

Archaism and Innovation in Kurdish

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SCIAS

March 24, 2025

Outline

1 How Old is a language

2 Breaking Myths

3 Iranian Languages

4 The Character of Iranian

5 Archaism and Innovation in Kurdish

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How old is a language?

- A language can be Old because it was spoken long ago.
 - A language can be Old because it has been written down for a long time.
 - A language can be Old because it has remained “Unchanged” for a long period of time.

OLD: of a bygone era |

- Hittite



OLD: of a bygone era II

- Sumerian



OLD: of a bygone era III

- Akkadian



OLD: of a bygone era IV

- Aramaic



OLD: of a bygone era V

- Sanskrit



OLD: of a literary tradition I

- Old Irish



OLD: of a literary tradition II

- Old Church Slavonic

пъвсѧкъ разуму приводѧнѣсѧ
ни. · помна вавъродъ татъ · посл
имъстъкѡсъгантннафилософъ
парнца ема гокни рила · мѧжаправе
дна и състинна · и сътворенімъ, л ·
писмена и осмъ · ѿвадбѡгіотнкоу
гътъсъкъхъпнисменъ · ѿваже по съ
вѣністъарѣн · ѿпраъвлагоженате

OLD: of a literary tradition III

- Old English

OE (West Saxon dialect, late ninth century)

þū ure fæder, þe eart on heofonum, sīe þīn nama gehālgod. Cume
þīn rīce. Sīe þīn pylla on eorþan spā spā on heofonum. Syle ūs
tōdæg ūrne dæghpāmlican hlāf. And forgief ūs ure gyltas spā spā pē
forgiefaf þām þe pið ūs agyltaþ. And ne lād þū nū ūs on costnunge,
ac ālīes ūs fram yfele.

ME (Central Midlands, c. 1380)

Oure fadir, þat art in heuenys, halewid be þi name. þi kyngdom
come to. Be þi wile don ase in heuene and in erþe. ȝiue to us þis day
oure breed ouer oþer substauNSE. And forȝiue to us oure dettes, as
and we forȝiuen to oure dettouris. And leede us not into tempta-
ciouns, but delyuere us from yuel.

EMode (Book of Common Prayer, 1549)

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy king-
dom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this
day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive
them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But
deliver us from evil.

OLD: of archaism

	German				English			
	M	N	F	PL	M	N	F	PL
NOM	<i>er</i>	<i>es</i>		<i>sie</i>	<i>he</i>		<i>she</i>	<i>they</i>
ACC	<i>ihn</i>			<i>sie</i>		<i>it</i>		
DAT	<i>ihm</i>		<i>ihr</i>	<i>ihnen</i>	<i>him</i>		<i>her</i>	<i>them</i>
GEN	<i>sein</i>				<i>his</i>	<i>its</i>		<i>their</i>

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All languages are equally old

English and German are sisters. Languages tend to innovate along one axis and be more conservative along another.

English	German
<i>apple</i>	<i>apfel</i>
<i>up</i>	<i>auf</i>
<i>to</i>	<i>zu</i>
<i>out</i>	<i>aus</i>
<i>book</i>	<i>buch</i>

Greek and Sanskrit I

	Greek		Sanskrit	
	SG	PL	SG	PL
VOC	<i>-a</i>	<i>-ai</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-āh</i>
NOM	<i>-as</i>	<i>-ai</i>	<i>-as</i>	<i>-āh</i>
ACC	<i>-an</i>	<i>-as</i>	<i>-am</i>	<i>-ān</i>
INS			<i>-ena</i>	<i>-āih</i>
DAT	<i>-a</i>	<i>-ais</i>	<i>-āya</i>	<i>-āibhyah</i>
INS			<i>-āt</i>	<i>-āibhyah</i>
GEN	<i>-ou</i>	<i>-ōn</i>	<i>-asya</i>	<i>-ānām</i>
LOC			<i>-i</i>	<i>-āsu</i>

Greek and Sanskrit II

	Greek		Sanskrit	
	give	carry	give	carry
1SG	<i>dídōmi</i>	<i>phérō</i>	<i>dadāmi</i>	<i>bharāmi</i>
2SG	<i>dídōs</i>	<i>phéreis</i>	<i>dadāsi</i>	<i>bharasi</i>
3SG	<i>dídōsi</i>	<i>phérei</i>	<i>dadāti</i>	<i>bharati</i>
1PL	<i>dídomen</i>	<i>phéromen</i>	<i>dadāmah</i>	<i>bharāmah</i>
2PL	<i>dídote</i>	<i>phérete</i>	<i>dadatha</i>	<i>bharatha</i>
3PL	<i>didóasin</i>	<i>phérōusin</i>	<i>dadati</i>	<i>bharanti</i>

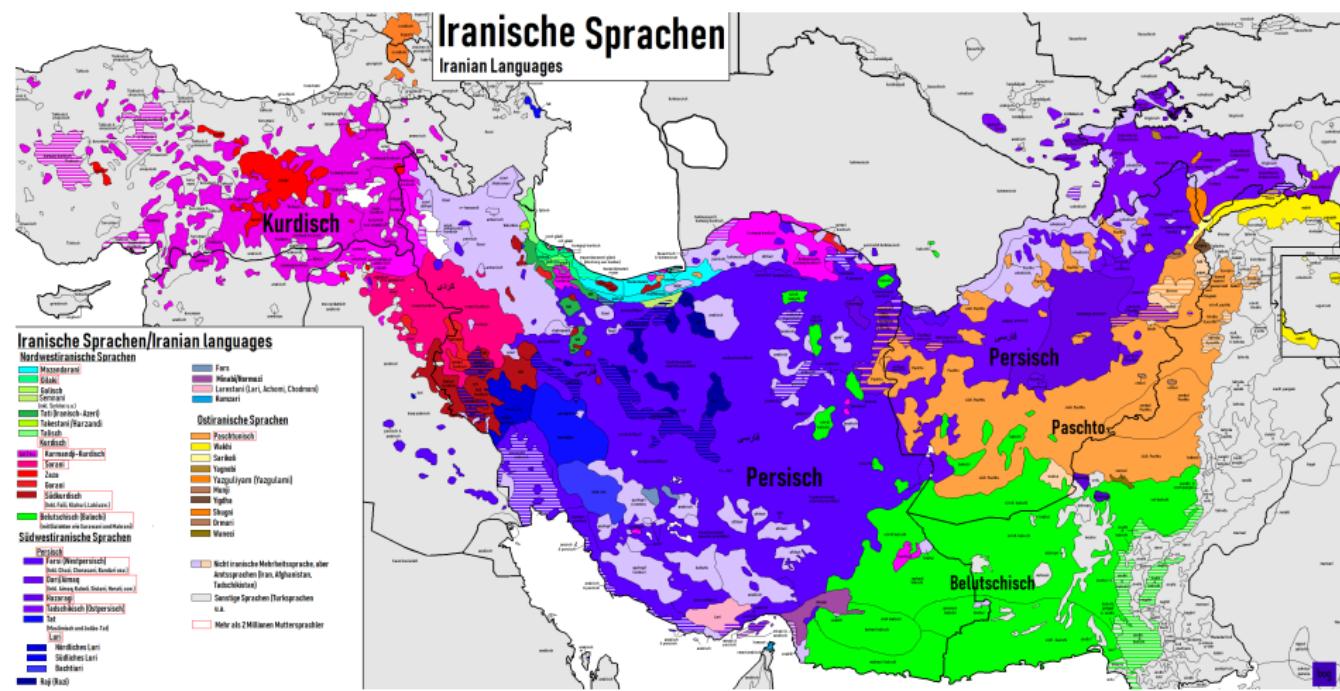
Sir William Jones (1746-1794)

The Sanscrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothick and the Celtick, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanscrit, and the old Persian might be added to this family, if this were the place for discussing any question concerning the antiquities of Persia.

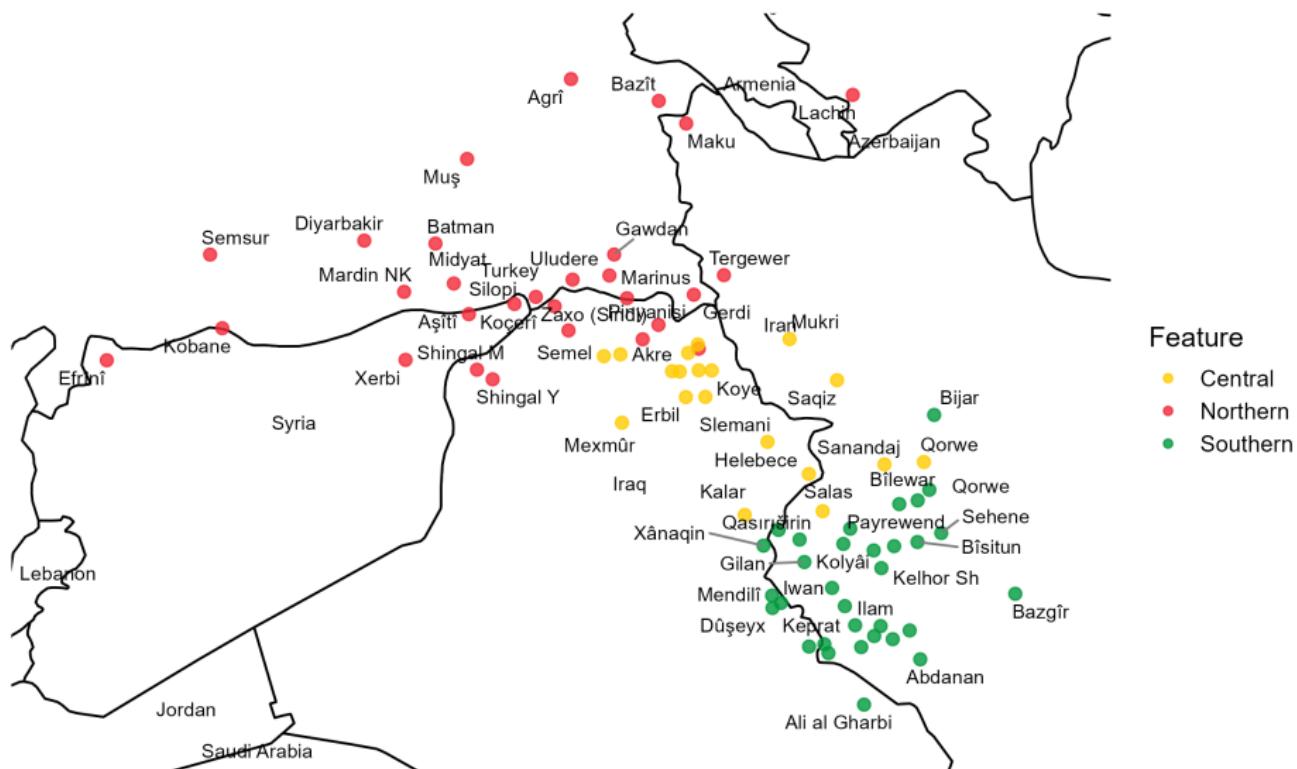
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The Iranian Languages



Kurdish



Kurdish Folk I



Kurdish Folk II



Kurdish Folk III



Hewraman



Zab



Rewanduz



Photo & Photograph: Jim Gash



Amadî



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Tense-based alignment split

Northern Kurdish:

(1) *ez nan dixwim*

Ich (das) Brot esse
I (the) bread eat

'I eat bread.'

(2) *min nan xwar*

mein (das) Brot gegessen (ist)
my (the) bread eaten (is)

'I ate bread.'

Hewramî (Text):

(3) *min panîrekeî werû*

Ich den Käse esse
I the cheese eat

'I eat bread.'

(4) *min panîreke war*

mein der Käse gegessen (ist)
my the bread eaten (is)

'I ate bread.'

Evolution of the split: Example from Mt. Bisitun



Evolution of the split: the Achaemenid royal inscription



Evolution of the split: Example Old Persian

(5) *adam hamaranam akunavam*

ich (die) Schlacht tat

I (the) battle did

'I battled.'

(6) *manā hamaranam kartam*

mein (die) Schlacht getan (ist)

my (the) battle done (is)

'I have battled.'

Two cases; two genders

	M	F	PL
DIR	<i>æsb-Ø</i>	<i>kærg-æ</i>	<i>textitæsb-e/kærg-e</i>
OBL	<i>æsb-i</i>	<i>kærg-é</i>	<i>æsb-án/kærg-án</i>

Vafsi case (Stilo, 2008, p. 703)

	M	F	PL
DIR	<i>arwêş-Ø</i>	<i>arwêş-Ø</i>	<i>arwêş-i</i>
OBL	<i>arwêş-i</i>	<i>arwêş(-er)-Ø</i>	<i>arwêş-an</i>

Zazaki Case (Paul, 1998)

Evolution of case: Rythmic Law I

	(a) [SG]	(a) [PL]	(ā) [SG]	(ā) [PL]
VOC	yas.na	yas.nå	daē.ne	daē.nå
NOM	yas.nō	yas.nå	daē.na	daē.nå
ACC	yas.nəm	yas.nä	daē.näm	daē.nå
INS	yas.na	yas.nāiš	daē.na.ya	daē.nābiš
DAT	yas.nāi	yas.naē.ibyō	daē.na.yāi	daē.nā.byo
ABL	yas.nāt	yas.naē.ibyō	daē.na.yāt	daē.nā.byo
GEN	yas.ne.he	yas.nā.näm	daē.na.yå	daē.nā.näm
LOC	yas.ne	yas.naē.šu	daē.na.ya	daē.nā.hu

Evolution of case: Rythmic Law II

	(a) [SG]	(a) [PL]	(ā) [SG]	(ā) [PL]
VOC	yas.n	yas.n	daē.n	daē.n
NOM	yas.n	yas.n	daē.n	daē.n
ACC	yas.n	yas.n	daē.n	daē.n
GEN	yas.ne.h	yas.nā.n	daē.na.y	daē.nā.n
INS	yas.n	yas.n	daē.na.y	daē.nā.b
DAT	yas.n	yas.nāe.ib	daē.na.y	daē.nā.b
ABL	yas.n	yas.nāe.ib	daē.na.y	daē.nā.b
LOC	yas.n	yas.nāe.š	daē.na.y	daē.nā.h

Evolution of case: Northern Kurdish (Dihok)

	M		F	
	[SG]	[PL]	[SG]	[PL]
VOC				
NOM	<i>cejin</i>	<i>cejin</i>	<i>dîn</i>	<i>dîn</i>
ACC				
GEN	<i>cejinî</i>	<i>cejinan</i>	<i>dînê</i>	<i>dînan</i>

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Case and Alignment

Northern Kurdish:

- (7) *ez nan dixwim*

Ich Brot(das) esse

I bread(the) eat

'I eat bread.'

- (8) *min nan xwar*

mein Brot(das) gegessen (ist)

my bread(the) eaten (is)

'I ate bread.'

Central Kurdish:

- (9) *panîr-eke exom*

Käse-der esse

cheese-the eat

'I eat the bread.'

Central Kurdish (continued):

- (10) *panîr-eke=m xward*

Käse-der=mein gegessen

bread-the=my eaten

'I ate the bread.'

Southern Kurdish:

- (11) *panîr-ege xom*

Käse-der esse

cheese-the eat

'I eat the bread.'

- (12) *panîr-ege xwardim*

Käse-der äße

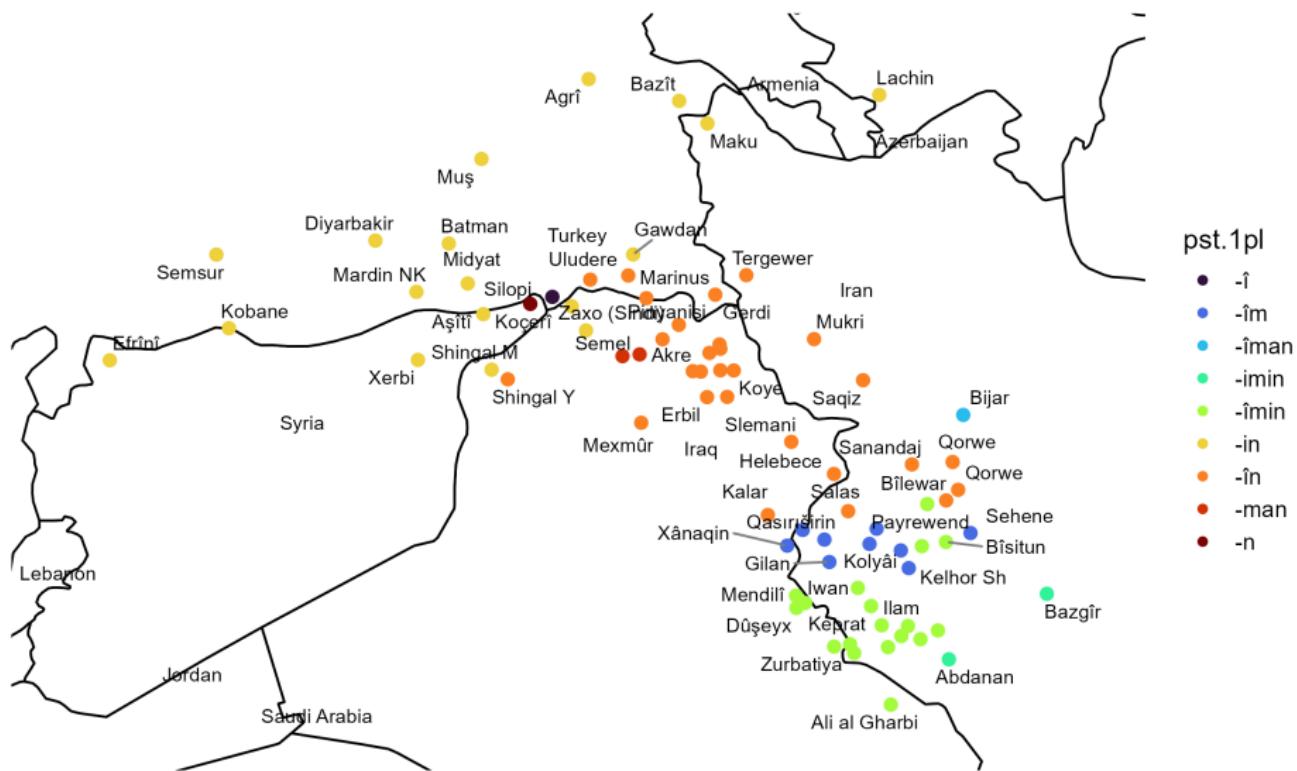
bread-the ate

'I ate the bread.'

Agreement I

	NK	CK	SK1	SK2	SK3	Lekî
1SG	-m	-m	-m	-m	-m	-m
3SG	- \hat{r}					
3SG	- \emptyset					
1PL	-n	- \hat{n}	- \hat{n}	- $\hat{m}n$	- \hat{m}	- \hat{m}
2PL	-n	-n	-n	- \hat{m}	- \hat{m}	- \hat{d}
3PL	-n	-n	-n	-n	-n	-n

Agreement II



Zor supastan ekem!

Vielen Dank!

Thank you much!

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