

Statement of Kevin Tuite

Département d'anthropologie

Université de Montréal

C.P. 6128, succursale centre-ville

Montréal, Québec H3C 3J7 Canada

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Professor Lehrstuhl für Kaukasiologie

Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena

Fürstengraben 27 (Rosensaal)

07743 Jena GERMANY

"The orthography you refer to -- "qvevri" rather than "kvevri" -- has no basis in either standard phonetic transcription systems, nor the transliterations used by librarians. The use of the letter "q" for the aspirated velar stop in ქვევრი, ქალი, ქართველი, etc. is an artifact of the keyboard layout adopted sometime in the 1990s for Georgian fonts. As a result, many Georgians (as well as those of us non-Georgians who use the language frequently) have become accustomed to associating the "q" key on the computer keyboard with the first letter of "kvevri". No one else, neither linguists, nor librarians, nor Caucasologists, nor pretty much anyone else who has contact with the Georgian language, writes this sound with "q". Furthermore, speakers of English and most other West European languages only use "q" in combination with "u", unless writing an foreign proper name or loanword that contains a deep uvular sound as in Arabic. Writing "kvevri" with a "q" will give people the impression that the word begins with an exotic consonant of this kind, rather than an ordinary, every-day, easy-to-pronounce "k" sound. So in my opinion, the spelling "kvevri" is the only reasonable option. best wishes Kevin "