

CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER: *Visions of Ararat. Writings on Armenia.* ix, 157 pp. London: I.B. Tauris, 1997.

The book is an attractive collection of excerpts from, and comments on, writings pertaining to Armenian history, culture and politics by a range of historical British observers, including such illustrious figures as Edward Gibbon, Lord Byron (who wrote a grammar of Armenian), and Gladstone. The compiler is the author of *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation*.

The behaviour of various UK governments at critical moments means that this country incontrovertibly bears a large share of the guilt for what happened to the Armenians in the Turkish *vilayets* from 1895 to 1915. And, as one has come to expect from Walker, there is both enlightenment here and much to ponder, especially for today's shapers of policy towards the Caucasus. The following words are from the Earl of Argyll: 'Let us recollect that every human life among the thousands which have been sacrificed in Armenia -- which we could have saved by any exertion on our part -- and which we have not saved because of the doctrine I have traced, has been nothing less than a human sacrifice on our part to our fetish god of the "Balance of Power" in Europe or in Asia' (75-76). With 'Nagorno-Karabagh, Abkhazia, Chechenia' read for 'Armenia', or with 'Preservation of Territorial Integrity' (sc. of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia respectively) read for 'Balance of Power', these words are as apposite now as when they were penned a century ago. Poet William Watson is said (p.78) to have lost the Poet Laureateship to Alfred Austin because his views on the Armenian question ('Abdul the Damned on his infernal throne') were at variance with those of HMG and the Foreign Office, where preference was predictably given to attitudes inherited from Wellington and Palmerston (the failure of the latter to act could be argued to have led to the Russian conquest of the whole North Caucasus and the subsequent exile of the bulk of the North West Caucasian peoples). Watson believed in the primacy of morality in international affairs -- only time will tell whether the newly proclaimed importance to be assigned to humanitarian issues in foreign relations will triumph over the more recently enshrined excuses for inaction, 'territorial integrity' and 'market forces'.

The jacket illustrates an Armenian church on Lake Van's Akdamar Island, which is reported to be in danger of collapse thanks to predictable neglect from the Turkish authorities.

Only one typographical slip was noted. On p.111 l.4 read 'one' for 'none'.

IVANE IMNAISHVILI, VAKHT'ANG IMNAISHVILI: *zmna dzvel kartulshi* [The verb in Old Georgian]. Vol. 1: 1-419 pp., Vol. 2: 420-785 pp. Frankfurt-am-Main.

In 1957 the late Ivane Imnaishvili published a 781-page tome describing the behaviour of the noun in Old Georgian (*saxelta bruneba da brunvebis punkciebi dzvel kartulshi* [The declension of the noun and the functions of the cases in Old Georgian]).

But, as everyone knows, it is the verb which represents the most complex feature of Georgian morphology, and this was equally true of the old language. It transpires that Imnaishvili senior's very productive career (amongst his many editions was the 1979 643-page study of the two last redactions of the Old Georgian Gospels) included work on a companion-volume dedicated to the verb. Although the work, which had been in preparation for 10 years, was in essence complete in 1984, the author did not live to see it through to publication. This task devolved upon his son.

It was not until Vakht'ang's extended study-leave in Germany (thanks to the Deutsche Forschungs-Gesellschaft) that he finally had the opportunity to bring the work to fruition, which necessitated his typing the whole text on computer, and it is in this format that the work is laid before the public, seemingly as a private publication (no publishing-house is named). Imnaishvili junior recognises that there are shortcomings: many Old Georgian texts were not available in Germany to enable checking of citations, which meant that the words/passages concerned had to be excised; the section on the participle is termed by the joint-author 'Materials' to indicate that ideally it should have been more comprehensive. Also, unlike the 1957 opus, there is no index.

This work is destined to become, as knowledge of its existence spreads, an indispensable tool for anyone working on Old Georgian. One hopes not to be long deprived of a thorough study of Old Georgian syntax as well as that *desideratum desideratorum*, a comprehensive Old Georgian dictionary. It is incredible that none such has been compiled despite at least a century and a half's work on Old Georgian texts -- both Ilia Abuladze's posthumous 1973 large-format work and Zurab Sardzhveladze's similarly sized 1995 volume, though entitled *dzveli kartuli enis leksik'oni* [Dictionary of the Old Georgian Language], are crucially subtitled *masalebi* [Materials].

Under normal circumstances Ivane Imnaishvili would have been destined to head the Old Georgian faculty at Tbilisi University. However, he had the misfortune to pre-decease the even more venerable Ak'ak'i Shanidze, who died in office at the age of 100 in 1987.

ROBERT W. THOMSON: *Rewriting Caucasian History. The Medieval Armenian Adaptation of the Georgian Chronicles. The Original Georgian Texts and the Armenian Adaptation. Translated with Introduction and Commentary by Robert W. Thomson.* li, 408 pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

I ended my review of Katherine Vivian's translation of 'The Georgian Chronicle' thus: 'What is now needed is a complete translation of the whole of *kartlis tskhovreba* [Life = History of Kartli = Georgia] to match what the French have had for over a century, thanks to the pioneering energy of Brosset' (BSOAS, 55.2, 1992, 342-343). Thomson has made a considerable contribution towards providing this, albeit

incidentally, for his principal interest is the heavily abbreviated Old Armenian translation of the first section of the Georgian chronicles (viz. texts printed on pp. 1-363 in volume I of Simon Q'aukhchishvili's 1955 critical edition). The final text here (VI) overlaps with Vivian's work. For a German rendition see Gertrud Pätsch *Das Leben Kartlis. Eine Chronik aus Georgien 300-1200* (Leipzig: Dieterich. 1985).

The Introduction examines Old Armenian historiography to contextualize this translation, argued to date from *circa* 1200. Also presented is a general comparison of the Armenian and Georgian versions with examples of the confusions and insertions (of a theological or pro-Armenian nature) made by the translator. On p. 23 one might imagine that the Armenian text ('At that time they spoke in Georgia six languages: Armenian and Xazar, Syrian and Hebrew, Greek and the combination of their mixture -- Georgian') represented a deliberate 'neighbourly' distortion of the Georgian original ('Now all these peoples in Kartli became so mixed that six languages were spoken in Kartli: Armenian, Georgian, Xazar, Syrian, Hebrew and Greek'), but on p. 21 even the Georgian text daringly postulates: 'When these innumerable nations had come together in Kartli, then the Georgians abandoned the Armenian tongue. From all these nations was created the Georgian language' (faithfully rendered into Armenian)!

In 1953 the Georgian armenologist, Ilia Abuladze, published an edition of the Armenian text, collating the Erevan mss ABCD (the oldest of which ante-dates the earliest surviving Georgian ms by almost 200 years), which he translated into modern Georgian, alongside the relevant section of the Old Georgian original. Thomson uses Abuladze's edition, supplemented where variant-readings exist from the 1884 publication of the Venice ms (V), but instead of translating the abbreviated Georgian original given by Abuladze, he renders the full text from Q'aukhchishvili (1955), for he wishes readers to appreciate the nature and extent of the Armenian reductions. Noted in bold type within both of Thomson's translations are page-references to Q'aukhchishvili for Georgian and the the Venice edition for the Armenian. Sources for Biblical quotations within the text(s) are indicated; this absence in Q'aukhchishvili's edition was keenly felt by some in Georgia.

At first glance, the horrible Library of Congress transcription-system seems to be employed for Georgian, but perhaps the armenological tradition is what accounts for the Georgian voiceless aspirates being marked with a reverse apostrophe, leaving ejectives unmarked, a practice neither to be recommended nor followed here; more logical for the voiceless uvular plosive (transcribed as underscored *h*) would be *q'*. It is a failed attempt to indicate this reverse apostrophe that accounts for a number of instances of the capital ligature *Æ* throughout the work. One puzzling misuse of this reverse apostrophe occurs within every instance of the name of the Georgian king that I would write as *Vakht'ang* (i.e. with ejective), although *Vakht'ang* is indeed correct when rendering the Armenian. Sometimes the apostrophe is erroneously omitted,

sometimes the apostrophe is not reversed, and occasionally it creeps in instead of schwa (p. 170 *ჰენოყრ*; p. 214 *ჰიდ*).

There is occasional disparity between Abuladze and Thomson in interpreting the Armenian text: on p. 6 Thomson offers: 'Hayk inherited his *entire* patrimony', whereas on p. 8 of his edition Abuladze has: 'Haik' inherited *half of* his patrimony', the problem-word being the direct object *z-hasarak-n* -- the Old Georgian itself states: 'Haos settled on the estates of his father Targamos'. On p. 8 Thomson translates: 'It penetrated directly *the (armour) that reflected the sun*', whilst Abuladze renders the difficult phrase *i loysanc'oyc's aregaknac'aytsas*: 'It passed through him with lightning speed, *like sun-rays a window-pane*'.

Most of the original Georgian texts of relevance here are ascribed to either Leont'i Mroveli or Dzhuansher, and two essential companions, manifestly not in Thomson's possession, to any work on these texts are the 1986 concordance-dictionaries published in Tbilisi with the general title *kartlis tskhovrebis simponia-leksik'oni* (vol. I, compiled by Manana K'vach'adze et al., for Leont'i; vol. II, compiled by Aleksandre Sardzhveladze et al., for Dzhuansher). There are instances where information from these volumes might have motivated a different translation. Take the phrase 'daughter of a *logothete*' on p. 68, rendering Georgian *loghoteti* AND Armenian *loht'ac'i*, for which Thomson states he could find no entry in either Old Armenian dictionaries or Abuladze's own 1973 'Dictionary of Old Georgian: Materials' but refers to the Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium for an office styled 'logothete'. However, in both Q'aukhchishvili's end-lexicon (rarely mentioned by Thomson) and in the concordance (vol. I) *loghoteti* is here cited as a proper-name; indeed, the Byzantine title in Georgian is *logotet'i* (see vol. 6 of the Georgian Encyclopædia). In the title-summary on p. 108 of Q'aukhchishvili is the verb *da-i-c'er-a*. Thomson treats it as transitive, thus: 'who [Sidonia] was a disciple of Nino, who saw and *wrote down* the conversion', taking the Nominative relative pronoun *romeli-ese* (viz. second relative in this sequence) as subject of the transitive verb *nax-a* 'X saw Y' even though this really requires the Ergative *romel-man-ese*. However, the concordance describes this very verb-form as a passive, accounting for the *i*-prefix ignored in Thomson's translation, so that we need: 'who [Sidonia] was a disciple of Nino, whom she saw, and (sc. by whom [Sidonia]) the conversion was written up'. The literal translation 'He assigned to them an *unencumbered refectory*' (p. 322) overlooks Q'aukhchishvili's own explanation (viz. 'he safeguarded all their material needs'); contrary to what is stated in footnote 13, Q'aukhchishvili glosses *dak'uetebuli* as 'castrated' alone (not 'circumcised').

Inevitably in an undertaking of this magnitude, many aspects of the translation call for comment, which is out of the question here, though I hope to publish a list of suggested emendations separately. All I can do below is illustrate the range of problems detected. 1. Misanalyses of Georgian: *ჰ-სა-რ-თ-ავ-ი* 'confluence' is essentially the future

participle of the root *-rt-*, having nothing to do with *ჴ-sa-ert* (p. 5); *grjneuli* is not a passive adjective, albeit related to the agent-participle *m-grjn-ob-el-i* [sic] (p. 120). 2. Simple mistranslations: 'Mary greatly loved the Lord' (p. 96) should be 'the Lord greatly loved Mary'; the Georgian and Armenian match exactly on p. 132, saying 'from an only-begotten mother', whilst Thomson's rendition of the Georgian 'only-begotten of a woman' would require *ჴbil-i* for the actual *ჴbil-isa*; for 'Before his arrival 27,000 Persian were killed by the forces of the Greeks' on pp. 189-190 read 'Before the arrival of the Persian army, they had killed 27,000 from the side of the Greek army'. 3. Omissions: the sentence 'The armies reached the great city of Pontus by the sea' should be inserted on p. 175 after the indicator of footnote 19; before 'Ašot' on p. 372 (l.19up) insert 'Former Adarnase but renamed Basil upon becoming a monk, son of Bagrat' Mampal of Art'anuj died in 165 of the kronik'on', before 'Davit' on p. 173 (l.1) insert 'Bagrat', son of this Ardanase curopalates, died in 189 of the kronik'on'.

Thomson occasionally follows not Q'aughchishvili's main text but one of his listed variant-readings without indicating this: p. 181 has 'ordered all the captives and clergy to be clothed' reading *ჴmosad* rather than the printed *ჴmoslvad* 'to come'; p. 192 has 'I have submitted humbly' reading Indicative *davdev* in preference to Subjunctive *davdva tavi ჴmi*"I shall bow my head"; p. 245 has 'those humbled with us' (*mdabalni*) against the text's 'glorifying' (*madidebelni*); p. 247 offers 'I know that my territories...are flourishing' (*uc'q'i ese*) as opposed to 'they have begun building our [sic] lands' (*uc'q'ies*); p. 334 prefers 'If those Greek authors' (*berjenta*) to 'those wise authors' (*brjenta*). The rendition 'dishes for game' (p. 333) is, however, just a misreading of *sanadimotata* 'pertaining to feasting *nadimi*', unrelated to *nadiri* 'game' -- note also: 'had heard the teaching' (p. 111) should read 'miracle' (*sasc'auli* not *sc'avlay*); 'and of Achilles' (p. 334) should be 'the Achæans' (*akeveltani*).

In the Introduction it is inaccurate to assert (p. xx) that Western Georgia was known to mediæval Georgians as *Egrisi* and to the ancient Greeks as *Colchis*, for *Egrisi* referred exclusively to the W. Georgian province of Mingrelia, whilst *Colchis* was an ill-defined geographical term encompassing the eastern coastal strip of the Pontic Euxine from roughly Trebizond to Abkhazia. The first Georgian script was rounded, as is today's, whilst the intervening one (none of the three distinguishing upper and lower cases) was angular (p. xxiii), resembling Armenian. On p. xlvi *mamasaxli* should read *mamasaxlisi*.

There are two maps, a list of Georgia's rulers, bibliography, and indices for Names and Biblical citations.

B. G. Hewitt

Aves, Jonathan. Georgia: from chaos to stability? 61 pp. The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Russia and Eurasia Programme, London, 1996.

LIFE in Georgia always verged on the theatrical, but the dismal sequence of events as Georgia spawned late-Soviet nationalism, gained independence (1991) under the ludicrously messianic Zviad Gamsakhurdia (responsible for the bitter war in Georgia's South Ossetia province), entered a civil war with President Gamsakhurdia's ousting (1992), and plunged within the year into even greater bloodshed (in Abkhazia) under the returned Eduard Shevardnadze sporting his latest 'democrat-cum-reborn-Christian' mask was an absurd mixture of tragedy and farce on an epic scale. For a brief but comprehensive summary of the main developments as Georgia has seemingly drawn back from the descent into total disintegration that threatened in 1993 after humiliating defeat in Abkhazia one would be hard pressed to find a better guide than the present, almost unreservedly recommendable booklet.

Aves, refreshingly, does not shy from negative comment: 'Shevardnadze's leadership style is typical of Soviet-era leaders' (p. 14); 'The "power-ministries" continue to provide access to corrupt income' (p. 55); there are 'very large sums of money generated by corrupt activity associated with the distribution of foreign humanitarian aid' (p. 56); Shevardnadze's domination 'raises serious questions about the working of democratic accountability' (p. 59), and indeed reforms introduced under foreign pressure from 1994 are 'probably against Shevardnadze's own instincts' (p. 22). Whilst the Tbilisi bomb of August 1995 'was also turned in a rather dubious fashion against Shevardnadze's other presidential rivals', having already enabled him 'to make political capital out of the event' (p. 12), Aves still accepts it as

an 'assassination attempt' rather than questioning, as others have, this assumption.

One has queries. Mingrelia is first mentioned on p. 15, and yet only on p. 48 is it explained that Mingrelian, whilst related to, is not mutually intelligible with, Georgian, and that Gamsakhurdia hailed from this region, jarringly (albeit following post-1930 Georgian orthodoxy) described as being predominantly populated by 'ethnic Georgians' (p. 47)! Gorbachëv evidently noticed Shevardnadze because of 'his reputation as an opponent of corruption' (p. 18), which sits ill with the latter's Georgian sobriquet of tetri melia 'White Fox' -- the disparity undoubtedly resides in non-native vs native perceptions, the latter witnessed by Prof. V. Iverieli's 1992 testimony to the leader's guile: 'You, creator of the state-mafia in Georgia, yet managed to earn for yourself the title of implacable anti-mafia warrior'. The figures quoted (p. 45) for the Meskh(et)ians (deportees of 1944 or descendants thereof) seem exceptionally low.

As with most commentators, Abkhazia is Aves' weakness. The statement that Abkhazia 'was granted (administrative) autonomy by the Soviet regime' (Summary and p. 26) implies acceptance of the Georgian propagandist claim that Abkhazia hitherto had been an integral (and contented) part of Georgia -- this is untrue. Whilst 'many foreign observers' may well 'believe that Russian soldiers were also involved in the final assault on Sukhumi' (p. 28), not many foreign observers' opinions on Abkhazia merit serious attention. The bulk of the so-called 'Georgian' (actually Mingrelian) population of Abkhazia may have departed post bellum, but they most assuredly were not 'pushed out' (p. 28). Footnote 5 (p. 28) suggests Yeltsin's support for Abkhazia early in the war, and yet nothing is said about either suspicions of Yeltsin's sanctioning Shevardnadze's invasion or Russian aerial activity against

the Abkhazians in the war's final stages. I am unable to elucidate either the 'substantial concessions' offered to Abkhazia (p. 37) or 'the harsh treatment meted out to the Georgian population of Abkhazia' (p. 48).

Georgia's stability will remain in doubt until the Abkhazian crisis is resolved.

No longer at Sussex, Aves now works in the FCO's Research Unit.
Corrigenda: p.16: Rcheulishvili (twice); p.18 1.9up: economic; p.24: Menagharishvili, Chkhik(')vaidze; p.44: Dashnaktsutun; p.49 1.8: through; p.52: émigré(s) (twice); p.55 1.20: élite; p.57 1.5: phenomenon.

NME Dept

B. G. HEWITT

SOAS

Coppieters, Bruno (ed.). Contested borders in the Caucasus. 205 pp.
VUB Press, Brussels, 1996.

'CONFLICTING parties in the Transcaucasus invoke either the principle of the territorial integrity of states or the right to self-determination. It is in the interests of all the neighbouring countries to defend the primacy of the first principle over the second', and it is 'from the perspectives of state stability and interstate conflicts' that recent tragic events in the region are here 'analysed' -- thus the editor in his concluding remarks (pp. 200 & 193). And the articles collected in this volume from a variety of international commentators do indeed concentrate on the roles and interests of the major local states (Russia, Turkey, Iran) plus those well-known state-clubs, the UN and CSCE (now OSCE). Those already acquainted with the minutiae of the problems that exploded in the Caucasus with the collapse of the USSR will find here some fascinating insights and incontrovertible truths -- e.g. 'The issues of oil wealth in the Caspian Sea and the routing of pipelines [...] make the pacification of this region by international

agreements more imperative, while [...] they increase destabilization by generating fierce international competition among those attempting to gain a foothold there' (Editor's Introduction, p. 9). But those seeking greater understanding of underlying causes should perhaps look elsewhere, and those who, like this reviewer, are more interested in peoples than states and how the multiplicity of ethnic groups resident in the Caucasus can find a mutually advantageous *modus vivendi* not only among themselves but with their larger neighbours will find this fundamental question unaddressed.

Paye and Remale (p. 111) highlight the UN's defiance of its own Charter by admitting Armenia and Azerbaijan (2nd March 1992) despite their war over Nagorno-Karabagh, and Georgia (31st July 1992) despite ongoing civil disturbance, harbinging the collective international betrayal of civilised standards in the face of Shevardnadze's blood-letting in Abkhazia (invaded a mere fortnight after Georgia's UN membership) and Yeltsin's subsequent massacres in Chechenia -- all for the greater glory of Georgian and Russian territorial integrity.

The book deals mainly with Karabagh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, contributions evidently ante-dating the Chechen war, though translator A. Zverev's regional survey also incorporates Ossetian-Ingush animosity. Of the parties directly involved in these conflicts space is found for a spokesman from only one, namely (mirabile dictu!) Georgia. G. Nodia's paper is often disingenuous: to suggest that Gamsakhurdia was alone of the radicals to inflame the ethnic minorities (p. 77) conveniently ignores the extent to which ALL such leaders openly attacked 'guests on Georgian soil' throughout 1989; the claim (pp. 82-83) that Ossetian and Abkhazian leaders were motivated by statements from only 'some Georgian politicians' before the independence movement could act against them forgets that Abkhazians

had regularly voiced their opposition in the 50s, 60s and 70s (as observed by Zverev) to their status within Georgia and conceals that greatest of stains on Georgia's body-politic -- that NO leading figure has ever spoken out against the anti-minority hysteria fanned from the late 80s.

Certain things are too easily taken for granted, such as this ridiculous assertion from D. Danilov: 'The Northern Caucasus is actually an inalienable part of Russian territory' (p. 137)! But it is Zverev's commendably ambitious chapter where most slips or questionable assertions seem to congregate: though often stated, 'Apsny' (Abkhaz for Abkhazia) cannot be etymologized as 'country of the soul'; christianity was established in Abkhazia by Justinian not 19th century Russia -- apostles Andrew and Simon the Canaanite had been active there earlier; the superficial assessment of the history of Abkhazo-Kartvelian relations needs rebuttal; Abkhazia's National Guard included non-Abkhazians; 'allegedly' is missing from claims about Lominadze and hostage-secretion on p. 48; the planting of over 100,000 mines by Abkhazian forces proves NOT 'the extent of Russian help' (a widespread misconception) but the ease with which Russian weaponry could/can be acquired for suitable payment; no-one has ever proved that mercenaries operated in the Abkhazian alliance; to this day Abkhazia has not declared independence, etc... Welcome, however, is the figure of 160,000 refugees from Abkhazia in Georgia, much more realistic than the cruder exaggerations of Georgian propaganda.

Corrigenda: p.11 l.4: inter-ethnic; p.43 l.11: autochthonous; p.59 l.14: (?)oversaw the removal; p.69 l.15: for 'The letter was completely disproved afterwards' read 'An attempt was later made to refute the letter's main arguments'; p.107 l.9: blockade; p.140 l.23: extend the mandate; p.154 l.10: rooted in that; p.181 l.13: exaggerated; p.184

l.20up: negotiator; p.189 l.17: excluding; p.195 l.3up: heterogeneous;
p.196 l.10up: succeeded great.

NME Dept

B. G. HEWITT

SOAS