**Ether Soselia**
*Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University*

# GLOTTOCHRONOLOGY AND THE DIVERGENCE OF COMMON-KARTVELIAN

An alternative variant of the family tree of the Kartvelian languages, different from the G. Deeters' one, has recently again appeared in the Kartvelian comparative-historical linguistics. According to the alternative genealogical tree, Svan-Zan language unity and Georgian (as an independent language) were formed at the first stage of the divergence of Common-Kartvelian. At the following stage Svan-Zan language unity differentiated into Svan and Zan languages. The Deeters's scheme, the kartvelologists have actually become aware of due to T. Gamkrelidze and G. Machavariani, proposes formation of Georgian-Zan language unity and Svan (as an independent language) at the first stage of the divergence. In favor of the Deeters' scheme, T. Gamkrelidze calls the fact that archaic characteristics of Common-Kartvelian have been preserved in Svan, and in addition, a significant number of innovations (both in lexis and in the grammatical structure) have been found to be common in Georgian and Laz-Megrelian, the latter being the daughter languages of Zan.

The results of the glottochronological calculations (performed independently by G. Klimov and T. Gamkrelidze), based on M. Swadesh's method of glottochronology, are in favor of the Deeters' tree. As it is known, M. Swadesh's method of glottochronology, which enables the calculation of the absolute chronology of the proto-language, was proposed in the early 1950s. Both supporters and critics of glottochronology immediately appeared, and soon, some refinements to M. Swadesh's model were made. An important role in the refinement has been played by S. Starostin. Reinterpreting the old model of glottochronology, he has changed the calculating formula as well. The results of the preliminary analysis (based on Starostin's model) of the data from the etymological dictionaries of the Kartvelian languages are presented in the paper, and they are clearly in favor of Deeters' tree.