

**GEORGIA Guest of Honour at Frankfurter Buchmesse
2018**

This catalogue was published within the framework of the project Georgia Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018 with the support of the Georgian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, and Georgian National Book Center.

**GEORGIAN
NATIONAL
BOOK
CENTER**



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE, CULTURE
AND SPORT OF GEORGIA



Georgia
Made by Characters
Guest of Honour
Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018



**FRANKFURTER
BUCHMESSE**



GEORGIAN PUBLISHERS AND
BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

Publishing team

Gvantsa Jobava
Tinatin Beriashvili
Tekla Kveladze

Translator

Maya Kiasashvili
Ketevan Grdzeldze

Editor

Philip Price

Designer

Teona Chanishvili

Publishers
and
Booksellers in
GEORGIA

A New Beginning for the Great Adventure of the Georgian Culture All Over the World

GVANTSA
JOBAVA

*Chairperson of
Georgian Publishers
and Booksellers
Association*

*Head of the
Publishing Program
Georgia - Guest
of Honour at
Frankfurter
Buchmesse 2018*

What were the expectations of the Frankfurter Buchmesse when in 2013, the (some might say risky) decision was made to name Georgia, a small but very old country in Eastern Europe, the official Guest of Honour of the Buchmesse 2018? What can we tell international society about our country today through our wide-ranging presentation, constructed around the unifying concept Georgia Made by Characters?

Georgia is a country of historically free, tolerant people with a geopolitical location of great significance—on the boundary between Europe

and Asia—and an active cultural life. Georgia had always been an oasis of varying and contrasting cultural trends up to the point where our country was hidden away from the entire world for seventy long years of the last century by the heavy burden of the Iron Curtain. What does Georgian Literature look like today? What did it look like in the past? Who are the Georgian authors worth meeting and hearing? Who are the authors whose work foreign readers should be reading? Are Georgian publishers ready for the challenge they are facing? On a wider scale, what exactly is Georgian culture, and what makes it attractive and unique?

Last but not least, how will we assess this project when it is all over? What are our expectations, and how will the lives and careers of Georgian authors and publishers change in and beyond 2019? This is just a small list of the questions we have asked ourselves and each other over the last five years of planning as we thought about and discussed these issues, sometimes with fear, sometimes with pride, and sometimes with the aim of providing mutual support.

And now, with Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018 open for business, the posters displayed in every corner of the exhibition venue tell us that this year, Georgia really, truly is Guest of Honour. As representatives of the country in charge of the project this year, we Georgian authors and publishers cannot easily put into words how great our motivation is. We shall be delighted to welcome visitors, foreign colleagues and friends with open hearts to the sections of the vast exhibition pavilion allocated to the Guest of Honour, and indeed anywhere else you may find us in the book fair.

You may be wondering what experience and abilities we have to handle a project of such huge scale.

The independent Georgian book industry, which I have been serving for the past ten years, is rather small. Considering its size and relatively short history, however, it is comparatively well developed, meeting international standards and keeping pace with current trends in the industry.

You should also keep in mind that we had to rebuild the entire publishing industry from zero in the early 1990s after it was left in ruins, along with the entire country, following the fall of the Soviet Union. Georgian publishers quickly established and developed business relationships with publishers across the world, taking any challenges in their stride. They also encouraged and assisted the development of the Georgian Translating School, which already had a long history and proud traditions. Moreover, these pioneers began the tradition of publishing Georgian school textbooks, thus becoming major partners of the State in the development of a modern education system.

Over the past twenty-five years, the Georgian publishing and literary community has come a long way, and now the baton has been passed to a new generation of caretakers with modern outlooks (it should be noted here that women form a significant majority of these young managers, this being one of the most famous features of the publishing industry in Georgia).



These young people are working hard to integrate fifteen centuries of Georgian literary tradition into a single coherent system to facilitate the export of Georgian literature abroad.

Over the past five years of preparation for this project, we have received invaluable assistance from the management of the Frankfurt Book Fair and various German publishers. They have shown great enthusiasm for our project and, through close cooperation with Georgian publishers and authors, they have become our teachers, partners, friends, and supporters. The willingness of the Georgian government to support the project with the relevant investments and promotion of translation work has also proved to be of major, even vital, significance.



In this regard, the support provided by the Ministry of Culture and the Georgian National Book Center, who are the main executors of the project at present, has been of the utmost importance. We are also grateful to the Georgian National Book Center, the major partner of Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, for helping us to lobby the publishing sector and Georgian authors.

Now, with all these activities complete, we find ourselves Guest of Honour at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018. Several years ago, we could only dream of such a possibility, and yet somehow the dream has come true. We are on our way.

Nevertheless, the path of development our publishing industry has taken over the last twenty-five years has been far from easy: the obstacles we have faced include disputes with various governments, efforts against corruption, harsh debates, hard work with minimum resources and on poor salaries, and battles with the authorities to defend vital democratic values like freedom of expression, freedom of publishing, and equality. And there is still more to do to reach the highest level of freedom. The reason why I have mentioned all these issues here is to show that a desire to change the world comes naturally to many young Georgians today—they seem to be born as social activists, without ever realizing when and how this happened. There is no other choice for young people in Georgia who wish to survive and live a better life in a better country. The truth behind these words could already be seen in the fighting spirit shown by young people back in the early days of Georgia's independence, as the country began rebuilding itself after many years under the constraints of Soviet ideology.

Most Georgian authors and publishers continue to influence the thought and consciousness of the nation today, just as they did in the past. They are present whenever civil society battles injustice, and they continue to support efforts to consolidate democratic values in Georgia. You may also have spotted a group of Georgian writers and publishers at our national stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair last year, holding up banners that read, “We are writers and Publishers from Georgia. We Have Voices. We have Power!”, “Stop Russia!”,



and “Russia is an occupier!” to protest Russia’s occupation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and Samachablo and its ongoing policy of “creeping occupation”. You will meet Georgian authors and publishers discussing that same issue again this year on various platforms. The aforesaid conflict zones are real, coexistent with our reality, and they form a painful part of the developed world.

For small countries like Georgia, such zones of conflict are particularly alarming. Unfortunately, war remains a problem even in the modern world, and accordingly, we believe we have a duty to write about and loudly discuss this issue. Georgian authors write about all topics that are current and problematic for global society today: human freedom, equality, war, the importance of peace, the passions of youth and human passions in general, love, death, history, modern life, and the future of the universe. Although these texts include literary thoughts and images that have sprung out of the peculiarities of Georgian culture, which remains little known on an international level, they are written in simple and understandable language and in a manner that the reader will not find difficult.



There are many places where you will be able to meet Georgian authors and publishers at this year’s Frankfurter Buchmesse: in the pavilion for the Guests of Honour, at various halls of the fair, and in many interesting venues throughout the city.

Here, though, I would like to tell you about one very important part of the project of Guest of Honour: the publishing program, which is organized and implemented by Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association and focuses mainly on the professional development of the publishing sector.

You will find the following three national stands at the book fair.

The Georgian National Stand, located in Hall 5.0, unites approximately forty Georgian publishing houses of all sizes, presenting their most recent literary works in Georgian. Here you can find two separate spaces for Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association and the Georgian National Book Center. The Georgian national stand, which has been present at the Buchmesse since 2007, acquires a very special meaning this year in the context of the Guest of Honour project, and will therefore be a major event at the fair.

The Georgian stand in ARTS+, which is located in Hall 4.1 and serves as the Georgian stand in the Art and Design Pavilion, reveals Georgia's potential in art and innovative technologies. Georgian stand is presented with three spaces: In the exhibition space you will find Georgian books about art and design, photobooks, art-books etc. During "happy hour" visitors will have the opportunity to write in Georgian with a specially invited Georgian calligrapher.

Another space showcases an innovative art-project Oraculum 0.1 (The Talking Avatars) as a permanent installation in ARTS+. Project authors and presenters are Zura Jishkariani and Sandro Asatiani. Three Avatars, products of AI are presented on three screens. They have individually designed appearance and character, age/sex recognition and speech abilities - they talk in the language of literature. Avatars are interactions of emotions and algorithms.

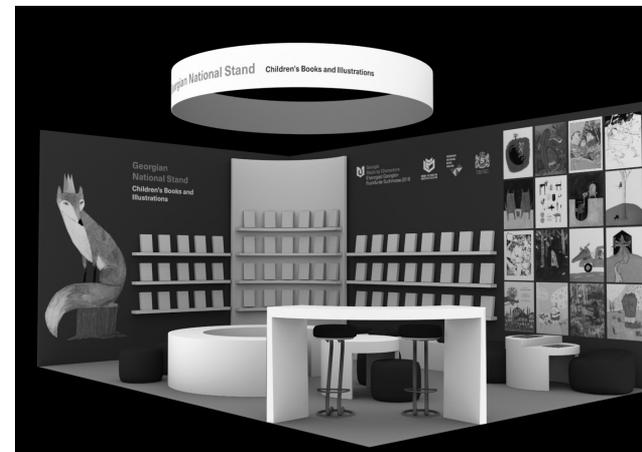
Third space is the joint stand of GPBA and Monotype GmbH. At this interactive stand visitors

will be able to get in touch with Georgian alphabet, typefaces designed by Monotype. This collaboration puts an emphasis on the unique visual trademark of the Georgian culture - typography. A special printer will be presented at the stand, which will allow creating instant postcards with Georgian type for the visitors.

Another permanent installation/showcase of chatbots in ARTS+ pavilion will be presented by the authors of Oraculum 0.1 (the Talking Avatars) project. Using screen and keyboards, they will let the visitors interact with different chatbots of their creation and will also show them the process of designing one.



The Georgian Children's Literature Stand, which is located in Hall 3.0 and serves as the Georgian stand in the Children's and Young Adults' Media Pavilion, exhibits Georgian children's books and interactive books and applications for young visitors. One wall of the stand is dedicated to an exhibition of Georgian illustrators. Georgian children's books and illustrations will also be exhibited in the Kids Foyer of the Frankfurter Buchmesse.



Over eighty events will be held within the framework of the publishing program between October 10 to October 14, with more than one hundred and fifty participants including Georgian and foreign authors, publishers, and translators. The most important area of the publishing program is located at the Georgian National Stand, which focuses on Georgian and German publishers and their common Georgian authors. A further program of sixteen events will be held on the small stage of the Guest of Honour pavilion (focusing on poetry and art) and many other stages and platforms in different halls.

It should also be mentioned that the Georgian author author, Tamta Melashvili will have the honour of making a speech at the annual General Assembly of the

International Publishers Association (the GPBA has been a member of the IPA since 2007), to be held on the second day of the Frankfurter Buchmesse. Hosting an author is something entirely new in the history of the General Assembly, which is the most important annual meeting of publishers from all over the world, during which they discuss professional issues and international challenges faced by the industry. It is indeed, therefore, a great honour (and an equally great responsibility) for us that the International Publishers Association has decided to choose a Georgian author on the very first occasion of this new tradition of the General Assembly.

Over three working days, business breakfasts (9:00-10:00 am) and business lunches (13:00-14:00

pm) will be held at the Georgian National Stand for Georgian publishers to introduce their current and upcoming publishing projects and meet over three hundred foreign colleagues. Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, together with Georgian publishers, will also host a reception in the Agent's Center. Besides these events, Georgian publishers will have numerous one-to-one meetings with their international partners at the Georgian National Stand in Hall 5.0.

This is a brief description of the main activities to be held within the framework of the Guest of Honour publishing program, as well as the main Georgian venues where you can visit us, discover #Georgiamadebycharacters, and just enjoy yourself.

Finally, we come to the question of our expectations. The status of Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse, unquestionably the most significant project in the history of the Georgian publishing industry, is viewed by Georgian authors and publishers as a light shining at the end of a long tunnel, a tunnel that has been full of obstacles. This light, we hope, will guide Georgian culture to Europe, showing it the way back to its origins after centuries of troubles. We fervently wish that this will be not only a big comeback, but also a new beginning for the great adventure of Georgian culture all over the world.



About Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association

TINATIN BERIASHVILI

*Executive Director
of Georgian
Publishers and
Booksellers
Association*

*Publishing Program
Director at
Georgia - Guest of
Honour, Frankfurter
Buchmesse 2018*

The independent Georgian publishing sector developed in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For the last twenty-five years, the industry has gone through hard times, facing and overcoming numerous challenges and difficulties. And finally, in 2018, the Georgian publishing sector is being welcomed as Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse. From the very beginning of its existence, GPBA (Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association) has taken responsibility for the development and consolidation of the entire publishing sector and has contributed significantly to this cause over the years. In 1996, the Georgian Association of Publishers was established. Two years later, in 1998, it was transformed into Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, which in 2007 became a member of the IPA (International Publishers Association). Today, around 90% of active Georgian publishers and booksellers are members of the GPBA.

Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association ensures the expression and protection of the common interests of the sector based on the principles of a free market and fair competition at the national and international levels. The Association protects freedom of expression and authors' rights. It also promotes the formation and refinement of a legal basis that will prove advantageous for the development of the industry.

The major goals of the Association include the following: to support the development of the literary process at the national and international levels; to enhance the literacy level of people of various ages, including children and teenagers; to promote intercultural dialogues between people of various professions associated with literature; to improve the current quality of translations of both fiction and non-fiction; and to popularize reading and provide support for various social and public institutions.



The Georgian publishing sector is undergoing a process of continuous development, with print runs ranging between one hundred and five thousand copies published during recent years. Approximately one thousand five hundred books are published annually, around a thousand of which are new editions, the remaining five hundred being reprints. Literary works and fiction make up approximately 40% of published books. In the last few years, the total profit gained from bookselling has exceeded approximately ten million Georgian lari (GEL). When assessing these results, it is necessary to consider that the population of Georgia is rather small, with about three million people.

According to recent studies, publishers are particularly active in printing and publishing works by Georgian writers. However, the number of published translations is also high. Books translated from English are published most frequently in Georgia, followed by books translated from German, French, and Russian.

The average price of a book in Georgia stands at 11.2 GEL. A recent study revealed that around half of the Georgian population (49.2%) have read some type of book or literature during the last year, be it fiction (33.6%) or non-fiction (25.6%).

Every year, Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association conducts a number of important projects aimed at supporting the development of the sector, and these events and projects have already become traditions.

Tbilisi International Book Fair is organized by Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association and has been held annually since 1997. It is one of the few cultural events in Georgia that attracts an increasing amount of attention from society every year, leading to enhanced public involvement. The festival continues to develop steadily, welcoming visitors with new offers. Tbilisi International Book Fair was held for the twentieth time in 2018, lasting from May 31 to June 3.

Tbilisi International Book Fair aims to popularize reading in Georgia and support and promote the publishing industry. Over the years, Tbilisi International Book Fair has been successful in improving literacy, as demonstrated by the ever-growing number of festival visitors, increased media coverage, and international attention.

Traditionally, the festival hosts Georgian and foreign publishers, embassies, museums, institutions, international organizations, and foundations. At Tbilisi International Book Fair it is possible to find almost every event you can possibly think of in relation to books, literature, and publishing, including presentations of new books and authors by publishers, read-aloud events, meetings and discussions with writers, introducing guests of honour, handing out literary awards, and professional seminars and conferences. A children's corner is constructed every year at the festival, and many fun activities are planned for young visitors.

Number of international participants at the festival increases every year. Foreign publishers or organizations have their own stands at the fair and conduct negotiations with Georgian publishers. Foreign authors, as the guest of honour, meet Georgian readers during the festival. Throughout the last years, international sector of the festival has developed significantly, and it has already become a tradition

to name *the focus country*. Norway became *the first focus country* of Tbilisi International Festival in 2017. The project was implemented with the assistance from NORLA, the aim of which is to popularize Norwegian literature abroad.

Such a symbolic project served the purpose of successful collaboration between two Guests of Honour in the two subsequent years at Frankfurter Buchmesse.

Germany was also symbolically named the focus country of Tbilisi International Book Fair in 2018, the year when Georgia is to be presented as Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse. Moreover, the Frankfurter Buchmesse had a stand of its own at the festival. German authors and publishers also visited the book fair, and the festival was opened by Juergen Boos, President of the Frankfurter Buchmesse.

The presentation of Germany as the focus country at Tbilisi International Book Fair constituted the first large-scale event of the publishing program of the project "Georgia – Guest of Honour at Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018" (Organized by Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association).



Tbilisi New Year Book Fair

On the initiative of Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, New Year Book Fair is held at the end of December and has already become a tradition in Georgia.

The need to set up Tbilisi New Year Book Fair was conditioned by growing public interest. The number of visitors to Tbilisi International Book Fair over the last few years clearly demonstrated that there was demand for another festival at a different time of year, and thus two festivals are now held in Tbilisi every year.

New Year Book Fair aims to promote and popularize reading, support literary processes, and enhance literacy and the availability of education in

Georgia. The New Year Festival is also helping to establish a tradition of giving books as gifts to family members, friends, and loved ones.

Over the three days of this large-scale program, New Year Book Fair incorporates a large number of events relating to books and literature. Within the framework of the festival, GPBA identifies and rewards various public figures for special contributions to the popularization of reading and education. GPBA also identifies and rewards the bestselling books of the year in various categories, based on information provided by booksellers and publishers (members of GPBA).

World Read Aloud Day

World Read Aloud Day is a global event established by the international organization "Litworld," and is celebrated annually in over one hundred countries all over the world, with around thirty-one million participants every year.

Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association works to ensure Georgia's participation in this international initiative, which has become an event of global importance. Every year, the association secures the involvement of authors, universities, schools, bookshops, and both local and regional culture centres in Read Aloud Day activities, with the aim of promoting book popularity in Georgia. Read Aloud Day aims to make book-related activities more interesting. A special book promoter award is granted every year on World Read Aloud Day. The nominee should not be professionally linked to publishing or literature, but their vocation, initiative, activities or financial support must be directed towards the promotion of reading to remind the public of the importance of literacy and education.

World Book and Copyright Day

On April 23, international society celebrates World Book and Copyright Day. The tradition of celebrating this day in Georgia is also an initiative of Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, and it has been celebrated annually with various cultural events and activities for many years.

Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association has celebrated World Book Day every year since 2003. Traditionally on this day, a day-long exhibition and book fair is held with the participation of various publishing houses, while within the framework of the content program, presentations of new books, meetings with authors, public readings and many other events take place.

Voucherisation of Libraries

Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association has been implementing the project Voucherization of Libraries for several years.

Voucherization of Libraries provides funding for regional libraries to enable them to add the newest books and Georgian publications (printed by various publishing houses) to their shelves and update their collections annually. Every year libraries are free to choose books from catalogues according to the amount of funds allocated to them. In so doing, they can enrich their collections with the newest editions. The project supports the development of both regional libraries and the entire publishing sector, while promoting contemporary literature throughout the country.



Georgian National Stands at International Book Fairs

For many years, Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association has been organizing Georgian national stands and various events at international book fairs including, but not limited to, the Frankfurt, London, Leipzig, and Sharjah book fairs. The GPBA thus enables Georgian publishers to become actively involved in current international processes in the industry and to present themselves on international platforms.

These local and international activities organized by the GPBA, as well as their efforts

to further develop the industry, have prepared the background for the Georgian publishing sector to acquire the status of Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2018.

The GPBA's trusted partners include the Presidential Administration of Georgia, Georgian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the Tbilisi Mayor's Office, the Georgian National Book Center, the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, Writers' House of Georgia, etc.



The Publishing Industry in Independent Georgia

Twenty-seven years have passed since April 9, 1991, the day when Georgia regained independence after seventy years of Soviet rule. Over the last three decades, the Georgian publishing industry has undergone multiple changes, the most fundamental of which came about with Georgia's transition to a market economy.

The early 1990s are generally considered to have been the hardest period for the Georgian economy. The old command economy system had collapsed, but no one was yet able to say exactly how Georgia could exist and survive as a market economy. Only a few people understood the basics of business, and such knowledge was, of course, rather shallow. Moreover, civil unrest in the country, increasing corruption, ongoing conflicts in the separatist regions of Georgia, and an infrastructure in ruins created serious obstacles for business and significantly hindered economic development.

It goes without saying that these conditions were hardly conducive to the establishment of a publishing industry. Nevertheless, in the early 1990s,

while state publishing houses still functioned in the country, several private and independent publishers were founded. Later, the state publishers stopped functioning completely, while some of the independent publishing houses founded at that time remain dominant players on the market.

Some of the pioneers of the Georgian publishing industry included Nekeri publishing, which was founded in 1992 and implemented twenty projects a year, including reference guides, academic and children's literature, schoolbooks and dictionaries; Paata Natsvlishvili Publishing, which was established in 1993 and, in the words of its founder, specialised in multiple types of publications, although limited to only eleven books per year; Azri, which was also founded in 1993 and published twenty books per year, including biographical literature and memoirs, documentary prose and textbooks; and Diogene, which was founded in 1995 and was the only independent publisher at the time to produce fiction and literary works, which appeared alongside children's literature and textbooks, with an overall number of fourteen titles a year.

TINATIN
MAMULASHVILI

*Publisher,
Sulakauri
Publishing*

Diogene was founded by four friends, Bakur Sulakauri, Gia Qarchkhadze, Tamar Lebanidze, and Otar Karalashvili, young, ambitious people who went on to open individual publishing houses of their own. It was on the initiative of these people that Georgian Publishers Association was established in 1996. Later, in 2000, booksellers also joined the Association, and since that time it has been known as Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association.

In those years of hardship, the Association and the publishing industry received significant support and assistance from Open Society Georgia (Soros Foundation), whose publishing program not only provided grants for publishing, but also financed workshops and training for new and aspiring publishing houses and booksellers.

Open Society Georgia also supported another major event, the first Tbilisi International Book Fair in 1997, which was attended by a total of twelve publishing houses and around five hundred visitors.

In subsequent years, festival funding was undertaken first by the Eurasia Foundation and later by the Ministry of Culture of Georgia. This year, Tbilisi Book Fair celebrated its twentieth anniversary and was noteworthy not only for the great number of participants and visitors, but also for the fact that the Frankfurter Buchmesse participated in the festival for the first time, being provided with its own stand. Juergen Boos, the president of Frankfurter Buchmesse, also participated in the celebratory opening of the festival.

The aforementioned training workshops for the publishing industry dealt with not only authorship rights, but also marketing and finances. One of the most notable was a four-day seminar called Book Marketing and Distribution, held within the framework of the National Publishing Program of the Soros Foundation in Gudauri 1998 and organized by BMR Consulting, a Polish company. The seminar was also attended by Armenian and Azerbaijani publishers along with their Georgian colleagues.

At that time, the main priority of the donor organizations was to provide technological and financial assistance to publishers of the three countries that make up the South Caucasus (Transcaucasia) in order to create equal opportunities for all of them. Accordingly, stands of Armenian and Azerbaijani publishing companies were also present at Tbilisi International Book Fair funded by the Eurasia Foundation.

In later years, the Goethe Institut also became actively involved in the development of the publishing industry. Seminars held at the institute were frequently of a regional character. Translation workshops held by the Tbilisi Goethe Institut proved to be of particular benefit to the publishing sector. These training programs were held several times for translators of fiction and literature from Georgian to German and German to Georgian. Through these workshops, a translation basis was formed in preparation for the day when German publishers would take an interest in translating Georgian literature.

It is worth mentioning that despite the similar starting positions of the publishers of these three countries in the 1990s, the Georgian publishing industry soon became dominant and was no longer dependent on grants and donors. At present, it holds the leading position in the region, having the greatest

number of publishing houses and largest numbers of annually published books, print runs, and bookshops. Contemporary Georgian authors are widely popular in Georgia today, which is partially encouraged and influenced by the existence of literary awards, which are few in number but high in prestige.

This remarkable progress, while also a result of the rapid economic growth of the country and the demonopolization of the textbook markets after 2005, is thanks in large part to the involvement of Georgian publishers in international book fairs since 1997-98, during the early days of development. In 1997, three Georgian publishing houses visited the Frankfurt International Book Fair for the first time with the support of, again, the Soros Foundation. For the first time ever in the history of the Georgian publishing industry, these publishers presented a few newly-published Georgian books at the Frankfurter Buchmesse on a stand measuring only four square meters. Ten years later, in 2007, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia financed the national stand for the first time. The stand was developed on the initiative of Publishers Association, and I was responsible for its organization. The stand occupied forty square meters; it was decorated in the red and white colors of the national flag and attracted visitors from even the distant corners of Hall 5.



I remember that the success of the project made us so excited and giddy that my colleague Gia Karchkhadze and I went up to Simone Bühler, head of the Frankfurt Guest of Honour Program, and asked her what was necessary for Georgia to receive the status of Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse. Ms. Bühler listened patiently and explained that the desire of publishers was hardly enough to gain such status, and the issue had to be negotiated at the state level. This meant that the Government of Georgia would have to sign a contract with Frankfurter Buchmesse.

Ever since that day, Georgia has been moving gradually toward that goal. First, in 2008, on the initiative of the publishing industry, the Ministry of Culture developed a support program known as Georgian Literature in Translation, which was a very significant step for encouraging and motivating foreign publishing houses to translate Georgian literature. Today, this program is being implemented with great success by the National Book Center, which at the same time has been organizing the Guest of Honour program at the Frankfurter Buchmesse. The Minister of Culture at that time, Nika Rurua, visited Frankfurt several times to negotiate with the administration of the Frankfurt Book Fair. Managers of the Frankfurter Buchmesse have also visited Georgia several times regarding this project.



This year, on the twenty-sixth anniversary since the foundation of an independent publishing industry, Georgia has become Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse.

With the support of the Georgian National Book Center, a large number of books have been translated to German and many other languages. Moreover, many foreign publishers, editors, journalists, and authors have visited Georgia over the years at the invitation of the Center, including the notable occasions of a visit by Orhan Pamuk, the Nobel Prize winning author, in

2004, and a visit this year by the French writer Michel Houellebecq and the Norwegian author Erlend Lu, hosted by Georgian writer Archil Kikodze within the framework of the Guest of Honour program. Many more contemporary authors have visited Georgia under the auspices of the Festival of Literature organized by the Writer's House.

Furthermore, Georgian authors whose books have been translated into German have had the opportunity this year to meet their German-speaking readers. Interest in classical and contemporary Georgian literature is gradually increasing, but to reinforce our current success and continue the successful development of the publishing industry, many other issues must be solved, and a great deal of effort has to be made not only by publishers and booksellers, but also by the government.

It is worth noting that the process of starting up a business in Georgia has been somewhat simplified. Georgia holds ninth place in the World Bank Rankings of Ease of Doing Business and fourth place in terms of the ease of starting up a business. Another important factor in the enhancement and development of the book market is the fact that book printing, dissemination, and import in Georgia are free of VAT. These factors alone, however, are far from sufficient.

It is essential that over the next few years, the government develop support programs for the promotion and popularization of reading, which will be implemented actively in educational institutions including elementary schools. In addition, governmental measures should include the formation and development of library support programs, the introduction of literary awards and scholarships, funding and travel grants for Georgian authors, the support of translation workshops, the founding and financing of Georgian language teaching courses at leading foreign universities, the establishment of a bookseller support foundation, and so on.

Liberalization of the school textbook market is of no less importance for the further development of the book market in Georgia. Since 1997, the Soros foundation has supported a project aimed at freeing the textbook market from government monopoly. Since 2006, as part of educational reforms, the market was entirely liberalized and came into the hands of the private sector, leading to rapid development of the entire publishing ecosystem. Unfortunately, the situation has changed radically since 2013, when the state began to

print and publish textbooks and left publishers and booksellers with only private schools, which form a tiny share of the market. Despite several years of vociferous protests by the publishing industry, the situation remains unchanged today, and in a sparsely-populated country like Georgia, adverse effects on the publishing sector are inevitable. To ensure the steady development of the publishing business in Georgia on the one hand, and the supply of high-quality textbooks to schools on the other, the state must let the professional publishers do their work and entrust them with textbook publishing.

The above list of actions includes those measures which I believe have to be taken for the Georgian publishing industry to continue to develop while promoting literature throughout the country. The end user and beneficiary of these measures is, of course, the reader. The status of Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse is a dream come true for us, Georgian publishers and authors. More importantly still, it is a step towards an encouraging and bright future, with an equal number of great challenges lying ahead.

why do we publish the Georgian Literature?

JOACHIM
UNSELD

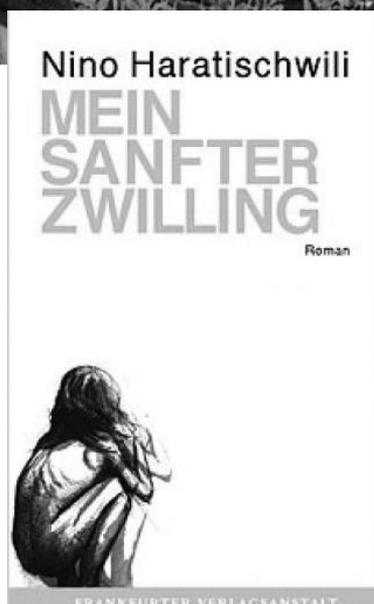
*Frankfurter
Verlagsanstalt GmbH*

Publisher

The first inspiration came from Nino Kharatishvili. It was in 2011 that her former agent, Rachel Gratzfeld, arranged to have my publishing house Frankfurter Verlagsanstalt, known for successful publications of emerging German authors, publish Nino's novel *My Gentle Twin*. From the first page, I fell in love with Nino's very special style and highly expressive manner, the fearless way she tells her story, her gripping psychological exploration of crime and punishment, and the special choreography of her characters. Another characteristic feature of her writing is her well-grounded knowledge of politics and historical facts. *My Gentle Twin* was awarded the 2011 Hotlist Prize.

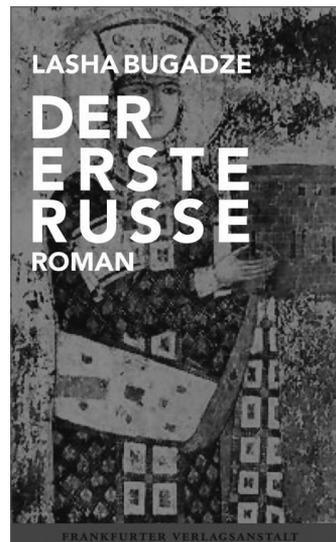
The publication of *My Gentle Twin* was the reason why Frankfurt-based Professor Manana Tandashvili, herself a specialist of Georgian literature, approached me, suggesting I publish an anthology of modern female Georgian authors. We fulfilled this project, entitling the book *Techno der Jaguare*.

I was delighted to see how this post-Soviet writing, still in its early days of development, expressed the thoughts of young people blessed with strong verbal skills, new voices from the contemporary literary scene unveiling and illustrating the gradual rise of their unknown (at least to me) country. This is how I came to discover authors like Tanta Melashvili, Ekaterine Togondize, Eka Tschilava, Nestan Kvinikadze, Maka Mikeladze, and last but not least, Anna Kordzaia-Samadashvili.



Techno der Jaguare was published with the support of the Georgian National Book Center. As a result, I had an opportunity to meet Medea Metreveli, the heart and soul of GNBC. Medea—adorable and charming as she is—convinced me to visit Tbilisi and speak about this anthology at an international panel. She also invited me to come and learn more about Georgia. I admit that she is responsible for my falling in love with the country. Besides, she was the one to introduce me to Lasha Bughadze. I met him, talked to him, had the opportunity to read one of his novels in English, and decided to offer him something we call a “three book deal”. We published The Literature Express, Lucrecia 515 (translated by Nino Kharatishvili), and Lasha’s latest novel Der erste Russe (translated by Rachel Gratzfeld and Sybilla Heinze), which will be released in autumn 2018, perfect timing for the Frankfurt Book Fair at which Georgia is Guest of Honour. Further Georgian titles are in preparation, including the Georgian classic Der Scharlachrote Wolf by Goderdsi Tschocheli. Moreover, in cooperation with GNBC and the Goethe Institut Tbilisi, six German and six Georgian writers have travelled through Georgia in pairs. Each pair, consisting of one German and one Georgian writer, visited various Georgian regions and wrote about their impressions. The result is a special literary journey report that will be published in autumn 2018.

In 2014, Nino's "big book" *The Eighth Life (For Brilka)* was released. This is an epochal novel about a Georgian family; a powerfully written epic about eight exceptional lives in the vicissitudes of the Georgian-Russian war and the Revolution. The novel was named best German novel of the year by the famous magazine *Der Spiegel*. We have sold more than one hundred thousand copies in Germany and a great number of translations have been published and well received all over the world (and more are in preparation).



Nino is an international success. We are happy to announce that in autumn 2018, her fourth novel *The Cat and the General* will be released in Germany. After her celebrated novel *The Eighth Life (For Brilka)*, Nino will take another glance at the abyss that lies beneath the rubble and broken pieces left behind by the destruction of the Soviet Union. This publication has also been timed to coincide with the Frankfurt Book Fair 2018, at which Georgia is Guest of Honour.

Nino will be the key speaker for Georgia at the opening ceremony of the fair. Although Nino writes in German rather than Georgian, I am still convinced that Nino thinks in Georgian while writing in German. Her heart is Georgian, I guess, and so is her very distinct and unique writing. The abundance of her brilliant imagination, her impressive narrative, and her unusual-to-German ears—metaphors clearly point to her Georgian background and origin.



Several intermediaries have played significant roles in my story, and I wish to express my gratitude to three of them, all of whom are now fully involved in the publishing of Georgian literature. First, I must thank Rachel Gratzfeld, who introduced me to Nino Kharatishvili. Many thanks also go to Manana Tandaschwili, who talked me into the anthology project. And finally, my thanks go to Medea Metreveli, who acquainted me with Lasha Bugadze, a great writer.

why Georgian Literature?

ZAAL

ANDRONIKASHVILI

*Centre for
Literary and
Cultural Research
(Berlin)*

*Ilia State
University*

This year Georgia the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair. It is the first time, at least since the fall of the Soviet Union, that Georgian literature will be presented in translation on such a prominent international platform. **Writers, singers, and fashion designers such as Nino Kharatishvili, Katie Melua, and Demna Gvasalia have greatly increased Georgia's visibility in recent years, and yet the former Soviet republic is still viewed as an unknown quantity on the international cultural map.** What remains of our perception of Georgia if we look beyond clichés like “the country of Medea” or “the place where Prometheus was bound”? In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, travellers came to Georgia from western Europe seeking an actual

Biblical paradise, while the lofty mountains of the Caucasus inspired the Russian romantic poets, ultimately becoming the second cradle of Russian poetry. Still, though, the geopolitical—and geopoetical—location of Georgia remains disputed. Does it belong to Europe or Asia, or, perhaps to both simultaneously?

As Oscar Wilde put it, “the very essence of romance is uncertainty”. This uncertainty may well have been the reason why Georgia became the subject of myth, and after all, there is only a step from myth to literature. What makes Georgian literature so special? How does European literature, with so many great books and masterpieces already in its heritage, benefit from translations of Georgian literature?

Historians of Georgian literature might suggest that literature serves as the autobiography of a nation. Even if this does not necessarily reflect current thinking, there may still be some truth in this definition.

Here, I will discuss three issues that I believe are fundamentally important to understanding the special nature of Georgian literature.

The first concerns the fact that Georgian literature does not share the usual milestones of development applicable to most Western European literatures: the emancipation of vernacular languages after the Renaissance; a strong orientation towards Greek and Latin literatures; and the emergence of a literary public sphere in the eighteenth century as the engine fuelling the development of literature. Georgian literature evolved in the context of translation from

its very beginning, for Eastern Christianity did not recognise the superiority of one language over others (in contrast to the dominance of Latin in the Catholic Church). The Gospels were translated into Georgian immediately upon the conversion of Georgia to Christianity in the fourth century A.D. Translations triggered the development of original literature (preceded by the creation of the unique Georgian alphabet). The first Georgian authors worked with content regarded as universal in those times, translating it into their native language and giving the original texts an individual imprint.

Nevertheless, the language issue remained a problem: did Georgian have the same value as Greek? A Georgian monk of the tenth century A.D. tried to address this problem by ennobling the Georgian language. Georgian was certainly not the language of Gospels, he claimed, but it was the language of the Last Judgement. Thus, he provided Georgian with eschatological significance. By the time Zosime wrote his bizarre treatise, Georgian (ecclesiastical) literature was already half a millennium old, and a great deal of philosophical and secular literature (extracts from Homer and Aristotle) was available in Georgian.

The status of the Georgian language has been beyond dispute for Georgians ever since—to speak and to write in Georgian became the strongest marker of belonging to the Georgian culture. Even in the times of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, Georgians managed to retain their language. In Aka Morchiladze's novel *Santa Esperanza* – a story of a fictional archipelago in the Black Sea that mirrors Georgia – the issue of the proper language for literature is not of central importance, and yet literature does play a role in the novel. The character Jessica de Rider is a local writer who switches to globalised English and quickly becomes a celebrated author of best-selling detective novels. Her ex-boyfriend Luka, on the contrary, is a vagabond who writes a polyphonic trilingual novel (in Georgian, Turkish and Italian, the native languages of Santa Esperanza). Luka's novel has only Santa Esperanza readers and is extremely popular there, coming to form one of the markers of archipelago identity, whereas Jessica's global monolingual audience is associated with the loss or absence of greater literary values,

the conclusion being that one can achieve literary sophistication only by writing in one's native language. This seems to be the Georgian choice: even in a globalised world, Georgians would rather choose multilingualism than give up their language altogether. This is the reason why translation into Georgian, as well as from Georgian into other languages, remains an issue of central importance for Georgian literature.

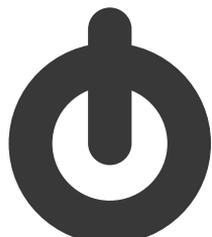
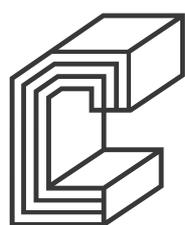
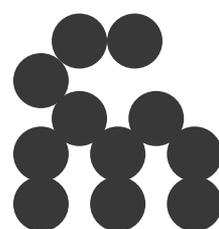
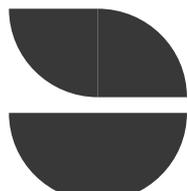
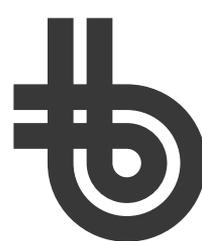
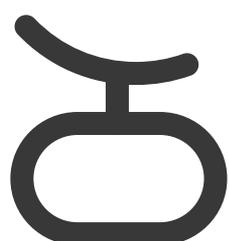
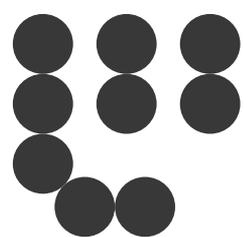
As a second factor, translation of the Gospels, the Bible, and the holy fathers, as well as liturgical literature, was fundamental to the development of Georgian literature. The founding fathers of secular literature in the twelfth century looked not to Homer and Virgil, as one would expect, but instead to Gorgani and Ferdowsi. Perception of the Persian renaissance was a decisive moment, a turning point for the emancipation of Georgian secular literature from the Church. Again, the Persian chivalric epos was not simply copied, but rather transformed into the secular, this-worldly ethics and philosophy that continue to affect Georgian culture today.

This makes Georgian literature the literature of the border. Georgia has always been located between several cultures, first between Persia and Byzantium, and later, more generally, between the dominant cultures of the Islamic and Christian traditions. In the nineteenth century, Georgian literature underwent intensive exchange with Russian and Western European literatures, and in the twentieth century its horizon was further expanded to include Latin American literary impulses. These sources of inspiration did not simply replace one another, nor did the strong tradition of reception turn Georgian literature into an epigone. Georgian literature cannot be understood without this fundamental openness to other cultures. The Russian poet Osip Mandelstam wrote in his essay *Something about Georgian Art* (1922) that Georgian culture absorbs only superficial patterns from neighbouring cultures while remaining resistant to their hostile internal essence. One could argue against the above dichotomy between form and content, however it is reception and productive adaptation that gives Georgian literature its unique character.

And last, but not the least, from the perspective of an English, German, or French-speaking reader, Georgian literature does indeed appear to be small, not producing masterpieces like works by Joyce, Musil, or Proust, for example. It is small because it addresses only the approximately five million speakers of the Georgian language. At the same time, however, it looks back on fifteen hundred years of history. A considerable variety of poetic and prosaic forms, styles and rhetorical figures have been accumulated, providing contemporary authors with an extensive range of expressive means. These fifteen hundred years of history constitute a resonance space of considerable importance for understanding Georgian literature. When you read a Georgian book, you hear a multitude of background voices coming from the distant past. Foreign readers are encouraged to follow these alien voices. The balancing act between a rather small audience and an ancient literary tradition prevents Georgian literature from being perceived as a typical small-nation literature. Instead, it allows for questioning of the dichotomy between world literature and small literature as evaluative terms. Neither "small literature" nor "world literature" should be understood as a judgemental term that makes a statement about the quality of the texts. Rather, these terms can be viewed as literary horizons that need not be mutually exclusive. Such an understanding of the word "literature" contributes to pluralization of the literary canon through texts that come from the so-called peripheries. This approach would require a well-planned and equally well-implemented translation policy for the literatures of small nations to be translated into bigger languages.

33 Tales of the Georgian Book

GAGA LOMIDZE



The Golden Fleece and the Colchian “Kirbebi”

According to ancient written sources, the Golden Fleece was the skin of a ram inscribed with the alchemic formulae for making gold. It was a desire to master this extremely important Colchian art that guided and motivated the journey of the Argonauts from Greece to “Colchis, the Land of Gold.” This implies that the ancestors of the Georgians were originally related to the predecessors of the contemporary west-classical civilization. Thus, the search for the beginnings of the Georgian writing system in Colchis is of the utmost importance.

What the Phaistos Disk tells us

According to one attempt to decipher the Phaistos Disk, dated to between 1850-1600 B.C., the language of inscription is Colchian, while the characters imprinted on the disk belong to the Colchian Goldscript.

Three Types of Georgian Script

The oldest type of Georgian Alphabetic script is Asomtavruli (meaning “the alphabet of capital letters”), which was used until the ninth century. The symbolism of Asomtavruli was related to knowledge of the writings of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, and the principle of the Golden Ratio in particular. The second type of alphabet is Nuskhuri, the earliest examples of which date back to the ninth century. This alphabet was used by the clergy. Mkhedruli, meanwhile, has been used since the twelfth century, mostly by secular persons.

The Oldest Georgian Inscriptions and the Story of Serapit

The recently discovered Inscriptions of Nekresi are the oldest surviving Georgian inscriptions, dated to between the fourth and second centuries B.C. The most impressive and poetic of these inscriptions is

the so-called Armazi Bilingual (dated to 150 A.D.), a tablet with bilingual inscription (written in Aramaic and Greek). Judging from the epitaph, it is thought to be the gravestone of a young woman called Serapit.

Georgian Manuscripts

Approximately eleven thousand Georgian manuscripts are known today, kept in Georgian and foreign repositories and libraries. Manuscripts composed between the fifth and ninth centuries mostly include religious or ecclesiastical texts, while later ones, dated to between the tenth and twelfth centuries, are mostly of philosophical, historical or literary content.

Manuscript Decoration

In the late Middle Ages, Georgian scribes focused their attention on European trends and abilities. Connections to European culture facilitated the development of Georgian book engraving art and, more importantly, the introduction of the printing press several centuries later. *The Moqvi Gospel* (dated to 1300), consisting of one hundred and fifty-five miniatures of various content, is one of the most significant Georgian manuscripts in terms of decoration.

The First Georgian Printed Books and the First Publishing House

European catholic missionaries in Rome were the first to begin publishing and printing Georgian books. The only Georgian involved in this business was Nikifor Irbach (Nikoloz Cholokashvili), a catholic priest and polyglot. Together they molded and cast Georgian letters and in 1629 published the first printed books in *Georgian-Italian-Georgian Dictionary* and *Prayers*. Printing and publishing industries were established in Georgia later when, in the early years of the eighteenth century, King Vakhtang IV founded the first printing press in Tbilisi.

Centers of Education

Between the third and sixth centuries, the Lazi Academy functioned in western Georgia for students to master the arts of politics and rhetoric. During the reign of King David the Builder, from the end of the eleventh century to the beginning of the twelfth, several academies were founded on the King's orders. The establishment of schools is however associated with the introduction of Christianity. Private home schooling seems to have been widespread in Tbilisi, mostly for the children of the nobility.

The Martyrdom of Shushanik – the First Georgian Literary Work

The Martyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik, composed between 476 and 482 by Jacob of Tsurtavi, is the first surviving work of original Georgian literature. This work shows that the portrayal of powerful, strong-willed women was of great significance for Georgians. This tendency found expression within the boundaries of the genre of hagiography, which was governed by strictly defined rules.

Women's Inscriptions in Vani's Caves

In Vani's unique Cave Complex (700-1500) one may come across churches and caves of various functions. Church walls are covered in inscriptions made by nuns who lived there centuries ago. Women appear to have been forced, or at least unwilling, to come here: some came to escape personal tragedy or find shelter, while others were obliged to live in this place. Women wrote of their hardships and misfortune in these inscriptions

Censorship and Subterfuge

Many literary works underwent changes and alterations due to intervention from the strict Soviet censorship system. Artificial and violent alterations completely destroyed the composition and artistic value of literature. Sometimes the authors,

trying to avoid the Argus Panoptes of Soviet censorship, would use strategies that have made the dating of several poems complicated. It was a ruthless period when rules were established for everything and no space was left for choice. Fortunately, true ideological threats would sometimes go unnoticed by the censorship thanks to altered dates.

The Tsisperqantselebi

In the years of independence between 1918 and 1921, Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, became a city of poets. Art cafes, known as "artist cafes", opened at that time. The Tsisperqantselebi (meaning "The Society of Blue Drinking Horns" in Georgian), a group of Georgian symbolists, viewed Georgian literature and art as part of the greater European Tradition. After the loss of Georgian independence, the group dissolved. In the 1930s, some of its members were exiled, some were captured and held in concentration camps, while others were either arrested and shot or driven to suicide.

The Avant-garde Book

In 1917, a poetry club opened in Tbilisi with the strange name of The Fantastic Barrelhouse. In a short period of time, it became a true laboratory of literary and artistic experiments. Two years later, the poets published a trilingual book, in Georgian, Armenian and Russian, called *The Fantastic Barrelhouse of Sophia Georgievna Melnikov* in a short run of only one hundred and eighty copies. It brought together works by Russian Avant-garde poets and the Georgian Tsisperqantselebi. This collection was one of the first examples of an avant-garde book in Georgia.

Georgian Futurism

On April 23, 1922, Georgian futurists held a soiree at the Tbilisi Conservatoire. Eccentric artists hung a grand piano upside-down from the ceiling. They expected that their gathering would have grand and shocking consequences, similar to the aftermath of the earthquake in

Japan that had occurred around the same time. The true scandal, however, took place several days later, when Simon Chikovani, a leading Georgian futurist poet, read his manifesto, called *Georgia: A Phoenix*.

■ Forbidden Literature

From 1932, the government began to impose restrictions on literature and ban literary or artistic experiments. Censorship became stricter. The government, together with the NKVD, began to banish writers. Some were arrested and shot, such as reformer and innovator of Georgian prose Mikhail Javakhishvili and symbolist poet Titsian Tabidze, while others, such as poet Paolo Iashvili, were driven to suicide. Those who somehow survived the Great Purge joined the Union of Georgian Writers, a Soviet institution formed by governmental decree.

■ Après le Déluge. Underground Publishing and Samizdat

Underground publications during the Soviet period significantly contributed to the development of literature and critical thinking in contemporary Georgia. The journal *Iakhsari*, founded in the late 1980s by poets Badri Gugushvili and Dato Chikhladze, was one of these publications. It was followed by the journal *Dato Barbaqadze*, the journal *Polilogue*, and the newspaper *+/-Literature*, which was published later, again by Dato Barbaqadze.

■ The First Book Shop

In the mid-nineteenth century, Gustav Berenstamm, a German bookseller, came to live in Tbilisi and opened a bookshop. He ordered German and French books from Europe. When French writer Alexandre Dumas visited Tbilisi in 1858, Gustav Berenstamm had the shelves of his bookshop decorated with the writer's books. Dumas is known to have shouted in dismay: "How is it that all books have been sold but mine!"

■ The Erotic Book

The final decade of the past century witnessed a true boom in erotic literature. The Soviet ban on eroticism was removed and a Pandora's Box was opened, giving rise to a deluge of erotic fiction. The unrivalled leader of the genre in that period was *The Marshland*, a novel by a certain Irene Auerbach. Her name was, most probably, a pseudonym, and nobody knows anything about this writer still today.

■ Scandalous Literature

A serious scandal occurred in the 1990s when poet and translator David Barbaqadze published his work *The Passions of the Martyrs*. It was a story written in the style of a Georgian hagiography, which fought against and tried to destroy the system of false values that were protected and cherished by people of Soviet mentality.

■ The Soviet Book

Legend has it that people in the Soviet Union read a great deal. Print runs today equal five hundred to a thousand copies on average, rising to five thousand on rare occasions. In the Soviet period, however, print runs of fifty thousand and sometimes more were not unusual. These large print runs were mostly for communist or secondary literature. More valuable editions, meanwhile, had comparatively shorter print runs.

■ The Story of a Bibliophile

"A noble person, a wonderful teacher and friend, a widely educated scholar" – this is how Giorgi Gechtman (1870-1956) was characterized by his contemporaries. He was one of the founders of the children's magazine called *Nakaduli*. The son of a German father, Gechtman first lived in Baku. He was then enrolled at Tbilisi Classical Gymnasium. His work in Georgia is related to the development of libraries.

Foreign Illustrators of the Georgian Book

The publication of an expensive edition of Shota Rustaveli's poem *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, illustrated by Hungarian painter Mihaly Zichy, constituted a new stage in the development of the Georgian printed book. "A thing so beautiful and pleasant to the eye can hardly be found not only in our country, but abroad as well. This book shall be a treasure for every Georgian family," wrote the Iveria on the occasion of the publication of this edition of Rustaveli's poem in 1888.

Fatal Books

The anti-Soviet position and attitude of Mikhail Javakhishvili (1880–1937) was widely known, but his fate, perhaps, was finally decided by his novel *Kvachi Kvachantiradze*. Maybe it was because the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, saw himself in the main character of the novel, a political adventurer living and working in Russia who by mere chance becomes a global political leader.

Georgians Nominated for the Nobel Prize

In 1932, the candidates for the Nobel Prize for literature included the Georgian author Grigol Robakidze, whose novel *The Snake's Skin* (Das Schlangenhemd) was nominated by Rihard Mekelein, a professor of Eastern Languages. The book was published in Germany in 1928, with an introduction by Stefan Zweig.

A Highly Memorable Character

Sometimes, to understand a nation, one needs to look at its literary and mythological tradition. One of the most famous and widely known characters associated with Georgia is Medea of Colchis, King Aetes's daughter, who sacrificed everything she had for the love of Jason, the Greek hero. She betrayed her father to assist her beloved, as without her help the Argonauts would never

have gained the Golden Fleece. Medea remains one of the most controversial characters in literature, ruthless and loving, caring and vengeful at the same time.

Literary Groups

By the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, several groups of poets had formed more or less simultaneously in Tbilisi. These groups somehow managed to continue the literary tradition that had been forcibly interrupted by Soviet rule at the beginning of the 1930s, with the introduction of Socialist Realism.

The Tergdaleulebi and the Society for Spreading Literacy

In Britain, the passing of the Elementary Education Act in 1870 made elementary education compulsory for all children. Before long, this trend reached Georgia as well. The movement was led by the Tergdaleuli, a group of people who had been educated at Russian and European universities. They founded the Society for the Spreading of Literacy in 1879.

Iakob Gogebashvili and Deda Ena

Children's writer Iakob Gogebashvili (1840–1912), author of the first ever Georgian textbook *Deda Ena* (Mother Tongue), began his career at a time when the Georgian language was forbidden in schools and the aristocracy shied away from speaking Georgian. He thought for years about what kind of book would be most suitable for children to begin their perception of the world. Iakob Gogebashvili conceived of *Deda Ena* on the basis of his scientific and theoretical views.

The Literary Salons of the Nineteenth century

Literary salons were hotbeds of political and amorous passions. Prince Alexander Chavchavadze's (1786–1846) salon was famous all

over the country. It was here that poet Nikoloz Baratashvili heard Prince Cahvchavadze's daughter Ekaterina sing and dedicated a poem to her, called *To Ekaterina, Prince Chavchavadze's Daughter*. The poet fell deeply in love with the Prince's daughter, who was known as the Rose of Tsinandali.

“The Literary Bohemia of Old Tbilisi”

Tbilisi was often compared with Paris, especially in the 1910s when it began to host avant-garde artists from Russia and Eastern Europe. Active artistic and creative life continued until the invasion of the Red Army in 1921. In 1927, Ioseb Grishashvili published his unique monograph *The Literary Bohemia of Old Tbilisi*. Sadly, after Tbilisi became a Soviet city, the voices of avant-garde artists and poets were drowned out by Soviet slogans.

Film Adaptations of Georgian Literature

The first attempt to adapt Shota Rustaveli's *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* for film occurred before the Soviet occupation. The initiators began negotiations with Fritz Lang, one of the founders of the German expressionist film movement, but the project failed due to a lack of financial resources. In 1936, Kote Mikaberidze, director of the avant-garde masterpiece *My Grandmother*, directed a movie called *Kajeti*, which was loosely based on the first part of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*.

The Recent History of Georgian Publishing Houses

In the early 1990s, most of the traditional publishing houses disappeared, while those which survived had to operate in a completely new reality. It is in this period that the publishing industry began its transition to a new, market-oriented model.

The Knight in the Panther's Skin

The major masterpiece of Georgian Literature, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, closely reflects the characteristics of Georgia and the Georgians. The imagery of the poem vacillates between cold-minded thinking and wild impulses and passions, from the dark instincts of primordial man to the brightness of the rational mind; at the same time, the rhythm of the verse oscillates between fast and slow sections. Rustaveli's magnum opus is a meeting place between East and West, between Ferdowsi and Plato, Nizami Ganjavi and Dionysius the Areopagite, Chinese philosophy and the dichotomy of the Apollonian and Dionysian.

01. Agora Publishing
02. Arete
03. Artanuji Publishing
04. Azri publishers
05. Bakmi Publishing
06. Publishing house Books in Batumi
07. Publishing House Cezanne
08. Creative Angel Publishing
09. Publishing House Dila
10. Diogene Publishers
11. Elf Publishing House
12. Indigo Publishers
13. Intelekti Publishing
14. Karchkhadze Publishing
15. Publishing house Qartuli
16. Publishing world of Lawyers
17. Logos Press
18. Meridiani Publishing House
19. Palitra L Publishing
20. Pedagogika Publishing
21. Publishing House Pegasi
22. Poezia Press
23. Academic press of Georgia
24. Saktsigni
25. Publishing House Shemetsneba
26. Siesta Publishing
27. Sulakauri Publishing
28. Tsigni+eri
29. Ustari Publishing
30. Zebra
31. Klio Publishing House
32. Publishing House Remedas
33. Zviad Kordzadze Publishing
34. Biblus
35. Bookcafe
36. Distribution Company Iriatoni
37. ExpressBooks
38. Prospero's books
39. E-Books House Saba
40. Lit.Ge
41. Publishing Autograph

GEORGIA

Publishers and
Booksellers in

Profile: Publishing House
Publishing priority: Mainly translations
Contact person: Marina Balavadze, Director
Address: 2/147 Uznadze St., 0102 Tbilisi
Tel.: +995 599 28 20 43
E-mail: agorabooks@hotmail.com
www.agorabooks.ge

Founded in 2006, Agora publishes Georgian authors but mainly focuses on translations of fiction: novels, stories and poetry; philosophical, historic, sociological and anthropological essays; and children's literature.

Agora has published more than a hundred books to date, among them classic and modern works by American, Belgian, Swiss, Italian, New Zealand, Canadian and Turkish authors. The majority of its publications, however, belong to French authors. In 2014, Marina Balavadze was named a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government for her special contribution to publicizing French culture.



Marina Balavadze
Publisher

As a translator and professor of the French language at Ilia State University, I had been professionally involved with books well before I thought of establishing a publishing house. My love of literature and knowledge of French, as well as my awareness of interesting foreign works, convinced me that Georgian readers needed to be exposed to new writing, because having our own literature wasn't enough for further development. Moreover, I was certain that we needed to translate not only modern literature but to have new translations of classic works as well. This was determined by the fact that in Soviet times most foreign literature was censored and most translations were done from Russian rather than from the original language.

Our most successful projects have been various publications of Antoine Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, the complete works of Albert Camus, and the first comic book translated into Georgian: *Cigars of the Pharaoh* and *The Adventures of Tintin* by the Belgian cartoonist Hergé. Within the European Union program Creative Europe, ten superb French, Belgian, Italian, Turkish, Irish and English authors have been published by Agora. We always try to select the very best works and pay particular attention to the quality of our translations, thus contributing to the further development of the Georgian language as well.



Giorgi Ekizashvili
Author

I Wish

Before I die, I wish to have enough time and strength as well as presence of mind to utter a short phrase, an antithetical phrase, a phrase that has become a kind of formula for me, a phrase that is associated with literature for most of us, a phrase that opens the door into a completely new world. Unfamiliar at first, the world soon becomes your own, and if you step into it, if you step over the threshold, cross the border between the real and the imaginary, you will surely get involved in the other reality, which is often more real than the ordinary reality. The genuinely happy moments of our life are in that world. Our world is our imagination, while that other world creates minutes and moods which we miss here, in our world. The feeling is akin to nostalgia and yes, we can be nostalgic not only for what we have already experienced, but also for something unseen; paradise, for instance.

This short phrase is not only the key to literature but its essence as well. By the same token, it is the epilogue to our life itself. The same verb structured in antithesis – the beginning of one and the end of the other. And here it is:

There was and there was not...

Literature starts with this phrase, while life ends with it.

*This piece is based on the Georgian for *Once upon a time*, which is იყო და არა იყო რა (iko da ara iko ra) and can be translated literally as "There was and there was not..."



Profile: Publishing House
Publishing priority: Fiction, non-fiction
Contact person: Giorgi Darsalia
Address: 25 Chavchavadze Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: +995 577 57 08 07
E-mail: gdarsalia@gmail.com

The publishing house Arete was founded in 2003. Current priorities of the publishing house are works by the renowned Georgian author Otar Chiladze, as well as a series of world classics.



Giorgi Darsalia
 Publisher

In the 16 years of its existence, Arete has published around fifty titles altogether, and I am extremely proud of the absolute majority of them. These were mainly world masterpieces translated into Georgian for the first time: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Knut Hamsun's *Hunger*, Julio Cortázar's *Hopscotch*, Ayn Rand's *Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*. We also published a completely new translation of Erich Maria Remarque's *Three Comrades* by Ana Kordzaia-Samadashvili, and this already familiar book became a true favourite among our readers thanks to its new life.

We began publishing George R. R. Martin's epic novels *A Song of Ice and Fire* even before the HBO series *Game of Thrones* was released, something to be proud of as well.

And last, but definitely not least, Otar Chiladze—the only Georgian author whose novels we are still republishing today. This outstanding writer seldom left home, but one day he walked into the bookshop Parnassus, where we talked and decided to publish his novels. This chance meeting gave me a wonderful opportunity to work with our great writer, and I have had the pleasure of spending many memorable evenings with him in thrilling conversation.



Ana Kordzaia-Samadashvili
 Author

I don't really remember exactly when I read *Three Comrades* for the first time. But I feel like I've been reading it ever since I became aware of my own name.

Just like everyone else, I also dreamed of meeting someone like the boys in the novel, dancing like Pat and taking a ride in Karl. I did not want the war, death and disease, but I did want to be one of the protagonists, just like everyone else who had read the book.

Then, one day, my friend Giorgi Darsalia told me he wanted someone to translate *Three Comrades* for him to publish. I begged and begged him not to give it to any other translator, saying I wouldn't get over it if he did. Another friend, Tamar Titmeria edited my translation and a third friend Gaga Nakhutsrishvili wrote an introduction about why *Three Comrades* is the best book ever and why we love Erich Maria Remarque so much.

And that's the book we ended up with: *Three Comrades*, in Georgian, created by three friends, with love to Erich Maria Remarque.



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Foreign fiction, Georgian and foreign non-fiction, textbooks, academic, historical and children's books, postcards

Contact person: Gvantsa Jobava

Address: 5 Chavchavadze Ave., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: (+995 32) 2 25 05 22

Fax: (+995 32) 2 25 05 22

E-mail: artanujipublishers@gmail.com

Website: www.artanuji.ge

The publishing house Artanuji was founded in 2000 on the basis of the history magazine of the same name. Consequently, its main area of interest is history, historical research, and academic fields. Apart from historical books, Artanuji publishes foreign fiction, books on popular science, biographies and autobiographies of famous people, political literature, textbooks, books for children, and dictionaries. Artanuji is also a market leader in the diversity and quality of the postcards it produces.



Maia Kudava

Publisher

I was one of the first graduates of the post graduate program in publishing offered by Ivane Javakishvili State University, which incidentally celebrates its one hundredth anniversary this year. I had often heard about the Frankfurt Book Fair from my professors, so when I first visited the fair as a student in 2005, I was happy for the opportunity. Since then I have regularly participated in this wonderful book festival.

In Artanuji I grew professionally, having worked in various positions and participated in local as well as international projects. Much has changed in Georgia since then, but I believe we have remained loyal to our chosen field. Personally, I still treat my duties with the same enthusiasm as when I started the job some fifteen years ago. The Frankfurt Book Fair, and the role of Guest of Honour in particular, present an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the Georgian book to the world and reclaim our rightful position in Europe.

Georgia has always been a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic country, extending its welcome to numerous travellers and academics, and by the same token, it attracted various invaders. It is the homeland of Stalin, a small country within the Soviet Union that achieved independence in the 1990s and has had two wars with Russia since then. All these topics are reflected in the books we publish—academic editions, fiction, and documentary novels, all of which we hope may be interesting for foreign readers too.



Gela Charkviani

Author

My first encounter with Artanuji was in autumn 2013 when two pleasant young people, Marika and Zviad, asked to visit me. They said that a man with my biography was sure to have material that would be of interest to their publishing house. I didn't make them wait. I simply walked over to my desk and pulled out a thick file from the drawer. "Interviews with Dad. I know you'll find it interesting," I said.

I decided to talk to my father Candide in the late 1980s when he was in hospital. I was fully aware that my father was the last survivor who had personally witnessed the problematic relations between Georgia and the Kremlin during Stalin's times. He was the leader of the Communist Party of Georgia in 1938-1952 and met Stalin on a regular basis. Even though my tape recorder was of very poor quality, I had still managed to record a nine-hour interview with Dad.

My visitors, Marika and Zviad, only took a couple of seconds to make a decision. Zviad Kvaratskhelia was the editor, and the book was published just two months later. It quickly became a bestseller and was translated into Italian. However, we were obliged to change the title to *Stalin's Georgian Dimension (La Dimensione Georgiana de Stalin)*, because the original title made no sense in Italy: nobody knows either me or my father there.



Priorities: Academic literature, fiction, specialised literature

Contact person: Mamuka Khantadze

Address: 18 Mtskheta St., Tbilisi

Tel.: +995 577 412182

E-mail: azribooks@gmail.com

Founded in 1993, the publishing house Azri was one of the first independent publishers in Georgia. Our publications have been nominated for and awarded prizes in various prestigious literary contests. Some of our books have been made into plays and films, while our academic literature for students is extremely popular in universities across the country.



Mamuka Khantadze

Publisher

The publishing house Azri was one of the first independent publishers in post-Soviet Georgia. It was founded in 1993, a time when not only the publishing industry but the entire country was in disarray. As a result, we had to think not only about developing our company, but also about creating a book publishing industry virtually from scratch. We participated in numerous projects: training sessions for Georgian publishers by foreign experts; founding the Publishers' Association; establishing the Georgian Book Fair; assisting in the creation of authors' and publishers' rights legislation; creating a code of practice for publishers; establishing a centre for publishing studies, which later was transformed into a university course in Publishing Management; and so on.

At the same time, we paid close attention to the works of emerging writers and published some of their debuts. Today many of them are well-known not only in Georgia but abroad as well.

Over the course of all these years, we have continued to keep a close eye on trends unfolding in the literary field. Ultimately, this was the reason why we published Malkhaz Kharbedia's *The Text and the Truth* in 2014. My conviction is that this book is exemplary in terms of collaboration between publishing house and author because both were perfectly aware of how timely and significant such a collection of critical essays was for the country. The result was not unexpected: the book won the Saba, the most important Georgian literary prize, in the category of literary criticism.



Malkhaz Kharbedia

Author

The Text and the Truth

I decided to pull together a collection of critical pieces I had written recently about modern Georgian prose, poetry, translations, literary policy, and publishing issues. Those are the topics that occupy me most of all when thinking and writing about modern Georgian literature. I believe the title reflects my approach to these problems because it is the truth, responsibility to the truth, and constructive criticism that give life to literary works. Today, what we need most of all is dynamic, topical literature that can incite self-reflection in our readers. The essays mention dozens of new, innovative authors in an attempt to combat the existing stereotypical attitude that there are only a few authors worth reading. Unfortunately, this superficial attitude is rather widespread in Georgia, and harms readers as well as the publishing business because the latter mostly publish mainstream literature, with the result that readers are forced to limit their choice instead of looking for something new. For these reasons, I have tried to present a wider picture of the noteworthy, often controversial issues observed in modern Georgian literature, translations, and the literary world in general. I hope 2018 will prove to be a significant crossroads for our literature. If we do not approach this great forum with new texts and new truth, however, it may turn out to be sadly disappointing.

Publishing priority: Fiction and children's books

Contact person: Rusudan Mosidze

Address: 7 Gr. Robakidze Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 72 54 99

E-mail: bakmipublishing@gmail.com

Website: www.bakmi.ge

Founded in 2000, Bakmi Publishers mainly focuses on fiction and children's literature. We have also initiated the publication of several rare editions. In the recent years, some of our books have been published in Europe. Since 2006, our company has participated in the Frankfurt, Leipzig and Bologna book fairs. In 2003, Bakmi Publishers was awarded the Georgian State Prize.



Rusudan Mosidze

Publisher

Since we founded Bakmi Publishers in 2000, our priorities have been Georgian classics, in particular our medieval epic *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, publishing translations of world classics (Omar Khayyam, William Shakespeare, François Rabelais, Erasmus of Rotterdam, etc.), and modern Georgian literature.

Recently, some of our books have been published in Europe.

A unique eighteenth century edition of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, illustrated with miniatures by an unknown artist, has become the trademark of our company. Several years ago, this particular edition attracted a lot of interest in academic circles, and as a result I was invited to Frankfurt, Munich and Vienna, where the publication was presented and passages were read out. European specialists in Kartvelian languages and literature held a press conference, organized by Professor Manana Tandashvili, dedicated to the importance of the Georgian epic for world literature.

These days, Bakmi's greatest challenge is to seek out and publish various manuscripts of the twelfth century epic. At present, we are preparing a seventeenth century manuscript of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, the so-called Begta-Beg version, for the Frankfurt Book Fair.



Bondo Matsaberidze

Author

The Austrian publisher DRAVA asked me to produce a new collection of fairy tales, *A Tale of Thusi and Tusi Too*. As well as the eponymous story, the publication includes three other fairy tales: *Once There Was a Blackbird*, *A Tale of Frog Banbakar* and *The Village of the Three Mushrooms*.

The first tale is about two little girls whose fathers bring them two white rabbits from the forest one day. After a tiring day of playing with the rabbits, the girls face a problem: they cannot tell one rabbit from the other, so instead they leave it up to the rabbits to distinguish their owners – the rabbit called Thusi has to remember the girl named Thusi, while the rabbit Tusi has to get used to the girl Tusi.

Another tale takes the readers to a village of mushrooms. If you follow the footpaths, you will come to an old oak tree where you can find out all about the everyday lives of the mushrooms – their traditions and hospitality, the things they do every day – and generally become familiar with their whole world, which after all isn't much different from ours, full of rumors, concerns and worries.

Then winter comes...

But to find out more, you will just have to read the stories.

PUBLISHING HOUSE BOOKS IN BATUMI



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Translated foreign literature, publishing and promotion of Georgian authors

Contact Person: Ninia Matcharashvili, Deputy Director

Address: 66 Chavchavadze Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 570 475148

E-mail: booksinbatumi@gmail.com

Books in Batumi is an independent publishing company established in 2015. Today it is viewed as one of the major publishers of Georgian authors. In the beginning, our priority lay with fantasy and science fiction, but with time we began to take into consideration the diverse interests of our readers of all age groups. At present we publish classics (the Immortal Library series), psychological mysteries (the ward N.6 series), as well as books for children and adolescents. One of our priorities is publishing and promoting local emerging authors.



Mariam Korinteli

Publisher

The Frankfurt Book Fair is extremely important for us because it is where we meet publishers from all over the world. 2018 is particularly significant because Georgia is Guest of Honour. We believe that the way our country is presented at the Fair will have a lasting effect on the future of our literature as well as culture in general. Books in Batumi has been in business for only three years, but we are proud to have the opportunity to introduce many Georgian authors to European readers. We wish the project great success and hope that Georgia will be welcome at future festivals with the same interest as this year.



Davit Gabunia

Author

I have often been asked why I have never thought of living and working abroad. I invariably reply that elsewhere they don't speak and write in Georgian. This is a language you can soar in freely, almost indefinitely, and yet for the rest of the world it remains as mysterious as hieroglyphs. The Frankfurt Book Fair is one of those rare exceptions when other languages, along with their readers, come very close to us, so close we can shake hands with them. We are ready for such close encounters. We will happily shake hands.

Profile: Printing and publishing services

Contact person: Ana Gogokhia

Address: 140 Tsereteli avenue, Tbilisi, Georgia

T: +995 32 235 70 02 , +995 32 235 70 05

E-mail anna@cezanne-web.com

Our company was established in 1998 with the aim of printing and publishing the highest quality product. Our dedicated team spares no effort to meet all the standards of publishing, and to consider every detail while preparing illustrations and translations.



Manana Kartoza

Publisher

One of our large-scale projects was *The Knight in the Panther's Skin and Us*, a series of books consisting of various volumes designed for readers of different interests and generations and covering a wide range of topics relating to the twelfth century epic poem. Each volume came about as a result of consultations with academics, bibliophiles and specialists in diverse areas. The end product is an encyclopedia of the famous poem, as well as a gift copy of its English translation.

Especially for the Frankfurt Book Fair we have prepared bilingual (Georgian and German) editions for children of Wilhelm Hauff's *The Story of Little Muck* and Sulkan-Saba Orbeliani's *Fables*. The very different worlds of the German storyteller and the Georgian fable writer are linked by Olesya Tavadze's illustrations, which bring these authors' characters to life for young readers.

Another publication prepared for Frankfurt this year is a trilingual book *Greetings from Georgia* in Arabic, Georgian and English. Our aim was to let European readers know how much experience our country has accumulated after many centuries of being at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

The crossroads aspect is further exploited in the culinary section of our publications, such as Rusudan Gorgiladze's book *Sharing Georgia*, which has been translated into German for the Frankfurt Book Fair.



Rusudan Gorgiladze

Author

While living in Berlin, I became particularly fascinated by the origin of food products and their journeys around the world. It occurred to me that it was this moving around that shaped and eventually defined ethnic cuisines, which ultimately are cultural cross-influences.

Georgian cuisine is no exception, and an analysis of how it arrived at its current form shows clear parallels with the history of our country. These are the topics covered in my book *Sharing Georgia*, published in 2012. If not for the enthusiasm and support of Cezanne Publishers, this book about travel through space and time would never have seen the light of the day.

The English translation has been presented in the Georgian embassies of Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Lisbon, and Athens, as well as the Foreign Office of Germany, the Berlin Museum of Culture, and many other cultural and educational organizations. As the author, I greatly appreciate all the efforts the publishers have put into promoting the book.

In 2018, the German translation of the book will be published by the German company Chonte, this project having been made possible by the support of the Georgian Book National Center. Needless to say, it is a great honour for me to see my book in several languages at the Frankfurt Book Fair this year.

Profile: Educational books, textbooks, travel guides, fiction

Contact person: Maia Beridze

Address: Apt. 43, Building 26, micro-district 7, 3700 Rustavi, Georgia

Tel: +995 599 794 944

E-mail: info@angelread.com

Established in 2014, our publishing house focuses on a variety of directions, with special emphasis on academic literature and textbooks, travel guides and books about Georgia for foreigners, and fiction, including both original works by Georgian authors and Georgian translations of foreign writers.



Maia Beridze

Publisher

Welcome to the bookworm's paradise! Here you will be hosted by amiable examples of fiction, kids' literature, historical pieces, educational books, guidebooks, and many other printed wonders poised to leave a lasting impression on you.

Our aim is to facilitate friendship through books. After all, reading is all about that cryptic and inexplicable chemistry between the reader and the book, a kind of magic and joy that lasts a lifetime. For our part, we are mere mediators, sparing no effort to maintain and sustain this friendship.

Let our books speak for themselves. Meet them, join them in an unforgettable journey to the mesmerizing world of fiction, make friends with new characters and revisit old ones, retrieve valuable information from our educational literature, visit the fabled land of children's books, and travel around the world and familiarize yourselves with different corners of Georgia!

In a nutshell, have fun in the realm of books!



Irakli Beridze

Author

Don't Call Me Broccoli is a politically and otherwise incorrect epic journey.

Caught between different cultures, languages, and ethnic and religious traditions, the novel's characters never give up on their quest for identity. Caught by immigration services and deported, caught in a whirlpool of weird events, embarrassing linguistic blunders, hilarious situations, and cat-and-mouse games, still the relentless pursuit of one's true self never ceases—it's catch as catch can. But first one must find and take in what exactly defines one's identity.

OK, but what's this broccoli thing? What's the catch?

Well, that's just another cultural/linguistic gaffe lost in translation—a goofy Catch 22 sort of thing.

Part two of the book is loosely based on my inaugural novel *Diogenes' Crutch*, which was written in Georgian and also published by Creative Angel.

Profile: Original Georgian fiction and cognitive literature for children; encyclopedias and albums; select editions of several authors and scientists; readers and supplementary reading material.

Contact person: Tamar Ninikashvili

Address: 1 Zandukeli St., 0108 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 032 293 6977

E-mail: dila1904@yahoo.com

The company was founded in 2004 on the basis of the children's magazine Dila. Our first project was an original encyclopedic series for teenagers, which now comprises fifteen volumes.

Another series, Adolescent Library, includes collections of Georgian authors' works for children, as well as myths, folklore and religious literature written specifically for children. One more series, Georgia's Cities, familiarizes teenagers with locations that have centuries of history since their emergence. Meanwhile, the company continues to publish the literary magazine for children Dila, which was established in 1904 and celebrates one hundred and fourteen years of existence in November 2018. In 2013, the magazine was awarded the status of Non-Material Cultural Monument.



Dodo Tsivtsivadze

Publisher

In 2004, when our publishing house was founded on the basis of the children's magazine Dila, the country was in a dire economic crisis that threatened the very existence of the magazine. Our first project specifically designed to save it was to publish an encyclopedia for children in fifteen volumes, which turned out to be an ongoing undertaking.

Each volume includes material previously published in the magazine over the hundred and fourteen years of its existence, successfully introducing young readers to all major inventions and scientific achievements.

The publication of the first Georgian encyclopedia for children was a highly anticipated event. All five thousand copies sold out in two weeks, enabling Dila magazine to continue its life. In a way, the children's encyclopedia saved the magazine's life at that time.



**Vano
Amir Khanashvili**

Author

It happened one fine morning, in the office of the Dila Magazine, naturally: the idea of publishing a book about Georgian literature designed for readers of all ages was born. There was only one way to do it: we needed to write for children but so that adults could understand too. But how? In what format?

After a lot of deliberation, we realized that Georgian literature itself, with its fifteen centuries of history, would show us the way. We discovered that history writes itself, so we simply reverted to the works of Georgian writers, their thoughts and emotions.

We wholeheartedly invite you to visit this land which stands on three pillars: love, friendship and freedom. Georgian literature is a terra incognita, appealing to the most inquisitive young readers as well as to adults.



Profile: Publishing House
Contact person: Mariam Gelenidze
E-mail: m.gelenidze@diogene.ge
Address: 9 Apakidze St., 0171 Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel.: +99532 2213321
E-mail: adm@diogene.ge
www.diogene.ge
Rights Manager: Zaza Shengelia
rights@diogene.ge

Founded in 1996, Diogene is one of the oldest publishing houses in Georgia. Known for its high-quality literature, Diogene Publishers has earned a reputation for publishing prize-winning Georgian authors. Translations are also at the core of the Diogene Publishers' identity. Our priorities are adult fiction and non-fiction.



Tamar Lebanidze
Publisher

Twenty-three years ago, four friends decided to start up Diogene Publishers. Apart from our friendship and mutual loyalty, we were driven by our love for books as well as our wish to be financially independent. However, it soon transpired that our principles regarding our business didn't always coincide, and we parted ways. At the time I felt like an underage mother left with a toddler, with a rather uncertain future ahead.

Now, looking back, I can state proudly that I managed to deal with the workload. When the process of textbook replacement was announced in Georgia, Diogene became the market leader. Moreover, the financial stability we achieved by publishing textbooks allowed us to initiate many interesting projects. Now, however, unreliable state policy has adversely affected the entire publishing industry in Georgia, leading to serious financial problems.

We have been obliged to reduce the number and scope of our projects, and yet in a sense, this has turned out to be beneficial: we have focused on the area that is Diogene's trademark today, namely modern Georgian literature of the highest standard and translated foreign literature, in particular classic works that are not yet widely known among our readers.

Finally, I would like to mention perhaps our most interesting project: the Pen-Marathon, a literary contest of an original format, first held in 2002. In 2018 the contest became international, with participants from Georgia and Germany



Vakhushti Kotetishvili
Author

Georgian cultural life in the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first is unimaginable without Vakhushti Kotetishvili, specialist of Iranian language and literature and Georgian folklore, translator, poet, essayist, adored by his students and winner of international awards.

His family history is closely linked to the history of our country and all the hardships it has had to endure, and demonstrates how heavy the moral burden of living in the Soviet times was for decent citizens.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Vakhushti fell silent, but after a while, he began an active collaboration with Diogene that continued for several years. In his final years, he completed many projects that still are of outstanding importance for Georgian book development: we published his collection of poetry *East-West Divan* (classic Persian poetry, Reiner Maria Rilke, Russian Silver Century), a collection of Georgian scabrous folklore, an autobiographical novel *My Life, Short as a Minute*, as well as his masterclasses for young translators.

Tamar lebanidze



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Children's literature

Contact person: Tinatin Didebulidze

Address: 2nd floor, Block 9, 8 Kartoza St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 92 35 70

E-mail: office@elf.ge, adm@elf.ge

Website: www.elf.ge

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/Elf.Publishing.House/>

Rights Manager: Leila Kirtadze

E-mail: right@elf.ge

Elf Publishers was founded in 1996 by journalist and translator Tinatin Didebulidze. The publishing house cooperates with the biggest and most famous publishers. Elf Publishers appears annually in the children's book sections of the Frankfurter Buchmesse and the Bologna Book Fair. Today we are one of the leading companies in Georgia. Our publishing priorities are children's books, fiction, cognitive literature, encyclopedias, popular scientific books, atlases, and so on.



Tinatin Didebulidze

Publisher

Since its establishment, the main priority of Elf Publishers has been to provide new translations of world classics. We felt the need to offer fresh versions because for many years Soviet policy was to translate mainly from Russian as an intermediary language. Nowadays we publish books for adults as well as modern literature for children, which make for pleasant reading with tasteful illustrations.

Elf Publishers provides continuous assistance to authors and translators to enhance their professional growth. Also, many of our projects have been supported by TEDA, BBM, CNL, Creative Europe, and others. We regularly participate in the Frankfurt and Bologna Book Fairs.

Every employee of our publishing house views their job as a vocation and a mission to be carried out. I believe this is the secret of our success.



Tamar Adamia

Author

I brought my book project to Elf Publishers in 2002. They liked my idea, offered me a contract, and gave me six months to complete the book. I found an artist to design it and a year later my first book was published. Since then Elf has published seventeen titles written by me, and I am extremely proud that most of them are bestsellers, reprinted annually.

Elf Publishers are famous for the assistance they provide to young talented authors, and it is for this reason that I always advise young writers to turn to them. Elf have also employed many promising artists and book illustrators on my recommendation, as well as publishing several emerging authors and holding contests to motivate schoolchildren.

Profile: Publishing House

Priorities: Literature and Arts, translations, ecology, culture, urbanism, travel, culinary art, global issues, human crises and modern challenges.

Contact person: Tamar Babuadze

Address: 24a Irakli Abashidze St., Tbilisi

Tel.: +995 99 91 06

E-mail: indigo.magazine.2015@gmail.com; tamarbabuadze@gmail.com

Founded in 2015, the company publishes the monthly magazine Indigo, covering cultural and social issues, modern literature, documentary prose, and poetry with the intention of guiding its readers through the new ideas and dilemmas that modern life brings and offering brand new and bold perspectives on well-established ideals and values.

The company also publishes a semi-annual English language edition of the same magazine in the form of a compilation of essays and interviews, editorials and features. In 2018, Indigo issued its first special edition for travelers in Georgia. Also in 2018, Indigo started to publish non-fiction books.



Tamar Babuadze

Publisher

The Indigo team consists of former colleagues who worked together on one of the most influential monthly magazines in Tbilisi in the 2000s. Three of us edited the magazine at various times: Nino Lomadze, Nino Japiashvili and Tamar Babuadze. That period ended at various times for each of us. And so we got together again, driven by the shared desire to apply our knowledge and experience to the creation of something new that would be run in accordance with our principles and would be much more than a monthly magazine.

From the start we envisaged INDIGO as a space comprising a printed version, a web portal, and a physical meeting point. The first issue of the magazine came out on 1 October 2015 and has been followed by thirty-three more. We are proud of the printed edition of Indigo Magazine, with its interviews with Georgian and foreign writers, musicians and scientists, its bold and frank comments on social issues, its photo projects, and its extended essays based on in-depth research.

In 2018, we widened the scope of our activities by joining the Georgian book market as a publishing house with the unshakeable principle to tell human stories, to bring to life new experiences, and to shape textual and visual interpretations and turn them into documentary prose.

We are delighted to present our first publishing projects at the Frankfurt Book Fair. We view our debut as an excellent opportunity to gain more experience and professional knowledge



Nino Lomadze

Author

Some wars are soon forgotten. Some wars exist only in a specific location, often a restricted area, and never reach the outside world. The 2008 hostilities between Georgia and Russia rapidly disappeared from sources of information. The memory hasn't retained complete stories, just unpleasant fragments reflected in dry facts and impersonal statistics. The book 08.08.08 brings together memories connected to the war in an attempt to restore the reality that still exists, only several miles away from the capital, but is failing to reach us.



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Georgian contemporary fiction, classics, foreign fiction, non-fiction, textbooks, children's books

Contact person: Gvantsa Jobava

Address: 5 Chavchavadze Ave., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: (+995 32) 2 25 05 22

Fax: (+995 32) 2 25 05 22

E-mail: intelektipublishingrights@gmail.com

Website: www.intelekti.ge

Intelkti Publishing is one of the largest publishing houses in Georgia and has numerous contemporary Georgian authors on its rights list. It is also one of the most active and prominent organizations in the Georgian cultural, educational, and publishing realms. School textbooks for Georgian and non-Georgian schools, classic and modern literature, international masterpieces of literature, and new authors introduced to Georgian readers for the first time are the themes and projects that Intelkti has been working on for over twenty years. Intelkti Publishing regularly participates in various international book fairs, actively promoting Georgian literature outside Georgia.



Kakhmeg Kudava

Publisher

Before I started my publishing business, I was a lecturer of physics. I was one of only a few who attempted to establish an independent publishing house in the 1990s, when Georgia was still taking its first tentative steps towards being a sovereign country and moving away from the Soviet system of state-controlled publishing policy.

Georgia is a multi-ethnic country, so not surprisingly, our first editions were textbooks for Azerbaijan, Russian and Armenian schools. Because there was no distribution system in place, I was obliged to deliver them in person, in my own car. Later, we won the Ministry of Education bid for publishing Georgian textbooks, which enabled our business to expand. I am extremely proud that today we publish classic, as well as modern Georgian and foreign authors. Many of our publications have been translated into other languages. I believe European readers will discover that while dealing with topical issues, our authors continue the rich literary traditions of our country.

When I first visited the Frankfurt Book Fair in the early 2000s, I had to explain to my foreign counterparts which country I was from. I used to revert to a map, noting that we not only had our own language but a distinct alphabet as well. Since then, as a result of developments in our country and the emergence of our publishing industry, we are much better known in Frankfurt.



Irakli Samsonadze

Author

Leah's Time is the second book of a trilogy narrating the dramatic, often tragic events occurring in my country from the end of the eighteenth century to our era. Working on the novel posed several serious problems, the first being the language, which I had to adapt to each of the historical periods covered in the novel: tsarist Russia, the 1917 Revolution, three years of independence, occupation by the Bolsheviks, the gruesome purges of the 1930s, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and newly acquired independence, post-Soviet Georgia, the civil war and raging lawlessness. Consequently, language reflecting the atmosphere of various periods became one of the characters of the book.

My main goal was to render as laconically as possible a modern saga that involved many different characters including, but not limited to, the members of one family. Some appear regularly, while others appear only fleetingly but play a significant part in the narrative. Alongside imaginary characters there are very real ones: Sergo Orjonikidze, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Shevardnadze and others. It wasn't an easy task to put all these stories and characters into a three hundred-page novel, to describe their fates and the twisted paths they took through their lives.

It is of course for the readers to decide how successful I was in my endeavor. I would only add that *Leah's Time*, published by Intelkti, alludes to Biblical stories of escaping slavery and roaming the wilderness, and the often tragic fates of those who dared.

Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Children's books, new books, fiction, non-fiction, encyclopaedias, atlases and art books.

Contact person: Giorgi Karchkhadze

Address: 16/15 Nutsubidze 1st Plateau, 0186 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 51 45 27

E-mail: info@karchkhadze.ge

Website: www.karchkhadze.ge

Our company is one of the leading Georgian publishers of children's books, reference books, encyclopaedias, atlases, children's fiction, Georgian modern classics, art books, and Georgian cultural heritage editions.



Giorgi Karchkhadze

Publisher

My first visit to the Frankfurt Book Fair was in 1997, a time of extremely deep economic and political crisis in Georgia. The Open Society Georgia Foundation suggested organizing a trip for a group of newly emerging publishers to visit the book industry Mecca. At the time I had no idea how it would help me, or whether I had any business in being there at all.

Exactly ten years later, after finishing putting up the Georgian national stand at the Fair, my friend Tina Mamulashvili and I came up with a fresh idea. At the time, we were jointly in charge of the Book Publishers Association, so we decided to meet the organizers of the fair to find out how to achieve the status of Guest of Honour. After the steps we needed to take were kindly explained to us, we realized it wouldn't be easy. Nevertheless, we had to start somewhere, and although we knew it would not come about instantly, we never imagined it would in fact take another eleven years.



Nato Davitashvili

Author

Any writer is thrilled by the chance to participate in a literary contest, especially when one is only a beginner, has only one book published, and under a nom de plume at that. In 2008, Karchkhadze Publishing announced the literary contest Golden Feather for the best children's prose. The greatest attraction for me was that only unpublished pieces with an undisclosed author's name would be accepted. Frankly speaking, I didn't think I could win because the genre of fantasy, to which my work *When the Winged Lions Return* belonged, wasn't at all popular and in fact quite new for the Georgian public. The contest proved extremely appealing, with around one hundred entries vying for the three main prizes.

I still vividly remember the days before New Year when I got the call inviting me to the award ceremony. I was rather busy at the time and asked if my presence was absolutely necessary. I was told it was highly advisable.

Sure enough, I went along to the ceremony. It was the year when Karchkhadze Publishing first published Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* in Georgian, so when the chairperson of the jury mentioned that fact, I already knew I was to receive the first prize.

Since then I have collaborated closely with Karchkhadze Publishing, while the Golden Feather truly launched my career in literature.



Profile: publishing house

Contact person: Anastasia Inasaridze

Address: 71 Iosebidge St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 593 741222; +995 0322 130157

E-mail: Contact@kartuli.ge

The company was established in 2009. Our aim is to facilitate the development of literature for children and adolescents. We also publish fiction and culinary books.



Mate Kbiladze

Publisher

A group of friends gathered in early August 2008 with the idea of catering for children's books and magazines, but before we could take care of the legal issues such as formally registering our company, war broke out between Georgia and Russia. The legal side was settled in early 2009 and we began publishing books for children, who immediately took a liking to our productions. This was a huge motivation for us to develop further.

Soon we began publishing the culinary magazine Menu, which has proved highly successful. I will always remember visiting a remote village with only about four or five families. There I met a one hundred and two-year old hospitable lady who had our magazine at hand, consulting it to prepare delicious dishes. I was immensely impressed.

At present our priority remains literature for little ones. For several years now we have been working on a project for children, and we hope it is going to be as successful as the previous ones. Needless to say, we are extremely happy to present our achievements at the Frankfurt Book Fair in the hope of reaching international readers.



**Anastasia
Inasaridze**

Author

When I began thinking about a children's series, I chose Ili Chavchavadze's famous words, Homeland, Language, Faith, as a suitable tagline for the publication. These three words are interpreted differently by adults depending on their world outlook and beliefs, but they are hard for children to understand, so I needed to find a special approach.

I decided to turn the world beyond those three words into a literary text. It had to be a kind of printed museum that would enable young readers to travel around the country through illustrations, familiarizing themselves with every corner of Georgia, their history and traditions, cooking and local character, as well as the history of our unique alphabet—the pride of every Georgian.

I shared my idea with Kartuli Publishers and to my joy the founder immediately supported the project. The next stage of working on the book exposed me to a relatively unknown, interesting, and unforgettable world. At first, I felt as though I knew almost nothing about the country where I was born and raised. I travelled extensively, visiting every part of Georgia, which gave me invaluable memories I can keep for the rest of my life.

However, the greatest emotional moment was still to come: the book became an instant bestseller. Children received it with their typical open-minded attitude, while their parents could hardly hide their delight. The whole experience surrounding the book is extremely precious to me, for there is nothing more valuable than children's appreciation.

PUBLISHING WORLD OF LAWYERS



Profile: Publishing house, bookshop, distribution

Address: 75 Kostava St., 0171 Tbilisi, Georgia

Contact person: Vakhtang Shatirishvili

Tel.: +995 32 2 383 599; +995 557 515134

E-mail: info@law.ge

Web page: law.ge

www.facebook.com/PublishingHouseLawyersWorld

Rights & International relations manager: Kakhaber Goshadze

The publishing house World of Lawyers was founded on September 10, 2012. The priorities of the company are academic literature and the publication and distribution of legal acts throughout Georgia. Every year we publish approximately thirty books covering various aspects of the law, which has enabled us to become the leader in this area of the Georgian book market. Our academic publications include areas such as civil, criminal and public law.



Vakhtang Shatirishvili

Publisher

The day I started my company is still very vivid in my memory. In 2012 I was a fourth-year university student and didn't even dare imagine that my initiative would become so successful and so well-known in law circles.

I opened my first bookshop near my university because I thought students could benefit from such proximity. It is highly symbolic that our first publication was the Georgian Constitution. Later, when we saw the interest from students and professors, we widened the scope of our publications.

After two years in business, we joined the international market by participating in the Frankfurt Book Fair, and since then our ambition has been to become one of the leaders in law literature publication.

It is worth mentioning that our aims are no longer restricted to local coursebooks and supplementary material. Thanks to various grants, we have been able to translate many foreign books that have without question enriched the academic resources available in the Georgian language.

Apart from publishing itself, we have participated in and sponsored various conferences and contests, presenting our publications to the winners as prizes.



Irakli Gabisonia

Author

One of the most significant parts of my long teaching career was to work on a coursebook dealing with Investigative Law. In 2017-2018 I initiated a project dedicated to extensive research in this area. The results of this research, as well as practical studies, enabled a group of academics, including myself, to complete the coursebook. It has no analog due to its structure and content: it includes the historical legacy and modern-day reality of investigative issues in Georgia and many other countries. The aim was to create a book that would become indispensable in Georgian legal academic circles, and ultimately, this aim was achieved in collaboration with the publishing house World of Lawyers.

The book covers reforms that enabled the development and enhancement of law enforcement and investigative agencies, as well as investigative law in general. This publication is interesting for both experienced specialists and beginner practitioners. Interest in the book increased greatly when some of our recommendations were adopted by legislative bodies. Finally, the role of the publishers should be emphasized, since demand for the book has doubled thanks to their effective promotion efforts.



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Books for children, art books

Contact person: Lasha Beraia

Address: 8 Mitrophan Laghidze St., 0108 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 430 302

E-mail: info@logospress.ge

Website: www.logospress.ge

The publishing priorities of Logos Press Ltd. since its establishment in 2000 have been books for children and art books. Apart from being one of the leading textbook publishers from 2006 to 2012, the company also published Georgian-language versions of such prominent art and fiction titles as *The Story of Art* by E. H. Gombrich, *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov, and *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess. Our most recent big projects include a special series of picture books titled *The Georgian Treasury for Children: 50 Georgian verses*, selected short stories for children, *Fables* by Sulikhan-Saba Orbeliani, *Georgian Myths for Kids*, and *Georgian Fairy Tales*.



Lasha Beraia

Publisher

I have been publishing books since 1996, a time when private publishers had only just started to emerge. There are some publications I am particularly proud of, such as E. H. Gombrich's *The Story of Art*, which was published after negotiating with Phaidon for ten years. I was the editor of its Georgian translation as well as translator of two chapters about Greek art. I also edited the Georgian version of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*, translated by Tamar Lomidze. Our company was the first to publish Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, translated by Giga Zedania, and I have to say it was extremely thrilling to work with him. I have coauthored and/or edited twenty textbooks in subjects such as *Our Georgia*, history, geography, citizenship, art, Georgian literature, and mythology.



Mzia Surguladze

Author

My first meeting with Logos Press was in 2015 when its head, Lasha Beraia, invited me to join their project publishing modern textbooks. At the time, the idea was to create history textbooks based on a completely new methodological approach. The team gathered in a small room, and I was immediately impressed by Lasha Beraia's enthusiasm and the lively atmosphere that encouraged us to solve educational problems while considering the new reality and the demands of the time. While working on the project, I had the opportunity to become acquainted with the staff of this emerging but already highly professional publishing house.

From the very start, the company had its chosen areas of interest, namely educational literature and translated children's books. Everything Logos Press publishes is of high quality and both appealing and educational for young readers. As a result, Logos Press has made reading in Georgia more popular. The company also offers its readers books on sociology, political sciences, national issues, and philosophy.

As a post-Soviet country, Georgia still faces numerous problems of a political and psychological character. I believe the publications of the Logos Press will assist our society in identifying and solving these problems.

MERIDIANI PUBLISHING HOUSE



Profile: Publishing House

Priorities: Educational, academic, cognitive literature; fiction and children's books

Contact person: Kakhaber Rusidze

Address: 47 Kazbegi Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 599 54 17 07

E-mail: Meridiani777@gmail.com

The company Meridiani Ltd. was founded on 11 March 1994. Our priorities are publishing educational, academic and cognitive literature, as well as fiction and children's books. We also print periodicals (newspapers and magazines), as well as headed paper for individuals and organizations.



Kakhaber Rusidze

Publisher

Our company actively cooperates with many higher education institutions and organizations that have been awarded various grants and bids, among them the Georgian Patriarch's office, the Georgian Ministry of Education and Science, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi Spiritual Academy, Georgian Technical University, the Georgian Prosecutor's Office, the Agency of Healthcare and Social Services, the Universities of Sokhumi, Kutaisi and Telavi, and many others.

We are particularly proud to have published *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (*The Life of the Kartli*, editor Roin Metreveli), *The Knight in the Panther's Skin: A Bio-geographic View*, *This is Georgia and The Caucasus* (by Arnold Gegechkori), *Material and Cultural Monuments of Georgia* (in both English and Georgian), *Georgian Beer* (by Eldar Nadiradze), and so on.

We continue to work with the aforementioned organizations on various projects geared toward the preparation of new textbooks that meet the standards of the national educational curriculum.



Arnold Gegechkori

Author

I have been working with Meridiani Publishers for nearly 25 years. It was this company that published my pedagogical, educational and popular books, as well as textbooks.

One of the best outcomes of our collaboration is the book *This is Georgia*. Published in Georgian and English, this book is equally interesting for local and foreign readers because it covers numerous issues: Georgian history, culture, and ethnography, and the nature of every region of the country. The book became an instant bestseller, captivating readers. Many presentations were held during which eminent scientists and writers expressed their often highly positive and complimentary opinions.

I had the idea for the book many years ago and shared my thoughts with our well-known film director Rezo Chkheidze. As soon as he looked through the material and photos, he immediately encouraged me to start thinking about publishing the book and even promised to write a foreword for it.

That was when I brought the materials to the publisher I knew so well. They demonstrated amazing professionalism while working on the publication, which was technically rather challenging: they needed to convert nearly three thousand photos into a printable format, as well as to translate the book into English. Meridiani Publishers were also instrumental in promoting the book abroad.

Profile: Publishing House

Contact person: Tina Asatiani

Address: 49 Iosebidge St., 0160 Tbilisi, Georgia.

E-mail: t.asatiani@palitra.ge

Tel: +995 32 2383871; +995 599 150525

Palitra L Publishing is a subsidiary of Palitra Media Holding. Today it is one of the largest and most successful enterprises in the Georgian publishing market. Each year, we publish over five hundred books in various genres, by Georgian and foreign authors alike. Through cooperation with the world's leading publishers and agencies, we release books for readers of all ages and tastes.

We have implemented numerous innovative and large-scale projects, including the world classic series 50 Books to Read Before You Die, The Illustrated History of Georgia, the YA series Liberteens, the business literature series Blue Ocean, the literary contest Become the Bestseller Author, and many others.



Tinatin Asatiani

Publisher

I joined Palitra L. in 2010, the most decisive period for the publishing house. At that time, the company had just launched a completely new project, Books to Read Before You Die. The whole idea was a challenge, but we overcame many problems, learnt a lot in the process, and succeeded in creating a select library that ended up affecting the entire Georgian book market. Prior to our project, a typical print-run was between five hundred and a thousand copies. Thanks to the popularity of our idea, it has increased to fifty thousand. We have managed to increase the availability of books not only in terms of their price, but also by penetrating all regions of the country.

A similarly promising project today is Liberteens, a series of books for teenagers chosen by themselves. Due to their personal involvement in the creation of the books, they show a huge level of interest. As part of the project, we have even invited and hosted international bestselling YA authors to Tbilisi.

Recently, our priority has been promoting Georgian writers. We launched a literary contest Become the Bestseller Author, which has proved highly popular, resulting in many bestselling titles.

The last eight years have convinced me that we have chosen the right way to develop, and we are now ready for new challenges.



Giorgi Kalandia

Author

A group of Georgian enthusiasts founded the Literacy Society in 1879, the significance of which for the country at that time is hard to overestimate. I can readily compare their impact to what Palitra L has done in terms of making reading popular: books by famous Georgian and world authors have been made available thanks to their low price and their method of distributing the books together with popular periodicals throughout the country. Hitherto rare books or books never before published in Georgian have suddenly become easily available and even rather trendy among my students.

Palitra L is an enthusiastic supporter of all areas of culture, a fact that can be illustrated by their collaboration with the Art Palace. I can single out two projects particularly worthy of note: the high-quality catalogue of the State Museum of Georgian Theatre, Music, Film and Choreography, and the title Georgian Theatre and Film, which was published as part of the popular series The Illustrated History of Georgia. It is hard to find a book published on this topic of similar taste and content.

I decided to trust the company to publish my Three Georgian Stories because I believed I would be able to reach more readers with an elegant, tasteful and attractive book. I believe only the team of the Palitra L could have produced it for they are consummate professionals in everything they do.

Profile: Publishing House

Contact person: Irina Rukhadze

Address: 15 Paliashvili Street, 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 25 23 39; +995 577 40 08 49

E-mail: g.pedagogika@yahoo.com

Website: www.pedagogika.ge

Established in 1994, Pedagogika Publishers produces educational, methodological, and scientific literature. Our main customers are teachers, pupils, their parents, university students, and other educational specialists. Our books are written by leading experts: highly qualified university professors and experienced, certified teachers. Pedagogika books meet modern standards of design as well as publishing quality. We try to assist teachers and students in making learning and teaching processes interesting and involving.



Irina Rukhadze

Publisher

Our company was the first independent publishing house in post-Soviet Georgia. We were able to secure the right to start our business only after a harrowing process of license acquisition, overcoming all the bureaucratic obstacles still in place in the 1990s.

I was educated in Georgia and Russia and then became a professor in the art department at Ilia State University, and as such, I have always been interested in pedagogical sciences. Although our company is relatively small, we are very pleased to say that our textbooks are used throughout the whole of Georgia. As an author and publisher, I am proud that my books have made a positive contribution to the educational system of my country.



Tamar Chkonია

Author

I am a proud professor of mathematics at Ivane Javakhishvili State University, but I also take pride in being part of the highly professional team at Pedagogika Publishers. Our collaboration began in 2011 when the Ministry of Education announced a contest to find the best modern textbooks. Being interested in this area, I visited a number of publishing houses and finally chose Pedagogika, a small company that impressed me with the enthusiasm and dedication of its staff. Through team work involving the efforts of twelve specialists, we published a series of textbooks for elementary and secondary levels. It was an extremely interesting and fruitful period, resulting in books that are still used in Georgian schools and have received highly positive reviews. I hope to continue this collaboration with many more remarkable projects initiated by Pedagogika.



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Fiction, children's literature, youth literature, documentary prose, cognitive literature.

Contact person: Marina Tskhadaia

Address: 27 Chavchavadze Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 32 09 78

E-mail: bookpegasus@gmail.com

Rights Manager: Nino Tsivtsivadze

We are proud to say that ever since our foundation, we have been actively trying to introduce novelty to Georgian readers by promoting still unknown authors. A further aim of our editorial staff is to translate into Georgian works of previously unknown foreign authors so that these works become accessible to Georgian readers. Our publishing priorities are fiction, children's literature, youth literature, documentary prose, and cognitive literature.



Marine Tskhadaia

Publisher

The idea of establishing a publishing house was born in 2006 when, having studied the market, we discovered that documentary prose, so popular in Europe, was practically non-existent in Georgia. We decided to fill this gap in the market by offering our readers biographies of outstanding figures, richly illustrated with photos. We began publishing the series Illustrated Biographies, which includes interesting biographies of prominent people, Georgians and foreigners, together with rare photographs.

When working on the text, we pay particular attention to historic truthfulness, objectivity, and modern attitudes. We are well aware that in Soviet times many historic facts, biographies, and events were wrongly interpreted and often deliberately distorted. Our company is trying to rectify this situation by publishing books based on the truth.



Mariam Tsereteli

Author

Inspiration for my novel *Life Defined by an Article* came during a very stressful but significant period in my life when I was a patient of the oncology ward. They say, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger", but I would rephrase that by saying "What is going to kill you also makes you stronger".

During my treatment I had the chance to live abroad, and I fully appreciated every minute of that time.

The difficult days and conflicting emotions I experienced at that time gave birth to my first literary attempt, which deals with some of the most painful issues of our times: battling against often fatal diseases, European multiculturalism, atrocities carried out because of religious fanaticism, and so on.

The wish to have the book published only came about after writer and commentator Dato Turashvili gave a highly complimentary opinion about it on the program Literary Triangle on TV channel Rustavi 2. It was published by Pegasus, and I am deeply grateful for their cooperation. I am also thankful to my readers who have received the book with such empathy.

Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Poetry, non-fiction

Contact Person: Natalia Alhazishvili

Address: Apt. 48, 2 Kipshidze St., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 599 53 78 87

E-mail: nalhazishvili@poeziapress.org

The priority for the Poezia Press is translating Georgian poetry into foreign languages as well as from foreign languages into Georgian. We also publish non-fiction translated into Georgian.



**Natalia (Nato)
Alhazishvili**

Publisher

I have always loved books. Reading them, examining them, comparing bindings and stitching and how the paper felt and smelled. In my family we had a rich library put together by several generations of readers. However, I was leading a quiet existence as a UN official, and I had never even dreamed of entering the publishing world. That all changed when I met Lyn Coffin and heard her idea of translating *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*. This is how my adventure as a publisher started, with the biggest book of Georgian literature in the best (so far) English translation.

I never looked back, and three years later, the thrill and excitement of working on this book is still with me. The thrill and excitement never leaves me, constantly demanding more books to feed my new addiction.



Lyn Coffin

Poet and translator

I first came to Georgia in 2011. I fell in love with Georgia and her incomparable twelfth century poet, Shota Rustaveli. I confided to Dato Barbakadze (a wonderful poet in his own right) that my life's dream was to translate *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* in Rustaveli's own shairi – sixteen-syllable lines rhymed AAAA, BBBB. Dato asked Nato if she knew of a publisher who would underwrite the enterprise. Nato became a publisher so she could help bring this translation forth. Dodona Kiziria prepared the ground with ptskaredi (a word-for-word translation) and commentary. A prominent Rustavelologist, Nodar Natadze, advised us. A great teacher and scholar, Levan Gigineshvili, added an afterword.

I worked for almost three years, translating nearly every day. I was possessed. I was driven. Inspired. Tariel wrestled with a panther. Rustaveli wrestled with Tariel. I wrestled with Rustaveli. I say this with the greatest respect and admiration. Long live Rustaveli!

Profile: Academic Press of Georgia (APG)

Publishing priority: Educational literature, children's books, fiction and academic books

Contact person: Tamar Natchkebia

Address: 181-2 Aghmashenebeli Ave., 0112 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 0234 0430; +995 599 173885

E-mail: pressacademic@gmail.com

Webpage: www.apgeorgia.com

Since the company started its operation, we have published more than thirty titles of educational books, fiction and non-fiction. We support young authors and promote translations by receiving various grants for these purposes. We recently began working on publishing an Icelandic book for children as well as on translating the work of Ketevan Davrichev, a French writer of Georgian origin.



Tamar Natchkebia

Publisher

Our company focuses on academic publications, but when one of my colleagues told me about Lela Tsutskiridze's manuscript, I began to wonder: academia means connection with education, so why not publish a book for children they can learn from, especially when we immediately liked the material?

The author helped with the promotion of *A Merry Family ... and Others* by holding lively presentations and encouraging kids to draw the characters. One writer commented that had the book been by a foreign author, publishers would have fought for the right to publish it, so we should be proud to have such an original work as part of our children's literature. More importantly, Lela has illustrated the book herself, which is quite remarkable.

The book was entered into a literary contest in the UAE in the category for seven to thirteen year-old readers. This is precisely the age group for which publications are sorely lacking in Georgia.



Lela Tsutskiridze

Author

It all started with a dinner service with geese painted on it. For years I passed the shop window where the geese lived, and they never failed to greet me politely. They were beautiful and joyful, but I couldn't help wondering how dull their life must have been. What if I relocated them to a merry family?

So, one day, I sat down and began writing about a merry family of people not like us or those around us, but those we would like to be. The geese encouraged me by honking loudly and cheerfully. I wrote about a big family of three generations, geese and others.

At some point I decided I had to put a full stop, otherwise more and more characters would end up joining the storyline. Three publishers rejected the book for various reasons, but the geese kept encouraging me. After I put short extracts on my Facebook page, Saga Publishers called me. Before I knew it, I was sitting in their office, talking to Tamara Nachkebia and Irma Liparteliani. We agreed on the terms and every detail of the publication, and a month later the book was ready, first as a paperback and then with a hard cover, with my own black and white illustrations.

To be perfectly honest, I never hoped to meet such considerate publishers: they promoted the book and agreed every step with me, making cooperation a highly pleasant experience altogether.

Profile: Publishing and distribution company; stationery distribution

Contact person: Lia Metreveli, Deputy Director

Address: 14 Tamar Mepe St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 32 2969070; +995 32 2958399

E-mail: saqwigni@yahoo.com

Saktsigni is the only publishing company fully owned by the state. Established in 1932, it has changed names, but its priorities remain the same. We publish and distribute books in all regions of the country where we have our bookshops. The head office and store houses are in Tbilisi. Omar Kereselidze is the General Director of the company.



Lia Metreveli

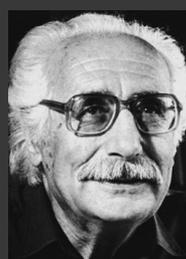
Publisher

There are very few organizations in Georgia that were founded nearly a hundred years ago, and I am proud to have worked for one of them since 1983.

Despite the severe censorship imposed by the Communist regime, our bookshops served as shelters and meeting places for supporters of culture and those hoping for more freedom. I witnessed many instances when ignorant censors banned certain publications, such as the case of Akaki Bakradze's monumental work on Ilia Chavchavadze, which was banned only because someone didn't like the preface and epilogue. Together with my co-workers we managed to save about a hundred copies from destruction. The same happened to Kolau Nadiradze's collection of poetry, from which the opening poem, one of the best, was torn out of the entire print run. We secured thirty copies that are still a treasured part of my friends' and my libraries.

After nearly 35 years at the company, I still remain an avid book lover, and I am extremely happy my students have shown the same dedication. When talking to them about publishing, I used to begin with new books and finish with Walt Whitman's saying that by touching a book, you ultimately touch a man.

My colleagues and I have touched hundreds of books and hope we will have the opportunity to see many more.



Otar Chkheidze

Author

The cycle *The Annals of Georgia* comprises twenty-four biographic novels covering social and political aspects of the Soviet and post-Soviet period. The impartial panorama of life described in the novels is often compared to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Saga.

The author offers a truthful, often courageously critical depiction of events, openly reproving Marxist ideology and exposing its falsehood. In return, the authorities pursued him, but despite the KGB's efforts to curb his revelatory stance, his firm decision to tell the truth was never shaken.

Today the novels read as guidebooks into Georgia's not too remote past, presenting an ideal source to study the circumstances that defined the historical period, as well as to reveal those cultural achievements that rightfully secure a place for our country on the international map.

Otar Chkheidze's legacy, particularly his two novels *Tskhratskaro* (The Nine Springs) and *The Artistic Coup*, sets the highest standards of Georgian prose, worthy of presenting our literature to Europe and the English-speaking world. Each novel draws attention with its intense drama, original characters, dynamic narrative, expressive, often grotesque and satirical passages, as well as elegant descriptive stretches.

Rostom Chkheidze

Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Cognitive literature for children and youth, fiction, poetry, textbooks, journals, scientific, guidebooks for tourists, reference books and postcards.

Contact person: Lia Shalvashvili

Address: 9B Antonovskaya St., 0177, Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 599 550 554

E-mail: info@shemetsneba.ge

Website: www.shemetsneba.ge

The independent Georgian publishing house Shemetsneba was founded in 2005. Our priorities are cognitive literature for children and youth, fiction, poetry, textbooks, journals, popular scientific literature, guidebooks for tourists, reference books, and postcards.



Lia Shalvashvili

Publisher

Since we started our operations in 2005, our aim has been to cater for the cultural, educational and literary needs of our country. It is highly noteworthy that the idea of establishing our own business was born in 2005, when I visited the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Over time, our company expanded to include books for children and adolescents, classic and modern poetry and prose, schoolbooks, and educational and didactic materials. We are proud of our children's series called Andria and Anastasia's Library and a series The Sky devoted to modern literature. We publish Georgian as well as translated works.

Over ninety titles published by Shemetsneba are suitable for diverse readers of all interests and tastes. Books for children, such as the Audio ABC, I Want to Know Everything, fairy tales, Georgian Literature for Children in three volumes, and Lives and Work of Georgian Writers in two volumes are particularly popular.

Our company is an active member of the Georgian Association of Book Publishers and regularly participates in book fairs in Tbilisi, Bologna and Frankfurt.



David Dephy

Author

It all began in 2006 when, after finishing a reading of my poetry at the Fashion Artistic Café, I stepped down and suddenly felt an unusual sense of tranquility. I soon discovered the lady from which it emanated. She walked directly towards me, through the crowd, looked me in the eyes, and introduced herself as the director of Shemetsneba Publishers. She said she wanted to publish my poetry, and that's when I knew I had been invited to take a long journey.

Over twelve years of cooperation, the company has published five of my novels, five poetry collections, and an audio poetry book. Last year two of my poetic works – *Easter Poems* and *The Poet King* – were officially included by the Georgian Evangelical-Baptist Church into its liturgy.

Our wonderful journey continues, and I can still feel the amazing peace and quiet coming from the courageous lady who approached me all those years ago.

Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Fiction, modern Georgian authors, modern classics, translations.

Contact person: Ketevan Kighuradze

Address: 10 Dodo Abashidze St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 577 444081

E-mail: rights@siestagroup.ge

Website: siesta.com.ge

Right Manager: Ketevan Kighuradze

The Siesta Group was founded in 2004 to provide publishing, advertising, and distribution services. Over the fourteen years of its existence, Siesta has published more than three hundred books. Our authors include nominees and winners of all the major Georgian literature prizes, including Saba, Gala, Tsero and Litera. Siesta is the founder and organizer of the literature festival Lit-Tour. Our team is developing new projects with the aim of offering Georgian readers a wide variety of editions and diversity of choices.



Ketevan Kighuradze

Publisher

Siesta, founded in 2004 in Tbilisi, Georgia, is an independent book publisher representing the best books of Georgian and foreign authors. For fifteen years, Siesta has been working successfully in the Georgian book market with a share of 10% and is considered one of the industry leaders due to the content of its releases and the number of books printed. Siesta considers the interests of its readers, carefully choosing books for publication, always looking for innovators who will enrich the reading experience, and exploring a wide range of literary themes and styles. We focus on modern Georgian authors, modern classics, philosophy, modern fiction, non-fiction, and young adult books. The reputation of Siesta Publishing House was created in recent years by selecting only literature of the highest quality. Our editions of modern classical authors and superior translations of foreign literature have been awarded a number of honorary prizes and awards in Georgia, and our authors have been nominated for prizes for best novel, best play, best poetry collection, best debut, best translation, and so on, and awarded prizes such as the SABA award in 2007, 2008, 2009, the GALA award in 2009, and the MUZA award in 2009. Siesta recently began publishing children's literature. This year saw the publication of the series Let's Talk About It, translated from Spanish. These books are loved equally by different generations and are considered interesting and useful not only for children, but for their parents too. Siesta constantly introduces new names and new works, releasing approximately five new books a month. We have already published around three hundred titles, of which one hundred are currently on sale. Over the years Siesta has been highly appreciated by readers and the media. We actively cooperate with regional suppliers on special terms, trying to solve the problem of "hunger for books" in the Georgian regions so that readers all over Georgia, and not just citizens of Tbilisi, have access to modern Georgian and foreign literature.



ErIom Akhvlediani

Author

The author of *The Mosquito* sees miracles and signs in the sheer fact of existence, and those signs construct his being as well as that of reality itself. Nothing is accidental. It is what it is and can't be otherwise. No effort is needed, nothing has to be made anew because everything is already written by a much superior hand. So why does a man write at all?

It is neither an allegory, nor a fable, nor a parable. Those seeking allegory in the work are deeply mistaken. Everything is all too real.

A man is carried away by the means and loses the aim. Wishing to be with his sweetheart, he exchanges his love for a place in the railway carriage of his dream. He gets in but forgets why he is there because he has lost the aim: there is no love in him anymore. Love ended up on the very bottom, strewn with thousands of everyday necessities.

What other comparison can I offer? It's like a man who sells his ancestral estate in order to buy the entire village, including his estate, but he can't get into his estate because he has sold it. And so on and so forth, everywhere and always, whenever...

What can we compare to a soul or what happens to the soul when one loses it and buys an entire village instead?

Zurab Kiknadze
Translator, Critic

Profile: Publishing House

Contact person: Tinatin Mamulashvili

Rights Manager: Mikheil Tsikhelashvili

Address: 150 Agmashenebeli Ave., 0112 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 32 91 09 54

Fax: +995 32 91 11 65

E-mail: info@sulakauri.ge; michael@sulakauri.ge; tina@sulakauri.ge

Sulakauri Publishing was founded in 1999 as a small independent publishing house, but after years of hard work it gained a well-deserved reputation and nowadays stands as the leading publisher in Georgia. The unchanging priority for the Sulakauri team is to provide valuable, high-quality, timeless and timely books for Georgian readers. Our publishing house offers the widest range of publications, covering the interests of all age groups. Apart from providing high-quality translations, our company regularly publishes contemporary Georgian literature, as well as actively seeking out and supporting the most prominent authors by publishing their books.



**Tinatin
Mamulashvili**

Publisher

In 1996, for the first time in Georgian history, four independent publishers, Irina Abuladze (Kandeli), Giorgi Bagrationi (Nekeri), Bakur Sulakauri (then a co-founder of Diogene), and Otar Karalashvili (also a co-founder of Diogene), were funded by the Open Society Georgia Foundation to visit the Frankfurt Book Fair. The Georgian stand was tiny, about four square meters, displaying about ten titles in all. To fill the space, they put several copies of each book on the shelves. On their return, they animatedly recounted their impressions, barely able to hide their excitement at the size of the exhibition space, a city of countless books inside a city, with buses taking visitors from one pavilion to another.

I had a hard time imagining the scale of the fair, but two years later, when I visited it as a representative of Bakur Sulakauri Publishers, I felt quite at ease. Instead of frustration I felt elated at the cosmopolitan environment, where the citizens of the world seemed to move chaotically but in an orderly way at the same time. A love of books had brought all these people together and I was thrilled at the realization. I had come from a small, post-Soviet country with numerous economic and political problems, and it was the first time I felt like the citizen of the world. Those impressions are still quite vivid in my memory and I believe that the feeling of unity I experienced then will stay with me forever.



Aka Morchiladze

Author

Years ago, a group of publishers announced a contest for the best detective novel. If my memory serves me correctly, there was a monetary prize and a promise to publish the winning book. I decided to try my luck. I suspected mine wouldn't be a true detective story, but I thought I would be able to write suspense.

In the end, the plot didn't meet the contest requirements. At the time there was an image that haunted me: two men in old Tbilisi, Korghanov and Bayard, caught up in a kind of classic English detective story. Rather than a detective story, though, it was a story about detectives, that is, people searching for answers, and because the narrative wasn't going to focus on a crime, I decided they shouldn't solve anything.

I used to write at night in a thick notepad because my typewriter was so noisy it kept my neighbours awake. I took the manuscript somewhere, I don't even remember where exactly. Time passed without anyone getting in touch. My only worry was that I had just that one copy and would be sorry to lose it.

One day I was invited to visit the offices of Sulakauri Publishers. They told me the contest had been canceled, but that they wanted to publish my book anyway, even though it wasn't a detective story. Their only condition was to change the title, which they didn't like. I left several versions for them to choose from and in the end, it was published as *Over the Madatov and Back*, a much better title than the original one. Meanwhile, Tamaz Varvaridze designed a cover that matched the storyline perfectly.

Profile: Publishing house

Publishing priority: Psychological, popular scientific, children's books, encyclopaedias, bilingual editions.

Contact person: Mzia Razmadze

Address: 5Arsayan (Dimitri) Emkhuari St., Tbilisi, Georgia.

Tel: +995 32 2180332; +995 571 13 12 11

E-mail: tsignieri@yahoo.com

Website: www.books.tsignieri.ge

Rights manager: Irina Robakidze

E-mail: irobakidze@yahoo.de

The publishing house Tsigni+eri was founded in April 2012 by Paata Khunashvili. Our company publishes popular scientific and educational literature for all generations. It has published a multi-volume edition called *Our virtues* (Chveni Girsebani in Georgian), representing Georgian spiritual and material values. The publication includes short stories by Vazha-Pshavela, *The Canon of Repetance* by King David the Builder, *On the Gallows* by Ilia Chavchavadze and *Fishes of Georgia* in two (Georgian and English) languages, as well as *The School Encyclopaedia* and *Georgian and Foreign Tales*. Another area of interest for the publishing house is psychology.



Mzia Razmadze

Publisher

The idea to become a publisher and the books I wanted to publish were determined by many years of dealing with books. As the director of a university library, I had long realized the immense significance of academic materials, so I resolved to make them available for a wider public in a more accessible language.

Our main project is a series of books about Georgia. In our globalized world, I believe our company is rendering a valuable service not only to our society but to international readers as well. We also publish bilingual editions with the aim of introducing Georgian literature to the rest of the world.

Many of our publications are devoted to translated works of psychology. We have achieved marked progress in this area and intend to widen the scope of books published in this field.



Merab Ratishvili

Author

Every epoch has its own “writers of fate” who determine the paradigm of the nation’s development for many centuries to come. Homer’s *Iliad* and Virgil’s *Aeneid* played exactly that role in shaping Greek and Roman cultures, ultimately molding European culture as we know it.

In the twelfth century, Georgia likewise had its own writer of fate – Shota Rustaveli, who gave us the epic *The Knight in the Panther’s Skin*. In my opinion, Chabua Amirejibi, the twentieth century writer, deserves to fall under the same category thanks to his outstanding personal traits and the moral principles that defined his life and literary legacy, which can serve as an example for coming generations.

After reading my novels, my publisher and several of my readers asked me to write a new novel about similar “writers of fate”—who they were, how they lived, what they did for their nations, and how they affected the fate of their own countries as well as that of the world.

The more I studied the history of my country and the world, the more I became convinced that people are closely linked to their cultural traditions. My novel will open up a door for them into a new world and free them from dogmatic attitudes, allowing them to take a fresh look at the history of mankind.

Incidentally, my cooperation with Tsigni+eri Publishers began at the Frankfurt Book Fair, where our books just so happened to be next to each other in the Georgian pavilion.



Profile: Publishing House

Publishing priority: Fiction, non-fiction, educational literature, supplementary literature for school teachers and students preparing for national school leaving exams.

Contact person: Tamar Natchkebia, Director

Address: 181-2 Aghmashenebeli Ave., 0112 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 34 04 30; +995 599 173885

E-mail: ustari2010@gmail.com

Since we started our business in 2010, we have published more than a hundred titles, won bids for publications and translations from the French Institute in Georgia and the US Embassy, and received translation grants from Norway, Russia, and Turkey. We have also been awarded the Summit Award 2012 and the Gold Ink Award 12.



Tamar Nachkebia
Publisher

At the very start of our venture, our priority was to publish supplementary material for school teachers at a time when no other publisher catered for them. A teacher certification program had been newly introduced, meaning that teachers were desperate for support in this area.

Here, however, I would like to focus on Mikho Mosulishvili's book *Helessa*, about the Laz people. Apart from publishing it in 2012, we also promoted it by entering it into the Berlinale literary section, which proved extremely successful. The book didn't reach the final, but the entry itself was significant, being the first Georgian book ever to be presented at the Berlinale.

We intended to apply for the Summit MEA (Marketing Effectiveness Award) contest but soon discovered the registration fee was too high. When the organizers read about the book, they wanted to know if it would be translated into Turkish because the majority of the Laz live in today's Turkey. The idea appealed to others worldwide, and as a result, we were allowed to enter the book in the contest without paying the fee.

Two months later, we were informed that the book *Helessa* had received the Silver Award.



Mikho Mosulishvili
Author

In his travelogue *The Orient Express* (1927), John Dos Passos writes about visiting Batumi and meeting the locals. He wrote that the Laz people were slender, wore bandana-like kerchiefs, looking a little like pirates, and were known along the Black Sea coast as good sailors and fishermen. I thought I could also write about them and their seafaring life, thus disproving the Soviet myth that the people of Georgia had no connection with the sea. In 2011 I was in Batumi and visited the small seaside resorts of Sarpi and Gonio. As I sat staring at the sea and listening to the seagulls, I pictured Medea as the sea – calm or stormy but always holding back a secret, unpredictable and deeply mysterious. She was one of the most famous women in Georgian history, but I wondered what she would have done if she lived today.

A year later I already had an experimental novel ready about the modern Medea – *Helessa, or the Azalea Azaled, the Fox Foxed, the Sea Rocked*. The novel is a multi-layer narrative written in a mythical and ritualistic style, telling of the adventures of the Kirbish family who sail the Black Sea trying to save a secret medicinal recipe they have held for centuries. The novel consists of a hundred and five scenes which the reader is asked to imagine as a film. Being published is a true celebration for any author, but I was doubly happy because I was lucky to work with editor Tamar Gelovani, publishing house director Tamar Nachkebia, designer Lia Sulakvelidze, and others, all of whom spared no effort to make the publication appealing for readers. Now, six years later, I still think about the book, which is why when Lali Kiknavelidze, the producer and director of CPU Lira Production, suggested writing a screenplay for a film based on my novel, I agreed. Just like people, books have their own destinies. I hope more adventures lie ahead for *Helessa*.

Profile: Publishing House
Publishing priority: Children's books
Contact person: Mariam Kasradze
E-mail: mkasradzefr@yahoo.fr
Address: 28 Bakhtrioni St., 0194 Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: +995 322 30 81 23
Rights Manager: Mariam Kasradze

Zebra mainly specializes in children's books and is the holder of Zaira Arsenishvili's foreign rights.



Mariam Kasradze
Publisher

My first encounter with the publishing business was quite accidental and a long time ago. At the time I lived in Paris, was completing my post-graduate studies and, like all students, was looking for odd jobs to support myself. One day an acquaintance suggested working as an assistant at one of the stands at the Paris Book Festival. I gladly accepted the offer, which was followed by similar jobs at other festivals. After graduation I began looking for a more stable job and it was then that my CV caught the attention of Editions Tallandier. They offered me the position of rights manager on the condition that I would bring them tangible results as soon as possible. I was excited but nervous, and timidly I started interacting with literary agents, scouts and foreign publishers. I visited various book fairs, talked to different people involved, but all my attempts failed. My co-workers must have had very low opinion of me, but the director still believed in me. One day I received a phone call from Tina Hegeman, the scout of the biggest Italian publishing house Mondadori, saying they were buying Matei Cazacu's rights for his *Dracula*. I remember happily rushing into the director's office and then glancing victoriously at the co-workers who had treated me so skeptically. Things changed radically after that...



Zaira Arsenishvili
Author

I firmly believe that Zaira Arsenishvili holds a very special place in Georgian literature. Her prose emits the aroma of Kakheti, her native region, as well as of Tbilisi streets, slightly reminiscent of the period of the Soviet purges: the atmosphere of constant fear, immersion in everyday problems, rich in details, unexpected, often strange stories narrated in an extremely rich language, tragic events diluted with an exquisite sense of humour. Throughout our long friendship I was always amazed at her curiosity, which at times seemed to me to be excessive. She wanted to get all the details right: when, who, where, which street, which house, facts and more facts. I thought them unimportant and when I used to ask her why she wanted to know, she would shrug her shoulders and give me her naive smile, saying she just was curious. Only later did I realize her interest wasn't senseless, and in fact her attention to seemingly petty details nourished her writing style: she needed her own imagination, experience and adventures as well as those of others. She would absorb and store them for later use in her truly phenomenal memory—events and stories, dates and places, loyal and treacherous people, happy and luckless, scared and brave, helpless and courageous, all of them carrying a lot of love inside them. The author feels sympathy for all her characters, and this affects us too as we read, suppressing any other emotions, even hatred, we might feel for some of them. Maybe this is what ultimately remains in our hearts: our protests against such terrible events are transformed into empathy for the perpetrators of the atrocities, who themselves were victims of the Soviet system.

Lana Gogoberidze



Priorities: Non-fiction, academic and scientific literature, travel books, children's books, textbooks, supportive material for secondary school students and teachers

Contact person: Irma Liparteliani, Project Manager

Address: 191 D. Aghmashenebeli Ave., 0112 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 032 234 0430

E-mail: kliopublishing@gmail.com; book@klio.ge

In 2003, when Klio was founded, the company mainly focused on academic and scientific literature, with history as its priority. Since 2008, Klio has been actively involved in publishing textbooks, supportive materials for secondary school students and teachers, as well as fiction for children. Later, our interests came to include travelogues and travel guides, such as 100 Natural and Cultural Monuments of Georgia, 100 Georgian Museums, 100 Georgian Resorts, and 100 wonders of Georgian Nature. These editions proved to be Klio's most successful projects. At present our aim is to introduce Georgian children's literature to foreign readers. The rights of our Georgian authors are protected by our daughter company A Agency.



Ana Khelaia

Author

My nearly forty years of experience as a teacher told me that the young generation knows their history: dates, names, a few dry facts. But history is much more than that—it is an ongoing process created by living people. Historical collisions reveal a country's spirit, the ideals of those who created the history, their aspirations and personality traits. Needless to say, our schoolbooks couldn't include all of this, and that is why our company decided to bring Georgian history to life for adolescents through a series of richly illustrated stories.

There isn't anything imaginary in the series because its source is *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (Life of the Kartli), akin to the Bible for all Georgians. Structured like the Bible, the annals tell the history of Georgia starting with Noah and his son Japheth, believed to be the forefather of our nation. Our books start there and continue to the present.

My aim was to present the milestones in our history through memorable narratives, focusing on our constant struggle for survival against invaders, the emergence of brave individuals, kings and ordinary people, complete with their moral and human characteristics, who fought selflessly for their country.

The book is richly illustrated by Gia Bughadze, who created a wonderfully colourful series about our history in the 1980s. The pictures are amazingly realistic, paying attention to historical details. I believe that adolescents need such illustrations to fully take in the epoch they are reading about and to step into that distant world.

While working on the publication, we were aware that we were in the process of rebuilding our country as a modern state that has a definite need to know about its past. We must be fully conscious of past experience because our past determines our future.

PUBLISHING HOUSE REMEDAS



Profile: Publishing House

Contact person: Giorgi Arziani

Address: Office 70, 3/5 First Lane, Kostava St., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 591 091 812

E-mail: remedas.publishing@gmail.com

Remedas is a small independent publishing house specializing in political economy, philosophical anthropology and cultural theory.



Giorgi Arziani

Publisher

We believe that a publishing house, as a cultural institution, should exhibit social responsibility. In Georgia, there is space for public debates, but the leeway for critical thinking is constantly shrinking. Academia and public intellectuals have fallen short in their efforts to produce unbiased judgments. Society is polarized as never before and social networks only aggravate the natural inclination of humans to avoid challenges to their world outlook.

We founded Remedas because we felt a need for a new type of institution that would take the initiative to implement cultural mapping, curating and mixing together ideas from different schools of thought. We are working on the borders of different fields of culture and study. I like that the first association that comes to mind when people hear our name is the word "remedy". We concentrate on texts in the fields of political economy, philosophy and visual aesthetics. After all, you can't do serious thinking if you don't read long and complex books.

Profile: Law and juridical literature, coursebooks, translated literature

Contact person: Tornike Nemstsveridze

Address: 1st entrance, Block A, 44 P. Kavtaradze St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +995 322 38 03 32; +995 322 38 03 22

E-mail: info@zkpublishing.ge

Web page: <http://zkpublishing.ge/>

<http://legalpublishing.ge/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ZviadKordzadzePublishing/>

Founded in 2014, the company began its publishing activities in 2016 with work on several projects. Our first major work, *The Chronicles of Georgian Constitutionalism*, was dedicated to the Georgian Constitution adopted on 21 February 1921, and included legislative discussions by the juridical commission and letters from public figures of the time. At present, our team is working on the first volume of a series *The Classics of Georgian Law*, which comprises letters and articles by well-known Georgian lawyers and academics.



**Tornike
Nemstsveridze**

Publisher

From the very start, the priority of the publishing house has been reprinting rare law literature. Our publications include works which were banned during the Soviet times, such as Konstantine Mikeladze's *The Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Georgia* (Tbilisi, 1918), Pavle Sakvarelidze's *Letters concerning the Political Structures of Various Countries* (Tbilisi 1918), Giorgi Gvazava's *The Main Principles of Constitutional Rights* (Tbilisi, 1920), and others.

Although most of the works we publish today were unavailable for many years due to political reasons, they have never lost their significance. This is particularly true for those books that saw the light of day during the brief period of Georgia's independence in 1918-1921. They present a clear picture of the ideas that inspired the individuals building a sovereign state as well as the standard of law interpretation. Samuel Smiles said that books are immortal, being the fruit of human activity that has the longest life. In this respect, our company tries to give a second life to those books that have been deprived of their first due to the political restrictions imposed by the Soviet system.

Profile: Bookstore

Contact person: Tinatin Peikrishvili

Address: Central branch, 7a Chavchavadze Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 595 995 077

E-mail: t.peikrishvili@biblusi.ge

Website: www.biblusi.ge

The bookstore chain Biblus was founded on 23 May 2008. We are proud to have created the biggest network of bookshops in Georgia over the last ten years, which includes fifty-six branches covering the whole country. Biblus offers a wide variety of books in all genres, catering for all customers and maintaining the highest standards required for modern-day bookshops. We are also one of the leaders in employment numbers and our sole aim is, and always has been, to make books available in every part of Georgia, turning reading into a favourite pastime.



Irakli Gagnidze

Director

Ten years ago, when we opened our first bookshop in Tbilisi, there was no effective intermediary between the book and the reader, no agency that would offer high-quality publications of classic books as well as modern literature in the widest possible range. This perhaps explained the relatively low level of interest toward books in general at that time. When we opened the first of our shops, we didn't think about profit because we were motivated by a desire to make reading popular. We quickly opened bookshops in other cities, and today we run the biggest chain in Georgia. I believe the secret of our success is largely explained by our dedicated staff whose aim is to promote book reading rather than just manage the business.

Our company is likewise grateful to the writers, literary critics, and readers who have been extremely loyal to us. It is thanks to them that nowadays we are not only increasing the number of selling points but also turning them into multi-functional spaces. We call our network the Biblus Gallery, where you can find thousands of publications, wine tasting corners, cafés, and stationery sections. Our brand has become a favourite with the public, an inseparable part of their everyday life.



Gela Charkviani

Author

I still remember the first small Biblus shop that opened on Iosebidge Street. At the time it was impossible to imagine that the network would soon cover the whole country. Biblus has done much to make books popular among young people, which allows me to state unequivocally that the company has made a valuable contribution to the promotion of reading. I wish Biblus many years of fruitful activities, directly linked to the well-being of the country and its progress.

Profile: Publishing House

Contact person: Lia Shalvashvili

Address: 15 Guramishvili St., Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 599 550 554

E-mail: bookcafe841@gmail.com

Website: www.bookcafe.ge

The limited company BookCafé is a publishing company that organizes book exhibitions and sales, meetings with authors, and new book presentations, as well as setting up various events with the aim of enhancing literacy levels in the country. We offer a wide range of literary genres and topics to all book lovers, as well as textbooks and supplementary texts for schoolchildren.



Lia Shalvashvili

Founder

BookCafé was founded in 2014, and since then we have produced a wide range of publications, including schoolbooks and supplementary educational material.

We are also active in distributing publications of other leading publishers, including Sakartvelos Matsne (Georgian Herald), Shemetsneba, Bakur Sulakauri Publishers, Pegasus, Adapti and Diogene.

We also organize exhibitions and sales of fiction and educational material across the country, as well as actively participating in various projects and events related to publishing and book distribution.

BookCafé also runs a chain of mini-shops in private schools in Tbilisi with the aims of increasing the reading population and promoting books in Georgia.



Givi Bojgua

Editor

BookCafé

Without any doubt, our bestseller is Georgian Reader for Children in three volumes. The book was published by Shemetsneba in 2016, immediately becoming a children's favourite. It includes one hundred and two writings by our classic and modern authors, arranged in chronological order, as well as the best samples from our centuries-old folklore.

The Reader presents prose and poetry from numerous writers, covering a wide range of topics: patriotism, human rights, ethical problems, historic heroism, rules and traditions of hospitality, friendship, love and family, and many others.

The folklore section offers the best examples of our rich literary tradition: fables and fairy tales, poems and stories, miniatures and epic poems.

DISTRIBUTION COMPANY IRIATONI



Profile: Publishing and Book Distribution Company; Online bookshop

Contact person: Nikoloz Kortava

Address: 17b Chavchavadze Ave., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel.: +032 2500 201; +995 555 440011

E-mail: iriatoni@gmail.com

Founded in 2013, Iriatoni became the biggest book distribution company in Georgia in 2017. We operate throughout Georgia mainly by distributing books, postcards and souvenirs. The company's distribution network includes bookshops, gift shops, craft shops, press booths, online bookshops, as well as large retail chains in Georgia – Spar and Carrefour. In total, the company has more than a thousand points of sales throughout the country and is the exclusive distributor of the top five Georgian publishing houses. Last year the company launched the biggest online discount bookstore in the country, www.booksale.ge, which has become a very successful project, and our goal now is to develop this segment to become the leader in its field.

As part of a joint project with the publishing house Azri, in 2016-2017 Iriatoni published four fiction and non-fiction books, which proved extremely successful. We intend to continue this project in the future.



Nikoloz Kortava

Director

I had extensive experience in distribution when I decided to concentrate on books six years ago. However, I soon discovered that book distribution is a completely different field, and a quite challenging one at that. When I became head of the company, I realized that selling our product is more than an ordinary business; Iriatoni makes books available for everybody in Georgia.

We participated in Tbilisi International Book Fair from the very first year of our foundation. The festival is still a very special event for me as well as for all visitors: for four days, books and literature in general become the center of attention for the whole country.

As a book distribution company, Iriatoni first participated in the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2014, which was an exceptional opportunity for us to gain more experience. At the time I knew little about the fair, but now, when Georgia is Guest of Honour, I am better aware of how important it is not only for authors and publishers, but for an entire country aspiring to integrate with Europe.



Gabriel Tanie

Author

I began writing my debut novel *Sons of Canaan* in the village of Argveti. I continued my work in Istanbul Airport, sitting on the floor somewhere between gates 18 and 21 (exciting working conditions for any writer, I'm sure you'll agree). After that, I haunted a small café in Casa del Principe near Naples, where every newcomer is eyed with suspicion. I walked around with my little notepad and everyone thought I was nuts. I wrote in Barcelona, in the Baroque Café where I practically finished the novel. I worked on it further in the village of Barisakho where I had a small room designated for me to use in the local post office. I wrote in Paris, in Jardin du Luxembourg where I had an actual office. The novel was mainly written in those countries and airport gates.

I worked with great passion and excitement. Wherever I was, in whatever conditions, I was happy. I felt like Niko Pirosmiani who said he had St. George standing over him, urging him to paint. I had no problem with characters: they just kept coming, asking to be included in the book. I actually had a problem restraining them.

I was reluctant to have the novel published, and even told my editor to hold on to it a while. I could never have expected what happened after its publication: the book became bestseller of the year, and I still receive many letters and phone calls about it. I would like to thank everyone for their support and attention for my novel.

Profile: Distribution Company

Contact person: Giorgi Abramishvili

Address: 9 Melikishvili St., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

E-mail: expressbooks@gmail.com; kighuradze@gmail.com

The publishing house and distribution company Express Books was founded in 2008. We publish and promote bestsellers, detective novels, popular literature and works by famous writers in general.



Giorgi Kekelidze

Author

The Gurian Diaries series became a readers' favorite quite unexpectedly. Luck played a part, of course, but more importantly, all three books in the series are different from each other while at the same time reflecting their author, yours truly, in that they lack some elements while having others in abundance. They are about the years that defined not only the character of my generation, but of the country itself, through extremely hard times. There is some humour in them as well as a few tears. Basically, they are about Guria, a region of Georgia where people cross themselves so fast God can hardly notice, and where people talk so fast you'd be lucky to catch even a word or two. It was in Guria where the first disco was held, where homes have American flags for tablecloths, and where Stalin's statue was still standing until the war broke out between Georgia and Russia. Ultimately, Guria is a place where love of life has always been an important feature. I am deeply grateful to Express Books for trusting me and publishing my book of poems, which quickly became a bestseller.

PROSPERO'S BOOKS



Profile: Bookstore and Coffee Shop
Contact person: Tamara Megrelishvili
Address: 181-2 Aghmashenebeli Ave., 0112 Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: (+995)32 2 92 35 92
Fax; (+995) 32 2 92 -09 -01
E-mail: info@prosperosbookshop.com

Prospero's Books was founded in 1999 by two American brothers, Eric and Stephen Johnson, and an English author, Peter Nasmyth.

We are family owned and operated, and our Director Tamar Megrelishvili has been successfully managing our purchases and employee/business development since the beginning. We offer an extensive selection of regional interest books as well as an array of bestsellers, reference books, children's books, fiction, and nonfiction. Our coffee is imported and roasted on-site and served in our adjacent cafe. Our experience includes trading with numerous international publishers for almost two decades.



Tamar Megrelishvili
Director

Prospero's Books has the biggest international bookselling presence in the Caucasus region. Just about every significant international writer visiting the country will have coffee in its café, and many enjoy launching their books there.

In 2000, *The Bookseller* published a full-page article on its creation entitled *Bookshop at the Ends of the Earth*, and Andy McNab mentioned it by name in his Georgia-set thriller *Aggressor*.

It is one of the longest surviving businesses on Rustaveli Avenue (twenty years old next year). It is the first port of call for many travellers and intellectuals arriving in Tbilisi, and was the first café to roast and grind its own coffee.

Profile: eBook Company, Literary Award

Publishing priority: All categories

Contact person: Irine Javakhadze

Address: 18 P. Melikishvili St., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 25 27 00

E-mail: service@saba.com.ge; ijavakhadze@saba.com.ge

Website: saba.com.ge

SABA sells e-books of all categories, bringing together diverse literature published in English and Georgian, as well as world classics, masterpieces of the contemporary literary scene, and bestsellers. Apart from that, our company is the host of the most prestigious annual literary award in Georgia, the SABA, supported by TBC Bank. It is important to note that the sixteenth SABA award ceremony will be held in the Kaisesaal of City Hall on 12 October 2018 within the framework of the Frankfurt Book Fair.

SABA, founded in 2012, is the leading e-book retailer in Georgia. Users registered on the website can download and read e-books without an internet connection on any device through the specially designed application SABA Reader. SABA is the only platform for the largest audiobook collection in Georgia. The company gathers together all audiobooks recorded in Georgia and makes them accessible online through the SABA website. Also, the Audiobook Reader is adapted for people with varying degrees of visual impairment.



Rati Amaglobeli

Director/Poet

SABA is a contemporary, free, and somewhat experimental platform and literary space, where authors can discover not only new readers but also themselves.

It is not easy for inexperienced newcomers, not to mention famous and skilled authors, to leave their own creative comfort zone and communicate with publishers or readers in such an open space. SABA makes the whole experience stress-free. Any person can turn their own texts into e-books, plan every detail, including e-book format and design, and wait for the most important process—the highly anticipated meeting between reader and author.

Through this route, everyone who wishes to challenge their own literary skills gets an opportunity to be a part of the most active, topical, and contemporary literary processes. In addition, every author has the chance to participate in the most prestigious annual literary award SABA and receive feedback from readers.

In this respect, SABA is the most democratic, free and interactive literary space in Georgia, a space which grants literature a whole new life.

Profile: E-book Publisher and Seller Company, Book Solutions

Contact person: Avto Suladze

Address: 17a I. Chavchavadze Ave., 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: +995 322 14 66 55

E-mail: info@lit.ge

Website: www.lit.ge

Lit.ge is the first and largest eBook publisher and seller in the Caucasus and has been in operation since 2011. Lit.ge collaborates with all Georgian publishers and authors. Since 2014, Lit.ge has been supplying eBook solutions, including eBook reader apps and websites, to various companies.

PUBLISHING AUTOGRAPH



Profile: Publishing House

Address: 75 Kostava St., 0171 Tbilisi, Georgia

Contact person: Nikoloz Shatirishvili

Telephone: +(995) 598- 55 17 82; +(995 032) 2 23 80 38

Email: pub.autograph@gmail.com

https://www.facebook.com/PublishingAutograph/

Autograph is a small publishing house established in 2014. The company focuses on publishing and promoting scientific literature. Annually it publishes books on around ten different topics, including winery. In 2018, its catalogue of publications was enlarged with fiction. In the future, the company plans to focus mostly on the publication of foreign scientific sources.

Georgia

The Guest of Honour at
Frankfurter Buchmesse
2018

PUBLISHING PROGRAM TEAM



Gvantsa Jobava

*Head of publishing
program*

gohpublishingprogram@gpba.ge



Tinatin Beriashvili

Executive Director

Dir@gpba.ge



Nino Kiknadze

*Publishing program
coordinator*

gohsupport@gpba.ge



Nuka Ghambashidze

*Publishing program
coordinator*

Projects@gpba.ge



Natia Pavliashvili

PR Manager

Pr@gpba.ge



Teona Chanishvili

Designer

tchanishvili@gmail.com



Tamuna Sordia

financial manager

Finance@gpba.ge



Tekla Kveladze

*Publishing program
assistant*

gohassistant@gpba.ge



GEORGIAN PUBLISHERS AND
BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION