chapter 40

Early Georgian

KEVIN TUITE

1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Georgian is a member of the Kartvelian family, one of the three indigenous Caucasian language families. Its sister languages are Mingrelian and Laz, two closely related languages spoken in western Georgia and northeast Turkey, and Svan, spoken in the highlands of northwest Georgia. There has been much speculation about the relation of Kartvelian to other language families. Typological similarities with Indo-European and Afro-Asiatic and an impressive number of vocabulary items which appear to be shared with these families have led some linguists to include Kartvelian as a peripheral member of the so-called Nostratic macrofamily, a phyletic grouping encompassing many of the principal Eurasiatic language groups. Even if the Nostratic hypothesis is not correct, the Kartvelian languages show the imprint of long-standing contact with Indo-European and Semitic speech communities, going back four thousand years or more. Most specialists locate the Proto-Kartvelian speech community either in or somewhat to the south of modern-day Georgia.

Ancient Near Eastern documents as early as the twelfth–eleventh centuries BC mention tribal groups which are likely to have included Proto-Georgian speakers. The first clear indications of Georgian political entities date from the seventh–sixth centuries BC, by which time Greek colonies are installed in Colchis, on the east coast of the Black Sea, and much of Transcaucasia and Asia Minor is under Persian domination. The two major early Georgian kingdoms – Colchis in the west and Iberia in the east – began to consolidate at this time.

During this period the Aramaic language, the lingua franca of the far-flung Persian Empire, was adopted as a medium for written communication in Georgia, as attested in inscriptions in the period preceding the introduction of Christianity. The adoption of Georgian as a written language is usually seen as a consequence of the conversion of the elite to Christianity in the middle of the fourth century.

The oldest Georgian monuments are written in well-formed letters, and the *karagmebi,* abbreviations of common words and sacred names, show considerable uniformity from the earliest texts onward: for example, **o~o** (*oüpalo* "Lord"), **š~e** (*šeic'q'ale* "have mercy [on somebody]!"). It is evident that the new literary language built upon an already well-established cultural infrastructure, appropriating the functions, conventions, and status of both the written language of pagan Georgia (Aramaic) and the new state religion (Greek, Armenian, and Syriac).

For the purposes of this chapter, we will employ the following periodization of the Georgian literary language:

949

(1)   *Early Old Georgian (EG):*   5th–8th centuries
       Classical Old Georgian (COG)   9th–11th centuries
       Middle Georgian: 12th–18th centuries
       Modern Georgian (ModG):   18th–20th centuries

The Early Old Georgian corpus contains eight manuscript texts (all but one of them palimpsests) and about a dozen inscriptions; altogether, it would fill a book of little over two hundred pages. Two dialects are represented in these materials, known to scholars as *Xanmet'i* "superfluous *x*'s" and *Haemet'i* "superfluous *h*'s." The first term was coined by the tenth-century translator Giorgi Mtac'mideli, and reflects the most salient feature of these texts from the perspective of a Classical Old Georgian speaker: a second-person subject (S2) and third-person object (O3) prefix *x-*, where the Classical language has *h-*, *s-*, or zero. The two Haemet'i texts make consistent use of *h-* in these contexts. Consider the first words of Matthew 17:4 in three early translations (on the agglutinative morphology of the verb, see §§4.3; 4.3.3, for a list of abbreviations specific to this chapter, see §6):

(2)   *Xanmet'i* (*c.* 500)   mi=**x**-u-g-o p'et're da **x**-rkw-a iesu-s
       Haemet'i (*c.* 750)   mi=**h**-u-g-o p'et're da **h**-rkw-a iesu-s
       Hadish (897) (COG)   mi=**Ø**-u-g-o p'et're da **h**-rkw-a iesu-s
                                   (Pᵥ-**O3**-OʙVɴ-answer-S3sg. Peter and **O3**-say-S3sg.
                                      Jesus-DAT.)
                                   "Peter answered and said to Jesus"

The retention of two verb forms with S2 *x-* in all known varieties of Georgian implies that the Xanmet'i dialect is especially conservative in this respect. Most Xanmet'i texts come from eastern Georgia, and the single Haemet'i inscription is in the west. While the two dialects doubtless derive from distinct varieties of spoken Georgian, this by no means implies that they corresponded closely to the Georgian spoken by the individual scribes who produced the documents in our corpus. There is evidence of diglossia as early as the Cambridge fragments of Jeremiah, *c.* AD 600. In what is otherwise a solidly Xanmet'i text, three verbs have O3 prefixes in *h-* rather than *x-*, a *lapsus calami* indicative of a Haemet'i-speaking monk copying from a Xanmet'i original. The only extended Haemet'i text, the eighth-century lectionary fragments, appears to have been composed by a grammatically unsophisticated scribe who already spoke a dialect similar to Classical Old Georgian, to judge by the extremely high error ratio: the *h*-prefix is missing in fully 36 percent of the verbs where it ought to appear (see Sarjveladze 1971:18).

2.   WRITING SYSTEM

The Early Old Georgian documents are written in the alphabetic script known as *mrglovani* ("rounded") or *asomtavruli* ("capital letters"), the oldest of the three Georgian scripts. Asomtavruli writing was used throughout the Old Georgian period, but with formal changes which enable paleographers to arrive at an approximate dating of manuscripts almost at first glance. In the earliest manuscripts and inscriptions the letters are well-rounded and wider than those in later documents, and the top part of the letters *b*, *q'*, and *u* forms a closed loop.

Table 40.1	The Early Georgian Asomtravuli script with numerical values				
Character	Transcription	Numerical value	Character	Transcription	Numerical value
Ⴀ	a	1	Ⴐ	r	100
Ⴁ	b	2	Ⴑ	s	200
Ⴂ	g	3	Ⴒ	t'	300
Ⴃ	d	4	Ⴓ	ü	400
Ⴄ	e	5	Ⴔ	p	500
Ⴅ	v	6	Ⴕ	k	600
Ⴆ	z	7	Ⴖ	ɣ	700
Ⴇ	ê(ey)	8	Ⴗ	q'	800
Ⴈ	t	9	Ⴘ	š	900
Ⴉ	i	10	Ⴙ	č	1,000
Ⴊ	k'	20	Ⴚ	c	2,000
Ⴋ	l	30	Ⴛ	j	3,000
Ⴌ	m	40	Ⴜ	c'	4,000
Ⴍ	n	50	Ⴝ	č'	5,000
Ⴎ	y	60	Ⴞ	x	6,000
Ⴏ	o	70	Ⴟ	q	7,000
Ⴐ	p'	80	Ⴠ	ǰ	8,000
Ⴑ	ž	90	Ⴡ	h	9,000

The later Georgian scripts, known as *nusxa-xucuri* ("ecclesiastic minuscule") and *mxedruli* ("knightly," i.e., "secular"), evolved from the asomtavruli alphabet in the course of the Classical period.

In terms of its time of creation, relationship to the Greek alphabet, and general morphology, the Georgian asomtavruli script forms a group with the other two early Christian Transcaucasian alphabets: the Armenian and the Caucasian Albanian. All three incorporate the Greek letter order, but without the straightforward appropriation of Greek characters that marked the creation of most Greek-based alphabets. Except for a handful of cases, the letters of the Armenian and Georgian alphabets are either entirely new creations, or radical transformations of Greek characters. The creator (or creators) of the Georgian alphabet placed the additional characters needed for the phonemes lacking a Greek equivalent at the end, after *k*, the equivalent of Greek *chi* (k^h). Other Early Georgian grammatological features calqued on the Greek model include the creation of an equivalent to *eta* (it represents the diphthong /ey/), and the use of an *oü* digraph to represent the phonemes /u/ or /w/ (e.g., *čwen* "we, us," spelled *čoüen* in Old Georgian).

Table 40.2 The Early Georgian consonants							
	Stops and affricates			Fricatives		Nasals	Approximants
	Voiced	Aspirated	Ejective	Voiced	Voiceless		
(Bi-) Labial	b	p	p'	v	—	m	w
Dental	d	t	t'			n	
Alveolar	j [dz]	c [ts]	c' [ts']	z	s		r l
Palato-alveolar	ǰ[dʒ]	č[tʃ]	č' [tʃ']	ž[ʒ]	š [ʃ]		y [j]
Velar	g	k	k'				
Uvular	—	q	q'	γ [ʁ]	x [χ]		
Glottal					h		

3. PHONOLOGY

3.1 Phonemic inventory

As Caucasian languages go, Georgian has a fairly restrained phonemic inventory. The stops and affricates come in triplets (voiced, voiceless aspirated, and voiceless ejective, i.e., glottalized), and the fricatives in pairs (voiced and voiceless). There are five vowels, without any distinction of length: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/. The consonants of Xanmet'i Georgian are listed in Table 40.2. The transcription used here is similar to those employed by most Caucasologists and Armenologists. (International Phonetic Alphabet equivalents are included in square brackets.)

3.2 Allophonic variation

The only allophonic alternations of note in Early Georgian are between [w] and [v], and between [i] and [y]. In general, [w] is employed immediately after obstruents and [v] in other contexts (e.g., in representations of the first-person subject prefix: *v-i-c-i* "I know something," but *x-w-e-ji-eb* "I seek something"). The glide [y] only appears as the non-syllabic alternant of [i] after vowels, when the latter is the initial phoneme of a case suffix.

3.3 Phonotaxis

Although Early Georgian words can contain daunting sequences of consonants, for example, *msxwerp'l-* "victim," *xtnda* "(s)he liked it," the structure of lexemes is constrained by phonotactic rules. Many groups of consonants represent so-called harmonic clusters, found in all Kartvelian languages. These consist of an anterior stop, affricate, or fricative followed by a posterior (velar or uvular) consonant, other than /q/, sharing the same voice-onset features; some examples are: *ǰγola-* "leading," *c'q'al-* "water," *sxwa-* "other." A harmonic cluster functions phonotactically as a single consonant. There is also a class of "nonharmonic clusters," which are the mirror image of harmonic groups: back consonants precede front, and the voice-onset features are different, for example, *k'bil-* "tooth," *č'de-* "notch." Sonorants, especially /m/ and /r/, can precede or follow consonants or clusters within the same lexemes.

Table 40.3	Declension of mojγw[a]r–"leader"			
			Long	
	Short	Singular	n-/t-plural	eb-plural
ABS.	mojγwar-Ø	mojγwar-i	mojγwar-n-i	mojγwr-eb-i
ERG.	mojγwar-man	mojγwar-man	mojγwar-t-a	mojγwr-eb-man
DAT.	mojγwar-s	mojγwar-s-a	mojγwar-t-a	mojγwr-eb-s-a
GEN.	mojγwr-is	mojγwr-is-a	mojγwar-t-a	mojγwr-eb-is-a
INSTR.	mojγwr-it	mojγwr-it-a	(mojγwr-it-a)	mojγwr-eb-it-a
ADV.	mojγwr-ad	mojγwr-ad	(mojγwr-ad)	mojγwr-eb-ad
VOC.	—	mojγwar-o	mojγwar-n-o	mojγwr-eb-o

4. MORPHOLOGY

4.1 Word structure

The typical Kartvelian nominal root is monosyllabic, with the most common shape being XVX or XV (where X = a single consonant or cluster, optionally preceded and/or followed by sonorants; see §3.3): for example, *mc'q'ems-* "shepherd," *qorc-* "flesh," *t'ba-* "lake." Verbal roots can be either monosyllabic or nonsyllabic, some of the latter comprising no more than a single consonant: *-k'rjal-* "forbid," *-c'q'-* "begin," *-γ-* "receive." Vowel-initial roots are less common, and tend to be limited to deictics and pronouns, numerals, and words of foreign origin.

4.2 Nominal morphology

The Early Georgian common noun is declined for seven cases (absolutive, ergative, dative, genitive, instrumental, adverbial, and vocative) and two numbers (singular and plural). Many noun stems, in particular those with a final syllable containing the vowels /a/ or /e/ followed by an approximant (e.g., *mojγwar-*), undergo syncope of the vowel when the stem is followed by a declensional morpheme of the configuration -VC- (e.g., *mojγwr-is*). Undoubtedly, at one time syncope was automatically conditioned by stress placement or perhaps vowel length; by the earliest texts, however, it was no longer predictable. The full declensional paradigm of a syncopating common noun is given here (on the short and long case forms, see §4.2.1.2).

The declension of vowel-final stems is slightly more complicated. As a general rule, the relative strength of vowels when two of them come into contact across a morpheme boundary follows the hierarchy: *o*, *u* > *i* > *e* > *a*. For example, a suffix beginning in /-i/ added to a stem ending in /a-/ or /e-/ will cause the latter to drop, whereas the same /-i/ will change to /-y/ when preceded by a stem-final /o-/ or /u-/: for example, *kwa+is* > *kwis* "stone-GEN."; *xuro+is* > *xuroys* "carpenter-GEN." The long absolutive suffix /-i/, however, always becomes /-y/ when added to a vowel-final noun (e.g., *kwa+i* > *kway* "stone-ABS."). When two vowels of the set /e/, /o/, /u/ meet, both are expressed without reduction or loss: *sarc'muno+o* > *sarc'munoo* "faithful-VOC."

4.2.1   Nominal cases

In the present section each of the seven cases is discussed, as well as the long and short case form distinction

4.2.1.1   *Absolutive and ergative cases*

Early Georgian was a language of the split-ergative type, with ergative-absolutive alignment in certain circumstances, and nominative-accusative alignment in others. The Series II verb forms, marking perfective aspect, assign absolutive case to the subjects of intransitive verbs and the direct objects of transitive verbs. The ergative case is assigned to the subjects of transitive verbs. The imperfective Series I forms, by contrast, assign absolutive case to both transitive and intransitive subjects, and mark the direct object in the dative case.

4.2.1.2   *Long and short case forms*

The formal and functional distinction between the long and short forms of the cases has received extensive study. To summarize it briefly, the absolutive and ergative endings, and the vowel /-a/ added to the dative, genitive, and instrumental, derive from postposed demonstratives used as direct articles (as we shall see, this process occurred a second time in the history of Georgian). The attested distribution of short and long absolutive noun phrases reflects a no-longer productive indefinite/definite opposition in the nominal system. The principal uses of the bare-stem absolutive are in (i) predicate nominals (*tkwen xq'avt igi* **kwab-Ø** *avazak'ta* [Lk 19:46] "you made it **a den** of thieves"); (ii) naming constructions (*romelsa hrkwian* **betlem-Ø** [Lk 2:4] "which they call **Bethlehem**"); (iii) time and distance expressions, especially when quantified by numerals (*xiq'o mun* **ormeoc-Ø** *dɣe-Ø* [Mk 1:13] "he was there **forty days**"); (iv) compound verbs incorporating a noun stem with generic reference (*nu* **k'ac**=*k'lav* [Mk 10:19] "thou shalt not kill," literally: "thou shalt not **person**=kill").

4.2.1.3   *Dative case*

This case has the widest range of functions. It is assigned to indirect objects, and to the direct objects of Series I verbs. A large number of verbs, mostly statives and passives, assign dative case and indirect-object status to their subjects. As would be expected, these are primarily verbs of sensation (**ma-s** *x-c'q'ur-i-s* "**(s)he-DAT**. is thirsty"), of emotion (**ma-s** *x-u-q'war-s* "**(s)he-DAT**. loves somebody"), and of possession (**ma-s** *x-u-c* "**(s)he-DAT**. has something"). The dative also appears in time and place expressions: **ma-s** **žam-sa** *xrkwa iesu* (Mk 3:3) "**At that time-DAT**. Jesus said"; *xiq'o igi* **ierusalêm-s** (Jn 2:23) "He was **in Jerusalem-DAT**."

4.2.1.4   *Genitive case*

The Early Georgian genitive signals a fairly broad range of relationships between nouns: possession, membership, kinship, substance, and so forth. The genitive optionally marks certain argument–verb dependencies when these are nominalized (*xicit* **nič̌-isa k'etil-isa** *micemay* [Mt 7:11] "you know how to give good things," lit. "you know the giving **of good things**"), though nonfinite verbs can alternatively assign the same cases as their finite counterparts. The long-form genitive can also indicate motion toward a person, rather like Greek πρός + accusative (e.g., *movida* **iesu-ysa** [Mt 14:29] "he came **toward Jesus**"). The short genitive occurs in compounds (**mɣdel-t** *mojɣwarni* [Mt 27:62] "chief priests," lit. "leaders **of the priests**"), and in certain adverbial expressions with a quantifier (*sam* **gz-is** [Mk 14:30] "three **times**").

4.2.1.5   Instrumental case

This case marks a wide range of instruments, means, or accessories (*šemosili* **samosl-ita sp'et'ak'-ita** [Mk 16:5] "dressed **in white garments**"). The short instrumental marks the place from which motion occurs, a usage which opposes it to the allative sense of the adverbial case: *iesu mosrul ars* **huriast'an-it** *galilea-d* (Jn 4:47) "Jesus has come **from Judea** (instr.) to Galilee (adv.)."

4.2.1.6   Adverbial case

In addition to the allative function mentioned immediately above, this case is employed to derive adverbial expressions from adjectives and nouns (*brc'q'invale-**d*** "splendid-**ly**"). The adverbial case of the verbal noun functions like an Indo-European infinitive (*ic'q'o* **gamosxma-d** *romelni xq'iddes t'redebsa* [Lk 19:45] "he began **to expel** those who were selling doves").

4.2.1.7   Vocative case

This case is believed to be of more recent origin than the other six. Titles and common nouns take the vocative in *-o*. Proper names are rarely used in direct address in the Early Georgian corpus, but when they are, they are in the bare-stem form (*c'inac'armet'q'wel-o* **davit**, *gwitxar* [*Mrv.* 4.3] "Prophet (voc.) **David**, tell us . . . ").

4.2.2   Plural marking

Early Georgian has two structurally distinct means of marking nominal plurality. By far the most frequently used is the synthetic *n-/t-* plural declension. The *n*-rectus-plural suffix is limited to the absolutive and vocative, and may be historically related to the plural absolutive suffix of the verb (see §4.3.3 [**9**]). The single oblique plural morpheme *-t-(a)* can represent the dative, genitive, or ergative cases; the instrumental and adverbial do not appear to have had distinct plural forms in this declension (cf. the instrumental with plural reference in Mt 15:8: *eri ese* **bag-ita mat-ita** *p'at'iv mcems* "these people honor me **with their lip(s)**").

The agglutinative *eb-* plural suffix, followed by the case endings of the singular declension, appears only a couple of dozen times in the Early Georgian corpus, sometimes in conjunction with *n-/t-* plural nouns: *brm-**eb**-i da q'ruv-**n**-i* (Mt 15:30) "the blind (*eb*-plural) and the deaf (*n*-plural)." While there is no evidence of a semantic distinction between the two plural morphemes in Early Georgian, only *n*-plural nouns can control plural agreement in the verb and within the noun phrase, whereas *eb*-plurals are syntactically singular: *rabami kw-**eb**-i ars* "what large stones there are (lit. **is**)" (Mk 13:1).

4.2.3   Definite articles

In what appears to be a renewal of the prehistoric means of signaling this category, demonstrative pronouns placed after the first word of the noun phrase serve to indicate definiteness. Broadly speaking, the Early Georgian definite article functions similarly to its French and English counterparts. In the episode of the healing of the man with the withered hand (Mk 3:1–5), for example, the protagonist and his hand are first introduced through indefinite nouns: *da xiq'o mun* **k'aci** *romelsa* **qeli** *ganqmel xedga* (Mk 3:1) "And there was **a man** who had **a** withered **hand**." Further on in the story, when they are mentioned again, the definite articles are employed: *da xrkwa* **k'acsa mas**: *ganiratx qeli šeni . . . da k'walad moxego* **qeli igi** (Mk 3:5) "And he said **to the man**: Stick out your hand . . . and thereupon **the hand** was restored to him."

4.2.4   Pronouns

4.2.4.1   Personal pronouns and proper names

First- and second-person pronouns, the personal relative/interrogative pronoun *vi-n* "who," and proper names do not have a distinct ergative case form. In addition, the first- and second-person pronouns lack distinct dative and vocative forms as well, using the bare stem in these contexts:

(3)		1st sg.	1st pl.	2nd sg.	2nd pl.	vin	*Proper names*
ABS./VOC./ ERG.		me	čwen	šen	tkwen	vi-n "who"	iesu "Jesus"
DAT.		me	čwen	šen	tkwen	vi-s	iesu-s
GEN.		čem-i	čwen-i	šen-i	tkwen-i	vi-s-(a)	iesu-ys-(a)
ADV.		čem-da	čwen-da	šen-da	tkwen-da	—	iesu-d
INSTR.		čem-it-(a)	čwen-it-(a)	šen-it-(a)	tkwen-it-(a)	—	iesu-yt

The genitive-case stem of the personal pronouns serves as a base for possessive adjectives: for example, *mama-man* **tkwen**-*man* (father-ERG. your$_{pl.}$-ERG.), *mam-isa* **tkwen**-*isa* (father-GEN. your$_{pl.}$-GEN.,), etc. "your father."

4.2.4.2   Interrogative/indefinite pronouns

The principal interrogative pronouns are: *vi-* "who"; *romel-* "which"; *ra-* "what," and its derivatives *ra-ysa-twis* "why" and *ra-oden-* "how much / how many." These can be converted into indefinite pronouns by the addition of the suffix *-me*: *vi-n-me* "someone," *ra-y-me* "something," etc.

4.2.4.3   Relative pronoun

The relative pronoun *passe-partout* is *romel-*, which can have animate or inanimate antecedents. When the relative clause is necessary for the identification of the referent, *romel-* can be accompanied by a demonstrative, almost always *igi*, which does not decline in this context: *ara ese ars=a* **romel-sa igi** *xejiebdes mok'lvad?* (not that-ABS. is=QUES. **which-DAT. DEM.** they-were-seeking to.kill-ADV.; Jn 7:25) "Is this not **the one whom** they sought to kill?"

4.2.4.4   Demonstrative pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns come in three sets, with suppletive absolutive and non-absolutive (oblique) stems. They take the same case and number suffixes as common nouns, save for the archaic ergative singular ending *-n*.

(4)	absolutive	oblique	meaning
I.	ese	ama-	"this"
II.	ege	maga-	"that" (associated with interlocutor)
III.	igi	ma-	"that" (remote); basic 3rd-person pronouns "she," "he," "it," "they"

All of these demonstratives double as definite articles. The set II demonstratives, although commonly encountered in conversation, are relatively rare in writing, and hence sparsely represented in the Early Georgian corpus. As would be expected for pronouns associated with the real or metaphoric locus of the interlocutor, they occur almost exclusively in reported speech. At the conclusion of a discussion, for example, Jesus is quoted as saying:

*ara q'(ove)lta dait'ion sit'q'way **ege*** (Mt 19:11) "Not everyone will accept **that** teaching" (i.e., the teaching which the interlocutors have just mentioned). The set III demonstratives are also the unmarked third-person pronouns, and as such have a far higher frequency of occurrence than the other two sets combined: ***ma-n** xrkwa **ma-s*** (Lk 15:27) "he-ERG. said to him-DAT."

4.3 Verbal morphology

The Early Georgian verb is morphologically more complex than the noun, but its generally agglutinative structure permits an analysis by *morpheme slots* and regularities of co-occurrence. In this section, the longest in the chapter, we will begin with an overview of (i) the three verb classes and (ii) the three paradigm series; then embark on a detailed examination of the morphology, slot by slot, followed by a presentation of the semantics of the tense-aspect-mood paradigms (the=sign is used in the glosses to segment cliticized or incorporated lexical elements, such as preverbs, clitic pronouns, and incorporated noun stems, from the internal morphology of the verb).

4.3.1   Verb classes

Georgian philologists divide the verbs of the classical language into three classes, also known as *voices* or *conjugations*, according to their morphology, semantics, and valence. The same tripartite division is employed here, with one minor change.

4.3.1.1   Transitive class

This class includes all verbs having Series II forms that assign ergative case to their subjects. Almost all of these verbs are in fact transitive, but a goodly number are either monovalent (*man imruša* [Lk 16:18] "he-ERG. committed adultery") or bivalent with an indirect object but no direct object (*man mas mixugo* "he-ERG. him-DAT. answered").

4.3.1.2   Intransitive class

The *intransitive class* includes both true passives, derived from transitive roots, and basic intransitives. There are four subgroups in this class:

1. *i-prefixal*: Such verbs are marked by the version vowel *-i-* (see §4.3.3 [**6**]) before the verb root (slot 6), preceded by a dummy third-person object prefix (see §4.3.3 [**4**]). Always monovalent, their only argument is a subject assigned absolutive case: *igi x-**i**-kmn-eb-i-s* (that:ABS. "O3"-PASS.-make-SM-TM-S3sg.) "something is being made, done."
2. *e-prefixal*: This subgroup is marked by the version vowel *-e-*, and comprises verbs that are almost always bivalent, with a subject assigned absolutive case and an indirect object assigned dative case: *igi mas x-**e**-kmn-eb-i-s* (that:ABS. that:DAT. O3-OʙVɴ-make-SM-TM-S3sg.) "something is being made, done to/for somebody."
3. *suffixal*: These verbs are marked by the suffix *-n* or *-d*. Many of these verbs are inchoative, often derived from nouns or adjectives: *igi gan=jlier-**d**-eb-i-s* (that:ABS. Pv=strong-PASS.-SM-TM-S3sg.) "somebody becomes strong."
4. *root intransitive*: These verbs have no special marker and constitute a small, nonproductive, and archaic group: *igi še=k'rb-eb-i-s* (that:ABS. Pv=gather-SM-TM-S3sg.) "(group) gathers together."

Table 40.4 Early Georgian verb classes ("conjugations")			
	Transitive class	Intransitive class	Atelic class
Semantic characteristics	Agentive, accomplishment verbs	Root intransitive, inchoative, passive	Atelic stative and activity verbs
Syntactic characteristics	Assign ERG. in Series II; inversion in Series III	Never assign ERG.	Simplest (archaic?) Series II forms do not assign ERG.
Range of verb forms	All 3 series	All 3 series	Typically Series I only; rare examples with periphrastic or "borrowed" Series II and III

4.3.1.3   Atelic verb class

The third class, which I have designated "atelic verbs," comprises verbs used to describe an ongoing state or activity, without a foregrounded beginning or end point. The atelic class includes statives (-*kw*-/-*kwn*- "have," -*ši*- "be hungry") and activity verbs (-*kadag*- "preach," -*ɣaɣad*- "cry out"). One important morphological difference between these and verbs of the other two classes, consistent with their semantics, is the absence of an opposition between perfective and imperfective forms. Each verb selects a single past indicative and future/conjunctive paradigm, usually from Series I, less often from Series II (the term "conjunctive" [Georgian *k'avshirebiti*] is used by Georgian grammarians to denote a set of verb forms with subjunctive, optative, or future meaning):

(5)   *present:*   x-a-kw-s "somebody has something"   x-gon-i-es "somebody thinks something"
      past: x-a-kwn-d-a [=imperfect]   x-e-gon-a [=aorist]
      future/conjunctive: x-a-kwn-d-e-s [=impf. conjunctive]   x-e-gon-o-s [=optative]

4.3.2   Paradigm series

Georgian verb forms are traditionally grouped into paradigms marking a specific tense, mood, and aspect. The Early Georgian transitive or intransitive verb formed thirteen paradigms, as far as can be told from the corpus, of which one is sufficiently rare that its status as a productive form is questionable. The Georgian paradigms are grouped into three sets or *series*, based on their stem morphology and syntactic properties:

4.3.2.1   Series II ("aorist series")

These are the morphologically simplest verb forms, associated with perfective, more precisely, *punctiliar* aspect: in the structuring of the narrative, the event or state is represented as a closed-off point (opposed to the linear sense of the Series I paradigms). In some contexts the punctiliar aspect emphasizes the completion of the narrated event; in others its primary function is to mark the events forming the principal narrative line. The ergative case is only assigned by the Series II forms of transitive verbs.

4.3.2.2   Series I ("present series")

The Series I paradigms include a stem formant (*series marker*) which does not appear in the corresponding Series II forms. The two morphologically basic Series I paradigms mark the present indicative. The other four members of the series contain the stem augment

-d-/-od-/-id- and pair off with the Series II paradigms employing the same tense/mood vowels and person suffixes. The contrast is one of durative (or linear) aspect versus punctiliar; the Series I paradigms emphasize the duration of an event, either to imply noncompletion, or to set the temporal background for a foregrounded event marked by a Series II form. In prehistoric Kartvelian, the Series I paradigms were all intransitive, as reflected in their case-assigning properties (they cannot assign ergative case) and in their morphology (the series markers seem to be the relics of ancient antipassive suffixes).

4.3.2.3   Series III ("perfect series")

This is the most recent and formally most heterogeneous of the three series. In the Early Georgian period, only transitive verbs had synthetic Series III forms; intransitives formed their perfects analytically, as in Latin (*micemul ars = datum est*). The Early Georgian transitive and intransitive Series III forms are identical to the absolute (monovalent) and relative (bivalent) passives of state, and indeed the semantic distance between the passive and perfect functions of these forms is often not very large: the Series III paradigms are principally resultative in meaning, referring to a state of affairs proceeding from the completion of an earlier action.

(6)

	monovalent passive of state	*intransitive Series III*
c'eril ars	it is written (present)	it has been written (present perfect)
c'eril xiq'o	it was written (aorist)	it had been written (pluperfect)
	bivalent passive of state	*transitive Series III*
x-u-c'er-i-e-s	it is written to/for somebody (present)	somebody has written it (present perfect)
x-e-c'er-a	it was written to/for somebody (aorist)	somebody had written it (pluperfect)

One interesting syntactic feature of transitive Series III verbs is known as *inversion*: they assign dative case and indirect-object marking to their semantic subjects, and subject status to their direct objects. The case-shift phenomena associated with transitive verbs in Series I, II and III is illustrated in Table 40.5:

Table 40.5 Case shift					
	Transitive construction			Intransitive construction	
	Subject	Direct object		Subject	
Series I:	**mama-y**	je-sa	x-p'ov-eb-s	je-y	x-i-p'ov-eb-i-s
(nom.-acc.)	father-ABS.	son-DAT.	O3-find-SM-S3sg.	son-ABS.	O3-PASS.-find-SM-TM-S3sg.
	"The father finds (his) son"			"The son is being found"	
Series II:	**mama-man**	je-y	p'ov-a	je-y	x-i-p'ov-a
(erg.-abs.)	father-ERG.	son-ABS.	find-S3sg.	son-ABS.	O3-PASS.-find-S3sg.
	"The father found (his) son"			"The son was found"	
Series III:	**mama-sa**	je-y	x-u-p'ovn-i-e-s	je-y	p'ovebul ars
(dat.-abs.)	father-DAT.	son-ABS.	O3-OBVN-find-TM-TM-S3sg.	son-ABS.	found is
	"The father has found (his) son"			"The son has been found"	

4.3.3   Composition of the verb

The Early Georgian verb can be analyzed as consisting of fourteen slots, which may or may not be filled with a morpheme in a given verb form: (i) six prefixal positions; (ii) the root; and (iii) seven suffixal positions:

(7)   The fourteen slots of the Early Georgian verb

preverb$_1$-preverb$_2$=clitic$_3$=O$_4$-S$_5$-version$_6$-ʀᴏᴏᴛ$_7$-causative/passive/inchoative$_8$-
ABS.plural$_9$-series$_{10}$-imperfect$_{11}$-tense/mood$_{12}$-S$_{13}$=clitic$_{14}$

1. *Slot 1 – preverb with more or less predictable directional meaning*: The most common Early Georgian preverbs are: *mi-* "to, away"; *da-* "down"; *šta-* "down"; *aɣ-* "up"; *gan-* "out"; *še-* "in"; *c'ar-* "away"; *garda-* "across, downward"; *uk'un-* "backwards."

2. *Slot 2 – preverb mo- ("hither")*: Indicates movement toward the source, or point of reference (usually, but not always, the locus of the speaker). The addition of *mo-* to a slot 1 preverb gives combinations such as **še-mo**=*slva-ɣ* "come in, enter [toward source]." The preverb *da-* can also follow certain preverbs, adding what appears to be a nuance of intensity or iteration, as in **mi-mo-da**=*x-xed-v-id-a* (thither-hither-**da**-O3-look-SM-IMP.-S3sg.) "circumspectavit" (*PJ* 57). In Modern Georgian, preverbs have the additional function of signaling perfective aspect, as in the Slavic languages. Although this is not the case in Early Georgian, there is nonetheless a perceptible tendency for Series I verb forms to lack preverbs, while Series II forms generally have them. The preverbal slot of certain verbs can also be occupied by incorporated direct objects with generic reference: *ɣaɣad*=*q'-o* (**cry**=do-S3sg.) "he cried out."

3. *Slot 3 – preverbal clitic*: In Early Georgian, unlike the modern standard language, the bond between preverbs and verbs was sufficiently loose to permit the optional interposition of certain clitic particles, a phenomenon known as *tmesis*. The ten or so Early Georgian preverbal clitics form two semantic groups: (i) adverbials (*-re-* "a little"; *-oden-* "when"; *-ray-* "while, after") and (ii) indefinite pronominals (*-vietme-*, *-vinme-* "some [people]"; *-rayme-* "something"). Consider these examples: *še*=**oden**=*rižwneboda* (Jn 6:17) "**when** it was getting dark"; *mi*=**vietme**=*xuges mc'ignobarta ganta* (Mt 12:38) "**some** of the scribes addressed him."

4. *Slot 4 – morphological object prefix (Set O)*: The Set O person prefixes cross-reference, in the majority of contexts, an argument assigned the dative case. Given the complexity of Georgian case-assignment rules, this latter could be an indirect or direct object, or even the subject of an indirect or Series III transitive verb. First- and second-person absolutive direct objects also control Set O agreement. There are four Set O prefixes, forming a two-by-two array:

(8)   Morphological object (Set O) markers

	– hearer	*+ hearer*
+ speaker	m- (1st singular or exclusive)	gw- (1st inclusive)
– speaker	x- (h-) (3rd person)	g- (2nd person)

What appears to be a dummy third-person object prefix (O3) is attested in all Early Georgian *i*-prefixal passives, even though these are monovalent in surface structure: *mi*=**x-i**-*q'wan-a igi angeloz-ta-gan c'iaɣ-ta abraham-is-ta* (to=**O3?**-PASS.-bear-S3sg. he:ABS. angel-GEN.PL.-by bosom-DAT.PL. Abraham-GEN.-DAT.PL.; Lk 16:22) "he was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham." One possible explanation is that the *x*-prefix once marked agreement with the demoted deep-structure subject (e.g., "angels" in the above example).

5. *Slot 5 – morphological subject prefix (Set S)*: The Set S markers cross-reference the subjects of verbs with direct syntax, and the direct objects of verbs with indirect syntax. The prefixes indicate person only; number being marked by a suffix in slot 13:

(9) Morphological subject (Set S) markers

	singular (slot 5 or 13)	*plural (slot 5 and 13)*	
1st person	v/w-	v/w-	-t
2nd person	x- (h-)	x- (h-)	-t
3rd person	-s, -a, -n	-n, -es, -ed	

With one exception, the presence of a Set O prefix blocks the expression of the Set S prefix controlled by the morphological subject: for example, *šen me mo-**m**-c-e* (you me Pv=**O1excl**.-give-OPT.) "You~sg.~ will give it to me." The exception is the combination of third-person object (O3) and first-person subject markers (S1), in which case both are expressed in surface structure: *me mas mi=**x-w**-c-e* (I this:DAT. Pv=**O3-S1**-give-OPT.) "I will give it to him/her." In later Old Georgian, the order of the person prefixes reverses, with the S1 marker preceding the O3 prefix.

6. *Slot 6 – version vowel*: The grammatical category of *version* (Georgian *kceva*) reflects, roughly speaking, the relation between the action or the absolutive argument (direct object of a transitive verb or subject of an intransitive verb), and either the agent or indirect object. There are four formally distinct version relations, though only a few verbs distinguish all four, and many lack the distinction entirely.

6A. *Subjective version*: This formant indicates an activity either done for the benefit of the agent him- or herself, or directed toward a direct object linked to (or even identical to) the subject. It is marked by the version vowel *-i-* in all persons (*sibrjne-man **i**-šên-a tavisa twisisa saxli* [*999* Proverbs 9:1] "Wisdom built a home **for itself**"). Possibly of the same origin is the marker *-i-* in monovalent prefixal passives, which occupies the version vowel slot.

6B. *Objective version*: This marker indicates the presence of an indirect object: for example, *aγ=x-**u**-dgin-o-s mk'widri **jma-sa twis-sa*** (up=**O3**-OBVN-stand-OPT.-S3sg. offspring-ABS. brother-DAT. own-DAT.; Mt 22:24) "that he raise up offspring **for his brother**." It is generally marked by the version vowels *-u-* (3rd-person object) and *-i-* (1st- or 2nd-person object); prefixal passive verbs and four archaic transitives employ *-e-* (all persons).

6C. *Superessive version*: This is a less common version indicating the presence of an indirect object denoting some kind of surface *upon which* the action is accomplished: for example, *moxgwares k'icwi igi iesus da da=x-**a**-sx-es **mas** samoseli* (Mk 11:7) "They brought the colt to Jesus and set [their] clothing **upon it**." Superessive version is marked by the vowel *-a-* in all persons.

6D. *Neutral version*: Many version-marking verbs have a neutral form, with either the vowel *-a-* or no version marker at all.

In a handful of transitive verbs, the version vowel alternates with zero in the third-person subject forms, an alternation evidently once conditioned by stress placement in verbs with or without a syllabic person suffix: S2sg. *x-**a**-rkw-Ø* "you said something to somebody" versus S3sg. *x-**Ø**-rkw-a* "(s)he said something to somebody."

7. *Slot 7 – verb root*: Many verb roots undergo ablaut, of which the two principal patterns are as follows:

7A. *e -i- Ø*: These root vowels display the distribution: *e* (Tr. Series I; Intr. aorist S1/2), *i* (Tr. Series II), Ø (other Intr.). Consider, for example, *še=x-k'reb-s* "he gathers$_{tr}$" (Mt 12:30); *še=x-i-k'ri b-i* "you gather$_{tr}$ (habitually)" (Mt 25:24); *še=k'rb-es* "they gathered$_{intr}$" (Mt 13:2).

7B. *Ø -a*: The distribution is: Ø (most forms), *a* (Aorist S1/2); thus, *mo=k'l-a* "(s)he killed somebody," *mo=v-k'al* "I killed somebody."

Early Georgian ablaut is believed to be the outgrowth of prehistoric alternations related to syllable quantity, stress placement, and perhaps transitivity.

8. *Slot 8 – passive/inchoative or causative suffix*: Directly following the root is a slot reserved for the valence-altering suffixes *-d/-n* (passive/inchoative) and *-ev/-i(v)/-in* (causative). The former pair of allomorphs is used to form suffixal passives, with *-d* added mostly to stems ending in the sonorants /l/, /r/, or /n/, and *-n* in other contexts. The causative suffixes are often accompanied by the version vowel *-a-*: *aɣ=x-w-a-dg-in-eb* "I raise somebody," compare *aɣ=w-dg-eb-i* "I rise, get up."

9. *Slot 9 – plural absolutive suffix*: Series II and Series III verb forms (except for the suffixal passives and root intransitives) add a marker *-(e)n-* if the absolutive-case argument, denoting the direct object or intransitive subject, is formally plural (i.e., marked by the pluralizer *-n*, which may be related to *-(e)n-*): *rayta=mca x-i-did-n-es igi-n-i* (that-OPT. O3-PASS.-big-**Pl. Abs.**-S3pl. this-**Pl.**-Abs.; Mt 6:2) "that **they** be magnified"; *m-i-qsn-en čwen borot'isa-gan* (**O1excl.**-ОвVn-release-**Pl. Abs. us** evil-from; Mt 6:13) "deliver **us** from evil."

10. *Slot 10 – series marker (or "present/future stem formant")*: This is a lexically specified morpheme used to form the Series I stem of most verbs, for example:

(10) *Series I (imperfect):*   x-c-**em**-d-es   (O3-strike-**SM**-IMP.-S3pl.) "they were striking him"
   Series II (aorist):   x-c-**Ø**-es   (O3-strike-S3pl.) "they struck him"

The principal series markers are *-eb-*, *-av-*, and *-i-*; the less common allomorphs include *-am-*, *-ev-*, *-em-*, *-ob-*, and *-op-*. According to most experts, the series markers were once antipassive formants, deriving aspectually durative intransitives from transitive forms associated with punctiliar aspect. The vowels of some series markers undergo syncope when followed by certain suffixes, and the markers *-av* and *-am* undergo a vowel mutation that may reflect prehistoric umlaut: compare the forms *x-loc-av-s* "somebody implores somebody" (present); *x-loc-v-id-a* "somebody was imploring somebody" (S3sg. imperfect), and *x-loc-ev-d-Ø* "you were imploring somebody" (S2sg imperfect, < *x-loc-av-id-Ø*).

11. *Slot 11 – imperfect stem suffix*: The stem augment *-d/-od/-id* is used to form the imperfect and indeed all of the Series I paradigms except for the present and present iterative. The allomorph *-od* is employed by intransitives and some atelics; *-id* follows the series markers *-av* and *-am*; and *-d* appears elsewhere.

12. *Slot 12 – tense/mood vowel*: A vowel (*-e-*, *-o-*, *-i-*) inserted before the person/number (Set S) suffix of certain forms serves to distinguish indicative from conjunctive paradigms. Also occupying this slot is the suffix *-i* of the passive present, and a homophonous (perhaps cognate) suffix employed by statives and the present perfect of transitives in conjunction with an *-e-* element of unclear origin, for example, *g-gon-i-e-s* "you think something." The passive and stative *-i-* are to be further distinguished from the vowel /i/ inserted before the Set S suffix *-n* and optionally before the S1/2 pluralizer *-t* (see **13**) in certain paradigms: for example, in the imperfect imperative *x-a-did-eb-d-i-n* "may they praise somebody."

13. *Slot 13 – person/number suffix (Set S)*: While the first- and second-person subject (S1/2) suffixes are the same in all paradigms, the third singular and plural subject (S3) morphemes come in three pairs, correlated to a degree with semantic features of the verb forms. A few

Table 40.6 Set S (morphological subject) suffix groups			
Set S suffix set (slot 13)	1st and 2nd person	3rd singular	3rd plural
A. PRESENT/CONJUNCTIVE present, present-perfect, imperfect iterative, permansive, optative, imperfect and pluperfect conjunctive	sg. -Ø / pl. -t	-s	-n / -en / -an
B. PAST INDICATIVE imperfect, aorist, pluperfect	sg. -Ø / pl. -t	-a	-es
C. IMPERATIVE/ITERATIVE present iterative, imperfect and aorist imperative	sg. -Ø / pl. -t	-n	-ed

paradigms are distinguished by the Set S suffixes alone (e.g., present indicative and present iterative, optative and aorist imperative); since the S1/2 endings do not vary, only the S3 forms are distinct in these instances.

14. *Slot 14 – postposed clitics*: These include the optative particle *-mca* (used with indicative-mood verbs to give them optative/subjunctive force); the adverbials *-γa* "even, just" and *-ve* "indeed, the very" (e.g., *kvani γaγadebden=**ve*** [Lk 22:60] "**the very** rocks will cry out"); the yes-no question particle *-a*; and the indefinite quantifier *-me* (e.g., *xiq'os=**me** vin tkwengani k'aci* [Mt 7:9] "would there be **any** man among you?").

4.3.4   Verb paradigms and their functions

In the present section, Early Georgian verb paradigms and their functions are discussed according to paradigm series (see §4.3.2). In Table 40.7, verb paradigms are illustrated using transitive (TR) and intransitive (INTR.) S3sg. (having a third-person singular subject marker) forms of *mi=c-em-a* "give"; verb slots (see §4.3.3) are indicated by subscript numerals.

4.3.4.1   *Paradigm Series I*

1. *Present*: This is the unmarked present indicative paradigm, and the most frequently attested in the Early Georgian corpus.

2. *Present iterative*: The present iterative can be formally distinguished from the present in the third person only. It often appears in statements of verities and generalizations. Note the contrast between the present iterative and simple present in the following passage. The present iterative and the permansive, its Series II counterpart, are used to convey a fact known from repeated observation, while the optative (future) and present are used in the description of an event – the Second Coming – which will occur only once:

(11)   *xolo leγwisagan isc'avet igavi igi : ras žams rt'oni misni daččwnian da γurceli **gamo= val-n** xuc'q'odit rametu axlos **ar-n** zapxuli. egreca tkwen : ras žams hixilot ese q'oveli xuc'q'odit rametu axlos **ar-s** k'arta zeda*

   "From the fig tree learn a lesson: When its branches grow tender (PERMANSIVE) and the leaves **come out** (PRESENT ITERATIVE), you will know that summer **is** (PRESENT ITERATIVE) near. Likewise when you will see (OPTATIVE) all these things, you will know that he **is** (PRESENT) near, at your door" (*GL* Mt 24:32–33).

Table 40.7 Early Georgian verb paradigms			
	Punctiliar (Series II)	Linear/durative (Series I)	Resultative (Series III)

present
    indicative
	— — —	*present*
		TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}s_{13}$
		INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$
			present perfect
			TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}u_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}$
			    $e_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$
			INTR. $mi =$ cemul ars

past *indicative*	*aorist* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}a_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}a_{13}$	*imperfect* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}d_{11}\text{-}a_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}od_{11}\text{-}a_{13}$	*pluperfect* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}a_{13}$ INTR. $mi =$ cemul xiq'o
future/ *conjunctive*	*optative* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$	*imperfect conjunctive* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}d_{11}\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}od_{11}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$	*pluperfect conjunctive* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ INTR. $mi =$ cemul xiq'os
permansive/ *habitual*	*permansive* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$	[*imperfect iterative*] TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}d_{11}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}od_{11}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}s_{13}$ *present iterative* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}n_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}n_{13}$	— — —
imperative	*aorist imperative* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}n_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}n_{13}$	*imperfect imperative* TR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}d_{11}\text{-}i_{12}\text{-}n_{13}$ INTR. $mi_1 = x_4\text{-}e_6\text{-}c_7\text{-}em_{10}\text{-}od_{11}\text{-}e_{12}\text{-}n_{13}$	— — —

The other principal function of this paradigm is in negative imperatives introduced by the particle *nu* "do not" (2nd person: *nu še = x-jrc'un-d-eb-i-t* [Lk 21:9] "do not be anxious"; 3rd person: *nu še = jrc'un-d-eb-i-n guli tkweni* [Jn 14:1] "Let not your heart be anxious").

3. *Imperfect indicative*: This is the basic Series I past indicative paradigm, aspectually contrasted with the aorist. It is the only past indicative form for many stative and atelic verbs: *brc'q'in-v-id-a* "glistened"; *jc'-od-a* "trembled"; *x-tn-d-a* "liked."

4. *Imperfect imperative*: Early Georgian has two positive imperative paradigms, distinguished by aspect. The imperfect imperative is used to direct the listener to engage in some sort of ongoing, repeated activity: *sneulta **gan = x-k'urn-eb-d-i-t**, ganbok'lebulta **gan = x-c'med-d-i-t*** (Mt 10:8) "cure the sick, cleanse the leprous." As with the aorist imperative, the imperfect imperative has no S2 prefix: *še = (Ø)-vid-od-e-t ic'rosa mas bč'esa* (Mt 7:13) "enter by the narrow gate."

5. *Imperfect iterative*: This paradigm is unusually difficult to detect, in that it is formally identical to the Series I conjunctive of intransitive verbs, and – in the first and second person – to the imperfect indicative of transitive verbs. This leaves the S3sg. and S3pl. of the transitive conjugation as the only morphologically unambiguous forms of the imperfect iterative. Only three examples are attested in the Early Georgian corpus, all from the same passage:

(12)   ***v-e-vedr-eb-od-i-t*** *da odes igi ševidis vitar igi šišit da jc'olit vdget* [L. K'ik'nadze reads *vdg**it***] *da **guls v-e-t'q'-od-i-t** da γmrtisa mimart **v-i-loc-v-id-i-t** misisa mis gulisa mokcevisatwis*

"[If we desire something from an earthly monarch] . . . **we would plead** (IMP. ITER.) to his servant for admission and when he comes (PERMANSIVE), we would stand (PERMANSIVE) as though in fear and trembling, and **we would feel desire** (IMP. ITER.) and **we would pray** (IMP. ITER.) to God that his heart be turned (toward us)" (*Mrv* 65).

The presence of the permansive indicates that a gnomic/iterative sense is intended. It should be noted that the manuscript in question is relatively late (eighth century), and contains numerous divergences from standard Early Georgian usage. In particular, the O3 prefix *x-* is frequently omitted before the S1 marker, as in the above passage. It may be that the imperfect iterative was an innovation in late Early Georgian, or introduced into this text from the native dialect of the translator.

6. *Imperfect conjunctive*: The imperfect conjunctive can be translated by either a subjunctive or a future indicative, depending on context: (fut. indic.) *da mravalni cruv c'inac'armet'q'welni aγ=dg-e-n da **x-a-ctun-eb-d-e-n** mravalta* (Mt 24:11) "and many false prophets will arise (OPTATIVE) and **will deceive** (IMPERFECT CONJUNCTIVE) many"; (subjunc.) *tu marǰwenê qeli šeni **g-a-ctun-eb-d-e-s*** (Mt 5:30) šen "if your right hand **deceive** you." The imperfect conjunctive (and optative) are likewise commonly found in restrictive relative clauses: *xlocevdit romelni **mi=g=xweč-d-e-n** tkwen* (Mt 5:44) "pray for those who **persecute** you."

4.3.4.2 Paradigm Series II

1. *Aorist*: The aorist is the unmarked Series II paradigm, the second most common verb form in the Early Georgian corpus, after the present indicative. In narratives the aorist is employed by verbs representing the main story line, presented as a succession of events; in this function it contrasts primarily with the imperfect, as well as the conjunctive paradigms, the pluperfect, etc.

2. *Aorist imperative*: The second-person aorist imperative is formally the simplest of the Early Georgian paradigms, lacking the Set S prefix found in the otherwise identical aorist indicative: for example, *mo=ved* "come!"; compare aorist *mo=x-wed* "you came."

3. *Permansive (aorist iterative)*: This paradigm is employed in parables, statements of regularities, and accepted truths, and as such can be translated by the simple present in English: *mas **x-u-rkw-i** c'arved da **c'ar=vid-i-s*** (Mt 8:9) "I **tell** him 'go,' and he **goes**."

4. *Optative (aorist conjunctive)*: The optative, like its Series I counterpart, the imperfect conjunctive, can have either future indicative or subjunctive meaning. In the latter sense it commonly appears after subordinating conjunctions.

4.3.4.3 Paradigm Series III

1. *Present perfect*: The Early Georgian present perfect is primarily resultative in meaning, representing a state of affairs extending to the (narrative) present as resulting from some event in the past: for example, *aγ=dgomil ars mk'wdretit* (Mt 14:2) "he **has risen** from the dead" (implication: he is still alive); *ege q'oveli da=m-i-marx-av-s siq'rmit čemitgan* (Mt 19:20) "all of these [commandments] I have kept since childhood" (implication: I still do).

2. *Pluperfect*: The basic function of the Early Georgian pluperfect is to mark past anteriority: *šeic'q'nares igi galilevelta rametu q'oveli **x-e-xilv-a** raodeni **x-e-kmn-a** ierusalêms* (Jn 4:45) "The Galileans welcomed him, for they **had seen** all that he **had done** in Jerusalem." The semantic difference between Series III and passive of state is especially slight in the case of

intransitive present perfects and pluperfects: ***šek'rebul xiq'o*** *bevreuli eri* (Lk 12:1) "a crowd of thousands **had (was?) gathered**."

3. *Pluperfect conjunctive*: This rare paradigm is attested only twice in the Early Georgian corpus. In both cases it appears to mark future anteriority: <*arγa*> ***x-e-q'iv-n-o-s*** *katamsa vidremde uvar = mq'o me sam gzis* (Jn 13:38) "The cock **will** not **have crowed** before you deny me three times"; *net'ar xiq'wnen romelta ara* ***x-w-e-xilv-o*** *da x(w)urc'mene* (*GL* Jn 20:29) "Blessed will be those who **will** not **have seen me** but who will believe in me" (note that the S1 prefix *w-* in *xwexilvo* marks the direct object, in accordance with the inverse syntax governed by transitive verbs in Series III; see §4.3.2.3).

4.3.5   Nonfinite verbals

The principal nonfinite forms of the Early Georgian verb are the verbal noun and three participles: active, past passive, and future passive.

4.3.5.1   *Verbal noun*

This is usually formed by adding the suffix *-a* to the verb root and its series marker (a smaller number of verbs, mostly members of the atelic class, employ the suffix *-il/-ol/-ul,* sometimes with the prefix *si-*). Among other things it can function like an infinitive in nominalized clauses subcategorized by certain verbs: for example, *p'ilat'e xubrjana* ***mi = c-em-a-d*** *gwami misi* (Mt 27:58) "Pilate ordered them **to give** him his (Jesus') body" (lit. "Pilate ordered them **the giving** of his body").

4.3.5.2   *Participles*

The active or agentive participle contains a prefix *m-/ma-/me-/mo-* inserted before the stem, and a suffix *-el/-ar/-ul*: *vin ars* ***mi = m = c-em-el-i*** *misi* (Jn 6:64) "who is the **one who will hand** him **over**" (lit. "who is his **giver**"). The past (or perfect) passive participle is usually formed with the suffix *-il/-ul*; among other uses it is employed in the Series III forms of intransitive verbs: *romelta* ***mi = c-em = ul*** *ars* (Mt 19:11) "[those] to whom it is **given**." The future passive is formed with the addition of a prefix *sa-* before the stem, and the same suffix as in the corresponding active participle: *xicit* ***sa = c-em = el-i*** *k'etili micemad švilta tkwenta* (Lk 11:13) "you know to give your children good **gifts**" (lit. "that-which-is-to-be-given").

4.4   Diachronic morphological developments

Although the Xanmet'i dialect is the most archaic attested variety of Georgian, hints of changes to come can be detected here and there in Early Georgian texts. Among them are the following.

1. *Uncertainty in the use of O1excl. m-*: While the inclusive/exclusive opposition in the Set O prefixes is maintained in the Xanmet'i gospels, evidence that the first-person inclusive object marker *gw-* is being reinterpreted as a general first plural prefix begins to appear in the Graz Lectionary composed a century later: *vitar igi* ***m****-e-t'q'-od-a čwen gzasa zeda; da vitar igi gamo = ****gw****-i-targman-eb-d-a čwen c'ignta* (*GL* Lk 24:32) "how he spoke to **us** (*m-*) on the road, and how he interpreted the books for **us** (*gw-*)."

2. *Paradigm recruitment for atelic verbs*: In later stages of Georgian, atelic activity verbs have the same range of paradigms as the transitive and intransitive conjugations. In the Early Georgian period, however, the rare Series II and III atelic verbs seem almost to be nonce

formations cobbled together from elements borrowed from the transitive and intransitive conjugations. The early Series II paradigms of atelic verbs display three types of formation:

(i) periphrastic, formed with *q'opa* "make": *γaγad = q'o* (Mt 14:30; Jn 7:28) "he cried out" (lit. "he made a cry")

(ii) root intransitive morphosyntax (more archaic?) with subject in absolutive: *katami q'iv-a* (Lk 22:60) "the cock-ABS. crowed"

(iii) transitive morphosyntax (more recent?) with subject in ergative and verb in subject version: *man i-mruš-a (*Mt 5:28) "he-ERG. committed adultery."

The root *-q'iv-* "crow" is a curious case, having a formally intransitive aorist, but a formally transitive pluperfect conjunctive with inversion: *x-e-q'iv-n-o-s katam-sa* (O3-OBVN-crow-PL.?-TM-S3sg. cock-DAT.; Jn 13:38) "the cock will have crowed."

4.5 Numerals

Georgian has a mixed decimal and vigesimal counting system. Monomorphemic number names are used for counting to ten, followed then by compounds of the form "ten-N-more" (e.g., *at=rva=met'* lit. "10-8-more," i.e., "18") up to *oc* "20." Counting continues by scores (e.g., *otx = me-oc da a(t) = cxra = met'* lit. "4 = score and 10=9= more," i.e., "99" [Mt 18:12]) up to *as* "100." Higher units include *at = as* ("10 = 100") "1,000" and *bevr* "10,000."

5. SYNTAX

5.1 Word order

Early Georgian word order gives the impression of being freer than it actually is. While it is indeed the case that very few constituents occupy an *obligatory* position, most do have a preferred position. According to Sarjveladze's quantitative study (1984:528, 535–536), Old Georgian in general, and Early Georgian in particular, favors head–modifier order both within the clause and within the noun phrase (NP): direct and indirect object after the verb; adjective, article, and possessor after the head noun, for example, *twali₁ šeni₂ marǰwenê₃* (Mt 5:29) "your₂ right₃ eye₁." The principal exceptions are interrogative, negative, and numeral modifiers, which generally precede their head. The subject, interestingly, is as likely to follow the verb as precede it, postverbal position being favored by subject NPs referring to new topics: *xolo xiq'wnes mun **dedanica mravalni*** (Mt 27:55) "But **many women** were there."

Among the items which have a relatively fixed position are definite articles and sentential clitics such as *tu* "if," *ra(γ)* "when," which follow the first element in the NP or clause: *atertmet'i **igi** moc'apeni* (Mt 28:16) "**the** eleven disciples"; *aγ= **ra** =xesrulnes dγeni igi* (Lk 4:2) "**When** those days were over."

5.2 Coordination and subordination

In addition to the relative pronoun *romel-*, described earlier (see §4.2.4.3), other interrogative pronouns double as subordinators, for example, *raoden-* "how much?"; "as much as": *xuq'wes mas **raodeni** xunda* (Mt 17:12) "they did to him **as much as** they wanted." Subordinate clauses can likewise be introduced by conjunctions of various sorts: *tu* "if," *rayta* "that," *vidremde* "until," etc. Many of these require a verb in the conjunctive or optative. The principal coordinating conjunction is *da*, which operates at the word, phrase, and clause level.

5.3 Agreement

Agreement, as distinguished from cross-referencing, occurs within the NP, and also between certain verb forms and absolutive-case NPs within a phrase . In the instance of NP-internal agreement, adjectives, articles, and even genitive-case modifiers reflect the case and number of the head noun: *jujeul-**n-i** mat-**n-i*** (alumnus-PL.-ABS. their-PL.-ABS.; *BQ* III) "their foster children." In NPs where a modifier is itself modified by a noun in the genitive, the latter may bear three case endings: its own (genitive), a copy of its head's case (genitive), and the case assigned the head of its head: for example, *saidumlo-y$_1$* sasupevel-isa$_2$ ca-**ta$_3$-ysa$_2$-y$_1$** (secret-ABS. kingdom-GEN. sky-**GEN. PL.-GEN.-ABS.**; Mt 13:11) "the secret of the kingdom of the heavens." The second agreement phenomenon of note is between Series II and Series III verbs and their absolutive arguments. Formally plural absolutive NPs (those marked with the pluralizer *-n-*, as well as first- and second-person pronouns and plural null anaphors) control the probably cognate agreement marker *-(e)n-* in slot 9 of the verb (see §4.3.3 [**9**]).

6. LEXICON

The great majority of lexemes employed in the Early Georgian texts are of indigenous origin, as far as can be told. At the same time, a number of cultures have left their imprint on the Georgian lexicon. The Greek of eastern Christianity has contributed terms such as *ek'lesia* "church" and *angeloz-* "angel"; *nav-* "ship" and *mankana* "machine, device" may go back to Hellenic times, when Greek merchants first established trading posts in Colchis. Persian civilization, with which the Georgians have been in regular contact since well before the Christian period, is the source of a considerable number of words, including many in common use: *p'at'iv-* "honor," *žam-* "time," *parto* "wide." The contribution of Armenian is easy to underestimate, since many words of Persian and Syriac origin (*sp'et'ak'-* "white," targm(a)n "translate") presumably entered Georgian via their neighbors to the south. The verb root *šên-* "build" and possibly the noun *mgel-* "wolf" (borrowed to replace a tabooed inherited root?) represent prehistoric loans from Armenian.

Abbreviations

Linguistic terms

IMP.	imperfect-stem formant
O1excl	1st-person exclusive object marker
O1incl	1st-person inclusive object marker
O3	3rd-person object marker
OBVN	objective version vowel
PV	preverb
Ques.	question particle
S1	1st-person subject marker
S3pl.	3rd-person plural subject marker
S3sg.	3rd-person singular subject marker
SBVN	subjective version vowel
SM	series marker
TM	tense/mood vowel

Most of this chapter was written in 1996. Since that time, further Early Georgian texts have been made available for study, including the palimpsest Codex Georg. 2 of Vienna, and a new edition of the Graz Lectionary, through the effors of Jost Gippert (Frankfurt) and Zurab Sarjveladze (Tbilisi). Recently, the archeologist Levan Ch'ilashvili has published the startling claim that several fragmentary inscriptions uncovered during excavations of what he believes was a pagan temple at Nek'risi, in eastern Georgia, are to be dated to the 1st–3rd centuries AD (*Burji Erovnisa* #3, pp/ 6–7, 2001). If true, this would be the first evidence that the Georgian alphabet predated the adoption of Christianity as state religion. In my view, there is nothing in either the form of the letters, nor in the grammatical features of the one inscription that has been published, which would compel the attribution of such an early date. It remains to be seen whether further investigation of the inscriptions, and the archeological context in which they were found, will confirm Ch'ilashvili's hypothesis.

Bibliography

Abuladze, I. 1973. *kartuli c'eris nimušebi. p'aleograpiuli albomi* (Examples of Georgian writing. A paleographic album; 2nd edition). Tbilisi: Mecniereba.

Birdsall, J. N. 1970. "A second Georgian recension of the Protevangelium Jacobi." *Le Muséon* 83:49–72.

_____. 1991. "Georgian paleography." In A. C. Harris (ed.), *The Indigenous Languages of the Caucasus, Vol. 1: The Kartvelian Languages*, pp. 85–128. Delmar, NY: Caravan Books.

Blake, R. 1932. "Khanmeti palimpsest fragments of the Old Georgian version of Jeremiah." *Harvard Theological Review* 25:207–272.

C'ereteli, G. 1960. *ujvelesi kartuli c'arc'erebi p'alest'inidan* (The oldest Georgian inscriptions from Palestine). Tbilisi: Mecniereba.

Danelia, K. and Z. Sarjveladze. 1997. *Kartuli p'aleograpia*. [Georgian paleography.] Tbilisi: Nek'eri.

Gamq'relidze, T. 1990. C'eris anbanuri sist'ema da jveli kartuli damc'erloba. anbanuri c'eris t'ip'ologia da c'armomavloba (Alphabetic writing and Old Georgian script. The typology and origins of alphabet writing). Tbilisi: Tbilisi State University Press.

Kajaia, L. (ed.). 1984. *xanmet'i t'ekst'ebi, 1: xanmet'i otxtavi* (Xanmeti texts, 1: the Xanmeti Gospels). Tbilisi: Mecniereba.

Molitor, J. (ed.). 1956. *Monumenta Iberica antiquiora: Textus chanmeti et haemeti ex inscriptionibus, Bibliis et patribus.* Louvain la-Neuve: Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.

Sarjveladze, Z. 1971. *xanmet' da haemet' t'ekst'ebši dadast'urebul zmnis p'irian pormata sajieblebi* (A tabulation of the finite verb forms attested in the Xanmeti and Haemeti texts). Tbilisi: Mecniereba.

_____. 1984. *kartuli salit'erat'uro enis ist'oriis šesavali* (An introduction to the history of the Georgian literary language). Tbilisi: Ganatleba.

Tuite, K. 1990. "Das Präfix *x*- im Frühgeorgischen." *Georgica* 13/14:34–61.

Sources

Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn	Xanmet'i gospels (6th century) [Kajaia 1984]
Bol	Bolnisi inscriptions (493–494) [Abuladze 1973]
BQ	Bir el-Qutt inscriptions (429–444) [C'ereteli 1960]
GL	Graz Xanmet'i Lectionary (late 7th century) [Molitor 1956]
H	Haemet'i lectionary (8th century) [Molitor 1956]
Jer	Cambridge & Oxford Jeremiah fragments (*c.* 600) [Blake 1932; Molitor 1956]
Mrv	Xanmet'i Mravaltavi (early 8th century) [Molitor 1956]
PJ	Protevangelium Jacobi (*c.* 700) [Birdsall 1970]
999	Palimpsest H-999 (Bible fragments, *c.* 500) [Molitor 1956]