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book
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Translations into Georgian since 1991

Facts, Trends, Recommendations

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CULTURE

TRANSLATIONS INTO GEORGIAN SINCE 1991

A research by

Ana Kopaliani and Salome Benidze

based on data collected in 2012

Research methodology, data collection
and analysis of the chapters I, II, III, IV,
VI, VII, XII by Ana Kopaliani

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The research presented in the current brochure “Translations into Georgian since 1991” focuses on the state of book translations from foreign languages into Georgian over the last 20 years. To provide the discussions on translations into Georgian with a context and a perspective, the Book Platform project and the Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association commissioned a profound study on translations to two experts Ana Kopaliani and Salome Benidze that have based their work on primary statistical data and interviews with translators and publishers. The brochure also includes two commentaries on the research results by Georgian professionals in the book/translation sector. Importantly, the last chapter of the text lists six key recommendations that offer a perspective for the future to all actors in the book and translation sector in Georgia.

This brochure is for everyone involved in making the history, theory and practice of contemporary Georgian translations: for the public policy-makers and for other organizations that (should) create the conditions for a flourishing translation culture; for publishers, translators and editors to assist them in making informed choices and putting their work into a larger perspective; for international publishers and organizations with an interest in Georgian publishing; for historians of culture interested in the social, economic and cultural conditions in which culture is being produced.

The texts in this brochure may provide the basis and are an invitation for a wide public and professional debate on the current state and the future prospects of translations into Georgian.

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The following materials are available online at
WWW.BOOKPLATFORM.ORG

1. complete texts of the study *Translations into Georgian since 1991*, including two commentaries
2. the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study *Translations into Georgian since 1991*
3. other international studies on translations and translation policy

TRANSLATIONS INTO GEORGIAN SINCE 1991

*Research methodology,
data collection and analysis by
Ana Kopaliani¹ and Salome Benidze²*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following research has been conducted in the framework of the “Book Platform” project organized by the Next Page Foundation along with its partners. It is the first attempt to gather and analyze data on translations made into the Georgian language since 1991.

The research has found that at the present time, there is no state structure responsible for registering all the translation activities taking place during a given year, collecting all the necessary statistical data and providing information to interested parties.

It would be preferable to modify the university teaching of literary translation, emphasizing more practical activities (e.g. workshops, training, and summer schools). In addition to this, it is important to support the development of the fields of Translation Studies and Translation Criticism.

Georgia needs to develop a state policy for translation and for providing appropriate financial resources for the translation into Georgian of literary works of intercultural importance, which for the various reasons cannot attract the attention of commercial publishing houses. Such activities would also contribute to the improvement of translators’ poor financial situation.

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Consumer organizations demand highly qualified translators. While translators' social status is quite high in literary circles, we cannot say the same about their financial position.

On the whole, modern Georgian publishing houses prefer to publish translations in thematic series. The most popular series are: "Diogene Library" (contemporary novels chosen by professionals) by Diogene Publishing House; "The Nobel Prize Winners" by Intelekti Publishing House; "Fifty Books To Read in Your Lifetime" by Palitra L Publishing House; as well as various genres, including adventure, juvenile, fantasy, detective literature, and bestsellers.

There is no official professional union of literary translators in our country, which would protect translators' rights and give them the chance to exchange information and professional experience.

The institution of the literary agent, which would allow translators to focus only on the creative aspects of their work, does not exist in Georgia for all practical purposes.

1. SCOPE, GOAL AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Since a basic, well-structured research study has never been conducted that would aim at reviewing in a scholarly way the flows of translating foreign literature into Georgian, we can assume that the present study is the first attempt to provide international and local communities with information concerning those matters which we have already discussed in the Summary and to introduce the opinions of representatives from different segments working in the field of translation in order to enable them to exchange ideas and generate new ones.

As a start, we would like to strongly emphasize that the most significant gap that was revealed while conducting the research was the lack of official institutions that would make a systematic inventory of current translation activities. Major organizations such as the Statistics Department of Georgia, do not have any information about this issue. All the statistical data used in our research were acquired from the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia (NPLG). However, these data are incomplete, as the legislation does not stipulate providing NPLG with free obligatory copies. Therefore, the NPLG has found a solution to this problem: it gives out free ISBN, ISSN and ISMN numbers to new editions and in exchange it receives copies of current publications. Thus, it should be noted that the information presented below - especially the description of the dynamics of translation in the 1990s - is to a certain extent conditional.

Empirical research methods were also utilized in our study: documentary and verbal information about translation activities between 1991 and 2013 provided by the five major publishing houses, as well as all the active foundations and cultural representatives of various organizations. We selected these organizations according to their actual participation in Georgian literary life throughout these years. We should necessarily

mention that all the information presented below about book circulation, book selling and translators' fees was gathered verbally through personal contacts, as such documents are highly confidential and are not available to unauthorized persons.

We have also conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with translators in our study. The interviewees were selected according to the following criteria:

- a) Novice translators, who have already gained some kind of recognition - their book(s) have already been published and/or they have received an award;
- b) Experienced translators who are continuously involved in translation activities and already enjoy an established professional status. Moreover, they are the "favorites" of some (sometimes more than one) publishing-houses;
- c) Distinguished translators from the older generation.

We hope that our research will help those people interested in translation matters to obtain information regarding the state of the Georgian translation market. Moreover, the study will definitely serve a useful basis for future research study, as well as making them more concrete and detailed, which will help to develop a more detailed approach to the problems of contemporary translation and to take sweeping measures to fill the gaps in this field.

2. INTRODUCTION

We all know that the translation tradition, as well as the quantity and quality of literary translations are major indicators of a country's cultural development.

The first literary translations appeared in our country in the fourth century; such activity has continued to develop over the following centuries (see chapter 3 on "History of Georgian Translation"). Apart from having a long-standing tradition, other requirements must be met in order to create an efficient school of translation.

The central problem of Georgian translation is the lack of human resources. Since the population of Georgia is quite small (the country has a total population of five million), it is not surprising that the country lacks human resources to keep abreast of world literary developments by translating the most important literary works, which play a crucial part in creating world culture. Moreover, it is evident that producing translations is truly a luxury for any given country. Unfortunately, the frequent financial crises which our country has faced has inhibited the intensity of translation work. Georgia now finds itself in a real dilemma, lacking translations of a number of key classical works - such as those by Byron, Proust or Ginsberg - which are a matter of honor for every country interested in world culture. The majority of Georgian intellectuals fill this gap by learning at least one foreign language fluently, which enables them to read both fiction and academic literature in the original. In the previous century, Russian was useful for Georgians in this respect. The situation has changed in our country, however, and currently English has replaced Russian as a second language. However, it is not the best alternative for a population to read literature in a foreign language. Literary translation is an essential resource for a country, which enriches both its domestic literature and the literary language. Hence, translation will never become a minor activity.

Recently there has been an increase in the intensity of literary translation in Georgia. However, there are a number of structur-

al, organizational and financial issues that hamper the efficient development of this process, including the inefficient teaching of translation studies at universities, as well as poor-quality, unsystematic and ineffective translation criticism.

In recent years, Georgia's cultural policy has focused on translating Georgian literature into foreign languages in order to efficiently integrate the country with the rest of the world and to become a full member of world culture. Frequently, such an approach diminishes the importance of translating foreign literary works into Georgian. Thus this strategy cannot be considered successful, but rather ineffective: if Georgia is not permanently provided with translations of world literature, Georgian literature will definitely fall behind the world's literary advancement and become out of step with world culture.

3. TRANSLATION IN GEORGIA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 Biblical Books into Georgian

Christianity became the state religion of Kartli (Iberia) in the fourth century, which was followed by Georgian translations of the Biblical books: the Old and the New Testaments, which had an enormous influence on how the people's outlook and aesthetic taste were formed.

According to recent studies, we can prove that the first Georgian translations of those books, used primarily in the liturgy (The New Testament, the Gospels, and the Psalms) emerged in the fourth and fifth centuries.

Due to the fact that in the beginning, translation took place in churches and monasteries and was carried out by monks, who preferred to remain anonymous because of their religious convictions, the names of the first translators are still unknown to us.

Researchers have established that each book of the Bible has its own history (different periods, source languages, translation methods, etc.). Thus, we can assume that these books are a kind of mixture. The biblical books translated into Georgian were published altogether in 978 and were named Athos' (or the Oshkian) Bible. It was also the first attempt at their editorial unification.

According to philological-comparative analyses of these translations, we can characterize the older ones as examples of free translations and the translations of the later period as metaphrastic.

The most thorough and carefully edited version of the Georgian Bible was published by the committee of emigrant Georgian bibliographers in Moscow, Russia, in 1743.

3.2. Translation of Non-Religious Literature into Georgian

In the earlier ages, Georgians preferred to translate clerical books from Greek and Aramaic, but in lay (or non-clerical) literature, the Persian heroic and chivalric epics used to dominate. Whereas the Biblical books were generally translated using a faithful and accurate translation method, they chose free translation method for lay literature and poetry. These interpretations were extremely popular among readers. The most noteworthy translations include the Georgian interpretations of “Shahnameh” by Ferdowsi, a Persian poet (the Georgian version is known as “Rostomiani”); as well as “Kilila and Damana” and especially “Vis and Ramin” by Asad Gorgani, a Persian poet who greatly influenced the development of original Georgian literature during the mediaeval and post-mediaeval periods. The Western-style thinking and the advanced form of Eastern rhymes came together in perfect harmony in early Mediaeval Georgian literature, the best example of which is “Vepkhistkhaosani” (A Man in the Panther’s Skin), the most magnificent Georgian poem, written by Shota Rustaveli at the end of the 12th century.

Georgian translation during the following period (until the 19th century) was mainly inspired by Persian poetry and the major method of translation was still adaptive translation. Following political integration with Russia, which took place in the 19th century, Georgian society eventually became interested in Western literature. Soon after this, Georgian translations of such works; Georgian translations of William Shakespeare’s plays were especially noteworthy.

3.3. Shakespeare into Georgian

In the 1860s, Shakespearian plays were translated in accordance with the interests of Georgian theater, yet those translations were not done from the original texts. Therefore, almost all of them were of a low literary value. *King Lear*, the first high-quality translation, done by the famous Georgian writer Iliia Chavchavadze and his co-translator Ivane Machabeli, was published in 1877.

At the end of the 19th century, Ivane Machabeli continued his work independently and translated seven Shakespearian tragedies: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Julius Caesar*,

Anthony and Cleopatra, and *Coriolanus*. These translations are considered to be faithful to their originals and are still very popular in Georgia. Ivane Machabeli was able to reduce the enormous distance that exists between the two completely different languages, Georgian and English. He successfully managed to replace Shakespeare's ten-syllable line with fourteen-syllable Georgian verse. As many English words are monosyllabic, an English line can convey more information than a Georgian one can. However, Ivane Machabeli solved this problem by systematically using the laconism of Georgian expressions. The Georgian translator maintained dynamism of Shakespeare's dialogues; he found exact equivalents for the typical Shakespearian puns and ambiguous phrases. Ivane Machabeli was also able to preserve exceptionally natural Georgian syntax and his speech is a nice mixture of the Georgian literary language and folk speech.

In the 19th century, Ivane Machabeli established a strong tradition for literary translation of both Shakespearean works and western literature.

Later, Shakespeare Studies became a highly developed field in Georgia, headed by the scholar Niko Khiasashvili. Not only did he study the works of Shakespeare, but he also organized the publication of a full edition of Shakespeare's works translated into Georgian. Now we have Georgian translations of each work by Shakespeare and most of the translations are successful and rather popular among readers, the credit for which goes to Ivane Machabeli.

Although quite a few works were translated into Georgian before the Soviet Union was formed, this process took place in a rather disorderly and haphazard manner. Translation as a unified cultural process became more intensive and organized following the Soviet period; this was highly influenced by the Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships, which was called "The Translators' Board" for the sake of brevity.

3.4 The Translators' Board

The Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships was founded in 1977. Its goal was to fill the gap in translations in Georgian literature by translating the best works of world literature into Georgian and vice versa, and in this way to popularize Georgian literature around the world.

The Translators' Board was a subsidiary organization, well-financed by the government and, therefore, to a certain degree, it acquiesced to the decisions made by the Soviet government. In other words, they also had to work on translations of low-quality Soviet literature in addition to distinguished and valuable literary works.

The literary works translated into Georgian with this organization's support were first published in the Board's journal, entitled *Saunje*, which, although now defunct, still holds the title of the most successful periodical for translated literature in the history of our country.

There was another periodical published within the framework of the Translators' Board - a Russian-language magazine entitled *Caucasus*, which published the works of Georgian and other Caucasian literatures translated into Russian.

The Board developed quite an interesting and comprehensive strategy for translation: they would compile a list of literature to translate and then make a word-for-word translation based on philological research. Thus, they created "a library of literary translations," which contained word-for-word translations of literary works. Translators were able to choose a work from the list which they liked and make a complete translation of it.

The criteria for choosing translators were also quite interesting and rather different from the ones we use today - perfect literary skills and knowledge of all the expressive means in the target language (i.e. Georgian) were more crucial for a translator than excellent knowledge of the source language. Of course, this served as a good basis for encouraging the domination of free translation.

It is worth mentioning that any translation needed two positive reviews to be published even in *Saunje*.

It should also be noted that the Translators' Board used to publish works with print-runs ranging from 40,000 to 60,000 and, as a rule, all of them sold out. The current scenario is entirely different: today the maximum number of copies is 2,500-3,000. Obviously, a translator's fee used to be much higher than it is today.

One of the most important branches of the Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships was the depart-

ment of Caucasian literature, which served to popularize Caucasian literary works. Eight volumes of Caucasian Folklore were prepared for publication; they were finally published in 2000 by Caucasian House after the dissolution of the Board.

It is also very significant that the Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships organized annual international translators' symposia, which took place in Bichvinta in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia from 1980 to 1988.

In the beginning, foreign translators would have three weeks to examine samples of contemporary Georgian poetry, prose and novels. Then a public discussion of these samples would be held. These processes laid the foundation for piquing foreign translators' interest in Georgian literature and thus helped popularize the translation of Georgian prose and poetry into different languages.

Antagonism inside the organization caused the Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships to split into two parts in the early 1990s. This was followed by an economic and political crisis in the country, which ultimately resulted in the abolition of subsidies for translation. In 1993 on the basis of the Editorial Office of Literary Relationships, which had been one branch of the organization, Caucasian House, a centre for cultural relationships, was founded, which still continues to be an important translation center in Georgia.

In summary, the Main Editorial Board of Literary Translation and Relationships significantly contributed to Georgian translation history, as it demonstrates the huge advantages of a state-organized and subsidized translation policy.

4. TRANSLATORS

Translators are undoubtedly one of the most important stakeholders in translation activities taking place in our country. Within the framework of our study, we have interviewed 15 translators of different age, skills, social status and professional standing. We have also formed an impression of the working conditions for contemporary translators through interviewing representatives of Georgian publishing houses. It should be noted that the situation is not very impressive: publishers complain that they often find it difficult to choose a translator for a project, because their level of competence does not meet the publisher's requirements. On the other hand, the translators feel that all the publishing houses, with a few notable exceptions, impinge upon their rights and offer payment that is not equivalent to their labor. In these interviews we have identified several key issues concerning contemporary Georgian translations, including:

1. Criteria for choosing translators;
2. Education of translators;
3. Translators' social and material status;
4. Problems of contemporary translations - from the translators' points of view.

4.1 Criteria for Choosing Translators

First of all, we should note that the publishing houses do not have a wide choice of translators in Georgia due to various reasons (we will discuss these problems below). On the whole, the number of literary translators is quite small in our country.

The criteria for choosing translators are quite strict. Both publishers and readers demand a high level of professionalism from them, including:

- a) **Excellent knowledge of the source language:** In contrast to the Soviet period, contemporary Georgian translation studies as well as translation practice totally rejects translating through an intermediary language except on rare occasions

(for example, there is a lack of Chinese and Japanese specialists in our country, thus, we still have to read translations of Chinese and Japanese literature made through an intermediary language) and opts for translating directly from the original language. Although translation criticism is quite rare in Georgia, all critical reviews focus on proper equivalents for each detail in the source languages, which a translator should be good at: phraseology, idioms, national elements and so on. Hence, perfect knowledge of the source language is a must for a contemporary Georgian translator.

- b) **Perfect Knowledge of the Original Context:** One of the translators notes the fact that a publishing house turned down her bid to translate a novel by William Faulkner, since the translator had neither traveled in the American south, nor had she visited Faulkner's museum and, therefore, it was thought that she could not have been an expert on either that period or on details of the environment, such as specific ceremonies and other characteristics in Faulkner's narrative. Indeed, Georgian translation studies and the practice of translation strictly require that a translator make an interpretation of a text on the levels of content and language, as well as having a comprehensive knowledge of the background information and paving the way for the reader (by means of notes, remarks, explanations, etc.), if necessary.
- c) **Perfect Knowledge of the Target Language:** Due to the fact that a literary translation is considered an integral part of a target culture, it is exceptionally important for a translator to skillfully use all the literary resources and traditions that already exist in the language, as well as to create and popularize new linguistic forms adequate foreign realities, if necessary. This is one of the ways to enrich a language with recently established literary and linguistic traditions.
- d) **High level of general education:** Translators should be acquainted not only with the information about the period and environment in which a given work was written, but they must have a clear grasp of all the philosophical, historical, literary, etc. preconditions of the work they are translating in order to achieve an excellent representation of the context. Dali Fanjikidze, a prominent researcher of Georgian Transla-

tion Studies, writes: "Not only should a translation take its readers into account, but it also should raise their awareness and broaden their horizon. So, a translator should undertake the mission of a *Kulturtrager* [i.e. cultural ambassador]." ³

There are also other criteria, including the age of translators: some of the publishing houses prefer to choose experienced translators with a good number of translated books. Therefore, for the most part they collaborate with translators from the older generation. Other publishing houses (such as Intelekti) prefer working with the younger generation, since they consider youth as a big advantage in adequately capturing the dynamics of modern life. Also, they feel that younger translators are far more motivated than the older generation.

As the criteria for translators are quite high and many would-be translators are not able to meet the requirements, publishing houses prefer to have their "own" professionals, who are permanently engaged translating works for certain publishers and, therefore they are somehow associated with these publishing houses. On the other hand, these are favorable conditions for the translators, too, giving them a sense of stability.

4.2. Translators' Education

There was a department of Translation Studies and Literary Relationships at Tbilisi State University (the only Georgian university during that time) from 1958 until 2009, the aim of which was to train students as future literary translators and translation critics. Nevertheless, only two out of twelve translators we interviewed have such a professional education in the field of translation. On the whole, translators are experts in the languages they are translating from, which is absolutely acceptable, since translation theory and practice is an obligatory subject in all the foreign language departments in Georgian universities. Thus, it can be assumed that every graduate of these departments has at least a basic education in the art of translation.

However, it is quite common in Georgia that a translator practices an absolutely different profession (e.g. economists, engineers, architects, etc.), yet their translations are more valu-

³ Fanjikidze Dali, *Georgian Translation History Issues*, Tbilisi, 1995

able than those ones made by professional literary translators. This can be seen as yet more proof that for a literary translator, innate talent, general education and erudition are no less important than specific education in the field of translation.

4.3. Social and Material Status of Translators

Even in 1990s, we can still find many cases when the publishers did not consider it necessary to put a translator's name on a book. Now, however, the situation has changed completely and such cases are very rare.

In 2002, Diogene Publishing House published *West-Eastern Divan* (the title is based on that of Goethe's famous book), selected translations by Vakhushti Kotetishvili, a distinguished Georgian translator, including his translations of Persian, Iranian, Russian and European poems. This edition was noteworthy as it set the precedent of putting the translator's name rather than the names of authors on the cover of the book; the translator became dominant for the first time in the history of our literature.

The process of popularizing translators and increasing their roles was encouraged by the Saba literary contest (an annual literary award co-founded by TBC bank) and Gala (a literary award founded by the Tbilisi City Council), as they have a nomination for "Best Translation of the Year." You can find more information about these and other literary awards in section 6.1.

Presently, most young translators have to translate materials suggested by the publishers; more successful professionals are able to choose a desirable work from the list annually compiled by publishers or even suggest any author they like.

The translators' fees in Georgia differ according to the publishers' financial resources and the translators' social status. There are two payment systems:

- 1) A publishing house pays a flat fee (sometimes in advance) to a translator and afterwards the translator has no right to demand any further payment, even if the translation becomes a bestseller and extra copies are published. In this case, all the rights to the book belong to the publisher. According to data obtained from the publishing houses, an average fee for a translator is 5-6 GEL (approx. 2.35-2.8 EUR) per page, irre-

spective of the nature or difficulty of the text. As for Diogene Publishing House, it recently has paid a rate of at least 5 USD per page and such rates might increase according to a translator's competence.

- 2) The royalty principle is the other system of paying a translator. In this case, a translator receives a fee equivalent to 10 to 20 percent of the cover price of the book for each copy sold. Nevertheless, it is the publishing house that is in charge of calculating the number of the books sold. Accordingly, a translator can neither control nor check the accuracy of royalties he/she receives. The representatives of publishing houses have admitted that a translator can always insist on examining the data that bookshops provide to them. However, no translators have ever used such a method for protecting their rights.

According to the translators themselves, payment is the number one problem in the Georgian translation market. Only two translators out of the twelve translators we interviewed said that 100 percent of their annual income comes from the payment that they receive from their translations. Except those two translators, the answers show that the fees received by Georgian translators make up approximately 10 percent of their annual incomes; this amount might increase to a maximum of 50 percent in case of well-established translators.

The fact that the translators' fees are not adequate to their labor adversely affects the dynamics of literary translation. Unfortunately, even the best translators look for other sources of income; thus, literary translation remains a minor activity, which they do as a hobby. This is highly regrettable, as the time and effort they spend on other activities will neither help the development of our translation tradition nor the popularization of our literature.

In conclusion, it can be seen that despite the problems we have presented in this report, both the social status and the financial conditions of Georgian translators have been improving year by year. This is due to several reasons: the development of the publishing business, the growing emphasis on the issue of copyrights, and increasing competition within the publishing industry.

4.4. Problems of Contemporary Georgian Translation - From the Translators' Point of View

Another aim of our research is to define the main problems that hamper the development of modern Georgian translation from the point of view of our translators. They are:

- 1) **Educating new generations of literary translators** - From the point of view of experienced translators, the main problem that hampers the advancement of Georgian translation is the lack of educational resources that would inspire a new generation of translators to become more interested in literary translation. Irma Tavelidze, a distinguished Georgian translator, says that a brief theoretical course in translation studies, which the students in foreign languages departments take at Georgian universities, is not sufficient to make them become involved in the process of literary translation. Long-term practice, such as comprehensive training in literary translation along with a tradition of working on translations, is a must for a novice translator. It would be rather helpful if some kind of workshops were regularly organized, which would enable young translators to become active participants in the process and work on a text in small groups. Summer schools would significantly contribute to this process as well. From the point of view of experienced translators, it would definitely improve the quality of translations and solve the major problem of contemporary Georgian translation: the lack of a new generation of translators on the literary translation market.
- 2) **Assertion of translators' rights** - Most Georgian translators feel that their rights have not been properly respected and in most cases they feel victimized by publishers' pragmatic approaches. For example, their royalties for translations hardly cover their basic living costs. Moreover, as soon as they finish working on a translation, they immediately have to find a new job. Otherwise, they will not manage to make ends meet. It is also worth mentioning that quite frequently publishers reprint an old translation done in the Soviet period, without paying a cent to the translator (if he/she is alive) or to his/her descendants (if the translator is deceased).

There are no organizations, trade unions, boards or associations in Georgia to assert translators' rights. This is a bitter

pill for translators to swallow, since in the recent past there was the Translators' Board in Georgia, which developed and secured quite comfortable professional working conditions for literary translators.

- 3) **The state policy on translation** - From the translators' point of view, there is a high demand for particular genres (i.e. fantasy, detective, dime novels, and various kinds of bestsellers) on the Georgian editorial market. Despite the fact that these genres are popular all over the world including Georgia, they are not of a high literary value. Hence, translating such genres would not be very beneficial for our country, since Georgia lacks translations of a great number of books that are considered treasures of world literature, for example, "In Search of Lost Time" by Marcel Proust (a note by Ketikantaria, translator). The publishing business in Georgia might never show any interest in translating masterpieces because of their low commercial value. For this reason, translators consider it necessary to develop a state policy to support translation, in the framework of which the government would choose skillful professionals and relevant material resources to fill the gaps in Georgian translation.

5. PUBLISHERS' TRANSLATION POLICY⁴

The statistical data shows that the number of books translated into Georgian has significantly increased in recent years. At the same time, the number of Georgian publishing houses is increasing. New book shops have opened in the capital of Georgia and in its other regions. We can say that the tendency is quite positive and it is obvious that despite the problems and less-than-ideal market conditions, the Georgian publishing business is slowly taking a step forward and developing successfully.

Serious efforts are required to provide the reader with high-quality translated literature and the publishing house with prestige and authority on the one hand, and for the project to be financially profitable on the other hand. Finding the golden mean between the market demand and high-quality production is quite difficult.

While selecting literature to translate, publishers often set out different priorities and criteria, such as the quality of the work and its worldwide recognition, the author's popularity in Georgia that in turn will assist in selling the book, although in last two years quite a few previously unknown authors have been translated. For Bakur Sulakauri Publishing House, differing factors play a key role at various times. Diogene Publishers has a clearly defined editorial policy. Its representative stated that during the selection of literature for translation, Diogene Publishers gives priority not to the average reader, but to the taste of professional writers, so they rarely translate bestsellers, fantasy, and detective works (however, the Georgian editions of the bestselling authors Nicholas Sparks and Stephen King should be noted here) and emphasize that such valuable literature may not sell in large quantities at a given moment, but their translations raise the country's literacy.

⁴ The data for this chapter are taken from six publishing houses: Diogene, Siesta, Bakur Sulakauri, Intelekti, Artanuji, and Palitra L. They were chosen for two reasons: They are the most productive from the point of view of publishing translations; they were the publishing houses we received answers from.

In some cases, there are other factors at play as well. For example, the Intelekti Publishing House publishes a series of works by Nobel laureates, which requires serious effort. Correspondingly, the greater part of the publishing house's resources are used to successfully implement this project. In the framework of the project, works of different periods, genres and quality are translated and published, with no concern for the publisher's interest in material profit. Despite the existence of financial risk, the publishers believe that it is necessary for the Georgian reader to be acquainted with all Nobel literary laureates in Georgian.

Siesta Publishing House focuses on translating classical literature from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Siesta gives priority to the translation of books for which they can obtain full or partial funding from various sources. However, in some cases, the publishing house itself completely covers the costs required for the publication of certain titles.

Artanuji Publishers is notable for the genre diversity of its catalogue. Along with German works by the Georgian writer Grigol Robakidze, Artanuji Publishers also publishes the autobiographies of famous football players. According to the project manager of the publishing house, publishing such books somehow stimulates Georgian athletes to write their own biographies. The series thus serves to popularize the genre. It is noteworthy that the readers' interest in the players' biographies is rather great.

Translated poetry is almost never published in Georgia. The reason must be the non-commercial nature of poetry. The exception is Intelekti's series that collects and publishes translations of well-known poems. Despite the fact that the books are quite small, gathering the materials is a very complicated question. The project is especially important and valuable for those people who are interested in the development of Georgian translation schools and study its inherent tendencies. The collection includes the works of young translators alongside famous ones. Some of translations are done especially for the project. As a representative of the publishing house declared, the project is commercially unprofitable, but it has successfully fulfilled its mission. The translations in the collection are qualitatively quite different. However, management of the

publishing house believes that the overall picture looks very promising.

Publishers emphasize that translation from the original language is a priority for them, but there are some exceptions. If a translator from a particular language cannot be found, the translation is made from an intermediary language. It should be noted that the greater part of the literature translated into Georgian during the Soviet period was translated from an intermediary language and many of them are among the best examples of Georgian translations. Nevertheless, taking into account the demands of the modern reader and the market, Georgian publishers do not look favorably on the practice of translating from an intermediary language and try to avoid such cases. According to the manager of Siesta Publishers, they have not published a single book translated from an intermediary language.

In recent years, many books have come out in Georgian, which had not been translated before. Bakur Sulakauri Publishing House, Diogene Publishers, Artanuji Publishers, Intelekti Publishers, Intelekti and Siesta give priority to the above-mentioned literature. The existence of a free market has increased competition among publishing houses, thus each of them try to provide readers with the most original and high-quality products possible. It should be noted, however, that within the framework of the project "Fifty Books To Read in Your Lifetime" from Palitra L, books translated and published at different times were re-published. Judging from the popularity of the series, it can be said that the project has succeeded.

Some of the publishers draw special attention to the translation of literature for children, where great emphases are placed on the illustrations.

Currently, all Georgia publishers observe and respect copyright law. In the past, the copyright situation was completely out of control. The question of copyright has been regulated since 2000, although some of publishers were already purchasing copyrights in the 1990s. Georgian publishers consider Georgia the absolute leader in the South Caucasus region in copyright protection.

In conclusion, it can be said after talking with the publishers, the following types of works were defined as a priority:

- modern classics;
- modern bestsellers;
- classical writings that haven't been translated into Georgian and the translation of which is necessary to strengthen the Georgian translation school and to satisfy readers' requirements;
- publishing books in series, which is particularly popular with readers;
- books that don't enjoy wide popularity, but which publishers consider expedient to fill various series;
- children's literature;

The vast majority of publishers give priority to translation from the original language.

5.1. Translators Selection Process and Criteria - From the Publishers' Point of View

The translation process is very complex. Along with proper knowledge and education, the main foundation of the relation between the translator and the work is the sense of responsibility towards the book, its author and the reader. "Knowledge of the language alone is not enough;" "understands the writer's world, translates quite well, but doesn't have a sense of the epoch" - you will hear such assessments quite often. A poorly chosen translator increases the probability of an unsuccessful translation from the very beginning.

There are translators who are especially good at translating a particular writer's work; proof of this can be seen in the books published and successfully sold over the years, which readers have loved. Moreover, the names of specific authors are associated with the names of certain translators.

Georgian publishers, on the one hand, are trying to cooperate with the translators whose names are a quality mark in and of themselves, while on the other hand they don't refrain from working with the younger generation of translators. Different publishing house are guided by different criteria while selecting a translator.

For Bakur Sulakauri Publishing House, the main criterion guiding the selection is the quality of the translation. The quality of the translation is also essential to other publishers. The translator's qualifications play an important role for Diogene Publishers. Accordingly, Diogene has a constant group of translators consisting of professionals who are permanently working on the publishing house's books. The group is almost invariable. According to the Diogene representative, there have been cases in which a young, unknown translator offered them translations. The publishers have cooperated with them, but such cases are quite rare and considered an exception.

In the early 2000s, Diogene Publishers held contests to identify young, talented writers and translators and tried to encourage and involve them in the literary process. However, the publishers have not carried out similar projects in recent years and at this stage, the literature published by Diogene is connected to well-known translators.

Siesta Publishing House has a different system of selecting translations and works to be published. They have a board consisting of ten people who discuss the submitted works and provide the management of the publishing house with their conclusions in the form of a review. The board is made up of poets, writers, translators and critics. The members may change due to the nature of the work under discussion. Board members are remunerated by Siesta Publishers for this work.

In addition to this literary board, the financial department also reports on the work. As we have mentioned several times above, a publishing house needs profit-generating products as well as other works. According to the manager of the publishing house, the board disapproves of more than 70 percent of the submitted works.

As for the selection of translators for the chosen literature, the publishing house relies on its own experience. Siesta also has a group of translators with whom they have long-term cooperation. At various times, each of them has received a positive assessment from the above-mentioned board.

The project manager of Intelekti Publishing House delineated a number of important criteria. He also highlighted technical

details and noted that sometimes the translator is busy and this is the main obstacle in the relations between a translator and a publisher, since the number of translators acceptable to the publisher translators is quite small. A representative of the publisher says that it is sometimes quite difficult to find a translator from English.

The translator's approach to the book and its author is of the utmost importance for the management of Intelekti Publishing House. The representatives of Intelekti fully comprehend that some translators have favorite authors to whose texts they have devoted years. So they try to take into account the translator's desire, interest and emotional attitude while offering them material to translate. They feel that in cases when working on a book is not seen as a "routine job," but rather a labor of love, much better results can be achieved.

Like other publishing houses, Intelekti also pays great attention to the experience of translators, including the quality of their previous work, although it should be noted that Intelekti, along with Artanuji, allow young translators to test their abilities. In some cases, relatively inexperienced translators were offered complex and large-scale book to work on. Such publishers believe that otherwise it would be impossible to cultivate a new generation of translators and note that their faith in youth in most cases is not misplaced.

As the publishers have made clear, translators are often involved in the selection of works. Siesta mainly publishes books proposed by the translators. It should be noted Siesta is not involved in publishing any series. Conceivably, this allows the translators to propose desirable works to the publisher.

Other publishers' practice shows that it is mainly the publishers who propose texts to the translators. Also, in some cases, the translator can choose a desired work from a list of literature compiled by the publisher. The publishers feel that the modern publishing industry and the interests of the parties involved are so extensive that the translator's active complicity has become a necessity.

The translation of academic literature is a relatively complicated process. One of the key figures in the translation of

academic literature is a competent editor, who ensures that the book's terminological and theoretical content has been properly reviewed. Artanuji Publishers are notable for publishing translated academic literature.

As we have already mentioned above, translation is a very complex process and publishers take into account:

- the translator's professionalism;
- the translator's experience;
- translator's attitudes and opinions about a specific author and work;

The impediments to collaboration between a translator and a publisher might include:

- the translators' busy schedule (due to the small number of professional translators)
- scanty budget, which may not allow publishers to interest a translator in the project;
- in the case of translating academic literature, the small number of translators interested in such work.

6. LITERARY COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS FOR IMPROVING TRANSLATORS' QUALIFICATIONS

As we have already mentioned, the popularization of translators has been encouraged by literary competitions.

Besides this, more and more events have been held over the last few years whose aim is to unify translators and improve their qualifications.

The number of such competitions and events underscores the fact that interest in literary translation has significantly increased since the 1990s. For this reason, we think that reviewing such contest would be helpful in presenting a valuable picture of contemporary Georgian translation.

6.1. Literary Competitions and Awards

First of all, we would like to present Saba, a literary competition founded in 2003 by TBC Bank, the Georgian Pen Centre and Rustavi 2 (a broadcasting company). Saba is considered as the most prestigious competition in the literary field in our country so far, since in comparison to the other contests it has a higher prize fund and greater support from the media.

The category for "Best Translation of the Year" along with seven other categories was founded in 2003, the very year when the competition began. A new category for "Best Foreign Language Translation of a Georgian Book" has been added to the competition this year.

As for "Best Translation of the Year" competition, it stands out not only because of the number of significant works included in the "short-list," but also because of its high quality. Normally, the winning titles are translations of classical works widely known around the world (e.g. *Faust*, *The Gulistan*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, etc.) and it is also worth noting that the judges often tend to favor translations of Eastern literature, not only because of their high quality, but also because of the long-standing tradition of literary relationships between Georgia and East.

It is worth mentioning that unlike other Saba categories, the results of the “Best Translation of the Year” almost never provokes skepticism in society.

It is also noteworthy that the “Award for Special Contributions to the Development of Georgian Literature,” which is one of the main Saba nominations, has been granted four times to distinguished Georgian translators since 2013. Moreover, in 2007 the translator Keti Kantaria won the prize for her translation of *Vernon God Little* by DBC Pierre, and that has been the only precedent in the history of the competition so far.

A “Best Translation of the Year” prize is given in the framework of Gala, another annual Georgian literary contest. Gala was founded by the Tbilisi City Council and has already been held for six years. This competition has also played a significant role in the process of reviving Georgian literature.

Apart from these two literary awards, other contests are generally held for prose and poetry, while other fields of literature are rarely taken into consideration. In order to improve the situation in this respect, Diogene Publishing House organized a contest to identify talented young translators (in 2005, 2006, 2010 and 2011). However, it should be mentioned that the main aim of these contests was to find translators of poetry.

There were also contests for the “Best Translation of a Poem” held by Diogene and by Intelekti. Since 2006, the Mikeil Tumanishvili Theater Development Foundation along with the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia has been organizing an annual competition for the translation of contemporary foreign drama, which aims to enrich Georgian theater with high-quality translations of topical and interesting contemporary plays.

6.2. Events for Improving Translators’ Qualifications

In contrast with the 1990s, the events that aim to improve translators’ professional qualifications (master classes, workshops, summer schools, and seminars) have taken place more and more intensively over the last several years. We should also mention “Tbilisi Translation Week” that was held in 2009.

The first master class was held in 2007 by Vakhushti Kotetishvili, a distinguished Georgian translator, for a small group of

young translators. This event resulted in the publication of an excellent book *Master Classes in Literary Translation*,⁵ in which the translator outlined a number of theoretical issues, analyzed his own experience with translation and presented new translations done by himself and the members of his group in the framework of the master class.

In 2009 “Tbilisi Translation Week” was held, which was organized by the Youth Affairs Department of Tbilisi City Hall and Lib.ge, the first Georgian online library. A number of important events were held in the framework of this project, including an exhibition of recently translated books, evenings of translated poetry, discussions concerning translators’ rights and two master classes by Giorgi Lobjanidze and Giorgi Ekizashvili, distinguished Georgian translators, and so on.

In 2013, a master class in prose translation was organized by Siesta and led by Elza Akhvlediani, an experienced translator.

One other important event in the past year was the literary forum-dialogue for writers, translators and publishers, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, the American Embassy in Tbilisi, British Council, Goethe Institute and Swedish Institute, which discussed various ways to promote both foreign literature in Georgia and Georgian literature overseas.

In 2012 Tbilisi hosted two international summer schools in literary translation:

- The first was sponsored by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation and took place at the Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature. Within the framework of the program, workshops, seminars and lectures were held, whose aim was to encourage novice translators to translate Georgian literature and academic texts into English, German, French and Russian. Over the span of two weeks, the participants in the summer school were mentored by experienced Georgian and foreign specialists. This event was held again in September 2013.

⁵ Vakhushti Kotetishvili *Mkhatvruli Targmanis Masterklasebi* - Diogene, Tbilisi, 2007;
Vakhushti Kotetishvili _ *Master Classes in Literary Translation*, Diogene, Tbilisi, 2007;

- The other summer school was held by Goethe Institute in Georgia, which conducts different events entitled “Workshops for Literary Translators” and which are designed to discover and professionalize literary translators. These events, which were sponsored by the Bosch Foundation and the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, encouraged the process of translating from German into Georgian and vice versa. This collaboration is ongoing and another event for novice translators has taken place at the end of July 2013⁶.

The third workshop in the series of authors/translators workshops held in the framework of the Book Platform project, entitled “Fair-Play and Collaboration: Intellectual Property, Working Conditions and Collaborative Actions for Writers and Literary Translators”⁷ took place on January 25-26, 2013, in Tbilisi and was hosted by the National Library of Georgia. The guest speakers, discussants and moderators were: Daniel Hahn (UK), director of the British Centre for Literary Translations, author, and translator; Lasha Bakradze (Georgia), director of the Literature Museum; Medea Shengelia (Georgia), a lawyer from the Georgian Copyright Association; Yana Genova (Bulgaria), director of the Next Page Foundation and manager of the Book Platform project. The workshop featured presentations by international and local speakers, group discussions and practical exercises.

The various participants reported different experiences. Some of the translators had had good experiences with publishers and contracts, but some of them shared negative experience concerning contracts, payment terms and copyrights. As it turned out, contracts for such work in Georgia are quite brief, hence the terms and conditions are not very clear, which causes many problems down the line. Participants also had to do exercises with existing contracts to identify the mistakes, advantages and disadvantages of their cooperation with publishers. Participants also discussed commercial risks, pricing policy and the quality of translated literature in Georgia.

⁶ www.goethe.de/ins/ge/tif/wis/uef/kaindex.htm

⁷ <http://bookplatform.org/en/activities/398-collaborative-actions-book-sector-ge.html>

7. A GENERAL STATISTICAL DATABASE OF LITERATURE TRANSLATED INTO GEORGIAN FROM 1991-2012 AND RELATED ANALYSES

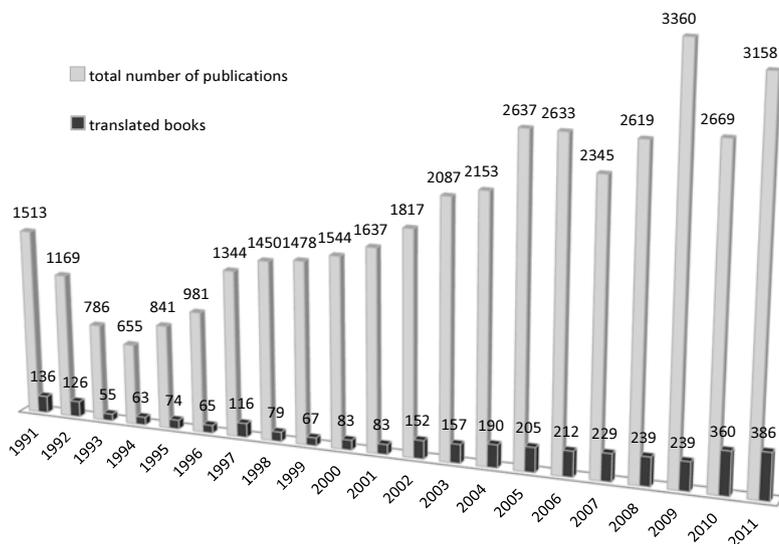
7.1. General Overview

None of the governmental or non-governmental institutes, including the National Statistics Service, possesses a comprehensive database of all translated literature from 1991 up to present, a fact which significantly complicates the present research.

It is essential that we carefully gather such information in future which will indicate the trends, developments and problems in translation and simplify planning future strategies.

At this stage, the main sources of information include the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, publishing houses, international and local NGOs, embassies and foreign cultural centers.

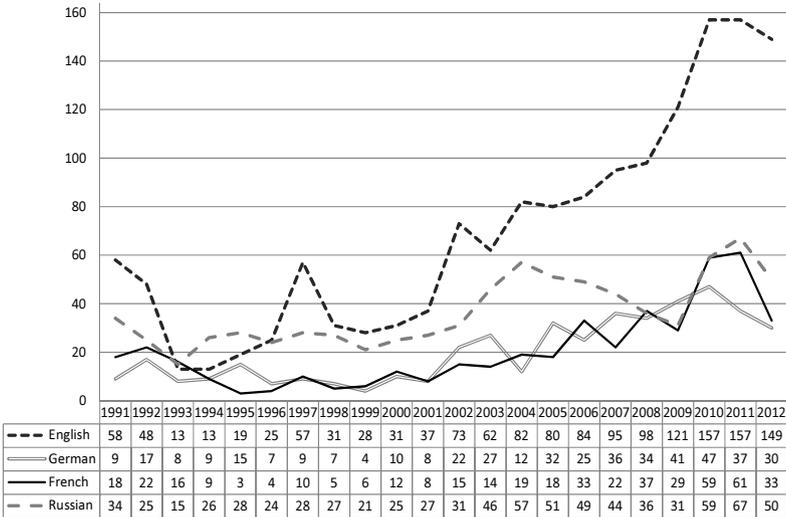
Number of translated books in relation to the total number of publications (1991-2011)



7.2. Source Languages and Trends

Based on information from the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, we can identify four main languages that serve as the source languages for most translations done since the 1990s: English, German, French and Russian.

Main source languages of translations into Georgian



Other source languages include: Azerbaijani, Armenian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, Polish, Persian, Latin, Norwegian, Turkish, and Japanese. To some extent, it can be admitted that considering German and French as “main” languages is arbitrary, since the number of translations done from these languages is significantly less than the number translated from the Russian and English languages. German and French are followed by Italian and Spanish.

In 1989, in Georgia, 136 books were published; 94 of them were translated from Russian. In 1989-90, the books translated from Russian prevailed by a significant margin. It can be said that the scheme that existed for many years continued working even in final years of the Soviet Union.

The situation changed after the restoration of independence of Georgia in 1991. Taking into account the general feeling of

the society and the political background, it seems that people showed a readiness and a will to obtain literature that was less available before. Although the same number of books was published in 1991 (136), of them, 58 were translated from English, and 34 from Russian.

The years of 1993-96 are marked by a small amount of translated literature. During this period in Georgia, the average annual quantity of translated and published books was 64. Russian still remained an important source language. Of course, the difficult political and economic situation in the country had an impact even on literature. In the Soviet period, translating and publishing activity were completely dependent on state financing and were part of the system, like other fields of culture and art.

The new lifestyle and new conditions presented new challenges for authors and publishers. When looking back on Georgian reality during the 1990s, we should appreciate the fact that despite the extremely hard situation, translation and publication of books continued throughout the whole of the 90s.

One specific detail should be noted: during 1993-1996, the translation of literary work was significantly reduced. Basically, academic literature was published and translated. We can assume that any available financing was used for books that were essential for the functioning of educational and academic institutions. Due to the financial conditions facing publishers, readers and buyers, translation of literary work was moved to the back burner.

Since 1997 the picture has changed. In that year, for the first time since 1992, the total number of translated books exceeded hundred. Again, the main source language is English, which has maintained its dominance since 1997. Russian, in most cases, remains the second most popular source language for translations, although in some years French or German outranks it.

The most important increase in the number of translated books began in 2005. An investigation into the causes of this upswing reveals an improvement in the social and economic situation in the country. The advancement of the publishing business, state assistance and cooperation between the private and public sector to popularize reading was reflected in statistical data. In 2005, for the first time since the end of the 1980s, the number of translated books exceeded 200. It should be not-

ed that in August 2008, severe financial difficulties in Georgia resulted in significant losses to large and medium businesses. However, the progress of publishing activity has not been interrupted due to the crisis. If in 2007, a total of 229 books were translated, in 2008 the number of books increased to 239.

Georgian publishing houses began making serious efforts to obtain copyright permissions in the early 2000s. The newly established Georgian publishing houses - albeit having no serious professional background in publishing and copyrights matters, started serious work to obtain copyright permissions. It can be said that consequently the responsibility of publishing houses and correspondingly the quality of translated literature has increased.

From 1991 to 2012, the highest number of translated books, 386, was released in 2011. One hundred and fifty-seven books were translated from English, 67 from Russian, 61 from French, and 37 from German. Based on the statistical data, the number of translated books from Spanish, Italian, Swedish and Norwegian has significantly increased in recent years, supported by certain programs and grants from the corresponding embassies.

7.3 Percentage of literary translations relative to the total number of translations into Georgian: annual data

First of all, it should be mentioned that when it comes to general statistical databases of post-soviet translations made into Georgian, we should take into consideration the fact that the only state institution (and in general, the only institution) that has been compiling statistics of translations into Georgian over all these years is the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia. All the other organizations (including: the ISBN Organization of Georgia, the Department of Statistics of Georgia, UNESCO and various Georgian publishing houses) that have been interested in information concerning translations (and this interest has increased over the last several years) used the data of the national library, as it was the only source that could give more or less exact information.

However, we should note that it is questionable whether the data from NPLG is thoroughly adequate to reality or not, since in the post-Soviet period the law on providing NPLG with free obligatory copies of every printed production was abolished and

supplementing the collection of NPLG with new editions depended solely on the goodwill of publishers and authors.

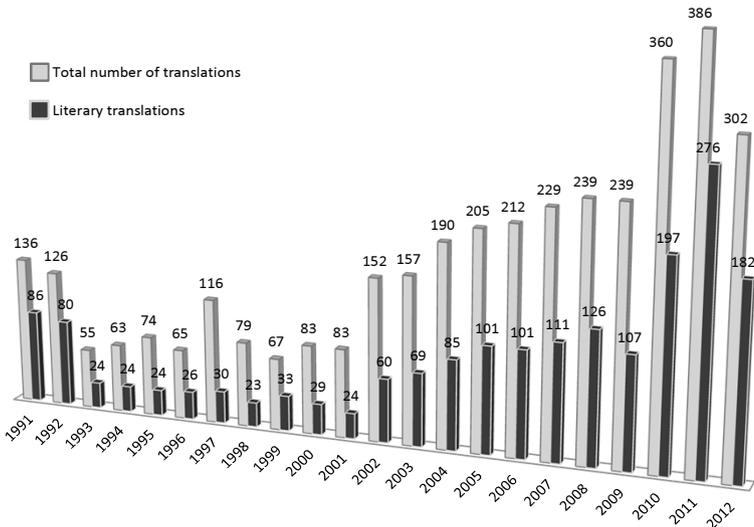
According to information provided by the employees of the library, additions are still being made to its collection of publications from the 1990s. Accordingly, data about publications from that decade tend to constantly change. The data from 2012 is also conditional and temporal since the registration of publications issued in 2012 will have been completed only by the end of 2013. Consequently, the data will presumably change quite soon.

As NPLG has not provided a total number of all the books published in 2012, we offer a diagram that presents the percentage of translations published in 1991-2011 in relation to the total number of new publications issued in those years.

As mentioned above, the lowest percentage of translations was in 1999, while the highest was in 2011.

Here we also provide data concerning the percentage of literary translations in relation to the total number of translated works from 1991 to 2012. The statistics are provided by the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia and based upon the database of the main UDC sections.

Literary translations in relation to total N of translations, 1991-2012



From 1991 to 1992, the general social and material conditions in the country were growing steadily worse. Nevertheless, the number of new editions including the number of translated books is still significant; this outcome might have resulted from the Soviet Union's policy. The percentage of literary translations as a share of total translations published is quite high in both years (63 percent), which shows that the country still had an avid interest in literary works and new international titles.

In 1993-2003, the number of new editions fell considerably and the percentage of literary translations decreased, hitting the lowest point in 1997, when literary translations made up 26 percent of the total amount of translated works. The share calculated in 1999 was 49 percent, which can be seen as an exception that hinted at the future literary revival and development.

In 2004-2010 the country's stability increased and the publishing industry once again became a relevant factor. The statistics from those years show that the interest in literary translation once again grew. The data are still far from that of the Soviet period, but the progress is nevertheless remarkable.

The year 2011 was rather outstanding due to the unprecedented development of the Georgian publishing industry. A total of 3158 new titles were published (approximately 2,500 more than in 1996 and 489 more than in the previous year); 386 of those were translated works. Literary translations account for 72 percent of the total number of translated works. These figures show that Georgians are becoming more and more interested in the tendencies in world literature. This interest has been maintained over the last two years.

Interestingly, fiction ranks first almost every year according to data on translated editions. The second and third positions belong to translations of books about the natural sciences and the social sciences.

8. STATE POLICY

In countries where the publishing business has a long history and is considered a stable field of activity, the existence of state programs for the improvement of translation is not vitally important. In Georgia the publishing business has only a fifteen-year history, which means that without the support of the state it is nearly impossible to provide the reader with high-quality translated literature. Additional factors should also be considered: despite the fact that numerous books were translated and published in Soviet Georgia during the 20th century, many important authors could not be published due to censorship. Georgian readers now have the opportunity to compensate for the vacuum that was created decades ago. Publishers often consider translating and publishing books by world famous writers who are unknown to Georgian readers, as well as less popular contemporary writers who would be unprofitable. In this case the state plays an important role. It is preferable for the state, along with other donors, to fund the publishing of financially unprofitable, yet literary valuable books, and to support society in its striving to keep abreast of contemporary literary trends.

Nowadays, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia is considered to be the main authority for developing cultural policy. Local governmental bodies also play a leading role in directing cultural policy. Among them, Tbilisi City Hall plays first fiddle.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia in the years of 1991-2004 there were no programs to support translation and publishing activities, which was quite understandable due to the political, social and economic difficulties of that time. It is impossible for culture to exist without state cultural policy which is not strong enough and for which much more support is needed.

Georgian state cultural policy and especially literary policy have changed since 2003. Along with other reforms implemented in the country, the budget for cultural programs and methods for approaching a number of issues have been significantly im-

proved. However, in 2004-2009, steps that could have radically changed the situation were not taken. The ministry supported Georgian publishers by purchasing and distributing books in libraries. Since 2010 with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, a Georgian Book and Literature program has been implemented. Its priorities include supporting the translation and publication of foreign literature in Georgian, as well as the translation and publication of Georgian literature in foreign languages. The program provides for the organization of the annual forum-dialogue for foreign and Georgian publishers (along with donors, as we already mentioned above), Georgia's participation in international book fairs and the participation of Georgian authors in literary festivals and symposiums that itself play an important role for boosting translation activities.

According to the Ministry: "The budget of the book and literature program had increased four fold since 2010, indicating program's dynamic development, sustainability and importance." Stressing the importance of increasing the amount of literary translations, they are planning further work in this direction.

Among the local authorities, Tbilisi City Hall pays the most attention to the development of culture due to the wide range of activities and the corresponding budget. As we have already mentioned above, in 2009, with the support of the mayor's office, a "Translation Week" was held, though it was a one-time event, which indicates that the project was carried out as a result of a single individual's effort and commitment.

Overall, the progress in state policy can be assessed positively. However, there is no doubt that the publishing business, as well as Georgian translation practice, still needs serious support and assistance from the state.

9. TRANSLATION FROM NATIONAL MINORITY LANGUAGES

Georgia, over its long period of existence, has always been notable for its ethnic diversity. Tolerance, acceptance and appreciation of different cultures have always been a matter of pride for us. Representatives of national minorities living in Georgia along with ethnic Georgians created and are still creating the culture of our country. Of course, each of them brought its own elements to Georgian reality. Translation from the languages of national minorities is a centuries-old tradition.

The new realities Georgia encountered after the collapse of the Soviet Union, influenced the position of ethnic minorities. According to the 1989 census, national minorities made up 30 percent of the Georgian population. In 2002 census, the percentage was reduced to 16 percent (the census was not carried out in Abkhazia and South Ossetia). Due to the events that occurred in Georgia in the 1990s, large numbers of Greeks, Jews, Armenians and Azerbaijanis left the country. The emigration of Slavs was especially intensive.

According to the 2002 data, Azerbaijanis were the most numerous ethnic minority. If we rely on data from the NPLG, in the years of 1989-91 not a single book was translated from the Azerbaijani language into Georgian, while during 1992-2011 only fifteen were translated.

In years of 1989-2011, only eleven books were translated from Armenian. It should be noted, however, that from year to year the number of books translated from Armenian or Azerbaijani does not significantly decrease or increase. If the literature translated from European languages to Georgian is influenced by the ongoing political and economic changes in Georgia, the fact is that the number of literary works translated from minority languages has not increased.

Some possible reasons for this include:

1. Reader interest in the literature translated from Armenian and Azerbaijan is low and publishing houses consider the preparation and printing of such books non-beneficial.

2. Georgia does not popularize the culture of the abovementioned countries, while this low output also indicates the passivity of their embassies.
3. There are few specialists in literary Armenian and Azerbaijani, which makes high-quality translation difficult. Local Armenians and Azerbaijanis are primarily educated in Russian, many of them so not even know Georgian, while very few Georgians express a desire to learn these languages.

The active work of Caucasian House for the promotion and popularization of minority languages should also be noted. The collected poems of Sayat-Nova published by Caucasian House in three (Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani) languages are important not only from a cultural point of view. This project also promotes the idea of Caucasian friendship and unity.

The Embassy of Azerbaijan has become relatively active in recent years and along with some private companies has financed several cultural projects. In 2013, a play by Mirza Fatali Akhundzade entitled *Mousse Jordan* was published with the support of the embassy and the Socar company. (Publishing House "Intelekti", translator Oqtai Kazumov.)

Obviously, considering Russian as a national minority language would be a mistake, since as in other Soviet republics, in Georgia the Russian language held a dominant position for many years. Nevertheless, Russian language never superseded Georgian as the native, national language. Statistics on literature translated from Russian has already been discussed in the previous chapter.

It can be said that the work of translating from the languages of national minorities should be improved. It would require the involvement of publishing houses, translators and academic institutes, as well as embassies and private companies.

10. LITERATURE TRANSLATED WITH THE SUPPORT OF FOREIGN CENTERS, EMBASSIES AND FOUNDATIONS

Georgia is still a country where the unstable economic conditions have not allowed the publishing business to make rapid development. For this reason, for decades Georgian readers' awareness and tastes somehow missed out on developments in world literature. As a result, books have been published in recent years that have played an important role in the rapprochement between Georgian society and modern world literature.

As the publishers point out, publishing foreign authors that are unknown to Georgian readers still entails certain financial risks. Accordingly, the grants that Georgian publishers have been receiving from foreign cultural centers, embassies and foundations are vitally important. It can be argued that several foreign organizations operating in Georgia are actively engaged in promoting the culture of their countries.

The "Program to Promote Translation Activity" is the oldest of the Goethe Institute's programs. This program aims at promoting the publication of German literature in other languages and making it accessible to foreign readers. Within the framework of the abovementioned program, several selected works of fiction, academic and field-specific (disciplinary works), children's and young adult literature are published every year. As the Goethe Institute explained, the program serves cultural and political objectives and is one of the instruments of German foreign policy in the fields of culture and education.

Since 1999, within the scope of the "Program to Promote Translation Activity," 33 books have been published (including Goethe, Günter Grass, Hermann Hesse, Patrick Süskind, Herta Müller, and others) and seven more are currently in press. The program basically supports the publication of small print-run of books and in most cases does not cover the full costs, but only part of the translators' honorarium.

Since 2011, the Goethe Institute has instituted a new project: "Translation Workshop for Literary Translators." The project is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia and the Bosch Foundation and aims to assist in the professional development of literary translators and in identifying young and talented translators. It should be noted that within the framework of these activities, not only German-to-Georgian, but also Georgian-to-German translation was discussed.

The Dumas Centre actively promotes the popularization of French culture and literature. During Merab Mamardashvili's publishing program (1998-2012), 138 translated works were released. If in 1998, the centre produced only one new book, in 2000 the number of books increased to 10 and to 20 in 2011. Dumas Center officials say some new books are on the way.

There are also the numerous funding programs operated by donors outside of Georgia - FILI, NORLA, the Irish Literary Exchange, etc.

11. PR AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE TRANSLATED LITERATURE

Perhaps some people will say that literature, especially high-quality literature, does not need to be advertised, and that a good book and its readers will always find each other. In fact, today, in the twenty-first century, advertising and PR matters greatly; well-planned campaigns or random events that pique society's interest can significantly increase the popularity of authors and books. A properly planned media strategy in some cases plays an important role in the quality of the literature.

Public and media relation or marketing managers exist in every Georgian publishing house. They try to turn public interest to this or that book using well-established or original methods.

As already mentioned above, literature published in a series is very popular at present, which is a wonderful way of market planning. Perhaps the books in the series have nothing in common conceptually, but the publishers still manage to unite them under the common cover.

Series are exceptionally popular on the Georgian market. Even in the Soviet era, it was almost obligatory for every family to own series such as *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, *Georgian Literature*, *World Literature*, *Literature for Young People*, and many others.

The shelves of Georgian bookstores offer broader alternatives today.

The vast majority of them are translated words: "World Classics" from Bakur Sulakauri Publishing House, "Diogene Library" and "Americans" from Diogene Publishers, "The Nobel Laureates" from Intelekti Publishers, "Fifty Books to Read in Your Lifetime" and "Biographies of Football Players" from Artanuji Publishers, and many others. Though their sales figures cannot be compared to the Soviet series, the popularity of the new series is gradually increasing among a broad range of readers.

However, the management of Siesta Publishers does not support the idea of publishing books in series. Siesta's policy entails an individual approach to each author and book, and the publishers do not intend to change this in the near future.

In order to promote a book, Georgian publishers always hold a presentation of the newly published translation and provide coverage of the event on television, radio and in the press. Social networks are heavily used for such promotion, as compared to the television they can be considered a more effective way of advertising.

Diogene Publishers used an interesting method to promote "Diogene Library." Well-known Georgian writers introduce each book in the series to the reader. It seems that popular authors' opinions have a significant impact on society, since their presentations of the books in different media outlets or on social networks are instantly reflected in the sales numbers.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

In our research we have outlined a number of major problems. In our opinion, solving them is of the primary importance for the further development and improvement of literary translation in Georgia:

12.1. COLLECTION, SYSTEMATIZATION AND RESEARCH ON INFORMATION ABOUT LITERARY TRANSLATIONS IN GEORGIA

First of all, we feel that the relevant state agencies - the Ministry of Culture and the Department of Statistics using their existing departments - should ensure the collection of all the statistical data and general information about the literary translation process in order to help the further development of the field. Or the government should create a new department that would register the actual translating process, as well as collect and systematize in detail the previous data existing in the field.

We also believe that the next-most-urgent matter is to create the legislative basis that would allow researchers and scholars to receive officially (and not by means of private contacts) all the necessary information from both relevant state agencies and private entities within appropriate timeframes and without any difficulties.

As we have already mentioned above, we can say that this study is the first attempt to describe the general picture of contemporary Georgian translation, but certainly it cannot exhaustively define that reality. Rather it shows the importance of further research in this field.

12.2. DEVELOPMENT OF AN ORGANIZED STATE PROGRAM FOR LITERARY TRANSLATION

It is necessary to develop a well-analyzed and specifically tailored state program based on scientific research whose goal is to fill the huge gap in contemporary Georgian literature - by this we mean the lack of translations of those most important literary works that have been translated into nearly every language. This would give us an opportunity to have the works of those valuable and worthy literatures (including the world's

poetic masterpieces) in Georgian, which for various reasons cannot attract the attention of commercial publishing houses. To succeed in this, the government should make more efforts to attract various international cultural foundations and agencies that would fund such projects. However, we must also mention that literary translation should be better financed by the state budget, which at present spends pitiful resources on the development of this field.

Even partial state subsidies for translations into Georgian would contribute to the protection of translators' rights as well, as the competition would force publishing houses to improve the poor conditions they offer to even the most outstanding literary translators.

Moreover, the government should probably undertake to develop closer ties with representatives of national minorities. One important step in this direction was the creation of a special program by the Ministry of Education and Science, offering preferential conditions to representatives of national minorities living in our country in order to educate them in secondary schools and universities, in order to encourage their closer interaction with Georgian culture. However, there is a need for more effective activities, especially in conflict regions, where closer cultural relationships would improve mutual understanding between diverse groups.

12.3. EDUCATING THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF TRANSLATORS

Over the last 25 years, literary translation has been seen as a less and less desirable activity for the younger generation. There are reasons for this tendency: first of all, this field is less rewarding financially; secondly, the social milieu linked with literary translation is rather static and it lacks the dynamism that would attract the younger generation. Presumably the universities should develop more attractive studying and working methods that would focus on practical activities and aim to involve capable young people more intensively in this industry. Universities should also try to increase student interest in Translation Studies and Translation Criticism, which are underdeveloped academic fields in our country.

12.4. FORMING A TRANSLATORS' ASSOCIATION

At present, we do not have any official professional union, board or association that would protect translators' rights and offer them the chance to exchange information and professional experiences.

Forming this kind of association is very important and this question often arises in professional circles, though the lack of financial and infrastructural means makes it difficult to solve this problem, which is becoming more and more urgent every day.

12.5. CREATING THE INSTITUTION OF THE LITERARY AGENT

Unfortunately, the internationally approved institution of the literary agent that makes it easier for translators to connect with customers does not exist in practice in our country.

12.6. CREATING PERIODICALS FOR PUBLISHING TRANSLATIONS

There's an urgent need to create a magazine that would publish only new literary translations (and perhaps translations of academic literature). It is noteworthy that *Saunje*, a magazine of similar profile (it was published until 1989) played a significant role in the development of Georgian literature. Another magazine *Akhali Targmanebi* was published unsystematically due to financial problems, with its last edition appearing in 2009. Today the translation magazine niche is empty on our literary market and needs to be filled.

COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH *TRANSLATIONS INTO GEORGIAN SINCE 1991*

by Gaga Lomidze¹

In the era of digitalization which is leading to the conversion of data into electronic format, the stage of data collection itself still remains important. This is understandable as there are many objective reasons to it. However, we all know that a database, and in our case, of information about Georgian literature translations into foreign languages and translations of foreign literature into Georgian, is an important and urgent matter. We understand it's not an easy task as on one hand this involves making an inventory of foreign language translations of Georgian literature found in different periodical publications during the last thirty years whilst scattered across different countries and on the other hand - compiling a complete list of translations into the Georgian language. But we know it's an urgent matter and we have to start somewhere. It is natural that such processes have to be preceded by research and analysis.

Research conducted by Salome Benidze and Ana Kopaliani is one of the first efforts in carrying out a comprehensive research in the sphere of translations in Georgia. There is no complete data on books by Georgian authors being published in Georgia in the English language or being translated into Georgian from English. I became acquainted with primary data and analysis some two years ago when the literature agent for Georgian literature Rachel Gratzfeld presented a similar survey covering translations made in the period between 2000 and 2012. Therefore, the research made by Salome Benidze and Ana Kopaliani is important as it covers quite a big volume of information; at the same time, in their research they also tried to offer us some recommendations and an analysis. It is natural that when an empty niche is

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being filled in, a space for some remarks is always there. However, the remarks are insignificant compared to the importance of work they have conducted and we can say that it is the first step in line of future research of this type.

Herein, we believe that several issues need clarification.

The authors of the survey mention that “criticism of translations in Georgia is limited, unsystematic and of a low quality.” This comment is acceptable. However, there is more than one reason to it. First of all, we do not have many specialists in this field, and those who are the specialists are often preoccupied with other interests. Some motivation is required to attract their interest. Moreover, publishers who are in a position to publish critical articles are uncommon. Now the situation has slightly improved in this regard. It’s enough to mention the renewed “Arili” literary magazine. Therefore, each problem is a ring in the chain leading to the causes of the problem that has to be resolved step by step.

The survey suggests that during the Soviet period the Council of Translators would ensure that the best world literature works were translated into Georgian and the other way round and would promote Georgian literature abroad. I do not really know if a similar “Council” should exist nowadays as it maybe an extra burden for the state. It might be better to entrust this function to one of the existing organizations or ministries, i.e. to decide which book/articles need to be translated.

The survey says: “ It is noteworthy that today, if the print-run is usually around 3000, the “Council of Translators” would otherwise normally print about 40000-60000 and yet still the whole print-run would usually be sold out”. This would not now count as a sufficient argument as the system then was different as well as the economic situation being much better then than it is today. It is worth mentioning that “ several thousand runs” were a bit artificial as there were some “forceful” distribution methods and whatever was not sold during the non-market economy system, would not bankrupt the publisher anyway as the notion of a competition did not exist.

The fact mentioned in the research suggests that the principles of choosing translators during the Soviet times were interesting

and different from today. This also deserves attention: proficient writing abilities in the native language of the translator were considered more important than the knowledge of a foreign language thus creating a domination of free interpretation principles. We think that this requirement for choosing translators still has the right to continue. Translators should know the language they are translating from well. At the same time they should have outstanding writing skills found typically with good writers. In the case of poetry, such skills are even more needed and demanding as possibly someone who is not a poet would have difficulty translating poetry. Therefore, the knowledge of a foreign language alone is an insufficient requirement.

In terms of translators' motivation, the translators themselves need to have more information about the availability of different programmes that offer residencies for translators and also payment for the translation job. It is disappointing that only few international funds or ministries (including Turkey, Austria, Australia, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, etc) are interested in the issue, i.e. translation of their literature into foreign languages.

The research rightly mentions that in Georgia there are no organizations, professional unions, councils, bodies that protect translators rights and interests; there is no literature agency either. With the exception of Rachel Gratzfeld, with her goodwill and initiative. When it comes to translations, it is also important to mention that there is a lack of state policy related to translation. Under such circumstances, this type of function should be undertaken by the Ministry of Culture, the capital's/city's municipalities or bank/business sector. The research says that in Georgia there is not a single Georgian translation of a text with world importance. For example, it mentions Marcel Proust and others' prose or poetry. But in this case, it should be in the interest of the country of the original and in order to translate it into Georgian, a publishing house has to contact the country's representing body. Accordingly, in cases when we speak about translating Georgian classical literature (meaning old text and not contemporary authors), the Georgian side is the one to act as an initiator.

The research says: "The publishing house "Intellect" publishes series of writers - the Noble Prize winners, which is a chal-

lenging task and therefore, the main resources of the publishing house are directed at the successful implementation of this project. In the framework of the project they have translated and published works of different period, genre and quality, which strikes out the salability of the book from the very beginning." However, it is just the contrary, the existence of this series means salability and the variety of genre here of second importance only. And each run of the series in Georgia is just an evidence of it. In other words, this project is much more commercial than they try to assure us. For example, the project "50 books" by "Palitra L" was entirely commercial only thanks to its title and it was not oriented at the quality of the books/projects. They would mainly choose the books that have been already published before, old translations or new translations from an intermediary language or, rarely, from the language of an original. It seems that authors were also selected randomly and this project is an interesting example for discussion.

The research rightfully mentions that higher educational institutions should elaborate a more attractive, practice-based teaching and work system to provide for a better level of involvement for young people in this sphere. In order to reach this goal, they should be involved in practical activities. In this perspective, the existence of periodicals publishing translations is important. The report mentions this type of periodic press, for example, magazine "Saunje" that indeed played a big, and a more or less successful role, in filling up this vacuum. The magazine "Homli" had the same mission and was publishing translations mainly. But today, we do not have this opportunity either. Here, the Ministry of Culture should show its own initiative or support other initiatives, and support production of these types of magazines. This will help to reduce the problem significantly.

The research also speaks about translations of the literature of national minorities and states that "the state should lead here and establish closer literature connections with the representatives of national minorities". It also mentions the programme of the Ministry of Education of teaching Georgian language to national minorities and their integration in Georgian culture. This is a good endeavor indeed. At the same time

we may or may not consider it in connection with the topic of translation. However, in terms of translations, more activity is expected not from the State but from the representatives of the countries whose literature or in whose language the literature has to be translated, and of course, in cooperation with local book publishers.

The research also analyses advertising strategies for published books. It is noteworthy that today users expect more novelties in advertisement strategies and publishers have to be prepared for the new expectations and try or introduce innovative methods. It might be a few second or a few minute footage - a method that is successfully and broadly used in the world. Also, an action/performance to promote a new book sounds like a good idea, etc.

And finally, I would like to mention once again that carrying out of this type of research is welcome. Under the circumstances when such researches do not exist, its importance increases significantly. However, it would be good if less effort was dedicated to the history of translation. Also, the research could have been more analytical. It mentions the issue of translating of scientific literature several times. This issue is so complex and encompassing that it requires a separate research with the participation of specialists from the relevant fields of science.

COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH *TRANSLATIONS INTO GEORGIAN SINCE 1991*

by Barbara Wattendorf¹

Ana Kopaliani's and Salome Benidze's research gives valuable insight into the role of translations from foreign languages for the Georgian book market from 1991 until 2012 and on the situation of translators in Georgia.

It is important to keep in mind that for a small book market like the Georgian one with relatively small print runs and low purchasing power, it is an enormous challenge to offer high quality translations from foreign languages. Regardless of all its shortcomings and problems, Georgia's publishing sector has undergone impressive development since the early 1990s: in its diversity and professionalism, it is outstanding in the South Caucasus. At the same time, the present study clearly points out the precarious situation of translators as well as publishers in Georgia who engage in translation from foreign languages and pay attention to quality and publishing culture.

The development of literacy, critical thought and informed public debate is unthinkable without translations of books for children and young readers, fiction and non-fiction as well as academic literature from foreign languages. The Georgian book publishing sector as well as translators and the country's literary landscape need substantial public support in order to develop in this direction and to meet the needs of future generations. Incidentally, this is the case not only in Georgia and in other developing countries; we should keep in mind that Germany's well-established book market and its diverse literary scene profit greatly from a wide range of national and European public support program for writers, translators, literary institutions and libraries.

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Georgia's Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection has established its own program for the support of literature in translation - into and from Georgian. The present study describes this program, albeit not in great detail. This program is modeled on European translation support practice and plays an important role in supporting translated literature in Georgia. It is definitely a step in the right direction. Hopefully, it will be further strengthened and soon supplemented by a similar program for supporting translations of academic literature from foreign languages into Georgian, which is especially crucial for the humanities and social sciences.

In order to lobby for sustainable and effective public policy in the field of book publishing and translation support, Georgian publishers and translators should focus on their common interests and develop powerful professional organizations. The authors of the study rightly include this in their final recommendations, but their emphasis lies on the need to form a translators' association. The already existing Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association also needs considerable development in order to truly serve the common interests of the publishing business in Georgia.

As a step towards founding a Georgian translators association, taking a closer look at European practice might be useful. The German Translators Fund (Deutscher Übersetzerfondse.V.), which was founded in 1997, is an excellent example of a successful initiative to support translators, to improve their working conditions and to give them public outreach. Thanks to this mainly state-funded association, translators are given a unique opportunity for professional development at all stages of their career (workshops, seminars, travel grants, mentoring program and residency scholarships). Some of the seminars and workshops include authors, literary critics or editors from publishing houses and greatly contribute to their mutual understanding. Ana Kopaliani's and Salome Benidze's recommendations mention the universities' role in cultivating a new generation of translators. I think that a system of training opportunities developed by experienced translators - outside the academic sphere - might be even more important than new courses of study in this field. It would encourage qualified debates about

translations into Georgian from various source languages and at the same time promote exchange among translators who usually work in isolation and lack opportunities for professional networking.

