

Towards Qualification of the Kodorian Svan Speech

Iza Chantladze

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics, Tbilisi, Georgia

(Presented by Academy Member Avtandil Arabuli)

ABSTRACT. In terms of general linguistics, the dialectal differentiation problem is particularly important on the late populated areas, especially if localization is in the mountainous region. In this respect, first of all, Kodorian and Cholurian dialects of Svan attracts attention of linguists and ethnolinguists. The first is Svan of the Svans of Upper and Lower Bal population who moved from the Kodori Gorge (Svaneti) and settled in the Enguri Gorge (Aphkazia) a century ago; the second is the combination of Lower Svan dialects (Lashkhian-Lentekhian). The process of fundamental research of both dialects is being carried out in the Arnold Chikobava Institution of Linguistics for several years with the financial support of the Rustaveli Foundation, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia. Prior to that, there were only separate theoretical studies or the results of synchronous description of the empirical material in the professional literature but only fragmentary. The problem is quite serious and requires not only the linguistic approach but also the use of linguistic geography cartographic methods. The study is an attempt to demonstrate the inter-merging of morphonological and lexicological occurrences of the Upper Svan dialects in the Kodori dialect. © 2018 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Key words: Svan language, dialectology, Kodorian and Cholurian dialects, ethnolinguistics

Most of local and foreign kartvelologists divide the Svan language into four dialects (Upper Bal, Lower Bal, Lashkhian, Lentekhian). In both Upper and Lower Svan, the Kodorian and Cholurian dialects are distinguished by their properties, which leave the impression of the transitional dialect, since none of them is fundamentally investigated [1].

In 2002 two groups of svanologists were formed in the Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics. The first one investigates the ethnolinguistic problems of Kodorian dialect, and the other investigates Cholurian dialect.

Over 5 years a fundamental study "*Kodorian Chronicles*" [2] (Svan texts with Georgian

translations and etymology of a number of roots) was created. Together with the colleague from Frankfurt, basing on morphology and morpho-syntactic problems we have conducted glossal-annotated analysis of the relevant texts (including Kodorian-Cholurian) of all the spreading territorial data of Svan. The work result is the book "*Tscholurswanisch-Deutsches Verbenverzeichnis*" (2003), published in Jena co-authored by a great kartvelologist Professor Heinz Fähnrich [3].

Therefore, unless the key aspects of the Kodorian and Cholurian dialects are investigated fundamentally, it would be good if we avoid

ungrounded statements, which occurred in professional literature even before.

Both the Kodorian and Cholurian dialects are interferenced, two dialects are merged into both: the Upper Svan dialect (Upper Bal, Lower Bal) and the Lower Svan (Lashkhian-Lentekhian). That is why we cannot call them either Kodorian, or Tskhenistsqurian (probably, better Tsenistsqurian, cf. the toponym Tsena, from where this beautiful river is sourced) and Engurian, etc. dialects. To illustrate this, I bring two specific facts:

In 1917, the ancestors of 54-year-old narrator Marika Devdariani-Akirtava moved from Lower Bal village Pari (Lamkheri) to the village Omarishali of the Kodori Gorge, where their neighbors were historically Upper Bal Svans (Jachvianis, Dadvanis, Margianis, Gasvianis, Gulbanis, Kaldanis). M. Devdariani-Akirtava's father and mother (Dziba Argvliani) were originally from Lower Bal, her grandmother Mati Khojelani was from Mestia. As she was born and brought up in the above mentioned surrounding, it is absolutely natural that she often used Upper Bal lexemes and grammatical forms of the parental language. In the Kodori Gorge, among the refugee population there occur many similar facts that do not fall into the idiolect frame, but in some cases the latter cannot be excluded. For example: daughter-in-law of (historically!) Lower Bal Gujejianis, Lashkhian Irma Kochbiani uses the umlauted form (*wäj* – "Woe!") [2: 695]. It naturally is idiolect occurrence.

Vigesimal system of the derivation of compound numerals, which is dominated in the Lower Bal (and Lentekhian) dialect, is much more difficult than the Upper Bal and Lashkhian decimal system.

It is noteworthy that the majority of our narrators belong to the category *utwra lutwer* ("uneducated educated"), and rightly assess the ongoing and expected political as well as

general-linguistic facts in the Kodori Gorge. Here is what one of them narrated us:

– *mišgomu xošil supta ləčabrus g'rg'lda, mare mišgu amži lənčəde (ləčabru – l əž abr u) gärgla sopliš gawləna bedšwli. eši libopš xom amču mar lətare i klassi aməču xwizelaldäs. mi twiton deš xwaterdas, mare esGurdäs, magalitat, nanagärte, ečka eJjär mačulidax: „wu, imži məžabrer eser ragdi!* – "My father spoke more pure Lower Bal but my mixed (Lower-Upper) speech is due to the influence of the village (i.e. populated with Upper Bal population. I.Ch.). I have spent my childhood here and I went to school here. I did not notice it myself, but when I went to my mother's native village, they told me: "Wow! You speak in a Upper Bal way" [2: 521-526].

Omarishaian Kolya and Gocha Gerliani are originally from Lower Bal, but in their speech there is larger vocabulary reflecting the morphological processes of Upper-Bal dialect, than of Lower Bal because both mothers (Metia Kaldani and Mariam Gigani) are from the village Mulakhi of Mestia region. So, the influence of mothers' Svan on the speech of a father and son is absolutely indisputable without special research [2: 680].

According to Prof. M. Kaldani's observations conducted in 1959 and in the Bechoian Etserian and Tskhumarian (partially!) subdialects *o* vowel is not umlauted (*mindor* "field", *kibdon* "ark", *lamton* "Teach me", *lampotin* "Load me on your back", ...) [4, 5 : 219]. It is noteworthy that in the speech of Bechoian and Etserian narrators migrated in the Kodori Gorge, M. Sagliani confirmed an umlauting of *o* rarely [6: 681]: *mindwers* ("field"), *warmošwebit* ("by origin"). The latter form is noteworthy from other aspect: in this case we are dealing with mutual interference – lexicological (Georgian word with Georgian formation!)

and phonological ($n > we$); *mindwers* as well as *warmošwebit* forms are conditioned by residing of Etsarian and Bechoian narrators in the surrounding of the emigrants migrated from Upper Svan.

It is also noteworthy that some Kodorian narrators use the data characteristic of either Upper Bal or Lower Bal dialect for one of the same lexeme and sometimes its interferenced variant:

ṭob || *ṭomb* || *ṭomb* are the characteristic forms of Bavchi Gurchiani [3 : 683], who originally is from Etsara and resided in Sakeni before the military battles in 2008. It means that his speech reveals the specificity of the transitional dialect.

M. Sagliani specially investigated the speech of the resident of the village Gvandra of the Kodori Gorge, a daughter-in-law of historically Lower Bal family, originally Lashkhian narrator Irma Kochbiani (40 years-old) and discussed it in [6], which is welcomed, but, I think, her assess of Svan to be Lashkhian-Lower Bal interferenced dialectal data is exaggerated. If a representative of unumlauted dialect once used umlauted form (*wāj* "Woe!") and Lower-Bal *tam-tamašd* "in playing" instead of Lashkhian *neb-nebašd* "slowly" composite, obviously, this is an idiolectic (and not interference!) occurrence. She has been living in the family of Lower Bal Gujejianis over ten years and has been well mastered the speech of her husband, her mother/father- in-law and sister-in-law, and perhaps because she uses the lexemes characteristic of their Svan and the forms reflecting certain morphonological processes to please them. As for the fact that Mrs. I. Kochbiani prefers the *xaṭulidax* ("were calling") form than *xaṭuliwx* one it is the result that the imperfect with *-w* morpheme occurs only in Lower-Bal dialect, with *-da* – it is originated from Common Kartvelian stem and occurs in all Kartvelian languages (including the Lashkhian dialect, as well!).

The loss of a consonant element of the relative case morpheme *-iš* in the speech of Lower Bal

population is unexpected. But in the speech of the descendants of those who migrated in the upper part of the Kodori Gorge and who live in the surrounding of the Upper Bals (family member, neighbors), this is quite normal:

mišgu dadašers xažxax peṭwi (< *peṭw-iš*)
Kwabār [2 : 521].

– *My mother's ("grandma's") native village is called "millet balls"*.

This fact does not reflect only the current situation, it has its own history: in 1923 Akaki Shanidze recorded from Etsarian (Hebudelian) Vladimer Subeliani (50 years old) the text illustrating the life in the Dali Gorge, which could be used as a historical document or ethnographic material:

xwarā qarq mermaxenču li *xoša šwān...* *xwarā qarqen* li lāzelal lintwisgāš mengzāriš, dāleš i šwāneš mengzāriš. adāid li merme sanzāwJerilāš qarq, amzawāš lāzelal mengzāriš dāleš i šwāneš [7: 187]. – "On the other side of the Khvarash Mountain Pass (Old Geo. *qorq-*) there is Great Svaneti... From the Khvarash Mountain Pass there is a winter road to Dali and Svaneti. There is another mountain pass Jerilash for summer walkers in Dali and Svaneti."

The interference process of Upper Svan dialects is still evident from the Lower Bal text recorded in 1923. In it the name of the mountain pass *xwarāš* between Chuberi and Sakeni is given severally, but in a Upper Bal way – without a consonant element (*-š*) of a relative case morpheme. Similar form (*xwarāqarq*) occurs in the text four times and the Lower Bal dialectal character – only once (*xwarāš qarq*).

In the analyzed material the term Dali Gorge opposes Great Svaneti i.e. the Enguri Gorge. Kodorians calling themselves neither Svans nor Apkhazians since the period they settled there (1879) to date – they are Dalians according to the name of beautiful Goddess of hunting Dali, but there are oral narratings about ancient settlement of Svan in these places.

Gradually interference is getting a footing in Kodorian Svan so that sometimes even archaic lexemes (toponyms, anthroponyms...) obey them. Thus, for example, a narrator from Lower Bal is likely not to say the toponym *omariš'l* (lit. "of Omari's family") (i.e. according to the morphonological structure of the Upper Bal dialect), but in accordance with Lower Bal system of formation of the names denoting family branch (*root of a name + plural morpheme*):

"*gənwīšunγwe li umarār*, – "Towards *umarārunγwe*, after *Gentsvishi* there is *Umarebi* (the narrator should say *omariš'l*, official terminology), after *Umareshi – Sakeni*" [2 : 80-81].

I especially focused on the use of the same toponym in the speech of the descendants who had migrated from various villages of historically Lower Bal territory in the Kodori Gorge: Zhana Tsalani (Becho > Ptishi), Marika Devdariani (Para > Ajara) and Shalva Argvliani (Tskhumari > Khutia) pronounce plural *-ār* suffix in a Lower Bal way (in all positions, i.e. in their speech a dissimilated allomorph *-äl* of a *-ār* morpheme does not occur. Due to this *omarišār* is ordinary for them), Etserian (Hebudian) Vladimir Subeliani does not discuss only phonetic difference between Lower Bal and Upper Bal dialects, and goes further – he knows that the name of one of the villages of the Kodori Gorge is originated from an ethnonym – the local population is a descendant of Omari and he uses a filiation formation, but in a Lower Bal way, since he is historically Etserian. The result gave different data – it is *umarār* (and not *omariš'l*, i.e., official name of the village on the map of Georgia). The study of the interference of the language is involving character, so each

mophonological or morphosyntactic occurrence should be studied comprehensively on the basis of the speech of many narrators, mainly in the form of live dialogues.

It is welcome that during our linguistic expedition in the Kodori Gorge in the speech of Lower Bal migrants settled in the village Gvandra and Sakeni M. Sagliani noticed Upper Bal dialect-like *-j* ending in singular nominative case of a certain group of names in parallel with the auslauts with elided *-äj*, which she explains to be interference of Upper Svan dialects [6 : 686]. Of course, this assumption is totally permissible, but it is necessary to verify this occurrence – if the elderly Lower Bal narrators used to say the forms similar to *zä-j* "a year", *yalä-j* "river", *məšä-j* "worker"... then it is expected that a nominative diphthongized ending *-äj* has been inherited from their original habitat – i.e. from the Enguri Gorge (entirely possible from the village Becho which is under the influence of Upper Bal dialect), as for young people's speech in this case we deal with the interference of speech of Upper Bal population residing in the Kodori Gorge.

We should take special care to interference speech study in Kodori and Tskhenistsqali gorges. The problem is quite serious and requires not only the linguistic approach but also the use of a cartographic method of linguistic geography. The present study is an attempt to demonstrate intermingling of morphonological and lexicological occurrences of Upper Svan dialects in the Kodorian speech and its consequences.

Acknowledgement. The work was supported by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (grant N217848, Place of Kodorian Dialect in the Svan Language System).

*ენათმეცნიერება***კოდორული სვანური მეტყველების კვალიფიკაციისათვის****ი. ჩანტლაძე**

ივანე ჯავახიშვილის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, არნოლდ ჩიქობავას სახელობის ენათმეცნიერების ინსტიტუტი, თბილისი, საქართველო

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის ა. არაბულის მიერ)

ზოგადლინგვისტური თვალსაზრისით, გამორჩეულ მნიშვნელობას იძენს დიალექტური დიფერენციების საკითხი შედარებით გვიან დასახლებულ ტერიტორიებზე, განსაკუთრებით მაშინ, თუ ლოკალიზაცია მთიან რეგიონშია. ამ მხრივ, უპირველეს ყოვლისა, არა მხოლოდ ენათმეცნიერთა, არამედ ეთნოლინგვისტთა ყურადღებას იქცევს სვანური ენის კოდორული და ჩოლურული მეტყველება. პირველი მათგანი წარმოადგენს თითქმის საუკუნუნახევრის წინ ენგურის ხეობიდან (სვანეთიდან) კოდორის ხეობაში (აფხაზეთში) ჩასახლებული ბალსზემო თუ ბალსქვემოელი მოსახლეობის სვანურს, ხოლო მეორე ქვემოსვანურ დიალექტთა (ლაშხურ-ლენტეხურის) ნაჯვარი მეტყველებაა. ჯერჯერობით მხოლოდ ამის აღნიშვნა შეგვიძლია დაბეჯითებით, რადგანაც ორივე მეტყველების ფუნდამენტური შესწავლის პროცესი სულ რამდენიმე წელია მიმდინარეობს არნოლდ ჩიქობავას სახელობის ენათმეცნიერების ინსტიტუტში; მანამდე სპეციალურ ლიტერატურაში არსებობდა მხოლოდ ცალკეული თეორიული ხასიათის გამონათქვამები ან ემპირიული მასალის სინქრონიული აღწერის შედეგები (ბესარიონ ნიჟარაძე, აკაკი შანიძე, ვარლამ თოფურია, მაქსიმე ქალდანი, მერი გუჯეჯიანი, მიხეილ ქურდიანი, ტარიელ ფუტკარაძე, ლამარა ბაბლუანი,...), ოღონდ ფრაგმენტული სახით.

პრობლემა საკმაოდ სერიოზულია და მოითხოვს არა მხოლოდ საკუთრივ ენათმეცნიერულ მიდგომას, არამედ ლინგვისტური გეოგრაფიის კარტოგრაფიული მეთოდის გამოყენებაც. ბევრ რამეს გვირთულებს ისიც, რომ კოდორის ხეობაში ჩვენი სამეცნიერო ექსპედიციების შემდგომ უმძიმესმა სამხედრო-პოლიტიკურმა ბატალიებმა (2008 წ.) ფაქტობრივად მოგვაშორა კვლევის ობიექტს, ამიტომ იძულებულნი ვართ, ვიმუშაოთ მთელი საქართველოს ტერიტორიაზე განფენილ, თავისი სამკვიდროდან მოწყვეტილ ლტოლვილ მოსახლეობასთან. ვიდრე დიალექტურ ინტერფერენციათა კვლევის ღრმად გააზრებული ეთნოლინგვისტური შედეგები არ გვექნება, მანამდე ჩვენი თხოვნაა, მოვერიდოთ ცალკეულ ზეპირ განცხადებებსა თუ სტატიებში გამოხატულ ზერეულ გამონათქვამებს კოდორული სვანური მეტყველების სპეციფიკის შესახებ. წინამდებარე გამოკვლევა გახლავთ მცდელობა კოდორულ მეტყველებაში ზემოსვანურ დიალექტთა მორფონოლოგიურ თუ ლექსიკოლოგიურ მოვლენათა ურთიერთშერწყმისა და ამით გამოწვეული შედეგების ჩვენებისა.

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Received September, 2017