

# Disentangling mutually shared innovations, shared retentions, coincidence, and contact phenomena in Southern Kurdish and Gūrānī

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MECHS

- MacKenzie (1961) and Leezenberg (2015)
- Issues identifying
  - mutually shared innovations
  - Shared retentions
  - coincidence
  - contact
- (Accepted) isoglosses
- Proposed isoglosses

## Problems in the Literature

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MacKenzie (1961), citing Professor K. Barr, attributes some differences within Kurdish to Gorani influence on the Southern dialects. He further argues that “there is no avoiding the conclusion that [Central and Southern] dialects of Kurdish have overlaid a Gorani substratum<sup>1</sup>, while the Northern dialects have to a much greater extent preserved their purity” (MacKenzie, 1961, 86)

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<sup>1</sup>There is no way of knowing what precisely MacKenzie (1961) meant by substratum. It is unlikely that in 1961 the term carried much of the theoretical weight that it does today.

Leezenberg (2015) rejected MacKenzie's (1961) claim, asserting that in addition to Gorani contact, the convergences between Central and Southern Kurdish and Gorani could also be explained as common inheritance, "parallel innovations of a Sprachbund-like nature, as prestige borrowings, or as innovations specific to Kurmancî."

# MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences I

- Passive
  - There is a synthetic passive construction built with *-rê/ra-* in Central Kurdish and *-y/-ya* in Gorani but absent from Northern Kurdish that MacKenzie considers a borrowing from Gorani.
    - Hewramî: *-îæ/-â: kirîæw*
    - Soranî: *-rê/-ra: ekrêm*
    - Kurmancî: *hatin + Vinf: dêm kirdin*
  - *y*-form passive is attested in Avestan, Old Persian, and Sanskrit (Leezenberg, 2015).
  - From a diachronic perspective, borrowing a syntactic pattern is easier than borrowing morphology.

## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences II

cf. Germiyanî: *dêm kirdin*

- definite suffix *-eke*, occurring in Gorani and Zazaki (following Hadank, 1930, 1932), must also be borrowing from Gorani, as it is notably absent from Kurmancî (MacKenzie, 1961).
  - According to Leezenberg (2015), this alone is not a good basis for assuming massive substrate effects and language shift.
  - K-type markers:
    - Emāmzāda Esmā'īlī (Fars): *doft-ak-ō* 'the girls [girl-DEF-PL]' (Windfuhr, 2012),
    - Bušehrī (Fars): *ī havā-y-akū* 'this weather' (Windfuhr, 2012),

## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences III

- Gīonī (Lor): *asp-Ø gap-eka* “the big horse [horse-DEF.EZ big-DEF]” (McKinnon, 2001),
- Northern Lori *-(e)ka* (McKinnon, 2011),
- Dezfūli and Šuštari (S Lori): *-aka* (McKinnon, 2011),
- Bakhtiāri (S Lori): *-ekū* (McKinnon, 2011),
- *-(e)ke* (Anonby & Taheri-Ardali, 2019, 452).
- Central Kurdish: *-eke* (Mackenzie, 1961), Kurdish: *-aka -aga* and *ağa* (Fattah, 2000, 245),
- Hewramî (Lihon): *-akæ* (MacKenzie, 1966),
- Paweyane: *-ækæ* (Holmberg & Odden, 2008),
- Zerdeyane: *-aka* (Mahmoudveysi & Bailey, 2013),
- Gewrecûî: *-aka* (Mahmoudveysi et al., 2012)



## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences IV

- definite suffixes without the /k/ (DEF = DIM)
  - Sīvandi has *-u* [M.SG.DEF] and *-e* [F.SG.DEF] (Windfuhr, 1991);
  - Judeo Isfahanî has *-e* [SG.DEF] (Windfuhr, 1991);
  - Khuri has *-u* [SG.DEF] (Windfuhr, 1991);
  - Kermani languages have *-u* (Borjia, 2017a);
  - the Median dialects (Kašan) have *-a/-e* (Borjia, 2012);
  - Keša'î has *-é* (Borjia, 2017b);
  - Kumzari has *-ō* (Anonby, 2019, 631),
  - Colloquial New Persian *-(h)e*, etc.

## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences V

- the open-compound construction (MacKenzie, 1961; close ezafe Thackston, 2006; and the definite ezafe ?, ?). is also an example of Gorani borrowing.
  - The ezafe is reduced in definite constructions:
    - Central Kurdish: *kiç-î cwan* 'beautiful girl' vs. *kiç-e cwan-êke* 'the beautiful girl'
    - Hewramî: *kitêb-æ sîaw-ækæ*
  - This phenomenon is more widespread:
    - Colloquial New Persian: *pesær-e bozorg* 'big boy' vs. *pesær-Ø bozorg-é* 'the big boy' (Samvelian, 2005);
    - Luri *kwak-e gap* 'big boy' vs. *kwak-Ø gap-aka* 'the big boy' (?)

## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences VI

- I suggest that this pattern represents a formal medial stage between reverse ezafe constructions and the canonical ezafe the grounds of formal semantics (Karim, 2021).
- the postverb =*ewe*:
  - The switch from preverb to post verb is (likely) phonologically motivated in Hewramî
    - Northern Kurdish: *ve-xwarin* vs. *ve-dixwe*
    - Central Kurdish: *xwardin-ewe* vs. *exwat-ewe*
    - Paweyane: *æwæ-wardæy* vs. *muwæro-wæ*
  - Kurdish does not shift any other preverbs to postverbal position while Hewramî does.
    - Paweyane: *æræ-niştæy* vs. *minişo-ræ*

## MacKenzie's (1961) proposed convergences VII

- Hewrami: *ænæ-kærdæy* vs. *(mi)kæro-næ*
- The simplified Ezafe: MacKenzie (1961) proposed that Gorani and Central and Southern Kurdish had simplified their ezafe (attribution marking) systems by eliminating case, number, and gender distinctions.

**More complex does not equate to  
more conservative!**

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# Ezafe- and case- marking in Zazaki and Kurmancî I

- Zazaki M.SG.OBL suffix *-ê* is from the *-aka* (Gippert, 2009).
- We have a model from Sogdian for differential case marking as a retention of the Strong and Vocalic declensions:

	Strong	Vocalic (< *-akā-)
Nominative	DIR	DIR
Accusative	DIR	OBL
Genitive	OBL	OBL

- The definite ezafe of CK and Hewramî, N-DEF.EZ A-DEF is missing from NK and Zazaki.

# Ezafat- and case- marking in Zazaki and Kurmancî II

- The alternative construction N-DEF-EZ A is a viable source for the “complex ezafat,” compare: the Sogdian vocalic declension with the NK/Z ezafat:

		Sogdian V	Kurmancî Ez	Zazaki Ez
	M	$-\bar{e}$	$-\hat{e}$	$-\hat{e}$ GEN
DIR	F	$-\bar{a}$	$-a$	$-a$
	PL	$-\bar{e}(t)$	$-\hat{e}(n/t/ti/di)$	$-\hat{e}$
	M	$-\bar{e}$	$(-\hat{i})^2$	$\begin{bmatrix} -\hat{e} \\ -a \\ -\hat{e} \end{bmatrix}$
OBL	F	$-\bar{e}$	$(-\hat{e})$	
	PL	$-\hat{e}ti [-\bar{e}n]$	$(-\hat{e})$	

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<sup>2</sup>SW Kurmancî forms are taken from an anstract from the 8th International Conference on Iranian Linguistics by Musa Ekici.

## Assuming an original ezafe, $-\hat{i}$ , lost after the definite suffix

- Zazaki precedent for  $a-\hat{i} \rightarrow a$ , e.g., *wāy-āy jey* [sister-EZ:F.SG 3SG.M.OBL] “his daughter” (Hadank, 1932, 73).
- There is a precedent in Hewramî where the ezafe is blocked after the stressed suffixes  $-\acute{a}$ , and  $-\acute{ê}$  for phonological reasons (MacKenzie, 1966).
- It is telling that of the hundreds of paradigmatic permutations possible in Zazaki nearly all of them are built from the formatives  $-a$ , and  $-\hat{e}$ .
- In Kurmancî (some varieties), sequential ezafat revert to  $-\hat{i}$ , e.g., *Xanîyê wanî buha* (Ekici, 2007).



## Question:

Based on the evidence for a substratum presented by MacKenzie (1961), Leezenberg (2015) was right to reject his hypothesis.

Question: Is there more evidence that MacKenzie (1961) missed.

There may be a greater range of morphological borrowing between Gorani and (Central) and Southern Kurdish. However, these changes did not all affect the core of Kurdish or the Hewramî core of Gorani.

# Kurdish-Gūrānī Convergences

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# Outline of Kurdish-Gūrānī convergence

- Definite Suffix (again?)
- Imperfective Marking
  - Hewramî > SK
  - Hewramî > SK (Laki)
  - (S)K > Gawraju'î
- Past Perfect Conditional

## Definite Suffix (again?)

- There is much evidence that the k-form definite suffix is a wide-spread inherited Iranian feature.
- However, the suggestion that the oblique suffix is from the \*-akā̃ conflicts with the possibility of inheritance.
- If M.SG.OBL -î is from the k-form suffix, the definite suffix -æ̃kæ̃ must be a secondary development.
- Furthermore, we know that Kurdish has lent this formative to other regional languages, e.g., Iraqi Turkmani: *oγlan-akâ* [boy.SPEC] (Bulut, 2019, 368), Arbel (Jewish): *belā-ke* [house-DEF] (Khan, 2019, 322), etc.

# Imperfective Marking (Gorani > Kurdish) I

- The inherited Gorani imperfective system is characterized by two features:
  1. PRS.IPFV-: *mæ-: mæ-kær-u*
  2. -PST.IPFV: *-e(n): kærên-ê*
- The regular negation marker *næ-* reduces to *ni-* before the imperfective prefix, e.g., *ni-mæ-kær-u* but not elsewhere *næ-kær-ên-ê*.
- This strategy was adopted in Southern Kurdish (ERIC loan?), where the negative marker was reduced to *ni-* before the present tense imperfective prefix *de-* contracting to *nye-* as expected following McCarus (2009).  
Xaneqîn: *nye-ke-m* but *ne-e-kird-im/na-kird-im*

- Other varieties adopted this same strategy whenever negation cooccurred with the imperfective prefix *de-*, *nye-ke-m* and *nye-kird-im* (Myaxâs, Ilâm, Mîhrân, Rîkâ (Sarna), Sâleh âbâd, Warmîzyâr, Zurbâtîya, Kordali, Kałhor (Shahabad), Camcamât, Harasam, Kîrmanšâh, Qasırîşîrin, Sanjabi, Xâtesa:)

# Imperfective Marking (Kurdish > Gorani)

- The inherited Kurdish imperfective system is characterized by two features:
  1. IPFV-: *de-: de-ke-m*
  2. IPFV-STEM-PST.IPFV: *de-...-da:*  
Biĵ.: *d-ü-â[t]-im* (Fattah, 2000),  
Šër. south: *a-čv-â-m*
- The prefix pattern was adopted by Gorani varieties replacing the past-tense imperfective stem:  
Gawraju: *ma-kar-im* and *ma-kard=im* (Mahmoudveysi et al., 2012)

# Imperfective Marking (Gorani > Kurdish/Laki)

- In the varieties of Bisitun, Cıhr, Harsin, and Pâyrawand the inherited Kurdish imperfective system underwent expected phonological changes  $d \rightarrow w, y, \ddot{w}, \emptyset / V\_$
- Laki borrows the Gorani prefixes over the inherited (bipartite) Kurdish system:

1. IPFV-: *e-ke-m*

2. IPFV-STEM-PST.IPFV: *e-...-ya*

↓

3. =IPFV (NEG-)IPFV-: =*e (ni-)me-ke-m*

4. =IPFV (NEG-)IPFV-STEM-PST.IPFV: =*e (ni-)me-...-ya*

töwirg=a ma-wāry-ā-ø

hail=IND IND-rain.PST-IMP?=-3SG

‘It was hailing hailstones’ (Belelli, 2022, 6:186)



## Past Perfect Conditional?

- According to MacKenzie (1966), there are tenses associated with irrealis including the imperfective, perfect conditional (pro), and pluperfect (apo).
  - The pluperfect STEM.PST-COP.IPFV: *amεbê(n)-*
  - The perfect conditional STEM.PST-COP.PST.IPFV: *amεbiε(n)-*
- Kurdish has two conditional forms that seem to calque MacKenzie's (1966) pluperfect and perfect conditional
  - 1st conditional (SBJ-)STEM.PST=IPFV=COP:  
*(bi-)hat=a=ye*
  - 2nd conditional (SBJ-)STEM.PST-COP.PST-IPFV:  
*(bi-)hat-ib-a*
- These construction are prolific throughout NK, CK, SK, and Laki. Their etyma is clearest in Hewramî. However directionality is an issue.

# Kurdish-Zazaki Convergences

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# Outline of Kurdish-Zazaki convergence

- Differential Case Marking:  
“The specially Cappadocian features are the distinction between the def. and indef. acc. in the sg.” (Northern Cappadocian Dawkins, 1916, 97)
- Definite Ezafe
- Loss of Pronominal Clitics

## Problems/Summary/Conclusion

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## Summary of issues

- There is no question that there has been convergence between Kurdish, Zazaki, and Gorani.
- However, the diachronic study of New Iranian languages is still in its infancy.
- This problem is exacerbated by language endangerment, the lack of documentary efforts, and inaccessibility of existing research.
- many seemingly local phenomena are attested across the Iranian world.
- cyclical recruitment can obscure the reality of borrowing and inheritance.

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**Zor supastan ekem!**

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