

wer sich immer wieder über seine jeweiligen fachwissenschaftlichen Grundbegriffe Rechenschaft ablegt, ermöglicht seinen fachwissenschaftlichen Grundlagen stetige Veränderbarkeit. Jeder Fachwissenschaftler aber, der über Grund, Zweck und Ziel seiner Fachwissenschaft nachdenkt, kann dies *nicht* mit den Methoden seiner Fachwissenschaft. Wissenschaft ist Handeln von Menschen. Wer aber über Handeln nachdenkt, unter der Kategorie des Sollens, der denkt in Kategorien der Ethik. *

* Herrn Dr. Zdzisław J. Kapera sei herzlich gedankt für die Gelegenheit, die Arbeit hier vorstellen zu können. Mit der Intention des Beitrages, die wesentlichen Überlegungen und Inhalte meiner Arbeit zu nennen, läßt es sich, so denke ich, guten Gewissens vereinbaren auf Zitate zu verzichten und entscheidende Thesen lediglich anzuführen ohne sie argumentativ abzusichern.

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THE NORTHERN IRANIAN DIALECT OF ALAMŪT AND THE PECULIARITIES OF ITS VOCABULARY¹

This paper aims at giving rise to a broad discussion about the North-Western Iranian languages and dialects, the problem of their classification, with special attention paid to archaic vocabulary that they have preserved and common innovations that they have developed. It is fairly important for comparative linguistic studies, in order to establish the connections between North-Western Iranian languages and dialects with ancient languages of the region.

Many scholars have advanced our knowledge of the linguistic complexity of this group of languages. The pivotal studies in this field were carried out by Bailey (1933), Henning (1954), Mac Kenzie (1961-1966), Yarshater (1969), Stilo (1971, 1981), Windfuhr (1975), Edel'man (1968), Rastorgueva (1975) and Oranskij (1979). Their studies led us towards a better understanding of the Western Iranian dialects, both diachronically and typologically. Unfortunately, in spite of their great contributions, which have proved that the new Western Iranian languages exhibit a diversity on all linguistic levels, there is no comprehensive study of the dialectal divisions and diachrony of the Western Iranian group. In fact, even in the first comprehensive analytical survey of Iranian languages in the *Grundriß*, the analysis and relative dialectology of Eastern Iranian languages fared better than that of Western Iranian. Judging by their diachrony, which is much more complex than it was assumed, the Western Iranian languages and dialects, as the Eastern Iranian ones, must also derive from a multiplicity of Middle Iranian predecessors. *All New Iranian languages obviously originate in Iranian stock*,

¹ Paper presented at the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies, Cambridge 11-15 September 1995.

but even though none can be identified as direct successors of attested Middle Iranian language. The historically dominant standards as: Old Persian, Avestan, Median, and Middle Persian, show distinctive absorption of features from other dialects (i.e. non-*"Persian"* features).² Nevertheless, typologically and genetically the number of shared features is sufficient enough to recognize them as a socio-linguistic unity, their basic stock being related to the dialects of the North Western province of Iran.

Our information concerning the general distribution of principal dialectal groups still remains fragmentary. One of the major questions to be answered is the relative diachrony of the changes which led to the divisions and the diachrony of diffusion patterns, which led to them. To solve this questions one has to follow all the small dialects in their gradual transition by a study of the forms used in all the villages situated in Northern Iran. It seems to be a difficult task since some of these dialects have been lost and the rest of them, although preserved by local minorities, have been reduced to certain lexical items and morphological features. In the face of the language loss, which has been considerable due to the spread of Persian and Turkish, the recognition of small, remnant dialects is of a particular importance for comparative Iranian linguistics. Systematic research is required in order to reveal these dialects which may as yet be unknown, and also to clarify details of the known ones, which have been so far only touched upon, as in the case of Alamūti.

The high, isolated valley of Alamūt³ in the Alborz mountains is famous for its chequered past. Conquered by the Isma'ilis in 1090, it became the centre of an isolated state that was to last for 166 years, and pursued the objective of breaking the domination of the Saljuqs, until the Mongols under Hulagu destroyed its power in the middle of the 12th century. The name of Alamūt, the symbol of Isma'ili power, is usually associated with the strong, inaccessible fortress, where "The Grand Master of Assassins", Hasan-i Sabbah

² G.L. Windfuhr, *New Iranian Languages, overview*, CLI (Wiesbaden 1989), p. 248.

³ According to the Persian legend, an eagle had indicated the site on a rocky crest to Wahsudan b. Marzubān, one of the Justānids of Daylam. It was a place, where eagles used to sit and learn to fly. Hence the name from *āloh* (eagle) and *amu(x)t* (taught). See: Daftary, *The Ismaili's*, p. 166; Browne, *A literary history ...*, II, p. 202.

resided and planned "holy crimes" carried out by Fedā'is. Although there are several sizable ruins at present, which the local inhabitants point out as being the remnants of the headquarters of "The Old Man of the Mountain", the real site of the fortress can hardly be identified with certainty. Some scholars, as W. Ivanow, maintain that the Alamūt fortress was located near the village of Gozarkhān⁴, but the name of Alamūt is now applied to the whole district.

The valley of Alamūt comprises the present dehestans of Alamūt and Rūdbār, which meet in the bakhsh of Rūdbār-e Alamūt in the shahrestān of Qazvin, the centre of which is Mo'allem Kalaya. Surrounded on all sides by mountains, the valleys of Rūdbār and Alamūt lie among the peaks of the Sīāh Lān range to the north and the Qazvin mountains to the south. The baxš of Rūdbār-e Alamūt consists of six sub-districts: 1/Bālā Rūdbār, 2/Pāin Rūdbār (Havānak village), 3/Fishān, 4/Aqān, 5/ Čahār nāhiye and 6/Andajrud district (main villages: Andaj, Dik, Kuchnān, Vasang, Molā Kalāya)⁵.

The vernacular common to the region is Azerbaijani Turkish, which has overlaid most of the Iranian dialects of Azerbaijan and the adjacent areas. In all the villages on the Qazvin plain, the population is generally trilingual, speaking its local dialect, Bazari (ie. the Persian of Qazvin, which spread mostly through commercial interaction) and Turkish. The name of each dialect is taken from the main village in which it is spoken. To ascertain the position of Alamūti with regard to other north-western dialects is a difficult task. Many scholars present different views on the problem of classification of the north-western Iranian languages and dialects. Yarshater suggested that Alamūti is one of the five closely related north-western Iranian dialects, belonging to a larger group known as Tati⁶. The ethnic appellation *Tati* does not refer to any particular dialect. This word is generally used to denote different Iranian speaking peoples in the region. However, the designation of these dialects as Tati is general and vague. Yarshater proposed to call these dialects "Median"; according to him, it is a more appropriate appella-

⁴ Ivanow, "The dialect ...", p. 354; Daftary, *The Isma'ilis*, p. 340.

⁵ Sotudeh, "Qela'-e esma'iliye", pp. 111-124.

⁶ The Tati dialects of the Caucasus, which derived from Persian, or a dialect similar to it, do not belong to this group (i.e. they belong to the south-western branch of Iranian languages). See: Yarshater, *A grammar ...*, p. 17.

tion, since they seem to be modern descendants of the ancient Median dialects of the region⁷. Another scholar, W. Ivanow, claims that Alamūti is an interesting form of transition language between the "Caspian" and "Central Persian" groups. The dialect of Gozarkhān in Alamūt obviously has many Median elements in it, and is very closely connected to the language spoken in the village of Tājriš (in the north of Tehran), described by V. Zhukovski (Zhukovski 1922: 395-432), and with some dialects of the Samnani group, which are closely connected with some local dialects spoken near Isfahan and Kashan. On the other hand, the Alamūti has adopted the "Caspian", chiefly Mazanderani, system of the ezafe, the Accusative, the Oblique or Possessive forms of Pronouns, &c."⁸ According to Windfuhr, Alamūti belongs to a group of ten, closely related dialects spoken in the north and north-west by the Talishi people and the Tatis in a Turkophone environment.⁹ Lecoq suggests that the group to which both Alamūti and Rūdbāri belong, should be called: "Āzari"¹⁰, and the Iranian scholar Mortazi Nesfat classifies them to the Caspian languages' branch.¹¹ To solve the question of proper classification and appellation of these dialects one must remember that they all derive from a multiplicity of Old and Middle Iranian predecessors, and that is why this problem is much more complex than is often assumed.

The peculiarities of Alamuti vocabulary

1/ Archaisms. Alamūti has preserved some startling archaisms. It contains a number of words inherited mainly from Old and Middle Iranian languages spoken in that region:

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ivanow, "The dialect ...", p. 357.

⁹ G.L. Windfuhr, A. Arbor, Western Iranian dialects, CLI, p. 295.

¹⁰ "Les dialectes āzari (appelés tāti dans l'usage local) peuvent être répartis en cinq groupes: 1/ les dialectes du NW, parlés dans le Harzand et le Dizmār: hazarandi, keringani, 2/ les dialectes du NE, parlés dans le Xalxāl et le Tārom: šali, kajali, etc., 3/ les dialectes du S, parlés au sud de Qazvin: tākestāni, čali, eštehārdi, etc., 4/ les dialectes du SW, parlés au sud-ouest de Zenjān: xoini, 5/ les dialectes du SE, parlés au nord-est de Qazvin: rūdbāri, alamūti, etc." P. Lecoq, Les dialectes caspiens et les dialectes du nord-ouest de l'Iran, CLI, (pp. 296-7).

¹¹ Caspian languages and dialects: 1/ māzanderāni, 2/ taleši, 2/ gilaki, 3/ tālaqāni, 4/ alamūti and rūdbāri, 5/ dilmāni, 6/ gorgāni nad esterābādi. See: Nesfat, "Farāvāni-ye zabān-hā", pp. 111-124.

borme - "cry; weeping", **borme-jen** - "sniveller, cry-baby", word no longer used in Persian. It corresponds to Pahlavi: *brām*- "weep, lament", *brām-ag* "weeping, lamentation" (Mac Kenzie, p. 19), Avestan: *bram*- in: *brāsat* "he wept", Khotan-Saka: *brem*- "to weep" (Bailey, p. 316), O.Ind. *bhrāmati*, O.Eng. *barmen*, IE **bher-*, *bhrem*- "well up, seethe (may have been applied to tears)" (Pokorny, p. 132). Cf. also in Mazanderani: *barm*- "to weep", Sangisari: *borma* "weeping" and Zaza: *bermān*;

čaken - "language, tongue" (Parthian loanword), Persian: *zabān*;

xou, xos - "sleep", **xosbidan** "to sleep". Cf. in Gilani: *xus*:- *xuft*-. Pahlavi: *xuftan*, *xufs*- (Mac Kenzie, p. 94), Avestan: *x'ap*-, *x'afsa*-, *x'apta*-. In Alamūti *xos* also has a special meaning: "a man (usually an old man) who sleeps in his boat, a man who loves the sea";

kote - "little, young, baby", in cpds.: *xers kote* "young bear", *palang kote* "young leopard", *sag kote* or *kotekā* "young dog", in Pahlavi: *kōdak* (Mac Kenzie, p. 51), Avestan: *kutaka*- "small", in Persian: *kutāh* "short, low", *kudak* "infant, baby";

kufā, kupā - "heap, pile, mass" also "truncated pyramids of mowed grass", in many cpds.: *ču kufā* "heap of wood", *gandom kufā* "mass of wheat", *kufā rig* "mass of sand". Avestan: *kaofa*-, O.Ind. *kupa*, Khotan-Saka *kuvaa*- "heap" (Bailey, p. 63), O.Persian *kaufa*, Pahlavi: *kōf* (Mac Kenzie, p. 51) "hill, mountain, hump", Persian: *kuh* "mountain", Oss.Iron. *k'upp* "hill" (dialectal), IE **keu-* "to bend", *keu-p*- (Pokorny, pp. 588-592);

ruč - "day", this word is preserved in the names of two villages in the region of Bālā Alamūt: *Bālā ruč* and *Pāin ruč*, Avestan: *raočaḥ*- "light", O.Persian: *raučaḥ*, Pahlavi: *rōz*, Persian: *ruz*

nakās - "eaves of a roof" (a house and eaves of its roof is like a man, who stands with a hand at his forehead looking ahead), Avestan: *nikāsa*-, O.Persian: *nikās*, Pahlavi: *nigāh*, Persian: *negāh* "look";

telār - "mosquito-net" also "a place for rest or sleep, usually near a river, covered with a net spread on four or six poles", Persian: *tala* "snare" (rare), in Pahlavi: *talag* "snare, trap" (Mac Kenzie, p. 81), in Alamūti: *lal/lar* "mosquito, fly"¹²;

tur - "crazy, mad, hostile man", *tur-vāš* "a name of a herb, people of Alamūt believe that everyone who eats this herb becomes savage and crazy", in Pahlavi: *tur* "one of the people inimical to Iran" (Mac Kenzie, p. 84).

¹² Ivanow, "The dialect ...", p. 31.

2/ Semantic innovations:

afto, *aftābe* - "copper jug of a peculiar form for holding water", not used in other parts of Persia, derived from Persian: *aftāb* "sun";

čašt - "dinner", in Persian: "middle hour of the forenoon, early lunch (rarely)", "breakfast" (Horn, p. 433), in Pahlavi: *čašt* "lunch, meal", *čašt-ag* "food", *čašnig* "taste" (Mac Kenzie, p. 22), O.Ind. *čaš-* "to eat, drink";

dāmān - "forest, wood", in Persian used in the sense of "skirt, lap, a lapful of firewood", *āteš rā dāmān zadan* "to add fuel to the fire", *dām* "net, snare", Pahlavi: *dām* "net" (Mac Kenzie, p. 24), Khotan-Saka *dāma-* "bond", base: *dai-*, *dā-* "to bind" (Bailey, p. 156), Avestan: *dyā-*, O.Ind. *dāman* "bond, tie, fetter", IE **de-*: *dā-* (Pokorny, p. 183);

xojir - "good", in Pahlavi: *hu-čīhr* "fair, beautiful", *hu-* "good, well", *čīhr* "form, shape, appearance, face" (Mac Kenzie, p. 44), Persian: *xub* "good", *čehre* "face";

das kaš - "sleeve", in Persian: *dast keš* "glove, muffler"

eškemdār - "pregnant" (*eškem* - Persian: *šekam* "belly, stomach, womb"), *šekamdār* in Persian this word has a different meaning: "large-bellied, capacious, roomy (metaphorical meaning)";

3/ Words of unknown etymology:

dender - "little bit", *dendere*, *denderek* "very small, very little";

gate - "big, high, grand", apparently not used in other parts of Persia, Adj. inflected as follows: *gate-tar*, *gate-tarin*, widely spread, replaces Persian *bozorg* and *boland* also in compounds: *gate šiše* "window or door pane", *gate piyar* "grand father", *gate adāš* "elder brother" etc.;

4/ Loan-words:

a/ From Turkish (mostly):

sāje - "broom", from Turkish *sāj* "wood";

gezi - "daughter", also *detar*, Persian: *doxtar*. Cf. in Kashani and Samnani dialects;

elxy - "stallion, a male horse", this loanword in Persian means: "stud";

b/ From Russian:

lampā - "lamp", *das lampā* "flash-light", word borrowed from Russian merchants (in Qadjar and Timurid periods). Cf. in Mazanderani. A loanword apparently not used in other parts of Persia.

c/ From Arabic:

puzemā, *poze* - "deliverance, salvation", also "a kind of a physical exercise in memory of Ismaili's of Alamūt; this exercise involves seven basic

stages, which makes the body skilled and flexible: three basic "bodily" stages, which are to improve the body: 1/speed, 2/physical strength, 3/bravery and four "spiritual" stages. Cf. in Mazanderani. Probably from Arabic *fuz* "success".

5/ Alamūti, in spite of the spread of Bazari Persian with its "southern" features, has preserved many lexical items showing phonological features typical for "northern" development:

a/ forms with /z/ phoneme, where Persian has developed /d/:

zāmā - "bridegroom, son-in-law", Persian: *dāmād*;

b/ forms with ancient /p/, where Persian has developed /f/:

espi - "white", Persian: *sefid*, MP *siped-*, Av. *spaeta-*;

c/ forms with archaic /j/, where Persian has /ž/¹³:

tij - "sharp", in Little Avesta: *brōiθrā tāžā* "sharp blade", Persian: *tiz* "sharp"; *jir* - "below, under", Persian: *zir*.

Thus, apart from many amazing archaisms and interesting semantic innovations, common to the whole Caspian region, the most peculiar features of Alamūti vocabulary can be summarized as follows:

1/ dental-alveolar liquid /r/ often appears as /l/: *goftāl* = P. *goftār* "speech", *valg* = P. *barg* "leaf", *chelg* = P. *cherk* "dirt"

2/ uvular spirant /x/ usually disappears (there is a general tendency to simplify speech): *detar* = P. *doxtar* "daughter", *tal* = P. *talx* "bitter", *sut* = P. *suxt* "fuel"

3/ final /b/ has a tendency to be pronounced as an unvoiced spirant /f/: *asf* = P. *asb* "horse", *jif* = P. *jib* "pocket", *sif* = P. *sib* "apple"

¹³ The front-palatal /ž/ sound does not occur within a word. Generally, where Persian has /ž/ (foreign phonem) or /z/ < OP /j/, in Alamūti, there is /j/: *bijan* = P. *bižan* "a name of a hero", *tij* = P. *tiz* "sharp", *abijar* = P. *abi zar* "irrigated field", *jir* = P. *zir* "under". Persian /ž/ is found in few borrowings from the North-Western dialects, since this sound is typical for the northern development of consonant alveolar affricate /j/ - /ž/. However, it is found neither in Alamūti, nor in the Tati dialects, which preserved the archaic /j/. Moreover, the loanwords from the European languages with /z/ sound also have /j/: *jandarm* = P. *žandarm* "gendarme", *bioloji* = P. *bioloži* (French loanwords).

4/ final /t/ disappears: *das* = P. *dast* "hand", *dārbas* = P. *dārbast* "trellis", or becomes the voiced stop /d/: *davād* = P. *davāt* "inkpot"

5/ the gemminate /-mm-/ usually takes the place of /-mb-/: *došamme* = P. *došambe* "Monday", *domme* = P. *dombe* "fat (tail)"

6/ dental, voiced stop /d/ sometimes appears after /n/: *pandir* = P. *panir* "cheese", *tandur* = P. *tanur* "oven"

7/ in word-building, there is a prevailing tendency to use the suffix *-dār* more frequently than other suffixes: *del-dār* "brave" (P. *delir*, *por del*; *del-dār* in P. mean: "whoever possesses one's heart, a lover, sweetheart"), *xu-dār* "someone who has a bad nature" ("kas-i, ke xuk dārad"), *čārve-dār* "porter, load carrying" (P. *bār-bar*), *ne-dār* "poor" (P. *faqir*)

8/ because of the absence of the ezafe construction as a genuine form, there are many compound words in which the adjective with the ending *-e* (the antecedent genitive) precedes the noun it modifies: *gate berar* "elder brother", *jevāne zen* "young woman", *lase čaken* "long tongue"

The aim of this paper was to show, on the basis of several chosen examples, the importance of studies on vocabulary attested in small, unknown dialects. Their further study is a crucial task and obvious necessity.

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