Have a look at GEORGIA





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Georgia - brought back to the world map after the collapse of Soviet Union - has already been known as a country of unique culture to the ancient Greeks. Let me remind you that the myth about the Argonauts and the Golden Fleece takes place in the land of Kolkhis - the ancient Georgian kingdom. The first inscription made with the unique Georgian alphabet, as well as the first Georgian book ever - both date back to the 5th century, which make us believe that literature has always been an important aspect of Georgian culture - as well as identity. We are proud of our literature and our gifted authors, though regretfully the Iron Curtain during the Soviet period made it impossible to translate their works into other languages and thus are unknown to the majority of readers in foreign countries.

Thus I, as the Minister of Culture of Georgia, can see my mission as providing support and all possible funds to promote contemporary Georgian authors and literature worldwide. The Ministry of Culture supports the Association of Georgian Publishers and Booksellers to organize the annual Book Festival in Tbilisi- the capital of Georgia; to help build a collective stand at FBF since 2007 and will provide funds to organize the collective stand at Leipzig BF from 2012. We also hope to give away translation grants to foreign publishers wishing to translate Georgian fiction and to provide grants to local authors. All these are step-by- step efforts which we hope will lead us to the next level - and a very important one at that. We hope that Georgia will become a guest of honor at both the Leipzig and Frankfurt Book Fairs. I admit that this will be a real challenge for all of us, but we are ready, willing and able to accept it!

> Nikoloz Rurua Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia 10.09.2011

IMPORTANT DATES

- 468 $\,$ The first Georgian inscription was made.
- 495 The first Georgian book "The Martyrdom of Shushanik" was written.
- 973 The first known Georgian Manuscript of the Four Gospels was created.
- 1629 The first Georgian book Italian-Georgian Dictionary was printed.
- 1712 The first book was printed in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi.
- 1819 The first Georgian newspaper was printed.
- 1995 The law on intellectual property was adopted.
- 1995 Georgia joined the Bern Convention.
- 1996 Georgian Publishers Association, later joined also by Booksellers (GPBA) was founded.
- 1997 National ISBN Agency was founded.
- 2008 GPBA joined IPA as a regular member.



THE HISTORY OF BOOK PUBLISHING IN GEORGIA

The roots of book publishing in Georgia go back to the 4th Century when Georgia's conversion to Christianity created demand for manuscripts in Georgian. These manuscripts were copied in monasteries across the country.

Alongside the translation of the Bible, original texts were also created. These early books were of religious content and written by monks. The first Georgian book – The Martyrdom of Shushanik by Jakob Tsurtaveli – was written in the 5th century.

Although 5th century inscriptions on the walls of churches are maintained, unfortunately no complete books survived from 5th to 6th Century save fragmentary pages. One Georgian handwritten book which did survive to the present day is the Mt.Sinai (Egypt) Bible from 864.

Despite the fact that Georgian books were printed from the 17th Century onwards, manuscripts still constituted the largest fraction of Georgian literature until the beginning of the 19th Century. And although thousands of books survived through various centuries, even more were allegedly destroyed.

There are about 10 000 titles of both manuscripts and old printed books preserved at the National Centre of Manuscripts in Georgia.



GEORGIAN ALPHABET					
ა - a	Ә - m	ድ - gh			
პ - ხ	б - n	ម - q`			
රි - g	(¹) – O	ට - sh			
ሮ - d	3 - р`	ß - ch			
0 - е	ป - zh	ය - ts			
3 - v	რ - r	d - dz			
% - Z	ს - s	წ - ts`			
01 - t	ම - t	ೆ - ch`			
0 - i	ປີ - u	ხ - kh			
კ - k	ප - p	Ж - ј			
<u></u> -	d - k	3 - h			

HAVE A LOOK AT GEORGIA

SECULAR LITERATURE

The creation of secular texts began later, namely in the 10-11th Centuries. The Knight in the Panther's Skin by Shota Rustaveli – a masterpiece regarded as one of the most important achievements in Georgian culture was written in the 12th Century; the poem is preserved in numerous copies of different manuscripts. It is particularly interesting to note that the Knight in the Panther's Skin was often distributed in the form of illustrated manuscripts.



The Knight in the Panther's Skin Illustrated Manuscript, 1646

THE FIRST GEORGIAN PRINTED BOOK

Due to the complicated political and economic situation in Georgia (the country was at that point totally isolated from the rest of the world) the first ever printed book was the Italian–Georgian Dictionary. It was printed in Rome in 1629. More books were printed abroad – in Italy and Russia – during the 18th Century.

The first printing house in Tbilisi was established in 1712 and the very first books printed there were The Holy Bible, The Knight in the Panther's Skin

by Shota Rustaveli and The Georgian Dictionary, as well as the history of Georgia compiled from old manuscripts.

During the 18th century 19 titles were printed in Georgia.

The Tbilisi printing houses closed down and reopened several times, but in total 21 titles were printed during the period between 1629 and 1800.

BOOK PUBLISHING AFTER 1801

After the annexation of Georgia by Russia in 1801 and the abolition of Georgian Kingdom, Georgia remained a Russian Province until 1918 when an independent republic was declared. During that time, Georgian was not a state language (until 1805, teaching Georgian at schools was also prohibited) and books were distributed only in handwritten form until 1805.





STATISTICS FOR THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO 1918

The total number of the titles published from 1801 to 1918 (the year Georgia declared its independence) stood at 5395.

STATISTICS FOR 1918-1921

The total number of the titles published from 1918 to 1921 comprised 896.

PUBLICATION STATISTICS IN INDEPENDENT GEORGIA

After the Soviet occupation in 1921, book publishing was monopolized by the state and subjected to heavy censorship and control. Moscow ruled over the system as it did in all other Soviet Republics. Publishing regulations were governed by a special Committee and were obeyed by all publishing and printing houses. The total number of titles published during the period between 1921 and1991 was 40 000.

1992 - 2010

The first half of the 1990s was marked with vitally important changes for Georgia. The civil war led to total collapse of book publishing. Almost no books were published during the period from 1992 through1994. A small revival took place in 1995 when several private publishing houses emerged fully replacing the state-owned publishing houses within few years. After this privatization, the majority of state institutions closed down or stopped publishing books.

A very important step in the development of book publishing in Georgia was the creation of the Georgian Book Publishers and Booksellers Association. The Association initiated the creation of an ISBN agency in 1997 and in the same year, the first Tbilisi Book Fair was held.

A positive role was played by the SOROS (Open Society Georgia) Foundation by funding several visits of Georgian publishers to the Frankfurt Book Fair as well as arranging numerous training schemes and seminars for publishers. The Translation Support Program successfully operated for many years. The publishing business had gradually became more sustainable, so that the most of publishers could survive and develop without support and grants from foundations/ donor organizations operating in Georgia

CHARACTERISTICS, CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE GEORGIAN BOOK MARKET

In 1996, four Georgian publishers, representing three independent publishing companies, participated in the Frankfurt Book Fair It was not just their first personal attendance at this fair, but the first ever participation of Georgian publishers in the Frankfurt Book Fair. The four were among a few independent publishers who set up publishing companies in the turbulent years immediately following the regaining of independence by Georgia in 1991. They presented all twelve new publications on a four square-meter Georgian collective stand in the huge Hall 9.2 at the Frankfurt Book Fair. At that time, around 500 titles were published throughout Georgia; the maximum print-run for a novel stood at 500 copies.

Fifteen years have passed since then and it would seem that those difficult times are long over.

Today, there are around 92 regular publishers, 66 bookshops and up to 10 wholesalers in Georgia. Most of them regularly take part in Tbilisi Book Festival which is organized annually by the Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association (GPBA). The number of independent publishing companies and new publications is gradually increasing; sales figures are also rising steadily.

Market Share 2011				
	Publishers (Number in group)	Average Production (1000 EUR)	Average Turn-over (1000 EUR)	Market Share
Large Publishers	6	6919,9	7256,8	74%
Medium-sized publishers	7	759,0	768,3	8%
Small publishers	79	2148,6	1757,9	18%

National Statistics Office of Georgia

Market (Geographic) Concentration 2011					
Total Capital Region					
Number of regular publishers	92	91	1		
Number of bookshops	66	36	30		

National Statistics Office of Georgia

Nowadays, about 30 publishing companies focus on school textbooks which account for 20 percent of the total book market. Children's books and novels each make up nearly 18 percent. The market is not very diverse – there are still numerous gaps or niches which can be expected to be gradually filled.

Book Production						
	2010	2009	2008	2007		
Number of Published Titles (According to the National Library)	2801	3591	2797	2534		
Average Turn- over (1000 EUR)	15353,6	7484,9	5030,04	4290,9		
Production Evaluation (1000 EUR)	13579,4	8034,1	6162,3	5649,1		

National Statistics Office of Georgia

Published categories					
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Philosophy, Psychology	3,2 %	14,1 %	2,1%	2,8 %	
Religion,Theology	5,2 %	11,2 %	4,2%	5,7 %	
Social Sciences	27,1 %	19,3 %	28,5%	33,1 %	
Mathematics, Natural Sciences	6,1 %	9,8 %	7%	7%	
Applied Scisences, Medicine, Technology	18,2 %	6,4 %	8,4%	10,3 %	
Arts, Recreation, Entertainment,Sports	4,5 %	5%	6,1%	5%	
Fiction	18,2 %	17,2 %	25%	20%	
Geography, Biology, History	7,5 %	0,7 %	8,2%	6,4 %	
Language, Linguistics	2%	6%	5,3%	5,8 %	
General Non-fiction	8%	10,3%	5,2%	3,9 %	

National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

STARTING A PUBLISHING BUSINESS: EASY TO START

The World Bank publishes an annual report "Doing Business" which provides objective measures of business regulations for local companies in 183 economies. Georgia's ranking in Doing Business during last 2–3 years is among top 15. In 2011 Georgia's general rank is 12, while the rank for Starting Business is 8 (www.doingbusiness.org).

To start a publishing business is as easy as any other. Everyone can register a publishing company of any legal form (Plc, Ltd, Joint Stock, Individual enterprise, etc) without any license. Only application and a charter is requested; no starting capital, no stamp needed. The registration process takes a day and a company is registered as soon as a registration document is published online at www.napr.gov.ge. Everyone can search and print out a document certifying that the company is registered from the above online database as well.

TAXES AND LEGISLATION: EASY TO GO

There is no VAT applicable to books in Georgia. Other taxes to be paid are Income Tax 20% (will be reduced to 15% beginning in 2013); Profit Tax 15% (will be reduced to 10% beginning in 2013); there is no Import Tax and the customs clearance procedures are rather simplified. Since September 2011, companies and individuals can declare the import of goods via Internet Portal.

Companies can also declare their monthly and yearly revenues electronically and are able to define themselves whom to provide annual Financial Audit – an official revenue agent or a private audit firm.

Internet banking is widely practiced and wire transfer can be simply made online to the accounts of foreign companies in any bank worldwide according to the invoices alone.

SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

In 2005/2006, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia embarked on the preparation of new curricula for schools. The school textbook market opened up to all publishing companies capable of providing quality textbooks in line with the new curricula. Just a year before, there was a choice of only two textbooks per subject and per grade. Strong competition has developed between school textbook publishing companies, which will certainly intensify in the future.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND NOVELS

The publishing of the children's books ranks the second after school textbooks, but the average quality of contents and illustrations is not very good. It is to be hoped that increasing competition on the children's book market will lead to an improvement in the quality of illustrations. Literary competitions and awards can also play an important role when it comes to inspiring children's books authors and authors of fiction for adults. There are several literary competitions and prize presentations every year in Georgia. They have all been created over the last decade by various independent organizations and publishers.

LITERARY PRIZES AND COMPETITIONS

There are literature competitions of various forms and structure such as the annual "Alubloba" for young writers aged 15+, online competition "Tsero" for debut writers and "Pen Marathon", which reveal new names and works every year. But the most prominent two events are: literature award Saba and Gala annual awards. Saba was founded in 2003, by The TBC Bank, Georgian Pen Club and daily newspaper "24 Hours". Every July, Saba sums up the "literary harvest" of the year in seven nominations and awards monetary prizes to the authors.

In 2007, Tbilisi Assembly initiated a new award called "Gala," founded by the writer Zaal Samadashvili. Gala also has seven nominations including illustration, Children's book, Screenplays and Drama and the best publishing project.

TRANSLATIONS

In most cases translations cannot be produced without financial support. Even world bestsellers fail to achieve high sales figures in Georgia. Funding from foreign foundations is very important for Georgian publishing companies and many apply to different institutions worldwide.

Several years ago, The GPBA submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia (www.mcs.gov.ge) to establish a Georgian foundation for the promotion of translation of Georgian literature into other languages. In 2010 Ministry of Culture launched a Program in Support of Georgian Book and Literature (www.book.gov.ge). Among the priorities of the program is the translation grant for foreign publishers willing to translate Georgian fiction.

Fiction					
	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Published Titles (% from overall titles)	25%	18.2 %	17.2 %	25%	20%
Translated Fic- tion (number of titles)	127	109	138	119	110
Number of Pub- lished Titles	266	223	216	212	157

National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

Original Language (mostly translated from)						
	2010	2009	2008	2007		
English	102	111	93	93		
Russian	44	26	26	39		
German	42	39	34	35		
French	50	28	36	22		
Italian	2	5	7	4		
Swedish	4	2	5	1		

National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

LIBRARIES

There are five big and about 3000 medium and small libraries in Georgia. The largest and the oldest among them is The National Parliamentary Library (www.nplg.gov.ge) with some 5 million titles including press and patents. The Tbilisi State University Library and the National Scientific Library follow with 3.5 million titles each. The National Scientific Library also contains the large collection of press (2.5 mln), patents (20 mln) and rare books (1530). The Library of Ilia State University contains 3 million titles, while the State Book Chamber – 2 mln titles.

LIBRARY STATISTICS

- 1900 Secondary school libraries containing 1000 books, on average.
 - 700 Public libraries around the country (average library collects 25,000 books in capital and about 5000 books, on average, in regional libraries which are currently merging with local public schools.
 - 100 Accredited academic libraries.
 - 150 Specialized libraries including ministry libraries, different foundations & NGO libraries.

THE GPBA

The Georgian Book Publishers and Booksellers Association (GPBA) is a business association which acts in its own interests, and according to the Constitution of Georgia, both within Georgia and overseas.

The Association plays an important role in the development of Georgian Book Sector. About 80 percent of Georgian publishing houses are members of the GPBA. GPBA defines and protects the interests of the book sector. The association organizes and runs the annual Tbilisi Book Fair. The Georgian book publishers and Booksellers Association protects the copyright and freedom of publishing. GPBA organizes seminars, conferences and civic projects and renders consultation services relevant to the interests of the Association. The GPBA has drafted and put into effect a professional code of ethics as well as legislation in order to improve conditions in the book sector.

TBILISI INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL BOOK FESTIVAL ORGANIZED AND RUN BY THE GPBA.

Spearheaded by the Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, Tbilisi International Book Festival is the major project in the Georgian Book Market.

The project is supported jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia and the Municipality of Tbilisi. During the last 12 years over 80 participants gather at the festival. They represent domestic book publishing houses, bookshops, international organizations, embassies, institutes, museums and libraries. This four-day festival is open to public and attendance is free of charge.

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