Revised and Updated Edition

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Contents

Judeo-Iranian Languages

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1   Introduction

A continuous Jewish presence on the Iranian Plateau goes back to the 1st millennium BCE, comprising one of the oldest Jewish communities in the world. This long history has led to Jewish adoption of various Iranian languages belonging to different Iranian subgroups (see Table 1 below). Iranian languages are native to the Iranian Plateau (modern Iran and Afghanistan), parts of the Caucasus, and much of Central Asia, which belonged to the Iranian cultural domain until medieval times. Having evolved out of the Indo-European family and Indo-Iranian sub-family, the Iranian languages are known from three chronological stages, commonly referred to as Old, Middle, and New Iranian. All the three stages are known only for Persian, the language that arose in the southern province of Fars. Old Persian is recorded in the cuneiform inscriptions

TABLE 1   *Judeo-Iranian Languages*

Language/dialect	Distribution	Branch	Affiliation	Literary tradition	Status
Judeo-Persian	Persianate territories	SW	Persian (written in Hebrew script)	8th–20th c.	abandoned
Bukhari (Judeo-Tajik)	Central Asia	SW	varieties of Tajik Persian	20th c.	endangered
Judeo-Tat (Juhuri)	Eastern Caucasus	SW	dialects of Tat, an early offshoot of Persian	20th c.	endangered
Judeo-Shirazi	Shiraz	SW	Fars language group	none	moribund
Judeo-Median	Central Iran	NW	at least 4 languages within Central Plateau group	none	moribund
Judeo-Gurgani?	Southeast of the Caspian Sea	NW	unknown	single text, 12th–14th c.	extinct

of the Achaemenids (6th–4th centuries BCE), Middle Persian was written in modified Aramaic scripts under the Sasanians (3rd–7th centuries CE), and New Persian has been written in a modified Arabic alphabet at least since the 9th century CE. However, the oldest document of the New Persian language is actually an 8th-century letter in Judeo-Persian, i.e., the Persian language written in Hebrew script. Judeo-Persian remained in written use among Persian-speaking Jews up until the mid-20th century.

New Persian developed an extensive classical literature and became the *lingua franca* not only of the Iranian-speaking peoples, but also in neighboring countries, most notably in India under the Mughals. In modern times, however, the domain of Persian saw a considerable contraction. In Bukhara, a center of Persian for a millennium, the language was replaced by Uzbek as the state language when the Emirate of Bukhara became Soviet Uzbekistan in the early 1920s. It was only in Soviet Tajikistan, carved out of the eastern highlands of Bukhara, that Persian retained its official status under the new name of 'Tajik'.

Tajik adopted a new standard based on local Persian varieties, and was written in the Roman alphabet (during the 1930s) and finally, as part of a larger Soviet policy dictated from Moscow, in Cyrillic (since 1940).

The Soviet regime recognized the sizeable Persian-speaking Jewish communities of the former Bukharan Emirate as a distinct nationality, with Judeo-Persian as their written language. But because the term 'Persian' (*fārsi*) was then forbidden, the language was officially called *zaboni yahudihoyi buxori/mahali* ('the language of the Bukharan/local Jews'). Today it is known as Judeo-Tajik, Judeo-Bukhari, or Bukhari. This name shift in the early 1920s also marks the point when written Bukhari took over from the earlier written Judeo-Persian (of Bukhara) through vernacularization, Romanization, and secularization, with the effect of pushing out Hebraisms (see section 3 below). When the Roman alphabet replaced the Hebrew one (ca. 1930), Bukhari looked little different from Tajik proper, setting it on a course to merge with Tajik, which it did within a decade, before World War II.

The Soviet model was also applied to Judeo-Tat, or Juhuri, an early offshoot of Persian (Fig. 10.1) spoken by the Mountain Jews in the eastern Caucasus. Mountain Jews were unique among all other known Iranian-speaking Jewish communities in that they were predominantly rural. With the advent of modernity, the Mountain Jews began writing their Tat language with a Hebrew script, but were eventually forced to shift to the Roman and Cyrillic alphabets, as were many other non-Christian peoples of the Soviet Union. Judeo-Tat was the only form of Tat that attained literary status, which it still possesses to some extent, in the Dagestan Republic (within the Russian Federation). It did not merge with Muslim Tat because the latter has remained unwritten, and its speakers were counted as Azerbaijani under the Soviet regime. Like many Jews elsewhere in the Soviet Union, the Mountain Jews began migrating en masse to Israel and North America in the late 20th century. Their language is diminishing both in the Caucasus and in the diaspora.

The terms Judeo-Shirazi and Judeo-Median include Jewish languages and dialects spoken in a dozen cities and townships in Iran (Fig. 10.2). They differ from the previously mentioned Iranian languages in that they are not offshoots of New Persian and they have never been written languages. Although Shirazi and Median belong to different branches of the Iranian language family (Fig. 10.1), they share similar sociolinguistic features due to a shared Jewish context. In Shiraz and in the central towns of Kashan and Isfahan, the Jewish vernaculars are insular survivors of native languages that were replaced centuries ago by Persian, while dialects akin to those of the urban Jews have also survived in the predominantly Muslim countryside. All these languages are now moribund both in their original habitat and in the diaspora. Judeo-Median consists of at least four mutually unintelligible languages, spoken in
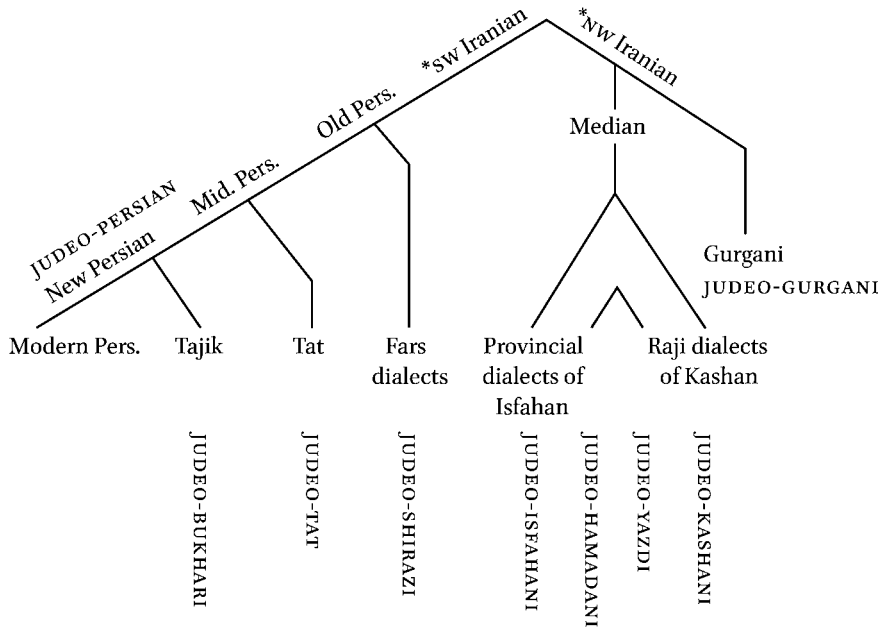
FIG. 10.1   *Position of Judeo-Iranian languages (shown in capital letters) within Iranian language family.*

Kashan, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Yazd and Kerman, each belonging to different branches of the language group commonly referred to as Central Plateau dialects (CPDs). The interrelationship between each of these Jewish languages and their kindred non-Jewish varieties has been little studied, so the degree of mutual intelligibility is unknown.

Another dialect may be attested in a solitary, short document that was found in the Cairo Genizah and studied by Shaked (1988). Based on his careful research and further examination by the present author, the label Judeo-Gurgani is tentatively proposed here for that dialect. The frame of reference is the extinct language of Gurgan, at the southeastern corner of the Caspian Sea, attested in the scriptures of the Ḥorufi sect from the 14th and 15th centuries.

All of these Judeo-Iranian languages are linguistically close to the vernaculars spoken by non-Jews (cf. Lazard 1968, 1996). Their Jewishness manifests itself in the sense of ownership and distinctiveness that the speakers feel with regard to their mother tongue. For instance, although in everyday registers Bukhari can often seem in purely linguistic terms little more than a variety of Tajik, the Bukharan Jews perceive it as their own native tongue, and even more so those in the diaspora, who are linguistically challenged by national languages. As for Judeo-Persian, there is the Hebrew script that actually defines it vis-à-vis standard Persian, which is written in the Perso-Arabic alphabet. For

FIG. 10.2   *Map showing the cities where Judeo-Iranian languages are traditionally spoken (shown in capital letters) and relevant historical provinces (in curved format).*

centuries Judeo-Persian was the vehicle of a large body of original literature, chiefly poetry, as well as translations. Judeo-Persian and other Judeo-Iranian languages, both in their written and spoken forms, are also characterized by the presence of Hebrew and Aramaic terms. Hebraisms have played a significant role in self-perception of the Jewishness of the language, even if they pertained largely to the religious domain and therefore, in and of themselves, do not necessarily make the language unintelligible to non-Jews. (Secret jargons served this purpose; see section 7.2.) Preserved in the Cairo Genizah is a thousand year-old bilingual letter, in Judeo-Persian and Arabic, which demonstrates how the Jewish writer considered his native Persian language to be Jewish (Shaked 2010; see below, section 2.1.1.2).

2   Judeo-Persian

The term Judeo-Persian was coined by Western scholars to designate the Persian language when written in Hebrew script. Like other Persophones, the Jewish speakers of Persian themselves have always just called their native tongue

pārsi or *fārsi*. The authors and copiers of Judeo-Persian manuscripts occasionally referred to the language as *lafẓ-e fārsi* or *lašon fārsi* ('Persian language'). Recently, scholars writing in Persian have coined the term *fārsihud* (< *fārsi* + *Yahud*) for Judeo-Persian. Modern scholars have also tended to subsume under the term 'Judeo-Persian' the spoken varieties of Persian Jews, such as the mixed language of Iranian immigrants to Israel. In this chapter, however, I will abide by the general consensus to use Judeo-Persian to refer only to a written, rather than a spoken, language. It is noteworthy to add that, following the opening of modern schools and the integration of Persian Jewry into the middle class in the early 20th century, Judeo-Persian gradually fell out of use, and Iranian Jews began to write their native tongue exclusively in the mainstream Perso-Arabic alphabet. Moreover, due to certain linguistic differences between the written Judeo-Persian of Iran and its counterpart in Central Asia, the latter is sometimes referred to as Judeo-Tajik (Netzer 1972; Zand 1979), but this should not be confused with the semi-colloquial Judeo-Tajik (or Judeo-Bukhari or Bukhari), which enjoyed a short period of literary status in the Roman alphabet in the Soviet Union (see section 3 below). As noted already above, the term 'Tajik' was coined only in the 1920s to indicate a language distinct from Persian.

Judeo-Persian documents, dating as far back as the 8th century CE, have emerged from all over the vast Persian linguistic territory, covering present-day Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and beyond—in Egypt, on the Malabar coast of India, and in Kaifeng in eastern China (Wong and Yasharpour 2011). The extant materials include inscriptions, personal and commercial letters, legal documents, biblical translations and commentaries, and religious and secular poetry, including versified chronicles. In addition to these varieties of original works, there exists also a significant amount of classical Persian poetry, as well as some medical and scientific treatises, that were transliterated from the Perso-Arabic into the Hebrew script.

The number of extant Judeo-Persian texts probably runs into the thousands. They are preserved in various libraries in Europe, America, and Israel. Many of these were acquired from different places in Iran and Central Asia during the 19th and 20th centuries, from personal collections and genizahs. Many came to light from the Cairo Genizah, which was recovered in the late 19th century. Datable documents from the Genizah may be assigned to the period from the 10th to the mid-13th century.

The chronology of Judeo-Persian surpasses a millennium, embracing the entire span of New Persian, save the contemporary period. An 8th-century letter in Judeo-Persian from Dandan-Uiliq (Chinese Turkestan) and the Tang-i Azao inscriptions from central Afghanistan (see section 2.1 below) mark the earliest written documents of the language, revealing a transitional stage from

TABLE 2 *Published Early Judeo-Persian Texts*

Abbrev.	Document	Date	Provenance	Edition
Inscriptions				
TA (Ta)	Tang-i Azao	752	Afghanistan	Henning 1957
(Koll)	Kollam plates	9th c.	India	Cereti 2009
(Afg)	Ghur tombstones	12th–13th c.	Afghanistan	Rapp 1965a,b
–	Torah-pointer from Ghur	12th–13th c.	Afghanistan	Shaked and Jacoby 2005
Letters and legal documents				
DU-1	Dandan-Uiliq letter 1	8th c.	Khotan	Utas 1968
DU-2	Dandan-Uiliq letter 2	9th c.	Khotan	Zhang and Guang 2008
L2, L6	Private letters (bilingual)		North Africa?	Shaked 2010
L14 (Lr)	Law Report from Ahvaz	1021	Khuzistan	Asmussen 1965b; MacKenzie 1966
L16 (Kd)	Karaite legal document	951		Shaked 1972
Tafsīrs and Halakhah				
T2 (Gr)	'Grammatical' *tafsīr*		Khuzistan	Khan 2000: 241–331
T4 (Db)	*tafsīr* to Daniel	11th–12th c.	Fars or Khuzistan	Shaked 1982
T6 (Ez 2)	small *tafsīr* to Ezekiel			Gindin 2007
T7 (Ez 1)	*tafsīr* to Ezekiel	ca. 11th c.	Bukhara and southwestern Iran	Gindin 2007
T10 (Gen)	*tafsīr* to Genesis		Bukhara	Shaked 2003 (partly)
T16	*tafsīr* to Jeremiah		Bukhara	Shaked 2009
T17 (Zef)	*tafsīr* to Psalms from Zefra		Fars	Shaked 2008
H3 or SM (Ar)	'Early Argument' (halakhah)	11th–12th c.	Khuzistan	MacKenzie 1968a

Abbreviations are from the lists of Shaked (2003, 2009); those of Paul (2013) are shown in parentheses. The editions listed are normally the most complete, but not necessarily the most recent.

Middle Persian to New Persian. Similarly, all other Judeo-Persian texts down to the early 13th century (letters, inscriptions, biblical commentaries) belong to the period when the local varieties of the literary language were merging to form Standard New Persian. Subsequently, the early stage of Judeo-Persian, called Early Judeo-Persian, is not linguistically uniform, but testifies to both dialectical differences and traits in the evolution of Persian over time. Early Judeo-Persian texts (a corpus of about 600 manuscript pages; see Table 2),

most of them unaffected by the stylistics of the formal language, contribute substantially to the study of the evolution of the Persian language. By the 14th century, when standard Persian had become widespread, Judeo-Persian texts followed suit, as is evident from Judeo-Persian poetry. Moreover, in more recent times, when Persia and Central Asia became divided politically and religiously, different varieties of Persian emerged, which eventually led to the Tajik standard to which Judeo-Tajik (Bukharan) belongs.

Notwithstanding the vastness of the corpus and variety of genres therein, it is still possible to draw a broad framework for the two major corpora of Judeo-Persian writings: religious texts and versified texts (setting aside for the moment the earliest documents, consisting of letters and short inscriptions). Chronologically we arrive at the following scheme:

11th–15th c.	Biblical studies flourish in Khuzistan–Fars and Bukhara
14th–18th c.	Judeo-Persian poetry begins in Shiraz and extends north to central Iran
17th–19th c.	Bukhara emerges as the center of Judeo-Persian literature and learning

2.1 *Judeo-Persian Texts and Literature*
2.1.1 Non-Literary and Biblical Texts
2.1.1.1 *Inscriptions*

If we accept the dating of 752–753 CE proposed by Henning (1957), rather than the much later date of 1300 that was suggested by Rapp (1967), the inscriptions of Tang-i Azao constitute the oldest dated Judeo-Persian material. These consist of three short graffiti on stone, made by three travelers who spent the night in a cave in central Afghanistan. The inscriptions used the same formula. The most complete one reads:

זכרא בר סמעל אז קובן אין ניוי קנד פא דאלס פא מוד יי (יאר) אש או באד אמן

zkr' br sm'l 'z qwbn 'yn nywy qnd p' d'ls p' mud yy (y'r) 'š 'w b'd 'mn

'Zachary the son of Smiʿīl (coming) from Kōban [an unidentified toponym] incised this inscription in [Seleucid year] 1064 [= 752 CE], hoping (*pa umēd-i*) in God. May He be his helper. Amen.'

HENNING (1957: 342)

Despite its brevity, the document is important for exhibiting two archaisms, namely, פא *p'* (*pa*), a characteristic preposition of Early Judeo-Persian (see

section 2.2.2.3), and the word ניוי *nywy* (*niwē*) for 'inscription' (< Middle Persian *nibēg*), used in classical New Persian only in the sense of 'holy scriptures'.

From the 9th century, a triangular inscription, known as Kollam, on a copper plate, was found in a Christian church in Malabar, a trade hub on the Indian Ocean. Its text, in Arabic, Middle Persian, and Judeo-Persian, first published by West (1870), contains four Judeo-Persian signatures, with the formula המגון מן פדיש גוהום ... *hmgwn mn ... pdyš gwhwm* 'likewise, I [name] witness on it'. The signatories are Ḥasan ʿAlī, Saḥaq Samaʿēl, Abraham Quwami, and Kuruš Yaḥiya (Cereti 2009).

The province of Ghur in northeastern Afghanistan offers two types of inscriptions. One is a recently-found short inscription on a bronze Torah-pointer written in a mixture of Hebrew and Judeo-Persian. The latter reads כר בר לב״דר *kr br lb"dr* (*xār bar lab-i dar*) 'hook on the edge of the door'. Shaked and Jacoby (2005) interpret *xār* (lit. 'thorn') as the bolt which holds together the two edges of a closed Torah case. They also surmise that the sign ״ (like a double apostrophe, otherwise unknown in Judeo-Persian texts) represents the *iżāfa* (possessive) morpheme *-i* (see section 2.2.2.4). The second inscriptional type includes 54 tombstone epigraphs unearthed in the cemetery in the village of Jām, incised with a blend of Judeo-Persian and Hebrew words (Gnoli 1964; Rapp 1965a, 1965b; Hunter 2010). Because of their formulaic composition, the inscriptions reveal more about the social conditions of the community than about the language. The settlement was apparently abandoned in the 13th century, at the time of the devastating conquest of Persian lands by the Mongol horde.

2.1.1.2   *Letters and Legal Documents*

Of the more than two dozen items that are identified in this category by Shaked (2003), only six have been published (see Table 2). Notwithstanding their limited size (only up to a couple of pages each) these personal, commercial, and legal documents have a disproportionate linguistic importance, since they record the natural language of everyday life.

The oldest of these is a letter discovered in the ruins of the Buddhist temple of Dandan-Uiliq, in the Khotan province of Chinese Turkestan, i.e., the heart of the so-called Silk Road, where Persian was the *lingua franca* for centuries. The author of the letter is a merchant in the business of trading sheep and clothing. This document has been carbon-dated to the second half of the 8th century CE, and has been studied exhaustively since its discovery in the beginning of the 20th century (most notably by Henning 1958: 79–80; Utas 1968; Shaked 1971: 182; and Lazard 1988). Another personal letter, from the early 9th century and probably from the same site (thus referred to as Dandan-Uiliq 2), has recently come to light (see Zhang and Guan 2008).

The next oldest datable Early Judeo-Persian texts in this category are two legal documents. The Karaite legal document (known as L16) from 951 CE deals with inheritance (see Shaked 1972). The Ahvaz law report (known as L14), dated to 1021, which deals with the legal resolution of confiscated property, has attracted wide scholarly attention (Henning 1958: 80–81; Asmussen 1965b; MacKenzie 1966; Shaked 1971).

Most Judeo-Persian commercial and private letters were found in the Cairo Genizah. Besides their linguistic importance, they are also historically interesting. Some of these letters are bilingual in Persian and Arabic, two of which (known as L2 and L6) were published by Shaked (2010). Letter L6 was written by a Persian Jewish merchant who probably lived in an Arabic land. The language of the letter is Judeo-Persian, while some phrases, such as the formal address of the letter and blessing formulas, were written in the Arabic language and script (i.e., not Judeo-Arabic). This suggests, as Shaked surmises, that the author treated his native Persian as a Jewish language by writing it in Hebrew characters, although Arabic was the dominant language where he was living.

2.1.1.3   *Early Tafsīrs and Halakhah*

The longest Judeo-Persian texts of earlier centuries consist of *tafsīr*s, translations of and commentaries on the Hebrew Bible, and halakhah, interpretations of religious law. The great majority of these texts have their origins in the Karaite sect, whose anti-Rabbinic theology was highly influential in the East during the 9th–11th centuries. The flourishing of this genre among Iranian Jewry (centered in Khuzistan-Fars and Bukhara) is contemporaneous with the promotion of Persian translation and exegesis (*tafsīr*) of the Qurʾān in the northwestern provinces of Transoxiana and Khorasan (cf. Lazard 1968; 1996: 50). Moreover, around the 10th century, the Zoroastrian priests centered in Fars were fully engaged in compiling and editing their religious books written in Middle Persian. These striking parallels suggest that the Zoroastrian and Muslim religious/literary trends could have influenced Jewish ones.

From a linguistic viewpoint Judeo-Persian Bible translations offer a rich corpus of archaic Persian when it was still a non-standard literary language in a territory spanning from Khuzistan to Central Asia. But a feature that takes quite a toll on the linguistic merit of these religious writings is their syntax: as a rule they follow the underlying Semitic texts verbatim, for they served chiefly as a means for understanding and memorizing the Hebrew original (Lazard 1978: 49); cf. the similar trend in Judeo-Arabic (see Hary 2009) and other Jewish languages.

Most of the *tafsīr*s and halakhic works have yet to be published, but those that have been fully or partly published are linguistically the most interest-

ing. None is dated, but linguistically they belong to the pre-Mongol period (11th–12th centuries). Those showing northeastern dialectal features are the *tafsīr* of Genesis (T10, partly edited by Shaked 2003) and a two-page fragment of the *tafsīr* to Jeremiah (T16, edited by Shaked 2009). From the southwest are the *tafsīr* of Daniel (T4, edited by Shaked 1982) containing a commentary on difficult words and some historical issues in Isaiah, Daniel, and Esther. This manuscript exhibits Babylonian *niqqud* (vocalization), in contrast to the Tiberian system used in the other contemporary *tafsīr*s treated here.

The largest manuscript of this group is the *tafsīr* of Ezekiel (T7), comprising 226 manuscript pages, which constitutes more than one-third of the entire Early Judeo-Persian corpus. Its archaic language, characterized as the 'missing link' between Middle and New Persian (MacKenzie 2003), suggests a date of composition no later than the 11th century. The linguistic heterogeneity among different parts of this Judeo-Persian translation-commentary, in both Khuzistani and Bukharan Early Persian varieties, suggests multiple authorship (Gindin 2003c). A variant of this large manuscript is found in a four-page fragment (T6), offering a detailed, verse-by-verse translation and commentary on the book of Ezekiel. Both of these Ezekiel *tafsīr*s were published by Gindin (2007).

A 'grammatical' *tafsīr* (T2, edited by Khan 2000) has been classified within the genre of *tafsīr* because it explains the language of religious texts. Aimed at tackling linguistic problems of the Scriptures, this grammar/translation only deals with difficult passages. The manuscript contains portions of Ruth, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Daniel, and Nehemiah.

The only published halakhic treatise is the 'Early Argument' (edited by Mackenzie 1968a), a twenty-page manuscript that seems to be a small part of the *Seper Miṣwot* ('Book of Precepts'). This polemic argues, in an archaic Persian, why the world needs a prophet, and why Moses must have been the true prophet, challenging the other three theologies known to the author, namely, those of Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam. The following is a sample passage (British Library, ms. Or. 8659, folio 6v):

... ואניז תיסהא יכא פורסידם אישאן רא המגאן אין הר ג׳ מוכאלפאן רא כו כא כוסתו
היד כו אין תיס אז פיש יכודה בי אמדה היסת אבר דסתיה ימשה הנביא בי מרדומן צי
היסת כא שמא כאר אזיש נא כוניד ופסוך דאדנד אישאן כו ...

... w'nyz tysh' yk' pwrsydm 'yš'n r' hmg'n 'yn hr 3 mwx'lf'n r' kw k' xwstw hyd kw 'yn tys 'z pyš yxwdh by 'mdh hyst 'br dstyh ymšh hnby' by mrdwmn ṣy hyst k' šm' k'r 'zyš n' kwnyd wpswx d'dnd 'yš'n kw ...

'and other things too which, when I asked all these three opponents,
"Since you confess that this matter has come from God to mankind by the
handiwork of the prophet Moses, how is it that you do not act according
to it?" They answered …'

MACKENZIE (1968a: 264–265)

2.1.1.4   *Post-Mongol Biblical Texts*

From the 14th century onward, numerous Judeo-Persian religious manuscripts
have survived, only some of which have received close scholarly scrutiny, and
even fewer have been edited and published; the archaic language of the earlier
Judeo-Persian texts has received more attention from scholars. Less numer-
ous are comparative studies (of early and late texts alike) along structural and
thematic lines with the works of similar nature within the Iranian domain
(Zoroastrian and Muslim) as well as within a broader Jewish linguistic range.
The main efforts for the last century and more have been on identifying, cat-
aloguing, and editing the manuscripts, as well as establishing their interrela-
tionships.

The religious Judeo-Persian manuscripts of this period pertain to the biblical
books, as well as other religious texts. Some later manuscripts are mere copies
of the older ones (see, *inter alia*, Asmussen and Paper 1977; Paper 1968a, 1972b).
Due to space limitations the discussion here will be limited to the major
manuscripts of the Pentateuch.

The oldest Pentateuch (British Library, ms. Or. 5446; facsimile in Paper
1972a), is also the first dated Judeo-Persian religious text, bearing the date of
14 Adar II, 1630 sel. = 6 March, 1319 CE. The verses are introduced by a Hebrew
headword, followed by the full Persian translation, and are interpolated by
many lexical, grammatical, and homiletic commentaries. The language of the
text shows vestiges of older stages of Persian, with interesting grammatical
features and a wealth of lexical material. Therefore a critical edition would be
a major contribution to the field.

The Vatican Library Pentateuch (Vat. Pers. 61) was purchased by an Italian
traveler in the town of Lār, south of Fars province, in 1606 (edited by Rossi
1948; published in transliteration by Paper 1964–1968). The date of the text
may conjecturally be given as 15th century (Ludwig Paul, personal communica-
tion) based on its language, which shows clear affinity to the Fars–Khuzistan
Early Judeo-Persian dialectal zone. Notwithstanding its relatively young lan-
guage, which is close to classical Persian, many earlier lexical features present
themselves. Interestingly, a nearly identical translation (ms. L188 [Adler B.63]
in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York; Paper 1968a) was acquired
in Bukhara, quite far from the provenance of the Vatican Pentateuch. The fol-

lowing sample from the JTS manuscript, Genesis 37:3–5 (Fig. 10.3), is shown together with a hypothetical phonemic transcription:

3. וישראל דוסתר דאשת מר יוסֿף אז המה פוסראן אוי כי פוסרי ﹶברדמנדסת אוי באוי
ובי כרד באוי דורעהי אברישומין: 4. ובי דידנד בראדראן אוי כי אוירא דוסתר דאשת
פדר אישאן אז המה בראדראן אוי ודושמן דאשתנד אוירא ונה מוראד בודנד בסﹶכון
גופֿתן אבאז אוי סלאמת: 5. ובושאסף דיד יוסֿף בושאסף ואגאה כרד בבראדראן אוי
ובי אבﹶזﹶודנד הנוז דושמן דאשתן אוירא:

3. *u Yišrāl dōstar dāšt mar Yūsuf az hama pusarān-i ōy, ki pusar-ē*
xiradmand-ast ōy ba-ōy, u bikard ba-ōy durʿa-ē abrīšumēn. 4. *u bi-dīdand*
barādarān-i ōy ki ōy-rā dōstar dāšt pidar-i ēšān az hama barādarān-i ōy,
u dušman dāštand ōy-rā, u nē murād būdand ba saxun guftan abāz-i ōy
salāmat. 5. *u būšāsp dīd Yūsuf būšāsp; u āgāh kard ba-barādarān-i ōy, u*
biaβzōdand hanūz dušman dāštan-i ōy-rā.

3. And Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, for he was (lit. 'is') the son of his wise [age], and he made him a silk garment. 4. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, and they hated him, and they had no desire to speak peaceably to him. 5. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he brought [it] to his brothers' attention; and they increased their hatred toward him even more.

Another undated translation is a 40-page fragment containing Gen. 24–36, preserved in the Hebrew Union College Library in Cincinnati (ms. 2193; edited by Paper 1972b). This is an independent translation that cannot be linked with any others that are extant. It has a special place among the Judeo-Persian Pentateuch translations, owing to its intriguingly mixed linguistic character. Stylistic archaisms such as אבר *ʾbr (abar)* 'on', אבאז *ʾbʾz (abāz)* 'to' (for later *bar* and *bāz*), לרזשת *lrzšt (larzišt)* 'trembling', and the passive auxiliary אמדן *āmadan* (along with later שודן *šodan*), appear side by side with modern-sounding colloquialisms such as כונה *x̄wnh* (for *xāne*) 'house', בכורדן *bxwrdn* (for *bexordand*) 'they ate', and וכת *wxt* (for *vaqt*) 'time'. The provenance of the manuscript is probably Hamadan, as supported by the way the translator rendered the ethnonyms אַשּׁוּרִם וּלְטוּשִׁים *ʾaššūrīm u-lṭūšīm* (Gen. 25:3) as כרדאן ולוראן *krdʾn wlwrʾn* (*Kordān o Lorān*) 'Kurds and Lurs', the tribal groups which border the province of Hamadan in northwestern Iran to this day.

Two important Judeo-Persian Bibles were published in the lifetimes of their translators. The translation of Yaʿqov b. Yosef Ṭāvus, a Jewish Persian scholar who seems to have taught at the Jewish Academy in Istanbul, appeared in an
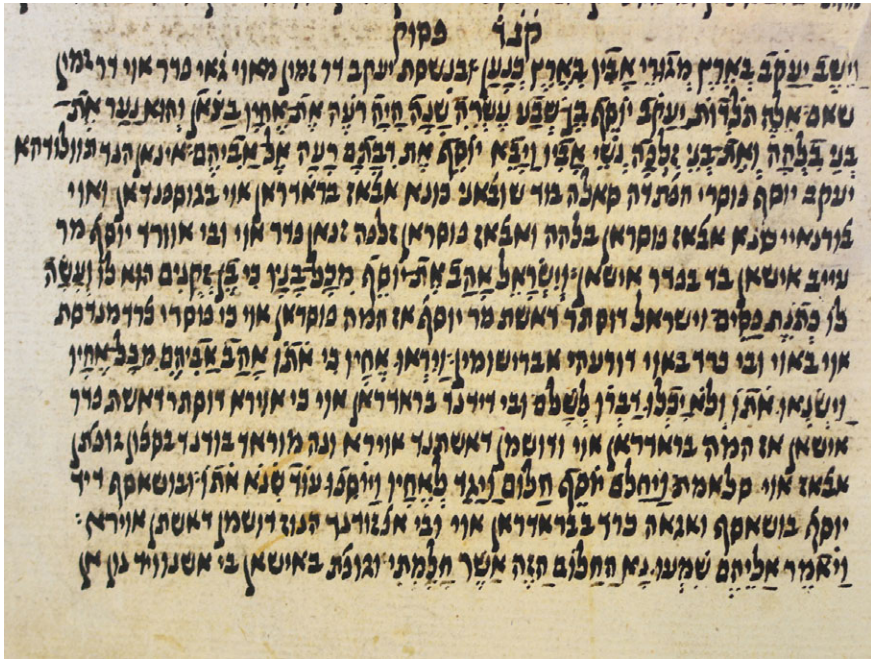
FIG. 10.3   *Gen. 37:1–6 in Hebrew and Judeo-Persian. Jewish Theological Seminary of America, ms. L188, f. 39r.*
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edition of the Pentateuch published by Eliezer Soncino (Istanbul, 1546) along-side the Hebrew text, Targum, and a Judeo-Arabic translation. In fact, this was the first printed Persian text of any kind. Its language, although markedly more developed than previous translations, still rests on the older traditions of Judeo-Persian *tafsīr*s, which as a rule show meticulous faithfulness to the Hebrew text. The next Judeo-Persian Pentateuch printed (Jerusalem, early 1900s) was that of Šimʿon Ḥakam, a prolific Bukharan scholar who had immigrated to Palestine. He had aspired to publish a correct translation of the Scriptures, free of the errors and colloquialisms of his Bukharan predecessors. In order to fulfill this task, he focused on selecting the right Persian words (of the Bukharan variety, naturally) marked by diacritical signs, and carefully punctuating the text (see the example in Table 3). He did not, however, break free from the practice of verbatim translation.

A truly free Persian translation of the Bible was published around the same time by Robert Bruce (British and Foreign Bible Society [BFBS], Leipzig 1895) to target the Persian community at large, followed by an edition in Judeo-Persian by Mirza Norollah and Mirza Khodadad, about which no other details are

TABLE 3 _Comparison among Judeo-Persian Bible translations of Deuteronomy 5:13_

Source	Date	Suggested transcription	Text
British Library	1319	_šaš rōzagārān kār kun u bi-kun hama kār(-i) tu_	שש רוזגאראן כאר כון ובכון המה כאר תו.
Vatican	15th c.?	_šaš rōzhā kār kunē u be-kunē hama kār(-i) tu_	שש רוזהא כאר כוני ובי כוני המה כאר תו.
Ṭāvus	1546	_šeš rōzhā kār konī va be-konī hama kār-e tu_	שֵׁשׁ רוֹזְהָא כָּר כּוֹנִי וַבְכוֹנִי הֶמַה כָרי תוּ׃
Šimʿon Ḥakam	1900s	_šeš rōzgārān xizmat kunī o/va bi-kunē jumlahē kār-i tu_	שֵׁשׁ רוֹזְגָּאְרָאן כִיזְמַת כּוּנִי וְבִיכּוּנִי גּוּמְלַהֵי כָּארי תוּ׃
Bruce (BFBS)	1895	_šeš rūz mašğul bāš o har kār-e xod-rā bekon_	שש רוז מַשׁגוֹל באש והר כאר כוֹד רא בכֹן׃
		'Six days you shall labor and do all your work.'	

known. The Judeo-Persian edition is known to Iranian Jews as _fāzelxāni_, seemingly after Fāżel Khan Garrusi, who collaborated on the translation project (Amanat 2013).

Table 3 compares the translation of Deut. 5:13 in the aforementioned Pentateuch translations; the texts in Hebrew script are reproduced from Paper (1968a: 105), but receive here a tentative transcription as well.

2.1.1.5 _Dictionaries_

There exist in various libraries a multitude of manuscripts of _argon_s (Judeo-Persian dictionaries) of various sizes. These _argon_s were compiled to support religious studies by explaining the Hebrew and Aramaic terms that appear in the Bible, the Talmud, and midrashim to Persian-speaking students and scholars. The _argon_s must have been in wide circulation, judging by the sheer number of manuscripts and their broad geographic distribution (see Netzer 2011).

The oldest identifiable _argon_s are found in manuscripts from the 14th and 15th centuries. One, titled ספר המליצה _Seper Ham-meliṣa_, was penned by the

scribe Šǝlomo b. Šamu'il in 1339 in the Chorasmian capital city of Gurgānj (modern Konye-Urgench, Uzbekistan), south of the Aral Sea. Its 18,000 Hebrew/ Aramaic headwords are glossed in a northeastern variety of Persian, as expected of Chorasmia. The other dictionary, simply titled *Argon*, was compiled by Moše b. Aharon b. Šerit Širvāni in 1459. Incomplete in coverage (*yod* to *taw* are extant), it is arranged by nouns and occasionally by the root. The provenance of *Argon* can only be surmised from the epithet of its author; if he was from Shervan in the Caucasus (and not another similar toponym), then *Argon* would be the only known Judeo-Persian work attributable to the ancestors of the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus (see section 4 below).

None of the Judeo-Persian *argon*s have yet been edited, no doubt due to the complex nature of the texts and the complex interrelationship among the manuscripts (for studies, see Bacher 1896, 1897, 1900; for manuscript information, see Netzer 1985, 2011).

2.1.2   Literary Texts

Judeo-Persian literature in the narrow sense of the word began with poetry, when the classical Persian poetic tradition (10th–15th centuries) was at its peak. Judeo-Persian poetry blossomed in the 14th century and continued into the early 20th century. As Moreen (2000: 11–12) has stated, "Judeo-Persian literature is the product of the confluence of two mighty literary and religious streams, the Jewish biblical and post-biblical heritage and the Persian (Muslim) literary legacy. The uniqueness of Judeo-Persian literature derives from the fact that it is a lovely amalgam in which the two streams, though recognizable, are strongly intertwined and interdependent".

2.1.2.1   *Pioneers*

Two prolific poets set the pattern for generations of Judeo-Persian poets to come. The first was Šāhin, who is considered the greatest and most prolific of all, having composed 14,000 couplets (28,000 verses) in his career. 14th-century Shiraz was the hub of Persian poetry, and Šāhin was a product of his time and place. In his three major works he gave an epical expression to the Pentateuch in Judeo-Persian, by incorporating not only the biblical sources, but also legends from midrashim and Persian sources. His first work, *Musā-nāme* 'Book of Moses', covers Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; it begins, as is common in long poetic works, with verses in praise of God, Moses, and the prophets, followed by praise of Abu Saʿid, the last of the Il-Khanids of Persia, during whose rule (1260–1335) Persian Jews enjoyed high administrative positions. Later in his life, Šāhin completed his poetical redaction of the Pentateuch in *Berešit-nāme*, on the Book of Genesis, which culminates in the story

of Joseph and Zoleyxā (Potiphar's wife). His other works, *Ardašir-nāme* and *ʿEzrā-nāme*, which can be treated as one book divided into two interrelated sections, relate the stories of Esther and King Ardašir (Ahasuerus), the love of Širuya and the Chinese princess Mahzād, and 'Cyrus ben Esther and Ardašir'. In these anachronic chains of events the poet presents vibrant scenes of love and rage, feasts and battles, hunts and scuffles, suggestive of the symbolic air of Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāme* (Moreen 1996). Šāhin's pentateuchal poetry was published as *Sēfer Seraḥ Šāhin Tōrah* (Commentary of Šahin on the Torah) by Šimʿon Ḥakam in four volumes in Jerusalem (1902–1905); selected passages appeared in Netzer (1973) and Moreen (2000). The attribution of the poem *Šāh Kešvar o Bahrām* to Šāhin (edited by Asmussen 1970: 9–31) has been disputed by Netzer (1974a: 259–260).

The other great pioneering poet was ʿEmrāni (1454–1530s) who is surmised to have been from Isfahan and lived in Kashan. Having aspired to complete his forerunner Šāhin's work, he took on the books of the Prophets and the Writings, though he stayed closer to the biblical text than Šāhin did. *Ganj-nāme* ('The Book of Treasures'), his best known work owing to the meticulous edition by Yeroushalmi (1995), is a poetic rendering of the Mishnaic tractate *Pirqe ʾAḇot* ('Ethics of the Fathers'). *Fatḥ-nāme* treats the events narrated in the books of Joshua, Ruth, and Samuel, infused by the midrashim. *Ḥanukā-nāme*, an epic relating the battle of the Maccabees against the Seleucids, was emulated by some later poets (see below); excerpts appeared in Moreen (2000). Besides these larger works, ʿEmrāni composed a *sāqi-nāme*, a Persian poetic genre in which the poet, seeking relief from his discontents, orders the cupbearer (*sāqi*) to bring him wine (text in Netzer 1973: 251–260). ʿEmrāni's repertoire includes a dozen additional works of poetry and prose, mostly didactic in nature.

2.1.2.2   *Followers*

Several poets from central Persia emulated the pioneers Šāhin and ʿEmrāni. The most celebrated is Aminā, the penname of Benyāmin ben Mišāʾil, who was born in Kashan in 1672. His forty-odd poems range in subject from the sacred to the secular and the personal. The best known is the *tafsīr* of *Azhārōt-nāme* ('Book of Writings'), a piece of 324 couplets composed in 1732. Even more well known, however, are his shorter pieces, such as *Monājāt* ('Supplications'), *Davāzdah ševaṭim* ('Twelve Tribes'), which are reported to have been chanted in contemporary synagogue services (Netzer 2003: 75 ff.).

In the 17th century, Aharon b. Māšiaḥ, an Isfahani who settled in Yazd, emulated ʿEmrāni's epic *Fatḥ-nāme* by using the same style and meter. He also embarked on *Šofṭim-nāme*, a paraphrase of Judges 1–18, which was finished

by Mordechai b. David (unknown date). Another admired Judeo-Persian poet was Simān-Ṭov Melammed, who was born in Yazd and moved to Khorasan, where he died in the early 19th century. He is better known for his mystical poems (Netzer 1973: 365–368; Moreen 2000: 262–267), written under the penname Ṭubiā, but his opus magnum is *Azhārōt*, composed in Hebrew and Judeo-Persian. It was published, together with some more poems of his, such as a *piyyuṭ* for a circumcision, in Jerusalem in 1896. Our knowledge about the life and work of several other Judeo-Persian poets of Iran is meager; unfortunately, Judeo-Persian has no parallel to the Persian tradition of compiling anthologies (called *tazkere*s), which help give voice to more minor poets through samples of their verse.

It was in Bukhara, the cradle of Persian classical poetry, that Judeo-Persian verse reached even greater heights. The crown jewel is Xʷāja-ye Boxārā'i's *Dāniāl-nāme*, a poem of 2,175 couplets written in 1606, based on the Book of Daniel, the Apocrypha, and the midrashim. Stylistically reminiscent of the earlier Judeo-Persian epics, *Dāniāl-nāme* narrates in a dynamic tone the battles of Cyrus the Persian and Darius the Mede against Belshazzar of Babylon (excerpts in Moreen 2000). A century after its composition, the epic was redacted and expanded by the aforementioned Aminā (Netzer 1971, 1972).

A generation after the Bukharan Xʷāja, Elišaʿ b. Šamu'il wrote under the penname Rāḡeb in the neighboring city of Samarkand. His two major works are the *Šāhzāde o Ṣufi* ('The Prince and the Sufi'), a Persian version of which is known in Europe as *Barlaam and Josaphat*, and whose large number of manuscripts attests to its popularity (Netzer 1973: 303–344), and *Ḥanukā-nāme*, a shorter poem composed on the thematic framework of ʿEmrāni's epic of the same name. In its style of blending poetry with prose, Rāḡeb follows Saʿdi's monumental Persian work *Golestān*. Clarity of expression and poetic imagination rank Rāḡeb high on the list of the best Judeo-Persian poets.

2.1.2.3 *Historical Chronicles*

These are limited to two related versified works, which are the literary expression of the suffering endured by the Jews under the policies of the Safavid dynastic rule in Persia. One is *Ketāb-e anusi* ('The Book of a Forced Convert'), composed of 5,300 verses by a certain Bābāi b. Loṭf of Kashan (edited by Moreen 1987). Bābāi relates the story of a major series of forced conversions and deportations that took place during 1656–1662. The relocations described in the chronicle, being enormous, seem to have affected the demographic map of Persian Jewry, about which Bābāi gives invaluable information by enumerating twenty localities, in central and western Persia, and Fars and Caspian provinces where Jewish communities resided. The value of *Ketāb-e anusi* also lies in the

data it provides on socioeconomic and organizational state of the Persian Jewish communities. A few decades later, Bābāi b. Farhād pursued the work of his grandfather in *Ketāb-e sargozašt-e Kāšān* ('The Book of the Story of Kashan', 1300 verses), in which he relates the further oppression experienced by the town's Jewish community (edited by Moreen 1990).

2.1.2.4   *Transliteration of Classical Persian Poetry*
The Judeo-Persian corpus includes many works by non-Jewish Persian poets. These are found in various manuscripts, sometimes containing an entire *divān* (repertoire) of a poet. In Judeo-Persian script we find the *divān*s of Ḥāfeẓ and Ṣāʿeb, Neẓāmi's *Haft Peykar* and *Xosrav o Širin*, Jāmi's *Yusof o Zoleyxā*, parts of the Saʿdi's *Golestān* and Rumi's *Masnavi*, ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of Birds*, and Omar Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat*, just to name the best known works (Asmussen 1968a, 1973: 67–109).

    Why would the scribes go to the effort of transliterating these lengthy texts into the Hebrew alphabet? An obvious reason is in order to make those works accessible to a broad Jewish Persian audience who received their education in Hebrew and Judeo-Persian, and not necessarily in the Perso-Arabic alphabet. Another possible reason is that the sense of ownership the Persian Jews may have had toward the Persian classics would have been reinforced when the texts were read in the Hebrew script. In fact, it makes little sense to talk about a 'Muslim-Persian' literature vis-à-vis Judeo-Persian literature. Persian classics in general and poetry in particular are irreligious in character and mood. The bulk of the Persian poetic heritage consists of epics and romances of pre-Islamic origins, a broad range of lyrical and mystical personal expression (*ġazal*s), as well as didactic poems and odes (*qaṣide*) to wine and nature or to men of power and wealth.

    Judeo-Persian poets rarely composed *ġazal*s or *qaṣide*s. Masters of classical Persian already excelled at these genres. What Persian Jews primarily needed was epics with Jewish heroes, and to achieve this, they produced their own works emulating the *Šāh-nāme*. It is noteworthy to add that the classical Persian *ġazal*s have been put to song in the musical art of Shashmaqom, an outstanding element of the heritage of the Bukharan Jews.

    Jewish Persian poets not only emulated Persian masterpieces but also commonly adorned their works by inserting lines from classical poetry and at times by opening their poems with a well-known verse. Indeed, the style, prosody, symbolism, and vocabulary used by Judeo-Persian poets differ little from those of their gentile counterparts. Judeo-Persian poetry is characterized by one scholar as 'clearly Persian in mood, outlook and form' (Yarshater 1974: 455). The scripts are, of course, a different story, but the formatting of the couplets and

stanzas, as well as the miniatures and illuminations that decorate some of the Šāhin and ʿEmrāni manuscripts, all follow common Persian practice (Gutmann 1968; Moreen 1985).

2.2   *Early Judeo-Persian Grammar*

The linguistic importance of the Early Judeo-Persian texts lies in the fact that they reveal much about the early centuries of the New Persian language (8th–13th centuries CE). While contemporary Persian books written in the Perso-Arabic script typically employ a stylized, high register language, the language of the Jewish texts (especially the surviving personal letters) reflects the spoken vernaculars. Two distinct varieties of Early New Persian emerge from the Early Judeo-Persian corpus, namely, the southwestern dialect spoken in Khuzistan and Fars, and that of the northeastern territories, centered on the city of Bukhara. Paul (2013) is the chief source of the sketch grammar presented below.

2.2.1   Phonology and Orthography

The consonantal system inferred from Early Judeo-Persian texts (Table 4) contributes to our understanding of the rather minor developments from Middle Persian to New Persian. The most notable are the incomplete merger of [xʷ] with [x]; acceptance of [ž] as a phoneme; introduction of the guttural stops [q] and [ʾ], possibly as allophones; and the ephemeral fricatives [β] and [ð] in some early dialects of New Persian.

Of concern to us here is the orthography of Early Judeo-Persian, which shows considerable variation not only among the texts but often within a single text. Various strategies were taken to render the 32 letters of the Persian alphabet with the 22 letters of Hebrew. Four major groups trouble the editors of the manuscripts:

(1)   /k/ and /x/ are rendered by the letters ק *q* and כ *k*, respectively, in the
        Dandan-Uiliq letter (Tang-e Azao has only ק), and both by כ in most later

TABLE 4   *Early Judeo-Persian Consonants*

p	*t*	*č*	*k*	*q (ʾ)*
b	*d (ð)*	*j*	*g*	
f	*s*	*š*	*x (xʷ)*	*h*
(β v)	*z (ð)*	*(ž)*	*γ*	
m	*n*			
w	*r l*	*y*		

texts, sometimes with diacritic modification to distinguish between the plosive and the fricative sounds.

(2) For the transcribing of the sounds /č/ (IPA [tʃ]) and /j/ (IPA [dʒ]): in southwestern texts, both appear as צ, in others as ג (with or without diacritics); we find, for example, the word *panj* 'five' transcribed variously as פנג *png*, פנג *pnǧ*, and פנצ *pnṣ*. (See the comparative tables in Lazard 1968 and Shaked 2009.)

(3) The sound /ð/ (IPA [ð]), an allophone of postvocalic /d/ in Early New Persian, is transcribed in Early Judeo-Persian by the letter ד, occasionally distinguished by a *rapē* (i.e., ד֯) (Paul 2013: §16).

(4) The voiced fricative /β/, probably an allophone of /b/, may alternate with the bilabial glide /w/, even word-initially; note the doublet ברדה / ורדה *wrdh/brdh*, probably *βarda* (cf. Middle Persian *warda*, New Persian *barda*) 'captive' (Paul 2013: §18).

A conspicuous feature of Judeo-Persian orthography is its use of the letters *waw* and *yod* as short vowel indicators, corresponding to diacritics *żamma* and *kasra* in Perso-Arabic script. Judeo-Persian *tafsīr*s (Bible commentaries) employ both the Tiberian and Babylonian vowel systems, with the former predominating. The *ʾimāla*, or the shift of *ā* to *ī*, is interpreted by Paul (2013: §8) as rendering the allophone *ē*, e.g., in רכיב *rkyb* (*rikēb*) 'stirrup' and וליכין *wlykyn* (*wa-lēkin*) 'but'.

2.2.2 Noun Phrase

2.2.2.1 *Nominal Suffixes*

Three nominal suffixes, close to their Middle Persian counterparts, are used far more frequently in Early Judeo-Persian than in other contemporary Persian texts:

(1) The plural inanimate morpheme *-ihā* (cf. New Persian *-hā*), as in *šamšērihā* 'swords', *luγatihā* 'words'. Moreover, a few Hebrew loanwords appear with a Hebrew plural ending, especially *yahūdīm* 'Jews' and *gōyīm* 'gentiles', with an optional combination of the Hebrew and the Persian plurals: *yahūdīmān* and *gōyīmān* (Paul 2013: §§78–81).

(2) The abstract suffix *-īh* (cf. New Persian *-ī*) is used in Khuzistan texts, e.g., *ayārīh* 'help', *durōdīh* 'greeting', *garmīh* 'fury'.

(3) A gerund is formed by suffixing *-išn* to verbal present stems (cf. New Persian *-iš*), as in *anjābišn* 'termination', *andēšišn* 'reflection, anxiety' (Paul 2013: §63). The form *-išt* is also used, especially in the Khuzistan texts, e.g., *bōzišn/bōzišt* 'relief, proof', *abganišt* 'throwing' (idem; Paper 1968a; Shaked 2009: 453).

TABLE 5　　*Early Judeo-Persian Enclitic Pronouns and Personal Endings*

	Pronouns		Personal endings
	Freestanding	Enclitic	
1SG.	*man*	*-um*	*-om*
2	*tō*	*-it*	*-ī*
3	*ō(y)*	*-iš*	*-ed, -ad* (pres.), *-ø* (past)
1PL.	*ēmā(n)*	*-mān*	*-ēm*
2	*šumā(n)*	*-tān*	*-ēd, -ēt*
3	*ēšān*	*-(i)šān*	*-end, -and*

2.2.2.2　Pronouns

The Early Judeo-Persian pronouns (which are given in Table 5) show dialectal forms in 1PL. *ēmā(n)* (cf. New Persian *mā*). The final *-n* in the 1 and 2PL. forms appears to be based on an analogy with 3PL. *ēšān*. As for enclitic pronouns, 1SG. *-um* agrees with Middle Persian, but differs from New Persian *-am*. The enclitics, especially the plural ones, are often written separately from the word they follow, giving rise to the question of whether they should be called 'enclitic' in these cases (Lazard 1963: § 281 ff.; Paul 2013: § § 110–115). The reflexive is normally expressed with *xʷad* or *xʷēš(tan)*, but in translations from Hebrew it is often expressed with plain anaphoric pronouns, e.g., *binišast Yaʿqūb … jāy-i₁ pidar-i₂ ōy₃* (for New Persian *xʷad/xod*) 'Jacob sat … in place of₁ his₃ father₂' (Vat. Pers. 61, Gen. 37.1). Note also the examples in Table 3.

2.2.2.3　Prepositions

The transitory nature of the language is reflected in the prepositions as well. The Middle Persian preposition *ō* 'to, towards' is preserved in Early Judeo-Persian alone, apparently as a short *o*, though it is mostly written as א. The multifunctional Middle Persian preposition *pad* 'to, at, in, on' is preserved in its original form only in Early Judeo-Persian, as *pa(d)* 'by, to, towards, with' (along with the New Persian form *ba(d)*). Subsequently, the high frequency form *pad-iš* 'to/with him/it' occurs exclusively in Early Judeo-Persian, corresponding to general Persian *bad-ān* 'to that', *bad-ō* 'to him'. Other formally conservative prepositions in Judeo-Persian, i.e., *(a)bar* 'upon', *(an)dar* 'in', *furō(δ)* 'down to', were consolidated in standard Persian as *bar, dar, furō* (later *foru*). Characteristic of Early Judeo-Persian is *azmar* 'for the sake of', calqued from Hebrew את *ʾet* (Lazard 1996: 46; Paul 2003, 2013: § 180, 182).

2.2.2.4   *Iżāfa*

The Persian *iżāfa*, a particle which links a noun to a modifier (possessive or adjective), is written, as in Middle Persian, as a separate word in the earliest Judeo-Persian texts (אי *ʾy*), e.g., *dwktr ʾy dyhgʾn* (*duxtar ī̆ dēhgān*) 'the landlord's daughter' (Dandan-Uiliq). In later texts, the *iżāfa*, if marked at all, is written as a plain *yod*, and either stands free (in the texts from Fars), appears suffixed to the head noun (Khuzistan texts), or is prefixed to the modifier (Northeastern texts), e.g., *ʾbr sry ʾyšʾn* (*abar sar-i ēšān*) 'on their heads'; *mylk ybrʾdrʾnwm* (*milk i-barādarān-um*) 'the property of my brothers' (Paul 2013: §187; Shaked 2009: 453). In all likelihood, the latter form—alien to Persian—is an orthographic style used in imitation of Hebrew ־ל *l-*. This is also the case with the conjunction ו (corresponding to و in Perso-Arabic script), which is normally attached to the succeeding word in Judeo-Persian orthography, but must have been pronounced jointly with the preceding word, as inferred from poetic meter, as in this verse of ʿEmrāni: סלטאן ספהר וכטה כאך *slṭʾn sphr wxth xʾk* (*sulṭān-i sipihr-u xiṭṭa-yi xāk*) 'the king of heavens and the realm of earth' (Yeroushalmi 1995: 309). (Note that the *iżāfa*s (*-i, -yi*) are not marked in this verse, mirroring the tendency to leave off the *iżāfa* in Persian orthography.)

Aside from the connecting role of the *iżāfa* in the noun phrase, the Middle Persian use of *iżāfa* as the introductory particle in relative clauses shows a gradual transition to *kw/ky* in Early Judeo-Persian texts. Some texts preserve the Middle Persian subordinating conjunction *kū* 'that' and the relative particle *kē* 'who, which' (as *ku* and *ki*, respectively; otherwise merged into the polysemous particle *ki* in general New Persian). In the Early Argument text alone, Middle Persian *ka* is preserved in its original meaning of 'if, when' (Paul 2013: §§185, 207).

2.2.3   Verb Phrase

A salient feature that qualifies Early Judeo-Persian as New Persian rather than Middle Persian is the absence of ergativity, even in the earliest Judeo-Persian texts. (A system of split ergativity inherited from Middle West Iranian remains in many modern Iranian languages, including Judeo-Median and Judeo-Shirazi, as shown below, but not in Persian.) Nevertheless, the former passive function of the plain past stem can be observed in southern Early Judeo-Persian texts, e.g., *nibišt ēn nāma* 'this letter has been written' (Paul 2013: §156), even if the active meaning of the plain past stem was already prevalent. Similarly, the past participle in *-a*, an adjectival derivation from the past stem (e.g., *nibišta* 'written'), is normally employed in the present perfect, as in *nibišta hest* 'he has written', but rarely also in the passive sense (*nibišta hest* 'it is written'), which shows the stative-adjectival origin of the past participle (Lazard 1963: §487; Paul 2013: §165).

The verb affixes in Early Judeo-Persian show considerable variation among and within the texts in the corpus. The original adverb *(ha)mē* and particle *be*, grammaticalized as markers of the present indicative and subjunctive respectively, were in free variation in Early Judeo-Persian. The personal endings of Early Judeo-Persian (Table 5) are not fundamentally different from standard Persian, but the copula, SG. *hwm, hy, h(y)st*, PL. *hym, hyd, h(y)nd*, correspond to the Middle Persian ones with an intial *h-*. The 3SG. copula shows variation, with southwestern היסת *hest* and northeastern הסת *hast* (Shaked 2009).

The inflectional passive, otherwise lost in New Persian but preserved in some Judeo-Median languages (see section 6.3 and Table 7), is a salient Early Judeo-Persian conservatism, especially in texts from Khuzistan. It is formed by suffixing *-ih* (< Middle Persian *-īh*) to the present stem, and an additional *-ist* to the past stem of transitive verbs. Examples are *gow-ih-ed* 'it is (being) said' and *gow-ih-ist-ø* 'it was said' (Paul 2013: 136 §171). Alternatively, an analytical passive may be formed with *āmadan* 'come', as in other forms of Early New Persian, e.g., *farmūda āmad-om* 'I was commanded' (Paul 2013: §§171–172; Gindin 2007: 20). The auxiliary verb is *šudan* in later Persian.

The tenses display great variety. The simple tenses of Early Judeo-Persian are generally similar to those in other Early New Persian varieties. Examples for the verb 'go' are: imperative *raw*; 3SG. subjunctive *rawād*; 1SG. present indicative *raw-am*; 1SG. past *raft-om*; 1SG. irrealis pres. **raw-am-ē(h)*; and 1SG. past irrealis *raft-am-ē(δ)*. The perfect periphrastic, however, exhibits some disparity between the two writing traditions, perhaps due to geographic provenance. The present perfect is expressed in two major forms: *rafta hom* (corresponding to New Persian *rafta-am*) and *raft-om hest* (corresponding to Early New Persian *raft-ast-am* < Middle Persian *raft ēst-ēm*), a peculiar construction not easy to explain historically (Paul 2013: §164.c). In addition we find in the northeastern Early Judeo-Persian texts the participial form *raftagē* (corresponding to modern Tajik *raftagī*) (Shaked 1986). The pluperfect, besides *rafta būd-am*, appears as *raft-om būd*, contrasting with Middle Persian *raft būd hēm*, Early New Persian *raft(a) būdastam*, and Late New Persian *rafte budam*. In some southwestern Early Judeo-Persian texts, a characteristic past tense is formed by the active participle in *-ā* plus the copula, often translating a Hebrew participle, as in *rawā būd hēm* 'we came', *šināsā būd-and ki ēn afʿāl qabiḥ hest* 'they knew that these deeds are evil' (Paul 2013: §§145, 160; cf. Lazard 1963: §508).

2.2.4   Poetic Language and Prosody

Judeo-Persian poetry is dominated by the genre of epics, which, following the classic tradition, are fitted into the *masnavi*, with various syllabic metric

patterns. This is demonstrated in the two text samples in section 2.3, from Šāhin and Xʷāja-ye Boxārā'i, who masterfully emulate the meters used in Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāme* and Neẓāmi's *Xosrow o Širin*, respectively. However, the language skills used in some poems hardly meet the high standards of classical Persian verse. We observe with some regularity a tendency toward the colloquial; for instance, the syllable *ān* is replaced by *un*, with the effect of making the word sound bitterly demotic (as *išun* 'they', for formal *išān*) and, even cruder, the hypercorrection *birān* for the proper *birun* 'outside'. Sometimes the rhyme is sustained by the dropping of final consonants (e.g., *pus* 'skin', for *pust*) or the meter is sustained by reading a long vowel short—gross violations of Persian prosody (see Netzer 1973: 66–70).

We find also dialectal forms, such as *dādar* (for *barādar*) 'brother', *fetādimān* (for *fetādim*) 'we fell', *natānest* (for *natavānest*) 'he could not', *če* (for *čo*) 'when', and archaisms such as *varnā* (for *bornā*) 'young', *čandidan* 'to shiver', and *pādyāvwand* 'strong'. The frequent usage of the plural ending *-ān* in words that are not commonly used with this ending in Persian, e.g., *esmān* 'names' (for *esmhā*) and *qowmān* 'peoples' (for *aqvām*), is probably a vestige of Early Judeo-Persian Bible translations. In light of the noticeable use of vernacularism in Judeo-Persian literature, one would expect the Jewish poets of central Persia to have left behind some verses in their native Median vernaculars, or those from Shiraz in Judeo-Shirazi, but that is not the case, even though dialect verses are occasionally found in the works of some Muslim poets who lived in these cities.

There are a substantial number of Hebraisms in Judeo-Persian verse, far more than in the *tafsīr*s, owing to the fact that Hebraisms were used as embellishment in poetry, whereas their use defeats the purpose in translated works.

Judeo-Persian poetry shares many Iranian figures with Persian classics. We also encounter some proper names that are particular to Judeo-Persian. Prominent examples are *Kureš* (from the biblical כּוֹרֶשׁ *kōrɛš*) 'Cyrus [the Great]', otherwise lost in Middle and New Persian as a personal name, though it may have survived in the hydronym *Kor* (e.g., the Kura River in the Caucasus); *Dāreyuš* (or *Dāreyāveš*) 'Darius' (from Old Persian *Dārayavaʰuš*, where *-š* signifies NOMINATIVE.M.SG.), the New Persian form of which, *Dārā(b)*, is a product of regular phonological developments in Persian; and *Mād* 'Media' (from Old Iranian *Māda-*), which otherwise developed into *Māh* in toponyms. These are instances where Judeo-Persian has circumvented the evolutionary stages of the Iranian languages by gleaning from the Bible and post-biblical Judaism terms that preserved ancient Iranian forms.

2.3 *Additional Text Samples* (*Poems*)

This passage on 'The Birth of Cyrus', from Šāhin's *Ardašir-nāme* was published in Netzer (1973: 170–171). The translation is a modified version of Moreen (2000: 103):

Estir čo hamdam-e šahanšāh	When Esther became the consort of the king of kings
gardid o biāft rafʿat o jāh,	and found dignity and an exalted station,
delšād šod Ardašir az ān ḥur;	that houri delighted Ardashir's heart;
dar čehre-ye u nadid joz nur.	he saw nothing but light from her face.
bā u be safā o ẕowq mibud;	He spent his time with her in joy and pleasure
bā ʿešrat o ʿeyš o šowq mibud.	and enjoyed her company and making passionate love.
Estir be amr-e fard-e akbar	Through the will of the Greatest One, Esther
šod ḥāmele az šah-e honarvar.	became pregnant by the chivalrous king.
hengām čo dar-rasid, zāyid	When her time of birth came, she gave birth
zibā pesar-i be rox čo xʷoršid.	to a beautiful, sun-cheeked boy.
ḥaqq bāb-e ṣafā bed-u bebaxšid—	God opened up for her the gates of purity,
andar xʷor-e tāj o taxt-e Jamšid.	worthy of the crown and throne of Jamshid.

The following text of 'Daniel in the Lion's Den', from Xʷāja-ye Boxārāʾi's *Dāniāl-nāme*, was published in Netzer (1973: 284–285). The translation is a modified version of Moreen (2000: 148):

dar ān hengām nazdik-e šahanšāh	In that time, before the king of kings
šodand ān qowm-e kāferkiš-e gomrāh.	came that tribe of lost idolaters.
be šah goftand, k-ey šāh-e jahānbān!	They said to him: O guardian of the world,
šavad dar ḥokm o farmān-e to noqṣān:	your law and order will diminish:
be Dāniyāl agar farmān narāni,	if over Daniel you do not reign,
degar dar molk šāhi key tavāni?	when will you fully rule your kingdom?
agar ḥokm-e ʿArāq o Fārs taḡyir	If you change the law of [Persian] Iraq and Fars
dehi—ey Xosrav-e bā rāy o tadbir!—	—O resolute, wise king—,
samand-e dowlat-at az pā dar-āyad;	the steed of your fortune will weaken;
ʿenān-e molk az dast-at bar-āyad.	the kingdom's bridle slip from your hand.

FIG. 10.4   *Manuscript page from Šahin's Ardašir-nāme and ʿEzrā-nāme (Ardeshir and Ezra Book, Jewish Theological Seminary, ms. 8270, f. 4v).*

3   Bukhari

3.1   *Bukharan Jews*

Four groups of Jewish communities were recognized by imperial Russia and the Soviet Union: Russian Jews, Bukharan Jews, Georgian Jews, and Tat Jews. The Bukharan Jews were so named by the Russian colonizers following the annexation of Turkestan in the late 19th century, owing to the fact that the large majority of Central Asian Jews lived in the Bukharan Emirate, which remained an independent but protectorate state before its annexation to the Soviet Union. Their self-designation is simply *yahudi* or *isroel*. Under Russian rule, many Bukharan Jews moved north to other urban centers of Central Asia, particularly to Tashkent, the capital of present-day Uzbekistan. Nevertheless, the designation 'Bukharan' still referred to all native Jews of Central Asia, with significant communities in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Dushanbe, and the towns of the Fergana valley. The fall of the USSR led to mass Jewish emigration to Israel and North America, where most Bukharan Jews now live. There is no reliable census, but the population of Bukharan Jews today may be as high as 200,000 (cf. Kaganovitch 2008). (For their history, see Zand 2006.)

3.2   *Dialects*

In modern Central Asia the Persian language is spoken in a multitude of local dialects, which are collectively designated by the blanket term 'Tajik', a politically motivated term coined in 1924 to replace *fārsi* 'Persian'. Bukharan Jews speak various Tajik dialects but mostly those of urban Samarkand and Bukhara. These two main varieties acquired local color by those Jews who moved from the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand to other towns of Central Asia. From a strictly dialectological point of view, no Tajik dialect can be identified as spoken exclusively by Bukharan Jews. The Bukharan Jews may be distinguished from other speakers of the language by their different linguistic behavior, especially the (modest) amount of Hebraisms used in religious and cultural contexts. Moreover, the Tajik varieties spoken by Jews have absorbed comparatively more Russian words during their decades of living in the Russian-dominated capital cities of Tashkent and Dushanbe (cf. Babaev 1991; Rzehak 2008). Notwithstanding dialectology, language planning of the early Soviet period (1928–1940) resulted in a distinct written form with the autonym *zaboni yahudihoyi mahali/buxori* 'the language of local/Bukharan Jews' or simply *yahudigi* 'Jewish', and which has variously been referred to by scholars as Judeo-Tajik, Judeo-Bukhari, Bukharan Jewish, and Bukhari.

3.3   *Bukhari in Writing*

The Jews of Bukhara had a long tradition of writing their religious and secular literature in Judeo-Persian (see section 2). In fact, Judeo-Persian saw its final flourishing at the turn of the 20th century by the newly established Bukharan Jewish community in Jerusalem. Led by Rabbi Šim'on Ḥaḵam (1843–1910), a printing press was established to meet the religious and literary needs of the Persian-speaking Jews, particularly those of Bukhara. The outcome was a large body of Judeo-Persian books and essays, not only in traditional fields, such as Bible commentaries, prayer books, rabbinical writings, and poetry, but also translation of Ashkenazi literature, as well as secular literature as varied as the Arabian Nights and Shakespeare. One notable masterpiece was Šim'on Ḥaḵam's translation of the Bible (see 2.1.1.4 above), which, like his other publications, incorporated local features of Tajik Persian.

Back in Central Asia, some local Jewish circles that were exposed to Russian culture or were influenced by the reformist movement known as Jadidism in the Bukharan Emirate began publishing in their native language. Significant among earlier works are a trilingual Judeo-Persian–Hebrew–Russian dictionary by David Kaylakov, a Bukharan Jew who had learned Russian in St. Petersburg, and the weekly newspaper *Raḥamim* ('Mercy'), published from 1910 to 1914 in Fergana, with the phrase בלפז פארסי *ba-lafẓ-i fārsī* (in the Persian language) always mentioned in its masthead (Paper 1986: xxv). The written Bukhari used in these publications increasingly showed a preference for local Tajik words in place of the standard vocabulary of the (Judeo-)Persian of former centuries.

Social reforms were intensified after the Bolsheviks seized power. Modern education was first introduced to the local Jewish population by Russian Jewish immigrants. Contrary to the former practice in traditional Jewish schools that used Persian as the language of instruction and Hebrew as the main subject matter, the new schools used Hebrew as the medium of communication between the European teacher and Bukharan student. This method was no longer used after 1923 (Zand 1972: 144); in the Soviet schools specific to Bukharan Jews, reading, arithmetic, geography, etc., were taught in Bukhari. By 1934, the number of students is estimated at 4,000. The alternative was to attend Russian schools which admitted native students, Muslim and Jewish alike, from privileged families. Education in Russian showed a constant growth among Central Asians until the fall of the Soviet Union.

The spread of mother-tongue literacy among the Bukharans led to a thriving Bukhari press. By the end of the 1920s (when Bukhari was still written in the Hebrew alphabet) dozens of books had appeared in the language, and the rate of publication in Bukhari continued to rise steadily into the next decade. The

newspaper רושנאיי *Rušnoyi* ('Enlightenment'), which began in 1925 with fewer than 200 copies, saw a dramatic increase in subscriptions, reaching 10,000 by 1932. At this time the newspaper started to come out under the name *Bajroqi mixnat* ('Banner of Labor'), in Romanized Bukhari, and its editors moved from Samarkand to Tashkent.

In the late 1920s, a Soviet language policy mandated the nations of Central Asia to adopt the Roman script. Having initially been promoted by the Pan-Turkist drive, the policy was welcomed and quickly implemented by the Turkic-speaking peoples (Uzbeks, Turkmens, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz), and even Tajiks followed suit without marked resistance. The Bukharan Jews, however, faced a dilemma; should their language be deprived of its Hebrew script, its distinction from the Tajik language would be lost as well. As such, the debates about the nature of the new written form of Bukhari continued well into the 1930s.

The Romanization campaign consisted of two distinct strategies. The first was purely orthographic. The initial proposal, put forward at a conference in 1928, postulated, among other things, that the Bukhari phonemes /a/ and /o/ be presented not by the graphemes ⟨a⟩ and ⟨o⟩ as adopted in Tajik orthography, but instead by ⟨ə⟩ and ⟨a⟩. The justification was that /o/ derives from the classical Persian /ā/, which was systematically rendered by the Hebrew letter א in Judeo-Persian. Had this proposal been accepted it would indeed have made Bukhari orthography look substantially different from Tajik, since /a/ and /o/ rank the highest in terms of frequency among all Tajik phonemes. Nevertheless, this ambitious proposal was superseded by another at the next conference, also in Samarkand, in 1930. The approved Roman alphabet (Fig. 10.5) differed only in a few details from the Tajik alphabet; these included the insertion of distinct graphemes for [ḥ] and ['], inherited from the Hebrew-based Judeo-Persian, and omission of Tajik ⟨ī⟩ that was employed in final position to distinguish a large group of nouns ending in stressed /i/ from the unstressed *iżāfa* suffix (section 2.2.2.4), a recurrent morpheme in all forms of Persian (Rzehak 2008). This last deviation from standard Tajik was justified by a study by the Russian linguist Zarubin (1928: 107), who showed that enclitics could receive stress in Samarkandi Tajik.

The second strategy, which brought results with more far-reaching consequences than orthography alone, was taken by bringing written Bukhari closer to the spoken dialects of Samarkand and Bukhara. A marked phonological feature that was admitted was the bilabial fricative [β], an allophone of /b/ resulting from its lenition in postvocalic positions, which was rendered by the letter ⟨v⟩; thus *kitov* 'book' (this had already been a characteristic feature of the Judeo-Persian of Bukhara). Morphological features included the elision of the final consonant in the 3PL. (e.g., *raftan* 'they went' for *raftand*), contraction of

periphrastic perfect forms (e.g., *raftem* instead of *rafta-am* 'I have gone'), and reduction of the postposition *-ro* to *-o* in post-consonantal position, among others (Rzehak 2008).

These orthographic and grammatical rules were neither completely standardized nor used consistently during the Romanization era of the 1930s. The rules were first presented in Raḥim Badalov's *Qoidahoji zaвoni jahudihoji вuxori* (Tashkent, 1931), and probably last in Yaʿqub Kalontarov and Raḥim Badalov's *Luɣati orfografigiji zaвoni jahudihoji mahali* (Tashkent, 1938) (Šalamūev 1993: 124) when Bukhari was already facing its demise as a written language.

3.4   *Soviet Bukhari Literature*

Soviet Bukhari literature grew out of the amateur dramatic circles that met regularly in clubs and teahouses in Samarkand and other towns. Dramatic works began with P. Pardozov and M. Boruvčov's *Ḥukūmati padar dar duxtar* ('Father's Authority over Daughter', 1921), and continued as the principal genre of Bukhari literature for nearly two decades. The notable playwright M. Aminov wrote on popular themes such as emancipation of women, the happy life brought by the Revolution, and the threats facing society.

Similar themes were dominant in fiction, which saw its beginnings in the 1930s. Most interesting perhaps are works written under the pretext of criticizing the pre-Revolutionary past, but at the same providing a wealth of detailed ethnographic information, especially in *Boвoçon* (1933) by Gabriel Samandarov, *Jatimcaho* ('Agricultural Laborers') by Y. Ḥaimov (1934), *Tuhmat* ('Slander') by M. Yahudoyov (1935), and *Çavoniji usto Şolŭm* ('The Youth of the Master Craftsman Shalum') by B. Qalandarov (1940).

In poetry, Bukharan Jewish poets such as Muḥib and Y. Kurayev wrote along party lines, but continued the long-standing metrical traditions of classical Persian poetry. As such, in poetry too, Soviet Bukhari literature remained "national in form and socialist in content", thereby complying with Soviet norms (Zand 1972).

The age of literary Bukhari came to a sudden end soon after the suppressive Stalinist polices of the late 1930s. Bukhari schools and clubs and the theater and museum in Samarkand were shut down, and the periodicals *Bajroqi miḥnat* and *Adabijoti soveti* were halted. The last books in Romanized Bukhari came out in 1940. This year marks the replacement of the Roman script with Cyrillic for the major languages of Soviet Central Asia, but the situation was otherwise for Bukhari. Though without any official decree, Bukhari lost its official status, and it ceased to be recognized as a distinct language from Tajik.

For the rest of the Soviet period, veteran Bukhari men of letters made a substantial contribution to the mainstream Tajik language and literature. Yaʿquv

חרף האיי סרגהי לאתיניהי דר כאנפי-
רינצייה תצדיק שודגי

| Oo	Bb	Cc	Çç	Dd	Ee	Aa
Oo	*Bb*	*Cc*	*Çç*	*Dd*	*Ee*	*Aa*
א	ב	ג	ג	ד	אי	א
Ff	Gg	Ojoj	Hh	Ḩḩ	Ii	Jj
Ff	*Gg*	*Ojoj*	*Hh*	*Ḩḩ*	*Ii*	*Jj*
פ	ג	ג	ה	ח	אי	
Kk	Ll	Mm	Nn	Pp	Qq	Rr
Kk	*Ll*	*Mm*	*Nn*	*Pp*	*Qq*	*Rr*
ק	ל	מ	נ	פ	ק	ר
Ss	Şş	Tt	Uu	Ůů	Əə	Vv
Ss	*Şş*	*Tt*	*Uu*	*Ůů*	*Əə*	*Vv*
ס	ש	ת	או	או	ע	ב
Xx	Zz	Zz				
Xx	*Zz*	*Zz*				
כ	ז	ז				

FIG. 10.5   *Bukhari alphabet introduced in 1930*

Kalontarov and Yaʿquvhay Ḥoxomov continued their careers as authors of dictionaries and textbooks. Nison Fuzaylov, Avren Isḥoqboev, Bension Qalandarov, Mierxay Gavrielov, Bhūr Isḥoqov, Zeev Nektalov, and Malkiel Donielov are all recognized names in Tajik journalism. Emanuel Mulloqandov translated great works of world literature into Tajik, and Lev Qandinov translated Tajik fiction into Russian.

Following their emigration to Israel and North America, some Bukharan Jewish writers and poets have continued publishing. There have been attempts to reclaim Bukhari, but this time in Cyrillic, the alphabet to which the Bukharan Jews have been accustomed for decades (Šalamūev 1993: 12).

At the spoken level, varieties of Bukhari have been carried over to the new homelands of its speakers. It continues as a spoken language among the older generation of immigrants, and many among the youth have at least some knowledge of the language. However, the long-term future of the language is in doubt, as fewer young people speak it. Currently, Russian continues to be the *lingua franca* of Bukharan Jewish communities in North America, though the younger generation is increasingly learning English and Hebrew, the languages of their newly adopted homelands (Borjian and Perlin 2015). Nevertheless, in the secular culture of Bukharan Jews a notable element that remains vital is the musical tradition of Shahmaqom, which is based on classical Persian literature, and the best performers of which are Bukharan Jews (Rapport 2006).

3.5   *Sample Text*

Related by Aron Aronov, New York City, 2013. For the audio recording, visit the website of the Endangered Language Alliance, Jewish Language Project (www .elalliance.org).

> *ba xona man ba zanam kəti ba zaboni urusi suhbat mekunem, gap mezanam. baččo kəti ba'zi vaxto urusi, ba'zi vaxto inglisi. Afsus ki zaboni buxori— odamoi ki hamsoli man boṣand, ino zaboni buxori gap mezannad. yoš bačo, javon bačo—ino zabona namedonand. man hozir yakta fikr oila kardam ki ba yešiva, ba gimnatzia, man meguyam ki studenta boyad zaboni buxori yod girand.*

> 'At home my wife and I communicate and speak in Russian. With children—sometimes Russian, sometimes English. Regrettably, the Bukhari language—[only] those of my age speak Bukhari. Younger children and teenagers—they don't know the language. I have now cultivated the idea that at yeshiva and college—I say—that the students should learn Bukhari.'

4   Judeo-Tat (Juhuri)

Judeo-Tat (also known as Juhuri) is the language of the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus. Judeo-Tat is a dialect of the Tat language, which originated in Dagestan (in the Russian Federation) and Shervan (now Shirvan, in Azerbaijan). Although Tat is structurally close to Persian, they are not mutually intelligible. The Mountain Jews, with an estimated population as high as 200,000, began to emigrate, along with other Jews of the Soviet Union, in the 1970s and 1980s, with a climax in the 1990s, predominantly to Israel and North America. Judeo-Tat appears to be endangered both in its homeland and in the diaspora, as few young people show an interest in learning it given the community's greatly altered present circumstances.

4.1   *The Language*

The historical domain of Judeo-Tat extends from the mountainous valleys of Dagestan southward to the plains and foothills of Shervan, which at the present time forms the northern part of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Judeo-Tat constitutes varieties of the Caucasian Tat language group; the other varieties are spoken by both Shiite and Sunni Muslims, and on a much smaller scale by a group of Christians who migrated to Armenia during the Nagornao-Karabakh war (1988–1994). The Tat language, also called Tati (not to be confused with the Tati dialects of northwestern Iran, which belong to the Northwest Iranian family), belongs to the Southwest Iranian family, but geographically is a distant outlier. The closest relative of Tat is unquestionably Persian, but whether Tat split from Persian before or after the standardization of Persian in the 10th to 12th centuries is an open question (cf. Grjunberg and Davidova 1982; Windfuhr 2006). Whenever the divergence may have taken place, the isolation has been long enough for the Tat language to have undergone such profound structural changes that it has become mutually unintelligible with any known variety of Persian or other Iranian languages. Tat vocabulary and grammar also exhibit certain areal influences from the neighboring languages of Caucasian and Turkic stock, above all Azeri Turkish. Another source of influence on Tat, especially on its vocabulary, is formal Persian, the *lingua franca* of the Persianate world. In the study of the Tat language and people, it is important to recall that before its Russian annexation in the 19th century, the southern Caucasus was administratively and culturally an integral part of Persia.

Before the mass emigration of recent decades, Mountain Jews lived in villages throughout the mountainous valleys of Dagestan, as well as in its southern port of Derbend, where Jews constituted a quarter of the city's population. Other North Caucasus cities with sizeable numbers of Mountain Jews were

Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan, Grozny, and Nalchik. The domain of the settlements extended south to the district of Quba in northeastern Azerbaijan. To the south of Quba, in an area of some 2,000 square kilometers, is the stronghold of the Muslim Tats, who cohabit with Azeri-speaking villagers. A large group of Tats live on the Apsheron Peninsula, east of Baku, and Baku itself has been home to a considerable number of Tat speakers, Muslim and Jewish alike. Large groups of Mountain Jews also lived in various towns of the north and central Azerbaijan Republic (Grjunberg 1963: 5–8; Zand 1985; Clifton et al. 2005; Authier 2012).

Judeo-Tat was the subject of an early study by V. Miller (1892). During the earlier Soviet decades (1920s to 1940s), Judeo-Tat received official status in Dagestan, and was adapted to the Roman and then Cyrillic alphabets, in which periodicals and textbooks were printed. An important product of this literary period was the grammar of N. Anisimov (1932), written in Judeo-Tat in the Roman alphabet. More recent contributions are the dictionaries by M. Dadašev (2006) and Agarunov and Agarunov (2010), and the grammar based on the literary language by Authier (2012). Clifton et al. (2005) conducted sociolinguistic fieldwork in ten Tat settlements in Azerbaijan, including Qırmızı Qäsäbä, the stronghold of Judeo-Tat near the town of Quba. The Endangered Language Alliance is currently conducting fieldwork among the community of Mountain Jews in New York.

The dialectal divisions within the Tat language group have been subject to debate. Miller (1929) regards all dialectal distinctions in terms of geographic position roughly along a south-north axis. His view is supported by N. Anisimov (1932: 27), who identified southern (Azerbaijan), central (Derbend), and northern (North Caucasus) dialects. Grjunberg, on the other hand, correlates the linguistic differences along confessional lines, arguing that Judeo-Tat is a single language different from Muslim Tat, while the latter is perceptibly divided among the Sunni and Shiite speakers (Grjunberg 1963: 7–8; Grjunberg and Davidova 1982). These two vantage points are not necessarily contradictory if we consider the geographic distribution of the three religious groups: Jews in the north, Sunnis in the middle, and Shiites in the south. Indeed, recent fieldwork based on perceptions of intelligibility (Clifton et al. 2005: 38–39) has turned up no linguistic grounds to justify a religious distinction among various Tat dialects. To my knowledge, no study has been published that compares and contrasts various Tat dialects on religious grounds.

4.2   *Literary Judeo-Tat*

As far back as the early 20th century, the Mountain Jews began publishing their language in a modified Hebrew script, although in a very limited way. Under

the Soviet regime a secular culture flourished among Mountain Jewish literary circles in Baku and Derbend, opening the way to a written language and formal literature.

On account of the policy of empowering minorities of a certain size to read in their native tongue in the early years of the Soviet Union, the Mountain Jews were recognized as a people under the name Tat. Tat thus became one of the seven official languages of the Dagestan Autonomous Republic (Zand 1972). Along similar lines, a network of Tat elementary schools was established in Dagestan and Azerbaijan in the 1920s, using Tat as the primary means of education during the first four years of schooling (Borjian and Kaufman 2016; cf. also Zand 1972; Clifton et al. 2005: 25). It should be added that such education was not available to Muslim Tats, who were officially undistinguished from Azerbaijanis.

The Tat script was changed twice during the Soviet period. In 1929, a conference in Baku adopted a modified Roman alphabet. A decade later, along with a general policy dictated from Moscow, the Tat alphabet was changed to Cyrillic. Two dialects predominated in the Tat press, the Derbend dialect in Dagestan, and that of Quba in Azerbaijan.

The Judeo-Tat-language press was quite impressive given the youthfulness of literary Tat and an apparently low readership due to the dispersed demography of the Mountain Jews. The longest-lasting periodical was the newspaper *Zäḥmätkäš* ('Toiler'); launched in June, 1928 in Makhachkala, it continued until after World War II. Other periodicals had shorter lives; a notable one, *Ruz johil-kom* ('The Day of the Com[munist] Youth'), started in 1928 in Baku, and other newspapers appeared some years later in Nalchik and Grozny as well (Zand 1985: 10–12). These periodicals played a leading role in the development of Judeo-Tat literature. In the 1930s, individual books began appearing increasingly in both Dagestan and Baku.

Along with the formation of the Judeo-Tat literary language, a new literature began to form. Naturally a continuation of the oral literature of the Mountain Jews (with two main genres of *ovosunä* ['folk tales'] and *mä'ni* ['songs']), most comprehensively collected in the volume of prose and verse titled *Folklor Tati* (Avšalumov 1940), the modern literature was profoundly influenced by Russian. It began with drama in the clubs that served as centers of the community's cultural life. Baku was again the pioneer hub, where writers, many from Quba, were active. In 1934, a literary circle was formed in Derbend, and within two years the 'Tat Section of the Union of Writers' was established (Zand 1985: 7–9). A pioneering playwright was Miši Baxšiev (1910–1972), who later turned to poetry and prose, in which he excelled as well. The new Judeo-Tat verse adopted classical Russian prosody, especially its syllabo-tonic

meter and rhyme pattern (Zand 1972: 138; 1985: 16). In prose, Yuno Semyonov (1899–1961) and Ḥizǧil Avšalumov (1913–2001) were the principal innovators (Zand 1985: 12–14). It should be added that irrespective of genre, the content of Soviet Judeo-Tat literature remained along the lines of social realism, aiming at criticizing the past and embracing change, but not without nostalgia for an idealized history, and so it offers a great deal of valuable cultural data.

Judeo-Tat literature began to decline with the Stalinist purges of the late 1930s. *Zäḥmätkäš* was discontinued after the war, as were the Judeo-Tat theater in Derbend and all teaching in Judeo-Tat, which was replaced by Russian in elementary schools. Across the administrative border, in Baku, the Judeo-Tat literary circle ceased its activities and the press came to an end. According to a tally by Zand (1986: 36), the number of books and brochures published in the language dropped from 63 in 1937 to 13 in 1941, with none by the end of the war.

The years of stagnation were marked by occasional publications with poor distribution and a decreasing readership, partly as a result of lack of teaching in Judeo-Tat. The Derbendi newspaper *Qirmizinä 'äläm* ('Red Banner') had only a short life (1947–1952). Conditions were improved, if only marginally, in the post-Stalinist years, when the almanac *Nüvüsdagorhoy Tati* ('Tat Writers') was launched in 1959, which continued under the new title *Vatan Sovetmu* ('Soviet Homeland') in most years until 1980, and resumed as *Češme* ('Water Source') in the 1990s. Veteran Judeo-Tat writers continued to publish poetry and prose, the most notable being Daniil Antilov's collections of poems (published between 1947 and the 1970s), Miši Baxšiev's novel *Hušähoy Ongur* ('Bunches of Grapes', 1963), and Ḥizǧil Avšalumov's humorous short stories based on the foolish folk figure of Šimi Därbändi (1978). The Judeo-Tat literature of this period can be characterized by a fading Mountain Jewish character in favor of general Dagestani and Soviet topics, as well as proportionally more translations from Russian. In addition, most members of the second generation of the Jewish Tat literati wrote in Russian. Notwithstanding the decline, publication in Judeo-Tat never ceased completely, and Tat has never been removed from the list of official languages of the Republic of Dagestan.

4.3   *Linguistic Features*

Although considered an offshoot of Persian, the Tat language (including Judeo-Tat) shows enormous differences from Persian in both grammar and vocabulary, resulting from both intra-linguistic metamorphosis and areal influence. Since no study has yet been made comparing Judeo-Tat to Muslim Tat, it is impossible to differentiate specific Judeo-Tat features in any systematic way.

A conspicuous phonological feature of Tat is the areal sound change of rhoticization of postvocalic *d*, thus the endonym *juhur* < Persian *juhūd* 'Jew'. Characteristic consonants are the pharyngeal stop and fricative; they occur not only in words of Semitic origin but also those of Iranian stock, e.g., *ʿov* (< *āb*) 'water' and *ḥämräḥ* (< *ham-rāh*) 'friend'. Tat verbs demonstrate a partial paradigm shift from the original Persian system, a noteworthy feature being the use of the infinitive as the base of the present. For example, *rafdenum* 'I go' employs the infinitive *rafden* (built on the "past" stem *rafd-*), instead of the expected "present" stem *ra-*.

Judeo-Tat vocabulary is basically Persian supplemented by a great deal of Azerbaijani Turkish. Hebraisms, although one of the clear distinguishing features between the Jewish and Muslim varieties of Tat, are largely limited to religious vocabulary. Interesting are the four cardinal directions with doublets from Hebrew and Persian:

East: *mizroḥ* (< Hebrew מזרח *mizraḥ*); *ofdovarov* (< Persian *āftāb* 'sun'+ *bar-āy* 'come out')

West: *mähärov*, *maʿarav* (< Hebrew מערב *maʿaraḇ*); *oftofurov* (< Persian *āftāb* 'sun'+ *foru-āy* 'come down')

North: *sofun* (< Hebrew צפון *ṣapōn*); *šimol* (< Persian and Arabic *šimāl*)

South: *dorum* (< Hebrew דרום *darom*); *qible* (< Arabic and Persian *qibla* 'the direction of Mecca'), *zofrun* (probably from *zofru* 'down', cf. Avestan *jafra-*, Pers. *žarf*), i.e., downslope south of the Caucasus foothills, the habitat of the Mountain Jews

As noted above, several scripts have been in use for Judeo-Tat. The early Roman script, short-lived as it was, does not seem to have had a chance to become standardized, given the challenge of dialect diversity. It had a simple, letter-to-sound correspondence. The Cyrillic alphabet that followed was reduced to fit the standard Russian keyboard, save for the addition of the Cyrillic ⟨I⟩ (known in Russian as *paločka* 'stick', and used for a number of languages of the Caucasus), which was used only in majuscule form, even when in non-initial position. This letter is found in the diagraph ⟨гI⟩, which represents the pharyngeal stop /ʿ/. Four more digraphs rendered Judeo-Tat sounds that were absent in Russian: гь /h/, хь /ḥ/, гъ /q/, and уь /ü/. Among the other noteworthy features was the letter ⟨э⟩, which rendered the sound [æ], but also [e] in initial position, since ⟨e⟩ was used word-initially as [ye] following Russian orthography (see sample text B below). In the post-Soviet period some have aspired to return to the Roman alphabet, but with various degrees of modification, appropriate to the era of the internet and the dominance of the English keyboard.

4.4 *Texts*

4.4.1 Text A

Following is an excerpt from a text in the Quba dialect, collected from Yakov Abramov in 2014 in New York (note the loanwords *gorskiy* and *raznitsa* from Russian and *hibru* from English):

> *e qed   en zuvun   gorskiy   juvur-ho ambar-a*
> in interior of language mountain Jew-PL   many-ATTRIB
> *gof-ho-y   en hibru   der-i   i   raznitsa   en gorskiy*
> word-PL-GEN of Hebrew be.in-3SG this difference of mountain
> *juvur-ho ne   tat-ho uni-ki.*
> Jew-PL   and Tat-PL thereof
> 'In the language of the Mountain Jews are many Hebrew words. This is the difference between the Mountain Jews and [the Muslim] Tat.'

4.4.2 Text B

This is the opening paragraph to the short story *Modni ʿärüs* 'Fashionable Bride' (Avšalumov 1978: 3). The original text, in Cyrillic script, is followed by a Roman transcription.

> Е гиле Шими Дербенди э хуне недерики эри чуьклеи кук эну е жогьиле, эзи е «модни» духдере хосдебируьт. Келе мерд Шими гьеле е гилеш гӀэруьс хуьшдере недиребу, унегуьре у э кук хуьшде гъэдэ-гъэ зе е руз екшобот Шими э хуне деригьо вэхд гую э гӀэруьс биев гуфдире э хунешу.

> *Ye gile Šimi Derbendi e xune nederiki eri čüklei kuk enu ye johile, ezi ye "modni" duxdere xosdebirüt. Kele merd Šimi hele ye gileš ʿärüs xüšdere nedirebu, unegüre u e kuk xüšde qädäqä ze ye ruz yekšobot Šimi e xune deriho växd guyu e ʿärüs biev gufdire e xunešu.*

> 'Once upon a time, Shimi Derbendi was not home, his youngest son was married off to a young "fashionable" girl. The old man Shimi had not seen his daughter-in-law yet. That is why he ordered his son on any Sunday, when he will be home, to bring his bride over.'

5   Judeo-Shirazi

The Jewish community of Shiraz, the provincial capital of Fars in southern Iran, has traditionally been one of the largest in Persia. Already in the 12th century, according to the travelogue of Benjamin of Tudela, there were 10,000 Jews in the city. It was in Shiraz that Šāhin founded the classical Judeo-Persian poetic tradition in the 14th century (see section 2.1.2). Historical sources from subsequent centuries reveal that the city's Jewish community, with all its ebbs and flows, remained one of the strongest and most stable in Persia, with a population of nearly 9,000 even in the 1960s (Loeb 1977).

Shirazi Jews call their spoken vernacular *jidi* ('Jewish'), an autonym sometimes used by the Jews of other cities as well. Judeo-Shirazi is an insular urban survival of the native dialect of Shiraz (called 'Old Shirazi', and known through medieval poems) that otherwise has long been replaced by Persian. There are also dialects of isolated villages in the Shiraz region (e.g., Davān) that show affinity with Judeo-Shirazi, but since these dialects have not received a detailed study in comparison with Judeo-Shirazi, their mutual intelligibility remains unknown. These Shirazi dialects are a subgroup of a larger linguistic group known as 'Fars dialects'. Fars dialects belong to the Southwest branch of Iranian languages, as does Persian, but are far more conservative. For instance, the Middle Persian preposition *ō* has survived in Judeo-Shirazi as *a* (as in Early Judeo-Persian), whereas it is lost in Persian.

As expected from its lineage, Judeo-Shirazi shows Southwest Iranian features in its phonology: Old Iranian **dz > d*, as in *dīkne* 'yesterday'; **ϑr- > s*, as in *pos* 'son'; **dw > d*, as in *dar* 'door'; **y > j*, in *jo* 'barley'; and **-č- > -z*, as in *rez* 'day'. An important isogloss that further characterizes Shirazi is attested in the merger of Iranian **ts* and **tsw* into *ϑ*, and later to *t*, whereas most other Southwest Iranian languages, including Old Persian, kept these two phonemes apart (cf. Morgenstierne 1958: 174–175; 1960: 130–131).

One distinctive feature of the Shirazi-type dialects is the past participle marker *-eϑ-/-ess-* (< **-est-*), used in perfective forms, e.g., Judeo-Shirazi *vâgešteϑâ bodom* 'I had returned' (cf. Davāni *amesse beδe* 'I had come'). Shirazi morphosyntax employs a kind of split ergativity—lost in Persian—in the past tenses of transitive verbs, seen in the Judeo-Shirazi text below. Persian verbs conjugate using personal endings (in this example, 1PL. *-im*, 3PL. *-and*) invariably in all tenses. In Judeo-Shirazi, while a similar set of personal endings is used in the present and the past of intransitive verbs, the past of transitives marks person with a proclitic that otherwise functions as an oblique pronominal suffix. Thus, in the text below, the 3PL. *ešu* functions as the oblique pronoun 'them' in the first word, but in the second word it plays the role of the agent in

'they said'. Similarly, in the last word the oblique pronoun *emu* 'us' acts as the agent that precedes the past stem *ded-* 'see'.

5.1   Sample Text

The following short sample of Judeo-Shirazi comes from Yarshater (1974: 465). The Persian equivalent is given for comparison.

Judeo-Shirazi

> *har-kodom-ešu ešu–go   dišna   xow-e   bad*
> each-3PL.OBL   3PL.OBL–say.PAST last.night sleep-GEN bad
> *emu–ded-en*
> 1PL.OBL–see.PAST-be.3SG

Persian

> *har-kodâm-ešân goft-and   dišab   xâb-e   bad*
> each-3PL.OBL   say.PAST-3PL last.night sleep-GEN bad
> *dide-im*
> see.PAST.PART-1PL

> 'Both (lit. each) of them said: Last night we dreamed a bad dream.'

The example illustrates the fact that Judeo-Shirazi's mutual intelligibility vis-à-vis Persian is quite low despite the shared lexemes. An even greater degree of unintelligibility characterizes the relationship between Judeo-Shirazi and the Judeo-Median languages spoken in central Iran. Notwithstanding geographic ties, Judeo-Shirazi shows features such as the intra-dental articulation [θ ð] of original sibilants [s z], also found in Judeo-Isfahani. (Note that this secondary sound development is different from the genetic one mentioned above.) This quality suggests a wave-like pattern that can be explained by the strong historical ties among the Jewish communities of central Iran, with evidence of significant migration among the towns in the past few centuries (cf. Yeroushalmi 2009).

Further descrption will require additional data; those at our disposal at present are short studies by Morgenstierne (1960: 129–132) and Yarshater (1974: 465), as well as the author's unpublished documentation from the Jewish Shirazi community of New York. Note that the wedding songs in Loeb (1974) and Soroudi (1986) are principally in Persian, not Judeo-Shirazi proper.

6   Judeo-Median

The Judeo-Median languages and dialects belong to the so-called Central Pla-
teau languages, a subgroup of Northwest Iranian languages. As Central Plateau
languages are spoken in the southern parts of the ancient province of Media,
they have also been designated as southern Median (Yarshater 1974; Borjian
2008, 2009). The Central Plateau languages are native to a region in central Iran
that extends roughly from Kashan in the north to Isfahan in the south. They
comprise dozens of vernaculars, with various degrees of mutual intelligibility,
spoken in individual villages and towns.

Prior to the mass emigration of Jews to Tehran and abroad (1930s–1970s),
almost every town in central Iran had a sizeable Jewish population. These
included the cities of Kashan and Isfahan, where Median is still native to
the surrounding villages, and the townships of Delijan, Mahallat, Khomeyn,
Golpayegan, and Khansar, in which gentiles as well as Jews spoke Median until
the recent past. Jewish speakers of Median also lived in several cities outside
the Central Plateau. These outliers extend from Hamadan in the northwest
to Kerman in the southeast. The presence of Jewish dialects therein can best
be explained by migrations in the not very remote past. Jews usually refer to
the dialects as *judi* or *jidi* 'Jewish'. All these vernaculars are on the verge of
disappearing, and no reliable data exist on the number of speakers.

6.1   *Documentation and Studies*

As none of the Judeo-Median languages have developed a written form, they
are known to scholars only through fieldwork. There are, however, at least two
short texts composed in Judeo-Isfahani by contemporary speakers. One is a
two-page text in Hebrew script, published in an article entitled 'Purim', by Aziz
Pajand (1966); it was republished with transcription, translation, and analysis
by MacKenzie (1968b). The other text is a short autobiography of the prominent
entrepreneur and philanthropist Jack Mahfar (residing in Geneva), published
in Persian script among the introductory sections in Ebrāhimi's (2006) glossary.

Attempts at documentation had a promising start in the work of Žukovskij
(1922), who published several Judeo-Kashani texts, followed up by Abraham-
ian's (1936) Judeo-Isfahani and Judeo-Hamadani texts. A long hiatus was bro-
ken by Yarshater (1974), who identified major Judeo-Median vernaculars and
provided short texts on Nehavandi, Yazdi, and Kermani, while Borujerdi re-
ceived a more detailed treatment (Yarshater 1989). Sketch grammars have been
published on Kermani (Lazard 1981), Hamadani (Sahim 1994; Stilo 2003), Yazdi
(Gindin 2003a, 2003b), Isfahani (Stilo 2008a), and Kashani (Borjian 2012b).
Glossaries of Isfahani have been compiled by Kalbāsi (1994) and Ebrāhimi

(2006). The multilingual lexicon of Kiā (2011) includes Isfahani, Yazdi, Hamadani, and Borujerdi words. Comparative studies (Stilo 2008b; Borjian 2012a) examine the Jewish dialects of Isfahan and Kashan within two continua: the *Velāyati* ('Provincial') dialects around Isfahan, and the Rāji dialects in the Kashan region.

As regards other Jewish dialects that were spoken in Delijan, Mahallat, Khomeyn, Golpayegan, Khansar, and probably other townships, there is little published data. This makes documentation of these dialects an urgent task, with the hope that at least some of the speakers are still alive, however far they may live from these varieties' original home.

6.2 *Linguistic Features*

With respect to historical phonology, a notable chain of developments that identifies Judeo-Kashani as a Northwest Iranian language is proto-Indo-European *$\hat{k}u$ > proto-Iranian *tsw > sp/sb. An example of this shift is Judeo-Kashani *esbe* (< Old Median *spaka-*) contrasting with Persian *sag* (< Old Persian *saka-*) 'dog'. Other major isoglosses defining Judeo-Kashani as Nothwest Iranian are Old Iranian *dz > z, as in *zun-* 'know'; *ϑr- > r, as in *pur* 'son'; *dw > b, as in *bar* 'door'; *(w)y > y, as in *yâ* 'place'; *-$č$- > j, as in *ruj* 'day'.

While the Judeo-Median languages share many grammatical features, there are also considerable differences, the study of which is beyond the scope of this chapter. Certain noteworthy features are presented below under the discussions of each region, and Tables 6 and 7 compare selective morphological and lexical units.

6.3 *Kashan and Isfahan*

These two old cities of central Iran (about 100 miles apart) are now Persian-speaking, but are surrounded by a mixture of Persian- and Median-speaking villages. Historical evidence supports the idea that Kashan and Isfahan themselves were home to a population that once spoke Median (Borjian 2011), but that the original vernaculars survived only in conservative Jewish quarters and among Muslims in the countryside (on the Jewish community of Isfahan, see Fischel 1953).

The Jewish dialects of Kashan and Isfahan are quite similar to the rural Median dialects spoken by Muslims that surround each city, notwithstanding a somewhat higher level of Persianism in the Jewish urban varieties. Some typical areal isoglosses of these two speech areas are listed in Table 7. Mutual intelligibility is further suppressed by grammatical disparities. A morpheme of high frequency is the imperfective marker *e*, which precedes the verb stem in Kashani, but follows it in Isfahani; the paradigms listed in Table 6 for the

TABLE 6   *Conjugation of the verb 'want'*

		Kashani	Isfahani	Hamadani
Present	1SG.	*m-e-gu*	*gu-m-e*	*gu-m*
	2SG.	*d-e-gu*	*gu-d-e*	*gu-d*
	3SG.	*š-e-gu*	*gu-š-e*	*gu-š*
Past	1SG.	*m-e-ga*	*gum-am-e*	*gâ-m*
	2SG.	*d-e-ga*	*gum-ad-e*	*gâ-d*
	3SG.	*š-e-ga*	*gum-aš-e*	*gâ-š*

TABLE 7   *Selective isoglosses across Jewish Median dialects*

	Kashani	Isfahani	Hamadani	Borujerdi	Yazdi	Kermani
arm	*bâzi*	*bâu*	*des*	*bâzu*		*bâi*
big	*gurd*	*bele*	*mas(s)ar*	*masar*	*gondo*	*mas*
brother	*berâr*	*beδâr*	*berâ*	*berâr*	*kâkâ*	*kâkâ*
cat	*meli*	*meli*	*meli*	*meli*	*gorbo*	*gorbo*
dog	*esbe*	*kuδe*	*kuye*	*kuya*	*esbo*	*espo*
hen	*kerk*	*morq*	*kark*	*morq*	*morv*	*morv*
shirt	*ševi*	*perhan*	*parhan*	*pirhan*	*perano*	*perāno*
small	*vijik*	*kučuli*	*kas(s)ar*	*kasar*	*kasok*	*kasok*
sneeze	*akse*	*ošnije*	*erčene*	*pešga*		*serro*
sparrow	*oranji*	*čiri(či)*	*melič*	*meliča*	*čoqur*	*čoqur*
sell	*ruš-*	*ferâš-*	*ferâš-*	*ferâš-*		*reš-*
throw	*xus-*	*xuϑ-*	*xus-*	*xus-*	*ven-*	*pân-*
want (present)	*gu-*	*gu-*	*gu-*	*gu-*	*-yvâ-*	*-ybâ-*
passive marker	*-i-*	–	*-i-*	*-i-*	–	–
Imperfective marker	(*e-*)	*-e*	(*e-*)	(*e-*)	*a-*	*a-*

modal verb 'want' are intended to demonstrate how morphological configura-
tions can vary between the dialects, even if the same present stem (*gu-*) and
aspectual marker (*e*) are employed in both. Other notable Kashani structures
missing in Isfahani include the inflectional passive with *-i-* and future tense
with *kəm-*.

There exist also a few features that bind the two Jewish dialects together
vis-à-vis their areal association, such as *tanj-* 'drink' and the third-person sin-

gular verb ending -*u* (otherwise atypical to Kashan area), in addition to shared Hebraisms (see below). Nevertheless, neither of the two vernaculars seems to demonstrate the level of idiosyncrasy that may qualify it as a language on its own. Indeed, Judeo-Kashani can be considered as a dialect of the Median language group of the Kashan area (Rāji dialects), and Judeo-Isfahani falls squarely within the areal continuum of Median around the city of Isfahan—the dialects known locally as *Velāyati* ('Provincial'). On sociolinguistic grounds, however, the picture is different. The Jewish speakers, generally inattentive about kindred vernaculars spoken by Muslim villagers, consider their mother tongue an integral part of their Jewish Iranian heritage.

6.4   *Hamadan and Borujerd*

In west-central Iran, the districts of Hamadan, Tuyserkan, Malayer, Nehavand (all in Hamadan Province), and Borujerd (further south, in Lorestan Province) form a geographic cluster that was inhabited until recently by sizeable Jewish communities. They spoke various Median varieties of Central Plateau stock in pockets within a language continuum that gradually shifts from Persian in the north (Hamadan) to Lori in the south.

Hamadan had one of the largest and oldest Jewish communities in Iran; the shrine attributed to Esther and Mordechai in Hamadan testifies to the enduring character of its Jewish population. However, the historical Median spoken in the Hamadan region is known from a limited number of medieval poems, which are sufficient to make clear that the extinct Median native to the Hamadan region belonged to the Tati dialect type of northwestern Iran, rather than the Central Plateau type of central Iran. This historical arrangement might lead us to the inference that only population movements from central Iran could have occasioned the presence of the existing Jewish dialects in the Hamadan area.

This remarkable history of population displacements is borne out by the mixed isoglottic nature of Hamadani. Taking Hamadani-Borujerdi as a single group, we find it united with Yazdi (in the words for 'big' and 'small'; see Table 7), with Kashani (passive and imperfective markers), with Isfahani and Kashani ('throw', 'want', 'cat'), and with Isfahani ('dog'). Within the same short lexical list, we find Hamadani and Borujerdi further share the gloss 'sparrow', while Borujerdi distinguishes itself with *pešga* 'sneeze', borrowed from local Lori. In terms of morphosyntactic categories, although Hamadani is close to Kashani and Isfahani, the differences are sufficient to justify their low mutual intelligibility. On the other hand, within the Hamadan area itself the dialects show a great deal of similarity (Stilo 2003), but studies are lacking on how the relatedness of these dialects is perceived by their speakers.

6.5   *Yazd and Kerman*

These two major cities of central and southeastern Iran have been known as Persian-speaking throughout the documented past. However, both cities had sizable quarters occupied by Jewish and Zoroastrian religious minorities who spoke Median dialects of the Central-Plateau type. Zoroastrian Yazdi and Kermani dialects are quite close to one another, and, according to Gindin (2003a), the Jewish dialects of the two cities are nearly identical. Historical records suggest that the population flow was from Yazd to Kerman (English 1966: 42; Yeroushalmi 2009: 200), with the implication that the Median dialects followed the same path. The affinity between the Zoroastrian and Jewish dialects of these cities has not yet been studied in detail.

The Kermani Jewish vernacular is largely unintelligible to Jewish Kashanis and Isfahanis, based on the author's own fieldwork. These speakers' perceptions may be explained not only by lexical differences (cf. Table 7), but also by others as well. A defining phonological isogloss of Jewish Yazdi-Kermani is the rhoticization of original dentals, e.g., Kermani *kero* (< *kada*) 'house', *xorâ* (< *xudāy*) 'God', *ber-* (< *būd*) 'was', and *šer-* (< *šud-*) 'went'.

In grammar, Jewish Yazdi-Kermani shows profound differences from other Median and Judeo-Median languages and dialects. In the Judeo-Kermani verbal system the perfective aspect marker *be-* is absent; compare Judeo-Kermani *rasâr-in* to Judeo-Kashani *be-rasâd-om* 'I arrived'. The third-person singular copula is the clitic *en* (common in Lori and Fars dialects, Judeo-Shirazi included), e.g., Judeo-Kermani *bis sâl-en ke te madreso dir-âm dars a-t-âm* 'it is twenty years now that I have been teaching in school'. Jewish Yazdi-Kermani modal verbs are distinct as well; for example, compare Yazdi *m-a-yvâ-ve-šin* 'I wanted to go' with the conjugations given in Table 6 for Kashani, Isfahani, and Hamadani. The morphosyntax of Jewish Yazdi-Kermani in ergative constructions shows a complexity of its own, in that the agent (oblique enclitic pronoun) can be prefixed or even stand alone, as in *š$_1$-a-šnáxt-eš$_2$* 'he$_1$ recognized him$_2$'; *šum$_1$ memáni-š$_2$ ka* 'they hosted him' (lit. 'he$_2$ was hosted by them$_1$') (Gindin 2003a).

6.6   *Text Samples*
6.6.1   Judeo-Kashani Story
The following is a Judeo-Kashani story, related by Jack Tabari (New York, 2012):

qedimâ ru Kâšun itâ má:deke az báske tanbal bo, núm-eš-â šun-vắte Šâtánbal.	In olden days in Kashan [there was] a fellow who was so lazy that they would call him Shatanbal (lit. 'king lazy').
itâ rúj-i ke šégâ bešu ser-e kâr, pē itâ bówne še-gašᵗ ke néšu.	One day when he wanted to go to work, he was looking for an excuse not to go.
váxti-ke dim-e yắbu-š nište bo, az yéki vâ-š-pá:sa, "ắdâ četówr_e-gá:du ke méru?"	While he was riding his horse, he asked someone, "How is it that a person dies?"
óvi_am ke evi-râ še-š-ešnắsâ, bé-š-vâ, "rúj-i ke hávâ sa:d_u, to_am dim-e yắbu-d níšti, o sarbâlắi dâri ší, égâ yắbu-d ítâ guz da:-du, to hémun-vaxt mére."	And that [fellow] who knew him, said, "A day when it is cold and you are sitting on your horse and are going upgrade, if your horse passes gas, you will die right away."

6.6.2   A Judeo-Isfahani Wedding Song (Netzer 1973: 58, 1982: 195–203)

Šifrâ veroϑ o yâyin-â bâr!	O Shifra, get up and bring the wine!
yâyin-u vo yâyin-u	It is wine, it is wine!
yâyin ge Šifrâ bâru	The wine that Shifra brings
xeyli am meδδe dâru	has much taste in it
vaδ-maϑϑi-â nedâru	and does not have ill effects of drunkenness.
amšeu šav-e dišabbât	Tonight is Sunday night,
amme demâγâ-mun ϑâδ	and our mood is just right.
bešoyim o bešim keniϑâ	Let's go to synagogue.
dig-e polow čâreϑâ	The pot of rice is ready
tong-e eraγ vâeϑϑâ	and the flagon of arrack is standing.
Šim'un Atal bereϑâ	Simon Atal has arrived.
aftâ gipâ-m varbaϑte	I have stuffed seven tripes,
aδ δahmatâ-š xo-m xaϑte	and am tired from its troubles.

7   Hebraisms and Lotera'i

7.1   *Hebraisms*
None of the Judeo-Iranian languages discussed above shows any Semitic features in its morphology or syntax, with the exception of texts translated from

Hebrew. In lexicon, however, all of the languages possess words of Hebrew and Aramaic origin. These words are by and large used in religious and cultural domains (see Tolmas 2006b for Bukhari), but probably far less in proportion to that seen in some other Jewish languages (e.g., Yiddish), and certainly not to an extent that would make the language unintelligible to non-Jews in general. Sahim (1994) notes that the Hebrew lexical elements in Judeo-Hamadani constitute less than one percent of the language's vocabulary. Similar inference can be drawn when one examines the vocabularies of Kashani and Isfahani.

Judeo-Median languages and dialects seem to share a common set of Hebrew-Aramaic words. Examples from Judeo-Isfahani are:

> *ʿâni* 'poor' (< Hebrew עני *ʿani*)
> *ʿarvit* 'nightly prayer' (< Hebrew ערבית *ʿarḇit*)
> *ʿâwn* 'sin' (< Hebrew עוון *ʿawon*)
> *bet-e ḥaim* 'cemetery' (lit. 'house of life') (< Hebrew בית חיים *bet ḥayyim*)
> *dârâš* 'sermon' (< Hebrew דרשה *dəraša*)
> *guym* 'gentiles' (< Hebrew גויים *goyim*)
> *ḥoxmâ* 'wisdom' (< Hebrew חכמה *ḥoḵma*)
> *malâx* 'angel' (< Hebrew מלאך *maľaḵ*)
> *massâ* 'matzah' (< Hebrew מצה *maṣṣa*)
> *maʿz* 'feast' (< Hebrew מועד *moʿeḏ*)
> *nâvi* 'prophet' (< Hebrew נביא *naḇi*)
> *sâtân* 'Satan' (< Hebrew שטן *śaṭan*)
> *sedâqâ* 'charity' (< Hebrew צדקה *ṣədaqa*)
> *seliḥut* 'Selichot (penitential prayers recited in the period before Rosh
>   HaShanah)' (< Hebrew סליחות *səliḥot*)
> *šabât* 'Sabbath' (< Hebrew שבת *šabbat*)
> *šaḥrit* 'morning prayer' (< Hebrew שחרית *šaḥarit*)
> *šeḥitâ* 'slaughter' (< Hebrew שחיטה *šəḥiṭa*)
> *ševʿâ* 'oath' (< Hebrew שבועה *šəḇuʿa*)
> *šezim* 'jinnee, demons' (< Hebrew שדים *šeḏim*)
> *tâme* 'unclean' (< Hebrew טמא *ṭame*)
> *taʿnit* 'fasting' (< Hebrew תענית *taʿanit*)
> *tefilâ* 'prayer' (< Hebrew תפלה *təpilla*)
> *yây(i)n* 'wine' (< Hebrew יין *yayin*)

7.2   *Loteraʾi*
The Hebraisms in the Judeo-Iranian languages should not be confused with the secret jargon known as Loteraʾi. This term is used by Iranian Jews for "speech characterized by local Judeo-Iranian grammar with a special exotic substitutive

vocabulary which is employed in the presence of gentiles to prevent them from understanding" (Schwartz 2014). Lotera'i vocabulary is a mixture of Iranian and Hebrew/Aramaic. Many pronouns, adjectives, nouns, and prepositions are Hebrew, while the morphology and syntax are Iranian. Lotera'i was introduced to the linguistic community by Yarshater (1977), who called it 'a hybrid language', while Lazard (1978) preferred the term 'jargon'. The research on Lotera'i has recently been further advanced by Schwartz (2014). These scholars have identified various layers of both Hebrew and Aramaic superstrata in Lotera'i speech, and have traced its origins to as early as the Achaemenid dynasty (ca. 550–330 BCE), when the bulk of the Jewish immigration to Iranian Plateau must have taken place. Lotera'i is now extinct.

An example of Lotera'i remembered by a speaker of Persian from Kabul (collected by the author in New York, 2014) is *in zâxârakâ havolot mitikinan* 'these young fellows are doing silly stuff'. Here the Hebrew word *zâxâr* 'male' is suffixed with the Persian diminutive *-ak* and plural *-(h)â*, while the stem *tikin-* (likely from Aramaic תקן *taqqen* 'to establish, fix'; cf. Schwartz 2014) has the Persian imperfect prefix *mi-*, and personal ending *-an(d)*. The word *havolot* is from Hebrew הבלות *haḇlut* 'nonsense'.

The example below (from Yarshater 1977) shows the blend in the Jewish dialect of Golpayegan. The first sentence of the example is expressed in the local Median of Golpayegan, which used to be shared between its Jews and gentiles alike. The sentence in the second line, the Lotera'i equivalent used by Golpayegani Jews in their secret idiom, employs the same grammar bound to three Lotera'i lexemes: *anni* 'I' (from Hebrew אני *'ani*), *bāy* 'want' (from Aramaic בעא *be'a*), and *ez* 'go' (from Aramaic or Hebrew אזל *'zl*).

mon	*gu-n*	*be-š-on*	*xiābān,*	*š-on*
anni	*bāy-un*	*b-ez-on*	*xiābān,*	*š-on*
I	want.PRES-1SG	SUBJ-go.PRES-1SG	street	go.PRES-1SG
vare-gard-on				
vā-ez-on				
PREVERB-go/turn.PRES-1SG				

'I want to go to the street; I shall go [and] return.'

8 Further Study

8.1 *Judeo-Persian*

The study of Judeo-Persian manuscripts has engaged generations of scholars for well over a century. The scholarly works on Judeo-Persian have focused both

on linguistics (especially of Early Judeo-Persian) and literature (Judeo-Persian poetry), though work on these two fields has typically been carried out by different groups of scholars.

The pioneering study of Lazard (1968) on the dialectology of Early Judeo-Persian has been expanded by Shaked (2000, 2003, 2009), with textual classification. A comprehensive grammar based on both published and unpublished texts is furnished by Paul (2013). Glossaries are supplied by MacKenzie (1968a), Asmussen (1969), Asmussen and Paper (1977: 110–118), Mainz (1977: 75–95), and Shaked (2003: 209–217), among others. Early Judeo-Persian published texts are listed above in Table 2. Detailed bibliographies on Early Judeo-Persian can be found in Lazard (1968: 95–98), Gindin (2007: 267–283), and Paul (2013: 15–18).

Excellent anthologies of Judeo-Persian poetry have been published by Netzer (1973), in Persian script, and, in English translation, by Moreen (2000); both works have valuable introductions. (Interestingly, no anthology has been published in the original Judeo-Persian script.) Critical editions of individual works are those of ʿEmrāni by Yeroushalmi (1995), Bābāi b. Lotf and Bābāi b. Farhād by Moreen (1987, 1990), and Xʷāja of Bukhara by Shapira (1999). On Judeo-Persian transliterations of Persian classical poetry, see Asmussen (1968b, 1973). Manuscript miniatures have been studied by Gutmann (1968) and Moreen (1985).

The series *Irano-Judaica* (6 vols., 1982–2006, Ben-Zvi Institute) and *Pādyā-vand* (3 vols., 1996–1999, Mazda) are dedicated to the study of Iranian Jews. Entries in the online version of the *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, though usually short, contain useful further references.

For descriptions of manuscript collections, see Moreen (2015, Jewish Theological Seminary of New York; see also Adler 1921), Seligsohn (1903, British Library; see also Moreen 1995), Rossi (1948, the Vatican), Netzer (1985, Ben-Zvi Institute), and Spicehandler (1968, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati).

8.2   *Bukhari*

For the history and culture of the Bukharan Jews, see Zand (1972, 2006), Tolmas (2006a), Baldauf et al. (2008), and Cooper (2012). The socio-political history of literary Bukhari is best summarized by Rzehak (2008). Sample literature can be found in Šalamūev (1993), among others, and a collection of idioms and expressions in Kalontarov (2002). Bukhari is covered in the polyglot dictionaries of Gulkarov (1998) and Kimiagarov (2010), and a self-study textbook was made by Tolmas (2010). An oral text with interlinear glossing was published by Ido (2007). Zarubin (1928) remains an authoritative reference for the dialect of Samarkand; no such detailed scholarly research is available for other Judeo-Bukhari dialects, though the thorough grammar of Tajik by Perry (2005) serves

the purpose for the most part. Among the pre-Soviet Bukharan literature, the *Musā-nāme* of Šimʿon Ḥaḵam was published by Paper (1986) as the first (and seemingly only) item in the Judeo-Iranian Text Series (Cincinnati).

8.3 *Judeo-Tat*

Pre-literary Judeo-Tat is documented and studied by V.F. Miller (1892, 1900, 1901, 1905–1907, 1912), and folkloric samples can be found in Baxšiev (1932), Avšalamov (1940), and H. Dadašev (1947). A fairly compact account of the development of Judeo-Tat literature was compiled by Zand (1972, 1985–1986), which is best complemented with sample writings such as those published in issues of the annuals *Vatan Sovetmun* and *Češme*. Bram (2008, 2009, 2013) offers a wealth of anthropological and sociological information on the Juhuri community in the Caucasus and diaspora. Clifton et al. (2005) is a field survey of Qırmızı Qäsäbä, among other Tat-speaking settlements of Azerbaijan. The Juhuri grammar by Authier (2012) is based on the written language, while Grjunberg's (1963) is based on field documentation of various Tat dialects, though not Juhuri in particular. A short comparative study is found in Windfuhr (2006). Literary Judeo-Tat had lacked dictionaries until recently, but this has been somewhat remedied by M. Dadašev (2006) and Agarunov (2010).

8.4 *Judeo-Shirazi*

The language of the Jewish community of Shiraz is very poorly known. To my knowledge, the published data is limited to a few words in Morgenstierne (1960: 129–132) and a short text in Yarshater (1974: 465). However, on sociolinguistics and the folklore of the community plenty of material has been published by Loeb (1974, 1977), Sorudi (1982, 1990), and Sarshar et al. (1996–2000). The Endangered Language Alliance is currently conducting linguistic fieldwork among the Shirazi Jewish community of New York.

8.5 *Judeo-Median*

These languages and dialects remain largely understudied. An overview is given in Yarshater (1974), and descriptions of individual languages have been provided for Isfahani (Stilo 2008a), Kashani (Borjian 2012b), Hamadani (Sahim 1994; Stilo 2003), Yazdi (Gindin 2003a, 2003b), and Kermani (Lazard 1981). Netzer (1982, 1991) gives an insight to the culture and folklore of the language communities. The Center for Iranian Jewish Oral History has published several bilingual volumes (Sarshar et al. 1996–2000), with new collections of songs and folklore. Borjian (2015) is a comparative dictionary that includes Judeo-Isfahani.

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