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XIX. *Cherith*, כְּרִית (or כּוֹרֵת?), χορραθ (B.A.L.), χορρα (Eusebius), Chorath (Jerome). Elijah, having appeared before Ahab—presumably in Samaria—and predicted the coming drought, was instructed to turn to the east and hide himself in the torrent-valley of Cherith, which is “before” or east of Jordan (1 Kings, xvii, 35); and after the Cherith had run dry, he removed to the Phoenician Zarephath. We are therefore quite safe in identifying Chorath with *el Kāra*, through which Wādy el Hummām, a perennial brook, fed by copious springs, descends to the Jordan Valley opposite Beth Shan. The loss of the final consonant is paralleled in Neballat (Beit Nabāla). Compare the testimony of the Onomasticon.

XX. *The Rock Oreb*, Orbo (so, *Bereslāth Rabba*), *Aorabi* (Jerome), *Harabin* (Bertius); *vile Relandi Pal.*, pp. 913 sqq.—As the men of Mount Ephraim at Gideon’s command took all the fordable waters in the lower Valley of Jezreel and the fords of Jordan in these parts as far north as the principal one at Beth Barah, the Bethabara of the New Testament, it is very natural to suppose that the Rock Oreb, where the Midianitish Prince Oreb was slain, was situate opposite this locality beyond Jordan (Judges vii, 22–25). So situated, almost due east from the ford of Bethabara (as identified by Colonel Conder), there is a ruin preserving the name, *Arbain* (compare the *Aorabi* of Jerome and also *Harabin*)—Orbo anciently, in the neighbourhood of Beth Shan (Bereslith Rabba). Eusebius and Jerome incorrectly locate the place west of Beth Shan.

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## A SKETCH OF THE GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE OF THE NURI LANGUAGE.

By R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A.

THE Nowar (singular, Nuri) are the despised nomads, akin to the gipsies and tinkers of Europe, who wander among the villages of Palestine, supporting themselves by blacksmith work—and theft. Like the gipsies, they have a language, which they speak among themselves. I have a considerable collection of words, phrases, and

other material for the study of this language, but it will need amplification, and, probably, correction, before I can venture to make it public. I think, however, I am in a position to indicate, in this preliminary sketch, the main outlines of the tongue, which I have found to be in some respects remarkably interesting.

I. PHONOLOGY.—Into this arid but important branch of the subject I do not in the present Paper intend to enter. I may, however, remark that the rough gutturals of Arabic are rarely used in Nuri, except in words derived from Arabic. Even in these, sounds peculiar to Arabic are sometimes softened, and appear to be so to the ear of an Arab. Thus, in a story taken down for me by my foreman, Yusif, in Arabic letters, the word كَلَّ *kál* ("he said") constantly appears as كَلَّ *kál*. Yusif assured me that he had written as he heard. On the other hand, the Nowar generally exaggerate the gutturals in speaking Arabic: the same unconscious tendency is sometimes observed in the speech of the few Europeans who acquire a good command of Arabic after adolescence.

II. VOCABULARY.—Of the vocabulary of the language it may be said that about three-fifths (roughly speaking) is Aryan, and has easily recognizable cognates in other Romani dialects and in the Indian and Persian languages. The remaining two-fifths are loan-words, sometimes more or less modified. As might be expected, the overwhelming majority are from Arabic: some few, like *guzel*, "pretty," are Turkish; still fewer (as *fonyádr*, "a lantern") are Russian.

III. THE ARTICLE.—Nuri does not possess a native definite article. The Arabic article *el-* is sometimes borrowed, but appears preferably to be attached to adjectives limiting and qualifying the substantive rather than to the substantive itself: as *kal kerda pariski el-mufalik*, "he said to the brother—the foolish one."

There is a suffix *-ik*, *-ika* (after vowels *-k*, *-ka*) affixed to substantives which, so far as I can make out from a comparison of the examples I have of its use, appears to have an indefinite sense, so that its *absence* supplies the place of a definite article. It is probably cognate with the numeral *yakik*, "one."

IV. THE SUBSTANTIVE.—I cannot detect any indication of a distinction of grammatical gender in Nuri. In the Romani of Rumelia (Paspatis, <sup>1</sup> p. 41), this distinction is difficult to detect.

<sup>1</sup> *Études sur les Tchingiane's ou Bohémiens de l'Empire Ottoman*, Alexandre Paspatis. Constantinople, 1870.

There are two numbers and seven cases in Nuri: nominative, accusative, genitive, two datives, locative, ablative. The use of the two datives and the locative is not very clearly defined, a speaker mixing them together in the course of a single narrative. But speaking generally, it appears that the first dative is used after verbs of motion towards; the second after verbs of speaking and giving; and the locative is, as usual, employed to denote rest on or in the place or object in question.

I have not discovered any example of an instrumental case, such as exists in Rumelian Romani (Paspatis, p. 50); and I regret to find that there does not happen to be an example of the locative and ablative plural in the specimens of the language I have so far obtained.

Some of the cases have more than one form. It will probably appear ultimately that there is more than one declension, but for the present it will suffice to set forth the inflexion of a substantive under one scheme.

	SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Nom.	<i>kuri</i> (a house).	<i>kurini</i> (also <i>-iya</i> ).
Acc.	<i>kuris</i> .	<i>kurin</i> .
Gen.	<i>kuriska</i> .	<i>kurinta</i> .
Dat. I.	<i>kurita</i> .	<i>kurima</i> .
Dat. II.	<i>kuriski</i> (also <i>-iska</i> ).	<i>kurinka</i> .
Loc.	<i>kurima</i> .	— ?
Abl.	<i>kuriak</i> (also <i>-ta</i> ).	— ?

The place of the genitive is sometimes taken by a compound expression exactly like the *tutpurusha* compounds of Sanskrit, in which the governed word is prefixed, in its crude form, to the governing. Thus *ghâla-kurita* (instead of *kurita ghâliska*), "to the house of the demon."

Two substantives co-ordinated in English by the conjunction "and" may be united in Nuri into a compound, like the *dwandwa* compounds of Sanskrit, but differing from them in taking the inflexions of the singular number. Thus *harâri kana-manas* (instead of *kanas wa manas*), "you take a loaf and an egg."

The accusative termination *-s* gives place to the indefinite termination *-k* above referred to. Thus the above sentence might also be rendered *harâri kanak wa manak*.

One of the most remarkable features of the language must now be mentioned. As in Arabic, the various persons are provided with a series of suffixes which take the place of possessive pronouns and pronominal objects of verbs—in Nuri, as we shall presently see, they also supply most of the pronominal *subjects* of verbs. The suffixes in Nuri are—

PERSON.	SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
1	<i>üm</i>	<i>umîn</i>
2	<i>úr</i>	<i>urîn</i>
3	<i>ús</i>	<i>usin</i>

(the *u* being dropped after a vowel). Thus we have *par*, “a brother”; *parám*, “my brother”; *parús*, “his brother.” So far as I know, Persian is the only Aryan language that has adopted this mode of expression.

But Nuri goes a step beyond Persian. Here a substantive with a pronominal suffix is treated as a simple substantive, and is declined as such. For instance, *kurim*, “my house,” may be declined *kurimis*, *kurimiska*, *kurinta*, etc. This mode of construction is thoroughly non-Aryan and thoroughly non-Semitic; it seems to indicate a contamination of Nuri accidence by the influence of some Mongolian language. For a precisely similar method of construction is found in Turkish, though the formative syllables are different.<sup>1</sup> Here we have *ev*, “a house,” declined in the singular *ev-in*, *ev-eh*, *ev-i*, *ev-den*; *ev-im*, “my house,” is declined *ev-im-in*, *ev-im-eh*, *ev-im-i*, *ev-im-den*.

In Nuri, the substantive with pronominal suffix can form a *tutpurusha* compound, like a simple substantive, to express the genitive: as *pinim-patrama*, “to my sister’s sons.”

V. THE ADJECTIVE.—Adjectives regularly follow the substantive they qualify. As a rule they do not admit of inflexion; but sometimes (principally, if not exclusively, when used predicatively) they are treated as substantives: thus, *kali*<sup>2</sup> *kan ibkarini*, “the sheep were hungry.”

VI. THE NUMERALS.—The numerals are essentially similar to those of other Romani dialects, and more or less resemble those

<sup>1</sup> The pronominal suffix of the first person singular happens to be similar in Turkish and in Nuri, but the others are quite different.

<sup>2</sup> *Kali* is probably singular in form here because it is considered as a collective noun.

of the Asiatic Aryan languages. They have, however, some notable peculiarities.

The units are—

1	<i>yakák.</i>	4	<i>štarás.</i>	7	<i>hutís.</i>
2	<i>diyás.</i>	5	<i>panjás.</i>	8	<i>štar-wa-štar.</i> <sup>1</sup>
3	<i>taranás.</i>	6	<i>šašás.</i>	9	<i>štar-wa-štar-wa-yakák.</i>

The terminal syllable of 4-7 is used in counting only, and dropped when the numeral is used with a substantive. Compare the precisely similar use of the particle *a* in Irish; in counting, *a ceathar*, *a cuig*, *a sé*, "four, five, six" but in enumeration, *ceathar éin* "four birds," *cuig madraidhe* "five dogs," etc.

The total loss of words for eight and nine, which leads to strangely complex expressions in the higher compounds of these numbers, is a remarkable phenomenon. In Rumelian Romani the same singular lacuna occurs, but it is more conveniently filled by the modern Greek numerals (Paspatis, p. 77). The Anatolian nomads, who are spoken of in Palestine as the Kurdish Nowar, have preserved these numerals: Paspatis reports *haisht*, and *neya* or *nu* from Anatolia, and the same words were heard by the late Herr Miklasiewicz of Safed, in (I believe) the Hauran: in a short vocabulary drawn up by him, which his son, Herr Ladislaus Miklasiewicz kindly permitted me to copy, I find the first twelve numerals given thus: *yeki*, *didi*, *tron*, *shtar*, *penez*, *shesh*, *haut*, *HOSCHT*, *NAH*, *desch*, *deschyeki*, *deshdidi*. In this paper, however, I am not concerned with the Kurdish dialect of Nuri, but with that of the so-called *Zutt*, which seem a more especially Palestinian tribe.

The tens are—

10	<i>dasás.</i>	40	<i>štarás.</i>	70	<i>hutlás.</i>
20	<i>dís.</i>	50	<i>nims.</i>	80	<i>štar-wa-štar-dás.</i>
30	<i>tarandás.</i>	60	<i>šašdás.</i>	90	<i>sí ila dasás.</i>

Here the chief point to notice is the substitution of *nims*, that is *nim-sí*, "half a hundred," for *panjdás*, "fifty": and the formation of 90 by subtraction ("a hundred minus ten"). The use of the Arabic conjunctions *wa*, *ila*, in the sense of "plus," "minus," will be noticed.

The intermediate numerals are formed by addition of the proper unit to the preceding ten—the *ás* termination of nos. 4-7 being

<sup>1</sup> Or sometimes *hut-wa-yakák*.

dropped. Thus *dás wa yakák*, 11; *šašdás wa hót*, 67. Subtraction from the following ten is used to express 19 (*dás ila yakák*) and the numbers 90–99 inclusive (*sí ila štar-wa-štar-wa-yakák*, “a hundred less nine”=91; *sí ila panj* “a hundred less five”=95). The expression of numerals by subtraction is not found in Rumelian, though some instances appear in Anatolian Romani (Paspati, p. 79).

The hundreds are *sí*, *dí sí*, *taran sí*, *štar sí*, and so on to *štar-wa-štar-wa-yakák sí*. “A thousand” is *dás sí*.

For clumsiness it would be difficult to beat the Nuri expression for 989, which fortunately does not require to be used frequently—*štar-wa-štar-wa-yakák sí wa štar-wa-štar dás wa štar-wa-štar-wa-yakák!*

VII. THE PRONOUNS.—The personal pronouns are *amá* I, *atú* thou, *arsak* he, *amah* we, *atmah* ye, *ahu* they.

The place of the genitive and accusative of these pronouns is taken by the pronominal suffixes affixed to substantives and verbs respectively. The place of the other oblique cases is taken by the same suffixes affixed to suitable prepositions.

The demonstrative pronoun, *apús*, is used in narration in place of the third person singular and plural. It is declined like a substantive.

There is no relative pronoun in Nuri, its place being supplied by the colloquial Arabic relative *illi*. As in Arabic, it requires to be followed by the pronominal suffix attached to the verb in the relative clause; as *ka mana ILLI landur-US* “where is the loaf you brought?” (colloquial Arabic *yén ir rajíf ILLI jibt-U*).

The principal interrogative pronouns are *kan*, who? *kík*, what?

The negative “no one,” “nothing” is expressed by *ní . . . kiyák*; as *ní laherda kiyák* “he saw nothing.”

VIII. THE VERB.—The following is a synopsis of the chief inflexions of the verb, so far as I have recovered it. There seem to be three tenses in the indicative—past, present, and future. These are as follows:—

Past: *kerd-um*, *-ur*, *-a*; *-un*, *-us*, *-usin* (I made, did).

Present: *ker-umi*, *-uri*, *-usi*; *-duni*, *-dusi*, *-usini*.

Future: *kernatš-um*, *-ur*, *-i*; *-in*, *-is*, *-usin*.

It will be noticed that the possessive suffixes are used to form most of the personal inflexions. The suffix used as object follows the suffix used as subject: thus *marnatš-um-ur*, “I will kill you.”

There is also an imperative, of the form *kerišti* or *keritši*, second plu. *kerištis* or *keritšis*, and a participle *kerdinda*. I have notes of some other verbal forms, but prefer to say nothing definite about them at present.

The substantive verb is "reduced to its lowest terms," being simply the Arabic *kān*, "was," used in the past without inflexion of number and person. For the present and future the verb is, as in colloquial Arabic, omitted: as *kik namūr*, "what [is] your name?" (compare colloquial Arabic *šu ismak*).

Much use is made (as in Hindustani and Persian) of periphrases involving the auxiliary verb *kerd*, "make, do"; especially with adjectives and participles borrowed from Arabic. Thus, *rusrusma madd kerda hastusis*, "he pointed [lit. 'made stretched'] his hand at his shadow."

A desiderative periphrasis, borrowed from colloquial Arabic, consists of the word *bidd* with the Arabic pronominal suffixes, united to the present of the Nuri verb, shortened by the loss of the final *i*. Thus, *biddi jam*, "I want to go."

IX. THE PARTICLES.—But little need at present be said about the Adverbs, Conjunctions, and Prepositions. The chief interrogative adverbs are *mikran*, "whence?" *katerdi*, "where?" *kenda*, "whither?" The qualifying adverbs are, as in colloquial Arabic, of the same form as the corresponding adjective. They are sparingly used.

Prepositions are used only when the declensional inflexions are not sufficiently definite to express the meaning intended.

The majority of the prepositions are native to the Nuri language: on the other hand, I do not find anywhere in my notes a single native conjunction. The latter, when required, are borrowed from Arabic; but as a rule a narrative in Nuri takes the form of a string of short jerky disconnected sentences, reminding the hearer of nothing so much as the conversational mannerisms of Mr. Alfred Jingle!

In conclusion, I would repeat what I said at the beginning—that this Paper is meant merely as an outline of the Nuri tongue. A good deal of "filling-in" will be necessary before a complete picture can be presented to students of such obscure languages.