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## PREFAZIONE

Il presente libro si configura come una raccolta di saggi di linguistica e filologia iranica, sette in tutto, seguiti da una bibliografia generale, fortemente interconnessi per contenuti e interessi, seppure indipendenti nella loro struttura. È stato progettato dai tre autori, Sara Belelli, Matteo De Chiara e me stessa, come uno spazio di riflessione comune e di collaborazione scientifica nel quale far confluire i risultati di alcune ricerche su cui ognuno di noi sta lavorando indipendentemente, ma che sono stati discussi nei dettagli secondo un'ottica di lavoro di gruppo.

A parte la differenza di età e quindi anche di esperienza accademica che separa noi tre autori, Sara Belelli, Matteo De Chiara ed io condividiamo molti aspetti del nostro percorso formativo. In particolare abbiamo in comune la stessa scuola dottorale presso l'Università di Napoli L'Orientale, sotto la guida di Adriano Rossi, ma anche esperienze di *fieldwork*, per quanto in aree linguistiche diverse (baloci, pashto e kurdo), e un insieme di interessi che trovano riscontro nelle nostre attività di ricerca e pubblicazione. Tra queste, multilinguismo, linguistica areale e fenomeni di contatto linguistico e culturale; cambiamento linguistico come effetto di processi cognitivi; grammaticalizzazione; attenzione alla prospettiva diacronica, da affiancare a quella sincronica; lessicologia e lessicografia; etimologia; sistemi di scrittura e politiche linguistiche; favolistica e letteratura orale. Tutti questi interessi sono presenti in varia forma nei sette capitoli che compongono il presente volume.

La maggior parte dei contributi qui raccolti sono da intendere come lavori preliminari per il Progetto PRIN 2020PLEBK4 *Interazioni culturali e contatti linguistici: lingue iraniche e non iraniche a contatto dall'antichità ad oggi*, da me diretto presso l'Università della Tuscia (2022-2025).

L'obiettivo generale del Progetto è quello di studiare relazioni passate e presenti tra lingue e gruppi umani, fenomeni di contatto e cambiamenti linguistici in alcune aree iranofone, e a questo fine è stata selezionata una gamma di situazioni diverse, tra cui la collocazione geolinguistica del laki "al crocevia" tra kurdo e lori e lo studio della terminologia marinaresca del Golfo persico e dell'Oceano indiano. A queste due linee si riportano i capitoli due e tre (a firma di Sara Belelli), mentre i capitoli uno e sette (a firma di Ela Filippone) presentano numerosi contesti di contatto, linguistico e culturale.

L'interesse comune verso lo studio dei repertori lessicali delle varie lingue è qui rappresentato dai capitoli tre e quattro (a firma rispettivamente di Sara Belelli e Matteo De Chiara); l'attenzione che da anni viene posta dai tre autori allo studio della lingua baloci si concretizza qui nei capitoli tre e sette (a firma, rispettivamente, di Sara Belelli e Ela Filippone). Tutti e tre gli autori, infatti, partecipano da anni al Progetto *Dizionario etimologico-comparativo della lingua baloci*, basato presso l'Università di Napoli L'Orientale, l'Università della Tuscia di Viterbo e l'ISMEO (Roma), ed hanno contribuito nel tempo alla formazione del relativo Archivio, sia lessicale che testuale, a cui si fa più volte riferimento nel corso del volume.

La scelta bilingue con alcuni capitoli in italiano ed altri in inglese è una scelta deliberata, giustificata dal pubblico degli studiosi cui le diverse linee di ricerca sono principalmente rivolte. In particolare, i capitoli quattro e cinque (a firma di Matteo De Chiara) sono preliminari alla pubblicazione di un dizionario pashto-italiano, cui l'autore lavora da tempo, in corso di preparazione presso l'INALCO (Parigi) e l'ISMEO. In italiano è anche il capitolo sei (a firma di Sara Belelli), parte di un progetto italo-kurdo che mira ad una maggiore conoscenza della cultura kurda in Italia.

ELA FILIPPONE



## 1

**Along the Path of a Grammaticalization Process:  
Prs. *šib* and *nešib* ‘Slope’ and Their Cognates  
in the Iranian Languages**

ELA FILIPPONE

*1. Preliminary Remarks*

It is a well-known fact that adverbs and adpositions in the Iranian languages are in most cases the result of a grammaticalization process. Terms from specific semantic domains are generally involved in these processes: (human and animal) body part terms, environmental landmark terms and relational object part terms often happen to lose referentiality and, in case, be used with relational, and, in particular, spatial implications. From this perspective, however, the Iranian languages are not an exception: this kind of phenomena pervade human languages.<sup>1</sup> What is remarkable in the Iranian languages is the extent of the phenomena.<sup>2</sup> I have already treated some of these issues analyzing the description of space in terms of experienced-based schematizations of the speakers’ world in Balochi (Filippone 1996), also emphasizing the fuzzy boundaries between Balochi content and function words (Filippone 1996: 67-83).

A grammaticalization process generally develops over time along an axis in which lexical autonomy is gradually lost and functional properties increase. The process can stop at any point of this axis; the loss of autonomy may therefore be only partial. It is thus easy to verify that cognate

<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive cross-linguistic analysis of the relationship between the way human beings experience space and the way space is encoded grammatically in language see Svorou 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Reference grammars and descriptive analysis of the single languages generally hint at this peculiarity; a thorough analysis of the phenomenon in Iranian as a whole is lacking.



words in nearby languages have had different developments, both in terms of referential and functional aspect. To illustrate this point, an exemplary case is the lexical set to which Prs. *šib* ‘slope, declivity, etc.’ and its Iranian cognates belong (thereafter ŠIB-set), some of which may profile a downward direction and/or indicate location under or below something. The aim of this paper is to analyze the senses and functions that the members of this lexical set have acquired in the different Iranian dialectal areas. Our starting point is Middle Persian from which we can derive the oldest forms of this set.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Middle Persian *šēb* and *nišēb*

The antecedent of Prs. *šib* is Pahlavi *šēb*, glossed as ‘declivity’ in MacKenzie 1986<sup>2</sup>. In fact, ‘declivity’ does not account for all occurrences of this word in the Pahlavi documentation. The situation is similar for *nišēb*, a form derived by prefixation (cf. *ni-* ‘down’), glossed ‘declivity’ and also ‘dejection’ as an astrological term in MacKenzie 1986<sup>2</sup>. In this latter technical sense, *nišēb* is almost always found in collocation with *bālist* ‘exaltation,’ with which it forms a polar opposition.<sup>4</sup> In fact, occurrences of *nišēb* with a clear reference to a well-defined, actual shape of the earth’s surface (i.e., sloping ground) amount to a couple or a little more. In these cases, *abrāz* ‘acclivity’ is its conceptual opposite; with this word *nišēb* may be associated to form a copulative compound to refer to the overall concept of ‘uneven place.’

(1)	(GrBd 1a.9) <i>az āb zamīg dād gerd ud dūr-widarag ud abē-nišēb an-abrāz</i> (Pakzad 2005: 28)	“He created the earth from the water, round, with far paths, neither depressions nor elevations” <sup>5</sup>
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<sup>3</sup> Abbreviations used: (languages) AfghPrs. = Persian of Afghanistan; (W, S, E) Bal. = (Western, Southern, Eastern) Balochi; Ir. = Iranian; Krd. = Kurdish, MMPrs. = Manichaean Middle Persian, MPrs. = Middle Persian, Phl. = Pahlavi, NPrs. = New Persian, Prs. = Persian, Pšt. = Pašto, Skt. = Sanskrit, Xor. = Xorāsāni.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. (Gr.) *Bundahišn* 5a.9 (*bālist u nišēb* “exaltation and dejection”), 5b.16-17, 6f.6; *Wizīdagihā-ye Zādspram* 2.22.

<sup>5</sup> See also GrBd 34.33, where this same condition is said to be expected in the future time of resurrection (*ēn zamīg an-aḫsār ud a-nišēb ud hāmōn bē bawēd* “This earth will be uncrowned, without depression, flat”).

(2)	(Dk 8.39.20) <i>ka pad abrāz ud nišēb ānōh kū az rāh bē wardēd ud zamīg saxt [...]</i>	“When there is uneven ground there where (it/he) turns out from the road and the ground is hard [...]”
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In most of its occurrences, *nišēb* is used in the metaphorical (abstract) sense of ‘decline,’ and is found in collocation with different types of referents (time, action, soul, fortune, Mazdean religion, etc.), also in this case generally with *abrāz* ‘ascent (in metaphorical sense)’ as its opposed element.

A different usage of *nišēb* is found in the *Dēnkard* 6. There the concern is to explain why “people should make themselves not mountain-tops, but cavities.” The reason given is the following:

(3)	(Dk 6.35b) <i>gabr harw āb ī abar wārēd pad-eš ēstēd ud ān-iz ī pad čagād wārēd nišēb awiš bawēd</i> (Shaked 1979: 204)	“In the cavity all the rain that falls upon it is preserved, and furthermore, that which falls on the mountain top comes down towards it” <sup>6</sup>
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As pointed out by Shaked (1979: 204 footnote E35b 2), ms B has <šyyp>. It follows that *šēb awiš bawēd* could also be considered as an acceptable phrase and that *šēb* and *nišēb* could be used in such kind of context with the same function, a function that points to the first steps of a grammaticalization path, via a process of *conversion*, i.e., change in word class. In fact, Phl. *šēb/nišēb būdan* seems to be used exactly in the same way as Prs. *sarāzir šodan* ‘to descend, to come down, etc.’ (Najafi 1999).<sup>7</sup>

The sure occurrences of Phl. *šēb* in the sense of ‘declivity’ are even less than those of *nišēb*. I was only able to trace a couple of passages, among which one from the *Andarz ī Anōšag-Ruwān Ādurbād Mahrspandān*, where the focus is on the alternation of fortune in life, with its ups and downs. Here a more abstract ‘decline’ is meant rather than a descending slope in the terrain, similar to what often happens with *nišēb*, and again in association with the opposite concept of ‘ascending’:<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Shaked 1979: 205 translates “[...] that which falls on the mountain top comes to it (by) a slope.” See also *nišēb* glossed ‘slope, depression’ in Shaked 1979: 349 (*Glossary*).

<sup>7</sup> For the several idioms containing outcomes and cognates of MPrs. *šēb* and *nišēb* corresponding to *šēb/nišēb būdan* see below.

<sup>8</sup> See also Dd 36.23 *abrāz ud šēb* “the ascending and descending” (Jaafari-Dehaghi 1998: 118-119).

(4)	(AARĀM 149) <i>ud ēč abrāz nēst kē šēb nē az pēš ud ēč šēb nēst kē abrāz nē az pas</i> (“Oryān 1992: 282)	“and there is no ascent that has not been preceded by a descent and no descent that is not followed by an ascent”
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Elsewhere *šēb* rather means ‘flow, stream.’ It evokes the way of moving of a liquid, and the natural tendency of liquids is moving in a stream, always looking for the road that heads down.

Consider the following passage from the *Zand ī fragard ī jud-dēw-dād*, where instructions are given about the pit in the terrain in which hair or nails should be placed after cutting in order to prevent contamination:

(5)	(ZFJ 35.1) <i>u-š hušk ō ī hušk padiš andar hambārišn u-š āb šēb aziš bē gīrišn [...] u-š huškān ī huškīh padiš andar abganišn u-š āb šēb aziš bē kunišn</i>	“and fill it with the driest of dry (things) and the water flow should be kept away from it [...] And throw in it the driest of dry (things), and the water flow should be kept away from it” (Moazami 2021: 290-291) <sup>9</sup>
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A similar usage is found in a passage from Dk 9, where an insatiate man with a full stomach is compared to a gallows: it is described (Dk 9.13.4) *čiyōn dār-ēw kē šēb ī harw rēmanīh awiš* “just like a gallows towards which every impurity flows.”<sup>10</sup>

Flowing water is also evoked in a passage from *Dādestān ī dēnīg* where the property in the inheritance (*xwāstag pad xwāstag-dārīh*) is said to be able to arrive above (*azabar*) and below (*azēr*). And this because inheritance is (Dd 61.2) *čiyōn āb ka pad jōy pad šēb*<sup>11</sup> *šawēd* (“just like water when it goes downhill in a stream”),<sup>12</sup> that, however, if its natural course

<sup>9</sup> In the *Lexicon* of this work (Moazami 2021: 425), however, *šēb* is simply glossed ‘downward.’

<sup>10</sup> I.e., “(there is) the flow of every impurity.” Cf. West 1892: 196 (“just like a gallows to which there is a foundation (šīpō) of every impurity”); Sanjana 1922/2: 25 (“just like a gibbet on which (appears) hanging every impurity”), with a comparison of our *šēb* with Prs. *šasp* ‘leaping, jumping’).

<sup>11</sup> Anklesaria 1958: 122 has in fact <\*nšyp>, as suggested by Henning (fn. to line 9).

<sup>12</sup> In fact, West’s translation (“just like water when it goes in a stream on a declivity,” 1882: 194 [62.2]), could also fit the context.

is blocked at the bottom by a barrier, is compelled to change the direction of his flowing and never comes back.<sup>13</sup>

Among the rules conditioning the daily life of the Zoroastrians there are those concerning how to urinate. The fundamental principle in preventing the body and ground pollution is not urinating standing. When necessary, one is expected to dig a pit in the ground, recite the appropriate prayer, squat over the pit and release the flow of urine avoiding the shedding of drops. The more general dispositions on this procedure are contained in many Phl. texts; detailed indications on how to perform the action correctly and according to the law are transmitted by (sometimes obscure) passages of the Phl. Vendidad (PVd 18.40-44) and *Zand ī fragard ī jud-dēw-dād* (ZFJ 36.5-9). In this latter text one reads in particular that it should not be considered as a sin if the drops of urine (ZFJ 36.6) *pad šēb frōd šawēd*. Since the reference to the downwards direction is already conveyed by the phrasal verb *frōd šaw-* ‘to go down,’ one could assume that with *pad šēb* a modality of movement is referred instead (flowing in or as if in a stream). Thence one could intend that it is not a sin if urine “goes down in a stream,” avoiding in this way scattering fine drops all around.<sup>14</sup> This is a hypothesis, though.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. Phl. *šēb* and Possible Etymological Links

Seemingly, the different senses that can be attributed to Phl. *šēb* and *nīšēb* in § 2 could be interpreted as semantic extensions developed from the notion of (a special kind of) movement, in most cases movement of liquid, movement downwards along an inclined plane, or uncontrolled and rush movement. This fact would favour the detection of an etymological

<sup>13</sup> Anklesaria 1958: 122 (and fn. 8) accepts Henning's suggestion to amend in *pad frāz* an otherwise inexplicable sequence of signs (<PWN pwy'c'>) preceding *abāz šawēd* ‘goes back.’ However, this reading could only be supported if one neglects the senses generally conveyed by Phl. *frāz* (‘forth, forwards,’ with *abāz* ‘back’ as its usual conceptual opposite), and take into account instead those of Prs. *farāz* (‘above; up; summit’). In this very context, due to an (occasional) interference from Persian, *pad šēb* (‘downhill’) would oppose *pad frāz* (‘uphill’). This is a mere hypothesis, that however may find a support from the occurrence of *azabar* and *azēr* in the initial part of the sentence.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ZFJ 36.6, where the one who *was srešk bē paššinjēd* (‘sprinkles several drops’) when urinating is considered as a sinner.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Moazami 2021: 305 (‘If urine is running downward’).

link between Phl. *šēb* and *nišēb* and the Phl. verb *šēb-* ‘move quickly, be confused,’ with its verbal nominals *šēbišn* ‘confusion’ (MacKenzie 1986<sup>2</sup>) and *šēbišnīg* ‘confusing,’<sup>16</sup> also attested in the MPrs. documentation.<sup>17</sup> A good instance is the following passage from the *Bundahišn*:<sup>18</sup>

(6)	(GrBd 21c.7) <i>xar ī se pāy ī andar zrēh ī Frāxkard frāz jumbēd hamāg āb ī zrēh pad šēbišn šēbēd ud āb be ō kustān ī zrēh abganēd</i> (Pakzad 2005: 247)	“(when) the three-legged donkey moves in the Frāxkard Sea, all the water of the sea is stirring roughly and the water crashes against the shores of the sea” <sup>19</sup>
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The connection between Phl. *šēb* ‘slope, etc.’ and *šēb-* ‘to move quickly, etc.’ has generally been neglected or expressly denied by scholars. It has been denied, for instance, by Belardi (1979: 37-38), who considers “BP *šēp* (and *nišēp*) ‘declivity’ as ‘a quite different word’ with respect to ‘BP *šēpišn* [...] *šēp-* ‘to move quickly [...]’.” According to him, “[t]his <sup>2</sup>*šēp* matches with NAv *xšuaēpā-* ‘Hinterer, Hinterteil’ [...]. Cf. NPrs *štb* ‘a descent, the lower part, anus,’ *štv* ‘a declivity, base, foundation’.” It would follow that any etymological links between Av. *xšuaēpā-* and MPrs. *šēbišn* on the one hand and Av. *xšuaēpā-* and Av. *xšuaēβa-* and Skt. *kṣip* on the other that may have been suggested previously by some scholars (see there for bibliographical references) should be rejected.<sup>20</sup> In this regard, however, it is important to note that Av. *xšuaēpā-* is the root posited by Bartholomae (1904: 560) to explain the form *xšuaēpaiia* (as a locative singular) occur-

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Rivāyat ī Ēmēd ī Ašawahištān* 40.16 *ēn saxwan ī šēbišnīg* “this is a confusing statement” (Safa-Isfehāni 1980: 271-272).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. MPrs. *šyb-* /*šēb/* ‘to move quickly, be confused, (water) to be stirred up,’ *šybyšn* /*šēbišn/* ‘confusion, trembling;’ *šybyšngr* /*šēbišngr/* (demon/disease causing trembling) ‘shaker’ (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, with references).

<sup>18</sup> One may note that *abrāz* is also used as a verbal root (though with a transitive sense); cf. GrBd 21c.9 *ōwōn cīyōn wād gerdag ka xāk gard ō andarwāy abrāzēd* “Just like a whirlwind when it lifts dirt and dust into the atmosphere;” Dk 3.283 *nazdikān abrōzēnd ud abrāzēnd* “they illuminate and elevate (their) relatives;” and several other occurrences, mainly in the causative form (*abrāzēn-*). As for the sequence formerly read *nišēbēnd* “they deviate” in the *Wīzārišn ī Čatrang* 30, also referred to (as *nišēpēnd*) by Belardi 1979: 38, it has been read more recently in a different way (cf. Panaino 1999: 75).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. also Agostini, Thrope 2020: 107 (“As it says, the three-legged donkey, when it moves in the Frāxkard Sea, causes the water to gush and splash and to crash against the shores of the sea”).

<sup>20</sup> See also Eilers 1988a/I: 369 as far as “Np. *šēb* ,Unteres, Unterteil, Hinterer‘ nebst *šēv*, *nišēb/v* und ihren mundartlichen Varianten” are concerned.

ring as a hapax in Yašt 19,40e and that the proposed sense of ‘Hinterer, Hinterteil’ seemingly only rests on that of ‘anus,’ vehiculated by traditional dictionaries (among others, by Steingass) for Prs. *šib*.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the sense of the whole Av. line still remains very debatable, as also admitted by Hintze 1994: 217 (“da sonst keine sinnvolle Analyse möglich ist”), who in any case suggests translating *xšuaēpaiia* as “am Schwanz.”<sup>22</sup>

MPrs. *šēb*- ‘move quickly’ is quoted in Cheung 2007: 459 s.v. *\*xšuaip/b* ‘to vibrate, tremble, shake,’ an Ir. root referred to a very dubious IE root *?(k)sueip-* ‘to swing, shake, whip’ (Rix 2001: 373). According to Cheung, “[d]espite the obvious, formal similarities, the semantic differences displayed by the Iranian forms” would lead to a separation of *\*xšuaip/b* from *\*xšaip/b* ‘to throw, hurl’ (connected to Skt. *kṣep-*, Mayrhofer 1992: 437, 811), with the postulation of two distinct Ir. roots. The existence of these alleged roots, with a possible contamination between them, has been envisaged by other scholars, as well. Among others, I mention Kellens (1977), Panaino (1990: 96), Yakubovich (2002: 545), Korn (2005: 113 fn. 201). Korn is the only one who takes into account in this context MPrs./NPrs. *šēb*, Bal. *šēp* ‘declivity,’ asserting that these words may be related directly to the ‘throw’-line only. I do not intend to enter here into the question of the etymology of Phl. *šēb*- ‘to move quickly’ and cognates, since it is not central to the main issue of this paper. For the time being, I only limit myself to emphasize that from the semantic point of view the notion of ‘throw’ cannot account for the actual senses of MPrs. *šēb* ‘slope,’ at least no more than it does for the senses of words that scholars attribute with certainty to the ‘move quickly’-line, and that Kellens’ statement about

<sup>21</sup> So recorded in the *Borhān-e Qāte‘* (‘*kun*,’ = Arabic *dobor*). Consider, however, that this sense should be understood as an expected conceptual development from ‘lower part,’ and not from ‘posterior part,’ never mentioned among the several senses attributed to Prs. *šib* in traditional dictionaries.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Tail’ also in Humbach, Ichaporia 1998: 118. For Hintze, who supports the traditional etymological association with Skt. *kṣip-*, “[d]ie semantische Entwicklung könnte von ‚Schwungteil‘ [...] zu ‚Schwanz‘ und ‚Peitsche‘ sich gespalten und von ‚Schwanz‘ wiederum zu ‚Hinterteil‘ sich entwickelt haben” (1994: 217 fn.132). Also in consideration of the presence in the same Av. line of *barəzan-* (in the very much discussed compound *\*vanaiia.barəšna*, see Hintze 1994: 217-218), I tentatively put forward the idea of considering the possibility of some kind of locative reference in Yašt 19,40e which takes into account the two categories in a polar contrast ‘lowness’ vs. ‘height,’ as we find in Pahlavi (*šēb / nišēb* vs. *afrāz; nišēb* vs. *bālist*, see above, § 2) and in Persian (*šib* vs. *ferāz / bālā*, see below § 4). For a different position (*barəšna* as belonging to *barəšnu-* ‘back’) see Humbach, Ichaporia 1998: 118.

the “onomatopoeic character” (1977: 200) of such kind of roots will deserve the most attention, in my opinion, in future deepening of the origin and motivation of the Ir. lexical forms under discussion here.

Phl. *šēb-* ‘to move quickly, to be confused,’ an instance of how changes of mental and physical states may be conceptualized in terms of movement, that would cause an alteration of the previous state (in human beings involving psychological, physiological, behavioural or cognitive aspects), continues in Persian and other Iranian languages. In Western Iranian, outcomes are found in particular in different varieties of (mainly Central and Southern) Kurdish and in the Lori area. Cf. Prs. *šibidan*<sup>23</sup> (transitive and intransitive) ‘to be mixed, to mix; be disturbed, agitated; to shake, to tremble; to become enamoured;’ Sorani Krd. *šêwan* ‘être trouble (un liquide), être brouillé; (fig.) être perturbé ou troublé (qqn), être troublé (une situation)’ (Nezan 2017); (Sulemanie) *shêw/an* ‘to be confused, to be disorganized’ (Wahby, Edmonds 1966); Kermānšāhi Krd. *šivāndan* ‘to disturb; to mix together [beham zadan, beham rixtan];’ *šivida* ‘confused; distressed’ (Darvišiān 1996); Gorāni (Awromāni) *šewiāy, šewia-* ‘to be confused’ (MacKenzie 1966), (Gawraĵui) *šiwēniya* ‘to mix together, to confuse [darham kardan]’ (Aliyāri Bābolqāni 2017); Lori (Boyerahmadi) *šīv-, šīvēsan* ‘to clash, to be disturbed [beham xordan], to go bad (of eggs)’ (Taheri 2016); (Sagvand) *šivnie* ‘to mix together, to confuse [darham zadan]’ (Aliyāri Bābolqāni 2017); Baxtiāri *šivesten* (Madadi), (Kuhrang) *šīv-, šīvēsan* (Tāheri 2010) ‘to be disturbed, to nauseate;’ Šuštari *šīvinīda* ‘disturbed, chaotic; scattered;’ *šīpalu* ‘mixed up, not in order’ (Nirumand 1976); Lakki *šeivonen* ‘to get detached, severed; entangled, confused, mixed up, chaotic, disturbed, dishevelled etc.; to fall down, to be scattered, to go to pieces [foru rixtan va az ham pāšidan]’ (Kiāni Kulivand 2011, s.v. *bešuwowe*); (Harsin) *šiptāy* ‘splash, splat’ (Belelli 2021), etc.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> This is not a common word in contemporary standard Persian. See also the connected forms *šifān* ‘to enamour, enfatuate,’ *āšoftan* ‘to be disturbed; to disturb; to get angry; to make chaotic.’

<sup>24</sup> From the Eastern Iranian perspective, one may tentatively add here Khotanese *ksāv-*, ‘to throw’ according to Emmerick 1968: 25, ‘to toss’ according to Bailey (1979: 68; in fact, for none of the instances quoted in Bailey, where hairs or other things blowing in the wind or fire scattered around by the wind are referred to, *ksāv-* may properly be rendered by English *throw*); Šuḡni *xēb-*, Rošāni *xīv-*, etc. ‘to thrash, pound, mince’ (Morgenstierne 1974); Waxi *šəip-* ‘to hit, pound, thrash’ (Steblin-Kamenskij 1999) (all assigned to the \**xšaip/b-* ‘throw’ root in Cheung 2007).

To MPrs. *šēb-* ‘move quickly’ one may easily associate nouns and nominal derivatives designating the path of a movement (cf. Man.Prth. *šēbah* ‘path’)<sup>25</sup> or evoking a specific mode of movement, that may be quick, sinuous, wriggling, darting etc., as also underlined by Kellens 1977: 198, for whom the Av. root  $\sqrt{xšuuip}$  “only applies to things with a brief quick, repeated movement - the vibration of a flexible rod, arrow or whip, the wriggling of the snake or of the tongue, the quivering of nervous horses.” Apart from Av. *xšuaaēβa-* ‘sparkling, scintillating, wriggling’ and related forms gathered in Kellens 1977, one may consider here Phl. *šēbāg* ‘swift, nimble; viper’ (MacKenzie 1986)<sup>26</sup> and ‘whip’,<sup>27</sup> the compounds *šēbāg-tigr* ‘of the swift arrow,’ used as an epithet of the legendary archer Ēraš (Prs. Āraš) in *Māh ī Frawardīn Rōz ī Xurdād* 22 (Gheybi 2017: 97 fn. 8); *šēbāg-uzwān* ‘with eloquent tongue,’ describing one of the conditions that makes the ritual valid in Dd 47.38; Man.Sogdian *xwšyp* ‘whip’ attested in a Middle Persian-Sogdian Glossary (twice in Fragment b 17, 18; Henning 1940: 21, 23), and numerous outcomes in modern languages continuing the different semantic developments. Consider the following data (without claiming to be complete):

Prs. *šib* ‘the whizzing of an arrow; the end of a whip-lash; a whip;’ Sorani Krd. *šip* ‘thong, strand of plait’ (Wahby, Edmonds 1966); Kurmanji Krd. *šip* ‘vitesse, promptitude’ (Nezan 2017); Ir.Āzari *šip* ‘an instrument similar to a whip used to make turn the *fārna*<sup>28</sup>’ (Sabz ‘Alipur 2012<sup>2</sup>: 87); *šiv* ‘twig, tender offshoot used to carry out the agricultural operation called *puša ekarden*’ (Sabz ‘Alipur 2012<sup>2</sup>: 93); Bandar-e Xamir (Hormozgān) *šipāk* ‘a straight and thin stick for punishment’ (Qatāli 2009), etc., Waxi *rāšip* and other EIr. cognates for ‘whip’ quoted in Steblin-Kamenskij 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *šybh* in Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, with references. Korn (2005: 113 fn. 201) mentions a suggestion by Durkin-Meisterernst, according to whom Prth. *šēbah* could have derived by haplology by the OIr. compound *\*šaiapa-paθa-* ‘steep path’ > *\*šaiapaθa-*. At the moment there are no elements to confirm or reject this hypothesis.

<sup>26</sup> The viper is specifically mentioned in Dk 3 22.1 (*šēbāg*); AWN 28.2, 50.1; ZFJ 35.6; Supp.ŠnŠ 17.7 (*mār ī šēbāg*); ZFJ 36.15 (*az ī šēbāg*), PVd 18.65B (*az ī šēbāg*, with the gloss: *ast kē mār ī šēbāg gōwēd* “there is who says *mār ī šēbāg*”).

<sup>27</sup> It is not certain that this particular sense has actually been recorded in Pahlavi. Cf. the complex verb *šēb kardan* ‘to whip’ that should be read in AWN 50.1 according to Gignoux 1984: 96-97 (with fn. 2), 189 (*ud šēb* [*<W šyp>*] *hamē kard* “le fouettaient sans cesse,” with the annotation “Cf. pers. mod. *šib* pente, déclivité”) but not according to Vahman 1986: 142-143, 207 (*nihēb* [*<nyhyp*] *hamē kard* “were frightening <him>”). The ambiguity of the Pahlavi script may be responsible for such kind of alternatives in reading.

<sup>28</sup> *fārna* is the Ir. Āzari name of a kind of spinning top.

Prs. *šivā*, *šibā* ‘viper;’ Gilaki *šip* ‘a type of snake of the Caspian Sea’ (Sartippur 1990); Bandar-e Xamir (Hormozgān) *šīb-mār* ‘a type of thin sea snake, yellow in color and not poisonous’ (Qatāli 2009); Kumzari *šēw* ‘type of snake; very thin person’ (Wal Anonby 2015: 357); Bal. *šēp-mār* ‘a kind of serpent’ (Sayyad Hāšmi 2000), *šeyp* ‘a small fast running snake that resembles a garter snake’ (Dašti 2019); etc.

Prs. *šivā* ‘charming, eloquent, versatile, fluent;’ *šivā-zabān* ‘sweetly-spoken, eloquent.’

Remarkable is the development of the semantic line having its oldest attestation in MP<sub>rth</sub>. *šēbah* ‘path.’ Here belongs Prs. *šive* meaning in general ‘(a particular) way or method; a manner (of living or acting),’<sup>29</sup> with the specialized senses recorded by dictionaries fitting different aspects of human experiences, such as ‘custom, habit; demeanour; the graceful movement of a lovely girl; an air of elegance; trade, profession; coquetry, grace; trick; a particular way of speaking, idiom, local pronunciation, etc.’ Cognates to Prs. *šive*, with (some of) these senses, are largely found in languages and dialects spoken in the whole Iranian plateau (Kurdish area, Central Plateau dialects; North Iran dialects; Fārs and Lārestān dialects, Xorāsāni, Eastern varieties of Persian, etc. etc.).<sup>30</sup>

In what follows I will only dwell upon those items more directly related to MP<sub>r</sub>s. *šēb* ‘declivity, decline; flow; downwards,’ to which for mere convenience I have referred above as the ŠIB-set.

#### 4. The ŠIB-set in Persian<sup>31</sup>

In contemporary standard Persian, *šib* is normally used in the sense of ‘declivity, slope, incline; decline’ and also as a technical term for ‘gradient,

<sup>29</sup> In this sense, Prs. *šive* is a synonym of *raveš*, *rāh-o-raveš*, *tariqe*, etc., as a further confirmation that for a semantic change, natural and motivated regularities could be expected.

<sup>30</sup> See also Pšt. *ševá* ‘matter, deed; habits, manners; coquetry, flirting’ (Pashtoon 2009).

<sup>31</sup> For the sake of convenience, in this paper the transcription of Persian (tendentially phonemic) is based on the modern pronunciation, regardless of the date of the quoted source. For all the other Iranian languages, I have mostly conformed with the systems used by the individual authors of the written sources from which any single expression has been extrapolated, with minor interventions. In source references, the page number is not given when the work is (or contains a section which is) alphabetically ordered. The glosses defining Iranian words drawn from dictionaries whose exit language is Persian or Russian have been translated into English;

grade; rate of descent;<sup>32</sup> *nešib* is used as ‘declivity, descent, slope; decline,’ being in some contexts a synonym of *šib*. Dictionaries, however, attribute much more senses and functions to Prs. *šib* than those just mentioned, sometimes qualifying them as ‘rare’ or ‘ancient.’<sup>33</sup> A few of these senses and functions are recorded in Classical Persian literature or in old manuscripts containing texts of different nature and content; probably, some of them should be attributed to distinct Persian dialectal areas. Evidence of this is the form *šiv* as a variant of *šib*, quoted in many traditional dictionaries. An accurate analysis, therefore, should also take account of diachronic and diatopic factors that, however, are not always easy to recognize in the old written tradition.

Prs. *šib* is normally recorded as a designation of specific elements of the natural environment and ground shapes:<sup>34</sup> ‘(mountain/hill) slope, declivity; valley; uneven ground; wet ground made uneven and rugged by the trampling of men, and afterwards hardened by the influence of the sun.’ According to Wolff 1965, in the *Šāhnāme* one finds *šēb* as ‘das tiefer Gelegene, Niederung,’ *šēv* as ‘Abhang, Tal,’ and *nišēb* as ‘Abstieg, abwärts, Senkung (oft. Sva. Unglück).’

In lexical composition, *šib* occurs in *ābšib* ‘channel for water flowing from high grounds’ but also ‘water running in this channel;’ *pāšib* ‘declivity (of a mountain); staircase;’ *sarāšib* ‘slope, declivity; steep, declivitous’ and its derivative *sarāšibi* ‘slope, steepness, incline.’

Prs. *šib* (and also *nešib*) often occurs in close collocation with *farāz* (*afrāz*) or *bālā* ‘up, upwards,’ or even in copulative compounds, very frequently used in classical poetry: *(ne)šib-o-farāz* ‘descent and ascent; up and down, the ups and down of life; profit and loss; the advantages and disadvantages of any affair;’ *šib-o-bālā* ‘heaven and earth; giving and taking; truth and falsehood; hot and cold;’ other pairs of opposites may be added to this list, generally with a positive and a negative pole, and

the original gloss (in transcription) is added into square brackets when considered useful to avoid misunderstanding.

<sup>32</sup> Consider also the approval by the Terminology Department of the Farhangestān (FVM 2005: 130) of the usage of *šib* as the equivalent of the English technical term *dip* (in the sense of ‘the angle that a stratum or similar geologic feature makes with a horizontal plane’).

<sup>33</sup> See for instance Anvari 2002 and Haim 1992.

<sup>34</sup> For the usage of Prs. *šib* and other members of the *šib*-set as (a component of) toponyms see Eilers 1988a/I: 303-304.

with *šib* or *nešib* always marking the negative one. The well-known UP/DOWN spatial orientational metaphor, based on human physical and cultural experience and coherent within the overall system, is generally coherent in the fact that in most cases (though not always) GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN.<sup>35</sup>

Since from the orientation point of view *šib* designate an inclination seen from the top (= *sarpāyin*, *sarāzir*), as opposed to an inclination seen from the bottom (= *sarbālā*), semantic extensions based on conceptual relations (metonymy) produced designations for the lower part of objects that in mental schematization may be perceived as structured along the vertical axis (cf. ‘valley’ with respect to a hill), or designations for the lower surface of objects (‘lower part, ground-floor; bottom’).<sup>36</sup> At this stage *šib* may appropriately describe spatial relationships, in particular the directionality of a movement specified on a vertical axis (downward; = *pāyin*, *forud*)<sup>37</sup> and/or a location under or below something.

Old written attestations of *šib* (or *šiv*) confirm this lexical to grammatical change. Evidence comes for instance from the Persian version by Bal‘ami of the *Tārix-e Tabari* (4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> c.), as exemplified by the following sentences that I quote from Dehxodā, s.v. *šib*:

(7)	<i>ān jovāl šib-e sar nehād va bexoft</i>	“he put that sack under his head and fell asleep”
(8)	<i>bar zamin šib-e pā-ye u čašme-ye āb padid āmad</i>	“on the ground under his feet a spring of water sprouted”

According to Lazard (1963: 41), the many extant manuscripts of the *Tārix-e Tabari*, however ancient, are “les héritiers d’une suite déjà longue de copies:” having had a great diffusion all over the Iranian plateau, “le texte a dû être tôt nivelé par les reproductions successives.” For this reason it presents substantially “des traits communs à l’ensemble des parlers persans, dans leur usage écrit, vers le Ve/XIe siècle.” That *šib* used as an ad-

<sup>35</sup> Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 14-21.

<sup>36</sup> Thence ‘the anus’ (see above fn. 20). These senses, recorded by traditional dictionaries, cannot be attribute to *šib* in contemporary standard Persian.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *šib āmadan* ‘to come down [be zir āmadan, pāyin āmadan, forud āmadan]’ (Dehxodā).

position (‘under’) should be considered as a ‘common trait’ in Persian could be questioned, though.<sup>38</sup>

The adverbial use of *šib* in classical poetry is exemplified by the following hemistich by Rumi (quoted from Dehxodā s.v. *šib*):

(9)	<i>jomlegān az bāmhā šib āmadand</i>	“All came down from the roofs”
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Occurrences of *šiv* with locative implications are also found in the Persian Harmony (Diatessaron) edited for the first time by Messina (1951). For his edition Messina used the Laurentian MS XVII, a MS held in the Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana in Florence, together with a second one (copy of the former), that at the time were considered the only two extant MSS of this work. Consider:

(10)	[Diat. II 29 (L 9,37 <sup>a</sup> )] <i>čun az kuh be šiv āmad</i>	‘Quando scese dal monte’ (Messina 1951: 136-137)
(11)	[Diat. III 32 (L 19,6)] <i>u be šetāb az deraxt be šiv āmad</i>	‘Egli scese in fretta dall’albero’ (Messina 1951: 232-233)

Messina (1951: 137 n. 1) comments on this particular use of *šiv* as follows: “ ‘venne giù’: *bišiv* non appare nei lessici nel significato di ‘giù.’ Esso è un composto di *bi* e *šiv* ‘discesa,’ quindi ‘in discesa, giù’ [...]. Uguale termine si trova anche in Luca 19,6 (M 3,32). Generalmente il traduttore per ‘giù’ usa *bizir*.” In fact, one may note that elsewhere in the same MS in a similar context *be zir* occurs:

(12)	[Diat. I 65 (M 8,1)] <i>čun az kuh be zir āmad</i>	“Quando scese dal monte” (Messina 1951: 84-85)
(13)	[Diat. II 28 (S [= Mark] 9,9)] <i>čun az kuh be zir āmad</i>	“Quando scese dal monte” (Messina 1951: 136-137)

Furthermore, in the same text one may find *šive* used both as a noun (‘slope’) and as an adposition (‘under’):

<sup>38</sup> See also Eilers 1988a/I: 303 (“Auch im Neupersischen ist در شیب, am Abhang ‘ nichts Ungewöhnliches [...]. Die Mundarten verwenden شیب geradezu als Adverb oder Präposition ,unten, unter‘ ”).

(14)	[Diat. III 37 (L 19,37)] <i>čun az kuh-e zeytun sar šive āmad</i>	“E quando venne dal Monte degli Ulivi in capo alla discesa” <sup>39</sup> (Messina 1951: 246-247)
(15)	[Diat. IV 9 (L 14,10)] <i>čun xānde šavi šive-ye hamaginān benešin tā čun biyāyad ānke tarā xānde bāšad beguyad: ey dust bālātar benešin</i>	“quando sarai chiamato siedti sotto a tutti, affinché quando venga colui che ti ha chiamato, dica: O amico, siedti più alto!” (Messina 1951: 292-293)

Evidently, Messina considered the form *šive* in (14) as unusual in Persian and therefore felt the need to dwell on it as well: “Il testo ha *šīva*, mentre il termine per indicare ‘discesa’ è piuttosto *šīv* o *šīb* e anche *nišīv* e *nišīb* (quest’ultima forma si trova in W[alton 1657] nel nostro passo); *šīva* ricorre anche in Lc 14,10 dove viene usata come preposizione nel significato di ‘sotto,’ cf. Lc IV 9; mentre in tale accezione in altri passi di Lc si ha *bišīv*” (1951: 247 fn. 2).

Very recently, another witness to the text of the Persian Harmony has been brought to light in the form of a MS held at the National Library of Iran in Tehran and edited by Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018. As the editors also remark (2018: x), “there are some consistent differences of spelling and phrasing, a fact which suggests that in the case of at least one set of MSS an editing process has taken place.”<sup>40</sup> In fact, the Tehran MS tends in most cases to fall more in line with the modern language as far as spelling, usage of adpositions and lexical selection are concerned (2018: 10-11). Very interestingly, in the Tehran MS one finds *be zir* instead of both *sar šive* in (14)<sup>41</sup> and *be šiv* in (10) and (11);<sup>42</sup> in (15) the two MSS coincide (both have *šive-ye hameginān*).<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> I.e., at the descent of the mountain.

<sup>40</sup> The most common divergences have been grouped in a Table by the editors of the Tehran MS (2018: ۱۳-۱۴) [text in Persian].

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018: 172.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018: 243, 278.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018: 344. For a different treatment of Luke 14,10, see *zirtar az hame benešin* in Walton 1657: 336. Notably, Walton 1657 contains the Prs. translation of the four separate Gospels held in the Bodleian library in Oxford, MS Pococke 241, translation that presents so many concordances with the text of the Prs. Harmony as to suggest a provenance of both from a common source (Messina 1951: lxxxvii-xcii; see also Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018: viii, ۹-۱۰).

The question we can ask at this point is the following: do we have any element to recognize *šiv* / *šive* in the Persian Harmony as a dialectal trait? The answer is difficult because little is known about the compositional history of this work and of the subsequent editing process of the different sets of MSS. In any case, the Tehran MS has been copied more than a century after the Florence one,<sup>44</sup> and this fact would justify interventions of modernization and perhaps also of language ‘normalization’ (in the sense of adaptation to the current style, with possible elimination of elements considered ‘peripheral’ or ‘unusual’), although we do not really know at what stage these interventions were made. We know very little about the author, as well,<sup>45</sup> and there are no elements that permit to define with certainty the actual time of compilation/translation: on the basis of historical facts hinted at in the Harmonia, this could be dated to no earlier than 1223 and not after the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century according to Messina (1951: xix-xx); on the basis of certain archaic features of the language it would predate Safavid times according to Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani (2018).

We are informed directly from the author that after leaving Tabriz he went to Māzandarān and later to Khorāsān, settling in particular in Herat, Tus, and Nišāpur, where Christian communities lived and where he would have left four copies of his translation. Māzandarān and Khorāsān are therefore to be envisaged as the geographical background of his literary activities. As hypothesized by Messina (1951: xxvi), for his translation the author could have used already existing Persian versions of separate Gospels. If this were true, the language of the Prs. Diatessaron could not represent a uniform dialectal milieu. From this perspective, it is remarkable that *šiv* / *šive* with locative implications are only found in passages from the Gospel of Luke. In any case, the Khorasanian background might be a plausible justification for such a usage.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The Florence MS was copied in 1547 by a certain Ibrahim ben Šamās, a Jacobite priest; the Tehran MS was copied at the end of 1699 by a certain Khusraw, son of Bahrām (Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani 2018: viii).

<sup>45</sup> He was an Armenian named Yahyā Ibn Ayvaz-e Tabrīzī-ye Armanī according to Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani (2018), who have challenged the hypothesis advanced by Messina that he was one named Ivānnis Izz al-Din from Tabriz. Another important divergence is that for Messina the author was simply a translator of an already existing Harmony in Syriac (Messina 1951: xx-xxii), for Hassanabadi, Jahani, Jahani (2018: viii ff) he was both the translator and the compiler of this work.

<sup>46</sup> See below, § 5.

To a Khorasanian origin points the following example (quoted from Dеходā s.v. *šiv*), drawn from the *Anīs al-ṭālebīn wa ‘oddāt al-sālekīn*, an important Prs. source on Bahā’-al-dīn Naqšband, the founder of the Naqšbandi Sufī order, written by one of the sons of a migrant from Xwārezm resident in Bukhārā, and completed in 785/1383:

(16)	<i>qors-e bozorg-i az šiv-e pustin birun kard</i>	“he put out the big disc from under the fur cloak”
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### 5. The ŠIB-set in Tajik and Other Eastern Persian Varieties

The status of *šeb* and *nišeb* in the contemporary standard Tajik lexicon presents some similarities but also many differences with that of *šib* and *nešib* in contemporary Persian. As for *šeb*, in fact, it is seemingly not in use and the dictionaries of Modern Tajik either do not mention it (Rahimi, Uspenskaja 1954; Moukhtor, Ibraguimov, Mansurov 2003) or label it as ‘literary’ and describe it as an ‘abbreviation’ of *nišeb*, to which they normally refer (Saymiddinov, Xolmatova, Karimov 2006). The senses generally attributed to *nišeb* are ‘slope; descent; sloping, etc.’; the idiom *nišeb raftan* (or *šudan*) ‘to go down, to move along a slope’ is also quoted in dictionaries. See, for instance, the following sentence:

(17)	<i>ū az nardebon ba poyon nišeb šud</i>	“he came down the stairs” (Rahimi, Uspenskaja 1954)
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The dictionaries that privilege the literary language, instead, also record *šeb* with the spatial relational implications we have seen above (§ 4); cf. (*dar*) *šeb-i* ... ‘under [= *zir-i*, *dar zir-i* ..., *dar tag-i*...]’ in Šukurov *et al.* 1969 s.v. *šeb*<sup>1</sup> (“abbreviation of *nišeb*”), where one also finds *šeb-u-faroz* ‘ups and downs [= *pasti-u-bulandi*].’ Dictionaries also record *nišeb*; cf. *nišeb* ‘1) lowness (of the ground) [= *pasti*, *pasti-yi zamin*]; sloping [= *sarozir va ru ba poyin*];’ *nišeb-u-bolo* ‘ups and downs:’ *nišeb-u-faroz* ‘1) low and high [= *past-u-bolo*];’ 2) ‘to go down [= *ba poyin raftan*];’ 3) misfortune; calamity; *nišeb uftodan-i kor* ‘to go wrong (of a thing) [= *bad šodan-i kor*]’ in Šukurov *et al.* 1969.

To find an actual usage of *šeb* as ‘lower part’ > *šeb-i* (adposition) ‘under/below [vnizu]’ in Tajik one should look to the dialectal variant of

Vanj as recorded in Rozenfeld' 1982 (< *nišeb*; see also *šeb-i po* 'sole of the foot').

Differently from Tajik, in Persian of Afghanistan and in Khorāsān the equivalent of Prs. *nešib* is not used (at least not recorded in the dictionaries I have consulted); instead, one finds *šēb*, *šēv*, *šēva*, etc. often evoking a downwards movement (or even simply a movement towards somewhere). Consider the following data:

AfghPrs. *šēb* 'slope [sklon, skat]' (Kiselevoj 1978); *šīva* 'slope [sarāšibi, šib]' (Šālči 1991), *šīva šudan* 'to go downwards [be taraf-e pāyin foru āmadan];' *saršīv* 'sloping [sarpāyin]' (Afṡāni Nevis 1956) || Herati *šewa/šēwa* 'descending slope; (moving) downhill,'<sup>47</sup> *šiwagi* 'descending slope' (Ioannesyan 2009); *sar šēwa* 'slope [sarāšib]' (Āsef Fekrat 1997), *sar šiwagi* 'slope, declivity [sarāšibi, sarpāyini]' (Šālči 1991). In the Herati folktales published in Ioannesyan 2009, the idiom *šewa dar miyān zadan* is frequently found; commonly used in folklore, it literally means "left behind/got down the slope/hill" but it "may be understood in a broader sense: 'got underway, set out on a journey'" (Ioannesyan 2009: 75).

Xorāsāni *šiva raftan* (in villages of Xor.) 'to descend, to come down [sarāzir šodan];'<sup>48</sup> *šīva kerdan* 'to turn upside down, to slant; to look sideways [sarāzir kardan, kaš negāh kardan]' (Šakurzāde 1967) || (Birjāndi) *šēb*, *šēbā*, *šēvā* 'slope, sloping [šib, sarāzir]'<sup>49</sup> (Rezāi 1994: 302, 305) || (Turbat Haydariye) *ševa* 'sloping [sarāzir]' (Dānešgar 1995); || (Tuni) *šiva* '1) crooked [kaš]; 2) slope [sarāšib];' *šiva kerdan* 'to go down and come back [sarāzir raftan va bargaštan];' *šivanāyi* 'sloping, declivity [šibdār, sarāziri];' *sar šivanāyi* 'declivity (of the road) [sarāziri (rāh)];' probably also *šow pā* 'below and adjacent to a thing or to a place [pāyin mašāver-e čiz-i yā makān-i, zir va janb-e makān-i]' (Yāhaqi 2017) || (Qāini) *seršive* 'sloping [sarāzir]' (Zomorrodian 1989) || (Esfarāyen) *šeyva* 'sloping [sarāzir];' *šeyva roftan* 'to descend, to come down [sarāzir šodan];' *šeyvakerdan* 'to turn upside

<sup>47</sup> As an effect of linguistic contact see *šebó* [ʃeβə] 'hinab, nach unten' in the Moghol dialect spoken in the Herat Province (Weiers 1972: 148 [quoted among adverbs and postpositions], 180).

<sup>48</sup> See also *šīva* 'Abhang, bergab' in *šīva raftan* 'bergab gehen' in Monchi-Zadeh 1990: 172 [505] ("< p. *šēb/v*, av. *xšvaēpā-* 'Hinterer, Hinterteil'").

<sup>49</sup> Rezāi 1994 also lists *ši* 'under, below [šib, be ma'ni-ye zir, pāyin].' There is no evidence, however, that this form, rightly recognized by Rezāi (1966: 97) in the first part of the compound *šinemāli*, recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. *Farhang* by Mollā 'Ali Ašraf Sabuhi, could have been used as an adposition ('under') in diverse contexts.

down, to slant [sarāzir kardan];' *šeyva gāh* 'sloping place [sarāziri, jāye šib]' (Homāyunfar 2007).

Hazaragi *šew* in *qalšew* 'downstream; down a valley (opposed to *qal-bala* 'upstream; up a valley')' (Dulling 1973); *šew šodo* 'to fall [oftādan];' *šew kado* 'throw down [pāyin andāxtan];' *šewna* 'lower, further down [tahtāni]' (Tāriq Mālistāni 1993).

Sistāni *šēb* 'south; slope [nešib];' *ševa*, *šēva* 'sloping, (going) downwards / southwards etc.; setting out towards the lower direction of a course, like a person who is going downwards or southwards or towards the bottom of a lane;' *ševeštā* 'to slope (of both things when falling and groups when leaning towards a goal)' (Mohammadi Xomak 2000).<sup>50</sup>

Some examples of sentence:

(18)	Xor. (Esfarāyen) <i>yār-om šeyva miroft, be bājestu barey mive miroft</i> (Homāyunfar 2007)	"my friend set off and went to the orchard to get the fruit"
(19)	Hazaragi <i>dum ši ra šew kad</i> (Xāvāri 2001: 315)	"he lowered his tail"

## 6. The ŠIB-set in the Lori area

Baxtiāri *šēv* 'slope [šib]; watermill channel;' *šivār xarden* 'to turn around, to be astray / loss' (Maddadi 1996) || (Kuhrang) *šēw* 'slope, sloping [šib, sarāšibi]' (Tāheri 2010) || Šuštari *šiw* 'slope, sloping [šib, sarāziri];' *šīwi āšāv* 'watermill channel' (Nirumand 1976).

## 7. The ŠIB-set in the Kurdish Speaking Area

Kurmanji Krd *šip* '1. fast moving stream or current; jet, stream, current, torrent; 2. waterfall, cascade; 3. gutter, trough, chute, small ditch (on a mill through which the water flows to the millstone)' (Chyet 2020).<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> See also *Kuša-šib*, the name of a Sistāni village (Southern Kuša) opposed to *Kuša-bālā* (Northern Kuša) quoted in Afšār Sistāni 1986.

<sup>51</sup> See also *šēp* in Nezan 2017.

*šēpil* ‘(adj.) incliné, penché, oblique;’ *šēpilî* ‘inclinaison’ (Nezan 2017) || (Hakkāri) *šîv* ‘valley’ (Rhea 1872-1880) || Sorani Krd *šîw* ‘ravine, vallée;’ *šîval* ‘vallon,’ *šîvaloka* ‘toute petite vallée, val’ (Hakem 2012), (*šîwelo*) ‘petit ruisseau, cours d’eau souterrain’ (Nezan 2017) || (Sulemaniye) *šîw* ‘deep water-course’ (Wahby, Edmonds 1966) || (Amêdi) *šîvik* ‘vallée, lit desséché d’un ruisseau’ (Blau 1975).

Kurmanji Krd. *nišîv* (also *nišêv*, *nišûv*) ‘1. downhill slope, incline, declivity; 2. steep slope, precipice; cliff; 3. south; 4. (adv.) (also *nišîwî*) down[ward(s)], downhill’ (Chyet 2020);<sup>52</sup> *nišûv* ‘(adj.) downward (slope);’ *bi nišûvî* (adv.) down, downwards’ (Rizgar 1993) || (Hakkāri) *nišîv* ‘(adv.) down’ (Rhea 1872-1880) || Sorani Krd. *nišêw*, *nišîw* ‘descente, pente’ (Hakim 2012) || (Sulemaniye) *nishêw* downward slope, declivity (Wahby, Edmonds 1966).

As for the Southern varieties of Kurdish, the picture is not clear. The authors of three dictionaries published in Iran that I have consulted on the matter maintain to have collected Kurdish words from all the Kurdish dialects, though two of them make reference to the dialectal background of single items apparently when they are not in use in the Krd. dialects spoken in Iran. See in particular Hažār 1990 (*šîp* ‘flood water [silāb];’ *šēp* ‘narrow valley in the mountains;’ *šîv* ‘valley,’ *šîw* ‘narrow valley;’ *šîvik*, *šîvala*, *šîvaloka* ‘very narrow valley;’ *nišûv*, *nišîv*, *nišîw*, *nišêw* ‘slope, precipice [nešib, partgāh]; south’), Ebrāhimpur 1994 (*šîw* ‘valley, torrent, etc.;’ *nišêw*, *nišôv*, *nišêv* ‘sloping, slope, downwards [sarāzir, šib, ru be pāyin];’ *nišêv* (Behdini) ‘south’), Safizāde 2001 (*nišêv* ‘declivity, slope;’ *nišêwî* ‘slope [sarāziri],’ *nišov*, *nišêv* (Kurmanji) ‘slope [sarāziri]; south;’ this dictionary does not contain any references to *šîp*, *šîv* or the like).

Here belongs Lakki *šeyf* ‘the pressure of the water cascade [fešār-e partāb-e āb], the movement of the water [jaheš-e āb]’ (Kiāni Kulivand 2011).

<sup>52</sup> By way of example, Chyet records *evraz bê nišûv nînin* ‘every uphill slope has a downhill slope [Lit. There are no uphill slopes without downhill slopes],’ a popular Krd. sentence with many parallels in Iranian as well as in many languages from different areas. Compare for instance WBal. *har šêwag-ê y-a bālādag-ê hast* ‘any descent has an ascent’ (Jahāndide 2017: s.v. *šêwag*), Brahui *har sarbālae asi saršêfa-as āre* ‘every ascent has a descent’ (Bray 1934: 261) and the Phl. sentence in (4), § 2.

8. The *šIB*-set in the Central Plateau Dialects (and Closely Related Dialects)<sup>53</sup>

Āmorei *šū* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *šiv* ‘slope [šib]’ (°Ādelxāni 2010) || Aštiāni *šu* ‘under/below, down [zir, pāyin]’ (Kiyā 1956).

Bizovoi *šēv*, *šiv* ‘under/below, at the bottom [zir, dar pāyin; šib];’ *šiv-čaši* ‘out of the corner of someone’s eye [zir-češmi],’ *šiv-das* ‘subordinate, inferior [zir-dast]’ (Asatrian 2011); *šiv* ‘under/below [zir],’ opposed to *bālā*;’ *šivura* ‘come down!;’ *šive molidā* ‘to deny [zir-e čiz-i zadan, monker šodan],’ *šiv pā novā* ‘to put under the feet,’ etc.; *šiv bayal* ‘armpit’ (Mazra<sup>ti</sup>, Mazra<sup>ti</sup>, Mazra<sup>ti</sup> 2001); *šēv* ‘en bas;’ *šēvā* ‘pente;’ *šiv* sous, dessous; *šiv-ō-dūm* ‘sens dessus dessous’ (Lecoq 2002); *šivōbōlan* ‘hollow and low ground; uneven land [zamin-e gowd-o-past; zamin-e nāhamvār]’ (Razzāqi 2016); Tarqi *šō ‘ār* ‘wide alluvium [ābroft-e ‘ariz]’ (Esmā‘eli 2011) || Kešeī *šuvi* ‘dale’ (Borjian 2017: 337).<sup>54</sup>

Moškeṅāni *šive* ‘slope [šib, sarāziri]’ (Sadri 2007).

Yazdi *šive/a*, *šibe/a* ‘sloping, downhill [sarāziri]’ (Afšār 1989) || (Zor.)Yazdi *šiv* ‘under/below [zir],’ *šiv zvin* ‘basement [zir-zamin],’ *šiv o pošt* ‘bed clothes [raxtexāb],’ *šiv-sar* ‘cushion,’ *šiv i xa nudvun* [= Prs. *zir-e xod gozāstan*] ‘to usurp other people’s properties,’ etc. (Kešāvarz 1993); *šiv*, *ā šiv* ‘downwards, down, under’ (“LP *šib*, used as a preposition, with ezafe; often used in bazari,” Ivanow 1939); *šiv* ‘under, below, down [zir, pāyin, šib];’ *šivuur* ‘lower direction [taraf-e pāyin] of the *qanāt*;’ *šivoz* ‘the wind blowing from under the crop [bād-i ke az zir-e xerman zanad] at the winnowing time;’ *šivari* ‘uneven surface [past-o-bolandi] inside the *qanāt*;’ *šiva* ‘slope, sloping [šib, sarāziri];’ *šivur* (also *čui-šivor*) ‘sloping [sarāšib], the channel under the mill and at the bottom of the *qanāt*;’ *šiv-puš* ‘underwear [zirpuš];’ *šiv-o-ri* ‘upside down [zir-o-ru]; revolution, health disorder and nausea,’ etc. (Sorušīān 1956); *šiv-i* (noun followed by ezafe) ‘below, beneath;’ *sar ō šiv* ‘downwards’ (Lorimer 1916: 482, 486) || JudeoPrs. of Yazd *šev* ‘under/below [zir]’ (opposed to *bālā*);’ *šev-e baqal* ‘armpit,’ *šev-das* ‘subordinate,’ *šev-e-iv* ‘under water [zir-e āb],’ *šev-pa:n* ‘linen cloth spread under a carpet [zir-andāz],’ *šev-žumo* ‘underclothes [zir-jāme],’ etc. (Homāyun 2004).

<sup>53</sup> Here the local varieties of Persian spoken in Yazd and Kermān are also included.

<sup>54</sup> Borjian 2017: 337 quotes *šuvi* as an example of lenition, in particular of weakening of a Middle West Iranian postvocalic coronal stop. It is not clear to me what he considered as the antecedent of this Kešeī word.

Anāraki *šew* ‘under/below, down [zir, pāyin];’ *šew-pernaiy* ‘undershirt [zir-pirāhani],’ *šew-yomou* ‘underclothes [zir-lebās],’ *šew zimini* ‘basement,’ *šewa-tegi* ‘slope [sarāziri],’ *šewona* ‘carpet,’ etc. (Sohrābi Anāraki 1994); *šuv* ‘sous;’ *šuvi biqel* ‘aisselle’ (Lecoq 2002) || Tudeški *šu* ‘under/below [zir],’ opposed to *bālā*;’ *šu-beqal* ‘armpit,’ *šu-dass* ‘subordinate [zirdast],’ *šu-endāz* ‘linen cloth spread under a carpet [zir-andāz],’ *šu-zimin* ‘basement,’ *šu-šalvāri* ‘underclothes’ etc.; *šu-vo-ru gartāy* ‘to overturn [zir-o-ru šodan],’ etc. (Homāyun 2017) || Nāini *šiv* ‘under/below [zir];’ *šiu-zimin* ‘basement of a building,’ *šiu-yomu* ‘underclothes [zir-jāme],’ *šivona* ‘linen cloth spread under a carpet [farš-e zir-andāz],’ etc.; *šiva* ‘slope, a steep place [sarāziri, mahall-i šibdār]’ (Sotude 1986); *šiv* ‘sous;’ *šiv biqel* ‘aisselle’ (Lecoq 2002).

Kermāni *šib* ‘down, under/below [pāyin, zir];’ *šiveškun* ‘mountain slopes near the town of Kermān;’ *šihur* ‘lower side/direction [taraf-e pāyin]:’ *šihure qanāt* ‘lower direction of the *qanāt*,’ *šihure xerman* ‘lower side of the crop,’ *šihure bād* ‘lower direction of the wind,’ *šibād* ‘the wind blowing from under the crop [bād-i ke az zir-e xerman miād] at the winnowing time,’ etc. (Sotude 1957); *ši bād* ‘wind blowing from south to north, in the opposite direction of the north wind [bālābād, bād-e šomāl],’ *šive* sloping, downhill, steep [sarāzir, šibdār]; *šive šodan* ‘to descend, to go down [sarāzir šodan], to be inside a sloping road [dāxel-e jade-ye šibdār šodan], to go down from the top [pāyin āmadan az bolandi]’ (Purhoseyni 1991) || (Zor.)Kermāni *šiv* ‘under/below, down [zir, pāyin, šib];’ *šivuur* ‘lower direction [taraf-e pāyin] of the *qanāt*;’ *šivād* ‘the wind blowing from under the crop at the winnowing time,’ *šivari* ‘uneven surface [past-o-bolandi] inside the *qanāt*;’ *šiva* ‘sloping, downhill [šib, sarāzir];’ *šivur* ‘slope [sarāšib], watercourse under the mill and at the bottom of the *qanāt*;’ *šiv zemin* ‘basement of a building;’ *šiv sar* ‘pillow;’ *šiv nādu* ‘a ribbon tied under the throat,’ *šiv-o-ri* ‘upside down [zir-o-ru];’ revolution, health disorder and nausea,’ etc. (Sorušian 1956) || Rāvāri *šibe*, *šive* in *šibe-šeden*, *šive-šeden* ‘to get under way; to go from top to bottom [ravāne šodan, az bolandi pāyin āmadan]’ (Karbāsi Rāvāri 1987) || Bardesiri *ši* ‘under/ below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *ši-baad* ‘south wind (?) [pāyin bād], contrary to north wind (?) [bālābād];’ *šihur* ‘lower direction [taraf-e pāyin] of the *qanāt* (opposed to *bālāhur*),’ etc.; *šive* ‘slope [šib],’ *šive šodan* ‘to descend, from an upper place to set out and go [sarāzir šodan; az bālāyi be taraf-e pāyin harakat kardan va raftan]’ (Baru-mand Sa’id 1991) || Zarandi *šibe* ‘crooked, steep [kaš, šibdār];’ *šibakerdā* ‘to turn upside down, to slant [sarāzir kardan]’ (Bābak 1996) || Sirjāni *ši* in *owši* ‘slope for water [šib-e āb] on the roof surface;’ *šive* ‘sloping, downhill [sarāzir];’ *šive šodan* ‘to descend, go down [sarāzir šodan]’ (Saryazdi 2001).

Sivandi *ši* ‘sous, en dessous de;’ *šičel* ‘aisselle;’ *šīzīni* ‘tapis de selle’ (Lecoq 1979); *šī* ‘unter’ (*šī vārde* ‘unter dem Steine’), *sārešī* ‘Abhang (= Prs. *nešib*),’ *šīzimīni* ‘Wohnkeller’ (Eilers 1988b: 141, 211); *ši bayal* ‘le dessous de l’aisselle,’ *ši zāni* ‘le dessous du genou’ (Huart 1893: 254); *ši* in idioms such as *ši pā roftan* ‘to kick out someone and take his place,’ *ši:želaki* ‘in secret,’ etc. (Nowruzi, Āzāde 2016).

Xuri *šiv*, *ši* ‘under/below [zir];’ *šiv o riv* ‘upside down,’ *ši korsī* ‘under the stool’ (Farahvaši 1976: 20, 58, 64); *ši-* in *ši-peruni* ‘undershirt [zir-pirahāni],’ *ši-zami* ‘basement,’ *ši-šarvāri* ‘underclothes,’ etc.; *šivā* ‘under/below; sloping, downwards [zir, sarāzir]’ (Šāyegān 2006).<sup>55</sup>

Some examples of sentence:

(20)	Aštiāni <i>sar-et šu van</i> (Kiyā 1956)	“Lower your head”
(21)	Yazdi <i>sar-čašma av pāk on: šivter ge šut e pačol e but</i> (Mazdāpur 1995: 468)	“At the source the water is clean, when it goes further down it gets dirty”
(22)	Yazdi <i>taxta še šiv i pō bar tīsta</i> (Lorimer 1916: 481)	“The plank has slipped from under his foot”

### 9. The *šIB*-set in the Dialects of Fārs, Hormozgān and Lārestān

Šīrāzi *šō* ‘slope [sarāziri];’ *šō-bāzār* ‘the bazar that is located in the lower part of the city’ (Behruzi 1969); Kāzeruni *šib* ‘down, under/below [pāyin; zir]’ || (Fāmur) *šib* ‘slope [šib, sarāziri];’ *šuvār* ‘steep slope of a hill [šib-e tond-e tappe],’ *šiva* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear)’ (Savāqeb 2007) || Kuzargi *šiv* ‘down [pāyin];’ *šō* ‘under/below [zir]’ || Kandeī *šey* ‘under/below [zir];’ *mi šey čel* ‘armpit hair,’ *še: puš* ‘underwear [zir-puš]’ || Māsarmi *šuva* ‘wide alluvium [ābroft-e ‘ariz]’ (Salāmi 2004) || Davāni *šuvār* ‘low ground where the water collects [zamin-e past va ābgir]’ (Salāmi 2002) || Zarqāni *ši* ‘under/below, down [pāyin, zir, forud];’ *ši umadan* ‘to come down, to

<sup>55</sup> In a paragraph concerning Xuri prepositions, Borjān (2018: 83) states: “One notable characteristics is *ši* ‘under’ (cf. Balochi *ša*).” Now, since *ša* (also *aš*) in (Western) Balochi is a preposition meaning ‘from’ (cf. Old Persian *hačā*, Prs. *az*, etc.) the etymological link hinted at by Borjān in this passage is not very clear to me. I suppose that he supports the hypothesis of a connection between Siv. *ši* and Gor. (Kandulāi) *čīr* ‘under’ advanced by Hadank (1930: 62) and considered as possible by Eilers (see below, § 13). In this case, one should refer to (Eastern) Bal. *šerā* ‘under’ rather than to (Western) Bal. *ša* ‘from.’

fall down [pāyin āmadan, forud rixtan]; *ši-endāz* ‘anything spread on the ground, in particular for sleeping;’ *šičang* ‘subordinate;’ *ši dandun* ‘good food,’ etc.; *šiye* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear);’ *sar e ši* ‘downwards [sarpāyin, ru be pāyin]’ (Malekzāde, 2001) || Buringuni *šiv* ‘unter, unten,’ *šô* ‘unter’ (Mann 1909) || Gāvkošaki (Gorgnāi) *šiv* ‘slope, sloping, downhill [šib, sarāzir];’ *šuvār* steep slope of a hill (Musavi 1993: 66), ‘wide alluvium [ābroft-e ‘ariz]’ (Salāmi 2005) || Riči *šuvār* ‘hollow and low land [zamin-e gowd va past];’ *šuva*: ‘wide alluvium’ (Salāmi 2005) || Hayyāti *ši* ‘under/below [zir]’ || Dorunaki *šib* ‘under/below [zir];’ *šib čolak* ‘armpit hair’ || Dežgāhi *ši* ‘under/below [zir];’ *mine ši čel* ‘armpit hair’ (Salāmi 2006).

Amirsālāri *ši* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *mi ši čel* ‘hair under the armpit’ || Miāndehi *ši vo bāl* ‘uneven ground [zamin-e nāhamvār]’ (Salāmi 2014) || Tangkiši *ši* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *ši-jame* (= zir-piran) ‘underclothes [zir-puš];’ Zāxoruye *ši* ‘under/below [zir];’ *pot-e ši čel* ‘armpit hair;’ Šurābi *ši* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin]’ (Salāmi 2007).

Lārestāni (Evazi) *šiv* ‘slope [šib];’ *šiv āboda* ‘do descend, to go down [sarāšib šodan];’ *šiv ākērda* ‘to steepen, to slope [sarāšib kardan];’ *šiv dada* ‘to incline an object or a place to facilitate the flow of water;’ *šiva* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear),’ etc. (Jānfedā 2019) || (Lāri) *šif* ‘sloping, downhill [sarāzir];’ *šif-vāxarda* ‘to slip, to slide [layzidan], to slip in a slope;’ *soravašifti* ‘slope [sarāziri]’ (Eqtedāri 1955) || Bixei *ši* ‘under/below [zir];’ *min-e ši čel* ‘hair under the armpit’ (Salāmi 2009) || Farāmarzāni *ševah* ‘hollow land in the middle of a cultivable land [zamin-e gawd dar vasat-e zamin-e mazra‘i]; as a separate headword *ševah* ‘flat ground [sahrā-ye sāf];’ *šiva* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear)’ (Farāmarzi 1984) || Bastaki *šib* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin]’ (Na‘imi 2007) || Lāyžangāni *ši* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *mid-e ši kang* ‘hair under the armpit’ (Salāmi 2011).

Alamarvdašti *ši* ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin];’ *ši(ā) kerdan* ‘to bring down, to lower;’ *ši bād* ‘(a place) in the lower direction [makān-e pāyin dast]’ (referring to a geographical coordinate); *ši čel* ‘armpit;’ *ši kaši* ‘to go down of value or price of a thing;’ *ši pā* ‘down, further down [pāyin, pāyintar];’ *ši das* ‘down [pāyin];’ *ši bālā* ‘upside down [zir-oru];’ etc. (Mehrvārān, Gholāmi 2017: 274, 447).

Dašttestāni *ši* (abbreviation of *šiv* or *šib*) ‘under/below, down [zir; pāyin, forud]’ (*šu* in the dialect of some villages of Dašttestān); *ši bonje darumedan* ‘to be born under a bush (i.e., be without root and parentage);’ *ši penj* ‘subordinate [zir-e panje];’ *ši zounin* ‘money or a gift that the bridegroom gives to the bride at the time of the engagement to make her say yes [zir-zabāni];’ *ši puk, ši zek* ‘very near;’ *ši čel* ‘armpit;’ *ši xečak* ‘under the chin

[zir-e čāne];’ *ši ko*: ‘the name of a wind [= *zir-e kuh* ‘under the mountain’]; toponym of an area in the suburbs of Dašttestān,’ etc.; *šivāri* ‘upside down [zir-o-ru];’ *šiv* ‘slope [šib] of mountain, hill or the like;’ *šive* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear);’ *šuwe* ‘very low lands where water collects, considered of good quality and suitable for cultivation’ (Borāzjāni 2003) || Bušehri *ši* ‘under, below, down [zir, pāyin]’ (more used in the districts of Dašti and Tangestān), *ši* ‘near [nazdik, kenār]’ (used in Dašti); *ši patu* ‘under the blanket [zir patu],’ etc.; *šife* ‘long wooden or metal channels that drive water from roofs to water deposits or in courtyards;’ *šive* ‘the sole of the *give* (footwear)’ (Hamidi 2001).

Jirofti-Kahnuji *šū-ow-bâlâ-kerdan* ‘to turn upside down (said of a person who is gagging),’ *delom šū-bâlâ akane* ‘I feel like throwing up;’ *šûkerdan* ‘to suspend, to dangle [āvizān kardan];’ *šûpâ* ‘down/below and submitted [pāyin va zir-e dast];’ *šû nokî* ‘the gift given by the bridegroom to the bride [zir-zabāni]’ (Dehqāni 1998).

#### Some examples of sentence:

(23)	<p><i>Kāzeruni va:de ke om meyes a pelayal beyom šib</i> (Salāmi 2004)  <i>Amirsālāri mowqe-y ke ixâsom a pelayal biyâm ši</i> (Salāmi 2014)  <i>Tangkiši hami ke xâsom a pelleylu ši biyâm</i> (Salāmi 2007)  <i>Zāxoruye vaxti mixâsom az pelleylu ši biyâm</i> (Salāmi 2007)  <i>Bixei môkey ke mixâsom a pellââ ši biyâm</i> (Salāmi 2009)  <i>Lāyzangāni vaxt-i ixâsom a: pellâ ’â aši biyâm</i> (Salāmi 2011)</p>	<p>“When I was about to go down the stairs”</p>
(24)	<p><i>Dašttestāni ši deraxt nešse</i> (Borāzjāni 2003)</p>	<p>“He sat down under the tree”</p>
(25)	<p><i>Dašti ši biu</i> (Hamidi 2001)</p>	<p>“Come here!”</p>

#### 10. The ŠIB-set in the Dialects of the Caspian Shore and North Iran

Tati (Juhuri) *šiv kende* ‘fondre sur’ (Authier 2012)  
 Iranian Āzeri (Kaĵali) *ašniv-avrâz* ‘low ground [zamin-e gowd-o-past]’ (Sabz °Alipur 2015) (with metathesis)

Taleqāni *nešīb* ‘slope [šib], inclination,’ *baumi nešīb kama* ‘the inclination of the roof is small’ (Fallāhi, Sādeqīān 2011)

Māzandarāni (Ārdehī [Dibā]) *še* ‘under/below [zir];’ (Altappei, Ārdehī) *ševārə*, (Purvāi, Nokandei) *ševār*, (Banafše-tappei) *šivār* ‘alluvium [ābroft];’ (Rostamkolāi) *šivār*, (Nokandei) *ševār* ‘low-lying land [zamin-e gowd-o-past]’ (Akbarpur 2015a) || (Šeydmirāni) *šib*, (Xoršidi) *šip* ‘slope [šib];’ (Šeydmirāni) *ševār*, (Jāmxānei) *ševārə*, (Mehtar-Kalātei) *šivār* ‘alluvium [ābroft],’ Xoršidi *šivār* ‘low-lying land [zamin-e gowd-o-past]’ (Akbarpur 2015b)

Semnāni *šib-konda* ‘basement [zir-zamin]’ (Sotude 1963) || Sangesari *šive* ‘small, deep valley;’ *šivār* ‘small valley;’ *šib-dār* ‘slopes’ (Azami, Windfuhr 1972).

### 11. The *šIB*-set in *Balochi*

W/SBal. *šēp*, EBal. *šēf* ‘mountain stream; creek, small tributary stream, minor river, waterway descending from the mountain and pouring into the river; ravine, small valley, low-lying land; slope, declivity’ (Mayer 1910, Elfenbein 1990; Jahāndide 2017; Sayad Hāšmi 2000; Dašti 2017; Dashti 2019 etc.); W/SBal. *šēpōk* ‘small waterway descending from mountains or hills’ (Jahāndide 2017; Sayad Hāšmi 2000)

WBal. *saršēp*, EBal. *saršēf* ‘top of slope, saddle, start of a descent’ (Elfenbein 1990; Mayer 1910); ‘declivity; ravine or natural sloping waterway descending from the mountains or high lands’ (Jahāndide 2017);<sup>56</sup> *sar šeyp* ‘the upper stream’ (Dashti 2019); EBal. *īršēf* ‘bottom of slope; descent’ (Mayer 1910, s.v. *slope* and *descend*)

W/SBal. *āp-šēp*, *āp-šēb* ‘the flood or passage of the water [sil yā gozargāh-e āb] in a sloping terrain’ (Jahāndide 2017), *āp-šēp* ‘the waterway that conveys the rainwater flowing down towards the river’ (Sayad Hāšmi 2000); EBal. *āf-šēf* ‘slope of a drainage basin, watershed’ (Mayer 1910); ‘line of water in bed of torrent’ (Hetu Ram/Douie 1898); *āpē šēf* ‘slope of watershed’ (Elfenbein 1990)

WBal. (Raxšāni) *šuwag* ‘down-slope, sloping down’ (Barker, Mengal 1969);<sup>57</sup> *šēwag* ‘hanging, pending [āvizān, mo<sup>c</sup>alleq]; declivity, slope

<sup>56</sup> Probably not used in SBal. At least so told me some Bal. speakers from Pakistani Makrān whom I have consulted on the matter some years ago, when I was collecting Bal. terms belonging to the domain of the natural environment. This word is also not recorded in Sayad Hāšmi 2000.

<sup>57</sup> Barker, Mengal (1969/I: 318) rightly underline the deictic value of this kind of terms (‘/šwvæg/ is a noun and adjective denoting ‘down-slope, sloping down.’ /zilæg/ similarly signifies ‘up-slope, sloping up.’ These terms are, of course, relative to the position of the speaker; a person

[nešib, sarāziri]’ (Jahāndide 2017); ‘downward; a slope; misfortune; demotion’ (Dašti 2017, Dashti 2019 [*šeywag*])

WBal. *sar-šēwag* ‘slope [sarāziri]’ (Jahāndide 2017)

WBal. *āp-šēwag* ‘a sloping watercourse through which water descends from a spring to low-lying lands’ (Jahāndide 2017)

W/SBal. *šēp bayag* ‘to move downwards [šib gereftan, sarāzir šodan, ru be sarāziri harakat kardan]’ (Jahāndide 2017); EBal. *šēf biay* ‘hin/herabsteigen’ (Eilers 1988a/I: 304)

W/SBal. *šēp girag* ‘to move from top to down (of liquid); to descend’ (= *šēpag*) (Sayad Hāšmi 2000); ‘to move downwards [šib gereftan, sarāzir šodan, ru be sarāziri harakat kardan] (Jahāndide 2017); *šeyp girag* ‘coming down; falling; the movement of a snake, creeping’ (Dashti 2019); ‘to come from up to down; to rush on; to creep like a small serpent; to pour (of water) from top to down; to go rolling over’ (Dašti 2017); *šēpgir-*, *šēpgirta* ‘to stream, flow’ (Elfenbein 1990)

WBal. *šēwag bayag* ‘to slope [sarāzir šodan];’ to determine to go somewhere, to incline towards a direction [qasd-e jāyi kardan, be-suy-i māyel šodan];’ *šēwag dayag* ‘to cause to incline [sarāzir kardan; be suy-i māyel gardānidan]’ (Jahāndide 2017)

W/SBal. *šēpag* ‘to move from top to down (of liquid); to descend’ (= *šēp girag*) (Sayad Hāšmi 2000); *šēpag* ‘to set going downwards [ravāne kardan dar sarāšibi]; to mix [āmixtan];’ to throw [andāxtan, partāb kardan]; to give a fast blow [zarbe zadan-e sari<sup>c</sup>] upon someone with a knife, dagger or something similar; to hide [gom kardan] something so that it cannot be found anymore, etc.’ (Jahāndide 2017).

The denominal verb *šēpag* (working as both transitive and intransitive) and the structures of predication formed by *šēp* and *šēwag/šuwag* may evoke the idea of (a) a movement of liquids downwards (preferably along an inclined plane); apart from the prototypical frame of rainwater descending from a higher position, the usage of *šēp* is highly predictable in other contexts as well, as is the case with tears running down on the face [26-28]; (b) a movement downwards or a falling [29-30] (also abstract, like a demotion [31]); (c) a movement towards a (planned) destination (that may be downwards or not) [32-33], and even (d) rapid movements into the air (in a serpentine manner like that of a rope [34], or in a swinging manner like a sword [35], etc.):

standing at the top of a given slope would refer to it as /šwvəg/; another person at the bottom of the same slope would speak of it as /ziləg/.”

(26)	WBal. (Turkm.) <i>šāī um čammān ars šewag būt</i> (BEDP Archive, unpublished text) <sup>58</sup>	“Tears flowed from his eyes”
(27)	SBal. <i>áiy chammán do tramp ars pa shép geragá járhi at</i> (Jahani, Baloch, Baloch 2022: 257) <sup>59</sup>	“In his eyes two drops of tears were about to flow” <sup>60</sup>
(28)	SBal. (Kečt) <i>do [...] trimp āyē gallānī sarā šēpgirān, āye jīgē sarā kaptant</i> (Elfenbein 1990/I: 76 [21])	“Two [...] teardrops, flowing down his cheeks, fell on his collar”
(29)	WBal. (Turkm.) <i>ye sing bi diga singān laggit u ša burzagā bāzēn singē bešī sarā šewag bütant</i> (BEDP Archive, unpublished text)	“This stone hit other stones and from the top many stones fell down on his heads”
(30)	WBal. (Sist.) <i>amēšī tā bass injā šewagē ku</i> (Delforooz 2010: 324)	“Inside it [the grave], he just poured down the lapful (of gold)”
(31)	W/SBal. <i>bēzānagēy nābāwarān šēpañt tai nām māñ porān</i> (Jahāndide 2017: 1684-1685)	“(those) ignorant infidels throw your name into the dust”
(32)	WBal. (Turkm.) <i>šewag büt dēmi šā-niyāz-xānī pissāi šārā</i> (Zarubin 1932: 81)	“He set off in the direction of the town of Šā-Niyāz-Xānī’s father”
(33)	EBal. <i>āfā nasīva zurt<sup>h</sup>o sar p<sup>h</sup>a bolavā šēfbīthā Müreñ Čākura māṛīā</i> (Dames 1907/II: 6)	“Having taking the chances of the water She moved in the direction of Bolan, to the abode of Mir Čākur” <sup>61</sup>
(34)	W/SBal. <i>ēwand čō mārā šēp gerān</i> (Jahāndide 2017 s.v. <i>ēwand &amp; šēp girag</i> )	The <i>ēwand</i> <sup>62</sup> rope moves (downwards?) like a serpent

<sup>58</sup> On the Archive of the Balochi Etymological Dictionary Project see Rossi 2017 and below, this book, p. 121.

<sup>59</sup> The text is recorded in the Balochi Latin script adopted by the Balochi Language Project, Uppsala University.

<sup>60</sup> “Two teardrops were about to roll down her face” in Jahani, Baloch, Baloch 2022: 257.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Dames 1907/I: 6 (“Taking the chances of the running water, she followed down the slope of the Bolān to Mir Chākur’s abode”).

<sup>62</sup> The *ēwand* (also said *rēz*) is a long rope used to lower down the bunches of dates from the top of the palm-tree (Jahāndide 2017).

(35)	WBal. (Turkm.) <i>amē salāt girdī amē watī zāmānā šīwag kurtant bi amē ɣaram-bāturī sarā</i> (Zarubin 1932: 153) <sup>63</sup>	“The warriors waved their swords all around towards the head of Gharam-Baturi”
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The diffusion of the form *šēwag*, only used in Western Balochi, is the effect of the linguistic contact with Eastern varieties of Persian (cf. above § 5). Similarly, the peculiar form *šay* ‘slope’ (Nourzaei, Jahani, Anonby, Ahangar 2015) recorded in the Bal. variety spoken by the members of the Korosh tribe, a tribe scattered across large areas of Southern Iran (Hormozgan and Fārs Province), is due to the contact with the dialects spoken in those areas (cf. above § 9);<sup>64</sup> see also *sar-e šeyā* ‘at the top of the slope’ in a Koroshi folktale published in Jahani, Nourzaei 2011: 67-68.

To a contact-induced effect one may also attribute the presence in Brahui of the following forms:<sup>65</sup> *šēf* ‘low, low-lying; down, on the ground; below (postposition, governing the ablative);’ *šēf kanning* ‘to lower, put down;’ *šēf danning* ‘to take down-country;’ *šēft* ‘declivity, down-country;’ *šēfkō* ‘lower, nether;’ *šēva* ‘slope, declivity; sloping downward;’ *šēva kanning* ‘to come downwards, descend;’ *saršēfa* ‘descent; descending, downhill’ (Bray 1934); *šēf* ‘low, below;’ *šēf xalling* ‘to disgrace; strike down;’ *šēway* ‘fall of a government; waterfall’ (Elfenbein 1983). In Rossi 1979, *šēf* is inserted in the list of the ‘Brāhūī borrowings from Baloci’ (List A), *šēva* in the list of the ‘Brāhūī borrowings from other Iranian languages’ (List C). In the light of the documentation now available (cf. WBal. *šēwag* above) this distinction is no longer needed. One problem remains, however, and we should probably have to look for other source-languages for this specific transfer: in fact, Brahui *šēf* has locative implications (‘below’) and grammatical functions similar to those characterizing some members of the *šIB*-set in Western Iranian but that Bal. *šēp* and *šēwag* have not acquired. Cf.:

<sup>63</sup> Being unrecorded elsewhere in Zarubin’s texts and in other Bal. sources I have consulted, I consider *šīwag* in this passage as a variant of *šēwag*. In Elfenbein 1963 doubts are also advanced on the meaning of the complex verb occurring in this sentence [*šīwag* + *kan-* ‘? Threatened’].

<sup>64</sup> See above, § 9.

<sup>65</sup> On general problems on contact-induced grammaticalization see Heine, Kuteva 2003.

(36)	Brahui <i>mašān šēf dīras marōe</i> (Bray 1934: 275)	“There ought to be some water below the hill”
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## 12. The *šIB*-set in Eastern Iranian

The picture is rather unclear. In Pašto one finds *nišéb, našéb* ‘1. slope, incline; 2. descent, declivity; 3. precipice; 4. low; gently sloping’ (Pashtoon 2009) as well as *ševá* ‘1) lowered, let down; *ševá kedal* ‘1. to descend, sink; to go down; to arrive somewhere; 2. lower down, downwards’ (Pashtoon 2009). The presence of both forms is seemingly the effect of linguistic contact with (Eastern varieties of) Persian (see above § 5).

Pšt. dictionaries also record *šebá* ‘1) instant; twinkling; 2) moment, time; 3) heavy rain, pouring rain; downpour’ (Pashtoon 2009). It remains to be seen if and how this item may be connected to the lexical set under consideration. Morgenstierne (2003: 78) suggests a possible derivation from “< *xšaipā-* with EVP, cf. Skt. *kṣip-* ‘to throw, cast,’ *kṣepa* ‘tossing.’ A connexion with Prs. (Steingass) *šība* ‘the shooting of an arrow’ is very unlikely.” As for the sense of ‘downpour,’ cf. also Kurdish *šipî* ‘shower, downpour,’ *šipen* ‘heavy downpour [ragbār-e tond-e bārān]’ (Salimi 2002: 238).<sup>66</sup>

To the *šIB*-set seemingly belong Yidya *šifčiko, šifčo* and Munji *šifča* ‘waterfall;’ *šīvčā* ‘irrigation channel’ (Morgenstierne 1938).<sup>67</sup> As a mere hypothesis, one may also add here Yidya *viščo*, Munji *viškʷo* ‘steep hillside, ravine’ (Morgenstierne 1938), if one assumes the possibility of a metathesis of the two first consonants. Such a hypothesis would be supported by the existence of Iškašmi *viš, viš* ‘1) lower part [niz]; foot (of mountain); 2) bed’ (Paxalina 1959) and Sangleči *viš, biš* ‘below; flour, ground’ (Morgenstierne 1938), to which the designations for ‘waterfall’ and ‘ravine’ could be associated (as derivatives); see also, as lexical compounds, Iškašmi *baɣalviš*, Sangleči *kašviš* ‘armpit,’ Sangleči *ɣālviš* ‘Adam’s apple’ (cf. *ɣāl* ‘throat’) in the body domain. Iškašmi *viš* and Sangl. *viš, biš*, for

<sup>66</sup> Only Southern Kurdish? See also Hažār 1990. Unrecorded in the Kurmanji and Sorani dictionaries I have consulted.

<sup>67</sup> Morgenstierne (1938: 250) refers (with question mark) to Prs. *šeftan* ‘to trickle’ (cf. *šeftan* ‘to become mad (variant of *šiftan*); to trickle; to scratch; to make drop’ in Dehxodā).

which no etymological explanation has been proposed so far, also work as function words:

(37)	Išk. <i>s̄nduq p̄ stol-viš</i> (Paxalina 1959: 241)	“the chest is under the table”
(38)	Išk. <i>ujir̄j p̄ sung-viš j̄bst</i> (Paxalina 1959: 241)	“the partridge fled under the stone”

I also advance here the very tentative hypothesis of a connection of Šuṇi, Orošori *x̄ōy*, Xuṇi, Rošāni *x̄ūy*, Bartangi *x̄ūy* ‘moraine of large boulders’ (Morgenstierne 1974), Waxi *š̄bly* (Stebelin-Kamenskij 1999), *šuy* (Morgenstierne 1938) ‘moraine, place covered with stones’ with the ŠIB-set under discussion.<sup>68</sup> From the semantic point of view they remind *šivâr* ‘alluvium’ in some dialects of Māzandarān (§ 10), *šuva* ‘wide alluvium’ in Māsarmi and similar forms recorded in the dialect of Fārs (§ 9) and elsewhere, also denoting accumulations of earth and stones generally carried and finally deposited by flowing water at the foot of a mountain.

### 13. Final remarks

As the data provided above clearly attest, representatives of the ŠIB-set, also including derivatives and compounds, are widespread in (mainly) Western Iranian languages, though semantic and functional developments are not parallel in all varieties. Forms close to Prs. *nešib* (derivatives with prefix *ni-*, cf. Phl. *nišēb*) are seemingly in use in Kurdish, some languages spoken in North Iran and Tajik.

From the referential point of view, this lexical set includes different environmental landmark terms that, according to different languages, display different semantic changes based on metonymic or metaphoric processes. In particular: declivity, slope (of mountains or hills), precipice, valley, narrow steep-sided valley (usually worn by running water), layers

<sup>68</sup> Previous etymological suggestions: < \**us-srāya*- “cf. Skt. *ucchrāya*- growth, elevation; *uc-chri*- to raise, erect, increate?” (Morgenstierne 1974); or, in alternative, < \**fra-sraya*- (Stebelin-Kamenskij 1999: 352). For Waxi *šuy*, Morgenstierne 1938: 541 had advanced a tentative connection with Skr. *kṣaya*- ‘waste, decay.’

of clay, sand, gravel, or other detrital material deposited at the foot of the mountain by running water, low-lying land, etc. In Kurdish and Balochi, šIB-terms mostly exhibit their link with the concept of ‘moving water:’ there one finds designations for watercourses, as well as for water streaming, running or falling in different contexts; among specialized senses, for instance, there is that of ‘waterway through which the water flows to the millstone;’ cf. above Kurmanji Krd. *šîp* (§ 7), but also Baxtiāri *šēv* (§ 6), (Zoroastrian) Yazdi and Kermāni *šivur* (§ 8).

With a transfer from one domain of human experience to another, landmark šIB-nouns, designating the lower part of a mountain or a hill have come to be used to refer to a subpart of an object, in particular its lower part or its lower surface; through a subsequent metonymy, the šIB-nouns for the lower part or the lower surface of an object have come to be used to indicate the space adjacent to that area, acquiring in this way relational spatial meanings. These developments have triggered on the one hand the creation of terms like *šive*, commonly used in several areas of the Iranian plateau as the designation of the sole of a traditional, durable and hand-made type of footwear, generally known as *give*,<sup>69</sup> on the other the starting of grammatical processes, whereby šIB-nouns grammaticalized into adverbs and/or adpositions. The relational character of the result of such kind of processes allows for a ‘grading’ process, as for instance is the case with (Zor.) Yazdi *šivter* ‘further down’ (§ 8), which would not be possible with a member of the nominal category.

Grammaticalization is to be intended as a continuous development. Many Ir. languages exhibit representatives of the šIB-set used adverbially or as the non-verbal element of complex verbs to indicate downward direction; this step in the grammaticalization path has already been documented in Pahlavi.<sup>70</sup> Semantic generalization has produced a change from a ‘movement downwards’ to a ‘movement with the intention to reach a specific goal.’ The UP/DOWN spatial orientational metaphor (GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN)<sup>71</sup> has favoured the creation of šIB-terms meaning ‘misfortune,’ as is the case with Tajik *nišeb* (§ 5) and WBal. *šēwag* (§ 11). In

<sup>69</sup> See already Behruzi 1969: 386 for Širāzi *šive* (“Probably this word derives from *šib* in the sense of ‘under [zir]’”).

<sup>70</sup> See above, § 2, example (3).

<sup>71</sup> See above, § 4.

the projection of the earth's surface along the vertical axis the perspective may play a relevant role; worth noting is *Dašti ši* 'near' (§ 9), displaying a clear deictic value (the speaker identifying his/her position with the 'lower position').

The representatives of the *šIB*-set in the different Iranian languages point to different degrees in the grammaticalization path: as adpositions used to describe location under or below something, *šIB*-terms are only found in specific areas. In these areas, many compounds and idioms in everyday language are also found with *ši*, *šu*, etc. 'under' as the first element; in equivalent Persian compounds and idioms, *zir* occurs instead of *ši*, *šu*, etc. The areal diffusion of this phenomenon is rather clear; it is particularly evident in some of the Central Plateau dialects and Fārs dialects. Apparent inconsistencies may be explained; this is the case, for instance, of *še* 'under/below [*zir*]' in the Māzandarāni dialect of Dibāḡ (§ 10), a village located in the district of Damghān, Semnān Province. This dialect is characterized by some peculiarities that distinguish it from other Māzandarāni dialects and find their reason in the strong historical, cultural and linguistic ties of the Damghān area with Khorāsān, Shāhrud and Central Iran.

That Prs. *šib* 'under,' below' developed from *šib* 'lower part'<sup>72</sup> has been clearly recognized by scholars and never questioned; the situation is slightly different as far as the etymology of the various forms *ši*, *šu* 'under, below' is concerned. These forms represent the last step of the grammaticalization process under consideration, the phase in which also erosion (i.e., loss of phonetic structure) occurs. As far as Sivandi *šī* is concerned, this connection was recognized by Hübschmann (1895: 178) in his additional note ("Dazu g. *šīv-sar* 'unter del Kopf' [...], *sīvend. šī* 'unter'") to Horn 1893 (*šēb*, *šēw* 'Unteres, Unterteil; Hinterer'). It was also recognized by Morgenstierne (1960: 136), who challenged the link proposed by Hadank (1930: 62) with Gorāni (Kandulai) *čīr* 'under' ("Kandulai, Awromani *č* vs. Sivandi *š*") and wrote: "It is more probable than *ši*: is related to Prs. *ši:v* (also in Buringuni)." Eilers (1988b: 344), on the other hand, still expresses doubts and seems to lean towards Hadank's suggestion ("wohl zu np. *šīb/v*, (*ni*)*šīb* (bei Morgenstierne p. 136). Oder gar (NW) < \**čīr* (چیر)?").

<sup>72</sup> I use here the label 'Persian' with the limitation hinted at in § 4.

To conclude, worth noting is also the use of representatives of the šIB-set as absolute orientation points, as illustrated by Sistāni *šēb* ‘south’ (§ 5); Kurmanji Krd. *nišîv* ‘south’ (§ 7); Kermāni *ši bād* ‘wind blowing from south to north’ (§ 8), etc. In fact, absolute orientation taking into account the four cardinal points represents only one possibility. Other systems exist and are used throughout the world, with environmental entities, such as mountains, hills and rivers, functioning as reference points for orientation;<sup>73</sup> on the usage of ‘up’ and ‘down’ in Balochi as orientational points depending on the direction of the water movement see Filippone 1996: 147-150.

<sup>73</sup> See Svorou 1994: 30-31.





## 2

### Laki Verbal Particles

SARA BELELLI

#### 1. *Introduction to the Topic*

##### 1.1. Defining Laki

Laki is a North-western Iranian language spoken at the southern periphery of the Kurdish language group and at the northern edges of the Lori continuum, in a region broadly spanning over the present-day western Iranian Provinces of Kermānshāh, Ilām, Lorestān and Hamadān. Several Lak communities are also reported to live outside this core area of diffusion unofficially known as Lakestān, i.e. in the Iranian provinces of Kordestān, Khorāsān, Mazandarān, Gilān, Esfahān, Fārs, and as far as Iraqi Kurdistan and Anatolia (cf. Izady 1992; Hamzeh'ee 2015). Nonetheless, the degree to which these exclaves of Lak origin preserve the use of the Laki language in day-to-day communication remains largely unchecked.

Considering that the affiliation and positioning of Laki with respect to Southern Kurdish (henceforth SK) and other Western Iranian contact languages is still surrounded by considerable debate (cf. Aliyari Babolghani 2019 on the topic), this paper attempts at investigating one of the features identified in the literature as relevant for a dialectological definition of Laki with respect to other regional languages. Indeed, the presence of peculiar (post)verbal particles – added to a set of quasi-homonymous postpositions—bundles Laki together with the majority of so-called Laki-Kermānshāhi (henceforth L-Ker.) dialects<sup>1</sup> transitional to SK (cf. Fattah 2000: 433 ff.; Belleli 2021: 155-157), and distinguishes it from all

<sup>1</sup> With the partial exception of the L-Ker. variety of Sahne, commonly using 'SK-like' preverbs.



its closest linguistic neighbours: SK, Gorani-Hawrami (henceforth Gor./Hawr.) and Northern Lori (henceforth NLori). As stated in Fattah (2000: 61-62), “L’existence de [la] construction ergative,<sup>2</sup> ajoutée à d’autres spécificités comme les prépositions construites de forme spécifique au laki et, troisième grande spécificité, l’absence de (h)al- et dâ- comme préverbes (ils existent sous d’autres formes comme postposés) [my emphasis, SB] [...] font en sorte que l’intercompréhension entre un locuteur KS [Southern Kurdish] standard et un Kurde *lak* ne s’effectue pas de manière aisée.”

## 1.2. Defining ‘Verbal Particles’

Verbal particles – also collectively termed ‘preverbs’ regardless to their actual placement within the verbal phrase (VP) – are most often treated in grammatical descriptions of Iranian languages, Kurdish included, in the context of verb compounding.<sup>3</sup> This closed set of elements, of intermediate status between lexical and function words, are in fact involved in the formation of a particular category of complex predicates (CPs) by and large comparable to English *phrasal verbs* (Ger. *Partikelverben*, It. *verbi sintagmatici*, Fr. *verbes à preverbe*, etc.).

On this topic, Mokri (2003: 306) observes that in Kurdish and related varieties “les verbes munis d’un préverbe ne peuvent en aucun cas être traités comme des verbes composés dans la mesure où les préverbes, à la différence des adverbes ou des noms, ne sont pas employés indépendamment du verbe.” However, as different from common noun- or adjective-plus-verb compounds these verbal forms may be, it is in fact reasonable to address them as a particular sub-class of CPs. Kurdish CPs involving ‘absolute adpositions’ (e.g. CK *pēdā*, *pē(k)*, *tē(k)*, *lē(k)*, etc.) and adverbials (‘pseudo-prefixes’ in Rastorgueva’s terms, cf. Telegdi 1955: 70-71; Windfuhr 1979: 115) can be viewed as an intermediate category between those two.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the major difference between Laki and L-Ker. dialects concerns alignment patterns in the conjugation of transitive verbs in Past tenses. Laki “proper” has forms of agentiality akin to those of Central Kurdish, while L-Ker. dialects show a nominative-accusative alignment throughout their verbal system as in SK. This difference is occasionally reflected also in example sentences below.

<sup>3</sup> MacKenzie (1961a: §§ 235, 300) exceptionally treats them in a separate section on particles, alongside pre- and postpositions.

Notwithstanding their centrality in lexicology, verb morphology and syntax, the sections most descriptive grammars devote to verbal particles are extremely concise: they usually provide lists of items with multiple glosses, accompanied by generic statements on their polysemous nature and broad range of functions. Verbal particles are most often defined as semantically opaque elements combining with simple verbs—especially dynamic verbs—creating “finer nuances, lexical extensions, or total meaning changes of a verb root” (Stilo 2007). These generally involve the space or manner in which the process expressed by the verb takes place. However, the resulting semantics is often non-compositional, appearing to a certain degree unpredictable or not immediately transparent from the mere combination of the verb’s and the particle’s core meanings: in other words, to some extent ‘idiomatic.’

Another well-known feature of verbal particles observed in many Indo-European (IE) languages, among which those of the Iranian branch, is that they occur in the same or a very similar shape with noun phrases (NPs), as adpositional elements introducing a variety of arguments and semantic roles. This allows to single them out from other elements used in the same function, and to circumscribe a more restricted class of ‘primary’ or ‘proper’ adpositions (as defined, for instance, in Luraghi 2003: 75). This circumstance is so widespread and solid across the historical representatives of the IE family that led scholars to assume a common etymological source for both categories, identified in ancient ‘local particles’ or ‘trajectory adverbs’ expressing spatial relationships between a trajector (or figure) and a landmark (or ground).<sup>5</sup>

Successive semantic extensions and non-linear deviations from the original local meaning of these particles, developing through mental processes such as metaphor and metonymy, gave rise to intricate semantic networks that are difficult to fully disclose and map in synchrony. In this sense, philological insights—with the necessary proviso that con-

<sup>4</sup> For a summary of taxonomical problems concerning Kurdish CPs, see Haig 2002: 42-44.

<sup>5</sup> This view reflects the tenets of localistic theory and Cognitive Grammar, according to which ‘spatial grounding’ lays at the very base of human cognition and provides the raw material for conceptualising complex, more abstract situations from a smaller, simpler and more concrete range of events. For a theoretical overview, cf. Luraghi 2003: 11-48. For an application of these principles to the study of locative expressions in a North-western Iranian language, Balochi, see Filippone 1996.



ceptualisation may follow different paths even in closely related languages<sup>6</sup>—may turn out useful for the analysis of these parts of speech.

## 1.2. Sources

The description of Laki verbal particles provided below is essentially based on a small corpus of Laki Kākāvandi oral materials collected during a fieldwork campaign carried out in the Provinces of Lorestān and Kermānshāh in 2014 and partly published as Bellelli 2020. These data have been complemented with information contained in previous descriptive literature on Laki, particularly in the Laki texts from Aleshtar in Lazard 1992, and through the examination of lexicographic repertoires containing lists of verbs, particularly Kiyāni Kulivand 2011. With the aim of enlarging the attestation of verbal particles in primary language data, examples from the L-Ker. varieties of Harsin and Sarmāj-e Hosseinkhāni<sup>7</sup> have been included.

Even so, the data at our disposal remain fragmentary, and at times contradictory. However much general impressions drawn from language-internal observations and cross-language parallels allow for a reasonable degree of confidence on the observations made in following paragraphs, it is hoped that dedicated field research will offer a better chance for checking and revising any provisional conclusions.

## 2. *Laki Verbal Particles*

The data at our disposal allow for the identification of at least four Laki verbal particles of common use, shared also by most L-Ker. varieties: *ör*, *ēr*, *(i)rā*, and *ā*.<sup>8</sup> At least in Kākāvandi Laki and L-Ker. dialects these

<sup>6</sup> As stated in Hewson, Bubenik 2006: 303, “the variation from language to language, even when languages are closely related, stems from the fact that each language is a different means of representation, a different human analysis of the world of experience.”

<sup>7</sup> Respectively from the textual appendix of Bellelli (2021) and the DoBeS Archive recording ‘Laki\_conv\_1’, available at [https://archive.mpi.nl/islandora/object/tla%3A1839\\_00\\_0000\\_0000\\_0018\\_03DC\\_B](https://archive.mpi.nl/islandora/object/tla%3A1839_00_0000_0000_0018_03DC_B) (accessed Jan. 2022).

<sup>8</sup> The particle we transcribe as *ör* corresponds to *öwr* in Lazard 1992. Kiyāni Kulivand (2011:36) quotes an additional preverbal form *āk(ā)* with a semantic range akin to *ā* (cf. §2.4), but there are no direct attestations of this particle in the available texts.



elements have been observed to invariably cliticize to the end of the conjugated verb, on which they prosodically lean, and may therefore be conveniently labelled as ‘postverbs’ or ‘postverbal particles’ (glossed as =PSTV). Even so, Lazard (1992) commonly represents them as self-standing elements, separate from the verb to which they pertain. Although postverbal usages seem to be the norm, preverbal variants (glossed as PREV) do occur, especially in the materials from Aleshtar. Preverbal position is also the norm for infinitive verbs, mainly found as citation form in lexicographical lists.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned above, we may expect to find counterparts of Laki verbal particles within the lexical class of adpositions, and these are indeed presumably related to a small set of formally-similar Laki bound postpositions (including =*ēr(a)*, =(i)rā/=arā and =ā, glossed as =PSTP), that would seem to share the same origin. Laki postpositions never occur alone, but concur in the formation of a varied range of circumpositions, combining with a prepositional element – either simple or complex – and attaching as a clitic to the end of the modified nominal. The largest semantic share within the circumposition is carried by the preposition, while the postposed particle usually contributes to emphasize location/direction or, in Fattah’s words, has the task “de mettre l’accent sur le mouvement, et dans certain cas de modifier le sens vers un sens figuré” (Fattah 2000: 637). Their form, as that of the verbal particles above, is somehow specific to Laki (and partly to L-Ker. dialects, cf. Fattah 2000: 637-643; Belleli 2021: 141-142), although their morphological properties closely resemble analogous sets in neighbouring North-western Iranian languages, such as Gorani/Hawrami.<sup>10</sup> These two promiscuous sets of elements are hardly ever found in any other grammatical function: indeed, they do not commonly occur as independent adverbials, although isolated counter-examples may exist.

In Paragraphs 2.1-2.4 below, each of the four verbal particles of frequent attestation in Laki will be discussed individually in its contexts of use, with the aim of mapping their semantic range and morpho-syntactic behaviour.

<sup>9</sup> At least two counter-examples are found in Fattah 2000: 448, quoting the Harsini infinitives *girdin=irā* ‘to encircle, siege’ and *mātkān=irā* ‘to scorch, excoriate.’ Further examples of infinitive verbs with preverbs in spoken or written samples are lacking.

<sup>10</sup> See the general treatment in Stilo 2009: 13-14. For Gor./Hawr. parallels, cf. Mahmoudveysi et al. 2012: 55-56; Mahmoudveysi, Bailey 2013: 69 ff.; Bailey 2018: 245 ff. Postpositional elements in Laki will be the topic for a dedicated study.



## 2.1. ÖR

In Kiyāni Kulivand (2011), the Laki (and L-Ker.) verbal particle *ör*, roughly corresponding to Eng. *up*, is listed in combination with nearly a hundred different verbs, appearing as the most productive of the four Laki verbal particles taken into account. Its frequency can be explained by the fact that “an upward position or motion, both physical and especially abstract, is in a very special way part of our daily experience” (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: 75).

As suggested in the literature (Lazard 1992: 221; Fattah 2000: 448), when combined with motion verbs the particle is perceived as prototypically entailing ‘up(ward)’ trajectory (SUPERLATIVE meaning)<sup>11</sup> as exemplified in (1):

(1) L-Ker. Harsin (Belelli 2021, 5: 46)

$\bar{t}=a$	<i>sar</i>	<i>mil</i>	<i>žin-a</i>	<i>ma-pař(-ē)=ör</i>
PROX=DRCT	on	neck	woman-DEF	IND-jump.PRS(-3SG)=PSTV

‘This one (i.e. the child) **jumps up**, onto the woman’s neck.’

In (1), the particle clearly reinforces the semantics of the motion verb *pařin* ‘to fly, jump’ and specifies that the action is projected upwards on a vertical axis (Figure 1). The landmark, located in a higher position, is further defined by the Prepositional phrase (PP) *=a sar mil žin-a* ‘on(to) the woman’s neck.’

Figure 1: UP, position at a high place or moving up to a higher one (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 75)



The directional particle in these ‘literal’ (or compositional) constructs can notably be replaced by directional phrases with a similar semantic apport. Meanings intersecting with those of *ör* can be expressed also by

<sup>11</sup> The use of grammatical case terminology throughout this paper has only a practical purpose, allowing for an easier definition of the intended local value of the particle/verbal expression without the need of circumlocutions. Of course, its use does not imply in any way the existence of corresponding grammatical cases at any previous stage of the language.



verb-plus-adverbial complexes of the type  $V...=a\ var$  ‘on’;  $V...=a(r)\ sar$  ‘on(to), over’ and  $V...=a(r)\ bān$ , ‘over, above’, all involving vertical orientation, but more strictly denoting a relationship of the trajector with the landmark’s upper surface (SUPERESSIVE meaning) or space above it.

Although, as explained in Lakoff (1990: 417) “[...] in the case of up, the source domain is spatial and the target domain is emotional, and the spatial sense is viewed as being more basic,” the prototypical local meaning of Laki *ör* appears residual in current use. Also with dynamic verbs, vertical orientation might not be overtly stressed but only vaguely entailed, as in (2). In the majority of instances, the particle provides a feebler or non-transparent/null contribution to the resulting CP.

(2) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.19. 20

*ōw*      *dā=s=ē*                                      *ōwr=ē.*      *vaxtī*      *ōw*  
 water   hit.PST=COP.PRS.3SG=3SG   PSTV=3SG.   When   water  
*dā=t=ē*                                      *ōwr=ē [...]*  
 hit.PST-EU?=3SG      PSTV=3SG

‘(II) a puisé de l’eau. Quand il a eu puisé de l’eau ... [He **drew/fetched** water (presumably from a well). As soon as he **had drawn/fetched** water...]’

In some cases, extensions involving movement ‘up and out(ward)’ (ELATIVE) or ‘up and away/aside’ (ABLATIVE) can be detected:

(3) L-Ker. Harsin (Belleli 2021 5:28)

*řün-á*                      *ma-gir-ē=ör=ī*  
 butter-DEF      IND-take.PRS-3SG=PSTV=3SG

‘The butter, he **picks it up/puts it aside.**’

In other cases, no real displacement of the trajector towards the landmark seems to be entailed, but only a change to vertical orientation (Figure 2) as in (4) below.

Figure 2: Change to vertical orientation (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 75)





(4) Laki Kākāvandi, Darb-e Gonbad 1, 00:19-00:21

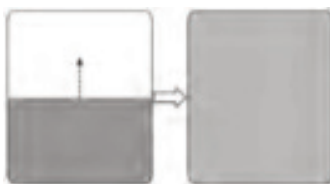
*yē čādir-ī hatar dö māl-al=mān dā=y=ör*

INDF tent-INDF like two household-PL=1PL hit.PST.3SG=3SG=PSTV

‘We would **set up/pitch** a tent, like (a tent) for two households.’<sup>12</sup>

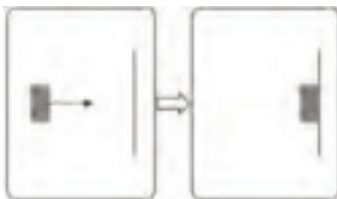
In (5), *ör* occurs in a less compositional configuration in connection to the complete filling of containers up to a certain *limit* quantity (Figure 3).

Figure 3: UP, covering an area completely/reaching the highest limit (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 86)



It may also entail the attainment of a Goal or Beneficiary (Figure 4), encoded in example (5) below by the PP *arā īma* ‘for us.’

Figure 4: UP (to), aiming at or reaching a goal, an end, a limit (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 77)



(5) Laki Kākāvandi, Darb-e Gonbad 1, 0:41-0:47

*harkī piř ya arā īma bi-čin-y=ör [...] yē*

whoever full PROX for 1PL SBJV-pick.PRS-3SG=PSTV INDF

*da šā-y b-ē-ym=ē bin*

ten-Shahi\_coin-INDF SUBJ-give.PRS-1PL=3SG to

‘Whoever will **collect** them/**gather** them (i.e., these bottles) **up** full for us, we’ll give him a ten-Shahi (coin).’

<sup>12</sup> The semantics ‘to erect, set up (a tent)’ is widely attested for the verbal complex, cf. also a similar CP in (8).



Here, the process expressed by the particle verb is presented as *telic*: it is directed towards a final stage that is usually not encoded by the simple verb (Thim 2012: 17). The same applies to example (6) where the semantic apport of the particle is minimal, and the meaning of the CP remains largely consistent with that of the basic verb, except for telicity.

(6) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.21

<i>kwilk=i</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>bi-kiz-in</i>	<i>ōwr</i>
hair=EZ	1SG	SBJV-burn-2PL.IMP	PSTV

‘Brûle mon poil [**Burn up** my fur].’

Although a far link with the original spatial meaning might be traceable beyond metaphoric developments, the compositional meaning of the CP may also shift entirely towards figurative connotations, i.e. idiomatic/non-compositional meanings. This shall be expected to happen more easily with semantically weaker or ‘light’ verbs such as *kirdin* ‘to do, make,’ as the instances in (7a-b) would in fact indicate.

(7a) Laki Kākāvandi, Darb-e Gonbad 3, 6:01-6:03

<i>nīšt-im=ī</i>	<i>āgir=im=ī</i>	<i>kird=ōr</i>
sit.PST-1SG=ADD?	fire=1SG=3SG?	do.PST=PSTV

‘I sat down and **lit up** a fire, too.’

(7b) Laki Kākāvandi, Darb-e Gonbad 1, 6:30-6:32

<i>hizim</i>	<i>jam=a</i>	<i>m-ē</i>	<i>āgir-ī</i>
firewood	collection=IND	IND-give.PRS.3SG	fire-INDF
<i>ma-k-ē=y</i>		<i>ōr</i>	
IND-do.PRS-3SG=3SG		PSTV	

‘He collects firewood and **kindles it/lights up** a fire (lit. on it).’

Although these constructions normally call for a postverbal placement of the particle, preverbal positioning occurs rather frequently in the materials from Aleshtar, as exemplified by (8), (9) and (10a-b) in the full range from more to less compositional. This fact may have some dialectological significance, and would deserve further assessment.



- (8) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.11

*mohammad\_ali* *dī-t=ē* *čāēr-ē* *öwr* *haḡwit*  
 Mohammad\_Ali see.PST-EP=3SG tent-INDF PREV hit.PST.3SG<sup>13</sup>  
 ‘Mohammad Ali vit qu’ une tente avait été dressée [Mohammad Ali saw that a  
 tent **had been pitched/set up**].’

- (9) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.24, 25

*kwilk=i* *sag/miruža* *öwr* *kizōn=ē*  
 hair=EZ dog/ant PREV burn.PST=3SG  
 ‘Il brûla le poil de chien/fourmi [He **burned up** the dog’s/ant’s fur].’

- (10a) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, III.3

*si* *čwār* *āyim-ē* *kaliḡ* *öwr=ō* *dāšt [...]*  
 three four man-INDF big PREV=2PL have.PST.3SG  
 ‘Ils prirent trois ou quatre hommes de poids. [...] [They **picked up** two or three  
 big men]’<sup>14</sup>

- (10b) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1991, III.4

*yāru* *öwr* *dāšt=ē*  
 fellow PREV have.PST=3SG  
 ‘Il le prit [he **picked him up/got him**].’

In both Laki and L-Ker. materials, formations with *ör* coexist with CPs built with the preverb *hiz* ‘up’ (= SK). When combined with the same verb, the two particles may assign slightly or completely different meanings: cf. *hiz girtin* (intr.) ‘to rise; wake up’ in (11a-b) vs. *ör girtin* ‘to pick up, put aside’ in (3); *hiz dā(y)n* ‘to pick up, collect’ in (12a-b) vs. *ör dā(y)n* (tr.) ‘to erect, set up (tent); draw (water)’ in (2, 4).

<sup>13</sup> The past stem *haḡwit-* is reported in Lazard with the meaning ‘to fall,’ but cf. *hangtin* ‘to hit, impact,’ *hangunin/hangyāyn* ‘to be hit’ in Kiyāni Kulivand 2011: 1257. This use equates that of Prs. *zadan* ‘to hit’ in *čādor zadan* ‘to set up a tent.’

<sup>14</sup> The particle verb in examples 10a-b semantically corresponds to Italian ‘prendere di peso,’ French ‘prendre de poids,’ having no exact English equivalent. It indicates the act of displacing someone or coercively removing him/her from its original location (metaphorically by lifting him/her bodily).



(11a) L-Ker. Harsin, Belleli 2021, 6: 22

*ye sidā-y qwiṛbāqa hiz=a ma-gir-ī*  
 INDF sound-INDF frog PREV=IND IND-take.PRS-3SG  
 ‘A cry of frogs **rises**.’

(11b) Harsin, Belleli 2021, 7: 52

*dīt-al hiz gir-in*  
 girl-PL PREV take.PRS-2PL  
 ‘Girls, **wake up!**’

(12a) L-Ker. Harsin, Belleli 2021, 5: 50

*ču hiz=a m-ē*  
 wood PREV=IND IND-give.PRS.3SG  
 ‘He **lifts** the club.’

(12b) Laki Darb-e Gonbad 1, 7: 19-7: 21

*aswāw-il-a=m hiz dā.*  
 ware-PL-DEF=1SG PREV give.PST.3SG  
 ‘I **picked up/collected** the dinnerware.’

In at least three entries from Kiyāni Kulivand (2011: 118) *hiz* and *ör* are found in combination, with *hiz* behaving once as preverb, and twice as formant of unverbated derivatives: *ör hiz girtin* (tr.) ‘to pick up, lift up; extinguish, abolish;’ (intr.) ‘to get up, stand up; rise, increase;’ *ör hizunin* (tr.) ‘to pick up, select; put aside;’ *ör hiziāyn* (intr.) ‘to be selected, be put aside.’

## 2.2. ĒR

The Laki postverbal particle *ēr*, polarly opposed to *ör*, broadly corresponds to Eng. *down*. It normally profiles a ‘down(ward)’ (DELATIVE/SUB-LATIVE) trajectory (as in Figure 5; example 13).

Figure 5: DOWN, movement from a higher to a lower place (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 104)





(13) Laki Kākāvandi, Bellelli 2020: §23

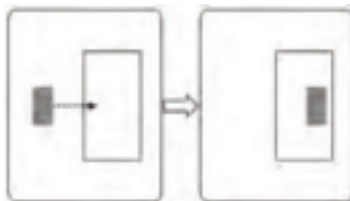
$\bar{e}$                        $sar=\bar{a}$                        $m-\bar{a}\check{z}-in=\bar{i}=\bar{e}r$   
 from                      top=PSTP                      IND-throw.PRS-3PL=3SG=PSTV

‘From the upper edge (of the gravepit), they **throw** it (i.e. the corpse) **down/in**.’

In its ‘literal’ or compositional semantics, the particle corresponds to verb-plus-adverbial formations of the type  $V\dots=a\ hw\bar{a}r$  ( $hw\bar{o}r$  in Lazard 1992, L-Ker.  $xw\bar{o}r$ ) ‘down(wards), below’ and perhaps  $V\dots=\bar{e}\ \check{z}\bar{e}r$  ‘under, beneath.’<sup>15</sup>

However, the prototypical local meaning of the particle intersects considerably with ‘in(ward)’ direction (ILLATIVE), as Eng. *in(to)*. This semantic value involves the concept of a container (Figure 6), considered as “anything that surrounds the entity or moving object or anything in which the moving object can be located or can enter” (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: 48).

Figure 6: IN(TO), motion into a container (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 48, 69)



With verbs allowing for static interpretations, as in examples (14a-b), the particle can express also INESSIVE meanings, broadly corresponding to Eng. *inside*:

(14a) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.7

$das=a$                        $ma-n-\bar{i}m=\bar{e}$                        $\bar{e}r$   
 hand=IND                      IND-put.PRS-1PL=3SG                      PSTV

‘Nous lui mettons les bras dédans [We will **put** his hands **inside** it (i.e. a pulley)].’

<sup>15</sup> However, in the available materials  $=\bar{e}\ \check{z}\bar{e}r$  is attested only in combination with the verb  $\check{c}un$  ‘to go’ expressing the figurative meaning ‘to be fooled.’ Cf. Lazard (1992, III.3)  $\bar{e}\ \check{z}\bar{e}r\ na\check{c}in$  ‘ne se laissent pas faire, lit. n’allèrent pas dessous.’



(14b) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.16

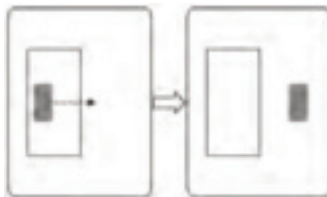
*dömē=im nā=s(a) ēr*  
tail=1SG put.PST=COP.PRS.3SG PSTV

‘J[y] ai mis la queue de mouton [I **put** the (ship’s) tail **inside** it (i.e. the pit).]’

In these cases, the verbal particle corresponds to analytic formations of the type  $V...=a nām$  (=  $a nōm$  in Lazard 1992) ‘in(to), inside.’

As Lazard (1992: 221) observed, the Laki particle *ēr* would seem to show an unusual double-face orientation, being also used to denote real or figurative movement ‘out(wards)’ (Figure 7) when combined with verbs calling for ABLATIVE/ELATIVE interpretations, as in (15) below. This interpretation also involves the ‘container’ metaphor, implying a movement of the given trajector out of whatever surrounds it (container/surface/landmark).

Figure 7: OUT, entities moving out of containers (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 14)



(15) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.16

*dömē-aha ōwird-ē=as=ē ēr*  
tail-DEF bring.PST-PTCP=COP.PRS.3SG=3SG PSTV

‘Il a tiré la queue de mouton [He **extracted/took** the tail **out**]’

At least in one L-Ker. example reported in (16), semantic extensions of this particle are very similar to those produced by *ör* in (2) above, with possible meanings ranging from ‘out(ward)’ to ‘away/aside.’

(16) L-Ker., Sarmāj-e Hosseinkhāni, Laki\_Conv\_1, 7:55-8:00

*a pārcā ma-šur-ē, ma-gir-ē-t=ēr=ī*  
DIST cloth IND-wash.PRS-3SG IND-take.PRS-3SG-EP=PSTV=3SG

‘She washes the cloth and **puts** it **aside**.’



Besides these local values, the particle *ēr* may determine more abstract semantic shifts in the basic verb, as shown in (17):

(17) L-Ker. Harsin, Belleli 2021, 6:48

*min=iš*      *bow(a)=ē*      *ōwird-im=as=ēr=ē*  
 1SG=ADD    father=3SG      bring.PST-1SG=COP.PRS.3SG=PSTV=3SG  
 ‘I **cursed** her father [lit. I **brought** her father **out**], too.’

At least in one instance from Aleshtar, *ēr* seems to be found in preverbal position. However, in the absence of clear prosodic cues, it is difficult to ascertain whether in this case the particle should be considered as fully verb-oriented, or rather as a postpositional complement of the preceding PP *ē čā* ‘from the well.’

(18) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard 1992, IV.9

*čēlsōrx=ōn*      *ē*      *čā*      *ēr*      *ōwird*  
 Chelsorkh=3PL      from    well    PSTP/PREV?    bring.PST-3SG  
 ‘On vint tiner Tchelsorkh du puits [They **pulled** Chelsorkh **out** of the well].’

It would be tempting to suppose that this kind of structural ambiguity<sup>16</sup> might have been at the source of grammaticalization phenomena leading to the development of Laki postpositional elements from corresponding verbal particles.

Despite, as we have seen, the use of the particle *ēr* is occasionally attested also in L-Ker. dialects, Fattah (2000: 434 ff.) refers that in these varieties the meaning ‘out(wards)’ is more often expressed by preverbal formations with *dir* (= SK *dar*), as in (19a-b, 20):

(19a) L-Ker. Harsin, Fattah 2000: 436

*dir*      *ni-ma-č-in*  
 PREV      NEG-IND-go.PRS-3PL  
 ‘Ils ne sortent pas, ils ne s’extraient pas’ [They do not **exit/go out**].’

<sup>16</sup> See also Lazard 1995a: 27, identifying potentially ambiguous cases in the use of pre-classic Persian preverbs.



(19b) L-Ker. Harsin, Fattah 2000: 437

*dir=a*            *ma-č-in*  
 PREV=IND    IND-go.PRS-3PL  
 ‘Ils sortent [They **exit/go out**].’

(20) L-Ker. Harsin, Fattah 2000: 442

*dir*            *ā(wi)r!*  
 PREV            bring.PRS.IMP.2SG  
 ‘Extras! [**Extract it/take it out!**].’

### 2.3. (I)RĀ

The particle *(i)rā* has scant attestation in the Laki and L-Ker. textual corpora as formant of CPs. Even so, it occurs in a long list of verbs in Kiyāni Kulivand 2011: 58 ff., where the particle is described as emphasizing ‘down(ward)’ direction, most often translating Prs. verbs with *foru(d)* ‘down’—e.g. *irā āwirdin* ‘to bring down,’ *irā āyštīn* ‘to drop down, throw on the ground’—or more abstractly conveying a nuance of ‘abundance’ or ‘firmness, steadiness’ to the process expressed by the verb—e.g. *irā birdin* ‘to plunge, sink with force (e.g. one’s feet in mud); to endure, bear (e.g. an insult).’

In the single instance from a L-Ker. dialect reported in (20) below, the same particle seems to express the local meaning ‘around’ (DEPARTURE FROM CIRCUMFERENCE LIMITS, Figure 8), but this observation is unfortunately not supported by further examples from primary Laki data.

Figure 8: (A)ROUND, Location or motion (in different directions) often viewed from a central point (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 184)





- (20) L-Ker. Harsin, Fattah (2000: 448)

*māt-a*                      *gird-im=ē=rā*  
house-DEF      take.PST-1SG=3SG=PSTV

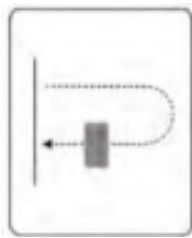
‘La maison, je l’ai assiégée; la maison, je l’ai cernée’ [The house, I **besieged/surrounded** it].’

2.4.  $\bar{A}$ 

The last of the four Laki verbal particles taken into consideration – as its equivalents in neighbouring Kurdish varieties, e.g. CK = *awa*, SK = *aw(a/ā)*, =*wā*, =*ow*, and variants – is generally treated separately from the forms listed so far. In fact, contrarily to the particles *ör*, *ēr*, and *(i)rā*, it seems less capable of producing relevant semantic shifts in the basic verbs it accompanies.

In its prototypical local meaning, in combination within a limited list of verbs of movement,  $\bar{a}$  profiles ‘back(ward)’ orientation and return to the trajector’s earlier/initial location (Figure 9).

Figure 8: BACK, return to or stay at an earlier location (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 173)



- (21) L-Ker. Sarmāj-e Hosseinkhāni, Laki\_Conv\_1, 8:16-8;22

*bās*                      *b-ar-ēt=i=ā*  
must                      SBJV-bring.PRS-3SG=3SG=PSTV

‘He has to **bring** him/her **back**.’

- (22) L-Ker. Harsin, Belleli 2021, 6:113

*hāt-im=as=ā*  
come.PST-1SG=COP.PRS.3SG=PSTV

‘I’ve **come back**.’



With the same semantics, the particle alternates with complex predicates involving absolute prepositions/adverbials, of the type *V... arētā*; *V...=a dimā* ‘back’ (= *a dōmā* in Lazard 1992).

One of the few instances in which the particle seems to produce some effect on the resulting semantics of the CP concerns the verb *kirdin* ‘to do,’ when it confers the abstract value ‘to open’ to the complex. With this meaning, it corresponds to variant form =*ow* (=SK) attested in the L-Ker. variety of Harsin:

(23) L-Ker. Harsin, Belleli 2021, 4:134

*dar qār kird=ow*  
 door cave do.PST.3SG=PSTV  
 ‘He **opened** the entrance (lit. door) of the cave.’

In most cases, however, the particle provides a generic sense of ‘repetition, reiteration, reciprocity’ to the process described by the verb, or denotes ‘return’ to a previous state or condition, as in (23).

23) Laki Kākāvandi, Belleli (2020, §21)

*mō-ün-ī har=a ma-kōw-ī,*  
 IND-see.PRS-3SG repeatedly=IND IND-fall.PRS-3SG  
*har řās=a mow=ā*  
 repeatedly straight=IND become=PSTV  
 ‘He sees (that) he keeps falling and **getting up again**.’

In combination with the verb ‘to be’, it specifies the semantics ‘to become’ (change of state), as in (24).

(24) Laki Kākāvandi, Belleli 2020: §12

*zēnī bī=as=ā*  
 alive be.PST=COP.PRS.3SG=PSTV  
 ‘He **came back** to life.’

Among the four Laki verbal particles described, this is certainly the more “advanced” in the ideal grammaticalization process – well-known for many IE languages – converting “spatial or directional determiners into markers of aspect, with a partial loss of the lexical content” (Thor-



darson, 2011: 220).<sup>17</sup> With respect to other particles of the same class, Laki *ā* also manifests a more flexible behaviour as for positioning within the VP. If a slot is available, the particle can be raised on a preceding predicative complement, as in (25a-b):

(25a) L-Ker., Sarmāj-e Hosseinkhāni, Laki\_Conv\_1, 44:02-44:04

<i>ambār=ē=a</i>	<i>ma-k-ē</i>	<i>tā</i>
storage=3SG=IND	IND-do.PRS-3SG	until/so.that
<i>girān=ā</i>	<i>bu</i>	
expensive=PREV	be.PRS-3SG	

‘They store it until/so.that they **become** more expensive.’

(25b) Laki Aleshtar, Lazard (1992, I.5)

<i>řīs=im</i>	<i>asbē=ā</i>	<i>mow</i>
beard=1SG	white=PREV	become.PRS.3SG

‘Ma barbe devient blanche [My beard becomes white].’

### 3. Laki Verbal Particles in Diachronic Perspective

Although no direct predecessor of Laki or any of its closest kins is known, clues on the origin, etymology, and development of Laki verbal particles can be drawn from comparisons with Old Iranian (Old Persian/OPrs.; Avestan/Av.) and Middle Western Iranian languages (Middle Persian/MPrs., Manichean Middle Persian/MMPrs. and Parthian/Prth.), as well as from contemporary North-western Iranian (NWIr.) and South-western Iranian (SWIr.) cognate languages.

1. In its local meaning, Laki *ōr* corresponds to NK preverbs *hil*, CK *hał* (with *-r* variants; MacKenzie, 1961a: 120, 196); SK (*h*)*ał*, (*h*)*al* (with *-r* variants; Fattah, 2000: 448ff.); Gor. *haw*, *hor*, *hur* (Bailey 2018: 183), all denoting ‘up(ward)’ movement.<sup>18</sup> Most items of this NWIr. set may confidently be related to MPrs. *ul* (<LALA>, cf. Aramaic *l-ʿl*), MMPrs. <’wl> ‘up(wards)’ and perhaps further to YAv. *əṛədwa* ‘up(right)’ (MacKenzie 1961b: 77).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Öpengin 2016: 72-73, describing the equivalent Mukri morpheme *-awa* as an aspectualizer.

<sup>18</sup> See also Mokri 2003: 306-307. It is unclear whether Zaz. *hawār-* (Todd 2008: 120, univerted in *hawārdāyış* ‘to pick up, lift’) should be adduced here, too.



On the other hand, SWIr. equivalents—e.g. Prs. *bar*, *var* in complex verbs like *bar/var dāštan* ‘to pick up, collect;’ NLori *ver* etc.<sup>19</sup>—continue the set of MPrs. *abar*; MPrs., Prth. <’br> ‘upon, over; on(to)’, cf. OPrs. *upari-* ‘upon, over,’ YAv. *upa’ri* (Vedic *upári*), attested in preverbal function and originally related to the notion of ‘departure from a surface limit’ (Bubenik 2006: 136). OIr. (Av., possibly OPrs.) had also more clearly projective forms *us-*, *uz-* ‘up; out’ (Vedic *úd-*), seemingly discontinued in Middle WIr., but possibly reflected in the set of Laki, Kurdish, Gor. *hiz*, *hēz* etc.

At least since MIr., and as observed also for Laki *ōr*, it is possible to witness some “overlapping of the notion of ‘upper surface’ and ‘upper part of a Ground with relevant vertical dimension’” (Filippone, 1996: 106). In the case of MPrs., this semantic overlap could be disambiguated through differentiation between *abar* ‘on’ (SURFACE CONTACT) and innovated *azabar* ‘above’ > NPrs. *zebar* (SURFACE LIMIT) with which we should compare Zazaki (henceforth Zaz.) *jor*; NK *žor* ‘up(wards)’.

Further coalescence is also witnessed in several Iranian languages between the notion of ‘upper surface’ and that of ‘(front) side’, the latter generally related to the body-part term for ‘chest, breast; side, flank’ (MPrs. *war*; Prs. *bar*).<sup>20</sup> For this specific meaning, some Kurdish varieties have distinct (borrowed?) preverbs such as *war* ‘in opposite’, *bar* ‘frontward’ (Öpengin, 2016: 66), corresponding to the adverbial expressions =*a var* ‘on; in front’ of Laki (attested also as preposition, alongside *var a(ž)* ‘before’) and =*a bar*, =*a war* ‘(up)on; before, in front’ of Gor. (the latter used also as preposition, cf. Bailey 2018: 240).

Other etymologically unrelated particles – such as the Hawr. postverb *-ana* ‘on’ (Mann, Hadank 1930: 125; MacKenzie 1966: 31-32; attested as postposition =*ana* in the Gor. of Zarda, cf. Mahmoudveysi, Bailey 2013: 69-70) or the Zaz. “absolute” circumpositions *pā* ‘at, onto’, *pirā* ‘on’ (Paul 2009: 556) – are used with similar meanings in related languages.

2. Laki *ēr* ‘down(ward)’ is attested already as MPrs. *ēr*, MPrs. <’yr> with the meaning ‘down(ward), below; under’, cf. OIr. (YAv.) *aḍairi-* ‘under.’ In analogy to *abar* and *azabar*, MPrs. has also produced the com-

<sup>19</sup> On NLori, see MacKinnon 2002: 24. Probably to be adduced here are also the preverb *wir* with the meaning ‘up’ in the Gor. of Zarda (Mahmoudveysi, Bailey 2013: 38) and the set of Balochi (henceforth Bal.) *bir*, *bur*, *wur* (Filippone 1996: 287-288).

<sup>20</sup> Corresponding to Bal. *gwar* (Filippone 1996: 309-311).

plex form *azēr*, MPrs. <'c'yr> 'under, below' > Prs. *zir*, reinforcing the notion of 'surface limit.' This form corresponds to CK, NK *žēr* 'under, below; down(ward),' Zaz. *jēr* 'down(ward),' and occurs as Laki/L-Ker. *žir*, *žēr* and Gor. *žīr*.<sup>21</sup>

Preverbs attested with similar semantic values in neighbouring varieties—e.g. Kurdish *dā-* 'down(wards);' CK *řā* 'down(wards), through;' Zaz. *de* 'into,' *ro* 'down' (Paul 2009: 556); Gor. *wā* (Bailey 2018: 183; perhaps identical to the Gor. adverb *wār*, Laki = *a hwār* and variants)—do not share the same etymology of the Laki particle *ēr* (see 3. below).

For what concerns the semantics 'in(to), inside' documented for Laki *ēr*, we should assume a contamination between the notion of 'lower surface' or 'lower part of a Ground with relevant vertical dimension' and the 'container' metaphor. The latter is traceable to the set of MPrs., Prth. <'ndr> 'within, inside;' MPrs. *andar* 'in, among; towards, concerning'<sup>22</sup> > Prs. (*an*)*dar*, attested with a similar semantics already in OIr. (Av.) *antarǵ* 'inside, between, among' (Vedic *antár* 'within, inwards').

As we have seen, the Laki particle *ēr* shows a peculiar "double-face" orientation, being able to profile 'in(ward),' as well as 'out(ward)' trajectories. As suggested already by Geiger (1890-1891: 72), this circumstance may derive from a coalescence between the above particle and preverbal elements akin to CK, SK *dar* 'outside' (*dir* in the L-Ker. of Harsin, cf. Fattah 2000: 434 ff.; Öpengin 2016: 66), etymologically related to lexical items for 'door' through a very common semantic shift 'door' → 'open space in front of the house' → 'outside, outdoors.'<sup>23</sup> The same development explains also Gor. *bar* 'out(side), forth' (Bailey 2018: 236, 240) < Gor. *bar* 'door.'<sup>24</sup> Instances of variation between Laki formations with

<sup>21</sup> Compare also Bal. *ēr* 'down(ward), below' vs. *čēr/šēr*, referring in particular to relationships with the 'lower external surface' (Filippone 1996: 67 fn.1, 344-345). NK *žēlā/ī* 'upward, from below,' as well as Bal. *jahlā* 'below, on the ground' < *jahl* 'low (part)' (Filippone 1996: 146 ff.; 354) might belong here, as well.

<sup>22</sup> With MPrs. derivatives *andarag* 'in, between, among' and *andarōn*, MPrs. <'ndrwn> 'inward, within, inside' (with *rōn* 'direction') > Prs. (*an*)*darun*. See also Bal. *andar* 'inside of any object' (Filippone 1996: 341-342).

<sup>23</sup> Compare also Bal. *dar* (Filippone 1996: 329-331).

<sup>24</sup> It is unclear whether the Gor. (Zarda) preverb *wir* with the meaning 'out' can be considered as a possible variant of *bar* 'out, forth,' or is rather related to *wir* 'up' (on which see fn. 19 above). Phonological similarity might indeed have led to a contamination between the two forms.

*ēr* and adverbial constructions with *=a dēr*, *=a dar* (with or without postpositional *=ēr(a)*) further reinforces this hypothesis.

3. Unfortunately, not as much can be said about Laki *=(i)rā*, due to its scanty attestation as a verbal particle. In its prototypical local semantics, it seems to correspond to Kurdish *dā-* (Fattah 2000: 444) already cited in 2. above in connection with ‘down(ward)’ meanings, alongside CK *řā*; *Zaz. de, ro*. Closely related seems also the Hawr. postverb *-ara* ‘down’ (Mann, Hadank 1930: 125; MacKenzie 1966: 31-32; attested as postposition *=ara* in Gor. (cf. Mahmoudveysi, Bailey 2013: 38, 69-70; 2018: 244-245).

As we have seen, in Kiyāni Kulivand (2011) this Laki particle often translates Prs. *foru(d)* ‘down’ < MPrs. *frōd*, MMPrs. <prw(w)d, frwd>, commonly interpreted as a complex formation combining OIr. *frǎ-* ‘before, ahead, forth’ (cf. OAv. *frǎ-*, YAv. *fra-*; Vedic *prá-*)<sup>25</sup> with a second element stressing movement or direction (cf. Vedic *pravát-* ‘forward urge, fast progress’). A similar formation is observed also in Prs. *farā(z)* ‘forth’ < MPrs. *frāz*, MMPrs. <pr’z> ‘forth, forward’ (cf. Vedic *prānc-* adj. ‘turned forward; Eastern’, possibly involving a base ‘to bend, turn’ as second component).<sup>26</sup> The semantic value related to the notion of ‘circumference limit’ in some instances of this Laki verbal particle, seems indeed compatible with analogous usages of Prs. *farā*.<sup>27</sup>

4. Laki *ā* almost perfectly matches the functions of NK preverbal *va*; CK *=awa* (Öpengin, 2016: 72-73); SK *=aw(a/ā)*, *=wā*, *=ow* and variants (Fattah 2000: 458); Gor./Hawr. *=(a)wa*, *=o* (Mann, Hadank 1930: 125; MacKenzie 1966: 31-32; Bailey 2018: 258; Mahmoudveysi, Bailey 2013: 38); and *Zaz. ā* (Paul 2009: 556). In all these languages, the particle has much to do with the aspectual characterisation of the verbal process (reiteration, change of state), expressing the original local semantics ‘back(wards)’ only with a limited number of verbs of movement. Compared to other verbal particles, the above forms do not seem to trigger major semantic changes on the resulting CP; in some cases they add an

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Hasandust 2015, no. 3646.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Hasandust 2015, no. 3589, 3591. Bubenik (2006: 142) considers MPrs. *frāz* and its antonym *abāz* as “compound forms (reinforced by *az* “from”).”

<sup>27</sup> A similar case might be that of Bal. *pa(r)*, of unclear etymology (Filippone 1996: 99-101, 295) but possibly belonging to this set.



idiomatic nuance, e.g., with the verb ‘to eat’ they specify the semantics ‘to drink.’

When changes occur, these are usually related to the notion of ‘splitting, opening’. In this sense, they seem semantically akin to the Prs. forms *bāz*, *vā*, both of which can be used as adverb ‘again, back’ and as adjective ‘open’ (also as formants of CPs). With the former meaning, they correspond to MPrs. *abāz* ‘back; again, re-’ (<LAWHL>, cf. Aramaic *l-(w)ħr*); MPrs. Prth. <’b’c>, Prth. <’b’j> ‘back; off, away; again,’ probably emerging as complex formations with continuants of OIr. (OPrs., Av.) *apa-* ‘away, forth, off’ (cf. Vedic *āpa-* id.)<sup>28</sup> well-attested in preverbal function.

Although a local meaning ‘away, off’ could in principle account for semantic extensions towards the notion of ‘opening, splitting,’ we should probably look for a different lexical source for the set of Prs *bāz*, *vā* with the meaning ‘open’, more probably related as past participle to an Ir. base ‘to release, free, open.’<sup>29</sup> However, the coalescence between those two meanings must have taken place at a rather early date, as suggested by the existence of the MPrs. verb *ābāz kardan* ‘to open’ besides the synonym *wīšādān*.

#### 4. Conclusions and Future Prospects

We have seen that, according to their prototypical meaning, the Laki particles *ōr* ‘up(wards)’ and *ēr* ‘down(wards)’ can be clearly identified as a contrasting pair, profiling static or dynamic grounding on or towards two opposite extremes of a vertically-oriented axis. If Laki (*i)rā* can be demonstrated as continuing the same set of Prs. *foru(d)* and/or Prs. *farā(z)*, it would also be possible to delineate a binary opposition between this particle and Laki *ā* ‘back,’ in this case projected on an horizontal axis. The former pair of particles, of wider occurrence in Laki, seems to preserve the original local meanings better, while the pair (*i)rā* vs. *ā* seems way more advanced in the shift from ‘verbal particle’ to ‘aspectual marker,’ with *ā* having almost completely taken on the function of an aspectualizing particle.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hasandust 2015, no. 629.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Hasandust 2015, no. 626 and Cheung 2007: 18.



This overview seems to give reason of much of the polysemy observed in Laki verbal particles, the widespread syncretism and formal promiscuity of this class of words and one would call for a much more detailed historical explanation. For instance, it seems plausible that areal phenomena of lenition of initial and intervocalic stops operating in various languages spoken along the Zagros range,<sup>30</sup> adding up to the progressive development of free-standing particles into clitic elements, produced an increase in the partly pre-existing homophony or semi-homophony between items stemming from different lexical sources, and expressing distinct local meanings. This gives good reason to apparently curious phenomena, such as the “double-face” orientation of Laki *ēr* or the use of Laki *ā* and variants to convey the meaning ‘to open, split.’

A catalogue (already on the way) of Laki particle verbs and their comparison with equivalents in Kurdish and kin North-western Iranian languages seems a necessary step for the identification of cross-language regularities and differences in the use of these particles, that may eventually point to shared patterns of grammaticalization and semantic development. Of course, the necessary lexicographical work will need to be complemented by dedicated field research, as well as by deeper comparative investigations, possibly enlarging their scope to include similar classes of items from other, more distantly related Iranian languages.<sup>31</sup>

#### *Glosses*

1	first person	INDF	indefinite
2	second person	NEG	negation
3	third person	PREV	preverb
ADD	additive	PSTP	postposition
COP	copula	PSTV	postverb
DEF	definite	PL	plural
DRCT	directional particle	PROX	proximal
EP	epenthetic	PRS	present
EZ	ezafe marker	PST	past
IMP	imperative	PTCP	Participle
IND	indicative	SBJV	Subjunctive

<sup>30</sup> Lenition of plosive consonants is indeed a well-known phenomenon in the area, still awaiting a comprehensive treatment.

<sup>31</sup> Consider, for instance, so-called Pashto ‘deictoids’ (on which see Boyle David 2014: 169-171) or Ossetic preverbs (see Thordarson 2011). More research is also needed to give reason of common processes of univerbation, on which see Moshkalo’s 1988 preliminary remarks on Balochi.





### 3

## Some Balochi Nautical Terms

SARA BELELLI

The following pages contain a selection of Balochi nautical terms extracted from the lexical archive of the Balochi Etymological Dictionary Project,<sup>1</sup> pertaining in particular to the lexical subset indicating boats, ships and other kind of vessels. In spite of a long history of research in the field of maritime culture and its technical terminology across the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf,<sup>2</sup> the nautical vocabulary of the languages of coastal areas of Iran all the way from Khuzestan to Balochistan remain largely underinvestigated.<sup>3</sup> Without any claim of completeness, the list that follows is to be intended as part of the preliminary work for the future compilation of a small lexicon of Balochi naval terms and vessel-parts terminology, whose entries will be included also in the semantic field of ‘material culture’ that is being compiled for the Etymological Dictionary Project. This line of research will be enlarged and deepened by the research group of the PRIN 2020 “Cultural interactions and language contacts: Iranian and non-Iranian languages in contact from the past to the present,” aimed at investigating past and present relationships between languages and peoples, contact phenomena and language change in selected Iranian speaking areas.

<sup>1</sup> University of Naples L’Orientale, Tuscia University, Viterbo, and ISMEO, Rome, on which see Rossi 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Intensive research has been conducted in particular on Arabic dialects of the Arabian Peninsula, especially those of the Gulf coast. See Johnstone, Muir 1964, and the more recent research work of Agius (2005, 2008, 2012, 2019) with extensive bibliography.

<sup>3</sup> The extant sources include some glossaries and wordlists, among which Bausani 1969; Mohebbi 1996; Nurbaxš 1990, 2002; and Lirāvi 2001.



1. *āgbōt* small ship, boat

Term of limited diffusion in Iranian, attested also as Psht. *agbūt*, *agbót* with the meaning ‘steamboat’ (this word is marked as “regional” in Pashtoon; further Psht. synonyms are *orberáy* and the loanword *vāpór*). Bal. *āgbōt* is reported in SHG as equivalent to *bōjīg* ‘boat’ (see below). The word probably entered Bal. ← Ur. *āgbōt* ‘steamboat, steamer,’ interpretable as a complex formation involving Hi./Ur. *āg* ‘fire, heat,’ and *bōt* ‘vessel, earthen vessel boat.’ The attestation in Small (1882: 6) of Hi./Ur. formations such as *lāngbot* ‘longboat’ and *bothūk* ‘boathook’ suggests a borrowing of the second component ← English. Thus, it is probably unrelated to Hi./Ur. *bohīt*, *bauhit* ‘vessel, sheep, boat’ (on which see CDIAL 11461 s.v. *vahitra* ‘boat; square chariot with pole’), as this is more probably a cognate of the Hi./Ur. verb *bahānā*, *bohānā* ‘to set afloat/adrift, launch (a vessel)’ (on which see CDIAL 11453 [and Add.]).

Variants: CoBal. *āgōt* ‘ship’ (EAL); *āgūt*.

2. *bōjīg* (large) boat, ship RaBal., CoBal. | *bōžt* id. EBal.

Term of uncertain etymology. Apparently used in Bal. as generic denomination for ‘boat’ (Gilbertson s.v.: “*Bozhī* appears to be the word in general use”), mainly in connection with medium and large-sized watercrafts. Elfenbein (1989: 354) assumes an Ir. protoform \**bauj-īka-*, which unfortunately has no parallel whatsoever in OIr. languages. A relationship with Prs. *buzi*, *busi* (from Steingass, written with <š>) ‘boat, skiff’ and Ar. *būṣī* ‘river boat’ (see Agius, 2008: 282-283), as suggested in GEB 49, would point to a connection with the Ar. term *būṣ(a)* ‘reed,’ perhaps with reference to the building material. Or rather with the Ar. word *bājī* ‘vaka-wood, Albizia molveanna’ (also dialectal *bāqā*, *bāga*), described in Agius (2005: 31) as “a strong black wood used for the gunwale and weatherboards”? The latter is considered a word of IA origin in Agius (2008: 371) without further explanation. DTB and Gilbertson mark the Bal. term as ‘Arabic loanword.’ Hi./Ur. *bōjh(ā)* ‘ballast (of a boat or ship), cargo’ might be a further cognate.

Variants: *bōjī(k)* (FBG); *bōgī(g)* (EAL).

### 3. *bēṛī* boat

Term of unknown distribution in Bal. dialects, attested also as Psht. *berāy* ‘vessel, ship, barge, boat.’ Certainly related to IA words for ‘boat’ < Skt *bēḍā-* (see CDIAL 9308 [and Add.]; Elfenbein, 1994: 76), among which Hi./Ur. *berā* ‘raft, float, boat, fleet (of boats or ships), timber formed into a raft to be brought down a river;’ Si. *bēṛō*, *bēṛī* ‘(large) boat;’ Sir. *bēṛā* ‘large cargo boat,’ *bēṛī* ‘boat.’ Bal. qualifies as loanword ← an IA language (poss. Si. or Sir.; the word is marked as ‘Sindhi loanword’ in DTB). Qaemmaqami (2018: 114) further relates the set to Ar. *bīraja* (reported as *bārija* ‘warship, battleship, barge’ in Wehr; see Agius, 2008: 328-330 describing it as a ‘deep-sea vessel used also in riverfaring, pirate ship’), that he considers as an old loanword ← IA. The Semitic term might as well be compared to Late Egyptian *bʒjr* ‘transport ship,’ probably entered also in Gr. βάρης ‘Egyptian boat, a kind of raft’ and thence to Latin *bāris*, *barca* ‘bark’ (on which see EDG 202, perhaps all “loans from a Mediterranean substrate?”), although this association is considered “perhaps coincidental” by Agius (2008: 329).

Variants: *bēḍī* (Mayer, also *bēṛīyax* ‘very small boat’).

### 4. *čarpōk* rowing boat, dinghy (in order of size, from smallest: *kaṭī*, *yakdār*, *čarpōk*, *rāčīn*, *larč*, all Co.)

Term of uncertain etymology, denoting a ‘rowing boat,’ probably flat and propelled by oars. The term seems related to the IA set for ‘flat’ s.v. *carpa* in CDIAL 4696 [and Add.], having reflexes mainly in the body domain as ‘palm of hand, flat of hand, slap (i.e. with flat hand)’ and in the domain of material culture as ‘flat clod of earth, dung cake,’ but including also items with the meaning ‘blade of oar.’ A semantic parallel might be observed in Psht. *čapāwī* row (as in rowboat), propelled by oars, Bal. *čapō*, *čāpō* ‘oar’ (< Si., Gilbertson), whence *čappag* ‘rowing gloves’ (CoBal., EAL). EWA iii 179-180 s.v. Skt *capeta-* ‘slap’ states that “das Verhältnis der Wörter für ‚Schlag‘ (*cap°*) und ‚flach‘ (*carp°*) ist nicht geklärt,” but both might ultimately belong to a base, at least partially expressive/onomatopoeic, conveying the notion of ‘pressing, sticking’ (on which cf. CDIAL 4674; Also Ir. and IE? Cf. EDIV 32-33; LIV 334-335).

Variants: *čārpōk* (EAL); *čarpuk* (FBG).



### 5. *gurāb* cargo ship, (large) boat

The Bal. word *gurāb*, also as formant of the complex formations *āpī gurāb* with *āp* ‘water’ and *bāpī gurāb* with *bāp* ‘steam,’ indicates a ‘big cargo ship.’ In combination with the term *bāl* ‘wing,’ i.e. *bālī gurāb*, *gurābbālī*, the word expresses the semantics ‘airplane.’ Agius (2005: 15) describes the *ghurāb* as having “a low and sharp projecting prow and a square stem like that of a galley with two or three masts; it was very broad in proportion to its length and weighed from 150 to 300 tons. [...] There has often been mention of this ship in connection with India from the fifteenth century. We come across the name *ghurāb* in the Mediterranean context identified as a merchant and a war galley but it is not known whether it is one and the same to the Indian Ocean type.” The Bal. word is attested also with the semantics ‘crow, raven, rook,’ which suggests a relationship with Prs. *γurāb* (with the possible variant *jurāb* ‘an empty ship’) reported in Steingass with the meanings ‘the curved part of the edge of a sword or of an axe (with which the blow is struck); a crow, raven, rook, jackdaw; ice, hail, snow; a kind of ship, a grab, corvette; the back part of the head; the prominent part of the buttocks of horses or camels.’ The term is attested also as Ar. *γurāb* ‘crow, raven; occiput, blade (esp. of a hatchet)’ for which a connection with the base  $\sqrt{\gamma rb}$  ‘to go away, depart, leave’ is often assumed. However, note the semantic parallel of French *corvette* denoting a ‘small warship ranking next below a frigate’ < Lat. *corbīta* ‘ship-load, cargo ship,’ considered a derivative < Lat. *corbis* ‘basket’ (EDLIL 135).

Other meanings: crow, raven, rook.

### 6. *jahāz* ship

The Bal. term *jahāz* indicates a big cargo or cruise ship. Attested in Ar. as *jahāz(i)*, it is described in Agius (2005: 228) as an “East African and also southern Red Sea cargo and transport vessel, with similar features to the Southern Arabian *sanbūq* [sv] having a circular ring-oculus painted on the moustache of the bows; a white circle oculus painted on each side of the stem projections of the Red Sea craft.” Probably related to the Ar. base  $\sqrt{jhz}$  ‘to make ready, prepare, arrange, supply, equip; be equipped, furnished, supplied, be ready,’ although this association is considered as “accidental” by Agius (2008: 314-316). Steingass quotes Prs. *jahāz* with



the semantics ‘a camel’s saddle, or the saddle-tree; pudenda mulieris; a ship; (also *jihāz*) paraphernalia, or portion given with a daughter, a trousseau (m.c.); travelling equipage; funeral apparatus,’ also as formant of the complex formation *jahāz-e āhanī* ‘an iron ship, an ironclad.’ Platts lists the Hi./Ur. word *jahāz* with the same semantic range. The term is attested also as Si. *jahāzu* ‘ship.’ Nonetheless, DTB marks the Bal. term as ‘Persian loanword.’

Variants: *jihāz* (Jahandide).

Other meanings: 1) bride’s dowry; 2) airplane.

### 7. *kaṭī* (small) rowing boat

Term of uncertain etymology, described in Jahandide as a “small wooden boat for the transport of the goods necessary for a ship from the shore.” Perhaps a derivative or cognate of Bal. *kaṭ* denoting a ‘cot, bed(stead),’ probably related to the IA set < Skt *khāṭvā-* ‘bedstead, bier, litter’ in CDIAL 3781 [and Add.]. This lexical set is semantically very close to that of (etym. unrelated) Prs. *taxt*, denoting a ‘flat wooden board’ in the first place. If this etymology is correct, we may hypothesize a reference to the watercraft’s flat structure or building material. However, the Bal. denomination for ‘rowing boat’ might as well be traced to the phonologically similar Drav. set in DED<sup>2</sup> 1109 expressing the notion of ‘passing through, traversing, crossing, etc.,’ and including at least one cognate with the semantics ‘boat.’

Variants: *kaṭī* (Jahandide); also called *suddōm* SHG, *suddūm* Jahandide.

### 8. *lānč* launch, motorboat

Equivalent of Prs. *lenj* ‘motorboat,’ a term of wide diffusion in the coastal areas of Iran (especially along the Persian Gulf) to denote a medium-sized, fast boat powered by an engine, used for fishing or for the short-distance transport of goods. The word is commonly considered an adaptation of Portuguese *lancha* ‘barge, launch, motorboat’ with a comparable semantics, whose ultimate origin is uncertain. Indeed, the frequently claimed connection with the name of the ‘spear, lance’ and/or the notion of ‘launching, throwing,’ with reference to the form of the bow and/or the boat’s quickness, is dubious. According to Qaemmaqami (2018:

116), the etymology of Prs. *lenj* should rather be traced to the IA set of Hi./Ur. *ḍōngā* ‘trough, dug-out canoe, boat, boat-shaped vessel,’ *ḍōngī* ‘small boat’ in CDIAL 5568 [and Add.], and its cognates Prs. *duni*, Ar. *dūnīj* denoting a ‘long and quick boat, coastal vessel, lifeboat’ (cf. Agius, 2008: 308), based on a change *ḍ > l* frequently attested in IA languages. However, this development is unrepresented in this specific lexical set, and the derivation remains phonologically problematic. Note that a probable cognate is found also in Malay *lancarān* ‘a type of sailing ship.’

Variants: (?)*larč* large boat (EAL).

#### 9. *mēl* ship, (large) boat

The term *mēl*, of unknown etymology, is reported in Jahandide as synonym of Bal. *gurāb* (see above) with the meaning ‘ship, large boat.’ Any connection with Prs. *mēl*, Ar. *mīl* ‘stem, stern-post, posts at bow and aft to which are fixed the strakes [stem or stern]’ (see Johnstone, Muir 1964: 321; Mohebbi 1996: 132)?

#### 10. *rāčīn* (large) boat

Term of unknown etymology, denoting in Bal. a type of large boat used especially for fishing, and known in Si. as *hōrā*. To be interpreted as a complex form *rā-čīn*?

In order of size, from smallest: *kaṭī*, *yakdār*, *čarpōk*, *rāčīn*, *larč*, all Co. (EAL).

#### 11. *sambūk* sailboat

Loanword ← Ar. *sanbūq/k*, *sunbūq/k* ‘sailboat,’ Prs. *sonbuq* ‘small boat, pinnacle,’ widespread in coastal areas of Iran and the Persian Gulf as denomination for a kind of sailboat with an inclined folding mast. Agius (2008: 235) describes it as a “sailing or motorized vessel; in the Northern Gulf characterized by the low, curved, scimitar-shaped bow and high square stem; in Oman and the Southern Arabian coast it is a double-ended vessel.” Probably a cognate of Gr. *σαμβύκη* ‘triangular instrument with four strings,’ expressing also the meaning ‘scaling ladder, ship-borne siege engine’ (considered “an Oriental loan word of unknown source” in EDG

1304-1305, doubting a borrowing ← Semitic), probably with reference to the shape of the ship's bow. The hypothesis of a relationship with Skt *śambu* 'bivalve shell' and its *-k* derivatives in CDIAL 12316, with a semantic shift 'shell' → 'boat' based on a shape similarity, is considered possible by Qaemmaqami (2018: 118). He nonetheless expresses doubts on the ultimate origin of the word and the direction of borrowing (either from an unattested MĪr. form, or an IA language; the term could either have entered independently into Ar. and coastal languages of Iran, or passed into Ir. languages via Ar.). In either case, the term qualifies as a Wanderwort of wide diffusion in all maritime cultures of the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and beyond, whose paths of transmission are difficult to determine. Also attested since XV c. as Portuguese *sambuco*, *zambuco* 'small Indian coastal boat' (HJ s.v.).

Variants: *sambōk* (Jahandide).

## 12. *tāpū* floating platform raft

Term of uncertain etymology, denoting a kind of raft made of several planks tied together. Probably related to Bal. *tāp* denoting 'the front and rear part of the side of a *lenj* or boat,' also in the complex formations *tāpdār* denoting 'the forepart of a *lenj* which constitutes one third of it' and *tāplahr* with the meaning 'movement of a *lenj* towards the direction where the waves come from, so that its forepart hits the wave straight' (Jahandide).

## 13. *trašt* rowing boat, dinghy

Term of uncertain etymology and limited diffusion in Bal. to denote a kind of 'rowing boat, dinghy.' Secondary Bal. meanings might suggest a connection with names for small containers and vessels (compare, for instance, Prs., Psht., Bal., etc. *tašt* 'metal bowl,' that GLB 270 considers a cognate of Bal. *tās* 'metal bowl, cup, tumbler' ← Ar. *tās(a)* 'round, shallow drinking cup made of metal, drinking vessel, finger bowl; see EDPL 1498) or rather with the set of Bal. *talašt* shallow, with reference to the shape of the watercraft.

Other meanings: 1) rugged mountain or palm tree with a smooth trunk, hard to climb; 2) bowl, cup; 3) shallow, wide.

14. *tūtīn* boat made of rushes

Certainly a derivative of the Ir. word for ‘rushes, reed,’ cf. Prs. *tūt* ‘mulberry; rushes’ and cognates in EDPL 1587 (whose IA origin is dubious, cf. CDIAL 5900 and EWA iii 253 s.v. *tūta* m. ‘mulberry tree,’ probably a “Kulturwort” with widespread cross-borrowing among all regional languages). The word *tūtīn* is attested also in Sistani: “The Seiad fishermen provide a sort of ferry service across the Hamun and the surrounding swamps. Their boats, made of reeds tightly bound together, are usually not more than 10 feet long or more than 4 feet wide; their draft is only a few inches so that they can float over extremely shallow areas. These boats are called *tutins*. They are propelled with poles. The Gaudars use them for driving their cattle out of the swamps” (Fairservis 1961: 26).

15. *yakdār* small rowing boat, canoe

This term denoting a ‘small, single-masted wooden boat,’ commonly propelled by oars, seems a complex formation involving Bal. *yak* one and Bal. *dār* (fire)wood, trunk, thus lit. ‘single-masted,’ or possibly carved from a single piece of wood. Cognates of Bal. *dār* are widespread in the whole Ir. area with the meaning ‘(piece of) wood.’ They are attested also as ‘tree’ since MPr. (compare MPrs. *dār* ‘tree, gallows, wood;’ Prth. <d’r> id., also ‘cross;’ Sogd. <d’rwk(?) , d’rwq> ‘wood?’), and continued with either or both semantics in most Nlr. lgs (Prs. *dār* ‘tree;’ Kurd. *dār* ‘tree, (fire)wood;’ Shghn. *dōrg* ‘wood;’ etc., see Hasandust 2011: 142-143, 153-154). Ir. forms can be derived < a protoform certainly Ir. (Sadovski 2017.573), cf. Av. *dāru-*; Skt (Ved.) *dāru-* ‘trunk, (piece of) wood,’ and IE, cf. Mallory, Adams 2006.156. On this term, see ESIJ ii 358; GLB 55; EDPL 2209; CDIAL 6298 [and Add.]. Consider that terms semantically related to a piece of wood are a common source for the naval general nomenclature in many languages, including Ar. (see Agius 2008: 266-268).

Variants: *yaddār* (with assimilation; blog c/o Ahmed Y. AlMaazmi<sup>4</sup>).

<sup>4</sup> This refers to the social media page ‘Balóci Gálband’ available online at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BalochiGaalband>.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ar. Arabic; Av. Avestan; Bal. Balochi (CoBal., EBal., RaBal.); Gr. Greek; Hi./Ur. Hindi/Urdu; IA Indo-Aryan; IE Indo-European; Ir. Iranian; Kurd. Kurdish; Lat. Latin; MPrs. Middle Persian; NIr. New Iranian; Prth. Parthian; Psht. Pashto; Prs. Persian; Si. Sindhi; Sir. Siraiki; Shghn. Shughni; Sogd. Sogdian; Skt (Ved.) Sanskrit (Vedic).



## Problemi di lessicografia e lessicologia pashto<sup>1</sup>

MATTEO DE CHIARA

### *1. Lessicografia, lessicologia, lessicostatistica ed etimologia pashto*

Il pashto è una lingua iranica parlata da almeno 50 milioni di persone (cfr. Simons, Fennig 2018) in una regione compresa fra Afghanistan orientale (da Kabul a Qandahar) e Pakistan occidentale (fra Swāt, Peshawar, Kalat e Quetta, ma anche da rilevanti minoranze nelle principali città del paese: Karachi, Islamabad, Rawalpindi e Lahore). Locutori pashto si trovano a Dubai e in Malesia, ma anche negli Stati Uniti, in Canada, nel Regno Unito, in Germania, in Iran (maggior quantità della recente diaspora) e nei molti altri paesi in cui sono emigrati i Pashtun nel corso degli ultimi decenni. In Afghanistan il pashto è lingua ufficiale assieme al dari (persiano d'Afghanistan) sin dal 1937, mentre in Pakistan è la lingua regionale delle province di Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KPK, l'antica North-West Frontier Province – NWFP, che oggi include anche le cosiddette FATA – Federally Administered Tribal Areas) e del Balochistan.

Le periodiche crisi militari e politiche in quest'area, assieme al coinvolgimento delle potenze occidentali sin dal XVIII secolo, hanno particolarmente stimolato studi linguistici e lessicografici sul pashto. La lessicografia della lingua pashto, in particolare, ha una storia lunga un paio di secoli, che trova origine nelle prime menzioni del pashto nei lavori di Pallas (1786) e Adelung (1806), per proseguire nel XIX secolo con l'opera di B. Dorn (1847), i lavori di Raverty (1860), Bellew (1867) e Darmesteter (1888-1890).

<sup>1</sup> Ringrazio calorosamente Adriano V. Rossi ed Ela Filippone per la loro attenta rilettura ed i numerosi suggerimenti bibliografici, formali e sostanziali.

Peter Simon Pallas (1741-1811) nella sua opera *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa*, pubblicata a San Pietroburgo nel 1786, presenta 273 parole, organizzate per famiglie semantiche (termini di parentela, lessico naturale, etc.), in 200 lingue. Il pashto occupa il numero 78 e di esso sono registrate solo alcune parole, 82 per l'esattezza, di cui molte errate: infatti, a parte i problemi legati alla trascrizione, troviamo vere e proprie sviste di ordine semantico o formale, come ad esempio, il n. 6 “xur ‘figlia’”, invece di pashto *lur* (il significato di *xur* è ‘sorella’); il n. 33 “ogor ‘spalla’”, invece di pashto *oġa*; il n. 35 “laš ‘mano’”, invece di pashto *las*; il n. 85 “erast ‘tempo’”, invece di pashto *waxt*; il n. 123 “zar ‘argento’”, invece di pashto *spinzar* (composto con *zar* che significa ‘oro’); o il n. 200 “asmaa ‘tuono’”, in realtà ‘cielo’, nella forma corretta *asmān*.

Il lavoro di Johann Christoph Adelung (1732-1806), il *Mithridates*, pubblicato nel 1806, non aggiunge granché al lavoro di Pallas: giusto 7 parole, che tuttavia correggono alcune delle sviste presenti nel *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa*.

La prima cretostomazia del pashto, la *Chrestomathy of the Pushtu or Afghan Language to Which Is Subjoined a Glossary in Afghan and English*, edita a San Pietroburgo nel 1847 da Johannes Albrecht Bernhard Dorn (1805-1881), seguiva la pubblicazione, da parte dello stesso autore, di una delle prime grammatiche in lingue occidentali del pashto, apparsa nel 1840 a San Pietroburgo, come *Grammatische Bemerkungen ueber das Pushtu, oder die Sprache der Afghanen*, con due articoli di integrazione nel 1842 (“Nachträge zur Grammatik der Afghanischen Sprache”) e nel 1845 (“Zusätze zu den Grammatischen Bemerkungen”). Una delle sezioni più interessanti della *Chrestomathy* è senz’altro rappresentata dal glossario finale, che occupa 230 pagine (387-620) con circa 7.000 parole e costituisce il primo glossario bilingue pashto-lingua europea, contenente anche tentativi di interpretazione etimologica.

Ritourneremo sulle problematiche sollevate dal lavoro di Dorn più avanti. Ad ogni modo, fra la fine del XVIII e l’inizio del XIX secolo videro la luce 6 “dizionari”, pubblicati da Pashtun residenti in Afghanistan o in India, a dimostrazione del crescente interesse per questa lingua. Ne faccio rapida menzione qui, anche se se ne potrà trovare una descrizione dettagliata in Kushev 1980: 68-79 e 2001.

Il primo di questi lavori fu composto nel 1773 da Pīr Muhammad Kākar: il *Ma‘rifat al-afghānī* (Apprendimento della lingua afghana), nelle

parole di Kushev (2001: 3) “a textbook whose author pursued the aim to create a guide for studying the Afghan language”: vi si possono trovare liste di parole, espressioni e frasi, ma anche un dizionario generale con cinque sezioni tematiche ed una sezione alfabetica.

L'*Āmad-nāma-yi afghānī* (Introduzione alla lingua afghana), pubblicato a Rampur all'inizio del XIX secolo, nella sezione del dizionario contiene “nouns of kinship, parts of the body, animals, birds, etc. and closes with the months of the solar year” (Kushev 1980: 68). Il *Riyād al-mahabbat* (1806-1807), scritto da Mahabbat Khān, contiene un dizionario pashto-persiano, di cui B. Dorn fece ampio uso per la sua *Chrestomathy*. Nel 1810, Nawwāb Muhammad Irdīdā Khān compose il *Farhang-i irtidā'ī*, in tre lingue, pashto, persiano e hindustani. Quest'opera, secondo Kushev (2001: 8), rimase probabilmente del tutto sconosciuta agli studiosi occidentali di pashto. L'*'Ajā'ib al-lughāt* di Ilahyār Khān, uscito nel 1813, è un dizionario in 4 lingue, pashto, persiano, arabo e hindustani, successivamente molto utilizzato da Raverty per il suo dizionario (1860). Ilahyār consultò 26 dizionari di persiano, pubblicati tra il 1220 ed il 1736 (v. Hanifi 2013: 70). L'ultimo lavoro appartenente a questo gruppo, l'*Afrīdī-nāma* or *Farhang-i Afrīdī*, pubblicato nel 1815, è un piccolo dizionario in 5 lingue, persiano, pashto, kashmiri, inglese e hindustani, a scopo esclusivamente pratico (Kushev 2001: 8).

A parte queste opere “indigene”, sarà evidente come la maggior parte dei lavori citati in precedenza fu pubblicata a San Pietroburgo, come ebbe a lamentare già nel 1849 Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890), nella sua recensione alla *Chrestomathy* di Dorn:

I cannot conclude this brief sketch of Affghan literature without an expression of regret that during our occupation of the country we took so little interest in what was around us, and that the first sensible work published in Pushtú should have appeared at St. Petersburg instead of at London or Calcutta (Burton 1849: 61).

La stessa critica viene formulata anche da Henry George Raverty (1825-1906), un ufficiale inglese di stanza nella North-West Frontier Province, qualche anno dopo:

The Russian have, for some time past, paid great attention to, and made great progress in, the study of the Afghān language; the Imperial Government having, as usual, been most liberal with its aid for that especial

purpose, and the Pushto is now taught, as well as other Oriental tongues, at St. Petersburg, although the Russians do not hold an inch of land where it is spoken. The Russian capital is, indeed, the only city in the world where the Afghān language is made a branch of study. The British authorities in the Panjāb, though ruling over a large portion of Afghānistān Proper, containing nearly two millions of people, to whom Pushto is the mother tongue, have hitherto wholly neglected it (Raverty 1860: xii).

Seguendo l'esempio di Dorn, nel 1860 lo stesso Raverty pubblicava un dizionario pashto-inglese, basato soprattutto sui dialetti yusufzai utilizzati nella piana di Peshawar e nelle regioni limitrofe, fino alla valle dello Swāt.<sup>2</sup> Questo pregevole dizionario rimane tutt'oggi un valido strumento soprattutto per il lessico dialettale,<sup>3</sup> pur non essendo esente da varie carenze metodologiche, come vedremo più avanti.

Qualche anno dopo, nel 1867, Henry Walter Bellew (1834-1892), un medico appartenente anch'egli all'esercito britannico di stanza nella provincia nord-occidentale del Rāj britannico, pubblicava un suo dizionario, basato sulle stesse varietà dialettali yusufzai del dizionario di Raverty. Una novità di questo dizionario, che tuttavia rimane di valore più limitato rispetto a quello del predecessore, è la presenza di un glossario finale inglese-pashto.

L'ultimo di questi primi lavori lessicografici in ordine di tempo è lo scarno glossario contenuto in *Chants populaires des afghans* di James Darmesteter (1849-1894), pubblicato a Parigi nel 1888-1890. I *Chants populaires des afghans* segnano la fine del dibattito sull'appartenenza genealogica del pashto:

La phonétique et le lexique de l'afghan s'expliquent comme si l'afghan était dérivé du zend ou d'un dialecte très voisin du zend. L'afghan serait donc, pratiquement, au regard du zend ce que le persan est au regard du vieux perse: il ne nous manque que le pehlvi correspondant. Mais ce pehlvi est moins nécessaire, la corruption phonétique et, comme on verra, la corruption morphologique étant moins avancées en afghan

<sup>2</sup> Il *Ganj-e puṣṭo*, parte del *Khalid-i afghani* di T.P. Hughes, pubblicato nel 1872 (traduzioni di Plowden 1875 e Roos-Keppel et al. 1901) riproduce la stessa varietà dialettale. T.P. Hughes era un missionario protestante giunto nel 1865 all'Edwardes College di Peshawar, la prima (ed unica fino al 1913) istituzione d'insegnamento superiore, istituita nel 1855.

<sup>3</sup> Il grande valore di questo dizionario e la sensibilità linguistica di grande modernità del suo autore sono riconosciuti anche da Shah Mahmoud Hanifi (2011 e 2013).

qu'en persan. L'afghan nous offrirait donc pour le zend ce témoin moderne qu'on lui cherchait en vain et que l'on pouvait désespérer de jamais trouver, et les tribus sauvages de la passe de Khaibar, les fanatiques Musulmans des monts Sulaiman, auraient conservé sur les lèvres, mieux que les Parsis de Bombay, la parole des mages antiques et de Zoroastre (Darmesteter 1888-1890: LXIV-LXV).

Con questa presa di posizione, infatti, Darmesteter sanciva definitivamente l'appartenenza del pashto alla famiglia delle lingue iraniche orientali, che peraltro era già stata avanzata da Victor Henry (1850-1907) nel 1882, nei suoi *Études afghanes*:

L'afghan est une langue éranienne et exclusivement éranienne. Le phonétisme afghan est plus éranien que prâkritique, malgré l'extrême abondance des linguales, qu'il faut considérer comme importées de l'étranger. La morphologie, que nous venons d'examiner, est encore bien plus concluante. [...] Mais c'est surtout dans la déclinaison et la conjugaison que le parallélisme éclate dans toute sa force: chaque fois que, dans une désinence évidemment proethnique, le zend s'écarte un peu du sanskrit, c'est au premier que l'afghan se rattache; dans les cas bien rares (deux ou trois au plus) où il en est autrement, la forme afghane fait bien moins songer au sanskrit qu'à une forme bactrienne un peu plus rapprochée du sanskrit que celle qui nous a été transmise par le zend [...] les caractères par lesquels l'afghan se rapproche un peu davantage, non pas du sanskrit, remarquons-le bien, mais, ce qui est bien différent, des idiomes prâkritiques [...] particularités curieuses sans doute et pleines d'intérêt, mais accidentelles, mais modernes, mais absolument étrangères à la grammaire proprement dite, due évidemment à une influence considérable exercée sur l'afghan par les idiomes prâkritiques depuis l'époque où ils ont pris naissance, c'est-à-dire depuis deux à trois mille ans, mais sans valeur pour démontrer une affinité indo-éranienne, qui, si elle était admise, remonterait nécessairement à la période proethnique, à un temps où n'existait pas même en germe une seule de ces formations hystérogènes (Henry 1882: 94-95).

Il volume di Darmesteter, oltre a contenere una notevole antologia di scritti in pashto inediti, in poesia e in prosa, include un'introduzione grammaticale, in cui spicca il primo trattato di fonetica storica del pashto, ed un glossario finale, come detto piuttosto scarno.

Fra l'opera di Darmesteter, alla fine del XIX secolo, ed i primi lavori lessicografici degli studiosi sovietici, alla fine della prima metà del XX secolo, possiamo registrare tre lavori di spicco, ancora una volta prodotti

da britannici (non si dimentichi che quest'epoca è a cavallo fra la seconda e la terza guerra anglo-afghana): la grammatica del dialetto waziri di John Gordon Lorimer (1870-1914) del 1902; nel 1915, *Pushtu, part I. Syntax of Colloquial Pashto*, di David Lockhart Robertson Lorimer (1876-1962); infine, il dizionario di pashto di George Waters Gilbertson (1860-1941), intitolato *The Pakkhto Idiom: a Dictionary*, del 1932.

Il movente militare della grammatica di Lorimer è ancora evidente, come per i lavori di Raverty e Bellew in precedenza:

It is hoped that this Waziri Grammar and Vocabulary may be of some assistance to officers who, after acquiring the Pashto of Peshawar, are brought into contact with the Waziris of the Bannu District or of Waziristan (Lorimer 1902: i).

Se Raverty e Bellew si erano concentrati sul dialetto yusufzai della parte settentrionale della North-West Frontier Province, Lorimer si concentra su un'area più meridionale, la regione di Bannu. Il dialetto waziri è uno dei più divergenti, in quanto contiene la cosiddetta 'metafonia waziri' (pashto standard *ā* = waziri *o*: *plar* = *plor*; pashto standard *o* = waziri *e*: *mor* = *mer*; pashto standard *u* = waziri *i*: *lur* = *lir*),<sup>4</sup> ed è difficile da comprendere persino per locutori pashto nativi:

A Pathan of the northern border lately arrived in the Waziri country, is far from understanding all that he hears, and cannot always make himself understood by the ordinary villager. After a short time, he is able to converse freely with Waziris; but he never acquires a perfect command of Waziri, in spite of its close relationship to his mother tongue. The difficulty to a British officer is of course much greater, even if he has a good knowledge of Peshawar Pashto (Lorimer 1902: i).

Lorimer fornisce numerose corrispondenze fra pashto standard e waziri, anche a livello consonantico. La sezione più corposa è rappresentata dal glossario finale, assai utile ancora oggi per il lessico del dialetto waziri. Il lavoro di Lorimer su un dialetto intermedio (*manjanəy*) rimarrà isolato (a parte il volume X [1921] del *Linguistic Survey of India* di George Abraham Grierson, contenente testi in vari dialetti pashto), perlomeno fino al 1994, con la pubblicazione della grammatica di dzadrani ad opera di Daniel Septfonds.

<sup>4</sup> Per la metafonia waziri ed i vari dialetti del pashto, v. De Chiara, Septfonds 2019: 33-44, capitolo 3, "Les sources de variations dialectales".

Lorimer si differenzia dai suoi predecessori Raverty, Bellew, Trumpp<sup>5</sup> e Roos-Keppel.<sup>6</sup> A differenza di essi, infatti, Lorimer si propone di rispondere ad interrogativi personali concreti sulla grammatica del pashto:

In my own case after mastering the intricacies of the Pashtu Verb, and a sufficiency of the less common Plural and Feminine forms, I soon found myself faced by a host of problems of syntax and usage which had to be fought out and solved before any progress towards a real knowledge of the language could be made. The present work is the result of my endeavour to solve these problems for myself (Lorimer 1915: v).

In coda alla grammatica sono collocati due glossari, inglese-pashto e pashto-inglese, di 50 e 60 pagine rispettivamente, il cui interesse metodologico verrà discusso più avanti.

L'opera del maggiore Gilbertson è un dizionario inglese-pashto della lingua quotidiana in due volumi di quasi 1.000 pagine. Si tratta di un lavoro notevole, soprattutto per l'ampia fraseologia, destinato a "those who have already made some progress in the language. It is simple enough, however, to be used by the beginner" (p. viii). Gilbertson fu assistito da tre parlanti provenienti dalle tre principali aree dialettali dell'area pashtofona: Árif Ullah, yúsufzai, Makhmúd, afrídí, e Alí Akbar Khán, qandahárá. Questa tipologia di pubblicazione rimase abbastanza isolata nel campo della linguistica pashto (a parte le varie compilazioni di testi destinate agli esami di lingua [*Examinations*] cui dovevano sottoporsi gli ufficiali britannici per le progressioni di carriera: v., fra gli altri, Cox 1911, la cui seconda parte è costituita dai "Papers set at higher standard Pushtu examinations" dal 1873 al 1911; cfr. in merito De Chiara 2015), né, apparentemente, vide mai la luce il *New English-Pakkkhto Colloquial Dictionary*, dello stesso autore, annunciato nella prefazione del dizionario del 1932 (p. xiv).

<sup>5</sup> Autore di una grammatica del pashto, pubblicata nel 1873. Ernest Trumpp vedeva nel pashto predominanti caratteristiche prakrite: "The Paštō however is by no means a Prākrit idiom, like the Sindhī, Panjābī etc., but an old independent language, forming the first transition from the Indo-Ārian to the Irānian family and therefore participating of the characteristics of both, but still with predominant Prākrit features. This is also fully borne out by the geographical position of the Paštō between the Indian and Irānian idioms" (p. XII).

<sup>6</sup> Autore di un manuale di pashto, *A Manual of Pushtu*, pubblicato nel 1901 a Londra in collaborazione con Qazi Abdul Ghani Khan, George Olaf Roos-Keppel fu anche presidente del "Central Committee of Examiners in Pashto".

Sempre in quest'epoca tra fine XIX e inizio XX secolo, assistiamo ai primi lavori etimologici di grande livello: Wilhelm Ludwig Geiger (1856-1943), a fine Ottocento, e Georg Valentin von Munthe af Morgenstierne (1892-1978), nella generazione successiva, possono essere considerati coloro che hanno dato un fondamento scientifico moderno agli studi etimologici sul pashto. Il primo in *Etymologie und Lautlehre des Afghānischen* (1897) studia l'etimologia di 389 voci e fornisce la più sistematica trattazione della fonetica storica del pashto dopo quella di Darmesteter, che peraltro Geiger ricalca molto da vicino. Il secondo è l'autore dell'unico dizionario etimologico del pashto ancora oggi esistente: *An Etymological Vocabulary of Pashto* (EVP, 1927, riedito postumo nel 2004 come *NEVP: A New Etymological Vocabulary of Pashto*, sulla base delle annotazioni accumulate in mezzo secolo dallo stesso Morgenstierne, con risultati assai controversi: v. le recensioni, tutte critiche di Cheung (2005), Tremblay (2005), Septfonds (2006) e Witczak (2006), e di numerosi articoli di etimologia pashto, oltre che più generalmente iranica (particolarmente notevole Morgenstierne 1942).

Metodologicamente, Morgenstierne dà prova di grande onestà, includendo nell'EVP molte discussioni etimologiche con la dicitura "etym. unknown": si tratta di parole per le quali lo stesso Morgenstierne "can suggest no explanation, but which may be genuine". È un'innovazione interessante rispetto alla metodologia dell'epoca, secondo un'abitudine che Morgenstierne manterrà tutta la vita. Nel frattempo, gli studiosi sovietici avevano ripreso la produzione lessicografica (al lavoro sui dizionari si affiancarono comunque studi più specifici come Aslanov 1947, che si concentra sui prestiti turco-mongoli in pashto), in stretta collaborazione con le Accademie pashto afghana e pakistana.

Al giorno d'oggi abbiamo a disposizione molti dizionari pashto monolingui e bilingui, alcuni di grandi dimensioni. Esamineremo in particolare Aslanov 1966; pashto-pashto (*tašrihi*) 1979; Daryāb 1994; Akbar 2015.

Il dizionario di Aslanov (1966) è probabilmente ancora oggi, a oltre 50 anni dalla sua pubblicazione, la migliore risorsa lessicografica bilingue per il pashto. Contenente oltre 50.000 parole, è caratterizzato da grande attenzione nella fase della compilazione, tanto che è difficile ravvisarvi sviste, imprecisioni o difetti formali. In ogni voce si possono trovare: il lemma in grafia pashto, la trascrizione con accento, la codifica grammaticale e le relative informazioni, quando necessarie, la fonte dialettale, in-

fine le glosse russe, con ampia fraseologia. Di questo dizionario esiste anche una traduzione inglese, pubblicata nel 2009 da Zeeya A. Pashtoon, non esente da imprecisioni di traduzione, refusi e sviste (per la quale rimando alla recensione De Chiara 2017a).

Il dizionario descrittivo pashto-pashto (*tašrihi*) fu pubblicato nel 1979 dall'Accademia pashto di Kabul in 4 volumi, ristampato successivamente in 5 e, da ultimo, in 6 volumi. Include oltre 50.000 parole, corredate da trascrizioni con accento, informazioni grammaticali, seppur non sistematiche, e citazioni letterarie.

Nel 1994 fu pubblicato a Peshawar da Qalandar Momand il dizionario monolingue Daryāb. Compatto, in un solo volume, contiene oltre 70.000 parole e spesso indica anche l'origine dei prestiti. Fino a poco tempo fa era il dizionario monolingue più ampio, ma abbiamo oggi a disposizione anche il dizionario di Khayal Bukhari, il *Pašto Akeđimi Luyat*, pubblicato nel 2018 a Peshawar, contenente oltre 85.000 parole. Da ultimo, il dizionario generale pashto-francese, pubblicato a Parigi da Wardak Akbar nel 2015, annovera oltre 40.000 parole: sono incluse espressioni polirematiche, ma non fraseologia o esemplificazioni (cfr. De Chiara 2017b).

Accanto a questi dizionari di grandi dimensioni, ne esistono di più ridotti, per lo più bilingui pashto-russo, che tendono a offrire un lessico più limitato, ma di sicuro uso corrente: ad es. Lebedev e Jacevič (1982), contenente 2.500 parole, Zudin (1950) e Kabir e Akbar (1999), contenenti circa 12.000 parole ciascuno.

Alcuni lavori, per lo più afgiani e pakistani, sono dedicati anche alla lessicostatistica. Si vedano, in particolare: il *Bunyadi pashto* (Pashto fondamentale) di Xatak, Nyāz, Tāir, Mayn e Ahmad (1965 [1977<sup>2</sup>]), che include 2.400 parole, e lo *Statistical Dictionary of the Pashto Language* di Daulat Mohammad Lubin (1974), che comprende 3.151 parole. Purtroppo, le ricerche di Wilma L. Heston per un dizionario del pashto ad ampia base statistica, derivante da un corpus di un milione di parole, rimangono inedite: è disponibile unicamente un documento pdf che riproduce uno stato intermedio del lavoro (Heston 2005, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED347841>) nonché 1.000 parole del *core vocabulary*, che si trovano nel sito dell'Università di Chicago dedicato ai dizionari dell'Asia del sud (<http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/heston/index.html>).

Prima di concludere questa breve rassegna, è opportuno menzionare l'unico lavoro esplicitamente dedicato allo studio sistematico della lessi-

cologia della lingua pashto: Kalinina 1972.<sup>7</sup> Il lavoro di Zoja M. Kalinina (*Očerki po leksikologii sovremennogo literaturnogo puštu*) intende principalmente “studiare e descrivere i problemi del pashto letterario contemporaneo”, ovvero “le caratteristiche della parola come unità essenziale del lessico di una data lingua; l’arricchimento del vocabolario del pashto attraverso diversi tipi di formazione delle parole e prestiti da altre lingue; la differenziazione del lessico sulla base delle relazioni semantiche e fonetiche tra le parole e delle caratteristiche semantico-strutturali delle parole” (p. 3, mia traduzione). Questo studio, inoltre, offre un’analisi approfondita di sinonimi,<sup>8</sup> contrari,<sup>9</sup> omonimi<sup>10</sup> e formazione delle parole.

<sup>7</sup> Ma si vedano anche Kalinina 1971 e Sikoev 1971 e 1976, sulla formazione delle parole.

<sup>8</sup> Interessante, tra gli altri, il suo trattamento del campo semantico degli aggettivi indicanti ‘grande’, ‘eminente’, ‘eccelso’, ‘importante’, volto a sottolineare come difficilmente tutti i significati apparentemente sinonimici siano interamente sovrapponibili. Eccone alcuni esempi (*ibid.*, p. 23): *loy* significa: 1) ‘grande’, ‘grosso’ (*loy kor* ‘una grande casa’); 2) ‘adulto’ (*loy saráy* ‘un uomo adulto’); 3) ‘eminente’, ‘eccelso’ (*loy poh* ‘un eminente erudito’, *loy dawlát* ‘uno Stato eminente’); 4) ‘illustre’, ‘rispettabile’; 5) ‘notevole’, ‘importante’ (*lóya xabára* ‘un evento notevole’); *yaṭ* vuol dire: 1) ‘grande’, ‘grosso’ (*yaṭ kor* ‘una grande casa’); 2) ‘voluminoso’, ‘pieno’, ‘corpulento’, ‘obeso’; 3) ‘eminente’, ‘grande’ (*yaṭ saráy* ‘un uomo eminente’); 4) ‘notevole’, ‘serio’ (*yaṭa xabára* ‘un problema serio’, ‘un fatto notevole’); 5) ‘importante’ (di Stati); *stār*: 1) ‘grande’, ‘grosso’ (*stār kor* ‘una grande casa’); 2) ‘eminente’ (*stār dawlát* ‘uno Stato importante’, *stār poh* ‘un erudito eminente’). Si possono così individuare a partire da *yaṭ* serie sinonimiche del tipo: 1) ‘grande’, ‘grosso’: *yaṭ - loy - stār*; 2) ‘voluminoso’, ‘pieno’, ‘obeso’: *yaṭ - čāy - corb*; 3) ‘eminente’, ‘grande’: *yaṭ - loy - stār - pyāwəray*; 4) ‘notevole’, ‘serio’: *yaṭ - muhím - stār - loy*; 5) ‘importante’: *yaṭ - stār - loy* (*ibid.*, p. 23).

<sup>9</sup> Per esempio (*ibid.*, pp. 29-30), *soṛ* ‘freddo’ e *tod* ‘caldo’: *soṛ* significa: 1) ‘freddo’, ‘che ha bassa temperatura’ (*saṛá hawá* ‘un tempo freddo’); 2) ‘freddo’, ‘insensibile’ (*soṛ harkəlay* ‘una fredda accoglienza’); 3) ‘freddo’, ‘che non ha riscaldamento’, ‘riscaldato in maniera insufficiente’ (*saṛá xúna* ‘una stanza fredda’); 4) ‘severo’, ‘crudele’ (*soṛ saṛáy* ‘un uomo severo’); 5) fig. ‘freddo’ (di guerra - *soṛ jang*); *tod*: 1) ‘caldo’, ‘afoso’ (*tawdá hawá* ‘un tempo afoso’); 2) ‘caldo/pesante’ (di vestito); 3) ‘caloroso’, ‘cordiale’ (*tod harkəlay* ‘una calorosa accoglienza’); 4) ‘caldo’, ‘fervente’, ‘animato’, ‘concitato’ (*tod saṛáy* ‘un uomo fervente’, *tawdá wayná* ‘un discorso concitato’); 5) ‘animato’, ‘vivace’ (di commercio); 6) ‘intenso’, ‘caldo’, ‘accanito’ (di battaglia, lotta - *tawdá jagrá* ‘una battaglia accanita’). Non per tutti i sensi di ciascuna voce si ha lo stesso antonimo: nell’esempio in questione sono antonimi in questi aggettivi il primo, il secondo ed il terzo significato. Dal quarto senso in poi sono antonimi di *soṛ* piuttosto gli aggettivi *narm* ‘mite’, ‘tenero’ e *zəsvānday* ‘buono’, ‘sensibile’ (*ibid.*).

<sup>10</sup> Per esempio: <sup>1</sup>اتلس *atlas* ‘raso’ (tessuto), <sup>2</sup>اتلاس ‘18’, <sup>3</sup>اتلاس *atlas* ‘atlante geografico’; oppure, اردو <sup>1</sup>*urdú* ‘armata, esercito’, <sup>2</sup>*urdú* ‘la lingua urdu’, omonimi sia nella grafia che nella pronuncia, ed in tutte le forme della declinazione.

## 2. *Problemi di metodologia nella lessicografia pashto*

Tutte le opere qui menzionate presentano un corpus lessicografico misto, rappresentato da lessico realmente in uso, lessico letterario, ma anche lessico presente nei dizionari precedenti. Infatti, il lessico raccolto e pubblicato da tutti questi studiosi ha via via accresciuto i dizionari dei successori, sicché, se, da un lato, è vero che oggi giorno anche un dizionario come ad esempio quello di Raverty è non solo più che affidabile, ma addirittura fondamentale per la regione del Pakistan nord-occidentale e la valle dello Swāt, dall'altro è altrettanto vero che questo lavoro, come gli altri, è complessivamente obsoleto e in vari punti contiene veri e propri errori. Questi errori sono stati veicolati e moltiplicati nei lavori successivi, con l'evidente conseguenza che solo parte del lessico incluso nella quasi totalità dei dizionari ha avuto nel passato ed ha oggi un uso reale, mentre numerose sono le voci puramente letterarie o addirittura frutto di erronee registrazioni, ripetizioni di incomprensioni, *ghostwords*, ecc. Interessante, a questo riguardo, un'osservazione di Dorn già formulata a metà Ottocento (1847, pp. XII-XIII):

The most difficult and irksome task which I had to fulfil in order to make the work answer the purpose for which it was undertaken, was the composition of the Glossary; the groundwork of which is the vocabulary furnished by Muhabbat Khan; nor did I think myself at liberty, to omit a single word inserted by the latter with the only exception of the names of Afghan tribes and territories not occurring in the Chrestomathy. But neither the words found therein, nor those given by Mr. Elphinstone, Klaproth, Eversmann, Leach etc. will suffice for the reader of continuous Afghan composition. I was frequently obliged to recur either to the Persian or Hindustani dictionary to make out the signification of unknown words borrowed from those idioms, but which in the mouth of the Afghans had undergone so entire an alteration as to leave almost no discernible trace of their original orthography. In spite of the most careful and unwearied researches, I must leave some words without having ascertained their true meaning.

Questa tradizionale modalità ricompare molto chiaramente nella composizione dei successivi dizionari di Raverty (1860) e Bellew (1867):

This work includes the result of my own researches during the last twelve years together with the whole of the words contained in the very rare, though not extensive, lexicographical works existing on the

Pushto language — the *Æjā'īb-ul-Lughat* ('Curiosities of Language') of Nawwāb Allah Yār *Khān*, of the Barech tribe, and the *Rī'az-ul-Mahabbat* ('Gardens of Friendship') by Nawwāb Hāfiz Mahabbat *Khān*, — both explained in Persian; the whole of which have, whenever the slightest doubt or variation existed, been tested and compared, and submitted by learned Afghāns, both in the eastern and western parts by Afghānistān, as well as to other persons of various tribes; in fact, to all whose assistance I could command, and they have not been a few [...] (Raverty 1860: xxi).

Bellew (1867), dal canto suo, riconosce un debito unicamente nei confronti di Raverty:

In compiling this Dictionary of the Puk<sup>kh</sup>to language, at the end of which I have added a reversed part in English and Puk<sup>kh</sup>to, my acknowledgements are due for the aid derived from Raverty's Dictionary, though, in many instances, we differ as to the meaning of certain words, such as *tsak<sup>kh</sup>kūrai*, *māndah*, *kishor*, etc., etc., as well as in more important particular respecting the family and structure of the language (Bellew 1867: xi).

Questo tipo di problematiche sono comunque comuni a tutta la lessicografia iranica di eredità ottocentesca. Vale la pena citare qui quanto scriveva nel 2017 Adriano V. Rossi in *Balochistan Review* a proposito delle problematiche presenti nella lessicografia balochi; ognuno dei punti da lui elencati è riferibile nella stessa misura anche al pashto:

- (a) incorrect identification of the phonetic shape of the forms selected as the *headwords* and their *lexicographical variants* due to the multi-variety *idiolects* of informants; recording errors caused by contrastive phonemics problems (English-speaking describers are notoriously incapable of fixing the vowel nuances in any linguistic variety they are describing); errors of transcription from fieldnotes to the printed text or, as in frequent cases of scholarly bequests, errors of interpretation by the posthumous editor; misprints (which are lakhs in the case of diacritic marks, especially in the publications printed in the Middle East and British India, where e.g. vowels, single vs. double consonants, etc. were also confused);
- (b) ambiguous sense *discrimination*, in the case of erroneous collocation of (a set of) item(s) within the **vocabulary system** or of semantic interference in informants' idiolects (which, in view of the complex, multilingual repertoires, are at the same time intradialectal, intralinguistic and interlinguistic); undue inference by the describer, etc.;

(c) erroneous attribution to a dialectal area, when the describer accepts the informant's statement: "in the area X they say Y" without checking it; or because of intra- or interdialectal interference in the (extremely frequent) case of internal (and/or nomadic) migrations, and consequent incoherent selection of the *main form* in the *lemmatisation* process;

(d) erroneous sociolinguistic evaluation, when the describer's competence is insufficient to ensure the identification of technical and other jargons etc., or to recognize the peculiar specifications of a particular type of text (religious, sententious, ironic, etc.) (Rossi 2017: 47).

A titolo di esempio, possiamo esaminare la componente indo-aria del lessico pashto nella *Chrestomathy* di Dorn, dove si elencano circa 130 parole di origine indo-aria. Molte di queste parole si trovano anche nel dizionario di Raverty ed è evidente il debito di quest'ultimo verso il glossario dello stesso Dorn, sia da un punto di vista lessicografico sia etimologico. Presenterò qui di seguito alcuni esempi di corrispondenze tra i lavori di Dorn e Raverty e le differenti scelte adottate volta per volta dal secondo.

Molte delle parole incluse nel lavoro di Dorn appartengono al vocabolario specializzato, ad esempio botanico. In questi casi, la lingua d'origine indicata in Raverty e Bellew è esattamente la stessa: cfr., per esempio, Dorn *ārḥān* 'the tree from which castor oil is made' ← Hind. *araṇḍ*, Raverty *arhand* 'the Palma Christi, or castor-oil tree', Bellew *id.* 'the castor-oil tree (*ricinus communis*)'; Aslanov, Akbar *id.* — Cfr. Platts 41 *araṇḍ* (Hindustani) [Sanskrit *eraṇḍa*] 'the tree from the fruit of which castor-oil is made, *Ricinus communis* or *Palma Christi*' (v. anche T2517).

In qualche altro caso, l'origine della parola indicata da Dorn, pur essendo palesemente errata, è stata mantenuta invariata in Raverty: Dorn *uljā* 'entanglement, perplexity, intricacy' ← Hind. *uljhāo*, Raverty *id.*, mancante in Bellew; Aslanov, Akbar *id.* — In questo caso, l'origine corretta è ← turco: v. Aslanov 1947 e De Chiara 2015.

Talvolta vi sono lievi differenze nella forma in cui si presenta il lemma, probabilmente dovute alle differenti competenze linguistiche pashto di Raverty: Dorn *ṭopī* 'hat' ← Hind. *ṭopi*, Raverty Bellew *ṭopəy* 'cap, hat, helmet, bowl, the cup of a pipe'; Aslanov, Akbar *id.* — Cfr. urdu *ṭopi*, siraiḱī *ṭopa*, etc. In altri casi, il significato citato è errato, probabilmente per confusione con il significato della corrispondente parola hindustani: Dorn *ṭol* 'hamlet' ← Hind., Raverty *ṭolaey* 'company, society, assembly, congress, levy, gather-

ing', ma *tol* in pashto è un aggettivo col significato di 'all, etc.?'; Bellew non fornisce alcuna origine; Aslanov, Akbar *id.* — Cfr. hindi *tol* 'hamlet, party', *ṭolā* 'group, herd of bulls'; *ṭolī* 'pack of wolves' (T5483 \**ṭōla*- 'party').

Altre parole sono di uso assai limitato, come i nomi dei mesi di origine indiana, al giorno d'oggi usciti dall'uso quotidiano ed usati solo nelle regioni più orientali dell'area pashtofona: Dorn *mangár* 'the second month of the winter' ← Hind. *aghan*, Raverty *id.* 'the name of the eighth month of the Hindū calendar, used by the Eastern Afghāns in agricultural matters', Bellew *id.*; Aslanov *regional*, mancante in Akbar — Cfr. sanscrito *mārgasīras* 'the month November – December': pali prakrito *mag-gasira*, sindhi *maṅghīru*, lahndi *maṅghir*, panjabi *magher*, *magghar* (T10076). V. De Chiara 2018.

Infine, qualche vocabolo, non più in uso al giorno d'oggi e probabilmente di uso raro già a inizio Novecento, è ben presto scomparso dai dizionari successivi, dimostrandosi così, accanto ad una passiva ricezione di parte del lessico, anche un'attiva rielaborazione da parte dei successivi autori: ad es. Dorn *parəl* 'to tear, to rend' ← hindustani *phārnā*, mancante in tutti gli altri dizionari.

Nella preparazione di un dizionario moderno della lingua pashto,<sup>11</sup> sarà opportuno tenere presente i seguenti elementi, tutti ugualmente indispensabili nella lessicografia moderna:

(1) costituzione di una griglia di base basata su *corpora* linguistici di ampie dimensioni. Un esempio delle principali categorie da cui estrarre il lessico incluso nel *corpus* si potrà ravvisare nelle scelte operate da De Mauro et al. (1993: 35):

1. scambio bidirezionale faccia a faccia con presa di parola libera (conversazione in tutte le sue possibili forme);

<sup>11</sup> È in corso di pubblicazione, presso l'ISMEO-Associazione Internazionale di Studi sull'Africa e il Mediterraneo (Roma), il primo dizionario pashto-italiano di medie dimensioni, frutto della collaborazione presso l'INALCO fra l'autore di questo scritto e Habib Kabir. Oltre ai 7.000 vocaboli del lessico di base (cfr. De Mauro 1980 [2003<sup>12</sup>], in particolare p. 117), il dizionario includerà derivati, composti e locuzioni polirematiche, per arrivare ad un corpus di circa 15.000 vocaboli. La scelta del lessico è stata operata sulla base dei lessici statistici summenzionati, *corpora* scritti (rappresentati da articoli di giornale, letteratura classica e opere letterarie miscellanee), verifiche da parte di locutori. Naturalmente, tutte le voci sono state controllate sui grandi dizionari monolingui e bilingui citati in precedenza. Il pubblico al quale il dizionario si rivolge è rappresentato da quanti hanno a che fare con il pashto, a vario titolo: volontari nel campo umanitario, diplomatici e funzionari di ONG, studiosi, linguisti ed iranisti, etc. Le scelte lessicografiche operate rispecchiano i principi qui enunciati.

2. scambio bidirezionale non faccia a faccia con presa di parola libera (conversazioni telefoniche);
  3. scambio bidirezionale faccia a faccia con presa di parola non libera (dibattiti, interviste, interrogazioni ecc.);
  4. scambio unidirezionale in presenza di destinatario/i (lezioni, conferenze, omelie, comizi ecc.);
  5. scambio unidirezionale o bidirezionale a distanza (trasmissioni radiofoniche e televisive);
- (2) utilizzazione del lavoro delle Accademie di pashto afgane e pakistane nella costruzione del lessico moderno: le ricerche lessicografiche effettuate da decenni dalle Accademie, infatti, costituiscono oggi uno strumento fondamentale da cui non si può prescindere. I risultati di queste ricerche sono apprezzabili nei numerosi dizionari monolingui e bilingui pubblicati.<sup>12</sup> Questa utilizzazione dovrà guidare anche nella scelta degli standard e della equilibrata quantità di lessico base e del lessico dialettale. Sebbene i dialetti pashto mostrino una sostanziale omogeneità morfologica e la maggior parte delle variazioni si verifichi nella fonetica, non possiamo trascurare importanti differenze lessicali che oppongono i dialetti afgani ai dialetti pakistani:<sup>13</sup> un esempio per

<sup>12</sup> Fra i principali strumenti lessicografici, bilingui o monolingui, pubblicati dalle Accademie pashto, a parte quelli già menzionati, possiamo annoverare dizionari pashto-dari (*Pashto Sind*, 7.000 parole, pubblicato da Mohammad Gul Khan Momand nel 1938 a Kabul; *Spec̄le Pashto*, 10.000 parole, pubblicato nel 1940 a Kandahar da Lal Mohammad e Abdul Hai Habibi; *Pashto Qamus*, in due volumi, ad opera della Pašto Tol̄na, Kabul 1952-1954) e dari-pashto (*Afghan Qamus*, *Farsi pah Pushto – Afghan Dictionary*, *Persian into Pashto*, pubblicato a Kabul da Abdullah Afghan Nawis); plurilingui (*Da Afghanistan da dzino zhabo aw lahjo qamus – A Dictionary of Some Languages and Dialects of Afghanistan*, pubblicato da Shah Abdullah Badakhshi nel 1960); urdu-pashto (*Urdu Pashto Qamus [Urdu into Pashto Dictionary]*, pubblicato a Peshawar nel 1969 da Syed Anwarul Haq) e pashto-urdu (*Pashto Urdu Lughat [Pashto Urdu Dictionary]*, contenente 50.000 parole, pubblicato nel 1990 da Haji Purdil Khan Khattak); pashto-inglese (*Pashto English Dictionary*, pubblicato dalla Pašto Tol̄na nel 1979) e inglese-pashto (*English Pushtu Dictionary*, 22.000 parole, pubblicato nel 1975, anch'esso ad opera della Pašto Tol̄na; *New English Pashto Dictionary*, pubblicato in due volumi nel 1991 da Muhammad Hasim Rahimi, Muhammad Wali Mandozai e Atiqullah Neazi); pashto-pashto (*Las Zara Pashto Luyatona [Ten Thousand Pashto Words]*, pubblicato dalla Pašto Tol̄na di Kabul nel 1941).

<sup>13</sup> I dialetti pashto si possono dividere in tre gruppi principali: dialetti “dolci” (A), parlati fra Kandahar (Afghanistan) e Quetta (Pakistan); dialetti “duri” (C), parlati fra Jalalabad (Afghanistan) e Peshawar (Pakistan); e dialetti “intermedi” (B), parlati fra Paktya (Afghanistan) e Waziristan (Pakistan). Si vedano Kieffer 1975: 5; Septfonds 2006: 112 e De Chiara, Septfonds 2019: 33-44. La principale differenziazione fra i tre gruppi di dialetti è di ordine fonetico, con due isoglosse, una consonantica (a) ed una vocalica (b):

a) la pronuncia nei dialetti “dolci” di [ts, dz, s̄, z̄, ʒ] corrisponde a quella nei dialetti “duri” come [s, z, x, g, dʒ/z];

b) la rotazione vocalica dei dialetti “intermedi” di [a, o, u] in [o, e, i].

Le differenze lessicali, invece, non riguardano i tre gruppi dialettali, bensì la linea di fron-

tutti, all'avverbio *bérta* 'indietro' in Afghanistan corrisponde in Pakistan *wapás*; entrambe le voci dovranno essere incluse nel dizionario;

(3) criteri lessicografici moderni nella presentazione delle voci, dei sensi numerati, degli esempi etc. A questo riguardo, il costante ricorso a locutori in ogni tappa della costituzione del dizionario è fondamentale;

(4) definizione delle dimensioni del dizionario e definizione del pubblico cui è rivolto. I due fattori sono strettamente legati: ad esempio, per un pubblico di "debuttanti" interessati ad una conversazione nel quotidiano sarà adeguato un dizionario di 7.000 parole (il lessico di base di De Mauro già citato), mentre per un pubblico più specializzato sarà necessario un lessico di minimo 15.000/20.000 parole.

Se riesaminiamo a circa un secolo di distanza le scelte che caratterizzano il glossario contenuto in Lorimer (1915) ed il dizionario di Gilbertson (1932), comprendiamo quanto, per ottenere un quadro sufficientemente affidabile delle condizioni di uso del lessico pashto, rimanga fondamentale il ricorso a locutori pashto accuratamente scelti, provenienti da diverse zone dialettali, appartenenti a fasce di età e a livelli di acculturazione differenti, etc.:

As regards the illustrations given, it has been no part of my scheme to provide an extensive or recondite vocabulary. I have rather endeavoured to make use only of the simplest phrases and commonest words, which are in daily use, in order to illustrate the principles laid down, and so to promote familiarity with that common talk which is essential for the purposes of everyday life. [...] The examples (with a few exceptions noted with an asterisk) were taken down verbatim as heard, or were submitted to the criticism of unsophisticated Pathans, and the principles enunciated were deduced from them. After this these examples were read over to a Peshawar Munshi. It is hoped that in this way most radical errors may have been eliminated, while the influence of the locality in which the work was compiled may have been reduced to reasonable limits (Lorimer 1915: vii).

tiera Afghanistan-Pakistan (contatti con il persiano e l'arabo, nel primo caso; contatti con l'urdu e l'inglese, nel secondo).

## 5

## Sulla trascrizione del pashto

MATTEO DE CHIARA

1. *La grafia arabo-persiana*

È noto come il pashto, lingua iranica orientale parlata in Afghanistan e in Pakistan, sia scritto in caratteri arabo-persiani. La prima opera letteraria in pashto risale al XVI secolo:<sup>1</sup> è il *Xayr ol-Bayān* ('il Migliore dei discorsi') di Bāyazīd Ansāri (1525-1585), anche detto Pir Roshān, fondatore della Roshāniyya, un movimento politico, militare e spirituale che affrontò il potere Moghol dell'India per oltre mezzo secolo. Di fronte al rapido sviluppo della Roshāniyya, i partigiani dell'ordine stabilito si organizzarono attorno a Sayed Ali Termezi, detto Pir Bābā (1502-1583): questa contro-offensiva venne condotta, sul piano letterario ed intellettuale, da Axond Darweza (1533-1638) e da suo figlio Karimdād (m. 1662), soprattutto nel *Makhzan al-Eslām* ('il Tesoro dell'Islam').<sup>2</sup> Entrambe queste opere, il *Xayr ol-Bayān* ed il *Makhzan al-Eslām*, sono redatte in pashto a mezzo dell'alfabeto arabo-persiano, ma con significative innovazioni per poter rendere per iscritto suoni assenti in arabo o in persiano.

<sup>1</sup> Non entro qui nel merito dell'annosa questione dell'autenticità della Pəṭa Xazāna ('il tesoro nascosto [degli Afghani]'). Secondo Abd-al-Hay Habibi, quest'opera di poesia miscellanea, redatta nel XVIII secolo, risalirebbe, nei suoi poemi più antichi, all'VIII secolo: l'opera contiene componimenti di autori mitici, tipo Amir Kroṛ (VIII secolo), e di figure femminili di letterate, più recenti (Shaikh Bostān Bārec, Bibi Nektakhta e Rabia del XVI secolo; Shah Hussain, Yunus Khān e NāzoTukhi del XVIII secolo). Gli studiosi occidentali hanno considerato quest'opera una pia fraus del XX secolo (Loi 1987) o addirittura un falso (MacKenzie 1997), senza tuttavia offrirne una dettagliata analisi. Si veda Habibi 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Per queste prime opere della letteratura pashto, si vedano Rishtin 1946, Bouquet n.p., Andreyev 2010 e De Chiara e Manalai, in stampa. Sulla Roshāniyya, si veda De Chiara 2021 e bibliografia.

Tuttavia, queste innovazioni non assusero a norma generale: infatti, Khushhāl Khān Khaṭṭak, il poeta nazionale pashtun per eccellenza, vissuto nel XVII secolo, capo della tribù dei Khaṭṭak e fiero oppositore dei Moghol, utilizza per il suo *diwān* ed i suoi scritti una propria convenzione. Nel brano che segue, Shah Mahmoud Hanifi (2013) riflette sul ruolo di Bāyazid Ansari e Khushhāl Khān Khaṭṭak:

In the Pashto portions of these two texts, different forms of Pashto writing were used in the original manuscripts and in the subsequent copying of each. The major distinction is that innovations captured in the *Khair al-Bayan*, involving the use of as many as thirteen letters beyond the four Persian letters appended to the twenty eight Arabic letters, are not captured in the *Makhzan al-Islam* that was produced subsequently. Akhund Darweza's contributions to the development of the Pashto script are less substantial than Bayazid Ansari's. However, it should not be assumed that Bayazid Ansari in the late 1500s was the first or sole engineer of thirteen "new" Pashto letters, or that Akhund Darweza in the early 1600s did not influence the development of the Pashto language or script. [...] Khushhal's Khan's script was somewhat cryptic by design in that its use appears confined to only a handful of his sons, grandsons, and other family members. One view, then, is that Khushhal's innovations were restricted to a small group of authors. From another perspective, the Khattak family writings also served to unify multiple dialects in the Indus plains and the Punjab and Himalayan foothills, and thus produced a substantially expanded range for a new standardized dialect of Pashto through the circulation and re-copying of these writings.

In a sense, Khushhal and Bayazid each solved the "problem" of writing Pashto in a different way. Each developed different characters and graphemes for Pashto phonemes, many of which exhibited and continue to exhibit a range of allophones across a spectrum of dialects spread out over a wide area. The writings of Khushhal and Bayazid together mark an era when Pashto speech firmly crossed into the realm of Pashto writing [...] (Hanifi 2013: 68).

La mancanza di uno standard scrittorio chiaramente definito ha caratterizzato tutte le epoche successive: la letteratura pashto di origine indigena così come quella di matrice coloniale. Nella seconda metà del XX secolo le Accademie pashto sono giunte alla definizione di una norma generale, più o meno universalmente condivisa, sebbene sussistano ancora punti di discussione.

David Neil MacKenzie, in un articolo del 1959 intitolato "A Standard Pashto", ha studiato in maggiore dettaglio la questione dell'alfabeto pa-

shto. Analizzando le innovazioni grafiche presenti nel *diwān* del 1697-1697 del poeta Najīb, calligrafato ad opera del copista Gul Muhammad Pešāwari, MacKenzie conclude “(a) that the older tradition was not exclusively Roshani, and (b) that the new signs still represented distinct phonemes in the north-east at this date”.

Attualmente, la grafia pashto correntemente usata nell’area pashtofona include 40 caratteri (45, se contiamo anche le varianti vocaliche; si veda oltre):

i 29 segni di origine araba: ا, ب, پ, ت, ث, ج, چ, ح, خ, د, ذ, ر, ز, س, ش, ص, ض, ط, ظ, ع, غ, ف, ق, ک, ل, م, ن, و, ی. Di essi, 7 (ث, ذ, ص, ض, ط, ظ, ع) sono presenti unicamente in prestiti dall’arabo e sono “mere ‘allographs’, marked in the transliteration by a subscript line” (MacKenzie 1959: 231), mentre 3 (ج, ف, ق) sono considerati “fonemi eleganti”, pronunciati unicamente da locutori “colti”, generalmente provenienti da Qandahar, e sostituiti correntemente dai fonemi ځ, څ e ځ;

i 3 segni di origine persiana: پ, ژ, گ. Si può aggiungere qui anche ټ iniziale, che tuttavia ha valore limitato in pashto, in quanto /a-/ e /ā-/ sono confuse in posizione iniziale;

i 3 segni di origine indiana, per la resa dei fonemi retroflessi: ږ, ډ, ځ;

i 5 segni indigeni puramente pashto: ځ, څ, ږ, ډ, ځ. A lungo ځ e څ sono state confuse, tanto che ancora l’articolo di MacKenzie (1959) utilizza un’unica grafia, ځ, per i due fonemi /ts/ e /dz/, secondo la norma invalsa già presso gli autori britannici del XIX secolo.

Lo standard ortografico minimale raggiunto dopo infiniti dibattiti e le relative determinazioni delle Accademie pashto nella seconda metà del XX secolo sembra oggi abbastanza condiviso, mentre MacKenzie (1997: 137) presenta il dibattito sull’ortografia come ancora non del tutto risolto:

Pashto, both in Afghanistan and Pakistan, has a fairly large alphabet, of over 40 letters, and in a way it is still growing [...] in some recent publications in Peshawar [Qalandar Mohmand, *Pəṭa xazāna fi’l mizān*, Pešāwar 1988] new conventions for the representation of the important grammatical distinctions between the final vowels /-a/ ټ and /-ə/ ټ (instead of ټ), and /-i/ ټ, /-e/ ټ, /-ay/ [ɛ] ټ and /-əy/ ټ have been employed.

Questa osservazione di MacKenzie è corretta: in effetti, i 5 segni vocalici aggiuntivi (ټ, su cui si veda *supra*, ټ, ټ, ټ e ټ), cui si alludeva più su, non sono oggetto di consenso generale, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i diacritici. Più nello specifico, ټ rappresenta /ay/, ټ /i/, ټ /e/, ټ /-əy/ nella morfologia nominale e ټ /-əy/ nella morfologia verbale.

A parte i segni vocalici, ancora sussistono differenze, seppur minime, tra i sistemi grafici utilizzati in Afghanistan e in Pakistan: per esempio, a گ utilizzata in Afghanistan corrisponde ك in Pakistan, oppure la grafia delle retroflesse in Pakistan può essere influenzata da quella corrente per le retroflesse dell'urdu ٹ, ڈ, ڙ, ڻ (nel XIX secolo anche ټ, ډ, etc.) a fronte di pashto ټ, ډ, ږ, ښ.

Se la grafia arabo-persiana per il pashto è prossima ad un consenso generale, sussistono, invece, questioni connesse all'identità culturale e politica dei paesi islamici legate all'uso di alfabeti modificati da una base araba. Per avere un'idea – oggi inattuale – di come il modernismo degli anni Trenta del Novecento percepiva la questione si veda quanto scrive Lentz nel 1937 (pp. 5-6):

Bis von kurzem war die Gleichheit der Schrift in allen islamischen Ländern ein starkes kulturelles Bindemittel und außerdem bequem für öffentlichen und privaten Verkehr, besonders an den Landesgrenzen. Von diesen Staaten ist die Türkei bereits zum neuen Schriftsystem übergegangen. Damit fällt dieser Gesichtspunkt weg. Vielmehr werden in absehbarer Zeit alle die unter Unbequemlichkeiten zu leiden haben, die diese Bewegung nicht mitmachen. Schon jetzt hat Afghanistan in seiner Nachbarschaft Staaten mit Lateinalphabeten, andere sind im Begriff zu folgen. In der Sowjetunion hat sich auf verschiedenen dem Paschto nächstverwandten Sprachgebieten seit der Einführung der Lateinschrift schon eine kleine oder größere Literatur auch dort entwickelt, wo man die einheimische Sprache gar nicht oder nur in beschränktem Umfang schrieb: so einerseits bei den iranischen Pamirsprachen (Schugni, Wachi), andererseits beim Tadschik-persischen und Ossetischen. In Indien gibts es zwar vorläufig nur für das Englische die europäische Schrift. Aber in der Armee wird dort bereits Hindostani mit Lateinalphabet zum Signalisieren verwendet und von allen Soldaten erlernt, und auch sonst gibt es Bewegungen zur Einführung der Lateinschrift hin. Die gleichen Bestrebungen sind in Iran im Gange.

È chiaro dagli sviluppi successivi che la diffusione che Lentz prevedeva degli alfabeti a base latina non si è verificata, tuttavia gli argomenti addotti dallo stesso Lentz per un alfabeto latino per il pashto hanno una loro fondatezza.

Una riflessione sul luogo di origine dell'alfabeto pashto in uso viene fatta da Penzl (1955: 9-10), il quale ne sostiene l'origine da Qandahar:

There is [...] no doubt that one undeniable and very important fact has been responsible for the great prestige of the Kandahar dialect; it is the

only dialect which has a phonemic system corresponding to the prevailing orthography [...] the correlation between the Kandahar phonemic pattern and the graphic pattern of the special Pashto symbols of the Arabic alphabet is so close that we must assume that these symbols were created in the area of the Kandahar dialect. Kandahar appears to be the cradle of the Pashto alphabet.

Questa opinione era e rimane piuttosto comune fra i ricercatori ed i viaggiatori occidentali come fra gli stessi locutori pashto. Tuttavia, un'obiezione a questa ricostruzione era già stata sollevata da Georg Morgenstierne (1932: 17):

When the orthography of Pashto was fixed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the distinction between *ṣ*, *ẓ* and *x*, *g* seems still to have been preserved even among the north-eastern tribes, who were probably the creators of Pashto literature. It may be noticed that a similar velarization of *ṣ*, *ẓ* is found in some neighboring Dardic dialects.

## 2. *La grafia latina*

Nel 1937 Wolfgang Lentz invocava una latinizzazione dell'ortografia del pashto, adducendo come motivazione che i caratteri utilizzati per mettere per iscritto il pashto non sono pienamente e chiaramente funzionali, e sono spesso fonte di ambiguità ed equivoci.<sup>3</sup>

Senza arrivare a sostenere il passaggio all'alfabeto latino per la redazione della letteratura pashto, come auspicato da Lentz, transizione operata dalla Turchia di Atatürk negli anni '20 del XX secolo con chiari intenti politici di discontinuità, il problema dell'impiego dell'alfabeto latino ri-

<sup>3</sup> "Das afghanische Schulwesen befindet sich in ständigem Aufschwung. Dadurch wird die Kenntnis der drei wichtigsten europäischen Sprachen, English, Französisch und Deutsch, immer mehr verbreitet. Für diese Sprachen müssen die Kinder sowieso ein bzw. zwei europäische Alphabete erlernen. Ihre Zeit und Kraft würde für andere Aufgaben, insbesondere Kenntnis und Pflege völkischer Sitte, Tradition und Literatur, frei. Aber auch für diejenigen Schüler, die keine Fremdsprachen treiben, ist die Lateinschrift mit ihren eindeutigen Lautzeichen leichter zu erfassen als die an Zeichen, aber auch an Verwechslungsmöglichkeiten reichere arabische Schrift [...] Für die lautliche Wiedergabe des Paschto ist das lateinische Alphabet besser geeignet als das arabische [...] Schon dem einfachen Lautsystem des Hochpersischen wird die arabische Schrift nicht gerecht. Bei dem nüancenreicheren Paschto macht sich dieser Übelstand erst recht bemerkbar. Dafür belastet die arabische Schrift das Bild der Sprache mit einer Reihe von Konsonantenzeichen, die im Persischen und Paschto hauptsächlich bei Lehnwörtern vorkommen, aber genau so wie die gewöhnlichen Zeichen ausgesprochen werden" (Lentz 1937: 6-7).

mane tuttora al centro di discussioni come lo era agli albori dei contatti del mondo occidentale con il pashto, alla fine del XVIII secolo.

Trascrizione e traslitterazione del pashto hanno una storia piuttosto complessa. Omettendo i primi zoppicanti tentativi di trascrizione in caratteri latini, possiamo citare la norma adottata da Henry George Raverty, come esplicitata nell'introduzione al suo dizionario:

the system of orthography adopted, and also used by Richardson and Shakspear in their Persian and Arabic, and Hindūstānī Dictionaries, is that of Sir William Jones [with the exception of the sound of Arabic ع, which I have written æ with the vowels used with it, as giving a more correct definition of its sound], - than which there is no other nearly so capable of giving the correct sound of Oriental words, - together with other combinations according to the same rules, to suit the letters and sounds peculiar to the Pušhto, the whole of which will be found explained in the body of the work at the commencement of each letter, and which, with regard to ۛ, ۞ and ۟, should be particularly attended to, on account of the number of uses to which they are applicable. (Raverty 1860: xxiii).

Henry Walter Bellew, per il suo dizionario del 1867, utilizza una norma leggermente differente, stabilita empiricamente. Per esempio, se Raverty 1860 scrive *ts'shal* 'to drink', Bellew 1867 scrive invece *tskakshal* (considerando la forma del dialetto corrispondente), indicando š il primo con *sh*, il secondo con *ksh* (a fronte di *ṣ-āl* in Trumpp 1873 e *tskūl* in Lorimer 1915). Per fare un altro esempio, a Raverty 1860 *jzīra'h* 'the beard' corrisponde Bellew 1867 *gīra* (Lorimer 1915 *gīrah*), indicando ž il primo con *jz*, il secondo con *g* (con un puntino sottoscritto, assai poco leggibile).

Si noti che Trumpp 1873 già utilizza le trascrizioni <ž> o <g> per ۛ, e <š> o <χ> per ۞, a seconda della pronuncia, ricordando con questo molto da vicino quanto sarà proposto nel 1937 da Lentz.

Ancora nel '900, benché si tenda sempre più ad andare verso una uniformazione generale dell'uso trascrittivo, non vi è una coerenza assoluta, come ben espresso da MacKenzie (1958: 319, nota 1):

Although based on Lentz's *Lateinalphabet für das Paschto*, Berlin, 1937, the transcription employed here is a personal attempt (which must needs be justified elsewhere) to represent the Pashto script by a similarly pan-Pashto transcription. It does not, therefore, accord with the phonemic system of any one dialect, least of all, probably, with that analysed in Penzl's *Grammar of Pashto* [...], 1955. Of the more un-

usual diacritics, [ˆ] (plainer and less ambiguous than a subscript dot) indicates a retroflex consonant, while [˘] marks a distinction in the Arabic script having no significance in Pashto.

In verità, il problema della trascrizione nei manuali e nelle grammatiche di pashto è sempre stato percepito come assai delicato dai vari autori, che volta per volta hanno cercato di risolvere il problema diversamente, seguendo una propria specifica norma. È il caso, per esempio, di Lorimer 1915 (p. viii), il quale dapprima denuncia l'assoluta inadeguatezza dell'alfabeto arabo per rendere il pashto e poi propone una propria norma di trascrizione:

It remains to say a word regarding transliteration, which always remains the grammarian's and the student's bugbear. I have given in the text my reasons for eschewing the modified Arabic script. It is quite unsatisfactory from the point of view of sound-rendering. Without outside help, what approximation to correct pronunciation would any one make in reading the Pashtu text in, say, Rooskeppel's Manual? On the other hand, the Hunterian system of transliteration in official use in India is too simple to render the varied sounds of Pashtu correctly. I have attempted to devise a system which falls in as far as possible with the familiar Hunterian system, and if the student will take the small initial trouble necessary to master it, I think he will find it fairly satisfactory. It is not intended to be strictly scientific, and it is possible that the renderings will not always meet approval. Apparent inconsistencies of transliteration are not necessarily denials of the truth, but may be the record of actual facts. To some extent I have admitted conventions as in the uniform rendering of the feminine ending by è and of the final vowel of Adverbs and Particles by e. It is not always easy to distinguish final vowel-sounds accurately, there is variation due both to dialect and sentence stress; these slight differences are not of great practical consequence, while on the other hand the marking (by the uniform use of the same vowel-sound) of the grammatical value of a word is often a convenience in reading and understanding.

L'opinione contraria viene invece espressa da George Waters Gilbertson (1932: xii-xiii), il quale raccomanda l'uso dell'alfabeto arabo:

Do not hoax yourself into the belief that you will ever master Pakkhto through the Roman characters. We have been told by more than one writer that the Arabic script is *entirely unsuitable!* The finding of the compilers of this work is that the Arabic script is *entirely suitable* for the writing of the Kurdish, Balochí, and Pakkhto languages. This con-

clusion has been come to after many years of hard study, and after mature consideration of all the advantages and disadvantages of both methods. We mention these three languages collectively because they undoubtedly have a common origin, and that the peoples speaking them at some time or other lay in close proximity to one another. Those who begin by using the Roman letters have not one alphabet to master, but two. Probably it would be juster to say three, because not infrequently we find Greek letters introduced into this Roman script! Not less perplexing are inverted letters, and letters so surrounded by dots and dashes and countless other symbols as to make it next to impossible to remember what is really intended. Why call such an atrocity Roman script? Lunar script, yes. It is a hundred per cent more difficult than the script now in use and adopted by the people themselves. What can one say of the mentality of the official who can visualize a future Afghán people using such a script? Where is there in the whole of Afghánistán a single chief who would be able to decipher a communication put up and sent to him in this execrable type? Remember, that is the object in learning this language: to be able to communicate with the people under every circumstance. Our best linguists, our practical scholars, scorn the Roman characters as a means to an end.

In this work the Arabic-Persian letters have been used throughout. The vowel points have not been shown. Why? Simply because later on the student will be forced to do without them. All or nearly all Pakkhto works are in lithograph, in which vowel points are few and far between: عقلاڼ پيروى نقط نه كند 'áqilán pairawí-i-nuqaṭ nah kundang, the learned stand in no need of the dots. The object of putting the sentences in the Roman type here is to accustom the student to read Pakkhto without these vowels. He who takes the plunge at the beginning of his study of the language never regrets it. This we know.

A dire il vero, le argomentazioni di Gilbertson sono ragionevoli e più che convincenti: chiunque abbia a che fare con l'insegnamento del pashto ha potuto personalmente constatare la difficoltà dell'insegnare una lingua differente, scritta in grafia araba, dovendo anche aggiungere un sistema di trascrizione alternativo, soprattutto in mancanza di uno standard universalmente riconosciuto. Gli studenti saranno riconoscenti di poter apprendere direttamente l'alfabeto arabo-persiano e, al contempo, studiare la lingua, ricollegando la grafia al lessico che stanno apprendendo. In fondo, non è molto differente quanto avviene per l'inglese: sarebbe come obbligare uno studente ad imparare, oltre alla lingua e all'ortografia, anche un sistema trascrittivo intermedio.

Se questo discorso può essere vero per quel che riguarda la didattica, va però aggiunto che, ai fini della trascrizione scientifica, l'alfabeto arabo-persiano non è affatto adeguato e l'uso dei caratteri latini risulta immediato per gli studiosi che intendano collocare il pašto in una prospettiva comparativa (indo-)iranica, come richiamato per il pashto da molti ricercatori: si vedano, fra gli altri, le opinioni di Penzl: 1955: 5,<sup>4</sup> MacKenzie 1959: 231<sup>5</sup> e Jahani 1989: 57-58.<sup>6</sup>

Un interessante parallelo si può trovare anche nella spiegazione delle norme adottate per la traslitterazione del sanscrito da M. Monier-Williams 1899: si veda la sua introduzione alle pp. xxii-xxx (“Section IV: *Reasons for applying the Roman Alphabet to the expression of Sanskrit, with an account of the Method of Transliteration employed in the Present Dictionary*”).

Negli studi di carattere filologico e linguistico la questione della trascrizione può essere risolta conservando, per i termini di volta in volta menzionati, quella originale della fonte da cui essi sono tratti. È questo il caso, ad esempio, delle pubblicazioni di Gerhard Dörfer e Gérard Fussman. Il primo precisa:

In vielen Fällen habe ich ferner die Transkription fremdsprachlicher Wörter unverändert so belassen, wie ich sie meiner Quelle entnommen habe [...] Jedoch war es unmöglich, sämtliche hier behandelten Sprachen in einundderselben Weise nach einer unifizierten Transkription zu umschreiben, da zuweilen die genaue Aussprache mancher Laute gar nicht feststeht, eine präzise Transkription so schwerfällig wäre wie die der finnischen Uralistenschule, und schließlich gewisse Normen in den einzelnen Fachgebieten existieren, die nur in Ausnahmefällen durchbrochen werden sollten [...] In den anderen Fällen wurde die originale Transkription belassen, so in den verschiedenen mo. und tü. Wörterbüchern (...), in den iranischen Arbeiten (...) u.a.m. (Dörfer 1963-1975, I: 31-32).

Fussman (1972: xvii), dal canto suo, pur confessando che sarebbe stato preferibile unificare la trascrizione, rinuncia esplicitamente al compito, soprattutto per evitare la moltiplicazione di errori e sviste:

<sup>4</sup> “In this study we use a Latin alphabet, not just for the sake of typographical convenience, but to mark sound values and distinctions that the Arabic alphabet does not indicate”.

<sup>5</sup> “If only on this account it seems opportune to attempt to define standard Pashto in more concrete phonemic terms than any adaptation of the Arabo-Persian script permits”.

<sup>6</sup> “When it comes to the vowels, the Arabic script leaves Pashto with a substantial underrepresentation / underdifferentiation. The vowel phonemes of Pashto are more complicated to describe than those of Persian, partly due to its many diphthongs”.

En théorie il eût été souhaitable d'unifier les transcriptions. Mais il nous est apparu qu'en retranscrivant ce matériel ancien, nous risquions de multiplier les erreurs, et, pour le lecteur, les difficultés: il est des cas où l'on peut hésiter sur l'interprétation à donner de telle ou telle transcription, notamment pour les aspirées et les rétroflexes. Travaillant de seconde main, souvent nous n'avons pas les éléments nécessaires pour choisir. Si nous avons persisté à utiliser un système de transcription unifié et cohérent, le lecteur aurait eu sans cesse à se demander si notre interprétation était correcte. Nous avons préféré la lui fournir tout de suite, quitte à faire pour tel ou tel mot les réserves nécessaires ou indiquer les éléments d'appréciation dont on dispose.

Adriano V. Rossi, dovendo fronteggiare lo stesso problema per il suo *Iranian Lexical Elements in Balochi* (ILEB xxiv), definisce i due possibili approcci rispettivamente: "bold" e "prudent". Il primo è il caso di Georg Morgenstierne, che in IIFL II (p. XX) sceglie di adattare la trascrizione di parole citate da altre fonti: "words quoted from other sources have as far as possible been adapted to the transcription used in this work".

Il secondo è il caso di Lentz (1933: 49-50), Dörfer e Fussman (vedi sopra). La conclusione cui perviene ILEB è che "in the end, it would still result that each author makes his own, though minimal, adaptations", scegliendo di conformarsi ad una "distinction between words quoted for areal purposes (when direct or indirect contact may be hypothesized) and forms quoted for comparative and etymological reasons". La scelta finale di Rossi per il suo lavoro è la seguente:

for the former category (comprehending Sir[aiki] Si[ndhi] Ur[du] [and other MIA] Bal[o]chi Pashto and all varieties related to EPrs. [= East Persian]), a rielaborated, tendentially semiphonetic transcription has been adopted, whenever possible [...], both for standardized (literary) languages and for non-standardized varieties; in any case the primary aim was that of defining the phonemic norm within each single source and/or variety. On the other hand, symbols for each single transcription have been chosen so that possible areal phonological affinities may be suggested, although not exaggerated [...] as for sources regarding non-contact languages quoted for comparative purposes, the intervention on transcriptions has generally been limited to graphic modernization as e.g. *c* for *ch*, *x* for *kh* etc. (ILEB: xxv-xxvi).

In un articolo del 1942, G. Morgenstierne, che fino a quel momento si era servito delle norme di trascrizione già utilizzate da Wilhelm Ludwig

Geiger nell'*Etymologie und Lautlehre des Afghānischen*,<sup>7</sup> adottava le proposte trascrittive di Lentz (senza, in realtà, alcuna implicazione per l'ortografia), mantenendole immutate in tutta la sua successiva attività, fino al postumo NEVP:<sup>8</sup> “in accordance with Lentz’s proposal, *š*, *ž* are employed instead of *š̄*, *ž̄*, and *e*, *o*, which are always long, are left unmarked” (Morgenstierne 1942b: 261).<sup>9</sup>

La difficoltà più grande, per quanto riguarda la trascrizione delle lingue di quest'area, risiede nel loro numero (si veda, ad esempio, Morgenstierne 1979: 23) e nelle varietà delle convenzioni trascrittive utilizzate, sempre basate sull'alfabeto latino. Basti solo pensare ad un confronto fra sanscrito e pashto, dove, ad esempio, a <c> utilizzato per la trascrizione del sanscrito, corrisponde per il pashto e le lingue ir. <č>; a <j>, <ǰ>; a <ś>, <š̄>; etc.

In precedenza, nei suoi primi studi sulle lingue dell'area, Morgenstierne (1926: 94) aveva lamentato le medesime difficoltà:

I have tried, as far as possible, to employ uniform system of notation and transcription; but it has not been easy to find one which suits all the languages quoted, and which at the same time conforms with the traditional transcription used in Indian and Iranian. It also was necessary to take typographical considerations.

La universale diffusione dei sistemi informatici e l'impiego di videoscrittura su PC, hanno, contrariamente alle aspettative, complicato piuttosto che semplificare la questione delle trascrizioni. E, a fronte del moltiplicarsi delle serie dei caratteri in uso e dei tentativi di proposta di neocreazioni, sembra che nessun tipo di font riesca effettivamente a coprire l'intera gamma di trascrizioni, e a soddisfare al tempo stesso gli utenti anche da un punto di vista grafico (e conseguentemente estetico).

Intorno agli anni '70 del secolo scorso il progetto per l'Atlas Linguistique de l'Afghanistan (ALA) sembrerebbe fissare definitivamente la tra-

<sup>7</sup> Vedi tabella in Geiger 1897: 202.

<sup>8</sup> Nell'introduzione di J. Elfenbein, alle pagine vi-vii si legge: “The transcription used in this book is the one almost universally employed nowadays, which follows a model proposed many years ago by Wolfgang Lentz. It was adopted by Morgenstierne in his notes at an early stage and is a decided improvement on the transcription used in EVP”. Cf. anche la tabella 36-1 e relative note in Elfenbein 1997: 740-742.

<sup>9</sup> Si veda anche: “Following Lentz, I write *š*, *ž* for the sounds usually transcribed *š̄*, *ž̄* (ش, ز), and pronounced *š̄*, *ž̄* in W. Psht., *x*, *g* in E. Psht., and *š̄*, *ž̄* in some Ghilzai dialects. – Note that *e*, *o* are always phonetically long, except in final position” (Morgenstierne 1942a: 89, nota 2).

scrizione, che infatti viene accettata da Septfonds 1994 (v. oltre); tuttavia Skjærvø 1989 utilizza ancora le norme di trascrizione di EVP (cioè si conforma ancora all'uso del primo Morgenstierne). Xavier Tremblay ancora nel 2005, nella sua recensione a NEVP, scriveva (p. 176): “Malgré l'autorité de W. Lentz [...], la translitération  $\check{x}$  et  $\check{g}$  de NEVP pour les spirantes rétroflexes est moins heureuse que  $\check{s}$  et  $\check{z}$  d'EVP et CLI”, aggiungendo (*ibid.*):

certes, ces spirantes ne se conservent aujourd'hui que dans les dialectes 'doux' (*Pashto mitior*) du sud-ouest et sonnent comme des vélaires dans les dialectes 'durs' (*Pashto seuerior*) du nord-est; mais leur position dans le système phonologique et leur origine ( $*r\check{s}$ ,  $*r\check{z}$ , etc.) sont bien celles de rétroflexes, et surtout  $\check{g}$  et  $\check{x}$  sont inintelligibles pour quiconque n'est pas versé ès langues iraniennes orientales. Il vaut mieux revenir à  $\check{s}$  et  $\check{z}$ , voire à  $s$  et  $z$ .

Questa opinione non ci sembra totalmente condivisibile, ma se ne comprende facilmente la ratio: il lavoro di Tremblay si è incentrato soprattutto sull'avestico ed il medio-iranico, non certo sul pashto.

Un capitolo a parte è rappresentato dagli studiosi sovietici: si veda in particolare la tabella contenuta in Grjunberg-Èdel'man 1987: 42, che presenta in sinossi i sistemi trascrittivi adottati da Zudin 1950 e 1955, Aslanov 1966, Lebedev et al. 1973, nel centro internazionale per lo studio del pashto a Kabul e da Penzl 1955.

Anche nelle Accademie Pashto di Kabul e Peshawar, sin dagli anni '50 del secolo scorso è in corso un acceso dibattito. Nel corso di vari convegni si sono venute a determinare norme per la trascrizione sia dei nomi comuni che dei nomi propri, inclusi i toponimi,<sup>10</sup> anche nel tentativo di uniformare le trascrizioni per il pashto e il dari, senza, tuttavia, poter giungere ad un consenso generale.

Uno standard per un “phonemic alphabet” sembrava essere stato trovato in un incontro di studiosi afghani tenutosi nel 1976. La trascrizione

<sup>10</sup> Si veda Elham 1978, che cita il convegno di Atene, 17 Agosto-7 Settembre 1977 e la conferenza regionale (Afghanistan-Iran-Pakistan), svoltasi a Tehran, 9-15 Maggio 1977. A p. 97 dice: “A system of transliteration, based on the Latin Alphabet, for geographical names, was established for the first time in 1957. A second revised edition of this system was published in English-Dari (Afghan Persian) in August 1962. The system was simplified once again in 1973 and a phonetic-type alphabet was established”.

adottata al termine dei lavori, tuttavia, differisce abbastanza da quella dell'ALA (si veda sotto): così, ad ALA <j> corrisponde <j> e a <j>, <j>; ad ALA <ɣ> (cf. oltre Septfonds 1994 <g>), <z>, a <ɣ>, <g>, e, infine, a <x>, <ɣ> (cfr. Helali 1977 e 1978, in cui vengono prese in esame anche le grafie pashto, e relative problematiche, dei principali dizionari monolingui del '900). Questa trascrizione dell'International Centre for Pashto Studies è utilizzata ancora da Pstrusinska 1986.

In linea teorica, la trascrizione proposta da Lentz 1937, integrata da quella dell'ALA,<sup>11</sup> con una riserva (/g/ invece di ALA /ɣ/),<sup>12</sup> resta valida, ed anzi, parrebbe auspicabile la sua applicazione universale, senza ulteriori indugi o moltiplicazione di sistemi trascrittori alternativi, per lo più incoerenti ed immotivati. I punti di forza di questa convenzione, utilizzata e presentata in Septfonds 1994 (p. 43), Elfenbein 1997 (p. 741) e, da ultimo, De Chiara e Septfonds 2019: 13-14, sono, fra gli altri, la sua perfetta specularità fra simboli di sorde e sonore, la chiara leggibilità e la sua immediatezza:

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. Kieffer 1974 e 1975, che fa anche alcuni interessanti esempi sulla genesi e la semplificazione del sistema di trascrizione dell'ALA, e Septfonds 1994: 43.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. Septfonds 1994: 43: "Des enquêtes menées dans le cadre de l'établissement d'un Atlas Linguistique de l'Afghanistan (ALA) de 1962 à 1971 portent, pour près de la moitié, sur des ensembles pashtophones. La transcription utilisée prend en compte les autres langues parlées en Afghanistan, de telle sorte qu'un graphème donné puisse (dans la mesure du possible) être utilisé pour diverses langues, avec la même valeur. Le gain en cohérence apporté par ce système de transcription m'a incité à l'adopter, à une réserve près: à ALA /ɣ/ j'ai préféré /g/".

## Consonanti

	bilabiali	dentali alveolari	retroflexe	velari	uvulari
<b>occlusive</b>	p    b	t    d	ʈ    ɖ	k    ɡ	<sup>(b)</sup> q
<b>affricate</b>		c    j č    ǰ			
<b>fricative</b>	<sup>(b)</sup> f	s    z	<sup>(a)</sup> š <sup>(a)</sup> ž	x    ɣ	<sup>(b)</sup> h
<b>nasali</b>		m    n		ŋ	
<b>liquide</b>		l    r			
<b>semi-vocali</b>		w    y			

(a) Differenti pronunce dialettali, a seconda della regione

(b) In corsivo i fonemi “eleganti” (v. *supra*)

## Vocali

anteriori	centrali	posteriori
i		u
e		o
	ə	
a	ā	

## 6

**Divisi dalla “penna” e dalla “spada”:  
la codifica delle grafie kurde,  
dai fratelli Bedir Khan e Taufiq Wahby al kurdo meridionale\***

SARA BELELLI

Una discussione sul problema della codifica ortografica del kurdo, nella sua evoluzione storica e nelle sue prospettive future, non può che partire da alcune considerazioni generali che illustrino meglio la condizione di unicità che caratterizza questa lingua, probabilmente senza eguali tra le svariate migliaia parlate al mondo.

Nonostante la lingua kurda – nell’insieme delle sue tre varietà principali<sup>1</sup> – sia inclusa tra le cinquanta lingue viventi numericamente maggiori,<sup>2</sup> è spesso elencata anche tra quelle più fortemente minacciate da processi di erosione e decadimento, alla stregua di varietà linguistiche molto meno

\* Il testo che segue è una versione rivista ed ampliata della conferenza tenuta da chi scrive in occasione del seminario “La lingua kurda tra passato e presente” organizzato da ISMEO e Istituto Kurdo in collaborazione con le Università di Sulaimani e del Rojava il 22 maggio 2021.

<sup>1</sup> La classificazione del kurdo corrente nella gran parte della letteratura scientifica riconosce tre distinte macro-varietà, solitamente etichettate secondo un criterio geografico o identificate dal glottonimo del dialetto (o insieme di dialetti) prevalente e di maggior prestigio. Il kurdo settentrionale, noto anche come kurmanji, kurmançî e sue varianti ortografiche, è parlato da poco più della metà dei kurdofoni ed è diffuso principalmente nelle province meridionali e orientali dell’attuale Turchia, nella Siria nordorientale, nei governatorati più settentrionali dell’attuale Iraq e in alcune zone dell’Iran nordoccidentale. Il kurdo centrale, o sorani, è la seconda varietà kurda per numero di parlanti, nonché quella maggioritaria nell’attuale Regione Autonoma Kurda d’Iraq e nelle aree limitrofe dell’Iran occidentale, specie nella provincia del Kordestan. Infine, il kurdo meridionale – variamente denominato Kalhori, Kermanshahi, Feyli, ecc. – include un insieme eterogeneo di dialetti kurdi diffusi principalmente nella regione dell’attuale Iran che include le province iraniane di Kermanshah e dell’Ilam e alcune zone ad esse contigue.

<sup>2</sup> Secondo la classifica stilata dal catalogo delle lingue del mondo ‘Ethnologue. Languages of the World’ (cfr. “What are the top 200 most spoken languages?” al link <https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/ethnologue200>, ultimo accesso gennaio 2022).

stratificate e dalla più breve storia letteraria. Inoltre, nel periodo che intercorre tra le prime attestazioni scritte del kurdo<sup>3</sup> e l’epoca contemporanea, almeno cinque diversi sistemi grafici sono stati utilizzati per questa lingua su base regionale: l’alfabeto armeno, l’alfabeto cirillico, l’*abjad* arabo-ottomano, e i due alfabeti fonemici a base latina e a base araba attualmente in uso rispettivamente nelle aree settentrionali e centro-meridionali della kurdofonia.

Cos’è, dunque, che rende questa lingua ancora così diversificata e per molti aspetti vulnerabile, nonostante la sua entità numerica e ampia diffusione geografica? La risposta più ovvia chiamerebbe in causa la situazione di disgregazione politico-istituzionale che ha accompagnato le aree di popolamento kurdo per gran parte della loro storia recente e per tutta l’epoca moderna, quando i confini di almeno cinque stati nazionali sono intervenuti a separare una continuità di popolamento sostanzialmente ininterrotta in tutto l’arco geografico che si estende dall’Anti-Tauro in Anatolia agli Zagros centrali nell’altopiano iranico.

Tuttavia, come cercheremo di illustrare ripercorrendo le principali fasi storiche della codifica del kurdo scritto – che distingueremo in ‘emergente’ (§1), ‘incipiente’ (§2), ‘normativa’ (§3) e ‘di stabilizzazione’ (§4) – la componente “politica” non è da sola sufficiente a rendere conto delle condizioni di eccezionalità nelle quali questa lingua si trova ancora oggi, nonostante siano trascorsi svariati decenni dalla diffusione capillare del suo uso scritto e si siano susseguiti numerosi tentativi di pianificazione linguistica tanto nei territori di origine, quanto nella diaspora internazionale.

<sup>3</sup> La prima attestazione scritta del kurdo attualmente nota consiste nella citazione di alcune parole e di uno scioglilingua nell’opera *Mu‘jam al-buldān* (Dizionario delle Nazioni) del geografo Yaqūt al-Ḥamawī (XII-XIII sec.). Il primo testo scritto in una varietà settentrionale di kurdo è invece una breve preghiera cristiana in caratteri armeni contenuta in un manoscritto datato al XV secolo, ma presumibilmente copiato da un originale più antico (Öpengin 2021: 613-614). La prima attestazione del kurdo centrale in forma scritta è molto più tarda: si tratta del *Mahdīnāme* di Mullah Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥāj datato al 1762 (Sheyholislami 2021: 637 fn.1).

1. *La fase emergente: la metafora della “penna” e della “spada” nelle opere dei letterati kurdi dei secoli XVII e XIX*

Una risposta più articolata a questa complessa questione ci è suggerita già dai primi cultori della lingua kurda, Ahmadi Khani<sup>4</sup> e Haji Qadir Koyi.<sup>5</sup> Questi precursori del rinascimento letterario kurdo avevano intuito – con secoli di anticipo rispetto alla formalizzazione dei concetti sociolinguistici di pianificazione linguistica, nella duplice accezione di ‘corpus planning’ e ‘status planning’ – la necessità di considerare due fattori complementari nel processo di normazione di una lingua, richiamati nelle loro opere attraverso la famosa metafora della “penna” e della “spada” (kurdo: *Şîr û xame*/شیر و خامه; cfr. Hassanpour 1993).

La “penna” come metafora della ‘pianificazione del corpus’ indica il lavoro sulla lingua in quanto tale, ossia la codifica grammaticale, lessicale e ortografica necessaria perché una lingua acquisisca i mezzi per essere impiegata come strumento utile a svolgere le diverse funzioni comunicative cui è demandata. La “spada”, che potremmo associare al concetto di ‘pianificazione dello status’, indica lo sviluppo di un apparato normativo, in genere di emanazione politico-istituzionale, che assicura il supporto alla lingua e ne consolida il prestigio all’interno della comunità, anche attraverso attività educative e di promozione sociale.

Pertanto, già i primi intellettuali impegnati nella promozione del kurdo come lingua letteraria erano persuasi che lo status deterioro di questa lingua non dipendesse da fattori ad essa “connaturati”, bensì dalla mancanza di occasioni d’uso da parte dei letterati e dall’assenza di un concreto sup-

<sup>4</sup> Nato ad Hakkari nel 1650 e morto a Bayazid nel 1707, Ahmadi Khani è considerato il campione dell’epica nazionale kurda. Fu autore del celeberrimo poema *Mem û Zîn* (1693-1694), ritenuto a buon diritto una delle composizioni più rilevanti della letteratura kurda classica. Tra le sue opere vi sono anche un lessico arabo-kurdo in versi (*Nûbihara biçûkan* ‘La primavera dei bambini’, 1683) e un compendio di dottrina islamica in kurdo (*Eqîdeya îmanê* ‘La dottrina della fede’) destinati agli allievi delle scuole coraniche (*mâdrase*).

<sup>5</sup> Nato a Koy Sanjaq nel 1817 e morto a Istanbul 1897, Haji Qadir Koyi fu poeta e intellettuale di spicco, persecutore delle idee di Ahmadi Khani e pioniere del nazionalismo kurdo. È noto, in particolare, per le sue audaci invettive nei confronti dell’aristocrazia tradizionale e dei mullah, ai quali attribuiva un colpevole disinteresse per le sorti della lingua kurda. Nella sua poesia in sorani, intrisa di patriottismo, auspica la messa per iscritto della letteratura orale, dichiara il giornalismo strumento utile allo sviluppo del kurdo come lingua di scrittura, ed elogia la modernità e la scolarizzazione come antidoti all’arretratezza della società kurda del suo tempo.



porto politico. Nella loro visione, solo l’equilibrio dialettico tra questi due elementi avrebbe potuto garantire il successo del kurdo come lingua di cultura, accompagnandolo nel percorso di affrancamento dalle lingue dominanti, rappresentate all’epoca dall’arabo nell’educazione religiosa e dal persiano nella produzione letteraria.<sup>6</sup>

Le critiche degli intellettuali dei secoli XVII e XIX alle norme di autorità linguistica stabilite nelle *mādrase* e nei circoli culturali ad esse associati emergono con forza a seguito del consolidamento della semi-autonomia dei principati kurdi nel XVI secolo, quando vengono a crearsi le condizioni minime per la formazione di una piccola élite urbana mediamente colta che promuoverà, con iniziative individuali, l’uso scritto del kurdo. Tuttavia, il tasso di analfabetismo in tutta l’area kurda rimarrà elevatissimo – ben oltre il 90% – fino agli inizi della modernità, con l’ovvia conseguenza che mancherà a lungo un bacino d’utenza utile a sostenere un vero e proprio mercato letterario (Hassanpour 1992: 77-79).

L’alfabetizzazione, infatti, era prerogativa quasi esclusiva della nobiltà feudale, che sola poteva avvantaggiarsi dell’insegnamento privato offerto dai mullah (kurdo: *mela*/مهلا).<sup>7</sup> Nonostante ciò, nella cultura scribale dell’epoca, era comune avvalersi dei servizi di professionisti della scrittura (kurdo: *mirzā*/ميرزا). Soltanto fattori esterni, come le richieste di committenti stranieri interessati all’apprendimento del kurdo, favorirono isolate esperienze di traduzione: tra queste, quella dello *Sharafnāme*, tradotto in kurdo dal mullah Mahmud Bayazidi intorno al 1850, su richiesta di August Kościeszka-Żaba (August Jaba), console russo a Erzurum (Hassanpour 1992: 81).

Si tenga presente che per tutta la fase precedente alle riforme ortografiche degli inizi del XX secolo il principale sistema grafico in uso fu quello consonantico (*abjad*) di tipo arabo, con caratteri aggiuntivi e varianti simili a quelli del persiano e del turco ottomano. Grafie diverse – come quella

<sup>6</sup> Il persiano è la lingua impiegata da Sharaf Khan Bidlisi per la compilazione dello *Sharafnāme*, la prima storiografia kurda, nel 1596-1597.

<sup>7</sup> I mullah che compaiono nella prima fase della storia letteraria kurda erano dei cultori di scienze religiose, in genere di estrazione sociale povera, educati alla lettura e alla scrittura dell’arabo coranico nelle scuole afferenti alle moschee. Tra i loro compiti vi erano l’interpretazione delle leggi coraniche, l’insegnamento della dottrina e delle pratiche religiose e la conduzione delle preghiere collettive. I primi poeti di lingua kurda proverranno senza eccezione da questa classe di clerici (Hassanpour 1992: 50, 76).



armena, documentata per il kurdo settentrionale sin dal XV secolo, e quella cirillica, comune nei territori di influenza russa, poi sovietica – rimarranno comunque in uso su base regionale, supportati dai rispettivi governi anche allo scopo di isolare le minoranze kurde interne da quelle oltre i confini.

## 2. *La fase incipiente: l'introduzione delle nuove tecnologie di stampa a cavallo dei secoli XIX e XX*

L'alfabeto arabo-ottomano sarà quello impiegato nella prima pubblicazione giornalistica monolingue in kurdo kurmanji datata al 1898: si tratta del giornale *Kurdistan*, pubblicato su iniziativa di Mikdad Midhat Bedir Khan<sup>8</sup> dal suo esilio di Istanbul, dapprima al Cairo, poi a Ginevra e infine in Inghilterra (Hassanpour 1992: 221-222).

La famiglia Bedir Khan – che nella persona dei fratelli Kamuran e Celadet<sup>9</sup> sarà centrale nel successivo sviluppo dell'ortografia kurmanji in caratteri latini – è espressione di una nuova classe intellettuale laica, educata in turco e francese nelle scuole d'ispirazione europea istituite dalla Grande Porta alla fine del XIX secolo, che parteciperà attivamente al movimento dei “giovani turchi” culminato nella rivolta costituzionalista del 1908. Di lì a poco, uno spartiacque epocale segnerà la storia della lingua kurda, determinandone l'ingresso nella modernità come lingua “di minoranza”.

Con la fine della Grande Guerra e la caduta dell'Impero ottomano nel 1918 tramonta la prospettiva di un Kurdistan unito: i territori kurdi verranno spartiti tra le potenze europee mandatarie – Gran Bretagna in Iraq; Francia in Siria – e i nascenti governi regionali – Repubblica kemalista in Turchia e monarchia Pahlavi in Iran. In queste circostanze, i kurdi sperimentano su più fronti l'efficacia del paradigma della “spada”, subendo in prima persona le conseguenze delle politiche assimilazioniste dei nuovi governi centralisti, che – a differenza delle formazioni più fluide dell'epoca precedente – mireranno ad assicurarsi integrità e stabilità territo-

<sup>8</sup> Giornalista e attivista kurdo vissuto tra il 1858 e il 1915. Fu tra i fondatori della Società Kurda per la Diffusione dell'Educazione (*Kürd Neşr-i Maarif Cemiyeti*, KNMC) e dell'istituto scolastico *Kürd Meşrutiyet Mektebi* (Scuola Costituzionale Kurda) di Istanbul. È lo zio paterno dei fratelli Kamuran e Celadet Bedir Khan.

<sup>9</sup> Kamuran Bedir Khan (1895-1978) e Celadet Bedir Khan (1893-1951), figli del politico e burocrate dell'amministrazione ottomana Emin Ali Bedir Khan, sono tra i discendenti più noti della famiglia che per secoli governò il Principato di Bohtan, con capitale Cizre.

riale anche attraverso la cooptazione linguistica e culturale delle minoranze. Da questo momento in poi si alimenterà, con forza uguale e contraria alle politiche assimilazioniste, l’attribuzione di un valore politico al discorso sulla lingua kurda.

Sul fronte della “penna”, con il declino della cultura manoscritta e la diffusione dei sistemi di stampa monotype e linotype all’inizio del XX secolo, prende avvio uno sviluppo esponenziale della produzione in kurdo, ormai non più ristretta alla sola poesia. La prosa si esprimerà dapprima in varietà settentrionali di kurdo; solo successivamente, con il rafforzarsi delle politiche linguistiche della Turchia kemalista, si affermerà il primato letterario del kurdo centrale e in particolare del dialetto di Sulaymaniya (kurdo: Silêmanî/سلیمانی). È proprio in questa città che, nel 1920, viene istituita con il supporto del mandato britannico la prima tipografia a caratteri mobili del Kurdistan iracheno.

Contemporaneamente alla diffusione della scrittura meccanizzata, si infittisce il dibattito sulla normazione della lingua, a cominciare dalle scelte ortografiche. Era infatti apparso evidente che la grafia corsiva araba, per quanto carica di un valore simbolico importantissimo nel retaggio delle culture di religione islamica, mal si adattava alle nuove tecnologie di stampa, necessitando di interventi tecnici continui, complessi e costosi. Non a caso, la stampa a caratteri mobili era stata lungamente osteggiata nell’Impero ottomano, divenendo popolare solo alla fine del 1800 sotto la spinta di un interesse personale del Sultano riformatore Abdülhamid II per il libro stampato. Ciò determinò molte difficoltà nel reperimento di componenti e ricambi per le strumentazioni, rendendo spesso necessaria la sostituzione dei segni “speciali” delle grafie arabo-ottomana e arabo-persiana<sup>10</sup> con i corrispettivi “semplici” dell’arabo.<sup>11</sup>

### *3. La fase normativa: le riforme ortografiche a base latina e base araba degli anni '20 e '30*

Iniziò dunque a farsi strada tra alcuni intellettuali vicini al movimento dei giovani turchi<sup>12</sup> – attorno al quale, ricordiamo, gravitavano anche illu-

<sup>10</sup> گ، چ، ژ، پ con l’aggiunta dei segni ف [v] e ژ [ŋ] in turco ottomano.

<sup>11</sup> ب، ج، ز، ک، ف.

<sup>12</sup> In particolare gli scrittori Hüseyin Cahit, Abdullah Cevdet and Celâl Nuri.

stri esponenti dell'élite kurda – l'ipotesi di una riforma ortografica su base latina.

Questa idea prese corpo nel 1923 quando, su iniziativa personale del primo Presidente della neonata Repubblica di Turchia Mustafa Kemal, in seguito noto con l'appellativo di "Atatürk", venne istituita una commissione per la latinizzazione ortografica del turco, considerata indispensabile nel progetto di modernizzazione e secolarizzazione del Paese. Dopo un brevissimo periodo di transizione, l'adozione dell'alfabeto turco a base latina divenne obbligatoria per legge dal 1° gennaio del 1929.

La legge ortografica, denominata "Türk Harflerinin Kabul ve Tatbiki Hakkında Kanun" (Legge sull'accettazione e l'applicazione delle lettere turche), oltre a proscrivere l'uso dei caratteri arabi per l'unica lingua ufficiale della Repubblica turca, rendeva implicitamente illegale anche l'uso di alcuni segni latini (<q, w, x, î, ê, û>) rappresentanti suoni molto comuni nelle lingue locali diverse dal turco, incluso il kurdo.<sup>13</sup>

Poco più di tre anni dopo, il 15 maggio 1932, Celadet Bedir Khan pubblica dal suo esilio in Siria il primo numero della rivista *Hawar*, inizialmente in doppia grafia latina e araba, poi (a partire dal ventiquattresimo numero) esclusivamente in caratteri latini. Lo scopo dichiarato della rivista era di "promuovere l'unità dei kurdi [...] sulla base di un alfabeto unificato e una lingua comune" (Yüksel 2021: 219). Il raggiungimento dell'obiettivo sarà rivendicato da Celadet Bedir Khan già nel ventesimo numero del periodico, a distanza di appena un anno dalla sua prima pubblicazione, con l'affermazione che il kurmanji era ormai definitivamente passato dallo status di lingua prettamente orale a lingua di scrittura grazie allo sviluppo di un pratico sistema grafico capace di rappresentare i suoni della lingua e adatto alla sua modernizzazione lessicale e tematica (Öpengin 2021: 621-622).

Se la disgregazione dell'impero ottomano aveva segnato una definitiva scissione della lingua kurda sul fronte della "spada", questo momento rappresenta in realtà un secondo spartiacque, che segnerà la divisione del kurdo anche sul fronte della "penna": il lancio dell'alfabeto kurdo a base

<sup>13</sup> Divieto, questo, rigidamente rispettato nella registrazione anagrafica dei nomi propri di persona, ma ignorato, ad esempio, nella comune segnaletica riportante prestiti inglesi o francesi. L'uso di tali grafemi è stato sanzionato con ammende pecuniarie fino alla sua formale rimozione nel 2013, ben ottantacinque anni dopo l'entrata in vigore della legge ortografica turca.

latina – poi noto come alfabeto “Hawar” o “Bedir Khan” – e la quasi contemporanea adozione di una grafia a base araba in Iraq consegneranno alla storia il kurdo come lingua dotata di un doppio sistema ortografico, che ne consoliderà inevitabilmente il successivo sviluppo anche come lingua a doppio standard kurmanji/sorani o a “standard pluricentrico” (riprendendo una felice definizione attribuita da Öpengin [2021: 604, 621] al kurmanji moderno).

Sebbene l’intento dei Bedir Khan e di Tawfiq Wahby, ideatore della grafia araba modificata del kurdo centrale, fosse sostanzialmente identico – ovvero volessero entrambi elaborare un alfabeto fonemico per la lingua kurda – le due esperienze viaggiarono su binari paralleli. In realtà, prima della decisione di presentare la riforma ortografica nel periodico *Hawar*, sembra che i fratelli Bedir Khan avessero cercato, con una corrispondenza epistolare, un dialogo con il letterato e ufficiale iracheno inizialmente impegnato nell’ideazione di un sistema a base latina per il kurdo centrale.<sup>14</sup> Nonostante ciò, non ci fu mai alcuna collaborazione diretta tra loro e purtroppo non sapremo mai se un tale incontro avrebbe potuto indirizzare diversamente il successivo biforcarsi delle grafie kurde.

Per lo sviluppo dell’alfabeto a base araba, Wahby si avvalse della collaborazione con l’alto funzionario britannico C.J. Edmonds e del supporto dell’amministrazione mandataria, impegnata in quegli anni ad attuare le raccomandazioni della Lega delle Nazioni sul rispetto dei diritti linguistici kurdi. A riguardo, un Memorandum del 1926 (citato in Hassanpour 1992: 105-106) afferma iperbolicamente che “lo sviluppo della lingua [kurda] scritta come mezzo di comunicazione è dovuta *interamente* agli sforzi dei funzionari britannici”.<sup>15</sup> Ciò attesta la rilevanza del fattore “extra-linguistico” nell’avvio della riforma ortografica in Iraq, così come nella promulgazione della “legge sulle lingue locali” del 1931, che, seppur del tutto inefficace nella pratica, consentì l’ammissione dell’Iraq indipendente alla Lega delle Nazioni.

La riforma ortografica su base araba, come già accaduto per l’*abjad* arabo-ottomano, rendeva imperativa la dotazione di caratteri a stampa con diacritici, rispetto ai quali si presentarono difficoltà del tutto simili a quelle già descritte per i caratteri latini: i caratteri speciali erano difficili da re-

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. Wahby 1925. Si vedano a tal proposito anche le discussioni in Edmonds 1931; 1933 e Minorsky 1933.

<sup>15</sup> Enfasi mia.

perire e rimpiazzare; i diacritici dovevano essere trascritti manualmente dopo la stampa o rappresentati dai numeri arabi  $\vee$  e  $\wedge$  affiancati alle lettere; per alcuni fonemi furono adottati per comodità segni raddoppiati (<رر> per [r], in seguito <رر>; وو per [u:]), che tuttavia stentarono a stabilizzarsi nell'uso.

Nonostante i numerosi impedimenti – cui si sommarono l'iniziale dissenso del Ministero della Cultura iracheno e la reticenza di alcuni settori conservatori della società, per i quali era impensabile che “le sacre lettere del Corano” venissero modificate in maniera tanto profonda (Hassanpour 1992: 378) – la riforma divenne presto popolare. Questa si diffuse anche oltre i confini iracheni, divenendo d'uso comune nelle adiacenti aree kurdofone dell'Iran occidentale, specie dopo l'esperienza di autonomismo kurdo della repubblica di Mahabad (1946).

D'altro canto, la divulgazione della latinizzazione del kurdo “alla turca” in Iraq e Iran sarebbe stata un'operazione ben più complicata da attuare rispetto a una proposta, per quanto radicale, di riforma dell'ortografia araba: infatti, all'epoca dell'uscita del volume programmatico di Jemal Nebez dal titolo *Scrivere il kurdo in caratteri latini* (Nebez 1957) ancora “nessuna tipografia a Baghdad era in possesso o intenzionata a procurarsi caratteri latini diacritizzati” (Hassanpour 1992: 182).

I numerosi appelli ai kurdi iracheni per l'adozione del sistema *Hawar* rimasero inascoltati e anche tra gli intellettuali francesi come Pierre Rondot e Roger Lescot – che avevano offerto assistenza ai Bedir Khan nella latinizzazione del kurdo dal loro esilio siriano – serpeggiava un certo malcontento per l'attaccamento dei kurdi iracheni ai caratteri arabi che, secondo Lescot (1943: 4), “si adattano molto poco alla loro lingua”.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. La fase di stabilizzazione: quale futuro?

L'adozione di un sistema diverso da quello a base araba in Iraq era però impensabile, data la presenza di un governo centrale a forte trazione

<sup>16</sup> Si veda anche l'elogio della riforma alfabetica sostenuta da *Hawar* rispetto a quella di Tawfiq Wahby nella recensione di Rondot (1932). Oltre un ventennio dopo, in una rassegna dei vantaggi e degli svantaggi dei sistemi ortografici a base latina e base araba, Bois (1965: 376) conclude che, al netto dei necessari aggiustamenti, “c'est [...] l'alphabet de *Hawar* qui devrait être adopté par tous les Kurdes, à cause de sa simplicité et aussi à cause de sa parfaite adaptation à la langue kurde, même aux dialectes sorani et mokri”.

araba, e lo divenne ancor di più a seguito dell’ingresso della riforma ortografica nelle scuole irachene, con l’approvazione ufficiale dell’abecedario di Ibrahim Amin Baldar nel 1951. Con la formalizzazione dell’amministrazione autonoma del Kurdistan iracheno nel 1992 e il riconoscimento del kurdo come lingua ufficiale accanto all’arabo nella Costituzione del 2005 (Art. 4),<sup>17</sup> l’uso dell’alfabeto kurdo-sorani si è definitivamente stabilizzato in tutti i settori: dall’amministrazione all’educazione, dalle scienze alla letteratura.

La possibile adozione di un alfabeto a base latina è stata implicitamente esclusa anche in Iran con la promulgazione della Costituzione del 1980, che al Cap. 2, Art. 15 recita: “quella persiana è la lingua *e la grafia* ufficiale del popolo iraniano. I documenti, la corrispondenza, i testi ufficiali, quelli scolastici devono essere tutti [compilati] in questa lingua *e in questa grafia*”.<sup>18</sup> Tale disposizione di legge rende giuridicamente impossibile una sostituzione della grafia a base araba con altri sistemi grafici in Iran.

Oggi la situazione all’interno delle comunità scriventi è però molto cambiata, specie grazie alle nuove tecnologie informatiche e all’uso di internet, rivelatisi strumenti importantissimi per sostenere l’avvio di processi di pianificazione linguistica inimmaginabili solo qualche decennio fa. Si pensi solo al vantaggio, rispetto al passato, di avere a disposizione font per la videoscrittura in entrambe le principali ortografie kurde, anche nelle chat di messaggistica istantanea, o allo sviluppo di sempre migliori strumenti di traduzione automatica tra le principali macro-varietà di kurdo.

Nonostante i ritardi, specie in Turchia e in Siria, nell’eliminazione delle restrizioni all’uso della lingua in vigore nel secolo scorso,<sup>19</sup> i nuovi media hanno offerto uno spazio estremamente favorevole per l’uso scritto del kurdo e la discussione metalinguistica – analogamente a quanto fatto nel ’900 dagli istituti di cultura kurda in Europa. Questo consente di su-

<sup>17</sup> Consultabile online in traduzione inglese al link [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq\\_2005.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq_2005.pdf?lang=en) (ultimo accesso gennaio 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Enfasi mia. Il testo costituzionale è consultabile in traduzione inglese al link [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran\\_1989.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran_1989.pdf?lang=en) (ultimo accesso gennaio 2022).

<sup>19</sup> Ad esempio, il divieto di pubblicare in kurdo in vigore in Turchia dal 1979 è stato abrogato soltanto nel 2005, sotto la pressione degli Stati membri dell’Unione Europea nel quadro delle trattative sull’adesione del Paese all’UE (Rossi 2007: 97-98).

perare sempre meglio gli ostacoli generati dalle divisioni geopolitiche, linguistiche, ortografiche che caratterizzano le aree kurde da lunghissimo tempo.

Quindi, quale futuro si prospetta per la lingua kurda? Gli intellettuali kurdi, tanto nei territori di origine che nella diaspora, non hanno mai mancato di sottolineare come l'unità ortografica delle varietà kurde potesse rappresentare l'inizio dell'unificazione dialettale della lingua, concetto espresso già nel 1932 da Celadet Bedir Khan nella sezione in caratteri arabi del terzo numero di *Hawar*.

Jamal Nebez fu uno dei più convinti promotori dell'idea che tale unificazione dovesse passare dalla latinizzazione del kurdo centrale. A seguito della popolarizzazione dell'alfabeto kurdo kurmanji nella diaspora si è andata rafforzando, nei circoli culturali kurdi all'estero, la convinzione che l'unica scelta possibile fosse l'adozione di un sistema unico a base latina. A tal proposito Ismet Cherif Vanly, in un articolo del 1959,<sup>20</sup> affermava in maniera categorica (ma inveritiera) che il kurdo kurmanji "è già scritto in caratteri latini ben adattati, a differenza del sorani che è scritto in un' *inadeguata* grafia araba"<sup>21</sup> (Vanly 1959: 9; cfr. Hassanpour 1992: 160). La scelta più ovvia è stata perciò quella di apportare alcune aggiunte all'alfabeto *Hawar* per adattarlo quanto più possibile alle peculiarità del sistema fonologico del kurdo centrale.

Non bisogna dimenticare infatti che le seconde e terze generazioni della diaspora kurda, generalmente bilingui in almeno una lingua europea e per la maggior parte parlanti varietà settentrionali di kurdo, raramente hanno la possibilità di apprendere e praticare la grafia a base araba sin dall'infanzia. È un dato di fatto che l'uso dell'alfabeto sorani a base araba rimanga ancora inintelligibile per molti dei parlanti kurdo settentrionale, mentre i parlanti varietà centro-meridionali hanno in genere più opportunità di entrare in contatto con l'alfabeto *Hawar* attraverso gli strumenti lessicografici e le pubblicazioni kurde all'estero. Una disparità, questa, che si sta recentemente tentando di appianare introducendo la grafia a base araba in nuove edizioni di "classici" della lessicografia kurmanji, come il dizionario kurdo-inglese di Michael Chyet (Chyet 2020).

<sup>20</sup> Il politico e attivista kurdo era allora a capo della *Kurdish Students Society in Europe* (KSSE).

<sup>21</sup> Enfasi mia.

Bisogna considerare, d’altro canto, che la proposta di un’estensione del sistema grafico kurmanji alle varietà centro-meridionali di kurdo<sup>22</sup> non viene sempre ben accolta dalle comunità in Iraq e Iran per una serie di concause, tra le quali: 1) la forte connotazione regionale dell’alfabeto kurmanji, intimamente legato a quello turco; 2) il radicamento storico dell’alfabeto sorani nella regione sin dagli anni ’20 del 1900; 3) concreti apparati normativi che promuovono o vincolano all’uso di grafie a base araba; 4) la competizione con sistemi diversi di traslitterazione in caratteri latini del persiano e dell’arabo, spesso incompatibili con la rappresentazione delle vocali nell’alfabeto *Hawar*.

Peraltro, il forte radicamento dei due sistemi nell’uso corrente delle diverse comunità scriventi ha escluso a priori la diffusione di proposte alternative di unificazione grafica su base latina, come l’alfabeto cosiddetto *Yekgirtû* o *Yekxisto* proposto dal network informale Kurdish Academy of Language.<sup>23</sup> Dunque, i tentativi teorici di unificazione grafica sono stati sostanzialmente disattesi nella pratica e lo scenario attualmente più probabile vede il kurdo assestarsi come lingua a doppio sistema grafico.

Vorrei concludere accennando brevemente alla situazione nelle aree kurdofone più meridionali che, come spesso accade, rimangono ai margini dei resoconti storici sullo sviluppo della lingua kurda, ma che rappresentano oggi il terreno più vivo in cui osservare nuovi processi di elaborazione ortografica, a valle della stabilizzazione delle ortografie delle due maggiori macro-varietà del kurdo. Le richieste che provengono oggi da questa comunità di parlanti e le problematiche che stanno affrontando somigliano per molti aspetti a quelle vissute dai parlanti kurdo settentrionale e centrale tra la fase emergente e quella normativa delle rispettive varietà scritte.

La richiesta fortemente sentita dalla comunità parlante è quella di avere presto a disposizione uno strumento lessicografico specifico per queste varietà, che serva da fondamento per il loro ampliamento nell’uso scritto e per l’elaborazione di una grafia unitaria. I recenti dibattiti di un team internazionale che si è costituito a questo scopo, dei quali ho potuto

<sup>22</sup> Come recentemente attuata, ad esempio, nel Manchester Database of Kurdish Dialects (Matras et al. 2016), le cui scelte di traslitterazione sono consultabili al link <http://kurdish.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/transliteration-system/> (ultimo accesso gennaio 2022).

<sup>23</sup> Questo sistema semplificato a base latina, basato sullo standard ISO-8859-1, è caratterizzato da un numero ridotto di marche diacritiche. Per un’illustrazione delle sue caratteristiche si consulti il sito <http://kurdishacademy.org/?p=111> (ultimo accesso gennaio 2022).

seguire in prima persona gli sviluppi, hanno visto riproporsi molte delle problematiche descritte fin qui. Sussiste infatti una profonda differenza di vedute tra chi: 1) dalla diaspora, auspicherebbe l'uso del solo alfabeto *Hawar* o l'adozione invariata degli standard esistenti; 2) chi nei luoghi di origine spingerebbe per l'adozione di sistemi maggiormente basati sullo standard del persiano, che costituisce nella maggioranza dei casi la seconda lingua di comunicazione quotidiana per i parlanti; 3) e chi invece ritiene indispensabile una seppur minima modifica delle norme esistenti per e un loro adattamento alle specificità fonologiche del kurdo meridionale, specie nel repertorio vocalico.

In assenza di qualsiasi supporto istituzionale alla codifica di queste varietà, peraltro caratterizzate da una forte eterogeneità e dalla sostanziale mancanza di un dialetto dotato di maggior prestigio che possa fungere da standard normativo di partenza, è impossibile stabilire al momento se e in che modo questi propositi potranno concretizzarsi. La speranza è in gran parte riposta negli strumenti informatici, che accorciano le distanze e favoriscono una sperimentazione sempre più aperta e condivisa, seppur costellata di questioni irrisolte e di ostacoli niente affatto facili da superare nel lungo e intricato percorso della pianificazione linguistica.



## **The King and the Thieves: Three Balochi Versions of a Well-Known Folktale**

ELA FILIPPONE

### *1. Introduction*

The textual archive of the Balochi Etymological Dictionary Project (BEDP, University of Naples, L'Orientale, Tuscia University, Viterbo and ISMEO/Rome) contains several unpublished texts, among which a few provided in transcription by Prof. Alexander Grjunberg in the early 1990s. They have mostly been collected in the area of Mari (Turkmenistan) by Sergej Axenov who published some years later a corpus-based grammatical description of the Balochi language of Turkmenistan (2006).<sup>1</sup> To these texts belongs the folktale I am going to publish here as K-T/1.<sup>2</sup> This is followed by two other versions of the same story in other Balochi varieties (K-T/2 in Sistāni Balochi, K-T/3 in Eastern Balochi), that have already been published in Barjasteh Delforooz 2010: 366-377 and Dames 1891.I: 17-18,<sup>3</sup> respectively.

Finding different versions of this very story in the Balochi speaking area is not at all surprising. It is in fact a well-known story, spread in a very large area running from North Africa to India (and also Europe). The oldest available documentation in Persian language dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century; it is

<sup>1</sup> Axenov mainly based his linguistic analysis on folkloric texts collected during several trips to Turkmenistan in the period between 1989 and 2000 (Axenov 2006: 27).

<sup>2</sup> As far as I know the text is still unpublished though couple of sentences have been used as examples in Axenov 2006: 60 [16]; 131 [330]. I dedicate this paper to the memory of Prof. Alexander L. Grjunberg.

<sup>3</sup> Translated by Dames in 1893: 300-302 (see also Jamiat Rai 1913: 27-29, substantially the same translation as that of Dames). A Russian translation is in Gankovskij 1989: 27-29. Dames' version has been quoted in Roberts, Thompson 1960 (N. 951 C).

a literary version by Jalāl-al-din Rumi.<sup>4</sup> The story can be summarized as follows: A king in disguised dress joins up with a gang of robbers, all of them endowed with an extraordinary ability, and all together carry out a burglary in the king's own palace. When the robbers are going to be executed for their crime, the king saves them from death (Type 951A in Uther 2004).<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Texts

The three versions of our story are given in the following.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.1 K-T/1 (TrkBal.)

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|--|--|
| <p>1. <i>šā abbās šapā watrā ʔalatnimā-a kurt<sup>7</sup> u bi šāray kūča<sup>8</sup>-u-maydānān čār-a kurt.<sup>9</sup></i></p> | <p>1. Šāh Abbās at night used to change his appearance and wander the streets and the squares of the town.</p> |
| <p>2. <i>yak šapē waxt bi yak kūčaay tā gō du mardumā brēbir<sup>10</sup> büt.</i></p>   | <p>2. One night in a street he bumped into two men.</p>  |
| <p>3. <i>gō yēšān salām-u-alaykē kurt u yak ʔukkurē amrā büt. yē guštant ki: ammā duzz-an.</i></p>                               | <p>3. He exchanged greetings with them and went along with them for a while. They said: “We are thieves.”</p>  |

<sup>4</sup> *Masnavi-ye maʿnavi* VI, 2816-2921. English translation in Nicholson 1934: 414-419.

<sup>5</sup> 951 A\*, 951 C in AT. See also Marzolph 1984: 178-179 (Iranian folklore); Eberhard, Boratov 1953: 375 (Turkish folklore; Type 344).

<sup>6</sup> Transcription generally follows that of each source, with some slight modifications. In K-T/3, for instance, Dames' *á, í, ú* have been changed into *ā, ī and ū*; *gh* has been changed into *ɣ, dh* into *ð*, etc. Abbreviations used: (languages) AfghBal. = Balochi of Afghanistan; Ar. = Arabic; (W, S, E) Bal. = (Western, Southern, Eastern) Balochi; Prs. = Persian; Sist. = Sistāni; Sist-Bal. = Balochi of Sistān; TrkBal. = Balochi of Turkmenistan.

<sup>7</sup> TrbBal. *ʔalatnimā* 'changed appearance,' *watrā ʔalatnimā kurtin* 'to change appearance' (Axenov 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Bal. *kūča* 'street' (Axenov 2006; Elfenbein 1963 [but read *kūča* instead of *kūčē*]), is a Prs. lw. with a limited areal diffusion within the Bal. speaking area.

<sup>9</sup> TrkBal. *čār* 'course, wandering,' *čār kurtin* 'to wander, ramble' (Axenov 2006). Connected to the verb *čar(r)ag* 'to turn; to roam, to go around.' See also below, fn. 53.

<sup>10</sup> A variant of *brābir*; both *brābir* and *brēbir* are attested in Zarubin 1932 and 1949, with the meaning of 'equal' (see *brābirā* 'in order, equally' in Elfenbein 1963) but also of 'opposite, facing.' The existence of more phonetic variants for this word is also attested in other dialects; cf. *barēbar*, *barōbar* in Jahāndide 2017, *barēbar*, *barōbar*, *barābar* in Sayad Hāšmi 2000. Cf. Prs. *barābar* and cognates, among which probably also Kurmanji Kurdish *berbiri* 'proceeding from the opposite direction, coming out to meet' (Chyet 2020), 'de, venant de (*indique la provenance*)' (Nezan 2017).

4. *šā abbās š-ēšān xāyišt*<sup>11</sup> *kurt ki: mnā um*<sup>12</sup> *gō wat pa duzzīā barit.*

5. *duzz guštant: ammā harē yakkē yak unar dāran, ta če unar dāray? šā abbās gušt: šumā če unar dārit?*

6. *yakkē gušt: mnī unar amēš int ki har yak čīzērā ki dil bandīn, šap bīt, roč bīt, dīsta ma baīn*<sup>13</sup> *am, wadī-a kanīn.*

7. *duwwumīyēn gušt: mnī unar amēš int ki har čunēn warokēn u gandagēn kučakkē bīt, mnā ki bgindīt, na gwakkūt*<sup>14</sup> *u pa mnī jānā arkatt-a na kant.*

8. *šā abbās gušt: mnī unar amēš int ki agar man watī čappēn dastā bi čappēn barōtā bkaššīn, sad mardumā bi kuštīnā daīn wa agar rāstēn dastā bi rāstēn barōtā bkaššīn, sad mardumā ša kuštīnā alās-a kanīn.*

9. *yē duzz šā abbāsay unarā bēxī*<sup>15</sup> *zabrēn*<sup>16</sup> *unarē isāb kurtant čerā*<sup>17</sup> *ki*

4. Šāh Abbās asked them to take him with them to steal.

5. The thieves said: “Each of us has a skill; what skill do you have?” Šāh Abbās replied: “What skill do you have?”

6. One said: “My skill is this, that everything I would bend my heart upon, be it day, be it night, even if I am not able to see, I find (it).”

7. The second one said: “My skill is this, that a dog, no matter how ravening and bad it is, if it sees me, doesn’t bark and doesn’t set on me.”

8. Šāh Abbās said: “My skill is this, that if I skitter my left hand on my left moustache, I condemn one hundred people to death, but if skitter my right hand on my right moustache I save from death one hundred people.”

9. These thieves esteemed Šāh Abbās’s skill a very good skill, since, should

<sup>11</sup> This form is not attested in Bal. dictionaries. In Zarubin 1932: 88 one finds the variant *xāhišt* (cf. *šā ta xāhišt a-kanīn* “I request you”). On the diffusion of *št*-deverbatives (or nominal derivatives) in Iranian, including Balochi (probably due to influence from Sistāni or other Eastern or South-Eastern Persian varieties), see Filippone 2011: 193-194. TrkBal. *xāyišt kurtin* is semantically equivalent to Prs. *xāheš kardan* (‘to ask, request, beg’).

<sup>12</sup> *-um* (also *-am*) ‘also, even.’ As Prs. *ham*, it also works as a focal particle (Axenov 2006: 233).

<sup>13</sup> On this particular construction (past participle of the main verb, plus negative inflected forms of the verb ‘to be’) to express ‘impossibility’ see Axenov 2006: 224.

<sup>14</sup> Bal. *gwakkag* ‘to bark’ (see also below, K-T/2 [13]) seems to have an areal connotation, with a more rooted presence in the Bal. varieties spoken in Iran (cf. Jahāndide 2017 [*gwakkag*, but also *wakkag*]). In other WBal. and SBal. varieties the variant *wakkag* is the usual one for ‘to bark’ (cf. Dashti 2019: *wakkag*, Dašti 2017: *wakkag*, *waṛkag*, etc.). Variant forms are however also recorded in Raxšāni: cf. *wakkūt* / *gwakkūt* in a Bal. proverb in Elfenbein 1990: 438 [30 a,b]). In Eastern Balochi, ‘to bark’ is usually *b<sup>h</sup>aunkay* (see below, K-T/3 [18]).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *bēxī* ‘very’ in Axenov 2006.

<sup>16</sup> *zabr* ‘good’ (Axenov 2006); ‘very well, very strong’ (Elfenbein 1963). Not only TrkBal.; cf. (Bal. of Iran) Jahāndide 2017 (*zabr* ‘well; healthy; much, a great deal; beautiful’). See also Xorāsāni (Qāimi) *zabr* ‘strong, vigorous’ (Šālči 1991).

<sup>17</sup> In the TrkBal. stories collected by Grjunberg, Axenov and kept at the BEDP Archive, there are at least two occurrences of *čerā ki* ‘because, since;’ from Prs. *čerā ke* ‘id.’

agar gīr āyant, yē amrāyiš āwānā ša markā alās-a kant.

10. šā abbāsā gō watī amrādārīyā zurtant u šutant dēmi āī jinday xazānagā.<sup>18</sup>

11. ā duzz ki guštī: kučakk mnā bgin-dant u na gwakkant, taī abar rāst int.

12. ā ki guštī: man nābaladēn jānā baladī-a kanīn u ar čīzērā ki mnī dīl bkaššūt, wadī-a kanīn, rāstām<sup>19</sup> šut u xazānagay gisay dapā oštāt.

13. yē gisay dapā pruštant u xazānagay zarr-u-sōrānā baḍ kurtant.

14. ša šārā dar būtant u yē čīzānā watī mānjīnā bār<sup>20</sup> kurtant.

15. har kas watī bārā zurt u gō yakdīgarā xudā-āfizī kurtant.

16. šā abbās gušt: ay brāsān, man bi šāray plān kūčaay plān jāā zindagānī<sup>21</sup>-a kanīn, mnī nām plānī int, šumay nām-u-nišānī kay int ki man bzānīn u šumayā byāīn?

17. duzz watī nām-u-nišānītānā pa šā abbās guštant u ša yakdīgarā jītā būtant u ar kas bi watī gisā šut.

18. yē duzz ša šā abbās bāz xāyišt kurtant ki šā abbās āwānā bēwōš<sup>22</sup> ma kant u āwānī gisā bayt.

19. šā abbās um yēšānā qawl dāt ki: man šumārā bēwōš-a na kanīn.

they be captured, this comrade of theirs could save them from death.

10. They took Šāh Abbās away along with them and headed for his treasury.

11. That thief which had said: “If the dogs see me they do not bark,” your words are true.

12. The one which had said: “I recognize unknown places and I find everything my heart desires, went forward and stood at the door of the treasury.

13. They broke the door of this house and loaded upon their back the money and gold of the treasury.

14. They went out of the town and shared these things among them.

15. Each one took his share and they said good-by each other.

16. Šāh Abbās said: “Hey brothers, I live in the so-and-so town, in the so-and-so street; my name is so-and-so. What is your name and your address, so that I can know it and come to you?”

17. The thieves told to Šāh Abbās their names and addresses, separated and each one went to his home.

18. These thieves vehemently asked Šāh Abbās not to forget them and to come to their houses.

19. And Šāh Abbās promised them: “I will not forget you.”

<sup>18</sup> Bal. *xazānag* ‘treasury,’ also found in K-T/2. Cf. *hazānag* in Jahāndide 2017; < Prs.

<sup>19</sup> *rāstām* ‘forward’ (Axenov 2006), ‘right’ (Elfenbein 1963 [*rāstām*]), ‘straightforward [mostaqim]; straight line [xatt-e rāst-o-mostaqim]’ (Jahāndide 2017); Zarubin 1932 (*rāstām*) *passim*, Zarubin 1949: 83[*twice*] (*rāstām*).

<sup>20</sup> (Raxšāni) Bal. *bār* (< *bahr*) ‘share, destiny, allotment’ (Elfenbein 1990), *bār kan-* ‘to apportion’ (Elfenbein 1963); see also Jahāndide 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Prs. *zendegāni* ‘life.’

<sup>22</sup> *bēwōš* ‘forgotten’ (Elfenbein 1963), *bēōš* ‘unconscious’ (Axenov 2006); cf. Jahāndide 2017 *bē-hōš* ‘unconscious; forgotten.’

20. *šā abbās šapay āxirā bi watī gisā āt u watī baḡḡā yak jāyē išt u puččānā kaššit u wapt.*

21. *tārī ki rōč būt, šā abbāsā sī kurtant ki dōšī xazānagā duzz jata, mazanēn čīzērā burtagant.*

22. *šā abbās watī wazīr u wakīl u duz-bigīrānā tawār kurt u ukm kurt ki duzzānā wadī bkanant.*

23. *wazīr u wakīl u duz-bigīr say šap u say rōč har čī ki gardant, ša duzzān darakk<sup>23</sup>-u-wādarakkē jatag-a na kasant.*

24. *čārumīyēn rōč ki bīt, šā abbāsā gušant ki: ammā hič darakkē jata na kurtan.*

25. *šā abbās du māsilā<sup>24</sup> tawār-a kant u duzzānī nām u nišāna u gīsānī u kūča u jāyiš māsilānā gušt u āwānī āwurtinā ukm-a kurt.*

26. *māsil šutant u duzzānā āurtant šā abbāsay darbārā.*

27. *šā abbās ukm-a kant ki: duzzānā byārit!*

20. At the end of the night Šāh Abbās came back home, left his load somewhere, stripped off his clothes and went to bed.

21. When it was morning, they informed Šāh Abbās that the night before thieves had robbed the treasury and had taken away a big thing.

22. Šāh Abbās summoned his visir, his viceroy and the thief-catchers and ordered to find the thieves.

23. The vizier, the viceroy and the thief-catchers no matter how much they go around for three days and three nights, are not able to get news of the thieves.

24. At the fourth day, they say to Šāh Abbās: “We were not able to get any news.”

25. Šāh Abbās summons two guards and tells the guards the names, addresses, street and place of the thefts, and ordered to bring them.

26. The guards went and brought the thieves to Šāh Abbās’s court.

27. Šāh Abbās orders: “Bring the thieves!”

<sup>23</sup> *darakk* ‘news (about somebody)’ (Axenov 2006). It is not easy to define the area where this word is really in use (apparently somewhere in the Raxšāni speaking area). Very few dictionaries and glossaries record it. A MS with a Balochi/Brahui/English/Urdu lexical list by Āyā Mir Nāsir Xān Ahmedzai (EBDP Archive) records Bal. *darak*, Brahui *darak* ‘search, inquiry, clue;’ this information is supported by the occurrence of *darakk* in a classical poem by Jām Durak (chief poet at the court of Nāsir Xān of Kalat) (Elfenbein 1990: 264; in *Glossary*, see *darakk* ‘discovered, traced’ (imprecise!) + *jan-* ‘to discover’). Jahāndide 2017 quotes it referring to Nāgumān 2011<sup>3</sup> (*darak* ‘clue’). Cf. also Sist. *darak* ‘indication, footprint, trace’ (Mohammadi Xomak 2000). In (23) *darakk* is at the base of the formation of an echo-compound, a typical product of a sound symbolic strategy characterizing Iranian and other languages in a very large contact area.

<sup>24</sup> Bal. *māsil* ‘envoy; soldier, guard’ (Elfenbein 1990); *māsel* ‘guard [pāsbān]’ (Jahāndide 2017); *māsal* ‘guard’ (Dashti 2019). Probably in use only in some varieties of Raxšāni. As tentatively suggested by Elfenbein, it could be a phonetic adaptation of Prs. *mohassel* (< Ar. *muḥaššil*) ‘(tax) collector.’

28. *duz ančō ki bi gisay tā putrant, ša duzzān yakkē šā abbāsā drust<sup>25</sup>-a kant ki yē amā šapīyēn ammay amrāk<sup>26</sup> int.* 28. When the thieves entered the house, one of the thieves recognized Šāh Abbās: “This is that comrade of ours of that evening.”
29. *duzz-a guštī: ay pādišā! ammā xāyišt-a kanan ki ta watī rāstēn dastā bi rāstēn barōtā bkaššay.* 29. The thief says: “Hey king! We ask you to skitter you right hand on your right moustache.”
30. *šā abbās sarpad būt ki duz āyirā drust kurt.* 30. Šāh Abbās understood that the thief had recognized him.
31. *šā abbās gušt: šumārā baxšātun. Brayit.* 31. Šāh Abbās said: “I have forgiven you. Go.”
32. *duz šutant u amā čīzē ki burtatant, padā āwurtant.* 32. The thieves left, and that thing they had brought, they carried back.
33. *yē abaray mānēā biyayr-i duzzān u pādišāā digar hičkas sarpad na būt.* 33. The meaning of this story nobody understood except the thieves and the king.

2.2 K-T/2 (SistBal.)<sup>27</sup>

0. *Bādišā Hārūn u čār duzz* 0. King Harun and the four thieves
1. *bādšā-(y)i ārūn. guštī bādšā-ē-at, bādšā-ē-at.* 1. King Harun. They say he was a king, he was a king.
2. *rōčā taxtay sarā ništ, šapā čōn<sup>28</sup>-a ku? kōnağēn pučč gwarā-a ku, kōnağēn pučč gwarā-a ku, čār-a ku.* 2. During the day he was sitting on the throne. What was he doing at night? He put out worn out clothes, he put out worn out clothes (and) walked around.
3. [<sup>H</sup> *badalnamā<sup>29</sup>-a ku*] *badalnamā-a ku, ā.* 3. [<sup>H</sup> He disguised himself]. He disguised himself, yes.

<sup>25</sup> *drust* ‘kown, recognized’, *drust kurtin* ‘to know, to recognize’ (Axenov 2006). This particular sense of *drust* (generally ‘all, whole’ in Bal.) and the complex construction *drust kurtin/kanag* is not peculiar to TrkBal. only; it may be found in other varieties of Raxšāni Balochi, as well (Barker, Mengal 1969.1: 436–437). With this sense it has been transferred into Brahui (Rossi 1979: 13 [A96]). See also Jahāndide 2017; Dašti 2017, 2019, etc. Cf. Prs. *dorost* ‘right, complete, full, sound etc.’ and cognates with partially different meanings. As other predicates belonging to the domain of cognition, *drust kurtin/kanag* is a logophoric verb construction and is followed by direct speech.

<sup>26</sup> Final *-k* is difficult to explain (elsewhere *amrā* ‘friend, comrade’). Probably, this is a typing or recording error, if not a sort of intrusive sound in speech.

<sup>27</sup> Hearers’ spontaneous interventions are enclosed in brackets. See below.

<sup>28</sup> For the sense ‘what [če kār]’ of (Iranian) Bal. *čōn* (‘how’) see also Jahāndide 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Equivalent to *yalatnimā*; see above fn. 7.

4. *čār-a ku<sup>30</sup> sayl-a ku ki mnī bādšāīay mardum čē rayam* 4. He walked around (and) looked around (to see) how the people of his kingdom (were).<sup>31</sup>
5. *āt ta<sup>32</sup> yakk jā-ē čār napar ništag-ant.* 5. He came (and saw) that four people were sitting in a place.
6. *ništag-ant-u gušt šumā čī-a kanit?* 6. They were sitting and he said: “What are you doing?”
7. *gušt-ī: ammā amidā kār-ē dāran.* 7. They/he said: “We have something to do here.”
8. *gušt: čē-(y)ē?* 8. He said: “What’s this about?”
9. *gušt-ī: ammā-a rawan rāst sōj-a kanay pa duzzī-u xazānag-u ē rangēn.* 9. They/he said: “We are going – you are right to ask – for theft and treasure and such kind (of things).”
10. *gušt: mnā-am gō wat amrā kanit.* 10. He said: “Let me also come along with you.”
11. *gušt-ant: ammā čār nafar-an čār kism<sup>33</sup>-a zānan. agar ta kism-ē zānay, trā baran.* 11. They said: “We are four people (and) we are able in four abilities. If you are able in an ability we take you (with us).”
12. *gušt-ī: xōb, šumā bgušit watī kism-mānā. šumay kism čē-(y)ē?* 12. He said: “Well, tell your abilities. What (is) your ability?”
13. *yak-ē gušt: mnī kism amēš-int ki ābādī-ē nazzik būt kučakk gwakkit, man-a zānīn ki ē čī-(y)a gušt, amē labzay-a<sup>34</sup> zānīn kučakkay.* 13. One said: “My ability is this: when a village is close (and) the dog barks I know what it says, I know its language, (that) of the dog.”

<sup>30</sup> See above, fn. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Not ‘(were doing)’ as in Barjasteh Delforoos 2010: 366. Here *rayam* alternates with *rakam* (see K-T/2 51). (Ir.) Bal. *rakam* ‘kind, type;’ < Prs. *raqm, raqam* [< Ar. *raqm*] ‘1) figure, digit, etc.; 2) type’. As other verbs of perception, *sayl kanag* is a logophoric construction and it is followed by direct discourse.

<sup>32</sup> On *ta* see below, p. \*\*.

<sup>33</sup> Bal. *kism* (as Prs. *qesm* ‘type, sort; share (also destiny)’ < Ar. *qism*) generally means ‘type, sort,’ a sense that does not fit the context. For (Ir.) Bal. *kism*, Jahāndide 2017 also mentions the sense ‘activity, profession’ [kār-o-kušeš’, ‘harfe-o-šoyl].” In TrkBal., the co-compound *kār-u kism* ‘(working) activity, profession’ is a synonym of *kism* (Zarubin 1949: 67 [cf. *ešānī kār-u kism muzzūrī* at (l. 6) vs. *ešānī kism muzzūrī būt* ‘their work/activity was working for hire/labor’). A similar meaning is conveyed by *kism-u-kār* occurring in a tale by a Bal. speaker from the surrounding of Nikšahr (BEDP Archive).

<sup>34</sup> Bal. *labz* is not only ‘word’ but also ‘language, dialect’ (Jahāndide 2017), (SistBal.) *labz* ‘Sprache’ (with metathesis) (Buddruss 1989), Sayad Hāšmi 2000, etc. Cf. Prs. *lafz* (< Ar.) ‘word, utterance or pronunciation.’

14. *gušt: ta-hoo*<sup>35</sup> *ē jwānēn xatarnāk-ē.* 14. He said: “Oh, wow! This is a fairly dangerous (thing).”
15. *yakk-ē gušt: mnī kism amēš-int harčōnēn tārīkī-ē, mardum-ē bgindīn, man duwārag drust-a kanīn.* 15. One said: “My ability is this: however dark it is (if) I see a person, the next time I will recognize him.”
16. *yakk-ē gu: mnī kism amēš-int ki man arčōnēn dīwāl-ē bīt, awlīēn lagat(t)ā maprōšīt, du(y)umīēn sayumīēn atman-a rawt, ša bayn-a prōšīt.* 16. One said: “My ability is this: I, any type of wall there is, (if) it doesn’t break down with the first kick, with the second or the third kick it will surely fall down (and) disintegrate.”
17. *yakk-ē gušt: mnī kism amēš-int ki rēkā ē rang say kanīn, zānīn ki idā xazānag-ast idā nē.* 17. One said: “My ability is this: when I look at the soil in this way, I know whether there is a treasure here not.”
18. *gušt: ta-hoo*<sup>36</sup> *ē xatarnākēn kism-ē, mnī am man kism-ē dārīn.* 18. He (the king) said: “Oh, wow! This is a dangerous ability. Mine, too. I (also) have an ability”.
19. *gušt: tī kism čī-ē?* 19. He/They said: “What is your ability?”
20. *gušt: man rīšā ki čandēntun, mardumā ša ēdām*<sup>37</sup> *alās-a kanīn.*<sup>38</sup> 20. He said: “If/when I shake my beard, I release people from execution.”
21. *gušt: napā*<sup>39</sup> *trā amrā-a kanan gō watī. tī jwānēn kism-ē.* 21. He said: “Then we let you come along us on our way. Yours is a good ability.”
22. *xulāsa bādšā ārūn čē kurt? gō ēšā rādag būt.* 22. In short, what did king Haroon do? He set out with them.
23. *ēšānā āzmāiš ku ki ta bārēn rāst-int amē wār drōγ-int.* 23. He tested them whether this is right or this time is a lie.
24. *šutant. ābādī ki nazzīk būt, kučakk gwakkitant.* 24. They went. When they came near the village the dogs barked.
25. *ā gušt: lāla, ē kučakk-a gušīt bādšā gōn-int-u bādšā gōn-int gō mašmā.* 25. The first one said: “Brothers, this dog says: the king is with (us), the king is with us.”

<sup>35</sup> So (*gušt ta-hoo*) in the transcription of Barjasteh Delforoosh. In fact, listening to the recording in the CD, one hears something like [ʃtū’ū:]. See below, p. 137.

<sup>36</sup> See above, fn. 35.

<sup>37</sup> See also (Ir.) Bal. *aydām* ‘execution’ in Jahāndide 2017 (Prs. *ē dām*, < Ar.).

<sup>38</sup> In fact, *alās-a kant* ‘it/he will release’ in Barjasteh Delforoosh 2010: 370. I have emended it into the 1<sup>st</sup> singular person, considering it as a case of loss of control by the storyteller.

<sup>39</sup> The discourse marker *napā* ‘then, afterwards’ is also frequently found in TrkBal. Cf. also Sist. *nafā* ‘then [pas, napas]’ (Mohammadi Xomak 2000).

- 26 *gušt: b-ill watī abarā, bādšā kay gō ē layarīēn puččān-a k-ayt pa duzzīā?* 26. They/He said: “Don’t say such things. When would the king come in these worn-out clothes for stealing?”
27. *ā, gōn-int!* 27. “Yes, he is with (us)!”
28. *γabūl nakurtant ā(y)ī abarā.* 28. They did not accept his word.
29. *gušt: xōb-int!* 29. He said: “ok!”
30. *āxir ā diga dīwāl-ē ki nazzik būt, humm-ē dāt gō sayumīēn lagat(t)ay dīwālā čappi-ē ku.* 30. Later, when the other one was near a wall, he made a sudden sharp jerk, with his third kick he demolished the wall.
31. *šutant ākā [...]* 31. They went, the soil [...].
32. *bādšā zānt ki idā xazānag-int.* 32. The king knew that the treasure is here.
33. *gušt-ī: ī āk-int, say kan!* 33. He [the king] said: “This is soil, look at it!”
34. *ākā ki sayl ku, gušt-ī: amidā xazānag-ē. xazānagā kaššitant.* 34. When he [the theft] looked at the soil, he said: “Right here there is a treasure.” They pulled out the treasure.” Whoever either had a blanket or had a lap cloth, they filled up (and) took them away.
- watī paṭṭū-ē dāšt, inj<sup>40</sup>-ē dāšt, purr-ē kurtant burtant.*
35. *gušt: xōb. bādšā gušt ki šumā annūn watī adris(s)ā dayīy dayit.* 35. He/They said: “Well.” The king said: “Now give your address accurately.
36. *mašmay jwānēn kism-ē. [H ā, mašmā-u brās<sup>42</sup>-an] ā, brās-an.* 36. Ours is a good ability.<sup>41</sup> [Yes, we are brothers] Yes, we are brothers.
37. *man-am watī adris(s)ā daīn šumā-am b-dayit.* 37. I give my address and you also give (yours).”
38. *bādšā watī adris(s)ā γalatt dāt.* 38. The king gave his address incorrectly.
39. *āwānī dayīy adris(s)ā gipt-u sōbī šut bādšāī(y)ā ništ.* 39. He took their accurate address and in the morning he went (and) sat down on the throne.

<sup>40</sup> Bal. *inj* ‘the skirt [dāman] of a garment for both men and women (but especially for men)’ (Jahāndide 2017).

<sup>41</sup> “We have something good going” in Barjasteh Delforoosh 2010: 373.

<sup>42</sup> Notably, listening to the recording of the text available in the CD attached to Barjasteh Delforoosh 2010, I had the impression to clearly hear *brāt* (and not *brās*, as reported in Barjasteh Delforoosh) in both cases. This datum can question the absolute homogeneity generally attributed to the distribution of the *brāt*-type in the Raxšāni area (see for instance Elfenbein 1990.II: VII).

40. *ništ-u bass*<sup>43</sup> *māmūrānā dēm dāt ki ešānā b-girit-u b(y)ārit!* 40. He sat down and immediately after sent the agents (with the order): “Arrest and bring them!”
41. *ēšānā giptant, āwurtant. giptant āwurtant. mākima*<sup>44</sup> *kurt-ī.* 41. They arrested (and) brought them. They arrested (and) brought (them). He put (them) on trial.
42. *gušt-ī ki šumā ē rang bādšāy xazānagā jatag-it, ē rang kurtag-it, dōšī ē rangēn kār-ē.* 42. He said: “You have broken into the king’s treasure in this way, you have done in this way, last night (you have done) such an act.”
43. *gušt: nakurta-an. gušt: na!* 43. He/They said: “We haven’t done (that).” He [the king] said: “No!”
44. *amā ki tārīkī-ē drust-a na-ku, amā gušt: lāla, ē amē dōšīēn mardum-int.* 44. The one who did not recognize him in the darkness, that one said: “Brothers, this is the very man of last night!”
45. *xānaxarāb,*<sup>45</sup> *ā layarī-ēn pučč nūn mardak*<sup>46</sup> *bādšā-ē, tāj-ē dārīt ē rang-u ē rang.* 45. “Damn you, that man (was) in worn-out clothes, now this man is a king, he has a crown (and) this and that.”
46. *gušt: na, yānē man drust-a kanīn ē amā-ēn mardum-ē.* 46. He said: “No, as I recognize he is that very man.”
47. *xōb, ta ki ā rang drust-a kanay amā-int, ā amidā ki mušmay ēdām-ī-ā sādīr ku, ta guš, bādšā sāīb, ta watī rīšā yakk wār bčandēn.* 47. “Well, you who recognize in this way (that) it is he, when he issues our death sentence just here, say: ‘Oh king, shake your beard at once’.”
48. *ā amā-int. ē gušt: šumā alās-it, šumā bāyid ēdām bayit.* 48. It is that. He (the king) said: “You are released(?),<sup>47</sup> you have to be executed.”
49. *gušt-ī: xōb, ammā-u ki ēdām-a bayan bādšā sāīb ta watī rīšā yakk wār bčandēn.* 49. He said: “Well, (now that) we will certainly be executed, oh king, shake your beard at once.”

<sup>43</sup> As a developing connective, *bass* indicates “a new development in BS narratives. The temporal meaning of *bass* can be interpreted as ‘just, just then, immediately after that’” (Barjasteh Delfooroz 2010: 209).

<sup>44</sup> Prs. *mahkame* ‘law court, surgery or consulting room etc.’

<sup>45</sup> This is a Prs. curse expressing the desire for someone’s impoverishment (Najafi 1999).

<sup>46</sup> Here *-ak* is a marker of definiteness; it has been transferred from Sistani (cf. Ahangar et al. 2017: 20).

<sup>47</sup> As Prs. *xalās*, Bal. (*x/h*)*alās* means both ‘finished’ and ‘released, free(d).’ It is not clear how it should be intended here. In my opinion, in (48) *alās* is merely an error of the storyteller, who introduces a concept in advance and corrects himself immediately after. Otherwise, one should think that he is using it in the sense of ‘finished’ here and in the sense of ‘released’ in (50), as interpreted by Barjasteh Delfooroz.

50. *zānt-ī diga idā*. [<sup>H</sup> *ā̃*, *drust-ī ku*].  
*bass ki čandēntī, alās būtant*, [<sup>H</sup> *alās būtant*].

51. *alās ki būtant, gušt: šumā zānay nūn ē kārā kurtit, man šumārā āzmāyiš kurtun ki mnī bādšāy tā čī rakam mardum ast*.

52. *nūn arčī ki šumay dil-a lōfīt, šumay kafā<sup>48</sup>-a bīt, arčī ki šumā watī xarčā bgušit, burj<sup>49</sup>-ē inka tanxā<sup>50</sup> šumay-int. duzzī makanit*.

53. *ša duzzīā band ku burj-ē inka tanxā āyirā čē-(w)a ku, ā̃, dāt-ī*.

50. He knew here, anyway. [Yes, he recognized him]. Right after he shook (his beard) they were released. [They were released].

51. When they were released, he said: “You know, now you did this act. I tested you (to see) what sort of people there are in my kingdom.

52. Now whatever you wish, that is enough for your livelihood, whatever you tell the amount of your expenses, this much is your monthly wage. Don’t steal.”

53. He prohibited them from robbery (and) each month this much wage, what did he do? yes, he gave them.

### 2.3 K-T/3 (EBal.)

1. *bādšāheā gwar čyār aθant čaukīdār, šafā jāgrū k<sup>h</sup>uθa-iš*.

2. *ya šafēā bīθa duzē<sup>51</sup> šahrā. hawāhiyā ki duzī bīθā āxto dāh dāθa-ī bādšāhār*.

3. *bādšāhā gwān-jaθayant hawā čaukīdār. gwašta-ī: šā khasē duzē dīθa dōštī ki jāgrū k<sup>h</sup>anayāθē?*

1. A certain king had four watchmen; they kept watch at night.

2. One night there was a burglary in the town. The one who had been robbed, came and complained to the king.

3. The king summoned those watchmen. He said: “Have you seen any thief last night while you were keeping watch?”

<sup>48</sup> Prs. *kafāf* ‘sufficiency, livelihood, etc.’ (< Ar.).

<sup>49</sup> Bal. *burj* ‘tower, tall building; fort on a hill or mountain; wall around a fort; any of the months of the lunar calendar’ (Jahāndide 2017); cf. Prs. *borj* ‘tower; sign of zodiac; month.’

<sup>50</sup> Prs. *tanxāh* ‘funds, capital, sums, cash.’

<sup>51</sup> In Balochi, *duz* is ‘thief’ and *duzī* ‘theft.’ Normally, a form *duzē* would be interpreted as the indefinite form of *duz* (and this is in fact the correct interpretation in several passages in Dames 1891 as well), but this does not seem to be the case here. In fact, in Dames 1891, *duzē* (*duze*) often occurs as a variant of *duzī* (or perhaps *duzī-ē?*); see for instance *ya handēā duzēā k<sup>h</sup>anū* ‘we will steal somewhere’ [11], *maī duzē bīθa* ‘in my house a theft has been committed’ (1891.I: 32) vs. *phēdāyēθant duzīā* ‘they were coming (to commit) theft’ (1891.II: 18), *duzī k<sup>h</sup>anayā* ‘to steal’ (1891.I: 5) and also *hawāhiyā ki duzī bīθā āxto* ‘The one who had been robbed’ following *bīθa duzē* in [2], that could support the indefinite nature of *duzē*.

4. *ã gwašta: wāzā, mā k<sup>h</sup>as na dīθa.* 4. They said: “My Lord, we have seen none.”
5. *hukm dāθa bādšāhā ki har çyārēnā barē, p<sup>h</sup>āho daēθ. burt<sup>h</sup>o p<sup>h</sup>āho dāθayant-ī.* 5. The king ordered: “Take out all four and hang (them).” They took out and hanged them.
6. *guḍā bādšāhā waθī dilā gwašta: bēgī<sup>52</sup> šahrā mā waθ jāgrū t<sup>h</sup>at<sup>h</sup>arā.* 6. Then the king said to himself: “Tonight I myself will roaming about in the town as a watchman.”
7. *waθī wēs maṭṭainthō darainthō šuθa.* 7. He changed his clothes and went out.
8. *šafā çarayē<sup>53</sup> šahrā, gindī: çyār mard mana-āyē.* 8. At night he is patrolling the town, he sees: four men are coming.
9. *bādšāhā hakal-dāθa: šā k<sup>h</sup>ai-ē? āmardā gwašta: mā duz-ī.* 9. The king challenged them: “Who are you?” Those men said: “We are thieves.”
10. *p<sup>h</sup>ōl-k<sup>h</sup>uθa-iš: t<sup>h</sup>o k<sup>h</sup>ai-ē? bādšāhā gwašta: mā dī duzē-ā.* 10. They asked “Who are you?” The king said: “I am a thief, too.”
11. *ē ālamā<sup>54</sup> salāh bas<sup>h</sup>a ki ya handēā duzēā k<sup>h</sup>anū.* 11. They all took the decision to go steal somewhere.
12. *bādšāhā p<sup>h</sup>ōl-k<sup>h</sup>uθa: šā olā hawē šahrā duzē k<sup>h</sup>uθa? āmardā gwašta: mā ya duzē olā k<sup>h</sup>uθa.* 12. The king asked: “Have you committed a burglary in this town before?” Those men said: “We committed a burglary before.”
13. *šār k<sup>h</sup>asēā dī dīθa? mār k<sup>h</sup>asā na dīθa.* 13. “And did anyone see you?” “No one saw us.”
14. *çaukīdārā dī na dīθa? gwašta-iš māī isrār-ē, mār p<sup>h</sup>awānk<sup>h</sup>ā na dīθa-iš.* 14. “Didn’t the watchme/an see as well?” They said: “We have a secret; for this reason they did not see us.”
15. *bādšāhā p<sup>h</sup>ōl-k<sup>h</sup>uθa: šār çī isrār-ant?* 15. The king asked: “What secrets do you have?”
16. *ya mardēā gwašta: mā ki k<sup>h</sup>ā jāgrūānī<sup>55</sup> gwara, guḍā ma k<sup>h</sup>uk<sup>h</sup>ā, guḍā jāgrū k<sup>h</sup>ōr bant.* 16. A man said: “When I arrive near the watchmen, then I cough. Then the watchmen become blind.”

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *bēgāh* ‘evening,’ *bēgahā* ‘in the evening’ in Dames 1891.IV:16; *begāhā*, *begāhī* ‘in the evening’ (Elfénbein 1990.II: 15). The -ī ending in temporal adverbs is common in Balochi; see *sōbī*, *suhbī* ‘this morning,’ *maročī* ‘today,’ etc.

<sup>53</sup> EBal. *çaray* ‘to wander, go about;’ see *çār* above, fn. 9.

<sup>54</sup> Bal. *ālam* ‘people; the world’ is also used (mainly in EBal.?) with the meaning of ‘all.’

<sup>55</sup> Note that here and in [25] *jāgrū* (‘watch’ in [1], [3], [6]) is used in the sense of ‘watch-keeper,’ equivalent to *jāgrū-k<sup>h</sup>anox* [24].

17. *dōmīyā gwašta: manā israr-ē gōn-ē, ki mā galōār dast-lā guḍā buškī<sup>56</sup> k<sup>h</sup>afī.*

18. *saimīyā gwašta: manā israr eš-ē, ki t<sup>h</sup>ōlay ki kurainī mā surp<sup>h</sup>ad bā, bīng ki b<sup>h</sup>aunkī, dī b<sup>h</sup>aunkayā dī surp<sup>h</sup>ad bā.*

19. *čyārumīyā gwašta: manā eš-ē israr, ma t<sup>h</sup>ārumēyē šafā hawā mardumā ki gindā, rōšā guḍā sad mar nyāwā bīθ-ī, p<sup>h</sup>ajyā-k<sup>h</sup>ārān-ī.*

20. *duzgalā gwašta bādšāhār: nī t<sup>h</sup>au gwaš, t<sup>h</sup>āī cī israr ē, ki mā sangatī bīθayū.*

21. *bādšāhā gwašta: māī sangatī ki k<sup>h</sup>asē gīrt<sup>h</sup>, mā waθ daršafā, māī sangat girjan,<sup>57</sup> guḍā bādšāh ki gīrt<sup>h</sup>, p<sup>h</sup>āho-dēayā bār<sup>h</sup>-iš, saḡar ki čandēnā guḍā p<sup>h</sup>āhō k<sup>h</sup>as na dā, ā dī dar-šafant.*

22. *guḍā p<sup>h</sup>ancē mar sangat bīθō sar-giptayant duzēā.*

23. *bādšāhā gwašta: mā sōhaw<sup>58</sup>-ā bādšāh mārīā zar-ā, barawū zarā k<sup>h</sup>ašū.*

24. *āxtō nī ki mārīā nazī bīθayant gwašta-iš: nīn jāgrū-k<sup>h</sup>anōx nazīx-ant, t<sup>h</sup>au k<sup>h</sup>uk<sup>h</sup>.*

25. *guḍā ān-marā k<sup>h</sup>ukθa, jāgrū k<sup>h</sup>ōr bīθayant.*

26. *guḍā dōmīyār gwašta-iš: nī t<sup>h</sup>au israr šōn-dai, galō bōž.*

17. The second said: “I have a secret: if I lay my hand on a door, then the door will open.”

18. The third said: “My secret is this: if a jackal howls, I can understand, if a dog barks, I can understand its barking as well.”

19. The fourth said: “My secret is this: the man whom I see in the dark night, I can recognise him by day, even if he is amongst a hundred people.”

20. The thieves said to the king: “Now tell you what secret you have, since we have become comrades.”

21. The king said: “If someone seizes my comrades, I myself will escape, though my comrades may be taken. Then if the king seizes them, and take them away to be hanged, if I shake my head none will hang (them): they, too, will escape.”

22. Then the five men having become comrades set out for a burglary.

23. The king said: “I know there is money in the king’s palace; let us go and carry off the money.”

24. They came and as soon as they approached the palace they said: “Now the watchmen are near, give a cough.”

25. Then that man coughed (and) the watchmen became blind.

26. Then they said to the second: “Now show your secret; open the door!”

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *buškag* ‘to be let go, to get off (of a gun).’

<sup>57</sup> Dames 1891: 17 fn \*: “*girjan* ‘will be caught,’ a passive form of *girag*.” On the *īj*-passive in EBal., see more in detail Bashir 2008: 61-64. Probably *girjan* could be explained as a present perfect 3rd pl., with “*girja* ‘caught’ [...] formed from the passive stem *girīj*- ‘be caught’” (2008: 63).

<sup>58</sup> Bal. *sōhaw*, a word of Indian origin (< Sindhi) in use not only in EBal., means ‘knowing, being aware of’ (Hetu Ram 1898; Jahāndide 2017 [dānā, āgāh]); ‘guide, acquaintance’ in Dames 1891 and ‘understood, known’ in Elfenbein 1990 are inaccurate translations.

27. *āṃardā dast-lāiθō bismi'llāh k<sup>h</sup>uθō, galō bōxta.* 27. That man laid his hand, said “*Bismillah*,” and opened the door.
28. *guḍā t<sup>h</sup>ōlayā kūrain<sup>h</sup>a, bīngā dī b<sup>h</sup>aunk<sup>h</sup>iθa. ya sangatā saimīyār gwašta: t<sup>h</sup>ōlayā bīngā cī gwašta?* 28. Then a jackal howled; a dog also barked. One comrade said to the third: “What did the jackal and dog say?”
29. *āṃardā gwašta ki: t<sup>h</sup>ōlayā gwašta ki: bādšāh mārīā duz b<sup>h</sup>ōrēnayant, t<sup>h</sup>ō bīng p<sup>h</sup>ače čupā k<sup>h</sup>anaγāi? bīngā jawāb dāθa ki: mā cō k<sup>h</sup>anā, bādšāh waθī mārī waθ b<sup>h</sup>ōrainayē.* 29. That man said: “The jackal said: ‘Thieves are breaking into the king’s palace, you, dog, why are you keeping silent?’” The dog answered: “What can I do? The king himself is breaking into his own palace!”
30. *ē alamā gwašta: t<sup>h</sup>aī drōy ant, t<sup>h</sup>ō cī surp<sup>h</sup>ad na bīθayē, bādšāh čacō k<sup>h</sup>aī waθī lōyā b<sup>h</sup>ōrainī?* 30. They all said: “Your words are false; you have understood nothing; how could the king come and break into his own house?”
31. *guḍā k<sup>h</sup>aštaγant-iš dō sandūk zarē až bādšāh-mārīā, burt<sup>h</sup>ō darrā likēnt<sup>h</sup>-ayant-iš.* 31. Then they drew two chests of money out of the king’s palace, carried them out and hid them.
32. *bādšāhā gwašta: māxta<sup>59</sup> bīθa rōš, šā barē hamōdā faqīr makānā, māī lōy hamedā ma šahr-ē, mā rawā waθī lōyā. t<sup>h</sup>ī šafēā khāū, zarā k<sup>h</sup>ašū, bahr-k<sup>h</sup>anū. likēnt<sup>h</sup>ō ēr-k<sup>h</sup>uθayant-iš.* 32. The king said: “It is now morning, go over there to the House of the poor. My house is here in the town; I am going to my own house. In a next night we will come, take out the money and divide it.” They concealed the money.
33. *ā čyār mar šuθa faqīr makānā, bādšāh šuθa waθī lōyā.* 33. The four men went to the House of the poor, the king went to his home.
34. *pharō dāθaī ki: duzā māī mārī b<sup>h</sup>ōrēnt<sup>h</sup>a. gwān'-jaθaī ālam ki duzā girā.* 34. He made a proclamation: “Thieves have broken into my palace.” He summoned the people so that they arrest the thieves.
35. *ālam muč bīθō āxta; bādšāhā gwašta: māī duz eḍā cī nē; čyār mard faqīr makānā ništaγan, barōē hawā girē biyārē.* 35. The people assembled and came, the king said: “My thieves are not here; four men are at the House of the poor. Go, take and bring them.”
36. *šuθō giptō ārt<sup>h</sup>ayant hawān čyārē mard.* 36. They went, arrested and brought the four men.
37. *bādšāhā hukm dāθa ki: barō, p<sup>h</sup>āhō dāēθ-ī; har t<sup>h</sup>auxa ki p<sup>h</sup>a-waθā k<sup>h</sup>anant* 37. The king ordered: “Take them away and hang them. Any words they say

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Dames 1891.IV: 95 (“*mākhta* adv., immediately (for *ma wakhta* ‘at the time’).”)

šā biyašk<sup>h</sup>anēθ, guḍā t<sup>h</sup>araint<sup>h</sup>iγā<sup>60</sup>  
biyār<sup>h</sup>-iš gwar mā.

38. sar-dāθayant-iš p<sup>h</sup>āhōā.

39. ya mardēā gwašta: t<sup>h</sup>ō gwašta ki  
t<sup>h</sup>ārumēyē šafā ki mardā gindā guḍā  
rōšā har handā p<sup>h</sup>ajyā-k<sup>h</sup>ārānī.

40. gwaštaī: mā p<sup>h</sup>ajyār<sup>h</sup>aī, maī san-  
gat bādšāh-ē.

41. t<sup>h</sup>araint<sup>h</sup>iγā ārt<sup>h</sup>a-iš gwar bādšāhā.

42. p<sup>h</sup>ōl-khuθa-iš: cī t<sup>h</sup>aux k<sup>h</sup>uθaē p<sup>h</sup>a-  
waθā?

43. ā mardā gwašta ki: mā p<sup>h</sup>ajyār<sup>h</sup>a  
ki maī sangat bādšāhē, nī mā gō  
bādšāhā t<sup>h</sup>auxā k<sup>h</sup>uθ na k<sup>h</sup>anū.

44. bādšāhā gwašta ki: sangatā gō mā  
kalām k<sup>h</sup>uθa ki sayar čandenā guḍā  
p<sup>h</sup>āhō na dāθ bādšāh. mā hawē-r'gā  
k<sup>h</sup>uθayā ki mā gwaštayā.

45. ya sandūkē baškāt<sup>h</sup>aī, yak<sup>h</sup>ē  
t<sup>h</sup>araint<sup>h</sup>ō gipta, tōba<sup>61</sup> dī k<sup>h</sup>anaint<sup>h</sup>a  
ki t<sup>h</sup>ibarē duzī na k<sup>h</sup>anū, guḍā ištō  
dāθa-iš.

each other, if you hear, then made them  
turn back and bring them back to me.”

38. They sent them off to hanging.

39. One man said: “You said: if I see a  
man on a dark night then by day I will  
recognize him anywhere.”

40. He said: “I have recognized him;  
our companion was the king.”

41. They made them turn back and  
brought to the king.

42. He asked them: “What did you say  
among yourselves?”

43. That man said: “I recognized that  
our companion is the king; now we can  
say nothing to the king.”

44. The king said: “I promised my  
companions that if I shook my head  
then the king would not hang them.  
(Now) I have done as I have said.”

45. He presented them with one chest  
of money and made returned and took  
the other. He made them promise: “We  
will not commit theft again.” Then he  
let them go.

### 3. Comments

The main differences among these three versions are to be searched at a dialectal level. In particular, the first two versions record two closely related subdialects of Western Balochi (frequently referred to as Raxšāni), though on how to define the relevant groupings there is no final agreement. Jahani, Korn 2009: 637 depict a picture where Afghan Balochi (AfghBal.) forms its own subgroup inside Western Balochi; a separate subgroup would include “eastern Iran (IrBal.), in pockets in Khorasan and Golestan, then further south in Sistan and in the northern parts of Balochistan around

<sup>60</sup> Dames 1891.I: 17 fn. †: “*tharaintighā* is the passive participle of the causal of *tharagh*, to return, and literally means ‘being made to come back.’”

<sup>61</sup> As Prs. *towbe*, Bal. *toba* (‘repentance’) occurs in the complex verb *toba kanag/γ* that means (not only in EBal.) both ‘to repent, to regret’ and ‘to make a vow, to promise (oneself).’ In this latter case *toba kanag/γ* is a logophoric construction and is followed by direct discourse.

Zahedan and Khash, with varieties often referred to as Sistani” while another subgroup would be that spoken in Turkmenistan (TrkBal.). On the other hand, Barjasteh Delforooz (2010: 22) includes in the category of ‘Balochi of Sistan,’ i.e., the object of his work, the Balochi variety spoken in Afghan and Iranian Sistan. His work, in fact, is based on oral narratives recorded from several male informants from both Iran and Afghanistan and no indication is given on the provenance of the informant for single document; we are only told that “the informants from Afghan Sistan are in the majority as they still continue the tradition of storytelling” (2010: 26). Nourzaei (2017: 31) extends the area of Sistani Balochi up to the region of Mari, Turkmenistan. While asserting that TrkBal. “is phonologically and morphologically very close to the Balochi dialect spoken in Afghanistan” (2006: 22), Axenov nevertheless supports its distinctiveness (“Zarubin demonstrates that the dialect of the Balochi of Turkmenistan belongs to the western group of Balochi dialects and differs in syntactic structure, phonology, morphology and vocabulary from other Balochi dialects;” 2006: 25). Obviously, dialect demarcation is not a clear-cut line and generally has a somewhat arbitrary character. It may also depend on how fine-grained the classificatory methods used are. For instance, one may quote by way of example the differences in usage in AfghBal. and TrkBal. of the special ‘complex’ markers (singular) *-ayā* and (plural) *-ānīyā* with locative function (Filippone 1996: 94-97; Korn 2008)<sup>62</sup> here recorded in *šumayā byāīn* (K-T/1 16) or the usage in TrkBal. of *dēmi* as preposition (‘towards;’ Filippone 1996: 163-164), seemingly extraneous to other varieties of Balochi. One of the many common traits is the usage of the particle *ta/tā* after a verb of visual perception or even in its absence, with the function of sensory evidential, as in K-T/2 5. This usage has been described in Filippone 1993: 141-147 and later by Barjasteh Delforooz 2010: 112-113, who has interpreted it as a ‘mirative particle’ (“The mirative particle *ta* after verbs of perception is used to highlight the information (or entity) that immediately follows”).<sup>63</sup> The restricted use

<sup>62</sup> According to Korn, differently from what happens in Afghan Balochi, “[i]n Turkmenistan Balochi [...] the locative clearly functions as a separate case;” the generalisation of this new separate case could also be triggered by language-external factors, i.e., it could be the effect of linguistic contact (2008: 96-97).

<sup>63</sup> In fact, it is not restricted to TrkBal. and SistBal. only; cf. Filippone 1993: 142-145 (especially in the forms *tān*, *dān*, *dan*). For the usage of a sensory evidential in Kumzari (*tamna*),

conditions lead to question the transcription *gušt ta-hoo* and its analysis by Barjasteh Delforooz (2010: 368, 370) in K-T2 14 and 18 (with *ta* glossed MIR[ative particle]). In fact, these two passages would be the only occurrences I know where mirative *ta* would follow a ‘say’-verb. Listening to the recording of the tale in the CD included in the book, in correspondence of *gušt ta-hoo* I hear something like [ʃtū'ū:]. In other passages as well, the verb ‘say’ is transcribed by Barjasteh Delforooz as it was a ‘complete’ form while instead the actually emitted string (audible in the recording) is a strongly reduced one (something like [ʃt]). Therefore, we have here *št* ‘say’ + an exclamative particle *ū'ū* [(a)hoo, see *hū* ‘oh,’ Dashti 2019]. This analysis is confirmed by the fact that when *gušt* is followed by the third-person singular clitic *-ī* one finds *guštī aho(o)* [...] ‘He said: Oh [...]’ (2010: 305, 308, 385), with no mirative particle.

The main dialect split in our case is however between the two WBal. versions on the one side and EBal. one on the other. The differences between them are substantial and are those generally known in literature. As EBal. peculiarities, one may quote here, by way of example only, the ergative alignment in past tense clauses, the notable presence of conjunctive participles (also in ‘compound verbs,’ in the sense of construction encoding a single event where the vector verb contributes aktionsart or aspectual meaning [Bashir 2008: 68-73]); much less use in EBal. of *b(V)*-prefixed subjunctive forms (Bashir 2008: 75-77); morphological passive in *-īj* (see Bashir 2008: 60-65);<sup>64</sup> collective *-gal/γal* formation, frequent in EBal., especially with terms denoting human beings, group of animals, or kind of objects conceived as a homogenous set,<sup>65</sup> etc. Furthermore, one may note different discourse markers: cf. TrkBal., SistBal. *am / um*<sup>66</sup> (K-T/1 4, K-T/2 18, 37 etc.) vs. EBal. *dī* (K-T/3 10, 13, 18 etc.) or different pronoun/adjective ‘other:’ cf. WBal. *diga(r)* K-T/1 15, 33, K-T/2 30 vs.

emphasising the information source as being sensorily acquired and having an origin different from that of Bal. *ta/tā*, see Waal Anonby 2015: 147-150. A review of the whole issue that takes into account cognates to Bal. *ta/tā* having similar functions in other Iranian languages is in preparation by the present author.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. *girjan* in K-T/3 21 and fn. 58. This morphological passive may be due to a contact with IA (Sindhi and/or Siraiki); cf. Bashir 2008: 61; Elfenbein 2009: 102.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *duzgal* K-T/3 20. See also Elfenbein 2009: 100; due to the many restrictions in use, *-gal* may hardly be labelled as a simple ‘plural marker.’ Bal. *gal* means ‘group; herd,’ nowadays commonly ‘political party.’

<sup>66</sup> See above fn.12.

EBal. *t<sup>h</sup>ī* (K-T/3 32, 45). A particularly evident phenomenon is the contact-induced effect on the lexicon: very strong that of Indian languages on EBal. (see *jāgrū* ‘watch,’ *wēs* ‘clothing,’ *dāh* ‘complain,’ *mārī* ‘a house with an upper room;’ *b<sup>h</sup>aunkay* ‘to bark,’ *maṭṭainay* ‘to exchange’ [K-T/3 1, 2, 7, 18, 29], etc.) and that of (mainly Eastern varieties of) Persian on TrbBal. and SistBal. (*kūča* ‘street,’ *zindagānī* ‘life’ [K-T/1 1, 16], *kafāf* ‘livelihood,’ *tanxā* ‘funds’ [K-T/2 52], etc.).

K-T/2 has some peculiarities compared to the other two versions. The transcribed text respects very closely, with a few small exceptions, the oral version, whose recording is available on a CD attached to Barjasteh Delforooz 2010. Listening to the recording also allows to check the level of participation and interaction with the audience, that seems to be rather numerous. It frequently approves, anticipates etc. and forces the storyteller to stop, specify, repeat words or sentences, breaking the chain of the story, with the voices of the speaker and those of the hearers that sometimes overlap. Some of the most significant interventions in this speaker-hearer interaction have also been transcribed and gray-backgrounded in Barjasteh Delforooz 2010 and here inserted into brackets; others, however, have not been reported in transcription. The reaction of the listeners and their high emotional involvement attests to the vitality of the story; laughing at some of the peaks they show that this story still touches their emotional chords.

In K-T/1 and K-T/3 the oral character of the text has been slightly blunted by the intervention of the scholars who reported it in written form. As proof, consider the usage of the verb *guštin* ‘to say’ as the only speech introducer<sup>67</sup> in K-T/2 with respect to the other two versions, where ‘say’ alternates with ‘ask,’ ‘replay,’ ‘command’ etc. though being prevalent. Furthermore, in the latter two, the reported speaker (‘the king,’ ‘the thief,’ ‘Šāh Abbās,’ etc.) is in most cases made explicit in the speech orienter,<sup>68</sup> while in K-T/2 it is not and this fact may sometimes be source of ambiguities.

As for the content, there are differences among the three versions, but these are not of great importance in the economy of the story. Different,

<sup>67</sup> See Barjasteh Delforooz 2010: 216. As it was expected, in the three versions direct discourse is found by default.

<sup>68</sup> I.e., the clause with the verb speech that identifies the reported speaker and/or addressee (Barjasteh Delforooz 2010: 213).

for example, is the number of thieves: two in K-T/1 and four in the other two; slightly different are also the abilities of which the characters are endowed.

As far as the plot structure is concerned, one may note that K-T/3 has a backstory that should justify the action of the main story. All of them conclude with the resolution of the conflict and a similar happy end, although in K-T/1 it is not very clear the purpose in the king's action and the pedagogical hints present in K-T/2 and K-T/3 seem to lack. In fact, while in K-T/1 the thieves are given license to leave without giving back the ill-gotten gains and there is no open criticism of their way of life, in K-T/2 they are required to hand over their share of the booty in exchange for a life grant and to promise not to steal more, and in K-T/3 they are authorized to bring with them only a part of the booty. This fact perhaps explains the epilogue in K-T/1 ("The meaning of this story nobody understood except the thieves and the king"), absent in the other two versions.

In K-T/1 and K-T/2 the king protagonist of the story is identified with a historical figure (Šāh Abbās and Hārūn ar-Rašid, respectively), while in K-T/3 the king is anonymous.

The transformation of historical figures like Hārūn al-Rašid, the fifth Abbasid caliph who ruled from 786 to 809, or Šāh Abbās, the famous Saffavid king who ruled in Iran from 1588 to 1629 into characters of folktales is a peculiarity of the folk tradition of Iran and other areas of the Middle East.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, other eminent protagonists of the Sasanian and Muslim Middle Eastern history (i.e., Bahrām Gur, Anuširvān, Mahmud of Ghazna, etc.) happen to be featured in popular folklores. The enlightened rule of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašid and his court was fancifully portrayed in the *Thousand and One Nights*, composed much later his death; Hārūn's court often appears as the set of the stories. Many anecdotes have circulated over time depicting him as "a restless soul," rambling incognito through Baghdad's streets at night (Bobrick 2012: 61). As for Šāh Abbās, whose eccentric character was very well-known and a usual topic of conversation in his time also abroad, we have evidence that legends portraying him in disguised dresses, wandering and listening to what his subjects used

<sup>69</sup> As for Šāh Abbās in particular see Amanolahi, Thackston 1986: 18 fn.1, Filippone 2004: 243 and fn. 42. This king is frequently found in tales from the Xorāsāni area, but also in tales in the Lori and Central dialects.

to tell of him (and then acting accordingly, i.e. awarding or taking revenge), arouse and began to circulate when he was still alive.<sup>70</sup> In particular, Pietro Della Valle, the Italian traveller who spent a few years of his life in Iran (1617-1622) and had the opportunity to know personally the king, while reporting some distresses of the Christian Armenian community in Esfahān in August 1621 relates an episode that sounds similar to those of many Iranian folktales:

Era avvenuto mentre il re stava in Abicurreng un caso bestiale: e fu, che andando un giorno il re, quasi solo e sconosciuto, a spasso per quelle campagne, da certe donne armene di una villa di là intorno, che ragionavano insieme, si sentì con gli orecchi propri stranamente maledire.<sup>71</sup>

In fact, walking at night in the streets of his own town driven from a genuine and sympathetic concern in the well-being of his people, may be recognized as a typical feature of the model ruler in the Middle Eastern popular imagery even today.<sup>72</sup>

The recourse to historical figures, or even simply the projection of the narrated events on a defined temporal and historical-cultural background (“In the time of Šāh So-and-So there was [...]”) could have the function of providing a veneer of historicity to the tale. This despite the fact that in many cases these ‘historical’ characters are purely conventional, interchanging one another<sup>73</sup> and sometimes with the concurrent presence of pro-

<sup>70</sup> Nocturnal visits of the king in disguise to the enemy’s military units are also mentioned in a versified history of Šāh Abbās (dated to the beginning of 12<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century); cf. Ahmadi, Mohammadi Fesharaki 2021: ٥٨ (18 English text).

<sup>71</sup> Della Valle 1843.II: 214-215. It goes without saying that the unfortunate women paid dearly for their little affection for the sovereign.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. the interview entitled “Camuffato tra i sudditi regno meglio” published in the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2000, where Abdallah II, king of Jordan, claims to use to wander incognito at night to know how his subjects really live in order to improve their living conditions ([http://archiviostorico.corriere.it/2000/febbraio/03/Camuffato\\_tra\\_sudditi\\_regno\\_meglio\\_co\\_0\\_0002037586.shtml](http://archiviostorico.corriere.it/2000/febbraio/03/Camuffato_tra_sudditi_regno_meglio_co_0_0002037586.shtml)). I also remember reading an uncritical interview in the early 2000s with the King of Morocco, claiming more or less the same. It was published in the Italian weekly *Il Venerdì di Repubblica*, but I am not able to provide exact references any more.

<sup>73</sup> This is possible since a storyteller may sometimes lose control in the oral performance, as it is the case in a tale (A3) published in Stilo 2004: 32-33. In this tale, whose protagonist (a king wandering around incognito to inspect his country) is Šāh Esmāil, one may note the narrator’s slip ‘*ša abbas*,’ immediately corrected in ‘*ša esmail*.’

tagonists belonging to different ages, as is the case with Šāh Abbās, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna and his famous minister Hasan Maimandi in the fragment of a Pawai tale published in Christensen 1921: 114-115, or Nāderšāh and Rezāšāh in the Abyānei story published in Lecoq 2002: 411-415.

Resorting to historical figures, however, does not seem to be a very common strategy in the Balochi folktale traditions. The few exceptions occasionally found could be explained as effects of linguistic/cultural contacts. The Persian Afsharid King Nādir Šāh (1736-47) with his sexual prowess, for example, is the protagonist of an erotic tale we have in two Bal. versions: one recorded in the Codex 24048 of the British Library, published by Elfenbein (1983: 32-25), that in consideration of its linguistic peculiarities seems to stem from South-East Iran, and the other included in the unpublished Mari material in the BEDP Archive mentioned above, p. 121. The presence of Šāh Abbās in TK-T/1 probably points to an influence from Xorāsān. Šāh Abbās is also mentioned in a Xorāsāni Kurdish version (Cukerman 1986: 189-192) as well as in a Lori version (Heydari 2001: 73-74) of this story.

Though being conventional, the historical character who finds his place in a story is not accidental; historical and cultural legacy may justify the choice of different characters in different areas.

As far as our tale is concerned, Timur, the founder of the Timurid dynasty, is the king in the Tajik version published in Amonov 1972: 77-79; Sultan Selim, who headed the Ottoman Sultanate from 1512 to 1520, is the protagonist of the (Gorāni) Awromāni version published in Christensen 1921: 105-109 (Italian translation in De Chiara, Guizzo 2015: 160-161); the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašid is again the protagonist in the Kurdish version published in German translation in Wentzel 1978: 216-221; Mahmud of Ghazna, the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty, in the version made famous by Rumi (see above, fn. 4) and also in the Pashto version published in German translation in Lebedev 1986: 142.<sup>74</sup> And to conclude, one may add here the first of the two stories in the Xorāsāni dialect of Naibānd published in Lazard 1995b: 88-91, consisting of two quite different tales strung together. The first is our tale; the king in this case is anonymous.

<sup>74</sup> Probably the same already known to Dames, who mentioned it in 1891 I: 18 [“Note – The above story is nearly identical with the Pashto legend of Mahmūd Ghaznavi and the thieves (see Kalid-i Afghāni Story 40, page 96)”].

‘The king and the thieves’ tale is still alive in the folklore of Iranian people, both in their country and abroad; an illustrated English version for children, with Šāh Abbās as the protagonist, has been published in USA in rather recent times (Balouch, Balouch 2000).

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