

A Fragment of Modern Domari

Introduction

This paper is an attempt to analyse a fragment of Domari^{1.} which is the language of the Nawar, a Gypsy group in the Middle East. The data set is small, consisting of a short tape recording made in Summer 1982 by Mr. Ghias Barakat in Damascus, Syria and the paper is thus, necessarily, a preliminary analysis. It is believed that this is the first investigation of the language that has been made since the appearance of Macalister's "The Language of the Nawar" in 1914. Kenrick (19) writes:

The various missionary groups who travel from the European Gypsy Pentecostal Church to India have made contact with some Nuri (Dom) groups but have not found any that still speak the language.

It is possible that the groups with whom the missionaries had contact did not speak the language, however in light of this recent research it would be interesting to know to which groups they spoke and also whether the missionaries knew Arabic; if an interpreter was used who was not a Nawar then it is not likely that the Nawar would have admitted to having their own language. Worldwide, Gypsies generally use their own language only in company with other Gypsies when there are no outsiders present and so it is not commonly known that they in fact speak dialects of their own Indic language. Certainly in the Middle East where the various Gypsy groups, of which the Nawar is one, are often involved in the business of entertainment considerable pains are taken to avoid publicising the fact

that they are Gypsies. Many famous Middle Eastern singers are of Nawari origin, a fact not usually known to the general public.

It may also be of significance that the missionaries reported by Kenrick, being Christian, created suspicion among the Nawar who are Muslim; religion can be as strong a basis for solidarity in the Middle East as is ethnicity.

The recording analysed here was made by Dr. Barakat on his second visit to a Nawari settlement, during which he presented them with a list of questions prepared by Prof. Hancock, written in Arabic, asking the principal informant, Mansoor, a man in his thirties, to answer at his leisure. Dr. Barakat did not indicate which language was to be used, but expressed an interest in Domari and hoped that a message in that language could be taken back to Prof. Hancock and other Gypsies living in America, in return for a similar tape in Vlax Romani presented to them. I am referring to the language here as Nawari, as that seems to be what the family themselves call it, though they also used the term Dom to refer to themselves and so may have another name for the language also. Nawari is the term that an Arabic speaker would use since it is an adjectival form of Nawar in Arabic. Macalister's term, Nuri, was undoubtedly that used by his informant; this and various other things which will be mentioned below indicate that Macalister's Nawar spoke a slightly different dialect.

The resulting tape is an interesting mixture of the two languages. Nawari and Arabic sentences alternate, the latter serving frequently as explanations and elaborations of the former. There is much more Arabic than Nawari but it is not particularly clear whether this is owing to the fact that the informant is more comfortable with Arabic or because this was only the second time he had met with the researcher and

was somewhat wary of revealing the full extent of his fluency in another language. A later visit apparently produced a more relaxed tape with a great deal more Nawari.

The family that was interviewed live in Damascus where they work with cousins as a musical troupe, playing, singing and dancing. They have travelled both inside and outside Syria. This particular family are known to have moved from the coastal area north of Tripoli, Lebanon, at least a generation earlier and still retain features of the Arabic dialect spoken there in the Arabic they now speak². Macalister's Nawar are known to have been based in Damascus and to have travelled to and from Jerusalem at a time when this family lived in Tripoli; this would immediately lead us to expect dialectal differences in the Nawari spoken by the two informants and I believe this is borne out in the text. In general, the Nawar are settled in various parts of the country; for example, there is a large community of Nawar farming in the Jazira in eastern Syria. Nawar live and work freely in Syria and since they are not a religious or political minority are not restricted in any way. Indeed such as the Jaziran community are courted for their votes and support and the parliamentary representative for that area is himself a Nawari.

Nevertheless, the Nawar do hide their identity, believing it might harm them to draw attention to themselves as a minority group and seeing little to be gained from doing so anyway. The reasons for this appear to be socio-historical rather than political; prejudice does exist, indeed the word 'nawar' carries a bad connotation in Arabic largely stemming it would seem, from the time when the unsettled Nawar travelled as nomads like, and often with, the Bedouin. They were regarded as uncivilised by

by city dwellers and often engaged in trades considered demeaning or unscrupulous such as trading in donkeys and sheep, as well as fortune-telling. It should be pointed out, however, that the Bedouin themselves are not regarded as being any more civilised and very often no differentiation is made between the two groups. The family interviewed lived in an airy, larger than average house, preferring to sit on carpets and cushions and said they could not live in a small house; evidence perhaps that they still had not become used to city living.

Although conscious of the fact that they constituted a separate group, the family were totally unaware of any difference between themselves and other Syrians in actual ethnic origin, or of the origins of their language. They were surprised to hear of other Gypsies elsewhere in the world and knew only of other Nawar in Turkey. It seems likely, however, that their awareness of being a minority group, often subject to social prejudice, has helped to maintain their language in its present vitality. As far as can be told, Nawari is still used in the home and is taught to the children. Total integration of the Nawar into society would probably have resulted in less pressure to maintain solidarity and identity and, consequently, a greater loss of the language.

In all, nine sentences of Nawari were extracted from the tape. A comparison with Macalister's description shows that phonologically and syntactically Nawari is increasingly influenced by Arabic (as he also reported) but continues to maintain an Indic base in its vocabulary and morphology though a comparison with the earlier texts would indicate that the number of inflections appears to be diminishing. Conjunctions and formulaic expressions are invariably in Syrian Arabic with some other

items of Arabic vocabulary also to be found. There remains a number of items, which may or may not be of Nawari origin, that have still to be identified. This has somewhat hindered accurate translation although the meaning of each sentence is generally known and is hinted at by the Arabic.

It is not at all clear that there is any true code switching involved since the alternation between Arabic and Nawari is largely a clarification of the latter while the usage of Arabic within Nawari sentences is highly restricted to individual words that have undoubtedly been long assimilated into the language. There is no evidence of phrasal alternation which would otherwise lead one to suspect code switching. The circumstances of the interview no doubt militated against elicitation of this type of sentence so whether the Nawar codeswitch amongst themselves is undetermined.

The Text

There follow transcriptions of the nine Nawari sentences (the complete text including the Arabic is appended) with translations and a morphological analysis, as well as some comparison with Macalister's findings, with Sampson's "The Dialect of the Gypsies of Wales" and with Sanskrit and Hindi.³

1. næmóom mænʃuúr ʃinsiyeeýoom ʃuúri
 name my Mansur nationality my Syrian
 My name is Mansur, my nationality is Syrian.

2. æmiin mizmées qankani fænəmæ domištēni

we in the past were (?) art in Dom/Nawar

In the past we were artists

dawəθəmæ ʕarsəmæ mindəwiikəni nitšiyēlmi

in wedding working (?)

3. baroom tariiqə mənǰətə u æštii benéen

brother my

and there are sisters

my brother

məndəwiikəndi u ɪzə frænsəmæ məndəwiikəndi

France in

4. u æmiin yæʕnii hæmduləyətə keyivriɲiyətə

and we I mean thanks God to happy (to)

and thanks to God we are happy

keyivriɲi ʔænə watənóməni æmiin ʃeeniyət maali

happy to us country our we

in our country

5. baʕdeen atooʔ inšalla hootə keyivhuuri

afterwards you God willing here happy be

God willing you will soon be happy here

nætmanə mən alláa atóoʔ haywétə basóomən hétə
 we wish from God you life with us here
 we hope you will come and stay here with us

æmiin æzimkəveni atooʔ lætyúur aw ĵurúur aw
 we you girl your or wife your or
 we welcome (?) you and your daughter (?) or your wife or
 æhruurəzə
 anyone your

anyone else of your family.

6. æmiin hétə hændulláa æšti kəriim basóomən wa
 we here thanks to God there is house my with us and
 here we have thanks be to God my house and
 æšti čeyəndiin siyεeréy basóomən
 there is with us
 we have

7. æmiin sædeeyóomən iðə hírə íkə basóomən
 we custom our when is someone with us
 It is our custom when someone is with us
 maaréni bakré æbúski izə hírə défikásoomən
 kill we sheep for him when is a guest with us
 to kill sheep for him - when there is a guest with us.

8. u æmiin ʔædeeyoomən mizmées keen ʃuuriin
 and we custom our in the past was/were women
 It was our custom in the past that women used to
 liharúsin wisəndi u mænsiin liheelúsin bæš
 by themselves they sit and men by themselves but
 sit by themselves and men by themselves but now
 ʔisæm tawarid waʔasawisəndi sáwa
 now they sit together
 it is usual (?) that they sit together.
9. æmiin istənikəri inšállaa bəlki hawé
 we stay your God willing maybe here
 God willing, maybe you will stay with us here
 basóomən utaké atooʔ ækérma
 with us you eyes your with
 and see (?) us with your own eyes.

The informant also gives the Nawari for several Arabic words:

əlʕen	æki	eye
ələnɸ	nɛbk	nose
əttim	zaruur	mouth
əlmayy	mɛʔ	water
əlwajəh	məʔ	face
əlʔiden	xastiin	hands
əlʔiʃreen	ičiin	feet
əlmarʔa	ʃuur	woman
ərrəʃul	mis	man

*-in Nawari
as in Arabic*

Analysis

Phonology

It is difficult to say anything conclusive about the phonology of Nawari without more detailed evidence but at present it seems little different from the phonology of the Arabic spoken in the region. The vowels certainly, both long and short, are the same and with a few exceptions so are the consonants. The sound ʕ is not common to the Arabic dialect of Damascus though it does occur in Palestinian; here it is undoubtedly a sound native to Nawari; had it been borrowed it would occur frequently in the Arabic texts and in loanwords where there is k. Emphatic ɖ, ɗ, ʒ are retained in loanwords which still are clearly Arabic but are softened in more disguised forms where analysis is not as easy. Similarly with the pharyngeals ʁ and ʕ which are also clearly present in some words and not so obvious in others, particularly ʁ; when in doubt I have used the glottal fricative h. Glottal stops are also common both in loan words and in Nawari words e.g. atooʔ, while the uvular stop q appears in obvious loanwords.

Aspirated stops, common in the 'phen' dialects of Europe (for historical discussion see Hancock 1984), are, as we would expect, not to be found in Nawari words though they do appear in Arabic loans and other (apparent) loans e.g. kayivrini. The aspiration has not been marked however since it is thought not to be phonemic. The velar fricative x is retained; there are no retroflex sounds except r.

It is worth noting that loanwords with perhaps two exceptions are exclusively from Arabic.

Morphology

Several words end in a possessive suffix, -VVm 'my', -VVmən 'our': nāmoom, kerim, ĵinsiyēyoom, baroom, watēnooməni, basoomən, sadēyoomən. From this data it would appear that the vowel is -oo when the preceding stem vowel is non-high and -ii otherwise. Macalister records several types of variation for the 1st person singular; -im, -mi, -om, -oom, -oomi, -um, -uum, -uumi, and for the 1st person plural; -mən, -min (with no preceding vowel), with -eem, -eemən consistently used with plural nouns. He suggested that the arbitrary nature of the vowel might be due to a broken down law of vowel harmony with the stem vowel. If this was so it would appear that the variation has now been levelled to two variants with a similar regularisation in the plural through the insertion of a vowel before -mən. However, kerim is the only word here that as a free morpheme ends in -i (a feminine ending) which may explain the lack of -oo through assimilation (see ĵuur p.42)

The vocabulary below is marked (N) Nawari, (W) Welsh Romani, (S) Sanskrit, (H) Hindi, (A) Arabic (Syrian), (Mc) Macalister, where he has a slightly different form.

nām	(N)	name	nav	(W)	nāman	(S)	nām	(H)
ker	(N)	house	kuri	(Mc)	khēr	(W)	gṛha	(S) ghar (H)
ĵinsiyē	(A)	nationality						
bar	(N)	brother	phal	(W)	bhrātṛ	(S)	bhāī	(H)
watən	(A)	country	- it is curious that this word is used when the usual Arabic dialect word (used in the equivalent Arabic sentence) is bələd.					
bas	(R)	with, near	- not found in Macalister though it seems					

to be in frequent usage. paše (W) pāršve (S) pās (H).

Note the similarity between paš amendi (W) 'near us' and basooman (N).

ʕædɛɛ (A) custom, habit ʕædɛt (A) note that in the case of both the Arabic words which end in -t (a feminine marker) the final vowel is lengthened in apparent compensation for its loss.

Three words have the 2nd person possessive suffix -uur recorded by Macalister as -r with various vowels as for the 1st person: lətyuur, ʃuruur, ahruur.

ləty- (N) girl læči (Mc) the depalatalisation here is of interest, unfortunately there is not an example of the free morpheme.

raklī (W) larkī (H) /laṭ (S)

ʃuur (N) wife ʃuuri (Mc) ʃuvel (W) yuvatī (S) ʃuvatī (H)

Again Macalister has this as a noun with a feminine ending (cf. kerī 'house') which might lead us to expect ʃuriir if the final stem vowel were a factor. This suggests that vowel harmony determines the pronominal vowel. Note the shortening of the stem vowel before the suffix.

ahr- - This word has not yet been identified, although it may relate to hari (Mc) 'any, whatsoever' i.e. anyone else of your family. It is also difficult to determine a meaning, if any, for -əzə at the end of this word.

There are two interesting uses of the 3rd person pronominal/possessive suffix: lɪħarusɪn, by themselves (f), lɪħeelusɪn, by themselves (m).

The possessive suffix -sɪn (-san (Mc)) is affixed to the Arabic word ħeel 'state, condition'. lɪ- is also an Arabic particle meaning 'to, for' though Macalister gives mɪn as the usual particle for this construct-

ion. e.g. *mrn hæelom* 'by myself'. What is more curious is the variation between the two expressions. It would appear that they cannot mean different things and as there is no other obvious etymology for *lɪharusɪn* other than that suggested it is presumed to be a variant which, in this case, is related to the gender of the referent. However, it cannot be conclusively regarded as such on the basis of this one example.

Other nominal suffixes in evidence are dative and predicate. The clearest example of the former is *hæmdulæyetə*. The familiar Arabic formula *ælhæmdulillaa* 'thanks (be) to God', where the particle *lɪ-* 'to' appears between the two nouns, is now represented with a contraction of the medial syllables and the Nawari dative suffix *-yeta*. Macalister has the common variant of the dative suffix as *-ta* suffixed to the accusative *-a* hence *-ata*. After nouns whose stem final vowel is *-i* this would be *-yata*. It seems that a regularisation has taken place for nouns ending in *-a* should take *-sta* which would give *hæmdullasta*. *-yeta* is now the constant dative suffix for all nouns ending in a vowel.

Another example is *keyivrɪniyetə*; this may have been an error as the informant corrected himself after and said *keyivrɪni* the meaning of which is not clear but it may mean 'happy/happiness' as the informant hesitated and almost used the Arabic word *mabsuut* which appears in the Arabic text. It is possible that *haywetə* and *hetə* also show a dative suffix, *-eta* after a consonant. However since the meaning of these two words is undetermined this may not be so. *haywetə* may be related to *hayæet* (ʌ) 'life' in which case the *-ə* ending is possibly an accusative inflection, though not regular, or just a nominative ending in

-a. *hetə* may be a contraction of *həteetə* (Mc) 'here (is), in this place' or the same word as *haat* (Mc) 'here, behold'. Another puzzle is the word *mənġətə* - the suffix is again presumed to be *-ata*, dative. *mənġ* may be the noun meaning 'middle' (*mənġ* Mc) or the preposition *minġu* (Mc) 'in, on, with, over', in which case one would expect by analogy to the forms described above *minġiyetə*. However the word could also be analysed *mən ġətə*, *mən* being Arabic *min* 'from' and *ġətə* a place name - not wholly unlikely since the preceding (Arabic) word *ṭariiqə* has the meaning 'road, path, way'. The meaning of the first part of this sentence remains quite unclear either way.

A tentative suggestion is made that the predicate suffix makes an appearance in *domištəni* and *azimkəveni*. Here the predicate suffix *-eni* is commonly attached to adjectives (Mc) turning the latter from qualifications to predications avoiding usage of the verb 'to be'. Arabic has a similar syntactic construction, though the predicate suffix is lost in colloquial.

(N)

(A)

<i>kuštota zaro</i>	the little boy	<i>alwalad assaviir</i>
little the boy		the boy the little
<i>zaro kuštotek</i>		<i>alwalad saviir</i>

-ek is the singular m. predicate suffix.

It seems likely that *domišt-* then is an adjectival form of *dom* -the Nawari cognate of *rom*. Macalister has no description of processes of adjective formation however. The phrase would then have the meaning "are Domari". It should be noted though that there is an Arabic dialect word *teeni* 'another, other'. No meaning has been located for *azimkəveni*

whether a predicate suffix is present or not; an Arabic word *ʕaziim* means 'great'.

There are four examples of a use of the locative case ending: *fænemæ*, *dawaθəmæ*, *ʕarsəmæ*, *frænsəmæ*. The locative suffix *-mæ* always follows the accusative suffix *-a* which here shows up as *-ə* being unstressed.

fæn (A) art, culture

ʕars (A) wedding

dawaθ (A) ? unidentified but undoubtedly meaning something like celebration or feast.

frænse (A) < *firænsə* France

In general bound morphemes appear to be of Nawari origin but there are a few exceptions, for example in *beneen*, *juuriin*, *čeyəndiin*, *mənsiin* where the final *-VVn* looks suspiciously Arabic particularly given Macalister's plural examples of *juur* as *juure* 'women' and of *manus* as *manuse* 'men'. It is possible that a paradigmatic regularisation has taken place and the plural forms are related to the accusative Nawari forms *juuren* and *mansæn* but this seems unlikely given the existence of a regular Arabic plural suffix *-iin*.

ben (N) sister *phen* (W) *bhaginī* (S) *bhān* (H)

juur (N) (see p.42)

manus (N) man *manuš* (W) *manuša* (S) *mānuš* (H)

čeyənd - the meaning of this is not clear.

Few verbs are in evidence; there are two clear cases and three unclear. The former: *maareni*, *wisəndi*.

maar (N) to kill *mærær* (Mc) *mār* (W) *māraya* (S) *mārṇā* (H)

The pronominal suffix -əni, -əni (Mc) is the 1st person plural indicative.

wis (N) to sit wesær (Mc) beš (W) ✓viš (S) baisnā (H)

The pronominal suffix -əndi is the 3rd person plural indicative.

The difficult cases are məndəwiikəni, məndəwiikəndi and qankəni. The first two would appear to be the 1st person plural and the 3rd person forms respectively of the same verb in the indicative. This would seem to rule out the possibility of mən being a free morpheme related to əmiin 'we', the nominative pronoun. There is a verb minær (Mc) 'to take, gather' but it has a d-preterite while this verb is clearly indicative; moreover such a meaning does not fit into the context at all. One might guess from the context that the word means 'to work'. qankəni may have a 1st person plural indicative ending - but no meaning has been located for a verb qank; from the context it seems possible that it is a disguised form of the Arabic verb 'was/were' kəen, though why this should be so is not clear since kəen is used undisguised in 8. huuri and hirə would appear to be the 2nd and 3rd person singular preterite forms of the auxiliary verb hočər 'to become' used with the sense 'to be'. Macalister has these forms as hruuri and hri respectively.

The following words are undoubtedly Nawari:

əmiin (N) we əne, əne? (Mc) amē (W) asmān (S) ham (H)

Note Khurasani Domari also has the form əmiin.

ətəo? (N) you ətme (Mc) tumē (W) *tušme (S) tum (H)

ika (N) one, a certain one, somebody. yrka, yikæk (Mc)

yekh (W) eka (S) ek (H)

bəkre (N) sheep pl. bəkra a sheep (Mc)

bakaro (W) varkara (S) bakara (H)

ʔiisəm (N) now isəm (Mc)

əbuski (N) for him əbuskarə (Mc) 3rd person singular
pronominal with the directional suffix.

əkermə (N) with your eye(s) ? rki (Mc)

yakh (W) akši (S) āmkh (H)

This compound word seems to be made up of ək with the 2nd person suffix
-r 'your' and the locative-mə in the associative sense 'with'.

nɪtʃiyɛmi/nɪtʃiyɛlmi (N) ? It is difficult to tell whether
there is a liquid in the penultimate syllable of this word or not. The
only word to which it might be related seems to be še-hočer 'to be happy'
- šayomi 'I am happy' (Mc), with a negative prefix ni- meaning 'I/we (?)
are not happy'- which does not quite fit into the context but since the
rest of the sentence is unclear no definite opinion can be formed.

The remainder of the vocabulary list not yet mentioned is
almost entirely Nawari.

nebk (N) nose pirn (Mc) nakh (W) nāsikā (S) nāk (H)

zuruur (N) (your?) mouth zəri (Mc)

məʔ (N) face muʔ (Mc) mūī (W) mukha (S) muḥh (H)

xastiin (N) hands xast(e) (Mc) vast (W) hasta (S) hāth (H)

ičiin (?) feet pau (Mc) pinro (W)

Note the Arabic plural form of the latter too, again.

mis (N) man possibly related to murš (W) muš (Anglo-
Romani). Note that in 8 the informant uses another word; perhaps for
reasons of semantic differentiation.

The word given for 'water' məʔ is another Arabic dialect word
of the same root as mayy; the usual Nawari word for 'water' according to

Macalister is *pani* which is also the European Romani word. It seems unlikely that such a word would have been lost, however its meaning may have become specialized as Macalister also lists it as meaning 'mud' and 'sea'. Hence usage of the Arabic for a more general purpose.

Other words of definite Arabic origin are:

u	and;	iðə/izə	when;
tariiqə	way, method;	baʿdeen	afterward;
inʃallaa	God willing;	nətmāna	we hope/wish;
kɛɛn	(there) was/were;	bəs	but;
sawa	together;	balki	maybe;
ʔænə	(ʔænə)	to us - we have.	

Words that remain unidentified are: *maali*, *hootə*, *hawe*, and *mizmeeš* - though this may be related to Kurdish *mež* meaning 'a long time'. In the context of the sentence it would seem to mean 'in the past' since it corresponds closely with the word *qadiimən* of the same meaning in the Arabic sentences.

The following "sound" Arabic: *ʃeeniyət*, *siyeerey*, *tawarid* and *defi*. *tawa* of *tawarid* may be the same as *tawa* in the Arabic sentence following - 'then'. *defi* may be related to *ḡiif* 'guests' which appears in the corresponding Arabic sentence. There is some difficulty in determining whether the informant here says *defikasoomən* or *defibasoomən*. *istaniikeri* is a puzzle as is *waʔasa*. There is an Arabic verb *yistānii* meaning 'to stay, wait' though not in the sense of visit. Possibly this is being used nominally with -k, the definite article and -eri, a form of the 2nd person pronominal suffix.

It is worth noting that several of the sentences contain

rhyming elements as for example 1, 4, 5, 8.

Syntax

The affixing of pronominal suffixes to denote possession rather than an apposition of the possessive pronoun and its noun may have come about through areal contact with Arabic which also forms possessives in this manner, using the same suffixes also to denote the oblique case in pronouns as does Nawari.

(N)	(A)
ker-iim my house	bet-ii my house
minŷ-iim with me	ʕan-ii to me (I have)

Reflexive use is similar too; though there are several ways of forming reflexives in Syrian Arabic they include use of *ħeəl*, for example:

leš btitʕab ħeəlæk brlmaslaħa

why are you troubling yourself about the matter?

ħeəlæk here takes a pronominal suffix as does the Nawari use of *ħeəl*. However it should be noted that Syrian Arabic would not use this construction for 'by oneself' meaning 'alone' but would use the word *wəħdu* ('singleness'), for example:

ṭabax wəħdu illaħm

he cooked (by) himself the meat

with the pronominal suffix -u attached to *wəħd*.

Word order is fairly clearly SVO as is Syrian Arabic, though the few verbs in evidence prevent firm conclusions. Note the usage of *keen* (A) 'was/were' in 8 which is not inflected for number or gender just as Macalister observed. Here it may mean 'there were' or '...used to'.

Macalister states also that the subject of the sentence is "generally named as late as possible". It is not possible, however, to either confirm or disconfirm this given the limited data although keen is the only case where a verb precedes the subject, as it does in Arabic fairly consistently.

Conclusion

The findings discussed in this report are, it should again be stressed, tentative and preliminary. I hesitate even to draw conclusions regarding the degree of influence of Arabic upon Nawari despite the obvious areal contact of several hundred years and so have not made any suggestions regarding possible restructuring of the language though a comparison with the status of Angloromani has been suggested by Prof. Hancock. Undoubtedly the most important finding remains that of the spoken language itself - it clearly is spoken by Syrian Gypsies and appears to be in a fairly healthy state. It is unfortunate that I have not been able to confirm the translation with the informant; this remains an important task for the future as does further systematic research - nine sentences is barely a beginning.

Notes

1. Domari (Nawari, Eastern Gypsy) is the branch of Gypsy spoken in the Middle East and north-eastern Africa. Lomavren or Central Gypsy is spoken in eastern Turkey and Armenia, while Romani or Western Gypsy is spoken throughout Europe and overseas. The date of the split, and in fact whether all three descend from a common stem, is a matter of some dispute (see Hancock, 1987).
2. e.g., retention of the glottal stop, where Damascene Arabic has assimilated adjacent vowels.
3. All data on Welsh Romani are taken from Sampson (1926), other Romani linguistic material is from course notes compiled in Professor Hancock's graduate seminar on the language. Sampson provided the main source for Sanskrit and Hindi forms, and his notation has been retained, although they differ in some respects from my own, used elsewhere in this paper.
4. I am grateful to Prof. Hancock for pointing this similarity out to me.

Appendix I

The complete text of the tape is as follows with the omission of a large section of Arabic in the middle which was not relevant to the analysis of the Nawari. The Nawari is not translated here but merely placed in context; the Arabic is translated.

- N. nāmoom mānsuur, ʃinsiyēeyoom ʃuuri
- A. ismi mānsuur waʃinsiiyrti ʃuuriya
- E. My name is mansur and my nationality is Syrian.
- N. āmiin mizmeeʃ qankani fānāmā domiʃteni dawāʾomā 'arsēmā
mīndāwiikēni nrtʃiyēlmi.
- A. nāhnu kinnā filqadiim yāʿnii filʾāʿraaz u filʾāfraah
yāʿnii fānēniin ʾaʾili fānniin wabāʿdeen filḥaadir
- E. In the past we were artists, people of the arts, at
at weddings and at feasts and afterward, now...
- N. baroom tariiqā mənʃatā u aʃtii beneen mēndāwiikēndi u rza
frānsēmā mēndāwiikēndi.
- A. filḥaadir hrlā xawaati kullu biʃtuyul bilfānn u rbān ixween
musiiqi kameenme māʃhuur fi dīmāʃq māʿruuf wa heeliin fii
bariisā biʃtuyul.
- E. Now here my sisters all work in culture/art and my nephews
as well as famous in Damascus - well known - and at present
are working in Paris.
- N. u āmiin yāʿnii ḥāndulōyetā keyivriniyetā keyivrini ʾānā
watēnomēni āmiin ʃēeniyat maali.

- A. wa nəhnə əlhəndulıllaa mabşuutiin fı bələdnə wa murtaahiin
wa həndulıllaa nuxdum fı bələdnə br'ayırşəklirkeen.
muwaatiniin nəhnə həndulıllaa fı bələdnə mən zameen məfnəwiyyət
u ʃinsiyyət u bıkıl məfnəlkırmə wa hurriyə keefiyə ʃabəʃən əlnə.
- E. And we thanks to God are happy and settled in our country
and thanks to God we serve in our country in any way.
we (have been) citizens in our country for a long time in
ideals and in nationality in the full sense of the word and
there is complete freedom for us, of course.
- N. baʃdeen atooʔ insalla hootə keyivhuuri nətmanə mən allaa
atooʔ haywetə basoomən hetə əmiin əzımkəveni atooʔ lətyuur
aw ʃuruur aw ahruurəzə.
- A. wa nəhnə əlhəndulıllaa hunə mabşuutiin watməna hineek ənt
əhweelək wanətməna nutužiina bızıyaarə libələdnə hoon u
təʃtəbəre bələdə fı teeni hoon fə nəhnə nətməna mın allaa
ʔən niştəmaʃ qariibun ʃuufužək ʃən ʃəriib u nətmaa həbet
tətəʃərəf ʃəleyna nihnə həbeen ʔən tətəʃərəf ʃəleyna.
- E. Thanks to God we are happy here and we hope it is the same
for you there and we wish you to come and visit our country
here and that you will consider this another country for you.
We wish from God that we will meet soon and see your face very
soon. We hope you would like to get to know us, we want you
to get to know us.
- N. əmiin hetə həndullaa əştii kəriim basoomən wa əştii ʃeyəndiin
siyərey basoomən.

- A. walḥamdillaa niḥnə ʿənə hoon buyuut wa kul wəḥəd əlḥamdillaa
brʔəmlək bet wabritšuuf brheʔəl ʃrʔ ʃəhih.
- E. We have here houses and everyone owns a house, you will see this
is true.
- N. əmiin ʿədəeyoomən rðə hire ikə basoomən maareni bakre əbuski
rə hire defikasoomən.
- A. nəḥnu ʿədətne yiḥeenə adiif aw ʃəxs mən xeyr allaa u demən
ḥəndullaa nətbax əlxəfaan wahiya ʿədətne.
- E. It is our custom when guests come to us we always cook
a sheep and this is our custom.
- N. u əmiin ʿədəeyoomən mizmeeʃ keen ḡuuriin liḥarusin wisəndi
u mənsiin liḥeelusin bæʃ ʔisəm tawarid waʔasawisəndi sawa.
- A. nəḥnu ʿədətne qadiimen keen ənnisween tēḡlis filməkeen lihəlan
wəzziləm tēḡlis fiməkeen lihəlun ləekin hələ əlḥəndullaa
tawə huwə saar ilʔitneen briṣtimu sawa hələ ʔərəh ʔəhkii
baʿədəttəfəəsiir, məsələn əlʿen - əlʿen fir ḡipsi əki,
ələnʃ - nəbk, əttim - zaruur, əmayy - məʔ, əlwajəh - məʔ,
əlʔiden - xastiin, əlʔiḡreen - ičiin, əlmarʔa - ḡuur,
ərrəḡul - mis.
- E. It was our custom in the past, the women used to sit in
a place by themselves and the men in a place by themselves
but now it has become that the two meet together. Now I am
going to give some details for example, 'eye' in gypsy (sic)
etc.
- N. əmiin istənikəri inʃallaa bəlki hawə basoomən utaḡə atooʔ
məkerma.

- A. nāhnu inšallaa nātəmanə 'ən tæ'tii ɪleynə wətʃuuf br'enək
 u tətə'ærəf 'æleynə mitmə həbet 'ən tətə'ærəf 'æleynə niħnə
 kəmeen harbiin nətə'ærəf 'ælek wa nāhnu murʃɪ' yəfnii dəfwə
 xaasə ɪllə ɬəttə bɪtʃuuf br'enək.
- E. We hope that you will come to us and see with your eyes and
 get to know us just as (we hope) you want to get to know us;
 as we too want to get to know you and we are hoping
 until you see for yourselves.

Appendix II

Some of the paradigms in Macalister are appended here in order to give a more complete picture of some of the grammatical items discussed. Macalister's own notation is replaced by a phonetic transcription as in the text.

a) Verbal suffixes

	Indicative	Preterite
sing. 1.	-æni	-om
2.	-eki	-or
3.	-æri	-æ
pl. 1.	-æni	-en
2.	-æsi	-es
3.	-ændi	-ε

b) 'To become' hočer

	Indicative	Preterite
sing. 1.	homi	-hromi
2.	(hweki?)	-hruri
3.	hori	-hræ, -hri, -hros
pl. 1.	honi	-hreni
2.	(hwesi?)	-hresi
3.	hondi	-hre, -hrend

c) Pronominal Suffixes

sing. 1. -m 2. -r 3. -s pl. 1. -mæn 2. -ræn 3. -sæn

d) Nominal suffixes

	nouns ending -i	nouns ending -æ,o	nouns ending -C
sing.	beli a friend	čonæ a boy	manus a man
nom.	beli	čonæ	manus
voc.	ya beli	ya čonæ	ya manus
acc.	beliæ	čonæ	mansæs
dat.	beliætæ	čonæstæ	mansæstæ
loc.	beliæmæ	čonæsmæ	mansæsmæ
assoc.	beliæsænni	čonæsænni	mansæsænni
direc.	beliækæræ	čonæskæræ	mansæskæræ
abl.	beliæk	čonæsk	mansæsk
pl.			
nom.	belie	čone	manuse
voc.	ya belie	ya čone	ya manuse
acc.	belien	čonæn	mansæn
dat.	belientæ	čonæntæ	mansæntæ
loc.	beliemæ	čonænmæ	mansænmæ
assoc.	beliensænni	čonænsænni	mansænsænni
direc.	belienkæræ	čonænkæræ	mansænkæræ
abl.	belienk	čonænk	mansænk

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