THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE OF AZERBAIJAN

By W. B. Henning

When I proposed the title of this paper to the officers of the Society, I imagined, in an optimistic mood, that I could offer a reasonable theory of the language once spoken in Azerbaijan. Further study, I regret to say, has convinced me that I cannot: our information is defective on all sides; and the information we do possess is affected by uncertainty in the most essential points. Although therefore it would be wise to keep silent, I hope I may be allowed to put the problem as an unsolved problem, as well as to add a little to the information hitherto available.

For several centuries now a form of Turkish has been the common language of the north-western provinces of Persia, Azerbaijan and Zenjan. The late Persian historian, Sayyid Aḥmed-i Kesravi, has traced the story of the gradual infiltration of Turkish tribes into those territories, and the attendant regression and final disappearance of the older population and their language; the process began in the 11th century and was completed by the beginning of the 16th.

It is generally agreed, and indeed not subject to serious doubt, that before the advent of the Turks Iranian languages were spoken here in Azerbaijan and Zenjan, as elsewhere in Persia. From the distribution of the Iranian dialects one may infer the group of Iranian to which the lost language of Azerbaijan belonged. To the east of Azerbaijan, in the high mountains that enclose the southern edge of the Caspian Sea, and in the coastal plain itself, we have successively Tālišī, Gilaki, and Mazandarānī, also called Tabari; and beyond the mountain range, in the neighbourhood of Semnān, several further dialects. To the south-east of Azerbaijan, at a great distance, we find the Central Group of dialects in the neighbourhood of Isfahān, with branches eastwards towards Yezd.

1 Paper read before the Philological Society on Dec. 4, 1933.
2 A. Kesravi, Ġāvari yā tabān-i hāslīn-i ġāburbāyūn, Tehran 1304/1926. With regard to the alleged survival of Ġāvari in Tabriz down to the end of the 16th century, see below, p. 176, n. 5.
and southwards towards Sivand. In the same direction, at less distance, a group of dialects was recently noticed in the neighbourhood of Vafs, half-way between Hamadān and Sāve.¹ In the south, Gūrānī survives in the Zagros mountains, which separate Persia from the plains of Iraq. And in the far west, beyond the limits of Persia, as far as the western border of classical Armenia, Zāzā, called Dimlū by its speakers, existed until quite recently and for all we know may exist even now. All these languages, which may be said to surround Azerbaijan, belong solidly to the north-western group of Iranian, and that was probably true also of the lost Azerbaidjanian tongue.

The languages and dialects named just now constitute all the surviving forms of North-west-Iranian speech about which we have information, with the sole exception of Kurdish, which stands apart and is outside the range of the present subject. Several have attained full status as literary languages: for example Gūrānī, the language of an obscure religion, the Ahl-i Ḥaqq, with considerable literature; Gurgānī,² from the south-eastern corner of the Caspian Sea, now defunct, once the language of a Muslimic sect, the Ḥurūfī; and above all, Tabari, with a literary history looking back almost as far as the Persian literary language.³ Nevertheless, all of them have been receding before the onslaught of the official language of the country, Persian, which itself belongs to a different group, to South-western Iranian; and now, under modern conditions,

¹ M. Muqaddam, Gûyîshâyi Vafs ve Âdîyân ve Tafrî (= Irân-Kûde No. 11). Tehran, 1318 Yezd./1949. This work also contains notices, deserving attention, of a local gypsy dialect, a Southern Kurdish language (Zand), and Khalaj Turkish.

² Our knowledge of that dialect, hitherto largely based on Huart, Textes persans relatifs à la secte des Hourroûfis (Gibb Mem. Ser. ix), 1909, has been deepened by S. Kiya, Vâzê-nâme-i Gurgâni (Intishârî-i Dânişgâh-i Tebrân 133), Tehran 1330/1951. An interesting survival is the optative (3rd sg. and pl.) byndû/btndû, which corresponds with Parthian beyndûy. [See now further H. Ritter, Die Anfänge der Hurûfisekte, Orients vii, 1954, 1–54.]

³ The older specimens were recently collected and analysed by S. Kiya (Vâzê-nâme-i Tabari [Irân-Kûde No. 9] Tehran, 1316 Yezd./1947), who also published the text of a Tabari "Nîshâb".
all the non-Persian languages and dialects are rapidly dying away.

Of the dialects still spoken in villages some may well disappear before they have been recorded. True, some areas have been fairly fully investigated; but others have been neglected, most of all the north-western provinces. Not only is practically no information available about the few dialects known to have survived in remote corners of Azerbaijan itself; but also the districts between that province and the capital, a stretch of some 250 miles, have remained disregarded, and this in spite of a hundred years' study of the dialects of Persia. It is probably due to such gaps in our knowledge that the task of determining the relationship of the north-western dialects to each other continues to present such great difficulty.

Thanks to a lucky chance I am able to say a little about a dialect spoken on the approaches to Azerbaijan, roughly halfway between Tehran and the present border of that province. I came upon it¹ three years ago at Tākistān, a village formerly known by the name of Siyah-dehān, some twenty miles to the south-west of Qazvin, on the ancient high-road that joins Azerbaijan with the heart of Northern Persia. I had only two hours and a half for taking notes, and even this short period was not free from disturbances of various kinds. In the outcome, the material I collected is insufficient and defective; regrettably there was no chance to check doubtful points and fill in the gaps that became manifest as soon as it was possible to read over my notes at leisure. In fact, one would be inclined to bury them quietly, were it not for the evident importance of this dialect, which may conveniently be called Tākistāni, for the comparative study of North-western Iranian.

At the time I did not know that the dialect had in fact been mentioned once before, namely by Professor Minorsky in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, in his article "Tāt". Professor

¹ I owe its acquaintance to the kindness of Mr. Hannibal, of Tehran, a very learned gentleman who invited me to pay a visit to Qazvin, a town for which he had unbounded enthusiasm.
Minorsky there expressed the opinion that it resembled the
dialects of the Central Group and quoted, from his own
observation, a small number of the words he regarded as
characteristic. Our notes are not always in agreement. For
example, of the five verbal forms quoted by Professor Minorsky
(mīzāndā 'I know', mīzānū 'we know', mīzānindā 'they
know', biškās 'look' [imp.], sī 'you should go') two differ
materially from the forms I received, in which the first person
of the singular ends in -im and the first person of the plural in
-um. The full set of the endings of the present in Tākistānī is
as follows: Sing. -im, -i, -e; Plur. -um, -ā, -indā.

A related dialect is known from another village in the
neighbourhood of Tākistān, Ištihārd; known, however, not by
observation but through a written source. Žukovskiy found
a copy of a Persian dictionary, the Burhān-i Jāmī, which was
printed in Tabriz in 1844: in the margins of that copy a
Persian had written glosses in an otherwise unknown dialect,
attributed to Ištihārd. These glosses, which number about
180, are written in Arabic script, with fairly full vowel marks;
they are of restricted usefulness, chiefly because many of them
merely serve to indicate a slightly deviating pronunciation of
Persian words. Nevertheless, there is enough to show that this
dialect is very near to Tākistānī. Two words may suffice here.
The first, tīṭye or tīṭe 'daughter' (Tāk. tīṭye), is typical of
the dialect group, with its initial t-; the nearest form otherwise
is Mahallātī dīṭye. The second, burbunistīn 'to weep' (Tāk.
bīrbanāstān), has four characteristic points: the use of the
prefix bī- with an infinitive; the ending -āstān; the metathesis
-rb-; and -n- in the place of -m-, the base being bram-. Now I shall put before you a few of the points which define
the position of Tākistānī in relation to the other North-
western Iranian languages. The first is the survival of gram-
matical gender. I had been told that 'bull' is gāv and 'cow'
māgāvə, which in addition to the prefixed mā- (an old adjective
meaning 'female') possesses a short vowel at the end, which

1 Žukovskiy, Materiali, vol. i, p. ix. The Ištihārdī words are included in
the glossary in vol. ii, part i.
could be a mark of gender. Towards the end of our session I was blessed with an intelligent informant and drew his attention to the difference, and he told me, almost in so many words, that his language possessed gender distinctions, and quoted as example, mārdāk bīsū ’the man went’, but zeiniye bīṣīye ’the woman went’. Here we have separate forms for the verb, the 3rd person singular of the intransitive preterite, which however is a nominal form by origin. Later, when I looked over my notes, I found several additional examples, one of which shows that this distinction is not confined to words of natural gender: varā būṁīā ‘snow fell’ (literally ‘snow came’); here both the noun and the verb have feminine endings.

Gender distinctions exist in comparatively few of the North-western languages; of those reasonably near to Tākistān, in Semnāni and in certain Central dialects, such as Farizandi and Jōṣagānī. In the details, Tākistānī agrees here most closely with Semnāni. The Semnāni equivalent of the sentence ‘snow fell’ happens to occur in the texts collected by Christensen, vara . . . biāmiā; it almost coincides with the Tākistānī version.

There are other points, some of them almost as weighty, in which Tākistānī agrees with Semnāni. Semnān is situated about 200 miles to the east of Tākistān; half-way between the two villages sprawls the modern capital of Persia, whose presence has extinguished the intervening dialects.

Yet Tākistānī has another face, and that is turned towards the North. The pronominal system shows that most clearly. Practically all the pronominal forms of the dialect are mentioned in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>az</th>
<th>ta</th>
<th>av</th>
<th>anā</th>
<th>ḵumā</th>
<th>anā</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enclitic</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-š</td>
<td>-man</td>
<td>-yun</td>
<td>-šun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td>čimī</td>
<td>ištā</td>
<td>ṣā</td>
<td>ḵumā</td>
<td>ḵumā</td>
<td>ṣanā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tal.</td>
<td>čimī</td>
<td>ḵštī</td>
<td>čai</td>
<td>čama</td>
<td>čima</td>
<td>čəvan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 čimī zeiniyē bīṣīye ‘my betrothed went’; bārke biyāsiś ‘the chicken flew (up)’.
2 Le dialecte de Sāmnān, p. 62, line 3.
Here the possessive pronouns are by far the most interesting. Possessive pronouns are something of a rarity in the Northwestern Iranian languages; they also do not exist in Persian, the language of communication used for talking with the villagers, so they attract one's attention immediately. It is true, they function occasionally also as oblique cases of the personal pronouns, as for example in the sentence čími istă āmidīyinda 'they do not give me to you' (čími 'me', istă 'you', ā(n) verbal prefix, ni negation, diyinda 'they give'). Such use is compatible with their origin; for they consist of an ancient preposition, Middle Iranian ac 'from', and oblique cases of the personal pronouns, themselves no longer in use. But their characteristic function is that of possessive pronouns; e.g. čími sīgār 'my cigarette', ā pīyār kālā 'her father's head', čumā gālbār 'our gate'.

Comparable pronouns exist only in one of the Northwestern languages hitherto known, in Tālišī, the language of Tāliš, the district on the Caspian Sea which straddles the frontier between Persia and the Soviet Union. The Tālišī pronouns, which there are used exclusively as possessive pronouns, are given above; they are in form almost identical with the Tākistānī series.

Another proof of the close relationship between Tākistānī and Tālišī is provided by the preterite of the verb. Below a full set of the normal forms has been given, successively the preterite of the intransitive verb, the preterite of the transitive verb, the preterite of 'to be' in post-sonantic position, and the pluperfect of a transitive verb, which involves the preterite of 'to be':—

1 Cf. the oblique cases of the pronouns for the 3rd person in Semnānī, Christensen, p. 43.

2 pīyār/piyār is oblique case of pīā 'father'; cf. puṟpiā 'grandfather', pūrmpīā 'my grandfather'; similarly maṟa 'mother', mayum 'my mother', mūrmayā 'my mother's mother'; zānborā 'wife's brother', borārān 'brother's wife'. Cf. Christensen, Sūmnān, § 80. Curious is fr 'son'. 
Here the most striking feature is the threatening confusion of the second singular with the third singular: anistiš 'you sat,' but vātīš 'he said,' veiše 'you were' but vātī-veišā 'he had said.' What preserves the difference is merely the status of the verbs as either transitive or intransitive, but this distinction is in process of being reduced, as one can see from the 1st and 2nd persons of the plural, where the intransitive has borrowed the finals of the transitive; one may perhaps wonder how the contrast between anistiš 'you sat' and vātīš 'he said' is going to be resolved.

There is no difficulty about the origin of these forms. The intransitive, of course, consists of the perfect participle and the present of 'to be,' but the transitive of the perfect participle and the enclitic pronouns. What interests us here is the agreement of the intransitive with the corresponding forms in Tālīšī. In that language the present of 'to be,' in combination with the negation (ne), has the following forms: nim, niš, ni (niye); nimon, nion, nin. There is substantial agreement, and that is most remarkable in the 2nd person of the singular, -iš 'you are.' Such a form is exceptional in Iranian. It is true, one finds it here and there, for example in Eastern Iranian in Sogdian; and in South-western Iranian among some dialects of Lārīstān, on the coast of the Persian Gulf: but in North-western Iranian it was hitherto known solely from Tālīšī.

A considerable distance separates Tākistān from the Tālīšī-speaking area, and the greater part of it is occupied by

---

1 Mann, Tājik-Mundarten, 127 sqq.; Ivanow, Gabri dialect, 77; Romanowski, Lar i ego dialekt (Iranskie Yavuki, i, 1945), 41 et passim.
the most inaccessible mountain country in the whole of Persia. There is every likelihood that Tālišī and dialects close to it extended much towards the south, into the mountains, probably as far as Khalkhal and upper Tūrom, and we may assume that dialects related to Tākistānī extended to the north-west of its present location, towards the Zenjān valley, so that there may have been a smooth transition from Tālišī to Tākistānī, just as there probably was a smooth transition, through dialects now lost, from Tākistānī to Semnānī in the east, and to the Central dialects, or some of them, in the south.

Thus we may regard Tākistānī as the essential link, joining the Northern, Eastern, and Southern groups. That it is in the right and natural position is also indicated by certain traits it shares with Gilaki and Tabari, the languages in its neighbourhood to the north and north-east. One could mention, e.g., the preference for -ūstān as the secondary ending of the infinitive (an ending entirely absent from Tālišī); or the almost primeval word vūye 'water', which has disappeared from practically all Iranian languages, but was preserved in Gilan, as biya, in certain geographical names.

We now leave Tākistān and turn to Azerbaijan proper. As I mentioned at the beginning, in this province, where Turkish

---

1 See below.
2 biťakástān 'shave', biťikástān 'look', bičišástān 'taste', birbandastān 'weep', āgārdastān 'turn back', āvazastān 'dance'.
3 Biya-pīš and Biya-pas. It is doubtful whether any of the other dialect forms with initial e/w may belong here, such as Sangisari wō (Zukovskiy), wō (Christensen, ii); Yazdi wō/vōv etc. (Hadank, Khoozdar, lxxvi n.; Andreas-Christensen 102 evdv; Ivanow wnw) certainly represents āp.  
4 Note also löyas 'fox' (Tab. Iwūs, Gozarkhoni (Ivanov, A.O., ix, 367 Iwus); pilă 'big, great', pilă-măš 'rat' (Gozarkhoni pilo bovo 'grandfather'; Gilaki pilo, pillo; Zaza pil, pil; Hadank 163; often wrongly confused with Pers. pīr 'old'; Dailemi name Pileswar, Minorsky, Domination des Dailamites, p. 3). A few further interesting Tāk. words may be briefly mentioned here: āzīrā 'yesterday'; sārā 'day after to-morrow'; čūst 'boot'; vayā 'wedding'; ēlā 'sparrow'; ushe 'dog'; gūyār 'calf'; asif 'apple'; úz 'walnut'; simār 'straw'; terizgā 'hail'; nimarif 'noon'; zārīn 'child' (pl. zārun; cf. Kurd.); geisin 'plough' (from
has been the dominating language for several centuries, a few islands of Iranian speech have survived in remote corners. Here our information is singularly defective: instead of knowing any of these surviving dialects, we merely know rumours of their existence. Three areas have been named:—

Firstly, the Harzan-Kūh in the north-western corner of the province, in the ancient borderland between Armenia and Persia, to the north-west of Tabriz, between the northern shore of the Urmia lake and the River Aras (the ancient Araxes). In several villages here, in Harzan, Gālin-qaya, Bābra, and others, an Iranian dialect is spoken, which may conveniently be called Harzani\(^1\); I shall say more about it presently.

Secondly: some villages in the Qaraja-dāy, to the north-east of Tabriz. Nothing is known about their language.\(^2\)

Thirdly: several villages in Khalkhāl, at the eastern fringe of Azerbaijan. This is precisely the area in which we should expect to find dialects that provide a transition from Tālishī to Tākistānī, and for this reason it is much to be regretted that we know nothing about them. There is at least a potential source of information. It is understood that the late Kersavi, in the second edition of his well-known book on the ancient language of Azerbaijan, quoted a few words in one of the Khalkhāl dialects; but this second edition, published in Tehran in 1317/1938, does not seem to have reached Western


\(^{1}\) Dr. M. Navābī recently discovered and published a Persian deed dated in 791/1389, in which the name now generally known as Harzand is spelt Harzan; accordingly, Dr. Navabī prefers Harzani as the name of the language (Naşriye-i Dānishkade-i Adabiyāt-i Tabriz, V, No. ii, 29-38).

\(^{2}\) See the additional note below, p. 177.
Europe; at any rate, in spite of some search, I have not been able to see it.

Twenty years ago a promising attempt was made to fill the great gap in our knowledge of these dialects, by a Swiss linguist, Dr. Emil Baer. In 1932/33 he visited Harzan and Khalkhāl (but not the Qaraʃa-dāy), and then went on to study the languages of Persian Tāliš, of Ḡilān, and Māzendarān. To two successive Congresses of Orientalists, at Rome in 1935 and at Brussels in 1938, he read papers on the material he had collected and the method he had used. At the latter Congress (which I could not attend) he quoted examples from the languages he had investigated, but these examples were unfortunately omitted from the report printed in the Proceedings. In fact, not a single word or a single form, out of the clearly massive material he had brought together, has been made accessible to the public. It has been reported

---

1 See the additional note below, p. 177.
2 Meanwhile, thanks to the kindness of a friend in Tehran, I have secured the 3rd edition of Kesravi’s Āšarī (Tehran 1325/1946). It is probably an unchanged reprint of the 2nd edition, regrettably printed in a most unsatisfactory fashion, often illegible and studded with misprints. The specimen of a dialect (unspecified, presumably Sūhrūd) of Khalkhāl is on pp. 61–62, in unvocalized Arabic script; its contents, a brief description of the linguistic situation in Khalkhāl, render it almost useless for our purposes; according to it, dialects (called Tāliš) are spoken in the whole of Sūhrūd and in a few villages of Kāyakūnān: all of them are close to Tālišī. As far as one can see, the latter opinion is partly borne out by the specimen, which shows some characteristic Tal. forms (ištan ‘self’; im ‘this’; antecedent genitive, sometimes in -ī; postpos. -kū; possessive pronoun če [ćh] ‘his’); but there are also considerable deviations from Tālišī, especially in the verb (e.g. vēʃin [veʃn] ‘they call’, gaf-зван ‘they talk’, bera [bɾa] ‘it was’, berā [bɾa] ‘it went’). However, one fails to detect any resemblance to Tākistānī, in which the corresponding verbal forms are màʃindā, màniʃdā, -ce, and (bi)ʃō.
3 He worked in due villaggi remoti, ma grandi e popolati, che han conservato anche essi il loro idioama iranico (Atti p. 237. . . . im Tale Shūhrūd, einem der 5 Māhāle des Berglands Khalkhāl (Actes p. 153).
that towards the end of the war Dr. Baer was killed in Germany, and it was said that his material had disappeared; but recently I learned from Professor Minorsky that Dr. Georges Redard had succeeded in tracing his collections. There is now good hope that they will be published one day. Pending that, we must make do with what can be obtained in other ways.¹

The only one of these dialects about which I can give information is Harzani, or more precisely, the variety of it spoken in the village of Gālin-qaya. It was in this village that European scholars first became alive to the survival of Iranian languages in Azerbaijan. C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, who passed a night at Gālin-qaya in 1898, noticed its peculiar dialect, and drew attention to it in the report on his journey which was published in 1910.² He quoted there four or five separate words, only two of them significant (hūrā 'three', isba 'dog'), and a sentence of two words, ospe bīndor, which he misunderstood: he thought it meant 'the horses are harnessed',³ while in fact it means 'tie up the horse', ospe being singular and bīndor the plural of the imperative.

This is all so far made known about the language of Gālin-qaya; in compensation, we have seven words from the neighbouring village of Harzan, which the late Mirza Muhammad-i Qazvini communicated to Professor Minorsky, who quoted them in the Encyclopaedia article mentioned above. These few words suffice to show that there are differences between Gālin-qaya and Harzan. Two of the forms supplied by Muhammad-i Qazvini, together with their Persian equivalents and the corresponding Gālin-qaya forms, may be adduced here, berend = Pers. būdand : Gāl. berut; šerindū = Pers. šudand : Gāl. šerut.

It will be clear from the foregoing remarks that I have had

¹ However, during the recent Congress of Orientalists (Cambridge, Aug., 1934) Professor Redard told me that only a part of Dr. Baer's collections had survived; the notes on the dialects of Azerbaijan have disappeared.

² Armenien einst und jetzt, i, 185 sq.

³ Die Pferde sind 'gebunden', angeschirrt.
access to a fresh source of information, and this is happily a copious one.

I owe it to a Persian scholar, Dr. M. Navabi, a lecturer in the recently founded University of Tabriz, the capital of Azerbaijan. Dr. Navabi, who studied for some time at the School of Oriental and African Studies, very generously allowed me the use of his field notes, as well as of a fair copy he had made of the larger part of his collections. Naturally, the publication of this material, which is fairly comprehensive, must be left to Dr. Navabi; but he has kindly permitted me to quote from it in this paper.

The dialect of Gālin-qaya has inevitably been strongly influenced by Turkish, which is also the second language of its speakers. There is a good deal of vowel assimilation: ūmīlā ‘to teach’ corresponds with Persian ūmūxtan, vūrūr- ‘to pass by’ with Persian guḏar-; in zūnusna, vūrūsna, beramesna, respectively ‘he knows’, ‘it rains’, and ‘he cries’, the vowel in the penultimate is one and the same by origin. The palatalized k-sounds are so strongly marked that they appear to be scarcely distinguishable from c-sounds; thus in Dr. Navabi’s notes one finds both kīna and čīna for ‘girl’, kōlla and čōlla for ‘you made’. A preceding genitive is mostly resumed by the enclitic pronoun for the 3rd person, which is -y after a vowel, j after a consonant, and -yf- between vowels; e.g. kōlo = ‘hat’, yan = ‘wife’; ‘his hat’ is kōloj, ‘his wife’ is yanj, and kōlojfa means ‘it is his hat’ (the -a at the end being the word for ‘is’). This pronoun now appears where

1 The 3rd edition of Keshvai’s Ašari (see above p. 160, n. 2) also contains specimens of the zabān-i Harzand, 17 everyday sentences (pp. 63–64) and a brief word-list (pp. 62–63). Although owing to the orthography used (unvocalized Arabic script with somewhat inphassard matrices lectionis) some points necessarily remain uncertain, one can say that the language of these specimens is substantially in agreement, indeed almost identical, with that of Dr. Navabi’s collections. Curious is the uncertainty in the endings of the 1st pers. plur. (also of the 1st pers. sing.), e.g. subj. ānem ‘let us go’ (Gāl. ānum); pres. (n)kendem ‘we (do not) do’ (Gāl. kândum), but (n)znusen ‘we (do not) know’ (Gāl. zūnum); prob. misprinted for *znusen; pret. (hkh) brum ‘we were (asleep)’ (Gāl. hēt berum); “trans.” pret. zwnsm’n ‘we knew (and) fled’ (Gāl. -muna); uncertainty in this very point is found also in Dr. Navabi’s notes.
a genitive precedes, e.g. merde koloy 'the man's hat' or brori yanf 'the brother's wife'—a construction doubtless due to Turkish influence. Similarly, the possessive pronouns (caman, esde, avey; cama, sema, avane), which incidentally resemble the Talish and Takistâni forms, are resumed by enclitic pronouns, e.g. caman yanma 'it is my wife', esde zanustar 'your knowledge' (the final -r being the enclitic pronoun of the 2nd person).

Here I have put down a scheme of the nominal inflexion, in which, however, one or two points are not entirely certain:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Case</th>
<th>Sing. merde</th>
<th>Plur. yanoy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oblique Case</td>
<td>merde</td>
<td>yanun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determin Acc.</td>
<td>merde</td>
<td>yanune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>merenda</td>
<td>(yanumenda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ablative</td>
<td>merderi</td>
<td>yanuneri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>merdehun</td>
<td>(yanunehun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partitive</td>
<td></td>
<td>yanunda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is always interesting to see how a language that has once shed an elaborate system of inflexion creates a fresh system that bears comparison with the original one. Actually, most of these cases are pseudo-cases, mere juxtaposition of noun and postposition. That becomes clear when an enclitic pronoun is affixed to the noun; it precedes postpositions, but of course follows proper endings. Hence dosmonda 'in my hand', doslonda 'in your hand', karjiri 'from his house' (kar = house), karlenda 'in your house', hamajiri 'from all of it'.

This consideration shows also that the determinative accusative, which in the singular often coincides with the oblique case, is in fact a pseudo-case. Actually, it is distinguished when a noun ends in a vowel; then the accusative ends in -re, but the oblique case is identical with the general case; e.g. kina 'girl', oblique case also kina, but kinare is the determinative accusative. Now I have found two examples in which enclitic pronouns are involved, grite 'his neck', i.e. giri 'neck' + -y-for the 3rd person + the dissimilated accusative ending; and
Xöyö eșde karille vörun kani ‘may God ruin your house’, where karille ‘your house’ is composed of kar ‘house’, the enclitic pronoun of the 2nd person (-r, often -l), and the mark of the accusative.

It is not possible to discuss here all the problems connected with the verb of this dialect. The following table contains the principal forms of the preterite and the perfect:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I saw</th>
<th>I have seen</th>
<th>I went</th>
<th>I have gone</th>
<th>I have not gone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vimna</td>
<td>vindama</td>
<td>šerin</td>
<td>šerama</td>
<td>nema šera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>villa</td>
<td>vindara</td>
<td>šeri</td>
<td>šerara</td>
<td>nera šera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinfra</td>
<td>vindaya</td>
<td>šera</td>
<td>šeraya</td>
<td>niya šera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vimmuna</td>
<td>vindamuna</td>
<td>šerum</td>
<td>šeramuna</td>
<td>nemuna šera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinnura</td>
<td>vindaruna</td>
<td>šerur</td>
<td>šeranura</td>
<td>nenura šera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinfuna</td>
<td>vindayna</td>
<td>šerut</td>
<td>šerayna</td>
<td>neyna šera</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It shows the influence of the transitive verb upon the intransitive. The perfect of the latter (šerama) is entirely modelled on that of the former (vindama); similarly behešdama ‘I have got up’, nehelara ‘you have not slept’, vin nani zülférangin gene parišun berama . . . hazrate Adam angin öso pašımın berama ‘see, how like your locks I have become tangled in (my) soul (?) . . . like Adam I have now become repentant’.

The intransitive preterite ordinarily preserves its distinct forms (šerin), even where the two kinds of verbs are in close contact, e.g. šerin nāhāre körma āmarim à ‘I went, ate lunch, came’; but occasionally we find forms adapted to the transitive, e.g. vörörma ‘I passed by’, mörfa ‘he died’.

Of particular interest are the verbal stems, of which a fairly full list is given here. In Middle Iranian and in the majority of modern Iranian languages we find two verbal stems, a present stem and a preterite stem; but in the dialect of Gāalin-qaya there exist three stems, present, preterite, and subjunctive, and an additional form for the 2nd singular of the imperative:

---

1 There is no translation of these verses in Dr. Navabi’s notes; the one above is therefore conjectural. -angin ‘like’ (spā vorgangin a ‘a dog is like a wolf’) represents earlier *angôn, cf. MPers. *hongen, Sogd. *hongen.

* With regard to -im instead of -in, see above, p. 168, n. 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>še</td>
<td>šer-</td>
<td>šend-</td>
<td>ševe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>bun</td>
<td>ber</td>
<td></td>
<td>baw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>dor</td>
<td>dund-</td>
<td>dā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>kan</td>
<td>kōrd-</td>
<td>kōnd-</td>
<td>kar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>(b)i</td>
<td>ord-</td>
<td></td>
<td>ā-bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>han</td>
<td>hōrd-</td>
<td></td>
<td>xar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>verar</td>
<td>vōrōrd-</td>
<td></td>
<td>wi-tar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td></td>
<td>vōzőrōd-</td>
<td>vōzőrn-</td>
<td>wi-bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>yan</td>
<td>yar</td>
<td>yand-</td>
<td>ūn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j)</td>
<td>āsta</td>
<td>āstān-</td>
<td>āstār-</td>
<td>ā-stan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k)</td>
<td>vin</td>
<td>vind-</td>
<td>vinn-</td>
<td>wain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l)</td>
<td></td>
<td>hōnd-</td>
<td>hōn-</td>
<td>xan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>zun</td>
<td>zunust-</td>
<td>zunusn-</td>
<td>xan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>āš</td>
<td>āt</td>
<td>ātn-</td>
<td>wak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o)</td>
<td>āraš</td>
<td>hōrōt-</td>
<td>hōrōd-</td>
<td>fra-wak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p)</td>
<td>'ri</td>
<td>ret-</td>
<td>ret-</td>
<td>raik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(q)</td>
<td>duž</td>
<td></td>
<td>dutn-</td>
<td>dawk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>hes</td>
<td>xap</td>
<td>xap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(s)</td>
<td>ġen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(t)</td>
<td>[nšin]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(u)</td>
<td>fi</td>
<td>fest-</td>
<td>fest-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>[bend-]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(w)</td>
<td>nevešt-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>hōst-</td>
<td>hösn-</td>
<td>xaz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(y)</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>bez-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(z)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Preterite stunts ending in two consonants are shorten in the "transitive" preterite, generally by the loss of the second consonant; hence in Kesravi's material 'wref = orfa 'he brought'; zunaolk = zunašla 'you knew' ; cf. above vimna, vilka, etc. (from vind-n, vind-la etc.).

2 In Kesravi's material kym as 1st sing. Subj. (read hum ?).

3 To perform ' (a prayer, etc.), Pers. gusārdan.

4 'To buy.' 6 Supplied from Kesravi (hiend-).

5 Cf. derra (inf.) 'to flee'; Kesravi urtmens (above p. 108, n. 1) = veret-muna.

7 'To sew.' 8 Supplied from Kesravi.

8 'To throw, spread (a rug over someone)' and 'to scatter seed, to sow', Pers. equivalents andāxtan and gūstardan. Example, ārāndakīyīx xutu festa ina yend yest 'have the people there sown (chick-)peas or not? ' (ārā 'thither', ārēyē 'thence', ārāndā 'there', ārāndaki 'someone being there', ārāndakīyīx pl).

9 Adapted from Lehmann-Haupt (bind-, above p. 167).

10 'To shine, be alight' (ōmā vašna 'the moon is shining', čore vašna 'the lamp is lit').
The preterite stem continues the ancient preterite stem and thus presents no difficulty. The old present stem is continued substantially by the subjunctive stem, and entirely by the imperative, which generally has strongly shortened forms. However, some of the subjunctive stems, those at the beginning of the list (a-f), have acquired a final -n, the origin of which is not clear. Here only those stems are affected, the base of which ended in a vowel or an unstable consonant. It is probable that these subjunctive stems are new formations built upon the imperative; for example, case (d), 'to make', where the old present stem was kar, which in the imperative was shortened to ha: on this form the subjunctive stem was built by the addition of -n-. The first verb in the list shows that this formation is not entirely recent; for the subjunctive stem su must have been created at a time when the imperative was still *su.

The most interesting of the three stems is the present stem. It is evidently built on the preterite stem; in this point the dialect of Gālin-qaya differs from most Western Iranian languages. This origin of the present stem is quite clear in the forms in the second half of the list; but some of those at the beginning of the list are again difficult. For example, if we consider case (i), at first sight one might assume that the present stem, yand-, was derived from the subjunctive stem, yam-, rather than from the preterite stem, yar-. However, it is in itself unlikely that in the weaker bases the formation should have been essentially different from that found in the stronger ones; also, it is to be observed that the vowel of the present stem is in every case identical with the vowel of the preterite stem.

The rule for the formation of the present stem can be formulated in this way: if the Old Iranian preterite stem ended in -t- preceded by a sonant, then the Gālin-qaya present stem ends in -nd with loss of the old -t-; and if the Old Iranian preterite stem ended in -t- preceded by a consonant, then the Gālin-qaya present stem ends in that consonant, if it was preserved, plus -n-, otherwise in -tn or -tt. The origin of these
stems may be found in the -ant- participle, which in Gālin-qaya is regularly built on the preterite stem:  )*seranda ‘going’,
doranda ‘giving’, köranda ‘making’, yaranda ‘hitting’, and
so forth. These forms may have been strongly shortened in
the creation of the present stem, so that the actual present
would be a composite tense by origin, ‘I am going’ in the
place of ‘I go’. Thus one could account for the various finals,
-and-, -n-, and -d- (often assimilated to -t-), all resulting from
-and- at the end of clusters of consonants.

These few details will, I hope, give an idea of the distinctive
features of the dialect of Gālin-qaya, which we may regard as
representative of the Harzani group. The question now arises:
is this Harzani the last surviving form of the language once
spoken in Azerbaijan? This question is not easily answered.
The first test to be applied concerns certain sound-changes
which must be presumed to have characterized the old
language of Azerbaijan, principally the change of Iranian fr-
to hr-, and the change of intervocalic -d- to -r-. the Iranian
loanwords in Armenian, which entered Armenian from the
neighbouring province of Azerbaijan, prove the existence of
these changes. Now the first, hr from fr, is satisfactorily
present in Harzani; but it carries no weight, because it is also
present in at least half the North-western Iranian languages.
The second change, -r- from intervocalic -d-, is unfortunately
absent. It is true, intervocalic and post-vocalic -t- regularly
becomes -r- in Harzani; many of the words I have quoted
show it—but that should not be confused, though it often has
been confused, with the change we are seeking. Intervocalic
-d- has either disappeared in Harzani, or been replaced by a
glide. There is only one certain case of -r- from -d-, arina
‘Friday’, and that word is probably a loan-word; a doubtful
case is the word for ‘under’, which occurs in ružare ‘west’,
literally ‘sun-down’ (ruž ‘sun’), and in parare ‘below’,
which contrasts with parpe ‘above’, so that -are meant ‘under’
and may be referred to Old Iranian adari ‘under’: that word,
however, already contained an -r-, so that we are not safe in
claiming that the Harzani -r- in this word represents the old -d-.
We have now to consider the relationship between Harzani and the other languages of the north-western group. It is obvious, and has already been pointed out by Dr. Baer,¹ that Harzani is most closely related to Táliší. This relationship would be even stronger if Táliší, which now presents much abbreviated forms through the loss of interior -t-, all dentals, and other consonants as well, had once shared in the change from intervocalic -t- to -r-, which characterizes Harzani; it has indeed been reported that words exhibiting that change occur in the southernmost dialect of Táliší, that spoken in Assálím.² It should be noted that Táliší, like Harzani, possesses a present built on the preterite stem; the Táliší forms have not been explained correctly,³ and can in fact be explained only with the help of the Harzani material.

On the other side, Harzani is related to Zaza. One may instance the existence of two genuine plural cases in both languages; the ablative postposition -ri, Zaza -rā; the negative prefix in čini(ya)⁴ 'it is not', Zaza činyo, činyā; many characteristic words, such as Harzani osma 'moon', Zaza ašma, the nearest related word ⁵ being Táliší oušm; vašna 'it shines', Zaza vašena; gen-both 'to take' and 'to fall' in Harzani and Zaza; rau 'quick' in both languages⁶; vondor-'to stand': Zaza vindur-⁷ and Vafṣi vender-,⁸ a verb known

¹ Anderseits erweise sich das Härzändi und das Shahruddi Azārbājānīs mit dem Talysh Kaspis eng verwandt (Actes, pp. 155 sq.).
² B. V. Miller, Tališkiy Yaziq, 1953, p. 201. Two of the words quoted above, p. 166, n. 2 (yr and brk) prove that this change als occurred in the Khalkhal dialect from which Ksaravi's specimen is derived.
³ Thus B. V. Miller in his latest work explained the Tal. present (votedam, or shorter vottom, 'I say') as compounded of the infinitive (vote), the preposition da 'in' (used as postposition), and the present of 'to be' (Tališkiy Yaziq, p. 146). However, Miller himself does not attribute, in his discussion of the prepositions (ibidem, pp. 86-88), such a preposition to Táliší (only dț 'with', and the postposition ada 'in'), which would not produce the form required; there is, of course, a preverb da).
⁴ Several times also in Ksaravi's specimen, spelt čynyh.
⁵ [Now : Keringānī ışmā.] ⁶ [So also in Keringānī.]
⁷ Hadank, Zad, 138, 273, 361, 378, stehen bleiben, stillstehen, anhalten, bleiben, warten. Similar forms (but with initial m-) occur also in Gurani.
⁸ Muqaddam, Vafs, p. 97, inf. venderdan, imp. hāwend, prot. hāwenderd, and similarly in neighbouring villages (note also vandardan, p. 127 middle); Pers. equivalent istādan. [Add Keringānī vendārda.]
from Middle Iranian.¹ This is merely a small selection of the many coincidences, some of them exclusive, that can be quoted. They leave no doubt that Harzani takes its place between Tālīšī and Zaza.

This result seems to be consonant with the present geographical location of the three languages, with Harzani actually in the middle between Tālīšī in the east and Zaza in the far west. But these appearances are deceptive; for it is certain that Zaza, now altogether out of contact with the languages to which it is related, has been carried to Eastern Turkey by some migration. It has been argued on historical and linguistic grounds, on converging lines, that Zaza is a branch of the ancient language of Dailam, an alpine country in the centre of the high mountains on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea.² If Zaza had its original place in Dailam (to the north and north-east of Tākistān), we are driven to the assumption that Harzani, too, is a dislocated language and had its home to the south-east of Tālīš, somewhere between Tālīš and the ancient Zaza country. Such an assumption would give an answer to many difficult problems; for example, we should gain a perfect series of the languages that form their present stem with the help of an -n- or -nd- suffix, that is, Tālīšī, Harzani, Zaza, parts of Gilakī, Tabari, and some dialects near Samnān.³ Moreover, there has been a report, by the head of the American Presbyterian Mission in Tabrīz at the beginning of this century (S. G. Wilson), that the people of Harzani had been transferred there from the region of Tālīš by Nādir-Šāh, that is to say a little over two hundred years ago.⁴ Ordinarily one might look upon such a report with

¹ Pahlavi Psaalter wneydī = qayyāmā ‘durus, permanens’; Inser. of Shapur, Parthian 17 RB' y'zin wneydrīn 'BDI; with assimilation -nd- > -nn- Manich. MPers. wneyr- ‘to remain (permanently), stay’ (so to be translated), from which its apparent causative wnyr- ‘to set, fix’ (also Pahlavi wyn'ī-, Pahl. Ps. wneydī, Inser. wneyr-) cannot easily be separated. The derivation of wneyr- from a base nar- (cf. ZII, ix, 206; Bailey, JRAS., 1953, 106) can scarcely be maintained.

² See the full discussion in the introduction to Hadank, Zāzā; cf. Minorsky, Domination des Dailamites, 17; BSOAS., xi (1943), 86-89.

³ Cf. Hadank, ibidem, p. 23.

⁴ See Hadank, ibidem, p. 5.
a critical eye: but here, as it is in agreement with the linguistic evidence, we may accept it as corroboration.

That leaves us with empty hands. The dialects that were presumed to be the last remnants of the ancient language of Azerbaijan have proved to be recent imports from another province. We are similarly unfortunate with the literary evidence which the late Kesravî had collected from Persian works: there is nothing conclusive. The most considerable is a set of 14th century dialect quatrains from Ardabil; but Ardabil is merely on the fringe of Azerbaijan, close to Tâliš, and the dialect of these quatrains has been shown to be akin to Tâliš. In short, with all the dialects we have considered here, of Tâliš, Harzan, Khalkhâl, and Tâkistân, we remain on the threshold of Azerbaijan; but of the language once spoken in Azerbaijan itself we know nothing.

**Additional Note**

This paper has been dogged by misfortune. Important new

* For example, I was myself told in Tâkistân that according to a local tradition the people of that village (the Tât) were immigrants from somewhere else; but no one could say from where they had come, or at what date.

* The 3rd edition of Kesravî's Ašâri contains additional dialect verses (some of them very interesting) taken from various jang-a (pp. 54–59); unfortunately, they are not sufficiently closely localized.


* See Miller, Tal. Taziê, 254–263. After seeing Miller's work (1953) I abandoned my intention to give a full analysis of the language of these quatrains. Note that dâr(h)-êr continues Manich. Parthian dârjêd 'suffering, in pain' (cf. ērmêjêd); and ēzêr 'life' Manich. Parth. jêyd. There is a possible case of -d. > -r. in ēzêrêm (6) 'I am the ball', which reading, however, is secured only by emendation (required by the rhyme); madītym (7) is misreading of n-dâstym, of Tal. daše Miller, Tal. Tekati, 217; Gâlin-qâya dâdêm daftâm 'my hand hurts'; probably Yaghnobi dazâ. The word for 'God', 'uynâ, is surely of Turkish origin (= oyan Kâfûrâ; Houtsma, Glossar, p. 7; etc.).

* The 'Appendix' to the Risâle by Rûhî of Anârajân (16th century), to which A. Iqbal has drawn attention (Yâdqâr, ii, fasc. iii, pp. 43–50) and which was published in full by M. Muqaddam (Yak sanad-i târîxi az gûyê-i āsâri-i Tabriz = Iran-Küde 10, 1317 Yezd./1948), is not, as has been claimed, written in any 'dialect', but in a vulgar (extremely vulgar!) and slangy type of colloquial Persian. It has no bearing on the problem of the ancient language of Azerbaijan.
publications, each requiring fresh adaptation of the views presented, kept coming in, either at the last minute or after the event. While the printing was in process, my friend and former student Dr. E. Yarshater, of the University of Tehran, presented me with (1) the second edition of Kesravi's ʿĀdārī, for which I had looked so long in vain (above, p. 165; it is indeed much superior to the third edition, which is merely a reprint); (2) M. Sutūde (Sotoodeh), Farhang-i Gilakī, Tehran, 1954 (an admirable work); (3) Yahya Zoka, The dialect of Keringan, Tehran, 1332/1953–4 (the first glimpse of one of the unknown dialects of the Qaraja-dāy, see above, p. 165; received too late, unfortunately, to be taken into account here).