

**Annotated Survey of
Georgian Religious Periodical Literature
Available 29 May 2004–13 June 2004
in Tbilisi and Mc'xeta**

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The following is an annotated survey of religious periodical literature that was available in Tbilisi, Georgia and Mc'xeta, Georgia during the two weeks between 29 May 2004 and 13 June 2004.

სცხოვნე სული შენი = *Ac'xovne sulī šeni* [Save your soul]
No. 3 (21), 2004
12 p. : ill.
Monthly

This appears to be a conservative newspaper; no blessing of Ilia II or any other hierarch present. There is an article attacking “Kmara” (Student movement involved in Rose Revolution) for being insufficiently Orthodox. There is an article on apocalyptic times that says that one signal of the end times was agreement in Luxembourg on 14 June 1985 when secret agreements about the unification of Europe were signed. Another article attacks “Globalists.”

აღმსარებელი = *Aǧmsarebeli* [Confessor]
“Published with the blessing Bishop Stephanos of C'ageri and Lentexi”
No. 4 (16) April 2004
4 p. : ill. (some col.)

Easter homily of Bishop Stephanos, a bishop serving under Ilia II, is the primary article of this issue. Church chronicle (including visit of Orthodox Church of American Metropolitan Herman) and news from the Internet (including Pope John Paul II's apology for the 4th crusade and the sack of Constantinople) are featured on p. 4, as are “Teachings of St. John Chrysostom.”

აღსავალი = *Aḡsavali* [Ascending]

“Religious-historical newspaper”

Published with the blessing of Ilia II

No. 7, 22 May 2004; No. 8 29 May 2004

20 p. : ill. (some col.)

Weekly

The Ascension and Pentecost are covered in this newspaper. Doctrinal teaching (e.g. on the Trinity) and historical articles predominate. Series of articles on the various eparchies of the Georgian Orthodox Church is continued through these two issues.

ახალნერგნი ზეთისხეღისანი = *Axalnergni zet'isxilisani* [Newly-planted olive trees]

“Children’s journal”

No. 1, 1999

15 p. : col. ill.

This issue is dedicated completely to the telling of St. Nino’s story.

ბავშვებისათვის = *Bavšvebisat'vis* [For children]

“Supplement to Sapatriark’os ucqebani [Patriarchal Communications]”

No. 10 (26), 14 May 2004

8 p. : col. ill.

Semimonthly

Glossy newspaper for children with stories about saints, history, moral lessons for children; also includes poetry and exercises for children.

ერი და ბერი = *Eri da beri* [People and monks; i.e. everyone]

“Georgian Orthodox newspaper”

Published with the blessing of Ilia II

No. 7 (25) 2004

12 p. : ill. (some col.)

From the conservative side of the Georgian Orthodox Church. Front page headlines: Iveria [i.e. Georgia] is threatened by an apocalyptic storm. Another article talks about liberalism as falsehood and slavery to knowledge. Commentary on Matthew focuses on false prophets. Article also about myrrh-bearing icons.

იანანა = *Iavnana* [Lullaby]

No. 5, 2004

8 p. : ill.

“Published with the blessing of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II of All Georgia”

Children’s publication. Front page has a greeting from Ilia II and pictures of processing children. Songs, children’s stories, articles on Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Cereteli, and the Patriarch’s birthday are included.

იდუმალეების სამყაროში = *Idumalebis samqaroši* [In the world of the hidden]

“Newspaper concerning facts and phenomena hidden in the future”

No. 21 (408), 28 May-4 June 2004

14 p. : col. ill.

Weekly

Newspaper covering the occult, predictions of the future, astrology, parapsychology and various things that would come under the general heading of New Age

ივერიის გაბრწყინება = *Iveris gabrcqineba* [Iberia’s brilliance]

“Independent Orthodox Christian informational/analytical bulletin” founded by Giorgi Gabashvili in 1994.

No. 1 (47) 2004

Anti-ecumenical; would seem to have some relationship with the “Orthodox Church in Georgia” [formerly True Orthodox Church in Georgia]

One of the most bizarre claims in this issue: a Church of Satan, located in San Francisco, is a member of the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. They are peddling some stories spread by Archbishop Averkii of ROCOR.

Articles also on the Antichrist and “Concerning Theosophy” the latter perhaps to disassociate themselves from other schismatic Orthodox in the Zviadist camp [i.e. followers of Zviad Gamsaxurdia] who have ties to anthroposophism.

კანდელო = *Kandeli* [Lamp]

“Printed with the blessing of Tadeozi, Archbishop of Bolnisi”

No. 19 (103), 14-20 May 2004

12 p. : ill.

Weekly

Archdiocesan newsletter. This issue has an extensive article on Tamar, Ruler of the Georgians in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. She is one of the quintessential national saints of Georgia. The ancient martyr Irene is also featured. Weekly calendar of saints is included.

No. 22 (106), 4-10 May 2004

Featured saints: Simeon the Stylite, John the Baptist, John of Kronstadt. Article on the 1 June feast commemorating Nino’s entry into Georgia is included, as well as a meditation on the beatitude “Blessed are the merciful.” A liturgical catechism is also included.

ლაზარეს აღდგინება = *Lazares aǰdgineba* [Raising of Lazarus]

Published with the blessing of Ilia II

This publication has been issued in 1989. It contains many translations from English and Russian. The name is a reference to Georgian as the “Lazarus” of languages but does not seem to have the theosophical baggage that often comes with those, such as Gamsakhurdia, who embraced a messianist nationalism around this concept.

Issue No. 18 appeared in 2004.

კარიბჭე = *Karibče* [Entranceway]

“Orthodox journal”

No. 5, June 2004

50 p. : ill.

Monthly

Includes the month’s calendar of saints and feast days. This issue includes a pamphlet “Akathist for St. Nino.” Article on Moses the Black. Article on Bodbe and Nino with material on the women’s monastery that is located there.

ქართობი = *K'arozhi* [Herald]

“Orthodox journal”

Vardobist've [Rose month] 2004, No. 6 (21) Designation of month
this way is precious and antiquarian.

This small journal has the blessing of Ilia II and an archbishop on the editorial staff, T'adeozi Ioramashvili. Zurab Varzashvili, Chair of the Patriarch Dept. of Social Welfare is also on the editorial board.

This issue has hagiographical entries on the Syrian Fathers, as well as a piece by Ilia II on life sometimes resembling being in the wilderness. There is also an article on St. John of Kronstadt, leading one to believe this journal is on the conservative side.

კლიტე დავითისი = *Klite Davit'isi* [Key of David]

“Monthly newspaper of the Tbilisi Spiritual Academy and Spiritual Seminary”

Established with the blessing of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II

No. 1, Jan. 2004

8 p. : ill.

Monthly

Articles on the Nativity of Christ as well as an article on the Spiritual Academy and its operations. An article also on the new Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi described in the title as a “Uniting Symbol of Georgia.” On p. 8 there is an article on science and religion called “Let every soul praise the Lord,” in which a student in Christian anthropology speaks of finding God praised in the singing of birds.

ლომისა = *Lomisa*

“Newspaper of true Orthodox Christians”

No. 10 (184) 15-31 *Vardobist've* [May] 2004

4 p. : ill.

With an article about the notorious Fr. Basil (Mkalavishvil) following the thorny path of John Chrysostom, this newspaper represents one of the schismatic Orthodox sects that have included this Fr. Basil and who directly relate to one of the Old Calendarist groups in Greece. Not to be confused with the sect that relates to Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston [at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery of Brookline, Mass.] and whose followers in Georgia were once known as the True Orthodox Church of Georgia.

The day of Tamar, Ruler of the Georgians, is commemorated. Among the short articles in the back is one that quotes President Saakashvili in Batumi speaking about the necessity to rid Georgia of non-traditional religions. This sort of statement [taken out of context?] would support this Orthodox sects moves to rid Georgia of Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals and others.

მადლიანი სტეფანწმიდა = *Madliani Step'anmida* [Gracious St. Stephen]

“Newspaper published with the blessing of Peter, the Bishop of Xevi and St. Stephen”

No. 13, June 2004

12 p. : ill. (some col.)

monthly

Newspaper of the Diocese of Xevi and St. Stephen. This issue contains articles on the Patriarch and his travels to Mt. Athos and other parts of Greece, as well as a homily on St. Andrew, the First-Called of the Apostles. A church calendar is included with extensive notes on the saints and events commemorated.

მართლმორწმუნე = *Mart'lmormune* [Orthodox Christian]

“Religious journal”

No. 3, 14 Jan.–13 Feb. 2004

23 p. : ill.

monthly

Several historical articles with material on Nino and David the Builder. The Patriarch is not pictured here, nor is his blessing or that of any other hierarch mentioned. There is an extended article on Judaism. Reference to Georgian Jews (not numbering more than 10,000) is made. A Bishop Leonid's meditation on David the Builder is included.

No. 5, 14 Mar.-25 Mar.

[after 25. Mar to appear weekly]

This issue includes an article on Islam, that had been started in No. 4. Articles on saints and fasting are featured.

მეტეხი = *Metexi* [Metexi Church in Tbilisi; although it does not appear that this is endorsed by the Metexi Church]

No. 1 (5) Mar. 14–Apr 13 2004

48 p. : ill.

Monthly

This is not a mainstream Orthodox publication. It includes articles by Zviad Gamsaxurdia as well as articles about the connections of Freemasons and Jews and how they run the United States. Also in this issue was part of a longer article on signs by which one could recognize the coming of the Antichrist into the world.

მთვესი = *Moqvasi* [Neighbor]

“Publication of Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas in Rustavi”

published with blessing of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II

Began publication on 14 Jan. 2004

No. 3, Feb. 2004; No. 4, Mar. 2004

8 p. : ill. (some col.)

Monthly

This newspaper from St. Nicholas’ Cathedral in Rustavi (industrial town to the south of Tbilisi) has articles on the church calendar and saints, as well as on the Divine Liturgy and the spiritual education of children. These issues each contain part of a serialized printing of the Gospel of Matthew.

მთვესი = *Moqvasi* [Neighbor]

“Monthly publication of the Alaverdi Eparchy”

No. 5 (20) May 2004

32 p. : ill. (some col.)

Monthly

This issue of *Moqvasi* featured the visit of a delegation from the Orthodox Church of America led by Metropolitan Herman. This eparchy is centered in the Alaverdi Cathedral located in Kakheti, i.e., East Georgia. A “Religious News of the World” section includes short pieces on the crisis between the churches of Greece and Constantinople, a poll that indicated that 54% of those questioned believed that Lenin should be buried, and a report on problems concerning the finances of Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of Christ.”

მრევლი = *Mrevli* [Parish]

Published with the blessing of Ilia II

No. 3 (86), Pentecost 2004

16 p. : ill. (some col.)

Monthly

Lead article in a meditation on the Holy Trinity, one of the aspects of the Orthodox celebration of Pentecost. Several of the articles are translated from other sources including Russian. Saints and history of the Church are covered in this newspaper. Also contained is an article "From the history of the struggle with ecumenism," that cites the work of Fr. Seraphim Rose [American convert in the Russian Church Outside of Russia] and his monastic companion Fr. Herman against the ecumenical work of Patriarch Athenagoras. This shows Mrevli to belong to a more conservative group within the Patriarch's Church.

მზესაბნობი = *Mzekabani* [Clothed with the sun]

"Newspaper of Georgia's Orthodox Writers' Union"

No. 4 (66) Vardobist've [May] 2004

8 p. : ill.

Monthly

Collection of Orthodox religious literature. Lengthy article on "Gospel of the Georgian Soul : The World-view of Shota Rustaveli." In this issue is part of a serialized article called "Crucified Georgia," that applies some numerology to its assessment of Georgian history.

ორნატი = *Ornati* [Furrow]

"Theological academic journal of the Nikorcminda Patriarchal Eparchy of the Georgia."

1, 2003

70 p. : ill., col. map

This issue, which begins by greeting Ilia II on his 70th birthday, the 40th anniversary of his ordination, and the 25th anniversary of his enthronement, has an extended, illustrated section on the eparchies of the Georgian Orthodox Church. It has a colored map to illustrate their geographical locations.

რწმენა და ცოდნა = *Rcmena da c'odna* [Belief and knowledge]

A run of these was available at the Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi. Protopresbyter Giorgi Gamerkeli is the editor-in-chief of this quarterly. Began about 1999 and may have ceased publication in 2003 as there did not appear to be any issues new for 2004.

Translation of Gospel of Matthew runs through several issues. Also articles discussing issues as the meeting point of science and religion such as the issues of creation, Genesis, and evolution.

საბა = *Saba*

2004, No. 5 (17) May.
16 p. : ill.
issued since 1994.

This periodical was obtained at the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church. It is published by an independent group of Catholics and is named for the Georgian philologist Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani, who converted to Roman Catholicism.

This issue had a variety of articles on local affairs as well as John Paul II's letter to Ilia II on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Ilia II's enthronement as Patriarch-Catholicos of the Georgian Orthodox Church. It also had a listing of courses for the Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani Institute of Theology, Philosophy, Culture, and History.

საპატრიარქოს უწყებანი = *Sapatriark'os ucqebani* [Patriarchal communications]

No. 19 (278), 28 May–3 June 2004
20 p. : ill. (some col.)
Weekly

An official publication of the Georgian Patriarchate, with chronicle of church events, including the travels of Ilia II. In this issue an article on Georgian hagiography as a special national treasure. Articles on the priesthood are featured with explanation of vestments.

სვეტი ნატლისა = *Sveti nat'lisha* [Pillar of light]
 “Newspaper of the Holy Twelve Apostles’ Orthodox Education Center in Mxeta”
 carries the blessing of Ilia II
 No. 5 (37) May 2004
 4p. : ill.

Educational material on saints and the church calendar are the focus of this newspaper. A notice is given on p. 4 concerning those who are interested in studying at the Education Center’s gymnasium in 2004–2005.

სულიერი და ზნეობრივი საქართველო = *Sulieri da zneobrivi Sak'art'velo* [Spiritual and moral Georgia]
 Weekly newspaper of the “Spiritual and Moral Georgia” movement
 No. 1 (1), Feb. 2004
 34 p. : ill.
 Weekly

The articles in this newspaper give the indication that they are promoting a close relationship between Orthodox and national culture in Georgia, e.g., “The movement’s political project : Georgia—a spiritual and moral authority” and “The nation and national identity.” Statements from Ilia II and President Mikheil Saakashvili appear on p. 2.

თორა - სინათლე = *T'ora - sinat'le* [The Torah is a Lamp]
 4 p. : col. ill.
 Weekly?

This was obtained at the synagogue located in the old part of Tbilisi. It is a Lubavitch publication and bears the same name as a publication that was issued in Israel for the Georgian Jews who have settled there.

ხარება = *Xareba* [Proclamation]

“Published with the blessing of Archbishop Joseph”

No. 3 (41), May 2004

20 p. : ill. (some col.)

Archbishop Joseph is part of the Patriarch's Church but this appears to be another example of publishing from the conservative wing. In addition to articles on saints and the history of the church there is an article on Mark of Ephesus and his work against the Council of Florence and how that should be an example of struggle against the sort of false unity promoted by such as Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras.

