

Chapter 1

Creation of writing

1.1 From the History of Kabardino-Circassian Writing

In the history of language development, the appearance of written monuments is not always connected with the creation of writing in that language. Some written monuments of the Kabardino-Circassian language belong to travelers, state officials and scholars who had no relation to the development of writing. However, there are also monuments of writing that were made in connection with the attempts to create writing in the Kabardino-Circassian language. But irrespective of the reasons and conditions of their emergence, the existing written monuments are an important material for studying the history of the Adyg languages. These monuments greatly help clarify the linguistic processes in the modern Kabardian-Circassian literary language. In this respect, the earliest materials are also of certain interest, despite their scantiness and extreme imperfection of the techniques of their graphic fixation. Thus, the lexical and textual materials of Evliya Chelebi, N. Witsen, F. I. Strahlenberg, I. A. Guldenstedt, P. S. Pallas, G. Yu. Klaproth¹ are not only fragmentary, but also suffer from significant flaws, which has caused skeptical attitude to them by specialists. However, it would be wrong to completely ignore them when studying the history of the Kabardino-Circassian literary language. For example, the small lexical material of N. Witsen reflects a number of archaic features, lost by the modern Kabardino-Circassian language. The records of I. A. Guldenstedt, inaccurately transcribing the Adyghe material with signs of different graphic systems, despite their flaws, shed light on the history of the development of some classes of words. In particular, this material is valuable in reconstructing the history of the development of numerals in the Adyghe languages. The fact is that numerals in the Adyghe languages are characterized by extreme diversity in their word-formation structure. In the living dialects there are different systems of counting - decimal, twentieth and mixed, and there are great differences between the Adyghe dialects and languages in the formation of quantitative numerals. The records of I. A. Guldenstedt helps to identify later innovations and reconstructions of the common Adyghe counting system, which is important for studying the history of the development and formation of the Adyghe literary languages. Therefore, one can hardly agree with P.K. Uslar, who considered completely fruitless the activity of G.Y. Klaproth to collect the linguistic material². With all their shortcomings, the materials of the above authors are still important for the history of the Adyg languages, that do

not have a long written tradition.

As for the works of L. Lopatinsky and Sh. Nogmov, they made a significant contribution to the study of the Kabardian-Circassian language in the pre-revolutionary period (see below). Especially valuable for the history of the Kabardino-Circassian literary language are the lexicographical studies of the mentioned authors.

Together with the study of the Kabardino-Circassian language, attempts to create a written language were made in the pre-revolutionary period. In the beginning of the 19th century, Russian educators of Adygea people worked on compiling the Kabardian-Circassian alphabet and alphabet.

In 1829 I. Gratsilevsky, a teacher at St. Petersburg University, created the Circassian alphabet based on Russian graphics. As S. Petin notes, with the help of Gratsilevsky alphabet "students even used to correspond with each other later" ¹. ¹ The alphabet of I. Gratsilevsky compiled for soldiers of the Caucasus semi-squadron was not distributed.

Chapter 2

Phonetics and Phonology

Chapter 3

Morphology

3.1 General characteristics of the morphological system

In terms of the complexity of the systems of word-formation and word-formation, the name and the verb form two poles. The name, as compared to the verb, has a relatively simple structure. Nouns have grammatical forms of number, definiteness-undefiniteness, case, possessive and conjunctive. All these grammatical forms, except possessive, are expressed by means of suffixal morphemes. Prefixation is used to express possessiveness. Cf.: **унэ** "house", **унэхэр** "house", **унэр** "house" (definite, known), **уыни** "and house" (union form); **шы** "horse", **сиш** "my horse", **Іэ** "hand", **сиІэ** "my hand".

The distinction between the main two cases, the Nominative and the Ergative, is related to the nature of the verb base. A transitive verb creates an ergative construction and a non-transitive one creates a nominative construction, for example: **абы тхылъыр кыицэхуащ** "he bought a book" (**абы** "he" is ergative, **тхылъыр** "book" is neuter, **кыицэхуащ** is infinitive); **ар мэлажъэ** "he works" (**ар** "he" is neuter, **мэлажъэ** is a non-receptive verb).

From the point of view of morphology, adjectives are not very clearly distinguished from nouns. The latter have degrees of comparison - positive, comparative and superlative. Degrees of comparison are expressed in two ways: synthetic (or rather suffixal) and analytic, for example: **ІэфІыщэ** "too sweet", **нэхъ ІэфІ** "more sweet", **нэхъ ІэфІ дыдэ** "the sweetest".

Derivative names are formed by means of affixation, word formation and conversion, for example: **цыху-гъэ** "humanity" (suffixation); **джэдкъаз** "poultry" (**джэд** "chicken", **къаз** "goose"), **псчэ** "cough" from **псчэ-н** "to cough" (conversion). The most productive of these methods of nominal word formation is word formation. Of the affixal types of word formation in names, only the suffixal one is active. It should be noted that suffixal word formation is mostly characteristic of nouns. As for the word-formation suffixes of adjectives, they are very few, and the most productive of them have not been completely grammaticalized.

In combinations 'noun + noun' and 'noun + adjective', the word-change suffixes are attached only to the postpositional member, e.g.: **пхъэ унэ-хэ-р** 'wooden houses',

унэ дахэ-хэ-р 'beautiful houses', (-хэ is a plural suffix, -р is a neuter suffix).

The verb has an exceptionally rich and complex system of word-formation and word-formation. The verb is the clearest of all typological features of the Kabardino-Circassian language.

Paradigmatically, we distinguish between transitive and non-transitive verbs, dynamic and static verbs, finitic and infinitic verbs. The grammatical meaning of the verb base determines the paradigms of conjugation and the sentence structure as a whole. Primary Static verb bases, in contrast to Dynamic verb bases, are in the closed list, i.e., they are quantitatively restricted. The paradigm of the Static verbs may include noun bases without any stemming morpheme. Cf. e.g.: **у-щлалэ-тэ-мэ** 'if you were a young man' (y is the subject prefix of the 2nd person singular, shlale is the stem of 'young man', -tae is the temporal suffix, -me is the inflectional suffix). This indicates a weak morphological differentiation of nominal and verbal bases. In the synchronic plane, there are bases that are neutral with respect to their belonging to nominal and verbal bases. From such bases are formed forms of nouns and verbs (static and dynamic). Cf. **jaegu** "game", **so-jaegu** "I play", **ar jaegu-ch** "this is a game".

Verbs are characterized by affixes of person (subject, direct object, indirect object), number, union, negation, time, inclination, causative, version, possibility, complicity, reciprocity, jointness, reversibility, locative and directive preverbs, modal particles, etc. A distinctive feature of the verb is also the circumstantial forms, functionally equivalent to adjective sentences. These are morphological forms such as **сы-зэрыкIуэр** "as I go", **сы-зэрыкIуэ-у** "as soon as I go", **сы-зэры-кIуэ-рэ** "since I went", **сы-здэ-кIуэ-р** "where I go", **сы-щIэ-кIуэ-р** "why I go", **сы-щы-кIуэ-р** "when I go", **сы-кIуэ-ху** "while I go".

The forms of person, version, dynamism, complicity, reciprocity, jointness, and place of action are expressed by prefixes, e.g.: **с-о-кIуэ** "I go", **у-о-кIуэ** "you go", **сы-ху-о-кIуэ** "I go for him", **сы-до-кIуэ** "I go together with him", **ды-зд-о-кIуэ** "we go together", **ды-зэр-о-лъягъу** "we see each other", **сы-те-с-щ** "I sit on something".

The forms of tense, inclination and conjunction are expressed by suffixes, e.g., **sy-kIu-a-sh** "I went", **sy-kIu-a-me** "if I went", **sy-kIu-e-ri** "I went and".

Forms of negation and possibility can be expressed in prefixal and suffixal ways, cf. **sy-my-kIue** "I am not going" (we- is the prefix of negation), **sy-kIuer-kyym** (-kyym is the suffix of negation), **s-hue-hyinsh** "I can carry" (hue- is the prefix of possibility), **sy-kIue-fyn-sh** "I can go" (-fa is the suffix of possibility).

The direction of action is expressed in prefixal and prefix-suffixal ways, e.g.: **sy-ky-o-kIue** "I go here" (кь(e)- direction prefix), **sy-d-o-kIue-y** "I go up" (d(e)- direction prefix, -y(s) - direction suffix).

Different methods are used to express circumstantial forms - prefixal, suffixal and prefix-suffixal, for example: **zer-i-thyr** "as he writes" [zer- is a prefix meaning "as"], **i-thy-hu** "while he writes" (-hu is a suffix meaning "until"), **zer-i-thy-u** "as soon as he writes" [prefix zer- and suffix -u meaning "as soon as *"].

The verb form may be single-morphemic, cf. **zhe** 'run!' "write!" But the verb as a whole is characterized by a high degree of synthesis.

The process of fattening a root morpheme with affixes (prefixes and suffixes) is illustrated by the following example: **у-а-къы-д-е-з-гъэ-шэ-жы-ф-а-тэ-къым** "I couldn't get him to lead you with them here then."

3.2 Stem structure

3.3 Noun

3.4 Pronoun

3.5 Adjective

3.6 Numeral

3.7 Ablaut in Nominal Word Formation

3.8 Verb

3.8.1 General characteristics of verb polysynthesis

The Adyg languages have inherited from the primordial state a verb system with an extremely complex structure and a high degree of synthesis.

The verb word form may be single-morphemic: common Adyg. dy- "to sew", khy- "to mow", zy- "to tse". The single-morphemic base of the mentioned type varies depending on the surroundings in modern Adyghe languages as CV, C: dy! "shi!" / from dy- "sew" /, so-d "I sew". In such cases, the all-Adygian structure of the base is preserved in Adyghean: se-dy "I sew. However, the depth of the verb word-form may be very large.

An example, taken from the Kabardian language, gives an idea of the degree and depth of verb synthesis:

шэ

е- шэ -ж

з- гъэ- шэ -жы -ф

е- з- гъэ- шэ -жы -ф -а -т

д- е- з- гъэ- шэ -жы -ф -а -т

къы- д- е- з- гъэ- шэ -жы -ф -а -тэ -къым

"lead"

"he leads him back."

"make me lead him back."

"I could then make him lead back."

"I could then make him lead him back"

"I couldn't get him to drive back here with him then."

In this "triangle," the root morpheme she "lead" of the last /sixth/ word form is complicated by ten affixal elements - five prefixes and five suffixes. But there are also

more extended chains of morphemes in the word paradigm. The latter chain can be extended by including several more affixal morphemes in the paradigm: **у-а-кы-ды-д-е-з-гъэ-шы-жы-ф-а-тэ-кы-ым-и** "I could not then get him to take you back out of there with them." This paradigm within one word consists of fifteen significant elements /eight prefixes + root morpheme + six suffixes/: у- prefix of direct object of 2nd person singular, а- prefix of indirect object of 3rd person plural, кы- directional prefix "here", у- prefix of allied action, е- local prefix, ф- prefix of object of 3rd person singular, д- subject prefix of the 1st person singular singular. г-е causative prefix, шы- morpheme of the verb she-n "to lead", -ы return suffix, -ф possibility suffix, -а past tense suffix, -те suffix "then", -кы-ым negative suffix, -и suffix with modal meaning. The high degree of synthesis in a verb is created by the fact that not only the categories of person, number, time and inclination are expressed morphologically, but also negation, affirmation, question, causative, joint action, localization, directional relations, etc.

The structure of the verb, its main word-formation and word-formation categories, their relations, the hierarchy and arrangement of numerous base-forming elements, the distribution of personal affixes in different types of bases, their dependence on other categorical forms, including verb transitivity-non-transitivity, etc., date back to the era of the All-Adyghe language unity. Moreover, the most important material elements (affixes of person, causative, negation, and a number of other formants serving to express forms of word-formation and word-formation) are chronologically derived from the Western Caucasian level.

It is important to stress that the genetically common material features that unite Adyghe verb with the verb of other West-Caucasian languages are inseparable from the structural-typological commonalities that also go back to the West-Caucasian condition. As we shall see, the structural hierarchical features, which have their roots in the epoch of prelanguage unity of the Western Caucasian languages, turned out to be extremely stable in the whole group of languages, indicating a close relationship between genetic and typological features of the verb. In this respect, the verb differs from other classes of words, preserving a number of primordial structural-typological and genetic features that unite all modern Western Caucasian languages. In any case, in terms of the specific weight of structural-typological features, which are attributed to the Western Caucasian condition, the verb has no counterpart among other parts of speech. This refers primarily to the distribution of word-formation and word-formation morphemes, including subject-object indicators.

The main structural types of the verb stem coincide in the Abkhazian-Adygian languages, although the differences between their two main subgroups - the Adyghean-Kabardian and Abkhazian-Abazian - are so significant that so far not all consistent sound correspondences between these languages have been established. At the same time, the order of verbal derivational morphemes in the Abkhazian-Adygian languages is so similar that knowing the arrangement of the significant elements of the stem in the Adygian languages, we can build models of the verb stem multimorphemes in the Abkhazian or Abazian. So, if the type of stem including the root morpheme /K/ and morphemes expressing stimulus /P/, specific localization /L/, joint action /C/ is given, then in the whole group of languages the significant elements of the stem are distributed as follows: S - L - P - C.

The main patterns of distribution of subject-object, derivational prefixal and root

morphemes cannot be explained as a result of parallel development of the Western Caucasian languages, but must be attributed to their pra-language condition.

3.8.2 Transitive and non-transitive verbs

In the complex system of word-formation and word-formation of a verb, the division into transitive and non-transitive verbs is central. The fact is that the sign of transitivity is present in all words and verb forms.

The categorical (invariant) meaning of transitivity-non-transitivity can be considered as syntagmatic, as it depends on the presence of subject and object in a certain case form of the name and on how they are represented in the verb form. A transitive verb requires a subject in the ergative case and an object in the nominative case: **Дыгъэм щыр егъэхуабэ** /dɛkam ɕ'ər jəvax^wa:ba/ - "The sun warms the earth". Here, the subject **дыгъэм** is in the ergative case and the object **щыр** in the nominative case. A non-transitive verb has the subject in the nominative case and the object in the ergative case. The subject is in the nominative case and the object is in the ergative case. Non-transitive (more often) and transitive (less often) may be objectless: **Щалэр йоджэр** /ɕ'a:ɬar jawd^ˈzar/ - "A young man studies" and **Щалэм къекӀухъ** /ɕ'a:ɬam qa-jk^wəh/ - "A young man walks".

A syntactic construction with a transitive verb is called an ergative verb and with a non-transitive one, a nominative verb.

In the above constructions, the case form of the name (subject and object) depends on the verb, but the name form also predetermines the transitive and non-transitive nature of the verb (especially the objectless one), which is evidence of the analytic relation of the name and the verb.

The order of the subject and object affixes in the verbal form is no less important for transitivity and non-transitivity. Thus, in transitive verbs, the subject affix is preceded by the subject index: **уы-з-ольагъу** - see you uy - the object index in the 2nd person singular and -z- the subject affix in the 1st person singular. Transitive verbs may be bipersonal, three-personal and four-personal. The personal affixes are so arranged: in the two-personal (see above), in the three-personal, the direct object prefix comes first and the indirect object prefix second. The prefix of the direct object comes first, the prefix of the indirect object comes second, and the prefix of the subject comes third: **сы-къы-п-ху-ишащ** - he has brought me to you. The two-person transitive verbs in the reflexive form become monolingual but retain their transitivity: cf. **абы ар итхъэщӀащ**, he washed that, **абы зитхъэщӀащ** "he washed himself" **абы ар игъэпскӀащ**, he bathed that; **абы зигъэпскӀащ**, he bathed himself.

Non-transitive verbs can be both singular and plural: **Шыр мажэ** - a horse runs - a singular verb; **Щалэр хъыджэбзым йожъэ** - a young man waits for a girl - a two-person verb, etc.

Non-transitive verbs form another syntactic construction, the inverse one, in which the real subject acts as an indirect object and the real object is the grammatical subject: **Сымаджэм мыӀэрысэр хуошх** - The sick manages the apple; **Студентым тхылъыр иӀэщ** - The student has a book. In these sentences, the real subject (**сымаджэм**,

студентым) acts as an indirect object and the real object (**тхылтыр, мылэрысэр**) becomes the grammatical subject. Such is the nature of inversion.

The subject-object forms of the verb are a sign of syncretism, but since they represent names that are present in syntactic constructions, they are also analytic in nature.

Transposition of non-transitive verbs into transitive verbs

Transitive verbs may be primary (simple) and secondary (derivative). Primary verbs include **хын**, to carry, **дын**, to cast, and others; secondary verbs are **кӀуэн**, to go; **кӀуын**, to pass and **гъэкӀуэн**, to make go, to send; **тхэн**, to write; **тхын**, to write something and **гъэтхэн**, to make write something, etc.

The ways of forming secondary transitive verbs are varied:

1. The causative prefix **гъэ-** transposes a non-transitive (dynamic and static) verb into a transitive verb: **псэлъэн** - to speak, **гъэпсэлъэн** - to make speak, to let repeat; **щытын** - to stand, **щыту** - he stands, **щы-гъэ-тын** - to make stand, **щегъэт** - to make stand etc.

2. Preverb **къэ** - translates non-transitive into transitive quite actively: **лъыхъуэн** /ləxʷan/ - to seek, **ар мэлъыхъуэ** /a:r maləxʷa/ - he seeks, but **къэлъыхъуэн** /qələxʷan/ **абы сэ сыкълъыхъуэ** /a:bə sa səkəjləxʷa/ - he seeks me (Kumakhov M.).

3. The translation of non-transitive into transitive with the preverb **къэ-** is accompanied by the alternation of the main **э:ы** in verbs: **гупсысэн** - **мэгупсысэ** - to think - he thinks - **къэгупсысын** - **къегупсысыр** - to invent - he invents; **лэжъэн** - **мэлажъэ** - **къелэжъыр** - to work - he works - he earns; **дыгъуэн** - **ар мэдыгъуэ** - to steal - he steals - **абы къедыгъур** - he steals something.

4. Preverb **къэ-** with suffix **-хьы** - accompanied by alternation of basic **э/ы**, translates non-transitive to transitive: **жэн** - to run, **мажэ** - he runs - **къэжыхьын** - to run around something, to run some space; **джэдэн** /dʒadan/ - to wander somewhere, - **къэджэдыхьын** /qədʒadəhən/ - to wander without a definite direction.

5. Preverb **къэ** + suffix **-хьы-**: **пщын** - **мэпщ** - **къопщ** - crawl - crawl here, but **къэпщыхьын** - crawl without definite suppression; **плъэн** - **къоплъэ** - look - look here, etc.

6. Singular verbs with postverb **-хьы-** with accompanying alternation of basic **э/ы**: **къэфэн** - **къэфыхьын** - dance - dance (around someone-something or rendering a certain mediation).

7. Transitive verbs are formed from non-transitive verbs by means of the affix **-ы-**: **кӀуэн** - to go - **кӀуын** - to pass (a separate distance), **тхэн** - to write - **тхын** - to write something, **дэн** - to sew - **дын** - to sew something, **къэпсэлъэн** - to speak, to speak - **къэпсэлъын** - to say something.

Transitive verbs can transpose into transitive verbs in certain forms:

1) in the potency form with the prefix **хуэ-**: **шхын** - to eat, to eat - **хуошх** - can eat, **сымаджэм мылэрысэр ешх** (trans. d.) - the patient eats an apple, but **сымаджэм мылэрысэр хуошх** (trans. d.) - the patient manages with an apple;

2) in the involuntary form with the preverb **ӀэшӀэ-**: **ЩакӀуэм дыгъужъыр къиукӀаш** /ʃa:kʷam dəwʷəzər qəjəwətʃʷa:ʃ/ (Transl. d.) - The hunter shot the wolf - **ЩакӀуэм**

хъэр IэщIэукIащ /ɕa:kʷ'am ɬar ʔaɕ'awətʃ'a:ɕ/ (Neoter. d.) - The hunter involuntarily shot the dog.

3) in the reciprocal form with the prefix zer-: Aby ar eshe - (colloquial) - He will marry her (here) - Aher zeroshehehe - They will marry.

4) in the object version with the prefix fie-: some transitive verbs become non-transitive: Aby ar eshe - He knows that - Aby ar kyfIposhI - He seems that; Khame kheder zhey kypfIposhI (Ps.) - A strange dead man seems to be asleep.

- 3.8.3 Dynamic and static verbs**
- 3.8.4 Finite and infinitive verb forms**
- 3.8.5 Face category**
- 3.8.6 Verb paradigms**
- 3.8.7 Tense category**
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- 3.8.18 Category potency (possibility)**
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Chapter 4

Syntax