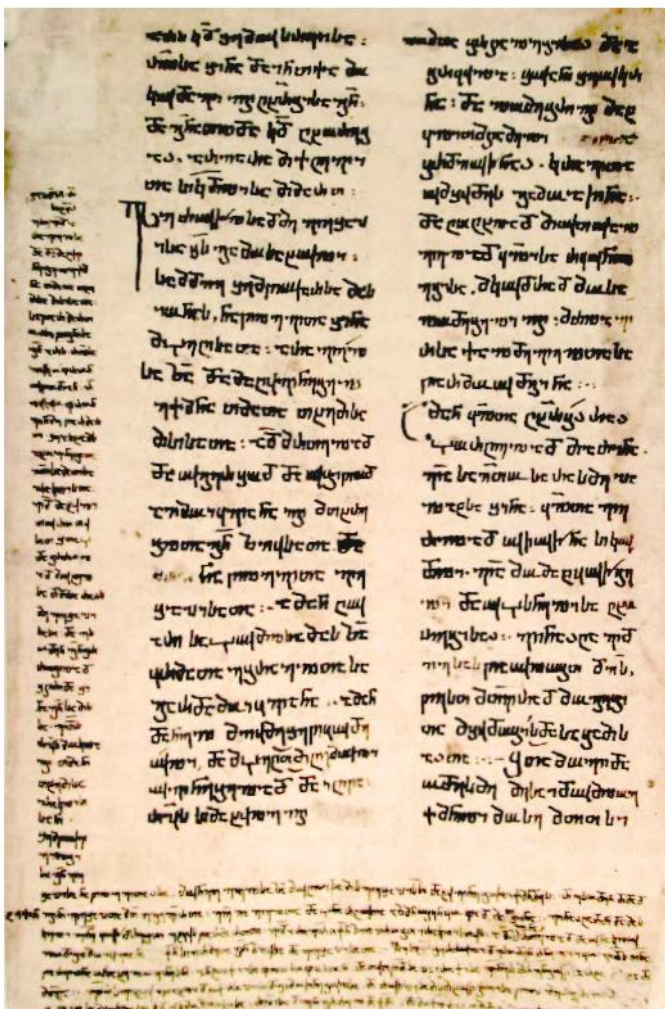


## Georgian Monolingual Dictionaries

Lexicographic activities in Georgia arose simultaneously with the development of Georgian literature. Conversion of the country into Christianity in the early IV century was followed by the translation into Georgian of books of the Old and New Testament. Manuscripts from the earliest period were appended with scholia, marginal notes and explanations, which served to clarify the meaning of this or that word or concept.

### *Eprem Mtsire as Lexicographer*



Picture 1

Eprem Mtsire's (11<sup>th</sup> century) minor, alphabetically arranged dictionary, appended to his manuscript 'Translation of Psalms' is regarded to be one of the first explanatory dictionaries in Georgian. Eprem Mtsire was well acquainted with the Greco-Byzantine tradition of appending glossaries to the books of ancient authors and himself became the first scholar to introduce this tradition into the Georgian lexicography. Eprem's dictionary regards as headwords both lexeme and word combination, mainly, the combination of modifier - modified

noun, e.g. lexemes: *ascension, light, holiness, Christ, life, fire, sleep, honest, etc.*; syntagms: *seat of God, resurrection of God, splendour of the Father, lightning of God, intent of God, commandment of God, wrath of God, teaching of Lord, etc.* In

his dictionary, Eprem includes as dictionary unit noun and verb, the latter also in the form of word combination.

Below is quoted one of the dictionary entries of Eprem Mtsire:

*The ‘seat of God’ is how at a time Heaven is referred to, or at a time the Church is, or at a time a virgin, or at a time the lich of a man, or anything else, whereupon the Will of God may reside ...*

In his explanations Eprem Mtsire frequently relies upon and refers to relevant sources (picture 1 represents a page from the autographic manuscript of Eprem Mtsire in Khutsuri script with scolia on the margins).

### ***Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani***

As far as explanatory dictionaries are concerned, a whole new era in the Georgian lexicography was established by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1658 – 1725), a Georgian writer, lexicographer, scholar and diplomat.



Picture 3

His Georgian Dictionary, so-called “*Sitkvis Kona*” (XVII c) is virtually the first complete explanatory dictionary of the Georgian language [SSO]. The time of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani’s scholarly and social activities spanned politically very difficult period of the Georgian history, which was simultaneously the time when

the Georgian culture was on the rise. Georgian kings of the period, such as Archil and Vakhtang VI were prominent patrons of literature, as well as of education and gifted individuals in general.

Saba's dictionary contains over 16 600 words (according to Saba's autographic dictionaries), explained in plain, easily understandable language (picture 3 represents the first page of the dictionary with the image of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, XVIII c. MS). Each word included in the dictionary is attested in Georgian sources and often also the sources are cited. The SSO cites more than 140 Georgian sources, original, as well as translated pieces of literature, both ecclesiastic and secular/historic writings.

Study of lexical meanings of words is based on the analysis of word contexts, which are, as noted above, in many cases cited. Saba worked for almost 40 years on his dictionary and produced 3 edited and revised versions thereof. SSO was first printed only in 1884, some 160 years after its author's death.

SSO includes all parts of speech. One of the interesting peculiarities of the SSO is the categorization of words by semantic clusters. E.g. in the dictionary entry for *navi* ('boat') Saba includes and explains: *nusha* ('a small sailing boat'), *vartsli* ('a large boat'), *kopano* ('a medium-sized river-boat'), *kartchapa* ('a barge'), etc.; in the entry for *sabeli* ('leash') there are included and explained *batsari* ('cord'), *toki* ('rope'), *chapani* ('cable') and so on. While explaining each member of any particular semantic cluster, the lexicographer often uses relevant headword:

ბაგირი არს საბელი ყოელთა უსხოსი (*bagiri* / 'thick rope' is the thickest possible *sabeli* / **leash**);

საკოჭავი არს საბელი საპალნის შესაკრავი (*sakochavi* / 'saddlebag drawstring' is a *sabeli* / **leash** used for fastening pack animal's load), and so on.

The lexicographer obviously regards language as a system of interrelated lexical units, rather than a mere conglomeration of isolated words.



In his dictionary, Saba uses conventional symbols. Celestial bodies (the Sun, the



Picture 4

Moon, stars), birds and animals, fishes and insects are marked in the dictionary with a special symbol, which is tantamount to subject labels in modern dictionaries. The dictionary also uses a special symbol (0) to designate the words of foreign origin.

The SSO includes explanations of personal (e.g. biblical) names and place-names.

Saba's dictionary discriminates polysemous meanings of words and in many cases each meaning is provided with a reference to the relevant source thereof. Great attention is paid to word synonymy. The SSO entries include synonyms of each relevant headword and differences in the shades of meanings of synonyms are also highlighted.

The SSO is an explanatory dictionary in the first place, however, along with Georgian explanations it includes also Italian, Armenian and Turkish equivalents of Georgian headwords in Georgian transliterations.

It must be noted that Sulkhani-Saba included in his dictionary also some taboo words which are not normally used in a polite conversation, such as certain anatomical terms, as well as terms denoting certain physiological processes, *etc.* Defending his choice to do so, Sulkhani argued that his Georgian Dictionary had to be lexically all-inclusive and it would not be appropriate to discriminate between 'good' and 'bad' words.

'*Sitkvis Kona*' by Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani is at the same time explanatory and bilingual dictionary, including some encyclopaedic information as well, which fact gives to the dictionary prominence as a unique lexicographic oeuvre of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Saba laid the foundation of the Georgian scholarly lexicography and

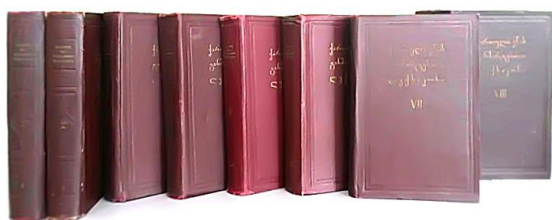
elevated it to the level of the lexicography of leading European and Asian countries of the time.

Popularity of Saba's dictionary equalled that of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* by Shota Rustaveli. There are some 150 copies of '*Sitkvis Kona*' preserved up to this day, which were made in the period between 18<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century (picture 4 represents the entry for *heaven* with a drawing of celestial spheres, XVIII c. MS).

თოვს (თოვს, თოვს) თოვლი მოდის (ვეფხისტ  
847, 1584), მთოველი, снежит, снег идет.  
თოვლი ზამთრით ჰაერში გაყინული და შთა-  
მოცვივებული ცვარი წვიმის მაგიერ (ფსალ.  
50, 8 და 147, 5, კჳალად 148, 8), снѣг. რა  
შემოდგომის სიცივე ღამით ცჳარსა დილი-  
სასა შეათოვებს, ვითარმე მიწათა გათეთ-  
რებადმდე, ეწოდება თ რ თ ვ ი ლ ი, უკეთუ  
დასთოვოს ტერფადმდე, არს ფ ი ფ ქ ი და  
უმეტესი მისი—თ ო ვ ლ ი. წვიმანარევი არს  
თ ო ვ ლ შ ხ ა პ ი. თოვლიანსა ნისლსა ეწო-  
დება ბ უ ე რ ი; ხეთა ზედა შეყინულსა ბუ-  
ერსა — ჭ ი რ ხ ლ ი და უკეთუ შთამოცვივ-  
ნული თოვლი დადგეს ხეთა ზედა, არს  
ქ უ რ ხ ლ ი და ხ უ რ ხ ლ ი. ქართა სას-  
ტიკთა თანა მონათოვსა ეწოდება ბ უ ქ ი  
და სადა ქარმან შეაგროვოს — ნ ა ნ ქ ე რ ი.  
თოვლსა შემაგრებულსა ყინვითა—ბ ზ ა რ ი  
და მცირესა ფიფქსა შებზარულსა—ა რ ხ ი-  
ლ ი. რა მზემან შეაღბოს — ლ ე ლ მ ა, რა  
აჭრელდეს—ლ ი ლ ო. უკეთუ თოვლთა სიმ-  
რავლე, მათა ზედა ვერღარა დატენილი,  
მზის სითბოსაგან მოიმზუტეს — ზ ე ა ვ ი  
და გაზაფხულ თოვლის ნადენს წყალს—  
ლ ა ნ ქ ე რ ი და ფ შ ა ტ ა ლ ა.

Picture 6

## *Eight-volume Explanatory Dictionary of the Georgian Language*



Picture 8

The publication of the eight-volume Explanatory Dictionary of the Georgian Language was the greatest event in the cultural life of Georgia of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the history of Georgian lexicography. The EDGL was composed in

the 1950s-1960s under the general editorship of an outstanding Georgian linguist Arnold Chikobava at the Institute of Linguistics of Georgia. Leading figures of the Georgian linguistics worked on the compilation of this dictionary. The dictionary explains up to 113 000 words which, as it is stated in the preface to the dictionary, is far from representing the whole lexical wealth of the Georgian language. The corpus of illustrational phrases and sentences selected from the Georgian literature, press, scientific literature and other sources comprising one million six hundred thousand cards in total, was specifically created for EDGL.

EDGL reflects lexical material from both literary and dialectal Georgian language and includes large amount of scientific terms. Word-entries give full description of polysemous meanings of Georgian words, as well as of collocations and phraseological units, provide references to relevant sources.

The most important issue in Georgian monolingual dictionaries is the issue of lemmatization of the Georgian verb. The EDGL shows an innovatory approach to the issue of the presentation of Georgian verb. Verb is represented in the dictionary not only by means of its masdar / verbal noun, but also by means of its relevant finite forms reflecting person, version, voice, contact, and dynamic-static status.

Generally, the question of lemmatization of the Georgian verb has formed two different, but coherently defined principles, based on different general linguistic postulates. One principle regards impersonal verb form - masdar, a verbal noun, as dictionary entry headword (unlike European languages, Georgian has no infinitive), e.g. *tesva* ('sowing'), *tsera* ('writing'), *sheneba* ('building', 'constructing'). Vast majority of Georgian dictionaries are compiled according to this principle. This principle is set out by Akaki Shanidze and is represented in his critical article dedicated to the EDGL. The article was written in 1949, but was published in 1999.

Another principle was developed by Arnold Chikobava in 1940s. The principle is described in the preface to the eight-volume EDGL and the Dictionary itself is compiled according to these principles. According to this principle, the verb should be represented in a dictionary not only by means of its masdar / verbal noun, but

also by means of its finite forms reflecting person, version, voice, contact, dynamic-static status and a dictionary should show present (or future) tense 3rd person verb forms for all above categories. E.g. *tesavs*, *itesavs*, *utesavs*, *atesvinebs*, *eteseba*, *iteseba*, *tesia*, *utesia*.

‘In respect to the riches of its expressive means, the verb in Georgian by far surpasses the noun,’ wrote Chikobava in his preface to the EDGL. ‘Expressive power of (Georgian) verb is substantial, verb can represent the action as a passive process, or as a manifestation of activity: *iteseba* (‘it is being sown’) and *tesavs* (‘sows he/she, it’); as intended for subject, or for object (both active and passive): *itesavs* (‘sows he/she, it for oneself’) and *utesavs* (‘sows he/she, it for smb.’), *eteseba* (‘will be sown’); as effected by subject, or as accomplished by the instrumentality of smb./smth. else: *tesavs* (‘sows he/she, it’) and *atesvinebs* (‘has smb. sow smth.’); both as being in a static state: *tesia* (‘has been sown’) and as a process, dynamics: *tesavs* (‘sows he/she, it’), *iteseba* (‘it is being sown’), *itesavs* (‘sows he/she, it for oneself’), *etc.* This riches of the Georgian verb will not be reflected by a Georgian dictionary, if verb therein is represented by a verbal noun’.

This principle was implemented in the EDGL.

The publication of a new edition of the Explanatory Dictionary of the Georgian Language began in 2008. The online version of EDGL is available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.ena.ge/explanatory-online>