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Section 1. Applied Linguistics

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TEACHING PROGRAMMING THROUGH PRACTICAL PROBLEMS: AN APPLIED APPROACH WITH MINIMAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

This research examines the innovative integration of programming education with English language instruction through a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach, designed to enhance both technical proficiency and communication skills among higher education students with minimal English proficiency. Conducted with 110 students from diverse programming-oriented faculties at Azerbaijan Technical University, the study employed a mixed-methods design, incorporating surveys, classroom observations, and project-based activities to evaluate the effectiveness of this interdisciplinary methodology. The results, supported by robust statistical analysis, reveal that embedding programming within language learning significantly elevates students' motivation, accelerates technical vocabulary acquisition, and strengthens critical thinking abilities. The PBL framework, implemented through real-world projects such as weather applications and student assessment platforms, promotes learner autonomy, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving, aligning seamlessly with 21st-century educational needs. Classroom observations further indicate improved student engagement, self-confidence, and academic performance, underscoring the model's transformative potential. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, this approach not only enriches digital and linguistic competencies but also offers a forward-looking, adaptable framework for modern education systems. As such, it stands as a theoretically grounded and practically inspiring resource for educators and researchers seeking to innovate teaching practices in diverse learning contexts.

Keywords: *Problem-Based Learning, Programming Education, English Language Teaching, Interdisciplinary Approach, Azerbaijan, 21st-Century Skills, Technical Vocabulary, Student Motivation*

Introduction

In the contemporary era, the rapid development of information technologies and the pervasive presence of digital literacy across all areas of life have made it necessary to teach programming skills from an early age. Particularly in higher education institutions, the integration of programming with other disciplines – including language instruction – contributes significantly to the development of both technical and communication skills among students (Robins, Rountree, & Rountree, 2003). In this context, the simultaneous teaching of English and programming skills emerges as one of the core requirements of modern educational models (Richards & Schmidt, 2013).

In the teaching process, it is crucial not only for students to acquire knowledge but also to be able to apply that knowledge in real-world contexts. Therefore, the integration of applied programming activities into English language classes is significant in terms of connecting language learning to technical contexts (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008). It is well established that contextual and project-based activities play a vital role in students' acquisition of new linguistic structures and terminology (Shih, 1986; Costa et al., 2005).

The educational shifts that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and students' attitudes toward online learning have shown that effective learning is not possible without technological support (Bingöl, Halisdemir, & Aghazade, 2022). In this context, the integration of programming education with language learning not only enriches the content but also enhances students' ability to engage in distance and technology-based learning (Allehyani & Algamdi, 2023).

Moreover, it is essential to apply methodologies that take into account the needs of second language learners. Research indicates that personalized and adapted instructional approaches significantly improve students' learning attitudes and outcomes (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Chamot, 2005). Thus, the aim of this study is to explore the integration of applied programming into English language instruction within the context of student needs, interdisciplinary connections, and technological transformation. Ultimately, this approach provides ample opportunities for students to develop not only technical knowledge but also academic and social communication skills (Nunan, 2003; Dafei, 2007).

Literature Review

The growing interest in the integration of programming and language teaching in recent years stems from the need for innovative approaches in education systems. Robins, Rountree, and Rountree (2003) discuss the challenges of learning programming and emphasize the importance of learning strategies tailored to students. Their research shows that programming not only develops technical skills but also fosters sequential thinking and a systematic approach to problem-solving. This aligns with the goals of language teaching (Goh, 2000).

Visual and contextual approaches in teaching English as a second language have been found to significantly enhance students' comprehension and production skills (Derwing & Munro, 2005). Reed and Railsback (2003) argue that when teachers in core subjects offer targeted and functional support for English language learners, learning efficiency increases. In this regard, subjects like programming, which are rich in technical terminology, can be beneficial for students in terms of developing purposeful academic writing and technical vocabulary (Shih, 1986; Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Similarly, the integration of technology-based teaching tools is supported by studies such as Fitria (2021), who discusses the potential of artificial intelligence in enhancing teaching effectiveness, particularly in language learning.

Interdisciplinary teaching models create favorable opportunities to integrate both language and technology learning within the same context. Alrabai (2016) shows that the motivation level of language learners and their interaction with technical knowledge directly affects their outcomes. This confirms the effectiveness of project-based learning, which is based on working on real-life problems (Met & Lorenz, 1997). Moreover, the role of technology in enhancing student engagement in both programming and language learning is also evident in studies by Eteng et al. (2022), who review effective strategies for teaching computer programming in developing countries.

Dafei (2007) has demonstrated a positive relationship between student autonomy and language skills. This relationship is also relevant in programming learning: when students work on their projects, they feel more responsible, engage in research on their own initiative, and collaborate with peers. This model promotes both critical thinking and academic freedom (Chamot, 2005). Such collaborative learning environments also align with Aizawa et al. (2023), who explore how students' language proficiency and academic skills improve when they actively engage in both technical and linguistic contexts.

Nazara (2011), in analyzing students' subjective assessments of their language skills, emphasizes that the use of technology in developing oral skills creates motivation. This suggests that programming activities can positively affect students' verbal expression skills as well as their written skills, an idea that also resonates with the findings of Wang (2024), who examines the effect of digital tools on teachers' and students' engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, research related to the COVID-19 period (Bingöl, Halisdemir, & Aghazade, 2022) reveals that the effective use of digital resources influences students' attitudes toward education. These findings align with research by Allehyani and Algamdi (2023), who demonstrate that teachers can apply more personalized and targeted teaching strategies through artificial intelligence applications, such as ChatGPT (Kostikova, I., Holubnycha, L., Besarab, T., Moshynska, O., Moroz, T., & Shamaieva, I. (2024)).

Methodology:

This study employs the **Problem-Based Learning (PBL)** approach to enhance the acquisition of programming skills through practical, real-life scenarios rather than relying solely on theoretical instruction. Rooted in constructivist learning theory, the PBL model encourages students to actively engage in the learning process by constructing knowledge through experience, rather than passively receiving information (Chamot, 2005; Derwing & Munro, 2005).

By contextualizing programming in meaningful, real-world tasks, students are encouraged to perceive coding as not merely a technical skill, but also as a tool for solving real problems. Projects such as weather applications, electronic registration systems, and student assessment platforms help students develop both algorithmic thinking and the ability to understand technical English terminology (Robins et al., 2003; Goh, 2000).

The methodology implemented in this study followed a five-stage PBL process:

1. **Problem Presentation** – A real-life problem, selected by the instructor, is introduced and contextualized within both programming and language frameworks (Nunan, 2003).
2. **Analysis and Discussion** – Students work in groups to analyze the problem, identify objectives, and determine the necessary knowledge. This stage fosters collaborative learning skills (Reed & Railsback, 2003).
3. **Solution Development** – Students conduct research, examine sample codes, and begin creating their own solutions. Learner autonomy and creativity are emphasized during this phase (Dafei, 2007; Allehyani & Algamdi, 2023).
4. **Presentation and Feedback** – Students present their projects to the class and receive feedback from peers and the instructor, supporting the development of critical thinking and self-assessment skills (Costa et al., 2005).
5. **Reflection** – Students review their learning processes, evaluate their performance, and make plans for future improvement.

This integrated methodology enhances not only programming competencies but also time management, problem-solving, and communication skills (Alrabai, 2016). Thus, programming classes serve as a multidimensional learning environment that supports technical and linguistic development simultaneously.

Participants. The study was conducted with 110 students from Azerbaijan Technical University, representing a range of faculties including Computer Science, English Language Education, and Engineering. This interdisciplinary participation enabled a comparative examination of the method's

effectiveness across different academic backgrounds.

Data Collection Instrument

Data were gathered through a 15-item structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

1. Demographic Information – Age, department, year of study, etc.
2. Student Perceptions – Opinions on the integration of programming and English language learning, rated on a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree) (Armstrong, R. L. (1987)).

Survey Questions:

Below are five items selected from the structured questionnaire administered during the study:

1. Programming education made it easier for me to understand English.
2. Working on real-world problems increased my motivation.
3. Writing code with English terms improved my technical language skills.
4. Programming makes the language learning process more meaningful.
5. Group work made it easier for me to learn.

Survey Results Overview:

The following charts illustrate the distribution of student responses to key survey items related to their experience with integrated programming and English language instruction. These visual representations aim to highlight trends in student motivation, technical vocabulary acquisition, and collaborative learning outcomes. Each chart corresponds to one of the core statements from the questionnaire and reflects participants' levels of agreement on a five-point Likert scale (Armstrong, R. L. (1987)).

Data Analysis

Collected data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Frequency and percentage distributions were calculated, and cross-tabulations were used for further analysis of selected items. The results helped identify general trends and patterns in student opinions and attitudes.

Below is a summary of key survey results:

Question No	Question Content	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Programming education made it easier for me to understand English.	5	9	16	48	32
2.	Working on real problems increased my motivation.	2	6	12	53	37
3.	Writing code with English terms improved my technical language skills.	4	11	18	45	32
4.	Programming makes the language learning process more meaningful.	3	8	19	49	31
5.	Group work made it easier for me to learn.	2	5	14	51	38

Summary of Survey Data – Table

Summary of Observations

Needs analysis and classroom observations indicated that traditional lecture-based instruction is not sufficiently effective in enhancing student motivation or practical knowledge acquisition. The majority of students agreed that programming tasks based on real-life problems provided a more meaningful and goal-oriented learning experience. Participants in project-based learning activi-

ties demonstrated faster mastery of both programming skills and academic terminology (Nazara, 2011).

Additionally, challenges encountered during coding prompted students to develop research habits and encouraged peer-to-peer learning (Met & Lorenz, 1997). Observational data also revealed that student-created projects fostered greater self-confidence, and teachers reported increased classroom participation and more creative problem-solving tendencies (Bingöl et al., 2022).

Discussion and Results

As evidenced in the findings of this study, the integration of Project-Based Learning (PBL) with constructivist teaching methodologies significantly strengthens the effectiveness of student-centered education (Shih, 1986; Goh, 2000). Beyond the acquisition of technical skills, students demonstrated notable improvement in both written and oral communication abilities, highlighting the interdisciplinary benefits of combining programming with language learning.

This model not only facilitates the simultaneous development of programming and English skills, but also cultivates essential 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, autonomous learning, and teamwork (Dafei, 2007; Allehyani & Algamdi, 2023). Through engaging in real-world projects, students were not merely passive recipients of knowledge but became active participants in knowledge construction (Chamot, 2005).

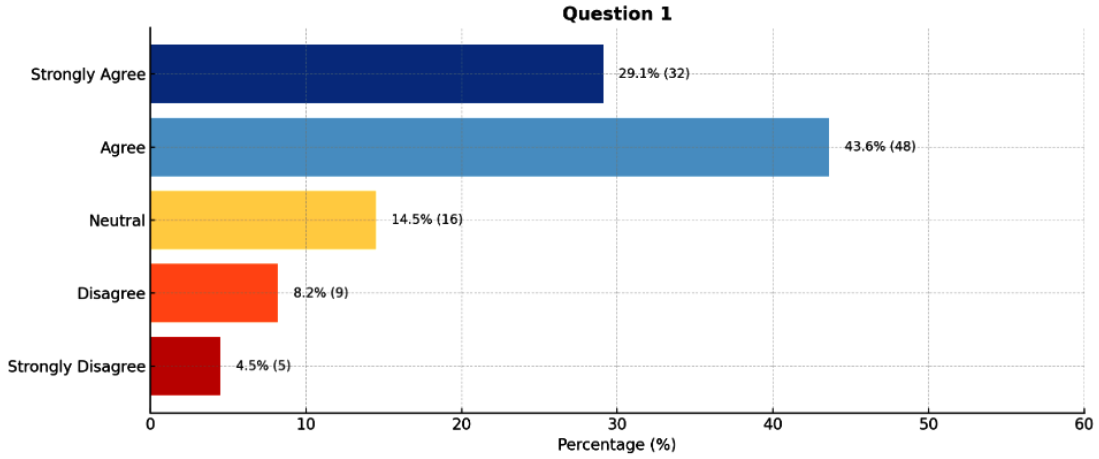
Survey Results

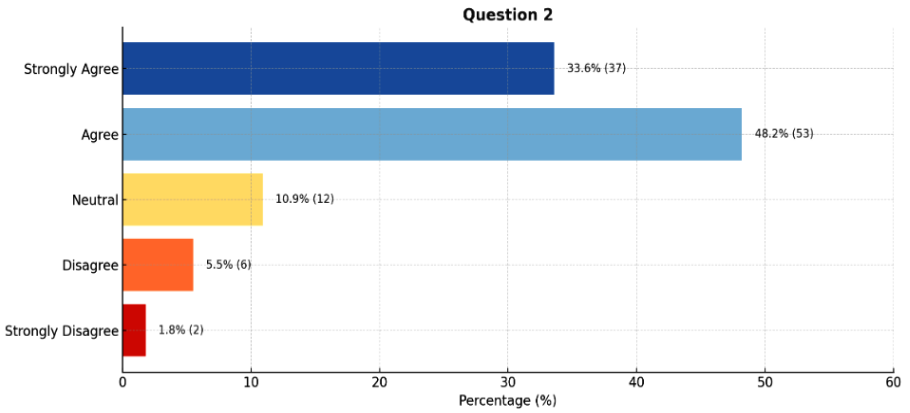
The needs analysis and structured questionnaire administered during the study provided valuable insights into students' experiences. Participants reported significantly higher motivation and engagement when programming was taught through practical, problem-based contexts rather than traditional lectures. They indicated that such approaches enhanced their understanding of both coding principles and technical English.

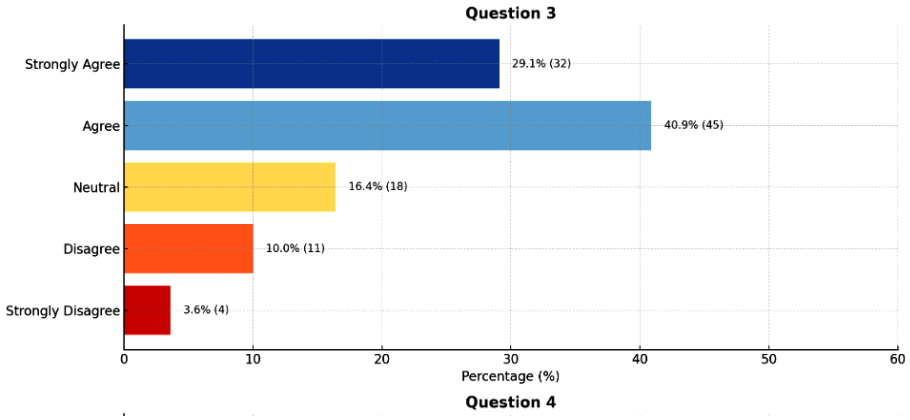
The challenges encountered in project development fostered analytical thinking, encouraged independent research, and stimulated collaboration among peers. According to survey responses, the majority of students expressed that their grasp of English programming terminology improved most effectively during the implementation of practical projects. They also noted gains in confidence when expressing ideas both orally and in writing (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Alrabai, 2016).

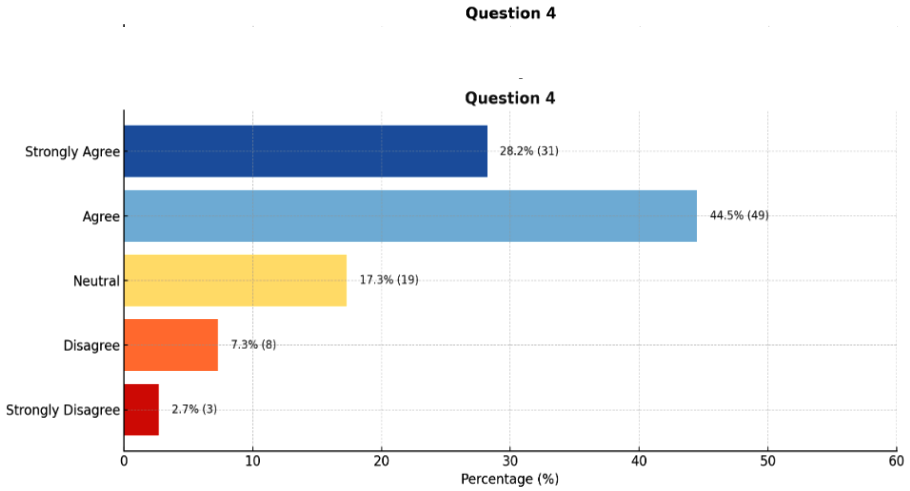
These findings are further supported by the following survey data, which reflect students' responses to key aspects of the integrated programming and language learning experience:

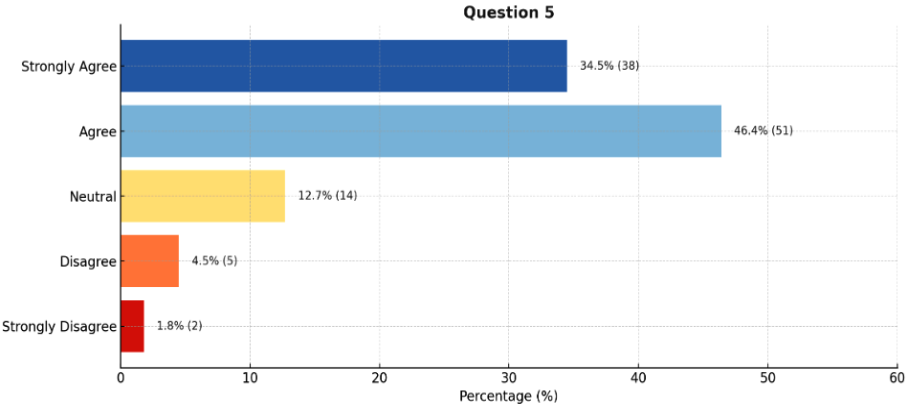
The challenges encountered in project development fostered analytical thinking, encouraged independent research, and stimulated collaboration among peers. According to survey responses, the majority of students expressed that their grasp of English programming terminology improved most effectively during the implementation of practical projects. They also noted gains in confidence when expressing ideas both orally and in writing (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Alrabai, 2016). These findings are further supported by the following survey data, which reflect students' responses to key aspects of the integrated programming and language learning experience:




Question 2
Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
33.6% (37)
48.2% (53)
10.9% (12)
5.5% (6)
1.8% (2)
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
Percentage (%)


Question 3
Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
29.1% (32)
40.9% (45)
16.4% (18)
10.0% (11)
3.6% (4)
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
Percentage (%)


Question 4
Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
28.2% (31)
44.5% (49)
17.3% (19)
7.3% (8)
2.7% (3)
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
Percentage (%)


Question 5
Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
34.5% (38)
46.4% (51)
12.7% (14)
4.5% (5)
1.8% (2)
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
Percentage (%)

Interpretation of Results and Conclusion

The visuals presented above illustrate the distribution of student responses to the key survey questions, clearly reflecting the overall effectiveness of project-based and problem-oriented learning methodologies. These approaches were particularly impactful in promoting both language acquisition and technical skill development. Moreover, students benefited from collaborative and research-driven coding tasks, which enriched their learning experience and encouraged deeper engagement with the subject matter.

Key Findings

Based on the survey analysis and classroom observations, the following core findings emerged:

1. *Enhanced Motivation and Participation:* Problem-based learning significantly increased students' motivation in both programming and English language instruction, fostering more active classroom participation (Robins et al., 2003).
2. *Effective Integration of Language and Content:* Teaching technical terminology through practical, real-life projects supported a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, allowing for deeper conceptual understanding (Shih, 1986; Richards & Schmidt, 2013).
3. *Development of 21st-Century Skills:* Participation in group-based projects helped students develop essential skills such as collaboration, time management, critical thinking, and creativity (Chamot, 2005; Nazara, 2011).
4. *Positive Perception of the Integrated Model:* Most students found the combined teaching of programming and English to be interactive, goal-oriented, and highly effective.
5. *Observed Improvement in Academic Performance:* Teacher observations indicated that the applied model not only improved students' creativity but also positively impacted their academic performance (Costa et al., 2005; Bingöl et al., 2022).

Conclusion

In summary, the integration of problem-based learning and project-oriented activities has proven highly effective in fostering both technical and linguistic competence. This model encourages active learning, supports knowledge creation, and cultivates the critical 21st-century skills required in today's academic and professional environments.

The results of this study align with international research findings and confirm that programming, when used as a vehicle for language learning, transforms the learning environment from one of passive knowledge reception to one of active engagement, creativity, and meaningful application (Echevarria et al., 2008; Nunan, 2003; Dafei, 2007).

Ultimately, the interdisciplinary approach adopted in this study not only enhances students' digital literacy but also empowers them to express themselves more confidently, think critically, and approach problems with creativity and adaptability – qualities that are indispensable in the modern world (Allehyani & Algamdi, 2023; Met & Lorenz, 1997).

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Section 2. Folk art

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IMPROVISATIONS ON TWO SAMPLES OF FOLK WISDOM IN GEORGIAN LITERARY WORKS

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Abstract

The Surami Fortress by Daniel Chonkadze, a novella based on The Legend of the Surami Fortress, was quite popular among Georgian readers in the 19th century and subsequent years. More than one Georgian literary work offers a story about a youth, Zurab, buried alive within the walls of a fortress, reflecting in various social or political contexts the fate of mothers and their sons, one that leaves its peculiar mark on their present and future. Georgia's fight against external and internal enemies alike defined the lives of mothers and their children, repeating itself throughout the centuries all the while – fathers constantly maintaining combat readiness, many dying in war, and their sons raised mostly by mothers. They were the ones imbuing their sons with patriotism, chivalry, and the values of masculinity. How is The Surami Fortress by Daniel Chonkadze – written in the 19th century – perceived today? And why does one of the characters in Niko Lortkipanidze's Diehards – a work created in the 20th century – read this novella? What does the term "mother's heart" or "son's heart" mean? The following matters are under consideration: Zurab as a sacrifice, the youth's love and a woman, the motivations behind Zurab's self-sacrifice, and the mother's unchanging image, which remains immutable in defiance of sociopolitical shifts.

Keywords: *Georgian literature, sacrifice, homeland, love*

Introduction

I do not believe that there is anyone in Georgia who has not seen the Surami Fortress or, at least, heard of the legend about Zurab, a youth buried alive in the fortification's walls. Before the current highway was built, one – traveling down the road stretching to Batumi on the Black Sea shore in West Georgia, or back from the sea to Tbilisi – would surely pass through Surami where the fortress is found. Art historian Parmen Zakaraia offers a sea of information about this structure: fortress and castle town construction in Georgia traces its roots to classical antiquity. In the 11th-12th centuries, the town of Surami emerged in the territory of Kartli,

being known as town up to the late medieval period. The old town's ruins include the fortress on a high cliff in the eastern section of what is known today as the village of Surami. Zakaraia refers to fortifications as "pillars of self-sacrifice." He writes: "It is known for a fact that a fortification is built by those defending themselves. A strong country pursuing conquest does not need defensive structures – there is no enemy in its territory. Such states wage war in someone else's land! Most of the time, especially in later centuries, we were among those defending themselves" (Zakaraia, 2002, p. 9).

The table of contents section of Folk Wisdom, Volume 3, a book published in 1964, mentions the chapter *Legends, Narrative, and Traditions*, including The Legend of the Surami Fortress. Particular topics are also specified: "for the homeland", "for freedom", "labor and construction", and others. The Legend of the Surami Fortress, incorporated into the topic "for the homeland" as part of this publication, uses various sources. Its encapsulated version goes along the lines of the following:

Pressed for time, Georgia's king is trying to build a fortress in order to defend the country from enemies. Each time a wall's construction is finalized, it collapses. The king's desperate vizier, who was in charge of the fortification's construction, turns to a fortuneteller who replies: "A sacrifice is due to strengthen the structure. If you bury Zurab, his mother's only child, alive within the walls, the fortress will be built to last forever" (Folk Wisdom, 1964, p. 106–107). The text includes a spine-chilling mother-son dialogue:

"Zurab, my son, how far up?" his mother screams.

"Alas, mother, to my ankles!" replies her son.

"Zurab, my son, how far up?"

"Alas, mother, to my knees!"

"Zurab, my son, how far up?"

"Alas, mother, to my chest!"

"Zurab, my son, how far up?"

"Alas, mother, I am as good as dead..." (Folk Wisdom, p. 106–107).

Literary researcher Vakhtang Kotetishvili, in his article *The Origin of the Legend of the Surami Fortress and Its Parallels in World Folklore,* delves into the question of the legend's genesis and asserts: "No legend, fairytale, or any creative work would and could appear without clear-cut actualities. The foundation of any figment of imagination is reality [...] In the same vein, the foundation of our legend must be sought in reality, and this reality lies in human sacrifice. And this legend builds on this reality" (Kotetishvili, 1936, p. 20).

"These ideas of church or wall or bridge wanting human blood or an immured victim to make the foundation steadfast, are not only widespread in European folklore, but local chronicle or tradition asserts them as matter of historical fact in district after district" (Tylor, 1871, p. 94–95). Jacob Grimm cites one example: "A new bridge was about to be built at Halle – eventually finalized in 1843-and people insisted that a living child must be immured in the foundation. For Liebenstein Castle to be solid and unshakeable, a child was bought from its mother for a handful of gold and buried alive within one of the walls..." (Bechstein, Thür. Sag., IV, 157-compare to 206) (Grimm, 2019, p. 779). Georgian scholars were well-aware of these books. For one, Mikheil Chikovani writes: "Discipline-specific literature notes that the customs and legends of immuring human beings in walls or foundations can be found in many other countries, such as Russia, Scandinavia, Italy, Germany, and England" (Chikovani, 1955, p. 835). James Frazer documents one ancient practice: "... immuring a living person in the walls, or crushing him under the foundation-stone of a new building, in order to give strength and durability to the structure, or more definitely in order that the angry ghost may haunt the place and guard it against the intrusion of enemies" (Frazer, 1983, p. 186).

Based on a vast amount of materials, Vakhtang Kotetishvili lists several stages in human sacrifice: 1) Actually offering a human being as a sacrifice, 2) Replacing a human being with an animal, 3) Replacing a human being or a living thing with an object, symbolic sacrifice, 4) Human sacrifice proper: A) as a commemoration, B) as an unbelievable story, and C) as the fictionalization of traditions (Kotetishvili, 1936, p. 21). Of special interest to us are the three explanations of the fourth point in that they relate to both oral traditions and texts by given authors.

Two Georgian writers and The Legend of the Surami Fortress

Several Georgian authors from different eras have taken an interest in The Legend of the Surami Fortress. However, works from two different centuries and eras seem to be of special interest to us. In one of them, Zurab is forcedly led to immurement, i.e. he is an unwilling sacrifice. In the other, Zurab voluntarily chooses the path of self-sacrifice. In the first case, we see a violent act, while the other emphasizes choice. The first work is *The Surami Fortress* by Daniel Chonkadze (1830–1860), and the other is Diehards by Niko Lortkipanidze (1880–1944).

What does the word "diehards", the plural form of "diehard", mean? It stands for an ungovernable and yet honorable person living by moral principles. The "diehard" does not imply willfulness, stubbornness building on capriciousness.

The action in Daniel Chonkadze's story unfolds in Tbilisi, Surami, Istanbul, and various locations in Georgia. *Diehards* by Niko Lortkipanidze takes place in the capital – though never pinpointing Tbilisi – and, as we may speculate, Imereti, one of West Georgia's regions. Vakhtang Kotetishvili argues that tales similar to *The Legend of the Surami Fortress* could be found in West Georgia as well. For example, *The Legend of the Minda* Fortress in Racha tells the story of one Mindeli, a youth whose immurement cemented the foundation of a fortification. One Levan Bakhtadze was sacrificed in a similar manner to build the Khoni Church in Imereti. By order of the kind, the young man was forcedly delivered to the construction site, because he and his mother resisted. "As Levan is immured, his mother, standing nearby, asks, 'How far up, my son Levan?' And Levan answers: 'Alas, mother, up to my ankles" (Kotetishvili, 1936, გვ. 20).

When a writer brings other authors into a literary work

The Surami Fortress by Daniel Chonkadze brings together several short stories composed by young people coming together in Tbilisi's blazing summer heat, in Rike („რიყე" [Rike], one of the Old Tbilisi neighborhoods on the Mtkvari Riverbank [Beridze, 1984, p. 399]). One of the young people is the story's author himself: "And, among them, was your humble servant"—this is how Daniel Chonkadze addresses his readers. In other words, the writer was present at the "unprepared" creation of these stories by different people, through skillful improvisation. The first storyteller, Niko, is encouraged by his friends to start his narrative with the traditional introduction to Georgian fairytales: "Once there was and there was not…" (Chonkadze, 2022, p. 20). As Georgian scholar, philologist, and folklorist Zurab Kiknadze (1933–2022) points out, this phrase is the traditional *tsinkari* antechamber of Georgian fairytales (Kiknadze, 2007, p. 152). The word "tsinkari" in the Georgian language means: 1) a corridor, and 2) a small unoccupied room in the entrance leading into other rooms („წინკარი" [*Tskinkari*], 1986, p. 564). So, in the tsinkari of the fairytale, the author already knows what they want to talk about, but how they will develop the story depends on them. And this is exactly what the introduction to The Surami Fortress draws our attention to: "…one and the same story has many narrators who come up with a plot at the drop of a hat" (Chonkadze, 2023, p. 9). When it comes to putting together a theatrical performance, the "Once there was and there was not" not principle was utilized by Georgian director Mikheil Tumanishvili. The word "was" means reality, a true story, while "was not" stands for something composed, imagined – and all this must be presented by every director in a different manner in one and the same play. Almost halfway through Daniel Chonkadze's work, right before the episode of "Durmishkhan's Betrothal", one of the narrators attempts to end his story on a positive note, hoping that the man won't cheat on the woman. To this end, he turns to a slightly modified version of the traditional closing line of Georgian fairytales: "Trouble there but merrymaking here," eventually coming up with this phrase: "Dumped trouble there but brought merrymaking here" (Chonkadze, 2023, p. 63). But the young men continue narrating just the same. Why? Because the story does not follow the usual path of a fairy tale – good does not triumph over evil, so both trouble and merrymaking are present here.

Daniel Chonkadze links together the stories told by the young people, though, unlike his friends, he does it in written –

not spoken – form. After all, authors, when writing, reconsider what they have seen or heard, logically double-checking everything, and reflecting the results of much thought and contemplation. And, when the pen starts cutting a rug on an unblemished piece of paper, the author transforms this accumulated "what" into "how".

Niko Lortkipanidze sets out to tell the story of Ivane, a lack-all little boy from Imereti. The author refers to him as a "storyteller", while one of the characters calls him a "yarn-spinner". The writer prepares Ivane for these characterizations right from the beginning of the first part of this long story: "...Ivane believed in the dragon, the wishing stone, the fountain of youth as something actually existing, something found right here, somewhere beyond this hill" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 317). Having witnessed a real event, Ivane conveys it in a creative manner and turns it into an example of oral tradition. For example, while fishing he observes a fight between an eagle and a snake, subsequently shaping this event into a nearly cinematic story. A domestic worker in the household of one nobleman, Ivane is married to a woman he adores, she is a best friend, his first listener and sharer in his creative endeavors, i.e. the storyteller needs a listener, an audience, a suitable setup. Having found favor with his master, Ivane never complains. "The servants' quarters, the kitchen, and the stable needed a storyteller – sure enough, Ivane was just the man for this job" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 327).

In the first part of *Diehards*, Ivane's grandson, Zuriko (this name being a diminutive variant of Zurab) is reading a book. "Boy, you've listened to my stories, all right. Now, why don't you tell me what's happening in those books of yours?" Zuriko is about to read out loud. But Ivane cuts him off: "Look me in the eye – there's no storytelling without it!" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 336). The grandson puts the book aside and recounts what he has just read. Ivane objects. You're twisting it, he says and tells his version, however, Lortkipanidze did not provide Ivane's version, as the narrator refused and it could not be recorded. But why does Ivane resist? Probably because he craves live communication allowing him to stir the hearts and souls of his listeners and expecting him to take in their internal monologues, unuttered responses, all these factors constituting his oeuvre, so, when his grandson asks to write down this story for one gymnasium student, Ivane objects: "Paper is not open to what's been said in the first place. [...] Let him come over and listen in person." Most likely, this gymnasium student is Niko Lortkipanidze himself, "entering" in this episode as a character with his "small role," seemingly collecting examples of oral tradition and now offering a first-person narrative as a first-hand account: "...I noticed that, as I tried to write down, he would go slurring, forgetting his words, attempting to draw attention without looking me in the face... " (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 337). In the introduction to *Georgian Oral Tradition,* a book by Petre Umikashvili (1838–1904), published in 1964, Mikheil Chikovani writes: "Petre Umikashvili gathered oral lore in every corner of Georgia, documenting hundreds of pieces narrated directly by storytellers, also establishing permanent partnerships in remote, unreachable areas, in this way enriching his collection. In this cause, Petre also enjoyed tremendous assistance from listeners, gymnasium students" (Umikashvili, 1964, p. 6).

Lortkipanidze asserts that about 50 years have passed since Ivane's storytelling. In other words, based on my calculations, Ivane – whom we can also refer to as a folk narrator – told the story of Zurab's live entombment within the fortress' walls in 1888–1894. This begs the question: What book is Zuriko reading? Undoubtedly, it is *The Surami Fortress*, a popular novella by Daniel Chonkadze. What is untrue in Chonkadze's story? What does Ivane the Storyteller object to? In my opinion, that was Zurab's final episode, when he is forcibly immurement into the wall.

Daniel Chonkadze's novella was published in 1859–1860, and the writer must have been 29 years of age at the time. Niko Lortkipanidze, on the other hand, was considerably past-the-middle-age when writing his story, i.e. in 1938–1944. He started working on *Diehards* at the age of 58, completing it aged 63. Daniel Chonkadze's legacy only consists of one piece – *The Surami Fortress*, while Lortkipanidze's oeuvre includes many other works, those far surpassing *Diehards* in excellence among them. The final

year of working on Diehards happened to be the writer's last year on this earth. In other words, one story belongs to a young author, and the other marks the last piece created by a seasoned writer – and they both walk in the path of sacrifice together, each with his "Zurab". And Guram Rcheulishvili (1934–1960), in notes to his unfinished play, *The Surami Fortress* (1960), also writes: "Immuring him within the fortification transforms its construction into creation! I have heard from poets that creation is a pleasure, but for me it is torment incarnate! Still, after it is built, it may become a pleasure for others as well!" (Rcheulishvili, 2007, p. 404).

Daniel Chonkadze and a victim of deception

Durmishkhan and Gulisvardi, the protagonists of *The Surami Fortress* by Chonkadze, are representatives of the lower social class, descendants of serfs. They fall in love with each other, though the man is interested in making a name for himself more than anything else, and down the road he eventually leaves Gulisvardi. The woman, on the other hand, does not forget her love, and – after having mastered fortunetelling – eventually uses her skill to exact revenge on her former lover. She predicts that a youth will be buried alive within the walls of the Surami Fortress and pinpoints Durmishkhan's only son for the vizier at the royal court in total disarray because of an expected enemy invasion. She says, "You must bury a mother's only son alive within the fortress instead of coins, and this youth is Zurab, Durmishkhan's son" (Chonkadze, 2023, p. 100). The fortuneteller realizes that this verdict separates her from God. And, even though she takes advantage of the country's desperate straits, her conscience tells her otherwise: "Hush, O my heart! It's been over 20 years since I distanced myself from God… " (Chonkadze, 2023, p. 100). In the course of twenty years after separating from her lover, Chonkadze continues, the woman took up acting, implying the art of deception and persuasion. Durmishkhan is also a skilled liar. And he says in relation to her lover, "I've deceived her so many times promising to come" (Chonkadze, 2023, p. 92).

Both Durmishkhan and Gulisvardi utilize different ways to influence and manipulate others, the man with his wealth accumulated through trade, also personal self-realization in society, and the woman with fortunetelling and her knowledge of the psyche of desperate people – she is good at discerning the wishes of people of various strata coming to her to peek into the future. Both characters are talented at what they do, but they use their talents for different purposes.

There are three victims in Chonkadze's work: Georgia, Durmishkhan's son and wife, i.e. Zurab and her mother. The novella also raises the issue of serfdom. And Durmishkhan's striving to make it to the top may lie in the very complex pitting him against the privileged nobility. There is nothing unusual about making a name for oneself at any cost, especially given the fact that aiming for leadership is generally embedded in every male's nature. Durmishkhan achieves leadership through trade, because money he earns imposes obedience on everyone, old and young. Things would have ended with reaching the zenith for this character had it not been for the love he once rejected as a youth and now standing in his way, something that eventually degenerates into the woman's unquenchable passion for revenge. In this work, these two characters are as cruel as the nobility and their behavior. The brutal treatment experienced by Durmishkhan in childhood adds fuel to the fire of his wildness. And, after liberation from serfdom, he now abuses others, with indescribable ungratefulness to boot – disrespecting Osman-Agha who gave him half of his fortune, also forgetting that he was liberated from serfdom through the interference of his lover – qualities certainly missing from the code of chivalry. The writer changes one character's name and religion twice: Nodari-Karapeta-Osman-Agha, and Christian-Muslim-Christian. As Nodar slaughters his master's family, he reciprocates the latter's past brutality with his own. However, Osman-Agha, liberated from serfdom, and wealthy, is for the rest of his life haunted by the image of a child killed by him. He believes that killing a master is fair, though murdering an innocent babe is unfair. Thus, under these circumstances – with the past of the main characters of Durmishkhan and Osman-Agha underpinned by abuse – both the abuser and the abused behave almost identically.

Manifested in the novella through the construction of a fortress, the theme of defending one's homeland comes to the fore in the finale, a factor the author does not prioritize, in my opinion. On the other hand, it is clear as day that, when a writer picks a legend to fictionalize it into literature, it is impossible to avoid the legend's main storyline. The tragic finale in this case, i.e. Zurab's burial alive in the fortress' walls, is in fact the gruesome murder of another human being, because otherwise, when a man goes to war to defend his homeland, he still hopes to survive – and, besides, is there a mission greater than to defend one's homeland? The non-voluntary death of Chonkadze's Zurab is a form of torture, the tragedy of one person further exacerbated by the tragedy of his parents. "Chonkadze's way of understanding Zurab's image differs from folk belief. In the narrative, Zurab is forcedly led to the construction site. An ancient Georgian story, however, argues that Zurab – in his desire to expedite the construction of the Surami Fortress and in this way block the path of an invading enemy – voluntarily sacrifices himself for his homeland" (Chikovani, 1955, p. 831).

The young storytellers in Chonkadze's work lack experience and are unable fully to clarify many things, with passion, emotion limiting their scope of discussion. Even though the stories of their schematic characters feature the issue of serfdom-based abuse, among others, their imagery is still full of lively pictures, effective forms, schemes, the reason why every event in Chonkadze's work comes alive before our eyes. Niko Lortkipanidze, on the other hand, takes his time and narrates with well-balanced emotions. In part two of Diehards, the protagonist, Edisher, returns to the capital from abroad and takes a fresh look at the realm of childhood and adolescence he had known before. This is probably how Niko Lortkipanidze himself looked at his homeland in 1907, after returning to Georgia from his studies in the Leoben Mining Academy, Austria.

Niko Lortkipanidze: from Mother's Heart to Son's Heart

Part one of Niko Lortkipanidze's work contains one episode with the author revealing the age of Ivane the Storyteller. He is 60 years older than his grandson, seminarian Zuriko, that means he is 75 years old. This passage shows that Ivane is busy raising his grandson, though not in a dictatorial manner, but indirectly, based on fiction stemming from reality, through artistically narrating something composed "by others," or perhaps "made up by some ancestor." In the same episode, Ivana's relative appears, who is angry with her child because he wants to go to work in the city and earn money for her grandson's education. Next, Ivane sets out telling a folk story, *Mother's Heart*, which is more like a fairytale, though in his own manner, *Mother's Heart* is a piece of folklore: "A youth extracts his mother's heart and takes it to his beloved. On his way, he stumbles, falls down, and cries, 'O mother!' His mother's heart moans in response: "You're not hurt, are you?" (Mother's Heart, 1974, p. 129). The youth comes to his senses and hurls his mother's heart at his lover forcefully enough to make her give up the ghost (Folk Wisdom, 1964, p. 221–222).

In Lortkipanidze's work, however, Ivane tells this story differently, adding hardworking skills to the youth's handsomeness, also describing the unmatched beauty of his lover. Everyone, both old and young, seem to covet the fate of the young man, whose name Ivane the Storyteller leaves unmentioned. His mother, concerned over her son's sorrow, finds out that the reason behind it is his love for one most gorgeous woman who "standing resembles a poplar tree and sitting is like a fawn" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, ტ. 334). In other words, the woman is extremely refined physically, while the comparison with a fawn implies false perceptions on the part of the young man – when an ugly soul abides in a beautiful body. A woman disguised in the image of a fawn is a dangerous predator, indeed – she demands the ring and the beating heart of the young man's mother. If, in the legend from *Folk Wisdom*, the youth personally removes his mother's heart, Ivane the Storyteller averts matricide from him, in this way mitigating the cruelty of the son and intensifying the mother's self-sacrifice. According to the mother's plan, her son must be liberated from passion, vice and – presently spaced out, nearly out of his mind – return to normal life. The mother must be first to leave

this world, and the son must survive, but how can he live mindless, out of his wits, having lost his own *self*? The mother's self-sacrifice including physical pain brings the son back to his senses. And when he stumbles on his way to his lover, his mother's voice asks, "You haven't hurt your kneecap, have you?"

As the youth passes the ring to his lover, the woman finds flaw with it and, arguing that it is too big, puts it on her big toe and stretches it for the man to kiss. With this inconceivable_gesture, the author turns the woman's mindlessness into a supreme manifestation of ugliness, which is disturbing not only through action but also because of the man's excessive humiliation, something she must have done before. Witnessing this brazen act, his mother's heart cries out: "Save my cherished son – look how he's being abused! Somebody help me! He's about to perish!" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 335).

Once back to his senses, and his eyes open, the young man rushes to his mother. Lortkipanidze's Ivane the Storyteller describes the youth's rush through poetic prose: "…he ran through fields and valleys like a deer, flew over mountains and rocks like an eagle, and crossed the sea and rivers like a trout…" Unable to save her, though, he asks for her forgiveness. Ivane concludes: "There's nothing more truthful than a mother's love!" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 335). After all, Ivane grew up without a mother as he says in the beginning of his story: "Mother has found shelter with our relatives, saying that it would make it easier for her to support us. Sure enough, she sends me money and clothes" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 317). Having grown up practically without a mother, Ivane holds his mother's efforts in high esteem. Unlike motherless Durmishkhan, he has not embrace evil, nor has he taken to theft. On the contrary, he works diligently, composing stories here and there, having an excellent insight into people's psyche, the likely reason why, one sunny day, he delivers a lesson in "mother's truthfulness" to his grandchild and a female relative, using to this end a colorful example. Why? Because Zuriko, fifteen years of age, is about to experience the overwhelming emotions accompanying first love, while the female relative has to share out her hard-earned money for her child.

Mother's Heart, as told by Ivane, is not simply quoted in Lortkipanidze's work. The author is preparing the reader for the second part of Diehards, in which Ivane and his family do not appear at all. The only exception is the name „Zurab"—the full form of the diminutive "Zuriko." But who is Lortkipanidze's Zurab?

The second part of Niko Lortkipanidze's Diehards is mosaic-like and richly expressive – it resembles a prolonged dream, where one story emerges to eclipse another, in turn taking a back seat to yet another, and so on. At times, you feel grounded in a real environment; at other times, you find yourself at a public religious celebration. Sometimes, you hear the story of an impoverished mother and her son (Salome and Zurab); at other times, you read the dialogues of the educated Edisher and his mother, the king, the incapacitated architect, and the nalekari (a former Daghestani who became Georgian). In these shifting scenes, power alternates: now the king prevails, now the discontented people whisper. The architect, punished for the collapse of a prison wall, has his hands and feet cut off – and this act of cruelty jolts you awake from the dream. Elsewhere, at the celebration, there are jesters and clowns, dancers and wrestlers – there is a sorrow and there is a joy in the world the writer has created. Heavy clouds hang over the yet-unbuilt fortress of Niko Lortkipanidze, casting a shadow on its inhabitants and foretelling nothing good.

Sacrifice is a way to escape from this country's chaos – the legend must come true, and the fortress cannot be built unless someone is buried alive in its foundation. Edisher – an educated man fresh back from abroad, "dressed like an artist," "a master of his trade,"—is appalled at the idea of burying a human being alive, at merely imagining a gruesome picture of immurement: "He could imagine someone fighting tooth and nail, fighting with his hands, but shoved back by the embittered workers" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 344)—and, full of concern for the country's fate, Edisher thinks to himself: "Bad omens across the board, enormous sorrow, and even greater injustice" (Lortkipanidze, 2022, p. 345). In this part of the work, following the train of Edisher's thought and putting the links of his ideas next to one

another into one continuous chain, suddenly, out of the blue, unidentified. Suddenly, and seemingly to confuse the reader, the same section begins to introduce the motifs of Ivane's story *Mother's Heart* – women are praising a mother and her son, the mother's name is Salome, while the son's name is not mentioned. The reader is convinced that this praised man is Edisher, whose father has died leaving his mother a widow. In addition, this episode points out that the son is full of sorrow, but what kind of sorrow remains a mystery. An elated reader may think that the riddle is solved: after all, it is Edisher, right? Edisher who encounters terrible chaos in the country. This element of surprise leads one to believe that the mother is identified as Salome, one loving to death and caring for her child, i.e. the mother portrayed by Ivane in *Mother's Heart*.

Later in the story, we find out that it is Zurab, not Edisher, creating in our minds an image of two different men struggling with the same heartache. Edisher's famed father has done a great deal of good things for his homeland. Zurab's father was a man lauded for his chivalry, courageous and strong in fighting foes. If, in Ivane's *Mother's Heart*, the unnamed young man is tormented by his love for a woman, Niko Lortkipanidze's mature man is overwhelmed by his love for his homeland. One may say that Edisher and Zurab are one and the same person symbolically personifying a man's self-sacrifice. Edisher is Zurab's intellectual, creative aspect, while Zurab is the enabler of Edisher's chivalry, and both Edisher and Zurab have their own ways of seeking ways out of the country's dire straits. However, the former cannot sacrifice himself, because, first, he believes it to be mere superstition, and, second, to prevent readers from accusing Edisher of cowardice, the author includes one provision on the list of requirements for a prospective sacrifice: it must be a penurious youth embracing sacrifice of his own volition. As a member of the intelligentsia, Edisher must be quite well-off. One passage even refers to him as "lord." And, if anything, poor people do not study abroad. But Salome's son, Zurab, is poor. His family has been abused and persecuted by their overlord, but he never loses his sense of patriotism. And, in the novella, Zurab applies himself as much as a prince groomed for the throne, i.e. learns how to care after his country from an early age. That is probably why Lortkipanidze picks a quote from poet Grigol Orbeliani's poem as the epigraph for *Die-hards*:

"His heart as strong as diamond the darkest hour cannot change—

And agile, singing, lover of his land he does remain."

A heart that draws love for the homeland like a magnet. Zurab's decision is tragic for his mother – we know a mother's devotion from Ivane's "Mother's Heart". But, since the writer puts love for one's homeland above love for a woman, in Zurab's image he brings together the hearts of all men burning with love for their homeland, while Edisher's image unites the efforts of thinkers serving healthy, positive thinking, studying people, and using their cognitive skills to stand sentinel over their homeland.

Conclusion

Both writers paint a grim finale. Chonkadze's Zurab is grabbed by the hand and bound, i.e. he is taken away by force like a living being offered as a sacrifice. Lortkipanidze's Zurab volunteers to sacrifice himself for the homeland. Although Zurab dies in one work and survives in the other, the second Zurab's effort is equivalent to self-sacrifice, for he chooses and sets out on a path to Golgotha to defend his homeland.

Chonkadze's sacrifice has no future because it is based on the destruction of life, and perhaps that is why, on moonlit nights, only the shadow of the mother circles the proudly standing Surami Fortress, from whose walls Zurab's unceasing tears flow. Lortkipanidze leaves only ruins in the epilogue of the fortress "built by his Zurab" (the author does not specify that this is the Surami Fortress). However, here too, on moonlight nights, a certain living being appears, though it is neither Zurab nor his mother – it is a little boy with curly hair who climbs a rope to ring the bells as a daily reminder for people that self-sacrifice for one's homeland can also be bloodless, and that fierce military action on a battlefield is not the only way to demonstrate one's patriotism. Its scope of activity is broad – it stands for any job accomplished conscientiously and

cognitive abilities in one. Thus, any person today can become a hero, anyone fighting in the battlefield for professional finesse, and such professions abound in this world to include scientists, writers, painters, artisans, green thumbs tending to a municipal flower garden... and soldiers whose profession is to defend one's homeland.

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Section 3. General questions of philology and linguistics

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ABOUT THE MOST RECENT PROBLEMS OF LEXICOGRAPHY

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Abstract

This article investigates the theoretical dimensions of digital technologies in reshaping modern lexicography, focusing on their capacity to create adaptive, virtual lexicographic frameworks. It proposes a novel conceptual model for standardizing linguistic resources across cognate languages, with a specific emphasis on the Turkic languages. By analyzing the interplay of normalization, terminological unification, and multilingual lexicography, the study advances a theoretical foundation for linguistic convergence, contributing to the broader discourse on language standardization and digital lexicographic innovation.

Keywords: *lexicographic means, information technologies, terminology, word-term of course, orthography, orthoepy, rhetoric, language teaching methodology, Multiparametric city*

Introduction

Scientific importance. Dictionaries and reference works must evolve to meet diverse modern needs, prompting the question of what lexicographic tools are best suited for today's challenges. Electronic dictionaries, unlike their static predecessors, are dynamic and virtual, existing only when accessed, as Schryver, (2003). notes: they "needn't really be there anymore." Atkins (1996) further describes this as their "virtual" quality, enabling real-time adaptability. This transformation allows lexicographers to rethink data storage, processing, and accessibility, fostering innovative applications such as shared lexicographic systems for related languages like Turkic languages. By leveraging these capabilities, electronic lexicography not only addresses current demands but also paves the way for standardized, interconnected linguistic resources.

1. Normalization, unification and standardization in lexicography

Nowadays, research on four interdependent issues assumes particular relevance. These issues are as follows (Tarp, S., & Gouws, R. H., 2008).

1. Lexicography and terminography;
2. Averaging of terms;
3. Multilingual dictionaries;
4. Establishing the role of dictionaries within the national language corpus (language groups).

Undoubtedly, both evident and subtle differences exist between these areas in terms of their scope, complexity, and development. The comparison between the concepts of lexicography and terminography arises from the contrast between "word" and "term." Previously, the development of theoretical and practical aspects of different types of dictionaries was referred to as *lexicography* (Gorodetsky B. Y., 1983).

Modern lexicography is not limited to theoretical studies on dictionary compilation and principles of dictionary development. It also includes the practical publication of various types of dictionaries to meet the demand for linguistic resources. Modern lexicographic tools must adhere to normalization requirements, at least at the orthographic level. That is, in a modern dictionary, a word must be presented according to the orthographic norms of its respective language. Thus, every lexicographic resource fulfills an additional function in maintaining language standardization (Swanepoel, P., 2006).

The results of lexicography are widely applied in areas such as orthography, orthoepy, rhetoric, and language teaching methodology. Lexicography is an integral part of linguistics. Scientific-technical lexicography focuses on the theory and practice of creating specialized (terminological) dictionaries. These dictionaries define and classify the nomenclature of various scientific disciplines and their associated terms. A. S. Gerd refers to scientific-technical lexicography as the initial branch of applied terminology (Gerd A. S., 1986, p. 24). At the same time, V. M. Leichic (1996), using the term "applied terminology," pointed out that "terminography" is derived from the phrase "terminological lexicography."

Lexicography is closely linked with lexicology, benefiting from its research findings while addressing scientific and practical issues. Conversely, lexicography supplies extensive material for lexicological study. Similar relationships exist between terminology and terminography. In terminology, the selection, organization, and analysis of terms ultimately lead to their inclusion in dictionaries. This means that modern terminological dictionaries can contribute to the organization, unification, and standardization of terms. Terminography thus has the potential to evolve terminological dictionaries into standardized term dictionaries (Hjørland, B., 2023).

In fact, terminography emerged as a subfield of lexicology (Alberts, 2001). From the same perspective, terminology originated within lexicology before becoming an independent field. In solving terminographical problems, issues such as synonymy, homonymy, polysemy, conceptual equivalence, and definition point back to terminological studies. Therefore, there are no obstacles to regarding terminography as a subsection of terminology. However, in the modern era, the trend toward differentiation and integration in every scientific field is a recognized reality.

One of the increasingly urgent problems in modern linguistics is the issue of *averaging*, especially in the context of convergence among cognate languages. Moreover, averaging plays a significant role in the development of formal languages. At present, efforts and studies are ongoing in both directions. The process of averaging among cognate languages initially appears straightforward due to the existence of common units and components at various levels. These common elements serve as reference points in selecting and defining other tools for averaging.

It is essential to identify and document these shared units, study them comparatively, and determine their scope. In other words, it is necessary to clarify which language element is common or similar to the element of another language. This involves analyzing the identity and similarity between elements A in one language and B in another, then extracting the shared elements. If A = B reflects mathematical identity, in linguistics, identity and equivalence are viewed from multiple angles – graphical, phonetic, semantic, and distributive. Hence, comparison and identification in linguistics are characterized by their multiparametric nature.

Currently, the problem of a *common language* receives particular attention in linguistics. While the concept itself is not new,

several languages are used as common or lingua franca in different contexts. Globally, English serves as the primary common language, and its domains of use continue to expand. Geographically, other languages may also function as regional lingua francas, depending on the language's prevalence and influence in that area. The integration of speakers of different native languages within a state often leads to the emergence of a regional common language. Historically, the language of a dominant state has often functioned as the regional lingua franca in political systems – for example, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian (May, S., 2014).

2. Lexicographical issues of common Turkic language

Some developments in the modern world necessitate a fundamentally different approach to the issue of a common language. In particular, the growing convergence among Turkic peoples has intensified the need for a shared linguistic medium. In the current context, with political and ideological barriers removed, it has become more feasible for one of the existing Turkic languages to assume the role of a common language. Nevertheless, the issue remains a subject of diverse perspectives. Occasionally, discussions arise around the creation of an entirely new common Turkic language.

Addressing this debate, A. Akhundov noted:

"When we speak of a common Turkic language, what is meant is not the creation of a new language, but rather the establishment of all Turkic languages on the basis of unified principles – such as a common alphabet, orthographic norms, and shared terminology. The concept of a common Turkic language encompasses two critical aspects (İskender, H., 2023):

1. a common Turkic language as a universal tool for communication, and
2. a common Turkic language as one underpinned by a shared alphabet, orthography, and terminology" (Akhundov, 2003, p. 245).

The author emphasized that there is no necessity to artificially construct a new language by merging elements from various Turkic languages, as such an initiative would likely result in an unnatural and unproductive outcome. Indeed, historical experience demonstrates that artificially created languages lacking national foundations and practical usage – such as Esperanto – have largely failed to integrate into actual communication systems.

In the context of intergovernmental relations and communication among Turkic-speaking communities across different states, selecting one of the existing Turkic languages as the common medium is a realistic alternative. This selection should be based on a set of objective criteria, including (Ouhsousou, S., & Tonkal, Ö., 2024):

- the language's scope of usage,
- its geographical distribution,
- accessibility for learning,
- number of speakers,
- phonetic and grammatical structure,
- and overall simplicity.

These features can serve as indicators of a language's potential for broader communicative adoption.

The solution to the problem of linguistic averaging among Turkic languages must begin with a comprehensive comparative analysis of their lexical foundations. According to A. Akhundov, two principles are central to addressing the common Turkic language issue through lexical alignment:

1. identifying the historical trajectory of borrowed lexicons in Turkic languages and selecting the most advanced variants in terms of modernity, and
2. adhering to historical convention, particularly in orthographic practices (Akhundov, 2003).

Naturally, the terminological system stands out as a key area of focus. The current linguistic status of each Turkic language allows for targeted interventions in its terminological system. In fact, many fields already display overlapping terminological units across Turkic languages, and further harmonization of these elements is entirely feasible.

A practical avenue for such harmonization lies in lexicography. It is therefore essential to conduct comparative studies of modern terminological dictionaries of various Turkic languages. Electronic lexicography, in particular, offers the advantage of compiling all field-specific terminological dictionaries into digital formats, thereby enabling wider accessibility and integration.

This task is also significant for the development of a common *corpus* of Turkic languages. In both world linguistics and Russian linguistic tradition, a *corpus* is understood as a systematically organized collection of texts in a natural language, stored electronically, and designed to support research on various linguistic features. As Mahmudov (2013) describes, corpora are created and used based on specific rules and offer valuable empirical data for linguistic studies.

Within the framework of a national corpus, two important sub-corpora can be defined: lexicology and terminography. These components assume particular relevance in addressing the problem of language averaging and establishing a common Turkic language. Naturally, each national corpus is an open and dynamic system, subject to refinement and expansion through the inclusion of new sub-corpora.

A sub-corpus on terminography should encompass existing terminological dictionaries and also project the development of new ones. The process of lexical averaging at the dictionary level requires, above all, the creation of comprehensive term inventories. Since averaging concerns multiple languages, the development of multilingual dictionaries becomes a key necessity. Ensuring concept-term equivalence, managing synonymy, and reducing polysemy are central tasks in this context, as these challenges can impede the early phases of linguistic convergence.

Constructing multilingual terminological dictionaries based on shared elements allows for partial resolution of these challenges. In practice, bilingual terminological dictionaries can serve as reference models. For instance, dictionaries such as English–Turkish, English–Azerbaijani, English–Turkmen, or English–Uzbek may be examined for comparative purposes.

Typically, in such dictionaries, the left column contains stable vocabulary items in the base language (e.g., English), while the right column lists their equivalents in the target language. However, selecting equivalents for terms often results in increased variability, optionality, or polysemy on the target-language side. Thus, several potential translations may correspond to a single base-language unit. Addressing this asymmetry is an essential step in achieving meaningful lexical convergence.

The idea of a common Turkic language encompasses all structural levels of language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and most critically, lexicon. Among these, the formulation of a unified lexical system stands out as a foundational component. In every language, new terms are continuously being created, and the number of borrowed or adapted terms in specialized terminologies is increasing. This dynamic facilitates the advancement of terminological commonality, which is essential for linguistic convergence (Kornfilt, Jaklin. 2018).

In contemporary linguistics, two principal tools for convergence among cognate languages are widely recognized: (1) the unification of orthographic systems through the adoption of a common alphabet, and (2) the harmonization of terminological systems. Both approaches support the broader goal of linguistic standardization and mutual intelligibility among related languages.

Currently, favorable conditions have emerged for the convergence and lexical averaging of specialized terminologies across different Turkic languages. There is a generally positive attitude toward this process, particularly in the domain of technical and scientific vocabulary. The presence of shared linguistic structures and historical interconnections among these languages further facilitates such efforts. In genetically related languages, opportunities for convergence tend to be more pronounced due to overlapping grammatical, phonetic, and lexical features.

To illustrate these possibilities, a comparative review of terminological usage in Azerbaijani, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Uzbek – specifically in the field of automated control systems – proves insightful. The analysis reveals that numerous technical terms, such as *vector, ventil, anode, cathode, harmonica, balance, camera, generator, aggregate, histogram, phase, scheme, controller, coder, graph, code, diapason,* and *diagram*, are employed in virtually identical forms across these four languages. This phenomenon is primarily attributable to the transfer of these terms via the Russian language during the Soviet era (Pavlenko, A., 2008).

Many of these terms exhibit no graphical or phonological variation. For instance, terms such as *diapason, anode, cathode, phase, vector, contactor,* and *assembly* are entirely consistent in both spelling and pronunciation across the examined languages. Such uniformity significantly strengthens the prospects for terminological unification and supports the broader process of linguistic averaging. These terms, by virtue of their identical or near-identical forms, can be classified as *shared terminology* within the Turkic linguistic domain.

However, the comparative analysis also indicates the presence of minor phonetic discrepancies in some terms. A representative example is the term *system*. While Azerbaijani employs the form *sistem*, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Uzbek continue to use *systema*, retaining the final "a" as in the Russian original. This suggests that phonetic divergence, even when minimal, persists among certain terms due to differential degrees of Russification or internal language reforms. Nevertheless, these minor variations can be systematically addressed and reduced through standardization initiatives (Grenoble, Lenore A., and Nadezhda Ja Bulatova. 2017).

Implementing a lexicographic filtering process for technical vocabulary across disciplines will allow scholars and experts to construct a unified terminological system. Such a system could then be incorporated into the national language corpora of the respective Turkic languages. The next logical phase involves analyzing the functional usage of these terms in various linguistic environments to determine their adaptability, frequency, and semantic consistency (Fantechi, A., Gnesi, S., Lami, G., & Maccari, A., 2003).

Through systematic standardization efforts, supported by lexicographic analysis and corpus-based studies, it becomes increasingly viable to lay the foundation for a unified and functional terminological framework for the Turkic languages.

3. Establishment of relations among the sections of lexicography

Lexicography, as a multifaceted domain within linguistics, encompasses a variety of subfields distinguished by their purpose, content, and application. Despite numerous attempts to define its exact structural divisions, there remains an absence of universally accepted boundaries and clear-cut criteria to differentiate its sections comprehensively. Nevertheless, based on historical development, functional orientation, and typological features of dictionaries, several core sections of lexicography have been identified. According to H. Jackson (2013), these sections include:

1. Philological lexicography
2. Teaching lexicography
3. Terminological lexicography
4. Encyclopedic lexicography
5. Nomenclatural lexicography
6. Etymological lexicography
7. Historical lexicography

However, this classification, while functional, is not devoid of limitations. For instance, empirical research and practical analysis suggest that *etymological* and *historical* lexicography may be better understood not as distinct categories, but as overlapping or even integrated components. Given that historical lexicography often addresses the origins and diachronic evolution of lexical units, it inherently incorporates etymological insights. In this light, etymological lexicography may be more appropriately positioned as a subdomain within historical lexicography, rather than as an independent section (Pearsall, J., 2015).

Similarly, elements related to pedagogy and history can be embedded within various other branches – particularly in philological, terminological, encyclopaedic, and nomenclatural lexicography. For example, the compilation of etymological or historical dictionaries can also be regarded as a function of philological lexicography, depending on the linguistic materials used and the intended purpose of the resource.

One notable subset of lexicographic practice is *teaching lexicography*, which is primarily concerned with language acquisition and instructional materials. This direction heavily relies on *lexico-statistical* methodologies. Numerous studies have demonstrated the application of *linguo-statistical* analyses in shaping teaching-oriented dictionaries. These include frequency dictionaries, alphabet-frequency lists, and core vocabulary compilations, which are critical in determining lexical minima for educational purposes. Although this area ini-

tially appears as an independent field, current research indicates that teaching lexicography functions more appropriately as a *subsection*, rather than a separate major branch, of philological or applied lexicography.

Taking these factors into account, contemporary scholarship increasingly supports the consolidation of lexicographic classifications into four principal categories (Fuertes Olivera, Pedro A., 2008):

1. **Philological lexicography** – encompassing historical, etymological, and teaching subdomains.
2. **Terminological lexicography** – focused on subject-specific and scientific vocabulary.
3. **Encyclopaedic lexicography** – dealing with concept-based knowledge rather than purely linguistic content.
4. **Nomenclatural lexicography** – emphasizing standardization and classification of object names and scientific designations.

Additional subfields that emerge from these categories – based on thematic, functional, or linguistic materials – should be regarded as subdivisions rather than standalone branches.

Modern technological advancements, particularly in the realm of *electronic lexicography*, have significantly transformed the structural and functional relationships among these lexicographic sections. The use of digital platforms and electronic databases allows for multi-purpose storage, processing, and dissemination of lexicographic content. For instance, it is now feasible to derive specialized, small-scale educational or explanatory dictionaries from extensive general encyclopedic databases through digital filtering and thematic segmentation.

Moreover, the integration of *illustrative material* into dictionaries has become more efficient due to searchable digital corpora and online linguistic resources. Researchers and compilers no longer face the same level of difficulty in sourcing examples and usage data; instead, they can access vast textual repositories through computational tools and search engines, thus enhancing both the quality and reliability of illustrative entries in modern dictionaries.

In conclusion, while traditional lexicographic classifications retain relevance, the dynamic nature of lexicographic practice – fueled by technological innovation – necessitates a more integrated and functionally adaptive understanding of its subdivisions and interrelations.

Conclusion

Digital technologies redefine modern lexicography by enabling theoretical convergence between lexicography and terminography, particularly in standardizing terminology. This study proposes a conceptual model for a unified lexicographic framework among Turkic languages, grounded in normalization and comparative terminological analysis. Core lexicographic domains – philological, terminological, encyclopedic, and nomenclatural – inform this framework, enriched by pedagogical insights. Digital lexicography thus emerges as a pivotal field, advancing theoretical paradigms for linguistic standardization and multilingual communication across cognate languages.

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Section 4. History of Literature

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PLACING THE MARTYRDOM OF SAINT QUEEN SHUSHANIK IN THE CHRISTIAN MARTYRDOM TRADITION: A LITERARY STUDY

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Abstract

This article examines *The Martyrdom of Holy Queen Shushanik*, one of the earliest known works of Georgian hagiographic literature, within the broader context of Byzantine and medieval studies. Composed in the 5th century by Iakob Khutsesi (Georgian: ხუცესი, which means 'the priest'), this text holds exceptional significance as the first surviving original Georgian literary work. The study explores the historical and cultural background of the narrative, analyzing its theological, literary, and linguistic features while considering its place within the Christian martyrdom tradition. It assesses the influence of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* on later Georgian literary traditions. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of its importance in both Georgian and broader medieval literary contexts by situating the text in a comparative framework.

Keywords: *Old Georgian Literature, Georgian hagiography, Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik, Iakob Khutsesi, Medieval Literature, Vakhtang Gorgasali*

Introduction

Old Georgian literature raises many issues for research and interpretation, with the question of the origins of Georgian literature being one of the most fundamental. To this day, the earliest surviving monument of original Georgian literature is considered to be Iakob Khutsesi's *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* (second half of the 5th century CE). However, the fact that no earlier Georgian works have been preserved does not necessarily mean that nothing was written in Georgian before the second half of the fifth century. *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* itself serves as evidence to prove that Georgian literature must have had certain antecedents. For this reason, many scholars have traced the beginnings of Georgian literature to even earlier centuries.

Georgian philologist P. Ingorokva (1893–1983) believed that pre-Christian Georgian literature from the pagan period must have preceded ecclesiastical writings. He wrote that "the folkloric texts included in the Georgian chronicles date back to before the fifth century" and, together with another researcher I. Lolashvili (1918–1984), identified the now-lost *Nebrotiani* (Story of Nimrod the Hunter) as one of the oldest works (Ingorokva, 1939, 102; Lolashvili, 1977). Meanwhile, R. Baramidze considered *The Life of Parnavaz*, which was reworked by Leonti Mroveli (11th-century Georgian chronicler) in *The Life of the Kings*, to be one of the earliest Georgian literary works (Baramidze, 1971, 99). According to B. Cholokashvili and I. Grigalashvili, the first hagiographic text written in Georgian was *The Martyrdom of the Children of Kola* (Cholokashvili, 2007; Grigalashvili, 2012). Some scholars argued that the first text was *The Life of Nino* (Siradze, 1997; Nachkebia, 2000; Chkhartishvili, 2021, 107). Another perspective suggests that the earliest Georgian text may have been the hymn *Praise and Glory of the Georgian Language* (Pataridze, 1993; Narsidze, 1985). Raised the question of whether the so-called *Description of Idols*, included in Leonti Mroveli's *The Life of the Kings*, could be the oldest Georgian text (Kuchukhidze, 2004). Furthermore, a credible interpretation of sources preserved in both Georgian and Greek confirms that Georgians must have had written monuments even in the pre-Christian era (Khintibidze, 2008, 55–63). Another perspective, most systematically argued by Georgian researchers holds that the origins of Georgian literature date precisely to the fourth and fifth centuries and began with Georgian ecclesiastical writings, stimulated by the spread of Christianity in Iberia (Kekelidze, 1960, 418–420).

However, since the origins of Georgian literature are closely linked to Christianity, the earliest period of literature is represented primarily by religious texts.

The first fully preserved original Georgian hagiographical text *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* is highly structured and artistically refined, indicating a developed stage of literature rather than its origins. It not only includes narratives of martyrdom but also preserves information about translated religious texts, such as the Gospel and the Psalms. Furthermore, the existence of biblical translations in the Georgian language during the 5th and 6th centuries is confirmed by ancient palimpsests.

The Martyrdom continues to be a subject of enduring interest for scholars to this day. It has been comprehensively researched from various perspectives, including the study of historical sources and manuscripts, textual criticism, comparative analysis of the Georgian and Armenian versions, authorship, clarification of the chronology of events described in the literary work and the date of its creation, the socio-political context, the determination of the genre, the incipit of the text, linguistic peculiarities of the literary work, etc.

Manuscripts

The text has been preserved in eleven manuscripts. The oldest is Manuscript A 95 (X century) – known as *Parkhali Mravaltavi* [the Collection of Parkhali]. It is written on parchment and contains 12 chapters of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik*; the 16th quire, consisting of 8 folios, is missing, resulting in the absence of the rest of the text. It is unknown when the part went missing, though the text is known to have already been lacunose by the 18th century. According to the colophon of the manuscript, the scribe was Gabriel Patarai, who copied the text in the Parakhali Monastery in Tao (see Description A, I_1, 1973, 361–393). The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik can be found on folios 353r-359v.

Manuscript A 130 (1713) is the second oldest manuscript containing The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik, after the Collection of Parkhali. It is written on paper and a colophon informs that Catholicos Domenti, brother of King Vakhtang VI, had compiled previously scattered and "lost to oblivion" hagiographic works about Georgian saints. At his request, Gabriel Saginashvili copied the entire collection in 1713 at the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in the David Gareji Monastery Complex. The scribe mentions himself several times in the notes to the manuscript (see Description A, I2, 1976, 137–145). The text of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* can be found on folios 99v-107v.

In addition to these manuscripts, *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* is preserved in nine other manuscripts:

- **A 170 (1733)**: The text is on pages 60v-65v (see description A, I2, 1976, 258–260);
- **A 176 (1743)**: The text is on pages 98v-109r (see description A, I2, 1976, 278–286);
- **H 2077 (1736)**: The text of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* appears on pages 60r-64v (see description H, V, 1949, pp. 44–47);
- **H 1672 (1740)**: The text is found on pages 384r-395r (see description H, IV, 1950, 101–105);
- **S 3637 (1838)**: The text of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* is located on pages 74r-78v (see description S, V, 1967, 103–110);
- **H 1370 (1871)**: Written on paper (21x17 cm), in *Mkhedruli* script with purple ink, the text of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* is found on pages 228r-237v (see description H, III, 1948, 328–333);
- **H 2121 (1748)**: The text is on pages 54r-61r (see description H, V, 1949, 74–75);
- **Q 300 (1800)**: The text is on pages 125r-146r (see description Q, I, 1957, 313–316);
- **M 21 (1842)**: See Karanadze, Kekelia, 2018, 152.

All the manuscripts listed above have been preserved at the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, except for M 21, which is kept at the depositories of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, while its photocopy, labeled RT II-No. 22, is kept at the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts.

Georgian and Armenian versions

The martyrological work of Iakob Khutsesi has been known since the 1880s (1882), while the Armenian versions of *The Martyrdom* had been discovered about three decades earlier (1853) (Abuladze, 1963, 9).

There are several Georgian and Armenian versions of *The Martyrdom*: the long and short Georgian versions, the long and short Armenian versions, and the versions included in Synaxaria. Additionally, there are later versions of the work re-edited by Catholicos Anton and Prince Ioane. The long Georgian version has survived in eleven manuscripts. Research showed that the long Georgian versions can be subdivided into two versions – versions a and b. The text in Manuscript A 95 from the Collection of Parkhali (version a) differs from the texts in all other manuscripts (version b). The differences include variations in anthroponyms, extra sentences, word omissions, word additions, word replacements, word order changes, phoneme additions, phoneme omissions, phoneme replacements, conjunction replacements, and stylistic differences. Only the cases where version a differs from the other ten manuscripts have been verified and documented (though several differences also appear between version a and only some manuscripts that belong to version b). The archetype of both versions is undoubtedly the original work written by Iakob Khustesi in the 5th century. However, none of the surviving texts, either linguistically or stylistically, reflects the 5th-century context, as the texts have been significantly edited according to linguistic norms and literary tastes prevailing at the time of edition. The archetype (referred to as the Q1 version) must have been followed by an intermediate version (referred to as the Q2 version), as despite documented differences, 564 Summary both versions are similar linguistically as well as stylistically, not to mention their structural-textual format, which is practically identical in both versions. The intermediate Q2 version should have formed the basis for versions a and b. It is difficult to determine when exactly these versions emerged. The research is further complicated by the fact that the manuscripts of version b from the 11th century or even from a closer period are not available. The oldest manuscript of version b, A 130, dates to the 18th century, specifically 1713, which makes it difficult to analyze the changes it might have undergone. The correlation between the versions based on existing textual material can be illustrated as follows:

The long Armenian version has been found in two variants. One was published in Venice in 1853, and the other was discovered by I. Abuladze in Etchmiadzin (copied in 1689). I. Abuladze (1891–1968) published the text of the

long Armenian version based on both manuscripts. Other scholars argue that the long Armenian version is a translation and adaptation of the long Georgian version (Abuladze 1938, 36, 37, 55; Janashia 1980, 201, 255).

N. Sargsyan copied the short Armenian version in the city of Karin (Erzurum) between 1846 and 1852. Only one manuscript of the short version is available, and it lacks the date. The short and long versions of *The Martyrdom* were published together in Venice in 1853. The short Armenian version is based on the long Armenian version, while the short Georgian version is believed to be a translation of the short Armenian version (Abuladze 1938, 14, 40; Janashia 1980, 188).

I. Abuladze references several Armenian Synaxarion editions. The first is the so-called Synaxarion of Tserentsi, which includes *A Reading of the Cross of Saint Nino* and briefly recounts the *Martyrdom of St. Shushanik* (Abuladze, 1938, 16). The second is the Synaxarion of Ter Israel. I. Abuladze discovered a third, previously unknown, Synaxarion found in a manuscript dated 1246. Research indicates that these editions share a common origin and presumably had been derived from the long Armenian version (Abuladze, 1938, 16; Janashia, 1980, 259–260).

The short Georgian version of *The Martyrdom* was discovered by N. Marr (1865–1934) in a manuscript of the Mount Athos Collection (Ath. 57). He dated it to the 10th century. No other manuscript of this version has been discovered.

The Georgian Synaxarion contains two manuscripts: A 425 (1718) and A 220 (1726). According to E. Gabidzashvili, the text of *The Martyrdom* in Manuscript A 220 was copied from Manuscript A 425. The version included in the Synaxarion is quite short. N. Janashia believes that this version was derived from the long version rather than the short one. It should be noted that the versions included in both Georgian and Armenian Synaxaria, do not provide new or significant information for the study of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik*.

Metaphrastic versions of *The Martyrdom*

As mentioned, there are metaphrastic versions of *The Martyrdom* – edited by Catholicos Anton I and Prince Ioane (Batonishvili).

The Martyrikon, Eulogies and Lives of Georgian and non-Georgian Saints Who Suffered for Christ by Catholicos Anton I contains accounts of the martyrdoms of 20 saints; the fourth text is dedicated to Saint Queen Shushanik titled: "Eulogy and Story of the Torture of the Holy Great Martyr, the Queen of Ran, Susanna, also known as Shushanik". Like other works in *the Martyrikon*, the text dedicated to Shushanik is accompanied by an iambus composed by Catholicos Anton I. *The Martyrikon* must have been written in 1768–1769. It is fully preserved in seven manuscripts, all kept in the K. Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts. These are: Q 78 (1769), S 1272 (1768), S 2988 (1790), S 3638 (1799), A 1484 (1806), H 907 (1821), and H 990 (19th century).

Prince Ioane also recounts *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* in his work *Kalmasoba*, which the author called *Khumarstsavla* ("studying with jokes"). This work was written between 1813 and 1828 and is preserved in seven manuscripts (GNCM: H 2170, Q 720, Q 577, S 5374, S 5375, H 2153, H 2134), though only H 2170 contains the text of *The Martyrdom of Holy Queen Shushanik*. The text can be found on folios 279v-287v.

This version is also included in a 19th-century hagiographical collection (GNCM, S 3687, 40r-61v) with some alterations to the text.

Publications

The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik has been published multiple times. The first edition by M. Sabinin (1845–1900) was published in 1882. Although the text contains significant errors, due to the failure of the editor to analyze it critically, this edition played an important role in the study of the work. Critical editions of the text were published by S. Gorgadze – in 1917, based on four manuscripts; I. Abuladze – in 1938 based on eight manuscripts (reprinted in 1978); in 1963, based on all eleven manuscripts; E. Chelidze – in 2005 also based on all available manuscripts; and in 2025 the critical edition of the text followed with vocabulary, indexes, researches, photocopies of

the main manuscripts was published (Iakob Khutsesi, 2025).

The short Georgian version of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* was first published by A. Khakhanashvili (1845–1912) based on the 10th-century manuscript preserved at Mount Athos – Ivir. Geo 57 (see description: Catalogue, 2020, 520–526) (Хаханов, 1910). Due to errors in this edition, it was republished by I. Abuladze using a photocopy of the same manuscript (Abuladze, 1938, 14). He was also the first to publish the version from the Georgian Synaxarion based on one manuscript (Abuladze, 1938, 63–64), and later, it was republished based on two manuscripts (Janashia, 1980, 23).

The long Armenian version was first printed in Venice (1853); an abridged text of the version was printed by Alishan in 1901; and a complete version of the long Armenian version was republished by I. Abuladze in 1938, incorporating a manuscript discovered in Etchmiadzin, alongside the first edition (Abuladze, 1938, 77–121).

The short Armenian version was also first printed in Venice in 1853 alongside the long version. It was later printed by L. Melikset-Beg in an Armenian language chrestomathy in 1920. The short Armenian version was most recently republished by I. Abuladze (Abuladze, 1938, 122–125). The last two publications are subsequent editions of the first publication.

The Armenian Synaxarion version has been published three times: first in the Synaxaria of Tsarentsi and Ter-Israel, and later in the 1938 work of I. Abuladze. Abuladze also included the reading of the Cross of Saint Nino recounting the story of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* (Abuladze, 1938, 16).

In addition to the above, there are also short stories in Armenian. One such story is included in a collection of lives and martyrdoms of saints compiled by M. Avgerian, while another is included in a book by the Armenian scholar L. Inchichian, which was later translated into Georgian (Abuladze, 1938, 18; Janashia, 1980, 24).

Old Georgian sources on the martyrdom of Queen Shushanik

Accounts of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* can also be found in ancient Georgian written monuments. The earliest of these is the IX-century chronicle *The Conversion of Kartli*. Shushanik is also mentioned by the old Georgian hymnographer Mikael Modrekili (X century) along with Saints Nino, Hripsime and Gayane (Gvakharia, 1978).

Accounts of the *Martyrdom of Saint Shushanik* are also preserved in Armenian sources, the earliest being the Book of Epistles, which contains correspondence between Armenian and Georgian Church hierarchs (605–609). Shushanik is first mentioned in a letter by Catholicos Abraham I of Armenia (early 7th century), referenced by Ukhtanes (10th century) (see Oniani, 1978, pp. 14–18 for more information on this topic). The correspondence between Sumbat Gurgen Marzban (in middle Persian: military commander) and Kyrion regarding *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* is also available.

No other historical sources mention Shushanik. It was expected that Ghazar Parpetsi (5th-century Armenian historian) would have mentioned the queen, but there is no mention of St. Shushanik in his works (Oniani, 1978, 26). The saint is also not referenced in epigraphic monuments. The inscription of Bolnisi Sioni (7th-8th or 9th-10th centuries) mentions a person named Shushanik, but it proved to be difficult to determine who specifically is referred to in the inscription (Shoshiashvili, 1980, 154).

Epoch

The chronology of events in the text and the issue of which king was ruling Georgia at the time of *The Martyrdom of Queen Shushanik* has long been a subject of scholarly debate.

The chronicle of *The Conversion of Kartli* and *The Georgian Chronicles* (as well as religious and secular literature based on these sources) suggest that the martyrdom of Queen Shushanik occurred during the reign of King of Kartli (eastern Georgian kingdom) Bakur, son of Pharsman. However, this information is presumed inaccurate – the event is distanced by a century and a half from its historical time. This misattribution – associating Shushanik's torture with the reign of Bakur – is due to several factors: 1. The surviving text of *The Martyrdom* does not mention the name of the King of Kartli; 2. The name of the

Shah of Persia is also missing from the text, and it must have been lost by the beginning of the 8th century when the chronicle of *The Conversion of Kartli* was compiled. By the time of Leonti Mroveli, no one knew which shah was mentioned in the text; 3. Historical memory failed to preserve the exact time of the martyrdom of Shushanik.

Vakhtang Gorgasali was wounded in a battle with Khosrow Anushirvan, the newly crowned and very young son of Kavadh, who invaded Kartli after the demise of his father, Shah of Persia, Kavadh, in 531. Vakhtang Gorgasali died shortly afterward. At that time, according to The Georgian Chronicles, Vakhtang was nearly 60 years old. At the time of his death, 56 years had passed since the martyrdom of Shushanik, and 47 years since Varsken was put to death (Sanadze, 2016, 295–348; id., 2019, 391–403, 420–432).

Archil, King of Kartli and the grandfather of Vakhtang Gorgasali, died circa 464–466. Afterward, his son and Vakhtang Gorgasali's father – Mihrdat V ruled Kartli from 466 to 478. Shushanik was martyred during the reign of Mihrdat V. At the start of the conflict (468), Vakhtang had not yet been born, and at the time of Shushanik's death (474), he would have been about 4 years old.

During the last years of Archil's reign, the Shah of Persia, Peroz, sent a mobedān mobed, a priest of priests, to oversee the Church of Kartli. There were only two such figures in Georgia: one served around 460–476, and the other around 476–489. The priest of priests Samuel, mentioned in *The Martyrdom*, was the first mobedān mobed sent to Kartli, later replaced by Iovel, as mentioned in the chronicle *The Conversion of Kartli*.

Vakhtang had Varsken killed in 484 (not in 482 as previously believed in historiography) when Vakhtang was 13 or 14 years old. Varsken was killed in the 25th year of Peroz's reign, and Peroz himself died that same year in a war against the Hephthalites.

Author

Neither historical nor literary sources provide any information about the author of the work. However, any debate regarding the author is futile, as the text itself states: *"And I, the priest of Queen Shushanik, accompanied that bishop"* (Abuladze, 1963, 13). The narrative is written in the first person, with the writer being an eyewitness to the events described. The author is repeatedly referred to by the title *"priest"*, and the name *"Iakob"* is mentioned within the text itself. Consequently, the conclusion is clear – the author of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* is Iakob the Khutsesi (Priest).

I. Abuladze suggests that Iakob, the Bishop of Tsurtavi, who participated in the Council of Dvin (506), and Iakob Khutsesi, the author of *The Martyrdom*, may have been the same person. For this reason, in the 1938 edition of the work, the scholar referred to Iakob as "Iakob of Tsurtavi" (Abuladze, 1938, 060). Some scholars speculated that Iakob Khutsesi may have also written a historical work. As evidence, they pointed to the phrase from the text: *"As we have said"* (Kekelidze, 1980, 115; Kilanava, 1973, 431; Oniani, 1978, 83).

Date of Composition

The Martyrdom of Shushanik does not explicitly state the date of its composition. However, based on the information preserved in the text, it is entirely possible to determine this timeframe. It has been frequently noted that Jacob the Priest intended to write the work early on, as evidenced primarily by his own words: *"Tell me how you see fit so that I may know and record your suffering."* This suggests that the author began preparing to write the work immediately after leaving the queen's palace. However, some scholars believe that the text was commissioned (Gorgadze, 2017; Kuchukhidze, 2004).

K. Kekelidze dated the composition to 476–483 (Kekelidze, 1960, 118), while N. Janashia proposed 475–482 (Janashia, 1980, 285–286), and Sh. Oniani suggested 474–482/3 (Oniani, 1978, 36).

Genre

Another significant issue that numerous scholars have addressed is the classification and precise definition of the genre of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik*. While many researchers have regarded the work as a literary monument confined within the conventional framework of hagiography, others have seen it as a classic example of breaking that mold – one that shares little with traditional hagiography and instead belongs to secular fiction or even historical prose.

Due to this debate, R. Baramidze noted that *"these two extremes are equally removed from objectivity... Highlighting human traits in the character of Shushanik is not a violation of hagiographic norms or a departure from convention, but rather a masterful technique that emphasizes the grandeur of her striving toward divinity"* (Baramidze, 1990, 6–8).

However, at different times, the work has also been interpreted as a historical source, an example of biographical-historical or memoir literature, a literary-biographical work, a Georgian novella, or even a domestic novel (Javakhishvili, 1926; Ingorokva, 1939, 164; Baramidze, 1957, 51–69; Lordkipanidze, 1966; Janashia, 1975; Chelidze, 1978; Baramidze, 1978, 127).

The philological analysis of the text focuses on the structural-compositional characteristics of the work, which follow a general hagiographic model, with the archetype of this model being the structural-compositional property of the Gospels. The discussions concerning the incipit of the text, which has been the subject of scholarly debate, we believe, should be guided by the general structural scheme of a hagiographic text, which, along with the body of the text and concluding part, includes an extensive introduction – an appeal to God, a description of the origin of the protagonist and their distinguished childhood.

Characters

When discussing the literary style of hagiography, scholars often point out that hagiographic texts typically revolve around a single protagonist, requiring the other characters to fade into the background to highlight the saint's figure. However, it has also been noted that this is less characteristic of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik*.

The depiction of Varsken as the tormentor is not limited to the remark *"the wolf Varsken."* Instead, the author develops his character through real-life episodes, creating a vivid artistic portrait of a cruel and base-spirited man. At the same time, the image of Shushanik, the central figure of the work, is strongly defined through contrast and opposition to the depiction of the **pitiakhsh** (governor). The secondary characters further enrich the narrative, providing a meaningful backdrop against which various facets of the martyred queen's portrait become sharper and more emphasized.

The characters in *The Martyrdom* can be divided into main (Shushanik and Varsken) and secondary figures. Among the secondary characters, there are both secular individuals – Jojik and his wife, Varsken's messenger, a Persian man, a servant, a young boy, Senakapani, a prison guard, a Magian woman, Varsken's foster brother, and the children of Varsken and Shushanik – as well as clergy members – Iakob Khutsesi, Bishops Apots and Ioane, Samuel the head of the bishops, and unnamed deacons. The text features both historically attested figures and those whose identities remain unknown.

The events of the work take place during the reign of the Persian Shah Peroz, though the text does not explicitly mention him by name.

Many scholars have dedicated their research to analyzing Jacob the Priest's techniques in character depiction. Some argue that in *The Martyrdom of Shushanik*, the author relies on pre-established religious archetypes, linguistic-stylistic methods, and expressive means rooted in biblical texts. Others, however, perceive a greater degree of psychological depth and even individuality in the characters, noting the influence of pre-Christian secular literature in Jacob the Priest's writing, as well as a certain departure from strict hagiographic conventions.

A comparative analysis of these differing perspectives reveals that Jacob the Priest, in shaping both positive and negative characters, follows the traditional hagiographic framework while simultaneously introducing innovation. He presents the protagonist as a dynamic figure, undergoing development throughout the narrative (Sulava, 2024). Although the hagiographic narrative remains aligned with biblical archetypes, in many instances, the author intensifies human elements to preserve the immediacy and relatability of the storytelling (Kuchukhidze, 2016, 43).

The composition of the characters of the work is three-tiered: Shushanik – the central figure, her supporters – Iakob and the entire community, and the opponents – the Pitiakhsh, who had allied himself with the Shah of Persia, together with a small group of like-minded individuals.

According to historiographic sources, Saint Shushanik belonged to the noble Mamikonian family, which held the hereditary title of *sparapet*, the supreme commander of the armed forces. Her father, Vardan Mamikonian, and grandfather, Hamazasp Mamikonian, both bore this esteemed title, while her mother, Sakahanuš, was the daughter of Sahak the Great, the Catholicos of Armenia.

Arshusha Pitiakhsh and Vardan Mamikonian were not only allies and close friends but also bound by family ties – Vardan's brother, Hmayak, was the brother-in-law of Arshusha Pitiakhsh, having married his wife's sister. Both Vardan and, later, Arshusha lost their lives fighting against the Iranians. After Vardan's death, Arshusha Pitiakhsh took on the role of protector for his family.

Shushanik grew up alongside Varsken and Jojik, a bond reflected in her own words when she addresses Jojik: *"I am your sister, and we were brought up together…"* Like Vardan and Arshusha, Shushanik was a devout Christian and a fervent patriot. This made Varsken's betrayal – both of his faith and homeland – all the more agonizing for her.

Varsken's mother was also a member of an ancient and well-known Armenian noble family of the Artsruni dynasty.

Varsken is portrayed as an autocratic and cruel person. His actions were driven by political ambitions. By aligning himself with Peroz, Shah of Persia, Varsken gained a high-ranking position as *Marzpan* (military commander) of Albania, specifically of Ran (the part of Albania located on the right bank of the Mtkvari River) and Movakan (the part of Albania located on the left bank of the Mtkvari River) that turned him from a subordinate official of King Vakhtang, to the suzerain of the King of Kartli. Thus, Varsken gained the legal right to reject the authority of the King of Kartli as his superior. As a subject of Iran, Varsken took on the responsibility of strengthening the northern border of the empire. This is why Ran is considered part of Varsken's domain, and Shushanik is referred to as the Queen of Ran.

He is introduced in the text with entirely negative connotations. His relationship with the protagonist is ambivalent, much like the relationship between Christ and the Antichrist. Varsken was the son of a renowned figure. His family was exemplary in terms of morality, which makes Varsken's sin, betrayal, and apostasy all the more unforgivable. He belonged to the Sassanian noble family of Pitiakhsh in Kartli. The founder 572 Summary of this family was Peroz, the son-in-law of the first Christian king, Mirian. Arshu sha Pitiakhsh, Varsken's father, was a prominent Georgian noble and a significant political figure of the 5th century. Information about him is preserved in the works of Koriun and Ghazar Parpetsi. Koriun refers to him as an honourable man and a devout believer, while Ghazar Parpetsi provides even more detailed information, having once resided at Arshusha's court alongside the sons of Hmayak Mamikonian. Ghazar Parpetsi describes Arshusha as a worthy patriot and a man of high morals.

Among the historical figures mentioned in the text are: Varsken's brother, Jojik, Pitiakhsh Arshusha, and Vardan Mamikonian. Additionally, several members of the clergy appear, including Iakob the Priest (*Khutsesi*), Bishops Apotsi and Ioane, and Chief Archbishop Samuel.

Linguistic characteristics of the text

Although the text belongs to the 5th century, the oldest surviving manuscript dates to the 10th century, meaning it has been significantly altered by scribes and editors (see the chapter on the linguistic features of the work for more details). The text of the martyrdom provides invaluable material for studying the early stages of the Georgian written and literary language. *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* helped to preserve archaic meanings of several lexical units (Imnaishvili, 1978, 132–144). Additionally, the text exhibits a range of linguistic features, such as the excessive use of conjunction and, paronomasia (wordplay), the frequent use of personal verb forms after either Ergative case constructions or after Dative case constructions, unique methods of rendering anthroponyms, instances of tmesis, etc. The text also contains biblical quotations and paraphrases.

The impact of the text on the historiography and ethnography of 5th-century Kartli

Iakob Khutsesi, in his account of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik*, vivid-

ly depicts the lives of the inhabitants of Kvemo Kartli, its ancient cultural and religious context, social-political structure, ecclesiastical organization, and peculiarities of private and domestic life. The richness of the details related to daily life is a significant argument that the Georgian version of *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* is the original and primary one, rather than the Armenian version (Kekelidze, 1960, 116).

According to the text, we have information about the residence of the Pitiakh and his wife, food consumption customs, food-related prohibitions and restrictions, jewellery and clothing, terminology related to kinship, family low rules, forms of punishment and household items.

Georgian historians used the description of everyday life presented in the work to convey the history of Georgia in the 5th century (Javakhishvili, 1960, 261–282). In the following period, the historiographic data and ethnographic material of the first Georgian written monument many times became the subject of interest and research. From the "Martyrdom of Shushanik," first of all, it can be seen that **pityakhsh** (a title of high official) plays an important role in the hierarchy of Kartli state officials and rulers (Sanadze, 2019, 340). Varsken the Pityakhsh is one of the main characters of the work. His father is also mentioned in the text – Arshusha the Pityakhsh. In the "Martyrdom," of course, we also find other terms denoting officials. Iakob Khutsesi speaks about the queen of Kvemo Kartli: "Daughter of Vardan, **spaspet** (high-ranking military official) of the Armenians" (ch. I). **Spaspet-i** (spahpat) is connected with the Middle Persian and means a horseman (Orbeliani, 1991, II, p. 108) or the commander of the army (Andronikashvili, 1966, I, 370). The common name of the ruling class in the V–VII centuries, **aznaur-i**, (nobleman) is mentioned several times in "The Martyrdom of Shushanik" for several times. "The great-great **aznaurs** and zepur mothers, **aznaurs** and ignobles from the country of Kartli" are going to see the Queen Shushanik (ch. XVII); "All bishops and **aznaurs** (nobles) together should ask her for one thing" (ch. XVII) (Sarjveladze, 1988; Guliashvili, 2025).

the study of the books of martyrdom and the lives of the saints has made it clear that hagiographic literature is an outstanding, and in some cases, highly reliable source for the study of not only the church but also the secular history of the Middle Ages, because "beyond the main plot, the story of the saint's martyrdom or activity is followed by the background – the history of the country (be it a political situation or a social system), the worldview of the author, and his attitude toward historical events" (Lordkipanidze, 1966, 12).

The significance of the text for Byzantine literary studies

The 5th-century text *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* engages with the broader Byzantine hagiographical tradition. Even though it is an original Georgian work, it likely reflects Byzantine literary models, themes, and theological perspectives. Identifying these connections helps trace the influence of Byzantine literary culture beyond its linguistic boundaries and provides a more comprehensive view of Byzantine literary interactions with the Georgian world. From a literary perspective, the analysis of the text's narrative strategies, motifs, and theological messages highlights the uniqueness of Georgian hagiographical composition and its place within the wider medieval literary canon.

Conclusion

The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik is a cornerstone of early Georgian literature, marking the transition from oral traditions and potential pre-Christian writings to the established Christian literary canon. While the origins of Georgian literature remain a subject of debate, this text stands as the earliest fully preserved original hagiographical work in the Georgian language. It reflects a sophisticated literary style, demonstrating that Georgian literature had already reached a developed stage by the time of its composition in the second half of the 5th century.

The study of *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* has spanned various disciplines, including textual criticism, manuscript studies, historical context, linguistic peculiarities, and comparative literature. The text has survived in multiple Georgian and Armenian versions, with significant variations between the long and short versions. Manuscript A 95, the

oldest surviving copy from the 10th century, provides crucial insights into the transmission of the text. Later versions, such as those by Catholicos Anton I and Prince Ioane, further demonstrate the ongoing reverence for Shushanik's story and its adaptation across different periods.

From a historical perspective, the text offers valuable insights into 5th-century Georgia, particularly regarding the sociopolitical struggles between Christianity and Zoroastrianism, as well as the role of Persian influence in the region. The author, identified as Iakob Khutsesi, was an eyewitness to Shushanik's suffering, lending credibility to the narrative. While historical records do not explicitly confirm all details, the text remains an essential resource for understanding early Georgian religious and political dynamics.

The genre classification of *The Martyrdom* has been a subject of scholarly debate. Some view it as a traditional hagiographical work, while others argue that its emphasis on human emotion and detailed character development transcends conventional hagiographic norms. The text's nuanced portrayal of both primary and secondary characters – particularly Shushanik and her antagonist, Varsken – demonstrates its literary depth and complexity.

The enduring scholarly interest in *The Martyrdom of Saint Queen Shushanik* underscores its significance as a foundational text of Georgian literature. Through numerous manuscript versions, critical editions, and academic discussions, the work continues to be an invaluable resource for the study of medieval Georgian culture, language, and religious history. Its legacy as a testament to faith, resilience, and literary excellence remains influential in both Georgian and broader Byzantine literary traditions.

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THE CATEGORY OF ITERATIVE IN OLD GEORGIAN

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Abstract

This study explores the historical development and eventual disappearance of the Permansive (iterative) category in the Georgian language. Georgian, a member of the Kartvelian language group, has maintained continuity between its written and spoken forms for over sixteen centuries, making Old Georgian comprehensible to modern readers. Unlike Classical Greek or Classical Armenian, which lost their connection to spoken forms, Georgian has evolved without significant divergence.

The Permansive was once a crucial morphological category expressing habitual and iterative actions. Old Georgian featured five Permansive screeves across all three verb series, but these forms began to decline after the 9th century, replaced by conjunctive and present forms. Through an analysis of Gospel manuscripts, this study traces the transformation of Permansive screeves, demonstrating their gradual loss and replacement by non-iterative constructions.

In Modern Georgian, iterativity is no longer a distinct morphological category. Instead, it is conveyed descriptively through contextual markers or particles such as ხოლმე (*kholme*, meaning "usually"), though its use is restricted in literary language. While some Georgian dialects preserve archaic iterative markers, standard Georgian now relies on generalized expressions and contextual interpretation. This linguistic shift highlights the broader evolution of Georgian grammar and its adaptation to modern usage.

Keywords: *Permansive, Iterative, Old Georgian*

Introduction

The Georgian language belongs to the Iberian-Caucasian language family and is specifically classified within the Kartvelian language group alongside Mingrelian, Svan, and Laz. Since the 5th century, Georgian has had a continuous tradition of both translated and original literature, with even earlier epigraphic materials available (e.g., Georgian inscriptions from Palestine dating back to the 4th century (Gagoshidze, G., 2022). Despite the history of development of the language spanning sixteen centuries, there has been no divergence between the written and spoken forms of the

language. Texts written in the early Middle Ages remain comprehensible to 21st-century readers without the need to learn about specific grammatical aspects. This characteristic distinguishes Georgian from other ancient languages, such as Classical Greek or Classical Armenian, which, at a certain point of their development, lost their connection to living spoken forms. The term "Old" with regard to Georgian is not entirely accurate, as "Old Georgian" does not differ from "Modern Georgian" as is the case with "Classical Greek" vs. "Modern Greek" or "Classical Armenian" vs. "Modern Armenian." Indeed, when discussing "Old," "Middle," and "Modern" Georgian, we refer to certain stages of a continuously developing literary language. These terms serve more as scholarly designations than being reflective of an actual linguistic divergence.

The Permansive (iterative) is one of the challenging categories of the Georgian verb. In Georgian linguistic literature, this concept encompasses both iterative and habitual nature. According to A. Chikobava, aspectual distinction in the verb conjugation system, i.e., distinguishing between two aspects: the *Durative Aspect* (marked by the suffix -ი **(–i)**, Iterative Aorist) and the *Momentary Aspect* (marked by the suffix -ე **(–e)**, Aorist) predated temporal distinction (Chikobava, 1943). Thus, the Permansive is one of the oldest morphological categories of the Georgian verb, and studying this category is crucial for understanding the history of Georgian literary language.

The expression of this category evolved differently across different stages of the development of the Georgian Language: In **Old Georgian**, **the Iterative was a morphological category** expressed through specialized "habitual/iterative screeves". Whereas in Modern Georgian, the morphological category of the Permansive and the distinction between semelfactive vs. iterative actions have been lost. Instead, this semantics is expressed **descriptively or periphrastically**. Old Georgian employed five Permansive screeves across all three verb-series.

Verb series and screeves in Old Georgian can be summarized as follows: verb conjugations in the Ancient Georgian language contain three paradigms based on the morpho-syntactic principle. The first series contains six screeves. The second series contains four basic and two additional (mixed) screeves. The third series contains four basic and one additional (mixed) screeves. "A screeve is a complex category that corresponds to person, number, tense, mood and aspect" (Sharashenidze, 2018, p. 29).

Hence, in Old Georgian, all three series included Permansive screeves:

1st Series: Iterative Present; Iterative Imperfect.

2nd Series: Iterative Aorist; Mixed Iterative.

3rd Series: Iterative Perfect.

All five of them were lost in Modern Georgian.

Initially, these forms had distinct functions without significant overlap, but over time, as the morphological category of Permansive weakened, they started to be increasingly replaced by non-Permansive forms.

Research method

Iterative screeves prevailed in Old Georgian in both original and translated texts. To observe their diachronic development and transformation, we can examine several passages from Gospels in different manuscripts, such as the Khanmeti Gospel (7th century), the Adishi Gospel (897 AD), the pre-Athonic and the Giorgi the Hagiorite's recensions (Kvirkvelia, 2019; Mrevlishvili, 2013).

Matthew 7:8 „რამეთუ ყოველი რომელი ხოთხოვნ, მიიღის, და რომელი ხეძიებნ, პოვის და რომელი ხირეკნ, განეღის" XC.

"For everyone who **asks receives**, and he who **seeks finds,** and to him who **knocks** it **shall be opened**"

Verb forms reflect the linguistic phenomenon characteristic of the linguistic phase of Early Old Georgian, known as Khanmet. The Georgian language of the 5th–7th centuries is characterized by *Khanmetoba* (use of the prefix ***Kh***-), the 7th–8th centuries by *Haemetoba* (use of the prefix ***H***-), and from the 9th century onward by *Sannarevoba* (use of the ***H-/S-/Sh-/Ø*** prefixes), which is also a defining feature of the modern Georgian literary language. In the written monuments of Khanmet the existence of *Kh*-prefix in all three person forms of *I*-Prefix Passive Voice is a norm (Therefore, in Haemet we come across ***H***-) (Tsikhelashvili, 2013).

The Khanmeti Gospels (marked with "C") and the Adishi Gospels (marked with "A") attest to the use of Iterative screeves in the forms of Iterative Present (e.g., ხითხოვნ [khitkhovn], ხეძიებნ [khedziebn], ხირეკნ [khirekn]) and Iterative Aorist (e.g., მიიღის [miighis], პოვის [povis], განეღის [ganeghis]). However, in the Ksani (A), Berti (B), Jruch (D), Parkhli (E), Urbnisi (F), Palestinian (G), Tskarostavi (T), Geo.O.Sin-30 (P), Geo.O.Sin-15 (R), Geo.O.Sin-16 (S) Gospels, as well as in the Giorgi the Athonite's recension (manuscripts I, K, N, Z, Y, U, Q, X, J, H), the Iterative screeves are replaced by Conjunctive I and Conjunctive II forms. Specifically: Iterative Present is replaced by Conjunctive I, whereas Iterative Aorist is replaced by Conjunctive II:

Matthew 7:8 „რამეთუ ყოველი რომელი ითხოვდეს, მოიღოს, და რომელი ეძიებდეს, პოვოს, და რომელი ირეკდეს, განეღოს"

For everyone who **will ask shall receive**, and the one who **will seek shall find**, and to the one who **will knock, it shall be opened**".

Given that Iterative Aorist is an ancient screeve not confined to frameworks of tenses and that "in Old Georgian, the Permansive occasionally aligns with present or conjunctive semantics in context" (Kavtaradze, 1961), we may conclude that Permansive screeves in Old Georgian also accommodated future tense meaning. Analysis of other Gospel manuscripts suggests that the Permansive forms used in the Khanmeti and Adishi Gospels likely expressed future tense rather than iterativity. In Modern Georgian, this passage would read as follows: „ყველა, ვინც//რომელიც ითხოვს, მიიღებს, ვინც ეძებს, იპოვის, ვინც დარეკავს, გაუღებენ" [For everyone who asks will receive; the one who seeks will find; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened]. It was natural for Old Georgian to express future indicative mood via conjunctive screeves, a pattern supported by most manuscripts. Notably, Iterative screeves with future function are uniquely preserved in the oldest Khanmeti Gospel (7th c.).

In some cases, the Iterative Present is replaced by the Present Screeves in other manuscripts. For example:

Luke 5:31 „არა უჴმს ცოცხალთა მკურნალი, არამედ რომელნი ბოროტსა სენსა შინა არიედ". manuscript C. "The healthy do not **need** a healer, but rather those who **usually are** in evil sickness."

არიედ **("usually are", Iterative Present)** C.

არიან **("are", Present)** manuscripts: ABDEFGPRST; IKNUQHJXZY.

"It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. (Lk. 5:31 NASB)

In Pre-Athonite and Athonite recensions, the Iterative Present არიედ ("**usually are**") is replaced by the Present form არიან ("**are**"). Additionally, it is noteworthy that in the Adishi Gospel, present tense (უჴმს [ukhms] – "**need**") and Iterative Present (არიედ – [aried] "**usually are**") alternate within the same sentence. This is entirely natural, as the present tense expresses not only a temporal action occurring at the time of speech but also, at times, an action stripped of a specific temporal context, i.e., a general action (e.g., „მამაო ჩვენო, რომელი ხარ ცათა შინა" [Our Father, who **art** in heaven]). In our case, უჴმს [ukhms] – ***need*** likely expresses precisely such a timeless meaning: it refers to the general idea that healthy people do not need a physician.

In the example we provided, the alternation between the present tense and Iterative Present within a single sentence to convey iterative or habitual meaning – alongside the replacement of Permansive forms with present tense forms in later manuscripts – suggests a tendency toward the elimination of the Iterative.

Iterative Aorist screeve is one of the oldest. Its decline is observable from the 9th century onward, evidenced by the alternation between Iterative Aorist and aorist forms in sentences:

Matthew 13:23 „რომელმან სიტყუაჲ იგი ისმინის და გულისხმა–ყვის და გამოიღის ნაყოფი და ყვის: რომელმანმე – ასი, რომელმანმე – სამეოცი, რომელმანმე – ოცდაათი" C.

"But the one who **hears** the word, **understands** it, and **bears** fruit, **yielding** a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown" Manuscript C.

ისმინის ["hears", Iterative Aorist] Manuscript E, ისმინა [heard, Iterative Aorist] Manuscripts DFGHIK.

გულისხმა–ყო [“understood” Aorist] Manuscripts DEFGHIK

გამოიღო [“bears”, Aorist] Manuscripts DEFGHIK.

ყო [“yielded”, Aorist] Manuscripts DEFGHIK.

In the Adishi Gospel, verbs in Iterative Aorist are rendered as aorist forms in the Jruchi Gospel (D) and Athonite recension, while the Parkhali Manuscript (E) employs both Iterative Aorist (ისმინის) and Aorist forms (გულისხმა–ყო, გამოიღო, ყო). The corresponding passage is missing from the Khanmeti Gospels.

Results analysis

Our analysis reveals that Permansive forms are better preserved in older manuscripts like Khanmeti (7th c.) and Adishi (897 CE), though we also documented cases where certain verbs in these manuscripts appear in the present screeve, while later manuscripts reintroduce Permansive forms.

Permansive III forms are exceedingly rare, especially in translated texts, as III series forms are generally uncommon in such works (Shanidze, 1947).

In Modern Georgian, iterativity is no longer a morphological category. Instead, the semantic is expressed descriptively: the function of Permansive screeves has been distributed across different screeves, which express the category by adding particle ხოლმე [kholme] (meaning “usually”).

While literary Georgian no longer expresses iterativity morphologically, some eastern dialects retain archaic ways of conveying iterativity. Notable examples include Khevsurian (Arabuli, 1978), Tush (Tsotsanidze, 1970), and Mokheuri (Kobiashvili, 1999), where particles like -კე/-ყე [ke] mark iterative actions. Similar forms appear in Phereidan and the Kizik sub-dialect of Kakhetian dialect.

In contemporary literary Georgian, the language of the press – which better reflects living language – shows limited use of the particle ხოლმე [kholme] (meaning “usually”). Instead, iterativity is often implied contextually or expressed through so called generalized forms by adding adverbial modifiers like: ყოველთვის (always), მუდამ (always), or ხშირად (often). We provide an example from the press:

„როცა ვლაპარაკობთ ქართულ კულტურაზე, ყველას ახსენდება ცეკვა” Translation: “When we talk about Georgian culture, everyone thinks of dance.” Implied meaning: [whenever] we talk about Georgian culture, everyone [usually] thinks of dance.

In press language, the explicit use of ხოლმე [kholme] (translated as “usually”) is maximally restricted – a trend likely driven by stylistic preferences.

Conclusion

As discussed above, we examined how Iterative forms in Gospel manuscripts are rendered in New Georgian texts. In the majority, if not all of the cases, this semantic category is conveyed through screeves expressing single, non-iterative actions without the particle ხოლმე [kholme] (translated as “usually”). For example: „მკურნალი ჯანმრთელებს კი არა, სნეულებს სჭირდებათ” – translated as: “It is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick” (and not: სჭირდებათ ხოლმე, translated as “usually need”).

Thus, on the path of development of the Georgian literary language, the morphological category of iterative (Permansive) has been replaced by descriptive constructions involving adding appropriate particles to the screeves of non-iterative semantics. In modern literary Georgian, this meaning is increasingly expressed via generalized forms, without the particle ხოლმე [kholme] (meaning “usually”). In such cases, distinguishing between semelfactive and iterative actions depends entirely on contextual interpretation.

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Abbreviation

NASB – The New American Standard Bible: 2020 Edition.

Marks of the Preathonic Gospels:

X Khanmeti Gospel (7th c.),
C Adishi Gospel (897)
A Ksani Gospel (10th c.),
B Berti Gospel (10th c.)
D Jruchi Gospel (936)
E Parkhali Gospel (973)
F Urbnisi Gospel (11th c.)
G Palestina Gospel (1048)
P Sin.Geo.O. 30 (10th)
R Sin.Geo.O.15 (975)
S Sin.Geo.O. 16 (10th c.)
T Tskarostavi Gospel (10th c.)

Marks of the George the Hagiorete's Recension:

I Echmiadzini Gospel (12th-13rd c.)
K Gelati Gospel (12th-13rd c.)
N Sin.Geo.O.-19 (1074)
Z Jer.Geo.-103 (13rd c.)
Y Jer.Geo.-153 (12th c.)
U Jer.Geo.-102 (12th-14th c.)
Q Jer.Geo.-49 (11th c.)
X Jer.Geo.-93 (12th c.)
J Jer.Geo.-122 (12th-14th c.)
H Vani Gospel (12th-13rd c.)

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