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The Influence of the Biblical Translation on the Postpositional[1] System of the Georgian Literary Language

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Abstract

The Georgian literary language has been formed and developed in the process of translation of the Bible from Greek. Thus, Septuagint Greek had a great influence on the Georgian literary language. Every level of the language: lexical, morphological or syntactical, reflects this.

In the article are discussed questions connected with formation of the postpositional system. There are some different cases:

Some Greek prepositions have the exact equivalents in Georgian and there are no difficulties in their translation (for instance, ἐν, ἐπί and so on).

Some meanings of the Greek preposition were completely unknown for the Georgian language and the translators had to find equivalents and use some alternative ones at the same time and gradually chose the most suitable one for their own style (for instance, παρά).

There is a prepositional construction in the original, but the equivalent of this preposition is absolutely unnecessary in Georgian (for instance, εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν

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[1] Postpositions in Georgian have the same functions as the prepositions in the Indo-European languages, but prepositions are located before the word and postpositions after the word. If postpositions are monosyllable they are located after the word without exception, if they are two- or more-syllabic, they may be placed before the word. This must be caused by the contact with the Indo-European language (for example, Greek) in the process of translation.

– told him). Because of the principles of literally rendering the Georgian transla-
tors have transferred it and thus we have very uncommon construction for Georgian
(თქვა მის მიმართ (instead of ჰრქუა მას) – said **unto** him).

We have discussed these linguistic phenomena in translated texts dated back to
the 5th – 12th centuries and then in the original Georgian writings. The influence of the
biblical style on the Georgian literary language has been decreased.

The Georgian literary language on the first stage of development was deeply
influenced by the Biblical style. "*c'amebaj c'midisa dedoplisaj šušanik'isi* [The Mar-
tyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik]" the first Georgian work written in the 5th cen-
tury is one of the examples: Biblical characters, literary devices (artistic solutions),
simple language and short sentences connected with **vav consecutivum**, represents
the stylistic solution of the oldest Georgian literary work. It's clear, that the style of
Georgian literary language was formed and improved at the same time, when the
Bible was being translated from Greek into Georgian. Thus, the Greek Bible had
a great influence on the Georgian literary language. It refers to all levels (parts) of the
language: lexis, morphology or syntax.

At this time we shall discuss the issues connected with the system of postposi-
tions. The system of the Georgian postpositions has been discussed and studied by the
Georgian scientists many times (Martirosov 1946; Imnaishvili 1957; Shanidze 1976;
Sarjveladze 1984, 1997; Danelia 1998), so we shan't discuss their semantic peculi-
arities in details. We want to find and show the changes connected to the translation
process in the system of the postpositions of the old Georgian literary language. We
focus on the following issues in the article: what changes were caused by the trans-
lation of the old Georgian language's postpositional system and how these changes
were reflected in the Georgian language and which of them were established in the
original works and which of them were used only in the translated texts. So we'll
represent the datum of the original texts besides the translated ones.

These topics are results of the literal translation. The significance of the original,
difficult context and the principles of literalism made translators not to omit even
a very unimportant segment of the original. They did not pay attention to the peculi-
arities of the Georgian language and created the unnatural constructions.

We distinguish three different cases:

I. There are exact equivalents for some Greek prepositions in Georgian. So, it is
not difficult to translate them (for example: ἐν (when it denotes the location), ἐκ, εἰς,
ἐπί and so on). We must mention one peculiarity, which is well known for everybody
who studies the old Georgian language – some cases have more functions and have
been more frequently used in some constructions. After some time, postpositions

took the role of case's form. For example, dative and its mark -ს (-s) denoted the location (*Gen. 46$_{20}$ ἐγένοντο δὲ υἱοὶ Ιωσηφ **ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ**; and unto Joseph **in the land of Egypt**[2]]* იყვნეს მენი იოსებისნი ეგჳპტე-ს *O*), instrumental (its mark is -ით (-it)) – the place, where the action begins from (*Gen. 25$_{29}$ ἦλθεν δὲ Ησαυ **ἐκ τοῦ πεδίου** ἐκλείπων; and Esau came **from the field**, and he was faint]* მოვიდა ესავ მაშურალი ველ-ით *O*), ablative (its mark is -ად (-ad)) – direction of motion (*Gen. 18$_{22}$ καὶ ἀποστρέψαντες ἐκεῖθεν οἱ ἄνδρες ἦλθον **εἰς Σοδομα**; and the men turned their faces from thence, and went **toward Sodom**]* და მოაქციეს მისა და მივიდეს სოდომ-ად *O*). The role of the unpostpositional constructions was larger at the beginning. Slowly the cases were replaced by the postpositional constructions and they still have this position. An important question arises here: this change was caused by the influence of Greek or it was a natural way of the old Georgian Postpositional system's development. We can assume that, this process was accelerated by the translation of the Bible, but it would have happened itself sooner or later, because one and the same form had several grammar meanings and this would have caused misunderstanding. In addition to this, the postpositions give us the chance to show the exact location of the things in the space. The activation of the postpositional system and the decrease of the functions of the cases were caused by this everything.

II. The grammar system of two languages, especially if they are as different from each other, as the Georgian and the Greek languages will never be the same. And in one of them will always be such grammar category, which has not the exact equivalent in another. This refers to the prepositional systems of the both languages: Greek and Georgian. In this topic we'll discuss preposition **παρά**. Our choice is not random: 1) it is polysemantic; 2) it is frequently used in Greek; 3) it is part of idioms and 4) some of its meanings are absolutely foreign for Georgian.

We studied equivalents of **παρά** preposition in the old Georgian recensions of the psalms. There are three textual forms for the Psalms in Georgian. They are so cold *sinuri* (Sin. 42, Sin. 22, Sin.29, Graz, Georg.2) = S (before 10th century), *mtsxeturi* (A 38) = M (10th century) and *George of Athos' recension* (Jer 161 (by R. P. Blake), Jer 133 (R. P. Blake), B I) = G^G (11th century). So, we can follow three different chronological steps of translation and revision and observe the stylistic changes that the Georgian equivalents of this Greek preposition undergo. During the research we have found equivalents of this preposition and determined its meanings according to the Greek original[3].

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[2] English quotations are cited from The King James Version.
[3] We used the following dictionaries to sort out the meanings of the prepositions discussed in the second topic: Lampe 1961; Liddell, Scott 1996 and Johannessohn 1925.

Παρά

Preposition **παρά** is widely used in the Psalms. It governs genitive, dative and accusative cases and also creates idioms. The meanings of the preposition **παρά** in the Psalms are:

I. cum. gen. *1) to come out: a) from place, b) issuing from a person; 2) with, near.*

II. cum. dat. *1) location (answering the question where?); 2) before; 3) in the quotes; 4) from.*

III. cum. acc. *1) besides, near, by; 2) along; 3) after, past; 4) in comparison; 5) because of.*

The idioms constructed with **παρά** in the Psalms are:

παρὰ βραχὺ, παρὰ μικρὸν, παρ᾽ ὀλίγον – *only a little, nearly*

The Georgian equivalents and the meanings of the preposition **παρά** in the Psalms are:

1) Issuing from a person, their equivalents in the Georgian Psalms are:
1) Postpositions:
1.1 Postposition მიერ **(from, by):**

Ps.7₁₁ δικαία ἡ βοήθειά μου **παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ** τοῦ σῴζοντος τοὺς εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ; my defence is **of God**, which saveth the upright in heart] ჭეშმარიტ არს შეწევნაჲ ჩემი ღმრთისა მიერ, რომელმან განარიჩნის წრფელნი გულითა (SMGᴳ).

1.2 Postposition -გან **(when it governs the genitive case):**

Ps. 23₅ οὗτος λήμψεται εὐλογίαν **παρὰ κυρίου** καὶ ἐλεημοσύνην **παρὰ θεοῦ** σωτῆρος αὐτοῦ; he shall receive the blessing **from the LORD**, and righteousness **from the God** of his salvation] ამან მოიღო (მოიღოს Gᴳ) კურთხევაჲ უფლისა-გან და წყალობაჲ ღმრთისა-გან მაცხოვრისა თჳსისა (მისისა Gᴳ) (SMGᴳ).

2) Genitive case:

Ps. 41₉ **παρ᾽ ἐμοί** προσευχὴ τῷ θεῷ τῆς ζωῆς μου; my prayer **unto the God** of my life] ლოცვაჲ ჩემი ღმრთისა მიმართ მაცხოვრისა ჩემისა (SM).

These constructions which parts is preposition **παρά** are not natural for Georgian but because of literalism translators transferred every element of the Greek sentence and they had to find suitable equivalents for them and exactly such ones are postpositions: მიერ, -გან and also **genitive case** for denoting a person who is a source of action, who is an agent.

In the old Georgian texts word მიერ is used as adverb and denotes the place where the action (motion) begins from (*Gen. 20₁ καὶ ἐκίνησεν **ἐκεῖθεν** Αβρααμ; And Abraham journeyed **from** thence]* და წარმოვიდა მიერ აბრაჰამ G), so it indicates commencement of action, the point of space or time from which the action or the occasion, proceeds. The postposition -გან has the same meanings too. So, they can also denote the issuing from a person, person who acts. These postpositions are used with such meanings in the original texts too (*The Martyrdom of Habo of Tbilisi*

– ყოველივე მის მიერ შეიქმნა (he has created everything); *The Vitae of Grigol Khandzteli* – სიჭაბუკესა ჩემსა სამ-გზის ოპიზით განძებულ ვიქმნე მამისა გრიგოლისა-გან უკეთურებისაგან სლვათა ჩემთაესა (In my youth Holy Father Grigol drove me three times out from Opiza because of my bad behavior)). As we know genitive case denotes possession, but in this occasion it denotes possession of action by someone i.e. a person who acts.

2) Location in space (Georgian language has a lot of means to express this meaning, so there is no difficulty to find their equivalents.):
a) With, near, by, its equivalent is postposition:
თანა (by, with)

Ps.11$_5$ τοὺς εἰπόντας τὴν γλῶσσαν ἡμῶν μεγαλυνοῦμεν τὰ χείλη ἡμῶν **παρ᾽ ἡμῶν** ἐστιν τίς ἡμῶν κύριός ἐστιν; who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are **our own**: who is lord over us?] რომელთა თქუეს: ენაჲ ჩუენი განვიდიდოთ, ბაგენი ჩუენნი ჩუენ თანა არიან; და აწ (> G^G) ვინ ჩუენდა უფალ არს? (SMG^G).

b) Before, in front of, its equivalent is:
წინაშე (in front of)

Ps. 38$_{13}$ πάροικος ἐγώ εἰμι **παρὰ σοὶ** καὶ παρεπίδημος; for I am a stranger **with thee**, and a sojourner] მსხემ ვარ (მე G^G) შენ წინაშე და წარმავალ (SMG^G).

c) In, into, its equivalent is:
შინა (in, into)

Ps.140$_7$ διεσκορπίσθη τὰ ὀστᾶ ἡμῶν **παρὰ τὸν ᾅδην**; cleaveth wood **upon the earth**] განიბნინენ (განიბნინეს G^G) ძუალნი მათნი ჯოჯოხეთის შინა (SMG^G).

3) To form degrees of comparison, their equivalents are:
უ-ეს circum-fix, which forms the comparative and superlative degrees of adjective:

Ps. 44$_8$ ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός σου ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως **παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου**; thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness **above** thy fellows] გცხოს შენ ღმერთმან, ღმერთმან შენმან საცხებელი სიხარულისაჲ უ-მეტ-ეს მოყუასთა შენთა (SMG^G).

Periphrastic formation:
a) Construction with the word უფროს (more than, the most),

Ps. 44$_3$ ὡραῖος κάλλει **παρὰ τοὺς υἱοὺς** τῶν ἀνθρώπων; thou art fairer **than the children** of men] შუენიერ არს იგი ხილვად (არს იგი ხილვად] სიკეთითა G^G) უფროს ყოველთა (> G^G) ძეთა კაცთასა (SMG^G).

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παρὰ βραχὺ (2); παρὰ μικρὸν (1); παρ᾽ ὀλίγον (1) – These idioms have the same meanings and denote *few, only a little*, besides the lexical forms in the equivalents of these idioms is the particle -და, that has diminutive meaning. The equivalents of these idioms are:

კნინ ერთ-და (**παρὰ βραχὺ** = for a little while), წუთ-და (**παρὰ βραχὺ** = for a little while), კნინ-და (**παρὰ μικρὸν** = a little farther), მცირედ-და (**παρ᾽ ὀλίγον** = a little):

Ps. 93$_{17}$ εἰ μὴ ὅτι κύριος ἐβοήθησέν μοι **παρὰ βραχὺ** παρῴκησεν τῷ ᾅδῃ ἡ ψυχή μου; unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had **almost** dwelt in silence] არა თუმცა უფალი შემეწია მე, კნინ ერთდა და და-მცა-ემკჳდრა ჯოჯოხეთს სული ჩემი (SMG^G).

Ps. 118$_{87}$ **παρὰ βραχὺ** συνετέλεσάν με ἐν τῇ γῇ ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ ἐγκατέλιπον τὰς ἐντολάς σου; they had **almost** consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts] წუთდა და წარწყმედდეს მე ქუეყანასა ზედა, ხოლო მე არავე (არა G^G) დაუტევენ მცნებანი შენნი (SMG^G).

Ps.72$_2$ ἐμοῦ δὲ **παρὰ μικρὸν** ἐσαλεύθησαν οἱ πόδες **παρ᾽ ὀλίγον** ἐξεχύθη τὰ διαβήματά μου; but as for me, my feet were **almost** gone; my steps had **well nigh** slipped] ხოლო ჩემი კნინდა და შემიძრწუნდეს ფერჴნი ჩემნი (> G^G), მცირედდა და შემიცდებოდეს (შემიცთეს G^G) სლვანი ჩემნი (SMG^G).

The equivalents of **παρά** were constantly used in the different stages of the translation and revision of the Psalms and they got very uncommon meanings for Georgian. The Georgian language adopted some of them, and the others stayed only in the translated texts.

Summarize the results of the research: as we see, **παρά** was problematic only in one case, when it was used in a passive construction for denoting the agent. Georgian is the language of the active forms and so not only a word with preposition **παρά** is unnatural for it, but the passive constructions too. The Georgian translators found the constant equivalents for **παρά** very easily, which got new meanings and they were adopted by the original texts.

III. The postposition is not necessary in the Georgian equivalent of the original's prepositional construction. But according to the principles of literalism it is not omitted.

εἶπεν is a form of the second aorist and the third person in singular. It governs an indirect object in dative. So, the natural phrase for Greek is: **εἶπεν αὐτῷ**. But, **πρός** prepositional object is very often used with this verb in The Bible (**εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν**). The same construction occupies in the Georgian translation of the Bible (თქუა მის მიმართ). Such phrases are not natural for the both languages.

We were interested in how **εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν** construction had been translated into Georgian: how is the balance of the calques and the natural phrases? Are calqued

forms in the original texts too? We must know one more peculiarity connected with the translation technique. There are two types of Bible's text in Georgian: Oshki and Gelati. The formation of the first type ended in the 10th century, but the Gelati type was created in the 13th century, in Gelati monastery. They differ with quality of literalism too. The Gelati type is more literal. This was shown in the example of translation of **εἶπεν πρὸς** too. This construction is used 124 times in Genesis and in Exodus. There are lacunas as in Oshki text as in Gelati. 6 examples are missing in Oshki and 4 in Gelati. From the 118 examples no one is calqued in Oshki. And in Gelati from 120 forms 93 are translated word for word and in 27 examples calque is not used. So, the construction თქუა მიმართ was created later and it could not be in the original texts. To be sure, we studied original hagiography. We have found only five constructions: one in "*The Martyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik*" (იკითხა და თქუა მსახურისა მიმართ მისისა (She asked and **said to** her servant), three in "*cxorebaj da mokalakeobaj c'midisa da net'arisa mamisa čuenisa giorgi mtac'midelisaj* [The Vitae of George of Athos]" ((1) ესევითარი ესე სულისა სარგებელი ითხრობად, ითქუას მათდა მიმართ (This story, profitable for the soul, must be **told unto** them); 2) ესევითარნი რაჲ სიტყუანი წარმოთქუნა პატრეაქმან ბერისა მიმართ (Such words were **uttered** by the patriarch **unto** the monk); 3) ხოლო მე ესრეთ ვიტყოდი ძმათა მიმართ ჩემთა და ყრმათა მოძღურისა ჩემისათა (I **told** my brothers and the children of my confessor)), and one in "*c'amebaj c'midisa moc'amisa gobronisi* [The Martyrdom of Gobron]" (ესე მცირედ მოიჴსენეთ, ვითარცა თქუა დავით: "მო[ვ]იჴსენებ მე დღენი პირველნი და ვიტყოდი ყოველთა მიმართ მცნებათა შენთა (remember, what David have said: 'I remember the days of old; I **meditate on** all thy works')"). But this is a quotation from Psalms (cf. Ps. 143$_5$ ἐμνήσθην ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ **ἐμελέτησα ἐν** πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις σου; I remember the days of old; I **meditate on** all thy works] მოვიჴსენენ დღენი პირველნი, ვიტყოდე ყოველთა მიმართ საქმეთა (მცნებათა Sin. 42, Graz, Georg.2) შენთა) (SM). So, we can say, that our assumption is right. Also, the comparing of two chronological steps of the Georgian Bible has shown that literalism had been grown at the later stage.

As we see, the Georgian translators of the Bible formally reflect the original. So their works were very literal and the main reason of the literalism was the significance of the translated text. Also the translation had to substitute the original. In this process the translators had to use a lot of unnatural constructions or grammar phenomena for Georgian. But soon they became very common and essential and nowadays it's impossible to imagine the Georgian language without them.

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Abbreviations:

S – Sinuri (Sin. 42, Sin. 22, Sin.29, Graz, Georg.2), before 10th century

M – Mtsxeturi (A 38), 10th century

G^G – George of Athos' recension (Jer 161 (by R. P. Blake), Jer 133 (R. P. Blake), B I), 11th century

O – Oshki type text of the Old Testament

G – Gelati type text of the Old Testament

Gen. – Genesis

Ps. – Psalms

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