

## OBITUARIES

### H.M. GUSTAF VI ADOLF, KING OF SWEDEN

The very sincere sympathy of the Society is extended to the Swedish people in the loss of their King at the great age of ninety. He was our most distinguished Foreign Extraordinary Fellow.

Gustaf VI Adolf, K.G., King of Sweden, of the Goths and the Wends, will always occupy a very special place in the memories and affections of Orientalists all over the world. He was approaching the age of seventy when he succeeded to the throne in 1950, and the leisure of his long period as Crown Prince had been largely occupied in the formation of a magnificent collection of Chinese art, published in 1948 in a sumptuous volume under the distinguished editorship of Nils Palmgren.

His Majesty had displayed a keen interest in a wide range of cultural subjects since his student days at Uppsala University, where his studies included history, Nordic archaeology, and Egyptology. He was an active patron and supporter of Swedish cultural and archaeological activities abroad, such as the establishment of the Swedish Institutes in Rome and Athens, and the prosecution of archaeological research by Swedish expeditions to Italy, Greece, Cyprus, and China.

It was about 1907 that his personal interests became focused on China, beginning with the pottery of the Ch'ing dynasty; but he was soon attracted to the earlier periods, and it was in these that his collection eventually became pre-eminent, the range of early jades and belt-hooks being especially noteworthy.

All museum men in this country who are concerned with Chinese art will have lively and affectionate memories of His Majesty's informal visits, sometimes at a moment's notice, and of the friendly and invariably stimulating discussions they involved—the careful assessment and comparison of objects, and the frank and easy exchange of views. We mourn him sincerely as a distinguished Orientalist and a candid friend.

B. W. ROBINSON.

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### ACADEMICIAN GIORGI TSERETELI

By the death of Professor Giorgi Tsereteli at Tbilisi in September, 1973, after a short but painful illness, the Society has lost one of its most universally respected, and also gracious and unassuming Honorary Fellows. As well as being Director of the Oriental Institute of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, Tsereteli was a full Academician of the all-Union Soviet Academy in Moscow, and an Honorary Member of the Polish Oriental Society.

Giorgi Tsereteli was born in Tianeti, Georgia, on 21 October, 1904, and attended the Georgian Gymnasium at Kutaisi before entering Tbilisi University in 1922. Seven years later he was transferred to Leningrad, where he worked under Krachkovsky, Kokovtsov, and Barthold. In 1932, Tsereteli was appointed Docent at Leningrad, and gave courses of Arabic there.

Returning to Tbilisi, Tsereteli was appointed in 1936 head of the Oriental Section of the Marr Institute of Language, History, and Material Culture. He devoted himself with outstanding success to building up a Georgian school of Semitic and Islamic studies, and in 1942 was appointed a Professor of Tbilisi University. In 1946 he became a full member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, and in 1968 (a rare distinction) of the Moscow Academy also.

From 1967 to 1970, Tsereteli was Vice-President of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, and he was recognized for many years as the country's leading spokesman on Orientalist matters.

In spite of his extremely busy life as a teacher, counsellor, and administrator, Tsereteli was a productive and meticulously careful scholar, whose works are available in several British collections. He always showed the greatest originality in his choice of theme, being never content to parrot the work of others. Particularly important are his substantial treatise on the Arabic dialects of Central Asia; his indispensable catalogue of the Urartian inscriptions in the Georgian State Museum; and his epoch-making research on the Armazi (Iranian-Aramaic) inscriptions found in Mtskheta. Before his untimely death, Giorgi Tsereteli had returned to one of his favourite fields of study, that of Georgia's own national epic, Rustaveli's *Knight in the panther skin*. Earlier he took part in an expedition to Jerusalem, to rediscover the fresco portrait of Rustaveli at the Cross Monastery, which had been painted over. He recently completed a study on metre and rhythm in the *Vepkhis tqaosani* which is said to provide a new perspective for Georgian medieval poetry.

Giorgi Tsereteli married an English lady, Dora, and they adopted a little Georgian girl.

D. M. LANG.

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#### MR. W. E. D. ALLEN

William Edward David Allen, O.B.E., F.S.A., a member of our Council from 1969 until 1973, died in Dublin on 18 September, 1973, at the age of 72. One of the pioneer figures in Caucasian historical studies in this country, he provided a link with the great Baddeley, and with Sir Oliver Wardrop. Like them, he was not an Orientalist by profession, but a man of affairs and a notable traveller. He had a great gift of friendship, and used his considerable private resources to build up a fine library at his Irish home in Cappagh, and to encourage younger scholars less fortunately placed than he.

It is hard to believe that Allen found time to be Chairman of an important advertising firm, that of David Allen and Sons, for almost half a century. He was a Member of Parliament from 1929 to 1931, then an army officer in Ethiopia during World War II, later still, from 1945 to 1949, Information Counsellor at the British Embassy in Ankara.

His literary output began precociously at the age of 18, with *The Turks in Europe* (1919). The Caucasus was his great love, a love strengthened by a visit to Soviet Georgia in 1926. This trip enabled him to complete his classic *History of the Georgian people* (1932), which has recently been reprinted. From 1935 to 1937, Allen was the main organizer of the Georgian Historical Society, whose valuable journal, *Georgica*, he edited jointly with the late Andro Gugushvili.

In collaboration with the late Paul Muratoff, Allen produced a substantive work on the Russo-Turkish campaigns of the nineteenth century, under the title *Caucasian battlefields* (1953). Another useful work was his *Russian embassies to the Georgian kings* (1970), edited and translated from Russian sources jointly with Anthony Mango; this deals to a great extent with the period of Boris Godunov. Less generally esteemed, but quite stimulating, was his essay, *Problems of Turkish power in the sixteenth century* (1963).

Four times married, Allen was a most sociable man. He was a delightful conversationalist, once one got attuned to his deliberately bumbling style of utterance, which spoils his effectiveness as a speaker. He had a genuine Irish sense of humour. He revisited Georgia in 1966 for the jubilee of Rustaveli, then in 1967, and finally, in 1971, as described in Michael Pereira's travel book, *Across the Caucasus*. He even undertook a Siberian journey to Lake Baikal in 1967, braving all the rigours of Intourist in the process. He will be sadly missed, for his generosity, his learning, and his complete absence of humbug and cant.

D. M. LANG.