Complex Morphology and its Impact on Lexicology: the Kartvelian Case

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Abstract
This paper deals with the impact of complex morphological structures on essential aspects of lexicology. On the basis of data from the Kartvelian (South-Caucasian) language family consisting of Georgian and its sister-languages, it discusses questions of how to lemmatize nominal and verbal word forms so that they can be arranged in a consistent and appropriate way in dictionaries and databases. The most prominent approaches that have been developed since the first attempt to provide a dictionary of Georgian (Paolini & Irbachi 1629) are analysed with a view to their applicability, usability, and conclusiveness.

Keywords: Kartvelian; Georgian; history of lexicography

1 Historical Outline of Kartvelian Lexicography

1.1 Together with its sister-languages, Svan (spoken in Northwest Georgia), Megrelian (spoken in West Georgia), and Laz (mostly spoken in Northeast Turkey),1 Georgian constitutes the so-called South-Caucasian or Kartvelian language family, one of the three autochthonous language families in the Caucasus.2 Among these languages, Georgian is peculiar in that it looks back on more than 1,500 years of uninterrupted literacy, thus exceeding languages like Russian or German by far. Roughly speaking, the history of written Georgian can be divided into three periods, Old Georgian extending from the 5th to the 12th century A.D., Middle Georgian from the 12th to the 18th century, and Modern Georgian since the 19th century;3 the periodization notwithstanding, the structure of the language has remained quite stable throughout time so that Old Georgian texts can still be understood by and large by modern speakers. In contrast to this, the Kartvelian sister languages, none of which has a written record of old, are incomprehensible for speakers of Georgian.

1.2 Astonishingly enough, there were no attempts to record Georgian lexicographically before the 17th century; at least no traces of earlier lexicographical work have survived. The first dictionary of Georgian was the Dittionario Giorgiano e Italiano published in 1629 “for the use of missionaries” in the Vatican by Stefano Paolini, who was supported by a Georgian nobleman named Niķipore Irubakiże. The first extant dictionary compiled within Georgia was the monolingual Leksiḳoni kartuli by Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani, who worked on it between the years 1685 and 1716; it was first printed as late as 1884. Before that, several other dictionaries of Georgian had been published abroad, viz. first, the small Russian-Georgian Leksikon in Goderzij Firalov’s Georgian “Teach yourself”-book of St.

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1 The latter two languages are often subsumed under the term “Zan”.
2 The question if there are genetical relations between these families or beyond cannot be discussed here.
3 A different approach assumes only two periods, Old and Modern Georgian.
Petersburg, 1820, and second, Julius Klaproth’s Georgian-French *vocabulaire* contained in his grammar of Georgian of 1827, which was printed in Paris. In 1840, Davit Čubinašvili published, with the support of Marie-Félicité Brosset, the first Georgian-Russian-French dictionary in St. Petersburg, and a Russian-Georgian and a Georgian-Russian dictionary by the same author followed between 1846 and 1891. Two dictionaries had been compiled before by the latter author’s uncle, Nikoloz Čubinašvili, in the first half of the 19th century, one Georgian-Russian and one Russian-Georgian; they were first printed more than 100 years later, in 1961 and 1971–73.

1.3 From the steadily increasing production of Georgian dictionaries in the 20th century, we may first mention Richard Meckelein’s Georgian-German and German-Georgian *Wörterbücher* of 1928 and 1937–43. The most remarkable autochthonous project of lexicography was the “Explanatory dictionary of the Georgian language” initiated and redacted by Arnold Čikobava, with eight volumes appearing between 1950 and 1964 (plus a compressed one-volume edition in 1986). Another remarkable achievement was the three-volume Georgian-German *Wörterbuch* by Kita Tschenkéli, published in Zürich between 1965 and 1974, with its German-Georgian counterpart compiled by Yolanda Marchev following in 1999. And in 2006, a “Comprehensive Georgian-English Dictionary” in two volumes appeared in London, with Donald Rayfield being its editor-in-chief.

1.4 Lexicographical work on the other Kartvelian languages began with word lists provided by travellers to, and explorers of, the Caucasus in the 17th and 18th centuries. The first word list of Megrelian was noted down by the Ottoman Turk Evliya Çelebi in the second volume of his “Book of Travels” (*Seyahatname*) of about 1640; the list, written in Arabic letters fully equipped with vocalisation marks, contains about 40 words (beginning with the cardinal numbers from 1 to 11) plus 12 idiomatic phrases. The second word list of Megrelian was compiled by Johann Anton Gülitenstädt, a scientist who explored the Caucasus in service of the Russian queen Catharine the Great between 1768 and 1775; his “Vocabularium”, published posthumously in 1791 (as a “Wörtersammlung” of “Georgianische Mundarten”), was used by subsequent authors like Peter Simon Pallas (1786–1789), George Ellis (1788), and Julius Klaproth (1814). The first comprehensive dictionary of Megrelian was the Megrelian-Russian *slovare’* compiled by Ioseb Kipšidze and published in his grammar of 1914 (pp. 191–424), followed by the Megrelian-Georgian *leksiḳoni* which Petre Čaraia had finished before 1918 but which was printed only in 1997, in the same year as Givi Eliava’s “Materials”. The most outstanding dictionary of Megrelian so far is that by Otar Kaǯaia, which appeared in four volumes between 2001 and 2014; another comprehensive Megrelian-Georgian dictionary is that by Alio Kobalia (2010).

For Svan, lexicography begins with Gülitenstädt’s word list again. As the first dictionaries proper, we may mention the Svan-Russian *slovare’* by Ivane Nižaraǯe, which appeared as vol. 41 of the journal *Sbornik Materialov dija opisaniya měťnostnej i plemen Kavkaza* in 1910. Some years before, by 1888, the author’s uncle, Besarion Nižaraǯe, had finished his Georgian-Svan-Russian *leksiḳoni*, which was printed as late as 2007. Both these dictionaries concern the Upper-Bal dialect of Svan, as does the Svan-English dictionary by Chato Gudjiedjian and Letas Palmaitis published in 1985. In contrast to

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4 Work on a new edition of the “Explanatory Dictionary” has been going on at the A. Chikobava Institute of Linguistics, Tbilisi, since 2008.

5 Cf. Gippert (1992: 38–52) for a full treatment of Evliya’s account of Megrelian (and ib.: 29–37 for his account of Georgian).

6 In Gülitenstädt (1791: 496-504).
this, the Lashkh dialect is represented in the Svan-Georgian-Russian dictionary by ქარწელ ოდუა, which was compiled in the 1930ies but appeared only in 2001; the Svan-Georgian dictionary by Aslan Liparteluri of 1994 relates to the patois of Choluri. The big Svan-Georgian dictionary by Varlam Topuria and Maksime Kaldani, which was published in 2000, was the first attempt to provide a cross-dialect dictionary of the Svan language. A first morpheme dictionary of Upper Svan is at present in the press (ჩანთაჟა ე. ა. ბ. 2016).

For Laz, a first word list with French translations was published by Hračya Aćaryan (Adjarian) in his “Étude sur la langue laze” of 1897, followed by the Laz-Russian sľovăr’ in Nikolaj Marr’s grammar of 1910. Since the late 1990ies, an ever increasing number of Laz-Turkish dictionaries have appeared in Istanbul, and two Laz-Georgian ones were published in 2012 (by I. Asatiani) and 2013 (by A. Tandilava).

1.5 In the following pages, I shall outline the development of Kartvelian lexicography using the example of Georgian, with special emphasis on the principles of the lemmatisation of nouns and verbs that have been applied throughout history. Reference to the sister languages of Georgian will only be made sporadically; given the close structural similarity of the four languages, most of the observations that hold true for Georgian also hold for the other members of the family.

2 The Development of Georgian Lexicography

2.1 The Dittionario Giorgiano e Italiano

As was stated above, the first dictionary of Georgian ever published was the Georgian-Italian Dittionario compiled by Stefano Paolini, the director of the printing house of the Sagra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide in Rome, for the use of Catholic missionaries. The Georgian who assisted Paolini was the nobleman Niḳipore (later Niḳoloz) Irubakiže-Čoloqašvili (ca. 1585-1657), who was educated in Italy (ca. 1600-1608) before becoming the court priest of king Teimuraz I of Kakhetia. After fleeing to Jerusalem during the attacks of Shah Abbas I in 1614, he sojourned in Italy again between 1626 and 1629 as a messenger of king Teimuraz to Pope Urban VIII; it was during this sojourn that he must have met Paolini. From 1632 on, he was the counsellor of king Levan II Dadiani of Megrelia. After another sojourn in Jerusalem, which he undertook between 1643 and 1649, he became the catholicos of Megrelia and Abkhazia by order of Levan II in 1656 or 1657. Captured by Vameq III, the ruler of Odishi, in 1657, he died in prison in 1658, remaining acknowledged as a wise man and philosopher by his contemporaries. An Italian Theatine missionary named Teramo-Cristoforo (de) Castelli, who visited Georgia from 1632 to 1654, drew a sketch of

8 Cf. Tamarati (1902: 92-132), Akopašvil (1977), and Bagrationi-Orsini & Tabagoua (1981 / 1983) as to Irubakidze’s sojourn in Rome and his correspondence with the papal see.
9 Two other Irubakiże-Čoloqašvilies, the poet Garsevan (1520-1574) and one Baadur, are mentioned in commemorative notes (so-called aqāpis) in the Jerusalem manuscript no. 24 (cf. Metreveli 1962: 86b and 94a). – In the Tbilisi manuscript no. Q-180, a codex of 1882 containing the so-called Dilariani (cf. Laraze 1903), Niḳoloz Ćoloqašvili is named as the author in a note on fol. 1r. The epic is usually attributed to Petre Laraze (1770-1837), whose authorship was contested by M. Žanašvili (1907: 5). The work in question must be distinguished from the Dilarget(iani) mentioned in the 12th century epics (Shota Rustaveli etc.), whose author was Sargis Tmogveli (cf. the edition by Čiĉina 1897 / 1916).
Irubakidze, which has survived in his Travel Notes.10

Looking at the first two pages of the Dittionario, which was the first book printed with Georgian mkhedruli letters ever,11 it becomes clear at once that it was compiled with no linguistically based lexicographical method, and with no sufficient knowledge of Georgian. Of the 45 entries contained on pp. 3–4, twelve consist of more than one word without indication of a word boundary, as in the case of abaróga “Ma che?” obviously representing Georgian aba rağa “look, come on”, auadári “Ammalarsi” representing avad arı “he/she is ill”, auícházi “Inhuman” reflecting avi ƙaci “evil man”, or aklamoudês “Adesso è venuto” equalling axta movides “now they have come”, with the pluralic verb substituted by a singular. Not only avad arı “he is ill” is wrongly translated by an infinitive, but also other finite forms like the 1st person future áual = aval “I will go up” by “Asendere” or the 2nd person imperative aģhè = aģe “take up!” by “Alzare”; and âdi, which can only mean Georgian adi “go up!”, is even rendered by the preposition “Di”. In some cases, the verbal form simply remains unclear; this is true, e.g., for auandumòb “Mormorare”, which must conceal something like the 1st person sg. future form davdudueb “I’ll murmur”, or aghmozenebéli “Biastemare”, which possibly reflects the present participle aģmgzenebéli in the sense of “stimulating”. The two entries auadadafamò “Maltrattare” and auadadafarè “Maltrattato” are likely to contain avad “badly” again, but can avad davparo “I will hide badly” and avad davpare “I hid badly” be meant here? akli “Tristezza, Compassione” must represent akli “he/she/it is missing”, if anything, and the case of avania “Calunnia” remains unclear even if it might be derived from avi “bad”.12

In the nominal domain, too, there are some questionable entries. While agmosaulétisa, i.e., aģmossavletis, the gen.sg. of aģmosavleti “East”, may still be translated as an adjective “Oriental”, pzoduilis, i.e. codvils, the dat.sg of (p)zoduili,13 i.e. codvili “sinful, sinner”, is by no means restricted to female persons as the translation “Peccatrice” suggests. While pzóla “Guerra” clearly stands for b(r)zola “battle”,14 the form pzóla “Bataglia” remains defective, no matter whether it represents the plural b(r)zolebi or the (obsolete) verbal noun b(r)zoleba “joining battle” (p. 77). On the other hand,

10 Cf. Bellio (1884: 677), according to whom Castelli wrote down the following words on “Niceforo Isbarghi” (sic!): “Parlando della sua vita, egli ne racconta dei tratti in più luoghi così : Niceforo Isbarghi, membro della Casa Reale di Georgia, monaco basiliano, venne in Europa nel 1624 e pregò Urbano VIII papa di mandare missionari che rafforzassero o convertissero al cattolicesimo i popoli della Georgia e dei paesi finitimi. E il Pontefice spedi Pietro de Avitabile, Giacomo di Stefano, Giuseppe de Judica, Vincenzo Caraffa, napolitani, Pietro de Jardina e Cristoforo Castelli, palermitani.” As to Castelli’s inheritance cf. also Licini (1980 and 1985) and Chikhladze (2013).
11 Cf. Gippert (2016) for the Georgian text specimens printed in mskhuri letters in S. Schweigger’s account of his travel to Istanbul in 1579 (printed for the first time in 1608).
12 The form given in the Dittionario appears once as such in the Middle Georgian adaptation of the Persian Šāhnāme epic (Kobje 1974: 141, verse 693d of the metrical version of the so-called Utrutian-Saamian). Considering the context of the prose version of the text (ib.: 216), the meaning must be something like “destruction”. The stem avan- occurs elsewhere in the same text (143, v. 712b; 154: v. 808b), as an adjective meaning something like “refusing, hostile”. There is no connection with avan-i “mortal”, which, together with its variant avang-i, is a borrowing from Persian əwang “id.” (vs. avani “vessels”, which reflects Arabic awānī, plural of inā “vessel, vase”).
13 The word appears two times, once with initial p- (p. 77) and once without (p. 118).
14 Note that the word appears two times in the Dittionario (p. 77), in identical spelling but with two different meanings: “Guerra” and “Combattere”.

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the verbal noun kitxva “interrogation” is represented by both chitka and chitkua, with two different translations (“Interrogare” and “Domandare”); and of the two participles pertaining to it, chitkuli = kitxuli “questioned” and chitkel = nkitxveli “reader”, only the former is discernible with no doubt, the initial m being left out in the latter (p. 125).

Many of the examples treated so far have already shown that the Latin transliteration applied in the Dittionario is far from being consistent. Apart from mere curiosities such as the un motivated “prothesis” of a <p> in pzduli ~ codvili and the like, there is systematic confusion e.g. in the case of velars: <k> may stand for the fricative /x/ as in akla = axla “now”, aspirated /k/ as in aklami = aclemi “camel”, glottalised /k/ as in aklia = akkiia “is missing”, uvular /q/ as in auisitkua = avsiqva “bad word”, or voiced /g/ as in kazmedili = gaçmedili “cleaned” (p. 41). On the other hand, all these five phonemes can also be represented by the digraph <ch>, as in auiachži = avi kaci “bad man” or auaqacchi = avazaki “rober” with glottal /q/, abáchchi = aba ak “look here!” with aspirated /k/, kuerzchi = kvercxi “egg” with the fricative /x/ (p. 47), parsçiamáchi = parsama(n)gi “peacock” with voiced /g/ (p. 73), or schidua = sqidva “buying” with uvular /q/ (p. 92). A similar picture can be seen in the representation of dental spirants and affricates: written <z> may stand for the voiceless affricate /c/ as in auiachži = avi kaci “bad man” or za = ca “heaven” (p. 116), glottalised /c/ as in mrzáms = mrçams “I believe” (p. 65) or záblí = čabli “chestnut” (p. 116), voiced /j/ as in pzóla = b(r)jolya “battle” or zaghi = zagli “dog”, but also voiceless /s/ as in zaawarkzáli = savarxali “comb” (as an instrument of torture), voiced /z/ as in zamtári = zamtari “winter”, or /ź/ as in zámi = zami “time, hour” (p. 116). On the other hand, /c/ can also be represented by <tʃ> as in kátʃi = kaci “man” (vs. auiachži = avi kaci “bad man”, see above) and by <ts> as in its derivative katsobritui = kacobritvi “human”, etc. (p. 44). Note that the <z> in pálamizo “Spalmare” (p. 73) reflects no Georgian sound at all, the word form being the 1st person sg. present of the Greek verb παλαμίζω “I smear”.

From all this, we may conclude that the entries in the dictionary were not written down by a Georgian. Instead, they must have been noted in Latin script off-hand, applying rules of Italian spelling; this is suggested by the application of <ch> for velar sounds especially before high vowels as in the name of the Georgian “co-author”, Irubaki-ʒe, which is written Irbachi on the title page (this spelling led to erroneous renderings such as Erbaci or erbaxi in Georgian contexts later).15 To be more precise, we may assume that the Latin word forms were noted down from dictation, which implies typical acoustical errors such as the confusion of /f/ and /x/ in pzduli ~ codvili “Name” representing saxeli “name”. The rendering in Georgian script can only have been added at the end, on the basis of correspondence rules given in the alphabet table; and this process appears to have been “randomised” to a certain degree. It is hardly imaginable that a learned person like Niķoloz-Niķipore Irubaki-ʒe-Čoloq ̇ ašvili might have accepted the result as being a usable “Dittionario” of Georgian; whether or not he ever

15 Cf., e.g., Tamarati (1902: 96) with the nominative form გძბვშ = <erbaxi> and (ib.: 96, 106, 115, 122) the dative form გძბლქ = <erbaxs>; in a similar way, M.-F. Brosset notes the name as გძბშ (nominative) = <erbaxi> in his preface to Čubinašvili (1840, see below). In the Latin letter of Nov. 18, 1628 by Pope Urban VIII to King Philipp of Spain translated into Georgian by Tamarati (1902: 96), Irubakiʒe is named “Nicephorus Erbacious Monachus S. Basilii” (ib.: 614; similarly in another letter of Dec. 2, 1628: ib.: 615), while in Italian letters by the Sagra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide, the name is spelt Herbaci (ib.: 615) or Erbaci (ib.: 617, 623, 627). More recent Georgian authors prefer the spelling გძბშ = <ibraksi>; cf., e.g., Akopaşvili (1977), the website of the National Parliament Library of Georgia or the Georgian Wikipedia. Bagrationi-Orsini & Tabagoua (1981) have the spelling Irbaki in French (and გძბშ = <ibraksi> again in the Georgian version of their article, 1983). Cf. note 10 above as to the erroneous spelling Isbarghi in Bellio (1884: 677).
took it into account, is uncertain.
What remains worthwhile investigating, is the notation of word accents in the Latin transcripts, a phenomenon that cannot be studied in Georgian written sources themselves as Georgian does not have accent marks at its command.\textsuperscript{16} For our present purposes, however, it may suffice to summarise that the \textit{Ditionario} is anything but systematic in the structure of lemmatic entries it contains. Nominals mostly appear in nominative forms, but genitives and datives are also met with, and \textit{aduilib} is by no means a noun “Facilitá” but the adverbal case form, \textit{advilad}, of the adjectival \textit{advili} “easy”. Verbs are often listed in forms of a 1\textsuperscript{st} person sg. present or future or 2\textsuperscript{nd} person imperatives, but other 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} person forms occur as well, as in the cases of \textit{chiuis} “Dolere”, which represents (s)\textit{tkivis} “it hurts (him / her)” (p. 124), or \textit{szinos} “Sonnolenza” and \textit{szinébia} “Sonnolento”, which must stand for \textit{g3inavs} “you (sg.) sleep” and the (evidential) perfect form \textit{g3inebia} “you (must have) slept” (p. 49).

The fact that both these verbs have an “indirect” construction, with the subject in the dative case and an object prefix in the corresponding verb forms, is one of the major problems encountered by any lexicographer of Georgian (and the other Kartvelian languages). The corresponding verbal nouns, \textit{tkivili} “pain” and \textit{zili} “sleep” are also contained (in the forms \textit{chiuili}, p. 124, and \textit{szili}, p. 49), but the relationship remains obscure to anybody who does not master the Georgian grammar, given that they are no regular formations.

2.2 Klaproth’s \textit{Vocabulaire}

Different from Paolini, (Heinrich) Julius von Klaproth in his \textit{Vocabulaire géorgien-français} of 1827 provides the Georgian material in Georgian script only, with no Latin transcription, and in quite reliable form. This is not astonishing, given that the author was a well-trained linguist who had learned to deal with many Oriental languages (including Chinese), his “Asia polyglotta” of 1823 having remained famous to the present day. Nevertheless, there are certain shortcomings that can be noted off-hand again. First of all, it can easily be proven, even on the first two pages, that Klaproth used Paolini’s \textit{Ditionario} as a source. It is true that there is no trace of two- or multiple word expressions such as \textit{aba rağa} “look, come on!” or \textit{aba ak} “look here!” in it, but many errors and uncertain words are repeated as in the case of \textit{advilid} “Facilité” (p. 1), which should be \textit{advilad} “easily”, or \textit{avisari} “Peste” (p. 2), which can hardly be anything but \textit{avi dari} (or \textit{avdarî}) “bad weather” or \textit{avi zari} “bad bell”.\textsuperscript{17} In some cases, Klaproth improves on his predecessor as in the case of \textit{abrešumi} “Soie”, which was written with \textless{o}\textgreater{} in the \textit{Ditionario}, and he even adds etymologies for clear borrowings as in the case of the latter word, which he equates with Persian \textit{abrīšum}.\textsuperscript{18} However, among the many items Klaproth listed for the first time (e.g., \textit{abedi} “tinder”, \textit{abi} “pill”, or \textit{agaraki} “field”), there are again some uncertain or untestified words such as \textit{adeli}, name of a “measure of three feet four English inches”, i.e. ca. 1 m, which appears alongside the common term \textit{adli} equalling the Russian “aršin” (or the English “yard”), a measure of about 71,12 cm (all p. 1). More alarming are new errors such as \textit{avziči} “robber, thief” (p. 2), which should be \textit{avazaki}; here, Paolini’s \textit{auafachi} is

\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Gippert (2016) as to S. Schweigger’s testimony of the Georgian word accent.
\textsuperscript{17} The instrumental \textit{avi zari} occurs in a poem by Lela Samniašvili but without the figurative meaning assumed here (მის სახით, ახლა არა, რა გმირი შედგო იყო “with the echoes of bullets bursting out, which are concealed by a bad bell”).
\textsuperscript{18} Klaproth’s spelling of the Persian word (p. 1) remains odd; instead of \textit{اررشم}, we should expect \textit{اریشم}. The Georgian word, which is attested since the 11\textsuperscript{th} c., clearly reflects the older (Middle) Persian pronunciation \textit{abrēšum}.

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even more correct. Verbs are mostly cited in a 1st person sg. present form as in the case of avdivar “I am mounting” appearing instead of Paolini’s 1st person future, āval = aval “I will mount”. Other subject persons are avoided, e.g. by adducing the participial formation avadmopi, lit. “being ill” (p. 2), instead of Paolini’s 3rd sg. present form auadāri = avad ari “he/she is ill”. Besides finite 1st person sg. forms, Klaproth amply registers verbal nouns, often in the adverbial case which may well be used to render (final) infinitives as in the case of adgomad “Se lever” ~ “(in order) to stand up” (p. 1); however, there is no concept discernible as to his preferences.

2.3 Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani

The first dictionary from Georgia that has survived is the Kartuli leksiḳoni by Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani, a nobleman who was born in South-East Georgia in 1658. Orbeliani, who was educated at the Royal court before becoming a monk in the monastery of Davit Gareǯa and travelling to Europe as a missioner for King Vaxṭang VI, also authored the first Georgian translation of the Indian Pañcatantra (under the title Kilila da Damana, translated from a Persian model) and the famous “Book of Wisdom and Lies” (Sibr泽ne sicruisa), a collection of fables and tales from various Oriental sources. The work on his dictionary, which he styled a Sitqvis kona, i.e. “bunch of word(s)”, extended from 1685 to 1716 and has manifested itself in a total of six handwritten redactions, which are well documented in the academic edition of 1966. From the author’s testament added to the Leksiḳoni,20 it is clear that his work was meant to substitute a former Sitqvis kona compiled by King Vaxṭang V (1618–1675), which had been lost in his days.21 We also learn that Orbeliani took a “smallish Armenian dictionary” as the model22 and that he gained his material from the Bible and other theological writings as well as philosophical texts.23 As to his method, he explains how he dealt with words whose meaning was not clear to him,24 and he states that he expected others to continue and

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19 Cf. Bolkvadze (1999) as to the background of Orbeliani’s lexicographical work.
21 The passage in question (Orbeliani 1966: 31) translates: “I, Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani, have devoted much effort to this book in my youth, because a dictionary of the Georgian language was not found, because the one that King Vaxṭang V named Sitqvis kona had disappeared in the course of time. And as this valuable book had been lost, the Georgian language became depraved at (everybody’s) will. The son of King Vaxṭang, my uncle King George (IX, 1651-1709), ordered me to set my hands to it” (redaction Z; redactions A and Cab are considerably shorter).
22 In translation (Orbeliani 1966: 31): “And I discovered one smallish Armenian dictionary, which is named Bargirk’ in their language, and I lay hands on its imitation and noted down as much as I could” (Z; A and Cab shorter again).
23 In translation (Orbeliani 1966: 31-32): “Whatever I found in the books, in the theological writings and the prophets, I excerpted. Some (words) I excerpted from the profound books of the philosophers ... and I noted them down for ease (of use), so that (the people) might learn the Georgian language” (Z; A and Cab shorter again).
24 In translation (Orbeliani 1966: 32-33): “Whatever I knew (the meaning of), I wrote down. And of some of the difficult words I did not know, which I had found in the profound books, I verified (the meaning) in other languages, and when I found detailed (meanings), I simply listed them together. If I could not find (the meaning), I did not write down arguable (guesses) but marked those words with a sign in red ink in the margin, so that the words might be found by searching in other writings where they might be written as well” (Z; A and
complete his work, also by adding material from foreign languages like Greek, Latin, Armenian, Russian, and Arabic.

What Saba does not tell us, is the way how he organised his dictionary linguistically with respect to its lemmatic entries. This, however, becomes quite clear if we look at some of the words beginning with the letter hae = <h> on the last two pages (410–411) of the edition 1844. Here we find, first of all, nouns like hruli “snooze”, correctly cited from Ps. 131.4, with the appropriate definition mciere ram zili, i.e. “a somewhat short sleep”. For hroarţagi, cited from III Kings (21.8), Saba gives no explanation but simply refers to the “script” (ceriši naxe = “look in the script”); in redaction D of his work, which was not consulted for the 1844 edition but is available via that of 1966, he explains that the word means a “letter by kings, totally unalterable” (h. ars čigni mepeta mieri, qovladve moušleli; p. 466), which is quite correct again; the best translation for the Iranian loanword would be “missive”. For horoli, Saba refers to another word he regards as a synonym, viz. moaba which, as an Arabic word, denotes a “sedan chair”. In the academic edition of 1966, the lemma is given as horli with the same reference to moaba (redaction Z) or its variant muaba (AB), plus a textual reference to iosipos, which means the Georgian version of the Antiquitates Iudaicae by Flavius Josephus. A lemma horoli is also contained, but only as a variant of oroli, which in its turn is correctly taken to mean a “lance” or “spear” (šubi; 1965: 608). As a matter of fact, there are no two different words here, the horli taken from Flavius Josephus representing the (irregularly) syncopated stem of horoli in the instr. pl. form horlebita which appears in book 8, ch. 12 of the Antiquitates; and this does not denote a “sedan chair” but just a sort of “lance”, as the equivalent of Greek σ(ε)προμάστης. Another faulty lemma is Saba’s hroni, misprinted as honi in the 1844 edition, which is listed with reference to the Life of George the Hagiorite (giorgi mtcə midelis cxovrebaşi) from the 11th century, with no definition given. What we do find in par. 74 of the vita, is the personal name Aaron in the nom.sg. form, spelt hroni in five of the eleven manuscripts available (vs. aroni in four others and haroni, in two).
similar case is likely to be hidden behind the lemma hreumisi, which Saba glosses simiata mcerali, i.e. “semiographer, short-hand writer”, with no textual reference. This, too, may represent a Biblical name, viz. that of a certain ‘Paoum or Rehum mentioned in the book of Esra Zorobabel (4.23), who pertained to the entourage of the Persian king Artaxerxes: in the so-called Mxeta Bible (ms. A-51), which was redacted by Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani himself, the name appears in the gen.sg. form areumis that might have been mistaken for a nominal stem. This is all the more probable as in the given context, another person is mentioned who is styled a “writer”.30 The last nominal entry, hrokonomoi, which denotes a “sort of artisan” or “official” (mogele ram aris) according to Saba, remains obscure. It is clear that it must represent a Greek term like oikovymes “housekeeper, manager, administrator” or paroikovymes “subordinate administrator”, but the word-initial deformation would be hard to motivate in both cases.31

All remaining entries of our sample are verbs. Among them, there is but one verbal noun, viz. hooba, which Saba paraphrases as õ(e)is tkma, i.e., “saying yes”. The other eight lemmas represent finite forms, mostly pertaining to the present tense, with a 3rd person sg. subject and the initial h- representing a 3rd person object marker as in hlamis “he/she wishes (to do)”, hmatas “he/she/it exceeds”, or hnakutavs “he/she chisels out”, but imperfect forms like hlamoda “he/she wished (to do)” or hlocvida “he/she prayed”, and aorist forms such as hnatra “he/she intended” and hrkua “he/she told him/her” are also found.32 Different from that, ᵃʰᵖₒ(ν)ₒ “you’ll find” is a 2nd person sg. optative form, with h- being the subject person marker.35 On the other hand, imperative forms abound at the beginning of the dictionary, among the words with initial aa- such as aabi “tie up!”, aabnie “shed it upon!”, or aadrire “send it back up!”, but two 2nd person sg. future forms such as aadvileb “you’ll simplify” or aaveb “you’ll make it vicious” are also included (1965: 40). Thus we can see that there is no real “system” behind Saba’s choice of entries, the mere occurrence of a given form being identification of the “Aaron” in question. The edition referred to as “atonis krebuli” in Orbeliani (1966: 466 n. 4) has the reading hroni (Xaxanašvili & Žanašvili 1901: 330, 35); for the Vita of Giorgi, it is based upon manuscript no. A-170 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi. Beyond that, the spelling hroni appears three times in the so-called Bakar Bible (the first printed Georgian Bible, of 1743), in Ex. 4.28, Num. 20.6, and Deut. 9.20.30

30 ვიჩახულმა ჩვენმა ორმაგ ადგილგაა ამჯობით და ხდის ფრთხლები და სხვა მსგავსი სახელი “he read the letter aloud before Rehum and [Sam]sai the writer and their servants” (ანგ. ἄνεγνο ἐνόπλων Ραουμ καὶ Σαμσαὶ γραμματέως καὶ συνορύχων αὐτῶν); for the Georgian text cf. Dočanašvili (1982: 361).


32 For hmatas, Saba provides a correct attestation in 1 Cor. (15.41). hlamis occurs several times in the Middle Georgian adaptation of the Persian epic of Vis and Ramn, the so-called Visramiani (Gvaxaria & Todua 1962: 103,12 etc.). Instead of hnakutavs, I only find the preverbal equivalent dahnakutavs (~ Gk. μετασχηματίζει “changes the form”) in the Georgian version of the works of the Neoplatonian Ammonius Hermiae (Rapava 1983: 100,32).

33 For hlocvida, Saba correctly notes Lk. 3.18; hlamoda occurs, besides the Visramiani, once in Rustaveli’s “Knight in the Panther’s Skin” (verse 1531a).

34 For hnatra, Saba correctly indicates the 6th chapter of Ioane Peþrici’s Georgian commentary on Proclus Diadochus and Plato (Qauxișvili 1937: 29, 34; also chap. 23, ib. 63, 15); hrkua abounds in Old Georgian (more than 12,000 attestations in the Georgian National Corpus).

35 The edition 1884 has the spelling ᵃʰᵖₒ, vs. ᵃʰᵖₒ, in the academic edition; both forms are widely attested in Old Georgian. Saba’s reference to Prov. 5.4 is correct again; besides, ᵃʰᵖₒ(ν)ₒ occurs, e.g., in Mt. 17.27.
decisive.
Summing up, we may state that Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani’ *Leksikon* is an enormous treasure of “rare”
words, including both obsolete and foreign terms but also some “ghost words” that are due to
misunderstandings of Biblical and other text passages. At the same time, the *Leksikon* stands out for
the many textual attestations it documents. Concerning verbal forms, however, there is no
linguistically based system discernible, finite forms of all types occurring side by side.

### 2.4 Goderzi Pirališvili (Goderzi Firalov)

Even though Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani spent his last years in Moscow, no attempt of his to correlate his
lexicographical work with the Russian language has survived. As a matter of fact, it took more than
half a century after his death for the first Russian-Georgian word list to be compiled and published, in
form of a *Leksikon* added as the sixth part to the Georgian “Teach-yourself” book by Goderzi Firalov,
i.e. Goderzi Pirališvili (1768-1823), who worked as a writer at the court of King Erekle II before he
moved to St. Petersburg in 1801. Among the ca. 2,500 entries of his word list, there are astonishingly
few verbs; e.g., of the 62 entries of words beginning with Russian II on p. 161, only 10 are verbal, all
წამახლავ ~ წამახლავ “I spoil”, წამახლავ ~ წამახლავ  “I unstick”, წამახლავ ~ წამახლავ “I rest”, წამახლავ ~ წამახლავ “I give to drink”. It is clear from this sample that the list was not meant to represent a “basic” vocabulary,
given that common verbs like წამახლავ “receive, obtain” are missing, let alone perfectives like წამახლავ “lay, put down”. At
the same time, we may note that some of the Georgian equivalents are dialectal (e.g., წამახლავ “I fly”
instead of წამახლავ) while others represent the language of the time (e.g., წამახლავ “I rinse out”
instead of წამახლავ). An investigation into the background of Pirališvili’s word list would
indeed be worthwhile.

### 2.5 Niḳoloz Čubinašvili (Nikolaj Čubinov)

By the time when Firalov’s *Samoučitel’* was published, another learned Georgian, Niḳoloz
Čubinašvili (1788-1845), was working on the first comprehensive Georgian-Russian dictionary
(*Kartuli leksiqoni rusuli targmaniturt*, i.e. “Georgian lexicon with Russian translation”), which he
completed in 1825; it took until the year 1961 for this work to be printed. Ten years later, A. გიოლთი
also published the second *opus magnum* of the same author, the “Complete Russian-Georgian

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36 Cf. the remarks as to წარეუძი above; for another example cf. Gippert (1993: 45-46) as to მანალი “camp”.
37 The imperfective “partner” of წარკლამი წაკლა “set (dogs) to attack”, is comprised in the 1st person sg.
present form წაყლი on p. 150, in two entries with the meanings წაყლი “I arrange” and წაყლი “I wound”.
38 For the present stem წარწან, the *Georgian National Corpus* gives 17 attestations, 14 of them from the
*Georgian Dialect Corpus*. Saba has the verbal noun წარწან (1966: 200), which matches წარწან.
39 The (root) stem წარწი is not attested at all with წარჭა “out” in the *Georgian National Corpus*, vs. 14
attestations of წარჭა. Saba has the verbal noun წარწი (besides წარწი), which matches the root stem, as
well as several derivatives (Orbeliani 1966: 11); წარჭა is not contained, however. The 1st person sg.
present form წარჭა “I wash off from you” appears in Ez. 16:9 in the Jerusalem Bible (11th c.), matched by
წარძე წარძე “in the Gelati Bible (12th c.); the Oşḳi Bible (of 978 A.D.) has the aorist form წარძე წარძე
(c.f. Ckiṭišvili 1966: 49 with n. 10), in accordance with Gk.  ἀπεπλύνα.
Dictionary” compiled by Čubinov between 1825 and 1837 (Čubinašvili 1971–73). Looking at the latter work, we will notice immediately that the author’s claim to be “complete” was not exaggerated: the 50 entries comprised on pp. 332–333 of vol. II match exactly the number of entries we find between поднимать “to lift up” and подобно “similarly” in the big dictionary of the Russian Academy published in six volumes in Sankt Petersburg between 1806 and 1822, which can therefore be regarded as Čubinašvili’s primary source. Nevertheless, there is a major difference between the monolingual Russian Slovar’ and its adaptation by the Georgian scholar: while the former usually lists verbs in the form of (both imperfective and perfective) infinitives, the only exception in the given sample being the impersonal verb поддабает “it fits” registered in the 3rd person sg. present, Čubinašvili presents his verbs in 1st person singular present / future forms throughout, with the same exception. It is likely that this practice, which we already noted for Klaproth’s Vocabulaire and Firalov’s Leksikon, was due to an influence of the lexicography of the classical languages, Greek and Latin, where the 1st person sg. present was the traditional lemma form used. It should be added that the 1st person sg. forms are contained in the Academy Dictionary, too, as grammatical information given, together with other forms, under the infinitives; in Čubinašvili’s lexicon, we find the corresponding forms, including the infinitives, under the 1st person lemmas.

There is one more thing that throws an interesting light on the relationship between Čubinašvili’s lexicon and the Russian Slovar’, viz. the textual attestations mentioned for many words, which are often identical as in the case of Jac. 2.3 and Ps. 109.1 noted for подножие ~ ὑποπόδιον “footstool”. In some cases, Čubinašvili adds further attestations, such as Ps. 98.5 adduced under the same word. Interestingly enough, the latter verse does contain the word ὑποπόδιον (this is the older spelling), as an equivalent of Gk. ὑποπόδιον; in Jac. 2.3 and Ps. 109.1, the same Greek word is rendered by kuešė perqta “under the feet” in the Georgian Bible instead. In contrast to this, the Russian (Church Slavonic) Bible does have подножие in both these verses, so that we may suspect that Čubinašvili did not even check the Georgian Bible when he imported the citations.

2.6 Davit Čubinašvili (David Čubinov)

A big step forward in the lexicography of Georgian was achieved by a nephew of Niko Čubinašvili’s, Davit, who spent most of his life (1814–1891) in St. Petersburg. His Georgian-Russian-French dictionary of 1840 was not only the first three-language-dictionary of Georgian but also the first that was published with an explicit description of the lexicographical method applied in it. It was not the author himself, however, who provided that description but the French scholar Marie-Félicité Brosset, a true pioneer of Georgian studies who worked in Russia as a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences from 1838 to 1880. In his preface to Čubinašvili’s dictionary, he wrote:

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40 N. Čubinašvili died in 1845 after having visited Jerusalem; his short report on Georgian manuscripts in the Monastery of the Holy Cross (published posthumously in Cagareli 1894: 44–52) is dated May, 3–4, 1845.
42 Cf. A. Ġlonṭi in Čubinašvili (1971: 9–10 / 17–18) as to other sources used by the author.
43 In the original: “Voici la marche que l’auteur a cru devoir suivre. Comme la connaissance du nom-verbal, tenant lieu d’infinitif en géorgien, est indispensable pour arriver à celle du verbe, et que ce nom verbal est presque toujours l’expression la plus simple des radicaux, l’auteur a pris les noms-verbaux pour base de son classement, les a rangés alphabétiquement et mis sous chacun les verbes qui en dérivent. – Quant aux autres noms et aux adjetifs, primitifs ou dérivés du nom-verbal, il les a mis en leur place alphabétique; de sorte que ce dictionnaire participe à la fois de l’ordre par racines, seulement en ce qui concerne les verbes, et de celui par...
This is the path the author felt obliged to follow. Given that it is indispensable to know the verbal noun, which substitutes the infinitive in Georgian, in order to understand the verb, and given that the verbal noun is nearly always best suited to demonstrate the root elements, he took the verbal nouns as the basis for his arrangement, ordered alphabetically and as the head entry of all verbal forms deriving from them. – Concerning other nouns and adjectives, be they primary or derived from verbal nouns, he listed them in alphabetic order. In this way, the dictionary exhibits both the arrangement by roots, in the case of verbs, and that by derivatives, for the rest. This method has the advantage that it involves less danger of omitting individual verbs that would otherwise have to be listed all under one letter, $\varphi = v$, which is the prefix of the first person indicative. Having experienced the usefulness of the precognition of the root elements in Georgian myself, I realised that this method would also be useful for others, and even though it may temporarily be regarded as being less convenient than the arrangement preferred elsewhere, I encouraged the author to choose this procedure.

The actual method applied by Čubinašvili can easily be demonstrated by looking at the lemmas appearing on p. 31. Here we find, first of all, the verbal noun aġdgoma “standing up”, classified as a n[om d’]act[ion]$^{44}$ and accompanied by the 1st person sg. future form of the intransitive verb aġvsdgebii “I’ll stand up”, which is styled a v[erbe] n[eutre] and translated by the Russian and French infinitives “стапать” and “se lever”. As a separate lemma, we then see aġdgoma listed a second time as a n[om s]ubstantif$^{45}$ denoting the “resurrection”. Next we have the verbal noun aġduşneba with two finite forms pertaining to it, viz. the intransitive avsduğebi “I’ll boil up” and its transitive counterpart, the v[erbe] a[ctif] aģvaduğeb “I’ll bring to the boil”. The following lemma is a verbal noun again, viz. aģeba “taking”, in its turn provided with two different transitive formations, viz. the “subjective” aɣvigroup (with its newer orthographical variant aviğeb) “I’ll take, accept for myself”, and the “neutral” aɣvağeb “I’ll open”. aģeba, too, is listed a second time as a substantive denoting the “last day before Lent” (“dernier jour gras”), and the verbal noun is also contained in ageb-micema “commerce”, lit. “taking-(and)-giving”, and its participial derivate aġeb-mimcemi “merchant”, lit. “take-giver”. The subsequent verbal noun is aġelveba, as well furnished with two finite forms, the transitive avagelveb “I’ll undulate, agitate” and the intransitive-passive (styled a v[erbe] r[éfléchi]) aġelvedebis “it’ll become agitated”. The first but last entry, aģviareba, classified as a substantive “confession”, could have been treated as a verbal noun, too, given that finite forms such as aģviareb “I’ll confess” do exist.$^{45}$ In contrast to this, the last lemma on the page, aġviredi, is a pure nominal formation, with its meaning being given as “golden bridle”.

Thus, the plan outlined by M.-F. Brosset was accomplished, with the remarkable innovation that different diatheses (active, passive, reflexive, “neutral”) are included in a more or less systematic way,
partially including the so-called “versions” (“subjective, objective, neutral”). Not so innovative is Čubinašvili’s Georgian-Russian-French dictionary with respect to citations, which are mostly taken from the Bible as in Sulxan-Saba Orbelianı’s Leksiçoni; they are not necessarily the same, however, and sometimes hard to verify. A clear dependency from the latter work manifests itself in many rare and obsolete lemmas registered in Čubinašvili’s dictionary, including errors and ghost words. One such case is aţviredi: with both its classification as a noun and its translation as a “golden bridle”, Davit Čubinašvili (as well as his uncle Niḳo before him) obviously relies upon Saba’s lemma aţwredi, which is given with the same meaning (okros lagami). What the Čubinašvilis do not quote, is the reference to the IIIrd book of Esdras (Zorobabel) we find in Saba’s lexicon; here, however, we see that aţwredi is not an independent word but the second part of an exocentric compound okro-aţwredi, which means “equipped with a bridle of gold”, with “gold” being represented by okro- and aţgr-ed-i being an adjectival derivative of aţwr-i “bridle”. While okro-aţwredi occurs a second time, in Euthymius the Athonite’s Georgian translation of the commentary of the Gospel of Matthew by John Chrysostom, attestations of aţwredi alone, which by itself would mean something like “equipped with a bridle”, seem not to exist.

2.7 Richard Meckelein

Such shortcomings notwithstanding, it was clearly Davit Čubinašvili with his three big dictionaries, Georgian-Russian-French, Russian-Georgian, and Georgian-Russian, who paved the way for the lexicographical work on Georgian in the 20th century, especially with the use of verbal nouns, also called masdars, as lemmatic entries as proposed by Brosset. This principle is clearly visible, e.g., in R. Meckelein’s Georgian-German and German-Georgian dictionaries of the 1920ies and 30ies. On pp. 23–24 of the former, we find the five verbal lemmas from aţdgoma to aţviareba we discussed above, all given as verbal nouns, with but one minor difference consisting in the replacement of aţduţneba by the younger variant aţduţeba. Different from Čubinašvili, however, Meckelein provides neither textual references nor finite verbal forms; instead we find past participles such as aţdgomili “auferstanden” or aţebuli “genommen”, and also a nominal derivative aţdegi denoting the “last Sunday before Advent” (“Totensonntag”). Meckelein’s dependence from Čubinašvili (and, lastly, Suxan-Saba Orbelianı) becomes nevertheless apparent by the inclusion of faulty lemmas like aţviredi “Zaum mit goldenem Mundstück” (see above).

2.8 Arnold Čikobava

The verbal noun is also the basic lemmatic form for verbs in the “Explanatory Dictionary” initiated by Arnold Čikobava, which appeared in eight volumes between 1950 and 1964. Beyond that,

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46 The citation for aţeba given as “Ps. XXXVII, 7” may refer to Ps. 38.9 instead where we have aţvaqe “I opened”. The reference to “Gen. VIII, 9, 10” under aţdgoma is not verifiable at all. For the latter word, Saba cites “6, 26 baruk”, which is correct (Baruch = Ep.Jer. 6.26).

47 The Georgian-Russian dictionary (1961: s.v. aţviredi) gives the meaning “raxţi, okroti daperili da mortuli lagami”, i.e. “bridle, gold-plated and adorned”.

48 III Esr. 3.6: აღსუან იგი საჴდარსა ოქრო-აღჳრედსა “they placed him upon a mount with a golden bridle”.


50 Another erroneous entry copied by Čubinašvili from Saba is goşţelakni “golden earring”; cf. Gippert (1993: 73–76).
The Georgian-English Dictionary thus opens the huge lexicographical treasury of A. Čikobava’s work for non-native speakers of Georgian. At the same time, there is a major difference in that Rayfield and his co-authors tried to cover the Georgian language diachronically, including lots of “obsolete” words from Middle and Old Georgian times, the latter mostly taken from I. Abulaže’s “Materials of an Old Georgian dictionary” (1973) and its continuation by Z. Sarǯvelaǯe (1995). Even though it is not stated explicitly, Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani’s *Leksikoni* also left its traces in it, including some dubious or erroneous words; this is true, e.g., for the obscure “sedan chair” *horli* (see above) and its variant *horeli*, which obviously arrived here via D. Ćubinaųvili’s dictionaries. On the other hand, *aģviredi* is not perpetuated as such but only in the compound *okrosaģviredi* “with a golden bridle”, which is a younger variant of *okro-aģwredi*. Be that as it may, the Georgian-English Dictionary is well suited to illustrate the complexities of the Georgian verbal system once again. As in the *Ganmartebiti Leksikoni*, perfectivising preverbs are indicated by the addition of aorist and perfect forms below a 3rd singular present lemma form. This is the case, e.g., with *aģeb(s) “opens”, for which Rayfield provides *gaģo* and *gauģia* (p. I, 122) just as Čikobava did (but without half brackets). In a case like *aģebinebs*, the causative of *aģeb*, a total of

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51 The basic principles of the dictionary are outlined in Čikobava (1950–64: I, 011–013).
52 Both these dictionaries also use the *masdar* as the basis of lemmatic entries of verbs; finite forms are only listed if the verb in question has no verbal noun or for cross-references.
54 Both words appear as separate lemmas in Rayfield (2006: II, 1727), the latter referring to the former.
55 Ćubinaųvili (1840: 691 and 1887: 1778) has the one lemma *horeli*, *horli* with the meaning given as “palanquin” etc.
six preverb combinations are given together with their different meanings, viz. ga-ağebina “has sth. opened”, but also a-ağebina “has sth. booked”, amo- “has sth. drawn”, mi- “has sth. admitted”, še- “has sth. painted”, and čamo- “makes sb. vomit sth.” (ib.). At the same time, the forms display the systematical interchange of version vowels within paradigms and beyond; note, e.g., the perfect form ga-u-ğia with “objective” version vowel vs. “neutral” -a- in the present a-ğebs and the aorist ga-a-go, or the “relative” version vowel -e- in the passive future and aorist forms ağ-e-vseba and ağ-e-vso “will be / was filled for sb.” which disappears in the perfect form ağ--vsebia. For the causative ağebinebs, the underlying (basic) verb is indicated as a-i-ğebs, with the “subjective” version vowel -i-, etc. And of course, irregularities and suppletivism in the formation of verbal paradigms had to be accounted for, too. E.g., the 3rd person future form ava as the lemmatic entry “he will go up” is provided together with the 1st and 2nd person forms aval and axval, as well as the 3rd person plural avlen, but also the three singular persons of the aorist, avedi, axvedi and avida, and the 3rd person perfect, asula (I, p. 23); except for avlen, all these forms are also indicated in the Gənmartebiti Leksi̇koní, which additionally lists the 1st and 2nd person perfect, avsulvar and asulxar (I, 143). The lemma ava is referred to from its more regular “by-form” avals (ib.), but not from adis, which is the 3rd person present form “he goes up” (I, 20); as the corresponding aorist and perfect forms show (avida, axvedi, asula), this is actually the suppletive present tense of avals(is), so that there is a notable lack of cross-reference here – again in agreement with the Gənmartebiti Leksi̇koní.

2.10 Kita Tschenkéli (Kıta [Peţre] Čxenkeli)

The intention to avoid incoherencies like this may have been the reason for Kita Tschenkéli, a Georgian from Kutaisi who came to study in Germany in 1920 and spent most of his life in Hamburg and Zurich, to choose a totally different way of representing Georgian verbs. In his three-volume “Georgisch-deutsches Wörterbuch”, which appeared in fascicles between 1965 and 1974, this author does provide verbal nouns (styled “infinitives”) like ağeba “Einnahme, Erhebung …” or ağelveba “Wogen, Brandung, Erregung …” and participles such as (ağelvebjuli “bewegt, erregt …” as lemmatic entries (p. I, 43–44), but by far not consistently and in a much less exhaustive way than the Gənmartebiti Leksi̇koní does. The major difference from the latter consists in the fact that Tschenkéli does not register finite forms of verbs as lemmas. Instead, his basic entry form is the abstract verbal root, under which all subparadigms of transitive (“T”), medial (“MV”), passive (“P”, “RP”), “indirect” (“IV”), and causative formations (“KT”) are subsumed, all indicated primarily by 1st person singular present and future forms together with the corresponding aorist and perfect forms and thus including all preverb combinations and versions, plus the relevant verbal nouns. This results in an extremely complex structure of entries, which sometimes extend over many pages as in the case of the root ɣ (II, 1602–1609) underlying the verb noted as ağebs in Čikobava’s and Rayfields dictionaries.

First of all, this root is divided into two (ɣ₁ and ɣ₂, with the two distinct basic meanings of “open” and “take”). Under ɣ₁, we first find a transitive verb in “neutral” version (“T₁”), vağeb, which, in combinations with the preverbs amo-, ga-, gamo-, da-, še-, and şemo- in its perfective forms, carries meanings like “aufklappen”, “öffnen”, “offenbaren”, “aufsperren”, “aufmachen”, or “halb aufmachen”. Next, Tschenkéli lists the transitive verb in “objective” version (“T₃”), vuğeb, again with four preverb combinations (ga-, da-, še-, şemo-) and meanings such as “open sth. for sb.” (“etw. für jdn. öffnen”). Under the same root, we further find the causative (“KT”) vağebineb, with five preverb combinations, and the passive in “relative” version (“RP”), eğeba, which only combines with ga-. Under ɣ₂, the first formation listed is the transitive verb in “subjective” version (“T₂”),
vigion, with a total of 12 perverb combinations and meanings like “aufnehmen, auf sich nehmen”, then another “objective” vigation (with 11 preverbs), the transitive verb in “superessive” version (“T3”), vaigion (with preverb a-), another causative vaigebin, the passive with preradical i-, igeba, the “relative” passive egeba, the “relative” passive of the causative, (“RP1 b”) vegebin “become the object of gossip” (“Gegenstand des Geredes/Klatsches w[erden]”), and the “indirect” verb (“IV1”) maigebins “meaning something like “sth. makes me vomit”.

In the case of suppletivism, Tschenkéli’s solution consists in subsuming the root variants supplying each other in a given (set of) verbal paradigm(s) under one main root entry. In the maximal case of the verb meaning “go”, this results in a total of nine roots being joined with svl, viz. dir1, val1, va1, vl1, ved, vel1, vid, s4, and arl (II, 1219–1241). This permits to bring together under one heading present formations such as a-vliivar “I go up” with the future a-val, the aorist a-vedi, the perfect a-vsulvar, the pluperfect a-vsuliqavi, and corresponding forms of other persons such as the 3rd sg. present a-dis, the 3rd sg. aorist a-vida, or the 2nd sg. aorist a-xvedi; note that the main root form, svl, is only represented in verbal nouns such as a-svla.

2.10.1 Tschenkéli’s predecessors

There can be no doubt that Tschenkéli’s approach is linguistically well founded, and the detailed explanation of his method outlined in the introduction to the first volume of his Worterbuch (pp. XI–XXXI) is certainly one of the most thorough analyses of the Georgian verbal morphology ever published. Nevertheless, it must be stated that Tschenkéli was by no means the inventor of the root-based analysis of the Kartvelian verbal system. As a matter of fact, a similar method was applied in the early dictionaries of both Laz and Megrelian, which appeared as appendices to the grammars by Nikolaj Marr (1910) and Ioseb Kipšiże (1914), and it was certainly the former author who was responsible for this innovative solution. Looking back to M.-F. Brosset’s introduction to the Georgian-Russian-French dictionary by Davit Čubinašvili of 1840, we might suppose that the innovation was envisaged even some 70 years earlier, given that Brosset explicitly talks about “roots” and “radicals”; however, Brosset did not go so far as to suggest to take the root proper as the lemmatic entry form, as we have seen above. And even though it is likely that Marr did study Brosset’s works thoroughly, we may rather suspect that his preference for root-based entries derived from his preoccupation with Semitic languages such as Arabic or Hebrew, the lexicography of which has traditionally been based upon verbal roots. Whether or not Kita Tschenkéli met Marr in his youth, in Georgia or in Moscow, is unknown, and it is not very probable that he did, as his first object of study was law, not linguistics or philology; yet, he may well have become acquainted with Marián ideas in the first 25 years of his life, between 1895 and 1920, so that the assumption that his approach was lastly based upon Marr’s is anything but far-fetched.

2.10.2 Pondering pros and cons of the different approaches

The question remains which approach is better suited for the lexicographical representation of Georgian (and, correspondingly, the other Kartvelian languages). In my view, this depends a lot on the envisaged target group of users. Native speakers, who may look for definitions of meanings rather than grammatical information, will certainly prefer an approach which is less “analytical”, given that they will easily be able to derive verbal nouns from given finite forms, and they will not need much additional information as to the latter, maybe except for questions of normativity. In contrast to this,

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57 Tschenkéli, born 1895, studied law in Moscow from 1913 to 1917 before going to Germany in 1920.
non-native speakers, especially learners, may have difficulties in deriving verbal nouns while the extraction of an abstract root from given finite forms may be a simpler task; so they may prefer a root-based approach as the one applied by K. Tschenkéli. For linguists, too, the approach of analysing morphological structures in a given verbal form with a view to determine a root may be more adequate, while for non-linguists it may remain awkward. Thus, there is no clear preponderance for the one or the other approach, and we can simply be happy that we have access to the rich lexicon of Georgian in so different ways.

3 Outlook: The GNC Approach

In the 21st century, lexicology is undergoing notable changes due to the necessity of applying it in digital environments. With the emergence of big text corpora, the need to structure the data has made lemmatisation a primary task beyond lexicography proper, and this is also true for Georgian. In the project of the Georgian National Corpus (GNC), which is meant to cover the whole diachrony of written Georgian up to the present day, this task had to be envisaged right from the beginning, and the approach chosen is, so-to-say, a twofold one. Given that one of the main functions of a corpus is to provide search functions, it is clear that a form like *axval*, the 2nd person sg. future meaning “you will go up”, must be retrievable as such, which is easy to implement; within the 200 Mio. word forms contained in the GNC, a search for the form yields a total of 93 attestations from the 12th century on. However, for more sophisticated analyses, e.g. on the syntax of a given verb, it will be indispensable to be able to search for all the different tense, mood, aspect, and personal forms appearing in a given verbal paradigm altogether without having to enter all of them separately. In the GNC, this is provided by the verbal nouns, in the given case *asvla*, being linked as searchable lemmatic entries to every single finite form. At the same time, the morphological analysis is also provided, thus facilitating a search for the use of, e.g., 2nd person sg. forms independent of the verb they pertain to. Beyond that, the root analysis is also provided, thus admitting to search across the paradigms of all the individual verbal formations sharing this root, which in the given case is *svl[a] / v[a]l* (with the preverb *a-*). In this way, distinct forms like *axval* and its perfect tense equivalent, *asulxar*, are linked together via the same verbal noun, *asvla*, the same “head” root, *svl[a]*, and the same preverb, *a-*, all searchable in their own right, and the search for *asla* as their “simple” common lemma yields a total of 13,040 attestations comprising forms so different as the 3rd person sg. aorist *avida*, the 3rd person pl. imperfect *adioden*, the 2nd person sg. imperative *adi*, or the 1st person sg. future *aval*. Searching for the root-based lemma *svl*, we even receive 871,001 hits, a figure that gives an idea of the diversity of formations sharing this root.

It is clear that the implementation of the underlying grammatical knowledge base cannot yet be 100% reliable, all the more since spelling errors in the corpus still exist. However, the GNC can and will be improved continuously, and the increasing number of linguistic investigations that are based upon it shows that the attempt to combine both the “verbal noun” and the “root” approach was well founded.

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