

Tariel Putkaradze

**On the SoCalled 'Gradual' Umlaut in the Kartvelian Languages  
and Some Problems of Relative Chronology**

Summary

The secondary character of palatalized vowels in the Kartvelian languages (resp. in Svan) is an accepted view in the specialist Literature. The formation of the phonemes **a, o, u** seems to be conditioned both the potency possessed by the language, and the impact of other languages.

At the stage of an archaic stage of the 'independent' evolution in Svan, as in other Kartvelian languages, vowel alternation occurred spontaneously; afterwards, as a result of superstratum phenomena, the establishment of **a, o, u** began in the three dialects of Svan.