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Three Papers on the Perfect  

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On the Development of the South Slavonic Perfect

The South Slavonic linguistic area is not much larger than Finland, and it is significantly smaller than Sweden, for instance. Owing to its political and cultural history, this area is now divided between five or six standard languages,¹ but from the vantage point of dialectal geography it forms an indivisible whole where grammatical and lexical innovations have always been able to spill over linguistic boundaries and state borders. This is visible also in the history of the South Slavonic Perfect, a periphrastic verb form inherited from Proto-Slavonic. It has been subject to various changes and conflicting developmental trends, which can all be understood as grammatical innovations spreading from three epicentres at different corners of the linguistic area.

1. The Original South Slavonic System

In Proto-Slavonic, there were only some lexicalized remnants of the old Proto-Indo-European inflectional perfect. In its place we find a new periphrastic perfect, formed with the auxiliary *býtě 'to be' and a kind of past participle active of the main verb. This so-called i-participle was used only in periphrastic verb forms, but it was historically related to deverbal adjectives (Vaillant 1966, 83–84).

The original South Slavonic tense system, inherited from Proto-Slavonic, can be studied through Old Church Slavonic (OCS) documents, which, for the most part, reflect the state of affairs in Bulgaro-Macedonian dialects from the IX century onwards. The Perfect paradigm of the OCS rešti 'to say' (stem rek-) is as follows (only masculine forms are given):

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¹ The standard languages are, from the northwest to the southeast: Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian. The status of Bosnian between Croatian and Serbian is still somewhat unclear, but eventually it may emerge as the sixth standard of the South Slavonic area. The term "Serbo-Croatian" designates the linguistic area consisting of Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian dialects; in the same vein, features common to Bulgarian and Macedonian dialects define a "Bulgaro-Macedonian" area.
The auxiliary tends to be enclitic, which is why it is placed after the main verb in this model paradigm.

Potebnja (1958 [1888], 255) pointed out that in OCS Gospel texts, the use of the Perfect does not consistently follow the use of the Greek Perfect in the originals. According to him, this shows that the OCS gram in question is not a perfect at all. However, there is no reason to accept the Perfect of New Testament Greek as a prototype defining what a perfect is cross-linguistically. (Still worse would be to take the Latin perfectum as such a standard, for it is clearly a kind of aorist, i.e., a perfective past tense.) The OCS Perfect conforms to the definition given by Maslov (1990, 372): a perfect is "an aspecto-temporal form of the verb, expressing a present state as a result of a preceding action or change, and/or a past action, event or state which is somehow important to the present and which is being considered from the present point of view, detached from other past facts" (my transl.).

New Testament Greek did make some kind of semantic distinction between the Aorist and the Perfect (Hoffman & von Siebenthal 1985, 330). But it is questionable whether anyone was still aware of that distinction in the IX century, when the Gospels were translated into OCS. According to Joseph (1990, 164), the old perfect system was eliminated "in the Koine period". The new periphrastic perfect system (with the auxiliary εγείρον 'to have'), even if it existed as early as in the IX century, hardly supported the correct interpretation of the old synthetic forms found in NT texts. There was also no reason why the translators would have identified those archaic forms with the Slavonic periphrastic Perfects. The Perfects found in OCS texts must consequently have been more or less spontaneous, that is to say, the Perfect was certainly not used more in them than in spoken Slavonic — but it may have been used less, for as a synthetic form, the Slavonic Aorist was formally supported both by the Aorists and Perfects in the originals.

The OCS Perfect is used mainly in direct speech (including prayers). Most instances of this tense in the Gospels, for instance, are found in the words of Jesus. Although I have not analysed all of the relevant text corpus, I think it can safely be said that the Old Church Slavonic Perfect can never be a narrative tense, i.e., it does not appear in plot-advancing sentences. It is a gram belonging to Weinrich’s (1964) "besprochene Welt", not to the "erzählte Welt". This is clearly seen in the Vita Constantini (Cyrilli), which, as far as we know, is not based on a

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2 Actually the first part of this definition applies rather to the gram called resultative — see Nedjalkov (ed.) 1988.
Greek original and may therefore reflect the tense use of spoken Slavonic relatively faithfully. In this text, the Perfect is used 52 times. All the instances save one are found in direct speech, and even the sole exception (in XVII: 13) is part of indirect speech, not of the narrative proper.

Słoński (1926, 19–25), who counted all instances of the Perfect in the OCS corpus known in his time, noticed that more than half of them are in the second person singular. According to him, the reason for this is to be sought in the morphology of the Aorist, in whose paradigm the second and third person singular are not distinguished formally (apart from possible accent differences not marked in the texts). As the Perfect was already semantically close to the Aorist — he explains — it was used in the second person so as to make the intended meaning clearer.

As far as dialogues are concerned, there is some sense in Słoński’s explanation. Even in Modern Bulgarian, the Aorist and the Perfect can be semantically close to each other in isolated sentences like dali sme oveshanie ‘we gave a promise’ and dadoxme oveshanie ‘we’ve given a promise’ (Maslov 1959, 282–283; cf. also Stankov 1980, 60–61 and Lindstedt 1985, 105–106). It is in principle possible that the OCS Perfect was sometimes preferred to the Aorist for clarity, and in some later Church Slavonic grammars the Perfect was even formally substituted for the second person singular in the Aorist paradigm (Hannu Tommola, p.c.). But the main reason for the preponderance of the second person singular is that although this form is seldom needed in narratives, it is very typical of dialogues — as well as in the special type of monologues represented by prayers and psalms.

The history of the South Slavonic Perfect is a history of this gram becoming a narrative tense and becoming part of new narrative systems arising in different dialect areas. These new narrative systems took over the functions of the old simple (inflectional) past tenses Aorist and Imperfect, but not all of these functions in all of the linguistic area. This change was accompanied by a partial loss of the auxiliary in the third persons of the Perfect, a process that went much farther in West Slavonic and East Slavonic, affecting even the other persons in the latter group. In OCS, the auxiliary was consistently retained in all persons, however in some parts of the Codex Suprasliensis, a manuscript of East Bulgarian origin, the auxiliary is sometimes omitted in the third person singular. Dostál

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3 The Vita Constantini is usually not mentioned as part of the Old Church Slavonic corpus because all of its extant copies date from centuries after the OCS period proper, defined to include the IX to XI centuries only. However, the original text must have been written soon after St. Constantine-Cyril’s death (867). Although the later copies do not retain the orthography or phonology of the original, it can be assumed that the verb forms were not altered to a significant degree.

4 As edited by Tomšić (Fontes, pp. 95–143).

5 In Bulgarian linguistics, the notion of narrative system (razkazovatna sistema) has been fruitfully applied by Ivančev (1984).
(1954, 607–608) considers this to reflect the spoken language of the time (X century). In the following account, the changes that the South Slavonic Perfect has undergone will be discussed as areal phenomena. There are three major spheres of innovation, each of which is part of a larger area that stretches outside the South Slavonic lands. These larger areas are tentatively labelled the Central European area, the South Balkan area and the Black Sea area. It is not claimed that these are linguistic areas, except as regards the perfect and its developments.

2. **The Central European Area**

Beginning in the northwest corner of the South Slavonic lands, a change spread south and east whereby the Perfect became a general past tense (preterite), the Aorist and the Imperfect being gradually lost. This change has been completed in the great majority of Slovene dialects, as well as in Kajkavian (northern) and Čakavian (western) dialects of Croatian. In Slovene, remnants of the two simple past tenses are found only in some westernmost dialects, viz. in the Resian dialects and in some of the Venetian dialects (Kolarič 1968, 56–57; Lencek 1982, 115; Steenwijck 1992: 138). Such remnants are also reported in some of the Čakavian dialects of Croatian (Mixalik 1986, 335).

In the whole North Slavonic (= West and East Slavonic) area the simple past tenses were likewise lost, with the exception of the Sorbian language of Southeast Germany. However, in South Slavonic area this change cannot be said to be simply a manifestation of the same intra-Slavonic tendency. The first written documents of Slovene, the Freising Fragments from about the year 1000, still show both Aorists and Imperfects (Kolarič 1968, 55–57). There are not plenty of them, to be sure, but there are not many Perfects, either: the Fragments contain two confessional formulas and a call to repentance, and in such texts past tenses are not needed extensively.

Dejanova (1986, 289) claims that the Aorist survives only as a relic in the Freising Fragments, the Perfect having taken over its functions. Here, as often in studies of the history of the Slavonic Perfect, there is no clear definition of what the central functions of the Aorist are supposed to have been. In the Fragments the discourse type associated with the Aorist, viz. narrative, is almost totally lacking; but in their few short narrative-like passages, Aorists and Imperfects are regularly used. As a matter of fact, the two simple past tenses were lost in

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6 Auxiliary drop will be discussed in section 4 below.

7 E.g. boneze zavniža zu ne priazginjnu zvignan od zlaui bošte potom na narod zlovuzki [traziti i petali boido...] (II: 7–13) ‘posteaquam diaboli invidia a Dei gloria depulsus est [avus noster], tum in genus humanum dolores et maiores irruptum’ (Freisinger, pp. 222 and 217). The second Aorist is even of the archaic asigmatic type (*poido*).
Slovene considerably later, towards the end of the Middle Ages (Lencek 1982, 115).

The Freising Fragments date from a period when the Hungarians (Magyars) had already lived in Pannonia for a century, having cut the connection between the North and South Slavs. Therefore the much later loss of the simple past tenses in Slovene cannot be due to an intra-Slavonic influence from the North. But if we consider all European languages, we notice a large area in which different kinds of periphrastic perfects have replaced one or two inflectional past tenses. This area comprises almost all of Central and Eastern Europe, whereas the languages in which the perfect has not become a narrative tense are in the periphery, as it were, along the coasts: Baltic Finnic languages, Scandinavian languages, North German dialects, English, Portuguese, Spanish, South Italian dialects, Greek. Although such macroareal phenomena are still poorly understood, it cannot be a mere coincidence that the loss of the Aorist and the Imperfect started precisely from the Northwest of the South Slavonic lands.

Most Serbo-Croatian dialects belong to the Štokavian group, which also forms the basis of the standard languages in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. The monograph on Štokavian by Pavle Ivić (1958) shows that even some dialects in this group have lost the simple past tenses. This is naturally the case in the extreme northwest of the Štokavian area, but the phenomenon can also be observed in the Dubrovnik dialect, which differs in this and many other respects from the East Herzegovinian dialects of the city’s hinterland. It is tempting to connect this fact with the historical western orientation of the city-state of Dubrovnik (Ragusa).

Most Štokavian dialects belong to a transitional zone, a periphery of the Central European area. In them, the Aorist and the Imperfect, or at least the Aorist, still exist, but the Perfect has nevertheless become a narrative tense. Western Štokavian (to the west of the Neretva River, Ivić 1958: 34) and Northern Štokavian (in Slavonia and the Vojvodina and in some parts of Bosnia and Serbia; Ivić 1958: 34–53) only have the Perfect and the Aorist, but in the southeast the Imperfect is used, too. Towards the Torlak dialects bordering on Bulgarian and Macedonian, the Aorist and the Imperfect gradually become the major narrative tenses. They are also actively used in some Montenegrin dialects.

The Croatian and Serbian standard languages have the Perfect as the main narrative tense but they retain the Aorist and the Imperfect as optional variants in some functions. As is to be expected on the basis of the areal variation described above, the two simple past tenses are more marginal in Croatian than in Serbian. According to Težak and Babić's Croatian grammar (1992, 265), the Imperfect belongs only to the language of belles-lettres. The narrative function of the Aorist is recognized, but its main function is to express "past completed actions which have taken place immediately before the moment of speech" (ibid., my transl.). The following two examples of this function are given:
(1) Stiže ti napokon. (Dugo sam te čekao.)
arrive:AOR:SG:2 you at_last
'You have arrived at last! (I've been waiting for you a long time.)'

(2) Majko, evo dode otac.
'Look Mother, Father has just arrived!'

Notice that this main remaining use of the Aorist in Croatian has no narrative function, but rather corresponds to the so-called "perfect of recent past" (or the "hot news perfect") in English.

In his syntax of Croatian, Katičić (1991, 56) emphasizes the stylistic markedness of the Imperfect: it has a clearly archaic flavour and "calls forth a feeling of participation in a rich literary tradition" (my transl.) — an allusion to the Dalmatian literature of Renaissance. According to him, this tense is not dying in Croatian, although it is symptomatic that this has to be explicitly stated. The Aorist is characterized as "literary", "emotional" and "vivid", but it is also connected with "rustic Štokavian [sic] familiarity" (p. 58, my transl.). Obviously the Aorist is associated with country people from the southeast — from Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and farther away.

For contemporary Serbian writers, the Aorist and Imperfect seem to be "supplementary" tenses, making it possible to vary the narrative, which is otherwise based mainly on the Perfect. In Milorad Pavić's famous novel Dictionary of the Khazars, there are whole long chains of Aorists, so that we can speak of two alternative narrative systems, the perfectal and the aoristic. The aoristic system is used especially in those stories ("dictionary entries") that describe important episodes in the lives of some of the key characters in the novel's wondrous world. However, there are relatively fewer Aorists in the entry about Dr. Isajlo Suk, who, unlike most other characters in the book, lived in our century; but in the middle of this story one remarkable chain of Aorists is used to describe how Dr. Suk was surprisingly attacked by passers-by without any apparent motivation. Of the two narrative systems used by Pavić, the aoristic is clearly marked, being associated on the one hand with a certain archaic flavour in the language and on the other hand with passages in which the plot advances intensively. Radovanović (1990 [1969]) reports a similar function of the Aorist in the texts of other authors.

Certain petrified Aorists of verba dicendi should be kept apart from the aoristic narrative system, since they can be used in the middle of Perfect chains as well. The Aorists reče '(s)he said' and upita '(s)he asked' are frequent in the Dictionary of the Khazars. Such forms are not rare in colloquial Serbian, either: in Savić and Polovina's (1989) corpus of spoken Serbo-Croatian, there are quite a
few instances of the first person singular reko 'I said' (standard rekoh).  

Although there are relatively many Aorists in Pavić's novel, the Imperfects are rare — only a dozen or so in the whole book — and most of them are of the same form beše 'was' (SG.3). In Savić and Polovina's corpus there is only one instance of the Imperfect, but 25 Aorists and 1739 Perfects (op.cit., pp. 19ff.). With the exception of the petrified reko, the Aorists are functionally of the "recent past" type, similar to the Croatian examples (1) and (2) above.

Thus, in Serbian we find, on the one hand, the use of the Aorist as an alternative, marked narrative device and, on the other hand, its use as a "recent past" tense, typically in dialogues. But the narrative function does not seem to be restricted to highly literary contexts only. Savić (1991) asked ten university professors and ten students from Novi Sad (the capital of the Vojvodina) to tell the following story in various contexts and in various persons, supplying the right verb forms by themselves:

(3) I [or "we", "my brother" etc.] WALK in the forest. Suddenly I STEP on a snake. It BITE me in the leg. I TAKE a stone and THROW (it) at the snake. It DIE.

Two groups of factors seem to favour the use of the Aorist (though in no context was it the form favoured by the majority of Savić's informants). The first group can be called the **proximity of the event**: the use of the Aorist is more probable if the events referred to are temporally near — or if they are evidentially near, that is to say, if the narrator has witnessed the events and not only heard of them. In the other group, the Aorist is engaged in **structuring the narrative**, just as in the Dictionary of the Khazars. This is seen in the following variant of (3), for instance:

(3') [Context: Do you know what happened to my brother yesterday? I saw it myself.]

We WALK in the forest. Suddenly he STEP on a snake. It BITE him in the leg. He TAKE a stone and THROW (it) at the snake. It DIE.

In the first sentence, which gives the setting of the episode, the Aorist would be ungrammatical; the Imperfect would in principle be possible but as it is clearly

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8 But the corresponding form in the third person singular seems to be kaže '(s)he says', a historical Present of another verb. It often seems that in colloquial Serbo-Croatian, the Aorist and the historical Present coincide functionally. Actually the Aorist and the Present also coincide formally in the third person singular of many verb classes, except for accentuation, which at any rate is not indicated in writing and which shows significant dialectal variation.

9 The method is explained in Dahl (1985); the "snake story" itself is from the same source (p. 205).
more archaic than the Aorist, all of Savić's informants use a Perfect, šetali smo (or a similar verb). Then most of them stick with either the Perfect or the historical Present to the end of the story, but some switch to the Aorist in step or bite, or in the last verb. Some also switch back to the Perfect in the last verb, having used Aorists in the middle sentences. It is thus possible to use the Aorist to highlight the culmination of the story, distinguishing it from the introduction and (optionally) from the coda.

While for Pavić, as well as for Savić's Novi Sad informants, the aoristic system seems to be a stylistic alternative for structuring the narrative, the Montenegrin writer Saša Božović makes use of it as the main narrative system. She comes from the village of Piperi, near the Adriatic, where Aorists are still widely used, and accent distinctions needed to separate them from the Present Tense are well preserved (M. Jovanović, p.c.). In an excerpt containing 51,000 running words from her short-story collections Ratne ljubav i Tebi, moja Dolores, there are ca. 1,000 instances of the Aorist, making her stories look very much like Macedonian or Bulgarian fiction in this respect.

In all, a clear areal gradation can be seen in the Perfect > Preterite change. It has been completed in Slovene and in the Kajkavian and Čakavian dialects of Croatian, which in this respect fully belong to what has tentatively been called the Central European area in this paper. The majority of the Štokavian dialects, i.e., the bulk of the Serbo-Croatian area, belong to a transitional zone in which the Aorist (and, to a very limited extent, the Imperfect) is still used as a means of structuring the narrative or emphasizing the temporal or evidential proximity of events. The aoristic narrative system is marked with respect to the perfectal system, with the exception of the Torlak and some Montenegrin dialects.

3. The South Balkan Area

In the southern part of the Bulgaro-Macedonian area, a new type of perfect has arisen, consisting of the auxiliary imam 'I have' and the Past Participle Passive of the main verb, e.g. Bulgarian imam napisano 'I have written'. An obvious model for this construction is the Modern Greek Perfect with the auxiliary εχω, and

10 These detailed data are not given by Savić in her article, but she has kindly made them available to me.

11 The excerpt is included in the computer corpus of modern Serbo-Croatian fiction collected by Henning Mørk, University of Århus. The text was analysed by Nina Heikkinen, who also helped me with the Dictionary of the Khazars.

12 Actually the type imam napisano does not have an exact model in Greek. The Greek Perfect εχω γράψει 'I have written' does not contain a normal participle but an indeclinable "perfect participle" called το απαρέμφατο (historically the Aorist Infinitive, i.e., an infinitive of the perfective aspect). The more exact equivalent of imam napisano would be εχω γράμμενο, with a Passive Participle, but it has only a limited use in Greek (Hedin 1987, 2–3). However, in
there is also an analogous Arumanian form, which is why we can speak of a South Balkan areal phenomenon. Some dialects also possess a mixed type with the auxiliary ‘to be’ and the Past Participle Passive, such as Macedonian sum umren ‘I am dead’, semantically a resultative rather than a perfect proper. The old Perfect appears as Macedonian sum pišal, Bulgarian napisal sām ‘I have written’; standard Macedonian always drops the auxiliary in the third person singular and plural, and standard Bulgarian does so under certain conditions that will be discussed in section 4 below.

The type (Bulg.) imam napisano, (Maced.) imam pišano, called the imam Perfect, has clearly arisen in the southernmost parts of the South Slavonic area. In Macedonia its northern isogloss roughly coincides with the Vardar River (see Friedman 1976 and the literature quoted there). In the dialects of Korča and Kostur in the extreme southwest (Korçë in Albania, Kastoria in Greece), it has completely ousted the old sum pišal type. In the more northern Ohrid area, both the imam Perfect and sum Perfect are used. In the West Central dialects, towards the Vardar River, the imam Perfect gradually becomes a more and more marginal form. It did not exist in the original dialect of the capital Skopje, which is why there is wide variation in its use in the Macedonian standard language. Only in the southwest (including Ohrid but not Bitola or Debar) can the imam Perfect be formed from all verbs, including ‘to have’ itself (imam imano) and ‘to be’ (imam bideno).

As far as I know, the areal distribution of the imam Perfect in Bulgarian has not been investigated in detail. The questionnaire for the Bălgarski dialekten atlas (BDA I:2, 173–182) contained no items about it — naturally it would have required extensive studies in each dialect before it could have been decided where the imam Perfect exists as a tense and where it is to be only regarded as a syntactic construction. There is, however, an indirect way of inferring its status from dialect monographs: if a given dialect possesses Past Passive Participles (PPP's) of intransitive verbs, such as dojden ‘come (PPP:SG.M)’, it is likely to have either a resultative construction corresponding to the Macedonian sum dojden ‘I have come, I am here’, or the imam Perfect imam dojdeno ‘I have come’, or both. This is a double criterion: since intransitive PPP's cannot be used attributively, their existence is indicative of the existence of such resultatives or perfects; and if the imam Perfect admits intransitive verbs, it is more grammaticalized than it is in dialects where it only admits transitives, as it does in the Bulgarian standard language.

The northern isogloss of such intransitive forms in Bulgarian is not known

Macedonian — in contrast to Bulgarian — the participle stands uninflected in the neuter singular, showing that the grammaticalization of this tense form in Macedonian has proceeded equally far as it has in Greek.

13 For a map of Macedonian dialects, see Friedman (1993, 300). Notice that there is no simple solution as regards the boundary between Macedonian and Bulgarian dialects, especially for the dialects in Northern Greece, which are outside the influence of standard languages.
to me, but the eastern isogloss can be sketched on the basis of Bojadžiev's (1991) monograph on former South Thracian dialects, most speakers of which have now emigrated from Greek and Turkish Thrace to Bulgaria. The transitive type *imam napisano* is used in all these dialects, but the PPP agrees with the direct object (Bojadžiev 1991, 93) — showing that the form is here less grammaticalized than it is to the west, in Macedonia. The intransitive types *imam dođeno* or *dojden săm* seem to be found only in Southwest Thrace, approximately up to the region where a projection of the Bulgarian Balkan dialects (*balkanski govor*) nearly cuts the South Thracian and other Rhodope dialects (*rupski govor*) into two parts, slightly east of the present-day Greek-Turkish border. Bojadžiev reports PPP’s such as */dójden/ 'come' or */umr'án/ ~ */umr'át/ 'died, dead' e.g. from Dimotika (Greek Didymoteichon) and Uzunk’opru (Turkish Uzunköprü), but not from Lozengrad (Kirklareli) or Ljuleburgaz (Lüleburgaz), which are more to the east.

While the combination of *imam* and the PPP constitutes a full-fledged tense in Standard Macedonian, it must rather be considered a syntactic construction in Standard Bulgarian and Serbian. It is formed only from transitive verbs, and the PPP agrees with the direct object of the sentence, cf. (4a) in Bulgarian, (4b) in Serbian:

(4a) Imam napisani petdeset stranici.
    I have write:PPP:PL fifty page:PL
    'I have written fifty pages; I have fifty pages ready.'

(4b) Imam napisano pedeset stranica
    I have write:PPP:SG:NT¹⁴ fifty page:PL:GEN
    'Idem'

However, at least in Bulgarian, the 'have' verb has lost part of its lexical meaning, so that it is possible to say:

(5) Tazi godina imam zagubeni pet čadara.
    this:SG:F year:SG I have lose:PPP:PL five umbrella:COUNT_PL
    'This Year I have lost five umbrellas.'

But if the direct object has specific reference, the construction is ungrammatical; "I've lost my favourite umbrella" cannot be rendered as:

(5') *Imam zaguben ljubimija si čadăr.
    I have lose:PPP:SG:M favourite:SG:M-DEF RFL:DAT umbrella:SG

Only the 'be' Perfect is possible here: *Zagubil săm ljubimija si čadăr.*

¹⁴ Numerals greater than 4 and most quantifying expressions trigger neuter agreement in Serbo-Croatian.
To sum up this section, as far as South Slavonic is concerned it is now easy to see where the South Balkan type of Perfect must have originated: in Southwest Macedonia, where the Macedonian language has long been in an immediate contact with Greek, Albanian and Arumanian. Heikkinen (forthcoming) has called the southwest Macedonian dialects "the gateway for accepting new forms". East of this area, the new \textit{imam} Perfect is used in Aegean Macedonia, in Southern Thrace up to the present Turkish border and slightly farther east. The northern isogloss reaches the Vardar River in Macedonia.

The rise of a perfect with the auxiliary 'have' (the so-called HABEO perfect) is a relatively common phenomenon in the history of European languages\textsuperscript{15} (Bybee & Dahl 1989, 68–73). However this is not true throughout the whole world, as a transitive verb meaning 'to have' is a rare phenomenon in other continents (op.cit., p. 98). But the interesting question is why a HABEO perfect arose in the southernmost Slavonic dialects, which already had a perfect (a SUM perfect,\textsuperscript{16} i.e., a perfect with the auxiliary 'to be'). It is obvious that in the high-contact situation of the Balkans, languages have adopted new features from their neighbours even when there has been no language-internal functional need for them. But the main reason may be that most of the dialects which have adopted the new type of perfect also belong to the Black Sea area to be described in the following section: their old SUM perfect has acquired evidential functions, opening the way for a new perfect in those dialects that were in the closest contact with the non-evidential perfects of Greek and Arumanian (cf. also Fielder, forthcoming b).

4. The Black Sea Area

Several languages around the Black Sea have grammaticalized distinctions of evidentiality. They typically have a distinct gram, called here the \textit{indirective}, which refers to situations (most often, though not necessarily, to past events) that the speaker has not witnessed, but whose occurrence has either been reported by other people (the \textit{reportative} function) or inferred by the speaker (the \textit{inferential} function). The indirective evidential is opposed to the \textit{confirmative}, in which the speaker claims first-hand evidential status for the situation being referred to.

The Black Sea area includes, from west to east, Albanian, Macedonian, Bul-

\textsuperscript{15} Among North Slavonic languages, such a development may now be in progress in Czech, where the verb \textit{mit} 'to have' enters into constructions like \textit{Máš výčištěné zuby?} 'Have you brushed your teeth?' (Bybee & Dahl 1989, 70), \textit{Mám úlohu napsanou} 'I have completed my task' (Maslov 1988, 80), \textit{mit knihu rozečtenou} 'to have a book half-read' (Short 1993: 487).

\textsuperscript{16} Note the distinction between, on the one hand, a SUM perfect and a HABEO perfect, which are cross-linguistically identifiable formal perfect types, and, on the other hand, the \textit{sum} Perfect and the \textit{imam} Perfect, which are grams in Macedonian. It is simply a coincidence that 'I am' is \textit{sum} both in Latin and Macedonian!
garian, Gagauz, Turkish, Kurdish, Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani and Persian (Haarmann 1970; Dahl 1985, 130, 149–153; Friedman 1986; Mačavariani 1988, 266, 275). Historically, we could also term this an "Ottoman Area", given that it roughly coincides with the territory of the Ottoman Empire (Dahl 1985, 152). It is therefore natural to seek the source of grammaticalized evidentiality in Turkish.

Indirective evidentials are indeed typical of the Turkic languages (Haarmann 1970, 39–59). In some of them, including Turkish, the indirective is formed with the suffix -mlş-, which also marks a past active participle; apparently the indirective has developed from a perfect tense (see Aksu-Koç & Slobin 1986, 164–166 and the literature quoted there). On the basis of the Turkish model, the languages of the Black Sea area have developed indirectives from their perfects, and part of their remaining past tenses have been consequently reinterpreted as confirmative. There are, however, differences between these languages as to (i) what the exact formal relationship is between the (former) perfect and the indirective, (ii) whether the perfect still retains temporal functions as well, and (iii) what the precise meaning and use of the indirective is in each language (cf. Bybee & Dahl 1989: 73). In Bulgarian, for instance, the use of the indirective when speaking of non-witnessed events seems to be much more obligatory than in Turkish itself.

In those Macedonian dialects where the new imam Perfect can be formed from all verbs, a division of labour seems to have arisen between it and the old sum Perfect: the imam Perfect is clearly preferred both in the temporal (experiential) meaning and as a perfect of result, whereas the sum Perfect mainly functions as an evidential, not as a tense (Heikkinen, forthcoming). In northern and eastern Macedonian, the sum Perfect fulfills both functions. Presumably in those

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17 Persian is not often mentioned among the languages that have grammaticalized evidentiality, but Dal's (1985, 129ff.) investigations show that evidentiality is relevant to the use of the Persian perfect (with the auxiliary budan).

18 The Turkish influence has often been denied by Bulgarian linguists, though it was considered to be self-evident by such an authority as Kiril Mirčev (1978 [1958], 231–233). Kucarov (1984, 89–90) finds it "most logical" to assume an independent Bulgarian development of indirectivity (in his terminology, preizkaznost, i.e., reportativity) because of the high frequency of this category in the world's languages. Formally, this is a valid typological argument: the more languages there are in which evidentiality has been grammaticalized, the more probable it is that an individual language X has grammaticalized it by an internal development. However, if we take the areal clustering of this feature into account, Kucarov's stance begins to look rather far-fetched: the probability of so many contiguous languages grammaticalizing the feature by internal development is, of course, extremely low.

19 This is a preliminary observation based on my discussions with Lars Johanson (whose Strukturelle Faktoren in türkischen Sprachkontakten, Stuttgart 1992, came to my knowledge too late to be taken into account in this paper), as well as on Celal Özcan's bilingual book Hâq Geldin — Die Türkei in kleinen Geschichten (München 1994: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag). In this book, the lives of historical figures are narrated using confirmative past tenses marked with -dl-; in Bulgarian, Indirective past tenses or the historical Present would be obligatory in such texts.
few dialects of the extreme southwest that have lost the sum Perfect altogether, there is no grammaticalized evidentiality. Because of the different semantic values of the old and the new Perfect, they can even be combined in one and the same form, e.g. sum imai pišano 'I had (allegedly) written'.

The Bulgarian situation is rather different. There are several indirective tenses. The oldest and most frequently used is based on the Perfect: a form such as xodil sâm 'I have gone; I went (they say)' can be interpreted both as a Perfect and as an Indirective Aorist. To form an Indirective Imperfect on this model, the East Bulgarian dialects have developed another l-participle, based on the Imperfect stem. It has been accepted in the standard language as well, making it possible to have such forms as xodel sâm 'I was going, I used to go (they say)' — this can also be used as an Indirective Present tense. Other tenses have likewise acquired indirective counterparts (Lindstedt 1985, 259ff.).

In the Bulgarian grammatical tradition going ultimately back to Andrejčin (1938), the Indirective forms are usually called the "Reportative Mood" (preizkazno naklonenie) or the "Reportative Tenses". The homonymy of the non-Reportative (in our terminology, Confirmative) Perfect and the Reportative Aorist is said to be resolved in the third person singular and plural, in which the auxiliary is omitted in the Reportative function: xodil e 'he has gone' vs. xodil 'he (reportedly) went'. As a matter of fact, those Reportative/Indirective forms with which folktales, for instance, are narrated regularly lack the auxiliary. (The situation is different from Macedonian where the sum perfect always drops the auxiliary in the third persons, at least in the standard language.)

However, in the traditional analysis there is no place for such actually occurring forms as xodel e, i.e., Indirective forms where the auxiliary is retained in the third person, in contradiction to Andrejčin's rule. Notice that xodel e cannot be a Perfect, either, since a Perfect should contain an Aorist-based l-participle xodil. Sometimes these forms are regarded as a separate Inferential mood (or rather, Inferential evidential), so that Bulgarian would have a threefold distinction Confirmative : Inferential : Reportative. Gerdžikov (1984) and Kucarov (forthcoming) both call this Inferential gram konkluživ, although they differ in whether they consider it to be a mood (Kucarov) or a "modus dicendi" (Gerdžikov).

Although I have advocated a partly similar threefold distinction myself (Lindstedt 1985, 263ff.), I do not now think it is the best analysis. There are in fact serious arguments against it (cf. also Penčev 1987):

(i) Since the "Reportative" omits the auxiliary in the third person only, a form like xodel sâm (SG.1) would belong both to the "Reportative" and the "Inferential" paradigm; xodil sâm would have a threefold ambiguity: Reportative Aorist, Inferential Aorist or Confirmative Perfect.

(ii) Unlike the "Reportative" and the Confirmative, the "Inferential" would not have any tenses referring to the present or the future. Present Inferentials are
mentioned in some studies, to be sure, but the examples given are not accepted by informants (Lindstedt 1985, 271). Kucarov (forthcoming) does not assume the existence of such forms any longer, contrary to his previous study (1984, 19ff.). The present inferential meaning is expressed by other means, typically with the auxiliary šte, which may also mark the Future Tense (Lindstedt 1992, 6ff.). It thus seems that inferentiality is a reading expressed by different Bulgarian grams, and it is not a distinct gram in itself.

(iii) The first person singular xodel săm, while having a reportative interpretation ('they claim that I was/am going' etc.), seems practically to lack an inferential reading, for only rarely does somebody actually infer what he or she has been doing; only actions performed by a drunk or a sleepwalker could come into question. The occurrence of the inferential meaning is restricted by pragmatic considerations, which is why the "Inferential" does not seem a good candidate for a gram.

(iv) The inferential meaning is not always easy to distinguish from the result meaning of the (Confirmative) Perfect because inference is often based on the (visible) results of a past event; in a sense, inferentiality is resultativity the other way round. Inferentiality is associated with the perfect in German (Weinrich 1964, 84ff.) and in Scandinavian languages (Haugen 1972; Kinnander 1973). So it would be difficult to speak of a distinct "Inferential" in Bulgarian, were it not for the fact that it can be naturally connected with the Reportative as a single evidential.

(v) The omission of the auxiliary in the third person forms is not consistently correlated with the distinction between the reportative and inferential function of the Indirective. In the inferential function the auxiliary is indeed often preserved, as Gerdžikov and Kucarov claim, but this is due to the discourse properties of inferential sentences (cf. below). In certain kinds of discourse the auxiliary is omitted despite inferentiality. Thus, in the department of prehistory at the National Museum of Bulgaria, the notices describing Neolithic man's life have been written with Indirective Aorists and Imperfects without the auxiliary, though this should be a prototypical inferential context — prehistory is ex definitione a period from which we can have no reported data. The explanation is that auxiliary drop is typical of historical narrative, and no clear-cut distinction is drawn between reporting and inferring.

The loss of the auxiliary in the third person forms of the Perfect is an areal phenomenon not confined to Bulgarian. As mentioned above, in the Macedonian standard language the auxiliary is always missing in these forms; this is certainly connected with the fact that there is now a competing form for the perfect function proper. In the Serbo-Croatian area, the so-called "truncated Perfect" has some expressive narrative functions of its own (Grickat 1954). It also appeared when Savić asked her informants to tell the above-mentioned (3) "snake story" as a
fairy tale, i.e.:

(3') Once upon a time there was a man. He walk in the forest. (etc.)

Most of the informants used the "truncated Perfect" in the first sentence because that's what the "once upon a time" formula requires in Serbian:

(6) \[ \text{Bio}^{20} \text{ jednom jedan } \text{čovek.} \]

'Once upon a time there was a man.'

But some of them omitted the auxiliary even in the second sentence, though it is not a formula.

As a very general observation it can be stated that omitting the auxiliary in the Perfect has something to do with narrativity, but usage differs significantly in the various South Slavonic languages (and dialects). When the Bulgarian Indirective Aorist was developed on the basis of the Perfect, the new form, having narrative functions, acquired the propensity to drop the auxiliary. It is not necessary to assume, as is often done, that it is precisely the auxiliary drop that reflects the Turkish influence in the Bulgarian Indirective; in fact, the third person singular has a zero person marking in all Turkish tenses, whether confirmative or indirective. What was borrowed from Turkish was the category of indirectivity (and, consequently, the idea of evidential oppositions), but this category was realized with Slavonic material.\(^{21}\)

The auxiliary drop did not become an unambiguous marker of the Indirective in Bulgarian (let alone a marker distinguishing between the "Reportative" and "Inferential", as claimed by Gerdžikov and Kucarov) — it is rather associated with certain kinds of narrative contexts. To take a simple example, if X has been waiting for Y to arrive, and then learns from a colleague that Y has now arrived, X may say to other colleagues who have not heard of Y's arrival:

(7a) \[ \text{Toj } \text{e došal.} \]
he:SG:NOM is come:PART:SG:M

'He has come.'

Normally, X would not omit the auxiliary, though what is reported is clearly

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\(^{20}\) SCR. bio < *bil, so this is historically an l-participle again (feminine bila).

\(^{21}\) However, a formal influence of Turkish on Bulgarian can be seen elsewhere. The l-particiles were not used attributively in Proto-Slavonic, but acquired this function in Bulgarian, based on the model of the Turkish mlسف-participle. Obviously -l- was functionally identified with -mlسف- by bilinguals.
based on hearsay. If, however, X presents a mini-narrative, the auxiliary can be dropped:

(7b)  Toj došāł, pil edno kafe
'He came, drank a coffee
i pak si trāgnal.
and again refl:DAT depart:PART:SG:M
and went his way.'

In (7b), the bare l-participles can be called Indirective Aorists, because they now have a finite function. What X cannot use is the Confirmative Aorist, for X did not witness Y’s actions.

In longer narratives, auxiliary drop is often a means of structuring the narrative. As pointed out by Fielder (forthcoming a, b), third-person forms without the auxiliary show the main plot line, whereas forms with the auxiliary explain background events and give the narrator’s comments. Forms of the latter type are often found in the beginning or end of the narrative (for an example, see Lindstedt 1993, 47). The possibility of omitting the auxiliary arises only in non-witnessed contexts, and therefore the omission entails indirectivity, though not the other way round.

The western isogloss of evidential oppositions remains to be determined. In section 2 above it was pointed out, on the basis of Savić’s data, that a speaker of Serbian may be more likely to use the Aorist when relating eye-witnessed events, as opposed to hearsay. Interesting material is presented in Pešikan’s (1965) monograph on certain Montenegrin dialects that have fully preserved the Aorist. According to him, in these dialects "the Aorist is practically the only form for narrating other people’s actions if they are narrated on the basis of one’s own observations"; the Aorist is not used in hearsay cases (p. 199, my transl.). The Perfect is used in hearsay cases, but also in the beginning of the narratives — Pešikan’s example of the latter case contains a Perfect (in the first person singular) without an auxiliary (p. 200).

Vaillant (1966: 90) pointed out that the Perfect, and not the Aorist, is normally found in the complements of *verba dicendi* both in Bulgaro-Macedonian and Serbo-Croatian, in contrast to OCS. It thus seems that in those Serbian dialects which preserve the Aorist, its opposition to the Aorist is interpreted to some extent as an evidential opposition. The Black Sea area here borders the Central European area; the original, purely temporal South Slavonic system is nowhere to be found.
5. Is There a Perfect in Bulgarian?

In the previous section we saw that the omission of the auxiliary in the third person forms is not a grammatical marker of the Indirective forms, but only a possibility arising in certain narrative contexts. A form like xodel (e), for instance, is an Indirective Imperfect, as opposed to the Confirmative Imperfect xodeše '(s)he was going; (s)he used to go', irrespective of the presence or absence of e. An obvious question is now: why should we still distinguish xodil e 'he has gone' as a (Confirmative) Perfect at all, given that also the Indirective Aorist xodil (e) may optionally retain the auxiliary? Is there a perfect in Modern Bulgarian?

There have been various descriptive proposals for doing away with the Perfect Tense in Bulgarian. Perhaps the most convincing was presented by Svetomir Ivančev (1984) in his article "Past narrative systems in Bulgarian". He argued that there is a full parallelism between the tenses in the confirmative and indirective systems:22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confirmative</th>
<th>Indirective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aorist</td>
<td>xodi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>xodeše</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluperfect</td>
<td>beše xodil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>šte xodi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Ivančev, it is an anachronism to distinguish a Perfect in Modern Bulgarian, since both formally and semantically it merges with the Indirective Aorist (in its inferential function).

Now, Ivančev is certainly right as far as narrative contexts are concerned, for what was originally a perfect could not have penetrated those contexts without losing its very nature as a perfect. But there are three strong arguments in favour of still distinguishing a Perfect Tense in other contexts, even if it means that a certain amount of descriptive elegance is lost:

(a) The Perfect can be combined with frequency adverbials equally well as the Imperfect can, but the Aorist cannot:

(8a) Toj često xodeši na teatār.
    he:SG:NOM often go:IMPF:SG:3 on theatre:SG
    'He often went to the theatre.'

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22 His Bulgarian terms were svidetelski 'witnessed' and nesvidetelski 'non-witnessed'.
(8b) Toj često e xodil na teatār.
    he:SG:NOM often is go:PART:SG:M on theatre:SG
    'He has often been to the theatre.'

(8c) *Toj često xodi na teatār.
    he:SG:NOM often go:AOR:SG:3 on theatre:SG

Notice that in (8b) the verb form cannot be called an Indirective Aorist, since there is no reason why the aspectual properties of the Indirective Aorist would be different from those of the Confirmative Aorist in (8c).

(b) In many of the typical uses of the Perfect, the event referred to is clearly witnessed:

(9) Xodil sām vāv Viena tri pāti.
    go:PART:SG:M am in Vienna three times
    'I have been to Vienna three times.'

The Perfect here has an experiential function. It is used because the speaker does not want to connect the events referred to with a specific occasion in the past (as the Aorist or the Imperfect would do; Lindstedt 1985, 84ff. and 101ff.), not because the speaker has not witnessed his own visits to Vienna!

(c) There is an Indirective Perfect:

(10) Toj kazva, če
    he:SG:NOM say:PRS:SG:3 that
    'He claims [!] that
    često bil xodil v tozi teatār.
    he has often been to that theatre.'

The Indirective Perfect is formed by replacing the auxiliary 'to be' with its Indirective counterpart. The form bil xodil can also have other interpretations — it could be an Indirective Pluperfect, for instance — but in this context (the matrix clause is in the Present Tense, and there is a frequency adverbial in the subordinate clause) it must be an Indirective Perfect. And since an Indirective Perfect exists, a Confirmative Perfect must exist as well.

Ivančev (op.cit.) assumes that the 3rd-person auxiliary in xodil e is secondary and not a direct reflex of the Proto-Slavonic Perfect auxiliary. In spite of certain syntactic facts that would indeed allow such an explanation, there seem to be too many difficulties with this scenario. The auxiliary is regularly retained in the existential meaning of the Perfect, as in (9) above. If the auxiliary was sec-

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ordinary in this function, we ought to presume that existential perfects acquired this formal marking of their own after a period of a formally unified, presumably mainly indirective gram. But it is difficult to explain how the experiential meaning could have arisen from the indirective meaning, as they are semantically nearly opposite. It is easier to explain them as the two outcomes of an earlier, mainly resultative perfect that still had the auxiliary in all persons.

However, it is not necessary to assume that xodil (e) represents two homonymous grams in Modern Bulgarian. Like Kucarov (forthcoming, Ch. 2.1.), I am inclined to think that there is only one gram, but it carries out two distinct functions in the system of the language. This is possible because the system of oppositions is different in narratives than in non-narrative contexts; Weinrich's (1964) "erzählte Welt" and "besprochene Welt" make use of slightly different grammars, as it were, in Bulgarian. It can thus be said that the Perfect is not homonymous with the Indirective Aorist — it is the Indirective Aorist when used in contexts where its perfect meaning is lost. When both the perfect meaning and the indirective meaning are needed, as in (10) above, there is a separate Indirective Perfect to be used.\(^{23}\)

It is not unprecedented to postulate such a polysemous gram in Bulgarian: the future /modal marker šte has likewise some distinct meanings which are realized with partly different syntax (Lindstedt 1985, 255ff.; 1992, 6ff.). It is not plausible to assume that there are two or more homonymous šte formants, neither is it possible convincingly to derive its functions from one basic synchronic meaning, though the interrelationships of the functions certainly have to be accounted for. Perhaps the first Bulgarian linguist who tried to describe the Bulgarian Perfect / Indirective along these lines was Jordan Trifonov (1905), whose approach may prove to have been more fruitful than Andrejčin's and later structuralists' pursuit of descriptive symmetry.

Although the experiential and indirective functions of the Perfect xodil (e) can both be considered basic in the synchronic system, it can also be assumed that the retention of the Perfect as a distinct gram in Bulgarian and Macedonian, in contrast to the great majority of the Slavonic languages, is mainly due to its new evidential functions in the Black Sea area. The experiential function (and the result function, if it has any synchronic relevance) of the Perfect has received a free ride in this process. This shows that grams may have more independent role in linguistic history than has been assumed in opposition-oriented structuralism (see also Bybee & Dahl 1989).

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\(^{23}\) The structural parallelism between, on the one hand, the Bulgarian Indirective Perfect and, on the other hand, the French surcomposés and the German Doppelperfekt is interesting (cf. also the Macedonian sum imal pišano mentioned in sect. 3 above). It shows that the Bulgarian indirective narrative system produces outcomes similar to those of systems that are in the process of losing their inflectional past tenses, in spite of the fact that the Bulgarian confirmative narrative system still fully retains those tenses.
6. Recapitulation: South Slavonic Narrative Systems

Over most of the South Slavonic linguistic area, the Proto-Slavonic Perfect has been turned partly or totally into a narrative tense, but the narrative systems that have come into being are clearly different. In the languages and dialects that belong to the Central European area, there is now only one past narrative system, which has entirely taken over the functions of the old inflectional past tenses, viz. the Aorist and the Imperfect. However, in the periphery of the Central European area, the old aoristic narrative system has been retained, but it has become a stylistically marked system, the perfectal system being used as the default.

Farther east, in the Black Sea area, there are now two narrative systems: the one formally based on the Perfect expresses indirective evidentiality, while the old system has been reinterpreted as a confirmative. The Perfect gram itself takes part in both systems, having developed a kind of bifurcated semantics. However, in that part of the Black Sea area which also belongs to the South Balkan area, the old Perfect has become a pure evidential, having transferred its perfect functions to a new type of HABEO perfect.

A final note. This paper is essentially a revised version of Lindstedt (1993) which, being written in Bulgarian, is not largely accessible to the linguistic community. My research has been supported in various fashions by the European Science Foundation, the Academy of Finland and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. I have greatly benefited from the advice and help given by Katina Boneva, Östen Dahl, Grace Fielder, Victor A. Friedman, Eva Hedin, Nina Heikkinen, Lars Johanson, M. Jovanović, Krasimir Kabakčiev, Kari Liukkonen, Petar Pašov, Juhani Sarsila, Svenka Savić (special thanks to her!), Valentin Stankov, Elena Todorova and Hannu Tommola.

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