

The Svan language.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

This description of the grammar of the Svan language is more than a revised edition of the grammatical sketch I published in 1997. That earlier attempt appeared just as Svan linguistics was entering a new and exciting stage. At the Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics in Tbilisi, a new generation of researchers, many of them native speakers of Svan, were bringing the long-overdue Svan dictionary project to completion, and beginning to explore aspects of the language that had hitherto drawn little or no attention. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to these extraordinary colleagues, without whom this grammatical sketch could never have been written. Their works are cited throughout this grammar, and many of their publications are listed in the bibliography, but there are some whom I wish to thank personally in this preface: Roena Ch'k'adua, Lela Giglemiani, Chato Gujejiani, Rusudan and Xatuna Ioseliani, Ketevan Margiani-Subari, Meri Saghliani, Nato Shavreshiani, and of course, Madame Iza Chant'ladze. Deep thanks as well to my friends in Svaneti, especially the residents of the commune of Lat'ali, for their hospitality, patience, and willingness to let a clueless outsider learn something about daily life in a Svan village: the C'erediani family (Nino, Leri, Levan, Maik'o; their beloved parents Davit and Valia, and uncle Bagrat Nansq'ani, who alas are no longer with us); also Madona Chamgeliani, Elisabeth Kaldani, and many other kind Svans who have shared their knowledge, food and drink over the years. Among the non-Georgian colleagues who have generously offered their comments and expertise, I wish to acknowledge Winfried Boeder, Jost Gippert, Christine Jourdan, David Erschler; and my students Hélène Gérardin and Jean-François Juneau.

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Finally, I extend very special thanks to my first teachers: Howard Aronson, Zurab Ch'umburidze Ambak'o Ch'k'adua. Ambak'o and Zurab are no longer with us, and it is to their memory that this sketch is dedicated — *xoča lakunu xarx*.

§1. The Svan speech community. The Svan language (Sv. lušnu nin; G. svanuri ena) is the outlying member of the Kartvelian (South Caucasian) language family. Svan speakers refer to themselves as šwan-är (singular mušwan), and to the territory of Svaneti as šwän. The root *šwan- is one of very few, possibly the only, ethnonym which can be reconstructed at the proto-Kartvelian level (*K* 179; *FS* 381). Although their language is mutually unintelligible with Georgian, the Svans have long considered themselves to be part of the Georgian nation, and were registered as Georgians during the Soviet period (as they continue to be in today’s Republic of Georgia). Recent estimates of the size of the Svan speech community range from 14,000 (Ethnologue 2018) to 50,000 (Gippert 2005). A more precise figure was provided by Chantladze, Babluani & Fähnrich (2003), who counted 26120 speakers, of whom 14709 speak an Upper Svan dialect (Upper and Lower Bal), and 11411 speak Lower Svan (Lashx, Lentex and Cholur dialects). Most Svans live in their traditional homeland, although increasing numbers reside in lowland Georgia, including some who were displaced by the destruction of several Svan villages by avalanches during the tragic winter of 1987-1988, or the Georgian-Russian conflict of 2008.

Since at least the early Middle Ages, the Svans have occupied the upper reaches of the Enguri River (“Upper Svaneti”, corresponding to the present-day administrative district of Mest’ia Municipality, within the region of Samegrelo-Upper Svaneti), and the Cxenis-c’q’ali River (“Lower Svaneti”, corresponding to Lent’exi Municipality, of the Rač’a-Lečxumi-Lower Svaneti region). Human occupation of this area goes back at least to the Middle Bronze Age (Sh. Chartolani 1976, 1977). There is no compelling evidence, in the form of discontinuities in the archaeological record, non-Kartvelian toponyms or linguistic substrates, against associating the initial colonization of the upper Enguri and Cxenis-c’q’ali basins with the ancestors of the present-day Svan speech community (A. Ch’k’adua 2020). According to Gamq’relidze and Ivanov (1984: 870-1), the Proto-Svan language was brought into present-day Georgian territory by the initial migration of Kartvelians northward and eastward from their initial homeland, in the highlands of the western Lesser Caucasus or eastern Anatolia. These authors estimate that the ancestral Proto-Kartvelian speech community would have existed in the 4th to 3rd millennia BC. (If so, the Proto-Kartvelians may have been one of the groups participating in the emergence of the Transcaucasian Early Bronze or Kura-Araxes horizon; see also *K* xii-xiii; Kavtaradze 2000; Yardumian 2015). Having migrated several centuries in advance of the remaining Kartvelian-speaking groups, the Proto-Svan speech community would have once inhabited much of what is now western Georgia. The geographer Strabo, writing 2000 years ago, describes the Svans (*Soanoi*) as one of the dominant populations of the West Caucasus highlands, allegedly capable of fielding an army of 200,000 men. Place names of Svan origin have been identified in the Georgian provinces of Lechxumi, Mingrelia, Upper Imeretia, and even Guria (Kaldani 1980; Cxadaia 1985; *CNK* 25-35; Tschumburidse 1990).

1.1. Dialects. By the beginning of the 19th century, as the Russian Empire began its annexation of the South Caucasus, Svan-speaking territory had been divided on a feudal basis into so-called Dadiani, Dadeshkeliani, and Free or Lordless Svaneti. Dadiani Svaneti (*Sadadiano*), corresponding to Lower Svaneti, was part of the domain of the Dadiani royal family of Mingrelia. The Dadeshkeliani princes ruled that part of Upper Svaneti westward of the Bal Ridge, which is between Becho and Lat’ali. The eastern Upper Svan communes, from Lat’ali to Ushguli, had no feudal overlord, although some local families had privileged status (Gasviani 1980, 1991; Xosht’aria-Brosset 1984; Tschumburidse 1990). The number of communes in the former Free Svaneti is presently seven, though in earlier times Muzhali (now part of Mulaxi), and

Adishi, Ieli and C’wirmi (all now included in Ipari), may have been distinct communes.

Regions	Communes (Sv <i>qew</i> ; G <i>temi</i>)	Dialects	Subdialects
Lower Svaneti (former Dadiani)	Lent’exi	Lent’ex (Ln)	Lent’ex proper, Xeleduri, Xopuri, Rcxmeluri
	Choluri	Cholur (Ch)	Lower Ch (Saq’dari); Upper Ch (Tek’ali, Panaga)
	Lashxeti	Lashx (Lš)	(none)
Upper Svaneti up to Bal Ridge (former Dadeshkeliani)	Ch’uberi-Nensk’ra, Nak’ra-Lalver; Pari; Eceri	Lower Bal (LB)	Central LB: Chubexevi, Pari, Eceri
	Xaishi, Laxamula		Laxamula
	Cxumari		Cxumari
	Becho		Becho
Upper Svaneti beyond Bal Ridge	Lenjeri, Mest’ia, Mulaxi-Muzhali, Ipari-Ieli-C’wirmi-Adishi, K’ala	Upper Bal (UB)	(central varieties)
	Lat’ali		Lat’ali
	Ushguli		Ushguli

The Upper Svans refer to those from the communes downriver from the Bal Ridge as *čwabär* (< *čwäb* “below”; sing. *mučwabir*), and those from upriver as *žabär* (< *žäb* “above”; sing. *məžabwir*). At least since Uslar (1861/1887), this territorial division has been used to classify the Svan language into dialects. The term used by Georgian linguists to designate the varieties spoken in the former Dadeshkeliani Svaneti is *Balskvemouri* (“from below Bal”); and the Svan dialect spoken upriver from the Bal Ridge is correspondingly named *Balszemouri* (“from above Bal”).

As already noted by Shanidze (1925a/1981: 371), these two dialect names are not readily translated into other languages. In this grammatical sketch, I will continue to employ the English equivalents “Lower Bal” and “Upper Bal”, which have been in use for several decades, even though designations such as “Cis-Bal” and “Trans-Bal” would be more accurate. Upper Bal is commonly characterized as the most conservative among the Svan dialects, primarily on the basis of its vowel system and geographical location (e.g. Deeters 1930: 5; Klimov 1996), but in many respects, it is the Lower Bal dialect, especially its central and western varieties, that conserves features not (or no longer) found elsewhere. Furthermore, a number of lexical and morphological isoglosses separate LB from UB and the Lower Svan dialects, which could derive from an early separation of the northwestern-most Svan settlements from the remainder of the speech community. Conservative features of LB will be presented in the sections on noun and verb morphology. Peripheral subdialects, or those adjoining the LB-UB dialect boundary, show interesting divergences from the more central LB and UB varieties; these include the subdialects of Lat’ali (Sharadzenidze 1970, Chartolani 2003: 212-2113); Cxumari (Sharadzenidze 1958); Laxamula (Kaldani 1954, 1955, 1956); and Becho (Kaldani 1962).

With respect to Lower Svan, there is a difference of opinion regarding the status of the Svan spoken in the villages of Choluri commune. Marr (1922) recognized Cholur as a distinct variety, whereas Shanidze (1925a/1981: 321) considered it to be a transitional zone, assigning the subdialect spoken in and near Saq’dari to the Ln dialect area, and the remaining varieties to Lš (see also Topuria 1965). Shanidze (1925a/1981) proposed a four-way division of the Svan dialects on the basis of phonological and morphophonological features related to the vowels: (i) vowel length; (ii) umlaut; (iii) reduction (see also Deeters 1930: 5; *T* 256; Topuria 1985: 144).

For those who do not recognize Cholur as a distinct dialect, the three features suffice to distinguish each dialect from the others:

Shanidze 1925a/1981 classification of Svan dialects according to vowel (morpho)phonology

	LENGTH	UMLAUT	REDUCTION
DIALECT			
<i>Upper Bal</i>	+	+	+
<i>Lower Bal</i>	—	+	+
<i>Lent'ex</i>	—	+	—
<i>Lashx</i>	+	—	+

This schema represented the consensus opinion throughout the Soviet period, but in recent years, some have called for the recognition of Cholur as a fifth Svan dialect (Lip'art'eliani 1994; O 6-7; Tschantladze et al 2003; Chant'ladze 2012 takes a more cautious position). In this grammar, I will treat Cholur separately from Lashx and Lent'ex when the sources of the data make it possible to do so, or when citing my own data from Cholur commune (collected in 1995). When drawing upon sources employing the four-dialect system, I will use the designations provided by the authors (hence, it is possible that Cholur forms will appear labeled as Lš or Ln). Finally, mention should be made of the varieties of Svan that emerged in the upper Kodori Valley. Svans settled in this area in the 19th century, and their descendents remained there until the Georgian-Russian war of 2008. Some Kodori villages were founded by speakers from multiple localities in Upper Svaneti, leading to the emergence of hybrid speech varieties combining Lower and Upper Bal features (Kaldani 1970; Chant'ladze et al 2010).

1.2. Sociolinguistic situation. Until very recently, Svan has seldom been used as a medium of written communication. Among Svans, literacy means literacy in Georgian. Knowledge of Georgian was fairly widespread, at least among the local elites, in the Middle Ages, but declined after successive invasions of lowland Georgia cut off regular contact with remote highland regions such as Svaneti. Up to the 19th century, many, perhaps most Svans were monolingual (women especially), although those living near other speech communities, and men engaged in commerce or working outside of Svaneti, would know Georgian, Mingrelian or Balkarian (Tepcov 1890: 64). Describing the linguistic situation in the late 19th century, Nizharadze (1964: 169-172) reported a high level of Georgian competence in Lower Svaneti, as well as a sharp increase in Free Svaneti from 1870 to 1891, albeit among men only. Volkova (1978) observed that a number of older men in the Upper Svan communities of Becho, Mestia, Mulax, and Ushgul, who had worked as migrant laborers in the North Caucasus, retained a good knowledge of Karachay-Balkar.

Since the late 19th century, successive administrations — Russian, Soviet and Georgian — have operated schools in Svanetia, with the medium of instruction being, in most cases, Georgian. Almost all adult speakers of Svan can now read and write Georgian, and many, especially those who received a higher education or who did military service during the Soviet period, have a good knowledge of Russian.

The 2018 edition of *Ethnologue* evaluates the vitality of Svan as level 7 (shifting) on the EGIDS (*Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale*), which indicates the assessment that the language “is not being transmitted to children”. My own impression is that the situation is not quite so dire. In the Upper Svan commune of Latali, children speak and are spoken to in

Svan, but several people expressed concern about the extent to which a full command of Svan is being passed on to the youngest generation. One friend in his mid-40s explained that, whereas he and other of his age learned Georgian only after acquiring Svan as their mother tongue, the newest speakers appear to be Georgian-dominant. Svan still appears to be the principal language of everyday communication within compact ‘diaspora’ settlements in lowland Georgia, many of which are composed of people from the same commune.

1.3. Writing in Svan. Throughout its known history, to the end of the Soviet period, Svan was almost exclusively a language of oral communication. Most examples of written Svan are contained in linguistic and ethnographic textual collections such as those mentioned in the following paragraph; that is, they are examples of oral literature reduced to writing by specialists. A rare example of a diary written in Svan (using Georgian script), by a soldier from Mestia sent to fight in the Russo-Turkish war of 1908, is included in the collection *UB* 41-48. The Koževnikova archive contains several personal letters in Svan.

The arrival of new electronic communication devices — mobile telephones and personal computers — has fostered a new life for Svan as a written language in the 21st century. Svans are increasingly using their language in text-messages and social-media chat, and one can observe the emergence of a new Svan “insider” literacy, associated with intimacy, humor and expressivity, coexisting quite comfortably with official Georgian-language literacy (Tuite 2017). The Svan language is less present in printed media, although some poetry has been published (Xergiani 2004), and initiatives have been undertaken recently to promote Svan writing by young people (e.g. Bærug 2013).

“Naïve” writing affords some insight into native perceptions of Svan phonology. Notably, the schwa vowel, although readily perceptible in speech, is commonly omitted, since its presence can in most instances be predicted on phonotactic grounds. Examples of omitted schwas occur in medieval manuscripts from Svaneti, e.g. <lha> and <k’ičxldaš> for the village names *Ḹha* and *K’ičx̣̄ldäš* (Silogava 1988: 567, 569; Tuite 2017).

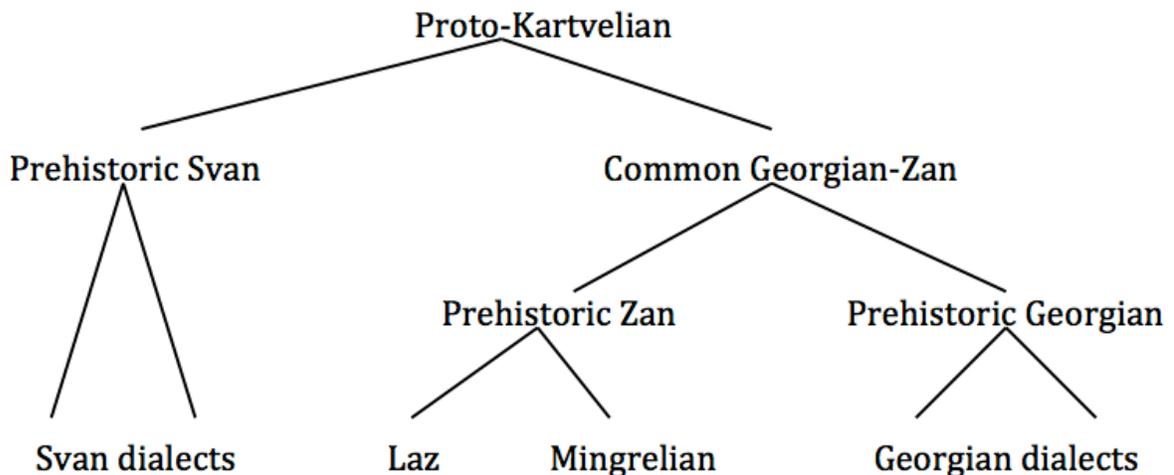
1.4. History of research on the Svan language. Unlike Mingrelian, whose kinship with Georgian can be detected by ear (Vaxusht’i 1745/1973: 783), the Kartvelian affiliation of Svan was not recognized until the first comparison of word-lists in the Caucasus languages by Güldenstädt (1787). The first brief grammatical sketch of Svan was published by Rosen (1846; see also Cagareli 1873: 78-80), followed by a more thorough study of the language by Uslar, portions of which appeared posthumously in a sketch appended to Uslar’s Abkhaz grammar (1861/1887), and in the *Sbornik materialov dlja opisanija mestnostej i plemën Kavkaza* (vol X, 1890). Also published in the same journal were collections of Svan texts, and a Russian-Svan dictionary, transcribed in variants of the modified-Cyrillic alphabet devised by Uslar (Gren 1890; I. Nizharadze 1890; G. & I. Nizharadze 1894; I. Nizharadze 1910). Uslar’s script was also employed in the 1864 *Lušnu anban* (“Svan alphabet”), a primer for children containing spelling exercises, a catechism, and a Svan-Georgian-Russian glossary. The oldest known sound recording of Svan was made in 1909 (transcribed and analyzed by Gippert 1987).

Svan texts and dictionaries were also published in the series *Materialy po jafetičeskomy jazykoznaniju* (Oniani 1917a, 1917b; Marr 1922), but in Georgian script, with diacritics for long and unlauded vowels. This became the standard practice throughout the Soviet period, and in present-day Georgia. Beginning with Shanidze (1925a/1981) and Topuria (1931), Georgian scholars produced a continual series of publications on Svan grammar, the most important of which are listed in the bibliography (see also Tschumburidse 1990). An anthology of Svan folk

poetry (*SP*), four volumes of prose texts (*UB*, *LB*, *Ln*, *Lš*), and a chrestomathy (*Chr*) were compiled during the Soviet period; only the first of these collections, however, includes translations of the Svan texts. The long-awaited Svan-Georgian dictionary was finally published at the beginning of the new millennium (*TK* = Topuria & Kaldani 2000), followed by Dondua's dictionary of the Lašx dialect (2001). A. Ch'k'adua's compendium of Svan place names was posthumously published in 2020. The Svan lexicographic material collected by Marr a century ago remains unpublished, except for one fragment (Marr 1922). Among the grammatical descriptions of Svan which have appeared since the 1990s are Schmidt (1992), Tuite (1997), Ch'umburidze et al (2007), and a posthumously-published textbook by Topuria (2008). An important on-line source for Svan textual corpora, including most of the collections listed here, is the Project TITUS web site at <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de>. As this chapter was being written, the archives of Evdokija Koževnikova were rediscovered by her descendants, in cooperation with researchers at the Georgian National Museum. Koževnikova, a graduate student in ethnography from Leningrad, was sent by Marr to Upper Svaneti in 1927 to undertake fieldwork. Over the next few years she visited Svaneti several times, including a year-round expedition in 1930-31, collecting thousands of manuscript pages of Svan texts transcribed either in modified Georgian script or Marr's "Analytical Alphabet". Many of these texts, with Georgian summaries or translations, are available on-line at <https://dinakozhevnikova.ge>. For a preliminary linguistic assessment of the Koževnikova corpus, see Chant'ladze & Ioseliani 2018.

1.5. The position of Svan in the Kartvelian family. The consensus opinion among leading specialists of Kartvelian linguistics is that Svan is the outlier within the family, diverging from the proto-language as early as the Bronze Age [Deeters 1930; Gamq'relidze & Mach'avariani 1965; Schmidt 1962, 1989, 1991; Klimov 1964, 1998; Fähnrich & Sarjveladze 2007]. The remaining branch (Georgian-Zan) separated considerably later (1st millennium BC?). The two closely-related Zan languages, Laz and Mingrelian, appear to have diverged relatively recently, perhaps as a result of the westward spread of Georgian in the 1st millennium AD.

Evidence of the outlier status of Svan includes lexical isoglosses and shared morphology. Georgian and Zan share over 1200 lexemes (according to *K* 1998), and much of their inflectional morphology. Svan shares only 480 isoglosses with Georgian and 415 with Zan; and Svan nominal and verbal morphology diverges significantly from that of Georgian and Zan (Schmidt 1976, 1989).



Features of Georgian and Zan not shared with Svan, and likely to be innovations in the Georgian-Zan branch, include: (i) paired 3sg and 3pl subject suffixes; (ii) the noun pluralizer *-eb; (iii) extension of the imperfect-stem formant *-d- to all verb types; (iv) inchoative verbs in *-d-. Features likely to represent innovations in Svan include: (i) 1st-person prefixes /l-/ and /n-/ in the verb; (ii) semi-indirect quoted speech; (iii) long vowels; (iv) extension of the distribution of the preradical (“version”) vowel /a-/.

1.5.1 Sibilant and affricate correspondances. The consonant inventories of the Kartvelian languages are very similar. All have five triads of stops and affricates (aspirated, ejective and unmarked/voiced); paired fricatives; and a small set of sonorants. For the most part, the correspondences among Georgian, Zan and Svan are straightforward; the most notable exception concerns the sibilants and affricates, summarized in the table below. Georgian “hissing” (alveolar) sibilants and affricates can be correlated with either the identical phonemes in Zan and Svan, or with their “hushing” (palate-alveolar) counterparts. The Georgian “hissing” sibilants and affricates, on the other hand, are correlated with Zan and Svan clusters including a velar stop.

Correspondances among Kartvelian sibilants and affricates.

Mach’avariani, Klimov	Schmidt	Georgian	Zan	Svan
*s	*s	s [sam- “three”]	s [sum-]	s [sam-/sem-]
*z	*z	z [zywa “sea”]	z [zoɣa “sea”]	z [zuxwa “sea”]
*c	*c	c [cila “egg-white”]	c [cila]	c [cil]
*ʒ	*ʒ	ʒ [ʒgib- “fill”]	ʒ [ʒgib-]	ʒ [ʒg(u)b-]
*c’	*c’	c’ [c’on- “weigh”]	c’ [c’on-]	c’ [c’on-]
*s ^l (*ś)	*š	s [svan- “Svan”]	š [šon-]	š [šwan-]
*z ^l (*ź)	*ž	z [ze- “up”]	ž [ži-n “up”]	ž [ži “up, on”]
*c ^l (*ć)	*č	c [cxra “nine”]	č [čxoro]	č [čxara]
*ʒ ^l (*ǰ)	*ž	ʒ [ʒma “brother”]	ž [žima]	ž [žim-il]
*c’ ^l (*ć’)	*č’	c’ [c’el- “gut”] [-c’- “pull, draw”]	č’ [č’i] [-(n)č’-]	1. č’ [č’in-č’il] 2. h [-h- “reach”]
*š	*šk	š [šwid- “seven”]	šk [škwit-]	šg [i-šgwid]
*č	*čk	č [čw- “(ac)custom”] [čwen- “our”]	čk [(r)čkw-] [čkən-]	1. čk [čkw-] 2. šg [gu-šgwe-]
*ž	*žg	ž [biž- “step”]	žg [bižg-]	žg [bižg]
*č’	*č’k’	č’ [č’r-ial- “squeak”] [č’ed- “forge”] [č’am- “eat”]	č’k’ [č’k’ir-] [č’k’id-] [č’k’om-]	1. č’k’ [č’k’ər-] 2. šk’ [šk’äd-] 3. Ø [ēm-]

Two hypotheses to account for these correspondances appeared almost simultaneously. Mach’avariani (1960a) and Klimov (1960) postulated the existence of three sets of sibilants/affricates, rather than the two in the attested Kartvelian languages, in order to account for the correspondances between Georgian and its sisters. As summarized in Gamq’relidze & Mach’avariani (1965: 7-9), the third set is characterized as “hissing-hushing” (*sisina-šišina*) or “mid-sibilant” (*šuasibilant’uri*); the phonetic features of the three sibilant and affricates series, in the opinion of Mach’avariani (2002: 44-47), would have been similar to those of the West

Caucasian languages. Schmidt [1962; 1978] takes the Zan-Svan phonemes as directly inherited from Proto-Kartvelian, and treats the Georgian reflexes as the product of a consonant shift postdating the breakup of Georgian-Zan: *(T)ŠK > Geo. (T)Š; *(T)Š > Geo. (T)S.

Mach’avarani’s reconstruction has been adopted by the Georgian Kartvelologists, and is used in all of the etymological dictionaries (except the one in Schmidt 1962). The common evolution of the three sibilant series in Zan and Svan would appear, however, to pose a problem for a family tree including a distinct Georgian-Zan branch. Schmidt’s reconstruction is in many respects the null hypothesis. It requires neither a prehistoric Svan-Zan contact area, nor an unattested third set of sibilants/affricates; and the postulated simplification of Š+K clusters in pre-Georgian is a more natural type of sound change than the spontaneous emergence of velars (Schmidt 1976, 1978, 1995; see also Testelec 1995; Manaster-Ramer 1994). Its principal weakness is the lack of an elegant explanation of why one set of affricate + velar stop clusters lose their second element in Georgian (e.g. G. *čwen*, M. *čki* “we” < *čkwen-; Schmidt 1962: 147), while another — admittedly, smaller — set does not (G. *čkep-*, M. *čkap-* < *čkep- “be agitated”, Klimov 1998: 258; Testelec 1995: 15-16). While I take no stand in favor of one reconstruction or the other, I will cite Proto-Kartvelian lexemes in a modified version of the Mach’avarani notation (with an acute accent replacing the superscript ‘1’), for the sake of easier reference to Klimov’s and Fähnrich & Sarjveladze’s etymological dictionaries.

1.5.2 Sound changes specific to Svan. Compared to its sister languages, Svan has undergone considerable erosion of vowels and sonorants in final syllables. Word-final vowels, including the nominative-case suffix *-i and the past-indicative desinence *-a, are lost in most instances, although their earlier presence can often be reconstructed from umlaut effects on the preceding vowel. Final /w/ is usually lost (Sv *šda* ‘ear (grain)’ < **taw-* ‘head’), whereas final /l/ was susceptible to devoicing and spirantization (*t’iš* ‘louse’ < **t’il-*; Kurdiani 2001). Kartvelian *t is in most contexts reflected by the cluster /šd/ in Svan (Melikishvili 1981, Gigineishvili 1987; Schmidt 1964 derived it from a palatalized /*tʃ/ in Proto-Kartvelian). Many roots with initial *v/w developed the cluster /ɣw/ in Svan, e.g. Sv *ywaš* “male ibex” < **wač*; *ywač’är* “merchant” < G. *vač’ar-i* (Topuria 1941a). Other changes affecting consonants, including loss of the stop segment in affricates and palatalization of velars, are shown in the following table:

	Kartvelian	Georgian	Zan	Svan
(I) *T > ŠD	*datw-	datw-	tu(n)t-	dæšdw-
	*tagw- ‘mouse’	tagv-	L mtug-	šdugw
(II) *Č’ > H/Ø	*č’am- ‘morning’	--	č’ume-	ham
	*mč’er- ‘insect’	mč’er-	č’anž-	mēr
(III) DEAFFRICATION	*zacxw- ‘linden’	cacxv-	cxacxu-	zesx-ra
	*k’ač- ‘man’	k’ac-	k’oč-	č’æš
(IV) PALATALIZATION	*k’wi(r)čx- ‘leg’	k’vircx-	k’učx-	č’išx-
	*gab- ‘boil’	gb-	gub-	žab-

1.6. Lexicon. The percentage of Svan vocabulary cognate with the other Kartvelian languages is quite low. According to Klimov [K viii], Svan shares 480 lexemes with Georgian and 415 with Zan (i.e. Laz-Mingrelian), whereas Georgian and Zan share over 1200. Unlike Mingrelian, which is not considered especially difficult for Georgians to learn, Svan has a reputation for being archaic, harsh-sounding, and impossible for non-Svans to acquire. To give an idea of just how impenetrable Svan sounds to other Georgians, here are four lines from a

traditional Svan poem, along with the Georgian translation, chosen at random from *SP* 54, lines 45-48:

Svan text

cxemäd miča ži xok'ida
liz-ličedi č'ur xobina.
mešjäl mare mäg wešgd laxcwir,
sgwebin otčäš, txum, esogän.

Gloss of Svan text

[bow.and.arrow:NOM his up he.has.taken
go-leave indeed he.has.begun
fighter man:NOM all:NOM behind he.left
before he.managed, head:DAT, he.stood.to.them]

Georgian translation

tavisi mšvild-isari auyia,
svla-c'asvla dauc'q'ia.
meomari k'aci q'vela uk'an dast'ova,
c'in gausc'ro, tavši moekca.

Free translation

'He has taken up his bow and arrow,
He has set out.
He left all the warriors behind,
He took the lead, he stood at their head.'

By far the most significant source of loanwords in Svan is, unsurprisingly, Georgian, from which Svan has borrowed lexemes from at least the early Middle Ages up to the present (Saghiani 2016: 267-392). Borrowings from other sources testify to cultural contacts in the past. A handful of terms relating to Christianity came from Mingrelian (*tanap* “Easter”, *-žgir-* “bless”, and probably *žgərāg* “St George”; Abaev 1949: 596; Abakelia 1988), attesting to the likely route through which Orthodoxy was introduced to the Svans. Some Svan isoglosses with Mingrelian might have been borrowed from Zan, the ancestor of Mingrelian and Laz (*c'q'aršənd* “duck”, cf Ming *c'q'arsinž-* “water-bird”; *ršon-* “remember”; Klimov 1998: 166, 342). The Greek language, spoken along the eastern Black Sea coast since Antiquity, has left its traces in Svan (*st'ārūn* “cross”; Shanidze 1925b/1981). The words *pämli* “servant” and *diär* “bread”, although ultimately of Latin origin, entered Svan via Byzantine Greek (Gippert 1990).

Svan vocabulary also bears the traces of longstanding cultural contacts with neighbors from the North Caucasus, although earlier claims that Svan was a “mixed” language with a West-Caucasian (Abkhaz-Adyghean) substrate were highly exaggerated (Klimov 1994: 269-271; Tuite 2011). Among the more plausible Svan/West-Caucasian lexical parallels are a handful of terms pertaining to agriculture, which appear to be early borrowings into Svan from varieties of Circassian: *zəntx* ‘oats’, cp. Kabardian *zəntx* ‘oats’; *k'wecən* ‘wheat’, cp. West Circassian *k^wecə* ‘wheat’; *gwiz* ‘special-quality wheat or millet flour used for baking ritual bread on feast-days’, cp. Kabardian *g^wez* ‘wheat’ (Shagirov 1977). Abaev identified several dozen possible lexical parallels between Svan and Ossetic [Abaev 1949: 291-308; see also Klimov 1963; Charachidzé 1987]. One interesting isogloss is the word for hemp (Svan *kan*, Ossetic *gän[ä]*, Abxaz *a-k^wnə*), containing a biconsonantal form, unique to the Central Caucasus, of the widespread root found in Indo-European, Semitic and other Eurasian language groups (Abaev 1949: 296). *Däl*, the name of the goddess of game animals and the hunt, appears to come from a Nakh (East Caucasian) source; cp. Ingush *däla* ‘god’ (Goniashvili 1985; Fähnrich 1988; Tuite 2006). Although no East Caucasian language now adjoins Svan, there may have been contact in the past. The Svan speech community once extended further to the east, to include the northern part of the province of Rach'a, as recently as the 15th century (Dzidziguri 1970: 190-1; Ioseliani 2014).

§2. Phonology. Note on transcription. *Shallow morphological representations will be marked by {curly brackets}, with hyphens between the underlying morphemes. *Asterisks mark reconstructed Proto-Svan or Proto-Kartvelian forms.*

2.1. Consonants. The inventory of consonant phonemes of the Svan dialects is essentially the same as that of Old Georgian (i.e. all of the consonants of standard Modern Georgian plus /j/ and /q/). Svan has the labiovelar glide /w/, but lacks /v/ as a distinct phoneme (although /v/ appears as an allophone of /w/ in the Ln dialect; Lezhava 1984: 5, 125-6; CNK 50-1). The uvular obstruents /q/ and /qʰ/ are often pronounced as affricates ([qχ], [qʰχ]; Lezhava 1984: 93). According to Zhghentʰi (Z 151), Svan voiced stops are pronounced with greater “intensity and energy” than their Georgian and Zan equivalents. Zhghentʰi [Z 141-148] reported a distinct voiced uvular phoneme /G/ in a couple of dozen lexemes, many of them expressive or onomatopoeic; e.g. Geh (edible alpine plant), žGwläp “sound of someone walking in slush”. No speakers consulted by Kaldani [1955: 142-3] or myself produced such a consonant, however.

Table 1. Svan consonant phonemes

	Obstruents			Fricatives		Sonorants		
	<i>voiced</i>	<i>aspirate</i>	<i>ejective</i>	<i>voiced</i>	<i>voiceless</i>			
<i>Labial</i>	b	p	pʰ	(v)	—	m	w	
<i>Dental</i>	d	t	tʰ			n		
<i>Alveolar</i>	ʒ [dz]	c [ts]	cʰ [tsʰ]	z	s		r	l
<i>Palatal(alveolar)</i>	ž [dʒ]	č [tʃ]	čʰ [tʃʰ]	ž [ʒ]	š [ʃ]		j	
<i>Velar</i>	g	k	kʰ					
<i>Uvular</i>		q	qʰ	ɣ [ʁ]	x [χ]			
<i>Glottal</i>					h			

2.2. Vowels. The vowel inventories of the Svan dialects differ from each other and from Georgian. Phonologically distinct long vowels occur in the Upper Bal, Cholur and Lashx dialects, although the phonological significance of the length distinction is limited to a handful of minimal pairs, such as māre ‘man’ vs. mare ‘but’; and the S2sg and S3sg aorist forms of some prefixal passives in UB (ätētʰwān ‘you escaped from sb’ vs. ätētʰwān ‘s/he escaped from sb’; läxqʰahān ‘you.sg kissed sb’ vs. läxqʰahān ‘s/he kissed sb’). The Lentʰex and Lower Bal dialects do not have — or rather, no longer have — long vowels, although evidence from morphophonemics (see §2.5.2) attests to their earlier existence. The feature of length can thus be reconstructed for Proto-Svan (Shanidze 1925a/1981: 366-368). Other vowel phonemes occurring in Svan but not Georgian are the central-back unrounded high vowel /ə/ (usually transcribed as a schwa, but to my ears sounding more like [u] or [i]), the low front /ä/, and the front rounded vowels /œ (ö)/ and /y (ü)/ (Machʰavariani 1963). These latter are often realized as the diphthongs /we/ and /wi/, respectively, and some analysts prefer not to treat them as separate phonemes for this reason [PG 17-18]. The vowel /ä/, almost always the result of fronting or lowering umlaut (§2.5.1), has the effect of palatalizing preceding velar stops (resembling Russian “я”; Shanidze 1925a/1981: 326; Lezhava 1984: 46; CNK 43). In her unpublished Svan texts from the 1920s and 1930s, Koževnikova also noted palatalization of /l/ before /ä/ (Chantʰladze & Ioseliani 2018).

Upper Bal and Cholur have the full set of nine vowels: /a, e, i, o, u, ə, ä, ö, ü/, as well as their long correlates, for a total of 18 vowel phonemes; Lower Bal and Lentʰex have the same nine vowels without a length distinction; and Lashx has the first six — all but the umlauts — both

short and long, for a total of 12. In the Laxamul subdialect of LB, vowels become distinctly nasalized when adjacent to /m/ or /n/; e.g. Māñōñā “Manana” (woman’s name); ānyri “comes”. Nasalized /ã/ tends to be backed, and /õ/ raised (Kaldani 1955: 154-157; Topuria 1985: 146).

Table 2. Svan vowel phonemes

DIALECT	SHORT				LONG			
	front un- rounded	front rounded	back unr'd	back rounded	front un- rounded	front rounded	back unr'd	back rounded
<i>Upper Bal</i>	ä [æ], e, i	ö [œ], ü [y]	a [ɑ], ə	o, u	ā [æ:], ē, ī	ō [œ:], ū [y:]	ā [ɑ:], ē	ō, ū
<i>Lower Bal</i>	ä [æ], e, i	ö [œ], ü [y]	a [ɑ], ə	o, u	—	—	—	—
<i>Lent'ex</i>	ä [æ], e, i	ö [œ], ü [y]	a [ɑ], ə	o, u	—	—	—	—
<i>Cholur</i>	ä [æ], e, i	ö [œ], ü [y]	a [ɑ], ə	o, u	ā [æ:], ē, ī	ō [œ:], ū [y:]	ā [ɑ:], ē	ō, ū
<i>Lashx</i>	e, i	—	a [ɑ], ə	o, u	ē, ī	—	ā [ɑ:], ē	ō, ū

2.2.1. The origins of vowel length. No other Kartvelian language has a length contrast. There has been considerable discussion about whether the Svan quantitative opposition was inherited from Proto-Kartvelian, as proposed by Vogt 1939, Oniani 1962, and Gamq’relidze & Mach’avariani 1965; or an innovation of Svan. Ch’umburidze et al (2007: 46-50) point to the lack of consistent reflexes in Georgian for Svan long vowels. Furthermore, as argued in detail by Zhghent’i (1949: 69-94), a significant proportion of Svan long vowels can be accounted for on the basis of morphophonology, etymology, or affinity with particular types of lexemes (see also Ch’umburidze 1987; Schmidt 1992). Here are the principal contexts linked to the appearance of long vowels in UB, Lš and Ch:

(a) the contraction of two adjacent vowels in underlying structure (alēser < ala+eser “this-QT”; agitōnqwädd < agite+onqwädd “we (excl) went home”; Gazdeliani 2015b; Saghliani 2016);

(b) the result of compensatory lengthening in Proto-Svan (e.g. PK *č’am- ‘eat’ > G č’am, Sv ēm- [K 319-20]);

(c) accent-related lengthening of the preverb la- in S1/2sg aorist stems (§2.4.1);

(d) short vowels in nominal stems occasionally lengthen when the same stem is used to form a verb (e.g. bäč ‘stone’ > Ch li-bäč-äl, Lš li-bēč-äl ‘stone-throwing’; berg “hoe (n.)” > UB/Lš a-bērg-e “hoes (v.)”; Ch’umburidze 1981). According to Zhghent’i (1949: 81), the lengthening was conditioned by the “opening” of the syllable by a following vowel.

(e) long vowels frequently appear in expressive verbs (e.g. Ch li-glāg-e “animal crudely chewing hay; rude, unpleasant speech”; i-p’q’äl-iel “small person or child screams loudly” (Lip’art’eliani 1994: 183, 132);

(f) a large number of suffixes contain long vowels, e.g. the diminutives -īl and -ōl, the iterative/durative/plural verb formants -āl and -i-ēl, etc.

(g) overall, long vowels are more likely to occur in syllables ending in a sonorant, especially /r/ (e.g. q’ōr “door”; dēra “frozen snow”; Zhghent’i 1949: 76-80).

At the same time, many stems with well-attested length in both Upper Bal and Lashx resist any such explanation: čāž ‘horse’, asōq’e ‘drives sb crazy’, lēt ‘night’. It should also be mentioned that there is no limit on the number of long vowels per word; the most I have encountered is four: kādīyālān {ka-ad-i-iy-äl-ān} [OP-IP-V-undress-VPL-PASS.AOR] ‘she undressed herself’ [UB 204].

2.2.2. Schwa. Alongside the five vowel timbres reconstructed for Proto-Kartvelian, Svan has

a mid-high back unrounded vowel transcribed as schwa (/ə/). In most cases, schwa results from:

(a) reduction of one of the five basic vowels, as in these loanwords from Georgian: UB/Ln *bənäb*, Lš/Ch *bənab* < G *buneba* “nature”; UB/LB *k’ənt’ər* < *k’it’r-i* “cucumber” (Rogava 1962: 46-47; Saghliani 2016: 330-333);

(b) insertion between consonants that would otherwise form a cluster disallowed by Svan phonotactics (e.g. *c’q’əljän* “holy, clean” < G *c’q’lian-*; LB *gəmr* “hero” < G *gmir-*; Saghliani 2016: 334).

Long schwa occurs in UB, Ch and Lš. It can result from compensatory lengthening (Lš *məjraq’i* = UB *məhraq’i* “vodka distiller”), and is also rather common in expressives (*č’q’əl* “shriek”; *səl* “whistling (of wind)”).

2.3. Phonotactics. Unlike Georgian, whose consonant clusters inspire the awe of phonologists, Svan imposes strict limitations on the combinations of consonants allowed word-initially [Z189-194]. In essence, these are limited to clusters phonotactically functioning as single consonants (i.e. harmonic clusters, as in Georgian and Zan, e.g. *txēre* ‘wolf’, *č’q’int’* ‘boy’; clusters of consonant + /w/), or historically derived from them (/šd/ < *t-, e.g. *šdugw* ‘mouse’ < **tagw-*; Gigineishvili 1987). Other initial clusters inherited from Proto-Kartvelian or borrowed from other sources are broken up by epenthetic vowels (*k’aravät’* < Russ. *krovat’* ‘bed’), or prothetic vowels (*aq’ba* ‘cheek, jaw’, cp. Geo *q’ba*). Consistent with this restriction, the 1st-exclusive and 2nd person subject prefixes *xw-* and *x-* are deleted before initial consonants, with metathesis of the /w/ (*{xw-t’ix-e}* > *t’wixe* ‘I return it’; cf. *{xw-i-t’ix-e}* > *xwit’xe* ‘I return it for myself’); and an epenthetic schwa is interposed after other person markers (*{m-t’ix-e}* > *mət’xe* ‘sb returns me’; T 22; Saghliani 2010: 119).

Conversely, Svan tolerates daunting final clusters, of a sort never seen in Georgian: *axeqwsg* ‘you stole up on sb’, *xosgwž* ‘I ordered sb’; *mitkwšw* “with habit”. Zhghent’i [Z194] attributes this to a tendency toward weakening and loss of vowels in word-final syllables, as in some Georgian dialects.

2.4. Prosodic features. Although Svan does not give one the impression of being a stress-timed language like Russian or English, its morphophonemics bespeak the presence, at an early stage of the language’s history, of a strong accent, predominantly falling on the penultimate syllable (see §2.5).

2.4.1. Accent shift in the past indicative. The two past-indicative tenses — the imperfect and the aorist — are characterized by a distinct stem in the 1st and 2nd-person singular (S1/2sg), compared to that used in the S3sg and all persons in the plural (S3/pl), an alternation already detected by Schuchardt (1896: 50). These reflect a leftward shift of the accent which has also left traces in Old Georgian, as shown in these paradigms (cf Chikobava 1942).

Past-indicative paradigms (Lower Bal)

	<i>imperfect</i>	<i>aorist</i>
S1sg	<i>xwäbm</i> < * <i>xw-á-b-em-aw</i>	<i>otab</i> < * <i>ád=xw-a-b-e</i>
S2sg	<i>xäbm</i> < * <i>x-á-b-em-aw</i>	<i>atab</i> < * <i>ád=x-a-b-e</i>
S3sg	<i>xabam</i> < * <i>x-a-b-ém-aw</i>	<i>atäb</i> < * <i>ad=x-á-b-e</i>
S1exclpl	<i>xwabamd</i> < * <i>xw-a-b-ém-aw-d</i>	<i>otäbd</i> < * <i>ad=xw-á-b-e-d</i>
Sincl	<i>labamd</i> < * <i>l-a-b-ém-aw-d</i>	<i>aläbd</i> < * <i>ad=l-á-b-e-d</i>
S2pl	<i>xabamd</i> < * <i>x-a-b-ém-aw-d</i>	<i>atäbd</i> < * <i>ad=x-á-b-e-d</i>
S3pl	<i>xabamx</i> < * <i>x-a-b-ém-aw-x</i>	<i>atäbx</i> < * <i>ad=x-á-b-e-x</i>

Old Georgian verb forms

	<i>imperfect</i>	<i>aurist</i>
S1sg	vk'levd < *v-h-k'l-áv-i-d	movk'al < *mo=v-k'ál
S2sg	hk'levd < *h-k'l-áv-i-d	mohk'al < *mo=h-k'ál
S3sg	hk'lvida < *h-k'l-av-í-d-a	mok'la < *mo=k'al-á
S1pl	vk'levdit < *v-h-k'l-áv-i-d-i-t	movk'alt < *mo=v-k'ál-t
S2pl	hk'levd < *h-k'l-áv-i-d-i-t	mohk'alt < *mo=h-k'ál-t
S3pl	hk'lvides < *h-k'l-av-í-d-es	mok'les < *mo=k'al-és

The accent shift is also expressed through vowel quantity alternations in the S1/2sg aorist stems of ablauting verbs, and non-ablauting verbs with strong aorists, as in these UB examples:

(i) Preverb *la-* in strong aorists, and aorists of vowelless roots: vowel-lengthening in S1/2sg.

S2sg: *la-x-é-k'wepx-a > lāxek'wpx 'you jumped on sb/sthg'

S3sg: *la-x-e-k'wépx-a > lāxk'wāpx

S2sg: *la-x-ó-g-e > lōxog 'you set up, supported'

S3sg: *la-x-o-g-é > loxge

(ii) Verbs with long root vowels and strong aorists: shortening of root vowel in S1/2sg.

S2sg: *á-x-o-č'ōn-e > oxč'won 'you called to sb'

S3sg: *a-x-o-č'ōn-e > oxč'wēn

2.4.2. The phonology of traditional Svan poetry. In her candidate thesis Chant'ladze (1969) investigated the language of traditional Svan poetry, which in many respect was pan-dialectal, in that its phonological features were essentially the same in all dialect areas. Among the characteristics noted by Chant'ladze in the corpus of Svan poetry are: (i) lack of long and unlauded vowels; (ii) rarity of reduction (see §2.5.2); (iii) use of filler vowels to reach the required syllabic quantity, usually eight syllables per line (cf. Shanidze 1953 §653). Some filler vowels are in fact etymologically-motivated vowels which are no longer retained in ordinary spoken Svan (e.g. poet. *t'uba* 'gorge', ordin. Svan *t'ub* < *t'aba; cp. Geo *t'ba* 'lake'), or the default filler vowels /i/ (e.g. *t'wibi* < *t'ub+i*) or /ə/. In the following lines from "Dali is giving birth on the cliff," the word *anyri* "comes" is expanded by one or even two schwas to fill out the 8-syllable meter (*SvP* 268; Tuite 1994b):

<i>esnär zagruš // metxwjär an-yri,</i>	They say, by the mountain ridge // the hunter is coming,
<i>metxwjär mepsäj // a-nə-yə-ri,</i>	The hunter Mepsay // is coming,
<i>metxwjär mepsäjd // te xarek'i,</i>	The hunter Mepsay // looked around
<i>zagrušw metxwjär // č'ur an-yə-ri.</i>	By the ridge, the hunter // it seems, is coming

Chant'ladze (1974c) also noted seemingly unmotivated occurrences of stem-final /w/ in certain words, e.g. *korwa* "house", *q'orwa* "door" (= *kor*, *q'or*/*q'ōr*). It remains unclear whether all such appearances of /w/ in poetic texts represent archaisms.

2.5. Morphophonemics. At first glance, Svan seems rather like an agglutinative language that had been left out in the sun too long: the individual morphemes, so easy to segment out in Georgian, here seem to have fused inextricably together, or been bleached away without a trace. A closer look, and a measure of time and patience, will show that much of the surface opacity is due to the combined agency of a handful of morphophonemic and phonotactic principles.

Kaldani (1968, 1969: 140-150) demonstrated convincingly that Svan morphophonological history can be segmented into two stages: an earlier stage I, which left its traces in all attested Svan dialects (see also Mach’avariani 1970), and a later Stage II marked by differences among the dialects with respect to processes such as umlaut, reduction, dissimilation and migration.

Stage I. Early Svan was characterized by a strong penultimate accent, with reduction or loss of antepenultimate and final vowels, as indicated by forms inherited from Proto-Kartvelian, as well as the oldest loanwords from Georgian, e.g. *dābdāb* “birth, fate” < *dābādébā*; *mordāb/mārdāb* “modesty” < *mōrīdébā* > (Kaldani 1969: 26; Saghliani 2016: 330-334). The one exception was the S1/2sg stem of the past-indicative paradigms (aorist and imperfect), in which, as just mentioned, the accent shifts to the antepenultimate or possibly further leftward.

Also active during Stage I were two types of vowel mutation or umlaut. The first was the fronting (and raising, in the case of /a/) of the non-front vowels /a/ and /o/ (Shanidze 1925a/1981); the evidence for the fronting of /u/ is sparser and more problematic (on the case of *goc’xir* < **goc’xūr* < G *k’oc’axuri* “barberry”, see Kaldani 1969: 148; Chantladze 2012: 88). The most common trigger for fronting was the vowel /i/ in the following syllable. Umlaut of /a/ could also be triggered by a following /e/, e.g. *Lš etk’əlān*, UB *ätk’əlān* < **ad=x-e-k’əl-ēn-a* “sb’s sthg was shut, stuck”; *Lš xēkw*, UB *xākw* “told” < **xākwe*. Stage I fronting umlaut is attested in inherited lexemes (semi “three” < PK **sami*; *Lš jeru*, Ln *jerbi* < **jerwi* < **jweri* < **jōri* < PK **jor-i* “two”); and early loans from Georgian (UB/LB/Ln *tāk’w*, *Lš tek’w* “rope” < **twēk’* < **tök’* < G *tok’-i*). As shown in the last two examples, unlauded rounded vowels tended to dissociate into /w/ + /e/ or /i/; the /w/ could subsequently migrate rightward.

A second type of Stage I vowel mutation, almost the inverse of fronting umlaut, was first described in detail by Kaldani (1969). The non-low front vowels /e/ and /i/ underwent lowering under the influence of a following /a/, /u/ or /w/. Lowering umlaut triggered by the past-indicative suffix *-a is attested in verb forms such as *Lš/Ln anqad*, UB/LB *anqād* “came” < **an=qed-a* (Kaldani 1969: 34-5). Its effects are also visible in early Georgian loans, such as UB/Ln *bənāb*, *Lš/Ch bənāb* “nature” < *bunēba*. Gippert (2000) detected cases of /i/ backed to /ə/ by a following /a/, e.g. *c’ər(a)ni* “red”, ultimately from Armenian *çirani* “purple red”.

Other phonological processes operative in Stage I include the rightward migration of /w/, attested in the words for “rope” and “two” cited above, and also in a handful of verb forms, preserved in all five dialects, with S1 /w/ following the root-initial consonant: UB/LB/Ln/*Lš/Ch qwedni* “I come” < {*xw-qed-en-i*} (Oniani 1970: 108; O II: 8). Traces of dissimilation between ejective consonants, in which one becomes voiced, have also been detected (*gak’* “hazel-nut” < G *k’ak’-al-*; *t’abäg* < *t’abak’-i* “table”; Zhghent’i 1947; Rogava 1984; Chuxua 2015)

Stage II. At some point the strong penultimate accent of Early Svan became weaker. The two types of umlaut ceased to be active in *Lš*, but continued and even intensified in other dialects. It is at this stage that the phonological features commonly used to classify the Svan dialects appear. Svan personal and place names mentioned in medieval manuscripts, when compared to their present-day pronunciations, indicate that some processes became active within the past 800 years (Kaldani 1969: 124-139). Due to the morphophonemic diversity of the Svan dialects, the Stage II

processes will be presented individually.

2.5.1. Umlaut. The rules for fronting umlaut in UB, LB, Ln and Ch can be boiled down to the following hierarchies, with different dialects and subdialects observing different cut-off points (/x/ > /y/ = “x is more susceptible or likely than y”):

(i) Susceptibility to umlaut: /a/ > /o/ > /u/; short vowels > long; root vowels > affixal.

(ii) Likelihood to trigger umlaut: /i/ > /e/ > /ä/; syncopated vowel > unreduced; short vowel > long; underlying /i/ or /e/ > /i/ or /e/ from dissociation of an umlauted vowel (e.g. /ü/ > /wi/).

The threshold for umlaut is lowest in the westernmost varieties of Svan, such as Ln and the Laxamul subdialect of LB (Ch’umburidze 1960: 151-165; Kaldani 1955), and highest in Usghul, the easternmost UB subdialect (Topuria 1985: 144-145); e.g. Ln/LB *mäxe* “new” vs UB *maxe*; Ušg/Lšx *idgari* “dies” vs UB/LB/Ln *idgäri*.

Here are some examples of fronting umlaut in recent loans from Georgian, with non-umlauted Lš equivalents for the sake of comparison:

UB/LB/Ln/Ch *kwerç’il* (Lš *korc’il*) “wedding” < G *korc’il-i*

Ln/Ch (w)oxrax*wi*š (Lš *woxraxuš*) “parsley” < G *oxraxuš-i*

Lowering umlaut applies in essentially the same contexts in all dialects, except Lš, in which it is no longer operative. In Ln, Ch and also the Laxamul subdialect, /e/ is lowered to /a/, whereas elsewhere it is lowered to /ä/ (Kaldani 1969: 26):

Ln/Ch *nab*, UB/LB *näb* (Lš *neb*) “desire, will” < G *neba*

Ln/Ch *zirab*, UB/LB *ziräb* (Lš *zireb*) “eucharist” < G *ziareba*

UB *satätwr*, LB *satetwr* (Lš *satitur*) ‘thimble’ < Geo. *satitur-i*

2.5.2. Reduction. In all Svan dialects save Lent’ex, every even-numbered vowel (except the final one) of a word is liable to syncope or reduction [Topuria 1946; Nik’olaishvili 1984; *O I*: 31-44]. The outcomes of reduction include the following: (a) The rounded vowels /o/ and /u/ reduce to /w/; /i/ and /e/ undergo complete syncope, but can cause umlaut of the preceding vowel; /a/, /ä/ and /ə/ disappear without a trace ({*näboz-äs*} > *näbwzäs* ‘evening-GEN’; {*x-a-c’wed-un-i-da*} > *xäc’dünda* ‘sb longed to see sb/sth’; cf Ln *xäc’wednida*). (b) Should reduction occur in the context /CVSC/ [S = sonorant], a schwa is inserted ({*lə-pindix*} > *ləpəndix* ‘having bullets’). (c) Long vowels do not undergo reduction. In LB, which lacks phonemic length, those vowels which correspond to long vowels in UB and Lš are likewise immune to reduction (Cp. {*a-k’ar-e*} > UB/LB *ak’re* ‘opens sthg’ vs. {*a-mär-e*} > UB *amäre*, LB *amare* ‘prepares sthg’). This is evidence that the loss of the length distinction in LB occurred relatively recently.

The Lent’ex dialect is sometimes said to lack reduction, but it would be more accurate to state that it has different rules, which operate in fewer contexts [Topuria 1946; Ch’umburidze 1953]. Unlike the other dialects, one reduction rule affects vowels in the 2nd syllable from the left edge of the word, and the other operates on the 2nd syllable (or 3rd in some contexts) from the right edge. For either rule to apply, the underlying form of the word must have at least three syllables. The left-edge rule applies first, and under most circumstances only reduces the vowels /i/ and /ə/. Should the conditions for left-edge reduction not be met, then the right-edge rule can reduce an /i/ or /u/ in the penultimate or antepenultimate syllable, but only if the vowel in question occurs in a suffix (most commonly, a causative or future-tense formant; *T* 112-125, 234-5). Root vowels are not affected by the right-edge reduction rule in Lent’ex.

<i>underlying form</i>	<i>meaning</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>
{t'ex-en-i}	“comes back, returns”	t'exeni (no reduction)	t'exni (2 nd syll)
{x-a-t'ix-un-e}	“makes sb bring back”	xät'xune (left-edge)	xät'xune (2 nd syll)
{x-a-gem-un-e}	“makes sb build”	xagemne (right-edge)	xägmune (2 nd syll)
{x-a-j-ēs-g-un-e}	“makes sb take sthg”	xäjesk'wne (right-edge)	xäjāsgune (reduction blocked by long vowel)
{x-a-c'wed-un-i-da}	“longed to see sb/sth”	xäc'wednida (right-edge)	xäc'dünda (2 nd & 4 th syll)

It should be noted here that verb forms in the past-indicative tenses (aorist and imperfect) sometimes appear to violate the reduction rules described above, due to the distinctive shifting accentuation characteristic of the past indicative in early Svan. Vowels can also be dropped when a vowel-final word or outer preverb is immediately followed by a vowel-initial word (if the latter begins with a vowel other than /i/ or /u/). The second vowel can undergo compensatory lengthening: *al ēser* < *ala* ‘this’ + *eser* ‘QT’ [Kaldani 1953].

2.5.3. Migration and metathesis. In Stage I, /w/ was susceptible to rightward displacement. In Stage II, the situation with regard to this phenomenon diversifies, and its range of operation appears to be limited to the verb (compare the migration of /w/ in the early loanword *tek'w/täk'w* “rope” < **twek* < G *tok'-i*; and the absence of displacement in the recent loan Ln/UB/LB *gweč'* < G *goč'i* ‘suckling pig’). In Lš and Ch, the rightward migration of /w/ has ceased, but in certain contexts, it can spread leftward. In UB and LB, /w/ can spread in either direction, and sometimes both (Saghliani 2010). Saghliani (2016: 186) noted that /w/ can spread as far as the end of the verb root, e.g. UB *pešgwni* “I am released” < {*xw-pešg-en-i*}. As for Ln, only rightward migration occurs. In the following verb forms, the various reflexes of the labial components of the S1 prefix /xw-/ and the version vowel /-o-/ are shown:

{*á=xw-t'ix*} > UB/LB/Lš *ot'əx* (L), Ln *at'ux* (R) ‘I returned it’

{*án=xw-t'ex*} > UB/LB *ont'wx* (L&R), Lš *ont'ex* (L), Ln *ant'wex* (R) ‘I came back’

{*ad=xw-o-dig-e*} > UB/LB/Lš *otdig* (L), Ln *atodig* ‘I extinguished it for sb’

Saghliani noted some examples of S1 /w/ remaining in place before root-initial consonants (LB *w-txerni* “I am bursting”, which she ascribes to the influence of Georgian (2016: 186)

In the Lent'ex verb, the /s/ of the preverb /as-/ can migrate rightward, and appear between the personal prefix and the version vowel (T 56; O II: 18-19; Saghliani 2010, 2016: 192): {*ži-as=gw-a-k'wiš*} “broke it on us” > *žagwsak'wiš*; {*as=m-a-q'a*} “I bring sb there” > *amsaq'a*. (Whether this has any relation to the distinct reduction pattern of Ln is unclear).

Scattered examples of metathesis, in which two consonants switch places, have been detected in Svan, especially the Laxamul subdialect: Lxm *č'ait* < G *t'aič'* - “thoroughbred horse”; LB *q'wič* < *čiq'v-i* “goiter”; UB/LB/Ln *k'ibd(w)en* “storage chest” < G *k'idoban-i*. The lexeme *gänž(w)* “rust”, if derived from G *žang-i*, would represent a Stage I instance of metathesis (Kaldani 1955; Chuxua 2015; see also Saghliani 2016: 608).

2.5.4. Dissimilation. As in Georgian, suffixes containing /r/ are prone to dissimilation to /l/ if the root to which they attach already contains an /r/ (Schmidt 1992). Dissimilation is especially common in the two Lower Svan dialects, whereas in Upper Svan words with two /r/'s in successive syllables are tolerated; cp. {*pur-är*} > LB *purär*, Ln *puräl*, Lš *puräl* ‘cows’ (Z164). In Lš, the interposition of an affix containing /l/ between a stem containing /r/ and the plural suffix blocks dissimilation: *pur-al*, but *pur-öl-ar* “little/cute cows”; cp. G *kart-ul* - “Georgian”, but *kartvel-ur* - “Kartvelian” (O I: 84-5).

2.6. Expressive phonosemantics. All Kartvelian languages have sizeable, and probably open, sets of expressive and onomatopoeic lexemes, but Svan seems uncommonly well-endowed in this respect. Expressive roots can appear in nouns, adjectives and verbs. As in Georgian, certain phonosemantic generalizations can be made, such as the association between voicing and size (voiced = large; voiceless, and especially ejective = small; Gersamia 2014), e.g.

<i>voiced</i>	<i>voiceless</i>
gvridä bepš “fat corpulent child”	k’vrit’ä bepš “small, full-bodied child”
an= bəb -an-e “bear or fat man comes”	an= pəp -an-e “tall man comes”

Nouns portraying sound or movement can be simple monosyllabic words, or forms with full or partial reduplication (Sanik’idze 1977: 22-48; Saghliani 2014, 2016: 438-491). Most of the examples in Saghliani’s corpus have high vowels (most often /i/, also /u/ and /ə/), although /a/ commonly appears in a reduplicated stem: **big-big** “the clumsy gait of a big man”; **pig-pig** “a thin person’s gait”; **žit’q’-žat’q’** “the sound of waves sloshing”; **žərən-pərən** “silly, pointless behavior and speech” (Giglemiani 2006; Saghliani 2016: 438-491; Gujejiani 2020: 61-4). Among the nouns derived from the consonant sequence **bVtk** are: **bitk**, **bitk-bitk**, **bitk-batk**, **burtk-ün**, **bərtk-ən**, all evoking a noisy banging, or the stomping of feet (Saghliani 2016: 479). In context, expressives are commonly accompanied by verbs such as **änk’id** “took”, **atyane** “let flow”, **ləg** “stands”, or **xaqid** “hit”, e.g. **mus-d rip ən-(i)-k’id** (snow-ERG *rip*.NOM IP-V-take.AOR) “the snow went *rip* (= sound of snow falling from tree branches)”; **šišd ričx m-a-qid gu-s** (suddenly *ričx*.NOM O1sg-V-hit.AOR heart-DAT) “suddenly it hit my heart with a *ričx* (rattling) = my heart skipped a beat”; **mteli lēt ču ləg-da xəl-ma-xəl** (whole night down stand-IMP *xəl*-REDUP-*xəl*) “all night long, loud noises [from gunfire] were heard (*xəl* = loud, repeated noise)” (TK 1543, 1544; Gujejiani 2020: 64).

Expressive statives and adjectives (Davitiani 1949/2008; Ch’k’adua 1999) depict the appearance and/or stance of a person or animal. The stative stems are monosyllabic, with simple consonants, harmonic clusters, or either accompanied by a sonorant, surrounding the vowel /i/; e.g. **yib** “has a protruding belly”; **glig** “stands awkwardly tall”; **t’k’ič** “a large-bodied person stands/sits”. Adjectives are formed by addition of the suffix **-ä** or **-äj**. Here are some LB examples from Davitiani, which are also attested in Lip’art’eliani’s (1999) Cholur dictionary:

	Lower Bal (Davitiani)	Cholur (Lip’art’eliani)
p’rit’-ä(j)	has raised, flapping ears	wide and thin (of a leaf)
prit-ä(j)	was wide ears	wide (of a leaf)
pxič’-ä(j)	sticks out tall and solitary	tall, thin and long-legged
t’k’ič-ä(j)	full-bodied	fat, heavy

Dynamic expressive verbs appear by the hundreds in Lip’art’eliani (1999), and less profusely in other sources. From the stative **t’k’ič**, mentioned above, one can derive the verb **i-t’k’ič-an-äl** “a large-bodied person walks back and forth”; from **gwir** “a bald man stands/sits”, **i-gwir-an-äl** “a bald man walks back and forth” (Ch’k’adua 2015b). Similarly to Georgian deponent verbs (Tuite 2002), these mainly describe activities that draw attention — usually negative — from other people. Verbs denoting a particular kind of activity often cluster around a root prototype with a specific phonological contour, as in the following Cholur examples (Lip’art’eliani 1999):

TALKING — a-√p'āNC(C)-un-e

a-p'ānp'-un-e “small boy or man speaks proudly”

a-p'ānč'-un-e “small boy or man speaks insolently”

a-p'ānč'q'-un-e “small girl speaks”

JUMPING — a-√PilC(C)-e

a-p'ilt'-e “child jumps around for no reason”

a-p'ilt'q'-e “small girl jumps”

a-pilc-e “small skinny child jumps”

EATING SOFT FOOD — a-√q'(w)anC'law-i

a-q'ant'law-i “eats fatty meat”

a-q'anq'law-i “eats something soft sloppily and quickly”

a-q'wanq'law-i “large person eats something soft”

BODY-PART EXPOSURE — x-o-√C(r/l)ēC-i

x-o-γlēž-i “one's teeth are showing”

x-o-brēk'-i “a man's genitalia are showing”

x-o-grēc'-i “a woman's belly is showing”

§3. Morphology I: Nominals and minor word classes.

3.1. Overview. The Kartvelian languages, including Svan, have two clearly distinct sets of inflected lexical categories: verbs and nominals. Within the set of nominals, nouns, pronouns and adjectives share certain morphological properties, such as case marking, but can be distinguished on other grounds. Nondeclinable classes include adverbs, postpositions and several groups of clitics. By and large Svan inflection resembles that of Georgian and Zan: Svan nouns mark most of the same cases, in roughly the same contexts, as their Georgian homologues; the Svan verb — once its morphophonemics have been untangled — reveals the same basic sequence of morphemes and tense/aspect/mood paradigms as its sister languages.

3.2. Nouns. Svan substantives are inflected for case and number; there is no category of grammatical gender, not even for pronouns. The degree of allomorphy is far greater than in Georgian or Zan [Oniani 1989]. Svan noun stems include lexemes inherited from Kartvelian, as well as borrowings from Georgian and other sources, including a handful from North Caucasus languages. They come in a variety of phonological shapes, but from the standpoint of suffixal morphology (case, diminutive, plural), the key parameters for classifying noun stems are syllabic quantity (monosyllabic vs. disyllabic or longer), and stem-final phonemes, including vowels which have undergone syncope (*CNK* 90-100). According to Oniani, the Svan noun has five suffixal slots, in the sequence: (i) derivational, (ii) plural, (iii) case, (iv) postposition, (v) clitic; e.g. *patw⁰-ār¹-al²-eš³-ži⁴-i⁵* (hair⁰-y¹-PL²-GEN³-on⁴-also⁵) “also on the hairy ones” (O I: 46). In the following section, nominal morphology will be presented in the following order: case (§3.2.1); number (§3.2.3); diminutive and other derivational suffixes (§3.2.5). Postpositions will be presented in §3.8, and clitics in §6.

3.2.1. Case. Except for a distinct vocative, which Svan lacks, and with the addition of the case I will label “locative”, Svan has the same set of cases, with more or less the same functions, as Georgian. In this section the formal characteristics of the cases, their histories and semantic peculiarities will be briefly presented.

(a) **Nominative: -Ø, *-i, ?*-e.** The Svan NOM patterns essentially like the Georgian NOM, although in addition it is used in direct address like a vocative (Abesadze 1975). The NOM case forms of many Svan nouns have fronted stem vowels, attributed to a non-low front vowel suffix which has undergone syncope. The syncopated NOM suffix is usually assumed to be *-i, corresponding to its Georgian homologue. Some linguists, however, argue that *-e may have been the original Svan NOM, at least in some declensions. What appears to be a NOM in -e occurs sporadically in Svan poetic texts, especially in the plural: *gezal-e* [child-NOM?] ‘child’ (mod. Sv. *gezal*); *top-ar-e* [rifle-PL-NOM?] ‘rifles’ (mod. Sv. *top-är*) [Shanidze 1925a/1981; Chant’ladze 1973; *FS* 143-144]. Oniani [1989: 94-106] considers this vowel an innovation, added to fill out the metre in Svan eight-syllable verse (a function sometimes assigned to other vowels as well; Klimov 1962: 116; Tuite 1994b: 22). Also supporting reconstruction of a suffixal *-e is the GEN in -eš added after the two most common pluralizers: *žey-är* “dogs”, GEN *žey-r-eš*; *mār-āl* “men”, GEN *mār-āl-eš*. Since the hypothesized *-e suffix appears predominantly in plurals, Kaldani 1974 derives it from *-a (an old pluralizer) + NOM -i (*ɣwaž-är-e* < *-er-a-i). Testifying to NOM -i in at least one instance is the numeral *semi* “3” < PK **sam-i*, which exceptionally conserves the NOM suffix even after umlaut of the root vowel.

(b) **Dative: -s, -Ø.** The Svan DAT has the same functions as its counterpart in Georgian, and more particularly, Old Georgian. In some dialects, and especially in the archaic language of Svan ritual poetry, nominal types typically used to denote location — toponyms and nouns meaning

‘valley’, ‘mountain pass’ and the like — are declined in the dative or adverbial case, without postpositions, e.g. zagar-w ži xoqidax [mountain.ridge-DAT up bring:PLPF:O3pl] ‘they have brought him up to the mountain ridge’ (Chant’ladze 1971, 1974a).

The Svan DAT can appear in many different guises, as in this LB proverb: šdik šdək eser xobge, bāžg bāžgs i muxwbe muxwba [tooth.NOM tooth.DAT QT supports, post.NOM post-DAT and brother.NOM brother.DAT] ‘A tooth (Class V) supports a tooth, as a post (Class VI) <supports> a post, and a brother (Class III) <supports> a brother’ (Davitiani 1973: 160). This has led some specialists to posit up to five allomorphs of the DAT (Sharadzenidze 1955, 1983; Chant’ladze 1990), but in my view, there are really only two: -s, cognate with the Georgian and Zan DAT, and -Ø. In declension classes I-V, the unmarked oblique stem serves as the DAT (see below), rendering an explicit DAT suffix redundant (K’ot’inovi 1955), although the bare-oblique DAT is increasingly being supplemented or replaced by the -s allomorph, especially in the Lower Svan dialects. The zero DAT can also appear with place names in locative expressions (č’umber-Ø xwizge ‘I live in (the village) Ch’umber’; Chant’ladze 1971: 133-134). A kindred phenomenon is the unmarked oblique with temporal meaning, e.g. anqād esnār ašxw ladäy krisde pUSD i tārizingzel [IP-come:AOR apparently one:OBL day-Ø Christ lord:NOM and archangel:NOM] ‘And so, apparently, one day Christ the Lord and the Archangel came’ [Chr 88, #102]. Although ladäy ‘day’ is in the unmarked form identical to the NOM, the adjective modifying it is in the oblique form used in non-nominative contexts (Chant’ladze 1998: 71-2).

(c) Instrumental: -šw. The Svan instrumental is believed to be a compound of two elements, -š and -w, which can appear in either order. Sharadzenidze (1955) interpreted these as the genitive and dative respectively, though this is hard to justify semantically. Some have linked the -š element to the Georgian/Zan instrumental in -it: (-š < *-išd < Proto-Krt *-it; G. Topuria 1977), or the -w to an archaic suffix preserved in Georgian adverbs such as mqr-i-v ‘by/on the side of’ and k’vl-a-v ‘again’ (Palmaidis 1979). Oniani (1989: 197-202) finds none of these proposals satisfactory, and leaves the question open.

(d) Adverbial: -d. As in the other Kartvelian languages, the Svan ADV is employed to form adverbs from adjectives, and to express circumstance, destination or transformation: mušgwri-d ‘as a guest’; bāč-d ād-sip’-da [stone-ADV IP-turn-IMP] ‘he turned into a stone’ (PG 41; Gazdeliani 2015a). It also is specified by certain verbs of emotion to designate the source; e.g. miča baba-d eser x-o-šgur [self’s father-ADV QT O3-V-ashame] ‘I feel ashamed due to/ in front of your father’ (Abesadze 1975). As mentioned above, Mach’avariani 1985 considers the -n suffix of some nominals to be adverbial rather than dative (cf. Oniani I: 71)

The ADV case of some Class I nominals contains the suffix -ar/ār-, e.g. čī-n-ar ‘all:ADV’; am-n-ār-d ‘this:ADV’. One wonders whether this could have originated as a derivational suffix linked to the adjective-deriving formant -ār, e.g. tāš-ār [cheese-ADJ] ‘cheese-containing’.

(e) “Locative”: -n. In one of the earliest analyses of Svan morphology, Zavadskij (1890: XXXIV, XXXVIII) described a “comparative case” (*sравнителный падеж*) in /-n/, used to mark the standard of comparison (am-ən xoša ‘older **than this**’; či-n mačēne ‘best **of all**’), and also with verbs of fear and surprise (dāw-n mama maq’luni ‘I am not afraid **of the ogre**’). The same suffix appears in conjunction with the postpositions -yo ‘after’ and -ka ‘out’ (barblaš-ən-yo “after the feast of St Barbara”). Pronominals and the noun ši ‘hand’ make frequent use of the -n suffix (šə-n läje ‘took it **in hand**’), whereas most nouns never employ it, or do so only in fixed doublet expressions meaning ‘from X to Y’, e.g. Lš/LB q’ōr-n i q’ōr-n [door-LOC and door-LOC] ‘from door to door’; UB ham-n i nāboz-n [morning-LOC and evening-LOC] ‘from morning to evening’

(Mach’avariani 1985; Chant’ladze 1998: 55-58).

Subsequent generations of linguists classified this suffix as an archaic variant of the DAT or ADV cases (Sharadzenidze 1955, Topuria 1985: 113, 120). Chant’ladze (1974b; 1985; 1998: 19-20, 53-60) and Oniani (O I: 60-2) note that the -n suffix is used in contexts where most nouns appear in the ADV or GEN+ADV (*bepšw-iš-d xoša* [child-GEN-ADV older] ‘older than the child’). Since at least some types of nominal have a case in -n alongside the other cases, including the DAT and ADV, I will, following Mach’avariani (1985: 237), classify it synchronically as a distinct case, which I tentatively label “locative” (LOC). It remains to be determined whether the LOC is related to an /n/ element appearing in the oblique stems of certain nominals in the I, II and III declension classes (*am-n-owš* “this-n-INS”; *xoč-ēm-n-ēm-d* “elder-OBL-n-OBL-ERG”).

Also to be worked out is the relation of the LOC to the suffix -in, sporadically attested in older texts with nominal modifiers (*bogreš-in boga-n-i čubaw* ‘below the Bogresh bridge’); and with numerals to indicate multiplication (*jurv-in* “twice” < *jerwi* “two”; *sum-in* “thrice” < *semi* “3” (Mach’avariani 1985: 236; Chant’ladze 1998: 59).

According to Mach’avariani (1985: 240), the LOC -n harks back to an ergative/adverbial allomorph in the four-case system he reconstructs for late Proto-Kartvelian [NOM *-i/-Ø, DAT *-s, GEN *-eš/-iš, ERG-ADV *-(a)d/-n(a)]; cf. Klimov 1962.

(f) **Ergative: -em/-d.** The Svan ergative has two basic allomorphs: -em and -d. The first resembles Georgian -m(a), and may have a similar origin, in that both derive from postposed demonstratives. The second allomorph, which is spreading at the expense of the first in recent decades, is homophonous with the adverbial. The ERG case in Svan is assigned by the Series II paradigms of Class A verbs to their morphological subjects (see below). Since not all of these verbs are transitive, the Svan ergative can be assigned to the single argument of an intransitive verb. As in Georgian, these verbs are aspectually atelic activity verbs, e.g. LBal *ežnem* *äd-(i)-p’or-al-e* [that:ERG IP-V-fly-VPL-AOR] ‘it [bird] flew’; *ežjār-d* *äd-(i)-burg-al-e-x* [they-ERG IP-V-wrestle-VPL-AOR-PL] ‘they wrestled’ [Holisky 1981; Tuite 1994a].

(g) **Genitive: -iš.** The genitive suffix is clearly cognate with its Georgian and Zan homologues, and fulfills essentially the same functions (Gazdeliani 2011a). In declensions I-V the genitive is either added to a secondary base identical to the ergative, or is itself homophonous with the ergative. The latter effect is due to a more general Svan phenomenon of (optionally) shortening the genitive when it directly precedes its head, e.g. Ln *xām-i[š] leyw-i[š] liesk’* [pig-GEN meat-GEN taking] ‘taking pig meat’; UBal *k’ož-ä[š] zir-te-jsga* [cliff-GEN base-to-in] ‘to the base of the cliff’ (examples from *Chr* 290, #305; *UB* 64-5, #67). In LB, the GEN suffix can appear as -äš after stem-final high vowels, e.g. *quru-äš* [hole-GEN] (Gazdeliani 2011b).

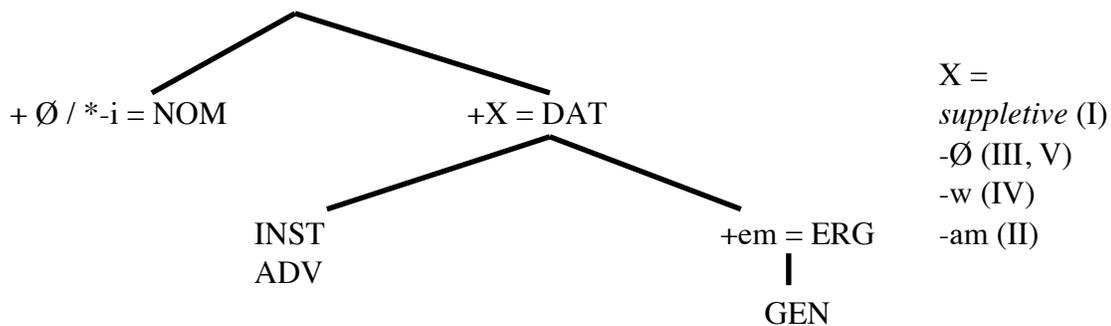
As in Georgian, the Svan GEN can be followed by a second case suffix. This can occur when a GEN-marked noun with a presupposed or elided argument serves as the head of a noun phrase, e.g. Lš *x-o-k’wib-x šuk’w-isa lixwje-s ež-k’alib-ar-eš-s* [O3-V-avoid-PL path-in meeting-DAT this-kind-PL-GEN-DAT] “they avoid meeting (people) of this kind on the road” (*TK* 648). The combination GEN + ADV has roughly the meaning “for” (G –*tvis*; Boeder 2004: 56-7), e.g. *lintw-iš-d ... ä-šxb-i-x wos-är-s* [winter-GEN-ADV V-sew-SM-PL coat-PL-DAT] “they sew coats for the winter” (*TK* 711).

The GEN of kinterms can be employed in direct address, indexing the speaker’s relation to the person addressed, e.g. *dede-š* [mother-GEN] “mother’s (child)!” (mother addressing son or daughter); *bebē-š* [grandmother-GEN] “grandmother’s (grandchild)!”.

3.2.2. Declension classes. Although the inventory of cases in Svan is similar to those of Georgian and the Zan languages, there are significant differences in terms of morphology. Only Svan has declension classes comparable to those of the Indo-European and East Caucasian families, and oblique-stem extensions. For the history of Svan declension, I will be drawing principally on the work of Mach’avariani (1960b, 1985, 2002); also Sharadzenidze 1955; Palmaitis 1979, Gudjedjani & Palmaitis 1985, 1986; Oniani (O I:49-80); Chant’ladze (1974b, 1998). The eight declension classes described here are essentially the same as in Gudjedjani & Palmaitis (1986: 46-50). The nominals in Classes I-V have two oblique stems alongside the rectus (NOM-case) stem, whereas Class VI-VIII nouns employ the same stem in all cases. Linguists have noted a trend toward single-stem declension, especially in the Lower Svan dialects, but all varieties of Svan conserve oblique stems for at least some common nouns and pronouns. The GEN forms with stem extension are particularly resistant to change, persisting even when the other cases have shifted to the same stem as the NOM (Kaldani 1958: 212-3).

3.2.2.1. Three-stem declension classes. Nominals belonging to Classes I-V have roots that are either monosyllabic, or disyllabic with a final vowel (O I: 57-58). The NOM stem is distinguished from the other cases by suppletion (Class I), absence of an oblique extension (II, IV), and/or umlaut of the stem vowel caused by a syncopated NOM suffix *-i. The DAT can be considered the unmarked oblique case, since it often is formally equivalent to the bare oblique stem. This is sufficient to distinguish the DAT from the NOM and the oblique cases (K’ot’inovi 1955), but increasingly the DAT suffix -ṣ is added, especially in the Lower Svan dialects.

Among the oblique cases, the ERG and GEN differ from the DAT, INST, ADV (and LOC, if there is one) by the addition of the stem extension -em. The ERG/GEN extension is apparently derived from a postposed demonstrative, which may have functioned as a definite article, as in Old Georgian (e.g. mārēmiš ‘man:GEN’ < *mara-jš am-iš [man-GEN this-GEN] ‘the man’s’; cp. Old Geo k’ac-isa am-is; Mach’avariani 1960b; Palmaitis 1979). This extension is added to the oblique suffix in Classes I, III, IV and V, and replaces it in Class II (Chant’ladze 1998: 101-105). Some other elements appearing in the declensions of Class I, II and III nominals might also be traced back to demonstratives.



Here are paradigms illustrating the three-stem declension classes. Unlabelled forms are from the UB dialect.

Class I: pronominal stems (monosyllabic or vowel-final disyllabic)

	<i>UB</i>	<i>LB</i>	<i>Ln</i>	<i>Lš</i>	<i>UB</i>
<i>NOM</i>	mäg “all, everyone”	mäg	mäg	mag	ala “this”
<i>DAT</i>	čī-(s)	či	či	čī-s	ami-s
<i>LOC</i>	či-n	či-n	či-n	či-n	am-ən
<i>INST</i>	čī-wš, či-n-owš	či-wšw	či-n-owš	čī-n-owš	am-n-oš
<i>ADV</i>	či-d, či-n-är	či-d	či-n-är-d	čī-n-ar	am-n-är-d
<i>ERG</i>	či-em-(d)	či-n-em	či-em	čī-em	am-n-ēm-d
<i>GEN</i>	čī-m-iš	či-m-i	či-m-iš	čī-m-iš	am-n-ēm-iš, am-iš

Also in Class I are *mæj* ‘what’ (oblique *im*-), *ža* ‘oneself’ (oblique *mič*-), and others.

Class II: some numerals and adjectives (monosyllabic or vowel-final disyllabic). Note the traces of three-stem declension in Lower Svan.

	<i>UB</i>	<i>UB</i>	<i>Ch</i>
<i>NOM</i>	xoča ‘good’	ara ‘eight’	ara
<i>DAT</i>	xoč-ām	arām < ara-am	ara-s
<i>INST</i>	xoč-ām-šw	arāmšw < ara-am-šw	ara-wš
<i>ADV</i>	xoč-ām-d	arāmd < ara-am-d	ara-d, ar-ām-d
<i>ERG</i>	xoč-ēm-(d), xoč-ēm-n-ēm(d)	ar-ēm, ar-ām-n-ēm,	ara-d
<i>GEN</i>	xoč-ēm-iš	ar-ēm-iš < *ara-em-iš	ar-ām-iš, ar-ēm-iš, ara-āš

Also in Class II are the numerals *usgwa* ‘6’, *čxara* ‘9’; the pronouns *woša* ‘how many’, *jerē* ‘someone’; and adjectives derived by the circumfixes *me-√-e* (past passive participle, e.g. *mebqwe* ‘cleft’), *xo-√-a* (comparative degree, e.g. *xoxwra* ‘younger’). On the declension of numerals in the Svan dialects, see especially Saghliani (2016: 99-114).

Class III: mostly e- or a-final disyllabic nouns and adjectives

<i>NOM</i>	māre < *māra-i ‘man’	nagzi ‘week’	twetne ‘white’
<i>DAT</i>	māra	nagza-s	twetna-(s), twetn-ām
<i>INST</i>	mār-oš < {māra-wš}	nagza-šw, nagz-oš	twetn-ām-šw, twetn-oš
<i>ADV</i>	māra-d	nagza-d	twetna-d
<i>ERG</i>	mār-ēm, mār-ēm-n-ēm-d, māra-d	nagza-d	twetn-ēm-d, twetna-d
<i>GEN</i>	mār-ēm-iš	nagz-ēm-iš	twetn-ēm-iš

The nouns *txēre* ‘wolf’; *lāre* ‘meadow’; *ləgre* ‘egg’, *exa* ‘fingernail’, *dēra* ‘icy snow’; and participles in *lə-√-e* (*ləsōq* ‘e silly’), *le-√-e* (*letre* ‘drink’), *mə-√-e* (*məbge* ‘strengthener’), among others, belong to Class III. When used as a noun, *twetne* ‘white’ can be declined as Class II or Class III (Chant’ladze 1998: 101)

Class IV: mostly consonant-final monosyllables

<i>NOM</i>	čāž < *čāž-i ‘horse’	qän ‘bull’ (LB)	zāj “year”
<i>DAT</i>	čāž-w	qan-w	za-w, zāj-s
<i>INST</i>	čāž-w-š	qan-w-š	zaw-š, zāj-wš/-šw
<i>ADV</i>	čāž-w-d	qan-w-d	zaw-d, zāj-d
<i>ERG</i>	čāž-w-em	qan-w-em	zaw-em, zāj-d
<i>GEN</i>	čāž-w-(e)m-iš	qan-w-em, qan-w-(e)m-iš	zaw-(j)āš, zāj-iš, zāj-āš

Also in Class IV are the numeral *jeru/jōri* ‘2’, and the nouns *bæč* ‘stone’; *berež* ‘iron’; *žey* ‘dog’; *č’āš* ‘husband’. The oblique suffix *-w* has been explained as an ancient noun-stem formant **-l* (e.g. Sv. *žay-w* ‘dog’ < **žay-l*, cp. Geo. *zayl-*), which underwent refunctionalization and spread to other nouns (Palnaitis 1979; Chant’ladze 1998: 6-24).

Class V: mostly consonant-final monosyllables

<i>NOM</i>	<i>txwim</i> < <i>*txum-i</i> ‘head’	semi ‘3’	<i>miž</i> ‘sun’ (< <i>*məž-i</i>)
<i>DAT</i>	<i>txum-(s)</i>	<i>sam</i>	<i>məž</i>
<i>INST</i>	<i>txum-šw</i>	<i>sam-šw</i>	<i>məž-wš</i>
<i>ADV</i>	<i>txum-d</i>	<i>sam-d</i>	<i>məž-d</i>
<i>ERG</i>	<i>txum-em</i>	<i>sam-em</i>	<i>məž-em</i>
<i>GEN</i>	<i>txum-em, txum-m-eš</i>	<i>sam-em</i>	<i>məž-em</i>

Many Class V nouns have the root vowel root /ə/, which is fronted to /i/ in the NOM (Mach’avariani 1963). Some of these can be traced back to Kartvelian nouns with an initial CC cluster broken up by schwa, e.g. *məž* ‘sun’ < **mž-e*; *šdax* ‘hazel-nut’ < **tx-il*. The noun ‘god’ has an irregular ERG/GEN stem, which is also employed in the plural. LB conserves an older form of the stem (*yermet* < PK **yřmat-*).

	LBal	UBal	Lašx	Lentx
<i>NOM</i>	<i>yermet</i>	<i>yērbet</i> < <i>*-i</i>	<i>yērbet</i>	<i>yērbet</i>
<i>DAT</i>	<i>yermat</i>	<i>yērbat</i>	<i>yērbat-s</i>	<i>yērbat / yērbet-s</i>
<i>ADV</i>	<i>yermat-d</i>	<i>yērbat-d</i>	<i>yērbat-d</i>	
<i>ERG</i>	<i>yert-em</i>	<i>yert-em</i>	<i>yert-em</i>	<i>yert-em-(d) / yērbet-em/ yērbet-d</i>
<i>GEN</i>	<i>yert-em</i>	<i>yert-ä(š)</i>	<i>yert-a(š)</i>	<i>yert-ä(š) / yērbet-iš</i>
<i>PLURAL</i>	<i>yert-är</i>	<i>yert-äl</i>	<i>yert-al</i>	<i>yert-äl</i>

Also declined as Class V nouns are clan names derived by addition of the suffix *-šēr* to the name of the founding ancestor (Lš *K’ēsar-šēr-em* Kesar-clan.members-ERG; UB *Gela-šēr-em* Gela-clan.members-ERG). According to Oniani (O I: 57-58), this is the only exception to the principle that oblique stem extensions are limited to mono- or bi-syllabic nominals.

3.2.2.2. One-stem declension classes. In those nouns with the same stem in all cases (declensions VI-VIII), we have to do with either (i) generalization of the NOM stem to the oblique cases (e.g. the newer declension paradigm of the noun *qän* ‘bull’, belonging to Class IV in more conservative varieties of Svan); (ii) vowel-final stems with syncopation (e.g. *kor* < **kora* ‘house’), as shown by genitives in *-āš* (< **a-iš*) or *-eš* (Gazdeliani 2011a); or (iii) proper names, which, as in Old Georgian, once employed the bare stem in nominative contexts (Ch’umburidze 1964; see also Chant’ladze 2016). Stems with more than two syllables, or disyllabic C-final stems, are relegated to Class VIII. This includes plurals and diminutives formed by suffixation, even when the base noun belongs to one of the three-stem classes (e.g. *txwim*, a Class V noun, has the Class VIII plural *txum-är*).

Class VI: Consonant-final stems, also some with final /i/ or other vowels. Usually have GEN *-iš* or *-iš*. The umlauted NOM stem has been generalized to the oblique cases. Most loanwords from Georgian belong to this class. Note that *qän* ‘bull’, a Class IV noun in LB, has shifted to Class VI in the other dialects.

<i>NOM</i>	wisgw ‘apple’	nāti ‘kin’	nāp’u ‘piece’	qän < *qan-i ‘bull’ (UB/Ln/Lš)
<i>DAT</i>	wisgw-s	nāti-s	nāp’u-s	qän-s
<i>INST</i>	wisgw-š	nāti-šw	nāp’u-wš	qan-šw
<i>ADV</i>	wisgw-d	nāti-d	nāp’u-d	qän-d
<i>ERG</i>	wisgw-d	nāti-d	nāp’u-d	qän-d
<i>GEN</i>	wisgw-iš	nātiš < nāti-iš	nāp’w-iš	qän-iš

Class VII: Final-a stems, either with reduced or unreduced final vowel. The latter is attributed by some to an original long *ā*, subsequently shortened (Gigineishvili 1973). Note the long vowel in the GEN. The DAT, ADV and ERG of *kor* ‘house’ with unsynocopated /a/ appear in poetic texts.

<i>NOM</i>	kor ‘house’	žihra ‘oak’ < *žihrā?
<i>DAT</i>	kor-[a]-s	žihra-s
<i>INST</i>	kor-šw	žihra-wš
<i>ADV</i>	kor-[a]-d	žihra-d
<i>ERG</i>	kor-[a]-d	žihra-d
<i>GEN</i>	kor-āš < *kora-iš	žihrāš (NB. long vowel)

Class VIII: Consonant-final and some e-final bisyllabic nouns; nouns with 3 or more syllables; proper names; and most plurals.

	[plurals]		[proper names]
<i>NOM</i>	txum-är ‘heads’	litre ‘drinking’	ämiran ‘Amiran’
<i>DAT</i>	txum-är-s	litre-s	ämiran-s
<i>INST</i>	txum-är-šw	litre-wš	ämiran-šw
<i>ADV</i>	txum-är-d	litre-d	ämiran-d
<i>ERG</i>	txum-är-d	litre-d	ämiran-d
<i>GEN</i>	txum-r-eš < *ar-e-š	litreš	ämiran-iš

3.2.3. Pluralizers. Svan substantives employ a number of pluralizers, none of which are obviously cognate with the Georgian and Zan plural formants (Sharadzenidze 1954; O I 84-87; GP 51; CNK 78-79).

(i) The most widely-used plural formant is /-ar/, which is especially common with consonant-final stems. When the stem contains /r/, the suffixal /r/ undergoes dissimilation to /l/, except in Lower Bal, and the Ushgul and Lenjer subdialects of UB. Compare the undissimilated plural suffixes of *räč’w* ‘rabbit’ and *barž* ‘shoulder’ in the latter varieties to the plurals with dissimilation of central UB and Lower Svan:

	LBal	Ushgul, Lenjer	central UB	Lashx	Lentex
diär ‘bread’	dir-är	dīr-är	dīr-äl	diar- <u>al</u>	di(a)r- <u>äl</u>
räč’w ‘rabbit’	rač’w-är	räč’w-är	räč’w- <u>äl</u>	reč’w- <u>al</u>	rač’w- <u>äl</u>
barž ‘shoulder’	barž-är	barž-är	barž- <u>äl</u>	barž- <u>al</u>	barž- <u>äl</u>
bäč ‘stone’	bač-är	bač-är	bač-är	bač-ar	bač-är

In the NOM case, the suffixal vowel is unlauded to -är/-äl < *-ar-i. After stems ending in a vowel, the suffixal vowel is lengthened in UB, Lš and Ch, e.g. UB nekč’-är, Lš nekč’-är

‘eyebrows’ < nekč’a. Some C-final nouns have plurals with long vowels, probably due to a former stem-final vowel that had undergone syncope (e.g. UB meqr-āl, Lš meqr-āl “arms” < *meqera+ar; cf. GEN meqr-äš; Gazdeliani 2010). Some monosyllabic nouns with final -a or -e form plurals with -räl, and sometimes lengthening of the stem vowel, e.g. cxäräl “fingernails” < cxa; tēräl “eyes” < te (GP 51). The suffix -räl might have resulted from doubling of the plural marker (tēräl < *te + ar- + ar- + NOM -i?).

(ii) Another frequently-used pluralizer has two primary variants: LB -ol; and UB -āl, Lš -ēl, Ch -āl, Ln -al (see the table below). This pluralizer is added primarily to a- and e-final nouns (Sharadzenidze 1954: 189; Kaldani 1974: 159). Nouns with -ol/*-ela plurals are mostly from declension class III, along with some from Class II (mezge “family”, xoša “great”), and Class VII (žihra “oak”; udgara ‘immortal’); and also some Georgian loans with final -a (porma “form”) or -e (zəne “custom”). UB -āl, Lš -ēl, Ch -āl, and Ln -al, all appear to be derived from *-el-a; the final /a/ might be the same pluralizer that appears with other types of nouns (Kaldani 1974). The LB suffix -ol is not obviously related to the other allomorphs. Furthermore, it is in somewhat of a complementary distribution with the diminutive formants (§3.2.4): In UB, Lš and Ln, but not in LB, -ol often forms the diminutive of a- and e-final nouns. Hence, one comes across curious interdialectal homophones such as txer-ol (LB “wolves”, Ln “little wolf”) and din-ol (LB “girls”, Ln “little girl”). The compound pluralizer -ol-u occurs in LB with some comparatives in xo-√-a (xoš-olu “elders”, xoxwr-olu “little ones”); and participles in me-√-e (mek’wšd-olu “short ones”).

pluralizer	-ol	*-el-a?		
		LBal	UBal	Lashx
dīna ‘girl’	dinol	dīnāl	dīnēl	denal
māre ‘man’	marol	mārāl	mārēl	maral
txēre ‘wolf’	txerol	txērāl	txērēl	txeral
lāre ‘hayfield’	larol	lārāl	lārēl	laral

The remaining Svan pluralizers are of limited distribution, appearing with particular types of nominals, or a handful of lexemes.

(iii) Svan kinship terms are especially interesting with regard to plural formation (GP 51; Chartolani 2003:182-3). The circumflex la-√-a, which may be of participial origin (Shanidze 1925a/1981), is the primary pluralizer, especially for terms designating kin of one’s own generation: la-dčur-a ‘sisters’ (from their brother[s]’ point of view) < dačwir; lä-čž-a “sons-in-law” < čže; lä-swnāj-a “co-godparents” < swināj (< G. svina). The terms dī “mother” and mu “father”, both of which are vowel-final monosyllables, can form plurals in -lāru (UB/Lš di-lāru), although circumfixal plurals are also possible (lä-dj-a {la-di-a} ‘mothers’). The disyllabic vowel-final kinterms baba “grandfather”, buba “uncle” and giga “aunt” have plurals in -ālär or -ālu, which appear to be compound suffixes containing the pluralizers -ar and -u. The circumfixal la-bbaw-a “uncles” {la-buba-a} is also attested in some dialects. Finally, the noun gezal “child” has a unique plural suffix (UB/LB/Lš gezl-īr; Ln gezel-il).

(iv) The suffix -u (reduced form -w) marks the plurals of agentive participles in me/mə- (məšk’d-u ‘blacksmiths’ < mə-šk’id [agent-forge] ‘blacksmith’); nouns derived with -ār (zīsč’ār-u ‘flea-infested ones’ < zīsč’ār [flea-characterized.by]); certain nouns in -ä or -äj (LB zobäw “big eaters” < zob-äj < zwb- “eat”); and a handful of nouns of other types (ləpk’äl-w “ladies”). The same element appears in some participial and kinterm plurals noted in (ii) and (iii) above.

(v) The pluralizer *-a* appears with agentive participles in *mə-*, which often denote professions (*məgm-a* ‘builders’ < *mə-gem* [agent-build]; Kaldani 1981); and (especially in LB) consonant-final participles in *me-* (UB/LB *meyrāla* ‘singers’ < *meyrāl*). The pluralizer *-a* can follow the verbal-plurality suffix *-āl-* in agentive participles such as *mə-qd-āl-a* ‘bringers of many (things)’ < *məqd-e* ‘bringer’; *mə-qd-āl-a* ‘those who come’ < *meqed* ‘who comes’ (Ch’k’adua 2013).

(vi) The suffix *-ēr* or the above-mentioned *-a* mark the plurals of old family and clan names (*set’el-š-ēr*, *set’el-š-a* [S.-GEN-PL] ‘the members of the Set’el clan’; Kaldani 1974, 1981; Chant’ladze 1998: 126-183); *besilād isgānsq’ex otar-šer-d* [Bes. reconciled-3pl Otar-GEN-PL-ERG] ‘the Otar clan members reconciled with Besilad’; LB 201).

(vii) The formant UB *-(i)ādu*, LB/Lš *-ēdu*, an apparent compound of uncertain composition, appears as the plural of *pusd/pusn* ‘(over)lord’ (UB *pusd-jādu*, LB *pusd-edu* ‘lords’), and rarely with other nouns; e.g. *c’ām-iadu* ‘close relatives’ (Sharadzenidze 1955: 197; Gazdeliani 2009).

(ix) Collective nouns can be formed from certain words, mainly monosyllables, by reduplication with insertion of the formant *-ma-*, e.g. *γən-ma-γən* ‘festivals’ < *γən* ‘festival, feast-day’; *qīd-ma-qīd* ‘things brought back and forth, offerings’ < *qīd* ‘something brought (as gift, tribute)’ (Saghliani 2016: 470-2). This phenomenon resembles *m*-reduplication in Georgian, and many other languages of the region (Neisser 1953: 56).

(x) Finally, mention should be made of the formant *-xi*, which appears in the compounds *māg-xi* ‘everybody’ < *māg* ‘all’; and *jer-xi* ‘some ones’ < *jer* ‘some’ (LB *jer-xi-d bik’-ār adpenq’urex* [some-PL?-ERG stump-PL split-3pl] ‘some people split tree stumps’ (TK153); note the plural agreement in the verb). What appears to be the same suffix can be segmented from the adverbs *sga-xi* ‘a bit further in, nearer’ < *sga* ‘in’; *ka-xi* ‘a bit further away’ < *ka* ‘out’; *atxe-xi* ‘just now, a short while ago’ < *atxe* ‘now’ (T 65-66; O II: 158; Gigmiani 2011, 2012). In both contexts, *-xi* is associated with plurality or intensification in some sense. This raises the possibility that this formant might be linked to the enigmatic morpheme *-x* in Svan verbs, which marks the plurality of 3rd-person subjects and 2nd and 3rd-person objects.

3.2.4. Singulative. Alongside the pluralizers just described, Svan also has a formant used to designate individuals by their ethnic or local origins, which only appears in the singular. The prefix *mə-* (labialized *mu-*), also used in Svan to form agentive participles (§4.5.2), is added to the name of the person’s homeland, commune or village. In LB a suffixal *-i* is also added, with reduction of the root vowel. The plural, on the other hand, is formed by adding the regular pluralizer to the toponym.

	TOPONYM	SINGULATIVE	PLURAL
I. region/ethnic			
Svaneti	šwän	mu-šwän, LB mu-šn-i ‘(a) Svan’	šwan-är ‘Svans’
Ossetia/Balkaria	sāw	mə-sāw	saw-är
II. commune			
Ushguli	ušgul	mū-wšgwil ‘(an) Ushgulian’	ušgw1-är ‘Ushgulians’
Choluri	čōlir	Ch mə-čōlir, Ln mə-čolil	čōll-är, Ln čoll-äl
Eceri	ecer	mə-jcer, LB mə-jcer-i	ecer-är
III. village			
Sasashi	sasāš	Lš mə-ssāš ‘(a) Sasashian’	Lš sasāš-ar ‘Sasashians’
Saq’dari	saq’dar	Ch mə-saq’dar	Ch/Lš saq’dar-āl

A few other singulatives are formed from ethnonyms (borrowed via Georgian) rather than place names, e.g. UB mu-rus “Russian”, pl. rus-äl < G. rus-; mə-ttär “Tatar” (i.e. Caucasus Muslim), pl. tatr-äl < G. tatar-. Lašx mu-wnjān-i “of the Onianis” is derived from a family/clan name (Dondua 2001: 216). Singulative mə- also occurs in the kinterm mu-xwb-e “brother (of brother)”, plural la-xwb-a. This usage of the agentive participial prefix appears to be old in Kartvelian, as attested by Georgian-Zan *m-egr-el- “Mingrelian” (< the ancient toponym Egr-is-i; K 118-119); and some medieval Georgian episcopal titles (m-rov-el- “(bishop) of Ruisi” < *rov-/ru-; m-t’b-ev-ar- “(bishop) of Tbeti” < *t’b-).

3.2.5. Derivation of nouns. In addition to the participial affixes described below (§4.5), Svan has several noun-forming affixes in common use:

(i) Diminutive formants. Diminutives are more frequently employed in Svan than in Georgian. The suffix generally adds a sense of small size or affection, but in poetry the use of diminutive formants often seems to be motivated by metric considerations, as in the following 8-syllable lines from a round-dance song:

däl- il	k’oža-s	x-e-lgwaž-al-e ...
Dal-DIM	cliff-DAT	O3-V-give.birth-VPL-SM
‘Dali is giving birth on the cliff ...’		
čukwan	txer- ol	x-o-daraž-i,
below	wolf-DIM	O3-V-watch-SM
‘Down below a wolf is lying in wait for them ...’ [Tuite 1994b, # 33]		

At first glance, the Svan dialects appear to have a bewildering variety of diminutive allomorphs, as shown in the table, but Ch’umburidze (1977) has shown that much of the variation is conditioned by the phonological form of the root.

	UB	LB	Ln	Lš
qän bull	qän-ild	qän-ild	qän-ild	qan-īl
txēre wolf	txēr-il	txer-il	txer-ol	txēr-ōl
diār bread	diār-il	dir-ild	diār-il	diar-ēl
gwi heart	gwi-ld	gwi-ild	gwi-lid	gū-l-ēl, gu-l-ūl (2x)
zurāl woman	zurāl-əd/-id	zurl-id	zural-əd	zurāl-ōl
k’almax trout, fish	k’alxm-əl/-əd	k’alxm-əl/-əd	k’almāx-il	k’almax-ēl
dāšdw bear	dāšd-uld	dāšd-uld	dāšt’-uld	dešd-ūl
šīra millstone	šīr-ōl	šīr-il	šīr-ol	šīr-ōl

In UB, LB and Ln, the basic form of the DIM is -ild. The suffixal vowel is lowered to /ə/ after a root that originally ended in -a (k’abəld “little dress” < *k’aba + ild), and rounded to /u/ after a root containing a labial consonant or vowel (apxuld “little frog” < apxw + ild). The DIM suffix is reduced to -il/-əl/-ul after bisyllabic roots, and -id/-əd/-ud after roots with /l/ in the coda (tulq’-ud “little sack” < tuluq’w + ild). The Lš and Ch diminutives are of the form -īl (with a long vowel), and a vocalism which often differs from the other dialects. UB, Ln and Lš (but not LB!) add the DIM -ōl/-ol to a-final nouns, which often makes the output resemble a LB plural, as noted earlier. In some UB diminutives, length appears to have been transferred from the root vowel to the suffix, e.g. UB c’āni weed > DIM cān-īl; t’ōmb lake > t’omb-ōl. Double DIM formants occur after some monosyllabic nouns in Lš (tek’-ūl-īl “little rope”), and less frequently in other dialects.

(ii) The suffix -aj/-äj is used to forms nouns denoting ‘lover of ...’ or ‘one given to ...’, e.g. kartobl-äj ‘lover of potatoes’, qep-äj ‘biter’ < qepa ‘to bite’ [*SJa* 115]; gurk'-äj ‘K’virik’e bull’, prepared for sacrifice at the festival of St K’virik’e in late July. This suffix, like its Georgian parallel (and probable cognate) -a, is also common in personal names or nicknames, e.g. Mepsäy, Datwiäy, Kaläy [*SJa* 115; Ch’umburidze 1980: 72-73].

(iii) The circumfix na-√-i forms deadjectival nouns: na-bg-i ‘firmness’ < bəgi ‘firm’ [*SJa* 114].

(iv). The suffix -jak serves to form nouns or adjectives denoting the purpose for which the referent is intended or destined, e.g. k'ab-jak “material for making a dress”; buzul-äl-jak (bee-PL-PURP) “(eggs) for hatching bees” (Ln Texts #14, p 23); č'äš-jäk “fiancé” < č'äš “husband”.

(v) The suffix -ra forms dendronyms from the names of fruit (icx-ra “pear-tree” < icx “pear”); and also appears in the tree names c'ip-ra “beech” (G c'ip-el-), zesx-ra “linden” (G. cacxw-). An identical suffix appears in some Georgian plant names, such as k'ank'ra “privet (*Ligustrum*)”, gvimra “fern” (Kaldani 1974; Fähnrich 1980; FS 337)

3.2.6. Compound and reduplicated nouns. According to Topuria (1959; 1985: 115), Svan does not employ compounding or reduplication as extensively as Georgian, though the same range of compound lexemes are attested, e.g. xexw-č'äš [wife-husband] ‘married couple’; yäri-yura ‘gorge’ [reduplication with vowel mutation of yär ‘ravine, valley’]; and some phrasal compounds (zomxa “New Year” < zäy/zaw “year” + maxe “new”).

3.3. Adjectives. A significant number of Svan lexemes can function as adjectives or as nouns, depending on how they are deployed in the clause, and are declined accordingly. The root twetn- “white”, for example, is primarily used as an adjective (dälil ... xelywažale twetn-ām k'ožas “Dali was giving birth on the white cliff” (*SvP* 268); but it can easily be transformed into a noun (twetn-ōl-ar “little white ones”; LšTexts 27). Adjectives agree to a limited degree with their head nouns (see §6.1), and can be declined for degree of comparison.

3.3.1. Degrees of comparison. The comparative degree of many common adjectives is formed synthetically, by addition of the circumflex x-o-√-a, e.g. c'ərni ‘red’ > xo-c'ran-a ‘redder’. Even adjectives borrowed from Georgian can be inflected in this way: xo-jp-a cheaper < jäp/jep < G iapi “cheap”; xo-bədniēr-a “happier” < bedniēr < G bednieri. The base forms of a small number of adjectives employ the same circumflex, from what appear to be stative verb roots (x-o-č-a “good”, cf. x-a-č-a “is happy, rejoices”; x-o-l-a “bad”, cf. x-a-l-a “is annoyed, upset”). The comparatives of these adjectives are formed with the suffix -il/-ēl/-ul.

Superlatives employ the circumfix ma-√-[ēn]-e: ma-c'ran-e ‘reddest’; ma-hwr-ēn-e ‘youngest’, cf. xo-xwr-a [< *xo-hwr-a] ‘younger’; and they often appear in juxtaposition to the LOC of mäg/či- ‘all’ (§3.2.1 (e)), e.g. či-n ma-č-ēn-e [all:OBL-LOC SUPERL-good-SUPERL] ‘the best of all’. Superlatives are no longer produced in the Lower Svan dialects, but relic forms remain (*SJa* 113, 117; Margiani-Subari 2008: 40-57; Gazdeliani 2013).

Color terms and some other adjectives have an “attenuated” degree alongside the comparative and superlative (Oniani 1997), giving four-way contrasts as shown in the table below, from Gazdeliani (2013). The Lš attenuated degree is marked by the suffix -āra/-āla: mešx-āra “blackish”; c'ərñ-āla “reddish” (O I: 87-90). An apparent double superlative has been described in LB: ma-ma-š-en-e “biggest” (O I: 88).

base form	comparative	superlative	attenuated
UB x-o-č-a "good"	x-o-č-ēl "better"	ma-č-ēn-e "best"	—
LB x-o-č-a	x-o-č-il	ma-č-en-e	xočil-šal "goodish"
Lš x-o-č-a	x-o-č-ul	ma-č-ēn-e	xočul-āra
Ln x-o-č-a	x-o-č-il	ma-č-en-e	xočil-ara
UB twetwne "white"	x-o-ttwen-a "whiter"	ma-ttwen-e "all white"	mə-ttwen-e "whitish"
LB t(w)etne	x-o-tten-a	mä-tten-e	me-ttan
Lš twetwne	x-o-ttwen-a	—	mu-ttwen/twetwne-āra
Ln twetwne	x-o-t(we)twen-a	—	mə-ttwan/ twetwen-ala

3.3.3. Derivation of adjectives. The principal affixes for deriving adjectives are (i) lə- 'having, possessing', e.g. lə-qän 'having a bull, bull-owning'; also the circumfix lə-√-u for adjectives of geographical origin, e.g. lə-tbilis-u "(something) from Tbilisi"; lušnu < lə-šwan-u "Svanetian" (Gazdeliani 2013); (ii) -ār and variants, e.g. täš-ār [cheese-ADJ] 'cheese-containing', zəsq'-ār "flea-infested", ip-ār [ash.tree-ADJ] (name of Upper Svan commune, lit. 'having many ash trees'); (iii) -ur/-ul 'without'; e.g. tetr-ul 'moneyless', šdik-är-ul "toothless" (lit. "teethless") (SJa 117; Ch'umburidze 1980).

3.4. Pronouns.

3.4.1. 1st and 2nd person pronouns. As in the other Kartvelian languages, the Svan 1st and 2nd person pronouns are essentially indeclinable particles, used in NOM, ERG and DAT contexts (that is, when the participant is marked in the verb): 1sg mi, 1pl näj, 2sg si, 2pl sgäj. The 1st and 2nd person possessive stems are cognate to the Georgian and Zan possessives: Sv. -šgw- [1st-person possessive], Geo. čwe-(n) 'our' < Proto-Krt *čwe- 'our' [1st exclusive plural]; Sv. -sgw- [2nd-person possessive], Ming. skan- 'your.sg' < Proto-Krt *šwen- 'your.sg' [Gamq'relidze 1959: 46; K 250, 256; Mart'irosovi 1964: 96-101; Oniani I: 78-81; Schmidt 1994]. Prefixed to the 1st-person possessives are what appear to be the object agreement (O1) prefixes, which, in the Upper Svan dialects, have distinct inclusive and exclusive forms. The formation of pronouns by addition of a person-marking affix to a non-person-marking base has been observed in other languages (see Nichols 2017 on "auto-person"), but in Svan it is limited to the 1st person. The i- in the 2nd-person possessives is a prosthetic vowel added to avoid a disallowed initial cluster (see §2.3). Also to be noted is the final element -ej, which distinguishes plural from singular possessives, most likely a Svan innovation. The dative/oblique forms end in -(w)a (e.g. isgwa jexw-s [your:OBL wife-DAT] 'to your wife'; mišgwa te-wš [my:OBL eye-INS] "with my own eyes").

	<i>particle (NOM/ERG/DAT)</i>	<i>possessive stem (other cases)</i>
<i>1sg</i>	<u>mi</u>	<u>m-i-šgu</u> , <u>m-i-šgwi</u> 'my'
<i>2sg</i>	<u>si</u>	<u>i-sgu</u> , <u>i-sgwi</u> 'your.sg'
<i>1pl exclusive</i>	<u>näj</u>	(UB/LB): <u>n-i-šgw-ej</u> 'our [but not your]'
<i>1pl inclusive</i>	<u>näj</u>	<u>gw-i-šgw-ej</u> / <u>gu-šgw-ej</u> 'my/our and your'
<i>2pl</i>	<u>sgäj</u>	<u>i-sgw-ej</u> 'your.pl'

3.4.2. 3rd-person pronouns, demonstratives. Svan, like Georgian, does not have 3rd-person pronouns distinct from the demonstratives, of which there are only two (rather than three as in Georgian): *ala* ‘this’ and *eža* ‘that’. The latter functions as the unmarked 3rd-person pronoun. Many pronominals have distinct nominative and oblique stems, including the demonstratives *ala* ‘this’ (oblique stem *am-*), *eža* ‘he, she, it; that’; *jär* ‘who’ (oblique stem *jä-/iša-*); *mäj* ‘what’ (oblique stem *im-*); *mäg* ‘all, everybody’ (oblique stem *či-*); and the pronoun *ža* ‘oneself’ (oblique stem *mič-*), most commonly met with in quoted speech (see §6.9.2). These pronouns belong to declension I in the singular. The plural demonstratives *alj-är* ‘these’, *ežj-är* ‘those’ belong to declension VIII, as does *min* ‘they’, the plural counterpart of *ža* (Mart’irosovi 1964). Pronominals and adverbials formed by addition of the suffix *-w-äle* (*järwäle* “some-/anyone” < *jär* “who”; *im-wäle* “some-/anywhere” < *im* “where?”) can have either indefinite or specific reference, combining the senses of G. *viyac/vinme*, *sadyac/sadme* (Kaldani 1964).

3.5. Numerals. The Svan numerals have well-established Kartvelian pedigrees, albeit somewhat obscured by prosthetic vowels and glides, metathesis, and the sound correspondence Geo/Zan /t/ : Sv. /šd/

	Svan	Georgian	Mingrelian	Proto-Kartvelian (Klimov 1998)
1	—	ert-i	art-	*ert- (Georgian-Zan)
	ešxu ‘1’	sxva ‘other’	šxva	*šxwa-
2	jeru / jōri ‘2’	or-i	žir-	*jor-
3	semi	sam-i	sum-	*sam-
4	wōšt̃xw	otx-i	otx-	*otxo-
5	woxwišd	xut-i	xut-	*xut-
6	usgwa	ekvs-i	amšv-	*ekšw-
7	išgwid	švid-	škvit-	*šwid-
8	ara	rva	(b)ruo	*arwa-
9	čxara	cxra	čxoro	*čxra-
10	ješd	at-i	vit-	*at-

Some unusual features of the Svan numerals might be due to their use in counting. The conservation of the NOM case ending in “2” and “3” (*jōri*, *semi*) — and possibly the long vowel in “4” — would maintain the disyllabic quantity of the numbers up to ten. Schmidt (1998: 84) surmised that the non-cognate onset /wo-/ in “5” echoes the (etymologically straightforward) onset of “4”; the initial vowel in “7” may likewise reflect the influence of the preceding number “6” (Georg 2002). On the postulated sound changes linking the two forms for “2”, see Chant’ladze (1998: 40).

The numbers from 11 to 19 are compounds, with “ten” as the first element: *ješd-ešxu* (10-1) ‘11’, *ješd-jōri* (10-2) ‘12’, *ješd-woxušd* (10-5) ‘15’, etc. The opposite order of numbers gives multiples of ten: *jerw-ešd* (2-10) ‘20’, *jerw-ešd-i-jōri* (2-10-and-2) ‘22’; *wōšt̃xw-ešd* (4-10) “40”, etc., although many Svans have adopted the vigesimal system characteristic of Georgian, expressed as multiples of UB/LB/Lš (*j*)*erw-ešd*, Ln *jerb-ešt̃* ‘20’. This gives compounds such as Ln *semi-jerb-ešt̃-i-ješt̃* (3-2-10-and-10) “70”, LB *ošt̃x-erw-ešd-i-jōri* (4-2-10-and-2) “82”. In the Laxamul subdialect of Lower Bal, the multiplier suffix *-in* is employed: *ur-in jerw-ešd* ‘40’ (lit. 2 times 20); *sum-in jerw-ešd i ješd* ‘70’ (3x 20 and 10). Numerals to *ašir* ‘100’ and beyond can be generated, though in practice Svan speakers will draw on Georgian or Russian to express higher figures (in the 1908 diary reproduced in Shanidze/Topuria [1939: 41-48], numbers much above ten, if written out, are in Russian).

In Modern Georgian, as a rule, numeral quantifiers are followed by singular nouns. In Svan, more often than not, this is the case (e.g. UB sēmi märe “three men”, lit. “three man”), but plural nouns with numeral quantifiers are not at all infrequent (e.g. jori tas-är [two cup-PL]; UB 217). Quantified kinterms almost always appear in their special plural forms, e.g. i-mbual-x semi la-wdil-a [V-converse-PL three:NOM woman’s.sister-PL] “three sisters are conversing” (LB 98).

3.6. Adverbs. Svan has adverbs with scope over the predicate (jenäsd “quickly”), and the proposition (esnär “apparently”; Margiani-Subari 2012b), as well as modifiers of other adverbs (mēwar “very”). Alongside a small number of primary adverbs (atxe “now”, ame “here”; mēwar “very”), a much larger number are formed by the addition of case endings, postpositions and suffixes of uncertain origin (O II: 156-8; Giglemiani 2012, 2014, 2015). Adverb-forming case suffixes include the DAT (ham-s “in the morning”; žōdia-s “far” < žōdi “long”); ADV (atx-ad “until now” < atxe “now”; isg-d “in the middle” < isg “middle”); INST (guw-šw “heartily” < gu “heart”); and LOC (ham-n i näboz-n “from morning to evening”). The adverbial expressions lēt (“at night”), ladäy (“today”) might represent unmarked DATs (see §3.2.1). Sizeable sets of compound adverbs can be generated from spatial preverb-postpositions such as ži “up”: ži-b “above”, ži-b-aw “up, high”, ž-äb “upwards”, ž-äb-š-xān “from above”; ži-xi “further up”, ži-šāl-id “while being above (e.g. in the mountain pastures)”, etc. Among the formants that can be segmented from these expressions are several of unknown origin. The adverbs le-ža “upward”, le-kwa “downward”, nen-sga/nē-sga “between” appear to contain prefixes similar to those used to form participles (Giglemiani 2011). Adverbs with reduplicated stems are also common, e.g. čiki-čiki “for the time being”; sōmi-q’ōmi-d “calmly” (Giglemiani 2010, 2012).

3.7. Postpositions. Svan has postpositions, as do its sister languages. These follow their nominals, often cliticising onto them. (O II: 159). Simple postpositions include -te ‘to(ward)’; -xān (Lš. -xen) ‘from’; -ži ‘upon’, -ču ‘under’, -isga (Ln -isk’a, Lš -isa) ‘in’; -ka ‘out’; -šāl ‘as, like’; -caxan ‘at, *chez*’; -nun ‘up to’; -mōq’/-moq’ ‘at, by’; -ənka (possibly a compound of the LOC case + -ka “out”) ‘besides’; -k’alib ‘in the manner of’. Compound postpositions comprise a directional element (-te ‘to’; -xān ‘from’) followed by a positional one, e.g. hagw-te-ču [ankle:DAT-to-under] “down to the ankles”; kan-xān-ka [hemp:DAT-from-out] “(is made) out of hemp”. In general Svan postpositions govern the dative case, although they assign genitive case to certain types of nominals denoting humans (proper names, pronouns and kinterms), in certain contexts (Abesadze 1955, 1972, 1984; Manning 1994); e.g.

tāš	sgōtšq’äd {sga-ad-x-o-šq’äd}	lemesg-tē-sga
cheese:NOM	OP-IP-O3-V-fall:AOR	fire:DAT-to-in
‘His cheese fell into the fire.’		

min-eš-tē-sga	an-qäd-x	ušgwl-är
them-GEN-to-in	IP-come:AOR-PL	Ushgulian-PL:NOM
‘The people from Ushgul came to them (lit. came into their [place]).’		

The postposition -šāl can also be attached to outer preverbs, with the meaning “almost, as if”, e.g. ka-šāl ž-a-lpar-a k’ož [OP-as O2-V-cover-PERF cliff:NOM] “it is as if the cliff was hidden from you” (UB, TK 812). In Laxmul LB, nouns and their postpositions can be bracketed, and receive further case-marking: txwim-miq’-iš larol [head-at-GEN field-PL] “hayfields at the head (of the valley)”. The postpositions -šāl ‘like’ and -cāl ‘so much as’ can also be added to inflected

noun+postposition units, e.g. šuk’w-te-kä-š-cäl [road:DAT-to-out-GEN-so.much] “as much as the distance to the road” (Kaldani 1956: 169).

3.8. Interjections, animal calls. Svan interjections can be divided into those based on words, or of similar phonological complexity (čabal! “bravo”; xiad! “joy”; gwah! “(let’s) go”); and expressive sequences of simple form, often including long vowels (ō!, ā!; ehe! “hey”; pwūh! “phooey, ugh”; su(d)! “shush”). Interjections used in direct address include he, ha, (h)at’ (Shavreshiani 2014). Boeder (1991) compiled an inventory of Kartvelian animal calls, including some elicited from a Svan informant. As in speech communities around the world, some Svan calls to animals use non-phonemic effects, such as labial-lingual trills (prr! affectionate call to horses); and clusters of voiceless obstruents (cx! call to shoo away a cat).

Calls to domestic animals (Boeder 1991; source Ciuri Gabliani)

<i>Animal</i>	<i>affectionate call</i>	<i>call to set in motion, shoo away</i>
horse, donkey	prr (labiolingual trill)	ačw
cow, bull	āpšw	haš haš ka (driving oxen)
chicken	čia/čią	(a)kša / kš ⁿ
sheep	bä	
goat	(a)bc	ca, cig
pig	gwit, ɣutʰ	soʔ
cat	čiw/čiu	čxə, cx
dog	kuc, poia	šišd atxā

§4. Morphology II: The Svan verb, Part I. Categories. Despite UsLAR’s initial impression of Svan verb conjugation as “complete chaos” (*soveršennyj kaos*; 1861/1887: 115), by the end of the 19th century, Zavadskij (1890) and Schuchardt (1896) had made significant headway in identifying the principal verbal categories. Topuria’s 1931 masterwork on the Svan verb, based on extensive fieldwork at a time when significant numbers of Svans were monolingual, remains the principal source on the topic. Mention should also be made of important recent studies by Ch’k’adua (1999) on stative verbs, and Margiani-Subari (2012a) on inferential and evidential paradigms.

Despite considerable innovation, as well as conservation of archaic features, and paradigmatic realignment, the Svan verb is recognizably Kartvelian, as is the arrangement of verbal forms into paradigms and series. It has a similar sequence of morphemes to those of its sister languages, as shown in the following table (cf. Deeters 1930: 6-7; Schmidt 1992; Tuite 1992, 2018). Lexically-specified elements are closest to the root; productive derivational morphemes (such as causative, verbal-plurality and passive suffixes) are toward the middle of the sequence (slots 2-6), and paradigm-specific, essentially inflectional, elements to the right (slots 7-9). The stem is bracketed on both sides by person and number markers, preverbs and clitics. These slot numbers will be marked when verb forms are broken down into their constituent morphemes.

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
OP	IP	S/O	V	√	SM1	INTR	VPL	CAUS	AOR	SM2	EXT	IMPF	TAM	S/O	CL
sga ka ži ču	an a(d) es la	m- ž- gw- xw- x- l- n-	a- e- i- o-		i em ēšg ēsg, &c.	en ōl ōn ən	ēl ōr āl	un in	ēn e	e i isg	a(w) ōl	d	a e i (ēd)	(š)d -s -x -is -sgw	a mo

-4	OP	outer preverbs
-3	IP	inner preverbs
-2	S/O	subject and object prefixes
-1	V	preradical or “version” vowels
0	√	verb root
1	SM1	oldest layer of series markers
2	INTR	(1) intransitive-stem formant -en (ablauting verbs), cognate with Old Georgian inchoative suffix-en; (2) -ōl, -ōn, -ən in some imperfective intransitive stems
3	VPL	verbal-plurality morphemes
4	CAUS	causative (and future/conditional/inferential) formants
5	AOR	aorist stem formants: passive-aorist and Series III formant ēn, thematic suffix -e
6	SM2	series markers in a-√-e transitives, causatives, passives, verbs with complex stems.
7	EXT	paradigm-specific suffixes: (1) *-aw in imperfects, statives and present-perfects; (2) imperfect conditional formant -ōl.
8	IMPF	imperfect-stem formant /-d-/
9	TAM	tense-aspect-mood vowels; UB conjunctive formant -ēd-
10	S/O	person/number suffixes; also stem extensions -is, -sgw in imperfect, conditional, etc.
11	CL	clitics (quotative, optative, etc.)

As in Georgian, Svan verbs divide into two basic groups, conventionally labeled as “active” (Class A), and “passive” or “inactive” (Class P) verbs. The principal syntactic distinction

between the two verb types is that Class A verbs assign ERG case in the Series II paradigms (aorist and optative), whereas Class P verbs cannot. Many Class A transitives are paired with Class P intransitives formed from the same stem:

Class A transitive verbs

non-ablauting

ä-č'm-e “mows hay”

a-hrāq'-i “brews vodka”

i-šx-i “burns one’s own sthg”

ablauting

pxiž-e “spreads”

kwic-e “cuts”

Class P intransitive verbs

non-ablauting (prefixal passive)

i-č'm-i “[hay] is mowed”

i-hrāq'-i “[vodka] is brewed”

i-šx-i “sthg burns”

ablauting

pxež-n-i “is spread, scattered”

kwec-n-i “is cut”

In addition to transitive Class A verbs, there is the sizeable — and productive — subclass of “medial” or “medioactive” Class A verbs (Nozadze 1974; Gagua 1988). Most of these are semantically atelic, and their stems generally contain the verbal-plurality (frequentative) formants *-ā̄l-* or *-iēl-*. Although some medioactive verbs can take a facultative direct object (Suxishvili 1988), they are most often intransitive. Whether or not they have a direct object, medioactives assign ERG case to their subjects in Series II.

Class A medioactive verbs (intransitive, atelic)

č'q'āl-i “screeches”

i-gwn-i “weeps”

i-yr-āl “sings”

i-bərcān-jēl “staggers around [drunk]”

i-bərg-jēl “wrestles”

Finally, mention should be made of two further groups of Class P verbs: statives and mediopassives. Many statives have defective or morphologically unusual paradigms (Gagua 1976), and those that are bivalent are almost always associated with indirect syntax (§4.2.2):

Class P stative verbs (intransitive)

sk'ur “is seated”

tera “is visible”

x-a-c'əx “sb [DAT] needs sthg [NOM]”

x-o-šgur “sb [DAT] is ashamed”

x-o-xal “sb [DAT] knows sthg [NOM]”

The mediopassives are mostly change-of-state verbs, many of which take the verbal-plurality suffix *-ā̄l* in the present series. Their Series II verb forms, however, belong to Class P (and sometimes have the passive-aorist suffix *-ā̄n*; Gagua 1988).

Class P mediopassive verbs (intransitive)

aorist (suffix -ā̄n)

ād-čīž-ā̄n “he married (into another clan)”

ād-ruxn-ā̄n “it thundered”

ād-rəh-ā̄n “it dawned”

ād-mut'k'wn-ā̄n “it got dark”

infinitive (suffix -ā̄l)

li-čīž-ā̄l “to become son-/brother-in-law”

li-rxun-ā̄l “to thunder”

li-rh-ā̄l “to dawn”

li-mt'k'un-ā̄l “to get dark”

4.1. Verb root (slot 0). Svan verbs can be readily created from noun and adjective stems, and

expressives, so in principle verb roots can be of almost any shape and length (Ch’umburidze 1981). Primary verb roots tend to be vowelless (e.g., a⁻¹-č^{’0}-e⁶ “bakes” < PK *č’w- “burn”), or monosyllabic (oxwäšxb {an⁻³-xw⁻²-a⁻¹-šxeb⁰} “I sewed” < PK *čxeb- “weave, entangle”). A handful of Svan verbs employ etymologically-unrelated roots in some paradigms; in most cases suppletivism is correlated with the ancient aspectual distinction between Series I and Series II, e.g. the two stems for ‘eat’ (-zwb/-ē̄m-) and ‘drink’ (-tr/-āš-) [T 243-254; Gagua 1976].

Slightly over a dozen verb roots cause lengthening of a preceding vowel, in those dialects with distinctive vowel length. This is attributed to compensatory lengthening by a now-lost root-initial consonant (or vowel, as in -Vmbw- < ambaw- “news”). Note the long vowels in the following forms derived from the root -Vt- “divide” < (PK *wlt-): ātāli “apportions” {a⁻¹-Vt⁰-āl³-i⁶}; īte “selects for oneself” {i⁻¹-Vt⁰-e⁶}; xōte “apportions to someone” {x⁻²-o⁻¹-Vt⁰-e⁶}; and the participles ūta “indivisible” {u-Vt-a}, lōte “divided” {lə-Vt-e}.

One ancient verb-root type has ablauting vowels. These are all of canonical Kartvelian CVC shape, where ‘C’ can be a simple consonant (including /šd/ < *t), a harmonic cluster, or either followed by /w/; e.g. -bVr- ‘(be) subtract(ed)’, -pxVž- ‘spread’, -k’wVš- ‘break’, -t’q’wVp- ‘explode’; -žyVp- ‘(be) squash(ed)’, -pVšwd- ‘let pass’. Based on a sampling of dictionaries, about 10-15% of Svan verbs belong to the ablauting class. They retain some characteristics of the Proto-Kartvelian ablaut patterns (but with changes noted by Gamq’relidze & Mach’avariani 1965 and Mach’avariani 1986), and their semantic characteristics are comparable to those of Georgian and Zan ablauting verbs (Tuite 2014, 2018). Ablauting verbs in Upper Bal, Cholur and Lashx (i.e. the dialects with distinctive length) show the following alternations (O I: 33):

(i) /i/-grade (reduced variant [ə]):

(i.a) Class A TRANSITIVE: present stem: UB dig-e, Lš/Ch dəg-e ‘extinguishes sthg’; aorist stem: S1/2sg stem a-xw-dəg ‘I extinguished sthg’, S3/pl stem a-dig ‘extinguished sthg’. (On the alternation /i:/ə/ in ablauting verbs see also Mach’avariani 1963).

(i.b) STATIVE/RESULTATIVE present stem, formed from certain ablauting verbs: sid ‘is left, remains’ [cp. dynamic passive sed-n-i]; x-a-p’iž ‘is hidden’ [T 208-10; Ch’k’adua 1999, 2014].

(ii) lengthened /ī/-grade:

(ii.a) Class A TRANSITIVE PERFECT: x-o-dīg-a ‘has extinguished sthg’

(ii.b) Class P PASSIVE (deep-structure bivalent): i-dīg-i ‘is being extinguished (by sb)’

(iii) /e/-grade (lowered variants [a, ä]):

Class P DYNAMIC MONOVALENT INTRANSITIVE present stem: deg-en-i ‘[fire, candle] goes out, burns out’; aorist stem: S1/2sg stem a-xw-deg ‘I burnt out’; S3/pl stem UB a-däg, Lš a-dag < *a-deg-a ‘went out, burnt out’

(iv) lengthened /ē/-grade:

Class P ATELIC MONOVALENT INTRANSITIVE: i-dēg-ur-āl ‘[fire] is just about to go out’

vocalism	underlying valence	normal or reduced grade	lengthened grade
/i/	bivalent	TRANSITIVE STATIVE/RESULTATIVE	TRANSITIVE PERFECT (true) PASSIVE
/e/	monovalent	DYNAMIC INTRANSITIVE	ATELIC INTRANSITIVE

A handful of Svan verbs have ablaut patterns differing from the above (T 242). Three such verbs have athematic Class A presents with /e/-grade vocalism, and /i/-grade aorists: i-k’ed “takes up” (aor. än-k’id); ter “recognizes” (aor. a-tir); q’er “rushes/hurries toward” (aor. a-q’ir). In view of their resemblance to the Georgian ablaut pattern, these verbs are considered to be especially

archaic (GM 208-209). A pair of verbs with regular /i/-grade ablauting transitives have intransitive stems with the vocalism /ə/, a variant of the bivalent passive lengthened grade /ī/, rather than monovalent /e/: *bid-e* “pours (liquid)”; intr. *bād-(e)n-i* “(liquid) spills, is poured”; *šid-e* “spills, scatters”; intr. *šād-(e)n-i* “is scattered” (T 242).

4.2. Person and number agreement (slots -2 and 10). Svan has two sets of person-marking affixes, most of which have Georgian and Zan cognates. The prefixes appearing in slot 1 are particularly close to those of Early Old Georgian: the S2 and O3 markers in *x-*, S1 *xw-*, and the distinction between inclusive and exclusive 1st person (Tuite 2004; Gurgendidze 2009). In all Svan dialects, however, the inclusive-exclusive distinction has been extended to Set S (prefix *l-*). In the UB and LB dialects, a specifically plural Set O exclusive prefix (*n-*) is opposed to O1sg *m-* (T 15; O II: 36-37). Margiani-Subari (2008: 67-74) found examples of O1incl *gw-* being used where O1excl *n-* would be expected among speakers from Ušgul and the Kodori Valley. Oniani (1978: 229-230) considers O1excl *n-* to be an innovation in the Proto-Svan period. It remains to be determined whether S1incl *l-* reflects a Proto-Kartvelian morpheme lost in Georgian and Zan (Tuite 1992).

Person agreement affixes in Svan.

	Set S			Set O		
	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>		<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>	
<i>1st exclusive</i>	xw-	xw-	-(š)d	m-	n- (UB/LB); gw- (Ln/Lš/Ch)	
<i>1st inclusive</i>		l-	-(š)d		gw-	
<i>2nd</i>	x-		-(š)d	ž-	ž-	-x
<i>3rd</i>	(l-), (-s)	(l-)	-x	x-	x-	-x

As in Georgian and Zan, the Set O 1st and 2nd-person prefixes take precedence over the Set S prefixes for the single position in slot -2. Alternatively, the distribution of person prefixes in the Kartvelian languages, including Svan, could be described as a type of "direct/inverse" person-marking system (Tuite 2021). If one assumes a person hierarchy in which the speech-act participants — 1st and 2nd persons — are of equal rank, and both outrank the 3rd person, then the Set S prefixes signal a subject that outranks its object (“direct” marking), whereas the Set O prefixes appear when the object is of equal or higher rank than the subject (“inverse” marking). For bipersonal verbs, the distribution of prefixes is shown in the following table. "2, 3 > 1sg" means 2nd or 3rd-person subject and 1st-singular object.

Svan personal prefixes, as a direct/inverse system

	DIRECT (= Set S)	INVERSE (= Set O)
+ speaker	xw- 1 > 3	m- 2, 3 > 1sg; n- 2, 3 > 1pl
+ speaker, + hearer	l- 1+2 > 3	gw- 3 > 1+2
+ hearer	x- 2 > 3	ž- 1, 3 > 2
— speaker, — hearer	∅ 3sub > 3do	x- 3sub > 3io

In view of the absence of a S3sg suffix in the non-conjunctive paradigms, a form such as *žə-t'x-e* (O2-return-SM) could mean either “I bring you back” or “s/he brings you back” (T 22). The O2 prefix *ž-* (< Proto-Krt *g-) has undergone yet further palatalization to *j-* in Lashx and the Ecer and Laxamulan subdialects of Lower Bal [T 32]. In Lentex, the S1 prefix can appear as *m-* when followed by schwa, e.g. *laməš* “I drank” < {la=xw-əš}; cf. LB/Lš *loxuš*; *magem* “I build” (T 7; O II: 7); i.e. Ln S1 patterns with S1incl and O1/2 prefixes.

Shown in the table below is the complete person/number paradigm for the transitive verb x-a-hwd-i "S gives it to O" in UB/LB, for all permitted combinations of subject and object markers (*T* 22). As in the other Kartvelian languages, coreferent subjects and objects are not possible, periphrastic constructions being resorted to in such circumstances (e.g. xoc'ad isgwa txwims! "save yourself!", lit. "save your head"; *UB* 315).

	O1sg	O1excl	Oincl	O2sg	O2pl	O3
S1sg	—	—	—	ǰ-a-hwd-i	ǰ-a-hwd-i	xw-a-hwd-i
S1excl	—	—	—	ǰ-a-hwd-i-d	ǰ-a-hwd-i-d	xw-a-hwd-i-d
Sincl	—	—	—	—	—	l-a-hwd-i-d
S2sg	m-a-hwd-i	n-a-hwd-i	—	—	—	x-a-hwd-i
S2pl	m-a-hwd-i-d	n-a-hwd-i-d	—	—	—	x-a-hwd-i-d
S3sg	m-a-hwd-i	n-a-hwd-i	gw-a-hwd-i	ǰ-a-hwd-i	ǰ-a-hwd-i-x	x-a-hwd-i
S3pl	m-a-hwd-i-x	n-a-hwd-i-x	gw-a-hwd-i-x	ǰ-a-hwd-i-x	ǰ-a-hwd-i-x	x-a-hwd-i-x

Two suffixes mark number agreement. The Set S 1st and 2nd-person plural suffix -d is undoubtedly cognate to Georgian-Zan -t. The allomorph -šd appears in only one verb in one dialect, this being the Upper Bal copula xw-i-šd 'we_{excl} are', l-i-šd 'we_{incl} are'; cp. xw-i 'I am' [*T* 9; Gagua 1976]. Since /šd/ is a regular reflex of Kartvelian */t/ (see 1.5.2 above), this allomorph might represent the initial form of the plural suffix [Klimov 1964: 67-8; *FS* 185-6; cf. Palmaitis 1986]. The suffix -x serves to indicate the plurality of any argument controlling Set S or Set O agreement, for which no other means of coding number is available (i.e. S3, O2, O3). (This pluralizer might be related to the intensifying formant -xi mentioned in §3.2.3).

4.2.1. Set S 3rd person marking in Svan. Whereas Georgian and Zan have several sets of paired suffixes for S3sg and S3pl, Svan has nothing of the kind. The formant -s, added to the S3sg forms of all modal paradigms (conjunctive, optative and perfect conjunctive), has evident Georgian and Zan cognates (Klimov 1964: 161; *FS* 357), although the initial distribution and function of this morpheme has been called into question (Oniani 1978: 172-4). The prefix l- contrasts with the S1 and S2 prefixes of the copular verb (li "is", läsw "was", lesw "would"; cf. xwi "I am", xwäsw "I was", xwesw "I would"), and also appears to have the same function in the stative lög "stands" (cf. xug {xw-ə-g} "I stand"), and the suppletive verbs la⁻³-l^{-2?}-ēm⁰ "ate" (Lš S1 lo⁻³-xw⁻²-ēm⁰ "I ate"), and la⁻³-l^{-2?}-əš⁰ "drank" (Lš only; cf. UB/LB/Ln laš < *la⁻³-əš⁰-e⁵}; *T* 2-3, Gagua 1976). The origin of an apparent S3 prefix, otherwise unknown in Kartvelian, has been the subject of considerable debate among specialists (Andghuladze 1968: 178-200; Oniani 1978: 166-185, *O* II: 28-9; Kaldani 1959a, 1979; Schmidt 1982), and remains unresolved.

The past-tense suffix -a, which occurs in some imperfects, and also has left traces in the stem vowels of intransitive aorists (Kaldani 1969: 34-35; 1978; 1979), has been equated with the Georgian-Zan S3sg past-indicative suffix *-a (Klimov 1964: 41-2; *FS* 28; Oniani 1978: 175-177).

4.2.2. Indirect syntax and inversion. The clausal argument crossreferenced by the Set S marker corresponds, in the majority of contexts, to the grammatical subject. The Set O markers generally agree with the indirect or direct object, especially if animate. This correlation between grammatical relations and person markers is called "direct syntax"

eǰjār näj täš-s gw⁻²-a⁻¹-hwd⁰-i¹-x¹⁰
 they:NOM us cheese-DAT O1incl-V-give-SM-pl
 'they (NOM) give us the cheese (DAT)'

In Svan, as in Georgian and Zan, it is quite often the case that the relation between grammatical relations and person markers is the inverse of that shown in the above sentence: the grammatical subject controls agreement with a Set O prefix. I will refer to such an agreement pattern as “indirect syntax”. As in Georgian, indirect syntax is associated with the Series III verb forms of Class A verbs, which undergo inversion. With the verb in the present perfect, the subject of the above sentence is in the DAT case, and the direct object in the NOM:

ežjār-s nišgwej-d tāš loxwhodax {la⁻³-x⁻²-o⁻¹-hod⁰-a⁷-x¹⁰}
 they-DAT us:GEN-ADV cheese:NOM IP-O3-V-give-PERF-pl
 ‘they (DAT) have given us the cheese (NOM)’

Compare the object-marking and subject-marking functions of the Set O prefixes in the following Series I and Series III paradigms of the Class A verb *li-k’wš-e* “to break”:

Set O person markers in direct and indirect constructions.

	<i>present</i>	<i>present perfect</i>
O1sg	m-i-k’wš-e “breaks it for me ”	m-i-k’wš-a “ I have broken it”
O2sg	ž-i-k’wš-e “breaks it for you_{sg} ”	ž-i-k’wš-a “ You_{sg} have broken it”
O3sg	x-o-k’wš-e “breaks it for him/her ”	x-o-k’wš-a “ S/he has broken it”
O1excl	n-i-k’wš-e “breaks it for us_{excl} ”	n-i-k’wš-a “ We_{excl} have broken it”
Oincl	gw-i-k’wš-e “breaks it for us_{incl} ”	gw-i-k’wš-a “ We_{incl} have broken it”
O2pl	ž-i-k’wš-e-x “breaks it for you_{pl} ”	ž-i-k’wš-a-x “ You_{pl} have broken it”
O3pl	x-o-k’wš-e “breaks it for them ”	x-o-k’wš-a-x “ They have broken it”

Conversely, 1st and 2nd person direct objects of transitive verbs can be linked to Set S markers in the Series III paradigms, e.g. UB I²-o⁻¹-mār⁰-a⁷-d¹⁰ [S1incl-V-prepare-PERF-1/2pl] “s/he has prepared **us_{incl}**”. In the Lower Svan dialects, auxiliary verbs are also used to mark 1st and 2nd person direct objects, as in Modern Georgian: Lš *atwmečāxwi* {ad⁻³-xw⁻²-o⁻¹-meč⁰-a(w)⁷-xwi¹¹} “it has aged **me**” (cf. G *davuberebivar*; T 170).

A large number of verbs, mostly (but not only) intransitive, which denote psychological or physical states, involuntary actions, desires, etc., are associated with indirect syntax in all tenses, as are the verbs denoting possession (Boeder 1980). Examples of indirect verbs include *m-a-lät* “I love”; *m-ä-īd* “I am hungry”; *m-i-xal* “I know”; *m-i-cx-a* “I prefer”; *m-ā-kw* “I am wearing (clothing)”; *m-a-q’a* “I have (person or animal)”. Indirect verbs can also be derived from many transitives, indicating the desire or spontaneous impulse to do something: *m-ä-qwšun-e* “I cough (involuntarily)” < *qweš* “coughs”; *x-a-rk’un-n-e eja-s* [O3-V-shiver-CAUS-PRS this-DAT] “s/he shivers (from cold)”; *māra x-ä-č’ m-un-e* [man:DAT O3-V-mow-CAUS-SM] ‘the man longs to mow hay’ (*tibva enat’reba*) < *ä-č’ m-e* ‘mows’ (T 236; Bik’ashvili 2008).

4.3. Verbal plurality (slot 3). The slot 3 suffixes *-āl/āl-*, *-ēl-*, and *-ōr-* signal verbal plurality in the broadest sense: repeated or habitual action, and/or plurality of the transitive direct object or intransitive subject; (Deeters 1930: 66-8; Sharadzenidze 1954; Schmidt 1957; T 233-4; Tuite 1992; O II: 33-35; Ch’k’adua 2012, 2013). The pluralizer *-ōr-* occurs principally with ablauting verbs, and often implies fragmentation of the referent of the direct object (*a⁻¹-gl⁰-ōr³-e⁶* “tears many, tears into many pieces” < *gil-e* “tears”). The allophone *-ēl-* appears with verbs taking the series marker *-i* (*ä⁻¹-šxb⁰-i¹-jēl³-i⁶* “sews many things” < *ä-šxb-i* “sews”). The suffix *-āl-* occurs with other types of verbs, and can occasionally substitute for the other two allomorphs (Ecer LB

$\ddot{a}^1\text{-g}^0\text{-m}^1\text{-}\ddot{a}r^3\text{-e}^6 / \ddot{a}^1\text{-g}^0\text{-m}^1\text{-}\ddot{a}l^3\text{-i}^6$ “builds many (houses)” < $\ddot{a}g\text{-em}$ “builds”; T 233). Instances of double pluralizers have been described, e.g. $a^1\text{-k}^0\text{wš}^0\text{-}\ddot{u}r^3\text{-}\ddot{a}l^3\text{-i}^6$ “demolishes” < $k^0\text{wiš-e}$ “breaks” (T 233-4).

Plural direct object

$t^0\text{abg-}\ddot{a}r\text{-}\ddot{z}i$ $\ddot{d}i\ddot{a}r\text{-s}$ i $l\ddot{e}y\text{w-s}$ $\ddot{a}^1\text{-d}^0\text{-i}sg^1\text{-}\ddot{a}l^3\text{-i}^6\text{-x}^{10}$.
table-PL-on bread-DAT and meat-DAT V-lie-SM-VPL-SM-PL
‘They put bread and meat on the tables.’ [Lower Bal; LB 79]

Plural intransitive subject

$m\ddot{a}g$ $u\ddot{s}x\text{wid}$ $\ddot{a}n^3\text{-}(i)^{-1}\text{-}\ddot{a}rd^0\text{-}\ddot{a}l^3\text{-}\ddot{a}n^5\text{-x}^{10}$
all:NOM together IP-V-grow-VPL-Pass.AOR-PL
‘They all grew up together.’ [UB; Sharadzenidze 1954: 195]

Added to telic intransitive verbs, $\text{-}\ddot{a}l/\ddot{a}l$ shifts the focus to the situation just before a change-of-state: $i\text{-puin-}\ddot{a}l$ “is about to boil” < $i\text{-puin-i}$ “will begin to boil”; $i\text{-d}\ddot{e}g\text{-ur-}\ddot{a}l$ “[fire] is about to go out” < $deg\text{-n-i}$ “[fire] goes out” (Ch’k’adua 2012). The suffix $\text{-}\ddot{a}l/\ddot{a}l$ is especially common with medial verbs, which denote activities perceived in terms of their temporal duration, rather than change of state (e.g. $i\text{-cw-}\ddot{a}l$ “fights”, $i\text{-zrinq-}\ddot{a}l$ “waves hands and feet, steps from side to side”). These include denominal verbs such as UBal $li\text{-b}\ddot{a}lkow\text{-}\ddot{a}l\text{-i}$ ‘to play cards’ (< $b\ddot{a}lkow$, the name of a card game), and $li\text{-lc-}\ddot{e}r\text{-}\ddot{a}l\text{-i}$ ‘to water, irrigate’ (< lic ‘water’; Chumburidze 1981). Svan medial verbs in $\text{-}\ddot{a}l\text{-}$ are characterized by atelic aspect, in which respect they resemble Georgian medioactive verbs (Nozadze 1974; Holisky 1981). Overall, the semantic range of the Svan verbal pluralizers is quite similar to that of the Georgian preverb da- (Shanidze 1953 §321).

4.4. Valence-changing derivations.

4.4.1. Version. In all Kartvelian languages, a vowel can appear between the person prefix (slot -2) and the verb root. These preradical vowels (slot -1) are linked to a wide range of functions, many of them associated with valence (Tuite 2021). Shanidze (1925c/1981) grouped some of the functions of the preradical vowels into a grammatical category which he named ‘version’ [Geo. *kceva*]; the category of version has been compared subsequently to voice (Lacroix 2009) and applicatives (Lomashvili 2010; Tuite 2023). Svan has the same versions, and cognates of the four version vowels, that are described for Georgian, Mingrelian and Laz (T 43-51). Rather than list the types of version and how each is expressed through the preradical vowels, I will instead list the vowels, and describe the contexts in which each appears, with particular attention to differences from the distribution of version vowels in Georgian. It should also be mentioned that if a Svan verb has an indirect object, one of these vowels must be present in the underlying form of the verb (before the syncope rules apply). In other words, Svan does not allow version-vowel-less (*satanao*) indirect-object agreement, unlike Georgian or Zan (Shanidze 1953: 385-388).

(i) -a- : One principal function of the preradical vowel -a- is to mark the “superessive” (*sazedao*) relation between the verb and an indirect object, which denotes the surface on which an action or state is located, e.g. $dina\ m\ddot{e}g\ddot{a}m\text{-s}\ q\ddot{a}n\text{-s}\ x^2\text{-a}^1\text{-b}^0\text{-em}^1$ [girl:NOM tree-DAT bull-DAT O3-V-tie-SM] ‘the girl ties the bull to a tree’; $x^2\text{-}\ddot{a}^1\text{-j}r^0\text{-a}^7$ “is written on it (e.g. paper)”; $mananay\ bal\text{-ar-s}\ x^2\text{-a}^1\text{-b}\ddot{a}d^0\text{-n}^2\text{-i}^6$ [dew:NOM leaf-PL-DAT O3-V-pour-INTR-SM] “dew falls on the leaves” (Lš; Oniani 1917a: 13).

The preradical vowel -a- is lexically specified by a significant proportion of transitive Class A verbs, including verbs which lack an indirect object. (In Shanidze’s terms, these occurrences of

the prefix *-a-* signal “neutral version”). Most Svan verbs with “neutral” (i.e. non-applicative) *-a-* are derived transitives with the SM *-e*, which correspond to Georgian verbs in *a-√-eb/-ev/-ob* (e.g. Sv *a¹-mār⁰-e⁶*, G *a-mzad-eb-s* “prepares”). There are, however, many Svan transitives with preradical *-a-* which do not fit this description; furthermore, their Georgian or Zan counterparts have no preradical vowel (Sv *a¹-qn⁰-i¹*, OG *qn-av-s*, M. *xon-un-s* “ploughs”). This “pseudo-version” prefix does not appear in the aorist stems of strong verbs, unlike true version vowels (see §5.2). Ablauting Class A verbs, and a handful of other transitives, have “neutral version” forms without a preradical vowel; e.g. *t’ix-e* “brings back”; *höd-i* “sells”; *ter* “recognizes”.

(ii) *-i-*: By far the most multifunctional preradical vowel, *-i-* is associated with two types of version, as well as passive and medioactive verbs (Ch’k’adua 2015a). Many Class A transitives can appear with preradical *-i-*, signaling that an action is performed in the interest of the grammatical subject, in some sense (“subjective version”): *dina qän-s i-b-em* [girl:NOM bull-DAT V-tie-SM] “the girl ties up her own bull, ties it for herself”; *kor-s i-g-em-x* “they build themselves a house”. What appears to be the same vowel also follows 1st and 2nd-person object prefixes as a marker of “objective version”, that is, the addition of a beneficiary or possessive indirect object to the primary argument structure of the verb (*dina qän-s m²-i¹-b⁰-em¹* [girl:NOM bull-DAT O1-V-tie-SM] “the girl ties up my bull, ties it up for me”).

As in Georgian, the preradical vowel *-i-* also marks a subgroup of Class P verbs (prefixal passives, Geo. *iniani vnebiti*), which typically represent the passive counterparts to Class A verbs formed from the same stem, e.g. Class P *i-šdyw-i* [V-bury-SM] “is (being) buried”; cf. Class A *a-šdyw-i* [V-bury-SM] “buries” [T 179]. Also as in Georgian, *-i-* appears in many medioactive verbs, e.g. *i-yräl* “sings” (Nozadze 1974; Gersamia et al. 2016: 288).

(iii) *-o-*: This prefix is the homologue of Georgian *-u-*, marking objective version with a 3rd-person object: *dina mu-s qän-s x-o-b-em* [girl:NOM father-DAT bull-DAT O3-V-tie-SM] “the girl ties up her father’s bull, ties it up for him”; UB *jōri dačwir kor-s x²-o¹-sgur⁰* [two man’s.sister:NOM house-DAT O3-V-sit] “two sisters are sitting in the house for him”, i.e. he has two sisters at home; TK 655).

(iv) *-e-*: The distribution of this prefix is wider than in Georgian (Ch’k’adua 2009, 2011). It marks the presence of an indirect object with prefixal passives (*x-e-šdyw-i* [O3-V-bury-SM] “is buried for sb; *sb*’s [deceased relative] is buried”), and also with *-i-*-prefixed medioactive verbs (*x-e-šdräl* “plays with sb” < *i-šdräl* “plays”). The prefix *-e-* takes on the functions of the “superessive” with (regular) ablauting Class P verbs (*x-e-qč-en-i* “wears out, falls apart on sb”; (food/drink) is digested by sb”; cf objective version *x-o-qč-en-i* “*sb*’s sthg (e.g. shoes) wear out”; T 49-50). In the Series II paradigms of some mediopassive verbs, *-e-* replaces the version vowel used in the Series I forms (LB *x²-a¹-bic⁰* “implores”, aor. *x²-e¹-bac⁰*).

4.4.2. Derived intransitives. Intransitives are derived from transitives through both affixation and ablaut (Ch’k’adua 2009). The Class P passives corresponding to non-ablauting Class A verbs are marked by the series marker *-i* and the version vowels *-i-* and *-e-*, as noted above. In some varieties of UB, the suffix *-öl-* — which ordinarily marks the imperfect and tenses derived from it — can be added to the passive present as well, e.g. Class P *i-šdy-öl-i-x* “they are buried” < Class A *a-šdyw-i* “buries sb” [Lat’ali]. Furthermore, some speakers replace the SM *-i*, with *-a* (D. Erschler, p.c. 2023), the SM occurring in many stative verbs, such as *ter-a* “is visible” (§4.4.3, 5.1). This leads to forms such as *i-g-öl-a* “is built” < (j)*ag-em* “builds, erects”:

q'wilyēr-isga i-g-ōl-a musw-i murq'wam məžal-s
 Cheese.Week-in V-build-EXT-PRS? snow-GEN tower:NOM Muzhal-DAT
 “A snow tower is erected in Muzhal during Cheese Week” [Lenjeri, 1943, *Chr* #4]

In some UB localities, both the older passive in $i-\sqrt{-}i$ and the newer one in $i-\sqrt{-}ōl-a$ are in use, with no significant difference in meaning according to speakers, e.g. $\bar{i}mi$ { $i-\bar{e}m-i$ } // $\bar{i}-m-ōl-a$ “is eaten, edible” [Adishi].

Class A ablauting verbs have two different means of intransitivizing, distinguished by stem vocalism (see §4.1) and by affixation, e.g. Class A $t'ix^0-e^6$ ‘returns sb/sthg’: Class P $t'ex^0-(e)n^2-i^6$ ‘is returning, coming back’ vs. $i^1-t'ix^0-i^6$ ‘is being returned [by sb]’ [T 181]. The slot 2 suffix $-en-$ is believed by some to be cognate to the Georgian passive formant $-n/-en-$ (Deeters 1930: 205-6; Klimov 1964: 79; *FS* 149-150), despite their differences of distribution.

Svan lengthened-grade passives, such as $i-t'ix-i$, have received little attention from linguists, although Topuria signalled their presence in his monograph on the Svan verb [T 181-182, 232]. They are of interest both for their semantics, as well as for the insight they afford on the evolution of Svan verbal morphology.

(a) */i/-grade passives*. In all dialects except Lower Bal, passives with root vocalism /i/ can be formed from transitive ablauting verbs. These are semantically distinct from dynamic intransitives, such as $t'ex-(e)n-i$, in that they denote events or states with an underlying agent, i.e. they are transitive at the level of deep semantic structure. Here are examples elicited from Upper Bal and Lashx speakers: $lemesg\ i-dīg-i$ ‘the fire is extinguished (by sb)’: $i-pxīž-i$ ‘is being spread (by sb)’: $i-q'wīč-i$ ‘is being broken (by sb)’: $i-gīč'-i$ ‘is being held (by sb)’. Such verbs are often used with negative adverbs, to indicate the impossibility of doing something: $k'wāši\ mām\ x-e-k'wīš-i$ “the corn-bread cannot be broken”; $surasāx\ dēmži\ it'ixi$ “Surasax can by no means be brought back” (*TK* 208; *UB* 128).

Lengthened /i/-grade vocalism also appears in the Series III paradigms of Class A ablauting verbs ($č'q'int'-s\ lemesg\ x-o-dīg-a$ [boy-DAT fire:NOM O3-V-extinguish-PERF] ‘the boy has put out the fire’), and the negative participle ($lemesg\ ču\ u-dīg-a\ lās-w$ [fire:NOM down NEG-extinguish was] ‘the fire was inextinguishable’; *TK* 725).

(b) */ē/-grade intransitives*. All four dialects have ablauting intransitives with lengthened /ē/-grade and iterative/durative suffixes. These verbs are semantically atelic. They can denote (i) the final stage before a change of state: $i-dēg-ur-āl$ ‘[fire] is just about to go out (Geo. *tandatan kreba, krebis bolo et'apzea*)’, $x-e-čēd-ur-āl$ “slips away from sb; breathes one’s last breath” (*TK* 232); (ii) an ongoing or repeated occurrence: $x-e-t'ēx-ur-āl$ ‘returns to sb often’ [T 232].

4.4.3. Statives. Alongside a small number of primary statives ($sgur$ “is seated”, $x-o-n-i$ “wants”), Svan can form stative-passive verbs from transitive roots and even from expressives. A half-dozen vowelless roots have athematic statives with lengthened version vowels, e.g. $x-ā-b$ “is tied, bound” < $a-b-em$ “binds”; $l-ā-g$ “stands” < $ag-em$ “builds, sets up”. A significant number of ablauting verbs have athematic statives with i-grade roots: $x-a-p'iž$ “is hidden” < $x-e-p'ž-en-i$ “hides from sb”; sid “is left” < $sed-n-i$ “stays, remains” (Ch’k’adua 2014; T 242). The category of i-grade statives appears to be ancient in Kartvelian, as attested by a small number of Georgian nouns and adjectives with root vocalism /i/, such as $čin-$ “(eye)sight” < $čan-s$ “is visible”; $c'mid-a$ “holy, saint” < $c'md-eb-a$ “becomes clear” (Neisser 1953: 38; Gamq’relidze & Mach’avariani 1965: 312). In fact, Georgian and Svan might well share a cognate i-grade stative, which in both

languages has become nominalized, with an interesting divergence in meaning. Svan qid (cf. qid-e “brings”) denotes a tribute or gift, usually one offered to the host by a visitor (T 242). Its Old Georgian cognate qid- (Modern G xid-) means “bridge”. An etymological association between OG qid- and the proto-Kartvelian ablauting verb *qad- “bring” /qed- “go” was postulated by Mach’avariani (1965: 21), who reconstructed the initial meaning of *qid- as “for going, for carrying, for taking across” (*savali, sat’ari, gadasat’an-gadmosat’ani*; see also Klimov 1998: 338-9; Fähnrich and Sarjveladze 2007: 706). Underlying the rather different meanings of the Svan and Georgian cognates is the notion of transfer, going across from one place to another, or one person to another (Tuite ms).

Other verb types form their stative-passives with the suffix -a, which is probably identical to the present perfect formant: x²-ä¹-jr⁰-a⁷ “is written (on sthg)” < ä-jr-i “writes”; cf pres pf x-o-jr-a; x²-o¹-lž⁰-a⁷ “(crop) is planted” < a-lž-i “plants”; cf pres pf x-o-lž-a.

A remarkable category of expressive stative verbs was described by Davitiani (1949/2008), in a paper discovered in the archives of the Chikobava Linguistic Institute. These are monosyllables comprising initial and final consonants or consonant groups, and root vowel /i/. As explained by the author, the vocable bičx can characterize the sound made by someone slapping a surface with a splayed hand, and also be used as a stative verb describing splayed fingers or legs, or the flattened carcass of a gutted animal. Some such statives evoke veritable *tableaux vivants*, depicting, often quite vividly, a type of person or animal moving or standing in a particular way; e.g. p’rit’ “a person with ugly ears appears/stands” (Saghliani in Gersamia et al 2016: 289); q’lip’ “stands with gaping mouth” (Ch’k’adua 1999); biq’w “a sulking boy stands with puffed-out cheeks” (elicited). Here are two sentences using expressives, from Ch’k’adua (2014: 294). In the first, q’lip’ functions as a finite verb, in the second, as the direct object of the causative verb a-x-k’id-wn-e, meaning something like “he took a gulp to the bread”:

im **q’lip’** i im m-i-yl-i?
 what:DAT gape and what O1-V-wait-SM
 "Why do you stand there gaping, waiting for me?"

däw-d xoša diärs **q’lip’** a-x-k’id-wn-e
 ogre-ERG big bread-DAT gulp:NOM IP-V-take-CAUS-AOR
 "The ogre swallowed the large bread in one gulp".

Alongside the i-grade statives are expressives with the vocalism /e/ (lowered to /ä/ by a syncopated suffixal /a/), which function as adverbs when marked by ADV-case -d:

žyäp’-d (< **žyep’**-a-d) ad-gen-e
 squish-ADV IP-stand-AOR
 "He made it squish-ly = He squashed it"; cf. **žyip’ ank’id** "It took a squish = it was squashed".

Adjectives and verbs can be derived from such expressives in seemingly endless profusion; Lip’art’eliani’s self-published Cholor dictionary contains hundreds of examples, many of which would have never gotten past a Soviet censor.

4.4.4. Causatives. The primary Svan causative formant is -un- and its reduced variants (-wn-

, -ən-), e.g. $x^{-2}-\check{a}^{-1}-\check{c}'m^0-un^4-e^6$ [O3-V-mow-CAUS-SM] “[subject] makes [indirect object] mow [direct object]” < $\check{a}-\check{c}'m-e$ “mows” [T 234-238]. The formants –in- and –en- appear in transitives derived from stative or mediopassive verbs ($x-a-\check{z}r-en-i$ “bores, annoy” < $x-a-\check{z}\check{a}r$ “is bored”). The causative formants are also used to form transitive verbs from noun stems, e.g. $a-m\check{z}-un-e$ [V-sun-CAUS-SM] ‘sb lays sthg out in the sun’ < $m\check{a}\check{z}$ ‘sun’. Double causatives have been described with “assistive” meaning, implying the participation of more than one person in the denoted activity (Kulikov 1993: 132-133); cf. double caus. $x^{-2}-a^{-1}-naq^0-n^4-un^4-e^6$ “helps sb to bake” < caus. $x^{-2}-a^{-1}-naq^0-n^4-e^6$ “causes sb to bake” < $a^{-1}-naq^0-e^6$ “bakes”. More often, the doubling of causative formants appears to be semantically unmotivated, e.g. Lš $\check{z}i^4-x^{-2}-\check{a}^{-1}-(nd^0-un^4)^0-\check{a}l^2-wn^4-e^6-x^{10}$ [OP-O3-V-want-CAUS-VPL-CAUS-SM-PL] “they will cause him to want them” [T 234]; $li-qd-un-\check{a}w-n-e$ [PPL-plow-CAUS-VPL-CAUS-PPL] “to cause to plow, have sthg plowed” (Gujejiani 2020: 96). Note that the verbal-plurality suffix appears between the two CAUS morphemes. In some varieties of Lower Bal, the series marker –esg and causative morpheme –un, as in $x^{-2}-\check{a}^{-1}-j^0-asg^2-un^4-e^6$ “causes to take away”, can be added (redundantly) to verb stems which already contain a causativizer, as Ecer $x^{-2}-\check{a}^{-1}-(\check{s}x^0-un^4)^0-asg^2-wn^4-e^6$ “causes to burn sthg” = UB $x-\check{a}-\check{s}x^0-un^4-e^6$ < $\check{a}-\check{s}x-i$ “burns”. (Note that in double-causative verbs, the causative stem is reanalyzed as a root (slot 0), to which causativization applies anew).

With respect to grammatical role assignment in causatives, Sumbatova (1993) noted a degree of fluidity in marking the causee argument with causatives of intransitives. Indirect object marking is preferred if the causee manifests agentivity, whereas direct object marking implies a less agentive argument. In the following sentence, assignment of DAT case to the object *bepsw* “child” indicates that the mother commanded or directed the child to walk, whereas the NOM implies that the mother led the child by the hand: *di-d kätzelälne {ka-ad-x-a-zel-äl-n-e} bepšw-s // bepsw-Ø* [mother-ERG OP-IP-O3-V-go-VPL-CAUS-PST child-DAT // child-NOM] “the mother caused the child to walk”.

4.5. Non-finite forms. Svan has a rich variety of verbal nouns and adjectives, including some not found in Georgian, formed by the addition of prefixes, or a combination of prefix and suffix (circumfix). Most of these derivational affixes apply to nominal as well as verbal stems (T 211-242; O II: 145-155; Schmidt 1997b), as shown in the following table:.

Prefixes and circumfixes with both verb & noun roots

	verb root (-g-[em]- “build, erect”)	nominal roots
	<i>imperfective stem (-g-em-)</i>	
mə-√	mə-g-em “builder” (agentive participle)	mu-šwän “Svan (person)” < šwän “Svaneti”
na-√-w	na-g-äm-w “footprint, site where building once stood” (past participle)	na-šuk'-w “former path (now overgrown)” < šuk'w “path”; na-zomax-w “after New Year” < zomxa “New Year’s Day”
le-√	le-g-em “to be built” (future passive participle)	le-päq'w “[material] to be used to make a cap” < päq'w “cap”
	<i>passive/resultative stem (-g-)</i>	
lə-√	lə-g “built” (past passive participle)	lə-č'äš “having a husband” < č'äš “husband”
u-√-a	u-g-a “unbuilt” (privative participle)	u-pq'w-a “hatless” < päq'w “cap”

The participle formants are listed here according to the initial phoneme of their prefixal components (l-, m-, n-, u-), since the following vowel, if there is one, has a distinct origin (possibly linked with that of the version vowels).

4.5.1. Prefixes in /l-/. These are cognate to Georgian prefixes in /s-/, with some overlap in functions (Kl 172-177; FS 720-723).

(a) Past passive participles in /lə-/: This prefix is the principal formant of past passive participles of Class A verbs, e.g. lə-mār-e “prepared”; ablauting lə-qīd ‘brought’ (note the lengthened-grade root). Attached to noun stems, it indicates possession; e.g. lə-č’āš “having a husband”, c’ərni lə-pāq’w “red-hatted, wearing a red hat” (T 239; Č’umburidze 1980); or even: anōgānx māg k’ēsārša lu-zrāl-lə-bopšw-d, lu-goč’-d [IP-stand-PASS-PL all:NOM king-GEN-PL PPL-woman-PPL-child-ADV PPL-piglet-ADV] “All the king’s household stood up, women, children and suckling pigs included” (UB, Chr #186; Boeder 2005b).

(b) Future participles in /la-/ & /le-/: Svan has two distinct future participles, denoting patients and themes (le-), and instruments and destinations (la-). Compare the participles le-tr-e ‘beverage [sthg to drink]’ vs. la-tr-a ‘drinking vessel, place for drinking’. Examples from noun stems: le-pāq’w ‘[material] to be used to make a cap’ (< paq’w ‘cap’), la-te-j ‘window in manger wall (for cow to see out)’ < te ‘eye’.

(c) Verbal nouns (“masdars”) in /li-/: The prefix li- is the primary formant of masdars, which are used in the roughly the same contexts as in Georgian (li-b-em “binding, to bind” = G b-m-a; Gujejiani 2020). Most verbs have a single masdar, with the exception of ablauting verbs, which have separate Class A (transitive) and Class P (intransitive) masdars: li-qd-e “bringing” vs. li-qed “coming”. The masdars of Class P ablauting verb stems can also be formed by addition of the suffix -a, e.g. kwāc-a ‘cutting’, xwāt’-a ‘extinction (esp. from lack of a male heir)’ [GM 210-1; T 213]. With nominal stems, li- forms abstract nouns, e.g. li-nāt-w ‘kinship’ < nāti ‘kin’.

4.5.2. Prefixes in /m-/.

(a) Active/agentive participles in mə-, ma-, me-, mo- (Nizharadze 2001): The primary formant of active participles from Class A verbs is mə-; e.g. mə-g-em “builder”, mə-q’d-i “buyer”, mə-t’x-e “returner [of sthg/sb]”; mükwīsg “teller” < mə-Vkw-īsg. The formant me- appears with Class P and some medioactive roots; e.g. me-qed “who comes”; me-txwiär “hunter”. The prefix ma- is selected by various mediopassive and atelic verbs, some of which take the version vowel -a- in the present tense; e.g. ma-lt’-ār “loving” < x-a-lät “loves”; ma-pu-a “boiling”; ma-zig “pain, illness” < x-e-zg-i “feels pain, suffers” (Gujejiani 2020: 43-49). The prefix mo- forms agentive participles from certain medioactives: mo-šdāb “working”; mo-sip “turning, circulating” (i.e. serving guests at table).

Nouns denoting professions and performers of activities are derived by addition of the agentive prefix mə- to the appropriate noun, e.g. mə-k’əlmāx-i “fisherman” < k’almax “fish”; mə-č’šx-i “first visitor to cross the threshold in the New Year” < č’išx “foot”. These tend to have the suffix -i, but some lack it (mə-ldey “herdsman”). A handful of minimal pairs indicate that presence of the -i suffix denotes a casual performer of the activity, whereas its absence implies a more professional involvement: mə-šk’id “blacksmith” vs. mə-šk’ād-i “someone hammering, forging”; mə-lc “duck” vs. mə-lc-i “water-bearer” < lic “water”.

(b) Resultative participles in me-, mə-. Class P verbs, especially those formed through ablaut, form resultative participles in me-√-e; e.g. me-dg-e “extinguished”, me-qd-e “arrived” (note the contrast with the agentive participle me-qed “arriver”); me-rd-e “who is (present)”, me-gn-e “standing”. Slightly over a dozen verbs form resultative participles in mə-√-(e): mə-bid “lit, set on fire”; mə-pxiz “spread”; mə-t’q’āb “roasted”; mə-sq-e “made” (Ch’k’adua 2011b). Most of these verbs also have seemingly synonymous participles in lə- (T 220-221; O II: 151).

Margiani-Subari (2012a: 44-45), however, detected a subtle semantic difference: the participles in lə- are distinctly passive in meaning, implying that the described situation resulted from an agent's past activity, whereas the participles in mə- do not imply an agent; e.g. mə-k'är “open” vs. lə-k'r-e “opened (by sb/sthg)”; mə-näq “baked” (*gamomcxvari*) vs lə-nq'-e “baked (by sb)” (*gamocxobili*). Some Svan resultative participles in mə-√-(e) correspond to Georgian participles in m-√-ar/al from cognate roots (Sv mə-žäb, G m-gb-ar- “cooked”; Sv mə-č'-e “baked”, G m-c'v-ar- “burnt”), implying that these participles may represent vestiges of an ancient group of ablauting intransitives.

4.5.3. Past participles in /na-/: Svan past participles in na-√-(w) have similar form and function to their Georgian homologues, in that they denote a former situation or object which no longer is (O II: 152-153); e.g. na-g-äm-w “footprint, spot where building once stood” < äg-em “builds, stands up” (cf. G. (*da*)-na-dg-am-i); na-kw-äm “previously worn (clothes)” < i-kw-em “puts on (clothes)”. This circumfix can also be applied to nouns; e.g. na-(m)šuk'-w “former path (now overgrown)”. Possibly related is the circumfix na- -i, with which deadjectival nouns are formed (na-bg-i ‘firmness’ < bəgi ‘firm’; na-k'lätx-i “height” < k'ältxi “high” [ibid: 114]; and negative nouns in na-u-√-i: na-u-qed-i “not coming”; na-w-kwisg-i “not saying”.

4.5.4. Negative participle in u-√-a/-w: Alongside its use in the previously-mentioned negative nouns, the prefix u- appears in negative past participles: Class A u-qīd-a ‘not brought’ (note lengthened *ī*-grade), Class P u-qād-w “not arrived, not having come”. This circumfix can also be applied to nouns, indicating lack: u-pq'w-a “hatless” < päq'w “hat”; u-c'wil-a “unmarried girl” (< c'wil “bride”); u-nāt-a “having no relatives” (Č'umburidze 1980).

4.5.5. Participles and verb stems. When added to verb stems, the various types of participial formants select imperfective (i.e. Series I) or resultative/passive (Series III) stems. This is illustrated in the table below, for (i) verbs with series markers in Series I; (ii) verbs with stem suppletivism; (iii) ablauting verbs:

Participles and imperfective (Series I) and resultative/passive (Series III) verb stems

verb	(i) -g-/-g-em- “build, erect” <i>imperfective stem (-g-em-)</i>	(ii) -zob-i-/ē-m- “eat” <i>(-zob)</i>	(iii) -qid-e/-qīd- “bring” <i>(qid-e-)</i>
li-√	li-g-em “(to) build”	li-zweb {li-zob-i} “(to) eat”	li-qd-e “(to) bring”
le-√	le-g-em “to be built”	le-zweb “food” (to be eaten)	le-qd-e “to be brought”
mə-√	mə-g-em “builder”	muzweb {mə-zob-i} “eater”	mə-qd-e “bringer”
na-√-w	na-g-äm-w “footprint, site where building once stood”	na-zob “what has been eaten”	nä-qid-w “what has been brought”
	<i>resultative/passive stem (-g-)</i>	<i>(-ē-m-)</i>	<i>(qīd-)</i>
lə-√	lə-g “built”	lōme {lə-ēm-e} “eaten”	lə-qīd “brought”
u-√-a	u-g-a “unbuilt”	ūma {u-ēm-a} “uneaten”	u-qīd-a “unbrought”

The compatibility of the na-√-w participle with imperfective verb stems would appear contradictory at first glance, but in fact its cognate morphemes are used to form imperfective evidentials in Mingrelian and some western Georgian dialects, e.g. WGeo na-k'et-eb-a, M no-k'et-eb-u-en “apparently was doing”.

4.6. Preverbs. In all Kartvelian languages, the person-marking prefixes in the verb can be preceded by “preverbs” (*p’reverbi, zmnisc’ini*). In Georgian, preverbs typically signal movement toward or away from the speaker, and with respect to external landmarks (“up”, “across”, “in”, etc.); and also are involved in the expression of aspect and tense. At first glance, Svan preverbs seem to have a similar range of functions, but a closer look reveals significant differences, especially with respect to the inner preverbs (Topuria T 52-70). To the extent that they are correlated with the orientation of the denoted action with respect to the grammatical subject or indirect object, or a surface, the Svan inner preverbs (IP) resemble the version markers which come after them, nearly as much as they do the outer preverbs (OP) which precede them.

4.6.1. Outer preverbs (slot -4): *sga-* ‘in’, *ka-* ‘out’, *ži-* ‘up’, *ču-* ‘down’. The outer preverbs are far more loosely tied to the verb, and can even be separated from it by intervening lexemes (§6.3.1; Davitiani 1954). The outer preverbs have clear links with postpositions in Svan, and have cognates elsewhere in Kartvelian (Geo. *še-* ‘in’, *ze-* ‘up’, *kve-* ‘down’). The core meaning of the outer preverbs is movement with respect to external landmarks, as in the following set: *kāčād* {*ka*⁻⁴-*a*⁻³-*čād*⁰} “went out”; *sgāčād* {*sga*⁻⁴-*a*⁻³-*čād*⁰} “went in”; *čwāčād* {*ču*⁻⁴-*a*⁻³-*čād*⁰} “went down”; *ži(i) a=čād* “went up”. Like its Georgian and Mingrelian cognates (*(k(v)e, ko)*), *ču* can be used as an assertive/affirmative particle (T 64), e.g. *lilāši-s ičo ešxu mare xedwāj-s ču xoxa lilāši* [sowing-DAT does one man:NOM who-DAT EMP knows sowing-NOM] “the sowing is done by a man who **really** knows how to sow”; Chartolani 2003: 100-101). Outer, but not inner, preverbs appear in masdars. For example, *ka li-t’x-e* can mean both “bringing back (here)” (aorist *kānt’ix*) and “taking back (there)” (aorist *kāt’ix*). Outer preverbs are used to form the categorical future, and the present resultative (see §5.3).

4.6.2. Inner preverbs (slot -3): *an-*, *ad-/a-*, *es-/as-*, and *la-*. The inner preverbs directly precede the verbal complex, and are intimately bound to it, as shown by their morphophonemic interaction with the person prefixes and version vowels (see §2.5). With one possible exception, the inner preverbs have no evident formal resemblance to preverbs of comparable function in Georgian or Zan.

Of the four, *an-* has the most clearly-defined meaning, marking motion toward the speaker, often in opposition to *ad-/a-* or *es-*: Ln *an-a-sk’in-e* [hither-V-jump-AOR] “jumped hither” vs. *ad-a-sk’in-e* [thither-V-jump-AOR] “jumped away”; UB *ž-an-yr-i* [up-hither-go-SM] “comes up (towards me)” vs. *ž-es-yr-i* [up-thither-go-SM] “goes up (away from me)” [T 53, 66].

The prefix *a(d)-* can be considered the unmarked inner preverb, signaling movement away from the speaker with verbs of motion, and accompanying the expression of tense, aspect and inferentiality with other kinds of verbs. The allomorph *a-* only appears in ablauting verbs, or verbs with strong aorists, when no version vowel is present. It is somewhat more common in LB, and less frequent in Lš. Compare the preverbs in the following strong aorists without and with version vowels:

<i>neutral version</i>	UB/LB/Ln <i>ašix</i> , Lš <i>adšixe</i> { <i>ad</i> ⁻³ - <i>šix</i> ⁰ -(<i>e</i> ⁵)} “burned”,
<i>subjective version</i>	Ln <i>ādšix</i> , Lš <i>edšixe</i> { <i>ad</i> ⁻³ - <i>i</i> ⁻¹ - <i>šix</i> ⁰ -(<i>e</i> ⁵)} “burned for oneself, burned one’s own X”;
<i>neutral version</i>	UB/LB/Ln <i>ak’wiš</i> , Lš <i>ak’uš</i> { <i>ad</i> ⁻³ - <i>k’wiš</i> ⁰ -(<i>e</i> ⁵)} “broke”,
<i>objective version</i>	UB <i>otk’wiš</i> , Ln <i>atok’wiš</i> { <i>ad</i> ⁻³ - <i>x</i> ⁻² - <i>o</i> ⁻¹ - <i>k’wiš</i> ⁰ -(<i>e</i> ⁵)} “broke for sb”.

The inner preverb *es-* (Lš/Ch *as-*) has a particular affinity for verbs denoting action directed toward a goal or surface (often, but not always, accompanied by the superessive version); e.g.

žesučxe {ži⁻⁴-es⁻³-x⁻²-a⁻¹-učx⁰-e⁵} “it rained on sb/sthg” vs. lä⁻³-(i)⁻¹-učx⁰-e⁵ “it rained”; LB es⁻³-(i)⁻¹-cwem⁰, Ln äs⁻³-(i)⁻¹-cwem “spread (ointment, etc) on oneself”. Several verbs employ the preverb es/as- in the present series paradigms, and a(d)- in the aorist; es⁻³-ɣwič “runs after sb/sthg”, aor. ät-ɣwäč {ad⁻³-x⁻²-e⁻¹-ɣweč⁰-a⁹}; es-ɣr-i “goes”, a-čäd “went”.

The fourth preverb, la-, is used less often than the others. In contrast with other preverbs, it can add the sense of an action done slightly, or not to completion: lä⁻³-j⁻¹-šdäm⁰-än⁵ “got slightly drunk, tipsy” (G. *šetvra*); cf. äd⁻³-(i)⁻¹-šdäm⁰-än⁵ “got drunk”; (T 67; Ch’umburidze 1986: 188-90). One also detects a degree of affinity for verbs in the subjective or objective version, and verbs of communication (that is, verbs denoting activities oriented toward a human participant); e.g. lä⁻³-j⁻¹-b⁰-e⁵ “tied for oneself, tied one’s X” vs. ad⁻³-b⁰-e⁵ “tied”; LB la⁻³-x⁻²-(a)⁻¹-ragd⁰-in⁴-e⁵ “spoke with, conversed with” vs. es⁻³-ragd⁰-in⁴-e⁵ “spoke”. Topuria (T 70) pointed to a formal resemblance between the Svan inner preverb la- and a group of apparently compound Mingrelian preverbs (a-la-, i-la-, e-la-), although the meanings associated with the latter do not encourage the postulation of a common origin (Gersamia & Axalaia 2016).

4.6.3. The two sets of Svan preverbs both participate in the tense and aspect system, but their functions are quite distinct. The four OPs behave rather like the preverbs of Old Georgian, to the extent that they primarily indicate direction, or are lexically specified by the verb stem. OPs occur frequently, but not obligatorily, with Series II verbs. In the following two sentences, the presence of the OP čü- in one of the two verbs meaning “he died” has no implications for the tense (past indicative) or aspect (punctiliar, completive).

- (i) al kweq’n-i xelc’ip čw-a-dgan
this land-GEN ruler:NOM OP-IP-die:AOR
“The ruler of this country died”
- (ii) mare eĵ c’äm-ži a-dgan
man:NOM that moment-at IP-die:AOR
“At that moment, the man died”

On the other hand, OPs can indicate tense when added to the present indicative; that is, Svan also has a PV+PRS future tense (Ch’umburidze 1986: 185). The future formed this way is characterized by Margiani-Subari (2012: 118-126) as the “categorical future”, which implies a degree of certainty on the part of the speaker:

eĵi-s aywe ka x-a-sačkwärn-e ečka ka lok pišt’w-e
that-DAT if OP O3-V-gift-SM then OP QT release-SM
“If you give me that as a gift, I will release you”

The four Svan IPs, unlike the OPs, are closely aligned with the Series II verb stems. With the exception of verbs with distinct roots for Series I and II (e.g. PRS x-a-t’q’c-i “strikes” [Series I]; AOR x-ä-qd-e “struck” [Series II]), all verbs have an IP in their Series II forms, as in the verbs in (i) and (ii) above. This correlation implies that Svan IPs have become grammaticalized as markers of perfective aspect. IP-less aorists, with the exception of the suppletive verbs just mentioned, no longer occur in Svan, but a handful of such forms attested in oral poetry indicate that they disappeared from use fairly recently (Margiani-Subari 2012: 60-2).

ešxwi pitil mad j-i-k'war-e
one morsel not O2-PRV-throw-AOR
“He did not throw a single morsel to you” (SbMat XXXI: 34)

4.7. Derivation of verbs. Denominal and deadjectival verbs are quite common in Svan. In many such instances the noun root does not undergo special modification (e.g. i-k'əlmäx-i “fishes” < k'almax ‘fish’; č'əšxš-e “dances a round dance” < č'əšxäš ‘round dance’ [T 72]). Many denominal verbs of atelic aspect add the verbal pluralizer -äi or one of its allomorphs [Chumburidze 1981; see §4.2.3]. Verbs can also be formed from adverbs and other types of expressions: li-žīb-e “promote, glorify” < žibe “upward”; li-məde-n-i “to do whatever (is needed to get sthg)” < məde “whatever” (cf G *gaimaskneba*; Chumburidze 1981: 147).

§5. Morphology III: The Svan verb, Part II. Conjugation paradigms (“screeves”). The Svan verb paradigms — often designated “screeves” by Kartvelologists — are grouped into three series, according to the case-assignment patterns of Class A verbs (ERG case assigned in Series II, inversion in Series III; see §6.2.1). Until recently, descriptions of Svan employed the inventory of verbal paradigms described by Topuria (1931/1967). Margiani-Subari’s (2008, 2012a, 2015) detailed and insightful work on Svan grammatical categories has added new paradigms to the list, as well as shed new light on how they contrast with each other.

5.1. Series I (present series). In Svan, as in the other Kartvelian languages, the stems from which most verbs form the present and other Series I paradigms include a formant (“thematic marker” or “series marker”, abbreviated SM), that is not present in the Series II paradigms. SMs appear in two slots in the Svan verb. Slot 1 SMs are of the phonological shape $-\underline{e}C$ or $-\underline{e}C$, and most of them are limited to a handful of Class A verbs with vowelless roots: $-\underline{em}$ (*a-b-em* “binds”, aor. *ad-b-e*); $-\underline{er}$ (*i-kwt-er* “steals”, aor. *äd-(i)-kwit*); $-\underline{ej}$ (*Lš ä-č’-ej* “bakes”; T 76-77); $-\underline{ēsg}$ and $-\underline{ēšg}$ (Mach’avariani 2002: 118). Twenty or so verbs are attested with the SM $-\underline{en}$, e.g. *a-k’r-en-i* “opens” (aor. *a-k’r-e*).

The slot 6 SMs $-\underline{e}$ and $-\underline{i}$ are added to more complex verb stems. Some Series I stems which already include a slot 1 SM also include one of the slot 6 SMs. This is the case not only for causatives such as UB $\underline{x}^2\text{-}\underline{ä}^1\text{-}\underline{j}^0\text{-}\underline{āsg}^1\text{-}\underline{un}^4\text{-}\underline{e}^6$ “makes take away” (T 234), with a morpheme intervening between the two SMs, but also verbs in which the two SMs appear one after the other: $\underline{ä}^1\text{-}\underline{j}^0\text{-}\underline{ēsg}^1\text{-}\underline{i}^6$ “takes”, (aor. *ad-j-e*; Ivanishvili 1986); $\underline{x}^2\text{-}\underline{o}^1\text{-}\underline{c}^0\text{-}\underline{in}^1\text{-}\underline{e}^6$ “hangs” (aor. *o=x-c’eb*; T 163).

The most common series marker is $-\underline{e}$, especially in Class A verbs. The second most common is $-\underline{i}$, which appears in the passives (Class P) of Class A verbs in $-\underline{e}$, but also in many transitive verbs. The emergence of the apparently contrastive use of the series markers $-\underline{e}$ and $-\underline{i}$ was reported by Kulikov (1990a,b) in a peripheral variety of Svan. Some medial and stative verbs have no SM: *sip’* “turns”, *qweš* “coughs”, *sgur* “is sitting” (T 41-42; 208; Ch’k’adua 2010).

There is also a sizeable number of verbs, mostly statives, with what appears to be the SM $-\underline{a}$; e.g. *x-a-žx-a* “is named”, *ter-a* “appears, is visible”, *x-a-šdb-a* “does, works”. Topuria analyzed these as perfect-presents, with morphology similar to that of the Series III present perfect; T 42, 173); cf. *x-a-č’ōn-a* “is wrapped around” (G *axvevia*), and *otč’ōna* {*ad-x-o-č’ōn-a*} “sb has wrapped sthg”.

Aside from $-\underline{i}$ and $-\underline{em}$ (cf. G *-am*, Zan *-um*), the Svan SMs do not have obvious cognates in the other Kartvelian languages (Natadze 1959). The SM $-\underline{e}$ can be linked to G *-ew/-eb* (Osidge 1982; Mach’avariani 1988: 103, 2002: 117; Tuite 2003), and like the latter it is employed with the preradical vowel *a-* to form transitive verbs (compare Sv *a-mār-e* and G. *a-mzad-eb-s* “prepares”). Mach’avariani (2002: 123-124) surmised that the SMs $-\underline{ēsg}$, $-\underline{ēšg}$ might be cognate with the G verb-stem formants $-\underline{eš}$ and $-\underline{eč}$ (*txl-eš* “shred”, *k’b-eč* “bite”; Vogt 1947; K 79, 87).

As in the other Kartvelian languages, the number of Series I paradigms is considerably higher than in Series II or III. In Modern Georgian, most telic verbs have six Series I forms. The present is the basic paradigm, and the future is usually derived from the present by addition of a preverb. The remaining Series I paradigms are based on the imperfect stem of the present or future, with the addition of the past-indicative or subjunctive endings:

Modern Georgian	present (<i>a-k'et-eb-s</i> “does”)	+ /-d-/+ PST →	imperfect (<i>a-k'et-eb-d-a</i> “did”)	+ SBJ →	present conjunctive (<i>a-k'et-eb-d-e-s</i>)
	↓ + preverb(s)				
	future (<i>ga=a-k'et-eb-s</i> “will do”)	+ /-d-/+ PST →	conditional (<i>ga=a-k'et-eb-d-a</i> “would do”)	+ SBJ →	future conjunctive (<i>ga=a-k'et-eb-d-e-s</i>)

Svan has a considerably more elaborate suite of Series I forms. Two future stems as well as an inferential present can be derived from the basic present, and each has a corresponding conditional (Margiani-Subari 2012a, 2015):

Svan	inferential perf. future ((<i>čw</i>)- <i>ad-xat'w-i(ne)-isg</i>)	+ PST →	inferential perfective conditional ((<i>čw</i>)- <i>ad-xat'äw-n-a/-īs/-asgw</i>)		
	↑ + inner preverb + suffixes				
	perfective future (<i>čw-a-xt'äw-i</i>)	+ (/d-/) + PST →	perfective conditional (<i>čw-a-xt'äw-d-a-i-w</i>)		
	↑ + outer preverb				
	present (<i>a-xt'äw-i</i> “paints”)	+ (/d-/) + PST →	imperfect (<i>a-xt'äw-d-a-i-w</i>)	+ SBJ →	conjunctive (<i>a-xt'äw-d-ēd-s</i>)
	↓ inferential - <i>un/-in</i> + (quasi)passive				
	inferential present (imperfective future) (<i>a-xtaw-n-i</i> ; LB <i>i-xtaw-n-i</i>)	+ passive imperfect suffix →	imperfective conditional (<i>a-xtaw-n-ōl</i> ; LB <i>i-xt'aw-n-i-w</i>)		
		+ SuperessV + PST →	imperfective evidential (<i>x-a-xt'äw-n-a</i>)		

The Series I paradigms include:

5.1.1. Present. This is the unmarked Series I stem. The present is aspectually imperfective, and while it generally is employed to describe events or states in present time, in appropriate contexts this paradigm can have (imperfective) future reference (Ch'umburidze 1986: 159).

5.1.2. Imperfect. The Svan imperfect, unlike that of its sister languages, is expressed through a bewildering array of suffixes, stem vocalism shifts, and even zero morphemes. The variegated allomorphy of the Svan imperfect has led to much speculation about its origins and links to the morphology of Georgian and Zan. The analyses presented by Mach'avariani (1980) and Schmidt (1997a) are particularly noteworthy, and inform my own thinking on the topic. The data have been laid out in rich abundance by Topuria (T 73-106; see also O II: 45-64). Leaving out minor details, the basic facts about the Svan imperfect can be divided into two sets:

1. Morphological characteristics common to all dialects:

(i) The S1sg and S2sg employ a stem (“S1/2sg”) different from that used in the S3sg and all plurals (“S3/pl”).

(ii) The S3/pl imperfect stems of verbs with the SM -e appear to involve replacement of the latter suffix by -a (*a-mār-a* “prepared” < prs. *a-mār-e*).

(iii) The imperfect stems of many mediopassive verbs contains the slot 2 formants -ən, -an or -ōn, which can cause deletion of a root-final /r/ (UB $\underline{x}^2\text{-o}^1\text{-tr}^0\text{-ōn}^2\text{-(d}^8\text{-a}^9)$ “recognized” < $\underline{x}\text{-o-tr-a}$; xošgunda “was ashamed” < $\underline{x}\text{-o-šgur}$; Gagua 1976; Topuria 1941b).

2. Old Lower Bal vs the others. With respect to the representation of the imperfect, the LB subdialects, with the exception of that spoken in Becho, stand apart from all other varieties of

Svan. For the most part, “Old Lower Bal”, as I will designate it, comes closest to the distribution of imperfect formants I reconstruct for Proto-Svan, although it has also undergone some innovation. The conservatism of LB has already been noted above with respect to case-marking morphology. The key differences between Old LB and the remaining dialects are:

(i) Old LB makes extensive use of the slot 7 formant $-w$ (Ec $x^{-2}-o^{-1}-y^0-\ddot{a}\ddot{s}g^2-w^7$ “was taking away”; cf UB $xo\ddot{y}\ddot{a}\ddot{s}g-d-a$), and what appear to be zero morphs (Ec $t'wix-0$ “I was bringing back”; cf. Bč $t'wix-asgw$, UB $t'wix-\ddot{a}s$).

(ii). In all varieties except Old LB, a slot 10 extension is added to the S1/2sg stem: Lš $-is$, UB/Ln $-\ddot{a}s$ ($< *a-is?$), Bč $-as(g)w$. In Lš, the extension only appears if no other imperfect-stem formant has been added (Lš $t'ex^0-is^{10}$ “I was returning sthg”, but $t'ex^0-n^2-\ddot{o}l^2$ “I was going back”). The S1/2sg extension, especially its Bč allomorph, resembles the series marker $-\ddot{e}sg$ (LB $-isg$), which appears with a handful of nonsyllabic roots (T 82, 93-4). It remains however unclear how such a morpheme came to be repurposed as a quasi person-marker in the non-Old-LB imperfect.

(iii). The imperfect-stem formant $-d-$, cognate with the Georgian and Zan formants, is limited to statives and some medial verbs in Old LB. Elsewhere it appears in most verb types, with the exception of those with SM $-e$, as noted above.

(iv) In all varieties except Old LB, the slot 2 formant $-\ddot{o}l-$ appears in the stems of prefixal passives (UB/Ln/Lš $i^{-1}-\ddot{s}x^0-\ddot{o}l^2-(d-a)$ “was being burnt”, cf Lxm $i^{-1}-\ddot{s}x^0-i^6-w^7$). In Lš, $-\ddot{o}l-$ is added to ablauting intransitives as well (Lš $qed-n-\ddot{o}l$ “was coming”; cf. Old LB $qed-n-i-w$, UB $qed-en-d-a$). The same $-\ddot{o}l-$ suffix, which apparently once had aspectual meaning, also appears in the imperfective future and evidential paradigms of intransitive verbs (see below).

I hypothesize that the Proto-Svan imperfect was formed primarily by the addition of stem extensions such as those noted above, appearing in slots 2 and 7, whereas the slot 8 suffix $-d-$ only appeared in medial and stative verbs that had no other imperfect-stem formant. The suffixal $-a$ in the imperfects of $a-\sqrt{e}$ verbs (such as $a-m\ddot{a}r-a$ “prepared”); the formant $-w$ appearing in many Class A and some Class P verbs in Old LB (especially Lxm); and the lowering of the stem vowel in UB imperfects ($a-b-\ddot{a}m-d-a$ “was binding”, prs. $a-b-em$) are traces of a slot 7 thematic extension $*-aw$ (Kaldani 1969: 91-94), which can be compared to the extension $-i-$ appearing in the imperfect stems of certain types of Old Georgian verbs:

Old Georgian and Svan transitive verbs with slot 7 imperfect-stem formants.

<i>Old Georgian</i>	<i>Ecer (LB)</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	
PRS S1sg $xw-a-b^0-am^1$ ‘I bind’	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{e}\ddot{s}g$	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{e}\ddot{s}g-i$	$< *xw-o-y^0-\ddot{e}\ddot{s}g^1-i^6$ ‘I take away’
IMP S1sg $xwabemd < *x-w-a-b^0-\ddot{a}m^1-i^7-d$	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{a}\ddot{s}gw$	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{a}\ddot{s}g-d\ddot{a}s$	$< *xw-o-y^0-\ddot{e}\ddot{s}g^1-aw^7-(d^8-a^9+is^{10})$
IMP S3sg $xabmida < *x-a-b^0-am^2-i^1-d^8-a$	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{a}\ddot{s}gw$	$xo\ddot{y}\ddot{a}\ddot{s}g-da$	$< *x-o-y^0-\ddot{e}\ddot{s}g^1-aw^7-(d^8-a^9)$

Mach’avariani (1980: 214-215) also reconstructed suffixal $-w$ in the S1/2sg imperfects of Class P ablauting verbs (S1 $t'wex-en$ “I was going back” $< *xw-t'ex-en-w$; cf. S3sg $t'ex-n-i-w$). The long vowel in UB conjunctives might be a further trace of $*-aw$ ($am\ddot{a}r\ddot{e}ds$ “may prepare” $< *a^{-1}-m\ddot{a}r^0-ew^6-aw^7-d^8-e^9-s^{10}$). In dialects other than Old LB, the formant $-d-$ spread to other verb types, although Class A $a-\sqrt{e}$ verbs continue to form their imperfects without $-d-$ in most varieties.

The Svan imperfect has essentially the same range of uses as its Georgian counterpart. Paradigms from Topuria (1967) and Gagua (1976) illustrate the variety of imperfect formants. Ecer (Ec) and Laxamul (Lx) represent Old LB; Becho (Bč) is another LB subdialect. Cholur, including the westernmost variety of Saq’dar, forms its imperfect as does Lš (Topuria 1965):

Class A, series marker -e “was preparing” (present: a-mār-e)

	<i>Ecer, Laxamul</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	xw-a-mar-Ø	xw-a-mar-a-sgw	xw-a-mār-äs	xw-a-mar-äs	xw-a-mār-is
2sg	x-a-mar-Ø	x-a-mar-a-sgw	x-a-mār-äs	x-a-mar-äs	x-a-mār-is
3sg	a-mar-a	a-mar-a	a-mār-a	a-mar-a	a-mār-(d)a
1excl	xw-a-mar-a-d	xw-a-mar-a-d	xw-a-mār-a-d	xw-a-mar-a-d	xw-a-mār-(d)a-d
1incl	l-a-mar-a-d	l-a-mar-a-d	l-a-mār-a-d	l-a-mar-a-d	l-a-mār-(d)a-d
2pl	x-a-mar-a-d	x-a-mar-a-d	x-a-mār-a-d	x-a-mar-a-d	x-a-mār-(d)a-d
3pl	a-mar-a-x	a-mar-a-x	a-mār-a-x	a-mar-a-x	a-mār-(d)a-x

Class A, series marker -i “was ploughing” (present: a-qn-i)

	<i>Laxamul</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	xw-a-qän-w	xw-a-qn-i-d-a-sgw	xw-a-qän-d-äs	xw-ä-qn-i-d-äs	xw-a-qn-is
2sg	x-a-qän-w	x-a-qn-i-d-a-sgw	x-a-qän-d-äs	x-ä-qn-i-d-äs	x-a-qn-is
3sg	a-qn-i-w	a-qn-i-d-a	a-qän-d-a	ä-qn-i-d-a	a-qn-əd-a

Class P prefixal passive “was being burnt” (present: i-šx-i)

	<i>Laxamul</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	xw-i-šx-i-w	xw-i-šx-i-d-a-sgw	xw-i-šx-öl-d-äs	xw-i-šx-ol-d-äs	xw-i-šx-öl-Ø
2sg	x-i-šx-i-w	x-i-šx-i-d-a-sgw	x-i-šx-öl-d-äs	x-i-šx-ol-d-äs	x-i-šx-öl-Ø
3sg	i-šx-i-w	i-šx-i-d-a	i-šx-öl-[da]	i-šx-ol-[da]	i-šx-öl-[da]

Class P ablauting “was returning, coming back” (present: t'ex-n-i)

	<i>Ec, Lx</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	t'wex-en-Ø	t'wex-n-i-d-a-sgw	t'wex-en-d-äs	t'wex-en-d-äs	t'ex-n-öl-Ø
2sg	t'ex-en-Ø	t'ex-n-i-d-a-sgw	t'ex-en-d-äs	t'ex-en-d-äs	t'ex-n-öl-Ø
3sg	t'ex-n-i-w	t'ex-n-i-d-a	t'ex-en-[da]	t'ex-en-[da]	t'ex-n-öl-[da]

Class P mediopassive “loved” (present: x-a-lät')

	<i>Ecer</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	xw-a-lt'-ən	xw-a-lt'-ən-[dasgw]	xw-a-lt'-ən-d-äs	xw-a-lat'-ən-d-äs	xw-a-lt'-ən-d
2sg	x-a-lt'-ən	x-a-lt'-ən-[dasgw]	x-a-lt'-ən-d-äs	x-a-lat'-ən-d-äs	x-a-lt'-ən-d
3sg	x-a-lt'-ən	x-a-lt'-ən-[da]	x-a-lt'-ən-[da]	x-a-lat'-ən-[da]	x-a-lt'-ən-[da]

Class P stative “was” (present: är-i)

	<i>Lx</i>	<i>Becho</i>	<i>Upper Bal</i>	<i>Lent'ex</i>	<i>Lashx</i>
1sg	xw-ar-d	xw-ar-d-a-sgw	xw-ar-d-äs	xw-ar-d-[äs]	xw-ar-d
2sg	x-ar-d	x-ar-d-a-sgw	x-ar-d-äs	x-ar-d-[äs]	x-ar-d
3sg	ar-d	ar-d-a	ar-d-a	ar-d-a	är-d-a

Of uncertain origin is the lengthened vowel in the S3/pl imperfect stem of certain stative verbs in Lashx [T 97, 244; GM 213], e.g. sgūr-d-a “was sitting”, cf. S2sg sgur-d “you were sitting”; and ār-d-a “was”, S2sg ar-d “you were”.

5.1.3. Conjunctive. This paradigm is formed by addition of the slot 9 modal suffix -e- to the S3sg/pl imperfect stem, followed by -s̱ in the S3sg form. In nearly all conjunctives, the imperfect stem formant -d- (slot 8) is also present, despite its near-total absence in the Old LB imperfect, e.g. Ec ä¹-d⁰-asg¹-w⁷-d⁸-e⁹-s¹⁰ “may put”; impf. ä-d-asg-w [T 107; O II: 64-5]. The formant -d- does not appear in the LB conjunctives of mediopassive and stative verbs with imperfect stems in -ən, -ön or -en (e.g. LB x²-a¹-lt⁰-ən²-e⁹-s¹⁰ “may love”; imp. x-a-lt'-ən “loved”). Some UB verbs of this type are likewise attested without -d- in the conjunctive (UB xalt'ins “may love” <

{x-a-lt'-ən-e-s}; T 111, UB 370), which implies that the more common conjunctives in -d- (UB x-a-lt'-ən-dēd-s) are an innovation.

The UB conjunctive stems in -dēd- appear to have been formed by analogy with the conjunctives of verbs with the SM -e (e.g. UB a-mār-ēd-s “may prepare” < *a⁻¹-mār⁰-ew⁶-aw⁷-d⁸-e⁹-s¹⁰; prs. a-mār-e). The segment -ēd-, derived from the coalescence of the SM, the stem extension and the imperfect suffix -d-, was reanalyzed as a conjunctive morpheme. This suffix was in turn added to the imperfect stems of other verb types, giving forms such as t'ix⁰-d⁸-ēd⁹-s¹⁰ “may bring back”; t'ex⁰-en²-d⁸-ēd⁹-s¹⁰ “may come back”. The Ušgul subdialect, and UB conjunctives attested in 19th century text collections (T 107), preserve the earlier morphology: Ušg ə-d-āsg-d-e-s “may put” < *d-ēsg-aw-d-e-s; cf. UB d-āsg-d-ēd-s.

The conjunctive is aspectually imperfective; and typically appears (i) in subordinate clauses of purpose; (ii) after the particle xek'wes ‘must’; (iii) in some types of main clauses expressing possible or hypothetical circumstances; e.g.

x ⁻² -o ⁻¹ -cx ⁰ -en ² -d ⁸ -ēd ⁹ -s ¹⁰	i	ladäg-isga	k'wicra-daqəl-s-i
O3-V-prefer-INTR-IMP-CNJ-S3sg	and	day-in	fem.ibex-goat-DAT-also
l ⁻² -e ⁻¹ -hwd ⁰ -in ⁴ -i ⁶ -d ¹⁰			
S1incl-V-give-FUT-SM-PL	[UBal; SP 268]		

‘If he prefers [CONJUNCTIVE], we will give him [IMPERFECTIVE FUTURE] a female ibex each day’.

5.1.4. Imperfective future (inferential present). Svan, unlike Modern Georgian, has two distinct future-tense paradigms: imperfective and perfective (T 112-125; O II: 65-67; Ch'umburidze 1986: 156-215). The principal formants of the imperfective future are -un- and -in- (also -ēn- in statives), followed by the SM -i. For most verb types, this compound suffix is appended to the present stem (UB a⁻¹-mār⁰-un⁴-i⁶ “will be preparing”, prs. a-mār-e; ä⁻¹-j⁰-āsg¹-un⁴-i⁶ “will be taking”, prs. ä-j-ēsg-i T 112-115; Ch'umburidze 1986: 162-171). Prefixal passives (in all dialects), and ablauting intransitives (Lš only), add the imperfect future formants to the present stem plus the slot 2 suffix -ōl-, that is, the same extended stem that these verb types employ in the imperfect (e.g. UB/Lš/Ln i⁻¹-šx⁰-ōl²-n⁴-i⁶ “will be burnt/burning”; cf. pres. i-šx-i, impf. i-šx-ōl-d-a; T 185; Ch'umburidze 1986: 168). In UB, Class A ablauting verbs add an additional -n- before the imperfect future formant, if no prefix precedes the verb root; e.g. S3 gib⁰-n⁴-un⁴-i⁶ “will smear”, but cf. S1incl li⁻²-gb⁰-un⁴-i⁶-d¹⁰; Ch'umburidze 1986: 165-6).

In Lower Bal, the imperfective futures of Class A verbs take on the formal characteristics of Class P prefixal passives; e.g. LB i⁻¹-mar⁰-un⁴-i⁶ [V-prepare-FUT-SM] ‘will prepare’ (cp. present a-mar-e [V-plough-SM]); with indirect object: x-e-mar-un-i [O3-V-prepare-FUT-SM] ‘will prepare for sb’ (cp. present x-o-mar-e [O3-V-plough-SM]) [Ch'umburidze 1986: 167; T 185]. In other words, LB imperfective futures are deponents, formally passive verbs with active meaning, and it seems likely that the imperfective futures of the other dialects once had passive morphology also (Tuite 2002). Aside from the slot 6 suffix -i, which also occurs in Svan passives, the conditionals derived from imperfective futures contain the formant -ōl-, associated with intransitive verbs. The imperfective futures of stative verbs have the morphology of prefixal passives, although the slot 4 formant is often absent (x⁻²-e⁻¹-t'wr⁰-(en⁴)-i⁶ “will be lit” < prs. x-a-t'wr-a; i⁻¹-sgwr⁰-i⁶ “will sit” < s^gur “sits”; Ch'umburidze 1986: 172-184).

Aside from its strictly temporal meaning, the Svan imperfective future is commonly deployed to imply a degree of uncertainty, a hypothesis, or a presumption based on inference; indeed,

Margiani-Subari (2011a, 2011b, 2012a: 111-118) proposes renaming this paradigm as the “inferential present”. In her view it is the -un/-in- formant in particular, which appears in both imperfective and perfective futures, that is associated with epistemic uncertainty, evidentiality, and expressions of desire (Lš x-a-lāš-wn-i “wants to sow seed” < a-lāš-i “sows”; T 236; Margiani-Subari 2011a). Here is an example of an imperfective future used — with present-tense reference — in response to a question, indicating the speaker’s reliance on inference or guesswork (Margiani-Subari 2012a: 114):

- Q: bepšw ečxē otāx-isga im x-a-šdb-a?
 child:NOM there room-in what:DAT O3-V-do-PRS
 “What is the child doing in the room over there?”
- A: i-šdrāl-wn-i
 V-play-FUT-SM
 “S/he is probably playing”

5.1.5. Perfective future. The perfective future is almost invariably preceded by one or two preverbs, which in Svan, as in the other modern Kartvelian languages, serve to signal perfective aspect as well as their distinct lexical meanings [Mach’avariani 1974; O II: 67-71]. In many cases the preverbs represent the only formal difference between present and perfective future, e.g. Ln. a-t’ex-en-i [IP-return-PASS-SM] ‘sb will come back’ vs. present t’ex-en-i. Other verbs add a suffix as well, often with change of the series marker: -i, -(i)n-e, -n-i or (LB only) -isg (T 115-125; Ch’umburidze 1986: 184-208). Not uncommonly, the same verb will take different perfective-future affixes, depending on the dialect, which Ch’umburidze (1986: 184-185) interprets as evidence that this paradigm is of recent origin in Svan: UB ad-bēl-i, Ln ad-a-bel-i {ad³-a¹-bēl⁰-i⁶}; LB ad-bel-isg {ad³-a¹-bēl⁰-isg⁶}; Lš ad-bēl-ne {ad³-a¹-bēl⁰-in⁴-e⁶} < pres. a-bēl-e “blows”. Furthermore, some verbs allow two formally distinct perfective futures, one formed by addition of an outer preverb (slot -4) only, and another which includes an inner preverb (slot -3) and one of the above-mentioned suffixes. In such instances, Margiani-Subari (2012a: 118-126) detects a semantic distinction between the two: The outer-preverb-only future (“categorical future”, in her words) implies certainty on the part of the speaker, whereas the suffixed future (“inferential future”) signals doubt or supposition, as in these contrasting sentences (Margiani-Subari 2012a: 122):

- (i) bāzi gim-s **čw⁻⁴-ä⁻¹-k’wrem⁰-i¹** i kartebil ču-i-dwäš-i
 tonight earth-DAT OP-V-freeze-SM and potato:NOM OP-V-ruin-SM
 “Tonight the ground will freeze (CAT. FUTURE) and the potatoes will be ruined”
- (ii) bāzi gim-s **čw⁻⁴-ad⁻³-(a)⁻¹-k’werm⁰-isg⁶** kartebil ču-i-dwäš-i
 tonight earth-DAT OP-IP-V-freeze-FUT potato:NOM OP-V-ruin-SM
 “Tonight should the ground freeze (INFER. FUTURE), the potatoes will be ruined”

The aspectual difference between the perfective and imperfective Svan futures is illustrated in the following excerpt from an UB text [*Chr* 161-2, #183]; the two imperfective futures are in boldface, and the perfective is underlined:

i	məxār	ham-s	žī-w	an-əg-än-x	i	bap’
and	tomorrow	morning-DAT	up-OPT	IP-arise-PassAOR-3pl	and	priest:NOM
i-brāl-wn-i,		ečas	läk’wcān	x-e-γwē-n-i,		ežas
V-bathe-FUT-SM		that:DAT	towel:NOM	O3-V-have-FUT-SM		that:DAT
<u>ču</u>	<u>o-x-k’w-än-e</u>		ža,	eža	žī-w	
down	IP-O3-drop-CAUS-SM		himself:NOM	that:NOM	up-OPT	
än-k’id			mižnēm.			
IP-take:AOR			he:ERG			

‘And tomorrow morning let us get up, and while the priest will be bathing [IMPERFECTIVE FUTURE], the towel that he will have [IMPERFECTIVE FUTURE], I will make him drop it [PERFECTIVE FUTURE], and you take it.’

The suffixes (-isg/-i, -ine) added to the perfective-future stems are of uncertain origin (T 115-125). One possibility is that they might have once had modal meaning. If this were the case, the Svan “inferential future” would parallel the modal futures of Old Georgian and Laz.

5.1.6. Imperfective conditional. This paradigm is formed from the imperfective future, by replacing the series marker by the suffix -ōl/-ol-, except in Old LB, which adds the imperfect formant -w: e.g. UB a⁻¹-mār⁰-un⁴-ōl⁷ “would be preparing” < impf. fut. a-mār-un-i; Lš t’exnōln-ōl {t’ex⁰-en²-ōl²-un⁴-ōl⁷} “would be coming back” < impf. fut. t’ex-n-ōl-n-i; Ec i⁻¹-b⁰-m¹-un⁴-i⁶-w⁷ “would tie up” < impf. fut. i-b-m-un-i (T 125-130, 189-191; O II: 72-3)

5.1.7. Perfective conditional. This form is the formal analogue to the Georgian and Zan conditional, in that it consists of the (perfective) future stem plus the imperfect suffix (O II: 73-5). In most cases this amounts to the imperfect preceded by an inner preverb (e.g. Ln. a-t’wexendäs {a-xw-t’ex-en-d-äs} [IP-S1-return-PASS-IMP-S1/2sg] ‘I would come back’; cp. impf. t’wexendäs); quite often, however, the conditional employs a different suffix, including the former series markers which appear in the imperfect (e.g. UBal adaxat’wīs {ad⁻³-a⁻¹-xat’w⁰-i¹-is¹⁰} [IP-NtV-paint-SM-CND] ‘would paint sthg’; cp. impf. axt’äwda {a-xat’aw-i-da}) [T 125-130]. As is the case with the perfective future, the perfective conditional employs a diverse range of formants, which vary significantly among the dialects (e.g. UB an-mār-īs, Bč an-mar-a-sgw, Lš an-mār-(i)n-a, Ln an-a-mar-ol “would prepare”); and the conditionals of some verbs show a S1/2sg vs S3/pl stem contrast paralleling that of the imperfect (e.g. Lš S1sg lo-x-tr-in “I would drink”, S3sg le-j-tr-a; T 128-130).

The uses of the Svan conditionals correspond more or less to those of the Georgian conditional (irrealis mode, past habitual, future-in-the-past), though with the addition of an aspectual opposition; e.g. Ln. č’k’wierian dem i-čom-da, mare im i-čom-n-ol?! [Chk:NOM not.want V-do-IMP but what:DAT V-do-FUT-CND] ‘Chkwierian didn’t want to do this, but what could he do [IMPERFECTIVE CONDITIONAL]?!’ [Chr 326-7 #350], or:

mola	nanxrewur	ču	dem	äd-(i)-t’ent’ur-isg⁶-w⁷,	ežis
little	grudge.having:NOM	down	not.want	IP-V-mourn-SM-IMP	that:DAT
mezge	mendrow-d		x-e-č’m-en-i⁶-w⁷		
family:NOM	angered-ADV		O3-V-follow-PASS-SM-IMP		

‘If someone, because of a small grudge, did not want to mourn [PERFECTIVE CONDITIONAL], the family, being angered, would follow suit [IMPERFECTIVE CONDITIONAL]’ [LB 297, #155].

As in the case of perfective futures, Margiani-Subari (2012a: 126-133) identified two types of perfective conditionals, opposed by “categoriality”. Conditionals formed by the addition of an outer preverb to the imperfect signal the speaker’s confidence in the assertion, e.g.

(The bees’ buzzing could be heard from one day’s walk away)

i pedil-te lizäl-d čw⁴-a¹-q’wg⁰-a⁷-x¹⁰ mara
and near-to go-ADV OP-V-deafen-PST-PL man:DAT

“and they would (certainly) deafen a man before he came close” (LB 259)

Replacing the verb with the other type of perfective conditional, formed by inclusion of an inner preverb and one of the suffixes (-in-a, -īs, -sgw), changes the degree of certainty: čw⁴-ad³-a¹-q’wg⁰-a⁷-sgw¹⁰-x¹⁰ mara “they would probably deafen a man” (Margiani-Subari 2012a: 130)

5.1.8. Imperfective evidential. This paradigm is formed either synthetically or periphrastically, depending on the valence (*T* 130-131, 191-2; Margiani-Subari 2012a: 39-44); it corresponds to the so-called “Series IV” evidential of Mingrelian and some West Georgian dialects (Ch’umburidze 1974; O II: 95-97). The imperfective evidentials of Class A verbs with indirect objects (i.e. NPs controlling Set O agreement) are based on the present stem, with addition of the suffixes -in-a, -un-a (Class A). Furthermore, the object-agreement prefix is followed by the supressive-version vowel -a-; e.g. LB x²-ä¹-g⁰-m¹-un⁴-a⁷ “was apparently building for sb” < x²-o¹-g⁰-em¹. Class P imperfective evidentials are formed from the imperfective-future stem, followed by the slot 7 suffix -a (< *-aw); e.g. UB x²-a¹-hwd⁰-ōl²-n⁴-a⁷ “was apparently being given to sb” (*T* 192). Verbs without indirect objects form their imperfective evidentials by placing the copula, which serves to mark the person and number of the subject, after a participle formed with the prefixes lə-m(a)- and the suffixes -un-e (Class P verbs employ other suffixes); e.g. Ec lə-m-g-äm-(w)n-e l-i “was apparently building” < ə-g⁰-em¹.

The imperfective evidential is often deployed in narratives as the imperfective counterpart to the present perfect. In contrast with the aorist and imperfect, these two paradigms signal that the content of the proposition is known through indirect evidence (hearsay, deduction, etc.), rather than having been directly witnessed by the narrator. In practice, the imperfective evidential and present perfect are frequently used at the beginning of a story, to frame it as an unwitnessed account, after which the two evidential paradigms give way to aorists, imperfects and even presents, which add a touch of liveliness and immediacy to the narrative, as in the following excerpt from a tall tale [UB; *Chr* 163, #184]:

än-bin-e	sosruq’-d	li-mbwi.	ašxw	ägi-s	eser	
IP-V-begin-AOR	S.-ERG	PPL-tell-NOM	one:OBL	place-DAT	QT	
x ² -ä ¹ -ldy ⁰ -in ⁴ -a ⁷	mäldey.	ečī	žikān	eser	werb	
O3-V-herd-INF-EXT	shepherd:NOM	that:GEN	above	QT	eagle:NOM	
lu-m-p’ör-yēl	i	š-un	buywā	barž	x ² -a ¹ -yww ⁰ -ēn ² -a ⁷ .	
IMEV-fly-VPL and	hand-LOC	ox:GEN	shoulder.blade:NOM	O3-V-have- INF-EXT		
a-x(a)-šq’ed-a	eža	ču	werb-s,	mäldey-i	tanw-isga	
IP-O3-V-fall-PERF	that:NOM	down	eagle-DAT	shepherd-GEN	eye:LOC-in	
a-x(a)-xwiēn-a,	sga	otšq’äd	{ad-x-o-šq’äd}	sgāmen-te,	žibe	quru-s
IP-O3-V-meet-PERF	in	IP-O3-V-fall:AOR	inside-to	upper	hole-DAT	
a-čäd	ha	čubeše	dār-d	ma	moš	än-(i)-meqr-e.
IP-go:AOR	or	lower	nobody-ERG	not	different	IP-V-notice-AOR

‘Sosruq began to tell the story: A shepherd was tending his flock [IMPERF. EVIDEN.] in a certain place. Above him an eagle was flying [IMPERF. EVIDEN.], and it had in its grasp [IMPERF. EVIDEN.] an ox’s shoulder blade. The eagle dropped it [PRES. PERFECT], and it went [PRES. PERFECT] into the shepherd’s eye. It fell [AORIST] inside his (eye), but whether it went [AORIST] in the hole under the upper (eyelid) or under the lower, no one could even tell [AORIST].’

5.2. Series II (aorist series). The two Series II paradigms employ a stem different from that used in Series I. For most verbs, Series II stems are characterized by the absence of the series marker (marked in boldface in the following table). Some suppletive verbs have distinct Series I and II roots.

	Class A weak aorist	Class P ablauting	Cl. A suppletive
I: present	a ⁻¹ -d ⁰ - esg ¹ -i ⁶ “sets”	pxež ⁰ -(e)n ² -i ⁶ “is spread”	q’əl-e “says”
II: aorist	esde {es ⁻² -a ⁻¹ -d ⁰ -e ⁵ }	apxäž {a ⁻² -pxež ⁰ -a ⁹ }	rāk ^w

The aorist and optative are aspectually perfective (or punctiliar) — representing an event or state as a single point within the narrative structure, rather than as a frame for another event. In most respects the uses of the Svan aorist and optative correspond to those of their Georgian counterparts, but some differences can be mentioned. The formal opposition between preverbed (completive) and preverbless (incompletive) Series II forms allowed by the Georgian aspectual system does not occur as such in Svan, if inner preverbs (IP) are taken into consideration. With the exception of verbs with suppletive Series I and II roots (such as q’əl-e/rāk^w above), Svan Series II verbs must contain an IP (Mach’avarani 1974). A handful of preverbless aorists preserved in Svan oral poetry (§4.6.3) indicate that this was not always the case, however.

As in Georgian, most mediopassive and stative verbs lack the Series I-II contrast, employing only Series I paradigms. Some mediopassives and medioactives (especially in Lower Bal), form (pseudo-)aorists and optatives by the addition of inner preverbs to their imperfect and conjunctive, e.g. Ec imperfect sip’-əd “was turning, spinning”; pseudo-aorist an-sip’-əd “turned” (T 156-7; Tuite 1994a). (For other verb types, addition of a preverb to the imperfect generates the perfective conditional, as noted above). Relative Class P mediopassive verbs in some dialects ‘borrowed’ their Series II paradigms from Class A, e.g. LB present x-e-γrow-äl ‘is lying to sb’; aorist otyrowale (< ad-x-o-γorow-al-e).

As in Georgian, the Series II paradigms are employed as imperatives. Aorists can serve as 2nd-person imperatives, and 3rd-person and 1st-inclusive-plural jussives use the optative, e.g. žaxäsq’ {žⁱ-⁴-a⁻³-x⁻²-a⁻¹-sq⁰-e⁵} “do it!”; žansq’as {žⁱ-⁴-an⁻³-a⁻¹-sq⁰-a⁹-s¹⁰} “may s/he do it!”; žalasq’ad {žⁱ-⁴-an⁻³-l⁻²-a⁻¹-sq⁰-a⁹-d¹⁰} “let’s do it!” (T 167-8)

5.2.1. Aorist. The aorists of Class A verbs are commonly divided into “strong” and “weak” conjugations, with ablauting verbs as a subtype of the strong conjugation. Strong aorists have an non-umlauted or reduced vowel in the S1/2sg stem and an umlauted vowel in the S3/pl; weak aorists have an umlauted vowel in the S1/2sg, and the thematic suffix -e in the S3/pl stem. Prefixal Class P verbs add the suffix *-ēn. With rare exceptions the S1/2sg and S3/pl stems are distinct. To show how preradical or “version” vowels (slot -1) are expressed in the different types of aorist stem, forms without and with indirect objects are shown in the following table.

Certain assumptions have been made on the basis of paradigmaticity or comparison with other Kartvelian languages, which may be subject to revision. In particular, I have assumed a

complementary distribution between the Class A aorist thematic suffix *-e and the past-indicative suffix -a, which is postulated for Class P aorists only.

	Class A (thematic suffix -e)			Class P (athematic, past-ind. *-a)	
stem	strong	ablauting	weak	ablauting	prefixal passive
neutral version	a-qn-i “ploughs”	dig-e “puts out (fire)”	ä-tn-e “reveals; gives birth”	t'ex-en-i “goes back”	i-ywž-äl “gives birth”
S1sg (S1/2sg)	oqan < *á ³ -xw ² -Ø ¹ -qan ⁰ -e ⁵	odæg < *á ³ -xw ² -dig ⁰ -e ⁵	oxwten < *án ³ -xw ² -a ¹ -ten ⁰ -e ⁵	ont'wx < *án ³ -xw ² -t'ex ⁰ (-a ⁹)	ätwɣwažen < *ad ³ -xw ² -i ¹ -ɣwáž ⁰ -ēn ⁵ (-a ⁹)
S3sg (S3/pl)	aqän < *a ³ -Ø ¹ -qän ⁰ -e ⁵	adig < *a ³ -díg ⁰ -e ⁵	antene < *an ³ -a ¹ -tén ⁰ -e ⁵	ant'äx < *an ³ -t'éx ⁰ -a ⁹	ädywažän < *ad ³ -i ¹ -ɣwáž ⁰ -ēn ⁵ -a ⁹
objective version	x-o-qn-i “ploughs for sb”	x-o-dg-e “puts out for sb”	x-ä-tn-e “leaves trace on sthg”	x-e-t'x-en-i “goes back to sb”	x-e-q'h-äl “kisses sb”
S1sg (S1/2sg)	otoqn < *ad ³ -xw ² -ó ¹ -qan ⁰ -e ⁵	otodg < *ad ³ -xw ² -ó ¹ -dig ⁰ -e ⁵	eswten < *és ³ -xw ² -a ¹ -ten ⁰ -e ⁵	lōxwet'x < *la ³ -xw ² -é ¹ -t'ex ⁰ (-a ⁹)	loxwq'ahän < *la ³ -xw ² -e ¹ -q'áh ⁰ -ēn ⁵ (-a ⁹)
S3sg (S3/pl)	otqän < *ad ³ -x ² -o ¹ -qän ⁰ -e	otdig < *ad ³ -x ² -o ¹ -díg ⁰ -e	estene < *es ³ -x ² -a ¹ -tén ⁰ -e ⁵	läxt'äx < *la ³ -x ² -e ¹ -t'éx ⁰ -a ⁹	läxq'ahän < *la ³ -x ² -e ¹ -q'áh ⁰ -ēn ⁵ -a ⁹

Initially, all Class A verbs had the thematic suffix *-e, which only surfaces in the weak Class A S3/pl stem, although it causes umlaut in other contexts. Class P verbs have athematic aorists, with lowering of the final vowel in the S3/pl due to the syncopated past-indicative suffix *-a (for a somewhat different reconstruction, see Kaldani 1978).

The principal morphophonemic rules affecting the aorist are:

(i) Umlaut of the vowels /a/, /o/, /u/, /ə/ (and their long counterparts) in the S3/pl stems of strong verbs, and the S1/2sg stems of weak verbs;

(ii) In Class A ablauting and strong verbs with short stem vowels, inner preverbs and preradical (version) vowels, the version vowel is expressed and the stem vowel undergoes reduction in the S1/2sg, whereas the version vowel is reduced in the S3/pl (cp. S1sg ätwic'wr {ad³-xw²-í¹-c'or⁰-e⁵} ‘I took revenge’ vs. S3sg ädc'ör {ad³-i¹-c'ór⁰-e⁵}; T 142). Note that the slot -l vowel in the present-series paradigms of strong verbs such as a¹-qn⁰-i⁶ “ploughs” is not a genuine version marker. The “pseudo-version” a- prefix vanishes in both aorist stems (as shown in the table above), whereas true version vowels appear in the S1/2sg (§4.4.1).

(iii) In Class A strong verbs with long stem vowels, the latter is shortened in the S1/2sg; conversely, the preverb la- is lengthened in some S1/2sg forms (see §2.4.1 and (iv) below).

(iv) In Upper Bal strong verbs, the stem vowel /e/ becomes lowered to /ä/ in the S1/2sg (cp. S1sg lōxwäm {la-xw-ēm} ‘I ate sthg’ vs. S3sg lalēm {la-l-ēm}).

(v) The Series II stems of Class P verbs are formed by the addition of a suffix *-ēn, the variant forms of which appear to reflect lowering umlaut by the syncopated slot 9 past-indicative suffix *-a (S3/pl UB -än, Ec -än, Bč/Ln -an, Lš/Ch -än < *-ēn-a; T 194). The suffixal vowel is shortened in the S1/2sg stem as a consequence of the leftward accent shift. In UB, LB and Ln, the passive-aorist stem formant is frequently absent (e.g. UB/LB/Ln äd-kāp = Lš ed-kāp-än “toppled over” < prs. i-k'āp-i; T 195-196; Kaldani 1978: 154). The Svan passive-aorist formant -ēn may be cognate to the Old Georgian plural-absolutive formant -(e)n- (e.g. v-i-xil-en ‘I saw **them**’). In Georgian Class P verbs, the pluralizer -(e)n- is for the most part redundant, since the number of the subject is also marked by suffixes (v-i-q'v-en-i-t [S1-V-do-PL.ABS-EXT-PL] “we were”). If the Svan cognate initially had the same function, its redundancy in Class P might have facilitated its reinterpretation as a passive formant. (The Old Georgian pluralizer -(e)n- likewise underwent

reanalysis, although with a different outcome; Nik’olaishvili 1978; Tuite 1998: 79, 118-9).

(vi) In Lš and Ch non-ablauting strong verbs have shifted to the weak conjugation (Lš/Ch ad-gan-e, UB/LB/Ln aqän “ploughed”; T 144), with the exception of a few irregular or high-frequency verbs (Lš/Ch la-l-ēm “ate”, čwemin “did”). Lš prefixal passive aorists often add the imperfect formant -da; e.g. le-x-mušgwr-ān-da-x “they visited, came as guests” < pres. x-e-mšgwar; T 195).

5.2.2. Optative. The Svan optative is formed from the Series II stem (including the optional passive-aorist formant -ēn in the optatives of prefixal passives). As in Georgian, the primary morphological distinction between the optative and the aorist is the TAM vowel in slot 9 (which might undergo syncope), and the slot 10 S3sg suffix -s (T 164-167, 199-202; O II: 87-91). Also as in Georgian, the unmarked optative-mood vowel is -e-, which appears in all Class P verbs, Class A ablauting verbs, and some other types as well. Class A verbs with weak aorists have optatives in -a-, and many non-ablauting strong verbs form their optatives in -i- (although the other two mood vowels occur as variants, sometimes within the same dialect). LB, especially the conservative Old LB subdialects, shows a strong preference for the optative vowel -e- in ablauting verbs, suppletive verbs, and verbs with vowelless roots and strong aorists.

Svan Series II paradigms: AORIST & OPTATIVE

verb type / present	aorist (S3sg)	optative (S3sg)
Cl. A ablauting dig-e “extinguishes”	UB/LB/Lš a=dig	basic: -e-, var. -i/-a- [+reduct.] LB a-dəg-e-s; UB -e/a-; Ln -e/i-; Lš -a/i-
Cl. A strong a-k’l-i “locks” a-kč-e “cuts”	UB/LB a=k’il UB/LB a-käč, Ln än-käč	basic: -i-, var. -e/-a- [+reduct.] UB/LB ak’l-is, a-k’əl-es, UB ak’əl-as UB/LB an-kč-i-s, Ln an-kač-i-s
Cl. A weak a-mār-e “prepares”	an=mār-e	basic: -a- an=mār-as
irregular/suppletive i-zb-i “eats”	la=l-ēm	basic: -e-, var. -a- LB lä-lem-e-s; UB la-lām-e/a-s, Lš/Ln la-lēm-a/e-s
Cl. A vowelless ə-g-em “builds” x-o-γ-ēšg “takes away”	LB ad=i-g; UB ad=g-e UB/LB/Lš ot=γ-e	basic: -e- (strong aor.), -a- (weak aor.) Ec ad=ə-g-e-s; UB ad-g-a-s LB/Lš ot=γ-a-s
Cl. P prefixal passive i-k’āp-i “topples over”	äd-k’āp/ äd-k’āp-ān	basic: -e- äd-k’āp-ēn-s/ äd-k’āp-s < *ad-i-k’āp-(ēn)-e-s
Cl. P ablauting t’ex-en-i “goes back”	at’äx/at’ax < *a-t’ex-a	basic: -e- UB/Ln a=t’ex-s, LB/Lš/Ušg a=t’ex-es < *a-t’ex-e-s

For the late Chato Gujejiani, a speaker of UB from Mulakhi, the unmarked optative TAMs were -a- for Class A verbs, and \emptyset < -e- for Class P (Gudjedjiani & Palmaitis 1985):

infinitive		optative S3sg	aorist S3sg
ABLAUTING			
TR li-t’x-e	return (tr.)	a-t’əx-a-s	a-t’ix
INTR li-t’ex	go back	at’exs < {a-t’ex-e-s}	a-t’äx
NONABLAUTING			
TR li-šx-i	burn	a-šəx-a-s	ä-šix
INTR li-šx-i	be burnt	ädšixēns < {ad-i-šix-ēn-e-s}	äd-šix-ān

The principal exceptions are a few dozen Class A verbs with strong aorists and the SMs -i-, -en-i, and -in-e, which have optatives in -i-, e.g. a-qn-i “plows”, OPT a-qn-i-s; i-cwm-en-i “smears sthg. on oneself”, OPT äd-cwem-i-s; x-or-k’-in-e “hangs sthg”, OPT ot-rek’-i-s. Ablauting

intransitives with root-final /d/ undergo loss of that consonant in the optative, a phenomenon noted in all Svan dialects (T 202), e.g. AOR an-qäd “came”, OPT an-qe-s; AOR a-čäd “went”, OPT a-če-s. Somewhat counterintuitively, the final /d/ is often retained in the plural forms of the optative, leading to /-d-d/ clusters in the 1st and 2nd plural:

alčedd {an-l-čed-e-d}, hedōri čw-a-l-sed-d kwäb-isga
 IP-Sincl-go-OPT-S1/2.PL or.else OP-IP-Sincl-stay-OPT-S1/2.PL cave-in
 “Let’s go, or if not, let’s stay in the cave” [UB, TK 895]

As with the aorist, prefixal passive optatives often lack the Series II stem extension -ēn- (T 199). The root vowels of Class A ablauting and strong verbs undergo syncope or reduction (/i/ being reduced to /ə/), which might result from accent placement on the prefix in early Svan: adəges “should extinguish” < *á⁻³-dig⁰-e⁹-s¹⁰; at’exs “should go back” < *á⁻³-t’ex⁰-e⁹-s¹⁰.

The optative appears in expressions of wishes, commands, and subordinate clauses after verbs such as xek’wes (itself originally an optative) “should, ought”, e.g.

eč’k’ali lok x-a-qəd-e-s maträx, ere k’än lok
 this.way QT O3-V-hit-OPT-S3sg whip:NOM that skin QT
 žäxet’q’eps {ži-an-x-e-t’q’ep-e-s}
 OP-IP-O3-V-tear-OPT-S3sg
 “He should strike it with a whip in such a way that it tears the skin” [Ln 295]

maj lok ĵ-a-k’uč yērbat-xen-ka, er lok la-ĵ-ōm-a-s?
 what:NOM QT O2-V-want god:DAT-from-out that QT IP-O2-give-OPT-S3sg
 “What do you want from God, that he should give you?” [Lš, W 52]

5.3. Series III (perfect series). The most salient morphosyntactic characteristic of the paradigms grouped together as Series III is the inversion transformation for Class A verbs, affecting the mapping between grammatical relations and morphology (§4.2.1). Alongside the three Series III paradigms described by Topuria (T 169-178), Margiani-Subari 2015 has added two so-called “conditional-resultative” forms, which will be described below. Furthermore, present perfects and pluperfects without preverbs (or with outer preverbs only) continue the purely resultative semantics also attested in Old Georgian, whereas the addition of an inner preverb entails an evidential or counterfactual interpretation. Finally, an IP-less verb form which appears to be based on the passive aorist/perfect stem in -ēn-a can be used in contrast to the present perfect to indicate unwitnessed past action, often implying iterativity or habitualness. The Series III paradigms for a Class A verb are shown below (Margiani-Subari 2011b, 2012a: 240).

Leaving aside the two conditional-resultative paradigms (which are formally akin to imperfective futures and conditionals), the Svan series III stems of Class A and relative Class P verbs are formed from their respective aorist stems, although Series I stems (with the series marker) are occasionally employed by verbs with vowelless roots, especially in Ln (UB/LB x⁻²-o⁻¹-g⁰-a⁷, Ln x⁻²-o⁻¹-g⁰-em¹-a⁷ “has built” < pres. ə-g-em; T 171). In addition, non-ablauting Class P verbs have the suffix -ēn in place of the aorist stem formant, and ablauting Class A verbs employ the lengthened /ī/-grade stem mentioned above (k’wiše “breaks”, x-o-k’wīš-a “has broken”). Class A verbs use Set O markers and the objective-version vowels -i-/-o- to mark the

grammatical subject; relative Class P verbs all take the version vowel -a, regardless of what vowel is used in Series I and II (e.g. pres.pf. x-ä-c'd-a {x-a-c'ed-a} ‘has caught sight of’, vs. aor. x-e-c'äd). Monovalent Class P verbs, as in Georgian, have periphrastic perfects, comprising a past participle (lə- -e, me- -e) plus inflected forms of the copula.

	PRESENT RESULTATIVE	PAST RESULTATIVE	MODAL
neutral (without inner preverb)	present perfect: <u>x-o-xt'aw-a</u> “has painted”	pluperfect: <u>x-o-xt'aw-än</u> “had painted”	plupf. conjunctive: <u>x-o-xt'aw-ēn-(e)-s</u> “would have painted”
evidential (with inner preverb)	(2 nd -hand information): <u>ot-xat'w-a</u>	(counterfactual): <u>ot-xat'w-än</u>	
evidential-iterative in <u>-ēn-a</u> (also without inner preverb)	<u>x-a-xt'aw-ēn-a</u> “apparently used to paint”		
inferential	conditional-resultative I: <u>x-e-xt'äw-i</u>	conditional-resultative II: <u>x-e-xt'aw-öl/-i-w</u>	

5.3.1. Present perfect. The non-periphrastic Svan present perfect of transitive and bivalent intransitive verbs employs the suffix -a. Unlike the corresponding paradigm in Georgian, the Svan present perfect is often used without a preverb; more precisely, without an inner preverb (O II: 113). According to Gudjedjiani & Palmaitis (1986: 75) “forms [of the present perfect — KT] without a preverb are used with pure resultative meaning. [Adding a] preverb stresses the unattested character of the situation.” In narratives, the IP-less perfect is used in juxtaposition with the (preverbed) aorist to create a similar aspectual contrast to that between preverbless (incomplete) and preverbed (completive) aorist in Georgian:

am-ži **x-o-km-a**, xokma, i ašir-te-ži **es-kim.**
this-way O3-V-add-PERF add... and hundred-to-on IP-add:AOR

‘In this way he increased and increased [PREVERBLESS PRESENT PERFECT] (the number), and increased it [PREVERBED AORIST] to a hundred’ [LB; *LB* 324]

si lok čim-išw-d **ž-i-mši-äl-wn-a** meqed
you_{sg} QT all:OBL-GEN-ADV O2-V-work-VPL-CAUS-PERF having.come
mušgwr-išw-da i mi lok dešsama **la-m-məšj-äl-un.**
guest-GEN-ADV and me QT cannot IP-O1sg-work-VPL-CAUS-AOR

‘You put all guests who came to work [PREVERBLESS PRESENT PERFECT], but you could not put me to work [PREVERBED AORIST].’ [Lš; *W* 51]

The present perfects of relative-intransitive Class P verbs often contain the extension -ēn-, but as Topuria noted, the presence of -ēn- varies according to dialect and even the particular verb [T 170-3]. For prefixal passives such as x-e-xtäw-i “is drawn on sthg, imagined by sb”, the present perfect has the extension in all dialects except Ln: UB/Lš at-xat'w-ēn-a, Ln as-a-xat'aw-a [T 170]. Some stative verbs have parallel present perfects with and without -ēn-: UB/Lš x-är-[ēn]-a “has had” [T 172].

The present perfects of monovalent Class P verbs are formed by addition of the copular verb to the past participle. In UB and Lš, the morpheme -el- is inserted after the participle. For ablauting verbs, the participle has the circumfix me-√-e, whereas non-ablauting verbs employ the participle in lə-√-e (§4.5.1, 4.5.2), e.g. [non-ablauting] Ln čwalšixwi {ču-an-lə-ši-e-xwi} “I have

become bloated, swollen” < i-ši-i “swells, becomes swollen”; [ablauting] LB čwomč’k’eželix {čū-a-me-č’k’ež-e-lix} “they have perished, been slaughtered” < č’k’ež-n-i “perish, be slaughtered”.

In the Lower Svan dialects, the postposed auxiliary is also used to mark 1sg and 2sg direct objects (morphological subjects) of transitive verbs that have undergone inversion in Series III [T 170]; e.g. O3/S1sg Lš x-o-mār-ā-xwi, UB x-o-mār-a “sb has prepared me”; cf. O3/S1incl UB/Lš l-o-mār-ā-d [S1incl-V-prepare-PERF-S1/2PL] “sb has prepared you and me”.

Present perfects with inner preverbs are commonly used to indicate past unwitnessed action (in which usage they often contrast aspectually with the imperfective evidential), or diminished awareness on the part of the narrator (e.g. when describing the content of a dream; Sumbatova 1999: 74-5). Margiani-Subari (2012a: 72) discusses a three-way contrast of Series III forms with 1st-person subjects: (i) a neutral perfect with resultative meaning; (ii) an evidential-inferential implying realization on the basis of inference; (iii) an evidential perfect with inner preverb (in this case, signaling second-hand information). Here are the examples with her interpretations:

1. *present resultative* (with outer but not inner preverb): kirs mi-j ču⁴-m²-i¹-m⁰-a⁷! [lentil:NOM I-also OP-O1-V-eat-PERF] “I too have eaten lentils!” (I have had the experience at least once).

2. *evidential-inferential*: kirs ču⁴-m²-ä¹-m⁰-en⁵-a⁷, atxe gar o-qwed gu-d! [lentil:NOM OP-O1-V-eat-AOR-PERF, now indeed IP-S1.came heart-ADV] “I have eaten lentils, now I realize it!” (I hadn’t known it before, and now I realize it through inference).

3. *evidential inner-preverbal perfect*: kirs lä³-m²-(i)¹-mam⁰-a⁷ i demeg la-m-lat’-a [lentil:NOM IP-O1-V-eat-PERF and not IP-O1-love-PST] “I apparently have eaten lentils and I didn’t like them” (They tell me I once ate lentils as a child, but I do not remember).

The Svan present perfect can be used with the optative particle -oy(w)/-u(w). Like the modern Georgian pluperfect conjunctive, this is a modal construction of highly specific distribution, limited to blessings, wishes, curses and the like (Margiani-Subari 2008):

xoča	zä	eser-oy	es-x-a-d-en-a,
good	year:NOM	QT-OPT	IP-O3-V-exchange-PASS-PERF
t’än-iš	nähduri	eser-oy	la-hod-en-a {la-x-a-hod-en-a}!
body-GEN	health:NOM	QT-OPT	IP-O3-V-give-PASS-PERF

‘May a good year be given you in exchange (for the past one), may health of body be given to you!’ [Lower Bal; LB 73, #41]

Inner-preverbless perfects are especially common in negated sentences, and in the more conservative language of poetry and proverbs.

yemat	dec-xen-ču	modma-geš	eser	x-o-šid-a
God:DAT	sky-from-down	not-thing	QT	O3-V-drop-PERF

“God has not thrown anything down from heaven” [LB, D 155].

A handful of monovalent stative verbs appear to have present perfects with inversion: perf. māra x-o-sgur-a [man:DAT O3-V-sit-PERF] ‘the man has been sitting’ < pres. māre sgur ‘man:NOM is.sitting’; perf. m-i-q’wn-a ‘I have been lying down’ < pres. xw-a-q’wr-e (Gagua 1976: 118, 125, 127; PG 91). In all likelihood these enigmatic forms originated as the perfects of

transitive verbs signifying “I have sat X down”, I have stood X up”, interpreted reflexively (“I have sat myself down”; Hewitt 1987; on the morphology of -q’wr/q’wn-, see Topuria 1941b).

5.3.2. Pluperfect. The Svan pluperfect is, formally speaking, the perfect stem plus (i) the Class P aorist suffix (pluperfects of Class A and relative Class P verbs), or (ii) the past tense forms of the copula (monovalent Class P verbs); e.g. [bivalent intransitive] xw-a-q’-ēn-ān [S1-V-have-EXT-PASS.AOR] “sb had had me”; [monovalent intransitive] ämt’exēlxwäs {a-me-t’ex-ēl-xw-äs} [IP-PPL-return-PPL-S1-was] “I had been brought back” [T 206-7].

The pluperfect is infrequently used, especially in comparison to the Georgian paradigm of the same name. According to Margiani-Subari (2012a: 133-139), Svan pluperfects without inner preverbs do not have evidential meaning. Pluperfects with inner preverbs are primarily employed in past counterfactual constructions:

xexw-s	dār	ž-a-hwed-da	hawe	mi	moma
wife-DAT	nobody:NOM	O2-V-give-IMP	except	I	not
lā-m-(i)-maržw-ān					
IP-O1sg-V-help-PLPF					
‘Nobody would have given you a wife, if I had not helped you.’ [Upper Bal; PG 33]					

čw-ad-k’ar-e	sadgom,	xedī	xek’wes	mōd	ot-k’ar-ēn	{ad-x-o-k’ar-ēn}
OP-IP-open-AOR.3/pl	dwelling	which	must	not	IP-O3-V-open-PLPF	
‘He opened the dwelling, which he must not open’ [Lashx; W 72-3]						

The past-anterior and modal senses of the Georgian pluperfect can also be conveyed in Svan by combining the future participle in le- or the passive particle in lə- with the possessive verb xāra “has”; e.g.

č’q’int’-ōl-s	le-t’ex	x-ā-r-a
boy-DIM-DAT	PPL-return	O3-V-have-PERF
“The boy had to go back” [Lš 67]		

goč’-ār-s	lə-xwār-e	x-ā-d-x
pig-PL-DAT	PPL-fatten-PPL	O3-have-IMP-PL
“The pigs had been fattened” [UB]		

5.3.3. Perfect conjunctive. This infrequently-used paradigm can be used as a future perfect (wod ečaw dosa gw⁻²-r¹-zn⁰-ēn⁵-(e)⁹-s¹⁰, ečkad nōsama-w a-ž-marcx-a-x [until to.there not O1incl-V-go-PRF-CNJ-S3sg, then nothing-OPT IP-O2-defeat-PERF-PL] “Until we will have gone there, may nothing you do fail!”; UB 87); or as a modal in past-tense contexts:

i	min	i-bn-a-x	liyrāl-s,	ere	mezga	lixīrwil
and	they:NOM	V-begin-IMP-PL	to.sing-DAT	that	family:DAT	to.revel:NOM
oxbinens {an ⁻³ -x ⁻² -o ⁻¹ -bin ⁰ -en ⁵ -e ⁹ -s ¹⁰ }.						
IP-O3-V-begin-PRF-CNJ-S3sg						

“And they would begin singing, so that the family could begin to have a good time” [UBal; Chr #44, p. 44].

q'wiž-d ed-(i)-gen-e mag, eži e ču x-o-dgar-ēn-(e)-s
 sacrifice-ADV IP-V-stand-AOR all this:NOM if OP O3-V-kill-PRF-CNJ-S3sg
 “He would sacrifice all he owned, if he had killed him” (i.e. he swore that he had not killed
 him; Lš, TK808).

šwän ušxwār lä-x-(e)-nabn-ān, ere ušxwār-e txwim-i
 Svaneti each.other IP-O3-V-swear-PASS.AOR that each.other-GEN head-GEN
 u-cwrun-a lə-mār-lesw-x
 NEG-leave-PPL PPL-been-be:OPT-PL

“(All of) Svaneti swore to each other, that they would never abandon one other” (lit. that each
 other would be unabandoned) [UB 4]

The Georgian perfect conjunctive is most commonly used in oaths and toasts. In Svan, this
 function is typically filled by the optative particle (LB -oy(w), UB/Ln/Lš -u) combined with the
 present perfect or another indicative tense:

cxāman-i kāman-uw alxīdēlxi {a-lə-xīd-e-el-x-i}
 growth-and increase-OPT IP-PPL-rejoice-PPL-EXT-S2-be
 “May you rejoice in growth and increase!”

5.3.4. “Conditional-resultative” I & II. These two paradigms, which were described and
 named by Margiani-Subari (2008, 2011b, 2012a, 2015), are, with respect to their morphology,
 the imperfective future (inferential present) and conditional of stative passives. They either lack
 preverbs, or only appear with outer preverbs. In contrast to the present perfect and pluperfect,
 respectively, the conditional-resultatives foreground the speaker’s uncertainty concerning the
 content of the assertion. In her Georgian glosses of sentences using these forms, Margiani-Subari
 (2012a: 162-3) deploys adverbs such as “probably” (*albat*), “possibly” (*šesazloa*), and
 “supposedly” (*savaraudod*). Here are some sentences she provides to illustrate the contrast of
 these Series III paradigms (UB dialect):

(i) *preverbless present perfect*: č'əmin žwinal-d mišgwa mu-s-i xwāj-n x⁻²-o⁻¹-lāš⁰-a⁷
 [barley:NOM old-ADV my father-DAT-also many-times O3-V-plant-PRF] “In the old days my
 father too planted barley many times”

(ii) *conditional-resultative I*: č'əmin žwinal-d mišgwa mu-s-i xwāj-n x⁻²-e⁻¹-lāš⁰-i⁶
 [barley:NOM old.times my father-DAT-also often O3-V-plant-SM] “In the old days my father
 too probably planted barley many times”

(iii) *preverbless pluperfect*: č'əmin žwinal-d mišgwa mu-s-i xwāj-n x⁻²-o⁻¹-lāš⁰-ān⁵⁺⁹
 [barley:NOM old-ADV my father-DAT-also many-times O3-V-plant-PERF+PST] “In the old
 days my father too had planted barley many times”

(iv) *conditional-resultative II*: č'əmin žwinal-d mišgwa mu-s-i xwāj-n x⁻²-e⁻¹-lāš⁰-ōl⁷
 [barley:NOM old.times my father-DAT-also often O3-V-plant-EXT] “In the old days my father
 too had probably planted barley many times”

§6. Syntax.

6.1. Noun phrase. Word order within the noun phrase is somewhat more rigid than in Georgian, in that postposed modifiers, including personal pronominals, are very rare. (On relative-clause modifiers, see 6.4 below). Adjectives and nominalized clausal modifiers precede the NP head, e.g.

li-gērg-ī tō-jsa kām me-pšwde čār-s {čaž-ar-s}
 St.George’s month-in outside PPL-let.go horse-PL-DAT
 ‘... [to] horses that were left outside during St. George’s month’ [Lš; *W* 15]

The rare examples of postposed adjectives in prose texts are possessive modifiers of kinterms:

dede-s **isgwa**, māj m-ä-q’r
 mother-DAT your:OBL what:NOM O1-V-do
 “What did you do to me, your mother?” (*UB* #92)

On the other hand, postposed possessives are common in Svan poetry, and not limited to kinterms:

sga xw-a-g-en-a **kora-s** **mišgwa** // ka än-sgid-a **dede** **mišgu**
 in I.stood house-DAT my:OBL out IP-look mother my:NOM
 “I stood by my house, out looked my mother” (*UB*, SvP #8)

Svan adjectives show limited agreement with the noun they modify, distinguishing at most a NOM and an oblique form; e.g. NOM luwzere māre [diligent:**NOM** man:NOM] ‘a/the diligent man’, OBL luwzera mārēmi našdabw [diligent:**OBL** man-GEN work] ‘the work of a diligent man’; NOM jori mešxe qæn [two:**NOM** black:NOM bull:NOM] “two black bulls”, OBL jar-w mešxa qan-w-em [two:**OBL** black:**OBL** bull:**OBL-GEN**] “of two black bulls” (Chubexev LB, Kaldani 1959b: 228-9). When adjectives are used as NP heads they decline as nouns: luwzer-ēmi našdabw [diligent:**GEN** work] ‘the work of the diligent one’ (*PG* 43; *O I*: 81-84). Discontinuous modifiers show full agreement if assigned DAT case, whereas those associated with ERG nouns appear in the unmarked (NOM) case (Boeder 2005b):

ža rok ašxw hilw-s laxwedne wokwr-šw lə-lāb-s
 that:NOM QT one:DAT mule-DAT will.give gold-INS loaded-DAT
 “He will give him a mule loaded with gold” (*UB* 332)

dina-d ädbine lizelāl hagar
 girl-ERG began going:NOM barefoot:NOM
 “The girl began to walk barefoot” (Boeder 2005b)

6.2. Structure of the clause.

6.2.1. Case alignment. The case-assignment properties of the Svan verb correspond to those of its Georgian counterpart, that is, the case pattern for Class A verbs shifts from series to series, as shown in the following table. Since 1st & 2nd-person pronouns are not case-marked in NOM, ERG and DAT contexts, the case-shift pattern is only expressed through 3rd-person pronouns and common nouns.

	Class A verbs			Class P verbs	
	NP1	NP2	NP3	NP1	NP2
<i>Series I</i> agreement case (3 rd person)	S NOM	O DAT	[O] DAT	S NOM	O DAT
<i>Series II</i> agreement case (3 rd person)	S ERG	O DAT	[O] NOM	S NOM	O DAT
<i>Series III</i> agreement case (3 rd person)	O DAT	— —	S NOM	S NOM	O DAT

NP1 = agent, source, experiencer, patient, theme ... (“subject”)

NP2 = addressee, recipient, experiencer, beneficiary ... (“indirect object”)

NP3 = patient, goal, theme, instrument ...

ežjār nāj tăș-s n⁻²-a⁻¹-hwd⁰-i¹-x¹⁰
 they:NOM us cheese-DAT O_{1excl}-V-give-SM-pl
 ‘They (NOM) give us the cheese (DAT)’

nāj māra tăș-s xw⁻²-a⁻¹-hwd⁰-i¹-d¹⁰
 we man:DAT cheese-DAT S1-V-give-SM-1/2PL
 ‘We_{excl} give cheese (DAT) to the man (DAT)’

ežjār-d nāj tăș la-n⁻²-ēm⁰-x¹⁰
 they-ERG us cheese-NOM IP-O_{1excl}-gave-pl
 ‘They (ERG) gave us the cheese (NOM)’

nāj māra tăș la-xw⁻²-ēm⁰-d¹⁰
 we man:DAT cheese-NOM IP-S1-gave-1/2PL
 ‘We_{excl} gave cheese (NOM) to the man (DAT)’

ežjār-s nišgwej-d tăș loxwodax {la⁻³-x⁻²-o⁻¹-hod⁰-a⁷-x¹⁰}
 they-DAT us:GEN-ADV cheese:NOM IP-O3-V-give-PERF-pl
 ‘They (DAT) have given us (GEN-ADV) the cheese (NOM)’

nāj mār-emiš-d tăș lānhoda {la⁻³-n⁻²-i⁻¹-hod⁰-a⁷}
 we man- GEN-ADV cheese:NOM IP-S1-gave-PERF
 ‘We_{excl} have given cheese (NOM) to the man (GEN-ADV)’

6.2.2. Number agreement between subject, object and verb. The factors conditioning the use of the Set S and Set O plural-agreement suffixes are sufficiently complex to merit separate treatment. The use of the plural suffix *-d* is obligatory in the context of a 1st or 2nd plural Set S argument, even when it is functioning as the direct object of an indirect-syntax verb [T 21]:

eji-s sgaj čotšdəmad {čw-ad-x-o-šdəm-a-d} bəgi letra-uš
 this:DAT you.PL OP-IP-O3-V-drunk-PERF-S1/2.PL strong drink-INS
 “He has made you all drunk with strong drink” [Lš 74]

Number agreement in *-x* with 2pl Set O arguments is limited to specific contexts (see charts in Topuria 1967:21-3). A distinct S_{2pl} marking is only possible when the Set S argument is 3rd person. When the subject is 1st person and the direct or indirect object is 2pl, number agreement in *-x* does not occur, whereas number agreement with 2pl Set O arguments is always expressed when the subject is 3rd person:

yerte-m či-w ž-a-mzər-a-x
 God-ERG all-OPT O₂-V-bless-OPT-PL
 “May God bless all of you_{pl}.” [Lower Bal; Chikovani 1972:81]

ka ž-i-pišwd-a-x he modei nalk’wih-s ž-i-d-i
 out O₂-V-release-PERF-PL if not choice-DAT O₂-V-give-SM
 “If you_{pl} have not released him I will give you_{pl} a choice.” [Upper Bal; SP 292,70]

6.2.2.1. Animacy and number agreement. The S_{3pl} suffix is also *-x*. When the subject is 3pl and the direct or indirect object is 2pl, only one *-x* suffix appears in the verb.

ežjār ž-a-hwd-i-x sgāj ečas
 they:NOM O₂-V-give-SM-PL you_{pl}:DAT it:DAT]
 “They are giving it to you_{pl}.” [Upper Bal; T 24-5]

According to Gudjedjiani & Palmaitis [1986:43-4], in Svan, “unlike Georgian, the predicate is always used in the plural if the subject is plural, animate or not.”

q’ōr-äl ka lədə lās-w-x
 door-PL:NOM out locked was-PL
 “The doors were locked.” [Upper Bal; UB 369]
 (cp Geo k’ar-eb-i dak’et’il-i i-q’-o [door-PL-NOM locked was-S_{3sg}])

More precisely, number agreement with subjects in Svan generally occurs in the presence of an explicit plural suffix. In the absence of a pluralizer, animacy plays a role. In the case of quantified NPs, which are usually not pluralized, subjects referring to humans always take plural agreement, those referring to animals may or may not, and those referring to inanimates never do:

ameleža sēmi māre an-yr-i-x
 hither three:NOM man:NOM IP-come-SM-PL
 “Here come three men” (UB; TK 45)

amē-sga äri-x sēmi šdawal
 this-in be-PL three:NOM swallow:NOM
 “In this are three swallows” (UB; TK 814)

t'äx-i txwim-isa semi št'awal lok äri
 boar-GEN head-on three:NOM swallow:NOM QT be
 “Three swallows are (“is”) on the boar’s head” (Ln; TK 265)

am xenc'ip-i äzw-isk'a semi äl-i megem lok äri
 this lord-GEN yard-in three:NOM poplar-GEN tree:NOM QT be
 “In the lord’s courtyard are (“is”) three poplar trees” (Ln; TK 893)

Conjoined singular NPs, where both conjuncts refer to inanimates, sometimes control plural number agreement in Svan:

šuk'w i ragäd ču dem eser šdex-n-i-x
 road:NOM and talk:NOM down not QT exhaust-PASS-SM-PL
 “The road and talk are never used up.” [Lower Bal; D 163]
 (G gza da lap'arak'i ar dailev-a-o [road:NOM and talk-NOM not PV-V-exhaust-S3sg-QT])

č'ir i gwämi mara čw eser xwir-e-Ø
 labor:NOM and burden:NOM man:DAT down QT collapse-SM-Ø
 “Labor and heavy burdens wear a man down.” [D 175]

6.2.2.2. Indirect and inverse verbs. As a rule, the Set O subjects of indirect and inverse verbs control number agreement in Svan. For 2pl and 3pl Set O arguments, the suffix -x is used:

ečkas nart-äl-s šira x-o-q'r-a-x
 then Nart-PL-DAT millstone:NOM O3-V-hit-PERF-PL
 “Then the Narts (dative subject) hit him with a millstone.” [Upper Bal; UB 174]

Indirect conjugation is also possible with a few transitive Class A verbs, though not as many as in Georgian (Tuite 1987). In the first of the following examples, the verb agrees in number with a 3rd-person plural indirect object. In the second example, the verb lenžoywännex agrees with a 3rd-plural direct object:

sk'odi žävr gvi-s x-o-c'xvavd-a-x äl č'q'int'-i
 deep worry:NOM heart-DAT O3-V-torment-IMP-PL this boy-GEN
dede-s i mama-s [Lent'ex; elicited]
 mother-DAT and father-DAT
 The boy’s mother and father (dative subject) were tormented by intense anxiety.”
 (lit. “Deep worry pained the heart for the boy’s mother and father”;
 cp Geo yrma mc'uxareba gul-s Ø-u-zi3gnid-a-t am bič'-is mšobl-eb-s)

One exception to the rule that 3pl dative subjects control number agreement in -x concerns indirect verbs with 1st or 2nd person direct objects (morphological subjects). Number agreement with a 3rd plural dative subject is blocked in this context [Topuria 1967:21]; e.g.

ežjār-s mi xw-a-lät' (*xw-a-lät'-x)
 they-DAT me:NOM S1-V-love [UB; T 21]
 “They love me.” (G. mat me v-Ø-u-q'var-var)

The 3pl NOM-case objects of a few indirect verbs which typically take animate themes optionally control number agreement. Topuria (1967:24) claims that number agreement with 3pl arguments is more likely to occur when the dative subject is 1st person, because there is no possibility of ambiguity concerning the interpretation of the suffix -x̣. (The number of 1st person Set O arguments is coded in the prefix). Here are two examples of number agreement with a 3pl NOM argument of an indirect verb. In the first the dative subject is 1st person.

kašg-ar m-i-xal-x moylat' mišgwi
 Circassian-PL-NOM O1sg-V-know-PL betrayer:NOM my
 “I know the Circassians (are) my betrayers.” [Lš; Wonyān 1917b:83]

bepšw-s ču-ät-karw-ān-x xam-ār
 child-DAT OP-IP-lose-PASS.AOR-PL pig-PL:NOM
 “The child lost the pigs.” [UB; Harris 1985:312]

6.3. Major Sentence Types. Although word order is not used to mark grammatical relations, Svan syntax is more structured than one might at first imagine. The verb is the central element in the clause, and usually is placed at or near the end of the sentence, with its associated clitics and particles deployed before it. Topical noun phrases and adverbials are placed at the extremes of the sentence, usually in first position, but sometimes at the end (“antitopics”). New information can also be introduced after the verb.

6.3.1. Particles and clitics. Much of the distinctive character of Svan discourse is due to the rich variety of particles and clitics, which, unlike other lexemes, have a fixed or preferred position in the clause. Most sentences have at least one, and often three or more of these elements, the exact sense of which is frequently difficult to convey. An attempt to classify these elements by preferred position was made in Tuite (1997), subsequently corrected and expanded by Boeder (2008). The principal positions in which particles and clitics appear are: (i) within the verb complex (before or immediately after the verb); (ii) second position in the clause; (iii) initial or final position in the clause; (iv) directly before or after the constituent they modify. The syntax of these elements will be briefly presented here. Their functions in specific sentence types (interrogative, optative, indirect speech, etc.) will be discussed in subsequent sections.

(i). *The verb complex.* The outer preverbs (§4.6.1) are the leftmost elements of the Svan verb complex. Whereas the inner preverbs are closely bound to the verb, and can be considered to be part of the same word as the verb root, the outer preverbs can be separated from the verb by intervening particles and clitics, as in the following sentence, in which four clitics are interposed between the outer preverb ẓ̌i and the inner preverb an- at the beginning of the verbal word:

ẓ̌<i>⁻⁴ eser h<e> ā̄r moš änbūcix {an⁻³-i⁻¹-būc⁰-i⁶-x¹⁰}
 OP QT if someone:NOM at.all IP-V-stretch-FUT-PL
 (he said) “if anyone (of you) somehow will stretch it” (UB #120)

On occasion the outer preverb follows the verb:

la⁻³-x⁻²-a⁻¹-t⁰ul⁰-e⁵-x¹⁰ ka⁻⁴ i k<a> än-[i]-sk'id-da dāw.
 IP-O3-NV-call-AOR-S3pl out and out IP-V-look-IMP ogre:NOM
 “They called out, and the ogre looked out.” [Lentex; *Chr* #350, pp. 326-7]

Among the elements which can appear within the verb complex, that is, between the outer preverb and the verbal word, are negative pronouns and adverbs, the optative clitic (LB -oy(w), UB/Ln/Lš -u), interrogative and indefinite pronouns, quotative markers, the emphatic particle yen(a) (Saghliani 2012), -id “again”, among others. Also situated in the verb complex are the yes/no question clitics -mo, -ma, -a, -u, etc., which are attached to the end of the verb:

məxär eser än⁻³-qd⁰-e¹-ma¹¹?
 tomorrow QT IP-bring-SM-QUES
 “Will you bring it tomorrow?” (UB 263).

Of the elements which can appear in the Svan verb complex, only the outer preverbs, the negators and the verb itself are accented (Boeder 2008).

(ii) *Clitics in second position (“Wackernagel’s position”)*. In several ancient Indo-European languages, clitics occupy the second position in the clause, attached to either the first word or the first constituent. This syntactic tendency, first described by Jacob Wackernagel, also applies to a group of clitics in Svan, such as yal ‘alas, poor X’; ešī “nonetheless, still”; lax(a) “if, that”:

metxwjar-a-s **yal** x-a-q'lün-i-x dal-iš
 hunter-PL-DAT PTC O3-V-fear-SM-PL Dal-GEN
 “The hunters, alas, are afraid of Dali” (Lš 13)

sgim-məq' ešī mejad gril-d ari mare
 spring-at however always cool-ADV is man:NOM
 “(In hot weather) by the mineral-water spring, however, one is always cool” (Lš 4; TK 45)

The quoted-speech markers eser and rok(w)/lok(u) occur in both second position and within the verb complex. A sampling of occurrences in the Svan text collections hints at a more nuanced story. The Lower Svan quotative lok(u) is predominantly preverbal, but can also occupy the clause-second position, and even follow the verb when the latter has been fronted:

k'ameč-i gwere ži **loku** as-a-šk'ad-e sk'äm-s
 buffalo-GEN skin OP QT IP-V-hammer-AOR chair-DAT
 (he said): “Nail the water-buffalo skin onto the chair” (Ln, TK 344)

aywe a-x-a-d-e-x **loku** liborgiel
 well IP-V-set-AOR-PL QT wrestling
 (he said): “Well, let’s begin to wrestle” (Ln, TK 427)

The UB and LB quotative eser, on the other hand, strongly favors Wackernagel’s position:

čāž-s **eser** ašxw-xān-čū gar dār a-lāb-i
 horse-DAT QT one-side-down only no.one:NOM V-load-SM
 “No one loads a horse on only one side (they say)” (UB, TK 41)

Davitiani’s (1973) collection of LB proverbs presents an interesting exception. In these one- or two-sentence texts, doubtless transmitted by rote memory for many generations, the preverbal position is clearly preferred (Boeder 2002: 24):

di-eš gwi gezl-ir-s **eser** x-a-tal-a-x
 mother-GEN heart:NOM child-PL-DAT QT O3-V-split-STAT-PL
 “A mother’s heart is split among her children” (D 33)

In about a quarter of the sampled proverbs, eser appears in second position, or even within the second constituent (which usually appears to be a focused noun phrase):

(ləč’q’är məx-s)^{NP} (ləč’q’är **eser** gwāli)^{NP} x-a-č’im
 continued storm-DAT continued QT drought:NOM O3-V-follow
 “A long rainy period is followed by a long dry spell” (D 66)

quotatives	second	in/after 2 nd topic	Pre-verbal	Post-verbal
<u>eser</u> [UB & LB prose texts]	47		8	
eser [LB proverbs]	7	5	33	
rok(w) [LB]	51		33	
lok [Lš, Ln]	24		44	2
loku [Ln]	2		28	2
-əž/-iž (1 st -person quote)			X	

This evidence implies that all Svan quotatives initially appeared in the verb complex (as is still the case for the 1st-person quote marker -əž/-iž), and then optionally in Wackernagel’s position as well, with the preference for the latter particularly strong in UB.

The Georgian tendency to attach quotative clitics to nearly every major constituent is not characteristic of Svan. On occasion, however, one does come across two quotatives in the same clause, one in the second position and the other before the verb:

q’or-isga meqed mar-em **eser** či-nem č’əšx-är **eser-u** la-x-(a)-k’wecn-e
 door-in coming man-ERG QT all-ERG foot-PL:NOM QT-OPT IP-V-O3-clean-AOR
 (they said): “At the door, all people coming in should clean their feet” (LB 49, TK 38)

(iii) *Initial or final position in the clause.* Certain particles appear at one end or other of the clause, or even both. These positions are particularly favored by subordinate-clause linkers such as lax(e) “if, since, that”, which occurs clause-initially; and ehe “if, that”, which can occupy either initial or final position:

lax eser miča näherw čotmaqda {ču-ad-x-o-maqd-a}, ži-nem-oɣw-i x-ä-her
 since QT one:GEN asked OP-IP-O3-V-fulfill-PERF self-ERG-OPT-also O3-V-ask
 “Since you have fulfilled my request, ask me for something” (LB 311)

liltxwmi eser či x-o-xal-d-e-s **ehe**, mäg txwim iri
 headship QT all:DAT O3-V-know-IMP-CNJ-3sg if all:NOM head will.be
 “If all knew how to lead, all would be leaders” (LB, D 58).

(iv) *Directly before or after the constituent they modify.* Finally, one group of clitics have scope over individual constituents, which they precede or follow. These include gar “only”, and some negative adverbs:

ešxu **gar** eser te imya x-o-sgur?
 one only QT eye why O3-V-sit
 “Why do you have only one eye?” (LB 258)

mäid-s eser **de** näti x-o-tr-a, **de** säxsamərtäl
 hungry-DAT QT NEG relative O3-V-recognize-STAT NEG morality
 “A hungry person recognizes neither relatives, nor morality” (LB, D 72)

6.3.2. Interrogative clauses; pronouns and particles. Interrogative pronouns appear in the verb complex, either directly before the verb, or separated from it by quotative clitics or negative indefinite pronouns.

isgwi mašed **jär** i-rol-e?
 your rescuer who:NOM V-be-SM
 ‘Who would be your rescuer?’ [SP 268]

In multiple wh-questions, all interrogatives appear in preverbal position:

jär-d **där-s** mamgweš laxwēm?
 who-ERG nobody-DAT nothing:NOM gave
 ‘Who didn’t give anything to anyone?’ (UB, Erschler 2015)

The response to a question is often introduced by an echo of the interrogative pronoun:

mäj eser x-a-k’u?
 what:NOM QT O3-V-want
 ‘What do you want?’
mäj eser **i** lädī moxärž eser ža l-i
 what:NOM QT and today:GEN meal.provider:NOM QT self:NOM S3-be
 ‘[What and] you are to provide today’s meal.’ [Chr 162]

The outer preverb can be repeated as a positive response to a yes-no question [Davitiani 1954]:

Q: **ka-čäd** ma-u? A: **ka.**
 out-go:AOR QUES-QUES out
 ‘Did he go out?’ ‘Yes (he went out).’

Kaldani (1964) lists a half-dozen question particles, which are postposed to the verb: **-a** (Laxamul **-ha**); **-u** (Ln **-ə**); **-ma**, **-mo**. The clitics **-a** and **-mo** have equivalent functions, signalling yes-no questions when the questioner knows that the respondent has already begun the activity in question (**x-ä-č’m-é-a** / **x-ä-č’m-é-mo** [S2-V-mow-SM-QUES] ‘are you still mowing hay? [or have you finished or stopped?]’), whereas the clitic **-ma** is employed when the questioner does not know if the activity has begun as yet (/ **x-ä-č’m-e-má** [S2-V-mow-SM-QUES] ‘are you mowing hay? [have you begun yet?]’). In the case of a verb to which **-a** or **-mo** has been adjoined, the accent can be either on the question clitic, or the final syllable of the verb; **-ma** on the other hand always attracts the accent. Yes-no questions can also be marked by a clitic **-(j)á**, onto which the accent shifts:

ka loxt’ülájá? {la-xw-o-t’ül-a-jā}
 OP IP-S1-V-call-OPT-QUES
 ‘Should I call him?’ [UB; Tamar Girgwliani (elicited)]

Interrogative pronouns in embedded *wh*-questions and sluice constructions can be marked by the postposed clitic **-do** in Upper and Lower Bal Svan (Erschler 2015):

dāwit-s šišd x-e-šdn-i-w, im-**do** imeg x-a-cq’en-i-w
 David-DAT quickly O3-V-forget-SM-IMP what-EMB where O3-V-stick-SM-IMP
 ‘Davit would immediately forget, what he stuck where’ (LB, TK 85).

manana-d lāt mole anq’id mare mam m-i-xa māj-**do**
 Manana-ERGYesterday something bought but NEG O1-V-know what-EMB
 ‘Manana bought something yesterday, but I don’t know what.’ (UB, Erschler 2015)

6.3.3. Imperative and optative clauses. The usual type of positive imperative is identical to a 2nd-person aorist, e.g. S2sg **axäsq’**, S2pl **axsq’ed** {a⁻³-x⁻²-a⁻¹-sq⁰-e⁻⁵-d¹⁰} ‘do it!’. As in some conservative Georgian dialects, the Svan imperfect can be employed as a softened imperative: Ec/Lx **x⁻²-ä⁻¹-sq⁰-e⁻¹-w⁷** ‘would you do it?’; T 168).

Svan has several prohibitive particles which are used to form negative imperatives. Some prohibitives, such as **nōm/nem** and **numa**, take a verb in the present or future indicative: **nom x-i-čō** [do.not S2-V-do] ‘don’t do it!’ (Geo. *nu švrebī*) [T 169]; **limšaw-i likädne nom ž-ä-mtkw-a** [work-GEN avoiding do.not O2-V-accustom-STAT] ‘don’t make a habit of avoiding work!’ (Ln, TK 453). Other prohibitives, such as **nōsa**, require a verb in the optative or conjunctive, e.g. **leyw nōsa la-x-ām-a, no xaršw la-x-āš-a** [meat:NOM do.not IP-S2-eat-OPT, nor broth:NOM IP-S2-drink-OPT] ‘Do not eat meat (Geo. *xorci ar č’amo*), nor drink broth!’ (UB 325).

Optatives are also used to form 1st-person inclusive cohortatives, e.g. **alčedd** {ad⁻³-l⁻¹-čed⁰-e⁻⁹-d¹⁰}, **he-dōri čw-a-l-sed-d kwäb-isga** [IP-S1incl-go-OPT-PL, if-not OP-IP-S1incl-remain-(OPT)-PL] ‘Let’s go; if not, then let’s stay in the cave’ (UB, TK 895).

Blessing, wishing and cursing formulas make use of either the modal paradigms (e.g. the

perfect conjunctive: yernet m-i-ywn-ēn-s ‘I swear to God!’; SvP 66); or the indicative mood plus the optative clitic (LB -oy(w), UB/Ln/Lš -u), e.g. yērbat-u eser otč’atwna {ad⁻³-x⁻²-o⁻¹-č’at⁰-wn⁴-a⁷} ‘May God curse him’, with the present perfect (UB 412; cf Saghliani 2016: 599-604).

6.4. Complex sentences. Clause linking has received rather less attention than other topics in Svan linguistics, but recent work has done much to make up the disparity (see, among others, Boeder 2005a, 2011, 2014; Shavreshiani 2010, 2015, 2022; Erschler 2015).

6.4.1. Subordinate clauses. Clauses can be imbedded through both nominalization (use of participles) and subordination, as in Georgian. The principal relative pronouns are derived from the corresponding interrogative pronouns by the addition of a suffix -wāj, which functionally, albeit not etymologically, resembles the Georgian suffix -c, e.g. jer ‘who?’ (Geo. *vin?*) > jer-wāj ‘who’ (Geo. *vin-c*); ime ‘where?’ (Geo. *sad?*) > im-wāj ‘where’ (Geo. *sada-c*); māzum ‘how much?’ > māzum-wāj ‘as much as, to which extent’ (Abesdaze 1960; Giglemiani 2013; Shavreshiani 2022). If the pronoun has a postposition adjoined to it, -wāj can appear both before and after the postposition in Lent’ex (xed-ka ‘where?’ > xed-wāj-ka-wāj ‘where’; Kaldani 1964).

Used as modifiers with a noun phrase, relative clauses represent the only common exception to the modifier-precedes-head principle, in that they almost always come after the NP head, e.g.:

ež māre, xedwāj ätywäč’ {< ad-x-e-ywäč’},
 that man:NOM which:NOM IP-O3-V-pursue:AOR
gäč-d äd-(i)-sip’-ān
 knife-ADV IP-V-turn-Pass.AOR
 ‘The man who was pursuing him turned into a knife’ [UB; A 110]

When the relative pronoun itself heads the noun phrase, a coreferent resumptive pronoun (based on the distal root ež- ‘that’) usually follows:

xedwāj-d lok xoča hark’-äl lākw-a-s, eža-s
 which-ERG QT good tale-PL:NOM tell-OPT-S3sg.MOD that-DAT
x-ā-c-e-s al diär
 O3-V-have-OPT-S3sg.MOD this bread:NOM
 ‘Whoever tells good tales, let that one have this bread’ [UBal; A 111]

lä-x-(e)-č’wed-da-x, mänk’wid er ka-an-qäd, eža-s
 IP-O3-V-ask-IMP-PL first that OP-IP-come:AOR that-DAT
 ‘They asked the first one that came’ [UBal; A 135]

More complex structures are possible, including sentence in which the head is modified by two clauses, one preceding and one following (Shavreshiani 2022: 275):

liyral eswa x-e-xl-i, eji, maxe nadgar axa
 singing:NOM who:DATO3-V-know-FUT he:NOM new dead:NOM even
jär x-e-r-i, eji-yäj ka meyräl li
 someone:NOM O3-V-have-FUT still OP to.sing is
 ‘He who knows how to sing, even if he has someone newly dead, still has to sing’ [LB 78]

Most subordinating conjunctions allow different moods, depending on the meaning. One of the more common, *lax* ‘if’ selects conditional forms when hypothetical or contrary-to-fact situations are being described, and the indicative otherwise, rather like its equivalents in the familiar European languages:

si **lax** mod lä-m-txan-ōl, mišgu k’umas̄ mäg
 you.sg if not IP-O1sg-appear-CND my livestock:NOM all:NOM
 m-e-γwp’aw-ōl
 O1sg-V-die.off-CND
 ‘If you had not come to me [conditional], my livestock would all have died’ [UBal; A 140]

lax č’q’int’ ä-ž-ten-i näj šišd odrid {ad-xw-r-i-d}
 if boy:NOM IP-O2-born-SM we right.away IP-S1-go-SM-PL
 ‘If a boy is born [perf. future], we will leave right away.’ [UBal; A 139]

Conditional subordinate clauses ordinarily precede the main clause, with the exception of clauses containing the conjunction *edo/odo* “or else” (Shavreshiani & Shavreshiani 2015):

nom γər-i-xi dāw-xo, edo iži ču ž-ä-dgar-i si
 don’t go-SM-S2sg ogre-to lest he:NOM OP O2-V-kill-SM you_{sg}
 “Do not go to the ogre, or else he will kill you!” (Ln, *Chr* 324)

The stressed deictic clitics –*é* (distal) and –*á* (proximal) can be attached to the phrase-final word in the matrix clauses to signal “a referent whose accessibility the speaker wants to ensure in an afterthought construction” (Boeder 2014: 109; see also Zhghenti 1949: 105-6, Hewitt 2005; Boeder 2011; Chantladze et al. 2015; Shavreshiani 2022: 181-184):

i ečk(a) ēser ža ečaw t’exn(i)-é, mänk’wi er ləmār
 and then QT self:NOM thither return-CL first that have.been
 “And then I (will) return there, where I was earlier” [UB 381; Boeder 2011: 50]

amnēm-á, sīmak-d, list’yunāl er kādzəgre {ka-ad-a-zəgr-e},
 this-ERG-CL girl-ERG bathing:NOM that OP-IP-V-finish-AOR
 ečkas kānt’äx {ka-an-t’äx} zuγwa-xän-ka
 then OP-IP-return:AOR sea-from-out
 “When this one, the young woman, finished bathing, she came back out from the sea” [UB 274; Boeder 2011: 40]

Subordination is also possible without the use of a conjunction. In Upper Svan, especially the LB dialect, subordination can be signalled by higher intonation on the subordinate clause, followed by lower pitch on the following main clause (Shavreshiani & Saghlani 2013; Shavreshiani 2022: 111-125):

žinay di-s ka x-e-q'wl-en-i, ečkas darbäz-t ä-gn-e-x
 lamb:NOM mother-DATOP O3-V-separate-INTR-SM then loft-to V-set-SM-PL
 "(When) the lamb separates from its mother, then they set it in the hay-loft" (UB; *Chr* 24)

mähi lexler max-ad lamywäi-s x-e-t'ex-e-s, ečeč-oyw li
 ripe orchard:NOM newly flowering-DAT O3-V-return-OPT-S3 there-OPT be
 isgwe lakun
 your_{pl} soul-place:NOM (LB; *Chr* 174)
 "(Where) a ripe orchard has just begun to flower, may that be your souls' resting-place"

6.4.2. Complementation. Certain Svan verbs take either full clauses, or reduced clauses headed by participles, as complements. The range of semantic and syntactic relations between complements and the main verb is similar to that which Vamling (1989) identified in Georgian. These include complements of the epistemic type (expressing knowledge and information), and those of the deontic type (expressing an act or state of affairs to be realized). Subordinate clauses representing epistemic complements are typically introduced by the complementizer ere:

məxär, mi m-a-baž-a, ere gril ira
 tomorrow I O1-V-seem-STAT that cool will.be
 "It seems to me that it will be cool tomorrow" (*Ln* 18)

Quite often, the complement clause is participial, especially with the matrix verb x-o-xal "knows":

gadan ka ləqīd m-i-xal-d-a
 debt:NOM OP brought O1-V-know-IMP-PST
 "I believed that the debt had been paid" (lit. I believed the debt paid; UB, *TK* 542)

txere-s ži x-ä-ter-n-a daql-ä nazob
 wolf-DAT OP O3-V-recognize-IMP-PST goat-GEN eaten
 "The wolf appeared to have eaten the goat" (*Ln* 163)

In the case of deontic or action-modality complements, masdar participles are commonly used when the subject of the complement is coreferent with the matrix-clause subject:

kurux päq'w-i liq'di m-a-k'u
 brown cap-GEN buying O1-V-want
 "I want to buy a brown cap" (lit. I want the buying of a brown cap; *Ln*, *TK* 787)

Full complement clauses introduced by ere can have the same or a different subject:

di-s x-e-k'w-ad ere jerwäle emqedēlān
 mother-DAT O3-V-want-IMP that someone:NOM had.come
 "Mother wanted someone to come" (*Lš*; *TK* 638)

Some Svan verbs can be used with both epistemic and deontic complements, e.g. xek’wes, which can mean either “X must [deontic complement]” or “it must be the case that [epistemic complement]” (Boeder 2015).

6.4.3. Adverbial clauses. Clauses specifying time, purpose, location, etc., can contain either a finite verb or a participle. Sentences with adverbial clauses often contain paired adverbs introducing the main and subordinate clauses (“when ..., then ...”; “where ... there ...”; “as ..., so ...”):

<u>imgwäj</u>	ləgan	mänk’u-š-ži,	<u>ečeču</u>	esgene
where	had.stood	first-GEN-at	there	put

“Where he had first stood, there he put (the boy)” (LB 29).

imwäjžin	ziʒaj-d	laxtōne,	č’abigw-d	ež-ži	čwemin
which-as	nurse-ADV	taught	boy-ERG	this-as	did

“The boy did as the nurse instructed him” (As the nurse taught him, thus the boy did; UB 266)

A clause indicating a preceding action can be formed by addition of the suffix -ywe “after” to the past participle:

<u>na-pər(w)-un-ywe</u>	itk-s	ka-id	a-c’wrem-i-x
PPL-dry-LOC-after	grain-DAT	OP-again	V-winnow-SM-PL

“After drying, they winnow the grain again” (LB 231)

Purpose clauses resembling Latin supine constructions contain future participles in la-marked by the ADV case or the postposition -te “to” (Boeder 2005b):

lic	axäj	ničw-ar-eš	i	t’ot’-r-e	<u>la-brāl-d</u>
water:NOM	bring	face-PL-GEN and	hand-PL-GEN		PPL-wash-ADV

“Fetch water to wash our hands and faces” (UB 376, 34-5)

6.5. Negative pronouns and particles. Svan has a sizable inventory of negative pronouns and particles, many of them evidently derived from two- or three-morpheme compounds (Sharadzenidze 1946). The three-way contrast represented in Georgian by the particles ar (not), ver (cannot) and nu (do not [prohibitive]), and their derivatives, is also present in Svan, though not as transparently. Grouped by their initial segments, the most widespread Svan negators include (translations very approximate):

- (a) de “not”, dēm “not want to ...”, dēmis “not”; dēsa ‘not’; dēsama ‘nothing’;
- (b) do ‘not’, dōm(a), dōsa ‘nothing’, dōr(i) “if not, then ...”, dōsama “nothing” (Lš);
- (c) māma “not, no!”, mād(e) / mōd(e) “not”;
- (d) no ‘do not [prohibitive]’, nōsa ‘must not in any way ...’, nōm(a) ‘do not’, etc.

Negatives of possibility, the equivalents of Georgian ver and its derivatives, are formed by the addition of -š to some of the stems listed above; e.g. de-š, do-š, (Ln) mādš < made-š ‘cannot’

(Sharadzenidze 1946: 293, 314-15; Shavreshiani 2010). The negators *ne*, *nem* ‘do not’; *bai* ‘not’ are only attested in the Laxamul subdialect of LB. Three different types of negatives occur in this dialogue from an Upper Bal tale [UB 65]:

čik	deš	γərid {x-γər-i-d},	k’oč’ōl	bopš-är	x-i-šd.
yet	cannot	S2-go-SM-PL	little	child-PL:NOM	S2-be-PL
māma	ž-ä-jmäd-a-x		dāw-ä	libərgiēl.	
not	O2-V-able-SM-PL		ogre-GEN	wrestling:NOM	
a,	eši-eši	γurid {xw-γər-i-d}.	naūzi-s	dem	xw-i-čo-d.
ah	nonetheless	S1excl-go-SM-PL	not.going-DAT	not.want	S1excl-V-do-PL

[Mother to children]: ‘You cannot [*deš*] go yet, you are still little children. You are not [*māma*] capable of tangling with an ogre.’ [Children to mother]: ‘Ah, but we will go anyway. We do not want [*dem*] to refrain from going.’

6.6. Coordination and chaining. Zero anaphora. In Svan, as in the other Kartvelian languages, reference maintenance across adjacent clauses through zero-anaphora (or deletion of an underlying coreferent NP, if one prefers to look at it that way) is relatively free (Sumbatova 1993: 267-8). In order to demonstrate this in a quantitative fashion, I selected a small corpus of texts from Svan and Old Georgian, and analyzed the correlation between zero anaphora and the formal and relational attributes of NPs. The method employed was simple and mechanical: Only 3rd person NPs assigned a syntactic case (ERG, NOM or DAT) by the verb were counted. Zero anaphors were regarded as bearing the case an overt NP in the same relation to the verb would have been assigned. Coreference relations were counted only if they occurred across adjacent clauses; these were assigned to two categories according to whether reference was maintained by a zero anaphor (NP > Ø) or an overt NP (NP > X). The table shows the correlation between manner of reference maintenance across adjacent clauses and properties of the NPs involved: grammatical role [S = subject; O = direct or indirect object (DO, IO)], same or different case, agreement by same or different set of person markers. While equivalence of grammatical relation, case and agreement set for coreferent arguments is correlated with an enhanced frequency of zero anaphora, it is clear that non-equivalence for any of these properties is no bar to the use of null pronominals. On the other hand, coincidence in any of these properties for coreferent arguments in adjacent clauses is no guarantee of zero anaphora, either. For most texts sampled, all cells in the chart are filled by at least one example.

Argument chaining [adjacent clauses]

	<u>GRAMMATICAL ROLE</u>				<u>CASE</u>		<u>AGREEMENT</u>		Total
	<i>S>S</i>	<i>O>O</i>	<i>S>O</i>	<i>O>S</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>diff.</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>diff.</i>	
<u>Svan</u>									
NP>X:	14	5	1	6	8	18	14	12	26
NP>Ø:	30	8	5	5	29	19	36	12	48 [65%]
<u>Old Georgian</u>									
NP>X:	20	10	10	13	18	35	29	24	53
NP>Ø:	155	15	7	18	106	89	166	29	195 [79%]

6.7. Copular clauses. Svan has two verbs that correspond to English “be”: *li* (1sg *xwi*) is equative and predicational, whereas *äri* (1sg *xwäri*) indicates existence or location. The two verbs are contrasted in the following sentences:

agräj däw-är eser **li**-x
truly ogre-PL QT be-PL
“Truly, you **are** [*equation*] ogres (he said)” [LB 26]

ečëcuäri-x tel kweq’ana-y menc’ir däw-är
there be-PL whole land-GEN victor ogre-PL
“Over there **are** [*location, existence*] ogres who can defeat anyone in the whole land” [Ln 221]

As in Georgian, the verb meaning “know” can be used to denote existence in a particular place (typically with reference to plant or animal species), e.g.

šixünd šwan-s-ī x-o-xal
lizard.sp:NOM Svaneti-DAT-too O3-V-know
“There are legless lizards in Svaneti, also” [Lš; TK 820]

6.8. Topic and anti-topic. A variety of elements can appear in the initial position of the Svan clause, which is set off, as it were, by a comma from the rest of the sentence. These include interjections and vocatives, topicalized NPs, and adverbial expressions describing the spatial or temporal setting of the episode about to be described (e.g. *merma ladey* ‘the next day’) or its sequence within the narrative (*ečkas* ‘then’, *wešgimp’ils* ‘finally’). As in French (Lambrecht 1984), Svan has both left- and right-dislocated, or “topic” (T) and “anti-topic” (AT), slots, the contents of which are often doubled by resumptive pronouns (R) within the clause.

(jexw-är)^T mine lemzir-s ži-ä (min)^R ä-mzər-i-w-x.
woman-PL:N their lemzir-DAT on-also they:NOM V-pray-SM-IMP-PL
“(As for) the women, they prayed over their *lemzirs* (ritual bread) as well.” [LB 294]

(atxe)^T merme sopl-är-i (am-te)^R an-yr-i-x (sgim-te-jsga)^{AT}
now other villager-PL:N-also this-to IP-come-SM-PL spring-to-at
“Now other villagers come to this, to the spring.” [LB 75]

The second-person pronoun often occurs in the anti-topic position in yes-no questions:

až-ya x-i-gwn-i mo (si)^{AT?}
this-because.of S2-V-weep-SM QUES you
“Is this why you are weeping?” (UB 67)

Outer preverbs can be repeated in postverbal (anti-topic) position for emphasis [Davitiani 1954]:

isga qid-e, **isga**.
in bring-SM in
“He brings it in!”

6.9. Quotative particles and indirect speech. One topic that has drawn considerable attention from linguists is the representation of quoted speech in Svan (Hewitt 1982; Chant’ladze 1998: 223-234; Boeder 2002; Margiani-Subari 2008: 156-182; Samushia 2014: 269-286).

When the speaker is repeating his or her own speech, the clitic *-əž/-iž* is attached to a word just before the verb (Hewitt 1982; *SJa* 143; Boeder 2002: 21; Samushia 2014: 274-5). The deictic elements (person and tense references) in the quoted speech are not shifted:

mi lōkar {xw-lēkar}, ere məxar-iž an-qd-en-i-x.
 I S1-say:AOR that tomorrow-QT IP-come-INTR-SM-PL
 ‘I said that they would come the day after [lit. “they will come tomorrow”]’

With a 1st-plural subject quoting their own words, either *əž/-iž* or *rok/lok* could be used (Boeder 2002: 23; Samushia 2014: 274-5):

nāj rākw-e-d, kor-te əž/rok yuri-d.
 we say-AOR-1/2PL house-to QT go-S1PL
 “We said we are going home” (UB; Samushia 2014: 275)

Either *-əž/-iž* or *rok/lok* — but not *eser* — occur in an imperative instructing the hearer to transmit a message to a third party (corresponding to Georgian *-tko*; Samushia 2014: 277-8). The message to be repeated is cited more or less verbatim, without shift of person or tense:

xola-iž ladey-s ž-i-cäd-i!
 bad-QT day-DAT O2-V-change-SM
 “(Tell him:) ‘I will make your day turn bad!’” [LB 204]

When quoting the speech of the 2nd person, however, the quotative clitic *eser* is used, with direct quotation of the text (Samushia 2014: 276):

si mi m-e-kar, drāw-ž(i) eser q-w-ed-n-i
 you.sg me O1-V-say.AOR time-on QT S1-come-INTR-SM
 “You told me: ‘I will come on time’”.

Reported speech from third persons can be delivered as an approximately direct quotation, with all person and tense markers unchanged, as in the following:

dede-d ämsimaxale {as-m-i-maxal-e} er tetr lok lezare ž-a-r
 mother-ERG IP-O1-V-instruct-AOR that money QT to.save O2-V-have
 “Mother instructed me that: ‘You (= speaker) have to save money’” [Ln; TK 393]

Most often, however, person oppositions are suppressed, with the special pronouns *ža* [singular] and *min* [plural] replacing the 1st and 2nd person pronouns (Boeder 1995). Agreement with *ža* [singular] and *min* is in the 3rd person. The indirect speech is introduced by the complementizer *ere* ‘that’, and contains the quotative particles *eser* or *rok(w)/lok(u)*.

sosruq’-d rākw, ere, ža eser x-ä-jsen-ā-wn-e
 Sosruq-ERG say:AOR that self:NOM QT O3-V-kill-CAUS-FUT-SM

txwim-s. nōta-w **min** eser ka im-te otčädx {ad-x-o-čäd-x},
 self-DAT maybe-OPT selves:NOM QT out where-to IP-O3-V-go:AOR-PL
 ža eser xoxra cod l-i, meča eser li (e)ser.
 self:NOM QT lesser sin:NOM S3-be old:NOM QT S3-be QT

“Sosruq said: ‘I [ž**a**] will let them kill me. Maybe you-all [**min**] can escape from them somewhere; since I [ž**a**] am the oldest, it is less of a shame (if I am killed)’” [UB; *Chr* 162]

Whereas 1st and 2nd persons are represented by special pronouns, other referents are indicated by regular 3rd-person pronouns:

jayw eser al-är-s **ži** čw-ad-ətäl-isg
 well QT this-PL-DAT self:NOM OP-IP-divide-FUT
 “Well (he said), I will divide these up” [LB 38]

Although eser and rok(w)/lok(u) are sometimes regarded as equivalent, their geographic distribution is different: lok(u) is limited to the Lower Svan dialects; its variant rok(w) mostly in Lower Bal; and eser in both UB and LB. The quotative eser also occurs in Cholur, albeit less frequently than lok. In the following sentence, the two quotatives appear side to side (Saghliani 2012: 127):

kā-w lok eser-yən a-t’ax mičaš-te, lēkwīs lok māyena xar!
 OP-OPT QT QT IP-return him-to to-say QT have O3-be
 “(He said): Hey, come back here, I have something to tell you!”

Furthermore, as noted above, rok(w) has a broader range of uses, appearing in some of the same contexts as the clitic -əž/-iž (Boeder 2002). The quotatives rok(w)/lok(u) originated as variants of the verb “say” in the 3rd-singular aorist (rāk(w)e/lāk(w)e) “said”; *T* 248). The origins of eser are unclear, but might be linked in some way to Old Georgian esrēt, esera “thus”, commonly used to introduce quotations (Boeder 2002; Samushia 2014: 273).

Finally, no discussion of Svan quotatives would be complete without mentioning the clitic unq’ws, which signals that the cited speech comes from the mouth (or mouths) of an ogre (Boeder 2002: 36-37). The origin of this particle is obscure, although it bears a curious resemblance to Balkar-Karachay unku “rotten”. Since many Svan men did seasonal work in Balkaria and acquired some competence in the language, this is a plausible, but unproven, source. In the following dialogue between an ogre (dāw) and a human, the speech of each is marked by the appropriate quotative:

jayw eser māj li dec-ləpar čukwān či-d mačēne?
 well QT what is heavens below all-ADV best
 dāwd ädsk’öre i ka laxt’ix: čid mačēne **unq’ws** gimžin, dec-ləpar čukwān
 ogre-ERG thought and OP returned all-ADV best QT earth-on heavens below
 mišgwi pägo li, ežgwärs **unq’ws** dār izelāl gimžin. ež<a> **anq’ws** li mačēne
 my P. is that-kind-DAT QT no.one goes earth-on that QT is best
 (Human asks): “Well, what is the best under the heavens?”

The ogre thought and answered him: “The best **UNQ’WS** on the earth, under the heavens, is my Pägo, no one like him **UNQ’WS** goes about on the earth. He **UNQ’WS** is the best” [UB; *Chr* 154]

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