CONVERGENCE IN LANGUAGE-CHANGE: MORPHO-SYNTACTIC
PATTERNS IN MINGRELIAN (AND LAZ)¹

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ABSTRACT
The paper examines two features of Mingrelian (a member of the Kartvelian, or South Caucasian, language-family): (i) the marking of subordinate clauses by either clause-final suffix -n(i)/-i/ alongside or this suffix + a full subordinating conjunction (or relative pronoun); (ii) the 'Conditional' forms in -k'o(n(i)), which are peculiar within Kartvelian to Mingrelian and its close sister Laz. Influence exerted long ago by the North West Caucasian language Abkhaz, whose speakers may be presumed to have been in close contact with the Zan ancestors of Laz-Mingrelians, it is claimed, might feasibly underlie these phenomena. The discussion finally touches upon consideration of the possible role played by parataxis in the development of some hypotactic constructions in the history of at least some languages, especially in light of a recent attempt to refute the notion that hypotaxis can be so derived.

Preface

Some particularities of hypotaxis and the formation of a set of verbal paradigms in the Caucasian language Mingrelian, whose best known cognate within the South Caucasian/Kartvelian family is, of course, Georgian, are re-examined. Whilst the basic data will be reasonably familiar to anyone who has looked at Mingrelian, the hypotheses to follow will, I trust, be new and take us beyond Mingrelian's immediate congeners.

Formation of complex sentences in the South Caucasian/Kartvelian family

Anyone with a background in Indo-European, when looking at the standard strategies for forming subordinate clauses in Georgian, is immediately struck by how familiar they seem. One is comforted to find free-standing and (usually) clause-initial conjunctions (or relative pronouns) in association with fully finite verbs, which will

¹Part of the work on which this paper, read at a meeting of the Philological Society in Cambridge on Saturday 11th March 2000, is based was carried out during a sabbatical term I was able to spend in Tbilisi (Georgia) and Ochamchira (Abkhazia) in the final months of 1987 thanks to a British Academy exchange with the Georgian Academy of Sciences. In Tbilisi I had the good fortune to work with the Mingrelians: the late K’orneli Danelia, Rezo Serozbia, and Merab Chuxua; my informants over a number of years in Ochamchira were: P’ant’e and Ek’a Basilaia, Manana Gunia, and the late Neli T’orchua. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I take this opportunity to mention them. As always, my thanks go to my wife, Zaira Khiba, for help with the Abkhaz data. The paper was improved thanks to helpful comments provided by two anonymous readers of the submitted draft; I hope they will agree that their suggestions have been adequately accommodated.
stand in either the indicative or the subjunctive mood depending on the requirements of the relevant construction and, in some cases, the time-reference involved. The major patterns for Georgian are sketched under item (1) (Some minor patterns, non-finite strategies, the wide use of reported speech, and indefinite clauses are ignored. See Hewitt (1987; 1995) for comprehensive discussions):

(1)

(a) Adjectival/Relative clauses:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vints} & \sim \text{rats} \sim \text{romelits} \\
\text{who} & \sim \text{which} \sim \text{who/which} \\
& \text{(in the appropriate case and (for romelits) number} + \text{Indic}^2)
\end{align*}
\]

(b) Noun clauses:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rom} & \ (+ \text{Indic}) \\
\text{that}
\end{align*}
\]

(c) Adverbial clauses:

**Time**

'when':

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rotca} & \sim \text{rodesats} (+ \text{Indic}) \\
\text{when}
\end{align*}
\]

'as soon as':

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rogorts k’i} & \sim \text{tu ara} (+ \text{Indic}; \text{the latter standing post-verbally}) \\
\text{as soon as}
\end{align*}
\]

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2 The abbreviations employed in this paper are:

- **Absol** = Absolutive
- **Acc** = Accusative
- **Adv** = Adverbial
- **Aor** = Aorist
- **Condit** = Conditional
- **Dat** = Dative
- **Erg** = Ergative
- **Fem** = Feminine
- **Fin** = Finite
- **Fut** = Future
- **Gen** = Genitive
- **IE** = Indo-European
- **Imper** = Imperative
- **Imperf** = Imperfect
- **Indef** = Indefinite
- **Indic** = Indicative
- **Inf** = Infinitive
- **Instr** = Instrumental
- **Irr** = Irrealis
- **Neg** = Negative
- **Pres** = Present
- **Pl** = Plural
- **Plup** = Pluperfect
- **Poss** = Possessive
- **Ptc** = Participle
- **Pur** = Potential
- **Prev** = Preverb
- **Pur** = Potential
- **Qu** = Question
- **Rel** = Relative
- **Sing** = Singular
- **Stat** = Stative
- **Sub** = Subordinator
- **Subj** = Subjunctive
- **Super** = Superessive
'after':

mas āemdeg rats ~ mas uk’an rats ~ mas aket rats ~ im droidan rats (+ Indic)
after

'while, until, before':

sanam(de/dis) ~ vidre(mde/mdis) (+ Indic or Subj)
while, until, before

**Purpose:**

rata ~ rom (+ Subj or Plup Indic)
(in order) that

**Result:**

rom (+ Indic for actual results; + Subj or Plup Indic for potential results)
that

**Cause:**

radgan(ats) ~ vinaidan ~ rak’i ~ raxan ~ imis gamo rom ~ imit’om rom (+ Indic)
because, since, as

**Manner:**

rogorts ~ ragvaradats ~ ranairadats (+ Indic)
as

**Condition:**

tu (+ Indic for real conditions) ~ rom (+ Subj or Plup Indic for unreal conditions)
if

**Concession:**

tumts(a) (+ Indic) ~ miuxedavad imisa rom (+ Indic) ~ tund(a(ts)) (+ Subj or
Plup Indic)
although despite the fact that even if

(Georgian)

Similar reliance on finite subordinate clauses is attested throughout the recorded history (spanning 15 centuries) of Georgian, and I know of no suggestion why this patterning (with variations, of course) should not be taken as characteristic of the Kartvelian family as a whole. Even if one accepts Winfried Boeder's recent contention: The frequent use in Old Georgian of the masdar, whose sphere of usage
has narrowed in modern Georgian..., we may, therefore, deem an archaism, which
must be a mid-stage between the pre-historic state with nominalised complement
clauses and the modern state with mostly subordinate clauses containing a finite verb'
(1999.41-2), it would still be true that Georgian (?Kartvelian) has always behaved in
an Indo-European manner, with a declinable verbal noun (masdar) whose Adverbial
case-form functioned in the old language just like an IE infinitive (for the variation in
case-marking of the infinitival object see Hewitt 1983). There is no hint in Kartvelian
of a full clausal argument-structure accompanying the array of converbal forms (and
even some masdars and infinitives) found elsewhere in the Caucasus, as in the
following examples quoted from Haspelmath (1993) for Lezgi(an):
(2) (a)

Nabisat-a wit[ǐ-n ktab k’el-iz ba[lami]-na
Nabisat-ERG self-GEN book-ABSOL read-INF start-AOR
'there began Nabisat's reading of her book = N. started to read her book'
(2) (b)

Sajran ada ik’ luhu-n.a-l mähtel xa-na
Sairan(.ABSOL) she(.ERG) so say-MASD-SUPER surprised be-AOR
'Sajran was surprised that she was talking like that'

(Lezgi(an))
I do, however, have to draw attention to a couple of features not immediately obvious
from a simple listing of the basic Georgian data.

Further internal Georgian developments

The conjunction rom (often pronounced [ɾɔm]) already stands out in the list under
(1) for its ability to mark a wide variety of clause-types. In fact, it is even commoner,
for it can replace the standard conjunctions rotsa~rodesats 'when' and
radgan(ats)~vinaidan~rak’i 'because', appearing in such examples usually after the
first constituent of the clause. It has a similar and exceedingly wide usage in relative
clauses, especially in the spoken language; such relative structures tend to precede the
head-noun, whereas those containing a full relative pronoun must follow their heads --
for details on Georgian relatives see Hewitt (1985; 1995). Some examples of these
additional functions are given under (3), with the more specific construction in
brackets (ro(m) = conjunctions rotsa~radgan and relative romelits, respectively).
(3) (a)

[en ro(m) axlosa xar, ar meînia
you SUB near you.are not I.fear
'when/because you are near, I'm not afraid'

(= rotsa ~ radgan (etc) ʃen axlosa xar)

(3) (b)

guʃin ro(m) mogetsi (is) ts’igni mitʃvene
yesterday SUB I.gave.it.to.you that book shew.it.to.me
'show me the book I gave you yesterday'

(= mitʃvene (is) ts’igni, romelits guʃin mogetsi)

(georgian)

This important modern general subordinator did not exist in Old Georgian, and its creation by erosion from romel(i) via rome can be charted in the texts -- the Old Georgian complementiser-role was filled by either vitarmed or rame, which in origin were clearly both adverbial attachments to an introductory verbum dicendi aut sentiendi, meaning respectively 'in some such way' and 'something/somewhat thus'.

Though foreign to the literary language, we also have to observe a feature attested in some dialectal material, namely the insertion of ro(m) into a subordinate clause already fully characterised by its own conjunction/relative pronoun, as illustrated under (4), where, respectively, complex sadats ro stands for simplex sadats, romelits rom for romelits, and rotsa ro for rotsa:

(4) (a)

mivida ert adgilsa, sadats ro es xalxi miq’ams am ʃorsa
X3.went one place.to where SUB this folk X.takes.Y this pig
'he went to a place where this pig is taking this folk'

(Upper Imeretian\(^4\), Gigineishvili et al. 1961.442)

(4) (b)

untsrosi dzma varo, romelits rom ts’evides da aʃar
younger brother I.am.QUOT who SUB X.is.to.go & no.more
mevides
X.is.to.come.QUOT
'I am the younger brother who is to go and not come back' (ibid.)

(4) (c)

---

\(^3\)Where the Georgian verb indicates one or more 3rd person arguments, the letters X, Y, Z are used to indicate the presence of the relevant verbal index.

\(^4\)For information, Upper Imeretian is spoken in the largest of Georgia's western provinces, whilst K’akheti(a) is Georgia's main region to the east of the central province of Kartli, where Tbilisi is located.
rotsa ro is kvabí gaaγes, im kalma mdzval mi mdzvalze
when SUB that pot they.opened.X that woman bone bone.on
maaba
X.bound.Y.to.Z

'when they opened that pot, that woman attached bone to bone'

(Inner K’akhetian, ibid. 201)

The extent of this double characterisation of subordinate status across the dialects is
not known, but the many pages whose scanning produced a mere four examples for
just these two dialects plainly did not abound in them.

Significantly, whether used alone or alongside a regular conjunction/relative
pronoun, ro(m) can never stand post-verbally and thus never appears clause-finally.
The only conjunctional phrase in Georgian that can behave thus is tu ara 'as soon as',
as indicated under (1).

Subordination in Mingrelian

Mingrelian's home is traditionally defined as the western lowlands between the
rivers Ingur and Tskhenis-ts’q’ali, bounded by Abkhazia, Svanetia (where the most
divergent Kartvelian language, Svan, is spoken), and the Georgian-speaking provinces
of Imereti and Guria, plus the Black Sea -- in the last 100 years Georgian has
encroached from the east, just as Mingrelian has gained in the north-west at the
expense of North West Caucasian Abkhaz. The only two Kartvelian languages which
are at all mutually intelligible are Mingrelian and Laz, usually styled dialects of Zan
in Georgia itself. Their ancestors once formed a continuum along a stretch of the
Black Sea's eastern littoral before starting to be split by incoming Georgian speakers
fleeing the Arabs' advance into central Georgia from the middle of the 7th century;
apart from a few pockets along the Abkhazian & Georgian coast, Laz speakers today
are confined to Turkey. Mingrelian (like Laz and Svan) is not a written language,
though some communist texts and a large number of local papers and journals were
published in it for about a decade from the late 1920s, a deliberately unpublicised fact
of which even most Mingrelians are today quite unaware.

Before considering subordination, the following peculiarities need to be noted. As
stated by native speaker T’ogo Gudava (1975 356): 'At the absolute end of a word a
close vowel (i, ə, u) may be added after a consonant, and vice versa -- if a word ends
in a close vowel (i, ə, u), this vowel may optionally be dropped'. Schwa can usually
be interpreted as an allophone of /u/ (but see below for cases of its substituting for /i/).
Examples (5)-(7) illustrate the addition of a supernumerary vowel (respectively /i, ə,
u/, here bracketed) to consonant-final elements (one verb, two nouns):

(5)
meurs, meurs(i) do keʃexvadu t’riali mindork
X.goes X.goes & X.met.Y broad meadow
'he goes [&] goes and came upon a broad meadow' (Danelia/Tsanava 1991.272)  
(Mingrelian)  
(6)  

uk’ulaʃi dʒimas(ɔ) nodʒoxobue data
youngest brother X.is.called.Y Data
'the youngest brother is apparently called Data' (Q’ipshidze 1914 in Danelia/Tsanava 1991. 266)  
(Mingrelian)  
(7)  

ate k’otʃk(u) kek’aʔunu
this man X.followed.Y
'this man followed him' (Q’ipshidze 1914 in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.266)  
(Mingrelian)  

Examples (8)-(9) shew the optional loss of a person-tense marking final /i/ or /uɔ/ respectively:

(8) midaprt(i) 'I went'  
(Mingrelian)  
(9) midart(u/ɔ) 'X went'  
(Mingrelian)  

Mingrelian (but not Laz) is also characterised by loss of final /-n/. In (10) the presence of final /-ia/, the speech-particle suffix, protects the underlined 3rd pers sg marker /-n/ in this Present indicative (va- jir- ən-ia):

(10) tʃknini rina mutuniʃa va-γir-ən-ia
our being for.nought X.does.not.count.QUOT
'(saying) our existence counts for nought' (Q’ipshidze 1914 in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.260)  

5The Georgian translation appended by the authors is: midis, midis da ʃexvda t’riali mindori, which indicates that they assign no particular function to the bracketed ‘i’ in the Mingrelian. Representations in the original Georgian script for all such examples in these footnotes may be found in the Appendix at the end of the article.
But without such a suffix the example would read as in (11) (with va- حجر- ە/ع/):

(11) ٞکەرە انەمەتە ەوە va- ەر- ە/ع

Attention can now be turned to subordination in Mingrelian. Mingrelian's equivalent of Georgian romel-i-ts 'which one' is namu-t(i). Both consist of the interrogative pronoun/adjective romel-i = namu 'which (one)?' + subordinating suffix -ts = -t(i), suffixes which incidentally also serve as coordinators 'and, also, even' in their respective languages. And relative clauses, postposed to their heads, can be formed, as in Georgian, in the typically Indo-European fashion, exemplified by Dative namu-su-ti and Nominative namu-ti in (12) and (13), respectively:

(12)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{k'o}tf-i & \quad \text{tina} \quad \text{re, namu-su-ti data d}_\text{X}x_6o_6 \\
\text{man-NOM} & \quad \text{than.one he.is who-DAT-SUB Data X.is.called.Y} \\
\text{'the (real) man is he who is called Data'} & \quad \text{(ibid. 266)}
\end{align*}
\]

(13)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{k'o}tf-i, & \quad \text{namu-ti} \quad ?ur\text{d}e\text{lepts} & \quad \text{t}_i\text{q'o}ndow_7 \\
\text{man-NOM} & \quad \text{who.NOM-SUB rabbits.DAT X.was.herding.Y} \\
\text{'the man who used to shepherd rabbits'} & \quad \text{(ibid. 268)}
\end{align*}
\]

Mingrelian also has a range of clause-initial subordinating conjunctions (some, like Georgian, incorporating the subordinating suffix -t(i) = Geo. -ts), that may be used without further complication -- ond(ar)o-soi\text{ax} 'while', mut\text{'}ot(i) 'as (soon as)', and mu \text{'}ams 'when' in (14)-(16), respectively:

(14)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ond(ar)o-soi\text{ax} voxet tak, t}_i\text{t}e \text{kimub}\text{aot}_8 \\
\text{while we.sit here little let's work} \\
\text{'while we are sitting here, let's do a little work'} & \quad \text{(elicited)}
\end{align*}
\]

(15)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In Georgian: k'atsi is aris, romelsats data hkvia.} \\
\text{In Georgian: k'atsi, romelits k'urd jlebs mts'q'emsavda.} \\
\text{In Georgian: sanam/vidre vsxedvart ak, tsot'a vimu\text{aot}.}
\end{align*}
\]
mut∫ot kobdziri tina, daxe gebxangi⁹
as I.saw.X X almost I.became.unhinged
‘as (soon as) I saw X, I almost went beserk’ (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

(16)

mu∫ams kəmours, mu∫ebas dibt∫q‘ant¹⁰
when X.comes work.DAT we'll.start.X
‘when X comes, we'll start work’ (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

I am at a loss to explain why Vamling/Tchantouria (1993.73) gloss the -ti of mut∫’oti
in one of their examples (cf. the first word of (15)) as INSTR[umental].

It is now time to consider the first oddity. It is impossible to reconstruct a common
Kartvelian conditional marker (for either real or unreal protases). And interestingly,
real conditions are marked in Mingrelian by clause-final (thus, generally verb-final)
-da, which even follows cliticised speech-particles (elements that indicate a direct
quote), as in (18):

(17)

kot∫’vend(u/ɔ)-da, mindor(i) i∫olud(u/ɔ)¹¹
it.was.raining-if field X.was.getting.wet
‘if it was raining, the field was getting wet’ (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

(18)

me tsxeni wamut∫ia-da, duts dip‘il∅
me horse you.didn’t.give.X.to.me.QUOT-if self.(DAT) I'll.kill.X
i∫enia.QUOT¹²
still
‘...saying, if you don't give me the horse, I'll still kill myself’ (Xubua 1937 quoted
in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.258)

(Mingrelian)

Bearing in mind that da in Georgian is the coördinating conjunction, which in
Mingrelian is do (manifesting the expected vowel-correspondence Geo. /a/ = Ming.
/ə/), I have argued (see Hewitt 1991) that the Mingrelian conditional suffix is best

⁹In Georgian: rogorts k‘i vnaxet igi, k‘ina jâm gavgi ʒdi/gadavirie.
¹⁰In Georgian: rotsa/rodesats mova, mu∫aobas davis‘ q‘ebt.
¹¹In Georgian: tu ts‘vimda, mindoroi sveldeboda.
¹²In Georgian: me tu tsxeni ar mometsio, tavs movik lav maintso. This is Danelia/Tsanava's translation,
from which we see that the protasis-marker tu does not have to take clause-initial position.
explained as a borrowing of the Georgian coördinator\textsuperscript{13}, examples of which apparently performing a protasis-marking function can be found from any period of Georgian. The arbitrarily chosen illustration (19) happens to be from a 20th century collection of dialectal material -- 'You won't give it to him AND I shall no longer be your child' easily converts to 'If you don't...':

(19)

\begin{verbatim}
ar mijtsem da me tkveni ḟvili aṭar viknebio
not you'll.give.X.to.Y and(=if) I your child no.longer I'll.be.QUOT
'saying, if you don't give it to him, I shall no longer be your child' (Inner
K'akhetian, Gigineishvili et al. 1961.193)
\end{verbatim}

(Georgian)

One can also point to the widespread use of Georgian \textit{da} when an interrogative is repeated at the start of the reply, as in (20):

(20)

\begin{verbatim}
rodis ts’axvedi? rodis da, gušin ts’avedi
when you.went when ? yesterday I.went
'when did you go? If it's a question of when, I went yesterday'
\end{verbatim}

(Georgian)

Via Mingrelian (one assumes), this conditional use of \textit{da} has even passed into North West Caucasian Abkhaz, where the substitutability of -\textit{za}+\textit{r} 'if' for -\textit{da} in \textit{jæzban-da} proves that the suffix means 'if':

(21)

\begin{verbatim}
jæz’ban? jæz’ban-da (= jæz’ban-Za+r) jæ-s-tæ’xe-n\textsuperscript{14}
why why-? (= why-if) X-I-want-PAST
'why? If it's a question of why, I wanted to'
\end{verbatim}

(Abkhaz)

It is convenient at this stage to ask what serves as complementiser in Mingrelian. The conventional answer is \textit{nam(u/ ḟ+da}. Consideration of the fact that \textit{namu} = Geo. \textit{romeli} 'which (one)?' (the source of today's complementiser \textit{rom}), whilst \textit{da} = 'if', logically suggests the following path of development for the complementiser: 'that' $\leq$ 'thus' $\leq$ 'if it's a question of what [sc. then somewhat as follows]'. It should be noted, however, that informants living either within or close to Abkhazia with whom I once

\textsuperscript{13}This, I assume, to be somewhat different from Abesadze's guarded remark (1965.254): 'The possibility is not excluded that Mingrelian \textit{da} (= [Georgian] \textit{tu}) and \textit{do} (= [Georgian] \textit{da}) might be of a single origin.' On the other hand, Arnold Chikobava, a native Mingrelian, saw conjunction and protasis-marking \textit{da} in Georgian as discrete entities (1936.185).

\textsuperscript{14}In Mingrelian: \textit{muken’? muken-da, mok’ond(u/ ḟ}.}
worked often used \textit{mut\'o}, which is strictly the interrogative manner adverbial 'how?' (as in \textit{mut\'o ret} 'How are you?'; cf. ex. (15) for the truly subordinate form with -\textit{t(i)}) in seeming preference to \textit{nam(u/ \&+da}. This extension of the manner-conjunction I have argued elsewhere (see Hewitt 1992a) to be the likely result of Abkhaz influence, for, lacking a pure complementiser, Abkhaz makes wide use in such a role of the particle \textit{-v(\&)}; whose basic meaning is 'how, as'. The example in (22a) illustrates the complementiser-role, whilst that in (22b) shews the particle's basic force of manner:

(22) (a)  
\[ \text{c-\'s\&-t\'maz+a,\,s\&-z} \]  
\[ \text{X-that-ill-NON.FIN.PAST \, I-it+on-fall-FIN.PAST} \]  
'I realised that (s)he was ill'

vs

(22) (b)  
\[ s-\'s\&-q\'a-W \]  
\[ (a-)a,j+p\& \]  
\[ \text{I-how-be-NON.FIN.PRES \, (it-)like} \]  
'as I am'

(\textit{Abkhaz})

We can now proceed to note that all the subordinate clauses illustrated thus far for Mingrelian that incorporate a clause-initial subordinating adverb/pronoun may carry an additional marker of their subordinate status, and this is clause-final -\textit{n(i)} (in which position it usually, but not necessarily, attaches to the verb), a pleonastic marking of subordinate status much commoner than the parallel structures quoted above for Georgian. Examples (23)-(25), with general subordinator underlined, illustrate the tautology in causal, relative and noun-complement clauses, respectively:

(23)  
\[ \text{uts'eis, \, tif\&eni \, nam\&da \, tif\&e \, rd\&-ni} \]  
\[ \text{they.said.X.to.Y \, for.the.reason \, that \, small \, he.was-SUB} \]  
'they said it to him because he was small' (Q'ipshidze in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.260)

(\textit{Mingrelian})

(24)  
\[ \text{ordes\& \, ti \, k\&ata, \, namunepk\&ti \, \&ars\& \, auxvades\&-ni} \]  
\[ \text{they.were \, that \, folk \, who \, on.the.road \, they.bumped.into.X-SUB} \]

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{15}}In Georgian: \textit{utxres, imit'om rom p'at'ara iq'o}.
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16}}In Georgian: \textit{iq'vnen is xalxi, romlebits gzaze \&emoxvda(t)}. 
'the folk whom he/they had met on the road were (there)' (Q’ipshidze in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.268) (Mingrelian)

(25)

mit[k(u/ɔ), nam(u/ɔ)da-mut’o tak] rek-ɔn17
I.know.X that here you.are-SUB
'I know that you are here' (elicited) (Mingrelian)

It should be noted for (25) that, even when unprotected by a word-final vowel, the nasal does not undergo the expected deletion. Now, this clitic is also widely used (exactly like Georgian rom) as the sole marker of a clause's subordinate function and is naturally the strategy employed for colloquial pre-posed relatives, where no relative pronoun appears18. This marking of subordinate status solely by the clitic is exemplified in (26)-(28) for relative, manner and temporal clauses, respectively:

(26)

kotomi ʔwilu-ni (ti) osurs iptʃinenk19
chicken X.slew.Y-SUB that woman.DAT I.know.X
'I know the(/that) woman who killed the chicken' (elicited) (Mingrelian)

(27)

irulu, vek’inud inu(u)-ni20 teʃ21
X.ran.off X.did.not.look.back-SUB so
'X ran off without looking back' (Q’ipshidze in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.278) (Mingrelian)

(28)

sadili ga(a)tu-ni, maxatʃ kalk uts’u: tfšs22
lunch X.finished.Y-SUB peasant X.said.Y.to.Z wife.DAT
'when he'd finished lunch, the peasant said to his wife...' (ibid.) (Mingrelian)

17 In Georgian: vitsi, rom aka xar.
18 I investigated the patterns of relativisation in Mingrelian in a Georgian article published in Tbilisi (see Hiuit’i [Hewitt] 1981).
19 In Georgian: katami ro(m) dak’la (im) kals vitsnob.
20 I have never heard long vowels from my Mingrelian informants and so bracket the second 'u' here.
21 In Georgian: gaiktsa, uk an ro(m) ar mouxedavs, ise.
22 In Georgian: sadili ro(m) gaatava, glexma utxra tsols.
There are, however, rivals to -n(i) as clause-final subordinator -- though I have made no count, it is my impression that -n(i) is by far the commonest allomorph. Q’ipshidze observed in 1914 (p. 289) that -n(i) could reduce to -i\textsuperscript{23}, as indicated four times in (29)-(30):

(29)

\[\text{ku(u)ts’i(i), mortas-əni/mortas-i}\textsuperscript{24} \]
\text{say.X.to.Y X.is.to.come-SUB ‘tell X to come!’}

(Mingrelian)

(30)

\[\text{mara iladςines-i, kodzires, boʃi a[esvirinants-i [...]} \]
\text{but they.looked.out.at.X-SUB they.saw.X lad X.stands.out.among.Y-SUB ‘maras’ tkuank-i, morenia\textsuperscript{25} but.DAT you.say.X-SUB what.is.it.QUOT ‘but when they peered at him, they saw that the lad stands out among [the pigs]. [...] saying: what's the reason that you say "but"?’ (Q’ipshidze in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.260)}

(Mingrelian)

It so happens that I have no examples to hand of final ‘-u’ fulfilling such a role, and so the presence of the underlined schwa in (31) raises the question of whether it should not perhaps here be treated as an allophone of /i/:

(31)

\[\text{k’ɔt̥i si ʔoperekə, ʔurdʎeleptsə tʃ’iʃ’ɛnk-ə}\textsuperscript{26} \]
\text{man you you.evidently.are rabbits.DAT you.herd.X-SUB ‘it appears that you are a (real) man insofar as you shepherd rabbits’ (ibid. 268)}

(Mingrelian)

\textsuperscript{23}Q’ipshidze first quotes:
\[\text{miodɔin(}/u)-ni kodzir(}/u) X.looked.atY-SUB X.saw.Y ‘X looked and saw Y’\]

(Mingrelian)

He then simply says that the nasal may be dropped, leaving -i to merge with what precedes, which would produce miod ʃni. However, since miod ʃni is actually part of the Aorist Indicative paradigm for the root -d ʃn- and means ‘you looked at Y/look at Y’, it is difficult to see how any subordinating sense could be preserved by dropping the nasal in this particular sequence.

\textsuperscript{24}In Georgian: utxari, ro(m) movides!

\textsuperscript{25}In Georgian: magram ro(m) gahxedes, naxes, ro(m) bitʃ’i ʃuaʃixedeba... magram’-s ro(m) ambob, ra ariso?

\textsuperscript{26}In Georgian: k’atsi [en q’opilsər, k’urtdjēbs ro(m) mts’q’emsav.}
Sometimes it is unclear how to interpret the function of such vowels, as with the final 
-i (underlined) of *ibtxuati* in (32):

(32)

\[
\begin{align*}
mok'ona & \quad \text{osuro} \quad \text{ibtxuat-}i \quad \text{vitoziri} \\
\text{we.want.X} & \quad \text{woman(=wife).ADV} \quad \text{we.ask.for.X.AOR.SUBJ-?SUB} \quad 12 \\
da-osurepi & \quad \text{sister-women} \\
'we want to ask the hand in marriage of 12 women-sisters' \quad \text{(ibid. 268)}
\end{align*}
\]

(Mingrelian)

If comparison is made with the Georgian equivalent (33), it is seen that *ro(m)* is optional where the Aorist Subjunctive (which is what represents the subordinate verb in both (32) and (33)) is dependent on the verb 'we want', viz.

(33)

\[
\begin{align*}
gvinda, & \quad (\text{ro(m)}) \quad \text{kalad} \quad (= \text{tsolad}) \quad \text{vixxovot} \\
\text{we.want.X} & \quad \text{that woman.ADV} \quad \text{wife.ADV} \quad \text{we.ask.for.X.AOR.SUBJ} \\
tormeti & \quad \text{da-kalebi} \\
12 & \quad \text{sister-women}
\end{align*}
\]

(Georgian)

This, then, leaves open the analysis of final -i in (32) as a subordinator or merely a euphonic post-consonantal word-final 'i' -- the verb-form in (32) could also be expressed as *ibtxuati/зи*. It is my belief that the clue to post-verbal or clause-final indexing of subordination in Mingrelian might lie precisely in the conjunction of the two optionalities: (i) optional use of euphonic final 'i' and, to extrapolate from the situation in Georgian, (ii) optional presence of subordinator when the verb stands in the subjunctive. It should be recalled that Mingrelian in general seems not to like word-final 'n'. Now, it so happens that a 3rd person plural subject is co-indexed in a verb of subjunctive mood exclusively by such a final 'n', and, therefore, to protect it, it is regularly accompanied by an extra (and, thus, usually) final 'i'. Consider the underlined 'и' in (34):

(34)

\[
\begin{align*}
t\text{ kin skualepi } & \text{ dzьabi do bojik ki?uanь-da,} \\
\text{our children girl & boy they.turn.out.to.be.AOR.SUBJ-if wife.ADV} \\
do \text{ komondьo } & \text{ kimvort kinatia}\text{27} \\
& \text{& husband.ADV let's.deem.X.AOR.SUBJ.QUOT}
\end{align*}
\]

\text{27In Georgian: } t\text{ veni zilebi gogo da bid'i tu iknen, tsolad da kmrad mivitnioto. This Georgian translation and the Mingrelian original demonstrate that, though the protasis-markers in both languages}
'saying, if it transpires that our children turn out to be a boy and a girl, let's deem them husband and wife' (Xubua 1937 in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.256)

(Mingrelian)

In (34) the relevant vowel cannot be interpreted as the subordinator, for in such protases this role can only by fulfilled by -da. Compare also (35):

(35)

p’idخاص i kimetiyas mutual artimaژiras, muti oath they.gave.X.to.Y each.other.DAT that.which i٪uan-i mu٪mai xeluat-٪ni, they.acquire.AOR.SUBJ(-؟) own craftsmanship.INSTR-SUB artima٪irats’٪k٪ma ka٪a gi٪rtan-i٪

between.each.other in.middle they.split.X.AOR.SUBJ-؟SUB

'they swore to each other that whatever they should gain each by his own craftsmanship they should split between them down the middle' (Q’ipshidze 1914 in Danelia/Tsanava 1991.264)

(Mingrelian)

I take the first underlined 'i' (in ی٪uan) to be the euphonic protector of the subjunctive's otherwise final 'n' since this clause's pleonastic subordinate marker is found in the clause-final -( ٪ni (on xeluat ٪ni), whereas I regard the 'i' at the end of the quote (on gi٪rtani) to be functioning as general subordinator applying to the entire oath29. I want, then, to propose that it is this combination of fluctuating presence vs absence of verb-final euphonic 'i', fluctuating presence vs absence of verb-final 'n', frequent coupling of 3rd pers plural subjunctive 'n' + 'i', and tolerance of the subjunctive mood in certain subordinate clauses with or without subordinator that together prompted the reinterpretation of -n(i)30, -i, or its variant -٪ as general

are normally construed with the indicative, they may on occasions accompany a subjunctive. It seems to me that the nuance is captured in English by translating 'If it transpires that...' 28In Georgian: sit’q’va (= p’iri) mistses ertmanets, (rom) rats k’i ٪ovon tav-tavisi xelobit, ertmanet٪ja٪qi gaq’on. Danelia/Tsanava do not, in fact, insert any complementiser in their Georgian translation. 29I have only one example of 3rd person plural subjunctive ending -n being reinforced by the variant subordinator with nasal -n(i), and even here there is the vowel -i- between the subjunctive nasal and the subordinator. The text in Xubua (1937.161) lacks the subordinator -ni, but the addition was elicited from an informant. The example reads:

osur(i) gatxinedani(-ni) vara, ma ud٪gu٪o woman.NOM you.PL.be.able.to.marry.X.FUT.SUBJ(-SUB) or.not I better maxioien-ia I’ll.rejoice-QUOT

‘saying: as soon as you are able to ask a woman’s hand in marriage, the happier I’ll be' 30N.B. that the -n(i) of -٪e+n(i), as in mu٪e+n(i) ‘why?’ and ti٪e+n(i) ‘for X’, is often called a postposition (Chikobava 1936.65; Vamling/Tchantouria 1993.83; Harris/Campbell 1995.292) -- no connection, as far as I am aware, has been postulated between this element and the general subordinator

The Georgian is: kalis txovna ิegedzhoubedot tu ara, me uk’etesad gameexardebao.
subordinator in clauses where the sister-language Georgian happens to employ ro(m). However, we need to ask whether there might not have been some stimulating force for (i) why Mingrelian happened to create a general subordinator in the first place and specifically in clause-final (usually verb-final) position, differently from the regular Kartvelian pattern, and (ii) why pleonastic marking of subordination should be much more widely attested in Mingrelian than elsewhere in Kartvelian. In Georgian ro(m) developed through phonetic attrition of an element that started life as (and in its full form retains) a clause-initial subordinating role; new subordinating functions were assigned as the shorter form became distinct from it source. Such a combination of changes seems quite understandable. I do not, however, see how Mingrelian's 'rom'-equivalents can be easily derived from any of the language's clause-initial subordinating items (namut(i) and nam(u/̣)da would be the only candidates), and, even if one were tempted to hypothesise a connection between either of these and -n(i), the verb-/clause-final positioning of the suffix would remain problematic. I suggest that the solution lies in yet another aspect of the influence that the North West Caucasian language, Abkhaz, has plainly exercised during their long period of symbiosis on Mingrelian (and, indeed, on Mingrelian and Laz together). The North West Caucasian family of languages, like North Caucasian languages in general, largely employ non-finite verb-forms as their translation-equivalents of what would typically be subordinate clauses characterised by a fully-fledged finite verb in languages of the Indo-European and Kartvelian families. Of the three main divisions of N.W. Caucasian (Circassian, the now extinct Ubykh, and Abkhaz), it is in this last that one finds the most sharply delineated morphological distinction between finite and non-finite forms:

under discussion. However, I must say that I know of no evidence to prove a postpositional origin for this element. Where complex case-endings exist in Kartvelian (and the component -e is the Ablative desinence), they usually combine two case-markers -- e.g. in Mingelian -(i)el construed 'for' = Old Georgian -(i)s+ad we have Genitive followed by Adverbial. This might suggest that the origin of this -n(i) should perhaps be sought in the case-system.

31For Abkhazian loan-words in Mingrelian see Chirikba (1998)
Finite vs Non-finite tense-forms in Abkhaz

Dynamic Group I Tenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>'stand up'</th>
<th>'not stand up'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st pers)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1st pers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present</td>
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<td>jə'gəlo</td>
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<td>s'gəlejt’</td>
<td>jə'gəla</td>
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<tr>
<td>Future I</td>
<td>s'gəlap’</td>
<td>jə'gəlarə/ə</td>
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<tr>
<td>Future II</td>
<td>s'gəlaç’t</td>
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<td></td>
<td>= jə'gəlax(Ja(t))</td>
<td>= jəmgəlax(Ja(t))</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Dynamic Group II Tenses

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<th>'not stand up'</th>
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<td>(1st pers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pluperfect</td>
<td>s'gəlaxlan</td>
<td>jə'gəlaxlaz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stative Pattern

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<th>Tense</th>
<th>'be standing'</th>
<th>'not be standing'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st pers)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1st pers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>s'gəlowp’</td>
<td>jə'gəlow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>s'gəlan</td>
<td>jə'gəlaz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at the tables in (36) reveals how the two types of verb (dynamic, stative) differ for all their tenses (whether affirmative or negative) between finite forms (here with 1st person singular subject s-) and their non-finite equivalents (here given in the form appropriate to a relative, with 1st person singular subject-prefix replaced by its relative equivalent jər ‘who’). What one notices immediately is that the shift from finite to non-finite in all cases but one (finite s'gəlam to non-finite jəgəlam) involves alteration to the morphology at the end of the verbal complex (accompanied perhaps by movement of negative affix and stress). Insofar as the relative affix replaces the normal finite agreement-affix (in these examples at the very start of the complex), one can speak of alteration earlier in the clause (specifically, in the pre-radical section of
the verbal complex). And when one examines how Abkhaz forms its translation-equivalents of English noun-clause complements and adverbial clauses of manner, cause (which involves a complement to a postposition), concession and time 'when' and 'as soon as', or the object-clauses in such expressions as 'I know (i) where you live, (ii) whither you are going, (iii) whence you came, (iv) why they died', one finds a similar combination of subordinating affixes inserted in the pre-radical structure coupled with complex-final non-finite morphology, as shewn in the selections under (37) (cf. also (22)):

(37) (a)

\[
\text{a'bas } d-\text{a}x\text{-}l'\text{Wa}_\rho\text{Wo} \quad s-\text{a}+'\text{W}w\theta-pxafojt' \\
\text{thus } X-\text{that-talk.NON.FIN } \text{i-it+of-be.ashamed.FIN.PRES} \\
\text{'I'm ashamed that X is talking like this'} \\
\text{(Abkhaz)}
\]

(37) (b)

\[
s-\text{a}x\text{-}l'\text{W}o\zeta \quad a-'\text{ze} \text{s-e-m'-tsejt'} \\
\text{I-that-be.afraid.NON.FIN.IMPERF it-for I-not-go.PAST} \\
\text{'I didn't go, because I was afraid'} \\
\text{(Abkhaz)}
\]

(37) (c)

\[
'a-mra (\emptyset-)\text{e}-'pxo-g\text{U}e \quad xtowp' \\
\text{the-sun (it-)how-shine.NON.FIN.PRES-even it.is.cold} \\
\text{'although the sun is shining, it is cold'} \\
\text{(Abkhaz)}
\]

(37) (d)

\[
d-\text{a}ne\text{-}z-ba \quad a-'\text{fWqW}w'("(\emptyset-)\text{e-s-tejt'} \\
\text{him/her-when-I-see.NON.FIN.AOR the-book (it-)her-I-give.FIN.AOR} \\
\text{'when I saw her, I gave her the book'}^{33} \\
\text{(Abkhaz)}
\]

(37) (e)

\[
d-e-'\text{sa-tcW}'q'\text{a-z} \quad j-e-'\text{a}za \text{ d-aajt'} \\
\text{(s)he-how-go-just-NON.FIN.PAST his-friend (s)he-come.FIN.AOR}
\]

---

32 Time 'after' combines a non-finite structure meaning 'when' followed by the postpositional phrase 'after it'.

33 With 'a-/ta\text{A}' after it' inserted in second place the meaning is 'after I saw her..'.
'as soon as he went, his friend came'

(Abbkhaz)

(37) (f)

\[ b-a\text{-}x-k\text{-}a\text{-}n't\text{-}x\text{c} \sim b-a\text{-}x-d\text{-}t\text{c} = \]

you.FEM\-where\-live.NON.FIN.PRES you\-where\-go.NON.FIN.PRES

\[ b-a\text{-}x-k\text{-}a\text{-}n'\text{z}t\text{-}s\text{c} \sim b-a\text{-}x-d\text{-}n't\text{w}t\text{-}t\text{c} = \]

you\-whither\-go.NON.FIN.PRES you.FEM\-whence\-come.NON.FIN.AOR

\[ j-e-z\text{-}a\text{-}f'\text{ps}e\text{-}z \]

\( (\text{o}) \text{-z'\text{-d}ar\text{-wej}t)' \)

they\-why\-die.NON.FIN.PAST (it-)I-know.FIN.PRES

'I know (i) where you live, (ii) where = whither you are going, (iii) whence you came, (iv) why they died'

(Abbkhaz)

The markers which, in conjunction with non-finite morphology, form the remaining subordinate expressions (of purpose, result, time 'while', 'since', 'before/until', condition and the expression 'as if') all stand exclusively at the end of the Abkhaz verbal complex. Nevertheless, I wish to propose that it is precisely in Abkhaz that we find a possible source for the Mingrelian features that are of interest because of their non-Kartvelian character. The double marking of subordination by (often early, i.e. pre-radical) insertion of a marker to specify the nature of the clause (or clause-equivalent) plus non-finite morphology shewn by a change at the end of the verbal complex is entirely natural for Abkhaz (and the sister-languages). Undeniably, there were moments in history when Abkhaz influence is likely to have extended well beyond the current south-eastern boundaries of Abkhazia\textsuperscript{34}. And perhaps it was as a

\[ \text{\textsuperscript{34}I myself have discussed a number of cases of possible Abkhaz influence on Mingrelian and vice versa (see Hewitt 1991, 1992a, 1992b, and Hiuit’i [Hewitt] 1988). There is undeniable evidence from the Soviet period (i.e. after the mass-migrations that took most of the native Abkhazian, and indeed North West Caucasian, population to Ottoman lands in the late 19th century) that it was then the norm for Mingrelian to be spoken as their second language by those Abkhazians living in close contact with Mingrelians (whereas knowledge of Abkhaz amongst the Mingrelians of Abkhazia seems to have been far less common). And we have evidence from the observations of (the half-Turkish half-Abkhazian) Evliya Chelebi in the 1640s for similar patterns of bilingualism among the Abkhazians living close to Mingrelia -- of the princely Chachba family he says: 'Amongst themselves they also speak in Mingrelian, for the country across the R. Phasis is Mingrelia in its entirety' (translated from the Georgian rendering of G. Puturidze (1971.100)). As Mingrelian advanced westwards in the wake of those 19th century migrations at the expense of Abkhaz at the latter's eastern fringe (specifically in the Gal District, earlier known as Samurzaq’ano), one might hypothesise that Abkhazians could have preserved features of their ancestral tongue as they became assimilated by the Mingrelians and adopted Mingrelian as their first language. However, though we have no direct contemporary testimony, it is not unreasonable to assume that the period of maximum Abkhazian influence throughout not only Mingrelia but even the whole of western Georgia will have been in the final two centuries of the 1st millennium (viz. during the period of the Abkhzian Kingdom -- see Hewitt 1993 for a convenient survey of the historical facts). At this stage, one might suppose, the greater likelihood would have been for (Laz-)Mingrelian's Zan ancestors to have adopted Abkhaz as their second language because of its prestigious status and to have calqued some Abkhaz features in their native Kartvelian tongue(s). It remains an open question as to whether, at an even earlier period, there might not even have been an Abkhazian (?North West Caucasian) substrate influencing (parts of Western) Kartvelian.}\]
result of such influence that some reanalysis of the elements discussed above at the end of Mingrelian verb-forms occurred. To those with some knowledge of Abkhaz let me say that I have not forgotten to mention the possibly pertinent facts about the functioning of the Abkhaz Past Indefinite and Past Absolute -- see Hewitt 1979 for a discussion of how these forms are used. The former ends in -n and signifies 'X VERBed AND', the latter ends in -n and functions like the English past participle 'having VERBed', as demonstrated in (38):

\[(38)\]

\[də-ta-n \sim də-ta-ne a-lynə\]
\[(s)he-go-FIN.PAST.INDEF (s)he-go-PAST.ABSOL the-house (g-)aa-j-x thểj’\]
\[(it-)PREV-he-buy.FIN.AOR\]
\[‘he went and ~having gone, he bought the house’\]

(Abkhaz)

Comparison of the endings is clearly very reminiscent of the Mingrelian fluctuation between -n and -ni -- this example, indeed, is plainly very close in sense to (28), which could equally well be translated as 'the peasant finished lunch and ~having finished lunch the peasant said to his wife'. Whilst the form and function of these exceedingly frequent Abkhaz verb-types might have been additional factors in exerting the influence for which I am arguing, I would, of course, not wish to suggest that these actual morphs might themselves have been borrowed. From what I said by way of explanation earlier it is obvious that no such hypothesis is necessary. It is sufficient to think purely in terms of structure and function, much as the high number of preverbs in N.W. Caucasian (specifically Abkhaz) must have helped, as widely acknowledged, to foster the large inventories of such items developed (without overt borrowing) in both Mingrelian and Laz in contrast with the numbers of such elements in Georgian or Svan (see Hewitt Forthcoming for a survey of Kartvelian preverbs).

The possibility of splitting the subordinating suffix from its verbal host and placing it clause-finally (as in (35)) must be assumed to be an internal Mingrelian development -- Abkhaz clauses are much more rigidly verb-final than is the case in Kartvelian, and so there is less opportunity for creating clause-final marking that is not at the same time verb-final.

How is the situation in Mingrelian reflected in Laz? To introduce direct quotation with *verba dicendi et sentiendi* Laz has borrowed *ot’i* from Greek and -ki ~-tʃi from Turkish (originally from Persian). (39) illustrates -ki:

\[(39)\]
wife his.ERG husband.DAT X.said.Y.to.Z-that one(.pair.of) bulls.NOM
kododgi-ni
set.X.up.IMPER-?

'his wife told her husband to set up one pair of bulls' (Chikobava 1936.184)

(Laz)

Note in passing the mysterious final element -ni to end the quote. No source I have consulted for Laz mentions the presence of such a Mingrelian-type marker, but I do not see how else it can be interpreted here\textsuperscript{35} -- obviously a question for future investigation.

However, the native element na is widely used as a general subordinator. It usually behaves like Georgian ro(m), tucking itself, where possible, inside its clause, and (also in parallel with the Georgian marker) derives by phonetic reduction from the language's interrogative for 'which one?' (namu, as in Mingrelian). (40) shews it in relative function:

(40)

na moskidasen dobt'axum\textsuperscript{36}
SUB X.will.remain we'll.break.X

'we'll break off what remains' (Chikobava 1936.184)

(Laz)

We have argued that the genesis in Mingrelian of a general subordinating suffix might well have taken place under the influence of a language in which subordinate clauses as such are exceptional but where a non-finite verb-form, morphologically end-marked, serves instead. The verb-forms with which Mingrelian associates its suffix retain their finite morphology, and so the suffix does nothing more than indicate subordinate status of its clause. But in an appropriate linguistic milieu it would not be too great a step for a general subordinator to take on the role of (let's call it) pseudo-non-finite marker. Abkhaz has no case-system to speak of, and so, unlike its sister-languages, cannot add case-markers to its verbs' non-finite forms. But Laz has long been exposed to languages (Classical/Byzantine(less relevantly Modern) Greek and Turkish) where non-finite verb-forms (specifically participles) can be case-marked -- examples (41) and (42) demonstrate the use of Dative and Genitive case-endings on Turkish and Ancient Greek participles, respectively:

(41)

\textsuperscript{35}In Mingrelian this example would be: ḟil(i) mu[i]ik komond ḟi)s uts'u (namda/mud' o): arti xod ḟpi kododgi-ni = Georgian: tsolma misma kmars utxra rom: erti xarebi daaq'ene.

\textsuperscript{36}In Georgian: ro(m) dart[eba (imas) movt'ext.
elmayı gelen ver
apple.ACC having.come.DAT give.IMPER

(Turkish)

= 

Δός τò μῆλον τò ελθόντι
give.IMPER the apple.ACC the having.come.DAT

(Ancient Greek)

'give the apple to the one who came'

(42)

gelenin elmasını bana ver
having.come.GEN apple.POSS.ACC me.DAT give.IMPER

(Turkish)

= 

Δός μοι τò μῆλον τò τοῦ ελθόντος
give.IMPER me.DAT the apple.ACC the having.come.GEN

(Ancient Greek)

'give me the apple of the one who came'

In light of this, consider Laz example (43):

(43)

na bigzalitu-pe-ţi lazut’i hini dok’oborey
SUB we.went-NOUN.PL-GEN maize.NOM they.ERG they.collected.X

'they collected the maize of those of us who went' (K’art’ozia 1970 Text 1, line 8)

(Laz)

Here a finite verb (Aorist Indicative with 1st person plural subject -- bigzalit(u)) has attached to it the noun-pluraliser (-pe-) AND the genitive case-ending (-ţi). To explain this, all we have to do is assume that the general subordinator has effectively become a pseudo-non-finite marker, thereby allowing what otherwise looks to be a full clause to carry the normal marker of nouns in the language. Commenting on this very example, which she quotes from Holisky (1991), Alice Harris (in Harris & Campbell 1995.292) suggests that the nominaliser here might actually be the vowel -u-, which

37 The Modern Greek equivalent is Δώσε τό μήλο σ’ αυτόν πού ἤρθε (where we have a prepositionally governed anaphoric pronoun 'to the one' + relative clause 'that came', which is less helpful to the point at issue)

38 In Modern Greek: Δώσε μοι τό μήλο αυτοῦ πού ἤρθε.
she links to a widely used verbal-noun formant in Laz(-Mingrelian). However, if we consult the original K’art’ozia article, we find in the second line of the short text containing citation (43) the following main-clause verb-form:

(44)

\[
\text{menda-f-t-i-tu} \quad \text{PREV-1st.Pers-come-AOR.PL} \\
\text{'we came'}
\]

(Laz)

This is nothing other than a finite verb ending in an optional -u. Indeed, K’art’ozia comments on this very peculiarity in his introduction, where he quotes Laz specialist Sergi Dzhikia’s observation to the effect that in the Atina dialect verbs ending in -t/s/n can add a meaningless -u. This is plainly reminiscent (albeit on a more limited scale) of the observation from Gudava with which we began about optional end-vowels in Mingrelian. If the development of verb-/clause-final subordinator in Mingrelian is a natural development for the language’s native material in the environment of its neighbour Abkhaz, the further extension of the parallel and similarly native item na in Laz to a pseudo-non-finite marker under the influence of Greek and Turkish is equally comprehensible.

But there is one final feature yet to examine in both Laz and Mingrelian. Laz also employs na clause-finally, in which role it functions as the marker of a protasis. In a real protasis such as (45) it is the equivalent of Mingrelian -da, which, as stated above, I regard as a specialised borrowing from Georgian of its coordinating conjunction:

(45)

\[
\text{jeti ginon-na, ma meg\dagger are}^{39} \\
\text{place.NOM you.want.X-if I I'll.give.X.to.you} \\
\text{'if you want a place, I'll give it to you'} \quad \text{(Chikobava 1936.184)}
\]

(Laz)

I believe that Laz may also have borrowed Georgian da, altering it to na once the latter became so prevalent in subordinate clauses, but there is no way to prove this. However, the element is also used for unreal protases, as in (46), where we note that it is preceded by an element -k’on-, as yet unspecified:

(46)

\[
\text{tu adgili ginda, me mogtsem.}
\]

\[^{39}\text{In Georgian: tu adgili ginda, me mogtsem.}\]
aja furunįį nek’na akolendo t’u-k’on-na, k’ai t’u
this oven-GEN door.NOM over.here it.was-2-if good it.was
‘if this oven’s door had been over here, it was (= would have been) good’
(ibid.151)

(Laz)

In Mingrelian unreal conditions referring to the present or future optionally contain
-n(i) in association with Present, on the one hand, or Future or Aorist Subjunctive
on the other, all three subjunctives being illustrated in (47):

(47) (a)

ase (ko)guraplende(n(i)) gak’vetils, dɔgir boji iʔidi
now you.learn.X.PRES.SUBJ lesson.DAT good boy.NOM you.would.be
‘if you were now learning your lesson, you’d be a good boy’ (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

(47) (b)

nebas komut|andas∅(ni) ?udes gamk’uortiuankia
permission.DAT X.give.Y.to.FUT.SUBJ(.if) house.DAT I’ll.turn.X.round.

‘saying: if (s)he were to give me permission, I’ll turn the house round’ (Xubua
1937.215)

(Mingrelian)

(47) (c)

ma molaprte(ni) skants’k’ɔma, mu|a gɔmgarine
I I’ll.come.away.AOR.SUBJ(.if) with.you in.what X.will.help.you

Non-Georgian: am purnis k’ari ake.shtml en rom q’opiliq’o, k’ai iq’o.

Vamling/Tchantouria (1993.67) quote an example of -n(i) combined with the Future Indicative
which they translate as a real condition:

lexi dosk’idu ts’amals kumuʾanki-n(i)
invalid.NOM X.will.recover medicine.DAT you’ll.bring.X.to.Y-SUB
‘the sick person will recover if you bring him medicine’

(Mingrelian)

On p.75 they observe that a temporal sense is also possible for this example (‘...when you bring him
medicine’). All the cases I have encountered of real future conditions in Mingrelian would demand -da
(in place of -n(i)) here, for normatively the example as it stands should only have temporal force. Note
also that the authors’ gloss of the temporal subordinator mudros ‘at that time’ (p.74) should, of
course, read ‘at which time’.

Vamling/Tchantouria (1993.73) quote an example from Q’ipshidze (1914.425) containing a Present
Subjunctive with -ni which they translate by the English preterite, viz.: joronti k’os kaak etendasuni
sal|verk meleni vee?uu? ‘If God created man, why was there no relief?’. In fact, the translation should
read as follows: ‘If God were enriching man [sc. as an ongoing process], why was there no relief?’
'how will it benefit you, were I to come away with you?' (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

But what do we find in the past? Consider the parallel triplets in (48) and (49):

(48)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ma} & \quad \text{skan sakmes} \quad \text{vak’etendi-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.NOM}) & \quad \text{your} & \quad \text{job.DAT} & \quad \text{I.was.doing.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\text{=} & \quad & \quad & \quad & \quad & \\
\text{ma} & \quad \text{skani sakme} \quad \text{vak’eti-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.NOM}) & \quad \text{your} & \quad \text{job.ACC} & \quad \text{I.did.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\text{=} & \quad & \quad & \quad & \quad & \\
\text{ma} & \quad \text{skani sakme} \quad \text{mik’etebud(u/o)-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.DAT}) & \quad \text{your} & \quad \text{job.NOM} & \quad \text{I.had.done.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\end{align*}
\]

'if it had been me doing your job, it would have been good' (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

or

(49)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ma} & \quad \text{ts’erils} \quad \text{dobil’arundi-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.NOM}) & \quad \text{letter.DAT} & \quad \text{I.would.have.written.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\text{=} & \quad & \quad & \quad & \quad & \\
\text{ma} & \quad \text{ts’erili} \quad \text{dobil’ari-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.NOM}) & \quad \text{letter.ACC} & \quad \text{I.wrote.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\text{=} & \quad & \quad & \quad & \quad & \\
\text{ma} & \quad \text{ts’erili} \quad \text{dom(i)t’arud(u/o)-} & \quad \text{k’o(n(i))} & \quad \text{d'gir(i)} & \quad \text{i?uapud(u/o)} \\
(\text{I.DAT}) & \quad \text{letter.NOM} & \quad \text{I.had.written.X-?} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{it.would.have.been} \\
\end{align*}
\]

'if I had written the letter, it would have been good' (elicited)

(Mingrelian)

43In Georgian these examples are: exla (ro(m)) sc’avlobde gak’vetils, k’argi bit’i iknebodi. nebas (ro(m)) momtsendes, saxls movabrunebo. me (ro(m)) ts’amovide [entan, rali gamogadgeba? 44Such forms combine with the Conditional (Georgian xolmeobiti) of the copula to form an imperfective Conditional, e.g. d’gir tsxovrebas mini ma’yirsendu/a-k’on i?uapudua good life.DAT who.NOM X.was.deeming.me.worthy.of.Y-? X.would.be/have.been 'asking: who would be/have been deeming me worthy of a good life?'

(Mingrelian)

The equivalent imperfective Future couples the Future Indicative of the copula with the Present Subjunctive (with or without -n(i)) of the lexical verb, e.g. brel sat’ukars mert/andas(∅n) i?iti many gift.DAT X.give.Y.to.you.PRES.SUBJ(-SUB) X.will.be 'X will be giving you many gifts' (Xubua 1937.242)

(Mingrelian)

45In Georgian: me [eni sakme rom mek’etebina, k’argi ikneboda.

46In Georgian: me ts’erili rom damets’era, k’argi ikneboda.
Here we have an element \(-k'o(n(i))\) attached in (48) respectively to the Imperfect, preverbless Aorist, and preverbless Pluperfect Indicatives, in (49) respectively to the Conditional (Georgian \(xolmeobiti\)), preverbal Aorist, and preverbal Pluperfect Indicatives -- the three preverbal vs preverbless pairs here seem to be interchangeable, though the subtle question of aspectual distinctions would benefit from further study. What, then, is this element, which appears as \(-k'on-\) in Laz example (46), but as \(-k'o\) in Laz example (50) (Dumézil 1967.81)?

(50)

\[ mts'k'upi \ text{ var } t'u-k'o \ text{ hak var dobdgitut'i } \]
\[
\text{darkness not it.was-? here not I.would.stay}
\]
\[
\text{'was it not dark, I should not stay here!' (Dumézil 1967 Text IX.85)}
\]

(Laz)

In his introduction Dumézil simply glosses \(-k'o\) as French 'si' = 'if' (i.e. the protasis-marker). As to the origin of the suffix in these special modal forms, which are quite unique to Laz-Mingrelian and which the Georgian tradition styles \(p'irobiti\)\(^{47}\), most commentators present it as existing in the allomorphic variation \(-k'o(n)\) and interpret it as a reduced form of what in Mingrelian appears as \(o-k'o(-n)\) 'X wants Y' (e.g. Chikobava 1936.140). As we see from (51):

\(^{47}\text{This would normally be translated as 'conditional'. However, as seen above, it has become the norm to use this English term for what in the Georgian tradition is named the } xolmeobiti \text{ (i.e. the Future Indicative stem + the endings of the Imperfect).} \]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(51)</th>
<th>Mingrelian</th>
<th>Svan</th>
<th>Laz</th>
<th>Georgian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'I want X'</td>
<td>m-o-k’o(-n)</td>
<td>m-a-k’u</td>
<td>m-i-n-o-n</td>
<td>m-i-nd-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'you want X'</td>
<td>g-o-k’o(-n)</td>
<td>dzh-a-k’u</td>
<td>g-i-n-o-n</td>
<td>g-i-nd-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'X wants Y'</td>
<td>o-k’o(-n)</td>
<td>x-a-k’u</td>
<td>u-n-o-n</td>
<td>u-nd-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Laz this conjugation of 'want' is used suffixally with (partly) conjugating Aorist Subjunctive of the lexical verb in the Xopa dialect to form the equivalent of the Future Indicative; in Chxalurian the suffixal component remains in the 3rd person singular form, whilst the lexical verb conjugates fully; in Vic’e-Arkabulian, on the other hand, the fully conjugating Aorist Subjunctive takes as suffix a reduced form of the Present tense of the copula (as Marr observed -- 1910.53). All of this gives for the verb 'measure' the following patterns (Chikobava 1936.148):
(52) Laz Future Indicative Formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vic’e-Arkabulian</th>
<th>Xolan</th>
<th>Chxalurian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'I'll measure X'</td>
<td>b-zum-a-re</td>
<td>b-zim-a-m-i-n-o-n</td>
<td>b-zim-a-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'you'll measure X'</td>
<td>zum-a-re</td>
<td>zim-a-g-i-n-o-n</td>
<td>zim-a-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'X'll measure Y'</td>
<td>zum-a-s-e(-re)</td>
<td>zim-a-s-u/i-n-o-n</td>
<td>zim-a-s-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'we'll measure X'</td>
<td>b-zum-a-t-e(-re)</td>
<td>b-zim-a-m-i-n-o-n-an</td>
<td>b-zim-a-t-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'you'll measure X'</td>
<td>zum-a-t-e(-re)</td>
<td>zim-a-g-i-n-o-n-an</td>
<td>zim-a-t-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'they'll measure X'</td>
<td>zum-a-n-e(-n)</td>
<td>zim-a-s-u/i-n-o-n-an</td>
<td>zim-a-n-u+n+o+n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marr (1910.53) and Q’ipshidze (1911.5) go on to speak of the Chxaltsians having an alternative formation suffixing -k’o (Marr)/-k’on (Q’ipshidze) to the conjugated Aorist Indicative. This formation is presented by Chikobava exclusively as the 1Ind p ‘irobiti mood, which he translates just like the parallel coupling in Mingrelian illustrated in (48) and (49) above. The listing under (51) demonstrates that Mingrelian certainly employs the form o-k’o(−n) (with the usually deleted final -n being the Present Indicative 3rd person singular affix agreeing with the Nominative entity desired), whereas Laz uses a different root, closer to the Georgian. One might argue that the root of the verb 'want' was shifted in Laz after the suffix took on this modal force. But another problem is that Laz does not delete final -n, and yet the suffix -k’o~k’on seems to exist in both forms in both languages. The main difficulty, however, seems to me to be the juxtaposition of the suffix with base-forms in the indicative mood -- t’u in (46) and (50) is the Imperfect Indicative of the copula. The 3rd person singular form of the independent lexeme 'want' in both Mingrelian and Georgian has become fossilised as the marker of necessity/obligation, but, whether used in this latter sense or to signify 'want', the subordinate verb/clause follows the desiderative marker48 and, with reference to future events, the coupling is with the Aorist Subjunctive49, as shewn in (53):

(53)

\[
\text{ok’o midaprte(−ni)} \\
\text{it’s.necessary I.go.AOR.SUBJ(-SUB)} \\
\]

(Mingrelian)

= 

\[
\text{unda ts’avide} \\
\text{it’s.necessary I.go.AOR.SUBJ} \\
\]

(Georgian)

48In Georgian this order is obligatory, and, when unda represents the fossilised marker of obligation, it functions as a kind of auxiliary prefix, forming such a tight bond with its dependent verb that no other material can split them. In Mingrelian, however, there is at least one example in Danelia/Tsanava (1991.272) with the order reversed:

\[
\text{ena r[epi] mind’egs mevu’one-o+k’o+n-ia} \\
\text{this horses.GEN owner.DAT I.take.X.to.Y-necessary-QUOT} \\
\text{‘saying: I have to take this to the horses’ owner’} \\
\]

(Mingrelian)

In Georgian: es ralëbis p’at’rons unda mivuq’vanoo. Note, however, that, regardless of the order of the elements in Mingrelian, the subjunctive remains essential.

49For present wishes the Present Subjunctive is used:

\[
\text{ok’o bt’arunde(−ni)} \\
\text{necessary I.be.writing.X.PRES.SUBJ(-SUB) letter.DAT} \\
\text{‘I should be writing a letter’} \\
\]

(Mingrelian)

In Georgian: unda vts’erde ts’erils.

50Not even the subordinating ro(m) is possible in Georgian, so close is the bond between auxiliary and subjunctive.
'I have to go'
But what happens when the wish/obligation relates to the past? Consider (54) (with Pluperfect Indicative alone in Georgian vs Pluperfect + underlined suffix(es) in Mingrelian):

(54)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ok’o} & \quad \text{midamrtumud-k’o(n(i))} \\
\text{it's.necessary} & \quad \text{I.had.gone-} \quad \text{(Mingrelian)} \\
= & \\
\text{unda} & \quad \text{ts’avsuliq’avi} \\
\text{it's.necessary} & \quad \text{I.had.gone} \quad \text{(Georgian)}
\end{align*}
\]

'I had to go/should have gone'
A parallel pattern is found in past purpose-clauses, as shewn in (55):

(55)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{midart(u/\varepsilon) \quad t\{xom(i) \quad out\}opud(u/\varepsilon)-k’o(n(i)) \quad (ti\{en(i))} \\
\text{X.went \quad fish.NOM \quad X.had.caught.Y-} \quad \text{for.it}^5 & \quad \text{(Mingrelian)} \\
= & \\
\text{ts’avida, rom-rata tevzi \quad daet\{ira} \\
\text{X.went \quad SUB \quad fish.NOM \quad X.had.caught.Y} \quad \text{(Georgian)}
\end{align*}
\]

'X went (in order) to catch fish'
It may strike observers as odd that Georgian should require a subjunctive mood when such \textit{irrealis} expressions relate to the present or future but an indicative in the past. The reason for this is that a specifically \textit{irrealis}/potential particle (naturally coupled with the indicative mood) once functioned in Old Georgian but has been lost in the modern dialects, leaving the Pluperfect Indicative, which developed out of the Aorist Indicative, stranded in these constructions. The Old Georgian particle was -\textit{mtsa}^52, which looks as if it contains -\textit{tsa} 'and, also, even', though the precise analysis remains annoyingly opaque. Examples (56a) and (56b) illustrate a past unreal condition and a past purpose clause, respectively:

51This is reminiscent of the optional use of the postpositional phrase \textit{a’z \varepsilon} for it' after non-finite expressions of purpose, marked by \textit{-r+ \delta} in Abkhaz, though the construction is perhaps preferable with \textit{ti\{en(i) in Mingrelian.
52Still widely used in the set-expression \textit{ts’q’eulimts iq’os} 'May X be damned!', but because its force is no longer properly understood, even here it is coupled with a verb in the subjunctive (the Aorist indicative here would be \textit{iq’o}).
(56) (a)

uk’uetu-mtsα itsoda saxlisa upalman... iɣ widzebda-mtsα
if-POT X.knew.Y house.GEN master.ERG X.was.awake.POT
ifar master of the house had known, he would have remained awake’ (K’iziria
1969.151)
(Old Georgian)
or

(56) (b)

mieaxla... rayta-mtsα mohk’ueta tavi misi
X.approached.Y that-POT X.cut.Z.off.Y head.NOM Y’s
’X approached Y in order to cut off his head’ (ibid. 142)
(Old Georgian)

Since Mingrelian incorporates the suffix of interest to us in subordinate clauses where
Georgian too once placed its now obsolete potential/irrealis element (viz. unreal past
protases and past purpose-clauses54), a natural question to ask is whether there might
not be some functional relationship between the two -- formally they are quite
distinct. Since the etymology of the Georgian particle is unclear, do other languages
offer any clues as to what items can fulfil such a function? It so happens that Russian
is a language which employs a similar particle, namely b(μμ), illustrated in (57),
whose origin is transparent:

(57)

esli bμμ upal, to nikogda bμμ ne vstal
if IRR fell then already IRR not stood.up
’if (I) had fallen, (I) would never again have stood up’ (Turgenev, from Borras &
Christian 1963.239)
(Russian)

In (57) bμμ is etymologically the 2nd/3rd person singular form of the simple past
tense of the verb ‘be’ (Entwistle & Morison 1974.205; Matthews 1960.210), attested
from the 13th century, though in Modern Russian this irrealis-marker no longer
shews any copular usage. If, then, the copula is a possible source for the marker
carrying the function of interest to us, we might further ask whether any copular link

53Note that it is protasis-marker tu (or at least a complex conjunction containing it) that couples with
the irrealis particle and recall that example (46) has the Laz equivalent of Georgian tu (namely -na)
also coupled with -k’on. This would lead one to expect a one-time association of -k’o(n) + da in
Mingrelian.
54Mingrelian’s development of a Conditional (formally identical to Georgian’s xolmeobiti with the
Imperfect Indicative endings attached to the Future Indicative tense) renders the presence of such a
particle in the apodosis of unreal conditions superfluous.
is establishable for the Mingrelian(-Laz) suffix. Within Kartvelian there is none (to
the best of my knowledge), but an affirmative response is feasible, if we do not
restrict ourselves to the Kartvelian family but yet again cast our gaze into Abkhaz(-
Abaza) grammar.

Extremely frequent in Abkhaz with negated verbs equating to English expressions
'without VERBing ~without having VERBed' is the suffix \(-k^W'\text{a}(n)\), as in (58), where
we note an optional final nasal and that labialised consonant + open vowel in Abkhaz
would be expected to correlate with plain consonant + 'o' in Kartvelian (cf. Abkhaz
\(aq^W'\text{a}'\text{raan},\) borrowed from Georgian \(q'\text{o}r\text{ani}'\text{raven}\)'), e.g.

\((58)\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ak'-'glə} & (\varnothing-)sə-ma-m-k^W'\text{a}(n) \sim (\varnothing-)q'a-m-t's'a-k^W'\text{a}(n) \\
\text{one-even} & \text{(it-)I-have-not-?} \quad \text{(it-)PREV-not-do-?} \\
\text{s-aa-jt'} & \text{} \\
\text{I-come-FIN.AOR} \\
\text{I came without anything ~ without having done anything'} & \text{(Abkhaz)}
\end{align*}
\]

But from a semantic point of view this hardly seems to offer enlightenment. Consider,
however, (59a) from Abkhaz and (59b) from the divergent Abaza dialect:

\((59)\) (a)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ak'-'glə} & (\varnothing-)q'a-j-m-t's'e-jt'. \quad \text{ak'-'glə} \\
\text{one-even} & \text{(it-)PREV-he-not-do-FIN.AOR} \quad \text{one-even} \\
(\varnothing-)q'a-j-m-t's'a-k^W'\text{a}+\text{na-w} & \text{ðə+w+f+t}^{55} \\
(\text{it-)PREV-he-not-do-?NON.FIN.PRES.STAT} & \text{is.it.really.so} \\
\text{'he didn't do anything. Do you really think he did nothing?!'} = 'Of course, he did!' & \text{(Abkhaz)}
\end{align*}
\]

cf.

\((59)\) (b)

\[
\begin{align*}
jə-b-dər-xə-w-ma & \quad \text{papa} \quad jə-j-h^W\text{ə-w+z} \quad \text{dad} \quad \text{which-he-say-NON.FIN.} \\
\text{it-you.FEM-know-really-NON.FIN.PRES-QU} & \quad \text{IMPERF} \\
\text{-- jə-zə-m-dər-x-k^W'\text{a}} & \text{} \text{} \text{}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{55}\)An alternative would be:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ak'-'glə} & (\varnothing-)q'a-j-m-t's'e-jt'. \quad \text{ak'-'glə} \\
\text{one.even} & \text{(it-)PREV-he-not-do-FIN.AOR} \quad \text{one.even} \\
(\varnothing-)q'a-m-t's'a-k^W'\text{a}(n) & \text{} \\
\text{(it-)PREV-he-not-do-NON.FIN.AOR-?} & \text{} \\
\text{jə-gə-pə-q'a-j-m-t's'e-} & \text{} \\
\text{it-how-PREV-he-not-do-NON.FIN.AOR-QU} & \text{}
\end{align*}
\]
'do you know what dad said? Of course I do!' (Tabulova 1976.215) (Abaza)

Here we have ways to rebut a negative assertion or the doubt implied in a question. The invariant Abkhaz particle indicating surprise at the end of (59a) suggests a connection with the verb 'a-dɔ(ə)-jɑ-ra 'suppose' (which governs a simple non-finite form of the verb for the object supposed -- just what we have in (Ø-) q'ɑ-j-ɛ-m-

b'ɑ-kW’ɑ+hɛ-w). The verb whose validity is being queried appears with the suffix of interest to us followed by -w, the marker of a stative verb in its non-finite present tense guise -- in Abaza (59b) the suffix attaches equally to a non-finite verb-form. I suggest that the most convincing way of assigning meanings to all the parts such that the required sense is obtained in the Abkhaz sequence (59a) is to interpret the sequence as in (59c) with a copular root:

(59) (c)

(Ø.)q’ɑ j m t’ɑ-kW’ɑ+hɛ-w  dɛ+w+j+t

his.not.having.done.it-be-ing  is.it.really.supposable

'is his not having done it really supposable?!

(Abkhaz)

A parallel analysis would then be assignable to the Abaza sequence. It so happens that a copular root -kW’( ə- does exist in Abkhaz, as in (60):

(60)

lɑ+ra  l-a+kW’ə-m

she  she-be-not.PRES.STAT

'it isn’t her

(Abkhaz)

The shift of open to close vowel is by no means uncommon -- example (61) illustrates how Abkhaz developed the close from the proto-Abkhaz-Abaza open vowel, preserved in Abaza, in the nominal root 'head' (also illustrated is how the original voiceless uvular plosive, again preserved in Abaza, merged in Abkhaz with the voiceless back fricative):

(61) Proto-Abkhaz-Abaza: *qa => Abkhaz: -xɛ (= Abaza: qa) 'head'

It is, thus, quite conceivable that this root might be cognate with the suffix under examination. Consider also a strange optional addition (underlined in (62)) with expressions of the type 'as X is/was VERBing':

(62)
What can this optional addition mean? Given the commonest role attested for the suffix -kw’a(n) in modern Abkhaz and given that the initial sequence ə+k’w’ə-m must be ‘it+be-', one might suggest the translation ‘without it being so’, but this looks dubious from a semantic point of view. More conceivable, I feel, is that a tight contrast of the kind ‘it wasn’t, it was’ or ‘it not being [so], it being [so]’ might plausibly serve as an expressive way of stressing that it was just/precisely under the circumstances described in the preceding clause that the main event occurred. If, then, the element -k’w’ə is in origin a copular root (and -m- is clearly the regular negative marker), we could interpret the final nasal as either a reduced form (and such are not uncommon) of a stative verb’s sole absolute suffix (-n ə) or the stative past tense marker (-n) -- either way, the element is optional, presumably because the original force of the suffixal component(s) (and indeed of this optional word as a whole) has been lost. Now, since in Laz-Mingrelian conditionality is associated with the suffix of interest, it would be nice to point to a role in conditional expressions for the parallel item in Abkhaz. In fact, none is known from Abkhaz proper, but the suffix -kw’ə (variants: -kw a/-gw a) is found in the divergent Abaza dialect, not spoken on Abkhaz territory since its speakers migrated to the North(-West) Caucasus in the 14th century, and here it can follow the regular Abkhaz conditional suffix -(za+)r ‘if’ (cf. Lomtatidze 1944; Chkadua 1970; Lomtatidze & Klychev 1989 for examples), as seen in (63)-(64):

(63)

d-l’a+j’ə-xə-r-k’w’ə+n  sə-j’ə-b
(s)he-come-again-if-? me-he-kill-FIN.FUT

‘if he were to return, he’ll kill me’ (Lomtatidze 1944.168)

(T’ap’anta Abaza)

or

(64)
Whilst recognising that this hypothesis is more controversial than that advanced earlier, I nevertheless want to propose that it is again within Abkhaz(-Abaza) that we might have a source for a copular suffix (even down to its fluctuating nasal) that might have filtered into Laz-Mingrelian long ago (obviously before the split of these two closely related tongues that began in the 7th century) to take on the still important irrealis-marking function, once fulfilled in Georgian by the now obsolete suffix -mtsa. Whether -k'ɔ(ŋ)ever had a protasis-marking role in the standard Abkhaz dialects is unknown -- if the protasis-marker -r is indeed derived from the non-finite Future I (marked today by -ra/ə-- cf. (36), and see Lomtatidze 1994.168; Hewitt 1987.94), it is not inconceivable that originally such forms were dependent on some other element, and a form of the copula might well have filled that slot before falling into obsolescence, but this is pure speculation in the present state of our knowledge. Whatever the origin of the optionality of the nasal component in Laz-Mingrelian's formally similar suffixes (and an analysis of the distribution of -k'ɔ vs -k'on in Laz, where neither deletion of final 'n' nor the subordinating suffix -n(i) is supposed to exist, is clearly required), I get the distinct impression that (in Mingrelian at least) the -n(i) of -k'ɔ(n(i)) is actually being assigned the separate role of subordinating suffix (equivalent to Georgian ro(m)) that we discussed earlier. Its detachment from the verb (koj'ibdesi'k'o) in the second conjoined subordinate clause and attachment to the clause-final noun (darteli) in example (65) (from one of the locally published Mingrelian journals of the 1930s) surely tends to support this suggestion:

(65)

tstol-n t'erepki iridixa'e miant'es k'olmeurneobas:
class-enemies.NOM from.all.sides they.attacked.X collective.farming.DAT
p'rovok'atsia, t'ula, gentxapa, mida'yala do xva tedgurepit
provocation arson assault robbery & other such.like.things.INST
ti'eni, namda k'olmeurneoba gak'ur yapadesi-k'oni do
for.it that collective-farming.NOM they.had.destroyed.X-2 &
atenero gilataralo ku'lib(u)desi-k'ɔ darteli-ni
thus for.marauding they.had.acquired.X-2 Darcheli-2
'class-enemies have attacked collective-farming from all sides: by provocation, arson, assault, robbery and suchlike in order to destroy collective-farming and in
this way to acquire [our village of] Darcheli for marauding' (k’olekt’ivîli [arat [By Way of the Collective] 1, 5 May 1932, p.2)

(Mingrelian)

However, the possibility of reduplicating this final component -- compare (66) and (67) with examples (54) and (55), respectively -- perhaps suggests some doubt amongst (at least some) speakers as to the precise force of -ni when combined with -k’o -- in my field-notes I have more cases of reduplicated -n alone than of the full -ni:

(66)
ok’o midamrtumud-k’o(n(i(n(?i))))
'I had to go/should have gone'

(Mingrelian)

(67)
midart(u/ê) ū[xom(i) out]’opud(u/ê)-k’o(n(i(n(?i)))) (ti[en(i)])
'X went (in order) to catch fish'

(Mingrelian)

Digression

As is well known, some dialects of ancient Greek also had an *irrealis*-marker ke(n). It has even been suggested that, if a disputed Mycenaean form similarly conveyed potentiality, then the proto-Greek putative demonstrative adverb (for there is no copular connection in the Greek) would be reconstructible as *q*\(^W\)e(n)/q\(^W\)r (Palmer 1995.68/285), a form whose full-grade is intriguingly reminiscent, structurally at least, of the Abkhaz-Abaza suffix and, both structurally and functionally, of the Laz-Mingrelian suffix. Whilst the eastern Black Sea coast was colonised by Greeks from the 8th century BC, the colonisers came from Miletus, where Ionian, a dialect with an in place of ke(n), was spoken (Palmer 1995.81). And so, this superficial similarity looks like nothing more than mere coincidence.

Conclusion

If the arguments advanced above prove to be correct, is there any wider lesson to be drawn other than that Abkhaz influence on Laz-Mingrelian will have been demonstrated to be even deeper than previously thought? The whole thrust of this presentation has been predicated on the belief that indications to a language's development might be found within the form and function of its native stock of elements and/or by taking into consideration the linguistic milieu in which it is/has been spoken (particularly where bi- and multi-lingualism have been the norm, as in the Caucasus) -- in the present instance the argument has been that both factors might have played a part in the genesis of the features examined. Misinterpretations and/or

56Such elicited examples with -ni-n(i) among my corpus all seem to occur only after -k’o, but again this may be no more than an accidental gap in the data.
reanalyses are undeniably significant factors in language-change, and it is surely legitimate to look to neighbouring and/or (one-time) dominant languages as sources of possible influence. When the question concerns reconstruction, is it proper to ignore possible clues in the form of the actual morphs themselves? I suggested above a (to my mind) entirely plausible chain of (re)interpretation to explain how Mingrelian nam(u/ ḗda 'that' might have acquired its complementiser-functions assuming it to be a coalescence of interrogative namu 'which (one)?' and protasis-marker -da 'if'. This, of course, touches upon the question of the relevance of parataxis to attempts at explaining the genesis of at least some types of hypotactic constructions in some languages, a possible path of development I have discussed with reference to the Caucasus more than once (see Hewitt 1984; 1987). Now, it so happens that, as a result of hypothesising along such lines, I stand accused by Harris and Campbell (1995.284) of committing what they style the 'Marker/Structure Fallacy':

'Notice that it is by no means necessary to assume that the structure in which a particular innovative grammatical element is found developed out of the structure in which that grammatical element originated. It is logically possible that one word simply developed from another, with little reference to context. It is also possible that structural marking that developed in one context was later extended to another. While the issue of whether the sources of markers logically imply the sources of structures is an empirical one, we shall refer to the assumption that they do as the Marker/Structure Fallacy.

'An example of the Marker/Structure Fallacy in recent work comes from Hewitt (1987.141-2, 260-1), where it is assumed without further evidence that a subordinate clause with marking otherwise found in questions in Georgian must have developed from an “independent interrogative clause”...

'The Parataxis Hypothesis is not supported by evidence from attested instances of the rise of the use of subordinators.' (Stresses original)

I suggested that Georgian's sole clause-final subordinating phrase tu ara 'as soon as' (cf. 1) might have taken on this meaning via progression from an expressive use of its original role in marking alternative questions (for the words literally mean 'or not', as in ts'avida tu ara 'Did X go or not?') to being grammaticalised as a fully-fledged formant of this type of temporal clause. In other words, my ascription to this particular type of subordinate structure of an origin in the paratactic use of the relevant question-marking strategy because the marking mechanism also functions interrogatively is denounced as fallacious. The details of how this or that language comes to express this or that type of subordination seem not overly to trouble my critics, for they seek to 'explain' widely attested parallelisms in structure between questions and dependent clauses merely by pointing to a global, shared semantic characteristic, namely 'speaker non-assertion'. Whether or not one accepts the validity of this claim, I fail to see how it 'explains' anything at all, for, if speaker non-assertion is the sole determining factor, should it not follow that any question-forming strategy
ought to be capable of marking any appropriate type of subordinate clause in the relevant language(s)? I am not aware that such unrestrained substitutability has been observed in such languages, and so one must conclude that, whatever the relevance of speaker non-assertion might be to the sort of constructional parallelisms under review, some other process must be at work behind this or that language's choice of this or that question-forming strategy to mark a particular type of subordinate structure. For the time being, therefore, I prefer to think that reinterpretation (specifically, the embedding) of an original paratactic sequence is by no means implausible. But it is not just that the Harris/Campbell proposal is lacking in explanatory adequacy -- their presentation is marred by some questionable interpretations of basic data (and not only Caucasian).

The late Nia Abesadze (1965.251-2) is cited (p.290) as source for the statement that the Mingrelian coördinator do 'and' can serve as a clause-final subordinator, as in (our) example (68):

(68)

\[
\text{ba\textsuperscript{\textw}}\text{anak mut\textsuperscript{\textw}}ot ginirtu viti ts'anero do}
\]

child such become 10 year and

'as soon as the child turned ten...' (Xubua 1937.1), glosses by Harris(/Campbell p. 290)

(Mingrelian)

In fact, Abesadze made no such claim. What she actually wrote was that the coördinator may stand between subordinate and main clause in addition to the presence of an independent subordinator, a feature she observed to be attested throughout the Kartvelian family\(^57\). Here, as amply attested above, the subordinator is much\textsuperscript{\textw}ot 'as (soon as)', for this would be the correct gloss (rather than 'such') -- Abesadze herself, it should be emphasised, correctly translated this conjunction on pp.240-1 as Georgian rogorts (k'i) 'as soon as'), just as the verb in (68) is actually 'became' (not 'become').

On p.295 the A-not-A question-forming strategy in Turkish is illustrated by (our) example (69):

(69)

\[
\text{kadin tarla-ya git-ti-mi git-me-di-mi}
\]

woman field-DAT go-PAST-QU go-NEG-PAST-QU

\(^57\)One could also mention that the phenomenon was found in Ancient Greek and Old Armenian: cf. Iliad 1.477-8: Ἡμὸς δ᾽ ἡρεμέοιον φάνη ἱοδάκτυλος Ἡλός, ἀλλ᾽ ὑπερπνεῦσεν τὸν Ἥρακλην 'When the early-born Dawn appeared with rosy fingers, [and] then they set sail...'; ibrew ekn emut i xoran andr, ew j a\textsuperscript{\textw}tris bazmec\textsuperscript{\textw}aw 'When he came [&] entered the tent there, [and] he sat down at the banquet' (Jensen 1959.197) -- the standard transcription for Old Armenian is used here.
'did the woman go to the field (or didn't she go)?'

(Turkish)

It is then asserted (p.297) that: 'The A-not-A structure of Turkish questions is also used to form temporal clauses with the meaning "as soon as"', as in (our) example (70):

(70)

 kadın tarla-ya gid-er git-me-z
 woman field-DAT go-AOR go-not-AOR
 'as soon as the woman went to the field..' [my glosses]

(Turkish)

In fact, Turkish does not use its question-forming strategy to build this type of subordinate clause, as proven by the absence in (70) of the question-forming suffix -mi -- it counter-poses affirmative vs negative so-called Aorists (which lack any person-affix); furthermore, the time-reference of (70) is determined by the tense of the main verb (i.e. under appropriate conditions, it could be future)58.

Having absolutely rejected any account of language-change that utilises the concept of parataxis, Harris and Campbell proceed to present (310-13) a concrete example of how a language with non-finite subordination might have developed a finite strategy, a not uncommon occurrence. The language chosen is North-East Caucasian Udi, and with an observation on this illustration the present Caucasian odyssey will close.

Contrasted with the participial relative structure ('dancing girl' = 'girl who danced') that typifies the whole language-family, as in (our) example (71), is the clausal neologism with relativiser and fully finite dependent verb, witnessed in (our) example (72):

(71)

58I am grateful to my colleagues Dr. Bengisu Rona and Laurent Mignon for analysis of these Turkish examples. A further slip in the presentation of the Georgian data in Harris and Campbell (1995) concerns the extension of the Georgian speech-particle -o, which is discussed on p.307 with reference to two examples. The first of these has the verb 'think' as introductory main verb for a direct quote, whereas the second, cited below, is stated only to imply the presence of such a verb:

 sazedao ktevis pornebı t- en element'i ise xird gvevlineba, [rom superessive version in forms t-en element.NOM so often X.is.manifested.for.us that titkos igia mats'amoebebi-o] as.if that.is formant.NOM-QUOT

(Georgian)

'We encounter the element -en so often in forms of the superessive version that it is as though it were the formant'

What Harris, for she is the author of this particular chapter, overlooks is that the conjunction titkos, which can function here alone (i.e. without the subordinator rom), does itself incorporate what is in origin the 3rd person singular Aorist Subjunctive passive of the basic verbum dicendi of Georgian, whose root is -tk(y)- 'say', such that the speech-particle can in this example at least be made to depend directly on this verbal root.
azak’e xinärax gölö[pi
I.saw girl.DAT dance.PTC
'I saw the dancing girl = girl who danced'
(Udi)

vs

azak’e xinärax mat’in-te gölö[ne-p-i
I.saw girl.DAT who-REL dance 1-3rd.SING-dance 2-PERF
'I saw the girl who danced'
(Udi)

And the 'explanation' proffered for this quite radical shift? Admittedly, the accompanying footnote (Ft. 37 on p. 429) states: 'There is circumstantial evidence that this development of finite relative clauses was influenced by Azeri, Armenian, and/or Georgian, each of them a language unrelated to Udi with which Udi has been in contact for long periods of time. If this is correct, it does not change the fact that the change in Udi required an internal mechanism...It is difficult or impossible to find any change in any language where the possibility of the influence of another language can be categorically excluded'. However, the internal mechanism proposed is simply (?!simplistically) this: as a participle is classifiable as part-adjective/part-verb, the -- presumably any -- language is free to shift from non-finite participial phrase to full clause with finite verb! But what of the formant here glossed as 'relative'? Readers might, I feel, have appreciated being told that -te is the widely used Armenian conjunction (e)h/eh:; whose privileges of occurrence (in Old Armenian) match those of Georgian tu (viz. 'that; if; or'). This borrowing is clearly described in his Udi grammar by Schulze (1982.202) who also points out that this import is widely associated with Udi's native stock of interrogatives to produce a range of new subordinating elements. Yet again, then, we seem to have a clear (hardly circumstantial) case of language-interference, which is surely the really interesting point here.

Before engaging in meaningful speculation about general trends, one surely has to unravel the developments in individual languages. Even this goal is unattainable unless investigations are predicated on accurate presentation of the data. I hope I may at least claim to have satisfied this basic desideratum, however persuasive the interpretation of these data may then be judged to be. Specifically, I have argued: (a) that the presence in Mingrelian of an atypical Kartvelian feature, namely verb- or clause-final marking of subordination (-n(i)/-i/∅ either alone or tautologically

59 I have myself mused (see Hewitt 1987.252) about this as a possible Armenian source for Georgian tu, which, as mentioned above, has no cognate-forms in the sister-languages.
indicating the subordinate status of the clause), could have arisen out of the reinterpretation of native Mingrelian morphological material under influence from neighbouring Abkhaz, where the phenomenon of suffixal marking of subordinate status is entirely characteristic of the North West Caucasian family, to which Abkhaz belongs; (b) that the *irrealis* verb-formant -k’o(n(i)), found only in Mingrelian and Laz within the Kartvelian family, might actually have derived from one of Abkhaz's copular roots, namely -k’w* (argued to derive from *-k’w’a) 'be'; and, tangentially, (c) that parataxis remains a viable explanation for the development of certain types of subordinate structures, despite a recent attempt by Harris and Campbell utterly to reject this assumption, -- some deficiencies in the latters' analyses are pointed out, and the explanatory adequacy of their belief that 'speaker non-assertion' can alone account for why some languages assign subordinate-marking functions to interrogative strategies is questioned.

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60Ap’olon Tsanava was the unnamed co-author of this work (p.c. -- T’ogo Gudava).


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APPENDIX

Georgian examples from the footnotes (as numbered) in the original script

5. მოღა, მოღა და შეცხადე გრძივად მოღალო
6. აქი ურ არის, რომელმაც ლაით შეუცხად
7. აქი, რომელმაც გარდამართა შეუიცხად
8. ბაძგი/ძიგი გრძხლიარი აქ, ურთი ურუცვია
9. მოღა კი შეცხადა იგი, მისმა გამოჰყოფა/გამოგზავნა
10. მიღა/მოჰყოფა მოღა, შეუიცხად დამაკვიდრა
11. თუ წარმოლო, მოღალო ჰყოფადი
12. უკ თუ შეუცხად არ მოჩალა, თქვე მოღა ლაით შეუცხად
13. ჰყოფა, ხახი მოღ(გ) არ ჰყოფიარები იქა
14. ხახალი მოღ(გ) გამოჰყოფა, ტუჩამ უკის იყო
15. ჰყოფა, რომ(გ) ჰყოფადი!
16. მცხოვრო რომ(გ) მაჰამჰამ, ბახამ, რომ(გ) ბუჯ ჩჯაჰო შეიცხად... "ჰყოფა"- h რომ(გ) შეიცხად, თუ არის?
17. მცხოვრო ქირად სელიჰა, გურიალაქა რომ(გ) ჰყოფადი
18. ბახალი მოღალო ფოლო და ბოჭ თუ უცხად, გაჩინა და ჭარბაჰ მაჰმამჰა
19. პიჯი ( = პიჯი) ჰყოფა გრძივად იყო, (რომ(გ)) ჰყოფა თუ მიყენილი თან-თანში ჰყოფა, გრძივადი უკის იყო გალახ
20. ფულთა ფიჯილა მაჰამჰამჰა მოღა არის, უკ უცხად შეიცხად ჰყოფადი
21. მიტო მოღა ქირად უცხად რომ(გ): უკის ბახამ დადგილ
22. რომ(გ) მაჰამჰა ამსთა ჰყოფადი
23. თუ ინიჭო ართა, უკ მიტო
24. აქ უფარამ ართა, უკ ჰყოფადი
25. მცხოვრო ხალია, ბალაჰ, რომ(გ) ბუჯ ჩჯაჰო შეიცხად... "ჰყოფა"- h რომ(გ) შეიცხად, თუ არის?
26. მცხოვრო ქირად სელიჸა, გურიალაქა რომ(გ) ჰყოფადი