

Status in the Lak Verbal System and its Typological Significance

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In a paper delivered at the First Conference on Non-Slavic Languages of the Soviet Union (Friedman 1979), I proposed a typology of status on the basis of data drawn from Georgian, Avar, Tadjik, and Azerbaidjani, with references to Balkan Slavic, Turkish and Albanian. In that paper, I accepted the definition of the term *status* as describing verbal categories marking the speaker's evaluation of the narrated event, i.e., in choosing a certain morphologically marked verbal form, the speaker is editorializing on the event in question. In my conclusion, I presented a table (reproduced below as Table IV) outlining a system for the comparative investigation of verb forms involving nonconfirmative status in the languages of the Soviet Union, the Balkans, and possibly elsewhere (Friedman 1979: 346). In this article, I will expand the bases of comparison by examining data from Lak, a language spoken by over 80,000 people in the central highlands of Daghestan (Comrie 1981: 197), which together with Dargwa and its related languages and dialects (e.g., K'ubachi) constitutes the Lak-Dargwa group of Northeast Caucasian (Daghestanian) languages. After presenting an outline of somewhat relevant portions of the Lak verbal system, I will show how they necessitate modifications in my 1979 typological schema.

Lak is one of the five literary Daghestanian languages (along with Avar, Dargwa, Lezgian, and Tabasaran). Its relation to Avar, the Daghestanian language I considered in my 1979 article, can be compared to that of English to Bulgarian, and in fact the two pairs of languages display some interesting parallels in their treatment of status, although a study of them must remain the task of a later work. The system of marking grammatical categories in the Lak verb is far more complicated than that of Avar or other Daghestanian languages, e.g., Dargwa, Tabasaran, and Udi (Xajdakov 1966: 155), and the standard twentieth-century analyses (Žirkov 1955, Murkelinskij 1971, and also Xajdakov 1966, Burčuladze 1979) show significant differences. In this article, I will take Žirkov's analysis as my starting point but I will modify it with information based on the other sources.

The nondefective Lak verbal root can enter into a three-way superordinate aspectual distinction, i.e., it can form three stems, each with its own infinitive and various finite and nonfinite forms, e.g., unmarked (plain) *čič* 'to write', progressive *čič-l-an*, iterative *čič-av-an*.<sup>1</sup> The conjugation of the plain stem is characterized by a greater number of synthetic tense forms (paradigmatic sets or sleeves [Geo *mc'k'rivi* ]) than the aspectually marked stems, which often have a corresponding periphrastic construction, e.g., 1sg common pres (class I) plain *čičara*, progressive *čičlaj ura* 'I write/I am writing.' We should also note here that there exist a number of underived progressive stems without the aspect marker (normally -l-), e.g., *xxan* 'seem,' *zun* 'work,' *ččvan* 'want,' *t'un* 'say.'<sup>2</sup> There are also a few diachronically derived progressive verbs marked with -n- or -r- instead of the usual -l-, e.g., *šanan* 'sleep,' *zanan* 'walk,' *ššaran* 'boil,' which have no corresponding plain forms (see Xajdakov 1966: 154).<sup>3</sup>

The plain stem has three bases for the formation of synthetic paradigms: (1) infinitive, e.g., *čičin-*, (2) bare root, e.g., *čič-*, (3) root with infix class marker, e.g., *čivč-* (I, III sg, I-III pl) *čirč-* (II, IV sg, IV pl).<sup>4</sup> Marked aspectual stems use only the first two types of bases and substitute periphrastic constructions with a plain auxiliary for the third. The infinitive base is used for the formation of future, optative, and conditional paradigms, the infix root for past forms, and the bare root for present, past, conditional, potential, and imperative forms.<sup>5</sup> In my previous work on status, I have limited my discussions to the indicative, leaving modal forms, including the future, for separate studies (see Friedman 1977:7, Aronson 1977:14 for a summary of the relevant arguments). In the present article, also, for the sake of clarity, I will limit the discussion to present and past indicative forms, i.e., those based on the bare and infix root.

A number of the languages that I studied in my earlier work have past tense forms which are marked for the speaker's personal confirmation of the truth of the narrated event. In Lak, however, there is a morphologically marked confirmative (Russ *utverditel'nyj*, Geo *mt'k'icebiti*) in both the past and the non-past.<sup>6</sup> The meaning of the present confirmative can be compared to the English assertive in *do*, e.g., *I do believe in ghosts!* (cf. Burčuladze 1979: 244). Unlike the English assertive, however, the Lak confirmative, which is based on the adjectival suffix *-ssa*, can be marked in both synthetic forms, and, by means of an auxiliary, in analytic forms in a wide variety of tenses and moods, where English must rely on stress and intonation. Consider the following examples from Burčuladze (1979: 188, 193) and Murkelinskij (1971: 176) :

- (1) *Na čičara čağar* (common plain pres) 'I write a letter'
- (2) *Na čičajssar čağar* (conf plain pres) 'I do write a letter' <sup>7</sup>
- (3) *Na čičlaj ura čağar* (common prog pres) 'I am writing a letter'
- (4) *Na čičlačissara čağar* (conf prog pres) 'I am writing a letter' <sup>8</sup>
- (5) *Ta ur tikku* (common plain pres) 'He's there'
- (6) *Ta ussar tikku* (conf plain pres) 'He is there'

The Lak confirmative also has a wider range of co-occurrence possibilities syntactically as well as paradigmatically, but this requires further investigation.<sup>9</sup>

The Lak preterite system is characterized by a rich variety of synthetic and analytic tense forms. In addition to problems caused by inconsistencies in the inventory and nomenclature used in various descriptions (cf., e.g., Xajdakov 1975:156 and N=Murkelinskij 1971:201, where the same tense form is labeled *imperfect* and *pluperfect*, respectively; cf. also Burčuladze 1979:195, 198-99) and by questions of agreement with subject and objects, the Lak preterite system is complicated by a phenomenon labeled by Xajdakov (1975:155) *heterogeneous paradigms*. From a more or less diachronic point of view, Lak can be said to have one defective and seven complete synthetic indicative past tense forms: the perfect or confirmative perfect, with only first person forms, the aorist, archaic past, confirmative archaic past, imperfect, confirmative imperfect, pluperfect, and confirmative pluperfect. <sup>10</sup> From a synchronic viewpoint, however, there are fewer sets of paradigms: aorist, confirmative archaic past, imperfect, and pluperfect. The perfect, aorist, and archaic past combine to form a single aorist paradigm - the source of any given form being determined by person and voice - while the synchronic imperfect and pluperfect can both combine forms from their respective common and confirmative paradigms. Table I gives examples of the preterite paradigms in diachronic terms using the verb 'write.' <sup>11</sup> Table II presents the sources of the synchronic heterogeneous paradigms.

Table I			
	IMPERFECT	PLUPERFECT	ARCHAIC
common	čičajva (v)	čivčuna (v)	čivčur -a -u -ø
conf	čičajssija (v)	čivčussija (v)	čivčussar -a -u -ø
	PERFECT		AORIST
	čičav	čičardu	čivčunn -a -u -i

Note: The (v) of the imperfect and pluperfect forms is added to mark the first and second persons. The -a -u -ø/-i of the archaic and aorist forms mark the first & second singular, first and second plural, and third persons, respectively.<sup>12</sup> The perfect has only first singular and first plural forms.

Table II					
		AORIST		'Write'	
		Transitive	Intransitive	singular/plural	singular/plural
1	perfect		archaic <sup>13</sup>	čičav/čičardu	lavgra/lavgru
2		aorist		čivčunna/čivčunnu	lavgunna/lavgunnu

Heterogeneity in the imperfect and pluperfect is a more limited phenomenon. There is no heterogeneity in the common and confirmative plain imperfects and in the confirmative progressive imperfect, which is also synthetic, e.g., *čičlačissija* (v). The common progressive imperfect, however, is formed analytically, viz. with the present gerund (*čičlaj*) and the imperfect of the auxiliary of *-ur* 'be': common imperfect *-ija* (v), confirmative imperfect *-ussija* (v). According to Burčuladze (1979:198), only the confirmative imperfect auxiliary is used in forming the first person, e.g., *čičlaj ussijav*, while in the second and third persons the common imperfect is ordinarily used although the confirmative imperfect is also acceptable. In the pluperfect, the confirmative is used with a first person subject, while the common form is generally used otherwise, but even with a first person subject, the common pluperfect can be acceptable, e.g., *na/žu čivčussijav* 'I/we had written' but *tanal čivčunav na/ina* 'he had registered me/you' and *lax £x £u na qinnu č'uvnu uvxxunav* 'yesterday I had gotten really very tired' (Burčuladze 1979:212).

In addition to the paradigms which have been discussed thus far, there is an enormous number of analytic and cliticized constructions which, if one accepts Murkelinskij's (1971) description, are all paradigmatic and marked for nonconfirmativity. Some of these are clearly syntactic constructions involving lexical finite verb forms or particles used as clitics. Thus, for example, virtually any verb phrase can be made to render the meaning 'reported' by the addition of *t'ar*, which can be written separately or attached to the last element on the verb phrase. The form is derived from *t'un* 'to say' and can be equated with the Geo quotative particle *-o* or the Russ *de*, *mol* (< *deskat'*, *molvit'* 'to say'), although Murkelinskij translates with the Russ *govorjat* 'they say.' The following examples will suffice to illustrate that *t'ar* is a particle and not a paradigm-defining element:<sup>14</sup>

(7) *Tanal čağar čičaj* (Murkelinskij 1971: 195)

He writes a letter.

(9) *Tanal čağar čičaj t'ar* (Murkelinskij 1971: 195)

They say he writes a letter.

(10) *Örč qän ivk'unni* (Murkelinskij 1971: 201)

The boy began to laugh.

(11) *Örč qän ivk'unni t'ar* (Murkelinskij 1971: 196)

They say the boy began to laugh.

(12) *Nanu t'ar, nanu t'ar / Cač'an nanut'ar/ Ivč'avaj, vix mäqnu/ kkakkan ččaj bur t'ar*  
(Xalilov 1969: 106)

Let's go, she says, let's go, she says/ Quickly let's go, she says/ He's dying, for you thirsting/ to see he wants, he says. (i.e., He says he is thirsting for you) [Context:

This is taken from the beginning of a ballad. The heroine is singing, reporting the words of the hero's mother who is in turn reporting the words of her dying son.]

Murkelinskij (1971: 177, 199, 205) also cites what he calls a dubitative suffix, *-kkar*, which he says renders the effect of Russ *kažetsja* 'it seems' (Geo *turme*; cf. also Xajdakov 1966: 191). This suffix is actually a cliticized finite verb form, however, as can be seen from the following examples from Murkelinskij (1971: 177, 199) which show person-number agreement:

(13) *Ina zij unukkara*

Apparently, you are working

(14) *Zu zanaj bunukkaru*

Apparently, y'all are walking

(15) *Tanal čağar čivčunukkar*

Apparently, he wrote a letter

- (16) *Örč' t'urk'ut'ij unukkar*  
Apparently, the boy is playing
- (17) *Örč' t'urk'u t'ij ivk'un unukkar*  
Apparently, the boy was playing

The construction is based on the past gerund in *-nu*. In the case of plain verbs, the clitic is added directly to the gerund (15). In the case of progressive verbs, which cannot form a past gerund, the past gerund of 'be,' *-unu*, serves as the auxiliary base, which can be used with the present gerund to render a present and with that gerund plus the past gerund of *-ikan* 'be' (the nondefective verb whose forms fill in when forms of *-ur* are lacking) to render a past.

Another construction treated by Murkelinskij (1971:199-200, 205) as paradigmatic is formed by means of a verbal adjective in *-ssa* and the phrase *xxaj ura* 'It seems to me' (Russ *mne kažetsja*). As can be seen from the following examples, however, this is simply a syntactic construction with the common present or imperfect of the progressive verb *xxan* 'to seem,' viz. present gerund *xxaj* and present or past auxiliary *-ur* 'is' agreeing in person and number with the one to whom the narrated event seems:

- (18) *Na duš duruxlaj bussa xxaj ura* (Murkelinskij 1971:199)  
It seems to me that the girl is sewing.
- (19) *Žu duš duruxlaj bussa xxaj buru* (Murkelinskij 1971:200)  
It seems to us that the girl is sewing.
- (20) *Ganal xijaldanun k'aj zuntturdu ökkissa gužraššal hala-utti hala jala cala bak'rajn bahanssa xxaj bija* (Žirkov 1955: 149)  
In his imagination it seemed to him that these very mountains along with a malicious force at any moment would fall on his head.

The constructions which have been considered thus far, viz. those with *t'ar*, *-kkar* and *xxan* all really convey nonconfirmativity lexically and cannot be treated as paradigmatic. However, Murkelinskij also cites a number of constructions with *-ur* and *-ikan* which are, in essence, periphrastic perfect-like constructions at least some of which appear to convey nonconfirmativity (translated by Russ *okazyvaetsja*, Geo *turme*) without recourse to lexical support and which must, therefore, be treated as periphrastic, paradigmatic constructions rendering status oppositions (Murkelinskij 1971: 195-99, 206, also Xajdakov 1966:53, 73). Table III illustrates the principal types of combinations which render various types of aspectual, temporal, and taxic meanings together with status marking, and appended to it a list containing at least one example of each type.

Table III

	Gerund of Main Verb	Past Gerund of <i>-ik'an</i> (I: <i>ivk'un</i> )	Present Participle main verb / <i>-ussa</i>	-UR
1	-----	-----	main verb	+
2	progres	-----	-ussa	+
3	progres	+	-----	+
4	progres	+	-ussa	+
5	past	-----	-----	+
6	past	-----	-ussa	+
7	past	+	-----	+
8	past	+	-ussa	+

- (21a) *Tanal ussu bazalluvun lagajssa ur* (Murkelinskij 1971:195)  
His brother is going to the market (it turns out).

- (21b) *Burc'il likkural majnijar vin qinssa cič'av daqqassa dur* (Murkelinskij 1967:506)

- Apparently there is no better medicine than the marrow of a wolf's shin-bone.
- (22) *Ĝaral lačlaj dussa dur* (Murkelinskij 1971:198)  
It's raining, apparently.
- (23) *Ĝaral lač'laj dir'kun dur* (Murkelinskij 1971:205)  
It was raining (it turns out).
- (24) *Qami zij birk'un bussa bur* (Murkelinskij 1971:196)  
The women had been working (it turns out).
- (25) *Tanil culk'lux' c'uvxxunu bur* (Žirkov 1955:141)  
She [the wolf III] asked the fox:
- (26a) *Ömar qin x'unu ussa ur* (Murkelinskij 1971:205)  
Omar has gotten well, it turns out.
- (26b) *Ta äjq'unu ussa ur* (Murkelinskij 1971:205)  
He has made a mistake, it turns out.
- (27) *Ta lavgun ivk'un ur* (Murkelinskij 1971:205)  
He had left, it turns out.
- (28) *C'an x'unu dirk'un dussa dur* (Murkelinskij 1971:196)  
It had gotten dark, it turns out.

Even from the abbreviated outline of part of the Lak verbal system given here, it can be seen that the status oppositions of Lak display significant differences from those of the languages I have considered in my earlier work. Starting with the concluding outline alluded to earlier (Friedman 1979:346) and reproduced here as Table IV, it is possible to make a number of meaningful comparisons and modifications. In doing so, I will follow the numbering system given in Table IV.

Table IV

- I. Perfect as pure resultative vs Perfect as nonconfirmative
  - A. First Person
  - B. Connected narratives
    - 1. With definite past time adverbs
    - 2. In folk tales
- II. Perfect with apparently nonpast meanings
  - A. Resultative
    - 1. Admirative
    - 2. Stative
    - 3. Performative
    - 4. Other emotive
  - B. Nonconfirmative
    - 1. Dubitative
- III. Quotative particles
  - A. Clitic
  - B. Independent
- IV. Competing forms
  - A. Resultative
  - B. Nonconfirmative
- V. Relation of perfect to neighboring forms
  - A. Simple preterite
    - 1. Marked confirmative
    - 2. Unmarked
    - 3. Other
  - B. Pluperfect
    - 1. Pure reported

2. Pure taxic

3. Modal

VI. Volition and Uncertainty  
(VII. Modality)

I. Lak has two types of forms which can be subsumed under the term *perfect* : synthetic (Tables I and II) and analytic (Table III).

I.A. The synthetic perfect illustrated in Tables I and II is called *categorical* by Žirkov (1955:82), who says it apparently confirms a past act completed at the moment of speech (cf. also Burčuladze 1979:206 n.100). As was noted earlier, this form is used only in the first person of transitive verbs, where it can be said to replace the aorist or archaic past. In intransitive verbs, the archaic past is normal in the first person, although the aorist can also occur, which leads Burčuladze (1979:207, 211) to equate the archaic past with the perfect and claim that in fact the aorist functions as a perfect in the second and third persons rather than the perfect functioning as an aorist in the first. Based on the available data and my informant work, however, I would argue rather that the Lak synthetic perfect has been absorbed by the simple preterite (aorist), as has the archaic past, although the perfect may retain a resultative nuance contextually. To this can be added the fact that the confirmative archaic past is not archaic at all but functions as the confirmative aorist (in the expanded sense of the term *aorist*). The confirmative nuance in the synthetic perfect posited by Žirkov can be said to be carried by the person rather than by the form. This phenomenon is explicitly manifested in the (analytic) progressive imperfect, where the first person always has the confirmative form while an opposition common/confirmative occurs in the other two persons, and to a lesser extent to the pluperfect, where the confirmative predominates in the first person.

I.B. The analytic perfects described in Table III vary in their degree of nonconfirmativity. Type 5 (past gerund plus *-ur*) appears to be virtually unmarked for status, and functions as the unmarked past in certain genres, e.g., folk tales (cf. Žirkov 1955:1940-42).<sup>16</sup>

II. There do not appear to be any perfects used with nonpast meanings, but the existence of nonconfirmative presents (Table III, Types 1 and 2), which, it should be noted, are formed in a manner similar to that of the analytic perfects, must be taken into account here. In any case, this category requires further research.

III. Lak has a well developed system of both clitic and independent quotative particles. In addition to the form *t'ar*, which was already mentioned, Lak can mark reported speech with the present gerund of *t'un*, viz. *t'ij* (in many respects, the uses of this form resemble those of Turkish *diye* 'saying'), as well as the past gerund of the plain verb of speaking *učin*, viz. *kunu*. Lak renders indirect speech by direct quotation followed by a verb or particle of reporting, as can be seen from the following example:

(29) *Ttux' h'akintural munijar qinssa daru baqqassar uvkunni, -kunu bur cuk'lul*  
(Murkelinskij 1967: 506)

The doctor told me (that) there is no better medicine than this - said the fox.

IV. Lak displays the tendency to create new perfects (analytic) which push the old perfect (synthetic) into the unmarked past (aorist), but the multiplicity of analytic perfect-like forms has also created competition among them. Additional nonconfirmative competition is provided by the cliticized forms such as those in *t'ar*, *-kkar*, and *xxaj*. Both resultativity and nonconfirmativity are factors in the competition among forms, but Lak does not appear to have developed a pure resultative.

V.A. As has been mentioned, the old perfect has been absorbed by the simple preterite, but the relationship of marked confirmative to common (unmarked) preterite is complicated by the interactions of person, aspect, and voice.

V.B. The Lak pluperfect is remarkable, in comparison to the pluperfects of languages considered in my earlier work, in that it does not appear to sharpen the status or other oppositions seen elsewhere in the Lak verbal system. On the contrary, the sharpening of the confirmative/common distinction seen in the heterogenous paradigm of the analytic progressive imperfect is less distinctly expressed in the pluperfect. The extent to which taxis is a marked category of the forms

we have been calling pluperfect also requires further study, insofar as many taxic relationships in Lak are rendered by means of participial forms.

VI, VII. With regard to volition, uncertainty, and modality, I can offer the following comments on their relationship to the status oppositions being considered here. The combination of confirmative status with future modality renders a meaning of volition. Also, there appears to be a nuance of uncertainty which can be communicated in interrogative forms by means of the choice of interrogative particle.

In my earlier article (Friedman 1979:347), I suggested three possible correlations between the presence and absence of various phenomena outlined on Table IV: (1) between the presence of clitic quotative particles (III.A) and the absence of the use of a perfect form in folk tale narratives (I.B.2), (2) between the presence of a marked confirmative simple preterite (V.A.1) and the presence of a pure reported pluperfect (V.B.2), and (3) between the presence of a dubitative use of the perfect (II.B.1) and a lack of clitic quotative particles (III.A).

The data from Lak contradicts the first correlation. The data are ambiguous with regard to the second, i.e., both such forms may exist in Lak, but not necessarily as the result of opposition sharpening. Lak data supports the inverse of the third correlation with its presence of clitic quotative particles and absence of dubitative perfect usage. Typologically, one of the most important contributions of Lak data is the synthetic present confirmative. In the languages I considered previously, all status oppositions have related in some way to a synchronic or diachronic perfect. Confirmative status has arisen in opposition to or in correlation with other developments within such perfect forms and has been limited to the preterite system, while status oppositions in nonpast indicative forms (e.g., the Albanian admirative) have been perfect-derived nonconfirmatives. The Lak confirmative is of a significantly different nature, as it can be both past and nonpast and does not appear to be connected with the perfect-type developments found both in Lak and the other languages, although further investigation may reveal some association.<sup>17</sup> Based on the Lak data considered in this paper, I am proposing Table V as a revised outline for the comparative investigation of verbal systems with morphologically marked indicative status categories in the Balkan-Pontic-Caspian area, and perhaps elsewhere.

Table V

- I. Perfect as pure resultative vs Perfect as nonconfirmative vs Perfect as unmarked past or confirmative
  - A. First person
  - B. Connected narratives
    1. With definite past-time adverbs
    2. In folk tales
- II. Perfect with apparently nonpast meanings
  - A. Resultative
    1. Admirative
    2. Stative
    3. Performative
    4. Other emotive
  - B. Nonconfirmative
    1. Dubitative
- III. Quotative particles
  - A. Clitic
  - B. Independent
- IV. Competing forms
  - A. Resultative
  - B. Confirmative
  - C. Nonconfirmative
- V. Relation of perfect to neighboring forms
  - A. Simple preterite

1. Marked confirmative
2. Unmarked
3. Other
- B. Pluperfect
  1. Pure reported
  2. Pure taxic
  3. Marked confirmative
  4. Modal
- C. Nonpreterite (present)
  1. Unmarked
  2. Confirmative
  3. Nonconfirmative
- VI. Influence of other generic categories
  - A. Aspect
  - B. Voice
- VII. Volition, Uncertainty, Interrogation
- VIII. Synthetic vs Analytic construction
- (IX. Modality)

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<sup>1</sup> The orthography used in this article follows current Lak orthographic practice in using doubled consonants for the pharyngealized stops, affricates, and fricatives (but *h'* for the glottalic pharyngealized fricative), *v* for [v] and [w], and no marks for length/stress. Glottalization is indicated by a subscript or superscript dot, the uvular series are represented by *q* and *x*, the velar series by *k* and *x* £. The diresis is used for front vowels (pharyngealized in initial position).

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<sup>2</sup> The plain infinitive of 'say' is *učin*, past gerund *uvkunu* (I).

<sup>3</sup> The iterative aspect has the smallest number of synthetic tense forms and presents virtually no irregularities. As it does not present any unique peculiarities germane to the discussion of status in this article, the remainder of the discussion will be limited to the plain and progressive aspects (cf. Xajdakov 1966:154, Žirkov 1955:95-100).

<sup>4</sup> Some verbs also take prefixed class markers:  $\emptyset$  (I sg), *b-* (III sg, I-III pl), *d-* (II, IV sg, IV pl). Such verbs will be preceded by a hyphen when being cited, e.g., *-ur* 'is' implies the forms *ur*, *bur*, *dur*, *ura*, *burā*, *dura*, *buru*, *duru* depending on the class, number, and person of the referent (subject or object)

<sup>5</sup> There are, in addition, a large number of participial and gerundive forms which can be derived from these three bases. The complete details are beyond the scope of this article (see Žirkov 1955:95-99, Murkelinskij 1971:218-232).

<sup>6</sup> The English term *affirmative* is used by Burčuladze (1979:244), but I have eschewed it in the context of this article due to its possible confusion with *affirmative* in the meaning of 'non-negative declarative'.

<sup>7</sup> For complex historical reasons, the plain confirmative transitive present agrees with the object, while the progressive, like the plain common present, agrees with the subject (see Burčuladze 1979:188-93).

<sup>8</sup> The progressive has reduplication of the second root consonant in confirmative and some participial forms based on the root.

<sup>9</sup> One noteworthy example of the use of the Lak confirmative occurs in proverbs (Xajdakov 1961:116). In contrast to, e.g., Georgian, which ordinarily suffixes the quotative particle-*o* to proverbs, Lak ordinarily uses the confirmative, as can be seen from the following example:

- (i) *Kä' valin lavgunni kunu laččul čismus nac'u x ĩunu qqabuč'ajssar* (Xajdakov 1961:116)  
Having gone to the Kaaba, garlic does not come back sweet.  
Cf. *Geo Ierusalims niori gagzavnes, dabrunđa da ısev q'ardao* (Gvarj#alaje and Kuasvili 1976:173)  
They sent the garlic to Jerusalem it came back and still stank.

It is interesting to note that in the languages of the Balkans with marked confirmative status categories, it is generally the unmarked verb form (Macedonian and Bulgarian *-l*, Turkish *-mis* $\infty$ ) which is generally used in proverbs, although the complete picture is much more complex. (Thus, for example, while Georgian usually uses the aorist, it will use the perfect in sayings which involve talking animals or inanimate objects, whereas Turkish will use the confirmative past (*-di*) in certain types of gnomic proverbs.)

<sup>10</sup> The nomenclature here follows that of Burčuladze (1979), which is the most consistent and takes all the previous literature into account.

<sup>11</sup> Some authors include the iterative imperfect of the type *čičavard-* *-a*, *-u*, *-i* in their general accounts of the Lak system, but these forms are not germane to the discussion here (see Burčuladze 1979:198-99, also Xajdakov 1966:166, 1975:155, 167).

<sup>12</sup> The rules for the choice of referent for person-number-class marking are beyond the scope of this paper. Verbs with infinitives in *-an*, *-un* have the third person marker *-i* in the common archaic past as well as in the aorist.

<sup>13</sup> The second and third person forms of the archaic past are in fact archaic. They occur primarily in folk tales and epics (Burčuladze 1979:203).

<sup>14</sup> According to Žirkov (1955:108), *t'ar* is the third present of *t'un* but does not occur in the speech of Kumux. The use of *učin/t'un* is additionally complicated by the fact that it is used to form compound verbs, e.g., *t'urku t'un* 'to play,' as well as in a variety of syntactic and even grammatical constructions (see Žirkov 1955:108-109).

<sup>15</sup> Table III is limited to constructions with a present participle, present gerund, or past gerund. Other possibilities include the durative progressive present participle, e.g.:

- (ii) *Čaral lač'ıajjna dussa dur* (Murkelinskij 1971:195)  
Apparently it keeps raining.

<sup>16</sup> In this, Lak behaves like Turkish, which uses the perfect-in-origin *mis* $\infty$ - past, rather than like Georgian, which uses the aorist, cf. the standard opening equivalent of the English *Once upon a time*, which translates literally '[Once] there was, (and) there wasn't;

Lak: *Atti-tti bivk'un bur, qqabivk'un bur*

Turk: *Bir varmis* $\infty$ , *bir yokmus* $\infty$

Geo: *Iq'o da ara iq'o*

<sup>17</sup> As was noted at the beginning of this article, the Lak confirmative can be compared to the English assertive in *do*. However, Lak differs significantly from English not only due to the fact that the Lak confirmative can occur in a

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wider variety of tense forms (synthetic and analytic) and sentence types (affirmative, negative, interrogative), but also because Lak has nonconfirmative tense forms of the type found in the Balkan-Pontic-Caspian area but not in Western Europe.