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## Greeting a guest in Bashkardi

Agnes Korn

[p. 301]

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Situating Bashkardi

**1.1.1.** “Bashkardi” (Bš., ISO 639-3: bsg) is the name for a cluster of varieties of the Iranian (Ir.) branch of Indo-European spoken in the region called Bašākerd in Iran, inland from the Strait of Hormuz (see the map). The region is difficult to access even today, and information about the variety spoken there is very scarce.

The Bashkardi text presented here is from a recording made by Ilya Gershevitch (1914–2001) in Iran in 1956,<sup>1</sup> possibly in or near Rameshk, in a variety of North Bashkardi (NBš.). For the present purposes, “Bashkardi” thus refers to the recordings made by Gershevitch in 1956.

**1.1.2.** Work has been done on the varieties spoken on the coast,<sup>2</sup> and there is a draft of a dictionary of the speech of Garu (a village some 40 km to the south of Minab) prepared by Gerardo Barbera (version of September 2014).<sup>3</sup> These varieties are similar to those of Bašākerd in some respects, but different in others.

In this article, “Bashkardi” will be used in the narrower sense to refer to the region of Bašākerd proper.<sup>4</sup> One rare source is Bakhtiar Seddiqi Nejad’s MA thesis on the South Bashkardi variety of Dahwast, which also contains two sample texts in the appendix (with Persian translation, no analysis).<sup>5</sup> The only NBš. text published to date is found in Korn (2021; with English translation and some notes, no analysis).

I have been fortunate in having access to the recordings made by Ilya Gershevitch and to the materials that he left to the Ancient India and Iran Trust in Cambridge.<sup>6</sup> I also have fond memories of a visit to his house in 2012 with Nicholas Sims-Williams to meet Lisbeth Gershevitch (†2017) and listen to details from their journey to the region.

**1.1.3.** My work on the text presented here has profited from a preliminary transcription and an audio-translation into Persian by Bakhtiar Seddiqi Nejad and Behrooz Barjasteh Delforooz. I did several rounds of double-checking with the sound file to arrive at the transcription given below, and [p. 302] added the analysis, the English translation and the notes. I have also made occasional use of two boxes of Ilya Gershevitch’s vocabulary cards.

#### 1.2. Bashkardi as a cluster of dialects

There are major differences among Bashkardi varieties, particularly between what is called “North” and “South” Bashkardi, and neither of these groups is homogenous.

It has generally been assumed<sup>7</sup> that Bashkardi belongs to the Persian (South-West) sub-branch of Iranian. However, the matter might be more complicated, given the major divergence among Bashkardi varieties, and the fact that South Bashkardi agrees with Balochi (Bal.) in features such as the retention of postvocalic voiceless stops and the inherited pronominal clitics

<sup>1</sup> [i, p. 322] See Gershevitch (1959) for an account of his journey and Korn (2015) for a description of Gershevitch’s materials.

<sup>2</sup> [1] Barbera 2005; Skjærvø 1989a, 1989b; Pelevin 2010.

<sup>3</sup> [2] Cf. Barbera’s project on <https://clar.soas.ac.uk/Collection/MPI931197>

<sup>4</sup> [3] Cf. also Filippone (2006: 11, 13).

<sup>5</sup> [4] Seddiqi Nejad (2010: 301-310).

<sup>6</sup> [ii] Gershevitch also left notes for some recordings (but I have not found any for the present one); and substantial material on Bashkardi grammar etc., but since he wanted it to be destroyed after his death, I have not used it. Considering the extant material, encompassing hundreds of pages (including manuscripts indicating typesetting information such as italics or boldface, and a number of typed pages), the statement by Filippone (2006: 16) “Ilya [Gershevitch] never had it in mind to describe Bashkardi or any of its single features” seems odd to me.

<sup>7</sup> [5] Thus e.g. Skjærvø (1989b: 846).

(PC) for the plural that are not derived from the singular, while North Bashkardi agrees with Persian (P) in having postvocalic lenited stops and pronominal clitics (see 2.2.2.) where the plural is derived from the singular (e.g. PC1PL P = *mān*, NBš = *mōn*).

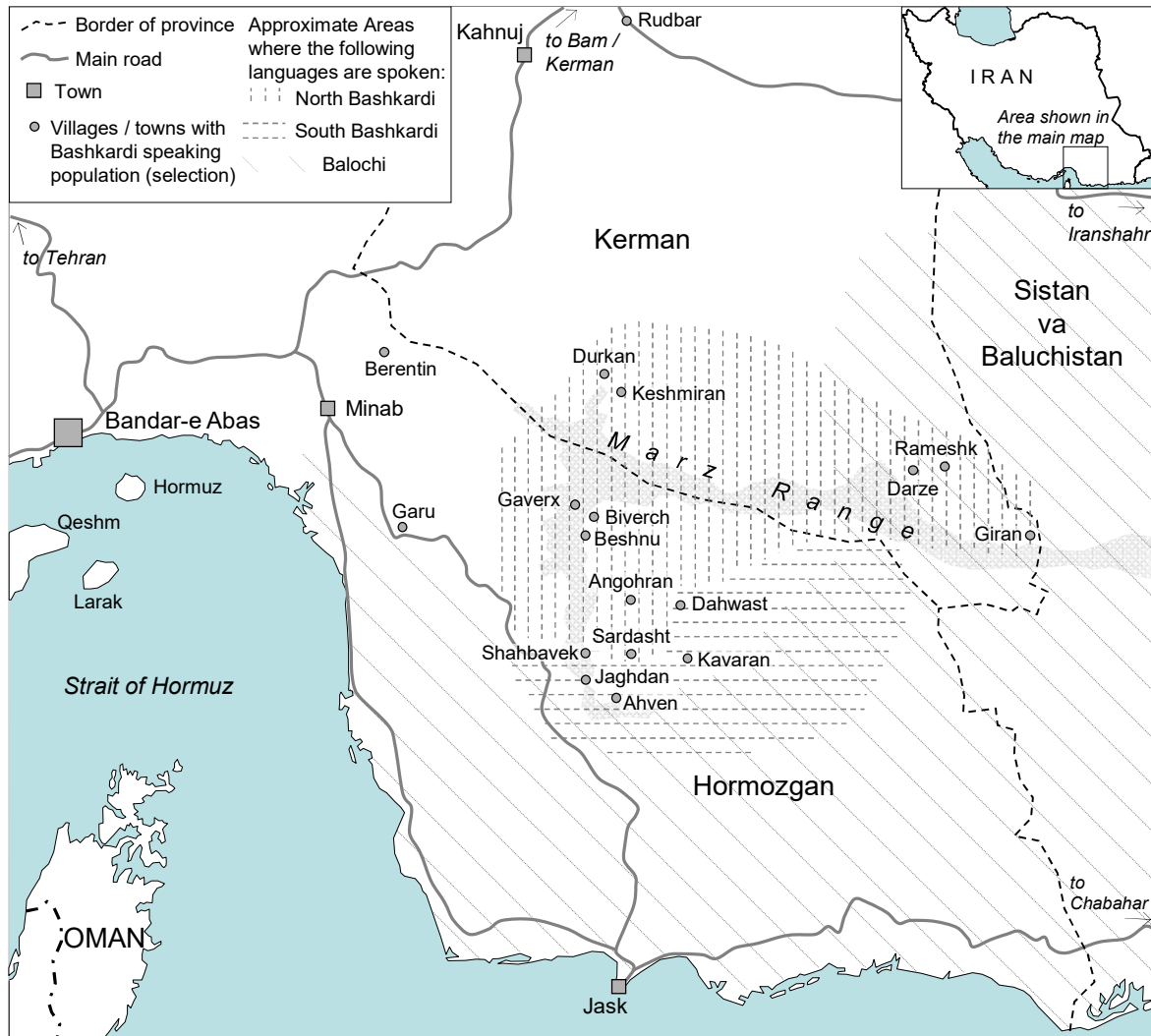


Fig. 1: Region where Bashkardi is spoken<sup>8</sup>

[p. 303]

Noteworthy instances of both North and South Bashkardi agreeing with Balochi include the present stem for ‘do’, which is *kan-* as in Balochi, thus diverging from both Persian (*kun-*, Old Persian *kunau-*) and Parthian (*kar-*);<sup>9</sup> as well as the verb ‘sit down’, which is PRS *nen-* / PST *nešt* (Bal. *nind-* / *ništ*) vs. P *nišīn-* / *nišast* and Parthian *nišīd-* / *nišast*.<sup>10</sup>

This suggests the possibility that “Bashkardi” is not a genetic entity, but the result of a small linguistic area where Ir. varieties of various origins have come together. A Balochi element would not be surprising, given that Balochi is spoken in and around the area.

Evidence for language contact with Turkic – although otherwise abundant in many parts of the Iranian plateau – has not been detected so far.

<sup>8</sup> [iii] This map is a slightly revised version of the one published in Korn (2017: 80).

<sup>9</sup> [iv] This feature has been held to be one of the isoglosses differentiating South Western Iranian (Persian and closely related varieties) from North Western Iranian (Parthian, Kurdish, Balochi, Caspian languages etc.). These isoglosses hail from the dialectal differences observed by Tedesco (1921) and others in the Manichean fragments (differentiating Middle Persian from Parthian) which have been held to be valid as isoglosses for the subgrouping of Western Iranian. This is methodologically highly problematic (see the discussion in Korn 2016: 406–411) as some features mentioned by Tedesco are not suitable as isoglosses, while other potential characteristics have been disregarded because they do not constitute a difference between Middle Persian and Parthian. Also, there are features where Western Iranian shows more than two outcomes, as is the case of the present stem of the verb ‘do’.

<sup>10</sup> [v] For details about this verb, see sentences (2) and (14) of the text.

## 2. Elements of Bashkardi grammar

The following notes limit themselves to those parts of the grammar of North Bashkardi (NBš) needed for understanding the text and what is not clear from the glosses or from the reader's knowledge of Persian.

### 2.1. Phonology

**2.1.1.** As in many other minority languages of Iran, the (historically) short vowels /i/ and /u/ are pronounced as *e*, *o* as in Persian.

Historical /ā/ is likewise pronounced as in Persian; I am noting it as *ā̇*. Characteristic of North Bashkardi is a fronting of historical /ō, ū/ to *ū*, and a diphthongisation of /ū/ to *ue* and of /ī, ē/ to *ie*.<sup>11</sup> This is also the case in our text, but there is a certain amount of variation, and variants with monophthong occur, too (cf. e. g. the variation *har-čie* / *har-čī* 'anything' in (22) and (23)).<sup>12</sup>

I am not sure at present whether vowel length is distinctive; for the time being, I am marking vowels as long where this would be expected historically (and where I hear them as long), except in the cases just mentioned (which all reflect historical long vowels).

**Table 1:** Vowel correspondences of Bashkardi and Persian

	(historical) long vowels				(historical) short vowels				
Middle Persian, Parthian	<i>ī</i>   <i>ē</i>	<i>ā</i>	<i>ō</i>	<i>ū</i>	<i>i</i>	( <i>e</i> )	<i>a</i>	( <i>o</i> )	<i>u</i>
North Bashkardi	<i>ī</i> , <i>ē</i> , <i>ie</i>	<i>ā̇</i> ( <i>ō</i> , <i>ū</i> / <i>_n, m</i> )	<i>ū</i> , <i>ü</i>	<i>ū</i> , <i>ü</i> , <i>ue</i> , <i>ī</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i> , <i>a</i> , <i>o</i>		<i>o</i> , <i>u</i> , <i>e</i>	
Fārsī	<i>ī</i>	<i>ā̇</i> [ā̇]		<i>ū</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i> , <i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>o</i>	

**2.1.2.** Another characteristic feature of North Bashkardi is the change of postvocalic *d* to *r*, occurring e.g. in *ham-orā* 'there' (14) in our text (Bal. *ōd(ā)*, Avestan *auuaḍa*).<sup>13</sup>

Loanwords are adjusted to the phonology of Bashkardi. For instance, Arabic/Persian *q* is rendered by *k*, as in *karz* (P *qarḏ*) 'loan' in (24), *kabūl* (P *qabūl*) 'acceptance' in (26) and *mantaka* (P *manṭaqa*) 'region' in (3).<sup>14</sup>

**2.1.3.** Nasal vowels also occur; they are allophones of the corresponding combination of vowel + *n*. To some extent, the distribution is as might be expected, i.e. *mon* 'I' if a vowel follows and *mō* elsewhere (see (3)–(4)), but there is a certain amount of variation here as well (*mō* also occurs in front of a vowel, see in (8) and (11)).<sup>15</sup> [p. 304]

Another phenomenon that may be described as sandhi is the variation of forms with word-final consonant if a vowel follows, but without elsewhere. This is the case for *tou* / *tour* (in *četo* 'how' (46)), *ha* / *hast* 'exists' and some of the verb endings (see **Table 2**), e.g. *yāw a-yāw-z* and *a-dah-an* in (16) 'they bring water [and] give [it to me]', with the full form of the ending being triggered by the following vowel. The same applies to *a-kan-t* (19) vs. *a-kan* (47) 'he does' (see also **2.3.1.**).

In some words, the expected final consonant seems to be dropped generally in *har-ka* (P *har-kas*) 'anyone'.

<sup>11</sup> [vi] While fronting of *ū* to *ü* is found in Ir. languages in contact with Turkic such as Zazaki and Caucasian Tat, it also occurs in some others such as Sistani (cf. Okati, Ahangar & Jahani 2009), and the *ī* systematically found for *ū* in some of Southern Balochi is likely to have developed via *ü* as well. A diphthongisation of Ir. *ē*, *ō* (but not of *ī*, *ū*) to *ie*, *ue*, respectively, is also found in some Bal. varieties, viz. in the so-called Lashari dialect (spoken in and around Iranshahr and Bampur), and, according to Okati (2012: 127–133, 210–212) in Khash.

<sup>12</sup> [vii] Such a variation in a dialect that in principle has these diphthongs is also noted by Okati (2012: 127–133) for the Bal. variety of Khash.

<sup>13</sup> [viii] Such a change is also found in Taleshi and Caucasian Tat. For a survey of the phenomenon in Ir. languages in general, see Édel'man (2006).

<sup>14</sup> [ix] The same phenomenon is found in Balochi, and in a number of Turkic languages.

<sup>15</sup> [x] There is also a variant *ma* (42).

## 2.2. Nouns, pronouns and alignment<sup>16</sup>

**2.2.1.** As in Persian, there is no distinction of case and gender. Directional prepositions (NBš *a*, *ei* ‘to’) may be used to mark the direct and indirect object in the PRESENT and the PAST domains (see below). There is also a directional marker *-â* (not occurring in our text). However, these are used only occasionally, and many nouns and pronouns are unmarked in any syntactic role.<sup>17</sup>

The *ezafe* (EZ) is frequently used, but there are also instances without *ezafe*, particularly when the possessor is a pronoun (cf. *dast=e mon* (4) vs. *dast mon* (6) hand(=EZ) I ‘my hand’ and *manzel mon* (27) ‘my home’).

As in other Ir. languages, there is a clitic *=î* (also *=ie* in our text), which I call “marker of specificity” for the purposes of Bashkardi.<sup>18</sup>

**2.2.2.** Except for the occasional use of the elements just mentioned, the [intransitive] subject, [transitive] agent and patient are all unmarked, i.e. there is neutral alignment.

In the PAST domain (i.e. in clauses with a verb form based on the past stem), which historically had ergative alignment, the pronominal clitics / enclitic pronouns (which historically are forms in the oblique case) are used very frequently referring to the agent of a transitive verb in the PAST domain, even if the agent is also expressed by a noun phrase. However, this is not as systematic as in Sorani, where, as argued by Jügel,<sup>19</sup> the clitics have developed into subject agreement.

In the PRESENT domain (clauses with a verb form derived from the present stem), the pronominal clitics may be used for the direct or indirect object.

**Table 2:** North Bashkardi pronouns and verbal endings ( / copula where different)

		full pronouns	pronominal clitics	endings (INFL) / COP
SG	1	<i>mo(n), mō, ma</i>	<i>=(o/a)m</i>	<i>-om / =om, =un</i>
	2	<i>to</i>	<i>=(e)t</i>	<i>-î; IMP -∅</i>
	3	DEM1: <i>î/ie, hamî/hamie, hamē</i> DEM2: <i>ye, âye, â, hamâ</i>	<i>=(e/a/i)h, =i, =e</i>	<i>-e(t), -t / =∅, =e, =i</i>
PL	1	<i>mâ</i>	<i>=mōn</i>	<i>-în</i>
	2	<i>šomâ</i>	<i>=tōn</i>	<i>-î(d) / -ie</i>
	[p. 305] 3	DEM2: <i>âûn, hamâōn</i>	<i>=šân, =šōn</i>	<i>-en(d), -an(d)</i>

## 2.3. Verbs

**2.3.1.** The verb system is based on the opposition of the present (PRS) and the past (PST) stem, the latter of which triggers post-ergative alignment in the sense described in 2.2.2. The perfect is derived from the PST with the suffix *-eh* (and variants).

As in Balochi, certain frequent verbs have a 3<sup>rd</sup> singular ending *-t* instead of *-e(t)*,<sup>20</sup> of which *a-kan-t* ‘does’ is found in our text (see also 2.1.3.).

**2.3.2.** Similar to the nominal system, affixes are not used entirely systematically in the verbal system. As in Middle Persian, Parthian and the more archaic Balochi varieties, the unprefixated present stem may be used in present-future and modal functions.

<sup>16</sup> [xi] See Korn (2017) for more details about the nominal system of Bashkardi.

<sup>17</sup> [xii] This is one of the crucial differences between the Bashkardi of 1956 and of today, where, judging by the material quoted in Seddiqi Nejad (2010), definite direct objects are regularly marked (probably on the model of P =*râ*), either by *-a* or by the preposition *ba*.

<sup>18</sup> [xiii] This term refers to the stage III of the grammaticalisation chain of a numeral ‘one’ into an article suggested by Heine (1997: 72f.); at this stage, the element introduces new entities into the discourse, and marks participants known to the speaker, but not to the hearer and expected to be mentioned again; its use is confined to singular countable nouns.

<sup>19</sup> [6] Jügel (2009: 152–156).

<sup>20</sup> [xiv] For this phenomenon, see Gershevitch (1970).

A prefix *a-* (glossed IPFV) may be used to mark a form as present (going on in this moment, or occurring habitually). The prefix is also found on forms where from a Persian perspective one would expect a subjunctive; in our text, this is the case e.g. in sentence (40). It seems possible to me that there are two prefixes *a-* with different etymologies, one marking aspect and the other one marking mood.

The (stressed) prefix *be-* (glossed IRR because it is used for both the subjunctive and the imperative as in Persian) is also found on modal forms. There is also a progressive; it is based on the infinitive and likewise has a prefix *a-*;<sup>21</sup> it is rare and does not occur in our text, surely because its function is to express something that is going on right here and now, for which there is no context in our text.<sup>22</sup>

The negative prefix *na-* and the prohibitive *ma-* likewise attract the accent. *na-* in combination with the prefix *a-* yields *nâ-* in North Bashkardi (see (26)), but *a-n-* in South Bashkardi.

**2.3.3.** Unlike Persian, but like Balochi and many other Ir. languages, there is no verb ‘to have’ in Bashkardi, and possession is expressed by a construction ‘to/for me X exists’ for ‘I have X’.<sup>23</sup> In Bashkardi, the construction typically uses the pronominal clitics indicating the possessor, and the existential verb *hast / ha* ‘exists’ (negated: *nî / nie* ‘does not exist’) as predicate. Our text presents several instances of this construction: (10), (20), (25), (36), (39), and (47)–(48).

### 3. Text<sup>24</sup>

#### 3.1. Introduction

Unlike some other interviewees, who were intimidated by having to talk to a 1950s-style tape recorder (probably the first they saw in their lives), and the presence of a foreigner, and did not quite know what to say, the present speaker does not seem to feel uncomfortable in the unusual setting. He might be speaking more slowly than he usually would, but his speech is coherent throughout the text and largely without pause or false starts.

Judging from the confident voice, and the way he would expect to be treated when staying with someone as their guest, the speaker is a high-rank person. The name Mir Haji Kamrani on Gershevitch’s list of tracks on his tapes appears to refer to him, the two elements Mir and Haji confirming his high status (see also 4.2. below). [p. 306]

If the speaker is Mir Haji Kamrani, the place of recording is Rameshk by Gershevitch’s list of tracks on his tapes.

We do not know who was present in the moment of recording aside from the speaker and Ilya Gershevitch. Given that the speaker seems to be a high-ranking person, one might expect that members of his household and/or other inhabitants of the village were present. The use of the pronoun ‘you.PL’ in (46) could imply that Lisbeth Gershevitch was likewise present (see note in 4.2. E.).

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<sup>21</sup> [xvi] The prefix might be identical to the aspect-marking *a-*, or to the directional preposition *a* (see 2.2.1.). The latter solution is suggested by a parallel progressive found in South Bashkardi, whose prefix *be-* is particularly likely to be a directional preposition (see Korn & Suleymanov 2017). This form would then be parallel to progressives / inchoatives based on locational constructions (“be in the situation of doing sth. / enter the situation...”). Such patterns are called “Turkic-type [p. 323] locative progressive” by Windfuhr (2009: 26) and are indeed particularly common in Ir. (and non-Ir.) languages of NW Iran and Azerbaijan (Vafaeian 2018: 141–198), but also occur in Ir. languages outside the area such as Bashkardi.

<sup>22</sup> [xvi] This account differs from previous descriptions (Skjærvø 1989b: 848), which call the progressive “continuous present tense” and do not discuss the functions of the prefixed vs. unprefixed forms.

<sup>23</sup> [xvii] This is the inherited situation for Indo-European languages (where any verb ‘to have’ is a secondary development), and it is common in many other languages. In Turkic languages, the possessor is typically in the genitive (or expressed by a possessive pronoun, but the dative is possible in certain contexts, and there are also structures with the possessor in the locative+ (Irina Nevskaya, p.c.).

<sup>24</sup> [xviii] The text is no. NBš\_B3t27.2 in our numbering (track 27, min. 2:30ff. of soundfile). The “min. 3:55” noted in Korn (2017: 97) is an error.



### 3.2. Glossed text

The section titles “A.” etc. divide the text into the various phases of the imagined situation (see 4.2. for socio-cultural comments on these).

Overall, the speaker articulates rather clearly, but he hardly makes a pause, and the intonation is rather even. Sentence boundaries are thus not always clear, and alternatives to the ones I have chosen are certainly possible.

The glosses cite the general meaning of a given word rather than a specific meaning in the given context; an exception to this are items that are used in more than one word class (e.g. *sar*, which is a noun ‘head’ and an adverb/preposition ‘on’).

A.

1 *salâmon-alaikom*,  
(greeting)

[When I meet someone, I will say:] “Salamun-alaikum.”

2 *âye ke nešt=a a-gue:*  
DEM2 SUB sit.PST=COP.PST.3SG IPFV-say.PRS.3SG  
*alaikom-assalâm yállâh.*  
(greeting) (greeting)

The one who is sitting says: “Alaikum-assalam, yallah.”

3 *a-yâ ba râhger=e mǔ*  
IPFV-come.PRS.3SG to welcome=EZ I  
*ke gozer=e mantaka am.*  
SUB big=EZ region COP1SG

He comes to greet me because I am in a high position.

4 *a-yâ dast=e mon a-bues-e.*  
IPFV-come.PRS.3SG hand=EZ I IPFV-kiss.PRS-3SG

He comes [and] kisses my hand.

5 *aga âdam=e xǔb=ie bǔ,*  
if human=EZ good=SPC become.SBJV.3SG  
*mǔ ham badal dast=ah a-bues-om*  
I also exchange hand=PC3SG IPFV-kiss.PRS-1SG

If he is a good man, I kiss his hand in exchange.

[p. 307]

6 *aga na, kam-pâya=ie bǔ,*  
if no of\_low\_rank=SPC become.SBJV.3SG  
*hamâ dast mǔn=e bues-e*  
DEM2 hand I=? kiss.PRS-3SG

If not, [if] he is someone of low status, [only] he kisses my hand.

7 *â wur a-deh-i: xwašâl bǔd-ih=ī?*  
DEM2 out IPFV-give.PRS-3SG healthy become.PST-PRF=COP2SG

He adds: “Have you been fine?”

8 *mǔ a-go-m: xwašâl, to xwašâl ī?*  
I IPFV-say.PRS-1SG healthy you.SG healthy COP2SG

I say: “[I’m] fine, are you fine?”

9 *a-go: xwašâl*  
IPFV-say.PRS.3SG healthy

He says: “[I’m] fine.

- 10 *če ehwâl=et ha?*  
which news=PC2SG exist.PRS.3SG  
What news do you have?”
- 11 *mõ a-go-m:*  
I IPFV-say.PRS-1SG  
*hēč ehwâl=ī nie ba-joz salâmatī;*  
nothing news=SPC NEG.COP.3SG except\_for health  
I say: “There’s no news except for health.
- 12 *to ehwâl=ie?*  
you.SG news=SPC  
[What are] your news?”
- 13 *k’ â a-go: ehwâl=e bad nie*  
SUB DEM2 IPFV-say.PRS.3SG news=EZ bad NEG.COP.3SG  
*ba-joz salâmatī=i âgâ=m.*  
except\_for health=EZ sir=PC1SG  
and he says: “There’s no bad news except for the health of my lord  
(if you’re fine, all is well).”

**B.**

- 14 *bād=ah nen-en ham-orâ yâr-en čelīm*  
later=PC3SG sit\_down.PRS-3PL EMPH-there bring.PRS-3PL waterpipe  
*sar a-kan-an dah-en barâ=i mõ,*  
on IPFV-do.PRS-3PL give.PRS-3PL for I  
Then they sit down there, bring the water pipe, start [it and] give [it] to me,

[p. 308]

- 15 *yâw a-yâr-and a-dah-en,*  
water IPFV-bring.PRS-3PL IPFV-give.PRS-3PL  
they bring water [and] give [it to me].
- 16 *čelīm a-kaš-om, yâw a-yâr-and*  
waterpipe IPFV-pull.PRS-1SG water IPFV-bring.PRS-3PL  
*a-dah-an, sar dast a-ger-en*  
IPFV-give.PRS-3PL on hand IPFV-take.PRS-3PL  
I smoke the pipe; they bring water and give [it to me]; they greet [me].
- 17 *mon a... yâw-on a-xwar-om.*  
I (false start) water-PL IPFV-eat.PRS-1SG  
I... I drink the water.

**C.**

- 18 *čânk a-b-en –*  
busy IPFV-become.PRS-3PL  
They become busy (start preparations for the meal):
- 19 *če meil=t a-kan-t paim be-kan-īn*  
what desire=PC2SG IPFV-do.PRS-3SG ready SBJV-do.PRS-1PL  
*nâštâ=t, yâ čâšt=et?*  
breakfast=PC2SG or lunch=PC2SG  
“What would you like us to prepare for you as breakfast, or lunch?”
- 20 *ma a-gõ: har-čī=tōn ha biečâra-ūn,*  
I IPFV-say.PRS.1SG anything=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG helpless-PL  
I say: “Whatever you have, you unfortunate ones,



- 21 *paim kan-ie be-dah-ie.*  
ready do.PRS-IMP.2PL IRR-give.PRS-IMP.2PL  
prepare [it and] give [it to me].
- 22 *har-čī ke dar, mehmōn har-ka ha,*  
anything SUB in guest anyone exist.PRS.3SG  
*xūna har-čī ha.*  
house anything exist.PRS.3SG  
Whatever [is] in [the house], [is for] whosoever [is] the guest;  
whatever [is] in the house (?).
- 23 *har-čie=tōn ha,*  
anything=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG  
Whatever you have [in the house]...
- 24 *karz ma-kan-ie, xwâr-o-badbaxt a-b-ie*  
debt PROH-do.PRS-IMP.2PL miserable IPFV-become.PRS-2PL [p. 309]  
– Don’t borrow [from others]; you would become wretched and miserable. –
- 25 *šīr=ie=tōn ha, naīnz=ie=tōn ha,*  
milk=SPC=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG cheese(?)=SPC=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG  
*bākliek=ie=tōn ha yâ murg=ie=tōn ha,*  
bean=SPC=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG or chicken=SPC=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG  
... [if] you have yoghurt, if you have cheese (?),  
if you have beans, or if you have a chicken...
- 26 *guespand-ōn gonâh=ī;*  
sheep-PL sin=SPC  
*kabūl nâ-kan âye guespand*  
acceptance NEG.IPFV-do.PRS.3SG DEM2 sheep  
[Offering] Sheep [is] a sin; he (the guest) doesn’t accept his sheep.”
- 27 *â a-gue: na, to âğâ=i mon ī,*  
DEM2 IPFV-say.PRS.3SG no you.SG sir=EZ I COP2SG  
*manzel mon âht-ih=ī.*  
house I come.PST-PRF=COP2SG  
He says: “No, you are my lord, you have come to my house.
- 28 *čapešt=ī a-koš-om*  
goat kid=SPC IPFV-kill.PRS-1SG  
I will kill a goat kid.”
- 29 *har-čī mon a-g-om: ma-koš-Ø,*  
anything I IPFV-say.PRS-1SG PROH-kill.PRS-IMP.2SG  
*â a-koš-i=e*  
DEM2 IPFV-kill.PRS-3SG=PC3SG  
However much I say: “Don’t kill [it]!”, he will kill it
- 30 *tâ weid-ī=e seil ..., ke košt-eh=e*  
until when=EZ look SUB kill.PST-PRF=PC3SG  
until [I] see... that he has killed [it].
- D.**
- 31 *a-gū: hâlâ ke košt=mūn,*  
IPFV-say.PRS.3SG now SUB kill.PST=PC1PL

*kabâb*                      *a-xwar-î*                      *sâhob*  
 grilled\_meat                      IPFV-eat.PRS-2SG                      sir  
 He says: “Now that we killed it, will you have meat, sir?”

32 *ma a-g-om: hâ, hâlâ*  
 I IPFV-say.PRS-1SG yes now  
*ke košt-e=tôn kabâb kan-ie* [p. 310]  
 SUB kill.PST-PRF=PC2PL grilled\_meat do.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 I say: “Yes, now that you killed it, grill it,

33 *del o jager=eh, pahlû=h, guerakban=eh,*  
 heart and liver=PC3SG rib=PC3SG kidney(?)=PC3SG  
 its heart and liver, its side (ribs?), its kidneys?;

34 *o pieg=eh bo-patâ-ie guerak-ôn=eh,*  
 and fat=PC3SG IRR-wrap.PRS-IMP.2PL kidney(?)=PL=PC3SG  
*kabâb kan-ie* ,  
 grilled\_meat do.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 and wrap its kidneys(?) in fat [and] grill [them],

35 *nemek=šün be-zan-ie,*  
 salt=PC3PL IRR-hit.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 salt them.

36 *aga torošî=tün ha, torošî=šün be-zan-ie*  
 if sour\_fruit=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG sour\_fruit=PC3PL IRR-hit.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 If you have *torošî*, add *torošî* to them [the insides, or the pieces of meat in general].

37 *dût na-ger-en, na-süz-en*  
 smoke NEG-take.PRS-3PL NEG-burn.PRS-3PL  
 They shouldn’t get smoked, they shouldn’t burn,

38 *ya čand tâ tanekî nâzok xōb ham be-kan-ie.*  
 one some piece (type of bread) thin good also IRR-do.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 Make also some pieces of nice thin Taneki-bread.

39 *aga tanūr=tôn ha, tanūrî... tanūrî,*  
 if oven=PC2PL exist.PRS.3SG (type of bread) (type of bread)  
*tanūr=tôn nie, rû tou kan-ie,*  
 oven=PC2PL NEG.COP.3SG on hot\_stone do.PRS-IMP.2PL  
 If you have a Tanur-oven, [it will be] a Tanur-bread, a Tanur-bread;  
 if you don’t have a Tanur, bake it on a hot stone

40 *be-yâr-ie ke gwar=e hamie kabâb-ôn a-xwar-om*  
 IRR-bring-IMP.2PL SUB besides DEM1 grilled\_meat-PL IPFV-eat.PRS-1SG  
 [and] bring it [so that] I can eat it with the meat.”

**E.**

41 *hormâ a-xwar-î sâhob?*  
 date IPFV-eat.PRS-2SG sir  
 [Later, he will ask:] “Will you eat dates, sir?”

42 *ma a-gō: hâ,*  
 I IPFV-say.PRS.1SG yes [p. 311]  
 I say: “Yes,

- 43 *mō čāī nā-xwar-om, čāī-xwār nah=am,*  
 I tea NEG.IPFV-eat.PRS-1SG tea-drinker NEG=COP1SG  
 I don't drink tea; I'm not a tea-drinker.
- 44 *mō xormā-xwār om.*  
 I date-eater COP1SG  
 I'm a date-eater.
- 45 *meil=e mō giešter ba xormā ye,*  
 desire=EZ I more to date COP3SG  
 My taste rather goes to dates.
- 46 *mels-e ke šomā če-tou čāī a-xwar-ie,*  
 like SUB you.PL how tea IPFV-eat.PRS-2PL  
 For instance: like when you drink tea,
- 47 *aga čāī=tūn na-bū*  
 if tea=PC2PL NEG-become.SBJV.3SG  
*sar=tūn dard a-kan.*  
 head=PC2PL pain IPFV-do.PRS.3SG  
 If you don't have tea, you will get a headache.
- 48 *mō aga xormā=m na-bū*  
 I if date=PC1SG NEG-become.SBJV.3SG  
*sar=om dard a-kan*  
 head=PC1SG pain IPFV-do.PRS.3SG  
 [But as for] me, if I don't have dates, I will get a headache!

## 4. Commentary

### 4.1. Linguistic notes

#### General remarks:

The text is overall narrated in the present. As it presents a hypothetical situation, the verb forms (most of them with prefix *a-*, see 2.3.2.) cannot refer to something occurring here and now, but can be interpreted as habitual, or as a prototypical situation. Specifically in the section on the roasting of the goat kid, however, the amount of detail given rather suggests a “real” present tense, even if the situation is hypothetical.

Several examples of the post-ergative construction occur (see 2.2.2.); they use the pronominal clitic to refer to the agent (30)–(32).

[p. 312]

#### Notes for individual sentences:

(2) • As in Persian, *ke* may introduce all types of subordinates and also quoted speech, and it is enclitic (as is Turkish and Azeri *ki*), i.e. if the subordinate clause precedes the main clause, *ke* is placed after the first element.

• The verb ‘sit down’ is PRS *nen-* / PST *nešt* in Bashkardi and Balochi (PRS *nind-* / PST *ništ, nist*), see 1.2. The PST is likely to derive from the zero-grade form *\*ni-šd-ta*<sup>25</sup> while P *nišast* goes back to the full grade (*\*ni-šad-ta*). For the present stem, see (14).

(3) • For *mantaka* see 2.1.2.

<sup>25</sup> [xix] Thus Bartholomae (1890: 553) for the Bal. form.

• *gozer* means ‘big’ and is derived from *\*wazrka-*, thus a cognate of P *buzurg*, by Gershevitch.<sup>26</sup> The implication here obviously is that the speaker is considered to be of high position, even if it is not clear whether ‘big’ is meant to refer to a certain office (one is tempted to think of P *gazīr* ‘vazir, superintendent, collector of revenue’). See (40) for another development of *\*wa-*.

(4) • Note that *dast* ‘hand’ vs. Avestan *zasta-* (Sanskrit *hasta-*) does not say anything about the sub-branch of Iranian a given language belongs to: *dast* is also used in Ir. languages for which one would expect *zast*, viz. in Parthian, Kurmanji, Balochi etc., vs. the distribution of *z/d* e.g. in *zān-* vs. P *dān-* ‘know’. It is obvious that the Persian form was indeed borrowed into neighbouring languages (including non-Ir. ones), but a form with *d-* is also implied by East Iranian (Sogdian *δst-*, Pashto *lās* etc.) and Nuristani (Ashkun *dust* etc.) languages,<sup>27</sup> and it seems unlikely that all these languages have borrowed the Persian form. Some specific phenomenon thus seems to have taken place in this word, e.g. a dissimilation *\*dzasta-* > *\*dast-* or *\*zasta-* > *\*dast-*.<sup>28</sup>

(5) • The PC =*ah* is only faintly audible.

(6) • Note the variation *dast=e mon* in (4) and the form without EZ here (similarly *manzel mon* in (29)), cf. 2.2.1.

• The function of the =*e* in *mon=e* is not quite clear. If it is SPC or PC, the sense might be roughly ‘the one who kisses my hand, [I don't do anything particular to him]’. Alternatively, it might be a variant of the prefix *a-* for the following verb.

• *hamā* probably refers to the man (contrastive focus) whom the speaker meets (*hamā* then the subject of the sentence) rather than to the hand (‘he kisses that hand [of mine]’).

(7) • The PRS of ‘give’ is *deh-* or *dah-* (see (16)) in Bashkardi as in Persian; the form expected for Persian from Ir. *\*dadā-*, viz. *day-*, may be seen in Balochi.<sup>29</sup>

• *wur deh-* (lit. ‘out/up give’) usually means ‘throw’, and with regard to the intonation, the sentence appears to belong with what follows rather than with the preceding sentence. I assume that this complex predicate is meant more literally here as ‘add (put on)’.

(10) • For *ha* ‘exists’, see 2.1.3.

This is the first instance of the possessive construction (‘to X is Y’ = ‘X has Y’, see 2.3.3.) in our text. [p. 313]

(11) • For *nie* ‘does not exist’, see 2.1.3.

• Note the variation of the SPC, which is =*ī* here, but =*ie* in (5), (6), etc.

(14) • The present stem of ‘sit down’ *nen-* (see (2) for the PST) might be from Ir. *\*ni-šnd-*,<sup>30</sup> showing the change *šn > n(n)* typical for Balochi (e.g. *\*turšn > tunn* ‘thirst’ vs. P *tīšna* ‘thirsty’), and (in Bashkardi) a subsequent change *nd > n* that recalls a parallel change in Manichean Middle Persian (*band-* ‘bind’ > MPM *benn-*).<sup>31</sup>

• For PRS *kan-* ‘do’, see 1.2.

• As in Persian and other Ir. languages, *sar* ‘head’ is also used as an adverb (‘up’) and a preposition (‘on’); I understand *sar kan-* in the sense of P *sar kardan* ‘begin’ and assume that the hosts start the water pipe and then give it to the guest.

• For *ham-orā* cf. *yerā* ‘here’, rendering Old Ir. *\*d* with *r* (Avestan *auuaḍa*, *iḍa*, Balochi *ōd(ā)*, *iḍā*), see 2.1.2.

<sup>26</sup> [7] Gershevitch (1965: 12-13, n. 4).

<sup>27</sup> [8] Morgenstierne (2003: 45).

<sup>28</sup> [xx] Klingenschmitt (2000: 200f. note 2) suggests that the Proto-Iranian output of PIE *\*g<sup>(h)</sup>*, conventionally noted “\*z”, was pronounced [dʒ], and that *\*dzasta-* would have undergone a dissimilation to *\*dasta-* while in the oral transmission of the Avestan text, *\*dzasta-* yielded *zasta-*.

<sup>29</sup> [xxi] See Korn (2010: 105) for discussion.

<sup>30</sup> [xxii] For suggestions regarding the P PRS *nišm-* see Korn (2005: 127).

<sup>31</sup> [xxiii] For Balochi sound changes, see Korn (2005) and Geiger (1891).

(15) • It is possible that this sentence describes the tradition of offering water to a guest in general while the repetition in (16) refers to the actual (even if hypothetical) situation.

(16) • *yāw* ‘water’ (South Bš *yāp*) shows an unetymological *y-*; such a *y-* is also found in the Lāšārī dialect of Balochi<sup>32</sup> (*y-āp*).

(17) • Note the water being treated as PL as it would be in Balochi.

- The vocalic element *a*, which I had interpreted as a directional preposition marking the definite direct object<sup>33</sup> now rather sounds like a false start to me, removing the evidence of marking of an inanimate direct object by a preposition in the 1956 data.

(19) • The ‘or’ might perhaps mean: Depending on the time of the day, they will say one or the other.

- For *čāšt*, cf. P *čāšt* ‘time between sunrise and midday; meal eaten at this time of the day’, Armenian *čaš* ‘breakfast’; for *nāštā*, cf. P *nāsitā* ‘fasting, breakfast’.
- For *kan-t* ‘does’, see 2.1.3.

(20) • Considering the 2PL verb forms in the next sentence, *biečâra-ūn* ‘helpless’ appears to be meant as an address. Why the speaker says so is not clear to me, maybe his idea is that they are not obliged to offer him a costly meal, which would agree with the various indications that he is of very high rank.

(22) • For *har-ka* ‘anyone’, see 2.1.3.

(23) • Note the variation *har-čī* / *har-čie* ‘anything’ similar to the variation of the SPC =*ie/ī* noted for (11).

(24) • For *karz* ‘debt’ see 2.1.2.

- The inherited prohibitive prefix *ma-* used on imperatives (see also *ma-koš* ‘don’t kill’ in (29)) is preserved in Bashkardi (as in Balochi) while it is no longer used in Persian. The subjunctive uses the normal negation prefix *na-*, as in (37). [p. 314]
- *a-bie* is used here in a sentence of conditional meaning (‘if you borrow money, you will / would become wretched’), see 2.2.2.

(25) • *šīr* ‘milk’ is often also used for dairy products such as yoghurt.

- *bākliek* are broad beans; in Balochi, they are called *bā(n)klē(n)k* / *bā(n)klī(n)k*, with unetymological nasals<sup>34</sup> vs. P *bāqilā*’.

- The meaning of *nāinz* is unknown to me; considering the series ‘milk/yoghurt, X, beans, chicken’, it might refer to cheese or to vegetables.

(26) • For *kabūl* ‘acceptance’ see 2.1.2.

- For *nā-* see 2.3.2.

(27) • Note *āht* ‘came’ vs. *yāw* ‘water’ (15)–(17) with unetymological *y-*. The past stem of ‘come’ recalls Balochi *āht* / *āxt* / *ātk* and is likely to go back to *\*ā-gata-* as does Parthian *āγad* (vs. P *āmad* from *\*ā-gmata-*).

The perfect may be meant in a resultative sense: you have come = you are here, so you are my guest.

(28) • *čapešt* is a young male goat (depending on the source, up to six months or one year).

- *a-koš-om* ‘I will kill’ is a good example of the verb prefixed with *a-* used for the future.

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<sup>32</sup> [xxiv] See note 11 [vi] for another feature shared by the speaker’s variety of North Bashkardi and the Lashari dialect of Balochi.

<sup>33</sup> [9] Korn (2017: 87).

<sup>34</sup> [xxv] The *n* in the second syllable can be due to the moderately frequent word-ending *-ēnk* (cf. Mahmoudzahi & Korn & Jahani 2019: 25, 27). It is unclear how the *ē* arose.

(29) • The verb form is not quite clear to me; the 3SG ending would be *-e(t)*; is there maybe a combination with the PC3SG (‘he kills it’) involved?

(30) • *weid-ī* ‘when’ reflects P *waxt-ī* (*ke*) ‘when’ with an irregular lenition of the consonant group as in Bal. *wahd-ē* (*ki*).

• *seil kan-* is a complex predicate meaning ‘see, discover’ which also occurs elsewhere in the recordings.

• Here, the perfect has a resultative function (as in (27)).

(30)–(32) • This passage shows typical examples of the Bashkardi ergative construction with the agent being expressed by the pronominal clitic (see 2.2.2.).

The use of the simple past in (31) might be to refer to the killing of the goat as a simple fact while the perfect in (30) and (32) could imply a resultative meaning (‘since the goat is dead [anyway]...’).

(33) • As in the case *naīnz* in the list of modest dishes in (25), the precise meaning of some parts of the goat kid is rather guessed from the context. Judging by the intonation, *pahlū-h* ‘its side’ is part of the list of body parts; it could refer to some insides or meat parts (the meanings of P *pahlū* do include ‘ribs, loin’) rather than be used as an adposition (cf. P *pahlū-yi* ‘besides’) ‘[what is at] its side’.

• *guerak* might then perhaps be other insides, potentially the kidneys, maybe a cognate of P *gurda*, even if Voskanian & Boyajian-Surenians<sup>35</sup> have NBš. *gordeg* and South Bš. *bok* for ‘kidney’, the latter somewhat recalling Turkish *böbrek*, but probably from Ir. *\*wrka-* even if the *b-* is unexpected (cf. *verx* < *\*wrka-* ‘wolf’<sup>36</sup>),<sup>37</sup> see also (40) and (45). [p. 315]

The variation *guerakban* here vs. *guerak* in (34) is likewise unclear (is there an element *ban* potentially linked to *band* ‘bind’ with a change *nd* > *n* as in *nen-* ‘sit’ (14)?).

(34) • *pieg* (Bal. *pīg*) is a cognate of P *pīh*, Avestan *pīuuah-*, Sanskrit *pīvas-* ‘fat, bacon’.

• *bo-patā-ie* could be linked to *pat-* ‘hide’ in Gershevitch’s vocabulary cards (cf. maybe P *patū* ‘woollen cloth, camlet’?), of which the form here might be a causative. Behrooz Barjasteh Delforooz remembers that traditionally, one would wrap fat around insides (P *rūdahā*).

(37) • *na-ger-en* and *na-sūz-en* (without *a-*) have subjunctive value.

(39) • *tou* corresponds to P *tāb* ‘heat’, *tāba* ‘frying pan, brick’; it shows *u/w* corresponding to P *b* as in *yāw* ‘water’ (15) vs. P *āb*. See also 4.2.

(40) • Just like *sar* ‘on’ (see (14)), the preposition *gwar=e* is based on a body part, viz. *gwar* ‘breast’ (Avestan *vahar-*, Sanskrit *uras-*, P *bar*). The word shows the sound change Ir. *\*wa-* > *gwa-*, which is typical for Balochi, while Persian changes *wa-* to *ba-*, e.g. Bal. *gwāt* ‘wind’ vs. P *bād*, Middle-Persian *wād*, Avestan and Sanskrit *vāta-*. It is not clear to me how much of the NBš. *g-* for Ir. *\*w-* is due to P or Bal. loanwords, or attributable to North Bashkardi itself (see also (33) and (45)).

From this word, Balochi derives a postposition *gwarā* ‘besides’ (*-ā* being the ending of the oblique case) while here, it is used with the *ezafe* in a structure parallel to P *pahlū-yi* (see (33)).

• The plural marking on *kabāb-ōn* might refer to the various pieces of meat and/or the insides.

• *a-xwar-om* is used in a construction where one would expect the subjunctive in Persian, see 2.2.2.

(45) • *giešter* ‘more’ (Bal. *gēš-tir*)<sup>38</sup> shows the Bal. sound change of word-initial *w-* to *g-* when a *i/ī* or *ē* follows while Persian has *b-* (P *bēštar* < Middle-Persian *wēš*), e.g. Bal. *gind-* ‘see’ vs. Parthian *wind-* (Sanskrit *vinda-*), see also (40).

<sup>35</sup> [10] Voskanian & Boyajian-Surenians (2007: 123).

<sup>36</sup> [11] Voskanian & Boyajian-Surenians (ibid.).

<sup>37</sup> [xxvii] Note that this word (Avestan *vərəδka-*, Sanskrit *vrkka-*) shows an unexpected *γ* in Sogdian *γwrđtq-*, Yaghnobi *γurkak*, etc. (Sims-Williams 1985: 178).

(46) • For *če-tou*, see 2.1.3.

(47) • *aga* ‘if’ vs. P *agar* need not show a loss of the final *-r* in Bashkardi (the word is thus not an instance of the type mentioned in 2.1.3.) since the variant *aga* is also found in Persian (and Balochi).

• *a-kan* is used here in a conditional sentence (cf. (24)).

## 4.2. Socio-cultural notes

### General remarks:

In this text, the speaker presents us an account of how an encounter on the road (presumably), the greeting formalities and an invitation for a subsequent meal would typically proceed. The text gives a good picture of traditional rural customs of hospitality. The speaker “retells” a dialogue which is hypothetical in that it is not part of the current setting, but presents a prototypical situation.

The text contains some sentences that differ in style from the surrounding passages and sound formulaic to me ((13), (22), (24)). They are difficult to understand and might be traditional sayings or proverbs.

It seems that the speaker’s name is Mir Haji Kamrani (see 4.1.), of which Mir and Haji are titles, and Kamrani is an adjective of appurtenance. In this sense, the name does not contain a personal (first) name. Name formulae in remote areas of Iran (and in Pakistan in general), have tended to be more [p. 316] flexible than those known in Europe, being composed of honorifics and affiliations to tribes or regions.<sup>39</sup>

### Notes for the individual parts:

#### A. (1)–(13) Greeting I: *ahwāl*

Without introduction, the speaker presents us with a hypothetical situation of himself meeting someone.

The dialogue that follows is a tradition called *ahwāl* (PL of *hāl* ‘situation, news’), cf. *ehwāl* (10) of our text and P *ahwāl-pursī* ‘news.PL-asking’. It serves on the one hand to exchange news in a society where traditionally communication was limited due to the remoteness of the region, and on the other hand it constitutes the opening part of meeting someone. To do this properly is an important element of traditional society in many parts of Iran. As detailed by Barker & Mengal<sup>40</sup> for Pakistanian Balochistan, the omission or attempt “to curtail” the exchange of greeting formula would be seen as rude. According to them, the person to start the conversation is either (a) the younger person, (b) the one who is riding, (c) or the passer-by towards someone “sitting by the roadside or to the occupants of a house or camp”.<sup>41</sup> The latter case (and maybe also the second one) seems to fit the hypothetical situation here. For the Baloch in Karachi, Farrell (1990: 16) states that many traditional forms of greeting not used anymore, but “still greetings and enquiries after one’s health can be quite extensive”.<sup>42</sup>

The part A. concludes with a sentence (13) that seems more formal than the preceding ones and appears to mean: Since you are well, all is fine. The formulation is reminiscent of an element of the introductory parts of letters in Bactrian, which incidentally provided a clue to the decipherment of Bactrian as they recall parallel parts of letters in Sogdian.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> [xxvii] The Bal. word is borrowed from Persian according to Gershevitch (1964: 87); whether this really needs to be so is not clear to me.

<sup>39</sup> [xxviii] For Balochistan, Badalkhan (2003) describes this situation and in what ways an individual’s name may change in the course of his/her life.

<sup>40</sup> [12] Barker & Mengal (1969: 215).

<sup>41</sup> [13] Barker & Mengal (1969: 168).

<sup>42</sup> [14] Farrell (1990: 16).

<sup>43</sup> [15] Sims-Williams (1997: 11).



στ=ομο and=PC 1SG	νιγατο hear.PST	σιδο what	το DEM	χοηο lord	λ̄ρογο healthy
[ταδο then	βα]δ=ημο happy=COP 1SG	ασιδ-ανο but-IRR	οαλο then	βαταρ=ανο happier=COP.SBJV 1SG	
καλδ-ανο when-IRR	αβο to	[το DEM	χοη]ο lord	χοαδο self	
λ̄ρογο healthy	ο̄ην-ανο see.PRS-SBJV 1SG	ναμασο praise	βαρ-ανο carry.PRS-SBJV 1SG		

“And (since) I have heard that your lordship (is) healthy, [therefore] I am [happy]; but then I would be more happy when I myself might see [your lordship] healthy (and) pay homage.”<sup>44</sup>

### B. (14)–(17) Greeting II: water and tobacco

According to our speaker, the next step prescribed by tradition for when one has a guest is to hand him water and tobacco. For Balochistan, Barker & Mengal note: “Once the formalities of greeting are completed, it is customary to offer the guest some refreshments, usually water, tea, etc. and a pipe of tobacco. The guest may refuse these if he wishes”<sup>45</sup> (scil. unlike *ahwāl*). Similarly, Pozdena<sup>46</sup>, who did [p. 317] his field-work in the Dashtiari region of Iranian Balochistan in the 1960s and 1970s, notes that water, followed by (if available) tea with milk are given to the guest after one has prepared a place for him to sit down (e.g. by spreading a mat). If there is no guest house in the village, this usually takes place next to the hut of the host or to the mosque. Thus, while part A. could take place between two people who meet (presumably on or near the road), the setting now presumably is (next to) the house of the host.

Sentence (16) seems to refer to the guest being greeted by other members of the household: The last clause (containing the polysemous *sar* ‘head’, see (14)) is an idiomatic expression ‘they greet [me]’; it is also used in Balochi (Maryam Nourzaei, p.c.). According to Bakhtiar Seddiqi Nejad, the women of the family would kiss the hands of the guest, which would be in line with (4)–(6) mentioning kissing of hands as a sign of respect. If this interpretation is correct, it is noteworthy that women are coming up to a male guest. This would be less surprising if guest is of very high rank, then more of a lord of the region than a male member of society.

### C. (18)–(30) Negotiating the terms of *mihmān-nawāzī*

This part is particularly interesting in discussing what is expected in terms of hospitality, i.e. the tradition known as *mihmān-nawāzī* in Persian and Urdu.

The dialogue starts by the guest suggesting somewhat more affordable eatables that the host might have, and he mentions dairy products and beans as a possible meal, a chicken being the maximum suggested.<sup>47</sup> It is possible that he mentions these in order for the host being able to make an advance on his suggestion and present himself as generous.

The guest’s attempts to suggest comparatively cheap food are rejected by the host (27), who insists on offering him a proper meal; the reasons he gives are that the guest is a high-rank person, and also the simple fact that he has come to his house, i.e. his status as a guest. To him, a proper meal seems to mean meat in the sense of P *gōšt* (red meat) – the chicken suggested by the guest would not do. Sentence (29) (‘And whatever I say, he will kill a goat kid for me’) highlights well the formalised nature of the hypothetical situation.

Sentence (22) sounds like a formulaic expression inserted into the narration. I take it to mean: a guest will accept anything that the hosts (who might be quite poor) are able to offer. There is also a Persian proverb to this effect, which is mentioned by Doulatabadi: “ein alter Spruch sagt: Alles, was im Haus ist, ist dem Gast genehm” (an old saying goes: Everything that is in the house is convenient for the guest).<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> [xxix] Letter xp, l. 3–5 (<http://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/iran/miran/baktr/baktcorp/baktc.htm>, similarly in other letters, which confirm the reading given here), edition and translation Sims-Williams (2007: 162f.), my glosses.

<sup>45</sup> [16] Barker & Mengal (1969: 215).

<sup>46</sup> [17] Pozdena (1978: 80).

<sup>47</sup> [xxx] Cf. Pozdena’s note (1978: 80) that at simple people’s homes, the meal will be bread with dried fish or beans.

This seems to be to be seen in connection to (24), another formulaic-sounding sentence, which is another parenthesis in the speaker's exposition of what the hosts could offer him. The point here is that one should not borrow money (or goods) in order to cater for a guest.<sup>49</sup> In this perspective, the speaker's 'anything you have' may be meant quite literally to limit expenses to what the hosts actually own (cf. the "everything that is in the house" just quoted). Indeed, in a folk tale recorded by Gershevitch a poor shepherd goes to his landlord to borrow money in order to feed a passing *darwīš*; and while one might think that the shepherd did a good deed according to the traditions of hospitality, he loses his family and house as soon as the *darwīš* leaves.

The guest rejecting the possibility of his host killing a sheep for him by calling this 'sin' (26) is likewise aimed at limiting the expenses the host should incur. Formulated as it is ('he (the guest) does [p. 318] not accept his (the host's) sheep', rather than 'I won't accept your sheep'), the sentence could be addressed to the listeners rather than be an element of the dialogue.

Overall, the negotiation in this part of the text reflects the conflicting norms of the host being supposed to offer the guest the best of what he has, and of treating any guest, important or not, to the best of his capacities, and the guest presenting himself as modest.

Traditional hospitality is proverbial in many parts of Iran (and elsewhere, of course), and in rural society, a host is obliged to feed and if necessary defend a guest with all the means he can command. Oral tradition e.g. in Balochi and Pashto preserves famous examples from tribal legends, but the tradition is by no means legendary only, and is still operating in remoter parts of the country if the case arises.

At the same time, tradition also provides for limits to the hosts' obligations, surely designed to avoid people getting into debt in order to fulfil social norms: Our speaker's insisting on 'anything you have', apparently implying 'any food that you actually own', and audibly stressing 'it is a sin' for the case that the host might offer a sheep seem to reflect this. As noted by Pozdena<sup>50</sup>, hospitality does not include anyone; a guest has to be either of high rank / tribe, or appeal to his relation to the host, even if the latter is somewhat far-fetched, such as bringing news from a relative or an acquaintance. The time one can stay and the number of meals one can expect is likewise limited (two meals and one overnight stay in Pozdena's data; if a guest stays longer, another relative or acquaintance takes over).<sup>51</sup>

#### D. (31)–(40) Cooking

In this part, the speaker gives details how he wishes to have the goat kid prepared that the host killed for him according to (29)–(30).

Unlike the preceding text, which very much seems a prototypical situation imagined by the speaker for the purpose of explaining socially expected behaviour towards a guest, the amount of detail he develops here rather elaborates on how to roast a goat kid.

There is a series of insides (heart, liver, maybe kidneys and other parts) that he would like to be grilled alongside with the meat (33)–(34); the meat is to be salted and those preparing it should make sure the pieces do not burn.

The *toroši* which the speaker suggests to add to the dish (36) does not refer to the pickled vegetables known in Persian as *turši*, but to sour fruits such as pomegranate, which are added to meat for the sour, fruity note.<sup>52</sup>

The speaker also wishes to have bread with his meal (38), which will be freshly made for the occasion. Incidentally, Gershevitch also recorded the same speaker explaining how various types of bread are made: *taneki*-bread is apparently a thin bread baked on both sides by putting it on hot stones, which are called *šak* or *tou*. As a meal on its own, it can be eaten with oil or

<sup>48</sup> [18] Doulatabadi (2009: 11).

<sup>49</sup> [xxx] While lending and borrowing as such is only *harām* if it involves interest, Persian friends confirm that one would not borrow in order to feed guests (weddings being an exception).

<sup>50</sup> [19] Pozdena (1978: 80).

<sup>51</sup> [xxxii] For Kurdistan, Omar (2005: 954) notes the saying (s.v. *mîwan* 'guest'): *masî=w mîwan ke manewe bogen deken* 'fish and guests who stay [scil. too long] stink.'

<sup>52</sup> [xxxiii] Also in Azerbaijan, *turšu* may refer to dried plums which are added to dishes to yield a sour taste (images and recipes can be found e.g. by searching for "turšu plov").

with sugar. The speaker mentions that bread is prepared by the *muelad* of the household, which, judging by the Bal. word *mōlid* ‘female servant’, would refer to lower-rank female members of the household. Who exactly prepares the goat kid in our text is not mentioned.

[p. 319]

### E. (41)–(48) Conclusion of the meal: dates and tea

The meal concludes with dates being offered to the guest. Dates were (and still are) a major product of the region, and the date palm also provides material used in everyday life. Gerardo Barbera, who collected date palm terminology in Minab and around, states: “every part of the tree has its uses in everyday life: wood, fiber and leaves provide timber and fabric for houses and fences; the leaflets are used for making ropes, cords and baskets; and the fruit provides refreshment for people and, occasionally, food for animals throughout the year”.<sup>53</sup> Activities connected to date farming provide the rhythm of the year,<sup>54</sup> and years are remembered according to whether the harvest was good or not.

The text concludes by the speaker saying that he is a date-eater while the addressee might be more of a tea-drinker. This could be addressed to Gershevitch, or maybe to him and his wife, or to the British in general represented by Gershevitch. This would explain the use of the plural pronoun *šomā* ‘you’: Unlike Persian, which uses this pronoun for polite address (similar to French *vous*), such a use is not usually found in the more remote minority languages such as Bashkardi and Balochi, where *to* ‘you.SG’ is employed to address a single person also in formal contexts, and in another recording, Gershevitch is addressed by *to* by the speaker.<sup>55</sup>

It is not clear whether it is just this speaker who does not particularly like tea, or whether tea would be unusual for the conclusion of a meal in this region (in 1956). Note that Pozdena mentions tea as preceding the meal (see **B.** above).

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### Abbreviations

The glosses follow the “Leipzig glossing rules”.<sup>56</sup>

Additional glosses and abbreviations are:

Bal.	Balochi	Ir.	Iranian (language); Proto-Iranian
Bš.	Bashkardi	NBš.	North Bashkardi
DEM1/2	proximal / distal demonstrative	P	(classical New) Persian <sup>57</sup>
EMPH	emphatic element	PC	pronominal clitic (enclitic pronoun)
EZ	ezafe	SPC	specific marker (=ī, =ie)
INFL	inflectional affix	SUB	subordinator ( <i>ke</i> )

[p. 320]

<sup>53</sup> [20] Barbera (2006: 317).

<sup>54</sup> [xxxiv] Cf. Parvin (2008) for names for seasons in Balochi connected to date farming.

<sup>55</sup> [xxxv] See the example cited in Korn (2017: 84).

<sup>56</sup> [21] <https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>

<sup>57</sup> [xxxvii] On the whole, Persian in its classical form seems more relevant for Bashkardi than the standard variety of Tehran today.

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