

## NIKOLAZ OTINASHVILI PLACE NAMES IN PRONE GORGE

The Prone gorge is a part of Kartli region. Historically located on the crossroad of the East and West, it is partly occupied today. Political circumstances that took place in the course of time were directly reflected in geographical names. The gorge toponyms shaped their form during millennia. Some of them are still in use, while others transformed their form or even disappeared.

Toponyms are often attested in written monuments. Important records on this region are provided by the "Records of Ruisi Episcopate" dated back to 1715. The very document provides geographical names as well as first names and family names of the inhabitants of gorge villages. The study of these names is interesting in many ways. Indeed, the materials are first of all to be studied from the perspective of linguistics.

The toponyms of the gorge villages are distinguished with structural variety. From this point of view, they are identified within the common Kartvelian pattern and are mainly similar to Imeretian and Kartlian. Suffixal derivation is frequent.

-et, -a, -eb, -ian, -an suffixes are applied as formative markers.