Proper Names in Georgian

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"სჯობს სახელისა მოხვეჭა ყოვესა მოსახვეჭელსა"

[It is better to garner a name than to gain everything]

- Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Tiger Skin*

Proper names in Georgian constitute a class of nouns with morphosyntactic properties distinct from all others. This paper will survey the function, grammatical distribution and origin of proper names in modern Georgian: their paradigmatic properties, the affects they have on agreement, and their role in binding and anaphora.

Though awareness of names and their proper usage in Georgian is almost immemorial in Georgian– a discussion of the significance of names is found in the first paragraph of the very first extensive work of Georgian literature, the *Martyrdom of Queen Shushanik*, dating to 476 A.D. –approaches to onomastics and the linguistic properties of proper names is comparatively recent, dating at the earliest to Catholicos Anthony II's 18th century grammar of Georgian and its 19th and 20th century successors. Through all this, focus has almost completely been given to the etymological (and, in earlier texts, mystical) origins of names almost to the complete exclusion of their actual grammatical distribution. This paper will examine the functioning and grammatical distribution of proper names in Georgian from a typological perspective, examining how they do or do not compare to the behavior of common nouns in the language.

§1 The language and its speakers

With nearly four million speakers, the Georgian language constitutes the most numerous branch of the Kartvelian language family, one of the three autochthonous language families of the Caucasus mountain region of Eurasia. These are today mostly found in the Republic of Georgia, though minority populations can be found in northeastern Turkey and northwestern Azerbaijan. As far as anyone can discern, the Kartvelian languages have probably been spoken in roughly their current location since the middle Bronze Age, not only before the earliest written texts in the region but almost before the earliest written texts of any kind.

Figure 1. The oldest Georgian inscription, from Birr el-Qutt, Palestine, dating to 430 C.E. It includes the names *Bakur* and *Griormizd*, both of Iranian origin.

Throughout its history, Kartvelian has been in contact with some of the best attested and best understood languages and language families of the ancient world, including contacts not just with Latin, Greek, Persian, Hebrew and Arabic but also Akkadian, Syriac, Hittite, Hurrian, Urartian and even Hattic (XX). This has the implication that potential evidence for Georgian nomenclature extends back into remote antiquity before the earliest attestation of the language as such. In Akkadian and Urartian inscriptions we find references to the names of kings of the presumably Kartvelian early Iron Age kingdom of Diaoḫi (= modern T'ao in northeastern Turkey), including Sien (12th century B.C.E.) and Utupursi (9th century BCE) (Fähnrich 2010: 76). Although these names do not appear to bear typical hallmarks of Kartvelian roots or word forms, they may yet be the earliest recorded Georgian names. In addition, Georgian has witnessed a continuous written record of its own beginning in the fifth century C.E., and from this point we can speak explicitly about what personal names Georgians bore and how they functioned grammatically (see Figure 1). Forms of Georgian
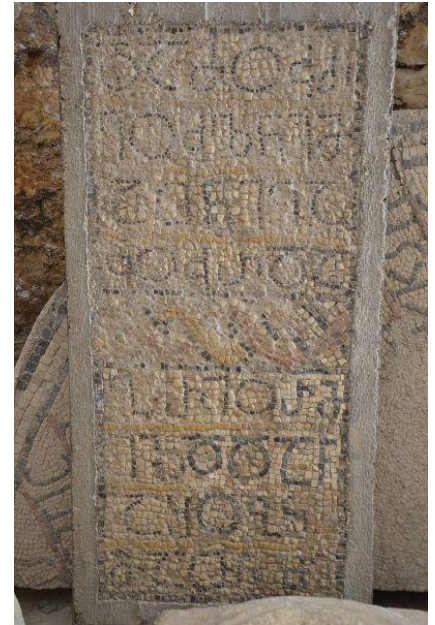
found in Old (5th-11th centuries) and Middle (12th-18th centuries) period texts are still to this day partially intelligible with contemporary Georgian of the twenty-first century, still function as archaic registers of the literary language, and are also sometimes the source of proper names in today's culture.

§2   Georgian naming practices

Georgian naming practices are fundamentally binomial, consisting of a *saxeli* and a *gvari*. The *saxeli* is equivalent to a given or first name in western languages, and has likely always been the primary way to refer to personal names since Proto-Kartvelian times: it derives from a nominalization of the verbal root **dzʲax-* 'call', and is cognate with Megrelian *joxo*, Laz *joxo*, and Svan *žaxe*, all '(given/first) name'. Technically, the word is also ambiguous as it has both the sense of 'personal appellation' as well as 'noun'; this semantic conflation likely results from a calquing of ancient Greek ὄνομα 'name, noun'. Georgians' second name or *gvari* functions as a surname to denote what immediate nuclear family the named person belongs to; the word, which also means 'clan' or 'tribe', historically comes from a Middle Persian word *gōhar* 'essence, stock, lineage', and has functioned as a surname since around the ninth century CE. All Georgians today have at least these two kinds of personal names.

In addition, Georgians often have one or more other kinds of names in addition to their *saxeli* and *gvari*. When Georgians become baptized later in life into the Orthodox faith, they sometimes adopt a new baptismal name from a list of saints' names, which becomes a kind of secondary *saxeli*. Because this set of given names was historically restricted to the Christian canon, and so is very limited, many Georgians have an additional *met'saxeli* (lit. 'more-name'), a nickname or byname by which they are known to intimates. These are usually derived from their *saxeli*: *Daviti* can become *Dato*, *Giorgi* becomes *Gio*, *Mixeili* becomes *Miša*, *K'onstant'ine* becomes *K'ot'e*, *Avtandili* becomes *Avto*, and so forth. Less commonly, a *met'saxeli* may be derived from a *gvari*: *Šatbera* from *Šatberašvili* or *Suxo* from *Suxitašvili*. The nickname may also

come from some specific character trait or life-event: *Šakara* from *šakari* 'sugar' (for a sweet personality), *C'ero* (lit. 'crane') for a tall person, *K'amo* from Russian кому 'to whom'[1].

During the Russian Empire and Soviet periods, Georgians were also legally required to bear a patronymic with the suffixes *–dze* '-son' or *–asuli* '-daughter', e.g. *Ioseb Besarionis-dze Juǧašvili* 'Joseph Besarion's-son Jughashvili' or *Barbare Davitis-asuli Jorjadze* 'Barbare David's-daughter Jorjadze'. While very many Georgian *gvari*s historically derive from patronymics of Georgian *saxeli*s, e.g. *K'axidze* from *K'axisdze* 'son of Kakha', in modern Georgia patronymics no longer have any legal status. The two kinds of patronymic also differ formally, in that surnames derived from patronymics often elide consonants and are fossilized, while Soviet-era patronymics always have the transparent structure [[*saxeli*]-GEN-son/daughter] and are derived explicitly from one's father's *saxeli*.

Other than patronymics and baptismal names, urban and lowland Georgians rarely have any additional names. This has not always been true of all regions of the country. In the Georgian highland regions of Khevsureti, Pshavi and Tusheti, where pre-Christian pagan or para-Christian religious practices still coexist with the more official Orthodox faith, it was common to have different kinds of names for different social or religious contexts. Makalatia (1935: 188) records that one man from the region of Khevsureti had five: *P'et're*, a 'calendrical' name derived from the day of his birth according to the Orthodox religious calendar; *Daviti*, a taboo 'spiritual' name used by his parents in early infancy to ward off evil spirits wishing to 'vassalize' him; *Giorgi*, his name in honor of the divinity of the local para-Christian shrine; *Xirčla*, his taboo name as used by a daughter-in-law or sister in-law; and *Bec'ik'ua*, a separate taboo name when used by an aunt. Georgians also have an array of categories of proper names for nonhuman entities (Table 1):

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[1] S. Montefiore cites this as the origin of the nickname of Stalin's violent henchman in prerevolutionary Georgia, Simon Ter-Petrosian: "Kamo had limited mental abilities and kept saying *kamo* instead of *komu* [to whom]. Stalin lost his temper and jumped up but then laughed, '*Komu* not *kamo*! Try and remember it, *bicho* [boy].'" (Montefiore 2008, p. 68)

Table 1. Different kinds of nonhuman proper names.

Category	Examples
Toponyms	*Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Rustavi, Parizi* (Paris), *St'amboli* (Istanbul), *Londoni*(London), *Romi* (Rome)
Regionyms	*Kartli, K'axeti, Imereti, Guria, Oseti* (Ossetia), *Apxazeti* (Abkhazia), *K'avk'azia* (the Caucasus), *Dağest'ani* (Daghestan), *Sahara, Mesop'ot'amia* or *Shuamdinare, P'at'agonia, Evrop'a* (Europe)
Hydronyms	*Mt'k'vari* (Kura), *Rioni, Alazani, Aragvi, Temza* (Thames), *Dunai* (Danube), *Nilosi* (Nile), *Amazoni* (Amazon), *T'igri* (Tigris), *Evprat'i* (Euphrates), *Araksi* or *Raxsi* (Araxes)
Oronyms	*Šxara* (Shkhara), *Q'azbegi* or *Mq'invarc'veri* (Mt Kazbek), *Tetnuldi, Ušba* (Ushba), *Ialbuzi* (Elbrus), *E'tna* (Etna)
Hylonyms	*Vašlovani, Lagodexi, Liaxvi, Sataplia*
Econyms	*Mc'eralta Saxli* (Writers' House), *Nariq'ala* (Narikala Fortress), *Svet'icxoveli* (Church of the Living Pillar), *Gelati* (Gelati Monastery), *Ančisxat'i*(Anchikhati Basilica), *Bagrat'i* (Bagrati Basilica)
Astronyms	*Irmis Naxt'omi* (the Milky Way, lit. 'leap of the deer'), *P'leadebi* or *Xomli* (the Pleiades), *Betelgeze* (Betelgeuse), *Mšvildosani* (Sagittarius), *Merc'q'uli* (Aquarius), *Tevzebi* (Pisces, lit. 'fishes')
Theonyms	*Ğmerti* 'God' (or in the pre-Christian pantheon, Zeus); *K'viria, K'op'ala, Iaxsari, Dali, Armazi, Zaden, Gaci* and *Gaimi* (twin gods like the Dioscuri), all pre-Christian deity names

Georgian has historically used three different alphabets or scripts to write both proper and common nouns: *Asomtavruli* (or Majuscule) script since the 5th century, *Nusxuri* (or Ecclesiastical) script since the 9th century, and *Mxedruli* (or Warrior or Equestrian) script since the 11th century. The name *Daviti* in each script would read ᲓᲐᲕᲘᲗᲘ (Asomtavruli), ⴃⴀⴅⴈⴇⴈ (Nusxuri), and დავითი (Mxedruli). Despite the names, each of these scripts were historically used in a variety of text genres during specific periods of Georgian history, and since around the early 19th century, the first two have been relegated to rare ceremonial or ecclesiastic functions, and today are supplanted by Mxedruli. Because Mxedruli lacks a distinction between upper and lower case, proper names cannot be immediately identified as such in writing by any special written convention. In the early 20th century, linguist Akaki Shanidze attempted to introduce the use of Asomtavruli for use as capital letters of personal names, initial letters of sentences and in titles (see Figure 2). This usage never caught on, and today almost all Georgians use Mxedruli exclusively.

Figure 2. Akaki Shanidze's signature using Asomtavruli capitals: <Ⴀ. ყანიძე>

§3   Morphophonological distinctions between proper and common nouns

As with all Georgian nouns, proper names belong paradigmatically either to consonant-stem or vocalic-stem subsystems, upon which specific case formants may be attached. The two subsystems are largely the same except that vocalic stems have a zero-marker for the nominative case, –*m* in the narrative, and –*d* in the adverbial case, and may lose their stem final vowel in oblique cases (as with *zǧva* 'sea' becoming *zǧvis*). Consonant stems on the other hand add –*i* in the nominative, –*ma* in the narrative, and -*ad* in the adverbial case (as with *k'edeli* 'wall'), as you can see in Table 2. Consonant-stem common nouns may also undergo stem-internal syncope (e.g. *k'edlis, k'edlit*).

Table 2. Vocalic and consonantal stem nouns, both common and proper.

	Voc. Stem, comm. noun	Cons. Stem, comm. noun	Voc. Stem, prop. noun	Cons. Stem, prop. noun
	zǧva 'sea'	*k'edeli* 'wall'	*Giorgi*	*Zurabi*
Nominative	zǧva	k'edel-i	Giorgi	Zurab-i
Vocative	zǧva-o	k'edel-o	Giorgi	Zurab
Narrative	zǧva-m	k'edel-ma	Giorgi-m	Zurab-ma
Dative	zǧva-s	k'edel-s	Giorgi-s	Zurab-s
Genitive	*zǧv-is*	*k'edl-is*	Giorgi-s	Zurab-is
Instrumental	*zǧv-it*	*k'edl-it*	Giorgi-t	Zurab-it
Adverbial	zǧva-d	*k'edl-ad*	Giorgi-d	Zurab-ad

This is not true of first names, which do not undergo syncope either stem-finally (as with *Giorgi*) or stem-internally (as with *Zurabi*). Some proper nouns such as *Giorgi* that end in /i/ also take the declension of vocalic stems (e.g. by taking –*m* instead of –*ma* in the narrative case), and because of this we can show that the final /i/ is a feature of the stem and not the separate nominative case suffix –*i*. Over the centuries, a number of proper nouns have slowly moved from a consonant-stem class to a vocalic-stem class by reanalysis of the final –*i* as part of the stem. Thus, older *Eter-i* (older narrative case *Eter-ma*) has shifted declensional class to become more modern colloquial *Eteri* (innovative narrative case *Eteri-m*). For some contemporary speakers, this is even an internalized rule: proper names should all be vocalic-stems. A survey of 100 common given names also reveals that 59 boys' names and 49 girls'

names are precisely bisyllabic vocalic stems[2], which tends to support that widespread generalization.

Proper nouns, whether vocalic-stem or consonant-stem, differ from common nouns in that they do not take any overt vocative suffix. Nominative case names like *Daviti, Luk'a, Giorgi, Nik'olozi* and *Gabrieli* become *Davit, Luk'a, Giorgi, Nik'oloz,* and *Gabriel* in the vocative. Thus vocative forms of consonant-stem proper nouns like *Zurabi,* i.e. *Zurab,* are one of the only instances where consonant-stem nouns bear no overt case suffix[3]. This is an inherited feature from Old Georgian, in which proper nouns systematically lacked any marking for nominative, narrative or vocative case. Because Georgian words undergo some devoicing in word-final position, over the centuries some proper names have shifted the voicing of their final consonant in precisely these contexts of ambiguity. Thus an earlier *David* became *Davit* and earlier *Elisabet* became *Elisabed.* That is to say, because in some contexts the proper names ended in positions where final voicing is neutralized, but in other contexts the same consonants were 'protected' by following suffixes that could be interpreted as an opposite neutralization (e.g. genitival *Davi*[D]*-isa*, *Elisabe*[D]*-isa*), speakers unfamiliar with such names did not have sufficient information to determine what the underlying voicing of the consonant should be. In modern Georgian, this situation no longer holds, because all consonant-stem proper names take an overt nominative case suffix *–i*, removing the phonological conditioning factor.

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[2]Taken from https://kids.ge/baby-names-popular.

[3] This is true of the heads of noun phrases. Modifying nominals in noun phrases and words in appositionlack an overt affix in most cases, e.g. *k'argmegobar-s* [good.DAT friend-DAT] 'for a good friend' or *kalakTbilis-ši* [city.DAT Tbilis.DAT=in] 'in the city of Tbilisi'.

§4 Formal properties of Georgian proper names

Formally, Georgian *saxelebi* mostly come from a fixed list distinct from common nouns, and almost all proper names in Georgian are also sociologically though not grammatically gendered, as each refers generally exclusively either to a male or to a female person. There are also virtually no proper names that are homophonous with common nouns. At the same time, very many Georgian names are derived to varying levels of transparency either from other names or from common nouns of various kinds. In many cases, nominal stems attach affixes that are not precisely derivational since they do not bear obvious semantic content, but they nonetheless have been productively used to create names (with genders marked m/f):

		Suffix	Name	Etymon
(1)	a.	-a	*Gela* (m)	*mgeli* 'wolf', < Armenian *gayl* 'wolf'
	b.	-a	*Maq'vala* (f)	*maq'vali* 'blackberry'
(2)		-o	*Čit'o* (m)	*čit'i* 'bird'
(3)	a.	-ia	*Nuk'ria* (m)	*nuk'ri* 'fawn'
	b.	-ia	*Mzia* (f)	*mze* 'sun'
	c.	-ia	*Šukia* (f)	*šuki* 'light'
(4)		-io	*Šio* (m)	Persian *sya* 'black'

Historically such suffixes were also commonly used to derive *saxelebi* from days of the week, month names or holy days (Chumburidze 2003): *P'arask'eva* (f) from *p'arask'evi* 'Friday', *Šabata* (f) from *šabati* 'Saturday', *K'viria* (m) from *k'vira* 'Sunday, week', *Ianvara* (f) from *ianvari* 'January', *Navruzi* (f) from the Iranian festival Nowruz, *Bairami* (m) from the Muslim feast Bayram. Colors were also a common source of personal names: *P'orpile* (m) from Greek πορφύρα, *Sardioni* (m) from *sardioni* 'carnelian', *Melania* (f) from Greek μέλας 'black', *Mavra* (f) from Greek μαύρα 'black, dark', *Saurmagi* (m) from a Scytho-Sarmatian word for 'black hand'.

Many male (and a few female) names derived from Greek also reflect specific facts about their contact origin, as most are borrowed specifically from the Greek vocative case (Table 3):

Table 3. Georgian names derived from the Greek vocative case.

| GEORGIAN NAME	GREEK VOCATIVE	GREEK NOMINATIVE
P'et're	Πέτρε	Πέτρος
P'avle	Παύλε	Παύλος
Ivane	Ἰωάννη	Ἰωάννης
Tevdore	Θεόδωρε	Θεόδωρος
Maksime	Μάξιμε	Μάξιμος
Toma	Θωμᾶ	Θωμᾶς
Aleksandre	Ἀλέξανδρε	Ἀλέξανδρος
Damiane	Δαμιανε	Δαμιανός
Luk'a	Λουκᾶ	Λουκᾶς
Andria	Ἀνδρέᾱ	Ἀνδρέᾱς
T'imote	Τιμόθεε	Τιμόθεος
Irak'li	Ἡράκλειε	Ἡράκλειος
Ak'ak'i	Ἀκάκιε	Ἀκάκιος

This suggests that many of these names were borrowed centuries ago under Byzantine influence from the spoken language, when contact with spoken Greek was more prevalent. In fact, so pervasive is this generalization for Greek derived stems to end in *-e* that some names

borrowed from Greek seem to have been reanalyzed with hypercorrect Greek-like vocatives: *Erek'le* (m) from Greek Ἡρακλῆς (authentic Greek vocative: Ἡράκλεις), or *Barbare* (f) from Greek Βαρβάρα (authentic Greek vocative: Βαρβάρα). This can only be explained either through a nonstandard Greek dialect (such as Pontic) or a Georgian-internal development[4].

Georgian has a range of diminutive suffixes to indicate the small size of or affectionate attachment towards particular people or objects: *-a* (*Nik'olozi* (m) > *Nik'oloza*; *Giorgi* (m) > *Giorga*), *-ak'* (*c'igni* 'book' > *c'ignak'i* 'little book'; *gora* 'hill' > *gor-ak'-i* 'hillock'), *-ik'–a* or *-ik'-o* (*Mariami* (f) >*Mar-ik'-a*; *Lali* (f) > *Lal-ik'-o*; *Nino* > *Nin-ik'-o*; *Tamari*(f) > *Tamr-ik'-o*; *mama* 'father ' > *mam-ik'-o* 'daddy'; *deda* 'mother' >*ded-ik'-o* 'mommy'), *-uk'–a* (*Laša* (m) > *Laš-uk'-a*; *Ana* > *An-uk'-a*; *Nino*(f) > *Nin-uk'-a*), *-in-a* (*bidza* 'uncle' > *Bidz-in-a*(f)), *-un-a* (*Tamari*>*Tam-un-a*), and so forth. Some of these are disproportionately found in proper names (e.g. bare *–a*, *-uk'-a*, *-in-a*), while others are highly productive for both proper and common nouns (e.g. *–ik'-o*).

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[4]One possible explanation is reanalysis of an original correct vocative stem *Erek'les-* as the noun stem plus the Georgian dative case *Erek'le-s(a)*. The earliest attestation of this name dates to 1042 *mepe-sa Erek'le-s*, but because this form is already in the dative case, it is clear any such reanalysis must have preceded its first attestation, since a stem ending in *–s* would have produced **Erek'les-sa, not Erek'le-s(a)*.

Map 1. Georgian surname suffixes and their distribution according to *raion*
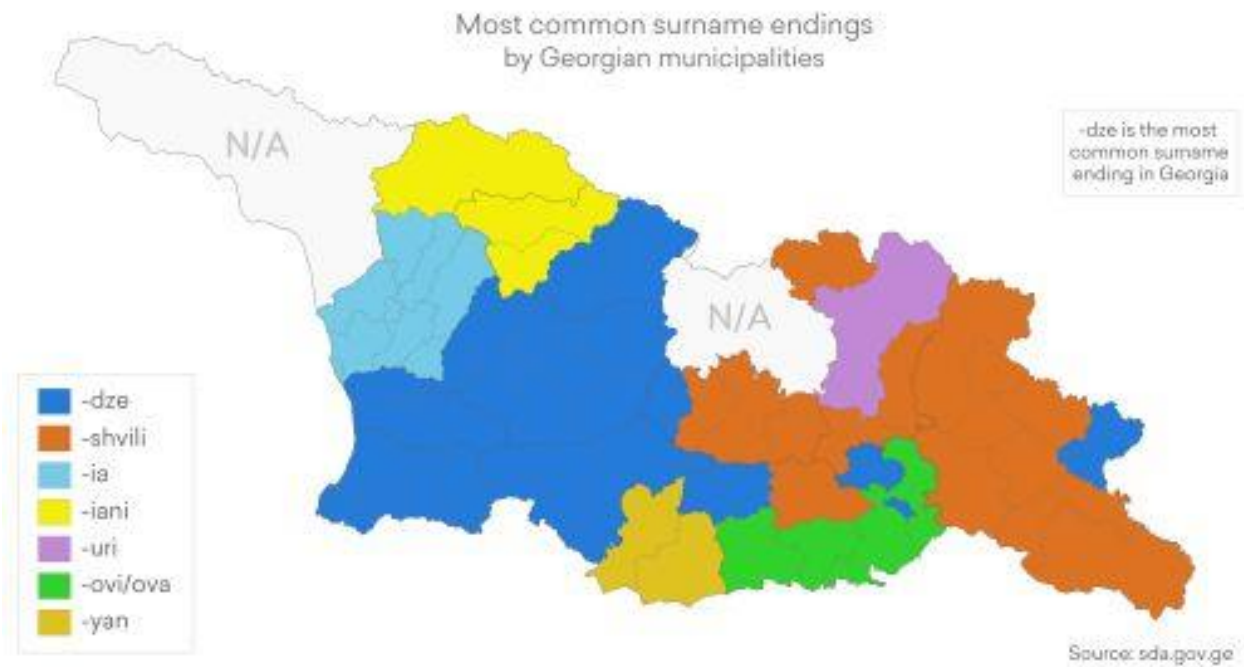
As with forenames, Georgian surnames likewise feature a number of typical formants. These generally derive from early medieval patronymics, adjectival formants or toponymical suffixes (**Map 1** above and **Table 4**, below). While all these surnames can nowadays be found almost everywhere in Georgia, they do still tend to have regional associations strong enough that speakers can tell or guess where someone with a given surname has roots. This is especially true of the rarer regional suffixes derived from the Svan, Megrelian, Laz or Abkhaz languages. As with given names, these suffixes function as stem-formants to which case suffixes can be added; thus their citation form in western languages usually ends in the nominative case –*i*, which is attached to noun stems that end in consonants (vocalic stems have a zero marker for the same case; see §3 above).

Table 4. Georgian surname suffixes with their typical geographical distribution

Georgian *gvari* suffix	Typical region	Example
-švil	general, eastern tendency	*Baratašvili, Andronik'ašvili, Guramišvili,*
-dze	general, western tendency	*Abašidze, K'aladze, Beridze, Maisuradze, Lomidze, Bolkvadze, Nozadze*
-el	general	*Jaq'eli, C'ereteli, Amašukeli*
-ur, -ul	Khevsureti, Pshavi, Mtiuleti, Tusheti	*Cisk'arauli, Jinč'arauli,Burduli, Gorelauri, C'ik'lauri*
-an, -ian	Svaneti	*Dadeškaliani, Dadiani, Q'ipiani, Ioseliani*
-(a)ia, -ua, -(a)va, -r	Megrelian *raions*	*Abašia, Apxazava, Gvasalia, Alasania, Dondua, Darjaia, Todua, Janašia, Pipia*
-š	predominantly or formerly Laz speaking regions	*Xalvaši, Jaši, Tuguši*
-x	south-central Georgian regions of Mesxeti or Javaxeti	*Mesxi, Lašxi*
-on	Tao-Klarjeti (in modern Turkey)	*Bagrationi*
-t'	western Georgian	*Ğlont'i, Žğent'i, Jibut'i, K'iut'i*
-ba(dze)	Abkhazia	*Lakoba, Tarba, Xutaba, Ančabadze*

Proper names also differ from common nouns in that they can form associative plurals, albeit not very readily in the modern literary language. Thus you can say colloquially *Giorgi-s-ian-eb-i* [Giorgi-GEN-ASSOC-PL-NOM] 'Giorgi and his family or friends'. Like more familiar

associative plurals in e.g. Japanese (*Tanaka-tachi* 'Tanaka and friends') which involve a referential anchor amongst heterogeneous groups, this Georgian construction involves a specific suffix *-ian* which attaches to the genitive case form of the personal name and can itself can also bear number and case suffixes. However, the more natural way to construct this would be *Giorgi da mis-iojax-i/megobr-eb-i* [Giorgi.NOM and his-NOM family-NOM / friend-PL-NOM].There seems to be a slight tendency for the associative plural to be found in eastern dialect regions such as Kakheti, where it is sometimes found in place names derived from family names: [XX, YY, ZZ]. This tendency for associative plurals may have been more productive in the past, as some plural forms of certain proper names have lexicalized meanings: *Davit-ni* [David-NOM.PL] means 'the psalms of King David'.

Places of human settlement and their surrounding countries also feature certain formants to indicate them in Georgian. One of the most frequent settlement formant is *–is-i*, which historically consisted of the genitive suffix *–is* plus the nominative suffix *–i*. This peculiar construction originated in a possessive noun phrase headed by a common noun like *kalaki* 'city', *sopeli* 'village' or *adgili* 'place' whose head became elided, leaving only the genitival modifier. Because in Old Georgian genitival phrases obligatorily agreed with their head noun in case and number through *Suffixaufnahme*, this meant the remaining (originally genitival) proper noun bears two cases. At least 78 proper names for towns and villages across Georgia are constructed this way according to my own research, including some of the biggest: *Tb-il-is-i* (lit. warm-PART-GEN-NOM, i.e. hot springs), *Kuta-is-i* (from earlier **kva-ta-tav-is-i*, rock-GEN.PL-head-GEN-NOM, a reference to the rocky cataracts of the the upper Rioni river), *Dman-is-i* (from Middle Persian *daman* 'building'), *Ru-is-i* (from Old Georgian *ruvi* 'ditch'). Many of these place names are quite ancient, going back to the first attested texts in Georgian, cp. Old Georgian *Tpʰilisi* (5th c), *Bolnisi* (9th c), *Kutatisi* (12th c), while some such as *Tamarisi* and *Vaxtangisi* date to the late 20th century. The formant is thus still productive.

Another common noun formant for country names is *–et-*, a form which goes back at least to late Georgian-Zan, and which has cognates in Megrelian and Laz as *–at*. This suffix may in turn also be derived from a loan *eri* 'nation, people, ethnos' from Old Persian *ariya* 'nation' or another form of Old Iranian plus the genitive plural formant *–t*, such that **er-t-* became **–e-t* through elision of the *r*-coda and then grammaticalized as *–et-*. This suffix is widely used for country-names both near and far: *Imer-et-i* 'Imeretia', *K'ax-et-i* 'Kakhetia', *Os-et-i* 'Ossetia', *Apxaz-et-i* 'Abkhazia', *Saberdzn-et-i* 'Greece', *Saprang-et-i* 'France', *Rus-et-i* 'Russia', *Indo-et-i* 'India', *Čin-et-i* 'China', and so forth.

§5 Morphosyntactic properties of proper names in noun phrases

Because modern Georgian entirely lacks a grammaticalized class of definite or indefinite articles as well as grammatical gender, many of the syntactic features that could distinguish proper names from common nouns on the noun-phrase level are lacking. In most respects, Georgian proper names behave like common nouns syntactically. For example, Georgian can marginally use both proximal and distal demonstratives with proper names if the discourse context allows for it, just like common nouns:

(5) es   Davit-i   k'idev   gada-i-ri-a
     this   David-NOM   again   PVB-PRV-go.crazy.AOR-AOR.3SG
     'This David again went crazy…' (GNC)[5]

(6) me   is   Giorgi Počxua   da-v-rč-i,
     1SG   that.NOM   Giorgi Počxua.NOM   PVB-1-remain-AOR.1
     rogor=c   adre   v-i-q'av-i
     as=REL   early   1-PRV-be.IMPF-1
     'I remained that Giorgi Počxua as I was before.' (GNC)

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[5] Unless otherwise stated, all example sentences in this article noted 'GNC' come from the online Georgian National Corpus; sentences without other citation are constructed but have been checked by native speakers.

Georgian proper names can also be modified with modifying nouns and with relative clauses. Although Georgian does not strictly speaking have a separate syntactic class of adjectives, modifying nominals can also be found occasionally, especially as vocatives (7). Relative clauses modifying proper names are quite common (8):

(7) Hoi, mtvare-v, lamaz-o   Azom,   me   av-ma   tval-ma
     Oh   moon-VOC   beautiful-VOC   Azom.VOC 1SG evil-NARR eye-NARR

     šen-i   tav-i   c'a-m-a-rtv-a
     2SG.POSS-NOM   head-NOM   PVB-1SG-PRV-take.away.AOR-AOR.3SG
     'Oh, moon, oh beautiful Azom, an evil eye has taken your countenance away from me.'
     (*Khosrow and Shirin* by Nizami; Chelidze 1964)

(8) Ber-i Davit-i,   vin=c   Kartvel   er-s
     Monk   David-NOM   who=REL   Georgian.DAT   nation-DAT

     ertgul   msaxur-ad   mo-e-vl-in-a
     faithful.ADV servant-ADV PVB-PRV-stand.as-CAUS-AOR.3SG
     'Monk David, who served as a faithful servant for the Georgian nation' (GNC)

Georgian noun phrases beneath the determiner do not formally distinguish adjectives from nouns, but rather distinguish modifiers from head nouns, as any 'adjective' can also serve as a head noun. So a word like *lamazi* 'beautiful' can by itself take on substantival function as 'the beautiful one'. That said, there are case distinctions between modifier-noun morphology and head-noun morphology (in bold and italic script in **Table 5**). Consonant stem-modifiers in dative, genitive, instrumental and adverbial cases take a distinct marker, while vocalic stem modifying nominals take no case marker at all.

Table 5. Modifier vs. head noun case distinctions in Georgian

	CONS. STEM MODIFIER	HEAD NOUN	VOCALIC STEM MODIFIER	HEAD NOUN
NOMINATIVE	lamaz-i 'beautiful'	q'vavil-i 'flower'	saint'ereso 'interesting'	c'ign-i 'book'
VOCATIVE	lamaz-o	q'vavil-o	saint'ereso	c'ign-o
NARRATIVE	lamaz-ma	q'vavil-ma	saint'ereso	c'ign-ma
DATIVE	*lamaz*	q'vavil-s	saint'ereso	c'ign-s
GENITIVE	*lamaz-i*	q'vavil-is	saint'ereso	c'ign-is
INSTRUMENTAL	*lamaz-i*	q'vavil-it	saint'ereso	c'ign-it
ADVERBIAL	*lamaz*	qv'avil-ad	saint'ereso	c'ign-ad

This is relevant for proper names, because some multistem constructions involving proper names behave like a modifier plus a head noun within a noun phrase, while others behave more like single complex compound nouns. Honorific titles like *bat'oni* 'mister' or *kalbat'oni* 'missus' for example usually consist of a special honorific plus a person's *saxeli* in contexts of familiarity with the person (9) or polite (10) or even reverential (11) direct address:

(9)   Kal-bat'on-ma   Nano-m   zǧurbl-i   gad-mo-iar-a
        woman-master-NARR   Nano-NARR   threshold-NOM   PVB-VENT-cross-AOR.3SG
        'Mrs. Nano crossed the threshold.' (*Data Tutašxia*, Chabua Amirejibi, 1974)

(10)   C'inasc'ar   x-ar-t   da-rc'mun-eb-ul-i,   Bat'on-o   Giorgi?
        in.advance   2-be-PL   PVB-convince-TH-PART-NOM   Mister-VOC   Giorgi.VOC
        'Are you convinced in advance Mr. Giorgi?' (*Data Tutašxia*, Chabua Amirejibi, 1974)

(11) Me   m-gon-i-a,   p'at'ivcemul-o   Davit,   avt'onomiuroba
      1SG   1SG-think-TH-3SG   honored-VOC   Davit   autonomy.NOM

      sxva   q'velaper=ši   še-i-dzl-eb-a
      other.DAT   everything.DAT=in PVB-PRV-be.possible-TH-3SG
      'I think, most honored David, that autonomy is possible in everything else.' (GNC)

Rarely, use of the honorific plus the *gvari* is also possible in contexts of indirect reference (and possible ironic or disrespectful or rude distancing):

(12) Bat'on-i   Saak'ašvil-i   k'arg-i   msaxiob-i=a
      Mister-NOM   Saakashvili-NOM   good-NOM   actor-NOM=be.3SG
      'Mr. Saakashvili is a good actor.' (Quote from PM Irakli Gharibashvili, 18 Feb 2023)

In each of these cases, the honorific can host case suffixes exactly as if they were modifying 'adjectival' nominals as in Table 5: *bat'on-i Zurab-i* (nominative case), *bat'on-o Zurab* (vocative case), *bat'on Zurab-s* (dative case), *bat'on-ma Zurab-ma* (narrative case), etc.

However, sequences of proper names consisting of a *saxeli* and a *gvari* like *Davit K'ak'abadze, Otar Ioseliani, Zurab C'ereteli, Revaz Gabriadze, Daniel Č'onkadze* and *Tamaz Gamq'relidze* behave like vocalic stem modifiers in which case marking can only fall on the final element *even when* the component *saxeli*s are otherwise consonant-stem nouns, as these all are (see **Table 2** above). Unlike a simple *saxeli*, they cannot for example ever host their own case suffix; the case suffix must be placed at the end of the entire name. This is also true when a given proper name consists historically of a head noun plus a following modifier (taking the Old Georgian order): *Davit IV Ağmašenebeli* 'King David IV the Builder' (dative: *Davit IV Ağmašenebels*), *Eprem Mcire* 'Ephraim the Lesser' (dative: *Eprem Mcires*), *Giorgi IV Brc'q'invale* 'King Giorgi IV the Brilliant' (dative: *Giorgi IV Brc'q'invales*). This suggests that these sequences of *saxeli* plus *gvari* are in fact syntactic compounds, and not noun phrases with a head and a modifier.

Within noun phrases it is possible for given names to possess other given names. For example, if you were trying to distinguish different children both named Giorgi based on who their mother was, it would be completely natural to say:

(13) Ara, čven   v-lap'arak'-ob-d-i-t   Mariam-is   Giorgi-s   šesaxeb
      No, 1PL   1-speak-TH-IMPF-1/2-PL   Mariam-GEN Giorgi-GEN about

      Nino-s   Giorgi=ze   ara
      Nino-GEN   Giorgi.DAT=on   not
      'No, we were talking about Mariam's Giorgi, not Nino's Giorgi.'

It is also possible for proper names to be quantified as noun phrases like common nouns, and when doing so, the quantified name obligatorily is found in the singular like all quantified noun phrases in Georgian, as in (14) and (15):

(14) Q'vela Mariam-i   i-tamaš-eb-s   u-pas-o-d   Mariamoba-s!
      all.NOM Mariam-NOM PRV-play-TH-3SG   PRIV-price-PRIV-ADV   St.Mary's.Day-DAT
      'All [people named] Mary will play for free on St. Mary's Day!'

(15) Apxazet=ši   maincdamainc   bevr-i   Davitaia
      Abkhazia=in   however   many-NOM   Davitaia.NOM

      ar   cxovr-ob-d-a
      not   live-TH-IMPF-3SG
      'In Abkhazia however not many Davitaias lived.' (GNC)

§6   Morphosyntactic and morphosemantic properties of proper names in clauses

6.1   Proper names and animacy agreement

As noted above, Georgian entirely lacks categories of definiteness and gender, and so these produce no effect on the clausal level in Georgian. However, the language does have other syntactic contrasts that can test whether some kinds of proper names are grammatically distinct from other common nouns. One example is syntactic animacy, which affects how

plural number agreement works in the language. Under normal conditions, animate plural nouns can trigger subject and (under some conditions) object agreement, while inanimate nouns cannot, as in (16a) vs. (16b):

(16) a. cxen-eb-i   dga-nan / *dga-s   ezo=ši
          horse-PL-NOM   stand-3PL/ *stand-3SG   courtyard=in
          'The [biological] horses are standing in the courtyard.'

    b. kv-eb-i   iat'ak'=ze   d-ev-s / *d-ev-en
          stone-PL-NOM   floor=on   lie.INAN-TH-3SG / *lie.INAN-TH-3PL
          'The stones are lying on the floor.'

Unlike familiar gendered languages like French or German, animacy in Georgian is not a discrete formal property of nouns, but rather a grammaticalized property of a noun's lexical semantics. Because of this, arguments that are semantically close to prototypical animate arguments sometimes but not always trigger plural number agreement. Thus notionally inanimate plural nouns like *mankanebi* 'cars' or *navebi* 'ships' are likely triggers, while *c'ignebi* 'books', *saxlebi* 'houses' and *p'lanet'ebi* 'planets' are not, and yet others like *robot'ebi* 'robots' elicit different opinions from different speakers depending on exactly what kind of robot it is. In many cases, this kind of precise semantic interpretation of a noun can affect whether it may take plural agreement. The grammaticality judgment given in (16a) for example would apply most of the time because most horses are live, biological creatures, but if one were speaking of equestrian statues or toy horses, singular agreement (with *dgas* instead of *dganan*) is nonetheless possible for many speakers.

This system of interpretative animacy becomes relevant for the study of proper names because some speakers preferentially distinguish between some kinds of inanimate arguments that have proper names from those that do not. For example, if we know the names of the robots or cars in question, they will almost certainly trigger plural agreement, as in (17) and (18):

(17) R2D2　　　da　　C3PO　　　T'at'uin=ze　da-e-šv-nen/
　　　R2D2.NOM　and　C3PO.NOM　Tatooine=on　PVB-PRV-crash.land-AOR.3PL
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　?da-e-šv-a
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　PVB-PRV-crash.land-AOR.3SG
　　　'R2D2 and C3PO crash-landed onto Tatooine.'

(18) Must'ang-eb-i　　　mi-sa-svl-el　　　　gza=ze　　dga-nan / ?dga-s
　　　Mustang-PL-NOM　PVB-FUT-go-PART.DAT　way=on　　stand-3PL / stand-3SG
　　　'The [Ford] *Mustangs* stood in the drive way.'

This is occasionally also true of proper nouns whose common noun equivalents would be unlikely to trigger plural agreement, such as with the planets:

(19) Iup'it'er-i　　da　　Sat'urn-i…　ertmanet-s　　　ca=ze　　　gada-k'vet'-en
　　　Jupiter-NOM　and　Saturn-NOM　each.other-DAT　sky=on　　　PVB-cross-3PL

　　　da　　ert-i　　　k'ašk'aša　　mnatob-is　　sax-it　　ga-mo-čnd-eb-ian
　　　and　one-NOM　radiant.GEN　light-GEN　　face-INST　PVB-VENT-appear-TH-3PL

　　　'Jupiter and Saturn will cross each other in the sky and appear as one radiant light.'
　　　(*Europe Time* news site, 21 Dec 2020)

Here both verbs show unexpected plural agreement: *p'lanet'ebi* 'planets' by itself would normally trigger singular agreement. Thus if proper names are salient enough, as the heavenly bodies are, they can trigger plural agreement as if they were more typically animate. In another example that involves an unexpected inanimate argument triggering plural agreement under passivization, we see a noun phrase describing a title of a particular work:

(20) Ra　　　　　　stil-ita=c　　　　i-c'er-eb-od-nen
　　　what.INST　　style-INST=too　　PRV-write-TH-IMPF-3PL.IMPF
　　　"P'rovinciul-i　　Scen-eb-i"
　　　Provincial-NOM　Scene-PL-NOM
　　　'In what style was 'Provincial Scenes' written?' (*The Georgian Language*, Mixeil Javaxišvili, 1924)

Here the title of the work triggers plural agreement despite being not only inanimate but actually abstract. Generally, cases like these seem to suggest some kind of 'uncanny valley' effect (XX), by which noun arguments that most prototypically resemble humans will elicit plural agreement, and having a proper name accentuates the humanness and empathy that speakers have with the noun argument.

6.2   Proper names and case and word order

Besides animacy, few other grammatical categories distinguish proper names from common nouns in Georgian. Word order in Georgian is nonconfigurational (Wier 2014), in that clauses are relatively insensitive to annotations for subject-object asymmetries and instead are sensitive to discourse-functional properties of the utterance such as topic, focus and negation, as in (21):

(21)   Clause structure in Georgian
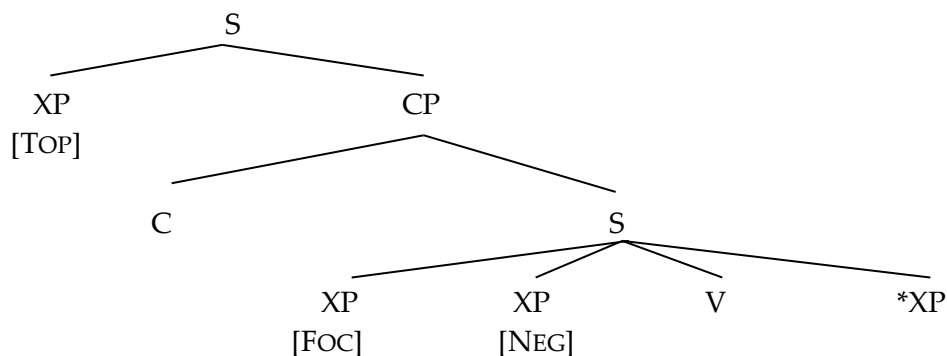
In this schema, topics take an external position outside any complementizer phrase, while foci and negated phrases are found below a CP head.

(22)   Tav-ad   Giorgi   tu   saubr-ob-d-a   P'ank'is-is   taoba=ze?
        self-ADV   Giorgi   if   speak-TH-IMPF-3SG   Pankisi-GEN   mayoralty.DAT=on
        'Did Giorgi himself speak about the mayor's office of Pankisi?' (Georgian National Corpus)

	(Di)transitive		Active Intr.		Stative Intr.		Dative-Affective	
PRESENT-FUTURE	SUBJ:	NOM	SUBJ:	NOM	SUBJ:	NOM	SUBJ:	DAT
	(IOBJ:	DAT)					DOBJ:	NOM
	DOBJ:	DAT						
AORIST	SUBJ:	NARR	SUBJ:	NARR	SUBJ:	NOM	SUBJ:	DAT
	(IOBJ:	DAT)					DOBJ:	NOM
	DOBJ:	NOM						
PERFECT-EVIDENTIAL	SUBJ:	DAT	SUBJ:	DAT	SUBJ:	NOM	SUBJ:	DAT
	(IOBJ:	PP)					DOBJ:	NOM
	DOBJ:	NOM						

Table 6. System of regular case-assignment in Georgian for both common and proper nouns. Georgian verbs feature several splits of alignment across both transitivity type and tense-aspect series; in every case the default assignment of case to subject or object is nominative, dative or narrative case.

Proper names in such cases do tend to take topic or focus positions, but this is because of their function in the discourse rather than their status as proper names per se.

Likewise, although Georgian case-assignment is famously complex, featuring case-splits across tense-aspect series and conjugation class (see **Table 6**; Harris 1981, Holisky 1981, Wier 2011, Wier 2014), aside from the purely paradigmatic facts discussed above (**Table 2** and **Table 5**), these splits generally do not distinguish proper names from common nouns as such. A possible example of a distinction between proper and common nouns comes from the titles of famous works of literature and fixed phrases. For example, in (23) *Omi da Mšvidoba* [War and Peace] is treated as a fixed unit whose internal case marking remains constant (*Omi* 'war' remains in the nominative, the citation case) while the entire phrase's role in the clause is marked with a genitive on *Mšvidoba* 'peace'.

(23) a.   C'ar-mo-dgin-e-t,   T'olst'oi-s   'Om-i   da   **Mšvidob-is**'
             PVB-VENT-imagine-1/2-PL   Tolstoy-GEN   war-NOM   and   peace-GEN

             nacvlad   rom   gv-e-targmn-a   mxolod   'om-i'
             instead   if   1PL-PRV-translate-3SG   only   war-NOM
             'Imagine if instead of Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' we translated only 'war'.'(GNC)

    b.   Marinsk'i-s   Teat'r=ši   'Om-i   da   **Mšvidoba-s**'
             Mariinsky-GEN   Theater=in   war-NOM   and   peace-GEN

             p'remiera-s   da-e-sc'r-o
             premier-DAT   PVB-PRV-attend-AOR.3SG
             '[The couple] will attend the premier of 'War and Peace' at the Mariinsky
             Theater.' (GNC)

In most cases, this final marking treats the genitive as a regular word, and so undergoes truncation as the word 'peace' normally would (*mšvidoba* 'peace (nom.)' > *mšvidobis* 'peace (gen.)'), as in (23a), while in rare cases we see the final word treated, exceptionally as a nontruncating vocalic stem, exactly like proper names would be, as in (23b). In either case, if this had been a regular conjoined noun phrase, we would have expected to see **om-isa da mšvidob-is* [war-GEN.EXT and peace-GEN].

6.3   Proper names and the binding of reflexives

Finally, it has also been noted in the literature on reflexives (Amiridze 2006) that proper names sometimes have an effect on the interpretation of reflexive possessives in Georgian. Georgian has two kinds of third person possessive pronoun: a reflexive *tavisi* 'his/her own' or *tavianti* 'their own', which requires a clause-mate antecedent, as in (24a); and a regular nonreflexive *misi* 'his/her' or *mati* 'their', which never requires one, as in (24b), taken from Amiridze (2006: 69-70).

(24) a. Levan-ma*i*   tkv-a,   rom   Irak'li-m*j*   šaršan
       Levan-NARR say.AOR-AOR.3SG   that   Irakli-NARR last.year
       a-a-šen-a   **tavis-i***i,j*   saxl-i
       PVB-PRV-build-AOR.3SG   3SG.REFL.POSS-NOM house-NOM
       'Levan*i* said that Irakli*j* built his**i, j* house last year.' (house = Irakli's house)

    b. Levan-ma*i*   tkv-a,   rom   Irak'li-m*j*   šaršan
       Levan-NARR say.AOR-AOR.3SG   that   Irakli-NARR last.year
       a-a-šen-a   **mis-i***i,*j*   saxl-i
       PVB-PRV-build-AOR.3SG   3SG.POSS-NOM   house-NOM
       'Levan*i* said that Irakli*j* built his*i,*j* house last year.' (house = Levan's house)

In ditransitive constructions, because there are two possible other antecedents within the same clause, this allows for coreference between either the subject and the direct object (interpretation in 25a), or the indirect object and the direct object (interpretation in 25b; Amiridze 2006: 70):

(25)   Nino*i*   a-dzl-ev-s   bavšv-s*j*   **tavis***i, j*   deda-s
           Nino.NOM   PRV-give.PRES-TH-3SG   child-DAT   3SG.POSS.DAT mother-DAT
           a. 'Nino*i* is giving the child*j* to her*i* mother.'

  Or: b. 'Nino*i* is giving the child*j* to its*j* mother.'

But what happens if we turn the direct object into a personal name? In this case, *tavis* 'his/her own' can only refer to the subject *Nino*, and not to the direct object *Giorgi* (Amiridze 2006: 70):

(26)   Nino*i*   a-dzl-ev-s   Giorgi-s*j*   **tavis***i *j*   deda-s
           Nino.NOM   PRV-give.PRES-TH-3SG   Giorgi-DAT 3SG.POSS.DAT mother-DAT
           'Nino*i* is giving Giorgi*j* to her*i* mother.'

Not: *'Nino*i* is giving Giorgi*j* to his*j* mother.'

Amiridze notes that scrambling the word-order of the clause does not alter these judgments; they seem to be inherent in the way binding is defined according to grammatical functions.

What explains this fact? As discussed at some length in Haspelmath (2004, 2021) for the typological literature and for Georgian specifically in Harris (1981) and Wier (2011), ditransitive constructions are sensitive to the associations of particular semantic properties of clauses with particular grammatical functions or roles, and when these become misaligned, they can result in less grammatical or ungrammatical sentence constructions. The most famous example of these come from the so-called person-case constraint (XX, YY, ZZ), in which first or second person features can be associated only with subject or indirect object relations (or agent or goal roles, respectively), and not with direct object (theme) arguments. As Haspelmath notes, the real generalization is much larger, since harmonic associations of many different kinds of features with particular functions/roles can affect grammaticality gradients, and these in turn are determined (either statistically or categorically, depending on the language) by frequency distributions of arguments in discourses. Thus in this case, because proper names have different sets of prototypical function/role associations than common nouns do (they are more frequently higher in animacy or agency than common nouns), it is less likely that they will be found as direct objects in ditransitive constructions, and thus less likely targets of binding functions.

§7   Conclusions

This paper has surveyed a broad range of features of proper names in Georgian: what kinds of proper names Georgians bear, the morphophonological and paradigmatic differences between proper names and common nouns, as well as what kinds of morphological and syntactic idiosyncrasies distinguish proper names from common nouns. We have seen that in Georgian proper names, the morphosyntactic and morphosemantic differences between proper and common nouns are mostly liminally revealed by the specific way in which semantic animacy constrains number agreement, and the binding properties of anaphora interact with the lexical semantics of arguments.

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