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Towards An Electronic Analysis of Svan Dialectal Divergences

1. In comparison with the other Kartvelian languages, the most striking feature of Svan consists not in the abundance of formal categories characteristic for its verbal paradigms, but in the diversity of its dialects which has to be considered as the result of a long-lasting historical process of disintegration of a formerly homogeneous proto-language. Although we are still far from being able to establish the features of Proto-Svan in all details, we dispose of a large set of historical developments that can be held responsible for the divergences met with in today's dialects, viz. processes such as apocopy, syncopy, vowel assimilations ("umlaut"), consonant assimilations, and metatheses, the conditions and effects of which were studied in detail by A. ŠANIՇE, V. TOPURIA, M. KALDANI, A. ONIANI and other scholars.

1.1. A few examples from verbal morphology may suffice to show in which way the processes in question took effect in the development of the four main dialects of Svan¹:

Meaning	UBal.	LBal.	Lšx.	Lent.	Proto-Svan	Process(es)
he began	<i>änbine</i>	<i>änbine</i>	<i>enbine</i>	<i>änbine</i>	<i>*an-i-bin-e-</i>	Ü, S
he prepared us	<i>ogwmäre</i>	<i>ogmare</i>	<i>ogmäre</i>	<i>agwamare</i>	<i>*an-gw-a-mär-e-</i>	(U,) L, S
I annoyed him	<i>otorm</i>	<i>otorm</i>	<i>otärm</i>	<i>aturm</i>	<i>*ad-x=w=o-rm-</i>	(U,) C, A
I burnt myself	<i>ätwšixän</i>	<i>otšixen</i>	<i>otšixen</i>	<i>ätwšixen</i>	<i>*ad-xw-i-šixen-</i>	Ü/U, C, S, A
he is going	<i>esgri</i>	<i>esgri</i>	<i>esgri</i>	<i>asxri</i>	<i>*es-gär-i-</i>	S, (C, Ä)
we are going	<i>elgrid</i>	<i>elgrid</i>	<i>elgrid</i>	<i>alsxrid</i>	<i>*es-l-gär-i-d-</i>	S, L/M, (Ä)

1.2. Considering the diversity thus illustrated, two questions arise immediately, viz. to what extent can the relationship between the present dialects be regarded as regular, and how can the divergences be accounted for in a historical perspective both with respect to the relative chronology of the changes that are involved in the emergence of the individual Svan dialects² and with respect to the relationship of Svan with the other Kartvelian languages?

2. The "shewa" phoneme ə (ჲ), which appears in all Svan dialects, is a good example to illustrate the problems indicated above.

2.1. It is well known that for the Svan ə vowel, several historical sources have to be assumed, which may still manifest themselves in innerparadigmatic alternations with other vowels. Such an alternation is, e.g., met with in the case of the Svan verb meaning "to look, check, regard, consider", the infinitive (masdar) of which is given as *lisinžäwi* besides

¹ In this treatise, the following dialects will be considered: Upper Svan: Upper Bal (UBal.), Lower Bal (LBal.); Lower Svan: Lāšx (Lšx.), Lentex (Lent.); the question whether it is necessary to presume a fifth dialect is open to discussion. Symbols used for historical processes: Ü = palatal umlaut, U = labial umlaut, Ä = "back umlaut", S = syncopy, A = apocopy; M = consonant metathesis, C = consonant assimilation, L = consonant loss. — Unless otherwise indicated, the following examples are taken from V. TOPURIA's treatment of the Svan verb (Svanuri ena, I: Zmna; = Šromebi, I, Tbilisi 1967; hereafter: VT).

² For a first attempt to elucidate the relative chronology of the changes involved, cf. B.G. HEWITT, *Bedi Kartlisa* 40, 1982, 330 sqq.

lisənžäwi for UBal.³. In the prose texts of this dialect published in the 1978 chrestomathy⁴, we find the finite form *čvadsinžwi* "he looks down" (83,16) and the derivative *lasənžäwte* "to the look-out" (169,24) side by side, the former showing *-i-* instead of *-ə-*. In the LBal. texts of the same collection, only forms with *-ə-* are met with, viz. *atsənžawex* "they looked at it" (233,13), *asənžäwi* "he is looking" (225,13), and *lasənžäwid* "to the look-out" (203,7). In the Lent. texts of SC, however, only forms with *-i-* seem to occur; cf. *atasinžäwi* "he is looking at it" (295,37), *adasinžavex* "they looked" (311,33), and *läsinžäwid* "to the look-out" (336,9). Yet another picture is provided by the Lăšx dialect where a long *ī* appears in all forms; cp. *čuv otsinžaw / č'otsinžaw* "I looked down at it" (252,32/33; similarly *otsinžaw* 256,21; 23; 262,22), *lamsinžwe* "he looked at me" (254,17), *laxsinžwe* "he looked at them" (288,21; 289,34), *loxsinžaw* "I looked at it" (255,37; 256,6) *čvadsinžwe* "he looked down" (258,9), *ču .. ogsinžwix* "they are looking at us" (260,43), and *lasinžawte* "to the look-out" (252,33).

2.1.1. Considering the presumable prehistory of the word-forms in question, we first have to state that Svan *-si/ənžav-* must be a borrowing of the Georgian verb (*ga-*, *da-*, *mo-*)*sinžva* "to check, to control, to try"⁵, which was borrowed from Persian *sanj-īdan*, *sinj-īdan* "to weigh, to consider" itself⁶. To be more precise, the source of the Svan verb must have been the Georgian present stem, *-sinž-av-*, since *-av-* is a present stem suffix of Georgian only. Within Svan, this suffix was reinterpreted as an integral part of a pseudo-root *-sinžav-* and was thus extended to the whole paradigm; furthermore, the verb received the neutral version vowel, *-a-*, which is usual with secondary (derived or borrowed) verbs in Svan. A similar case is the Svan pseudo-root *-xataw-* ("to paint, draw") which reflects the Georgian present stem *-xat-av-*⁷.

2.1.2. On this basis we may propose that the vowel alternation of UBal. might be a secondary effect of syncope. Let us first consider the finite form, *čv-adsinžwi*, in which syncope affected the two "even" syllables of the underlying form, i.e., the syllable represented by the version vowel and the second "root" syllable, *-žav-*, while the first "root" syllable (being in an "odd" position) remained unaltered (< *ču + ad-a-*sinžaw-i*⁸). In contrast to this, we should expect syncope to have affected the first "root syllable" in the derivative, *lasənžäw-te* (< *la-*sinžaw-i-te*), as well as the masdar form, *lisənžäwi* (< *li-*sinžaw-i*). The *ə* vowel we do find in this position might then be due to a process of resyllabification, the expected forms, [†]*la-snžaw-* and [†]*li-snžaw-i*, implying a phonotactically impossible consonant cluster, *-snž-*. The shewa vowel must in this case be regarded as anaptyctical, not as the immediate reflex of a reduction *-i-* > *-ə-*; the condition of its appearance must have been the given

³ Thus according to the Svan-English Dictionary, compiled by Ch. Gudjedjani and L. PALMAITIS, edited, with a Preface and Index by B.G. HEWITT, Delmar / N.Y. 1985 (hereafter: GP), 167 / 169; the meaning "to taste smth." given there hardly agrees with the use of the word in the text passages quoted below. The UBal. word list compiled by M. ZAVADSKIJ in cooperation with Iv. NIŽARAŽE (in: SMOMPK 10/1, 1890, ЛII-LXXIV; hereafter: MZ) contains but the form *lisənžavi* (лисвнцави), with the meaning "посмотрѣть, узнать" (LXIV). In the glossary which accompanies the Svan tales published in SMOMPK 10/2 (196-241; hereafter: ING), Iv. NIŽARAŽE mentions *lisənžavi* (лисвнцави) as the infinitive of *loxvsinžav* (лохвснцав) with the meaning "я посмотрѣлъ". In the same author's Russian-Svan dictionary (Russko-svanskij slovar', in: SMOMPK 41, 1919; hereafter: INR), the infinitive form *lisənžavi* is given as an equivalent of "попробовать".

⁴ Svanuri enis krestomatia. Teksčebi šekribes A. ŠANIŽEM, M. KALDANMA da Z. ČUMBURIŽEM A. ŠANIŽISA da M. KALDANIS redakciit, Tbilisi 1978 (Zveli kartuli enis katedris šromebi, 21); hereafter: SC.

⁵ Cf. V. TOPURIA, IKE 1, 1946, 84: "სინჯვა — ლო-სვნიჯვა-ი 'დახედა'". Note that *gasinžva* was first given as the equivalent of *lisənžavi* (and *попробовать*) in NIŽARAŽE's dictionary (INR, 323).

⁶ Cf. Iust. ABULAŽE's glossary provided for the 2nd vol. of the edition of the Georgian derivatives of Firdowsi's Šahnāme (Abu-l Qasim Pirdowski, Šahnāme, kartuli versiebi, t. 2, Tbilisi 1934, 565-636), s.v. *sinžva* (614).

⁷ This and other examples were dealt with by V. TOPURIA (VT, 72).

⁸ Here and in the following examples, vowels in syncope position are underlined. — It must be kept in mind that the four separable (or secondary) preverbs, *čv-* "down", *ži-* "up", *sga-* "in(to)", and *ka-* "out, away" do not count when the syncope rule has to be applied; this means that they were not integrated in the verbal body at the time when the process of syncope emerged.

constellation of consonants which emerged by syncope, with a nasal standing between (at least) two other consonants. By extending it to liquids⁹, this rule can be held responsible for all the cases of "reduction of (*u* → *i* and *a*) in words of two and more syllables" as compiled by V. TOPURIA¹⁰, viz. UBal. *lä-mərčil* (vs. *merč*), *li-šald-äni* (vs. *šeld*), *li-čəng-i* (vs. *čəng*), *li-həncw-i* (vs. *həncw*): In all these cases, ə appears in a second syllable that must have been syncopated first (**la-mərčil-* > *†lä-mrčil-* > *lä-mərčil* etc.), and there is no need to refer to the emergence of -ə- in Abkhaz borrowings from Georgian such as *a-məzəz* "reason, cause" < *mizez-i* as TOPURIA did.

2.1.3. The rule of "shewa anaptyxis" thus established seems to be restricted to UBal., however. We need not discuss the Lent. case here because in this dialect, syncope never applied so that *-sinž-* remained unaltered in all environments; cf. esp. *läsinžävüd* "to the look-out" < **la-sinžaw-i-d* (SC 336,9). As against this, Lšx. *-sīnž-* and LBal. *-sənž-* require different explanations. As to the Lšx case, it seems as if the long vowel was here introduced just to avoid the effects of syncope, given the rule that long vowels were not affectable by any type of reduction. In the present example, this might well have been due to a steady influence of Georgian, i.e., *-sīnžaw-* was continuously "restituted" by Georgian *-sinžav-*. The case of LBal. is more difficult to account for. If it is true that in this dialect, the first "root" vowel is ə both in "syncopated" position (*asənžävüwi* < **a-sinžaw-i-*, *lasənžävüd* < **la-sinžaw-i-d*) and in "unsyncopated" position (*atsənžävex* < **ad-x=a-sinžaw-e-x*)¹¹, we might propose that in LBal., a secondary levelling might have taken place after the effects of syncope and anaptyxis had applied in the same way as in UBal. In other words, we might assume that after the emergence of -ə- in "syncopated" position, this spread analogically to those forms where *-i-* should have survived. We could then suppose a reverse analogy to be responsible for the unexpected infinitive form of UBal., *lisinžävüwi*, as against "regular" *lisənžävüwi*.

2.1.4. All this would presuppose that the two Upper Svan dialects once shared the anaptyxis rule as a common feature. Unfortunately, the archaic texts of folk poetry as collected in Svanuri Poesia¹² do not give any hints as to this question because here, only forms with *-i-* unsyncopated in "odd" position are found, viz. *ansinžwe* "she looked out" (SP 57:46) < **an-a-sinžaw-e-*, *loxvsinžäv* "I looked" (32:29 a.o.) < **la-xv-a-sinžaw-e*, *lamsinžäv* "look at me!" (41b:47) < **la-m=a-sinžaw-e*, and also *laxasinžwe* "he looked" (41b:41) < **la-x=a-sinžaw-e-* as a hybrid form where the second syllable vowel (i.e. the version vowel, *-a-*) was not syncopated while the fourth syllable vowel (*-a-* in *-žav-*) was.

2.2. A different case is provided by the Svan verb meaning "to lock, to close". This verb is also well attested in the poetic texts where we find the present forms *micqanali* / *micqanālix* "he / they close (them) for me" (SP 54b:17 / 54a:45; 54b:35) and *xocqanālix* / *xocqanalix* "they close (them) for him" (61:49; 52:10; 63:74) as well as the participle *ləcqane* "closed" (62b:6) and the derivative noun *lacqäns* (dat.) "on the bolt" (41b:31). By contrasting the 3rd sg. perfect *otcəqnala* "he is said to have closed" which appears in the proverb *kor mekvšango qorar otcəqnala* "after the house is broken, somebody must have slammed the door"¹³, we

⁹ Note that exactly the same kind of anaptyxis refilling syllables lost by syncope must have occurred in Old Irish; cf. R. THURNEYSSEN, *A Grammar of Old Irish*, Dublin 1946, 70, § 112 with examples such as *immainse* "bound" < **immnse* < **immnse* < **imm-nasse* etc.

¹⁰ IKE 1, 1946, 84-85.

¹¹ To the examples given above, we may add *asənžävüda* "he used to look" (impf.) < **a-sinžav-i-da* and *laysənžävex* "they looked" (aor.) < **la-a-sinžav-e-x* from the collection Svanuri prozauli tekštebi II: Balszemouri kulo, tekštebi šekribes A. DAVITIANma, V. TOPURIAM da M. KALDANma, Tbilisi 1957 (hereafter: SPT 2), 65, 3 / 13.

¹² Svanuri Poesia, I, simgerebi šekribes da kartulad targmnes A. ŠANIŽEM, V. TOPURIAM, M. GUŽEŽIANma, Tbilisi 1939 (hereafter: SP).

¹³ Thus according to V. NIŽARAŽE's collection edited in SMOMPK X/2, 1 (no. 3: Кор меквшанго, қорар оҗцвқнала); a slightly different version was published by the same author (under his pseudonym, Tavisupali Svani) in *Žveli Sakartvelo* 2/2, 1913, 98 (no. 6): *kora mekvšango, qorar eser erees otcəqnala*.

arrive at a basic root structure *-cəqan-* the two vowels of which were alternately affectable by syncope, cp. *xocqanālix* < **x=o-cəqan-āl-i-x-* and *otcəqnala* < **ad-x=o-cəqan-āl-a-*. The same analysis is possible for the impf. *xocqanāldax* "they used to close" (< **x=o-cəqan-āl-i-da-x-*) and the simple derivative *lacqanre* "of the bolts" (< **la-cəqan-ar-e-*), appearing in UBal. prose texts (SC 30,15; 110,35) alongside *lalcəqnāls* (dat.) "the bolt" and the present form *žilcəqnāli* "he holds closed for you" (SC 110,35 / SC 56,13) which are secondary derivations from an underlying deverbal noun, **la-cəqan-āl-i-* (**la-la=cəqan-āl-i-s-*, with a "double" noun prefix, and < **ž=i-la=cəqan-āl-i-*).

2.2.1. On the basis of this evidence, there is good reason to distrust the masdar forms *licqane* (лицqвне) and *licqanā/ali* (лицqвна/али) appearing in older glossaries ("MZ" = SMOMPK X/1, LXV and "ING" = X/2,8, s.v. *xocqanalix*) with the meaning "запереть", for they cannot be motivated by reference to the normal rules of syncope. We should expect **licqane* and **licqanāli* instead, < **li-cəqan-e-* and **li-cəqan-āl-i-*. As the verb in question seems not to be mentioned in later dictionaries, it remains unclear whether the given masdar forms are at all reliable.

2.2.2. If we are right, then, to posit *-cəqan-* as the basic form of the root, the question arises how to account for its *-ə-*. As it cannot be anaptyctic in the given constellation¹⁴, we are left with a two syllable root which must be regarded as secondary. And indeed, we can identify the *-an-* element contained in this "root" with the causative marker which is represented, e.g., in Old Georgian *-zǧuan-* "to send" as a derivative of *-zǧu-* "to go ahead, proceed"; the Svan equivalent of this is the root **-žegw-*¹⁵ (thus in *xožegw*, "he goes ahead, leads", SP 52:19; the later pronunciation¹⁶ is *-žog(w)-* as in *xožog* 61:45) with its derivative **-žegwan-* (cp. the forms *xožǧwāne* "he sends", < **x=o-žegw-ān-e-*, and *otžogwāne* "he sent", < **ad-x=o-žegw-ān-e-*)¹⁷. But what, then, is the basic root contained in *-cəq-an-*? As a root †*-cəq-* seems not to exist as such in Svan, we may propose to take this as a variant of the root *-ciq-* meaning "to be stuck, fixed"¹⁸; cp., e.g., the Lāšx sentence *berži keṭ lok xaciq i ečeži ču lok xāb amiran*¹⁹ "a copper bolt is said to be fixed (there) and with this Amiran is said to be bound", where *xaciq* is used in connection with *keṭ* "bolt" (< Georg. *keṭva* "locking"?), thus indicating how the causative *-cəq-an-* could have received its meaning. If this analysis is right, we have to deal with a vowel alternation of *-i-* vs. *-ə-* again, but as was stated above, this cannot be due to anaptyxis as in the case of *-sinžaw-*. It seems not probable either to assume original ablaut here, for there is no indication of ablaut in any other form of the root *-ciq-*²⁰. It is therefore necessary to look for a different source of the *-ə-* in *-cəqan-*. This might be found in the constellation of vowels in the given two-syllable "root": If the causative was originally derived from *-ciq-* as **-ciqan-*, the substitution of *-i-* by *-ə-* might have been caused by the *-a-* of the following syllable.

¹⁴ Note that *-cəq-* cannot represent a primary consonant cluster.

¹⁵ Cf., e.g., G.A. KLIMOV, *Ėtimologičeskij slovar' kartvel'skix jazykov*, Moskva 1964, 240-241 s.vv. *zǧw-* and *zǧw-an-*, and H. FÄHNRIK (PENRIXI) / Z. SARŽVELAŽE, *Kartvelur enata eṭimologiuri leksikoni*, Tbilisi 1990, 432 s.v. **ḍ,ḍḍ-ḍ/ḍ,ḍḍ-*.

¹⁶ From the archaic form *xožegw*, it is clear that *-o-* in *-žogw-* is due to a secondary umlaut process, not to a special ablaut formation (cf. KLIMOV, l.c.: "огласовка").

¹⁷ Cf. T. GAMQRELIŽE / G. MAČAVARIANI, *Sonanṭa sistema da ablauti kartvelur enebši*, Tbilisi 1965, 250 n. 3.

¹⁸ KLIMOV, o.c., 224 identifies this with Megr. *ciḱ-* and Laz. *cig-* meaning "to push into".

¹⁹ Svanuri prozauli ṭekṣṭebi IV: Lašxuri ḱilo, ṭekṣṭebi ṣekribes Arsena ONIANma, Maksime KALDANma da Aleksandre ONIANma, redakcia gauḱetes Maksime KALDANma da Aleksandre ONIANma, Tbilisi 1979 (hereafter: SPT 4), 46,4. The same content is reported in the Lāšx text no. 279 of SC where the form *xociq* is used (257,17).

²⁰ KLIMOV's proposal to see a zero grade in the Svan infinitive form *li-cəq-e* ("в сван. форем налицо чередование ступеней огласовки") is misleading; instead we have to assume syncope (< **li-ciq-e-*) as in the aor. form *xocqe* (SC 257,21; < **x=o-ciq-e-*).

2.3. There are indeed many other words which show that the assumption of a substitution of *-i-* by *-ə-* caused by a following *-a-* is justified. One of these is the adjective meaning "red" which appears as *çərni* (nom.sg.) in the Upper Svan dialects (UBal., e.g., SC 43,25; LBal., 187,6) and Lāšx (247,35). While *çərni* is also the form met with in the archaic poetic texts (e.g., SP 32:15; adv. *çernid* 6:13 a.o.), the fourth Svan dialect, Lenṭex, which is peculiar by not showing the effects of syncope, proves that the bisyllabic form emerged from an original trisyllabic one: here we find the unsynocopated nom.sg. *çərāni* (SC 290,13 a.o.). The assumption that the underlying form contained an *a* vowel in its middle syllable (**çərani-*) is further supported by various derivatives of the word appearing in other dialects; cf., e.g., the adjective *məçran* "reddish" (UBal.: SC 135,29; Lšx.: 267,38), < **mə-çəran-a*, or the many forms of the UBal. verb "to become / make red" such as the presents *ču ičrānix* "they become red" (SC 134,36; < **ču + i-çəran-i-x-*) and *ču xecrāni* "it becomes red to him", (142,20; < **ču + x=e-čəran-i-*), the imperfects *čvacrānda* "he used to make red" (138,1, < **č + a-çəran-i-d-a-*) and *xecranōlda* "he used to become red" (145,10, < **x=e-çəran-ōl-d-a-*), the aorist *ču xocrān(e)* "it made him sth. red" (156,21, < **ču + x=o-çəran-e-*) or the participles *ləçrane* (SPT 1,2,13²¹, < **lə-çəran-e-*) and *ču ləçrana* (SC 145,16, < **ču + lə-çəran-a-*) "having become red". Of course, forms showing syncope of the *-a-* vowel occur as well in the paradigm of this verb; cp. *čvalçərnēli* "is said to have become red" (< **ču + ad-lə-çəran-ē-l=i*, SPT 1,2,13) or *ži lāmçərne* "he made red for me" (< **ži + la-m=i-çəran-e-*, SP 102a:71).

2.3.1. **çərani* can thus be established with certainty as the underlying form of *çərni*. At the same time, it enables us to trace cognates of the word outside Svan. It has for long been proposed that Svan. *çərni* might be historically identical with the Armenian adjective meaning "purple red", *çirani*²². This identification is now strongly supported by the fact that the Svan word must once have had a third vowel, *-a-*, in its middle. Although the etymology of Armenian *çirani* is far from being clear itself, it is hardly possible that it might have been borrowed from some kind of Proto-Svan; the opposite case, however, may well be true, all the more since this would easily explain the peculiar structure of the Svan word²³. In this connection it may be interesting to note that a homophonous word *çiran-i* is attested for Georgian as well, as the name of a "sort of apricot"²⁴; this may as well be a borrowing from Armenian, but of the noun *çiran* denoting *prunus armeniaca* rather than the adjective *çirani*.

2.3.2. By deducing Svan. **çərani-* from an older **çirani-*, we may indeed take this word as another example of the rule proposed above, according to which the shewa vowel must have

²¹ Svanuri prozauli ṭekṣtebi, I: Balszemouri ḳilo, ṭekṣtebi ṣekṣribes A. ŠANIŽEM da V. TOPURIAM, Tbilisi 1939 (hereafter: PUB).

²² Cf. N.Ja. MARR, IAN 6/9, 1915, 778-779; Hr. AČARJAN, Hayeren armatakan bařaran, B, Erevan ²1973, 460; K.H. SCHMIDT, Studien zur Rekonstruktion des Lautsystems der südkaukasischen Grundsprache, Wiesbaden 1962, 38. It is by no means certain that the meaning 'Purpur' given here is primary as against the adjectival usage. And as the nom.sg. form of the word ends in *-i* in all Svan dialects, SCHMIDT was not justified to posit "*çəran*" as its basic form; cf. also case forms such as the dat.sg. *çərnis* (UBal.: SC 44,7; LBal.: 213,35) or the dat.pl. *çərniärs* (UBal.: SC 44,31). A stem *çəran-* can only be assumed as the basis of derivatives (cf. the examples given above).

²³ As to the word-final non-apocopated *-i* cf. E. OSIŽE, IKEÇ 9, 1982, 47 according to whom this is frequently met with in adjectives. In the present case, however, it might be an immediate reflex of the word-final *-i* of the Armenian word, all the more since this bears the accent. — A root etymology connecting Svan *çərni-* with Georgian *çitel-i* "red" and other Caucasian words meaning "fire" or "blood" or the like such as Avar. *çar*, Axxax. *çari*, Chechen. *çe* or, within Kartvelian, Georgian *çida* "menstrual blood", as proposed by N. ARDOṬELI on the occasion of the present paper during the Kutaisi conference, has nothing in its favour if the structure of the Svan word is considered.

²⁴ Cf. D. ČUBINAŠVILI, Kartul-rusuli leksiḳoni, Sanktpeterburg 1887 / Tbilisi 1984, 1687 who refers to ღარანდილი as to its meaning. AČARJAN (l.c.) proposed that Georg. *çiran-i* might be homonymous (and historically identical with) *çeram-i*, a more usual name of the apricot *armeniaca vulgaris* or *prunus vulgaris*; this identification is also suggested by Sulxan-Saba ORBELIANI who referred to ღარანდილი for *çeram-i* in his dictionary (Txzulebani, ṭ. IV/2, Tbilisi 1966, 399).

replaced a former *-i-* in the position before a following *-a-*. Additionally, it makes it possible to determine the position of the rule within the relative chronology of the vocalic changes of Svan. Given that the *-ə-* occurs in all varieties of Svan, it must have been a feature of the Svan protolanguage rather than the individual dialects; in this respect, it is diametrically opposed to most of the other vocalic changes, especially the various types of palatal "umlaut". The rule has a striking resemblance, however, with the so-called "back umlaut" of *-e- > -ä- (> -a-)* caused by a following *-a-* as established by M. KALDANI²⁵, and it was in fact envisaged in this sense by E. OSIՅԷ in an article about the Svan auslaut²⁶. Astonishingly enough, the possibility of establishing a rule *-i- > -ə- /_-a-* seems to have escaped KALDANI's notice although he had to deal with alternances of the type *i/ə* as appearing in words like *šdik* "tooth" with dat. *šdək* or *čišx* "foot" with dat. *čəšx*. While KALDANI himself attributed the emergence of shewa in these forms to the influence of a former word-final *-w*, he also considered G. MAČAVARIANI's proposal²⁷ to regard *ə* as primary here, *i* being a variant caused by palatal umlaut (according to a proportion pl. *qanär : qän* "ox" ≈ pl. *šdəkär : šdik*). It goes without saying that these explanations are mutually contradictory, at least for parts of the material involved, and that further investigation is necessary before the "back umlaut" process *i > ə /_a* can be taken for granted. Let me discuss just one more example which is crucial in this respect.

2.4. As was noted above, the Svan word meaning "foot" belongs to the nouns that show the alternation of *i* and *ə* in their stem. Different from the cases discussed so far, the forms met with in the published texts give a rather chaotic impression.

2.4.1. In UBal., e.g., we find *-i-* in the nom.sg. *čišx* (SPT 1, 67,1 a.o.), the dat.sg. *čišxs* (62,9), the gen. *čišxi* (SC 33,10 a.o.), and the erg. *čišxd* (92,25), while *ə* is met with in the instr.sg. *čəšxšw* (SC 120,12 a.o.), the postpositional dat. (?) *čəšx-žm* (SC 57,27) and the plural forms nom. *čəšxär* (SPT 1, 1,11 a.o.), dat. *čəšxärs* (61,8 a.o.), erg. *čəšxärd* (36,34), instr. *čəšxaršw* (SC 129,37 a.o.), and gen. *čəšxre* (33,13 a.o.). In quite the same way, LBal. has the nom.sg. *čišx* (SC 174,19 a.o.) and the gen.sg. *čišxmiš* (216,30) besides the gen.sg. *čəšxe* (176,22), the instr.sg. *čəšxšw* (224,39), the dat.sg. (?) *čəšx* (227,18), and the nom.pl. *čəšxär* (SC 210,35 a.o.). In Lent., we note *i* in most singular and plural case forms such as the nom.sg. *čišx* (SC 296,6 a.o.), the dat.sg. *čišxs* (332,13), the gen.sg. *čišxe* (295,35 a.o.), the instr.sg. *čišxšw* (334,31 a.o.) and the nom.pl. *čišxär* (307,38 a.o.), but also a dat.pl. *čəšxärs* (345,35 a.o.) with shewa. Only Lāšx seems to be consistent in that all case forms show *i*; cp. the nom.sg. *čišx* (SC 249,30 a.o.), the gen.sg. *čišxe* (259,3 a.o.) besides *čišxi* (262,23 a.o.), but also the nom.pl. *čišxar* (240,35 a.o.), the dat.pl. *čišxars* (240,27) and the gen.sg. *čišxare* (251,10 a.o.).

2.4.2. A similar picture is provided by the archaic poetic texts. Here we have *i* in most singular forms such as the nom. *čišx* (SP 14:72 a.o.) with its archaic variant *čišxi* (10:25), the dat. *čišxs* (14:60 a.o.), the gen. forms *čišxi* (94a:9), *čišxiš* (32:32 a.o.), *čišxmiš* (8:8 a.o.) and (arch.) *čišxiše* (97a:61), but also *ə* in the (arch.) dat. *čəšxas* (1a:8 a.o.), the postpositional dat. (?) *čəšx-ži* (67:6), and the instr. *čəšxšw* (94b:20). In the plural forms, however, *ə* prevails as in the nom. *čəšxär* (8:207 a.o.), the dat. forms *čəšxärs* (41b:16) and *čəšxars* (65:59), the instr. *čəšxaršw* (27a:63), and the gen. *čəšxräš* (51: 164,61 a.o.), but a nom.pl. *čišxär* occurs as well (63b:145).

2.4.3. The off-hand impression that there are no rules involved seems to be further supported if we look at derivatives of the word. Among them, we find *i* in the UBal. diminutive

²⁵ M. KALDANI, *Svanuri enis ponetiķa*, 1: Umlautiṣ sistema svanurṣi, Tbilisi 1969, 25 ff.: "უკანა მიმართულების უმლაუტი".

²⁶ ИКЕС 9, 1982, 43: "разновидность регрессивно-направленного умлаута". The same author's paper "Чередувание гласных *i/ə* в сванском языке" ("доклад прочитан на научной сессии Тбилисского гос. университета 30 мая 1977 года": ib. n. 14) was not accessible to me.

²⁷ G. MAČAVARIANI, TGU Ṣromebi 96, 1963, 148.

čišxīlar-ži (SC 243,2) "on the little feet" and the adjective *ləčišx* "having ... feet" met with in identical form in UBal. (SC 158,23 a.o.), Lšx. (SC 243,5 a.o.), and Lent. (SC 314,28). Both the diminutive and the adjective occur in the poetic texts as well; cp. nom.sg. *čišxild* (SP 46:33), nom.pl. *čišxildār* (8:162), and *ləčišx* (62c:20 a.o.). As against this, *ə* is characteristic for *čəšxäš* "square dance" as appearing in UBal. (SC 59,11 a.o.) and the poetic texts (nom. *čəšxäš*: SP 30:25; dat. *čəšxäšs*: 52:19 a.o.; erg. *čəšxšed*: 30:29); in this word, it is only Lāšx again which has *i* (*čišxäš*: SC 260,15 a.o.).

2.4.4. Nevertheless, this latter word may conceal a clue to the problem. We first have to assume that it is derived from *čišx* not with a plain suffix but as a hypostatic paradigm built upon a genitive case form, just as *perx-isa* which we find as a synonym of Georgian *perx-uli* in the Pshav and Khevsurian dialects²⁸; its basic meaning can thus be established as "that (sc. dance) of the foot". Contrasting it with the actual genitive forms of *čišx* as appearing in the Svan dialects (e.g., UBal. and Lšx. *čišxi*, LBal. *čišxmiš* and *čəšxe*, Lšx. *čišxe*, Lent. *čišxe* and *čišxi*, as well as the forms *čišxi*, *čišxiš*, *čišxmiš* and *čišxiše* of the poetic texts), we may further state that as against these forms, *čəšxäš*- has to be considered as more archaic because its second vowel cannot be due to an analogical levelling while all the genitive forms can²⁹. The question then remains what to posit as the basic shape of the derivative. There seem to be two possibilities: Either we have to deal with an underlying **čišxeša-*, with an "emphatic" genitive case ending as in Georgian *perxisa*, or *čəšxäš*- goes back to an older **čišxäš-i*, with a non-extended ending as in Megrelian *kučxiši*, a derivative of *kučx-i* "foot" used in the word pair *kučxiši obireši* "dancing place"³⁰. In the former case, the *-ä-* would have emerged from a stem-final *-e-* via KALDANI's "back umlaut", in the latter, by palatal umlaut of a stem-final *-a-*. In this case, we would have the constellation of *-i-* followed by *-a-* again, which in its turn might be responsible for the shewa appearing in the (poetic and modern) UBal. forms³¹.

2.4.5. To a certain degree, the assumption that the rule *i > ə / _a* plays a rôle in the emergence of shewa in the paradigm of Svan *čišx* is also supported by the case forms proper of this word. According to the examples listed above, *ə* is most frequently met with in plural forms such as *čəšxär*, the basic element of which is the suffix *-är* (< **-are*). If we accept that this suffix was always added to the last consonant of a given noun stem, irrespective of stem final vowels appearing elsewhere in the paradigm, the underlying form must have been **čišx-are* in any case; here, again, we find *-i-* followed by *-a-*³².

2.4.6. It is true, of course, that Lāšx where we find *-i-* in the root syllable throughout seems to speak against the assumption of shewa resulting from "back umlaut". For this dialect, however, we may claim a peculiar tendency towards a levelling of vowel alternations within paradigms, just as in the case of the verb *-sīnžaw-* which was dealt with above. The tendency towards levelling is not restricted to Lāšx, though; it is more or less characteristic for all modern dialects of Svan, as the competing case forms show right from the beginning. Given this overall tendency, the question arises whether we can at all expect to prove or disprove a sound change the conditions of which could be obscured in certain environments by the

²⁸ Cf. Kartuli enis ganmartebiti leksikoni, t. VII, Tbilisi 1962, 78.

²⁹ This view was first expressed by N.Ja. MARR (IAN 6/6, 1912, 1094): "судя по Р. ჰომბა-შ, основа слова гласная — ṭiṣq̄a ... В сванскомъ Р. падежь ჰომბა-შ ṭiṣq̄aṣ (у, ин ჰომბაშ ṭaṣq̄aṣ, თრ ლაჰომბაშ la-ṭaṣq̄aṣ) значить хороводъ ..."

³⁰ Cf. MARR, l.c., and I. KIPŠIDZE, Grammatika mingrel'skago (iverskago) jazyka s xrestomatieju i slovarom, S.-Peterburg 1914, 263 / 324.

³¹ Since MARR's times, several authors have adopted the view that Svan *čišx* might be a borrowing of the Zan word (cf., e.g., V. TOPURIA, TUM 8, 1928, 342; GAMQRELIZE / MAČAVARIANI, o.c., 49). If the stem final *-a-* concealed in the derivative is primary, this is hardly plausible, however, for neither Megrelian *kučxi* nor Laz *kučxe* show a stem-final *-a-*. FÄHNRIK / SARŽVELAŽE (o.c., 195) now regard Svan *čišx* as inherited.

³² Even if the verbal form *žačəšxex* we meet in SP (7:53) with the meaning "they knocked (or trod?) you down" (*čiw žačəšxex gimasuḡwi* გაგაკრეს მოწახე) is derived from *čišx-*, it cannot prove that *i* was "umlauted" to *ə* before *e* as well; for in the given constellation, *ə* might be anaptyctical again (in "syncope" position: < *ž-a-čišx-e-x*).

effects of innerparadigmatic analogy. It seems a necessary conclusion indeed that we should rely upon such cases first where secondary levelling can be excluded. The adjective *çarni* may be a good example of this principle — note that it is here that the result of the assumed "back umlaut" is found in Lãšx as well.

2.5. The same principle must be kept in mind with a view to another possible source of shewa in Svan. This can be seen in the case of the word meaning "saddle", which appears as *həngir* in UBal. Besides this nom.sg. (SC 156,32; SP 1c:17 a.o.), we find a dat. *həngirs* and an adv. *həngird* in prose as well as poetic texts (SC 156,33 / 156,18; 102a:16 / 77c:17), contrasting with the gen.sg. *həngri* (SC 156,34) and plural forms such as dat.pl. *həngrärs* (SP 74:20), but also derivatives of the type *həngril* (dim.; SP 1a:11). Taking all these forms together, we should arrive at an underlying **həngir-i* or the like (with normal syncopy leading from **həngirär-* to *həngrär-* etc.).

2.5.1. This assumption, however, does not agree with what we have in the Lentex dialect. Here, the nom.sg. is *unəgir* (SC 320,4.7.8), which immediately recalls Georgian *unagir-i*. The question arises whether the Svan word is a borrowing from Georgian and whether **unagir-i* might be the underlying form of the UBal. word as well. In this case, we should have to assume, on the one hand, that the word received a prothetic *h-* in UBal.³³; on the other hand, forms such as the dat.pl. *həngrärs* would have to be regarded as secondary because they would presuppose a "double syncopy", starting from an underlying **(h)ənəgirär-s*. It is well conceivable, however, that such an irregular "double syncopy" could easily emerge on the basis of the internal morphological rules of Upper Svan, given that a nom.sg. *həngir*, even if it represented a tetrasyllabic **hənəgir-i* originally, could be taken as representing a trisyllabic **həngir-i* right from the beginning. In this way, an analogical pl. **həngr-är-* could develop alongside the regularly expected *†həngir-är-* (< **hənəgir-är-*).

2.5.2. If the Svan forms can represent Georg. *unagir-i*, then, the proposal suggests itself that the shewa vowel appearing in UBal. might represent a former *u*, derounded by influence of the following *-a-*. If this is right, we arrive at a third variant of "back umlaut" ($u > ə / _a$), and indeed, both "new" types thus established support each other in that they can be described as reflecting the same phonetic principle, viz. centralization. And in the sense of an assimilation caused by the central vowel *-a-*, this process seems much more plausible off-hand than, e.g., KALDANI's assumption of a change $i > ə / _w$ ³⁴.

3. It goes without saying that the assumption of "umlauts" and similar changes requires a verification on the basis of as much linguistic material of Svan as possible. Considering the dialectal divergences as noted above and the possibility of secondary levelling characteristic for all spoken varieties of the language, we are forced to look for heuristic procedures that permit to establish a reliable basis of argumentation whenever different explanations are feasible. In my view, such a basis can only be built upon an exhaustive computational analysis of the Svan language material, and there are at least two distinct approaches that must be envisaged in this connection.

3.1. A first approach of preparing a computational analysis of Svan consists in establishing a plain lexicographical data base. As we are dealing with questions of historical change, it will not suffice in this respect to collect and classify the lexical material of today's usage; instead, all the older material available since GÜLDENSTÄDT's enquiries of the 1790ies has as

³³ Alternatively, Georgian *unagir-i* could have had an initial *h-* itself originally; in this case, we might presume a relationship with Old Georg. *hune-* "horse". We have to consider, however, that the Old Georgian sources suggest a meaning "draught horse" rather than "riding horse" for *hune-* (as against *cxen-i*; cf. J. GIPPERT, *Hippologica caucasica*, in: *Man and the Animal World*, Budapest 1998, 613-622) so that a derivation of the word meaning "saddle" becomes less probable.

³⁴ M. KALDANI, o.c., 114.

well to be taken into account. It is a pity that among the dictionaries and glossaries published so far³⁵, most are concerned with the UBal. dialect only; it is to be hoped that lexical material of the other dialects will be published soon³⁶.

3.1.1. Of course, the building of a lexical data base of Svan requires several important preconsiderations. First, we need a clear separation of "source" and "target" languages, with a unique treatment of different graphic properties. The impact of this requirement may well be illustrated by looking at the Svan primer, Lušnu Anban, as an example. Here we find Svan words contrasted with their Georgian and Russian equivalents, Svan (i.e., UBal.) being written in Cyrillic letters (with additional marks); cp. the reproduction of p. 85:

<i>გერბეტ</i>	ღმერთი	Богъ
<i>წყილიან</i>	წმინდა	Святой
<i>ანგლოზ</i>	ანგელოზი	Ангель
<i>სგუებნავმეკვიცგ</i>	წინასწარ-მეტყველი	Пророкъ
<i>კაჲ, ჰორია</i>	ემშაკი	Дьяволъ
<i>ჰრვილ</i>	სარწმუნოება	Вѣра
<i>ლოც</i>	ლოცვა	Молитва
<i>ჰვარ</i>	ჯვარი	Крестъ
<i>ლაჲუამ (ვ)³⁷ ლაჲუმი (კ)³⁷</i>	ეკლესია	Церковь христіанск.
<i>ბან (ვ)³⁷ ნან (კ)³⁷</i>	მღვდელი	Священникъ христіан.

For being usable in a data base, the information contained in this list must be interpreted in terms of modern linguistics; cp the following renderings:

<i>gerbet</i>	ღმერთი	Бог
<i>çqilian</i>	წმინდა	Святой
<i>angloz</i>	ანგელოზი	Ангел
<i>sgwebnawmekvisg</i>	წინასწარმეტყველი	Пророк
<i>kaჲ, horia</i>	ემშაკი	Дьявол
<i>ჰrvil</i>	სარწმუნოება	Вера
<i>loc</i>	ლოცვა	Молитва
<i>ჰvar</i>	ჯვარი	Крест
<i>laqwam (v)³⁷ laqwmī (k)³⁷</i>	ეკლესია	Церковь христианская
<i>baჲ (v)³⁷ paჲ (k)³⁷</i>	მღვდელი	Священник христианский

³⁵ Cf. B. OUTTIER, *Bedi Kartlisa* 40, 1982, 200-211 for a survey of Svan dictionaries and glossaries, where the "Сборникъ словъ" (Svan-Georgian-Russian) contained in the first Svan primer, *Lušnu Anban / Сванетская Азбука* (Tiflis 1864), pp. 85-147 was omitted though (ca. 1350 words). The most comprehensive collections that have been published so far are the *Сването-русскій сборникъ словъ* ("MZ", cf. above; ca. 1200 words), the *Русско-сванскій словарь* ("INR", cf. above; ca. 15000 words), the index of word forms contained in V. TOPURIA's *სვანური ენა*, 295-375 ("VT", ca. 12000 word forms) and the *Svan-English Dictionary* compiled by Ch. GUDJEDJANI and L. PALMAITIS ("GP", ca. 10000 word forms).

³⁶ Hitherto unpublished lexical sources I know of are: a complete computer index of word forms as appearing in *Svanuri Poezia*, compiled by J. GIPPERT (1st edition Berlin 1988, 2nd revised edition Frankfurt 1995), a *Svan-Georgian-Russian Dictionary* compiled by Karpez DONDUA (ca. 2700 words) and an extensive dictionary of Svan to be published by the Linguistics Institute of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. The latter has not been accessible to me so far.

³⁷ (ვ) = "Вольная или Верхне-Ингульская Сванетія", (კ) = "Княжеская Сванетія".

3.1.2. Second, there must be a clear distinction of linguistic material and elements of grammatical analysis as the ones we find in GUDJEDJANI's and PALMAITIS's UBal. dictionary; cp. the following list of entries:

a	(dem.ptc.): <u>ž'ankid a qän i adje</u> "he-took <u>this</u> ox and took-it-away"	abēla	vid. libēle t, 2
-a, a	(ptc.irg.): <u>ayerā ser?</u> "hast thou already come?"	abērga	vid. libērgē, 2
abāba	vid. libābe t, 2	abečķws	viā libečķw 1v, 12
ababāj	woe!	abwra	vid. libwre t, 2
ababaja	(LB.) vid. ababāj	ābza	vid. libze t, 2
abāluni	vid. libēle t, 4	abid	vid. libde 2v, 11 ³
abāmda	vid. libem, 2	abīds	vid. libīd, 12
abānda	vid. libānde, 2	abičķw	vid. libčķwe 2v, 11 ³
abāka	vid. libāke t, 2	abiqw	vid. libqw, 11 ³
abāčķw	vid. libečķw 1v, 11 ³	abmuni	vid. libem, 4
abga 7	knapsack, saddle-bag	abžura	vid. libžura, 2
abga	vid. libge t, 2	abrālda	vid. librāli, 2
abge	vid. libge t, 1	ābreg 6	bandit
ābde	vid. libde 2v, 5	ābregob 7	banditry

3.1.3. Third, the data base must be designed to contain not only lemmatic entries (nominatives, masdars) but also all kinds of inflected word forms as these are a most important factor of historical-comparative analyses of the kind illustrated above. In fact, the dictionaries and glossaries published so far contain lots of inflectional variants, but it is not always easy to find out according to what criteria these were selected; cp., e.g., the following list of verbal forms pertaining to UBal. *libqwe* "to cleave smth. in two parts" as appearing in GUDJEDJANI's and PALMAITIS's dictionary again:

<i>abiqw</i>	vid. <i>libqw</i> , 11:3	[i.e. aor.act., 3.ps.sg.subj.]
<i>abuqw</i>	vid. <i>libqwe</i> , 2v, 11:2	[i.e. aor.act., 2.ps.sg.subj.]
<i>ābqwe</i>	vid. <i>libqwe</i> , 2v, 5	[i.e. fut.pfv.act. (3.ps.sg.subj.)]
<i>biqwa</i>	vid. <i>libqwe</i> , 2	[i.e. impf. (3.ps.sg.subj.)]
<i>biqwe</i>	vid. <i>libqwe</i> , 1	[i.e. pres. (3.ps.sg.subj.)]
<i>libqwe</i>	(m.) t, 2v: to cleave smth. (Od) in two parts	[masd.]
<i>mebqwe</i> 3	(n.r.) cleft in two parts vid. <i>libqwe</i>	[nom.res.]
<i>otbīqwa</i>	vid. <i>libqwe</i> , 13	[i.e. perf. (3.ps.subj.)]

For the data base to be exhaustive, it will be desirable, of course, to collect complete paradigms of given words, not only what is represented in the published lexical material, and it may well be necessary to provide a more detailed subdivision of dialects according to the linguistic differences met with in them.

3.2. Alternatively, the lexical material of Svan can be digitised directly on the basis of published texts. The first step to be undertaken in this direction consists in mere data entry which can be done in two ways, either manually or by using an optical scanner. The latter case presupposes the adaptation of so-called "OCR" (Optical character recognition) programs to the special requirements of Svan, and its results depend a lot on the printing quality of the original. It may be sufficient here to contrast a few plain images of printed texts and the result of their automatical "recognition" to show what problems are involved in this task.

3. ხვალმი ი ლეღვი ალაბ

ხვალმი ლადლ ნამპარვი ჯემალადლ ლი ი ეჯ ლადლ ლიმზერ ხარხ ჩრძჷ ქორისგა. ხვალმი მეგემ ლეგბრა ლექქვანჩუნ ლეგ. ხოშა გეგებ ლი ი ამის ხემზირხ, ესეჷა გეჷმ ხარ. ხოლამ მუჭედი პატრონს ი ვეჷშჷამ ამ ლადლიმდ ერს მამილვ ხორი ნამზურუნდ ი ერს—ლეგრალ. ალ ნამზურუნ მოჯლნი ნათორ ხარხ. ხვალმი ლადლ ქა ნარბინლუნლო ლემზერარს ანჷალის. ეჩქანლო ესეჷა ხვალმი მამილვ ი ედ ლეგრალ ხაგედ, ეჯარს მემზერი ჟი ხამზერი ი ხაბიც ხვალმის, ერე „მიჩა მეფეჷდე მანგი ათქანბენას ამნ მუძღენის, ხოლა მეჷვარდელ, გეჷმ ი მუჭედი მთლა ქ' ათქანბენას ი ანსიპენას აშ სეგებდ ი ლერსგვანთე ალ მამელიშ ი ედ ლეგრალე მუძღენი“. ეჩქანლო მამილვს ჩეჷმსენის. ეჩის ილეგრალს ე' აჯანბ ი ჩუ იდარალს. მოგდნს მამელი ი ედ ლეგრალ ლეთხუმდ ხარ ლეყდი ი მუზეგებ მან ლი ქორისგა. ეჩქანლო კჷჷნ მგჩხიმისგა კიცი კურპლარს აქის სამ. ეჯარს შამფევის ხაცეგხ ი ქჷმ კვილას ხჩხინეხ. ალ კურპლარს მარე დემ იზბი ი მუჭეგვარლარს ხულვეხ ლეზობდ ი ლეკრენტლდ.

ლეღვი ალაბ ლეთ მანკვი ლეღვს ხაგემხ მან ი ეჩროგმ ჩუ იდარალს. ჯიჯვარს ი გვლმოზარს ნანქო' ადესგის გელვე ლაგაფიქელ. ნადარობენ ფეტვარშ ი ჭყანი ცერცმას იჩოხ ი ეჩას ხოგალის ჩრ თეით ფაკენს. ჟი ხეზის, ერხი ლეღვიშ მუგაისგა ლეჷარ ი ზურალარ ცერცმან ნაჷუვარს ხანფეღეს უმხეჷარ ი ჟი ხოთულგაფის ლერქვარს ი ნიჩვარს მგჩხიმარ ცერცმოგმ. ეჩქანლო ემხუ მარე ჟი ლერი დენინ ყორთეჷნ, ჯიჯვარს ი გვლმოზარს ქა შიდე ი ტული: „ოო უ გელო, ელოს აჯზე გელოდ. ამზავ ალა ჯანც ი ზავდ ბარჯს აჯკენე“.

ლენჯვარ

Svanuri enis krestomatia, p. 9, Text 3 (plain image)

3. xvÄlmi i leGvi aGab

xvÄlmi ladäG namParvi %ëmaladäG li i e% ladäG limzër xÄrx CIyä korisba. xvÄlmi megem Gvebra lekvÄnC~n lëb. xoSa gëgib li i amis xemzix, esvÄy qväs xAr. xolAm muÇvdi PaTrons i qveSäys am ladGiSd ers mamilv xori nämzurund i ers lëgrÄl. al nämzurun mo%läi nator xArx. xvÄlmi ladäG ka närbialunGo lemjäräs anQÄlix. eCkanGo esvÄy xvÄlmi mamilv i ed lëgrÄl xagäd, e%yärs mëmzëri Zi xämzëri i xabic xvÄlmi, ere „miCa mepSvde mäzig atkAbvna amI mu&Gvni, xola mEKvÄryEl, qväs i muÇvdi mätk' AtkAbvna i ansiPvna aS sgvebd i lersgvante al mamvliS i ed lëgrAle mu&Gvni" eC kanGo mamiles Cväysenix. eCis ilëgrÄls Z' a%äbx i Cu idyarÄlx. mogdÄns mamvil i ed lëgrÄl letxumd xAr leQdi i muzeeb mäg li ki~risga. eCkanGo KAZIn mëCximisga qici KURPillärs äÇix sam. e%yärs Sampvirs xacvex i kÄm qvilas xäCxinex. al KURPillärs mAre dEm izbi i muZqvärillärs xUGvex lezobd i leKrEnTald.

leGvi aGab lEt mÄnKvi leGvs xagemx mäg i eCnovS Cu idyarÄlx. %i%värs i gälmozärs nänKt' AdEsbix gelve lagäpiAkd. nädyaroben peTvräs i ÇQäni cërmas iCox i eCas xogÄlix CI tvit paKäns. Zi xebzix, erxi lëpSir mezgaisga GvaZär i zuralÄr cërcmÄ nAPuvärs xäpSvdex uSxvAr i Zi xotulvåpix lerkvärs i niCvärs mëCxmÄr cërcmovS. eckanGo eSxu mAre Z~ Gëri dE-pni QOrteZIn, %i%värs i gälmozärs ka Side i TULi: „oo u gelo, elos ä%zëze gelod. amzav ala %Äc i zavd bar%s ä%KvAne"

Same text scanned with an OCR program
(NB: arbitrary but consistent representation of extra characters)

3. xvāłmi i leǵvi aǵab

xvāłmi ladāǵ namparvi žəmaladāǵ li i ež ladāǵ limzəx xārx čiyā korisga.
 xvāłmī megem ǵvebra lekvānčün ləǵ. xoša ǵəǵib li i amis xemzırx,
 esvāy qvāš xār. xolām mučvdi paṭrons i qvešāys am ladǵışd ers mamılv xori
 nāmzurund i ers_ləǵrāl. al nāmzurun možlāi nator xārx. xvāłmi
 ladāǵ ka nārbiālunǵo lemzərārs anqālix. ečkango esvāy xvāłmī mamılv
 i ed ləǵrāl xagād, ežyārs məmzəri ži xāmzəri i xabic xvāłmis, ere "miča
 mepšvde māzig atkābvnas amī muzǵvnis, xola mēkvāryēl, qvāš i mučvdi mātla
 k' atkābvnas i ansıpvnas aš sgvebd i lersgvante al mamvliš i ed ləǵrāle
 muzdvni" ečkango mamılv čvāysenix. ečis iləǵrāls ž' ažābx i ču idyarālx.
 mogdāns mamvil i ed ləǵrāl letxumd xār le~di i muzeeb mäg li korisga.
 ečkango qāžın məčximisga qıci kūrpiłārs āčix sam. ežyārs šampvirs xacvex
 i kām qvilas xāčxinex. al kūrpiłārs märe dēm izbi i mužqvāriłārs xuǵvex
 lezobd i lekrēntāld.
 leǵvi aǵab lēt mānkvı leǵvs xagemx mäg i ečnovš ču idyarālx. žıžvārs
 i ǵälmozārs nānkt' ādēsgıx gelve lagāpiakd. nādyaroben peṭvrāš i čqāni
 cəṭmas ičox i ečas xogālix čı tvit paqāns. ži xebzix, erxi ləpšir mezǵaisga
 ǵvazār i zuralār cərcmv nāpuvārs xāpšvdex ušxvār i ži xotulvb.pix
 lerkvārs i ničvārs məčxmār cərcmovš. ečkango ešxu märe žs ǵəri dēpni
 qörtežın, žıžvārs i ǵälmozārs ka šide i tüli. "oo u gelo, elos
 āžzəze gelod. amzav ala žāc i zavd baržs āžkvāne::

Same text converted into standard transcription, with adaptation of line format

29. ძალუშურ ქორს ლიუდი

ძალუშურ ნახეტუნლო ეჯარე ქორს ნესგაშარ ესფუსენნახ. ძა-
 დუნა ეჯარე მბგერი ღემშრლიხ. ნესგაშარს ქაუშურდ ოთყიდახ.
 ალა ნიშევი სომშლს ახბურენახ. აშხე ლადმდ ესნარ ანკადხ, ეშხე
 სორე სექ სეზადეს ქორთე ძალუშურ, ლანუნუნღეი ნკჩულ ჭუქენ
 ოთქიხ ი ესპილენებ. ექანლო ალ ქორ დელგემდ მმსიდელი. 5

ღალეშარ აშხე ზიქქა ე წადე ღსე, პირისდნე თენგიხ ოთარშა.
 იეა ში ესერდ მაშყიდ. ანხე ლადმდ მნაზორანხ ბაპარ, ლალეზინ
 ოთინეიხ სეა ხონტრდახ. მშნევი აშირ ი უსგემ თვიმენდ მთეკიდ
 ღალეშარს ქორს მაჩე ექანლო თამანიშურემ მბინეს ლიტორკოვლ. 10
 აშეშნ უსგემ აშირ ი უსგემ თვიმენთეენ აჩნდ ფას. თამანიშურემ
 ღემ შეკოეს ი სერ ნა ნდ ალ ფას ლეჯდე. ეშდეშუ წან მკვად,
 კაროდუნ. ოთარი სომა ოიღურ, ნაქმლ ი იშგენ განხ. ქორს დორა
 შდე გარ აჩნდ ჟანარ. მღლეენიდ თენგიხ ი ბაპარ ღსესე დორი-
 დეო. ანგახს მთისთიდე წან ახბენდ. ღმსქედლა ნიშევიდ ღვაჟარს: 15

Svanuri prozauli tekstebi I: Balszemouri kilo, p. 27, text 29 (plain image)

" katušē~i korā liq̄di
 a ~mē~ naxvāt~ao ežy~v kors nēsgāšār espusnēnax. ma~
 ~a ežy ~e mabgeri ~mārlix. nēsgāšārs kaušērd otq̄idax,
 ..a n ~evva xoš~ls atx~rēnax ašxv ladāg eānār anq̄ādx ešxu
 x.~ze]. ~ā~;x ~o~ a~v kağuşēr , lānn~nxlei nāq̄cul čukvān
 ~y~xx i ~. ;~i~i~ e~a~go al kor ~elqvqmd āms tēli
 ~. .v~ ~ ~xv ~,i~k~a vaçame lā'sv, p r sd.āv tengi~x i tarša.
 i~a m~ v vr~ eašvi~. anxv la~āg āxnāz~rānx bapār, lağv~č̄in
 i ~. ~ i ;~, x~a~.e~ ax, m'~k̄vi ašir i usgvām tvimend ātvq̄idd
 ~'~.~.~. ;i~. e ~ k̄ eika~ti tamānišērvm ānbīnex litorkievā~. aa~,~
 ~~~a ,~e ~i~ i ~~~; ~v~v ovimentež̄in ačād p;~s. tamānišērem  
 'i .a ', ~,~; i x~r n~ ~.d .l p~;s l'e~de. ešdešx~ qān anq̄vād,  
 a ~ ~ äč~l i išgen gānz. kor s yor  
 ~~,~ ~,~. n~...d qanā,~ ~..~l~venid teçgiz i bapār lāsvx yori~.~  
 ~.~. ~ - s~,it ~.~,~ svī~. l~x~ nişgvey ğvažārs.

Same text scanned with OCR program, converted into standard transcription

29. zağuşēr korā liq̄di  
zağuşēr naxvātungo ežyare kors nēsgāšār espusnēnax. zağuşa  
ežyare mabgeri lāmārlix. nēsgāšārs kaušērd otq̄idax,  
alā nişgvey xošāls atxārēnax. ašxv ladāg esnār anq̄ādx, ešxu  
xorev zek sgādyex korte zağuşēr, lānnūnālzi nāq̄cul čukvān  
otnāxx i ž'asbīdnex. ečkanġo al kor lelqvemd āmsedēli.  
lağvāč̄in ašxv čikka vacaçe lāsv, p̄irisdāv tengiz i otarša.  
eža mī ezerd maşq̄id. ašxv ladāg āxnāzōrānx bapār, lağvāč̄in  
i tengizi sga xonqerdax. mānkvi ašir i usgvām tvimend ātvq̄idd  
ežyārxānka kor. mare ečkanġo tamānišērem ānbīnex litorkovāl.  
amež̄in usgvām ašir i usgvām tvimentež̄in ačād pās. tamānišērem  
deš ādq̄idx i ser nāy nād al pās leqde. ešdešxu qān anq̄vād,  
qardlār. yori xoča topār, nāč̄āl i išgen gānz. kors yori  
ūgva gar eņsād qanār. muļgvenid tengiz i bapār lāsvx yoriġet.  
tengizs ātištavd qān atxvīd. lāxčvedda nişgvey ğvažārs:

Same text manually restored (underlined: letters correctly recognized by OCR)

3.2.1. It goes without saying that an electronic text thus achieved requires further treatment before the lexical material contained in it can be used for any kind of linguistic analysis. First, it will need manual correction which can only partially be supported by an automatical process, viz. the so-called "spell-checking". Second, the digital text will have to be structured so that it can be used for retrieval; cp. the following example from Svanuri Poezia which shows a minimum of "markup" consisting in the indication of page numbers, line numbers, and text numbers (with a variant containing a German translation which was added manually):

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| bSP52/Ḳal:_Nuarsala<br> P(166a)<br> 11 vož gal sabirelo Nuarsala!<br> 12 Mušvraši ṭubas esgəri,<br> 13 sgobin lažxvidax Čolšare,<br> 14 min žixaldax si moqtare,<br> 15 esran irix min amxvare.<br> 16 ka lažšədax ečxän-amxän,<br> 17 meqrär šəqasuğv ežlažix,<br> 18 ču lažtəxix Mušvra ṭubas.<br> 19 Davberxo lekva esqadäs,<br> 110 Davbrar qōrars xocqanalix:<br> 111 ləmšare sgožix mušgvriša.<br> 112 Lalxorte lekva amiex,<br> 113 Lalxor mulxorin gošia.<br> 114 Muḱvdarte žibav loxvsinžav,<br> 115 mešxe murqvam šxepenila.<br> 116 Iprarte žiben loxvsinžav,<br> P(168a) 117 Butil lamtils sgveženila.<br> 118 Qete lekva-lekva oğver,<br> 119 Ivan gvarḱla čəšxašs xožeğv.<br> 120 Vičnašxo lekva esguri, | bSP52/Ḳal:_Nuarsala<br> P(166a)<br> 11 vož gal sabirelo Nuarsala!<br>{Oh, unglücklicher Nuarsala!}<br> 12 Mušvraši ṭubas esgəri,<br>{Du gehst in der Mušur-Schlucht hin,}<br> 13 sgobin lažxvidax Čolšare,<br>{die Čolšer kommen dir entgegen,}<br> 14 min žixaldax si moqtare,<br>{du hältst sie für Wohltäter,}<br> 15 esran irix min amxvare.<br>{sie werden (aber) wohl Feinde sein.}<br> 16 ka lažšədax ečxän-amxän,<br>{Sie warfen sich von hier und dort auf dich,}<br> 17 meqrär šəqasuğv ežlažix,<br>{banden dir die Arme auf den Rücken,}<br> 18 ču lažtəxix Mušvra ṭubas. hinab.}<br>{brachten dich zurück die Mušur-Schlucht<br> 19 Davberxo lekva esqadäs,<br>{Sie brachten dich hinab nach Davber,}<br> 110 Davbrar qōrars xocqanalix:<br>{die Davbrer verschließen die Türen:} |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

3.2.2. A first result of computational analysis that can be achieved on this basis is a "book-style index" containing all the word forms that appear in the digitised text; cp. the following example which is taken from a complete index of Svanuri Poezia produced with the WordCruncher program:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <i>xoba</i> ..... (1) . <b>51</b> : 162a,20<br><i>xobaža</i> ..... (3) . <b>4</b> : 14,38; <b>27b</b> : 96,31; <b>29</b> : 102,34<br><i>xobažax</i> .... (2) . <b>3</b> : 8,18; <b>94c</b> : 302,6<br><i>xobax</i> ..... (1) . <b>13</b> : 46,15<br><i>xobemax</i> .... (1) . <b>39b</b> : 128,93<br><i>xobidna</i> .... (1) . <b>39a</b> : 124,71<br><i>xobiza</i> ..... (1) . <b>94a</b> : 294,102<br><i>xobina</i> ..... (20) <b>3</b> : 8,23, 29; <b>14</b> : 52,27; 54,46;<br><b>24</b> : 74,38; <b>26</b> : 86,43; 88,74; <b>39b</b> : 126,53; <b>41a</b> :<br>134,33; <b>51</b> : 164a,48; <b>55a</b> : 180,36. 44. 53; <b>63a</b> :<br>212,7; 214,13; <b>67</b> : 244,32. 33; <b>94a</b> : 290,38; <b>94b</b> :<br>296,5; <b>95</b> : 306,12<br><i>xobinav</i> ..... (3) . <b>54a</b> : 174a,52; <b>93b</b> : 282,23;<br><b>102a</b> : 322,32<br><i>xobinay</i> ..... (2) . <b>42c</b> : 146,15, 24<br><i>xobinax</i> .... (14) <b>8</b> : 36,214; <b>9</b> : 36,16; <b>11</b> : 42,7;<br><b>14</b> : 52,28; <b>26</b> : 84,25; <b>27b</b> : 94,14; <b>39a</b> : 120,12;<br><b>43a</b> : 148,7. 11; <b>51</b> : 162a,24; <b>55a</b> : 178,14; <b>57</b> :<br>190,43; 192,83; <b>94b</b> : 300,79<br><i>xobžinala</i> ... (1) . <b>27a</b> : 88,7<br><i>xobräya</i> .... (1) . <b>46</b> : 166,109<br><i>xobräyax</i> ... (1) . <b>13</b> : 48,62 | <i>xoga</i> ..... (1) . <b>46</b> : 162,33<br><i>xogämdax</i> .. (1) . <b>25a</b> : 76,43<br><i>xōgän</i> ..... (1) . <b>79</b> : 262,6<br><i>xogänx</i> ..... (2) . <b>63b</b> : 226,157<br><i>xogax</i> ..... (1) . <b>51</b> : 164a,46<br><i>xogdax</i> ..... (1) . <b>5</b> : 18,41<br><i>xogemd</i> ..... (4) . <b>22</b> : 70,4. 6. 16. 18<br><i>xogena</i> ..... (4) . <b>8</b> : 28,64. 70; <b>17</b> : 60,10; <b>39a</b> :<br>124,72<br><i>xogenax</i> .... (2) . <b>46</b> : 166,127<br><i>xogenda</i> .... (1) . <b>99d</b> : 316,11<br><i>xogvašilax</i> .. (1) . <b>5</b> : 18,69<br><i>xogveršla</i> ... (1) . <b>31</b> : 108,48<br><i>xogvranax</i> .. (1) . <b>25b</b> : 82,78<br><i>xognax</i> ..... (1) . <b>13</b> : 50,92<br><i>xogcxada</i> ... (1) . <b>13</b> : 48,60<br><i>xoda</i> ..... (3) . <b>39b</b> : 128,100; <b>46</b> : 170,177;<br><b>93c</b> : 286,9<br><i>xodaraži</i> ... (1) . <b>91a</b> : 268,5<br><i>xodaräži</i> ... (1) . <b>68</b> : 244,7<br><i>xodax</i> ..... (2) . <b>13</b> : 46,16; <b>25b</b> : 82,64<br><i>xodgara</i> ... (12) <b>3</b> : 8,21.42; <b>4</b> : 14,49; <b>24</b> : 74,32; |
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3.2.3. More detailed analyses require the word-forms to be defined with respect to their morphological and syntactical status. This has to be done by a so-called "tagging", i.e., the addition of the particulars of the word-forms in quite the same way as indicated in the example from GUDJEDJANI's and PALMAITIS's dictionary given in 3.1.3. It goes without saying that for a highly inflective language as Svan, this can only partially be achieved by automatical procedures.

3.3. Once this preparatory work has been done, a final step for building up a reliable and exhaustive data base of word forms will consist in the collation of the data compiled on the basis of both lexical collections and texts. It is to be expected that in the course of this step, all kinds of inconsistencies that are characteristic for the actual state of the morphology of Svan will easily come to light, thus offering themselves for special investigations into the mutual relationship of dialect forms, the sound laws involved, their relative chronology and similar questions. This task may be supported by or even be left to computer programs which can be designed to serve the purpose of a comparative "parsing" of Svan word structures with a view to the consistency of the sound correspondences involved; but this must remain a future aim which requires the cooperation of various specialists.

## რეზიუმე

1. ყოველი მეცნიერი, რომელსაც ოდესმე სვანური ენა უკვლევია, გაცემული დარჩენილა ამ ენის დიალექტური მრავალფეროვნებით. ცნობილია მრავალი თავისებურება, რომელიც ერთმანეთისაგან განასხვავებს ამ დიალექტებს, მაგალითად, კვეცა, კუმშვა, უძლაუტის, თანხმოვანთა ასიმილაციის, მეტათეზისის ნაირსახეობები.

ნაშრომში მოხმობილია სამეცნიერო ლიტერატურაში განხილული მაგალითები, რომელიც ასახავს ამ ფენომენს (იხ. 1.1). და მაინც, რჩება ბევრი საკითხი, რომელიც დღემდე არ არის ახსნილი. საქმე ეხება ძირითადად შემდეგ საკითხებს:

— რამდენად რეგულარულია ფონეტიკური შესატყვისობები დიალექტებს შორის?

— როგორ წარმოსდგება დიალექტებს შორის განსხვავება ისტორიული პერსპექტივის თვალსაზრისით, კერძოდ:

ა) რელატიური ქრონოლოგიის თვალსაზრისით საკუთრივ სვანური ენის ფარგლებში?

ბ) მონათესავე ქართველურ ენებთან მიმართებაში?

წინამდებარე მოხსენებაში განვიხილავ ამ საკითხს სვანური ფონების გ–ს მაგალითზე.

2. ცნობილია, რომ გ–ს წარმოშობის სხვადასხვა ვზები არსებობს სვანურში.

2.1. სვანური ზმნის ლისგნჯჳვი პარადიგმაში ერთმანეთის გვერდით გვხვდება ფორმები ფუძეში ი ან გ ხმოვნით. ამასთან, გ–ხმოვნიანი ფორმები გვხვდება იქ, სადაც კუმშვა არის მოსალოდნელი. როგორც ჩანს, კუმშვისას სრულად კი არ დაიკარგა ხმოვანი, არამედ ანაპტიქტური გ ხმოვანი გაჩნდა მარცვლის ბოლოკიდური თანხმოვნის წინ. მაგრამ აღნიშნული წესი მხოლოდ ზემოსვანურში დასტურდება. ბასლქვემოურში მხოლოდ გ–თი განხმოვანებული ძირი გვხვდება, რაც მეორეული პროცესი უნდა იყოს. აღნიშნული ფუძე ქართული სინჯ-ავ აწმყოს ფუძისაგან არის ნასესხები, რაც იმაზე მიგვანიშნებს, რომ ძირისეული ი პირველადია.

2.2. სრულიად სხვა შემთხვევა გვაქვს სვანურ ზმნაში, რომელიც "ჩაკეტვა" მნიშვნელობით იხმარება. ტექსტებში დადასტურებული ფორმები შეიძლება გავაერთიანოთ ცგყან ძირის ქვეშ. ამის საპირისპიროდ ნიჟარადის ლექსიკონში ვხვდებით მასდარის ფორმებს ლიცყგნე და ლიცყგნალი, რაც ძნელად შეიძლება დავუკავშიროთ წგყან–ს. ცგყან ძირის რეკონსტრუქცია დამაჯერებელი იქნება, თუ ვივარაუდებთ, რომ იგი ციყ ძირის კაუზატიური დერივატია. დგება საკითხი: ი/გ მონაცვლეობა ფუძეში აბლაუტით უნდა ავხსნათ თუ მეორეულია?

2.3. განსხვავებული წარმოშობის უნდა იყოს გ ხმოვანი ზედსართავ სახელში წგრნი – "წითელი". ტექსტებში დადასტურებული ფორმები გვიჩვენებენ, რომ ეს სიტყვა მიღებულია წგრანი–საგან. სავარაუდოა, რომ იგი სომხური წირანი–დან არის ნასესხები. თუ გავითვალისწინებთ, რომ სვანური \*წგრნი ი ხმოვანზე ბოლოვდება, რომელიც არ იკვეცება, საკითხავია, საიდან გაჩნდა გ ხმოვანი ინლაუტში. ალბათ საქმე ეხება დეპალატალიზაციის პროცესს, რომელიც ა–ს მიერ არის გამოწვეული.



2.4. ბგერათა მსგავსი კონსტელაცია გვაქვს ჭიშხ ფუძის ფორმებში. დიალექტებში ვხვდებით ამ ფორმათა ვარიანტებს განზოგადების თვალსაზრისით. საგულისხმოა, რომ, როგორც დერივაციული ჭგშხაშ- "ფერხული" ფორმა ადასტურებს, ჭიშხ ისტორიულად ა-ზე ბოლოვდებოდა.

2.5. საინტერესოა, შეიძლება თუ არა უ-საგან მიგველო გ ხმოვანი ა-ს წინ. ამის შესაძლო მაგალითი არის ქართული სიტყვა უნაგირი, რომელიც სვანურში ჰუნგირ ფორმით დასტურდება, სადაც ფუძედ უნდა განვიხილოთ \*ჰუნაგირ. მაგრამ ბალსზემოური ნათესაობითი ჰუნგირი ქმნის პრობლემას, რადგან იგი თითქოს ორმაგ კუმშვას გვიჩვენებს.

3. მაგალითები, რომელიც მე მოვიტანე, გვიჩვენებენ, რომ ბგერათცვლილებები სვანურში საჭიროა შეძლებისდაგვარად დიდი მოცულობის მასალაზე შემოწმდეს. ამასთან, მიზანშეწონილად მიგვაჩნია მასალის კომპიუტერული დამუშავება.

3.1. არსებობს ორი წყარო, რომელიც ამ მიზნით შეიძლება გამოვიყენოთ. პირველი წყარო გახლავთ ლექსიკონები.

3.1.1. ლექსიკონების კომპიუტერში შეტანა პრინციპში მარტივია, მაგრამ სვანური ენის ლექსიკონების შემთხვევაში დგება რამდენიმე სპეციალური პრობლემა. მაგალითად, უნდა გავითვალისწინოთ გრაფიკულად როგორ არის ჩაწერილი ლინგვისტური მასალა ძველ ლექსიკონებში. კომპიუტერულად მათი დამუშავებისათვის საჭიროა გრაფიკათა გაერთმინებელიანება ტრანსკრიფციის თვალსაზრისით.

3.1.2. შემდგომ დგას საკითხი, განსაკუთრებით ზმნურ ფორმათა შემთხვევაში, თუ რომელი ფორმები შევიტანოთ მონაცემთა ლექსიკონურ ბაზაში. მაგალითად, გუჟეჯიანი-პალმაიტიის ლექსიკონი შეიცავს მრავალ ფლექსიურ ფორმას. ჩვენთვის გაუგებარი რჩება, რა პრინციპით იქნა შერჩეული ეს ფორმები.

3.1.3. ერთ-ერთ უმთავრეს პრობლემას წარმოადგენს ისიც, რომ დღემდე გამოცემულ ლექსიკონებში სვანური ენის დიალექტები არ არის თანაბრად წარმოდგენილი. ამასთან, სვანური ენის დიალექტთა კომპიუტერული კვლევისათვის აუცილებელია შეიქმნას სვანური ენის მონაცემთა ბაზა, რომელშიც მოცემული იქნება:

- სიტყვათა სრული პარადიგმები,
- ამ ფორმათა დიალექტური ვარიანტები;

ვინაიდან დღემდე ღიად რჩება საკითხი, როგორ უნდა დაგვყოთ დიალექტები კილოებად ბგერათცვლილებების გათვალისწინებით.

3.2. ზემოდასახელებული მონაცემთა ბაზის შესაქმნელად მეორე წყარო უნდა იყოს ტექსტური მასალის კომპიუტერიზაცია.

3.2.1. ტექსტის კომპიუტერში ავტომატიზირებული შეტანა გარკვეული საზღვრის ფარგლებში შესაძლებელია. თანამედროვე ტექნიკური საშუალებები იძლევა ამის შესაძლებლობას. ტექსტის სკანირება მნიშვნელოვანწილად დამოკიდებულია ნაბეჭდი ტექსტის ხარისხზე. ამასთან, ყველა შემთხვევაში აუცილებელია ტექსტის ხელით კორექტირება.

3.2.2. იმისათვის, რომ ტექსტის კომპიუტერული ანალიზი გამარტივდეს, უპირველეს ყოვლისა საჭიროა — მისი სტრუქტურირება, შემდგომ კი მორფოლოგიური და სინტაქსური მახასიათებლების შეტანა ინდექსირებისათვის. მხოლოდ ამის შემდეგ გახდება შესაძლებელი ყველა მონაცემის გაერთიანება მონაცემთა ბაზაში.

3.2.3. მონაცემთა ბაზის შექმნის შემდეგ ჩვენი მიზანია დიალექტებს შორის არსებული სხვაობები ბგერათცვლილებების თვალსაზრისით პროგრამული საშუალებებით ვიკვლიოთ. ამ მიზნის მისაღწევად საჭიროა მრავალწლიანი მოსაშხადებელი სამუშაოების ჩატარება.