

## **Kartvelian and Sumerian Similarities**

### **kabkab – kakabi**

Since 1853 when the Sumerian language was identified as a separate language system generations of scholars have had numerous attempts to find genetic relations with any of the languages of the world. The Kartvelian languages named among first possible candidates were soon neglected and forgotten due to lack of sufficient language evidence. A number of difficulties associated with the study of Kartvelian (or at least one) languages have labeled the theory of genetic relations between Ibero-Caucasian and dead languages of the ancient civilizations as counter-productive and futile. Contrary to this accepted view, the paper presents an instance of Kartvelo-Sumerian similarity focusing on one of the hardest vocabulary layers of Sumerian – birds. The Sumerian word **kabkab** (“bird”) is recorded in the lexical lists of Late Uruk (3300-3000 BC) and is mentioned only once, a feature, that attributes the lexeme to the proto-Sumerian substratum. A word of identical sound form and meaning is found in Kartvelian: Kartuli **kakab**, Megruli **kokob** meaning not simply a bird but “a type of wild hen with very delicious meat”.

A comparative linguistic and cultural study of both lexemes determines the exact reading of the Sumerian **kabkab**, makes the meaning of the word more precise, and reveals the structural pattern (reduplication of the root **kab**) of the word. Being a polysemantic Kartvelian word with cognates in Megrelian and Svan, the archetype **kab** establishes linguistic ties between ancient **kabkab** (“bird”) and later Akkadian **kappa** (“wing”), explains the difficulty linked with the use of the word (**kappa**) in Babylonian mythology, and throws light on the phonetic similarity existing between **kappa** and **kappu** (“a horse bit”), uncovers the latter’s archetype and, in general, organizes the Sumerian and Akkadian material into logical morphemic and chronological groups.

Word count: 291