

OTAR KADSHAIA and HEINZ FAHRICH: *Mingrelish-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. 688 pp. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2001. ISBN 3-89500-221-6

Mingrelian, Laz, Svan and Georgian form the South Caucasian (Kartvelian) language-family. Only Mingrelian, spoken in the lowlands of western Georgia, and Laz, largely confined to N.E. Turkey, are mutually intelligible. Because speakers of all four languages resident in Georgia (or the former USSR) were classified as 'Georgians' circa 1930, no-one knows how many Mingrelians there are (perhaps a million±), nor of course how many actually speak the language. Though some communist texts together with many local newspapers and journals were published in it (using the Georgian script) from the late 1920s to 1938, Mingrelian was never officially awarded literary status, the most widely spoken indigenous Caucasian language to be denied this privilege. Most Mingrelians are educated in Georgian, which they employ both as principle means of communication outside the home and for writing. In 1914 the talented (but soon to perish) Georgian linguist Ioseb Q'ipshidze produced a 574-page grammar (in Russian; republished 1994) with texts and dictionary, which made Mingrelian at that time perhaps the best described of all the Caucasian languages (including Georgian, with its long literary tradition). The neglect of Mingrelian for most of the Soviet period meant that after 1938 very few materials appeared, and these catered mainly for the specialist markets of folklore and philology. Since Georgia's independence (1991) publishing in and on Mingrelian has increased. By way of lexicons alone (sc. Mingrelian-Georgian) the present compilers mention those by: Avaliani (1995, also including Svan); Ch'araia (1997 from a 1918 ms.); Eliava (1997); Pipia (in preparation); and a 5,000-page manuscript by Kadshaia himself, from which the present work is an extract, with German replacing Georgian. One could add B. K'ilanava's '900 Mingrelian Words' (1998) and A. Chikvanaia's 'Mingrelian Expressive Words and Expressions' (1998).

This latest offering begins with a mere 5-paragraph Foreward. More useful than the nationalist propaganda of paragraphs 3 and 4 would have been a statement explaining (a) the principles by which the selection of words presented here was

made, and (b) why Kadshaia's entire manuscript could not have been prepared for a German edition (obviously in fascicles) to match K. Tschenkéli's 'Georgisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch' (1965-74), surely a worthy project. All that readers are told is that a roman transcription accompanies each basic entry for those not familiar with the Georgian script, in which the Mingrelian is, as it should be, represented (two additional characters are necessary for schwa, transcribed by 'y', and the glottal stop, though here an apostrophe indicates the latter -- usually the Georgian graph for [q'] is inverted). However, since all extra citations within the entries for verbs are given exclusively in the Georgian script, serious readers need it anyway. We also learn that, whilst verbs have as their basic entry the (usually perverbless) masdar, each such entry contains, where they exist, the 3rd person singular forms of the Present, Future, Aorist, '1st Perfect (Resultative)', and '3rd Perfect (Resultative)' -- all participial forms are also quoted. Readers (including this reviewer) will be puzzled over the terminology here.

It is customary to distinguish (for Georgian, at least) three Series of tense-aspect-mood paradigms, the first member of Series III, the Perfect, being usually deemed the inferential counterpart to the Series II Aorist, used for factual past statements. Now in 1953 ('Ibero-Caucasica V', in Georgian) native-speaker Giorgi Rogava demonstrated that Mingrelian has a fourth Series, containing inferential counterparts to the Series I paradigms -- it is the first member of this extra Series, formed by circumfix *no-ue* and meaning 'X is/was apparently VERBing', that is presented under the guise of the mysterious '3rd Perfect (Resultative)'.

Little progress is possible in Kartvelian languages without a full understanding of the verb. Grammars' and dictionaries' reputations, thus, essentially depend on their treatment of this category. The present volume has systematicity in its favour, but Q'ipshidze is more fulsome, particularly concerning the (often complex) combinations of preverbs (in which Mingrelian is vastly richer than Georgian) and roots. For example, the half column (large print) here devoted to *ula* 'going' compares with six and a half columns (small print) for the same root *l-* in Q'ipshidze! Whilst all

3rd person singular Aorists end in *-u*, some (most) conjugations demand *-i*, others *-e* for the first two persons, but the entries here are silent on which is required. Causative formations (like postpositions) are generally omitted. Under *ngara* 'crying' one will not find the simple expression 'X cries' (*ingars*), and one wonders why *ongaruans* is translated 'er beweint' -- surely it corresponds to Georgian *at'irebs* 'X makes Y cry'? All verbs are assigned a participle formed by circumfix *na-ueri* (translated as 'Entgelt für das [Verb]'), a formation not mentioned by Q'ipshidze and unencountered in my investigations (into the westernmost dialect).

To illustrate an average verbal entry let us take *ch'arua* 'writing'. Given (with Series-forms) are: 1. *ch'aruns* 'X writes', 2. *ich'aruns* 'X writes for X's self', 3. *uch'aruns* 'X writes for Y', 4. *ich'aruu(n)* 'X is being written' (long vowels, absent from the dialect with which I am familiar, are indicated by geminates), 5. *ach'aruu(n)* 'X is being written for/to Y', 6. *ich'are(n)* 'X can be written', 7. *ach'are(n)* 'X can be written by/for/to Y' + participles. These all take perfectivising preverb *do-*. *duuch'aru* appears as the (1st) Perfect for (1)-(3) -- by adding the external pronouns *musho* 'for self' to (2), *tisho* 'for Y' to (3), the authors could have indicated how the language syntactically preserves the semantic difference. For a full entry I would have expected to see reference to at least the additional: *och'arapuan* 'X makes Y write', *ech'arua* 'describe', *moch'arua* 'write to (thither)', *moch'arua* 'write to (hither)', *gilach'arua* 'write around', *ginoch'arua* 'copy', *mishach'arua* 'register', *eshach'arua* 'lift (text) out of; remove (text)', *inoch'arua* 'inscribe'. Strangely, *gech'arua/gech'arapa* 'write on; assess' has its own entry, minus all finite forms. Entries, such as *ḡashich'ara* 'fate', might usefully have been etymologized, here giving 'forehead's-writing', which has no (single-word) parallel in Georgian but for which cp. neighbouring Abkhaz *a.lax' an. 'ts'a* the eye.above[=forehead].on.place[=record] 'fate'.

This is a useful contribution to Mingrelian studies, but what is really needed is for the Georgian Academy file-cards on Mingrelian and Svan to be turned into their respective dictionaries for which Kartvelologists have been yearning for decades.

GEORGE HEWITT