G | P | S | 04

Grazer Linguistische Monographien / GLM
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ISBN 978-3-901600-46-3

WIEN KULTUR

GRAZER PLURILINGUALISMUS STUDIEN G P S 04

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Zazaki – yesterday, today and tomorrow

Survival and standardization of a threatened language

2017

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Preface

Zazaki is an Indo-European language of the northwestern branch of Iranian languages. In recent years, scholars and activists have widely accepted the designation Zazaki. Other names for this language, which developed in the historical region of Dersim in Eastern Anatolia, are Kurmanci, Dımılki and Kırdki.

This volume is an effort to develop consciousness about the revitalization of a language that has been counted amongst the threatened languages within the most recent version of the UNESCO *Atlas of the world's languages in danger* of 2009/2010.

Several attempts have been made to rescue the Zaza language in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Turkey. Activists used various methods, such as education and research at universities, teaching at primary schools and adult education institutions, artistic performances (music, theater), magazines, children's books, radio shows and internet portals. However, the language is not spoken fluently, even among the elderly, because it is not constantly used in everyday life. Speakers lack the necessary practice and very often have to make considerable effort not to mix in Turkish words and idioms when speaking.

The conference in Vienna, organized by the *Zazaki Language Academy of Vienna* under the patronage of UNESCO-Austria, on 18 December 2015: *Zazaki – yesterday, today and tomorrow. Survival and standardization of a threatened language*, on which this volume is based, showed that Zazaki increasingly has only a symbolic and figurative function. The conference about the Zaza language only used English, German and Turkish. The symposium resulted in an important discussion on the academic standardization of Zazaki, but also developed an awareness of the urgent need to revitalize the daily use of Zazaki.

This collection of articles considers the possibilities and the framework for the survival of the language and suggests feasible options for the future. Linguists still strongly debate the standardization of the language. Since Zazaki has several dialects and the scholars have not yet thought about the political dimension of standardization, this question remains open.

I would like to thank Dieter Halwachs for supporting me in compiling these papers from the first scholarly conference on Zazaki in Vienna. I am fortunate to have met Dieter Halwachs and, through him, Marcus Wiesner, who made the layout. I also would like to thank Whitney K. Isaacs for editing the contributions, and Harald Otto for proofreading the introduction. Furthermore, I am thankful for the financial support of the Vienna Cultural Office (Kulturamt Wien, MA 7) that made possible the first academic conference on Zazaki in Europe and the publication of this volume. Finally I am very grateful to all the contributors for their very interesting analyses. I hope this project will contribute to further research on keeping alive the Zaza language and its world.

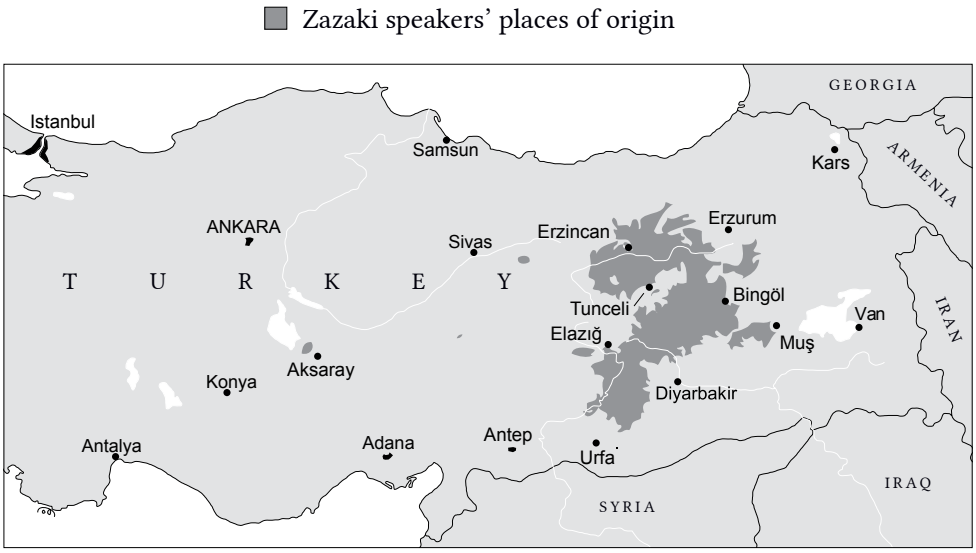
Introduction

Assessments of the number of Zaza speakers vary between three to six million. Some estimate that around 300,000 Zaza speakers live in the European diaspora, with around 150,000 in Germany.[1] The Zaza speakers originally come from a compact and geographically unified area. The linguist Mesut Keskin writes, "Zazaki is mostly spoken in Dersim[2] (Tunceli), Bingöl, Elazığ, eastern Erzincan and northern Diyarbakır. It is also spoken in the region of eastern Sivas, also known as Koçgiri and Karabel, in the districts of Kangal, Zara, Ulaş, İmranlı, Divriği, Hafik and Almus, in Tokat, Kelkit and Şiran in Gümüşhane, Varto in Muş, Hınıs, Tekman, Çat and Aşkale in Erzurum, Gerger in Adıyaman, Siverek in Urfa, Pötürge and Arapkir in Malatya. Moreover, enclaves can be found in Baykan (Siirt), Mutki (Bitlis), Sarız (Kayseri), Aksaray, Selim (Kars) and Göle in Ardahan. The neighboring languages to this area are mostly Kurdish (Kurmancî) und Turkish. In former times, Armenian and some Assyrian were the main languages spoken in that region".[3] Northern Zaza settlement areas such as Koçgiri, Dersim, Erzincan, North-Bingöl, Varto, Hınıs, Tekman, Çat, Sarız, Göle, Selim are of Kızılbaş-Alevi Zaza religious origin; however, the southern Zaza settlement areas are of Sunni origin. While the Sunni Zaza from Elazığ, central Bingöl, Genç, Solhan, Hani, Kulp, Lice, Ergani, Dicle, Eğil, Silvan, Hazro, Mutki and Baykan are from the Shafii rite of the Sunni *madhab/mazhab* (School of law), parts of Maden, Çermik, Çüngüş, Siverek, Gerger and Aksaray are of the Hanefi rite of the same madhab (ibid.).

1 Asatrian, Garnik. 1995. Dimlī. In: Enzyklopädia Iranica. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/dimli (last accessed 03.04.2017) and Keskin, Mesut: Zazaki. In: Zazaki.de. http://www.zazaki.de/deutsch/aufsaezte/Keskin-Zazaki.pdf (last accessed 31.10.2016).

2 The ancient region of Dersim (Ancient-Dersim) encompasses the province of Tunceli (Zazaki: Mamekiye) and parts of Elazığ, Bingöl, Sivas, Erzincan, Varto and Erzurum in eastern Anatolia. Turkish: Dersim, Armenian: Տէրսիմ/Դէրսիմ Tersim, Kurmanci: Dêrsim, Zazaki: Dêsım. This paper uses the name "Dersim" in this sense.

3 Original quotation: *„Geografisch zeigt sich das Zaza-Sprachgebiet relativ kompakt. Am häufigsten wird sie im Zentralgebiet von Dersim (Tunceli), Bingöl, Elazığ, im Osten Erzincans und Norden Diyarbakırs gesprochen. Im Gebiet des Ostens von Sivas, bekannt als Koçgiri und Karabel, wird in den Bezirken von Kangal, Zara, Ulaş, İmranlı, Divriği, Hafik und zu Tokat gehörende Almus, Kelkit und Şiran zu Gümüşhane, Varto zu Muş, Hınıs, Tekman, Çat und Aşkale zu Erzurum, zu Adıyaman gehörende Gerger, Siverek zu Urfa, Pötürge und Arapkir zu Malatya, gesprochen. Des Weiteren befinden sich in den Enklaven von Baykan (Siirt), Mutki (Bitlis), Sarız (Kayseri), Aksaray, Selim (Kars) und zu Ardahan gehörende Göle ebenfalls Zazas. Die benachbarten Sprachen dieser Siedlungsgebiete sind überwiegend Kurdisch (Kurmancî) und Türkisch. Früher wurde fast im ganzen Sprachgebiet auch Armenisch, teilweise auch Syrisch gesprochen"* (translation Z.A.); quot. Mesut Keskin in Aslan, Şükrü (ed.). 2010. Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim - Tarih, Toplum, Ekonomi, Dil ve Kültür. İletişim Yayınları. İstanbul.



Therefore, around fifty percent of the Zaza people are Alevi, who live in the northern part of the Zaza region and fifty percent are Sunni (of Hanefi and Shafi confession) and live in the southern part of the Zaza region.[4]

Studies on Zazaki have been carried out by various linguists, Iranologists and Kurdologists such as Jost Gippert, Ludwig Paul, Mesut Keskin, Agnes Korn and Heiner Eichner.

Originally, Zazaki was taught in Kurdish or Alevi migrant associations within the European diaspora. Zazaki is now offered to students and adults in state-funded, adult education centers (*Volkshochschulen*) in Austria. If there is enough interest, Zazaki is also taught to school children. The democratic environments in the European diaspora have allowed the development of Zaza language radio programs, children's books and other publications, online or in print.

The original attention to the language was generated by some musicians and songwriters from Ancient-Dersim. They were forced to leave Turkey and went into exile in Germany after the military coup d'état in 1980. Exile allowed them to freely live their cultural, linguistic and religious identities and find their way back to

4 Arslan, Zeynep. 2016a. Eine religiöse Ethnie mit Multi-Identitäten. Die europäisch-anatolischen Alevit_Innen auf dem Weg zur Systematisierung ihres Glaubenssystems. LIT Verlag. Wien. and: Aslan, Şükrü (ed.). 2010. Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim - Tarih, Toplum, Ekonomi, Dil ve Kültür. İletişim Yayınları. İstanbul.

their roots. They also became acquainted with the political dynamics of the emerging Kurdish movement. In the diaspora the absence of oppression to use their mother tongues and intensified contacts between the Kurmanci and Zazaki speakers, caused an increased consciousness about differences between the two languages. When these songwriters and musicians could return to their home country, they started to develop archives of the language and traditional music in the Ancient-Dersim. All the songs had been only passed on orally, so they recorded and publicly performed them. From the mid-1990s, Zaza folk songs began to be published and popularized by musicians from Ancient-Dersim such as Mikail and Ahmet Aslan and Nilüfer Akbal. The rediscovery of Zazaki via music also generated great interest among the younger generations, but the excitement about learning the language has not continued, even though it has affected identity formations.

In recent years, this interest has been carried further and scholars are increasingly focused on Zazaki. Most Zaza speakers within the European diaspora belong to the Alevi faith. The Alevi faith from Ancient-Dersim is tightly connected with Zazaki and it seems that somehow both faith and language, marked by disorientation about identity and belonging, somehow support each other. Religious rituals and practices were originally carried out in Zazaki. In various assimilationist policies, the Turkish state had previously prohibited Zazaki. Since the Justice and Development Party, AKP has gained political power and questioned the Alevi faith, it is only now possible to fully rediscover the living practice of this faith. Alevism in Ancient-Dersim differs from Alevism in the western parts of Turkey.

The discussion often diverges from the question of ethnicity and belonging of Zazaki speakers. Until now, they have generally been seen as Kurds. However, in recent years, the position that Zazaki is a language of its own has become dominant. The issue of ethnic belonging has also become pertinent and raises the interesting question as to whether language alone is a sufficient indicator of ethnic belonging, or if other factors also play a role. Zazaki first began to be researched at the end of the 19th century, so the discussions about identity and belonging still follow the focus on languages. This book collects different scholarly perspectives on Zazaki as a language and, without directly and explicitly focusing on the questions of ethnicity and belonging, looks for options about keeping alive a threatened language. However, ethnicity and identity are also relevant issues and so are mentioned and partially analyzed here. Questions about the modern circumstances of mono- and multilingual identities are discussed along with issues about education models for languages.

The linguist Jaffer Sheyholislami notes that keeping a language alive involves not just the emotional connection with the language but also the instrumental use of the language. That means that a language needs to be official and institutionalized. Schools must use the language not just in language lessons, but also as a language of instruction in other subjects. Otherwise, there is not much chance to keep a langua-

ge alive. Sheyholislami argues that the emotional ties to the language will fade after the native-speaking generation will not be amongst us anymore. His contribution to this book shows one model of revitalizing threatened languages by documenting the Badini and Hawrami speakers in Iraqi Kurdistan and compares their efforts to keep alive their language through institutional power. He resumes, that "the most important factor favoring Badini seems to be its speakers' significant political and linguistic ties with one of the most powerful political parties of KRG, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)".

The socio-linguist Katharina Brizić considers how the socio-economic conditions of a family influence the teaching of the mother tongue to their children. Her very important contribution to the Zazaki conference in Vienna was the finding that families with a higher income care more about transmitting their mother/first tongue to their children. Moreover, her biographical-narrative interviews reveal the complexities of personal and external aspirations about identities. This contribution primarily notes the "strong impact [of] the sociopolitical level (…) on individual language experiences" and "how the language becomes 'visible' in qualitative autobiographical interviews".

The doctoral candidate in linguistics, Mesut Keskin analyzes the efforts to keep alive all the dialects of Zazaki. Each variation has its own history and reason for existence. For Keskin, they show the richness and diversity of a language. Nevertheless, he notes, "at least, there is a need for a standardized written language to keep Zazaki alive." Another doctoral candidate in linguistics, Gohar Hakobian, points to the many similarities between Zazaki and Taleshi. Hakobian argues that the "linguistic features Zāzāki shares with Kurdish dialects (by the way, not so numerous; in any case, not more than with other Iranian dialects) can be explained by centuries-old contact between these languages, but not by common dialectal bases".

The linguist İnci Dirim does a comparative study of the issue of language education systems in different countries. Dirim seeks options about alternatives in bi- and multilingual education models and their effects on children, who increasingly grow up in multilingual circumstances. Above all, migrants face the government's policy and aims to use education to create homogeneous nations in the frame of one nation, one language, one state. Some examples illustrate the various policies taken by Austria, Germany, Turkey and the United States.

The social and cultural anthropologist Maria Six-Hohenbalken and the psychology scholar Filiz Çelik discuss historical traumata and the constellation of identity, language, ethnicity and the minority position of Zazaki. The experiences of exile, migration and diaspora challenge the positions of individuals within their surroundings. Six-Hohenbalken identifies the transmission of historical trauma to younger generations who listened to stories from their parents and grandparents and then developed an emotional heritage that appears in new circumstances. Six-Hohenbalken argues that apparently these younger generations, above all, seek the survival

of the threatened language of their parents. She focuses on "understanding the meaning of language knowledge and usage for establishing (semi)official narratives of experiences of extreme violence" and identifying the motivations of these younger generations for this rediscovery. Her aim is "to elaborate on the (individual) meaning of language knowledge, besides the acquisition and maintenance of the language, for the shaping of remembrance about the acts of genocidal persecution in 1937/38 versus official policies of silencing and denial." While Six-Hohenbalken is focused on the younger generations, Filiz Çelik has developed a more general approach about the personal traumatic effects of the Dersim Genocide 1937/38 and in which constellations this event became an important identity marker to those in the European diaspora. A central issue is transgenerational transmission of trauma and the effects of the loss of language after being forced to speak only Turkish. Both contributions use different approaches to identity definitions, the role of language and new positions in new life circumstances; when read together, they help to develop new perspectives on these issues of genocide, language, and identity.

The political analyst Thomas Schmidinger and myself create a framework for the national and ethnic identity questions of Zazaki, according to the influences of Kurdish nationalism, Turkish government policies on minorities, the diasporas and international dynamics. Thomas Schmidinger considers the current discussion between Kurdish and Zaza activists as to whether Zazaki is a Kurdish dialect or a unique language. My contributions focus on the questions of ethnicity and belonging of Zaza while noting the special ethnic-religious position of the Alevi-Zaza in Northern Dersim in connection with their complex identity challenges in Turkey and the European diaspora. Zazaki and Alevism seem to support and empower each other. The lack of regular use of Zazaki in daily life does not mean the complete end of this language that has been transmitted orally throughout centuries. Oppressing or refusing to acknowledge historical identities would incite divisive conflict and politicize non-political demands. In my opinion, as increasingly diverse people share common living spaces in big metropolises, non-recognition of historical languages would add new challenges to democratic coexistence and mutual respect.

Zeynep Arslan

Vienna, 2017

ZAZAKI – SURVIVAL AND STANDARDIZATION IN COMPARISON

Mesut Keskin

On the standardization efforts for a cross-dialectal literary language in Zazaki[1]

Despite all the efforts since the 1980s to develop Zazaki into a full-fledged literary language, the results have been rather unsatisfactory. Only isolated vernaculars of the three main dialects are thus written down, many of which are already characterised (Paul 1998a; Keskin 2009) but some have been textualised. The mutual understanding between speakers of the various dialects is quite high, at least better than the understanding of the written language: among Zazaki speakers, the mother tongue literacy rate is not widespread and mostly confined to the own environment and dialect. For this paper, I would like to present my current research on the development and necessity of a literary language that is acceptable for the Zaza speakers from different dialectal backgrounds. Some preliminary results will be provided as well.

1 Introduction

Zazaki is a northwest Iranian language located in the east of Asia Minor with ca. 3-4 million speakers. It has no official status as a minority language in Turkey: it is neither acknowledged as a language of education nor is it financially supported by governmental organizations. Since 2009 we can observe positive developments in Turkey regarding minority languages, such as the establishment of a national TV-channel TRT Kurdî (formerly known as TRT 6), which broadcasts mainly in Kurdish but also, intermittently programmes in Zazaki. The release of radio broadcasts in various languages and the willingness of the government to establish research institutions for Kurdish and Zazaki (and other minority languages) reflect democratic changes in the language policies of the state. It does, however, fall short of the genuine endorsement of an official status of local languages in Turkey.

1 I would like to thank Dr. Johnny Cheung for proofreading and valuable comments.

Since the 1980s, expatriate Zaza communities have attempted to turn Zazaki into a full-fledged literary language through the publication of cultural magazines and books of (mainly) folkloristic texts, a cause that has also been taken up by Zazas in Turkey beginning in the middle of the 1990s (in the aftermath of more liberal government policies). Unfortunately, this has not resulted in the development of a unified/standardised literary language. Just a few vernaculars of the existing three main dialects have been written down whereof many vernaculars have already been described (Paul 1998a; Keskin 2009).

Generally, oral communication between the speakers of the different dialects does not pose any great challenges, especially when it is confined to familiar surroundings and scenes from daily life. In contrast, good comprehension of written Zazaki is less widespread, which we can attribute to the low mother-tongue literacy rate. Many Zazaki speakers have been overwhelmingly educated at Turkish-only schools (and in the European diaspora (Germany, Austria, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden etc.), educated almost exclusively through the language of their host country).

Zazaki has been classified as an endangered language by the *UNESCO Atlas of Endangered Languages*. The narrow geographic distribution of Zazaki is not conducive to its continuous, unimpeded use. Prior to the great waves of emigration, Zazaki was spoken exclusively within the borders of Turkey, whose repressive language policies severely curtailed the free expression of minority languages. The large-scale migration of Turkish "guest-workers" to Europe has also led to the establishment of Zaza communities abroad. A different kind of pressure is put on their language, as Zaza immigrants are adopting the host language in order to integrate and further themselves in society. Most Zazas are bilingual Turkish – Zazaki, thanks to compulsory education and the media in Turkey. In the diaspora, they are generally multilingual (Turkish, Zazaki and the language of their host country). Monolingual Zazaki speakers are quite rare nowadays, but sadly some Zaza speakers have become fully turkicised, and are therefore unable to converse in their ancestral language (fluently).

2 History of scholarship

For the sake of readers who are not familiar with the Western research on the Zaza language, I would like to present a concise overview here. The Western study of the Zaza language does not have a very long history. The first mentioning of *Zaza* can be dated to 1857/58 when the German orientalist Peter I. Lerch (in Russian service) published the results of his fieldwork in the Ottoman and Persian Empires. In his

work *Forschungen über die Kurden und die Iranischen Nordchaldäer* 'Researches on the Kurds and the Iranian Chaldeans of the North', which includes more than 40 pages of text samples with German translation, he remarked:

> *Nur das Zazá blieb den Kurmā̆ṅḍi bis auf einzelne Wörter unverständlich. [Only Zazaki remained incomprehensible to the Kurmanji speakers, with the exception of a few words.]* (Lerch 1858: XXII).

After some years Friedrich Müller dedicated an article of 18 pages (1864) based on Lerch's collected texts to the historical phonetics and grammar of Zazaki. Approximately 40 years later in 1903, two further tales of five pages and also four short anecdotes and several hundred single sentences in Zazaki were published, which Albert van Le Coq a volunteer of an excavation expedition of the German orient committee had recorded in Damascus two years prior (1903).[2]

At about the same time (1906) Oskar Mann collected texts in East Anatolia which until then has been the most extensive collection of Zazaki texts (91 pages of five vernaculars with German translations). Karl Hadank published these in 1932 under the title *Mundarten der Zâzâ; hauptsächlich aus Siverek und Kor* (Mann 1932). Hadank first wrote a grammatical description of particular vernaculars which should "ease the reader the grammatical comprehension of the texts …" (p. VIII). By the standards of the time and status of research, it is an indispensable source for the dialectology and the investigation of Zazaki. It should also be noted that in 1909, Oskar Mann and Karl Hadank named Zazaki as an independent language and not as a Kurdish dialect, as it had been known until then. The independent position of Zazaki is depicted in Mann/Hadank (1932) on the pages 18-23 through a comparison of the phonetic developments with Kurdish and other Iranian languages.

About 50 years later, the American linguist Terry Lynn Todd (1985) drafted the first grammar of Zazaki according to modern methods of modern linguistics, *A Grammar of Dimili (Also known as Zaza),* which is based on collected speech material from Çermik (Southern Zaza).

Especially in the 1990s, the research on Zazaki was enlarged; particularly articles about single subjects were published, like historical phonology (Cabolov 1985, Maurais 1978), negation (Sandonato 1994), ezafe forms (MacKenzie 1995), a general grammatical overview (Asatrian 1996, Asatrian/Gevorgian 1988, Asatrian/Vahman 1990, Blau 1989, Pirejko 1999, Kausen 2006 und 2012, Keskin 2010), treatise about the position of Zazaki among the Iranian languages (Paul 1998b) as well as a lit-

2 The Iranologist F.C. Andreas mentions in his personal letter to his colleague from 7 July 1909 (probably to Emil Sieg) concerning LeCoq's records and texts that Zazaki doesn't belong to Kurdish. http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/personal/galeria/andreas.htm (2016).

eral (Selcan 1998b) and historical development (Gippert 1996 and 2008), etymology (Bläsing 1995, 1997; Schwartz 2008), orthography and reading primer (Jacobson 1993, 1997), code switching and bilingualism (Temizbaş 1999), particles (Arslan 2007), dialectology (Keskin 2008) and verb functionality (Arslan 2016).

Although the position of Zazaki in the Iranian Studies for a century insofar is justified, there is still – even in contrast to previously getting less – a status quo especially in Turkish sources, media and in the politics. It consists of opinions that Zazaki is a Kurdish dialect which are based on prejudices, knowledge and source gaps, or political motivations and infantilizing. Nevertheless, until now it has not been linguistically proved that Zazaki belongs to the Kurdish languages.

3 Zazaki as a literary language

The Zazaki language was first written down by the Zazas themselves probably around the years 1798 and 1831 by Sultan Efendi in Diyarbakır, but relaible sources are lacking. Later, in 1899, the religious scholar Eḥmedê Xasi from Diyarbakır-Lice wrote down the *Mewlıd* (birth of the prophet) in Arabic letters, which is widespread among Sunni Zazas. Another *Mewlıd* was written by the Mufti *ʿUsman Esʿad Efendiyo Babıc* in Siverek in 1906 and printed in Damascus in 1932.

Since the 1960s articles in Zazaki were occasionally published in Kurdish periodicals and newspapers. The Zazaki texts were written according to the latinised Kurmanci orthography. However, a strong need was felt to have a more suitable script that would better represent the complexities of the sounds and phonetics of the Zazaki language. The first essential steps for the transcription of Zazaki were taken in the 1980s, when prominent Zaza intellectuals in the diaspora started to publish works in Zazaki. For those they created a Latin-based script with its own orthographic rules suited to Zazaki phonology. Finally, in the 1990s also books and articles were published about the orthography and reading primers were compiled by Zaza authors with the aid of linguists and philologists. At the same time, the first periodicals appeared that were entirely edited in Zazaki. When the repressions against the local languages were partly repealed, especially in Istanbul, the first publishing house was founded; books, periodicals, dictionaries and – for the Zazaki an important component – music albums have been published in the homeland. In the second half of the 1990s, programs on radio and television in Germany and Turkey were broadcast one to two hours a week in Zazaki with cultural, musical or political content. Also the number of web sites in Zazaki has increased.

The Zazaki script developed by Zaza intellectuals is based on the Turkish-Latin alphabet with the letters *ê, q, w* and *x* added. Digraphs with *h* are included to render

certain phonemes of Zazaki not attested in Turkish: *çh, kh, ph, th, ʻh, dh, lh, sh* [tʃ, k, p, t ~ tˤ, ħ, dˤ. lˠ, sˤ].

The existing Zazaki alphabets (see also Keskin 2011) are differing among each other by the letters: *ı : i, i : î, ü : û; ğ, çh, kh, ph, th,* (*ʻ, ʻh, dh, lh, sh, ö*). The Ware-Jacobson Alphabet is used by authors who regard Zazaki – like usual in linguistics – as an independent language and, thus, try to distinguish and write as many of the phonemes of the language and its vernaculars as possible. The Bedirxan Alphabet, which was conceived for Kurmanci, is used by the other circle, who regard Zazaki as a Kurdish dialect due to political traditional reasons.[3] Beyond the Latin alphabet there exist few documents in Zazaki from Dersim based on the Western Armenian pronunciation drafted from the Armenian alphabet containing poems and prayers.

A more significant problem encountered in the elevation of Zazaki to a literary language is actually the manner of standardisation that would be acceptable to speakers of the different dialects of Zazaki. This is a recurrent problem that is also the main topic of my current PhD research. In this paper, I would like to outline the difficulties of developing a standardised Zazaki that would also take into account the dialectal background of the speakers. Some preliminary solutions and suggestions are presented as well.

4 Towards a common literary language

There are several pressing reasons that Zaza communities in Turkey and in the diaspora need a common literary language. In the first place, it provides a specific identity marker that would cement the social cohesion of Zaza speakers, especially when they have different religious outlooks (Alevi, Hanafi or Shafii Sunni). A widely accepted literary language for the Zaza communities no doubt facilitates and encourages the creation of literary works, and also leads to a better presence in the media and on the internet, which, in turn, should positively affect language retention among the younger generations of Zazas. Finally, the existence of a common standard language would also lead to an awareness and stronger self-esteem among its speakers that would allow them to better defend themselves intellectually against the appropriation of their identity and history by Turkish and Kurdish nationalists.

3 The rise of a literary standard in Zazaki does have its share of detractors though. Certain Kurdish nationalists consider this as a Turkish plot to split the Kurdish cultural sphere, while insisting that Zazaki is merely a "Kurdish dialect" (a view that is also adopted by some Zazaki speakers).

4.1 Alphabet

As indicated above, the first step towards a common literary language is a common orthography that is acceptable to speakers of Zazaki. I propose to adopt the alphabet that was presented at the language seminar in Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler from 17-19 October 2010. It has additional letters that facilitate the writing of different vernacular variants. The criterion for the selection of the letters for rendition of the phonemes was chiefly the intersection of all common phonemes in the main dialects. Phones that are not represented in at least one dialect in its sound inventory have not been included as letters in the standard alphabet but as additional letters for the writing of the vernacular variants. Compare, for instance, the pharyngealised sounds in Central and Southern Zazaki or the unaspirated <çh, kh, ph, th> in Northern Zazaki, and the allophonic alveolar affricates [ts^{h}] and [dz] in the Dersim-vernaculars (cf. figure below). At the seminar on 19 March 2016 in Gießen, the velar l [ɬ] represented by the letter <lh> was included into the common alphabet.

Letter	IPA	Pronunciation	Zazaki	English	Turkish
A a	[a]	as in *father*	*adır*	*fire*	*ateş*
B b	[b]	intervocalic and final also [v]	*bıra*	*brother*	*kardeş*
C c	[dʒ]	as in *jungle*	*cor*	*above*	*yukarı*
Ç ç	[tʃ^{h}]	as in *chair* (aspirated)	*çım*	*eye*	*göz*
D d	[d]	as in *down*	*dı*	*two*	*iki*
E e	[ɛ]	as in *get*	*des*	*ten*	*on*
Ê ê	[e]	“closed e” as in *many*	*dês*	*wall*	*duvar*
F f	[f]	as in *father*	*fek*	*mouth*	*ağız*
G g	[g]	as in *gas*	*ga*	*ox*	*öküz*
Ğ ğ	[ʁ]	close to French [r] (Arabic غ)	*ğerib*	*foreigner*	*garip*
H h	[h]	as in house (initial]	*her*	*donkey*	*eşek*
I ı	[ɨ]	“centralised i” as in *if*	*bılbıl*	*nightingale*	*bülbül*
İ i	[i]	as in *we*	*insan*	*human*	*insan*
J j	[ʒ]	as in French *jardin*	*jû*	*one*	*bir*

K k	[kh]	as in *kiss* (aspirated)	*kay*	*game*	*oyun*
L l	[l]	as in *love*	*lac*	*son*	*oğul*
M m	[m]	as in *mother*	*mae*	*mother*	*anne*
N n	[n]	as in *nose*	*new*	*nine*	*dokuz*
O o	[ɔ]	as in *olive*	*o*	*he*	*o (eril)*
P p	[ph]	as in *pause* (aspirated)	*pi*	*father*	*baba*
Q q	[q]	"uvular k" (Arabic ق)	*qatır*	*mule*	*katır*
R r/rr rr	[r] [ɾ] [r]	initial "rolled r" as in French *rien* medial "flapped r" as in Spanish *caro* final "rolled r" as in German *Herr*	*roc* *ara* *bırr*	*sun* *breakfast* *forest*	*güneş* *kahvaltı* *orman*
S s	[s]	as in *house*	*sae*	*apple*	*elma*
Ş ş	[ʃ]	as in *she*	*şêr*	*lion*	*aslan*
T t	[th]	as in *tea* (aspirated)	*tici*	*sunshine*	*güneş ışını*
U u	[u]	like a short "oo" in "ooze"	*uca*	*there*	*ora, orda*
Û û	[uː]	as in cool	*dû*	*smoke*	*duman*
V v	[v]	as in very	*va*	*wind*	*rüzgar*
W w	[w]	as in water	*wae*	*sister*	*kızkardeş*
X x	[χ]	as in Scots loch (Arabic خ)	*xoz*	*pig*	*domuz*
Y y	[j]	as in year	*yare*	*beloved*	*yar*
Z z	[z]	as in rose	*zıwan*	*language*	*dil*
Digraphs					
Th th	[t]/[tʿ]	as in French tu / regional as Arabic ط	*theyr*	*bird*	*kuş*
Lh lh	[ɬ]	"velar l" as in Polish łapa	*lhınci*	*mud*	*çamur*
Letters with diacritics and Digraphs for the Vernaculars					
‘	[ʕ]	as Arabic ع	*‘ef*	*forgiveness*	*af*
Çh çh	[ts] [tʃ]	"unaspirated ts" "unaspirated ç"	*çhep* *çhik*	*left* *spark*	*sol* *kıvılcım*

Dh dh	[dˤ]	as Arabic ض	*dhadi*	*mother*	*anne*
ʻH ʻh	[ħ]	as Arabic ع	*ʻheş*	*bear*	*ayı*
Kh kh	[k]	"unaspirated k"	*khej*	*blond*	*sarışın*
Ö ö	[ø]	as in curry	*çöwt*	*askew*	*yamuk*
Ph ph	[p]	"unaspirated p"	*phan*	*smooth*	*yassı*
Sh sh	[sˤ], [sˠ]	as Arabic ص	*sheyd*	*hunting*	*av*
Ü ü	[y]	as in German grün	*dü*	*smoke*	*duman*
Zh zh	[ðˤ]	as Arabic ◦	*zhot*	*curse*	*beddua*
Free pronunciation variants in vernaculars					
C c	[dz] [dʒ]	in some vernaculars of Northern Zazaki: medial before and final after a, e, ı, o, u; in some places dz > z. before i, ü,; in Eastern-Dersimian also before ê	*cor* *cêr*	*above* *down*	*yukarı* *aşağı*
Ç ç Çh çh	[tsh],[tʃʰ] [ts], [tʃ]	in some vernaculars of Northern Zazaki: medial before and final after a, e, ı, o, u; before i, ü; in Eastern-Dersimian also before ê	*çım* *çi* *çhem*	*eye* *thing* *river*	*göz* *eşya* *nehir*
Ê ê	[jɛ] [e]	in Eastern Dersimian and Palu-Bingöl: medial after a consonant (regional also ê); final position like ê above.	*dês* *zê, sê*	*wall* *like, as*	*duvar* *gibi*

5 Choosing the common literary forms

The basis for the cross-dialect literary language is determined according to linguistic criteria. The main attention thereby lies on the selection of the word and inflection variants according to the diachronically, *most conservative* form of the existing variants. Loanwords adapted long ago will be included by choosing the closest variant to the borrowing or giving language.

The project is realized in dialogic exchange. In its empirical part, the data will be collected in field work. This happens in the particular language area (diaspora and core area), among others, by holding seminars and conducting surveys. It is also attempted via social media (Facebook) to reach Zaza native speakers from all possible regions for the purpose of data collection.

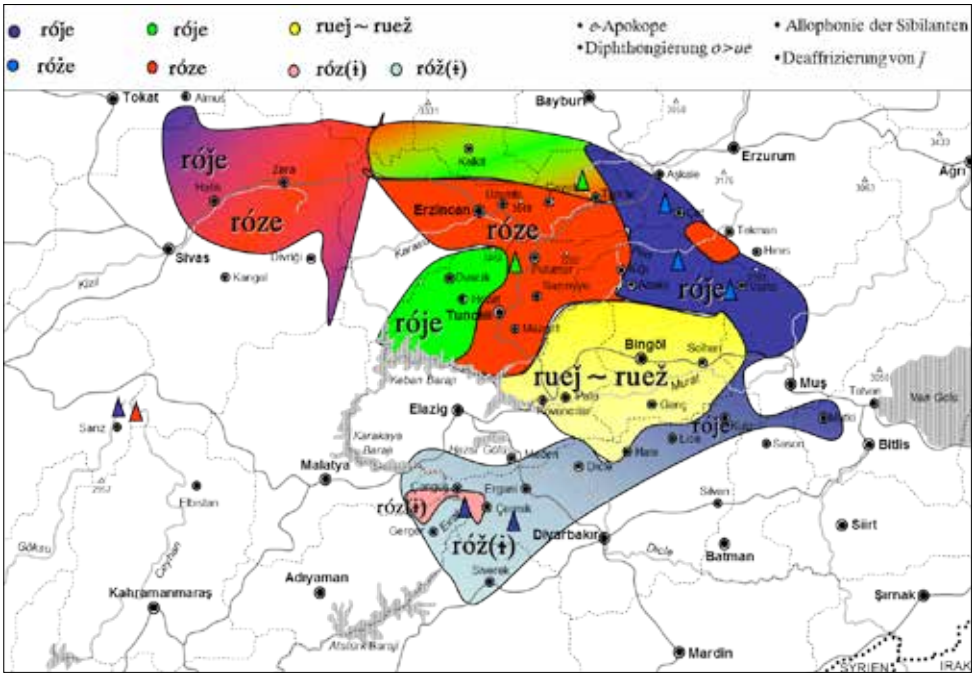
The selection of forms is therefore guided by etymological considerations within the frame of Iranian languages. The reason for invoking etymology is that it is an objective criterion that would avoid a possible dispute about the preference of just one dialect. This removes any bias towards a particular, regional vernacular.

In addition, the parallel existence of the standard language and the dialects in written form is maintained. Like German in Switzerland, the vernaculars can be dynamically maintained as the vital language in every domain of life, unlike the standard language; the cross-dialect literary language, on the other hand, should be reserved for scientific and nationwide, media purposes. In short, diglossia is proposed for Zazaki.

The selection procedure for a particular form can be illustrated with the phonetic realisations of the feminine noun for 'day' in Zazaki: */roǰe ~ rože ~ roze ~ roje ~ roǰi ~ rožɨ ~ rozɨ ~ rojɨ ~ roǰ ~ rož ~ roz ~ ruеǰ ~ ruež ~ riojɨ/*.[4]

Distribution of <*roce*> 'day'

The synchronic and diachronic cognates of *roce* reflect the historical diversification:



4 See Keskin 2008: 16, 175; transcription following tradition of Iranian studies (e.g. Paul 1998; Gippert 2008).

diachronic: *róje* < Middle Iranian *rōč* < Old Ianian **rauča-* < Proto-Indo-European **leu̯k-es*
Parthian *rōž* / Middle Persian *rōz* < Avestian *raōča-* / Sanscrit. *roca-*
Greek *λευκός*;

synchronic: Armenian *ռոճիկ* / *rročik* 'daily bread', Baluchi *roč*, Persian *rūz*, Kurdish *rož.*

Phonetic processes and changes of variants (cf. Keskin 2009: 170):

- apocope of *-ė*, i.e. loss of unstressed *-e* ~ *-i* in final position,
- shifting of final *e* [ə] to *i*,
- de-affrication of *ǰ* ~ *j* in intervocalic or final positions to *ž* ~ *z*,
- conservative and innovative sibilants *ǰ* : *j*,
- diphthongisation of *o* ⟶ *ue* ~ *ua* ~ *io*; also in loanwords of specific vernaculars = recent phenomenon: e.g. Turkish *göl* (> *gol*) > *guel* 'sea, lake', Armenian *xoz* > *xuaz* 'pig'.

Phonetic changes in vernaculars:

Vernaculars	apocope of *-ė* ~ *-i*	de-affrication of *VǰV*	sibilants / compl. distribution
Varto, Hınıs I	–	±	–
Adaklı	–	±	–
Koçgiri I	–	–	–
West-Dersim	–	–	+
East-Dersim	–	+	+
Pülümür-Erz.	–	±	±
Koçgiri II	–	+	+
Hınıs II-Tek.	–	+	+
Palu-Bingöl	+	±	–
Solhan	+	+	–
Genç	+	+	–
Lice	–	+	–
Çermik-Siv.	±	±	–

Dicle	–		–
Kulp	–	–	–
Aksaray	–	–	–
Mutki	±	–	–

On the background of this analysis <*roce*> is the most archaic variant and, thus, has been selected as the standard lexeme.

5.1 Months, weekdays names and cardinal directions

For cultural terms, such as calendar terms and geographical directions, we have adopted frequency as an additional criterion, rather than chiefly etymological ones. After several discussions, the specific designations were adopted during a seminar held in Mannheim on 15 November 2014.

Names of the months:

Month	Gender	Alternative	English
Çıle	nr	*Zımıstania Werteyêne*	*January*
Gucige	mk	*Sıbat*	*February*
Mart	nr		*March*
Nisane	mk		*April*
Gulane	mk		*May*
Hezirane	mk	*Amnania Verêne*	*June*
Temuze	mk	*Amnania Werteyêne*	*July*
Tebaxe	mk	*Amnania Peyêne*	*August*
Êlule	mk	*Payizia Verêne*	*September*
Payizia Werteyêne	mk		*October*
Payizia Peyêne	mk		*November*
Gağand	nr		*December*

nr = *neri* ‘masculine’, mk = *mayki, maykek* ‘feminine’

Names of the days:

Day	English
Şeme	*Saturday*
Yewşeme, Bazar	*Sunday*
Dışeme	*Monday*
Sêşeme	*Tuesday*
Çarşeme	*Wednesday*
Pancşeme	*Thursday*
Yene	*Friday*

Cardinal directions:

Direction	Gender	English
Şeme	nr	*North*
Veroc	nr	*South*
Rocawan	nr	*West*
Rocakewtene	mk	*East*

5.2 Etyma until now

The etymologically assessed words which consist of 2256 etyma on 116 pages, have been presented to the participants for the first time in collaboration with Umut Akkoç at the language seminar Bad Neuenahr – Ahrweiler on 18 December 2016 as an advance copy. The actual state amounts to ca. 3200 etyma.

6 Summary and conclusion

The reason to choose etymology as the basis for establishing a common literary standard for a non-literary language such as Zazaki is that it is a criterion relatively free of political or regional bias. None of the dialects has sufficient prestige or political heft to impose itself naturally as the main language of (written) communication among Zaza speakers from different areas who, in the past, would have resorted to Turkish. On the other hand, the etymologically reconstructed form is more transparent as the changed variants.

A proposed diglossia could be used in the given domains:

Literary standard	Regional dialect
Media (TV, radio, newspapers) Education (teaching material) Encyclopaedia Scientific texts Official and collective correspondence (statutes, laws, foreword, travel guide etc.)	Local/regional media Music and folkloric works Regional culture (theatre, art etc.), Colloquial language Individual correspondence and written literature (own articles, regional, folkloric or individual literature)

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Gohar Hakobian

Lexical similarities of Zāzāki and Ṭāleši

Despite their migration in the 10th-12th centuries and the fact that for almost a millennium the Zāzā people had no direct contact with their closest linguistic relatives, the language of this people has preserved numerous phonetic, morphological, and lexical isoglosses with the South-Caspian Iranian dialects. This justifies the place of Zāzā in the Caspian dialect group of Northwest Iranian. The group of Caspian dialects includes, along with Zāzāki, Ṭāleši, Harzan(d)ī, Gūrānī, Gīlakī, Māzandarānī, Semnānī, and Southern Tātī. Historically, the Caspian dialects belong to the Northwest Iranian group of dialects.

This paper discusses some common lexical elements between Zāzāki and Ṭāleši. Although located in a far distance from the area, Zāzāki, as a matter of fact being a South Caspian dialect, has preserved a number of highly interesting isoglosses with the linguistic landscape of the South Caspian-Aturpatakan region. Among these elements, the most conspicuous is the term for 'moon': Zāzā *āšmī, āšme, āšmə,* Ṭāleši *ovšim*, Harzan(d)ī *ōšma*, etc., from Old Iranian **uxšya-(waxša-)mah-ka-*, Middle Persian *āyišm*.

The linguistic features Zāzāki shares with Kurdish dialects (by the way, not so numerous; in any case, not more than with other Iranian dialects) can be explained by centuries-old contact between these languages, but not by common dialectal bases.

The study of Zāzā with regards to its areal characteristics can yield important results, illuminating not only the position of this language among the New Iranian dialects, but also the ethno-demographic developments in the Irano-Caspian-Anatolian region.

1 Settlement area of the Ṭālišis

The land of Ṭāliš (Ṭāleš, Talysh, Tolysh) or Tālišistān[1] (with suffix *-stān* < Old Iranian **stāna-* 'shelter')[2] is located in the south-west of the Caspian Sea and is divided into northern and southern parts. Southern Ṭāliš includes the southern regions of

1 This name is used in the plural form of Arabic *Tāvāliš* in Iran.

2 The suffix *-stān* is widely used in the irano-turkic ethnocultural world for ethnic areas' names, such as cities, regions, and separate territories, e.g. *Balūchistān, Tūrkmenistān, Afghānistān, Luristān, Kāfiristān, Zāzāistān* etc.

the Republic of Azerbaijan, comprising five regions of modern Azerbaijan Republic: Lenkorān, Āstārā, Lerīk, Massally (Ṭāleši Māsāllon), Yardymly (Ṭāleši Vargadiz). The northern regions of the Iranian provinces of Gilan and eastern parts of Ardabil form northern Ṭāliš. This shapes the historical homeland of Ṭālišis, stretching from the Mugan steppe in the Azerbaijan Republic to the southern coast of the Caspian Sea until the Kopuchal locality not far from Enzeli lagoon (Bandar-e Pahlavī) in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The approximate settlement area of Ṭālišis in Azerbaijan is 5,370 sq.km and in Iran it is 3,839.6 sq.km (Asatrian 2011: 13).

In Northern Ṭāliš, we notice interesting toponyms (place-names) like Lenkorān, Lerīk, Māsāl, Āstārā; in Southern Ṭāliš -Lavandavīl, Kopūrčāl, Anzalī, Āstārā, Vīznē, Līsār, Haštpar, Āsālem, Šanderman, Māsūlē, Fūman, etc.

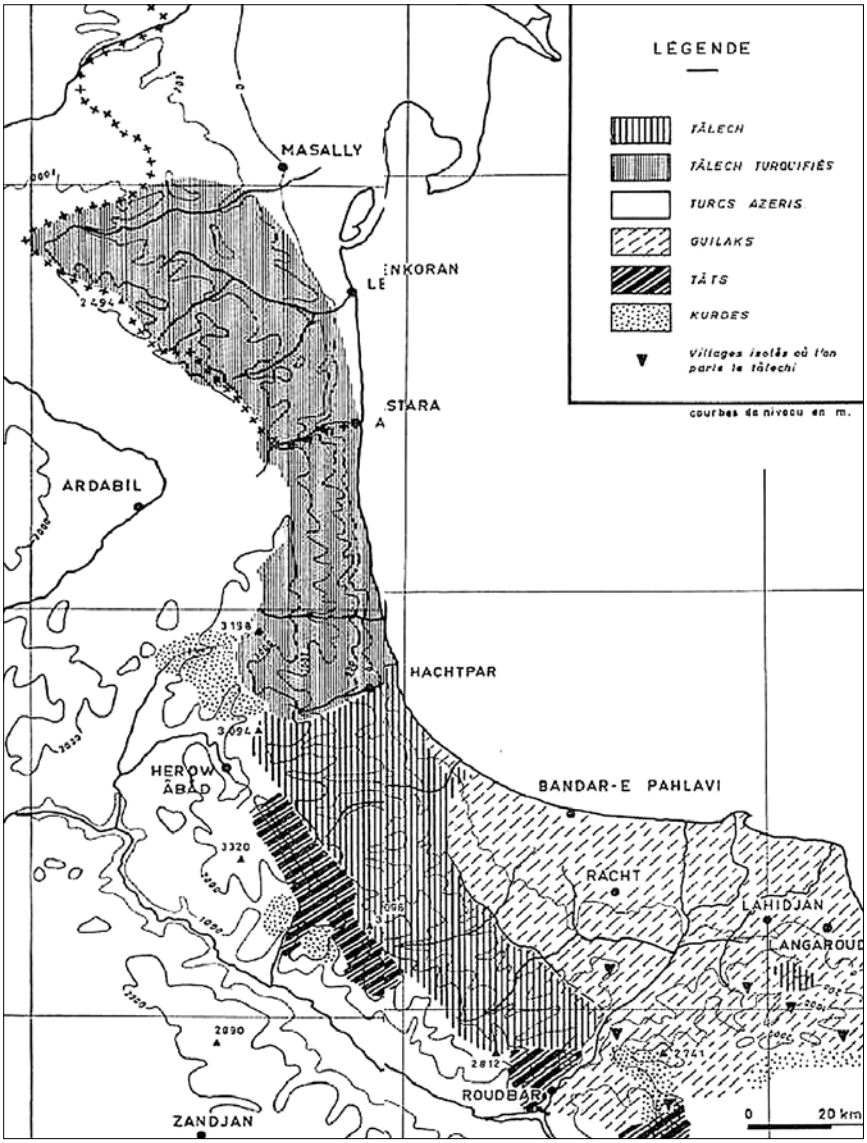
The toponym Kopūrčāl, for example, has a quite transparent structure: *kopūr* and *-čāl*. The suffix *-čāl* is a toponymic formant in the Iranian lingual area, with the meaning of 'pit, hole' and is synonymous to Turkic *çuxur*. Asatrian traces *kopūr* to Old Iranian **kapa-* 'fish', which is usually considered an East Iranian isogloss (c.f. Ossetian *kœf*) with **bara-* 'carrier', i.e. **kapa-bara-* '(locality) abounding with fishes', which is a proper name for coastal settlements.

The toponym Āstārā (Iṣṭārāb, Iṣṭarāb, Iṣtāra) (ibid: 23) is observed in both Northern and Southern Ṭāliš (or Tālišistān). The earliest mention of this toponym (under the name Astārāb), is found in the Ḥodūd al-ʿālam, written at the end of the 10th century. Obviously, the final *-ā* in Āstārā is the abridged form of the word *āb* 'water'. Asatrian draws a parallel between Iranian *-āstar* and Kāshān dialectal forms *assar, āstar* 'reservoir, basin' < Old Iranian **āpa-starana-* 'expanse of water' (not from *istaxr* 'basin'). Accordingly, the initial form was **āstar-āb*, which in Arabic transmission appears with the reduction of the initial long vowel (ibid.). From the 16th to the 18th century, the Ṭālišī Khans of Āstārā were either autonomous or nominally subordinate to the governors of Gīlān or Ardabīl. After the frontier delimitation of 1813, Āstārā became the starting point of a significant trade route between Russia and the north-west of Iran. After the establishment of the Soviet regime, the frontier was closed and the two towns progressed separately. The Azerbaijani town has a mainly Ṭāliši and Turkish population and is the centre of the Āstārā district of Azerbaijan. The Iranian town has mainly Shi'ite and Turkish-speaking inhabitants (Bazin 2012).

According to folk etymology, the toponym Lenkorān or Lankarān is explained from *langar-kanān* 'pulling up the anchor(s)'. Perixanian supposes that it originates from Middle Median **lankarān* (< **Lan(a)karāna-*) 'land of Lans' (**karan-* "border, region, land", *Lan* is probably the name of one of the Caspian tribes) (Perixanyan 1982: 55). Asatrian suggests that it originates from Old Ṭāleši **lankar-ān* with Iranian toponymic formant *-ān* < Old Iranian *-āna-*. In the first part, according to him, we have a complex formation with the meaning of 'cane house': *lan* 'cane, reed' (in Ṭāleši *leyna*)

and *kar* 'house' (c.f. in Ṭālešī *ka* < Old Iranian **kata*-, Pers. *kada*). Obviously, Ṭālešī *leyna* does not have Iranian etymology, c.f. *leɣ*, *ləɣ* 'sedge, special kind of reed' (perhaps from **leynak*). It is possible that here we have a substrate element – protoform **lagn*- or **lang*- (Asatrian 2011: 24).

Map of Ṭāliš (Bazin 1974: 165)



2 Settlement area of the Zāzās

The Zāzā people or Dim(i)līs live mainly in Eastern Anatolia, in the Dersim region (modern Tunceli) between Erzincan (Greek *Erzingan*, Armenian *Erēz*, *Erznga(n)*) and Elazığ in the north and the Muratsu river (*Morādsū*, Armenian *Aracani*) in the south, the far western part of the historical Upper Armenia (Bardzr Hayk‘), as well as in Bingöl, Mush, and the province of Bitlis, around Diyarbekir (Dīārbakr), Siverek, and Sivas (Asatrian 1987: 159). Their appearance in the areas where they now dwell is probably related to the waves of migration from the highland of Gīlān during the 10th-12th centuries. Today, a lot of Zazas live in the Western European Diaspora (about 400,000), basically in Germany and in smaller communities in France, Netherlands, Swiss, Austria, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

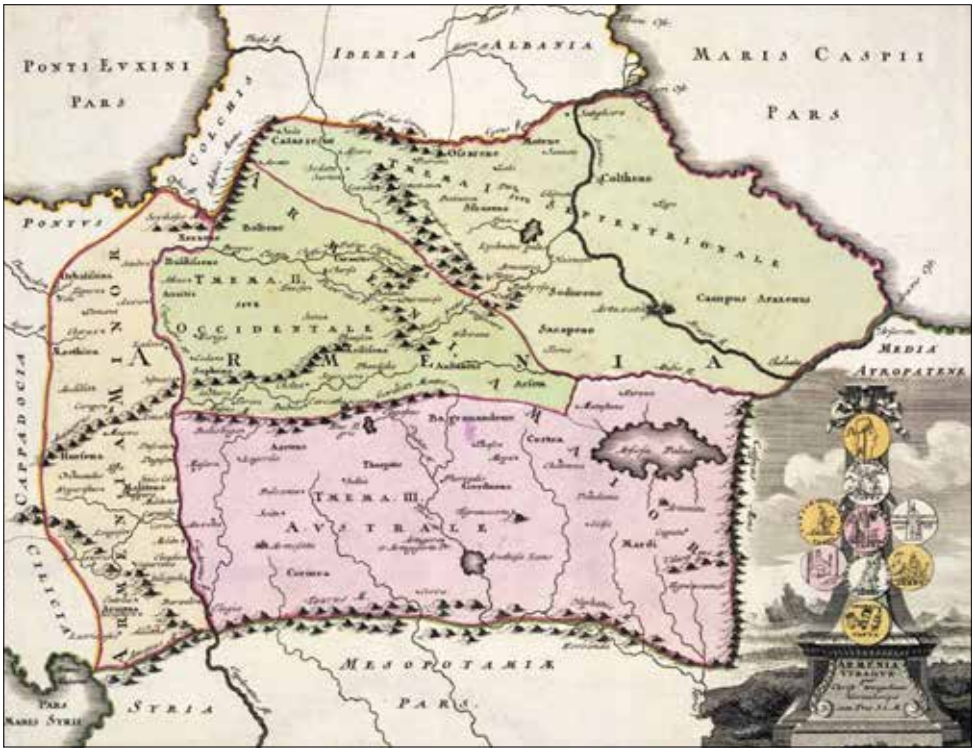
The term Zāzāistān was offered for the first time by teacher, writer, and publisher Ebubekir Pamukçu, which, as he suggests, has no political meaning (Pamukçu 1992: 3-4). Nevertheless, this term, which also has an academic background, has become the central idea of the Zāzā national movement. According to the Armenian scholar Arakelova, some Zāzā leaders today often speak about the formation of an independent Zāzāistān in the future (including Dersim and adjacent areas) (Arakelova 1999/2000: 403).

3 Demographics and roots of the Ṭālišis

It is difficult to establish the origin of the Ṭālišis because of the lack of sources. In early Arabic sources (al-Balādhurī, al-Ṭabarī, Yāqūt), Ṭālišis are defined with the term al-Ṭaylasān, in Persian-Ṭālišān and Ṭavālīš (plural forms of Tāliš). Nevertheless, as the German historian and orientalist Marquart suggests, the ethnonym Tāliš in its original form is attested in the 16th century Armenian translation of the *Alexander Romance*, which was initially translated from Greek in the 5th century (Marquart 1903: 278)

Ṭālišis usually identify themselves with the ancient Cadusians (Καδούσιοι), an Iranian nomadic tribe, who, according to Stephan of Byzantium (the author of an important geographical dictionary entitled Ethnica (Ἐθνικά)), lived in the area between the Caspian and the Black Seas and, according to Greek geographer, philosopher, and historian Strabo, on the south-western shore of the Caspian Sea and south of the Araxes (Aras) river between the Albanians in the north and the Mardoi in the east, i.e., in the mountainous northern part of Media around the Parachoatras Range (Schmitt 1990).

John David Koehler's (1684-1755) 'School and Travel Atlas'



Both *Καδούσ-* and *Ṭāliš-* are suffixal formations with the stems *kād-* and *tāl-*. Armenian scholar Asatrian, considering the later Armenian versions of this ethnonym, *Kadiš-* in *Kadšk'*, notes that in case of **Kādus-* we have the suffix *-uš* or *-iš* (Asatrian, Borjian 2005: 47).[3] Here we have **-δ- >-l-* transition: the palatalisation of *-k->-č-* and the influence of the following front vowel *-i-* could result in *k- <t-*, i.e. **kāl-īš> *čāl-iš> tāliš*. However, this can be regarded merely as a working hypothesis (ibid.).

The approximate number of the Ṭāliši-speaking population in both southern and northern Ṭāliš may be estimated at around three million. It needs to be mentioned that the demographic data about the Ṭālišis are coarsely manipulated due to various political factors.

Ṭālišis in northern Ṭāliš are primarily bilingual, in southern Ṭāliš they are trilingual. According to Miller (1926) Ṭālišis in northern Ṭāliš, in addition to Ṭāleši,

3 All Iranian forms with *-š-* are introduced with *-s-* in Greek because of the absence of the phoneme *-š-* in Greek.

speak Azerbaijani fluently, not peculiar to the first half of the 20th century. Miller notices that the female population of Ṭāliš especially in remote mountainous areas did not know the Turkish language (Miller 1926: 7). Ṭālišis in southern Ṭāliš, along with their native language Ṭāleši, are fluent in Persian, the official language of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as in the Turkic and Caspian dialect Gīlakī.

According to Asatrian (2011: 89) Ṭālišis in Iran can be divided into three main groups, based on their economy:

1. Nomadic or semi-nomadic groups, called *gāleš* (literally, 'shepherd of neat cattle'), who mainly raise livestock. They represent an individual ethn-social group and have their own spiritual traditions, material culture, and even their own unique dialect, which is a mixture of Ṭāleši and Gīlakī. The basis of their economy is transhumance: the seasonal movement of people with their livestock between higher pastures in summer and lower valleys in winter.

2. Sedentary cultivators who have preserved some elements of a tribal apparatus. They are generally engaged in agriculture and horticulture. Ancillary elements of economy both for cattlemen and farmers are hunting, bee-keeping, and fishing.

3. Sedentary cultivators, who are peasants without tribal affiliation. Tribal groups compose tribal confederations – *īl (ʾašīret)*. The largest Ṭāliši īls are Kargarū, Asālem, Tālešdulā, Khušābar, Malal, Šāndermīn, and Māsāl ('Abdolī 1990: 42). Tribes, in their turn, are divided into smaller units – clans, big families, etc.

4 Demographics and roots of the Zāzās

The Zāzās call themselves *Dimlī* (not in Erzincan, Kiği, or Mutki areas; see Andrews/Benninghaus 1989: 121), which probably derives from *Deylam* (*Dēlam* or *Dēlim*) (Minorsky 1932: 17) (cf. also Armenian *delmik*, *dlmik*), evidently from **dēlmīk* 'Deylamite' (also other ethnonyms for Zaza people like *Kırmanc* (Dersim and Erzincan), *Şarê Ma* 'our nation, our people' (Varto, Xınıs (Khnus, Hınıs)), *Elewi* are widespread). The Deylamite origin of the Zāzās is confirmed by the linguistic position of their language, which, as a Northwest Iranian dialect, is closely related to South-Caspian dialects (Henning 1955: 174-175). For their neighbours, they are chiefly known as *Zāzās*, meaning 'stutterer' (Asatrian 1995), due to the specific phonetic system, which, unlike other Western Iranian idioms, has single-focused affricates influenced by the Armenian language. In Turkey they are called *Dersimli* and *Qızılbāš* (ibid.). For Armenians, as noted, they are known as *Delmik*, *Dlmik*, *Dmlik*, *Zāzā (Alevi) K'rder*, *Dužik*

and *Dužik K'rder* (after the name of the central mountain in Dersim, Dužikbaba), or *Ča'rk'əč'ik* (after the name of feudal landowner tribe *Çarekan* in Pülümür (Dersim)). Asatrian notes that the Armenian term *K'rder*, i.e. 'Kurds', does not refer to the nationality; in this context, it is apparently a socio-ethnonym (Asatrian 1987: 160). The majority of the Zāzās live in rural areas, however, unlike the Kurds, Zāzās are basically sedentary cultivators who are particularly renowned as horticulturists, though cattle breeding has a tangible place in their economy. They have a tribal society based on kinship, which includes forty-five sub-tribes, each divided into smaller units and directed by an important clan. The most prominent sub-tribes are Ābāsān, Āgājān, Ālān, Bāmāsūr(ān), Baḵtīār(lī), Dǔžīk, Dawrēš-Gulābān, Dawrēš-Jamālān, Haydarān(lī), Hasanān(lī), Kurēšān, Mamikī, and Yūsufān (Asatrian 1995). The religious and secular leaders of subtribes are called *seyīd*s or *pir* and *raybers*, who exercise considerable influence in society. Unlike their Muslim neighbours, divorce is severely banned.

As in the case of the Ṭālišis, the population figures can only be approximately estimated, as Zāzās are not counted separately in Turkish census; however, their total number is approximately three to four million (Minahan 2002: 2096).

5 Minority status of the Ṭālišis

As in the case of other minorities in Azerbaijan, the Ṭālešī-speakers are subject to aggressive attempts of assimilation – there is no formal education in Ṭālešī and reading and speaking the language is discouraged by the authorities. Instead, Ṭālišis have to use Azerbaijani or Persian in formal situations. As a result, the number of people being educated in Ṭālešī is decreasing, and the language is now considered *vulnerable* by UNESCO (*UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*). This represents a serious threat to the cultural integrity of the Taishis, as proficiency in and the use of an ethnic language is an important factor for the sustainability of the ethnic groups and their cultural self-identification.

During the early USSR period, there were Ṭālešī high schools, a newspaper called "Red Ṭāliš", and several books in Ṭālešī were published. However, at end of the 1930s, these schools were closed and broadcasting in Ṭālešī was abolished; since then, the Ṭālišis have been deprived of their mass media in general. The Ṭālišis are not acknowledged in official statistics but are classified as "Azerbaijanis".

This process started in 1826 and continues to the present. From 1826 to 1917, during the Czarist Era, Russian authorities supported and contributed to Turkic cultural elements in order to diminish the region's Iranian impact. Prime examples of Russian policy were the promotion of the anti-Persian *Akıncı* newspaper and the re-

ligious dominated Mullah Nassreddin magazine. The Russian researcher A. Zavodski wrote in 1902:

> *[...] the names of Ṭāliš villages are being changed in accordance with the Tatar language and pronunciation. The influence of the Turks is great. It is a pity that the areas inhabited by Ṭālišis are losing their geographical names, which are being substituted by the Tatar ones [...]*

More than 400 Ṭāleši place names have been changed during the last two centuries. The *Müsavat* Regime of 1918 in Baku on 1918 introduced the name *Azerbaijan* which is taken from the original name of the north-western province of Iran. During the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union in June 1993 and major political unrest across the Caucasus, Ṭāliš military and political activist of Azerbaijan Ali Akram Hummatzada declared the formation of the Ṭāliš-Mughan Autonomous Republic. However, the self-proclaimed state was ephemeral, lasting only until August 1993. With the accession of the Aliev family to power, the Azerbaijani central government sentenced Hummatzada to death for his activities, which was afterwards commuted to life imprisonment. However, in 2004, due to endeavours of the Council of Europe, he was released and classified as a political prisoner. As a result, he was deprived of his Azerbaijani citizenship and now lives in the Netherlands.

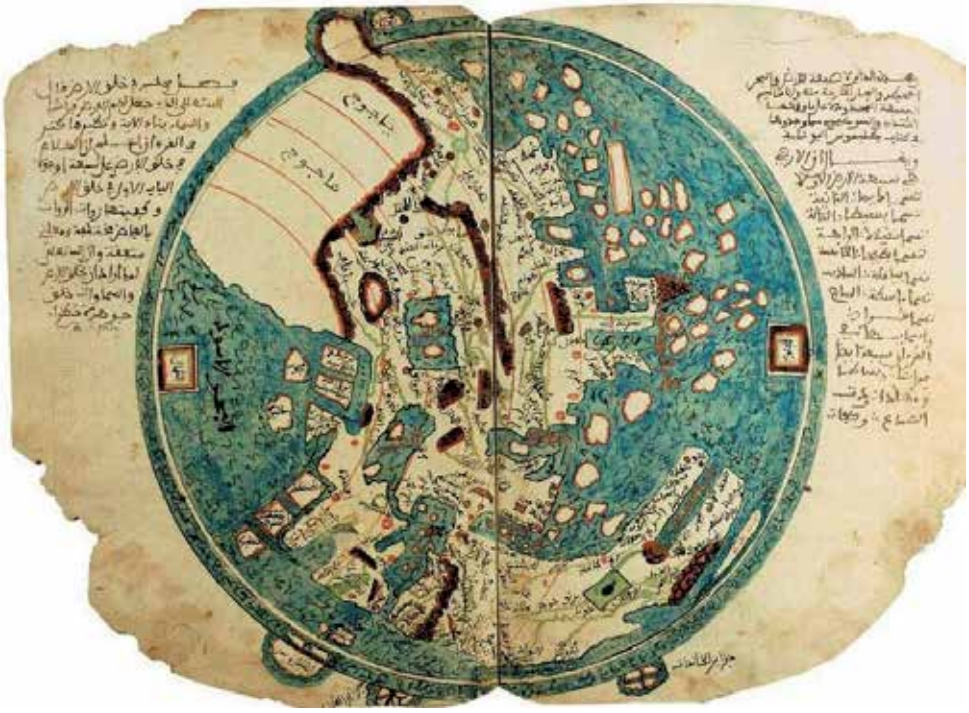
The government of the Republic of Azerbaijan has an obvious discrimination policy towards the ethnic minorities, particularly the Ṭālišis, which is best shown in many imprisonment cases of outstanding public Ṭāliši figures.

Thus, Azerbaijani leadership's goal is minimizing contacts between the Ṭāliš communities in Azerbaijan and Iran and turning Azerbaijan into a mono-ethnic state.

6 Minority status of the Zāzās

Despite their distinct national identity and ethnic consciousness, Zāzās have never claimed their separate existence, as they have been surrounded by the Kurds for centuries. The national identity of Zāzās has always been under the shadow of the Kurdish ethnic and national prevalence. Until now, these people have been considered part of the Kurds, i.e. one of the Kurdish "tribal confederations". However, the historical and linguistic investigations revealed that the Zāzās are neither Turks nor Kurds. They are a north-west Iranian people who migrated to the present lands of their inhabitation during the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. from the southern parts of the Caspian Sea, in particular from Deylam.

Islamic world map of 977 AH/1570 CE



This map is and is part of *Kitab al- bad'w al-Tarikh* 'The Book of the Beginnings and History', a manuscript thatis attributed to Ibn-Said or al-Šawi al-Farsi. The origin of the map, however, goes back to the Islamic cartography of the 12th or 13th centuries. Constantinople is shown on the narrow strait that connects the Mediterranean to the Black Sea, which would be the representation of the Bosphorus. To the east of the Black Sea is the Caspian Sea, which is the rectangular lake at the centre of the map, with two islands (which do not exist). Below the Caspian (to its west) lies a large mountain mass – possibly the Caucasus – with a second one further south, which is probably the depiction of the Armenian Highlands. Between the two mountain ranges lies Armanieh, Armenia. Khorasanis situated to the west of Armenia and the cities of Bab-ul-Abwab (Derbend) and Shirwanare are to its north, within the territory of Deilam. To its south, the cities of Hamadan and Baghdad are shown.)

In the modern history of Turkey, the Zāzā identity itself evokes a chaotic situation. Starting from the Dersim Genocide of 1937-1938, the Turkish government has always regarded this part of country, predominantly inhabited by Zāzās, as the most uncontrollable. These people live between two enemy parties who are trying to use

them for their purposes: the Kurdish national movement on one side, trying to involve them in their struggle, and the Turkish military forces against Kurds, on the other side.

In the Republic of Turkey their national identity is not recognised, and their language and culture are prohibited.

Due to the continuous oppressive policy of the Republic of Turkey towards minorities and their languages, practically no indigenous Zāzāki written literature exists. The first exclusively Zāzāki journal was published by Ebubekr Pamukçu in 1984. Nowadays, the further development of the Zāzā language and culture is endangered by the Turkish "purifying" and assimilation policy in Eastern Anatolia of indigenous populations. UNESCO has even categorised a danger of language extinction for the Zāzā people (UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger). The seriousness of the situation becomes apparent by the fact that children are not taught their mother tongue at home nor is there the need for Zāzāki to be spoken at home or in public. Thus, the culture of the Zāzā people has changed dramatically due to migration to Western Europe, denial of the mother tongue education (in their non-Turkish languages), Turkey's policy towards the minorities, etc.

7 Religion and folk beliefs of theṬālišis

The South Caspian region has always been an important contact zone. Despite the traditional forms of Islam in this area, the religious outlook of the Ṭālišis is an example of syncretism. The majority of Ṭālišis in Iran (with the exception of residents of Šāndermīn and Māsāl) are Sunnis, followers of the Naqshbandi order.[4] Previously, the Zaidi (Zaydi) sect of Shiʿism,[5] and, to a certain extent, Ismailism[6] were widespread in the Gilan Province of Iran, including the region of Ṭāliš. Ṭālišis in the Republic of

4 Naqšbandī is a major Sunni spiritual order of Sufism, which traces its spiritual lineage to the Islamic prophet Muhammad through Abu Bakr, the first caliph and Muhammad's companion. Some Naqshbandi order followers trace their lineage through Ali, his son-in-law and the fourth caliph, in keeping with most other Sufis.

5 Shii Muslims, the followers or party of ʻAlī, believe that Muhammad's religious leadership, spiritual authority, and divine guidance were passed on to his descendants, beginning with his son-in-law and cousin, ʻAlī bin Abī Ṭālib, his daughter, Fatimah, and their sons, Hasan and Husayn. There are three main branches of Shiis today: the Zaydis, the Ismailis (Seveners), and the Ithna Asharis (Twelvers or Imamis).

6 Ismaʿilism is a major Shiʿite Muslim community. The Ismaʿilis have had a long and eventful history dating back to the middle of the 8th century when the Emāmi Shiʿis split into several groups after the death of Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādeq. The earliest Ismaʿilis from amongst the Emāmi Shiʿis traced the imamate in the progeny of Esmāʿil b. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādeq, the eponym of the Esmāʿiliya.

Azerbaijan are Shiʿites, except for the inhabitants of the 25 villages near the city of Āstārā, which is the centre of the Astara Rayon of Azerbaijan (Asatrian 1998: 9). At the same time, the national beliefs and traditions of Ṭālišis have preserved numerous pre-Muslim elements.

In Ṭāliši folklore, folk Islam has very deep roots, in which Muslim Saints, Prophets, and Koranic characters are impersonated with the pre-Islamic authentic heroes. As in the case of other nations whose basic economy is predominantly cattle breeding, the most imaginary characters in the Ṭāliši beliefs are patrons of cattle.

Siyāh Gāleš, or the Black Shepherd, is the Chief Master and the protector of the flock, but his name shows that he was primarily a patron deity of neat cattle. Even currently in the modern South Caspian zone, the term *gāleš* is used for the herdsman of cattle, and the term *kurd* for the 'shepherd'. Asatrian (2002: 82) gives the etymology of *gāleš,* from Old Iranian **gāwa-raxša-(ka)*, i.e. 'the protector of cows' with the substrate form *-uš* (*-iš*).

Picture from *Talyšskie narodnye predaniya i skazki* (2005)

The tradition attests that Siyāh Gāleš invisibly accompanies the herd everywhere, returns cows escaped from the herd, and curbs and punishes naughty livestock and disobedient herdsman. He is open-handed to careful shepherds and owners of herds, rewarding them with a magical black stick, which brings success and contributes to the rise of the herd. He also gives magical egg, or a piece of meat, which can be put into a sack with rice in order to preserve the stock of provisions.

In the national beliefs of the residents of the Mazandaran and Gilan provinces of Iran, including Ṭālišis, Siyāh Gāleš is represented in various forms: an invisible old man wrapped in black wool or a healthy dark-faced young man. Often seen accompanying Siyāh Gāleš is his favourite big fallow deer. Sometimes

Siyāh Gāleš is an ambivalent figure with opposite features and attributes of an *autochthonous* deity. The sacral black colour, which is represented in his name, dark face, and attributes, generally symbolises the coherence of earth with deity, unruled forces of nature, fertility of the earth, rich pastures, and the world of flora (Arakelova 2007: 155-156).

We can draw many parallels with the Caspian Black Shepherd "the protector of the livestock", e.g. Namad Kāl for Lurs, Mam(ē) Šivān and Gāvānē Zarzān (individually responsible for the cattle) for Yezidis, Fælværa for Ossets, Sārikō-šuān and Mamōgāvān or Wāyirō xēr, who is the Lord of Kindness and his antipode Wāyirō xirāv for Zāzās, and Tavri-čʻlut for Armenians (Asatrian/Arakelova 2004: 259).

Another character similar to Siyāh Gāleš is Siyāh Čəxo (literally 'black covering') represented in the folklore of Northern Ṭāliš (Abilov/Mirzalizade 2011: 199). He is identified as fate – everyone has his Siyāh Čəxo. Everyone who sees him standing will become rich if they keep the meeting secret. If the personified character appears lying, sleeping, or falling, then death is near (ibid.: 200).

The patronage of the herd in Northern Ṭāliš represents the Muslim character Saint Khidr, which is explained by his initial affiliation of green and earth. Al-Khidr (Ḫiḍr) sits on white fur, which turns green from his touch; he is the lord of seas and prays on green carpet on the surface of water. Allah says to the source of life

> *You are al-Khidr and the earth will become green if your leg will touch it.*
>
> (Papazian 1986: 91)

The cult of Xizir (Xeżr) Īlyās with the elements of the Armenian Surb Sargis (Saint Sergius) are also recognizable in the Zāzā community. Christian elements are fused with Shiʻite conceptions (as in the case of Xizir) or have been adopted from the Armenian population of Dersim, for example, the rites of communion, baptism, and worship at Christian shrines and churches (e.g., the Sūrb Kārāpēt monastery, Hālvōrī Vānk in the Duzgin mountains, Dēr Ōvā, Armenian Tēr Ohan, and Saint John monastery near Sulpis/zdāḡ).

The connection of al-Khidr with eternal life – *we have never given anyone immortality before you* (Koran 21-34) – is undoubtedly warranted by his unity with water. Water as a source of life and a symbol of rebirth and renovation, which annihilates the past and is the beginning of cosmogony (environment keeping the family), indisputably gives him power over the time. These sacral characteristics make him responsible for birth, growth of herd, reproduction, encirclement of nature processes, etc.

In Ṭāliši folklore, the role of the protector of cattle is partly entrusted to Musa (Bible Moses). According to tradition, God, at the request of Musa, created a dog for the protection of the flock from wolves.

Despite the fact that in both parts of Ṭāliš the pre-Islamic and Qoranic characters are patrons of flock, Ṭālišis in Iran have mainly saved substrate elements, while in Northern Ṭāliš, residents of the Republic of Azerbaijan have given functional overloading to Muslim characters.

Nevertheless, national beliefs of both southern and northern Ṭālišis have remarkable archaic elements, originating from the depths of ancient times and formulating the traditional worldview of representatives of this nation.

8 Religion and folk beliefs of the Zāzās

Many different groups are frequently counted among the *Alevis* living in the Balkans, the Middle East, and in different parts of Asia. However, they distinguish themselves from each other on a variety of points, such as their religious practices and views on Islam. For example, the Anatolian Alevis are different from the Nuṣayrī (also called the *Arab-Alevis* or just Alawis, ʻAlawīyyah) and from the Jaʻfari, also called *Imami Shiites* (Arslan forthcoming) (they see ʻAlī b. Abī Ṭāleb, not Prophet Muḥammad, as the central incarnation of God, which has a rather formal position in their religious conceptions). The Sunni majority in Turkey does not recognise them as Muslims, which results in cultural and religious discrimination towards them. Such Islamic practices as namaz, the Ramadan fast, the zakat tax, the hajj, and the pilgrimage to Mecca are excluded in Zāzā-Alevi religious life.

The religious belief of Zāzā-Alevis is characterised by a primitive hue, some Christian nuances and the deep influence of folk Sufism. However, many Alevi-Zāzās, like Yazīdīs, unbendingly refuse that they are Muslims and claim that they are followers of a distinct religion (Molyneux-Seel 1914: 64). God is known as Hū/ŭmāy, Hōmā or Haq. Among Zāzās their religion is known by the Turkish term *yōl-ušāğī* ʻfollowers of the true path'.

Nature worship is the significant part of their beliefs; pilgrimages to sacred springs and mountains are of particular importance: Mūnzūrdāğ, Duzgin bābā, Sulpis, Zēle (Žēle) rocks, springs, Hēnīyē Xizirī 'the spring of Xeżr' on the slopes of Dŭzgin bābā, Kānīyē ānmāhūtyan 'the spring of immortality' at the foot of Sūlpis, trees (mainly oaks), and animals (snakes, rabbits). Arakelova suggests that pagan cults are basically presented in the Zāzās' world-vision, where philosophical and religious concepts are mixed and closely related to each other (Arakeova 1999/2000: 398).

Women have equal participation in religious rituals and often are called derogatory names (e.g. *čirāğ-kušān, čirāğ-sōndurān, mūm-sōndurān, ķurōs-kušān* ʻcandle extinguishers'), which suggests participation in orgies (Asatrian 1995).

Zāzās, like the Yazīdīs, besides worshipping in *tekkes* (special public places for performing their religious ceremonies), also worship in private houses, including those of their religious leaders (Asatrian 1992: 105).

There are three clans, Dawrēš-Jamālān, Bāmāsūrān, and Kurēšān, the traditional guardians of Zāzā religious doctrine. The highest religious office *pīrē pīrān* (cf. Persian *pīr-e pīrān* 'elder of elders') is hereditary like other religious offices.

9 The Ṭālešī language

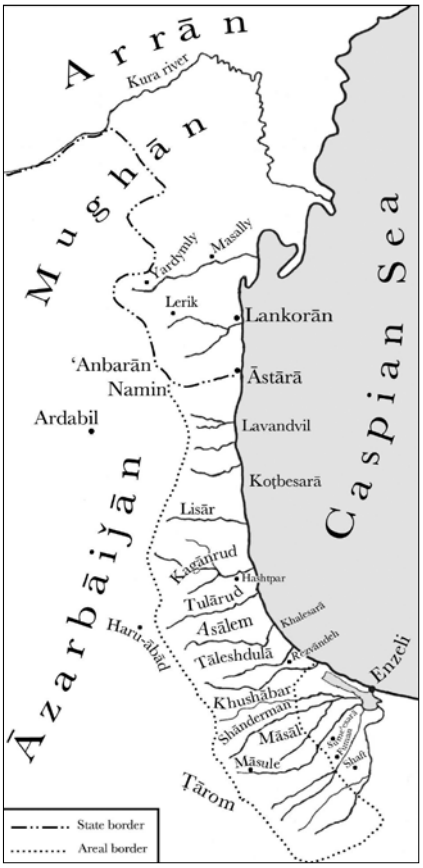
Ṭālešī is a north-western Iranian language, which is closely related to the Tāti group of dialects spoken from Kajal and Shāhrud in the south-west to Tārom in the south. Despite the absence of written monuments in Ṭālešī, it is considered to originate from the Āẕarī language. This is confirmed by Miller (Miller 1953: 227) who suggests that Āẕarī of Ardabil was a form of Ṭālešī. We notice the influence of neighbouring languages, in particular Gīlakī (in southern Ṭāliš) and Turkish (in northern Ṭāliš), on Ṭālešī. In some urban centres, such as Āstārā and Hashtpar (in southern Ṭāliš), Turkish has already replaced Ṭālešī. Central Ṭālešī is the unimpaired form of the Ṭālešī dialects.

The influence of Armenian is also noticeable in the vocabulary of Ṭālešī, though there is no attestation of direct Ṭāliši-Armenian contact: cf. Ṭālešī *hand* 'furrow', Armenian dial. *hand*, Udi *hännd*, Classical Armenian *and* cultivated *hand*; Ṭālešī *šāɣ* "dew", Armenian *šaɣ*; Ṭālešī *pənd* "strong", Armenian dial. *pənd-*, *pind*, etc.
Stilo (2015: 419) divides Ṭālešī into three basic groups:

i. Southern Ṭālešī (Māsāli, Māsulei, Šāndermīni, and others),
ii. Central Ṭālešī (Asālemi, Haštpari, and others),
iii. Northern Ṭālešī (in four closely related dialect zones of Lerīk, Māsāli, Lenkorān, Āstārā in the Azerbaijan Republic and in the dialects of Āstārā, Sayyādlar, Vizane, as well as Anbarān and surrounding villages in Iran).

Central Ṭālešī is obviously more closely related to northern Ṭālešī in both grammatical features and lexical composition than it is to southern Ṭālešī. There are also transitional dialects between each of these groups, e.g., the dialect of Jowkandān, transitional between northern and central Ṭālešī, or Tālesh-Dolābi, transitional between central and southern Ṭālešī. Certain lexical and grammatical features unite all varieties of Ṭālešī.

Map of Talish by Habib Borjian and Uwe Bläsing (Asatrian/Borjian 2005)



10 The Zāzā language

The Zāzā language, or Dimlī, is a north-west Iranian language (Windfuhr 1995) with with northern, south-western, and south-eastern dialect forms (Paul 2009: 546). We can conditionally classify Zāzā as well as Gūrānī into the group of Caspian and Aturpatakanian dialects, which, to some extent, have bearings in north-west Iranian dialects of Central Iran (Nāʾīnī, Semnānī, Sīvandī, etc.).

The influence of Armenian is also discernible in the Zāzā language. Cf. Zāzā *gōme* 'barn' from Arm. *gom* < IE **ghom-*, Danish *gamme* 'sheepfold', Swedish *gamme* 'crib' (Asatrian 1987: 163); Zāzā *masūr* 'hip, dog rose', Armenian *masur*, etc.

11 Lexical similarities between Zāzāki and Ṭāleši

North-Western Iranian languages are not distinguished from other Iranian languages so distinctly as the languages of the south-western group. For some historic-phonetical reasons which separate the south-western and north-western Iranian languages, the latter are fused with East Iranian languages to some extent (e.g. preservation of Old Iranian **s*, **z*). Historical and dialectological interaction within this group is also highly complicated. It is impossible to reconstruct the total original dialect for this entire group: it can be assumed that modern north-western languages and dialects, Kurdish, Balūčī, Caspian languages (Ṭāleši, Gīlakī, Māzandarānī) and adjoining dialects, such as Zāzā, Gūrānī, Vafsī, and central dialects derive from several branches of Old Iranian and Middle Iranian north-western dialects.

The most important criterion for the characteristics of this group of dialects is the system of lexical isoglosses. This refers to the lexicon, which basically or exclusively is peculiar to the dialects of the south Caspian zone. See below some common elements found in both the Ṭāleši and Zāzāki lexicons:

1. Zāzā *(ā)ǰēr* ‘down’ (Paul 1998: 291); Ṭāleši *bajži, žīǰ* (Pirejko 1976: 273); cf. in dialects of Vafs, Āštīān, Harzan(d)ī, and Tafreš we have ÷پژر *paže* (Āzarli 2008: 81); Bābol جر *ǰer* (ibid: 127), Balūči چرا *čerā,* چیر *čīr* (ibid: 140) from Old Iranian **hača-adari.*

2. Zāzā *ā-kerdiš* ‘to open’ (Paul 1998: 291); Ṭāleši *ōkārde* (Pirejko 1976: 296); in dialects of Vafs, Āštīān, Harzan(d)ī, Tafreš ÷اوکرد *ōkorde* (Āzarli 2008: 31). Here we have the preverb *ā-*.

3. Zāzā *ānā, henēn/e* ‘so’ (Paul 1998: 291); Ṭāleši *āna, ānanda, ānahoǰ* (Pirejko 1976: 313).

4. Zāzā *ārwēš* ‘rabbit’ (Paul 1998: 291); Ṭāleši *havuš* (Pirejko 1976: 282).

5. Zāzā *berz* ‘high’ (Paul 1998: 292); Ṭāleši *barz, barzin* (we have also *lavar* for ‘high, tall, top’) (Pirejko 1976: 275); cf. Balūči, Tātī برز *barz* (Āzarli 2008: 46) from Old Iranian <**barz-*.

6. Zāzā *este* ‘bone’ (Paul 1998: 297); Ṭāleši *āsa* (Pirejko 1976: 286); cf. Šūš اشة *āssē* (Āzarli 2008: 15); Dari-e Kermān *osto* (ibid: 29) from Old Iranian <**astu-*.

7. Zāzā *golik, guk* “calf”; Ṭāleši *gala* (in Ṭāleši we have also *gūg* for ‘calf’) from Old Iranian <**gāwaka-*.

8. Zāzā *īnī* ~ *hēnī* ‘spring’ (Paul 1998: 301); Ṭālešī *honī*/*xoni* (Pirejko 1976: 306); cf. Tātī خاني *xānī* (Āzarli 2008: 158); Kermānšāh, Sōranī, Bojnūrd كاني *kānī* (ibid: 267); Īlām كيني *keyanī*; Qūčān, Qaračē-e Kašmar گاني *gānī* (ibid: 309) from Old Iranian **xan-*, Middle Persian *x’n* (*xān* ‘source, spring’) (Mackenzie 1971: 94).

9. Zāzā *kewī/ḳewe/kewo/kiho/hewz* ‘blue, green (Paul 1998: 303), Ṭālešī *kāvū* (in Ṭālešī we have also *hāvz*, *hāvzīn*) (Pirejko 1976: 309); cf. Īlām كو *kū* (Āzarli 2008: 296); Tātī هوز *hovaz* (ibid: 415); Karīngān هوز *hovaz* ‘green’ (ibid.) from Old Iranian **kapawta-*. In Modern Persian we have كبوتر *kabutar* ‘dove’, from Middle Persian *kpwtl* (*kabōtar* ‘pigeon, dove’), Manichaean Middle Persian *kb-wtr* (*kabōtar*) (Mackenzie 1971: 48).

10. Zāzā *mešti* ‘tomorrow’ (Paul 1998: 305); Ṭālešī *māškī, māškīnaǰō* (Pirejko 1976: 281) from Old Iranian **mazdā.*

11. Zāzā *nēčīr* ‘hunting’ (Paul 1998: 307); Ṭālešī *nēčī* (also *ōv*, *šīkō[r]*) (Pirejko 1976: 297); cf. Kūrmānǰī نيچير *nīčīr* (Āzarli 2008: 382), Arm. *Nāxčīr.*

12. Zāzā *pird* ‘bridge’ (Paul 1998: 308); Ṭālešī *pārd* (Pirejko 1976: 291); cf. Gilan پورد *purd* (Āzarli 2008: 91) from Old Iranian <**pṛtu-* <**par-*.

13. Zāzā *seř(e)* ‘year’ (Paul 1998: 313); Ṭālešī *sōr* (also *ǰāš*) (Pirejko 1976: 276); cf. Tātī, Karīngān *pv sor* (Āzarli 2008: 219) from Old Iranian **sarada-*.

14. Zāzā *sēkuř* ‘orphan’ (Paul 1998: 313); Ṭālešī *sayir* (note that in Ṭālešī the word *yatīm* is used for ‘motherless’ and *sayir* for ‘fatherless’) (Pirejko 1976: 309); cf. Kurdish *sēwī*, Māzandarānī *sek-sayīr*; Lūrī, Baxtīārī *sayīr*; Behšahr, Sāri, Qāemšahr, Bābol, Āmol, Tonkābon *sek-sayīr* from Avestian *saē*; Manichean Middle Persian *sēwag*; Old Iranian **sai-kara-*.

15. Zāzā *simer* ‘straw’ (Paul 1998: 313); Ṭālešī *sima* (also *kilaš*, *laš*) (Pirejko 1976: 310).

16. Zāzā *ṣī* ‘stone’ (Paul 1998: 313); Ṭālešī *siɣ* (also *sangōna*) (Pirejko 1976: 284) from Old Iranian **sikā-*.

17. Zāzā *šīyāyiš* ‘to go’ (Paul 1998: 326); Ṭālešī *šē* (Pirejko 1976: 283); cf. Balūči شودهاگ *šūdhāg* (Āzarli 2008: 244), Natanz شوين *šūyen* (ibid: 245) from Old Iranian **šyaw-*.

18. Zāzā *vātiš* 'to say' (Paul 1998: 331); Ṭālešī *vōtēy* (Aboszoda 2008: 547); cf. Delījān باین *bātan* (Āzarli 2008: 37); Sangsar, Aftarī نواتن *bovāten* (ibid: 59); Tātī, Natanz, Xānsar, Būīn Zāhrā واتن *vātan* (ibid: 385); Šāle Qazvīn, Nāʾīnī, Aftarī واج *vāǰ* (ibid: 386) from Old Iranian **wač-*.

19. Zāzā *(h)arma(y), herme* 'forearm'; Ṭālešī *ām* (Asatrian 1990: 159); cf. Oss. *ā/ărm* (Bailey 1979: 23) from **arma-*.

20. Zāzā *ā/ăš/smā/ă, āsmi* 'moon'; Ṭālesī *ovšim*; Tatī *ušmā*; Harzanī *öšma* (Vahman/Asatrian 1987: 115) from Middle Persian *āyišm* 'moon'; Old Iranian **uxšya-* (*waxša-*) *mah-ka-* (Asatrian 1990: 160).

21. Zāzā *barm-*, *bermāyiš*, *bermen-*, *bermī* 'weep, cry'; Ṭālešī *bame*; Māzandarānī *barm-*; Harzanī *beram* 'weeping'; Tātī *berām*; Gīlakī *barmā*; Aftarī *burme*; cf. in the Central dialects Nāʾīnī *biremba*; from Old Iranian **bram-*; Parth. *bram-* (Zokā 1953: 50).

22. Zāzā *kʿaynakʿ, čēnā* 'girl, daughter'; Ṭālešī *kīna* (Nawata 1982: 112); cf. Harzanī *kīna*; Tatī *kīna* (Karang 1955: 52); Galīnqaya *kina, čina*; marginal lexeme in Pers. *kanīz* and Kurdish *kinik*) from Old Iranian **kanyā-*.

23. Zāzā *kaya, čē, key(e)* 'home, house'; Ṭālešī *ka, kada* (Nawata 1982: 110); Gūrānī *ka*; Tatī *kā*; Galīnqaya *kar*; Harzanī *kar, čār* (Karang 1955:52); Aftarī *kiye*; cf. in the Central dialects Ḵūnsārī *kī(y)a*; Nāʾīnī *kiya*; marginal lexeme in Pers. *kade* and Kurdish *kadīkirin* 'to domesticate (animals)' from Old Iranian **kata-*.

24. Zāzā *ṟau* 'quick, swift'; Ṭālešī *ra*; Harzanī *rav*; Tatī *rav* (Karang 1955: 61); Semnānī *rayk*; cf. Oss. *räw, rog* 'light' (Abaev 1958: 561) from Old Iranian **ragu-*; Parth. *rayγ* (Asatrian 1995).

25. Zāzā *vižĕr(ī), vizēr(ī)* 'yesterday'; Ṭālešī *azīra*; Gūrānī *uzera*; Harzanī, Tātī *zīr*; Tākistānī *azīra*; Aftarī *yezze*, from Old Iranian **uz-ayara-* 'yesterday' Av. *uzaii-ara-* 'afternoon' (ibid.).

26. Zāzā *vaš-* or *vēš-* 'burn'; Ṭālešī *vaš-*; Harzanī *vaš-*; Tatī *vaš-*; versus **sauc-* in Pers. *sūḵtan*, etc. from Old Iranian **waxš-* 'burn'; Parth. *wxšyndg* 'blazing' (ibid.).

27. Zāzā *š/sit* 'milk'; Ṭālešī *šit*; Gūrānī *šit, šifta*; Harzanī, Aftarī *šet*; Tātī *še(r)t*, versus Pers., Kurdish *šīr* < **xšīra-* from Old Iranian and common Northwest Middle Iranian **xšwipta-* 'milk', Av. *xšuuipta-*, Parth. *šift* (Asatrian 1990: 160).

28. Zāzā *usāṟ, wasārī* 'spring'; Ṭāleši *āvāsōr*; Harzanī *āvāsōr*; classical Pers. *ābsālān* from Old Iranian **upa-sar(a)daka-* "spring(time)"; Mid. Pers. *Ābsālān.*

29. Zāzā *sił* 'cowdung'; Ṭāleši *səl* < **sṟ-ya-*<* *ǩer*, Av. **sarya-*> sairya-. We also have *səł-ond-*> *səł-hond* (Zāzā *siłond*) in Ṭāleši.

12 Conclusion

Numerous lexical isoglosses found in Zāzāki and Ṭāleši confirm that, despite the isolation from the South-Caspian Iranian dialect zone, the Zāzā language has many commonalities with Ṭāleši. Not only a detailed analysis of Zāzāki and Ṭāleši dialects, but also a comparative study and their relationships with the neighbouring idioms, are yet to be conducted. These two languages share a series of important lexical, phonetic, and grammatical isoglosses with the dialects of the Near Caspian and Aturpatakan areas, irrespective of their north-west or south-west dialectal affiliation. This continuum of dialects can be conditionally defined as Near Caspian-Aturpatakan Sprachbund (language union) of the Iranian dialects.

The relationships of the Zāzā people and the Ṭālišis are illustrated not only in the language level, but also in the social-cultural life. Moreover, the studies on subjects such as the Ṭālišis and Zāzās, their ethnic history, folklore, and beliefs are far from being complete. A thorough study in this field will contribute to the illustration of ethno-demographic developments in this region.

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Jaffer Sheyholislami

Language status and party politics in Kurdistan-Iraq. The case of Badini and Hawrami varieties

This paper compares the status of two language varieties from Kurdistan-Iraq: Badini and Hawrami. The before Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) views both varieties as Kurdish. Yet, although both varieties have strived for mother-tongue education and some sort of official recognition, only Badini has been successful in achieving language rights. To investigate possible reasons for this imbalance in the status of the two varieties, the paper deploys critical language policy and the historical construction approach. The paper compares the two varieties with respect to several factors such as linguistics, historical development, literary tradition, perception and attitude, ethnolinguistic mobilization, demography and socio-economic situation, and finally politics and the community's political power. The most important factor favouring Badini seems to be its speakers' significant political and linguistic ties with one of the most powerful political parties of KRG, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

1 Introduction

In 1990, after the Iraqi military invaded Kuwait, Iraq became a war zone for years to come. The Western media constructed Saddam Hussein as one of the worst dictators of the century, who allegedly used poison gas against the Kurds and massacred them and other Iraqi populations in tens of thousands. This negative portrayal of the Iraqi state in the 1990s was so powerful that it even influenced the prominent English publisher Longman. As part of its definition of the entry *Kurd*, *The Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (1998: 7131) wrote:

> *The Kurds have often been badly treated and sometimes, especially in Iraq, forbidden to speak their own language…"*

The dictionary was wrong, of course. It was Turkey that forbade the language from public domains for decades. Iraq never did, at least not officially. The reason was not because Saddam Hussein or other rulers in Iraq, compared to rulers in neighbour-

ing countries, were more tolerant of minorities such as the Kurds, but because the formation of Iraq was significantly different from that of Iran and Turkey, and even Syria. Iran and Turkey continued their statehood in the aftermath of WWI albeit with a modernist agenda according to which a nation-state's territory, governance, nationality, and culture had to be congruent (Gellner 1983; Hassanpour 1992). As far as language was concerned, a modern nation-state could only have one language in the form of one standardized dialect often among many. The states of Iran and Turkey pursued this policy. This policy also prevailed in Syria mainly because, unlike Iraq, it was under the French Mandate, and also because the Kurdish nationalist movement in that country was either weak or non-existent.

The situation in Iraq, however, was very different. Despite the will, the Iraqi state was not able to legislate the congruency of nation, state, and culture, including language, for many reasons. The Kurdish nationalist movement was strong enough to be exploited by Britain, who had been given the mandate in Iraq, against Turkey. In 1931, the Iraqi parliament reluctantly passed the *Local Languages Law* according to which Kurds and other linguistic minorities were granted some measures of language rights including mother-tongue education subject to certain provisions (Hassanpour 1992). Central Kurdish became the regional official language in the provinces of Sulaimani, Hawler and Kirkuk. At the time, there was no mention of Southern Kurdish, perhaps because it was spoken outside the Kurdish proper regions (e.g. in Khanaqin). However, Hawrami was not mentioned either although it was spoken in the Sulaimani province. One may attribute this to many factors that I will not explore now because they will be considered further down when the two cases of Hawrami and Badini are compared.

As for the Kurmanji or Badini speaking regions, they were given the option of selecting their own variety as their regional language; however, after much deliberation among the representatives of various towns of Badinan region (e.g. Duhok, Zakho, Amêdî), they opted for Arabic. They did not accept the "dominance" of Sorani, and they did not believe that their own variety was codified enough to be the language of education or public administration. Thus, central Kurdish or Sorani was the only Kurdish variety that enjoyed positive language rights continued the process of standardization, and started to be used as a full-fledged language, especially in the province of Sulaimani. Hawrami, Southern Kurdish and Badini remained vernaculars and spoken languages of their regions. In later years, Badini found its way into new domains in Iraq when, in 1958, Radio Baghdad started airing programs in Badini, and publishing and literary activities in the dialect started to spread locally. Most Kurdish nationalists in Iraq at the time, mostly Sorani speakers, perceived this move by Baghdad as a deliberate political move to fragment Kurdish identity. During 1970-1974, when Kurds achieved political autonomy from Baghdad, Sorani was also recognized as the working and schooling language

in the Badini speaking regions. However, Arabic replaced it again shortly after the Kurdish autonomy ended, even though Sorani, along with Arabic, remained the working language of the Sulaimani province, and to some extent of the Erbil and Kirkuk governorates, until 1992 (see Appendix A, for a map of Kurdish Varieties in the region).

In 1992, KRG became a semi-independent region consisting of three provinces, including Sulaimani and Hawler, home to mainly Sorani speakers, and the Badini speaking governorate of Duhok, the stronghold of the KDP. Given the political circumstances of the time, where the West cursed Iraq but protected the Kurds, and Kurdish nationalism was rapidly on the rise, it was unthinkable for Badini speakers to prefer Arabic over any variety of Kurdish. Anything contrary to this could have been considered unpatriotic. In this case, what could their language choice be, Sorani or Badini? How about Hawrami speakers, could they achieve language rights? These are intimately connected to broader questions that should be asked about language policy and planning in the context of Kurdistan-Iraq: if Kurds in Iraq, despite their harsh treatment by the Iraqi state, could enjoy some degree of language rights, what language management policies or practices have the Kurds themselves put in place since 1992? In other words, to what extent and in what ways have they been able to deal with non-Kurdish minorities in KRG but also speech varieties that have been seen as Kurdish among the Kurds?

I will illustrate that, although Kurdish has been recognized as an official language of both KRG and Iraq, the Kurds have found it challenging to manage language issues in their region. One of the main reasons has been the fact that speech varieties that continue to be called *dialects* of Kurdish by the authorities started to ask for language rights such as mother-tongue education. To show the complexity of the matter, I will specifically focus on two Kurdish varieties, Badini and Hawrami. Both of these varieties are spoken by Kurds in Iraq, and they have both put forward demands for mother tongue education and some sort of official status since the mid-1990s (Badini) and the mid-2000s (Hawrami). Yet, whereas Badini speakers have managed to literally impose their demands to make Badini the de facto official language of their province, Duhok, Hawrami speakers have not been able to have mother-tongue education for their children or receive the kind of recognition they have been asking for (see Sheyholislami 2012a for an English translation of Hawrami petition for language rights in 2006). The aim of this paper is to investigate what factors might have contributed to this unequal status between two varieties in the same region.

In what follows, I will first outline the theoretical and methodological assumptions that have guided this study. Accordingly, I will continue to examine the historical background of language policy and planning in KRG since 1992. Then, I will show when, how and why Badini and Hawrami started ethnolinguistic mobilization. The

paper compares the two varieties with respect to several factors such as linguistics, historical development, literary tradition, perception and attitude, ethnolinguistic mobilization, demography and socio-economic situation, and finally politics and the community's political power. The paper concludes with some remarks as to what the future may hold for the two varieties, especially Hawrami.

2 Theoretical issues

All speech varieties can be defined in terms of their function for communication, indexing identity and also world interpretation and construction. Despite this, not all varieties have the same status even within the same country or national/ethnic group, as is the case among the Kurds of Iraq, for example. The difference in status could be due to a variety of historical, political, socio-political and sociolinguistics factors. However, since the status of a speech variety could have decisive impacts on the vitality and survival of a variety, the observation may not assist sociolinguists in their efforts not only to celebrate linguistic diversity but to maintain it. A cultural group may survive for decades to come even when their language is lost but this loss has serious consequences for the group's healthy self-perception (Crystal 2000). The loss of a language may also result in the loss of a group's traditional knowledge (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000) and culture (Fishman 1999). Given this, it seems apparent that we need to find out what factors in what contexts are more influential or even deterministic in their influence on the status of speech varieties.

One of the difficulties in investigating the status of a speech variety is to determine what a language is and what a dialect is. In the language policy and planning literature, we do not speak of dialect rights but language rights. States do not assign status to dialects but to languages (Wright 2004). Throughout the modern time, in fact, states and their ideological apparatus have referred to thousands of speech varieties as dialects (e.g. in France, Iran, Turkey, etc.) in order to deny them official recognition on the one hand, and to stigmatize and marginalize them on the other. In the case of Kurdish, for example, whereas the dominant central elites call Hawrami the *oldest and purest Kurdish dialect*, a great number of Hawrami literati themselves, similar to Western philologists, call their variety a *language* of the Kurds. This is one way of declaring that their speech variety needs recognition and support. In contrast, Badini literati concentrated in the province of Duhok, Kurdistan-Iraq, consider their tongue a variety of Kurdish, yet they enjoy positive linguistic rights. It appears that it matters very little what a group tries to call itself or what others tend to call them sometimes. It does not change their minority

and endangered status, as is the case with Hawrami. There are, however, instances where two *dialects* of the same language have enjoyed official status, for example in Norway. Furthermore, there are instances where what has been known as a single speech variety (e.g. Serbo-Croatian) later turned into distinct languages of two different independent states (i.e. Serbia and Croatia).

The often quoted saying *a language is a dialect with an army and a navy* popularized by the Yiddish sociolinguist Max Weinreich conveniently underlines the significance of possessing political power in determining the status of a speech variety. Other researchers have illustrated how questions of language policy in the form of assigning status to a language or any other form of recognition by governments or political parties are in significant ways political. After all, *language policies are eminently political* (Sonntag/Cardinal 2015; also see May 2015) to the extent that languages could be viewed as political constructions (Joseph 2004). Issues of language status are political not just because they are often determined by sources of power such as states, but also because any change in their status, especially in case of minority languages, depends on the existence of ethnolinguistic mobilization or lack thereof. Ethnolinguistic mobilization has the potential to unpack hegemonic language ideologies and *disturb and disrupt power relations and, by extension, state traditions* (Sonntag/Cardinal 2015: 15).

Despite the political nature of language policy, many other factors could bear upon the status of a language. For example, Sonntag/Cardinal (2015) employ political theory to provide a theoretical framework that could determine why and when the status of a language may change. They observe that this often happens within the constraints of state traditions at critical junctures, e.g. at times of major political upheavals and crises. But they also underline the significance of ethnolinguistic movements. In other words, they do not see change of language status as solely a top-down process. The revitalization of Welsh is an excellent example where grassroots movements for language revitalization and the community's desire to revive, maintain and develop its language despite the overwhelming pressure of English has made a unique and remarkable difference. The opposite has happened in Ireland (Ferguson 2006). Thus, in addition to politics, other factors could influence the status of a language. Among these factors are the number of speakers compared to other linguistic communities in the same nation; the socio-economic power of the speakers; their territorial uniformity and other demographic factors (e.g. rural vs. urban concentration); the existence of strong literary traditions or their absence; the level of corpus planning and standardization; the strength of an ethnolinguistic movement (e.g. whether a population demand a high status for their language and how forceful they are in pressing their demand); the hegemonic ideologies towards multilingualism and language diversity in a nation-state; and the prevailing attitudes towards language rights (Giles/Bourhis/Taylor 1977; May 2008). It is almost

impossible to prioritize these factors in a list to show which factor may have the greatest impact on the status of a language. The interplay between these factors and the status of any language is context-dependent. This will be illustrated in the case of Iraqi Kurdistan and the contrasting status of two Kurdish varieties, Badini and Hawrami, in that polity.

3 A note on methodology

Contrasting the status of the two speech varieties and my attempt to seek an answer to the question as to why the two varieties have different status in KRG is informed by Critical Language Policy and Planning (CLPP) (Tollefson 2006). CLPP is concerned with inequality in the status and vitality of speech varieties. More specifically, this paper draws on the historical-structural approach that

> *... assumes that language-policy research is inescapably political [and it requires] an understanding of the political nature of language-policy processes [and] explicit analysis of the links between language policy and such sociohistorical processes as migration, state formation, and political conflict.* (Tollefson 2006: 49)

The data for this study have been accumulated over the past ten years, during which I have been actively studying language policy and planning in Kurdistan-Iraq (Sheyholislami 2015, 2012, 2011; Sheyholislami/Hassanpour/Skutnabb-Kangas 2012). In 2012 and 2013, I spent about nine months in KRG. During this time, I travelled to various regions and informally talked to people from all walks of life from taxi drivers, applied linguists, sociolinguists, political scientists, teachers, students, ordinary citizens and high ranking officials with opinions and views on language management issues in the region. I continue to be in close contact with both Badini and Hawrami language activists. In this paper, I will use the term Badini because the vast majority of people in Kurdistan-Iraq refer to that variety of Kurmanji (norther Kurdish) as Badini, as it is mainly spoken by the people who live in the Badinan region (mainly the governorate of Duhok). Similarly, I use the term Hawrami following the labelling that people in that region prefer regardless of different internal and linguistic naming that may exist (e.g. Gurani/Gorani, Kakayî, etc.).

4 Language policy of KRG since 1992

4.1 Language varieties of KRG

Iraqi Kurdistan is home to several variety groups: Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, Syriac-Aramaic, and so forth. All Kurdish varieties except for Zazaki (Dimilkî, Kurmanjikî) are spoken in Iraqi Kurdistan. They can be grouped into five dialect groups. The southern group (e.g. Faili, Kalhuri, Khanaqini, etc.) is spoken outside KRG, for example, in Khanaqin, and Mandali. Hawrami is spoken by about 25,000 people in Halabja and the rural surroundings towards the Iranian border. Kurmanji or what is more commonly in Iraq called Badini or Behdinani is spoken by about 1.5-2 million mostly in the province of Duhok and the Shingal/Sinjar region. Central Kurdish or Sorani with about 3-4 million speakers is the largest variety group and predominantly spoken in four provinces: Erbil/Hawler, Sulaimani, Halabja, and Kirkuk.

4.2 The 1992 draft constitution

In 1992, the newly established Kurdish parliament drafted its constitution with Article Seven solely dedicated to the KRG language policy (Kurdistan 2004). It said the following:

i. Kurdish shall be the official language of the Kurdistan Region.

ii. Official correspondence with the federal and regional authorities shall be in both Arabic and Kurdish.

iii. The teaching of Arabic in the Kurdistan Region shall be compulsory.

iv. The Turkmen language shall be considered the language of education culture for the Turkmen in addition to the Kurdish language. Syriac shall be the language of education and culture for those who speak it in addition to the Kurdish language.

In this preamble, while language rights of Turkmen and Syriac-Aramaic communities are declared, diversity within Kurdish is suppressed. The term Kurdish in this article is used as an umbrella term to include all Kurdish varieties including Badini and

Hawrami, both spoken in KRG, but in reality, Kurdish here refers to the standardized version of Sorani only. For example, this variety became the medium of instruction in all public schools from Halabja to Duhok and Zakho in 1992. This was not new to Hawrami speakers who had Sorani alongside Arabic as their medium of instruction under Saddam Hussein's rule as well. However, Sorani had not been the medium or even subject of instruction in most public schools of the Duhok province, at least since 1974. Most teachers in the province were not familiar with the standard and literary Sorani and were much more comfortable with Arabic. The lack of resources to teach and use Sorani effectively, coupled with decades-long tensions between the Sorani and Badini speaking regions (rooted perhaps in political rivalry), gradually galvanized resistance to the presence of Sorani in the region. I will provide more details further down.

4.3 The Badini case

The resistance to Sorani's hegemony by Badini speakers in the Duhok province did not materialize until 1996 mainly for two reasons. First, those pro-Badini literati needed time to prepare teaching materials and carry out some fundamental corpus planning (e.g. producing readers, textbooks, grammar books and dictionaries) towards the standardization of Badini at least to the extent that it could be taught in schools. Secondly, the KDP, with the Badini speaking region as its stronghold, convinced the Badini elite to put aside their grievances for the sake of unity of the Kurds.[1] The latter concern, however, started to lose its weight when the decades-long political rivalry between Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and KDP was materialized in a ferocious civil war between them in 1994. In 1996, and with the help of the Iraqi central government, KDP managed to capture the capital Erbil and push PUK towards Sulaimani the breeding ground and bastion for the standardized Sorani in Iraqi Kurdistan. As a result, KRG started to be governed by two administrations (1997-2002); one located in Sulaimani PUK and the other in Erbil (KDP), whose jurisdiction also included the Badini-speaking province of Duhok. Sorani's status as the standardized Kurdish variety was considerably weakened in the capital, Erbil, since it was ruled by KDP.

The timing could not have been better for Duhok to lobby the KRG administration in Erbil to allow education in Badini in that province. In 1997, KRG's ministry of education commissioned a taskforce to look into this possibility. In 1998, Nouri Shawais, the Prime Minister at the time, signed a memorandum according to which

1 Members of the Barzani family who are leading KDP are native speakers of Badini and hail from that region. Most of them, however, are also competent speakers of Sorani.

Badini could be the medium of instruction for elementary grades one to four. In 2002, the province desired to have all grades at the elementary level to be in Badini. This is the time when the joint parliament (PUK and KDP) resumed its work in Erbil. This time, Kurdistan Science Academy reluctantly extended the permission to grades five and six on the condition that the province teaches Sorani alongside Badini.

Gradually, there were more demands for the use of Badini in education outside the province of Duhok as well. For example, in 2005, five university students from Soran University located in the Erbil province asked for permission to use Badini in writing their dissertation. The Dean of Social Sciences denied their request. However, since Soran is one of the strongholds' of KDP in the Erbil province, the students managed to achieve their goal with the intervention of the KDP representative.[2] In 2008, the Duhok Governorate Assembly and the provincial board of education asked Erbil to be allowed to extend the use of Badini as the medium of instruction to grades 7-9. KRG's ministry of education asked the Kurdish Academy, which was run by PUK appointed members at the time, to look into the request. Despite the fact that the Academy advised the province against the move, Duhok successfully implemented the plan. By the study year 2014-2015, Badini became the medium of instruction in all public schools, colleges and universities in the Duhok province. It also became the main working language of the governorate of the province, private institutions and the media.

4.4 The Hawrami case

Estimated at around 100,000, most Hawrami speakers (about 75% of them), can be found in Iran and the rest, about 25%, in Iraq. The latter mostly reside in the city of Halabja and about thirty villages and small towns of that district on the border with Iran. Their region is called Hawraman-i Lahun (Lahun Hawraman, as opposed to Takht Hawraman, etc.). The dominance of Sorani and its acceptance as the *standard language* did not seem to cause any resistance from the Hawrami speaking communities. The main reason for that might have been the fact that to them nothing had changed. During the Saddam Hussein era, as well, as part of the province of Sulaimani, Hawramis had Sorani as the medium of instruction. Hawrami literati, however, were not unaware of the tensions between Sorani and Badini and also important strides the latter made in the late 1990s and early 2000s, namely replacing Sorani with their own language variety, Badini, as the de facto official language of the Duhok

2 In 2012 when I was spending a part of my sabbatical at the University of Soran in KRG, I witnessed one of these students' doctoral oral defence conducted in both Sorani and Badini. He had written his dissertation in Badini.

province. Hawrami activists and artistes living in diaspora also started to develop acute ethnolinguistic awareness in Europe (Scandinavia in particular) as a result of perhaps being reminded that their speech variety was different from other Kurdish varieties (Sheyholislami 2012).

In 2006, when KRG released its draft constitution, about 300 individual Hawrami literati or members of Hawrami cultural associations, including those living in Iran and the diaspora (e.g. Scandinavian countries), signed a petition appealing to KRG for language rights. In it, they asked KRG to

1. recognize the community of Hawrami speakers as a *linguistic minority* and Hawrami as an *endangered language*,

2. provide support for the standardization of Hawrami,

3. promote its use in the media,

4. support and implement mother tongue education for Hawrami speakers in their local schools.

The petition appeared to be in a sharp contrast with what the dominant linguistic ideology in the region, especially Sulaimani, preached: a nation, e.g. the Kurds in Iraq, could not have more than one language symbolizing them. To regional Kurdish nationalists, most of whom hailed from Sulaimani at the time, Hawramis were Kurds and therefore they could not speak of linguistic rights or mother tongue education to mean anything but having access to Sorani (Sheyholislami 2012). Even some literati of Hawrami origin criticized the petitioners; they argued that the petition was not in the interest of the Kurdish nation but an effort to disintegrate that nation. The peculiar thing here was that these were the same people who for decades voiced their opposition to any power that denied their linguistic rights.

Judging by the content of the petition, it becomes that the petitioners had been anticipating such reaction by the majority. Thus, they assured the rest that they are Kurdish and patriotic but at the same time they demanded language rights. For example, they acknowledged that the KRG Constitution *is a result of the ongoing struggle of Kurdish people* and they make reference to *our beloved Kurdistan* (Sheyholislami 2012: 119) They further point out that Hawrami *is one of the richest Kurdish languages, it is a source of literary treasure for the Kurds, and it is widely spoken in some areas of Kurdistan* (ibid.). In other words, only after they explicitly identify themselves as Kurds, their variety as Kurdish and their land as *Kurdistan*, they demand language rights such as mother-tongue education. It is worth noting that the petition urged KRG to

look positively at their linguistic rights demands *in compliance with [the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages]* (ibid.). Little did they know, that KRG was not an EU member nor was it a candidate for membership.

In 2015 when the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament announced its plan to deliberate on a project on the Communities' Language Law (*Yasay Zimanî Pêk-hatekan*) for KRG, a group called *Protectors of Hawrami Language* submitted a similar petition to the parliament. While they reiterated their Kurdishness, they complained that the KRG parliament, like other institutions in that region, have done nothing but create obstacles on the way of Hawrami development. They urged that KRG ought to actively promote Hawrami in education and media domains (KNN 2015). However, KRG has not acted on their request in any meaningful way. Instead, the officials have replied by saying that since KRG in going through a historical period, dealing with various crisis and establishing itself as an independent nation, such requests need to be postponed. Interestingly enough, Badini speakers were given the same reasons at the time in order to abandon their linguistic demands and instead accept Sorani as their official language, but they ignored the advice and at the end achieved what they pursued. In the following section, I will look for reasons behind the disparity of the outcomes for each group.

5 Comparing the Badini and Hawrami cases

5.1 Linguistics

From a linguistics perspective, Hawrami has been considered different from the *Kurdish proper* (Sorani, Kurmanji/Badini, and southern varieties) (Mackenzie 1962, 2002) to the extent that it has been called *non-Kurdish*. In contrast, Badini has not been identified as a non-Kurdish variety but rather a different dialect than Sorani or the southern varieties (Haig/Opengin 2014). Kreyenbroek (1992) does see Badini and Sorani as different as English and German but he does not provide thorough linguistic evidence to substantiate his claim. Thus, on linguistic grounds, Hawrami should have enjoyed the same language rights as other non-Kurdish linguistic communities (e.g. Turkmen and Assyrians). But, these rights have gone to Badini and not to Hawrami. Thus, one needs to look at extra-linguistic factors to see why Badini in practice has become a full-fledged albeit de facto official language of the province of Duhok, whereas Hawrami has remained to be, more or less, the speech of private domains.

5.2 Perceptions and attitudes of native speakers

Sometimes the community members' attitudes and perceptions of their variety could also make a difference in the official or public status of that variety. Badini speakers do not refer to their speech variety as a separate language from Kurdish; the vast majority of them refer to their speech variety as Kurmanji Kurdish or Northern Kurdish. In contrast, a considerable number of Hawrami speakers refer to their speech variety as a separate language from the Kurdish proper (Sorani, Badini and southern dialects), for example in their petitions to KRG authorities in 2006, and 2015 demanding language rights. In a more recent linguistic survey in the Hawraman region of Iran, it became apparent that most informants referred to their speech variety as Hawrami and not Kurdish or Hawrami Kurdish (Anonby/Sheyholislami/Mohammadirad 2016). In other words, Badini speakers refer to their speech variety as a dialect or variety of Kurdish but Hawrami speakers, at least those who signed the petition (discussed above), call their variety a *language* significantly different from Kurdish Sorani and Badini. Calling their speech variety a language, however, has not granted Hawramis language or linguistic rights either.

5.3 Literary tradition

Another factor that might be important in influencing the status of a speech variety is the degree and history of literary tradition in that variety. According to Hassanpour (1992), who compares literary traditions in Sorani, Kurmanji, and Hawrami, the oldest written collection of poetry by Mela Parêshan was written in Hawrami in the late fourteenth century. The first Kurmanji collection of poetry by Ali Hariri in a Kurmanji variety, close to Badini, emerged a few decades later. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the number of Hawrami literary works almost equaled the number of works in Kurmanji and Sorani combined. The reason perhaps was the fact that Hawrami was used in the courts of the Ardalan principality in Sanandaj. At that point, writing in Kurmanji more or less came to a halt; we have no record of written works in Kurmanji as of the 18th century until the early decades of the twentieth century. Hawrami's prestige and currency, however, gradually faded away after the Ardalan principality was thrown away, and this state of poor literary presence continued well into the last decades of the 20th century. The first collection of poetry in Sorani by Mistafa Kurdi trailed behind the first Hawrami written work by about four centuries. However, from the 18th century onward, Sorani written works started to dominate the scene and it became the language of Kurdish nationalist movements from the early 20th century in Iraqi Kurdistan. Thus, this may explain why Sorani became standardized before Hawrami and Badini. Badini started to be used in broad-

casting in the 1960s both in the state's radio of Baghdad and also the clandestine radio of KDP. Meanwhile, Badini's sister variety Kurmanji was already well on its way towards standardization based on the Botan dialect of southeast Turkey. During this time, Hawrami's use and function, however, was confined to private domains in the isolated and remote villages of the mountainous region of Hawraman.

5.4 Demography

Although the lack of literary tradition in the modern era might have been a decisive factor in determining the lower status of Hawrami and other Kurdish varieties, other factors such as demography might have played a role as well. For example, Hawrami has been spoken by a much smaller population compared to Sorani and Badini, or Zazaki, for that matter. In fact, one may speculate that there are not more than 25,000 Hawrami speakers living in villages of Halabja on the Iran-Iraq border. The population of Hawrami speakers on the Iranian side might be estimated at 75,000. The split of the community between two countries has weakened the demographic strength of this linguistic community. We know that territorial cohesion is of paramount importance to solidify a speech community's cultural unity and its ability to maintain its language and mobilize efforts to modernize its speech (White 1991). Whereas both Sorani and Badini communities started to experience urbanization and thus expanding the domains of language use as early as the 18th century, Hawrami mostly remained confined to rural areas of Hawraman with a much smaller population residing also in smaller urban centres such as Halabja in Iraqi Kurdistan and Sanandaj and Kirmanshah, in Iran. But the latter populations have had much difficulty to resist assimilation into dominant Sorani Kurdish, in the case of Iraqi Kurdistan, and Farsi or Sorani, in the case of the Iranian Kurdistan. A combination of these factors have prevented Hawrami to be codified and standardized.

5.5 Politics

Not having a standard form, not being the language of Kurdish nationalist movement, not being the language of modern domains, and not having an urbanized and socioconically influential population have left the Hawrami speakers with very little political influence in Iraqi Kurdistan. This is certainly not the case with Badini. Hawrami political influence in KRG, albeit limited, is divided between the two main political parties: PUK and KDP. There are individual Hawrami speakers who occupy relatively high-ranking positions in both KDP and PUK. However, the Hawrami speaking region is a part of the PUK-ruled area where the dominance of south Kurdistan nation-

alism and Sorani may feel overwhelming. The situation has been very different for Badini. It has been the main speech variety of the entire province of Duhok, which has been the stronghold of KDP. In fact, Badini is the mother-tongue of much of the leadership of KDP, Barzani. Badini is important to KDP not just because it is the mother-tongue of the Barzanis, its main leadership, but also because it is one of the varieties of Kurmanji that is predominantly spoken in the areas under the influence of Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), KDP's main military and political rival in that region. It, KDP's main political rival in the region. It appears that KDP's support for Badini to become the de facto official language of the province of Duhok has been politically motivated. KDP has not only solidified its political influence in the province but it has also debilitated PKK's influence in the Badini speaking areas such as Zakho, Amedi and elsewhere.

5.6 Ethnolinguistic mobilization

Language policies are political not just because they are often made by states, institutions and political parties that are politically powerful, but also because they could result from a linguistic community's political movement and pressure. This is another factor in which Badini and Hawrami differ. Badini communities (particularly in Duhok and Zakho) have been much more proactive not only in demanding language rights but also in status planning such as producing dictionaries, textbooks, and translations even if this has meant paying for it out of the provincial budget rather than KRG's (Kulturname 2011). Many factors have contributed to the emergence of Badini's ethnolinguistic mobilisation, such as new communication technologies and migration, which have brought about more ethnic awareness about other peoples and language varieties especially in Europe. This can also be seen in the Hawrami petition where the petitioners hold KRG to EU's standards with respect to minority language protection. The petition makes explicit reference to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992. It is clear that both Hawrami and Badini communities could have been equally affected by these external factors. There could be other factors responsible for their difference in status. A major difference between the two linguistic communities is that (since the early 1990s) there has been a powerful grass root movement among Kurmanji (and Zazaki) speakers in Turkey toward mother-tongue education and this has had a great impact on Badini literati who see themselves linguistically much closer to Kurmanji varieties rather than Sorani or southern Kurdish. The ethnic mobilization in Turkey, and recently in Syria, has given the Badini literati confidence that they can compete with Sorani. Although standardizing Badini was lagging behind Sorani by several decades, Kurmanji standardization started parallel to Sorani first in Istanbul, later in Syria and finally in Europe (and

since the early 1990s in Turkey and Syria). This has not been the case with Hawrami speaking communities in Iran, where the vast majority of Hawrami speakers reside. In fact, the first basic reading and writing textbook for Hawrami has been published only recently (Mousazadeh/Faeq 2016).

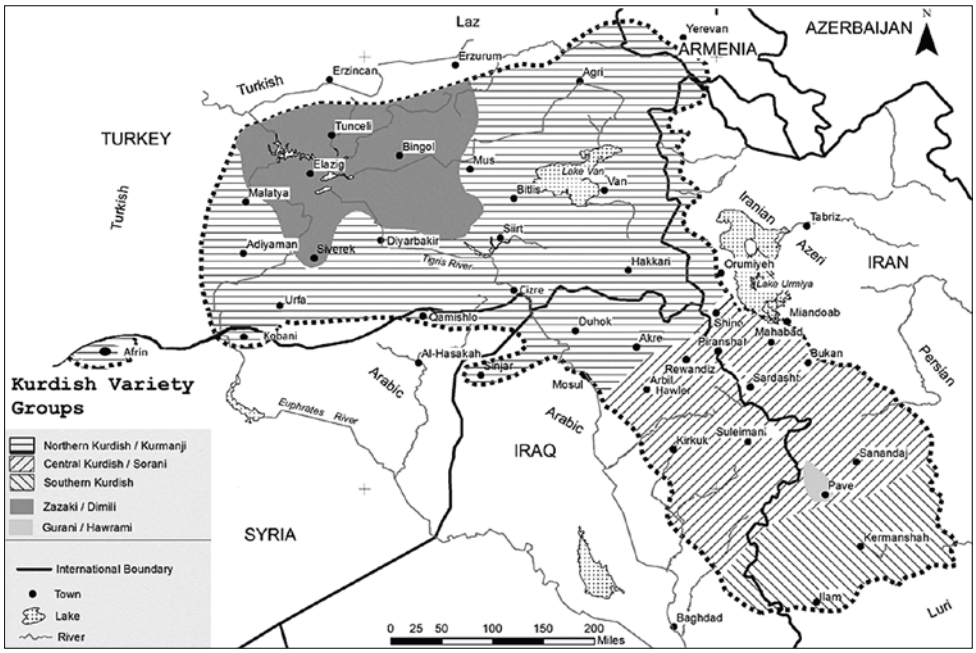
6 Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to investigate why two speech varieties of Kurdish in the same region of Kurdistan-Iraq have ended up with different status. Whereas Hawrami for the most part is confined to private domains, the Badini variety, despite the fierce opposition of the dominant Sorani Kurdish, has become the official de facto language of one province, Duhok, out of the four provinces of KRG. The analysis, guided by critical language policy and planning in general, and the historical-structural approach in particular, has illustrated that several factors could have contributed to this outcome: distinct linguistic properties, historical significance and development of the variety and its literary traditions, native speakers' perception and attitude towards their variety, grass-roots movement of the community for expanding the domains of language use, demography and socio-economic situation of the community, and finally politics and the community's political power. Some of these factors, for example having more linguistic features different from Sorani, compared to Badini, and having the oldest literary tradition, makes Hawrami a more likely candidate for language rights. However, the dialect is disadvantaged with respect to so many factors: With respect to codification and standardization, it lags behind Kurmanji (standard Badini) by almost a century; it is spoken by a much smaller population confined to rural areas of Halabja and with almost insignificant socio-economic and political power and influence in KRG compared to the Badini speaking population. The most important factor seems to be Badini's significant political leverage that stems from, generally, its close affiliation with KDP, and specifically from the fact that the Barzani family founded KDP.

One wonders, however, whether Hawramis could hope to enjoy some significant political influence over decision makers anytime soon so that they might have an easier time to obtain their language rights, especially the right to mother-tongue education. The status of the two varieties continue to be strikingly unequal. However, this imbalance may change in favour of Hawrami, and without any negative ramification for Badini, due to some new developments in the last few years. For example, Hawrami speakers have become more vocal in their demands for mother-tongue education and KRG's support to efforts of Hawrami maintenance and development. For the first time, in 2015, the Ministry of Education of KRG published a grade one read-

ing and writing textbook in Hawrami. In addition, one can see more linguistic and cultural activities on the other side of the border (i.e. Iran) as well and this could have an impact on the ecology of the variety in general. In 2016, a textbook entitled Grade One Hawrami was authored by two Hawramis from Iran (Mousazadeh/Faeq 2016). The book, which aims at teaching the Hawrami alphabet and the basic reading skill in the variety, is used in some private courses and Hawrami classes on both sides of the border. A few TV and radio channels continue to broadcast Hawrami materials, be it in the form of music or weekly programs. Hawrami cultural and linguistic activists have enjoyed more presence on the internet, including social media, in recent years. Perhaps more important than all this is the designation of Halabja as a province in 2014; this way Hawrami speakers could make up close to 20% of that new province's population. Hawrami speakers could then become a game-changing force in provincial, if not regional or national, elections, and thus politically they might be in a much better power position to advance their demands for mother-tongue education and the maintenance and development of Hawrami. All signs indicate that Badini will continue to flourish and develop further as the official de-facto language of the province of Duhok.

Kurdish variety groups (Sheyholislami 2015)



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“EMOTIONAL HERITAGE” AND DIASPORA – EFFECTS ON MEMORY OF LANGUAGE

Filiz Çelik

The Dersim Massacre (1937–38) and native languages of Dersimis: Implications of the loss of the native language as an effect of intergenerational trauma

Looking at the effects of the trauma of the Dersim Massacre on subsequent generations this chapter will focus on the assimilation of the native languages (Kurmanci and Zaza) and their religious belief (Alevism). Through looking at the literature on trans-generational transmission of trauma and the effects of the loss of language as an aggravating factor this chapter will focus on accounts of Dersimis in trying to understand the effects of the loss of Zazaki language. Loss of language is observed to have traumatic effects among members of subsequent generations. Loss of native language appears to have had an effect on the population firstly through experiences of the survivors and their children in being forced to be monolingual in Turkish and secondly through rupture in intergenerational continuity of the culture due to rupture created by the Massacre and intensified through loss of the use of the language. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to focus on a loss of language and the intergenerational effects of this on the society by investigating the experiences of the population of the Dersim region in relation to assimilation of their native languages, in particular to that of Zazaki language.

1 Introduction

Today, the diverse linguistic heritage of the world is shrinking at an alarming rate. Realising the direness of the current situation, UNESCO created an Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger in 1996 (Moseley 2010) in order to raise awareness and promote advocacy. According to the Linguistic Society of America (2012), an endangered language is one that faces an immediate threat of becoming extinct. This happens as the majority of the world languages are replaced with more widely spoken languages. UNESCO lists the Zazaki language of the Dersim region – the region known as the present-day city of Tunceli – among the endangered languages.

It is important to identify the causes for the decline of the use of the language and, eventually, its death so that this may be reversed. What dies with a language is not only a tool for communication for a particular community but also part of the world's heritage.

The linguicide of Zazaki has resulted from the process of nationalisation beginning with the late Ottoman period and reached its intended momentum with the ratification and implementation of state policies of the Republic of Turkey that aimed to assimilate the entire population into a single national identity of Turkishness. Such practices, referred to as social engineering projects, are generally studied under genocide literature. The aim of the process is the extermination of the identity of a group of people who are deemed 'undesirable' either by the eradication of the population or, in cases where the eradication is only partial, through attempts to subjugate the remainder of the population (Hinton 2002; Semelin 2007; Baum 2008). Subjugation processes involve banning and even criminalising aspects of the society so their shared identity continues to fracture and eventually dissolves. Ridding a society of its language, a practice referred to as linguicide, is an essential part of such practices.

> *Language is not merely an instrument of communication. While it forms the basis of identity, cultural heritage, and social reality, it plays a crucial role in the distribution of the powers and resources in the society.* (Dua 1996: 1)

It is the aim of this chapter to understand the process of the loss of the Zazaki language in general and the effects of this on its speakers in the Dersim region in particular. In doing so, this chapter will focus on a loss of language and the intergenerational effects of this on the society by investigating the experiences of the population of the Dersim region in relation to the assimilation of their native languages, in particular the Zazaki language. Research concerning the current experiences of the Dersimis cannot exclude what the effects of the Dersim Massacre might be. To understand the effects of the Massacre, it is pivotal to adopt a multi-level approach as Robben and Suarez-Orozco (2000: 1) explain that massive traumatisation affects not only the body and the psyche but the socio-cultural order as well. Therefore, this chapter adopts a psychosocial approach that attempts to understand the effect on the individual and society; not through distinguishing both, but through attempting to understand the circular ongoing interaction between them.

In order to provide the reader with a context in relation to the loss of Zazaki language and its effects, this chapter will begin by providing a brief historical background with an emphasis on the linguistic difficulties experienced in the region. Here, three significant processes are manifested:

i. a lack of documentation of the language throughout centuries, i.e. the lack of written literature and archives in the Zazaki language,
ii. the Turkish language becoming the only official language and other languages being disregarded in the institutional domain,
iii. particular experiences of the Dersimis in relation to the Dersim Massacre (1937–38).

The chapter will then discuss the psychosocial effects of the Dersim Massacre in relation to the use of the Zazaki language and will explore the intergenerational impact of the decline of the Zazaki language.

2 Historical background

Zazaki is historically the most widely spoken language in Dersim followed by Kurdish. The proportions of the speakers of Zazaki and Kurdish are reversed outside Dersim, as in the neighbouring regions, Zazaki is the minority language compared to Kurdish. Dersim, existed as a province with no clear-cut borders in Eastern Anatolia of the present-day Republic of Turkey. Owing to its geographical structure, Dersim remained relatively immune to centralisation policies for centuries (Akpinar et al. 2010; van Bruinessen 1997). Due to changes in its borders and various trends of migration prior to the Dersim Massacre, mostly in forms of exile,[1] today Dersim not only refers to a geographical space but also to a culture with which many Alevi people of Kurdish and Zaza ethnic descent identify. Although Dersim culture is now identified with Kurdish and Zaza Alevis, the region was a multi-faith, multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, and multi-cultural society where people self-identified through membership to their respective tribes. Dersim was known to be inhabited by diverse populations of Armenians, Kurdish and Zaza speakers of the Alevi/Kizilbaş and Gregorian Christian faith as well as by a small minority of Sunni Muslims and Turkomens (White 2003).

There is no census data to refer to the number and distribution of different ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities in Turkey. Despite the denial of their existence until the 1990s, Kurds are the largest ethnic minority and Alevis are the largest religious minority (Jongerden 2003; Yegen 2009). The Kurdish people of Turkey have managed to preserve a very strong sense of ethnic identity, despite (or perhaps due to) pressure to wipe out their culture. Dersimis would, at large, be described and also self-

1 For example, according to Levene (1998: 397), during the systematic and violent expulsion of Armenians between 1915 and 1916, an estimated number of 700,000 Kurds were also forcibly relocated to Western Anatolia under the commands of the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).

identify as ethnically Kurdish but part of the population simultaneously claim their emancipation from Kurdishness and self-identify as ethnically Zaza (Kehl-Bodrogi 1997; van Bruinessen 1997, 2000, 2006; White 2003). The Zaza language is the native language of the majority of Dersim people, however, it is considered as only a dialect by most Kurds (van Bruinessen 1997).[2]

This denialist attitude of the Kurdish is often likened to the practices of the Turkish elite and their efforts to Turkify the entire population. Often, the Kurdish front argues about Zazas not claiming their distinct identity historically. However, considering the socio-historical environment, it may be inferred that the Zaza people may have adopted or rather not resisted being labelled as Kurds so they could distance themselves from discourses of and pressures to assimilate into Turkishness. Furthermore, as the Kurdish political movement gained momentum and the Kurds began to assert their identity as Kurdish in public spaces first in diaspora and eventually in Turkey, Zazas may have begun to feel discontent with being identified as Kurds and thus began to assert their distinctiveness as Zaza. Van Bruinessen (1994) locates initial sparks of conflicting views between the Kurds and the Zazas in this regard by referring to native language classes offered to children of migrants in German schools. When children of migrants were offered lessons in their mother tounge Kurdish activists began to mobilize Kurdish migrant workers for education in their native Kurdish language so that their children would not be taught Turkish in German schools. Upon implementation of Kurdish as the native language class Zazas voice their concerns and discontent that this was not their native tongue and demanded that their children to be taught Zazaki as their mother tongue.

Parties of these arguments appear to predominantly operate based on the positivist assumptions about what the large group identity is. Under the influence of positivist ontology large group identities, such as national and ethnic identities, have long been attempted to be described through shared common lineage and as solid entities that has always existed. This view is no longer shared by the scholars and large group identities are now acknowledged as being socially constructed rather than biologically evident (Anderson 2006; Conversi 2008). Today, what we are witnessing is perhaps Zaza ethnic identity maturing in its process of being constructed. Still, the use of labels of large group identity such as Zaza and Kurd is challenging in the

2 As I am not a linguist, I am not informed enough to comment on the claims of the Kurdish or Zaza front. As a researcher in psychosocial studies, my interest remains with the observation of the circular interaction between the individual and the institutions (informal, semi-formal and formal). My interpretations of my observations are aligned with the social constructivist paradigm, which, in this regard, acknowledges that shared identities are socially constructed. Lastly, as a psycho-traumatologist, I am interested in how this process of construction or, as is the case with human-made disasters, the process of destruction of the shared identity unfolds and the effects it has on the collective.

context of Dersim as such identifications are not readily compatible with the terms that Dersimis have traditionally used for their large group identities. It is important to acknowledge that prior to the Dersim Massacre, the main component of identities were membership to various tribes and/or linguistically informed; i.e. based on what language a particular group of people spoke.

Leaving the tribal identification out of the focus, we can categorise the labels of large group identities as Kırmanc (*qeer-manch-k*), who comprise the majority population in Dersim, and Kurmanc (*quer-manch*). Kırmanc are the religiously Alevi people who speak the language referred to as Zaza or Zazaki in this chapter; however, they refer to their language as Kurmanci or Dımılkii (*de-meeal-kee*). They would use the term Zaza for Sunni Muslim speakers of Kurmanci (Zazaki) language. Kurmanc are the religiously Alevi speakers of Kurmanc, which is referred to as the Kurdish language outside of Dersim. Dersimis would use the term Khur to refer to religiously Sunni Muslim speakers of the Kurdish language who comprise of a very small minority in Dersim. As complicated as this is, it also provides fluidity for people to identify with various labels of large group identity depending on the context of their individual and collective lives. Hence, it is possible to meet a family from Dersim in which different members of the same family would assert their ethnic identities differently. Although this further evidence how large group identities are socially constructed, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to further analyse this situation and therefore this chapter will continue to focus on the experiences of the speakers of Kirmanc, which will be largely referred to as the Zaza or Zazaki language hereafter.[3]

2.1 Lack of documentation of the Zaza language

The rich and diverse history of Dersim both as a region and as a culture is unfortunately not documented in written format. This absence is often considered as evidence of the absence of a distinct identity of speakers of the Zazaki language. Yet, such claims disregard the fact that lack of written history is not an uncommon and does not indicate the absence of historical existence. Many native societies with shared a culture, tradition, language and sense of distinct identity lack a documented history. These native societies were well established with their long-standing institutions, had

3 The avoidance of using the term Kirmanc should not be understood as a denialist approach but a practical one that aims to locate this chapter in wider literature. There may also be instances where the terms the Kurdish people and the Kurdish language will be used in referring to experiences of the Zaza people and the Zaza language where and when the experience of the Zaza is not distinguished from the experince of the Kurd in the literature.

rich oral traditions, and ensured their survival through the observation and repetition of customs and traditions with each coming generation. Despite the lack of written documentation, these societies were sustainable by their rich heritage being passed down to further generations through oral traditions. Unfortunately, with the advent of the modern era and misguided institutional models of the new period, these societies experienced many traumas that resulted in rupture to survival of their culture; e.g. the interventions of European settlers in Australia and the Americas. Because of colonisation, languages of the indigenous communities fell from use as the language of the colonisers dominated commerce, education, and literature (Duran et al. 1998; Grenoble/Whaley 1998; Duran 2006; Haskell/Randall 2009; Menzies 2009).

The diverse Anatolian population unfortunately suffered a similar fate, particularly in the process of rapid transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey. Although Turkey resisted partition and colonisation by the Europeans in the War of Liberation (1919–1923), the theory of Edward Said (1978) about orient and occident remains applicable for understanding the dynamics of the emergence of the modern political formation in the form of nation-state. According to Said, the oriental society is appraised as traditional and backward, and the occidental society as modern and progressive. The orientalist images generated by colonialism justified the economic, political, military, and cultural dominance of the modern Europeans over the Eastern world. Moreover, nation-states in the Orient such as Turkey, who self-consciously knew that they were somewhere between the orient and occident, applied this discourse to remove the segments of their population through "othering" them as traditional and backward and through assimilating them from their inferior cultural existence into the superior cultural existence offered by becoming Turkish.

2.2 Turkish nation – Turkish language

The Ottoman Empire (1299–1923) had an ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse composition. These diverse groups often co-existed and were able to protect and maintain their native language and culture (Dorian 1998) in return for paying taxes to the Imperial Ottoman House and providing soldiers in times of war. By the end of the 19th century, following the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), various ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire contemplating independence began to emancipate from the Empire (Yegen 1999; Gocek 2011). In reaction to this, assimilationist policies of the Empire intensified with the emergence of Turkish identity and process of assimilating the entire population to ethnically Turkish and religiously moderate Sunni Muslims in socially engineering a nation-state. The basic facet of the creation of the homogeneous group of people relied on stripping diversely populated groups of their shared traits that were not congruent with the newly scripted identity.

Language, being the most important aspect of shared identity, had to be eliminated. This has started with Turkish as the official and only language to be used in all institutional domains such as education, literature, commerce, and thus becoming a high language. Orientalist policies began portraying Kurdish as an inferior language and Turkish as not only superior to Kurdish but as the source of all languages, the so-called "Sun-Language Theory" (O'Driscoll 2014: 278). Changes made to the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey on the 29th of October 1924 banned Kurdish words from public places (Yüksel 2010) and for decades the use of minority languages continued to be banned and/or criminalised.

Non-Turkishness was thought of as something that people could recover from. The statement by then the minister of Justice Mahmut Esat Bozkurt in 1930 reads:

> *I believe that the Turk must be the only lord, only master of this country. Those who are not of pure Turkish stock can have one right in this country, the right to be servants and slaves.* (Nezan cited in O'Driscoll 2014: 278)

The process of Turkification continued with the Law of Resettlement of 1934 (Law No: 2510, Turkish Grand National Assembly) that divided Turkey into three zones with all intents and purposes to

> *'create a country speaking with one language, thinking in the same way and sharing the same sentiment …*

by forcibly uprooting people from their lands and dispersing them to areas populated with a culturally Turkish population for their assimilation into Turkishness. The linguicide policies of Turkey continued, intensifying with each period of internal unrest or conflict. For example, after the military takeover of 1980, all languages other than the official Turkish language were banned. Although this law was reversed in 1991 (O'Driscoll 2014) because of Turkey's effort to join the EU, the use of minority languages is still restricted to informal conversations and continues to be actively discouraged (e.g. UK-Turkey Relations and Turkey's Regional Role 2012: 106).

2.3 The Dersim massacre (1937–38)

There is a long history of violence towards Dersimis arising from their faith, ethnic origins, customs, traditions, and language. The marginalisation of the Dersimis is rooted in the history of the Ottoman Empire, as the Alevis were particularly targeted for their resistance to being assimilated into Sunni Islam, especially after the 1514 Battle of Çaldıran between the Sunni Ottoman Sultan Selim I and the Shi'a Safavia

Shah Ismail. The Ottoman Empire, despite accommodating a multi-ethnic, multi-faith, and multi-lingual population through a *millet* system, excluded the Alevis. The millet system divided the population into two groupings, *ümmet* (*ummah*), referring to the Muslim population, and *millet*, referring to the non-Muslim population such as the Christian and Jewish communities. Within this structure, there was neither a categorisation nor a terminology to refer to the heterodox religious communities of Anatolia, including the Kizilbaş/Alevi community (Kieser 2003: 177). Although Alevis were treated as ümmet in administrative matters and subjected to the Shari'a of Sunni Islam given their belief in Allah, Muhammad and (unlike Sunni Muslims) Caliph Ali, they were also declared as 'heretics' by Islamic scholars and treated as infidels (Kehl-Bodrogi 2003: 55).

Subjected to the persecution of the Ottoman Empire and pushed to the periphery for centuries, the Alevis believed that centuries of ill-treatment would come to an end with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the secular regime of the new Republic of Turkey (Keiser 2011; 2003). However, the rapid transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey only served to intensify many of the difficulties the Republic had experienced with its diverse population since its establishment. The Dersim Massacre (1937–38) is considered to be the most systematically destructive of all the atrocities in the history of the Dersimi people. The pain, suffering, and loss suffered by Dersimis are immeasurable and the trauma of the Massacre continues to encapsulate lives of the subsequent generations of Dersimis (Çelik 2013; 2015). Figures according to Chief inspector of General Staff's report – which was never circulated but verbally referred to by the members of the Governments, on last occasion by then the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2011 (Ayata/Hakyemez 2013) – 13,160 were killed and 11,818 were exiled. These figures are contested that the actual death toll would have been much higher. In addition to the exiles, an unknown number of female children were given to members of the armed forces to be raised. These children were not adopted but used as domestic servants and the remainder of the children of survivors were sent to boarding schools to be Turkified (Gündoğan 2010).

3 Language loss in the context of other traumatic losses

The Dersim Massacre is in the category of events referred to as human-made disasters. When a collective experiences human-made disasters such as the Dersim Massacre, the events cause individual and shared psychological traumas. The latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) of the Ameri-

can Psychological Association (APA 2013) identifies exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury and sexual violation as possibly causing a trauma and the stress-related disorder of *Post-traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD). Human-made disasters involve direct and/or indirect exposure to all these events at a massive scale.

Volkan (2006) divides catastrophic and traumatic events into three categories: the first involving natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, etc.; the second being events from major accidents to nuclear explosions; and the third involving disasters that are human-made, including social unrest, political violence, mass murders, genocidal massacre, ethnocide and genocide. All types of disasters can cause traumas at an individual level by overwhelming the psyche of the individual to cope with the destruction of the outside world, and at a collective level through disruptions to the functioning of social systems. However, human-made disasters are acknowledged to be the most debilitating and traumatising types of disasters, perpetrated by the actions of one group over another group and involving de-humanising and degrading measures and practices (e.g. Janoff-Bulman 1985; Norris et al. 2002; Ursano et al. 2007; Volkan 2006; Bohleber 2010).

Genocidal atrocities that target a collective with the intent to physically and culturally eliminate them, such as the Dersim Massacre, do not occur instantaneously. Targeted communities often have long history of prejudice and discrimination against them and the peaking systematic violent attacks are not the end of their experiences, as they will continue to be subjected to prejudice and discrimination. Some of the earliest examples of this come from settlers' colonisation of native and aboriginal communities and their policies of 'civilising' them (Duran 2006; Woolford 2004). Assuming their culture was superior and dominant, European settlers set out to impose it on the natives, a practice they referred to as the civilisation and modernisation of the natives. The discursive context focused on shunning the native culture as inferior and the aspects of the native culture, such as the traditions, values and language, as shameful. The most efficient way of imposing this discourse on the natives was educating them to internalise the values of the oppressors to such a degree that they would see their own identity through the eyes of the oppressors and would want to distance themselves from it. To this end, European settlers set up boarding schools. The detrimental effects of which are still enduring on the Native American tribes (Yellow Horse Brave Heart 2003; Whitbeck et al. 2004).

Boarding schools are well-known practices for assimilation. The new generation of the native population educated in the new language can be culturally and emotionally distanced from their own communities. Thus, a generational tear can be created and the intergenerational continuity can abruptly be broken. This creates traumas on so many levels; children grow up away from their families, shunned and forced into an existence without the comfort of an emotional attachment to their caregivers. Similar processes of assimilation were also practised in the aftermath of

the Dersim Massacre. Effected by the practices, a member of the Dersimi community talks about the experiences of his wife's family in order to avoid sending their daughter to a boarding school:

> *I looked at my mother-in- law's tombstone and realised that her date of birth predates that of her brother and asked my wife why there was an incorrect date on the tombstone. She explained that when they were coming to collect female children her grandparents lied about her age and said she was older than her brothers (therefore beyond school age) so she would not be taken away.*

Boarding schools were used acculturate and assimilate Dersimi children into Turkishness. The language of education and similarly that of literature and commerce was Turkish. Soon, children entering the education system would become fluent in Turkish and would grow distant from their native tongue. Dorian (1998) explains the process of the loss of language by distinguishing languages as high and low prestige languages; the oppressors' language, associated with privileges of better social strata, is the high prestige language and the other language, associated with socially disfavoured identities, is the low prestige language. Thus, the speakers and potential speakers of the low prestige language identifying with this differentiation distance themselves from the language.

Along with language, other aspects of the community also become unfavourable to members; thus, as the members of the collective adhere to the assimilation into a more favourable identity, all the shared aspects that signify the identity of the group start disintegrating and eventually breaking down. A Dersimi man speaks of his journey from rural Dersim into metropolitan Istanbul and the process of his alienation from his native culture over his encounter with his parents in the domains of the high prestige language and therefore the culture. The man, 54 years old, refers to his early adulthood years:

> *I became fluent in Turkish and gradually lost my ability to speak my own language [...] I have then moved to Istanbul to continue my education, now I was modern and those I left behind in the village were primitive [...] One day, my parents were visiting my brother and I in Istanbul. I needed to take them from one district to another to my brother's home. I was dressed in modern clothes but my parents were dressed in their local primitive clothes and when I am out with them I notice that everyone is looking at us, they are judging my parents and with their eyes, they are saying you don't belong here and I feel extremely ashamed to be their child.*

Now that the new generation is suddenly, abruptly, and forcibly separated from their own culture and educated in the in a different language and internalises the values

of the oppressors that only acknowledge their culture as primate and socially undesirable. Their native culture formed through accumulation of their collective experiences over centuries if not millenniums did not even have the chance to go through a transformation to accommodate the aspects of the new culture but oppressed in to non-existence. Members of the subsequent generations are alienated to each other's references, values, world-views, and other experiences and thus, not only the language but also the identity of the collective begins to disintegrate. Such devastation and destruction not only creates individual and collective traumas but also cultural trauma as the discomfort of disruptions to the functioning of social systems becomes a fundamental part of the collective's sense of their own identity (Alexander 2004: 10). The past that was lost unnaturally, suddenly and violently continues to occupy the present and forces a sense of loss upon the collective that will need to be dealt with. A man born in the 1950s, almost two decades after the Dersim Massacre, explains his experiences of speaking his native language after he started school:

> *As a child, my native language was Kurmanci and I first encountered Turkish at the age of seven when I started school. We were banned to speak our language not only in school but also at home, no was allowed to speak it. We realised that the teacher gives a task to students to spy on each other and thus when we spoke in our native tongue the teacher would find out and punish us. That fractured our communication with our parents and grandparents who could not speak Turkish.*

In this simple narrative of a man accounting his everyday experiences during his formative years, the impact of a sudden and forced break with natural aspects of identity is articulated. The trauma created by the Dersim Massacre is no longer restricted to the events of the Massacre but is prolonged not only in not being redressed but also in continuing through practices of assimilation.

4 Concluding remarks

Languages are living organisms and are a dynamic property of large group identity. Languages, similar to other aspects of large group identity, change and adapt to respond to the need of the collective. Being an enduring aspect of large group identity, languages also metamorphose for their own survival. Language is not only a tool for communication but also holds symbolism relating to the identity of its speakers and references about the functioning and the culture of the group which are unique to its speakers. It is shared by generations of people, linking all of its members along a timeline, giving them a cultural heritage, intergenerational continuity, and a shared

history. The loss of language creates a traumatic rupture and decontextualises the experiences of the collective. In particular, with cultures whose heritage is passed down through generations via oral tradition, the loss of language has an even bigger impact on the acceleration of the loss of the cultural heritage and shared sense of identity. Referring to the loss of continuity of the culture and the identity, a man of 40 from Dersim speaks of broken intergenerational linkages in his family because of the linguicide of the Zaza language:

> *I feel that those responsible for the 38 had envisioned its effects for the present day too. They envisioned that they will be alienating people their history, their past, their culture. Language is what connects us but today I visit my family and I am a happier person for communicating with them in my Zaza language. However, I can only communicate in Zaza with my siblings, their children cannot speak Zaza. They do not only not speak the language but also they cannot share our sentiment about Dersim. For example when we talk about certain places such as villages, our sacred places and other locations we refer to them in their original names (not their new Turkish names). These conversations bring us together but now these references mean nothing to new generations and they do not feel what we can.*

His account indicates that the purpose of the Dersim Massacre was largely achieved through the destruction of the language and denying the current and future generations their linguistic heritage. Today the Zazaki language is in the midst of what may be a process of revival. Efforts have been noted on the part of the recent Turkish government to reverse the process that caused the loss of the language to the degree that it has become an endangered language. For example, Turkey began to loosen its grip on its ethnic minorities by the 1990s and this is when literary work in the native languages began to be produced in Turkey. In the next decade, through Turkey's adherence to certain regulations for European Union accession, the ethnic minorities began to exercise a degree of legality in expressing themselves, i.e. articulating their ethnicity, faith and language (i.e Yıldız 2005; Öktem 2011).

However, the half-hearted efforts of the government do not appear to aim for the revival of the languages. For example since 2010 several linguistic degree programs in Kurdish and Zazaki language at Bachelor and Masters levels were introduced at the universities in localities that these languages are widely spoken. Yet, these languages are still not permitted to be used in public domains for communication such as hospitals, police stations and schools. Furthermore, in September 2012, Kurdish was offered to fifth graders for the first time after then Prime Minister Erdoğan declared that the Kurdish language could be taken as an elective in schools if requested by a sufficient number of students (O'Driscoll 2014). Although from the outset such effort appears to aim to reverse the damage to the linguistic heritage of the Anatolia calling the classes,

"Living Languages and Dialects" as opposed to Kurdish and/or Zaza language classes fails to address or remedy the problem.

For healing of the collective trauma, it is prerequisite to firstly redress and then try to remedy the problem. This would require promoting diversity, providing space for people to reconnect with their heritage and in doing so also symbolically and/or financially compensate people for their losses. Here, it is vital to implement measures for revival of the language. Unfortunately, today revivalist efforts are limited to the efforts of Zaza Community themselves furthermore these efforts although not exclusively is largely produced by the Disapora communities. These revivalist efforts are evidence of the resilience of the community and demonstrate that where and when the space becomes available, people pool their resources for the survival of their language. In this respect, the revival of the Zaza language would help with the restoration of the intergenerational continuity and the healing of the collective traumas.

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Maria Six-Hohenbalken

Kurmanci, Zazaki and the remembrance of Tertele. The language as a key and catalyser for memory processes

The matter is absolutely silenced (…) After Turkish statements of confidential, it must be feared that massacres will happen, heavens have rarely seen it before (…)
(Austrian Consul in Istanbul, 24 May 1937)

Most of the people were on the yayla when the persecution happened. Several sought refuge in the mountains and woods. All the other villagers who could not escape were deported. My neighbor witnessed the deportation of his sister and his aunts. They were put in chains, brought to the river Alti Tik. There they were assassinated and thrown into the water.
(90-year-old woman from Dersim
in a day centre for elderly in Vienna in September 2015)

1 Introduction

After acts of genocide, perpetrators often practice forms of silencing and denial. In post-violent settings, specific policies are employed to make an elucidation, a reconciliation and thus a remembrance impossible. In several cases, decades pass until light is shed on the acts of violence and their long-term effects. In the Dersim case, the incidents of 1937 and 1938 have, until now, not been completely illuminated and are still waiting for an entire academic clarification and respective political acts. These acts of persecution are known as *Tertele* which in Kurmanci/Zazaki means 'the day at the end of the world'. Alternatively, the term *Ṙoza Şiae* 'the black day' or *Dersim Katliamı* (Turkish) is used as well.

In this contribution, I will elaborate on the interconnection between language usage and memory processes. Herein, I focus on the meaning of language knowledge and usage for establishing (semi) official memories of experiences of extreme violence. The historical focus is on the acts of persecution, mass killings and deportations in Dersim almost eight decades ago. This article has a specific Austrian focus due to

field research within the Dersim communities in Austria. My case study[1] is settled in a broader historical frame. Here, my aim is to elaborate on the (individual) meaning of language knowledge, besides the acquisition and maintenance of the language, for the shaping of remembrance about the acts of genocidal persecution in 1937/38 versus official policies of silencing and denial.

The sources for the identity of people from Dersim are the language realm, religious denomination and political orientation, which mark the membership in these communities. The definitions and boundaries of each of these three markers are diverse and their interactions are multilayered (see Arslan in this volume).

2 Historical developments

On the eve of WWII, Dersim's population faced policies of mass deportation due to the Settlement Act (No. 2510, 14 June 1934), which should be seen as the culmination of this series of legislation which, step by step reconceptualised (re)settlement as a safety measure to be taken against separatist tendencies based on cultural difference and a means of building a national-cultural unity (Yardımcı/Aslan 2013: 207).

The Act focused on three groups of citizens that were determined by their ethno-religious belonging and language skills.[2] In the 1930s, Turkey was officially divided into four zones, each with a specific population policy (*İskan Kanunu*).
Measures of this policy included the renaming of the province Dersim to Tunceli, the promulgation of the new Settlement Act, the allocation of the province administration with an additional budget, and the new authorization of the lieutenant general, the governor with specific rights (Yardımcı/Aslan 2013: 207ff.). A further plan was to completely evacuate Dersim (Kendal 1988: 117ff.).

The international public was informed about preparations for a plain administrative reform, while the region was cut off from the outside world. Thus, diplomatic reports in general were scarce. In some letters, diplomats report about ongoing warfare against upheavals of tribes in the *eastern vilayets* without any further facts, arguing that they could hardly get any additional information. On May 24, 1937, the Austrian consular division in Istanbul offered a more detailed and critical report for the Secretary of State (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in Vienna.

1 This paper is the product of an ongoing research project based on problem-centred and narrative interviews with activists in Vienna's Dersim community conducted in the last three years.

2 Referring to those with ethnic Turkish origin, those seen as part of a Turkish culture (such as Turkish-speaking populations from the Balkans) or those who were of different ethnic origin and did not speak Turkish. Targeting the eastern provinces from 1930 onwards, this Turkification policy had its peak in the approach towards Dersim.

> *About three weeks ago a rebellion broke out in the eastern vilayets. There was absolute silence about this concern[3], thus no news reached the world public yet. (…). But it seems, that this time it is a provocation by the Turkish government itself. Confidential information tell, that Tahsin Bey, one of the close associate of Atatürks and chief of the IV: general inspectorate, has called several Kurdish tribal leaders to discuss affairs in his administrative district. Not all the Shaikhs followed the invitation. They had the right instinct, as those present were arrested without further ado. Thus the others took up arms and provided the grounds for a comprehensive punitive expedition by the Turkish government. (…) The troops had more than four month time in summer to execute the operations. (…) the repressive measurements were tackled and executed with greatest determination in order to eliminate the Kurdish question – which since the rebellion and execution of Sheikh Said caused uprest in the eastern parts - once and for all. After Turkish statements of confidential, it must be feared that massacres will happen, heavens have rarely seen it before".*[4]

Military operations began attacking Alevi leaders and heads of tribes without any sort of trial. In 1938, planned and coordinated massacres killed thousands of villagers and forced expulsions took effect one year later. It is estimated that between 60,000 and 100,000 people were killed in these events – the same events that were denied by and silenced in Turkey until the last few years (Bumke 1979: 542). In the last two decades, many research projects have shed light on the genocidal processes (see e.g. Beşikçi 1990; Çem 1999; Mahmud/Shorsh 2013; Yağan 2013; Bozdağ 2015).

After the persecution in 1937/38, a *reform plan* was established, encompassing the deportation of the village populations to western provinces. Villages were completely abandoned or devastated and people could only return a decade later. Before their deportations, many of them witnessed the persecution and assassinations. Now families were torn apart as people were resettled in groups of no more than ten family members, where they experienced poverty and hostile surroundings (Yardimci/Aslan 2013: 215). After the displaced were allowed to return, they were confronted with various *Turkification* measures and again experienced suppression, in parts based on the Settlement Act which was amended about 20 times in the following six decades (Yardımcı/Aslan 2013: 220).

3 *Um die Angelegenheit konnte bisher eine Zone absoluten Schweigens gelegt werden, sodass noch keinerlei Nachrichten in die Weltpresse gedrungen sind. Es liegt natürlich nahe, nach einem auswärtigen Erreger dieser neuerlichen Kurden-Rebellion zu suchen und ich konnte in meinen Gesprächen tatsächlich konstatieren, dass z .B. die Engländer Moskau, die Italiener Frankreich und umgekehrt diesbezüglich verdächtigen.*

4 AdR Auswärtige Angelegenheiten Gesandtschaft Ankara 3

The socio-economic developments and policies did not allow for coming to terms with the past in the following decades. The exercised state violence, the rigid language laws, the assimilation measurements through rigorous schooling and the destructive fragmentation of social life have never allowed for a discussion on the mass violence and persecution in 1937/38. Over decades, foreigners were denied access to the province. Scientists and activists experienced persecution when they tried to shed light on the topic. Even in the 1990s, scientists like Ismail Beşikçi, who tried to scrutinize the historic developments, were arrested.

The province experienced several emigration waves to western Turkey and Europe. The conditions that arose from the civil war between the Turkish military, Kurdish supporters, and PKK guerillas caused the depopulation of various areas and barred the civil population from even more regions. In the 1990s, several diasporic organizations started to deal with the fateful past in Dersim. In 2011, various political initiatives and EU-level conferences in Turkey forced the Turkish government to officially apologize for the massacres in which 13,800 (first official numbers) were said to have lost their lives. International NGOs estimate that the number of victims is at least thrice that much, if not up to 100,000 (Ayata/Hakyemez 2013).

3 Coming to terms with the past

Were survivors actually able to express their experiences in such a political climate? How did the survivors and their descendants learn what had happened to their families? How did they cope with the experiences of mass violence, the disappearance of family members and bearing witness to atrocities?

When people are exposed to a permanent state of fear, physical violence and repression, *a culture of fear* emerges (Green 2002) and traumatic experiences cannot be coped with (Edkins 2003).

The routinization of terror is what fuels its power. Such routinization allows people to live in a chronic state of fear with a facade of normalcy, while that terror, at the same time, permeates and shreds the social fabric (Green 2002: 311).

Silencing, then, is a strategy of survival but concurrently a mechanism of control which fuels the fear. Often this goes hand in hand with a continued denial of the persecutions (Cohen 2001; Robben 2011).

The inability to come to terms with the past in the wider community or on the national level leads to the existence of *public secrets* as Taussig (1992) has termed it. Public secrets mean that many people know about past incidents, but hardly anybody dares to address them in public due to political suppression. However, what does this mean for intergenerational transmission?

In narrative interviews and talks with people from the second generation of Dersim living in Austria, they conveyed that they knew 'something' terrible had happened but could not find out what. Depending on the political orientation of the parents, their violent experiences and family narrations, members of the second generation have only sometimes learned what happened to their parents and grandparents in the last one or two decades.

4 Multiple entanglements and challenges for memory work

In the Dersim case, several strategies upheld the silencing and the perpetuation of the policy of denial, which can be partly subsumed under the heading of *multiple othering*. The population in Dersim was, in ethnic and religious terms, a minority within the Sunni Muslim Turkish majority. The vast majority of the population in Dersim is of Alevi denomination, which differs in various parts from the (ethnic) Turkish Alevis. During the First World War, Dersim was a save haven for the persecuted Armenians[5] who were also targeted by the policies of destruction in 1937/38.

The language factor was one of the impediments for coming up with terms – the majority of the Dersimlis speak Kurmanci/Zazaki, while only a minority speaks Kurmanci, both of which were targeted by the language ban in Turkey. The existence of several dialects and dialect groups within Kurmanci/Zazaki, its orality and lack of standardization and the recent attention for reviving the language make the multiple entanglements even more diverse. Questions of identification and belonging, self and external designation, as well as the negotiation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries are generally fluid, situational and often contextual. Due to the various sources, questions of belonging are rather complicated and forms of identification are multifaceted. While the inhabitants from the northern regions of Dersim are Alevi and use *Kırmanc* as a self-description, inhabitants from Erzurum and Sivas (partly of Sunni denomination) use mainly *Zaza* as a self-determination. In the southern regions of Dersim, people feel closer to Kurdish (Sunni) identity processes (see Arslan in this volume). Additionally, political orientation, experiences of migration, and, among others, the dispersal of Dersimli within Turkey can be decisive in identity processes as well as in the memory work, which experienced an impetus in the last two decades. Furthermore, Armenian heritage is also a factor in the new historical awareness.

5 For further information about memory processes of the Armenians of Dersim, see Törne (2015).

Additionally important for the memory work was the impact of the tribal structure in 1937/38 insofar as some tribes were not loyal to those persecuted, some tried to be neutral and some even showed their willingness to collaborate with the state but then also experienced the policy of destruction. Herein are several open questions, which are difficult to deal with, my interlocutors argued. Of particular importance was the impact of the religious notables, some of them leading figures but others too naïve who fell into the traps of the military and state representatives. Beside all the decisive factors of silencing and denial as well as belonging, Turkish leftist groups and parties that were very strong in Dersim in the 1970s and 1980s also hampered bringing the topic up.

Identity processes and memory works are, in the long run, based on these factors of otherness. They oscillate between the various sources, such as the speaking of or connectedness to Kurmanci/Zazaki, religious denomination, being an Alevi, and the political orientation of belonging to one of the various leftist organizations.[6] These three bundles of sources intermingle in various ways, emphasizing one factor more than the other. It is a highly dynamic structure of relatedness and identification, showing diverse outcomes and sometimes competing orientations – the question either of belonging to the Kurdish society or being different seems to be the most discussed currently.

It is crucial in all the theoretical approaches to memory that dealing with the past, ranging from (re)shaping a historical consciousness, to confrontations and debates, is based on the present. Current developments, opinions, orientations etc., shape the way the past is (re)constructed and remembered. The narratives of the past, thus emphasizing specific topics and silencing others, are important sources for developing images and identities of ourselves (see also Assmann 1992).

5 Transnational communities and initiatives

Due to the state of emergency over decades in the eastern provinces of Turkey, migration to Central Europe was the only opportunity to flee the extreme political situation at home. The possibilities for self-organization, language maintenance and culture initiatives catalyzed memory work. In 1994, the first Dersim association was founded in Berlin and the umbrella organization *Avrupa Dersim Dernekleri Federasyonu* was established in 2006 (Strasser/Akçınar 2014: 212) to organize oral history projects within the respective communities.[7]

6 For further information on Alevi identity processes, see e.g. van Bruinessen 1997, Göner 2005, and, for the Alevi revival, Çelik 2003.

7 http://dersim-tertele.com/index.php/de/ueber-uns/geschichte-dersim-1937-38-oral-history-projekts

Elaborated in the Dersim communities in Germany, a survey scrutinized the living faith and identity processes in the Diaspora (Çelik/Wagner 2013). Since the 1960s, ten thousands of migrants from Dersim have moved to Germany due to the labour recruitment agreements. After the military coup in 1980, about 50.000 people from Dersim sought refuge in Germany (Çelik/Wagner 2013: 33). Thus, the largest demographic Dersim communities abroad were established. The socio-political situation in Europe allowed the Alevis from Dersim to engage politically, to establish an infrastructure and to mobilize their members. The political climate in European countries allowed for a revitalization process, with the German Dersim associations having a leading role. Almost 50% of the respondents in the survey by Çelik/Wagner (2013) established a close connection between the language (Zazaki/Kurmanci), the region of origin, Dersim, and the religious denomination. The factor of language – within the various sources of identification – plays a crucial role, even if the active language knowledge is declining in subsequent generations (Çelik/Wagner 2013: 56 f.).

A further crucial factor for identification is the fateful past. Two-thirds of the respondents explained that they or their relatives experienced the genocidal persecution. About 50% of the interviewed persons could discuss the policy of extinction in detail. While the younger generations (up to 25 years old) have very superficial knowledge, the detailed accounts start with respondents in their thirties or older. Besides clear knowledge of all the victims in the family and the people who disappeared, participants also mentioned the enforced deportation (Çelik/Wagner 2013: 60 f.).

In the several associations in Austria, the Dersim 1937/38 case or the Kurmanci/ Zazaki language/dialect issue have mainly become topics in the last ten to 15 years. A well-established project founded in 2000 is the independent Kurdish FM and online radio *Radio Dersim*, transmitting two to three programs a week in Kurmanci, Kurmanci/Zazaki and Soranî. Since it was founded when there was hardly any formal education in their mother tongue(s), one of its main tasks is to support the young generation in language acquisition and practice. One of the protagonists in terms of language maintenance has even established a program in Zazaki as a form of the online TV program *SoBe* (at Okto TV, a free TV station).

Due to the legal acknowledgement for religious denominations in Austria, there were various high-pressure projects organized by Alevi communities (of Turkish and Kurdish descent), to have Alevism officially recognized as a religious denomination in Austria in May 2013. However, many Kurmanci and Kurmanci/Zazaki speaking Alevis distanced themselves due to political and religious reasons. While the acknowledged community emphasizes its ties to Islam, the dissenters labeled themselves *Old Alevis* and minimized their connection to Islamic traditions[8].

8 For the peculiarities of Kurdish Alevism, see e.g. Bumke 1979 and van Bruinessen 2015.

In summary, it can be emphasized that memory works in these transnational spaces are based on and oscillate between the orientation towards religious denomination, political orientation and language.

6 The time and language factor in narrating and expressing violence

The shaping of narratives, historiographies, counter-histories and memory works are dependent on the socio-political context in the post-genocide setting. Witnesses and scholars have argued that there are limits of language in order to express horrible experiences. For the victims, language seems insufficient for describing violent experiences and some researchers argue that these experiences can only be expressed from a distant position (Das/Kleinman 2001). Often, the narration and memory of mass murder can only be grasped after two or three decades (Alexander 2009). Victims are silenced over decades and are also often hindered in their personal, private realm from conveying what has happened. Forgetting is an inherent factor in memory work which can be an active process in the sense of destroying facts or denying perpetrations or a passive process like losing, hiding or ignoring (Connerton 2009). Active forms of silencing and self-censorship from the victims in order to protect themselves and upcoming generations must be taken into consideration.

In the Dersim case, the language ban and the extreme assimilation policies were important additional factors in why the expression and transmission was hindered.

In a preliminary questionnaire survey[9], people with Dersim roots between the ages of 20 and 40 were interviewed in Vienna. 35 persons were interrogated about their personal knowledge and of Dersim 1937/38 and the intergenerational transmission of narratives about extreme, violent experiences. Asked about their main sources of knowledge – multiple source selection was possible – respondents indicated (indirect) information from talks between elder persons (73,5%), direct narrations (63 %) and books/written sources (42 %). The main languages for transmission (with multiple selection) were Turkish (94,5 %), German (63%), Kurmanci/Zazaki (56%) and Kurmanci (38,5%). More than the half of the respondents argued that their family kept silent (59,5 %), which is connected with the very weak knowledge about the number of victims and disappeared persons in the family. Many of the respondents are grand-

9 Questionnaire survey in Vienna 2015.

children or great-grandchildren of victims and witnesses of Dersim 1937/38. Not all of the participants could remember when he/she became aware of the fateful past, but eight respondents argued that they were older than ten (28 %), seven indicated that they were between ten and 15 (24.5 %), and a further seven stated that they were between 16 and 20 years old (24.5 %). Nearly all participants knew families who were directly affected by the persecutions. Asked about their personal attitude (with multiple selection), respondents indicated sorrow (about 80%), anger (49%), hatred (28%) and psychological burden (28%), among others.

7 Family narratives

How the experiences of the victims and witnesses were told to the next generations depended on several individual factors. Some families practised a highly detailed transfer of knowledge about the Dersim massacres and how their families were affected by the genocidal persecution. In other families, while the parents were active in political movements, they avoided these subjects because they feared political persecution for themselves or for their children and grandchildren.

Several interlocutors remember members of their grandparent's generation sitting together during or after their everyday work, narrating their experiences and sharing their sorrow and grief. During these conversations, the older generation used their mother tongue, mostly Kurmanci/Zazaki, to re-narrate and express their fate. Rarely did they direct their narration towards the children, but shared it in their age group. The interlocutors remember the specific sorrow settings where the elders were sitting, remembering and mourning together. Of course this was a highly ambivalent situation for young people who knew, in some sense, about the experiences of their ancestors that was in a stark contrast to what they learned in school about Turkish national history. Some informants spoke about the constant fear of their (grand) parents, when meeting state officials or militaries. Because of that constant fear they were enforced to speak only Turkish, when they went to provincial towns. One female respondent said the elders stressed the topic in situations when they were beside themselves, when they were renting after anger and offence and mentioning the one or the other experience. Many of the interlocutors only dared to ask them about their experiences when they themselves were older and had already gained more factual information. During their annual visits, several actively pursued the family history, recorded the narrations of their elders and were shocked by the extent of the persecutions, the violence their elders had undergone and the family histories that were sometimes kept like secrets. When female respondents learned the stories of their mothers, grandmothers and relatives, the narratives of gender specific violence

struck them. They not only lost several relatives, witnessed mass executions and were displaced, but the women were forced to leave their babies behind. The fleeing community feared that crying infants could catch the attention of the perpetrators, they told me.

Two male respondents who are from two different sub-clans of the Abbasans, the clan of the leader Sey Rıza, gained their knowledge about their family and clan history in different ways. While one family was very conscious and conveyed the history in detail, the other respondent only had a fragmented knowledge. The main source was his grandmother, who conveyed her experiences in Kurmanci. She had managed to save two of her children by protecting them from being stabbed with her own body. The respondent's father was one of the children who had survived did not speak at all about his experiences. Several factors are decisive for the transgenerational transmission of family history. Depending on the personal traumatic experiences, the context in which the family lived in the aftermath (in the respective villages, provincial towns or western provinces to which the families were displaced and never returned), the coping strategies the individuals have chosen, the exposure to assimilation processes and the involvement in (party) politics, were decisive factors for the intergenerational transmission.

Almost all the (second generation) interlocutors showed strong emotional remembering during the interviews. Several of them had tears in their eyes and were shaken by these memories, which intermingled with their own experiences of persecution, the politics of assimilation and denial during their childhood in the 1970s and 1980s. Those who grew up in Dersim, attended school there and gained a higher education were confronted with the most violent politics of assimilation all over Turkey. In some family homes, the (grand)parent's generation spoke Kurmanci/Zazaki with one another and so several informants had at least a passive knowledge of the language. In school, they were forced to spy on their parents regarding whether they spoke any other language than Turkish at home. While attending secondary school, they had to stay in boarding schools in provincial towns throughout the year and saw their families, at best, only during holidays. One participant told me that the assimilation policy was so suppressive that he was ashamed of his mother, a humble countrywoman who only spoke Kurmanci/Zazaki. When he went with her to town, he kept a distance from her when walking in the streets. The rigid schooling and language laws had such a great impact that some people mentioned their 'cultural deficits' which evoked negative identification with their region of origin, Dersim.

The politics of assimilation, silencing and denial enforced a relationship in the families which was like a double wall. Dan Bar-On (1993) described this kind of experience of avoidance of intra-familiar transmission in his studies on the Holocaust, when parents avoided narrating and children avoided asking. Researchers have scrutinized the trans-generational effect of violent experiences; for example,

Maurice Bloch (1998) and White (1999) showed how people, during their childhood, acquire an 'emotional remembering' about certain incidents they have not experienced themselves. Angela Moré (2007; 2012/13), further elaborated Freud's approach of *Gefühlserbschaft* 'emotional heritage'. She explains the mechanisms of the inheritance and transmission of experiences that are either too traumatizing to be expressed or too harmful even for the next generation that they are silenced, but are transmitted indirectly and non-verbally. In post-violent settings, parents can manage to convey normalcy in everyday life, but often they cannot handle the (unconscious) transmission of the emotional experiences, Moré explains.

8 Political Contexts and semi-official narratives

Politically, the Turkish-speaking Alevi and a few of the Zaza and Kurmanci-speaking Alevis have traditionally been supporters of CHP, the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, the party founded by Mustafa Kemal, Atatürk. Crucial herein was the secular orientation of the CHP. Today, many of the Kurdish Alevis and Zaza speakers in Austria are far from the CHP, but support Turkish or Kurdish leftist parties – and this is one reason for the contradicting narratives in the communities towards the Dersim massacres.

When interviewing elderly people (age 50 or older) in Vienna, two narratives emerge, depending on the political orientations of the people. There were often two sentences that were crucial in the interviews: The divergent CHP relations led to a dispute about the role of Atatürk in the Dersim massacres. The CHP-oriented reproduce the narrative that Atatürk was not aware of what happened in the Dersim province, it was the responsibility of the military in charge. Atatürk was far away in the western part of Turkey and already sick due to his serious illness of a liver cirrhosis[10]. Some of them started their narratives in the interview with the saying *Atatürk was sick then, he was already in bed.* But what do they mean with this sentence? They especially refer to the day when Sey Rıza (Turkish: *Seyit Rıza*), the leading person in the Zaza Alevi movement, was hanged together with his son and six other comrades in Elazığ. The second semi-official narrative coming from the left wing-oriented and independent Zaza speaker claims there is evidence that Atatürk himself was present when Sey Rıza was hanged. In 2015, alleged archival material was discussed in media, which documents that Atatürk met Sey Rıza in Elazığ the night before he was executed. Atatürk proposed to spare him if he begged for pardon, but Sey Rıza refused and

10 He died in November 1938.

was hanged with six of his fellows and his son in Elazığ. So several of my interlocutors knew the last sentences of Sey Rıza by heart, which are

Ben sizin hilelerinizle baş edemedim, bu bana dert oldu, ama ben de sizin önünüzde diz çökmedim, bu da size dert olsun! 'I didn't understand your deceptions. I could not cope with your lies and tricks. This was a problem for me. I did not kneel in front of you and let this be a problem for you.'

Especially the young, educated, leftist-oriented people know this sentence very well and cite it if there is a discussion about the role of Atatürk in the trial against Sey Rıza and his comrades.

Furthermore, in interviews with people between the ages of 30 and 50, there is often a certain self-critique on their involvement with Turkish leftist groups, which produced their attitude of ignorance and silence in the 1970s and 1980s. They argue that they had neglected finding out the truth, listening and recording the witness accounts and showing enough respect to the sorrow and fears of the victims.

9 Language and Memory

Gerald Echterhoff (2008) has elaborated on the multifaceted connectedness between language and memory. In focusing on

> *memory as a central phenomenon and how it depends on or is influenced by language and linguistic formats of representation* (ibid.: 264)

his approach is based on the work of two anthropologists, Sapir and Whorf, commonly known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis[11].

> *In its strong version, this hypothesis states that our experiences with the world are intrinsically linguistic and that cognition is inherently determined by the thinker's language.* (ibid.: 265)

Language shapes the episodic memory (besides others), thus the

> *conscious recollection of one's previous experiences within a specificable temporal-spatial context.* (ibid.: 266)

Taking the importance of non-linguistic forms of expressions and representations into account, it is significant that different languages can shape or modify the aspects

11 Based on the work of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, the fundamental idea is that language or linguistic categories determine thought and decisions.

of experiences, depending on the structure of the langue or the vocabulary available. Studies with bilingual people have shown how different language communities shape the remembrance of the past.

> *Consistent with the notion of context-dependent memory, episodic memories become more accessible when the linguistic environment at retrieval matches the linguistic environment at encoding, indicating that membership in different language communities can play an important role in how we remember our personal past.*
> (ibid.: 269)

Furthermore, Echterhoff outlines that memories depend on and are (re)shaped whether there is a socially shared reality and whether the audience people address is trustful or not.

In the Dersim case, the question is whether the upcoming generation has enough language competence (predominantly in Kurmanci/Zazaki, but also in Kurmanci) to understand their ancestor's narrations and to actively communicate with them. Grandparents were predominantly the source for language competences and knowledge about the fateful past for those in their 40s and 50s who grew up in Dersim. In the migratory settings, Turkish often became the dominant knowledge and parents used more Turkish than Kurmanci/Zazaki or Kurmanci for communication with their children. Some parents used Kurmanci/Zazaki only when they wanted to exclude the children from the topic under discussion.

Lifelong suffering and trauma of victims can remain as *deep memories* or *repressed memories* and influence the lives of the following generations. These deep memories are often transmitted non-verbally and are embodied, e.g. as bodily habits, and sustained as *lived memories* (Kidron 2009) for the next generation. Such lived memories are a kind of strategy against forgetting and established forms of commemorations. Thus, lived memories and alternative expressions, for example through art, can be crucial in a post-violent setting marked by denial and silencing. This is of specific importance in the Dersim case, where the upcoming generations have experienced the language ban and various assimilation measurements.

Crucial for the transmittance of Kurdish oral history in general were the traditional singers, who conveyed important incidences. So, also in the remembrance of Dersim 1937/38, music seems to play an essential role in memory work. Talking about music, one of my informants explained that

> *they could take our language but they couldn't take our melodies,*

so these melodies were a kind of a (hidden) script through which people remembered. In past decades, these were the *Dengbej (Kurmanci)/Şüare, Şine (Zazaki)*, today they are young musicians whose songs sometimes reference the *Dengbej/Şüare, Şine* recitations which are commonly known. These songs recall the places where massacres

happened, above all the Dersim rivers and places in the Munzur valley. *Hewae Derê Laç* is a lament and describes incidents in the valley of the tributary stream of the Munzur river. The song is known by various generations and often (re)interpreted. Before the Internet, people usually recorded the traditional singers during their annual holidays and, when back in Europe, they copied these songs using their private tape decks and spread them in the community. Mehmet Emir, an artist staying in Vienna, documented recitations of the *Dengbejs* in his village in 1992 and provided these recordings to Metin and Kemal Kahraman, two famous musicians in the transnational Dersim community who used his material in their work on traditional Dersim music. Songs are partly in Kurmanci/Zazaki and are also known by the young generation, sometimes by heart. Therefore, besides the lyrics, the melodies are a common source for all those informed and uphold the (sometimes only passive) language competence.

10 Conclusion

It was up to the young generation to foster remembrance through semi-official narratives, to scrutinize their parents and grandparents' experiences of violence and to tackle sensitive topics. Some young people told me that the first time they heard of the 1937/38 persecutions in Dersim was in Vienna. This encouraged them to find out more about such secrets and family histories, often during their annual visits home. Today, the accounts of the next generation include how their parents survived, often due to a fortunate coincidence, and the pain of waiting so long for their parents to be able to share their experiences. They were strongly affected when they encountered these secrets and are still emotionally touched when they recall their ancestors' fates. Self-critically, they mention taboo topics, above all the grey zones of collaboration and their own indifference for a long time. Often this goes hand in hand with increasing interest in Kurmanci/Zazaki, the language of their grandparents. Through this language, which they had experienced either fragmentary or in metaphors, they learned what happened in Dersim 1937/38. It seems that it is the language which is the key for their emotional remembering and thus for the memory work. Interestingly, most of the informants of the second generation had chosen Turkish or German in the interviews to convey their knowledge. They argued that even if they were fluent in Kurmanci/Zazaki, they lack the specific terms to express their knowledge. During the interviews, some persons switched from Turkish to Kurmanci/Zazaki when the remembrance became highly emotional.

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Katharina Brizić

Language, visibility and implicity: Zazaki in Austria

Zazaki is a language with numerous speakers in Austria, who have most often immigrated from Turkey. Nevertheless, knowledge on the Zazaki language and community is still lacking, and not only in Austria. Using the example of a Zazaki speaker's biography, the present paper will analyse some of the reasons why Zazaki is largely absent in quantitative data on multilingualism, and how the language becomes 'visible' in qualitative autobiographical interviews. The findings are intended to contribute to a profound understanding of language biographies, the ways they are narrated, and the strong impact the sociopolitical level has on individual language experiences.

1 Background and data

The Kurdish language varieties are among the most widely spoken 'immigrant' languages in Austria (cf. Brizić 2007). Yet, Kurdish speakers have been exposed to several periods of language ban and denial of language rights in the 'homelands' (Öpengin 2012). These restrictions gave rise to a certain reluctance when it comes to questions of language use, such as in surveys, censuses etc. (Haig 2003). Hence, both in the European 'diaspora' and the 'homelands', e.g. Turkey, reliable data on the number of Kurdish speakers are missing (Brizić 2007; King et al. 2008).

For the Zazaki language, however, data are even more difficult to obtain. Despite grammatical structures that are considerably distinct from Kurdish (e.g. from Kurdish-Kurmanci), speakers nevertheless disagree on whether Zazaki should be regarded as 'Kurdish' or not (Öpengin/Haig 2014). Spoken mainly in Turkey, both Zazaki and Kurdish-Kurmanci have in fact been exposed to very similar forms of sociocultural and linguistic persecution. Hence, speakers of both languages share the aforementioned reluctance towards language censuses; or, in the case of Zazaki, it is not unusual that 'Kurdish' is stated instead when the family or 'mother tongue' is asked for. The resulting *invisibility* of Kurdish-Kurmanci and Zazaki across Europe (Haig 2003, King et al. 2008, Brizić/Hufnagl 2011) is but one manifestation of transnational social, linguistic and other inequalities.

In a qualitative Viennese study on *Inequality, Multilingualism and Academic Success* (2009-2012),[1] the *language* inequality aspects were of core interest within this study. Roughly 200 mono-, bi- and multilingual children, their parents and teachers were included in the study sample, in order to provide information on family and everyday languages, language biographies and competences in these languages (Brizić 2013; Blaschitz 2014). Many of the families had migrated into Austria from Turkey, hence a considerable percentage of them could be expected to have Kurdish and/or Zazaki among the family languages. However, in order to avoid any 'language census' atmosphere, the families were invited to informal personal interviews, often resulting in long, in-depth personal accounts on language biographies and family languages – among which were also Kurdish-Kurmanci and Zazaki.

The conversations were recorded and subjected to narrative analysis (Lucius-Hoene/Deppermann 2002; Georgakopoulou/de Fina 2012). One example will be discussed in detail in the following section, which may particularly illustrate the *invisibility* aspect of the Zazaki language (cf. Brizić, forthcoming).

2 From a difficult place we have come. A language biography

Mr Z was born in a small village in mountaneous Eastern Turkey. He emigrated as an adolescent, first to Western Turkey (Istanbul), then to Austria (Vienna). The research interview with Mr Z took place in Vienna, with Turkish being Mr Z's language of choice for the interview. Apart from Turkish he speaks some German, as he has already been living in Vienna for 25 years. Mr Z apparently loves to talk, bringing up personal stories and depicting experiences in great narrative detail. The research interviewer also originates from Eastern Turkey, which fuels Mr Z's desire to remember and recount the past. Given that Mr Z is born in Eastern Turkey, Kurdish is likely to be spoken in his family, or Zazaki, or another minority language of Turkey's multilingual east. Hence, when the conversation turns to languages, the interviewer's introduction opens up an almost direct transition to the topic of family languages:

1 Funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF, project number P20263-G03, see http://uni-freiburg.academia.edu/KatharinaBrizic

Transcript 1

Interview language: Turkish / translation / I: Interviewer / Z: Mr. Z (interviewee)

001 I: konumuz dediğim gibi DİL,
well as i said before our topic is LANguage,

002 Z: ana DİLi,
MOther tongue,

003 (--) e:: mesela (.) sizce ana dil NE demek;
(--) e:: for example (.) WHAT does the term mother tongue mean for you;

004 Z: (--) y/ e: ana dil insanın e: ş/DOĞduğu zaman ge:/ (--) ki ŞEY yani.
(--)w/ e: mother tongue {is part of a} human being th/ from BIRTH on/ (--) THING um.

005 (1.3)doğduğu zamanki=e:: konuştuğu (-) DİL.=
(1.3)the (-) LANguage=e:: s/he speaks from birth on.=

006 =konuştuğu ŞEY.
=THING s/he speaks.

007 I: m_hm m_hm-
m_hm m_hm-

008 Z: DİL.
LANguage.

009 I: m_hm-
m_hm-

010 taMAN
oKAY

As we can see in transcript 1 above, the interviewer's opening (lines 001-003) and Mr Z's answer (lines 004 and following) differ considerably. The interviewer's straightforward topic selection is not pursued by Mr Z. He does not mention Kurdish or Zazaki, nor does he mention any other concrete language. Rather, he shifts to a general level and talks about *human beings* and *language*, in general. The many interjections and intervals give the impression that Mr Z is – for the first time in the interview – quite hesitant to speak.

The interviewer aims to substantiate the language Mr Z might have in mind, and passes onto Mr Z's childhood:

Transcript 2

011 I: (---) e::m (-) o zaman çocukluğunuza gidcek oLURsak;
(---) u:hm (-) so then if we now go BACK to your childhood;

012 siz okula başladığınızda okula (g)/NAsıldı sizin için;
when you started school (s)/HOW did you experience this;

013 Z: şimdi:: (--) e: (-) BEN e: tabi./
we::ll (--) e: (-) for ME e: of course./

014 (---) e::h başladığımda bizim (bu) okul şeyimiz çok ZORdu;
(---) e::h when i started (this) school thing was very HARD for us;

015 (-) e: o zaman okumak ÇOĞ zordu;
(-) e: at that time it was VERy hard to get schooling {at all};

016 kalem defter kitap falan YOKtu.
pens notebooks books were NOT available.

017 I: m_m [hm-]
m_m [hm-]

018 Z: [hatta] (---) e:: yiyeCEK bile e: yani o zaman,=
[what's more] (---) e:: even the FOOD e: well at that time,=

((...))

As we see in transcript 2, Mr Z remains far from talking about a particular family language. Although the interviewer had already marked *mother tongue* as highly relevant in her introduction (lines 001-002), and asks for childhood experiences again (lines 011-012), Mr Z now leaves the topic of language behind altogether. Instead, he starts depicting the very difficult circumstances around schooling at the time of his childhood in Eastern Turkey: it was a life of poverty and hunger (015-018).

To redirect the conversation, the interviewer marks the relevance of *mother tongue* again, reiterating *childhood*:

Transcript 3

019 I: peki o zaman gene çocukluğunuza dönecek oLURsak,
well now going going BACK to your childhood again,

020 e:: sizin anadiliniz kürtçe?
eh: your mother tongue is kurdish?

021 Z: anadilim kürtçe.
my mother tongue is kurdish.

((…))

In transcript 3 above we witness a reaction which is rather atypical for Mr Z's otherwise communicative and joyful narration style: he answers only briefly here (line 021): *My mother tongue is Kurdish.*

The interviewer does not yet give up on the *mother tongue* issue and applies a different strategy now: directing away from Mr Z, himself, she asks whether Mr Z's *children* speak, or would wish to learn, Kurdish (this is not in the transcript due to length). From other parts of the interview, the interviewer knows of Mr Z's five children, all of them being under the age of 16.

The strategy of the interviewer proves to be successful – if for the moment we define *success* as the *explicit reference to Kurdish*: Mr Z affirms that his children want to learn Kurdish, the motivation for this being introduced as follows:

Transcript 4

022 Z: (---) mesela ben (-) e:h (--) çocuklarla HER zaman (-) konuşuyorum.=
(---) for example i (-) e:h (--) ALways (-) talk to the children.=

023 =HER zaman anlatıyorum mesela (-) nası/ n/ NErden geldik.=
=ALways i tell them for example (-) how/ w/ WHERE have we come from.=

((…))

024 <<moved> =NE şartlardan geldik.>
<<moved> =WHERE have we come from.>

025 I: TAbi;
inDEED;

Again Mr Z does not elaborate on the topic of language in transcript 4. The fact that his children want to learn Kurdish seems rather *socioeconomically* contextualised: *language* repeatedly brings Mr Z to the topic of living conditions, as we already saw in transcript 2. *Where have we come from!* he exclaims (line 023) and he then repeats his exclamation (line 024).

Now, the motivation for Mr Z to speak has increased. He offers to narrate a story from his youth, still framed by the living and learning *conditions* during that period:

Transcript 5

026 Z: (--) mesela insanLAR,
(--) for example the PEOple,

027 (-) bir şeyi e: a/ (-) <<laughing low> anımı ANlatim istersen?> (--)
(-) i'm going to tell you e: a/ (-) <<laughing low> one of my experiences if you like?> (--)

028 I: hm,
hm,

In transcript 5, Mr Z is again narrating on the *people* (line 026). The interviewer signals consent, inviting Mr Z to continue. And, from this point, Mr Z's story begins. *You know, they sent me to a village* (line 029):

Transcript 6

029 Z: he (--) şimdi beni bir YEre verdiler,
ja (--) you know they sent me to a VILLage,

030 (1.3) e: (-) bir/ bir MEZraya verdiler daha doğrusu.
(1.3) e: (-) to the/ to the middle of NOwhere they sent me to be honest.

((...))

031 I: (---) ((laugs briefly)) <<all, laughing> e: okutMAN diyolardı-=>
(---) ((laughs briefly)) <<all, laughing> e: they called us LITerizers-=>

((…))

032 (---) ÜÇ aylık bir oku/ ok/ okuma yazma kursuna verdiler,=
(---) they gave me a THREE-month re/ r/ reading and writing class to teach,=

We learn that Mr Z, then a young adult, was sent to a village; he does not inform us who sent him. In line 031 the narrator's low laugh attracts attention: Is he laughing as a self-mockery, or is he laughing ironically at something more ominous? The laughter seems to frame Mr Z's desire for education, be it as a child wanting to learn, or be it as an adult who was sent out to teach. His longing for education has repeatedly been emphasised throughout the conversation. So, why is he laughing now?

The reason remains unclear yet. The story then focuses on the village that Mr Z was sent to. It is a village in Eastern Turkey, just like his own village, which is characterised by deep poverty and illiteracy, with the adult villagers having to be taught reading and writing. And it is deep mid-winter when Mr Z, newly promoted to a position as teacher, arrives:

Transcript 7

033 Z: =oraya GİTTiğimde,
=when i arrIVed there,

034 (---) BENim GITiğim KÖYde,
(---) in that village where i had GONE,

035 (1.2) <<p> İKi metre kar vardı.>
(1.2) <<p> there were TWO metres of snow.>

036 I: hm;
hm;

037 Z: (--) <<pp> iki metre KAR vardı,
(--) <<pp> two metres of SNOW,

038 (2.0) °h şimdi=GİTTik->
(2.0) °h well=we WENT there->

039 (--) yani (--) <<p> kimse şey yapmak> <<pp> iSTEmiyor yani.>
(--) well (--) <<p> NO one wants> <<pp> to do this learning thing.>

((...))

040 benim on dö/ on dört tane ÖĞrencim [vardı.]
fourt/ fourteen STUdents [I had]

041 I: [m_hm,]
[m_hm,]

042 Z: (---) ON dört tane öğrenci(m) vardı,
(---) FOURteen students (I) had,

043 (1.4)!HİÇ! birisi gelmedi.
(1.4) not even a !SINGle! one came.

044 I: hm:.
hm:.

045 Z: <<laughing low> hı NİYe gelmedi?>
<<laughing low> well WHY didn't they come?

Repetition is a stylistic means that is well known in narrative research, and even more so in Kurdish narrations (but, note: Mr Z narrates in Turkish; he might nevertheless have transferred this characteristic feature from Kurdish into his second language of Turkish). But, whatever the chosen language, repetition rarely happens by accident. Rather, it marks something important, so that the audience must hear it twice. An increase in repetition and attention to detail can, moreover, indicate that as narrator, Mr Z is trying to come to terms with events he has not yet coped with (cf. in detail: Lucius-Hoene/Deppermann 2002). Thus, we can state: it is important for Mr Z that there were *two metres of snow* when he arrived in the village (lines 035, 037).

The increase in narrative tension is also indicated by the interviewer's silence, apart from signals of engaged listening (e.g. line 036). Moreover, the narrator speaks increasingly softly, with the passage ending cryptically: *Well, no one wants to do this learning thing* (line 039). In short: Mr Z, the teacher, had no students. They did not show up. Of fourteen adults, *not even a single one came!* (line 043).

The complicating action culminates in an unanswered question: *Well, why didn't they come?* Here, again, Mr Z laughs in a low voice (line 045).

Transcript 8

046 Z: <<akz> (---) ŞİmdI (--) İMkanlar (-) GELmesini ZORlaştiriyodu.>
<<akz> (---) NOW (--) the CIRcumstances (-) KEPT them from COMing.>

047 I: hm;=
hm;=

048 Z: =hepsinin evleri (-) BAŞka bir yerde.
=their homes (-) are all in DIFFerent places.

049 I: hm,
hm,

050 Z: (--) e hepsinin de ÇOcuklari var,
(--) you know they all have CHILdren too,

051 I: hm;
hm;

Mr Z is an experienced narrator. He does not yet reveal the answer to the why. Again, he returns to the living circumstances, this time referring to the village population: *Now, the circumstances kept them from coming* (line 046). Note the rhythm of this clause on (almost) every constituent: *NOW, the CIRcumstances KEPT them from COMing*.

Delaying the climax of the story again, Mr Z has his audience's undivided attention (lines 047, 049, 051). He further portrays the village population, with *their homes all in different place*s, and *with children they all have*, too (lines 048, 050).
He maintains the slight rhythm as he finally turns to answering the *why*:

Transcript 9

052 Z: (---) üstelik (--) s/ e: şey/ soğukTAN dolayı kardan dolayı,
(---) what's more (--) because of th/ e: thing/ the COLD the snow,

053 (1.5) <<p> VALLahi yan/ üç ay içinDE,
(1.5) <<p> by GOD w/ withIN three months,

054 (--) yani belki DOkuz on tane ÇOcuk öldü.>
(--) well maybe NINE ten CHILDren died.>

055 I: <<emphatically, pp> !YA:!>=
<<emphatically, pp> !YA:!>=

Did the adults not show up – understandably – *because of the thing, the cold, the snow…?* (line 052). But, the truth is much harder; after a long interval, the narrator emphasises every single constituent as he finally reaches the climax of the story: … *by GOD – withIN three months – maybe NINE, ten CHILDren died* (lines 053-054).
Hence, this was the reason for the adults to forget about their education: they had to stay with their children during illness, and then they had to mourn the deaths of their children. *Because of the cold, because of the snow*, the children had died – from influenza, from *ordinary illnesses*, as Mr Z adds later.

Reading, writing, education, and Mr Z's teaching aspirations had lost their meaning. We can assume, in retrospect, that the aforementioned laugh of Mr Z (lines 031, 045) was a mockery with respect of the awful events: the futility of human aspirations when social conditions are too harsh. Here it becomes obvious that the story is, as the entire interview, framed by the fundamental *Where have we come from* question. It is this question that leads from Mr Z the teacher back to Mr Z the child and the futile searching for education. The teacher he tried to be echoes the schoolchild he desired to be.

On an explicit level, the topic of language is now out of sight. Implicitly, however, it is part of the larger frame. For Mr Z, *language* is not something someone necessarily speaks or learns. Rather, language is the *circumstances, the cold, the snow. Language* is the immaterial answer to *Where have we come from.*

This applies throughout the interview. Whenever the topic of language is touched upon by the interviewer, Mr Z's answers become figurative. He imagines, for example, *branches* and *blossoms of a tree* when the *dialects of a language* are referred to, and he says *dialects should not be forbidden* when, in fact, *Kurdish* is the subject matter.

Of the remaining long and personal account, only the final lines are provided here. The conversation's end starts with the interviewer paying tribute to Mr Z, the narrator:

Transcript 10

((…))

056 I: başınızdan böyle şeyler geçtiği nası(l) BELLi;=
it's so CLEAR from what you are saying that you yourself have experienced all these things;=

057 =[Dİ mi?]
=[ISN'T it?]

057 <<smiling>[ya] ya [Bİliyosun yani;=]>
<<smiling>[ya] ya [so you KNOW it;=]>

059 I: [((laughs))]
[((laughs))]

060 <<smiling> =biz ZOR YERden geldik;>
<<smiling> =from a DIFFicult PLACE we've come;>
((…))

The interviewer's reference honours Mr Z as an experienced narrator. And, above all, the interviewer honours the fact that even Mr Z's implicit aspects have been expressed and received clearly. This, in turn, shows awareness of implicity by both the interviewer and the narrator, and the importance that implicity has for any analysis of Mr Z's autobiographical account (lines 056-057).

Mr Z, in turn, confirms: *So you know it*, he says, smiling (line 058, cf. lines 031, 045). With this, he affirms that *he knows* that *the interviewer knows* how much has, in fact, remained *unsaid*.

What is it that has remained unsaid? Mr Z speaks again, still presenting that smile: *From a difficult place we have come* (line 060). The difficult place, *the snow, the cold* - the *circumstances* come to mind again, and the language that *should not be forbidden*.

Only *after* the interview do we learn that Mr Z's family language is (Kurdish-) *Zazaki*.

3 Discussion

The most striking characteristic of Mr Z's account is *implicity*, particularly the implicity of *Kurdish* (as he calls the language, if he names it at all). This holds for the story presented above as well as for the whole interview: Mr Z speaks about many topics, e.g. illiteracy or poverty and even death, in great and explicit detail; but he never explicitely talks about Kurdish, The only exceptions are made for the sake of politeness towards the interviewer, i.e. when the interviewer asks for Kurdish in a way that makes Mr Z's response explicity *inevitable* (cf. lines 020-021).

Even more implicit than *Kurdish* is only *Zazaki* – which he calls *Kurdish*, see above. In other words, in a concept that is never made explicit (*language* as the *circumstances we have come from*), Kurdish is implicated (Kurdish as the difficult place we have come from); within Kurdish, in turn, Zazaki is implicated. This renders Zazaki (almost) invisible.

Is *invisibility* relevant for a language? – Yes, it is, and in several different ways:

First, languages that are 'visible' in public – in the media, in administration, etc. – have a better standing regarding standardisation, language rights, learning and teaching resources, etc. (Matras/Reershemius 1991) Hence, the more a language is 'visible', the wider the public that can be reached for communicating and successfully confronting matters of linguistic suppression (May 2012).

The more harshly a state's pressure is exerted on a language, however, the poorer the means of the language community for reaching audiences becomes. In the case of Zazaki and Kurdish, persecution and denial of language rights are effective since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, and they do not leave the diaspora untouched: not every Kurdish- or Zazaki-speaking person is willing to talk about it. The resulting fact that Zazaki and Kurdish have less *autobiographical* visibility than other languages is, hence, an impressive example for the impact which language *policies* have on individuals, both in the 'homeland' and in the 'diaspora' (for the persistence of other sociopolitical factors over generations, see Feliciano 2006).

Second, Kurdish and Zazaki do not belong to the category of 'prestige languages' in Central Europe either. Rather, they are ascribed the label of 'immigrant languages'. This bears considerable consequences for – again – standardisation, language rights, learning and teaching resources, etc. Kurdish has more (but, not always favourable) media attention than Zazaki, and slightly more home-language teaching, e.g. in Austrian schools (Herzog-Punzenberger/Schnell 2012). However, home-language teaching in Austria has always had a poor standing. This holds for all so-called 'immigrant' *minority languages*, even if they are 'state languages' elsewhere, such as Turkish, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and many more (Çınar 1998). Yet, Zazaki has, in this respect, the standing *not* just of a 'minority language' in its colloquial sense (such as e.g. Turkish in Austria), *nor* has Zazaki the position of a 'minority-within-a-minority language' in Austria (such as Kurdish-Kurmanci within the Turkish-speaking group in Austria); rather, Zazaki's sociolinguistic status could be described as a 'minority-within-a-minority-within-a-minority' language in Austria.

Third, the context outlined above can have strong effects on family-language use and transmission (Brizić 2006, Heller 2012): parents rarely consider a 'minority(-within-a-minority-within-a-minority) language' to be of much use for their children's future. Proficiencies that are crucial for child language acquisition and for later academic success (Ehlich et al. 2008) are, hence, not transmitted to the children, or they are transmitted in a new family language, e.g. Turkish or German. The consequences are still underresearched, but they are likely to depend on the parents' proficiencies in the new language, on a family's overall socioeconomic situation, and on many more factors (Brizić 2007).

Fourth, exactly because of its very particular context, Zazaki is of utmost interest for answering the many challenges that have been raised in the present paper. We have to keep in mind that children from Zazaki-speaking families in Austria are not simply bilinguals (Zazaki and German), and often not even trilinguals (Zazaki, Turkish and German), but multilinguals with four or more languages (Zazaki, Turkish, Kurdish-Kurmanci, German) which they master on largely differing levels. This provides a multi-proficiency context for institutions such as schools, just as for linguists, with a resulting task that we are still far from reaching: to understand and to cope with *diversity as a normality* in late-modern societies (Blommaert/Rampton 2011).

This argument holds all the more, as there will be no decrease in diversity. Since the beginnings of labour immigration to Austria, there has been an increasing growth in diversity. Hence, diversity has to be a starting point for any analysis, with Zazaki being both a prime language and a prime community to start with.

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Transcription conventions (adapted cf. Selting et al. 2011)

?	rising to high pitch movement
,	rising to mid
-	same level
;	falling to mid
.	falling to low
SYLlable	focus accent
!SYL!lable	extra strong accent
(.)	micro pause, up to 0.2 sec. duration
(-)	short pause, appr. 0.2-0.5 sec. duration
(--)	intermediary estimated pause, appr. 0.5-0.8 sec. duration
(---)	longer estimated pause of appr. 0.8-1.0 sec. duration
(2.0)	measured pause of (e.g.) 2.0 sec.
=	fast, immediate continuation (latching)
[ ]	overlap and simultaneous talk
:	lengthening, by about 0.2-0.5 sec.
::	lengthening, by about 0.5-0.8 sec.
°h	inbreath of appr. 0.2-0.5 sec. duration
/	self-repair
((laughs))	non-verbal vocal actions and events …
<<laughing>>	… with indication of scope
<<moved>>	interpretive comment with indication of scope
<<p>>	piano, soft
<<pp>>	pianissimo, very soft
<<all>>	allegro, fast
<<akz>>	accentuated
( )	unintelligible passage
((…))	omission in transcript

OPTIONS AND EFFECTS ABOUT BI- OR PLURILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

İnci Dirim
Bi- and plurilingual education

İnci Dirim

Bi- and plurilingual education

This is my third paper written in a Turkish scientific form. I do not work in Turkey, therefore, I am not able to follow the scientific research done in Turkey. It is possible that some terminologies will not be understood by some interested readers in Turkey. This paper is based on my observations in Germany and Austria as well as my own research. I think that my contribution is in some direct connection to the discussions regarding bilingualism and the bilingual education system in Turkey. The question regarding implementation of some education models to the education system in Turkey, as I show in the contribution, is up to the reader's decision because I do not think that it would be useful to make some comments while working and living abroad. My decision is based on the issue of some hegemonic relations in the world of science. The research made in Western Europe and publications made in English are dominant in comparison to the research done in other parts of the world. So I do not want to reproduce this hegemonic asymmetry by expressing some subjective opinions without being knowledgeable busy with the scientific research done in Turkey. My contribution is another external point of view to the issues and discussions happening in Turkey.

1 Introduction

It makes sense to start with a statement by an elementary school teacher about his student. In one interview, he says: "This child cannot know what a bicycle is, because it does not know the name for it in its mother tongue" (Friedel-Boesch 2013: 68). This teacher thinks that it is a first criterion that the child knows the name of the bicycle in its mother tongue first in order to understand the name of it in another language. Another example can be given about a teacher from the Austrian province Tirol, who explains that once during a mathematic lesson in a career program, he asked a student the name of a square in his mother tongue and the student did not know it. This teacher also expected that it would be easier for the student to understand something he/she did not know in his/her mother tongue than in a second language. This is the expectation: Even if the student does not consume an education performed in his/her mother tongue, he/she must be able to translate some terminologies in his/her mother tongue. Maybe this could be a further expectation: If one student does not understand

something, then the translation to his/her mother tongue will solve the problem and he/she will understand immediately.

These argumentations are quite extensive. For example, the perception in Europe that children who speak Turkish in their households but do not really know it well, will not be able to learn French, German, etc. is very extensive. The teachers mentioned before live in two different provinces in Austria and their argumentations show this idea. Teachers and pedagogues who support this opinion aim at one common scientific idea. This idea is based on the argument that, in order to be able to learn a second language, someone needs to know at least a particular level of his/her mother tongue. In 1970s and 80s this hypothesis was developed by Cummins and became widespread (Cummins 1981). This hypothesis is known in many places around the world and is basically used to encourage the education systems. Cummins called it the „Threshold Hypothesis" (Cummins 1980) and wrote that it is completely misunderstood therefore is not evident anymore. There are a lot of reasons for the invalidity of the hypothesis and one very important reason is that it is not possible to ascertain on what level one needs to learn the mother tongue in order to be able to be fit in with a second language. Another very important point is regarding the usage of terminology. Due to my observations, it is talked about as a second foreign language, when it is called "second language" in Turkey. However, in the research mentioned above, the definition of the term "second language" is different. According to Cummins' idea, the first language is a minority language or the first language children learn, the second language is the official, formal, school language. If a foreign language is meant, then he uses the term "foreign language". For example, a child that grows up in a Zazaki family has the mother tongue of Zazaki, the school/formal language of German, and the foreign language of English or French.

After his *threshold hypothesis*, Cummins developed his *interdependence hypothesis*, which means "dependent from one another". He argues that when children grow up bilingual, the two languages influence each other and there is no reason to think that the second language could just be learnt after gaining a good knowledge of the first language.

Against all of these discussions in Europe and other parts of the world, it is thought that children who grow up bilingual need to learn their mother tongue first, because otherwise they will not be able to learn another language or the formal language at school at all. For that reason, and in respect to the discussions about the education of migrant children, mother tongue lessons were introduced to the school curricula. Altogether, there is the assumption that children who do not learn their mother tongue well are able to create a mixture of languages for themselves.

2 Plurilingualism

From the global point of view, and regarding the migration atmosphere, it can be said: In the atmosphere of migration, plurilingualism is lived and experienced. For example, a lot of children that visit elementary schools in Vienna speak many other languages (mother tongue) besides of German. Katharina Brizić realized a big survey in Vienna and found that just 44 % of the 2.923 children of the fourth class (elementary school) said that they only speak Turkish at home. The rest of the children said that they speak German and different minority languages other than Turkish in Turkey (Brizić 2009). Similar results can be observed in the research of Hans Reich from Hamburg in Germany (Reich 2009). His research shows that children speak different languages with different family members. For example, Turkish with mother and father, Kurdish with mothers and fathers who do not know Turkish, and German with brothers and sisters. These results show that the first language of children must not be just one, but can be many languages at the same time (Brizić 2009).

Further research made in recent years shows that the use of many languages in the daily routine causes the combination of them in talking actions. It is usual to switch from one language to another and the research shows that this situation has got many functions. Nevertheless, this kind of language usage is not accepted as language or mother tongue or bilingual etc. by hegemonic arguments. The combination of two or more languages is called code switching in linguistics. Research shows that in areas where plurilingualism is used, code switching is very typical. For example, in Rinkeby in Stockholm, families have migrated from different parts of the world, so their children speak around five languages in combination (Quist 2005). These languages are Swedish, Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish and Assyrian (Quist 2005). In my research I conducted with Peter Auer in 2000, we found that teenagers whose parents did not speak Turkish learned Turkish from their friends and combined that language with German in their daily life (Dirim/Auer, 2004).

I would like to show one example how code switching is used by children; this example is a quotation from research done in Hamburg in 1997 (Dirim 1997). In this example, Galip and Fırat, two students from elementary school and preschool, play football in the children's playground. During the game the ball gets caught in a tree. The kids try to reach the ball. Near the tree, some researchers from the university, who were doing a survey about bilinguality in Turkish and German, were observing the children. Galip takes a fisherman's net and tries to get the ball down. Fırat realizes that maybe this net would fall down on the heads of the researchers sitting on the bank beside the tree and shouts to Galip:

Nicht so werfen! Aber nicht auf, teyzelere doğru atma! Haydi, los! Mach!
(Dirim 1997: 231f).

Fırat starts his sentence with German. Here we see one important result of the survey: the children do not speak only in Turkish, but also in German. Fırat continues talking in German *Nicht so werfen!* (*Don't throw like this!)* and *Aber nicht auf* (*but not on*) and without using the names of the researchers he continues with Turkish *teyzeler* (*aunts*). *Teyzelere doğru atma!* (*Don't throw the net in the direction of the aunts!).* He continues in Turkish *haydi* and again in German *los* (*come on*).

The reason why Fırat starts in German and continues his sentence in Turkish is not because he does not know German, but he uses *teyze* (*aunty*) to show respect for the researchers, a typical expression in Turkish for foreigners but not in German. So Fırat tries to warn Galip while not being rude to foreign women. Here we see that Fırat aims to use the two languages efficiently and in combination.

Maybe some of you will think *Aren't there children who use languages separately, like only Turkish?* Fur sure there are some, but these researchers were focused on questions regarding plurilingualism and therefore combinations, which are typical for plurilingualism studies, were observed. Of course this typical situation can be also observed with minority groups in India, Africa and Australia. Lots of research results in similar outputs. We see that due to migration and asylum – a reminder that these are results of globalization – national language concepts become more and more irrelevant in daily routines. In this sense, terminologies about *mother tongue* and *first language* should be analyzed again regarding the results of the mentioned research.

Families who live in plurilingual atmospheres do not communicate in just one, but rather many languages with each other, but the attitudes in formal school language and the concept about national language is basically used and this in no way fits in with what the children experience in their everyday lives. In this concept, the national language, which does not fit in with the experienced language reality in the lives of those children, is made to their mother tongue. Furthermore, these children become alienated to the languages they originally grow up with. These children get shaped to forms they do not fit in and are foreign to national ideologies.

At this point I would like to point to the terminology of linguality (Turkish: *dillilik*). This terminology was developed by Brigitta Busch (2013) and Niku Dorostkar (2014). These linguists from the University of Vienna criticize the terminologies of *bi- and plurilingualism*, with the argument that these terminologies stabilize the national language concepts and illegalize deviations. They argue that by stabilizing the national language concepts, languages are seen as countable like two independent and different languages, which are used separately. That is why Busch

and Dorostkar suggest to use *linguality* instead of *bi-linguality* and pluri-*linguality* (*Zwei- und Mehrsprachigkeit*; *ikidillilik veya çokdillilik*).

According to these researches and analyses it can be assumed that minorities in Turkey – even when they are not migrant minorities – practice similar language usages. Depending on different circumstances, Zazaki, Turkish, Kurmanci, Arabic and other languages can be used separately from or in combination with each other. Moreover, if we mind the mobility regarding external migration and internal migration movements, etc. we can observe a quite interesting and active picture.

3 Plurilingualism and school education

What do scholars suggest in circumstances where plurilingualism is the case? In the United States and Germany some surveys show that for students with minority languages the best model would be the bilingual education concept (Dirim 2015). The aim this idea is based on is about adopting the languages these kids use to the national language concept and the written language. In recent years, children in New York speak Spanish, which is the minority language, and English and they go through bilingual education. According to the concept of the educational scientist Ofelia Garcia, the languages used by the children are used as the initial point in reading and writing lessons. Children are given separate reading and writing lessons to exercise combining the languages they speak. The idea is to teach children reading and writing without ignoring the languages they usually speak and without forcing them to go through the national language ideology (Garcia 2015).

Form the postcolonial point of view, the hypothesis based on national language concepts systematically practices the *othering* of language concepts that do not fit with themselves. Linguality, minority and majority languages, migration, asylum, globalization etc. are formed in respect to some power and interest relations and finally result in national language concepts. The pedagogical attitudes and hypotheses are mostly stuck in these national language concepts. In this way, children who speak more than one or two languages experience *othering* by being forced to learn national language concepts. In Austria we can observe that not just the migrant languages earn attention, but combinations of many languagesmust be respected. Otherwise the governments would perform language hegemony by "othering" other languages. This hegemony would discriminate other languages that are not national languages and that do not fit with the national language concept. It might be difficult to break with national and colonial attitudes, but the education concept Ofelia Garcia tries in New York makes hope for change.

Besides this new education model, some other models – listed beyond – could be discussed for possible adaptation in Turkey:

3.1 Turkish as second language

In some countries of the world, the education of national languages is didactically performed in three ways. I would like to explain these concepts with the example of German and try to discuss the validity or the ability for them to be practiced in Turkey. Here I want to question the advantage of the concept of "Second language" in Turkey.

3.2 German as first, second and foreign language

German is used as official/national language in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy (Trentino), Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Belgium. For example, in Austria we see lots of other languages besides German. Some minority languages (Slovenian, Hungarian and Croatian) are counted as official/national languages. Moreover, in Austria, some migrant groups came to work as guest workers after the Second World War (for example Turks and Serbians) and also refugee groups within the last years (for example Chechens). The languages of these groups – irrespective to their number – do not own any official status. The children of families from these groups learn their languages in their households and do not own any legislative right to get an education in these languages. At Austrian public schools many times these children receive mother tongue lessons. The situation is similar in the other countries with German as the official/national language. To keep with the example of Austria, it can be observed that local minorities and some private schools like the Jewish school offer bilingual education. Additionally, mother tongue lessons are offered at public schools. Altogether, the education language in Austria is German and children that do not, or just at a low level, speak German in their household face different difficulties in the education system. The PISA surveys show that, beside some social issues, migrant children who do not speak German with their families are challenged more and face failures in comparison to children who grow up in German-speaking households. As in similar countries which are ruled according to the nation-state model, Austria clings to the notion of one nation-state language – besides foreign language lessons and some exemptions – the education in the official/national language is seen as "norm(al)" and ideas regarding "bi-linguality" and "pluri-linguality" seem to still be an utopia.

One of the main reasons why children who do not have German as their mother tongue are challenged with difficulties in school is the use of that language in education system as if it would be the mother tongue of these children. German is

used in any lesson as if all the students have it as their mother tongues and according to the language development of children with German as their mother tongue. For many years now, countries with German as the official/national language are looking for a solution to that challenge. In the beginning, the education of German in other countries as a foreign language was taken as a role model, but not long after it was clear that children had German as the instruction language and the comparison that it would be a foreign language lesson was not convenient. Afterwards, new concepts like "German as Second language" were prepared.

As I said before and showed with different examples, the terms s*econd langua*ge and *foreign language* are used differently in Turkey. A second language is the language children of minority groups are forced to learn. Many educational concepts tried different methods to develop second language models. In education systems, research was made to analyze the use of German for different school subjects. The difference between the German spoken daily and German as the instruction language has been researched. Pedagogues did assert that in order to be able to handle the instruction language German, children need to be supported for at least four years. Moreover, teachers need to be sensitive to the necessities of children that learn German as a Second language. Methods about how those children could be supported without discrimination were researched. For German pedagogues, it is compulsory to visit seminars about different methods of German education as a Second language. It is thought that every teacher needs to know how to deal with children that have German as a Second language.
In conclusion, we can summarize that three language concepts are used in the German language area:

1. German as mother tongue (education for children that learn German in their households);
2. German as a foreign language (German language lessons abroad; for example, German foreign language in Turkey);
3. German as a Second language (German education for students who belong to minority groups and speak different minority languages in their households. This concept does not just concentrate on methods of how to teach those children the official/national language, but also methods for how teachers could use the language due to the needs of those students).

I want to show the difference between "German as mother tongue" and "German as Second language" with one example: Children that have German as their mother tongue do not have any problems with using the pronouns, but children that have Germans as a Second language are challenged by the use of pronouns and are confused many times. In this sense, teachers who are familiar with the concepts of Sec-

ond language are more sensitive in dealing with that situation and try to teach the right use and understanding of pronouns to those students.

3.3 The adaptation of the concept of German as second language to Turkey

In my opinion and regarding the results of some research in which I have participated, the most convenient educational concept in language for children of minority groups is the establishment of bilingual school systems (Dirim/Döll 2008). According the method of Garcia, the different uses of language need to be part of the language education concept. Based on Turkish and Kurdish, this issue has been questioned in some research done within the last years (Coşkun et al. 2011). It should be remembered that the use of two languages or a language that is not in the line with the official/national one, the number of the students with other languages beside the national one, the circumstances in schools, the area of the schools, and the pedagogic qualifications of teachers are not always adequate. It is observed that students who do not know Turkish and speak other languages in their households are not on the same level and do not have equal opportunities like their classmates who have Turkish as their mother tongue and speak Turkish in their everyday lives. So it is very important to develop models and methods to support these children.

In Turkey, the model of bilingual schools could be a good solution in regions where Kurdish and Zazaki are mainly spoken. Nevertheless, pedagogues should have the qualifications to know how to teach Turkish as a Second language to those children. These teachers need to know what it means to learn a Second language, the didactic methods and how to practice those methods in a pedagogical way. In regions where Kurdish and Zazaki are spoken at the same time, education models for three languages can be developed. For sure, beside the two minority languages as mother tongue and Turkish as a Second language, foreign language lessons should be offered as well. In Europe, many examples regarding the possibility of children to learn many languages at the same time exist. Research of these models and concepts regarding their adaptation to Turkey should be launched.

4 Conclusions

In my opinion, the models and concepts developed in the official/national German language area could be adapted to Turkey and the school education system in Turkey. The use of Turkish in school instruction and as the language for communication could

be developed. Inequalities in the school education system could be minimalized and equal opportunities for all students could be enabled. In this sense again:

1. Turkish as mother tongue (didactic for children who grow up in Turkish-speaking households);
2. Turkish as a Second language (didactic for children who grow up in households with little Turkish language practice);
3. Turkish as a foreign language (didactic for foreign students who learn Turkish at summer schools);
4. education in mother tongue (example: Zazaki);
5. consideration of mixed language use models.

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CURRENT QUESTIONS ABOUT BELONGING AND IDENTITY

Thomas Schmidinger

An idiom without an army and navy: A discussion about Zazaki in the 21st century

This paper focus on the disastrous consequences of the debate about the relation of Zazaki with Kurdish. The debate about the status of Zazaki is not something specific for Zazaki only. Labelling a form of human expression as a *language* gives this expression a political status; power determines what is considered as a distinct 'language'. The article will discuss the political background of the discussion about language vs. dialect and its consequences for language revitalisation and preservation. Finally the text demonstrates the need of language revitalisation instead of just preservation. This is not an academic analysis and its author is neither a linguist, nor a native speaker of Zazaki. This discussion paper simply highlights the political impact of some debates about Zazaki and its consequences for future actions to preserve Zazaki. It will focus on two topics: The disastrous consequences of the debate about the relation of Zazaki with Kurdish and the need to discuss language revitalisation instead of just preservation.

1 Kurdish dialect or language?

Describing variations of spoken communication as a *language*, a *dialect* or a *slang* is a political not a linguistic issue. Labelling a form of human expression as a *language* gives this expression a political status; power determines what is considered as a distinct *language*.

This is a global issue and not something specific to the Middle East or the varieties of western Iranian languages. For example, in Latin America, while Spanish and the European languages were identified as *idioma*, the languages of the pre-Colombian inhabitants of this continent had been labelled *lengua*. During the 20th century, the political emancipation of native American populations of Latin America included a fight to recognise their languages as *idiomas*. However, in some countries such as Colombia, Spanish is still considered an *idioma*, while the native American languages are only considered as *dialectos* by the population. Even the Spanish Wikipedia classifies the indigenous languages *lenguas*, while Spanish is an *idioma*.[1]

1 https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lenguas_de_Colombia (2007/02/21)

The linguist Max Weinreich (1894-1969), head of the Yiddish Scientific Institute popularised the saying

> *a shprakh iz a dialekt mit an armey un flot*
> *'A language is a dialect with an army and navy.'*

This sentence became popular in sociolinguistics and reveals the political roots of the debate about *language*.

This is very obvious in the case of Zazaki (Dımılki, Kırdki or Kurmanci). Unfortunately, the decades-long debate over whether Zazaki is a language or only a Kurdish dialect harms the capacity of speakers of Zazaki to preserve and revitalise their language. The debate is highly political and has caused political conflicts within the small number of intellectuals who struggle to preserve and revitalise Zazaki.

The debate about the status of Zazaki began with Zazaki-speakers close to the Kurdish national movement; i.e., since the 1980s, the Worker´s Party of Kurdistan PKK. They suggest that Zazaki is a dialect of the Kurdish language, while supporters of other left-wing and liberal groups claim that Zazaki is an independent language closer to Persian, Balochi or any other Iranian language other than Kurdish. While earlier scholars on Iranian languages and linguists considered Zazaki as a form of Kurdish, Mann/Hadank (1932: XXIII) argued that Zazaki was

> *wrongly considered to be a Kurdish dialect.*

Since then, both academics and Zazaki-speakers within Turkey and the diaspora continue the debate as to whether Zazaki is a separate language or only a dialect of Kurdish.

Ludwig Paul (cf. Paul, 1998: xii), Zülfü Selcan (cf. Selcan 1998) or Mesut Keskin (cf. Keskin 2016) insist that Zazaki is an independent language. However, Özlem Belçim Galip considers *Zazaki and Kirmanci as sub-dialects of Kurdish* (Galip 2015: 273) or Mehmet S. Kaya considers it a *Kurdish dialect* (Kaya 2011: 155).

These two schools of thought also differ in their alphabet. Turkish and Kurmanci switched from the Perso-Arabic alphabet to Latin-based script. Zazaki has a very short history as a written language. The oldest written text by a native speaker is a *Mewlid* of Ehmedê Xasi from 1898! While early texts at the beginning of the 20th century were written with the Arabic-Ottoman script, journals of the 1980s started to write Zazaki in Latin-based scripts. The first important journals of the 1980s already demonstrate the political division between the pro-Kurdish and the Zazaki intellectuals. *Hêvî* 'hope' was a pro-Kurdish journal first published in 1983 in Paris. However, *Ayre* 'mill' and its continuation *Pîya* 'united' represented the Zazaki trend, led by the Zazaki nationalist Ebubekir Pamukçu (Paul 1998: xvii).

Since then, other journals and books in Zazaki were published in Turkey and in exile but these publications follow different styles of writing and different forms of the Latin alphabet. Intellectuals who consider Zazaki as a Kurdish dialect tend to use the Hawar alphabet developed by Celadet Alî Bedirxan in the 1930s. However, those pro-Zazaki language intellectuals tend to use a script similar to the Turkish version of the Latin alphabet but with the additional letters ê, x and w. The two alphabets share most letters; it would be easy to switch from one alphabet to the other. However, the two systems differ in the use of *i* and *î* or rather *ı* and *i* and also in some writing styles. While those advocating Zazaki's status as a language would write 'my name' as *Namey mı*, pro-Kurdish Zazaki speakers using the Hawar alphabet would write *Nameyê mi*. Another difference is that the copula is written separately from the word in the Hawar alphabet and added to the word in the other Zazaki alphabet.

Of course, these small differences do not prevent Zazaki readers from reading texts in both versions. However, these differences are still used as a political signal of differentiation between the pro-Kurdish and the Zazaki language trend of Zazaki intellectuals. The long-standing rivalry between the two schools of thought intensified because the Turkish government had supported the idea of separating Zazaki from Kurdish. Some interpreted this move as an attempt for divide-and-rule by the pro-Kurdish Zazaki speakers.

In fact, this led to the presence of both schools of thought in the political and academic fields and both do not really talk with each other any more. The debate of language vs. dialect blocks many activities to preserve and revitalise Zazaki. This short paper argues that the highly political discussion about the relationship of Zazaki with Kurdish will be obsolete if the language cannot be preserved and revitalised and all the efforts of both groups should concentrate on that!

2 Language preservation or revitalisation?

Meanwhile, especially for the Alevi speakers of Zazaki, language revitalisation would be much more important than just preservation. While Sunni speakers of the southern dialects kept more of their language, the results of the massacres in Dersim 1938, the deportation and the language ban afterwards, had devastating consequences for the Alevi Zazaki speakers in Dersim. Additionally, their Alevi identity seemed to be more important than their linguistic identity. While Sunni Muslims partly used their language in illegal *madrasas* until the 1960s, Alevi teaching switched to Turkish and did not focus on the language any more. Most of the younger generation in Dersim and in the large diaspora from Dersim do not speak Zazaki any more or know only some relics of the language. Some of them started to relearn the language in the last

decade. However, it is no longer their first language and there are hardly any spaces to use the language.

This was also obvious during the conference that led to this publication. All the discussions about Zazaki were held either in German, English or Turkish. Very few people formulated questions in Zazaki and these few questions had to be translated to Turkish for those who did not understand Zazaki. Even the people who were able to talk in Zazaki felt that their language was not suitable to discuss a scientific topic. Zazaki is considered as the language of quotidian family life back in the village and not a language for a public speech or an academic debate. This is not a surprise when one considers the lack of school or university education or academic books in Zazaki. Moreover, the younger generation, both in Dersim and in the European diaspora, also have almost completely lost the ability to use Zazaki in their families.

For the future, this means that, at least for the Alevi speakers of Zazaki, the northern dialect of the language, should go beyond language preservation and rather focus on language revitalisation. The revitalisation of languages is not a lost cause. Future debates about Zazaki should include historic examples of language revitalisations; this could lead to some practical ideas reviving Zazaki.

The most popular example is the revitalisation of Hebrew in modern day Israel. However, this most successful example also shows that language revitalisation is relatively easier if there is a political power, as a state, that encourages such a development with all its political weight. Hebrew has an 'army and a navy' and even a very strong one. However, there are at least some other examples that were at least partly successful without an 'army and a navy': Cornish in Cornwall, Manx at the Isle of Men and some Native American languages in Northern America.

The last person with some traditional knowledge in Cornish died in the late 19th century. Some years later the revitalisation of the language started out of private activities of Cornish enthusiasts. Like Zazaki, Cornish has problems with different dialects and writing styles. However, the movement gained its momentum in the 1980s. Britain recognized the language as a minority language and meanwhile there are about 3,500 people with some knowledge in that language,

> *some 100 are fluent speakers and about 500 use it on regular basis.*
> (Grenoble/Whaley 2006: 47)

A similar development happened to Manx, the native language of the Isle of Man. Its last native speaker, Edward Maddrell, died in 1974. When Maddrell died, some of his speech was already recorded for language revitalisation and people already started to learn the language. A new generation of children are now growing up with Manx as their native language at home.

Besides these European examples, North America has some successful examples of language revitalisation of Native American languages. Especially in the USA, many native nations continued to keep their political structures, but lost their language in the 19th or early 20th century. Native revival since the 1970s led to language revitalisation in some of these nations.

While some of these attempts to revitalise languages worked well, others did not. It would be extremely interesting to learn from these processes for the language revitalisation of Zazaki. This short article does not offer the room to compare and discuss all these experiences in detail. However, the Native American experiences demonstrate that

> *language revitalisation and revival is directly proportional to resources, of which motivation is foremost.*
>
> (Shaul 2014: 56)

Currently, this motivation is lacking. The Alevis from Dersim do not see language as a central part of their identity conceptions. Rather the language is even seen as a problem in building alliances with Turkish-speaking Alevis. Many Alevis from Dersim prefer a pan-Alevi identity rather than a Zazaki identity.
The Zazaki diaspora also seems to have limited motivation for language revitalisation. Zazaki language courses regularly collapse after a few lessons. Zazaki language education offered in Austrian schools by the ministry of education struggles every year to attract enough pupils. Only a few parents are interested in their children learning Zazaki in school.

3 So what?

The precarious situation of Zazaki in Turkey, but also in the diaspora is a result of decades of repressive policies of the Turkish states. However, it is not solely a result of that, but also a result of the way the community dealt with this repression and how it assimilated to Turkey and to the European countries to which they migrated. If the language should be preserved and revitalised, the communities themselves need more motivation to relearn, write and read in that language, especially in the European diaspora where the host states do not restrict the use of the language.

Future discussions about language preservation and revitalisation must discuss possible incentives to increase this motivation to relearn the language. In what ways can children and young people gain something from learning Zazaki (and not another

language)? How can the knowledge of Zazaki enrich their lives or can it even increase their value in the job market or at least in certain branches? If parents and children find it more useful to learn another language than the language of their 'village back home in the mountains', they will learn another language instead of Zazaki. Therefore, an important issue is increasing this motivation within the communities and to find successful methods like language immersion to transmit the language to future generations.

After this is achieved, these new speakers of the language shall have fun discussing the relation of Zazaki to Kurdish!

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Zeynep Arslan

The case of Kızılbaş Alevi Zaza People

Options for the development of a clear political orientation to focus on the demand for democratic rights

1 Introduction

The homogenising character of the Ottoman Empire, and later of the Turkish Republic, was expressed in efforts to forcefully assimilate deviations from the Turkish-Sunni Islam hegemony; as a result, groups outside of the paradigm Turk-Turkish-Sunni-Islam such as the Alevis could not develop a common political consciousness. Because of new political conditions and the government's interest in meeting the European Union's prerequisites for membership,[1] many minority groups in Turkey began to discover new aspects of their identity. For the Alevis, the massacre of 33 Alevi intellectuals in the Anatolian Province of Sivas on 2 July 1993 served as a start to discuss their religious and cultural identity beyond immediate political issues (Kaplan 2009: 161). With time, they became aware of the additional challenges resulting from the lack of a clear definition of Alevism's religious aspects, and the heterogenity created by different forms of Alevism.

During the Ottoman Empire, Alevis and other oppressed ethnic groups unsuccessfully rose up against the hegemonic state (Baba-Ilyas 13th century, Sheich Bedreddin 15th century, Pir Sultan Abdal 16th century, etc.). Also, the Turkish Republic is marked by massacres of Alevis and other ethnic groups (Dersim 1938, Maraş 1978, Malatya 1978, Çorum 1980, Sivas 1993, Gazi Mahallesi 1995). Alevis fear new mas-

1 Outlined in the following pronouncements: 11 December 1999: Decision about the possibility for starting negotiations regarding accession EU-Turkey in Helsinki; Turkey signed the *Convention for the European Union* based on the *Expansion of the European Union* Articel 49, Articel 6(1), Articel 6; the *Decision about the full application of the Association Convention* of Turkey of September 1963, which is based on the *Ankara Convention* of 14 April 1987; *Turkey's application for EU membership*, Copenhagen 2002: the *Decision about the option of starting for the Accession Negotiations* of 2004, regarding the fulfillment of the *Copenhague Criteria* (decided in 1993) of Turkey; in December 2004 the European Council decides that Turkey is fulfilling the Copenhaguen Criteria; October 2005: official start for accession negotiations. For general information see the *Timeline about EU-Enlargement.* http://www.demokratiezentrum.org/wissen/timelines/zeittafel-der-eu-erweiterung.html?type=98 (2016/07/29)

sacres in the future.[2] Due to their non-Sunni identity, the Alevis have been facing discrimination for centuries. However, those Alevis who also have other non-Turkish identities face multiple exclusions and disadvantages in a republic characterised by the Turkish and Sunni-Islam synthesis (Seufert 1997: 182ff.; Kaner 1998: 45ff.).

The few existing literary sources on this orally transmitted faith[3] are dominated by political interests seeking to reduce and assimilate Alevism to a kind of Turkish culture (Johanson 1988: 55; Leiser 1988: 116ff.). This position fundamentally challenges the strong influence of Arabic İslam. On the scholarly level, this approach is represented by. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak and Irene Melikoff. For example, Izzettin Doğan forcefully advocates that position within his state-supported Cem Foundation (Turkish: Cem Vakfı) in Turkey. The heterogeneous character of Alevism with regard to its various ethnicities has been ignored for a very long time. The historian Hans Lukas Kieser from Switzerland clearly points to a difference between the western Alevis and the eastern Anatolian Alevis in Turkey (Kieser 2001). More and more research reveals that the Alevi groups have widely diverse ethnic identifications (Brubaker 2010) and religious rituals. Currently, most international scholars acknowledge the heterogeneous character of Alevism.

It is important to emphasise that many different groups which are often counted among "the Alevis" live in the Balkans, the Middle East, and in different parts of Asia. However, they distinguish themselves from each other on many different points and have completely different religious practices and views of Islam. The Anatolian Alevis from Turkey are different than the Nuṣayrī (also called the "Arab-Alevis" or just Alawis; Alawīyyah) and also the Jaferi also called "Imami Shiites").[4] This paper

2 Currently, Turkey's AKP government seeks to establish a camp for 27,000 refugees in the middle of Terolar (district of Maraş Province in eastern Anatolia), that is very far away from the Syrian border and populated with around 9,000 eastern Anatolian Alevi inhabitants. The same project has started in Divriği, a district in the eastern Anatolian province of Sivas with Alevi population; see article in *Birgün*: *Maraş'ta "Nusra kampı istemiyoruz' diyenlere biber gazı"* / 'Pepper spray on those who say, We don't want a Nusra Camp in Maras' (2016/04/03) http://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/maras-ta-nusra-kampi-istemiyoruz-diyenlere-biber-gazi-108066.html.

3 Dressler (2002) states that the problem of the historical religious localisation of Alevism is difficult due to the lack of written literature until the 20th century: *Maßgebliche Ursache des Problems der religionsgeschichtlichen Verortung des Alevismus ist der Umstand, daß dieser traditionell ein orales Milieu bildete, dem Traditions-vermittlung über verschriftlichte Texte bis ins 20. Jahrhundert hinein weitgehend fremd geblieben ist. Die Tradierung der alevitischen Kultur und alevitischer Glaubens-vorstellungen erfolgte fast ausschließlich über die persönliche Unterweisung durch spirituelle Führer und die Weitergabe religiösen Liedguts […] Auch die Heterogenität alevitischer Geschichtsschreibung ergibt sich mit aus dieser schwierigen Quellenlage, insbesondere dem Fehlen allgemein anerkannter autoritativer Texte.* (Dressler 2002: 10)

4 Ja'fari is the third tendency, besides the Ismailis and the Zeydis, in the Shīʿah rite of Islam. The Jaferi are not generally recognised by the Sunni-dominated Islam world because of their strict position against the first, second and the third Caliphs in Islam, who did not support the succession, after the death of Prophet Mohammed, by Imam Ali, who was the fourth Caliph. Today, the Iranian state follows this tendency of the Shīʿah rite of Islam. In Turkey, the most popular leader of the Ja'fari school is Selahattin Özgündüz, who strongly favours the current Iranian regime.

concentrates on the Anatolian Alevis in Turkey and in the European diaspora and it particularly deals with the situation of the Zazaki- and Kurmanci-speaking Alevis in eastern Turkey[5] due to their non-Sunni confession, non-Turk ethnicity and non-Turkish first language in the Republic of Turkey.

This paper emphasises the special feature of the Alevis and Alevism from and in Dersim[6], which is a historical region in eastern Anatolia and generally accepted as the stronghold of the eastern Anatolian Alevis. The Dersim population is almost entirely of Alevi origin. The Dersim Alevis maintain the pagan and pantheistic elements of Alevism, which deeply connects to a space as if time has never passed; this forms a distinctive typology of the Alevism in that region. This analysis will focus on their special form of Alevism, their position to and within the Kurdish national movement and their possibilities for establishing their own identity regarding their ethnicity, language and belief.

Due to political and economic conditions, many eastern Anatolian Alevis went into the diaspora. Furthermore, important Alevi organisations in the European diaspora now try to influence their homeland. These points will be considered in regards to the political influence of the European Alevi diaspora associations and their demands for democratic rights in their homelands.

2 The Kırmanc

Research of the linguist Mesut Keskin has revealed that if people in eastern Anatolia, in particular northern Dersim and Erzincan say *I am Kırmanc*, they mean that they are Alevi and there is no direct connection to the word "Kurmanc", which points to the northern Kurdish dialect or Kurdish ethnicity (Interview Mesut Keskin 30 October 2015). Alevis from Erzurum (Tekman, Hınıs) and Varto, for example, call themselves *Şarê Ma*, while Kurmanci-speaking Alevis from Sivas (Karabel, Divriği, Ulaş, Kangal) call themselves *Zaza* to clearly distinguish themselves from the neighbouring Sunni Kurds. Due to the strong and expanding Kurdish national movement, a big debate has emerged on the ethnic background of the Dersim population. Also, according to the outcomes of the First Zazaki Conference in Vienna on 18 December 2015, linguists agree that the membership to a nationality is a political decision and does

5 According to the political view also named: North-Kurdistan, North-Mesopotamya and Western Armenia.

6 The ancient region of Dersim encompasses the province of Tunceli (Zazaki: Mamekiye) and parts of Elazığ, Bingöl, Sivas, Erzincan, Varto and Erzurum in eastern Anatolia. Turkish: Dersim, Armenian: *Տէրսիմ* / *Դէրսիմ*, Tersim, Kurmanci: Dêrsim, Zazaki: Dêsım.

not implicitly contain direct connections to the first language or mother tongue that one speaks. With the respect to ongoing discussions over ethno-linguistic identity, this paper refers to the Zazaki[7] and Kurmanci-speaking Alevis in Dersim rather than Kurdish Alevis. In surveys, most of the Dersim population say that they are Alevis in belief and Zazaki in language.

Kieser points out that the Anatolian Alevis were strongly repressed during the Ottoman Empire, above all in the 15th and 16th century. Above all the time period between the 13th and 16th century signs the growing of the power of the orthodox Sunni Islam and institutionalization of it within the state bureaucracy. The opposition to the Ottoman repression and the socio-political context (influence of the Persian Empire under Shah Ismail upon the region and attempted solidarity with Christian Armenians) resulted in big socio-political distinctions between the western and eastern Anatolian Alevis. Above all, Sultan Abdulhamid II practiced an anti-Armenian and anti-Protestant-missionary Sunnitising politics in eastern Anatolia in the 19th century. Due to their critical and distant position against the local Sunni rulers and the central Ottoman Empire, the eastern Anatolian Alevis developed solidarity with their Armenian neighbours (Kieser 2001). Above all, the elderly Kırmanc talk about common celebrations with their Armenian neighbours and interreligious and intercultural weddings. We do not really know about the role of the Alevi in the Armenian Genozide yet, but to flee the 1915 genocide, many Armenians converted to Alevism and engaged with the Kırmanc. While Armenian churches now exist only as ruins and many Armenian houses are inhabited by the Kırmanc, people in the region still tell stories about and even search for buried Armenian gold.

Within the Turkish Republic and the growing left-wing political movements in the 1970s, Dersim was exceptionally described as the place of people defined by three Ks *Komünist, Kızılbaş, Kürt*[8] 'Communist, Qizilbash, Kurd' (Bumke 1979: 544).[9] In the

7 Also called Kırmancki, Kırmanci, Dımılki, Zonê Ma (depending on the regional origin of the local speakers) is an ancient language that belongs to the the West-Iranian group of the Indo-European language family. An interesting discussion raises the question of whether Zazaki is a dialect of Kurdish or rather more a language of its own. The linguists more and more agree that Zazaki is a separate language (for example: Mesut Keskin, Jost Gippert, Heiner Eichner, Ludwig Paul). The UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger 2009/2010 lists Zazaki as an endangered language along with Kurmanci (See: http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php).

8 Anyone that was and is not of Turkish ethnic origin in eastern Turkey has officially been counted to Kurds.

9 While different Alevi groups are defined by different names such as "Tahtacı", "Abdal" or "Çepni", the eastern Anatolian Alevis can be defined as the "Kızılbaş". "Kızılbaş" has been a curse against the Alevis for a long time. The eastern Anatolian Alevis antagonised the Ottoman rulers through their solidarity with the Persian Empire. Some say that as a result, these Alevis are called "Kızılbaş", because their ancestors wore red caps (Turkish: kizil başlık), when they fought on the side of Shah Ismail against the soldiers of the Ottoman Sultan Yavuz Sultan Selim in 1514. I argue that "Kızılbaş" is the name of the eastern Anatolian Alevis and strongly points to their oppositional political positions against the central-rulerships (Arslan 2016a: 85).

1990s, the guerrilla fighters of the Kurdish PKK launched their campaign from the Munzur mountains in Dersim. During those years, some parts of Dersim were under an official state of emergency. Next to the influence of the Turkish socialist movement in the 1970s in Dersim, the Kurdish movement had an important impact on the region. Above all, the generation born in the 1990s show stronger sympathy to the Kurdish movement.

3 Alevism in Dersim

Stronger Shīʿah Islam influence and the historical contact with the Persian Empire helped the eastern Alevis to maintain elements of pre-Islamic, pagan and pantheistic belief systems that can be particularly discovered within the Kırmanc.

> *[The] battle of Tschaldiran (Province in North-West Iran) on 15 August 1514, between the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Empire, which ended with the victory of the Sunni-ruled Ottoman Empire, was the historic breaking point for the Anatolian Alevis and determined that they would become Shiite. Shah Ismail, Emperor of Persia and the leader of the Safawi Dynasty, had intensely close relations with the eastern Anatolian Alevis. As did his father and grandfather, he tried to annex Anatolia to his empire. As a counter-balance to the increasingly Sunni-ruled Ottoman Empire, Shah Ismail established the other orthodox movement in Islam, Shii'tism that became the state religion in Persia and also of big influence among the eastern Anatolian Alevis. Although Shah Ismail grew up and was socialised within the Alevi-Kızılbaş rite, its non-hierarchical and less institutionalized and non-orthodox character did not seem useful to him for ruling a big empire. This historic moment for Alevism, resulted in simultaneously combining pagan and pantheistic elements with ancient, pre-monotheistic spiritual elements and the elements of the monotheistic religions, above all from the Shīʿah rite of Islam.* (Arslan 2012)

The historian Erdoğan Aydın defines Alevism as a variety of Islam that is shaped to a humanist frame and a religious culture that has developed itself due to a oppositional attitude against the central rulership of the Ottoman Empire (Aydın 2010: 388).

After the battle of Tschaldiran, Alevis suffered harassment, massacres, pogroms and oppression by the Sunni-ruled Ottoman Empire and the Ottoman Emperor Yavuz Sultan Selim I.. The threat of forced assimilation and withdrawal went hand in hand. Above all, the Kırmanc primarily found protection in the mountains of Munzur in Dersim until 1935.[10] This protection and withdrawal seemed to make possible

10 On 25 December 1935, the Act of Tunceli (Tuncelı Kanunu) enabled the path to the Dersim Genocide 1937/38.

the preservation of wide-ranging, pre-Islamic belief elements. Still Shīʿah Islam has a strong influence, but many people, e.g. Dr. Daimi Cengiz, argue that the cult of the Twelfth Imam is just symbolic. Indeed, Imam Ali in Alevi imagination represents more humanist typologies than the historical figure of Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. For example, he represents love, justice, and peace, and also plays the role of the patron saint for all Alevis and especially for the Kırmanc.
In Dersim, the elderly Kırmanc recognise the spirits of the trees, rivers, mountains, sun, moon, animals and nature.

> *[T]he Alevis regularly make pilgrimages to holy places, places of worship, Ziyaret. These places are mostly on high mountains and in caves. Some are burial plots of people, who are supposed to be Ermiş and [a]fter every visit to the Ziyaret, mostly the Alevis give some sacrificial offering, which is called Lokma or Niyaz to the ghosts, to the birds and animals and also to the homeless persons there and in the surroundings.* (Arslan 2012)

Lighted candles are left in every Ziyaret for the souls of the dead.[11] The regular Cem-gatherings every Thursday night can be defined as a kind of divine services and were originally realised within the Kırmanc, sometimes in the languages of Zazaki and Kurmanci too. Because of the difficult political conditions, the use of Zazaki and Kurmanci was suppressed in favour of Turkish.

4 Identity challenges of the Kırmanc

The Armenian scholar Victoria Arakelova defines the Alevis as a "religious ideology spread among various ethnic groups" (*Iran and Caucasus Studies Journal* 2010). She does not assert that there is a "unifying vector", but she simply identifies "the belonging (sometimes formal) of self-awareness" (Arakelova 2010: 14). Another very important point in Arakelova's re-search is "endogamy" within ethno-religious groups. The ethno-religious perspective analyses the connection to and relative priority of religious items aside from the ethnic belonging. Arakelova writes, "The presence of such groups in different ethnoses indicates their sub-ethnic character, as well as the initially supra-ethnic character of the doctrine itself" (Arakelova 2010: 6). Another very important issue regarding the definition of Alevism is that the Alevis do not proselytise and thus do not need to formally explain their beliefs to the outside world. Seyfi Cengiz (founder of the Zaza Journal *Desmala Sure*), who has been one of the

11 Within the Alevis, Dersim is known as *Hardo Dewres,* Zazaki for 'the earth/the place of the holy dervish'.

protagonists in the European Diaspora, and many other Kzılbaş-Alevi-Zaza make a difference between the Sunni-Zaza and the Kızılbaş-Alevi-Zaza and argue that Zaza of South and North "(…) talk the same language and are highly likely of the same heritage, but the difference in Sunni and Alevi reasoned the creation of two different folks in history, the Kırmanc and the Zaza" (Cengiz 1991: 1; translation Z.A.; see also Kehl-Bodrogi 1998: 127). Cengiz argues that religion indeed plays an important and basic role (ideological and cultural cement of national unity) about the definition of a nation, which is an opinion that refers to the nationalism theories of scholars like Eric Hobsbawm (1990) and Benedict Anderson (1989). So the Alevi and Sunni identity indeed created two different cultures and a central break line between the two groups, which prohibits a common Zaza ethnicity. In addition Kehl-Bodrogi writes:

> *"In respect to the historical and geographical linkage with the Kurds, as with different cultural expressions of the Sunni and Alevi Zaza, the Zaza nationalism has got difficulties to develop own "national" symbols. (…). There are almost no fiests, mytholo-gies, songs and dances that could melt both confessions and so could be defined as common national symbols"* (Kehl-Bodrogi 1998: 126; translation: Z.A.)

Dersim, seen as the stronghold of the eastern Anatolian Alevis, is characterised by its non-Sunni and non-Turkish identity. The Dersim inhabitants fear discrimination and violence by Kurds because most Kurds belong to the Hanefi-Sunni and partly to the Schāfi-i rite of the Islam. Most elderly Dersim population believe that "if the Kurds have had the chance they would kill us." They point to the Kurdish clans' solidarity with the Ottomans in the battle in Tschaldiran and the absence of Kurdish support during the Dersim and the other Alevi massa-cres. For example, the stronger and more radical practice of the Islam within the Kurdish population increases fear about new discrimination against Alevi. The same Alevi uncertainty can be found with regards to the neighbouring Sunni-Zaza people.

After the Dersim Genocide in 1938, a deathly silence somehow dominated Dersim. When the Turkish socialist movement of 1970ies became active in Dersim, the region's rebellious aspect emerged again. The Kurdish movement dominated Dersim after the second half of the 1980s and into the 1990s. From the second half of the 1990s and particularly after the beginning of the 21st century, that region's socio-political developments were shaped by a renewed return to the Kırmanc identity, above all in the European diaspora. Again, Dersim functions as an important battleground between the Kurdish movement and the Turkish government. Furthermore, this region is threatened by the Turkish government's construction of hydroelectric dams. These dams destroy the Ziyaret of the Alevis and also devastate the culture, faith and life style of the Kırmanc. The Kırmanc consider this development as a new way for the Turkish regime to eliminate that region's people, spirit and culture.

Due to different assimilation politics of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic and faced with the strong Kurdish movement, the Kırmanc seem to have missed at least three opportunities: the option of maintaining their mother/first language Zazaki, the option of clearly defining and living their Alevism beliefs and the clear definition of their ethnic affiliation. In summary, the Kırmanc face a challenging identity crisis.

5 The Alevi diaspora

The religious scholar Martin Baumann states that

> *a diasporic situation shall be qualified by a group of people which perpetuates a recollecting identification with a fictitious faraway existent geographic territory and its cultural religious traditions. Emphasis is placed on the enduring, often glorifying identification with a cultural-religious point of reference outside the current country of living.* (Baumann 1995: 100)

The director of the Max-Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Steven Vertovec, defines the diaspora as a *tripolar interrelatedness*, which means that diaspora groups are denoted by a reciprocal inter-relatedness of collective self-definition, country of emigration and homeland (Vertovec 2000: 4). The social scientist Robin Cohen (1997: 26) determines nine criteria for the definition of a diaspora group:

1. dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;
2. alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;
3. a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements;
4. an idealisation of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance;
5. the development of a return movement that gains collective approbation;
6. a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in a common fate;
7. a troubled relationships with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;
8. a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement;
9. the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

The more democratic conditions in Europe enabled the Alevis to live and develop their identity, which has been oppressed and threatened in their homeland, Turkey. Within their migrant existence, Alevis established associations to practice their faith and to socialise with each other. For some years, the members of the Alevi associations in the Western European diaspora recognised the need to institutionalise their faith to keep it alive and to transmit it to the new generations. They began to intensively discuss the position of Alevism to Islam; above all, because of the demands for official recognition by the Alevi associations within the Western European diaspora. The influence, the relevance and meaning of the Islam within the Alevism still raises many questions. In a Sunni-dominated Turkey, the distance or the nearness of Alevism to Islam has never been discussed as strongly as in the European diaspora. The more democratic conditions in western Europe prompted some circles within the European Alevi population to move away from or keep a distance to Islam (Arslan 2016a: 186). While this is an Alevi phenomenon practiced in the European Diaspora, it is not possible to make so within a Turkey regarding the Sunni-Orthodox hegemony and rulership.

While there is a general political demand to not be dependent on Sunni-Islam-ruled institutions such as the Turkish Presidential Department for Religious Affairs in Turkey (Turkish: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) or the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich, IGGiÖ), the Alevis encounter difficulties when defining their position to Islam because they do not practice any of the five pillars of the Islam. In Turkey, the assimilation pressure is too big to ignore. However, in western European states, the Sunni-Islam institutions themselves encourage the Alevis to go their own way if absolutely necessary.[12]

Finally, some Alevi circles in the European diaspora demand to be accepted as some kind of confession within Islam – as happened in Austria. The Austrian authorities included the Alevis in the new Islam Act of 2015, because of the efforts of the Islam-Alevi Religious Society. Not all the Alevis agree with that development, above all the eastern Anatolian Alevis, who mostly seem to be organised within the Confederation of the Alevi Associations in Europe (AABF) and the Democratic Alevi Federation (FEDA) (Arslan 2016 b).

12 Interview with Anas Schakfeh (term of office 1987-2011) on 22 February 2010: The former President of the IGGiÖ completely rejected any association of Alevism with Islam. He did not reject Alevism as a religion, but appraised Alevism 'diametrical' to Islam: *The point is not an enmity or friendship. This is not the question. The point is not to downgrade it. I would never say 'An Alevi is a Kafir (unbeliever)'. The point is that an Alevi is a member of another religion, like a Christian, a Jew, a Buddhist, a Hindu. […] An Alevi is a believing Alevi, but never a Muslim. […] That is why we never said that we are against the recognition of the Alevi religion [in Austria]. […] But never as Muslims. That would mean that a governmental adjustment would take the right to name someone as Muslim or not. This is never the business of the state.* (Arslan 2016a: 202).

In Austria, the Alevi associations are challenged to define their faith in distinction to the officially accepted Islam Religious Society, and this situation causes disputes within the European Alevi associations themselves. From the beginning, all attempted to define Alevism within a relationship to Sunni Islam. During the whole recognition processes of Alevism in Europe, Alevism, both from the side of Alevi stakeholders and from the side of the responsible European institutions, was set in relation to Sunni Islam. One development shall be mentioned here, which was a result of the recognition of the Islam-Alevi Religious Society in Austria: The power of the IGGiÖ got broken. Now the IGGiÖ is no longer the only and one representancy of the Muslim population in Austria any more (for details about the recognition process, see Arslan 2016). A definition and fulfilment of the content of Alevism without using the principles of Islam does not seem possible.
The achievements of the European Alevi diaspora inspire the Alevi stakeholders in Turkey to demand their democratic rights. At the same time, the discussion about the question of whether Alevism belongs to Islam or not, which dominates the European Anatolian Alevis daily routine, appears suspect and alarming to the Alevis in Turkey.

> *The concealment of the apprenticeship within a regime where they were in danger was a priority (Turkish: Takkiye) and led to a life in territorial and social isolation. Only people who were born into the Alevi circle had the chance to be part of and to gain knowledge of Alevism.* (Kehl-Bodrogi 1992: 2)

The Anatolian Alevis had a somehow critical position to the orthodox Islam of the Ottoman Empire, but they did not really question their own position to Islam. To the contrary, the more they were harassed as nonbelievers within a Sunni Islam dominated empire, the more they searched for protection in Islam that was represented by the Persian Empire.

6 Conclusions

Some attempts to establish an Alevi party in Turkey were unsuccessfully attempted under Mustafa Timisi with the *Birlik Parti'si* (1966-73) and *Türkiye Birlik Parti'si* (1973-81). All the political parties in the Turkish Republic have been aware of the big voting potential of the Alevi population in Turkey. Above all, the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partis'i*, CHP), as the so-called protector of laicism in Turkey, has greatly profited from the Alevi votes. Since the increasing power of the AKP hinders a transparent and sustainable democratisation process in Turkey, the eastern Anatolian Alevis have more obviously supported Kurdish issues and the

pro-Kurdish Democratic People's Party, HDP. An important development revealing the positions of the European Anatolian Alevis, in contrast to the Anatolian Alevis in Turkey, happened when the president of the Confederation of the Alevi Associations in Europe, Turgut Öker, declared his candidacy for independent deputy in the parliamentary elections of 2011 in Turkey (Arslan 2016: 127f.). The Alevis in Turkey, due to their own socio-political conditions, did not welcome this step and once again supported the Republican People's Party, CHP, to maintain a balance against the AKP.

The cofounder of post-colonial studies, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, notes that this *opportunistic action* was to gain entrance to the centre and achieve *attractive privileges* such as at least avoiding new massacres, while marginalising itself and keeping ahead and reproduce the *Centre/Border-Dualism* (Varela 2003: 276). The situation of the Alevis and Alevism cannot be understood without analysing their attitudes and survival strategies, which are sometimes seen as opportunistic (Arslan 2016: 73ff.). According to political conditions and their survival struggles, the Alevis take particular positions. The CHP always seems as a protector for them to prevent the takeover of Islamic power in Turkey. Currently, the HDP seems to promise democracy, diversity, equality and justice in Turkey.

On the one side, because the relationship of Alevism and Islam is still not clear, this polemic will probably continue. No Alevi stakeholder can clearly answer the questions *Who is an Alevi and what is Alevism?*, but their responses will undoubtedly contain information about the massacre and harassment of Alevis and Alevism in Turkey, the common traumatic memories ('emotional heritage' – as discussed in the paper of Maria Six-Hohenbalken), the inequality and disadvantaged position compared to Sunni Islam followers within the Turkish Republic, etc. These are mainly political issues that are emphasised because of fear and worry about new massacres in future assimilation actions.

The Alevi Associations' solidarity with the Kurds in Turkey and in Europe focuses on a democratisation process in Turkey and equality for everyone. An important part of the Alevis also fear oppression and massacre through the Schāfi-i Muslim Kurds in a possible Kurdish territory (Erman, Tahire; Göker, Emrah 2000: 100). As long as scholars cannot define and determine an Alevism as an independent belief system apart from Islam, a subordination and assimilation to the Islam seem to be inevitable in the long term. However, the Zazaki speakers – because of many external and internal reasons – have not developed their own ethnic identity, but more and more Zazaki speakers now point to their differences to the Kurdish culture and the Kurds. Currently the linguists agree that Zazaki is its own language, but they do not want to answer the question if the Zazas are their own ethnicity or nationality distinct from the Kurds. Mostly they argue that this is a political decision (personal communication Heiner Eichner and Ludwig Paul). Besides the question of whether

movements or declarations about nationality are really relevant in the 21st century, the issue remains of criteria, existing possibilities and conditions for forcing demands to establish a Zazaistan.

Due to their economically poor position and their non-Turkish ethnic background, the eastern Anatolian Alevis belong to the most emigrated people, since the beginning of the 1960s, to the Turkish metropoles and the European diaspora (Kieser 2001). In addition to the political conditions and context in the homeland regarding the Kurdish movement, important issues include the ongoing debate on a definition of Alevism, revitalising the Zazaki language and strengthening self-identity processes within the diaspora existence. While some marginalised Zazaki speakers have attempted to promote a Zazaki nationality, another larger group seems to try to rescue the Zazaki from the embrace of Kurdish. The largest group of the Alevi Zazaki speakers do not really seem aware about or interested in their ethnic identity, but prefer to hold on their eastern Alevi identity and another part seems to favour the Kurdish movement. Perhaps the focus on the religious identity could also support and motivate the development of the language.

More than before, it seems important that democratic Alevi stakeholders manage to define elements of a common identify and to focus on, at least, the humanist and key values of Alevism: namely pacifism, social peace and equality. Besides the regularly performed commemoration rituals of the Alevi associations, on the one side, and their solidarity actions with the oppressed groups in Turkey, on the other side, it is time to establish a clear vision and perspective to an Alevi theology and Alevi politics that clearly defines its own purposes without external ascriptions and without worry about new massacres and assimilation. These goals can be reached when a self-confidence and belief in its own visions and aims can be established. The existing Alevi associations mainly practice cultural and social activities. Because the leadership positions within the Alevi associations are taken by former activists of the Turkish student and socialist movement of the 1970s, the Alevi movement is not able to develop new visions for the future and keeps looking to the past in its political practices. Considering the danger and worry about new massacres, continuing discriminations and oppressions and their socio-political status in Turkey, the Alevis generally failed to establish a strongly united political attitude and organisational membership. Because the main criteria in the Alevi faith is pacifism, the estimated 25 million Alevis living in Turkey must be able to clearly and effectively set a political programme to develop democracy and peace. Independent of whether Alevism is officially accepted or not, the more stable that democracy becomes in Turkey, the more chances Alevis and other dominated groups would have to survive and live without fear and discrimination.

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