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**European Diplomat-researchers’
(18th-19th cc.) Contribution to Caucasian Studies**

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Abstract: The article discusses the contributions of European scholars to the study of Kartvelian (Georgian) languages. The focus is on Oliver Wardrop's English-Svanetian Vocabulary, which, despite its errors, provides valuable information about the Svan language. The article also mentions the importance of European Diplomat-researchers’ (George Ellis, Johann Güldenstädt, Demetrius Peacock, Peter Pallas) efforts and D. Peacock’s Georgian-Mingrelian-Laz-Svan-Abkhaz vocabulary.

Keywords: *Oliver Wardrop; Marjory Wardrop; Svan language; English-Svan dictionary; European Diplomat-researchers.*

For three decades, the prominent Austrian and Georgian scientists – linguist (Indo-Europeanist, Caucasiologist) Hugo Schuchardt and chemist Petre Melikishvili (first rector of Tbilisi State University) were friends; the latter gave him first lessons in Georgian. Great Ekvtime Takaishvili, the Treasurer of Georgia, recollected the eminent academician in the following way: once Hugo asked me: “why chemistry? Europeans will do well in chemistry studies. You have such a

rich language and dialects; study them and help us in our explorations; without you, we will not be able to cope with it" (the newspaper *Independent Georgia*, Paris, 1927, №135).

In 1895, in his excellent work *Über das Georgische*, Hugo Schuchardt noted with great disappointment: *one should be surprised by the fact that Western scholars pay little attention to the Georgian language*; however, after these words, he proudly emphasized that the Englishman John Oliver Wardrop was learning Georgian even while being in Russia [21, pp. 7-8].

Indeed, brother and sister Oliver and Marjory Wardrops have enormously contributed to the popularization of Georgian culture and materials of Kartvelian languages in Europe! Particularly significant is the catalogue of manuscripts preserved at the British Museum and at the Georgian monastery of Mount of Athos published in *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 12, 1910-1911. It was followed by Oliver Wardrop's *English-Svanetian Vocabulary* which appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (vol. 43, London, 1911) [23].

Irrespective of the fact that the dictionary does not contain a large volume of data (only 1334 lexemes), similar to analogous publications by either other European diplomat-researchers or members of the Russian Imperial Academy (Peter Pallas - 1786 [25], Johann Güldenstädt - 1787 [15], George Ellis - 1788 [14], Demetrius Peacock - 1887 [20], etc.), it is still very important, owing to the fact that it represents the Svan language spoken almost a century and a half ago. "Any documentation providing certain knowledge about the early situation of using unwritten languages is scientifically valuable for the history of those languages... What we should be really surprised by, is not errors, but the fact that there are no more inaccuracies in the works of foreign travelers and scholars. [11, pp. 20, 111] Some of them did not even speak any of the Ibero-Caucasian languages; hence, they recorded some words from word of mouth. Entries and pertaining grammatical forms, recorded by the British aristocrat, sound so archaic that, in our opinion, Oliver Wardrop's informants must have been residents of Kala, Khalde, and Ushguli. (cf., according to Nino Abesadze's speculation, the materials of the dictionary were recorded from the speakers of all four representatives of Svan dialects [1, p. 297].

Tere are indeed many errors in Latin transcriptions of Svan lexemes, however, we should correct them as much as possible, and compare them with

ones occurring in similar publications (for instance, the author of the work is familiar with D. Peacock's *Georgian-Mingrelian-Laz-Svan-Abkhaz vocabularies*, published in 1887, in London, in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 19 and he corrects the errors occurring in this work¹[20]), in order to demonstrate similarities and differences and to assign Georgian translations to O. Wardrop's English equivalents.

Oliver Wardrop seemed to have been familiar with the book *Memoir of a Map of the Countries Comprahended Between the Black Sea and the Caspian; with an Account of the Caucasian Nations, and Vocabularies of Their Languages* [14], (anonymously) published by J. Edwards (London, 1788); it should be found out whether the book was available at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, at the time 'English-Svanetian Dictionary' was compiled or not [23].

We plan to visit the Library in order to find out what materials are available there, including dictionaries of Ibero-Caucasian Languages, including Georgian, Mingrelian and Svan. According to our British colleagues, these books are presently preserved at the Marjory Wardrop Fund,² which was founded by Oliver Wardrop to commemorate the untimely death of his sister and to generate interest in the Kartvelian language family in Europe. He was very well aware of how necessary it was to record the oral speech by means of phonographs (in that period, no other technical equipments was available for these activities) and hoped that British students would not lose time to take care of this issue. He regarded his dictionary only as a starting point for further serious investigations, which manifests the aristocratic manners of the author's such a modest statement.

The diplomat Oliver Wardrop was a consul of Great Britain in Russia, with a residence in Batumi. The fact that he was well educated and spoke a number of foreign languages is revealed in his dictionary: almost in all instances, each Svan lexeme, borrowed from Georgian, has the abbreviation - G next to it; for example, Vein - dsarghual (G. dzarghvi), which is somehow presented as a

¹ An amazing fact! - in his 'English-Svanetian Vocabulary', the author corrects a number of errors (in Svan, among them) occurring in Peacock's five language dictionary, published earlier also in London.

² Maybe here we can find the work by polyglot D. Peacock dedicated to the Caucasus which isn't studied yet (Morfill, 1895:137-138) and an information by the orientalist R.N. Cast about Caucasian languages (JRAS, 1884, v.17).

Lashkhian dialect form in the plural. It may be assumed that, alongside with Besarion Nizharadze, who was Wardrops' main informant, prominent public figure of Svaneti of the time and Ilia Chavchavadze's friend, they either got acquainted with Arsen Oniani (author of Lashkhian materials and an abridged botanical dictionary [24] edited by Academician Nicolas Marr. As far as we know, the Wardrops have never visited Lashkheti. However, dashdv/dasht'v 'bear', -visgv/vusgv/ vusk 'apple', -isgu/isku 'your' and analogous parallel roots could possibly be the reflection of lower Svan) or the word zažy'uel must be recorded from a young person, someone resident of Upper Bal area.

Today, in all dialects of Svan, except from Lashkian, this word is presented as žäyw, manifesting the phoneme correspondence rule of the common proto-Kartvelian. Unfortunately, the dictionary is not consistent with using either umlaut or long vowels (which we were expecting to come across, thanks to our relationship with Besarion Nizharadze!); otherwise, we would have more grounds for our assumption.

Oliver Wardrop could also refer to the Latin *vena*, which was used in Georgian as well; however, it seems like he did not know about it.³ On the other hand, elsewhere he has referred to not only Greek and Latin, but also Oriental languages:

Key - kel, kyl (G. clite, cf. Pers. and Lat.) i.e. Kel, kl (Georgian, Lock, cf., Pers. And Lat)

In Svan, there must have been only kyl considering kel refers either to 'a handle' or 'a stalk.'

O. Wardrop seems to have been apt for etymological enquiries as well. The English Warm is translated in Svan as *tebdi* next to the abbreviation -G written in the brackets. Probably, the author was familiar with the specialist literature of the time (this is well observable in the introduction of the dictionary we are analyzing), whereby the Svan root -t'eb was associated with the Old Georgian -t'ep-and Laz-Mingrelian -t'ub-/t'ib-/t'əb. The correspondence was established by the excellent German Caucasiologist Gerhard Deeters in his *Armenisch und*

⁴ O. Wardrop was familiar with volumes of the collection *Сборникъ матеріаловъ для описанія мѣстностей и племень Кавказа*, published in Tbilisi. We believe he would have been familiar with 'Svan-Russian Dictionary' *Русско-сванскій словарь* by Ivane Nizharadze, published a year earlier (1910) in vol. 41; the following entry: *Вена – з і с х і л а з а л а л ц а р 5* i.e. (*vena* - blood vessel) is mentioned in there.

Südkaukasisch (1926) [13]; however, ‘English-Svanetian Dictionary’ appeared much earlier, in 1911 [23]. It is interesting to find out whether this, rather notable finding belongs to O. Wardrop, or did he read about it from the other work of any earlier researcher? Maybe, it was Alexander Tsagareli or Nicolas Marr. It is obvious that Mr. Wardrop not only knew those researchers in person, but he read the works of the world recognized linguists. Otherwise, we cannot explain his *sgiai* ‘you’ and *lydgyar* ‘dead’, *myskiad* ‘ring’ entries from his English-Svanetian dictionary, where apparently umlaut does not occur, but there is -iota presented by -i, -y graphemes. Nico Marr used to express - a vowel following after back velar -g- q-k consonants exactly in the same way unlike Akaki Shanidze, who would indicate at only umlaut (-ä) in such a situation: “iotaization of palatal -ä after gutturals is always and everywhere meant anyway,- wrote he in his fundamental work ‘umlaut in Svan’ [8]. Perhaps, that’s why the British author employed such iotaized forms in in his dictionary in such a precise way. It is also possible that he had had some consultation from Nico Marr while living and working in Saint Petersburg.

It is noteworthy that in most cases the dictionary provides plural and, less frequently, genitive forms, usually with elided consonant -š; this is due to the fact that O. Wardrop’s material has basically covered the Upper Bal dialect. Thus, a present-day linguist has an opportunity to observe a process of the elision of the morpheme -iš occurring in Svan from a hundred and fifty years ago.

Sometimes, an alphabetically arranged system is accompanied by an ideographical data:

Hand, *shi*, pl. *shiar*, *shun*⁴, *t’hot’h*, *t’hot’hil*, *tvēt*, gen. sing. *toti*, pl. nom *totar*; right hand, *mursghven t’hvet’h*; left hand, wp: *mirthen*⁵ *t’hvet’h*; nails *tzkharal*, fingers, *p’hkhuliar*; palm, *mimi*⁶ *guigv*

“No attempt has been made to distinguish the dialects of Upper and Lower Svanetia”, declares he in the introduction to the dictionary. Probably, this is why it presents numerals according to both decimal and vigesimal systems [10, p. 37]:

⁵ In the Svan segment of the entry *Hand*, the *shun* (‘in one’s hand’) and *t’hot’hil* (dim.) must have been accompanied by both a translation and grammatical note.

⁶ The compiler has noticed the *t’ot’* and *t’wet’*; however, he failed to grasp the difference between the two items with one and the same lexical meaning. In how the lexemes *mirten* (‘left’) and *pxuliar* (‘fingers’), one can trace umlaut (cf. *mārtēn* ‘left’ and *pxulār* ‘fingers’).

⁷ Erroneous transcription; the correct version is *shimi*.

semešd ('three ten') / erveštiešt ('two ten ten') - thirty

voštixešd ('four ten') / urinervešti ('double two ten') - forty

The fact that the dictionary does not either distinguish interrogative and relative pronouns or separate corresponding adverbs from each other, is not due to the author =being a native speaker of English [1, p. 303] but it is because both in the early 20th century and in nowadays, neither dialect varieties of Svan (even in particularly archaic ones including Ushguli variety, among them) distinguish them in any other way than by means of the context (cf. Old Georgian). This and other numerous facts manifest that Ivane and Besarion Nizharadze have made a special influence on Svan material collected by various foreign and Georgian travelers and scholars.

As it is common with dictionaries of Indo-European languages, verbs are presented in the form of infinitive; however, sometimes, various screeve or participle forms can occur as well:

Kill (to) - lidgari (cf. dil, death), he - killed - adgar, adghar⁷, chukhodgara; they killed - chadgarḳh, chuadgarḳh.

As it is seen, the singular and plural forms and/or those with a complex preverb of Aorist 'she/he killed' and Resultative I 'she/he has killed' occur with the preverbless infinitive 'to kill'.

We should also pay a special attention to the Latin transcription used by the European scholars, which they have used to cover special forms (glottal, lateral, pharyngeal, long, umlaut, elided, aspirated and etc.,) The publisher of D. Peacocks original 'Five west Caucasian language dictionary'⁸, English orientalist Robert Needham Cast who considered the Caucasian region to be an indefinite sample of language varieties, suggests its author (and also others as well) used the system of transliteration by Lapsis because it is the best one. If it is not done in this way, then the dictionary should give the precise explanation of each letter-sound, symbol or diacritic sign [20, p. 145].

Apparently, neither Cast or Peacock (unlike O. Wardrop) knew about Peter Uslar's work *Лышы Аҥбан* (1864) [26] where based on Russian alphabet and by using corresponding diacritical signs, a non-linguist presented Svan phonemes

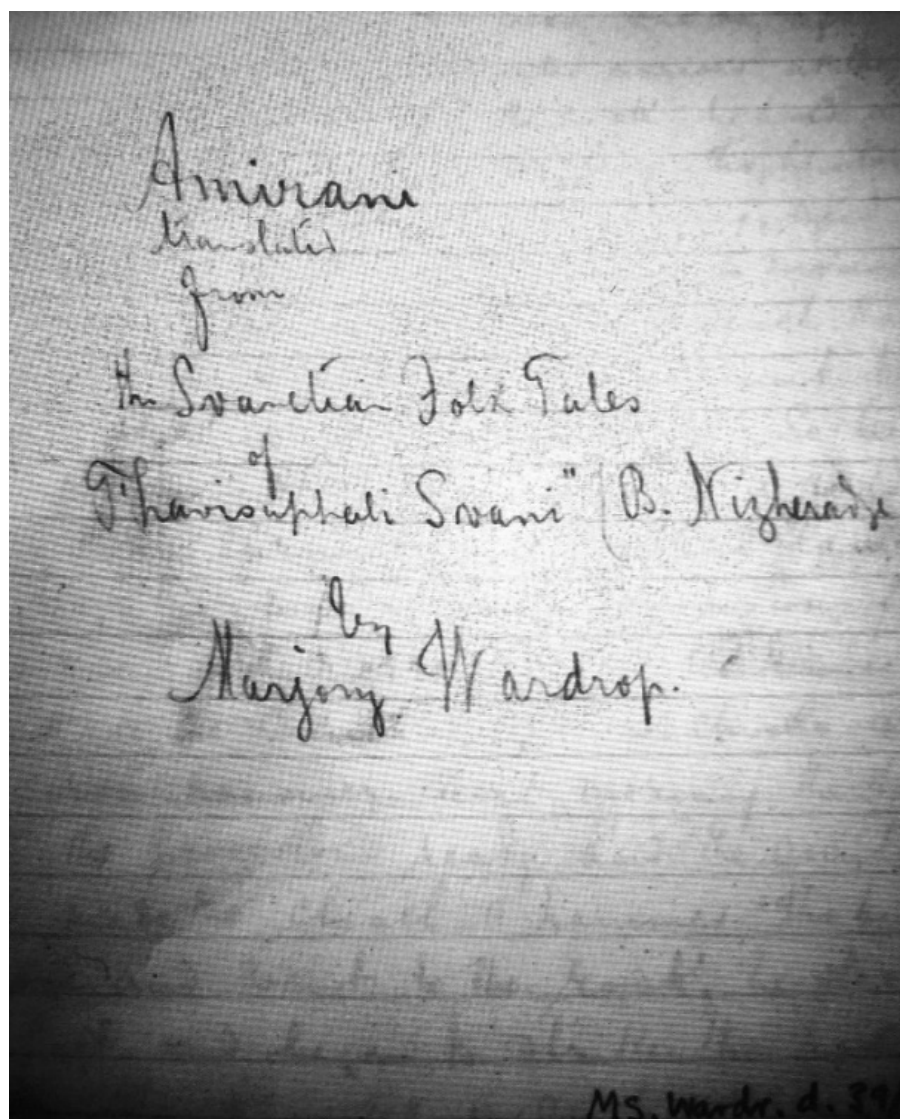
⁷ Both the form and transcription are erroneous.

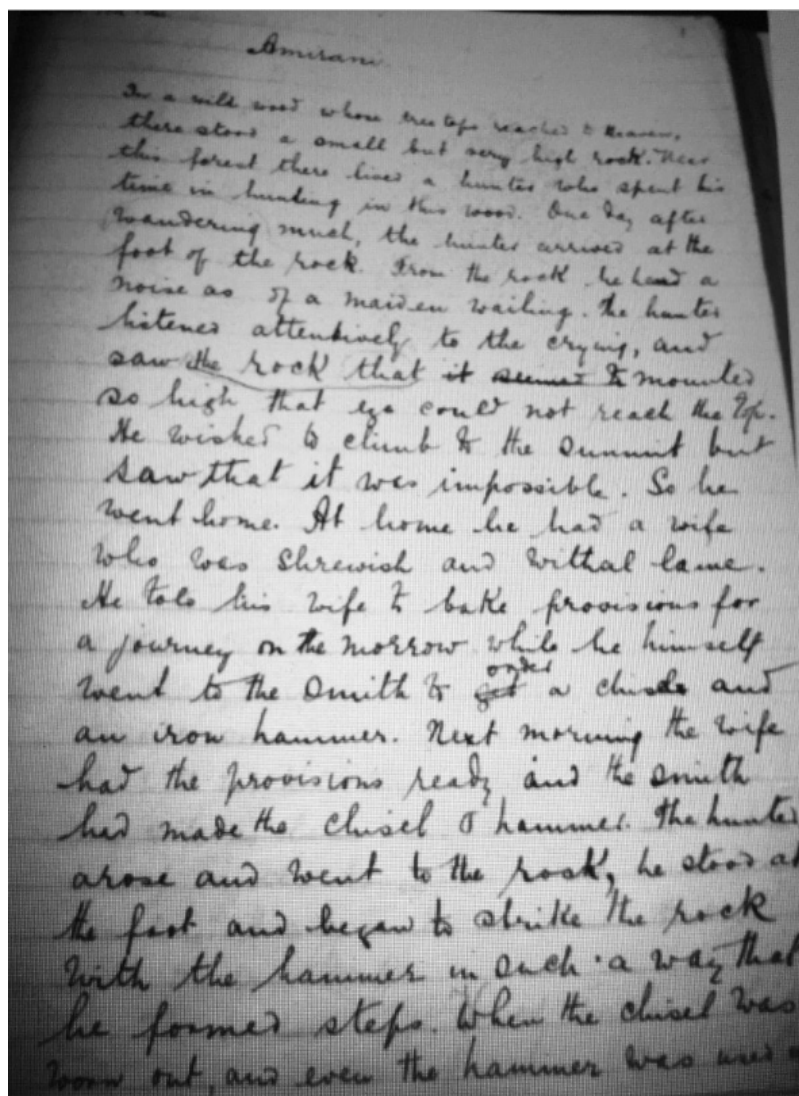
⁸ Why was this dictionary called 'original', we'll discuss it specially.

almost without any mistakes around one hundred and fifty years ago. Regardless that ‘The caucasiological works by Peter Uslar do not go out of date [16, pp. 186-187], he has made very gross mistake (maybe he went through the politics of Tsarism?), he should not have named his work neither as ‘*Лушну Анбан*’ or ‘Сванетская азбука’ [9, pp. 42-43].

We should also study and investigate Oliver Wardrop’s attitude to Academician Nicolas Marr’s (his mother was ethnic Georgian!) Japhetic theory. From this point of view, we should deal with his review (published in 1922-1923 in London) of N. Marr’s *Japhetische Studien zur Sprache und Kultur Eurasiens* (translated into German by F. Braun).

As for Marjory Wardrop, she had much more time (her brother was engaged in diplomatic service); while living in Batumi, she had an opportunity to get acquainted with virtually entire western Georgia and thus collect various materials reflecting way of life of the Georgian people. Among them, we should note translations of Gurian, Mingrelian, and Svan folk tales, of which the former two are more or less familiar for readers as far as they were published when she was alive [22] (in 1894); as for the Svan folk tales, the manuscript is still untouched by a human hand (at least, by the Georgians) at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The Library also preserves *Svan Folk Tales* by ‘Free Svan’ (that is, Besarion Nizharadze), published in 1893 in Kutaisi, with 16 texts in it. We are aware that Marjory Wardrop translated ‘Religious Beliefs of Svans’ and ‘Amirani’ into English and that the manuscripts are still preserved at the Bodleian Library, Oxford; however, what happened to the rest of 14 folk tales, is to be found out at the library in Oxford. Based on an introduction to ‘English-Svanetian Dictionary’ [23], Svan folk tales were to be published shortly (the translations must have been made based on B. Nizharadze’s publication); however, we are now aware why they did not appear (Were not they able to get the font type for the Svan language, consisting of 48 characters in London, Oxford, or Cambridge?! At least, they could have used the Latin transcription). It is true that Oliver Wardrop was not a linguist, but he could not help being familiar with either N. Marr’s Japhetic analytic alphabet or *A Russian-Svan Dictionary*, preserved at the Archives of the Russian Imperial Academy, Saint-Petersburg (which has not been published yet, unfortunately), because he had worked in Saint-Petersburg for some time.





Almost half a century ago, Prof. Leila Taktakishvili – Urushadze wrote: Marjory Wordrop has left the handwritten translation of Svan tales. There is nothing known about this translation according to the specialist literature and obviously, if it is found, it will create a great interest [3, p. 73].

We may assume that the Wardrops had learnt Svan as well because they were capable of acquiring languages of different typologies so quickly. When Akaki Tsereteli could not conceal his excitement on hearing Marjory's Georgian, he asked: How did you manage to learn such a complex language in two years? She, who was in love with Georgia, proudly had replied to 'the uncrowned king of Georgia': *One must be a stupid not to acquire a language for two years. In her reply, she had used 'Abdali' to mean a stupid, a word from Gurian dialect; this means that the Wardrops had paid their attention to the dialects as well.*

It is impossible to read a letter sent from a godmother, written in Bucharest by Mrs. Wordrop without being overwhelmed with emotions: "Romania is very beautiful but where is anything like Georgia in this world? I wish I could see it again" (Fund of Institute of Manuscripts, N 7121/H-d). She had a few godchildren, one of them was Irakli Availiani, son of Rostom, resident of the village Hadishi, from where the local people managed to save the earliest manuscript of the gospel (dated to 897) from the invasions of barbarians. You cannot read a poem by Akaki Tsereteli also without special emotions in which the poet compares her to a chirping swallow who flew over from a well-known England to explain to us that the nation who created Shota Rustaveli would not die out.

While lying on her bed fighting death at the age of 40, Marjory Wordrop lost the ability to speak and as she could not say a word, she wrote the word *Sakartvelo* 'Georgia', which was the icon to her whole life [3, p. 120].

It is necessary to detect archaic texts in the Kartvelian languages preserved at the Library in Oxford, and, based on them, to compile bilingual dictionaries, to undertake linguistic analyses of occurring grammatical forms, including etymological investigations of notable lexical items.

We should acknowledge the contribution by professors Leila Taktakishvili, Marika Odzeli, Nino Abesadze, Nikoloz Aleksidze, and Irine Lobzhanidze to exploring the Wardrops' achievements [6], [7], [1], [3], [12]. However, their works say almost nothing about the aforementioned texts. As for memoirs, we should identify articles by Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, and Tedo Sakhokia. We should also note our younger colleagues – Nino and Maia Gambashidze's, merit in publishing Oliver Wardrop's 'English-Svanetian Vocabulary' as a separate book (Tbilisi: acad.ge, 2018). We should not forget the PhD student Ketevan Genebashvili who, instructed by Iza Chantladze, published a review of

D. Peacock's 'Original Vocabularies of Five West Caucasian Languages' in *Issues of Linguistics* [2]. Unfortunately, she did not continue her endeavors on the issue from this viewpoint. We hereby would like to thank Academician Elguja Khintibidze who delivered a copy of Peacock's 'vocabularies' from the Bodleian library.

Present-day scholarly links between Oxford University and various universities in Tbilisi have facilitated production of a number of highly academic works. With this respect, we have to distinguish literary scientists, linguists, ethnologists, historians, and musicologists of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Ilia State University. Recently, Professor Zaal Kikvidze and Professor Levan Pachulia's conducted noteworthy research on Mingrelian and Laz materials used in lexicographic collection by British diplomats of the 18th-19th centuries, George Ellis and Demetrius Peacock. Prof. Z. Kikvidze and L. Pachulia have published three papers in English in Tbilisi and Kiev, the fourth one *On one English-Caucasian lexicographic resource* will be also published in Georgian in *Caucasiological Researches*, the international journal of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University [4], [17], [18], [19]. We should particularly emphasize M. Odzeli's and Z. Kikvidze's contribution to identify the author of anonymously written book, published by J. Edwards 'Memoir of a Map of the Countries Comprehended Between the Black Sea and the Caspian; with an Account of the Caucasian Nations, and Vocabularies of Their Languages' [14]. They found additional documentation in English to finally assure that the anonymous author was George Ellis.⁹

As long as European travelers and diplomats have begun studying the data of unwritten Kartvelian languages, (However, there is a still a lot of to do with regard to analysing Laz lexems, syntagmas and phrases from a linguistic perspective!) naturally enough, we should initially focus on Svan, with its archaic vocabulary and grammar, which is the closest to the Kartvelian parent language. It has happened so, however, rather late! It would have been so much better to concentrate on exploring such relevant problems by doing earlier research to make a contribution into the celebration of the Marjory Wardrop UNESCO anniversary year in 2019. Unfortunately, we Georgian scholars have to overcome through many severe socio-political problems in our everyday work.

⁹ In the Catalogue of David Barrett the author of the said dictionary is George Ellis.

The outcomes of the work carried out within this project will be written as a monograph both in Georgian and English and it will also be available online provided by our American (ethnic Georgian) colleague Elizabeth Lane on her private channel DAREZKNOW.

In the 19th-20th centuries, European and American scholars got interested in Ibero-Caucasian languages as they were very different from Indo-European ones in terms of their structure, morphology, and syntactic constructions, particularly, they were interested in Georgian. Therefore, the following words dedicated to Professor Kalistrate Salia, a founder and editor-in-chief of the journal *Bedi Kartlisa* published in Paris, sound so natural:

“Not very long ago, there was an insignificant number of individuals abroad seriously interested in Georgian Studies. Georgia was not exposed to the world in the way that was appropriate to its history and cultural inheritance from its now and past; however, today the situation has drastically changed – more and more European and American scholars study Georgian and other languages of the Caucasus, also their literature, history and art. The Georgian language and literature are taught at a number of overseas universities, and the studies of Caucasian languages develop almost everywhere in the world... The editor of *Bedi Kartlisa* managed to make all Kartvelologists and Caucasiologists come together; he established necessary links between the various studies conducted both in Georgia and abroad, and aroused the scholars' interest in the study of this legendary and charming country. Owing to this selflessness, Kalistrate Salia turned *Bedi Kartlisa* into a great body of international fame” – these words were published in the journal, vol. XXVIII, 1971 (pp. 7-8) and signed by renowned professors from all over the world: Julius Assfalg (University of Munich), Gérard Garitte (University of Luovain), François Graffin and Charles Mercier (Institut Catholique, Paris), René Lafon (University of Bordeaux), David Lang (University of London), Irène Mélikoff (University of Strasbourg), Joseph Molitor (University of Bamberg), Gertrud Pätsch (University of Jena), Karl-Horst Schmidt (University of Bochum), Hans Vogt (rector of the University of Oslo) [5].

Unfortunately, none of them is any longer alive; however, all well-known libraries of the world preserve their books, without them a high level of Caucasiology cannot be sustained.

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