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### The Suffix -oba in the Georgian Language

The suffix -oba is very productive in the Georgian language. It is one of the affixes producing abstract nouns and it also expresses collectiveness. In the scientific literature it is stated that the suffix -oba produces abstract nouns by adding to nouns and participles in the active voice, e.g. *zma* “brother” – *zmoba* “brotherhood”, *mšenebeli* “builder” – *mšenebloba* “building” (Shanidze 1973).

Noun *studentoba* have particular meanings in the context:

1. (a) *studentoba kargia* (Being a student is good).
1. (b) *studentoba šekriba* (The students have gathered).

#### *Abstract Nouns with the Suffix -oba*

The suffix -oba adds to a concrete noun and gives it semantics of the existence, e.g. the concept *adamiani* “human” and the abstract expression of its existence *adamianoba* - being a human, having human peculiarities. *zmoba* (brotherhood) – being a brother, having peculiarities of the brotherly relationships.

Abstract nouns suffixed with -oba can be often found in the old Georgian written monuments. It was used even with the forms that have the ending -eba today, e.g. *ertguloba* “devotion”; *sneuloda* “sickness”; *ubeduroda* “distress”.

#### *Nouns Suffixed with -oba having the Function of Collectiveness*

In modern Georgian a part of the nouns suffixed with -oba has the semantics of collectiveness along with the abstractness. As it seems they gained this meaning later.

The fact that the expression of the qualitative combination should be primary and not the quantitative combination is indicated by the situation that only a small group of nouns suffixed with -oba has an ability to express plurality. For the transition of the qualitative characteristics of nouns suffixed with -oba to the quantitative ones they should be the characteristics solely of a certain class of people and they should be able to distinguish these people from the other parts of the society, e.g. *opicroba* “officership”, *glexoba* “peasantry” (a certain social status). A multitude of a quality is considered as an uncountable multitude.

The derivation of collective nouns suffixed with -oba is not possible from any bases. Only the quality of multitude such as craft, profession is not enough to create an uncountable multitude. For example, *mxatvroba* (being a painter; painting ) and *damlagebloba* (being a cleaner) do not express plurality but they do express multitude of a quality. Nouns suffixed with -oba that are derived from participles cannot take the function of collectiveness.

It is also noteworthy that collective nouns suffixed with -oba often require determiners expressing completeness for their functional-semantic stability that precede them and make

the context complete, e.g. *mteli* axalgazrdoba ik iqo (All the young people were there) or they use the particle *sul* (meaning everyone), e.g. axalgazrdoba *sul* ik iqo.

### *Nouns Suffixed with -oba in Georgian Dialects*

In Georgian dialects we attested word forms that express only the intensity, the multitude of a quality, e.g. A little girl is called by her grandmother: modi, **kalobav**, čemtan! Come here, my girl! (Kartlian dialect).

In this regard Fereydanian dialect of the Georgian language that is spoken by the Georgians displaced to Iran four hundred years ago is certainly rich. The dialect being in a kind of isolation has preserved a number of interesting occurrences. It has preserved a lot of nouns suffixed with -oba a part of which is abstract and the rest are neither abstract nor collective. There can be found synonymous pairs such as *dila/diloba* (morning); *sagomo/ sagomoba* “evening”; *ena/enoba* “language”. They are used in one and the same context, however, with respect to the frequency of use nouns suffixed with -oba are preferred.

2. (a) **dilobas** mosqlavi ro amua, mere moa sadiloba. “In the morning when the sun rises the time for dinner will come”.

2. (b) vetqvit čon čon **enobaze**. “We will tell him in our language”.

Fereydanian uses the same pattern to express abstract concepts in the vocabulary borrowed from Persian, e.g. *paizi – paizoba* “autumn”.

As for collectiveness, the semantics of plurality, in Fereydanian the nouns suffixed with -oba do not have such a characteristic.

### *The Suffix -oba in Old Georgian*

The material of Fereydanian dialect makes it clear that once the similar forms were the part of Georgian and indeed, we have attested them in old Georgian texts:

3.(a) *qorciłoba aišala*. (Wisdom of Lies). “The wedding is over”.

3.(b) *sulobas movida*. (Rusudaniani). “He has regained consciousness”.

3.(c) *čvenca čvens švilobaze gzrdidit*. (Rusudaniani). “We took care of you like our child”

As it seems the suffix -oba added to nouns as well as to adjectives, numerals and pronouns. Some of such forms still can be found today, e.g. **meṭi - meṭoba** “more – being more”, **čemi – čemoba** “my – being mine” while some are even affixed and established as unchangeable forms, e.g. **asobit** “hundreds of”, **meṭobit** “by being more”.

4. (a) *asobit adamiani iqo mosuli*. “Hundreds of people had come”.

In the old Georgian colloquial vocabulary we suppose the existence of the kind of pairs such as *\*asoba – asobit* “being a hundred – hundreds of”. The example of the transparency of this process is the frequency of use of nouns suffixed with -oba in the Fereydanian speech.

In old Georgian the semantics of collectiveness almost never can be found in this type of nouns with the exception of a few examples of XII-XIII century secular work “Visramiani” that is known for a number of linguistic innovations and an abundance of forms characteristic for colloquial Georgian of that time.

5. (a) smides da gaixarebdis, iyo didebulta zalaboba. “They were drinking and having fun. There were noblemen’s families”.

5. (b) yoveli muslimanoba brzanebasa tkvensa morčilebdes. “All the Muslims will obey your commands”.

Nowadays the suffix -oba is an active formative of collectives.

#### *Masdars Ending with -(a)oba*

In the Georgian language the suffix -ob adds to verb forms, e.g. **tevzaobs** “He is fishing”, **banaobs** “He is having bath”, **kanaobs** “He is wagging”. We think that in these examples –a is of a stem marker –av and the forms can be restored in this way \*tezvavobs, \*banavobs, \*kanavobs. Therefore, we apparently had \*tevzavoba, \*banavoba, \*kanavoba where -a of a stem marker –av is missing today. These forms have a masdar nature and demonstrate the intensity of a certain process, e.g. **tevzaoba** “fishing”, **burtaoba** “bouncing a ball”, **parikaoba** “fencing”. The forms **mepobs – mepoba** “He reigns – reign”, **kalobs – kaloba** “She acts like a woman – being a woman” are of the same type. Nouns suffixed with -ob are inclined towards being masdars. Thus, we think that the suffix -ob in the said verb forms and the suffix -oba in nouns are linked to each other.

*tevzoba* – being a fish; *tevza(v)oba* – fishing.

The suffix -oba may express the combination of qualities, the quantitative combination or the abstraction of a particular process, e.g. **studentoba** - 1. Unity of the qualities of a student; 2. The unity of students; 3. A period of being a student.

The increase of a degree of a quality makes a basic form be an abstract concept that is sometimes turned into a quantitative multitude. Even in a masdar of a verb form with the stem marker -ob the degree of intensity of a certain action is manifested.

#### **References**

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