

**GEORGIAN LITERATURE IN EUROPEAN
SCHOLARSHIP**

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The land of the Georgians has since time immemorial lain in the area south of the Caucasus Range, eastward of the Black Sea, at the boundary of Europe and Asia. The Georgian language and culture, the customs and mores of the Georgian people hold the key to many mysteries of mankind's ancient civilization. In the Middle Ages, from the beginning of the 5th century, the Georgians created a rich and highly important literature which, today too, is developing intensively, with its national Georgian writing – one of the oldest among the world scripts.

Interest in Georgian literature in Europe commenced towards the close of the 16th century. Hundreds of scholarly studies or popular essays have since been published in Europe on Georgian literature. The present monograph is devoted to their critique. It is the first attempt at tracing the history of the study of Georgian literary culture and at compiling a bibliography of studies published in Europe on Georgian literature and of translations of Georgian literary works. The monograph fills a substantial lacuna in the scholarly history of Georgian literature, offering a bibliography of works written by Europeans on Georgian literature to foreigners interested in the Georgian world.

GEORGIAN LITERATURE IN FRENCH LITERARY CRITICISM

One of the consequences of the incorporation of Georgia into Russia was the enhanced role played by Russian literary criticism in the development of Georgian-French literary contacts. First reports on Georgian literature entered French-language studies from the Russian critical literature. Of special importance in this respect is a book of the Metropolitan of Kiev Evgeni Bolkhovitinov, issued in St. Petersburg in 1802. This book, entitled *Historical Depiction of Georgia in Her Political, Ecclesiastical and Educational State*, published anonymously, proved of major importance for foreigners. The book was translated into German immediately, while Malt-Brin's French review of the book was published under the title *Analyse du tableau historique, politique, ecclésiastique et littéraire de la Géorgie, écrit en russe par l'archimandrite Eugénus: "Annales des voyages", t.12, Paris, 1810*. The reviewer notes that, according to Eugénus, the Georgians have old church manuscripts that deserve the attention of scholars. The lively relations of Georgians with the Byzantine empire makes likely the existence of many important Greek manuscripts in this country. Ioane Petritsi is a well-known translator of Greek theological-philological works into Georgian. Prince Orbeliani is a well-known scholar of the 18th century, whose dictionary has survived. Lovers of Persian literature will also find many treasures in Georgian literature, for in the Golden Age (12th century) of this literature poets and historians translated celebrated works of Persian literature into Georgian. Outstanding among these translations is *Iosebzikhaniani*. The most familiar poem is the *Tamariani*, formed of several monotonous odes and a series of similes-epithets. The finest verses of the Georgians are the church hymns - *iambikos*. In this metre, Anton I composed his *Tsqobilsitqvaoba*, a series of historical odes on famous men of

Georgia. Of the romances the *Baramiani*, *Rostomiani*, *Darejaniani*, and *Visramiani* may be named. Malt-Brin speaks of the Georgian Bible as well. In his words, in the 18th century, King Archil worked out a new version of the Georgian Bible, largely translated from the Septuagint. The fact that Moses Khorenatsi already referred to it permits the assumption that it must have existed prior to the 5th century. From the viewpoint of Rustaveli Studies it is interesting that the two novelties connected with Bolkhovitinov's name, viz. the theories of the foreign provenance of the plot of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* and of the tonicity of the Georgian verse, found reflection in Malt-Brin's review. Owing to the lack of knowledge of Georgian and incompetence in poetics, Bolkhovitinov failed to develop a correct view on Georgian versification. His ideas found their way into the French review, though not the entire information contained in Bolkhovitinov's book. At the same time there are serious errors in it: in reviewing the early period of Georgian literature, Bolkhovitinov focused attention only on texts translated from the Greek. He said nothing about the original hymnography and hagiography created in the same period and, after reviewing the old translated texts, he directly proceeded to discuss secular texts. Owing to this, the French reviewer had formed the impression that "Georgian original works date from the 12th century - Tamar's period". Thus, Malt-Brin's essay is a rather dull reflection of Bolkhovitinov's interesting work.

Discussion of Georgian literature continued in the *Lettres sur le Caucase et la Géorgie, suivies d'une relation d'un voyage en Perse en 1812, Hambourg 1816*. This anonymous book is today definitively believed to have been written by W. Freygang and his wife¹. The Freygangs supply the traditional evidence on David the Builder's sending twenty young men (including Ioane Petritsi) to Athens for study. The significance of Petritsi's translational work is accentuated in the book so as to link his activity with the flourishing of Georgian learning. Freygang relates this advance to the emergence of the "classic poems laudatory of Tamar". Thus, in the

¹ N. K. Orlovskaya, Questions of Georgia's Literary Contacts with the West. 1986, p. 158 (in Russian).

author's correct view, Petritsi's philosophy laid the foundation for the writing of Georgian classic works. 12th-century secular literature is qualified as "classic". The authors relate the subsequent revival of Georgian literature to Anton I's activity (the setting up of schools, writing of a grammar textbook). The authors of the book must have been familiar with Bolkhovitinov's work in Russian from which, in addition to other information, they copied word for word the unscientific hypotheses about the Georgian language. The Freygangs' book was written in a very attractive style, representing the diaries of a female traveller, with a wealth of personal experiences and emotions. Alongside this, the book discusses Georgian history and architecture with expertise. All this is skilfully combined with attractive narration, which made this journey popular throughout Europe. A full English translation of the book came out in 1823, and a German translation, in 1826¹. Its Danish, Dutch, Swedish translations were also published. Besides, the book of the Freygangs evoked response in the foreign press of the period.

Interest in Oriental Studies assumed the character of systematic research towards the end of the 18th century. The interest of the great French Kartvelologist Brosset in Georgian Studies falls to the period of the founding of the *Société Asiatique du Paris*, 1822. Interest in Rustvelology is noticeable in his very first Kartvelological studies. At the initial stage of his work Brosset, too, relied on Bolkhovitinov's work. Brosset published the first special study of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* in 1830: *Recherches sur la poésie géorgienne, notice des deux manuscrits et extrait du roman de Tariel*. According to the researcher, the poem was written in the 12th century by Tamar's commander-in-chief Rustaveli, who is also the author of the *Tamariani*. Concerning Bolkhovitinov Brosset writes: "Evgenius appears to have erred in ascribing this work (i.e. the *Tamariani*) to Chakhrukhadze". In the researcher's view, Rustaveli wrote the eulogy of Tamar, hence he must be the author of

the *Tamariani*, an eulogistic collection. In Bolkhovitinov's works the plot of the poem is considered to have been borrowed from Indian. The influence of this view is seen in the early period of Brosset's work. In 1828 the French scholar referred to Rustaveli as "the author of a Persian story"¹. Subsequently, under the influence of Teimuraz Bagrationi's conception, Brosset's view in connection with this question gradually changed in favour of the originality of the poem. In the 1841 edition Brosset pointed out that *The Man in the Panther's Skin* was an allegorical work depicting historical events and historical personages. A concrete example is cited: the analogy of the invitation of the son of Khvarazmshah as Nestan's bridegroom with the Khvarazmshah asking the hand of Tamar. The search for the historical-national interpretation of the poem primarily served the argumentation of the originality of the subject of the poem. "This Persian story..." in the poem was perceived by Brosset as a disguise. This view is basically shared in present-day Rustvelological literature. At the first stage of his research Brosset was familiar with two manuscripts of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*, preserved at a library in Paris. Of these he recognised the extended redaction (with a continuation) as belonging to Rustaveli. This is why the scholar had formed the opinion of the poem being "intolerably long". In 1831, Chapter V of the *Recherches* conveys the content of the long redaction. The co-operation with Teimuraz Bagrationi here too proved decisive. Under the influence of the latter's consultations Brosset altered his view, and in 1834 he no longer considered Rustaveli the author of the continuations of the poem². The French scholar saw a difference in the characters of the personages of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*, and he was the first to observe that the work was "a romance of characters"³. In his view, each main character is a literary embodiment of some concrete idea (friendship, love...). The posing of the question of the characters of the

¹ Letters from the Caucasus and Georgia to which are added the account of a journey into Persia in 1812 and an abridged history of Persia since the time of Nadir Shah, London 1823; Briefe über den Kaukasus- und Georgien vom Jare 1812, aus dem Französischen der Frau von Freygang, geb. v. Kudrjaffsky. Übers. von Heinrich V. Struve, Wien 1826.

¹ "Etat actuel de la littérature géorgienne": *Nouv. Journ. Asiatique*, I, 1828, pp. 434-454.

² Notice littéraire sur quelques auteurs géorgiens: *Nouv. Journ. Asiatique*, XIV (1834), pp. 143-164, 232-250.

³ Analyse du roman géorgien Amiran-Daredjaniani: *Bull. Scient.*, t.III, 1838, col. 7-16, N1, émis le 14 octobre, 1837

personages by Brosset was a major contribution to Rustaveli Studies. It should be noted specially that Brosset translated into French a fairly large part of the poem (*Recherches...* Chapter V; also: *Première histoire de Rostéwan, roi d'Arabie, traduite du roman géorgien intitulé - L'Homme à la peau de Tigre (Roustawel), suivie de quelques observations sur les dictionnaires géorgiens*).

The French Kartvelologist discussed the *Amirandarejaniani* in detail (*Analyse du roman géorgien Amiran-Daredjaniani*). Brosset conveyed the plot of the work in detail, translated the title of each chapter, and described the basic features of the master-and-serf relations described in it. He raised the question of the originality of the work - its derivation from Georgian life, and pointed to the compositional complexity of the romance; he believed the interconnecting of the chain of various events to be the main achievement of the author. Later studies did confirm a certain degree of compilation work done by the author of *Amirandarejaniani*. Brosset's original view on the attribution of two chapters (*The Story of Jimsher, the Son of Dilar* and *The Story of Jimsher's Son - Do not Kill Jimsher*), entered in the manuscripts, to the continuator, is today accepted. Brosset's *Notice littéraire sur quelques auteurs géorgiens*, printed in two parts, deals with the works of Georgian writers of the period of the Renaissance, viz. *The Omainiani, Baramgulijaniani*, and *Miriani*. Brosset translated the latter work into French, and published it with an extensive review: *Le Miriani ou histoire du roi Miri, conte géorgien*. Brosset devoted a study to Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani's Georgian Dictionary: *Notice sur le dictionnaire géorgien de Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, récemment acquis par la bibliothèque royale de Paris*. The paper begins with an extensive biography of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, followed by a review of his Dictionary, with a study of the Georgian as well as foreign sources used in compiling the latter Dictionary. Brosset indicated 26 authors used by the Georgian lexicographer¹. Brosset's archive contains his manuscript translation of Orbeliani's Dictionary with extensive notes and commentaries.

¹ R. Dodashvili, Marie Brosset: a Researcher into Georgian Literature, Tbilisi 1962 (in Georgian).

Interesting information about Rustaveli is supplied by E. Stackelberg, a European traveller of the first half of the 19th century. He is the author of the commentaries on the pieces in the Album of the Russian artist Gagarin¹. Stackelberg's commentaries contain a report on Rustaveli having fallen in love with a great female monarch. The author shares the view on the original provenance of the poem, but on a ground differing from that of Brosset. As Rustaveli could not express his feelings openly, he resorted to fiction and composed *The Man in the Panther's Skin* in which he described his sweet passion, but transferring the action elsewhere. The French author seems to develop the hypothesis on the love of Tamar and Rustaveli on the basis of broad oral traditions. His phrase "tradition says nothing about whether Queen Tamar guessed (Rustaveli's) analogy" would suggest that the folk stories "must have been the underlying traditions" of these views. Stackelberg points to his familiarity with individual parts of Brosset's translations. Stackelberg's report on Rustaveli's portrait having been seen in Jerusalem seems to have been borrowed from Brosset. Thus, these brief but noteworthy pieces of information about Rustaveli are suggestive of his fairly good knowledge of sources on Rustaveli.

M. de Villeneuve's book - *La Géorgie par M. de Villeneuve*, Paris, 1870 - is not marked by such competence. The author repeated the reports on Georgian literature, contained in the cited book, in his *Mtzhketh et Ibérie. Notice sur la Géorgie*. The author's assessment of Georgian literature is rather superficial. In his words, there exists in the Georgian language a very incomplete literature, but full of genuine flights; poetry remained for a long time the only literature of Georgia, which was seldom characterised by inspiration. Villeneuve's evidence is characterised by obvious contradictions. Thus, one wonders how poetry remained the only literature of the Georgians while Villeneuve speaks of the literary seat of Mount Athos, of Euthymius the Athonite and other "scholarly and educated" Georgians, the translations made by them of biblical books and the writings of the Fathers of the Eastern Church. The

¹ Le Caucase pittoresque. Dessiné d'après nature par le prince G. Gagarine. Avec une introduction et un texte explicatif par le comte E. Stackelberg, Paris 1847.

genre characterisation of the "Tariel Romance", created in the 12th century, is also contradictory, called by Villeneuve at once a romance and an Iberian epopee.

Brief information about Rustaveli and his work are to be found in *Le Caucase et la Perse et la Turquie d'Asie d'après la relation de M. le baron de Tielmann, par le baron Ernouf, Paris 1876*. The author travelled on a diplomatic mission in "strange and difficult-of-access" places. On a visit to Telavi, after a feast the foreigner was shown, among "other curiosities", a good manuscript of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*. In Tielmann's words, this was a chivalrous epopee - a 12th-century manuscript, illuminated with perfect miniatures. The traveller observes that "the poem is written according to the ancient taste of the Georgians". The French traveller E. Orsolle, the author of *Le Caucase et la Perse par E. Orsolle, Paris 1885*, agrees with Tielmann's view on the definition of the genre specificity of Rustaveli's poem. According to the author, the Golden Age of Georgia was marked by Rustaveli's poem (*The Panther's Skin*). At the same time Rustaveli's influence on Georgian literature of the subsequent period is stressed; the prose is linked to his authority. The author must have made use of written sources as well as personal contacts. Hence, it is worth noting that Orsolle speaks not only of old and classic poetry but he is familiar with poets of his period: Orbeliani, Eristavi, Baratov, and "especially Prince Chavchavadze" and his contemporary periodical editions, the *Droeba, Imedi, Iveria*.

The first encyclopaedic article on "Tariel" appeared in the Petit Larousse: *Tariel, P. Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire Universel, Paris (1885)*. The information in the cited encyclopaedia is incompetent and unexpected: "Tariel, a Georgian poem - one of the rare works known to us from this literature - must have been written in the 16th or 15th century. True, it is too long (8 thousand quatrains); notwithstanding several flaws, it still is a remarkable work. Particularly noteworthy is its style which is rich in diverse images and figurative sayings, so lavishly used by Oriental poets." In the first place the dating of the poem by the encyclopaedia is rather unexpected. It is hard to determine which source the authors of this information used. As shown by the materials reviewed above, even travellers did not err in dating the poem. The error is the more

to be regretted that at the period in question (1885) Brosset's French-language publications were a thing of the past.

Towards the close of the 19th century Iona Meunargia's translation of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* into French evoked extended reviews by J. Mourier and A. Suttner. Mourier's view on *The Man in the Panther's Skin* merits special attention. Mourier lived and served in Georgia for a long time. In 1889-1902 a French magazine was issued under his editorship (*Le Caucase illustré*). I. Meunargia handed to him his translation of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* for editing. This was followed by Mourier's booklet on Rustaveli, issued in Tbilisi in 1886 and entitled *Chota Roustaveli, Notice par J. Mourier, officier de l'instruction publique*. Later the author published the same booklet in Paris and Brussels. He published • Rustaveli's biography, based on a folklore source. Reviewing the poem, Mourier is enthusiastic about the greatness of its language and literary world. However, he is irritated by the "banality of the subject" and the "lack of ideas", as he puts it. The French author has reservations about the characters of the poem, focusing attention on the unethical behaviour of Nestan and Avtandil.

In 1886 another French translation of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* was published. (However, as explained by the author, his work was not a translation but an imitation). The translator was Achas Borin (pennname of Count Alexander Bobrinski). The book was published in Paris along with other "Oriental Stories": *Achas Borin, Contes Orientaux: Daniel, La Peau de Léopard, L'Hospitalité, Paris 1886*. A year later his translation was issued in Tbilisi too. The work is prefaced with a fairly interesting introduction. The translation itself proved colourless but it is highly noteworthy, for, as is known, Meunargia's translation, done at the same period, has not survived. The title in the translation is traditionally represented as "the Leopard's Skin". An attempt is made at a historical interpretation of the poem. In Borin's view, "Tinatin embodies Queen Tamar" and, in general, the poem is dedicated to Tamar. Nevertheless, Borin quotes Rustaveli's words to the effect that "he had found a story written in Persian", accepting it uncritically. Thus, Borin does not deny the foreign provenance of the plot either, considering it to have been adapted very originally,

so as to reflect Georgian life. The translator's view is significant: "Even if we notice some influence of Persian literature here, it is seen only in the fantasy and colour which characterises the entire oriental poetry." It is interesting to note that Borin does not take the text of the poem uncritically; he has done some work of textual criticism, removing some spurious passages from the poem. Nevertheless, Borin's principles of textual study are highly subjective and unscholarly.

The early 20th century was marked by a very interesting and noteworthy work. This refers to A. Thalasso's book: *Anthologie de l'Amour Asiatique*. The book deals with "the love literature" of oriental countries, including Georgian literature - largely with Rustaveli to whom a separate chapter is devoted. According to Thalasso, original poems are known in Georgian literature, belonging to Rustaveli, Chakhrukhadze and Guramishvili. In his view, this literature is rich in love poetry - largely an imitation of Persian and Armenian poetry, for "Georgian poets are inspired by Armenian metrics" (cf. Brosset, *Recherches sur la poésie géorgienne...*, 1830). Thalasso clearly repeats Brosset's views in noting that "two Georgian prose romances: the *Amirandarejaniani* and *Visramiani* are written in the style of Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse* (cf. Brosset, *Recherches sur la poésie géorgienne...*, 1830). Thalasso relates the emergence of "love poetry" in the 12th century to the sending by David the Builder of young people to Athens for study. Thalasso (following Brosset's work just cited) names oriental-type metaphors as an indicator of the influence of Arabic-Persian poetry on its Georgian counterpart. Finally, the author appends a French translation of two "Rustaveli" quatrains. He considers the first of these quatrains to be an example of the *ghazal*, while the second is a *shairi*, so far unpublished but found in the continuation of *Tariel* (manuscript E), and attributed to Rustaveli. The author must be referring to one manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, used also by Brosset. In general, in discussing *The Man in the Panther's Skin*, the author of the *Anthologie* made use of the works of Bolkhovitinov and Brosset. Besides, he appears to have been influenced by an Armenian consultant, as seen in the constant repetition of the priority of Armenian over Georgian poetry. At the same time, Thalasso does not repeat Bolkhovitinov's view on the

syllabic-tonic character of the Georgian verse. He considered Georgian as well as Armenian verse syllabic.

The well-known French traveller Baron de Baye was greatly interested in Georgian literature. He dedicated several books to his travels through Georgia, had contacts with Georgian writers (Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli), was closely acquainted with Georgian life, and translated examples of Georgian literature into French. Baron de Baye speaks affectionately of his friend Akaki Tsereteli in his book *En Imérétie*, considering him "an eloquent poet anointed with Supreme grace", expressing the sentiments of the Georgians. Baron de Baye presents Akaki's poems translated in prose: *Les nations différentes*, *Devant l'image*, *Souliko*, and *L'abeille*¹. He translated and published the Georgian legend *Beauty* (*La Beauté, légende géorgienne, traduite et publiée pour la première fois en français par le Baron de Baye*, Paris 1900). In his book *In Georgia* he dwells on Queen Tamar and the legends current on her in Georgia. Among them, the traveller relates a folklore tradition from the cycle on the relationship of Tamar and Rustaveli. Different versions of this tradition are well known in Georgian folkloristics². Most interesting assessment and copious material about Georgian literature is to be found in Baron de Baye's book: *Tiflis, Souvenirs d'une mission*. The traveller does justice to Ilia Chavchavadze's public activity, viz. the founding of the Bank of the Nobility, chairmanship of the Society for the Dissemination of Literacy and the publication of the most influential periodical *Iveria*. At the same time, the author assessed Chavchavadze's sharpest and most important tool - satire - with an unerring literary flair. According to the author "He (Chavchavadze) wrote humorous stories in prose, whose significance for Georgia is the same as Gogol's works are for Russia. And his poetry is profoundly Christian, patriotic and philosophical. Prior to Tolstoy, Ilia expressed analogous ideas on various themes; in one of them he laid bare the vices characteristic of the Georgians in a satirical manner".

¹ D. Panchulidze, Akaki Tsereteli in France, Tb. 1980 (in Georgian).

² I. Megreliдзе, Rustaveli and Georgian Folklore, Tb. 1950 (in Russian).

Another French traveller, Duchesse de Rohan, also made brilliant use of her acquaintance of Georgia early in the 20th century: *Les Dévoilées du Caucase, Note de voyage, Paris, 1910*. The authoress was the wife of Duc de Rohan (father of the son-in-law of Ekaterine Dadiani). Thus, she made personal acquaintance of Georgia, studied Georgian literature and supplied much more information about it to the French reader than is found in the works of other travellers. De Rohan had a comprehensive idea of Georgian literature. She names the philosopher Ioane Petritsi, the orator Ioane Khakhuleli, the translator and scholar Giorgi the Athonite, Georgia's Golden Age poets: Chakhrukhadze and Shavteli. According to de Rohan, Mose Khoneli "was Tamar's historian, while Sargis Tmogveli - a great romancer". Interest attaches to the traveller's Rustvelological evidence. She is the only traveller to mention Rustaveli's name, Shota. Until then, apart from Brosset's later works, the poet's full name had not been recorded in French literary criticism. The author names 1190 as the exact date of the writing of the poem. De Rohan may be credited also with paying attention to the philosophical depth of the poem - especially its aphorisms. She continues her review of Old Georgian literature by noting Brosset's service to Kartvelology. Nikoloz Baratashvili and Giorgi Eristavi are considered versifiers of Georgian poetry. The following poets are also named: Aleksandre Chavchavadze, Erekle II (as the author of religious odes), the latter's daughters, Mariam and Ketevan (who had written elegies), Dimitri Tumanishvili - author of patriotic verses; Grigol Orbeliani, Sayatnova and, finally, Akaki Tsereteli who had completed 50 years in the service of poetry. De Rohan translated poems of Akaki Tsereteli, Ilia Chavchavadze and Rapiel Eristavi, appending them to her review. In particular, she translated Akaki's poem *A l'amour*, the introductory part of Chavchavadze's poem "Several Scenes or an Episode in the Life of an Outlaw", entitling it *Crépuscule dans la vallée d'Alasan*, and Rapiel Eristavi's *Le Pays Natale de Chewurzen*.

In 1909 Akaki Tsereteli was visited by Mme Toucas Massillon, correspondent of the *Les Nouvelles* newspaper. Her long article, entitled: "Akaki Tsereteli" was printed on 1 November 1909. An article on Akaki, *Le jubilé d'un grand poète*, was published in the *Action* newspaper; the poet's works are reviewed in *Mercure de*

France, while in several issues of *Petit Republicain* the French reader became acquainted with prose translations of the poem *Natela* and *Gamzrdeli*.

In his book *La Géorgie Libre. Son passé, son présent, son avenir* (Genève 1920), the author Emmanuel Kune discusses in detail the origin of the Georgian language and writing, as well as Rustaveli and his poem. Kune is familiar with fragments of the poem (in Brosset's translation), printed in the *Journal Asiatique*. He points out also that the poem has been translated into German, English, and Russian - into the latter language by Balmont. The author's attempt to use some facts of the poem in a political sense is unprecedented. Thus, he dwells at length on the Laz being Georgians. In support of this view he quotes *The Man in the Panther's Skin* in which, in his words, one of the three characters is Laz. Kune should be credited with correctly understanding the meaning of the suffix *-osan* in the Georgian title of the poem, defining the title of Rustaveli's work as "A man in the panther's skin".

In his *L'Eglise Géorgienne des origines jusqu'à nos jours* (1910), Mikheil Tamarashvili, who had fundamental knowledge of Georgian literature, advanced somewhat controversial conclusions. According to him, Georgian literature acquired an independent original colour only after its development attained its apogee in the 12th century. Prior to that "it suffered the influence of the Persians, Arabs and Greeks".

The originality of Georgian literature is specially accentuated in *La Langue Géorgienne* by N. Marr and M. Brière, Paris 1931. According to the authors, Georgian literature did not limit itself to "ecclesiastical sciences" alone, as did some other oriental literatures. It developed along the secular path too, creating real masterpieces, resting on national inspiration".

In 1934 Professor J. Karst of Strassbourg University published his *Littérature géorgienne chrétienne*. Despite the title, in the first part of the work the author discusses theological literature, and in the second, middle and new literature; thus the work deals with the entire Georgian literature.

In 1957 M. Brière published a paper: *Lettres géorgiennes chrétiennes*. It is an excerpt translation of K. Kekelidze's *History of*

Georgian Literature, vol. I. The author reviews the development of the Georgian literary language and the inception of literature and the periods of Georgian ecclesiastical literature. In the subsection: "Original literature and Translators" six authors are discussed in detail: Euthymius and Giorgi the Athonites, Eprem Mtsire, Arsen Iqaltoeli, Ioane Petritsi and Anton the Catholicos. After reviewing their biographical data, the author lists their translations, classified in terms of genre. Only the floruit and the titles of works are presented for the other authors. The last, third chapter of the paper follows Kekelidze's principle in vol. I of his *History of Georgian Literature* in giving separate reviews of the genres of Old Georgian literature (bibliology, exegetics, dogmatics, polemics, hagiography, asceticism and mysticism, homiletics, canons, poetry, liturgies).

Attention of Europeans to medieval Georgian-Byzantine contacts and the participation of Georgians in the political and cultural life of Byzantium was drawn by the monograph *Pierre l'Ibérien et les écrits du Pseudo-Denys d'Aréopagite* (1952) by the well-known Belgian Byzantinist Ernest Honigmann. This work gave rise in Europe to a highly important hypothesis in Medieval Studies, proclaiming the Georgian prince Peter the Iberian to have been the genuine author of the early medieval theological treatises known under the name of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. Critical discussion of this theory is today, too, a major theme both in Kartvelology and, generally, in European Medieval Studies.

A major contribution to the research into Georgian literature was made by Professor Gerard Garitte of the University of Louvain, whose studies formed a new stage in Kartvelology. A review of Garitte's works may be started with his *Documents pour l'étude du livre d'Agathange, Citta del Vaticano* (1947, *Studi e Testi*, vol. 27). The book contains the new Greek redaction of Agathangelus's work on the Christianisation of Armenia by Gregory the Illuminator. Numerous Greek, Arabic, Georgian, Armenian and Syriac fragments and commentaries on them are also included¹. Two years later

¹ The present review of Garitte's work is based on M. Tarchnishvili's work - M. Tarchnishvili - A propos des travaux de philologie géorgienne de M. G. Garitte: *Le Muséon*, t. 68, 1955, pp. 360-384.

Garitte published a brief paper: *Sur un fragment géorgienne d'Agathange*. It is a publication of a text preserved at the Library of Cambridge, with a Latin translation. The text forms part of the history of the martyrdom of the Ripsimians, extant in the History of Gregory the Illuminator. According to the researcher, the Georgian version is a translation not of the Greek but of the Armenian text. The manuscript dates from the 11th century, presumably copied by Gregory-Prochorus. The Cambridge redaction, characterised by archaic language, must be earlier than the 9th century.

Garitte's papers on Agathangelus were followed by one more important study: *La Narratio de rebus Armeniae*. Alongside the *Narratio*, discovered by him, Garitte printed the work of Arsen the Catholicos *On the Separation of Kartli and Armenia*, as well as a Georgian list of Armenian catholicos; both studies are provided with French translations. Garitte's paper *Version géorgienne de la Passion de St. Rocco par Eusèbe*, was of major importance. The text is supplied with a Latin translation. The Greek original is believed to have been lost. In the researcher's view, the Georgian translation is not later than the 7th century. At the same time, the Georgian text permits to determine the exact date of the saint. A collection of the Syriac, Latin and Georgian texts allows to visualise the text of the original indirectly.

More important is the Georgian evidence - identified by Garitte - on the death of John the Hesychast: *La mort de St. Jean l'Hesychaste d'après un texte géorgien inédit*. As is known, the Greek manuscripts containing *The Life of St. John*, written by St. Cyril of Scythopolis, give no date of the death of the saint. Now, there exists a Georgian version of the *Life*, published by Kekelidze in his *Monumenta hagiographica georgica*, 1918. The text ends with the story of the death of John the Hesychast, which is lacking in the Greek text. It is this story that Garitte published with a Latin translation and commentaries. In the researcher's view, this ending was added by Cyril of Scythopolis to the *Life* completed by himself in 557-58. The story of the death of the saint was added after his death, or after 8 January 559. The Georgian redaction of this *Life* must not date later than the 7th century.

Garitte's study *Un extrait géorgien de la Vie d'Etienne le Sabaite* deals with the Georgian text of the "Life of Stephen of Saint

Sabas". The researcher concludes against St. Stephen's kinship with John of Damascus (as was believed traditionally). He was erroneously identified with *S. Etienne le Thaumaturge*. Accordingly, the researcher questions the date of John Damascene's death (747), which was based on the above erroneous identification and the chronology of St. Stephen's life.

Among Garitte's studies special importance attaches to his *Les lettres de Saint Antoine en géorgien*. It deals with two Sinaitic MSS containing the Georgian text of St. Antoine's letters: cod. 35, and cod. 25. In these MSS the text of the first seven letters is presented in full, the letters being authentic. Later Garitte published the Georgian text of all the seven letters, with a Latin translation and critical apparatus: *Lettres de Saint Antoine, version géorgienne et fragments coptes*. To date a complete collection of St. Antoine's letters is available in Georgian, Arabic and Latin. The Latin redaction, dating from *ca* the 15th century, comes from the lost Greek original. The Arabic version must have been translated from the Coptic and must precede the Latin at least by four centuries. The Coptic redaction itself predates the 11th century. The Sinaitic MSS containing the Georgian text are of a post-11th-century period. The translations must have been made before the 8th century. In Garitte's view, the Georgian translation is the oldest specimen of the hitherto known seven letters of St. Antoine.

Garitte's *La version géorgienne de la Vie de Sainte Marthe* must be considered a major study of the Georgian text of the *Life* of St. Martha. The *Life* of the mother of St. Symeon, the New St. Martha was written in Greek at the turn of the 7th century. Its translation is extant in three Georgian MSS: Iviron, géorgien 84; A-142 Institute of Manuscripts; Jerusalem, géorgien 156. Of these only the first contains the text in full form, the rest lacking the initial parts. Garitte prepared a critical edition with a translation of the *Life* of St. Martha according to these MSS. The colophon to the Iviron MS indicates that it was copied by Giorgi the Athonite at the request of Giorgi the Monk during the abbotship of Giorgi the Athonite (1042-1045). In Garitte's opinion, a certain David from the Black Mountain should be assumed as the translator of the *Life* rather than David Tbeli (10th century), according to Kekelidze's version.

Garitte is the author of an encyclopaedic review article on Georgian church literature. (*Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* - 1967). After a brief general review of church literature the author dwells upon didactic-narrative, properly ascetic works and the Lives of the holy monks and ascetics. A list is presented of the ascetic-didactic literature translated into Georgian as well as original ones, with indications of their editions (in Georgian and foreign languages) and of the MSS containing these texts. Basic writings on ascetic literature were translated into Georgian before the close of the 10th century - prior to the epoch of the Athonites. Notably enough, Georgian translations have preserved oriental works unknown to Greek literature (St. Anthony's letters, some letters of Amona, of Arsenius and Macarius. Some Georgian homilies, ascribed to Ephraem the Syrian and John Chrysostom, are not found in Greek MSS; mention can also be made of the *Limonarion*, the Lives of Ilarion the Iberian and John Damascene, as well as the Lives of St. Ephraem the Syrian, Peter the Iberian and Symeon the Stylite the Old, all arriving via Syriac. And notwithstanding the loyalty of the Georgian church to the Greek Calcedonian orthodoxy, "Georgian culture retained its oriental and national character and individuality under pressure from Greek culture, thereby avoiding total Hellenization".

Garitte's paper *Une édition critique du psautier géorgien* deals with the Georgian edition of the Book of Psalms, prepared by Mzekala Shanidze. In her study, Shanidze makes no mention of one papyrus MS of the Book of Psalms discovered in St. Catherine's Monastery by A. Tsagareli among the Sinaitic MSS in 1883. The papyrus MS is datable to *ca* the 7th-8th centuries. Garitte pointed out that the cited MS, believed by M. Shanidze and K. Kekelidze to have been lost, is in fact preserved on Mount Sinai, being described in 1950 in Garitte's catalogue. Garitte's paper gives a description of this MS, with the text of Ioane Zosime's colophon included in it. Thus, the MS does not appear to be earlier than the 9th century. At the close of his paper Garitte gives a Latin translation of Giorgi the Hagiorite's note appended by him to his redaction of the Book of Psalms.

By 1958 Garitte produced a critical edition of Ioane Zosime's Georgian Calendar (*Sinai géorgien* 34), with a Latin

translation of the Georgian text and commentaries. The researcher devoted a special study to the same calendar: *Une édition commentée du calendrier palestino-géorgien de Jean Zosime*. According to the scholar, the year 956, which is believed to have been the date of the copying of the calendar, is related to the second part of the MS, which has no palaeographic relation to the part containing the calendar proper. Ioane Zosime's colophon shows that the calendar must have been written in the Monastery of St. Sabas, near Jerusalem. From 973 Ioane Zosime was on Mount Sinai, i.e. the calendar was written by 975. The calendar contains over 1100 hagiographic liturgical pieces of information from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. It has preserved most valuable evidence on liturgical practice in Jerusalem, as well as hagiographic evidence from Greek synaxaries. Besides Palestinian and Byzantine festivals, the calendar presents some properly Georgian festivals: of Abo Tbileli, of Saint Nino, Saint Shushanik, etc. Garitte's work aimed at collating the Georgian Calendar with other sources, identification of saints, determination of the dates of the establishment of festivals and their significance, and so on. On the occasion of the issuing of Ioane Zosime's calendar as a separate book, in 1958, Garitte was awarded the highest, Franqui Prize, which was presented to him personally by the Belgian King.

Foreign Kartvelologists made a major contribution to the study of the Georgian versions of the Acts of the Apostles. Garitte laid the foundation of work along these lines by his highly important study *L'ancienne version géorgienne des actes des Apôtres*. After visiting Sinai and microfilming, Garitte issued the Georgian version of the Acts of the Apostles according to two manuscripts. The Georgian texts are supplied with an exact Latin translation and study in which the author makes the following conclusions: 1. The old version of the Acts was translated from the Armenian. 2. The extant MSS of the Armenian Vulgate date from the 13th century, but this Vulgate is not a pattern of the Georgian translation. 3. The Georgian text must derive from a lost old Armenian redaction, the latter appearing to depend on the Syriac version. 4. The Georgian translation, made from the Armenian, must have suffered revision according to the Greek text. In Garitte's observation, these assumptions warrant the conclusion that the story of the Acts is in

every respect similar to that of the Georgian translation of the Gospel.

The special work on the Acts of the Apostles, commenced by Garitte, was continued by M. van Esbroeck by a review of the Georgian Acts of John the Evangelist: *Les formes géorgiennes des Acta Iohannis* (1975). The scholar identified three types of the Acts of John the Evangelist, publishing the redaction of one of them (the 1074 MS of the Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos), with a Latin translation: *Les Acta Iohannis traduits par Euthime l'Hagiorite*. Esbroeck studied one more redaction (published by Kekelidze in vol. I of the *Keimena*), concluding that the Georgian version emerges in its primary form, issuing from the branch that produced the Armenian forms. The version published by K. Kekelidze must have already been emended according to the Armenian pattern type. In order to clarify these relations Esbroeck published the Georgian version of the *Dormition*, with a Latin translation and a parallel version of Kekelidze's edition.

Esbroeck made a special study of the apocrypha of the Dormition of the Virgin (MS A-144) in his papers: *Nouveaux apocryphes de la Dormition conservés en Géorgien* and *Apocryphes géorgiens de la Dormition*. He collated two Georgian redactions of the apocryphal Dormition with the Greek and Ethiopic texts of the same apocrypha (P.V. Arras, CSCO, vol. pp. 342-343), concluding that the Ethiopic text should be considered an archetype for the Georgian and Greek redactions of the Dormition of the Virgin. The derivation of both Georgian apocrypha from one and the same Greek original may be hypothesised. However, neither can it be ruled out that one of the Georgian redactions (the one with the opening part missing) is directly related to some Semitic original. Esbroeck published the complete parallel texts of the Georgian and Ethiopic apocrypha.

Mikael Modrekili's brilliant hymnographic collection from Shatberdi was the object of Esbroeck's special study (*L'hymnaire de Michel Modrekili et son sanctoral*). Following the important studies by P. Ingoroqva (*Giorgi Merchule*, Tbilisi, 1983) and V. Gvakharia (*Hymns of Mikel Modrekili*, Tbilisi, 1978), Esbroeck was the first to study Modrekili's *Iadgari* in the full context of Georgian hymnographic collections, bringing to light essential details of their

interrelationship and difference. He noted that Modrekili's calendar of hymns is rich in Georgian proper material too: John of Edessa, Konstanti Kakhi, Gregory of Neocaesarea, Abo Tbileli. The scholar assumed that the collection must have contained hymns dedicated to Saint Nino and Euthymius the Athonite as well.

Esbroeck's paper, *Le Catholicos Antoine I-er et son "Martirika"*, was devoted by Esbroeck to the study of hymns dedicated to Georgian saints proper. It transpired that compilation of an hagiographic collection dedicated to Georgian saints alone was not only Anton I's idea. The priority of compiling such a collection belonged to Onopre Machutadze, a 17th century abbot of the Monastery of David Gareja. The work started by him was completed early in the 18th century by Gabriel Saginashvili. Later this work was continued by Besarion Orbelishvili. Part Two of Esbroeck's study deals with the identification of Anton I's sources, basing himself on M. Kavtaria's works as well¹. Esbroeck concludes that Anton was familiar with Italian sources too.

Esbroeck's study, *Euthyme l'Hagiorite: le traducteur et ses traductions*, constituting a novel assessment of the translation method of Euthymius the Athonite, should be considered his major work. Esbroeck opposes Kekelidze's view, according to which Euthymius "either added something to the original, or took something away from it, or freely altered passages, producing an absolutely new redaction"². Esbroeck reanalysed the Old Georgian translations studied by Kekelidze in order to determine Euthymius' method of translation (*The Small Nomocanon, The Life of Maximus the Confessor, The Small Synaxary, The Life of Ilarion the Georgian, Maximus the Confessor's Questions to Thalases, The Miracles of St. Mikel*) and Eprem Mtsire's well-known *Testament on Euthymius*. The researcher concluded that Euthymius did not translate exactly - word for word: he deleted or added not whole paragraphs or fragments taken from other works, but only words. Esbroeck believes that Euthymius used other redactions of the works

named that are today lost, or must be brought to light. It may be noted here that Esbroeck published the text of Euthymius' translation of Maximus' *The Life of the Virgin*, with a complete French translation - CSCO, vol. 478/SI, t. 21; vol. 479/ SI, t. 22.

French Kartvelologists made a significant contribution to the study of the Georgian redactions of the Apophthegms. W. Bousset's fundamental work, *Apophthegmata Studien zur Geschichte des ältesten Mönchtums, Tübingen, 1923*, brought together the Greek and oriental MSS of the Apophthegms, with a comparative study of Greek, Latin, Coptic, Syriac, and Armenian apophthegms. However, the Georgian versions were omitted in the work. M. Dvali's two-volume monograph (*"Old-Georgian Translations of Medieval Novellas"*, Tbilisi, vol. I, 1966, vol. II, 1974) was devoted to the Old-Georgian translations of apophthegmatic texts. In his *Les apophthegmes dans les versions orientales*, Esbroeck continued the study of Georgian Apophthegms in the context of other old redactions, paying special attention to the Slavonic and Armenian versions. One redaction of the latter version is translated into Georgian. The researcher specified the lists adduced in Dvali's edition and in some cases, details of identification with the Greek original.

Taking into account Esbroeck's above-discussed study, B. Outtier made an in-depth study of Euthymius' translation of the Apophthegmata in his paper: *Le modèle grec de la traduction géorgienne des apophthegmes par Euthyme*. In his opinion, the collection of Apophthegms translated by Euthymius does belong to a systematic collection, but to the particular redaction deriving from the alphabetic-anonymous type. In Euthymius' translation some apophthegms are rendered exactly, while in some the pattern is relatively altered.

In 1975 Outtier published the Georgian text of the hitherto unknown fragments of the Georgian *asomtavruli* ("uncial") lectionary (*Fragments oncieux du lectionnaire géorgien*). These 10th-century fragments are preserved in the Armenian Monastery of Lebanon. In it several days of fast differ from the well-known lectionaries. The Great Lectionary of Jerusalem had been edited by

¹ M. Kavtaria, The life and activity of Besarion Orbelishvili, - *Bulletin of the Institute of Manuscripts*, vol. I, 1959 (in Georgian).

² K. Kekelidze, *Studies*, vol. I, 1956, pp. 188-189 (in Georgian).

national literature on the conversion of their country was created among the Iberians, it was imported from abroad.

Peeters devoted significant studies to texts of the original Georgian hagiographic corpus, publishing their translations too. Special mention should be made of the *Life of Ilarion* the Georgian, with a review and Latin translation of the text; the Passion of the proto-Martyr Razhden; *A History of Georgian Monasteries*, with Latin translations of the *Lives* of Ioane and Euthymius the Athonites, Giorgi the Hagiorite, Serapion of Zarzma and Grigol Khandzteli; also: studies on *The Passion of Michael of St. Sabas*; the Martyrdom of Abo (*Les Khazars dans la Passion de S. Abo de Tiflis*); the well-known study of the Passion of Shushanik, with a translation of the text (*S. Šoušanik, martyr en Arméno-Géorgie*), and others.

Especially significant among Peeters' Kartvelological studies is his study of the Latin translation of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (1931), in which the origin of this extremely popular mediaeval European romance is linked to the name of Euthymius the Athonite, and the derivation of the romance from the Georgian *Balavariani* is argued (*La Première traduction latine de "Barlaam et Joasaph" et son original grec*). It was on the basis of Peeters' cited study that the problem of the provenance of the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, posed in French literary criticism at the end of the 19th century in H. Zotenberg's monograph (*Notice sur livre de Barlaam et Joasaph*), was related to Georgian sources. Interest in this problem revived in French literary criticism in the 1950s in connection with the stand taken against Peeters by the German scholar F. Dölger in his monograph published in 1953. This monograph was followed by the reviews of F. Halkin (*Analecta Bollandiana*, t. 71, fasc. IV, 1953) and H. Grégoire (*EEBΣ*, 32, 1963), and P. Devot's philological-historical essay *Les origines du Barlaam et Joasaph grec*.

B. Martin-Hisard devoted a basic study to the *Lives of the Syrian Fathers* - another significant part of the Georgian original hagiographic corpus. She thereby continued the work commenced by Peeters along with research into the initial period of the spread of Christianity in Georgia, on the one hand, and supplemented the translations of Georgian hagiographic texts with French translations of the *Lives of the Syrian Fathers* (Abibos Nekreseli, David of Gareja, Ioane and his pupils), on the other. Her work was issued in

three parts: "*Les treize saints Pères*". *Formation et évolution d'une tradition hagiographique géorgienne (VIe-XIIe siècles)*. Martin-Hisard published also a French translation of the "Life of Ilarion the Georgian": *La pérégrination du moine géorgien Hilarion au IXe siècle*.

Martin-Hisard's study *Du Tao-K'lardzeti à l'Athos* deals with an analysis of the political reality linking Tao-Klarjeti and the Georgian monastery on Mount Athos. A passage in the *Life of Ioane and Euthymius* tells of Ioane's desire to flee to *Spania* (Spain) to save his soul. Martin-Hisard draws attention to the fact that the theme of fleeing to another country occurs frequently in hagiographic texts, turning into a kind of *topos* for the Lives of saints (10th-12th centuries). The researcher believes that Grigol Khandzteli set up a vast monastic complex in Tao-Klarjeti, this making for a transition from anachoretic to monastic life. The latter form was shunned by monks owing to their calling. This must have been one reason for Ioane leaving the laura of the church of the Four Gospels. The same may be said of another episode: with the arrival of Tornike, the small community of Mount Athos became involved in secular relations; features of Klarjeti monasticism appeared in Ivron, causing the interest of the Bagrationis. The fact that Ioane failed to depart for Spain reflects the considerable pressure brought to bear on him by the socio-political system of the day.

Special interest attaches to Martin-Hisard's study: *Les Arabes en Géorgie occidentale au VIIIe s. Étude sur l'idéologie politique géorgienne*. On the one hand, she reviews the political ideology of Juansher's historical work in the 8th-9th centuries and, on the other, studies in what form it was used and altered in the 11th-12th centuries by the author of the *Martyrdom of David and Konstantine* to illustrate a new political point of view. In Martin-Hisard's view, in the 7th-9th centuries Juansher could extol Byzantium and the Georgian Khosroid kings, giving priority to Eastern Georgia over Western Georgia. The adaptation of Juansher's work by the hagiographer accorded with the ideology adopted in the 11th century: by substituting David and Konstantine for Archil and Miri the hagiographer showed that Western Georgia did not submit to the Arabs without fighting, and that it (Western Georgia) atoned for Byzantine heresy (admission of iconoclasm) and upheld the holy

creed of Andrew the Apostle. These references to Byzantine heresies and the unswerving adherence by the Georgians to the true faith occur in Giorgi the Athonite's *Life* as well, being characteristic of the 11th-12th centuries. The author of the *Martyrdom of David and Konstantine* is not an anti-Byzantinist, but he does not present his country's history as dependent on Byzantine history, but the other way round. Martin-Hisard appended French translations of both texts to her study: the relevant fragments of Juansher's *History of Vakhtang Gorgasali* and *The Martyrdom of David and Konstantine*.

The outstanding significance of Byzantine ascetic literary sources translated into Georgian for the reconstruction of the oldest originals of these works was highlighted in European literary criticism. In this respect note should be taken of a study written in French by the Belgian scholar J. Gribomont: *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de S. Basile* (1953). The author summarises the results of long research into Basil the Great's ascetic writings. Having studied one Georgian manuscript (Sin-35) of St. Basil's *Asceticon*, Gribomont demonstrated its major importance for the reconstruction of the original redaction of this corpus. Taking Gribomont's monograph into account, E. Khintibidze made a study of all Georgian redactions of St. Basil's *Asceticon*, establishing their place in Byzantine philology¹.

Rustaveli's well-known jubilees and the new translations of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*, published in Paris by this time, were followed by a new wave of response. 1937 and 1964 were two significant dates causing the reanimation of foreign Rustvelology. The influence of G. Gvazava's views, expressed in the Foreword to the translation of the *Man in the Panther's Skin*, issued in Paris, on the views of the authors of studies written on the translation is obvious². Gvazava's view is repeated rather faithfully in D.

Japaridze's encyclopaedic article¹. The French writer and critic E. Jalou also responded to Gvazava-Paon's translation³. He sees the specificity of the Renaissance world view in the fact that the striving of the characters of West-European chivalry romances for the mystic source - the fantastic Grail - is replaced in Rustaveli with the quest for the embodied symbol (Nestan) of beauty and good.

S. Tsouladze's translation of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*, was the most significant development in French Rustvelology in the 1960s. This poetic translation is pervaded with the views of Sh. Nutsubidze, the consultant of Tsouladze. The Rustaveli problems, researched by Nutsubidze in Georgian criticism, are further discussed by Tsouladze in his study, *Connaissance de Roustaveli* (Tbilissi 1966). Other French critics, in their comments, base themselves on Tsouladze, respectively coming under the influence of Nutsubidze's view. Thus, in the studies just cited, in dealing with the biographical issues of Rustaveli and the date of writing the poem, Tsouladze is guided by Nutsubidze's Russian-language monograph - *The Work of Rustaveli*, Tbilisi, 1958. The translator sees in the *Man in the Panther's Skin* "pantheistic trends inspired by Neoplatonism". The ground for this, in his view, is provided by the line: "O one God! Thou didst create the face of every form" (Wardrop's translation). In Tsouladze's translation the line assumed the form: "(Dieu) donna la forme à tout corps", cf. the Russian: "Образ тел во всей вселенной создал ты - единый бог" (Nutsubidze's translation). On the one hand, the precision of the translation is debatable, and on the other, the content of the translation leads one to believe that the poem speaks not of the creation of the world by God, but of God creating the face or form of the world, which is indeed a postulate of Pantheistic materialism. Again on the basis of Nutsubidze's ideas, Tsouladze, for the first time, argues the influence of Neoplatonic ideas on Rustaveli. The translator examines the quatrain: "This thing hidden...", interpreting the essence of ethical monism conveyed in it and pointing out that

¹ E. Khintibidze, Georgian Redactions of Basil the Great's *Asceticon*, Tbilisi 1968 (in Georgian).

² G. Gvazava, Préface: Roustaveli et son oeuvre, dans - Chota Roustaveli, L'homme à la peau de Léopard, texte français de M. Gvazava et M-me Marsel-Paon, Paris 1938.

¹ D. Djaparidzé, Littérature géorgienne; Histoire des littératures anciennes orientales et orales: *Encyclopédie de la pléiade*, Paris 1955.

² Un poète géorgien: *Le Temps*, 17 July 1938.

the "sage Divnos" is Dionysius the Areopagite; the corpus current under the same name must belong to the Georgian Prince Peter the Iberian.

Attention was drawn to the Rustavelian "This hidden thing..." by the critic R. Lacôte in an article published in 1965. In Lacôte's view, the idea of dualism is well expressed in the poem, which is understandable for the period when Neomanichaeism was already known; however, Rustaveli remained a strong adherent of the Areopagite.

Other articles were also devoted to Tsouladze's translation of *The Man in the Panther's Skin*: M. Brion, *A l'assaut des sommets* and Max Pol Fouchet *nous parle du barde Caucasien - Chota Roustaveli*. The available Georgian sources on the poem were extensively reviewed by N. Salia, with translations of excerpts, in her paper *Le poème médiéval géorgien - "Le Chevalier à la Peau de Tigre", son importance littéraire et scientifique*. The author based herself on the works of G. Tsereteli, K. Kekelidze, A. Baramidze, and especially Sh. Nutsubidze.

K. Salia presented a comprehensive review of the entire Georgian literature for the foreign reader (*Bedi Kartlisa*).

Georgian literature of the Soviet period is given comparatively less attention in French-language literary criticism. In this respect, special mention should be made of a monograph by the Belgian researcher Goldie Blankoff-Scarr (Brussels 1987) in which the works of Nodar Dumbadze and Chabua Amirejibi are studied through typological parallels with the literary heritage of Fazil Iskander and Chingiz Aitmatov.

Rosmarie Kieffer, a journalist from Luxembourg, wrote special articles on Georgian poetry. She reviewed the works of Murman Lebanidze, Ana Kalandadze, and Grigol Abashidze, translating their poems into French. Her study of the *Visramiani* is noteworthy, *Recontre avec la littérature géorgienne: Le roman de Vis et Ramin*. According to the researcher, the author of this important mediaeval work is unknown. She notes the significance of the *Visramiani* for mediaeval European literature.

Louis Aragon devoted a long article to Georgian literature in his book: *Littérature Soviétique*. He begins the review of Georgian literature with the 12th century. He discusses Rustaveli's poem by

the Russian and French translations, then reviewing the writers of the so-called Renaissance period. He dwells in more detail on 19th-century literature. Here Aragon's partisan ideology becomes apparent, assessing Georgian writers from this position. Thus, his attempt to detect postulates of Marxist ideology in N. Baratashvili's poetry looks strained. According to Aragon, it is obvious from Baratashvili's poetry that aristocratic Georgia had outlived itself and that if "the poet accords it (Georgian aristocracy) time in his poetry, it is to take leave of it". A separate chapter devoted to a review of Georgian literature of the 1860s, in particular of Ilia Chavchavadze, was given a rather scandalous title by Aragon: "Can One Love Ilia Chavchavadze?" Following in the footsteps of M. Toroshelidze, Chairman of the Union of Georgian Writers in the 1930s, Aragon notes that, though Ilia preached respect for the peasants to the gentry, he did not castigate serfdom as a system - as a social regime. In Aragon's view, Ilia was a reformer of the language and founder of realism, and notwithstanding his clearly defined reactionary views, he still may be considered a progressive figure. Aragon's ideas just cited correspond to the period of pressure of the communist ideology when negative assessment of national tendencies manifested in literature was a *must*. In his essay, Aragon reviewed 20th-century Georgian poets as well: Galaktion Tabidze, Sandro Shanshiashvili, Ioseb Grishashvili, the *Blue Horns* Neosymbolist group, and the Futurists.

Marcel Brion's paper, "*Megui*" - *roman de Grigol Robakidzé*, discusses Robakidze's *Megi*. The critic perceives the development of the Greek classical atmosphere in the novel: the action takes place in ancient Colchis - in Medea's fatherland - and in many respects *Megi* resembles Medea. The author of the paper notes that it is a dramatic climate reminiscent of ancient legends or Greek tragedies: man moves towards the fulfilment of his will without knowing whether he is nearing happiness or death. The French author notes that Colchis is not a bookish reminiscence to Robakidze - he had never ceased experiencing the Classical world in his being.

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