous and purposeful person, held the struggle against them. He is highly respected as he was associated with the great history of Georgian people. Pharnavaz, Mirian, King Vakhtang Gorgasali, Bagrat III, Bagrat IV, David the Builder, King Tamar, George V, Queen Ketevan, Vakhtang VI, Heraclius II, Solomon I and Solomon II – these are the Kings still dear to us and still remembered by the nation even after 2000 years.

Origins of the Kingdom of Georgia and of Georgian civilization are directly linked to the name of King Pharnavaz. Six Hundred years later, in the beginning of the

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6. Governor of the region.

IV century, King Mirian spread Christianity in the Kingdom thus introducing Western civilization to Georgian people: these two sources of light have penetrated the darkness of ignorance surrounding Georgian people.

King Vakhtang I entered the arena in the second half of the V century, who converted a small state of Kartli, established around Mtskheta, into the powerful Kingdom. During his reign, Georgia survived various invasions of Khazars, Balkans, Persians and Armenians. These invasions instead of weakening, even further enhanced it in physical and moral terms through spreading of the new almighty religion. Christian doctrine shed its warm light on Mtkvari and Rioni ravines and inspired the residents with the new civic virtue and dignity.

King Vakhtang has taken Georgia to the highest point of glory. Georgian people associate his name with various legends, where the King is envisioned as a wise ruler, smart leader and invincible warrior.

Vakhtang, named as Gorgaslan (meaning “wolf” (446-499) was enthroned at the age of 7. The King of Persia took the advantage of the age of Vakhtang and dispatched the fire-worshiper witches to Mtskheta hoping that it would be enough to eliminate Christianity in Georgia. Vakhtang’s mother, Sagdukht, the regent of the Kingdom, was loyal follower of Christianity. She, backed by the Bishop Michael, convinced the witches in misleading nature of their pagan doctrine.

Vakhtang was 10, when Ossetians attacked Georgia, ravaging the country and took sister of Vakhtang – Mirandukht a hostage. In the same period, Greeks occupied Abkhazia and part of Samegrelo. Under these dreadful circumstances, Vakhtang being only 15 years took the reins of the country in his hands. The King, being strong physi-

cally and well built, smart in critical thinking, was trained by Commander Sauromaces in martial arts and in main Christian doctrines under the patronage of Archbishop Michele, opted for revenge on Ossetians. He led the numerous armies and headed to Dariali Gorge to meet Ossetian and Khazar tribes on the bank of River Tergi. Prior to the decisive battle, Vakhtang came to grips with Ossetian Bogatyr and Khazar Tarkhan. Annihilation of their leaders totally confused the enemies and Vakhtang gained the brilliant victory as evidenced by the mural inscription in Nuzal Church.<sup>7</sup> He liberated his sister and returned with the rich spoils to Georgia through Abkhazia.

To protect Georgia from Persian invasions, he married the daughter of the King of Persia. Later, Vakhtang suppressed the revolt of highlanders and drew his army against Greeks.

In the same period, the Eristavi (lord) of Lazica under patronage of Byzantines cherishing hopes to ascend the throne, took the advantage of minor age of Vakhtang and conquered Svaneti.

King of Persia – father-in-law of Vakhtang – offered his hand in the battle against Greeks and Vakhtang eagerly accepted the aid. He well remembered his country destructed by the Greeks. The allies occupied the cities of Ponto and Karin. The Emperor Leo, willing to end hostility, married his daughter to Vakhtang (by that time Vakhtang had become a widower) and gave the province of Klarjeti back to Georgians. He also promised to support the King in establishing the independent “Catholicosate”<sup>8</sup> in Georgia.

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7. In North Ossetia Republic, specifically XIII century Christian church located in Alagiri Valley – Ed.

8. Patriarchate



Settlement of differences between Greeks and Georgians entailed invasion of Persians in Georgia. Persians tortured St. Razhden the Protomartyr who was spreading Christianity. The conflict was expired by yet another marriage of Vakhtang. He gave his daughter to the Shah of Persia under wedlock and agreed to accompany him in the battle against India. As always, he returned victorious and with rich spoils and trophy – thousand captives.

The name of Vakhtang is associated with numerous legends. Persians named him as “Gurj-Aslan” (Georgian lion) due to his strength and courage. He always wore the hat with the head of wolf depicted on the front, and the head of lion – on the back side. Vakhtang, always leading the army, put fright on his enemies and the Persians, as soon as seeing his hat, would scatter screaming: “Save yourselves, Gurj-Aslan”. This name is preserved in history. Being a smart leader and a brave commander, he always took care of education of his people, he was establishing the universities, giving the ecclesiastic books for translation, improving already existed translated versions. Other than ecclesiastic literature, he was spreading Apocrypha: Books of Nimrod, Life of Adam and Eve etc.

The excellent Church to Twelve Apostles in Mtskheta, as well as the Sioni and Metekhi Churches in Tbilisi, also the Nikozi Church erected on the grave of Razhden the Protomartyr are witnesses of his glorious reign. Vakhtang is the founder of Tbilisi, the new capital of kingdom where his son, Dachi moved the Residence, thus, over-shadowing a glory of the old Capital, Mtskheta. There is an ancient, heavily destroyed Martkhopi Cathedral, near Tbilisi, with frescoes on its two surviving dome supporting pillars, one depicting King Vakhtang

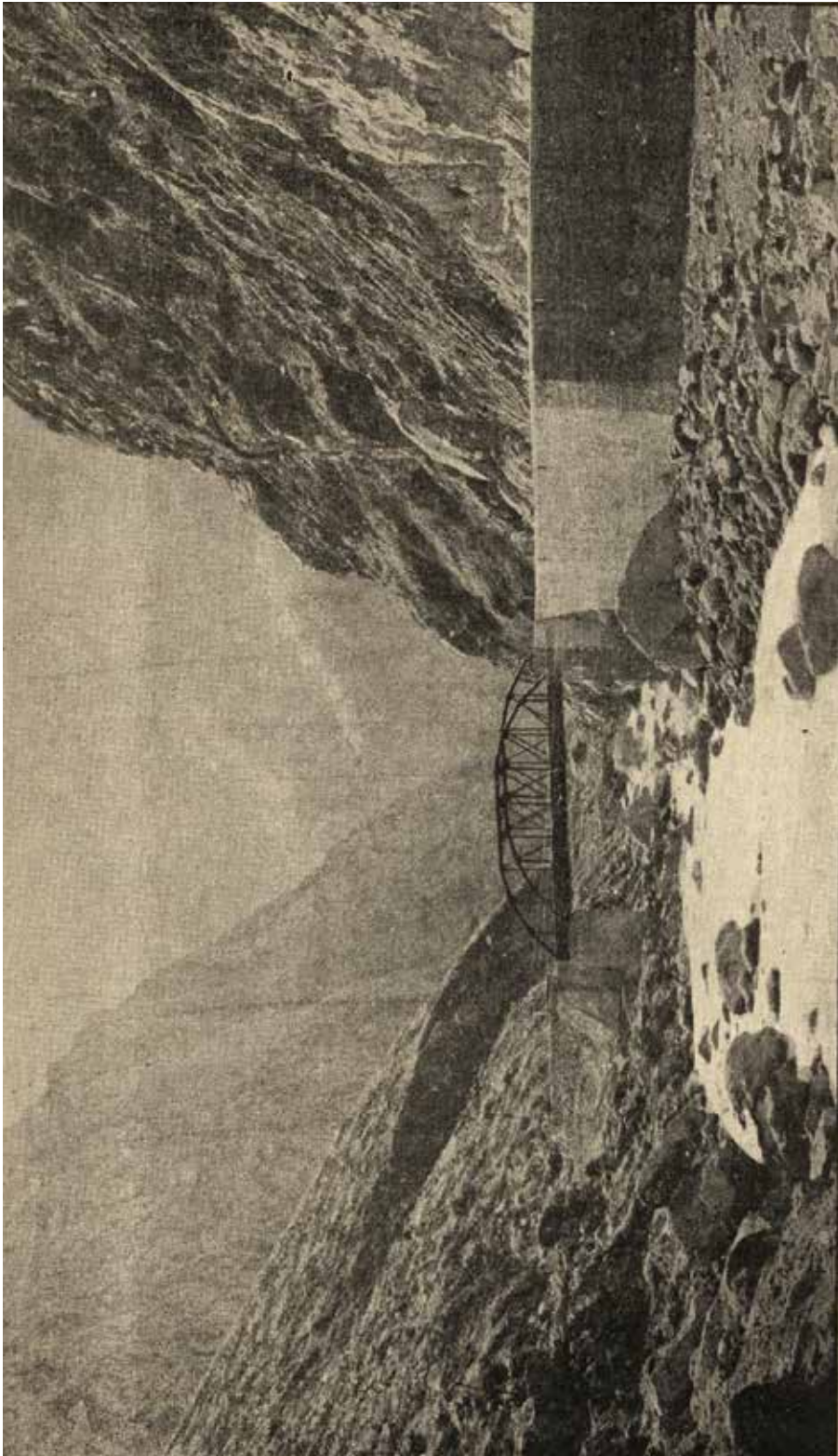
Gorgasali, the builder of the cathedral, and another - King David the Builder.

One can find the fresco of Vakhtang in Jerusalem as well, in the Monastery of Iviron as described by Metropolitan Timote (Gabashvili) in his novel about journey to Palestine in the XVIII century. Timote, along his other suppositions, presumes that Vakhtang, encouraged by the King of Egypt, also conquered Jerusalem. "Kartlis Tskhovreba" (Georgian Chronicles) provides the story of his journey to the Holy Land accompanied by his mother and sister, where he purchased the land to build the Georgian Monastery.

Vakhtang was a very pious man. He has established new eparchies, expelled Zoroastrians from the Kingdom and established independent Patriarchate. Foreign sources confirm the facts provided in the "Georgian Chronicles".

In the memory of Georgians there are many legends and fabulous stories related to King Vakhtang. Even the author of the first historical chronicles, Juansher (VIII century), the descendant of the Commander of Vakhtang's Army has included into his collection the folk legends from history of Georgia, namely about the Kings of Georgia, including Vakhtang. The reign of the heirs of Vakhtang – Dachi and Bakur is not distinguished with any valuable facts.

Description of West Georgia – Lazica by the Byzantine chronicler and historian, Procopius (of Caesarea) is coincides with the reign of Pharsamanes V (531-579) of Iberia and the facts provided by him complete the facts provided by the "Georgian Chronicles". Procopius mentions not only the Kings of Lazica but tells about the Kings of East Georgia – Iberia unknown to us. He



**DARIALI GORGE**

describes history of Lazica and distribution of Christianity in Justinian era.

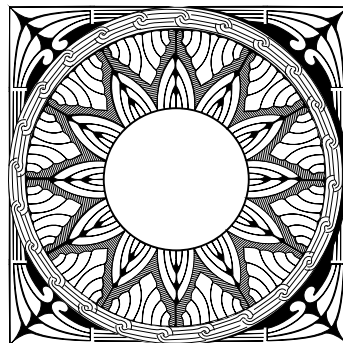
During Pharasmanes's reign, twelve Assyrian Fathers led by Ioane of Zedazeni arrived in Georgia aspired to strengthen Christianity in newly converted countries.

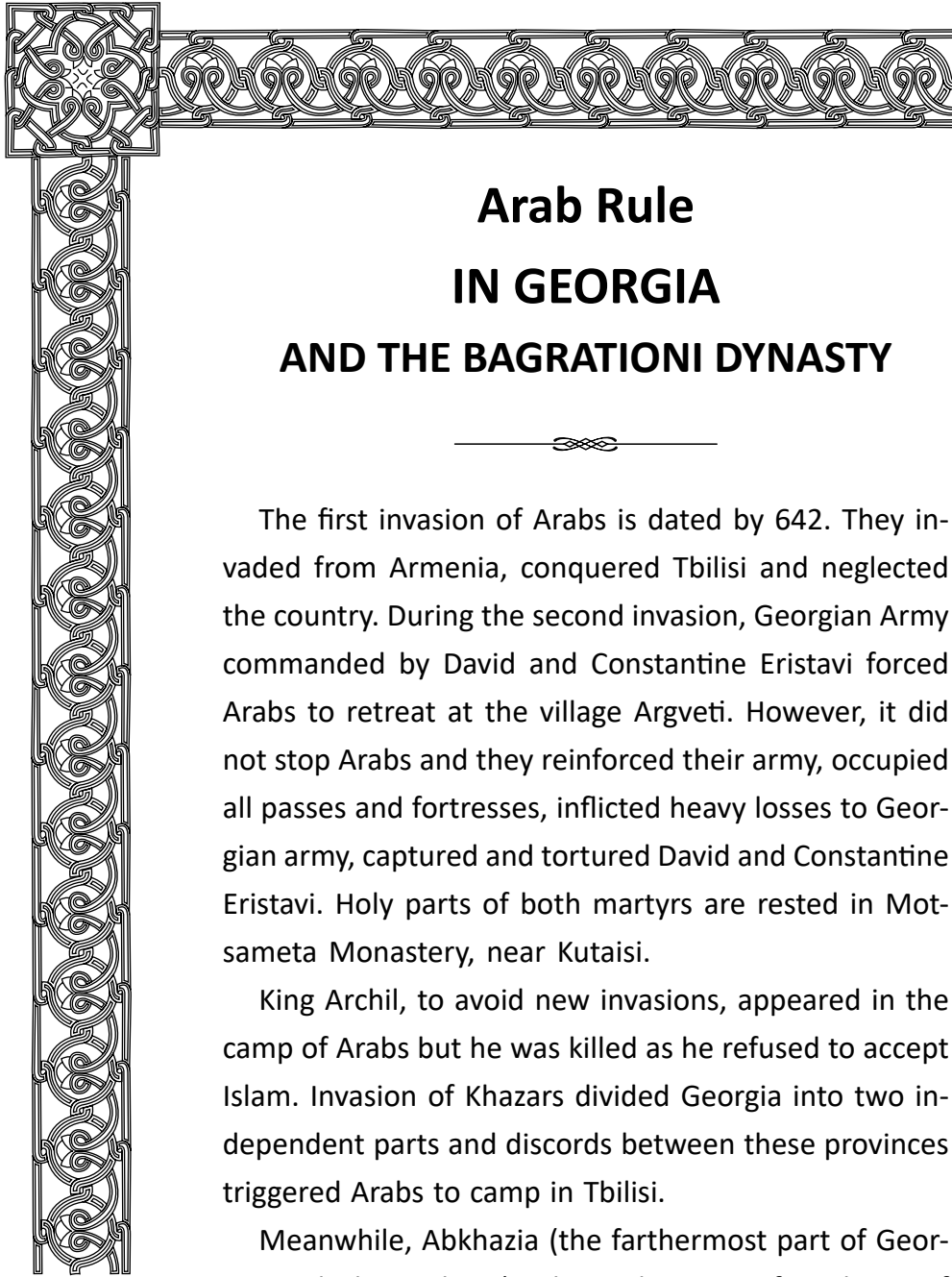
Pharasmanes VI, Stephen I of Iberia and other Georgian Kings patronized the Monasteries built by the holy fathers with rich donations in capacity of the lands and valuables, exempting them from taxes.

Minor children of Bakur III (557-570) had to flee and migrate to the highlands out of fear of Persians. The representatives of the House of Bagrationi took this advantage to establish their dynasty in the country.

Prior to describing the history of Bagrationi dynasty, we would like to note that Georgian aristocracy composed of distinguished warriors already existed during the reign of Vakhtang. There is the presumption that the Eristavs (lords) of Ksani and Aragvi descended from the family of Dudarov of Ossetian origin, who settled in Ksani and Aragvi ravines, invited there to prevent disorders among the local residents during St. George Day festivities.

Origins of these two houses of Georgian nobility have not yet been clarified and the story of disorders during St. George Festival most likely refers to the events of later times.





## **Arab Rule IN GEORGIA AND THE BAGRATIONI DYNASTY**

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The first invasion of Arabs is dated by 642. They invaded from Armenia, conquered Tbilisi and neglected the country. During the second invasion, Georgian Army commanded by David and Constantine Eristavi forced Arabs to retreat at the village Argveti. However, it did not stop Arabs and they reinforced their army, occupied all passes and fortresses, inflicted heavy losses to Georgian army, captured and tortured David and Constantine Eristavi. Holy parts of both martyrs are rested in Mot-sameta Monastery, near Kutaisi.

King Archil, to avoid new invasions, appeared in the camp of Arabs but he was killed as he refused to accept Islam. Invasion of Khazars divided Georgia into two independent parts and discords between these provinces triggered Arabs to camp in Tbilisi.

Meanwhile, Abkhazia (the farthermost part of Georgia at Black Sea shore), taking advantage of weakness of Georgian Kings and Byzantium under influence of which it was established its independent state, merging whole Samergelo, Imereti, Svaneti and Guria regions up to Surami mountains and proclaiming Kutaisi as the Capital.

Meanwhile, Kakheti region was separated from Georgia and the whole territory adjacent to Taparavani Lake and the area from the upstream of River Mtkvari up to Batumi became possession of the House of Bagrationi that had emigrated from Judea.

Tiflis and the surroundings became the property of the Emir. The only territory left under the authority of the Georgian Kingdom covered the area from the Taparavni Lake up to Surami mounts. Georgia has been divided into numerous political inter-independent regions due to internal discords and external invasions.

Georgian Kings concerned about civil wars were appealing to the Emperor of Byzantium to dispatch the facilitator. The Bagrationi dynasty had to deal with the double task – to unify and to organize Georgia. The first representative of the House of Bagrationi in Georgia was Guram (Guaram, 575-600), entitled by the Greek Emperor Justian II as the Kourapalates for his merit in the war against Persia.

During his reign, construction of Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi was concluded. The same period was signified by religious division of Georgian and Armenian people that followed the ecclesiastic Council in Dvin (506). During the reign of the heir of Guaram, Georgia was invaded by Greeks. The Emperor Heraclius of Byzantium decapitated Georgian King for conspiring with Persians. Ever since, Byzantium's influence over Georgia grew constantly, where Christianity once and for all overcame Zoroastrianism. Georgian Kings become the vassals of Byzantium and were granted the courtier titles of Curopalatos, Magisteros, and others. Along with Arab invasions, influence

of Byzantium over Georgia was significantly reduced. Arabs were dominating even over Georgian Kings, who were forced to fulfill orders of the Emir. Their title of the monarch was maintained only formally.

Arabs kept on dispelling Georgia. Many Georgians have died in torture (Abo Tbileli, Gobron et.al.) and calamities. Abkhazians did not want to concede any single thing to Arabs and they occupied even Kartli. Georgia, weakened due to Arab and Abkhazian invasions, started to strengthen during the reign of David Courapalates (1001), who was famous even in Byzantium where he brought peace after repressing the rebellion of Bardas Skleros. King's commander, Tornike Eristavi returned to Georgia victorious over Bardas Skleros with the rich spoils, the greatest part of which was consumed for enlargement and enrichment of the Monastery on Mount Athos.<sup>9</sup>

Georgia, divided into independent provinces was repeatedly unified into one Kingdom during the reign of King Bagrat III. He subjugated the Aznauris (common name of the semi-independent Georgian nobility) opposing the monarchy, forced the King of Kakheti Kvirike III to abduction and confided Kakheti to his loyal Abulal. He destroyed the Arabic city Shinekar. He also had influence on Caucasian highlanders. After establishing order in the country, he erected the significant monuments. Kutaisi and Bedia Cathedrals prove the high level of development of architecture in Georgia during the reign of Bagrat.

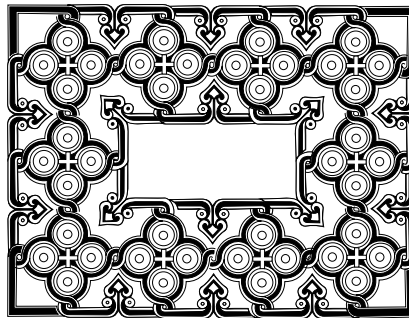
It was in the reign of the King Bagrat when ecclesiastic writing reached its climax on the Mount Athos. The most

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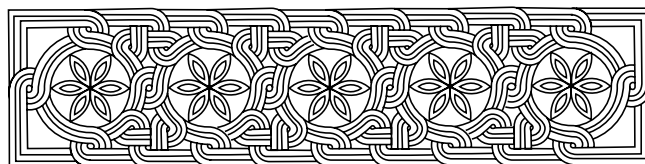
9. In ancient times, it was Georgians building the Monasteries in Jerusalem and Greece, as well as Mount Athos. It was the greatest honor for the Georgian Kings to develop the Monasteries.

brilliant representatives of this congregation of scholars, Georgian monks Euthymius the Athonite and George the Hagiorite completed the second revised and corrected translation of the Holly Script into Georgian.

This is the period, when the House of Bagrationi finally established its undisputed authority over the united Georgian Kingdom and the most splendid era in Georgian history that started with the reign of Bagrat III was uninterrupted until the death of king Tamar.







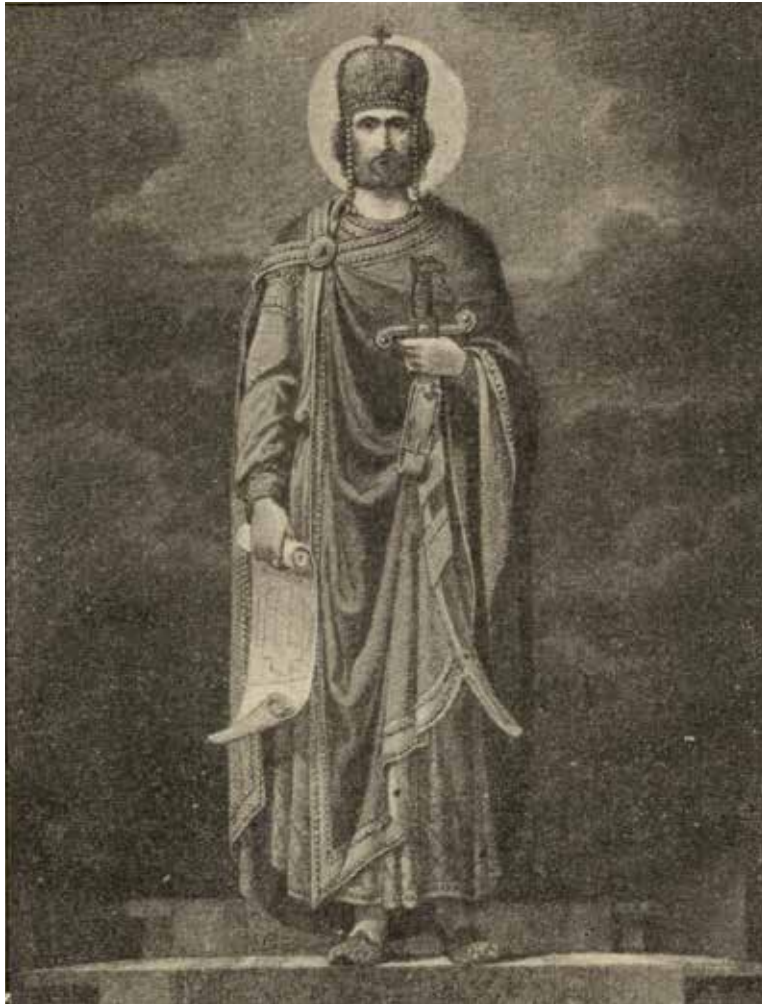
## **HISTORY OF GEORGIA**

### **X-XII CENTURIES**

## **DAVID THE BUILDER**



Let's recall the history of Georgia of the X, XI and XII centuries. The first Bagrationi ascended the throne in 575. It was the period of the most remarkable revival of Orthodoxy in Georgia. At the same time, world's greatest Kingdoms, Byzantium and Persia were in fierce war, Georgia being one of the most important topics of their rivalry. The war was not yet finished when Arabs, invaded, conquered and occupied Georgia. The Kings managed to maintain only nominal authority in Artanudj, Adjara and Tao provinces. Fearing their new sovereigns, they abandoned to refer each other Kings and were using titles of lesser dignity instead – prince, grand-prince, etc. During this grave period, the Princes of Abkhazia and Kakheti stopped obeying the royal authority and declared independence. Although, despite troubles, Georgian rulers managed to restore their strength so that after 100 years, Guram and Ashot defeated Gregory, ruler of Kakheti and subdued the whole Georgia from Klarjeti up to Ksani gorge and till the city of Barda. Son of Ashot – Bagrat defeated King of Abkhazia – Theodos. The authority of Bagrationi dynasty increased considerably. In the era of Adarnase



**DAVID THE BUILDER, KING OF GEORGIA**

(923), according to the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenites, Georgians dared to claim possession of the city of Arzrum and its vicinities held by the Byzantines. In his essay Arab writer, Massoud (XII century), while referring to the same period mentions the Kingdom adjacent to Abkhazia and Alanya, governed by King Sumbat (923-958) and inhabited by Gurjs (Georgians).

In 980, the throne of the unified Georgia encompassing Abkhazian Kingdom was inherited by King Bagrat, son of King David Courapalates. Destruction of the rebelled warlord Bardas Skleros by Georgians happened in the same period. Georgian, Byzantine and Armenian chronicles unequivocally confirm this fact. Thus, foundations of the mighty Georgian kingdom had been laid long before the ascent of King Tamar to the throne. It happened during the reign of King Bagrat III who has established the unified Georgian-Abkhazian Kingdom (980). The outset of the XI c. when King Bagrat III unified all Georgian lands under his crown Revival of the country in political and intellectual terms had started Seljuk invasions in the second half of the XI century suspended development of the country and revealed the whole horror of the occupation by barbarians. However, David the Builder took the advantage of advance of Crusaders against the Turks, who were forced to concentrate their army in Asia Minor to oppose them. This has considerably diminished their dominance in Transcaucasia and King David became able to unify Georgia, and extend the country's territory from the Black to Caspian Sea, from the Caucasus Mounts to current province of Kars. Being 16 when ascending the throne, David inherited ruined country: East Georgia

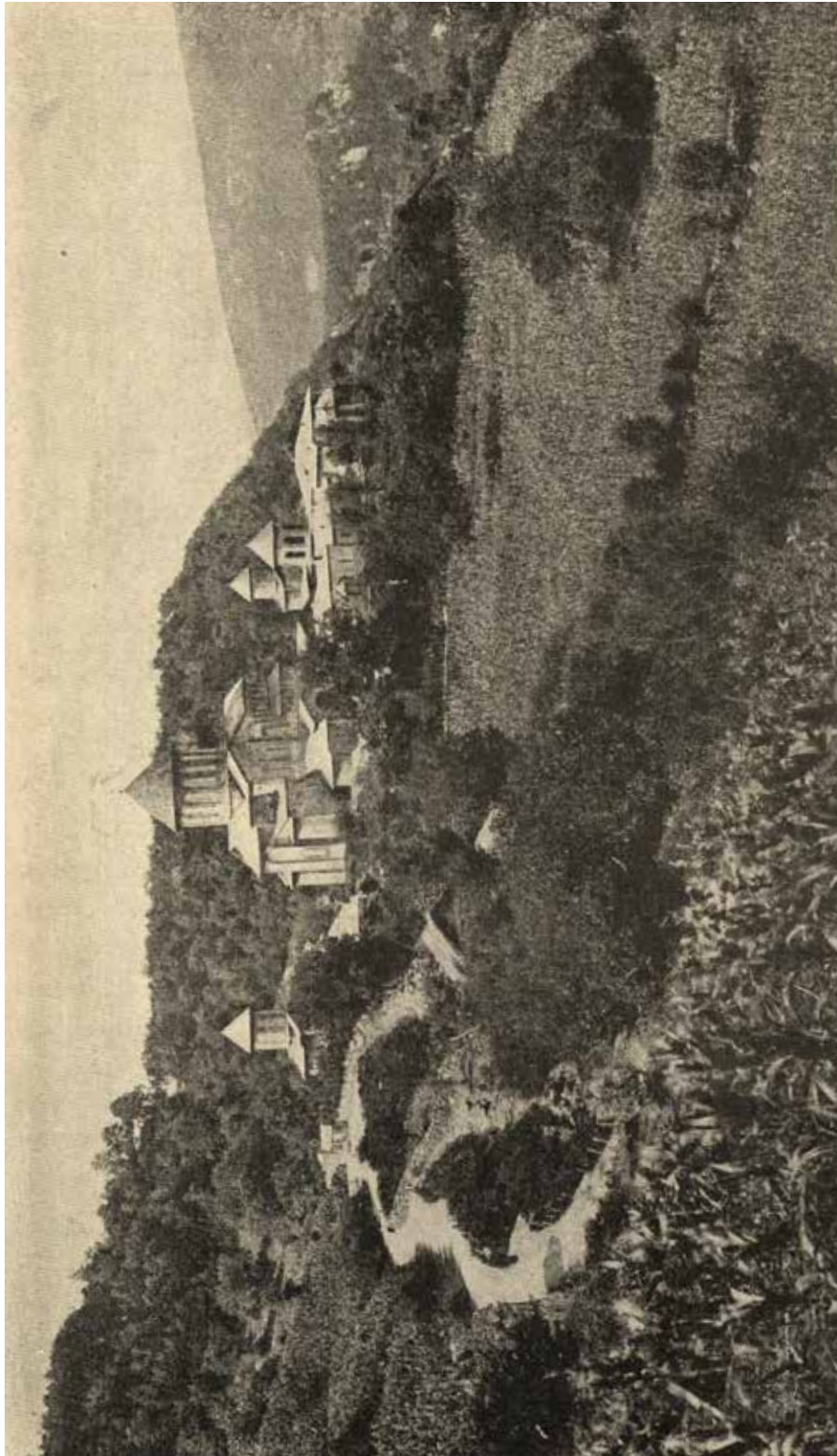
was under Turkish, yoke Byzantine Emperors dominated the West with the excuse of protection of Orthodoxy there. Barbarian Turkish tribes were marauding in the surroundings of Tiflis, Persians raging the state borders and Armenians kept never-ending invasions. The new King faced the mission that seemed almost impossible to accomplish: restoration of shattered country.

As mentioned above, David IV made Georgia the most powerful Kingdom both in terms of military and civic might. As soon as he learned about the invasion of Constantinople by the Crusaders, the King liberated Tiflis and the surrounding territories putting the end to robbery and lawlessness incurred by the enemies.<sup>10</sup>

Weakening of Muslim horde strengthened Georgia, allowing dispatching of the supplementary military forces to the Crusaders for liberation of the Holy Land. David IV incorporated Svaneti, Ossetia, Dagestan and Kakheti into his realms. He expelled Turks from all Georgian fortresses and after liberation of his Kingdom from the enemies and establishment of his undisputed royal authority all over the country David IV directed all his resources to education of the people and internal administrative arrangement of the kingdom. He introduced the system of new administrative units- provinces (saeristavo) with appointed heads of local bureaucracy-the eristavs. Spread of various doctrines denying Christianity, negligence of civic authority by the clergy, moral decline of the society during the domination of external invaders served as the key reasons triggering David the Builder to convene the Church Council in 1103 and develop the Code of Canonic

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10. Conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders took place in 1204, during the reign of King Tamar (1184-1213), not David IV the Builder-Ed.



**GELATI MONASTERY**

Laws. It is the first legislative monument of Georgia preserved up-today. The Council excommunicated and dismissed the bishops who were not consecrated, filed the claim to the Court against the refractory priests and dismissed the clergymen of the lower ranks gone astray. The Council endorsed the Orthodox religion and developed internal and external legislative regulations.

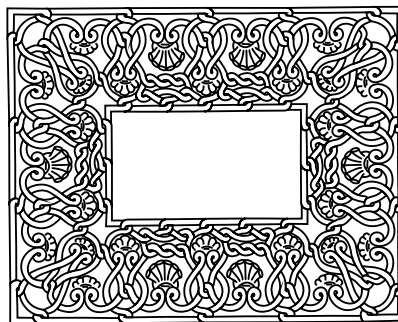
David established the organized schools with the curriculums covering religion, grammar, mathematics, customary law and official legislation and music.

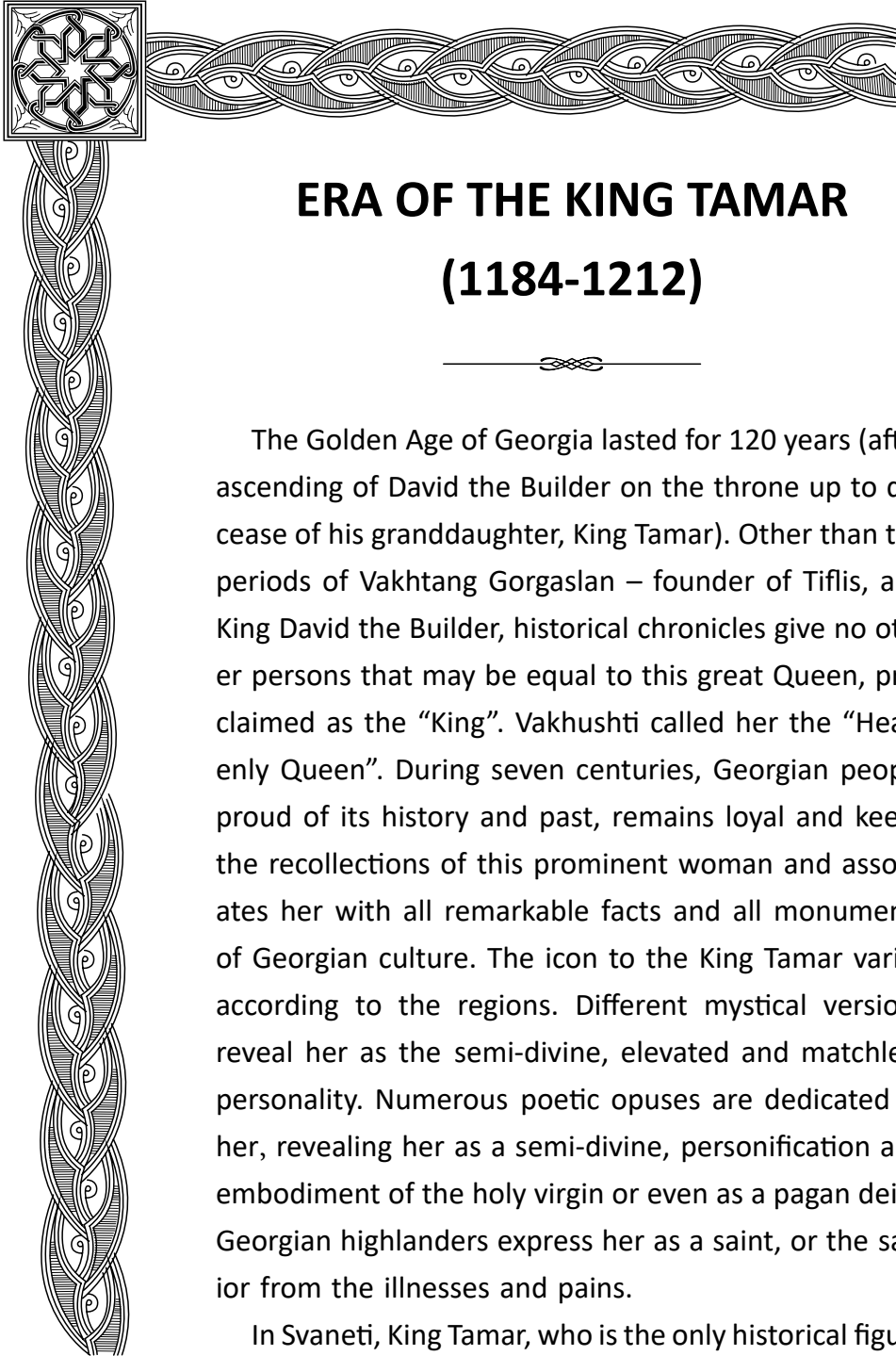
Many of the famous persons, including Shota Rustaveli obtained education in Iqalto Academy, the first Rector of which was Arsen of Iqalto. David the Builder sent the youth to the Mount Athos for further education and namely, translation of theological and philosophical essays. David was a good translator and Christian himself. In his leisure time he read theological books, spent vast sums for construction of churches, including Gelati Monastery – one of the most beautiful samples of Georgian architecture. He built hospitals and shelters in his widely extended Kingdom and designated lands for churches and monasteries. His charity also reached far beyond the Kingdom. He always richly donated churches in Jerusalem, the Monastery on Mount Athos and churches in Syria. He erected St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai preserved up-today. His kindness and care were not limited with construction of churches and monasteries but he paid much of his attention to improve communications with the distanced provinces in the Kingdom, building new and restoring and upgrading roads and bridges ruined during the invasions. He reorganized and rectified legal and social administration of the Kingdom and introduced written guidelines and

directions for public servants that included elements of customary law and rights common for each particular province the servants were to govern.

David died young, in the age of 53 leaving the powerful and orderly Kingdom to his heirs. Georgian people gave him the name “Builder” and the church canonized him. On his deathbed he announced his will to be buried in front of Gelati Monastery entrance gates thus allowing all the pilgrims entering the gate pray for his soul. He ordered to move the gates from Derbent (the city conquered by David) to Gelati Monastery. One of the wings of this gate still exists.

One can see granite gravestone at the entrance of Gelati Monastery with the inscription in Georgian – the excerpt from the psalm: “This is my resting place forever and forevermore; so do I wish, here shall I dwell”. An inscription in Arabic can still be seen on the gate wing that reads: “For the Lord, Chief and Serein Shavur bin al-Phadli. Forged by the blacksmith Ibrahim bin Uthman bin Mallakhun 455 Hegira.” (1077 AD).





## ERA OF THE KING TAMAR (1184-1212)

The Golden Age of Georgia lasted for 120 years (after ascending of David the Builder on the throne up to de-  
cease of his granddaughter, King Tamar). Other than the  
periods of Vakhtang Gorgaslan – founder of Tiflis, and  
King David the Builder, historical chronicles give no oth-  
er persons that may be equal to this great Queen, pro-  
claimed as the “King”. Vakhushti called her the “Heav-  
enly Queen”. During seven centuries, Georgian people  
proud of its history and past, remains loyal and keeps  
the recollections of this prominent woman and associ-  
ates her with all remarkable facts and all monuments  
of Georgian culture. The icon to the King Tamar varies  
according to the regions. Different mystical versions  
reveal her as the semi-divine, elevated and matchless  
personality. Numerous poetic opuses are dedicated to  
her, revealing her as a semi-divine, personification and  
embodiment of the holy virgin or even as a pagan deity.  
Georgian highlanders express her as a saint, or the sav-  
ior from the illnesses and pains.

In Svaneti, King Tamar, who is the only historical figure  
in memory of the local population as the Queen warrior,  
has become the object of worship and at the same time,  
the ideal of the magic beauty.



The folk tunes sung by Svans are odes to the beloved Queen featured bearing the golden crown and garments embroidered and embellished with precious stones.

Tradition claims her to be liberal and generous. The legend says: Once when the queen was to depart for Gelati Monastery to attend the service, dressed in royal gowns and crowned, she was told about the begging women standing at the courtyard gates. She dispatched her maids to see for the poor and tell her to wait a while. Leaving the courtyard the queen looked for the poor but she was already gone. Concerned and aggrieved for being late and unable to help the woman, she removed her crown in Gelati Cathedral and put it to the crown of the holy virgin.

Historical novels, local legends and sagas tell about life of Tamar (1184-1212). According to Russian and Georgian historians, Tamar married the son of the Russian Grand Prince, Andrey Bogolyubsky who was famous for his victories over Turks in Kars and Ararat provinces. However, the marriage, due to the reasons unknown to us, was annulled and George fled to Constantinople. Tamar agreed on the second marriage. She had to select the spouse amongst numerous suitors, including Polikarpos – presumably the descendant of the Byzantine Emperor and the son of Sultan of Isfahan. She opted for the Prince of Ossetia, David Soslan who like Tamar, was the descendant of the Bagrationi dynasty. The first husband, George could not tolerate loss of the royal throne and entered Georgia accompanied with the Greek Army. Despite the aid he enjoyed from his supporters – Princes of Klarjeti and Samtskhe – his army was defeated and



**KING TAMAR**

George was brought to the Queen. Tamar, being of kind soul, liberated him under the condition that he would leave Georgia forever.

At the same time, Georgia was at war with Persians, Saracens and Turks that were insistent in their claims against the country even during the Golden Age of Georgia.

Soslan has taken the field against Persians, gained several brilliant victories and returned with rich spoils, trophy, captives, horses, camels, gold and silver after conquering Ganja. After the certain period of time, Tamar dispatched her army to expulse Turks from Kars; the enemy fled as soon as Georgian army came to the field and surrendered the fortress without a single shot.

Rukn ad-Din, the famous Sultan of Aleppo, surprised by the victory of Iberian army, dispatched 800 000 soldiers – strong force against Georgia as the historical chronicles say.

He warned the Queen about his invasion pledging he would have mercy on her if Tamar married him. He also pledged mercy to every single person who would convert into Islam.

However, when the envoy of Rukn ad-Din echoed these conditions in the grand audience, the commander of armed forces Zakaria Mkhargdzeli responded with the terrible blow dropping the envoy half-dead. The challenge was accepted, which meant war. Georgian army met Sultan's overwhelming force at Basiani raging the first attack. Georgian army won the battle. Turks were expelled, many of them captivated and their weaponry captured.

The immense riches gained by King Tamar in the wars entailed conflict between Georgia and Byzantium.

The Byzantine greedy Emperor – Alexios Angelos was informed that the Queen would give rich donations to Georgian Churches in the Holy Land. He robbed the monks traveling to Jerusalem through Constantinople. The King Tamar in her fury declared war to Byzantium, conquered Trabzon and some other provinces in South of the Black Sea shore. She founded the Trabzon Empire out of these lands and delegated it to Alexios Komnenos, aiming at prevention of further dissemination of Islam in Caucasus and Asia Minor.

Influence of Tamar spread far beyond Ossetia and Caucasus mountains. Highlanders recognized victory of her Army and were baptized. The military were followed by Georgian priests and merchants and thus, commercial activity and Christianity were spread along the rivers Mtkvari, Alazani and Tergi.

The legends associate Tamar with construction of all remarkable churches and fortresses in Georgia, which by the way is not far from reality as most of these churches and fortress were built in the era of Tamar.

She has left the indelible trace during her reign. The stone fortresses built in the mountains of Georgia manifest her glory. The churches and crosses erected in high rocks, deep in the forests, on the shores of two Seas and beyond are mute witnesses of her wisdom and power. The best poetic monument of Tamar is “Vardzia”, where the “Rose Palace” was carved in the steep caves in Zemo Kartli, near Akhaltsikhe. These caves are still recognized as the most beautiful pearl of the Queen’s crown; the palace consisted of at least 360 halls. Visitors are still able to see the remnants of this great residence where,

between the cells and corridors they can find the ruined great church with the mural frescos one of which is the fresco of Tamar herself. The fresco, emerging unexpectedly above the ruins, gives strange emotions to visitors. According to the legend, Tamar is buried next to the church, under the dome but a real place of her burial is unknown. Some say it is the Gelati Monastery, others indicate Svaneti; local residents of Racha claim the Queen rests there.

Residents of different regions of the country, driven by the desire to honor and be close to their beloved queen, claim her grave is located in their lands.

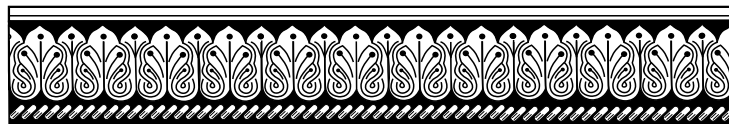
Reign of Tamar was distinguished not with great military might only, but longstanding peace achieved as a result of her glorious campaigns. Peaceful development facilitated flourish of science and arts, especially development of Georgian literature which was under influence of three civilizations: Arabic, Persian and Byzantine. Famous writers of the Courtyard take Georgian language to the highest point of perfection.

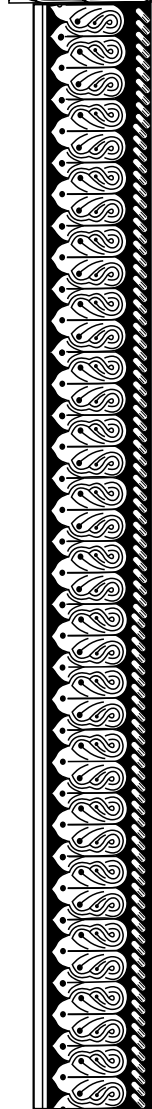
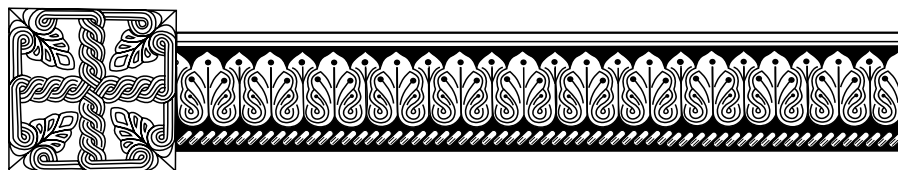
Two great poets – Shavteli and Chakhrukhadze describe the reign of Tamar and give odes to her. Talented writers – Khoneli and Sargis-Mtogveli also tell about brilliance and glory of Tamar but the fame of these classic writers is shadowed by the greatness of Shota Rustaveli who is worshiped by every Georgian.

Every Georgian knows and reads his famous poem “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin”. The extracts from the poem serve as the proverbs and aphorisms. There is no Georgian who does not know at least some of the extracts from the poem by heart. The poem is penetrated

with depth of reason and heat of the feelings. After seven centuries, this book is equal to the New Testament and the Deeds of Apostles with its educational and didactic value. Glory and welfare of Georgia were gone after decease of Tamar. It is noteworthy that in Georgia the greatest human dignity for women - high moral is associated with St.Nino, while combat heroism and administrative wisdom - with King Tamar.

Nino and Tamar are the most frequently used names in Georgia.

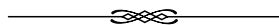




## **History of Georgia**

### **DIVISION INTO THE INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS**

### **(XIII-XVII centuries)**



The XII century was the era of the highest political and intellectual development of Georgia; vital force of Georgian people was very rapidly and widely consumed in the eras of David the Builder and the King Tamar; the moral and physical resources of the nation were expired and thus, Georgia is ready for free fall. During the reign of the heirs of the Great King Tamar, high Georgian society, Kings and Princes already showed the signs of moral decay. Shortly after King Tamar's death, one of the Commanders of Genghis Khan attacked Georgians and whipped the army units commanded by King George, who was immoral and philanderer Prince. In a couple of years, Georgia was invaded by Jalal ad-Din, the master of Khorezm, who was earlier defeated by Genghis Khan. The "Georgian Chronicles" describe the damage inflicted to the country by this invasion: "Everything is destroyed. Only fortress and towers stand non-ruined but the dwelling houses are demolished due to the Georgian Kings and Princes, who totally forgot the God, laws, moral and order and entered into discord and hatred towards each other". Jalal ad-Din captured the Commander of Georgian Army and tortured

him after his refusal to accept Islam. Georgia slowly recovering after this devastating invasion became the battlefield again. In 1236, Mongolian army commanded by Genghis Khan, conquered Armenia, Shirvan and Azerbaijan and invaded Georgia. The Princes fled from the city and surrendered it to the enemies. In three years, Mongols dominated over the whole country.

Despite the arrival of catholic missionaries in Georgia no real military aid came from the Holy See, and Queen Rusudan, disappointed by waiting in vain for any tangible support from the Popes Gregory X and Honorius III, agreed to negotiate with Mongols sending them the heir to secure the rights of succession in her kingdom. Purportedly Mongols agreed but effectively they were ones who would decide whom to put on the throne, to elevate or deprive in rights and honor, punish and pardon. Their despotism had no limits: they were easily awarding the titles to Georgian Princes and depriving their glory with the same simplicity. Georgia had several Kings at the same time all unable to eliminate disorders. Instead to be unified against the common enemy, Georgia was divided into various parts. The population suffered heavy labor and high tax burden. 1/10 of Georgian men served in Mongol army, so that by 1258 Georgia was providing 90.000 -men-strong army to Mongols.

Based on this figure, the Academician Brosset calculated the population of Georgia achieving 4.5 million at that period. Other than military service, the population was under the monetary taxes and agricultural duties. If tolls were delayed children were taken away from the households to secure the payments.

Besides, Georgian merchants had to pay 15 florins for the right to trade goods 1000 drachma of value. The pasture fees for the cattle were "Taipa" (Kapcher).



Destructed and fractioned Georgia was in the grave situation. The population was under constant fear of Mongols. Never-ending invasions took the country to the edge of destruction. Moral decay befell on Georgia above all troubles. King Demetre II married the daughter of the Emperor of Trabzon and several other women. The Princes followed his example with pleasure. The representatives of the royal family and the royal princesses married Mongols. In 1279, the devastating earthquake during the lent ruined the churches of Atskuri and Mtskheta.

After extreme decline Georgia enjoyed the short period of peace during the reign of King George V called “the Magnificent” who gave happy and relaxing days to the country. Upon ascending the throne, he traveled throughout his realms and enforced law and order everywhere. He visited the highlands as well, compiled and edited the particular Code “Dzeglisdeba” for the locals, one of the oldest law codes in the history of Georgian Law. Later this Code was incorporated into the Code created by King Vakhtang VI. In those times, Mongol Empire was weakened. George V took this advantage and extended the borders of the kingdom. He conquered Armenia, Hereti, Rani and land inhabited by Lezgians. He subordinated the Khan of Shirvan and reconquered all the territories previously taken away from Georgia. This was the era of peace and accord, alas the short one. Though, this peaceful time is well documented by numerous church inscriptions all over the country. Peace lasted till the invasion of Tamerlane from Samarkand (1387). Tiflis was completely destroyed. In 1393, during the new invasion, Tamerlane overrun the whole country and returned for the third time couple of years later. For 20 years Georgia had not a single day of peace. As a re-

sult of merciless attacks of Tamerlane, Georgia was again divided into semi-independent provinces hostile to each other for a long time.

Total disorder, hatred between the Kings and Princes, torture of defeated parties and destruction of the country by the invaders – was the grave reality of Georgia. History of Imereti clearly shows the outcomes of division of the nation, the strength of which lies in unity. Instead of the united nation-state, destruction and political disagreement ruled.

State affairs deteriorated to the extent that one could think of certain occult supernatural power pushing Princes into the whirlpool of rabid hate and never-ending wars. Sometimes, Kings attempted to achieve peace and agreement but even the minor things were enough to undermine those desires and disorders and feuds were back again. External invasions facilitated this situation. Princes, temporarily calmed down, would resume disorders. Georgian Kings, we may say, were very unfortunate being subject to constant invasions.

Besides, two years after the Ecumenical Council of Florence (1438) (The reference is to Ferrara-Florence Church Council, - Ed.) where the representatives of Georgian Church refused to sign the Act on Ecclesiastic Union, the Governor of Tabriz invaded Georgia. They conquered Tiflis and returned with great spoils. Georgian people, left impoverished, were unable to pay the tax for restoration of the churches, imposed by the central power and thus, the tax was annulled. It should also be noted that Georgian Kings and Princes were preparing to participate in the Crusade against Muslims urged by the Pope Pius II in 1460. The undertaking was not realized due to discord between the European ambassadors in Venice. The wedding

of the daughter of King George VIII of Georgia to the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI Palaiologos also failed due to siege of Constantinople by Turks.

In 1453, after Turks occupied Constantinople, they started to intervene in the internal affairs of West Georgia. At the same time, East Georgia was under Persian domination. Turks and Persians, purportedly striving for reconciliation of Georgian kingdoms, – in reality were facilitating aggravation of hostilities between the regions, disagreements between fathers and sons, putting brothers against brothers and thus, trampling the dignity and independence of the country. Islam was rapidly distributing over the remnants of Christianity. Starting from the XVII century, Muslim Kings substituted each other on the throne of the Kingdom of Kartli. King Vakhtang V Shah Nawaz including, the first king of the Mukhrani branch of Bagrationi dynasty, and King Vakhtang VI, who converted into Islam, though according to his self-estimation, only ostensibly, were among them. King Archil of Kakheti (1664-1706) though holding Persian title had fundamental disagreements with Persian Shah regarding confessional issues, remained the devoted Christian.

He was the sincere follower of national religion, a good theologian, restorer of churches. People, for these virtues, called him “Father” or “The Magnificent King”. His reign was full of mistakes common for that period; he ascended the throne twice – in Kartli and Imereti and spent his last days in exile in Russia leaving behind the poem “Archiliani” where biographic data of King Teimuraz and the important information about history of ancient Georgia and its morals and ethics are preserved.

At that, most of the Kings were far from the resolute support of those ideas and morality. They acted solely



**QUEEN KETEVAN**

according to their dynastic interests being ready to renounce their faith committed to sell women in slavery for harems, support spread of Islam, Persian or Turkish customs in their subjects.

Principles of Muslims included still persistent remnants of paganism that contradicted Christian religion and its basic dogma of “Holy Trinity”. Concerns pertaining these issues are clearly stated by catholic missionaries and Russian ambassadors as well. The representatives of high society proved their total moral decay: Georgian noblemen were inclined towards instinct-driven relations, incest and divorces became frequent. Some of the Kings accepted Islam became example of such behavior. Fortunately, there were people with astonishing moral power and unwavering will, but in scarcity. For instance, Queen Ketevan of the divine beauty, showed the intact morality, and despite torture and martyrdom she remained faithful Christian. In 1624, on Public Square in Shiraz she was stripped off, and tortured - burning her body with red-hot metal and putting embers over the open wounds. Despite terrible pains she stood resolute and remained faithful of her religion. Viewing her unshakable devotion to Christianity torturers plunged her into the red-hot barrel head-down. She died as a Christian martyr. Queen Ketevan was canonized and her relics were rested in the Church of Namur in Belgium by the Catholic priests witnessing her martyrdom.

Unfortunately, the enemies proved to be smarter and stronger against Georgia weakened by internal confrontations and disorders. Vigorous and strong people hoped for better fate than that of the Queen Ketevan. It's hard to imagine the country worse than Georgia in the XVII century – where partisanship and petty selfishness prevailed so much over the interests of the homeland and over the issues that mattered for the universal well-be-

ing of the country. Georgian society, lacking solid relations was significantly affected.

Some notes related to Saakadze, also known as “Mouravi” (military officer) can shed a light on this period. A good-looking, well-built and eloquent conservationist, brave and daring man Saakadze attracted public attention at the very first glance. King Simon of Kartli awarded him the title of “Tarkhan”<sup>11</sup> and King George X granted him the title of Mouravi”. Saakadze, at 26 became the personal councilor to King Luarsab. Ambitious and vainglorious Georgian aristocracy saw to immense increase of the authority of Saakadze, descendant of lower ranks of Georgian nobility. They set a whole set of plots against him, even demanding the King his immediate expulsion from the court and dismissal from all positions, but the invasion of Turks impeded the aristocracy in plotting against him.

Mouravi assumed the mission to save the country when the part of Georgian army led by the best Commanders was totally defeated by Turks. He personally participated in the battle at Mtkvari bank by the side of his soldiers. Georgian army decapitated Pasha and presented the head to the King. Turks defeated by Georgian army retreated. The King in person visited Saakadze in his house to express his gratitude and seeing his sister, was charmed by her beauty. Despite the wise advises of the Queen - Mother and Saakadze himself, the King decided to marry sister of Saakadze. The high aristocracy considering this unequal wedlock as an insult to the throne, decided to conspire against the family of Mouravi. Saakadze, being warned about the bloody plot, sought shelter in the house of his father-in-law – Prince

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11. Giorgi Saakadze was living in the period of King Simon II, but with the title of “Tarkhan” was granted his son Ioram by the king Rostom – Ed.

of Aragvi. The palace of Mouravi was demolished by his enemies and Saakadze himself left for Persia to have revenge on Luarsab. He offered Shah to conquer Kartli and Shah, to test his loyalty, sent him to the war against India and then Turkey. When the news about Saakadze's victories reached the mounts and gorges of Kartli, poets composed odes and panegyrics glorifying him. Shah, fervent by these great successes decided to punish and purge Georgians with sword and fire. Luarsab and Teimuraz fled from Kakheti out of fear of the invader and found shelter in Imereti but the Shah, being smart and slay assured King Luarsab in his unshakable friendship and invited him to his palace; however, as soon as Luarsab arrived in Persia, Shah ordered to kill him and substituted him with Muslim Bagrat V (1616-1619).

Teimuraz was dethroned. Shah sent the Persian military formation to Kakheti under the command of Jesse of Kartli. Almost immediate of Shah's departure from Kartli, his puppet ruler was killed and Teimuraz was restored on the throne. In 1617, infuriated Shah accompanied by Saakadze attacked Georgia. He destroyed everything on his way, shed rivers of blood, burned cities to ashes, robbed monasteries, icons and crosses were trampled and blasphemed, their precious embellishment removed and given to the women in Shah's harem.

On Easter, they exterminated 6000 monks in David Gareji Monastery. Shahs appropriated the precious relic of Mtskheta, the Seamless Robe of Jesus and send it to Moscow<sup>12</sup>. Infliction of heavy destructions was not the only aim of Shah. 60.000 locals were taken hostages and exiled to Persia. Only thanks to unshakable loyalty of sev-

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12. Shah himself spread misleading information about the Robe of Jesus, the fact of sending the Robe of Jesus is mentioned in Russian sources – Ed.

eral people to Christianity, ideas of national independence and care for national rites and customs, Georgian people preserved moral superiority over invaders, bearing hopes for restoration of the ruined and depopulated country. Dethroned King Teimuraz hoped to receive aid from the Sultan and Russian Tsar, but his appeals all were in vain.

The person, who inflicted those terrible devastations over Georgia – Saakadze, became the savior of the country. Witnessing all calamities of the invasion he became heavily oppressed with the sense of terrible guilt, bearing most bitter feelings for King Luarsab's merciless murder. Just then several Georgian noblemen were shamelessly killed in the tent of the commander of Persian expeditionary forces - Qarachaqay Khan.

This served as the last drop for Saakadze's and the nation's patience. He took the advantage, set people against the enemies and rebelled. Iranian army was completely crashed and Qarachaqay Khan was decapitated by Mouravi himself. Kartli and Kakheti were liberated. Governance of Kartli was entrusted to Kaikhosro, the representative of Mukhrani branch of the house of Bagrationi, while Teimuraz was restored on the throne of Kakheti. Saakadze, the initiator and advocate of disasters earlier, now became the national hero and absolute patron of the country. He was called the "Father of the nation"; in churches people prayed for his longevity. Aristocracy fascinated by the great heroisms of Saakadze, was converted into his loyal companion.

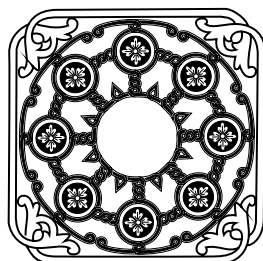
Now his heart was full of love for his homeland, aiming for total liberation of the country and ending-up sufferings and pains of the people. The Iranian Shah, being informed about betrayal of Saakadze and restoration of Teimuraz on the throne, massacred Saakadze's family held as hostages in Persia and tortured Queen Ketevan, King Teimu-

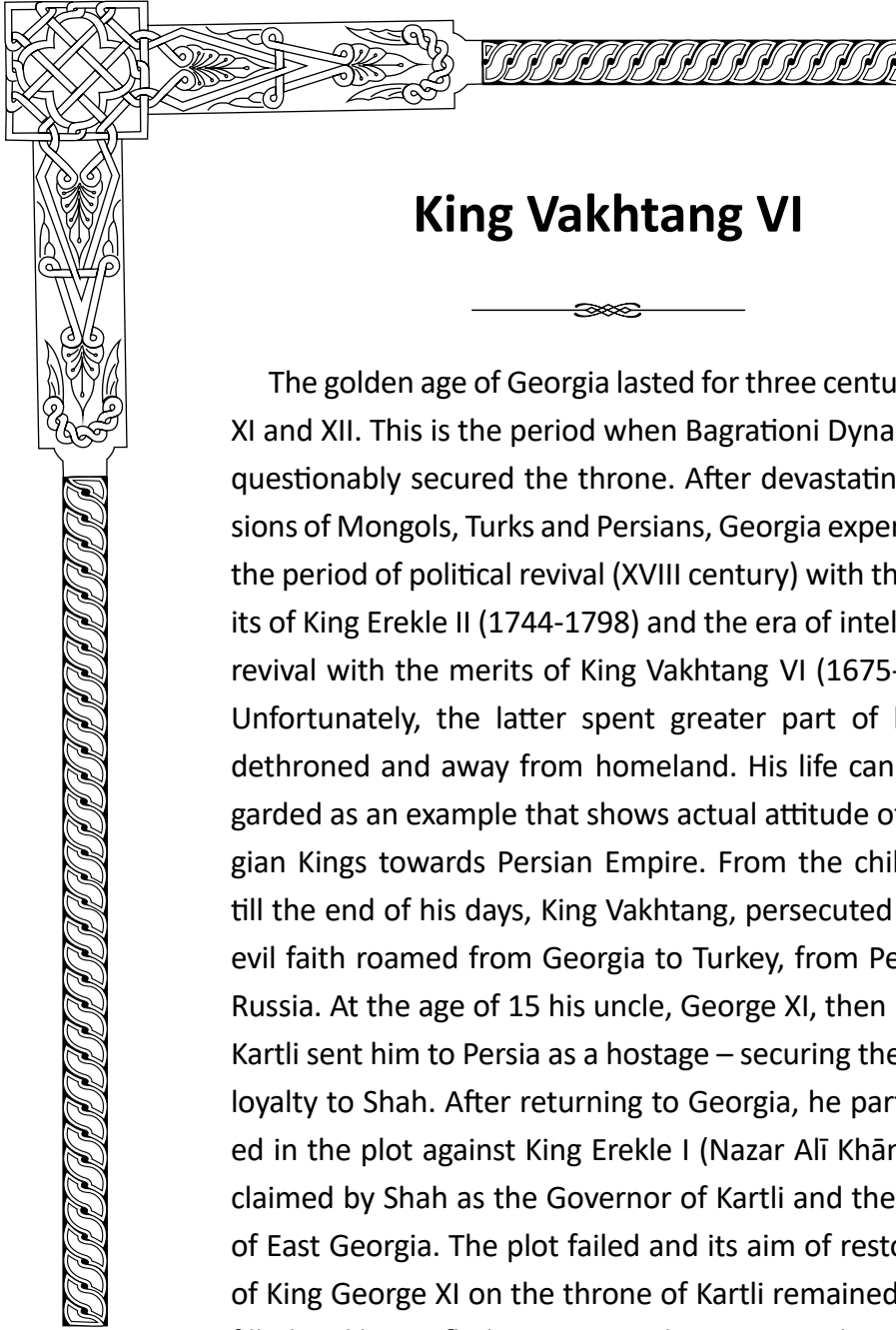


raz's mother. Her martyrdom was tolled above. Besides, Shah dispatched the powerful army to Georgia to punish the rebels. Saakadze accepted the challenge, gave the battle, but due to some unforeseen circumstances, was defeated. He made the decision to declare war on Shah and was as merciless to Persians as they were to Georgians. But due to Saakadze's terrible deeds in the past his minor failures overshadowed all of his heroic acts and caused distrust amongst people. He was regarded as a reason for all misfortunes and disasters. Despite the second defeat in Ksani battle, that opened the way for Rustam-Mirzah to Tiflis, Saakadze hoped that liberation of Georgia was still possible. He got in touch with Imereti, Samegrelo and Aragvi Princes and appealed to Turks for help.

His glory as of the brilliant military commander was once again affirmed in the victorious battle against Ossetians. Although, Georgia's leadership and people were even more convinced that Saakadze was unable to defeat Persians. Mouravi, betrayed by Georgian nobility and defeated in Bazaleti battle, fled to Constantinople. Here his military talents were once again revealed and he shortly gained the great fame all over the East. His fame contributed to the tragic death.

In the letter to her husband, the first Vizier Azamat, the lady talks about Constantinople news and states: "who is this famous person insulting your name?" Irritated vizier invited Saakadze and ordered to decapitate him (1629).





## King Vakhtang VI

The golden age of Georgia lasted for three centuries: X, XI and XII. This is the period when Bagrationi Dynasty unquestionably secured the throne. After devastating invasions of Mongols, Turks and Persians, Georgia experiences the period of political revival (XVIII century) with the merits of King Erekle II (1744-1798) and the era of intellectual revival with the merits of King Vakhtang VI (1675-1737). Unfortunately, the latter spent greater part of his life dethroned and away from homeland. His life can be regarded as an example that shows actual attitude of Georgian Kings towards Persian Empire. From the childhood till the end of his days, King Vakhtang, persecuted by the evil faith roamed from Georgia to Turkey, from Persia to Russia. At the age of 15 his uncle, George XI, then King of Kartli sent him to Persia as a hostage – securing the King's loyalty to Shah. After returning to Georgia, he participated in the plot against King Erekle I (Nazar Alī Khān), proclaimed by Shah as the Governor of Kartli and the whole of East Georgia. The plot failed and its aim of restoration of King George XI on the throne of Kartli remained unfulfilled. Vakhtang fled to Imereti where in 1694 he married the daughter of Circassian King, Rusudan. Nazar Alī Khān, the victor assigned his rival King George XI (Gurj-Khan) to suppress the revolt in Afghanistan and Beluchestan against Persia. For successful fulfillment of his assignment

of peace - enforcement in Kandahar, Shah awarded Gurj-Khan the throne of Kartli, by that time held by Vakhtang VI who, on his turn was enthroned as a result of dethronement of Nazar Alī Khān (1703).

The young King of Kartli (he was 28), also known as Hosayn-qolī Khan, was a vigorous governor of the country. He reigned during eight years (1703-1711) but even in this short period he achieved the greater progress for his homeland than his predecessors. He established the first printing house in Tbilisi, publishing both religious and secular books. He fluently spoke foreign languages and was well read in Oriental literature. He also became famous translator and the author of many original works. He edited and publishes the compendium of essays on the history of Georgia, and introduced new uniform Legal Code throughout the country that normalized all ancient laws and traditions of Georgia. Together with the establishment of administrative order, the King enacted strict fiscal order in the Kingdom and clarified taxes and dues for his subjects (Dastur-Lama).

He subordinated Imereti and Kakheti (Georgian Chronicles, vol II, 71), established order in their domestic affairs, demolished the fortresses where Ossetians and Lezgins were camping and protected the population from their invasions (Georgian Chronicles, vol II, 77).

Wise governance of Vakhtang had positive impact on welfare of Georgian people. Unfortunately, his reign was brief. Shah awarded him highest title of the King and appointed him as the Commander of Persian Army (1712).

Orders of Shah were to be strictly followed without any resistance. Kings had to abandon the thrones and leave the country at the mercy of chance and the vague circumstances.

Vakhtang immediately appeared in the Shah's Palace where he was received according to his title. To make ties closer, Shah offered Vakhtang to accept Islam. Vakhtang did not want to be converted and refused the offer. This entailed series of disasters lasting for all his life. First of all, Shah deprived him of the title of King and passed to his brother Jesse, a loyal Muslim.

Vakhtang sent his family to Imereti out of fear of persecution by the new King. Demoted Vakhtang, being dethroned was moved to Khirmani as he still posed threat to Jesse.

Jesse did not enjoy love of people for his immoral life and promiscuity. The reign of this renegade King was brief. After three years, Shah Husein, irritated by his inaptitude during the invasion of Lezgins, deprived him of the title and endorsed Vakhtang back on the throne of Kartli. Vakhtang "pretended" to accept Islam, but it was only a formality. In his 1718 letter to Russian Ambassador to Iran, Volinsky, Vakhtang made it clear that "if he refused the Christian doctrine, it was made not for his glory, not for his welfare but for rescue of his family from the jail. If he accepted the awful Muslim religion, he still remained Christian from his head to toe, reserving the hope that he would regain his true religion with the aid of His Majesty, the Emperor".

The Shah, recognized Vakhtang as the King of Kartli and at the same time appointed him Ispahsālār (army commander) of Iran and Tauri. Thus, he was forced to stay in Iran and to delegate his regal powers to his son – Bakar. The latter, opposite his father, was not as bold to suppress Lezgin invasions. At last, Vakhtang was allowed by Shah to return to Georgia and restore the order. He set to action immediately and severely punished his opponents.

In the shortest period, he tamed the highlanders but still could not stop their invasions once and for all. Still fragile authority of Vakhtang and his weak influence on highlanders was significantly undermined with his involvement in the Russia-Iran conflict.

Peter the Great for a long time was eager to gain access to Caspian Sea and establish commercial ports there.

Unforeseen circumstance put the end to his peaceful Desires. In 1722, Lezgins raided and devastated the city of Shamakhi which was of the great importance for Russian trade. The damage inflicted to Russian merchants, confirmed by the Ambassador of Russia to Iran, Volynskiy forced the King to switch sides. The Emperor got in touch with Vakhtang (1718), the Ispahsālār of Iranian army, who through mediation by Georgian Parsadan-beg, held the negotiations with Volynskiy offering the action plan against Persians.

In August, 1721, Volynskiy reported to the Emperor: “Georgian prince<sup>13</sup> (Vakhtang) appealed to us to introduce the plan of the alliance acceptable for Your Majesty to defeat the common enemy of Christianity. This implies the following: 1. Your Majesty is asked to send 5000 or 6000 people – strong unit to Georgia to reinforce the army of the country. This most likely will end discords noticed in Georgian aristocratic circles and if you send the armies, various parties would have to achieve agreement. 2. To facilitate the alliance with you, you are asked to send 10000 people or more to push Persians out of Derbent or Shamakhi, as far as if these cities are not

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13. As you see below, Vakhtang was discontent with mentioning him in this manner and wanted to prove to Russian authority that other countries recognized him as the King and signed: “Vakhtang, King of East Iberia” (see. Correspondence 22).

held, it would be difficult to start the war. 3. He appeals to you, Your Majesty to build the fortress on Tergi between Kabarda and Kozak-Grebenski and to deploy Russian garrison there to simplify and protect relations with Georgia". According to Volynskiy, the reasons provided by Vakhtang are not groundless.

Vakhtang did not stop at listing down those proposals and recommendations. He openly opposed his sovereign, the Shah, contacted Russia, promised Russian Emperor to rage war against Iran with his 30000-40000-men strong army and reach Isfahan, provided Russia would join in.

Arguments of Vakhtang and Volynskiy responded to the aspiration of the Emperor to oppose Turks in strengthening their stand in Caspian states, so in summer, 1722 Peter the Great decided to get involved in the war against Iran.

The prestige of the Emperor ensured his success in North Caucasus, and the governors of Tarki and Aksay surrendered without delay.

However, after conquering Derbent, the Emperor retreated and started construction of the new city (holy cross) between Argolan and Solah rivers, purposed to replace old, less reliable fortress of Terki, and to protect Russian borders. Retreat of the Emperor was an unexpected act for Vakhtang as they had agreed to join the armies between Baku and Derbent. Relying on Russia, he openly betrayed Shah and rejected alliance with Turkey as well in favor of Russia. Peter the Great, stationed in Shamakhi and Derbent, left the city due to lack of the equipment and ammunition and returned to Astrakhan. Georgians were even further concerned of those developments, as far as the day before leaving Derbent, the

Emperor of Russia was informed of Vakhtang, camped on River Mtkvari banks with 30000 men-strong army waiting for Russians to join him and to advance towards the city of Shamakhi (Butkov, I, 30).

Peter the Great sent his emissary Lieutenant Tolstoy to Vakhtang as the facilitator in talks with Iran aiming to convince the Shah to concede Caspian lands and all Christian territories to Russia. In return of this service, Peter the Great promised Vakhtang to provide Russian support against Persia. Upon arrival in Tiflis on November 6, Tolstoy found out that King Vakhtang had already left the capital, living the kingdom to his son, prince Vakhushti. He immediately sent a note to the Emperor about those developments. Prince Vakhushti, deeply disappointed by retreat of the Emperor, explained Tolstoy the grave outcomes of these actions - wrath of Shah and hostile attitude of Turks due to the alliance with Russia were unavoidable for Georgia. Provided that Georgians were to decline a new offer of alliance with Turkey, Pasha of Erzurum ordered by the Sultan, was expressing acute menaces was declaring his readiness to invade Georgia and destroy everything on his way. However, upon his return to Tbilisi Vakhtang still cherishing hopes for better outcome, was not inclined to give up and agreed to fulfill the assignment of the Emperor regarding the conversation with Shah. Certainly, Shah knew about the relations of the King with Russian Emperor.

Talks resulted in demotion of Vakhtang and his banishment as the traitor of the Suzerain. (January 30, 1723). Shah issued the order in Tiflis about delegation of the royal throne of Kartli to the King of Kakheti. The King of Kakheti immediately arrived in Tiflis but Vakhtang was not prone to concede the throne and fought for it but

was defeated – lost the throne and trust of the people, as well as support of the allies. Turks occupied the greater part of Georgia. Vakhtang left Tiflis seeking shelter in the mountains together with Tolstoy. Peter the Great issued the order on dispatching the dragoons from Astrakhan to Georgia in support of Vakhtang but it was no longer necessary as Georgia already was under Turks and Persians.

Ultimately, in 1724 King Vakhtang who had been residing in Imereti since 1723 was invited by the Emperor to Russia.<sup>14</sup> He ordered all local governors to at maximal extent ensure his secure movement.

Soon afterwards the state of affairs seemed to be once again favorable for Vakhtang, when, due to political circumstances, he could be of some use to Peter the Great's successor, Empress Katherine I, but due to the extensive costs for maintaining military units and unfavorable climate, Russian Government in 1726 made the decision about termination of intervention in domestic affairs of Persia. Russia would withdraw the troops from the provinces of Persia under the condition that the provinces would not be occupied by Turks.

Vakhtang was assigned the negotiations with Tagmaspe Shah. "By virtue of his experience and skills and taking into account his merits and prestige in this region, his enthusiasm and goodwill towards Russian interests" the King and his family were promised immunity in any case. Vakhtang left for Persia accompanied by Russian General, Vasil Dolgorukiy. As a result of the protracted talks mediated by King Vakhtang, Russian and Iranian

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14. Correspondence of Georgian Kings with Russian Kings within 1659-1770 (St. Petersburg, 1861), pg. LXXV-LXXIX, Butkov, C.L. p. 51.



Ministers agreed upon the terms offered by Ismail Beg, that envisaged Russia would get Derbent, Astrabat and all other lands stipulated under the agreement.

In 1722, Vakhtang was sent to Petersburg.<sup>15</sup> He renewed mediation with the Emperor about protection of Georgia from Turks inflicting heavy destructions all over the country, robbing the monasteries and forcing population to accept Islam. Vakhtang, through the Vice Chancellor Osterman was appealing to send one of his sons to Georgia, left without any apt ruler to end the disasters in the country. General Levashov, on his turn, informed the Emperor that Georgian refugees sheltered in his Kingdom, the Monastery of Holy Cross, were pleading the Emperor to send the “Son of Georgian King” to maintain and protect the territories that still were beyond the rich of Turks.

The Government of Russia considered it expedient to act against Persians and Turks, to restore Vakhtang or his son on the throne and support him by all possible means other than dispatching Russian army as it could cause termination of peaceful relations with Turkey.

On May 1, 1734 pursuant to the Decree of the Emperor, Vakhtang and his son left for Caucasus. As soon as they arrived Tiflis, a new Decree followed, that superseded the previous one, forcing Vakhtang and his son to return to Russia in 1736. Meanwhile, Turks and Persians kept on destructing the country as in Kartli, so in Kakheti.

King Teimuraz II of Georgia, son of Nicholas informed the Emperor about the grave situation in his country and appealed to send the Georgian Prince, son of Vakhtang—General Bakar to Georgia. The latter, through Duke Os-

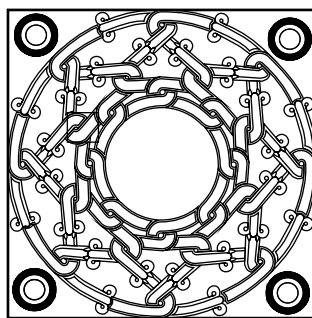
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15. King Vakhtang VI left to Russia in 1724 – Ed.

terman, resumed appealing the Emperor to help Georgians “with gunpowder, bullets and money, promising in return to serve for Russia and fight against the enemies of Russia and render friendly support”.

But all of a sudden the state of affairs changed drastically against Georgia. According to Ganja Decree, Russia conceded Baku, Derbent and Kuban Khanate to Persia, evacuated her military units from the Holy Cross fortress and withdrew the garrison to the left bank of Tergi River – in newly constructed fortress of Kizlyar.

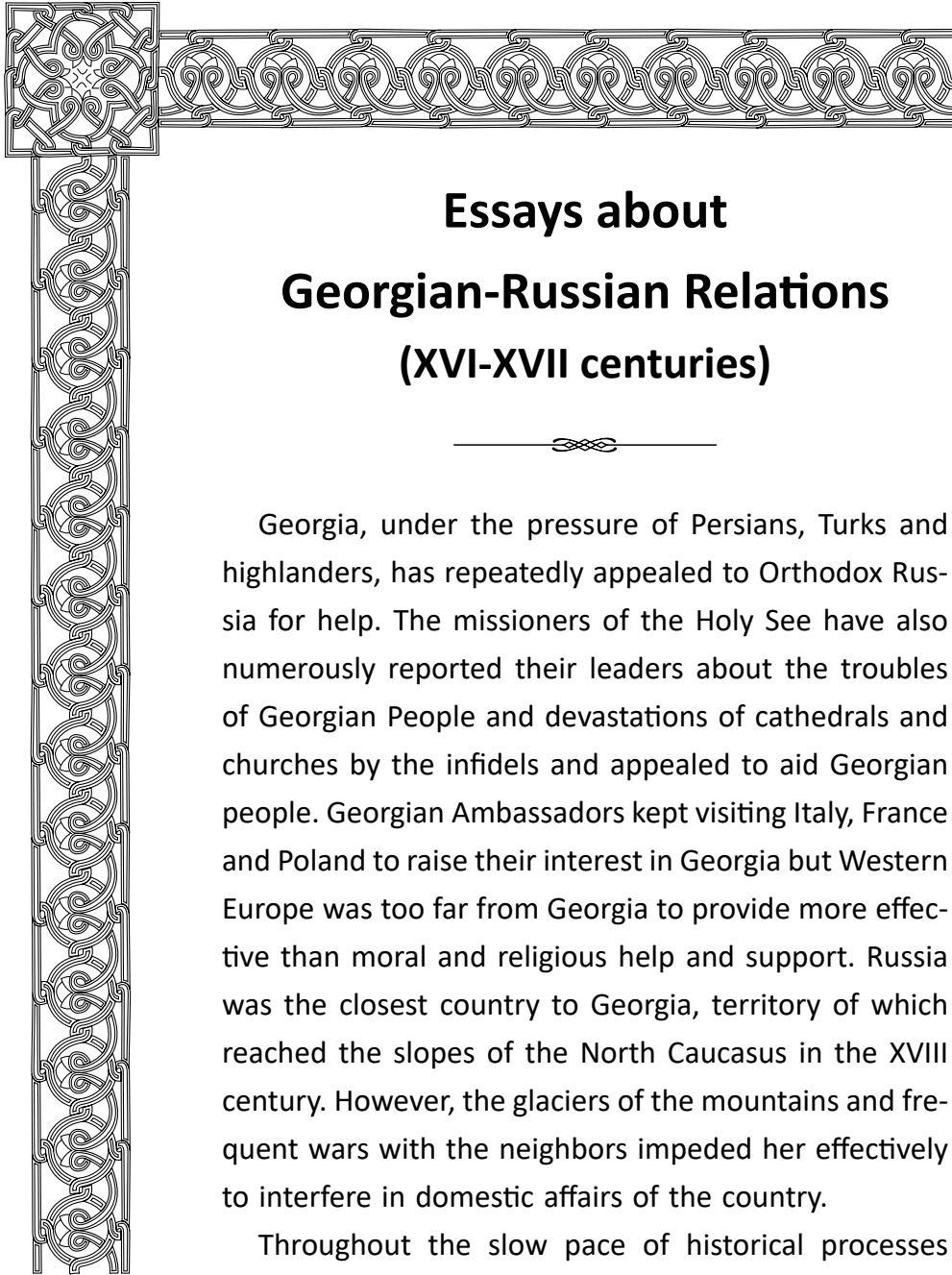
According to Georgian sources, Vakhtang arrived in Astrakhan. With no hope to ever see his homeland again, he lived in Astrakhan to the last day of his life. He was buried in the Cathedral (March 25-27, 1737).<sup>16</sup> In his poem “Davitiani”, Georgian poet, David Guramishvili, contemporary and close confidant of King Vakhtang, clearly reveals deep sorrow and despair of the King and of his retinue caused by the developments and misfortunes spelled over them.



16. In 1762, King Teimuraz II, the son-in-law of King Vakhtang, was buried next to his grave.



**KING EREKLE II**



## Essays about Georgian-Russian Relations (XVI-XVII centuries)

Georgia, under the pressure of Persians, Turks and highlanders, has repeatedly appealed to Orthodox Russia for help. The missionaries of the Holy See have also numerous reported their leaders about the troubles of Georgian People and devastations of cathedrals and churches by the infidels and appealed to aid Georgian people. Georgian Ambassadors kept visiting Italy, France and Poland to raise their interest in Georgia but Western Europe was too far from Georgia to provide more effective than moral and religious help and support. Russia was the closest country to Georgia, territory of which reached the slopes of the North Caucasus in the XVIII century. However, the glaciers of the mountains and frequent wars with the neighbors impeded her effectively to interfere in domestic affairs of the country.

Throughout the slow pace of historical processes the favorable time came, when Russian armies entered Trans-Caucasus to protect the population against permanent attacks and invasions.

Origins of Georgian-Russian relations are dated back to the IX and X centuries.

In the XII century, the Prince of Russia Iziaslav Mstislavovich married the Abkhazian princess – daughter of King Demetre I (1125-1154). His granddaughter, King Tamar (1184-1212) married the son of Andrey Bogolyubsky, Prince George as advised by the clergy and the Princes but the marriage turned unhappy. In couple of years, George went to Constantinople and in 1196 left Georgia forever.

As a result of Mongol occupation of Russia relations between the countries were terminated for a long time.

For the huge time span of XIII-second half of XVI c. it was only once when the relations were renewed for a short while – during the reign of Grand Prince Ivan III (1491-1492).

Relations were restored after the fall of the Khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan. This time, Turks occupied Constantinople and the title of the “Third Rome” moved to Moscow whom the Georgian King<sup>17</sup> appealed for help in 1557.

In 1567, Ivan IV received King Levan of Kakheti.

During the reign of Theodore and Boris the relations acquired almost constant nature: Russian and Georgian Kings were exchanging Ambassadors and sending each other valuable gifts.

However, promises about liberation of Georgia from enemies appeared vain. That’s why the representative of King Alexander – Archimandrite Kirill and the Secretary Saba expressed complaints against King Boris.

King Boris pledged to liberate Georgia from the enemies but in the same period, Shah has re-conquered Georgia, destroyed churches, robbed cathedrals and destroyed the holy relics venerated by the whole country.

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17. Means: King Levan of Kakheti (1518-1574)-Ed.



**PRINCE DAVID**

Instead of Russian military aid marriage between Russian and Georgian royal families was proposed.

Russian Ambassadors, Tatischev and Ivanov acting on behalf of their sovereign Boris, were tracing Georgian nobility to select a groom for their princess Ksenia Borisovna and a bride- for her brother.

King Vakhtang agreed to give his daughter Helen to Prince of Russia provided that she would stay in Georgia until full age. Boris soon died and due to disorders in Moscow, the negotiations about friendship and alliance with Georgia have been suspended again. They were restored only after the ascend of King Michael on the throne. Throughout the period of XVII-XVIII Georgian Kings have repeatedly swore loyalty to Russia, but domination of Russians in Caucasus has strengthened during the reign of the King Erekle II (1781-1793).<sup>18</sup> Erekle was glorious King indeed and skilled leader. He gave happy days to Georgia. In view of establishment of the external peace, King Erekle II of Kartli and Kakheti supported Russia against Turks in 1783, he concluded the agreement<sup>19</sup> with Catherine II that envisaged him become the Vassal of Russia with the reserved rights as follows: Bagrationi dynasty to reign in Georgia, independence of Georgian church led by the Catholicos, right of minting, and independence in domestic administration.

Muslim Kingdoms and highlanders who were repeatedly invading and devastating the country became concerned about this alliance. The formidable Shah of Persia - Agha Mohammad Khan, the eunuch (castrated by his predecessor- Adil-Shah Avshar) – severely revenged

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18. King of Kartli and Kakheti Erekle II (1762-1798) – Ed.

19. Means: the "Friendship Treaty" in the Georgievsk castle, between Russia and Kartli-Kakheti Kingdom – Ed.

on Erekle and destroyed Georgia (1795). Still trying to revive from the disaster, King Erekle died (1798). He left the unforgettable trace in the memory of Georgian people. He was called the hero of Caucasus.

His son, George XII ascended the throne with approval of Emperor Paul according to the Article III of 1783 Treaty, and David, son of George was recognized as his heir. Internal discords so common when it comes to nomination of the heir to the throne obliged George XII to appeal to Emperor Paul for recognition of Georgia as the Russian subject and delegate the title of the King to the heir.

This will was never fulfilled and during the reign of Alexander I, Georgia was annexed on September 12, 1801.

Lieutenant-General Kroning was appointed as the General Governor of the country. According to the will of his father and provisions of the Treaty of 1783, Crown-Prince David waiting for the pending recognition by Russia as the King, was sent to Russia.<sup>20</sup>

The Manifesto of Alexander I evidently reveal the reasons why the Georgian monarchy was overthrown: “the circumstances and the voice of the people triggered us to make the decision not to abandon the Orthodox nation to the devastating invasions of the enemies – the country which entrusted its fate to powerful Russia through the Treaty”.

Georgia, according to the order of the Emperor, was converted into the Russian province and was divided into five regions to be governed by the Governor, Commander Kroning II. One year later, he was replaced by General

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20. David was not sent in Russia. He was waiting to the insignias from the Russian Empire – Ed.



Tsitsianov – Russian man of Georgian origins. During his governance in 1804, the Prince of Samegrelo, (Gregory), Dadiani became the vassal of Russia. Last governor in Samegrelo, Prince David Dadiani died in 1853 leaving the daughter – Salome, and two sons – princes Nicholas and Andrew. Due to their minor age, their mother – Princess Catherine<sup>21</sup> was assigned as the regent over the principality in 1857. Shortly afterwards she was forced to resign and all authority was delegated to Russia.<sup>22</sup> Mamia Gurieli, Prince of Guria gave the military swear in Russian army only in 1810 and Guria became subject of Russia. Same year, Russia appointed its governor in Imereti thus converting the Kingdom of Imereti into the Russian province. The last King of Imereti Solomon fled to Turkey, where he died in 1815. Thus, Georgia, piece by piece was merging with Russia. Year after year, Russian language and culture were gradually spread in Georgia. In 1815 the first high school was established in Tbilisi, and the regulations of Trans-Caucasus schools were enacted with it. Georgian Orthodox Church became subordinate to Russian Holy Synod, with the Institution of Catholicos annihilated and replaced by Russian exarch as the head of local eparchies.

In 1846, according to the decision of Pope Pius IX and in consent with the Russian Emperor Nicholas I, Georgian Catholicos, as well as of other Caucasian countries fell under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Mogilev, seated in Saratov. Currently they are the subjects of Bishop of Tiraspol.

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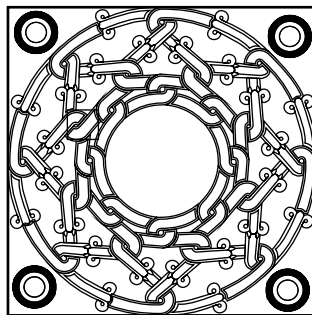
21. Means the daughter of the Prince Aleksandre Tchavtchavadze Catherine (1816-1882) – Ed.

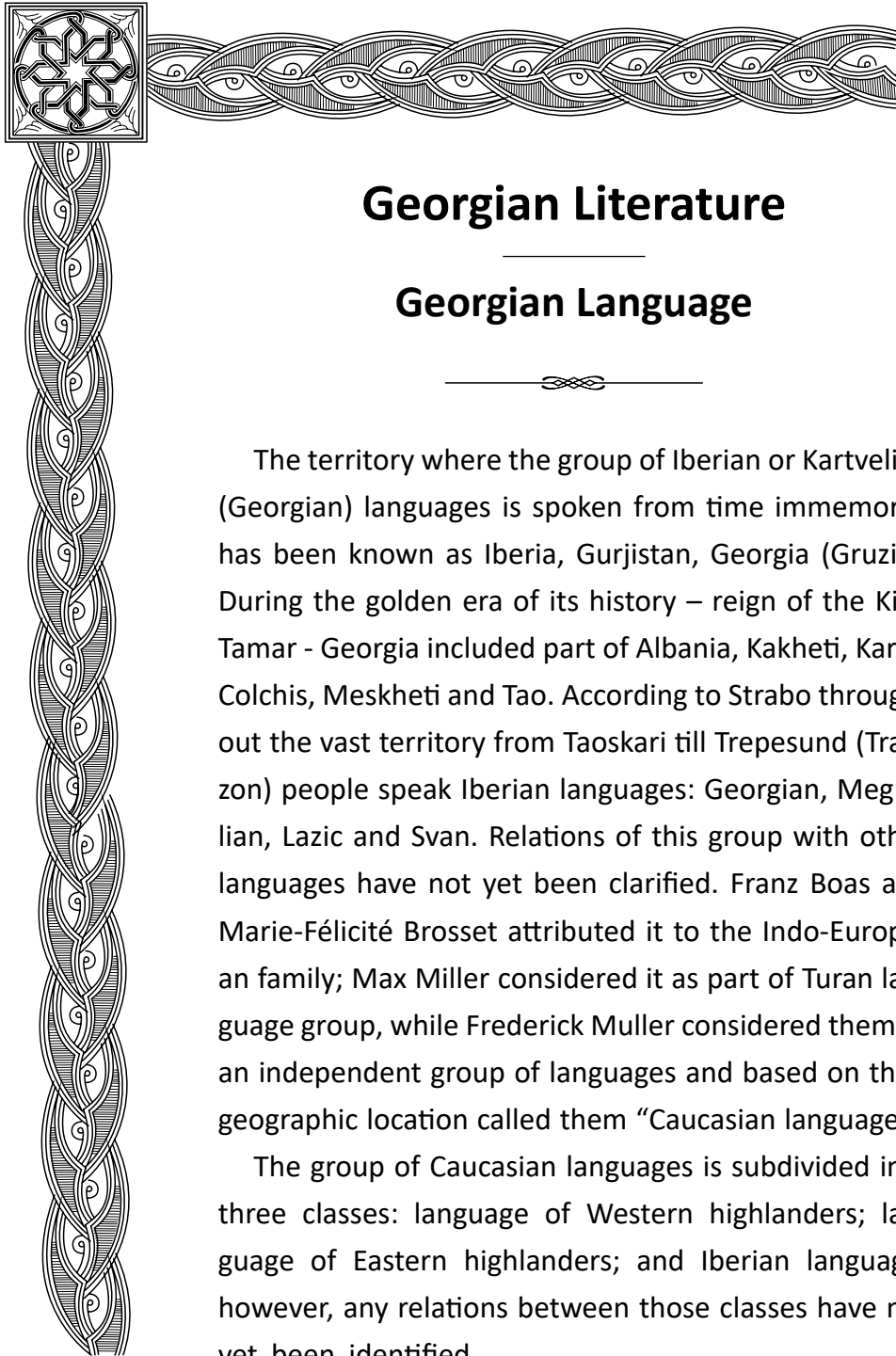
22. He gave his daughter – Salome to the French Prince, Achille Murat. They had one daughter and two sons, one of which served in French Army.

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After this brief review of the history of Georgia, it has clearly been outlined all the disasters and troubles the nation has suffered: calamities of constant hostilities, robbery and destruction, as if fire and sword were normal and natural throughout the nation's history.

It is surprising that such a small nation maintained not only its national identity but the religion, literature and language despite never-ending disorders, invasions and conquests by various countries. After being so severely tottered, this nation survived other far powerful countries; with utterly different system of administration, specific feudal organization, without any aid, with the strength and dear rarely seen elsewhere – Georgia survived up to the XIX century and relied on the powerful Orthodox country with the hope for peace, that is truly flourishing currently as a background for its intellectual development and contribution into the common European Civilization.





## Georgian Literature

### Georgian Language

The territory where the group of Iberian or Kartvelian (Georgian) languages is spoken from time immemorial has been known as Iberia, Gurjistan, Georgia (Gruzia). During the golden era of its history – reign of the King Tamar - Georgia included part of Albania, Kakheti, Kartli, Colchis, Meskheta and Tao. According to Strabo throughout the vast territory from Taoskari till Trepesund (Trapzon) people speak Iberian languages: Georgian, Megrelian, Lazic and Svan. Relations of this group with other languages have not yet been clarified. Franz Boas and Marie-Félicité Brosset attributed it to the Indo-European family; Max Müller considered it as part of Turan language group, while Frederick Müller considered them as an independent group of languages and based on their geographic location called them “Caucasian languages”.

The group of Caucasian languages is subdivided into three classes: language of Western highlanders; language of Eastern highlanders; and Iberian language; however, any relations between those classes have not yet been identified.

All samples of Georgian writing preserved up-to-day are attributed to the Christian era, including the most ancient

one – Ksani Gospel (on parchment) dated back by the VI century as determined by Georgian philologist, D. Bakradze.

Translation of the Gospel and the religions books in general has formed the literary language, which is closer to the ancient language than with the current spoken one. Gradually, once uniform Georgian language underwent various influences and transformations, was divided into several local dialects, for instance Gurian-Imeretian, Kartlian-Kakhetian, Pshav-Khevsuretian, Meskh-Ingilo etc. Of all other languages ancient Persian had greatest influence over Georgian having borrowed most of administrative terms from there. Persian is followed by the Greek language whose influence became particularly acute after translation of religious books and Greek theological and ethical compositions into Georgian. As a result of relations with many other Western and Eastern people lots of words were borrowed from Sanskrit, Arabian, Armenian and Turkish languages. It is noteworthy that in general Turkish influence is more noticeable in West Georgia, while the Persian impact can still be well traced in the Western part of the country. After Russian domination and spread of European civilization in Caucasus, Georgian language mastered numerous foreign words from the scientific, arts, military, administrative, social spheres and daily life.

Georgian literature comprises two different parts: verbal compositions – transmitted orally; and written – literature. Georgian literature comprises four stages: the ancient - covers the period of V-IX centuries, Classical - X-XII cc. New, that covers XIII-XVIII cc. and the last – modern stage from the XIX century up-today.

Prior to discussing these four periods, let's pay attention to the origin of Georgian writing. Georgia has two writing systems: Mkhedruli (secular alphabet) and Khutsuri (ecclesiastic alphabet). There are two versions about creation of the alphabet: according to the compendium of historical narratives "Georgian Chronicles", the first King of Georgia Pharnavaz is considered the creator of Georgian alphabet (III century B.C.) but the chroniclers do not provide the information whether it was "Mkhedruli" or "Khutsuri."

Armenian historians of the V century – Koryun and Movses Khorenatsi (Moses of Khoren) confirm that Armenian alphabet was created by Mesrop Mashtots. He is also believed to create Georgian alphabet and if it is a true fact, then why Georgian chroniclers omit this high deed served for Georgian nation? Naturally, it puts authenticity of this version under doubt. In his article: "Origin of Georgian Alphabet" I.L. Okromchedlov considers historical data about creation of Georgian alphabet by Mesrop as groundless, noting that Mesrop could not speak Georgian and thus, it would be difficult for him to find the respective signs equivalent to sounds of the language unknown to him. The merited professor, upon comparing the symbols of "Mkhedruli" with the "Zend" language and "Khutsuri" is strongly assured that "Khutsuri" is the derivative of "Zend" alphabet and "Khutsuri" was later generated from "Mkhedruli".

M. Okromchedlov's conclusions are as follows:

1. Alphabetic writing was introduced in Georgia by King Pharnavaz in the end of the IV century or in the beginning of the III century B.C.

2. “Khutsuri” (religious alphabet) has been modified from “Mkhedruli”;

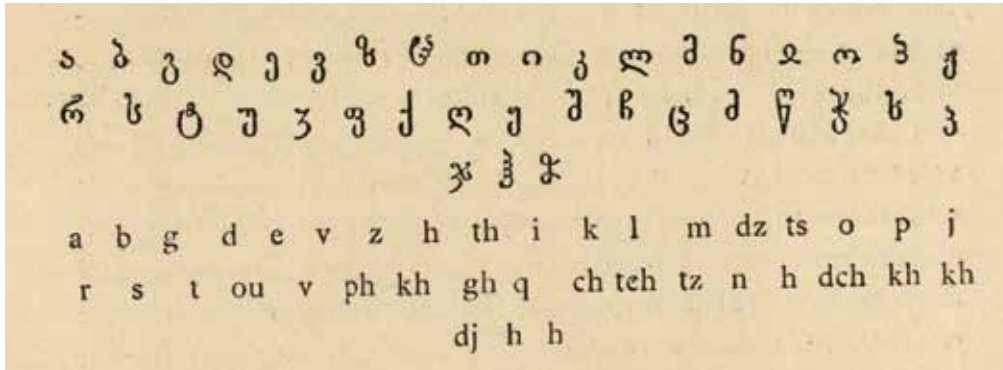
3. If Mesrop has something to do with creation of “Khutsuri”, it was surely limited with replacement of the rounded outlines of the secular alphabet with straight letters.

Prior to spread of Christianity, invasions and devastation of the country has destroyed all literary monuments of the pagan period and suspended progressive development of Georgian people – who were starting to establish relations with the neighboring civilizations of that period: Persia, Greece and Rome.

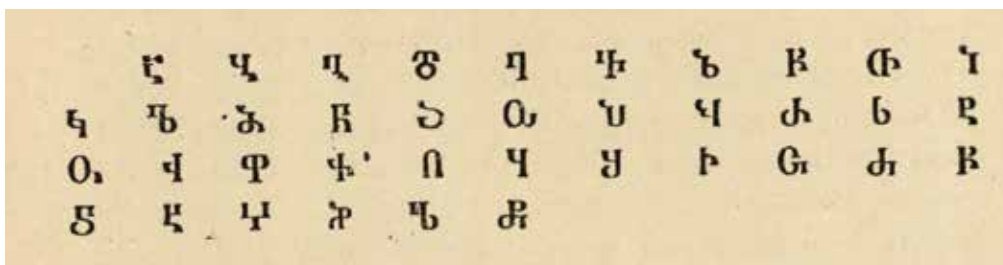
In the IV century, spread of Christianity by St. Nino facilitated development of the country. Christian doctrine, that had separated Georgia from the pagan East, put the country under influence of the Western Christian world and related it to Byzantium, the heir of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. Many Georgians were educated in Byzantium, the only source of civilization for that time. After returning to Georgia, the educated youth established schools and shared the literary treasures of Greece with their compatriots. They translated the Gospel and the doctrines of Holy Fathers.

Many Georgians, obtaining education in Byzantium and on the Mount Athos, have later become famous seculars and religious writers, Ioane Petritsi, philosopher, translator of Plato and Aristotle is one of them; Shota Rustaveli (XII century), coming from Meskheta, coeval of King Tamar, famous for his poem “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” where the wide and thorough education and the greatest literary talent are perfectly combined.

**SECULAR ALPHABET**



**RELIGIOUS ALPHABET**



If Petritsi created the scientific language, Shota Rustaveli put poetic harmony and flexibility on the highest level. Ekvtime and George of Mtatsminda –translators and authors of the original religions works – further improved the narrative style. According to Georgian chronicles, several fragments of the translated Gospels dated back by the IV c were at hand coupled with partially reserved parchment of Psalms and manuscripts of the Lives of the Saints dated back by the VII c.

We also are heirs of several Books of Sermon and Liturgical Tractates composed in the XI century. In 978, translation of the Gospel has been accomplished on the Mount Athos. The first publication of this manuscript, initiated by Georgian royal family members – Bakari and Vakhushti – sons of Vakhtang VI, was undertaken in Moscow in 1742-1743. Georgian monasteries established on the Mounts of Athos and Sinai, in Palestine and Syria were the significant centers of education, preserving, disseminating and creating original literary and religious works. The profound importance of those centers is still noticeable nowadays.

There were several great centers of knowledge in Georgia as well, the most noteworthy of which were: Opiza, Shatberi, Shio Mgvimeli, Gareji, Gelati and other Monasteries. Interestingly, those centers were working not only on canonical texts, one of the very best samples of which is the XII c. manuscript of the New Testament embellished with the finest miniatures, but apocryphal literature as well. The most renowned of them are translations of verses about George the Martyr, books about the childhood of Christ, story of the descent of the Holly Virgin to the Hell and others.

Alongside the Byzantine influence Arabic and Persian cultural currents were also significant. Arabs introduced sciences to Georgia: mathematics and astronomy (The Observatory was established in Tbilisi in the VIII century). The series of prosaic and poetic compositions translated from Persian enriched Georgian literature. Civilization of Georgia reached the highest level of development in the XII century, during the reign of King Tamar (1184-1211). King Tamar, victorious over her enemies, succeeded to spread political power of Georgia in Asia Minor and in the whole of Caucasus.



Reign of Tamar is described by the famous writers, including the poet Shota Rustaveli, Chakhrukhadze with his odes to Tamar, and the prosaic writers: Mose Khoneli and Sargis Tmogveli with the heroic poem “Amiran-Darejaniani” and the novel “Visramiani” often compared to *New Heloise* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Shota Rustaveli is the XII c. greatest Georgian poet, but the information about his biography is quite scarce and often we find discrepancy in data. His name – Shota is the abbreviated version of Ashot and is not mentioned in the Christian calendar. Second name – Rustaveli is associated with his home town – Rustavi (Akhaltzikhe region). He graduated the educational institution in Greece and for a certain period was appointed the Treasurer of King Tamar (his signature is preserved on one of the acts of 1190). Well familiarized with Homer’s poems, Plato’s philosophy, Persian and Arabic literature, theology, poetry and rhetoric, he dedicated his life to literature and created the poem “Knight in the Panther’s Skin” – the most magnificent “ornament” and pride of Georgian literature. Being hopelessly in love with adorable Queen, his life was ended humbly in Jerusalem, in the Monastery of the Holly Cross, established by the Georgian Kings. Georgian Metropolitan of the XVIII century, Timothy saw the grave of Rustaveli and his fresco, which was deliberately covered with white paint later.

The legend tells that Rustaveli, heartbroken by his unanswered love with Tamar, married the maid Nino. Shortly after his marriage King Tamar assigned him to translate a Persian novel, presented to her by the defeated Shah. Rustaveli brilliantly accomplished his task and refused to be paid. Eight days later, he was found decap-



**SHOTA RUSTAVELI**

itated. There are many other legends about relations of Rustaveli and King Tamar.

The poem “Knight in the Panther’s Skin” contains 1637 strophes all of which are written with 16-syllable verse (edition by the Academician Brosset). There are many manuscripts preserved to the present day. The original text suffered changes over time, and many new stanzas were added. Even the extension of the poem “Omaniani” exists that continues its main storyline. Absence of the original manuscript can be explained by constant devastating invasions in Georgia on the one hand and its persecution by the church, considering the poem as secular work contradicting the principles of Christianity on the other. Patriarch Ioane himself persecuted the poet despite he was under King Tamar’s patronage. In the XVIII century Patriarch Anton I, the well-educated parson and author of many original works himself, publicly burned numerous copies of the poem published in 1712 under the direct supervision of King Vakhtang VI.

Where the plot of the poem comes from? There are three opinions on this issue. The first derives from the words of Rustaveli himself (see strophe 16), where he states, that he borrowed a Persian fairytale and put it in verses. However, despite numerous surveys, no Persian original text with the same contents has ever been found. The second opinion offered by professor David Chubinov who argues that the subject of the poem does not derive from Oriental source but was written as the ode to Tamar.

The third opinion is of A. Khakhanov, who thinks, that the storyline of the poem was borrowed from the local lore, as it happened in case of “Hamlet” and “Faust” that were composed on the bases of the medieval legends and stories. He came upon this conclusion after the me-

ticulous comparison of Rustaveli's poem to the samples of popular legends and stories about Tariel, also the main hero of the poem. Rustaveli used the national legend to reveal this historical era. Comparing the song of Tariel with the poem of Rustaveli with Tariel as the main character, A. Khakhanov became assured of trustworthy identity of the folk legend with Rustaveli's original poem as in terms of fabula, as in many other details.

On the other hand, similarity of life of Tamar and the character of the poem – Nestan-Darejan confirms that Nestan-Darejan personifies King Tamar.

Supposedly, taking the action to India, Arabia and China, Shota Rustaveli tried to conceal his desperate love.

The context of the poem is well known: it is the love story. The main characters, after overcoming numerous impediments, get married and enjoy their happiness.

The main character – Tariel – is a very handsome and brave prince who fell in love with the daughter of the King of India – most beautiful Nestan-Darejan who answered his feelings. Tariel is hesitant for asking the king for his daughter's hand in marriage because King intends to give his daughter under wedlock to the prince of Khwarazm.

During their secret meeting, Tariel, agitated by Nestan's complains, penetrates the palace of the King and kills fiancé while sleeping. Nestan, blamed in murder of her fiancé, was banished and left in the middle of the sea in a boat. After the troubles in the sea, she was captured by the Kaj demons and imprisoned in the unscalable fortress. Meanwhile, Tariel leaves India to find his sweetheart but in vain. Desperate, he puts the panther's skin on and settles in the cave where he is found by Avtandil – the Commander of the Arabian army, who is assigned to find him, ordered by Tinatin – his beloved princess. With

assistance of Avtandil and Pridon - King of Mulgazanzar, Tariel manages to deliver Darejan from imprisonment and celebrates the wedding. Meanwhile, Avtandil, back to India, marries Tinatin and thus, becomes the heir of Rostevan, his father-in-law, on the throne.

So the poem ends in the publications, edited by Brosset, Chubinov and others. Similar to the poems of Homer, the Knight in the Panther's Skin was supplemented by the story-tellers with the strophes and sometimes with the whole chapters; these chapters added later on to the poem cannot be attributed to Shota Rustaveli neither in terms of style nor the plot.

The artistic language of the poem, exquisite psychological analysis, aphorisms repeated with pride by Georgians even after seven centuries – all constitute the importance and value of the poem. Rustaveli fights against slavery, advocates gender equality (“all the whelps of the lion are equal either male or female”). He calls upon to beauty and liberalism: “consider what you give away as your possession and what you do not – as the lost value”.

He puts personal dignity and merits above the lineage, prefers heroic death over cowardly life; he hates liars and says that “lies and falsehood damage flesh and soul”.

Due to the depth of thinking and beautiful style, the poem constitutes the model of greatness and perfection of Georgian poetry.

There are full of partial translations of the poem into: German (Leist, “Der Mann im Tigerfelle”, Leipzig 1880); French (Achas Borin, “La Peau de léopard”, 1885); English, Russian, Polish and Armenian<sup>23</sup>.

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23. Published, illustrated in Georgian language by George Kartvelihsvili, Tiflis.

The classic period of Georgian literature was followed by the era of decline caused by the devastating invasions of Mongols and Khwarazmians in the XIII century, invasion of Tamerlane in the XIV – the beginning of the XV century, barbaric raid of Abbas I of Persia in the XVII century and internal disorders as a result of those almost constant calamities. Unfortunately, conquer of Constantinople by Turks erased any influence of Greece over Georgia, the country appeared isolated from the civilized Christian world and surrounded by Muslim countries – was divided into three Kingdoms and five principalities (1469).

These four centuries stand between the classic period of literature and revival thereof covering the XVII and XVIII centuries. At that, there are numerous works survived from peaceful intervals between the disasters. It is surprising indeed that during the constant invasions and attacks, Georgian nation, being so small, managed to preserve not only its national identity but the religion, literature and language.

We have numerous translations and original works preserved even from the most disastrous period – XIII-XVII centuries. There are up to 15 works that end with “-ani” suffix, analogue to the western “-ade” ending (Petriade, Henriade etc.). “Daphnitsiani”, “Musuriani”, “Rusudaniani”, “Amiran-Darejaniani”, “Baramiani”, “Utrutiani”, “Samaritiani”, “Saridoniani” are the most noteworthy of those.

There are several legal and ecclesiastic monuments of the same period: Laws of George V of Georgia (XIVc.), Codes of Princes (Atabegs) Bequa and Aghbougua, rulers of Principality of Samtskhe (nowadays the area of Akhaltsikhe region). In the XIII century, Catholicos Arsen, enacted several ecclesiastic laws, in the XIV century Ar-

chimandrite George translated canons from Greek into Georgian, in the XV century Catholicos Malachi summoned the Council and issued the universal regulations endorsed with the signatures of eleven arch-bishops. These secular decrees and Laws by George V, as well as the Book of Laws of Atabegs Beka and Aghbugha have later been included into the Civil Code of King Vakhtang VI.

The overview of works created during these four centuries can be ended-up by listing of several historical works: History of the Kings of Imereti by Catholicos Arsen (XIVc.), Description of Samtskhe Atabagate by Ioane, Archbishop of Manglisi (XV c.), Devastation of Georgia by Shah Ismail by Catholicos Domentius (XVIc.) and Lives and Proceedings of the Princes of Imereti by Monk Evdemon.

So called Silver Age – the era of revival in the history of Georgia started with the original literary works of the representatives of high society - King Archil, King Teimuraz I, King Teimuraz II, King Vakhtang VI, Catholicos Anton and the Prince Vakhushti. King Archil of Kartli and Imereti composed numerous verses and the poem “Archiliani” describing life of the philosopher and rhetor – King Teimuraz I. The poem is of the utmost importance in Georgian literature as it brought old power and brilliance back to Georgian letters. He translated the “History of Alexander the Great” by pseudo-Kalistene into Georgian and composed the chronicles according to Russian and Greek sources.

He also penned numerous verses. King Teimuraz II, son of Erekle I and Princes Ioane, David and Teimuraz wrote the treaties in theology, philosophy, history and original poetry of various genres.

All these verses constitute the valuable material for history and are penetrated with the high national aspiration, however in terms of poetic beauty and philosophical depth they cannot compete with the poetry of Shota Rustaveli.

It is crystal clear that the national literary works of the XVIII c. initiated by Teimuraz I are crowned by David Guramishvili's poetry. Inspired by strong religious enthusiasm and patriotism, he skillfully described the grave situation of Georgia being the subject of confrontation between Turkey and Persia and almost totally destroyed and devastated.

Similar to prophet Jeremiah, he reflected the feudal civil wars with his bleeding heart. His verse tells the story about life of the King Vakhtang VI forced under circumstances to appeal to Peter the Great and leave for Russia. The author underlines the merit of the King and commemorates his name for the greatest erudition and loyal service to the homeland, the founder of the first printing house in Tiflis, significant historian and translator into Georgian of the collection of Arabian-Persian fairytales – Kalila and Demna. King Vakhtang VI also published the "Knight in the Panther's Skin" with his original comments in Tbilisi.

The famous Monk – Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, confederate of the King Vakhtang VI was one of the outstanding figures of that period. He traveled Europe, was twice received by King Louis XIV of France, got acquainted with La Fontaine. He also visited Rome and met the Pontiff Clement XI. Prior to departure to Georgia, he was converted into Catholicism and brought twelve Capuchins missionaries with him for distribution of Catholic faith in the country.





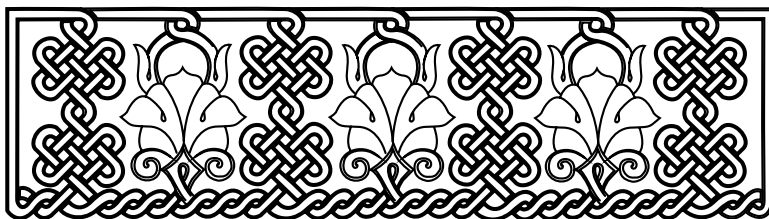
**SULKHAN-SABA ORBELIANI**  
**(MONK - PRINCE)**

He compiled the dictionary – thesaurus of Georgian language – the first of its kind and composed the book - “Wisdom and Lies”, the collection of fables written in popular language and distinguished with accuracy of expression. The collection includes funny and melancholic, naïve and sensual, wise and reasonable fables. The son of King Vakhtang VI – Vakhushti served in Moscow where he published the complete version of the Gospel, Russian-Georgian dictionary, and the group of historians and scholars employed by King Vakhtang collected rich historical material and penned many significant works in history and geography of Georgia.



**CATHOLICOS ANTON, PATRIARCH OF GEORGIA**

Catholicos Anton, son of Jesse, the Muslim King of Georgia, is the author of the first Georgian Grammar. He translated works of Aristotle, the Physics by Wolff, philosophy by Bomestier, History of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius etc. He also penned works in theology, hagiography, assays about lives of Georgian Saints. He also composed tractates on Rhythmic Speech (rhymed lambs), and described the merits of writers and public figures.



## CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE



**PRINCE GIORGI ERISTAVI**

From the beginning of the XIX century, Georgian literature can be divided into two periods: 1. before publication of the Magazine “Tsiskari”; and 2. after publication of the Magazine. The Magazine was published by the first Georgian dramatist, translator of Jean Racine, Prince Giorgi Eristavi. The publishing house also printed works by the



**GENERAL PRINCE GRIGOL ORBELIANI**

editor himself. The most noteworthy of his works were comedies: “Divorce”, “Dispute”, “Greedy” etc. The publishing house also printed verses by Alexander Chavchavadze, and poems of Grigol Orbeliani where glory and beauty of Caucasus were matchlessly and skillfully described.

The Magazine printed as well, verses of Prince Nikoloz Baratashvili, one of the most gifted and brilliant Georgian authors, called the Georgian Byron.

Several noteworthy scientific and literary works of the sons on the last king of Georgia, George XII, belong to the same period. They were published in the Magazine as well.



**GABRIEL, BISHOP OF IMERETI**

David, the Royal Prince, wrote essays on the history of Georgia. The Royal Prince Ioane compiled and edited diplomatic acts of his father. Another Royal Prince, Teimuraz wrote the complete history of Georgia narrated with the exceptional consistency. Prince Bagrat should be mentioned as well with his collection of Georgian proverbs.

In terms of spiritual/religious authentic works Bishop Gabriel is the undisputed leader.

The collections of his Sermons were translated into English<sup>24</sup> earning him international recognition.

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24. By his Holiness Mahun, Bishop of Broad-Windsor.



**DIMITRI KIPIANI**

The second period is distinguished by the works of Prince Vakhtang Orbeliani and Rafiel Eristavi, as well as women poets: Nino Orbeliani and Barbare Jorjadze.

Hitherto, literature was the prerogative of the highest aristocracy as it seems; however it is also noteworthy that later this prerogative was extended to people of all social classes. The two of them are the most noteworthy: Dimitri Kipiani<sup>25</sup>, the translator of Shakespeare and Daniel Chonkadze, the author of the novel "Surami Fortress" - the first original work that reflects life of rural population of the country.

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25. He was the Mayor of Tiflis.



**PRINCE ILIA CHAVCHAVADZE**

In the second half of the XIX century, Georgian literature loses its originality due to the European influence. The young generation, educated in Europe or Russia, led by Prince Ilia Chavchavadze - the significant public figure in contemporary Georgia himself is a poet and writer, previously the founder and editor in chief of “The Herald of Georgia” magazine.

Currently he publishes the “Iveria” journal.



**PRINCE AKAKI TSERETELI**

The confederate to Ilia Chavchavadze, Prince Akaki Tsereteli is the poet and dramatist most famous for his lovely lyrical poetry. He masterfully describes life and traditions of people. He leads “Krebuli” (Collection) Journal publishing numerous but less-known samples of ancient national literature. The Prince Tsereteli is known as an interpreter of Georgian national poetry.





**PRINCE NIKOLOZ NIKOLADZE**

Nikoloz Nikoladze, a famous publicist and economist<sup>26</sup> is known for his efforts to spread European influence.

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26. Nowadays he is the Mayor of the Black Sea port - Poti.



**PRINCE MAMIA GURIELI**

Mamia Gurieli is known and recognized as the poet of the lyric genre. Giorgi Tsereteli – Georgian archeologist and historian has lately published several novels.



**EKATERINE GABASHVILI**

The pen-craft of Ekaterine Gabashvili was influenced by the works and ideas of Ilia Chavchavadze. Her most famous novels are: “Kona” – that reflects life of Aristocracy of Kakheti; and “Victorious Niko” with the rural Priest as the main character.

Prince Ivane Machabeli has masterly translated Shakespeare’s tragedies later successfully staged in Georgian theatres.

Prince Rafiel Eristavi, Avksenti Tsagareli, and Alexander Kazbegi are the most notorious dramatic writers in contemporary Georgia. The latter, called the writer of



**DIMITRI BAKRADZE**

highlanders, mostly reflects the lifestyle, culture and history of people of mountains. Of his novels “Elguja” and “Killer of the Father” are the most well-known due to their conceptual and artistic value.

The Razikashvili brothers dedicated their poetic talent to the description of the habits, customs and lifestyle of highlanders. Their works are translated in German. Shio Dedabrishvili and David Kldiashvili are respectively, the most notorious representatives of symbolic and realistic literature. Both cooperate with “Moambe” (The Herald) journal.



**PROFESSOR DAVID CHUBINOV**

The most famous figures working on the history of Georgia are Platon Ioseliani and Dimitri Bakradze - author of the literary works and the scholar who first attempted to write pragmatic history of Georgia. He is also famous as the author of works regarding archaeology of the country. Marie-Félicité Brosset - a Paris - born Orientalist, member of the Academy of Sciences of Petersburg dedicated most of his studies and researches to the history and literature of Georgia.<sup>27</sup>

David Chubinov, professor of the University of St. Petersburg is basically focused on studies on Georgian

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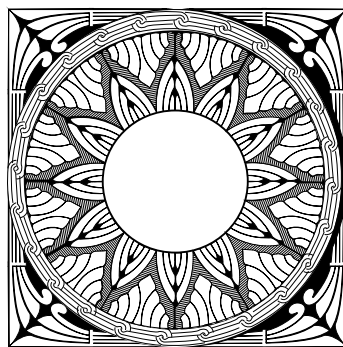
27. See Analytical Bibliography for works by M. Brosset, 1887.

language. His noteworthy works are: Chrestomathy (collection) of Georgian Literature, Georgian Grammar, Georgian-Russian-French and Russian-Georgian dictionaries. Through his publications he has enriched Georgian historiography.

As for education sphere, we shall highlight Mr. Jacob Gogebashvili<sup>28</sup>, the author of textbooks for the elementary schools and Mrs. Anastasia Tsereteli, founder of the Magazine for children “Jejili”.

Our brief overview aims to raise the interest and curiosity of the reader towards our history and literature. Because of the limitations both in time and volume of this addition, it was possible to cover the topics only very generally, although, hopefully, the narrative about the courage, heroism, religious fidelity and other values of our people is communicated convincingly and trustfully.

Paris - Printing house of Ch. Noblet, 13, Gujas str.



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28. “Deda Ena” (Native language) – the first book and “Bunebis Kari” (Entrance to Nature) – the second book. Both considered as the best primers, similar to “Ruskoe slovo” (Russian Word) considered as the best primer for Russian language.



**Cultural Heritage of Georgia  
at 1900 Paris World Exhibition and after 118 Years**

**Marina Tumanishvili**

**Part II**

**Cultural Heritage of Georgia Presented  
at 1900 Paris World Exhibition after 118 Years**





**Marina Tumanishvili**

**Part II**

**Cultural Heritage of Georgia Presented  
at 1900 Paris World Exhibition  
after 118 Years**

Georgia is rich with its cultural heritage. The country, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, always had its eye towards the civilized world. Due to benevolence, openness and tolerance to other countries, Georgia has managed to introduce the world's progressive ideas in the light of its self-identity and create the cultural values on its own, that nowadays are recognized as the world heritage of outstanding value.

Presentation of the cultural heritage of Georgia to the world was of utmost importance at all the stages of development of our statehood. In historical terms, due to affiliation to the interests of other countries, independent presentation of the achievements of the country worldwide was always a hard task for Georgia. Constant struggles, invasions, dependence on other countries, subordination to the interests of the great Empires – were contributing factors to the impediments, preventing Georgia to reveal and introduce its achievements and cultural heritage to the world.

Georgia was always striving to set close bonds with the world's leading countries, and the European countries in particular. European culture has always been familiar to Georgia. Georgia-Europe bonds were even further enhanced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Young generation became able to obtain education in European Universities and upon their return to the homeland was eager to contribute to the Georgia-Europe rapprochement and enhancement of the inter-cultural dialogue. Georgia's aspiration to the European values was reflected in architecture and urban development of the Georgian cities and settlements. As a result, on the basis of the synthesis of the European and local architectural styles, various remarkable

architectural samples were created in Georgia in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, simultaneously with Europe, Georgia has developed the modern, so-called “Art Nouveau” style. The samples of the original architecture built in the Modern style in Georgia are well-recognized and constitute the greatest interest for the historians of architecture not only in the country, but worldwide as well. It is noteworthy that due to prevailing European style, the visitors used to call Tbilisi a “little Paris”.

### **History of participation of Georgia in Paris World Exhibition of 1900, publication of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” and its presentation at the exhibition.**

History of world exhibitions begins in 19<sup>th</sup> century. With establishing the world exhibition practice, the countries obtained the opportunity to introduce/exchange and promote their own achievements. Organization of world exhibitions was initially of utmost importance and the progressive phenomenon for the civilized world. These exhibitions played crucial role in the development of intellectual potential of the world.

The tradition of world exhibition was established in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In general, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to present, all countries attach high importance to the participation in the international exhibitions. The world exhibitions, considered as a symbol of industrialization and the field for demonstration of technical and technological achievements, are periodically held in various countries.

The first exhibition – World Fair (Exposition Universelle Internationale, or Exposition Mondiale) was held in 1851 in England, London, Hyde Park with the initiative of the spouse of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha with the main exhibit – the Crystal Palace by Joseph Paxton. So far, more than 70 world exhibitions have been already held in various countries including USA, Canada, Belgium, France etc. The last exhibition was organized in Astana, Kazakhstan in 2017. The next exhibition is scheduled to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in 2020.

In the history of world exhibitions, one of the most significant was the World Exhibition held in Paris in 1900 that still maintains its relevancy.

Republic of France had several times hosted the world exhibitions before, but the exhibition of 1900 in Paris proved to be of particular importance not only for its participants, but for France as well.

Paris World Exhibition of 1900 was held in view of recognition of the key achievements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and acceleration of further development. The exposition was held on April 14-November 12, 1900 and was spread on the vast territory, including the Champ de Mars,

Trocadéro, Bois de Vincennes and Esplanade des Invalides. The exposition hosted 76.000 stands on the area of 216 hectares. The exhibition was visited by up to 50 million people, which was recognized as the world record for that period. Many new inventions, machines and architectural samples were exhibited, most of which are well-known and widely used today. Their majority was made in “Art Nouveau” style. It was for the first time when the exhibition included the presentation of the sound film and the escalator. The exhibition also provided the diesel engine, “telegraphone” (first magnetic audio recorder), the series of panoramas and panoramic technologies, such as: “cineorama”, “mareorama” and Trans-Siberian railway panorama. One hundred meter-high grand wheel “Grande Roue de Paris” was also exposed for the first time there.

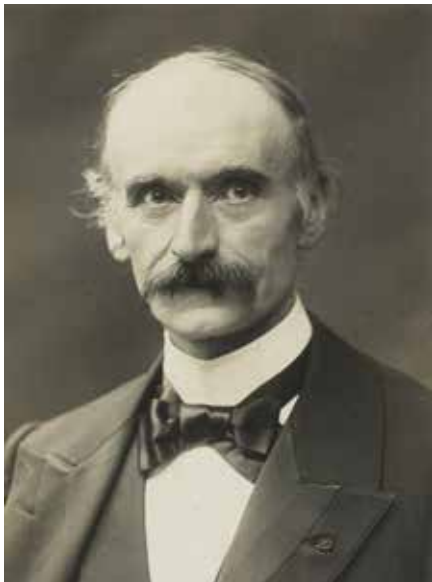
Various remarkable premises and edifices were specially built for the exposition in Paris, including the Gare de Lyon, Gare d’Orsay, Pont Alexandre III, Grand Palais and Petit Palais. These buildings, constructed particularly for the exhibition, are still considered as the major attractions of Paris. They had the key role in urban development of the city, determining modern appearance thereof. Most of these premises were recognized worldwide, including the symbol of Paris, the creation of the engineer Gustave Eiffel – Eiffel Tower. This unique iron construction is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List since 1991 within the nomination “Paris, Rives de la Seine”. Similar to the Eiffel Tower, Petit Palais, Grand Palais, Pont Alexander III and other buildings built for the exhibition of 1900, are included in the World Heritage List. It is noteworthy the names of the organizers of Paris Universal Exposition of 1900 are engraved on the pylon of the Pont Alexander III in commemoration of these people, including the name of the Chief Commissioner of the Exposition, Alfred Picard. His letter of appreciation to Raphael Isarlishvili concerning the receipt of the book (History of Georgia) is archived in Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature (G. Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-004).

History of participation of Georgia in the world exhibition with the independent stand and presentation of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” is associated with this remarkable exhibition. For the first time Georgia had the opportunity to present its achievements in various fields worldwide.

The idea of publication of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” for the presentation at 1900 World Exhibition in Paris, belongs to the famous scientist and public figure, remarkable representative of Georgian nobility, Raphael Isarlishvili. He has also organized participation of Georgian landlords in the world exhibition. Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili contemplated the book as kind of a guide for Georgian exposition that would facilitate better acquaintance with the country’s history, geography, landscape, cultural heritage, literature and its most prominent public figures for the wide public and world society in general.

He belonged to the young generation educated in Europe, who, after returning to the homeland, was tirelessly contributing to the progress of the country, development of culture and public education and rapprochement of Georgia to Europe. In late 19<sup>th</sup> century, since the decision on opening of the world exhibition in Paris in 1900 was made, Raphael Isarlishvili was actively involved in the organization of participation of Georgia in the exposition.

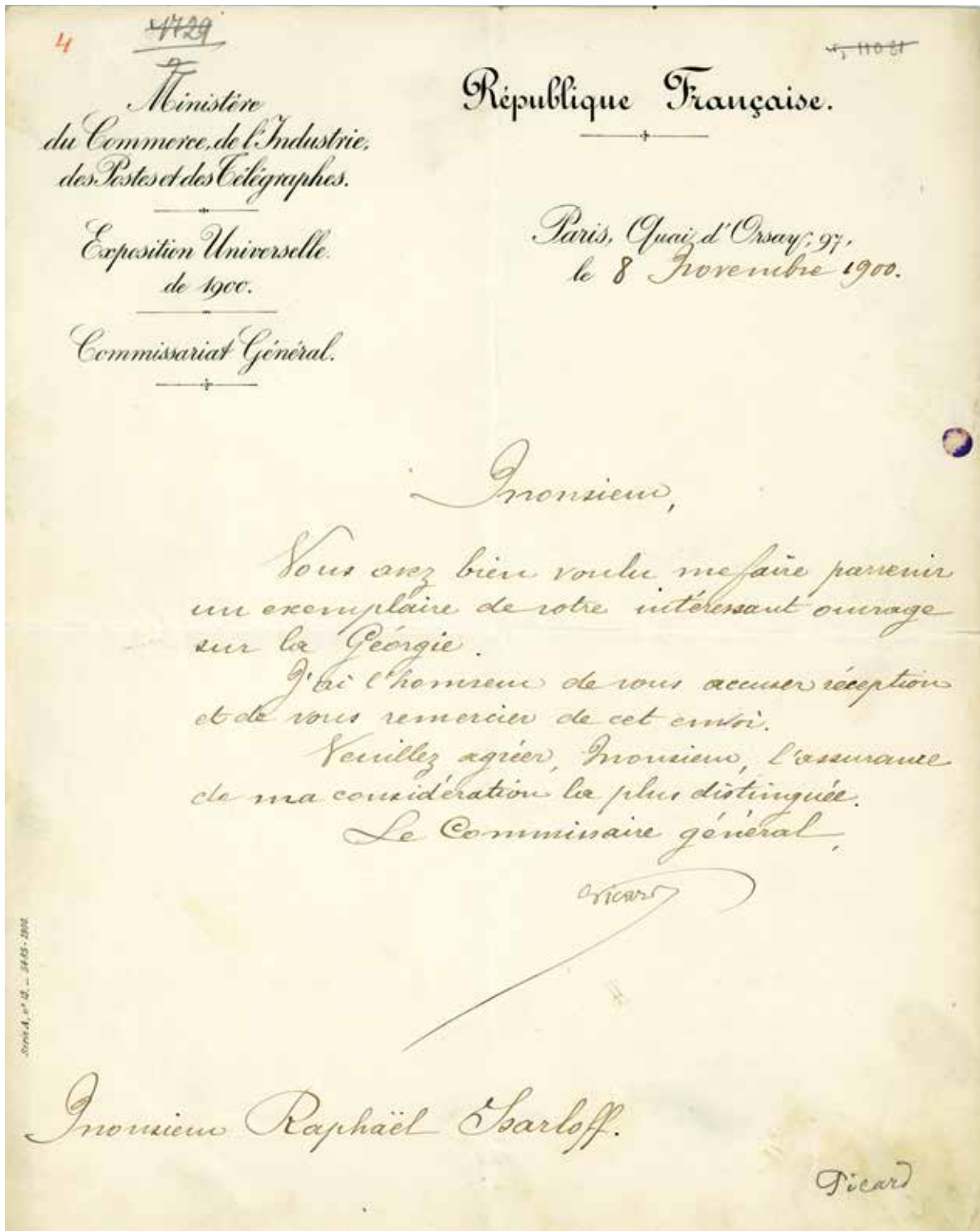
It was the period, when Georgia was part of the Russian Empire, so obtaining the permission on demonstration of its achievements separately, as of a standalone party, was equal to heroism on the side of organizers.



**Alfred Picard, Chief Commissioner of Paris Universal Exposition of 1900.**



**Paris, Pylon of the bridge of Alexander III with the engraved name of Alfred Picard.**



The letter of Alfred Picard to Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book "History of Georgia" – (G. Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-004).

Preface of the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” reveals that as soon as the decision on organization of the universal exposition in Paris in 1900 was made, the representative of Georgian noble families, Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili has actively set to distribute this information to allow Georgian landlords’ participation in this international event. Through the newspaper articles and thousands of informative bulletins, he was assuring his compatriots about the benefits of participation in this exposition. The book “Histoire de Géorgie” provides the overview of history, geography and literature of Georgia (Aperçu géographique et Abrégé de l’Histoire et de la Littérature géorgiennes) by Professor Alexander Khakhanashvili. Originally written in Georgian, the book was translated into French in Georgia. Raphael Isarlishvili himself edited, enriched with images and illustrations and decorated the book with Georgian ornamentation samples and finally published the book in Paris in 1900.

Due to his outstanding personal merits and professional abilities, Raphael Isarlishvili was appointed as the “Attaché au Commissariat Général de Russie” at 1900 Paris International Exhibition based on November 11, 1899 Ordinance of the Minister of Finance of Russia. At the same time, he was the Director of the Caucasus-Georgian Department and the representative of Georgian landlords. In the letters sent by the officials of Paris Exhibition to the address: 40 rue des Ecoles, Paris, Raphael Isarlishvili was referred to as “Monsieur Raphaël Isarloff, Représentant des propriétaires Géorgiens, Attaché officiel au Commissariat Général de Russie à l’Exposition Universelle 1900”. This status is mentioned in entire official correspondence, including the letter of appreciation by the representative of the General Commissariat of Germany, Mr. Richter concerning the receipt of the book (History of Georgia) (illustration - the letter of appreciation by the representative of the General Commissariat of Germany, Mr. Richter, December 4, 1900). The original of this letter is kept at Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature (Dr. Richter- Commissariat Général de l’Allemagne à l’Exposition Universelle de Paris 1900. Paris, 88, Avenue des Champs Elysées, le 4 Desembre 1900, N 11071-05). The status is also mentioned in the title page of the book “Histoire de Géorgie”. It is noteworthy that the house, where Raphael Isarlishvili lived in Paris in 1900 bears the same address today: 40 Rue des Ecoles. The house is located in Latin Quarter, nearby Sorbonne University. The current state of the house is reflected on the photo of 2018. Even after 118 years, the residential house has preserved its appearance, being a witness of the hard work of Georgian envoy to Paris - Raphael Isarlishvili, devoted to his homeland.



**Dr. Richter, Germany Chief Commissioner at 1900 Paris Universal Exposition.**



**The letter of Dr. Richter to Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book "History of Georgia" (Richter-Commissariat Général de l'Allemagne à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris 1900. Paris, 88, Avenue des Champs Elysées, le 4 Desembre 1900) (G. Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-05).**





Paris, Street of the Schools “Rue des Écoles” and the residence - N40, where Raphael Isarlishvili lived in 1900 during the exhibition (photo of 2018).

The Vice President of the Geographic Society of Russian Empire, the member of the State Council, P. Semionov wrote to Raphael Isarlishvili regarding his appointment as the official representative at Paris World Exhibition:

“I have the honor to inform you that effective November 11, by the Decree of the Minister of Finance you have been appointed as the representative to the General Commissioner of Russian Department at 1900 Paris Exposition. I hope that your official appointment will allow you to present the exhibits of the compatriots of Tiflis and Kutaisi Provinces at the exhibition thoroughly and completely as these provinces truly deserve. I also believe that you will successfully fulfill your duties of the representative of those landlords, who have honored you with the election on this position”. (Iveria, 1899, 2.XII, N279, L. Nanitashvili, „ქართული წიგნის ამაგდარნი“ – “Qartuli cignis amagdarni” – Dedicated Servants to Georgian Book p. 30).

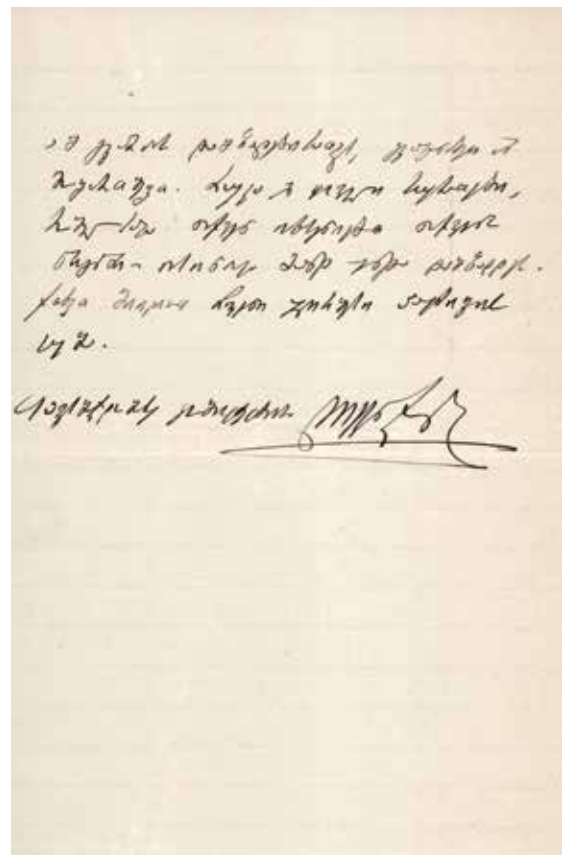
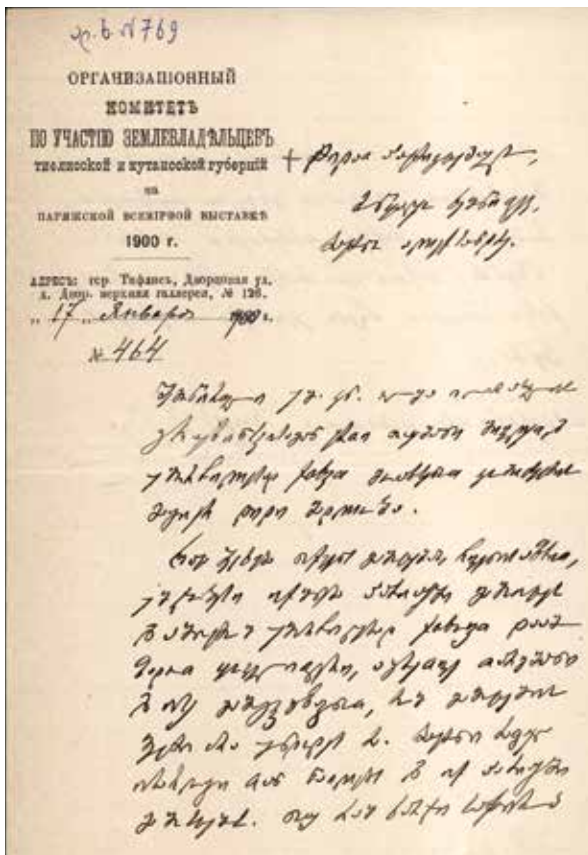
In the capacity of the Official Attaché of the Commissioner General of Russia and the official representative, he was awarded with the Special Pass for the participation in 1900 Paris Universal Exposition. The pass N722 of the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Post of France signed by the Commissioner General of Paris exposition (MINISTÈRE DU COMMERCE, DE L'INDUSTRIE, DES POSTES ET DES TÉLÉGRAPHES. EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE INTERNATIONALE DE 1900. CARTE DE SERVICE N722 – M. Isarloff attaché au Commissariat Général de Russie). Front of the pass comprised Raphael Isarlishvili's image and the rear provided the text. The document is archived in Simon Janashia National Museum of Georgia.



Special pass for participation in 1900 Paris Universal Exposition for Raphael Isarlishvili confirming the status of the Official attaché of the Russian Empire, N722 (MINISTÈRE DU COMMERCE, DE L'INDUSTRIE, DES POSTES ET DES TÉLÉGRAPHES. EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE INTERNATIONALE DE 1900. CARTE DE SERVICE N722. M. Isarloff attaché au Commissariat Général de Russie). Simon Janashia National Museum of Georgia.



The Steering Committee for participation of Georgia in 1900 Paris World Exposition was set up in Tbilisi, Prince Levan Jandieri appointed the chair. For all official correspondence the Committee designed a special blank paper printed in Russian. The blank paper bears the address of the office of the Steering Committee for Participation of the Landlords of Tbilisi and Kutaisi Gubernias in 1900 Paris World Exhibition: Tiflis, Palace Street, Courtyard, Upper Gallery, N126 (Организационный Комитет по участию землевладельцев Тифлисской и Кутаисской Губерний на Парижской Всемирной Выставке 1900 г. Адрес: гор. Тифлис, Дворцовая ул. д. Двор. верхняя галерея. №126). The same blank paper was used by Levan Jandieri for the letter dated January 17, 1900 addressed to Alexander Khakhanashvili concerning the publication of the book (“History of Georgia”). The letter reads: “as to your publication, we presume, it would be preferable to publish the book in Paris, thus we appeal to you to prepare everything, also ensure the translation and send it to us in a complete form so that the volume is ready for publication and nothing is left behind. Mr. Raphael Isarlov will take it to Paris and publish.” (Korneli Kekelidze National Center of Manuscripts, Al.Kh. N769).



The letter of the Chair of the Steering Committee on Participation of landlords from Tiflis and Kutaisi Provinces in 1900 Paris World Exposition addressed to Al. Khakhanashvili on the official blank paper of the Steering Committee (Korneli Kekelidze National Center of Manuscripts, Al.Kh. N769).

Raphael Isarlishvili, supported by the Prince Levan Jandieri and the State Advisor Alexander Bakradze, several times travelled through Caucasus to organize participation of the landlords in the World Exposition.

The Georgian Committee of the Exposition has sent the letters to the various regions of Georgia appealing to Georgian public for participation in the World Exposition of 1900. As the call reads:

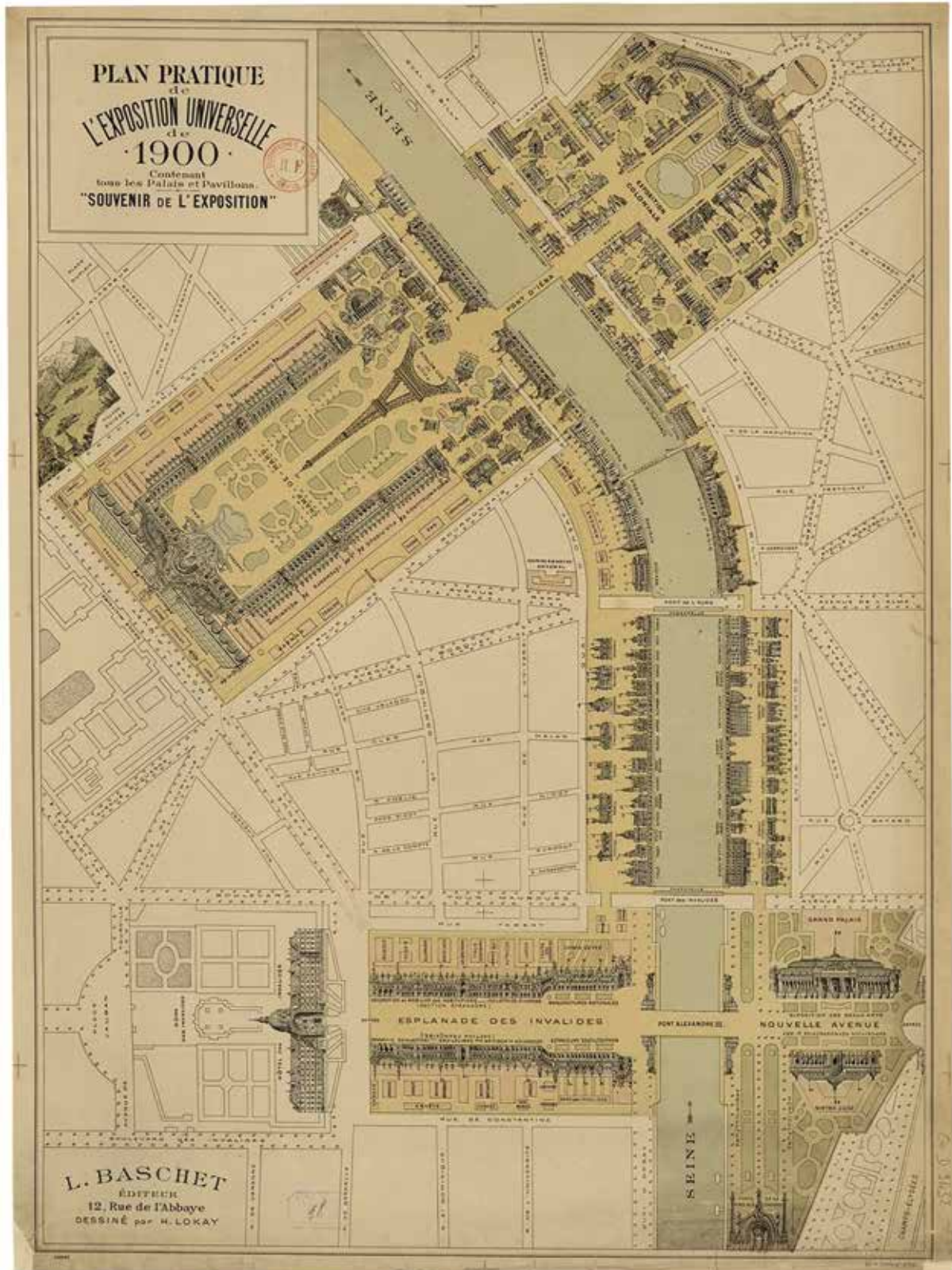
”... never before Georgia has been mentioned at any of the world exhibitions. Never ever have we been able to introduce ourselves, or the goods produced here, or fruits bore by our land, or the vast treasures we have been bestowed so generously with, all of them being of the highest importance for the enhancement of industrious capacities of our homeland, and this disability was devaluating the real value and immense treasures of our country, that has been and still is wasted almost for free.

Today the Government has kindly accepted our appeal and desire, turned its attention to our country and allocated an ample space for goods produced here that will be presented within the Russian Section of the World Exhibition. This is the most important a case, that will attract attention of the educated, industrious and progressive people to us, focus the interest of foreign scientists and entrepreneurs towards our country, thus triggering its progressive development and increase of the value of our land, so abundant with natural treasures (Iveria, 1899 2.XII N 279, the extract from the „ქართული წიგნის ამავდარნი“ by L. Nanitashvili, p.31).

From the present standpoint it is obvious that participation of Georgia in the exposition can be recognized as a historical fact of particular importance in the course of inter-cultural dialogue and development of international relations of our country, considering high impact that Paris International Exposition of 1900 had on world’s intellectual life.

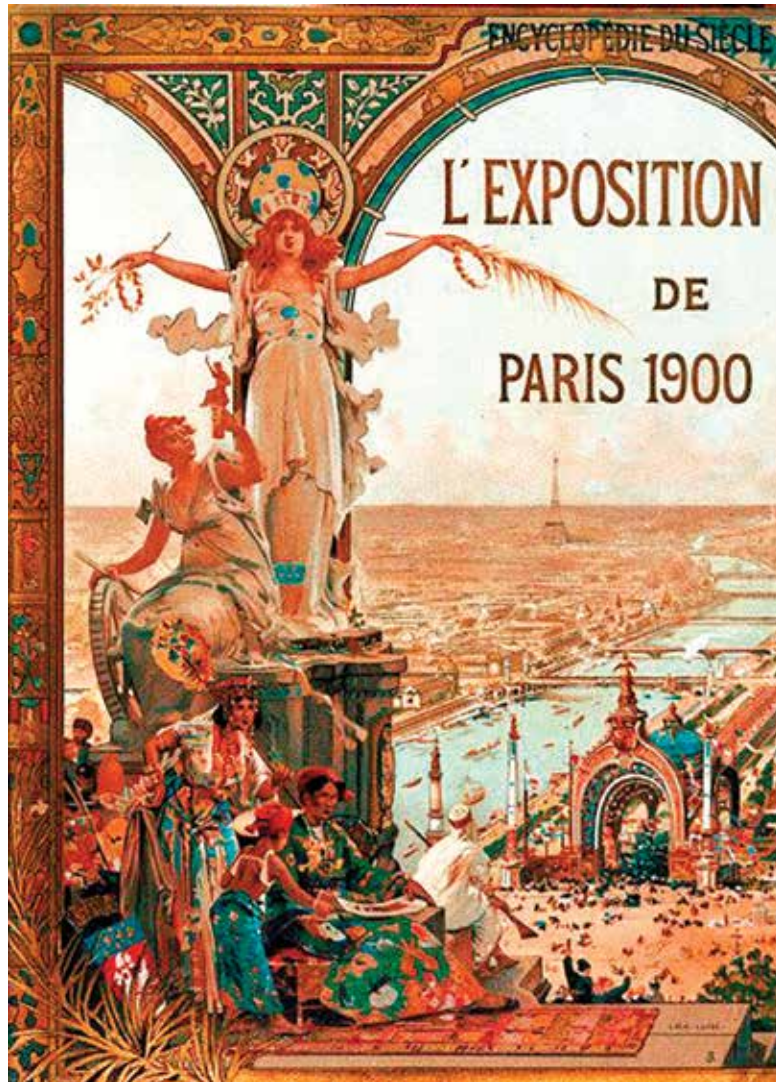
Georgia has introduced its tangible and intangible cultural heritage, coupled with the materials reflecting progress in agriculture, education, literature and arts, country has achieved for the moment of Paris World Exposition of 1900.

Georgian wine, tea, tobacco, mineral waters, ores and Georgian craft works, as well as silk products were sent to 1900 Paris World Exposition. Besides the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”, dedicated to Georgia’s involvement in the world exhibition, Raphael Isarlishvili arranged space for Shota Rustaveli “Knight in the Panther’s Skin”. 1888 edition was presented, illustrated by Mihály Zichy, famous Hungarian artist. This publication was funded by Giorgi Kartvelishvili - the famous manufacturer and donor. The exhibits submitted by Georgia also included the “Deda-ena”(„დედა ენა“) – (Native language) the textbook for the elementary schools and “Bunebis Kari” („ბუნების კარი“) – (Entrance to Nature) the second book by Jacob Gogebashvili, as well as the newspapers “Iveria” and “Tsnobis Purtseli” (the Newsletters). Georgian exhibits were highly appreciated and recognized by the visitors and the public at 1900 Paris World Exposition facilitating promotion of Georgian tangible and intangible cultural heritage on international level.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Practical Plan of 1900 Paris World Exposition.



Posters of 1900 Paris World Exhibition.





The Bridge of Alexander III in Paris, built especially for Paris World Exposition of 1900 and the pylon where the names of the organizers of the exposition are engraved.





**The Palace Petit Palais, built specially for Paris World Exposition of 1900.**



**Railway Station "Gare d'Orsay", built specially for Paris World Exposition of 1900, later the museum "Musée d'Orsay".**



**Symbol of Paris  
Eiffel Tower**

The book, particularly prepared for the exhibition was published in Paris on October 13, 1900. Raphael Isarlishvili's letter to Alexander Khakhanashvili dated October 13/26, 1900 (old style – 13; new style – 26) sent from Paris regarding the publication of the book "Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900", reads:

"Brother Alexander,

I have not yet received your response to my last letter. I am sending you our book, published today. It is very successful indeed, except couple of pictures due to photography as the cliché is a little pale. Other articles could not be printed – some of them needed to be corrected and we had no time for it! I will publish them in future. So far, your history was most appreciated. I distributed it and book is highly appreciated by everyone. Please, let me know the number of the copies you would like to receive. I also need the addresses and the names to send the book to Russia too.

I have spent the whole day travelling with fiacre and delivering the book personally to every famous person. I have also sent copies to – Rome, Berlin, London, Vienna, New York etc. 200 copies are distributed so far and we will distribute more. Forgive me for the short letter as I am in a hurry.

Yours sincerely,

Raphael Isarlishvili".

(Korneli Kekelidze National Center of Manuscripts, personal fund of Alexander Khakhanashvili, N438).

No. 6. N 438 35  
 + *დასაწყისი*,  
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#6

ვაჟებო, რომლებსაც  
 და ვაჟი ვიყავი ახლა!  
 ღმერთი და მისი მადლი გელოვება.  
 აქ ვხედავ იმ ადგილს  
 რომელიც ვინაობის ყველაზე  
 ძვირად ვთვლი. — ვინაობის  
 მოსახლეობისა და  
 დროის დარღვევის გარეშე  
 მათ — მძიმეა ხედავს.  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვაჟებო —  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე.

ვაჟებო, რომლებსაც  
 და ვაჟი ვიყავი ახლა!  
 ღმერთი და მისი მადლი გელოვება.  
 აქ ვხედავ იმ ადგილს  
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 მოსახლეობისა და  
 დროის დარღვევის გარეშე  
 მათ — მძიმეა ხედავს.  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვაჟებო —  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე.

ვაჟებო, რომლებსაც  
 და ვაჟი ვიყავი ახლა!  
 ღმერთი და მისი მადლი გელოვება.  
 აქ ვხედავ იმ ადგილს  
 რომელიც ვინაობის ყველაზე  
 ძვირად ვთვლი. — ვინაობის  
 მოსახლეობისა და  
 დროის დარღვევის გარეშე  
 მათ — მძიმეა ხედავს.  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვაჟებო —  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე  
 ვინაობის გარეშე.

13  
 აქტი 26  
 1900

Raphael Isarlishvili's letter dated October 13 (26), 1900 from Paris to Alexander Khakhanashvili, regarding the publication of the book "History of Georgia" (K. Kekelidze National Center of Manuscripts, personal fund of Alexander Khakhanashvili, N438).

The merit of Raphael Isarlishvili in organization of the exhibition and participation of Georgia in Paris World Exposition of 1900 is distinctly evidenced by his letter addressed to the famous writer and the public figure, Ignate Ioseliani:

“Mr. Ignate,

as you are aware from the newspaper “Iveria” (N161 of the preceding year), I have applied all my efforts striving to ensure participation of Georgian public in Paris World Exposition for the first time.

Our Georgian exhibits constituted the best part in the Caucasus department. It was well arranged, though organized with scarce resources and support.

Besides, the Paris Bureau that I had temporarily arranged was highly beneficial for introduction of Georgian works and countries’ natural treasures abroad.

At that, for the whole one year I have succeeded in fulfilling (without salary) duties imposed to me by the Minister of Finance at the General Commissariat of Russia and at the best of my abilities ensured representation of Georgians at every official assembly and while meeting the diplomats.

And finally, hereof brief history of Georgia – *Histoire de Géorgie*, compiled in Russian by Mr. Al. Khakhanashvili and edited, decorated, supplemented with illustrations, images of the monuments of Georgian architecture and published by me in Paris in French, has been sent to all famous diplomats and scientists in hundreds. I have received appreciation letters by everyone full of warm feelings. Many newspapers and magazines express their support to us and their desire to know us better.

Also, presenting our book for gratis to the people, with the sole reason of introduction of our country to Europe was highly productive. All these facts will be printed in the newspaper “Iveria”. I hope that you will find this book interesting. See the enclosed copy of the book as a token of my deepest respect to you.

Your humble servant,

Raphael Isarlishvili.

Tbilisi, April 5, 1901.

Авчальская площадь и Новокатолическая ул. N 9

(address: Avchala Square and N9 New Catholic Street – ed.)”

(Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N3061-1).





Alexander Khakhanashvili also speaks about the greatest contribution of Raphael Isarlishvili in participation of Georgia in Paris World Exhibition of 1900. In his letter sent from Paris he notes that “with scarce resources and immense devotion he made our society step into the World Exposition” (A. Khakhanashvili, letter from Paris, “Iveria”, 1900, 27, VII, N161, L. Nanitashvili, „ქართული წიგნის ამავდარნი“, pg. 31).

Apart from Raphael Isarlishvili’s contribution to publish the book – *Histoire de Géorgie* – in Paris, it required immense efforts to introduce the book to foreign citizens. As Raphael Isarlishvili states in his letters, he personally had distributed the book among various important agencies and persons. Both the publication and distribution of the book were highly demanding activities, successfully implemented thanks to Mr. Isarlishvili’s tireless work and his personal finances.

Putting aside all other personal activities, introduction of his homeland to the world became the case of utmost importance to him. He was also busy with publication of articles about Georgia in French periodicals in Paris and establishment of the Chair of Georgian language there. As stated in his letter to Al. Khakhanashvili, Raphael Isarlishvili was planning to return to Paris and fulfill his undertaking, publish a new, extended and more sophisticated version of the book “*Histoire de Géorgie*”:

“Brother Alexander,

a couple of days ago I sent you January edition of N- *Revue de Géographie*, N-335 *Journ. des Débats* and a postcard, informing about my arrival.

From Paris we departed for Rome. Thanks to the help of Mr. Tamarashvili I completed all my activities here. Frankly speaking, I was extremely exhausted with a long journey, especially with the roads starting from Villochisk up to Odessa 2-lanes and Petrovsk, which I found in the poor condition due to heavy snow. Heavy snowfalls and sub-zero temperatures were the reasons I was locked-up in Odessa for 12 days. Many newspapers have mentioned our book (*History of Georgia*) and I have collected them all. Besides, as I have already informed you, I have distributed the book to all the eminent persons and received the letters of gratitude and appreciation full of warm feelings, for instance, from the President, Ministers, diplomats, eminent professors, high rank clergymen etc. This collection of the letters and newspapers I want to publish in the newspaper “*Iveria*” for our people to read them and see that we have fundamentally introduced our country to the world through Paris Exposition in the shortest period of time and understand the high importance of the book - *Histoire de Géorgie* – so richly published and distributed in a noble manner, as grates. Thus, I have decided to put my personal business aside again and return to Paris to resume my works. We shall republish the book, extended and enlarged, with Coats of Arms

of Georgia, the map and other pictures, as well as with chapters on the history of Georgian medicine and music. I was also numerously asked to publish the translated version of the Knight in the Panther's Skin with illustrations, coupled with the publications of the most important works of our modern authors. I want to title them "Bibliothèque Géorgienne" gradually completing the series with new novels, thus, Georgia will always remain in the spotlight of the educated community. Although I had to sacrifice considerable personal assets to cover the expenses related to my capacity as of the representative and for the publication, but I still hope I will be able to pay back all the debts and gain new level of trust in Paris.

Now, I am up to this new work and sacrifice my whole time and resources for the translation and publication of the letters and newspaper articles. Besides, I have to raise all the funds necessary for my future publications myself.

As to establishment of the Chair of Georgian language – I had met many persons capable to render any assistance and my strivings resulted in the publication of your letter in January issue of the magazine "Revue de Géographie".

Though, the Government today is reluctant to approve allocation of funds for similar initiatives, some of them still pledged to do their best – but what can be done without me in Paris? Please, let me know whether you have received books and in what quantity, as I have delivered 60 volumes to my publishers to be sent to you.

Besides, please send me the list of those, whom you already have sent the book. Your list will be added to the list I have, to know the total number of books distributed, so that if there is anyone who has not received it yet, I must provide them as well.

There is one particular letter amongst the lot – the most remarkable one – of the President of the Academy of Prague. I attach the copy of the letter and of my response to it and please, let me know the ways how can I express my respect to this eminent person.

I'm sending this letter to you as well with today's mail.

Forever wishing you benevolence,

Raphael Isarlishvili.

Tbilisi,

January 24, 1901.

(на углу Авчальской площади и Новокатолической ул. д Я. Исарлова» (address: interjection of the Avchala Square and New Catholic Street, House of Jakob Isarlov – ed.) (Korneli Kekelidze National Center of Manuscripts, Al.Kh. N439).



In his letter to Raphael Isarlishvili Hugues Krafft acknowledges the intensive activity in Paris of the former towards the introduction of Georgia to Europe. Along with appreciation for receiving the book (History of Georgia) and warm attitudes towards Georgia, he highlights the importance of the scheduled meeting of Raphael Isarlishvili with Prince Roland Bonaparte and the Secretary General of the Geographic Society of France, Baron Hulot for the benefits of his undertakings.

“Monsieur,

Je m’impresses de vous adresser l’expression de mes plus vifs remerciements pour le bel exemplaire de votre Histoire de Georgie, que vous avez eu l’amabilité de m’offrir.

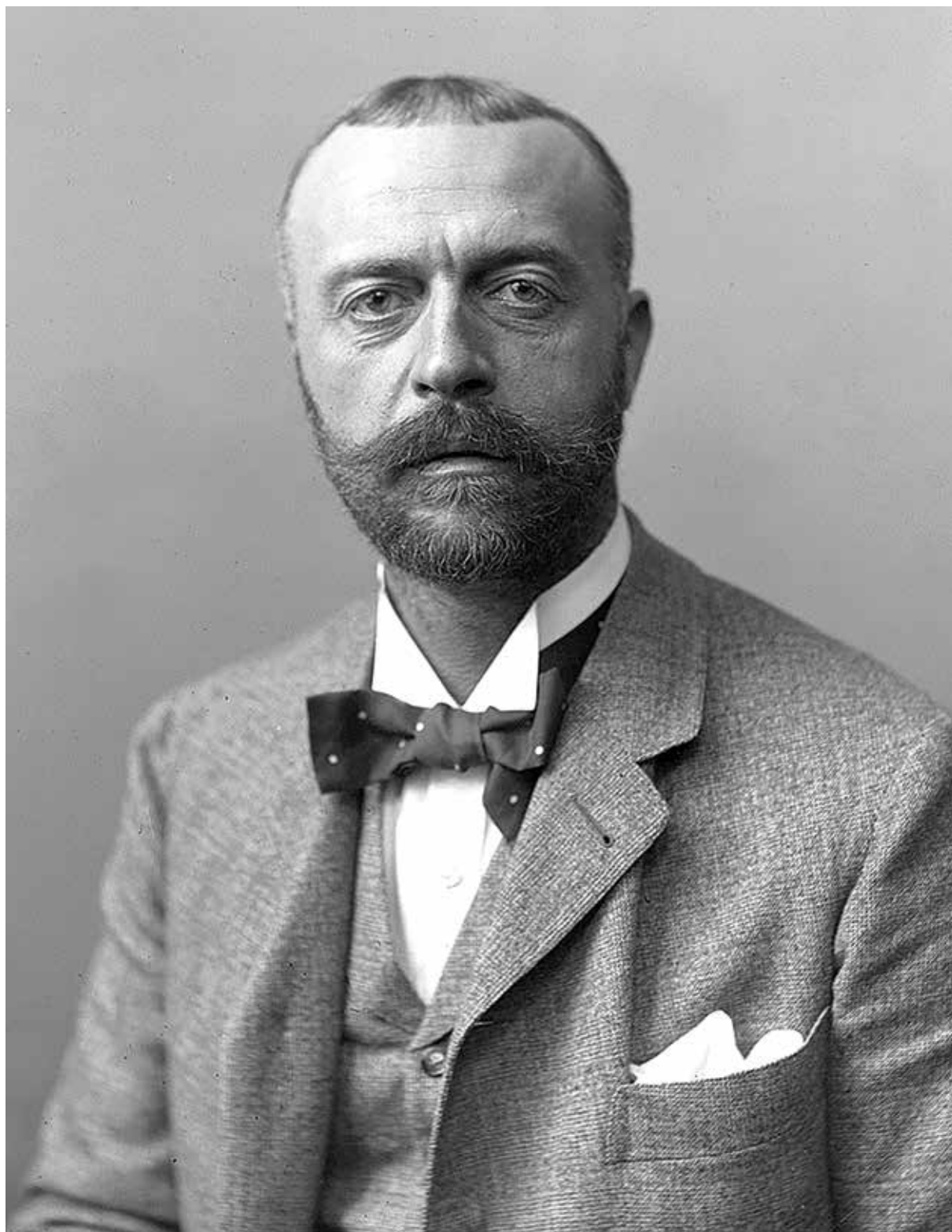
Je vais lire cet ouvrage avec tout l’intérêt d’un voyageur qui est resté sous le charme de votre beau pays.

J’aime à croire qu’il vous sera possible de voir prochainement le Prince Roland Bonaparte et d’obtenir au journal des Débats l’insertion que vous désirez. Je pourrai ensuite annoncer votre visite au baron Hulot, Secrétaire général de la Société de Géographie. Mais, par votre visite au Prince Roland Bonaparte, vous, obtiendriez la plus efficace des introductions, puisque le Prince a présidé et préside encore de la Société.

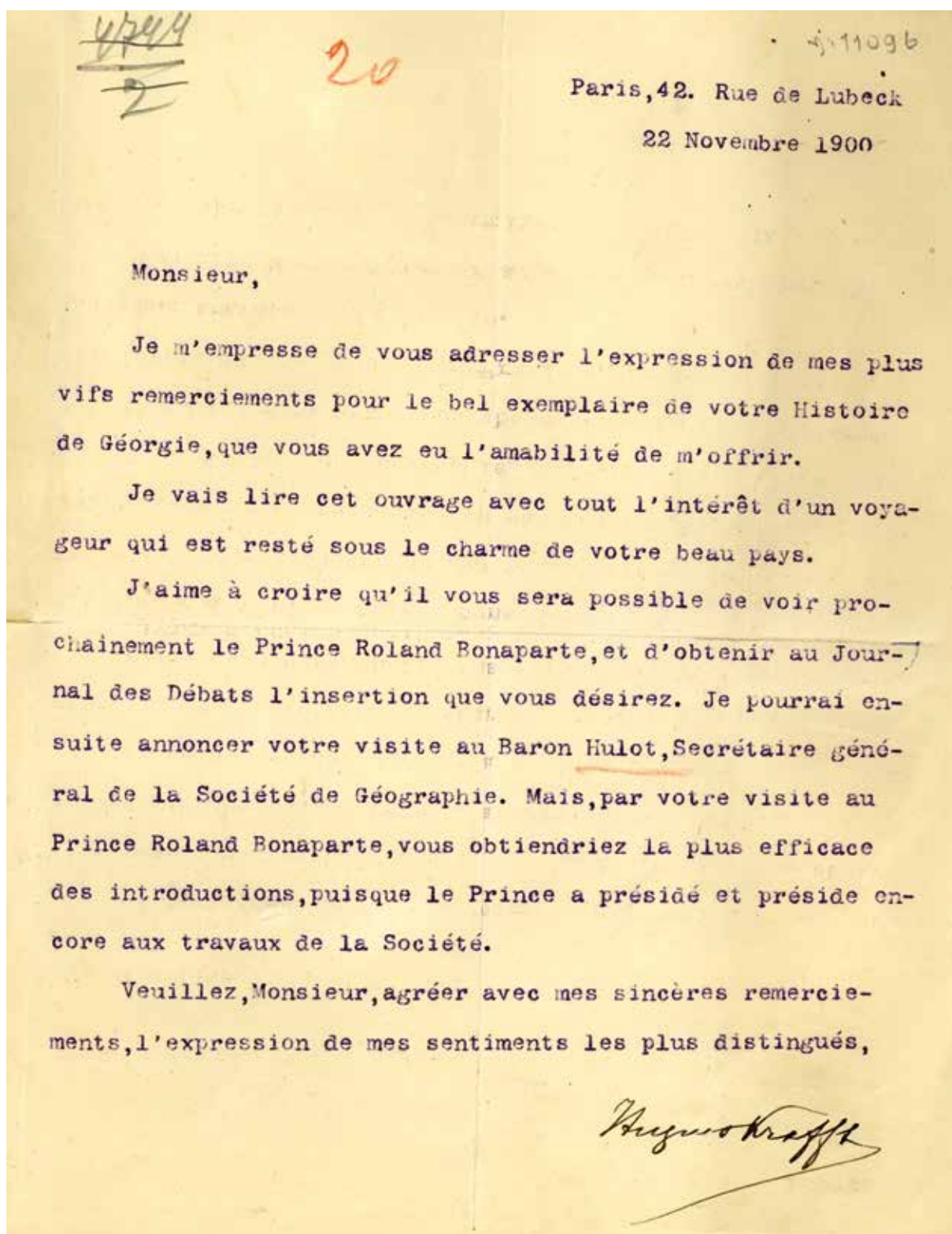
Veillez, Monsieur, agréer avec mes sincères remerciements, l’expression de mes sentiments les plus distingués,

Hugues Krafft”.

The correspondence also reflects attempts of the Georgian scholars to establish close contacts with the leading scientific circles in Europe. It is noteworthy that Geographic Society of France was in the range of the leading scientific organizations enjoying the highest authority in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is likewise noteworthy that Geographic Societies, almost simultaneously founded in Paris, London and Berlin were crucial for the establishment of geography, as the independent field of science. Geographic Society of France (Société de Géographie) is one of the oldest scientific societies in Europe. It was established on December 15, 1821 in Paris. The persons mentioned in the letter were extremely influential representatives of this organization. Baron Etienne Hulot, had held the position of the Secretary General of the Geographic Society of France for many years (1896-1918) and Prince Roland Bonaparte was the President of the Society. Prince Roland Bonaparte was the Chevalier Order “Legion d’Honneur”, the highest award in France.



**Hugues Krafft (1853-1935, famous French traveler and photographer), photo taken in Tbilisi, Georgia, in November or December 1898 (Photo: Collection de la SAVR/Musée Le Vergeur; Nel Watson, Tom Marsden „Discovering Baku: Hugues Kraffts Journey to the Caucasus”).**



Letter of Hugues Krafft to Raphael Isarlishvili, 22.XI, 1900 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071\_20).

It is noteworthy, that overview of geography of Georgia is the subject of particular attention in the book (History of Georgia). Naturally, Georgia is remarkable for its geography and provision of this article in the book served for the better introduction of Georgia to the international society. However, it might as well reflect the desire of Georgian scientists to highlight their affiliation to new methodological approaches formulated in Europe by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century towards the scientific perception of geography in particular and to other progressive innovative scientific approaches emerging in Europe in general. They also wished Georgia to be actively introduced at European scientific circles through their new works and publications. The archive documents include letters of Prince Roland Bonaparte and the Secretary General of the Geographic Society of France, Baron Etienne Hulot mentioning importance of the book “Histoire de Géorgie” and its role in enrichment of the library of the Geographic Society of France.



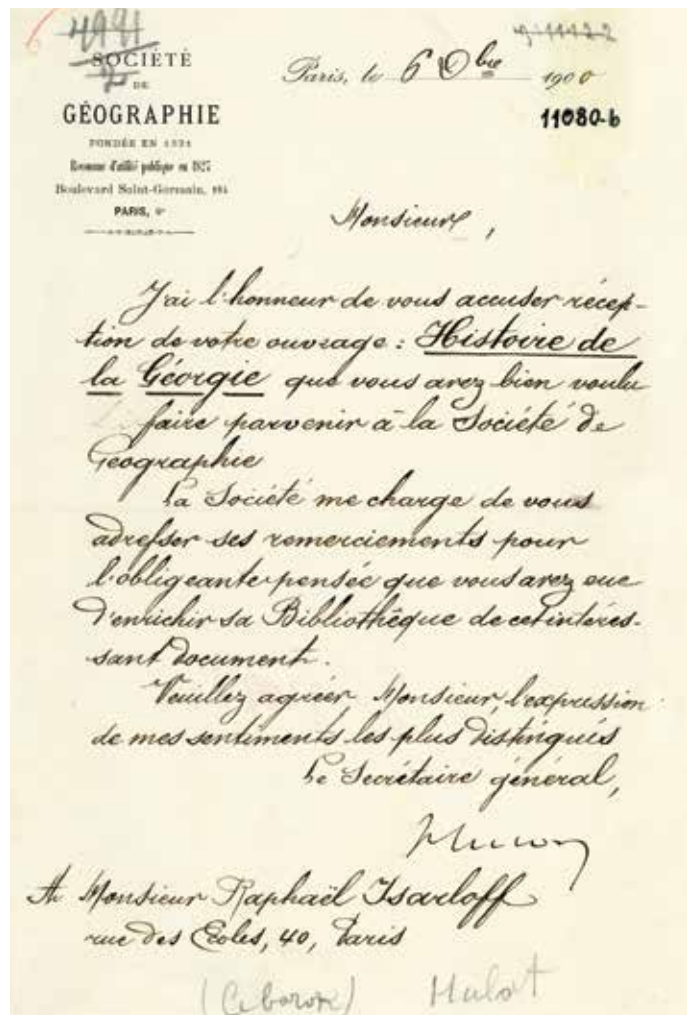
Prince Roland Bonaparte, Chevalier of the Highest Award of France – Order “Legion d’Honneur”.

Letter of Prince Roland Bonaparte to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book “History of Georgia” (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature).





Baron Etienne Hulot, Secretary General of the Geographic Society of France.



Letter of Baron Etienne Hulot to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book "History of Georgia" (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11080).



As mentioned earlier, the book (History of Georgia) published by Raphael Isarlishvili was well received and approved on the international level. Original letters of appreciation, kept in the archive of Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, sent by organizations, high rank state officials, diplomatic corps, scientists and public figures are unambiguous proofs of this fact. The incomplete list of responders includes:

President of France (18.02. 1899 -18.02.1906) Émile Loubet (Présidence de la République, Paris, 27.11.1900.) N11071\_001;

On behalf of the President, Secretary General of the President, Abel Combarieu, Chevalier of the highest award of France – Order “Légion d’Honneur” (Présidence de la République, Paris, 27.11.1900. Le Secrétaire général. Directeur du Cabinet civil du Présidence de la République, Abel Combarieu, Paris, 27.11.1900.) N11071\_002;

Alfred Picard – Commissioner General of the World Exposition 1900, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Post and Telegraph of France (Ministere du Commerce de l’Industrie des Postes et des Télégraphes. Exposition Universelle de 1900. Le Commissaire Général Alfred Picard) N11071\_004;

Jean Le Vayer – Deputy Minister of Commerce, Industry, Post and Telegraph of France (Ministere du Commerce de l’Industrie des Postes et des Télégraphes, Secrétaire particulier du Ministre, Jean Le Vayer) N11071\_003;

Alfred Rambaud – famous French historian, writer and public figure, Professor at Sorbonne University, Senator (Senat, Alfred Rambaud. 31.01.1901) N11074;

Paul Boyer – Professor of the Oriental Languages (Paul Boyer, Professeur à l’école des langues Oriental) N11071\_014;

Prince Roland Bonaparte, Chevalier of the highest award of France – Order “Legion d’honneur” (Prince Roland Bonaparte. 10.XII.1900.) N11071\_017;

Prince Ouroussoff, Museum of Natural History (Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle. Le Prince Ouroussoff) N11114;

Baron Etienne Hulot, Secretary General of the Geographic Society of France (Secrétaire Général de la Société de Géographie de France), N11080;

E. Nys – Professor at Brussels University (Professeur a l’Université de Bruxelles, E. Nys 29.XI.1900) N11084\_08;

Elisée Reclus – famous French geographer, historian, member of the Geographic Society of Paris, Brussels (Elisée Reclus, Bruxelles. 21.XI.1900) N11085;

Ed. Drouin – Secretary of the Asian Society (Société Asiatique. Secrétaire de la Société Ed. Drouin. 28.X.1900) N11071\_008;.N11071\_11;

Ernest Chantre – Director of the Museum of Natural Sciences (Muséum des Sciences naturelles. Directeur Ernest Chantre) N11083;

I. Chvetzer – Director of the Industrial Bank of France 30.XI.1900. Banque Francaise Industrielle. N11071\_38;

Prosper B. Delpech – Superior of the Foreign Affairs Department of France (Prosper B. Delpech, Supérieur du Séminaire des Missions Etrangères) N11071\_39;

Doctor Richter – Commissioner General of Germany at Paris Universal Exposition 1900 (Richter – Commissariat Général de l'Allemagne à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris 1900. Paris, 88, Avenue des Champs Elysées, le 4 Desembre 1900) N11071\_05;

Iv. Rezhabek – Rector of the Business Academy of Czechoslovakia (Reditelstvi CESKOSLOVANSKE AKADEMIE OBCHODNI – Ив. Режабек, 10.XII, 1900) N11071\_029;

L. Brosset – Councilor General of Russia, Barcelona, 9.XII, 1900 (L. Brosset. Consul Général de Russie. Barcelone, le 9 décembre 1900) N1107\_018;

Henri Jermain – President of “Credit Lyonnais” (Crédit Lyonnais. Cabinet du Président, Henri Jermain 10.XII.1900) N11071\_016;

I. Deniker – Director of the Library of the Museum of Natural History of France, Paris, 10.XII, 1900 (I. Deniker. Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Bibliothèque. Paris, le 10 décembre 1900); N11071\_019;

Hugues Krafft – famous French traveler and photographer, 22.XI.1900, Paris (Hugues Krafft. Paris 40 Rue de Lubeck, 22 novembre 1900) N11071\_20;

Gaston Henry – Administrator of the Magazine “Viticulture”, Paris, 8. XI.1900. (Gaston Henry. Administrateur de la Revue de Viticulture. Paris,8.XI.1900) N11071\_35-36;

Jules Legras – Professor of Foreign Literature at Dijon University (Jules Legras. Professeur de Littérature étrangère à l'Université de Dijon. 10.XII.1900. 24. Chemin de Fontaine) N11071\_015;

Vico Mantegazza – Secretary General of the Commissariat of Italy at the World Exposition of 1900 (Vico Mantegazza - Secrétaire général du Commissariat d'Italie à l'Exposition de 1900) N11071\_022;

Doctor Emile Gotchaue – Doctor of the Police Department of Paris (Docteur Emile Gotchaue-Médecin de la Préfecture de Police, 67. rue de la Victoire. Paris) N11071\_023;

P. Camena d'Almeida – Professor at the University of Bordeaux (P. Camena d'Almeida Professeur à l'Université de Bordeaux. Bordeaux, 10 décembre 1900). N11071\_024;

N. Paquet – President of the Company “N. Paquet” (N. Paquet et C<sup>ie</sup>, Marseille. 4. Place Sadi- Carnot, 10 XII. 1900) N11071\_029;

Herbert Jekyll – Commissioner General of the Great Britain at the World Exposition of 1900 (Herbert Jekyll – Le Commissaire Général de la Grande-Bretagne. 11 décembre 1900. 11 Avenue de la Bourdonnais. Paris). N11071\_026;

Henri Cordier, Paris (Henri Cordier. 14, rue Nicole. 11 décembre 1900, Paris) N11071\_027;

Paul Adam – famous French writer and novelist (Paul Adam., Chateau de Bhayes.) N11078;

I. Vazoff – famous Bulgarian poet and writer, Academician of the Academy of Sciences of Bulgaria, Sofia, 21. XI.1900 (I. Vazoff. Sofia, 21.XI.1900) N11071\_034;

Caplier – Superior of the Company “St. Sulpice”, Paris (Caplier. Superieur general de la Compagnie de St. Sulpice Paris) N11071\_032;

Alexandre André – Advisor for Foreign Trade Affairs of France (Alexandre André, Conseiller du Commerce extérieur de la France ) N11071\_033;

Lieutenant Colonel Guillot – Director of “Forges” (Forges. Lieutenant Colonel Guillot, Directeur des Forges) N11071;

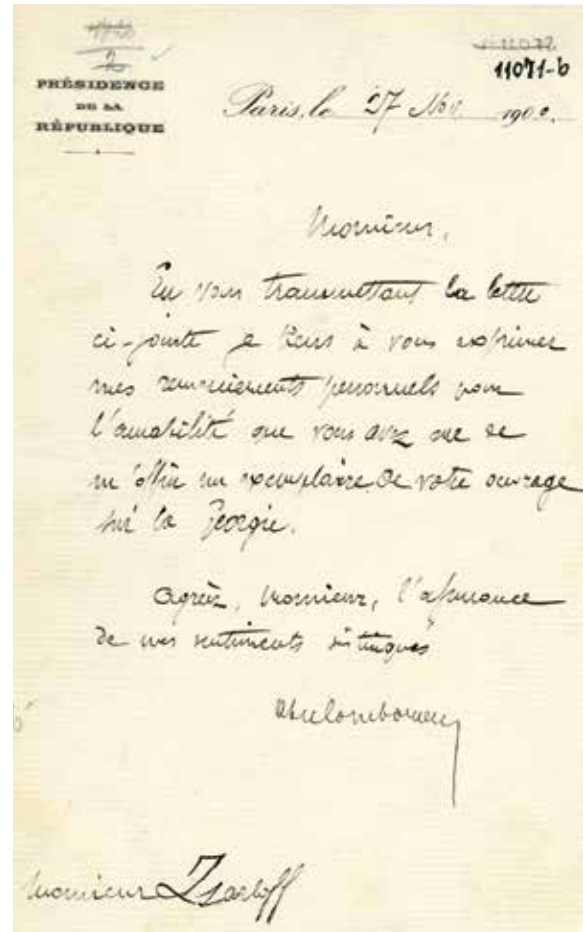
Baron Joseph de Baye – French archeologist and traveler, Member of the Geographic Society of France (Baron Joseph de Baye. 1900) 11075;

His Imperial Highness, Grand Duke, Michael Nikolaevich of Russia ( Его Императорское Высочество Великий Князь Михаил Николаевич, 1901 ) N11076;

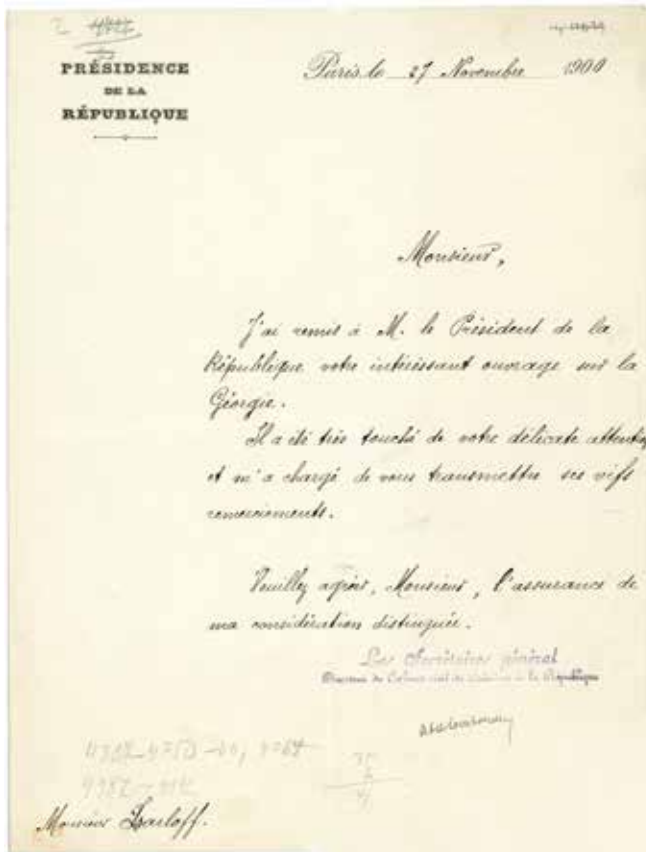
Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess, Elizabeth Feodorovna of Russia (hereon canonized as a saint) (Ее Императорское Высочество Великая Княгиня Елизавета Феодоровна, 1901 ) N11077.



President of France Émile Loubet  
(18.02. 1899 -18.02.1906).



Letters of President of France and Secretary General of the President regarding the book "History of Georgia" (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature).



Secretary General of the President, Abel Combarieu, Chevalier of the highest award of France – Order "Legion d'Honneur"



Baron Joseph de Baye (1853-1931) – French archaeologist and traveler, Member of the Geographic Society of France.



Letter of Baron Joseph de Baye to Raphael Isarlishvili (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11075).





Herbert Jekyll – Commissioner General of the Great Britain at the World Exposition of 1900. Letter of Herbert Jekyll to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book “History of Georgia” (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-026).

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Adresse télégraphique  
"PARISOLONT PARIS"  
Téléphone No. 277. 43.

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11107

11 AVENUE DE LA BOURDONNAIS,  
PARIS.

Le 11 Décembre 1900.

Monsieur .

J'ai l'honneur de vous  
accuser réception de votre aimable  
lettre du 26 Novembre .

Je suis très sensible à  
votre gracieux envoi d'un exemplaire  
de votre ouvrage sur la Géorgie,  
je vous en remercie bien vivement.

Bonne nuit que ce sera  
avec

avec le plus vif plaisir que  
j'étudierai cet intéressant  
volume .

Permettez-moi aussi  
ainsi que mes remerciements  
renouvelés, l'assurance de ma  
haute considération.

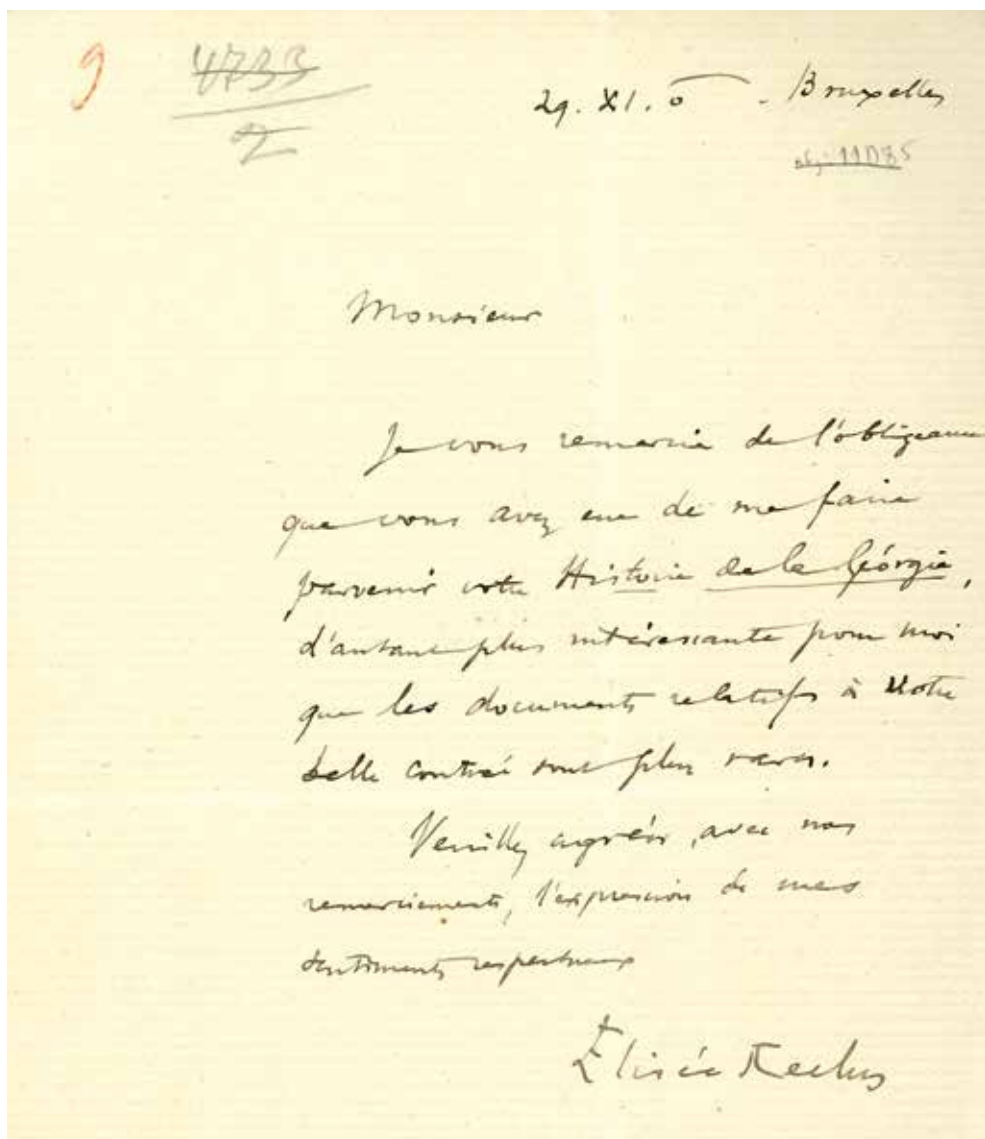
Le Commissaire Général  
de la Grande Bretagne  
Herbert Jekyll.

26

Monsieur P. Isarlishvili.  
Représentant des propriétaires Géorgiens  
etc etc etc .  
40 Rue des Ecoles . 40 Paris



Elisée Reclus – famous French geographer, historian, member of the Geographic Society of Paris.  
Letter of Elisée Reclus to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book “History of Georgia”, 22.XI.1900 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11085).

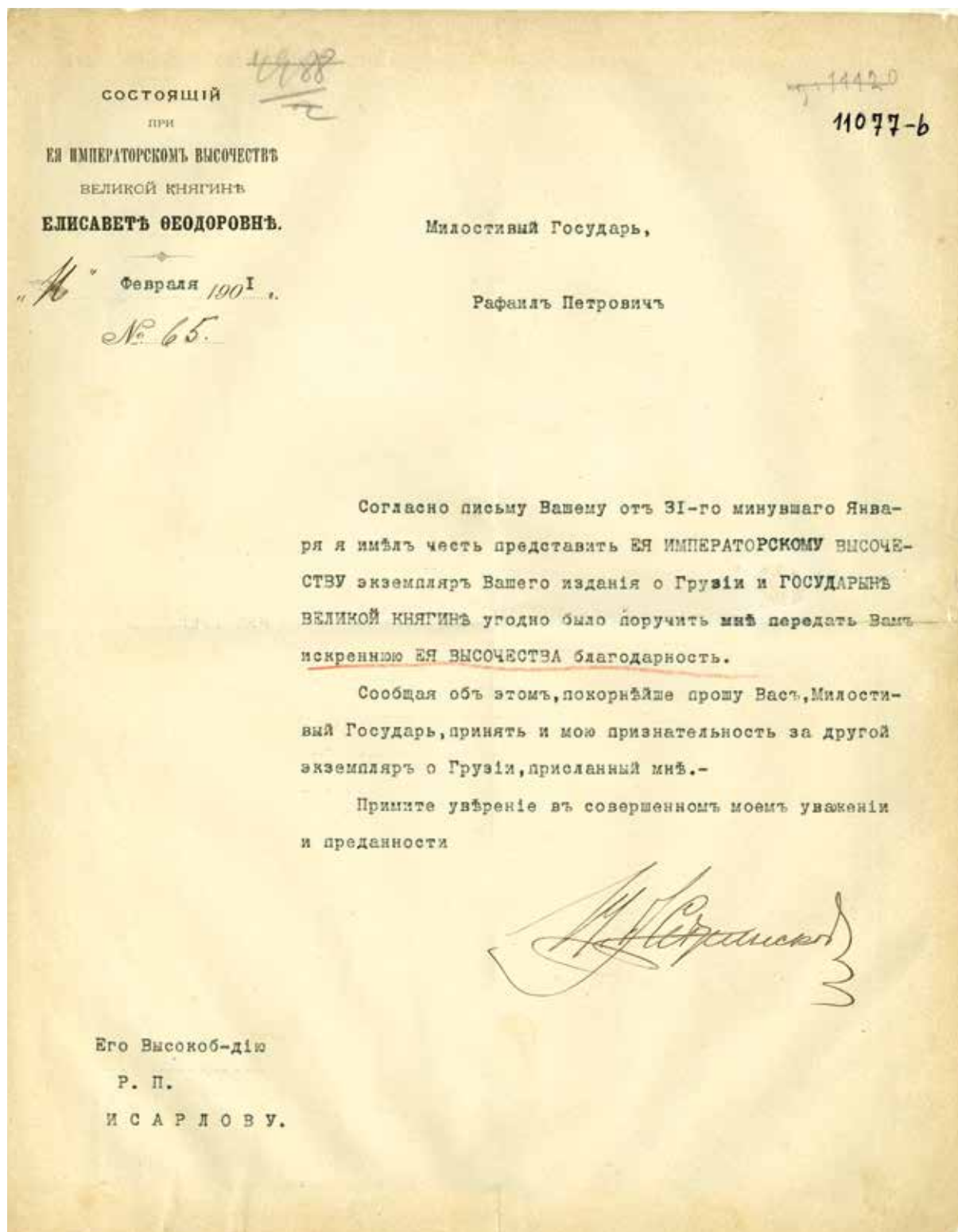




**Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess, Elizabeth Feodorovna of Russia (hereon canonized as a saint) (Ее Императорское Высочество Великая Княгиня Елизавета Феодоровна).**

Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna (born Elisabeth Alexandra Luise Alice von Hessen – Darmstadt und bei Rhein) was the granddaughter of Queen Victoria of the Great Britain. After the marriage to Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, brother of Emperor Alexander III of Russia, she became the member of Russian Imperial House, officially known as Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess Elizaveta Feodorovna. After the assassination of her husband by a terrorist, she took the veil. In 1909, she established the Charity House, later the Nunnery (Martha-Mariina Mercy Cloister), where she had spent her life till the exile. In 1918, she was exiled by Bolsheviks to Perm Gubernia, where she took the martyrdom on July 18, 1918. She was thrown to the Mine “Novaya Selimskaya” near the city of Alapayevsk. In 1981 Russian Orthodox Church Abroad canonized her as St. Elizabeth. Later, in 1992 Russian Orthodox Church confirmed the canonization. She is buried in the Holy Land, Jerusalem. Her image is depicted on the Western Wall of the Westminster Abbey in the Great Britain amongst the statues of the 20<sup>th</sup> century martyrs.

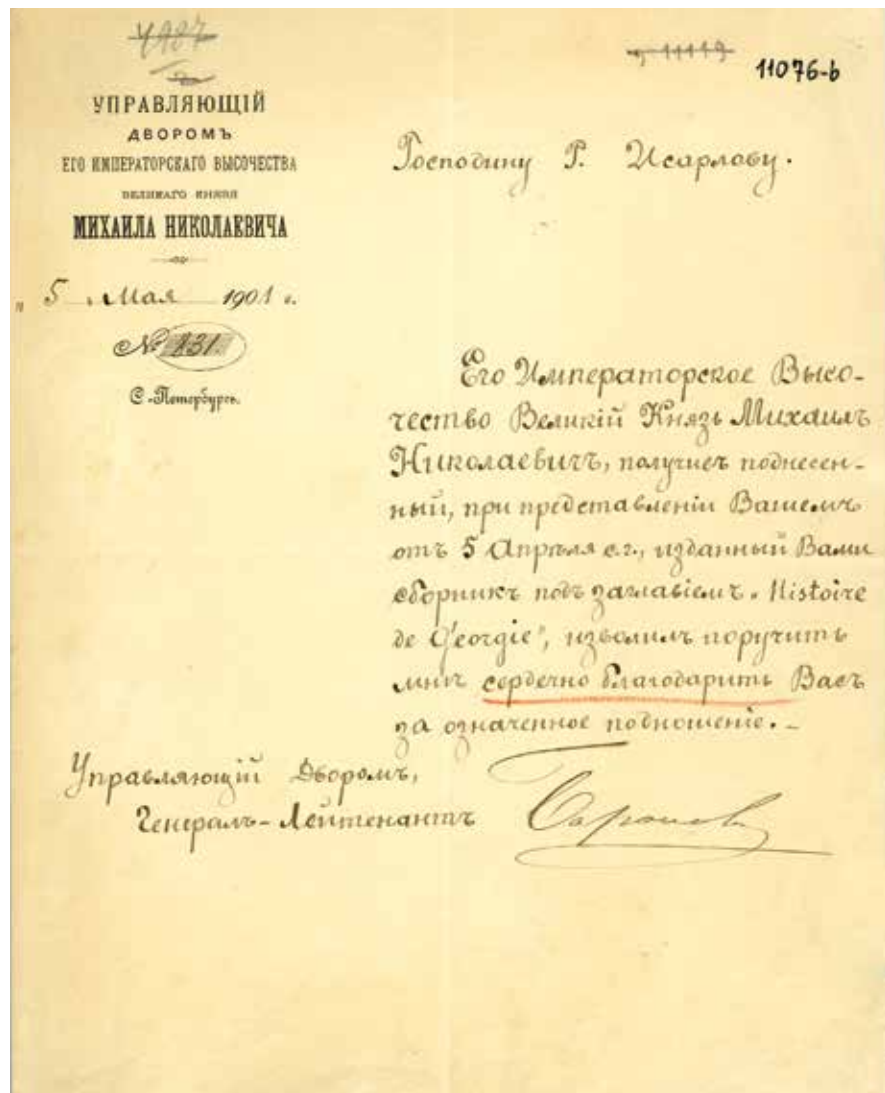




Letter of Her Imperial Highness, Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book "History of Georgia", 16.II.1901 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11077).

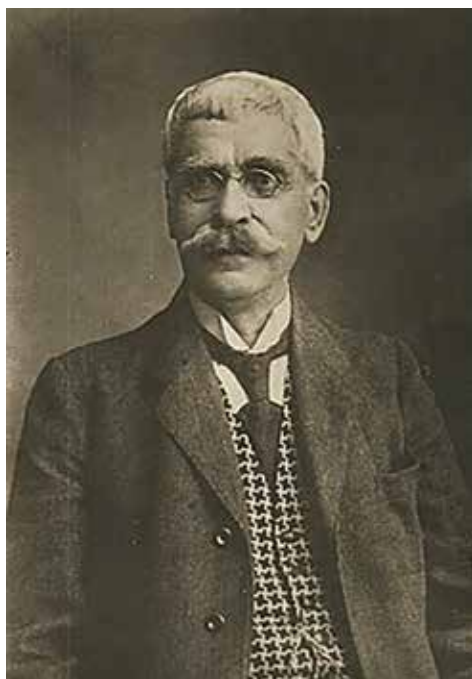


His Imperial Highness, Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevich of Russia (Его Императорское Высочество Великий Князь Михаил Николаевич).

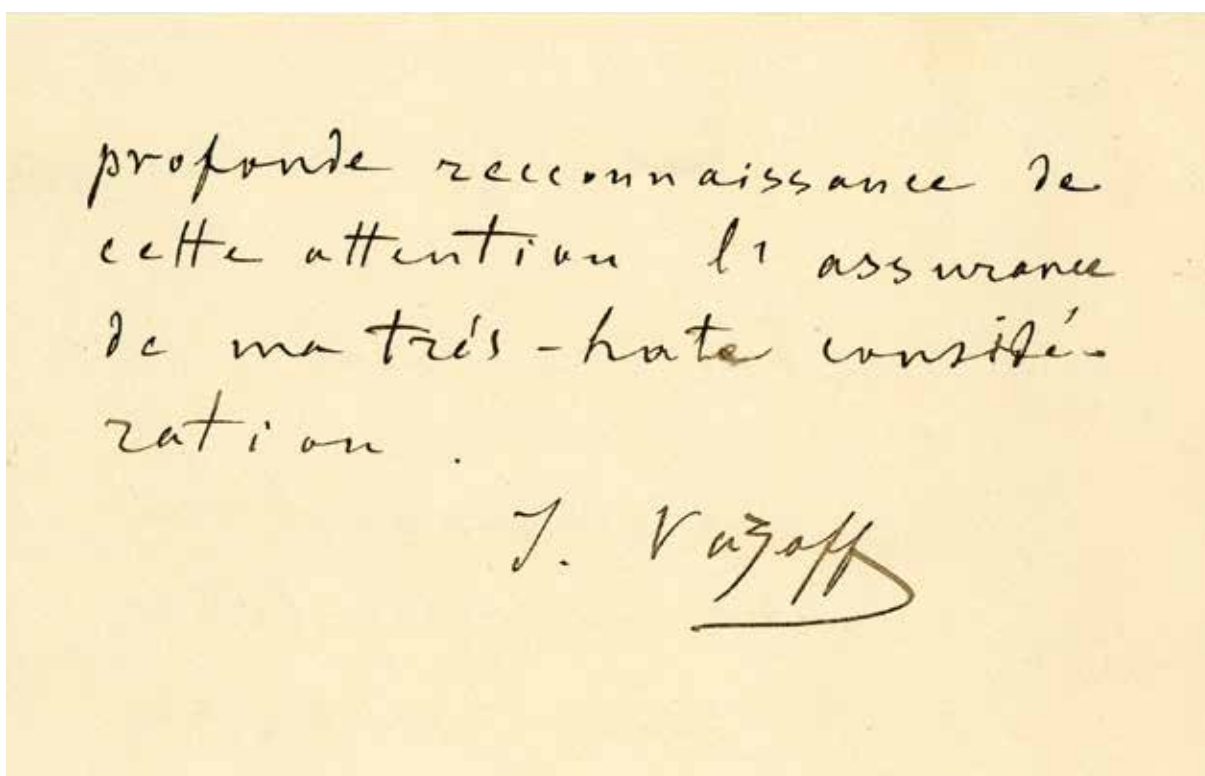
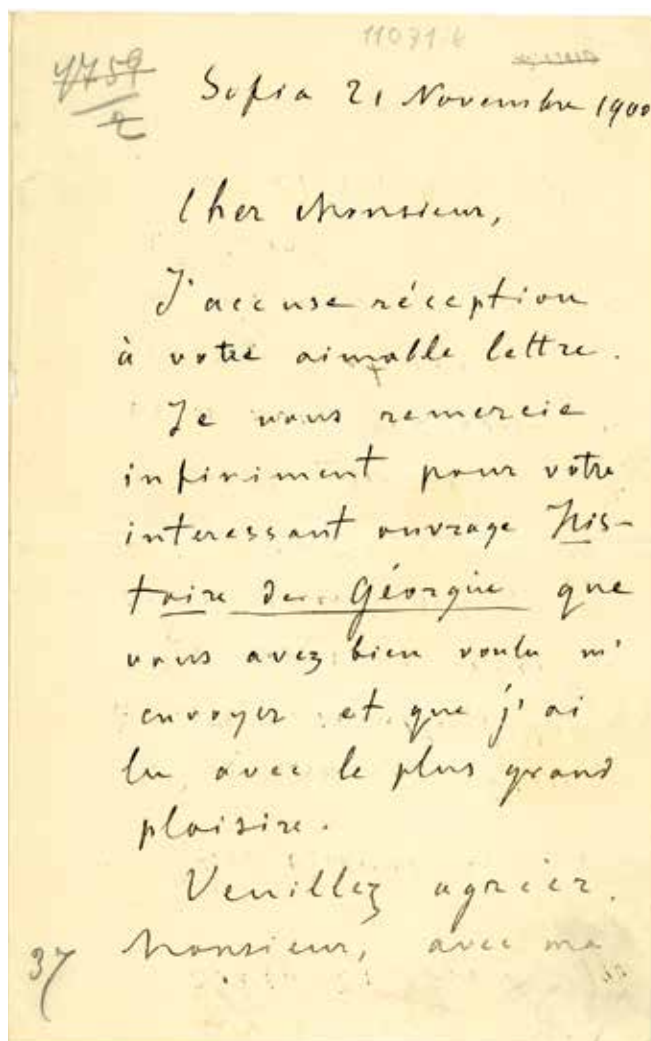


Letter of His Imperial Highness, Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevich to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book "History of Georgia", 16.II.1901 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11076).



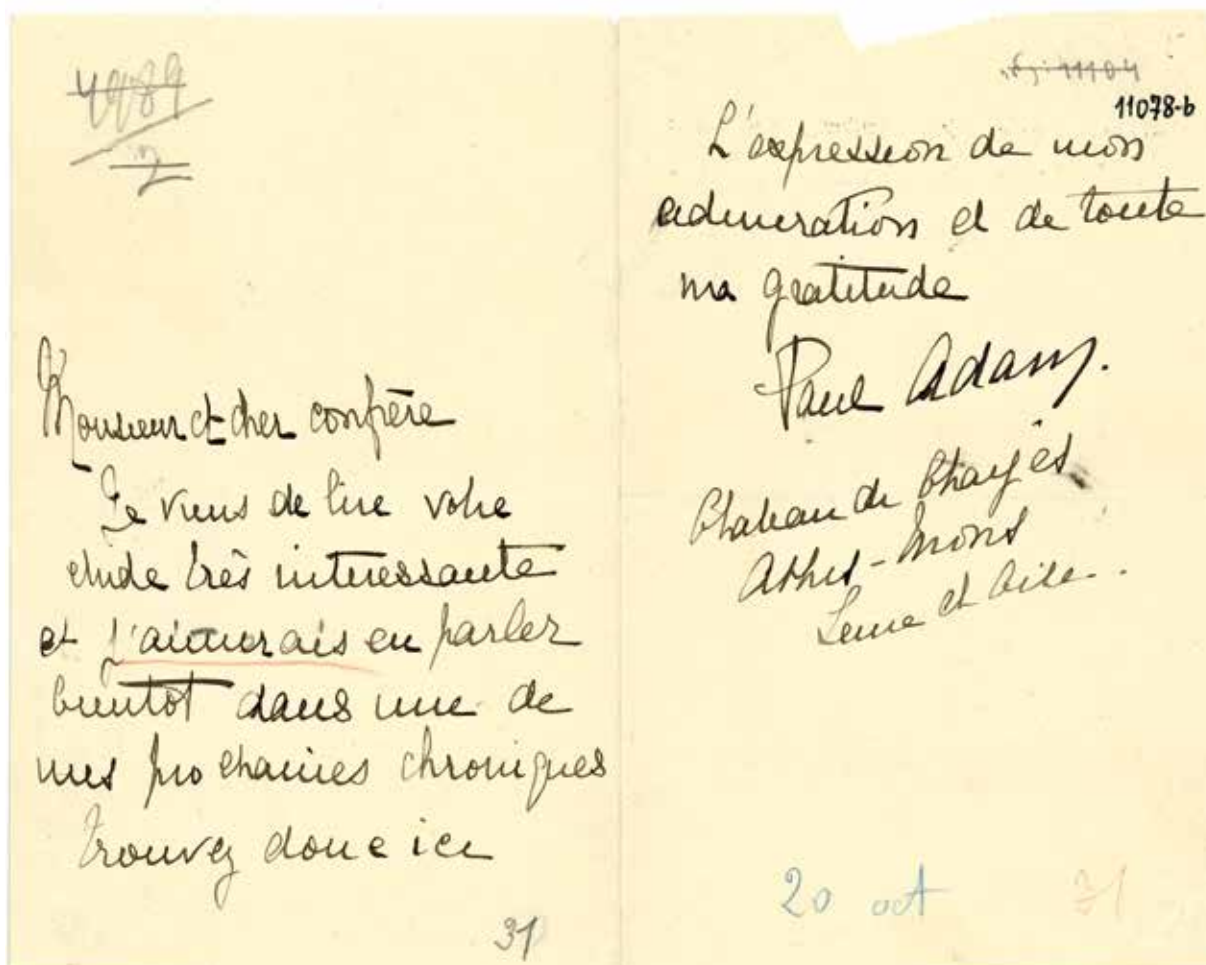


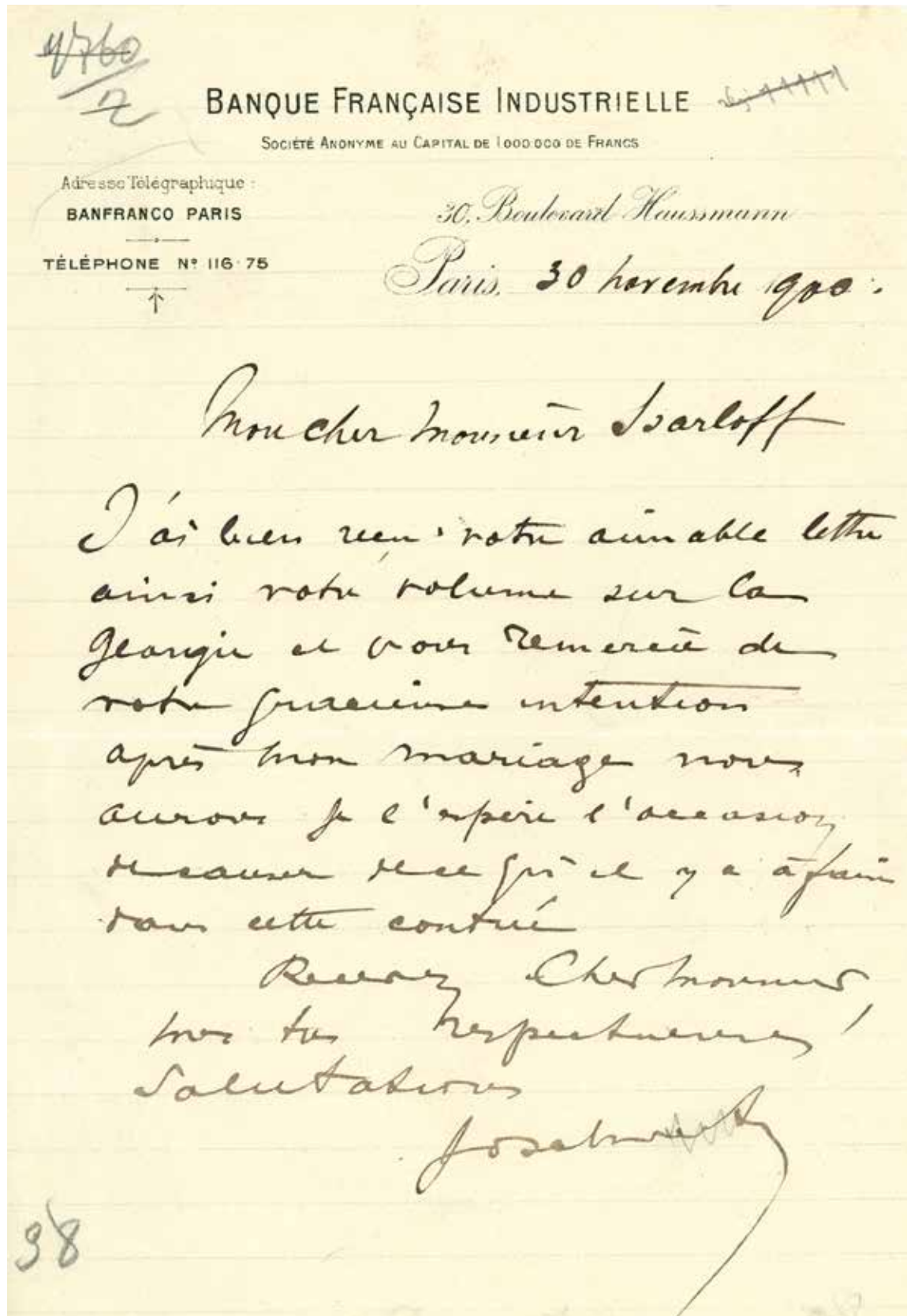
I. Vazoff – famous Bulgarian poet and writer, academician of the Academy of Sciences of Bulgaria. Letter of I. Vazoff to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book "History of Georgia", 16.II.1901 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-037).





Paul Adam – famous French writer and novelist. Letter of Paul Adam to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book “History of Georgia”, 16.II.1901 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11078).





The world society response – letters received by Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book “History of Georgia (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature).

**Paris, le 31 janvier 1901**

Je vous prie de m'excuser de vous répondre si tardivement à votre aimable lettre et à l'envoi de votre précieuse ouvrage sur l'existence sur l'histoire de la Géorgie.

J'ai été, dans ces dernier temps, si dérangé de toutes manières que ma correspondance et mes lectures en ont beaucoup souffert.

Je vais pouvoir, grâce à vous, combler de grosses lacunes dans mes lectures d'histoire de Géorgie qui a joué un si grand rôle dans la résistance aux invasions mongoles ou musulmanes et qui fut alors un rempart de l'Europe ingrate parce qu'elle était mal informée.

Je vous prie d'agréer, avec mes remerciements, l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus distingués.

**Alfred Rambaud**

**Paris, 1901 year 31<sup>th</sup> January**

Please pardon me for my late reply to your letter and your precious work about the history of Georgia which you had sent.

I was busy lately for a couple of reasons, which also affected my correspondence and reading.

With your help I shall fulfill my knowledge about the history of Georgia, which played the great part in fighting against Mongols and Muslims during their invasions, Georgia has created the resistance on their way to ungrateful Europe, ungrateful, because of its insufficient knowledge of Georgia.

**Alfred Rambaud**

~~44447~~  
11074-b

~~4763~~

SÉNAT

Paris le 31 janvier 1901

Monsieur

Je vous prie de  
m'excuser si je réponds si  
tardivement à votre aimable  
lettre et à l'honneur de votre  
précieux ouvrage sur l'histoire  
de la Géorgie.

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si grande parce qu'elle était si  
impuissante. Je vous prie  
d'agréer, avec mes remerciements  
l'assurance de mon respectueux  
et plus distingué

Alfred Rambaud

44

Letter of the famous French historian, writer and public figure, Professor at Sorbonne University, Senator Alfred Rambaud to Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book "History of Georgia", 31.01.1901 (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11074).



4336  
211. rue de Verneuil  
Paris 2<sup>e</sup> mar<sup>ch</sup> 1900  
9:14022

Monsieur

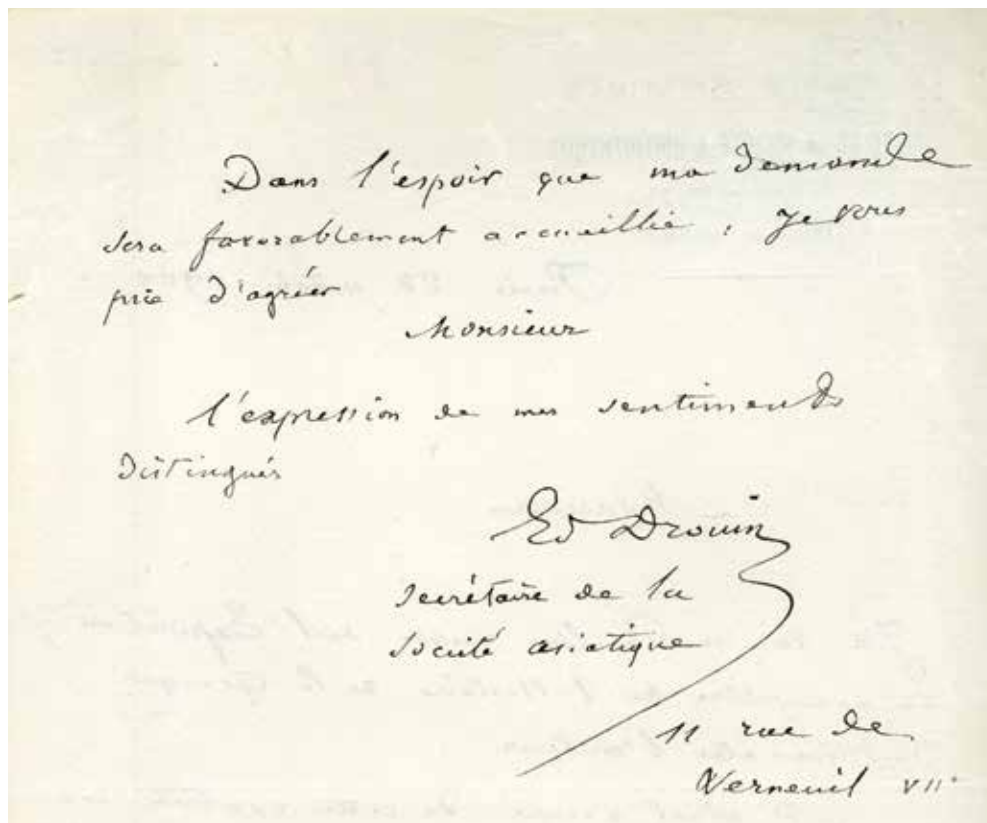
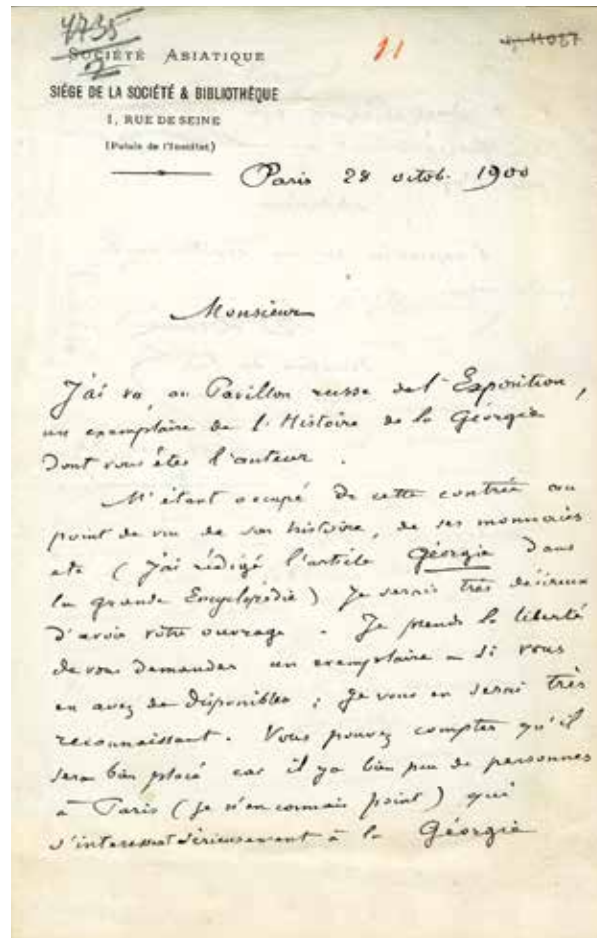
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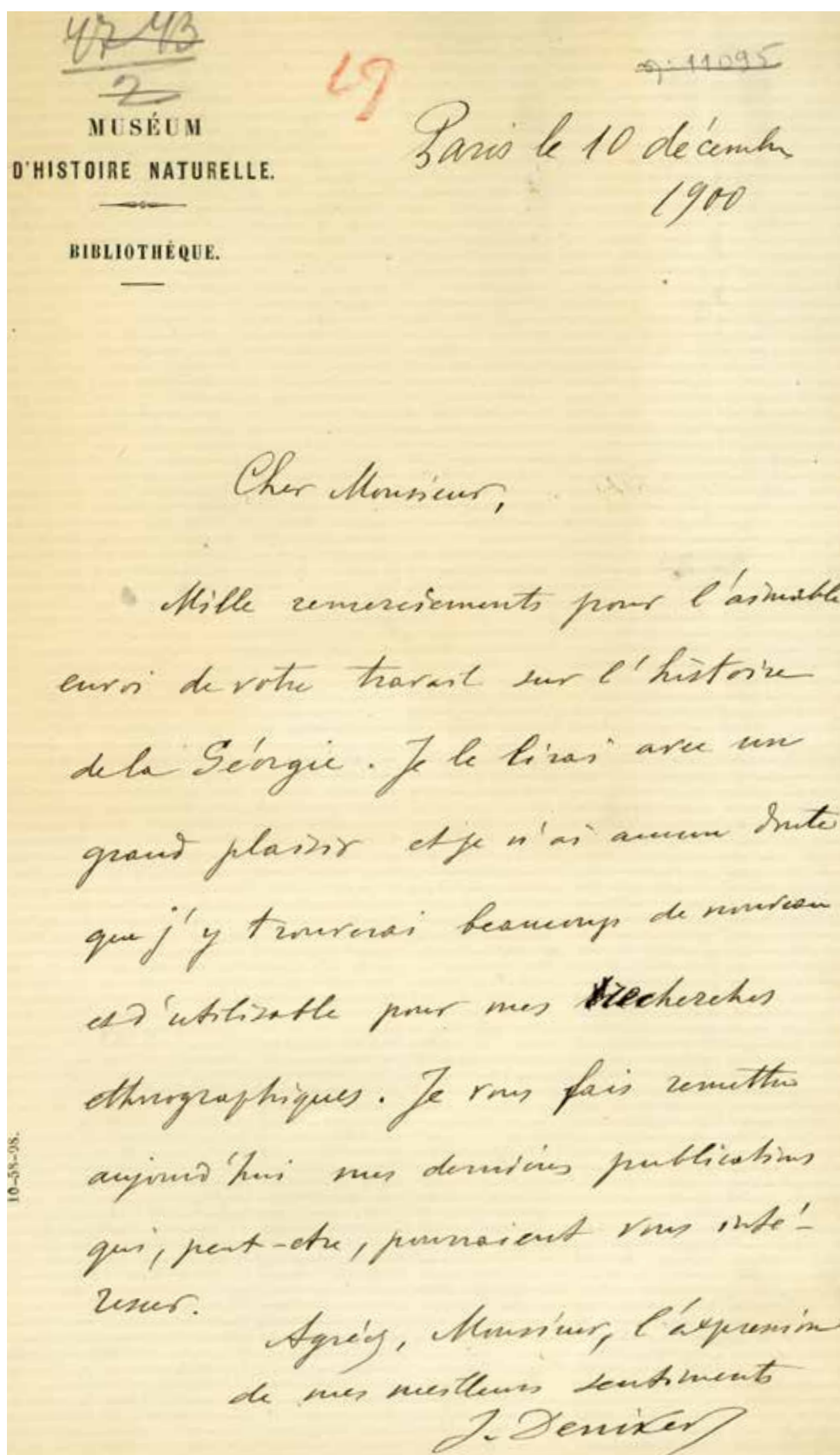
Je viens de recevoir "l'Historia  
de la Georgie" que vous avez eu la  
bonté de me donner, sur ma demande  
et je vous en remercie bien vivement.  
Je viens de parcourir ce volume,  
avec d'autant plus de plaisir que  
cette histoire m'est familière.  
L'ouvrage est très bien fait et les portraits  
que vous avez eu la bonne idée d'y  
insérer lui ajoutent beaucoup de  
valeur.

Veuillez bien agréer, Monsieur  
l'expression de mes sentiments reconnaissants

Ed. Drouin

Letters of Ed. Drouin – Secretary of the Asian Society to Raphael Isarlishvili  
(Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-11).



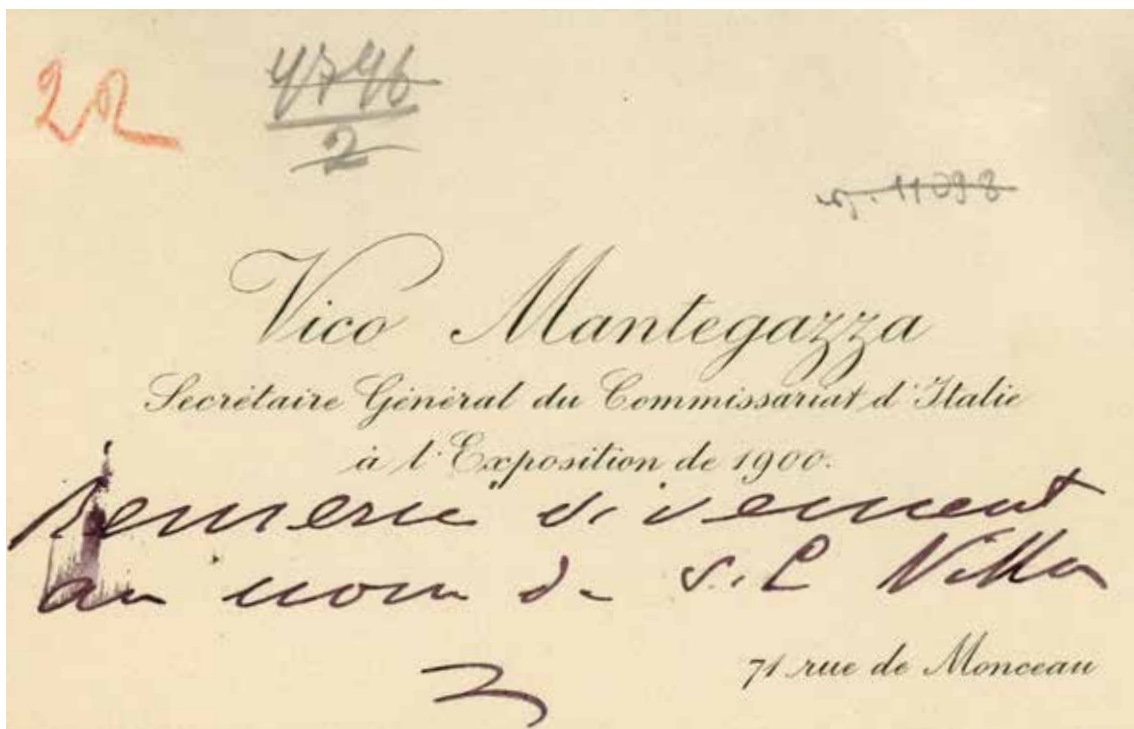


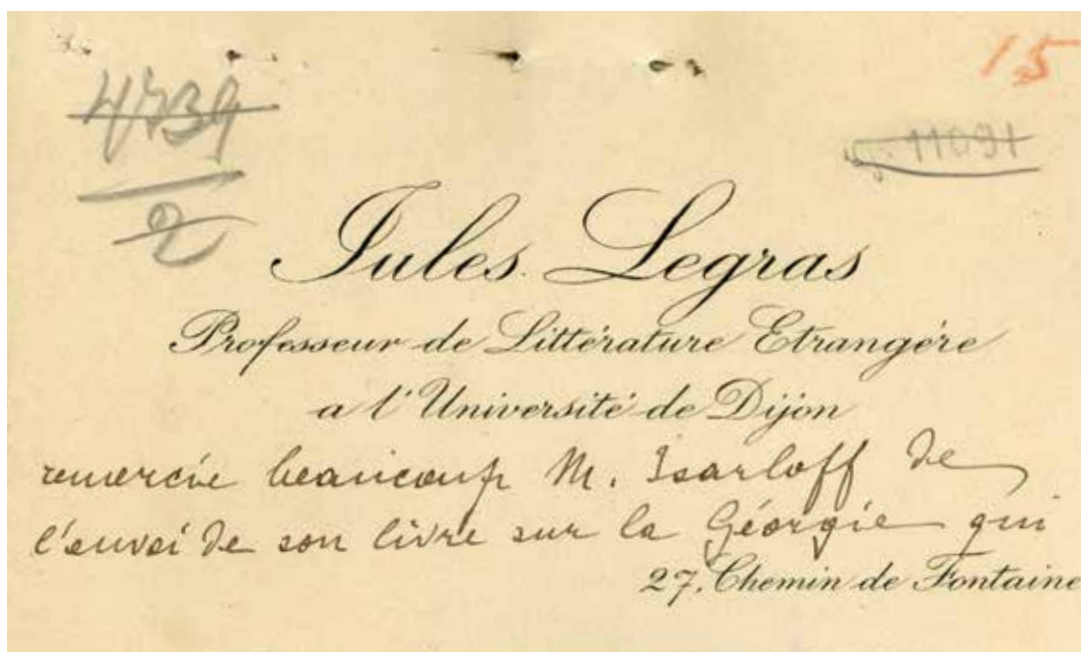
The world society response – letters, received by Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book “History of Georgia” (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature).



Vico Mantegazza – Secretary General of the Commissariat of Italy at the World Exposition of 1900.

Letter of Vico Mantegazza to Raphael Isarlishvili, regarding the book "History of Georgia" (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071-022)





The world society response – letters, received by Raphael Isarlishvili regarding the book “History of Georgia” (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature).

This list is just a part of the immense response of the world society, received by Raphael Isarlishvili regarding participation of Georgia in the World Exposition of 1900 and presentation of the book “History of Georgia”. One of the letters, particularly mentioned by Raphael Isarlishvili in his letter to Al.Khakhanashvili belongs to the Rector of the Business Academy of Czechoslovakia, Iv. Rezhabek ( Reditelstvi CESKOSLOVANSKE AKADEMIE OBCHODNI. Ив. Режабек, 10. XII, 1900, G. Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071\_029). The letter is the clear evidence that the book (History of Georgia) has raised high interest amongst the world society towards Georgia – its culture, history, heritage, music, language and literature. As stated in Mr. Rezhabek’s letter:

„Милостивый Государь!

Присылкой Вашей интересной книги Вы мне доставили величайшее удовольствие и считаю долгом принести Вам за Вашу любезность мою искреннюю благодарность. Земля Ваша конечно не была призвана судьбой играть в историческом развитии народов первенствующую роль, но таинственной красотой своей природы она издавна првлекала к себе взоры культурных народов европейских и азиатских и в роскошной растительности Ваших долин поэты воодушевлялись в своих песнях. Один из наших известных писателей заинтересовался до того Вашим отечеством, что просит Вас назвать ему заглавие какой-нибудь новой грамматики грузинского языка и словаря, при помощи которых он мог бы ознакомиться с Вашим языком. Кроме того просит передать ему, существуют ли какие-нибудь сборники Ваших национальных грузинских песен.

Принося снова мою благодарность за Вашу любезность, честь имею быть, Милостивый Государь, Вашим покорнейшим слугою.

Ив Режабек“

“Dear Sir!

Your book has brought the greatest pleasure to me and now I feel obliged to express my sincere gratitude for your attention. Truly, your country was not destined to play leading role in historical development of the world, but with the mystic beauty of its nature it has long ago attracted attention of the civilized nations of Europe and Asia and picturesque nature of your valleys have inspired poets for their verses.

One of our famous writers was interested in your country to such an extent that he appeals to you to recommend any new grammar book of Georgian language and the dictionary that will enable him to know your country better. Besides, he appeals to you to let him know whether there are any publications or records of Georgian folk songs.

Let me once again assure you in my gratitude for your attention, I have the honor to be your humble servant friend.

Iv. Rezhabek”.

Similar to Mr. Iv. Rezhabek, the famous Bulgarian poet and writer, academician of the Academy of Sciences of Bulgaria, the person recognized as the Patriarch of Bulgarian Literature, Ivan Vazoff also responded to the book (I. Vazoff. Sofia, 21.XI.1900. G. Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071034). It is noteworthy that according to the scholars of his legacy, “Histoire de Géorgie” of Raphael Isarlishvili was one of the books that inspired Iv. Vazoff to write the essay-overview “Historical Past of Georgian People”, published in the monthly Bulgarian magazine “Bulgarian Compendium” in 1901, N3 (Л. Джулабашвили „Вазов и болгаро - грузинские культурные связи“, Сабчота Сакартвелო, 1961; „Ценное исследование о Вазове“, Newspaper „Вечерний Тбилиси“, 27.VII.1961).

Thus, the publication “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” has played the key role in raising the interest of the international society to Georgia, later being reflected in their works and pen-craft.

Letter of the famous French novelist and writer, Paul Adam regarding the book “Histoire de Géorgie” is highly interesting, where he refers to Raphael Isarlishvili as to a friend and colleague (“Monsieur et cher confrere”). He talks about his desire to speak about this interesting work in his future publications (“Je viens de lire votre étude tres intéressante et j’aimerais en parler bientôt dans une de mes prochaines chroniques”).

Letters of the Secretary General of the Asian Society, Ed. Drouin to Raphael Isarlishvili are another good evidence of the vivid interest of scientific circles towards Georgia during the exhibition. In one of them he appeals for a copy of the book “Histoire de Géorgie” and notes that the information about Georgia is necessary for his scientific activity. Moreover, there are certain persons in Paris, he notes, with high interest in Georgia. Speaking of the book, he praises it highly and appreciates Rapael Isarlishvili’s initiative to revise the publication and add images of the most famous Georgian figures. (The letters of Ed. Drouin to Raphael Isarlishvili - Société Asiatique. Secrétaire de la Société Ed. Drouin. 28.X.1900. Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11071\_008; N11071\_11).

December 24, 1900 issue of the “Tsnobis Purtseli” daily newspaper provides a brief summary of French press coverage of Georgia’s participation in Paris World Exhibition and of the response of the international society on the book. The article reads as follows:

“After his fervent participation in organizing Department of Georgia in the Exposition, Mr. Raphael Isarlisvhili has articulated the remarkable idea: to print out some historical,

literature and scientific notes in our language about the country, which is interesting indeed with its favorable geographical location and the natural richness and treasures, and with truly amazing history as well.

The monograph edited by Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili is short, but provides everything one needs to know. Hereof monograph aims at introduction of the past and the present of the people, who fall the victim of constant destructions, tells about the past and the present of the country burned-down, spared and dispelled by the enemies. Geographical overview and brief description of the history and literature of Georgia by Mr. Al. Khakhanashvili provides the reader with the necessary information about this country.

In the end, numerous illustrations and pictures reflecting the architecture and monuments clearly demonstrate the beauty and fineness of the art of ancient Georgia” (“News Note”, 1900,24.XII. N1337 – L. Nanitashvili „ქართული წიგნის ამგდარნი“, pg. 38).

The excellent review of the book was printed in the Italian press as well, which was published in the Newspaper “Iveria” on May 19, 1901, N107.

“We have received a very nice book titled “History of Georgia”. This book, illustrated with the pictures of beautiful men and women, is concise description of the history and literature of Georgia; it aims at introducing the people that still remain “terra incognita” for Europe. This is the people bravely fighting for freedom and religion during centuries against the most powerful enemies of mankind and Christ. Nevertheless, it managed to maintain and protect its statehood for more than 2000 years. Noble nature of these people goes together with the beauty of their spirit and the landscape” (Newspaper “Iveria”, 1901, 19. V. N107, L. Nanitashvili „ქართული წიგნის ამგდარნი“, pg. 38).

The same issue of the newspaper “Iveria” of May 19, 1901, N107 had the letters of European scientists addressed to Raphael Isarlishvili with one written by the famous French historian, writer and public figure, Professor at Sorbonne University, Senator Alfred Rambaud. The original is kept in Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature (N11074). The photocopy of the letter with the translation is included in this publication. It reads as follows:

“...thanks to you, now I am able to complete my remarks about the history of Georgia, the country that had highly contributed in the past by the greatest resistance to the invasions of Mongols and Muslims, providing enormous service of being the defensive wall to Europe, ungrateful Europe, as the latter had no knowledge about Georgia” (Newspaper “Iveria”, 1901, 19. V. N107).



It is as well noteworthy that the same issue of the newspaper “Iveria” provides the letter of Hugo Schuhardt, professor at the University of Graz: “Let me express my sincere gratitude for sending me your book “History of Georgia”. This book will trigger the highest interest of many in Europe towards your beautiful country” (Professor of University of Graz, Newspaper “Iveria”, 1901,19.V. N107, L. Nanitashvili „ქართული წიგნის ამაგდარნი“, pg. 38-39).

In recognition of Mr. Raphael Isarlishvili’s successful activity and his contribution to overall success of the entire enterprise, he was decorated with the Order of the Ministry of Agriculture of France and the title of „Officier du Mérite Agricole”. The respective diploma that certifies the award is issued on February 24, 1901 signed by the Minister of Agriculture of France, Mr. Dupuis. The document reads as follows: “I have the honor to inform you that pursuant my personal mediation and effective to today's Ordinance, you are awarded the title “Officier du Mérite Agricole”. I am glad to have the opportunity to award you this title for your merit in agriculture”.

**“République Française**

**Paris, le 24 février 1901**

Monsieur,

J’ai l’honneur de vous faire connaître que par décret en date de ce jour, rendu sur ma proposition, vous avez été promu au grade d’Officier du Mérite Agricole.

Je suis heureux, Monsieur, d’avoir pu vous faire accorder cette distinction en récompense des services que vous avez rendus à l’agriculture.

Recevez, Monsieur, l’assurance de ma considération la plus distinguée

Le Ministre de l’Agriculture

Dupuis

A Monsieur Issarloff Raphaél, délégué aux Confins de l’Empire, à Tiflis (Russie)“

(S. Janashia National Museum of Georgia, N37-979/2).

This high award of the Government of France was officially handed to Raphael Isarlishvili by the representative of Russia, K. Nikolaevich. His letter dated June 10, 1901, provides:

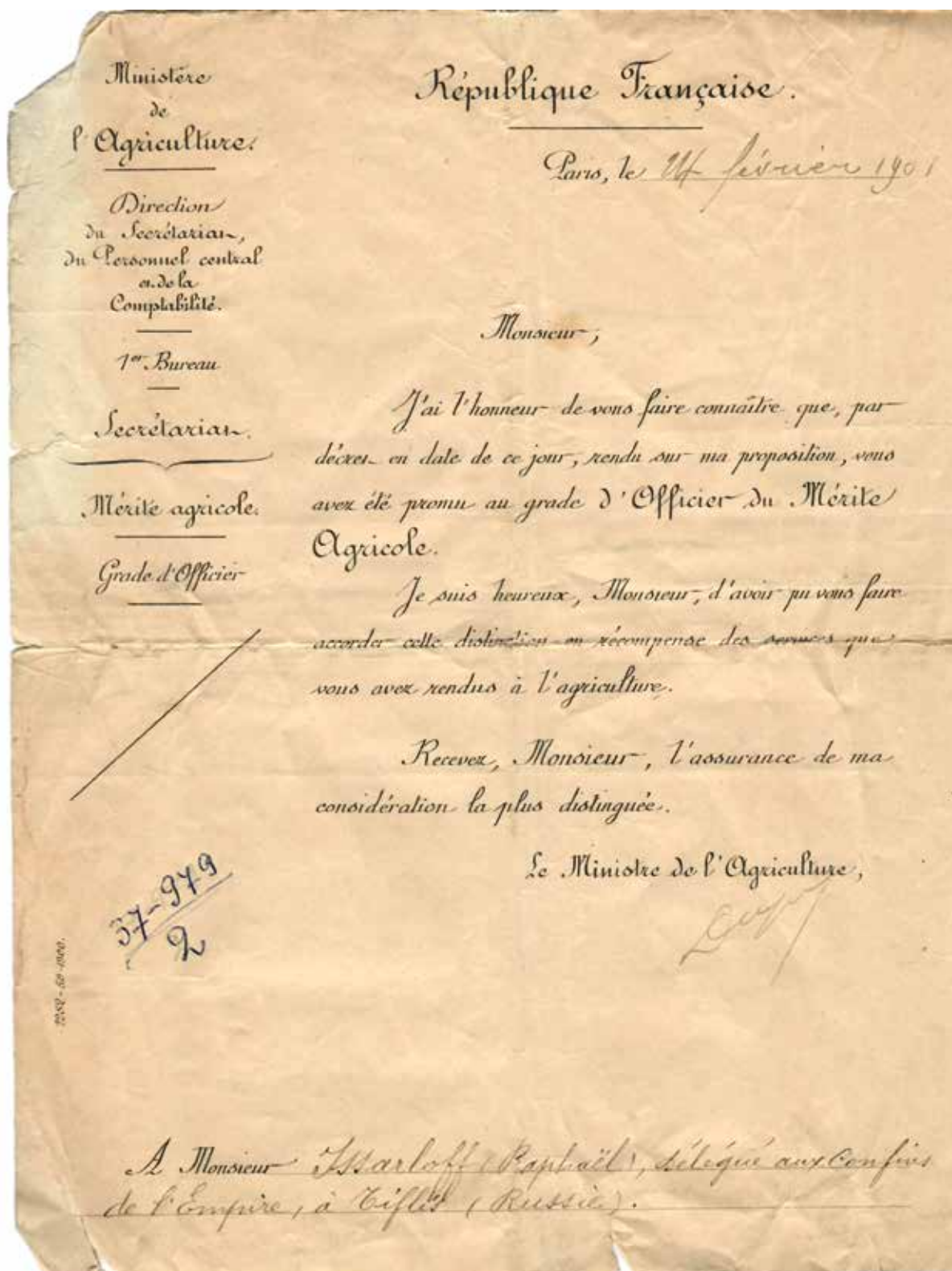
“Dear Raphael Petrovich, it is my pleasure to send you the Diploma and Order of the Government of France given to you for your merits and contributions to the exposition of the Caucasian-Georgian production in the regional department of Paris Exposition. Please, have my sincere congratulations with the new title „Officier du Mérite Agricole“,

My respect and confirmation of loyalty.

K. Nikolaevich,

June 10, 1901,

Petersburg”.



Raphael Isarlishvili, as a result of his successful activity, has been awarded by the Government of France one of the highest award of France for his merit in the World Exposition of 1900 and was granted the title „Officier du Mérite Agricole” and the Diploma and Order of the Ministry of Agriculture (S. Janashia National Museum of Georgia, N37-979/2).



The Order „Officier du Mérite Agricole“, that was officially awarded to Raphael Isarlishvili for his merit in agriculture (S. Janashia National Museum of Georgia, N37-979/1).

37-979  
3

Многочастному  
Папе Римскому

Съобщаю вам одобреніемъ почтеннаго  
Сената, гениала и ордену Французскаго  
Университета, основаннаго Павломъ I  
Вашу труды по экономическому возвышенію  
Сир-Ервункара производимаго въ Окраин-  
ныхъ Оудовъ Имперіи въ Сибиріи, и  
наблюдя въ васъ съ котораго Стани-  
сва Officier du Mérite Agricole.

Прочитавъ рукопись и прописавъ  
въ своемъ распоряженіи представителю  
К. Николаевичу

10/1000 901.  
Николаевичу.

The award of the Government of France – Diploma and Order „Officier du Mérite Agricole“ was officially awarded to Raphael Isarlishvili by the representative of Russia, K. Nikolaevich. His letter dated by June 10, 1901 regarding award of Diploma and Order (S. Janashia National Museum of Georgia, N37-979/3).

**“Многоуважаемый**

**Рафаел Петрович,**

С большим удовольствием посылаю Вам сегодня диплом и орден Французского Правительства. пожалованный Вам за Ваши труды по экспонированию Кавказких-Грузинских продуктов в Окраинном Отделе Парижской выставки и поздравляю Вас с Новым Званием Officier du Mérite Agricole.

Прошу Вас принять уверение в моем уважении и преданности

К. Николаевич

10 июня 1901.

Петербург.“

(S. Janashia National Museum of Georgia, doc. N37-979/3).

Indicated documents – Diploma, Order and the Letter are currently kept in Simon Janashia National Museum of Georgia.

In 1979, these relics of the Isarlishvili family archive handed over to the National Museum by Sophio Isarlishvili, Raphael’s niece, through Nana Saparishvili, who was the granddaughter of her sister, Helene.

The history of establishment of this high award of the Republic of France – “Ordre du Mérite Agricole” is very interesting.

The Order is the highest French award for particular honors and exceptional input in agriculture. The Order was established on July 7, 1883 based on the decree of then Minister of Agriculture of France, Jules Méline (Ministre de l’Agriculture Jules Méline). By the dignity the Order is second only after the National Order of the Honorary Legion established by Napoleon Bonaparte on May 19, 1802 (Légion d’honneur or Ordre national de la Légion d’honneur). Initially the Order had only one degree - of the Knight. On the basis of the Ordinance of June 18, 1887, it was supplemented with the second title – Officer (Officier), and on the basis of the Ordinance of August 2, 1900, with yet another title – Commander (Commandeur). Republic of France uses this honorary Order up to present to award not only the persons for particular merit in agriculture, but also persons for particular merit in scientific surveys, related publications and other contributions. Currently, the Ordinance of the Government of France of June 15, 1959 N59-729 regulates the procedures of awarding the Order. The awarding ceremony is being held twice a year – on January 1 and on July 14.

The holders of the Order include famous scientists, politicians, artists and public figures, including the famous French scientist, aka “Father of Micro-Biology” Louis Pasteur, Jacques René Chirac, the President of France (1995-2007), the actress Catherine Deneuve and others. In 2007, the order with the Title of Commander was awarded to the member of the British Royal Family, Prince of Wales, Charles for his innovative role in agro-ecology and for his high interest in soil, food safety and climate (le Prince Charles a été promu au grade de commandeur de l’Ordre du Mérite Agricole le 16 mars 2017 notamment pour son *“rôle de pionnier de la promotion de l’agro-écologie, et pour son grand intérêt porté sur la question des sols pour la sécurité alimentaire et le climat”*).

Thus, for the modern stage of development of Georgia, it is crucial that the historical fact of awarding Georgian scientist and public figure Raphael Isarlishvili with the Order and the title „Officier du Mérite Agricole“ for his exceptional contribution in agriculture and in Paris 1900 World Universal Exhibition goes back to the earliest stages of establishment of this Order.

## **Biographies of the authors of the book**

### **“Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”**

#### **Raphael Isarlishvili**

Raphael Isarlishvili was born in 1843 in Tbilisi, in the noble family – Peter Isarlishvili and Barbare Andronikashvili. Both were of the noble descent. He was the sixth son in the family.

The family, who lived in Sololaki district nearby the Georgian Catholic Church, was actively involved in the charity the Church was giving to the homeless and impoverished. It is noteworthy that after the Church was destructed, the statue of The Holly Virgin was the only thing to survive, though badly damaged. It was carefully restored and removed to St. Peter and St. Paul Catholic Church, now located on Iv. Javakhishvili Street.

The Isarlishvili family originates from South Georgia. According to the studies of the famous scholar, Zakaria Chichinadze, the Isarlishvilis previously bore the name of Khursidze<sup>1</sup>. In late 16<sup>th</sup> century, after Ottoman Empire took dominion over Meskheti, the local Georgian toponyms were replaced by Turkish names. The “guard of the fortress” in Akhaltsikhe, which was the hereditary position of the representatives of the Khursidze family, was called “Isar-li” or “Isarli-aga” in Ottoman manner. Further on, this position has become indicative of the name and thus, the descendants of the house of Khursidze were renamed as Isarlishvili. During dominion of Russian Empire over Georgia, all Georgian names were forcefully converted into Russian style. Georgian family names ending with “shvili” acquired the new ending “ov”. Thus, along with other Georgian names, the name Isarlishvili was also converted into Isarlov.

The hereditary position of Isarlishvili family – the guard of the fortress – was depicted on their coat of arms (see. illustration). The gules shield is the background for the gilded fortress with open gates, two argent swords with the gilded handles per saltire above the gate. The helmet mantled with the noble crown has six military flags flowing (see, blazon of the Coat of Arms <https://gerbovnik.ru/arms/2647.html>).

Some of the representatives of Isarlishvili family were clergymen. The sources mention the priests – Anthon and Gregory Isarlishvili serving in Akhaltsikhe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The priest, Melkisedek Isarlishvili, who was also involved in trade, served at the royal court of the King of Imereti, Solomon I in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The grandfather of

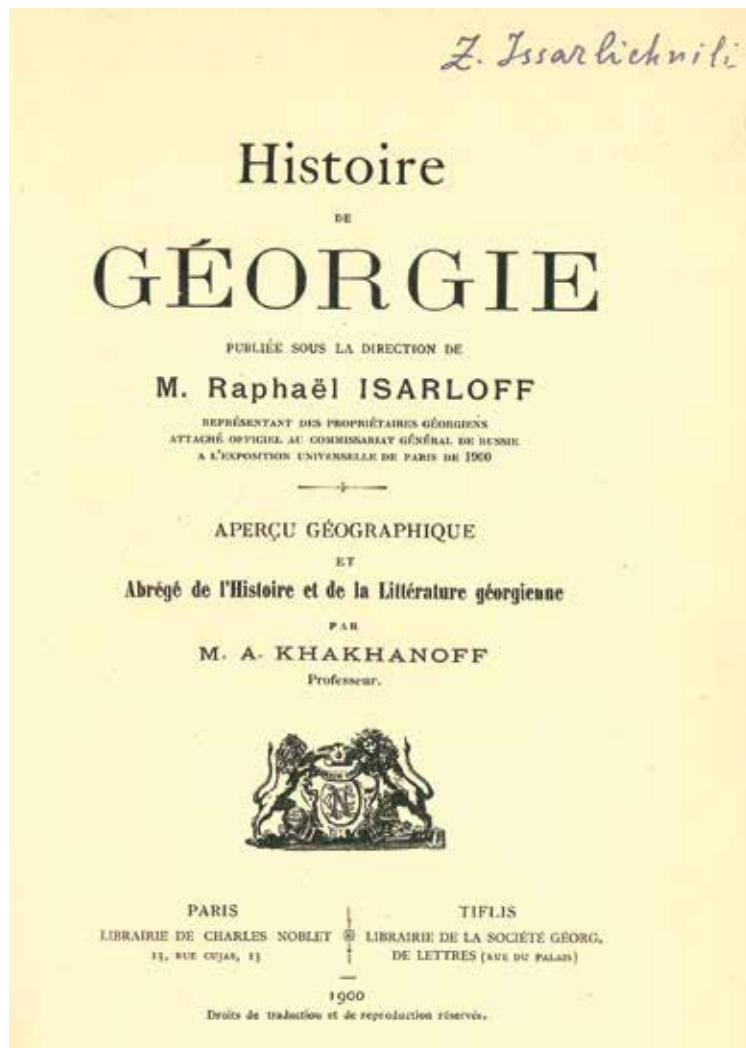
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1. See the information about origin of Khursidze (Isarlishvili-Isarlov) name in “History of Khursidze (Isarlov) family name and Shota (Shio) Rustaveli” by Zakaria Chichinadze, 1904.  
See the information about Peter Isarlishvili – ibidem, pg. 108; as well as in “Personal Encyclopedia by Ilia Chavchavadze 1837-1907”.





The Coat of Arms of the Isarlishvili's family.



Raphael Isarlishvilis's brother, Jacob and his personal volume of the book "History of Georgia" with his own autograph.

Raphael Isarlishvili, Luka Isarlishvili was in close acquaintance with the King of Kartli and Kakheti, Erekle II who asked Luka Isarlishvili to be the mediator with the “Pasha” of Akhatsikhe (see, E. Vardzieli, “Lives of Famous Figures – Raphael Isarlishvili”, newspaper “Saba”, January, 1998).

One of the streets running down to Mtkvari (Kura) embankment from David Agmashenebeli Avenue (former Mikheil Street) in the old district of Tbilisi, where the numerous workshops of Isarlishvili family were located, was previously named after him (currently, Kote and Soso Tsereteli Street). Isarlishvili Street (Isarlovskaya) is indicated on the city map printed in 1907. The last representative of Isarlishvili family, Elizabeth Isarlishvili – who was the granddaughter of Raphael Isarlishvili’s brother, Jacob – died in 2002 (Nana and Gia Saparishvili “Elizabeth Isarlishvili – the beautiful life transferred into the eternity”, newspaper “Saba”, February, 2002).



**Former Isarlishvili Street in Tbilisi (nowadays Kote and Soso Tsereteli Str.).**



Isarlishvili Street in Tbilisi, the map of 1907.

As the representative of a noble family, Raphael Isarlishvili studied in Tbilisi Gymnasium. After graduation, he entered Universities in Paris and Belgium. In the 1860s, Raphael Isarlishvili with the knowledge of natural science, philosophy and economics, returned to the homeland inspired to apply his knowledge and experience obtained in Europe for the progress of his country. The media of that time echoed his appearance in public. One of the issues of "Tsiskari" magazine, for 1869 reads: "our youngsters, at the best of their abilities, are aspired to study. Most of them strive to obtain better education and leave for other countries at their own expenses and then return with new knowledge and ideas. We know the young man, who has obtained education abroad, aiming to use it for the benefit of our country and he has succeeded in this endeavor in Georgia. This young man is Raphael Isarlov, who published "Synoptic Calendar" for 1869".

It was the first time when the "Synoptic Calendar" was published in Georgian, at once receiving wide recognition of the wide public. The newspaper "Droeba" wrote: "we all thank Raphael Isarlishvili for his first undertaking, taking the needs of the people into account and we hope that he will attach higher attention to the matters so necessary for the promotion of the literacy of our people".

In 1873, Raphael Isarlishvili at his own expenses opened the free school for the children of poor families where academic process was held in Georgian. In 1875, he published the "First book for literacy with illustrations according to the American method for the rural schools". This book is even considered as the predecessor of „Deda Ena“ („დედა ენა“ -Mother Tongue) by Iakob Gogebashvili. (E. Vardzieli, Lives of Famous Figures – Raphael Isarlishvili”, newspaper "Saba", January, 1998).

The members of Isarlishvili family were distinguished for their public activities. They were actively involved in the Society for Distribution Literacy amongst Georgian. Brother of Raphael Isarlishvili, Jacob Isarlishvili was the close friend to Ilia Chavchavadze in the University of St. Petersburg<sup>2</sup>. Jacob, together with Raphael, was the members of the progressive group who under the leadership of Ilia Chavchavadze strived for better future of Georgia. Devoted service to the homeland was one of the characteristics of the Isarlishvili family. The merit of Jacob Isarlishvili in the refurbishment of the building of the Georgian Nobility High School, where later Tbilisi State University was opened, is highlighted in the memoirs of Ekvtime Takaishvili, published in the magazine "Mnatobi" in 1959, where he says that Jacob Isarlishvili (Isarlov) "studying in St. Petersburg University together with Ilia Chavchavadze, was constructing buildings, conducted commerce, and without a degree in

2. Isarlishvili (Isarlov) Jacob – Secretary of the College. Friend of Ilia Chavchavadze during their time at the University. Comersant. Constructor. Member of the Society for Distribution of Literacy amongst Georgians. Wife – Ana Konstantinovna Rodzievich". Personal Encyclopedia of Ilia Chavchavadze 1837-1907, pg. 305.

engineering, was good in construction. He gave his special assistance in reconstruction of the building of the school for noble families and thus, saved us money” (from the memoirs of Ekvtime Takaishvili, magazine “Mnatobi”, 1959, N1, pg. 167). In his book “Georgian Catholic Clergymen and the News from Meskhet-Javakheti”, dedicated to the memory of the famous Maecenas, Stephen Zubalashvili, Zakaria Chichinadze mentions Jacob Isarlishvili “who, being the descendent of the ancient noble family – Khursidze, is well aware of all public affairs of Georgian people, sees to every development and never neglects the possibility of participation in the activities for the benefit of the country. He is also known as the noblest Georgian amongst Georgian people”<sup>3</sup>.

Similar to Jacob and Raphael, other members of the great Isarlishvili family, including the representatives of Jandieri and Tumanishvili families, were close friends and confederates to Ilia Chavchavadze as noted in the Personal Encyclopedia of Ilia Chavchavadze (see the names: Isarlisvhili, Tumanisvhili, Jandieri. Personal Encyclopedia of Ilia Chavchavadze, 1837-1907).

Raphael Isarlishvili was also in close friendly relations with the famous public figures of Georgia: Akaki Tseretelie, Jacob Gogebasvhili, Alexander Khakhanashvili, Zakaria Chichinadze, Tedo Sakhokia, Mikheil Tamarashvili and others. It is well known, that Raphael Isarlishvili’s assistance to Mikheil Tamarashvili, who lived in Rome, working on his Opus Magnum “The History of Georgian Church” was extremely important. All illustrations and images of the book were provided by Rapael Isarlishvili.



**The Isarlishvilis’s house in Tbilisi, A. Chikobava sq./K.Abashidze N9 (former Avchala Sq./New Catholic str. N9)**

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3. Zakaria Chichinadze, “Georgian Catholic Clergymen and News from Meskhet-Javakheti”, in commemoration of Stephen Zubalashvili son of Constantine, Tbilisi, 1905, pg. 42.



### **Jacob and Raphael Isarlishvili Family, 1914**

**The photograph shows members of the Isarlishvili family, who kept personal documents of Raphael Isarlishvili and the book “Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”, on the basis of which the present publication was prepared: Nino, Mary, Sophia and Helen Isarlishvili, daughters of Jacob (on the balcony from left to right); Barbare Isarlishvili, daughter of Jacob (sitting, second from the right), her husband George Tumanishvili<sup>1</sup> (standing in the center, between the sisters, famous pedagogues Agnesa and Helen Tumanishvili); Constantine and Peter Isarlishvili, sons of Jacob (standing on far left and far right).**

1. George Tumanishvili son of Paul (1872-1937, executed by the Bolsheviks) – the Prince. Member of the Society for Distribution of Literacy amongst Georgians, railway constructing engineer. “Personal Encyclopedia of Ilia Chavchavadze 1837-1907”, Ilia Chavchavadze Research Center, pg.288 (see as well Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia)

Besides, thanks to Raphael Isarlishvili and financial support of the Isarlishvili family, the book "Histoire de Géorgie" was published in Paris in 1900, preserved in the families of the descendants of Jacob Isarlishvili. The Isarlishvili family members, who have preserving the personal documents of Raphael Isarlishvili and the book "Histoire de Géorgie" (History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis, 1900), on the basis of the rarity of which the hereof edition has been developed, in their personal archives, are depicted on the family photo of 1914.

The house where Jacob and Raphael Isarlishvili grew up was located in Tbilisi, on the junction of Avchala Square, currently Arnold Chikobava Square, and New Catholic (Новокатолическая ул,) currently Kita Abashidze street. This address: Avchala Square, N9, New catholic Street, House of Jacob Isarlishvili („Авчальская пл., Новокатолическая ул. N9, д. Я. Исарлова“), where Raphael lived with the family of his brother Jacob, is indicated on all letters addressed to him. The descendants of the Isarlishvili family still live in this house.

Raphael Isarlishvili passed away on November 29, 1918. His merit towards Georgian people and the country was underlined in the obituary by Zakaria Chichinadze. Raphael Isarlishvili inter vivos was recognized by compatriots, as well as the scientists and public figures abroad. The brightest evidence of his merit in publication of the book "Histoire de Géorgie" and his contribution for the benefit of his homeland is provided in 1901 letter of the Arch-Bishop of Imereti, Leonide Okropiridze (later, Catholic-Patriarch of All Georgia ) to Raphael Isarlishvili. It reads:

“Gracious Mr. Raphael,

expressing my highest gratitude I hereby provide you with the letters by various officials regarding your book. I hardly find the words that would convey the spiritual pleasure I have been feeling when reading your book. The endeavor you have initiated is of the greatest and glorious importance indeed. Reasonable, noble and sincere love of the homeland is one of the highest Christian virtues and I believe with my strongest faith that our Heavenly Father will never leave the Apostles of this Virtue without unfading crown. I wish you long life for the benefit of the homeland which is as precious as the mother is. I owe you for your courtesy.

Humble Arch-Bishop of Imereti, Leonide.

June 1, 1901.

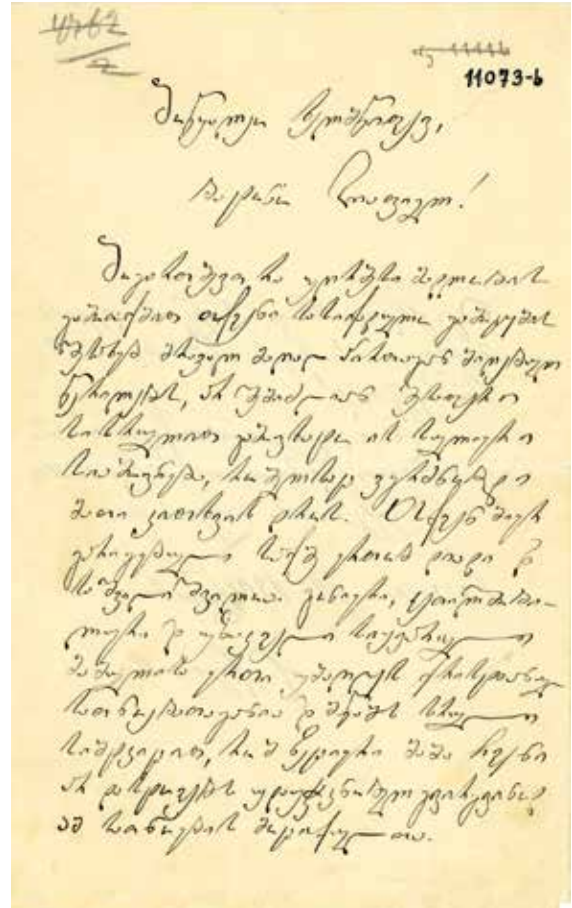
Kutaisi city”

(Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11073).

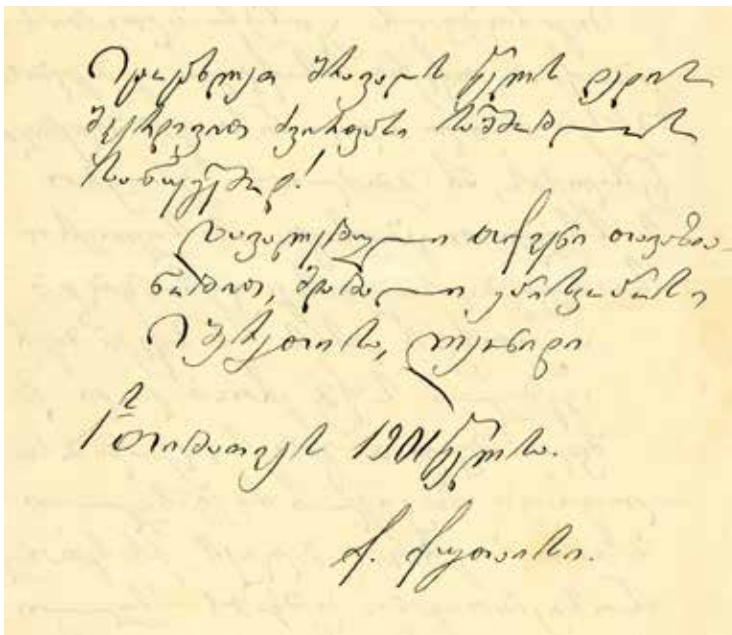
It is noteworthy that declaration of 2018 as the year of European Cultural Heritage and the date of preceding retrospective publication of the book “History of Georgia. Paris-Tiflis 1900” coincided with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death-date of Raphael Isarlishvili (November 28, 1918).



Arch-bishop of Imereti, Leonide Okropiridze (later, Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia, 1918- 1921).



Letter of Arch-bishop of Imereti, Leonide Okropiridze to Raphael Isarlishvili (Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Georgian Literature, N11073).





## Alexander Khakhanashvili

Alexander Khakhanashvili (Khakhanov) was born on January 3, 1864 in Gori, in the family of a clergyman, Solomon Khakhanashvili. After graduation from Tbilisi Gymnasium with honors, he entered Moscow Emperor's University, Historical-Philological Faculty. In 1888, after graduation from the University with the PhD degree, he returned to Tbilisi to continue his activities as a scholar and public figure. He actively cooperated with the newspaper of Ilia Chavchavadze "Iveria", submitting his scholarly articles. In 1900, after establishment of the Georgian Department at the Moscow University, he assumed the position of the Chair of the Department and till the end of his carrier was giving lectures on Georgian history, language and literature. Alexander Khakhanashvili also worked at Moscow Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages and Moscow Gymnasium for Ladies. He has published up to 80 works on Georgian history, literature, education, ethnography and cultural heritage in Georgian, Russian, French and German.

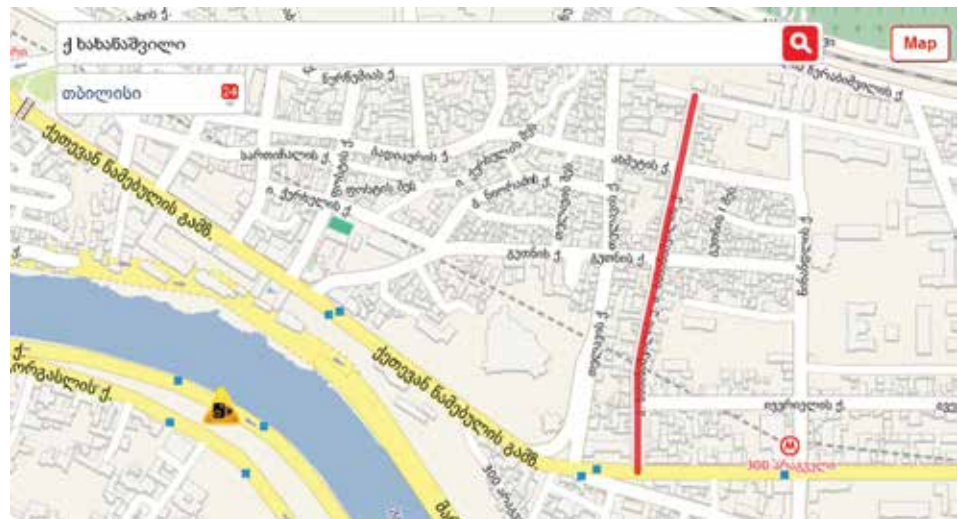
He gained the greatest authority amongst the world scholars as the famous philologist, historian and orientalist. He was the board member of F. Brockhaus and I. Efron Universal Encyclopaedia (the name was given after its publishers - Энциклопедический словарь Ф.А. Брокгауз – И.А. Ефрон, Петербург, 1890-1907). Articles of Professor Alexander Khakhanashvili were published in all Georgian and Russian magazines and Newspapers published in the Caucasus region: "Iveria", "Kvali", "Moambe", "Жизнь", "Юридический вестник", "Вестник всемирной истории", "Вестник Европы", "Этнографическое обозрение", "Журнал для всех", and others.

"Essays on the History of Georgian Literature", published in Moscow in 1895-1902 in Russian in 4 volumes ("*Очерки по истории грузинской словестности*") and in Georgian in 2 volumes are Alexander Khakhanashvili's Opus Magnum. These work was estimated as the significant step for the promotion and introduction of Georgian spiritual treasures to Europe (Nona Kupreishvili, "Alexander Khakhanashvili, 1864-1912"). His another monograph "On the Ancient Boundaries of Settlement of Georgians in the Asia Minor" ("*Древнейшие пределы расселения грузин по Малой Азии*", М., 1890 и 1892) was also seminal in the studies of the ancient period of the history of Georgia.

Other significant researches of Prof. Khakhanashvili include: "Georgian Manuscripts in British National Museum" (1896); "Georgian Manuscripts in Paris National Library" (1898); and "Georgian Literary Language" (1901). The outcomes of the surveys of Georgian antiquities during his 1892-3 and 1895 travels in the region were published in Moscow in 1897 in his book "Archaeological Excursion in the Caucasus" ("*Археологическая экскурсия на Кавказ*" 1892, 1893 и 1895 гг., Москва, 1897).



Aleksandre Khakhanashvili and the Khakhanashvili Street in Tbilisi



During his scholarly activity, he kept close relations with Georgian and foreign scholars, clergymen and public figures: Ilia Chavchavadze, Jacob Gogebashvili, Alexander Kazbegi, Mikheil Tamarashvili, Ekvtime Takaishvili, Giorgi Sadzaglishvili (late Catholic-Patriarch of All Georgia, Kyrion II). He kept correspondence with Marjory and Oliver Wardrops, German scholar of Georgian language, Hugo Schuchardt, Nicholas Marr, Arthur Leist, Czech historian, archaeologist and ethnographer Lubor Niederle etc.

Overview of Georgian history, geography and literature for the book by Raphael Isarlishvili "History of Georgia" specially for the Paris World Exposition of 1900 (*Aperçu géographique et Abrégé de l'Histoire et de la Littérature géorgiennes*) is one of the eminent amongst his works. This work has been highly appreciated upon publication. The French magazine of that time "La Réforme" provided: "We can read quite an interesting essay published in French about history, geography and literature of Georgia. The section on literature belongs to Prof. Al. Khakhanashvili introducing the facts absolutely unexpected for us in the Trans-Caucasian province " (Nona Kupreishvili, "Alexander Khakhanashvili, 1864-1912").

Alexander Khakhanashvili passed away in 1912 at the age of 48. He is buried in Tbilisi, in Didube Pantheon of writers and public figures. The streets in Tbilisi and Kutaisi were named after him to commemorate and highlight his name and merit towards Georgia.

## **Worldwide recognition of the cultural heritage of Georgia: Cultural heritage of Georgia presented at Paris World Exhibition of 1900 after 118 years**

Many of the samples of cultural heritage of Georgia presented at Paris World Exhibition of 1900 have already gained official international recognition. The book published by Raphael Isarlishvili -“History of Georgia”- provides the images of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Georgia already included in the UNESCO World Heritage List for their outstanding universal values. The book also provides the images of natural and urban heritage sites. The process of their official worldwide recognition is ongoing, so far as the Government of Georgia has lately submitted some of them to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List.

### **Historical Monuments of Mtskheta**

In view of introduction of rich cultural heritage of Georgia to the world, the book “History of Georgia, Paris-Tiflis 1900” provides the picture of Mtskheta with Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Jvari Monastery.

The ancient Capital of Georgia, Mtskheta, with its unique cultural heritage has been for centuries serving as the visit card of Georgia. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral – the shelter of the Seamless Robe of Jesus, and Jvari Monastery - built in the 6<sup>th</sup> century on the place where St. Nino had hoisted the holy cross are highly popular amongst Georgian people and the tourists as well. Mtskheta is recognized as one of the hubs for civilization and Christian confession in the modern world. Since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century Georgian Government has passed various legal acts in view of protection of Mtskheta cultural heritage, including the Resolutions stipulating the status of Mtskheta.

Considering the value of cultural heritage of Mtskheta and in view of its protection, the Government of Georgia has developed the Master Plan for the State Reserve of Mtskheta in 1950. Later on, the Government of Georgia has issued various Resolutions on the status of Mtskheta, including:

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Georgia SSR of 06.11. 1968 N564 on “Declaration of the City of Mtskheta as the Museum-Reserve”;

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Georgia SSR of 14.09. 1977 N653 on “Establishment of Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve of Mtskheta”. In recognition of the outstanding universal value of the cultural heritage of Mtskheta, the city of Mtskheta



World Heritage Site – Historical Monuments of Mtskheta.

is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List since 1994. The respective Decision (NCOF 003 XI) was adopted at the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Phuket, Thailand in 1994. Mtskheta was inscribed on the World Heritage List initially as the City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta and later, in 2005, on the basis of the Decision (N 29 COM 8B.1), made at the World Heritage Committee 29<sup>th</sup> Session held in Durban, South Africa, it was retitled as the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Key components: Jvari Monasteri, Svetitskheveli Cathedral and Samtavro Monastery).

From the current standpoint, it is obvious that initially historic monuments of Mtskheta were introduced to the world thanks to the publication of the book “History of Georgia” by Raphael Isarlishvili and Alexander Khakhanashvili and its presentation at Paris World Exposition of 1900, almost a century prior to awarding the status of the World Heritage to them in 1994. Together with the monuments of Mtskheta, some other sites and samples of tangible and intangible cultural heritage were presented in the book, two of which, namely Gelati Monastery Complex and Georgian Alphabet were awarded World Heritage status, being first introduced to the world in Paris, through the same book, almost a century earlier to their official inscription on the World Heritage List (“Gelati Monastery”-1994,2017; “Living culture of three writing systems of the Georgian alphabet”-2016). More than a century has passed since the first publication of the book “History of Georgia”. Certainly, a lot has happened during that time in terms of recognition of the value of Georgia’s cultural heritage. It is worth mentioning that one more sample of the intangible cultural heritage of Georgia – Qvevri Winemaking Method was awarded the status of the Cultural Heritage of Humanity. At the same time nomination documents were prepared for many more heritage sites, elements and landscapes: Tbilisi Historic District, Historic sites of Tusheti, Vardzia, Shatili; Ananuri and Kvetera Fortresses. Currently they are in the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List.

**Tbilisi Historic District**

**Georgia**  
**Date of Submission:** 24/08/2007  
**Criteria:** (i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)  
**Category:** Cultural  
**Submitted by:**  
**Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia**  
**State, Province or Region:**  
**City Region**  
**Coordinates:** 544 49 E41 37  
**Ref.:** 5233

**Description**

Tbilisi is a great sample of Georgian urban heritage, in which an interesting process of adoption of foreign influences penetrating in the course of the centuries, their creative transformation and adaptation to the traditional Georgian dwelling and its planning structure is still alive. Major factor determining a character of the original national culture - geo-political location of Georgia on the cross-roads of Europe and Asia with all consequent historical conditions - had drastically affected Tbilisi, fifteen century old capital of the country, being reflected in its unique artistic and architectural integrity.

Remarkable peculiarity of the city is preeminent by the active part played by the specific natural setting in the creation of its general aspect and despite significant interventions, original interconnection of the city and environment is still preserved. Narrow portion of the river bed selected for its location, mountain ridge on the right bank of the river destined for the elevated, picturesque rocky plateau on the opposite side, are obviously perceptible in the general silhouette of the city. Minor structures of the Late Medieval urban fabric provide favourable background to the architectural accents - Narikala fortress and Metekhi church - creating these monuments of nature.

Great is the historical significance of Tbilisi, permanent capital of the Christian Georgian state from the days of its foundation up to present, "grand city" of the historical Silk Road in the course of centuries, centre of the whole Caucasus from the 16th c. onwards.

Building layers dating to the foundation of the city together with spontaneously developed urban forms of the feudal epoch, 19th century regular planning, buildings of "Tsarist period" (imperial heritage of the past), all these form - create city organism reflecting diverse stages in its history, being united by the unique "Tbilisian spirit" and, despite its certain eclectic character, combining it into an organic indivisible integrity.

Main determinant of the city architectural aspect - unique "Tbilisian spirit" and character of residential houses - is formed within its community, being imbued with its characteristic traits, these houses, with their age-old traditional dwelling types, procedural emergence of not only mode of life and tastes of always multi-national, free and tolerant in the respect of religious confession, united by the "Georgian habits and behaviour", open-minded inhabitants of Tbilisi, but also universal warm and human environment, which is highly aesthetically and desirable even today. Alongside functional perfection of the traditional dwelling, these houses reflect, among diversity of the national artistic creativity, which is displayed in their spatial-compositional and artistic-aesthetic aspects. Apart from the unique lived dwellings with superb architectural and decorative rendering, distinction of such structure manifested in the singularity of its situation and interrelation with the setting, give birth to numerous unexpected effects, imparting new life to the city and despite rude displacement, still preserve their originality.

A balcony and a courtyard - characteristic elements of the traditional southern dwellings - are turned into indivisible components of Tbilisi dwelling houses, in which possibilities of archaic building material - wood and brick - are fully revealed. Interesting "Tbilisian" model of "open dwelling" is elaborated by the art of wall through off combination of the courtyards and balconies with the street. Here a balcony had undergone interesting development in the process of adaptation to the common European style façades the same is the case with the courtyards, which had even penetrated into the Art Nouveau style buildings contributing to the creation of its unforgettable "Tbilisian" samples.

Tbilisi Historic District – Since 2001 it is enlisted in World Heritage Tentative List.



## **Tbilisi Historic District**

Along with Mtskheta, the book „Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900” also contains the photo of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century historic district of Tbilisi with its urban environment – churches and structures along the River Mtkvari bank, that emphasizes the value of the historically developed urban environment of Tbilisi and importance of its cultural heritage not only for Georgia, but for the whole civilized world.

Taking into account the value of the urban heritage of Tbilisi, and to ensure of its protection and preservation, the Decree of the Government of Georgia of February 25, 1975 N141 boundaries of “The State Protection Area of Tbilisi Historic District” were defined. For the purposes of further improvement of the protective measures of this particular part of the city, the Government of Georgia has issued yet another important Resolution on “Further Improvement of The State Protection of Tbilisi Historic District” (Resolution N76, 29.01.1985), that is currently in force. This resolution establishes three zones with special regulations that are as follows: State Protected Zone of the Historic Part of Tbilisi, Built-up Regulation Zone and Landscape Protection Zone.

Even after a century, introduction of the historic part of Tbilisi and recognition of its universal value is still relevant for Georgia. On the basis of criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi) of the World Heritage Convention and protective measures stipulated by the Resolution of the Government of Georgia of 29.01.1985 N76, on December 9, 1999, the Government submitted the nomination “Tbilisi Historic District” to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre for consideration. In 2001, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) reviewed the nomination. The nomination submitted by Georgia and the respective recommendations by ICOMOS were discussed at the UNSECO 25<sup>th</sup> ordinary session held in Helsinki, Finland on December 11-16, 2001. According to the UNESCO document, ICOMOS has recognized the outstanding universal value of Tbilisi historic district, however has recommended Georgia to direct efforts towards the preservation of the historic part and to develop the respective instruments for monitoring of the changes in due conservation of a historic city as the precondition of its subscription in the World Heritage List. ICOMOS has also called on the international society at maximal extent to assist Georgia in this endeavor. Pursuant to the UNESCO Decision, nomination of Tbilisi Historic District was returned to Georgia for its further improvement in terms of the elaboration of the respective legal framework, management body and the guiding principles for rehabilitation (see the document WHC-01/CONF.208/INF\_11 Rev, - UNESCO 25<sup>th</sup> ordinary session, 11-16,XII,2001-Tbilisi (Georgia) No 1020, Nomination: Tbilisi Historic District, pg.86-90).

For Georgia, nomination of “Tbilisi Historic District” still remains topical and the country strives to be successful in this particular nomination. Providing that the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List is updated once in every 10 years, Georgia has submitted “Tbilisi Historic District” nomination to the updated Tentative List both - in 2007 and 2017.



## **Gelati Monastery**

The book – “History of Georgia”, amongst other illustrations gives the panoramic view of Gelati Monastery to underline the particular place of Gelati in the history of Georgia.

For centuries Gelati Monastery has maintained its importance as of the outstanding monument of cultural heritage of Georgia. The cultural-educational center of the Middle Ages of the universal value located North-Eastwards of the city of Kutaisi still remains in the spotlight of the world. Gelati Monastery and Academy were established with the initiative of King David the Builder in 1106. According to his will, the king was buried in the Monastery gate to allow every Georgian step on his grave. On the basis of the Ordinance N319 of the Government of Georgia on “The Establishment of Kutaisi-Gelati Museum-Reserve” of April 21, 1981, Gelati Monastery Complex was declared the Museum-Reserve.

Religious services and monastic life were restored in Gelati in 1988. In 1994, Gelati Monastery was awarded the status of UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inscription on the World Heritage List took place at the 18<sup>th</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Committee Session held in Phuket (Thailand) in 1994 along with Bagrati Cathedral (UNESCO Decision N18 COM XI). In 2017, in line with the significant boundary modification, nomination documents were updated and according to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee Decision, made at its 41<sup>st</sup> Session in Kraków, Poland (UNESCO Decision N41 COM 8B.31), Gelati Monastery was re-included in the World Heritage List as a standalone site “Gelati Monastery”.



**Gelati Monastery.**

## Georgian Alphabet

For the purposes of worldwide introduction of Georgia's intangible heritage, the book "History of Georgia" contains the section about Georgian alphabet with its varieties. Georgian alphabet constitutes the foundation of cultural heritage of Georgia. Through the nation's history the alphabet has undergone transformations and currently, we have three main systems endorsed: Mrgvlovani, Nuskhuri and Mkhedruli. All three systems are used both in secular and in the ecclesiastic life and constitute the fundamental part of "living culture" of Georgia. Georgian alphabet with its varieties serves as one of the indicators of statehood development of the country. It also constitutes the significant contribution of Georgia to the world civilization.

In 2015, "Living culture of three writing systems of Georgian alphabet" was nominated for the status of intangible cultural heritage of national category in the domains as follows: the public experience, oral traditions and expression forms. On the bases of the Resolution of the Government of Georgia (Resolution of the Government of Georgia N116, 19.03.2015 on "Living culture of three writing systems of Georgian alphabet") the nomination was awarded the respective status. 2016, the "Living culture of three writing systems of the Georgian alphabet" was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Decision on recognition of three writing systems of living culture of Georgian alphabet was made at the 11<sup>th</sup> session of UNESCO Inter-Governmental Committee on Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage held on November 30, 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Decision N 11.COM 10.b.13).

Thus, the unique Georgian alphabet, for the first time was introduced to the world community by R. Isarlishvili's publication at Paris World Exhibition of 1900, more than a century earlier of its official recognition as of the phenomenon of the intangible cultural heritage of the universal value.

## ქართული ანბანი

1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
ა	ბ	გ	დ	ე		ს	ხ	ც	ძ	200
ვ	გ	ბ	ბ	2		ე	ქ	ც	ქ	300
ღ	უ	ბ	გ	3		დ	ყ	ვ	ყ	
ო	ფ	დ	d	4		ოდ	ყ	უ	u	400
რ	ყ	ე	e	5		ფ	ჟ	ფ	p	500
ჩ	ჟ	ვ	v	6		ჩ	ჩ	ქ	k	600
ც	ც	ზ	z	7		ჩ	ჩ	ღ	ღ	700
ძ	წ	ც	ē	8		ყ	ყ	ყ	ყ	800
ტ	თ	თ	t	9		გ	ყ	ყ	ჭ	900
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კ	კ	ქ	k	20		ც	ქ	ც	c	2000
ლ	ლ	ლ	l	30		ძ	ძ	ძ	ვ	3000
მ	მ	მ	m	40		ჩ	ჩ	ჭ	ჭ	4000
ნ	ნ	ნ	n	50		ს	ს	ჭ	ჭ	5000
ო	ო	ქ	j	60		ე	ქ	ხ	x	6000
პ	პ	ო	o	70		ყ	ყ	ქ	ყ	7000
რ	რ	პ	p	80		ჯ	ჯ	ჯ	ჭ	8000
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1. ასომთავრული 2. ნუსხური 3. მხედრული  
4. საერთაშორისო ტრანსკრიფცია 5. რიცხვითი მნიშვნელობა

Three writing systems of the Georgian alphabet.

## Deda Ena (დედა ენა)

The book – “History of Georgia”, in view of illustration of the resuming achievements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the educational sphere of Georgia, especially provides the textbook by Jacob Gogebashvili compiled for the elementary schools – “Deda Ena” (deda ena - Native Language). Also, in view of introduction of the author of “Deda Ena” to the world, the book provides the annotation about his activities.

After a century, “Deda Ena” (დედა ენა) was awarded the status of intangible cultural heritage in 2013 as Jacob Gogebashvili’s method of elaboration Georgian alphabet textbook (1876) and in 2014 it was attributed to the national category on the basis of the Ordinance of the Government of Georgia. It is important to note that “Deda Ena” (Native Language) by Jacob Gogebashvili is published and used as a text book for elementary schools till today.



“Deda Ena” – publication of 1876 and 2016.



“Deda Ena” – publication of 2016, with blessing of Catholicos – Patriarch Iliia II.

## Georgian Polyphony

In 1900, being in Paris, Raphael Isarlishvili expressed the will to re-publish the book “History of Georgia” in an improved and extended edition to introduce more samples of cultural heritage of Georgia to the international society. In his letter to Alexander Khakhanashvili, he names Georgian music and medicine as additional samples for introduction. His will has at last come true after a century. Georgian polyphony, this unique sample of outstanding universal value that has emerged on the basis of Georgian folk songs and chants, in 2001 was recognized as the masterpiece of universal intangible cultural heritage, and in 2008, under the nomination of “Georgian Polyphonic Singing (Le chant polyphonique géorgien)” it was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Decision N3.COM).

The fact of launching the Georgian polyphonic song “Chakrulo” by NASA into the space is the eloquent example of recognition of the outstanding universal value of Georgian music.

The space shuttles “Voyager-1” and “Voyager-2” with the attached Golden Records were launched in 1977. 78% of sounds on the Golden Records were dedicated to the multi-cultural musical forms. The International Jury has selected 27 musical pieces. Along with the compositions by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Stravinsky, the Jury has selected Georgian polyphonic folk choral song “Chakrulo”. The “Golden Records” (gold plated information discs) on which NASA has recorded the vocal and video signals from the Earth, as the message of Human Civilization are likely to survive a billion years into future, when our civilization is profoundly altered and the surface of the Earth may be vastly changed. The 39<sup>th</sup> President of USA, James Earl “Jimmy” Carter noted about NASA project: “This is a present from a small distant world, a token of our sounds, our science, our images, our music, our thoughts, and our feelings”. Thus, in glory for Georgia, Georgian polyphonic choral song can be heard in the vast space since 1977.



Georgian polyphonic song “Chakrulo” was sent to the space, by the United States NASA Program in 1977, as the message to the galaxy, on the “golden discs”.





## **Achievements of Georgia in Agricultural Sphere – Samples of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

To demonstrate agricultural achievements of Georgia, Georgian landlords submitted samples of their production that were exhibited at Paris World Exposition of 1900. Georgian wine was amongst the exhibits. As is known, very unique method of wine making was formed in Georgia in the historical process – wine making tradition in a clay vessel – called Qvevri (Pitcher) buried in the ground up to its lip.

This millennia-old tradition of winemaking is a living tradition in Georgia up to present day. On December 4, 2013 (Decision N8.COM) The Ancient Georgian Qvevri wine-making traditional method (*La méthode géorgienne de vinification à l'ancienne dans des kvevris traditionnels*) was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and ever since, it holds the status of intangible cultural heritage of outstanding universal value.

In modern Georgia, many local traditional agricultural methods are recognized as the intangible cultural monuments. Currently, many of the traditional products and methods of their making are inscribed on the State Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage Monuments, that are as follows: Meskhetian Cheese “Tenili”, Lagidze Waters, the ancient dairy product from Pshavi – “Dambalkhacho”, samples of Svanetian cuisine: Khachapuri with millet, Kubdari, Svanetian salt, traditional methods of making Tashmjabi; tradition of using healing mineral waters of Zemo Svaneti, technology of making Kakhetian Churchkhela.

It is noteworthy that Raphael Isarlishvili, in view of promotion and exhibition of agricultural products of Georgia at Paris World Exposition of 1900, has produced the special vessels for Matsoni (yogurt) – the dairy product made with the use of Georgian traditional method, to be exhibited there. Matsoni was kept in transparent glass bottles and jars decorated with his initials (R. I.) and the crown – part of the coat of arms of the house of Isarlishvili. These samples of the vessels are preserved in Isarlishvili family. Thus, culture of preparation and consumption of Georgian traditional dairy product -Matsoni was introduced to the world 118 years ago at Paris Universal Exposition. Hence, at the present standpoint, Georgian Matsoni, rich in unique properties, is amongst the samples, traditional technological method and consumption rules of which deserve the status of intangible cultural heritage.



Glass vessels for agricultural products with Raphael Isarlishvili initials, produced for Paris World Exhibiton of 1900.



## Another Worldwide Recognition of Georgian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2018

In 2018 UNESCO has updated the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, when “Wrestling in Georgia” was subscribed into it. The respective decision was made on 29 November, in Port Louis (Mauritius) on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage 13<sup>th</sup> Intergovernmental Committee Session. Therefore, the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity nowadays includes four intangible cultural heritage monuments of Georgia.



Alaverdi Cathedral, 11<sup>th</sup> Century



Greeting Card. This Scene of Wrestling is presented as the fresco (16<sup>th</sup> century) at Alaverdi Cathedral.

## **Queen Ketevan – St. Ketevan the Martyr**

The book “History of Georgia” emphasizes the personality of Queen Ketevan and provides her icon. The book tells about her merit to the homeland, devotion to Christianity, her martyrdom and death. It is noteworthy that Queen Ketevan holds the particular place in the history of Georgia. For centuries, she was worshipped by the entire Christendom - both by the representatives of the Orthodox and of the Catholic confessions. Queen Ketevan – spouse of the King David I of Kakheti and mother of King Teimuraz I – was taken hostage by Abbas I of Persia. After refusing to convert into Islam the Queen was publicly tortured and executed on September 12, 1624. The French traveler, Jean Chardin mentioned this story in his essay: “Ketevan refused in surprisingly brave and intact manner so characteristic of Georgian women”. The Portuguese Augustinian missionary, Padre Ambrozio Dush-Anzhush witnessed the martyrdom of Queen Ketevan and managed to preserve the holy relics of Ketevan the Martyr for the generations. In one of his letters sent to Rome in 1640 he notes:

“I presume that the Queen is in Heaven now and rejoices the glory of the Lord. Although she adhered to the Greek rules, she always manifested the greatest love to the Catholic Church and to all Latin”. The Orthodox Apostolic Church of Georgia has canonized Queen Ketevan and declared September 12 (September 26 according to the new style) as the Saint Ketevan Day.

In Georgian historiography it is broadly recognized that the martyrdom of Ketevan the Martyr has triggered the morale and fighting capacity of Georgia against the invaders. In 1625, Georgia gained victory in Martkopi and Marabda battles, secured its independence and ensured maintenance of Christianity in Georgia.

The holy relics of Ketevan the Martyr were separated and delivered to the various parts of the world, including Portugal, Italy, France, Belgium, Georgia, Russia, India, etc. At present, we have no sufficient information that would undoubtedly confirm the presence of the holy relics in most of the countries listed above. Although, the book “History of Georgia” provided that the holy parts of Ketevan the Martyr were rested in Namure Cathedral, Belgium (La cathédrale de Namure en Belgique) and the same had been stated in one of the notes dated back to 1845, coupled with information of the illustrated addendum to the Belgium newspaper “Popular Paper” of 1914, where the shots of Namur castle and cathedral were printed with the subtitle telling that those were the images of the place where the relics of the Holy Queen Ketevan were rested, modern researchers failed to obtain sufficient information on this fact.



For instance, in her work, published in 1973, famous Georgian scholar, Nino Salia noted that “The search has been held in vain. No relics of the Holy Queen could be found in Namure” (<https://ka.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen-Ketevan>).

One of the places where the holy relics of Ketevan the Martyr are still preserved is the city of Goa, India. The holy relics of the Queen were brought from India to Georgia on September 23, 2017 for the period of six months to allow Georgians to pray on them. The holy relics, while in Georgia, were taken to the National Museum, Holy Trinity Cathedral, the holy relics also travelled all over the country to allow the population to show due respect to and commemorate Queen Ketevan.

Ketevan the Martyr is highly respected in the modern world. One can find many streets and churches named after her. The Church of Ketevan the Martyr in Tbilisi is located in Avchala district. Many of the churches have frescoes and icons of the Queen Ketevan, including her mural fresco on one of the walls of Tbilisi Sioni Cathedral. An interesting historical fact is preserved related to this particular painting: famous 19<sup>th</sup> century artist, Gregory Gagarin, from all noble ladies of Georgia selected Lady Natela (Natalia) Isarlishvilias the model for the fresco of St. Ketevan. Lady Isarlishvili was Rapiel Isarlishvili’s aunt (his father, Peter’s sister), the widow of Datiashvili – the manager of the Royal Finances of the last sovereign of Imereti – King Solomon II.

With the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Georgia and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, the panneau depicting St. Ketevan the Martyr, preserved in the Graca Monastery, Lisbon, Portugal was restored in 2016-2017. This panneau is made of the glazed clay tiles (length – 12 m; height – 3 m) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the Portuguese masters. Known as the Azulejo panneau, it bears the scenes of the Queen Ketevan’s arrival to Iran, her martyrdom and Augustinian Monks handing over the holy relics of Ketevan the Martyr to her son, King Teimuraz (“Restoration of the panneau of azulejo”. *The Cultural Heritage of Georgia*. 2016-2017, p. 216).

Importance of Queen Ketevan and her personality for the modern spiritual life of Georgia is best highlighted in the title of the article by Father Gabriel Bragantini, concerning arrival of the holy relics of Ketevan the Martyr from Goa, India to Georgia. The title reads: “Saint Ketevan, pray for us!” (magazine “Saba”, 2017, November, N11).

## **Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli**

The book “History of Georgia” introduces the famous personalities and public figures of those days to the world, who were initially recognized as the leaders of the nation. First of all, it is Ilia Chavchavadze - the poet, writer, publisher of the magazines “Sakartvelos Moambe” and “Iveria”. The annotation states that he is the leader of his generation, majority of whom got European education and was great supporter and disseminator of progressive ideas. The book also introduces Akaki Tsereteli as the “confederate” of Ilia Chavchavadze and the “master of folk poetry”, the “lyrical poet and dramatist describing life and customs of people”. These lines written 118 years ago about the greatest contribution of Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli to political and socio-cultural life of the country are still relevant in contemporary Georgia. Generations have been raised on their works, were patriotism and the basic values of European culture are so well and seamlessly blended. Respect of the nation to them is immeasurable. Many streets, avenues and Universities are named after them. There are numerous memorial plates and monuments erected to commemorate their names in Georgia. One of the famous monuments, which is particularly popular both among the local population and the visitors of Georgia, is the statue erected in front of the public School N1 (former Gymnasium N1) on Rustaveli Avenue in Tbilisi. The sculptural composition shows Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli with their glances directed towards the future of the country.

The Georgian society, shocked by the treacherous murder of the leader of the National Liberation Movement, Ilia Chavchavadze in 1907 still tries to heal this bleeding wound. Ilia Chavchavadze is buried in Tbilisi, at Mtatsminda Pantheon for the Public Figures. In 1987, the Georgian Orthodox Apostolic Church has canonized Ilia Chavchavadze as **“Saint Ilia the Righteous”** for his merit to Georgian people and the Church.



**Ilia Chavchavadze Memorial at Mtatsminda Pantheon and Saint Ilia Righteous Icon.**

**Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli Monument in Tbilisi (in front of 1<sup>st</sup> High School).**





## **Natural Heritage and the Landscape of Georgia**

The book “History of Georgia” includes the natural heritage of Georgia – Dariali Gorge with its unique landscape and the bridge located at the state border of Georgia. The landscapes, natural and cultural heritage of Georgia still constitute the most important treasures of the country and the primary touristic destinations.

Georgia is located in the Caucasus region, in the sub-tropical climate zone, between Europe and Asia. Due to such geographical location, one can see almost all geographical zones in the country with highly diverse flora and fauna – sub-tropical areas in the West and arid zones of steppe and semi-desert in the eastern part. Many places offer views of gorgeous landscape. Altitudinal diversity is another landmark of the country. The highest point in Georgia is Mount Shkhara – 5.201 m above the sea level; and the lowest point is the swamps between Pot and Kulevi -1.5-2.3 m below the sea level.

Georgia is known for its mountainous settlements that are highest in Europe. The status of the highest settlement in Europe was so far awarded to the Ushguli Community settlement located at the altitude of 2 200 m above the sea level in Zemo Svaneti region. It is noteworthy that part of this settlement is the famous village Chazhashi with the status of the UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. Currently, the village of Bochorna, located within the unique landscape on the protected area of Tusheti, is recognized as the highest settlement of Europe, located at an altitude of 2.345 m above the sea level.

Landscapes of Georgia are the integral part of the natural and cultural heritage of the country. Georgian legislation guarantees their protection. Apart from the national legislation, Georgia, as a member-state, has joined and ratified several international conventions, European Landscape Convention being one of them (Ratification – 2010; Entry into Force - 01.01.2011). As a member-state, the country is actively involved in the process of implementation of the European Landscape Convention. On March 9-10, 2018 Tbilisi hosted the National Symposium on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Georgia. Inter-ministerial round-table dealt with the issues of Integration of the landscape into politics and relevant policies.



Village Bochorna, Tusheti. The highest settlement in Europe, 2 345m above sea level.



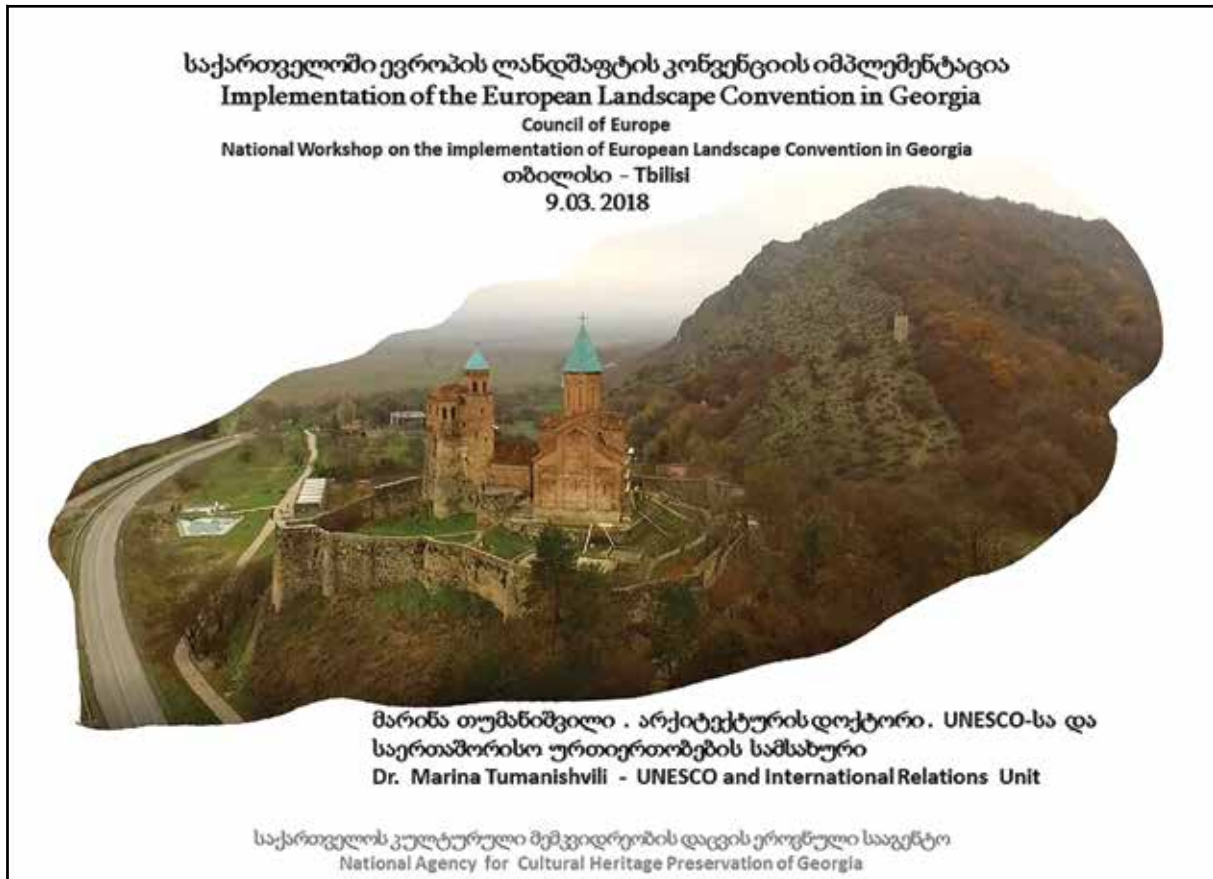
World Heritage Site – Chazhashi, Upper Svaneti.



Village Shatli, Khevsuret, presented at World Heritage Tentative list.

The screenshot shows the Council of Europe website page for a National Symposium. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Council of Europe logo and the text 'Council of Europe Landscape Convention'. Below the navigation bar, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'You are here: Democracy > European Landscape convention > Meetings > National/Regional Symposia'. The main heading reads 'National Symposium on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Georgia'. On the left, there is a photograph of a town by a river. To the right of the photo, the text says 'Interministerial Round-Table: Integration of the landscape into policies' and 'Tbilisi, Georgia, 9-10 March 2018'. Below this, it states 'The Symposium aimed to present the European Landscape Convention and to discuss its implementation at national level.' On the far right, there is a stylized logo for the European Landscape Convention, with the text 'EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION CONVENTION EUROPÉENNE DU PAYSAGE COUNCIL OF EUROPE/CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE' and 'Drawn by Alberta Floridi'.

The title page features four logos at the top: the Georgian coat of arms (a red cross with four smaller crosses), the coat of arms of Georgia, the European Landscape Convention logo, and the Council of Europe logo. Below the logos, the text reads 'COUNCIL OF EUROPE' and 'EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION'. The main title is 'National Workshop on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Georgia' in orange italics. Below that, it says 'Interministerial Round-Table: Integration of the landscape into policies' in orange italics. The location and date are 'Tbilisi, Georgia' and '9-10 March 2018' in orange italics. The word 'PROGRAMME' is centered in blue, flanked by dashes. Below this is a photograph of a town by a river. The caption reads 'Downtown Kutaisi and White Bridge as seen from Mt Gora'. At the bottom, it says 'Document prepared by the Secretariat of the European Landscape Convention, Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe'.



National Symposium on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, held in Tbilisi, 9-10 March, 2018.

## Afterword

In the end, it should be noted that 118 years have passed since the first publication of the book “History of Georgia” (“Histoire de Géorgie, Paris-Tiflis, 1900”), but it has never lost its relevancy. One can still buy the book at various international auctions. As mentioned above, taking into account the appreciation of the world society expressed towards the cultural heritage of Georgia and the book “History of Georgia” at the Paris World Exhibition of 1900, Raphael Isarlishvili was willing to re-publish the book in a more extended and complete new edition, that would have included the Coat of Arms of Georgia, the map and other images. We hope that the current edition has at least partially fulfilled this will of Raphael Isarlishvili. It is as well noteworthy that at the current stage, promotion of the cultural heritage of Georgia and introduction of the treasures of the country to the world are still relevant. In conclusion, we would like to express our sincere belief that the mission of the cultural heritage of Georgia for further development of international relations and the progress of the country is still crucial and thus, shall be widely supported.

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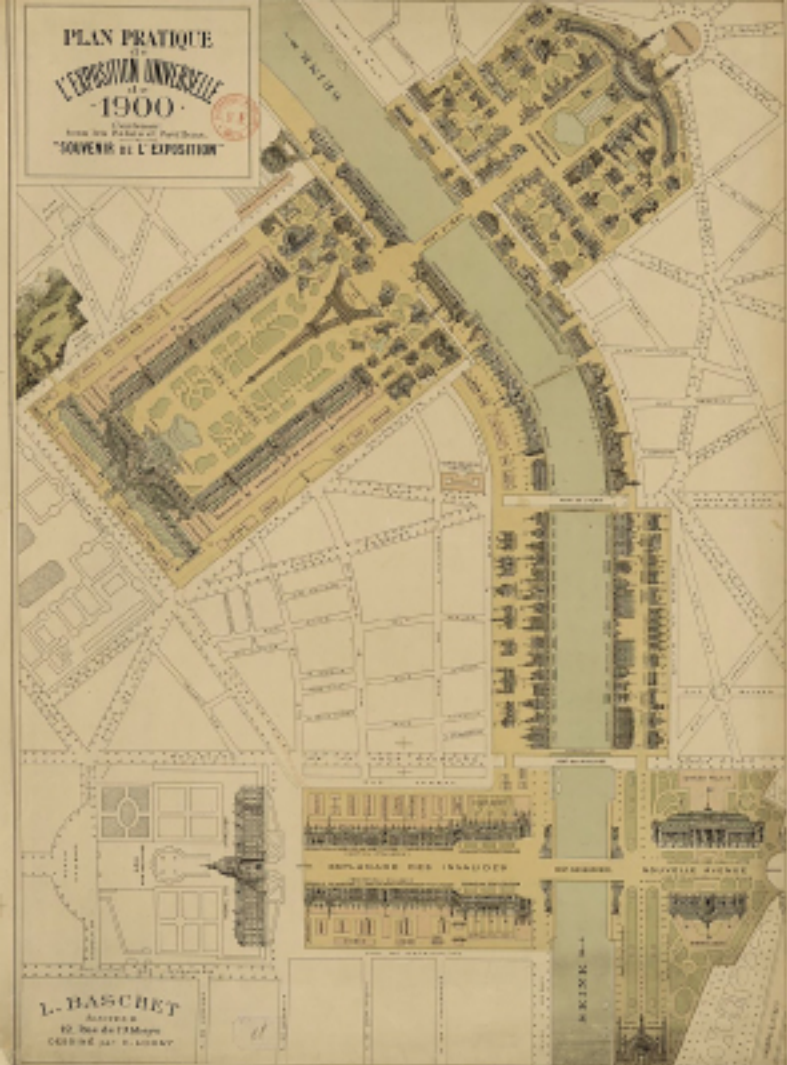
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