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**CAREER OF PROFESSOR
TARIEL PUTKARADZE
IN KUTAISI**

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Tariel Putkaradze was an accomplished scholar with remarkable intellectual distinction, and a versatile public figure with a well-defined national vision, and rare personal qualities. He pursued his career at different universities and in different cities in Georgia (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Akhaltsikhe, Gori, Batumi, and other cities); he worked in close cooperation with Kartvelological Centers in Turkey.

Kutaisi occupied a special place in T. Putkaradze's biography. His dedication to Akaki Tsereteli State University and the scientific-educational, cultural, and social life of Kutaisi is outstanding.

In 1992, T. Putkaradze was appointed as the new head of the then newly-established Institute of Dialectology, founded by Professor Magali Todua at Akaki Tsereteli State University. He facilitated the launch and implementation of extremely important, valuable, and state-oriented projects at Akaki Tsereteli State University as well as in Kutaisi.

T. Putkaradze led the Institute of Kartvelian Dialectology to become one of the distinct and successful scientific-research centers in the country. Recording, documenting and ensuring the scholarly examination of the Kartvelian dialect materials, and the study of dialects as well as ethnographic and cultural features were among the functions of the Institute.

In 2017, the Scientific-Research Center of Kartvelology was established at the premises of the Institute of Dialectology where, until the end of his life, T. Putkaradze supervised the fields of Kartvelian dialectology, ethnography, and folklore. By the decision of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University, the Center was named after Tariel Putkaradze in 2021.

Tariel Putkaradze was the initiator of several academic undertakings at the University. The Symposium *Kutaisi Discussions* – the academic forum for the linguistic, ethnological, and culturological study of Kartvelology – is one of his remarkable projects. The first one of the *Kutaisi Discussions* took place on May 13-14, 1994, while the 17th Conference, dedicated to its founder, Tariel Putkaradze was

held on May 14-15, 2021. International academic forums organized by the Institute of Dialectology were of utmost importance for both Kartvelology and Kutaisi.

Under the initiative of T. Putkaradze, the Institute of Kartvelian Dialectology established the *Kartvelian Heritage*, the academic journal that publishes the materials presented at *Kutaisi Discussions*, the peer-reviewed Kartvelological papers, and dialect texts, newly-recorded by the Institute of Dialectology (currently, the Center of Kartvelology). The very first issue of the journal with Taniel Putkaradze as its editor-in-chief was published in 1997, while its 25th issue was dedicated to him.

The organization of dialectological fieldwork and expeditions for students of Akaki Tsereteli State University is linked with the name of T. Putkaradze. On his initiative, since 1996, fieldwork and expeditions have been carried out in different regions of Georgia (such as Adjara, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Svaneti, Samegrelo, Khevsureti, Lechkhumi, and Imereti), while starting from 2006, they have also covered the historical territory of Georgia, namely, Tao-Klarjeti. The above-mentioned expeditions are important for the survival of endangered dialects and the ethnographic situation that have been preserved up to the present day in the historical regions of Georgia. Besides, they offer the best way of expanding and enriching the relations with the Georgians living in Turkey.

The outcomes of student fieldwork and expeditions have undergone regular discussions during Student Academic Conferences, traditionally organized by the Center of Kartvelology.

T. Putkaradze laid the basis for launching an important scholarly project, the nationwide academic conference for MA and Ph.D. students in the field of Kartvelian linguistics, regularly held since 2007.

In 2001, T. Putkaradze established the Scientific-Educational Center *Georgian Language and Literature Beyond Borders* as part of the Institute of Kartvelian Dialectology.

T. Putkaradze's career in higher education at Akaki Tsereteli State University is remarkable. He was employed first as an invited lecturer (starting from 1992) and later, as Professor (since 2006) by the Department of Georgian Language at the Faculty of Humanities. T. Putkaradze developed and supervised MA and Ph.D. programs in Kartvelian linguistics. He taught phonetics, grammar, dialectology, Kartvelology, and other courses at different levels of higher education. He was loved and respected among his students for his friendship and advice.

In 1998, while working at Akaki Tsereteli State University, T. Putkaradze defended his Doctoral dissertation at the Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics. From 2001 onward, he supervised many of the young researchers who defended their Ph.D. theses at Akaki Tsereteli State University, among them E. Dadiani, M. Mikautadze, L. Khachapuridze, L. Avaliani, G. Kamushadze, S. Tkeshelashvili, M. Labadze, Kh. Babunashvili, M. Tedoradze, K. Gurchiani).

T. Putkaradze was the real mastermind behind various academic, cultural, and public activities at Akaki Tsereteli State University and those carried out in Kutaisi. He participated in different events, delivered public lectures, organized gatherings,

and seminars on urgent topics of Kartvelology or the social and political life of our country.

Under his initiative, the Kutaisi branch of the State Chamber of the Georgian Language was established in Kutaisi in 1996. T. Putkaradze laid the foundation for the popular science newspaper entitled *Georgian!* (1998-2004). In Kutaisi, he established the sociopolitical newspaper *Kuji*, further serving as its editor-in-chief (1999-2001).

The scholar actively collaborated with Kutaisi Ilia Chavchavadze Public Library where as a result of efforts by Merab Gvazava, the Director of the Library and on the initiative of T. Putkaradze, the International scientific conference was established in 2009. He was the founder and editor-in-chief of the academic journal *Tselitsdeuli* issued by the Library.

T. Putkaradze's cooperation with the Broadcasting Company RioniTV was extraordinary. He frequently participated in the RioniTV projects and television shows, covering urgent societal issues.

He held interesting gatherings at Kutaisi public schools, delivered public lectures, and organized joint conferences, book presentations, and so on.

Professor Tariel Putkaradze left his extensive academic work as his legacy for future generations. He had published over 330 scholarly works and up to 300 journalistic essays contributing to his successful career. He lived an honorable life, devoting it to the service of his country as well as his profession.

The name of Tariel Putkaradze will forever be remembered in the history of Kartvelology as well as that of our country.