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@ IN THE ISSUE:

- Evidence on the Iberian Script
- Practical Dictionary of Georgian Verbs

სიმკობი

- არის თუ არა ქართული ენა უფრო ეკონომიური, ვიდრე იბერული?
- აღიუქვები და მკვლელობა შოთა რუსთაველის „ვეფხისტყაოსანში“
- მუხუთე საერთაშორისო ქართველოლოგიური სიმკობი

## GEORGIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

- David Guramishvili** – Zubovka (English translation by Donald Rayfield) ..... 5

## CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

- Vakhtang Imnaishvili** – “Two years ago a ‘real war broke out’ over the manuscripts you purchased” [*in Georgian*] .....10
- Sopio Guliashvili** – The Fifth International Symposium in Kartvelian Studies [*in Georgian*] .....22
- Pol Poupard** – Bastion of Georgian originality and spirituality (Georgian scholars abroad) [*in Georgian*] .....26

## MODERN KARTVELOLOGISTS

- G. Koolemans Beynen** – Adultery and Death in Shota Rustaveli's *The Man in the Panther Skin* [*in Georgian*] .....34
- Anthony Stobart** – Is Georgian a more efficient language than English? [*in English and in Georgian*] ..... 59
- J. Daniel Humphries** – Creating a Practical Dictionary of Georgian Verbs [*in Georgian*] .....76

## SCHOLARSHIP

- Elguja Khintibidze** – Towards a mystic interpretation of love in “Zubovka” by David Guramishvili [*in English*] .....85
- Nino Doborjginidze** – Christian Historiography and the Topos of Fifteen Literary Languages (Evidence on the Iberian Script) [*in English*] ..... 89

*In a broad sense Kartvelology embraces study of Georgian culture, history and all fields of the humanities: linguistics, literary criticism, art, archaeology, folklore, ethnography, source study.*

*Georgia, Sakarvelo, successor to ancient Colchis and Iberia, lies at the boundary of Europe and Asia, east of the Black Sea, in the south-western part of the Caucasus.*

*The Kingdom of Kartli – referred to in Classical sources as Iberia – emerged at the turn of the 4th-3rd cent. B.C., approximately on the territory of modern Georgia. The recorded history of the country dates from that time.*

*Interest in Kartvelian problems commenced in Europe in the 17th century. In the 19th century the French scholar Marie Brosset, the German scholar Arthur Letisi, the English brother and sister Wardrop, and others laid the scholarly foundation for this activity, contributing to the West's broader familiarity with Kartvelology.*

*Over the last decades the interest of the humanities in the key points of Kartvelology has been increasing, viz. in the problems of Georgian ethnogenesis, medieval Georgia in the context of cultural and political relations with Western and Eastern countries; the originality of the Georgian parent language and its relation to the families of Indo-European and Semitic languages; Georgian myths and the Georgian-Caucasian world in Classical mythology; direct or typological relations of the rich Georgian literary culture to Byzantine and Eastern literature, to the European Renaissance thought, and Modern European literature, etc.*

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საბრძანბო

DAVID GURAMISHVILI (1705-1792)

The 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of David Guramishvili was marked in Georgia in 2005. Guramishvili is an outstanding representation of Georgian poetic culture. After Rustaveli, it was Guramishvili's poetry that brought profound lyricism, and clearly-defined uniqueness to the Georgian poetic word. The poet owes this uniqueness to the blend in his works of Georgian, Russian and, partly, European poetic culture, due to the specific peripeteias of his life and the Georgian cultural environment of his floruit. He took shape as a poet in Georgia, flourished as a citizen in Russia and fought as a soldier in East European countries. The latter is probably a significant factor in accounting for the elements of European style of thought in his works. These elements are not visible on the surface of his poetic heritage; they are in-depth grains in the poet's four-part collection "Davitian" in Georgian ideal and thematic garb, probably conceived in analogy with the Gospel, echoing the biblical Psalmist. European element in the "Davitian" has been noticed by Western researchers themselves. The German scholar and translator of masterpieces of Georgian literature into German, A. Endler speaks of typological parallels of Guramishvili's poetry with French and German lyricists – Francois Villon (15<sup>th</sup> cent.) and Johann Günther (18<sup>th</sup> century). The English Kartvelologist Donald Rayfield perceives a stream of European bucolic poetry in Guramishvili's works entering via Russian. In the brief essay that follows I wish to offer the reader a novel view of this topic, namely a new look at the mystic interpretation of love in Guramishvili's masterpiece, "Zubovka". First the reader is offered the Georgian original of this poem, with a parallel translation into English by the above-mentioned Kartvelologist D. Rayfield. Here is his own description of the poem: "One of the greatest as well as the wryest poems written in Georgian".

The Editor

ძართული ღიბერატურა ინგლისურ თარგმანებში

დავით გურამიშვილი – ზუბოვკა (აწინადა რევილიდის ინგლისური თარგმანით) -----5

ძართველილ(ობიური ძრუნობა

ვახტანგ იმნაშვილი – „ოქვენ მიერ შექმნილი ხელნაწერების გამო ორი წლის წინ ნამდვილი თბი ბახადად“ [ქართულ ენაზე] -----10

სოფო გულიაშვილი – მესხეთე საერთაშორისო ქართველოლოგიური სიმპოზიუმი [ქართულ ენაზე] -----22

მიხეილ ბეგიაშვილი – ქართული თეოლოგიისა და სოციალური მედიის (ქართული მეცნიერები) სიმპოზიუმი [ქართულ ენაზე] -----26

თამარ ბერიძე – ქართული თეოლოგიისა და სოციალური მედიის (ქართული მეცნიერები) სიმპოზიუმი [ქართულ ენაზე] -----34

ანტონი სტობარტი – არის თუ არა ქართული ენა უფრო მკონომიური, ვიდრე ინგლისური? [ქართულ და ინგლისურ ენებზე] -----68

ჯ. დანიელ ჰაფორისი – ქართულ ზმნათა პრაქტიკული ლექსიკონის შექმნისათვის [ქართულ ენაზე] -----76

სამეცნიერო თემატიკა

ვლადიმერ ხინთიბისი – „ზუბოვკის“ ბიკინტილის მისტიკური ინტერპრეტაციისათვის (ინგლისურ ენაზე) -----85

ნინო დობროჯანიძე – ქართველოლოგიის ინტერპრეტაცია და თეოლოგიის სიმპოზიუმი (ინგლისურ ენაზე) -----89