

## REVIEW

### *Kartvelian and Sumerian Language Similarities.*

Anna Meskhi, Ph.D.

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### Reviewed by Edward R. Raupp

In her outstanding work *Kartvelian and Sumerian Language Similarities* in Phonetics, Lexicon, Language Structure, and Reconstructed World View, Professor Doctor Anna Meskhi draws correlations in great detail between the Kartvelian and Sumerian languages, using references to the Akkadian, Egyptian, and Old English languages. This 2011 English language edition presents, in translated form, a detailed, unremitting investigation into the connectedness of these languages.

The book is 140 pages long and well-organized, starting with the Foreword and Acknowledgements, laying the stage for the deep analysis that is about to unfold. It is also useful that the author includes a Transliteration Chart, linking Georgian notation to the Library of Congress system. This is especially valuable for scholars doing research on both language landscapes. The core of the book is divided into five Articles, each probing varied aspects of Kartvelian and Sumerian linguistic parallels. This is rounded out by a Summary, Bibliography, Addenda, and Index, all of which make for a useful research tool.

Meskhi argues essentially on comparative grounds for a number of phonological and etymological features that serve as evidence of substantial parallels between the Kartvelian and Sumerian languages. She then searches for these similarities among a variety of sources, including ancient texts and inscriptions. The addenda are also enriched with discussion and proofs from an analysis of Mesopotamian words of Kartvelian origin, Kartvelian-Sumerian-Akkadian sound correspondences, and revealed sound correspondences inside the Kartvelian language family.

The importance of Meskhi's work lies in its potential for changing our understanding of ancient linguistic relationships. With a connection between Kartvelian and Sumerian, Meskhi opens up a new view on research about languages, their origins, and evolution, breaking the previously created images in historical linguistics research. Her contribution is specifically to Kartvelian languages, but much more to general philology, and in some respects to the field of ancient Near Eastern languages.

The study is methodologically rigorous. Throughout the book, readers have a sense of the intensity with which Meskhi has approached data collection and analysis, using a wide linguistic source base to make her findings credible. Outstanding among these are the Transliteration Chart and phonological analyses for precision and usefulness.

While the book itself is a major contribution to the field, it comes with some difficulties. The translation, in general, can surely be trusted from Georgian to English, but sometimes it could be said that the full nuance in Meskhi's argument was not sufficiently expressed. This is a trifle, however, compared to the general overall value of the work.

In conclusion, *Kartvelian and Sumerian Language Similarities* by Professor Doctor Anna Meskhi is destined to become a junction piece in the restored world of philology. Thoroughly and innovatively argued with a large scope, it is a must-have for scholars interested in the Kartvelian languages and cross-connections with ancient Near East languages. I recommend this book highly not only to scholars and researchers in related fields, and I also look forward to further volumes to be issued, which will continue to expand this important research effort.