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Formation of National Identity through Primary Education (Yerevan and Tbilisi Schools)

To gain Ph.D. Degree in Anthropology

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# INTRODUCTION: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

## Structure of the Dissertation

The 169-page dissertation consists of the following parts: introduction, two chapters, conclusion, and bibliography. The Dissertation has also five appendixes (in total 40 pages) as visual support for the texts and presentation of the field material from schools. The introduction and the two chapters are divided into sub-chapters and most of the sub-chapters are in turn divided into paragraphs.

The introduction includes theoretical bases (through a literature review) and methodology of the dissertation. The literature review includes: a) theories of ethnicity and nation (the ethno-symbolic theory and approach of A. Smith, modernist and post-modernist theories); b) Education (socialization and mass state education and schools as agents of nation building, works on history teaching, and identity construction in schools); c) review of literature related to national identity (Armenian and Georgian) and of anthropological, culturological analyses.

In the following sub-chapters the working (and operational) definition of “(ethno) national identity” I apply throughout the dissertation, as well as the description of the data gathering and analyses methods and techniques, are presented.

Chapter 1 (Armenia) and Chapter 2 (Georgia) introduce the mapping of the (ethno) national identity within general education for the countries. These “maps” include representations of “constituent symbolic resources” of the identities in textbook narratives and visual material (textbook), through rituals, ceremonies, traditions, and various festive events (ritual dimension) and symbols and signs in classrooms, school corridors and foyers (iconographic dimension). The “maps” are complemented by presenting the teachers’ discourse around the aforementioned representations through showing cases and practices of transformation, “editing” and “translating” of the textbook material by teachers. Chapter one consists of nine sub-chapters, while chapter two contains eight sub-chapters.

The *Conclusion* describes ‘constituent symbolic resources’ of the Armenian and Georgian identities represented within the elementary school education through textbook, iconographic and ritual dimensions. The conclusion also summarizes the role of the teachers as creators, editors and translators of the textbook discourses.

Appendix 1 consists of a set of photo materials for chapter 1 (Armenia) and Appendix 2 for chapter 2 (Georgia) taken during the field-work in schools, textbook illustrations, and photos gathered from other secondary sources. Each sub-chapter has its relevant illustration for the

dissertation. In Appendix 3 and 4 “Maps of Identity” for both cases are presented as visual representation of corresponding chapters in the dissertation with integrated comments and notes for separate points. Appendix 5 presents the “Iconic map of symbols of the Areas of Georgia” that I constituted as a visual expression of what textbooks offer for each region of Georgia.

## **Ethnicity**

The term “ethnicity” is defined in *The Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*: “The actual term [ethnicity] derives from the Greek *ethnikos*, the adjective of *ethnos*. This refers to a people or nation. In its contemporary form, ethnic still retains this basic meaning in the sense that it describes a group possessing some degree of coherence and solidarity composed of people who are, at least latently, aware of having common origins and interests” (Cashmore ... 1996:119). The term was first used in the 1840s by L. Warner and his colleagues and soon appeared in the *Oxford Dictionary*. M. Weber’s definition has retained its significance ever since: “Those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for group formation; furthermore it does not matter whether an objective blood relationship exists” (qtd. in Roth ... 1978:389). Frederick Barth’s book *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Differences* (1969) alerted scholars to the fact that understanding the word “ethnic” as referring to groups of people who are considered to have a shared identity, a common history, and a traditional culture heritage, is true, but it needs to be modified to give a basis for analyzing and understanding ethnic phenomena: “something like mechanisms, not for descriptions of manifest forms” (Barth 1998:5). Barth shifted the focus on to the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not cultural matters that it encloses (Barth 1998:6). According to F. Barth’s work, ethnicity is conceptualized as “group identity that is essentially fluid depending upon how the boundaries of an ethnic group are drawn in a specific context, and hence, the precise content of ethnic identity is defined in relation to distinct external stimuli” (Stack 1986:5). By separating ethnicity from culture, Barth made ethnicity an ever-changing, socially constructed, subjective construct (Jenkins 1997). Barth influenced the shift of “the emphasis from the static evocation of tribal identity as a feature of social structure to recognition of ethnic identity as a dynamic aspect of social organization”. This eventually became the “basic anthropological model of ethnicity” (Jenkins 1997).

Another viewpoint belongs to Cl. Geertz’s concept of culturally generated “ethnic bonds” (“givens”) which provides different perspective compared to previous ethnicity studies. Cl. Geertz

introduced the concept of culturally-generated “ethnic bonds” (“givens”) – (assumed) blood ties, language, region, i.e. territory, custom, and cultural differences. According to Cl. Geertz, perception and attribution are more important than the presence or absence of a genuine blood connection (Geertz 1963:109).

This very brief passage on the historical background of the concept of ethnicity offers a stark outline of the approaches and theoretical concepts in the social sciences.

Primordialist theories view ethnicity as fixed at birth, and ethnic identification as based on rooted, ‘primordial’ attachments to a group culture. Within this approach, there are two perspectives: the socio-biological, which gives a decisive role in determining ethnicity to kinship, and the culturalist, which says that common culture (language and religion) is important in determining membership. The socio-biological theorists, such as Van den Berghe, stress the role of “natural” factors, such as lineage and cultural ties, in determining ethnicity. To primordialists, it is the inborn bonds that give rise to, and sustain, ethnicity (Yang 2000:1042). The socio-cultural wing of the primordialist approach represented mostly by Cl. Geertz and Ed. Shils finds primordialism not in ethnicity and race, but in the significance attributed to them. Shils’s point was that individual identity and social organization depended heavily on the kinds of ties that he called primordial (Cornell ... 2007:57). According to Ed. Shils, these ties and relationships “could only be described as primordial because a certain ineffable significance is attributed to the tie of blood” (Shils 1957:142). According to Geertz perception and attribution are more important than the presence or absence of a genuine blood connection (Geertz 1963:109).

The circumstantialist (instrumentalist) approach assumes that individuals/groups emphasize their ethnic or racial identities when there is a visible advantage to be gained from so doing. It also suggests that ethnic identities are not fixed; they undergo changes due to the situational needs. Identities take on different forms; they are situational and may have varied functions (Cornell ... 2007:61). This approach is sometimes called instrumentalist, given that it views ethnicity and race as instrumental identities. Nevertheless, Cornell and Hartmann are prone to name the approach with a broader term, circumstantialist, to note that “Circumstances may create ethnic and racial groups and identities not through a logic of interests so much as through a logic of social organization” (Cornell ... 2007:62). One specific point important to note about this school of thought is the fluidity and contingency (reacting to the needs of the situation) of ethnic and racial identities as opposed to the fixed and unchanging primordialistic view on them.

Cornell and Hartmann name the view on ethnicity and race, as constructionist approach that “accepts the fundamental validity of circumstantialism, while attempting to retain key insights of primordialism, however adding to them a large dose of activism: the contribution groups make to creating and shaping their own - and others’ - identities” (Cornell ... 2007:76). This approach has an initial assumption - (something offered back in 1969 by F. Barth) - that ethnic and racial identities, as well as the groups carrying these identities, change over time as a result of internal and external group forces (Cornell ... 2007:75). They argue that much of the power of ethnicity and race comes not from anything genuinely primordial, but from the rhetoric and symbolism of primordialism that are so often attached to them (Cornell ... 2007:95). The main focus of this approach is on the ways in which ethnic and racial identities are built, rebuilt or dismantled. Ethnicity and race are not simply labels forced upon people; these are also identities that people accept, resist, choose, specify, invent, redefine, reject, actively defend, and so forth (Cornell ... 2007:81).

This approach is highly relevant to this research, as I also try to track how in a specific period of time, in a specific organization, such as schools, a specific sort of identity such as “being Armenian” and “being Georgian” is being built. Thus, this dissertation will look at the methods of *assignment* and *assertion*. It will also look at *boundaries driven* and *meanings attached*, terms offered by Cornell and Hartmann. They particularly mention, “Identity construction involves the establishment of a set of criteria for distinguishing between group members and nonmembers. These criteria can include skin color, ancestry, place of origin, a cultural practice, certain behaviors, or something else – or a lot of things at once” (Cornell ... 2007:84). The specific markers for boundary criteria, however, may be different, and it is important here to fix the categorical boundary, the line between “us” and “them”. Besides marking boundaries, another point for consideration is the assertion or assignment of the meaning within (along with) that marking (for ex. we are good...) (Cornell ... 2007:84).

Postmodern theories are concerned more with nations and nationalism than with ethnicity (this will be referred to in more details later). With the rise of the postmodern paradigm attention shifted to the issue of group boundaries and identity scholars operating in this paradigm felt that those terms such as "group," "category" and "boundary" connote a fixed identity, something they wanted to avoid.

Benedict Anderson (1983) introduced the concept of imagined community, arguing that a nation is a community that is socially constructed. In other words, people imagine themselves as belonging to a nation.

A comparatively new approach, which can be understood as re-specifying the old debate between primordialists and circumstantialists, presents a cognitive turn in the study of ethnicity. Rogers Brubaker's approach allows the researcher to integrate insights from most of the major theories of ethnicity, rather than treating them as mutually exclusive. As introduced by R. Brubaker, cognitive perspectives try to conceptualize ethnicity (as well as race and nation) as a perspective on the world rather than a thing. In his approach, which can be named as "ethnicity without groups", ethnicity is a "way of seeing" the social world around us and "categorizing" both ourselves and others in that world. "How do people get these categories?" is the question, which becomes significant within the framework of this approach, the answers to which fall into two main groups. One of them looks towards the state (census, legal terminology, passports, and other relevant forms of classification), while the other studies everyday life (informal context, everyday discourse and conversations, social interactions and network, self-presentation) to find out how these categories are constituted.

Both layers are relevant to the research where it tries to discover how and what identity the state tries to "impose" through school education (if it does at all). This research also tries to discover how the categorizations of nationality (Armenians, Georgians), different classifications and definitions are happening in the school environment through everyday situations. This research aims also to reveal practices of how teachers transform the "knowledge" and their own interpretations during the lessons.

## **Nation**

"Perennialism regards ethnic groups as stable, even ancient units of social cohesion. According to this school of thought, the group identity called "nation" is a modern variant of pre-modern ethnic identity (Smith 1998:167).

The ethno-symbolic approach regards ethnic identities and communities as crucial for the formation and persistence of nations (Smith 2009:21). Pre-modern ethnic cores were the bases upon which the first European nations were formed. Smith labels these pre-modern ethnic cores as *ethnie*, a collective group that falls between ethnic groups and nations.

Anthony Smith mentions the six following main attributes of ethnic community (or *ethnie*): 1) a collective proper name; 2) a myth of common ancestry; 3) shared historical memories; 4) one or

more differentiating elements of common culture; 5) an association with a specific 'homeland'; and 6) a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population (Smith 1991:21).

According to A. Smith, before the rise of nation-states, citizens owed loyalty to the ruling dynasty. The focus of most people was local, centered on their clan, tribe, village, or region. With the rise of communication and education, knowledge of history and current events expanded beyond one's local community and people began to develop a feeling of a collective cultural identity with others who spoke their language and practiced their religion. This growing sense of collective identity led to the emergence of nation-states. The movement, therefore, was developed from "ethnic group," to "*ethnie*" to "nation" to nation-state. Not all ethnic groups become *ethnie*, not all *ethnie* become "nations", and not all nations are "state-forming nations." Smith saw ethnic unity as a necessary condition for national survival and unity. He traced this necessary ethnic unity to the existence of coherent mythology, and a symbolism of history and culture in an ethnic community. It is difficult, if not impossible, he argued, for an ethnic community to become a nation-state without these ethno-symbolic factors. Due to the importance attached to ethno-symbolic factors, Smith's theory is known as ethno-symbolism, though Smith himself mentions that, "‘ethno-symbolism’ does not pretend to be a scientific theory. Rather it should be seen as a particular perspective on and research programme for the study of nations and nationalism" (Smith 2009:1). Central preoccupation of ethno symbolists is considered to be "the need to understand the ‘inner world’ of ethnicity and nationalism through analyses of symbolic elements and subjective dimensions" (Smith 2009:23). These 'symbolic elements and subjective dimensions' also mean "the constituent symbolic resources" and include myths, symbols, memories and values, rituals, and traditions, language, religion, costumes and institutions, different collective symbols such as flag, anthem, national holiday, etc. (Smith 2009).

Anthony Smith's approaches are considered to be highly relevant in the research in at least two aspects. First, his theory (concept of *ethnie*) takes into consideration the long historical traditions of different forms of statehood and nation long before the modern nations emerged, as in the case of the histories of both Armenia and Georgia. This was also encountered in works related to the Armenian and Georgian national identities (Pannossian 2006, Chkhartishvili 2006, 2009, Nodia 2009). I agree with this approach and apply it for the dissertation. However, this dissertation will "investigate" national identity elements within the school discourse throughout the period of the research with synchronic analyses. Using A. Smith's terminology the focus in this research is not the "formation" of the two nations or "the role of nationalism", but rather those elements that exist and

work in one way or another for the persistence and transformation of the two nations (i.e. language and public institutions, intellectuals and their role, music and visual arts, symbolic resources of the nation: ancestry, community, territory, history, and destiny, myths of origin and election, sacred homelands, golden ages, destiny through sacrifice, etc.). Secondly, the preoccupation of ethno-symbolic analyses with symbolic elements and subjective dimensions and its attempt to look into the “inner world” corresponds with one of the research aims: to draw a “map” of the symbols and notions constituting the (ethno) national identity represented (or “the constituent symbolic resources” if to use the term by Smith), constructed, and negotiated through the elementary level within the general education system. Though the content and contours of the map of “constituent symbolic resources” should be drawn using a “bottom up” approach, the constituents of the map will be defined through the field research and the textbook material. However, it is assumed that many of the resources could correspond to the resources A. Smith mentions.<sup>1</sup> In his recent book entitled *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism* (2009) Smith proposes an “updated” definition of nation in ideal typical manner. Nation is defined as “a named and self-defining human community whose members cultivate shared memories, symbols, myths, traditions and values, inhabit and are attached to historic territories or “homelands”, create and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observed shared customs and standardized laws” (Smith 2009:29).

Ernest Gellner was the leading proponent of "modernism". In his classic work *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) Gellner argued that both nations and nationalism are essentially modern phenomena that emerged after the French Revolution as a result of modern conditions, such as industrialism, literacy, education systems, mass communications, secularism, and capitalism. According to E. Gellner, the idea of nationalism was the product, not the producer, of modernity, with the idea of nationalism producing the nation, and not vice versa (Breully 2006:xxi). Nationalism, he argues, is "not the awakening of an old, latent, dormant force, though that is how it does indeed present itself. ...It is a new form of social organisation, that is based on deeply internalized, education-dependent high cultures each protected by its own state" (Gellner 1983:48).

From E. Gellner’s approach there is one highly relevant aspect for this research concerning the role of mass education standardization as a unification mechanism for forming, maintaining and

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<sup>1</sup> We have also briefly reviewed the literature on the Armenian and Georgian identity to reveal the main characteristics, and their ‘constituent symbolic resources’, but also tried that this picture did not influence the field work process of fixing the identity constituent resources in each case.

developing the nation-state, particularly, focusing on the latter two, i.e. maintenance and development.

Benedict Anderson shared E. Gellner's conception of nationalism as a modern phenomenon, but focused on nationalism as a mode of political imagination. However, there is a scholarly debate on whether his approach is post modernistic or modernistic (McCleery ... 2007). Anthony Smith defines it as post modernistic, however "in modernistic framework" (Smith 2004:136). He argued that the important thing about nationalism is that there are a variety of ways in which a (national) community is imagined, and what needs to be investigated with scholarly research is the manner in which particular national discourses are constructed, and the different elements they combine and recombine. Benedict Anderson's definition of "nation" is a widely quoted definition of a "nation" by modern scholars: "In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an *imagined political community* - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 1991:5). It is imagined, he argues, because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members...yet in the minds of each lives the image of their country... all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity or genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 1991:5;6). In the research I will also refer to the part of Anderson's definition, which addresses the "image of own country" in relation to school education, trying to answer the question of how school is participating in the creation of this image.

A recent postmodernist theory of nationalism, the theses of which are very much relevant to this research, is that of M. Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (1995). The theory considers how national identity is produced and reproduced by daily social practices. For M. Billig it is not a theory or doctrine; it is instead used to describe a practice, where in his book he mostly speaks about "civic nationalism". He contends that nationalism and the active reproduction of national identity is occurring continually within all nation-states. The question he is interested in is 'why do not people forget their nationality?' The answer he offers in general can be summarized as such: "in established nations there is a continual "flagging" / "reminding" of nationhood. This "flagging" occurs in all sorts of public ways; for example, through words and symbols in songs, on flags, stamps, and banknotes" (Billig 1995). This research adopts the same attitude.. The intention here is not to discuss nationalism, Armenian/Georgian nation-states from a historical aspect, neither it is to create a description or explanatory mechanism of national identity in Armenia or Georgia. Instead, the goal is to anthropologically assess the process of *how and in what ways* elementary education, i.e. the first



stage of general education generates these constant, daily flaggings of nationhood. The research will also aim to outline the “design” of the flags and the contents of the reminders.

Michael Billig notes, “Daily, they [USA, France United Kingdom etc.] are reproduced as nations and their citizenry as nationals. And these nations are reproduced within a wider world of nations. And these nations are reproduction to occur; one might hypothesize that a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices must also be reproduced. Moreover, this complex must be reproduced in a banally mundane way, for the world of nations is the everyday world, the familiar terrain of contemporary times” (Billig 1995:6). His approach is applicable to the research undertaken because it also takes the world of nation-states for granted, without going deep into the debate between theories of nationalism. He explains the usage of the term ‘nationalism’ in the book as something, which “covers the ideological means by which nation-states are reproduced” (Billig 1995:6).

Using empirical material gathered through mostly textbook analyses, but also complimented with ethnographic field work, the research has attempted to observe and fix the “ideological” means by which national identity is reproduced by participating in the reproduction of the nation-state as well. If the world of nations is to be reproduced, says M. Billig, then nationhood has to be imagined, communicated, believed in, remembered (Billig 1995:17). Michael Billig clearly mentions that this kind of approach cannot be studied simply by applying ready-made methodologies or theories (Billig 1995:19). Michael Billig refers to the term of identity and national identity, also focusing on the ways in which they are practiced in everyday life. “Identity, in common talk, is something which people have or search for. One might think that people today go about their daily lives, carrying with them a piece of psychological machinery called ‘a national identity’. Like a mobile telephone, this piece of psychological equipment lies quiet for most of the time. Then, the crisis occurs; the president calls; bells ring, the citizens’ answer; and the patriotic identity are connected” (Billig 1995:7). Therefore, I triangulated different methodologies and theories to answer the research questions. For empirical data gathering I employed methods of ethnographic fieldwork; participant observation, and intensive interviewing. A separate research stage involved close reading of textbooks (the list of used textbooks is provided in the bibliography) and teaching methodical documents used at schools, after which I decided upon specific interviews and the classes to be observed and focused on. Desk research focused on the documentation related to the education policy making and implementation processes in Armenia and Georgia, using public information from the ministries of education and science, as well as other associated agencies. Online education

resource portals created for/by teachers, where I found many lesson plans, lesson descriptions, Power-Point slideshow presentations used during classes, photos and videos of different events and activities carried out at schools, have also been used. Some schools in Yerevan and Tbilisi have their own websites and this type of resource material has also been used. Theoretically, the research is based on the authors and approaches presented above, but a closer focus was placed on two main approaches. First, was A. Smith's ethno-symbolic approach in relation to the content of national identity, and its "constituent symbolic resources". Second, were the theories offering post-modernistic approaches in analyzing the ways and practices of construction, building, negotiating, reminding, flagging, and reproducing the national identity. One important methodological note is that the research applied a bottom-up approach. Essentially, the themes and topics introduced in these analyses have been derived from the material discovered.

## **Education**

### **Socialization and Schools**

Ethnic identity formation processes are also in line with children's ethnic socialization as the ways in which ethnic group membership affects development. "Ethnic socialization refers to the developmental processes by which children acquire the behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and come to see themselves and others as members of such groups" (Phinney ... 1986:11). Rotherdam and Phinney (1986) define ethnic identity as one's sense of belonging to an ethnic group and the part of one's thinking, perceptions, feelings, and behavior that is due to ethnic membership. They also differentiate between ethnicity and ethnic identity based on the fact that the first is about group patterns while the latter refers to the individual's acquisition of group patterns. The school is one such institution within which some elements of ethnic socialization occur.

Teun Van Dijk, in his book *Ideology. A Multidisciplinary Approach* (1998), examines the "institutions that organize, manage and propagate cognitions, actions, interactions and group relations. ...how ideologies are reproduced in and by...schools, media, churches..." (Van Dijk 1998:186). According to him, the education system with its constituents, namely schools and universities, is one such ideological institution; complex, elaborate, and pervasive (Van Dijk 1998:186). First, all members of society are involved in the education system for different reasons and throughout different time periods. Second, as institutions dealing with the reproduction of knowledge and the acquisition of skills, they also serve as key means for the reproduction of the dominant ideologies of society. T. Van Dijk, however, agrees on these institutions being facilitators

of the propagation of counter-ideologies (Van Dijk 1998:187). In this research for drawing the maps of (ethno) national identity, “constituent symbolic resources”, I have applied elements of discourse analyses as an auxiliary method to reveal concepts, notions, terms, wordings, and phrases that are used in textbooks. Throughout the work I will use the term “textbook discourse” as a short wording for all texts, pictures, questions, discussions that I find within the textbooks. I use the term “teachers’ discourse” in reference to the combination of teachers’ spoken texts during the lessons I observed, interviews conducted with the teachers and in teachers’ lesson plans I reviewed. Another relevant study was undertaken by I. Sandomirskaya in her book *A Book about Homeland [Kniga o Rodine]*, in which she discusses discourse concerning definitions for different nouns meaning “homeland” (rodina, otečestvo, otčizna).

Thomas Eriksen’s book *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (1993) also mentions the decisive role of uniform and mass education in forming ethnic identity. He notes that, “uniform educational system covering large areas greatly facilitates the development of abstract identifications with a category of people whom one will never meet” (Eriksen 1993:92). In the book he also elaborates on the mechanism, which makes this identification possible, saying that it enables a large number of people to learn which ethnic group they belong to and what are the cultural characteristics of that group. Thus, the role of mass education in the establishment of standardized reifications of culture is significant (Eriksen 1993:92). This part of Eriksen’s work is also of important relevance to the research undertaken here, as I seek to understand how accounts of “our people”, “our culture”, and “our country” are being widely produced through school education, which in turn serves as important tools in fashioning identity with a presumed cultural continuity (Eriksen 1993:92).

Yet much earlier than Eriksen and van Dijk, in the book *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976), E. Weber mentioned the important role of school programmes in forming the consciousness of citizenship and nationality in nineteenth-century France. The book among many other reports and field accounts speaks of a school report, which proves the effectiveness of the school as a socializing agent, as “it had to teach children national and patriotic sentiments, explain what the state did for them and why it exacted taxes and military service, and showed them true interest in their fatherland” (Weber 1979:332). Weber also mentioned in the book that, “the symbolism of images learned at school having created a whole new language and provided common points of reference that straddled regional boundaries exactly as national patriotism was meant to do” (Weber 1979:337).

Maria Leskinen discussed forms and methods through which the educated elite “was constructing” the consciousness of a specific territorial community using the subject of geography, as a sample of normative educational literature in the last third of nineteenth-century Russia, viewing them as “peculiar outcomes reflecting the hierarchy of identities dominant in that specific environment” (Leskinen 2006:126).

### **School Rituals and Ceremonies – ‘Spiritual Fuel for Schools’**

The importance and special role of rituals and ceremonies as “the spiritual fuel for schools” is mentioned in the book *Shaping School Culture: the Heart of Leadership* authored by T. Deal and K. Peterson (Deal ... 1999:33). According to the authors, schools need special moments [rituals] in the daily life to reflect what is really important, to connect to each other; to have a common spirit to make school experiences more like a spiritual communion (Deal ... 1999:33). Deal and Peterson discuss the role of rituals, ceremonies and traditions in school life and in creating common consciousness in the case of schools in the United States. In the book, rituals within the school context are defined as “daily interactions that are infused with meaning”, with ceremonies as “larger, more complex social gatherings that build meaning and purpose usually marking transitions in the school year” (Deal ...1999:34). The authors also mention their general ‘functions’, “Throughout the year rituals and traditions fortify the core values of the school...Rituals, traditions, and ceremonies make the routines of schools symbolize what is important, valued, and significant” (Deal ... 1999:45). These all are taken into account while choosing the ritual, ceremonies, events and celebrations as one important aspect to be reviewed within the undertaken research.

### **Shared Symbols and Signs in Schools – ‘Unifiers of a Group’**

Deal and Peterson also refer to the significant role of symbols and signs within the school context; “Schools have panoply of symbols and signs scattered throughout classrooms, hallways, and gathering places” (Deal ... 1999:61). Symbol is defined as a means to infuse an organization with meaning, while having specific influence on their behavior: “Symbols, as representatives of what we stand for and wish for, play a powerful role in cultural cohesion and pride. Attachment to shared symbols unifies a group, and gives it direction and purpose” (Deal ... 1999:60).

In the research I have considered the above-mentioned aspects of the schools, including two groups; one consisting of rituals, ceremonies and traditions, and the other, consisting of *symbols* and

*signs*, as one dimension of the research, namely ritual and iconographic dimensions of schools. Thus, I have been trying to track various representations of the ‘national identity constituent symbolic resources’ within rituals, ceremonies, traditions, and various festive events (ritual dimension) and within symbols and signs in classrooms, school corridors, and foyers to combine them with relevant representations within textbooks (iconographic dimension). From my understanding, the iconographic dimension includes decorations inside the classrooms, pictures, posters, and bulletin boards on the walls of school lobbies and other visual materials that teachers use during the classes. I apply a wider definition of iconography: “as means of recording, preserving and conveying information and memory in various fields of human activity through images” (Marutyan 2009:18).

## **History Teaching and Identity Construction in Schools**

The academic literature on post-Soviet countries and more specifically on Armenia and Georgia has discussed the issues of ethno-politics, historical memory representation, and history teaching. In particular, V. Shnirelman, in one of his articles entitled “Russian School and National Idea”, discusses the issues of historical education in secondary schools of post-Soviet Russia and the ways it is used to fit in with the new reality, specifically through the combination of different interpretations of the same historical event. Shnirelman’s other work, *The Value of the Past: Myths. Identity and Politics in Transcaucasia* (2000), refers to the role of historiography and perceptions of history in ethnic conflicts, which may well help in discussing history teaching in Armenia and Georgia.

Another relevant work is the collection of papers published in Russian in 1999 and edited by K. Airmermaher and G. Bordyugov, entitled *National Histories in the Soviet and Post-Soviet States*. In general the book seeks to answer several questions related to history and how it is represented, in particular how modern historians assess events of the past. What are the main directions of the historical sciences in Russia and in post-Soviet states? How does a new view of the past influence relations between nations and states? In particular, the article on Georgia authored by Yu. Anchabadze argues that the tradition of the ancient national statehood has played a crucial role in shaping Georgian identity. According to Yu. Anchabadze, this is the reason why the medieval kings “The State Builders” and especially the history of the first Republic (1918-1921) receive special attention. The article on Armenia by A. Iskandaryan and B. Harutyunyan, entitled “Armenia: Gharabaghization of the National History” discusses historical mythologies, which hold particular

value in the national and cultural identity of Armenians, especially the image of the “Christian people surrounded by enemies” (Iskandaryan and Harutyunyan 1999:148).

Post-Soviet historiography and issues related to its historical teaching are further addressed in another collection of articles by the same editors published in 2002 in Russian entitled *Historians Read the Textbooks of History: Traditional and New Concepts of Educational Literature*. Another interesting article is written by S. Rumyantsev (2008), entitled “Ethnic Territories: Presentation Practices in Historical Textbooks in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan and Georgia,” which is based on an analysis of maps in post-Soviet secondary school textbooks. This is how the author summarizes the results: “It is possible as early as in secondary school to get an idea about ‘our national territories’ which were lost due to neighbors’ intrigues” (Rumyantsev 2008:811).

Nino Chikovani wrote a series of articles about Georgian history textbooks with regard to representation of identity and ideology. The most recent of these concerns the representations of self and neighbors (2012). K. Kakitelashvili touched upon the issue of the instrumentalization of history and history teaching in post-Soviet Georgia (2009).

The academic literature on Armenia and Georgia (wider speaking on South Caucasus or, even wider, on post-Soviet countries) has discussed the issues of ethno-politics, historical memory representation, and history teaching (Shnirelman 2000), (Ayrmermaher ... 1999), (Rumyantsev 2008), (Chikovani 2008:2012), (Kakitelashvili 2009), (Gigineishvili 2009), (Reisner 1998, 2009), (Zolyan ... 2008). Various cases of examination of “use” and “abuse” of history are provided in the book edited by M. Ferro *The Use and Abuse of History: Or How the Past is Taught to Children* (2003). In the editorial introduction, Ferro writes: “our images of other people, or of ourselves for that matter, reflect the history we are thought as children.... The history marks us for life...” (Ferro 2003: ix). In my previous publications (Mkrtchyan 2010, 2012) I have also referred to history textbooks and history teaching in Armenia and Georgia, and I agree that history subjects at schools play a significant role in the formation of national identity. However, I suggest that studies on history teaching, though important, still have left out those years of school, when the history subject is not taught yet, in most of the cases it is the elementary school (plus one or two grades). What is the situation before history is taught in schools? My research attempts to answer this question as well. I have taken an initial assumption (I consider it as a hypotheses as well) that the history teaching at school happens not only through lessons on national and world history, but also through language subjects, subjects related to nature, music, art, etc.. History teaching, in fact, starts much earlier than the teaching of the special subject: it starts from the very beginning of school education.

Marc Ferro mentions, “Its [history] representations, which is for each one of us a discovery of the world, of the past of societies, embraces all our passing or permanent opinions, so that the traces of our first questioning, our first emotions, remain indelible” (Ferro 2003:ix). Patricia Crain in her book *The Story of A* (2000) discusses the textbooks of ABC (‘Primers’) regarding their capacity not only to teach reading and writing, but also in teaching stories, thus constructing identities. Behind every letter in the ABC book there is something more, a meaning attached to them through “texts” to make letters more recognizable and easy to remember. Crain suggests that these meanings should be further researched (Crain 2000:19). Characteristics of national identity construction through the contemporary ABC textbooks in Armenia have been discussed in my recent publication on visual dimension of national identity (Mkrtychyan ... 2012:40-65). These publications showed that images of “us”, “our country”, and “our culture” have been included in the ABC books that could be true for other elementary grade textbooks as well.

### **National Identity Related Literature: Armenia and Georgia**

As mentioned above, the approach undertaken in this research is anthropological and bottom-up (from below). In addition, I have drawn the analyses, the components and contours of the identity maps derived mostly from empirical research of textbooks and different discourse within the schools for the research. Meanwhile, I have also reviewed literature related to theoretical concepts of (ethno) national identity and its composition as well as to the Armenian/Georgian identities and to their distinct elements. Priority has been given to those with anthropological, ethnographic, and ethnologic focus, but also to others that discuss the topic from the perspective of other humanities and social science disciplines.

Besides the theoretical approaches and concepts related to ethnicity, nation, school, identity, and construction I have also reviewed relevant literature to obtain a brief overview concerning possible constituent elements of any national/ethnic identity such as myth of origin, landscape, space and geography, language, food, etc.

According to the definition by A. Smith, the existence of the myth of common ancestry is one of the key characteristics of an ethnic group (Smith 1993:21). It is common that a country is named by the “first man, ancestor, name-giver”.

It is common for one geographical unit to be marked in the collective memory as being especially important for the identity of a nation or people (Buttner ... 2006:5). In the book *Landscape and Memory* (1995), S. Shama tried to show that the cultural habits of humanity have always made room for the sacredness of nature. All our landscapes, from the city park to the mountain hike, are

imprinted with our tenacious, inescapable obsession (Shama 1995:18). National identity, he says, would lose much of its ferocious enchantment without the mystique of a particular landscape tradition; its topography mapped, elaborated, and enriched as a homeland (Shama 1995:15). In the dissertation, there is one section for each case, which presents the corresponding national landscapes and geographical units or other forms of sacred nature represented in the textbooks and in school space.

Linguistic theories are very often used in the elaboration of national histories, especially concerning prehistoric periods. Language is often the only evidence showing the ethnic roots of society, and its right to a specific territory is augmented by the language (Abrahamian 2006:70). Thus, language, alphabet, and writing (script) are considered to be key elements creating the nation and correspondingly serve as symbols representing the national identity.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Cl. Lévi-Strauss and M. Douglas stressed the role of food as a signifier, classifier, and identity builder. The view of the close relationship between food and identity is summarized in Cl. Fischler's article, which opened with the confident statement that, 'Food is central to our sense of identity' (Fischler 1988:275). Schollers (2001) also discusses the central role of food in self-identification and making the image of "others". In particular, he states: "Food and identity construction have an intimate relationship in diverse times and places and that most people were and are concerned with what they eat, what others eat, and how they see, classify and judge each other" (Schollers 2001:18). Moreover, many studies consider the creation of a nation to happen through invention, standardization, or glamorization of a national cuisine. Food is often used explicitly throughout the invention of national identities (Holtzman 2006:368). Boisard's (2003) study, for example, explores how the cheese Camembert has become a symbol of French national identity. Ohnuki-Tierney's (1993) study of rice in Japan shows how rice constructs Japanese conceptions of self in historical and mythical ways; in some cases over-determined, while in others, invented (cited in Holtzman 2006:369). Eugene Anderson in his book *Everyone Eats* mentions, "Using food to signal ethnicity has clearly grown with the rise of trade, contact, and regional interaction. It has also grown with nationalism; each ethnic group feels it must assert its identity by having a distinctive" (Anderson 2005:200).

Three books authored by L. Abrahamian (2006), R. Panossian (2006), L. Abrahamian and N. Sweeze (ed.) (2001) are considered key texts, the sources from where I took the elaboration of primarily the components and "building blocks" as put forward by Panossian (2006) regarding



Armenian identity, as well as the identification of key discourse around each element of the national identity.

In the book *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture, and Identity* (2001) edited by N. Sweezy and L. Abrahamian, nine authors present the origins and meanings of Armenian identity through symbols and the objects with which Armenians have historically surrounded themselves. They also discuss the traces of ancient myths and legends that convey contemporary Armenian values and beliefs. The most relevant for the scope of this research is the second chapter, which is devoted to the symbols of Armenian identity, as found in ancient myths, contemporary festivals, and everyday Armenian culture. The book presents the following symbols and dimensions: the world as a garden, the sacred mountain, the temple, writing and the book, and finally the *Khachkar* (a freestanding, upright, rectangular cross stone found in cemeteries to commemorate an Armenian's conversion to Christianity).

Razmik Panossian in his book *The Armenians: from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (2006) tries to analyze interpretively how Armenian identity was shaped over centuries, and how nationalism arose and was manifested, with an emphasis on modern– developments from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onward (Panossian 2006:1). In chapter two R. Panossian speaks about ‘building blocks’ of Armenian ethnic identity: “Pillars of the distinguishing features of Armenian identity – the building blocks – were laid in ancient times: religion, language, territorial basis, myths and symbols” (Panossian 2006:23) .

Levon Abrahamian in the book *Armenian Identity in the Changing World* aims to outline the characteristics of Armenian identity, not trying to rigidly define what Armenian identity is, but rather outlining the frames within which it becomes visible (Abrahamian 2006:1). For national identity, he applies an analogy calling it a ‘national park’ and presents the components as paths and trees (Abrahamian 2006:7).

Below I present the key elements of the Armenian identity, which were common for all three books. According to the Armenian legend the name of the country comes from the name of the progenitor Hayk (Abrahamian 2006:31,32). The myth of origin of the Armenians - the story about Hayk and Bel - was written by Moses of Khoren (V c.); the story is taught to all primary students in Armenian schools around the world (Panossian 2006:51).

Levon Abrahamian (2006) and R. Panossian (2006) regard Mount Ararat as one of the central elements in the system of ethno-national identity of the Armenians. Mount Ararat is one of the modern stable symbols of Armenia, as vividly exemplified in its presence on the coat of arms of the

three Armenian republics (Abrahamian 2006:11). In the book *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture, and Identity* (2001), in which Armenian culture and identity is presented, H. Petrosyan allocates a special place to Ararat, the sacred mountain among the symbols of Armenian identity (Petrosyan 2001:22). He also describes the popularity and wide representation of the mountain in public discourse both in Armenia and among the Armenians throughout the world (Petrosyan 2001:38). Panossian also mentions Mount Ararat, the national symbol for all Armenians, and the territory around it - the Armenian homeland from time immemorial - as a key element in the story about Hayk and Bell, the myth of origin of Armenians, which is taught to all primary school students in Armenian schools around the world (Panossian 2006:51).

In the beginning of the fourth century when Christianity was adopted as a state religion in Armenia there was no Armenian script. Early preachers had to read the Bible in Greek or Assyrian and make translations for the parish. An alphabet that could facilitate the dissemination of Christianity among the population was invented in 405 by Mesrop Mashtots (Petrosyan 2001:52). Mesrop Mashtots is said not only to have created the alphabet, but also to have done much to spread writing, opened schools, and undertook an extensive translating movement. The Armenian Apostolic Church canonized Mesrop Mashtots. According to R. Panossian, the collective identity of the Armenians was developed throughout several centuries, reinforced with the adoption of Christianity as a state religion (fourth century) and the invention of an alphabet (fifth century) (Panossian 2006:33). This emphasizes language as one of the key building blocks of Armenian identity (Panossian 2006:23). Academic works on Armenian identity attach high importance to books (as a phenomenon) and writing as components of the Armenian identity (Petrosyan 2001:52-59), (Abrahamian 2006: 86). The Matenadaran, the Museum-institute of ancient manuscripts named after Saint Mesrop Mashtots in Yerevan, has become very much like a temple, preserving many books and manuscripts previously having been honored as relics by their previous owners (Abrahamian 2006:86).

According to R. Panossian, “Pillars distinguishing the features of Armenian identity – the building blocks – were laid in ancient times: religion, language, territorial basis, myths and symbols” (Panossian 2006:23). Clearly, he considers religion as one of the key blocks. He regards the official adoption of Christianity as the state religion in the Middle Ages as the “most important event in terms of maintaining a separate identity” (Panossian 2006:42). Levon Abrahamian also speaks about the centrality of the religious element in Armenian identity (Abrahamian 2006:111-134).

Guram Ghoranashvili in his book *Ethnic Self-Consciousness and Traditions* (1984) agrees with one of the two main points regarding ethnic self-consciousness existing in the Soviet science of the time, which says ethnic self-consciousness is much wider than just the awareness of a person of his or her belonging to a given ethnos; it also includes “attitudes of a person to ethnic values, experiencing the belonging to the given ethnos, etc.” (Ghoranashvili 1984:67). In the book, Ghoranashvili also presents a review of the history of understanding the notion of ethnic self-consciousness in the history of Georgian scientific thought, analyzing in particular Illia Chavchavadze mentioning that although he had not used the term “national conscious” he in essence, “meant exactly what we mean under the term “ethnic self consciousness””. Ivane Javakhishvili spoke about the “national self-cognition” [თვითშეგნება] and “national feelings/sentiments”. Both I. Chavchavadze and Iv. Javakhishvili stressed the important role of history and its knowledge among the nation (Ghoranashvili 1984:32). Ghoranashvili also refers to different usages of related terms, for example, consciousness of unity [ერთობის შეგნება] and national consciousness [ეროვნული შეგნება] by S. Janashia, by which he meant self-consciousness (ეთნიკური თვითშეგნება) in a narrow sense, the consciousness of ethnic (national) belonging (Ghoranashvili 1984:33). Ghoranashvili continues by referring to the usages of the term self-consciousness or other related terms during the 1960-70s by several authors such as I. Kacharava (“national consolidation” [ეროვნული კონსოლიდაცია]), A. Apakidze (“formation of unification”), G. Bregadze (ეთნიკური კუთვნილების თვითშეგნება), A. Surguladze (“consciousness of ethnic belonging” [ეთნიკური კუთვნილების შეგნება], and national awareness [ეროვნული გათვითცნობიერება], the nation’s self consciousness [ერის თვითშეგნება]), and G. Melikishvili (ethnic affiliation and formation of unity in the book related to the Georgian feudalism) (Ghoranashvili 1984:34-36). According to G. Ghoranashvili, however, most of these terms suffered from insufficient presentation of the contents and strict definitions for the terms used (Ghoranashvili 1984:36). Furthermore, he elaborates on the historical aspect of the formation of Georgian ethnic self-consciousness, the roots of which, according to him, stem “from the tribal mode of life of our ancestors” (Ghoranashvili 1984:65). The components of the Georgian ethnic self-consciousness suggested by Ghoranashvili are the following: common territory, origin, certain economic relations, everyday life, culture (basically folk), and as already noted, common state (Ghoranashvili 1984:36), religion (Ghoranashvili 1984:43), Georgian language (Ghoranashvili 1984:47), unification of Georgia and strong centralized monarchy (Ghoranashvili 1984:51), high degree of dignity (Ghoranashvili 1984:53), and knowledge

of traditions (Ghoranashvili 1984:64). At the end of the book, Ghoranashvili concludes, “Ethnic self-consciousness is an important historical reality. It’s not only ethnic belonging of the individuals or members comprising ethnoses but is a rather phenomenon and encompasses an ideology that is common for the ethnos” (Ghoranashvili 1984:65). Ethnic self-consciousness is expressed in relevant feelings, behaviors, ideals, and so on. Ghoranashvili concludes, “Once ethnic, national self-consciousness is formed on definite historical bases it in its turn becomes an active factor in the life of the nation, ethnos” (Ghoranashvili 1984:65).

Rizmag Gordeziani in his book *The Issue of Georgian Self-consciousness* (1993) defines the term and describes the development stage of Georgian self-consciousness. National consciousness is what creates the basis for a nation, he says; it is often much stronger than geographic, political, social, economic, and sometimes linguistic unity factors (Gordeziani 1993:3).

National self-consciousness (თავოთმეგნეობა) is based on several important pillars of which the first is the memory or faith of genetic unity within this or that nation, followed by the unity of literary language (cultural self-expression). Another powerful factor of national self-consciousness is religion as well as other essential aspects such as cultural, territorial, political, and social unity (Gordeziani 1993:3;4). In the formation of the Georgian nation representing a long and multi-stage process, Gordeziani attaches the most decisive role to the “strong code of genetic unity” originally formed in Georgia already in the Bronze epoch. He writes, “It was the very code that provided the country with the key stimulus to unite into one organism in all historically favorable moments” (Gordeziani 1993:77).

The collection of papers of the National Multidisciplinary Conference *National and Religious Identity* includes important references to aspects of national identity and its components, with particular reference to those that are religious (2004). D. Melikishvili defines the role of orthodoxy as the basis of the Georgian national consciousness and national unity (Melikishvili 2004:39). M. Shalikadze describes the Georgian musical culture as unique, which compared to other elements of Georgian culture, saying it is “historically less changeable” with its essential peculiarity of Georgian musical folklore expressed in its polyphonic forms and a variety of dialects (Shalikadze 2004:67). L. Gigineishvili argues that turning Georgia from a state into a province [when becoming part of Russia] instead of weakening the uniform Georgian consciousness, on the contrary, had a really positive influence on strengthening it in the form of a counter reaction to the process of Russification. In the article he says, “it was this very counter reaction, expressed most strongly in the works of the

“Tergdaleulebi,” that formed the modern Georgian self-consciousness as we have it now” (Gigineishvili 2004:20).

In 2005 a collection of articles *Georgia on the Crossroad of Millenniums* was published, in which about 50 authors analyzed and discussed nationalism and patriotism, Georgian mentality and identity, culture, and politics. L. Berdzenishvili in his article on different levels of identity highlights the importance of cuisine regarding the Georgian identity (Berdzenishvili 2005:64). M. Gamelaury presented an article based on socio-psychological research carried out in 1991-1992 in which she tries to answer the question: What is homeland as a phenomenon that unfolds the psychological essence of homeland? What meaning rather than an abstract concept does a person attach to it? (Gomelaury 2005:199). On the final stage of the research the following psychological logos (essence) of homeland based on these subjective feelings and contents were revealed: “Homeland is a place for my existence and of those like me - “my compatriots” (ერის მშობლი). If that was determined before my birth, with it my identity is established. It provides the possibility to hopefully solve the problem of finality” (Gomelaury 2005:202).

In her book *The Key Marker of Georgian Identity* (2006) within a broader theoretical frame of ethno-symbolic tradition M. Chkhartishvili discusses Smith’s concept of *ethnie* and relates it to the Georgian case, particularly the issues of self-nomination (*ethno-names of Kartveli, Kartleli*) (Chkhartishvili 2006). In general, the author finds that Smith’s ethno-symbolic approach “in fact, supplies us with terminological instruments needed to describe the pre-ethnic situation” (Chkhartishvili 2006:229). Another study by M. Chkhartishvili about the *Georgian Ethnie in the Epoch of Religious Conversion* (2009) focuses on the ethnie inhabiting the territory of contemporary Georgia, on which the development of the pre-modern (10-11<sup>th</sup> centuries) and modern Georgian nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century occurred. “It was the development of the ethnie *Kartli* that in the 10-11<sup>th</sup> century that yielded in the emergence of Sakartvelo-community, characterized of firm inner links, that is the pre-modern Georgian nation, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the latter served as a basis for the modern Georgian nation” (Chkhartishvili 2009:169). The book focuses on one important factor of developing the Georgian ethnie and religion, with particular regard of the latter on the conversion to Christianity.

Lela Iakobishvili-Piralishvili and Z. Piralishvili published a book in two parts *Letters on Georgian Identity* and *Theatrical Dialect of Georgian Politics*. The first part of the book authored by L. Iakobishvili-Piralishvili is of vast importance for this study as it tries to draw the Georgian identity analyses based on cultural analyses identifying and describing the main mythologemes through

which Georgian culture is beginning to be identified through: a) mythology, b) territory, c) language, d) history, e) alphabet, e) religion, e) features of artistic creation, f) techniques of thinking connected to works of art, g) techniques of academic thinking, h) language of science and humanities, i) identification with authorial creation, and j) identification with artistic values.

The project “Print Media and the Process of Shaping Georgian National Identity: Iveria by Ilia” funded by the Rustaveli National Science Foundation (2008 - 2010) resulted in three monographs authored by a team of TSU scientists (T. Bolkvadze, M. Chkhartishvili, Z. Kiknadze, and K. Mania). Research based on the study of the famous newspaper *Iveria* founded in 1877 and edited by Ilia Chavchavadze aimed at addressing various questions related to national identity and Georgia, in particular. Questions included: what does ‘collective national identity’ mean?; What are the key characteristics of Georgian national identity?; How did it change over the course of time? The approach of A. Smith was taken as the basis of the research. M. Chkhartishvili, the program manager and author of books published as a result of the project, thinks this approach describes the ethnic development of nations quite well, especially the statement made by A. Smith about all nations having dominant ‘ethnic cores’ although born in a new era. The research team assessing *Iveria* also used the theory of Anderson on the nation as ‘imagined community’ (TSU Science 2012:5). The studies from this project identified the following characteristics of Georgian national identity reflected in *Iveria*:

- Common origin, that people think they have (According to M. Chkhartishvili, many people think they are united by a common genetic origin. However, in fact the ‘idea’ is the key consolidating factor in this case. When a person categorizes himself as belonging to a certain nation and ethnic group, it is always culture that serves as the basis for it (TSU Science 2012: 7);
- Territory, cult of motherland;
- Language (in the work *Shaping Georgian National Identity: Iveria by Ilia* T. Bolkvadze presents *Iveria*’s active responses to problems arising from the educational policy pursued by Russia as well as the specification of the language of liturgy based on Mercule’s statement about liturgy and prayers which are said in the Georgian language (Bolkvadze 2010:328, 329);
- Religion (Eastern Christianity);
- Name (“an example of historic memory”, the term use in the sense of ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ sense).

The authors of this project emphasize two factors that have been operating in national consolidation – collective culture and war<sup>2</sup>. Mariam Chkhartishvili and K. Mania conclude: “Establishing a nation is a process that changes. Previously, special emphasis was laid on ethnic origin. Now, the focus is on ‘citizenship’”. They go on suggesting, that, “The word ‘Georgian’ has acquired the meaning of ‘citizenship’. During the Soviet period Georgian identity partially lost this custom, but now it has developed again. It seems that over time the term ‘Georgian’, which usually means ‘an ethnic Georgian’ now, will incorporate all Georgian citizens, regardless of their ethnic origin” (TSU Science 2012:7).

One issues from the journal *Identity Studies* published by Ilia Chavchavadze State University (Vol. 1, 2009) collected materials from conference dedicated to Ilia Chavchavadze held in Tbilisi (2007), which discussed issues related to nation building, Georgian identity components, and formation. An article by G. Nodia outlines the components of the Georgian national idea first by presenting his view of the evolution of the idea of the modern Georgian nation. Descriptions of two major components of the Georgian national idea - identity building and the Georgian nation as a political project - are included through the implementation of “a big-picture approach with its large generalization”. Gia Nodia refers to the markers of identity as “features around which the sense of belonging is built, that is to say, the materials without which the idea of the nation can only be formal and shallow” (Nodia 2009:87).<sup>3</sup> The article presents a version of interpretation of the triad proposed by Ilia Chavchavadze (1860) with a status of ‘the formula’ of the Georgian nationhood. Considering each element of the triad as a “building block of the Georgian national identity”, G. Nodia suggests reviewing each separately as well as discussing the sequence in which they are introduced. According to G. Nodia, Chavchavadze intended to replace the term *samshoblo* (the land of birth, primarily associated with the mother) with the term *mamuli* (patrimony, the land or estate of father). However, G. Nodia finds, that ‘*samshoblo*’ is a much more widely used term today, while “*mamuli*” is used in more poetic and sublime contexts (also in patriotic texts, such as the Georgian national anthem adopted in 2004). According to G. Nodia, Georgian language as a “feature unifies members of the nation”. He also stresses the significance of the “written language of long history” (Nodia 2009:89). Gia Nodia agrees that religion, and more specifically the Orthodox Christianity that was preserved in Georgia throughout the Middle Ages was of formative importance in the build-up of Georgian

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Smith elaborates on the significant role of a war for the crystallization of ethnic consciousness (Smith 1981).

<sup>3</sup> “These blocks are usually pre-modern components of the nation; nobody can just invent, construct a territorial homeland, a historical record, language, religion, etc. Something should be there to start with. But all these things can be –rather should be – re-constructed and re-interpreted in order to fit into a national design workable in the context of modernity” (Nodia 2009:87).

nationhood, Nodia also cites Giorgi Merchule's famous definition of *Kartli* being the land where they preach in Georgian, suggesting that this may be the most workable definition of the pre-modern Georgian nationhood (Nodia 2009:90). Gia Nodia also explains that the religion (Orthodox Christianity) could not implement the "major task" and was not distinguishing the nation from its imperial master [Russian Empire].

### **Working Definition of the Term Ethno-National Identity**

In relation to the cases of Armenian and Georgian identities, one theoretical note should be made to remember the distinction between the terms "nation" and "ethnicity", "civic/political" (or "western") and "ethnic/cultural" (or "eastern") concepts of identity (nationalism) (see, Fenton ... 2002:3-14, Calhoun 2006:180). I also suggest using W. Connor's (1994) approach. Thus, ethno-nations would emphasize the "shared blood" and "common origin" as a decisive factor in defining them as a nation or ethno-nation. It is crucial to keep in mind that in this approach what people believe in is more important than what the reality may be (Connor 1994:93). He also suggests viewing "nation" and "state" as distinct terms, while considering many of the uses of nation instead of state as misnomers, though quite widespread (Connor 1994:97). Calhoun has described two types of nationalism. According to him, the first, civic case of national identity is something derived from the juridical membership within a political unit, a state, with membership defined first of all as the political identity of its citizens. The second case is when national identity is defined on the bases of cultural and ethnic criteria different from the political one (Calhoun 2006:180). I, however, do not claim that I will cover the entire range and depth of the issue. For this research, though, it is relevant to consider the idea of many researchers, among which S. Fenton and S. May who argue that "'civic' and 'ethnic' elements will invariably be combined in most nationalisms", and further, "salience of, and balance between, ethnic and civic dimensions within any given nationalism will inevitably vary" (Fenton ... 2002:7).

Rogers Brubaker and F. Cooper argue that the term "identity" "tends to mean too much (when understood in a strong sense), too little (when understood in a weak sense), or nothing at all (because of its sheer ambiguity)" suggesting that the category of 'identity as an analytical tool' be replaced with other less ambiguous terms (verbs), each showing separate meanings of the term such as categorization, identification, connectedness, etc. (Brubaker ... 2000:1). In this research, though, we will keep the term "identity" meaning the categorisations, identifications, connectedness, feelings of belonging, etc. However, I will not go into the theoretical debate over the term (ethno-national) identity, neither will I claim to have found a comprehensive definition to use in the work. From the



anthropological perspective I take a bottom-up approach and have developed a working definition of the *ethno-national identities* for the research. This definition is operational in its nature and is a roadmap of key words, phrases, topics, and images, which will be used to guide my research during the fieldwork and textbook analyses. It is not the aim of this research to discover the Georgian and Armenian identities in “reality” (or how it was throughout history). My aim is to reveal what constitutes Armenian and Georgian identities and how are they presented, represented, used, and expressed at schools and in the general education systems. In doing this I agree with A. Smith, who citing W. Connor, notes that, “in the field of nations and nationalism what counts is not what is, but what is felt to be” (Smith 2009:100). Thus, this outline (definition) of ethno-national identity in the research includes:

- a) “definitions” of the terms/notions 1) “Armenia”/“Georgia”, “Armenian/Georgian” [language], [person/people/nation], [culture], 2) everything that is called, presented, and recalled as being “Armenian/Georgian”, and 3) understandings of what it means to belong to the Armenian and Georgian nations;
- b) definitions, representations, and perceptions of “Armenianness”/“Georgianness” (markers);
- c) anything that could mean “us”, “our” (the constituents parts of the “our”).

Thus, while conducting the research I will look for the notions, concepts, meanings, and representations of those identifications, group-connectedness, and categorizations related to “Armenianness”/“Georgianness”.

## **Methodology and Empiric Data Collection**

In gathering the empirical material I have applied triangulation approach to answer the research questions. Textbook analyses (close reading of the texts and visual material in the textbooks) and ethnographic field-work (participant observation during the classes, excursions, school events, and ceremonies, etc.) provided the core of the research, which was completed using in-depth interviews, and desk research (methodological guidelines, official agencies’ documents, and on-line education portals, etc.). Empirical material has been gathered during the academic years of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 (to a lesser extent in 2012-2013 also) through ethnographic fieldwork at the schools in Tbilisi and Yerevan. Some of the principles of “focused ethnography” have been used for empiric data collection due to the several features of this method; short-term field visits, data/analysis intensity, time intensity, focused, communicative activities, field-observer role, background

knowledge, notes and transcripts (Knoblauch 2005). Applying these features of “focused ethnography” in both field sites gave opportunity to observe and fix relevant data in Yerevan and Tbilisi school during one year period so that we could include the school life cycle from the very first day of the academic year and up until the last class. The schools have been chosen to represent both central and peripheral regions of the city, and so that both public and private institutions would be included. In addition to observation, in-depth interviews with teachers of elementary grades were conducted. Interviews with several representatives of the textbook authors and publishing houses have also been conducted. Elementary grade textbooks officially approved by the Ministries of Education and Sciences of Armenia and Georgia have been analyzed. I chose a list of subjects taught in elementary grades relevant to the research scope, the textbooks of which were reviewed, based on the initial review of the textbook list, their structure reflected in the table of contents, and some sample pages. The list included the subjects *Language (1-4)*, *Language and Literature (5-6<sup>th</sup> grades)*, *Music*, *Painting/Art*, *Nature (Georgia)*, *Chveni Sakartvelo (Our Georgia)*, *Me and the Surrounding World (Armenia)*, and *Hayrenagitutyun (მამულებიცოდნეობა) (Armenia<sup>4</sup>)*. Methodical guidelines for teachers (called *Teachers’ Textbooks* in Georgia and *Teacher guidelines* in Armenia) prepared for each textbook and the special copy-books for students that are included in the package with textbooks have been analysed too. Several official documents reflecting the official policy and perspective have also been reviewed (listed in full in the bibliography). The material available on the websites and education portals of the agencies related to education, including those operated by the schools themselves, have also been reviewed. I have used on-line education resource portals created for/by teachers where one can find many lesson plans, lesson descriptions, Power Point slide shows used during their classes, photos and videos of different events and activities carried out in schools. I have translated cited texts from the textbooks from both languages into English as close to the original version as possible. Georgian words are provided in brackets in those cases where the use of the original word was needed and for transliteration (romanisation) for the Armenian words; the Hübschmann-Meillet system has been used. I cited the field-work data by mentioning the source, the place, and the time (year). To avoid particularization and to keep anonymity in most cases, names of the respondents and the schools, where the fieldwork was conducted, have not been mentioned in the dissertation

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<sup>4</sup> For detailed description of the textbooks, the grades in which they are taught and the list, please, refer to the first sections of each chapter and *Bibliography*.

## ARMENIA

### General Education: National Curriculum, Textbooks, and Teachers

The state provides twelve years of free general education for all its citizens. The National Curriculum for General Education introduced in 2006/07 is based on a twelve-year general education programme; compulsory education consists of primary education (grades 1 to 4) and lower secondary education (grades 5 to 9) (UNESCO Report, Armenia 2011).

The paper provides some key statistics relevant to the research scope, which focuses on the elementary level (1-4 grades) of schools in the Republic of Armenia (the field material is collected from schools in Yerevan). General education is implemented in the Armenian language (Law on General Education, Armenia 2009)<sup>5</sup>, however according to recent changes in the legislation (2010) educational institutions may implement international programmes and organise education in foreign languages upon the discretion of the Government of the Republic of Armenia<sup>6</sup>.

During the academic year of 2010-2011, there were 365 500 students and 40 400 teachers in Armenia (NCET Armenia ... 2011). Teacher-related statistics are of particular interest in this research, taking into account the framework in which teachers are regarded as “creators” of a discourse through the implementation of a general education programme. They not only mechanically transfer the content of education materials and textbooks, but also take the role of mediators and translators in this process. According to the World Bank database, 99.7 percent of primary school teachers (1-4 grades) in Armenia are female (World DataBank 2011). Of the total number of teachers in general education institutions in Armenia, 75.7 percent are aged above 35 (NCET Armenia ... 2011). This means that the vast majority of teachers in schools received their pedagogical education in Soviet institutes and colleges with respective basic ideology, knowledge, and methodological instruments. For the academic year of 2010-2011 the total number of general education institutions (schools) in the country was 1450, of which 259 operated in Yerevan.

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<sup>5</sup> The RA Law on General Education envisages that general education for national minorities of Armenia can be organised in their mother tongue or national language together with compulsory teaching of the Armenian language.

<sup>6</sup> According to these amendments to the Law, educational programmes in a foreign language may be implemented solely by non-state education institutions, as well as by educational institutions established by interstate and inter-governmental agreements. Instruction of the Armenian language and subjects on Armenian studies in Armenian for citizens of the Republic of Armenia studying at the educational institutions referred to in this part, which implement educational programmes in a foreign language, shall be mandatory in compliance with the state general education criteria. The law also defines the maximum number of such general education institutions as eleven and mentions which schools they are (General Education Law Amendments 2010).

Up until 2002, some fundamental structural changes were carried out in the general education sector, establishing grounds for reforms in content (Education Financing and Management Reform Project, 1998-2002)<sup>7</sup>. Since 2003, structural reforms have been further fortified, and reforms in content have been undertaken (“Education Quality and Relevance” First Project, 2003-2009). As the next stage of these reforms, a new project was implemented by the “Center for Education Projects” of the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia (“Education Quality and Relevance Second Project” 2009-2014).

The National Curriculum for General Education was introduced in 2006/07, which envisages a document of the state standards (hereinafter referred as State Standards) development of each subject, based on which textbooks should be created and chosen (through competition) by state financing. The Ministry of Education and Sciences had announced a call for publishing houses to be vetted, with the selected publishing houses participating in the textbook competition. According to an assessment from the separate committees established for each school subject, the state funds publications for chosen textbooks for the duration of four years. At present, a textbook circulation fund is in place to allow students to rent textbooks each year for a relatively small amount of money (compared to an outright purchase), which in turn provides students with a high availability of textbooks. The textbooks should correspond with the provisions of the State Standards. The assessment should be based on the compliance of each textbook to the State Standards (general and for each subject).

State standards must specify the general content of education according to different educational levels and required skills and knowledge. The content of secondary education, according to the state standards, shall consist of the knowledge specified in accordance with the objectives of general education; educationally and psychologically valuable social experiences, and cultural, moral, aesthetic, national, and universal human values.

The content of secondary education (1-9 grades) is organized into the following educational spheres (or learning areas): Armenian language and literature; foreign languages; mathematics; informatics, information and communication technologies (ICT); natural sciences; social sciences; arts; technology (technical knowledge and labor skills); physical education, initial military training

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<sup>7</sup>Main objectives of this project were: decentralization of the education system; increase efficiency of public resources; rationalization of the school system; financial and management reforms of the general education system; increase of community and parents involvement in education; upgrading of the state curriculum and provision of secondary schools with core textbooks; development of private sector in education.

(IMT); and health and safety education. Every educational sphere is represented by both compulsory and optional subjects. Each educational sphere comprises of the following components of educational content: knowledge systems; abilities and skills (cognitive, logical, communicative, cooperative, and creative); the ability to work independently; and value system (UNESCO).

The Law on General Education (2009) reflects a range of basic principles of the state education policy of the Republic of Armenia, among which the following is relevant to be mentioned within this research scope:

a) “The Republic of Armenia shall proclaim and guarantee the development of the field of general education as an important pre-condition for ensuring the safety and sustainable development of an individual and society and for maintaining the Armenian identity”;

b) The bases of the state policy in the field of general education shall be the national school whose main goal is the formation of a well-rounded person brought up in the spirit of patriotism, statehood and humanism, and attaining a professional orientation;

c) The Republic of Armenia shall ensure the democratic and secular nature of the education (RA Law 2009).

In the reviewed National Curriculum, with regard to the general education, patriotic education (upbringing) is included among the aims of primary schools. It also lists the minimum requirements for students that should be achieved upon the completion of each level (primary, middle, and high). The list for primary schools which consists of eight groups under a general title “Societal and Civic Abilities” contains the following: a) the student should be conscious of his/her own national identity and appreciate it; life; b) objective self-esteem; c) to respect and accept family and public values; d) to show respect to the people in his/her surroundings, tolerance, and moderate behavior; e) to acknowledge and appreciate the homeland and state symbols of the Republic of Armenia; f) to be aware of his/her own rights and responsibilities and become responsible for his/her own deeds; g) recognition of self-belonging to community.

One can meet the statement “Forming and preserving the national identity” as one item in the aim list for the subject of the Armenian language (i.e. mother tongue). Similarly, “the appreciation of homeland, state and nation [azg]” is mentioned among the aims of the social science group of subjects. Thus, the national curriculum includes notions of “national identity”, “homeland”, “nation”, “state” with prescriptions for students “to acknowledge”, “to love”, “to appreciate”, and “to preserve” them (RA Government Decree 2010) (RA Government Decree 2011).

In these documents the concept of homeland is not definitive and rational. The content of this document is not concrete and measurable. What is said to be homeland is not encompassed by any contour of borders. Homeland is being used as a separate concept, its relations to the notions of “nation”, “society”, and “state” are not clarified in the documents.

Below I provide a brief discussion of the educational aims of each subject group to demonstrate the methods and the “instructions” envisaged in the official documents for textbook development and teaching. One methodological note should be mentioned: I will discuss those subjects’ aims, which contain “value” content or principles that are used to up-bring the students and will not refer to those subjects’ aims which speak about knowledge and competence/skills.

Armenian language and literature in the primary school are taught through the textbook entitled *Mayreni* (lit. translation is *Native*). In the first part of the first grade, though, the textbook entitled *Aybhenaran* is used, with which the alphabet is being taught. In the first grade the subject consists of seven academic hours a week, with eight academic hours a week allocated to the subject from the second grade up to and including the fourth grade. The aim of the *Mayreni* in primary schools alongside those aims, the imperative of which is knowledge transmission to the students and their competence development, is to ensure a “national identity dimension”. According to the curriculum, by the end of primary school students “should be aware of the necessity of learning their mother tongue and should regard it as a priority; they should acknowledge the key role of the mother tongue in forming and maintaining their national identity” (RA Government Decree 2010). This subject has the biggest workload - 650 academic hours yearly (followed by mathematics and physical training with 500 and 400 hours respectively per year).

*Me and the Surrounding World* is a subject which integrates the educational sphere of natural and social sciences and is taught in the second (one academic hour a week), third (one academic hour a week), and fourth grades (two academic hours a week). The primary school share of the social sciences (concerning society) sphere subjects (i.e. *Me and the Surrounding World*) prescribes the education programme to include “preliminary, elementary” knowledge about the following:

- 1) State flag, coat of arms, and anthem;
- 2) Most important events, key figures, cultural values, as well as national [azgayin] and state [petakan] holidays;
- 3) Notions of homeland, family, nation [azg], and society;
- 4) Linguistic, national, and religious diversity;
- 5) Administrative division of Republic of Armenia;

- 6) Nature, history, and cultural monuments of own residence;
- 7) Personal rights and responsibilities and behavioral rules of society;
- 8) Necessity of equality, justice, friendship, and peace among people.

From the list above it is clear that several spheres of the knowledge to be transmitted to the students can be considered as presenting the “national identity dimension” of this subject. This dimension predominantly includes one integrated chapter in the fourth grade textbook, which has been included in the research sources.

According to the national curriculum, the education sphere of art in primary schools should contain preliminary knowledge and ideas of famous works of national and foreign art (the list of minimum requirements specifically concerns the art sphere). Music and art subjects are taught throughout the years of primary school (in the first grade it is two hours a week and the rest one hour a week for each subject). After elementary level these two subjects are taught only in the fifth grade (one hour a week for each subject).

It is also stated that through the medium of music it is possible to humanize the process of education and upbringing. The document regards it as a significant requirement of modern times. At the same time, in the document, music in general is seen as equal to the mother tongue as a means of preserving the identity, self-consciousness, and existence of the nation [azg]. National music is regarded as a basis for the musical education of a child, from the other side it is said national music should be combined with classical music and with the folk music of other peoples (nations).

Thus, by generalizing the minimum requirements for the knowledge that students of elementary schools must acquire in four years, one can conclude that the government expects that after elementary school graduation students will be familiar with the state symbols and administrative regions of the Republic of Armenia, they will have gained specific knowledge about events, famous personalities, cultural and historical values, public holidays of the “Armenian people”, Armenia in general and the place of their residence specifically. The list includes elements of citizenship (rights/responsibilities), humanism, and pluralism.

*Hayrenagitutyun* (Nationhood), a subject taught one academic hour a week in the fifth grade, represents the social science of the educational sphere. The subject of history is taught from the sixth grade onwards, while the fifth grade attends to the other integrated subject, *Hayrenagitutyun*<sup>8</sup>. The

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<sup>8</sup> UNESCO World Data Report for Armenia section translates the subject as Nationhood, which however, does not provide the full idea of the course. *Hayrenagitutyun* literally means “knowing about the homeland, especially the place of own residence” (Malkhasyants 1944:41). That is why, we preferred not to translate the title for this subject and leave it as it is in Armenian.

research includes also the fifth grade curriculum and textbooks, though it is considered to be an elementary grade. Taking into consideration that this research considers those parts of general education where the history subject is not introduced yet, and in Armenia two subjects of history (Armenian History and World History) are introduced only in the sixth grade, it is reasonable that the textbook reviews are expanded by the research by one more year. Thus, the research also included the fifth grade textbooks (i.e. *Mayreni 5* and those representing the social science sphere, i.e. the subjects *Hayrenagitutyun* and *History of the Armenian Church*). Nevertheless, the overall picture in this case will shift from the results shown for the primary school. That is why throughout the entire text I strictly mentioned the grades, so that it makes the text more explicit.

A closer look at the “instructions” of the State standard for the subject gave a general picture of the concept of national identity that such standards recommend. It reveals three key elements or “building blocks” (if the term by Panossian is used) of identity: a) Armenia as a homeland (Republic of Armenia and Republic of Mountainous Gharabagh mentioned as “successors of the Armenian statehood”), b) Armenian language as “one of the ancient and most beautiful languages”, c) Armenian Apostolic Church and its significant role in Armenian history). These are the three main columns, of which the document adds a concept that Sandomirskaya called the concept of “small homeland” (Sandomirskaya 2001), historical-cultural monuments, cultural values, folklore (special focus on the Epos “*Sasna C̄ĕr*”), and famous Armenian military and cultural figures (“their deeds devoted to the nation”). The identity formulae also envisage several “activities” (“love and respect towards”, “realize”, “appreciate” and “attach importance to”, “to preserve and convey”) that are recommended to be applied towards and with regard to the homeland, Armenia, Armenian language and church.

The subject *History of the Armenian Church* is taught one academic hour a week in the fifth grade. The subject and its introduction into the school curriculum are of crucial interest. However, this is a theme of a separate discussion (for details see (Mkrtchyan: 2012)).

## **Myth of Origin**

### **Hayk Nahapet**

In the first grade textbook, the *Aybbenaran*, students are acquainted with “heroes” and historical figures. Hayk, according to the representations in the *Aybbenaran*, the founder of the nation (the Armenian people), is simultaneously a hero, brave, and freedom-loving, who defeated Bell (Sargsyan: 2009). One of the two officially approved first grade textbooks, *Aybbenaran*,



presents Hayk within the lesson devoted to the letter “H” [H] through a short text, “Hero Hayk”, with a picture depicting Hayk with a bow in his hands and Bell supposedly hit by an arrow from Hayk’s bow, against the background of Mount Ararat (Sargsyan 2009:101-102). The text in the first grade post-alphabet period textbook entitled “Hayk and Bell” starts with a sentence, characterizing *Hayk Nahapet* (lit. *Hayk Forefather*), who was “tall, beautiful and clever, with curly hair and who was a good archer.” The scene of the battle of Hayk and Bell is also found in this textbook. Here, Hayk is depicted with a bow directed at Bell with his soldiers standing behind him (Kyurkchyan 2010:50).

Below are different scenarios of the in-class implementation of the lesson about Hayk observed during my fieldwork and interviews. One typical scenario I met can be summarized in the following way. The teacher first reads the text in the *Aybhenaran* then begins to characterize both Hayk and Bell. The teacher adds details to the textbook’s short text resulting in an image of Hayk as a hero and Bell as an anti-hero. According to this practice, the teachers connect this story to perceptions of “what is good” and “what is bad,” assuming also that Hayk is good and Bell bad. *“Now children, you assess them on your own, and make conclusions on who should you be like, Hayk or Bell, the good or the bad”* (Teacher, Yerevan school, 2012). This kind of discussion regarding images of specific “heroes” and/or historical figures within the textbook stories was observed as common practice during the lessons, and the teachers were speaking of them regarding other topics rather than Hayk and Bell as well. These heroes and/or historical figures are thought to be in the binary concept of good and bad, emphasizing the need for the students to follow their deeds or to be like the good.

Another observed strategy of presenting the lessons about Hayk is connected to how Bell is presented. According to this strategy, the teachers tried to depict the image of Bell not as an “enemy” but rather as the opposite of “the good” (“the positive”), to pull the idea of enemy and enmity away from a simplistic black and white view and use the examples of Hayk (strong, freedom-loving) and Bell (tyrannous) and to present their characteristics as the difference between what is good and what is bad. Below is an explanation of the presented strategy:

*“Look children, now you listed good character of our forefather Hayk, that we are his descendants, that means we all have to do our best be like him, and then I also try to make this list of characters not to be so high in the air and not disconnected from our everyday life. I think that children should be able to imagine and see these characteristics in their*

*practice, they should try to correct their own mistakes” (Teacher, first grade, Yerevan, 2011).*

The teacher explains this strategy saying, “the reason for this comparison of good characteristics of Hayk with those bad of Bell could have its result on the behavior and thoughts of the children”. Below is provided another account from a class in a Yerevan school related to Hayk.

*“Children, have you ever thought who we are by nationality [azg]? ...What other nations do you know? Let’s think about the name of our nation. Look, many of you are named after grandfathers or grandmothers, isn’t it so? ...And where does our name [hay] derive from? There was a man, - forefather of our people [žołovowrd], his name was Hayk, and we are named after him...” (Field observation, Yerevan, 2011).*

In this example first we see the reflection of the theme of Hayk; the myth of origin, and the ancestor, forefather, and name-giver of the Armenian people. In the following parts of the lesson the image of Hayk is introduced. They also describe Hayk, derived from the picture in the textbook, as heroic and freedom-loving, and briefly talk about Hayk’s triumph over Bell, who was trying to dominate Hayk. (See pic. 1.1.1-1.1.2)

Hayk, as a common ancestor for the Armenians, is also included in other texts of the first grade textbooks *Aybbenaran* and *Mayreni* (See details on page 65). The *Mayreni* textbooks written by V. Sargsyan et al. speak about Hayk in consecutive grades as well. For example, students are introduced to Hayk in the third grade within the theme of the Armenian Army: “*Hayk forefather struggles against the enemy Bell, who wanted to conquer our country with a huge army. In a severe battle Hayk kills Bell. The army of Bell then fled*” (Sargsyan 2008:136). Meanwhile, the *Mayreni* textbooks written by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan present the story of Hayk and Bell in the first grade.

In the fifth grade textbook of the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* there is a topic entitled *Myths*, which also includes the myth of Hayk and Bell. The lesson text defines myths as “*not created by individuals, but generations and entire peoples. They are being complemented through centuries and passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth*”. Thus, this textbook being taught in the first year of the basic school, tells the story of Hayk and Bell close to the original version by Movsés Khorenats'i. One should note, however, that the textbook interpretation of the myth

combines the image of Hayk – the ancestor as well as hero of the Armenian people.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, despite the above definition of the story as mythical, the textbook also contains concepts showing it as a “real story and a real character” (Danielyan...2007:47)<sup>10</sup>. (See pic. 1.1.3)

The textbook of the subject *History of the Armenian Church* (fifth grade) also tells the story of Hayk and Bell within a wider theme of the Tower of Babel and the Spread of Noah’s Descendants. In the same textbook there is another legend (contained within the section meant for additional reading), which tells of another version, according to which “Hayk, tall and square-built, defeated Bell in an archery contest and gained the right to leave him with his dynasty [gerdastan]” (Ghandilyan 2008:20). In the questions intended for the students, the authors ask them to describe Hayk and Bell separately, and ask the question (with a positive reply expected/hinted) if they would rather be like *Hayk Nahapet* (Ghandilyan 2008:19).

## Space and Territory

### (Erebuni) Yerevan

(My Erebuni – now Yerevan... [Erewan darjac im Êrebowni...])

My Erebuni – now Yerevan,  
You are our new Dvin, our new Ani,  
You are the big dream of our small land,  
Yearning of centuries, your stone elegance.<sup>11</sup>  
(Paruyr Sevak)

“Erebuni transformed into Yerevan - one of the most ancient cities in the world; pink in color, from pink tuff, and still a beautiful capital city for all Armenians in the world”-this is the concept of Yerevan, the capital city of the Republic of Armenia, which one can follow throughout the discourse in the textbooks analyzed here from the first grade until the fifth.

From the first grade, students are shown images related to Erebuni Fortress. For example, the lesson teaching the Armenian letter E [Ē] includes Erebuni-related pictures as its main illustration (Sargsyan 2009:83). (See pic. 1.2.2)

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<sup>9</sup> Compare this to the same feature we have noted in the first grade textbook *Aybbenaran* (see page 35).

<sup>10</sup> Thus, in the textbook we read: “*The Armenian people have created myths about its hero sons. One of them is dedicated to its brave ancestor and name-giving Hayk the forefather. ...Our country is called Hayk after the name of our brave ancestor...It is from him that the Armenian people have inherited its courage and freedom-loving spirit. ... The sons of the Armenian land - heroes such as Hayk Nahapet, Vardan and Vahan Mamikonyans, Smbat Bagratuni have fully devoted themselves to that patriotic mission*” (Danielyan ... 2007:47).

<sup>11</sup> A song, which was specially created for the Yerevan-1750 anniversary celebrations in 1968, since then the song has become very popular, and, currently, it is the official anthem of the city Yerevan.

In the fourth grade textbook on the subject entitled *Me and the Surrounding World*, Yerevan is included in a wider theme of the Republic of Armenia, where students read the following text about Yerevan: “*The capital city of the Republic of Armenia is Yerevan, which is one of the ancient cities in the world. It was founded by Argishti the First in 782 B.C.. They call Yerevan a Pink city, deriving from the buildings from pink tuff. Our Capital city is beautiful today too with many new buildings, streets, and monuments*” (Hovsepyan ... 2010:86). Some of the pictures used as illustrations for Yerevan related lessons in order to symbolize the city also include “new” buildings and monuments built during recent years, for example, the building in the Northern Avenue in central Yerevan.

In fifth grade textbook on the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* the authors ask students to think about the statement “Yerevan is the Pan-Armenian capital city” and present their own argument in order to prove it (Danielyan ... 2007:141).

Yerevan is present in routine school life and iconographic space as well, perhaps more than in the textbook dimension. The second grade annual program envisages the organizing and holding of a class event dedicated to Yerevan. The “Erebuni-Yerevan” celebration dates back to 1968, when one-week celebrations of the 2750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Yerevan - were held in the then Soviet Armenia for the first time (Yerevan Municipality website). Now, official celebrations of Erebuni-Yerevan are held each year in October. These celebrations, or *Yerevan Day* as it is publicly known, highlights yet another occasion when schools in Yerevan are engaged in the celebration practices, this time for a week, holding on-stage events, in-class events (school N 51 website), preparation of wall-posters, group excursions, etc.

Wall-posters and other decorations prepared by students together with teachers on the occasion of Yerevan Day remain in place for a long time - sometimes the new poster replaces one from the previous year or sometimes they stay side by side. One can see a variety of titles such as “Erebuni”, “Erebuni-Yerevan”, “Our Yerevan”, “Yerevan is my Home”, “Yerevan – 2790” (or other years). Nearly all of them fix the date 782 B.C. as the birthday of Yerevan (Erebuni) as well as the age of Yerevan at that point in time and include pictures (photos) of different sights, monuments, and views of Yerevan from different times including from the Soviet period. (See pic. 1.2.1-1.2.9) The question about the age of Yerevan is constantly discussed in the classrooms. As my observations have shown, the date of the foundation of Erebuni and the age of Yerevan (Erebuni) is fixed (written, drawn, painted, or highlighted) also in the copy-books that the students were using.

## Landscape and Geography

### Ararat and Aragats

The centrality of Ararat among the national symbols is obvious in the textbooks. The means and forms of representation of Mount Ararat (Masis) are quite diverse in the textbooks. In first grade textbooks, one can see the mountain mentioned as “Ararat” or “Sis and Masis,” illustrated with a variety of images. It is identified both as *Ararat* (for example within the lesson teaching the letter A) (Sargsyan 2009:32) and as the expression of “Sis + Masis = Ararat” (Sargsyan 2009:68;47) (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:46). The image of Ararat is on the cover and first pages of the first grade textbooks *Aybhenaran*, but also on the cover of the third grade textbook *Mayreni*. Ararat is regularly encountered throughout all grade textbooks analyzed. It is either standing alone or combined with other images symbolizing Armenia and Armenians. It serves as a background very often and nearly in all cases, when there is a need for having a background for an image, picture, scene, or landscape. Here are some examples to illustrate this point; for instance, a street with Ararat in a background (Sargsyan 2009:28), a landscape with Ararat in the background (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:2). Another illustration for the point mentioned above is the picture introducing the theme “Armenia - My Home” in the fourth grade textbook, where one can see a boy and a girl with the ABC textbook in their hands and Ararat in the background. Ararat is depicted as a single object; in many pages of the textbooks it is used as an illustration for texts somehow related to the mountain, Armenia, or homeland. The textbooks highlight or hint at the importance of, and high value attached to Ararat through fostering discussions and questions at the end of the lessons (For example, “*When was the last time you have seen Ararat? Please, describe it*”). Noah’s Ark is depicted in several cases on top of the images of Ararat in the textbooks (Sargsyan 2009:71) (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:62). The second grade textbook *Mayreni* presents a short story of Noah’s Ark on Ararat, another short text about Ararat, which says, “... Ararat is the highest peak (if one measures it from its base to the peak), it is the most beautiful mountain if viewed from the eyes of the Armenians...” (Sargsyan ... 2010:122). Ararat, depicted as a mount constituting of Sis and Masis and being captive and physically not accessible for the Armenians, is present in different pages of one of the two versions of the fourth grade textbook *Mayreni*. “We cannot climb up physically the mount but we can do it in our minds”, says one of the personages in the short story (Torosyan ... 2010:14).

Ararat is an active part of the teachers’ discourse and there its biblical nature is mentioned often. Below are presented several excerpts from the interviews illustrating this practice:

*“I always mention several things about Ararat, though I realize that children are quite young for this kind of information, however.... This is Biblical Ararat, a mountain in the Bible, it is immortal...”* (Teacher, third grade, Yerevan, 2011).

*“We are the country, where for the first time Noah’s Ark has been revealed on the Mount Masis”* (Teacher, first grade, Yerevan, 2010).

In the fifth grade of the subject *History of the Armenian Church* within a broad chapter *Old Testimony* there is a theme entitled *The Mount Ararat*, which in turn has sub-topics such as *Noah is Coming Down from Ararat, Ararat and Noah’s Descendants Shem, Jam, and Japheth, The Meaning of Ararat for Armenians*. The same textbook includes a legend about Ararat, which introduces the “emergence” of the mountain and the river Araks. According to this legend, there was a hero, a brave man named Ararat, who defeated the enemies and at the age of 100 years old asked God to turn him into a mountain. When the people saw this they started to cry and from their tears the Araks River emerged (Ghandilyan ... 2008:17). This story *The Legend of the Mount* was quite popular among the elementary school teachers observed, many of whom telling it to the students when they spoke about Mount Ararat.

Ararat (Masis) is represented also within various poems and lyrics taught in schools dedicated directly to Ararat itself, or to the Armenian language, homeland, or Armenia. Here are some examples illustrating this. Some of the poems generally dedicated to the Armenian language (and/or “Mother tongue”) have several references to it “... keep it [the mother tongue] high and pure as the sacred snow of Ararat” by S. Kaputikyan, “We have only one Mount Masis in the world, this mount is coming from far ages, this mountain infinitely speaks Armenian” (by Kh. Dashtents) (Gyurjinyan ... 2006:10). Students are also offered small riddles about Ararat. Here is one such included in the first grade *Mayreni* textbook: “Two brothers, young and old, have a snow crown, hot or cold” apparently hinting at the existence of two peaks of the Mount Ararat, one big and the other smaller, covered with snow on top.

In the classrooms during lessons not related to this theme the teachers find a ‘space’ and ‘opportunity’ to mention Ararat. One example of this is when a teacher explained the usage of capital letters with the names of geographical units very often using Ararat, Sis, and/or Masis as examples to show that they are written starting with a capital letter. Examples from the illustrations for the textbook representations of Mount Ararat are shown in Appendix 1.4. (See pic. 1.4.1-1.4.7)

Iconographically, Ararat is also present in the school space in the form of paintings, wall-posters, drawings on the walls of school corridors, and in the classrooms. During the on-stage events one often encounters, Ararat is used as a form of decoration or wall illustration. Frequently, Ararat is used as a background, big, all-inclusive, and covering the stage in the hall or as a stage decoration. Children also get tasks to paint, depict, and construct images of Ararat as part of their homework (See pic.1.5.1-1.5.7).

In the textbooks, students come across other items of the national landscape, such as the mountains Aragats and Ara, the lakes Sevan and Van, and the river Araks. In the first grade textbook *Aybberanaran* students see the mountains Aragats and Ara. However, these mountains are less seldom depicted than Ararat (Sargsyan 2009:50,52). Within the chapter entitled “Native Country” [Hayreni erkir] of the fourth-grade textbook *Mayreni*, students must read a poem entitled “Springs of Aragats” by H. Arsenyan, and are then asked to tell and discuss what they know about Mount Aragats. A short text about Aragats follows the discussion. It presents Mount Aragats as “the highest mountain in the Republic of Armenia and the fourth highest in the Armenian Highland”. Thereafter, geographical details are added to the text about the mountain, its location, and surroundings (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:63). Mount Aragats, often regarded as a *four-peak mount*, is praised and described in the poems and other writings that students deal with during their study.

### **Sevan, Van, and Araks**

Images of Lake Sevan, the biggest lake on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, are present in the first grade textbook *Aybberanaran* together with a kind of trout fish, called *Ishkhan*, which the lake is famous for. This kind of fish was described as “our fish,” and “naturally growing only in the waters of Lake Sevan” by the teachers I met during the field-work (See pic. 1.15,1.16). In the third grade textbook *Mayreni*, there is one page related to Lake Sevan, where it is referred to as the *Pearl of Armenia*. The book offers students a poem dedicated to Lake Sevan by P. Khachatryan, where one finds many epithets for the lake, which is also called “Sister of the Lake Van” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:140). In the fourth grade textbook *Mayreni*, Lake Sevan is referred to in the chapter entitled *Travel through the Armenian Miracles* with a separate lesson, which refers to the lake as a kingdom and the fish *Ishkhan* as a “king” in the water kingdom. The text informs that the fish is suffering now because of a water decrease and other ecological problems related to Lake Sevan in contemporary Armenia (Torosyan ... 2010:31-33). The textbook refers also to the meaning Armenians attach to the lake: it is not just an ordinary lake; “it is a sea, even an ocean for our

hearts”. There is also a message encouraging children to take care of the lake and to preserve the “treasure” (Torosyan ... 2010:35). The textbooks also refer to Araks, a river flowing along the borders of the Republic of Armenia with Turkey and Iran, as *Mother River*.

## Flora and Fauna

The species of flora and fauna have also been revealed as national identity components. In particular, there are trout known as *Ishkhan* from Sevan and *Tarekh* from Van. They are included in the pictures, the image collections of the Armenian identity which are implemented through technique of collage, i.e. assembling different forms to create a new whole. These pictures illustrate various texts about Armenia, Armenians, or separate elements of the Armenian identity in the textbooks (See pic. 1.1.5, 1.1.6). In the previous passage a representation of the fish *Ishkhan* as the “king” of Lake Sevan, an imaginary kingdom, through a fourth grade textbook short story was shown. Another example of presenting an animal in relation to the national identity is the Van cat [*vana katow*]. One illustration in the first grade textbook *Aybberan* on its first page shows a dog, cat, and parrot with their eyes staring at a book on the table. At first glance, the animals are ordinary, but a closer look at the cat reveals that the eyes of the cat are of two different colors; one is green and the other is blue. Different colored eyes are the feature this kind of cat called *Vana katow* is famous for. During the interview, one of the authors of the textbook specifically focused on this detail, mentioning that this was a small “technique” applied by herself in order to incorporate a national feature (Armenianness) into the textbook. “Look at the cat in the first page; do you think it is an ordinary cat? No, that is our Van cat...”. The interviewed teachers, however, had not paid attention to this detail in the picture, did not recognize that it was a Van cat, and correspondingly did not emphasize it during the classes to the students. Thus, with this example, we see that the interpretation of symbolism by the author is “lost” during the process of transmitting the knowledge to the classroom.

In the third grade textbook *Mayreni*, there is a chapter related to the natural surroundings, mostly plants, fruits, and vegetables. In these pieces of texts the authors present information, small stories, proverbs, riddles, and legends about various species of flora. apricot (tree), pomegranate (tree), and grapes are either presented as “Armenian”, “our”, “traditionally typical for the Armenians” or considered as symbols of Armenia (the Armenians and Armenianness).

In relation to grapes, along with other information, students read the following: “Sweet grapes are being ripened in Armenian gardens. It is the symbol of our heritage, our joyfulness, and



love of life. ...Armenia is one of the most ancient centers of grape cultivation and wine making in the world” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:31,33).

In the same textbook the students read: “Pomegranate trees have been cultivated in Armenia since the ancient times” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:34). There is also a short poem dedicated to the pomegranate (by G. Gabrielyan), where the author writes about the features of pomegranate, as well as praising its taste, color, and healthiness. The final lines of the poem read the following: “...*I am the fruit, Armenian fruit*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:36).

A small passage about grapes, pomegranates, and apricots is placed in the second grade textbook *Mayreni*, when asking and discussing the question: “*What do you imagine when saying the word Armenia?*” Here the students view the picture and read a short, three-four sentence text about the pictures on the page of the textbook: a cross-stone and an image of a stork on a pole (one common element of a popular painting of Mount Ararat in Armenia and among the Armenian Diaspora). In the part related to apricots, students read the following text: “Armenia is the homeland of the apricot.” This statement is met also in the third grade textbook as the introductory sentence to share information about the features of apricot (trees) (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:98). “*This sun-flavored and sun-tasted fruit has been living in Armenia since the times of Hayk forefather [Nahapet] ... Golden apricot is the symbol of Armenia*” (Kyurkchyan ... 2010b:150) (See pic. 1.1.7) The third grade textbook *Mayreni* includes a small poem about the apricot, introducing and praising its features. A part of the poem says, “You will immediately think of Armenia when you hear the word *apricot* pronounced” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:96). Then, the authors offer a legend entitled “The First Apricot Tree” by H. Khachatryan, which speaks about apricot trees on Mount Masis, having appeared on Noah’s Ark. According to the story, when the first snow appeared there, the apricot tree fields were planted in the Ararat valley by Torgom, the father of Hayk forefather. The story ends with the following words: “... *and then apricot trees were spread through the country so much, that the Armenian world was called Apricot country*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:97;98). (See pic. 1.1.7) The students get homework, which asks them to compose a piece of creative work with the title *Armenia is the Homeland of the Apricot*. The implementation of the task eventually results in different forms of written compositions, paintings, and pictures on the theme of the apricot and its characteristics as a tree, a plant, and as an Armenian symbol. (See pic. 1.1.8)

The apricot, as a symbol of Armenia and its direct connection with the perceptions surrounding the notion of “Armeniannes”, is manifested also in the discourse around the national flag of the Republic of Armenia and, more specifically, about one of its colors - the orange - which

is the third color in the Republic of Armenia's tricolor flag. The public perceptions, as well as taking into consideration the interviews with the teachers, reveal a preference to use the word *ciranagowyn* (sounding as "apricot-colored") rather than orange for the third color of the flag<sup>12</sup>. In the discussions, many of the teachers found it important to connect the third color of the national flag to the apricot and to stress the idea of Armenia being the homeland of the apricot. This is interesting to correlate with the RA Laws on state symbols adopted in 2006 to regulate the standards of the flag including the colors of the flag. According to the law, the third color of the flag is orange, which symbolizes the "creative talent and diligence of the Armenian people" (RA Law on the National Flag 2006).

## **Territory, Homeland, and the State**

### ***Defining "Homeland" and "Native Land"***

The first grade textbooks introduce the concept of homeland: *"Armenia [Hayastan] is our country/home. Our country is named Hayastan by the name of Hayk"*. The first grade textbooks also introduce the notions of *"love towards the homeland"*, *"being proud of it"*, and the *"desire to make the homeland happy by doing good deeds for her"* (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:63), (Sargsyan 2010:102). (For details, please, refer to page 73) That is to say, students are getting acquainted with their country, the name of which derives from a common ancestor, the name-giver. Throughout consecutive years of study, what the students get is enriched with more images and a greater understanding of their homeland that is filled with specific content. They also come across "definitions" and normative statements and "instructions" on how to deal with and behave in relation to the homeland. Within the writings of these textbooks, elements of personification of the country (homeland) are met, for example, when patriotism is said to be the *"desire to make the homeland happy"* (the supposition of the fact that the country can have feelings and should be happy). In relation to the notion of homeland and the attitude towards it in the textbooks we noted signs of such personifications.

As described by Sandormirskaya in her analysis of the notion and representations of homeland (*rodina*, *otechestvo*, *otchizna*), regarding the case of Russia, cases of personification can be viewed as when it is expressed as a "supreme creation, who should be loved and is longing for being served, who can ask for (demand) sacrifices, loyalty and full commitment" (Sandormirskaya

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<sup>12</sup> There is a popular Armenian song in which the third colour is said to be [*ciranagowyn*] to mean "the colour of apricot".

2001:160). Many of these elements were found in the textbooks in relation to Armenia/homeland. Another idea related to homeland is the “homeland in need of protection, defense”. For example, it is stated in the third grade textbook *Mayreni* in the form of “*sacred duty of each human being to defend his/her homeland*”. This topic links the concept of patriotism. The Armenian word for patriotism [hayrenasirutyun] consists of two parts, and the direct translation is “loving the homeland”. In one of the textbooks, for example, the students find a statement, which says, “*We love the homeland not because it is big, but because it is ours*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:11). The fifth grade textbook of the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* presents a more detailed reference about the concept of homeland including the notion of people’s “love towards the homeland”. Particularly, it states, “*Many have conducted heroic deeds, they even sacrificed their lives. To love the homeland means to know it, know its past, appreciate the priceless heritage created by our ancestors and transmitted to us. Patriotism starts with getting to knowing the homeland...*” (Hovsepyan ... 2007:4). The second version of the *Hayrenagitutyun* textbook at the very beginning states: “*Homeland is a shrine for every Armenian.*” The same textbook then envisages a discussion in the classroom of the theme of possible ways of expressing patriotism, for example, through asking questions to the students such as: “What does it mean to love your homeland? Is it to sing songs about your homeland [or are there other ways]?”

Throughout the textbooks the authors have put notions of homeland and patriotism in specific frames and presented definitions (For more details about definitions, please, refer to pages 73-75). However, these notions still remain abstract, ambiguous, and open to various interpretations and diverse ideas to be conducted by the teachers. Presented are some excerpts from a variety of interpretations and conceptualizations regarded in the schools when talking with teachers and/or observing their classes. Regarding the teachers’ interpretations of the notion of homeland and patriotism, love towards the homeland, alongside textbooks’ concepts of patriotism as “dying/sacrificing oneself for the sake of the homeland” one can see the everyday life aspect of these terms as well as be made aware of the practical and operational definitions taught by the teachers themselves. This everyday life aspect is sometimes more focused. For example, very often teachers depict loving the homeland as being equal to “keeping it clean,” “to build or create something instead of destructing,” “being a hard worker in everything a person does, be it regarding study in school or a job when the students are grown up.” These “everyday life oriented” ideas less highfalutin to the students as the situations used were familiar.

Another theme related to homeland concerns “*living outside the homeland, and missing it*”, as well as the suffering of that “loss”. In a third grade textbook students read a story entitled *Dream of a Plant* by A. Parsamyan which, metaphorically speaking, is about the disadvantages and weaknesses of living outside one’s birthplace regardless of how comfortable and wealthy their life is in their new places of residence. The children are also advised to read and to think about a proverb, which says that it is as impossible to live without one’s homeland as it is to live without bread (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:11). Another proverb says, “*A foreign country will never become a homeland*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:65). Students are also offered to think over the questions about the role of homeland in the life of every person and about their personal feelings. Another question given to the students in the textbooks within the above-mentioned topic is the following: “Is it possible to live without one’s homeland?” These questions and discussions became spaces and possibilities for teachers to stress once again in the classrooms that the best place to live in is one’s homeland - “where your house is, where your relatives live. They express regret and pity for those cases when people had to leave the country as well as urge the students not to leave the country. The theme of homesickness [karot] is presented and discussed in the fifth grade textbook *Mayreni* through the poem entitled *Karot* to be learned by heart. The textbooks ask the students to sing the popular song based on the lyrics of this poem. Here is an example from a class discussion observed on the theme of “Armenia is my Homeland.”

*“Children, do you remember we have learnt about this during the music classes as well, that many people has left the country, maybe they have got wealthy there, but their heart feels [misses] their native home. Our home is in Armenia. The best place is Armenia. You should never forget your home”* (Teacher, fourth grade, Yerevan, 2011).

With a closer look at the themes discussed, comparing it with context information, one can note that both in the examples provided by textbooks and classroom practices the feeling of homesickness, nostalgia and longing for the homeland [karot] is expressed within the context of and in relation to the current trends of migration, leaving homeplace for other country, the historical aspect of migration is not discussed, nor different forms of forced migration is touched upon (ex., conflict-driven, ethnical cleansing, and Armenian Genocide) (See details on pages 69-73). It shows the “bad” sides of leaving one’s own country, and of searching for comfort and wealth not in the homeland but in foreign countries, as if recommending or urging students not to leave their home country.

The theme of relating homeland to mother (bringing a parallel between them or presenting them as equally beloved) is introduced in the textbooks and within teachers' discourse. A poem entitled *Homeland and Mother* by M. Koryun communicates the idea of the homeland having given birth to "us", like a mother would. The poem also highlights the idea that people are granted love and care by both the homeland and the mother. Another poem entitled *Mother Armenia* by N. Miqaelyan is presented in the fourth grade textbook, which again related the homeland to the mother. The poem transfers the idea of Armenia [Hayastan] being "*Mother of land, light, water and sun, wine and grape, rivers and mountain peaks in snow, pink cities, happiness, dreams and future*" (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:36). The theme of equating the mother and the homeland was touched upon through the textbook section allocated to the questions for discussion as well. Particularly, the third grade textbook *Mayreni* asks the students to think over the question: "How should a child pay back what the mother and the homeland have done for him/her?" (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:19).

Within texts, tasks, questions, and homework from textbooks, students find definitions of homeland. These definitions are present mostly in those parts, which are dedicated to Armenia or the homeland. Here is one such example: "What do we mean by 'homeland'? Homeland is our birthplace, terraqueous, language, faith, song, and history. Homeland is our ancestors and people living next to us. Homeland is our parent and our home" (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:3). The full spectrum of definitions and practices of conceptualizing the homeland and native country will be discussed further. (See pages 73-76)

### ***Armenia, Republic of Armenia, Historical Armenia (Homeland)***

Throughout different textbooks (predominantly starting from the third grade) students find a particularization of the homeland: Armenia, the Republic of Armenia, and historical homeland. The interchangeable use of other notions describing the country such as Armenia, Republic of Armenia, and historical Armenia (homeland) is also noted.

Below are passages from the textbooks.

In the third grade textbook *Mayreni* students find a text on Armenia [Hayastan], a brief introduction about Republic of Armenia. The text says, "*The official name of our country is the Republic of Armenia. It is situated in the South Caucasus. The neighbors of Armenia are Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkey. Nagorno Kharabagh is connected to Armenia through one road. The Republic of Armenia was created in 1991. The capital city is Yerevan and the state language is Armenian. The spiritual Centre of Armenia is Edchmiadzin. There are 10 regions [marz] in*

*Armenia. The highest peak of Republic of Armenia is Aragats. The biggest lake is Sevan. The river Araks flows along the border between Armenia and Turkey It is known as Mother River*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:152). Students read a text with nearly the same content in the fourth grade within the subject *Me and the Surrounding World*, which starts with the following sentence: “*Today we have a small but independent state, the Republic of Armenia*” (Hovsepyan ... 2010:86).

The textbook of the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* authored by Hovsepyan et al within various pages includes definitions and wordings of different names for the homeland. “Armenian Highland” is defined as “*the historical homeland and cradle of the Armenians*”, and the Republic of Armenia is described as “embodiment of the Armenian statehood on a part of the territory of historical Armenia” or as “being situated on one part of the historical homeland” (Hovsepyan ... 2007:16). Armenia is the short name of both versions, the historical homeland of the Armenians and the Republic of Armenia (Hovsepyan ... 2007:16).

### ***Statehood and State Symbols***

In this section, representations of the main three symbols of a state – the flag, coat of arms, and anthem of the Republic of Armenia - will be presented<sup>13</sup>. Out of the three state symbols, the state flag has been observed to have the widest presence in school space. The tricolor flag of the Republic of Armenia, small or big, and whether hung on an obvious space or otherwise, can be seen on the majority of pages of the *Aybbenaran* authored by V. Sargsyan. The flag is flown from the top of the buildings and houses, and displayed on the clothes of the children in the pictures, etc. (Sargsyan, 2010:26; 27; 37). In the textbook by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan, the state flag is present in the illustrations of the textbook, the pictures implemented by a technique similar to a collage, through which the authors show the diverse symbols of Armenia, Armenians, and Armenian culture in one picture. In these pictures, the flag colors are shown through the practice of painting the elements in red, blue, and orange. The textbooks analyzed contain images of the state flag of the Republic of Armenia dispersed throughout the illustration for the lessons. (See pic. 1.7.1-1.7.2) Meanwhile, the fourth grade textbooks introduce the other two symbols as well as a “holistic” presentation of all three symbols. Thus, the fourth grade textbook *Mayreni* lists the three symbols of the state, and informs students about the function and the authors of the national anthem

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<sup>13</sup> All three national symbols of the First Republic of Armenia (1918 – 1920) have been chosen as national symbols for the Republic of Armenia after long debates in the Parliament of Armenia in early 1990-s. (For detailed discussion of the debates see (Abrahamian 2006:58-59)).

(Gyurjinyan ... 2010:78). The authors of the fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World* allocate a separate lesson entitled *The Symbols of our Statehood* in which they elaborate more on the functions and description of each of the symbols, adding details about the ‘meanings’ of their elements, colors, images of animals, etc. I have observed diverse images of the state symbols as illustrations for the copy-books the students were using at schools. Additionally, the students received home-tasks to depict the state symbols in a way they would imagine. (See pic. 1.8.2)

Small areas in the schools, which are reserved for state symbols are called State Corners. They either are hung on one of the walls of the school entrance hall, or in the second floor, or in any other place as visible as possible. The national flag, the coat of arms, and the anthem, together with pictures of the President of the Republic of Armenia and the Catholicos of All Armenians, constitute the core of these corners. One can also encounter the text of the Lord’s Prayer at the side that has the picture of the Catholicos, and a passage from the Constitution at the side with the picture of the President, though in fewer cases. Unlike the elements of composition, which are rather similar in most schools, the implementation, style, material, and texture are quite diverse. Some of them are “handmade”, while others have quite a high level of quality regarding their design and graphics, while some are made of expensive materials. (See pic. 1.6.1)

The use of national (state) symbols in educational institutions including schools is prescribed by official regulations. According to the regulations of the Laws of RA on Flag (2006 July 4, ՀՕ-149-Ն) and Coat of Arms (2006 July 4, ՀՕ-148-Ն), these two symbols should also be installed in educational institutions in one of the halls or foyers of the building. The use of the national anthem has its official regulations too. The RA Law on the Anthem says that the anthem should be played “each Monday before the start of classes in all schools providing general education on the territory of RA independent from the form of ownership” (2006 December 27, ՀՕ – 252-Ն). As in the case of the “State Corners”, they are installed in every school, and the practices of performing the anthem also are decided individually in each school. Each school has adopted its own way of performing the anthem with a diverse level of “honesty”, ceremonialism, and scope of participation. These “ceremonies” occur either in the classrooms, in the foyer of the class, or sometimes in schoolyards.

During on-stage events, school ceremonies, and rituals of the school, one can see the national flag. The school directors sometimes apply creative approaches to the use of the flag (directors are typically the actors that make decisions about the school’s major decoration in the foyer (entrance room) and in the main corridors). Meanwhile, teachers are in general “responsible” for the classroom decorations. Students usually are those who implement ideas regarding decorations, or

make wall posters, wallpapers, maquettes, mini-models, and portraits as part of their homework. Some of these works eventually get hanged on the walls in the school. Especially during on-stage events and performances, stages and halls are decorated, with the national flag used not only in the form of a flag, but also through different items and compositions in the colors of the flag. For example, balloons, dresses, ribbons, posters, curtains, etc., can be used in this way. (See pic. 1.8.1)

## Language

**“I love you, Armenian language, you are as sweet as my mother is ...”**

*I love you Armenian language,  
You are as sweet as my mother is,  
I am proud of you  
In Armenian I read, write and recite.  
(R.Gharibyan)<sup>14</sup>.*

In the textbooks and in school life we observe various forms of representations of the language as one of the key components celebrating 'Armenianness.' A unique script, books (manuscripts), Mesrop Mashtots, and Matenadaran are considered important aspects of Armenian culture. With the pages of the Aybbenaran textbooks by both authors among images and illustrations, which are key content bearers for the textbooks, one can observe diversely decorated presentations of the letters (Sargsyan 2010:146) (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:100) and the alphabet (Sargsyan 2010:27;68,146) (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:62), Mesrop Mashtots, the building of Matenadaran, and various books (mostly presented as manuscripts). (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:82;100; 101). (See Appendix 1.9)

Throughout the textbook discourse (from the first year through to the fifth year) students were observed learning and reciting various poems dedicated to the Armenian language, praising it and stating its importance for the preservation of the nationhood. Here are short excerpts from the poems that students learn in the fifth grade of the subject *Mayreni*:

*“Keep it [Armenian language] as high and pure as the sacred snow of Ararat is, do keep it close to your heart right as you remember your grandfathers...even if you happen to forget your own mother, you should never forget your mother tongue” (by S. Kaputikyan)*  
(Gyurjinyan ... 2006:4).

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<sup>14</sup> This short poem is popular among first graders, usually it is being taught earlier than the school years, yet in kindergartens.



*“Our caravan would have lost his way, we would have been lost, if we did not have our language to light for us in the night roads. Thus, let us glorify and burnish as a sword, so that the Armenian language, always bright, could tinkle under the sun” (by N. Zaryan) (Gyurjinyan ... 2006:7).*

The authors of the textbooks urge students to *“love, learn well, and keep pure our sweet Armenian language,”* not only through the poems they have chosen for the textbook, but also through proverbs, wisdoms, statements for classroom discussions, short texts, and recommendations addressed to the students.

The notion of “mother tongue” is introduced in the second grade textbook *Mayreni*. First, a general definition of “mother tongue” is offered in the fourth grade textbook. Then the authors move to presenting the Armenian language. The text says, *“Every people [žolovowrd] has their own language; Russians speak Russian, the French speak French...also there are languages which are native for several people, for example English. The language of the Armenians is Armenian. It is our mother tongue, and it is called “mother” because each of us hear and learn the first Armenian word from his/her mother. Thanks to the Armenian language the Armenian people could survive”* (Gyurjinyan ... 2010a:84).

A whole chapter in the fourth grade textbook entitled *Our Sweet-worded Armenian Language* brings to the attention of the student the importance of the mother tongue in the life of any nation/people, with a particular mention about the crucial role of the Armenian language for the Armenians. Students are asked to read and think about various proverbs regarding languages and the mother tongue. For example, with the following saying by S. Zoryan the students are offered to cogitate over the significance of their own mother tongue: *“Those who know their native language poorly are half a man, and those who do not know it at all, are like a miserable leaf fallen off a tree swept by a sudden wind”*.

A section of the aforementioned chapter in the fourth grade *Mayreni* textbook is dedicated to the letters of the alphabet and to Mesrop Mashtots, the creator of the Armenian alphabet. One perception of the letters/Mesrop Mashtots is noted to be common for the textbooks by both authors, which shows the great power and significant role ascribed to the invention of the alphabet for the national identity of the Armenians. According to these perceptions, the alphabet had the same significant power as an army could have in terms of preserving the national identity. In particular, one can find the practice of imaging letters as soldiers of a “peace-loving army”, i.e. the alphabet

depicted as an army, letters as soldiers, and Mesrop Mashtots is imaged as an army chief or as a hero. (See pic. 1.9.1) This concept can be met also in ceremonial texts and in-school iconography.

Within a separate chapter “My Language, My Belief and My Church”, the authors of the textbook *Hayrenagitutyun* (fifth grade) allocate two lessons dedicated to the Armenian language. The style of narration of these lessons is rather academic. The Armenian language as a “mother tongue of the Armenians and state language of Armenia” is one of the key concepts presented here<sup>15</sup>. The historical background of the language (in general it is stated that it is one of the ancient languages of the world), geographical areas of its spreading, development phases of written Armenian (old, middle, and new), and its dialects as evidence of the Armenian language being ancient and rich, are included in the lessons mentioned above.

The following passage from textbook *Hayrenagitutyun* illustrates the perception of the Armenian language as a key factor in preserving the national identity. The passage mentions the book as a value itself (along with the language) to which the Armenians attach great importance. It says also that the language is a guarantee for the people to remain and continue to be Armenians: *“Foreign invaders tried their best to force the Armenians to get assimilated and violently forced the Armenians to forget their mother tongue. But freedom-loving Armenian people managed to defend the mother tongue, the guarantee of the permanency of the Armenian nation. During the Medz Yeghern<sup>16</sup> those Armenians saved from the massacres instead of keeping material values with them they used to take Armenian books and spiritual values. One of them was the manuscript Mšo čarəntir, the biggest Armenian manuscript (XIII century), and the door of the Snt. Araquelots church in Mush that had been carried by the people and brought to Yerevan”* (Danielyan ... 2007:34).

The illustration on the first page of the fifth grade textbook *Mayreni* can be used to describe the outlines of the discourse concerning the Armenian language within the analyzed textbook concerning the concepts of the Armenian language as a national identity component. The picture shows a boy holding a book in his hand. The monument to Mesrop Mashtots (situated in front of the Matendaran in Yerevan) and the Armenian alphabet carved on a wall are situated in the background. The following four statements are placed in the four corners of this picture, which can be regarded

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<sup>15</sup> Students in fifth grade learn about Armenian being the State language of the Republic of Armenia in the framework of the *Mayreni* subject as well.

<sup>16</sup> Within the textbooks of elementary grade textbooks in Armenian case (1-4<sup>th</sup> grade) there has not been any reference to the Armenian Genocide. This reference in the fifth grade is the first time within the textbooks that students read about it. (Details about this see on pages 70-73)

as the “building blocks” of the concept of the Armenian language as a component of the national identity:

- a) Poets have named the Armenian language a *royal* language; resilient, sun-flavored, and sweet-worded;
- b) Kids recite: “I love you, my Armenian language, you are as sweet as my mother is;
- c) Scholars say that Armenian is one of the ancient languages of the world and has a history of four-thousand years;
- d) The constitution of the Republic of Armenia declares Armenian as the state language of the country (Gyurjinyan ... 2006). (See pic. 1.9.2)

### **Mesrop Mashtots: The Great Teacher**

“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding.” [*Čanač’el zimastowt’yown ew zxrát, imanal zbans hančaroy*] (Book of Proverbs, 1:2)<sup>17</sup>

Portraits of Mesrop Mashtots made with diverse materials and various techniques, old and new, expensive and low-cost, can be seen in nearly all elementary school classrooms. Usually, they are located somewhere high and central in the classroom. (See pic.1.10.1) One can see different figures and decorations depicting the Armenian alphabet or simply separate letters from the alphabet. One group of such decorations has been designed and prepared specifically for the celebration of the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the invention of the Armenian Alphabet in 2005-2006. Many copy-books, in which students write down classroom exercises and homework, are published with images of letters or pictures of Mesrop Mashtots either on the first page or on the back side of the copy-book. For example, some of the copy-books that the students were using in the schools depicted the Park of the Letters, a monument dedicated to the Armenian alphabet, a complex of stone statues for each of the 39 letters, which was built on the occasion of 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005 in the eastern slope of Mount Aragats, 40 km northwest of Yerevan. This monument for many elementary classes has become a place where excursions or “pilgrimage” (as they commonly call it) are organized. Excursions and “pilgrimages” to Matenadaran are part of the annual plans of teachers in the elementary schools of Yerevan and nearby regions; the Matenadaran commonly have group visitors from Yerevan, nearby regions, sometimes from faraway regions of the country as well.

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<sup>17</sup> The first translated and written down sentence from the Bible by M. Mashtots is introduced to the children both in the textbooks, sometimes it is written on the walls in school corridors and inside classrooms as well.

Throughout the textbook and teachers' discourse a wide range of epithets granted to M. Mashtots were observed. Mesrop Mashtots is praised for "his great contribution in the life of our people", "keeping our nation alive", "ensuring Armenians remain Armenians forever", with epithets like "The Armenian number one", "Great scholar", "Great patriot", "First teacher", "Great teacher", "Master-teacher", and "Saint". Similarly, epithets are granted to the alphabet itself as a whole and also separately to the letters. The alphabet is called "Mesrop-lettered" [mesropatař], "golden-lettered". It is also referred as an army, "a brave army of 36 phonemes and 39 letters". The letters are called "Mesrop-spirited" [mesropařownč'], they are called to be "each like a mount Masis" or "soldiers".

Songs and poems dedicated to Mesrop Mashtots are heard in ritualized ceremony on the occasion of the completion of learning the alphabet in the first grade. The poems, words for the songs, and quatrains included in the program of the events, are taken from the literature. One can also encounter songs and quatrains composed by the teachers themselves using various kinds of paraphrases, cutting some parts out and adding additional discourse. This practice once more illustrates the process of everyday transformation, "translation," and negotiation regarding identity construction at schools. Common are visits (pilgrimages) to the tomb of Mesrop Mashtots in Oshakan, where there is also a church. These visits are organized on the occasion of finishing the alphabet learning (or sometimes when starting to learn the letter A). Here, the students usually recite an oath entitled 'Promise to Mashtots', stating that they will love and preserve the language and its purity. During the on-stage event dedicated to the completion of learning the alphabet, they promise ceremonially that they will keep the Armenian language pure, and that they will love, cherish, and preserve it. In some cases one of the students dresses up as Mesrop Mashtots admonishes the children to love and keep the Armenian language pure. A big model of a book entitled *Aybbenaran* is often a decoration on the stage. In the end retreats are usually organized in classrooms or in the school hall. Cakes and pastries for the retreat are arranged to be in the form of a book or decorated with variations of the alphabet, images of Mesrop Mashtots, or cookies in the form of the letter A. (See pic. 1.11.1) The value and importance of the Armenian language and the calls for keeping it pure are very often heard from the teachers during the classes as well. Below is an extract from a lesson (Me and the Surrounding World) in the fourth grade, in which the teacher speaks about the importance of the Armenian Language, the importance of knowing "our history" thus, fixing the role of native language, (alphabet and Mesrop Mashtots) national identity formation, and its preservation:

*“This little Armenia...There used to be a lot of enemies around and always wanted to destroy us, that is why, we are now this small. From the other side, there are many countries, which have been eliminated; they do not have a state anymore. How it came we survived though? You have read in the textbook of Mayreni that Armenians opened schools and operated them in secret when they were oppressed. We could manage to survive because Mesrop Mashtots invented the letters, so that Armenians would know their language, their history, write it in the book, so that people could open the books and get to know about it too. And this is the way people transmitted the knowledge to us and we should do the same for our grand-grandchildren”* (Field observation, Yerevan, 2011).

## **Religion**

### **Churches and Monasteries**

In the first grade textbook *Aybbenaran* among illustrations and pictures accompanying the lessons the students find images of churches or elements of church architecture and interior. For example, in the illustrations for the letter E [E] in the *Aybbenaran* by V. Sargsyan, children see a landscape and a church (“E” – the first letter of the word for church in Armenian [ekelec’i]. Another example is the letter V [V] in the *Aybbenaran*, where the students see an image of a monastery (“V” is the first letter of the word for monastery in Armenian [vank’]) (Sargsyan 2010:86,89). (See pic. 1.11.2) A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan, together with the illustrator of the textbook, have chosen the practice of inserting a small church in the pictures and images in the textbooks where a settlement (usually rural) is depicted. In some cases these churches are very small and hardly visible. This is how they explain their choice: *“Traditionally, i.e. before the Soviet power diminished religion, the church had had a key role in every Armenian settlement.”* (S. Ayvazyan, interview, May 2011) (See pic. 1.17.1; 1.7.2). Both *Aybbenarans* also contain separate elements of church interior and Christian relics (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:46). During the in-class implementation of the lessons the teachers, while describing these pictures, refer also to their meanings and ways of use. In further grades the textbooks by V. Sargsyan et al. offers a special focus on valuable architectural monuments, praising their beauty and art of construction. In different grade textbooks (mostly in the second and third grades) the authors present the Church Khor Virap and the story about Grigor the Illuminator and King Trdat. Mother Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin is presented in several textbooks as the spiritual center of the Armenians. (See pic. 1.13.1) The case of the texts about the churches and monasteries illustrates one feature of elementary grade textbooks. The textbooks *Mayreni*, for

example, are composed of many historical dates and details, which teach history besides their primary function of “teaching language.”

## Garni Temple

Images of the pre-Christian temple Garni in Armenia are present in both versions of Aybbenaran textbooks when children learn the letter “G” [G]. (Sargsyan 2010:114, Kyurkchyan...2010:81). (See pic. 1.13.2; 1.17.2) The image of the temple Garni is often situated in compositions illustrating texts and poems about Armenia on various pages of textbooks with it becoming one stable element in how textbooks represent the complexities of the Armenian identity. (See the section about the image collections of identity, page 76). Garni temple is included in the list of excursions organised in the schools (including the elementary grades).

## Khachkars (Cross-stones)

Another religion-related item that the students meet in the textbooks is the *Khachkar* (cross-stone); not only in the *Aybbenaran* textbooks in the first grade, but in further grades as well<sup>18</sup> (Sargsyan 2010:116) (See pic. 1.12.1). In the second grade textbook, *Mayreni* there is a chapter entitled *My Sweet Armenia*, in which to initiate a classroom discussion the question asks the students to think over the topic about which they think at the very moment they pronounce the word Armenia. The authors then present several things that they themselves remember when they hear the word Armenia [Hayastan]. Along with pictures of a pomegranate, apricots, and Mount Ararat, the authors present also a picture of Khachkar with a short text, which says, “*Since very ancient times these beautiful monuments have been erected by Armenians only. Khachkars in Armenia are innumerable many. Their lace-like ornamental patterns never repeat each other*” (Kyurkchyan ... 2010a:150). (See pic. 1.12.3) The third grade textbook *Painting* also familiarizes students with *Khachkar* with an illustration picture of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Khachkar from Goshavank, a monastery in Armenia. (See pic. 1.12.2)

Both in textbooks and teachers’ discourse the *Khachkars* are viewed as rather cultural artifacts representing national [Armenian] culture while connected to Christianity given that there is a cross on it. The fourth grade textbooks *Mayreni* by both authors contain texts and images of

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<sup>18</sup> Khachkar is a type of Armenian architectural monuments, which is a stone stele with a carved image of the cross. H. Petrosyan, a prominent researcher of khachkars has presented khachkhars and khachkar culture of Armenia as one of the unique to Armenians symbol of identity (Petrosyan 2001:60) (Petrosyan 2008).

Khachkar as “a unique Armenian cultural value.” They also highlight the aspect that “creating Khachkars as typical for the Armenian people.” The textbook by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan, for example, contains a poem by V. Davtyan dedicated to Khachkar, which is followed by a short informative text about their “*unique treasures of Armenian culture*”, describing the composition and traditional and contemporary ways of its use. Both texts are accompanied by illustrations. (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:53; 55) A three-passage long text in the fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World* also has an informative section about Khachkars, praising the art and ingenuity of the cross and the ornaments of the Khachkars (Hovsepyan ... 2010:102). The fourth grade textbook, co-authored by V. Sargsyan, has a short informative text with an illustration. (Torosyan ... 2009:43) The teachers’ discourse also refers to Khachkars as “cultural values” with references to Christianity (because there is a cross on it), to their being unique in the world and peculiar to the Armenian people. Below is an example from field observations in Yerevan schools:

*“Khachkars can be found only with us. How can we not speak about this? It seems to be the best topic to me. It is in Armenia that a stone can be transformed into a cross, cross-stone, one of the most important things in Armenia, in Churches. Is there any other Christian country, where people turn the stone into a cross, into a sacred thing? No there is no such country. We should tell it to our students. They get very excited hearing this” (Teacher, fifth grade, Yerevan, 2010).*

*“In this place we speak about master Momik<sup>19</sup> and Khachkars, children start to tell where in Armenia they have seen Khachkars. In general, our Armenia is a country, in which Khachkars and churches are everywhere. Children love this topic” (Teacher, first grade, Yerevan, 2011).*

*“...This is not the only lesson about Khachkar, we have spoken about it before too. We said already that this is a pure Armenian piece of art. This has relations with Christianity: this is the reason that a cross is constructed as something typical for the Christians. It is specific for Armenians only because it is made out of stone, because only they can create a Christian piece of art out of stone. Of course, I also told the students from the very beginning that they*

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<sup>19</sup> Momik (or Momik Vardapet) was an Armenian architect, sculptor and a master artist of Armenian illuminated manuscripts (14<sup>th</sup> century). He also famous for his mastery in khachkar carving, they are found predominantly at the monastery complex in Noravank, Vayots Dzor region of Armenia.

*were used to serve as gravestones in the past, and only later did they become monuments”*  
(Teacher, second grade, Yerevan, 2011).

## Christmas

The third grade textbook *Mayreni* refers to the holiday New Year. It says, “*Very long ago Armenians celebrated New Year on March 21..., now we, like other Christian nations, celebrate New Year on January 1*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:61). In the same textbook, there is a small passage entitled *The Birth of Jesus*, which says, “*A star is usually shining on a decorated fir tree. It reminds us of the Bethlehem star. For about 2000 years ago, this star-miracle appeared in the sky and pointed at the place of Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. After having celebrated New Year we celebrate Christmas on January 6*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:64).

Another explanatory text concerning the origin of Christmas is found in the fourth grade textbook entitled *Me and the Surrounding World* where again the pan-Christianity of the Christmas holiday is focused upon. The text says, “*The tree decorated with motley toys is the symbol of New Year. A star is shining on the top of the fir tree; this symbolizes the star, which showed the place where Jesus Christ was born in the city of Bethlehem. The day when Jesus Christ was born is called Christmas and is celebrated by all Christians in the world*” (Hovsepyan ... 2010:94).

Stories from the Bible, and in particular different episodes about Noah complement Christianity-related educational content within the textbooks were analyzed. For example, the biblical story about Noah and his relation to Mount Ararat. (For more details see pages 40-41).

Razmik Panossian puts conversion to Christianity among the initial building blocks of the Armenian identity: “The notion of being the first Christian people who originally received the word of God directly from the apostles has remained with the Armenians throughout the centuries; it became a core element of their national identity” (Panossian 2006:44). This sense of pride and representations of identity being “pioneers of official Christianity” is very much characteristic of the Armenian identity (Abrahamian 2006:113) seen in the school discourse as well. Elementary grade textbooks (i.e. textbooks for first to fourth grades), however, “keep silence” about this specific aspect of Christianity in Armenia<sup>20</sup>. Notwithstanding the fact that the elementary grade textbooks do not refer to the date of the adoption of Christianity as a state religion in Armenia, the teachers

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<sup>20</sup> One only indirect reference is met in the second grade textbook *Mayreni* (by V. Sargsyan et al.) within a broader topic *Our Homeland* right after the text entitled Saint Edchmiadzin as a small note. The text says, “Thousands of churches have been built in Armenia. Recently, in the centre of Yerevan a new church was built, the St. Grigor Lusavorich on the occasion of the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of adoption of Christianity as a state religion in Armenia” (Sargsyan ... 2010:128).



usually mention it to the students in this way or another. Here is one excerpt from an elementary grade teacher: *“Now my students know by heart the dates of the Creation of the Armenian alphabet, and the adoption of Christianity.”* Moreover, as a common practice, teachers point to the significance of the Armenian Apostolic Church during excursions to Matenadaran. Here is one example from a teacher’s interview:

*“The Armenian alphabet was created by the support of the Church and the manuscripts with which we can now declare that our ancient nation and culture have been also created in the Churches and not in the houses of people, for example”* (Teacher, third grade, Yerevan, 2011).

*“When we go on excursions to Khor Virap, of course I tell them the story about Grigor the Illuminator by all means and also about how he was kept in the hollow and the whole story afterward...how Christianity was adopted and our country became the first in the world to officially adopt Christianity”* (Teacher, fourth grade, Yerevan, 2011).

Thus, these cases once again illustrate that textbooks are not alone in creating a discourse and constructing identities, and that teachers are the agents who interpret, supplement, confirm, or reject the ideas and notions.

The fifth grade textbook *Hayrenagitutyun* introduces the theme of Armenia as the first to have officially adopted Christianity as a state religion. This is, in fact, the first reference to this theme within the textbook content. The full passage says, *“Denying paganism, Trdat III by a royal order declares Christianity as a state religion. Thus, Armenia becomes the first Christian state in the world”* (Danielyan ... 2007:43). Furthermore, we have also reviewed the textbook’s table of contents as an additional source in order to analyze the formulae of national identity as suggested by the authors, i.e. how they present the homeland in the textbook, the very title of which says it is about homeland (the word *hayrenagitutyun* in Armenian literary means “knowing the homeland”). We suggest viewing the structure of the textbook expressed throughout the textbook’s chapter titles as an outline of the Armenian identity or as a specific kind of national identity formulae. Thus, the chapter titles of the chapter are the following: “My Country”, “My Language, My Belief and My Church”, “Talks from the History of our Homeland,” and “Culture of our Country.” In the “identity formulae” of this textbook, we note the religion as one component. It is presented via two elements: belief and the church.

## Official Church Symbols and Holidays as Reflected in the Schools

The first symbols of religion (church) that are seen in the schools are those that are included in the composition of so-called “State Corners” which is basically a small area in every school reserved for state symbols. These corners usually are hanged either on one of the walls of the school entrance hall, or some other visible place on the second floor. These corners have the following staple parts: the national flag, coat of arms, and anthem. The photos of the President of the Republic of Armenia and the Catholicos of All Armenians (hereinafter referred as Catholicos) are also typically parts of these corners. Very often, the corners include the text of the Lord’s Prayer next to the photo of the Catholicos. (See pic. 1.6.1) The presence of the Church as a religious organisation (expressed via the picture of the Catholicos) and in some cases also of the Lord’s Prayer in the composition of the state corners in schools, points at the key role the religion (more specifically, the Armenian Apostolic Church) as ascribed in the schools, as a national religion; as one of the “building blocks” of the Armenian identity. Thus, as a discourse element, this “presence of church” is quite intensive as these corners are in all schools, always in the schools, situated somewhere visible. (A discussion of this topic can be seen on page 44).

The school iconography includes several other indirect manifestations of religion through pictures of churches, monasteries, writers, and artists from the medieval period of Armenian history, who were essentially from the Armenian Church at that time. Religion-related symbols, ideas, and notions are dispersedly present also in the ritual component of school life, which, as observed during the research element, are being manifested through several ways: a) religious, mostly Christian elements in various on-stage events not directly related to religion, b) church holidays and festivals that are celebrated within school, c) presence of clergymen during various events that are held in schools, particularly at those which could be rituals of the school “life cycle” (e.g. “Last Bell”, “ABC Fair”) Below are examples illustrating the presence of religion-related elements. One example presented below is about Christianity as observed during the on-stage events in schools with themes directly not connected to religion:

In one of the sections of a school event in Yerevan, an on-stage performance dedicated to the invention of Armenian alphabet was observed as part of the event entitled “*Sacred –Christian Values*”. In this event, Christianity for the Armenians was valued not only as their own faith but also as a “Savior” thanks to which Armenians could have had preserved the language: “*That was the*

*sword converted into a Cross could fight for preservation of the Armenian Treasure [language] and thanks to which the victory of the nation became possible”* (Field observation, Yerevan, 2011).

Another example in this direction concerns a school event dedicated to grandparents. At the very end of this event, the participants - elementary grade students - said a prayer. In the information on the school website there was also an “interpretation” of the practice, which say, “Our *little Christians whispered a prayer to the God to be sure that the God will make their wishes come true. That is to say, that God will grant their grandmothers and grandfathers a long-lasting and healthy life.*”

A third example is about a school’s on-stage celebration on the March 8 holiday (International Women’s Day) organized jointly by the elementary grade classes which had been staged as one long “confession of love to mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and teachers”. In the very beginning of this confession, students recited excerpts from the Bible related to love (Field observation, Yerevan, 2010).

Fieldwork in the schools and the school website information revealed various religious holidays and festivals on the occasion of which events and celebrations are organized within school life (not necessarily the elementary grade). The most popular holidays according to the fieldwork and schools’ websites were Christmas, Holy Easter, Presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Temple<sup>21</sup> [trndez], and the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ [hambarjowm]. For those in the younger grades though, the two main holidays celebrated were Christmas and Holy Easter. Earlier it was observed that Christmas was present also in the textbook discourse. (See above, page 59).

Below is an example of a classroom event, which has been traditionally organized by one of the teachers on the occasion of Holy Easter (2011). I bring this example to discuss elements related to religion, the church, the Armenian Church, and other aspects.

The key elements of the hall decoration were eggs, which were painted and decorated. The event started with the Lord’s Prayer recited on the stage by the students in white clothes. Two boys came forward with a children’s Bible in their hands, reciting a poem about the Saviour. Then one of the girls in white came forward and read out the following text: “*When we read this sacred book [Bible] we get to know that the Father created this wonderful world, which starts with a bright*

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<sup>21</sup> On February 14, the Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates Presentation of the 40 day-old Christ Child to the Temple in Jerusalem. The holiday is also famous for its folk names “trndez”, and a special ritual of going around a fire and jumping over the fire as a part of the holiday. This part of the holiday has been preserved popular and common practice in Armenia during the Soviet period as well.

*spring and awakening of nature*". This passage from the event shows a co-existence of two "themes", one is connected to religion (Christianity) and the other- to spring, with the renaissance of nature happening in spring. Furthermore, the whole event is a specific splice of religious meanings and content (i.e. the story of the life of Jesus Christ and the Ten Commandments) and folklore often associated with spring (i.e. "the beginning of a new life")<sup>22</sup>. Church rituals and practices connected to the holiday and traditional folk celebrations (traditional food for the day, its preparation rituals, traditional egg-games, e.g. a game-contest, in which "firmest egg" is defined, and pieces of folklore) went hand in hand throughout the whole ceremony.

Another religious holiday intermingled with folk traditions; representation of which one can meet in textbooks (e.g. *Mayreni* 3), is the Day of Transfiguration and Resurrection of Jesus or *Vardavar*, as known by its popular folk name and as presented in the third grade *Mayreni* textbook. The holiday itself consists of two layers, the Christian, and pre-Christian folk meaning (related to the ancient goddesses *Anahit* and *Astghik*). The holiday could also be related to the World (global) Flood (Mkrtchyan 2010:96-105). In the third grade textbook *Mayreni*, the authors, however, have chosen to keep the folk name (as well as the meaning attached to it) of the holiday, i.e. *Vardavar*. With the help of a short poem it speaks mostly about water and water pouring rituals common for the day. A small informative passage says, "Vardavar is coming from very ancient times and is celebrated in hot summer weather" (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:148). The lesson in the textbook also includes recommendations urging the students to pour water over others more carefully, only over those with whom they are playing, and that it is dangerous to pour over driving cars. At the end of the lesson, the authors have somehow connected the tradition of "water pouring" to ecological education saying, "Despite the fact that it is a water holiday children should save water" (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:149).

There is a presence of clergymen during various events that are held in schools in Yerevan, particularly at those events, which could be considered as ritualistic of school "life cycle" (e.g. "Last Bell", "ABC Fair") as illustrated through one such event (celebration), the *ABC Fair*. Observed were other different kinds of such events, in which it is common practice to invite a clergyman as a guest to be present at the official ceremonial part. For example, "September 1" or the "Day of Knowledge", is the official starting day of the academic year in Armenia, and is ceremonially

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<sup>22</sup> According to L. Abrahamian, "intertwining of pre-Christian and Christian remains an essential characteristic of the Armenian Christian faith, which has preserved, for example, the pagan ritual of slaughtering a sacrificial animal and at the same time many peculiarities of early Christianity, which other Christian religions have lost centuries ago" (Abrahamian 2006:121).

marked in every school each year. Another such example is “Last Bell”, which is a ceremony commemorating the graduation of the twelfth graders and the “Last Lesson” of the ninth graders (basic school).

ABC Fair, a celebration that takes place on the occasion of the completion of learning the alphabet and the ABC book (*Aybbenaran*), usually comes in the form of an on-stage performance and a small celebration. On this occasion a visit to the church in Oshakan, to the Mesrop Mashtots' tomb, is often organized. The entire visit is ritualized and is often called *pilgrimage*; there is a special ceremony where the students give an oath to Mesrop Mashtots, promising that they will preserve the Armenian language and keep it pure. The priest in some part of the event joins them with his blessing and joint prayers. Another example with the presence of a clergyman as an invited guest at school event-celebrations in Yerevan is September 1, the Day of Knowledge and the first day of academic year. School staff, the director, and one or two teachers, usually holds a congratulatory speech on the Day of Knowledge and with the beginning of another academic year they welcome first graders to school life. During these ceremonies, held most often outdoors, many songs are heard and sang, while poems and welcoming short speeches are performed, and a small performance by the school children is displayed. The local self-government representatives also give a speech or read the appeal of the city municipal head. In many schools in Yerevan at the end of the ceremony a clergyman from the Armenian Apostolic Church is invited to give their blessing with a short speech of congratulations and a word of advice addressed to the children, parents, and school staff.

## **Food and Drink**

### **Tonir and Lavash**

The textbooks of language (*Mayreni*) starting from the second grade speak about *Lavash*, a thin flatbread baked in a special cylindrical clay oven installed underneath the soil, which is called *tonir* in Armenia. It is mentioned as a specific “national” food, as “our” bread, i.e. one, which is connected to the notion of “Armeniannes” or is considered typical for Armenians. Its features are described in details and praised. The baking is connected to a typical Armenian village even up until this day.

The second grade textbook *Mayreni* by V. Sargsyan introduces a short story about lavash by H. Khachatryan, which tells students about an Indian prince who was delighted by the features of lavash (so thin and tasty that can be kept fresh for a long period of time) in the Armenian town of

Dvin (Sargsyan 2010:130-131). (See pic. 1.14.1) The third grade textbook *Mayreni* by Gyurjinyan also speaks of *tonir* and *lavash*. It shows the picture of a woman baking *lavash* in the *tonir* (pic. 1.14.1), and also describes the features of the *tonir* and the aims of its usage among Armenians, for instance, for baking *lavash*, cooking dinner, and meat. “*The tonir was located in the center of the Armenian houses in the past...and the people had a special attitude towards it*”, it says (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:6). In the next pages the textbook presents a story-legend about the *lavash* written by Hayk Khachatryan.<sup>23</sup> *Legend about Lavash* [Ask’ lavaši masin]. The story is about the *lavash* being very thin, but at the same time very nutritious and replete. Thanks to these features, the Urartian King Aram, was able to win the fight with the King of Assyria (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:120). The story is followed by a small passage about *lavash*: “*Lavash is our national bread. It is different from other forms of bread because it lacks dough filling. Thanks to this feature, it is an easily digestible product. You can also keep it unspoilt for a long time...*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2008:120-122).

The fourth grade textbook *Mayreni* includes a picture (photography) of village women baking *lavash* in the *tonir*<sup>24</sup>, which illustrates a short story by V. Petrosian about a Polish guest in an Armenian village. During their visit the author and the guest got tired and hungry and started searching for a place where they could have lunch. Not having found such a place in the tiny village, there appeared an appetizing smell of freshly baked bread. They went to the place where a group of women were baking *lavash* in *tonir*, and asked them to sell them bread and cheese, but instead they were offered a good lunch and generous treatment (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:55-59).

The fifth grade textbook *Mayreni* includes a poem “Our *Lavash-bread*” by A. Parsamian, which in a poetic way describes the way of baking *lavash* in *tonir* with a focus on the sacredness of bread. In the poem we find also lines connecting the *lavash* to the identity of “us”, attaching “*our bread lavash*” to notions of “*our sincerity, history, sadness, endurance, and prayer*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2006:148).

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<sup>23</sup> Hayk Khachatryan is a writer, who authored many books about Armenian national heritage popularizing legends and historical stories. The authors often include his works or the adapted versions of his stories in textbooks.

<sup>24</sup> This image is very popular when describing or showing ethnographically interesting tourist pictures, as well as in various media as a symbol of Armenia. This is how the Underwood and Petrosian has described the popularity of *lavash*-symbol: “Women baking *lavash* is a theme that has always inspired Armenian painters. These many renditions of happy women making *lavash* have almost become a tired cliché. A trip to an Armenian village to see *lavash* baking is almost always included in the tourist to-do list” (Underwood ... 2006:26;27).

## History and Historical Figures

### The Hero Hayk

Heroes and concepts of heroism are also included in the textbooks starting from the first grade. In both *Aybbenarans* the forefather Hayk is presented as a founder of the Armenian people/nation. He is also named a hero, who defeated Bell. Thus, the myth of origin, this critical element in the construction of national identity, is presented along with the concept of heroism. The text for the lesson on the letter ‘H,’ entitled “Hero Hayk” is accompanied by a picture of Hayk in front of Mount Ararat, with the defeated Bell in the background. (See pic. 1.1.1) In the textbook co-authored by V. Sargsyan Hayk is presented in later grades as well via several other short stories. In one of the last pages of the *Aybbenaran* by V. Sargisyan there are portraits of three historic figures – Andranik, Nzhdeh and Dro<sup>25</sup>, with a short text, which reads, “*You have just read the names of heroes. You can also become a hero. Study well, be honest, strong and courageous*”. (See pic. 1.15.4) Moreover, the message “*You also can become a hero...*” is included in latter grade textbooks as well.

### David of Sassoun

*David of Sassoun as the most beloved hero embodying the characteristics of the Armenian nation*

In one of the final pages of the first grade textbook by V. Sargsyan, David of Sassoun, one of the key personages of the Armenian national epos *Sasna Tsrer*, is also presented under the “title” hero. The lesson shows a picture depicting David of Sassoun, which is accompanied by a text saying, “*It happened a long-long time ago. The enemy wanted to conquer our country Armenia. The enemy soldiers were as many as the stars in the sky. But David stood up against the enemy, he fought and won*” (Sargsyan 2010:126). Key phrases such as “long-long times ago”, “an enemy” “fight” and “victory” appear key here. The text does not specify the word “enemy”, and does not identify who this enemy is; it presents a general idea of the existence of “an enemy” and the necessity to fight against it. Regarding this point a common approach by the teachers revealed during the interviews and class observations was the adaption of the idea of “the enemy” and enmity to the psychology and features of age-specific cognition of the students in elementary grades. There

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<sup>25</sup> Andranik Ozanyan, one of the leaders of the Armenian national liberation movement in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; Nzhdeh – Armenian military and statesman (1886-1955), Dro – a political and military figure.

were many cases and practices where teachers tried to “shun” away from further explanations or to “postpone” it to the “times of higher grades”.

The textbooks of the consecutive years also present the image of David of Sassoun. In the second grade textbook *Mayreni* the students are introduced to a short story *The Kid David* [manowk Davit'ə]. In the third grade the students encounter David of Sassoun again through a small passage from the version of the epos (adapted by H. Tumanyan). This passage is accompanied by an illustration depicting David rigorously sitting on horseback and facing soldiers armed with bows and arrows with faces full of consternation. (See pic. 1.15.1) A proverb about courage and the meaning of who can be considered brave and coward, follows in the above mentioned lesson, thus connecting the ideas of heroism (of David) and courage. The third grade textbook *Painting* also refers to David of Sassoun, and the statue dedicated to him in Yerevan (Nersisian ... 2008:20). (See pic. 1.15.1) In the fourth grade textbooks *Mayreni* students encounter David of Sassoun in two extracts from the version of the epos (adapted by M. Kheranyan). In the fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World* the representation of David of Sassoun is in the form of a popular graphic work by H. Kojoyan and the sculpture by Y. Kochar. The textbook notes, “*Kojoyan has painted our most beloved hero in a way that one can recognize the characteristics of the Armenian nation in him – patriotism, love of freedom and righteousness* (Hovsepyan ... 2010:99). The idea of presenting the image of David of Sassoun as an illustration of the collective features of the Armenian people is present also in the *Mayreni* textbook of the fourth grade. The textbook presents a piece from the epos accompanied with illustrations. The authors of the textbook mention the following features embodied in the image of David of Sassoun: humanism, uprightness, patriotism, courageous, braveness, solicitude, honesty, and frugality (asceticism) (Torosyan ... 2010:42). The fifth grade textbook *Hayrenagitutyun* also refers to several features embodied in the image of David of Sassoun that represents the collective features of the Armenian people within a broader theme concerning Epos; how it had been created by people in ancient times and disseminated by word of mouth for a long time until the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the folklorists started to collect and collate it in written form. The features that students encounter in this textbook are “heroism, devotion to the homeland and own people, kind-heartedness, single-heartedness, generosity, and gratefulness” (Hovsepyan ... 2007:93).

During in-class observations I noticed an interesting practice where the teachers were putting a special emphasis on the positive characteristics that are listed as typical for David in order to urge



the students to be like him and follow his example. The teachers' idea was that the students should try their best to be like David, thus using his character as a role model.

### **The Brave Vardan and the Battle of Avarayr**

The textbook *Mayreni* by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan also present Vardan Mamikonyan among the national heroes. The second grade textbook has a short story entitled the Brave Vardan (Kyurkchyan ... 2010a:144-146)<sup>26</sup>. (See pic. 1.15.3, 1.15.5)

The third grade textbook *Mayreni* presents a lesson about the Battle of Avarayr and Vardan Mamikonyan. The three main ideas and notions fixed in this lesson are: “Vardan Mamikonyan, is a leader of a heroic battle”; “presence of an enemy which wanted to force the Armenians to abandon own language and change the religion”; and “destructing effects of violence”. Particularly, with regard to the first grade textbook example provided (regarding David of Sassoun), the “enemy” in the text is not specified; this “enemy” was trying to force the Armenians to abandon the Armenian language and change the religion. The time of the battle is also not mentioned, with the text saying that it happened many centuries ago. An explanation was provided during the interviews with one of the authors of the textbook. According to him, the reason for that was “not to get students to concentrate on a specific nation or state who were the “enemy”, but rather to help them form a sense of importance of preserving one’s own language and religion as well as praising the devotion of the Armenian people and of Vardan Mamikonyan to the homeland (Interview, Yerevan, 2011).

The next idea communicated through the lesson is about violence. The textbook urges the students to restrain themselves from using any kind of violence. The impotence of applying violence is discussed on two levels, both interpersonal and between the peoples [žołovowrd]. The text says, *“Both individual persons and entire peoples should learn to respect each other, they should try to solve the problems they have peacefully, and as a result there will be peace in the world and people would live in happiness. You too, my little friend, remember that the right thing would be to our fists trying to speak to the person in front of you, before you resort to”* (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:129).

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<sup>26</sup> One distinction of the textbooks authored by A. Kyurkchyan L.Ter –Grigoryan or D. Gyurjinyan is the presentation of Vardan Mamikonyan within the hero-list. While the textbooks by V. Sargsyan (and those with his co-authorship) have not mentioned V. Mamikonyan in any of the textbooks.

## Heroes: the Braves and the Talanted Sons of the Nation

Looking at the chronology of the “hero” component of identity presented in the textbooks, we see that it starts at the very origin of the nation – forefather Hayk, then to the middle ages (David of Sassoun, Vardan Mamikonyan) concluding with militaries and politicians at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> (Andranik, Dro, Nzhdeh) century up until contemporary times including Monte Melkonyan as the hero of our times (early 1990s).

The fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World*, though, has another “strategy” of presenting the heroes and the notion of “heroism”. A separate chapter entitled *Famous Figures and Events* has an introductory part saying that they are going to present the “talented children of our people”, well-known people, each with successes in their field. One common feature for them is mentioned to be their “boundless love to their homeland”, which has been found in their deeds. Among the list of the famous figures mentioned by the author are Hovhannes Tumanyan (“our national great poet”), Yervand Kochar (Armenian renown sculptor), Hakob Kojoyan (Armenian renown painter), Hovhannes Baghramyan (“prominent general”), Monteh Melqonyan (“a hero of our times”), and Viktor Hambardoumyan (“great scientist”).

A general trend related to national historical figures was revealed in the textbooks. It is the usage of the term “heroism” as connected to “braveness”, “defending the homeland”, and “dedication to the hard task of creating a state”. Above we saw that the concept of heroism and the description of the heroes reflected in the texts have been predominantly related to military aspects and physical power. While under the title “Prominent figures/talented children of the nation [žolovowrd]” famous people from spheres of art, science, sport, literature and architecture are presented<sup>27</sup>. While presenting their concepts of heroism during the in-class implementation, the authors of the textbooks, however, left space in order to stimulate a discussion and reflections of “alternative” concepts relating to heroism and the heroes other than with regards to a “military concept,” usually using a provoking question to yield a classroom discussion. For example, they ask students to start a discussion about heroism and to think of the heroes of “our days” or to think over the question of whether it is possible to become a hero during peaceful times and how is it possible. Or alternatively they ask: “Do you know that heroic deeds can be conducted by other ways other than with weapons?”

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<sup>27</sup> One distinction from this practice, however, is Viktor Hambardzoumyan, who is mentioned in the same list as the “military heroes”, he is a hero, and his achievements in science – as heroic. (Sargsyan ... 2010:3)

## Memory of the Armenian Genocide

Separate elements of the collective and historical memory of any people are important parts of identity. For the Armenians the Armenian Genocide has become the most important element concerning the collective and historical memories, cultural life, and in relation to the outer world (Marutyan 2009:306). According to N. Dudwick the Genocide is a root paradigm for the Armenians (Dudwick 1989:64). R. Panossian refers to the “1915-1916 Genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as the cornerstone of modern Armenian identity, particularly in the diaspora”<sup>28</sup> and “the key to understanding Armenian identity in the twentieth century”. Representations of the theme *Armenian Genocide*, or *Medz Yeghern*, are not observed from one to fourth grade textbooks (i.e. throughout elementary levels), neither within chapter and lesson titles, nor within the themes and plots of the stories and poems. One prompt “reminder”, however, was mentioned in the fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World* within a passage talking about the Armenian writer Hovhannes Tumanyan. Having mentioned his merits as a writer, the text also says: “Tumanyan has been with his people during the hardest times. He was spending his whole time with the Armenian refugees, survivors of the 1915 Medz Yeghern” (Hovsepyan ... 2010:98). Another small “iconographic memory spot” within the textbooks are met by students in the second grade *Mayreni* textbook by V. Sargsyan et al. in the form of a picture of the monument dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide. This image is placed within a visual collection of pictures consisting of symbols of the city Yerevan which itself is illustrated by a text entitled *Yerevan*. (See pic. 1.2.1)

The textbooks start to mention the Armenian Genocide within the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* starting from the fifth grade, i.e. the first year of the basic level of general education in Armenia. Both versions of the subject refer to the theme, one using the wording *Medz Yeghern* and the other - the wording *Armenian Genocide*. The textbook by E. Danielyan et al. includes relevant information within the passage about the Armenian language and the invention of the alphabet. The passage says: “*Foreign invaders tried their best to force the Armenians to get assimilated and violently forced the Armenians to forget their mother tongue. But the freedom-loving Armenian people managed to defend their mother tongue, the guarantee of the permanency of the Armenian nation. During the Medz Yeghern those survived from the massacres, instead of keeping material values, they used to carry Armenian books and spiritual values with them. Among these values were the manuscript Mšo čarəntir and the door of the Mush Araquelots Church.*” (Danielyan ... 2007:34)

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<sup>28</sup> In his book R. Panossian also elaborates on noted differences that the Armenians in Republic of Armenia (both Soviet and Independent Republics) had in the memory of Genocide compared to the Diaspora Armenian compatriots (Panossian 2006:229).

The other version of the textbook authored by Hovsepyan et al introduces the topic of the Armenian Genocide within a wider theme of *Armenian history as an example of times in the history of the Armenian people, when the country was weak and could not able to rebut invaders*. The text says, *“When there was solidarity in the Armenian kingdom and it was powerful, the attacks were beaten back and the homeland was defended. ...But it was not always like this, in those cases when they could not rebut the invasion, the people were found themselves in hard conditions”* (Hovsepyan ... 2007:14). The authors in the next page continue, *“...The hardest strike the Armenian people received was in 1915-1916. In Western Armenia as a result of the Genocide conducted by Ottoman Turkey the Armenian people were deprived of most of their homeland”* (Hovsepyan ... 2007:15).

While not directly about the Genocide, the biographies of prominent Armenian artists and composers allude to the topic. For example, when telling the biography of Martiros Saryan, the Armenian painter, the authors speak also about the period of his life when he “being a patriot left his life in Moscow and came to Etchmiadzin to assist the refugees survived from the 1915 *Medz Yeghern*, taking care of the sick and the children in hunger” (Danielyan ... 2007:120). About Komitas, an Armenian musician, the textbook says, *“Komitas was a great patriot. ...Horrible views of the crime conducted towards the Armenian people in 1915 that Komitas witnessed, impressed him so much, that he felt into the state of mental instability”* (Danielyan ... 2007:112).

April 24 is officially recognized as Genocide Commemoration Day in Armenia and is declared as a non-working day. Since 24 April 1968<sup>29</sup> people have been going to the memorial in Tsitsernakaberd to lay flowers and circlet of flowers. Since the mid-1970s the commemoration day starts with an early morning pilgrimage of the governments (leaders of Communist Party in Armenian SSR) to pay tribute to the victims of the Genocide (Marutyan 2008:121). The complex of the monument itself is perceived as a ‘cemetery’ and there is observed many ritualistic elements typical to the practices of visiting cemeteries for remembering the dead on April 24 each year (Marutyan 2008:125). On an officially marked commemoration day, the people’s “pilgrimage” to the monument in Tsitsernakaberd in Yerevan includes different conferences and exhibitions, which are dedicated to commemoration anniversaries and books are published and presented written related to the occasion. All these make the day a “place of memory” to use the concept of P. Nora

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<sup>29</sup> For a long time in the Soviet Armenia the theme and memory of the Armenian Genocide had been a taboo and it was never mentioned in the official history. However, the family memories were being transformed within oral histories as well as in the form of literature and biographic memoirs, stories about childhood of the writers-witnesses in description of their native lands they left without putting an accent on the descriptions of the massacres. These reflections in literature furtherly have been replaced with other direct reflections about Genocide in Soviet Armenia. In 1960s the “national theme” has already blossoming in Armenia, when mass demonstrations occurred on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the streets of Yerevan in April 1965 (Marutyan 2008: 119).

(Nora ... 1999:17-50). This specific “place of memory” is a part of school education in Armenia in one way or another. It is common for children in Yerevan to join their family members on the April 24 “pilgrimage” to the monument. My field observations showed a considerable presence of groups of school children especially on the following day, on April 25, including elementary graders, on their way to the monument and on the territory of the monument (Marutyan 2008: 125). (See pic. 1.16.2)

Field observations and interviews with teachers showed also that one or two days before the official memory day, teachers reflect on the theme with a short introductory “speech” (as they named it) as a tribute to the memory of the victims and to reflect on the daily situation in the society. They do, however, try to keep the talk very short and in a mild tone, first of all taking into consideration the children’s age and psychology. Here we present a “collection” of teachers’ interpretations and perceptions that have been fixed during the fieldwork and interviews:

*“... Won’t they grow older, won’t they have history subject? Anyway, they will know about it. Why should we tell them now, when they are so young, ... also not to provoke hatred in them.... But also you cannot silence it, and ignore even if you wanted, you could not, because it is in the air during those day in Armenia...”*

As in the other cases when addressing the teachers’ discourse, I can not claim that the full range of perceptions and interpretations are presented. Neither are quantitative results available; however, provided here are some of the discourse, or those typical, often repeated versions of teachers’ practices of interpretations and their perceptions reflecting the teaching process. Sometimes presented is just a snapshot of the discourse about a given issue for a given period. Keeping this in mind, approaches of teachers to the issue are presented, for example, an approach can be formulated in this way: *“They are the future citizens of Armenia and should know everything from the beginning and as it was so; no need to hide the cruel reality from them”*. There were teachers who thought that they should also introduce to the pupils the notion that Armenians have not been all the time only victims, who have been slaughtered. According to this approach, teachers should try to change the perception, which says that Armenians had no victories during their history. The teachers should also talk about the Battle of Sardarapat in May 1918, as well as issues relating to self-defense during the years of the Genocide.

In the schools, wall posters, boards, and in some cases paintings bearing written and image-based information on the Armenian Genocide, usually with the year 1915 highlighted, are common.

They are either prepared by higher grade students during the learning process, or are posters that have been used for an on-stage event or a literary event dedicated to the memory of the Genocide. They are not in the classrooms for elementary grades, but in the school foyer or in another corridor at the sight of the students on a daily bases. (See pic. 1.16.1)

## **Formulae and Image “Collections” of the Identity**

### **Formulae, Definitions and Instructions**

Very often one will find “definitions” of “Armenianness”, “Armenian nation/people” or, “Armenian (cultural) heritage” as well as “recommendations” and “instructions” of what an Armenian should do, how s/he should behave for the sake of the nation/country. Both versions of *Aybbenarans* contain small texts about Armenia and Armenianness. They can be considered as “(Armenian) identity formulae”. Through these texts the authors provide “outlines” of Armenianness and “guidelines about being Armenians”. In one of the *Aybbenarans* one find the following:

*“I am Armenian. My father is Armenian. My grandfather is Armenian. And the grandfather of my grandfather is also Armenian. Our country is named Hayastan by the name of Hayk forefather. Armenians have been living in ancient-ancient times; they live now and will live forever. I am proud to be Armenian”*(Sargsyan 2010:102).

In this text we note the author presenting an ethnic concept of nations where “blood-ties” are at the core with Hayk as the common ancestor. The text has also a presentation of the past (“ancient-ancient times”) as well as of the future (“...will live forever”) resuming with an emotional perception of “belonging” (“feeling pride...”).

The textbook of A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan contains two such “identity formula” texts:

*“Armenia (Hayastan) is our Home*

*Hayk is Armenian. He loves Armenia, Armenian [language] and the mountain Masis.*

*Grandmother Haykuhi tells Hayk about Hayk forefather and our hero-ancestors. Armenia is our home.*

## *Armenian Names*

*My father's name is Hrayr, and my mothers's name is Arusyak. And my name is Hayk, the name of Hayk progenitor.. My grandmother Haykuhi says, "Armenian people should have Armenian names" (Kyurkchyan ... 2010:63).*

The first text too presents an ethnic concept of the nation dating back its origin to the common ancestor, Hayk. The text, though, puts emphasis on territory, the country, and the concept of *Home*. The second text elaborates on personal names as a marker of one's ethnicity, and reflects probably the "diaspora" identity feature when personal names are regarded to have a distinguishing function. These texts are accompanied with an illustration in which a range of the national identity symbols is presented. (See pic. 1.17.1) (For details see page 76)

During field observations and interviews a common practice of teaching these formulae in which the teachers were trying to find a way to neutralize the "normative", "excluding" stances was revealed, for example, by explaining that the author did not mean to say that those students who might have a non-Armenian grandfather cannot be considered Armenian. According to this logic, it does not also mean that those students are not "allowed" to consider Armenia as their homeland. In the case of the "normative" statement about Armenian names, teachers tried to make it less intense through interpreting it as "just a kind wish of the author", elaborating more on the fact that "all names are beautiful", "it is the person that is important, not the name", etc.. Below are two such cases from field observation:

*"...Here focus on the part, which says I am proud of...I explained to them, that probably they had been proud of being the children of their parents up to this moment, but now we could also think of being proud of being Armenian, and then we together list good characteristics of Hayk Forefather" (Teacher, first grade, Yerevan, 2011).*

*"...We open the name-book, then we start to explain and describe names, and as a result, the child is sure that her/his name is a beautiful name as all others are" (Teacher, elementary school, Yerevan, 2011).*

Textbooks include various "definitions", descriptions, and a formulation for the concept of homeland, which are in the form of poems, short stories, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions. Above is the discourse around the Homeland for the Armenians. In this section, though, are the

“definitions” included in the textbooks. In the third grade textbook *Mayreni* is the definition of the concept homeland. It says, “*Homeland is your mother, relatives, your home, village or city, sacred churches of your country, and all together they are called native land* (Gyurjinyan ... 2008: 119). The authors “define” homeland as the birthplace, where a person spends their whole life. It is appreciated and beloved as much as the mother is, and at the same time, it needs to be defended. In the third grade textbook *Mayreni* students read another version of the definition of the term “native country”, after which defining it as “*a common house of all of us*”, “orders” the students to love each corner of it and keep clean the surrounding: the streets, parks, fields and forests (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:16).

In the fourth grade textbook *Mayreni* students read the following dictum “*Homeland is sacred. It is our bread, mother’s embrace, our childhood, cemetery of our grandparents and a marry cradle of our children*” (Gyurjinyan 2010:39-40). With this “definition”, the authors mention the sacredness of the homeland and mention the three dimensions of time and existence (the past, the present and the future). It is said to be as essential like bread, and, again, it is compared to one’s mother. In the same textbook a text-definition about the mother tongue says, “*The language of the Armenians is Armenian. It is our mother tongue. It is called mother tongue, because, it is from mother that each of us learn the first Armenian word. Thanks to the Armenian language, the Armenian people could survive till our days*” (Gyurjinyan ... 2010:84).

In the fourth grade textbook *Me and the Surrounding World*, there are two sub-titles within a broader chapter entitled *Republic of Armenia*, that is *Home* and *Native Home*. The definition of the concept native home reads, “*It is the home, which is built on native land, in the homeland. Our homeland is very ancient. It has had good times but also lived bad days. It suffered from wars, plunders, and destruction. Notwithstanding all these, our grandfathers were so brave and hardworking that they managed to preserve and pass it to us*” (Hovsepyan ... 2010:86).

The fifth grade textbook presents another concept of homeland, which seems to be an emotional, wider, and more ambiguous (in terms of territoriality and borders) than those used in the elementary school textbooks. Here the definition of homeland includes reference to what patriotism is within the lesson entitled *My Homeland is Armenia*. “*Armenia is our homeland, which means that we were born and grew up here. Our ancestors, parents, relatives, friend and close people, very many other people were born here. Armenia is considered homeland also for those millions of Armenians living outside its borders. Representatives of other nations [azg] living here, Russians, Assyrians, Ezidies, Greeks etc. also consider Armenia as their homeland. Armenia is our country,*



*our common Home, and we love, adore and appreciate it. Our love and devotion we express not only by words but also by deeds* (Hovsepyan ... 2007:3).

This definition includes all the dimensions noted in the textbooks in the elementary grade textbooks. It also adds new dimensions, such as “civic” and the notion of “diaspora”. This textbook used in the basic level of school plays an introductory role when learning the subject’s history. Key words in this definition include again “birthplace”, and “ancestors”, with “instructions” as to how to show love and devotion to it. A new dimension referred to as “civic” says, that “those people of other nationalities living in Armenia also consider it as their homeland”. In the “definition” another new dimension concerns the diaspora (“millions of Armenians living outside”).

### **Image Collections of the Identity**

In the textbooks a practice of presenting concepts through collections of various symbols and images associated with national identity has been reviewed. Commonly, these items of book graphics “open” chapters about Armenia, homeland, mother tongue, etc. Below are introductions to them, along with their constituent elements. They present themselves as specific “collections of Armenianness, Armenian heritage”, and miniatures of Armenia.

Above the identity formula texts in the textbook by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan, *Armenia my Home*, and *Armenian Names* (See page 76) were discussed. These texts are accompanied with such collection of images. According to S. Ayvazyan, the illustrator of the textbook, this is a “collection of what can represent Armenia, the Armenians, and Armenian cultural heritage”. During the interviews, she also named each item with its meaning and the association with the Armenian identity. Thus, this image “collection of the identity” used as an illustration for the Armenian “identity formula texts” in this *Aybbenaran* has the following composition. It starts with a statute from the Artik region of Armenia (bronze age)<sup>30</sup> and goes on to image a silver coin with the image of Tigranes the Great (B.C. 74), elements (capital) from the Zvartnots temple, a Medieval Age manuscript, fish from Lake Van (*tarekh*) or Sevan (*ishkhan*), Mother Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin, vessel for chrism in the form of a dove (1797), a jug for wine, pomegranates, grapes, letters of the Armenian alphabet are imaged in the form of three bows in colors of the Armenian national flag. A big picture of the Mount Ararat is drawn in the background. (See pic. 1.17.1)

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<sup>30</sup> Statuette of a chamois, 14th-13th cc. BC, Artik, bronze, 25,8 x 12,8 x 5 cm, HMA no. 2173-55.

In the framework of the *Mayreni* second grade textbook students meet another visual collection of Armenianness, which “opens” the chapter *My Sweet Armenia [Hayastan]*. A ribbon colored in red, blue and orange, the colors of the national flag of Republic of Armenia, encircles the images of Mount Ararat with Noah’s ark on top, a settlement with a small church situated in it, a fish in water, fields of wheat, grapes, a big clay jug, and an angel. A big bell with the first ever translated Armenian sentence from the Bible carved on it is shown: “To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding” (*Čanač’el zimastowt’yown ew zxrát, imanal zbars hančaroy*). (See pic. 1.117.1) Textbooks *Mayreni* contains many other examples of such visual collections of diverse size and scope. (See pic. 1.17.1; 1.7.2)

The fourth grade textbook of the subject *Me and the Surrounding World* has a chapter entitled *Armenia is My Homeland. Republic of Armenia*, which opens with “a visual identity collection” as well. In this image we see Ararat as a background for the other symbols: the Matenadaran with the monument to M. Mashtots in front, the temple Garni, churches, and a *Khachkar*, buildings of the Northern Avenue, a recently built street in the center of Yerevan, the observatory in Byuarakan, and the statute called “We Are Our Mountains” (also known with the name *Monument of Grandma and Grandpa*). (See pic. 1.7.2) These visual collections, outlines and formulae of national identity, serve as a kind of permanent “reminder” highlighting the Armenian identity from the many pages on different subjects and grades in the schools.

Through field-work observations and interviews with teachers I tried to follow the process of transmitting these visual collections, and how they are transformed and interpreted by teachers. However, I do not argue that the interpretations collected during the field work are representative for Armenia, neither do I claim that I had the whole range of possible variations of interpretation. Below is an exempt from one of the interviews with elementary grade teachers in Yerevan:

*“I start with Tigran the Great, explain to them that he was a king in ancient times. Now this next one, it is a chamois, related to this I explained to them that this animal has been only in Armenia, and now it is in Red book. Next to Mount Ararat are pomegranates, and the fish Ishkhan. We should by all means tell them [students] that the fish Ishkhan exists only in Armenia (in other places they grow only in artificial lakes), but we had it first. Then here you see the dove, which is the symbol of peace, in this place, though, it is the Church dove-pot, from which oil is poured into chrism and children are baptized. In this part you see fruits*

*and grapes, out of which we have prepared wine aforetime*” (Teacher, first grade, Yerevan, 2011).

In this example the Bronze Age statute of chamois excavated in Artik (a region of Republic of Armenia) has got another name and meaning. Here it is the endangered species of Mouflon known as *(Iranian) Red sheep or Armenian Mouflon*. Another such “interpretation” is related to the vessel for chrism in the form of a dove, one of the relics of the Armenian Apostolic Church. In this particular interpretation it was a dove. The first thing related to the image that the teacher considered important to mention was that the dove is a symbol of peace (in another example, this vessel was an eagle).

At this point one more observation that I would like to mention is the chain of identity constructed through symbols and concepts in the textbook. As we saw above, the National Standard document, which in turn has been developed by a group of experts based on the legislation (Law on Education<sup>31</sup>) said, “the students should recognize (appreciate) national culture”. The document does not provide clarifications or examples of the content of the concept “national culture”. The authors of the textbooks create the content of the textbook filling this concept of “national culture”, outlining the structure, categorizing, naming and labeling the culture and its constituent elements. Then the painters create illustrations transforming these concepts into pictures, images, and other forms of visual art. In each stage of this process actors add their own interpretations and perceptions of concepts and notions. The next actor in the circle is the teacher who transforms all these “definitions”, concepts and “illustrations” to the students in the classroom, adding their own meanings and interpretations to them. The National Standard document is developed by a group of experts, then the author (group of authors) of the textbook and the illustrator(s) create the textbook (together with other staff of the publishing houses). The package of the textbook produced includes also corresponding guidelines for teachers and copy-books for each textbook. Furthermore, thousands of teachers interpret and transmit the content to the students in the classrooms. This process together with the existence of several actors in the chain shows that the concepts and notions (including those discussed in the dissertation) are a conglomeration of multiple views and perceptions. Even in those cases when textbook publication seems to be standardized and state

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<sup>31</sup> The Law on General Education (2009) of Republic of Armenia envisages guaranteeing provision of the following principles: humanistic feature of general education, priority of national and World values, life and health of a person, free and comprehensive personal development, attaching importance to civic consciousness, respect to the people and their personal rights and freedoms, dignity, patriotism, feature of hard-working, responsibility, tolerance, formation of environmental world view.

controlled as the state funds the textbooks publications, which have been authorized by the Contest Committee, the meanings and facts are constantly being updated by a small group of people (authors, publishers, and the National Standards writing team). The textbook is published as a result of these “negotiations”, which later again undergoes new interpretations, negotiations, “editing” and repeating, naming and renaming processes. Thus, intensity and diversity of these “meaning negotiations” depend on the number of people who participate in the textbook creation process. Particularly, for the academic years 2010/2011, 2011/2012 two sets of textbooks *Mayreni* and *Aybbenaran* have been published and are in use.<sup>32</sup> The group of authors for *Aybbenaran* (and *Mayreni*) in Armenia is relatively small. One author and one illustrator have been working for 10-15 years in the case of the textbook *Aybbenaran* (by V. Sargsyan), and two authors and an illustrator for the other textbook by A. Kyurkchyan and L. Ter-Grigoryan<sup>33</sup>.

## GEORGIA

### General Education: Statistics, National Curriculum, and Textbooks

The state provides twelve years of free general education for all its citizens. General education in Georgia consists of primary (grades 1 to 6), lower secondary (7 to 9) and upper secondary stages (10 to 12), and is regulated by the State Law on General Education (8 April 2005). The first nine years of education are compulsory. The three stages are regarded as one general level in the system of education in Georgia, i.e. primary and secondary are contained within the same system. Management and funding (per capita) are common for a general school comprising of the three stages. Therefore, funding allocated for general education is divided between primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education proportionally according to the number of students enrolled in each of these stages.

This section of the dissertation provides some key statistics relevant to the scope of the research, which pertain the elementary level (1-6 grades) of the Tbilisi schools with Georgian as the language of instruction. The Law on General Education of the Republic of Georgia says the language of instruction in general education institutions is Georgian, apart from in the Autonomous

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<sup>32</sup> In Georgia two sets of textbooks for each subject have been published, for some of the subjects officially authorized textbooks are more than more two sets of textbooks, for example, for the first grade ABC book, *Dedaena*, there has been authorized three textbooks.

<sup>33</sup> The author groups for the Georgian *Dedaena* textbook’s creation group consist of three authors, two illustrators and the publishing house staff.

Republic of Abkhazia where it is Georgian or Abkhazian. For those citizens of Georgia for whom Georgian language is not their mother tongue, the law considers the right to receive general education in their mother tongue according to the national curriculum. In these schools, teaching the state language is mandatory (in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia – two state languages).

In the academic year of 2010-2011 in schools there were a total of 289, 137 students and 52, 010 teachers in Georgia (UNESCO Report, Georgia 2011). Teacher-related statistics are of certain interest within the scope of this research, taking into account the focus of the research. Teachers are regarded as one of the actors who “create” discourse through the implementation of the general education programme; they not only mechanically transfer the content of education materials and textbooks, but also take active role in transforming the knowledge in textbooks to the students. It is worth noting that during the academic year 2010-2011, out of the 52, 010 teachers teaching in 1-6 grades, 46, 405 (89 percent) were female (UNESCO Report, Georgia 2011). According to the database of the Ministry of Education and Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi school teachers over the age of 40 outnumbered those below the age of 40 by four times, and the retirement age of teachers was slightly higher than the number of teachers under 30<sup>34</sup>. This means that the vast majority of teachers in schools most probably received pedagogical education in Soviet institutes and colleges.

Since 2004, considerable education reforms have taken place in Georgia. According to the assessment of several international organizations and experts they have been extensive and wide-ranging (CPIDD Policy Paper 2009:6). The National Curriculum and Assessment Center, established in April 2006, introduced new curricula, designed to encourage active learning rather than using a mechanical transfer of knowledge, at first in grades 1, 7 and 10, and on a pilot basis in grades 2, 8 and 11. For the academic year 2006-2007, a new National Curriculum was introduced for all schools with Georgian as the language of instruction (and in 2007-2008 it was introduced for schools with other languages of instruction) (CPIDD Policy Paper 2009:8). Authors have developed new textbooks to accommodate the new curricula (Consolidated Education Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2011) 2007). The National Curriculum and Assessment Center having evaluated each textbook offer, decided on the books to be authorized after which schools were given a list of textbooks to choose from.

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<sup>34</sup> The statistics is taken from the catalogue of the Ministry of Education and Sciences for the date of December 2012: unfortunately the catalogue is not available any more. The numbers for Tbilisi school based on the given age groups are the following: less than 30 – 1307 teachers, 30-40 – 3531. 40-50 – 3877, 50 up to the retirement age – 3659, retirement age teachers.

In accordance with the National Goals of General Education, adopted by the Government of Georgia in October 2004, as well as international obligations and commitments assumed by the country, the general education system aims to develop all its citizens as free individuals equipped with essential mental and physical skills and capacities, and to nurture a civil consciousness based on democratic and liberal values. One of the goals included in general education is “to promote national interests and traditions (UNESCO Report 2010-2011).

The Law on Education (2005) reflects a range of basic principles of the state education policy of the Republic of Georgia, of which the following are relevant to the research scope: *“humanistic, scientific, and democratic character of education and upbringing”, “recognition and appreciation of human and national cultural values” or “independence of educational institutions from political and religious organizations”* (UNESCO Report 2011).

This research covers the National Curriculum of the academic year 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. These included the following eight educational spheres: *state language, mathematics, foreign languages, social sciences, natural sciences, technologies, art education and sport*. Each sphere is introduced with three components: special competences, general competences, and values. The list of the values is quite long, but most concern “liberal-democratic” values (such as human rights, tolerance, civil courage, and respect for law) with the key word “civic” (not “national” [with the meaning showing Georgianness as ethnicity, i.e. “ქართველი”, “ქართული”). Patriotism (love towards the homeland) is also included in the list. National Curriculum 2009-2010 in its turn among the aims for the subjects of social sciences in elementary level mentions the following: “to support to the development of the student as a patriotic and responsible citizen”. Values reflecting the Republic of Georgia as a country with an ethnically and religiously diverse population form a separate cohort in the document such as “tolerance” towards people with different opinion, nationality, religious and culture.

Below is a brief discussion of educational aims of each subject group and the “instructions” the official documents envisaged for textbook elaboration and teaching. Two methodological notes should be mentioned. First, we will discuss those aims of the subjects, which have “value” content or principles meant for upbringing rather than providing knowledge or competence/skill. Second, starting with the first subject group, i.e. the state language, we take the part relevant for our research scope; namely, teaching Georgian language and literature for schools with Georgian as the language of instruction. Meanwhile, the Abkhazian language in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and

Georgian as a second language for non-Georgian speaking students are considered as being out of the research scope.

The subject Georgian Language and Literature is taught in each grade with the following distribution: seven academic hours a week in the first two grades, six hours a week in the third and fourth grades, and five hours a week in the fifth and sixth grades. The first grade textbook is entitled *Dedaena*, the textbooks for second and up to the fourth grade are entitled *Georgian Language*, while the fifth and sixth grade textbooks are called *Georgian Language and Literature*. Among the aims, “value-component” is mentioned as “to instill feeling of respect towards literary heritage”.

The elementary grade programmes did not contain “mandatory content” in which the literary works and authors, literary genres, and themes are listed. Thus, the first grade program states, that the programme should contain short poems, stories and fairy tales about peers, homeland [სამშობლო], friendship, justice, human relationships, animals, kindness and evil-heartedness, relations of the humans and nature.

The second grade textbook contains similar themes and genres including “homeland”. The third grade program among other themes adds Georgian folk and fairy tales of other people in the world, legends, and myths. In the fourth grade, mandatory themes list “patriotic and heroic” themes. The program says that the thematic range of the fifth and sixth grades is widened to include works created on the bases of patriotic, civilly-sounded (სამოქალაქო ჟღერადობის) and historic themes.

The textbook structure for one to fourth grades contained literary works and pieces as separate lessons. However, they are not grouped in a chapter with a common theme under a unifying title. The fifth and sixth grade textbooks differ in this sense, they have one key literary work highlighted as a “title” for the chapter. Here is an example of the language textbook (Maghlakelidze ... 2010) with corresponding chapter “titles”: ”საქართველოს მთებში გაგაჩინა ზენამ”, “ჩემო კარგო ქვეყანავ”, “დამაკვირდი”, “სიბრძნე სიცრუისა”, “ადამიანი და ბუნება”, and “გაიცანით თქვენი თანატოლია”. Both painted and photo pictures are typically used as illustrations for the textbooks, with photo illustrations including material culture monuments (i.e. churches) and landscape views.

The social science group includes subjects Our Georgia [*Chveni Sakartvelo*] (5-6 grades) and Civic Defense and Safety (fourth grade). The subject Our Georgia (hereinafter the Georgian name of the subject, *Chveni Sakartvelo* will be used) is taught three academic hours a week in each grade (fifth and sixth). The subject is an example of an integrated approach (history, geography, civics,

ethnography, etc.). The textbook, especially the one for the sixth grade, presents an “outline of Georgian History” and encourages the students to continue learning in subsequent grades. In many schools, teachers and students perceive it to be the subject “history”. Aims for the social science group are “to support the education of informed, active, and responsible citizens, to inform the students about the surrounding nature, to help them define the place of their native country in the world’s historical and geographical contexts, to form a patriot and humanist person”. The subjects of this group are seen as crucial in forming civic values among the students.

The subject Chveni Sakartvelo (5-6 grades) should familiarize the pupils with key events in the history of Georgia viewed from multiple perspectives and based on various sources. When the subject is concluded, which is also the end of the elementary grade in Georgia, students will have learned their own place of living, historical sites of Georgia, and its diverse culture, nature, natural resources, and main economic characteristics. The subject textbooks include chapters dedicated to different regions separately and to ethnographic descriptions of everyday life, traditions, and the economic and spiritual lives of people living in Georgia in earlier times, while forming the image of diversity. These textbooks have a rich collection of illustrations, most of them being photo materials showing the students views of the country, landscapes and churches, and other places of interest. The textbooks contain diverse sources, on which the lessons are based.

Subjects falling under the art education category for elementary grades are the following: Arts and Crafts (two academic hours a week for each grade) and Music (two academic hours a week for each grade). In the fourth grade, one hour out of the two is allocated to the subject Georgian Dance. Music is seen as the best method of teaching aesthetic and artistic education to children. Music lessons are seen as a way through which the students grasp universal values, and simultaneously through music they form national consciousness. While, among the artistic and aesthetic educational aims for the subject Georgian Dance, it is deemed a tool for the development of national consciousness and respect for traditions, and is considered as a means of artistic and aesthetic development for the children. The National Curriculum 2010-2011 specifies that the core of the subject is folk dance, which is an indivisible part of Georgian culture. The curriculum envisages that among other artistic and aesthetic educational outcomes, the students should learn elements and whole complexes of Georgian folk dance and should have knowledge about the culture of Georgian dance.



This focus on art and aesthetic education throughout the “task” of developing national consciousness becomes obvious from the music and art textbooks too, in which the elements and symbols of national identity are widespread and intensive. These symbols and narratives around them can be found in each grade textbook for these subjects as if gradually accumulating them by the end of the elementary level of education collecting the whole “package” of national identity. The textbooks of this subject also have rich illustrated materials in which presentations of works of art are combined with photography. The review of the textbooks also showed that many of the tasks anticipated practical activities and creativity to make and/or process things that the students learn within the textbooks. While doing it, they as if “perform” the national identity (see details in further chapters). One brief illustrative example (common for other similar cases) is the comparison between the first grade ABC books (hereinafter referred to as *Dedaena*, the Georgian name of the first grade language textbook) and the music textbooks. This comparison reveals a greater number and frequency of national identity constituent elements in music textbooks rather than in *Dedaena*. This is the list of the symbols revealed in the Music textbook: landscapes and separate units of Geography, churches and monasteries, the Legend about Tbilisi (Vakhtang Gorgasali), Georgian Kings (Parnavaz, David the Builder, Queen Tamar), a map of Georgia “Here is my Georgia”, State Symbols, book personages wearing traditional folk costume along with the others in ordinary clothing (Otiashvili 2011). This is the list of the symbols revealed in the *Dedaena* textbooks: state symbols (anthem, coat of arms, and flag), cities and regions of Georgia, monument-symbols and landscape views, national food, Iakob Gogebashvili (and the first-ever Georgian *Dedaena* textbook created by him) (Rodonaia ... 2008), (Maghlakelidze ... 2008). In this aspect the Georgian textbooks are in contrast with the Armenian ones, in which a greater number and frequency of national identity constituent elements are found in ABC Books, i.e. *Aybberans*.

## **Space and Territory**

### **Tbilisi, the Legend about Tbilisi, and the King Vakhtang Gorgasali**

Tbilisi, as the capital city of Georgia and King Vakhtang Gorgasali as the founder of the city are introduced through the lesson *Legend about Tbilisi* starting from the first grade.

In the textbook *Dedaena* views of Tbilisi (various monuments and landscapes representing Tbilisi) are presented along with other landscapes - views representing different regions (cities) of Georgia. For example, students are shown views and asked questions: panorama of the city and the

monument to Rustaveli (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:18). (See pic. 2.1.1) The music classes also include Tbilisi as a theme. Both versions of the textbooks we analyzed include the theme *Legend about Tbilisi* in the first grade. The first grade textbook authored by M. Otiashvili introduces students to the *Legend about Tbilisi* and King Vakhtang Gorgasali as its founder 15 centuries ago. (See pic. 2.1.2) The textbook by M. Chikvaize et al. (second grade), for example, presents a song dedicated to Tbilisi, views (panorama) of the city, the monument dedicated to Vakhtang Gorgasali, and the Metekhi Church in Tbilisi.

The *Legend about Tbilisi* is introduced in the fourth grade within the textbooks on the subject of *Georgian Language* (by N. Maghlakelidze et al) and *Nature* (by G. Kvantaliani). The fourth grade textbook *Nature* opens with the theme on Tbilisi reminding students about the *Legend about Tbilisi*, where the authors state: “*Tbilisi is Georgia’s capital city situated along two sides of the river Mtkvari and in between mountains*”. The textbook also contains pictures and descriptions about the pantheon of writers and public figures on *Mtatsminda*, at *Mamadaviti* Church. This textbook also refers to the modern characterization of Tbilisi for example, through expressions like “It has many cultural monuments”, “our city is getting more beautiful and is constructed daily, many new buildings are being constructed, and simultaneously old buildings are renovated” (Bliadze ... 2009:149). It focuses on the high level of diversity in the city, “...*More than one million people live in Tbilisi. Tbilisi is a diverse [ძრავადღებურობა] and multinational city*” (Bliadze ... 2009:148). In the pictures illustrating the lesson, the students see images of old Tbilisi yards, and Tbilisi baths.

Below are several extracts from the fourth grade student project and a third grade integrated lesson. These illustrate how the static information in the textbooks is put into action adding nuances, legends (in this case we observed a certain level of mythologisation happening), the evaluation of Tbilisi’s foundation, and the biography of King Vakhtang Gorgasali with ascription of epithets to him.

During the practical transmission of the textbook information, the scope has become broader; several other themes are added to the *Legend about Tbilisi*. While covering the details about King Gorgasali and the foundation of Tbilisi in earlier grades students also refer to history, dates, facts, and figures, thus are providing a picture of the main outline of the historical period for the elementary grade students. At this point, it is important to remember the fact that teaching about the concept of chronology and calculation of the time by centuries are included only in the program of the sixth grade subject *Chveni Sakartvelo*, which is to come yet (National Curriculum, 2010).

A student project (fourth grade) Tbilisi-Capital City of Georgia includes a Power point slide-show presentation about Tbilisi, the story of its foundation, and its history with a city excursion part of the project. One of its aims is mentioned to be “*to increase the knowledge about the capital city, desire to learn about its past and the feeling of patriotism*” (Project Plan 2011).

In one integrated lesson of the subjects *Nature and Language* in the third grade, one of the topics for group work was “Tbilisi”. The following issues and facts covered in the lesson represent quite a wide range of aspects describing the city, its history and churches in it:

- The geographic location of Tbilisi through student’s work on the map;
- *Mtatsminda* connected to the name of David *Garejeli*, who, according to the legend lived in a cave in one of the mountains;
- Metekhi Church and how it was built by Vakhtang Gorgasali;
- The three parts of the city in early times (Tpilis, Kala, and Isani);
- The period of the city’s foundation and a brief reference to the present day characteristics of Tbilisi (“founded by Vakhtang Gorgasali 1500 years ago and with a population today of more than a million”);
- The climate and lakes of Tbilisi;
- Churches [კლდეო] of Tbilisi (Sioni, Anchiskhati, Mamadaviti, Kashveti, Virgin Mary Church in Didube, and many others) (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011).

Below is presented several relevant excerpts from this integrated lesson in which a wide range of references to history, legends, and biography of Vakhtang Gorgasali is included:

- Biographic notes about Vakhtang Gorgasali: The lesson transformed the following ideas. “Vakhtang has been learning Christ’s laws. He was clever and wise, handsome; he was of 2 meters and 40 centimeters tall.... The additional name of the king is Gorgasali, which stems from an Iranian word meaning “wolf’s head”. Vakhtang reigned for 45 years and was such a powerful king that people created legends about him. One such example is about telling the story about him once going uphill from Mtskheta to Armazi with the horse on his shoulders without taking a break. When war-weary he desired some wine, the god would hand him a drinking horn. Depicted on the front of his helmet was a wolf’s head, and on the back a lion’s”.
- The role of Vakhtang Gorgasali in the battle for the freedom of Georgia. The lesson goes on with the teacher telling the students, “...*From very early childhood, Vakhtang Gorgasali was known for his braveness and talent. He increased the size of the Georgian army and made it*

*more powerful. From the early times of his reign, he started a triumphant campaign in the North Caucasus against Ossetians and Turkish Huns (თურქი ჰუნების) and united Western Georgia. He was an outstanding fighter, a commander who was a dangerous power for Persia; he was a winner in all of the battles he fought”.*

The content of the lesson continued to mention Gorgasali's role in saving Georgia from Persia's invasion for a long time as well as stating there were other battles in which the king was not victorious, allegedly because of traitors such as the battle against the Iranians in 482.

- The services of Vakhtang Gorgasali to the Georgian nation [ქართველი ერი]. In particular, it says, Vakhtang Gorgasali was distinguished for his cultural and constructing activities; he built the new building of the Mtskheta Svetitskhoveli, the city castle Ujarma, Cheremi [ქერემი] and Khornabuji. He founded and constructed the city of Tbilisi and many other churches. In Tbilisi there are churches built by Gorgasali - Metekhi, Sioni and Anchiskhati. In the Anchiskhati Church there remains an Icon, which was brought from *Anchi* Monastery in Meskheti. The Icon, they said, is called “ზელოუქმნელი” because it is not made by human hands, it is self- painted. The St Nino Cross is kept in the Sioni church.

- The legend about the foundation of Tbilisi—“...with the foundation of Tbilisi the king Vakhtang gifted us with an unforgettable present...”<sup>35</sup>;

- The death of Vakhtang Gorgasali and the stories of betrayals from which he suffered (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011).

The fifth grade textbook includes a poem by A. Kalandadze about Tbilisi "Was it the Same Kind of [good] Weather then" [ასეთი დარი თუ იყო მაშინ] and a painting with a view of Tbilisi, as well as the poem *Tbilisi* (by O. Chiladze). (See pic. 2.1.5) A small text adds, “*Our capital city has sensed many dangers. One of them is reflected in the poem of Kalandadze. What do you think, is it only the people of Tbilisi [თბილისელი] that should take care of Tbilisi? Georgians [ქართველი] from all over Georgia should care for it*” (Rodonaia ... 2010:137). The fifth grade textbook of the subject music presented to the attention of students a song *The Second Legend* by N. Gabunia and

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<sup>35</sup> Within this part of the lesson they also watch a piece from the film Vakhtang Gorgasali.

A. Gelovani (“...and the people are warm [თბილი], and the sun is warm...that is why it is named Tbilisi...”) (Otiashvili 2010:7)<sup>36</sup>.

The fifth grade students read about Tbilisi also within the subject *Chveni Sakartvelo*, namely about its location, population, and valuable sights focusing on ethnic and religious diversity, “*The Population of Tbilisi is more than a million. The majority of the population is Georgians. Azerbaijanis, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Russians and representatives of other ethnicities all live together with Georgians.... Besides the Orthodox churches there are places of prayer for other religions...in the center of Tbilisi old districts are situated...upon the increase of the population of Tbilisi new districts have been built. In Tbilisi, living conditions and standards of people have been improved*”(Surguladze ... 2010:57). The textbook includes views of Tbilisi (panoramas, pictures of buildings, and different sights) including two churches - *Anchisxati Church* and *St. Trinity*. The textbook also introduces the legend about Tbilisi reminding the students that the Coat of Arms of Tbilisi (by E. Burjanadze) is based on this legend (Surguladze ... 2010:60).

Thus, starting from the first grade and throughout elementary school, presence of Tbilisi and its founder King Vakhtang Gorgasali is prominent. It is present in the reviewed textbooks of all subjects - Language, Music, Nature, and Art. A common visual form of representation of the city Tbilisi includes panoramic views and churches. In the fifth grade the idea of Tbilisi being the capital city of Georgia is further emphasized, and the idea of the ethnic diversity of Tbilisi is introduced for example through the text in the fifth grade textbooks *Chveni Sakartvelo* and *Georgian Language and Literature*.

## **Symbols of the State, “Our Homeland [სამშობლო]”, and Areas of Georgia**

*Kartli-Kakheti, Imereti, Guria and  
Samegrelo-all of them are my  
homeland-my beloved Georgia.*

### ***State Symbols***

A piece from the poem “We Should Love Georgia” [საქართველო გვიყვარდეს] by G. Kachakhidze in the first grade invites students to listen to the national anthem, and to show the national flag and the coat of arms during class. In other sections, the performance of the national

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<sup>36</sup>The music textbook by M. Otiashvili includes another Tbilisi related song entitled *The Morning of Tbilisi* (by M. Davidashvili, Sh. Porchkhidze) accompanied with an illustration showing the monument to Vakhtang Gorgasali (Otiashvili 2011d:21).

anthem was also seen during integrated lessons. All the textbooks published in Georgia since 2004 adorn state symbols, such as the flag, coat of arms, and the text of the anthem on the other side of the textbook cover (See pic. 2.2.5). The textbooks contain images of the national flag and the coat of arms as an illustration for topics referring to the flag (see pic. 2.2.2-2.2.3) and there are tasks asking students to color and/or draw the national flag and the coat of arms (see pic. 2.2.1; 2.2.4; 2.2.6). One can see the national flag in the entrance hall or in the corridors of school buildings; sometimes the flags are hung together with the EU flag. The state symbols, all three or with either combination, of different sizes, material, and artistic forms, can be observed also in the classrooms on the walls. The flag is present in celebrations, on-stage events, and various ceremonies held in schools, either in the form of decorations, or as an actual flag held by the students, or as part of the pattern of clothing. (See pic. 2.3.1; 2.4.1)

### ***(Our) Homeland [სამშობლო]***

A piece from the poem *We should love Georgia* [საქართველო გვიყვარდეს] by G. Kachakhidze, that students learn in the first grade, is about Georgia “consisting” of alphabet, books, scripts, Vardzia, Uplistsikhe, Ikalto, Gelati, legends, etc. The poem resumes that “everything tells us we should love Georgia” [ყველაფერი გვეუბნება: - საქართველო გვიყვარდეს!] (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:31). This poem continues by depicting the monuments that children have seen in their village or region. Thus, as above there were noted several key themes: “(unbelievably great and endless) love towards the homeland”, “parallels between the love felt towards the homeland and mother” (See page 88). For this lesson, the teachers’ guidebook suggests reading a piece from N. Dumbadze’s poem *Your Name is Georgia* [საქართველო გქვია სახელად] is about the author’s love towards Georgia, which is “unbelievably great and endless”. The theme of comparing love towards the country with love towards one’s mother is presented here. A discussion about the strength of the author’s love towards Georgia is initiated after the poem is read/recited (Maghlakelidze ... 2008a:25). Among the aims of this lesson, the teachers also cite “deepening of the love of students towards the homeland”. Here is one example of a common interpretation of the idea of “loving the homeland as much as one’s mother” from an interview with an elementary teacher in a Tbilisi school:

*“You should love your country as you love your mother. You may live a happy life elsewhere outside your country but you will not be equally happy as in your homeland. You should not*

*cut yourself off your roots, better eat black bread (only bread), but it will taste better than anything else elsewhere, for example, a French loaf”* (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

Below is a passage from an integrated lesson (Georgian Language, Music and Nature) dedicated to the poem by N. Dumbadze, which is entitled *Your Name is Georgia* in the first grade (2011). The lesson is revealed to be an artistic presentation of the country, expression of love to the beloved country and pride for its beauty accompanied with music, dances, and recitation.

During the lesson teachers showed pictures and views of Tbilisi and Georgia, the pantheon of the writers and public figures (Mtatsminda) in Tbilisi on a Power Point presentation. During the lesson, the national anthem of the Republic of Georgia was sung. At the end of the lesson the children sang folk music dedicated to the homeland [ლალე ლალე, დივლი დაღალე, ჩემო ღამაზო სამშობლო, შენ კი გენაცვალე]. They also concluded,

*“Georgia cannot be imagined without Tbilisi, because it is its capital city, while Georgia is a part of the mother Earth, it is beautiful in every season. How can one not love this wonderful country and not sing about it”.*

The meanings of the notions “homeland, patriotism, and care for the homeland” were said to be too abstract for the first graders (but also for the next several grades in the elementary level) to grasp and learn. We observed teachers were searching for a formulae and ways of transmitting the ideas to the children thus performing a specific act of “translating into the children’s language” by simplifying and editing the language so that it becomes more understandable for the children.<sup>37</sup>

Below are two episodes of such “translation” in elementary classes in Tbilisi schools. In the first episode the teacher “urges” the children to love own country; to prioritise it among the other countries, to do as they would do in case of own family. The second episode shows one example of the practices when the concept of homeland is explained via other things that are familiar and usual for the students and constitutes the everyday space.

*“...[You love Georgia] Because you are born there. Imagine, can you not love your family and love another’s? No. You should love other people’s family but first of all you should love your own family. If you know other countries you should love them, but primarily you should*

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<sup>37</sup> We have made similar observations during the field work in Yerevan too.

*love your homeland first. If you ask your grandmother if she loves America more than Georgia, I am sure, she would tell you – Georgia. Your grandma is Georgian, isn't she? She will say - Georgia. It may happen that you have a job somewhere and move to some other country, but we should by all means love our own homeland*" (Field observation, first grade, Tbilisi, 2012).

*"Homeland basically starts with the school, classmates, friendship, with the love towards their own neighbourhood and district. This is where homeland starts. This is envisaged for juniors and then the scope of coverage gradually is expanded"* (Teacher, second grade, Tbilisi, 2011).

In the second grade textbook of Georgian by N. Maghlakelidze et al., on the page where the poem by L. Japarashvili *We Should Take Care of Georgia* [მოვუაროთ საქართველოს] is presented, a grand message reads *"...before travelling around a foreign country, you should first acknowledge your own homeland [ძამუღო]"*. The poem praises the values of Georgia, "the country of Saint Mary", its landscape-views (woods, plains, mountains, and snow), language and fairy tales, temples and manuscripts. The text of the poem is accompanied by an illustration of a landscape-view picture with Svanetian towers, pictures of Jvari Monastery (Maghlakelidze ... 2011: 84).

The students who have the textbooks by V. Rodonaia et al in the second grade of the Georgian language textbook find a text entitled *Georgia is My Homeland*, which places Georgia, the homeland of the Georgians, in one planet with others. The full text says, *"The world is big. Our Earth is one small planet. When the first human being flired to Space, he saw the blue-clothed Earth from a distance and cried: 'What a beauty!' On this Planet we, the Georgians live together with others. Our homeland is called Georgia"* (Rodonaia... 2011:173). Another piece in the second grade textbook, a poem entitled "Song" [სიმღერა] by Gr. Abashidze is dedicated to Georgia, and notes, *"...We love Georgia's sky and land, monuments and fields as lullaby, as a sweet fairy tale"*(Rodonaia ... 2011:116).

Thus, above in the second grade textbooks a few more themes related to homeland were observed, which seem to be "instructions" for the students to take care of the country, Georgia and a call to "get familiar with one's own country first, to know it", placing "Georgia, the homeland of the



Georgians<sup>38</sup>, in one Planet with others”. The “instructions” are given in the form of/through poems and literary works.

The lesson Symphony of the Vase (third grade) has one significant component regarding areas of Georgia, including work on the regional map of Georgia with an introductory part on the national anthem and the coat of arms of the Republic of Georgia.

The third grade textbook of Georgian language by N. Maghlakelidze et al. has another poem by L. Japarashvili *Our Mother – Georgia* [ჩვენი დედასაქართველო], in which the author draws parallels between the same great values of the mother and Georgia (Maghlakelidze ... 2009:98). The aim of this lesson as noted in lesson-plans prepared by the teachers is “embedding in the students the love towards homeland”. One of the activities the teacher described in is the following: “*I show the students the Georgian national coat of arms, flag, map, and the country’s nature. We discuss what they know about them. Why Georgia is compared to Mother is ([because] both deserve to be loved equally)*” (Lesson Plan 2012). This textbook within the theme of New Year introduces a piece from N. Dumbadze’s work *Let’s Dream for our Country’s Eternity* [მამულის უკვდავება ვინატროთ] (Maghlakelidze ... 2009:61).

Below is a discussion during an integrated lesson (Language, Nature, Art, Music, and Mathematics) based on N. Dumbadze work *Let’s Dream for our Country’s Eternity*. The aims of the lesson are mentioned as follows: a) strengthening patriotic feelings and religious faith of the students, b) making them wish to seek and study the past of our country in order to learn more about our homeland, its traditions, history and culture, and c) studying songs dedicated to the homeland. In this case we see an illustration of teachers’ practice of highlighting education of patriotism and religiosity through a specific lesson, as well as complementing the lesson with elements of history teaching and artistic performance.

The discussed integrated lesson starts with the Georgian national anthem; everybody is standing and singing the national anthem with their hands placed on their chests. Below a further flow of the lesson is presented, which shows also discussion of the theme related the concepts hero and heroism, love and devotion to the homeland.

**“Teacher:** *How should we behave in order to have our dream come true?*

**Students:** *We should study well, work well, we should do good things and we should be*

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<sup>38</sup> Here we fix the representation for an ‘eastern’ concept of the nationalism (defined by Calhoun), in which the authors fix a statement about Georgia being homeland for the Georgians [ქართველები].

*useful to our homeland by becoming good women and men.*

**Teacher:** *Yes, these kinds of children grow into good persons and Georgia has had so many famous people who have preserved our country's tradition and culture to this day. Thanks to them, we have the three treasures; language, homeland, and religion preserved. All their life they had been working, struggling, and praying for the wellbeing of the country. Let us name the people we know. We should continue what they have started"* (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011a).

Then the students name Georgian kings, writers, heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country. They discuss their deeds, that the main thing in their life was tremendous love for their country.

**Teacher:** *The same goes on today, just recently captain David Tskhovrebadze, the resident of our city, has committed a heroic deed thanks to his boundless love towards Georgia. Our school as well as the adjacent street bears his name. He studied at our school. He was your age when he took an oath to make his country famous, which he did. It was this tremendous love towards homeland that made our great poets and writers write the words that you have selected from their works and posted on the exhibition My Beautiful Georgia"* (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011a).

The teacher then asks the students to explain the meaning of a slogan that has been used for the exhibition *Like God, the Homeland is also One* (by R. Eristavi). The student explains it in the following words: "We have one God, we believe in one God, and it is so for the homeland too we have only one homeland, and we will not accept another country's paradise in exchange". Before passing to the description of the further flow of this lesson, one brief note should be made about this concept of "One God – One Homeland" being often heard in the teachers' discourse rather than in the textbooks in relation to other lessons, poems and discussions dedicated to homeland, Georgia, and heroes. The lesson continues with different phrases and passages from poems written by I. Chavchavadze, A. Tsereteli, V. Pshavela, Sh. Nishnianidze, M. Lebanidze, and others. This introductory part concludes with the song "My Beautiful Georgia" by A. Kalandadze, which is accompanied by a Power Point slide show depicting various sites of landscapes and historical monuments of Georgia. The next part of the lesson focuses directly on the work by N. Dumbadze *Let's Dream for our Country's Eternity*, with interpretations of the students about how they understand the phrase. Here are some sample quotes from the lesson:

*“...the first step to achieve the eternity of the homeland is to know more about its past, to preserve its traditions, and be deserving followers of its achievements to make it famous to the world.”*

*“A person at any age can make their country famous, even kids, let’s remember, 10 year-old kids, “Bzikebi” at Eurovision song contest 2008.”*

*“Our country will become a country of kindness. There will not be any evil and it will be home to God”* (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011a)

The discussion of what they would dream for the homeland ends with the following list of wishes: peace, freedom, eternity, love, kindness, friendship, joy, long life, fortune, and abundance.

The teachers’ discourse in regards to this part can be summarized in the following topics and concepts: a) embedding, strengthening, raising patriotic feeling; b) (tremendous) love towards the homeland; c) necessity to study the past (significance of history of the nation and to know the country well; d) folk songs and/or songs dedicated to homeland, Georgia; e) necessity to become useful for the country, to preserve the tradition and culture, to sacrifice life for the sake of the country, to make it famous in the world; f) like God the homeland is also one (“...we should not accept another country’s paradise”); and g) the country of St. Mary, a home to God.

In the fourth grade textbook of Georgian language with a piece from the poem “You, My Beautiful Georgia” [საქართველო ლამაზო] the beauty of Georgia is depicted and praised (Maghlakelidze ... 2009a:9).

The sixth grade textbook authored by N. Maghlakelidze et al. starts with the chapter entitled *I Have My Roots in the Native Land* [მშობელ მიწაში მიდგას ფესვები] (Maghlakelidze ... 2011a:7), and the chapter starts with the poem “I Sing to My Homeland” [ვუძღვრ სამშობლოს] by G. Leonidze. The poem is about a deep feeling of attachment to the native land, love, and devotion to the homeland. The final message of the poem is that a person is the “architect of their own country”<sup>39</sup> (Maghlakelidze ... 2011:8). The textbook also encourages discussion concerning the idea of devotion to the homeland that the author expressed in the poem (Maghlakelidze ... 2011a:9).

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<sup>39</sup> “...I am the architect of my country; I am the contemporary day of the new Kartli! [მე ვარ სამშობლოს ჩუქურთმის მკრედი, ვარ ახალ ქართლის თანამედროვე!]

Thus, summing up the ideas and notions that have been common and widespread throughout the textbook discourse, one can conclude that they represent the following groups: a) love towards the homeland made equal to the love towards one's mother; b) descriptions of and praising the beauty of Georgia; c) the idea of Georgia situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia; d) Georgia - a country diverse not only geographically but also in terms of its traditions; and e) every person is an architect of their own country.

### **Georgia: Diverse but United Country and the Areas of Georgia**

The textbooks of Georgian language contain a brief introduction about Georgia and its different regions, all of them being very diverse, but together constituting unity, the united country of Georgia. In the fourth grade textbook authored by V. Rodonaia et al. the first lesson is entitled "Georgia, our Homeland". It is a brief introduction about Georgia with key geographic data, which starts with an expression locating the country "at the crossroad of Europe and Asia". The text further says, "The population of different areas (Gurian, Svanetian, Megrelian, Kakhetian, Mtiuletian, Mokhevian, Acharian, Khevsuretian, Imeretian, Tushetian, Lechkhumian, Meskhian, Rachvelian and Kartlelian) varies from each other with houses, tradition-rituals, speech, singing and dancing. However, there is one important sign, which unites all children living in this small country into one indivisible whole. That is Georgians' most important historical achievement, the language and a united state that is called Georgia" (Rodonaia ... 2011a:3). Within this lesson, the authors suggest listening to folk songs from different areas of Georgia and compare them with each other in order to find differences. These songs are followed by presenting the poem "My Beautiful Georgia" [საქართველო ლამაზო] by Gr. Orbeliani, which starts with the expression "You cannot find another Georgia" [სხვა საქართველო სად არი?]. A task for students entails listening to the song with the same title (composed by T. Natsvlishvili) (Rodonaia ... 2011a:8). The notion of Georgia as a border between Europe and Asia is also touched upon in the fifth grade textbook of the subject *Nature*. It has a separate lesson in which Georgia is located "at the border of Europe and Asia, in the Caucasus" (Bliadze ... 2011:83).

Starting from the first grade, from the very first textbook, knowledge about Georgia is commonly taught through its different regions [კუთხე, მხარე] and the people living there. In the first grade, in *Dedaena* textbook written by N. Maghlakelidze et al. within the first three pages the students find pictures symbolizing different regions of Georgia - monuments, buildings or landscapes, and views for which such regions are considered famous. The students are then asked to

guess or to recognize what area or city is presented through the picture, spell them correctly, reveal what they know about such places, and speak of where their parents or grandparents are from, and etc. In the picture illustrating this lesson, the students see landscape views, Svan towers, and a view from Shatili, as well as the cities of Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi, Telavi, and others (see pic. 2.1.1; 2.5.2).

This idea is also widely formulated, presented, and discussed in the textbooks of other subjects such as *Music*, *Art*, *Nature*, and *Chveni Sakartvelo*. Every textbook, however, has its own strategy. As an example, the subject *Nature* is presented below, where a two-page lesson entitled “Our Homeland” with many illustrations is presented. The textbook encourages discussing the theme of homeland through several questions and statements like “My Homeland is called ..., My homeland’s capital city is.... I live in the city.... I live in the village.... How else can you call your homeland [სამშობლო]...? Please, draw the flag of our homeland” (Kvantaliani ... 2007:144-145). The text regarding Georgia’s regions is as follows: “*On the Earth there are about 200 states, and one of them is Georgia. Georgia has 12 regions [მხარე], part of it is in Western Georgia, the other part in Eastern*” (Bliadze ... 2007:144). In further pages of the textbook the students read, “*The population of any country constitutes the people living in the country. Besides Georgians, people [ადამიანი] of other nationalities live in Georgia - Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Russians, Ossetians, Abkhazians, etc. The majority of the people living in Georgia are Christians, though representative of other religions also live in Georgia. Georgia is a common homeland for all the peoples [ხალხი] living together with us*” (Bliadze ... 2007:146). Thus, textbooks speak also about the diversity resulting from different climatic conditions, differences in folk traditions, and language dialects. The textbook mentions diversity in Georgia in terms of religions other than Christianity, as well as the people, of whom there are representatives of ethnic groups other than Georgian. Then it introduces the idea of Georgia being “the common homeland” for all, with this introducing an element of the civic concept of the nation.

Below is one example of an integrated lesson about the regions of Georgia (Nature and Georgian Language) in the second grade in a school in Tbilisi. During this lesson, students get to know the regions of Georgia, their location, historical monuments, and natural conditions specific to each of the regions, folk songs typical for the specific region, poems written by Georgian poets, and historical cities. Students correlate them with each other, analyze, and conduct practical work. They touch upon historical themes as well.

*“This is a relevant theme. In terms of our, Georgian, way of life, Georgia is one unity consisting of different regions. Therefore, to ensure that we are a unified and strong country, the regions should have harmonious and solid bonds, love, and respect toward each other. ...This theme will help to foster patriotism among schoolchildren. They should be cognizant of the fact that the regions comprising Georgia, all together, make up our homeland and it is our faith to love any one of them; all this will promote the feeling of national self-consciousness among students”* (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

In the following sections, representations of the areas of Georgia with the specific symbols attached to them in the textbooks of the subject *Music, Art, Chveni Sakartvelo*, and *Nature* of elementary grades will be presented. As mentioned above in the textbooks of language, a brief introduction was provided including themes about the country, the concept of homeland, love towards the homeland, and the regions/areas being diverse and different from each other in many aspects, though constituting one united country Georgia. The textbooks of other subjects by different authors too include the aforementioned aspects. Each textbook however has its own strategy and point of view. As a result, the regions/areas of Georgia are presented more widely and in more depth with many details, thus making the mosaic of Georgia and its representations richer and comprehensive.

Both versions of the reviewed textbooks *Music* include knowledge, information, and illustrations about the areas of Georgia with diverse forms of implementation and interpretation. Thus, in the textbooks of the subject *Music* by M. Otiashvili within the first four grades the textbook personages travel through not only present-day Republic of Georgia, but also the places outside the country where Georgians live. Through small texts and illustrations accompanying them, the personages tell the students what songs and dances they have experienced, and what specific areas and their people are famous for. The textbooks for music authored by M. Chikvaidze starting from the second grade include presentations of different areas of Georgia: Tbilisi, Qartli, Kakheti, Imereti, Khevsureti, Guria, Racha, and Svaneti within the chapter *“The Land [ქვეყანა], where you Live”*. In the textbook, the authors included small texts, presentations of the songs, dances, and musical instruments that are thought to be specific to the areas or the people living in them. Texts in the textbook are very often illustrated with pictures and views, as symbols representing each area [ქვეყანა], in order to create stable visual associations with certain regions.

The first grade textbook of the subject *Music* by M. Otiashvili presents Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia, through the short story “*The Legend about Tbilisi*”. A landscape view of Tbilisi with the monument to Vakhtang Gorgasali illustrates the story. The textbook personages’ travels starts in the second grade from Svaneti through Samegrelo<sup>40</sup>, Racha, Qartli, Khevsureti, and Meskhet Javakheti. In the third grade, they continue their journey through Guria, Lazeti, and Tusheti. The same theme of travel is seen in the textbook *Music* by M. Chikvaidze. Starting from the fourth grade, the textbook *Art* includes the theme *Our Homeland* in each grade, within which the authors present separate regions of Georgia through short texts, landscape pictures, and pieces of (folk) art from the region or a picture by an artist born in the region. In the tasks for students the authors ask the students to list all the regions of Georgia, or to recognize the region based on the picture provided, or to mention the symbol of a certain region [კუთხე] of Georgia (for example, towers for Svaneti) (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:46;47). The explanatory text in the textbooks of the subject *Art* for the lessons in the rubric “*Our Homeland*” is the following: “*Each area of Georgia, as well as the people living there, has signs of their peculiar characteristics. This can be their clothing or everyday life artifacts or some edifices common to this area, sometimes this kind of mark can be considered as a symbol for the area*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:46). In the final part of the textbook of the fourth grade, the authors present a map of Georgia including the following regions: Abkhazeti, Samegrelo, Svaneti, Tianeti-Pshav-Khevsureti-Mtiuleti-Tusheti-Khevi, Racha-Lechkhumi, Qartli, Kakheti, Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Imereti, Guria, Achara (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:91). The textbook states to the students, “*During the whole year you have been getting familiar with Georgia’s regions [კუთხეები]. You became sure that they are different from each other, but each corner has its own beauty*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:91). In the fifth grade, the authors continue to acquaint students with the areas of Georgia within the topic “*All of them are my Homeland*” [ყველა ჩემი სამშობლოა].

In the fifth grade textbook of the subject *Chveni Sakartvelo* a separate chapter is dedicated to the *Regions of Georgia* [კუთხეები] (Surguladze ... 2010:65-159). The opening page of the chapter introduces the main ideas. It states that the chapter will introduce the students to the location, natural surroundings, population, economy, farming, and traditions of the population of each region. Besides the natural and demographic aspect, the authors also present the regions from a historical

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<sup>40</sup> “...Then I wanted to go to Abkhazia and listen to peaceful songs, but I could not, hope in the future I will be able to go there” (Otiashvili 2011a:21).

point of view, telling “many interesting stories about your country’s past and present day” (Surguladze ... 2010:65). For each presented region the authors allocated four sub-chapters, “nature, population, occupation of the population, and sights” accompanied with illustrations, including a map, pictures of historical monuments, churches and monasteries, but also fortresses, landscapes and panoramic views, natural resources, and house-museums of poets and other historical figures. There are a large number of illustrations: 48 pictures of churches and monasteries, and 196 pictures depicting landscapes and panoramic views within the chapter related to the regions of Georgia.

In the fourth grade textbook of the subject *Nature* students become familiar with Georgia’s regions (Bliadze ... 2009:144). To help illustrate this lesson, the authors used several pictures (views) of Georgia (example, Ushguli (Zemo Svaneti), cities of Poti and Rustavi as well as Uplistsikhe (Bliadze ... 2009:146;147).

The map included in the appendix 5 illustrates the main items that have been repeatedly used in the textbooks to symbolize and illustrate the corresponding region of Georgia.

Below, based on a common review of all subject textbooks mentioned above, a brief outline showing representations of the areas of Georgia and the characters (pictures, views, etc) attached to them in the textbooks is presented.

- Svaneti –towers in Svaneti (which have been reviewed in all textbooks many times), St. Ivlita and the icon of St. Ivlita, a picture depicting Svan dance, landscape views of the mountain Shkhara and Tetnuldi, pictures of a man and a woman in Svan traditional costume.
- Khevsureti – village Shatili (one of the most commonly met symbols), Lazareth, the Khevsurian toy, and traditional costume and dance pictures;
- Meskhet-Javakheti - views of Vardzia, frescos of Tamar the King and Giorgi III, Shalva Akhaltsikheli and the song *Shalvego, song Mze Shina*;
- Lazeti – images depicting Laz fishermen’s dance, Lazian house;
- Tusheti – pictures of landscapes of a Tushetian village, a Tushian boy;
- Imereti – a landscape view, the Gelati monastery, paintings of landscapes of Imereti by D. Kakabadze with a task for the students to find information about a famous artist from their own region;
- Qartli, Kakheti –images of peasants in Kakheti, landscape views, the view of Aragvi and Mtkvari crossing point, the monument by M. Berdzenishvili with a motif connected with the



poem “They will be brought up anew” [კიდევაც დაიზრდებიან] as well as the monument with the motif of the ballad “A tiger and a young man [ვეფხი და მოყმი]”,<sup>41</sup>

- Guria – a man in traditional costume, landscape view;
- Racha- musical instruments, landscape view depicting forest;
- Khevi- picture of the Gergeti St Trinity church;
- Achara – a picture of seashore view;
- Samegrelo -the lake Ritsa, Bedia temple, the Martvili temple, the Dadiani Palace, and Virgin Mary’s robe;
- Abkhazeti – this is the region to which the textbooks have provided more space in textual form compared to the other regions of Georgia. - The second grade textbook of Music by Otiashvili refers to Abkhazia within the presentation of the travel to Samegrelo. The text says that for the travelers it was impossible to go to Abkhazeti after the Samegrelo travel. The students read the following text: “*I wanted to go to Abkhazeti and listen to peaceful songs, but I could not, hope in the future I will be able to go there*” (Otiashvili 2011a:21).

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* also refers to the topic of practical impossibility to visit Abkhazeti and provides a brief explanation as to why this is the case: “Abkhazeti is populated since ancient times. Two hundred years ago, its population started to grow, not only its local population - Abkhazians and Georgians, but also Russians, Armenians, Greeks, and others. A little more than a hundred years ago, this area was populated by almost one tenth of the entire population of Georgia. After the 1992-1993 war in Abkhazeti many people had to leave their native corner. The population decreased by about four times. Many homes were destroyed and entire villages were abandoned. The Georgian population now remains only in the Gali region. Today in Abkhazeti mostly Abkhazians, Armenians, and Russians live. Abkhazians speak the Abkhaz language” (Surguladze ... 2010:138).

The textbook *Art* has a similar focus when speaking about Abkhazeti. It says, “*Abkhazeti is an indigenous region of Georgia. Beautiful and unique is its nature...On the territory of Abkhazeti the human being has existed since ancient times* [S.M.: Here a small text about the Dolmen follows]...*Abkhazeti is Georgia’s region, where in the first century St. Simon Kananeli preached Christianity*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:76). The lesson in the textbook consists of pictures of *Akhali*

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<sup>41</sup> The authors of the textbook envisage in-class discussions of its main idea - patriotism and devotion to the homeland, presenting also the description with explanation of the meaning of the monument: “...it seems the mother is pushing her children ahead sending them to sacrifice their lives for the homeland” (Kldiashvili ... 2009:21).

*Atoni*, the Dolmen (III-II millennium B.C.), Bichvinta Temple (X-XI centuries), and the Gospel of Mokvi. The authors ask the students to search for other monuments of Abkhazeti and to prepare a presentation as a task for the next lesson (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:77).

Below is an example from the fifth grade textbook *Art* presenting the Kakheti region: “*When one tells this word, he/she imagines snowy mountains of Kavkasioni and the large valley of Alazani*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:18). This short text is followed with a question to the students to remember the historical figure they start to think of when they hear about Kakheti. The page is illustrated with the map of Georgia, the pictures of the monument to Erekle II in Telavi, a landscape of Alazani valley, and the Bodby Monastery (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:18-19). The textbook also provides a brief presentation of the monastery and the legend about St. Nino’s spring. A short text about King Erekle follows, which is presented within the passage about the King (see also page 121-125).<sup>42</sup> In the fourth grade textbook, the authors present pictures - landscapes of Kakheti painted by Akhvlediani (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:22) with a task for the students to find information about a famous artist from their own region (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:23), or draw the map of Georgia with historical monuments and unique features typical to each region (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:91).

## **The Black Sea and the Myth of Argo**

Additional themes regarding Georgia and its values revealed in the textbooks are related to the fortresses [ციხე - სიმაგრეები], the Black Sea, and Georgia’s territorial location at the crossroad between Europe and Asia.

The third grade textbook *Art* presents a small introductory lesson entitled *Our Heritage*, which speaks about churches, monasteries, towers, and fortresses. The text read by the students includes the following: “*You do not need to go far if you want to see old Georgian churches and monasteries or towers/fortresses [ციხე სიმაგრეები]. You will hardly find a city or a village in Georgia where you cannot find a historical monument*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009a:70).

The sixth grade textbook *Art* also speaks about the fortresses of Georgia describing them as widely known and as a source of pride. “*In every city or village in Georgia one would easily find ancient monuments of our history - churches-monasteries, fortresses, towers, ancient settlements,*

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<sup>42</sup> The fifth grade textbook has another title for the chapters related to Georgia and the theme of Homeland, All of Them are my Homeland [ყველა ჩემი სამშობლო] presenting regions separately with certain symbols and features that are considered to be symbolic for each region.

*etc. Whether still standing or destroyed, the long-standing history and beauty of our monuments surprise those who see them, which create a sense of pride for us.*” The authors also highlight that such knowledge is not sufficient and further they should obtain knowledge about ancient fortresses: Tbilisi-Narighala, Mtskheta-Bebristsikhe, and Gori-Goristsikhe. By raising such questions, the authors facilitate a search for new pieces of information and discussions about the location and the legends related to the fortresses (Kldiashvili ... 2009d:40). At the end of the lesson, the students have a home task to draw a fortress from their own region and a map of the monuments (sights) of the region (Kldiashvili ... 2009d:41).

The textbooks *Nature* have information about the Black Sea and Georgia with respective illustrations. “*Many countries in the world have seas at their borders. Georgia is located at the Black Sea coast*” (Kvantaliani 2009:62). The second grade textbook of the subject *Music* by M. Otiashvili has a rubric called “*Stories from my Grandma*” within which it presents the legends of Jason and Medea, Orpheos, and Sirinozes, and the Golden Fleece (Otiashvili 2011a:32; 55). The third grade textbook *Nature* highlights the location of the Black Sea as “*between Europe and Asia*”. The textbook further explains, “*why the sea has such a strange name*”. According to the textbook, in the past it was called the “*Sea of Pontus*”. According to the authors, the Turks then called it the Black Sea. The color of the sea is not black; it is a little bit darker in comparison with other seas (Kvantaliani ... 2008:72). The fourth grade textbook *Art* includes two lessons, *The Legendary Argo* and *Argonauts in Kolkheti*: “*The myth of Argonauts attracts the interests of many scholars and travelers. Several years ago Tim Severin, an Irish scholar and traveler studied the ancient Greek art of ship construction and built a real modern copy of Argo. This new ship took the route of the Argonauts and finally came to Georgia*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:56). The next lesson continues with the topic noting that the modern Argo ship traveler proved that the story about Argonauts could have happened in reality. The textbook says also that the scholars resumed - it happened in ancient times (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:58). The textbook tasks the students to build a small ship to resemble the Argo. The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* referring to the Black Sea also notes its utmost importance for Georgia as a natural resource and as a means of connection not only to Europe and Asia but also to the countries belonging to other continents in the world (Surguladze ... 2010:30). (See pic. 2.5.1)

Below is one example of an integrated lesson (*Georgian Language, Nature, and Music*) about Kakheti, Shida Kartli, and Imereti, the three regions of Georgia under the general title *The Regions of Georgia*. The lesson conducted with the participation of fourth grade students and

prepared by teachers, presents a unique mosaic of knowledge, each piece of which is connected to the regions presented. The nature part introduces the location, natural resources, and historical monuments of the region, while the literature part presents three famous Georgian literary figures all born in the regions presented - Ilia Chavchavadze (Kakheti), Akaki Tsereteli (Imereti), and Iakob Gogebashvili (Shida Kartli). The knowledge section is decorated and crafted artistically through songs and musical activities, which is also connected to the regions presented (“კახეთო, ჩემო კახეთო”, “ჩემო კარგო ქვეყანავ”, “გახედე ბიჭო, თენდება”, “წონგურს სიმები გავუბი“) (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011b). Not only here but also in other cases of open and integrated lessons and small class performances one can observe using illustrations of traditional folk costume as a symbol for each presented region.

### **Georgians Live also outside Georgia**

*“What should I say to such a Georgian”:  
If a Georgian in Fereydan is still singing  
under the accompaniment of his panduri,  
What’s got into you here?  
Who brought you up?  
So many Georgians have given their lives  
For your sake ... (M. Machavariani)*

The second grade textbook *Georgian Language* includes short texts briefly informing students about Georgians living not only in Georgia, but also those living in Turkey and Iran. Both texts tell stories about the book *Dedaena*, with the help of which little Georgian boys learn Georgian. The first story is about a Gurji boy not knowing Georgian in Bursa to whom the author [N. Dumbadze] presents with the family treasure, the textbook *Dedaena*, so that the boy could learn his mother tongue. The second text is about a little boy having learnt Georgian with the help of the *Dedaena*. The second story also informs the students how Georgian people appeared in Iran: “A long time ago, Georgia's enemies had set our village on fire and sent our people to exile in Persia”. The text also contains a message from those Georgians to their home country. It says, “My dear country! Do not forget Zurab, a Georgian boy exiled to Fereydan” (Maghlakelidze ... 2011:6-7).

The third grade textbook *Georgian Language* contains a short text entitled *Little Georgia in Persia* by I. Gogebashvili, which tells how Georgians first appeared in Iran. The texts, with a foreword including a small introduction and questions, intend to remind students about Georgians who live outside Georgia, and in particular about those living in Iran (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:14).

Based on my observations, in practice, teacher tended to expand the topic, connecting it to present-day situations and contexts. For example, the teachers start their talk with presentation of possible reasons for people to leave Georgia, such as lack of employment, or war that forces them to become refugees. During in-class implementations of the lesson *Little Georgia in Persia*, the teachers were elaborating upon the text regarding the history of the Georgian population in Iran, how they appeared there, in which places, and the reason for this to occur. A separate part of the lesson is allocated to presenting representations of Georgiannes among Fereidani Georgians be it with regards to everyday life or festive life. For example, “*They cultivate vine there (albeit Muslims do not drink wine) and shape a cross on the cornbread [ძჭაფლი]*”.<sup>43</sup> Another theme that teachers’ discourse added to the discussions about Fereidani Georgians was the issue about Georgians’ eventual return to their homeland. This discourse consists of the wish of Fereidani Georgians to return from one side, and Georgia waiting for them from the other side.

The next theme under the general topic of Georgians outside present-day Georgia is about group of people called Ingilo. The introductory text with questions for discussion offered the students the following, “Georgians also live in *Saingilo*. Who are the Ingilo people and why are they living there?” (Maghlakelidze ... 2009:16).

*Eighteen Brothers (an Ingilo Legend)* by A. Chkhenkeli tells the story of the Georgians living in Hereti, “an amazing place with happy life” as the author describes. Then the text continues to inform students about enemy’s envy of the Georgian people’s good life and their desire to conquer such a heavenly country. The text says that the enemy destroyed the country and its people. Seventeen brothers out of the 18 living in Hereti came to where now Georgia is and built there a new Hereti. “*They built fences on the four sides of the country in a way that even a bird could not penetrate. The eldest brother being very old and weak remained there with his family*” (Maghlakelidze ... 2009:17). The story further tells how the name Ingilo emerged from the word *ჰეხილგოლაგ* (tamed-converted, *მონღულებული*), a name, which he and his family were given by the enemy.

The third grade textbook for the subject *Music* by M. Otiashvili presents a one-page lesson about travel in the direction of Turkey to the “historical Lazeti, one of the most beautiful and ancient

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<sup>43</sup> An example of a Power Point slide show used during the lesson in the third grade about Fereidani Georgians shows different aspects of the issue. First, it presents landscape and views of the present day Fereidan in Iran, then it shortly speaks about the reason they are in Iran now, and finally, it starts to present Georgian trace in Fereidan revealed in every-day life and festive realities there (Georgian, script, wedding, funeral, folk art, hunting traditions, traditional house, costume and holidays (particularly, April 14 celebration). (Education Resource by Irina Salia)

parts [აბსოჯ] of Georgia”. The text informs the students that people living there are called *chveneburebi* [our folk]. The travelers, personages of the textbook, tell the story and express to the students how amazed they were by the nature, by the old wooden houses, and by the polyphonic music that they heard there. The text describes the polyphonic music and the dances the travelers witnessed. The text says, “That was a real Georgian song and dance”. The travelers also promise that upon their arrival back home they will try to learn more about this region and the people living there. The textbook also offers a website where students can look up more materials about Lazeti (Otiashvili 2011c:37). This textbook presents a map of Georgia under the title “Here it is my Georgia”. The map includes Lazeti, Shavsheti and Saingilo parts marked with lines, different from the rest of the map –lines. The same map is also on the last page of the first grade textbook.

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* has a chapter entitled *Lands of the Old Georgia and Historical Cities of Georgia*. Within these lands, “which in the past were part of Georgia, now considered outside of it”. Saingilo, Lazeti, and Meskhethi are presented in a two-page text with illustrations (photographs of the St. Giorgi Church, Laz house, and a scene depicting a Meskhetian dance) (Surguladze ... 2010:159). All three stories introduce the people and the territory as well as how the territory appeared to be outside Georgia’s modern-day territory.

Below is a brief summary of the Ingilo people as presented in the textbook. Earlier it was the historical Georgian region of Hereti where Georgians had been living since time immemorial. Four hundred years ago, Persian Shah Abbas cruelly destroyed Kakheti and took away a part of Hereti. Then 100 years later the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire took it away and presented it as a gift to Lekhi, the people from Chari. The kings of Qartli and Kakheti were struggling to return these lands. The Leks were getting the support and patronage from those places, while local peasants could get land only should they change their faith and convert to Islam. Those who converted to Islam started to be called “Ingilo”, which means “newly converted” [ახალი მუსლიმანი] in Turkish. Today this territory is Azerbaijan. Ingilo people have preserved Georgian languages and traditions up until this day (Surguladze ... 2010:160). Laz people are described using the same structure: description, the history of appearing outside modern-day Georgia, and information about the current situation. For example, an extract from the text notes: “*In the old time on the South – Eastern shore of the Black Sea, the Lazian Kartvelian tribe existed. Laz language is very close to Megrelian; in fact, they are branches of one language. They were famous for their courage and studiousness. The place of residence of the Laz people first was a part of the Roman Empire, then Byzantium, and in the end it fell under the control of Turkey. During the Ottoman period, these people adopted Islam. However,*

*they were subjected to suffering because of riots, massacres, and numerous exiles carried out by the Ottoman people. Contemporary Lazeti is now called Lazistan in Turkey. Many representatives of Laz people participate in building the state. The majority of them preserved the memory of the old homeland and knowledge of the Georgian language. In Georgia Laz people live in one only village Sarpi” (Surguladze ... 2010:160;161).*<sup>44</sup>

Below is an extract from an interview with a teacher illustrating one more case when the teachers add “interpretive” explanations and own perceptions to what the textbooks says. In the given case, it is an explanation about the possible reasons of these territories becoming part of other countries.

*“I point to the fact that on the historical territory of Georgia the Georgian trace has remained, I ask them to mark the state borders of Georgia, after which they then mark those areas [ქუთხეგბო] that remained out of Georgia, and I note once again that these areas are the historic lands of Georgia. I bring the attention of the students to the fact that all of the above mentioned are peripheral regions and therefore they were the first to come under attack from enemies” (Teacher, elementary grade, Tbilisi, 2012).*

Another aspect of “Georgians outside Georgia” students discover in textbooks is the theme about Georgian antiquities abroad as introduced through the works by Irakli Abashidze (Palestinian Diary), and Iakob Gogebashvili (Monastery of Iveria) (Maghlakelidze ...2011a:10-20).

## **Language**

### **The Georgian Language: “Our Ornate Georgian Language”**

The textbooks *Georgian Language* (1-4 grades) and *Georgian Language and Literature* (5-6 grades) contain works, mostly poems, dedicated to the Georgian language. Below are poems from the fifth grade textbooks *Georgian Language* [ქართული ენა] by L. Asatiani, *Song to the Georgian Alphabet* [ჰიმნი ქართულ ანბანს] by G. Tabidze, and *Our Ornate Georgian Language* [მკვირვართულის სიტყვაქართული] by I. Noneshvili.

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<sup>44</sup> Using education resources in the form of Power Point presentations with the title “Georgia’s Historical Lands” involving a large amount of historical dates and figures, maps as well as using a wide range of photography from these places as they look in contemporary times. One such Power Point slide show is provided in the bibliography list (Education Resource by N. Kobalia)

The poem by L. Asatiani dedicated to the Georgian language starts with praising the language as a “divine language of velvety chords” (Maghlakelidze ... 2010:8). Based on the questions in the textbook classrooms discussions are held in order to interpret and understand the idea of Georgian being a “language of Gods”, “language of toasts and love poems”, and the native and mother tongue for the Georgians [ქართული ენა ჩვენი მშობლიური ენაა, დედაენა] (Maghlakelidze ... 2010:9). Besides the Georgian language, the nature and history of Georgia are discussed followed by relevant lines from poems.

Furthermore, in the final part of the lesson, students read the following statement, “*Georgian language is one of the ancient literary languages, which means that we have rich literature in Georgian, and as a written language it has existed for more than 15 centuries. It is a common language for Georgians living in all areas of Georgia* (Maghlakelidze ... 2010:11). This statement can be regarded as a formulae in a sense that its fixed content is regularly observed within the teachers’ and textbook discourses in other places and times at schools. The teachers’ discourse also showed this idea of a common language to be a focus, “*all regions have their characteristically special features which is the basis of the diversity of Georgia including the dialects spoken, all of which consist of one common language, - Georgian. - The root of the language spoken by the Svans and Megrelians is also the same common language*” (Teachers, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011-2012).

The lesson when students learn the poem by G. Tabidze *Song to the Georgian Alphabet* [ჰიმნი ქართულ ანბანს] in the fifth grade reveals to be a platform to present the information and discussion about the Georgian alphabet, and how great was its role when created (“...26 centuries ago, that is to say, B.C. 6<sup>th</sup> century”).

In the third grade textbook of the subject *Music*, one can find references to the Georgian language. For example, when presenting Svanetian songs and dances, the author mentions the following statement, “*Svan language is also a Qartvelian language, and we all, Qartlians, Kakhetians, Imeretians, Khevsuretiens, Gurians, Mokheviens, Meskhs, and Javakhs are Georgians and all study at Georgian-language schools*” (Otiashvili 2011b:11). With this statement, the author highlights the national (state) language as a unifying factor for the nation.

Every April 14, the Mother Tongue Day, has been marked in Georgia since 1978, including at schools - mostly in elementary classes - but also in higher grades, where a wide range of events and celebrations are organized such as on-stage events and ceremonies, open classes, integrated classes, calligraphic contests, essay writings, and excursions to the monument to the Mother Tongue



in Tbilisi, etc. The monument dedicated to the Mother Tongue in Tbilisi is a place where excursions and outdoor classes are often held on the occasion of the completion of Georgian alphabet learning in the first grade.

## Iakob Gogebashvili and the Dedaena

ბ ა დეაენა ბ ა მ ე ნ დ ა დ ი დ ე  
 ა ბ გ ე ბ !

Portraits, pictures, and images of Iakob Gogebashvili as well as the book *Dedaena* and a small violet [ ა ბ ] are widespread items in elementary school classrooms. Celebrations of the first graders at the end of the first year and upon the completion of the book *Dedaena* are organized in schools. Tribute to Iakob Gogebashvili, the creator of the first ever ABC Book (called *Dedaena*, lit. translation of which is Mother Tongue) for Georgian schoolchildren, is given in different forms of implementation and artistic performance. An excursion to Variani, the birthplace of Iakob Gogebashvili and his house-museum, is a ritual-like practice for elementary grade classes. Elementary grade textbooks, especially those for the first and second grade, include pictures of Iakob Gogebashvili and the *Dedaena*. (See pic. 2.7.1) The first grade textbooks *Dedaena* by both authors contain texts, illustrations, and an appreciation of Iakob Gogebashvili's contribution to Georgian education. *“Iakob Gogebashvili very long ago created “Dedaena” for Georgian children, while writing many other stories. In each story there is a piece of advice”,* says one of the textbooks (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:123). The main ideas of a short story entitled *The Guest of Gogebashvili* can be summarized as follows: *“The main book children learn in the first grade is Dedaena, the author of which is Iakob Gogebashvili, .... the teacher of all Georgians, who created the first ever Dedaena.... Iakob Gogebashvili is a great writer, he wrote many wonderful stories. You have already learnt many of his stories, let's remember them...”* (Rodonaia ... 2009:132). The text is illustrated with a picture of the Iakob Gogebashvili house-museum in Variani.

Every first grade classroom (elementary grade cabinet-classrooms) has pictures, posters, and wall-posters dedicated to Iakob Gogebashvili. They are usually published industrially, but one can also discover handmade items. The decorations of first grade classrooms also include pictures and other forms of artistic implementations depicting the flower violet [ ა ბ ] and the *Dedaena*. *“This is a violet [ ა ბ ა ბ ]”* is the first sentence learnt by children using this textbook. The flower violet has

become a very frequently used symbol in the elementary classrooms and celebrations of the first graders in schools. (See pic. 2.6.1)

The house-museum of Iakob Gogebashvili in Variani and Gogebashvili's tomb in the cemetery on Mtatsminda are places visited by excursions, which are organized for elementary grade students. During these trips, children put flowers on the tomb, as well as prepare a small performance or an event-program dedicated to the mother tongue, *Dedaena* textbook, and Iakob Gogebashvili himself.

## **Religion**

### **Saint Nino**

Lesson 14 in the fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* within the bigger theme *Our Homeland* is entitled *Introduction of Christianity in Georgia* [ქართლის მოქცევა]. The introductory part of the lesson informs students that they are going to learn how human beings came up with the idea of one God and how Christianity came to Georgia (Surguladze ... 2010:35). The further content is expressed through the following subtitled texts: a) how mankind came to adopt one God; b) what did Christ teach to his disciples?; c) how did the spread of Christianity start in Georgia?; d) Saint Nino, who preached and disseminated Christianity in Georgia, and e) Conversion of the King Mirian and Qartli. (See pic. 2.8.1)

The fifth grade textbook *Georgian Language and Literature* has two lessons related to Christianity under a general title *Bible Stories*, Appointing David as King [დავითის მეფად მიწოდება] and the David Victorious wins over Goliath (according to I. Gogebashvili) (Rodonaia ... 2010:236-238).

The textbooks also present churches and monasteries both within lessons concerning certain churches (and stories about them) and within other themes related to Christianity. Particularly, the fifth grade textbook *Art* presents Mtskheta as “the main religious center” and “home to very important Christian sanctities, the most important among which is Christ's Robe which was buried in this place where later on they built an ancient church”. The students are also given a home task to remember the history of bringing the robe of God to Georgia (Kldiashvili ... 2009d:38). The church Svetitskhoveli is described with more details accompanied with many image illustrations. “*In the beginning of the eleventh century at the place where Christ's robe was buried, a new temple was*

*built instead of the old church, which was named Svetitskhoveli in honor of the miraculous column”* (Kldiashvili ... 2009d:39). (See pic. 2.14)

The fifth grade textbook *Art* presents also pictures of the churches of Alaverdi and *Akhali Shuamta* in Kakheti, the Bodby Monastery as well as of those founded by Assyrian Fathers (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:34-35). For the Bodby Monastery the textbook says: “... *a place where St. Nino’s spring is located. According to the legend, the spring emerged thanks to Nino’s prayers. After having bathed in this water, many people with physical and mental illnesses have been cured*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:19). (See pic. 2.8.2)

## **Christmas and Easter**

The first grade textbook *Art* has a topic entitled *Easter*. During this lesson, the authors offer the students together with the teacher to prepare Easter-related decorations, illustrations, and ornaments for Easter eggs. The fourth grade textbook *Art* has another suggestion for students to prepare for Easter - “one of the favorite holidays for the children”, - which is to make a present for the family in the form of the Easter *Jejily* [ჯეჯილი] (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:72). (See pic. 2.9.2)

Diversely decorated eggs made from various materials and other Easter-related decorations usually made by the schoolchildren themselves for classes became stable elements of in-school and in-class decorations. (See pic. 2.9.1)

Icons and other church-related symbols, which I could observe as rather reflections of personal religiosity of teachers are manifested through small icon-corners on shelves or on a small space allocated for icons within the classrooms (or an icon on the wall), religious-content calendars, journals on their tables or on the walls. They show the religiosity of teachers represented in their private space (teachers themselves consider the classroom as their private space), which on a certain level intersects with the classrooms as a public space. (See pic. 2.10.1)

The second grade textbook *Art* has a lesson *Choir of Angels* [ანგელოზთა გუნდი] starting with the text: “*The shepherds were sitting near the fire. From the sky a choir of angels appeared and heralded the birth of Christ*”. Later the students go on to prepare the angels’ choir from diverse materials and in different forms (Kldiashvili 2007:46). The fourth grade textbook *Art* also contains a theme based on Christmas. The lesson starts with a small passage saying, “*Christmas is a favorite holiday for everyone. On that day, the whole family usually gathers together around the feast table, congratulate one another, and sing Christmas songs. Christmas brings warmth and love*

to everyone” (Kldiashvili ... 2009b:38). The textbook also tasks students to prepare a Christmas angel to hang on the Christmas tree.

In the fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* the authors included the topic *Christmas and New Year in Georgia*, which is within a broader chapter dedicated to Georgian traditional culture. The text says, “*In the first days of January, everybody congratulates each other during Christmas and New Year. These two holidays are mentioned together in the Alilo song: On the 25 January Christ was born, bringing Christmas and New Year to us...*” (Surguladze ... 2010:209). Then the textbook continued to mention Christmas feast preparations (dishes) and traditions of celebrating Christmas in Guria and Racha (Surguladze ... 2010:210-211). The textbook also has illustrations of an Alilo scene and a traditional Christmas tree.

New Year and Christmas are among the most popular holidays celebrated in schools. Each school has different ways of celebrating New Year and Christmas, be it a pan-school carnival, joint or separate performances in elementary grades, small theatrical performances, an on-stage event, a fairy-tale performance, or an open-class. These celebrations also include the scene of Christ’s birth in Bethlehem with Alilo often being performed at the event.

### **Alilo and Chant [გალობა]**

Alilo [ა ლი ლო], the Georgian ritual song sung on Christmas Eve, is included in the first grade textbook *Music*, which asks students to sing a part of Alilo [25 დეკემბერსა ქრისტე იშვა ბეთლემსაო, ოჰო-ჰოი, ჰოი ალილო]<sup>45</sup> and then to listen to the Christmas song from the film *Songs of the District Vera* (Chikvaidze 2011:44). The second grade textbook *Music* asks the students to listen to the same fragment of the film and to remember it within the lesson entitled *Star of Hope*, the star of Bethlehem, and the rituals of *Alilooba* (the day of Alilo) (Chikvaidze 2011a:58-60). The text says, “*Very long ago a star lit in the sky. It was very bright; it informed people about the arrival of new life. At that very moment angels appeared in the sky that heralded the birth of the God*” (Chikvaidze 2011a:58). The fourth grade textbook also refers to Alilo through a two-page lesson entitled *Alilo in Georgia*, which starts by telling the students that Alilo had been common all over Georgia. All regions [ს უთხე] had their own specific ritual dedicated to Alilo. Then the authors offer to listen to various versions of Alilo, ex., Meskhetian, Megrelian, and Kakhetian. A task for students to search for the version of Alilo typical for the region they (their family) are from is given as homework (Chikvaidze 2011c:53;54). (See pic. 2.8.3) The textbooks of the subject *Music*

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<sup>45</sup> “The Christ was born in Betlehem on the 25 December, halleluah, halleluah”.

by M. Otiashvili also contain different references to Christmas; however, the focus is on rather New Year. The first grade textbook has an Alilo and the story about the birth of the Christ. (Otiashvili 2011:22-23) The second grade textbook presents the Rachvelian Alilo, the third grade textbook presents Christmas illustrations (ex., The Birth place of the Christ in Betlehem, painting by Rembrandt) within the lesson about Megrelian New Year song (Otiashvili 2011a:24-25). While the fourth grade textbook presents Megrelian and German Christmas songs (Otiashvili 2011c:35;39).

The fifth grade textbook Music introduces students with chants [ღ ა ლო ბ ა ] and icons, allocating separate lessons for each. They offer the students the chance to listen to some of the chants authored by the Patriarch of Georgia Ilia II (Chikvaidze 2011d:64) and to see paintings of the Virgin Mary [ღ ე მ თ ი ს მ მ ო ბ ე ლ ი ]. The authors start by saying that 2000 years have passed since people of art have been praising Mother of God. The text says, *“When an artist is drawing the godmother he/she in most cases draws not a simple drawing but what eventually turns out to be an icon”*. The following passage from the textbook shows that the author of the textbook attaches a significance of Georgian identity marker to these icons: *“Georgian man worships the icons of the Virgin Mary Godmother since long time ago. The icons are protectors of our country and land; they are the biggest sanctity. It is not accidental that Georgia is called the country of Virgin Mary”* (Chikvaidze 2011d:66). Below is another example of a school event, which makes references to the icon of the Virgin Mary. It is an open lesson in the fourth grade dedicated to the Holy Mountain Athos with the following structure: a) the history, b) the monasteries, and c) the icons of the Virgin Mary and their magic power. This is how the teacher described the part related to the icon:

*“When other monks came across, the icon was moving away, and only a Georgian monk could bring the icon in. The Virgin Mary Icon of Iviron Monastery. This is the copy that was brought to Tbilisi. The students during the lesson talk about miracles related to this icon. One of the miracles is related to earthquakes, with every earthquake the icon starts moving. The copy that has been brought is placed in the new Trinity Temple. There was a child on St. Athos mountain, he was sick and lost the ability to speak in his native language, and started to speak in Georgian. His father went to pray by the Virgin Mary icon, and when he returned back he was already cured.”* (Teacher, fourth grade, Tbilisi, 2011).

## Churches and Monasteries

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo*, following the lesson about the introduction of Christianity to Georgia, has a separate lesson dedicated to the Assyrian fathers' traces in Georgia. The lessons describe their activities, and the monasteries they founded, with relevant illustrations, the map of the monasteries founded by the Assyrian fathers, and pictures of nine of them. In particular, it says that the monks coming from Assyria [today's Syria] about 1400 years ago "strengthened the Christian faith among the people through preachings, leading to an ecclesiastical life", thus for that reason they have been called "fathers", that is to say spiritual confessors (Surguladze ... 2010:38).

The sixth grade textbook of the subject *Art* presents Mtskheta as "the ancient capital city of Georgia located on the junction of the rivers Aragvi and Mtkvari. Its history goes back to the third millennium B.C." Furthermore, in the lesson students read about Mtskheta, the church Svetitskhoveli, and Christ's Robe. (See also page 109).

The analyses of the lessons observed in the classroom based on Assyrian monks shows a variety of visual illustrations related to the churches, the monasteries founded by thirteen Assyrian monks, as well as pictures and miniatures depicting the monks themselves. This lesson is also becoming a space to speak about different religions and related rituals, about the types of religious buildings (church, monasteries, and etc.), and their constituents and functions.

References to monasteries, churches, and other sanctities are typical to other lessons of the textbook as well, especially, when presenting separate areas of Georgia and placing pictures and brief information about key spiritual buildings of the region (see also pages 90-95). The same is also true for other textbooks in which there is a presentation of the regions of Georgia, or the themes *Georgia* or *Homeland*. (See pic. 2.8.2) In a way, the churches and monasteries are in the list of the symbols of the region, sometimes taking the role of the key symbol. (See Appendix 5) The pictures of churches and monasteries also decorate the walls of classrooms. School excursions and study visits, as well as outdoor classes and celebrations, have been held in the surroundings of different churches and monasteries (my field work material noted the churches in Mtskheta, Ananuri, *Mamadaviti* as the most visited), some small-scale pilgrimages are also organized on a voluntary basis in schools. Territorially, these predominantly include trips to nearby areas surrounding Tbilisi, Kakheti region, but these excursions may also include regions significantly further away from Georgia's capital.

## History and Historical Figures

### Georgian Kings

One of the key elements constituting the content of Georgian identity in elementary school discourse are the kings of Georgia, among whom are the kings Vakhtang Gorgasali (founder of Tbilisi), Parnavaz (founder of the first united Georgian state), David the Builder, Queen Tamar (“united Georgia” and the Golden Age), and Erekle the Second. They are presented and evaluated as key figures (“*Alfa and omega for the Georgian nation*”) in the history of Georgia. The first grade textbook *Music* by Otiashvili includes three Georgian kings together in one picture, Parnavaz, David the Builder, and Queen Tamar. (See pic. 2.11.1) Meanwhile, Vakhtang Gorgasali is presented in a separate lesson entitled *Legend of Tbilisi*. Besides, on the topic of Tbilisi, the textbook describes King Vakhtang Gorgasali and the tremendous love the Georgian nation [ქართველები] has towards him. (Details of King Vakhtang Gorgasali can be seen in the part allocated to Tbilisi, page 84-88).

### Parnavaz

*You, Parnaoz, you united the country under  
your government,  
You gave the Georgians the first book,  
You consolidated the nation and made it  
understand the tradition and power of unity. (G.  
Orbeliani)*

In the fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* within the chapter entitled *Our Homeland* [საქართველო] students find the lesson called *The First Georgian State and King Parnavaz*, which in two pages presents how the first united Georgian state [საბჭოთა ქვეყანა] was formed and the role of Parnavaz, the King of Qartli, and Quja, the Governor of Egrisi” (Surguladze ... 2010:33). At the end of the lesson, the authors make the following concluding remark about King Parnavaz’s reign, “*Parnavaz reigned for 65 years, during which he carried out many significant changes in the kingdom of Qartli. In particular, he established strong royal power, introduced state religion, and a common state language*” (Surguladze ... 2010:34). This brief presentation of Parnavaz’s contribution to Georgian history is developed and expanded within the sixth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* (Surguladze ... 2011:95-98).

The sixth grade textbook *Georgian Language and Literature* includes also two lessons about King Parnavaz within a broader chapter *Our Famous Ancestors*. Through the work *The Life of*

*Parnavaz* (L. Mroveli), and a piece from the G. Orbeliani poem *Toast*, his life, deeds, and contribution to Georgia's and the Georgians' success are described and discussed, and Parnavaz himself praised and appreciated. The following integrated lesson (Georgian, *Chveni Sakartvelo*, and Physical training) from one of the Tbilisi schools in the sixth grade regarding the life of Parnavaz and the origins of Georgian script is one example illustrating the great significance attached to King Parnavaz, who has been interpreted as a hero, and someone the children should try to be like. In the design of the given integrated lesson, the two above mentioned literary works were used. Included were tasks relating to the monument dedicated to King Parnavaz in Tbilisi, with the scene with a bow performed in order to illustrate the corresponding fragment from Parnavaz's hunting according to *Life of Parnavaz* by L. Mroveli. (See pic. 2.11.3) The lesson also incorporated physical exercise to collect the letters of the name Parnavaz as fast as possible with the following words: "*King Parnavaz used to exercise a lot, so that he would be a good warrior and hunter*". As to the content of the lesson, it actually repeats the main ideas in the textbooks, but at the same time adding new aspects and details, mostly about daily life and complementing with artistic performance as well as emotional load. Below a passage from the integrated lesson described above is presented as illustration for the mentioned practice:

*"The life of King Pharnavaz is Alfa and Omega for the Georgian nation that gave us the Bolnisi Sioni inscription; thanks to it the history of the Georgian nation and the Knight in the Panther's Skin by Rustaveli were written. Grandfather bequeathed his grandchild with nine words: sky-heaven, roads, land, home, cradle, mother tongue, sanctuary, harvest, and Georgia. Georgia is our homeland and Georgian is our mother tongue. There are fourteen written languages in the world, and Georgian is one of them"* (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011c).

During the field observations, this motif (praising Parnavaz for the Georgian letters) had also been met in school celebrations or in-class events on the occasion of the completion of learning the Georgian alphabet as well as within teachers' discourse, "*The kids should know also about Georgia's past...and specifically about Parnavaz's life. During his reign so many important things happened - the country united, and he created the language, a written language*" (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).



## David the Builder and the Didgori Battle

Above the first grade *Music* textbook presentation for the three kings of Georgia including David the Builder was described (see page 113). The next meeting with the king takes place during the second grade. The second grade textbook of the subject *Music* makes reference to David the Builder regarding the personages of the textbook travelling throughout Georgia, this time - in Imereti. Mainly, it introduces to the student the story of David the Builder and his burial place: “*The Gelati monastery built by David the Builder, he, according to his own will, is buried there in the main gateway so that everyone could walk on his burial place. With this will the great king showed a rare example of modesty and deference to the descendants*” (Otiashvili 2011a:25).

Textbooks of Georgian language introduce David the Builder starting from the third grade with a text entitled *The Erudite King* [ა უ ჳ უ ა ჟ ო ზ ნ ო ბ ს ო ო ] with a small introductory passage asking the children to remember the “hero-kings” of Georgia, and to think of Georgia’s most famous one. The small text emphasizes David the Builder’s love towards books and education. “He is the most educated king among the Georgian kings”, the text says (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:11). The interviews and observations showed that as an introductory part for this lesson, teachers gave a brief talk about David the Builder, his biography, and about the time of his reign. During these introductory small speech (“mini-lectures” as they used to call it) the teachers commonly provided information about: the dates of his birth and years of his reign, whose son he was, when he died, where is he now buried, how it came he was buried in Gelati monastery gateway. They also described his merits as a king and what he deed being the governor of the country, particularly, *how powerful Georgia became under his governance, he united the country, what churches, monasteries he built, he initiated to send talented young people abroad to study, many praising epithets that were assigned to him, how he was canonized by the Church*” (Field observations and interviews with teachers, Tbilisi, 2011).

The fourth and fifth grade textbooks also contain texts, literary works, and lessons related to David the Builder. For example, there is a piece on the Didgori battle from *David the Builder* by L. Sanikidze, and a passage from the work of an unknown author entitled *The Life of David, the King of Kings*.

In the sixth grade, within the subject *Chveni Sakartvelo*, which lasts for two lessons (a six-page text with illustrations) the authors present David the Builder. The text of the textbook contains information describing the time of his reign, the hard situation that Georgia was in because of the Seljuq-Turks’ invasions, how he could mobilize the country and defeat the enemies, as well as about

the Didgori Battle. Lesson 44 further presents how the battle was won, highlighting the king's personal bravery, ultimate physical power, and mental farsightedness, emphasizing his heroic personality and in a way mythologizing the king. The text starts with the following passage: *“Georgia that was united by Bagrat the Third now was in a big danger: from one side internal disorder, from the other side Seljuq-Turks’ invasions. Under these conditions David the Fourth, the Builder ascended the throne. His farsighted and brave policy not only saved Georgia, but also turned it into the most powerful state in Caucasus. Our country was coerced to pay taxes to Seldjuq Sultan”* (Surguladze ... 2011:123). Further in the next page the textbook says, *“The king led his worriers encouraging them with his lion-like calls and breaking into the lines of the enemy like a hurricane. He knocked down with his strong arm everyone facing him. His sword unleashed rivers of blood. On that fierce day three of his horses were killed and he completed the fight on his forth horse...”* (Surguladze ... 2011:124).

The textbook elaborates on the importance and crucial role of the Didgori Battle for the country and the Georgian nation, “Didgori battle: that was the time when the fate of our country was put on trial. The victory of the Didgori Battle saved our country from destruction and brought glory and fame to its brave king. Rulers of the neighboring Turkish sultanates would not dare to attack Georgia anymore” (Surguladze ... 2011:124-125). The students had lessons connected to the Didgori Battle in the framework of language subjects in earlier grades as well (The Didgori Battle (according L. Sanikidze), Esteeming the Care and Attention Rendered [ამგობ დავახებდა] by A. Arabidze, etc.). A poem by A. Arabidze is an example of those literary works and lessons, which serve as a basis for teaching history together with literary work.

The analyses of the lesson plans prepared by the teachers reveals that apart from the grammar and language teaching aims for this lesson the teachers have set additional aims related to teaching history and imposing patriotism. For example, the lesson plans stated the aims like “familiarization with the past of the country/homeland”, “familiarization with our hero-ancestors and their service to the country”, “kindling the feeling of love towards the homeland”, and etc.. The second lesson of the same textbook is allocated to a description of the reforms that David the Builder initiated, his efforts in developing the country and making it more powerful, and his special attitude towards books, reading, education, and culture.

The fate-deciding role of the Didgori Battle, the braveness and power of David the Builder and his army (as, for example, noted in the textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo*) is the key and visible narrative of the teachers’ discourse as well. Below are excerpts illustrating this discourse:

*“Georgians attained a brilliant victory on the Didgori Valley, which laid the grounds for the creation of a unified and powerful state stretching from Nikopsia to Derbend and from Ovsetia to Aragatsi ” ... "This war was won by David the Builder. He liberated and brought under his control the city of Tbilisi, which had been under foreign rule for 400 years, and moved the capital from Kutaisi to Tbilisi" (Teachers, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).*

Below is an example of a third grade integrated lesson (of the subjects *Nature* and *Georgian Language*) where one of the groups had a task to present the theme *David the Builder*. This integrated lesson thus included two main aspect history teaching and presentation of the king as a hero. First, they describe the hard situation in Georgia of those times known as “Great Turkishness” [”დიდი თურქობა”]. They also emphasize the fact that it was during this hard situation that the 16-year old David was crowned king in 1089. The students then told about the significance of the Didgori Battle for Georgia, which happened in 12 August 1121. The Turkish army was much bigger than the Georgian one lead by David the Builder (300, 000 versus 56, 000). With victory in this battle, David the Builder freed and united the city of Tbilisi, which had been in foreign hands for 400 years, and Tbilisi was made the capital city instead of Kutaisi. Besides the above-mentioned, during this integrated lesson students referred also to the individual characteristics of the king: *“He was very educated. He knew many foreign languages. He started to lead the country energetically. He built churches, monasteries, schools, and hospitals and urged young people to learn. Under David the Builder, the country was building and people’s wellbeing was improving. This is why people called him the "Builder".* The students also referred to the significant reforms in the church undertaken by the king. They talked also about his will regarding his own burial place (through performing the poem by A. Kalandadze *Step on Me* [ფეხი დამადგოთ]) (Integrated Lesson Plan 2011d).

The three main constant items that have been revealed as accompanying the lessons connected to David the Builder in the elementary grades are the map of Georgia of that time, Gelati Monastery and the Fresco of the King David. (See pic. 2.11.4)

## **Queen Tamar**

*“The king of kings and the queen of queens, of the Abkhaz, Georgians, Rans, Kakhetians, and Armenians, Shirvanians*

*Shahanshahs, and the possessor of all of the East and West by imperial power”<sup>46</sup>*

The textbooks first introduce students to the picture of Queen Tamar<sup>47</sup> in the first grade *Music* textbook within the lesson dedicated to the legend about Tbilisi and to King Vakhtang Gorgasali (Otiashvili 2011:36-37).

The third grade textbook *Georgian* provides a text (according to I. Gogebashvili) about Queen Tamar. Through introductory questions, teachers try to gauge what the students already know about her, in order to start a conversation in the classroom. The text is accompanied with a picture of the queen. The text that the authors provide includes a brief historical overview of Queen Tamar’s reign, a brief assessment of the country, references to her personal characteristics, and her merits as the governor of the country. Below are several passages from the text characterizing the king as “gifted with many talents”, “clever, strong willed, philanthropic, kind-hearted, and beautiful”, “a strong supporter of Christianity”, and “a king having created one of the most powerful countries of the world”.

*“...Georgia was already a united and powerful country. This powerful country was made even more powerful by Tamar and became one of the most powerful countries of the world”* (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:92).

*“Tamar was gifted with every kind of talents, besides, the merits of her parents (grandparents) passed to her - cleverness, strong will, philanthropic heart and beauty. All of these made her the most beloved king of the Georgian people”* (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:93).

*“As a god-loving king, she [the King Tamar] contributed much to the strengthening of Christianity.... After her death, the Georgian people canonized her”* (Maghlakelidze ... 2008:93).

Furthermore, students are invited to discuss the following statement: “Tamar was a wise, strong, and just king” (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:94). During the lessons, I could observe frequent

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<sup>46</sup> “მეფეთ მეფე და დედოფალთ დედოფალი აფხაზთა, ქართველთა, რანთა, კახთა და სომეხთა, შირვანთა და შაჰანშათა და ყოვლისა აღმოსავლეთისა და დასავლეთისა თვითმფლობელობითა მპყრობელი”.

<sup>47</sup> One would meet usage of both versions *Queen Tamar* and *King Tamar*. In the dissertation I used those versions in the form as it had been used in the source, i.e. textbooks and within the speech of the teachers.

usage of Power Point slide shows and short films about King Tamar (ex., Education Resource “Tamar mefe” 2009).

The fifth and sixth grade textbooks *Georgian Language and Literature* offer students the chance to learn and discuss the works of different poets dedicated to King Tamar. The fifth grade textbook offers a piece from the poem by G. Orbeliani *Toast* entitled *They Raised Tamar’s Flag* [თამარის დროშა გაშალეს (Rodonaia ... 2010:123)]. The sixth grade textbook presents the poem *Great Tamar* [დიდი თამარი] by V. Pshavela, where the students again find various epithets dedicated to King Tamar (...you, the soul of Georgians, you, the mother of Georgians!) The fifth grade textbook *Art*, presents Tamar, along with other major Georgian kings, through a two-page section with illustrations within the theme of *Georgia’s Kings*. In one part of the lesson, the kings are presented, while their deeds and lives discussed through examples of monuments dedicated to them and the widely known frescos in the monasteries. Students are offered to discuss the question of how much the monument corresponds to the personality and deeds of the kings, and what exact features are reflected in the monument. Among the monuments depicted through pictures, students find the monuments to David the Builder, Vakhtang Gorgasali, and King Parnavaz in Tbilisi, the monument to Queen Tamar in Akhaltsikhe, frescoes of David the Builder in Gelati monastery, and Queen Tamar in Vardzia monastery. Within the introductory part of the lesson, the authors invite students to recall what they know about Georgian kings and historical figures as well as their “heroic deeds”, discuss the epithets that were given to the kings such as *The Builder*, *The Brilliant*, *The Devoted* (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:80-81). Thus, here the kings are mentioned not only as key figures of Georgian history (building blocks of Georgian identity), but they are also referred to as heroes, and their lives as heroic.

The sixth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* also introduces King Tamar. However, her biography goes into more details including the battles the Georgian army won under her leadership, the enlargement of the territories of the kingdom, and her influence over the neighboring countries. The textbook’s three-page lesson ends with a concluding remark about Queen Tamar, saying, “*In the memory of the Georgian people [ბ ა ლ ბ ა] the name of Queen Tamar is connected with power, progress, and the cultural development of our country. The historian of her time called her “The Sun of Kings” [ა ჯ გ ჯ ო ა ბ ე] and “The Wisest of the Wise” [ბ რ ძ ე ბ ო ა ბ რ ძ ე ბ ა]. Poets praise her beauty, wisdom, and virtue*” (Surguladze ... 2011:131). (See pic. 2.11.2)

Open lessons, integrated lessons, and events dedicated to King/Queen Tamar have been revealed of high frequency in Tbilisi schools. During one such lesson in the fifth grade, for example,

the teacher used a Power Point slide show presentation with various illustrations related to Queen Tamar (paintings, frescos, monasteries, and other items related to her reign of Georgia). (See pic. 2.12.1)<sup>48</sup> A wide variety of such open lessons and Power Point presentations are available on the portal LeMill. King Tamar is also referred to often within the lessons (sometimes during integrated lessons of *Art* and *Chveni Sakartvelo* in the fifth grade) and in particular regard about the monastery in Vardzia.

Furthermore, knowledge and references about the kings of Georgia (including Queen Tamar) is part of the music lessons as well. Here one of the themes related to King Tamar as it was articulated in the framework of music lessons.

*“First, students say what they know about the king, and then music teachers tell them stories relevant to aspects related to music and dance; for example, what music they used to play in royal ceremonies and receptions, what rituals and ceremonies they had then and how they played Georgian music. We also teach them one or two such songs. For example, we take an example from the book, which contains an episode related to Queen Tamar's wedding, describing the Queen's passage under an arch of daggers accompanied by a ritual song”* (A teacher of music, Tbilisi, 2012).

Below are three more exempts from the teachers' discourse illustrating the perception of the Queen Tamar with her key role in Georgian History and as constituent symbolic element of Georgian identity.

*“This [Tamar] is a female king who should be revered by all Georgians. At that time, Georgia was unified, stretching from Nikozia to Derbend. This was a golden age in Georgian history. Georgia was quite a strong country politically as well as socially and economically. Georgian writers and poets always praised her, and they [students] should know this”* (Language teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

*“Tamar was deserving successor and grandchild of David. There was a golden age during her time. I know that these themes are too in-depth for little children in early grades, but I*

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<sup>48</sup> In the information portal *LeMill* a search with the key word “King Tamar” resulted in a considerable number of results, 304 items, lesson plans, ppt presentations, maps and other materials used during the classes in Georgia (mostly uploaded by Tbilisi school teachers).

*think that they should know about our worthy kings from childhood”* (Language teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

*“Regarding Tamar, I usually mention one distinctive aspect that she was a woman and was an excellent king. Not only was she in no way inferior to but even exceeded other kings in that she united Georgia. She united also the territories that had been lost. Once again I put a focus on the fact that "The lion’s cubs are equal, male or female“* (Language teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

## **The King Erekle, the Krtsanisi Battle, and the Notion of Heroism**

The third grade textbook *Georgian Language* contains a lesson entitled *300 Devoted Peasants*, in which King Erekle, the Persians, the enemy, and the battle of Krtsanisi are presented. The people from Aragvi swore to each other before going to battle, *“either we will defeat the enemy or we will die in battle”*. The textbook speaks of it as brave oath, which was duly honored. The enemy outnumbered the Georgians, but none of the Aragvian soldiers turned their backs to the enemy. Everyone struggled until the final drop of blood. This battle occurred in the valley of Krtsanisi near Tbilisi (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:86).

The general narrative accompanying King Erekle concerns heroism, braveness, devotion to the country, and the sacrifice of one’s life for the sake of the homeland. The plots about the king relate to battles, the enemy, and heroism. Thus, the introductory part for this lesson includes several questions, most of which are about Georgian heroes, and about what made them as such. Another theme contained here is the nation’s history and how important it is to know it well (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:86). Furthermore, in the questions for discussion examples of self-image (of the Georgian nation) construction, in which the authors invite students to think over the features of the Georgian people concerning the story about the Krtsanisi battle, were regarded (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:87). The text is illustrated with a picture of King Erekle. The introductory and resuming questions of the lesson in the third grade textbook *Georgian Language* entitled *Nine Brothers Kherkheulidze* (according to I. Gogebashvili) urges students to think over the topics of heroism and battles. The questions ask, *“What have you heard about female Georgian heroes? What do you think heroism can say about a person in battle?”* (Maghlakelidze ... 2008b:87;90). The text tells about a family of nine brothers who were devotedly taking part in the struggle against Shah Abbas’s army, which was twice as big as the Georgian army. While they were fighting bravely and devotedly, the Persian army got additional forces and became stronger, with the exhausted Georgian soldiers, and thus

finding it difficult to fight anymore. The nine brothers, however, decided not to give up. They decided to either beat the enemy or die in the battlefield. The story further tells about their mother and that she was present at the battlefield and kept encouraging her sons. When one of them was seriously wounded in battle, she took the flag of Georgia from her hands and passed it to another son.

Apart from the aims related to language teaching that this lesson has there are other aims set up by teachers for this lesson, for example, “Learning the historical past of our country”, and “getting familiar with the heroes devoted to the homeland”. Several of these aims were also emphasized in many of the reviewed plans for the lessons. During in-class implementations of this lesson the story told were being complemented with different new aspects through the discussion of proverbs, reading, comparisons with other literary works (ex., listening to the poem *Nine Brothers Kherkheulidze* by L. Asatiani), and writing essays. Another addition that was made as classes held in the classroom concerned to the gender aspect of heroism, it was more highlighted by teachers and it got more space for discussion than it had been envisaged by the text (ex., “...in the battles of the Georgians not only mothers used to take part but also sisters”). The notion of enemy and enmity is one of the constituting elements in the lessons related to heroism, battles, the kings, etc.. The teachers discuss the topics and elaborate on these topics in the classrooms, however trying to find so called “a child-appropriate angle” to discuss the issue. Here are several such examples of this attitude:

*“...third grade students are too young to speak about politics, but I try to find one or two words from our mother-history exactly connected to this lesson, to tell that we have been surrounded by nations of different faith who have constantly been trying to conquer Georgia because of its geographic location and also because of its beauty” (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2012).*

*“...From ancient times we have had contacts and invasion from outside enemies” (Field observation, Tbilisi, 2011). “Our homeland is Georgia. Georgia is an amazing country. Later on I will show you a big map. There were always battles over Georgia, a tiny place, because it is a very beautiful country” (Field observation, first grade, Tbilisi, 2012).*

Also in consecutive grades, the students meet with King Erekle and the battles connected with him. In particular, they read and discuss the Krtsanisi Battle, King Erekle, and the themes of heroism and devotion to the homeland through different literary works such as *The Krtsanisi Battle*



(according to I. Gogebashvili), *The King Erekle* and *The Ugly from Ananuri* [ერეკლე მეფე და ანანურელი ულამაზოები] by R. Inanishvili, poems *Krtsanisi Snowdrop* [კრწანისის ენძელა] by E. Merabsihvili and *Poppies of Krtsanisi* [კრწანისის ყაყაჩოები] by L. Asatiani. (See pic. 2.11.5) Related ideas, phrases, and notions that were “flying in the air” during the lessons in the classroom I observed (as well as based on the analyses of the teachers’ official guidebook materials) can be presented in the following collection of thoughts:

*“people, devoted to their homeland”, “loss in the Krtsanisi battle changing the life of Georgians”, “the pain of Georgians caused by the loss of independence” (Maghlakelidze ... 2010:75-82); “...through these lessons we try to evoke feelings of love towards the homeland, remembering the Georgian kings, sacrificing their lives for Georgia, and expressing respect towards them, assessing their deeds, ... Erekle, the king hero, courageous and a deserving man, ... the duty of all Georgians to defend their own homeland, ... power is in unity [ძალა ერთობაშია], poems and literary works devoted to the heroes who died in the Krtsanisi battle, to the memory of 300 Aragvians” (Field observations, Tbilisi, 2010-2011).*

The lessons mentioned above under an umbrella theme of King Erekle created an atmosphere in the classrooms where everything was regarded through the viewpoint of setting an example of heroism, devotion to the homeland for the students, and as an opportunity for the teachers to urge students to be as devoted to their country as their ancestors were.

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* also has a separate lesson connected with King Erekle. Within the first chapter (*Our Homeland*) the students find a lesson *How Erekle the King Took over the Kvareli Fortress* as a continuation for the lesson about the fortresses of Georgia<sup>49</sup>. The students read, “... the fame of Erekle being undefeatable was spread famous in the entire Caucasus” (Surgulaadze ... 2010:50).

The fifth grade textbook *Art*, when presenting the monument to King Erekle in the city Telavi, includes a small text about him saying: “*Erekle was a warrior and a caring king of Georgia. ...he spent a large part of his life in battles and campaigns...people named him “little Kakhi” which represented their great love towards him*” (Kldiashvili ... 2009c:19). During in-class

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<sup>49</sup> The authors of the 2011 edition of the textbook, however, decided to replace this text with another one telling about Tamar the King based on the previous feedback from practicing teachers and experts. (Interview with the publisher, Tbilisi, 2011)

implementations of the lessons teachers were emphasizing the great love that the people had towards the king; how people loved him, appreciated him, and what widespread fame he had among the Georgians and not only.

One of the chapters out of a total of seven of the textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* (grade 6) is dedicated to the history of Georgia starting from the theme *Ancient States on the Territory of Georgia* and ending with the theme *Georgia Today*. Within this chapter, King Erekle is presented within a lesson dedicated to Qartli-Kakheti from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This is how King Erekle is described: “*King Erekle - his contemporaries regarded him as a very talented military and political figure; he was even called the Great Hero of the East [ს დ მ ბ ს ვ ლე მ ბ დო დო ვ მ ბ ბ ]*. The famous monarch of the Prussian Kingdom Fridrikh the Second commented: ‘I am powerful in Europe and the king of Georgia Erekle is in Asia’”. According to the textbook, King Erekle left the deepest trace in the memory of Georgian people. The overwhelming sorrow caused by his death was expressed in a folk poem: “*Georgians, can’t you understand that no longer have you the iron gate, you no longer have King Erekle, and the dynasty of Bagrationi*” (Surguladze ... 2011:173). The textbook refers also to the Krtsanisi battle and the heroes saying that, “*the 300 bravest young men from Aragvi gorge, peasants from Pshav, Khevsureti, and Kizikhi (ქ ბ ბ ბ ბ ) took an oath under which if the defeat was unavoidable they would not come back alive from the battlefield.... They showed a surprising example of real heroism*” (Surguladze ... 2011:173). This textbook reference about the Krtsanisi battle from a historical point of view, in a sense, concludes and resumes the information/knowledge and narratives of the textbooks of the previous grades once more highlighting the key role of the battle and about the significance of this the battle for preservation of the Georgian identity. The crucial role of the Krtsanisi battle is often mentioned in teachers’ discourse as well. Below is an example illustrating this:

*“This is just a part of the history of our country, the part that any Georgian should know: Krtsanisi was the battle thanks to which we have preserved our identity as Georgians, and thanks to which we still exist as a nation [ქ ბ ბ ]”* (Language teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

In this example, we see that the teacher emphasizes Krtsani battle first, as an element of Georgiannes and second, its role in preserving the nation.

A visit to Telavi, King Erekle’s Palace, is included in the excursion plans of many schools in Tbilisi. These visits serve as a way to resume the knowledge and emotions they accumulated

through many lessons connected to King Erekle and about the time he was governing Georgia; to see where he lived, to listen to the tour guides talking about the king's life, and different stories about him including those telling about his character, habits and everyday life.

## **Writers and Public Figures**

### **Ilia Chavchavadze**

*No genius in the world might have such importance for his nation, as Ilia Chavchavadze for Georgia (I. Gogebashvili).*

Students are acquainted with literary works by Ilia Chavchavadze starting from the fourth grade textbook by N. Maghlakelidze et al.. Examples of the works are the story A Sunny Day [მზის დღე] in the fourth grade, The Treasury of the Georgians' Heart [ქართველების გულის საუნჯე] and Nikoloz Gostashabashvili in the fifth grade (Education Resource by L. Zedginidze 2012). In addition, four pieces in the fifth grade and three pieces are provided in the sixth grade textbooks Georgian Language and Literature by Rodonaia et al..

All the lessons devoted to the literary works of Ilia Chavchavadze conducted in the classroom (as well as written in the lesson plans) included an introductory talk about Ilia Chavchavadze as a writer and public figure, as well as a discussion about his deeds for the sake of the homeland, though the textbook does not contain that on the pages (Education Resource by L. Zedginidze 2012). Very often open and integrated lessons are conducted, which are either dedicated to Chavchavadze himself, or in relation to his literary works, in the case of which a large section is allocated to Chavchavadze and his great role in the history of Georgia. These lessons have been revealed in a high frequency and intensity in schools especially starting from the fourth grade.

The teachers' discourse revealed a wide range of epithets assigned to Ilia Chavchavadze pointing at several perceptions of Ilia Chavchavadze sacralising his figure such as "leader, father and (crownless) king" of the nation. Namely, close reading of lesson plans and integrated lesson reports, analyzing interviews with teachers, and field observations have revealed a range of epithets and characteristics attached to Ilia Chavchavadze, a typical list of which we provide below:

*"he authored works that took their valuable place in the treasury of Georgian literature for a long time...praiseworthy son of the Georgian nation [ქართველი ერის საამყო შვილი],*

*...his decision was to be the leader of the nation, ...only God-blessed persons could take that path...he was canonized by the church for his service towards the nation [ჯ ო ო]...the father of the nation, spiritual father; ...And then was recognized as Saint in Georgia by the Georgian church and about him we tell the students everything... Crownless king [უგვირგვინო მეფე]; Only God-blessed people can walk this most difficult road. ... the biggest flagman of the national liberation movement” (Field observation, Tbilisi, 2010-2012).*

Here is an example of an open integrated lesson in the sixth grade in one of the Tbilisi schools, which uses Ilia Chavchavadze’s work *Nikoloz Gostashabashvili*. Teachers normally prepare and train students for the open-integrated lessons, with the teachers in charge of material and lesson program preparation. In this sense, the open and integrated lessons can very often be considered as a type of staged performance with teachers as “script writers” and students as “actors” (which is characteristic also for schools in Armenia). The following small passage from the lesson illustrates the observed model of discussing the value component and normative role of literary works in language subjects at school, which is also complemented with historical context and knowledge:

*Teacher: What is embodied in this work?*

*Student: One of the heroic episodes of Georgia’s history, that is to say, the real image of Giorgi the Twelfth.*

*Teacher: What is the aim of this work?*

*Student: Understanding of homeland in the soul of a brave man [სამშობლოს გაგება ვაჟკაცის სულში].*

*Teacher: What made Nikoloz Gostasabishvili fight with the Iranians? Was it revenge?*

*Students: It was not revenge; he wanted the death of the five brave young men not to go unpunished, so not to bring shame on the Georgian army” (Tbilisi school, 2011).*

In this example, we saw a significant presence of elements of history teaching and patriotic education in the meaning of “devotion to the homeland, sacrificing life for the sake of the homeland” during the class of a language subject.

It is in the sixth grade, however, that biography of Ilia Chavchavadze and the appreciation of his deeds for the Georgian nation (which is followed by another piece from his works, *Home Affairs* [შინაური მიმოხილვები]) is introduced within the textbooks *Georgian Language and Literature*.

In particular, through this lesson students are expected to know the following: who is Ilia Chavchavadze, what is his role towards the Georgian nation, why he is called ‘spiritual father of the nation’ [ერის სულიერი მამა], what is his role in the development of literacy among Georgian society, why was he named Saint Ilia the Righteous by the nation, why should be his deeds valued, etc. As a matter of fact, by the time the textbook provides a summary about Ilia Chavchavadze in the sixth grade, the teachers have already covered the information piece by piece during previous grades.

The sixth grade textbook of the subject *Music* also has a small passage about Ilia Chavchavadze from a specific point of view, telling the students that he was a big lover of music and how he was the first to speak about the necessity of having a national opera in 1886, after having listened to the choir of Lado Aghniashvili (Otiashvili 2011c:41). A brief reference to Ilia Chavchavadze is made also in the fourth grade, where the textbook introduces the students to a small poem by Ilia Chavchavadze with the task of creating a song for it. A small text follows, within which Ilia Chavchavadze and his memories about his teacher in Kvareli are remembered, who “first read a prayer and poems, and then started the class with playing plays”. These classes supposedly helped Chavchavadze “*being away from homeland to write the poem. The poet missed his country, took its hardships close to heart, and cherished hopes for its future*” (Otiashvili 2011c:77).

References to the great role and efforts for the sake of the homeland of Ilia Chavchavadze are also met in the fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* within the theme *From the Society for Spread of Literacy to the University*, which tells the story about the 40-50 young Georgian noblemen who had received their higher education abroad. The text reads, “*Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Iakob Gogebashvili, Niko Tskhedadze and others knew very well that the reason behind the backwardness of our country was the lack of education, and the governors of the Russian Empire did not want to change the situation. That is why they initiated creation of the folk’s school [ს ა ბ ა ლბ ო ს კ ო ლა ]. For this purpose, about 130 years ago they formed ‘Society for spreading literacy among Georgians’*” (Surguladze ... 2010:229).

Pictures of Ilia Chavchavadze are placed in nearly all schools either in the entrance hall, or on the walls of the second/third floors, where they usually occupy a central space, and can be visually seen from many places. The pictures have been made different times, very old pictures and new pictures, which shows that this has been a long-time practice. They are diverse, hand-made, or industrially published, which also shows that the initiatives have been coming from the bottom, i.e., teachers, school directors and schools administration have been searching and using artistic and

creative forms of ensuring the presence of Ilia Chavchavaze's image in the school. These pictures depict Ilia Chavchavadze in his different ages. (See pic. 2.13) Besides the pictures of Ilia Chavchavadze, the walls of the classrooms very often contain wall-paper and posters that are results of student group-work dedicated to Ilia Chavchavadze and his activities, his role, and his mission in the life of the Georgian nation (they get this task starting from the fifth grade). (pic. 2.14.1; 2.14.5) Diverse representations of the famous triad formulae by Ilia Chavchavadze 'language, homeland, faith' have been observed on classroom walls. (pic. 2.14.2; 2.14.3)

The lessons dedicated to Ilia Chavchavadze as well as to his literary works serve also as a space and opportunity to speak about the identity of the Georgian people, and the deeds of Chavchavadze for the nation. Teachers commonly open discussions for the students to think over what they themselves can do as representatives of the Georgian nation [ქართველები]. The teachers also urge students to follow the example of Ilia Chavchavadze, behave like him, while presenting him as a hero. For example, here is passage from a narration during an open integrated lesson (subjects *Georgian Language and Art*) in the fourth grade with the theme *Ilia Chavchavadze: Life and Work*. In this lesson students watched a Power Point slide show presentation about Ilia Chavchavadze's biography accompanied with the song "*My Dear Country*". This is how the teacher assessed the outcome of the lesson:

*"...At the end of the lesson the students concluded that Ilia's works make us ponder about who we are, what being a Georgian obliges us to do, what Ilia requires from the future generation, what we should cherish most of all, that thing being 'language, homeland and faith' .... It is the duty of every Georgian to fulfill Ilia's commandments"* (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).

## **Shota Rustaveli and the Knight in the Panther's Skin**

Students first meet the Knight in the Panther's Skin in the second grade through the lesson *A Man Was Going down the Road* [გზაზე ერთი კაცი მიდიოდა]. The lesson appears also to be an opportunity to speak about the period of King Tamar's reign, the work itself, and its translations to different languages visually accompanied with pictures of those different editors, illustrations of his

work, and pictures of Shota Rustaveli himself. Lessons are also accompanied with visual materials.<sup>50</sup>

The fourth grade textbook *Georgian Language* by Maghlakelidze presents a text about Shota Rustaveli (according to Gogebashvili) and a small piece from the work *The Story of the Men who Fell in the Well* [ქაში ჩავარდნილი კაცის ამბავი]. Teachers used this lessons as a means to “provide simple information about Shota Rustaveli and *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*”, as well as to introduce students with several aphorisms from the epic poem.

In the fifth grade, students learn about Shota Rustaveli and *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* during a lesson dedicated to the work itself, which besides a brief introduction of Shota Rustaveli and his work, includes classroom task on aphorisms, as well as an analysis of a piece of the work itself Apointing Tinatin as King [თინათინის გამეფება]. This lesson is seen also as a platform to “understand Rustaveli’s wisdom through famous aphorisms” as viewed by the teachers. One of the aims of the lessons in the textbooks *Georgian Language* is considered to be getting familiar with and understanding the era in which the heroes presented in the literary works lived in. In this case, these heroes were David the Builder and King Tamar (Education Resource by E. Beruashvili 2012). In Tbilisi schools often can be met usage of Power Point slide show presentations for either ordinary lessons or open/integrated lessons, in which teachers collect visual material related to the topic. The Knight in the Panther’s Skin is one such popular topic about which visual materials are being gathered consisting of information and pictures of Shota Rustaveli, illustrations from different editions of the poem. (ex., Beruashvili 2012)

The sixth grade textbook *Georgian Language and Literature* introduces Shota Rustaveli as a writer. The lesson also includes another piece from the *Knight in the Panther's Skin* allocating to it relatively more space than in the previous two years. First, his biography is presented, afterwards the piece *The Arabs’ King Sees the Young Man in the Panther's Skin* follows. (See pic. 2.15.1)

Thus, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* is taught in pieces throughout the entire schooling period; by the time students reach the upper grades they should have learned the whole work. (See pic. 2.15.2) However, it is important to note here that children usually appear to be familiar with the work of Shota Rustaveli from their families even before coming to school. The book is supposed to be a common “member” of the family libraries in Georgia. “*You will not find a Georgian family that*

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<sup>50</sup> For one such example, see the link <http://lemill.net/lemill-server/content/webpages/vefxistkaosani2013video-2>. Many of the illustrations in this video are met in the schools, within in-class decorations, or related to different lessons on Shota Rustaveli or the work *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* in almost each grade.

wouldn't have this book. There used to be many people who knew the whole work by heart", as it was often formulated by teachers (Field observation, Tbilisi, 2011-2012).

Throughout teachers' discourse, one can see diverse kinds of epithets and characterization, in which teachers point out the key places in the work of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* (and Shota Rustaveli) regarding Georgian identity. Here is such one example of description given by a teacher: "valuable treasure for all Georgians, the masterpiece of Georgian literature, the brilliant sample of not only an epos, but of the entire Georgian literature". The significant amount of education resources that teachers use including Power Point presentations, open and integrated lesson plans, and other methodical resources points at a high level of popularity of themes related to Shota Rustaveli and the epic poem *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*. Aphorisms from the poem have been one of the key elements of the lessons related to Shota Rustaveli, with different ideas, ideals, and values (including elements of patriotic education) discussed and shared in the classrooms as well as during various on-stage events and school celebrations. Here are several of the most commonly used aphorisms observed during fieldwork and in the analyzed material: "The lion's cubs are equal, male or female", "He who does not seek a friend is an enemy to himself", "Sweet language can bring the snake out of its hole", "The good defeated the evil, its power is everlasting". (See pic. 2.15.2)

The ritual and ceremonial dimensions at the schools also contain visual representations of the importance attached to Shota Rustaveli and his work *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, its popularity and assignment a role of national identity element to it, ex., in-class posters wall-posters - commonly created by the students themselves as a home task - depicting Shota Rustaveli among the "Great Georgians". (See pic. 2.15.1) There have been observed small performances based on the motifs of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* held in schools by elementary grade students with the help and initiative of the teachers.

## **Food and Drink**

### ***Toneh and Shotis Puri***

The first grade textbooks, ABC books involve images and visual material at the core of the book. Teachers build the lesson based on the images and pictures in order to teach children reading and writing. Among such pictures in the textbook *Dedaena* by Maghlakelidze et al. are those of *toneh* and *Shoti*-bread. (See pic. 2.16.1) They are present also in the illustrations throughout the second grade textbooks of various school subjects. During the interviews and lesson observations, it



was noted that the discussions around the *toneh* and *Shoti*-bread interpreted and presented them as “our” [Georgian] bread, thus serving as an illustration of a food element of national identity composition.

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* has a lesson entitled *What is Being Baked Out of Grains in Georgia?* within a larger chapter called *Traditional Agricultural Works in Georgia*. The authors with extensive use of illustrations within three pages explain “*what general products were made out of grain in Georgia*” (Surguladze ... 2010:178). The textbook then elaborates on different types of grains, bread, and other products made out of grain, describing them and the areal of their spread in Georgia. In one of the illustrated materials, the authors present different names of the bread now used in Georgia such as ქ ა რ ხ ნ ი ს პ უ რ ი , თ ო ნ ი ს პ უ რ ი , "დ ე დ ა ს პ უ რ ი ", ნ ა ზ უ ქ ი . Among them one can read: “*In the toneh the well-known kakhnetian Shotis puri, which is also called ‘dedas puri’, is baked*” (Surguladze ... 2010: 179). The textbook starts with the history of grains in Georgia “*...there are various types of grains in Georgia. Majority of them are spread from ancient times (უ ძ გ ე ლ ე ს ი დ რ ო ი დ ა ნ ), the corn entered into our life 400 years ago and has spread especially in Western Georgia. The reason for the diversity of grains in Georgia is its relief, soil, climate and other kind of diversity in surroundings*” (Surguladze ... 2010:178). In a separate illustrated material the authors speak about corn fields, clay pan [კ ე ბ ი ], and *ghomi* widespread in Georgia.

## **Vine (ვაზი), Grapes, Vineyard (ვენახი), Wine, Vintage (როგელი), and Churchkhela**

“ *The kernel of the crunching nut!  
Is dressed in botchy fur!  
Who do we offer it to? – the one with teeth,  
What use is it for the toothless!*”  
(*A riddle for the word Churchkhela, Tbilisi, 2012*)

The first grade textbook *Art* has a separate class entitled *Grapes*, through which children are expected to learn and practice making grapes out of different materials (Kldiashvili ... 2009:40;41). Under the general theme *Vintage* [როგელი] the textbook of the subject *Nature* presents pictures of grapes, the harvesting process of grapes, and a scene of *churchkhela* being dried by an elderly village woman (Kvantaliani 2009:29). (See pic. 2.17.1; 2.17.3; 2.17.5)

The second grade textbook *Georgian Language* has a short story entitled *Churchkhela* by K. Chilashvili. The plot of the story revolves around the beloved *Churchkheldas* of Taso, a little girl in her grandma's house in the countryside in autumn. Making *churchkheldas* is described as a common practice there, while the copy-book for the same textbook also has a grammatical exercise with the word *churchkhela* (with its image as illustration) (Maghlakelidze ... 2011:18). (See pic. 2.16.2; 2.16.3)

The autumn -related themes including *churchkhela*, wine, vine, and, grapes, as well as the scenes of a Georgian supra within mostly a rural environment can be considered a common thing for schools. (See pic. 2.16.3)

Below is one example of such school-project as prepared for/by elementary grades called *Lechkhumi Autumn*, the idea of which is the creation and decoration of an Autumn Corner in the school through a photo contest with photos depicting traditions and presenting *churchkhela* in a natural way (Project Plan 2012). This lesson also provides for an opportunity to speak about *churchkhela*, what children know about it, and the season when it is prepared. From the various kinds of pictures and visual materials shown, relating to *churchkhela*, it becomes explicit that *churchkhela* is considered typical for the Georgian people and their way of life, with its preparation most often connected to grandmothers.

The textbooks of the subject *Music* in the second grade include several themes on vine (vineyard), vintage, and wine (Chikvaidze 2011b:40) (Otiashvili 2011b:10-11; 18-19) under an umbrella theme "Georgia is the Homeland of Wine." A short story with a title "*What Does a Building in the Village Need?*" describes autumn in a village and the time for vintage, with a huge vineyard, and the process of grape harvesting. The story ends with words of the grandmother: "*Children, a building in the village, in the country needs kindness, love of native land, support, and care towards each other, and the vine needs to be looked after like a child. Georgia is the homeland of wine: on this land more than 1000 sorts of vine grow. Georgians gave the name wine to this amazing drink and this name has spread all over the world*" (Otiashvili 2011b:18-19). Another song *Let's See the Vineyard*, based on a fairy tale by Gogebashvili, is a popular children's song (Otiashvili 2011b:10). (See pic. 2.17.3; 2.17.4)

Through the work by Sh. Nishnianidze entitled *The Symphony of Vine* children in the third grade gain knowledge and get an opportunity to discuss within a broader theme of Georgia's areas and their sights about the ancient culture of vine in Georgia, about numerous sorts of vine in Georgia and rich traditions of vine cultivation. The lesson has two main parts, one dedicated to the

presentation called *Areas of Georgia* and the second focusing on the theme entitled “*Georgia - Homeland of Wine*.” (See pic. 2.17.2) Below I present two excerpts from teachers’ interview describing the lesson process. The first case illustrates a typical practice of relating vine and (wine culture) to the Georgian identity (Georgiannes). While in the second episode one can see how the topics about Christianity, St. Nino and vine are connected together and related to the Georgian identity as inseparable elements:

*“I tell the students about the ancient culture of vine, that Georgia is considered to be a historical country of vine and wine bringing also the following words of N. Dumbadze as additional material, “Maybe the vine is homeland! Think about it! If it is a low-trained grapevine, you will have to kneel down to pick it, if it’s rambling vine, you must have your hands raised towards the sky when picking. Both surprisingly resemble a prayer. And a prayer does not go with anything so well as homeland!” (Teacher, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011)*

*“This part of is also connected to Christianity and St Nino's vine cross, another building block of the Georgian identity, by means of which the Georgian nation was baptized. I will speak about the country that is under the auspices of the Virgin Mary, show the students the icon “You are the Vineyard” [თუ ვინაა ბოროტი ვინაა ბოროტი], and have them listen to the Anthem” (Teacher of Georgian language, elementary school, Tbilisi, 2011).*

The fourth grade textbook *Music* within the theme Autumn speaks about harvesting, especially about vintage, and traditional ways of making wine, presenting a working song that used to be sang during the grape harvest. This text also ends with a statement “*Georgia is the homeland of wine...*” (Otiashvili 2011d:17).

The fifth grade textbook *Georgian Language and Literature* by N. Maghlakelidze refers to the theme of wine within the literary work *The Magic of Lullaby* [ოცნებასა და ზღაპარსა] through the section entitled *Homeland of Wine*. The guidebook of teachers for this part says, “The title of this chapter indicates that it will deal with Kakheti, the historic homeland of wine...as well as the power of lullaby, the history and traditions of our country...” (Maghlakeldze ... 2011a:15).

The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* has a lesson entitled *Vintage* [წიგნის აღება] within a bigger chapter *Traditional Agricultural Works in Georgia*. The four-page lesson starts with the following text: “*In Georgia, a country famous for its wine culture, vintage is one of the significant things in the year. Through this lesson, we will introduce you to grape harvesting traditions and*

*rituals by using the example of two regions of Georgia, one in eastern and the other in western parts - Kakheti and Guria*”. The students read in the lesson about the old name of the month October – the month of vintage [ს თულის თვე], the month for wine-making [ღვინის თვე] according to Iv. Javakhishvili. The textbook introduces the students to different kinds of knives for cutting vines (see pic. 2.17.6) with paintings and fragments by Pirosmiani paintings illustrating the lesson. (see pic. 2.17.7) The textbook presents small texts with focus rather on illustrations about the cellar [მარაგა] and *churchkhelas* as well. Students read about *churkhkhela*, its recipe, and see a picture of already -made *churchkhelas* drying. The text informs the students also about the practice of the warriors in the past, when taking *churchkhelas* with them when going to war (Surguladze ... 2010:182). In the last page of the lesson, the authors offer to read segments of two poems: *The Song of Vine-Cultivator* by R. Eristavi, and *Is this a Vintage or Your Wedding?* by I. Ninoshvili.

Besides the themes of “*Vine - a Symbol of Georgia*”, “*Georgia - Homeland of Wine*” as described above, another general pattern among teachers observed is connected to the topics on the seasons of the year. Particularly, topics about autumn show that any reference to this season is connected to harvesting, and the main type of plant they connect it to is grapes [vine], thus creating an opportunity to speak further about a large diversity of vine types in Georgia, ancient traditions of winery, etc.

“...What does it [autumn] stand out for? What do they usually do in autumn? They harvest, pick grapes, which is called “rtveli” how they process it, what do they make of it. Why is it good? We tell them [students] that Georgia has a large variety of different types of vine” (Teacher, second grade, Tbilisi, 2012).

“...As we know vine is a symbol of Georgia and all Georgians are familiar with it in one way or another [ვაზი ხომ სიმბოლოა საქართველოსი და ყველა ქართველს აქვს მუხემა]” (Teacher, third grade, Tbilisi, 2011).

## Traditional Clothing and Music

Some of the personages (heroes) of the textbooks *Music* are wearing clothes with folk culture elements; several of the personages wear costumes traditional for specific regions of Georgia. This practice is common also for the textbooks *Language* (i.e. Maghlakelidze ... 2011:16). (See pic. 2.18.1) Santa Claus [თაგლის პასკა] in the textbooks for subjects *Language*, *Music*

and *Art* has a folk outfit, his bag incorporating Khevsurian ornaments (See pic. 2.18.2). One can also meet two versions of Christmas tree, one is a green decorated fir tree, and the other is the traditionally known *chichilaki*. (See pic. 2.18.3)

The integrated lessons, school events, on-stage, and in-class celebrations usually have a musical part, with the students singing and dancing, in which the participants are wearing respective folk clothes considered traditional for each song/dance. One can often meet some of the students playing a traditional musical instrument known as *chonguri* during these events. During my field work I could observe at least one (but often more) student in each class who knew playing *chonguri* and used it in events or celebrations, even small-scale or on class-level. For those celebrations not connected to “national” or folk occasion, for example, a New Year event, the performance are commonly organized in a specific way, so that at least one of the participants (sometimes many) wears traditional costumes, or Georgian folk traditions are represented in one way or another. For example, the Santa Claus [სანტა კლაუსი] is traditional and he wears national folk clothes, a beard, and a hat (usually typical for people in Svaneti). The same pattern of the *Tovlis Papa* can be seen in the textbooks described above. (See pic. 2.18.2) Furthermore, the ceremonies and on-stage events are furnished and decorated in a way that includes elements from the Georgian traditional lifestyle, typical to one or another region of Georgia. (See pic. 2.19.1)

## CONCLUSIONS

### Mapping Representations of Armenian Identity

Maps of ethno –national identities as represented in schools through elementary grade textbooks, rituals, ceremonies and traditions (ritual dimension), as well as symbols and signs (iconographic dimension) of schools. Teachers’ discourse includes interpretations of the teachers and their practices of transformation and transmission of the textbook content during the in-class implementation of lessons. (For visual representation of the maps see Appendix 3 and 4)

The textbook section on representations of the myth concerning common ancestry covers the subject of language (first and third grade textbooks) in the elementary grades. In the fifth grade the textbooks *History of the Armenian Church* and *Hayrenagitutyun* include the story about Hayk and Bell. The latter textbook tells this mythical legend through the lesson entitled *Myths*, where a story very close to the original version of *Movsés Khorenats'i* is told. The textbook *History of the Armenian Church* in the fifth grade tells the story of Hayk and Bell within a wider theme of the

Tower of Babel and the spread of Noah's descendants. According to the textbooks, Hayk is the founder of the nation (the Armenian people), while he is simultaneously a hero, brave and freedom-loving.

The dimension of Space and Territory covers the themes represented in all dimensions of the school: a) capital city of the state (Yerevan); b) landscape and geography; c) flora and fauna; d) territory; and e) homeland and state.

Images, perceptions, and ideas of Yerevan can be summarized in the following passage: *"Erebuni transformed into Yerevan, one of the ancient cities in the world, pink in color, which it received from the pink tuff, still beautiful and capital city for all Armenians living in the world."* This perception about Yerevan is present in the textbooks from the first to the fifth grades. Yerevan is present in everyday school life as well as iconographic space, perhaps more intensively than in the textbook dimension (there is a mandatory class-event dedicated to Yerevan envisaged in the second grade textbook, yearly celebrations of "Erebuni-Yerevan" Day, and wall posters used as in-school and in-class decorations).

The prominence of Ararat in the complex of national symbols in the textbooks is obvious as intensive representations of the mountain (Masis) are found in the textbooks, while texts dedicated to it, symbols, epithets, various visual representations through images, collage-like pictures and other forms of illustrations are all present throughout all five grades. Ararat is part of the teachers' discourse and is present in school space in the form of paintings, wall-posters, drawings on the walls of corridors, and in the classrooms. During on-stage events Ararat is often seen as a decoration or wall illustration. Frequently, Ararat is used as a background, in many cases dominating the stage as if "protecting" and "demarcating" them from the rest of the world. Children are also given tasks for homework to paint, depict, and construct images of Ararat.

More elements of the "national" landscape, such as Mounts Aragats ("four-peak") and Ara, Lakes Sevan and Van, and river Araks ("Mother River") are presented in the textbooks, however, without the support of iconographic and ritual dimension.

Species of flora and fauna have also emerged as national identity components in the first, third, and fourth grade textbooks of language (*Mayreni*). In particular, trout known as *Ishkhan* from lake Sevan and *Tarekh* from lake Van are used widely while another example of presenting an animal in relation to national identity is the Van cat [*vana katow*].

The textbooks refer to the "national" as attributions to various species of flora through short stories, proverbs, riddles, and legends. For example, apricot (tree), pomegranate (tree), and grapes

are either presented as “Armenian”, “our”, “traditionally typical for the Armenians” or considered as symbols of Armenia (the Armenians and Armenianness). I have shown that some textbooks present the theme “Armenia is the homeland of the apricot”. I showed also how the notion of the apricot, as a symbol of Armenia, came to be mentioned in the discourse around the tricolor national flag of the Republic of Armenia and its third colour (orange). I discussed examples, in which the flora and fauna species described as “national” were part of the teachers’ discourse too.

The concept of homeland is introduced in the first grade textbook (i.e. “*it is the country Armenia [Hayastan] and our country has got its name from Hayk forefather*”), while throughout further years of elementary schools, as well as in the fifth grade, the image and understanding of homeland is enriched, widened, and filled with specific content.

The authors also place “definitions” of homeland and related themes and normative statements (“instructions”) about how to deal with and behave in relation to the homeland. Throughout this dissertation I showed the elements of personification of the country (homeland) in the textbooks and how this manifests itself through teachers’ interpretations (ex., “*desire to make the homeland happy*”, “*sacred duty of each human being is to defend his/her homeland*”, “*it needs care, protection and defense*”). Other themes related to homeland were “feeling pity for the Armenians leaving the homeland and going to other places” and the feeling of “homesickness” [karot]. The theme of relating the homeland to the mother (making parallels between them or making them equally beloved) is introduced both in the textbooks and throughout teachers’ discourse.

Throughout different textbooks (predominantly starting from the third grade) students find various names and borders for the homeland: Armenia [Hayastan], the Republic of Armenia, and Historical Homeland (or Armenian Highland, the first mention of which is in the fifth grade).

The dissertation illustrates ways, techniques (sometimes artistic and creative), and the spaces in which the usage of the state symbols within textbooks, school interior decorations, and during school ceremonies are applied. The state flag, one of the three state symbols is the most common in school space.

Textbooks of different subjects starting from the first grade and each subsequent grade, teachers, iconography, and ceremonies in schools represent [Armenian] language as one key component constituting 'Armenianness', which shows the unique script, books (manuscripts), Mesrop Mashtots, and the Matenadaran as important aspects of the Armenian identity. It is both an important identity marker and is seen as a crucial factor having preserved nationhood throughout

history. Mesrop Mashtots has been revealed as a central figure around which the language (mother tongue) as a key component of Armenian identity is built. Textbooks and teachers' discourse are complemented by iconographic and ritual evidences of the significant role attached to Mesrop Mashtots.

The image of Mashtots is widespread in the classrooms allocated for the first graders up to the fourth grade. These portraits of Mashtots made with diverse materials and various techniques, old and new, expensive and low-cost, small and big, are hung high in the center of classrooms. In the dissertation, several locations treated as places of "worship and pilgrimage" connected to Mashtots have been described: his Tomb in Oshakan, a recently built monument called the "Avenue of the Letters" in the region of Aragatsotn, and Matenadaran (with the monument to Mashtots and his student Koryun). In this section, I have also shown the epithets that Mashtots is afforded in the textbooks - although this is more intensive and vivid within the teachers' discourse - as well as the songs and poems dedicated to Mesrop Mashtots. Cakes in the form of a book or decorated with variations of the alphabet, images of Mesrop Mashtots, cookies in the form of the letter 'A', are common for the ABC Fair ceremonies each class experiences upon the completion of learning the alphabet.

Representations of religion in schools consist of four main themes: Christmas, Khachkars, Churches (and Monasteries), and the Garni Temple throughout all grades in elementary school. In the first section, images of churches and/or elements of church architecture, interior and relics are among the illustrations and pictures accompanying the lessons. I referred also to various representations of the pre-Christian belief as one character of religion for the Armenian people, with particular reference to images and short texts about the Temple Garni starting from the first grade. *Khachkar* (cross-stone), as a peculiar element of Armenian culture, is presented in textbooks of each grade. The 'cultural' value of Khachkars and its uniqueness for the Armenian culture are central to the representations in the textbooks. Teachers' discourse also viewed *Khachkars* as rather cultural artifacts as representing the unique national [Armenian] culture. Christianity in schools is presented also through the holiday Christmas - included in the textbook short stories - as well as the story about the birth of Jesus Christ, as well as stories from the Bible, particularly regarding different episodes about Noah.

One of the first items symbolising religion (church) that are seen in schools are included in the composition of the so-called "State Corners". Among these symbols, pictures of the Catholicos of all Armenians (in all cases) and text of the Lord's Prayer (in some cases) are included to represent



the Armenian Apostolic Church as a national identity element<sup>51</sup>. The school iconography also includes several other indirect manifestations of religion through pictures of churches, monasteries, writers, and artists from the medieval period of Armenian history. Religion-related symbols, ideas, and notions are dispersedly present also in routine school life, examples of which are shown throughout the dissertation.

Perceptions about “national” food and drink have also been included in the textbooks. Presentations about *Lavash*, a thin flatbread baked in a special cylindrical clay oven installed underneath the soil called a *tonir* have been presented in the textbooks of Armenian language (*Mayreni*) starting from second grade. In particular, it is regarded as a specific “national” food, as “our” bread, i.e. one that is connected to the notion of “Armenianness” or considered typical for Armenians. Its features are described in detail and praised as well as noted that Lavash baking in tonirs remains a wide spread practice in Armenian villages today.

Starting from the first grade, the textbooks present concept of heroism and separate heroes. The myth of origin - a crucial element in the construction of national identity - is presented along with the concept of heroism through the image of Hayk as both the founder of the Armenian people/nation and as a hero. David of Sassoun, one of the key personages of the Armenian national epos *Sasna Tsrer*, is also presented under the title of hero. He is referred to as the most beloved hero in the character of whom the features of the Armenian nation are embodied. Vardan Mamikonyan is the next historical hero in connection to the Armenian identity that the students meet in the second grade language textbook pages.

The “hero” component of national identity in the textbooks starts at the very origin of the nation – the forefather Hayk, which then moves to the middle ages (David of Sassoun, Vardan Mamikonyan) and concludes with militaries and politicians of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Andranik, Dro, Nzhdeh) including Monteh Melkonyan as a contemporary hero (early 1990s). A common feature of the textbooks comes when presenting the historical and “heroism” component where the term “heroism” is connected to “braveness”, “defending the homeland”, and “dedication to the hard task of creating a state”, while under the title “Prominent Figures/Talented Children of the Nation” famous people from spheres of art, science, sport, literature, and architecture are mentioned. The aforementioned military concept of heroism based on physical power and courage is

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<sup>51</sup> These Corners include also the pictures of the president of Republic of Armenia, the state flag, the text of the state anthem, sometimes - passages from the Constitution.

found in the textbooks, some of the authors, however, left space for discussion and reflections on “alternative” concepts related to heroism and the heroes rather than the “military concept” through hinting questions for discussion in the classrooms (ex., “Children, do you know is it possible to become a hero during peaceful times? Do you know that heroic deeds can be done other than by using weapons?”).

The memory of the Armenian Genocide is also represented in school. The primary school textbooks (1-4 grades) have not addressed the theme of the Armenian Genocide either on chapter and lesson title level or within the themes and plots of the stories and poems. It starts from the fifth grade when the textbooks mention the Armenian Genocide within the subject *Hayrenagitutyun* with the wordings *Medz Yeghern* and *Armenian Genocide*. While not directly about the genocide, the biographies of prominent Armenian artists and composers allude to the topic (M. Saryan, H. Tumanyan, and Komitas). The memory of the Armenian Genocide is in the school discourse notwithstanding the textbook “silence” in the elementary grade in different ways such as teachers having a small introductory speech within one of the lessons each year on the eve of the officially recognized Commemoration day, April 24, through group visits to the monument to the victims located in Tsitsernakaberd, Yerevan, which mostly occur not on the exact day but on the following day. In addition, schoolchildren join their families at the monument on the day of the commemoration. Additionally, the elementary grade students come across the representations of the Armenian Genocide through the school interior decorations in foyers and corridors that includes wall posters, boards, and in some cases paintings bearing written- and image-based information on the Armenian Genocide, usually with the year 1915 highlighted.

The textbooks of diverse subjects and grades contain “definitions” and “formula” of the Armenian identity: “Armenianness”, “Armenian nation/people” or “Armenian (cultural) heritage”, as well as specific kinds of “instructions” and “recommendations” about what should be done by the Armenians for the sake of the nation/country. This includes “collections” of images and representations of different national identity-related symbols all compiled in one picture implemented through the technique of collage. These visual collections of national identity, outlines, and formulae serve as permanent “reminders” of Armenian identity.

## Mapping Representations of Georgian Identity

The dimension of Space and Territory represented in all the dimensions of the school covers the themes of a) capital city of the state (Tbilisi), b) symbols of the state, c) “Our homeland [ჩვენი სამშობლო]” and areas of Georgia, d) Georgia: diverse but united country and the areas of Georgia, e) The Black Sea and the myth of Argo, and f) Georgians who live also outside Georgia.

Tbilisi as Georgia’s capital is presented in the textbooks starting from the first grade, which continues thereafter throughout every grade with themes concerning Tbilisi, the legend about Tbilisi, and the King Vakhtang Gorgasali as the founder of Tbilisi accompanied by illustrations (various pictures depicting the city’s panoramic views, monuments, and churches in Tbilisi).

The three state symbols: the flag, the anthem, and the coat of arms can be found in schools. The flag, coat of arms, and the text of the national anthem are placed on the flip side of every textbook as well as on several pages of the textbooks. They are used as school interior decoration, in the foyer, or inside classrooms as well as during the ceremonies and throughout diverse rituals.

Summing up the ideas and notions that have been common and widespread throughout the textbook discourse regarding “Our homeland”, “Our country”, and “Georgia” I came up with the following notions: a) love towards the homeland made equal to the love towards one’s mother, b) nice depictions of Georgia praising its beauty, c) the idea that Georgia is situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, d) Georgia - a country diverse not only geographically but also famous for its diversity of traditions, e) every person is an architect of their own country.

Regarding the theme Homeland several key themes have been revealed through the textbook analyses, teachers’ interpretations and during in-class implementations of the lessons such as “(unbelievably great and endless) love towards the homeland”, “parallels between love felt towards the homeland and the mother”, “One God- one homeland”.

The textbooks of Georgian language briefly introduce Georgia and its different regions, all of them being very diverse, but all together constituting a whole unit, the united country Georgia. Some of the textbooks note also the level of diversity within Georgia in terms of religions other than Christianity, as well as the people who are representatives of ethnic groups other than Georgians.

It is typical for the textbooks *Language*, *Music*, *Art*, *Chveni Sakartvelo*, and *Nature* to include representations of the areas of Georgia with the specific symbols attached to them. Each textbook has unique strategies of description and techniques for illustration creating an “associative map” of the symbols attached to specific regions and stereotypes ascribed to the people living there. For many regions, textbooks provide illustrations of churches, monasteries, towers and other

buildings, landscapes considered typical for the region, and personages with traditional costumes, dances. In the Appendix 4, I have provided a map of Georgia on which the main symbols are shown based on representations that the textbooks provide as symbols and illustrations of the corresponding regions of Georgia within textbooks.

Different groups of Georgians living outside the current borders of Georgia are also represented in the textbooks: Fereidani, Ingilo, and Laz.

Language, one of the key constituent components of national identity, is presented through two themes: a) the Georgian language, and b) Iakob Gogebashvili and Dedaena. The language textbooks of different grades present the theme mostly through poems dedicated to Georgian language. Mother Tongue Day is celebrated in the schools too on April 14 with wide participation of elementary grade students. The celebrations of the holiday include a wide range of events and festivities, on-stage events and ceremonies, open classes, integrated classes, calligraphic contests, essay writings, excursions to the monument to the Mother Tongue in Tbilisi, etc. On the occasion of the completion of learning the Georgian alphabet in the first grade excursions to the Mother Tongue monument in Tbilisi are held.

References to Iakob Gogebashvili and Dedaena, the first Georgian ABC textbook created by Gogebashvili are widespread in textbooks, school iconography, and ritual life. Portraits, pictures, and images of Iakob Gogebashvili, the cover page of the first-ever Dedaena and a small flower violet [ო ს]<sup>52</sup> are common elements in the elementary school classrooms. The celebrations of the first graders at the end of the first year and upon the completion of the book *Dedaena* are organized in schools. A tribute to Iakob Gogebashvili as the creator of the first-ever Dedaena for the Georgian schoolchildren is given in different forms of implementation and artistic performance. The excursion to Variani, the birthplace of Iakob Gogebashvili and his house-museum, Gogebashvili's tomb in the cemetery Mtatsminda in Tbilisi, are ritual-like events for elementary grade classes in schools.

The dimension of religion as one component of national identity covers the themes: a) Christianity and St Nino, b) Easter and Christmas, c) Alilo and Chant, d) Churches and Monasteries.

The textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* of the fifth grade presents a lesson about how Christianity was introduced to Georgia and subsequently how it developed. Mtskheta being the main religious center, the church Svetitskhoveli and Bodby Monastery are also spoken about commonly. The fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo*, following the lesson about the introduction of Christianity to

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<sup>52</sup> ო ს (This is violet). This is the first sentence the students learn in the first grade in school, and the flower violet has become a very frequently used symbol in the elementary classrooms and celebrations of the first graders in schools.

Georgia, has a separate lesson dedicated to traces of the Assyrian fathers in Georgia. One can see references to monasteries, churches, and other sanctities in the textbook; for example, when presenting separate areas of Georgia. In a way, the churches and monasteries are in the list of symbols of the region, sometimes taking the role of the key symbol. The pictures of churches and monasteries also decorate the walls of classrooms. School excursions and study visits, as well as outdoor classes and celebrations, have been held in the surroundings of different churches and monasteries (my field work material in Tbilisi schools noted Mtskheta, Ananuri, Mamadaviti churches as the most visited), some small-scale pilgrimages are also organized on a voluntary basis in schools. Often these excursions are organized to places near the city Tbilisi, Kakheti region, and sometimes to further regions of Georgia.

Representations of Christian holidays – such as Easter and Christmas - are common within textbooks, school iconography, and ritual space. Particularly, the textbooks of *Art* and *Music* include preparations for the holidays in artistic forms: eggs and other decorations for Easter, a choir of angels for Christmas, and songs and musical compositions. Diversely decorated eggs made from various materials and other Easter-related decorations usually made by the children themselves for the art classes and especially for Easter became stable elements of in-school and in-class decorations.

Icons and other church-related symbols showing the personal religiosity of teachers manifested through small icon-corners in the shelves, religious-content calendars, journals on their tables, or a small space allocated for icons within the classrooms (or an icon on the wall) are common in schools.

New Year and Christmas celebrations are stable elements of the ritual and festive life of schools: a pan-school carnival, joint or separate performances in elementary grades, small theatrical performances, carnivals, an on-stage event, a fairy-tale performance, or an open-class. They include also the scene of Christ's birth in Bethlehem. The performances often include children singing and performing Alilo. Several textbooks (*Music*, *Chveni Sakartvelo*) contain presentations of Alilo [ა ლი ლო], a Georgian ritual song sung on the eve of Christmas and *Alilooba* (the day of Alilo). Other Christianity-related identity elements represented within textbooks and school space, rituals, and ceremonial spheres include chants [გალობა], (Virgin Mary) icons, and Bible stories.

History, historical figures, and heroes, as national identity constituting symbolic resources are presented through the themes of Georgian kings, fate-deciding battles, and notions of heroism through different textbooks (*Language and Literature*, *Music*, *Art*, *Chveni Sakartvelo*), teachers'

discourse, in-class implementations (open and integrated lessons) and ceremonial life of the schools. Among the kings of Georgia the most famous and indivisible from “Georgianness”, as figures considered “*alfa and omega for the Georgian nation*” are presented to be Vakhtang Gorgasali (founder of Tbilisi), Parnavaz (founder of the first united Georgian state), David the Builder, Queen Tamar (united and powerful Georgia, epoch of Golden age under her reign) and Erekle the Second. In the school discourse, the kings are mentioned not only as key figures (building blocks of identity) of Georgian history, but are also referred to as heroes, and their deeds as heroic; they are presented as examples for students to follow especially in their devotion to the homeland. Fate-deciding battles in the history of Georgia are also presented in relation to the kings. The Krtsanisi and the Didgori battles are mentioned as historical events due to their nation-preserving role. A specific role has been attached to the examples of heroism that has been shown during the battles by soldiers, the kings (Erekle the Second and David the Builder) and peasants of those times.

Ilia Chavchavadze and Shota Rustaveli and the epic poem Knight in the Panther’s Skin have been referred to as figures associated with “Georgianness” and considered as key figures in the life of Georgians and Georgian history throughout the textbooks, school iconography, and ritual space. Students get acquainted with literary works by Ilia Chavchavadze from the fourth grade, with the lessons based on the literary works authored by him including an introductory talk held by the teacher. These talks or so-called “mini-lectures” are about Ilia Chavchavadze as a legendary writer and public figure, as well as a discussion about his deeds for the sake of the homeland. Very often open and integrated lessons are conducted dedicated to the prominent writer and public figure himself. In the open and integrated lessons that are based on the literary works authored by Ilia Chavchavadze, however, a large section is about himself and his significant role regarding the history of Georgia. It is in the sixth grade, however, that the biography of Ilia Chavchavadze and the valuation of his deeds for the Georgian nation are introduced within the textbooks of *Georgian Language and Literature*. The sixth grade textbook *Music* also has a small passage about Ilia Chavchavadze. References to the great role Ilia Chavchavadze and his huge efforts for the sake of the homeland are found also in the fifth grade textbook *Chveni Sakartvelo* within the theme *From the Society for Spread of Literacy to the University*. There have been fixed a wide range of epithets and characteristics ascribed to Ilia Chavchavadze (ex., “the father of the nation”, “crownless king,” etc.) within school discourse as a whole including the textbooks, teachers interpretations, and in-class implementation of lessons. Images of Ilia Chavchavadze are present within school interior at key, central, and/or visible places.

Shota Rustaveli and short pieces from his epic poem *The Knight in The Panthers Skin* is presented predominantly through Georgian Language and Literature in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Teachers used this lesson as a mean to “provide simple information about Shota Rustaveli and *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, as well as to introduce students with several aphorisms from the epic poem”. Aphorisms from *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* have been one of the key elements of the lessons related to Shota Rustaveli, as different ideas, ideals, and values (including elements of patriotic education) are discussed and shared in the classrooms and during various on-stage events and school celebrations. Shota Rustaveli is presented also through school iconography through pictures; his image is on the walls of classrooms and school corridors, as well as through illustrations from the epic poem.

The food and drink dimension of national identity covers two main themes, a) *Toneh* and *Shotis Puri*, and b) Vine (Grapes, Vineyard, Wine, Vintage) and *Churchkhela*.

The textbooks of all the subjects in various grades (*Art, Music, Nature, Georgian Language and Literature, Chveni Sakartvelo*) include vine and related items (wine, vineyard, and vintage) as separate lessons. For example, one of the the first grade textbooks has a separate class entitled Grapes, where children learn and practice making grapes out of paper, cloth, and other different materials. Under the general theme *Vintage* [ოთგ ე ლო] one of the first grade textbooks *Nature* presents pictures of grapes, the harvesting process of grapes, and a scene depicting *churchkhela* dried by a village's old women. The second grade textbook *Georgian* (by N. Maghlakelidze et al.) has a short story entitled *Churchkhela* (by K. Chilashvili). The textbooks *Music* in the second grade include several themes on vine (vineyard), vintage, and wine under an umbrella theme “Georgia is the Homeland of Wine”. Georgia - Homeland of Wine, ancient culture of vine cultivation and winemaking are themes present also in other textbooks. The theme *Autumn* and autumn related discourses are one common element for the schools, they include also the themes of *churchkhela*, wine, vine, and grapes, as well as the scenes of a Georgian feast (*Supra*) mostly within a rural environment. Around the concepts *Vine - a symbol of Georgia, Georgia - homeland of wine* the teachers develop many other stories, which are complemented by details related to ancient vine cultivation and winemaking traditions. The teachers often note about large amounts of vine types grown in Georgia claiming that wine-making tradition has originated in Georgia later on spread all over the world.

Traditional costume and music is another aspect where nationality (ethnicity) is highlighted. For example, some of the textbook personages/story heroes wear clothes with folk traditional culture

elements or folk costumes considered traditional for a specific region of Georgia. The integrated lessons, school events, on-stage and in-class celebrations usually have a musical part, with the students singing, dancing, in which the participants are wearing the respective folk clothes considered traditional for each song/dance. It is common to see some of the students playing on a traditional musical instrument known as *Chonguri* during these events.

## **Textbook in Chain: Education Policy, National Curriculum, Authors, and Publishers**

### **Armenia**

The state education policy of the Republic of Armenia through the Law on General Education (2009) regards national identity as one of the key categories. For instance, “maintaining the Armenian identity” is listed among the aims of general education, with “formation of a person brought up in spirit of patriotism and statehood” listed as one of the basis of state education policy. The document of the national curriculum includes notions of “national identity”, “homeland”, “nation” [azg], and “state” [petutyun] with prescriptions for students “to acknowledge”, “to love”, “to appreciate”, and “to preserve” them. Many of the subjects are seen as a means of preserving national identity, self-consciousness, and the existence of the nation [azg].

According to the minimum requirements of knowledge students of elementary schools are demanded to acquire (within four-year time), the government expects that upon the completion of elementary level students will be familiar with state symbols and the administrative regions of the Republic of Armenia, and will have gained specific knowledge about events, famous personalities, cultural and historical values, public holidays of the Armenian people, the country, and the place of their residence. The list includes also several elements regarding citizenship (rights/responsibilities), humanism, and pluralism.

The documents of the state standards for each of the subjects included in the research provides outlines of the national identity concept, out of which the subject of Armenian Language (*Mayreni*) focuses more on the national identity dimension. Thus, the outline for this subject states that “forming and preserving the national identity” should be seen as one of the main aims of the subject. According to the curriculum, upon the completion of elementary level, the students “should be aware of the necessity of learning their mother tongue and should regard it as a priority; they should acknowledge the key role of the mother tongue in forming and maintaining their national identity”. Meanwhile, the subject *Me and the Surrounding World* focuses on providing preliminary



knowledge about: 1) the state flag, coat of arms, and anthem; 2) most important events, key figures, cultural values, as well as national [azgayin] and state [petakan] holidays; 3) notions of homeland, family, nation [azg], and society; 4) linguistic, national, and religious diversity; 5) administrative division of the Republic of Armenia; 6) nature, history, and cultural monuments of own residence. The curriculum and other official documents imply two different words to note ethnic and civic aspects of nationality; the words “national” [azgayin] is used to imply “ethnic” and the word “state” [petakan] indicating also the meaning of “civic”.

## Georgia

In accordance with the National Goals of General Education adopted by the Government of Georgia in October 2004, as well as international obligations and commitments assumed by the country, the general education system aims to develop all its citizens as free individuals equipped with essential mental and physical skills and capacities, and to nurture civil consciousness based on democratic and liberal values. One of the goals for general education is “to promote national interests and traditions.” The Law on Education (2005) reflects a range of basic principles of the state education policy of the Republic of Georgia, of which the following are relevant to the research scope: “humanistic, scientific, and democratic character of education and upbringing”, or “recognition and appreciation of human and national cultural values, independence of educational institutions from political and religious organizations”.

The National Curriculums for the academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 were reviewed for this research. The review included eight educational spheres (state language, mathematics, foreign languages, social sciences, natural sciences, technologies, art education, and sport), each of them introduced with three components: special competences, general competences, and values. The list of the values that the subjects in schools should nurture among the students prescribed by the National Curriculum (2009-2010, 2010-2011) is quite long, but most of them concern “liberal-democratic” values such as human rights, tolerance, civil courage, and respect for law. The word “civic” is used as a focus in the education policy documents. Among the list of values to be nurtured, love towards the homeland (patriotism) is mentioned<sup>53</sup>. Values reflecting the Republic of Georgia as a country with an ethnically and religiously diverse population form a separate cohort in

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<sup>53</sup> National Curriculum 2009-2010 in its turn among the aims for the subjects of social sciences in elementary level mentions “to support to the development of the student as a patriotic and responsible citizen”.

the document such as “tolerance” towards people with different opinions, nationality, religion, and culture.

The elementary grade programmes did not contain “mandatory content”, i.e. list of specific literary works and authors, literary genres, and themes that are considered to be minimum mandatory constituent of the subject programs and/or textbooks. Rather, they state general themes about which the subjects should include such as short poems, stories, fairy tales, and etc. Homeland [ს ა მ შ ი ლ ი] is one such theme<sup>54</sup>. In the subsequent grades the presence of homeland-related mandatory topics gradually increases, complemented with “patriotic and heroic” themes starting from the fourth grade with the thematic range of the fifth and sixth grades widening to include works created on the bases of patriotic, civilly-sounded (სამოქალაქო ჟღერადობის), and historic themes.

Among the aims of the subject *Georgian Language and Literature* taught in each and every grade, a corresponding “value-component” is mentioned as “to instill a feeling of respect towards literary heritage”. The integrated subject *Chveni Sakartvelo*, taught three hours a week in the fifth and sixth grades, mixes history, geography, civics, and ethnography with a clear focus on history. The aim of the school subject group under a general title Social Sciences together with the aim “to support the education of informed, active, and responsible citizens” include also the dimension of patriotism through the objective “to form a patriot and humanist person”.

The notion “national consciousness” appears in the reviewed Georgian education policy documents in relation to the subject *Music* and *Georgian Dance*, lessons of which are seen as a way through which students grasp universal values, while simultaneously through music forming national consciousness. Alongside the artistic and aesthetic educational aims for the subject *Georgian Dance*, it is deemed a tool for the development of national consciousness and respect for traditions, and is considered as a means of artistic and aesthetic development for children. In other words, the students should learn elements and whole complexes of Georgian folk dance and should have knowledge about the culture of Georgian dance. This focus on art and aesthetic education for the implementation of the “task” of developing national consciousness becomes obvious also from the *Art* subject programme in which many elements and symbols of national identity are found. A review of the textbooks *Art* and *Music* revealed that they bear a considerable load of national

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<sup>54</sup> Other topics are peers, homeland, friendship, justice, human relationships, animals, kindness and evil-heartedness, relations of the humans and nature, and etc..

(ethnic) identity symbols and representations, which gradually increase in the number of elements and variety each year, thus accumulating a “national identity package”. The comparison reveals a greater number and frequency of national identity constituent elements in *Music*<sup>55</sup> textbooks rather than in the *Language (Dedaena)*<sup>56</sup> textbook in the first grade. This is in contrast with the same textbooks in the Armenian case, where the ABC book (*Aybbenaran*) contains a greater number and frequency of national identity constituent elements.

### **Teachers: “Creators”, “Editors”, and “Translators” of the Textbook Discourses**

The education policy documents in both countries do not define the notions “national consciousness”, “patriotism”, and “national interests”. The documents use these notions (those in Armenia use them more intensively) without providing any specification, examples, or explanations of what these notions mean or how they will be expressed. The textbook analyses revealed that the majority of the components or the “constituent symbolic resources” of national identity, as well as specifications of homeland and patriotism, have been included in the textbook at the stage of textbook development by the authors and publishing houses. With this, the authors, illustrators, editors of the textbooks are becoming decisive actors in terms of identity construction.

Teachers are the next actors in the chain of the textbook life who “create” discourse through the implementation of the general education programme; they not only mechanically transfer the content of education materials and textbooks into the classroom, but also take the role of mediator and translator in the process. While transmitting the textbook knowledge to students in the classroom, via self-initiated activities these teachers also perform different strategies and practices, among which one could observe “translating”, “editing”, “proof reading”, and “copy-pasting”. In doing so, they, as if “negotiate” the meanings, interpret, supplement, confirm, and/or reject the ideas and notions that the textbooks and education policy documents have envisaged for them. With

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<sup>55</sup> This is the list of the symbols revealed in the Music subject textbook: landscapes and separate units of Geography, churches and monasteries, the Legend about Tbilisi (Vakhtang Gorgasali), Georgian Kings (Parnavaz, David the Builder, Queen Tamar), a map of Georgia “Here is my Georgia”, State Symbols, book personages wearing traditional folk costume along with the others in ordinary clothing (Otiashvili 2011).

<sup>56</sup> This is the list of the symbols revealed in the *Dedaena* textbooks: state symbols (anthem, coat of arms, and flag) cities and regions of Georgia, monument-symbols, and landscape views, national food, Iakob Gogebashvili (and the first *Dedaena* textbook created by him) (Rodonaia ... 2008), (Maghlakelidze ... 2008).

regards to themes and ideas concerning the national identity, I observed several key practices such as: a) ‘nationalizing’ and sacralizing the historical figures and perceived heroes, landscape, flora and fauna, and food (drink); b) mitigating cases and expressions of exclusions and soothing the images of enmity within textbooks; c) mythologizing and historicizing; d) adding emotional load to the lessons and initiating artistic performance for many episodes, and themes as well as; e) making simplifications which often lead to profanation and misinterpretation/misnaming of many terms. Simplifications are made to provide child-appropriate explanations for abstract notions such as mythology (mythic personages), history, and homeland.

For the academic year 2010-2011 the vast majority of elementary grade teachers were female both in Armenia (99.7 percent) and in Georgia (89 percent). Additionally, the majority of teachers in schools most probably had received pedagogical education in Soviet institutes and colleges both in Armenia (75.7 percent are aged above 35) and in Georgia (in Tbilisi, school teachers over the age of 40 are outnumbered by those below the age of 40 by four times).

The delivery of the myth of common origin in classrooms in Yerevan has undergone diverse transformations. For instance, one typical way of this kind of “translation” and “editing” of the textbook content was the presentation of the image of Hayk Forefather as a “hero” and the image of Bell as an “anti-hero.” According to this practice, the teachers used this story to educate the students and nurture moral ideals among them, connecting this story to perceptions of “what is good” and “what is bad”. In doing so, they were assuming that Hayk is the good and Bell is the bad, attaching corresponding characteristics to them and emphasizing the need for the students to look up to Hayk. Another observed strategy of story transformation during the lessons regarding Hayk is connected to how Bell was presented. According to this strategy, the teachers tried to depict the image of Bell not as an “enemy” but rather as the opposite of “the good” to avoid discussing the notions of enemy and enmity in the classrooms.

Among the practices of classroom transformations by teachers, I observed diverse cases and uses of mythologization and sacralization. Notwithstanding the fact that throughout the textbooks, authors of various textbooks have tried to put notions of homeland and patriotism in specific frames and present definitions (which is especially obvious in the case of the Armenian textbooks), these notions still remain abstract, ambiguous, and open to various interpretations to fill the content during the teaching practices. The fieldwork at schools revealed a variety of interpretations and conceptualizations alternative to those in the textbooks. Alongside the textbook notions of homeland, patriotism, and devotion to the homeland defined as “dying/sacrificing oneself for the

sake of the homeland”, the teachers were using everyday life aspects of these terms, even more, sometimes highlighting this very aspect of daily life, applying activities that could felt to be more realistic, and that were supposedly familiar to them (ex., loving the homeland could mean “keeping it clean”, “building or creating something instead of destructing”, “being a hard worker in everything a person does”, etc.).

Practices of assigning epithets, words of praise about historical figures, and heroes by teachers (in some cases sacralizing) during the classes, integrated/open classes and ceremonies were more obvious than in the textbook discourse (ex., Mesrop Mashtots, Ilia Chavchavadze, Iakob Gogebashvili, etc.). Very common were the practices of teachers characterizing things, events, figures as “national”, unique, or being connected to the national identity, making them a “constituent symbolic resource”. They were creating notions about these “resources” as necessary things that any person belonging to that specific group (nation) should know, or something without which the nation should not have existed as such (ex., fate deciding battles, alphabet, kings, religion, etc.). The teachers’ discourse was more obvious, more intensive, and frequent for those themes where national (Armenian and Georgian) origin was mentioned and/or highlighted with regard to landscape, food (drink), space, architecture, art, and etc.

Teachers were complementing the data and stories adding a “national” element and (sometimes) national pride, while also “editing” some of the cases in textbooks when a certain topic was silent or underrepresented according to them (ex., the sense of pride for and representations of identity for being “pioneers of official Christianity”, which is very much a characteristic of Armenian identity (Abrahamian 2006:113) as revealed through the teachers’ discourse, or with regard to the memory of the Armenian Genocide notwithstanding the fact that the textbooks of elementary level “kept silence” about this specific aspects of Armenian history.<sup>57</sup>

Teachers add special character to representations of the religious element of the national identity and a certain level of religiosity in school space. In Georgia, for example, the religiosity of teachers is represented in their private space (teachers themselves consider the classroom as such), which on a certain level intersects with the classrooms as a public space. In Armenia, many teachers initiate celebrations of religious holidays in school, in which, however, one could note more focus on folk elements. During the lessons related to the kings of Georgia presented within textbooks, the

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<sup>57</sup> One only indirect reference is met in the second grade textbook Mayreni (by V. Sargsyan et al.) within a broader topic Our Homeland right after the text entitled Saint Etchmiadzin as a small note. The text says, “Thousands of churches have been built in Armenia. Recently, in the centre of Yerevan a new church was built, the St. Grigor Lousavorich on the occasion of the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of adoption of Christianity as a state language in Armenia” (Sargsyan ... 2010:128).

teachers were repeating the main ideas of the textbooks, at the same time adding new aspects and details, mostly about the daily lives of the kings. The teachers often add emotional load to the lessons, they also encourage diverse forms of artistic performance during the classes. In these stories the kings were becoming not only historical figures - successful and beloved governors - but also heroes and key figures regarded as national identity key symbols. Through teachers' discourse they were becoming "figures that every Georgian should know about and look forward to becoming like them", people as "Alpha and Omega for the Georgian nation".

The teachers' discourse revealed a considerable amount of history teaching and historization, including telling the students historical facts, mentioning dates and centuries. Yet the state standards for the subjects foresee introduction of the concept of centuries and principles of chronology calculation only after the fourth grade. Furthermore, the lesson plans for the language subject directly note aims such as "learning the historical past of our country", and "getting familiar with the heroes devoted to the homeland", etc., which is more obvious and intense in Georgia.

Very often the research revealed "definitions" of "Georgiannes", "Georgian nation", as well as "instructions" of what a Georgian should do for the sake of their homeland within the teachers' discourse. This characterizes the teachers' discourse more than the textbooks (ex., statements and discussions about "who we are", "what being a Georgian obliges us to do", "what is the duty of each Georgian to fulfill", "what we should cherish most of all", etc.).

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## APPENDICES 1-5

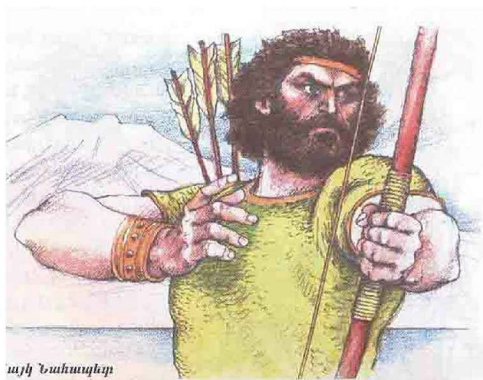
## Appendix 1



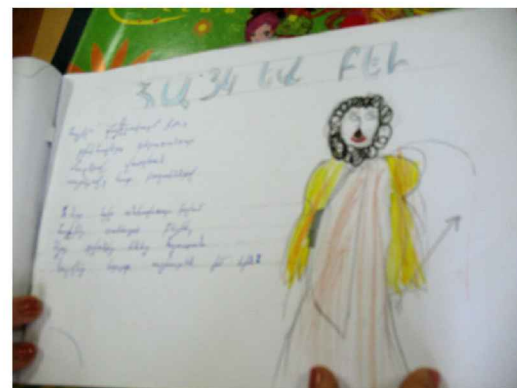
pic. 1.1.1



pic. 1.1.2



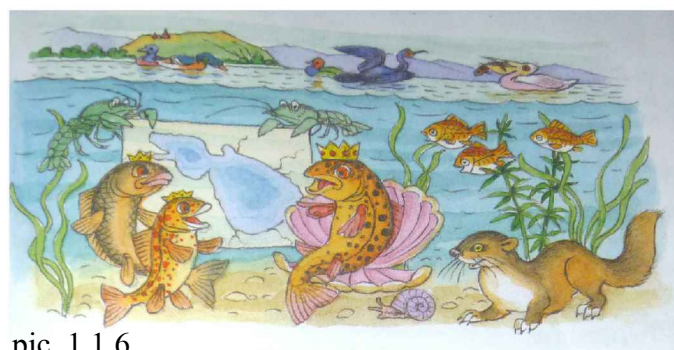
pic. 1.1.3



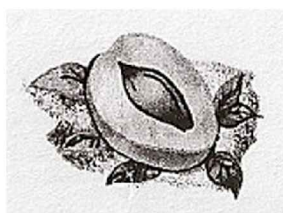
pic. 1.1.4



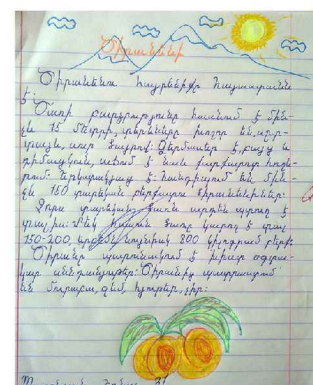
pic. 1.1.5



pic. 1.1.6



pic. 1.1.7

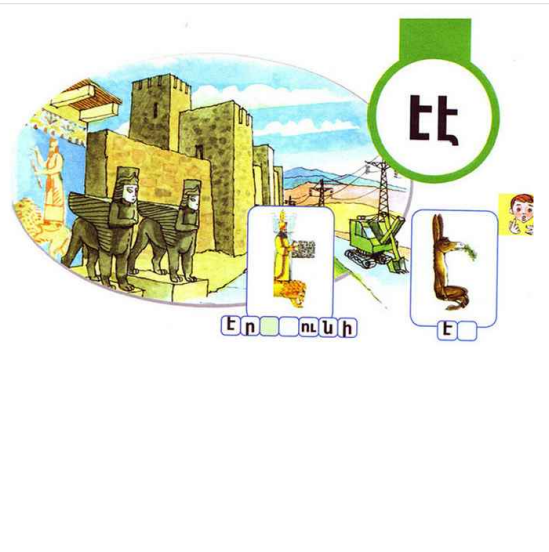


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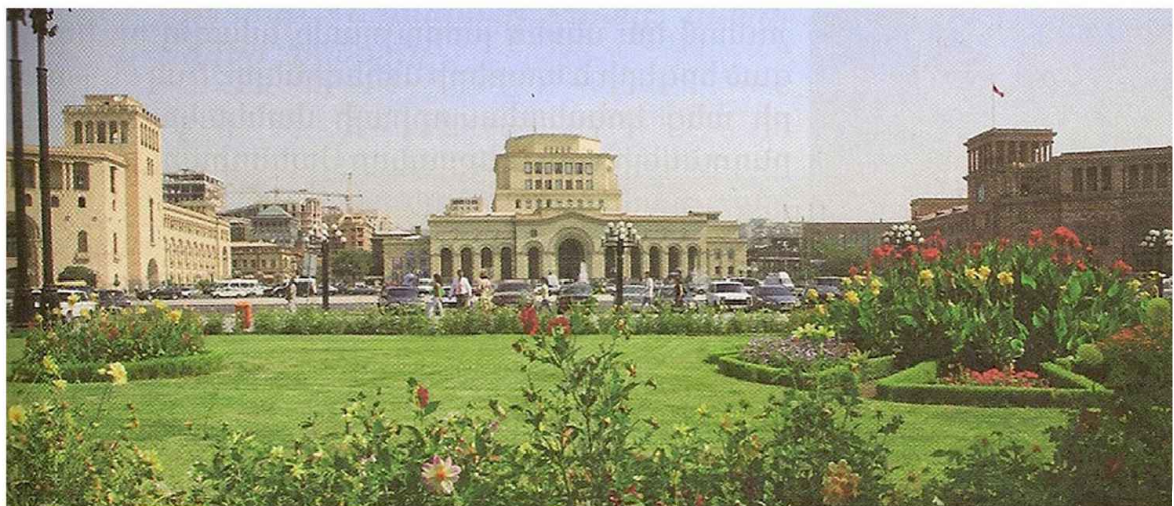
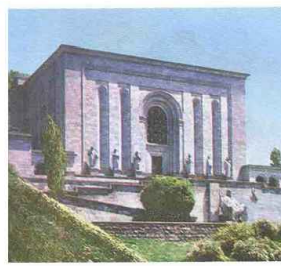




pic. 1.2.1



pic. 1.2.2



pic. 1.2.3





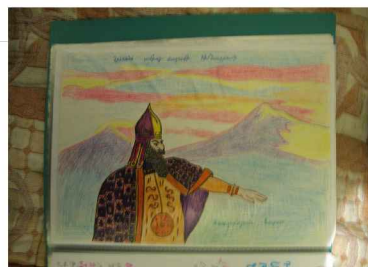
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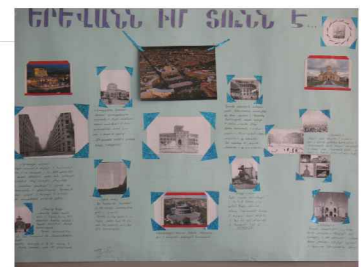
pic. 1.3.2



pic. 1.3.3



pic. 1.3.4



pic. 1.3.5



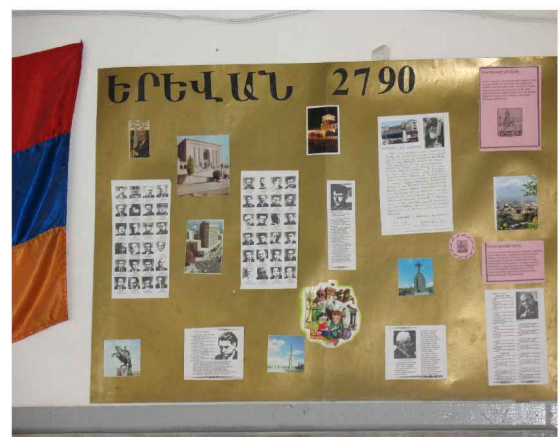
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pic. 1.3.7

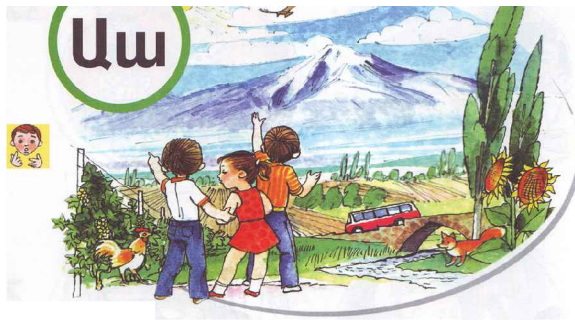


pic. 1.3.8



pic. 1.3.9

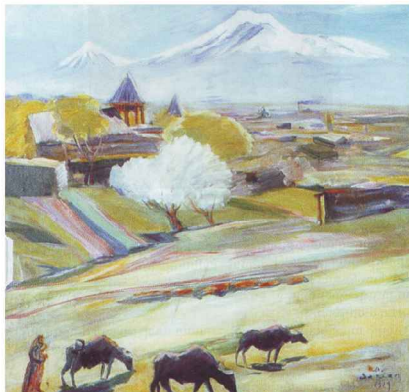




pic. 1.4.1



pic. 1.4.2



pic. 1.4.3



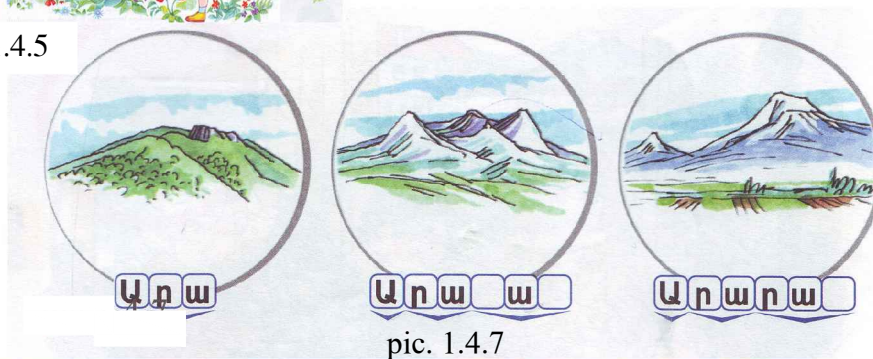
pic. 1.4.4



pic 1.4.5



pic. 1.4.6



pic. 1.4.7



pic.1.4.8





pic. 1.5.1



pic. 1.5.2



pic. 1.5.3



pic. 1.5.4



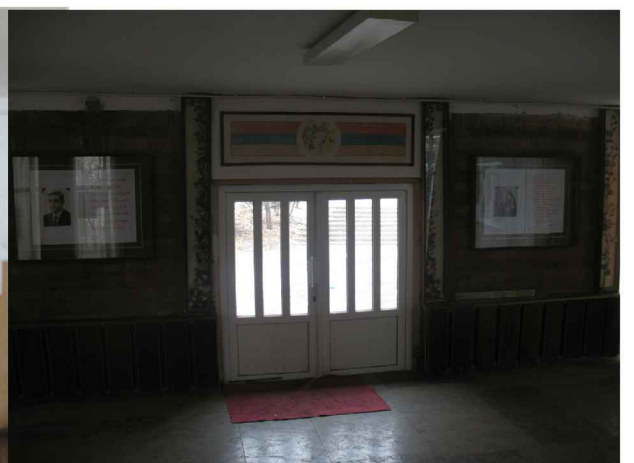
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pic. 1.5.6

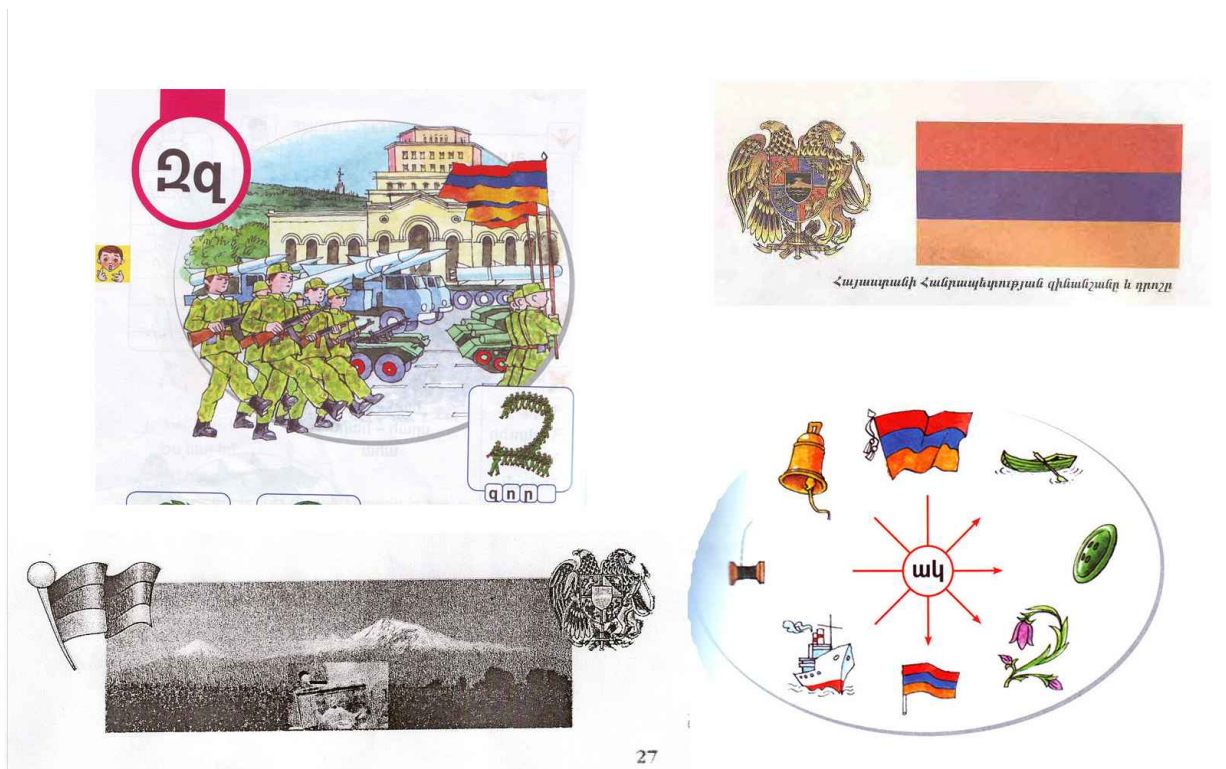


pic. 1.5.7



pic. 1.6.1





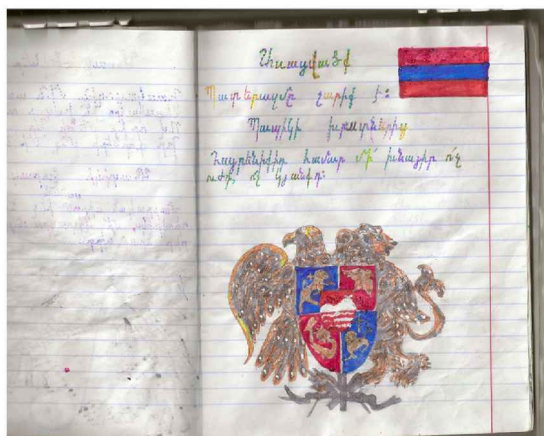
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pic. 1.7.2

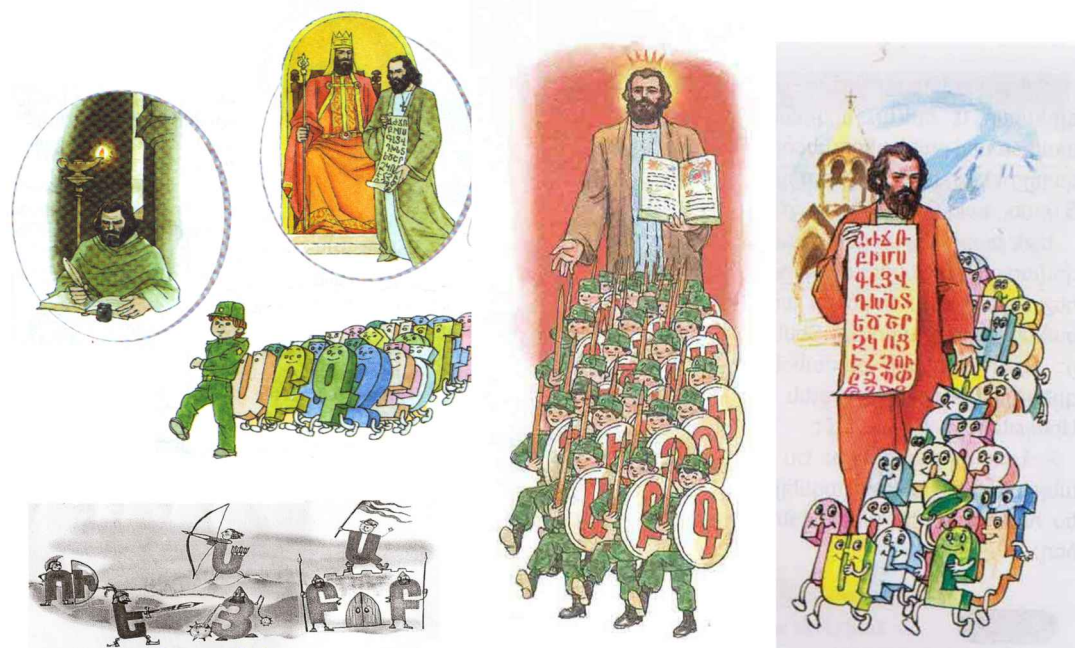


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pic. 1.8.2

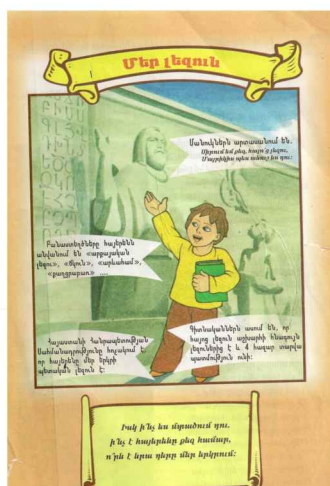




pic. 1.9.1



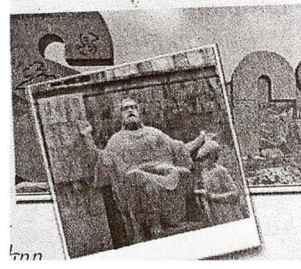
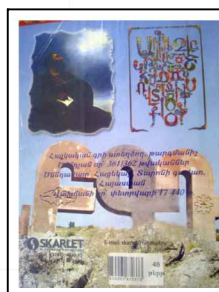
pic. 1.9.2



pic. 1.9.3



pic. 1.9.4



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pic. 1.9.5

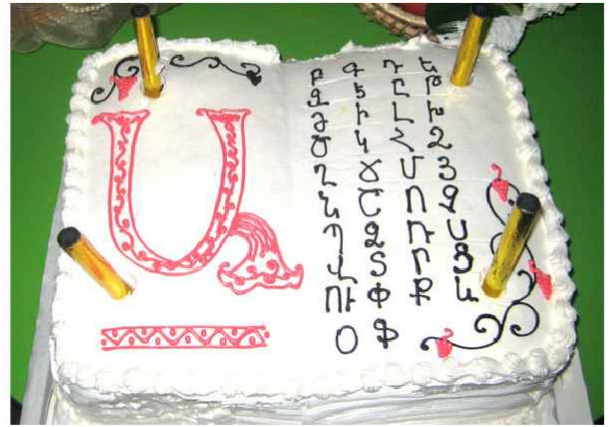


pic.1.9.6

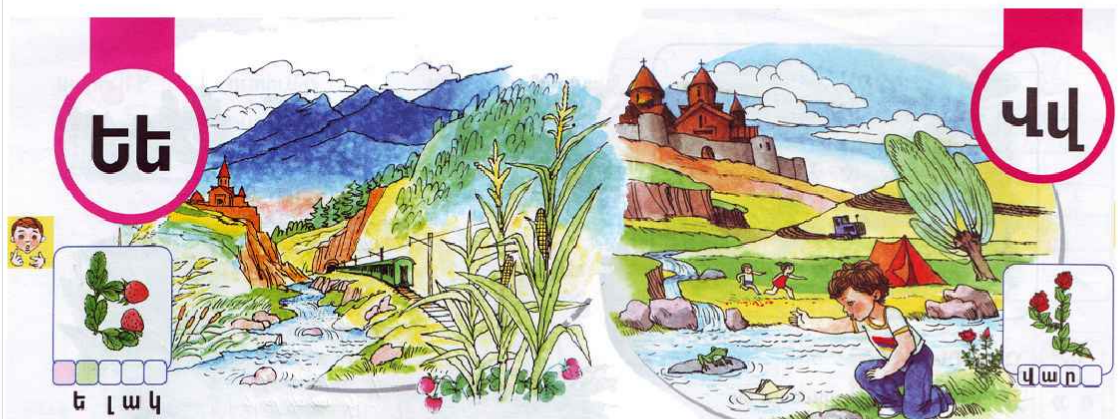


pic. 1.10.1



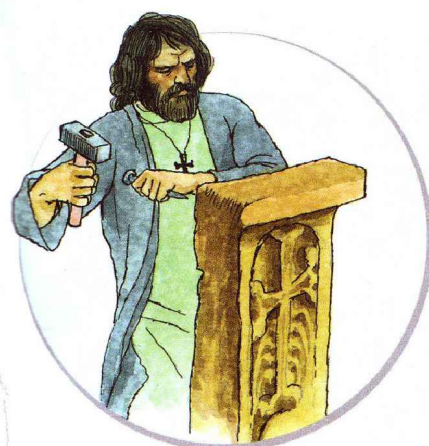


pic. 1.11.1



pic. 1.11.2

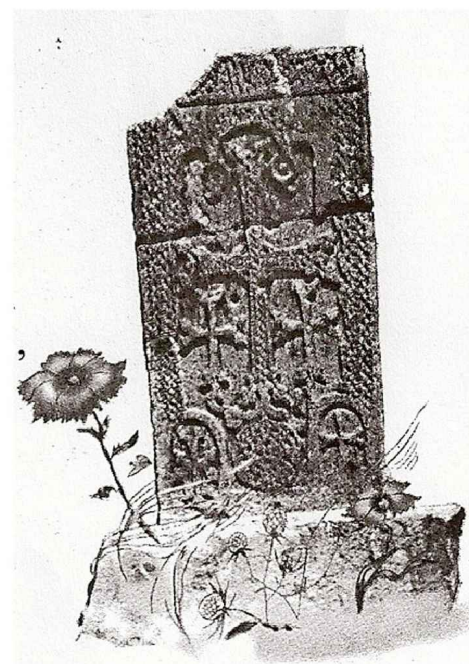
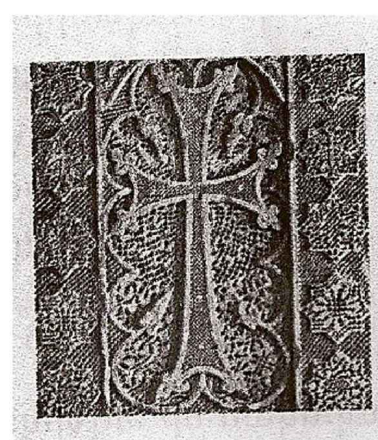




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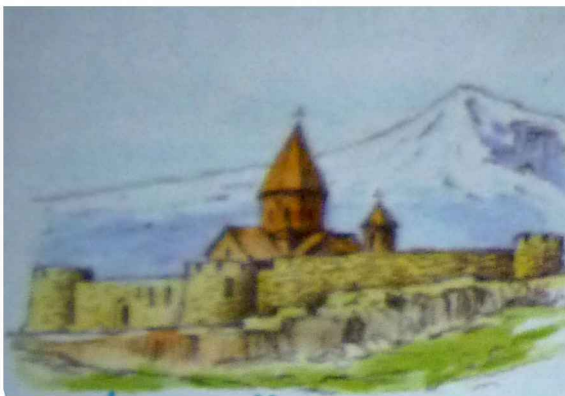
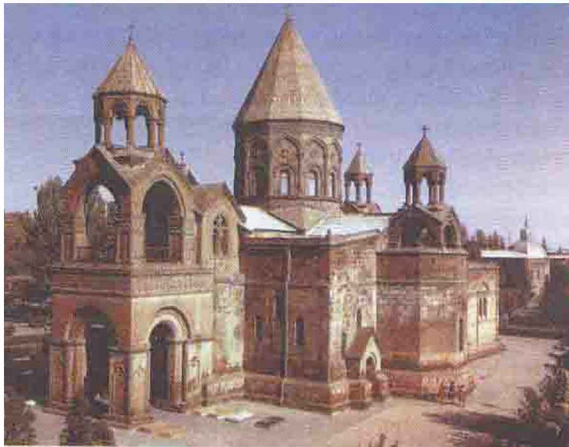


pic. 1.12.2

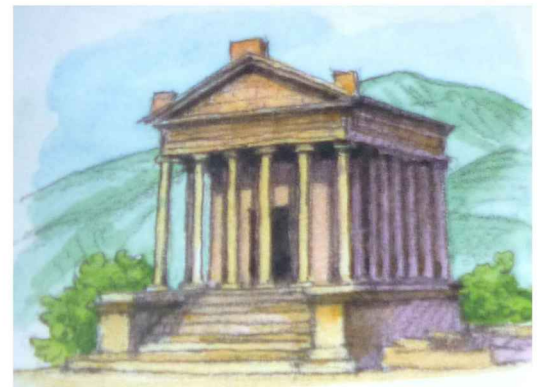


pic. 1.12.3



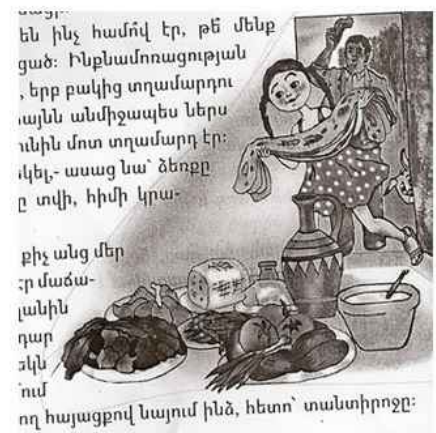


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pic. 1.15.3



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pic. 1.15.5



pic. 1.15.6



pic. 1.15.7

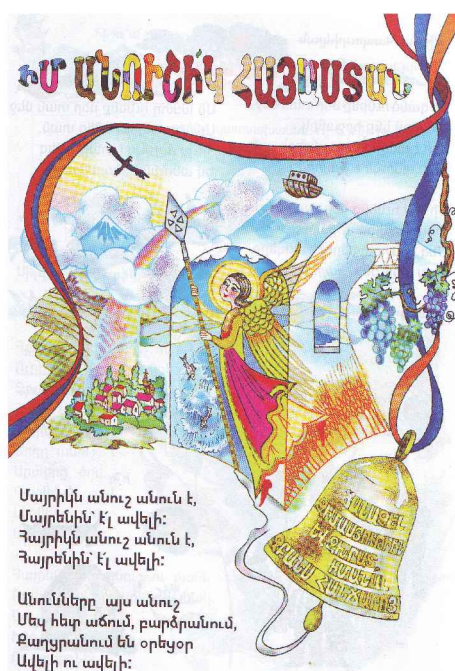




pic. 1.16.1



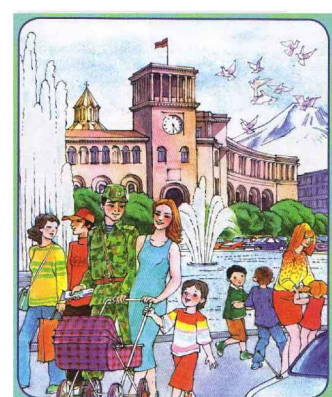
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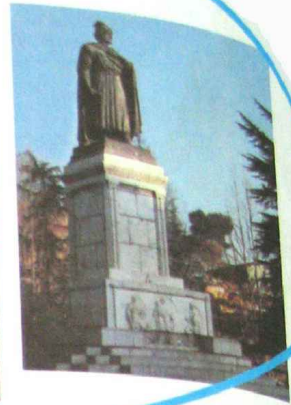
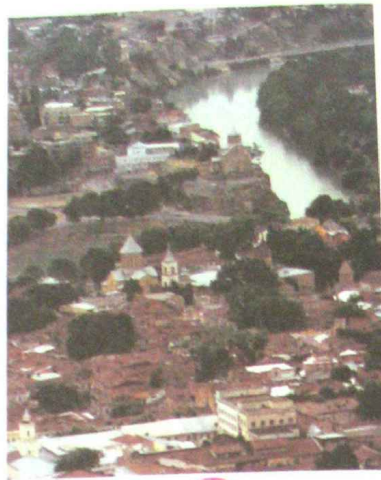
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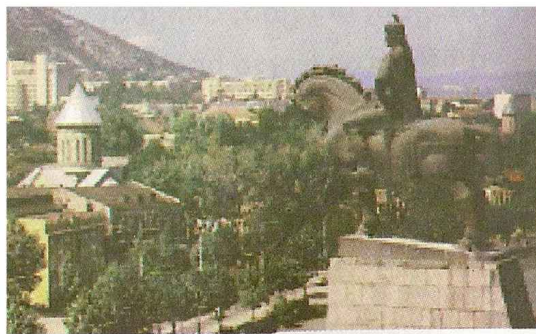
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pic. 2.1.1



ვახტანგ გორგასალი



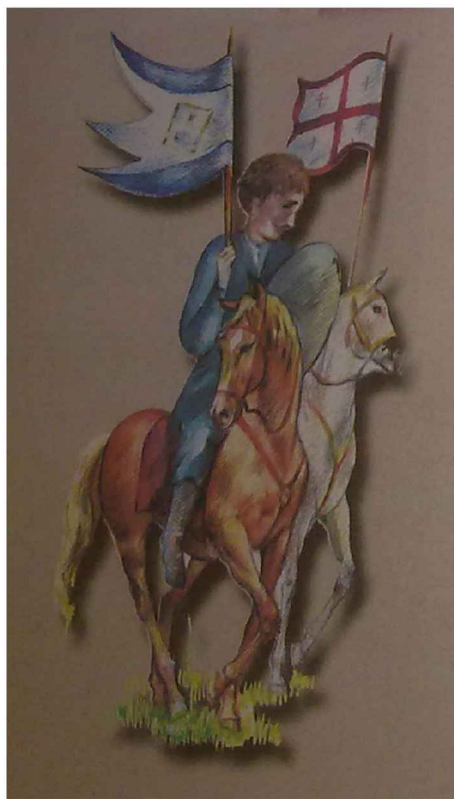
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pic. 2.1.3



pic. 2.2.1



pic. 2.2.3



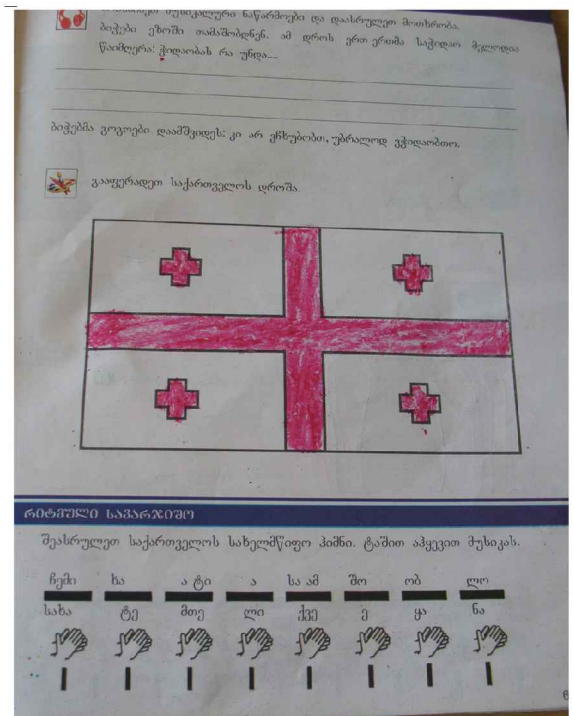
pic. 2.2.5



pic. 2.2.2



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pic. 2.2.6



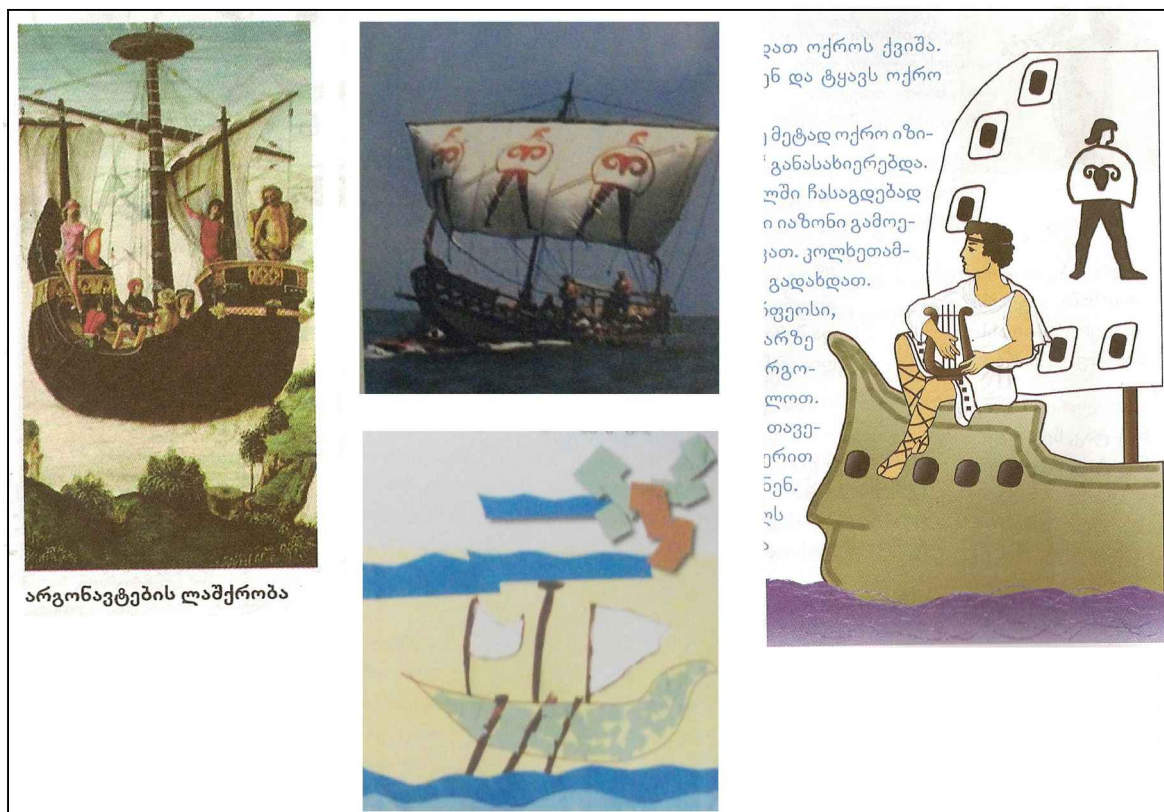


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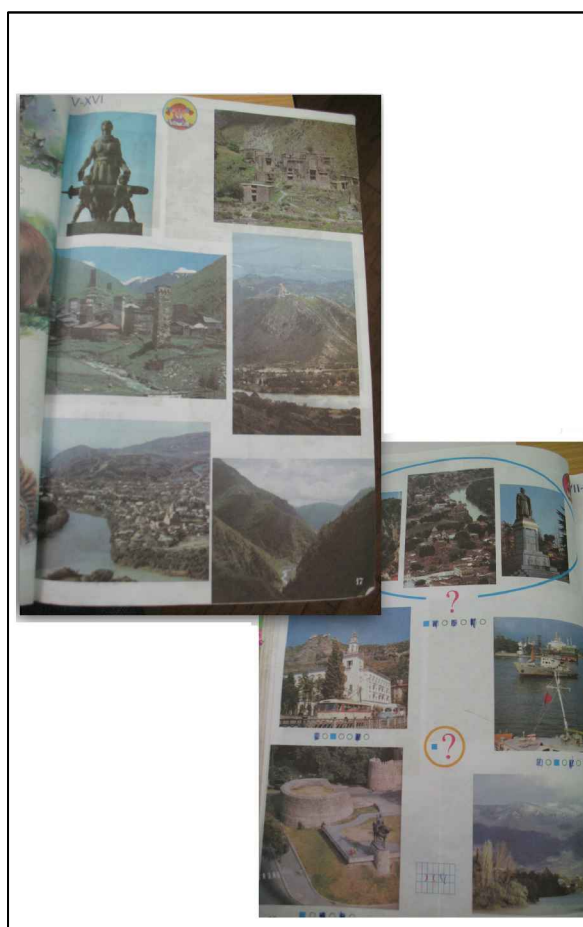


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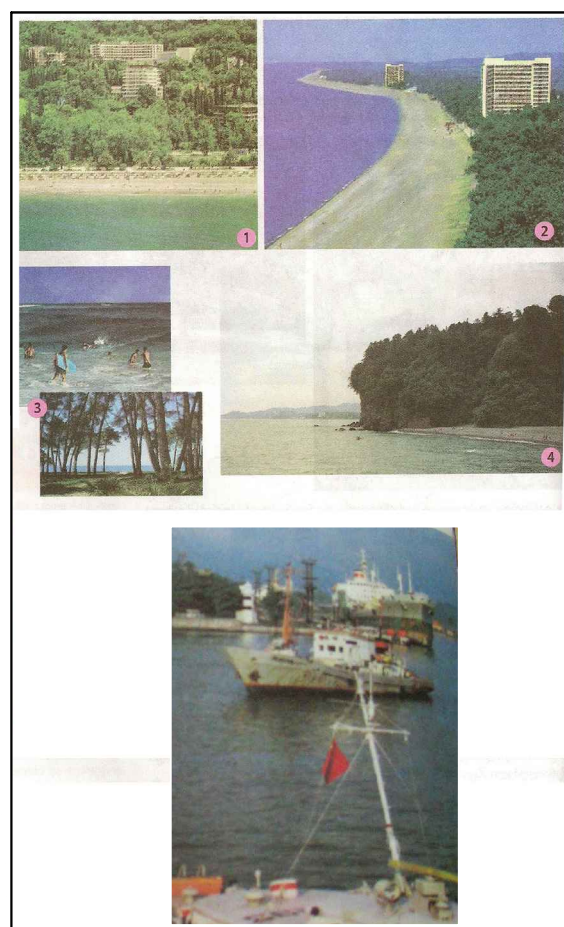




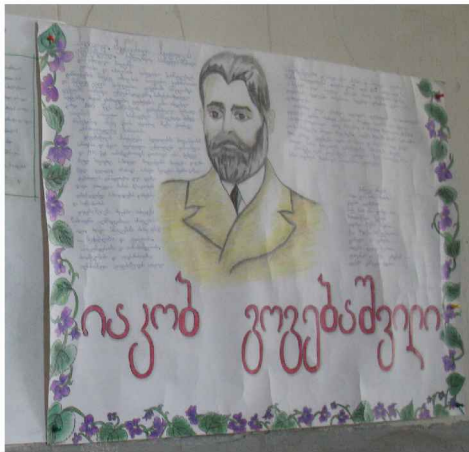
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pic. 2.5.2



pic. 2.5.3

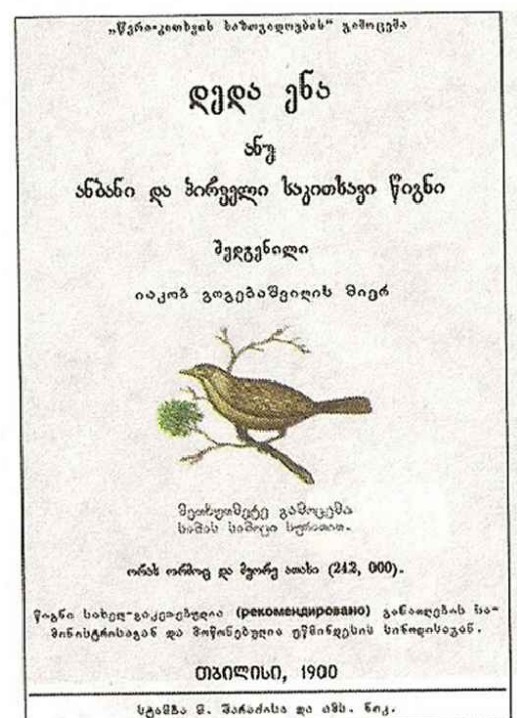


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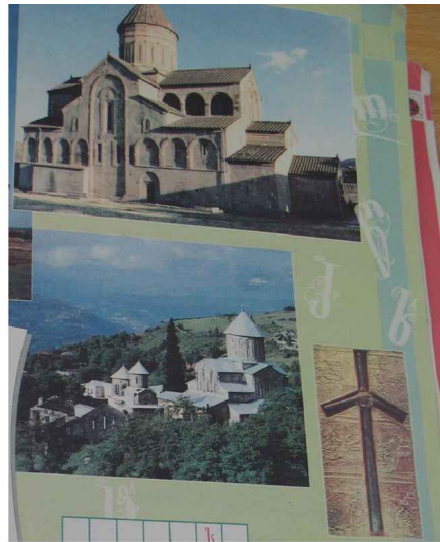




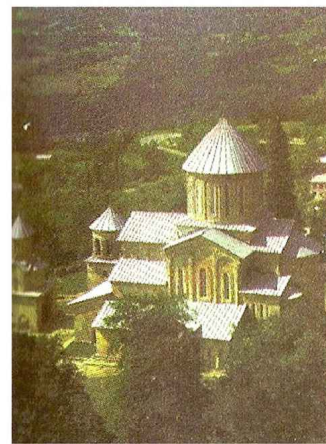
იაკობ გოგებაშვილი



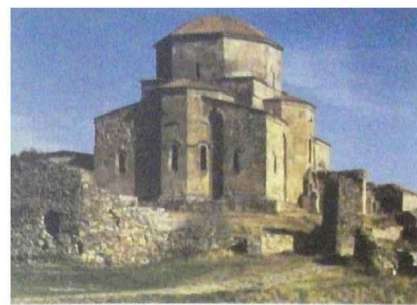
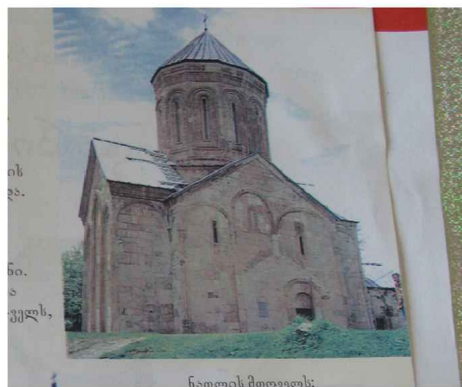
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pic. 2.8.1



გელბთი



pic. 2.8.2

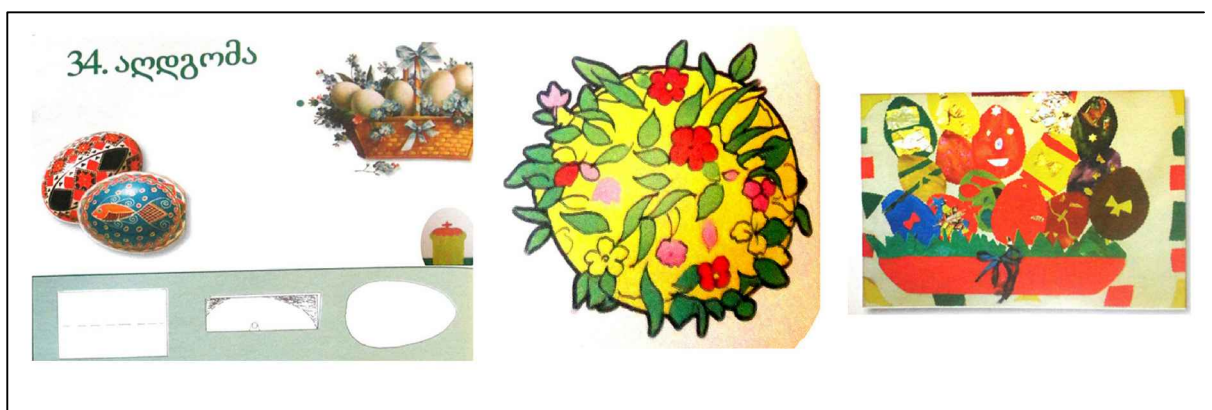


pic. 2.8.3





pic. 2.9.1



pic. 2.9.2



pic. 2.10.1



## საქართველოს მეფეები



ფარნავაზ მეფე



დავით აღმაშენებელი



თამარ მეფე

37

pic. 2.11.1



pic.

pic. 2.11.2

ნყარ  
გიორგ

დიდ  
სი უფ  
ძე, იუ  
ლოში |  
თამარ  
გიორგ  
ფერებ,  
გიო  
კონსტ  
მონინა



pic. 2.11.3



pic. 2.11.4



pic. 2.11.5

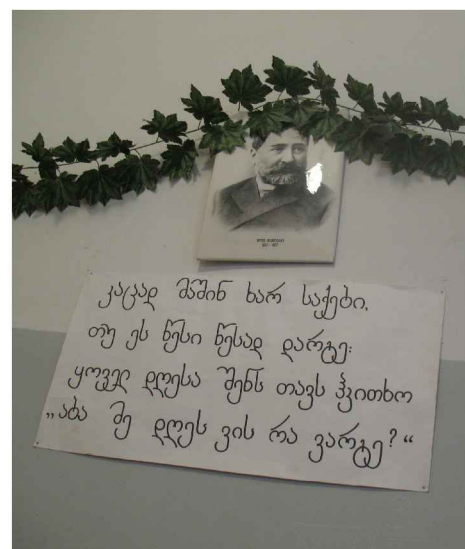
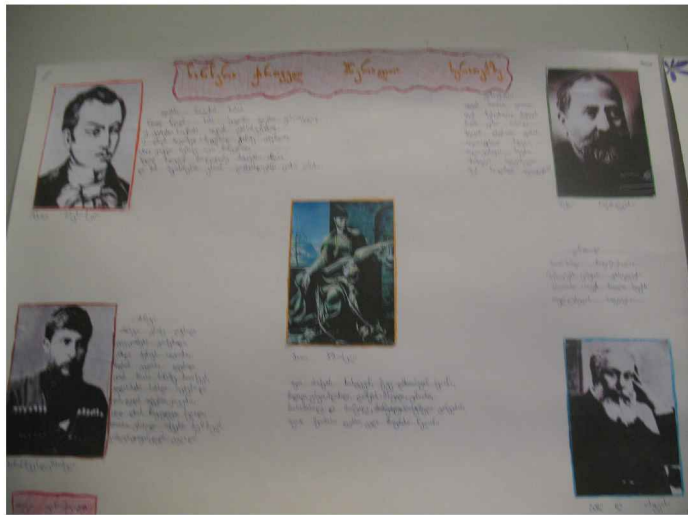




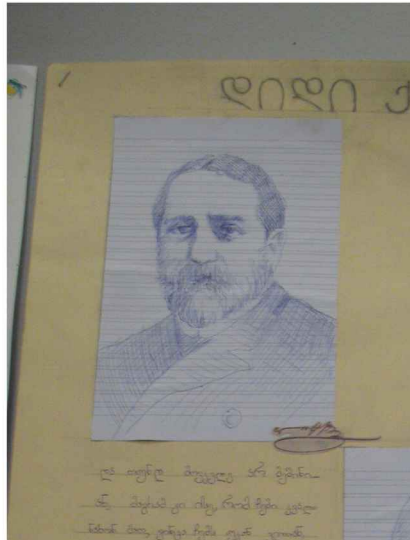


pic. 2.12.1





pic. 2.13.1



pic. 2.14.1



pic. 2.14.2



pic. 2.14.3

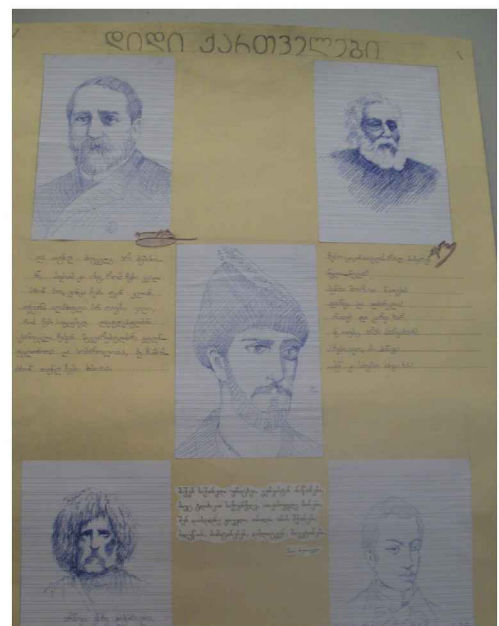
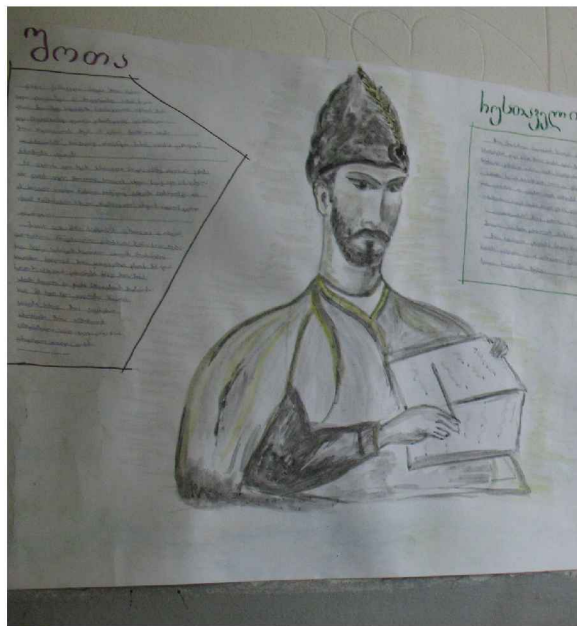


pic. 2.14.4

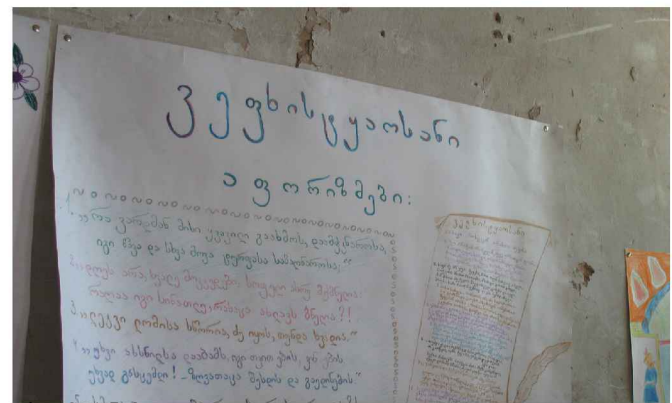


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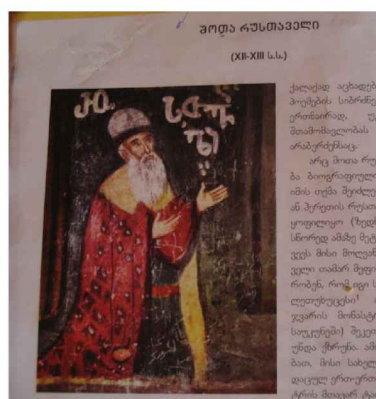




pic. 2.15.1



pic. 2.15.2



pic. 2.15.3



pic. 2.15.4



pic. 2.16.1

pic. 2.16.2



pic. 2.16.3

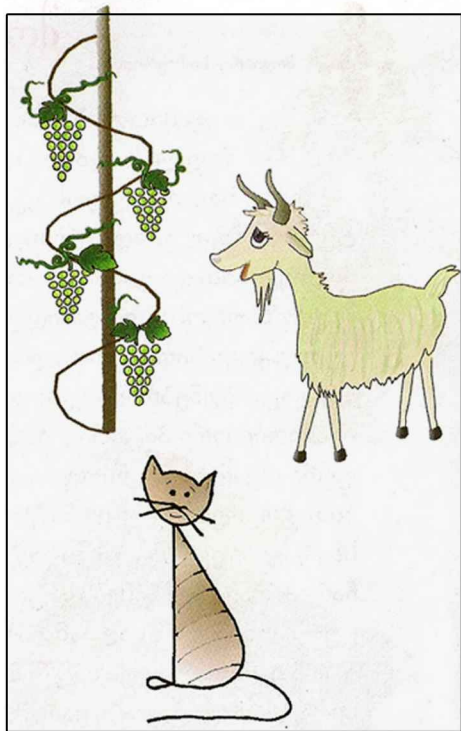




pic. 2.17.1



pic. 2.17.2



pic. 2.17.3



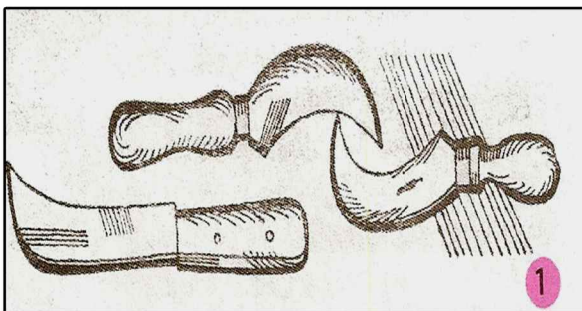
pic. 2.17.4

კახელი გლეხები

დავითიძე



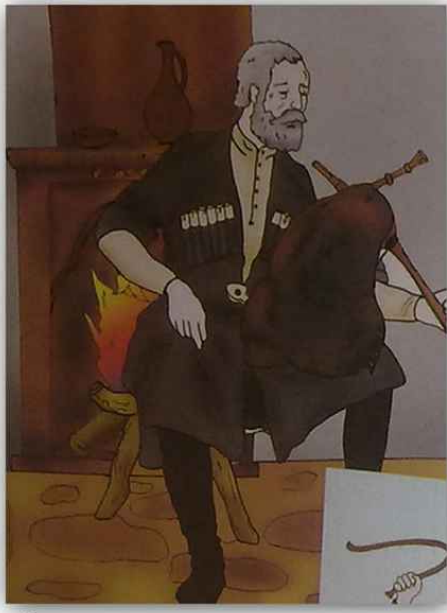
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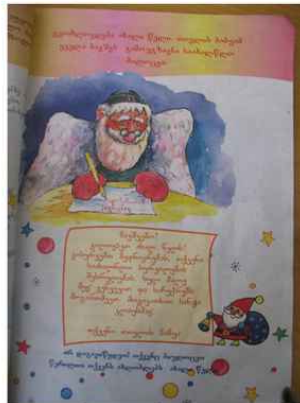
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“Maps of Identity” as Represented through School Textbooks,  
Iconography, Rituals, and Excursions

		Textbooks	Iconography	Rituals	Excursions
Myth of Origin	Hayk <i>Nahapet</i>	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Absence
Space and Territory	Yerevan	Often	Constantly	Constantly	Constantly
	Ararat	Often	Constantly	Constantly	Absence
	Ara, Aragats	Seldom	Absence	Constantly	Constantly
	Sevan, Van, Araks	Seldom	Absence	Constantly	Constantly
	Flora and Fauna	Seldom	Absence	Absence	Absence
	State Symbols	Constantly	Constantly	Constantly	Absence
Language	Armenian	Constantly	Absence	Constantly	Constantly
	Mesrop Mashtots	Constantly	Constantly	Constantly	Constantly
Religion	Churches and Monasteries	Constantly	Constantly	Absence	Constantly
	<i>Khachkar</i>	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Absence
	Garni Temple	Seldom	Absence	Absence	Constantly
	Official Church Symbols / Rituals	Absence	Constantly	Constantly	Constantly
Food	<i>Tonir, Lavash</i>	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Absence
Memory of the Armenian Genocide		Absence	Constantly	Absence	Constantly
History and Historical Figures	David of Sassoun	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Absence
	Vardan Mamikonyan / <i>Avarayr</i>	Seldom	Absence	Constantly	Absence
	Andranik / Heroes	Seldom	Constantly	Absence	Absence

Presence in Textbooks

Constantly

Often

Seldom

Presence in Iconography, Rituals and Excursions

Absence

			Textbooks	Iconography	Rituals	Excursions
Space and Territory		Tbilisi/Gorgasali				
		State Symbols				
		Areas of Georgia				
		Fereidani,...				
Language		Georgian				
		Iakob Gogebashvili				
Religion		St. Nino				
		Easter and Christmas				
		Churches and Monasteries				
		Teachers' Religiousity Reflected Publicly				
History and Historical Figures		King Parnavaz				
		Queen Tamar				
		David the Builder				
		King Erekle				
Writers and Public Figures		Rustaveli, <i>Vefxistyaosani</i>				
		Ilia Chavchavadze				
Food and Drink		<i>Toneh, Shotis Puri</i>				
		Grapes, Vine, Vintage, Wine				
Traditional Clothes and Music		Churchkhela				

Presence in Textbooks

Presence in Iconography, Rituals and Excursions

Absence

Constantly

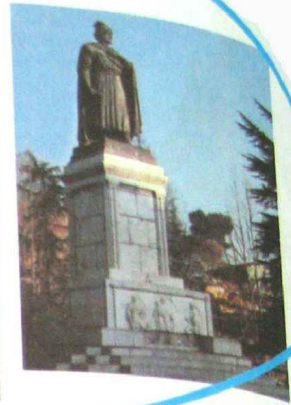
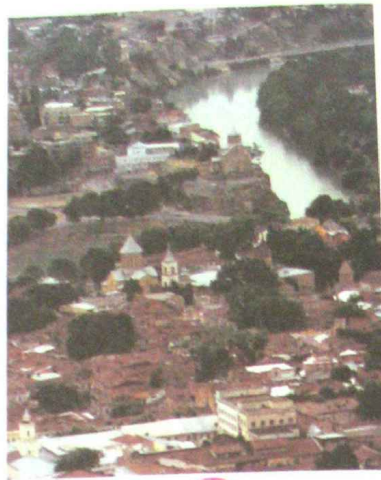
Often

Seldom

Appendix 5  
“Iconic Map” of Most Typical for Textbooks Symbols  
Representing the Areas of Georgia







pic. 2.1.1



ვახტანგ გორგასალი



pic. 2.1.2

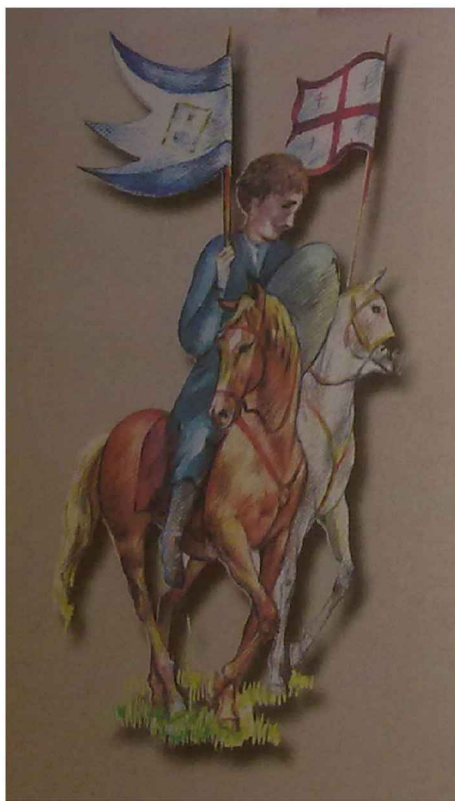


pic. 2.1.3





pic. 2.2.1



pic. 2.2.3



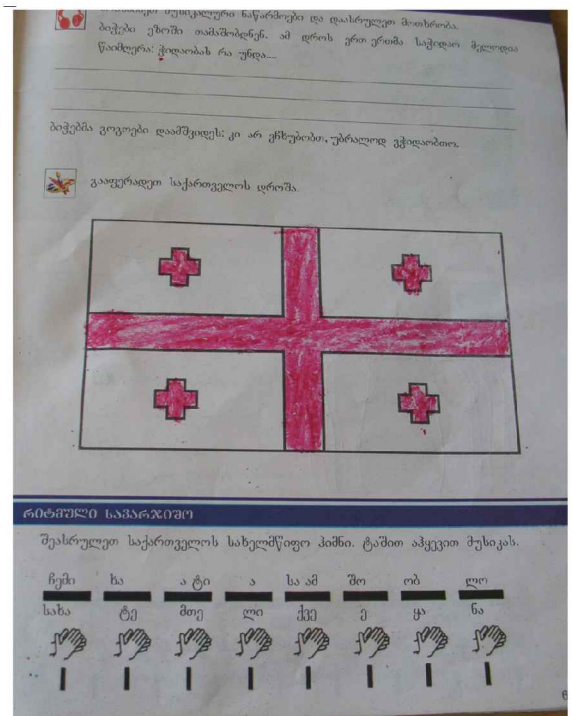
pic. 2.2.5



pic. 2.2.2



pic. 2.2.4



pic. 2.2.6

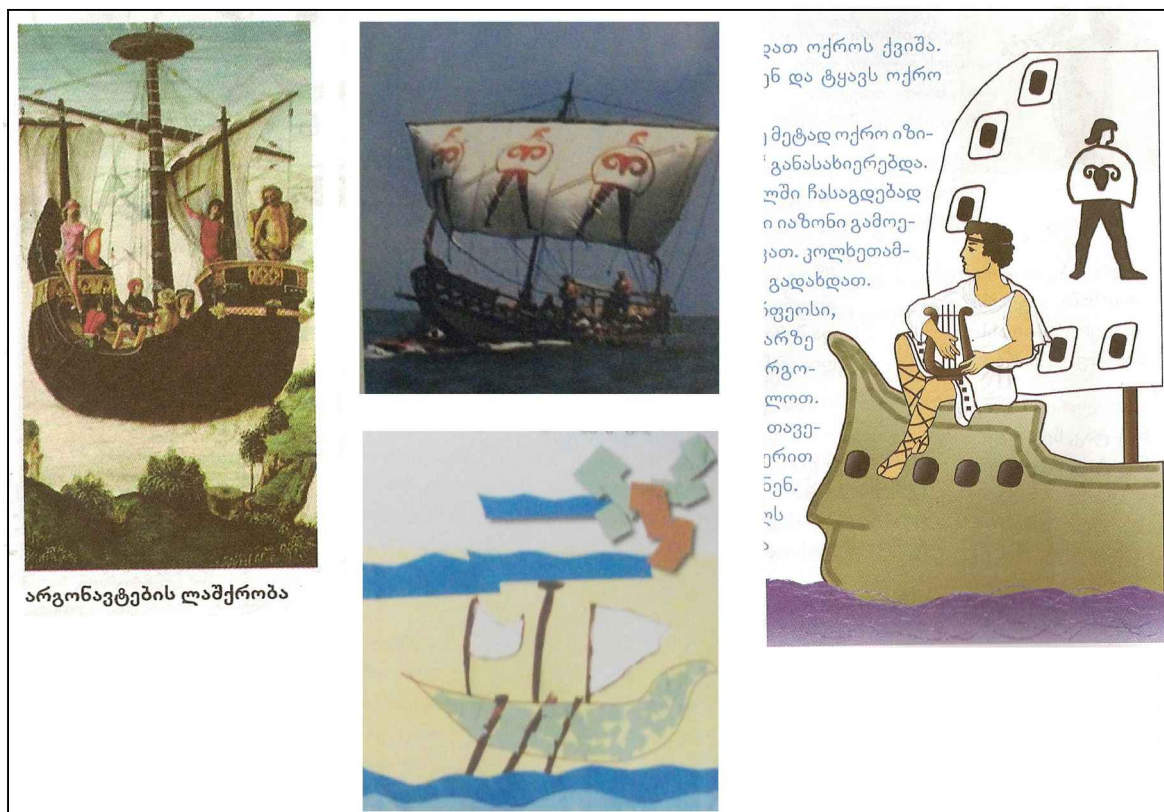


pic. 2.3.1

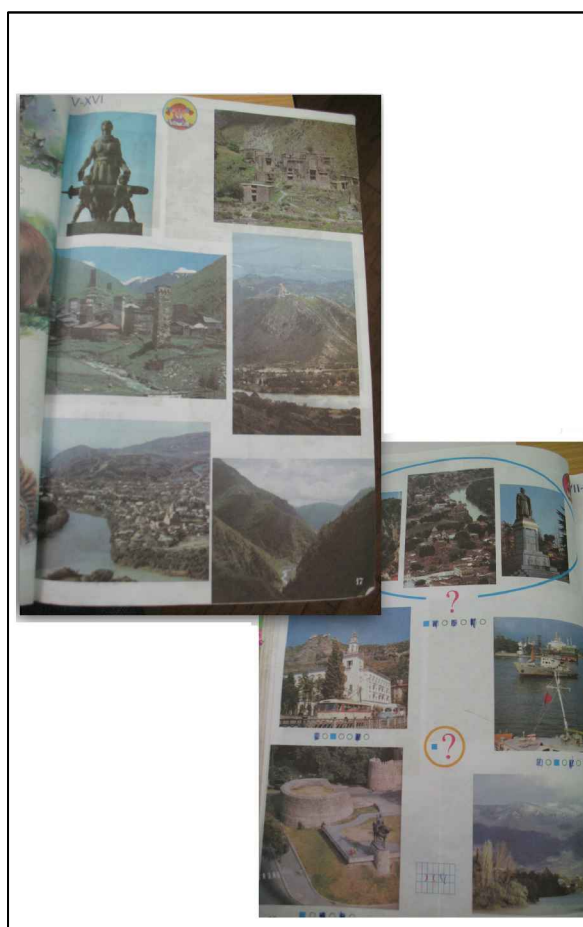


pic. 2.4.1

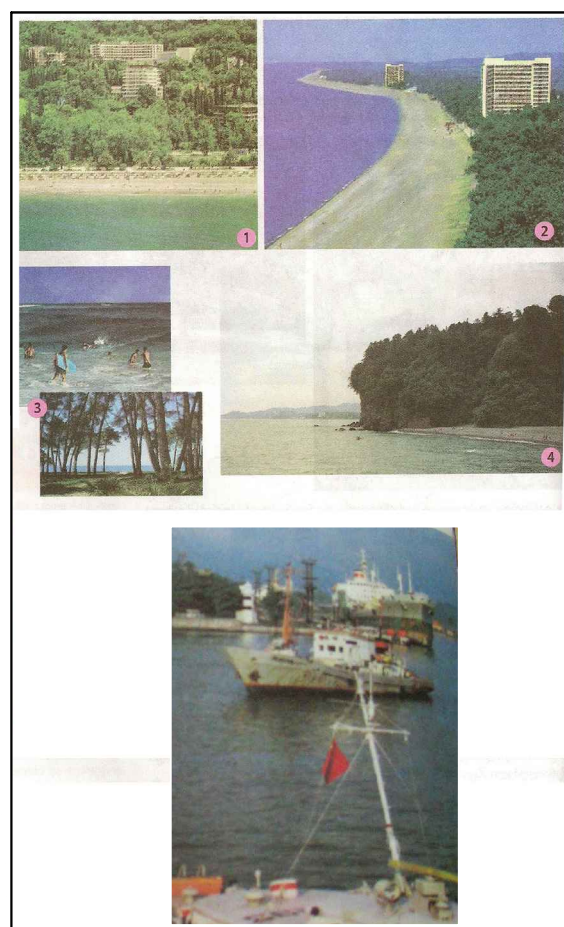




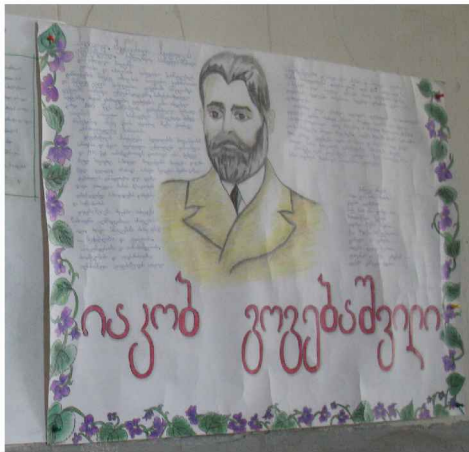
pic. 2.5.1



pic. 2.5.2



pic. 2.5.3

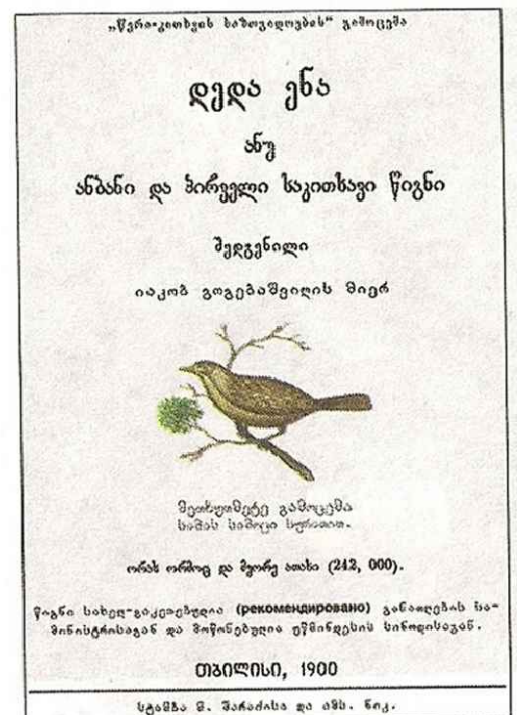


pic. 2.6.1

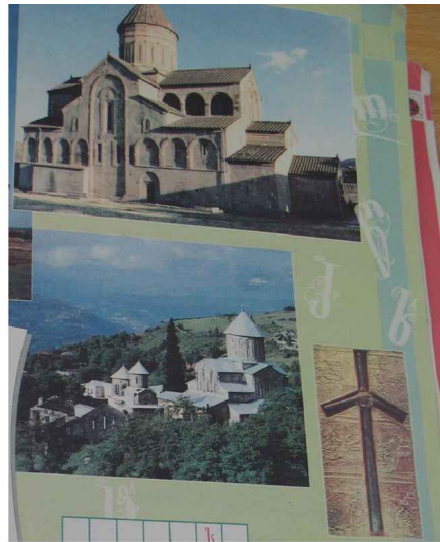




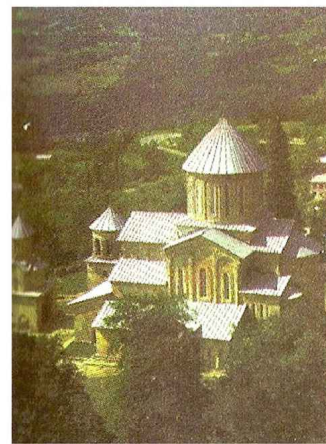
იაკობ გოგებაშვილი



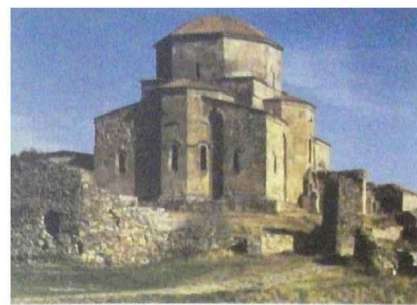
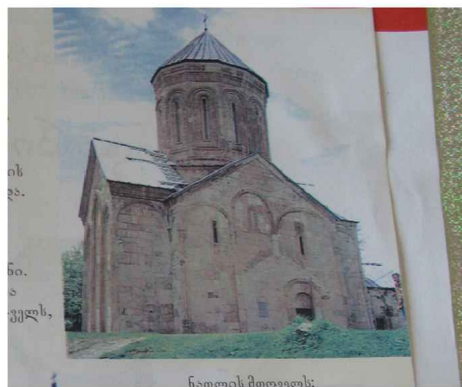
pic. 2.7.1



pic. 2.8.1



გელათი



pic. 2.8.2

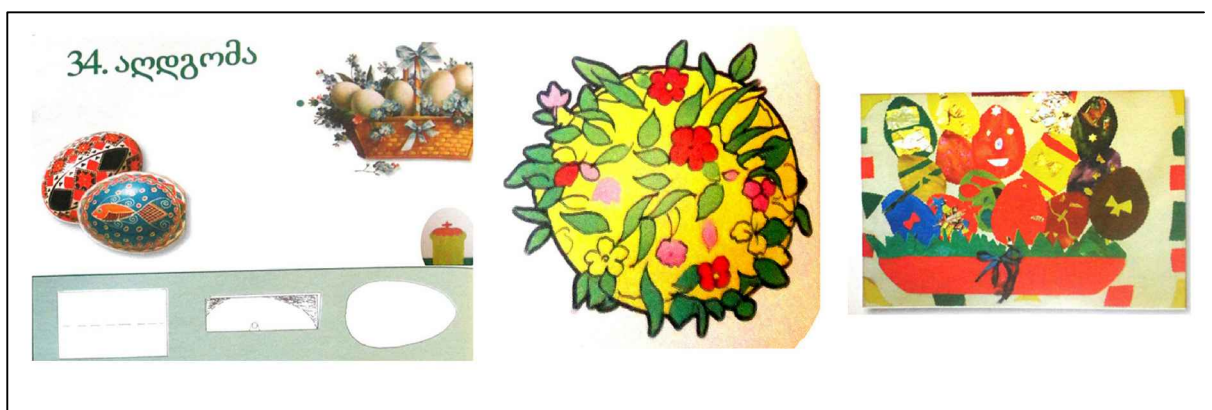


pic. 2.8.3





pic. 2.9.1



pic. 2.9.2



pic. 2.10.1



## საქართველოს მეფეები



ფარნავაზ მეფე



დავით აღმაშენებელი



თამარ მეფე

37

pic. 2.11.1



pic.

pic. 2.11.2

ნყარ  
გიორგ

დიდ  
სი უფ  
ძე, იუ  
ლოში |  
თამარ  
გიორგ  
ფერებ,  
გიო  
კონსტ  
მონინა



pic. 2.11.3



pic. 2.11.4



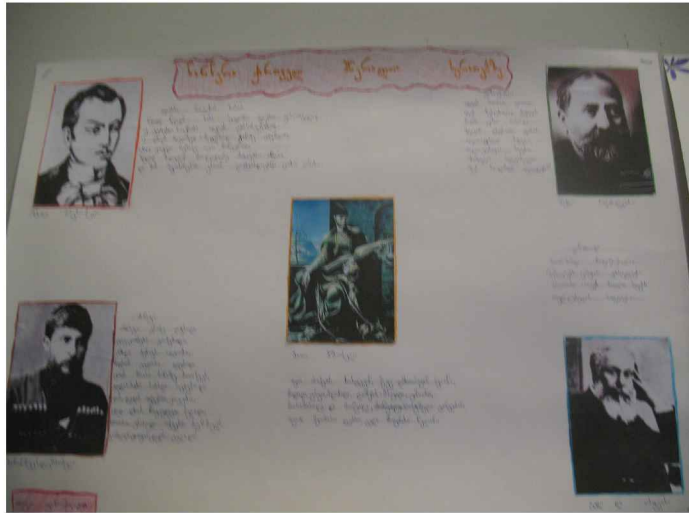
pic. 2.11.5





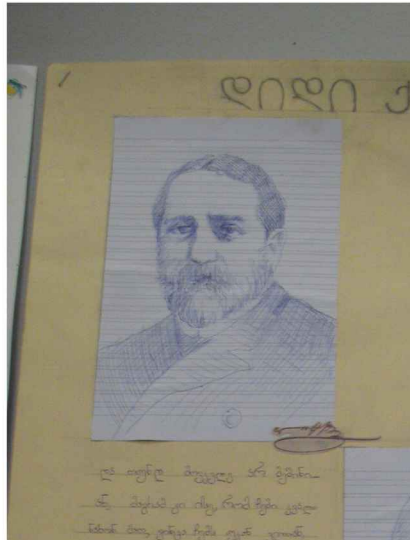


pic. 2.12.1



pic. 2.13.1





pic. 2.14.1



pic. 2.14.2



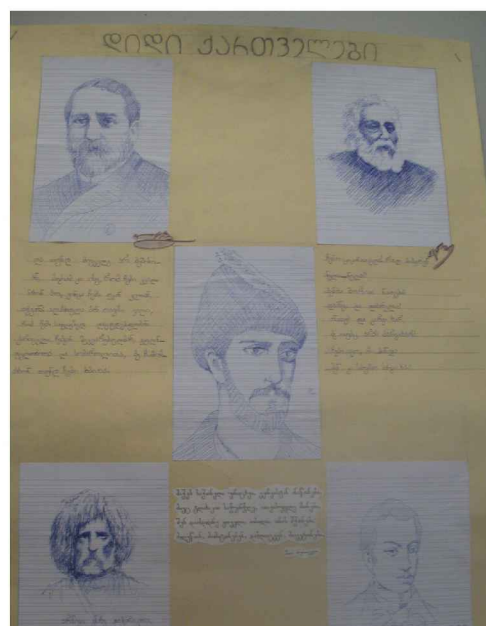
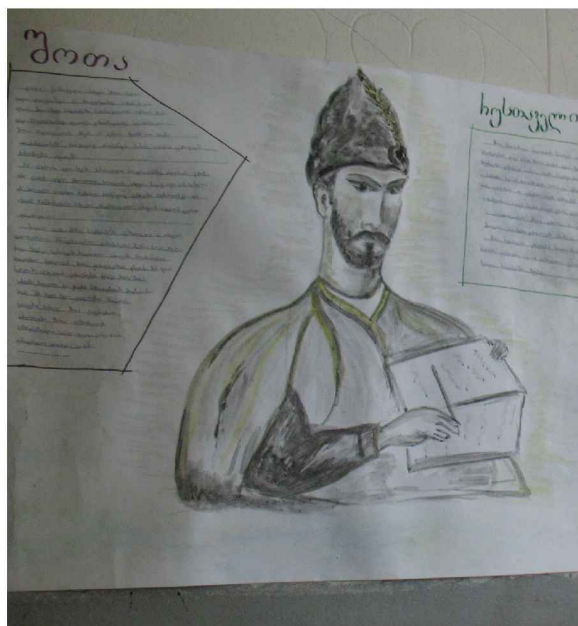
pic. 2.14.3



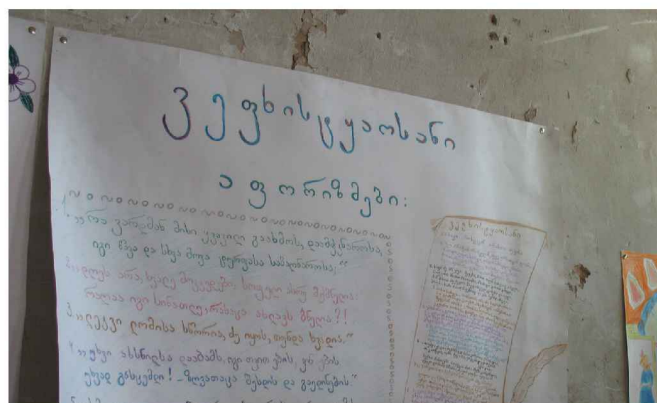
pic. 2.14.4



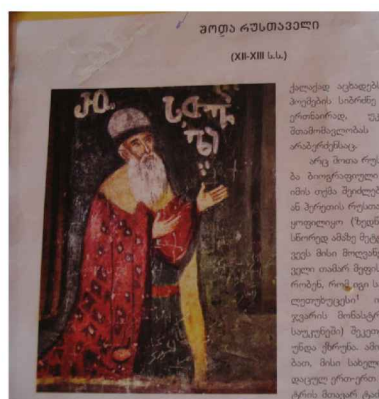
pic. 2.14.5



pic. 2.15.1



pic. 2.15.2



pic. 2.15.3



pic. 2.15.4





pic. 2.16.1

pic. 2.16.2



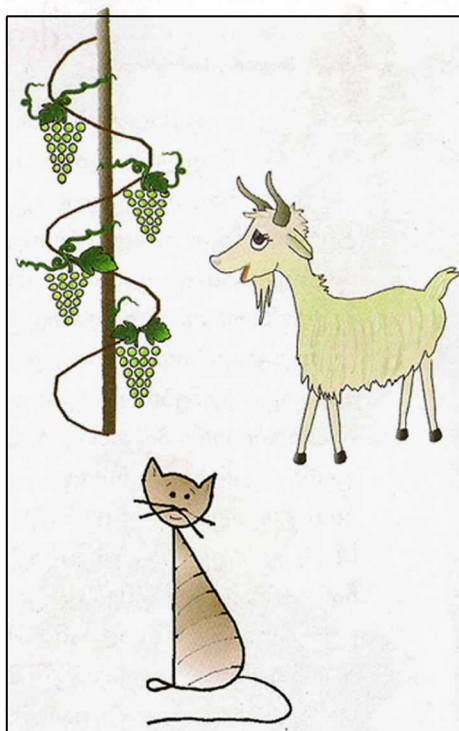
pic. 2.16.3



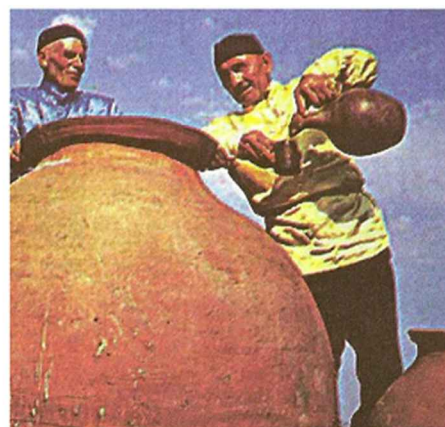
pic. 2.17.1



pic. 2.17.2



pic. 2.17.3



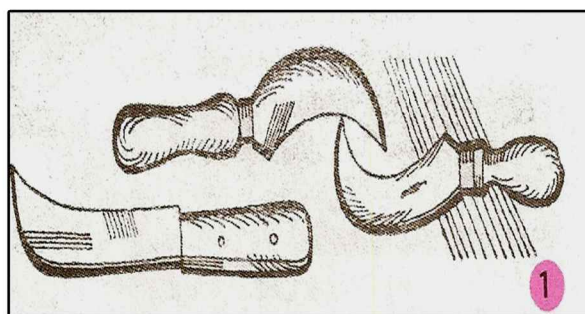
pic. 2.17.4

კახელი გლეხები

დავალება



pic. 2.17.5

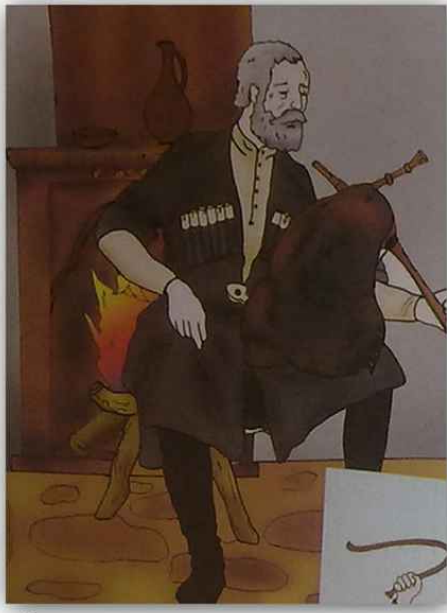


pic. 2.17.6

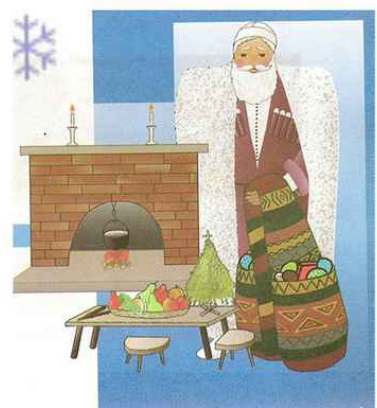
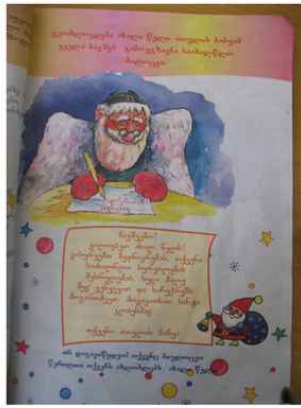


pic. 2.17.7





pic. 2.18.1



pic. 2.18.2



pic. 2.18.3



pic. 2.19.1

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- Pic. 2.14.1 Portraits, pictures and introductions about Ilia Chavchavadze and the triad

“Language, Homeland, Faith” on wall posters prepared by students hung up on the walls of the school corridors and classrooms

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- Pic. 2.19.1 School events and celebrations with participation of the students



Appendix 3 and 4  
“Maps of Identity” as Represented through School Textbooks,  
Iconography, Rituals, and Excursions

		Textbooks	Iconography	Rituals	Excursions
Myth of Origin	Hayk <i>Nahapet</i>				
	Yerevan				
Space and Territory	Ararat				
	Ara, Aragats				
	Sevan, Van, Araks				
	Flora and Fauna				
	State Symbols				
Language	Armenian				
	Mesrop Mashtots				
Religion	Churches and Monasteries				
	<i>Khachkar</i>				
	Garni Temple				
	Official Church Symbols / Rituals				
Food	<i>Tonir, Lavash</i>				
Memory of the Armenian Genocide					
History and Historical Figures	David of Sassoun				
	Vardan Mamikonyan / <i>Avarayr</i>				
	Andranik / Heroes				

Presence in Textbooks		Constantly
		Often
		Seldom
Presence in Iconography, Rituals and Excursions		
Absence		

		Textbooks	Iconography	Rituals	Excursions
Space and Territory	Tbilisi/Gorgasali	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Often
	State Symbols	Constantly	Often	Often	Absence
	Areas of Georgia	Often	Often	Absence	Absence
	Fereidani,...	Seldom	Absence	Absence	Absence
Language	Georgian	Seldom	Absence	Often	Often
	Iakob Gogebashvili	Seldom	Often	Often	Often
Religion	St. Nino	Seldom	Often	Absence	Often
	Easter and Christmas	Constantly	Absence	Absence	Absence
	Churches and Monasteries	Constantly	Often	Absence	Often
	Teachers' Religiousity Reflected Publicly	Absence	Often	Absence	Often
History and Historical Figures	King Parnavaz	Seldom	Absence	Often	Absence
	Queen Tamar	Constantly	Often	Often	Often
	David the Builder	Constantly	Absence	Often	Often
	King Erekle	Often	Absence	Absence	Often
Writers and Public Figures	Rustaveli, <i>Vefxistyaosani</i>	Often	Often	Often	Absence
	Ilia Chavchavadze	Often	Often	Often	Often
Food and Drink	<i>Toneh, Shotis Puri</i>	Seldom	Absence	Absence	Absence
	Grapes, Vine, Vintage, Wine	Constantly	Absence	Often	Absence
	Churchkhela	Seldom	Absence	Often	Absence
Traditional Clothes and Music		Often	Absence	Often	Absence

Presence in Textbooks

Constantly

Often

Seldom

Presence in Iconography, Rituals and Excursions

Often

Absence

Appendix 5  
“Iconic Map” of Most Typical for Textbooks Symbols  
Representing the Areas of Georgia

