

# Guide

## Georgian Architecture

*Introductory guide with foreword by Cyril Mango*

Advisor: Gundolf Bruchhaus

*University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the Institute  
of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi*



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# Georgian Architecture

A documented photo-archival collection on microfiche with 47,000 photographs for the study of Early and Late Medieval Christian Architectural Arts of Georgia and its historical area of settlement.

Introductory guide

Gundolf Bruchhaus, University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the Institute of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi

## Editorial

All articles in sections II and IV in the Introductory Guide have been written by Georgian scholars, some of whom enjoy highest reputation in Georgia. Their contributions thus reflect the present state of Georgian scientific endeavour and didactic skills in the field which is dealt with here; overall they constitute an authentic document of the times.

*G. B.*

The preparations for a microfiche publication on Georgian architecture coincided with a most dramatic period in Georgian history, when the country having taken the road of sovereignty found itself in the midst of grave political and economical cataclysms. But however paradoxical it may sound it is the situation that makes the noble cause of publishing the microfiches so important.

During the hostilities that took place in Tbilisi in December 1991 and January 1992 the building of the Institute of Georgian Art History of the Georgian Academy of Sciences was reduced to ruins. Fire destroyed the copious materials collected by the Institute in the course of half a century - measurements of architectural monuments, sketches and projects of reconstruction, more than a hundred thousand photos and negatives, scientific works and manuscripts, a rich library and all the technical equipment.

All this made it extremely difficult to represent a systematized picture of Georgian architecture presented in the given publication and the staff working on preparing the microfiches was faced with utmost difficulties. But their professional enthusiasm and the awareness of the significance of the publication of microfiches, both from the scientific point of view and for propagation of knowledge about Georgian architecture, proved to be more important than all the obstacles to be overcome. Besides we were helped by the friendliness and goodwill of our German and Dutch colleagues.

We are unable to mention all the specialists here who took part in preparing the microfiches, but their names will be referred to in summaries and texts.

We are convinced that the presentation of architecture in Georgia, one of the oldest countries in the world, in such volume and on such a scale will be of great use to those who are interested in architecture of the world.

*Nodar Janberidze*

Director of Chubinashvili Institute of Georgian Art History of the Georgian Academy of Sciences

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# Preface

One does not have to be a specialist to admire the distinctive beauty of medieval Georgian architecture, especially when it is seen in its natural setting; for it is not only each building in itself but also its appropriateness to the landscape that produce such a vivid impression on the spectator. It is quite another matter to understand and evaluate Georgian architecture in historical terms: to discover its ultimate roots, to identify both the similarities that link it to the building crafts of other regions (notably Armenia and eastern Asia Minor) and the differences that make up its peculiar individuality, to trace the evolution of its forms and ornament and determine the play of influences. That is the scholar's task, and I daresay that no complete unanimity of opinion can be expected on some of the problems I have mentioned.

Without entering on any contentious issue I may be permitted to say that medieval Georgian architecture, at any rate in its more flourishing periods, was in no sense provincial and should be viewed as an important branch of the Christian architecture of the Near East. While it needs to be studied for its own sake, it should also be seen in a wider context and, when so seen, its evolutionary "curve" will appear to run reasonably parallel to that of other neighbouring regions. The initial prevalence of the basilica as the dominant type of church structure (fifth century), the introduction of a variety of domed and radiating forms in the sixth-seventh centuries, a dark period in the eighth, a renewal of building activity in the ninth reaching an apogee in the eleventh, with a quest for slender silhouettes, a plastic differentiation of façades and a proliferation of ornament — these phases are applicable not only to Georgian architecture but to that of the greater cultural entity which we often call Byzantine for lack of a better term.

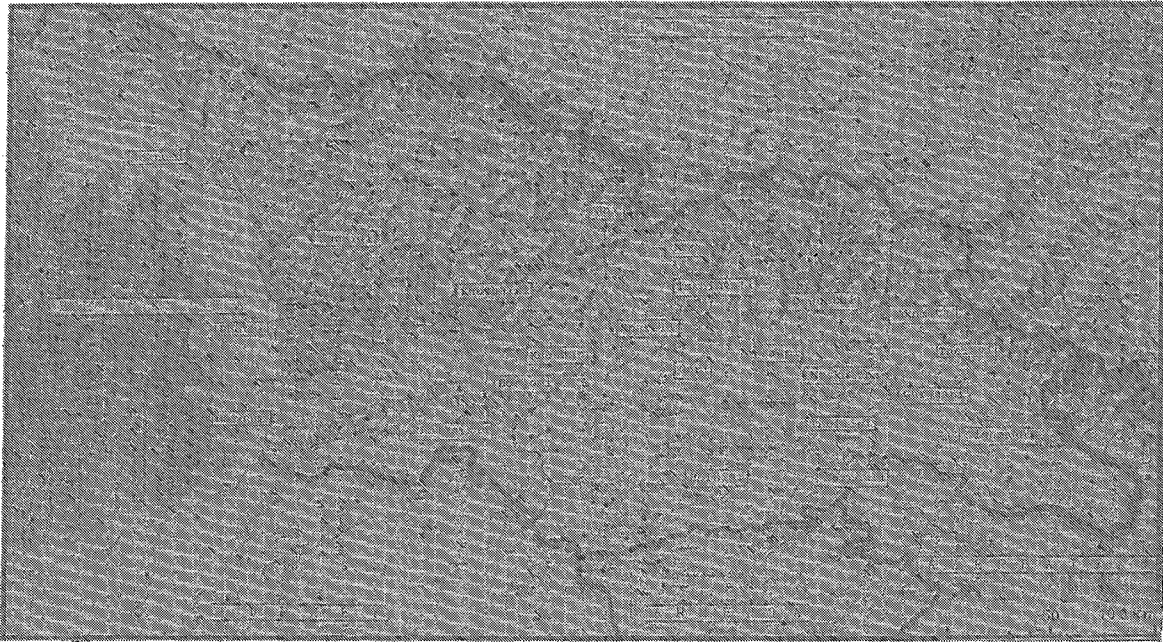
The surviving monuments of medieval Georgian architecture are very numerous, amounting as they do to about 5,000. The great majority of them are situated in the Republic of Georgia; there is also a smaller but important group in north-eastern Turkey. The monuments in the Republic of Georgia have been over the years systematically, indeed lovingly recorded and studied; those on Turkish territory have received much less attention. Furthermore, starting in the fourth century, the Georgians have also gravitated towards the Holy Land and have left traces of their architectural handiwork in Palestine, Syria (especially in the region of Antioch) and even Cyprus.

The dispersal of Georgian monuments and the inaccessibility of many of them have until now made it difficult to gain a truly comprehensive view of the subject. Hence the importance of the present project. The accumulated records compiled over several decades by the Institute of Georgian Art History at Tbilisi have been supplemented, as regards monuments situated outside the Republic of Georgia, by N. and J.M. Thierry and by G. Bruchhaus (Research on Armenian Architecture), who undertook several campaigns of exploration to this end. G. Bruchhaus has furthermore acted as the principal organizer and co-ordinator of the microfiche project, designed to be a pendant to the already published microfiche inventory of Armenian Architecture. The result is an exhaustive archive, arranged geographically, which at long last will place the study of the most notable achievements of medieval Caucasian art on a new and more scientific basis.

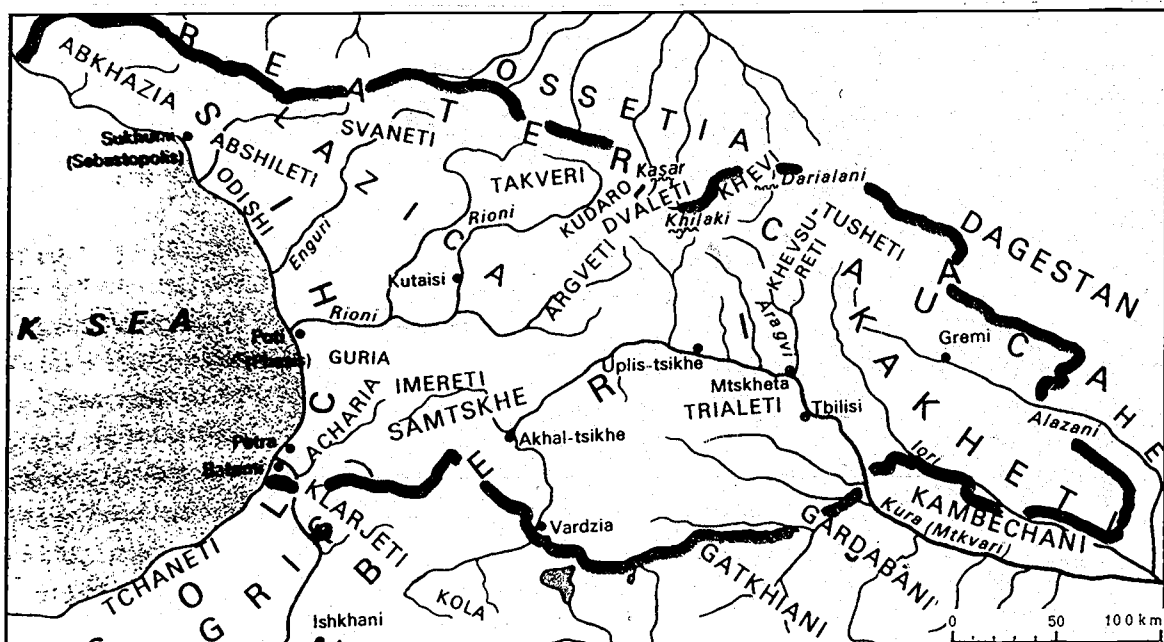
*Cyril Mango*

Georgians 3433 (68.8 %); Armenians 448 (9.0 %); Russians 372 (7.4 %); Azerbaijanians 256 (5.1 %); Ossetians 160 (3.2 %); Greeks 95 (1.9 %); Abkhazians 85 (1.7 %); Ukrainians 45 (0.9 %); Jews 28 (0.6 %); Kurds 26 (0.5 %); other nationalities 45 (0.9 %).

*Thamaz Dvali*



1. Map of Georgia



2. Rivers and landscapes of Georgia.

# The History of Georgia

## **From Prehistoric Times to the 4th Century A.D.**

Georgia is situated in an area where two great continents, Europe and Asia, come together. To the north the country borders on the snow-capped main range of the Caucasus, to the south it spreads as far as the highlands of the Minor Caucasus. Several less elevated mountain chains descend south of the Great Caucasus mountain range. One of these, the Likhi (Surami) Range, divides Georgia into two main parts: East and West Georgia. Georgia borders on Russia on the north, the Republic of Azerbaijan on the south-east, Armenia and Turkey on the south, and the Black Sea on the west. The city of Tbilisi is the capital of the country.

The Caucasus has been populated since more than a million years. The human jaw found in Georgia at Dmanisi in 1991 is presumably the earliest known evidence of human presence in Eurasia, aged 1.6 million years. Traces of human activity on Georgian territory date back to the early Stone Age (Paleolith). Since that time life has continued in an uninterrupted evolution. Numerous early and late Neolithic tools, weapons and dwelling sites have been uncovered on the territory of the country. From late Neolith on - approximately 10 - 8 thousand years ago - the inhabitants of this area began to cultivate edible plants and to domesticate animals, developing agriculture and livestock breeding. A species of cereals, transitional from wild grain to modern cultured species of wheat, has been found, which enables one to conjecture that this area was one of the oldest centres of cereal cultivation and agriculture. The people who dwelt here made lots of pottery for home use, spun yarn and wove cloth.

About six or seven thousand years ago ancestors of the Georgians discovered rich deposits of copper ore on the territory of Georgia; they have certainly contributed a great deal to the development of metallurgy. Though tools and weapons of stone, wood and bone were still widespread at this initial stage of metalworking, goldsmithing was gradually introduced and became more and more popular. Irrigation began to be used in agriculture. People lived in small, circular or oval adobe dwellings with permanent fires burning on hearths inside or beside their homes. A few dozen of these built on the tops of small elevations or hills made up individual settlements surrounded by ditches or rubble-stone walls.

In the 4th - 3rd millennia B.C. the ancestors of the Georgians learnt to process copper; metallurgy, cattle breeding, and handicrafts developed. Tribal clans were formed with chieftains at their head. A wide variety of implements has been excavated in the burial mounds of the greater clan chieftains as well as a four-wheeled car, numerous tools and weapons, articles of religion and ritual use, also jewellery, and exquisite gold and silver objects decorated with precious stones. Unions of clans gradually formed states. The bulk of material excavated by archaeologists is preserved in the State Museum of Georgia and in other museums.

In the latter part of the 2nd millennium iron metallurgy emerged and developed. In this time a new state, referred to as Diaoch (Diaen) in ancient eastern sources, emerged in the south-western part of Georgia whose population was known to the ancient Greeks as the Taochi. This new state, now called the traditional Georgian province of Tao, is today incorporated into the territory of Turkey. Assyrian and Urartian cuneiform inscriptions inform us of these states, their rulers and towns. They also mention cattle, horses, gold, silver and copper taken away as spoils or tribute by the troops of Assyrian and Urartian kings who had plundered the land.

Another large Georgian state, Colcha, existed to the south and to the west of the Black Sea. This state was ruled by a king who governed the land with the help of numerous officials. The Colchians were engaged in agriculture, cattle breeding, and metallurgy. Life in Colcha is reflected in the famous myth of the Argonauts. In the 8th century B.C. the Colchians invaded the Kingdom of Diaoch; shortly after, in the late 8th century B.C., Colcha itself fell under the pressure of Urartu and the invasions of Cimmerian tribes from the North Caucasus.

The Georgians are one of the oldest nations whose ancestors have always lived on the historical territory of Georgia. According to some scholars, the Georgians belong to the Indo-European family, but others are convinced that they belong to the indigenous Caucasian race. Georgian culture and the language have much in common with Caucasian as well as with Indo-European languages and cultures, which can either be the result of both stemming from the same root, or of maintaining close neighborly relations throughout millennia. The Georgian tribes of common origin are: the Kharths, the Megrel-Tchans and the Svans. The common Georgian ancestor language, Proto-Georgian, is thought to have existed in the 3rd millennium B.C.; in the 2nd millennium the Svan language of the West Georgian highlands branches off, followed by the Megrel-Tchan language in the 1st millennium. Nevertheless only the Georgian (Kharth) language developed into a written literary language, while the Svan and the Megrelian languages have remained spoken.

The common Georgian nation was formed in the course of a long and complicated historical process. The starting point of this process is supposed to be the 2nd millennium B.C., i.e. the time when the larger tribal unions were formed. Besides the clans of common Georgian origin other indigenous clans as for example the Vainachs and the Adygs joined the unions. The tendency towards the unification of the Georgian clans, evident from ancient times, was actually realized in the late 4th and early 3rd centuries, when the Kharthlian (Geek sources: Iberian) Kingdom took shape, with the capital in Mtskhetha, embracing both East and West Georgia. Under complicated and adverse circumstances this unity was often destroyed, but gradually the Georgians developed the sense of common national identity which found its basis and expression in the common Georgian culture and the common Georgian language.

### **The Kingdom of Colchis (Egrisi)**

After the fall of Colcha another kingdom rose: Egrisi (in Georgian tradition) or Colchis (according to Greek sources). Centre of this new kingdom became the city of Khuthaisi (in Greek sources: Khuthaia). There were also other important cities and trading towns in the central part of the country such as Tsikhe Goji (Archeopolis), the cities of Vani, Sairkhe and others. Colchis was a land of progressive agriculture with well developed field-crop cultivation, horticulture, viticulture and cattle breeding, advanced metallurgy and crafts, especially goldsmithery, jewellery, and pottery. The Colchian Kingdom maintained close economic and cultural relations with the Hellenistic world. There were many Greek colonies: Phasis (near the modern city of Phothi), Dioscurias (near Sokhumi), Gyenos (Ochamchire), Pitiunt (Bitchvintha), and others. Imported goods were mostly articles of luxury as were jewellery, valuable fancy household ware, and oil. Articles of export were: gold, iron, flax, linen, furs, leather, ship-building timber and other valuable wood such as the box-tree, and even slaves. Numerous foreign coins and imported objects have been unearthed in Colchis. Silver coins of local mintage were introduced since the 6th century B.C. and were mainly used within the country and in neighboring states.

Colchis was a state in which the population was already differentiated into classes, though communal-tribal relations still existed in the mountains. The country experienced the powerful cultural influence of the Hellenistic world.

### **The Kingdom of Kharthli (Iberia)**

By the late 4th and early 3rd centuries B.C. the united East-Georgian state of Kharthli (Iberia), incorporating western Georgia as well, came into being amidst incessant and sanguinary wars against invaders. Its capital was the city of Mtskhetha. The process of consolidation of the Georgian clans on the historical territory of Georgia was well under way, a process of vital importance for the further unification of Georgian ethnic groups and the eventual formation of a new historical entity, the Georgian nation. According to the Georgian historical tradition, the founder of the Pharnavaziani dynasty of Georgian kings, a descendant of the house of the Mamasakhlisi (governors) of Mtskhetha, came to the throne as a result of a fierce struggle against internal and external foes. The king was the sovereign ruler of the country, his power inherited by his successors. The commander-in-chief, who also administered justice, was the second man in the kingdom. The royal court maintained an intricate bureaucratic system. The priests of pagan temples wielded great authority.

The city of Mtskhetha was very well fortified and an extensive system of fortresses protected the land. The country was divided into administrative areas ("saeristhavs") whose governors, the Eristhavs, were subordinate to the Spaspets, commanders of the armed forces. They governed the central province of the kingdom. Armazi, whose idol stood on Mount Armazi near Mtskhetha, was the supreme deity. The idols of other gods (Zadeni, Gatsi, Ga) also stood there. In King Pharnavaz's time the Georgian language gained superiority over numerous other languages spoken in Kharthli and became a written language.

The main road connecting the East and the West ran through Georgia, coming from India across the Caspian Sea - along the Mtkvari river valley - down the Rioni (river Phazis) - to the Black Sea port of Phazis. Besides Mtskhetha there were other important towns in Iberia: the towns of Uphlistsikhe, Urbnisi, Tsunda, Odzrkhe, and many larger or smaller urban communities. The buildings in the towns displayed architectural competence, as did market-places and other structures. The buildings were for the most part topped with red-tiled roofs. Most of the population were free farmers who in times of emergency made up the army. Besides these, there were the bond-men and a smaller number of slaves.

Kharthli was under the strong political and cultural influence of Achaemenian Persia. In early 2nd century B.C. Rome, having built up sufficient strength, launched its expansionist campaigns into the east. The Kingdom of Pontus, Georgia's neighbor to the west at this time, conquered Kolkhethi under

King Mithridates of Pontus (111 - 63 B.C.) and, in alliance with Tigran II of Armenia, resisted Rome's expansion into the Caucasus. Kharthli was an ally of Pontus in this struggle. In 65 B.C. the Roman legions led by Pompey marched into Georgia. King Artag of Kharthli was defeated in the battle and was forced to conclude a treaty of friendship and alliance, which imposed on him the duty of blocking the mountain passes of the Caucasus to prevent nomadic tribes from pouring over the range. Rome appointed its own governors in West Georgia; the Colchian Drachma minted by Aristarkhus, one of those governors, has come down to our time.

In the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. the Kingdom of Kharthli gathered strength and became quite powerful. It took an active part in the war between Rome and Parthia, who were contending for Armenia, and even tried to seize Armenia in the 30s of the 1st century A.D. Members of the Iberian royal house held the Armenian throne from 35 to 50 A.D. Even Rome strove to secure peace with Iberia. The Kingdom of Kharthli grew even stronger in the early 2nd cent. A.D. under King Pharsman II (30s - 50s of the 2nd century A.D.). By this time the Kingdom of Kharthli held the territory stretching as far as the Black Sea, incorporating a great part of western Georgia. The Roman Empire sought ways to improve its relations with Kharthli. During his sojourn in Asia Minor in 128 A.D., the Emperor Hadrian (117 - 138 A.D.) invited King Pharsman II along with other kings and rulers of the east. King Pharsman, evidently displeased with something, disregarded the invitation; the relations were tense. Later on King Pharsman was again invited by the Emperor Antoninus Pius. The Empire, so it seems, had made some concessions and King Pharsman, accompanied by the Queen, the Prince and their body of attendants arrived at Rome where he was given a grand welcome. The Emperor attended the military exercise performed by the King, the Prince and their train and an equestrian statue of King Pharsman was erected in Rome. As a special favour to the Georgians, they were granted the right to offer a sacrifice in the Capitol. Rome recognized the legitimacy of the Iberian borders stretching far out west. Though in the early 3rd century A.D. the Kingdom of Kharthli retained the status gained previously, the changes that had taken place in Iran in the 20s of the 3rd century A.D. upset the balance of forces in the Near East. A powerful Sassanian state rose from the ruins of the weak Parthian Kingdom.

After Pompey's West Georgian campaign, the Romans established control over the land; the forts on the borders of Egrisi were manned by Roman soldiers. Western Georgia was fighting for her independence. By the 2nd century A.D. the Kingdom of Kolkheti disintegrated into principalities ("skeptukhias").

The Georgians of classic antiquity used the Greek and the Aramaic scripts, specimens of which have been discovered in abundance. According to tradition, King Pharnavaz introduced the Georgian script in the 3rd century B.C., but no specimens of it have been found dating prior to the 5th century A.D. It is not unlikely that the Georgian script was used side by side with the Aramaic and the Greek scripts and, undergoing improvement, assumed its final form and perfection only after the Christian faith had spread throughout the country.

Archaeological excavations have uncovered many sites of fortifications, palaces, and rich burials, which indicate the existence of well-developed structural engineering. Copper and iron tools and weapons, the perfection of their forms and their artistic design, gold and silver adornments, jewellery and tableware in exquisite taste attest the high level of the development of arts and crafts. At that stage the Georgians were already familiar with the classic theatre art. Public baths consisting of several halls (caldarium, tepidarium and frigidarium) with corresponding heating systems and mosaic floors point to a high standard of everyday life.

In earlier times the ancestors of the Georgians worshipped the forces of nature. They adhered to the faith of the renewal and rebirth of nature. The emergence of unified Georgian states brought closer together various religious ideas, which created a relationship of hierarchy between the divinities. The moon, worshipped in the form of a warrior, was the supreme deity. The bull was considered its sacred animal. Bulls were offered as sacrifices to the moon, their heads or crescent-shaped horns often adorned various objects and temples. The worship of the Great Mother, the sun, was also popular. The first king of Kharthli declared Armaz, presumably a modified version of the moon-god, the supreme deity. Its copper statue with gold armour and a gold helmet, holding a sword studded with precious stones, stood on top of the Mount Armazi near Mtskheta, with the idol of Zadeni opposite to him and all the other gods in a circle around.

The might of Kharthli (Iberia) in classic antiquity strongly influenced the consolidation of the other Georgian clans with the Kharthli tribe in the making of the integrated Georgian nation.

## **Georgia in the 4th - 12th Centuries A.D.**

From the 4th century onwards feudal relations combined with large-scale landownership became well established in Georgia. The community was divided into two main classes: the gentry of the feudal lords and the dependent farmers, the "glekhi". The land belonged to the feudal class: the king, the secular and the clerical gentry; the "glekhis" lived and worked on plots of terrain on the basis of heredity, paying tribute and serving their lords who were the legitimate owners of the land.

In the 4th century A.D. there were two Georgian states on the historical Georgian territory: the East Georgian Kingdom of Kharthli (Iberia) with the capital in Mtskhetha, and the West Georgian Kingdom of Egrisi (in Greco-Roman tradition: Lazica) with the capital in Tsikhe-Goji (antique sources: Archeopolis).

In the early 4th century the Christian religion was declared the state religion of Georgia. The Christian faith had penetrated into Georgia even earlier in the first centuries A.D. and the Georgian historical tradition considers St. Andrew and St. Simon Canaanite the first preachers of Christian doctrine in Georgia. Simon Canaanite died in Georgia and is buried there. At the beginning of the 4th century St. Nino of Cappadocia came to Georgia to preach her faith; the adoption of the Christian doctrine as the official religion of the Georgian Kingdom is ascribed to her activity.

During the 4th - 6th centuries the Georgian people fought for their independence against Sassanian Iran and Byzantium. The struggle went on with varying success. One of the most important periods of this struggle in the 5th century A.D. is associated with the name of King Vakhtang Gorgasal. The Georgian king took good advantage of the rivalry between Iran and Byzantium for the domination over the Caucasus. In the beginning, as a vassal of Iran using the Iranian military forces, he launched a campaign in the North Caucasus against the northern nomadic tribes (the Osses, according to Georgian chronicles) and, after he had defeated them, fortified the northern border. He repaired the Darial fortress manning it with his own soldiers and spread his power over western Georgia. In this context he also annexed Herethi, the north-western part of the historic Caucasian Albania in the east.

The church reform carried out during King Vakhtang's reign gave the head of the Church of Kharthli the status of Catholicos; the Church gained autocephaly, new dioceses were instituted. The late 5th century is coined also by important cultural and building activities. New strongholds, the towns of Ujarma, Tcheremi, and Khornabuji, were founded; the town of Artanuji, a stronghold built in the same period, soon became an important trading centre of the Near East. A new "saeristhavo" (an administrative area) was set up in the historical Georgian province of Klarjethi in south-western Georgia which has just been liberated from Byzantine domination. The moving of the capital from Mtskhetha to Tbilisi is also associated with the name of King Vakhtang.

Evidences of the cultural life of people on the territory of present-day Tbilisi date back to the 4th millennium B.C. At the turn of the new era there was a large settlement of traders and craftsmen there on one of the world's most important trade routes. In the 4th century the town was fortified. The toponym Tbilisi, which is attributable to the local hot sulfur springs, first appeared in written sources on a 4th century A.D. Roman road map in the form of "Philado"/"Philida". The construction work required to turn Tbilisi into the capital, the further fortification of the stronghold and the building of the palace, began during King Vakhtang's reign. His son Dachi accomplished what his father was unable to finish. According to King Vakhtang's will Dachi transferred the capital from Mtskhetha to Tbilisi, but Mtskhetha remained the centre of the Georgian Church.

The transfer of the capital to Tbilisi was prompted by social, political, geographic and many other factors. Time and history have justified King Vakhtang's choice: Tbilisi preserved its status of the capital through the ups and downs of history and brought it down to our time. King Vakhtang waged a war against the nobles who adhered to the pro-Iranian religious and political platform; he actively fought against the Iranian expansionism and fell in battle.

In the 6th - 7th centuries the Georgians continued their contention with the Iranian and Byzantine conquerors. Though the Iranians in Kharthli (Iberia) and the Byzantines in Egrisi (Lazica) succeeded in abolishing the royal power and appointed their own officials to rule the countries, the local government was restored in the person of the "erismthavari", a representative of the royal house. It is noteworthy that from this time on the "erismthavaris" of both Kharthli and Egrisi had the titles of the Byzantine court (curopalatus, patricius, etc.).

Beginning with the 40s of the 7th century A.D. Georgia found itself in the sphere of interests of a new great power, the Moslem Arab Caliphate. In the 30s of the 8th century the Arabs succeeded in conquering Georgia. They placed their official, an emir, in Tbilisi and distributed their garnisons to the most important towns of the Georgian east. The emir had a large staff of functionaries. Mosques were opened in Tbilisi. The Arabs exercised their authority over eastern Georgia, while western Georgia was basically under the Byzantine influence. From time to time the Arabs managed to impose their

supremacy on western Georgia as well. Nevertheless, they failed to impose also their ideological and cultural influence: Islam did not take root; the best sons of Georgian people rallied round the Church and defended their independence with the cross in their hands.

The second half of the 8th century marks the beginning of the great struggle for liberty. As the Arabs were still strong in the central part of Georgia the centres of resistance shifted to the provinces. New independent Georgian states came into being: the so-called Abkhaz Kingdom in western Georgia, Kakhethi and Herethi in the east and Tao-Klarjethi ("Kingdom of Georgians") in the south. Meanwhile the Arabs, as mentioned above, were still strong in central Georgia and in the city of Tbilisi.

In the 8th - 10th centuries the new Georgian states continued their fight to liberate the central part of Georgia from the Arabs. One of the most important stages in this struggle ended by the 70s - 80s of the 10th century A.D., when the whole of western Georgia, the greater part of south-western Georgia ("Kingdom of Georgians") and Inner Kharthli with its capital Khuthaisi united, forming one kingdom with Bagrat Bagrationi on the throne. Bagrat Bagrationi was nominated by a group of Georgian feudal lords holding progressive views on Georgian unity and leading the struggle for the unification of the Georgian lands.

Bagrat (future King Bagrat III, 975 - 1014 A.D.) personified Georgia's unity. Through his father, a Bagrationi, he was heir of the throne of Tao-Klarjethi; through his mother he claimed the crown of the whole of western Georgia ("Abkhaz Kingdom"). The Bagration's came from the south-western Georgian province of Speri. According to their family tradition, they descended from the biblical kings David and Solomon. The information about their Hebrew origin, i.e. their descent from David and Solomon, is conveyed by a 9th-century Georgian chronicle. The same is stated in 10th-century Armenian and Byzantine sources. A particular historical manuscript listing their genealogy was dedicated to the house of the Bagrationis in the 11th century; the author, Sumbat Davithisdze, must have drawn on also the family chronicle of the Bagrationis. According to this treatise, Gvaram Bagrationi came into supreme power by becoming the Erismt'avari of Kharthli in the 70s of the 6th century A.D.; this amounted to the restoration of the royal power in Kharthli, which had been abolished by the Persians in the 30s of the 6th century. According to some sources, the Bagrationis are the descendants of the oldest Georgian royal house, the house of the Pharnavazianis. The Bagrationi dynasty remained in power in Georgia until the beginning of the 19th century, when the government of the Russian Empire abolished the royal command in Georgia. It is noteworthy that, when the Georgian Kingdom disintegrated in the 16th century, the crown in each of the three kingdoms, Kharthli, Kakhethi and Imerethi, went to representatives of the Bagrationi family.

Bagrat III was the first king of the united Georgian Kingdom. The fight for the unification of Georgia as well as for gaining control over Shida (Inner) Kharthli had so far been conducted among the Georgian kingdoms and principalities; now the central government in the person of the King led the struggle for annexing the other Georgian lands still remaining outside the borders of the united Georgian Kingdom.

The tendency to unite into one state is characteristic of the Georgian lands throughout the whole history of Georgia, especially at the end of the 4th century B.C. and in the early 3rd century B.C. (King Pharnavaz), in the middle of the 2nd century A.D. (King Pharsman II), and in the late 5th century A.D. (King Vakhtang Gorgasal). This tendency was enhanced by Georgia's historical and geographical circumstances, natural boundaries, the alternation of highlands and lowlands within these boundaries that favoured the development of the main branches of farming such as agriculture and cattle breeding, as well as the awareness of ethnic unity, common language, and a common culture. Under the circumstances of political disintegration of the Georgian land, the Church assumed an important role. Georgia was united by the common faith long before it became a political unity. The throne in Mtskhetha had brought together almost all of Georgia, and it was the Church of Georgia, around which all the forces fighting for Georgian unity rallied. As a rule it were external, alien might that had disintegrated the country, or had hindered its reunification. Separatist forces and tendencies existed at all times and in all epochs, but their activity was always inspired by an alien factor.

The 80s of the 10th century were particularly important in respect of the unification of Georgia. The first kings of the united Georgian Kingdom, Bagrat III, Giorgi I (1014 - 1027), Bagrat IV (1027 - 1072), and Giorgi II (1072 - 1089) fought against Byzantium and the Seljuk Turks. The struggle went on with varying success, but in the 80s of the 11th century Georgia suffered a defeat at the hands of the Turks and the latter overran almost the whole territory of eastern Georgia. The Seljuk Turks also defeated Byzantium, Armenia and Albania; they occupied the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire and Georgia found herself alone face to face with a well-organized and well-armed enemy. The Seljuks settled in the territories they had seized and, as they practised extensive nomadic cattle breeding, traditional Georgian branches of farming like horticulture, viticulture ect. were threatened of being ousted. Trouble was brewing among the feudal lords. King Giorgi II tried and failed to organize

proper resistance to the Seljuk Turks. He was forced to abdicate in favor of his sixteen-years-old son David (King David IV, 1089 - 1125), nicknamed "the Builder" in recognition of his outstanding services to his country and people.

From the late 11th century on the international balance in the Near East began to change for Georgia's advantage. The Seljuk Empire went into a gradual decline and began to disintegrate; the Moslems of the east felt the pressure of the European Crusaders. In this situation the Georgian king started his campaign to liberate the land. First of all he secured himself against the separatists within the country. Then he stopped paying tribute to the Seljuks, chased them away from Shida Kharthli and let the refugees return and restore the disrupted economy; he drove the invaders out of Kakhethi, Herethi and Tao. Though the occupation of the city of Tbilisi, still held by alien forces, must have been one of his main objectives, King David refrained from taking the town by direct assault. Instead of this he attacked the strongholds south of Tbilisi. After a series of sanguinary battles, the whole of Georgia was liberated by 1118 A.D., except Tbilisi and a few fortresses south of the town.

Though the Seljuk empire had disintegrated, the Moslem sultanates and emirates could not tolerate the loss of their positions in Georgia and, in spite of bitter feuds between themselves, came to accord about their policy against Georgia. The emergence of a strong Georgian power went counter to the interests of the Moslem rulers of the large trading centres in the Caucasus. Merchants of Tbilisi, Dmanisi and Ganja formed a union with the Moslem rulers of South Caucasus whose allied forces, organized and blessed by the Caliph of Bagdad, were sent to Georgia. Thanks to King David's ability and the dedication of his soldiers fighting for the freedom of their country and the safety of their homes and families, the Georgians won a sweeping victory at Didgori, near Tbilisi, over an enemy far exceeding their number. By the strictest of estimates the enemy troops had 300,000 soldiers against 56,000 men under King David's command.

The Battle of Didgori was an event of great historic significance for the Georgian and other Christian peoples of the Caucasus with far-reaching repercussions in the Near East and in Europe. The Christians of Europe began to consider Georgia a bulwark of Christendom in the east. Throughout Europe legends and tales were told of David as the defender and patron of the Christians.

In 1122 the Georgians liberated Tbilisi from the Moslems and King David moved the capital from Khuthaisi to Tbilisi. Now fighting continued in order to liberate other Christian countries of the Caucasus still held by the Moslems. At that time the leaders of Ani, the old Armenian capital, asked the Georgian king for help. The struggles for Shirvan and Armenia ended in 1124 and 1125; Armenia and Shirvan became part of the Georgian Kingdom. The invaders were at last driven out of all the Georgian lands; the unification of the Georgian Kingdom was accomplished.

At this time the Georgian Kingdom stretched from Nicopsia (today: Tuapse) in the east to Derbent in the west, and from Ossetia (today: North Ossetia, since no other Ossetia existed at that time) in the north to the Mount Aragatz (Armenia) in the south. Besides conducting active warfare, the country was undergoing important organizational changes. In accordance with a military reform, a regular armed force totally under the king's control was created, strengthened even more by the settling of a Kipchak horde in Georgia in 1118 A.D. The Church was brought under the jurisdiction of the King; a police force was created as well as a strictly organized system of intelligence service. A financial reform was meant to provide an international market for money of Georgian coinage. The rights of the judicial establishment were expanded and the Court of Justice was separated from royal power - the king retaining the function of Chief Justice only.

The rapport with national minorities and non-Christians was a matter of close attention. Though immediately after the fall of Tbilisi the Moslem inhabitants of the town had been treated with severity because of their resistance against the Georgian forces, foreigners were granted special privileges as soon as the hostilities ended. Among the inhabitants of the town there were Jews, Armenians, Moslem Arabs and Seljuks. The Armenian migration to Georgia had started a long time before, intensifying more and more at the time of the persecution of Armenians, which adhered to the orthodox Christian faith. Fleeing persecution, the Armenians settled in various regions of Georgia as well as in the city of Tbilisi. The Jews appeared in Georgia after the first capture and plunder of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (586 B.C.) and settled in the environs of Mtskhetha. The second wave of Jewish immigration came after the seizure of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus. The immigrants lived side by side with the indigenous ethnic Georgian Hebrews. Judaism was evidently wide spread in Georgia. Part of the ethnic Georgians of the Hebrew faith evidently refused to be converted to Christianity and subsequently assimilated with the newcomers. Tbilisi had been held by the Moslem Arabs since the 30s of the 8th century A.D. and then, since the 70s of the 11th century, by the Seljuks; hence it had quite a numerous Moslem population.

Tbilisi was situated on one of the most relevant trading arteries of the world and was an important transit trading centre both under the Arabs and the Seljuks. In spite of the long dominance of the

invaders, Tbilisi was not severed from its national roots. The inhabitants of nearby villages brought their produce to the town; Tbilisi, in turn, supplied them with various goods. Trade was centered in various Moslem trading organizations. The town collected a rich revenue in taxes. Foreigners and people of various faiths residing in Georgia enjoyed good living conditions. King David granted the Moslem, Armenian and Jewish residents of Tbilisi the special privilege of reduced taxes, at the same time safeguarding their confessional immunity. Along with this policy of religious tolerance, King David endeavoured to use the Church to convert the Armenian residents of Georgia to the orthodox faith which was expedient for the unification of the country. This policy was continued further during the reign of Queen Tamar and King Giorgi Lasha. Religious and ethnic tolerance is a national trait of the Georgians which, along with other factors, accounts for representatives of various nationalities and religious groups living in compact settlements or dispersed throughout Georgia at all times of Georgian history and at present.

The descendants of King David the Builder, Demetre I (1125 - 1156) and Giorgi III (1156 - 1184), strove to protect the borders of the country, following the policy of King David IV. Moslem leaders fought for restoring their lost influence in the region. The fight for Armenia and Shirvan went on with varying success. The northern part of Shirvan remained within the Georgian borders, while the south-eastern part was held by Shirvan Shahs on the condition that it remained under the suzerainty of the Georgian crown. The Armenian problem was settled by the late 12th century; the country remained part of the Georgian Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Georgia reached the peak of its might and international prestige under Queen Tamar (1184 - 1212). By the end of her reign Georgia had scored a number of important victories. In 1195 Atabag Abu-Bakr of Azerbaijan (Adarbadagan), contending for Georgia's vassal state Shirvan, suffered a crushing defeat at Shamkor by the hands of the Georgian troops. In 1203, after defeating Sultan Rukn ad-Din of Rum at Basiani, the Georgians launched a military campaign along the south coast of the Black Sea where the administration of the weakened Byzantium was actually defunct. The Georgians effortlessly occupied the territory from Khupathi (near Bathumi) to Sinope (Rize, Trabzon, Kerasunt, Kotiora, Samsun) with a predominantly Georgian population (the Laz and the Tchan) and, by order of the Queen, created a state dependent on Georgia, which was given the high-sounding title "Trabzon Empire". Emperor of the new state became Tamar's relative Alexius of the deposed Comneni ruling family of the Byzantine empire, who had taken shelter at her court.

The Erziuk Sultanate and the Erzurum Emirate to the south, Rani to the south-east, the Circassians and the Ossetians to the north and Derbent and Shirvan to the north-east were all tributaries and vassals of Georgia. In order to secure their borders against attack, to demonstrate her might to the neighbours, and to exact tribute or spoils of war, the Georgians had to carry out raids, mostly to the south into the territories of Moslem rulers. In 1210 the Georgian troops invaded northern Iran and, taking the cities of Marand, Tabriz, Zenjan, and Qazvin, returned laden with spoils. By the late 12th century also the North-Caucasian mountaineers bordering on Georgia experienced Georgians strong political and cultural influence.

The long lasting struggle against the Seljuk conquerors had come to an end. Now the victorious Georgia, surrounded by Christian nations of the Caucasus and living in peace, was making a steady economic and cultural progress. Many big towns and cities flourished in the Georgia of those times as were Tbilisi, Khuthaisi, Rusthavi, Gori, Dmanisi, Thelavi, Tskhumi, and Zhinvali. The land carried on trading with Byzantium, Iran, Egypt, Russia, and other countries. It exported agricultural products and objects of handicraft industry and imported articles of luxury. Both Georgian and foreign currencies were used in the country. Georgian money was minted in Tbilisi, Khuthaisi, Dmanisi, and Akhaltsikhe. The population of Georgia in the 12th - 13th centuries was about 5 million, while Tbilisi was a capital of 100,000 inhabitants. The country was ruled by a king respectively a queen of the Bagrationi family bearing the title of "The King of the Abkhaz (West Georgia), of the Georgians (Kharthli proper and Meskhethi), of Herethi and Kakhethi, King of the Armenians (Lower Kharthli, Lore-Tashiri), Shah-an-Shah (the title of the Bagratunis of Ani), Shirvan-Shah (the title of the rulers of Shirvan)". This impressive title reflects the historical process of unification and territorial growth of the Georgian Kingdom.

Besides the royal power, there was a representative body, the "darbazi", consisting of the secular and clerical aristocracy, which was convened periodically to discuss and settle matters of particular importance such as war, peace treaties, appointment of high-ranking officials, and others. During the reign of Queen Tamar there was an attempt to create a representative legislative institution of a new kind (something like a parliament) parallel to the royal power, which evidently brought about a restriction of the rights of the existing "darbazi".

The government of the country developed into a large bureaucratic and administrative apparatus. Large administrative areas were governed by "eristhavs", the most important of the departments (war,

finance, and interior) were headed by "viziers". State property was strictly marked off from the property of the crown, and a special elder-vizier was in charge of the property of the king and the royal family. There was a council of viziers presided over by the royal chancellor ("m̄tsignobarthukhutsesi"), who was at the same time the bishop of the largest diocese, that of Tchqondidi.

Medieval Georgia was a heir of rich cultural traditions that came down from the times of antiquity. The land maintained strong cultural ties with its neighboring countries and peoples: Byzantium, Iran, the Arabs, Armenians, Syrians and others. New monuments of the Christian religion were erected on the pagan cultural heritage (and ideology), which caused the loss of numerous cultural monuments of the pre-Christian epoch.

Georgian writings of pagan times could have possibly been destroyed in connection with the transformation of the pagan temples into churches. According to Georgian historical tradition it was King Pharnavaz who first introduced the Georgian script, though, as it has already been mentioned, no example of the Georgian script dating from times prior to 5th century A.D. has so far been discovered. Georgian script which is in use today has evolved from the old Georgian 5th century script. Georgian writing acquired special importance with the establishment of Christianity. All the main books of ecclesiastical literature and liturgy were already translated from Hebrew, Greek and other languages in the 5th century, also the church service was conducted in Georgian. Georgian monks even had the privilege of performing a part of the divine liturgy on Mount Sinai in Georgian. Today we are in possession of a considerable body of hagiographical literature (martyrological works and lives of saints), hymnography, and historical works dating from the 5th century and onwards.

The philosophic ideas of antiquity and the art of rhetoric were widespread in Georgia of those days. The Greek system of education was well established in Iberia and Kolkheti. In the 4th century A.D. there was a school of philosophy and rhetoric near the town of Phasis (Phothi) where Greek students were educated side by side with Georgians. The Egrisians on many occasions showed their competence in rhetoric at various festivals in the 4th century. The knowledge of old Greek literature and philosophy was essential. The Georgian Prince Bakur, proficient in philosophy, was considered one of the most educated men in the eastern Roman Empire in the late 4th century. Another Georgian prince, Murvanos, who was held hostage in Constantinople in the early 5th century, is supposed to have been the world famous philosopher, named Peter of Iberia. He maintained close ties with his homeland and founded a number of Georgian monasteries in Palestine.

The holy books of the Christians, the Gospels and the Bible, were translated into Georgian from various languages such as Greek, Syrian, and Hebrew. In the course of time an original Georgian literature appeared, namely hagiography, historical works, and hymnography. The oldest work of Georgian literature that has come down to our times is "The Martyrdom of Shushanik" by Yakob Khutsesi, a 5th century author; "The Martyrdom of Evstate of Mtskhetha" was written in the 6th century by an anonymous author, "The Martyrdom of Abo Thbileli" dates from the 8th century. Besides these there were works dedicated to the lives and the works of outstanding clerics, as for example "The Life of Grigol from Khandztha". These works reflect the struggle of the Georgian people against the conquerors, and witness the high level of the political, social and cultural life of the country.

The unification of the Georgian lands into a united state concluded the long historical process of the formation of the Georgian nation. The Georgian language, which since the 9th century came to be used as the only means of formal communication, writing and church service in every corner of the historical Georgian provinces, acquired a new significance. The political unification of Georgia was preceded by the unity of the Georgian ecclesiastical and cultural world, which heightened the people's awareness of the importance of their mother tongue. Ioane Zosime wrote a hymn to the Georgian language in the 10th century, eulogizing it as a language of particular significance among the languages of the world. Michael Modrekili, also a prominent hymnographer of the 10th century, compiled a hymnal comprising works of Georgian and Byzantine authors. These hymns were accompanied by a certain musical notation which indicates the places of either a particular accentuation or dropping of the voice to a low pitch and defines the rhythm of the performance. At the same time the Georgians read novels, stories and poetry, both translated and original, specimens of which have come down to us in fragmentary form.

The Georgians of those times were also well acquainted with the science of philosophy. The oriental tale of Buddha, "The Wisdom of Balavar", revised by a Georgian author and translated from Georgian into Greek by the outstanding Georgian writer and scholar Ekvthime Athoneli in the 11th century, is a remarkable example of philosophic thought. The book was translated from Greek into Latin in the same century and spread all over Europe.

The 9th - 10th centuries mark the revival of Georgian historiography. The chronicle "Mokhtsevai

Kharthlisai", narrating Georgian history from the 4th century B.C. to the 9th century A.D., was revised and supplemented in the 9th century. It also includes the story of the conversion of Georgia by St.Nino. The history of the Bagrationi family and the history of Georgia from old times till the 4th century B.C. ("The History of the Kings" by Leonti Mroveli), the history of the reign of King Vakhtang Gorgasali, and the chronicles of the reign of David the Builder, Queen Tamar, and King Lasha Giorgi were written in the 11th century. These books speak of the political history of the country, as well as of the origin of the Georgian people, the kinship of and the relationship between the Caucasian peoples, the origin of the Georgian script, and the problems of the history of Georgian culture.

The appearance of "Kharthlis Tskhovreba", an anthology of historical works written at different times, proves the high standard of historical thought in those times. At first the book consisted of annals describing the oldest period of Georgian history ("The Lives of Kings", "The History of King Vakhtang Gorgasali"). Then the collection gradually grew in volume absorbing the chronicles mentioning the events of the 8th - 11th centuries; later the stories of King David IV, Queen Tamar, and others were added. Besides the facts of Georgian history the works making up the volumes of "Kharthlis Tskhovreba" hold important information about the history of Georgia's neighbours, a fact that determined its translation into Armenian as early as the 12th century. More and more chronicles were added to "Kharthlis Tskhovreba" from time to time, and so the book now tells the history of the country till the end of the 17th century.

Especially important for the development of Georgian national culture were the Georgian churches and monasteries, centres of education and culture both within Georgia and abroad in the countries of advanced Christian civilization (Byzantium, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem). These centres were founded in the very earliest time of Christianity. They did not only practise liturgy and divine services, but had also particular importance as educational and scientific centres engaged in copying, illuminating and distributing manuscripts, and in translating literature from Syrian, Arabic, Greek and other languages. Books on theology, philosophy and natural science were translated in the centres of Georgian culture abroad and were sent from there back home to the mother-land Georgia. The people in these centres served as ambassadors of Georgian culture in the countries of Christian civilization.

Among the Georgian monasteries abroad the monastery on Mount Athos (Chalcedon peninsula), founded in the late 10th century by the prominent Georgian religious and public figure Ioane Mthadsmindeli, was the most important. Most of the means donated for the foundation of this monastery came from Thornike Eristhavi, who had received the money from the Royal Court of the Byzantine Empire in recognition of the assistance the Georgians had rendered Emperor Basileus in defeating the rebellious Barda Scliros in 977 A.D. Many manuscripts, among them a manuscript describing the life and work of the founder of the monastery, were written within the walls of this cloister; they contain important information about the cultural activity of the convent, as well as data on Georgian culture and the Georgian-Byzantine relations. In the 11th century a high-ranking official of the Byzantine Royal Court, the Georgian nobleman Grigol Bakurianisdze, founded a monastery near the village of Petritson on the territory of present-day Bulgaria, which at that time formed part of the Byzantine Empire. He also drew up the rules and rubrics of religious service (typicon) for the monastery, which included a seminary for Georgian youths.

In Georgia the Gelathi Monastery, founded by King David the Builder at Khuthaisi, acquired particular importance by housing a seat of higher education. The Academy of Gelathi was headed by the prominent scholar Ioane Petritsi, who was translator and commentator of Aristotle's works and author of philosophical treatises. Besides Gelathi, there was another academy in Iqaltho near Thelavi, headed by Arsen Iqalthoeli, an equally well-known author of philosophical works. Shio-Mgvime Monastery, patronized by King David the Builder, should also be named as one of the important cultural centres.

The Georgia of that time could boast of a high standard of education. The efforts of scholastic activity were directed to the teaching of Christian doctrine and rules, while mathematics, music (hymn-singing) and other subjects were also important. Special stress was laid on history, because an educated Georgian was supposed to have a well-grounded knowledge of that subject. The curriculum basically followed the common Byzantine pattern of "trivium" and "quadrivium" with a few additional subjects. A 10th century anthology, the so-called "Book of Instruction" also known as the "Shatberdi Collection" - because it had been copied in the Shatberdi Monastery in southwest Georgia (present-day Turkey) -, holds interesting information on the common curriculum of that day. The book is a collection of compulsory literature for educated Georgians of the time. Besides the theological, philosophical and natural science texts, it includes information on world history and an essay on Georgian history ("Mokhtsevai Kharthlisai").

By the same time original secular literature was gaining momentum. While only fragments of

translated and original literary works dating from times prior to the 10th century have survived, the 12th century can boast of excellent books of adventures of chivalric heroes ("Amirandarejaniani" by Mose Khoneli), panegyric literature ("Thamariani" by Chakhrukhadze; "Abdulmesia" by Shavtheli), and original poetry. These poems, dedicated to Queen Tamar and her consort, eulogize the queen and sing praise to the idea of a powerful feudal monarchy.

The development of cultural creativity in the epoch reaches its climax in "The Knight in the Panther's Skin", the masterpiece of Shotha Rustaveli's rare genius. This gem of Georgian literature is well worthy of its place of honor among the world's finest works of literary inspiration. Rustaveli sings of his homeland, of earthly love, chivalry, friendship, brotherhood of people, and of the ideals of humanism.

The culture of feudal Georgia had reached the peak of its development. Many of its features later formed the basis for the European Renaissance.

### **Georgia in the 13th - 18th Centuries**

The early years of the 13th century mark a cardinal change of the situation in Asia Minor. A new power, the Mongol Empire with its nomadic traditions, its communal-tribal system, and a strong military organization emerged on the world scene.

In the 20s of the 13th century the Mongols, at war with Shah Muhammad of Khwarazm and his son Jalal ad-Din, made several incursions into Georgia. King Giorgi Lasha (1212 - 1222), son of Queen Tamar, died in one of the battles against the invaders. Jalal ad-Din, defeated by the Mongols, appeared at the Georgian border during the reign of Queen Rusudan (1225 - 1245), daughter of Queen Tamar. He captured Tbilisi in 1226; the Georgian royal court gained shelter in western Georgia. The Khwarazmians plundered the country for five years. At last, with Jalal ad-Din's final defeat and death, the country seemed to get a breathing-space, but then the Mongols followed in 1235. The Georgians suffered a defeat and Queen Rusudan took refuge in western Georgia again. Eastern Georgia came under the control of the Mongols. They failed to conquer western Georgia, but in a way their power was felt in this part of the country as well.

During the hundred years of Mongol domination the country was forced to pay enormous tribute. The military service in the Mongol troops was obligatory and forced the Georgians to take part in the Mongols' aggressive wars; a large part of the population perished in those wars. Never satisfied with the tribute, the Mongols plundered the country time after time. During the Mongol dominance Georgia's cities, towns and villages lay in utter desolation. The trade was ruined; economy and culture went into a decline, and there was a steady decrease in population. In this situation the separatist forces within the country more and more gained ground so that in the 70s of the 13th century the Georgian Kingdom split into three: the kingdoms of Likhthimerethi (western Georgia) and Likhthamerethi (eastern Georgia), and the Samtskhe Saathabago (southern Georgia) principality. But Georgia did not relax fighting against the Mongol conquerors. In the 30s of the 14th century, during the reign of King Giorgi V the Illustrious (1314 - 1346), the disintegrated Georgian Kingdom was again united, and liberated itself from the Mongols; the country slowly recovered from the occupation. Then, in the late 14th century, it suffered another devastating blow: Georgia had attracted the attention of Tamerlane who had built up a powerful new state on the ruins of the Mongol empire. From 1386 to 1403, Tamerlane invaded Georgia eight times. He ultimately failed to conquer the country, but again the towns were in ruins, the economy disrupted, and the population decimated and displaced.

The 15th century did not prove any better for the Georgian Kingdom. The rise of the Ottoman Empire, the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, and the fall of the Byzantine Empire was a heavy blow to Christian Georgia. From the early 16th century on the country was surrounded by the Moslem world: the powerful and aggressive Safavid Iran to the south-east and the equal powerful and aggressive Ottoman Empire to the south-west. Though Byzantium had tried at several times to expand its territory at the expense of Georgia, the relations between the two countries finally had developed into a kind of agreement because of their common Christian faith and their high cultural level.

In the 12th century Georgia had reached the highest stage of development as a feudal state, and it would have taken a new road of progress if the hostile environment had not proved so disastrous. The complicated external conditions stimulated the separatist tendencies - characteristic of a feudal state - within the country. By the early 16th century, the united Georgian Kingdom split into four independent states: the kingdoms of Kharthli, Kakheti and Imerethi, and the Saathabago of Samtskhe. In the 16th - 18th centuries the Caucasus and Georgia in particular became the apple of discord and a battlefield for Iran and Ottoman Turkey. The conquerors plundered the country, dividing and sharing it among themselves; the Moslem nomads from the North Caucasus started several inroads into Georgian territory, looting the country by driving away the cattle, kidnaping people and selling

them at the markets of Asia. The Georgians kept on fighting, often using one enemy against another; the country was falling into ruins, but did not surrender. The best sons of the nation, the valiant Georgian kings Luarsab I (1527 - 1556), Simon I (1556 - 1609), the Great Mouravi Giorgi Saakadze (1609 - 1629) and others gave up their lives in this struggle for freedom.

A new power emerged on the political scene of the Near East in the 16th century. The powerful Christian state of Russia advanced towards the Caucasus with its own national aims and interests. Georgia, almost bled to death in its struggle against the Moslems, hopefully turned towards the co-religionist Russia. Russian influence became stronger and stronger in the Caucasus. The Georgian states established diplomatic and military relations with Russia, which caused a fierce opposition on the part of both Iran and Turkey. The North-Caucasian Moslems took an active part in this struggle against the consolidation of Russian influence in the Caucasus. Under these circumstances, Russia assumed the aspect of a deliverer in the eyes of the Georgian statesmen. In the early 18th century the plans for Georgia's liberation from Iran seemed feasible through its liaison with Russia, but these plans were doomed to failure and in 1724 King Vakhtang VI, together with his family and a numerous retinue, was forced to emigrate to Russia in search of support. His hopes did not come true; Kharthli at first came under Ottoman domination (1723 - 1735), and then under the Iranian yoke (1735 - 1747).

And again the Georgian people did not give up its struggle for independence. Then, in the second half of the 18th century, things seemed to take a new course. Theimuraz II (1745 - 1761) and Erekle II (1745 - 1798), father and son, came to the thrones of Kharthli and Kakhethi, thus heightening the prospects of the unification of these two kingdoms; their common efforts finally ended with success. Erekle II directed his activities at restoring order in the country, at centralizing the power and rebuilding the ruined economy; at the same time he repelled the Lezgin incursions.

In the meantime, during the reign of Solomon I (1752 - 1784), western Georgia sought to find ways of warding off Turkish aggression, restoring law and order in the country and curbing feudal disunity. Georgia was actually on the verge of establishing new relations with Russia.

The events in south-western Georgia took a different course. The Ottoman Empire seized Chanethi and the western part of Atchara and Samtskhe. In the 17th century these provinces totally came under the control of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks created the Moslem Akhaltsikhe Pashalik on the territory seized from the Georgians; the old monuments of Georgian Christian culture, some of them great masterpieces of Georgian architecture, were lost for good. The Turks also penetrated into Abkhazethi where the Moslem faith extended and the pressure of north Caucasian mountaineers increased.

The treaty signed between the Kharthli-Kakhethi Kingdom and Russia in 1783, the so-called "Georgievsk Treaty", was provided for Georgia's independence in its internal affairs and seemed to pave the way for breaking through the Moslem encirclement. But Russia fostered its own national interests. The treaty stirred up discontent among Georgia's Moslem neighbors who stepped up their military operations against Georgia. Russia did not observe the provisions of the treaty binding it to defend Georgia. The invasion of 1795, carried on by Agha Mohammed Khan of Iran, had tragic consequences for the Kingdom of Kharthli and Kakhethi. The defeat of the Georgian forces at the approaches to Tbilisi, which took place on the Krtsanisi battlefield, proved crucial for the fate of Georgia. It was Russia which took the most advantage of this defeat by annexing the Kharthli-Kakhethi Kingdom in 1801. Other parts of Georgia were gradually taken over by the Russian Empire and Georgia ceased to exist as an independent kingdom. The Georgian royal power was abolished, the members of the Georgian royal family were exiled to Russia and Georgia was declared a province of Russia.

Since the 13th century, Georgian culture, victim of the unfavourable political situation and the decline in economy, had failed to follow the proper course of development. But, regardless of hard times, the Georgian people had managed to maintain a remarkable cultural creative ability, although of a standard much inferior to the one achieved earlier.

Though many of the cultural centres had ceased to exist, a few still continued functioning. Tbilisi, one of the most important cultural centres of the Caucasus at the time of the united Georgian Kingdom, still retained its importance. Many representatives of Armenian and Azerbaijanian culture were active at the Georgian royal court. A most important historical manuscript, the title and author of which unfortunately have remained unknown, was written in the 14th century; it tells of a hundred years of Mongol rule in Georgia. The manuscript was later, in the 16th century, added to the "Kharthlis Tskhovreba" collection. Besides important information about Georgia, this manuscript conveys many significant data on the life of Georgia's neighbors, in particular on the Mongol language and on the history of the Mongol state. A family chronicle of the rulers of the Khsani Saeristhavo, a province of Kharthli, was written in the 14th century and already shows a tendency towards political disintegration, whereas the author of "The Chronicle of a Hundred Years" is a champion of the

centralized state. Georgian society continued to show interest in the "Kharthlis Tskhovreba" annals, adding to it still more chronicles and making more copies; a great job of supplementing and publishing it was done in the early 18th century. The temporary political stability created favorable conditions for the revival of cultural life. King Vakhtang VI (1703 - 1724) appointed a special commission of "learned people" to fill in the missing part (14th - 17th century) of "Kharthlis Tskhovreba", to streamline it and to publish a new edition of the book which now covered the entire period from old times to the 18th century.

The revival of cultural life also involved the revival of various branches of science. Especially significant in this respect was the appearance of "The Karabadini - a Book on Doctoring" by Zaza Phanaskerteli-Tsitsishvili in the 15th century, dwelling on theoretical and practical problems of medicine. The sources of Georgian legal science are to be sought in antiquity, though no monument of Georgian writing on law is known prior to the 11th century. In the early 11th century Giorgi Mthatsmindeli translated "The Minor Canon Law", an encyclopedia of ecclesiastical, civil and criminal law from Greek into Georgian; the translator also added certain Georgian material to the translation. This Byzantine book actually reflects some aspects of the Georgian legal culture as well. The so-called "Code of Law of Bagrat Kurapalates" also dates from 11th century. This book of law has survived only in fragmentary form, but the part that has come down to us enables one to form an idea of the administration of law at that time.

The Georgian law of that period provided for severe punishment like death and dismemberment. During Queen Tamar's reign, however, both capital punishment and dismemberment as well as other forms of punishment involving mutilation were abolished.

At the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries another book of Georgian law, known as "Bekha-Aghbugha Law" (Princes of Samtskhe), was written. It covers problems of court-organization, administration of law, offense, punishment, and others. Apart from this a special code of law was made in the 14th century for the highlands of eastern Georgia, since this region was falling behind in its development; that special code of law reflects this state of affairs. The great changes that the Georgian state had undergone during the 14th - 18th centuries prompted the necessity for a new code of law, which was created on the initiative of King Vakhtang VI. Besides those books there was "The Code of the Royal Court" (14th century), which defined the system of management of the royal court and the state administration for the whole of Georgia; the system of management of the royal administration of the Kingdom of Kharthli was defined in "Dasturlamal" in the 18th century.

Centres of higher education and science no longer existed in Georgia in the 16th - 17th centuries. Reading and writing was mainly taught at home or in churches and monasteries. In the 17th - 18th centuries Catholic missionaries began to operate in Georgia; they set up missions, trying to spread the Roman-Catholic faith among the Georgians. They also opened schools teaching Latin, Italian and practical subjects e.g. Medicine, and others.

The Georgian cultural centres abroad also ceased to exist. The Holy Cross Monastery in Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Moslems. Subsequently the Georgians managed to get it back several times, but from the late 17th century on the Holy Cross Monastery along with other Georgian sanctuaries came under the Jerusalem Patriarchy.

The 16th - 17th centuries renewed great public interest in "The Knight in the Panther's Skin"; a number of continuations of the poem were written. The humane philosophy of the book and the ideas expressed in it - which were common to all mankind - have always exercised a beneficial influence on the Georgian way of thinking and artistic taste.

Because of the grave political situation in the country, historical themes became a predominant motif in art and poetry in the 16th - 17th centuries. King Theimuraz I (1606 - 1660) dedicated a poem to his mother, Queen Kethevan, who had suffered martyrdom at the hands of Shah Abbas for her Christian faith and her loyalty to her homeland. Joseph Thbileli dedicated a poem to the exploits of the Great Mouravi, Giorgi Saakadze. Works of Persian poetry and prose were translated at this time, and a translation in verse of the "Shah Nameh" enjoyed great popularity. Finally to be mentioned is the bulk of literature of didactic-educational nature, which was published in the same space of time.

In the early 18th century the Georgians felt an increased political and ideological pressure on the part of the Iran and the Ottoman Empire; but besides the need of physical survival they also realized the importance of saving and developing Georgian culture. The efforts of King Vakhtang VI in this direction have especially enriched his country's cultural heritage, as it has been mentioned above. He also established the authentic text of "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" after a critical revision of various manuscripts. The first printed Georgian books, a "Grammar of the Georgian Language" and the "Italian-Georgian Dictionary" were both published in Rome in 1629. The books were meant for practical use by the missionaries.

In 1705 King Archil occasioned the printing of a number of Georgian books in the Georgian colony in Moscow. At that time the foundation of a Georgian printing house more and more had become a necessity. In 1709, during King Vakhtang's reign, the first printing press in Georgia was set up in Tbilisi, where books of the Gospels, psalms and other religious literature were published; the same printing house published "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" and various textbooks in 1712. A great aid to King Vakhtang in setting up the printing house was rendered by a man of Georgian origin, the well-known Rumanian ecclesiastic Antimos Iverianu (Anthimos Iverieli), Bishop of Rimnic, who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery in his youth by the Lezgins. He sent a Vlacho-Hungarian printer to King Vakhtang: Michael Ishtvanovich.

Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, a prominent Georgian scholar of the time, made a special contribution to Georgian culture by his "Georgian Dictionary" and a collection of didactic fables, "The Wisdom of Falsehood". There was also a revival of Georgian historical science, which produced a book of Georgian history by Vakhushti Bagrationi, covering the period from prehistoric times till the 18th century. His book contains the history of Georgia as a whole, including the historical geography of the country, its chronology and genealogy. In addition he made up historical maps and a geographical atlas, which - translated into French - was published in Paris in 1766. Vakhushti Bagrationi made the knowledge of Georgian history a science. Several books written in the 18th century deal with the history of that century. Various scientific literature was translated into Georgian at this time such as a book on the exploits of Alexander the Great, a textbook of astronomy by Ulug Bek (translated by King Vakhtang VI), as well as works on geometry and cosmography. There was also a renewed interest in philosophy; quotations from Socrates, Plato, Aristoteles and Aristophanes were translated, collections of their views were compiled.

The Georgian colony had been established in Moscow at the end of the 17th century and played an essential role in the development of Georgian culture of the 18th century, in particular because of its printing and publishing activities. It was founded by Archil Bagrationi and stepped up its activities after the emigration of King Vakhtang VI to Russia. Among King Vakhtang's retinue was the best part of Georgia's intellect and creative ability, which was a great loss to the homeland. Living and working in Moscow, these people introduced the Georgians to specimens of Russian and European cultures and, in return, made Russian readers acquainted with the achievements of Georgian culture. Members of the Georgian colony took an active part in Russia's intellectual life. Their contribution to the foundation of the Moscow University is evident in the list of the founders.

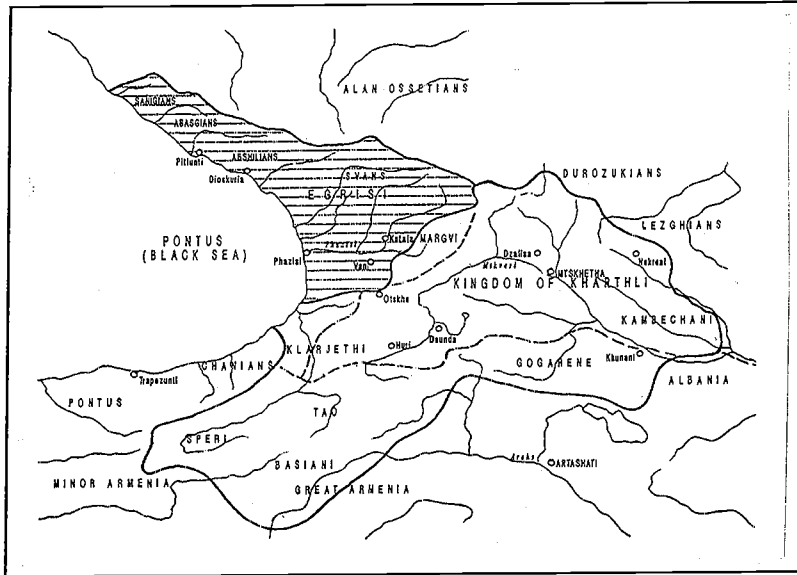
The expansion of the network of elementary and secondary education as well as the founding of seminaries in Tbilisi (1755) and Thelavi (1758) were especially significant factors of the cultural life of the country in the second half of the 18th century. The printing press, destroyed during the Ottoman and Persian domination, was restored in 1749. It was again reduced to ruins in 1795 during Agha Mohammad Khan's invasion and again restored in 1800. One more printing house was opened in Khuthaisi, another important centre of Georgian culture throughout the Middle Ages.

Special notice should be made of the works of David Guramishvili, another famous Georgian writer of the 18th century. Kidnapped by the Lezgins in his youth, he managed to escape and eventually took shelter in King Vakhtang VI's Georgian colony in Moscow. After a life full of adventures, he settled in the Ukraine and truthfully described the hard fate of 18th century Georgia in his poem "The Woes of Georgia". In the late 18th century there existed a theatre in Georgia with a special repertoire of Georgian plays, and a steady company of actors. The theatre company fought and died in the battle during Agha Mohammad Khan's invasion.

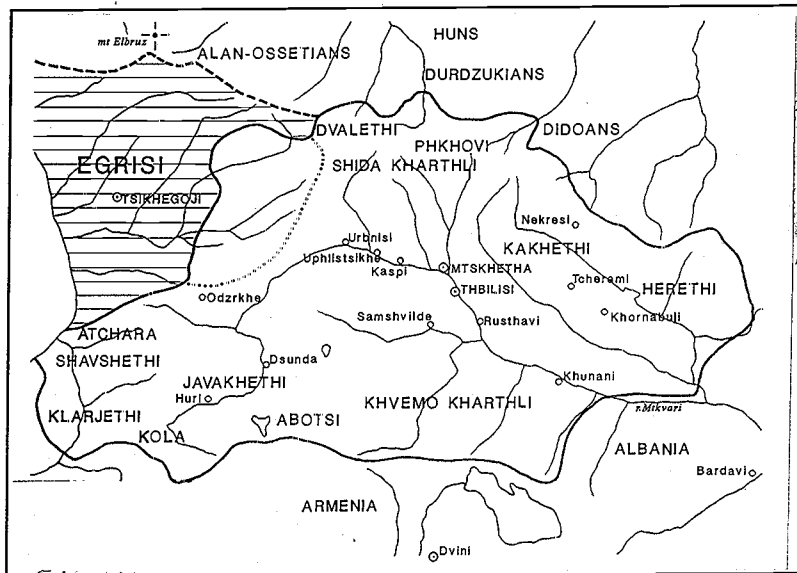
As we can see, the Georgian state survived in spite of the many unfavorable circumstances and continuously developed its culture. The Georgian people preserved their national identity, religion and mother tongue and survived physically.

After the act of 1801 Russia gradually abolished the Georgian state, conducting a policy of Russification, but the Georgian people continued to fight and preserved their constructive character. The fall of the Russian Empire in 1917 seemed to create favorable conditions for the liberation of the peoples conquered by Russia. The Georgian state was restored in May 26, 1918, as the Republic of Georgia; but already in February 1921 it was again annexed by Red Russia.

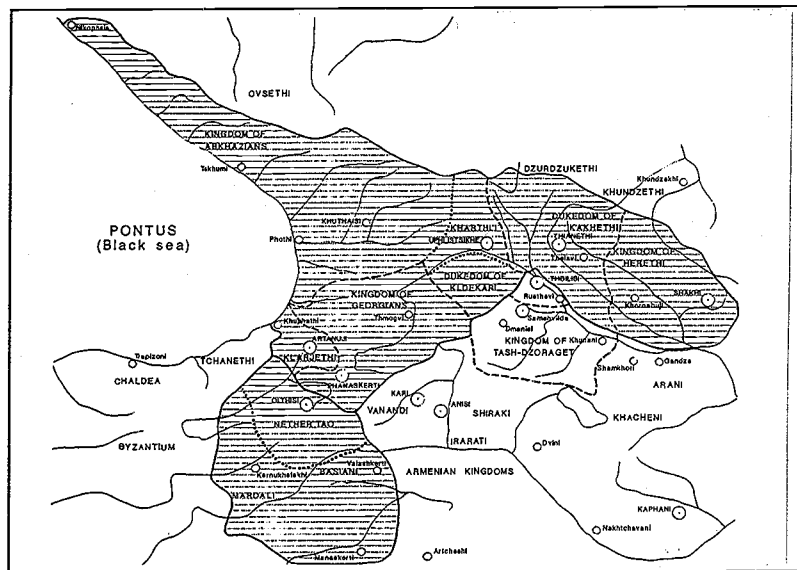
During the following 70 years of soviet totalitarian rule, the Georgian people managed with an enormous effort to preserve their national identity. In this context the activities of the Georgian national liberation movement can be regarded as the Georgian contribution to the down-come of the regime. Today the Georgian state has risen again and is striving to enter the family of democratic nations of the world.



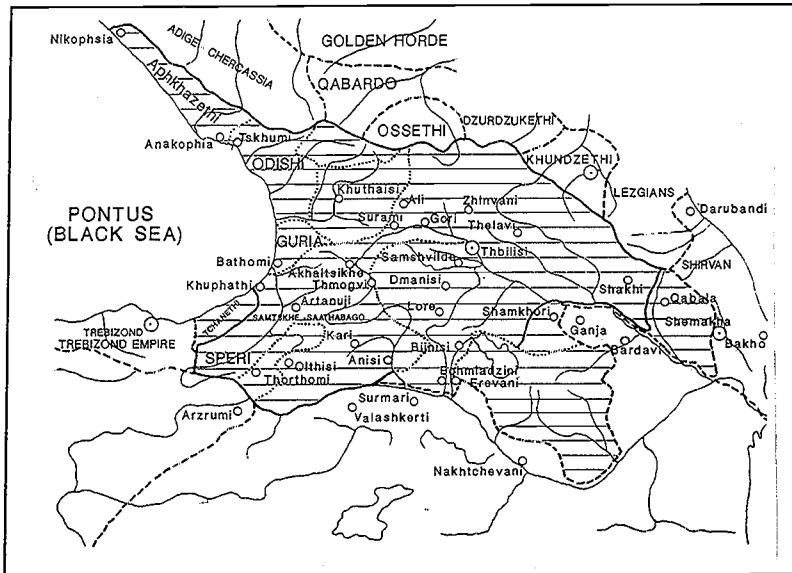
1. Georgia; 2nd century B.C. - 2nd century A.D.



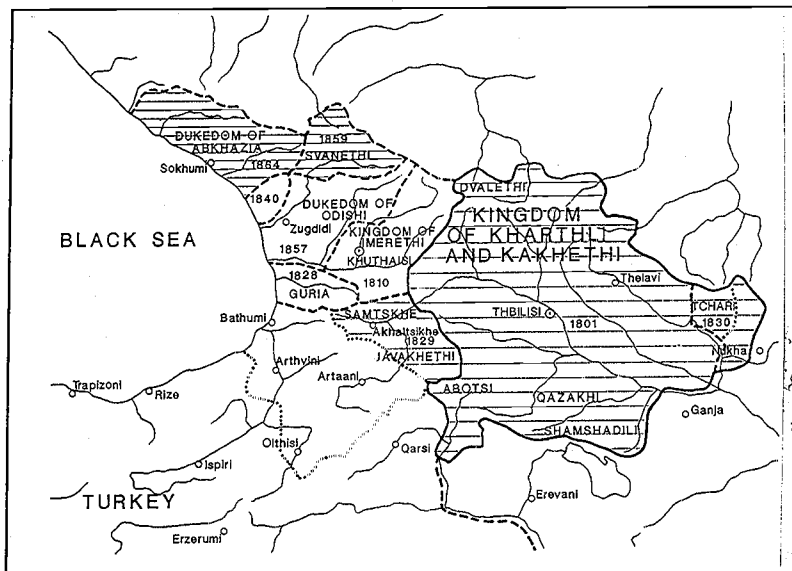
2. Khartli (Iberia); 3rd - 6th centuries.



3. Georgia at the turn of 10th/11th centuries.



4. Georgia after the liberation from the Mongolian yoke; 1st half of the 14th century.



5. Dates of connections between the Georgian kingdoms/dukedom and Russia; 19th century.

# Georgian Language and Script

The Georgian language is the national language of the Georgian people and the state language of the Republic of Georgia, declared as such by every constitution the state has ever had. Three million people recognize it as their mother tongue. Georgian-speaking people outside Georgia live in Azerbaijan (the Ingilos), in Turkey (the Imerkhevis), and in Iran (the Phereidanis); most of the Georgian immigrants in western Europe live in Leville, a suburb of Paris.

The majority of the Georgians belong to the Orthodox Church, some are Roman Catholics; a considerable number of the population in Atchara and the Georgians living in Asia are Moslems. The Georgian language, however, neutralizes as a factor of Georgian unity the differences of faith in a country, which has deep-rooted traditions of religious tolerance.

The Georgian language with its twenty dialects belongs to the Kharthvelian (Iberian) group of the Iberian-Caucasian family of languages, together with the non-written Zanian (or Megrelo-Tchanian) and Svanian languages. Out of the thirty-six Iberian-Caucasian languages only Georgian has been a written language since ancient times.

The Georgian script is one of the world's fourteen original scripts. It is considered to have derived from the Aramaic, though the sequence of the letters in the alphabet is arranged according to the Greek pattern. Over the fifteen centuries of documented history the Georgian written language is represented by three stages or versions: 1. Mrgvlovani (rounded) or Asomthavruli (uncials); 2. Nuskhuri or Nuskhakhutsuri, an angular script, and 3. Mkhedruli, secular script (cursive, lit. military).

The oldest specimens of Georgian writing have survived in epigraphic form: in inscriptions (430 A.D.) in the monastery built by Petre the Iberian near Bethlehem in the Judaeen Desert in Palestine, as well as in the inscriptions of the Bolnisi Sion Church (493 - 498 A.D.), 60 km south of Tbilisi. These inscriptions were made in the Mrgvlovani script. The inscriptions in other churches and monasteries of the 5th - 8th centuries were also done either in Mrgvlovani or in Nuskhuri as were numerous manuscripts (kept at present for the most part in Tbilisi at the Institute of Manuscripts) such as the so-called "Khanmeti Lectionary" (7th century), the earliest dated manuscript "Sinuri Mravalthavi" (Sinai Polycephalon, 864 A.D., an old Georgian liturgic collection written on Mount Sinai), the earliest dated Gospel (copied in 897 A.D. in Adashi, Svaneti), etc.

The earliest specimen of the Mkhedruli script, in a donation of King Bagrat IV, dates from the 11th century. Since the 15th century the outline of every letter of the Georgian alphabet has been identical to the modern Georgian alphabet. The introduction of printing in the 17th century was instrumental in the stabilization of Georgian writing. The "Italian-Georgian Dictionary" by St. Paolini and N. Irbach (Cholokashvili), the first printed Georgian book, was published in 1629 at Rome. It was followed by "The Grammar of the Georgian Language" by F. Maggio (1643). The setting up of a printing house in Tbilisi at the turn of 18th century by King Vakhtang VI gave a strong impetus to book-printing and publishing in Georgia. The first printed edition of "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" came out here in 1712.

Georgian writing is phonematic: each grapheme stands for a certain phoneme and vice versa each phoneme is expressed by a certain grapheme, which makes the spelling most simple and perfect. The only exception in old Georgian Mrgvlovani and Nuskhuri was the vowel [u] which, like in Old Greek, was expressed by two graphemes.

The old Georgian alphabet consisted of thirty-eight letters. Each letter had its numerical value: the first nine letters stood for digits, the next nine letters represented tens, the third nine were hundreds and the fourth were thousands. The modern Georgian alphabet represents thirty-three sounds: five vowels and twenty-eight consonants.

The history of the Georgian literary language is divided into two stages: from the beginning up to the 12th century and from the 12th century till the present day. Some scholars also consider a Middle Georgian stage (12th - 18th century). The Georgian literary language is based on the lowland dialects of eastern Georgia, especially the Karthlian, which is wide-spread in the basin of the Mtkvari River, i.e. the central part of Georgia. The old capital Mtskhetha and the present-day capital Tbilisi (since the turn of the 5th/6th century) are both situated in this area, which helped to preserve the dialect-basis of literary Georgian almost intact. This accounts for the ease with which the modern reader can read "The Martyrdom of Shushanik", a book written by Jacob Tsurtaveli in the 5th century (known to us through an 11th century manuscript), which is also the first original piece of Georgian literature known to us so far. It is taught in Secondary Schools along with other specimens of Old Georgian literature.

The bulk of the literature written in Old Georgian was religious or spiritual, both canonical and apocryphal (translated and original), which, together with extensive philosophical and theological literature served to reinforce the Christian faith in Georgia. According to the 10th century author Giorgi Merchule, the church service was conducted in Georgia in the Georgian language.

Numerous monuments of spiritual poetry in the 9th - 11th centuries on the one hand, and the rudiments of rhythmic verse on the other, e.g. in the inscriptions of the 7th century Ateni Church of Sioni, paved the way for the rapid growth of secular poetry in the 12th century. "The Knight in the Panther's Skin", the poetry of the panegyrist poets, the Georgian translation of the Persian romantic poem of "Visramiani" provided a basis for the New Georgian literary language, which assumed its final form in the 18th century both as the language of fiction (D. Guramishvili's poem "Davithiani" and S.S. Orbeliani's "The Wisdom of Falsehood") and the language of official and legal papers. But the development of the Georgian literary language was hindered for a whole century by the introduction of the "Three Style Theory" by Anton I, Catholicos of Georgia (18th century). It was only in the 60s of the 19th century that the Georgian language returned to the natural course of development through the efforts of the reformer of the Georgian literary language I. Tshavtshavadze. Important books by I. Tshavtshavadze, A. Dsereteli, Vazha-Phshavela, as well as "The Georgian Language" and other textbooks by J. Gogebashvili ("Deda Ena", "Bunebis Kari"), which played a key role in the introduction of the Georgian language into school under Russian tsarism, were all written in the new, common Georgian literary idiom. I. Machabeli's brilliant translations of Shakespeare raised the Georgian literary language to a higher level.

The foundation of the University in Tbilisi in 1918 and the subsequent establishment of the Academy of Sciences stimulated the development of various branches of science. About sixty kinds of scientific terminology have been standardized so far. Teaching in every school of higher education is conducted in Georgian, including lectures in national science, physics, mathematics and all branches of technology, let alone the humanities.

Georgian, a language of rich literary traditions of fifteen hundred years, performs all the functions characteristic of a polyvalent language: it is the language of fiction, scientific and political literature, journalism and law, a product of civilization and a great stimulant of that civilization.

*Shukhia Aphridonidze*

# Epigraphic Monuments

Old Georgian architecture is quite unimaginable without Georgian epigraphic monuments, not only because every architectural monument features at least one Georgian inscription, but also because the inscriptions give us valuable and authentic information on the history of the monument, ranging from information about the date of construction, about the donor, the builder or the architect, to information about the expenses incurred. Though this information and the epigraphic monuments containing it are not always of equal importance and value, Georgian epigraphy accompanies Georgian architecture of Christian times throughout the whole of its history.

The chronology of the inscriptions on Georgian churches embraces the time from the 5th to the 18th century. These inscriptions are not only important for the study of the history of Georgian writing. Suffice it to say that the earliest known monuments of Georgian writing, as well as the earliest Georgian dated written monuments in general have come down to us in the form of inscriptions. The study of the earliest stage of development of Georgian writing, the specification of the stages of its development is all mainly carried out according to Georgian epigraphic monuments.

Various views have been expressed on the origin of the Georgian script, both in old times and in modern science. The Georgian historical tradition is represented in "Kharthlis Tskhovreba", a collection of Medieval chronicles. It was compiled in the 11th century possibly by grouping together and revising earlier manuscripts, according to the needs of the epoch, and supplemented later, from time to time, by other chronicles till the 18th century. The creation of the Georgian script is attributed to King Pharnavaz (3rd century B.C.) who, according to the same tradition, was the founder of the Georgian state. Scholars adhering to this view even state the date of birth of the Georgian script: 284 B.C.

Another view, popular in Armenian historiography, is equally old. According to this tradition, the creation of the Armenian, as well as the Albanian and Georgian scripts, is attributed to Mesrop Mashtots, a prominent Armenian figure of the 5th century A.D., who did not know the Georgian language, but accomplished the fact with the assistance of a Georgian named Jaghta or Jalta. Georgian historiography does not support this opinion. There are two main arguments against it: the information seems to have been added later (in the 10th century) to the original Armenian inscriptions (of the 5th century) on the subject in question (I. Javakhishvili, Z. Aleksidze). Besides, the Georgian alphabet fits the phenomic nature of the Georgian language so perfectly that it implies a deep linguistic knowledge of the language (T. Gamqrelidze), and rules out the possibility of its being created by a man ignorant of the language even if he might have been assisted by a man with a deep knowledge of Georgian.

There are essentially two points of view in Georgian historiography on the origin of the Georgian script: a) It evolved from the Phoenician script in the 7th century B.C. by way of independent development (I. Javakhishvili); and b) It is the product of Georgian Christian culture and came into being under the influence of Greek writing in the 4th or 5th century (K. Kekelidze, T. Gamqrelidze). The supporters of the second point of view have a strong argument in that no Georgian inscription or any other written monument has been discovered dating from the time prior to the 5th century A.D. in spite of intensive archaeological excavations, especially in recent years, whereas numerous pre-Christian inscriptions in other languages or other scripts have been found in archaeological excavations on the territory of Georgia, including Aramaic, Greek, and - later on - Hebrew. It is especially noteworthy that the Aramaic script had formed into a local version and the scientific term used to define it is "The Aramaic Script" (G. Dseretheli).

The Georgian epigraphic monuments are executed in relief; the letters are carved, painted, scratched, or made in mosaic. Their number, including those made on icons, totals ten thousand. There are comparatively few inscriptions in mosaic, but it is important, that the two presumably oldest Georgian inscriptions dating back to 430 A.D. (G. Dseretheli), discovered in 1952 in Palestine during excavations of the ruins of a Georgian monastery, were done in mosaic on the floor of the church [1].

The three inscriptions on the Bolnisi Sioni Church belong to the group of the oldest Georgian inscriptions. One of them has been dated by means of the tradition of dating common at the time (according to the years of reigns of kings), which in modern chronology would be 493 A.D. [2]. There are ten other very old inscriptions - some of them rather long - and the various letters of the alphabet on Jvari (Holy Cross) Church in Mtskhetha dating back to the turn of the 7th century.

Georgian epigraphic monuments are diverse in meaning: inscriptions naming the donors, memorial inscriptions, acts or epigraphic documents, financial accounts of construction, texts written spontaneously by worshippers, names of pilgrims. The inscription on the church in Oshki (province of

Tao, now in Turkey) is the most significant of the "economic" inscriptions. This lengthy inscription was made in the 50s of the 10th century and gives a meticulous account of the annual expenditure on the construction of the church: the amount of building materials: stone, iron; products: wheat, wine; pay issued to the workers; the number of masons, carpenters and blacksmiths; and the beasts of burden: oxen, mules, etc.

The inscriptions on Georgian churches often had a decorative function, like the inscription on the eastern façade of the Samthavisi Church dating from the 30s of the 11th century, the inscription around the window of the Khtsisi Church dating from 1002 A.D., and the building inscription on the gate-tower of the wall around Sveti-tskhoveli Cathedral. They are executed in a very peculiar, decorative, pointed-end style of Georgian epigraphic writing. Other types of decorative writing known in Georgian epigraphic monuments are dotted-end and flower-end types. The former is widely used in epigraphy, while a good example of the latter is to be found in an explanatory inscription for a bas-relief composition of the Day of Judgment on Nikordsminda Church, dating from the early 11th century.

No lengthy discourse or detailed description of the old inscriptions on the Georgian architectural monuments is either feasible or needful here, as comprehensive information concerning them will be given in connection with each architectural monument.

*Valeri Silogava*



1. Palestine. Mosaic inscription in the Georgian monastery near Bir-el-Kutt, not far from Bethlehem. The floor mosaic consists of a prayer in Asomtavruli script, naming the Abbot Antoni and the mosaic artist Josia. 430 A.D.



2. Bolnisi. Three-aisled basilica of Sioni; inscription on the architrave of the north door. 493/4 A.D.

# Georgian Architecture

## The pre-Christian Georgia

The earliest traces of human activity on Georgian territory date from the Paleolithic Age. Neolithic and aeneolithic artifacts have been uncovered too. Further evidence of subsequent times up to the 4th - 5th centuries A.D. has also been obtained by archaeology.

The Georgian people are genetically related to the old, indigenous population of Asia Minor. Two well-defined cultural regions emerged in the second millennium B.C., corresponding to the two main Georgian tribal unions: the western and the eastern. In the second half of the 1st millennium B.C. two states were established on the territory of Georgia; they were Colchis in the west and Iberia in the east. According to the authors of antiquity, they were countries with a well-developed agriculture and various kinds of crafts, which is confirmed by numerous archaeological finds. Around this time Greek trading stations sprang up along the Black Sea coast. The maintenance of close relations with these stations was very important for Colchis. The most relevant West Georgian cities were Aia, Cotatis, the ancestor town of modern Khuthaisi, the town of Phazis on the Black Sea coast and Dioscurias, the present-day city of Sukhumi. The ancient city of Vani flourished in the 3rd - 1st centuries B.C. Substantial archaeological material obtained there shows that it maintained a bustling trade and cultural relations with the Greek world. In eastern Georgia the city of Mtskhetha, the capital of Iberia, rose to prominence by the late 1st millennium as the biggest city of the country and a commercial centre. There have been found many objects made of gold, silver and other materials, jewelry, various utensils and weapons, the decoration and workmanship of which demonstrate the very high professional skills of local artists and craftsmen; they also manifest close ties with the Hellenistic world and Asia Minor.

Armazistsikhe, the acropolis of Mtskhetha, whose majestic ruins have come down to our days, displays a high level of the building art of those times. Remains of grand architectural ensembles have also been uncovered in numerous other localities of Georgia.

Iberia became especially powerful in the 3rd century B.C. during the reign of King Pharnavaz, the founder of a new dynasty. The relations with the powerful neighbors, the Roman Empire to the west, and Iran and Parthia to the east, were an essential factor in the life of the Georgian states. Iberia and Colchis sometimes came under their political influence and had to submit, but they posed as partners and even rivals from time to time. The Caucasus and particularly Georgia found ample reflection in old Greek mythology: it is known that Prometheus was bound to the Caucasus, the Argonauts came to Colchis to seek the Golden Fleece, and Jason married Medea, the daughter of the king of Colchis.

## The Conversion of Georgia and its Development in the 4th - 7th Centuries

During the reign of King Mirian of Kharthli (Iberia) Christianity was established as a state religion [330 A.D.]. West Georgia adopted Christianity in the same century, i.e. Kharthli and Egrisi are the first Christian Georgian states. The space of the 4th - 7th centuries was the time of the first great revival of Georgian culture and art, despite the fact that Georgia was engaged in a complicated and tense relationship with its aggressive neighbors: with Rome, later Byzantium as the heir of Rome to the west, and with Sassanian Iran to the east, which at times spread its powerful influence over Georgia.

At the end of the 5th century, during the reign of King Vakhtang Gorgasali, the capital of Kharthli was transferred from Mtskhetha to Tbilisi. At the same time the Georgian church gained its independence and became Dyophysitic.

The adoption of Christianity was extremely important for the further political and cultural life of the country. Georgia established close ties with the Mediterranean, especially with the Byzantine cultural world, which it maintained throughout the ages. The space of the 5th - 7th centuries was the time of the further spread and the final establishment of the Christian faith throughout Georgia. Intensive construction work on churches was under way, the first monasteries were founded, including the impressive complex of the cave monasteries of David Gareja (founded in the 6th century). Georgian religious centres also appeared abroad, in Palestine.

The Georgian script was introduced in the 5th century. The first translations of the Gospel appeared in the same century as well as the first original books of Georgian literature. Many manuscripts and lapidary inscriptions of the 5th century have survived to the present day.

This was the time when, in addition to the first churches, the first masterpieces of Christian Georgian architecture were built: the so-called Bolnisi Sion (late 5th century), which is a three-naved basilica, the "Anchiskhati" Church in Tbilisi, the basilica in Urnisi and the domed Holy Cross Church, an

original construction near the old capital city of Mtskhetha, built in 586/587 - 604/605. The Holy Cross Church near Mtskhetha can be considered a milestone in the development of Georgian architecture; diverse churches in various historical provinces of Georgia followed that type in the middle of the 7th century as were Martvili, Ateni and Old Shuamtha. Another important ecclesiastical building, Tsromi Church, dates from the same period. In addition we also have to regard the ancient basilicas in the eastern province of Kakhethi. All these monuments are specimens of an accomplished stage of a certain style which could be called "Classical".

Besides architectural monuments, there are also important specimens of the plastic art in bas-relief dating from the same period. The Georgian national culture of the time is an original, splendid page in the culture of the epoch.

### **Georgia after the Arab Invasion in the 7th - 10th Centuries**

In the 7th - 8th centuries the Arabs invaded Georgia and eventually took Tbilisi, establishing there their Emirate. The Arab conquest was a great disaster for the Georgian people who carried on a fierce and ceaseless struggle for the next few centuries. That Georgia, unlike Iran, did not adopt the Moslem faith is a fact of essential historical significance. The Georgians succeeded in preserving their Christian religion, a fact which meant at that time: they preserved their national identity and clung to their language and script.

Between the 7th and the 10th centuries new Georgian states emerged on Georgian territory: the Kingdom of Abkhazeti on the territory of ancient Colchis, which held the whole of West Georgia, the Tao-Klarjeti principality in south-western Georgia, as well as Herethi and Kakhethi in the east. Tbilisi with the surrounding part of the country was still held by the Arabs. In spite of the desperate international situation and the internecine wars - characteristic of feudal countries - these centuries were rich in events of cultural life. The country, devastated as it was by the Arab invasions, was slowly rising to its feet. On the one hand, there were the political strife for the establishment of the new Georgian states, the activities for driving away the invaders, and the demand for the unification of the country prompted by objective reasons; on the other hand, there was an intensive monastic movement. New monasteries were founded, especially in Tao-Klarjeti and Kakhethi, which soon turned into great centres of spiritual life: Opiza, Shatberdi, Khandzha and many others. These places were characterized by strenuous literary activity. Wonderful, original hagiographic books and manuscripts were written, among them beautifully illuminated Gospels. Books on science and theology were translated from Greek into Georgian, the originals of which have been lost. Georgian writing of that time is of immense importance for the study of the eastern Christian culture.

Numerous new churches were built in the 9th and, especially, in the 10th centuries, including the cathedrals of Kumurdo (964), Bichvintha, and others. Cultural life, artistic and other creative activities were particularly intensive in southern Georgia. In addition to the churches mentioned above, which had been built in Tao-Klarjeti, magnificent new monuments of Georgian architecture were built in the same region in the mid-10th century: the churches of Oshki and Khakhuli; this laid a solid foundation for the further development of Georgian architecture. Decorative sculpture on church fronts had become more refined, as had the goldsmiths' art. The walls of some churches were covered with magnificent specimens of monumental painting; they also have brought down to us a wealth of messages in old Georgian inscriptions. In the late 10th and at the turn of the 11th centuries the question of Georgian unity had matured. After the death of David Kuropalates, the ruler of Tao-Klarjeti, in 1001, his adopted son Bagrat, the heir to the King of Abkhazeti, united most of Georgia, excluding the Tbilisi area. Bagrat III became the first king of the united Georgian Kingdom (1014).

### **The 10th - 13th Centuries: The "Golden Age" of Old Georgia**

The 11th century, the last stage in Georgia's fierce struggle for unity, was rich in wonderful monuments of architecture, sculpture, mural painting and goldsmith's art. The largest cathedrals in Georgia were built at this time, far exceeding in size contemporary Greek churches: the so-called Bagrat Cathedral of the turn to the 11th century in Khuthaisi (then the capital) - richly decorated with architectural ornaments, Alaverdi Cathedral in Kakhethi - the highest church in Georgia, the patriarchal cathedral in Mtskhetha, known as "Svetitskhoveli" (1010 - 1029), - the biggest church in the country, built on the site of the first Christian church in Georgia, the cathedral in Samthavisi (1030) - absolutely remarkable for its ornamental decor, the cathedrals in Nicordsminda, Manglisi (mid-11th century), and many others.

During the reign of King David the Builder (David IV, 1089 - 1125), Georgia's unification was accomplished and the country was at the zenith of its power: it had won a decisive victory over the invading Seljuks, driving all the marauding bands out of the country. Georgia became one of the most

powerful countries in Asia Minor; its territory, including the annexed and conquered lands, stretched from the Black Sea coast to the Caspian Sea, while to the south its border extended beyond the region of the Caucasus. This was the time when Georgia's economy was flourishing, trading centres and cities grew and developed. Georgian literature reached the very peak of its development in the 12th century with the emergence of secular literature and its masterpiece "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" by Shotha Rustaveli, which has been translated into many languages of the world. There was a revival in chronicle writing and science. The Gelathi Monastery and Academy were founded during King David IV's reign, where prominent Georgian and foreign philosophers taught among other teachers. The magnificent monument of Georgian goldsmiths' art, the so-called "Khakhuli Triptych", decorated with numerous cloisonné enamels, was also made in the early 12th century. Georgian monasteries in Palestine, in Bulgaria and on Mount Athos were famous as very important centres of Georgian culture.

The late 12th century and the turn to the 13th century were also rich in monuments of architecture, mural painting, gold and silver metalwork, and manuscript illumination. The cave monastery of Vardzia, whose main church is decorated with mural painting, the domed churches in Bethania, Khvathakhevi, Phitarethi, the splendid mural paintings in the same Bethania, in Qindsvisi, Timotesubani - they all date from the 11th - 13th centuries. Even smaller provincial churches were decorated with frescos, e.g. in Svanethi. Illuminations of the Gospel and other religious literature date from the same time when the famous goldsmiths Bekha and Beshkhen Opizari created their masterpieces.

This period, known as "The Golden Age", continued up to the early 13th century, through the reign of the illustrious Queen Tamar (1184 - 1213).

### **The 13th - 18th Centuries**

In the 13th century the Mongols invaded Georgia and conquered the country, establishing a long-term domination over the Georgian Kingdom. Though after the Mongol conquest the Georgians managed at times to restore their complete political independence - e.g. in the 14th century during the reign of King Giorgi V -, the following centuries were full of severe obstacles, which influenced the further development of the country for a long period. This time was determined by sequences of tragic events as were Tamerlane's devastating invasions in the late 14th century, the isolation from Europe after the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, the aggressive policy of Turkey and Iran with ruinous invasions beginning from the 15th - 16th centuries, as well as the internal evolution of the country, its disintegration into smaller feudal kingdoms and principalities, feudal strife and the deterioration of the standard of living. These times, up to the 19th century, were full of the fierce struggle of the Georgians defending their independence.

In spite of these tragic events cultural life in Georgia, the only Christian state in Asia Minor (Armenia had long since lost its statehood) did not die altogether. Architectural activity had gathered momentum in Georgia in the previous centuries till the early 14th century: the monasteries in Saphara, Zarzma, "Metekhi" Church in Tbilisi, and others. Intensive building work continued into the 16th - 17th centuries. New churches and fortifications were built, even new towns were founded.

The 17th - 18th centuries saw a revival of Georgian poetry. Books on Georgian history and lexicography were written; the "Dictionary of the Georgian Language" is still in use today. Classical works of Persian literature were translated into Georgian, manuscripts illuminated. In 1710 a Georgian printing press was set up in Tbilisi. There was a renewed interest in western culture. Roman Catholic missionaries from Europe were active in Georgia leaving interesting descriptions of contemporary Georgia.

In the late 18th century the Georgian kingdoms and principalities found themselves in a desperate situation as a result of the aggressive actions of Turkey and Iran. In 1783 King Erekle II of eastern Georgia (Kharthli and Kakhethi) was forced to sign a treaty of friendship and protectorate with the Russian Empire. The treaty guaranteed Georgia's autonomy, but in 1801 Russia violated the treaty, annexing first Kharthli and Kakhethi, and then the other independent Georgian kingdoms and principalities.

In 1918 Georgia restored its independence and declared itself a Democratic Republic, but in 1921, as a result of Russian aggression, it lost independence again, which it regained in 1991.

# The History of the Project

## Notes on the Documentation of Architecture in Georgia<sup>1</sup>

- 1830s - 1840s      First steps are taken towards the surveying of architectural monuments by:
- Mikheil Barathashvili
  - Theimuraz Batonishvili
- 1870s              Systematization of the work of documentation. Descriptions of monuments are increasingly supplemented by analyses; the idea of placing historical monuments under protection gains ground at a time of growing historical awareness. Newly founded institutions sponsor the work and arouse the interest of wide circles of the population in the national monuments:
- The Caucasian Museum (1852)
  - The Society of Friends of Caucasian Archaeology (1873)
  - The Society for the Propagation of Reading and Writing amongst the Georgians (1879)
  - The Ecclesiastical Museum (1888)
  - The Caucasian Section of the Moscow Archaeological Society (1901)
  - The Society for the Ethnography and History of Georgia (1907)
- Turn of the century      Commencement of planned expeditions and excavations; the results are published. The most important work in this area is carried out by:
- Dimitri Bakhradze
  - Nikodim Kondakov
  - Niko Marr
  - Ekhvthime Thaqashvili
  - Proskovia Uvarova
- in addition:
- David Grimm
  - Alekhsandre Khakhanashvili
  - Aleksandra Pavlinova
  - Alekhsandre Tsagareli
- Monographs on individual historical monuments including discussion of frescoes, ornamentation and statuary:
- Platon Ioseliani
  - Nikolai Severov
- in addition:
- Lado Gudiashvili
  - Anatoli Kalgin
  - Simon Kldiashvili
- 1918              Foundation of the Georgian State University. The establishment in the same year of a Chair of Art means that both research into and the study of the archaeology, art history and architectural history of Georgia are now officially recognized by the state.
- 1941              Foundation of the Academy of Sciences of the Georgian SSR with various institutes, among them the Institute of Georgian Art History (Chubinashvili Institute). At the same time the research being carried out under the auspices of the Chair of Art is transferred to the institute newly founded at the Academy, in order to expand its base.
- 1949              Foundation of a Department for the Preservation of Monuments in Georgia, the first of its kind in the USSR.

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<sup>1</sup>The chronology is based on information from Vakhtang Beridze, until 1989 Director of the Chubinashvili Institute of Georgian Art History, Tbilisi.

Many church buildings had fallen victim to the anticlerical campaigns carried out by the officials of the new state in the 1920s; additional monuments were destroyed during the course of the so-called "socialist reconstruction and architectural style of the cities", when they were in the way of the laying out of broad, new streets and parade grounds. The establishment of the Department for the Preservation of Monuments took place against the background of the catastrophic consequences of this policy over the previous decades.

- 1959 Foundation of the Society for the Protection of Georgian Cultural Monuments.
- 1970 The Georgian cabinet takes the decision to have a comprehensive inventory of Georgian historical monuments compiled. On the basis of this decision special editorial staff working on the Encyclopaedia of the Georgian SSR are charged with the task of co-ordinating contributions from the following institutions:
- Institute of Georgian Art History (Chubinashvili Institute)
  - Department of History, Ethnography and Archaeology + Archaeological Centre (Javakhishvili Institute)
  - Faculty of Architecture of the Technical University of Georgia.

### **The "Georgian Architecture" Microfiche Project**

On the occasion of the VI. International Symposium on Georgian Art, Tbilisi 1989, I first had the opportunity to view the basic material compiled for the Encyclopaedia from the field of architecture. The extent and the quality of this material was so impressive, that it occurred to me to supplement the publication already planned by making available the whole corpus of historical and recent photographs, plans, and building specifications. It was clear that it would be impossible to do this in book form. A microfiche archive would be the only way of publishing a collection of more than 45,000 pages of illustrations and texts.

The basic concept of a microfiche publication was subsequently developed during a number of discussions between Nodar Janberidze, Director of the Institute of Georgian Art History, Thamaz Dvali, Head of the "Registration and Documentation of Georgian Historical Monuments" Section, and myself. On the basis of this concept the Georgian Academy of Sciences decided in March 1990 to carry out the Microfiche Project on "Georgian Architecture."

Immediately this decision had been taken, work was begun on adapting and supplementing the material for a microfiche publication, this time in English. By the end of 1991 the work had proceeded so well that publication of the first volume was projected for the spring of 1992.

It was in this situation that the project suffered a severe setback. The former Soviet Union had collapsed and Georgia was confronted with a political, economic, and social transformation. The quest for new values was accompanied by a destabilization of broad sectors of public life. In December 1991 this process escalated into war. In the course of these events, which were concentrated on the centre of Tbilisi, the Institute, which was situated in the Government area, came under fire and it was completely destroyed together with all its extensive archives. All the material destined for the planned publication fell victim to the flames.

That the project did not have to be given up in this situation is due to the efforts of Nodar Janberidze, Thamaz Dvali and Nugzar Andghuladze. While Thamaz Dvali began immediately after these events to replace the material destined for the first volume from the archives of other institutions which had not been destroyed as well as with new photographs and plans of his own, Nodar Janberidze worked tirelessly to persuade the government and the academy to make the funds necessary for the continuance of the project available.

Nugzar Andghuladze took on the particularly onerous task of compiling the extensive bibliography once again. The central library on Georgian architecture no longer existed, and so began wearisome research through the stocks of other institutions and private collections which had been preserved. In some cases bibliographical details had to be accepted without checking, which means that the possibility of error cannot be entirely excluded.

I should also like to thank the persons who have worked in the following areas:

#### Photography:

Giorgi Bartishevski, Igor Gilgendorf, Giorgi Giorgobiani, Zurab Janezashvili, Nana Kuprashvili, Giorgi Marsagishvili, Givi Melkhadze, David Morbedadze, Iura Pinaev, Vladimir Savin, Valentin Thulashvili, Othar Tskhvitinidze, Ilia Zenko, Irakli Zenko.

Translation:

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Computation:

Devi Gharibashvili, Nodar Momtselidze, Lia Qaralashvili.

Other work:

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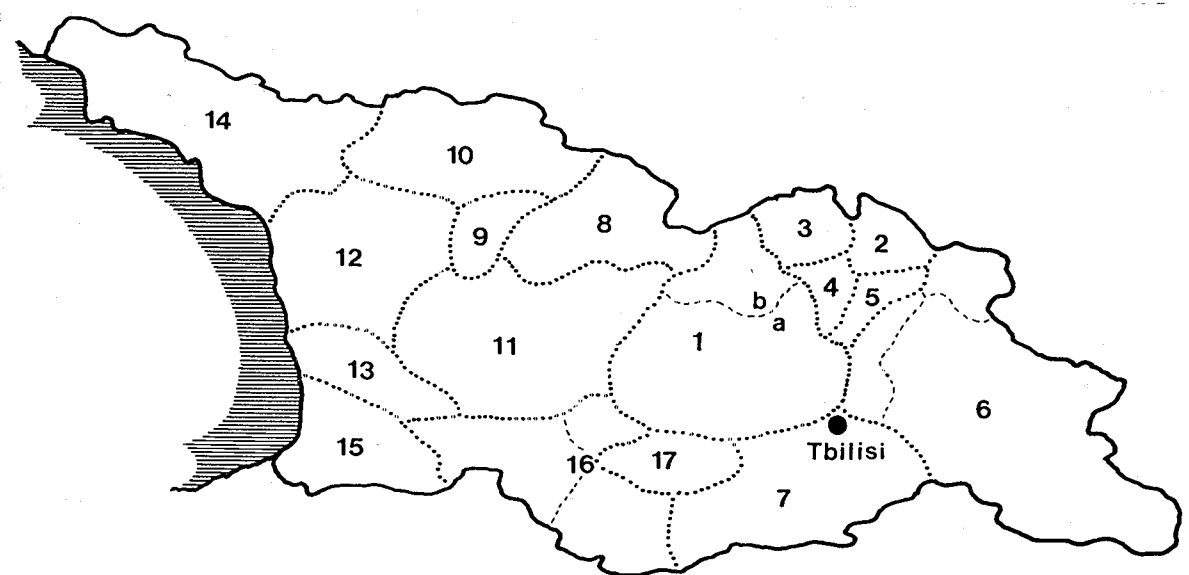
In addition I should like to express my thanks to Niko Chubinashvili, Giorgi Marsagishvili, Vakhtang Tsintsadze and Parmen Zakharaia, who with their private archives have helped to make it possible that the first volume can now appear.

*Gundolf Bruchhaus*

# Remarks on the Systematization of the Microfiche Documentation

There are a number of ways of ordering a collection of monuments as rich as that which we are here designating by the collective term "Georgian Architecture". The range of criteria according to which the collection may be subdivided is determined by the varied requirements of the users; the most important distinguishing characteristics - such as the purpose for which the monument was built, the type of architecture, the date of origin, the region where it is located - as well as an arrangement of sites and monuments in alphabetical sequence may be regarded as of equal importance. This is why, as the work progresses, the archive will be supplemented by several indexes, whose purpose will be to take account of various areas of interest.

The only principle that seemed appropriate for the main arrangement of the monuments throughout the whole "Georgian Architecture" microfiche edition was, however, that of geographical distribution, which allows us to consider architectural ensembles independently of the differing dates of origin or building types of the individual monuments. The division corresponds to the regions of the country as they have developed through history. Their sometimes shifting borders are indicated on the map and indexed by numbers. On completion of the archive they will be supplemented by the regions beyond the borders of present-day Georgia.



The historical regions within present-day Georgia:

1 Shida Kharthli (Šida K<sup>c</sup>art<sup>l</sup>i)

a) central area

b) highlands

2 Khevsurethi (Xevsuret<sup>i</sup>)

3 Khevi (Xevi)

4 Mthiulethi (Mt<sup>i</sup>ulet<sup>i</sup>)

5 Phshavi (P<sup>c</sup>šavi)

6 Kakhethi (Kaxet<sup>i</sup>)

7 Khvemo Kharthli (K<sup>c</sup>vemo K<sup>c</sup>art<sup>l</sup>i)

8 Ratcha (Rača)

9 Lechkhumi (Leč<sup>c</sup>xumi)

10 Svanethi (Svanet<sup>i</sup>)

11 Imerethi (Imeret<sup>i</sup>)

12 Samegrelo (Samegrelo)

13 Guria (Guria)

14 Apkhazethi (Ap<sup>c</sup>xazet<sup>i</sup>)

15 Atchara (Ač<sup>č</sup>ara)

16 Samtskhe Javakheti (Samc<sup>c</sup>xe Javaxet<sup>i</sup>)

17 Thrialet<sup>i</sup>

The distribution of the regions in the separate volumes is as follows:

## Volume 1

- Shida Kharthli (central area)

## Volume 2

- Shida Kharthli (highlands)

- Khevsurethi

- Khevi

- Mthiulethi

- Phshavi

## Volume 3

- Kakhethi

## Volume 4

- Kakhethi

- Khvemo Kharthli

**Volume 5**

- Ratcha
- Lechkhumi
- Svanethi
- Imerethi

**Volume 6**

- Samegrelo
- Guria

- Aphkhazethi

- Atchara

**Volume 7**

- Samtskhe Javakheti
- Thrialeti

**Volume 8**

- Monuments beyond the present boundaries of Georgia

The first aid to orientation the user will find in each volume is an alphabetical list of all sites by region. The name of each site is followed by the name of the monument; in cases where there are several monuments per site, these have been listed alphabetically too. Every monument has been furnished with a reference to indicate where it may be found in the microfiche archive. Thus the reference 008-B7, for example, would mean microfiche no. 008, line B (= 2nd row), 7th image.

The description of each monument is preceded by a bold heading which contains the basic information on the following aspects: province, site, monument, dating and code-number. All Georgian proper names have been quoted according to both the so-called "popular" transliteration and - in round brackets - the ALA-LC transliteration table<sup>1</sup>. The English translation of the Georgian name then follows in square brackets.

The transliterations in the heading are standard for the naming of the monuments in English.

Each monument has been provided with a code-number. This consists of two numbers, connected by a dash. The first number indicates the region. The second denotes the monument within the region. This second number, however, providing no encoding of any information on actual characteristics of the monument; it indicates only the sequence according to which the monuments have been documented, and is without significance for the user.

The description of the individual monument is supplemented by specific bibliographical references. It is followed by the location of the monument<sup>2</sup>, plans, elevations, sections, and in some cases by perspectives or isometric drawings. The arrangement of photographs generally accords with the following scheme: exterior views, façades, sections of the façades, exterior details, interior views, interior details. It is clear that the way each monument has been documented can vary depending on its type and state of repair. Wherever possible, however, recent photographs have been supplemented by undamaged archive material.

We hope that the systematization chosen will provide the user with the information he needs to gain direct access to the documentation.

*Gundolf Bruchhaus*

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 36 of this publication.

<sup>2</sup>The first volume departs from this principle in that the map locating the site has been placed before the description of the monument and, in cases there are a number of monuments at the same site, before the first monument discussed.

# Transliteration Systems

The table of transliterations consists of thirty-eight letters, five of which are out of use today: nos. 8, 15, 22, 35 and 38. Because these five characters are met in Old and Middle Georgian texts, however, they are usually integrated in transliteration tables.

The letters of the modern Georgian alphabet are characters of the *mkhedruli* script ("knightly hand") which, according to D.M. Lang<sup>1</sup>, was evolved from the minuscule form (*nuskhuri*) of the older *khutsuri* script ("priestly hand") during the 11th century A.D. Even today there exist only minuscule letters which, as S. Aphridonidze<sup>2</sup> states, have not changed their form since the 15th century.

The relationship of characters to sounds in the Georgian language is unambiguous, that means contrary to different Indo-European languages, each sound is expressed by a specific character. Since, however, Georgian contains some sounds which cannot be satisfactorily expressed by Latin letters, their transliteration can necessarily only have the character of an approximation in these cases. This dilemma becomes evident when the following numbers are compared: 9:21, 11:25, 17:24; 7:20, 18:28; 30:31:32; 29:33:36.

No.	mkhe- druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
1	ა	ან	a	a	1
2	ბ	ბან	b	b	2
3	გ	გან	g	g	3
4	დ	დონ	d	d	4
5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ჳ	უ	ey	ê/ē	8
9	თ	თან	th	t'	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლან	l	l	30
13	მ	მან	m	m	40
14	ნ	ნან	n	n	50
15	ო	უ	y	y	60
16	პ	პან	o	o	70
17	ჟ	ჟან	p	p	80
18	ყ	ყან	zh	ž	90
19	რ	რან	r	r	100

No.	mkhe- druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
20	ს	სან	s	s	200
21	ტ	ტან	t	t	300
22	ჯ	უ	vi	w	
23	უ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფან	ph	p'	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	k'	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	g'	700
27	ყ	ყან	q	q	800
28	შ	შან	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩან	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	c'	2000
31	ძ	ძან	dz	ž	3000
32	წ	წან	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭან	tch	č	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ღ	უ	kh	q/x	7000
36	ჯ	ჯან	j	j	8000
37	ჰ	ჰან	h	h	9000
38	ჱ	უ	oy	ô/ō	10000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

Within the continuous text of a publication any transcription/transliteration which proves difficult to read in the language of the publication should be avoided and be replaced by a so-called "popular" transliteration. For this reason a transliteration system whose basis is the table of transliterations used by D.M. Lang<sup>3</sup> has been applied. To simplify the type face within the continuous text we follow the alternatives shown in his table; these replace a Latin letter which occurs with a diacritic sign by a combination of two Latin letters whose English pronunciation normally reproduces the equivalent

Georgian sound. We also follow his alternative transliteration of nos. 22, 30 and 38. In addition to this the sign for the aspiration “c” has been replaced by “h”, so that for nos. 9, 24 and 25 “th”, “ph” and “kh” is written. In the case of no. 25 “kh” is used in order to stress the difference between this letter and no. 11, while at the same time “(k)” is added for better understanding. We refer here to a proposal of Heinrich Rohrbacher, Bonn, who has contributed many valuable impulses to this article in several personal conversations.

## Column 2

The popular transliteration cannot be used for the citation of sources and literature. For this purpose the ALA-LC<sup>4</sup> transliteration table has been added in column 2. In this work it is applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used -in round brackets behind the popular transliteration- in the heading of the description of each monument.

For the citation of Russian sources and literature we also refer to the ALA-LC transliteration table<sup>5</sup>.

*Gundolf Bruchhaus*

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<sup>1</sup>Lang, D.M., *Catalogue of Georgian and other Caucasian printed books in the British Museum*, London 1962, p. X.

<sup>2</sup>Aphridonidze, S., *Georgian Language and Script*, p. 24 of this publication.

<sup>3</sup>Lang, D.M., *op. cit.*, p. X.

<sup>4</sup>American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D.C. n.d., pp. 46-47 (Georgian).

<sup>5</sup>American Library Association - Library of Congress, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161 (Russian).

# Bibliography

The bibliography has seven parts: 1. Geography, 2. Language, 3. Epigraphy, 4. History and Archaeology, 5. Sources and Travels, 6. Architecture, 7. Mural Painting.

## Abbreviations

- AG = K<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>uli Xelovneba - Ars Georgica (Studies of the Institute of Georgian Art History), Tbilisi.  
AG IX-XIVs. = L'Arte Georgiana dal IX al XIV Sec., Atti del Terzo Simposio Internazionale sull'Arte Georgiana, Bari-Lecce 14.-18.10.1980, vol. 1, Galatina 1986.  
AIS = Atti del Primo Simposio Internazionale sull'Arte Georgiana, Bergamo 28.-30.6.1974, Milano 1977.  
BASG = Sak<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>velos SSR Mec<sup>c</sup>nierebat<sup>c</sup>a Akademiis Moambe [Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of Georgian SSR], Tbilisi.  
BBK = Beiträge zur byzantinischen und osteuropäischen Kunst des Mittelalters.  
BH = Saistorio Moambe [Bulletin Historique], Tbilisi.  
BILHMC = Enis, Istoriisa da Materialuri Kulturis Institutis Moambe [Bulletin of the Institute of Languages, History and Material Culture], Tbilisi.  
BK = Bedi K<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>lisa - Revue de Kartvélologie, Paris.  
BUT = T<sup>c</sup>bilisis Universitetis Moambe [Bulletin of the University of Tbilisi], Tbilisi.  
CARB = Corsi di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina, Ravenna.  
CHV = Khristianskiĭ Vostok [Christian East].  
En.M. = Enimkis Moambe - Communications of N. Marr, ed. by the Institute of Languages, History and Material Culture of the Academy of Sciences of Georgian SSR, Tbilisi.  
IKIAI = Izvestiia Kavkazskogo Istoriko-Arkheologicheskogo Instituta [Bulletin of the Historico-Archaeological Institute of the Caucasus], Tbilisi.  
IKM = Izvestiia Kavkazskogo Museia [Bulletin of the Caucasian Museum], Tbilisi.  
KOIRGO = Kavkazskoe Otdelenie Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva [Caucasian Department of the Emperor's Russian Geographic Society].  
LA = Literatura da Xelovneba [Literature and Art], Tbilisi.  
Macne = Istoriis, Ark<sup>c</sup>eologiis, Et<sup>c</sup>nograp<sup>c</sup>iisa da Xelovnebis Istoriis Seria [Bulletin of the History, Archaeology, Ethnography and History of Art], Tbilisi.  
MAK = Materialy po Arkheologii Kavkaza [Materials on the Archaeology of the Caucasus], Moscow.  
MMG = Moambe [Bulletin] du Musée de Géorgie, Tbilisi.  
SA = Sovetskaiâ Arkheologiâ [Soviet Archaeology], Moscow.  
SHCMG = Sak<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>velos Istoriisa da Kulturis Žeglt<sup>c</sup>a Aġceriloba [Summa Historical and Cultural Monuments of Georgia], vol. 5, Tbilisi 1990.  
SIGK = Sak<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>velos Istoriuli Geograp<sup>c</sup>iis Krebuli [Collected Historical Geography of Georgia], Tbilisi.  
SMASMG = Sak<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>velos SSR Mec<sup>c</sup>nierebat<sup>c</sup>a Akademiis Sazogadoebriv Mec<sup>c</sup>nierebat<sup>c</sup>a Ganqop<sup>c</sup>ilebis Moambe [Bulletin of the Section of Social Sciences of the Academy of Sciences of Georgian SSR], Tbilisi.  
SMOMPK = Sbornik Materialov Dliâ Opisaniâ Mestnôsteĭ i Plemën Kavkaza [Collected Materials for the Description of Localities and Tribes of the Caucasus].  
SREMK = Šot<sup>c</sup>a Rust<sup>c</sup>avelis Epok<sup>c</sup>is Materialuri Kultura [Material Culture of the Epoch of Shotha Rusthaveli], Tbilisi.  
SX = Sabčot<sup>c</sup>a Xelovneba [Soviet Art], Tbilisi.  
VV = Vizantiiskiĭ Vremennik [Byzantine Bulletin], Moscow.  
Ž.M. = Žeglis Megobari [Friends of the Monuments of Culture], ed. by the Georgian Society of Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments, Tbilisi.

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Berzenišvili, D., Narkvevebi Sak<sup>c</sup>art<sup>c</sup>velos Istoriuli Geograp<sup>c</sup>iidan [Studies from the Historical Geography of Georgia], Tbilisi 1985.  
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*Nugzar Andghuladze*

# **Georgian Architecture**

**Vol. 1**

**Shida Kartli (Central Area)**

# Transliteration Systems

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
1	ა	ან	a	ā	1
2	ბ	ბან	b	b	2
3	გ	გან	g	g	3
4	დ	დონ	d	d	4
5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ეჲ	უ	ey	ê/ē	8
9	თ	თან	th	tʰ	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლან	l	l	30
13	მ	მან	m	m	40
14	ნ	ნარ	n	n	50
15	ო	უ	y	y	60
16	ოჲ	ონ	o	o	70
17	პ	პარ	p	p	80
18	ჟ	ჟან	zh	ž	90
19	რ	რან	r	r	100

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
20	ს	სან	s	s	200
21	ტ	ტარ	t	t	300
22	ჯ	უ	vi	w	
23	უ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფარ	ph	pʰ	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	kʰ	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	ğ	700
27	ყ	ყარ	q	q	800
28	შ	შინ	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩინ	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	cʰ	2000
31	ძ	ძილ	dz	ž	3000
32	წ	წილ	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭარ	tch	č	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ჯ	უ	kh	qʰ/x	7000
36	ჯ	ჟან	j	j	8000
37	ჰ	ჰან	h	h	9000
38	ჭ	უ	oy	ô/ō	10000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

The so-called "popular" transliteration, applied within the continuous text.<sup>1</sup>

## Column 2

The ALA-LC<sup>2</sup> transliteration table, applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used - in round brackets behind the "popular" transliteration - in the heading of the description of each monument.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see *Introductory Guide*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D.C. n.d., pp. 46-47 (Georgian).

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# **Georgian Architecture**

**Vol. 2**

**Shida Kartli (Highlands)**

**Khevsurethi**

**Khevi**

**Mthiulethi**

**Phshavi**

**Kakheti/Erdso-Thianethi**

Gundolf Bruchhaus, University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the  
Institute of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi

**Board of the Project**

Nugzar Andghuladze

Gundolf Bruchhaus

Thamaz Dvali

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CIP

Georgian architecture : a documented photo-archival collection on microfiche with 47,000 photographs for the study of early and late medieval Christian architectural arts of Georgia and its historical area of settlement / edited by Gundolf Bruchhaus ... -  
Leiden: Inter Documentation Company (IDC)

1 (1994). - 2 (1995).

# Transliteration Systems

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
1	ა	ან	a	a	1
2	ბ	ბან	b	b	2
3	გ	გან	g	g	3
4	დ	დონ	d	d	4
5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ჟ	ჟ	ey	ê/ē	8
9	თ	თან	th	tʰ	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლას	l	l	30
13	მ	მან	m	m	40
14	ნ	ნარ	n	n	50
15	ო	ო	y	y	60
16	ონ	ონ	o	o	70
17	პ	პარ	p	p	80
18	ჟ	ჟან	zh	ž	90
19	რ	რან	r	r	100

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
20	ს	სან	s	s	200
21	ტ	ტარ	t	t	300
22	ჯ	ჯ	vi	w	
23	უ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფარ	ph	pʰ	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	kʰ	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	ğ	700
27	ყ	ყარ	q	q	800
28	შ	შინ	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩინ	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	tʰ	2000
31	ძ	ძილ	dz	ž	3000
32	წ	წილ	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭარ	tch	č	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ც	ო	kh	qʰ/x	7000
36	ჯ	ჯან	j	j	8000
37	ჭ	ჭან	h	h	9000
38	ძ	ო	oy	ô/ō	10 000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

The so-called "popular" transliteration, applied within the continuous text.<sup>1</sup>

## Column 2

The ALA-LC<sup>2</sup> transliteration table, applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used - in round brackets behind the "popular" transliteration - in the heading of the description of each monument.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see *Introductory Guide*, pp 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D C n.d., pp 46-47 (Georgian).

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# **Georgian Architecture**

**Vol. 3**

**Kakheti**

Gundolf Bruchhaus, University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the  
Institute of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi

### **Board of the Project**

Nugzar Andghuladze

Gundolf Bruchhaus

Thamaz Dvali

Nodar Janberidze †

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1 (1994). - 2 (1995). - 3 (1997).

# Transliteration Systems

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
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1	ა	ან	a	a	1
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5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ეჲ	უ	ey	ê/ë	8
9	თ	თან	th	tʰ	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლან	l	l	30
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15	ო	უ	y	y	60
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18	ჟ	ჟან	zh	ž	90
19	რ	რან	r	r	100

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
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21	ტ	ტარ	t	t	300
22	ჯ	უ	vi	w	
23	უ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფარ	ph	pʰ	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	kʰ	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	gʰ	700
27	ყ	ყარ	q	q	800
28	შ	შინ	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩინ	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	tʰ	2000
31	ძ	ძილ	dz	ž	3000
32	წ	წილ	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭარ	tch	č	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ჯ	უ	kh	qʰ/x	7000
36	ჯ	ჯან	j	j	8000
37	ჰ	ჰან	h	h	9000
38	ჱ	უ	oy	ô/ō	10 000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

The so-called "popular" transliteration, applied within the continuous text.<sup>1</sup>

## Column 2

The ALA-LC<sup>2</sup> transliteration table, applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used - in round brackets behind the "popular" transliteration - in the heading of the description of each monument.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see *Introductory Guide*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D C n.d., pp. 46-47 (Georgian).

# Georgian Architecture

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# **Georgian Architecture**

**Vol. 4**

**Kakheti / Tusheti  
Khvemo Kartli**

Gundolf Bruchhaus, University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the  
Institute of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi

**Board of the Project**

Nugzar Andghuladze

Gundolf Bruchhaus

Thamaz Dvali

This volume was made possible by financial support from the Cultural Department of the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Academy of Sciences of Georgia.

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No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
1	ა	ან	a	a	1
2	ბ	ბან	b	b	2
3	გ	გან	g	g	3
4	დ	დონ	d	d	4
5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ყ	ყ	ey	ê/ë	8
9	თ	თან	th	t'	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლან	l	l	30
13	მ	მან	m	m	40
14	ნ	ნან	n	n	50
15	ო	ო	y	y	60
16	პ	პან	o	o	70
17	ჟ	ჟან	p	p	80
18	რ	რან	zh	ž	90
19	ს	სან	r	r	100

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
20	ს	სან	s	s	200
21	ტ	ტან	t	t	300
22	ჯ	ჯ	vi	w	
23	უ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფან	ph	p'	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	k'	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	g'	700
27	ყ	ყან	q	q	800
28	შ	შან	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩან	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	c'	2000
31	ძ	ძან	dz	ž	3000
32	წ	წან	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭან	tch	č	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ჯ	ჯ	kh	q/x	7000
36	ჯ	ჯან	j	j	8000
37	ჰ	ჰან	h	h	9000
38	ჱ	ჱ	oy	ô/ō	10000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

The so-called "popular" transliteration, applied within the continuous text.<sup>1</sup>

## Column 2

The ALA-LC<sup>2</sup> transliteration table, applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used - in round brackets behind the "popular" transliteration - in the heading of the description of each monument.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see *Introductory Guide*, pp 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D.C. n.d., pp 46-47 (Georgian).

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According to the present-day administrative-territorial division Khvemo Kharthli includes the Bolnisi, Marneuli, Gardabani, Dmanisi and Dsalka districts. Due to the great number of the monuments and the large amount of the material the monuments of the Dsalka district and Tbilisi will be included in the following Volume 5.

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# **Georgian Architecture**

**Vol. 5**

**Khvemo Kharthli / Thrialeti**

**Samtskhe**

**Javakheti**

**Thori**

**Tbilisi**

Gundolf Bruchhaus, University of Technology, Aachen, in cooperation with the  
Institute of Georgian Art History, Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi

**Board of the Project**

Nugzar Andghuladze

Gundolf Bruchhaus

Thamaz Dvali

in memoriam  
Vachtang Beridze  
(1914-2000)

This volume was made possible by financial support from the Cultural Department of the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Academy of Sciences of Georgia.

CIP

Georgian architecture : a documented photo-archival collection on microfiche with 47,000 photographs for the study of early and late medieval Christian architectural arts of Georgia and its historical area of settlement / edited by Gundolf Bruchhaus ... - Leiden: Inter Documentation Company (IDC)

1 (1994). - 2 (1995). - 3 (1997). - 4 (1999). - 5 (2001).

# Transliteration Systems

Copy of Copy  
- original kept by IDC - Leiden -

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
1	ა	ან	a	a	1
2	ბ	ბან	b	b	2
3	გ	გან	g	g	3
4	დ	დონ	d	d	4
5	ე	ენ	e	e	5
6	ვ	ვინ	v	v	6
7	ზ	ზენ	z	z	7
8	ჲ	უ	ey	ê/ē	8
9	თ	თან	th	t'	9
10	ი	ინ	i	i	10
11	კ	კან	k	k	20
12	ლ	ლას	l	l	30
13	მ	მან	m	m	40
14	ნ	ნარ	n	n	50
15	ო	უ	y	y	60
16	რ	ონ	o	o	70
17	ს	სარ	p	p	80
18	ჟ	ჟან	zh	ž	90
19	ჩ	ჩაე	r	r	100

No.	mkhe-druli	Georg. name	column		numer. value
			1	2	
20	ს	სან	s	s	200
21	ც	ცარ	t	t	300
22	ვ	უ	vi	w	
23	ჟ	უნ	u	u	400
24	ფ	ფარ	ph	p'	500
25	ქ	ქან	kh (k)	k'	600
26	ღ	ღან	gh	g'	700
27	ყ	ყარ	q	q	800
28	შ	შინ	sh	š	900
29	ჩ	ჩინ	ch	č	1000
30	ც	ცან	ts	c'	2000
31	ძ	ძილ	dz	ž'	3000
32	წ	წილ	ds	c	4000
33	ჭ	ჭარ	tch	č'	5000
34	ხ	ხან	kh	x	6000
35	ჯ	უ	kh	q'/x'	7000
36	ჯ	ჯან	j	j	8000
37	ბ	ბაე	h	h	9000
38	ძ	უ	oy	ô/ō	10000

\*) out of use

## Column 1

The so-called "popular" transliteration, applied within the continuous text.<sup>1</sup>

## Column 2

The ALA-LC<sup>2</sup> transliteration table, applied for all bibliographical information. It is also used - in round brackets behind the "popular" transliteration - in the heading of the description of each monument.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see *Introductory Guide*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> American Library Association - Library of Congress, *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, Washington D C. n.d., pp. 46-47 (Georgian).

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