In his book on the Daghestanian verb, Xajjakov (1975) characterizes the Lak verb as the most complicated in the Northeast Caucasian family. These complications extend to the grammatical terminology used for Lak indicative synthetic past tense forms, as anyone who reads more than one description of the Lak verbal system will quickly learn (cf., e.g., Burčulaje 1979; 1987; Murkelinskij 1971. Murqiqilinski 1980, Uslar 1890, Xajjakov 1966; 1975, Zirkov 1955). In an earlier article (Friedman To appear) I proposed that the status opposition in finite verbal forms usually marked by the morpheme -ss[-a], e.g., marked present čićajjar ‘writes, does write’ (as opposed to the unmarked present čičaj) be described by the English term assertive where Russian uses utverditel’nyj ‘affirmative’, podverditel’nyj ‘confirmative’, kategoričeskoe ‘categorical’, and Georgian uses mtk’iicebiti ‘affirmative, assertive’ (Friedman To appear). My central argument rested on the fact that the assertive forms are stylistically neutral in formal written contexts but marked as emphatic in everyday conversation. I therefore concluded that they are used for ‘objective assertion’, which is the most common style in formal communication but becomes emphatic in everyday speech, where some degree of subjectivity is the norm. While purely formal or traditional labels may be used for various screes as long as all participants in the discussion agree on the forms to which they refer, some type of consistency is essential for any coherent discussion. In the case of the Lak assertive, descriptive clarity as well as consistency could be sought, since the distinction itself did not have a traditionally established label. In the case of the Lak past tenses, however, traditional labels such as aorist, perfect, imperfect, and pluperfect are already in use and can, if consistently defined, function as usefully as any. The problem is that different authors use the same label for different forms so that, for example, Murkelinskij’s (1971) pluperfect is Xajjakov’s (1975) imperfect, Burčulaje’s (1979) pluperfect is Zirkov’s (1955) past (preterite), etc. I shall attempt, therefore, to propose and justify a consistent terminology for the indicative synthetic past tense forms in Lak. Tables One and Two summarize the terminological differences in seven articles and monographs concerned in whole or in part with the description of the Lak verb. Table One gives the Russian and Lak terminology, and Table Two gives English equivalents. Examples use the transitive verb čićin ‘write’ and, where appropriate, the intransitive verb lagan

NOTES

1 I wish to thank the Central Library of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, which has sent me many of the materials that helped me in this work. I am also indebted to the University of North Carolina Research Council, which funded some of my original research on Lak. Finally, I wish to thank my Lak informant, Ms. Eleonora Magomedova.

2 Unfortunately, I received Burčulaje1987, too late for inclusion in this article. It will no doubt provide many valuable insights for future investigation.

3 I shall concentrate on the unmarked aspect (type čićin ‘to write’) since the marked aspects (progressive and iterative: types čićlan, čičiwan, respectively), lack the past stem and synthetic screes based on the past stem in the unmarked aspect are replaced by analytic pasts in the marked aspects.

4 Prošesec can be translated as ‘past’ or ‘preterite’, and I have chosen ‘past’ as the more convenient and flexible of the two. Both pržeprošesec and davnoprošesec can be translated by ‘pluperfect’, which I have done, but it should be born in mind that the literal translations are ‘pre-past’ and ‘distant-past’, respectively, which are meanings that some of the scholars take literally (e.g., Burčulaje 1979). I have distinguished between [ne]soveršennoe and [ne]zakončennoe by using the standard translation [im]perfective for the former while translating the latter as ‘[non]completive’. These terms are referring to essentially the same phenomena. The difference appears to be that Murkelinskij is emphasizing the fact that the Lak distinction is not to be taken as being identical with Russian superordinate aspect, which is described by the term[s] [ne]soveršennoe in Russian grammatical description. I have discussed my reasons for using the English term ‘assertive’ where Russian uses podverditel’noe or utverditel’noe in Friedman (To appear) and at the beginning of this article. I translated kategoričeskoe as ‘categorical’ for ease of comparison. Dlitel’noe ‘durative’ could also be translated as ‘progressive’, but this latter term is better reserved for the marked superordinate aspect of the type čićlan. The use of ‘iterative’ for povtornoe is standard. The terms aoristnoe, rezultativnoe, and arxaicnoe, etc., are transparent. This leaves only Uslar’s otalennoe, which I have translated literally as ‘distanced’. In the case of the Lak terms, I have simply tried to be literal. The precise meanings of the words are the following: lagassa ‘past, gone’, čana ‘present, now’, čćinpara ‘long ago, a long time (Russian davno) < čćani ‘quickly, early’, čćićra ‘before, earlier’. For the remainder of the paper, I will use English terminology.
‘go’. Class One markers are used in those forms requiring class markers (screeves 4-7).

There are three screeves based on the present stem (čič-), screeves 1/2 oppose the first two persons (marked by -w) to the third (marked by -ød). screeve 3 occurs only in the first and second persons of transitive verbs. There are five screeves based in the past stem (čičw-). Numbers 7/8, like 1/2, distinguish the first two persons by means of -w as opposed to -ød in the third. The other three screeves all have a three-way opposition of the type 12s - 12p -3 marked by -a, -u, and -i or -ød, respectively. With the exception of Uslar (1890), the sources of these terms are all relatively modern works describing the literary language (Gümüç [Kumux] dialect). Although Uslar’s work describes the Vic’iqi [Vixeci] dialect of a century ago, his terminology is included here not only because his is a pioneering work of Lak linguistics that has influenced and served as a source for generations of subsequent studies, but also because the Vic’iqi dialect does not differ significantly from Gümüç with respect to verbal conjugation (Merkelinskij 1949:100). With the exception of Murqqilinskij (1980), which is in Lak, the terminology is all in Russian, which has been the language of publication for the majority of studies of the Lak verb.

When lined up and compared to one another, these terminologies manifest a variety of inconsistencies and lacunae. Only Zirkov (1955), Xajdakov (1966), and Merkelinskij (1971) mention all eight of the Lak synthetic past screeves, and only Zirkov (1955) has distinct terms for all of them. In the case of Xajdakov (1975), the lacunae are explained by the fact that he was not attempting a complete description. In the other cases, the reasons for these gaps are not always clear, but it is worthy of note that no two authors omit the same screeves. The use of identical terms for different screeves in Xajdakov, Merkelinskij, and Uslar is explained by the phenomenon of heterogeneous conjugations. This term, taken from Xajdakov (1975), is used to describe the neutralization of (or failure to distinguish) status oppositions in screeves 1/2, 7/8 and 3/4/5. In the case of 1/2 and 7/8 in colloquial Lak, the assertive is ordinarily used in the first person and the nonassertive in the other two persons due to the semantics of the assertive (Burçulaje 1979). In the case of 3/4/5 we have a diachronic process of relatively recent origin to be discussed in greater detail below. I shall return to these points shortly.

In the case of screeves 1/2, all of the authors except Uslar and Merkelinskij 79 (201) are more or less consistent in using a term translatable by the English ‘imperfect’. examples (1)-(3) are typical:

1. Ca-ca č’unal durčal čennawa rat’uw xxār-xx-ᵲ t’i j čartu kkuru lagałja. (Zirkov 1955:148)
   From time to time, from under the horses’ hooves, stones went rolling rumble-rumble into the gorge.

2. Quniwɔum Ꚓuzuṭralgumawa, qanu biwk’un učajwa: … (Merkelinskij 1971: 200)
   Even the older workers, laughing, said: …

3. Na h’aq’inu şawa ussijaw, win qquxlkura. (Uslar 1890: 84)
   I today at home was, but you didn’t see.

Uslar’s use of the simple term ‘past’ for screeve 1 is explained by the fact that he assigns this screeve not to the unmarked aspect but rather to the iterative aspect (type čiča-wan). Aside from the fact that the stem in screeves 1/2 is clearly the actually unmarked čič-a-j and not the aspeictedly iterative čič-a-w-a, the iterative aspect, like the progressive, forms an analytic screeve 1/2, i.e. čičawaj (uss)ja[w] (cf. progressive čičla-j (uss)ja[w]). Merkelinskij (1971: 201) uses the term ‘pluperfect’ when he is contrasting screeves 1/2 with screeves 7/8 as noncomplete vs complete. Elsewhere, however, he uses the term ‘imperfect’ for screeves 1/2 (Merkelinskij 1971:90-91). Uslar, too, uses the term ‘imperfect’, but only for the forms of the auxiliary meaning ‘be’, i.e. ja[w]. Both Uslar’s use of ‘distanced’ and Merkelinskij’s use of ‘pluperfect’ appears to be an attempt to convey the idea that screeves 1/2 function as the imperfect equivalents of all the remaining synthetic past screeves. In other words, screeves 3-8 all denote single completed actions and only 1/2 of the unmarked aspect do not.

In view of these considerations, the standard term screeve seems entirely adequate.

In the case of screeves 3/4/5 there are two chief issues. The first is whether to convey the fact that synchronically they can be described as forming a single heterogeneous screeve, as reflected in Xajdakov’s and

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5 The second person is limited to interrogatives, e.g., hwraw ‘Hello’ (lit. ‘Have you arisen?’) SSan baxxaw huq’a? … I na laws’ساس bahlun baxxaw. (Xalilov 1976:214) ‘What did you pay for the shirt? I paid what you bought it for.’

6 Burçulaje (1979) gives English and Georgian equivalents for four screeves in an abstract of one of his Russian articles, but these do not materially affect the situation. The terms are açuq’o m’tıkicebiti = present affirmative, namq’o usuri = past indefinite (imperfectum), k’at’egoriuli perpek’ti = categorical perfect, and aorist’ti = aorist. A complete Georgian terminology is given in Burçulaje (1987), but as was mentioned in note 2 this was received too late for inclusion in this article.

7 All examples from Uslar have been put in the orthography used in this paper and adjusted to reflect literary Lak spelling.
Merkelinskij’s terminologies, or to keep them distinct as do Burčulaje and Zirkov, or to tread a middle ground, as does Uslar. According to Uslar (1890:90-91), 3 and 4 were used only for events the speaker witnessed or was at least aware of at the time they took place. The difference between 3 and 4 was that 3 was limited to transitive verbs, while 4 was used for intransitives. On the other hand 5 was used for other types of past events. Thus, according to Uslar, the first person of screeve 5 was used only in situations when the speaker did not personally remember the events, e.g., something that happened to the speaker in infancy or early childhood. Another feature differentiating 3/4 from 5, according to Uslar, is that the former denote events completed in the past whereas the latter is used for states continuing into the present as in (4)

(4) Wākssu h’aladaj šawa iwkw’unni! (Uslar 1890:91) 
   How much time he has been at home! (implication: and he is still there)

In the course of the past century, according to the modern linguists, a situation has developed which parallels to some extent that in that in screeves 1/2 and 7/8. screeves 3/4/5 form a single heterogeneous screeve in which 4 has become archaic except in the first person intransitive (elsewhere screeve 4 occurs only in folk tales, among older speakers, etc.), 3 is used for the first person transitive and 5 is used for the other two persons. It is clearly the case that screeve 5 is not invariably nonconfirmative, etc., as can be seen from examples (5) and (6) (cf. also Burčulaje 1979:207):

(5) Ina h’aq’inu bullalissa čakgu balič’an buwnu, mizitrawa uwkwun, jalagu k’ura awnu, q’urun kkalan iwkw’unmaxxa (Xalilov 1976:204).
   You today, having interrupted the prayers in progress and gone out of the mosque, then having returned, began [again] to read the Qur’an!

(6) QOqārššuni cukkančaw šīnawun. TTun mu tulta jarunnnin kkawkwunni. - kunu. [Xalilov 1976:214]
   It has not fallen in the water at all. I have seen it with my own eyes, - he said.

In the context of (5), the congregation is asking the mullah to explain actions that they had just witnessed. Example (6) likewise concerns a clearly personally confirmed action. The second question is the use of the term ‘aorist’ as opposed to the term ‘perfect’. In practice, these terms can mean whatever the describer chooses, and in fact the meanings do vary considerably among language descriptions. Thus, for example, the term aorist is used in descriptions of Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Georgian for non-durative or punctuative pasts while in descriptions of Turkish it refers to a type of gnomic present. Similarly the term perfect is used for a present resultative, an unmarked past that developed from a present resultative, etc. Nonetheless, some type of consistency must be established for any given language under consideration. In connection with these two problems, the relationship of screeves 3/4/5 to 6, 7, and 8 should also be considered. Burčulaje, Xajdakov and Merkelinskij all treat 7/8 as distinguished only on the basis of assertive/nonassertive. Zirkov, however, makes this same distinction for 7 and 6. Burčulaje and Merkelinskij (1979) likewise use the term ‘pluperfect’ for screeves 7/8, Zirkov uses it only for screeve 8, Xajdakov uses it for screeve 6, while Murqqilinskij (1980) implies that 6, 7, and 8 are all some type of pluperfect. Uslar omits 7 and 8 and treats 6 as the assertive of 3/4.

While the heterogeneous unity of 3/4/5 is clear, it is necessary for both morphological and descriptive reasons to distinguish among them. I therefore propose using the cover term ‘perfect’ to refer to all three and the terms ‘transitive’, ‘archaic’ and ‘unmarked’ to distinguish among them. The use of ‘transitive’ for screeve 3 is justified by the fact that it is indeed limited to transitive verbs. Examples (7) and (8) are typical:

(7) Harkan ali manamassu kasak butan ā’rkinsa xxaj, nagu ca kasak butaw. (Xalilov 1976:210)
   It seemed that each person was supposed to put in a piece, so I have put in a piece, too.

(8) TTun ina k’ičirawa xal xunaw. (Zirkov and Xajdakov 1962:276)
   I have seen you on the street.

The use of ‘archaic’ for screeve 4 is preferable to the use of, e.g., ‘intransitive’ because it is indeed archaic in most of its uses (a fact I have been able to confirm with my native informant) and because transitive uses are still possible, albeit uncommon.8

(9) Na h’aq’inu k’urxixi šawa iwkw’ra (Uslar 1890:90)
   I was at home this morning [but not now].

(10) ... zana biwkwun laweri k’ījagu ussu (Burčulaje 1979:203)
   Having returned, the two brothers have left.

(11) Tanal çu bavxxuriw? (Burčulaje 1979:205)
   Has he sold the horse?

By contrast with screeves 3 and 4, screeve 5 is unmarked. Cf. examples (4)-(6) above also:

(12) Žul aģurdal h’uh’u kunu, zul kkacral täjrttu bunni. Mij täjrdu bulara, mij žulli! (Xalilov

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8See note 5.
The choice of the term ‘perfect’ over ‘aorist’ is motivated by the fact that 3/4/5 are not narrative advancing screeves. They are used for statements of fact, very often - but not always - with some sense of present relevance or state. The term perfect, therefore, is used advisedly, with the caveat that it is not identical to the perfect in other languages but shares with at least some of them the qualities of denoting completion without necessarily denoting plot-advancing action.

The relationships among screeves 6, 7, and 8 are as problematic as the table indicates. It is clear on the basis of usage, e.g., examples (14)-(16) that 7 is best labeled ‘aorist’ in the sense of ‘plot-advancing past tense denoting completed acts’ and that it is not a ‘pluperfect’ or ‘distant past’.

(14) H'aq'i nu čansa mašınarttu bija. Qus t'ajla dukkan zuşša qqa xuna. (Murqqilinskij 1980:II 7)

There were too few cars today. We didn’t send the goods.

(15) Čak bullaj una, tun č'alan biwk'una mizirtal č'ira čapal bullalissa kkačči. Allahnal qqatta čapur šun qqabitan, na ta liqan ban lawgssijaw. (Xalilov 1976:204)

While I was praying, I saw a dog befouling the wall of the mosque. Not to let Allah’s house be defiled, I went out to make it run away.

(16) Graždan dāw-wilul č'umal ... ukunssa iš čussar. … partizanannan maqunmaj šun bахssar. Partizannal h'ukmu buwssar arxnu zunttawunmaj han. Amma k'ālamin mall gajnal qirw lajan q'ast durssar. Partizannan cala q'ulpitirttasal, rizq'ilussal zunttavun han bahlahl biwk'ssar. Bawt'un mašwara bullalissa č'umal, iwzu na šahlissa partizannal uu'kuna: ... -- Kālami na ššallussa q'ini bač'an banna ... -- Wil maq żun kulsar, --kunu, partizantal bačin ḥ'adur qa'na biwk'una. Cinjaw lawguna, źahlissa partizanma gikkuva liw'cuna.

During the Civil War … such an event happened. … the Partisans had to pull back. The Partisans decided to go into the mountains. But the Whites intended to pursue them. The Partisans had to go into the mountains with all their families and cattle. During the council meeting a young Partisan stood up and said: … --I will hold off the Whites all day. … --Your word is known to us, -- saying the partisans began to get ready to go. Everybody left, the young partisan stayed there. (Murqqilinskij 1980:22)

On the basis of their morphology, 6 and 8 are clearly both marked for assertive status. The difference between the two is that the endings of screeve 6 are not marked for tense (the stem itself is markedly past) whereas both the stem and the endings in screeve 8 are markedly past (the latter are identical with the imperfect of ‘be’). In Murqqilinskij (1980) example (17) is given as the formal equivalent of the colloquial (14).

If we examine the first part of example (16), cited below as (18), it appears that screeve 6 is a type of scene setter providing the background for narrative advancing screeve 7:

(17) Ārkinnssakssa mašınarttu baqqāsiwrijn buwnu, cila č'umal qus t'ajla qqadurkssar. (Murqqilinskij 1980:II 7)

Due to the absence of the necessary cars, the goods have not been sent in time.

(18) Graždan dāw-wilul č'umal ... ukunssa iš čussar. … partizanannan maqunmaj šun bahssar. Partizannal h'ukmu buwssar arxnu zunttawunmaj han. Amma k'ālamin mall gajnal qirw lajan q'ast durssar. Partizannan cala q'ulpitirttasal, rizq'ilussal zunttavun han bahlahl biwk'ssar. Bawt'un mašwara bullalissa č'umal, iwzu na šahlissa partizannal uu'kuna: ... -- Kālami na ššallussa q'ini bač'an banna ... -- Wil maq żun kulsar, --kunu, partizantal bačin ḥ'adur qa'na biwk'una. Cinjaw lawguna, źahlissa partizanma gikkuva liw'cuna. (Murqqilinskij 1980:22)

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Screeve 8 is illustrated by examples (19) as well as in example (15) cited again here as (20):

(19) Pu niw'ussa č'umal na ac'wa tuman xarž buwssija. ... TTul ussil timur t'ajlassar. Pu niw'ussa č'umal, munal ac'wa tuman xarž buwssija. Amma ži iq'ral qqadurssija, ni k'i bačin ārkinnssar... (Xalilov 1976:204)

At the time farther died I spent 10 tumults. ... What my brother says is true. At the time father
died he spent 10 tumans. But we did not make an agreement that it was necessary to divide it in half.

(20) Cak bullaj una, tun čalan biwk'una mizirtal č'ira čapal bullalissa kkačči. Allahnal qqatta čapur šun qqabitan, na ta liqan ban lawgssijaw. (Xalilov 1976:204)

While I was praying, I saw a dog befouling the wall of the mosque. Not to let Allah’s house be defiled, I went out to make it run away.

Although example (19) could be taken as illustrating a type of pluperfect or distant past, such an interpretation seems forced for example (20), where lawgssijaw appears to be functioning according to Burčulaje’s and Murkelinskij’s descriptions, i.e. as the assertive equivalent of the aorist.

It is clear on the basis of function and form that both screeve 8 and screeve 6 are assertive. The question is how do they relate to one another and to the aorist? In example (17) t'ajla qqurdurkssar describes the result of a lack of vehicles while in (18) šussar and the following forms in that screeve describe the state of affairs relating to and resulting in the main action of the story. In (19) and (20), on the other hand, lawgssijaw, xarž buwssija, and qqardurssija describe actions completed in the past without referring to their results in the present or using them to set a scene. In the case of (20) the event described by lawgssijaw follows on that described by čalan biwk'una, whereas in (17) t'ajla qqadurkssar is a resultative equivalent of t'ajla dukkan qqašuna in (14). Consider also the fact that the various perfect screeves in Lak are called č'ana largssa 'present past' and that screeve 6 has a present-derived desinence while screeve 8 has a past tense-derived desinence.

In Lak, the temporal relationships of anteriority described by the English term pluperfect are rendered by a complex set of non-finite forms, while the other screeves of the Lak perfect -the transitive (screeve 3), the archaic (screeve 4), and the unmarked (screeve 5) - are not marked for the assertive feature carried by the -ssa- in screeve 6. On the basis of all the foregoing, I propose the terms assertive aorist and assertive perfect for screeves 8 and 6, respectively.

To summarize: I propose the following terminology for a consistent description of the synthetic past screeves of Lak:

1=imperfect
2=assertive imperfect
3=transitive perfect
4=archaic perfect
5=unmarked perfect
6=assertive perfect
7=aorist
8=assertive aorist

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The precise relationship of the archaic and transitive perfects screeve 6 is beyond the scope of the present article.
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<td>prosēdšee nesoveršennoe</td>
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**TABLE ONE**

**Lak Past Paradigms: Russian & Lak Terminology**
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<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>Burč '79</th>
<th>Žirk '55</th>
<th>Xajd '66</th>
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<th>Murk '71</th>
<th>Murq '80</th>
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<td>imperfect pluperfect durative (noncompletive)</td>
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<td>past imperfective</td>
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**TABLE TWO**

**LAK PAST PARADIGMS: ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS**