

## MAYA MIKAUTADZE

### GRAPHEME j (ჲ) IN THE 11TH -15TH CC SECULAR (MKHEDRULI) ALPHABET

In the secular manuscripts of the 11th - 15th cc the absence of ჲ grapheme can be explained not by the loss of diphthongs but by the absence of the non-syllabic allophone of the original / i /.

It seems that the first creator of the secular alphabet did not consider it necessary to make distinction between the / i / allophones which in the actual speech could be distinguished acoustically but did not change the meaning of words, i.e. it was not a phoneme.