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### THE SYMBOL OF A DEER ACCORDING TO ST. IOANE OF SINAI'S *CLEMAXIS* COPY OF GAREJI MANUSCRIPT (H-1669) AND THE GEORGIAN FAIRY TALES

The present paper is aimed at identifying the plot function of a deer and its symbolism in the Georgian fairy tales and its relationship with *the deer* expressed in the décor of the manuscript of St. Ioane of Sinai's "Clemaxes".

The paper discusses the question whether there is the same realization of the metaphoric image of deer in the Georgian folklore as it is in the Christian art – deer as the symbol of spirituality. The investigated materials did not manifest any resemblance or the relationship between the Christian symbolism of the deer and the fairy tales' deer.

In the Georgian folklore we do not encounter the deer of Christian symbolism which is quite common in the European fairy tales.

In the Georgian tales deer is the medium between the heaven and earth to represent the model of the universe. Tales with metamorphoses are of later origin, but not necessarily traditional Georgian ones. They are mostly enriched with oriental motifs.

Presumably it is possible to date back these tales (where there is a deer a participant) approximately, as they far proceed to the typical fairy tales, the oldest motif of which is the ascending to the heaven by way of climbing the deer horns, which we encounter in the tales where the protagonist travels to the sky to bring the water in which the sun has washed the face.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> c. manuscripts the expression of personages of these tales is very important as we do not have earlier written records of the Georgian tales than of the 17<sup>th</sup> c.

The images painted by Nicholas Nikra are classified in the Art studies as the examples of the "Folk Painting". From the folklore point of view these pictures belong to folklore not only according to the technique of its performance but also by the folklore origin. They also reflect the folkloric views of the scribe who copied the texts.