

Perfective past in Dargwa

Perfect, aorist, resultative and evidential in Shiri and beyond

Oleg Belyaev

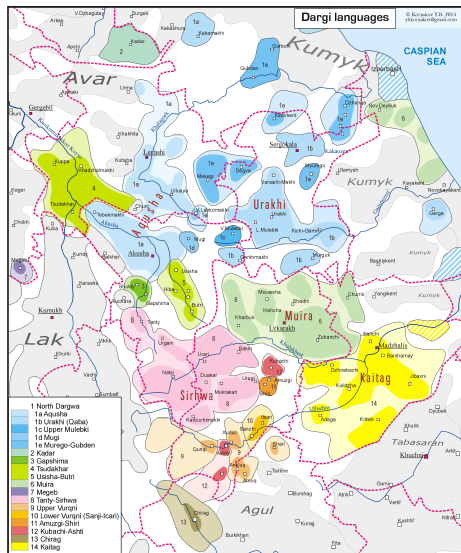
Lomonosov Moscow State University

East Caucasian Workshop, Bamberg

April 16, 2016

Dargwa: General information

- A group of East Caucasian languages
- SOV, ergative alignment
- Complex verb and noun morphology
- Person and gender agreement



Shiri

- Shiri is originally spoken in the eponymous village, some 3km from Kubachi
 - currently mostly spoken in the lowlands (Chinar etc.)
 - heavily endangered; not more than a few hundred speakers
 - together with Sanzhi, focus of a DoBeS project (led by Diana Forker and Rasul Mutalov)
- Together with Amuzgi (93% Swadesh cognacy), a separate language of the Dargwa branch
- Has common properties with both Kubachi and other southern Dargwa varieties



Perfective past forms

Aorist

	sg.	pl.
1	-a-d-i	-a-d-a
2	-a-t:i	-a-t:a
3	-aj, -i, -ini	

	sg.	pl.
1	b-arq'-a-d-i	b-arq'-a-d-a
2	b-arq'-a-t:i	b-arq'-a-t:a
3	b-arq'-aj	

- A synthetic witnessed past tense form
- Can also be formed from the imperfective stem (= **Imperfect**)
 - together referred to as the **Preterite**
- The same form exists in Kubachi/Ashti and Amuzgi
 - in other varieties, this set of endings is only used in the past habitual

dam ŷü če-w-ag-a-t:i
 me.DAT thou SUPER[LAT]-M-see.PFV-PRET-2-SG
 'I **saw** you.'

- The Aorist is the standard past tense in witnessed narratives:

▶ ca ʔurus x:unul **sa-ha-r-eɣ-i** lak, nus:a
 one Russian woman ANTE[LAT]-UP-F-reach.PFV-PRET.3 up we.EXCL
 kat d-ɯq^ʕ-ɯn-ni=di, ca<r>i lak, h̄a-q^ʕ-ɯn-ni
 down 1PL-go.IPFV-PTCP-CVB=PST self<F> up UP-go.PFV-PTCP-CVB
 nis:i-c:i, Ɂaj ci-k'al **ha-ta-ʔ-aj**
 we.EXCL-INTER[LAT] speech what-INDEF UP-NEG-say.PFV-PRET.3
 he-li-dil ...
 EMPH-that-ERG

‘One Russian woman **came** up in front of us, we were going down, and she was going up, having come near us, she **didn’t say** anything ...’
 (spoken text)

Resultative

Perfective

Converb

-*ib-li*

-*ub-li*

-*ur-ri*

-*un-ni*

		auxiliary	
		sg.	pl.
+	1	=da	
	2	=di	
	3	=cai	

	sg.	pl.
1	b-arq'-ib-li=da	
2	b-arq'-ib-li=di	
3	b-arq'-ib-li=cai	

- Resultative proper

- murad **kejg-ib-li=ca<w>i**

M. DOWN:M:sit.PFV-PTCP-CVB=3<M>

'Murad **is sitting.**' (lit. 'has sat down')

- Evidential past

- ha-r-ε̄-ib-li=ca<r>i** ca x:unul hin-ne

UP-F-reach.PFV-PTCP-CVB=3<F> one woman water-IN[LAT]

'One woman **came** to the water.' (spoken text)

- The Resultative is the typical tense used in unwitnessed narratives:

▶ t'u-mi-nuq[˘]-b-ala b-eq-ub-li bec'
 leg-PL-hand-PL-COLL N-break.PFV-PTCP-CVB wolf
ka-b-ik-ib-le=cai q:at:a, wa bec' ... hämhä
 DOWN-N-fall.PFV-PTCP-CVB=3<N> valley[LAT] and wolf donkey
 lar-b-ik'-u-l t:uz-b-ik'-u-l
 stamp-N-say.IPFV-PTCP-CVB fart-N-say.IPFV-PTCP-CVB
b-id-ag-ur-ri=cai
 N-thither-go-PTCP-CVB=3<N>

‘The wolf **fell down** the valley with broken legs, and the donkey **ran away** merrily.’ (“The Wolf and the Donkey”)

Perfect

Perfective

Participle

*-ib**-ub**-ur**-un*

auxiliary

		sg.	pl.
+	1	=da	
	2	=di	
	3		

	sg.	pl.
1	b-arq'-ib=da	
2	b-arq'-ib=di	
3	b-arq'-ib	

- Has only the perfect function (past event with present relevance)
 - never used in narratives etc., except direct speech
 - no evidentiality contrast

★ he-l χabar-ri q:æ-r-arq'-ib=da du
 EMPH-that story-ERG dizzy-F-do.PFV-PTCP=1 I

'This story **has made** me dizzy.' (spoken text)

★ mašina b-id-ag-ur řurkabe-ka bari ha-b-ulq-na-b-a
 car N-THITHER-go.PFV-PTCP[3] Kubachi-EL sun UP-N-go.IPFV-LOC-N-ALL

'The car **has left** Kubachi and is now heading eastwards.'

- In narrative texts, Perfect forms are exclusively found in direct speech:

- ▶ na ag-ur, ik'-u-l=ca<w>i, arg-an
now happen.PFV-PTCP[3] [M]say.IPFV-PTCP-CVB=3<M> happen.IPFV-POT
'Now the inevitable **has happened**, he says.' ("The Magic Beads")
- ▶ wallah, b-ik'u-l=cai, du χazain-ni
by.God N-say.IPFV-PTCP-CVB=3<N> I master-ERG
t:ura-Ɂ-ib=da š:i-li-c:i-ka
EX[LAT]-chase.PFV-PTCP=1 village-OBL-INTER-EL
'By God, my master **has driven** me **out** of the village.' ("The Donkey and the Wolf")

Overview

- A standard three-way system (cf. e.g. Armenian):
 - ▶ synthetic Aorist (witnessed past)
 - ▶ periphrastic Perfect
 - ▶ periphrastic Resultative (+ evidential)
- Unusual features:
 - ▶ direct evolution resultative → evidential? (*pace* Tatevosov 2001)
 - ▶ Aorist corresponds to past habitual in most other dialects
 - ▶ Perfect corresponds to aorist in most other dialects
- In what follows, I will attempt to account for these “unusual” features by proposing a reconstruction of the proto-Dargwa perfective past tense system and its development

Cross-dialectal comparison

Semantically neutral labels

- Due to cross-dialectal semantic variation in Dargwa, I will use the following semantically neutral labels for the paradigms in question:
 - PPST₁** for “Participial Past 1”: 3rd person form segmentally equivalent to the perfective participle, 1st and 2nd person forms utilize clitic person markers (1p. *b-arq'-ib=da*, 3p. *b-arq'-ib*).
 - PPST₂** for “Participial Past 2”: identical to PPST₁ except for the use of the “copula” *ca=i* in the 3rd person (1p. *=arq'-ib=da*, 3p. *b-arq'-ib=cai*).
 - RES** for “Resultative”: the paradigm based on the perfective converb (*-ib-li* etc.) with the clitic person markers 32 (1p. *=arq'-ib-li=da*, 3p. *b-arq'-ib-li=cai*).
 - SPST** for “Synthetic Past”: the synthetic perfective past-tense paradigm which corresponds to the Shiri Aorist, with the 3rd person endings *-aj*, *-i*, *-ini*, *-iri* (1p. *b-arq'-a-d-i*, 3p. *b-arq'-aj*).

Cross-dialectal overview

	Shiri	Ashti	Kubachi	Icari	Akusha, Tanti	Kaitag
PPST ₁ (- <i>ib</i>)	perf.	—	—	aor.	aor.	aor.*
PPST ₂ (- <i>ib</i> =COP)	—	—	evid.	perf. evid.	—	evid.
RES (- <i>ib-li</i> =COP)	res. evid.	perf. evid.	perf.	res.	perf. evid.	perf.
SPST (- <i>aj</i>)	aor.	aor.	aor.	—	—	—

Sources:

- own fieldwork for Shiri and Ashti (Kubachi system in Magometov 1963 seems identical)
- Abakarova (1996) and Šamov (1994) for Kubachi
- Sumbatova and Mutalov (2003) for Icari
- Sumbatova and Lander (2015) for Tanti
- van den Berg (2001) for Akusha

Kubachi examples

- PPST₂ (evidential, not attested in Magometov 1963!)

- ▶ ʔu:ɤʰbug-an-t-at:-ij b-ulh-un=sa-b nadir-šah-li-j
Kubachi-INHAB-PL-OBL-DAT N-see.PFV-PTCP[EVID]=3-N N.-Shah-OBL-DAT
š:e ha-b-alč-ij b-ik:-u-l
village UP-N-take.PFV-INF N-want.IPFV-PTCP-CVB

‘The people of Kubachi **saw** that Nāder-Shāh wanted to capture the village.’ (“The *muchals*”, Abakarova 1996, 175)

- RES

- ▶ resultative

du ijal lum b-us-ib-li=da
I today edge N-hold.PFV-PTCP-CVB=1

‘I **am fasting** today.’ [lit. ‘I **have held** the edge’] (“The Wolf and the Fox”, Abakarova 1996, 223)

- ▶ perfect

e:ɤ-ib-l=a:-de it:-ij at:a-la wasijat
understand.PFV-PTCP-CVB=NEG-2 thee-DAT father-GEN testament

‘Thou **hast not understood** thy father’s testament.’ (“The father’s testament”, Abakarova 1996, 172)

- SPST (aorist)

- ▶ suq k'abk'aj-li-j siɁ-u-zi-w
once Vladikavkaz-IN-EL HITHER:M:reach.IPFV -PTCP-ATTR-M
saɁ-a-d du mažalis-le
HITHER:M:reach.PFV-PRET-1[SG] I madzhalis-IN[LAT]
‘Once, when returning from Vladikavkaz, I **reached** Madzhalis.’ (“What happened to me”, Abakarova 1996, 170)

Kaitag examples

- PPST₁ (aorist)

- ▶ he-ž-eli dam q:^want'-e q:^waš **b-erh-iw**
 EMPH-this-ERG me.DAT lip-IN[LAT] fist N-hit.PFV-PTCP[AOR.3]
 'This one **hit** me in the lip.' ("The cost of 20 kopecks", Karacan, sentence 6, Temirbulatova 2004, 277)

- PPST₂ (evidential)

- ▶ hap'-b-ar-iw-li, šuš:k:e=ra ca-j=ra, r-us-un-ni
 IDEOPH-N-do.PFV-PTCP-CVB sabre=ADD self-M=ADD F-sleep.PFV-PTCP-CVB
 ka-r-is:-un ric:i-l-sa **k-ag-ur=ca-j** il
 DOWN-F-lie.PFV-PTCP sister-OBL-ANTE[LAT] DOWN-go.PFV-PTCP=3-M that
 'He snatched the sabre and **came down** to the sleeping sister.' ("Brother and sister", Dzhirbachi, sentence 12, Temirbulatova 2004, 274)

- RES (perfect)

- ▶ du-li kitaw **b-elč'-un-ni=da**
 I-ERG book N-read.PFV-PTCP-CVB=1
 'I **have read** the book.' (Temirbulatova 2004, 159)

A reconstruction

The original system

- In a nutshell, my proposal is that the proto-Dargwa perfective past tense system included SPST, PPST₁ and RES:

form (3p.)	abbreviation	PD meaning
<i>-ib</i>	PPST ₁	perfect
<i>-ib-li=cai</i>	RES	resultative
<i>-aj</i>	SPST	arorist

- This is essentially identical to the Shiri system, except for the lack of grammaticalized evidentiality
- What is the motivation for such a reconstruction?

Resultative (RES, *-ib-li=cai*)

- Cognate forms have resultative semantics in all known varieties
- Extensions to perfect (Ashti, Akusha, Tanti, Kaitag) and evidential (Shiri, Ashti, Akusha, Tanti)
- Apparently, in Shiri there has been a direct transition from resultative to evidential

Aorist (SPST, *-aj*)

- Main division among Dargwa varieties:
 - SPST (*-aj*) Kubachi/Ashti, Shiri/Amuzgi
 - PPST₁ (*-ib*) all other dialects
- I believe that it is SPST that has to be reconstructed as the original Aorist
- There are three main arguments in favour of this scenario:
 1. the alternatives are typologically and formally implausible
 2. SPST endings themselves are old and exist in most other dialects (usually in a different function)
 3. some dialects, while lacking a full perfective SPST paradigm, have incorporated SPST forms into their Aorist paradigms based on PPST₁

An old synthetic Aorist

1. Implausible diachronic scenario

- If the original Aorist was PPST₁, how could it acquire perfect semantics in Shiri?
- Theoretically, the aorist function could be displaced by a new form à la Haspelmath (1998)
- However, aorists generally do not arise on their own, but develop from perfects or resultatives
- Furthermore, the new aorist would simply replace the old aorist rather than narrow its meaning

An old synthetic Aorist

2. SPST is not an innovation

- SPST is a synthetic (thus old) form
- It exists in other varieties as Past Habitual
 - cf. perfective participle in *-aj* in Shiri and Tanti

Icari Past Habitual
(=*uc-* ~=*urc-* ‘catch’)

	sg.	pl.
1	b-urc-a-di	
2	b-urc-a-t:-i	b-urc-a-t:-a
3	b-urc-iri, b-urc-aj	

Shiri Aorist

(=*uc-* ~=*urc-* ‘catch’)

	sg.	pl.
1	b-uc-a-d-i	b-uc-a-d-a
2	b-uc-a-t:-i	b-uc-a-t:-a
3	b-uc-aj	

An old synthetic Aorist

3. Mixed forms

Amalgamation of SPST and PPST₁ in some dialects (Mutalov 2002, 97)

Kaytag (Temirbulatova 2004)

(=ar(q')- ~ir(q')- 'do')

	sg.	pl.
1	b-ar-iw=da	
2	b-ar-a-t:-i	b-ar-a-t:-a
3	b-ar-iw	

Urakhi (Uslar" 1892)

(=aq'- ~iq'- 'do')

	sg.	pl.
1	b-aq'-i=ra	
2 (P)	b-aq'-i=ri	
2 (A)	b-aq'-a-d-i	b-aq'-a-d-a
3	b-aq-iβ	

Perfect (PPST₁, *-ib*)

- Having established that SPST was the original Aorist, it seems most parsimonious to assign to PPST₁ the function of perfect
- The Shiri system would be the most archaic one. Most other dialects have undergone the typologically well-attested perfect → aorist shift (Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca 1994)
- The only alternative would be to assume that PPST₁ paradigms are independent innovations in Shiri and other dialects, but:
 - ▶ semantics too similar
 - ▶ zero 3rd person marking is consistent across dialects, unlike other periphrastic forms
 - ▶ stress shift (Sumbatova and Lander 2015)
 - ▶ mixed paradigms
- As for PPST₂, it seems to indeed be an independent innovation:
 - ▶ found in otherwise remote varieties
 - ▶ semantics: either perfect or evidential, sometimes both
 - ▶ 3rd person copula = participle in predicative position
 - ▶ it is morphologically impossible for the 3rd person marker to attach to an already complete form and change its meaning

Developments in individual varieties

“Kubachoid” group (Kubachi/Ashti, Shiri/Amuzgi)

	Shiri		
PD meaning	res.	perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	PPST ₁	SPST
	*-ib-li=cai	*-ib	*-aj
changes	+evid.		

Developments in individual varieties

“Kubachoid” group (Kubachi/Ashti, Shiri/Amuzgi)

Ashti, Kubachi *apud* Magometov (1963)

PD meaning	res.		perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	→	PPST _I	SPST
	*-ib-li=cai		*-ib	*-aj
changes	+perf.			
	+evid.			

Developments in individual varieties

“Kubachoid” group (Kubachi/Ashti, Shiri/Amuzgi)

Kubachi *apud* Abakarova (1996)

PD meaning	res.		perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	→	PPST ₁	SPST
	*-ib-li=cai		*-ib	*-aj
changes	+perf.			

PPST₂
 *-ib=cai
 evid.

Developments in individual varieties

“Narrow Dargwa” (Akusha, Tanti, Icari, etc.)

PD meaning	res.	perf.	→	aor.
PD form	RES	PPST ₁		SPST
	*-ib-li=cai	*-ib		*-aj
changes		+aor.		

Developments in individual varieties

“Narrow Dargwa” (Akusha, Tanti, Icari, etc.)

	Akusha, Tanti		
PD meaning	res.	perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	PPST ₁	→ SPST
	*-ib-li=cai	*-ib	*-aj
changes	+perf. +evid.	+aor.	

Developments in individual varieties

“Narrow Dargwa” (Akusha, Tanti, Icari, etc.)

	Icari		
PD meaning	res.	perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	PPST ₁	→ SPST
changes	*-ib-li=cai	*-ib	*-aj
		+aor.	
		-perf.	
		↑	
		PPST ₂	
		*-ib=cai	
		perf.	
		evid.	

Developments in individual varieties

“Narrow Dargwa” (Akusha, Tanti, Icari, etc.)

	Kaitag, Urakhi			
PD meaning	res.		perf.	aor.
PD form	RES	→	PPST ₁	⇐ SPST
	*-ib-li=cai		*-ib	*-aj
changes	+perf.		+aor. -perf.	
			PPST ₂	
			*-ib=cai	
			evid.	

Remaining problems

- The reconstruction crucially depends on the data of Kubachi/Ashti and Shiri/Amuzgi
 - ▶ SPST has only survived intact in these varieties
 - ▶ PPST₁ has retained the original perfect semantics only in Shiri
- There is not enough data on most Dargwa languages
 - ▶ descriptions of TAME for the most part quite sketchy
 - ▶ not enough textual evidence (few texts or limited genres, e.g. perfect rarely found in narratives)
- Some remaining mysteries:
 - ▶ the nature of PPST₂ (*-ib=cai*)
 - ▶ the ultimate origin of SPST
 - ★ 2sg form equivalent to Içari imperfective converb *-a-t:i*
 - ★ 3p form equivalent to Shiri and Tanti (maybe more?) perfective participle in *-aj*
 - ★ in any case, this is more an issue of internal reconstruction

Conclusions

- I have proposed a reconstruction of the Proto-Dargwa perfective past tense forms involving a three-way distinction:
 - aorist
 - perfect
 - resultative
- This system has only survived in a small minority of languages
- Most of the postulated diachronic changes are typologically well-attested
 - all stages of the “perfective cycle” seen in a single branch of East Caucasian
- Two developments are unusual and require further elaboration:
 - the direct evolution from resultative to evidential in Shiri (bypassing the perfect)
 - the grammaticalization of PPST₂ (*-ib=cai*) in Kubachi and Kaitag (evidential with apparently no perfect functions)

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