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The Tati Language Group in The Sociolinguistic Context of Northwestern Iran and Transcaucasia

DONALD L. STILO

The purpose of the present paper is to demonstrate some features of sociolinguistic interaction and language convergence phenomena in northern Iran and Transcaucasia. In particular, I wish to explore some of the problems of language classification and the effect of sociological and geographic factors on language diversity in the extended geographic area of Iran, with the aim of offering a new and more productive model for the study of Iranian dialects and languages. Since the material that forms the basis of my discussion is the Tāti language group, I will present here a brief description of it before going on to more general questions.

Definition and Background of the Tāti Group

Tāti, in the context of Iranian linguistics, generally refers to at least two groups of Iranian languages of different origin. The use which interests us presently refers to a group of languages of Northwest Iranian¹ origin, generally classified as a subgroup of the Central Plateau Languages. They are spoken in an area that extends from the Irano-Soviet border in Azerbaijan (and within the Sovi-

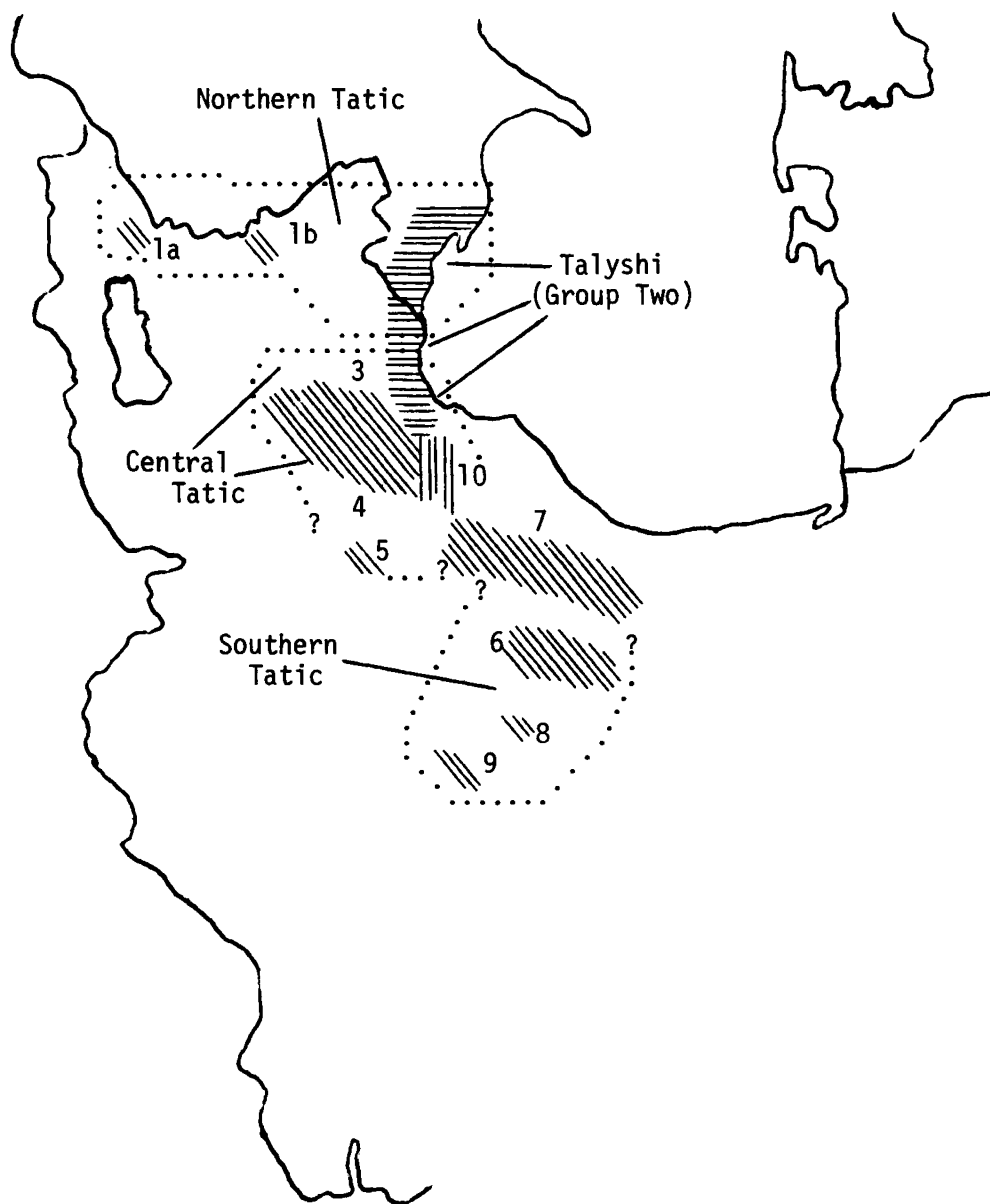
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et Union, with the inclusion of Talyshi here with the Tāti group) south to the Saveh area and possibly beyond. The heaviest concentration of Tāti speakers is found in the central parts of this area: Khalkhāl (Azerbaijan Province), Upper Tārom (Zanjan Province) and the areas north and south of the city of Qazvin. With the exception of the northern dialect of Talyshi, spoken in the Soviet Union, the languages and dialects of Tāti and Talyshi have no written tradition, though a script has been in use for Northern Talyshi during the Soviet period. I would estimate the total population of Tāti and Talyshi speakers to be from 250,000 to 300,000.

Iranian area linguists, most prominently Professor Ehsan Yar-Shater, have described and analyzed different members of the Tāti group at length. Little work, however, has been concluded on comparative Tāti studies. No attempts have been made to state specific relationships of Tāti to other Northwest Iranian languages, specifically Central Plateau languages, and no satisfactory definition of what the Tāti languages are, and what characteristics bind all these languages into a coherent group separate from other Northwest Iranian languages, has been offered.

On the basis of my own field work and current research on Tāti languages, I would like to offer a preliminary classification of the members and subgroups of this group. This classification finds additional corroboration in Professor Yar-Shater's work.² My criteria are based upon extensive comparative work in the fields of lexicon, morphology and syntax. I will present a few of the results in this paper, while a more complete presentation, along with a full description of the criteria for setting up a Tāti group as a cohesive linguistic group, as well as what possible transitions to non-Tāti languages exist, will be published in the future.

Tāti-type languages may be divided into ten groups on the basis of geographic proximity and linguistic and ethnic criteria (see Map 1):



MAP 1

The Tatic Language Group

Group One:

- A. Dialect of Harzan, now relocated in Qalinqie, between Marand and Jolfā in West Azerbaijan Province
- B. Dialects of Dizmār District (notably the village of Keringān) and Hasanu District in East Azerbaijan Province

Group Two:

- A. Northern Talyshi, centered around Āstārā and the Caspian littoral in the USSR
- B. Central Talyshi, centered around the Asālem-Hashtpar area along the Caspian littoral in northwestern Iran
- C. Southern Talyshi, centered around Shāndermen, Māsāl, Māsule and surrounding mountainous areas in Gilan Province

Group Three: Dialects of Khalkhāl District in Eastern Azerbaijan Province

- A. Shāhrud District (Shāl, Kolur, Lerd, etc.)
- B. Koresh-e Rostam District
- C. Kāqazkonān District (Kajal, etc.)

Group Four: Dialects of the "Tāromi" type

- A. Dialects of Upper Tārom of Zanjān Province (Hāzār-rud, Siāvarud, etc.)
- B. Dialects of Kalās and Kabate of Rudbār District of Gilan Province

Group Five: Dialects of the Khoi area of Zanjān Province (tentative)

Group Six: Southern Tāti of Professor Yar-Shater's classification

- A. Dialects spoken in the Rāmand District of Qazvin (Tākestān, etc.)
- B. Dialect spoken in Eshtehārd and environs in the Karaj District of the Central Province

Group Seven: Dialects north and northeast of Qazvin

- A. Qazvin Kuhpāye area (Razajerd, etc.)

- B. Marāghei³ dialects of the upper Rudbār area
(Rudbār-e Alamut)
- C. Alamut area (tentative)

Group Eight: Dialects of Alvīr and Vīdar, near Sāveh

Group Nine: Dialects of Vāfs and environs, in the Arāk District of the Central Province

Group Ten: Rudbār dialects of the Sefīd Rud Valley
(transitional to Caspian languages)

Henceforth, I shall use the term Tatic to refer to the Tāti languages, the transitional groups, and Talyshi as a whole. Until now, only Groups One, Three, Four, Six, Seven, and Eight have been referred to as Tāti, but the present classification also includes Group Nine (Vāfsi) as clearly Tāti, Groups Five and Ten as tentatively Tāti, and Group Two (Talyshi), which is not usually referred to as a Tāti language.

The relationship between Talyshi and Tāti has only been alluded to in footnotes here and there in Professor Yar-Shater's descriptions of Tāti, or indirectly by Professors Henning and B. V. Miller in their works on Tāti and Talyshi respectively.⁴ Talyshi has generally been listed in Iranian linguistic literature with the Caspian group, along with the languages of the Semnān area. This grouping can only be one of geographic convenience as there is no linguistic basis for grouping Talyshi and the languages of the Semnān area with the linguistically coherent Caspian group.

I will refer to the following divisions of these languages, arbitrarily set up here for convenience, until further substantiation can be made at a later date:

Northern Tatic: Group One and Northern Talyshi

Central Tatic: Groups Three, Four, Central and Southern Talyshi

Southern Tatic: Groups Six, Eight and Nine⁵

Transitional Tatic: Group Ten

Groups Five, Seven and Ten have not been studied well enough to be grouped with any of the North, Central or Southern Tatic groups and are omitted from any further classification. It does seem, however, judging from preliminary information, that the Rudbāri group (Group Ten) is a form of Tāti that became linguistically converted to the "Caspian group" in structure and to a great extent in lexicon.

*Language Diversity and Linguistic Interaction in
Northwestern Iran and Problems in the Methodology
of Language Classification*

Attempts at delineating the groups and subgroups of languages within the Northwest Iranian languages, as well as defining their historical and genetic relationships to each other, have for the most part failed. Traditional philology and modern linguistics have approached this complex interrelationship of languages as derivations of a hypothetical original stage or common-parent language. Both the philological approach, based on phoneme reconstruction and correspondences of morphemes and lexical items, as well as the modern linguistic approach of the study of syntactic universals, language typology, and syntactic change, are bound to fall short if *internal* comparison is the only theoretical tool which is employed. It is not sufficient to view these linguistic divergences as developments solely, or predominantly internal to these languages.

Divergency and linguistic developments in languages occur over a long period of time, during which the communities of speakers have undergone great cultural change through contact with other groups. But the *external* factors causing language change are generally not adequately or systematically studied. A frequent assumption made in the studies of the languages of the Northwest Iranian group (as well as in other areas of the world) has been that the speakers of these languages are monolingual or that, if they are multilingual, they keep their languages distinct and only occasionally borrow across these languages and only in the realm of lexicon. Such is not the case in most parts of the world, and certainly not in northern Iran,

where whole communities speak an average of two or three languages; it is not uncommon to find villages where five languages are spoken.⁶

Iranian linguistics needs adequate models in the form of explicit, comprehensive, and systematic analyses of Iranian languages and dialects more integrally united with their overall sociolinguistic environment. A language is not a discrete, static unit, but a dynamic process with ongoing change motivated both internally (self-motivated), and externally by contact with other languages (contact, interference, convergence) and these factors must be taken into account and given full recognition. Languages are not in isolation, and clearly they are not so in remote villages in the mountains of Iran, and therefore should not be examined in isolation. A more dynamic linguistic model is needed to account for the historical events of continual movements and cultural diffusion among diverse populations. Tāti dialects, for example, have been in constant contact with similar dialects, with very different Iranian languages, as well as with languages of genetically different families or stocks.

Indeed, I do not know if a study of the linguistic forces external to a given language, and of the extralinguistic factors which have influenced the linguistic development of the languages of northwestern Iran, can be conducted in as systematic a method as is needed. For example, the prehistoric influence of the substratum peoples is just as complex as the historically observable changes. Simply because indigenous peoples have been assimilated into the incoming groups (in this case Indo-European speakers of the Iranian group), with a subsequent loss of the substratum languages, does not mean that these peoples and their languages have had any less influence on the historical development of the languages there today. In the case of Gilaki (Caspian) and Talyshi (Tatic), for example, the border between these two languages is clear and abrupt. There are not transitional dialects between them and they are for the most part not mutually intelligible. They coincide, however, in the greater part of their phonological systems, if not all, and share many grammatical patterns, some of which are

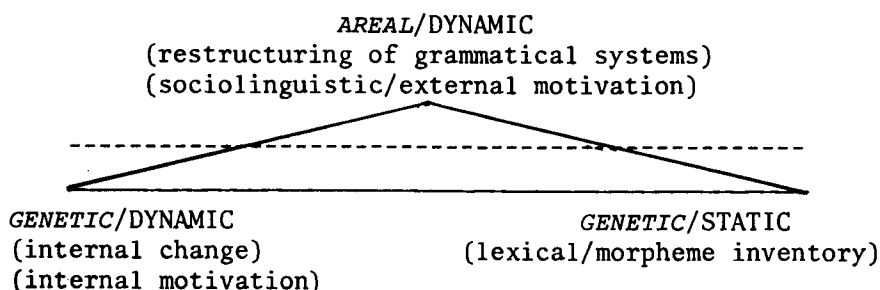
uniquely characteristic to them and do not exist in Iran outside of this geographic area. One possible explanation is that these common unique features are the result of a mutual influence from a previous substratum language.

Philology and linguistics must break the habit of analyzing languages as discrete units.⁷ We must train ourselves to stop thinking that Iranian and Turkic are separate families whose social contacts through the years have allowed only for occasional lexical borrowings back and forth, and even rarer morphological interchanges. Even though lexical borrowings between Iranian and Turkic languages are substantial, they should not be the only consideration in the study of linguistic interchange.

It is not a new phenomenon to find languages of an area that exhibit bundles of common grammatical features (cf. the Balkans, Southeast Asia, etc.), or even languages of different stocks sharing identical syntaxes. Examples can be found in the linguistic literature on Finnish and Lapp; Urdu, Marathi, and Kannada in central India; and the Semitic and non-Semitic languages of Ethiopia,⁸ among others. The point I wish to stress is that syntax can be very vulnerable to change through language contact, although in each case of languages in contact there will be different results, depending on the sociolinguistic situation and the attitudinal factors of the speakers. Given certain sociolinguistic contexts, different languages can accommodate themselves to each other on all linguistic levels, bringing about a new structural affinity between heretofore unrelated languages, thus complicating the task of genetic classification. This phenomenon is known as language convergence or *Sprachbund*. Specialists in Iranian linguistics must look into dynamic processes, placing language in a sociolinguistic context both synchronically and diachronically. The rich linguistic material of Iran can provide linguists and other social scientists with answers to questions about change, transition and contact of systems.

A Proposed Methodology

The systemic restructurings and related phenomena resulting from convergence complicate the task of establishing genetic relations among languages. Even when restructuring phenomena due to language convergence are distinguishable from genetic relationships, they are no less important in establishing the interrelationships of the languages in any given area. Classification of languages in convergence should be viewed from at least three different axes, with a clear distinction made between *genetic* criteria and convergence, or *areal* criteria:



Both types of genetic criteria are still valid, but the language can be accurately assessed--or classified, if this term is still applicable--only within the sociolinguistic context in which it occurs. All previous attempts at the classification of Northwestern Iranian languages, especially of the dialects of the Caspian and the Central Plateau, including Tāti, have failed because these different axes were not separately considered. Emphasis has been placed on the role of historical derivation; the role of restructuring has not been clearly understood nor systematically studied.

In order to separate the information on the genetic axes from that of the areal axis, each morphological form, lexical item, and syntactic rule that is shared by two or more dialects must be plotted on maps. Henceforth, I shall refer to the plotting onto a map of a morpheme or word as

an *isogloss* and of syntactic rules as *isorules*.⁹ I shall use the term *isomap* to refer to either type of map. As these isomaps are amassed, the patterns of genetic and areal relationships appear. Certain of these isoglosses and isorules will play central roles in the delineation of language groups or less formally bound language clusters.

By amassing a substantial number of isoglosses with formal phonological correspondences in these different languages, we will be able to set off, as genetically related, the Tāti group of languages from other Northwest Iranian groups.

Through amassing isorules, we can link sociolinguistically certain Northwestern Iranian language groups such as the Caspian languages, Central Plateau languages, and Tatic languages into a core, as opposed to languages of the periphery such as Kurdish, Zaza, Gurāni, and Baluchi. Other groups of isomaps clarify the relationships within these groups, such as the distinction between Caspian languages from Central Plateau and Tatic languages, with special status given to the transition areas.

As a contribution to the investigation of the languages and dialects of northern Iran, I wish to discuss here some specific methods of classifying the Tāti languages in light of sociolinguistic interrelations with their linguistically Iranian and non-Iranian neighbors, as well as to present examples of some dynamic processes shared by all the languages in northern Iran and Transcaucasia.

The importance of isomapping in determining the position of Tāti languages in relation to the Plateau and Caspian languages can be previewed here by examining a sampling of patternings of isoglosses and isorules among some related features of the pronominal systems and pronominal enclitics of the languages of northwest Iran.

The following two isomaps and accompanying discussions emphasize the distinction of the genetic axes and the areal/convergence axis by pointing out: (1) the genetic homogeneity of Tatic languages by the use of an isogloss

(Isomap 1), which presents genetically inherited morphemes common to all these languages, as opposed to (2) the sociolinguistic heterogeneity of the Tatic languages as seen in an isorule (Isomap 2), which (a) demonstrates a cohesiveness between only certain languages of the Tatic group and the linguistically less closely related Caspian group, and (b) shows the dissimilarity among some of the languages of the Tatic group which are genetically more closely related. In the case of Isomap 2, sociological factors, geographic, and economic considerations have played a more important role in the history of Tatic languages than has genetic affinity.

*Isomap 1: Genitive/Oblique Case Forms of
Personal Pronouns¹⁰*

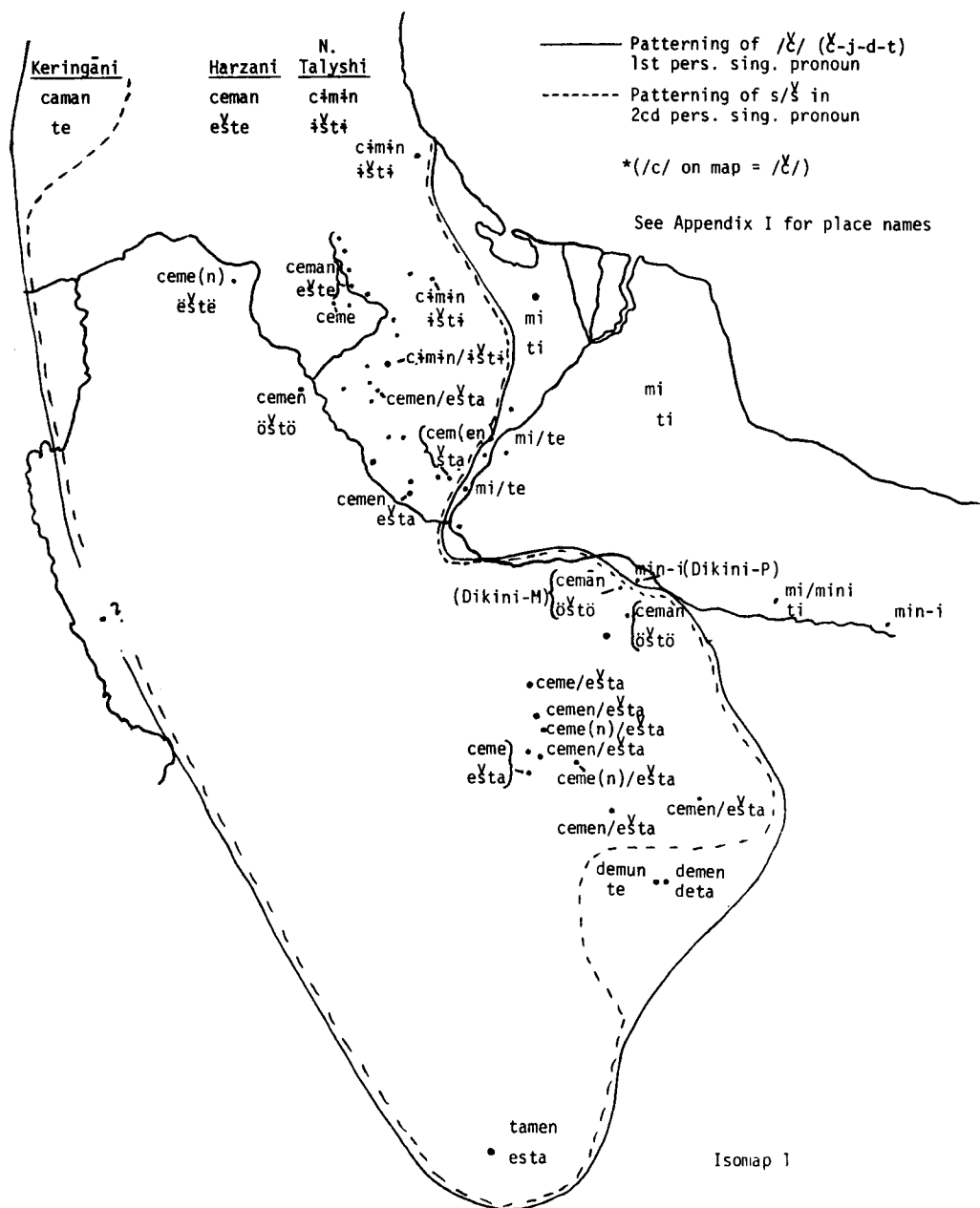
Special mention should be made first that until more information is forthcoming, we will consider there to be one key feature of the pronominal system which unites all Tatic languages, with the exceptions of Rudbāri as a transitional group, and Khoini.

Table 1 compares the first, second, and third persons singular of pronouns in all groups of Tatic languages (except Khoini) and contrasts them with transitional Tatic and non-Tatic languages of Northwestern Iranian origin. Baluchi pronouns are also included because the forms of the first and second persons singular are similar to other non-Tatic languages being compared here, and because it is generally accepted that the Baluchi language originally was spoken in the northwest of the Iranian linguistic area.

In Group I of Table 1, the genitive is one of the functions of the oblique case¹¹ of the personal pronouns. In Group II, there is a formal distinction between the genitive case and another non-nominative case, which is the oblique case in some of the languages represented in the table, and the agentive¹¹ case in others. The important isogloss that unites both subgroups is the morphology of the oblique/genitive (Group I) or the simple genitive forms (Group II). These forms are built with the morphemes /ʕ/

TABLE 1
PRONOUN SYSTEMS OF TATIC AND NON-TATIC LANGUAGES

		PERSON CASE	Vafsi	Vidari	Eshtehārdi	Tākestāni	Esfarvarini	Kālāsi
GROUP I TATI - TYPE I	1st sg	Nom	az	a	az	a(z)	az	az
		Obl	tamen	demun	čemen	čeme	čemen	čem(en)
	2cd sg	Nom	ta	te	ta	ta	ta	ta
		Obl	esta	te	ešta	ešta	ešta	šta
	3rd sg (masc)	Nom	ān		a	ā(v)	ā	a
		Obl	tāni		jā	jā(v)	āči	jā
GROUP II TATI - TYPE II	1st sg	Nom	az	az	az	az	az	az
		Obl	men	men	man	men	man	mīn
		Gen	demen	čeme(n)	čemān	čem(en)	čeman	čimin
	2cd sg	Nom	} ta	ta	tō	ta	te	tī
		Obl						
		Gen	deta	ešta	ōštō	šta	ešte	išti
	3rd sg	Nom	u	a	av	ā	a	a
		Obl	ju	ay	avi	(a)jā	ave	ay
		Gen	deju	jay	čey	jā	ča	če
GROUP III MIXED TATI AND NON-TATI	1st sg	Nom	} man	Nom man	mon	man	men	man
		Obl		Acc mara	mera	mana	mere	mnā
		Gen	čaman	Gen čeman	mi	mi/mini	mi	mnī
	2cd sg	Nom	} te	Nom tō	to	tu	te	ta
		Obl		Acc tōra	tera	tara	tere	trā
		Gen	ešte	Gen ōštō	ti/te	ti	ti	ti
	3rd sg	Nom	} a	Nom	on	u/i	u	ē(š)
		Obl		Acc	ona	ura/ina	ane	ēširā
		Gen	avi	Gen	one	ui/ina	ani	ēšī



in the first and third persons singular and /ʃ/ in the second person singular. The /ʃ/ form has become either voiced (/j/) or depalatalized (/t/, /d/) in some languages and the /ʃ/ is depalatalized to /s/ in Vafsi. These secondary forms are variants of the same two original morpheme types.

The third group consists of two types: one in which the nominative and the oblique are identical in all persons (Harzani); and one in which there is a formal accusative case¹¹ used only as an accusative (other languages of the third group). In all these examples, however, the genitive is the form of interest for the present discussion. Harzani and Razajerdi have clearly Tatic genitive forms. Gilaki, Rudbāri, Gozarkhāni, and Baluchi have independent genitive pronouns which precede the head noun and are clearly non-Tatic forms. For the use of these possessive pronouns, see the examples given below under Isomap 2.

Isomap 1¹² plots these Tatic isoglosses (in the first and second persons only) and contrasts them with the equivalent forms in the surrounding dialects and languages. The patterning of the genitive/oblique formation shows one type of unity among all Tatic languages and we assume that this unity is one of genetic relationship. Since Tatic languages have never been fully identified, this isogloss upon further investigation may prove to be important because its forms are unique among western Iranian languages.¹³

Isomap 2: Enclitic Possessive Endings

Isomap 2 demonstrates the patterning of (1) independent possessive pronouns versus (2) enclitic pronominal possessive endings. This isomapping is not concerned with the *form* of the possessive but with the *system* for expressing possession in pronouns.

A. Full possessive forms in pronouns (see also Table 1).

1. Caspian languages, Rudbāri dialects, Harzani, Keringāni, the languages of Khalkhāl and Tārom (except for

Charazei and Jeyshābādi), Kabatei, all forms of Talyshi, Dikini ("Marāghei" and "Pashei" types), Razajerdi, and Chāli of Southern Tāti have separate *possessive* pronouns which precede the head noun:

Examples: Pattern = *Possessive Pronoun + Head Noun*

Gilaki (of Rasht):	ahmad mi berār iss-e
Rudbāri (of Tutkābon):	ahmad mi berār hast-e
Māzanderāni (of Bābolsar):	ahmad me bErār hass-E
Shahmirzādi:	ahmad me berār hass-e
gloss:	"Ahmad my brother be-he"

Tatic languages

Talyshi (of Māsule)	ahmad ^V cemen berā -y -a
Shāhrudi (Khalkhāl)	ahmad ^V ceman berā -r -e
Kajali	ahmad ^V cāman berālög -e
Razajerdi	ahmad ^V ceman berār -e
Dikini ("Marāghei")	ahmad ^V cēmā berō -e
Chāli	ahmad ceme berā -y -e
gloss	"Ahmad my brother tran- he"
	sition
	consonant

English meaning	"Ahmad is my brother."
-----------------	------------------------

2. Possessive function subsumed by the oblique case form (see also Table 1): Southern Tāti (except Chāli), Charazei and Jeyshābādi of Tārom, and Kalāsi and Kabatei (Tāromi types of Rudbār District), Alviri/Vidari, and Vafsi have an independent *oblique* pronoun form which includes the possessive function and precedes the head noun:¹⁴

Pattern: *Oblique Pronoun + Head Noun*

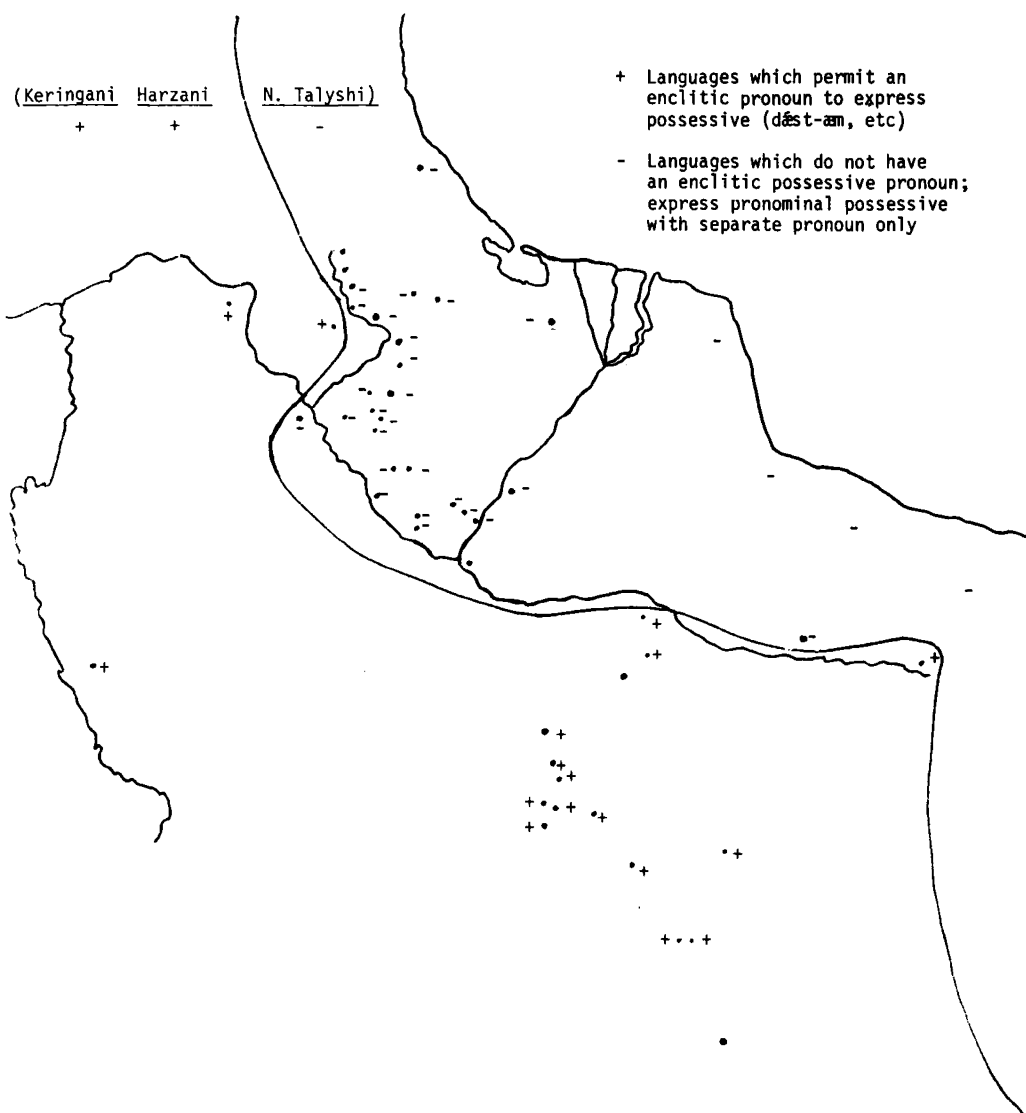
Vafsi	tāwān	ke dar-e
Tākestāni	^V cōmā	kia der-e
Eshtehārdi	^V camā	kia dar-a
Kalāsi	^V cebā	kia der-e
Alviri	de-jemā	kia der-ey
gloss	our	house in-he = "He is at our house."

B. Enclitic possessive pronominal endings: most of the Central Plateau languages and optionally Vafsi, Alviri, Vidari, all the Southern and Northern Tāti, and some of the central Tāti languages express pronominal possessives with short enclitic pronouns, like /dast-am/ of Modern Persian:

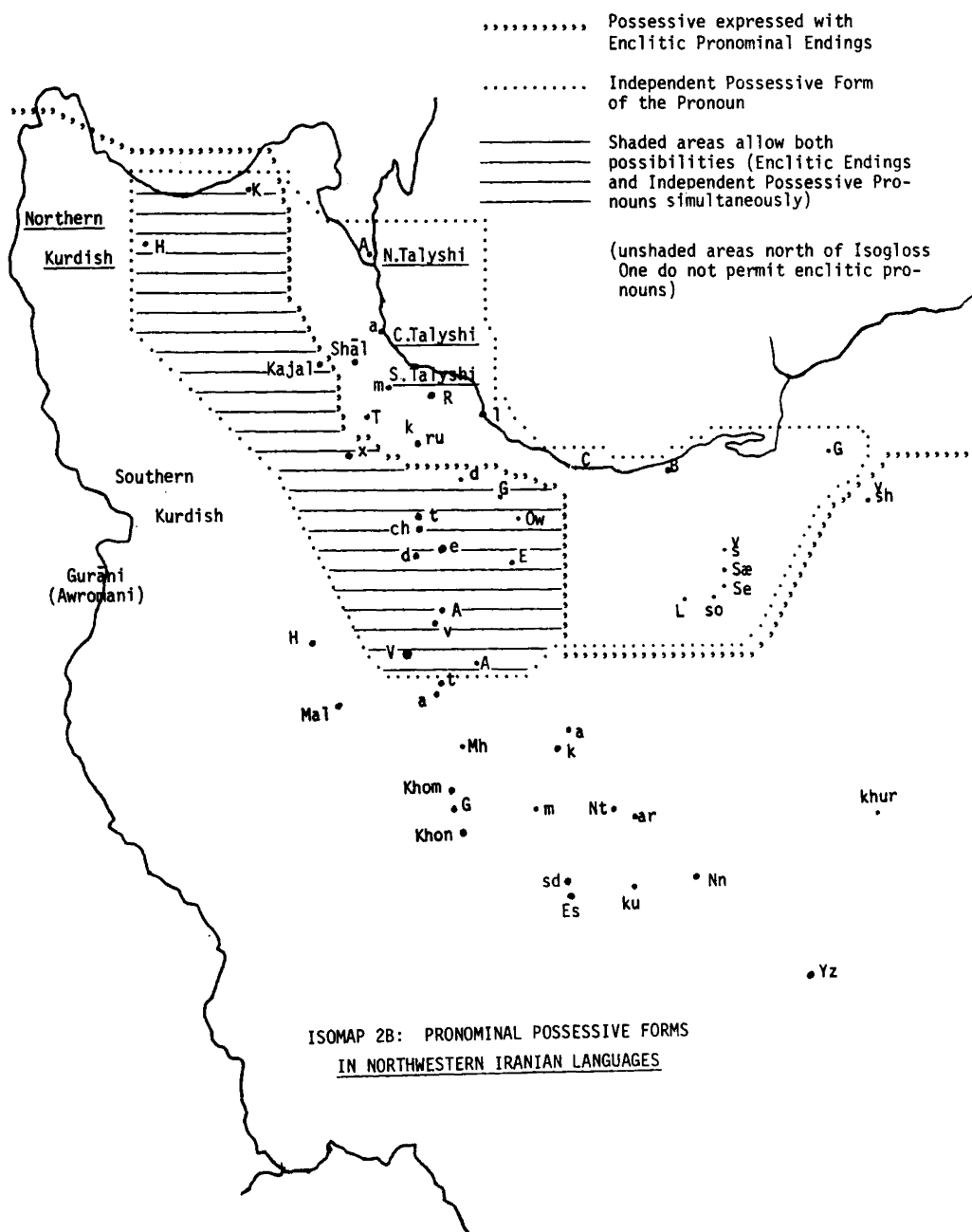
Pattern:	<i>Head Noun + Enclitic Possessive</i>	
Keringāni	āsp-am	my horse
Harzani	osp-im	my horse
Lerdi	dass-em-a (fem)	my hand
Kajali	beralëg-em	my brother
	nana-m	my mother
Owrazāni	dim-it	your face
Dikini/Pashei	barār-et	your brother
Razajerdi	māri-m	my mother
Dikini/Marāghei	berō-t	your brother
Khoini	dim-i	your face
Chāli	piar-öm	my father
Tākestāni	berā-m	my brother
Eshtehārdi	berā-m	my brother
Vafsi	asp-om	my horse
	dast-om	my hand
	berā-ym	my brother
	div-i	your face
	bāwe-y	your father
	nane-y	your mother

See Isomaps 2A and 2B for the patterning of each of these features in Tatic languages and Northwest Iranian languages, respectively. Those Tatic languages in which both the full form possessive pronoun and the enclitic pronoun occur have the option of expressing pronominal possession with either form, or both simultaneously, as in the following examples from Vafsi, Tākestāni, and Harzani:

Vafsi	tamen dobor	} my (three-year old male) camel
	dobor-om	
	tamen dobor-om	



ISOMAP 2A: ENCLITIC POSSESSIVE
PRONOMINAL ENDINGS IN TATI LANGUAGES



ISOMAP 2B: PRONOMINAL POSSESSIVE FORMS
IN NORTHWESTERN IRANIAN LANGUAGES

Tākestāni	ceme piar piar-em ceme piar-em	} my father
Harzani	(^V caman) osb-im (^V este) osb-ir (avi) osb-i (^V čāmā) osb-mun (^V sema) osb-lun (avun) osb-i	my horse your horse his horse our horse your horse their horse

Isomaps 2A and 2B point out that Vafsi, the Southern Tāti dialects and Harzani hold a transitional status between plateau languages and Talyshi and the Caspian languages: (1) they share enclitic possessive pronominal suffixes with the plateau languages; and (2) they have the possessive/oblique pronouns which precede the head nouns as do the Caspian languages, Talyshi, and the other Tāti languages.

I wish to emphasize the thesis presented here by making a clear distinction between a morphological *form* and the *rules* pertaining to the use of that form. Two closely related languages (Language A, Language B) may have the same morphemes as part of a given word, but may apply different rules to those morphemes. The rules applied in one of those languages (Language B) may be common with those of another unrelated language (Language Y) with which it is in sociolinguistic unity, as demonstrated in the following schema:

<i>Genetic Unity</i>	<i>Sociolinguistic Unity</i>
{ Language A Morpheme 1 Language B Morpheme 1 Language Y Morpheme 2	Rule aa applied to Morpheme 1 Rule xx applied to Morpheme 1 Rule xx applied to Morpheme 2 }

As an example, we can cite the pronominal endings of personal agreement in the past tenses of transitive verbs in Tatic languages versus the Caspian and Central Plateau languages. All the Tatic languages have a set of morphemes derived from the same genetic source for the personal endings of past tense transitive verbs. These endings, un-

like Persian, for example, are the same as the pronominal possessive enclitics discussed above under Isomap 2 (cf. also Isomap 4). I shall call this set of personal endings Set₂. Set₂ endings are also used in the Central Plateau languages. Caspian languages, however, differ from Tatic and Central Plateau languages in that they make no distinction between intransitive and transitive verbs in the conjugation of any tenses, and they use the intransitive personal endings, which I shall call Set₁, for the conjugation of both intransitive and transitive verbs.

The similarity in *form* of the personal endings between languages of closer genetic affinity is clear in Table 2. The Tatic languages share the same forms in these verbal endings with the Central Plateau languages, but both groups are clearly different from the Caspian group.

TABLE 2
PAST TENSE PERSONAL ENDINGS OF TRANSITIVE VERBS

	SET ₂ ENDINGS					
<i>Tatic Languages</i>						
Vafsi	im	i	is	oān	iān	išān
Alviri	em	i	eš ^V	emun	eyun	ešun ^V
Chāli	em	i	eš ^V	emō	eyō	ešō ^V
Kabatei	em	i	eš ^V	emon	eon	ešon ^V
Dikini/Marāghei	em	et	eš ^V	emon	eton	ešon ^V
Central Talyshi	em	er	eš ^V	emun	erun	ešun ^V
<i>Central Plateau Languages</i>						
Abuzeydābādi	m	d	y	mon	don	yon
Se-Dehi	m	d	y	mun	dun	yun ^V
Āmorei	em	et	eš ^V	emo	eto	ešo ^V
Meimei	em	et	eš ^V	emun	edun	ešun ^V
Esfahani	om	od	oš ^V	mun	dun	šun ^V
Yazdi (Zoroastrian)	om	od	oš ^V	mo	do	šo ^V

TABLE 2--Continued

SET ₁ ENDINGS						
<i>Caspian Languages</i>						
Gilaki (Rashti)	em	i	Ø	im	id	id
Māzanderāni	eme	i	e	emi	eni	ene
Shahmirzādi	ema	i	ea	emi	eni	ena

The rules applied to form past tenses with the above morphemes, however, differ in the Tatic languages according to geographic area. Vafsi, Alviri, and Vidari follow the pattern of the Central Plateau languages by placing the personal endings (Set₂) *before* the verb root, whereas the other Tatic languages place the personal endings (Set₂) *after* the verb root, as is characteristic in the formation of Caspian verbs (verb root + Set₁). The following examples compare the simple past tense conjugation of the verb "to say" in Central Plateau, Tatic, and Caspian languages:

TABLE 3
PAST TENSE CONJUGATION OF TRANSITIVE VERBS

Central Plateau Languages			Tatic Languages	
<i>Se-Dehi</i>	<i>Yazdi</i>	<i>Āmorei</i>	<i>Vafsi</i>	<i>Aiviri</i>
be- <i>m</i> -vāt	om-vot	ba- <i>m</i> -vāt	b- <i>im</i> -vātt	h-em-vāt
be- <i>d</i> -vāt	o <i>d</i> -vot	ba- <i>t</i> -vāt	b- <i>i</i> -vātt	b-i-vāt
be- <i>y</i> -vāt	o <i>š</i> -vot	ba- <i>š</i> -vāt	b- <i>is</i> -vātt	b-e <i>š</i> -vāt
be- <i>mun</i> -vāt	mo-vot	ba- <i>mo</i> -vāt	b-oān-vātt	b-emun-vāt
be- <i>dun</i> -vāt	do-vot	ba- <i>to</i> -vāt	b-iān-vātt	b-eyun-vāt
be- <i>yun</i> -vāt	šo-vot	ba- <i>šo</i> -vāt	b-isān-vātt	b-ešun-vāt

TABLE 3--Continued

Type Two

Tatic Languages

Caspian Languages

<i>Chāli</i>	<i>Kabatei</i>	<i>Dikini/M</i>	<i>C. Talyshi</i>	<i>Gilaki</i>	<i>Shahmirzādi</i>
<i>bāt-em</i>	<i>vāt-em</i>	<i>vot-em-a</i>	<i>vāt-em-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-em</i>	<i>bö-göt-ema</i>
<i>bāt-i</i>	<i>vāt-i</i>	<i>vot-et-a</i>	<i>vāt-er-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-i</i>	<i>bö-göt-i</i>
<i>bāt-eš</i>	<i>vāt-eš</i>	<i>vot-eš-a</i>	<i>vāt-eš-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-ø</i>	<i>bö-göt-ea</i>
<i>bāt-emō</i>	<i>vāt-emon</i>	<i>vot-emon-a</i>	<i>vāt-emun-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-im</i>	<i>bö-göt-emi</i>
<i>bāt-eyō</i>	<i>vāt-eon</i>	<i>vot-eton-a</i>	<i>vāt-erun-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-id</i>	<i>bö-göt-eni</i>
<i>bāt-ešō</i>	<i>vāt-ešon</i>	<i>vot-ešon-a</i>	<i>vāt-ešun-a</i>	<i>bu-guft-id</i>	<i>bö-göt-ena</i>

We can see from this comparison of the verb root "to say" and the affixes used in conjugating its past tense that the Tatic languages are clearly related to the Central Plateau languages and are distinctly different from the Caspian group. The position of Set2 endings within the Tatic group, however, differs according to the patterns of the other language groups with which they are more integrally connected on geographic, economic, and social bases affecting a sociolinguistic affinity. Thus the isomapping of this particular rule divides the Tatic languages into two groups, yielding the following types of relationships found among these languages:

Morphemic Form (Genetic/Static)	Position of Morphemes (Restructuring/Dynamic)
Caspian	Caspian Tatic-1
Tatic Central Plateau	Tatic-2 Central Plateau

Conclusion: Iranian Languages

The isomaps presented above are exemplary of the types of linguistic relationships which exist within the languages of the Tatic group and between the Tatic group and other Northwest Iranian languages. They demonstrate the difficulties in trying to set up a clear classification of a language group in an area with so much linguistic diffusion that structurally similar languages may or may not be genetically related and where genetically related languages are spoken in areas located far from each other. These factors play havoc with a neat categorization of genetic affinity for any given language or language group. Each case is filled with anomalies because of unaccounted for linguistic phenomena. Our criteria for classification must use an almost three dimensional model.

In fact, since most of the features listed in the literature¹⁵ as key grammatical points uniting the Southern Tāti dialects are shared by most other Northwest Iranian languages, especially Central Plateau languages and forms of Kurdish, it may be necessary to rely most heavily upon the lexical-morphological inventory¹⁶ to determine which languages are Tatic proper and which are mixed dialects or transitions to other groups. A language that can be classified genetically with one group (according to lexical and morpheme inventory) may share a great number of grammatical structures with another group with which it is socially and geographically more integrated. Such cases are found in the valleys which serve as transitions from the plateau area to the Caspian seacoast: the Semnān area (transition from Plateau group to Caspian/Mazanderani), the Sefid Rud Valley (transition from Tatic/Rudbāri to Caspian/Gilaki), and perhaps the central Alborz range as well.

In establishing relationships among Northwest Iranian languages, the forms of both the roots of words, and the morphology, play a central role in the investigation of the genetic/historic axis. Although these forms are not entirely static and not immune to borrowing, these languages seem to be more conservative in retaining lexical and morpheme forms and less conservative in retaining syntactic struc-

tures. Of the two types of forms mentioned, lexical items are more susceptible to borrowing than are grammatical morphemes, which seem to be more commonly retained.¹⁷ The morphology of the oblique/possessive pronouns listed in Table 1 and Isomap 1 point out a genetic relationship between all Tatic languages since they all retain the same prefixes which form the oblique or possessive (genitive) form of the pronouns (with phonetic variation), whereas non-Tatic languages of the area¹⁸ do not have these prefixes in their pronoun morphology. Table 2 shows a genetic relationship between Tatic and Central Plateau languages and separates both groups from the Caspian group.

Isomap 2 addresses itself to isorules and structural points and is more pertinent to the study of convergence and diffusion of grammatical features and rules. These isomaps do not necessarily indicate a straightforward genetic relationship since the expression of pronominal possession throughout northern Iran versus the enclitics of central and western Iran is a question of structure rather than simply of form (of the morphemes). Restructuring of systems shows the results of language convergence which becomes strikingly clear as we plot the diffusion of such grammatical features within a geographic continuum as in Isomap 2 and Table 3. Since syntactic rules (grammatical processes) seem to be more susceptible to change, they give us more information about areal relationships due to the phenomena of language convergence and play the central role in the study of the areal axis.

Further investigation of the Tatic languages points toward their tentative classification as a language chain rather than as a closely knit language group; each language in the chain serves as a transition to the other. This analysis would, coincidentally or not, correspond to geographic reality. It would certainly corroborate Henning's analysis of Harzani and Talyshi,¹⁹ Groups I and II here, as a possible transition to other independent Northwest Iranian languages such as Zaza of Turkey.

The analysis of these languages as a chain of transitions seems to be reasonable and might lead to a total

restructuring of the classification of Northwestern Iranian languages in which different links in the Tatic chain connect the Central Plateau languages to all Northwest Iranian languages. My own research reveals a series of striking similarities between Vafsi and the different forms of Kurdish. Professor Elwell-Sutton makes the same point: "There are...various points of contact [in Vafsi] with Kurdish, though it is not always possible to distinguish loan-words and words of common Iranian origin."²⁰ Further investigation may lead to a classification of Vafsi as a transitional language from Tatic and the Central Plateau to Kurdish, probably with a language such as Gurāni serving as another link in this chain.

Non-Iranian Languages and Convergence Features

To emphasize further the point that isorules disregard genetic boundaries, I will expand the discussion to include languages of this area which are genetically not Iranian: Azerbaijani, Armenian, Neo-Aramaic (Assyrian), and the European Romany of the Qazvin area. These languages, although genetically not related to Iranian, pattern similarly and in some cases identically to the Iranian languages just discussed. As seen in Isomaps 3 and 4 below, a given grammatical pattern covers a certain geographic area and all the languages in that area share that grammatical feature, regardless of their genetic relationship. The following are some of the possible explanations for this phenomenon:

I. Synchronic

- A. Ongoing process of diffusion from Iranian languages (especially Modern Persian) to non-Iranian languages;
- B. Ongoing process of diffusion from non-Iranian languages (especially Turkic) to Iranian;
- C. Mutual diffusion through extensive bilingualism, multilingualism, and code-switching within whole communities over generations.

II. Diachronic

- A. Iranian linguistic substratum (e.g., Parthian) having left an imprint on the existing non-Iranian languages;
- B. Pre-Iranian, pre-Indo-European substratum having left an imprint on subsequent languages of different stocks (Iranian, Armenian, Turkic, Semitic, etc.).

III. Coincidence

All of the above factors have been operating to produce the ultimate result of language convergence to the extent it exists in northwestern Iran today. Since there are so many grammatical and syntactic features common to all languages of this area, it is difficult to determine the origin of each.

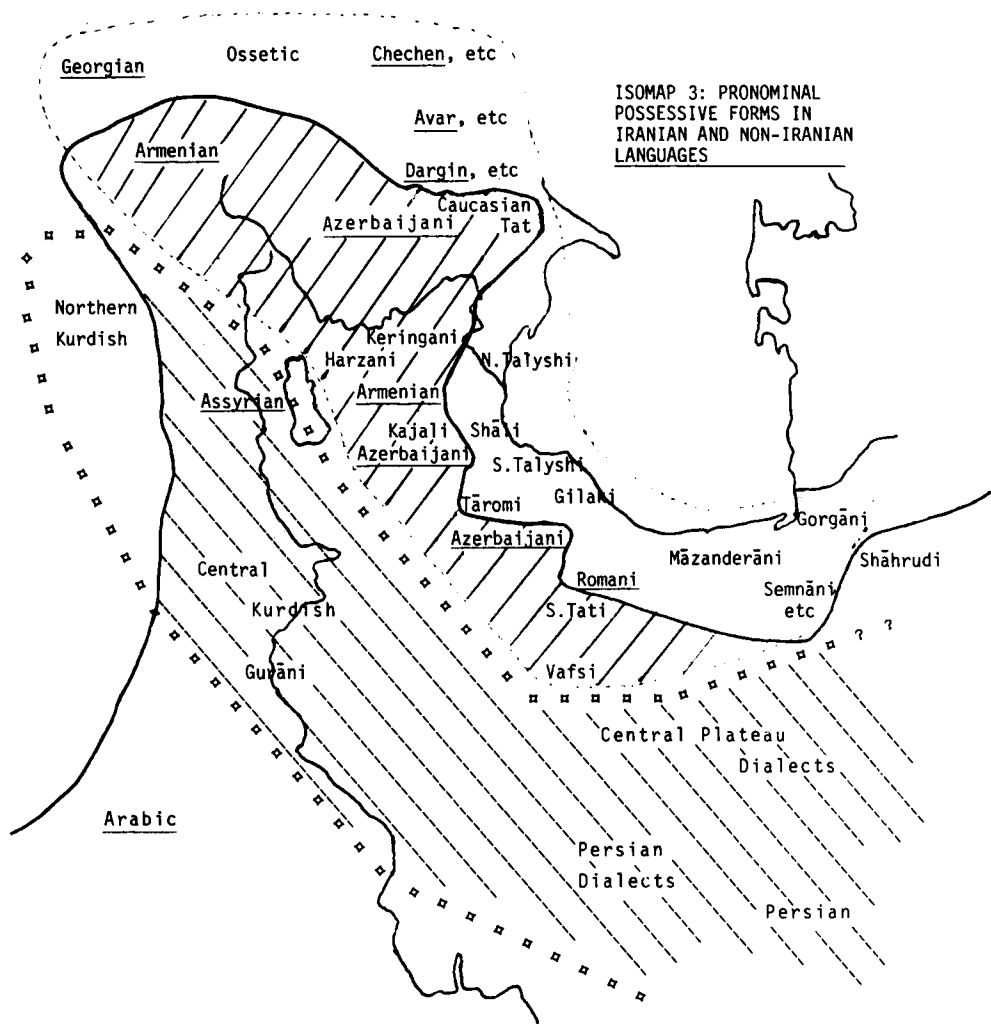
The following isomaps are examples of the complex grammatical interrelationships of Iranian and non-Iranian languages born of centuries of sociolinguistic interaction between these groups within Iran.

Isomap 3: Pronominal Possessive and Enclitic in the Iranian Area

Isomap 3 is an expansion of Iranian Isomap 2 and includes the distribution of possessive pronouns and possessive enclitics in all the languages of northern Iran. See Table 4 for examples of the possessive pronoun structures in these languages.

Isomap 4: Pronominal Direct Objects

Isomap 4 demonstrates the geographic distribution of three related grammatical rules which involve the incorporation of pronominal direct objects into the verb in the (genetically) Iranian and non-Iranian languages of Iran. This incorporation refers to the possibility in Persian,



- | | | | |
|-------|--|------|---|
| — | Languages in which the possessive is expressed by enclitic pronominal endings | /// | Languages in which there is an overlap of the use of the enclitic possessive and the independent possessive pronoun which precedes the head noun. In these languages, both forms are used either singly or concurrently |
| ----- | Languages which have an independent possessive pronoun preceding the head noun | /// | |
| ■ ■ ■ | Languages in which the possessive pronoun follows the head noun. The form may be either a special possessive pronoun (Assyrian), an oblique form of the pronoun (N.Kurdish) or an uninflected form of the full pronoun (Persian) | //// | Languages in which there is an overlap of the use of the enclitic possessive and the independent possessive form following the head noun. In these languages, both forms may be used alternately but not concurrently |

TYPE I (CENTRAL AREA ON ISOMAP FOUR - indicated by the symbol ///)

[illegible]

TYPE II (Enclitic alternates with full pronoun after noun - indicated in Isomap Four by

Central Kurdish	Persian	Vidari	Neo-Aramaic (Assyrian)
nāw-i mî	esm-am	mā-y	šimm-iy
'my name'	'my name'	'your mother'	'my house'
			šimma diyiy
			'my name'

TYPE III (No enclitics - northern area of Isomap Four indicated with no shading)

<u>Māzanderāni</u>	<u>Gilaki</u>	<u>N. Talyshi</u>	<u>Shāli</u>	<u>Tāromi</u>	<u>European Romany (Qazvin)</u>
me bēār	mi berār	čmā boā	čēman berā	čēmen berā	mo potāl (m)
"my brother"	"my brother"	"my brother"	"my brother"	"my brother"	"my brother"
"my sister"	"my sister"	"my sister"	"my sister"	"my sister"	"my sister"

TABLE FOUR

Georgian Osset

Isorule 4A

Languages which do not permit
object incorporation into verb

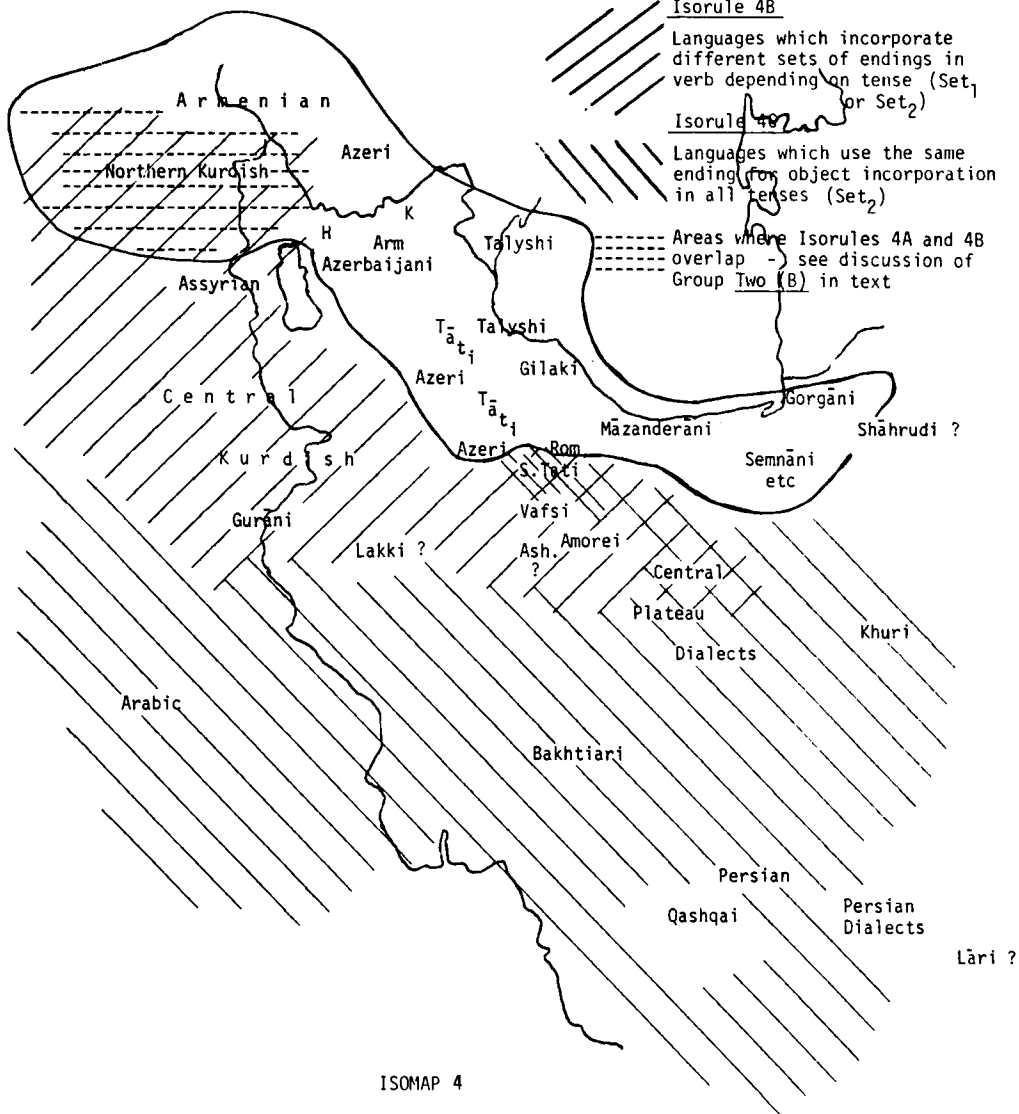
Isorule 4B

Languages which incorporate
different sets of endings in
verb depending on tense (Set₁
or Set₂)

Isorule 4C

Languages which use the same
ending for object incorporation
in all tenses (Set₂)

Areas where Isorules 4A and 4B
overlap - see discussion of
Group Two (B) in text



for example, of saying /mibinametān/, "I see you (pl)" as well as /man šomā-rā mibinam/. The /-etān/ is an enclitic pronoun functioning as a short direct object.

Isorules 4A, 4B and 4C on Isomap 4 divide the languages of Iran and bordering areas into three groups and two subgroups. The point of interest in the patternings of Isomap 4 is that each of the three groups delineated by the three isorules includes genetically Iranian and non-Iranian languages alike, as is seen from the map and the example presented below:

Non-Incorporating Languages

Group I (Isorule 4A): The languages of this area do not permit the incorporation of short pronominal objects into the verb. Examples:

Pattern:	Full Pronoun + (subject)	Full Pronoun-(marker) + (object)		
	1	2	3	4

CASPIAN GROUP

Gilaki	ama ^Y šema-ra dinim	"We see you"
	1 2 3 4	

TATIC GROUP

S. Talyshi	ama ^Y šema vinam	"We see you"
	1 2 4	

Rudbāri	amā ^Y šemā-ra vanim	"We see you"
	1 2 3 4	

TURKIC

Azerbaijani	biz siz-i görürax	"We see you"
	1 2 3 4	

OTHER INDO-EUROPEAN

Armenian	menk žez tesnumenk	"We see you"
	1 2/3 4	

Romany	amon tumen-go diklām	"We see you"
	1 2 3 4	

Incorporating Languages

All languages on Isomap 4 not included in the area of Isorule 4A (Group I above) have the option of having full pronominal direct objects or short forms which are incorporated into the verb as in the Persian example cited above. The examples given below are only the short forms with the pronominal forms affixed directly to the verb.

Group II(A) (Isorule 4B): The languages of Group II (A) use a different set of pronominal forms to incorporate the direct object into a present tense verb than those used with the past tenses. In the present system, one set of endings (Set₁) is used for verbal agreement with the subject, and the pronominal possessive endings (Set₂) are used for the incorporation of the direct object into the verb, as in Persian (Group III). In the present tenses, Groups II and III are identical. In the past system of tenses in the languages of Group II, however, the functions of Set₁ and Set₂ are reversed: Set₂ (possessive endings) now represent agreement with subject, and Set₁ (verbal agreement endings) represent the pronominal direct object. There are three alternate combinations of the verb root and the personal endings depending on the position of the endings relative to the verb root. Examples:

Patterns (according to tense)

Alternate 1	{	Present system:	Set ₂ - Verb Root - Set ₁ (obj) (subj)
		Past system:	Set ₂ - Verb Root - Set ₁ (subj) (obj)
Alternate 2	{	Present system:	Verb Root - Set ₁ - Set ₂ (subj) (obj)
		Past system:	Verb Root - Set ₁ - Set ₂ (obj) (subj)
Alternate 3	{	Present system:	Set ₂ - Verb Root - Set ₁ (obj) (subj)
		Past system:	Verb Root - Set ₂ - Set ₁ (subj) (obj)

Set₁^{*} Set₂^{*} Noun** Possess Direct Object Incorporation

TATIC--Vafsi (Alt 1)

-ā	-oān	dast-oān (pres)	<u>oān</u> -ar-vin- <u>ā</u>	"You see us"
			o s	
-ā	-iān	dast-iān (past)	b- <u>oān</u> -dia-y <u>ā</u>	"We saw you"
			s o	

TATIC?/CENTRAL PLATEAU?--Amorei (Alt 1)

-imi -emo dast-emo (pres) emo-d-vin-ite "You see us"
o s

-ite -eto dast-eto (past) ba-mo-di-te "We saw you"
s o

KURDISH (Central)--Sōrāni (Alt 3)

- <u>i</u> n	- <u>i</u> mān	dast- <u>i</u> mān(pres)	<u>i</u> - <u>mān</u> -bin- <u>i</u> n	"You see us"
			o s	
- <u>i</u> n	- <u>i</u> tān	dast- <u>i</u> tān(past)	di- <u>mān</u> - <u>i</u> n	"We saw you"
			s o	

GURĀNI--Auromani (Alt 2)

- (y)mē -mā das-mā (pres) ma-bar-de-mā "You see us"
 S O

-(y)dē -tā das-tā (past) bard-ayde-mā "We saw you"
 O S

SEMITIC--Assyrian (Neo-Aramaic) (Alt 2)

-ax -(1)an iyd-an (pres) ki-xaz-itun-lan "You see us"
 S O
-tun - (1)oxun iyd-oxun(past) xizye-tun-lan "We saw you"
 O S

* The endings for Set₁ and Set₂ for all languages cited above are first and second person plural respectively.

**
Examples of nouns plus possessive endings all use the noun "hand" as the head noun. The noun plus possessive endings, therefore, mean "our hand" and "your hand."

*** These plural forms were not actually attested in the source material but were constructed on the patterns of regular formation to conform with other examples here.

Group II(B): Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji) serves as a transitional language with patterns belonging to both Group I and Group II. It is like Group I in that the present tense does not allow incorporation of the pronominal direct objects into the verb. In the present tense, only verbal agreement is expressed (*Set*₁). The *full* pronominal object is obligatory since there is no short form to be affixed to the verb. As is characteristic of Group II(A), however, Kurmanji does incorporate the pronominal direct object into the past tenses of the verb. This incorporation in the past tenses is also expressed by *Set*₁; there is no agreement with the subject. Thus the *full* pronominal subject in the past is obligatory.

In Group II(B), therefore, *Set*₁ is used in both present and past systems but has a different function in each of these two tense systems. Examples:

Pattern (according to tense):

Present System: Verb Root - *Set*₁
(subj)

Past System: Verb Root - *Set*₁
(obj)

NORTHERN KURDISH
(Kurmanji/USSR)

<i>Set</i> ₁	<i>Set</i> ₂	<i>Tense</i>	<i>Subject/Object Incorporation</i>	
-in (1 pl)	none	(Pres)	(am) tî dî-bi ^V zer- <u>in</u> s o s	"We choose you (sg)"
			(tö) ma dî-bi ^V zer- <u>i</u> s o s	"You (sg) choose us"
-i (2 sg)	none	(Past)	ma (tö) bi- ^V zart- <u>i</u> s o o	"We chose you (sg)"
			tî (am) bi- ^V zart- <u>in</u> s o o	"You (sg) chose us"

Group III(A) (Isorule 4C): The languages of this area, including Persian, incorporate the same pronominal forms (Set₂) as enclitic direct objects of both present and past systems of the verb. Set₁ verbal endings are never used to indicate the object. In some of the languages of this area, agreement with subject is indicated only by the Set₁ endings, as in Persian, whereas other languages, which serve as a typological transition to the languages of Group II, use Set₂ to indicate agreement with subject in the past tenses. Thus there are five alternate patterns for indicating subject and object within the verb, depending on the use of Set₁ or Set₂ for agreement with subject in the past and also depending on the positioning of these endings relative to the verb root. The important feature in the languages of this group is that Set₂ is always used for pronominal direct object incorporation regardless of its relative position in the verb. Examples (compare with data on next page):

Patterns (according to tense)

Alternate 1	Verb Root - Set ₁ - Set ₂ (subj) (obj)
Alternate 2	Set ₂ - Verb Root - Set ₁ (obj) (subj)
Alternate 3	Set ₁ - Verb Root - Set ₂ (subj) (obj)
Alternate 4	Set ₂ - Set ₂ - Verb Root (subj) (obj)
Alternate 5	Set ₂ - Verb Root - Set ₂ (subj) (obj)

The isomaps presented here are indicative of the dynamic interrelationships of the languages of different stocks represented in northwestern Iran which have developed a concrete affinity on all linguistic levels as a result of generations of historical, economic, and cultural interaction. The individual features presented here may exist in various other languages of the world, of course, but the important

		Noun		
Set ₁	Set ₂	Possess	Direct Object Incorporation	
<i>SW IRANIAN</i>				
Persian (Alt 1)				
- <u>im</u>	-emān	dast-emān	mi-bin- <u>im-etān</u> s o	"We see you"
- <u>id</u>	-etān	dast-etān	did- <u>im-etān</u> s o	"We saw you"
Bakhtiari (Alt 1)				
- <u>im</u>	-emun	dast-emun	e-bin- <u>im-tun</u> s o	"We see you"
- <u>in</u>	-etun	dast-etun	di ^ʃ - <u>im-tun</u> s o	"We saw you"
<i>CENTRAL PLATEAU</i>				
Meimei (Present = Alternate 2; Past = Alternate 4)				
- <u>ima</u>	-emun		a- <u>dun-xus-ima</u> o s	"We strike you"
- <u>ida</u>	-edun		b- <u>edun-emun-xost</u> s o	"You struck us"
Se-Dehi (Present = Alternate 1; Past = Alternate 5)				
- <u>ime</u>	-mun		ven- <u>ime-dun</u> s o	"We see you"
- <u>ide</u>	-dun		be- <u>mun-di-dun</u> s o	"We saw you"
<i>SEMITIC</i>				
Arabic (Present - Alternate 3; Past = Alternate 1)				
'-/-tu (1st sg)	-iyy	'īd-iyy	'-arā-k s o	"I see you (sg)"
t- (2nd sg)	-k	'īdu-k	ra'ī-tu-k s o	"I saw you (sg)"

fact is that in the area of northwestern Iran all of the languages regardless of genetic affinities share innumerable identical grammatical features of which the use of the possessive pronouns and the incorporation of pronominal direct objects into the verb are only representative examples, chosen to illustrate our present discussion.

It may be argued that the use of the possessive pronoun and the possessive enclitic is simply a case of borrowing of a syntactic feature by the languages of the area from Turkic languages, especially Azerbaijani in these cases. Object incorporation into the verb in the Iranian languages may be originally of Semitic origin, and the exchange of functions of the personal endings (Set₁ and Set₂) according to tense may be of secondary Iranian influence on a Semitic language, Neo-Aramaic of Azerbaijan. Such arguments may be valid for these particular convergence features. But along with many which are of these specific origins, there is a whole series of other syntactic features, even more impressive because of their relative syntactic importance, which characterize all the languages of certain areas of Iran, especially the northwest, which are not of Turkic, Semitic, or Iranian origin. These lists of identical structures can hardly express mere coincidence. The features which interest us draw on material from all linguistic levels, including the clause level (subordinate clause types, especially relative clause formation; ergativity; special treatment of definite direct objects, etc.) and the phrase level (lack of infinitival form for verb complementation; tense and aspect marking; specific use of definite articles and noun plurals, etc.). For obvious reasons, it is not feasible to give even a representative list of these features here. Many types of features on other levels have not been adequately studied. We do not know enough specifics about the semantic composition (e.g., compound verbs, impersonal verbs, idiomatic expressions and so on) of individual languages of Iran, including Persian, and cannot even begin to make important comparisons between languages on these levels. We can only assume that the inter-influence on these and all levels is analogous to the syntactic examples which we have demonstrated here.

Using this information and other grammatical processes as a basis, one might argue that the basic grammars of these languages are identical, with differences only in surface level details (morpheme ordering, lower level phonological rules, etc.) and the phonetic shapes of word roots and morphemes. Among the languages of northwestern Iran, Iranian and non-Iranian alike, a high degree of intertranslatability can be performed mechanically. That is to say that the morphemic breakdown of sentences across languages is often isomorphic. In addition, it is remarkable how many syntactic rules of these languages are identical. One must allow for a certain amount of variation in consistency given the fact that the peripheral languages, while participating in the mass of convergence features that form a *Sprachbund* in the area, are also in contact with languages on other geographic fronts. This is true of certain syntactic rules in the languages of northern Iran, which are common to the languages of Transcaucasia, although many features alluded to here are also common to the languages of both Iran and Transcaucasia.

Conclusion

The isomaps presented here are representative of the role of syntax and lower level structures in language convergence and are indicative of the problems of determining genetic relationships among languages in a *Sprachbund*. In the case of northern Iran, some important rules show affinity among the structures of Vafsi, Southern and Northern Tāti languages, the languages of the Semnān area, Talyshi, and the Caspian languages. Still other rules show the tendency toward the interinfluence of languages of totally different linguistic stocks, to the extent that they develop common grammars. These patternings complicate the task of classifying languages of the same stock into discrete groups, just as in the past Iranists have had difficulty classifying them solely on genetic criteria.

The trend in the past few years in Iranian linguistics has been toward more comprehensive, detailed studies of individual Iranian languages and dialects. In addition

to individual studies of greater depth, however, we must look forward now to a more holistic study of the languages of Iran, taking into account the influence of cultural neighbors in a community as a whole and extralinguistic factors, without the constraints of a purely genetic paradigm. We must encourage research which uses a more flexible approach to the study of syntactic universals and linguistic change, which will place the languages and dialects of northwestern Iran in their sociolinguistic context.

NOTES

1. The terms "Northwestern Iranian" and "Southwestern Iranian" refer to a clear linguistic division of the languages of Iran proper and others located to the west and northwest of the borders of Iran. The following lists are a rough outline of the languages included in these two groups:

<i>Northwestern Iranian</i>	<i>Southwestern Iranian</i>
Northern Kurdish="Kurmanji"	Standard Persian & dialects
Central Kurdish="Sōrāni"	Bakhtiāri-Luri
Caspian Languages	Dialects of Fārs Province
(Gilaki, Māzanderāni, etc.)	Dialects of the Persian Gulf
Central Plateau Languages	Caucasian Tat
Tāti Languages	
Talyshi	
Gurāni (center: Auromān)	
Zaza (Central Turkey)	
Baluchi	

A. The Northwestern group referred to throughout this article as Central Plateau Languages is usually called Central Plateau Dialects.

B. For a complete listing of all villages whose dialects are mentioned in this paper, including some villages where other Central Plateau Languages are spoken, the reader is referred to Appendices I and II which

consist of maps of north central Iran and the Tāti language area respectively.

C. The use of the term Tāt, other than the North-western group discussed in this article, refers to a language of Southwestern Iranian origin spoken in the southern Caucasus in the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. The language has two main branches, Muslim Tat and Jewish Tat.

D. There is some dispute over the classifications of the different forms of Kurdish as a Northwest or Southwest Iranian language. For the present discussion I have assumed a Northwest origin for Kurdish and follow the classification of Kurmanji Kurdish as Northern Kurdish, Sōrāni/Mukri as Central, and Kermānshāhi as Southern Kurdish.

2. Various brief references to the interrelationship of Tāti languages have been culled from the following works of Prof. Yar-Shater: E. Yar-Shater, "The Tāti Dialects of Rāmand," in *A Locust's Leg: Studies in Honour of S. H. Taqizadeh*, eds. W. B. Henning and E. Yar-Shater (London: Percy, Lund, Humphries and Co., Ltd., 1962), pp. 240-245; *idem*, "The Dialects of Alvīr and Vidār," in *Indo-Iranica: Melanges Morgenstierne* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1964), pp. 177-187; *idem*, *A Grammar of Southern Tati Dialects* (The Hague/Paris: Mouton, 1969); *idem*, "The Dialect of Shāhrud (Khalkhāl)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXII (1) (1959), pp. 52-68. See Footnote 11 below for citations on other articles by Yar-Shater on Tāti languages.
3. Marāghei dialects of the Rudbār-e Alamut area refer to the dialects spoken by a group of people who have a secret religion and make a rigid distinction between themselves and the Shi'ite Muslim villagers whom they call "Pashei." The Marāghei religion may be a form of Ismaili sect or, more likely, a mixture of elements from different religions of Iran and the Middle East. The Marāghei language is a form of Tāti and is totally unintelligible to the speakers of Pashei Tāti.

Marāghei Tāti is spoken in some sixteen villages including Dikin (which I was able to visit), Mushqin, Garmābād-e Pāin, Aliābād, Avirak, Vashte, Dorchāk, Yavej, Aspemord, Sutkaš, Angerāzuj, Aleyn, Sapuhin, Vartovān, Zanāsuj, and Kashābād-e Pāin. Since I did not expect to find their form of Tāti in this territory, I would conjecture that the Marāghei speakers are immigrants to the area. Further study of the field notes collected on their language may reveal more information about its possible affinities. The Tāti of the Pashei speakers in the same villages is a form of Tāti that I would have expected for this area since it is not dissimilar to the Tāti spoken in Gozarkhān and Owrazān, discussed in the studies of Ivanow and Al-e Ahmad, respectively.

4. E. Yar-Shater, *op. cit.* (1959); W. B. Henning, "The Ancient Language of Azerbaijan," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (London, 1954), pp. 155-177; B. V. Miller, *Talyšskii Iazyk* (Moscow, 1953), pp. 227-237, 254-266.
5. A distinction is made here between Southern Tatic as handled in this article, and Southern Tāti, which refers to the Tāti dialects spoken in the Qazvin area and investigated by Prof. Yar-Shater in his *Grammar of Southern Tati Dialects*.
6. While collecting material in the field on Tatic languages, I realized how common multilingual situations are in Iranian villages. For example, the people of Vafs with whom I had contact, all spoke Vafsi, Azerbaijani Turkish, and Persian in that order of usage. In Kabate, everyone seemed to speak Kabatei (Tāti proper), Rudbāri (preliminarily: a Caspianized Tatic language), Gilaki (Caspian), and Persian, in addition to which most of the men and some of the women spoke Azerbaijani Turkish. My observations in both villages included elderly women who had never left their native villages. In the cases of some of the villages, their Tāti language serves as their only language through childhood, and the non-Tāti languages, usually includ-

ing Azerbaijani and Persian, are not learned until adolescence. In some villages, Tāti speakers are bilingual or multilingual from a very early age. The village of Dikin in Rudbār-e Alamut, for example, has three different languages (Persian; Tāti-"Pashei," Owrazāni type; and Tāti-"Marāghei," Tāti proper). These languages are spoken concurrently in Dikin owing to the presence of three different groups in the village. The Persian speakers (Shi'ite Muslim) are monolingual; the Tāti-"Pashei" speakers (Shi'ite Muslim) all speak Tāti-"Pashei" and Persian, whereas only the Tāti-"Marāghei" speakers (Marāghei sect, non-Muslim?) are completely trilingual.

7. A very encouraging new step in this direction has been made by Colin P. Masica in *Defining a Linguistic Area: South Asia* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1976). Dr. Masica examines in detail certain grammatical features that group languages across most of Eurasia into different subtypes, irrespective of their genetic affinity. A dynamic approach to Iranian dialectology is seen in a recent dissertation presented at the University of Michigan by Karl J. Krahnke, *Linguistic Relationships in Central Iran* (1976). His methodologies present a dynamic classification of Iranian dialects in the central plateau area and are not rigidly bound to the impossible task of genetic classification, as is the case with the work of his predecessors in this area. Through the use of isogloss maps for his area of study, Krahnke shows that it is impossible to delineate discrete genetic groups and subgroups in Central Plateau Languages. Unfortunately, Krahnke's dissertation came to my attention only recently. Because this article was already completed, I was unable to include here a discussion of his methodologies and results.
8. Important statements regarding convergence are made in J. J. Gumperz and R. Wilson, "Convergence and Creolization: A Case from the Indo-Aryan/Dravidian Border in India," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the*

University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, April 1968, ed. Dell Hymes (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 151-167. Speaking of the phenomenon of convergence in the village of Kupwar in Central India, where Marathi (Indo-Aryan), Urdu (Indo-Aryan), and Kannada (Dravidian) are spoken, the authors point out (p. 155) that the similarity among the grammatical structures of these three languages is so great, "that we were able to analyse an extensive corpus of bilingual texts involving all three local varieties without having to postulate syntactic categories or rules for one language which were not present in the other language. We may say, therefore, that the codes used in code-switching situations in Kupwar have a *single syntactic surface structure*." This statement is further supported by the claim that "For many Kupwar residents...a model of linguistic competence must comprise a single semological, a single syntactic, and a single phonetic component, and *alternative* set of rules for the relation of semantic categories to morphemic shapes" (p. 165). A similar case is made for Finnish and Lapp in R. Anttila, *An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics* (York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 169, in the claim that "Finnish syntax is largely Indo-European (Baltic and Germanic, apparently Swedish for the most part). Lapp syntax in Finland is strongly Finnish--in fact, almost like Finnish with Lapp words, but in Norway is markedly Norwegian." The case for substratum influence on syntax is made for the Cushitic substratum in Ethiopic (Semitic) languages by W. Leslau in "The Influence of Cushitic on the Semitic Languages of Ethiopia--A Problem of Substratum," *Word*, I (1) (New York, 1945). Aside from examples given in the realms of phonology and morphology, the author states that "It is the syntax that gives to Ethiopic, and especially to the modern languages, their particularly non-Semitic character. The Cushitic substratum is especially clear in matters of syntax" (p. 73).

9. The term "isorule" was coined and communicated to me orally by Dr. Gernot L. Windfuhr of the University of Michigan.

10. The following sources were used for the languages and dialects cited in the examples in the rest of this article and on the isomaps: *Tatic--Alviri*: J. Hāshemi, "Guyeš-e Alviri" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Tehran, Department of Linguistics, 1353/1974); *Vidari*: E. Yar-Shater, *op. cit.* (1964); *Southern Tāti* (including *Eshtehārdi*, *Tākestāni*, *Esfarvarini*, and *Chāli*): E. Yar-Shater, *op. cit.* (1969); *Upper Tāromi*: E. Yar-Shater, "The Tāti Dialects of Tārom," in *The Henning Memorial Volume*, eds. M. Boyce, I. Gershevitch (London, 1970), pp. 451-467; *Khoīni*: "Khoīni--yeki az lahjehā-ye āzari," *Farhang-e Irānzamin*, 6 (Tehran, 1958), pp. 324-327; *Gozarkhāni*: W. Ivanow, "The Dialect of Gozarkhon in Alamut," *Acta Orientalia*, 9 (1931), pp. 352-369; *Owrazāni*: J. Al-e Ahmad, *Owrazān (Vaz'-e Mahall, Ādāb va Rosum, Folklur, Lahje)* (Tehran, 1954); *Shāhrudi*: E. Yar-Shater, *op. cit.* (1959); *Kajali*: *idem*, "The Tāti Dialect of Kajal," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXIII (2) (1960), pp. 275-286; *Lerdi*: *idem*, "The Distinction of Feminine Gender in Southern Tāti," in *Studia Classica et Orientalia Antonino Pagliaro Oblata*, III, ed. W. Belardi (Rome, 1969), p. 300; *Harzani*: A. A. Kārang, *Tāti va Harzani* (Tehran: Isma'il Vā'ezpur, 1954); *Keringani*: *idem*, and Y. Zokā, *Guyeš-e Keringān* (Tehran: Ketabxāne-ye Dāneš, 1954); *Northern Talyshi*: B. V. Miller, *op. cit.* (1953); *Central Plateau Languages--Āmorei*: R. Sā'eb, "Guyeš-e Āmore" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Tehran, Department of Linguistics, 1976); *Meimei*: A. K. S. Lambton, *Three Persian Dialects* (London, 1938); *Other Iranian Languages--Baluchi*: V. S. Rastorgueva, "Beludžskii Iazyk," in *Iazyki Narodov SSSR, I, Indoevropеiskie Iazyki* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), pp. 323-341; *Central Kurdish (Sōrāni)*: J. J. Abdulla and E. N. McCarus, *Kurdish Basic Course, Dialect of Sulaimania, Iraq* (Ann Arbor, 1967); *Northern Kurdish (Kurmandji)*: K. K. Kurdoev, *Grammatika Kurdsogo Iazyka* (Moscow/Leningrad: Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1957); *Gurāni (Auromani)*: *The Dialect of Awroman (Hawrāmān-ī Luhon)*: *Grammatical Sketch, Texts, Vocabulary*, Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabsnernes Selskab, Historisk-Filologiske Meddelelser, 4

(3) (Copenhagen, 1966); Caucasian Tat: A. L. Griunberg, *Iazyk Severoazerbaidžanskix Tatov* (Leningrad: Akademiia Nauk SSSR, 1963). My own field notes were used for examples in the following dialects and languages: *Tatic*--Vafsi, Razajerdi, Dikini/Marāghei, Dikini/Pashei, Kalāsi, Kabatei, Southern Talyshi (Māsulei and Māsāli), and Central Talyshi (Asālemi); *Caspian*--Gilaki (Rashti and Lāhijāni dialects), Māzanderāni (Bābolsari dialect), and Shahmirzādi; *Transition Tatic/Caspian*--Rudbāri; *Central Plateau Languages*--Se-Dehi, Esfahani Jewish, Yazdi (Zoroastrian), and Abuzeydābādi; *Other Iranian Languages*--Bakhtiari; *Non-Iranian Languages*--Azerbaijani Turkish, Armenian, Romany (of Ābyek area), Neo-Aramaic (Assyrian), and Arabic. The transcription system of my own examples is the same as that used throughout this article with the exception of the vowels of Māzanderāni; the Mazanderani vowel equivalent to the /e/ of Persian and English (mid vowel) is represented as /E/, whereas /e/ is used to represent a high mid-vowel phoneme in Mazanderani, similar to the "é" of French.

11. The nominal system (including pronouns) of the Tatic languages and many other Northwestern Iranian languages differs drastically from that of Modern Persian (I use Persian for contrast as a point of reference for most readers of *Iranian Studies*). Nouns in these languages have a two case system: Direct Case and Oblique Case. The functions of these two cases are listed below:

Direct

1. subject of intransitive verbs in all tenses
2. subject of transitive verbs in the present tenses only
3. object of transitive verbs in the past tenses only (optional, depending on the language)
4. destination without preposition ("I'm going home" "man miram xūne").

Oblique

1. subject of transitive verbs in the past tenses only

2. object of transitive verbs in the present tense (and
in some languages in past tenses also)
3. possessive
4. indirect object
5. object of prepositions (optional)
6. preceding postpositions

The languages of this system are known as "ergative" languages. The ergative construction has also been referred to in the Iranist literature as the "passive" or "agentive" construction, although sentences of this type are by no means passive in meaning. The *ergative* construction contrasts with the *nominative* construction of Persian and other languages. In the nominative type sentence, the subjects of intransitive and transitive verbs are in a direct or nominative case (often the unmarked case, i.e., with no case ending) and the direct object of transitive verbs is marked by an accusative case or an accusative marker such as /-ra/ of Persian. In the ergative type sentence, as seen above in the list of functions of the two cases, the *subjects* of intransitive verbs and the *object* of transitive verbs are represented by the same case, the Direct case (or unmarked case) in Iranian languages. The *subject* of transitive verbs is then marked by a special case used only for this syntactic function; this case has been named variously the ergative case or the agentive case. The contrast of the ergative and nominative systems in Iranian languages is demonstrated in the following schema:

	<i>Intransitive Subject</i>	<i>Transitive Subject</i>	<i>Transitive Object</i>
nominative system	nominative case	nominative case	accusative case
ergative system	direct case	oblique case	direct case

Iranian languages have an ergativity which is tense-based; this is not necessarily true of ergative systems in other languages. That is, in their pure forms, North-west Iranian languages are nominative in the present

system and ergative in the past system. This tense-based ergativity, therefore, yields a flip-flop of the case functions according to tense of the transitive verb:

	<i>Transitive Subject</i>	<i>Transitive Object</i>
Present (Nominative)	direct case	oblique case
Past (Ergative)	oblique case	direct case

Examples from Vafsi:

Vafsi direct case:	merda	aspa
Vafsi oblique case:	merda-y	aspa-y
	"man"	"dog"
merda (subj)	aspa-y (obj)	arvine
		"The man (direct) sees the dog (oblique)"
aspa (obj)	merda-y (subj)	badia
		"The man (oblique) saw the dog (direct)"

In the instance of pronominal cases, some Northwest Iranian languages have the same system of cases in pronouns as in nouns. In other languages, however, some of the functions listed above under "oblique" case are taken over by specialized pronoun case forms which may number from three to five, depending on the language. Hezārrudi (Tāromi), for example, has five cases in the pronoun:

Case One: Subject of intransitive verbs, subject of (Direct) transitive verbs in the present tense, destination--i.e., most "direct" functions

Case Two: Possessive; object of the postposition (Genitive)

Case Three: Subject of transitive verbs in the past (Ergative) tense

Case Four: Object of transitive verbs in the present tense

Case Five: Object of transitive verbs in the past tense.

In the Iranist literature concerning the use of cases in Iranian languages and dialects, Case Three is usually referred to as the "agentive" case, Case Four is the "objective" case, and Case Five is the "logical direct object" which refers only to objects of past tense verbs in the ergative system.

12. Individual isomaps appearing in the text of this article do not indicate the names of individual dialects mentioned. Isomaps correspond exactly to the maps of Appendices I and II, where the names of the villages are given in full.
13. There seems to be a relationship between the $\text{ʃ}/j$ morpheme of Tatic and the oblique marker $/\text{ʃ}/$ in the third person pronouns of Sorkhei and Semnāni, as already mentioned in W. B. Henning, "The Ancient Language of Azerbaijan," *op. cit.*, p. 162:

	<i>Sorkhei</i>		<i>Semnāni</i>	
	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>
Direct	u	ʃin	ü	üi
Oblique	ʃu	ʃin	$\text{ʃ}\emptyset$ (m) $\text{ʃ}\emptyset n$	ʃin(f)

It is too early to say, however, whether these are parallel developments or whether they can be considered the same isogloss as Tāti.

14. The independent possessive/oblique pronouns in Alviri/Vidari seem to follow their head nouns, connected to them by the ezāfe (which, as in Persian, connects noun with noun in a genitival function and noun with adjective in adjectival modification). More field work is

necessary to test whether these pronouns may also precede their head nouns.

15. Yar-Shater, *Grammar of Southern Tati Dialects*, p. 21.
16. Historical retention of lexical roots (as opposed to morphemes) in the languages of northern Iran as a tool to use in the establishment of genetic affinity has not been discussed in this paper simply because no systematic comparative work has been done on the lexical composition of the members within each group of Northwestern Iranian languages nor have comparative studies among the different groups been conducted. We do not even understand clearly the criteria for establishing Tatic, Central Plateau and Caspian languages, Kurdish, Gurāni, Zaza, etc. as separate groups. Even less do we understand the interrelationships and hierarchical ordering of the relationships of groups of Northwestern Iranian languages, and certainly the transitional areas between these groups have never been established on a systematic basis.
17. It cannot be said that grammatical morphemes are never borrowed. There are many clear examples of morpheme-borrowing from one language into another. There are also examples of extreme cases of borrowing in which whole morphemic systems of one language are taken over *in toto* by another language, and the new set of morphemes, calqued upon the roots of the original language, form a type of unusual hybrid language. Such may have been the case to some extent in the Rudbāri dialects. They seem to have been originally members of the Tatic languages which now show a great percentage of Tatic lexical roots but share most, or possibly all, of the morphemic system of Gilaki, a language of the Caspian group. Such extreme cases of morpheme borrowing in languages must be studied more carefully to understand the reasons for, and mechanics of, this process.
18. The dialects of the Semnān area and of Āmore, which seem to be transitions between Tatic and Central Plateau, are possible exceptions in that they may

prove to share these prefixes in their morphology.

19. W. B. Henning, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
20. L. P. Elwell-Sutton, "The *Vafsi* Dialect (North-western Persia)," in *Trudy XXV Mezhdunarodnogo Kongressa Vostokovedov (9-16 Avgusta, 1960)* (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 1960), p. 315.

APPENDIX I



Key to Administrative Divisions

/§/ = Villages of Khalkhāl, Azerbaijan

/*/ = Villages of Tārom, Zanjan

(z) = Villages of other districts of Zanjan

(f) = Villages of Fuman, Gilan

(r) = Villages of Rudbār, Gilan

/=/ = Villages of Rāmand district, Qazvin

(k) = Villages of Karaj district, Central Province

(s) = Villages of Sāveh district, Central Province

=Khlāraj

=Khoznīn

Dānesfān

*Sagzābād

Vidar(s) • Alvir(s)

•Tākestān

•Esfarvarin

•Chāl

•Ebrahimābād

•Dānesfān

•Sagzābād

•Eshtehārd(k)

•Sagzābād

•Alvir(s)

•Sāveh

•Vafā

APPENDIX II

