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Chapter 11
The Reception of Marr and Marrism in the Soviet Georgian Academy

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On the last day of October 1985, a month and a half after I arrived for nine months of doctoral research in what was then the Soviet republic of Georgia, I attended a daylong conference at Tbilisi State University in honour of the 120th anniversary of the Soviet linguist Nikolai Marr. One after another, legendary figures from Caucasian studies presented their personal recollections of Marr and spoke about his contributions to Georgian and Caucasian linguistics, archaeology, folklore, and literary studies. The first speaker was the venerable grammarian Akaki Shanidze, amazingly spry and energetic for a man who was already 30 years old by the time that the Soviet Union was born. He was to be followed by the linguist Arnold Chikobava, who was gravely ill (and was to die only six days later). The ailing Chikobava was replaced by a scholar only two years his junior, the Ossetian philologist and folklorist Vasilii Abaev (1900-2001). In the course of the next few hours, I also heard Shota Dzidziguri, Aleksandre Baramidze (1902-1994), Ketevan Lomtatidze, and Ioseb Megrelidze, one of Marr's last students.[1]

At the time, I had heard enough about Marr to find the jubilee event in Tbilisi surprising. Was it not Marr who once asserted that all of the world's languages evolved *in situ* from four primordial elements, and whose theories were officially denounced by no less an authority than Stalin himself in a 1950 'discussion' of Soviet linguistics in the newspaper *Pravda*? In subsequent years, as I learned more about Marr and his career, the conference came to seem yet more baffling in retrospect. First of all, once branded a 'citadel of anti-Marrism' (Alpatov 1991: 58), Georgia seemed an improbable venue. Here and there in his writings and especially in the biography published just after his death, Marr cultivated an image of himself as a progressive internationalist who was repeatedly attacked by the narrowly nationalist

[1] Also participating was the politically astute academician Tamaz Gamq'relidze, who was only five years old when Marr died.

elite of his erstwhile homeland (Marr 1924; Mikhankova 1935: 25, 45-47, 69, 172-78, 224-5). And if Georgia was a citadel of anti-Marrism, then Tbilisi State University would have been its headquarters. Founded over Marr's objections in the newly-independent republic of Georgia in 1918, Tbilisi State University came to be staffed by many of his former pupils, who, 'possessed by nationalistic romanticism, renounced in their home setting the few scientific ideas they professed in Petersburg-Petrograd' (Marr 1925). By 'scientific ideas', of course, Marr was referring to his ever-evolving Japhetic theory (about which more will be said below). And perhaps the most surprising of all was the name of Arnold Chikobava on the program of Marr's 120th anniversary colloquium: the same person who had been an outspoken critic of Marr's theory in 1930s and 40s and who advised Stalin behind the scenes about its deleterious impact on Soviet linguistics (Alpatov 1991: 181-8; Chikobava 1985).

Those who seek to understand the relation between Marr and his Georgian colleagues during the Stalin years are confronted with two contrastive representations. On the one hand, there is Stalin's notorious characterization of Soviet linguistics as an 'Arakcheev regime' dominated by Marr and his disciples, invoking the name of a repressive minister from Tsarist times. Whatever prominence he might have enjoyed elsewhere in the USSR, however, Marr insisted that he had been a prophet without honour in his own homeland since the 1890s, when the Georgian intellectual elite placed him on 'the list of deniers of Georgian culture, and indeed enemies of Georgian national identity (*vragov gruzinskoi natsional'nosti*)' (Marr 1924; Mikhankova 1935: 25). A further consideration, which to my knowledge has not received sufficient attention from scholars, is the schizoglossic nature of the exchanges between Marr and his Georgian readers: Whereas Marr published almost exclusively in Russian, the reception of his work amongst Georgian readers emerged for the most part in Georgian-language publications. As a consequence, most Russian and Western commentators on Marrism have been party to only one voice in this conversation — Marr's — supplemented by the rather small proportion of Georgian responses available in Russian.[2]

As represented in their writings from the 1910s up until the 1950 denunciation of Marrism, Georgian academics did not form a unified bloc vis-à-vis their compatriot in Leningrad, either as followers or detractors. Quite the contrary: leading Georgian scholars at the time appear to have accorded Marr more or less the same treatment as they gave each other, disagreeing with him sharply on some issues, citing him with approval on others, and

[2] Cherchi and Manning 2002 is a noteworthy exception to this linguistic one-sidedness.

passing over certain of his writings and theoretical stances in silence.[3] It should also be noted that Marr's handling of his Georgian critics — when he mentioned them by name and not as a collectivity — was on the whole not significantly different.[4] In order to give a brief but representative overview of Marr's reception in Soviet Georgian academia, I will begin by laying out the dominant stances and some of the key figures in each camp, followed by a case study: an exchange of articles concerning a rather esoteric problem in Kartvelian linguistics, in which representatives of each group debated what were in fact fundamental issues concerning Georgian ethnogenesis.

The story of Niko Marr

First, a few words about the remarkable career of Nikolai Iakovlevich Marr (1864/5-1934): Born in western Georgia to an elderly Scottish father and a local Georgian woman, who (according to Marr's recollection) shared no common tongue, young Niko exhibited a precocious interest in languages and while still a student began exploring the hypothesis that the Kartvelian languages were related to the Semitic family. He was named *privat-dozent* at St. Petersburg University in 1891 and soon achieved recognition as one of the world's foremost specialists in Georgian and Armenian philology. In the years preceding the first World War, there emerged in Marr's writings a focus on hybridity, as reflected in elite vs. popular language varieties in ancient Georgia and Armenia, issues of linguistic and cultural contact and mixing, and the shifting nature of ethnic identity, especially in border regions. In works from the 1910s, Marr discussed what he believed were Kartvelian layers in the Armenian language, the mixed Armenian and Georgian heritage of the populations of medieval southwest Georgia, and the possibility that Shota Rustaveli, the author of Georgia's most-loved literary classic, the *Knight in the Leopard's Skin*, was not a twelfth-century Christian, as commonly supposed, but rather a fourteenth-century Muslim (Cherchi and Manning 2002; Dzidziguri 1985: 63; Mikhankova 1935: 172-3; Tuite 2008). During the same period, Marr revisited his earlier fascination with the deeper origins of the Kartvelian languages, and in subsequent years he progressively set aside philological work in favour of a single-minded focus on paleolinguistics, etymology, and ethnogenesis.

[3] E.g. K'ek'elidze 1924, L. K'ik'nadze 1947 (*TbSU Šromebi* 30b) and Shanidze 1953, who all dished out the same sort of criticism to others as they did to Marr.

[4] See, for example, Marr's references to Dzhavakhov/Javaxishvili (Marr 1912: 50-1, 1920: 86-7, 228, etc.), Shanidze (Marr 1927: 324), Melikset-Beg (Marr 1925, 1926), Ingoroq'va (Marr 1928: 15).

In the interest of brevity, I summarize the key phases of Marr's linguistics theories (known under the name of 'Japhetidology', based on the name he used at first to designate the Georgians and their nearest ethnolinguistic kin, and later expanded to an all-encompassing theory of linguistic and ethnic origins) in the following diagram.[5] The progress of Marr's professional career is shown in a parallel column, demonstrating the extent to which the growing distance between Japhetidology and the linguistic and ethnological theories then dominant in the West coincided with Marr's rise to academic prominence in the USSR. In his earliest work, Marr employed etymological methods not radically beyond the bounds of the approaches of his West European colleagues. In the second and third periods, the search for evidence of hybrid origins comes to dominate Marr's linguistics. 'Japhetic' mutates from its initial manifestation as a language grouping modelled after the better known Indo-European and Finno-Ugric families to an ethnic and linguistic 'layer' (*sloi*) in the complexly structured soil from which languages emerged. Marr's attention was drawn in particular to Eurasian languages of unknown origin (such as Basque or Etruscan) and hypothetical speech varieties believed to have left traces in attested languages (such as the 'Pelasgian' lexical component in Greek). Belonging to neither the Indo-European nor Hamito-Semitic families, these languages were evidence of a 'third ethnic element' — Japhetic, of course — in the ancient history of the Mediterranean area. In its final phase, Japhetic was redefined as a 'system', or evolutionary stage, through which all languages pass as they evolve from primordial sound clusters (Marr proposed four proto-syllables as ancestral to all human speech varieties) to their present-day forms. Marr and his followers also emphasized parallels between their stadialist theory of language and the concepts of Soviet Marxism. One key assertion of late Japhetidology was that language structures depend on the cognitive predispositions of speech communities at different levels of socio-economic development, or, translated into Marxian terminology, that language was a component of the ideological superstructure that emerges from the economic base. It was this claim in particular that Stalin declared heretical in his 1950 article.

[5] The labels and chronology are based on Javaxishvili 1937 (49-77), Chikobava 1965 (327-8), Mikhankova 1935, and Cherchi and Manning 2002. Marr's Japhetidology is also discussed by Thomas 1957, Slezkine 1996, Tuite 2008, and — in relation to the linguistic theories of earlier thinkers — by Sériot 2005.

Marr's Japhetidology	Marr's academic career
Kartvelological period (1908-1916): Japhetic (= Kartvelian and 'pre-Aryan' language of Armenia) as branch of 'Noetic family' with Hamitic and Semitic	Head of Oriental Studies Dept., St. Petersburg University (1908), dean (1911); member of Academy of Sciences (1912)
Caucasological period (1916-1920): Japhetic 'layers' and the mixed heritages of the North and South Caucasian languages	First dean of newly organized Faculty of Social Sciences at Petrograd University (1918); Academy of the History of Material Culture founded (1919)
Mediterraneanist period (1920-1923): Japhetic as 'third ethnic element' in the creation of Mediterranean cultures: Etruscan, Basque, Pelasgian, etc.	Japhetic Institute founded (1921)
The New Theory of Language (1923-1934, continued by Marr's pupils to 1950): Japhetic as universal evolutionary stage or 'system'; radical autochthonism: *in situ* evolution of languages and cultures	Director of Leningrad Public Library (1924); joined KPSS, named Vice-President of USSR Academy of Sciences (1930); received Order of Lenin (1933)

The reception of Marr and Marrism in Georgia

In the years preceding the official denunciation of Marr's 'New Theory of Language' (*Novoe uchenie o[b] iazyke*), Georgian scholars in the fields intersecting with Marr's interests — linguistics, archaeology, ethnography, philology, history, and folklore — could be grouped into two camps, although some individuals were less easy to classify or shifted their positions. I will label them the 'Ibero-Caucasian' and 'Japhetic' cohorts, employing two competing terms for the larger linguistic grouping to which Georgian and the other Kartvelian languages were to be assigned. The Japhetic label is applied to those who represented themselves as adherents to Marr's later teachings, at least up to the 1950 'discussion'. This group comprised the relatively small group of Georgians who went to Leningrad to study with Marr in the 1920s and 1930s.[6] While several members of the Japhetic cohort published explicitly Marrist works in the years preceding 1950, all went on to have productive careers in linguistics and folklore studies in the post-

[6] Aleksandre Ghlont'i, who stubbornly professed allegiance to Marr to the very end of his days, delivered a revealing portrait of the Georgian Japheticists in Ghlont'i (1998).

Stalin period (most notably Mixeil Chikovani, who became Georgia's most influential folklorist).

The other, considerably more numerous group is called 'Ibero-Caucasian', this being the term for the theory of Caucasian ethnic and linguistic unity proposed by the historian Ivane Javaxishvili (1937), and subsequently revised and expanded by Chikobava and his colleagues (Chikobava 1965, 1979; Tuite 2008). This cohort is comprised of those scholars who shared many of the proposals about Georgian ethnogenesis first formulated by Marr up through the 1920s: the common origin of the three Caucasian language families and the complex history of contact and borrowing out of which Georgian and other Caucasian cultures emerged. The 'Ibero-Caucasian' group can be further divided according to the manner of engagement with Marr's ideas. Led by disciples of Marr from the years preceding Georgian independence and the founding of Tbilisi State University, the majority regularly cited Marr's pre-1920 writings, rejecting or criticizing some of Marr's proposals while acknowledging others. The later teachings, however, were mentioned sparingly and often simply passed over in silence. A minority, led by Chikobava, responded explicitly to later versions of Japhetidology, including the New Theory, which they submitted to critical, even harsh assessment (e.g. Chikobava 1945). It was this latter cohort that most actively participated in the 1950 *Pravda* discussion and the attacks on Marrism in the following two to three years.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">I. 'Ibero-Caucasian' camp</th><th>II. 'Japhetic' camp</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">*Accepted much of Marr's pre-1920 work
*Believed in the genetic unity of Caucasian languages, also some ancient Near-Eastern languages (Sumerian, Urartean)
*Adopted historical approach, but with greater methodological rigour; acknowledged role of contact, borrowing, chronologically-distinct cultural-linguistic layers
*Accepted some Marrist etymologies, especially those linking the Caucasus to Near-Eastern and Classical civilizations</td><td rowspan="3">*Students of Marr in Leningrad from the 1920s-1930s
*Accepted New Theory of Language
*Principally in fields of linguistics, folklore, literature</td></tr>
<tr><th>Moderate</th><th>Critical</th></tr>
<tr><td>*Includes many pre-1918 students of Marr
*Collegial criticism of Marr (especially while he was alive), selective amnesia of later theories</td><td>*Explicitly critical engagement with Marr's later theories
*Active involvement in officially condoned criticism of Marr(ism) from 1950-53</td></tr>
</table>

HISTORIANS Ivane Javaxishvili (1876-1940) Simon Janashia (1900-1947) LINGUISTS Ak'ak'i Shanidze (1887-1987) Varlam Topuria (1901-1966) Giorgi Axvlediani (1887-1973) ETHNOGRAPHERS Giorgi Chit'aia (1890-1986) Vera Bardavelidze (1899-1970)	LINGUISTS Arnold Chikobava (1898-1985) Ketevan Lomtatidze (1911-2007) Tinatin Sharadzenidze (1919-1983)	LINGUISTS K'arp'ez Dondua (1891-1951) Aleksandre Ghlont'i (1912-1999) Shota Dzidziguri (1911-1995) PHILOLOGIST Ioseb Megrelidze (1909-1996) FOLKLORIST Mixeil Chikovani (1909-1983)

During the Stalinist era, therefore, Georgia hardly seems to have been the 'citadel of anti-Marrism' that Alpatov described. According to Ghlont'i (1998: 36-37), Marr lectured in Tbilisi on occasion and corresponded regularly with a student-organized 'Japhetological Circle' at Tbilisi State University.[7] On the eve of the 1950 linguistics discussion, the moderate Ibero-Caucasianists held the positions of greatest prominence in Georgian academia. Among them were several of Marr's earlier students (Shanidze and Axvlediani in linguistics, Chit'aia in ethnography) as well as one of his very last students, Mixeil Chikovani, who explicitly endorsed Marr's New Theory in his folklore studies textbook (1946: 143-46). Chikobava, who was soon to launch the opening salvo in the *Pravda* discussion, headed the Ibero-Caucasian linguistics departments at Tbilisi State University and the N. Marr Institute of Language.

Georgian ethnography under Marrism

Among the disciples of Marr who played leading roles in the Georgian academy during the brief period of independence (1918-1921) and the early

[7] It should, however, be mentioned that Ghlont'i was witness to a puzzling incident that may indicate mounting opposition to Marr in the Georgian establishment as early as 1933, or at least that Marr strongly suspected something of the kind. In the summer of 1933, Marr was invited to attend an official meeting at Georgian party headquarters, convened by K. Oragvelidze (later to become rector of Tbilisi State University, and shot in 1937) and including Chikobava, Shanidze, Janashia, Axvlediani, Topuria, and D. K'arbelashvili. Evidently expecting to be confronted with accusations, Marr refused to attend the meeting and left Georgia that very evening, never to return (Ghlont'i 1998: 40-42).

years of Soviet rule, Giorgi Chit'aia, like Abaev and Shanidze, had the exceptional destiny of a career that spanned the near totality of the Soviet period. Named to head the newly organized ethnography section at the Georgian National Museum in 1922, Chit'aia remained in this position until his death in 1986. Along with his wife and colleague Vera Bardavelidze, Chit'aia established the following theoretical and practical guidelines for Georgian ethnography during the Soviet period and indeed up to the present day:

(1) Scientific and empirical approach to intellectual and material culture, based on close observation in the field as well as the study of museum collections;
(2) Ethnography as a fundamentally historical social science, concerned with issues of ethnogenesis and socio-economic evolution (which during the Soviet period was expressed in conformity with Marx-Engelsian stadialism)[8];
(3) Professionalization of fieldwork (typically conducted by teams of researchers with distinct tasks and specializations) and museology;
(4) Development of a multidisciplinary approach (intellectual and material culture, language, physical anthropology, and archaeology) for the study of the specific features of Georgian culture throughout its long history and its links with other cultures of the Caucasus and the civilizations of the ancient Near East.

Attending Marr's lectures in 1911, Chit'aia was impressed by the philologist's erudition, polyglottism, and etymological 'wizardry' (*charodei etimologicheskikh razyskanii*; Chit'aia 1969, V: 419-21). In the following years, Marr came to befriend and serve as both a benefactor and teacher to Chit'aia (Chit'aia 1986). For all that, the influence of Marr's theoretical writings on Chit'aia's research was comparatively limited. In a manuscript entitled 'Niko Marr and the ethnography of Georgia' (Chit'aia 1958: 43-54), Chit'aia summed up what he took to be Marr's contributions to the discipline. He praised, first of all, Marr's ethnographic fieldwork in the western Georgian provinces of Guria, Shavsheti, Klarjeti, and Svaneti. The expedition to Shavsheti and Klarjeti was of particular significance since those historically Georgian provinces, now on the Turkish side of the border, were closed to Soviet researchers after the Revolution. From time to time Chit'aia and Bardavelidze cited with evident approval Marr's etymologically-based

[8] In one early article, Chit'aia (1926) contrasted the historical science of ethnography to the allegedly ahistorical bourgeois discipline of ethnology (based on the study of 'primitive' peoples and judged inappropriate to the study of the peoples of the Caucasus).

attempts to link various cultural phenomena in the Caucasus to the ancient civilizations of the Near East and the Classical world, although they often rejected etymologies they considered ill-founded (e.g. Bardavelidze 1941: 55, 64, 76-77, 108-118). Chit'aia also pointed to Marr's insistence that nations and ethnicities were to be understood as the products of complex historical processes, including convergence among heterogeneous social groups, and not as biologically unified 'racial' lineages.[9] On several occasions, Chit'aia referred approvingly to Marr's renunciation of his earlier hypothesis that the Georgian pre-Christian pantheon was mostly borrowed from neighbouring Iran (Chit'aia 1946: 28)[10], but only rarely did he mention Marr's post-1920 theories.[11]

Although Chit'aia was Marr's former student, the figure he held up as having the greatest impact on Georgian ethnography was another one-time disciple of Marr: Ivane Javaxishvili.[12] Javaxishvili's voluminous writings on Georgian history, the origins of Caucasian paganism, Georgian traditional law, agriculture, music, material culture, and so forth could be said to have laid out the principle research problems that kept Georgian scholars busy for decades. Furthermore, it was Javaxishvili's institutional stature, in Chit'aia's view, that sheltered Georgian ethnography from the ideological turbulence stirred up in Russia by Marxist zealots — many of them students of Marr's — in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Chit'aia 1975: 68-9; 1938b: 47; cp. Bertrand 2002: 122-135).[13]

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[9] This aspect of Marr's theory of ethnogenesis, before it mutated into the radical autochthonism and economically driven stadialism of his later writings, could be considered his most significant contribution to the social sciences.

[10] The denial of Iranian contributions to ancient Georgian culture should also be evaluated in light of the ideological context in Soviet academia during the later years of Stalinism, which was informed by a sort of anti-Aryanism (or anti-Indo-Europeanism). Examples include the shift in Chit'aia's treatment of the hypotheses that Georgians were at least partially of Aryan origin, proposed by J. Karst and T. Margwelaschwili (Chit'aia 1938a: 48ff; 1950: 89-90). In the latter paper, Chit'aia repudiated all attempts to link the Georgians to the Aryans, without mentioning the name of Margwelaschvili, who had been lured into Soviet East Berlin and shot in 1946.

[11] One exception is Chit'aia's criticism of Marr's Semitic-Japhetic and 'third ethnic element' theories (1975: 73-4).

[12] Marr appears to have had a somewhat greater impact on Caucasian archaeology during the 1930s and 1940s, judging from the monographs of L. Melikset-Beg (1938) and B. Kuftin (1949), both of which are generously laden with such Marrist etymological gems as the linking of Hebrew 'cherub' to the Svan *ɣerbet* 'God', or the attribution of the Rabelaisian name *Gargantua* to a Caucasian source (cp., Shnirelman 1995).

[13] In particular, Chit'aia denounced the 'nihilistic' attitude toward ethnography that inspired some participants at academic congresses held in Russia between 1929 and 1932 to call for the 'liquidation of ethnography and archaeology as scientific disciplines' (Chit'aia 1938b).

The remarkable case of Vaso Abaev

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Vasilii Abaev took the place of the mortally ill Chikobava at the 1985 Marr memorial conference in Tbilisi. I do not presume to know whether some sort of irony was intended by the replacement of the nemesis of Marrism by one of its foremost adherents. Perhaps a more fitting figure to whom Abaev could be compared (and contrasted) would be Ivane Javaxishvili, since Abaev is every bit as towering an authority in Ossetian scholarship as Javaxishvili is for the Georgians. Furthermore, as a researcher, Abaev was no less meticulous than Javaxishvili, even though he stuck with Marr to the bitter end. In his work from the 1930s and 1940s, Abaev managed to produce high quality, methodologically solid scholarship on Ossetian linguistics, ethnogenesis, and folklore, while continuing to display his affiliation to with the Marrist school. To take but one example, Abaev's 1938 Marr memorial volume paper on the Roman and Ossetic myths of twins (Romulus/Remus, Xsar/Xsærtæg) contains well-founded etymologies, formulated with reference to the Indo-Iranian and Indo-European language families, that would pass muster with any Western historical linguist.[14] Yet in the same paper Abaev declares his faith in Marr's New Theory, which he represents as a framework for revealing the 'strict regularity' (*strogaia zakonomernost'*) of prehistoric cultures and their stadial evolution, that is, their progression through a fixed sequence of social and economic stages (1938: 327). In practice, Abaev applied Marrist principles to his speculations about primitive thought, totemism, etc., while retaining a perfectly respectable historical-linguistic and etymological methodology. Abaev's 1948 paper on 'ideosemantics' (Abaev 1948), for example, is a tour-de-force of creating a silk purse out of the sow's ear of Marr's stadialist determinism. Abaev's approach to etymology showed an awareness of the flaws in Marr's linguistic methods, but, unlike Chikobava, it could be said that Abaev chose the path of quiet reform from within.

Linguistic Hybridity and Svan Ethnogenesis

In the early years of the twentieth century, Marr took a special interest in Svan, the most peripheral of the Kartvelian languages. In keeping with his

[14] In a 1949 chapter on Ossetian ethnogenesis, Abaev referred to the Indo-European language family as a 'system', in keeping with Marr's doctrine of the time, and acknowledged Marr's hypothesis that Indo-European might be the result of a 'long process of gradual assimilation and consolidation of numerous small, splintered prehistoric tribal and linguistic formations' (1949: 13); but on the whole, Abaev did not stray from accepted methods in his etymological and cultural-historical analyses. On Abaev's ethnological methodology, see also the recent master's thesis by Nadia Proulx (2008: 79-97).

theoretical stance of the time, Marr ascribed many of the distinctive features of Svan to borrowings from neighbouring speech communities as well as the mixing of language varieties from different sources (some of which were 'Kartlian-Mesxian' [= Georgian] and 'Tubal-Cain' [= Mingrelian-Laz] dialects, others from the Northwest Caucasian family [Abxaz and Adyghe]). Marr's hypothesis that the Svans and the Svan language were of mixed or hybrid origin was revisited by Georgian scholars until the very end of the Soviet period. Although at first glance the Svan language debate would appear to pertain to the recondite domain of Kartvelian historical morphology, the participants were in fact touching on fundamental issues of Georgian national origins: ethnic hybridity, prehistoric relations with neighbouring peoples, autochthonism, and chronology of settlement.

From Topuria in 1931 to Sharadzenidze in 1955, all participants in the Svan morphology debate shared the basic presuppositions Marr enunciated in 1911: (1) that all of the indigenous Caucasian languages were genetically related; and (2) that a diversity of speech varieties and ethnic communities, from both sides of the Caucasus, contributed to the emergence of the Svan language. The major point of contention was the socio-historical mechanism invoked to explain Svan ethno-linguistic hybridity: intensive contact between neighbouring communities, the spread of the Kartvelian language to an erstwhile Northwest Caucasian-speaking community, or the radically autochthonist explanation favoured by Marr in his later years. Throughout the debate, all participants — including Chikobava and Sharadzenidze, the two most active critics of Japhetidology in Georgia — acknowledged the importance of Marr's earlier work on Svan ethnogenesis. There is no indication throughout this exchange of articles that Marr was regarded as anything other than a respected colleague, even in the paper by Sharadzenidze published five years after the *Pravda* linguistics discussion.

The Debate Over the origins of Svan declensional morphology and Svan ethnogenesis

Marr, N. Ja. (1911)	Gde sokhranilos' svanskoe sklonenie? (Where is the Svan declension preserved?) *Izvestiia Imper. AN*	Svan as a mixed language; nearly all declensional morphology borrowed from Kartvelian and Abxaz-Adyghe dialects.
Topuria, V. (1931, 1944)	*Svanuri ena, I. zmna* (The Svan verb, 1931); brunebis sist'emisa-tvis svanurši (The case system in Svan) *Moambe* V#3 (1944)	Svan as language of mixed type (*narevi t'ipis ena*), with four declensional systems: 'Kartvelian', 'Adyghe', 'Svan', 'mixed'.

Chikobava, Arnold (1941)	Svanuri motxrobitis erti variant'i (One variant of the Svan ergative case), *TbSU Šromebi* XVIII	Adyghe-derived ergative morpheme in Svan older than 'Kartvelian' allomorph.
Janashia, Simon (1942)	Svanur-adiɣeuri enobrivi šexvedrebi. (Svan-Adyghe linguistic contacts). *ENIMK'-is moambe* XII. 249-278 [*Šromebi* III (1959): 81-116]	Cites Marr on Svan as mixed language ('when Japhetidology had not yet made language mixing into a universal principle') but ascribes Adyghe layer (*pena*) to intensive linguistic-cultural contact; Svan remains a fundamentally Kartvelian language.
Dondua, K'arp'az (1946)	Adiɣeuri t'ip'is motxrobiti brunva svanurši (Adyghe type of ergative case in Svan), *Iberiul-k'avk'asiuri enatmecniereba* I: 169-194	Response to Janašia: Adyghe-type morphemes were not borrowed from an external source, but rather evolved within Svan itself (*šekmnilia tviton svanuris c'iaɣši*), perhaps at the same time as they arose in Adyghe. Dondua's analysis characteristic of late-Marrist radical autochthonism, which favoured *in situ* evolution over borrowing or migration as an explanation for language and ethnic origins.
Chikobava, Arnold (1948)	Kartvel´skie iazyki, ikh istoricheskii sostav i drevnii lingvisticheskii oblik (The Kartvelian languages, their historical structure and ancient linguistic profile). *Iberiul-k'avk'asiuri enatmecniereba* 2.255-275	Marr's account of mixed character of Svan is undisputed (*besporno*): Svan emerged from a 'complex historical process of crossing [*skreshcheniia*] of Kartvelian and Abxaz-Adyghe dialects'. In Chikobava's view, this is to be ascribed to the earlier presence in Svaneti of an Abxaz-Adyghean speech community.
Sharadzenidze, Tinatin (1955)	Brunvata k'lasipik'aciisatvis svanurši. (On the classification of Svan declension), *Iberiul-k'avk'asiuri enatmecniereba* 7.125-135	Acknowledges the position of Marr, Janashia, and Topuria that one of the Svan declension types is of Adyghe origin but does not speculate on the historical circumstances of its emergence.

Mach'avariani, Givi (1960)	Brunebis erti t'ip'is genezisatvis svanurši (On the genesis of one type of declension in Svan), *TbSU Šromebi* 93: 93-104	Argues, on the basis of Old Georgian parallels, that the Svan declension in /m/ is of Kartvelian, not Adyghe origin; but does accept Janashia's argument that other Svan morphemes were indeed borrowed from Adyghe.
Oniani, Aleksandre (1989)	*Kartvelur enata šedarebiti gramat'ik'is sak'itxebi: saxelta morpologia.* [Issues in the comparative grammar of the Kartvelian languages: Nominal morphology]. Tbilisi: Ganatleba.	Rejection of Marr's, Chikobava's and Sharadzenidze's analyses of Svan as a mixed language with Circassian substratal features. All of the features in question derive from the Proto-Kartvelian ancestral language.

The 1950 Pravda discussion and its aftermath

On May 9, 1950, a three-page article by Arnold Chikobava appeared in *Pravda,* preceded by an editorial note that the newspaper intended to host a debate over 'the unsatisfactory state of Soviet linguistics'. In his opening salvo, Chikobava praised Marr's early philological work while subjecting his later theories to sharp and detailed criticism. I. Meshchaninov, Marr's most prominent disciple, replied a week later. Further articles, criticizing or defending Marr's ideas, were published over the next few weeks until Stalin's ex-cathedra denunciation of Marr's New Theory of Language appeared on June 20. In a paper published after his death, Chikobava (1985) described his prior meeting with Stalin; the encounter appears to have been arranged by the Georgian Central Committee first secretary K. Charkviani, possibly with Beria's assistance (Alpatov 1991: 168-190, Pollock 2006: 104-34). In Ghlont'i's view, it was only after Stalin's intervention that a genuine 'Arakcheev regime' came into being in which Marrists were the persecuted rather than the persecutors, but in fact few suffered serious consequences (certainly nothing comparable to the 1937 purges). Numerous linguists throughout the USSR added their voices to the attack upon the principles of Marrism, now characterized as 'anti-historical' as well as 'antiscientific'.[15] From 1951-53, during the peak of officially sanctioned — and, to a degree, officially required — anti-Marrism, criticism of the deceased linguist came from all quarters, often for relatively minor reasons (e.g. Shanidze 1953: 672).[16]

[15] See, for example, the introduction to Vinogradov and Serebrennikov 1952.

[16] Not everyone jumped on the bandwagon: Bardavelidze cited (with approval) ethnographic data collected by Marr on the very first page of a book published in 1953. In a 1954 issue of the *Journal of the Language, Literature and History Institute of Abxazia* largely given over to

Arnold Chikobava and certain of his colleagues (Tinatin Sharadzenidze and Ketevan Lomtatidze, among others) presented their competing methodological principles for the historical study of Caucasian languages, and by extension, Caucasian peoples. As exemplified in the Svan morphology debate, however, Chikobava retained many of Marr's assumptions concerning the role of convergence and hybridity in language evolution, even as he denounced the excesses of late Marrist stadial determinism, four-element glottogenesis, and unbridled etymologizing.

Fifteen years later, the public 'rehabilitation' of Marr was underway. Chit'aia's 1958 essay on Marr's contributions to ethnography was never published, but an article on the same topic did appear on the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1965 (Chit'aia 1958: 43 [footnote]). The Marr centenary was also the occasion for conferences in Leningrad and Tbilisi; the latter was attended by Chikobava, among others (Alpatov 1991: 212). An homage to Marr by K. Dondua — not included in the 1967 Georgian edition of his collected works — appeared in the Russian edition of 1975 (247-253). The 120th anniversary was marked by the publication of a biography on Marr as a 'scholar of Georgian culture' by Shota Dzidziguri (1985), as well as the symposium I attended on a late October afternoon in 1985.

In present-day Georgia, Marr's reputation remains largely favourable in academic circles. In other contexts, however, far less positive references to him can occasionally be found, as in a comment posted on a website in October 2006, in which Marr, followed directly by Chikobava, heads up a list of 'traitor-historians' (*predatelei-istorikov*) who were willing to 'hand out pages of Georgian history to Armenians, Abkhazians, and Ossetians'. If one were to trace the sources of these dismaying accusations against Marr and other Georgian scholars, the path would almost certainly lead back to a thousand-page biography of a tenth-century Georgian ecclesiastical writer by literary historian P'avle Ingoroq'va (1893-1990), delivered to the printers in 1951, during the height of the anti-Marr campaign, and published in 1954 (Ingoroq'va 1954). In his attempt to reconstruct the ethnic landscape of south-western Georgia and Abkhazia in the early Middle Ages, Ingoroq'va laid the groundwork for a sweeping rejection not only of Marr's work but also those assumptions regarding the origins of ethnic groups in general and of the Georgians in particular that Marr shared with Chikobava, Janashia, and Javaxishvili (Tuite 2008). Ingoroq'va's model of Georgian ethnogenesis rejected hybridity in favour of an image of national origins that emphasized continuity, homogeneity, and purity. Ingoroq'va's anti-hybridism was to

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Marrism-bashing, the Abkhazian ethnographer Shalva Inal-Ipa referred to Marr twice without criticism, even though he also cited Stalin's essay on linguistics.

have consequences that are still very much felt today, but that discussion is best left for another time and another venue.

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