

Symposium II: Linguistics

Plural Marking in New West Iranian Languages and Dialects: A Historical and Typological Approach

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INTRODUCTION

The nominal system of all New West Iranian languages has two numbers. The singular is often used after numerals and quantitative adjectives, but in some languages the plural is marked, especially when specific, after numerals larger than one. The choice of plural markers depends upon case (mostly direct vs. oblique), gender distinction and the distinction between animate and inanimate. The purpose of this paper is twofold: to study the form, function and distribution of plural markers in a selection of New West Iranian languages and dialects; and to identify the source and the original meaning of New West Iranian plural markers.

The nominal system of Old Iranian (OIr) had three genders (masculine, feminine, neuter), three numbers (singular, dual, plural), and eight cases (nominative, accusative, dative, instrumental, ablative, genitive, locative, and vocative). The formal differentiation of these cases was complete only in the singular, and even there only in one declension, that of the masculine *a*-stems. In the dual and the plural, there were only three and six separate forms respectively. The plural case-endings of OIr masculine *a*-stems can be reconstructed as follows:

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Nom. Voc. | *-āh, *-āhah |
| Acc. | *-ān(s) ¹ |
| Ins. | *-āiš, *-aibiš |
| Dat. Abl. | *-aibyah |
| Gen. | *-ānām |
| Loc. | *-aiš, *-aišvā |

There is enough evidence to show that in Western Middle Iranian (WMIr), the cases had been reduced to two: direct and oblique. Such a

¹ -s was retained only in some *sandhi* combinations.

two-case system is well attested in Middle Persian (MP) and Parthian of the Sassanian inscriptions and the Pahlavi Psalter (PPs). The same system is also preserved, at least to some extent, in Book Pahlavi (BPah), but it has been mostly abandoned in Manichaean Middle Persian (MMP) and Manichaean Parthian (MParth), where the two cases are only distinguished in the first person singular pronoun and the old stems in *-ar*. The case endings of nouns in Western Middle Iranian are as follows²:

| | <i>ar</i> -stems | | | |
|---------|------------------|---|-------------|---|
| | Singular | Plural | Singular | Plural |
| Direct | -∅ | -∅ | -∅ | - <i>ar</i> |
| Oblique | - <i>ē</i> | - <i>ān</i> (- <i>īn</i> , - <i>ūn</i>) | - <i>ar</i> | - <i>arān</i> (- <i>arīn</i> , - <i>arūn</i>) |

The direct case (from the old nominative and accusative) was used as grammatical subject, and the oblique case (from the old genitive) was used as agent, indirect object, genitive, and the complement of prepositions and postpositions. Both the direct and the oblique cases could be used as direct object. Inanimate nouns were most often left undeclined, unless there was a wish to emphasize plurality.³

Examples: Parth. *yazad* (Dir. Pl.) *amāh ... dastgird karēnd ud pad yazad-ān* (Obl. Pl.) *pušt ...* ‘the gods made (historic present) us [their] property, and with the help of the gods ...’; MP *šāh-ān* (Obl. Pl.) *šāh* (Dir. Sing.) ‘king of kings’; MPth *tō ay pid* (Dir. Sing.) *čē im-īn harw-īn karišn* ‘Thou art the Father of all these creations’, *nimāyān pidar-ān* (Obl. Pl.) *wxēbēh* ‘I will show [you] my own fathers’.

However, even in good classical WMĪr texts, there occur instances of the plural oblique case used as direct. Thus, the two-case system gradually disappeared from WMĪr, and nouns came to be distinguished in number only, the general plural-ending being *-ān* (or rarely *-īn* or *-ūn*, from the OIr genitive endings **-īnām* and **-ūnām* for *i*-stems and *u*-stems respectively). This is the only plural-ending in MParth, but in MMP two other plural-endings, both of a latter date, have been identified: *-īhā* (originally an adverb-making suffix, usually added to inanimate nouns), and *-agān* (adding a generic sense to the noun and designating a multitude of individuals). In addition, in some MParth and MMP texts the abstract nouns formed with the endings *-īft* and *-īh* respectively are used as collectives or plural nouns.

² Cf. Asha 1998: 7-10; Nyberg 1974: 277-78; Skjærvø 1983: 132-35.

³ Skjærvø 1983: 134.

Examples: BPah *wuzurg-ān* ‘the great ones’, *ātaxš-ān* ‘fires’, *frazand-īn* ‘children’, *kōf-īhā* ‘mountains’, *jahūd-agān* ‘a multitude of Jews’, *harborz kōf-īh 2244 ast* ‘Harborz has 2244 mountains’; MParth *brādar-ān ud wxār-īn* ‘brothers and sisters’, *dušmin-ūn* ‘enemies’, *pad harw bay-īft* ‘among all gods’

In WMIr strict concord between a plural noun and a modifying adjective, whether attributive, demonstrative or quantitative, was not obligatory, but it often occurs, e.g., BPah *astōmand-ān mardōm-ān* ‘corporeal men’; MParth *šubān-ān rāšt-ān* ‘righteous shepherds’

A noun modified by a numeral often occurs in the singular in WMIr, but the use of a plural noun after numerals larger than one is not infrequent, especially in MParth and MMP, where in most cases the agreement can be attributed to rhythmic factors.⁴ e.g. MParth *dō brādar-ān* ‘two brothers’

In WMIr a predicate substantive need not agree in number with a plural subject or antecedent, e.g. MMP *drōzan ma hēb bawēnd* ‘They should not be liars’

Sometimes in a substantive phrase, the modifying noun is plural, not the regent noun, e.g.: MMP *abārīg-ān dēn ī pēšēnag-ān* ‘the other religions of the ancients’

PLURAL MARKING IN NEW PERSIAN

The plural markers used in Early Modern Persian (EMP) are: *-ān*, *-(i)hā* and *-(a)gān*, e.g.: *nazdik-ān* ‘relatives’, *derakht-ān* ‘trees’, *dast-ān* ‘hands’, *setāra-gān* ‘stars’, *setam-hā* ‘cruelties’, *sepīd-hā* ‘the white ones’, *sar-ihā* ‘heads’, *kār-ihā* ‘deeds’, *farzand-agān* ‘children’, *dōst-agān* ‘friends’ One can also identify *-hān* as a plural suffix indicating approximation, e.g. *ānjā-hān* ‘(lit. those places) around there’.⁵

In classical Persian texts there are instances in which a modifying adjective has agreed with a plural noun (e.g.: *ferishtag-ān i pāk-ān* ‘pure angels’). In addition, sometimes the noun, especially when specific, has appeared in plural form after numbers larger than one, (e.g.: *har du zan-ān* ‘both women’).

The plural-endings of Contemporary Persian (CP) are *-ān* and *-(h)ā*. The ending *-ān* is often used for human and human-related items, especially in literary registers. In addition, in all stages of New Persian, plural markers of Arabic origin are used, mostly in Arabic loan words, such as *-āt* (*ta’lim-āt* ‘teachings’), *-in* (*mo’allem-in* ‘teachers’), *-un*

⁴ Brunner 1977: 46.

⁵ Lazard 1963: 195-96.

(*enqelābi-y-un* ‘revolutionary people’), and broken plurals of different types, e.g. *kotob* ‘books’ (Sing. *ketāb*), *afrād* ‘individuals’ (Sing. *fard*), *romuz* ‘secrets’ (Sing. *ramz*), etc.

The addition of a plural marker to an already plural noun is occasionally witnessed in both EMP and CP, e.g. *khalifazāda-gān-hā/khalīfa-zāda-gān* ‘descendants of the caliph’ (Sing. *khalīfa-zāda*), *ahvāl-hā/ahvāl* ‘conditions’ (Sing. *hāl*).

PLURAL MARKING IN NEW WEST IRANIAN LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS

In modern Iranian languages and dialects, pluralization is generally performed by adding certain affixes. In the study carried out for this paper, a group of New West Iranian languages and dialects were investigated, and the typological relationships existing in them were extracted. It should be added that in some of these languages and dialects the previously mentioned plural markers of Arabic origin are, under the influence of Persian, occasionally witnessed. The data is as follows:

Abuzaydābādi: *e* (replacing final *-a*), *-(h)ā*, *-hō*, *-un*, *pāk-* (to emphasize the concept of plurality): *espe* ‘dogs’ (Sing. *espa*), *pāk-reg* ‘veins’, *pāk-mū* ‘hair’ (Pl.) (*CLI*, p. 317; Mazra‘ati et al., p. 44)

Abyāna’i: *-a*, rarely *-(h)ā*, *-hō*, *-un*: *dādā-a* ‘sisters’, *dōt-a* ‘girls’, *raz-a* ‘gardens’, *bone-a* ‘trees’ (Sing. *bōna*), *mesh-a* ‘sheep’ (Pl.); but: *kaye-a* ‘houses’ (Sing. *kaya*), *kūye-ā* ‘dogs’ (Sing. *kūyā*), *voche* ‘children’ (Sing. *vocha*). After numerals larger than one the plural form is used: *dō mere-a* ‘two men’, *sa pūra* ‘three boys’ (Āhani, p. 54; *CLI*, p. 317; Yarshater, in *EIr* I, p. 404).

Aftari: *-(h)on* (*kāku-hon* ‘uncles’, *vachkā-hon* ‘children’, *dār-on* ‘trees’). With respect to demonstratives, only the noun is pluralized: *ven mirdon* ‘those men’ (cf. *ven mirde* ‘that man’), *an kargon* ‘these hens’ (cf. *an jeki* ‘this woman’; Windfuhr, in *EIr* I, p. 592; Homāyun, pp. 53, 57).

Alviri: *-hā* (*CLI*, p. 314).

Āmora’i: *-gal* (*asb-gal* ‘horses’). The feminine ending *-a* is omitted before the plural marker: *sū-gal* ‘apples’ (Sing. *sūa*; *CLI*, p. 314; Lecoq, in *EIr*. I, 956).

Anāraki: *-hā*: *chash-hā* ‘eyes’ (*CLI*, p. 322; Windfuhr, in *EIr*. II, p. 3)

Ārāni: *-o(n)*, rarely *-hā*: *hayvon-o(n)* ‘animals’ *dērakht-o(n)* ‘trees’, *sag-o(n)* ‘stones’ The plural marker *-hā* is mainly used in some personal,

demonstrative and interrogative pronouns: *hēmē-hā* ‘we; us’, *shēmē-hā* ‘you’, *nēmi-hā* ‘these’, *kiyā-hā* ‘where, what places?’ (Alijānzāda, p. 203).

Ardestāni: *-(h)ā, -ū(n)*: *pore-hā* ‘sons’, *bolobol-ū* ‘nightingales’ (CLI, p. 322; Lecoq, in *EIr* II, p. 387)

Āštiyāni: *-gal(ān)*, in rapid speech sometimes *-gel*: *mā-gal* ‘mothers’, *pūr-galān* ‘sons’; the feminine ending *-a* is omitted before the plural marker: *khu-gal* ‘shovels’ (Sing. *khua*) (CLI, p. 314; Yarshater, in *EIr* II, p. 848).

Āzari: see Tāti.

Bādrudi: *-(h)ā, -hō, -e*, rarely *-un*: *bāl-e* ‘spades’, *böz-e* ‘goats’ In ergative constructions when the logical direct object is plural, sometimes the verb also takes the plural marker: *dözz-e sarbāz-e-shun dar-kos-e* ‘the thieves hit the soldiers’ When the verb or a referring pronoun indicates the plural number, often the singular is used for the plural: *sarbāz ö döz da:vā-shun be-ka* ‘the soldiers and the thieves quarreled’ (CLI, p. 317; Yarshater, in *EIr*. III, p. 383)

Baluchi: Obl. *-ān, -gal* (most frequently in Eastern Hill Baluchi). Kechi: Nom. *-ø*, Obl. *-ān* (*-ānrā*, emphasizing the direct object), Gen. *-ānī*: *mardom-ānī but* ‘men’s boots’, *sepāhī-ānī jamag* ‘soldiers’ shirts’ (CLI, pp. 354-55; Collet, p. 5; Elfenbein, in *EIr*. III, p. 635)

Bashkardi: (Northern): *-ā, -on, -ōn, -un, -ūn*; (Southern: *-an*): *lahar-on* ‘huts’, *pā-’on* ‘feet’, *ā-’ūn* ‘they, those’ (CLI, p. 366; Skjærvø, in *EIr*. III, p. 848)

Bakhtiyāri: *-(h)ā, -(y)ā, -vā* (for animals and inanimate objects); *-ū(n), -gal, -yal* (for humans and animals): *māl-ā* ‘tents’, *gandom-ā* ‘wheat’ (Pl.), *čo-vā* ‘pieces of wood’, *ded-ūn/dedū-yal* ‘sisters’, *kor-gal/yal* ‘boys’, *bače-yal* ‘children’, *gā-w-ūn/gā-hā* ‘cows’, *guar-gal* ‘calves’, *khar-gal* ‘asses’, *ādom-yal* ‘people’, *shākh-ā* ‘horns’

Bakhtiyāri of Ardal: *-ā, -v/wā* (after *-u* and sometimes *-ow*), *-yā* (after *-i*), *-un, -jal*: *dodar-gal* ‘girls’, *mish-gal* ‘ewes’, *mir-gal* ‘men’ (Sing. *mire*), *zin-gal* ‘women’ (Sing. *zine*), *bi-jal* ‘kids’ (Sing. *big*), *sag-jal* ‘dogs’, *dej-jal* ‘sisters’, *du-vā* ‘sour milk’ (Pl.), *orosi-yā* ‘shoes’, *low-vā* ‘lips’, *show-ā* ‘nights’

In the Bakhtiyāri of Ardal adjectives may agree in number with the nouns they modify: *mir-gal gap-ā* (even: *mire gap-ā*) ‘old men’ (Sing. *mire gap*) (CLI, p. 344; Windfuhr, in *EIr*. III, p. 560; Eydi, p. 59; Sālehi, p. 27).

Behbahāni: *-ā, -(h)u:* *sarbāz-ā* ‘soldiers’, *das-ā* ‘hands’, *mard-u* ‘men’, *zen-u* ‘women’, *gā-hu* ‘cows’ With respect to the numerals, the nouns are pluralized: *i pay sikhe kebāb-ā* ‘these five rows of Kabāb’, *u de doluv-ā* ‘those two old women’ (Mortazavi, p. 36).

Behdini: *-un, -(h)ā, -(h)o:* *porog-un* ‘(small) sons’, *dotog-un* ‘daughters’, *vachog-un* ‘children’, *ziy-un* ‘women’, *noker-o* ‘servants’, *khda-(h)ā* ‘houses’, *chmosh-(h)ā* ‘shoes’; Kermāni: *-ā:* *khuk-ā* ‘pigs’; Yazdi: *-hu:* *wacha-hu* ‘children’ (CLI, p. 322; Windfuhr, in *EIr.* IV, p. 105; Firuzbakhsh, p. 49).

Bidgoli: *-o(n):* *yūr-o* ‘children’; final *-ō* drops before the plural marker: *karg-o* ‘hens’ (Sing. *kargō*) (Yarshater, in *EIr.* IV, p. 247).

Biyābānaki: *-ūn:* *vashko-ūn* ‘infants’ (CLI, p. 109)

Burenjāni: *-al, -gal, -yal:* *dar-al* ‘doors’, *khar-al* ‘asses’ (CLI, p. 342)

Charza’i: *-on* (Yarshater, in *EIr.* V, p. 22)

Davāni: *-al, -gal, -yal, -(h)ā:* *ādam-gal* ‘people’, *bachchek-gal* ‘children’, *sāl-gal* ‘years’, *gap-gal* ‘conversations’, *shāh-ā* ‘kings’, *un-ā* ‘those’, *ke-hā* ‘who, which people?’ (CLI, p. 342; Mahamedi, in *EIr.* VII, p. 130).

Dimili: see *Zāzā*

Esfahāni Jewish: *-(‘)ā, -vā* (after *-u* and *-o*), *-yā* (after *-i*), *-un:* *chesh-ā* ‘eyes’, *ru-vā*, ‘days’, *‘abri-yā* ‘eyebrows’, *bu-vā* ‘smells’, *hāmelovā* ‘pregnant’ (Pl.), *veyθa-‘ā* ‘those standing’

After *-ā*, vowel lengthening is witnessed: *dev-ā* ‘drugs’

Final *-e* drops out before *-ā:* *keδ-ā* ‘houses’ (Sing. *keδe*).

If *-ā* follows the diphthongs */ou/*, */āu/*, or */eu/*, the */u/* sound changes into */v/* or */w/*: *khov-ā* ‘sleeps’ (Sing. *xou*), *δāv-ā* ‘delivered woman’ (Sing. *δāu*), *tevā* ‘fevers’ (Sing. *teu*) (CLI, p. 320; Kalbāsi, 1373, p. 53).

Farizandi: *-(h)ā, -hō, -un* (CLI, p. 317)

Farvi: *-gūn:* *geche-gūn* ‘children’ (CLI, p. 324)

Gazi: *-ā:* *gul-ā* ‘flowers’ (CLI, p. 320)

Gilaki: *-an, -ān, -en:* *vokht-an* ‘moments’ *jāy-ān* ‘locations’, *dehāt-en* ‘villagers’ (CLI, [1989:] p. 304)

Gurāni: Awromāni: *-e*, Obl. *-ā* (MacKenzie): Indefinite: Masculine *-ê*, Obl. *-â:* *har-ê*, Obl. *har-â* ‘asses’; Feminine *-ê*, Obl. *-a:* *māhar-ê*, Obl. *māhar-a* ‘she asses’; Definite: Masculine *-ake*, Obl. *-akâ:* *har-ake*, Obl.

har-akâ ‘the asses’; Feminine *-kê*, Obl. *-kâ*: *mâhar-a mâhara-kê*, Obl. *mâhara-kâ* ‘the she-asses’

Nouns ending in stressed *-a* and feminine nouns in stressed *-e* drop out their final vowel before plural endings: *yâne*, Obl. *yânâ* ‘houses’ (Sing. *yâna*), *kinâche*, Obl. *kinâchâ* ‘girls’ (Sing. *kinâche*).

Nouns ending in stressed *-â* replace it with *-ε* (in the direct plural) and *-âyâ* (in the oblique plural): *piε*, Obl. *piâyâ* ‘men’ (Sing. *piâ*).

Feminine nouns ending in *-i* preserve this in the direct plural case, but only in isolation. When they are joined with any other form (except a simple epithet), they are inflected as if they ended in *-a*: *kârdi* (*kârde*), Obl. *kârdâ* ‘knives’ (Sing. *kârdi*).

After numbers larger than one the plural form is used: *shish suâre* ‘six horsemen’

Adjectives agree with the nouns they modify: *kitebe siâwe* ‘black books’

In the oblique plural the succession of two words, noun and epithet, each with *-â* is avoided, the first *-â* being reduced to *-a*: *yâne gawre*, Obl. *yâna gawrâ* (instead of **yânâ gawrâ*) ‘big houses’ (CLI, p. 337; MacKenzie, in *EIr* III, p. 111; idem, 1966, pp. 13-15, 17-18, 23)

Harzani: see **Tâti**

Jowšaqâni: *-(h)â, -hō, -un* (CLI, p. 317)

Kafrâni: *-ō: dendōn-ō* ‘teeth’ (CLI, p. 320)

Kahaki: *-e, -ow, -iya, -iye* The final vowels of words are omitted before the plural markers: *pur-e* ‘sons’ (Sing. *pura*), *khāk-e* ‘sisters’ (Sing. *khāka*), *zām-ow* ‘sons-in-law’ (Sing. *zāmā*), *varz-ow* ‘oxen’ (Sing. *varzā*), *zan-iya* ‘women’ (Sing. *zana*), *da’-iye* ‘maternal uncles’ (Sing. *da’i*), *sabz-iye* ‘vegetables’ (Sing. *sabzi*) (CLI, p. 314; Šari’ati, p. 58).

Kāšâni Jewish: *-(h)â, -hō, -un* (CLI, p. 317)

Keringâni: see **Tâti**

Kermâni Jewish: *-â: âsin-â* ‘sleeves’ (CLI, p. 322)

Keshe’i: *-(h)â, -hō, -un* (CLI, p. 317)

Khânsâri: *-â, -yâ* (after *-i*), *-vâ* (after *-u*): *âdem-â* ‘people’, *zemin-â* ‘fields’, *mâni-yâ* ‘mothers’, *chu-vâ* ‘pieces of wood’; note also *vech-â* ‘children’ (Sing. *vecha*), *kiy-â* ‘houses’ (Sing. *kiya*) (CLI, p. 316; Tavakkoli, p. 71).

Khuri: *-un, -gun, -ugun, -un, -ō:* *shōn-ugun* ‘women’, *kitēb-un* ‘books’, *heyvun-un* ‘animals’, *chemchā-gun* ‘spoons’, *mardu-gun* ‘men’, *mī-v-ō* ‘hair’ (Pl.) (CLI, p. 324; Farahvashi, p. 66).

Komjāni: *-e, -ye* (after vowels): *rus-e* ‘roosters’, *raz-e* ‘gardens’, *vahi-ye* ‘kids’, *māli-ye* ‘cats’; but: *kay-e* ‘houses’ (Sing. *kayā*), *küy-e* ‘dogs’ (Sing. *küyā*), *mer-e* ‘men’ (Sing. *merā*) (Āhani, p. 52)

Kumzāri: *-ā, -an:* *say-ā* ‘dogs’, *zank-an* ‘women’. Nouns and adjectives agree in number: *zank-en gāp-an* ‘big women’ (CLI, p. 366)

Kurdish: Northern: *Ezāfa -ê, -ên*, Obl. *-a(n)*; Eastern: *Ezāfa -ê(t), -êd* (Mokri *-î da*); Mahābādi: *-ān, -wān* (after *-ū*), *-yān* (after all vowels except *-a* and *-ū*): *kich-ān* ‘girls’, *pyāw-ān* ‘men’, *khānū-wān* ‘houses’, *tarāzū-wān* ‘scales’, *birā-yān* ‘brothers’

Final *-a* is omitted before *-ān*: *zhinak-ān* ‘the women’ (Sing. *žinaka*), *birāk-ān* ‘the brothers’ (Sing. *birāka*) Sometimes the plural form is used after numerals larger than one: *shash řōzh-ān* ‘six days’ (CLI, p. 330; Kalbāsi, 1362, p. 18).

Laki: *-al, -yal:* *zhan-al* ‘women’, *āyil-al* ‘kids’, *kowerr-al* ‘sheep’ (Pl.).

Čahār-duli: *-ān:* *dōtak-ān* ‘the girls’, *kilwak-ān* ‘the stones’

Darra-shahri: *-aļ, -yaļ, -waļ:* *kōtow-aļ* ‘books’, *koṛ-aļ* ‘boys’, *khuri-yaļ* ‘nets’, *dū-yaļ* ‘smokes’, *pat-waļ* ‘blankets’

Khājvandi-ye Kelārdasht: *-al, -gal, -yal* (after vowels), *-ān:* *det-al/det-gal/det-ān* ‘daughters’, *shi-al/shi-gal/shi-ān* ‘husbands’

Exceptions: *veryl* ‘lambs’ (Sing. *vark*); D. *bōrā:ļ* ‘brothers’ (Sing. *bōrāļ*); Khājvandi *‘āylevil* ‘children’ (Sing. *‘āyl*) (Izadpanāh, pp. 45-46; Mir-Cherāqi, p. 17; Purmand 1374: 161; Sepehri, p. 38).

Lāri: *-ea* (esp. in Evazi, Khonji and Bastaki), *-ūn* (poetic), *-iyā, -niyā* (after vowels): *asp-iyā/asp-ea* ‘horses’, *govv-iyā/gowv-ea* ‘cows’ (Sing. *gow*) (CLI, p. 366; Eqtedāri-ye Lārestāni, p. 486).

Lāsgerdi: *-on:* *dār-on* ‘trees’, *pur-on* ‘sons’ (CLI, p. 309)

Lori: *-yā, -o* (for animates): *dār-yā* ‘trees’, *das-yā* ‘hands’, *dokhter-o* ‘girls’, *bach-o* ‘children’ (CLI, p. 344; *Elr* IV, p. 325; Izadpanāh, p. 6; Moqimi, pp. 44-46)

Boyer-Ahmadi: *-al, -val, -yal, -gal, -un:* *bow-yal/val* ‘fathers’, *merd-al* ‘men’, *kela-yal* ‘hats’, *zan-gal* ‘women’, *dwar-al/-un* ‘daughters’, *sāl-al/-un* ‘years’, *māh-al/-un* ‘months’; in this dialect sometimes the final */a/* changes to */e/*: *bache-yal* ‘children’ (Sing. *bacha*)

Feyli: *-(ī)ā:* *bav-ā* ‘fathers’, *āyam-īā* ‘people’, *zan-īā* ‘women’

Giyāni: *-yā:* G. *asp-yā* ‘horses’, *mū-yā* ‘hair’ (Pl.).

Mamasani'i: *-al, -gal, -yal*: *-ā*: *asp-al* 'horses', *vazīr-al* 'ministers', *hūna-yal* 'houses' (*CLI*, p. 344; Windfuhr, in *EIr* IV, p. 325; Izadpanāh, p. 6; Moqimi, pp. 44-46).

Mahallāti: *-ā*: *jūnavar-ā* 'animals' (*CLI*, p. 316)

Māsarmi: *-al, -gal, -yal*: *ādam-al* 'people' (*CLI*, p. 342).

Māzandarāni: *-ho(n), -un, -kun*: *zon-ho(n)* 'women', *per-un* 'fathers', *rikā-(k)un* 'boys'

Elāshti: *-hān, -(h)un, -kun*: *mār-un* 'mothers', *dār-un* 'trees', *kerk-un* 'hens', *kijā-kun* 'girls', *gu-hun* 'cows', *zan-un/zan-hān* 'women'

Kelārdashti: *-on, -kon, -shon, -eshon* (after consonants), rarely *-koneshon, -ville* (only in *vache-ville* 'children'): *berār-on* 'brothers', *zenā-kon/-shon* 'women', *rikā-shon* 'boys', *kuh-eshon* 'mountains', *merdā-koneshon* 'men'

Sāravi: *-un* (only for human beings), *-ā* (after consonants), *-yā* (after *-i*), *-hā* (after *-e, -ā*, and *-u*): *mari-y-un* 'men', *rikā-'un* 'boys', *piyer-un* 'fathers', *zan-un/-ā* 'women', *vach-un/vache-hā* 'children', *dāmād-ā* 'sons-in-law', *piyala-hā* 'cups', *sikā-hā* 'ducks', *siyu-hā* 'black ones'

Shahmirzādi: *-(h)ā, -on*: *piēr-hā* 'fathers', *tifl-ā* 'infants', *zan-on* 'women', *mard-an* 'men', *pul-(h)ā* 'money' (Pl.).

Velātru'i: *-an, -(h)ā*.

(*CLI*, p. 305; Kalbāsi, 1376, pp. 38-39; Najafzāda, p. 61; Pur-Karim, p. 156; Shokri, pp. 70-71).

Meyma'i: *-(h)ā, -hō, -un* (*CLI*, p. 317)

Nā'ini: *-ā, -jā, -wā*: *horchen-ā* 'stairs', *nemej-ā* 'felts', *ārt-ā* 'flour' (Pl.), *tshī-jā* 'things', *tī-jā* 'blades, razors', *ollu-wā* 'eagles', *poru-wā* 'sons', *jē-hā* 'barley (Pl.)' *guzā-hā* 'foods' (*CLI*, p. 322; Pur-Ābedi, p. 85).

Natanzi: *-(h)ā, -hō, -un* (*CLI*, p. 317).

Pāpuni: *-al, -gal, -yal*: *esfahān-yal* 'Esfahāni people' (*CLI*, p. 342).

Qohrudī: *-(h)ā, -hō, -un* (*CLI*, p. 317)

Qomše'i: See *Šahrezā'i*.

Rāji, (of Delijān): *-ye*: *peur-ye* 'sons', *deji-ye* 'daughters' (Sing. *dejo*) (Safari, p. 60).

Šahrezā'i: *-ā, -vā* (after *-u*), *-yā* (after *-i*) *lāhāf-ā* 'mattresses', *dokhter-ā* 'girls', *bālu-vā* 'airplanes', *patu-vā* 'blankets', *sandili-yā* 'chairs', *kūdi-yā* 'marrow' (Pl.); but: *khun-ā* 'houses' (Sing. *khune*), *bechā* 'children' (Sing. *beche*).

In descriptive genitive structures, the modifier is pluralized: *derakh tut-ā* ‘mulberry trees’, *late gandom-ā* ‘wheat farms’ In possessive genitives, however, the head is pluralized: *dar-ā bāq* ‘the doors of the garden’, *rakhd-ā khārum* ‘my sister’s clothes’ (Tāki, 1372: 32).

Sangesari: *-hā, -un* (CLI); *-∅*, Obl. *-uon*, Agent-case (for the past form of transitive verbs) *-uony*: *ke-hā, ke-v-un* ‘houses’, *pur-un* ‘sons’

Irregular plurals: *bochaw*, Obl. *bochuon* ‘kids’ (Sing. *bochae*), *kawtaw*, Obl. *kawtuon* ‘boys’ (Sing. *kuotae*), *mird*, Obl. *mirduon* ‘men’ (Sing. *maerkeyin*), *var(r)aw*, Obl. *var(r)uon* ‘lambs’ (Sing. *var(r)ae*), *zawkaw*, Obl. *zawkuon* ‘children’ (Sing. *zaw*), *zhinni*, Obl. *zhinnuon* ‘women’ (Sing. *shaekeyin*).

After numerals larger than one the plural form is used: *du zhinnuony baevaw* ‘the two women said’

Sedehi: *-hō*: *veche-hō* ‘children’ (CLI, p. 320).

Semnāni: *-i, -y* (after stressed vowels), Obl. *-un* (Sotuda, *-∅, -ey*): *pir-i*, Obl. *pir-un* ‘sons’, *sāl-i*, Obl. *sāl-un* ‘years’ (Sing. *sāla*), *kiyé-y*, Obl. *kiye-y-un* ‘houses’ (Sing. *kiyá*), *astey* ‘fruit stones’ (Sing. *astā*); also note: *dot-i, dotar-i*, Obl. *dotar-un* ‘daughters’ (Sing. *dota*). (CLI, p. 307; Sotuda, p. 7).

Sivandi: *-gar*: *det-gar* ‘daughters’ (CLI, p. 346).

Somqāni: *-al, -gal, -yal*: *mīsh-gal* ‘sheep’ (Pl.), *ādam-yal* ‘people’ (CLI, p. 342).

Sorkhe’i: *-ā(n), -hā*: *mirdi-ān* ‘men’, *zhiki-ā(n)* ‘women’, *dār-hā* ‘trees’ (CLI, p. 309).

Tāleshi: Lankorāni: *-on*: *do-on* ‘trees’; Māsāli: *-en*, Obl. *-un*: *dār-en* ‘trees’; Māsula’i: *-en*, Obl. *-on*: *dār-en* ‘trees’; Paresari: *-e*, Obl. *-un*: *dōr-e* ‘trees’; Tulārudi: *-e*, Obl. *-an*: *dōr-e* ‘trees’; Vizna’i: *-on*: *dō-on* ‘trees’; Zida’i: *-an*, Obl. *-un*: *dār-an* ‘trees’ (CLI, p. 299).

Tāri: *-(h)ā, -hō, -un* (CLI, p. 317).

Tāti (i.e. **Āzari**) (Āl-e Ahmad 2536: 171; CLI, p. 301, 303; Kārang 1333: 83, 104-05; Yarshater, 1969: 75-83; Zokā, 1332: 38).

Čāli: *-e, -ē* (after *-á* and *-ā*), Obl. *-ō(n)*: *qoč-e* ‘rams’ Also note that the feminine morpheme *-a* disappears before plural endings: *barr-e* ‘spades’ (Sing. *barra*); nouns ending in stressed *-a* or in *-ā* have their direct plural in stressed *-ē* and drop their final vowel before *-ō(n)*: *dad-ē* ‘fathers’ (Sing. *dada*); *p-ē* ‘feet’ (Sing. *pā*); *chuār-ō* ‘sheep’ (Sing. *chuārā*); nouns in *-i* tend to drop the plural ending in the direct case:

sāri(-e) ‘stars’; and nouns in *-u* have their direct plural in *-ö*: *höll-ö* ‘peaches’ (Sing. *höllu*).

Dānesfāni: *-on*:

Ebrāhimābādi: *-en*, Obl. *-ēn*:

Esfarvarini: *-end*, Obl. *-o(n)*:

Eshtehārdi: *-ehā*, Obl. *-un*: *esb-ehā* ‘dogs’ The feminine morpheme drops out before the oblique plural ending: *mish-un* ‘ewes’ (Sing. *misha*); and final stressed *-a* coalesces with *-e-* in *-ehā* and changes into *-i* before the oblique plural ending: *esb-ehā*, Obl. *esbi-un* ‘dogs’ (Sing. *esba*).

Harzani: *-oy*, *-un*, Obl. *-un*: *kin-oy* ‘girls’, *yan-oy* ‘women’, *küy-un* ‘mountains’;

Hazār-rudi: *-e*, Obl. *-ān*: *asb-e* ‘horses’;

Kajali: *-e*, Obl. *-o*: *berāleg-e* ‘brothers’, *zhaneg-e* ‘women’;

Keringāni: *-ende/-inde*, *-nde* (after vowels), Obl. *-un*: *yan-inde* ‘women’, *kinā-nde* ‘girls’

Khiyāraji: *-e(n)*, *-eyn* (for nouns ending in stressed *-a*), Obl. *-un*: In Khiyāraji final stressed *-a* drops out before the plural morpheme: *ki-eyn*, Obl. *ki-un* ‘houses’ (Sing. *kia*).

Khoznini: *-in*, *-en* (for nouns ending in stressed *-a*), Obl. *-un*.

Sagzābādi: *-e*, *-yn* (after *-ā*), Obl. *-un*: *quch-e* ‘rams’, *zumā-yn* ‘sons-in-law’ In this didialect the feminine morpheme drops out in the plural; *-a* and *-ā* drop out in oblique plural; and nouns ending in stressed *-a* have their direct plural in *-(y)n*, with *-a* palatalized into *-e*: *bādie-yn* ‘bowls’ (Sing. *bādia*).

Shāli: *-ān*

Tākestāni: *-on*: *qoch-on* ‘rams’. In Tākestāni *-a* and *-ā* drop out before the plural morpheme: *fer-on* ‘boys’ (Sing. *fera*).

After quantitative adjectives and numerals larger than one, the plural form is used in Chāli, Kajali and Khiyāraji: Chāli: Obl. *shash suār-ō* ‘six horsemen’; Kajali. *dō berāleg-e* ‘two brothers’; Khiyāranji. *cand mahun* ‘several months’

Tāti, of the Republic of Azerbaijan: Northern: *-ho*, *-un*: *khune-ho* ‘houses’; *kuk-un* ‘sons’; Southern: *-hā*, *-un*: *khuna-hā* ‘houses’; *mard-un* ‘men’ (CLI, p. 297).

Urāzāni: *-ān*: *dār-ān* ‘trees’, *yālān* ‘children’, *sif-ān* ‘apples’ (Āl-e Ahmad, p. 85).

Vafsi: *-ān*, *-e(n)*, *-iya* (after vowels), *-iye* (after vowels): *bez-ān* ‘goats’, *dast-e* ‘hands’, *dūwār-e* ‘walls’, *dār-en* ‘trees’, *merd-īya* ‘men’ (Sing. *merda*), *zen-īye* ‘women’ (Sing. *zene*) (CLI, p. 314; Moqaddam, p. 119).

Vāneshāni: *-ō(n)*, *-ū*: *ferzend-ō* ‘children’, *khūk-ōn* ‘pigs’, *dandūn-ū* ‘teeth’ (*CLI*, p. 316).

Varzena’i: *-ā*: *ādem-ā* ‘people’ (*CLI*, p. 320).

Vidari *-hā* (*CLI*, p. 314).

Yaran(d)i: *-(h)ā*, *-hō*, *-un* (*CLI*, p. 317).

Zāzā: *-ē* (Asatrian), Obl. *-ān*; Ezāfa: Masculine *-ê*, *-dê*, *-yé*; Feminine *-ê*, *-y nē p’ōstālē min* ‘these my shoes’ (*CLI*, p. 339; Asatrian, in *EIr.* VII, p. 407)

Zefre’i: *-gelō*, *-hō*: *pūr-gelō* ‘boys’, *veche-hō* ‘children’ (*CLI*, [1989:] p. 322).

CONCLUSION

As illustrated in the above data, the most frequent plural markers in New West Iranian languages and dialects are the following endings, pronounced in slightly different ways in different languages: (A) *-hā*, from MP *-ihā*, functioning both as an adverb-making suffix and as a plural-ending, but originally an abstract noun maker (*CLI*, p. 258); (B) *-ān*, from WMlR general plural-ending *-ān* (< OIr **-ānām*), which originally designated the plural oblique case; and (C) *-gal*, from OIr **gr̥da-* ‘troop’ (Nyberg, p. 48; cf. Pers. *galla* ‘flock, herd’), which originally designated a multitude of things.

The study of the above-mentioned data also reveals the following linguistic facts:

(A) Almost all New West Iranian languages tend to pluralize their nominal items via suffixation. The only exception is Abuzaydābādi, in which a prefix (i.e. *pāk-*) is also used.

(B) Some plural markers are in fact made up of two independent plural-endings, e.g. *-galān* in Āshtiyāni, *-gelō* in Zefra’i, and possibly *-hān* in Elāshti.

(C) After numerals larger than one and quantitative modifiers the singular is often used. Only in a few languages (Abyāna’i, Awromāni, Behbahāni, Chāli, Kajali, Khiyāraji, Mahābādi Kurdish, Sangesari) the use of the plural is witnessed.

(D) Concord between a plural noun and a modifying adjective, whether attributive, demonstrative or quantitative, is not frequent; however, it occurs in Awromāni, Bakhtiyāri of Ardal and Kumzāri.

(E) The feminine morpheme often drops out before plural endings (e.g., in Āmora’i, Āshtiyāni, Chāli, Eshtehārdi and Sagzābādi).

(F) The addition of a nominal plural marker to a transitive verb in ergative constructions is only witnessed in Bādrudi.

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