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FLORAL SYMBOLS IN GEORGIAN, ENGLISH AND FRENCH CULTURES

The vocabulary of a language is the most mobile level, which constantly evolves, reflects the spiritual culture of each nation, its centuries-old history associated with customs and traditions.

As is known the word is a unit of speech that serves the purposes of human communication and has certain lexical-semantic properties. According to L. Lyons “the word is ambiguous, both everyday usage and also as it is employed technically by linguists. Words may be considered purely as forms, whether spoken or written, or, alternatively, as composite expressions, which combine form and meanings” (Lyons, *Linguistic Semantics*, 1995).

The purpose of this scientific paper is to conduct a descriptive, etymological, semantic, linguo-cultural and comparative analysis of the floral symbols of Georgia, England and France in both linguistic and extra-linguistic aspects based on the lexical materials of the Georgian and English languages.

The associations of symbols arise from cultural and contemporary contexts. Natural symbols display variety of the world nature of all countries.

Plants, the amazing creations of nature, occupy an important place in human life. In all cultures, plants are the main symbol of the natural world and are considered a unique cultural asset. The vine is one of the important parts of human culture, which is specific to Georgian, English and French cultures. It is one of the spread cultures in Georgia and worldwide. Georgia is recognized as the motherland of vineyards. Carbohydrate analysis showed that a seed dates to 5000-7000 BC is the oldest not only in Georgia but throughout the world (Ramishvili, 1988).

Georgia is home to a rich assortment of vines, numbering over 500 varieties. About seventy varieties of Georgian vines are still grown in Europe today.

The vine is considered a sacred plant, and wine is a sacred drink. When the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus sent Saint Nino of Cappadocia to preach in her allotted land, she took hold of a branch of the vineyard, cut it off, and created it into the shape of a cross and gave it to Saint Nino – she was supposed to Christianize Georgia with this cross. The righteous apostle accepted the cross of the vine and, as a sign of her vow to perform the blessing worthily, cut off her hair and tied the branches. She arrived in Georgia in about 320 and introduced Christianity to the Georgian people. “წმიდამან დედოფალმან კელი მიჰყო ზედა კერძო ცხედრისა მისისა მყოფსა მას რტოსა ვაზისასა, მოჰკუთა მისგან და შექმნა ჯუარი” (cx. ninoძსი, agiogr. III, 218.4).

The Grapevine Cross has become a major symbol (the cross is still kept in Georgia and has no analogues in the world) and a sacred plant of the Georgian Orthodox Church by 337, when Christianity became the official religion of the Georgian Kingdom of Iberia.

The term “**vazi**” (**vine**) is attested in Georgian language monuments from the 9th and 10th centuries, meaning **a grape tree** (Asatiani, 1978: 8).

In the 17th century, due to the great interest in viticulture, landowners in a number of areas of southern England tried to cultivate vineyards on their estates.

Since ancient times, linguistic units have been formed in the Georgian and English languages that describe the cultivation and care of grapevines, as well as the realities of life connected to vines, the traditions of peoples and their cultural values.

The vine is a symbolic expression of the Jewish people: “For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel” (Isa. 5:7 King James Bible). The English word “**vine**” comes from the Old French word “**vigne**”, meaning

“**vine**” or “**vineyard**”, which in turn comes from the Latin “**vine, vineyard**” from Proto-Indo-European PIE **-*wóyh nom (“vine, wine”), *weyn-, wóih nom, *woino-**.

Derivational – adjective forms are as follows: **vined, vineless (vineless), vinelike (vine like), viny (‘viny); vinegar, vintage, vinery.**

The word vine has the following forms in different languages: French – **vigne**, German – **Rebe**, Greek – **αμπέλι**, Italian – **vite pianta**, Portuguese – **vinha**, Ukrainian – **виноградна лоза**, Polish – **winorośl**, Romanian – **viță de vie**; Croatian – **loza**, Czech – **vinná réva**, Danish – **vinranke**, Dutch – **wijnstok**, Swedish – **vinranka**, Norwegian – **vinranke**, Spanish – **parra**, etc.

In the English language there are a lot of compound words derived from the word vine, for example: **vine-leaf, vineyard – vine, vine cactus, vine grower, vine harvest, vine-store, vine-louse – phylloxera, vine-trade, vine shoot, vine-shop vine culture – viticulture, vine prop, vinedresser, vine crop**, etc.

The phrase “**I am the vine**” used in the Gospel of John expresses the sacred connection between divine genealogy and man. The vine planted by God, a symbol of Jesus Christ. Jesus metaphorically considers himself as the “**true vine**”.

1 “**მე ვარ ვაზი ჭეშმარიტი, და მამაჩემი მევენახეა**” – “**I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener**” (John 15:1-5, New International Version) (NIV).

5 “**მე ვარ ვაზი, ხოლო თქვენ ლერწები ხართ, ვინც ჩემში რჩება, ხოლო მე მასში, დიდძალი ნაყოფი გამოაქვს; ვინაიდან უჩემოდ არაფრის ქმნა არ შეგიძლიათ**” – “**I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing**”. John 15:1- 5 (New International Version (NIV).

Flower symbolism began with many ancient religions. Many flowers were originally linked to ancient deities including Venus, Diana, Jupiter and Apollo.

During the Renaissance, nature was viewed as a reflection of the divine (Kashmira, 2010).

The rose has been a symbol of love, beauty, even war and politics since ancient time. The poetess Sappho first named the rose “Queen of Flowers” in her poem “Ode to the Ros”.

The Tudor Rose – the red rose is the floral heraldic emblem and Royal Badge of England and takes its name and origins from the House of Tudor when it was introduced. The red rose was adopted by Henry VII as England's emblem of peace at the end of the War of the Roses.

Roses are recognized as the national flower of the USA, the states of New York, Iowa, Northern Dakota and Oklahoma as well.

Red roses often appear in poetry, literature, classical artwork and films. The famous Scottish poet, Robert Burns, compared his love to a red rose in the poem Red, Red Rose. Based on a folk Robert Burns wrote a version of a song he had heard on his travels. “O my Luve’s like a red, red rose, that’s newly sprung in June: O my Luve’s like the melodie, that’s sweetly play’d in tune...”

Dating as far back as 1580 B.C., when images of lilies were discovered in a villa in Crete, these majestic flowers have long held a role in ancient mythology. The lily’s name has pre-classical origins; indeed, it was the Greek name leirion and the Roman name lilium from which the name ‘lily’ “was derived. There is one more version of the origin of the name ‘lily’ occurring from the Celtic word “li” – “white”, on flower coloring. Initially lilies were only white. Thanks to selectors of the different countries, lilies with the most various coloring, perhaps, blue, dark blue and violet are grown.

In both the Christian and pagan tradition, the lily is a symbol of fertility. It was a popular flower in ancient Jewish civilization and is mentioned in the old and new Testaments. It should be noted that the Bible mentions lilies 15 times in 15 different verses. Of these 15 mentions, 8 of them occur in the Song of Solomon.

As is known King Solomon ruled the nation, land, and children of Israel

about 970 to 930 BC. He grew Lilies in his garden and enjoyed being around them – in his garden and his palace: “my beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies”, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies” (Song of Solomon 6: 2-3 KJV), “Mon bien-aimé est descend á son jardin, au parterre d’aromates, pour paitre son troupeau dans les jardins, et pour cueillir des lis” (Chant de Salomon 6:2-3).

The most memorable verses are the following: “I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys” (Song of Solomon 2:1). “Je sius un narcisse de Saron, un lis des vallées” (Chant de Salomon 2:1).

“As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters” (Song of Solomon 2:2). “Comme un lis parmi les ronces, telle est mon amie parmi les jeunes filles” (Chant de Salomon 2:2).

Thus, thanks to the beauty, variety of grades and a set of color shades the lily became one of the finest and richest symbols in world culture. The lily has various semantics: it expresses purity, chastity, innocence, spirituality, virtue, hope, compassion, justice, etc. Certainly, it should be reflected in lyrics of the sensitive poet to a word.

The symbol of France is the “fleur-de-lis”, or so-called heraldic lily, the prototype of which is, the fragrant lily. It is the flower of kings, signifying the power of the monarch. The lily is even depicted on the country’s coat of arms.

According to French legend, Clovis, the Merovingian king of the Franks, converted to Christianity in 496 AD, after which an angel gave him a golden lily as a sign of his purification.

Therefore, linguo-cultural research is necessary to reveal significant cultural information of any people. The world of floronyms is an important cultural concept that truly represents an integral part of the linguistic and cultural space of any language.