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### THE LANGUAGE HISTORY OF THE GEORGIANS AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF DIVERGENCE AND CONVERGENCE PROCESSES

Scholarly literature provides a well-processed historical-comparative method for a hypothetical reconstruction of a proto-language. The very method allows determining a primary linguistic model of cognate items.

The events resulted from integrative and convergence processes need to be considered in order to elaborate an accurate model.

The ways of divergence of the Kartvelian dialect are debatable.

According to G. Deeters, first of all Svan and Kartlo-Zan broke off from Proto-Kartvelian. The Kartlo-Zan was split into Georgian and Zan with the latter being further split into Mingrelo-Laz. Arn. Chikobava had a different point of view claiming that Proto-Kartvelian further developed into the Georgian language from which the Zan-Svan dialect group broke off later splitting into unwritten Svan and Zan languages; the Zan language is represented by two dialects: Megrelian and Laz. According to Arn. Chikobava, Georgian is the mother language for all Georgians (including Megrelians, Las and Svans).

I believe, striking differences inherent in today's Svan dialects as opposed to the Proto-Kartvelian result from frequent migrations of other Iberian-Caucasian, Turkish and Alan tribes to Caucasus Mountains rather than from the ancient nature of the Svan.

There is an extensive trace of superstrate occurrences of the Svan idiom even in phonematic structure and morphological inventory, for instance, palatalized vowels apparently are not of the Kartvelian origin. Furthermore, the following lexical items in Svan language are supposedly of Circassian origin: murqvam "a tower",

až "a horse", mus "snow", etc. Despite external influences, the Kartvelian language world (with the Georgian literary language and tens of dialects) represents a unified common Kartvelian culture.

I believe, all major Kartvelian sub-systems are of the same age, and their differences are a result of various kinds of influences (assimilation) and isolation or an impact of the literary language.

The common Kartvelian language of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> millennia BCE is followed by an archaic literary language of the Georgians which has been further developed into a modern literary language. The Kartvelian oral traditions have developed through close contact with this literary language the impact of which further defined subsequent changes in oral traditions.