

Unexpected subject-marking in Kartvelian*

Everyone is familiar with the facts of case-marking in Georgian -- transitive verbs in series I take a nominative subject and dative object, in series II a subject marked by the case in -m(a) (called in Georgian motxrobiti 'narrative') and a nominative direct object, and in series III a dative subject plus nominative direct object; intransitive verbs take a nominative subject in all series -- we are disregarding here completely the class of verbs which display Inversion in all three series. This fluctuation in case-marking and associated verbal agreement is now generally explained by saying that series I is characterised by Nominative-Accusative patterning, series II by Ergative-Absolutive patterning, and series III by Inversion -- hence the case in -m(a) is regularly styled the 'Ergative' in translation. However, it is also well-known that one group of verbs -- the Middle/Medial verbs -- most of which can never be used with a direct object and are thus apparently intransitive, nevertheless govern an ergative subject in series II and shew Inversion in series III. Coupling this fact with the observation that such verbs tend to take agentive subjects, led Harris (1981) [^]

to suggest that ergativity is wholly irrelevant to Georgian and that what we have here in series II and III is a division of the intransitive verbs into 'active' and 'inactive' verbs such that the former, whose subjects are acting volitionally and are in control of events, pattern like transitive verbs, whereas the latter pattern like normal intransitives/passives -- in series I the 'active' vs 'inactive' opposition is simply neutralised.

Activity had previously been suggested to be the reason behind the use of the case in -m(a) to mark the subject of some (non-medial) intransitives in certain of the modern dialects or even in some Old Georgian examples by commentators such as Žyent'i (1936) and

Sardžveladze (1975 or 1984). Whilst accepting that the model is clearly there in Georgian for the future development of just such an 'active' vs 'inactive' system in series II and III, I set out in Hewitt (1983) reasons for not following Harris' argument that this system has already been established in non-literary forms of the language and is also relevant to a degree in the literary dialect as well. Briefly, if the semantics alone determine the choice of subject case-marker in series II (and, one might add, of Inversion in series III also), then the case in -m(a) must become obligatory for all series II verbs with the appropriate semantics (e.g. 'went', 'sat down', 'stood up', 'lay down', 'hid', 'sneaked away from', etc..), but none of these verbs in literary Georgian can govern a subject in -m(a) (e.g. is (*man) c'avida, da^vda, adga, dac'va, daimala, gaep'ara respectively), nor do they appear consistently to govern such a subject even in the relevant non-literary dialects (further research into distributional patterns is, however, required here), and certainly none of them motivates Inversion in series III. And surely embarrassing to proponents of the 'activity'- hypothesis is the fact that in the relevant dialects one finds examples of the case in -m(a) marking patently 'inactive' subjects, e.g.

1) 3axma daberda 'The dog grew/has grown old'

2) xenc'ipem mok't'a 'The emperor died'

(both from Xyent'i's description of Gurian (1936.69))

3) ro c'vimam šig ar čauvides '..that he should not have rain come in on him'

4) uprosma 3mam ... 3alian gayaribda 'The elder brother became very poor'

(quoted by Sardžveladze (1975.244 or 1984.569) for K'axetian and Kartlian respectively).

In my opinion, what has happened/is happening here manifests a Georgian

parallel to what may be supposed to have run its course in Mingrelian (cp. Fahnrich 1967) -- two cases exist for the marking of subjects in series II of which that used for transitive subjects may be regarded as marked, since it exists exclusively to fulfil this role, as opposed to the unmarked nominative, which can mark all (truly) intransitive subjects in any series as well as transitive subjects in series I. In time, for the sake of greater expressiveness, the marked desinence extends its privileges of occurrence so that now all subjects with series II verbs in Mingrelian are so marked (the case-marker in Mingrelian is -k), whilst in the closely related Laz all transitive subjects, regardless of verb-series, are so indicated. At the start of, and during, the transitional period one might well imagine that the intransitive subjects carrying the new exponent would be those with most in common with transitive subjects (i.e. agentive/'active' subjects) -- hence the plausibility of the 'active'-hypothesis in the minds of the above-named commentators on the basis of the frequent association of the Georgian case in -m(a) with typically 'active' intransitives. But, to repeat, this ignores both the use of this case with clearly 'inactive' intransitives and the fact that nowhere in Georgian does there seem to be consistency in case-marking according to this semantic parameter.

As mentioned above, those who have made appeal to 'activity' in Georgian have concentrated their attention on series II characteristics, ignoring what happens to non-medial intransitives in series III for the simple reason that nothing unusual happens to these verbs in series III in Georgian -- they take nominative subjects and form (sc. unless they are bivalent/relative intransitives like 'sneak away from') all three screeves by associating the past participle with the appropriate form of the copula (e.g., for the verbs listed earlier the Perfect is: is (*man/*mas(=DATIVE)) c'asula, damždara, amdgara,

dac'olila, damalula, cahp'arvia). However, when we examine series III formations and associated case-markings in Mingrelian, something unexpected is revealed. The basic verb of motion 'come/go' forms its series III from either of two roots: -rt-, -l-, both of which require Inversion and thus take a dative subject (e.g. (5) ti-s mi+do-u-rt+um-u//mi+do-u-l(+eb)-u 'X(LATIVE) has apparently gone' — for the full paradigms see Margvelašvili 1982.96); (6) 'X has apparently sat down' is ti-s duxun \leftarrow do-u-x(+)-un-u; (7) 'X has apparently stood up' is ti-s ge-u-dg(+)-in(-u); (8) 'X has apparently lain down' is ti-s do-u-n(+)-₂(+)-ir(-u); (9) 'X has apparently hidden' is ti-s do-u-t'q'ob(+)-in(-u); (10) 'X has apparently returned' is ti-s do-u-rt(+)-in(-u); (11) 'X has apparently escaped' is ti-s u-nt'(+)-in(-u). That the presence of Inversion here cannot be explained by assuming that we are simply dealing with clear-cut members of Mingrelian's medial class is shown by either the lack of the tell-tale i-prefix in their Aorist forms or the presence of clearly passive morphology in their Presents — cp. (5') ti-k mi+da-rt(-u); (6') ti-k do-xod(-u); (7') ti-k ge-dirt(-u); (8') ti-k din₂^Vir \leftarrow do-i-n(+)-₂(+)-ir-u (the -i- here is the passive not the medial exponent, as may be seen by comparing the Present, where we have the i-coupled with the clearly passive (non-medial) ending -u = ti-na i-n(+)-₂(+)-ir-u); (9') ti-k dit'q'ob \leftarrow do-i-t'q'ob-u (as for (8'), as the Present is ti-na i-t'q'ob-u); (10') ti-k dirte \leftarrow do-i-rt-u (as for (8'), since the Present is ti-na i-rt-u); (11') ti-k i-nt'(-u) (as for (8'), as the Present is ti-na i-nt'-eb-u), whereas a typical medial behaves like: (12) ti-na la?ap-en-s \sim ti-k i-la?ap(-u) \sim ti-s u-la?ap(-u) 'X plays \sim played \sim has apparently played' respectively. And so, might we appeal to 'activity' as the explanation for these interesting facts? Comparison of (6) and (8) with their stative counterparts might suggest that an affirmative response is correct,

for we have respectively: (6'') ti-na no-y-u-e 'X(NOMINATIVE) is/was apparently seated'; (8'') ti-na no- $\frac{V}{2}(+)$ an-u-e 'X is/was apparently lying (= in a prostrate position)'. Also one can point to the one form of the root 'come/go' which does not take an agentive/'active' subject, namely c'a-ul-a 'go off, rot', and which forms its IIIrd series just like Georgian intransitives by employing the past participle as base and taking a nominative subject -- e.g. (13) ti-na c'a-rt(+)⁹/um-(el-)-e; cp. c'a-ul-ir-i, the more common past participle quoted by Kipšidze (1914.267).

However, the situation is not so cut-and-dried as it at first appears. Unlike in Georgian, where there is no Imperfect but there are distinct IInd and IIIrd series' formations for the verbs 'be seated' and 'be prostrate', Mingrelian has exclusively 1st series' forms -- the equivalents of Georgian i- $\frac{V}{2}$ d-a 'X sat/was seated', i-c'v-a 'X lay' are respectively the Imperfects x-e-d(-u) and $\frac{V}{2}(+)$ an-u-d(-u), whilst the evidentials in no- are, of course, 1st (or IVth) series' forms, absent from standard Georgian (Kogava 1953) -- and so, nothing but a nominative subject would be anticipated anyway. The system is thus quite different from Georgian, where the IIIrd series' statives differ from their non-stative counterparts merely by omission of the perfective preverb (i.e. is m- $\frac{V}{2}$ d-ar-a 'X apparently sat/was seated', is c'ol-il-a 'X apparently lay').

There are also many semantically 'active' verbs which do not motivate inversion in series III, including bivalent intransitives -- e.g. (14) ti-n-ep-i do- $\frac{V}{2}$ saq'-ar-~~en~~-a 'they(NOMINATIVE) apparently gathered together'; (15) ti-n-ep-i ga-rig-eb-~~en~~-a 'they apparently made up their differences'; (16) ti-na ma mt'ebu(~~is~~ m-nt'-eb-u) 'X(NOMINATIVE) has apparently sneaked away/escaped from me(DATIVE)'. In addition there are the (expected) non-inverted variants for (8), (9) and (10) above, namely: (8a) ti-na do-n(+) $\frac{V}{2}(+)$ ir-(el-)-e (Kipšidze), (9a) ti-na

do-t'e'ob(+)in-(el-)e, (10a) ti-na do-ri-(el-)e. And finally, although the non-inverted stative counterpart to (7) does exist -- namely (7'') ti-na ge-r(+)in-(el-)e 'X apparently stood' (Kipšidze) -- the usual way of conveying this stative ('inactive') notion is surprisingly to use the inverted form (7a) ti-s ge-u-r(+)in(-u).

Facts such as the above must give pause to any hasty correlation between Inversion and 'activity'. However, the formations cited thus far do reveal an interesting tendency for many of the unexpected inverted forms to contain the suffix -in-, which is generally, though not always, absent in non-inverted series III formations. What is this suffix? One can point to at least three contexts in which it appears -- (a) Leeters (1930.213) noted that as a causative marker it sometimes stands alone (e.g. (17) v-o-č'it-in-u-an-k 'I make X red'), sometimes alternates with -ap- (e.g. (18) v-o-č'ud-in-u-an-k// v-o-č'ud-ap-u-an-k 'I make X kiss Y'), and sometimes may combine with -ap- (e.g. (19) v-o-č'ot-(in-)ap-u-an-k 'I make X throw Y'); (b) it seems to be optional in the IIIrd series of some medials (e.g. (20) u-ngar-(in-)u 'X apparently cried'); (c) it occurs with some verbs obligatorily, with others optionally, in their potential forms (e.g. (21) m-a-nt'-in-e 'I can escape'; (22) ma-m-a-č'-(in-)e 'I can bring X' -- Kipšidze 1914.258). I am convinced that ultimately all of these functions (including the use of -in- in the earlier examples that first drew our attention to its existence) will be explicable by assigning the suffix a basic causative or, as Kipšidze puts it, 'transitive' force (though the association of causative with potentiality is perhaps not so easy to explain), just as -in-(-en-) in Georgian is a causative marker -- and surely it is no accident that the IIIrd series' forms of medials in Georgian too may contain what will undoubtedly be the consonantal component of this same suffix, such that the direct equivalent of (20) is: (20a) u-t'ir-(n-)i-a.

I argued in 1983 that in all tense-mood forms (with the possible exception of the Present Indicative, Imperfect Indicative and Present Subjunctive) Georgian medials are underlyingly transitive with an obligatorily deleted reflexive pronoun as direct object (sc. unless of course some actually realised lexical noun takes the place of this reflexive as in 'X played ball'); since in all non-IIIrd series' tense-moods (other than the three mentioned above) the medials manifest the subjective version of the corresponding causative formation, it is not surprising that a causative element of some description should appear (albeit optionally) in the IIIrd series¹. Basically I assume the same to be true of Mingrelian and that the unexpected presence of Inversion in all the forms with -in- examined earlier results from the underlying transitivity of these forms, which itself follows from them being treated (in the IIIrd series at least) like the regular class of medials in Mingrelian. As to why just the verbs cited above should become treated like medials in the first place, it might well be suggested that the semantics of 'activity' could well be somehow responsible -- subjects of straightforwardly transitive verbs and of the (as I would say) underlyingly transitive medials have in common the dative case in series III; they are typically (if not obligatorily) 'active' in the sense of being in control and acting voluntarily -- hence, other typically 'active' subjects in series III might become case-marked in the same way in the course of time, which first of all required the verbal formations to be made transitive. The problematical presence of (7a)², however, might equally suggest that we are dealing with a chance-phenomenon (cf. the Svan data below) -- perhaps the dative will eventually extend to all series III subjects just as the case in -k became the only subject-marker in series II in Mingrelian, having possibly begun to extend its range, as we hypothesised above, by first being associated with 'active' in-

transitive subjects.

What of the inverted forms shown above that contain no -in-? The -un- in (6) could possibly be an allomorph of -in- (N.B. Georgian (23) a-cx(+)un-eb-s 'gives out heat' vs (24) cx-el-i 'hot', and that in Svan -un- is the regular causative exponent for transitive verbs). Again in (8) -ir- would seem to be a variant for -in-, both of which suffixes are attested with this root in Mingrelian's close sister, Laz (Čikobava 1938.434 -- as the Georgian equivalent of Zan ^V₂(+)ir- he gives the nominal stem ₂(+)il-, and of ^V₂(+)in- he gives the verbal stem ₂(+)in-). This leaves the two roots for the basic verb of motion: the forms with -l(+eb)- can be thought of as basically transitive anyway, since they parallel Georgian (25) i-vl-i-s ~ i-ar-a ~ u-vl-i-a, of which the same may be said (cf. the start of the proverb (26) ^V₁ori gza mo-i-ar-e 'journey along a distant road') -- N.B. the tell-tale medial i- prefix in the Mingrelian Aorist (27) v-i-l-i//i-v-l-i 'I went' (Georgian (27a) v-i-ar-e). As for -rt-, the conventional view is that this derives from *rxt- < *qt- < *qd-, which may be compared with q(e)d- as in the Old Georgian and Svan roots (Schmidt 1962.90); the suffix -^o/um- is then related by Margvelašvili (1982.94) to the Old Georgian masdar-suffix seen in qd-om-a. The problem is that in modern Mingrelian -^o/um- is only found in series III and that there is no masdar (28) rt+^o/um-a meaning 'go'. However, there is a masdar of just this form for (29) v-o-rt-^o/u-k 'I am doing it' (Kipsidze), which parallels Georgian (28a) v-^Vsvr-eb-i. Interestingly this verb is defective in Mingrelian, lacking its own IIrd and IIIrd series' forms³ -- i.e. just those forms where 'go' is expressed in Mingrelian by the root -rt-⁴. Might there not, thus, be some connection here such that the IIIrd series of (30) ul-a 'come/go' was originally supplied by rt-^o/um-a 'do, make', which would straightforwardly explain the transitivity of these forms⁵? Support for the concept 'go' being actualised

by some form of the verb 'make' comes from English, where colloquially 'X made off/away' is roughly equivalent to 'X went off/away'.

We have so far been arguing that the unexpected cases of Inversion in Mingrelian are really due to the transitivity of the forms in question, which does in fact make Inversion quite normal for them. We have further suggested that the motive behind the making transitive of these particular forms may have been the semantic feature of 'activity' that their subjects have in common with typically transitive (including medial) subjects. This semantic equivalence does not, however, obtain in the case of (7a), since 'be seated/sitting' is a stative (= 'inactive') expression. Interestingly, when we look at Svan, whose case-marking and verb-agreement systems are 'mutatis mutandis' essentially identical to those of Georgian, we find that in series III Inversion occurs (as expected) with (a) obviously transitive verbs and (b) medial verbs but also (unexpectedly) with (c) the three stative/'inactive' verbs 'be standing', 'be prostrate', and 'be seated/sitting': e.g. (the forms cited represent the Upper Bal dialect)

(30) x-o-g(+)-n-a 'X(DATIVE) apparently sat/was seated' (lent'ex =
x-o-g(+)-en-a)

(31) x-o-q'v(+)-n-a 'X(DATIVE) apparently lay/was prostrate'

(32) x-o-sgvr-a 'X(DATIVE) apparently stood/was standing'

With these inverted forms one may compare their non-inverted, processual (= 'active') counterparts:

(30') a-l-g(+)-en-ē-l+i 'X(NOMINATIVE) apparently stood up'

(31') a-l-q'w(+)-in-ē-l+i 'X(NOMINATIVE) apparently lay down'

(32') e-l-sgur-ē-l+i 'X(NOMINATIVE) apparently sat down'

Since -in- is the regular causative formant for Svan medials and -en- is not unknown in causative function (Topuria 1967.236), there is no problem about identifying the nasal in (30) and (31) as the same causative exponent that we earlier recognised in Mingrelian's unexpected

inverted forms; there is no causative exponent in the corresponding Presents:

(31a) *le-g* 'X(NOMINATIVE) is standing' (masdar = *li-g(+)*n-e)

(32a) *a-q'v(+?)r-e* 'X(NOMINATIVE) is lying' (masdar = *li-q'v(+?)r-e*)

cf. (33a) *sgur* 'X(NOMINATIVE) is sitting' (masdar = *li-sgvr-e*)

In all three cases here the (Imperfective) Future reveals the tell-tale *i*-prefix of the medial class (the first two verbs also shewing a nasal component), e.g.

(31b) *i-g(+)*n-i

(32b) *i-q'v(+)*n-i⁶

cf. (33b) *i-sgvr-i*

Since, then, these three verbs may be assigned to the medial class, they will be (underlyingly) transitive in (both the (Imperfective) Future and) series III, with the result that Inversion is only to be expected in their series III formations. These Svan data shew how inclusion in the medial class is not integrally connected with 'active' semantics, since 'be standing/prostrate'^{/sitting} are 'inactive' statives. Indeed, ~~from a purely formal point of view, the odd feature of Svan is the non-inverted treatment of (30)-(32), since these dynamic ('active') forms are at least for some of their paradigm members of the medial class too, e.g.~~

~~(30-a) *i-g(+)*n-äl 'X is standing up' (masdar = *li-g(+)*n-äl)⁷~~

~~(31-a) *i-q'v(+)*n-äl (Leeri, Lent'ex) 'X is lying down' (masdar = *li-q'v(+)*n-äl)~~

~~(32-a) *i-sgvr-i* 'X is sitting down' (masdar = *li-sgvr-e*)~~

Why does the verb 'be seated' not pattern like 'be standing/prostrate' -- in particular why is there no nasal (causative) component in any of its forms? Perhaps a causative marker is present in all of its forms under the guise of -^u/vr- (cp. the sequence -ir- in (8)). Were this to be the case, we would be left with the root -sg-, which would be the regular Svan equivalent of Georgian -გ- (Schmidt 1962.58), as

in a-^V₂(+)en-s 'X seats Y', where the -en- is, of course, causative. However, 'sit' remains unusual also by virtue of possessing only one masdar-form for the stative, intransitive dynamic, and transitive (= 'seat') meaning, whereas there are three separate masdars for each of the parallel formations for the verbs 'lie/lay (down)' and 'stand (up)' -- the transitive masdar for 'stand up' is li-g(+)^Vn-e//, the dynamic intransitive masdar for 'stand up' is li-g(+)^Vn-ä, that for 'lie down' is li-g^V(+)^Vn-ä / li-g-em, that for 'lay down' is cu li-g^V(+)^Vn-e (all ^Vvan forms have been quoted from at least one of: Gudžedžiani/Palmaitis 1985, Gagua 1976, and Topuria 1967).

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Footnotes

1. Šanidze argues (1973.476) that this -n- merely serves to differentiate medio-actives (= medials) from their clearly transitive counterparts -- with (20a) cp. u-t'ir-eb-i-a 'X apparently made Y cry'. Our explanation actually accounts for why the exponent here is -n- rather than anything else. Also note that we can explain the presence of -in- in such Georgian Pluperfect formations as ga-m-ē-k'et-eb+in-a 'I had done it'. Šanidze rather dismisses a causative origin here (1973.440-1), merely opting for the arbitrary insertion of an -in- once the Perfect ending -eb- had been extended to the Pluperfect. What we need to bear in mind is that there are precedents for causative exponents being used merely to underline a verb's transitivity -- the Daghestanian language Andi being a case in point, e.g. (after Cercvadze 1965.226)

hede^Vdi hinc'u arxon(-zi) (literally = 'he door opened')

both of which variants mean 'he opened the door', regardless of whether

- causative -ai- is present or not. Since the Pluperfect forms of Georgian transitives arose out of the corresponding relative intransitive (sc. with accompanying indirect object) Aorist, what better than a causative marker to underline the change in status for the verb's arguments? -- viz. intransitive indirect object becomes transitive subject, intransitive subject becomes transitive direct object.
2. 'be standing' is expressed somewhat oddly in all of its forms in Mingrelian -- as with the statives 'be prostrate//sitting', the verb has no 11nd series' forms, and its Present//Imperfect forms consist simply of the copula preceded by the preverb gⁱ/e- 'up' (e.g. gi-v-o-r-e-k 'I am standing (literally = 'I am up')' vs v-o-r-e-k 'I am', though we also have the passive/intransitive form ge-v-dg-e-k 'I am standing' (Kip^Vsidze), whose root is the same as that of (7)). The masdar ge-r+in-a 'be standing' compares with r+in-a 'be'. Where the stem is used transitively in forms like g-i-r+in-a-an-k 'I set him/her up for you', the Georgian equivalent is g-i-q'en-eb (Kip^Vsidze). Since the copular root in Georgian is -q'(a)v-, might not -q'en- go back to this very copular root plus causative -en- to parallel precisely the Mingrelian sequence -r+in-?
3. The missing forms are supplied by the verbs kimin-a-a and ɣol-am-a, just as Georgian fills these same gaps for -svr- by employing the relevant forms of kwn-a.
4. In the 1st series the roots -ur-, -ul- and -v- occur.
5. Problematic perhaps is the fact that v-o-rt-a/u-k, ^{like} v-svr-eb-i, is formally a bivalent intransitive.
6. I would personally also see in the -n- here a component of the causative marker. Indeed, Topuria, noting that the Imperfective Future of all straightforward transitives contains -un- whilst that of **medials** contains -(i)n- (1967.112-115), was led to pose the question as to whether we might not here be dealing with the causative suffix. He

decided against this in view of what would in that case be the odd ending of the Imperfective future in the dialect of Eceri. I would prefer to seek a special explanation of the Eceri anomaly and accept the causative-hypothesis, especially as Topuria cites forms shewing the -(i)n- occurring in the Perfect of medials, which is just what we would expect on the basis of the earlier discussion, e.g.

x-o-rgäd-n-a//ot-ragd-in-a (← *(ad-)x-o-ragad-in-a) = Georgian u-lap'arak'-(n-)i-a 'X has apparently spoken'.

~~7. In Svan, Mingrelian and Laz the i-prefix is found with many more medial Presents, Imperfects and Present Subjunctives than it is in Georgian. This is (to my mind) a clear example of analogical spread so that all non-IIIrd series' forms should behave alike in shewing this prefix and not, as Nozadze (1974) supposes, a case of some totally unmotivated phonetic change in Georgian whereby the i-prefix was lost from just these three serieses.~~

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