

Bodleian Manuscripts of Georgian Grammar and Language Studies

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Abstract. This paper introduces Georgian Grammar manuscripts from the Wardrop and other collections at the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, focusing on grammars used primarily for didactic purposes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The materials include grammar manuscripts (MS. Georg. e. 1, *cigni grammatikay k'art'ulisamebr enisa* by Catholicos Anthony I, 1784), archival materials (MS. Wardr. c. 26, Sir Oliver Wardrop's translation of the *Grammatical Sketch* by Dodashvili, 1894 holograph), printed books (Wardr. 5. 10, *L'art libéral, ou, Grammaire géorgienne* by Marie-Félicité Brosset, 1834, litographic edition) and Marjory Wardrop's language notebooks (Ms. Wardr. e. 32, Marjory's handwritten language notebook related to her Georgian studies, 1905-1906). A newly prepared online edition of the latter is now freely available online via the Wardrops' Collection Online (WCO) repository. Created in .xml format using the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), Extensive Markup Language and Oxygen software, it includes metadata and enables advanced textual search. This edition facilitates access to Georgian cultural heritage preserved outside of Georgia and provides insights into lesser-known aspects of teaching/learning Georgian as a foreign language in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. © 2025 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

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Introduction

The Wardrop Collection of Georgian manuscripts and archival materials is the core collection at the Bodleian Libraries (University of Oxford) and one of the major repositories of Georgian material outside of Georgia. It includes 210 items, 75 of which are handwritten books from the 7th to the 20th centuries (materials are from various subject areas, many of them rare and unpublished, thus being of great interest to scholars). Most of the materials were collected by Sir J. Oliver Wardrop (1864-

1948) (the first British Chief Commissioner of the Transcaucasia 1919-1920) and his sister Marjory Wardrop (1869-1909) (both well-known scholars, translators, founders and benefactors of Kartvelian studies at the University of Oxford).

My research focuses on manuscripts, archival materials, and published books related to Georgian Grammar preserved at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. These materials come not only from the Wardrop collection but also from older collections:

(a) MS. Georg. e. 1, *cigni grammatikay k'art'ulisamebr enisa*, [Grammar Book of the Georgian Language], Grammar by Catholicos Anthony I, language: Georgian. The title page, main headings, running titles and capitals are in asomtavruli script, text is in mkhedruli script, dates back to 1784;

(b) MS. Georg. d. 1, *minuši k'art'ulis cerisa*, [Sample of Georgian writing], language: Georgian, in mkhedruli script. 1870;

(c) Ms. Wardr. e. 26, 37, *Grammar of old literary Georgian*, by Niko Marr, translation probably by J. O. Wardrop, language: English (two-exercise books), original text Russian *Grammatika drevne-literaturnogo gruzinskogo yazıka* [Grammar of Old Literal Georgian] (Leningrad, 1925);

(d) MS. Wardr. c. 26, *Dodashvili's grammatical Sketch*, translated by O. Wardrop from the journal *Moambe*, no. 4, Tiflis, April 1894 (Holograph, with 2 sheets in typescript);

(e) Wardr. 5. 10 *L'art libéral, ou, Grammaire géorgienne* [Liberal Art, or Georgian Grammar], by Marie-Félicité Brosset text in French, title in Georgian: *xelovneba aznaurebit'a, gina k'art'ulis enisa t'wt'mascavlebeli*, [Liberal art, or self-study book of the Georgian Language] (Paris, 1834; Litographic publication);

(f) Wardr. 5. 81, *Noice sur la langue géorgienne* [Notice on the Georgian Language], by Marie-Félicité Brosset text in French (Paris, 1827);

(g) Ms. Wardr. e. 32, *Language notebook* of Marjory Wardrop. Translations, lessons, c., relating to her Georgian, Russian and Rumanian studies, Language: English, Georgian (1905-1906);

(h) Ms. Wardr. f. 11, *Notebook* of Marjory Wardrop, with Georgian word-lists, fragments of translations;

(j) Ms. Wardr. c. 1 (10), *Georgian-English Word-list* by Marjory Wardrop (1895); *Georgian grammar* (2 pages).

In the following sections, I discuss three manuscripts: MS. Georg. e. 1, MS. Wardr. c. 26, and Ms. Wardr. e. 32 pointing out some theoretical implica-

tions and presenting the online edition of Marjory Wardrop's notebook.

MS. Georg. e. 1 *cigni grammatikay k'art'ulisamebr enisa* by Catholicos Anthony I. The most significant manuscript on Georgian Grammar is the 18th-century work by Catholicos Anthony I (MS. Georg e.1). This is the first comprehensive Georgian Grammar written in Georgian, covering phonology, morphology and syntax. While influenced by existing grammatical descriptions of Latin, Greek, French, Italian, German, Armenian, and Russian, it also explores many unique properties of the Georgian language. Notably, its theoretical approach aligns more closely with modern linguistic principles than with traditional descriptive grammars, positioning it as a philosophical work rather than a mere language description.

The manuscript explores numerous peculiarities of the language and includes comparative discussions aimed at identifying more universal language patterns. From the structural point of view one of its most significant contributions is to our understanding of the Georgian case system/assignment and ergativity as such by providing information on various issues associated with cases in Georgian. It provides valuable insights into case assignment by documenting cases not described in earlier or later Georgian grammars, including the ergative (mentioned for the first time), the absolutive unmarked (rather than nominative as in other grammars), and the accusative (absent from the Modern Georgian case system whatsoever). The recognition of these cases has crucial theoretical implications for case assignment, enabling an analysis of Georgian case assignment from the Dependent Case Theory (DCT) perspective. For theoretical discussions on DCT, see [1-6], inter alia and for how case assignment actually happens in Georgian, see [7] and other alternative accounts therein.

Anthony's Grammar exists in two editions: the first from 1753 and a concise second edition from 1767. It has been acknowledged in related literature

[8] that no autograph manuscript by Catholicos Anthony I has been preserved; instead, numerous copies were made by his pupils. Seventeen such copies, dating from the late 18th and 19th centuries, are preserved at the National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi and have been extensively studied [8]. A printed edition by Prince R. Eristavi, published in 1885, is based on the second edition. The Oxford manuscript dates to 1784, but little is known about its history or where it was originally produced. The scribe is identified as a person named Michael. A brief provenance note states: *es grammatika mep'isa žis žis Leonisa aris* 'This grammar belongs to the King's (grand)son Leon'. However, scholarly literature suggests that this inscription likely refers not to this specific manuscript but to the original from which it was copied, as Prince Levan (1756-1781) was no longer alive in 1784 [9].

The Bodleian manuscript follows the second edition, as evidenced by the omission of the three theories of style at the end of the book and several other distinguished features. For instance, in the first edition, the ablative case – referred to as *dacqebit'i* 'lit.: starting' – is listed after the predicative case, whereas in the second edition, it appears after the instrumental case.

Most subsequent grammatical descriptions were based on Anthony's grammar, which gained widespread popularity from the 18th century and remained in use until the early 20th century. The primary grammar used for didactic purposes in 19th-century Europe *xelovneba aznaurebit'a, gina k'art'ulis enisa t'wt'mascavlebeli*, [Liberal art, or self-study book of the Georgian Language] by M. Brosset (Wardr. 5.10) is also based on Anthony's Grammar. This work was donated to M. Brosset by Prince Teimuraz, son of the last King of Imereti Solomon II (1789-1810) [10].

MS. Wardr. c. 26 *Dodashvili's Grammatical Sketch*. The Bodleian collections also contain supplementary materials that have been valuable in the language learning process. These include a

Sample of Georgian Writing (MS. Georg. d. 1), N. Marr's *Grammar of Old-literary Georgian* (mainly phonetic/phonological part MS. Wardr. e. 26, 37) and Dodashvili's *Grammatical Sketch* (MS. Wardr. c. 26) translated by Sir Oliver Wardrop.

The author of *Grammatical Sketch* is not explicitly named in the manuscript, but a note in Oliver Wardrop's handwriting: "This translation was made with Dodashvili in the latter's rooms in 1894 in Tiflis" confirms that the work is not Solomon Dodashvili's well-known 1830 grammar, as he was no longer alive at that time. Rather, it is unquestionably the work of Kote Dodashvili, Solomon's grandson.

The translation corresponds to the first part of Kote Dodashvili's work, published in the journal *Moambe* (No.4, Tiflis, April 1894), the second part (*Moambe*, No.6, 1894) which predominantly comprised of paradigms, was not translated by Oliver. In a letter to Hugo Schuchardt, Oliver explains: "the second part consists almost entirely of paradigms, etc. so I have thought it is better to refer students to the original" (04-12617, Kertch September 16, 1895). In his correspondence with Marjory (MS. Wardr. Add. 2. Fols. 314-345, 314v., Tiflis October 25, 1894), Oliver mentions meeting Kote Dodashvili, noting that he had insights into grammar and phonetics. To the best of my knowledge, this translation remains unpublished. Oliver wrote to Hugo Schuchardt (letters from Kertch, 03-12616, 29.08.1895; 04-12617, 16.09.1895; 05-12618, 15.10.1895, Hugo Schuchardt's Archive, University of Graz) stating that he was unable to publish it in England, and had sent it to Prof. Friedrich Müller in Austria, but unfortunately, he had not heard from him back.

Grammatical Sketch consists of two parts on phonetics/phonology and two parts on morphology. The morphological section covers noun declension and verb conjugation. The case system presented in this work differs from that of Anthony I and subsequent Georgian grammars by omitting the absolute case, renaming the ergative case (referred to

as the *demonstrative* case), and introducing the transformative case (which corresponds to the adverbial case in Modern Georgian grammars). The accusative is retained but has the same form as the nominative. From a theoretical point of view, these changes are not crucial for making claims.

The more intriguing aspect of this work is its exploration of multifunctionality in morphology, discussing multifunctional affixes that appear in different, seemingly unrelated contexts. Those affixes are used both in inflection (primarily as case markers) and in derivation. However, it remains unclear whether these are truly single multifunctional affixes or merely two separate affixes that happen to be homonymous. Some examples show homonymous affixes used as suffixes in inflection and as prefixes in derivation. For instance, *deda* ‘mother’ – *deda-si* (GEN) vs. *si-dedri* ‘mother-in-law’, or *saxl-i* ‘house’ – *saxl-sa* (DAT) vs. *sa-saxl-e* ‘palace’. Still, this is the first reference to this complex issue in Georgian Grammar, which has not yet been discussed at the appropriate level. From a theoretical perspective, this topic has gained significant interest in recent years, as seen in some works within the Distributed Morphology (DM) framework [11 – 13], inter alia.

Ms. Wardr. e. 32 *Language notebook of Marjory Wardrop*. For didactic purposes neither of the mentioned grammars are sufficient to provide the complete description of the language or concise grammatical rules. However, these grammars,

especially M. Brosset’s, based on Catholicos Anthony’s description, were the primary resources for teaching/learning Georgian in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This is evident in Marjory’s notebooks, where verb paradigms follow Anthony’s theoretical assumptions about the existence of two infinitival forms for active and passive verbs. Marjory’s notebooks offer valuable insight into how Georgian grammar was taught during this period. They include translations, fragments from Georgian literature, grammatical rules, verb paradigms, and wordlists.

The online version of the notebook Ms. Wardr. e. 32 follows TEI standards and encompasses diplomatic transcription that preserves as much as possible the original spelling, marginalia, and changes in the manuscript. These changes are encoded using and <add> elements, with attributes indicating the @place of insertion such as <add place="inline">, etc. The newly added edition (2025) is available from the WCO ropository [14], allowing researchers to explore lesser-known aspects of Georgian manuscripts from the Bodleian Library.

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ფილოლოგია

ბოდლეს ბიბლიოთეკის ხელნაწერები ქართული გრამატიკისა და ენის სწავლების შესახებ

ს. ბერიკაშვილი

ილიას სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, ლინგვისტურ კვლევათა ინსტიტუტი, თბილისი, საქართველო

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის ვ. ასათიანის მიერ)

ნაშრომი ეხება ოქსფორდის უნივერსიტეტის ბოდლეს ბიბლიოთეკის, უორდროპების და სხვა კოლექციებში დაცულ ხელნაწერებს ქართული გრამატიკის შესახებ. ყურადღება ეთმობა იმ გრამატიკებსა და დამატებით მასალას, რომლებიც მე-19 საუკუნის ბოლოს და მე-20 საუკუნის დასაწყისში გამოიყენებოდა ქართული ენის შესასწავლად, კერძოდ, ხელნაწერებს ქართული გრამატიკის შესახებ (MS. Georg. e. 1, *წიგნი ღრამმატიკაჲ ქართულისამებრ ენისა*, ანტონ პირველი კათალიკოსი, 1784 წ.), საარქივო მასალებს (MS. Wardr. c. 26, დოდაშვილის *საგრამატიკო ესკიზის* სერ ოლივერ უორდროპის თარგმანი, 1894 წლის პოლოგრაფი), ნაბეჭდ წიგნებს (Wardr. 5. 10, *ხელოვნება აზნაურებითა, გინა ქართულის ენისა თვით მასწავლებელი*, 1834 წლის ლითოგრაფული გამოცემა) და მარჯორი უორდროპის ენის რეგულებს (Ms. Wardr. e. 32, მარჯორის ხელით შესრულებული რეგული, რომელიც ქართულის შესწავლას ეხება, 1905-1906 წწ.). აღსანიშნავია, რომ მარჯორის რეგულის ციფრული გამოცემა მომზადდა .xml ფორმატში ტექსტური კოდირების ინიციატივის (TEI) რეგულაციების დაცვით და ამ ეტაპზე ხელმისაწვდომია ონლაინ გამოცემის სახით უორდროპების ონლაინ კოლექციაში (WCO). გამოცემა უზრუნველყოფილია როგორც მეტაინფორმაციის ნახვის, ასევე გაფართოებული ტექსტური ძიების საშუალებით. ელექტრონული გამოცემა ხელს უწყობს საქართველოს ფარგლებს გარეთ არსებული ქართული კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის ხელმისაწვდომობას და აძლევს მე-19 საუკუნის ბოლოს მე-20 საუკუნის დასაწყისში ქართულის, როგორც უცხო ენის ნაკლებად ცნობილი ასპექტების შესწავლის საშუალებას.

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