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The Scientific Secretary
of the Scholarly Certification Council - Ph.D.
Acad. G. Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies
3 Acad. G. Tsereteli Street
Tbilisi - 380062
Georgia

09 October 2002

Dear Sir,

I am writing in connection with the Defence of the dissertation **The Qashqa - Darya Arabic Dialect of Central Asia** by Guram Chikovani. Although I myself cannot read Georgian, the copious summary in English gives a good idea of the seriousness of the work and the depth of the analysis of one of the important "peripheral" dialects of Arabic, which only came to the attention of scholars in the twentieth century. Prof. Chikovani is well known among scholars of Arabic as the specialist on Central Asian Arabic dialects, a reputation enhanced through his connections with the Association Internationale de Dialectologie Arabe (AIDA), at whose International meetings he regularly presents studies of different aspects of these dialects. He has also been invited to lecture at different Universities, including my own - the University of Malta, on his scientific work.

The analysis of Qashqa-Darya Arabic is securely grounded within its cultural and sociolinguistic context to the point that the author tries to establish a chronology of migration as a background for the various interesting features of this peripheral dialect. This special interest comes out not only in the opening part of the work but also in the more technical chapters on phonology, morphology, syntax and lexis. Thus the departures from Literary Arabic as far as the phonemic inventory is concerned are carefully listed. Similarly in the subsequent morphological as well as syntactic and lexical analyses, interference and borrowing from Uzbek, Tajik (and partially Turkmen and Russian) are highlighted.

Certainly this is a scholarly work which deserves full recognition with the award of the degree of Doctor in Philological Sciences.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Albert Borg'.

Prof. Albert Borg
Chairman