

Chapter 4

4. The Ossetic Noun Phrase

4.1. The simple clause

A simple clause normally consists of either a verb alone, or a verb and, depending on the syntactic properties of the verb, one or more nominal members. These accompany the verb as complements, indicating the agent or experiencer of the action or process, its target, and the various circumstances under which the action or process takes place, such as purpose, place, time, means or manner. The placement of the nominal members in relation to the verb is generally not grammatically significant but the word order SOV may be regarded as the predominant one.

4.2. Nominal word-classes

4.2.1. Ossetic shows no clear-cut distinction between substantives, adjectives and adverbs. Pronouns and cardinal numbers can be singled out as separate word-classes on the basis of certain inflectional and/or syntactic peculiarities. Lexical items which are traditionally classified as adverbs share to a large extent the inflectional properties of nouns and are hardly distinguishable from these.

The comparative (elative, intensifying) suffix *-dær* cannot be used as a criterion for distinguishing between substantives and adjectives; cf. the examples given by Abaev 1964: 20: *næ lægdærtæ Uellažirmæ sæ ud qarinc æmxuizonæi* “the most manly among us rushed as one man to Alagir”.

The same nominal base may appear, with or without inflectional affixes, as either a head noun or a modifier, or it may function as an adverb of one type or another (predicative or sentence adverbial, modifier of an adjectival attribute). Thus, e.g., the nominal base *ting* (I.) means either “strength”, “strong” or “strongly, very”, according to its function in the clause where it occurs.

Bæx “horse” appears as a modifier in *bæx uærdon* (I.) “horse-cart” but as a head in *xorz bæxil ævzær baræg næ fidau* (I.) “a good horse does not fit a bad rider” (MF: I, 344). *Iron* “(an) Ossete, Ossetic” is a head in *biræ Irædtæ* “many Ossetes” but a modifier in *Iron adæm* “the Ossetic people”.

I. *nir* “now” appears as a genitive modifier in *niri cardæi mælæt xuzdær u* “death is better than the present life” (lit. “the life of now”) but as an adverbial in *nirmæ æz cardæn mæxicæn æncad ænæsajæsæi* “until now I have lived for myself peacefully and without worries” (“Ich lebte still und harmlos.” – Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm Tell, transl. by Æmbalti Cocko, act 4, 3, scene 1).⁸⁵

4.2.2. Some nominal bases tend to be used exclusively or primarily in one function or other. This has to be indicated in the lexicon, as far as definite statements are possible, and has actually been done in the dictionary by Miller and Freiman (MF, 1927-32).

Certain derivative suffixes function, or tend to function, as formatives of either substantives or adjectives. Thus, e.g., the suffixes *-ad* / *-adæ* and *-zinad* / *-zinadæ* form abstract nouns: *xorz-zinad* / *xuarz-zinadæ* “goodness”, D. *xuæzdær-zinadæ* “super-

⁸⁵ The drama was no doubt translated from Russian into Ossetic.

iority” (lit. “betterness”), *æcæg-zīnad / æcæg-zīnadæ* “truth, veracity”, *særibar-ad / særibar-adæ* (*særibar-zīnad / -zīnadæ*) “freedom”, *uarzon-ad / uarzon-adæ* “love”, etc.

In the modern language, the suffix *-on* is frequently used as a formative of adjectives corresponding to Russian denominative adjectives in *-sk-*, *-ck-*; cf. *proletaron* “пролетарский”, *kulakon* “кулацкий”, *pedagogon* “педагогический”, etc.⁸⁶

4.2.3. The noun phrase is treated as a single prosodic unit, appearing under one single main stress, irrespective of its complexity.

In complex noun phrases certain morphophonemic changes may take place, such as vowel shortening (*a > æ*) in a preceding element; cf. I. *ævd-særon* “seven-headed” (*avd* “seven”), I. *xærz-uag* “well-behaved” (D. *xuærz-uag*; *xorz / xuarz* “good”; *wag / wagæ* “habit”); another possible change is the sonorisation of an initial consonant in a second element as in *bæx-zarm* “hide of a horse” (*carm* “skin, hide”); I. *ali-vars* “round, on all sides” (*fars* “side”).

As a rule, the noun phrase is continuous. It contains no morphological marker of concord in case and number between the members. The inflectional affixes which mark the function of the noun phrase in the clause occur only once. Accordingly, it is difficult to distinguish between nominal compounds and complex noun phrases (cf. Abaev 1964: 103).

A derivative suffix may be added to a complex noun phrase as a whole; this seems to be particularly common in bahuvrīhi (possessive) compounds such as: *ævd-sær-on / avd-sær-on* “seven-headed”; *diuuæ us-on – divid-on*, *ærtæ us-on ænæxelaf* “a man with two wives has two evils, a man with three wives is without trousers” (a proverb; MF: I, 513); *cippær-k’ax-ig*, *cippær-k’ax-on* “a quadruped”, *bon-vid-dær* “what is worse from day to day” (*fjd / fud* “bad”); *ært-xur-on / ært-xor-on* “a divinity inflicting skin diseases”, lit. “son of sun-fire”, where the patronymic suffix *-on* is added to an inverted tatpuruṣa compound; or “fire – son of the sun” (*art* “fire”, *xur / xor* “sun”; cf. IES: I, 182).

4.2.4. When two or more noun phrases are juxtaposed, the grammatical markers may be added to the final member alone (conjunction reduction, group inflection):

I. *fælæ din cæx(x) æmæ kærzīnæi fīsim uizīstæm* “but we will entertain you with salt and bread” (MF: III, 1665; lit. “... salt-and-bread” + abl./instr. ending *-æi*).

D. *uosæ æma xaiuanbæl æuændgænæ ies* “women and animals should not be trusted” (Miller 1881-87, III: 184; lit. “woman-and-animal” + iness. ending *-bæl*).

D. *nælgoimag ku ramæluī, uæd in æ uælmærdæmæ ærbalasuncæ bairag-bæx æd-sary-estong-æi*.

<i>nælgoimag</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>ramæluī</i>	<i>uæd in</i>	<i>æ</i>	<i>uælmærdæmæ</i>
man (nom.)	when	dies	then him (dat.)	his (gen.)	to-burial place (all.)

<i>ærbalasuncæ</i>	<i>bairag-bæx</i>	<i>æd-sary-estong-æi</i>
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they-bring	foal- horse	with-saddle-equipped (abl.)
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“when a man dies, they bring him to his burial place on (with) a saddled foal” (IAS 1961: II, 404, in a description of burial rites); here the ablative ending is affixed to the modifier in an inverted noun phrase.

Group inflection is optional:

I. *cæuin ta iæ quidis læyz bidirtil, xæxtil, cædtil, cæugædættil* “he had to pass flat plains, mountains, lakes, rivers” (NK 1946: 119); here the repetition of the superessive suffix (*-il*) is no doubt emphatic.

⁸⁶ For nominal suffixes I refer to Abaev 1964: 84 ff.; Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 101 ff.

4.3. Complex noun phrases

4.3.1. In complex noun phrases it is normally the order of the members which decides their function. As a rule, a modifier precedes the noun it modifies:

mard læg “a dead man”, but *læg mard* “a man’s (male) corpse”. This applies to nouns proper, numerals and pronouns as well as relative clauses (the last-mentioned category will not be treated below). When an adjectival attribute is modified by an adverbial phrase, premodification is also the rule.

Even in colloquial speech noun phrases may be quite intricate, consisting of a number of members which are subordinate to one another:

- (1) *avd xoxæn ædtæ xoxi badæg burčizg*
avd xoxæn ædtæ xoxi badæg burčizg
 seven mountain (dat.) outside on-mountain sitting (pres.partic.) fair girl
 “the fair girl sitting on a mountain beyond the seven mountains” (Munkácsi 1923: I, 84).

The two principal manners of connecting an attributive nominal modifier with its head are:

- the modifier is put in the nominative (indefinite) case;
- the modifier is put in the genitive case.

The following examples will illustrate the two manners:

- (2) *I. Xussar Iristoni zonad-irtæssæg instituti uactæ.*
Xussar Iristoni zonad-irtæssæg instituti uactæ
 South Ossetia (gen.) science-research institute (gen.) reports (pl.)
 “Proceedings of the Scientific-Research Institute of South Ossetia” (book title);
- (3) *D. Qara Aslambægi æfsadti bæxti quæcæ.*
Qara Aslambægi æfsadti bæxti quæcæ.
 proper name armies (gen.pl.)horses (gen.pl.)smoke
 “the dust (raised) by the horses of Qara Aslambæg”.
- (4) *I. æmæ ænækæron biræ uarza Sainæg-ældar iæ iunæg čizži*
æmæænækæron biræ uarza Sainæg-ældar iæ iunæg čizži
 and endless much loved Sainæg chieftain his only daughter (gen.)
 “and Sainæg the chieftain loved his only daughter infinitely much” (NK 1946: 277).
- (5) *I. iu azi guird sædæ saži sæ ficcag*
iu azi guird sædæ saži sæ ficcag
 one year (gen.) born hundred cerf (gen.)their first
 “(with) one hundred one year old cerfs ahead of them” (NK 1946: 282).
- (6) *I. mæguir zæronð xæxxon læži k'uxæi amad mæsig u ai*
mæguir zæronð xæxxon læži k'uxæi amad mæsig u ai
 poor old mountaineer man (gen.) hand (abl.) built (past part.) tower is this
 “this is a tower built with the hands of a poor old mountaineer.”

4.3.2. The ablative, the inessive, the adessive, the allative and the equative case may appear as nominal modifiers; thus, we frequently find the partitive ablative and the ablative of material in this role. Similarly, nouns with the case-like prefixes *æd-* “with”, *ænæ-* “without” may function as modifiers. The comitative (lacking in Digor, apparently a fairly recent innovation in Iron, cf. 4.13.4.1.1. and 4.13.4.7. below) seems not to occur in this function, however.

The position of these cases, when used as nominal modifiers, may be freer than that of the genitive and the nominative. Thus, e.g., the ablative: I. *isçi uæ* “somone of you” (the partitive ablative follows the head);

- (7) I. *sædæ lægæn k'axæi k'uxmæ cidæriddær qæui fælistæi, uii kærðgæ dær æmæ xuiigæ dær bakodta.*

sædæ lægæn k'axæi k'uxmæ cidæriddær qæui fælistæi,
100 for-man (dat.) from-foot (abl.) to-hand (all.) whatever is-needed of-attire (abl.)
uii kærðgæ dær æmæxuiigæ dær bakodta
it cutting (ger.) too and sewing too she-did

“whatever of attire there is needed for 100 men from top to toe, she both cut and sewed” (NK 1946: 188).

- (8) I. *biræti kadžin lægtæi æmæ iexi ærvadæltæi amardta*

biræti kadžin lægtæi æmæiexi ærvadæltæi amardta
many (gen.pl.) worthy of-men (abl.pl.) and his-own of-brothers (abl.pl.) he-killed

“he killed many of the worthy men and (many) of his own brothers” (Bishop Iosif: Xucau arɣuani ragondini cibir siydæg istoria, 1881: 139, apud Stackelberg 1886: 22).

4.3.2.1. In association with the genitive case of enclitic personal pronouns, the dative is used as a modifier, expressing possession: *mæncæn mæ xo* “my sister” (“for-me my sister”); *adæmæn sæ kuist* “the work of the people” (“for-people their work”);

- (9) D. *i fiiauæn æfustæ fesk'ardtoncæ bonivainæni*

i fiiauæn æfustæ fesk'ardtoncæ bonivainæni
the for-shepherd (dat.) his sheep (nom.pl.) they-drew-out at-dawn (iness.)

“they drew out the shepherd’s sheep at dawn” (Isaev 1966: 41).

In noun phrases of this type the position of the dative is comparatively free:

- (10) I. *Acæmæzæn Æfsati uidis iæ fidi ærdxord*

Acæmæzæn Æfsati uidis iæ fidi ærdxord
for-Acæmaz (dat.) Æfsati (nom.) he-was his father’s (gen.) oathbrother (nom.)

“Æfsati was the oathbrother of the father of Acæmaz” (NK 1946: 280).

For further comments on this usage cf. 4.13.4.4.9. below.

In the following clauses the distributive dative seems to function as a modifier:

- (11) I. *xuicauboni æxsænadon kuistitæm qæui adæm xæzaræn lægæi racidisti.*

xuicauboni æxsænadon kuistitæm qæui adæm xæzaræn
on-Sunday (iness.) common to-work (all.pl.) of-village (gen.) people (nom.) for-
house (dat.)

lægæi racidisti
as-man (abl.) they-went

“on Sundays the village people went the common work, one man from each house” (Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 46).

- (12) D. *xæzaræn lægæi isbadtæncæ [sic!] innætæ ba læudtæncæ*

xæzaræn lægæi isbadtæncæ innætæ ba læudtæncæ
for-house (dat.) as-man (abl.) they-sat-down others (nom.pl.) but they-stood

“they sat down, one man from each house, the others were standing” (Isaev 1966:41).

Cf. also the use of the verbal derivatives in *-æn* (= the dative) used as modifiers in compounds: *raiguiræn bon* “birthday” (“day-for-birth”), *kæscæn-cæst* “spectacles” (“eye-for looking”), *xæccæn-garz* “weapon” (“tool-for-fighting”), etc.

4.3.2.2. In the following example the partitive ablative is preposed to its head:

- (13) I. *1860-1865 azti Kavkazi cæræg adæmtæi ting biræ aligdi Turkmæ*

1860-1865 azti Kavkazi cæræg adæmtæi
in 1860-65 years (iness.pl.) in-Caucasus living (pres.part.) of-people (abl.pl.)
ting biræ aligdi Turkmæ

very many fled (3.sg.) to-Turkey (all.)
 “in the years 1860-1865 very many of the peoples living in the Caucasus emigrated to Turkey” (Iron literaturæ Xrestomati 1969: 48).

The ablative of material used as a modifier:

- (14) I. *kuiroiī fidæi uædærttitæ*
kuiroiī fidæi uædærttitæ
 of-mill (gen.) from-stone (abl.) spools (nom.pl.)
 “spools of millstone” (Munkácsi 1923-32: I, 14).

The adessive functions as a modifier in noun phrases as the following:

- (15) I. *Sirx gvardiī nomil kolxoz*
Sirx gvardiī nomil kolxoz
 red of-guard (gen.) name (adess.) kolkhoz (nom.)
 “a kolkhoz called the Red Guard”.

Nomil us “a second wife, concubine” (lit. “wife in the name”), *k’uxil xæcæg / k’oxbæl xuæcæg* “the first best man” (“Brautführer”; lit. “holding in the hand”).

4.3.2.3. The allative functions as a modifier in compounds like *kommæ kæsag (kommæ gæs)* “obedient” (lit. “looking-to-(one’s-) mouth”), *ræstmæ nixas* “a true word” (lit. “a word for-truth”), *cæstmæ qus* “a hypocrite” (lit. “ear on-eye”), *cæstmæ qus nixas* “hypocritical talk”.

4.3.2.4. The equative may function as a modifier: *dæliau, uæliau fændag* “the road downwards, upwards”, *lægau læg* “a worthy man” (“a man like a man”), *xærdau xærd* “a solid meal” (“a meal like a meal”). – For more details on the double role of the suffix -au cf. 4.13.4.1.1. below.

4.3.2.5. The modifier may be connected with the plural ending -t-:

- (16) I. *æncæ- bazir-tæ mary*
æncæ- bazir-tæ mary
 without wings (pl.) bird
 “a bird without wings”;
- (17) I. *xæid-tæ-gond kui fæci læppu*
xæid-tæ- gond kui fæci læppu
 parts- done (past part.) when he finished boy (nom.)
 “when the boy had finished the partition”.

4.4. Inversion of modifier and head

In complex noun phrases the inverted order of the modifier and its head is used as a stylistic device, usually carrying some emphatic or archaic connotation. This possibility no doubt reflects an older stage of the language, with a more ambivalent word order.

4.4.1. Gabaraev (1965) quotes some examples from the poetry of K’ubalti Alikssandr (Aleksandr Kubalov, 1871-1944) where this stylistic feature is said to be particularly common:

- (1) *badt zi uasžitæ uæzdan*
badt zi uasžitæ uæzdan
 sat (sg.) there guests (nom.pl.) eminent
 “eminent guests were sitting there”
- (2) *uižænis sæ razi dik’uxig stir*

- uiʒænis sæ razi dik'uxig stir*
 will-be their in-front-of ladle (nom.) big
 “a big ladle will be in front of them”
- (3) *næ kæsi iæ razi ærvon mæi siʒærin*
næ kæsi iæ razi ærvon mæi siʒærin
 not it-looks his in-front-of heavenly moon golden
 “the golden moon of the heaven does not shine in front of him”
- (4) *æmbærzt u iæ uælæ pælæz dær buxairag*
æmbærzt u iæ uælæ pælæz dær buxairag
 covered (past part.) is his over cloak (nom.) also Bukharian
 “he was also covered by a cloak from Bukhara” (cf. also Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 49).

It seems likely that the stylistic possibility of inversion depends on the meaning of the modifier, at least in part. In the examples quoted by Gabaraev the modifying nouns are generally characterizing, not restrictive (with the possible exception of the last one).

Inversion may be used to emphasise the modifier as especially important because it conveys some new or contrasting information:

- (5) *Bibo xæʒar eyau saræzta, fælcæ iin zi cærin næ bantist*
Bibo xæʒar eyau saræzta fælcæ iin zi cærin næ bantist
 Bibo house (nom.) big he-built but him (dat.) there-to-live (inf.) not it-succeeded
 “Bibo built a big house, but he could not live in it (i.e., even if it was big)”.

4.4.2. In noun phrases of this type the plural ending of the head may be repeated on the modifier:

- (6) *Bibo bæxtæ xærztæ balxædta, fælcæ ...*
Bibo bæxtæ xærztæ balxædta fælcæ ...
 Bibo horses (nom.pl.) good (nom.pl.) he-bought but ...
 “Bibo bought good horses (i.e., good enough), but ...”

A contrasting sense can be stressed by the addition of an adverbial such as *bærgæ* “to be sure, certainly”:

- (7) *bæx bærgæ xorz balxædta, fælcæ iin sary næi, ændæra* “he bought a good horse indeed, but he did not have a saddle, though” (other examples in Gabaraev 1965).

4.4.3. Appositional noun phrases naturally appear after their head:

- (8) *uæd Kozirtæi iu Toxtæ xuindi, læppu-læg kæmdær ærdxæræn qaruiæ æmæ æxsaræi nomxæssæn iæ kuistæi.*
uæd Kozirtæi iu Toxtæ xuindi læppu-læg
 then of-the-Kozirtæ (abl.pl.) one (nom.) Toxtæ (nom.) was-called boy-man (nom.)
kæmdær ærdxærænqaruia æmæ æxsaræi nomxæssæn iæ kuistæi
 somewhere unusual energy (abl.) and strength (abl.) renowned his work (abl.)
 “then one of the Kozyrtae was called Toxtæ, a young man, widely renowned for his unusual energy and strength and his work” (Bežizati Čermen 1958: 394).

4.4.4. Traditional surnames are placed after the proper name: *Beduxa ræsuyd* “B. the Beautiful”, *Nasiran ældar* “N. the Chieftain” (heroes of the Nart epos), *Kæfti sær ældar* “Head of Fish the Chieftain” (a mythological character), *Nikkola xuarz* “the Good N.”. – Postmodification seems also to occur in epic or mythological names such as *Batir-as* “*Batyr* (< Turk. *batur* “hero”) *the As*, the Ossetic hero”, cp. the Georgian name of an

Alan hero, *Osbatyari*; *Buræ-færnig* / *Boræ-færnug* “B. the Prosperous” (the ancestor of the Borætæ tribe of the Nart epos).⁸⁷

4.4.5. Inversion is found in religious or traditional vocabulary: *xur-zærin* “the golden sun, dawn”, a designation of the sun particularly used in solemn invocations; *mæi-næuæg* (-nog) “new moon”; *mæi-zæronð* “the old moon” (the last fourth phase of the moon).

Ært-xur-on / *ært-xor-on* (from *art* “fire”, *xur* / *xor* “sun”) “a fire divinity (*zuar*) inflicting skin diseases; a cake baked on New Year’s eve in honour of this divinity”, seems to mean either “fire of the sun” or (rather) “descendant of sun fire” (with the patronymic suffix -on); for details I refer to IES: I, 182.

A similar case may be *Kuird-alæg-on* / *Kurd-alæg-on*, the name of the Nart smith, if from **kurd-āryak-āna*- “the Alan smith” (but cf. IES: I, 610).

Regarding inverted compounds, cf. 4.5.3. below.

4.5. Nominal Compounds.

From Old Iranian (and Indo-European) Ossetic has inherited the capacity to combine independent nouns into compounds, with only the final member being inflected for number and case. Compounds rarely comprise more than two component members. As already mentioned, there is no clear-cut distinction between substantives and adjectives. Accordingly it is difficult to draw a well-defined line between nominal compounds and complex noun phrases.

Nominal compounds can be either determinatives (*tatpuruṣas*, *karmadhārayas*) or possessives (*bahuvrīhis*). Both types are productive. Copulative (*dvandva*) compounds are rare.

This device for expanding the vocabulary Ossetic shares with the neighbouring Turkic and Northwest Caucasian languages. In the Nakh languages nominal composition is also usual; cp. Chech.-Ing. *zudaber* “girl” (*zuda* “woman”, *ber* “child”), *dānāna* “parents” (*dā* “father”, *nāna* “mother”); *vokkxas(t)ag* “old man”, *jokkxas(t)ag* “old woman” (*vokkxa* (m.), *jokkxa* (f.) “old”, *s(t)ag* “human being” (Chechen *stag*, Ingush *sag*).⁸⁸ As to the Northeast Caucasian languages in general, cf. Klimov 1994: 168 ff. However, there can be no doubt about the Iranian origin of this typological feature in Ossetic.

In his Grammatical Sketch (1964: 99 ff.) Abaev devoted an extensive survey to the nominal compounds (arranged according to principles somewhat different from those adopted here) thus saving us a detailed treatment of the various composition patterns.⁸⁹

4.5.1. Tatpuruṣas vs. bahuvrīhis

One and the same compound may be either a *tatpuruṣa* (*karmadhāraya*) or a *bahuvrīhi*, according to its function in the clause. Examples: I. *xæf-cæst* (-*cæstæ*, D.): a) “blear-eyed”, b) “ulcer” (*xæf* / *xæfæ* “matter, pus”, *cæst* / *cæstæ* “eye”); *zærdæ-zavd* (I.): a) “hit in the heart” (“ins Herz getroffen”, MF: I, 556), “one who has had a stroke”, b) “heart failure” (*zærdæ* “heart”, *cævin*, *cavd* “to strike”); *zærd-æncoi* (I.): a) “with a quiet heart, hopeful”, *zærdæncoi card* “a peaceful life”, b) “peace of mind” (*æncoi* / *æncoinæ* “rest, peace”).

⁸⁷ Cp. Abaev 1949: 231 ff.

⁸⁸ Cf. Maciev / Ozdoev 1966: 202, 485, 514.

⁸⁹ Cf. also Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 141 ff.

4.5.2. Semantic changes

Nominal composition frequently brings about semantic changes, so that the compound is not always comprehensible on the basis of its members (metaphorical extension, an older meaning preserved in the compound); cp. *zærd-æryævd* “clever gifted” (*æryævin*, *æryævd* “to seize, catch”, with semantic specification by means of preverbs; cf. IES: II, 407; IV, 301); *car-æftid* “unhappy”, lit. “one whose roof (*car*) has tumbled down” (*æftin*, *æftid* “to fall down”); *ærd-xord* / *ærd-xuard* “a sworn brother” (*ard* “oath”, *xærin* / *xuærun*, *xord* / *xuard* “to eat”, lit. “with an eaten (swallowed) oath”); an inverted bahuvrīhi).⁹⁰

The compound may even be unanalyzable within the modern language; cp. *sæl-xær* (I., D.) “stupid, disturbed, turnsick” (from *sær* “head” and *xær* < **xæld*, past participle of *xalin* “to ruin”, *xælin* “to decay”).

4.5.3. Internal order

In nominal compounds, as in other noun phrases, the modifier as a rule precedes the head.

Inverted determinatives (tatpuruṣas, karmadhārayas) are rare but cp. I. *iæu-gæf* “caviar, roe” (*iæu* “millet”, *kæf* “fish”), I., D. *cæf-xad* “horse-shoe” (*cæg* “ring, hoop”, *fad* “foot”, with metathesis; cf. IES: I, 295), *kæv-dæs* “crib, manger” (if from **kæd-uæs* = **waca-kata-*, lit. “place for calves” (cp. D. *uæs* “calf”); cp. IES: I, 591). The last two, synchronically unanalyzable words attest a comparatively high age of this type of compounds.

In a few cases, an inverted tatpuruṣa seems to reflect word forms that have become obsolete in the modern language:

In I. *don-guiron* “mill-brook” (but *don-guiroi* “water mill”) the second member of the compound derives from **kurāna* “mill” = modern Iron *kuïroi*, (D. *kuiroiṇæ* < **kurān(y)ā-*?). An ancient form **kurāna* is also attested by D. *kuron-don* “mill-brook” and the Balkarian place name *Kuran-dan* (< Oss.; cf. IES: I, 369, 611 and Abaev 1964: 117 ff.). – Cp. also 4.4.5. above.

Bahuvrīhi compounds with the modifying noun as the prior member are common in the modern language and are no doubt an Aryan (and Indo-European) inheritance.

To this type belong the numerous compounds with the privative prefixes *æ-* (< **a-* < **n-*), *ænæ-* (< *ana-*) “without”, and the comitative prefixes *æm-* (< **ham-* < **sam-*), *æd-* (< **hada-* < **sadha-*, **sm-dha-*) “with”.

Examples:

- æ-gad* / *æ-gadæ* “inglorious, without glory” (*kad* / *kadæ*);
- I., D. *æ-væd* “without a trace” (*fæd*), “childless, without issue”;
- with a derivative suffix: *æ-gom-ig/-ug* “dumb, speechless” (*kom* “mouth”);
- I., D. *ænamond* “unfortunate” (< **ænæ-amond*; *amond* “fortune”);
- I., D. *ænæ-zærdæ* “coward, without courage” (*zærdæ* “heart”);
- æm-nost* / *-niuast* “drinking companion”, lit. “of a joint drink” (*nost* / *niuæstæ*);
- I., D. *æm-siæxs* “brother-in-law” (the husbands of two sisters are called *æmsiæxstæ*; *siæxs*, a designation used by the wife’s relatives for her husband);
- I., D. *æd-gærtæ* “armed, with arms” (*gærtæ* pl.);
- æd-zond* / *-zund* “intelligent, clever, with intellect” (*zond* / *zund*);
- æd-uærdon* “with a wagon” (*uærdon* / D. *-un*);
- I., D. *æd-bæx* “with a horse” (*bæx*);

⁹⁰ Cp. also IES. I, 174.

æd-guin æd-qis “with hair and bristle, totally, as a whole”.

- (1) I. *sizdæxt æd-don sæximæ* “she returned home with the water” (Dæbe I, 23);
- (2) D. *bæxtæ rauaxta æd-idæntæ æma æd-særytæ iguærdænti æma xunti uæyðæi*.
bæxtæ rauaxta æd-idæntæ æma æd-særytæ iguærdænti æma xunti uæyðæi
horses he-left with-bridles and with-saddles in-meadowsand in-fields free (abl.sg.)
“he left the horses free in the meadows and in the fields with the bridles and the saddles” (Miller 1902: 2);
- (3) I. *iu ran iu dinžir tulz bælas æd-uidægta stidta* “in one place he pulled up a tall oak by (lit. “with”) the roots” (NK 1946: 213).

4.5.3.1. Compounds with *æ-*, *ænæ-*, *æm-* are frequently used in the ablative, marking circumstances concomitant with the action expressed by the verb; I know of no example of an *æd-* compound in the ablative, however (cf. 4.13.4.6. ff. below). Cp.

æm-dix-æi / *-dux-æi* “with joined forces” (*tix* / *tuxæ*);
æm-žix-æi / *-žux-æi* “unanimously, with one mouth” (*žix* / *žux*);
D. *æm-duar-æi cæraitæ, ieu uedugæi xuæraitæ* “you live behind the same door, you eat with one spoon” (example in MF: I, 125);
æm-auærc-æi, æn-auardon-æi “prodigally, extravagantly” (cf. *auærdin* “to save”);
ænæ-fæ-tæriyæd-æi / *-itæregæd-æi* “without pity” (*tæriyæd* / *tæreyæd*);
ænæ-rai-qal-æi “without waking up” (*qal* / *iyal* “awake”).

In the last two examples (MF: I, 149; 146) the preverb (*fæ-*, *ra-*) is intercalated between the prefix and the noun.

- (4) I. *æ-val-æ-vidis-æi iæ card arvista* “he lead his life without blame (*fau*) and reproach (*fidis*)” (MF: I, 82).
- (5) D. *uarzun alke dær æ-væsmon-æi* “I love everyone without repentance” (*fæsmon*) (IES: I, 460).

4.5.3.2. The privative prefix *ænæ-* is frequently found in gerundial clauses, in which case a nominal element can be intercalated between the prefix and the gerund:

- (6) *ænæ simax bafærs-gæ kuid*
ænæ simax bafærs-gæ kuid
without you (gen.) asking (ger.) how
“Why did he not ask you?”
- (7) *ænæ dardmæ kæs-gæiæ færdiizina*
ænæ dardmæ kæs-gæiæ færdiizina
without far (all.) looking (ger.abl.) you-will-err (fut.)
“You will err if you do not look far (ahead)” (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 58).

This syntactic feature must no doubt be seen in connection with the tendency towards an incorporation of the nominal parts of the clause in the verbal body, as mentioned in 3.5.6. above.

4.5.4. Inverted bahuvr̥his

According to Abaev (1964: 117), inverted bahuvr̥his are not a productive type in the modern language. However, there exist a considerable number of such compounds, which indicates that the order of members was formerly freer than it is now. In a few instances the order is still optional; cp. I. *bar-xi* / *xi-bar* (D. *xe-baræ*) “free; arbitrary, secluded, solitary”, lit. “with his own (*xi-*) will (*bar*)”; *fenda(g)-rast* and *ræst-vændag*

“a pleasant journey, lit. “a straight way” (farewell greeting). Cp. also synonyms like *kom-xæliu* and *xæliu-ʒix* “with an open mouth” (*kom*, *ʒix* “mouth”).

4.5.4.1. Quite a number of nouns denoting parts of the body and mental abilities occur as prior members in bahuvrīhi compounds, frequently used figuratively. MF list some ten bahuvrīhi compounds with *zærdæ* “heart” as the prior member, e.g.: *zærdæ-ruxs* / *-rox*s “joyous, with a bright heart” (MF: I, 557; but cp. also *ruxs-* / *rox*s-*zærdæ*); *zærdæ-(æ)ncoi* / *-(æ)ncoinæ* “with a calm heart” (MF: I, 556; but this can also be understood as a tatpuruṣa meaning “hope”).

Other examples:

sær-ægas “unharméd, with an unharméd head”;

ærm-aræxst “skilfull, with able hands” (*ærm*; *aræxsin* “to be able to”);

D. *ærm-æftud* “clumsy”, lit. “with fallen hands” (*æftauin* “to bring down”, intr. *æftin*);⁹¹

I. *qæst-ælvæst* “slender in the waist” (cf. D. *qæstæ* “stomach”, obsolete in modern Iron, except in this compound; *ælvasin* “to tighten, tie up, to pull out”; cf. IES: I, 131 f. and II, 298);

bærzæi-sast “with broken neck”, used in curses: *bærzæisast fæu* “may you break your neck” (*sæddin*, *sædtin* “to break”; cf. IES: I, 254 and III, 53 f.);

xuilf-xæld “with damaged entrails” (*xalin* “to break, to shatter”, intr. *xælin*; cf. IES: IV, 259 and 138);

astæu-naræg “with a slender waist” (also *naræg-astæu*; IES: I, 78 f. and II, 156);

guir-uidauc “well-proportioned, with a slender (*fīdauc*) figure” (IES: I, 531);

uæng-uayd “with drooping limbs” (*uazin* “to let go”; IES: II, 228 f. and IV, 37 f.);

ud-uældai “selfless, self-denying, with a self-sacrificing soul” (*uældai* “superfluous”; IES: IV, 9);

ud-ægas “living, with an undamaged soul” (IES: IV, 8).

4.5.4.2. Inverted bahuvrīhis with a past participle in *-t*, *-d* as the final member are particularly common. Examples of this type have already been mentioned in the preceding paragraphs; in addition to these the following can be quoted:

kard-ælvæst “with naked sword” (*ælvasin* “to pull out”; IES: I, 571 and 131);

færs-issad “with sharpened edges” (*issin* “to sharpen”; IES: I, 455), used as a compound verb with *kænin* in the sense of “to sharpen”;

bæx-ævzærst-æi, *læg-ævzærst-æi* (abl.) “with chosen horses”, “with chosen men” (*ævzarin* “to choose”; IES: I, 209 f.);

card-æfsæst “satisfied, cheerful, content with life” (*æfsadin* “to satiate”; IES: I, 479 f.);

nom-ʒid “famous, whose name has come out” (*cid*, past participle of *cæuin* “to come, go”; IES: II, 188 f.);

æydau-xæld “demoralised, with ruined moral” (IES: I, 122; for *xæld* cf. 4.5.4.1. above, s.v. *xuilf-xæld*);

rixidast “with his moustache shaved off” (used as a disgrace; *dasin* “to shave”; IES: II, 416 f. and I, 347 f.);

car-æftid “unhappy, one whose roof has tumbled down” (IES: I, 289 and 115 ff.).

4.5.4.3. Among the inverted bahuvrīhis there are nouns which to all appearances belong to the traditional social or religious vocabulary. Such a word is, e.g., *ærd-xord* “a sworn brother” mentioned above (4.5.2.); note the vowel shortening in the prior member.

⁹¹ Cf. Isaev apud Šagirov 1977: II, 158: *Ӏӕрмӕфт(р)у* ‘*ärmăft(r)u* “id.”, a Kab. borrowing from Ossetic.

Similarly, *mæi-dar* “dark, with a dark (*tar*) moon”, used in fixed phraseology as an epithet of *æxsæv* “night”, is most likely an old poetic creation (IES: II, 84).

4.5.4.4. Numerals and privative and comitative prefixes do not occur as final members in possessive compounds.

4.5.4.5. The inverted order of the constituents in bahuvrīhi compounds is undoubtedly an Aryan (and Indo-European) inheritance that Ossetic shares with its sister languages. The free word order of the constituents is easily explicable when we consider that the bahuvrīhis are basically equivalents of descriptive relative clauses and originated from the predicative or appositional use of a group of nouns characterizing a substantive, in a period of Indo-European when the inflectional marking of concord between the members of compound noun phrases was less developed than in the attested ancient languages; cp. OInd. *nārah sv-āśvāh* (< IE **néres su-ékuōs*) “men with good horses” (“men – their horses (are) good”); OInd. *indra-jyeṣṭhā devāh* “the gods having Indra as their mightiest” < **devāh – indro jyēṣṭhaḥ* “the gods – Indra (is) their mightiest” (Wackernagel-Debrunner: II,1, 289 f.; Jacobi 1897).

4.5.4.6. Among the Scytho-Sarmatian proper names found in Greek inscriptions in the North Pontic lands there are a few which can be interpreted as inverted bahuvrīhis. The majority of the names are too opaque, however, to permit indisputable conclusions. The following items seem to be fairly certain, or at least worth considering:

Ἀσπουργος, attested several times as the name of a Bosphoran king (1st cent. B.C./A.D.), is to all appearances derived from **aspa-* “horse” and **uyra-* “strong” (with a regular metathesis of *-yr-* > *-ry-*), i.e. “owning a strong horse (strong horses)”. In modern Ossetic *æfsury* / *æfsorq* is the name of a mythical breed of horses (historically an inverted karmadhāraya). Ἀσπουργιανοί is attested as the name of a tribe living east of the Don (or of a colony of mercenaries, “soldiers of Ἀσπουργος, the Bosphoran king”? cf. Zgusta 1955: 35).

Μαιωσαρα (a woman’s name) is possibly to be analyzed as consisting of **māhyā-* “moon” and **sarah-* “head” (“Moon-head, Moon-face?”); cf. Abaev 1979: 294.

4.5.4.6.1. **arta-* “truth, oath” seems to occur as the prior member in Ἀρδαγαδακος, possibly **arta-* plus **haxta-* “authorised, empowered” (cf. Bartholomae 1904: 1745) plus **aka-*, “Eidverbinding habend, zur Eidgenossenschaft gehörend” (cf. Justi 1895: 21). In Ἀρδαβούριος the name of three Byzantine generals of Alanic descent, the second member is obscure (**baiwar-* “many”, cf. Abaev l.c.: 280: “наделенный многим *ard’om*”).

4.5.4.6.2. **aspa-* “horse” occurs as the prior member in Ἀσπαιμθαρης (in the genitive Ἀσπαιμθαρεος). The second member Vasmer (1923: 34) compares (tentatively) with Av. *miθbara-* “gepaart, vereint” (Barth: 1183), i.e. “der gepaarte Rosse besitzt”. Another possibility might be a derivation from **miθra-* “friend”, i.e. “whose horse is his friend”; for the meaning cp. perhaps Ἀρμισσποί, a Scythian tribal name (Herodotus IV,13 and 27; III,116), if from **aryaman-* “friend, companion” as suggested by Benveniste (apud Legrand: 1960: 64): “φίλιπποι”, a premodified bahuvrīhi. Ἀσπαιμθρης is attested as an Old Persian proper name by Ktesias (Pers. 14, FGH, III C, 1958, p. 464); cf. Justi 1895: 46 and Zgusta 1955: 74: “whose horse is his friend” or “a friend of horses?”). Was the Sarmatian name borrowed from Old Persian?

Ἀσπανδανός is analyzed by Abaev (1979: 282) as **aspa-* plus **andāna-* “steel” (Oss. *ændon*), apparently also found in the Sarmatian proper name Ἀνδα[κ]ός, i.e. “owning a steel horse”. Non liquet.

Even less certain is Ἀσφορουός, which Abaev (1979: 282) explains as **aspa-* plus **rauka-* “light”, i.e. “owning bright horses, Λεύκιππος“. Abaev (p. 281) also refers to *Asparuch*, Ἀσπαρούχ, the name of a Bulgarian chieftain in the Balkans (7th cent.); but cf. Moravcsik 1958: II, 75 ff. Ἀσπαρούκις, the name of a Georgian *P’it’iaxši* (2nd–3rd cent.) and Arm. *Aspūrak* (Justi 1895: 47) are hardly of Sarmatian origin.

4.5.4.6.3. **Baxta-* (**bayda-*) “fate” may occur as the prior member in Βαγδοχος, possibly **bayda-* plus **yahu-*, i.e. “whose fate is good”, and in Βαγδοσαυος, analysed by Abaev (1979: 284) as **baxta-syāva-* “whose fate is black” (an apotropaic name, to ward off evil?). Another explanation is given by Vasmer (1923: 35): **baxta-savah-* “der den Nutzen des Schicksals hat”.

4.5.4.6.4. **A-kāsa-*, cf. Oss. (I., D.) *ægas* “safe, sound”, is possibly found as the second member in Γωδιγασος, if the prior member can be identified with Oss. *quidi* / *yudi* “thought”: “of a sober, judicious mind” (“*здравомысл*“, Abaev 1979: 277); perhaps also in Σαναγασκος, seemingly attested in the genitive Σαναγασκο[υ] (for the reading of the inscription cf. Zgusta 1955: 143), if the prior member is **sawah-* “morning” (Oss. *sæu-* “morning” in compounds and derivatives; cf. IES: III, 93; Bartholomae 1904: 1562); in that case the sense would probably be “whose morning is (shall be) good, healthy”. A third example may be Οσσιγασος, Ουσιγασος, (Οσσι[γ]ασος?) in which Abaev (1979: 277) sees the forerunner of Oss. *us* / (*u*)*osæ* “wife” as the prior member: “having (may he get) a sound, judicious wife”.

Πιτοφαρνακης, Πιτφαρνακης, Φιτοφαρ[νακης?] can possibly be translated as “having a well-off (**farnaka-*) father (**pitā-*)”. A more likely interpretation is given by Zgusta (1955: 134 ff.): “dessen Ruhm (**farnah-*) in seinem Vater begründet ist”.

4.5.4.7. *Sangibanus* is given by Jordanes (37) as the name of an Alanic chieftain in Gallia (5th cent.). A possible analyses is **čanga-* “arm” and **bānu-* “bright” (I., D. *bon* “day; strength”), i.e. “having bright arms, λευκώλενος“, in which case it would have functioned as an adjective.⁹² Another analysis is suggested by Abaev (1979: 284) who translates the name as “имеющий мощь в руке”, “having strength in his arms” (perhaps rather “with strong arms, armstrong”, an inverted *bahuvrīhi*).

4.5.4.8. According to the anonymous *Periplus Ponti Euxini*, 77 (5th cent. A.D.), the Alanic or “Tauric” name of the Crimean town Theodosia was Ἄρδάβδα (so the mss.), which the text explains as “(the town) of seven gods”: Νῦν δὲ λέγεται ἡ Θεοδοσία τῇ Ἀλανικῇ ἦτοι τῇ Ταυρικῇ διαλέκτῳ Ἄρδάβδα, τουτέστιν ἐπτάθεος. This name has commonly been analyzed as a compound consisting of **arta-* “truth, oath” (OInd. *ṛta-*, Av. *aša-*, Oss. *ard*, etc.) plus **avda-* (**hapta-*) “seven” (Abaev 1979: 280; 1949: 155; 231; IES: I, 61; Vasmer 1923: 72 who proposes an emendation of the text to Ἄβδαρδα). I see no reason to challenge this explanation, although the apotheosis of **arta-* “truth, right, oath” to a divinity is not substantiated by our sources for the study of the ancient North Pontic religions (needless to say that the Greek translation offered in the text is not necessarily precise).

⁹² As to the pronunciation of the ancient voiceless affricates cf. Thordarson 1989.

4.5.4.9. The Russian river name *Dnepr* (O.Russ. *Днѣпръ*, cf. also Gr. *Δάναρις* in *Periplus* (58) and Lat. *Danaper* by *Jordanes* (5), is derived by *Abaev* (1949: 154; 236; 1979: 278) from Ir. **dānu-* “water, river” plus **āpra-* “deep” (cf. Oss. *arf* “id.”, < **āp-* “water” plus a suffix **-ra-* according to IES: I, 63). He explains it as a *karmadhāraya* “Deep River”. Alternatively the name might be explained as a *bahuvrīhi* “with deep waters”. Actually, we should rather expect a metathesis in the group **-pr-* (**-fr-*), cp. **uyra-* > *ury-* in *Ασπ-ουργος* etc. (cf. *Zgusta* 1955: 233; *Bielmeier* 1989: 240 ff.). For other explanations I refer to *Vasmer*: I, 354 f. s.v. *Dnepr*.

4.5.4.9.1. The name of the *Dnepr* can hardly be separated from that of the *Dnestr* (O.Russ. *Днѣстръ*; *Danaster*, *Danastrius* in the *Periegesis ad Nicomedem regem* by *Pseudo-Skymnos*, first cent. B.C., v. 850; *Geographi Graeci Minores* I, 1855, p. 232; cf. *Real-Encycl.* XVIII. 2; 1949, col. 825 ff.). Besides, it is found as the name of two rivers in South Russia and the Ukraine (*Her.* IV, *passim*, and later *Ammianus Marcellinus* XXXI,3,3,4; *Jordanes* 5). The second member of the compound could also be explained as **stūra-*, cp. Oss. *stir* / (*æ*)*stur* “great” (cf. IES: III, 158 f.; *Bartholomae* 1904: 1609 *stūra-* “umfangreich, stark, derb”); this adjective is probably found in *Sarmatian* proper names, too (*Abaev* 1979: 304). A river name **Dān(u)-stura-* is either an inverted *bahuvrīhi* “having great (deep?) waters”, or a *karmadhāraya* “Great River”. For other explanations see *Vasmer* I, 355, s.v. *Dnestr*. *Βορυσθένης*, the ancient Greek name of the *Dnepr* (*Herodotus* IV, 53 onwards), has commonly been thought to be an adaptation of a *Scythian* **Vāru-sīāna-* “Broad Place” (or “having broad places” (of the ostuary); cf. *Vasmer* 1923: 65 ff. but cp. *Schmid* 1976 and 1978).

4.5.4.9.2. The third Russian river name that possibly derives from an inverted *Scytho-Sarmatian bahuvrīhi* is *Avsorok*, if from **āp-sūraka-* “having strong waters” (*sūra-* “stark, gewaltig”, cf. *Bartholomae* 1904: 1584) as suggested by *Schmid* (1976: 7),⁹³ cp. also *Abaev*’s (1949: 183) derivation from **stūra-* “big” and *Vasmer* 1923: 53.

4.5.4.9.3. *Παντικάπης*, the name of an unidentified river in the Ukraine (*Herodotus* IV, *passim*, and later authors; see *Vasmer* 1923: 67), seems to be a Greek adaptation of a *Scythian* postmodified noun phrase meaning “road, way of fish”, either as an inverted determinative or consisting of a head noun plus a post-positive genitive, i.e. **pantā-* “way” plus **kapa-* “fish”. *Παντικάπης* is also an ancient name of the *Bosporus Cimmerius* (cf. *Real-Encycl.* XVIII (1949), col. 825 ff.), together with the name of the town *Παντικαπαίων* which was situated at the *Bosporus Cimmerius*, the modern *Kerch*.

4.5.4.9.4. The *Sarmatian* tribal name *Ἀλάνορσοι* (*Ptolemaeus*, *Strabo*; *Real-Encycl.* I, 1285) most likely reflects a postpositive adjective, if we identify the final part of the compound with *Av. auruša-*, Oss. *urs* / *ors* “white”, i.e. “the White Alans” (cf. 4.4.–4.4.4. above). The opposite order is probably found in the tribal name *Ῥωξολανοί* (*Strabo* etc.; also *Ῥευκαναλοί*; *Real-Encycl.* Suppl. VII, 1195 ff.), if its prior part can be identified with *Av. raočah-*, Oss. *ruxs* / *rox*s “light”, *Av. raočšna-* “light, bright” and Oss. *rux(s)sag* / *rox*sag (cf. IES: II, 437) in the formula phrase recited at funerals, *ruxsag u* “be blissful, sc. in the other world”, etc.: “the Light Alans”.⁹⁴

⁹³ This quotation could not be verified, cf. above [S.F].

⁹⁴ Colour terms are occasionally found in *Ossetic* ethnic names; cp. *Urs-tualtae*, used of the *Ossetes* living at the upper reaches of the *Didi Liaxvi* in *Georgia* (cf. IES: IV, 19).

In spite of the uncertainties caused by the interpretation of the Scytho-Sarmatian onomastic material there is sufficient evidence that these dialects had retained the ability to invert the order of the members of possessive compounds.

4.5.4.10. In the Iranian sister languages the relatively free order of the members of bahuvrīhi compounds is well attested. Inverted bahuvrīhis of Avestan were treated briefly by Duchesne-Guillemin in his study of the Avestan nominal compounds (1936: 173), where the following are mentioned:

nasu.kaša-, *iristō.kaša-* “who takes care of the dead” (both Vd.), *apaōša-* = **apa-vrta-* “par qui les eaux sont retenus” (the name of a *daēva*, Y.Av.; Bartholomae 1904: 72), all with a *-ta-* participle as the final member. As to the type cf. OInd. *gara-gīrnā-* “who has swallowed poison”, *kṛtā-dviṣta-* “who hates the activity (of another)”, both Vedic; *putra-hata-* “whose son has been killed” (Brāhm.), Oss. *aerd-xord* “sworn brother” (cf. 4.5.2. above). To these may be added Av. *spāra.dāšta-* “par qui le succès (+) est obtenu” (an epithet of *Aši*, Yt. 19, 54.; cf. Benveniste 1966: 85 s.v. *šbaramanya*; Bartholomae 1904: 1616 s.v. *spā-* “proficere”; Duchesne-Guillemin, o.c.: 149, 171: “der Gedeihen gewährt”; Hintze 1994: 278 ff., with ref.). Further compounds of this type are, as it seems: *aša.paoiriia-* “having Truth in front of him, headed by Truth” (proper name, cf. Mayrhofer, IPNB: I, No. 51.); *ārmaiti.paoiriia-*, *manas.paoiriia-* “headed by A., M. (cf. Duchesne-Guillemin, o.c.: 148).

4.5.4.10.1. Y.Av. *tanu.mąθra-*, an epithet of Mithra, Sraoša as well as men, and its counterpart *tanu.druj-* were interpreted by Gershevitch (1959: 180 f.) in his commentary on Yt. 10.25, who adds *tanu.kəhrpa-* (Vyt. 3) “(sons) whose bodies are (like your) shape”. The first of these compounds Gershevitch convincingly translates (p. 85) with “the ... personification of the divine word” (M. Boyce, 1975-91: I, 227: “having the sacred word as body”). The same interpretation was given by Hertel (1929): “dessen Leib aus Liedern besteht”. Another interpretation was offered by Duchesne-Guillemin (1936: 155), who translates “ayant la D. [*druj-*] au corps” and “ayant la parole sacrée au corps”. Regarding the theological questions involved I refer to Gershevitch (l.c.).

4.5.4.10.2. In descriptive adjectives like *barəsmō.zasta-* “holding *barəsmān* in her hands” (in a liturgical formula, Yt. 10,91 = Y. 62,1, Vd. 3,1), the final member of the compound stands in a predicative function in the same way as in the bahuvrīhis treated above. Such compounds, whose final member denotes a part of the body, and the prior member something held by this, have their counterpart in OInd., too: *iṣu-hasta-* “(with) an arrow in the hand”, *maṇi-grīvā-* “(with) pearls on the neck”. Cf. also Greek compounds like **io-χέαιρα* (an epithet of Artemis) **io-χέσρ-ja* “(with) a bow in (her) hand”.⁹⁵

4.5.4.10.3. Among the proper names occurring in the Avesta there are a few that can be identified as inverted bahuvrīhis. *Nəmə.vanhu-* (Yt. 13.109; cf. Mayrhofer 1979: 64, No. 231.) is to all appearances to be interpreted as “of good worship”. Beside this, a premodified form of the name is found in Yt. 13, passim (*Vohu.nəmah-*, cf. Mayrhofer 1979: 99, No. 387).

stūra- “strong” seems to occur in *Baēšatastūra-* (Yt. 13, 125; Mayrhofer 1979: 31, No. 78.), but the prior member of the compound is obscure. *Ōiymatastura-* (Yt. 13, 125; Mayrhofer 1979: 65, No. 236.) has been interpreted as consisting of **vi-ymata-*, past

⁹⁵ Cp. Wackernagel-Debrunner II,1: 279; Duchesne-Guillemin 1936: 156; R. Schmitt 1967: 178.

participle of **vi-gam-* “go apart”, plus *stūra-*, but the meaning of such a compound is anything but clear. According to Beekes (1988: 108), no inverted bahuvrīhis are found in the Gāthas; here all possessive compounds have a substantive as their final part.

4.5.4.11. An inverted bahuvrīhi is to all appearances found in the Old Persian personal name *Čiçaⁿ-taxma-* (in the Bisotun inscription; Τριτανταίχμης, Justi 1895, 164), i.e. “of brave lineage” (Mayrhofer 1979: I,2: 17, 22.). Other examples seem to be Τυθραύστης (Justi 1895: 164; Gershevitch 1969a: 249 f.; Hinz 1975: 75) = **Čiθra-va(h)išta-* “of the best lineage”, and Ταννοζάρκης (to be read as Ταννοζάρκης, Benveniste 1966: 94 s.v. *Tannuka*; Justi 1895: 321 ff.) = **Tanu-vazrka-* “having a great (valiant) body” (but see Hinz 1975: 234).

4.5.4.11.1. Among the ancient West Iranian proper names found in the Elamite Persepolis tablets there are several examples which in all likelihood reflect inverted bahuvrīhis, and others where such an interpretation is at least admissible:

Ziššawiš < **Čiça-va(h)u-* “of good lineage” (cf. Gershevitch 1969a: 249, where other instances of inverted bahuvrīhis among the proper names are treated; Mayrhofer 1973: 257, with variants);

Rašdakma (and perhaps *Rašdama*) < **Rastu-taxma-* “having a valient shape” (Gershevitch 1969a: 226; Mayrhofer 1973: 224 f.;

Šandupirzana (var. T-), *Dandupirdana*, possibly < **Zantu-brzāna-* (**Dandubrdāna-*) “of high lineage” (Gershevitch 1969a: 229; Mayrhofer 1973: 230 and 148; Benveniste 1966: 92);

possibly *Šatipartanna* (Mayrhofer 1973: 231; Benveniste 1966: 93, s.v. *Šatipartanna*), Σατιβαρζάνης (Justi 1895: 291; Hinz 1975: 231), if < **Šati-brzāna-* “of high *šāti-*, felicity”; or with **brzāna-* as a present participle “exalting *šāti-*”, cf. *Irdapirzana*, Ἀρτοβαρζάνης “exalting *arta* (*aša*)”; hardly “of exalted *arta*” (cf. Gershevitch 1969a: 229 f.).

4.5.4.11.2. *Hištimauiš* was interpreted by Benveniste (1966: 83, s.v. *Hištimauiš*) as deriving from **Išti-vahvī-* (fem.) “(ayant une) meilleure possession”, whereas Mayrhofer (1973: 160) analyzes it as **Ršti-va(h)uš-* [sic] “having a good spear”; cf. also Gershevitch 1969a: 196.

Ašbaširi < **Aspa-srī(ya)-* is translated by Benveniste (1966: 78) “(qui a) la beauté du cheval”; Mayrhofer (1973: 129) proposes “mit prächtigen, schönen Rossen”. According to Gershevitch (1969a: 223), *Badumašda* is to be analyzed as **pādah-vazda(h)-* “whose face and back surfaces are fat, well nourished” with **pādah-* = Ved. *pājas-* (of uncertain meaning), Ir. **pāz/d-ah-*, Oss. *faz / fazə* “side, half” (Mayrhofer, EWAlA: II, 116), and Av. *vazda(h)-* “beständig, Beständigkeit” (Bartholomae 1904: 1391). Cf. also Mayrhofer (1973: 134, s.v. *Badu-mašda*): **Bādu-vazdah-* “der mit des Armes Ausdauer”. According to Hinz (1973: 107), the final member of the compound is *vasta-*, past participle of *vand-* “to praise”, i.e. “Armgelobt”, “whose arms are praised”. If this interpretation is acceptable, note the *ta-* participle.

4.5.4.12. Possessive compounds with an inverted order of the members are also found in Sogdian (note the past participles):

βr'n βstk r'βk'w “ill with asthma, asthmatic, having impeded breath” (SCE, ed. MacKenzie, v. 104; *βr'n* “breath”, *βstk* “bound”, *r'βk'w* “ill”);

nyc ptr'wšty “with obstructed nostrils” (SCE 85);

'škwch ptr'wštk r'β “the illness of an obstructed throat” (SCE 390).

Gershevitch (1946: 146: 141 and 147; reimpr. 1985: 10 and 16) gives Man. *šyr'qtyy* “pious”, Chr. *šyr'qt* “good, pious” as inverted bahuvrīhis, consisting of *šyr* plus *'kt-*, a past participle in **-aka-* (< **krti-*).

4.5.4.13. Konow (1935: 13) quotes the following inverted possessives from Khotanese:

ārratāḍa- “wer Sünde getan” (*ārra-* “Sünde”; *tāḍa-* “getan”);
buljsājsera- “dem Ruhm (*buljsaā-*) getan werden soll” (*tcera-*);
pajsamajsera- “verehringungswürdig” (*pajsama-*, *tcera-*).

Cf. also Konow (1949: 59) with *klaiša-jita-* “by whom defilements are overcome”, but also *jitapuva'na* “by whom fear is overcome”. But see Emmerick 1989: 227 ff. and Degener: 1987: 36 ff.

4.5.4.14. Nominal compounds in New Persian have been treated at some length by Telegdi (1962 and 1964)⁹⁶ and Shaki (1964); cf. also Windfuhr (1979: 76 ff.) and Lazard (1957: 276 ff.). Inverted bahuvrīhis are quite common, mainly functioning as adjectives. To some extent inversion is optional; thus we have lexical pairs like *del-tang* / *tang-del* “distressed” (“heart-tight”), *češm-sefid* / *sefid-češm* “impudent” (“eye-white”), *dast-tang* / *tang-dast* “poor” (“hand-tight”). According to Shaki (1964: 103 ff.), the postmodified bahuvrīhis are particularly common in the modern colloquial language.⁹⁷ The modifying member is frequently a past participle in *-te/-de* (< **-ta-ka-*); cp. *aql-ramīde* “bereft of reason” (“reason-scared”), *bīnī-borīde* “having one’s nose cut off” (“nose-cut”), *del-baste* “devoted” (“heart-bound”); *sar-baste* “sealed, under cover” (“head-bound”); *del-sūxte* beside *sūxte-del* “grieved” (“heart-burnt”), *del-morde* and *morde-del* “dejected” (“heart-dead”), *del-šekaste* and *šekaste-del* “afflicted, grieved” (“heart-broken”).

The modifier can be a present participle in *-ān* (cf. Shaki 1964: 109): *xandān-lab* “smiling” (“smiling-lip”), but *sar-gardān* “bewildered” (“head-wandering”).

According to Telegdi, inversion is not found in possessives where both members are substantives or the modifying member in a numeral; thus we have only *do-del* “irresolute (“two-heart”) or *šir-del* “lion-hearted, brave”. (A compound like *xāter-jām* “tranquil” (“mind-at-ease”) is marginal.) On this basis Telegdi (1962) tries to distinguish between substantives and adjectives in Persian.

Prepositional groups occur only as final members: *češm-be-rāh* “waiting” (“eye-on-road”), *sar-dar-piš* “ashamed, meditating” (“head-in-front”, “the head hanging”); as to this type cp., e.g., Av. *barāsmō.zasta-*; cf. 4.5.4.10. above).

4.5.4.14.1. In Kurdish inverted bahuvrīhis are common; cp. for the Suleimaniye dialect:

čāw-šin “blue-eyed” (“eye-blue”), *dil-tang* “sad” (“heart-tight”), beside *girān-bā* “expensive” (“dear-price”), *dū-rū* “hypocritical, two-faced”, *bad-kār* “evil-doer” (“bad work”), etc. (MacKenzie 1961: I, 144); for the Sūrčī dialect *bēn-tang* “impatient” (“breath-tight”), *xūn-šīrīn* “handsome” (“blood-sweet”), beside *du-rū* “two-faced, etc. (MacKenzie *ibid.*: 216).

4.5.4.14.2. Trumpp (1873 / 1969: 54 ff.) gives some examples of inverted bahuvrīhis in Pashto:

zōe marai “having a dead son” (“son-dead”), *max tōrai* “having a black face” (“face-black”), *lās prēkarai* “having the hand cut off” (“hand-cut”), *starg važai* “having

⁹⁶ Both of them could not be verified [S.F].

⁹⁷ “In Modern Persian, specially conversational, the final determinative form prevails” (p. 103).

hungry eyes” (“eye-hungry”); *sīnah kabāb* “having the breast roasted” (this may also be a tatpuruṣa “breast-roasted”).

4.5.4.15. In Sanskrit possessive compounds with a verbal adjective in *-ta-* as their prior member may invert their order:

putra-hata- “one whose son(s) has (have) been killed” (Tāṇḍyamahābrāhmaṇa) = *hata-putrā-*; *a-danta-jāta-* “whose teeth have not yet come up” (Agastyasamhitā / Skandapurāṇa); *somāpahṛtā-* “one whose soma has been stolen (SBr.), *agnyāhita-* “one who has performed the *Agnyādhāna* ceremony” (*āhitāgni-*; Paṇini 2.2.37, ed. Böhtlingk 1887/1964).⁹⁸ This type, which has its counterpart in the Iranian languages (cp. the examples quoted in the preceding paragraphs), is rare in the earliest Indian texts but is to all appearances found once in the 10th *maṇḍala* of the Rīgveda (10.15.9) in *stómataṣṭāsah* “those who have fashioned into hymns their eulogies”: *ye tātrśúr devatrā jēhamānā hotrāvīda stómataṣṭāso arkaiḥ* “Die bei den Göttern lechzend gedürstet haben, die Opferkundigen, die ihre Loblieder zu Preisgesängen formten” (Geldner’s transl.; cf. also Renou, EVP XVI (1967): 126.⁹⁹ For verbal adjectives in *na-* cp. *jānvāknā-* “having the knees bent” (ŚBr.).

Although this type is sparsely represented in the earliest Indian texts, there is no reason to doubt that it is rooted in common Aryan. A detailed compilation and analysis of possessive compounds in the various Indo-Iranian languages would be a wearisome task, and in any case an undertaking too vast to be attempted here. Suffice it to repeat that Ossetic has inherited its ability to alternate the order of the members of this type of compounds from the Aryan ancestor language.

4.5.4.16. Other Indo-European languages also possess this freedom. In Homeric Greek inverted bahuvrīhis are quite common both in traditional epic phrases and as noun-epithet formulas, which in combination with a proper noun appear in fixed positions in the hexameter (such as the latter half of the verse, after the feminine caesura), a fact which attests to their archaic character; cp. ποδῆνεμος ὠκέα Ἴρις “the windswift rapid Iris” (Il. 2,786); ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς “the swiftfooted god-like Achilles” (Il. 1,121), ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο (gen.) “the swiftfooted son of Aeacus” (Il. 23,28), etc.

Inverted bahuvrīhis are also found as proper names, even in Hellenistic times (where, of course, they may have been borrowed from the epic language), cp. Ποδώκης (Cyrené, 3rd cent. B.C.; Bechtel 1917: 373) or, as the names of animals, Ποδάργος, Ποδάργη “swiftfooted” or “whitefooted” (horses’ names, Ilias 8,185; 16,150). The existence of inverted possessive compounds in Mycenaean Greek is to all appearances attested by *po-da-ko* = Πόδαργος “whitefooted” (rather than “swiftfooted”), *to-ma-ko* = στόμαργος “with a white mouth”, (names of oxen, cf. Ventris-Chadwick 1956: 105).

4.5.4.17. In Armenian we also find possessive compounds consisting of a head noun followed by an adjective or participle; cp. *lezu-at* “with the tongue cut out, γλωσσομητός”, *yus-a-hat* “désespéré”, *k’n-a-hat* “privé de sommeil” (cp. *hatanem* “I cut”), *tn-ank* “malheureux” (“de qui la maison est tombé”), but also *meca-tun* “qui a une grande maison” (Meillet, MSL 18 (1914), 245 ff. (repr. 1962: 159 ff.); 1936: 98 ff.).

⁹⁸ Cf. Wackernagel-Debrunner II,1: 302 ff.; Nachträge: 83; Gonda 1971:72.

⁹⁹ An alternative interpretation is suggested by Renou 1953 (p. 232): “(poésie) façonnée en forme de la panegyrique”.

4.5.4.17.1. In the Celtic as well as the Germanic languages inverted bahuvrīhis are common.

In Old Irish the postposition of the adjective is the usual order of the members in possessive compounds; cp. *cenn-mar* “large-headed” (“head-large”), etc. (Thurneysen 1946 (1970): 218 f.). Such compounds are also found as proper names: *Barr-find* (beside *Find-barr*) “fair-haired” (“hair-fair”). According to Thurneysen 1946 (cf. also Pedersen 1909-13: II, 5), this type is common to all Celtic languages. At least some of the Gaulish proper names seem to be formed in this way; cp. *Nerto-marus* “of great strength” (“strength-great”, cp. Old Irish *nermar* “id.”), *Agedo-virus* “der, dessen Gesicht wahr ist”) (cf. Schmidt 1957: 80 ff., where these names are treated at some length).

4.5.4.17.2. In the Germanic languages inverted possessive compounds are common, especially at their older stages of development; but cp. also Mod. Engl. *heart-sick*, *head-strong*, and proper names of the *Armstrong* type.

In the ancient Nordic languages this type of bahuvrīhis is usual; cp. OIcel. *hár-fagr* “fair-haired”, *fót-langr* “long-legged”, *hand-smár* “small-handed”, *hjarta-góðr* “kind-hearted”, but also *góð-hjartaðr*. In modern Icelandic the postposition of the adjectival member of possessives is still a productive manner of word-formation and even more common than the prepositive type; cp. *fingra-langur* “long-fingered; light-fingered”, thievish” *geð-fastur* “firm of mind”, *skap-hardur* “harsh-tempered”, *lund-blíður* “sweet-tempered”, *vamb-síður* “pot-bellied”, and the like.

4.5.4.18. In Kabardian-Circassian as well as the other Northwest Caucasian languages, most attributive adjectives follow their head. Noun composition is in these languages an extremely productive device for forming new nouns. Possessive compounds with an adjective as their final member are common. A few Kabardian examples are found in Kuipers 1960: 90 ff. (e.g., $g^{\circ}\text{-}\acute{s}x^{\circ}a$); cp. also Colarusso 1992: 144 ff. with $g^{\circ}\text{-}\acute{s}x^{\circ}a$ “brave” (“heart-great”), *na-f* “blind” (“eye-rotten”, cp. *fən* “to rot”).

4.5.4.18.1. In Old Georgian, where the adjectival modifier agrees with its head for case and number, the position of the modifier is comparatively free, although post-modification is the prevalent order; numerals are as a rule placed in front of the head. In the modern language, where the expression of grammatical agreement is more limited, the modifier as a rule precedes its head (cf. Vogt 1971: 220 ff.; Šaniže 1982: 185 ff.).

4.5.4.18.2. In *bahuvrīhi* compounds the order of the members is relatively free; the adjective is frequently placed after the head noun, and in some instances the order is optional; cp. *šav-tvala*, *tval-šava* “having black eyes” (also *šav-ival-eb-iani*, the plural stem followed by an adjectival suffix); *q’el-vic’ro* and *vic’ro-q’el-iani* “narrow-necked”. Bahuvrīhis with a participle as the final member are a particularly productive type of noun composition (Šaniže 1973: 159 ff.; Vogt 1971: 256 f.).

Examples: *k’bil-didi* “having big teeth”, but *tetr-k’bila* “having white teeth”; *did-q’ura* “having big ears”, but *q’ur-mzime* “deaf, insensitive” (“ear-heavy”), *q’ur-moč’rili* “with the ears cut off” (note the participle); *xel-* (OGeorg. *qel-*) *mc’ipe* “sovereign, king” (“with mature hands”); *ert-guli* “faithful” (“having one heart”), *orguli* “treacherous”, OGeorg. “hypocrite, distrustful, irresolute” (“having two hearts”); *sicocxle-gardamxdari* (part.) “one whose life has elapsed” (Šota, ed. Šaniže, v. 353), *mepē morbis tav-šišveli* (part.) “the king came running bareheaded” (Šota, v. 355); *tmā-gardat’evbuli* (part.) “with her hair disordered” (*Mart’vilobay Šušanik’isi*, ed. Abulaze: 1938, IX, 7, p. 28).

4.5.4.19. As was already said above, the comparatively free order of the members of bahuvrīhi compounds in Ossetic is an ancient inheritance which dates back to Aryan and even Indo-European times. The inverted (postmodifying) order can therefore not be ascribed to the influence of the neighbouring languages. The frequent use of participles as final members in possessive compounds is a typological feature that Ossetic shares with Georgian but it has parallels in the Aryan sister languages and is thus not attributable to Kartvelian (or Kabardian) influence. In Georgian it is ancient and undoubtedly rooted in the structure of Kartvelian. Also, for more general reasons the possibility of Ossetic influence on the grammatical structure of Georgian can be ruled out (cp. 3.2.5.7. above).¹⁰⁰

4.5.4.20. Inverted determinatives are, as was previously stated (cf. 4.5.3. above), rare in Ossetic. In Sanskrit this type of compounds does exist; cp. *mayūra-vyaṃsaka-* “a peacock-rogue, treacherous peacock” (= *dhūrta-mayūra-*, Paṇini 2.1.72), *chātra-vyaṃsaka-* “a pupil-rogue, knavish pupil” (Wackernagel-Debrunner II,1: 255). A historical connection between these types of Indian and Ossetic compounds is questionable. Influence of the Northwest (Kabard-Cherkes) languages should perhaps not be ruled out here.¹⁰¹

4.6. Vowel alternations in nominal compounds

4.6.1. In Ossetic, nominal composition is frequently accompanied by vowel alternations. An *a* in the prior member is weakened (shortened) to *æ* (occasionally to *i* / *i*) in the compound. Vowel weakening, which is common to both dialects, takes place in possessive as well as determinative compounds. It is particularly common in words which to all appearances belong to the ancient lexical stock of the language. In some words vowel-weakening is optional.¹⁰²

Examples:

xorz / *xuarz* “good” > *xærz-* / *xuærz-* (cf. IES: IV, 217 ff.; 184):

xærz- / *xuærz-uag* “well-behaved” (*uag* / *uagæ* “character, temper”);

xærz-ad “palatable, tasty” (*ad* / *adæ* “taste”), but also *xorz-ad* / *xuarz-ad* “id.”;

xærz(æ)-bon / *xuærzæ-bon* “good-day” (a greeting; probably also a bahuvrīhi “whose day is good?”);

xærz- / *xuærz-æxsæv* “good night”;

but also:

xorz-æx / *xuarz-ænxæ* “favour, grace” (the final member an obsolete word, cognate with Av. *aṃhauu-* “existence”; cf. IES: IV, 219 f.);

xorz-zærdæ “kind-hearted”.

I., D. *arm* “hand” (IES: I, 67 ff.): > *ærm-*:

D. *ær(m)zæf* “clapping of hands” (*arm* plus *caef* “blow”);

¹⁰⁰ The question of contacts between Proto-Kartvelian and Indo-European in remote antiquity is a matter which cannot be treated here as it would carry us far beyond the scope of these studies.

¹⁰¹ The Nordic languages possess a class of nominal compounds which are somewhat reminiscent of the Sanskrit karmadhārayas; in modern Icelandic they are particularly common; cp., e.g., Norw. *jent-unge* “a girl-child, young girl” or Icel. *mann-skratti* “a man-devil, bad man”. The question of historical connections between these Germanic and Indian types of nominal compounds cannot be discussed here but their likeness to the Ossetic inverted determinatives is remote.

¹⁰² Some of the examples given below are from f.Th.’s own fieldwork collection [S.F.].

- D. *ærm-xodæ* “a kind of glove” (*xud* / *xodæ* “hat”);
 I. *ærm* (*ærn*)-*k'ux* “id.” (*k'ux* “hand, finger”).
 I. *ælm-ærin*, *ær-mærin* “elbow” (**arathni-* “elbow”, OInd. *aratni-* “id.”, cp. Av. *frārāθni.drājah-* “the length of one cubit”; IES: I,129 and 300; Mayrhofer, EWAIA: I,109).
ærm-aræxst “experienced” (an inverted bahuvrīhi; *aræxst* past participle of *aræxsin* / *-un* “to be able to”; cf. IES: I, 59f.).
ældar “chieftain” (in the traditional Alan tribal society) is derived by Abaev (IES: I,126 ff.) from *arm* plus a verbal noun *dar-* (*darin* “to hold”), i.e. “maintainer, Handhaber”; the word is recorded as a loanword in Hungarian: *aladár* “centurio cohortis praetoriae” (12th–14th cent.); cp. also the Sarmatian proper names *Αρδαρος*, *Αρδαρακος*, *Αρδαρισκος* (Zgusta 1955: 68).
 I., D. *ars* “bear” (IES: I, 69) > *ærs-*:
 I. *ærs-ʒarm* “bearskin” (*carm* “skin”);
 I. *ærs-nix* lit. “bear’s claw”, a plant name (*nix* / *nix* “claw”).
 I., D. *art* “fire” (IES: I, 69) > *ært-*:
 I. *ært-iskæn* (*ærc-iskæn*) “coal tongs”, but D. *art-skinæ* (as to the etymology of the final member I refer to IES: I,183).
ært-xutæg / *ært-xotæg*, *ært-xotug* “ashes” (for the final member cf. IES: I,182).
 But also:
art-ʒæst / *art-ʒæstæ* “fire in a cooking range; hearth” (*cæst* / *cæstæ* “eye”; IES: I, 70).
qarm / *ʒar(m)* “hot” (IES: II, 266 f.) > *qærm-* / *ʒærm-*:
qærmæ-don “hot mineral waters” (*don* “water; river”).
 I., D. *dary* “long” (IES: I, 344 f.) > *dæry-*:
dæry-dim / *-dun* “having a long tail”.
dæry-ʒæskom “having a long face” (*cæs-kom* “face”, lit. “eye-mouth”). But cp. also: I. *dary-ʒikkū* “long-braided” (*ʒikkū* / *ʒikko* “plait, braid”, a loanword).
 I., D. *ard* “oath” (< **rta-*; IES: I, 60 ff.) > *ærd-*:
ærd-xord / *ærd-xuard* “sworn brother” (an inverted bahuvrīhi, no doubt a compound originating from the archaic tribal society; cp. also IES: I, 174);
cippar / *cuppar* “four” > *cippær* / *cuppær-* (cp. IES: I, 322):
cippær-k'ax-ig, *-on* / *cuppær-k'axug* “quadruped”.
 I. *cippær-ʒæst-ig* “having four eyes”.
cippær- / *cuppær-dæs* “fourteen”;
 but:
cippar-issæʒi / *cuppar-insæi* “eighty” (an indication that the adoption of the vigesimal counting system is later than the vowel weakening?).
 I., D. *avd* “seven” (IES: I, 82 f.) > *ævd-*:
ævd-sær-on “with seven heads” but D. also *avd-sær-on*; cf. also D. *avdi-sær* “Monday”.
ævd-dæs “seventeen”.

The vowel weakening is to all appearances prior to the narrowing of *ā* in front of nasals; cp.:

- I., D. *cong* “arm” (**čanga-*; IES: I, 313 f.) > *cæng-*:
 I. *cæng-dar-æn* “bracelet” (but also *cong-dar-æn*);
 D. *cæng-ærinæ* “cubit” < **čanga-* plus **arathni-*, cf. I. *ælmærin* “id.” (cf. above);
 I. *cænkūil* “armless, one-armed, crippled” (*kūil* is found in several compounds where it denotes physical deficiency; IES: I, 301).
 I., D. *fonʒ* “five” (IES: I, 478) > *fīnd* / *find-*:

find-tæs / find-tæs (IES: I, 496) “fifteen”; but note *fænz-* in derivatives such as *fænzaem / fænzaemag* “fifth”, *fænzaɪ* “fifty” (ib.: 449).

These examples can be supplied by numerous others.

The reduced vowel (ɨ) in the first syllable of the Old Russian river names *Дѣнѣрѣ*, *Дѣнѣстрѣ* (cf. 4.5.4.9 above) may reflect a shortening of *ā* (**dānu-* > **dānu-*) in the Iranian donor dialect.

4.6.2. The most adequate explanation of the vowel shift is the assumption that it was caused by a dynamic accent (stress) on (the first syllable of) the final member of the compound at an earlier stage in the history of the language. In that case the final member of possessive as well as determinative compounds was stressed.

In a previous study (Thordarson 1990) I discussed the vowel shift (*a* > *æ*) and the syncope which accompany certain derivative suffixes in modern Ossetic. I found it most reasonable to consider these sound changes as the result of an earlier stress on the suffix. Neither in compounds nor in derivative nouns the vowel shift is intelligible within the accentual framework of modern Ossetic (for treatments of the modern Ossetic accent I refer to my article of 1990). Accordingly, an explanation must be sought in the accent system of a previous phase, when a rule of free accent was operative in the language. Needless to say that these accentual features do not necessarily derive from the Aryan ancestor language; the Iranian proto-dialect of Ossetic can easily have created accent rules of its own. However, at least some of the suffixes treated in my study of 1990 have their counterpart in Old Indian suffixes which are accentuated in Vedic texts.

In a couple of studies, G. Morgenstierne has convincingly argued that both Pashto and the Pamir languages retain traces of the ancient Aryan accent system.¹⁰³ In 1925 J. Kuryłowicz maintained that in a number of cases the Gathic accent fell on the same syllable as in Vedic, i.e. that the rule of free accent was still operative in the dialect of the Gathas. The same conclusions were drawn by R. Beekes in his Gathic grammar of 1988 (cf. p. 55 ff.). Later in his life Kuryłowicz abandoned his theory of 1925, advocating a new one, according to which the accent in preliterary Old Iranian was confined to the penultima. Another theory was advanced by A. Meillet in 1900; in his opinion Proto-Iranian had developed a stress accent of the Latin type, the accent falling on the penultima when it was long, otherwise on the antepenultima. It is not quite clear to me whether these theories were meant to apply to the ancestor dialects of all recorded Iranian languages.

4.6.3. Our conclusion as given in the preceding paragraph – that both types of compounds, possessives and determinatives, had the accent on the final member in Proto-Ossetic – is not in agreement with the accentuation of Old Indian as known from Vedic texts.

In Vedic bahuvrīhis usually retain the accent of the prior member: *sūrya-tejas-* “possessing / having the brightness of the sun”, *agni-tejas-* “possessing the brightness of fire”, *ugrā-bāhu-* “having strong arms” (Whitney 1889: 503 ff.; Wackernagel-Debrunner II,1: 291 ff.). This accentuation has parallels in Greek and Germanic: *ὠκύπτερος* “swift-winged”; OEEng. *fyðer-fēte* “four-footed” (< **fīþur-*, cp. OInd. *cātuṣ-pad-* “id.”; cf. Brugmann II,1: 75). To this main rule there are exceptions, however (cf. Whitney and Wackernagel-Debrunner: II, 1, ib.).

¹⁰³ Morgenstierne 1973 (NTS 27) and 1983: 167 ff.; cf. also Morgenstierne 1942: 95 ff.; furthermore, cp. Skjærvø 1989: 410.

The accentuation of determinative compounds is even less uniform (Whitney 1889: 490 ff.; Wackernagel-Debrunner: II, 1, 214 ff.). Compounds consisting of ordinary nouns (not verbal nouns denoting agent or activity) are usually accentuated on the final syllable: *Indra-dhanús-* “Indra’s bow, rainbow” (but *dhánus-*; cf. Whitney 1889, in particular §1267). Karmadhārayas, in which a substantive is preceded by a qualifying adjective, are normally oxytone: *mahā-dhaná-* “great spoil or wealth” (but *dhána-* “booty, property”; Whitney 1889: p. 495, §1280).

This is of consequence, inasmuch as two compounds consisting of the same members may be distinguished by the accent: *rāja-putra-* “having kings for sons” – *rāja-putrá-* “a king’s son”; *hiraṇya-ratha-* “having (riding in) a golden chariot” – *hiraṇya-rathá-* “a chariot made of gold”. Cp. also G. θηρό-τροφός “feeding on beasts, having beasts as his food” – θηρο-τρόφος “feeding wild beasts”; but note also καλλι-παῖς meaning both “having beautiful children” and “a beautiful child”, and both ἄκρο-πολις “the upper city” (a karmadhāraya) and πολύ-πολις “with many cities” (a bahuvrīhi, the karmadhārayas being secondary word-formations).

According to Kuryłowicz’s theories about the Indo-European accent nominal compounds were originally accentuated on the final member, the difference between *rāja-putra-* (bahuvrīhi) and *rāja-putrá-* (tatpuruṣa) thus being secondary (Kuryłowicz 1968: 56 ff., in particular p. 63; and, in greater detail, Kuryłowicz 1958: 69 ff., in particular p. 74). This means that the determinatives, historically a secondary type of word-formation, retained the original accent or develop, through polarisation, an oxytone accent as a more marked contrast to the accentuation of the prior member (Kuryłowicz 1958: 75).

This is not the place to repeat the arguments adduced by Kuryłowicz in support of his theories, nor to discuss their validity. But if these views are sound, we may ask whether the Iranian ancestor dialect of Ossetic still retained vestiges of an Indo-European, pre-Aryan accentuation – i.e., whether it was, at least as far as this goes, more archaic than Vedic (and Greek and Germanic, as these languages are in agreement with Vedic as regards the accentuation of nominal compounds).

Considering the marginal position that may be assumed for the the ancestor Saka dialect of Ossetic within Iranian, this cannot be rejected out of hand. It would also imply that the accent of proto-Iranian was not as uniform as often assumed.

4.6.3.1. There are other instances where Ossetic, partly in contrast to Vedic, seems to possess traces of Indo-European accentuation. In my paper of 1990 (Thordarson 1990: 260) I treated the Ossetic plural suffix *-tæ*. This suffix, which undoubtedly goes back to I.E. **-tā-*, is used for forming abstracts or nouns with a collective or amplifying meaning. It is normally accompanied by vowel shift (*a > æ*) or syncope in the preceding syllable: *arm* “hand”: *ærmtæ*, *ard* “oath”: *ærdtæ*, *zæronnd* (< **zavānd-*) “old (man)”: *zævædtæ* / *zævændtæ*, *nom* “name”: *naemttæ*, *don* “water”: *dædtæ* / *dæntæ*, *uæiug* / *uæiug* “giant”: *uæguītæ* / *uæigutæ*, etc. (cf. 4.13.3.1. ff. below).

I found it most natural to ascribe these sound changes to an older accentuation of the suffix. This is not in agreement with Vedic, where derivatives in *-tā-* normally have the accent on the the presuffixal syllable, irrespective of the accent of the primary word (Wackernagel-Debrunner: II, 2, 619): *janātā-* “community, people” (*jāna-* “creature, man”), *puruṣātā-* “manhood” (*puruṣa-* “man”), *bandhūtā-* “kinship, kinsfolk” (*bāndhu-* “connection, relation”), etc.

In Greek abstracts in *-τα*, *-τη* (and masculine agent nouns in *-της*) are as a rule accentuated on the final syllable: γενετή “birth”, ἀρετή “skill, goodness”; but also κοιτή “bed, couch”, βλάστη “bud, sprout”; κριτής “judge”, μαθητής “pupil”, ποιητής “poet”

(from verbal roots) but also ἵπότης “horseman”, πρεσβύτης “an old man” (from nominal roots, see Kuryłowicz 1958: 140 ff.; 1968: 103).

In Germanic there is evidence of an oxytone suffix **-tā̄*: Goth. *þiuda* “people” (< **toutā̄*), *mulda* “dust” (< **mltā̄*), *junda* “youth” < **juwntā̄*, cf. Lat. *iuventa*). But also barytone **-ībō* < **-ētā̄* must be assumed: *gaurīþa* “grief” (from *gaurs* “sad”), *diupiþa* “depth” (diups “deep”), *aggwiþa* “distress” (*aggwus* “narrow; OHG *angitha*), *kaúria* “burden” (*kaúrus* “heavy”), like G. -ότης, -ύτης (for traces of -οτής, -υτής cf. Kuryłowicz 1968: 5 ff.).

On the basis of graphic phenomena, Beekes (1988: 58 ff.) argues for an oxytone suffix **-tā̄* in the Gathic dialect.

The Slavonic and Baltic facts are too complex to allow certain conclusions which are relevant to our question (in spite of Kuryłowicz 1958: 66).

4.6.3.2. In addition to the plural suffix *-tæ*, Oss. (D.) *zældæ* “turf, green, verdure” < **zaritā̄*-, cf. OInd. *hārita-* “yellowish”, *haritā-* “Dürvā grass”) should be mentioned. The *l* here shows that an *-i-* was syncopated (*ri/y > l*).

According to Kuryłowicz’ theories, the Indo-European derivative nouns in **-tā̄* were originally accentuated on the final syllable, the presuffixal accentuation of Vedic being an innovation (Kuryłowicz 1935; 1958: 66; 1968: 52 f.).¹⁰⁴

4.6.3.3. Previously I derived the gerund suffix *-gæ* from **-akā̄-*, an ancient oxytone instrumental case of an action noun in **-aka-*, with a syncope of the presuffixal vowel: **-akā̄ > *-agā̄ > -gæ* (cf. 3.4.4.3. above). In Vedic there is a handful of oxytone adverbs in *-ā̄* corresponding to barytone thematic adjectives: *dakṣiṇā̄* “to the right or south of” (*dākṣina-* “right”), *apākā̄* “far” (*āpāka-* “coming from a distant place”), *amā̄* “at home” (*āma-* “this”); *madhyā̄* “in the middle, between” may be a haplology of *madhyayā̄*, a *-yā̄* adverb of *mādhyā-* “middle, central”, rather than an *-ā̄* adverb (cf. Wackernagel-Debrunner: II,1, 21 and III, 87; Kuryłowicz 1958: 22 and 1968: 31 ff.).

It seems natural to interpret these adverbs as petrified oxytone instrumentals of thematic nouns with a mobile accent.

4.6.3.4. As to other possible reflexes in Ossetic of Indo-European accentuation I refer to my article of 1990 (Thordarson 1990). If these reasonings are sound, there is a certain probability that the Iranian ancestor dialect of Ossetic had, in some instances at least, inherited from Indo-European accent features which were lost, or were only sporadically represented, in Vedic. They also contradict earlier theories about a uniform accentual system of common Proto-Iranian. As a matter of fact, there is no empirical evidence that all the historical Iranian dialects derive from one homogeneous protodialect where the accentual rules assumed by Meillet and Kuryłowicz were carried through.

A close scrutiny of the vowel changes that have taken place in the East Iranian sister dialects of Ossetic may throw new light on the whole question of the ancient Iranian accentuation. The above views have accordingly been advanced with reservations.

The vowel shift which occasionally accompanies some of the case endings will be treated below.

¹⁰⁴ The accentuation of the presuffixal syllable in Vedic is regarded as old by Wackernagel-Debrunner: II,2, 619 ff.

4.7. Postmodification

A particular type of postmodification has so far not been treated here. In a noun phrase, the head noun may be put in the genitive that is followed by the modifier. The markers of case and number are added to the noun phrase as a whole: *mæ fidi zæronð* “my old father” beside *mæ zæronð fid*, *læzji mard* “dead man” beside *mard læg*; *sæxti mærdtæ* “dead goats” (both members in the plural). Axvlediani (1963-69: II, 49 ff.) gives the following examples:

basi soižin “a fat soup”, *uasæzi uasag* “a cock who (often) crows”, *bæxi uaiag* “a galloping horse”, *čizži ræsuyð* “the beautiful one among the girls”, but also “the beautiful girl”; *næ sixægti zæronð læg-iu aftæ zayta: čizži zurag, zærgæ, xorz us nikui uizæn* “our old neighbour used to say: a talkative girl will never be a good wife”; cp. also *araqqi karz nuazinæn zindær u* “a strong vodka is difficult to drink / the vodka is difficult to drink when it is strong”.

Other examples:

- (1) *don alasta usi mard* “the river carried away the dead woman” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 64; the genitive *mard* marks the noun phrase as a definite object).
- (2) *Belaii ræsuyð aftæ zuri* “B. the beautiful says so” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 100; *Bela ræsuyð* is evidently also possible, cf. 4.4.4. above).
- (3) *D. uædtær æz xærgæfsitæ donmæ nikkænzænæn æma din uædtær uoni k'æxti zmanst doni læk'un fænniuazun kænzænæn*
uædtær æz xærgæfsitæ donmæ nikkænzænæn æma din uædtær uoni
then I mules (pl.nom.) to-river I-shall-drive and you (sg.dat.) then
their
k'æxti zmanst doni læk'un fænniuazun kænzænæn
of-feet (pl.gen.)troubled of-water turbid to-drink I-shall-make
“then I shall drive the mules to the river and force you to drink the turbid water stirred up by their feet” (Miller 1902: 2).

The question arises which semantic difference there is (if any) between this genitive construction and the “ordinary” premodified noun phrase. The grammars that I have been able to consult are not very informative about this matter.

According to the Axvlediani grammar (1963-69, II, 49, written by native scholars), there is a shade of stylistic and semantic difference between the two constructions, the inverted type normally meaning “who is so-and-so, such-and-such”. This seems to indicate that the genitive construction as a rule expresses general characterisations, rather than specification or restrictive modification. This is supported by most of the examples quoted above, and is also in agreement with Gagkaev (1956: 96 ff.), according to whom the genitival construction is common with such adjectives as *zæronð* “old”, *cibir* “short”, *mægüir* “poor”, *xorz* “good”, *ædili*, *ænezond* “stupid”, words which seem to be particularly likely to occur as non-restrictive modifiers, in general characterisations or expressions of an evaluation from the side of the speaker.

- (4) *tizmægæi mæm ma kæs, mæ fidi zæronð* “do not look angrily at me, my old father” (K'osta, Nifs, Iron fændir, ed. 1960: I,12).
- (5) *D. næ fidæi ie kardi zæronð, je bæxi zæronð, je caryi zæronð næ baizadæi?* “was not an old sword, an old horse, an old saddle left from our father” (Gagkaev 1956: ib.).

The other examples quoted by Gagkaev point to the same direction:

- (6) *(badi) iæ kærçi cibiri midæg* “(he is sitting) in (inside) his short fur-coat”;
- (7) *arti mægüirmæ adæm sæxi lasinc* “the people assemble at the low (lit. poor) fire”;
- (8) *uæd ma iæ ci boni xorzmæ auærdin* “then for which good day do I spare him”.

But although it seems likely that there is a shade of stylistic difference between *mæ zæronð fid* and *mæ fidi zæronð* “my old father”, it is hard to see that *zæronð* is anything but a non-restrictive, genererally characterizing modifier in both constructions. Unfortunately, at present I do not have enough data to clarify the stylistic differences between the two non-restrictive types of noun phrases.

To express the notion “(the) old man” (among other men or in a group of men), where the modifier has a restrictive function, premodification seems to be the ordinary structure: *zæronð læg*.

The genitive construction was convincingly explained by Bailey (1946: 205 ff.) as originating from the reinterpretation of an ancient *ezafe* construction, i.e. a nominal group consisting of a head noun followed by the relative pronoun **ya-* plus the adjectival modifier:

$$N_1 + *ya- (*yat?) + N_2 > N_{1-gen.} + N_2.$$

4.8. Definiteness

In Digor the noun phrase may be preceded by the preclitic particle *i-* as a marker of definiteness: *i kizgæ* “the girl”, *i dæs bæxemæn* (dative) “for the 10 horses”.

In Iron, where initial (unstressed) *i-* was lost, definiteness is marked by the shift of accent. If the initial syllable of a polysyllabic noun phrase contains a weak (short) vowel, the accent is shifted from the second to the first syllable: *sírʁ fætʁ 'ui mìn radt* “give me a red apple”, but *sírʁ fætʁ 'ui mìn radt* “give me the red apple”. If the vowel of the first syllable is strong (long) the opposition definite vs. indefinite is neutralised.

As was shown by Bailey (1946:46 ff.), the proclitic article derives from the old relative pronoun **ya-* (**ya(h) > i-*).

We thus reconstruct a previous stage of Ossetic where the ancient relative was used in two types of syntactic constructions: a) introducing the noun phrase as a kind of definite article, and b) as a complementiser linking the modifier to the preceding head noun.

4.8.1. The Old Iranian use of the relative pronoun – either to introduce a noun phrase or as a means of attaching a modifier to the head, besides its use as a marker of subordinate verbal clauses – is too well-established to need a special treatment here. For a survey of the functions of relative modifiers in Avestan I refer to Seiler 1960 (with references to earlier literature) and Haider / Zwanziger 1984.

Examples:

- (1) Av. *daēuuō yō apaōšō, daēūm yim apaōšəm* “the devil Apaōša” (Yt. 8,21 and 28); *puθrəm yaʁ pouruśaspahe* “(Zarathuštra) the son of Pouruśaspa” (Yt. 5.18); etc.

The situation was in all essentials the same in Old Persian, where the relative *haya-*, *taya-* is used either to connect the modifier to the head or as a kind of definite article preceding the noun phrase: *kāram tayam hamiçiyam* “the rebellious army”; *Gaumātam tayam mağum* “G. the magian” (DB I,49 etc.), *hayā amāxam taumā* “our family” (DB I,8), *tayamšām madīštam agarbāya* “he captured their chief” (DB V,12). (DB II,25-26; – cf. Kent 1953: 84 ff.).

In Khwarezmian the ancient relative **ya-* is used as a definite article, preceding the noun phrase (ʻy m.sg. and m., f. pl., yʻ f. sg., dual). It also links a head noun to its modifier: ʻy *mrc* “the man”, yʻ *ðyn* “the woman”, ʻy *rwdk* ʻy *hwynyç* ʻk “the blood-filled

gut” (“black pudding”); *’y xsr ’y mrcy’n* (possessive) *nyc’k* “the father-in-law of the man” (Humbach in Schmitt 1989: 196; MacKenzie in EI, vol. V, 1991: 519).

In Bactrian the ancient relative seems to function in a similar way, as a definite article and as a complementiser in complex noun phrases: (Manichaean) *y’β* “(the) water”, *yβw’g lyynlyryg’n* “the pure Electi” (Sims-Williams in Schmitt 1989: 235).

Regarding the relative particle *ī* (< *ē* < **haya-*?) of Middle Persian, and *čē*, *kē* of Parthian I refer to Sundermann in Schmitt: 1989: 158 ff. and 132, and to Boyce 1964: 28 ff. On the topic of the New Persian *ezāfe* construction and its historical background cf. Haider / Zwanziger 1984; Windfuhr 1979: 57 ff.; Lentz 1958: 209 ff.

4.8.2. In Old Indian the relative *ya-* functions both as an article and as a connective between the head noun and its modifier, although these functions are here less developed than in Old Iranian:

- (2) *višve mariūto yē sahāsaḥ* “all the Maruts, the powerful” (RV 7.34.24);
- (3) *vī jānīthy āryān yē ca dāsyavaḥ* “distinguish the Aryans from (those who are) Dasyu (fiends)” (RV 1.51.8);
- (4) *yāni te kārtvāni* “the things that you shall do, your duties” (RV 2.30.10).¹⁰⁵

4.8.3. The use of relative pronouns in nominal (non-verbal) constructions is to all appearances an Indo-European inheritance. Usages similar to those described above are found in various sister languages in addition to Old Indian, viz. in Greek, Armenian, Hittite, Latin, Gothic, Irish; cf. also the definite inflection of the Baltic and Slavonic adjective, which is generally explained as originating from the addition of the relative (IE) **yo-* to the indefinite adjective.¹⁰⁶

4.8.4. The noun phrase may be preceded by the numeral I. *iu* (D. *eu*) “one” as a kind of indefinite article, especially, as it seems, in colloquial speech. Corresponding numerals are used in a similar way in various neighbour languages: Turkic *bir*, Georg. *erti* “one”. In Abkhaz, *-k’* “one” is postponed to its head as an indefinite article: *iyab-k’* “a girl” (Hewitt 1989: 57).

In Kabardian the numeral “one”, *zə*, functions in a similar way, cp.: *zə-k’ əθ-y-a-s’ ə-f* (sic) “any one man can do it” (Colarusso 1992: 56 ff.). These usages are too trivial to need further comments.

4.9. Possessive Dative.

The use of the dative in association with the genitive of an enclitic personal pronoun to express possession has already been mentioned (cf. 4.3.2 above).

Comparable possessive constructions are found in various languages, where they have arisen independently of each other. Thus, e.g. in German: *dem Vater sein Haus ist groß* “the father’s house is big”; New (dialectal) Norwegian: *det var i den andre presten* (nom.) *si* (poss., 3. sg.) *tid* “it happened at the time of the other parson” (from O. Duun’s novel *Juvikfolke*). However, as possession is expressed in similar ways in some of the neighbour languages of Ossetic, it seems natural to regard this syntactic feature as an areal phenomenon.

¹⁰⁵ Renou 1952: 386 ff.; Wackernagel-Debrunner: III, 554 ff.

¹⁰⁶ For a survey, with further references, cf. Seiler 1960: in particular 101 ff.; Benveniste 1966: 208 ff.

In Abkhaz possessive relations are expressed by the absolute case of the noun referring to the possessor, plus the possessed noun marked by the appropriate pronominal prefix, which expresses the indirect object in a verbal complex:

- (1) *à-č'k'°ən-c°a rə-y°n-k°á*
à-č'k'°ən-c°a rə-y°n-k°á
 the-boy-pl. their-house pl.
 “the boys’ houses” (Hewitt 1979 (1989): 116).

In Kabardian possession is expressed by the oblique case of the possessor noun plus a possessive affix:

- (2) *ħa-mØ-yə-pa-r*
ħa-mØ-yə-pa-r
 dog (obl.) poss. nose (abs.)
 “the dog’s nose” (Colarusso 1992: 167).

This way of expressing possession is also reminiscent of the possessive construction of Turkic languages: Kar.-Balk. *Kavkaz-ni* (gen.) *xau-ast-i* (poss.): “the climate of the Caucasus”; Anat.Turk. *adam-in ev-i* “the man’s house”. This type is already met with in Old Turkish: *bu törü-nüy iş-i* “the deeds of this law”, *māniñ sü-m* “my army” (von Gabain 1950: 171). Its presence in the Turkic languages of the Caucasus can accordingly not be ascribed to the the influence of a Caucasian substratum or adstratum.

It is worth pointing out that the Ossetic dative to all appearances is a comparatively recent creation; its use in the possessive construction is therefore an innovation.

4.10. Group inflection

The Ossetic group inflection (cf. 4.2.4 above), which is usual in juxtaposed enumerations, must be seen in connection with the development of the agglutinative morphology of the noun. Number and case are expressed by separate suffixes: stem – plural – case (– postposition – case):

bælæs-ti-sær-mæ
bælæs-ti- sær-mæ
 trees-plur.-gen.- head-all
 “to the top of the trees”.

It is reasonable to assume that the group inflection started in postpositional phrases, i.e. in the border area between flexional formatives and independent lexical items. It was reinforced through the development of postpositional phrases into genuine cases (superessive *-il/-bæl*, allative *-æm(æ)*, equative *-iumæ*, cf. below), and spread from there to the original cases.

In Sogdian, where the suffix **-tā* functions as a pluraliser, the agglutinative morphology of the heavy stems has led to a similar mode of inflection (Gershevitch 1961: 236 ff.; Sims-Williams 1982; id. in Schmitt 1989: 183, 190).

Group inflection occurs occasionally in Khotanese as well: *kṣu ttarna* “by hunger and thirst” (Jātak. 17v1 (p. 432), 34r3 (p. 442); instrumental case in *-na*, cf. Dresden 1955: 408; regarding the etymology of the instrumental ending cf. Emmerick 1968: 258).

The group inflection of the noun is thus basically due to internal developments of the language. But as similar modes of inflection are found in other languages of Central and Western Asia, it is tempting to consider it an areal phenomenon.

In New Persian, the postposition *-rā* in a sequence of two or more noun phrases only figures once, at the end of the group. In the older New Persian texts this is not yet the general rule (Lazard 1963: 356 ff.).

In the Turkic languages the markers of case and number are commonly, though not invariably, placed after the last member of (asyndetically) juxtaposed noun phrases; but notice that this is not the ordinary syntax in the oldest Turkic documents (cf. Grønbech 1936: 121 ff.).

In Tocharian group inflection is also common, in so far as the secondary case endings may be placed after the last member of groups of juxtaposed nouns (Krause-Thomas 1960: 91).

Similar inflectional practices are found in the Caucasian neighbour languages of Ossetic. When in Georgian groups of nouns are connected by *da* “and”, the secondary case endings (ancient postpositions) occur only once: *magidasa da sk'amze* (dative plus superessive = *magidaze da sk'amze*, superessive) “on the table and (on) the chair”.

In Adyge, when two nouns in the instrumental case are coordinated with the connecting affix *-rǎ*, the case ending occurs only after the latter noun: *mǎsǎm-rǎ tǎ-γužǎm-rǎ* “with a bear and a wolf”.

Similarly in Kabardian: *šaqǎ-rǎ qǎrǎndaš-č'* “with ink and pencil” (*-rǎ* only after the prior noun; Kumaxov 1971: 175 ff.; Rogava & Keraševa 1966: 336 ff.).

4.11. Premodification

4.11.1. As appears from the preceding paragraphs, premodification is the general rule in Ossetic noun phrases. Postmodification occurs as a stylistic device or as an unproductive relic (in inverted *bahuvrīhis*); in the *ežafe* construction postmodification has undergone a reinterpretation and is probably of a limited productivity. The rule of premodification applies also to relative clauses, which invariably precede the main clause (as do most subordinate clauses with a finite verb). This means that in noun phrases word order has a syntactic role. In clauses, on the other hand, word order has a pragmatic, rather than a syntactic role, although SOV may be regarded as the unemphatic or unmarked order.

The Ossetic principle of premodification is in agreement with the general trend in the East Iranian languages, and derives to all appearances from Old Aryan (and Indo-European), although the functional load of word order is here of minor importance. In Vedic, prose genitives and adjectives mostly precede their heads, unless they have an emphatic, contrastive or appositional meaning (“traditionelle” vs. “occasionelle Wortfolge” in Delbrück’s terminology, 1888 (1968): 15 f.; cf. also Gonda 1960 (repr. in Gonda 1975: III, 95 ff.); Lehmann 1974: ch. 3, 57 ff.).

4.11.2. The fairly rigid rule of premodification is concomitant with the loss of gender as a marker of grammatical concord between the members of noun phrases.

In modern Ossetic nouns are only inflected for number and case. There is no grammatical gender, but a limited distinction with regard to animacy can be expressed. The interrogative-relative pronouns distinguish between “who” and “what” (*či / ka, ci / ci*, resp.).

Natural gender can be expressed lexically by prefixing *sil / silæ* “female” (< **strī-* (**srī-*) or I., D. *næl-* “male (< **narya-*) to the noun; both occur also as separate nouns (plural *siltæ / siltæ, næltæ*).

Examples: *sil-goimag / sil-goimag* “woman”, *næl-goimag* “man” (*goimag* as a second member in compounds means “person”; IES: I,522); *sil-kuiž* “bitch”, *sil-sæg* “she-goat”, *sil-fis* “ewe”; *næl-bæx* “stallion”, *næl-sæγ* “he-goat”, *næl-fis* “ram”.

4.12. Declension classes

4.12.1. In Iron the ancient declensional classes have disappeared; all nouns are inflected in the same way (as regards pronouns cf. 5.1. ff. below). We may presume that this is the final result of a general transfer of nominal forms to the two declensions in *-a* and *-ā*.

In general the ancient nominative singular is the basis of the case and number inflection.

D. *xuæra* “sister” (I. *xo*) derives from an ancient oblique case that has been transferred to the *ā*- declension (**hwahar-*, cp. Av. *xʷaṇhar-*, acc. sg. *xʷaṇharəm*, *xʷaṇha*, nom. sg.).

Similarly, nominal stems like *zæronð* “old” (I., D.; IES: IV, 304 f.), *bærzonð* “high” (I., D.; IES: I, 254), *æmbisonð* / *æmbesonð* “wonderful, miraculous” (IES: I, 139), *tæssonð* “fragile” (I., D.; IES: III, 281 f.), *fældesonð* “creation” (D.; IES: I, 435) are based on an ancient oblique case (**-ant-*) but have been transferred to the *a*-declension. In the same way, *art* “fire” (I., D.) presupposes a thematic stem **āθra-*, based on an oblique case **āθr-*, with the regular metathesis of *-θr-* > *rt-* (Orlan. **ātar-*, Av. nom. sg. *ātarš*, gen. sg. *āθrō*; cp. IES: I, 69 f.).

Ancient *u*-stems seem to be reflected by umlaut in such nouns as *fis* / *fus* (< **pašu-*) “sheep” (IES: 500 f.), *fīr-* / *fūr-* (< **paru-*) “many, very” (in compounds; IES: I, 499 f.), *mid* / *mud* (< **madu-*) “honey” (IES: II, 134 f.); *fiḡ* / *funx* “cooked” is from a thematic stem **pa(n)xwa-*, cp. OInd. *pakva-* “id.” (IES: I, 503).

4.12.2. Digor possesses two nominal declensions, characterised in the nominative singular by *-æ* and zero, resp. In Iron these two declensions have been conflated in one, characterised by a zero ending in the nominative singular.

Iron nouns like *bæstæ* “place” (IES: I, 254), *zærdæ* “heart” (IES: IV, 300 f.), *arfæ* “thanks, salutation” (IES: I, 63 f.), *ærtæ* “three” (IES: II, 425 f.; same forms in D.) probably derive from ancient **-aya-*: **upastaya-* (**upasthaya-*), **zrdaya-*, **āfraya-*, **θraya-*; but **-āya-/ā* > *-æi(æ)*: *mæi* / *mæiæ* “moon, month” < **māhyā-* (IES: II, 83) *bærzæi* (I., D.) “neck” < **brzāya-* (IES: I, 254). – I. *diuuæ*, D. *du(u)æ* “two” is from **duwā* (IES: II, 385). – I. *læxstæ*, D. *liḡstæ* “prayer, entreaty” (IES: II, 39 f.) are plurals; *sædæ* “one hundred” (IES: III, 52 f.) is an archaism in so far as it is used in Iron.

I. *čiræ* (D. *kiræ* “load, carrier’s trade”; IES: I, 609 f.), I. *kuatæ* (also D.) “apron” (IES: I, 604), I. *livzæ*, *libzæ* (D. *livzæ*, *libzæ*) “stew” (IES II, 59), I. *uinaffæ* (D. *unaffæ*) “council” (IES: IV, 116), I. *guizavæ* (D. *guzavæ*) “doubt, hesiation” (IES: I, 533), and I. *guiffæ* (D. *guffæ*) “the basket of a carriage” (IES: I, 529) are loanwords.

I. *dimgæ* (D. *dungæ*) “wind” is a gerund used as a noun (*dimin* / *dumun* “to blow”; IES: I, 381). The same applies to I. *dudgæ* “watercress” (*dudin* “to itch”; IES: I, 327), I., D. *æftaugæ* “horse-cloth” (*æftauin* / *æftauun* “to cover”; IES: I, 114), I. *sæigæ* (*kænin*) “(to be) confined to one’s bed” (*sæiin* “to be ill”; IES: III, 59 has only the Digor form), I. *cingæ* “soup” (*cimin* “to gulp”; IES: I, 321), I., D. *zongæ* “acquaintance” (*zonin* / *zonun* “to know”; IES: IV, 314), *zingæ* (D. *zingæ*) “visible” (*zinin* / *zinun* “to appear”; IES: IV, 323).

4.12.3. There is every reason to assume that the *æ*- declension of Digor continues the ancient feminines in **-ā*, and that this dialect thus retains the old distinction between *a*- and *ā*- stems. It may be objected to the identification of the *æ*-declension with the ancient *ā*- stems that *-æ* is also found in nouns which originally belonged to other declensional classes. But as all nouns were at one time transferred to either the **-a(h)* or

the **-ā-* declensions, this objection is not valid. There is no reason to identify the Digor nominatives in *-æ* with the (at least in part) unetymological final *-æ* as found in certain verbal forms in Digor. The addition of *-æ* to the nominative in a group of Digor nouns – for phonetic reasons – is evidently out of the question.

In Digor the declensional classes are arbitrary and completely unmotivated, empty and without a semantic function. Thus, e.g., *æ-* forms have male as well as female referents: *fidæ* “father” (I. *fid*; IES: I, 488), *ærvadæ* “kinsman” (I. *ærvad*; IES: II, 437), *moinæ* “husband” (IES: II, 127 f.), *uasængæ* “cock” (I. *uasæg*; IES: IV, 54), *cædæ* “ox-team” (I. *cæd*; IES: I, 293), *ængaræ* “of the same age, comrade” (I. *æmgar*; IES: I, 143); cp. also the feminine personal name *Binzæ* (“fly”; Fritz 2006: 47) and the masculine names *Bobæ*, *ʒafæ*, *ʒayolæ* (Fritz 2006: 48, 73; for further examples cf. ib.).

Membership of either declension does not entail agreement with any other member of the clause. The declensions are thus not comparable with the nominal classes of the Northeast Caucasian languages nor the Indo-Iranian (Indo-European) genders.

4.12.3.1. The ending *-æ* is characteristic of the nominative singular, as was said above. In the genitive, ablative, dative and inessive it is dropped (*fid-i*, *fid-æi*, *fid-æn*, *fid-i*), but it is retained in front of the endings of the allative and the superessive (*fidæ-mæ*, *fidæ-bæł*), which testifies to the comparatively late formation of these cases. In the plural, *-æ* disappears in front of the ending *-i(æ)*, with or without the insertion of the svarabhakti vowel *-i-*: *kinzæ* “daughter (sister)-in-law”: *kinz-i-tæ*; *fiŋgæ* “table”: *fiŋg-i-tæ*; *bærcæ* “measure”: *bærc-i-tæ*; but *ʒæungæ* “street”: *ʒæung-tæ*, *ʒændæ* “will, desire”: *ʒænd-tæ* (cf. Isaev 1966: 34 ff.).

4.12.3.2. The merging of the two declensions in Iron may be due to a loss of final *-æ* and thus to a sound change. Final *-æ* is, however, retained in the nominative plural ending *-tæ* and in the gerund ending *-gæ*. Final vowels are also preserved in the case endings of the genitive and the inessive (I. *-i*, Dig. *-i*) and the allative singular (I., D. *-mæ*; but cp. the plural forms: I. *-t-æm*, D. *-t-æmæ*), where they have a grammatical function. Cf. also words like *diuuæ* “two” (D. *du(u)æ*), or *innæ*, *annæ* (I., D.) “the other” (< **anya-* or **-ā*). This indicates that the conflation of the two declensional classes in Iron should be ascribed to morphological, not phonetic causes. Such a development is in agreement with the general trend of the Iranian languages; in Iron this process has been carried further than in Digor. We can hardly decide whether it was strengthened through bilingual contacts with some neighbour languages (Turkic?).

4.12.3.3. In the Alanic documents – so far as published – a final *-æ*, corresponding to Digor *-æ*, seems to be recorded in a few words.

In the Alanic verses found in manuscripts of the Theogony of Ioannes Tzetzes (late 12th century), a final nominative *-æ* can probably be identified in *χσινα* “lady”, corresponding to *αὐθέντρα μου* in the Greek text, cf. D. *æxsinæ* “lady” (I. *æxsin*), and possibly in *κίτρι*, if = D. *kinzæ* “daughter (sister)-in-law” (I. *činz*) and in *μέσφιλι*, if = D. *mæ æfsinæ* (*m'æfsinæ*; – *æfsinæ*, I. *æfsin* “mistress of the house, mother-in-law”), corresponding to Greek *αὐθέντριά μου* (Abaev 1949: 254 ff.; Hunger 1953).

From the Yass word list (Hungary, 15th century) the following words can be quoted:

baza, i.e. *basa* = D. *basæ* “soup” (I. *bas*); *sana* = D. *sænæ* “wine” (I. *sæn*); *jayca*, i.e. *jaika* = D. *aikæ* “egg” (I. *aik*); *casa* probably = D. *kasæ* “porridge” (I. *kas*); *acha* = D. *accæ* “wild duck” (I. *acc*); *saca* = D. *sæʒæ* “goat” (I. *sæʒ*). Cp. also *manauona*, if = **mænæu-ana* (Németh 1959: 14 ff.).

In the Zelenčuk inscription (11th–12th cent.) we find τζηρθε, probably “grave”, which may render Alanic **cirtæ*. However, in the modern Digor dialect we have *cirt*, not **cirtæ* (I. *cirt*) “grave, tombstone” (Zgusta 1987: 32; Thordarson 1988; Abaev 1949: 267).

It goes without saying that these documents cannot be used for dating the merger of the declensions in Iron, as we know nothing about their dialectal affiliations. It is clear, however, that they reflect an older stage of the language and are therefore closer to Digor than to Iron.

4.12.3.4. In the Ossetic vocabulary of Witsen,¹⁰⁷ which contains words recorded in the late 17th century, we find the following items: *Os* “wife” (D. *uosæ*, I. *us*), *Gout* “hat” (D. *xodæ*, I. *xud*), *Ack* “kettle” (D. *agæ*, I. *ag*), *Tzach* “salt” (D. *cænxæ*, I. *cæxx*), *Mey* “moon, month” (D. *mæiaæ*, I. *mæi*), *Dzest* “eye” (D. *cæstæ*, I. *cæst*), *Absist* “silver” (D. *ævzestæ*, I. *ævzist*), *Angurst* “finger” (D. *angulzæ*, I. *ænguilz*), *Kinick* “book” (D. *ki(u)nugæ*, I. *činig*); but cp. also *Kiska* “girl” (D. *kizgæ*, I. *čizg*).

We may therefore presume that the simplification of the declensional system of Iron – the merger of the two declensions – took place earlier than the middle of the 17th century.

4.13. Noun inflection

4.13.1. Agglutinativity

The noun inflection of Ossetic is of the agglutinative type. The grammatical affixes are added to the nominal base in a fixed order, each carrying its own function. The plural ending precedes the case endings. Postpositions are placed after the case marker; plural and case endings may follow a postposition.

Examples:

- (1) I. (proverb) *ævzæræn iæ razæi, xorzæn iæ fæstæ* “ahead of the bad, behind the good” (possessive dative of the head noun + enclitic possessive “his” + postpositions in the ablative).
- (2) I. *sisi særti zininc xæxtæ* “over the wall the mountains are seen” (genitive of the head noun + plural inessive of the postposition *sær* “head”).
- (3) D. *næ xæzaræmæ uælæmæ* “up to our house” (allative of the head noun + allative of the postposition).
- (4) D. *mæ furtti furtti xæccæ* “with the sons of my sons” (plural genitive of the head noun + postposition).
- (5) I. *aboni ong* “until today” (genitive of the head noun + postposition).
- (6) D. *nuri uængæ* “until now” (genitive of the head noun + postposition).

An enclitic adverb may be inserted into the noun phrase: D. *xæzari tækkæ særmæ* “right over the house” (genitive of the head noun + enclitic adverb + allative of the postposition).

As to the prepositions cf. 4.14. ff. below.

¹⁰⁷ Noord en Oost-Tartaye..., 1705; for the full title cf. the appendix of the present book and Thordarson 1984: 193–194.

4.13.2. Order of elements

In the forms of the interrogative pronoun, the reverse order of case and plural affixes is the rule:

I. *či-tæ* “who” (plural nominative), gen. pl. *kæi-ti* (genitive singular + plural affix in the oblique case); all. *kæ-mæ-ti* (allative singular + oblique case of the plural affix); etc.

But note that in the plural of the comitative the order of the affixes is optional: *kæ-imæ-ti* (singular of the comitative + oblique case of the plural) or *kæi-t-imæ* (oblique case (genitive) of the singular + plural affix + comitative).

Correspondingly the inanimate interrogative “what” has the following forms: nom. *ci-tæ*, gen. *cæi-ti*, all. *cæ-mæ-ti*, etc.; com. *cæ-imæ-ti* or *cæ-t-imæ*.

The free order of case and plural affixes in the comitative is no doubt due to the recent development of this case in Iron; in Digor the comitative does not exist.

With the exception of the comitative, the inflectional pattern of the interrogative pronouns is the same in Digor as in Iron, the plural affix *-ti* (oblique case) following the case affix: Anim. plural nom. *ka-tæ*, gen. *ke-ti*, dat. *kæmæn-ti*, iness. *kæmi-ti*, etc.; inanim. plural nom. *ci-tæ*, gen. *cæi-ti*, dat. *cæmæn-ti*, iness. *cæmi-ti*, etc. (cf. also ch. 5 below, on the pronominal flexion of the pronouns).

4.13.3. Number

4.13.3.1. The plural of nouns is expressed by the suffix *-t-* in both dialects. (nom. *-tæ*). In the oblique cases the endings are added directly to the suffix *-t-*: gen., iness. *sær-t-i / sær-t-i*, etc.

The plural ending *-t-*, as it is now generally agreed among scholars, derives from the old Aryan (Indo-European) suffix **-tā-*, which was used to form abstract and collective nouns. Other explanations must be regarded as antiquated. Old Iran. **-θwa-* (OInd. *-tva-*) suggested by Gauthiot (1916: 41) as the origin of the plural marker *-t-* as well as NPers. *-hā* and late Middle Pers. (Book Pahlavi) *ē/-ihā-*,¹⁰⁸ would probably have resulted in **-p(p)-* in Ossetic, cf. *čippar / cuppar* “four” < **čathwāra-* (cp., e.g., Bailey 1946: 24 ff.; 1981, 246 ff.; Bielmeier 1977: 276; Abaev, IES: I, 322).

In Sogdian, ordinary nominal plurals also build upon the abstract-collective suffix *-tā-*, and in Yaghnōbi *-t* represents the regular plural suffix of nouns.

Due to its morphological independence, *-t-* has not been sonorised after nasals and between vowels.

In Old Iranian *-tā-* is used to build feminine abstracts denoting a quality – from both adjectives and substantives:

Av. (Gath.) *haiθiīā-uuarəštā-* “realisation; the act of making real” (Y. 50.11), from *haiθiīā-uuarəz-* “who makes real, does his duty” (Bartholomae 1904: 1761);

Y.Av. *xšnaoθbatā-* “Würdigkeit zufriedengestellt zu werden” (Bartholomae 1904: 556; Yt. 8.50), from **xšnaoθβa-* “würdig zufriedengestellt zu werden (Bartholomae 1904: *ibid.*);

frā-uuīra-tā-: *fraṣṣu frāuuīratāca* “the possession of good livestock and men (Vr. 12.1), from **frā-uuīra-* “having good men, whose men are ahead” (Bartholomae 1904: 986, s.v. *fraṣṣu*; Duchesne-Guillemin 1936: 186).

¹⁰⁸ And also Yazghulāmī *-aθ?*

OPers. *arštā-* “rectitude, justice” (**aršta-tā-*, from *aršta-* “upright”; Kent 1953: 171; Gershevitch 1959: 286).

In Old Indian abstracts in *-tā-* may have a collective meaning: *janātā-* “mankind”, *bandhūtā-* “relatives”, *grāmātā-* “a group of villages” (Wackernagel-Debrunner: III, 618 ff.).

4.13.3.2. The Ossetic pluraliser in *-t(a)* was identified by Miller (1903: 43) with the ending *-ται* (in part also *-τοι*) occurring in a number of North Pontic and Central Asian ethnic names in Greek literary and epigraphic texts from the 5th century B.C. down to the Middle Ages:

Ματοκέται, Μυργέται (Hecataeus), Μασσαγέται (Herodotus), Σαυρομάται (Herod.; later Σαρμάται; *Syrmatae*, Pliny, Nat.hist.); Αύχάται, Θυσσαγέται (Herod.), Σκόλοτοι (Herod.); *Agamatae* (Pliny, Nat.hist.), Εύεργέται (Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Arrianus: Anabasis); *Euergetae* (Curtius, Pliny, Nat.hist.); Κερκέται (Ptolemaeus); Πατζινακίται, Τουγγάται, Σαλμακάται, Σακακάται, Γιαουκάται (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De admin. imp.) and many others.¹⁰⁹

Miller’s identification has been accepted by most later scholars (cf. in particular Bailey 1946: 24 ff.; Abaev 1949: 218 ff., and 1979: 338 ff.). Vasmer’s (1923: 21 and 1924: 367 ff. = 1971: 176) criticism seems not to carry much weight. According to him singular forms like *Μασσαγέτις*, *Μαιῶτις* (text references in Pauly-Wissowa: Real-Encycl., s.vv.), as well as the absence of parallel forms without the *-ται* element, speak against Miller’s identification. This would mean that the *-t-* belongs to the nominal stem, to which the Greek plural ending was added.

As an objection against Vasmer’s latter argument we may refer to pairs like *Νάπαι* (Diodorus Siculus) and *Ναπάται* (Apollonius Rhodius), *Napites* (Pliny, Nat. hist.); *Νευρίται* (Suidas), *Νευροῦται* (Scymnus), *νεῦροι*, *Νευροί* (Herod.), *Neuri* (Pomponius Mela), *Nerui* (Ammianus Marcellinus); *Areatae* and *Arraei* (Pliny, Nat. hist. IV,41: *Arraei Sarmatae quos Areatas vocant*, a derivative of the ethnic name **arya-*? cf. Harmatta 1970: 29); cf. perhaps also *Ζακάται* (Ptolem.), if it is not an error for **Σακάται*, vs. *Σάκαι* (Herod.). According to Stephanus from Byzance (7th cent.), the inhabitants of the “Scythian” village Ἰσσοῦ (the same as *As*, an ancient tribal name of the Ossetes?) were called Ἰσσοῦται.

Σαυδαράται, a tribal name which occurs in an inscription from Olbia (Latyšev I, 16; 2nd cent. B.C.), is almost certainly the plural of **sau-dar(a)-* “dressed in black” and thus the equivalent of *Μελάγγλαινοι* (Herod., book IV passim), the Greek name being a calque; cf. also Oss. *saudar(aeg)* (I., D.) “wearing mourning”.

This does not mean that all the ethnic names in *-ται* (*-τοι*) contain the abstract-collective suffix **-tā-*. In some instances the *-t-* may well belong to the nominal stem, the *-αι* (*-οι*) being the Greek plural ending. This might apply to *Παραλάται*, the name of a Scythian dynasty (Herod. IV, 6), if from **para-dāta-* “placed in front of” (with *d>δ>l*); this etymology is, however, uncertain. The tribal name *Μαιῶται*, *Μαιῆται*, *Μαεοται* etc., can hardly be separated from *Μαιῶτις*, *Μαιῆτις* etc., the name of the Sea of Azov, where the dental stop seems to belong to the stem. No etymology of this name is known to me.

4.13.3.3. If we accept Miller’s explanation of the ethnic names in *-ται*, as I am inclined to do, we must conclude that **-tā-* was commonly used with a collective or plural meaning in certain Northeast Iranian dialects as early as the 6th-5th cent. B.C. This

¹⁰⁹ For the etymologies of the ethnic names, cf. Kothe 1969, 52 ff. (mostly rather fanciful) and Abaev 1979, 276 ff. [cp. Mayrhofer 2006 as the most recent publication on this subject; S.F.]; text references in Pauly-Wissowa: Real-Encycl., s.vv.; Const. Porphyr., De adm. imp., Greek text ed. by Gy. Moravcsik).

does not mean that **-tā-* was the only pluraliser of these dialects. Ancient plural forms may have survived, e.g. in count nouns. Traces of plurals in **-ah* (after numerals) in Ossetic will be discussed below (4.13.4.3.1.).

In some of the above-mentioned ethnic names *-ται* is preceded by *-αγ(έ)-*: *Μασσαγέται*, *Θυσσαγέται* (*Thyssagetae*, *Thyssagetae*), *Τυραγέται*, *Euergetae*; cp. also *Κρακνακάται*, *Σαλμακάται*, *Γαιουκάται* (Const.Porph., De admin. imp.). Abaev (1979: 300 ff.) interprets *Θυσσαγέται*, *Μασσαγέται* as compounds with the tribal name *Saka-* as their final member. It seems more tempting to derive this element from the nominal suffix **-āka-*.

In Ossetic, *-ag* (< **-āka-*) is commonly used to form secondary ethnic names (adjectives, individualizing nouns), in part from collective singulars: *guirziag* “(a) Georgian” (from *guirzi* “the Georgians”) *uirissag* “(a) Russian” (from *uiris* “the Russians”), *adigejag* “(a) Circassian”, *uirag*, *zuttag* “Jewish, a Jew” and many others. In the tribal names recorded by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*Κρακνακάται* etc.) the Greek κ may have been used to render the (half) voiced velar stop *-g-* of Alanic; in Byzantine Greek γ was written for a voiced velar spirant. In the same usage derivatives in *-on* (< **-āna-*) are much rarer than those in *-ag*, and mostly limited to the names of the Ossetic tribes or peoples living in close contact with them. Cp. *iron* (from *ir(æ)*), *diguron* (from *digur*); *kæsgon* “Kabardian” (from *kæsgæg* “the Kabards”), *mæqqælon* “Ingush” (from *mæqqæλ* “the Ingush”), and a few others.

Ethnic names in **-āna-* are possibly reflected by such designations as Ἰσσηῶνες / Ἰσσηῶνες, also Ἰσσηδοί, Ναβίανοι, and no doubt Ἄλανοι (*Alāni*) < **āryāna-*).

4.13.3.4. Nart, the name of the heroic or mythical race of the epic cycle, was explained by Bailey (1953: 108) as a derivative in **-tā-* (< **-tra-*) from **nar-* “man”, i.e. “valour”, and thus as a collective noun like *kæsgæg* “the Kabardians” or *Ir(æ)* “the Iron tribe, the Ossetes”. The form *Nartæ*, which Abaev (IES: II,158 ff.) refers to in support of his explanation of the noun as a plural, is probably a secondary word-formation where the *-t* has been reinterpreted as the plural ending. *Næرتون* “of the Narts, legendary” (*næرتون tug* “the blood of the Narts”) can be derived from *Nart* in the same way as *iron* from *Ir(æ)* or *kæsgon* from *kæsgæg*.

The expression *ærtæ Narti* “the three Nart families, clans” speaks in favour of the interpretation of the noun as a singular. If *Nart(æ)* were a plural, we should rather expect **ærtæ Nari* (cf. 4.13.4.3.1. below). By the way, should *-t(æ)* in the function of a plural suffix not cause vowel weakening (*a* > *æ*) in the presuffixal syllable, at least if the word is old (as it is no doubt)?

4.13.3.5. In Iron a syllable *-æł-* is inserted between the plural suffix *-t(æ)* in a few kinship terms: *mad-æł-tæ* “mothers”, *ærvad-æł-tæ* “brothers, cousins”, *fid-æł-tæ* “fathers”, *madirvad-æł-tæ* “mother’s brothers” (but *xo-tæ* / *xuær-tæ* “sisters”), also *us-t-æł-tæ* / *(u)os-t-æł-tæ* (besides *ustitæ* / *(u)ostitæ*), from *us* / *(u)osæ* “wife”; D. further has *nost-æł-tæ* “daughters-in-law” (from *n(u)ostæ*; cp. also Abaev 1964: 16).

In Digor, particularly in some local idioms in Kabardia-Balkaria, this infix has become comparatively productive: *sæst-æł-tæ*, from *sast* “fragment”, *uxst-æł-tæ* “spits (for roasting)”, *fest-æł-tæ* “wool (the vernal sheep-shearing)”, *suγdt-æł-tæ*, from *suγd* “burn”, *kust-æł-tæ* “work”, *tuydt-æł-tæ*, from *tuyd* “war”, *zurdd-æł-tæ*, from *zurd* “word” *rædudd-æł-tæ*, from *rædud* “mistake”; but also *kust-i-tæ*, *sæst-i-tæ* etc. (Isaev 1966:36.) It is difficult to find any semantic feature connecting these words with the kinship terms or with one another.

Most probably the *-æł-* infix reflects ancient **-ar-* in the plural of *r-*stems: **pitarah* etc., although the *-ł-* is not clear.

4.13.3.6. In Digor *i* and *u* are frequently inserted as connecting vowels between the stem and the pluraliser. In Iron, where *i* and *u* have merged, either *i* or *ui* are found as connecting vowels. The insertion of a connecting vowel is particularly frequent in such cases where the stem ends in a consonant cluster: cp. I., D. *kark* “hen”: *kærçitæ* / *kærkitæ*. This is, however, not a rule without exceptions.

Especially nouns ending in *r* or a nasal plus a spirant or a stop do not insert a connecting vowel in front of the plural ending: cp. I., D. *ard* “oath”: *ærdtæ*, *fænd* / *fændæ* “will”: I., D. *fændtæ*. In bi- and polysyllabic nouns ending in I., D. *-æg*, where the *-æ-* has been syncopated, *-i/u-* is inserted: cp. I., D. *naræg* “ravine”: *naržitæ* / *nargutæ*, *fissæg* / *finsæg* “writer”: *fisžitæ* / *finsgutæ*. In nouns ending in *-ig/ug*, where the presuffixal vowel has been syncopated, we find *-ui/u-*: *uæiig* / *uæiug* “giant”: *uæiigutæ* / *uæiugutæ*. In a number of words ending in *-æg* or *-ig/ug*, *i/u* is inserted without the loss of the presuffixal vowel: I., D. *kærdæg* “grass”: *kærdæžitæ* / *kærdægutæ*; I., D. *ræstæg* “time”: *ræstæžitæ* / *ræstægutæ*; *qæzdig* / *qæzdug* “rich”: *qæzdizžitæ* / *qæzdugutæ* (cf. Abaev 1964: 12 ff.; Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 80 ff.; Isaev 1966: 35 ff.)

In the last-mentioned instances the affricatisation of *-g-* in front of *-i-* in Iron points to an earlier *-i-*, not *-u-*, as a connecting vowel.

It is tempting to ask if the appearance of *i*, *u* as connecting vowels reflects Old Iranian *i-* and *u-* stems. This may be true of ancient **-ti-* stems (transferred to the *ā-* declension) such as *bærc* / *bærçæ* “measure”, *nimæz(-c)* / *nimæzæ* “number”, *xælç* / *xuælçæ* “subsistence, daily bread”, *zæic* / *zæicæ* “descendants”, *æftauc* / *æftaucæ* “a kind of barn or store house” (for the exact meaning cf. MF: I, 238 and IES: I, 113 f.), *fidauc* / *fedaucæ* “beauty”, *guirz* / *igurzæ* “embryo, germ” and many others, all with plurals in *-itæ* / *-itæ* (in so far as the plural is used).

The following nouns may also be relevant: *çinç* / *kinçæ* “bride, daughter-in-law”, from **kan(i)-çī* – *çinçitæ* / *kinçitæ*; *binç* / *binçæ* “a fly”, if from **bin(a)-çī* – *binçitæ* / *binçitæ*; *çæst* / *çæstæ* “eye” (< **çašti-*?) – *çæstitæ* / *çæstitæ* (in all three cases mentioned Abaev offers other etymological derivations, cf. IES: I, 607; 280; 304 f.); *sist* / *sistæ* “louse” (< **s(p)išti-*?) – *sistitæ* / *sistitæ* (cp. IES: III, 210 f.); *mist* / *mistæ* “mouse” (< **mušti-*?) – *mistitæ* / *mistitæ* (cp. IES: II, 142 f.); perhaps also D. *n(u)ostæ* “daughter-in-law”, if from **snaušaçī* – *n(u)ostitæ* (cp. IES: II, 190 f.).

On the other hand, we have ancient *a-* stems in words such as I., D. *calx* “wheel” (< **čaxra-*) – *cælxitæ* / *cælxitæ*; *sirx* / *surx* “red” (**šuxra-*) – *sirxitæ* / *surxitæ*, I., D. *ars* “bear” (< **arša-*, **rša-*) – *ærstitæ* / *ærstitæ*.

Cp. also past participles in **-ta-* such as *kuist* / *kust* “work” – *kuistitæ* / *kustitæ*, as well as the numerous nouns in *-æg* (< **aka-*) and *-ig/ug* (< **uka-*). The connecting vowel *-u-* after *-ug* and *-æg* in Digor may be due to the preceding velar *-g-*.

Note also that *fis* / *fus* “sheep” < **pašu-* has the plural form *fistæ* / *fustæ*. The plural of *fir* / *fur* “ungelded ram” is *firitæ* / *furutæ*; Morgenstierne (1942: 267) derived this word from **pr̥na-*, originally “full, complete”, an etymology which seems to have been accepted by Abaev (IES: I, 499; not mentioned in Mayrhofer, KEWA, II, 324 and EWAIA, II, 156: *pūrṇá-*).

As far as I can conclude from the aforementioned, there is no reason to assume the ancient *i-* and *u-* stems to have been the historical source of the connecting vowels. More likely *-i-* and *-u-* were inserted in front of the plural ending for phonotactic reasons, to avoid clusters consisting of more than two consonants. Admittedly, however, three consonant clusters may occur at morpheme boundaries, and actually such clusters are found in a number of plural forms: I. *arm* “hand” – *ærmittæ*, *fars*

“side” – *færstæ*, *bærzond* “old” – *bærzændtæ*, *avg* “glass” – *ævgtæ*, and many others (cf. the list in Abaev 1964: 13 ff.).

Vowel weakening and syncope which accompany the plural suffix were discussed above (4.6.2.).

4.13.3.7. The plural marker can be added to collective, mass and count nouns, expressing various sorts of meanings such as plurality (“more than one”), amplification (an enlargement of the nominal concept), complexity or approximation (approximately, more or less).

Number concord between a third person subject in the plural and the verb is not obligatory:

(7) *narti adæmi 'xsæn uidi ittæg ævirqau æxsaržin miggægtæ*
narti adæmi 'xsæn uidi ittæg ævirqau æxsaržin miggægtæ
 Narts (gen.) people (gen.) among was (sg.) very unusual brave families (pl.)
 “among the Nart people there were very unusually brave families” (NK 1990: 79).

(8) *uidis uim bæxtæ, galtæ, quccitæ, fistæ æma xuitæ* “there were (lit. “was”) horses, oxen, cows (sg. *qug*), sheep and pigs” (example in Gagkaev 1956: 76).

(9) *biræ qæbatir læpputæ ži razindi, biræ ži ssardta ænafon iæ mælæt*
biræ qæbatir læpputæ ži razindi biræ ži ssardta ænafon iæ mælæt
 many daring boys (pl.) there appeared (sg.) many there found (sg.) untimely his death
 “many daring boys were seen there, many found their death there” (K’osta, the poem *Xetæg* vv. 33-34 (ed. 1960: I, 252; [250 ff.]).

But the same poem has also (v. 267, p. 270):

(10) *biræ baržitæ iæ ali fars uadisti*
biræ baržitæ iæ ali fars uadisti
 many horsemen his all side ran (pl.)

“many horsemen were running around him”.

(11) *fændagil ærbacæui æfsæddontæ* “on the road soldiers are (lit. “is”) coming”.

(12) *maxmæ ærbacidi wazžitæ* “there came (sg.) guests to us”.

(13) *æmbirdi uidis ustitæ æmæ lægtæ* “at the meeting there were (lit. “was”) women and men” (example in Gagkaev 1956: 76).

A noun phrase subject consisting of a numeral plus a head noun in the genitive singular (cf. 4.13.4.3.1. below) does not require number concord with the verb: cp. *ærtæ læppuii sil ærbambældi* (sg.), *ærtæ læppuii sil ærbambældisti* (pl.), both meaning “three boys met them” (examples in Gagkaev 1956: 77).

According to Stackelberg (1886: 65) such noun phrases take the verbal predicate in the plural if they denote animata, in the singular if they denote inanimata. But this is contradicted by the examples just quoted.

According to Abaev (1964: 123), a plural subject denoting indefinite things can take the verb in the singular. This is obviously true for animata as well as inanimata:

(14) *biræ sivællættæ c'æxnæuuii qazi* “many children are (lit. “is”) playing on the green grass”; *xoxæi durtæ tuli* “stones are (lit. “is”) rolling from the mountain”.

This is evidently not a rule. Gagkaev (1956: 76) seems to regard *arvil fæzindisti* (pl.) *st'alitæ* and *arvil fæzindis st'alitæ* as synonymous sentences, both meaning “there were seen stars in the sky” (Gagkaev gives these examples without a context).

4.13.3.8. Collective nouns in the singular, in the function of a subject, take their verbal predicate either in the singular or plural:

(15) *Nart æi fedtoi* (pl.) “the Narts saw him” (IAS 1961: I,133).

- (16) *adæm fæsabir sti* (pl.) “the people became quiet” (Sek’a 1979: 229).
 (17) *Sau denžizi bilmæ Alan fætærinc* (pl.) Čingisxani *’fædætæ* “the Alans drive the armies of Dzhengiskhan to the shores of the Black Sea” (K’osta, in the poem Xetæg, ed. 1960: I,252)
 (18) *cægati ’rdigæi Uiris fæzindisti* (pl.) [...], *fervæzin næ kodta* (sg.) *Uiris* “the Russians appeared from the north [...], the Russians saved us” (Brit’iati Ėlbizdiqo, quoted by Abaev, IES: IV,126)
 (19) *am ragæi nal fendæuid* (sg.) *adæm, nædæw zi fosi zugtæ xist* (sg.) “for a long time people were not seen here, nor did cattle graze” (example quoted by Gagkaev, 1956: 77).

When the subject is a place name in the singular, denoting the inhabitants of the place, it may take the verb in the plural:

- (20) *Donifars zurdtoncæ Iesemæ* “(the people of) Donifars said to Iese” (Miller 1902: 1)
 (21) *Xiui kom sqal sti* “(the people of) the Khiw valley began to pride themselves” (Sek’a, 1979: 224).

4.13.3.9. The plural marker is frequently used with an amplifying meaning. Thus we can say both *arfæ kænin* and *arfætæ kænin* “to thank” (the latter more emphatic?).

In the same way collective nouns can take the plural suffix: cp., e.g., *adæmtæ* “people” (*xorz adæmtæ* “good people”); *æfsædtæ* “troops” (*afsad* “army”); *zorttæ (æ)ftauin* “to baptise” (lit. “to place crosses on”); *ænæqæn dunetæ* (pl.) *æriqal væiini* “the whole world became awake” (NK 1946: 278).

A sort of amplifying meaning can also be seen in the use of the plural marker with mass nouns, as e.g. in *xor* “grain” – *xortæ* “crops” (without vowel weakening according to the dictionaries), but *nart-xærttæ* “crops of maize” (*nart-xor*); *mænæutæ* “crops of wheat” (*mænæu*); *birædtæ* “litter” (*biron* “husks”), *siftærtæ* “foliage” (*siftær* “leaf”), *cæxærtæ* “coal” (*cæxær*); cf. Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 78 ff.

The pluralia tantum, as given below, are all marked by a certain meaning of “complexity”: cp., e.g., *binontæ* “family”, “wife” (in polite speech); *xæmxudtæ*, D. *kæmbottæ* “snout”, *æmgulzæxtæ* “the interstice between the thumb and the other fingers”, D. *mutultæ* “gum”, *sagæxtæ* “the interstice between the legs” (esp. in the inessive *sagæxti*), D. *yədmærestæ* “woodland meadow”, D. *mær(d)-sintæ* “bier” (*mard* “dead”, I. *sint* “stretcher”), D. (*i*)*lugtæ* “a bit”, D. *xalængurtæ* “disorder, chaos”, *bustæ / bostæ* “whim, caprice”, I. *gænzæxtæ (tibirtæ) cæydin*, D. *tæppæztæ cæydu* “to have convulsions”, *cæydin/-un* “to strike”, cf. IES I, 298 f.), *kæscæn-cæstittæ* or *cæst-gæscæntæ* “spectacles” (lit. “for-seeing eyes”, resp. “eyes for seeing”), and many others (cf. Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 85).

A proper name in the plural refers to the person named and his companions, such as *Uirizmægtæ* “Uryzmag and his consorts”.

The plural form of names of saints and deities may be used to denote their feasts. Examples are *Tutirtæ* “the feast of Tutyr” (St. Theodore, the patron of wolves; celebrated in the first week of the Lent); D. *Basiltæ* “New Year celebration”, D. *Basilti mæiæ* “January” (St. Basil; *basil / basil* “a New Year’s cake”); *Uacillatæ* “the feast of Wacilla” (St. Elias); *Mairæmti mæi / Mairænti mæiæ* “August” (*Mairæmi kuazæn / Mairænti kouuazæn* “the feast of St. Mary”).

In epic and folkloristic texts the plural of names of saints and deities is used in a general sense. Cp., e.g., *Safatæ (Safa)* is the deity of the hearth chain, *ræxis*), *Uacillatæ* (St. Elias; cf. above), *Uastiržitæ* (St. George), etc. For this use of plural forms cf. Benveniste 1959: 133 ff. and Dumézil 1978: 75 ff.

4.13.3.10. The infinitives in *-in/un* and the verbal nouns (adverbs) in *-æn* often take the plural marker, as the following examples show:

- (22) *cæuintæ baididta Soslan mærdti bæstæm*
cæuintæ baididta Soslan mærdti bæstæm
 to-go (pl.) began Soslan dead (pl.gen.) land (all.)
 “Soslan started his travel to the land of the dead” (NK 1949: 212).
- (23) *iumā bacæuæntæ næi*
iumā bacæuæntæ næi
 together for-going (pl.) is-not
 “it is not possible (for us) to go there together” (NK 1989: I, 422).

The pluraliser can even be added to interjections, apparently for emphasis:

- (24) *cæi-tæ ut, čizžitæ, aƒon u, uælæmæ sistut* “well, girls, it is time to get up”
 (example in MF: III, 1642 s.v. *cæi* “nun, wohlan”).

4.13.3.11. The plural marker can be added to adverbs, in which case it imposes a shade of indefinite, approximative meaning to the adverb:

kuid-tæ / kudd-i-tæ “how”, *kuiddær-tæ / kuddær-tæ* “somehow”; I. *aftæ-tæ* “so, thus”, D. *ati-tæ* “so, in this way” (sg. *atæ*), *uoti-tæ* “thus, in that way” (sg. *uotæ*), etc.

The plural inessive of local adverbs is especially common; as usual, the inessive indicates directionality (“towards”) as well as location (“where”) in these forms: *ami-ti / ami-ti* “here, in these parts”, *uimi-ti / uomi-ti* “there, in those parts”, *kæmi-ti / kæmi-ti* “where”, *dælæ-ti /-ti* “below”, *uælæ-ti /-ti* “above”; D. *izol-ti zi raco* “go away from there” (lit. “to-away from-there go”; cp. IES: I, 262: a Digor *Bæx feldisin* text).¹¹⁰

In a similar way the plural marker can be added to postpositions: *cur-ti* “by, around”, *ræz-ti* “in front of” (sg. *raz*), *bin-ti* “below” (“at the bottom(s)”), *astæu-ti* “between (“in the middle of”), *sær-ti* “above” (“at the head(s) of”) etc. Cp. the following examples:

- (25) *qædi astæu-ti fændag aigærstoi*
qædi astæu-ti fændag aigærstoi
 of-wood (gen.) middle (pl.iness.) road they-broke
 “they built a road through the wood” (Axvlediani o.c.: I, 289).
- (26) *čidær kaui sær-ti a-gæpp kodta*
čidær kaui sær-ti a-gæpp kodta
 somebody fence (gen.) head (pl.iness.) leap made
 “somebody jumped over the fence” (Axvlediani o.c.: I, 283).
- (27) *næ cur-ti diuuærdæm kodtoi baržitæ*
næ cur-ti diuuærdæm kodtoi baržitæ
 our around (pl.iness.) to-both-sides (all.) did horsemen
 “(the) horsemen circled around us on both sides” (Axvlediani o.c.: I, 287).
- (28) *iu ran fændag bacidis k'æzæxi bin-ti*
iu ran fændag bacidis k'æzæxi bin-ti
 one place (nom.) road entered of-rock (gen.) bottom (pl.iness.)
 “at one place the road lay under a rock” (Axvlediani o.c.: I, 289).
- (29) D. *xonxi sær-ti*
xonxi sær-ti
 of-mountain (gen.) top (pl. iness.)
 “on the (top of the) mountain”.

4.13.3.12. A plural noun can also be used as a modifier in compounds, as the following examples show:

¹¹⁰ Cf. Abaev 1964: 33; Isaev 1966: 67; Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 212.

- (30) *ænæ-bazir-tæ mary*
ænæ-bazir-tæ mary
 without-wings (pl.) bird
 “a bird without wings” (NK 1946: 83).
- (31) *xæi-ttæ-gond kui fæci læppu*
xæi-ttæ- gond kui fæci læppu
 parts (pl.)-done when became boy
 “when the boy had finished the partition” (NK 1946: 185) (*xæittæ-gond*, a *bahuvrīhi* “with parts-done”).

4.13.3.13. Considering the facts that have been treated in the preceding sections, particularly the optional expression of number concord between the plural subject and the verb, it seems natural to interpret the nominal pluraliser as a derivative rather than an inflectional suffix. This is in agreement with the original function of **-tā-* as a formant of abstracts or collectives.

It is therefore not necessary to ascribe the lack of number concord to interference from neighbouring languages, although I would not deny the possibility that bilingual contacts may have contributed to the retention of an inherited syntactic feature. What I have in mind here is particularly contacts with Turkic languages. It is characteristic for this linguistic family that number concord between a third person subject and the verbal predicate is in principle redundant.

In Ingush-Chechen, three of the gender classes referring to non-humans (among them the two largest classes) employ the same prefix in the singular and the plural in order to mark concord between the verb and a noun in the absolutive case (in the function of a subject of an intransitive verb or the object of a transitive verb). In Bats the situation is basically the same; two large classes referring to non-humans do not differentiate between the singular and the plural.¹¹¹

In modern Georgian, as a rule, a verbal predicate shows number concord with a plural subject marked with *-eb-* (an ancient collective suffix) only if this refers to humans or to animates regarded as individuals; if the subject itself is in the *n*-plural, the verb is always in the plural. Concerning the given case, however, as in general, I am rather sceptical in considering any Georgian influence on the grammatical structure of Ossetic.

In Sogdian, where *-t* also functions as the normal pluraliser, the number of the verb as a rule agrees with the subject noun. A subject in the plural may, however, take a verbal predicate in the singular (Gershevitch 1961: 238 ff.). In Yaghnōbi a subject in the plural usually takes the verbal predicate in the plural (Xromov 1972: 73).

4.13.3.14. In its approximative and amplifying functions, the Ossetic pluraliser closely resembles the New Persian plural marker *-hā* (colloquially *-ā*; Hinchā 1961: 141 ff.; Windfuhr 1979: 31 ff.). In both languages the general meaning (“Gesamtbedeutung”) of the plural markers can be said to be “amplification”, a quantitative extension of the concept expressed by the noun. Like the Ossetic pluraliser, the Persian equivalent *-hā* can be added to adverbs; cf. *key-hā* “in which period” (*key* “when”), *zir-hā* “somewhere below” (*zir* “below”), *hālā-hā* “at the present time” (*hālā* “now”), etc. (Hinchā 1961: 143 f.).

In both languages, in all likelihood independently of one another, the nominal pluraliser has thus been extended to adverbs. The starting point may have been the

¹¹¹ For a general survey I refer to Nichols 1994a: 21 ff. (Chechen) and 1994b, 93 ff. (Ingush), and Holisky / Gagua 1994: 162 ff. (Bats).

adverbial use of nominal plurals in sentences such as Pers. *šabhā qisse miguft* “in the evening(s) he used to tell stories”.

The adverbial use of the nominative plural of *zaman* “time” in Turkish, indicating the approximate time (*o zaman-lar* “by that time”, *bir zaman-lar* “at one time, formerly”) is reminiscent of but not exactly comparable with the pluralised adverbs of Ossetic and Persian. As the amplifying or approximative meaning of plural markers is a common linguistic feature, I prefer to be cautious in interpreting its occurrence in Iranian and Turkic languages as an areal phenomenon.

4.13.4. Case

4.13.4.1. The case system

Ossetic has developed a system of morphological cases that is unique among the Iranian languages. Whereas the sister languages have to a large extent abolished, or at least reduced, the ancient noun inflection, Ossetic has built up a comparatively rich case system. I previously argued that Ossetic at some prehistoric stage possessed four nominal cases corresponding to the nominative, the genitive, the locative and the ablative (and/or instrumental) of Old Iranian (cf. Thordarson 1985). In addition to that earlier system of four cases, the language has developed new case endings, mainly from postpositions, through morphosyntactic reanalysis. Morphophonemic changes must have taken place which concealed the former word boundary. Needless to say, the precise order of events that led to the present structure cannot be determined. But it is worth noting that the case systems of the two dialects are not identical. As will be clear from the following paragraphs, this can only mean that Iron represents a more advanced stage of development, while Digor lingers somewhat behind.

4.13.4.1.1. Modern grammars assume nine cases for Iron: Nominative, genitive, dative, allative, inessive, adessive (superessive), ablative-instrumental, equative and comitative.¹¹² The last-mentioned is lacking in Digor, where the comitative meaning is expressed either by a postpositional phrase (genitive plus *xæccæ* “with”) or the prefix (or preposition) *æd-*.)

The earlier grammatical descriptions differ considerably from this analysis.

Klaproth in his short and in part faulty grammatical sketch (1814: 181 ff.) identified six cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative and ablative. In this analysis the accusative is mostly identical with the nominative, but partly also with the genitive. Klaproth also lists a few postpositions: *ma* (evidently identical with the allative ending), “welches eine Bewegung nach einem Orte anzeigt”, *ei* “in, auf” (example *chúzaw ei* “auf Gott”), *tychei* “wegen” (Klaproth’s spelling).

Rosén (1846, 364 ff.), who based his grammar on South Ossetic speech, assumes four cases of nouns and pronouns, viz. nominative-accusative-vocative, genitive-locative, dative and instrumental-ablative, except for the singular of personal pronouns where he identifies an accusative form as distinct from the genitive-locative and the nominative-vocative: *man* “me”, *daw* “thee”, but nom.-voc. *az*, *di*, gen.-loc. *mani*, *dawi* or *dachi* (Rosén’s spelling).

Sjøgren, in his Ossetic grammar, the first really scholarly description of the language (1844: 48 ff., cf. also p. XXI), identified eight cases of nouns and pronouns: nominative, vocative, accusative, dative, genitive, locativus interior (= inessive), locativus exterior (= allative), ablative. The vocative is mainly identical with the

¹¹² The English terminology is that of Abaev 1964.

nominative, but is in part marked by the interjection *o* used with the nominative. According to Sjøgren's analysis (p. 49, cf. also p. 206) the "definite" accusative is identical with the genitive and the locativus interior, while the "indefinite" accusative has the same form as the nominative. Sjøgren treats the endings *-il / -bæl* (spelled *ul, yl / bøl*) and I. *mæ* "with" (= D. *xace*) as postpositions (p. 190 ff.) and identifies one preposition, *æne* (p. 210, written *anæ/ane*), which precedes the accusative, as a rule in its "indefinite" form (i.e. the nominative).

The equative suffix *-au (-aw)* is analysed as an adverbial ending, used "um die Gleichheit oder Aehnlichkeit zu bezeichnen" (p. 68).

In these analyses, especially in the assumption of a distinct accusative (and also vocative) the influence of the traditional description of the Latin and Greek inflections is obvious.

Miller (1881-87: II, 127 ff.; 1903: 43 ff.) adds the comitative and the adessive (superessive) to the case inventory assumed by Sjøgren. He thus recognises a distinct accusative ("Neben der mit dem Nom. zusammenfallenden Form des Accusativs hat Oss. noch einen sog. Accusativus definitus, dessen Function der Genitiv übernommen hat; 1903: 44). Miller further lists the equative ending *-aw* among the derivative noun suffixes (1903: 93; 1881-87: II, 113). He hesitates to interpret the Digor adessive and comitative as genuine case forms, because the suffixes, as he says, are added to the genitive in the same way as postpositions: *fidi-bæl* (sic!) "auf, über dem Vater", *fidi-xætcæ* "mit dem Vater" (1903: 43).

Stackelberg's (1886) treatment of the Ossetic case syntax is based on Miller's analysis.

Vogt, in his study of the Ossetic case system (1944), places the equative (by him termed "adverbial") on a par with the cases. Abaev, in his detailed study of the Ossetic dialects (1949: 388 f.; first published 1939, cf. Isaev 1980: 135) treats *-aw* as a case ending. In these studies and later grammatical descriptions the accusative, no doubt assumed in accordance with Greek and Latin grammars (cp. above), has disappeared (cf. Abaev 1964: 17 ff.; Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 94 ff.; Isaev 1966: 37 ff.).

4.13.4.1.2. In addition to the case forms listed above (the primary cases), Ossetic possesses a number of postpositions and a few prepositions. The majority of the postpositions are nouns that are used metaphorically to express various local, temporal and modal meanings. Most of the postpositions are added to the genitive. Such postpositional phrases (secondary cases) may take the plural ending (cf. 4.13.3.10. above) and the endings of the primary cases (type *bælas-i sær-mæ* "to the top of the tree", *bælas-i sær-i* "at the top of the tree", *mæ cur-t-i* "beside me").

Similarly prepositional phrases may be combined with case and number endings:

- (1) *Uirizmæg-mæ fæs-duar-mæ rakast*
Uirizmæg-mæ fæs-duar-mæ rakast
 to-Uryzmag (all.) behind-door-to (all.) he-looked
 "he looked at Uryzmag behind the door" (IAS, 1961: I,240);
- (2) *mid-bil-t-i xudin*
mid-bil-t-i xudin
 within-lips-in (iness.pl.) to-laugh
 "to smile".

There is no clear-cut distinction between such postpositional phrases and the primary cases. To some extent, at least, a noun phrase may take two primary case endings that follow one after another:

fars "side": *færs-il-æi* "on the side, sideways" (adessive plus ablative), *færsilæi xuissidî* "he lay down on his side";

æraeg “late”: *æraž-i* “lately, recently” (inessive), *æraž-i-au* “at the end, finally” (inessive-equative), *æraž-i-au-gomau* “rather late”;

(3) *fæ-kom-kom-mæ bælas-il čizž-i niu-mæ æmæ sayd-au-æi bazzadi*.

<i>fæ-</i>	<i>kom-kom-mæ</i>	<i>bælas-il</i>	<i>čizž-i</i>	<i>niu-mæ</i>	<i>æmæ</i>
prevb.-	to-opposite (all.)	on-tree (all.)	girl’s (gen.)	to-picture (all.)	and
<i>sayd-au-æi</i>	<i>bazzadi</i>				
as-stuck (equ.+abl.)	became				

“he came across the picture of the girl on the tree and became as dumbfounded” (PNT0 III (1928): 51; apud Bouda 1934:43); *sayd*, past participle of *sayin* (tr.) “to stick into”, *sæžin* (intr.) “to stick, get tied up”.¹¹³

The prepositional and postpositional phrases will be treated separately below (cf. 4.14.).

4.13.4.1.3. As already stated, the Ossetic case inflection is of the agglutinative type (cf. 4.12.1. and 4.13.1. above).

In Iron the case markers are added to the nominal stem as it appears in the nominative. If the stem ends in a vowel and the case suffix also begins with a vowel, an *i* [j] is inserted between the stem and the ending. This rule applies to Digor, too (in the genitive and the inessive, realised as *-ai*, *-oi* etc., diphthongs: *žæxæra-i* “of a beet” etc.). In the plural, the *-æ* of the nominative is omitted in front of the oblique case endings.

In Digor, nouns ending in *-æ* (< **-ā*) in the nominative, lose this element in the oblique cases, except for the allative and the adessive. With the same exceptions, the *-æ* of the nominative plural is omitted in the oblique cases.

A few nouns (in part, no doubt, recent loanwords, see 4.12.3. above and Abaev 1949: 395 ff.) that in Iron end in *-æ* in the nominative singular, retain this vowel in the oblique cases and in the plural: *ærtæ-i-æn* “three” (dative), *arfæ-tæ* “blessings, thanks”. There are two exceptions: *zærdæ* “heart” (< **zrdaya-*; IES: IV 300 f.) and *bæstæ* “place, village, country” (probably < **upá-st(h)aya-*; cp. IES: I, 254 f.). In the genitive, inessive and adessive of these nouns variant forms without *-æ-* are common (and, in some locations, evidently the rule (Abaev 1949: 396): *zærd-i*, *zærd-il*. As the final *-æ* – in other derivatives of **-aya-* (cp. *ærtæ* “three” < **θrayah*, IES: II, 425; *arfæ* “blessing, benediction” < **ā-fraya-*, IES: I, 63 f.) is retained throughout the inflection, *zærd-i*, *bæst-i* etc. are probably analogous formations, due to the influence of the consonant stems.

In Digor, the corresponding nouns belong to the *æ*-declension.

4.13.4.2. Nominative

As already mentioned above (4.12.1.), the nominative of nouns derives from the Old Iranian nominative of *a-* and *ā-*stems.¹¹⁴

The nominative can be defined as the indefinite or zero case form. It is opposed to the other cases in a negative way, hence its wide range of functions. It is used as the subject of both transitive and intransitive verbs. With the genitive, it shares the ability to serve as a modifier in complex noun phrases, and as the object of transitive verbs; it has in common with the ablative to serve as a predicative complement. It can be used with local and temporal denotations, in which function it competes with the inessive.

¹¹³ Bigulaev e.a. 1962: 325 gives *saydaw* as a separate lexical item: “dumbfounded, surprised”, cf. *bazzaiin* “to stop, remain”.

¹¹⁴ The following remarks owe much to H. Vogt’s study on the Ossetic case system (Vogt 1944), and to R. Jakobson’s study on the Russian case system of 1936, as published in an English translation in Jakobson 1995, 332-385.

Finally it is used independently – outside the clause structure – as a vocative and as the naming form of the noun.

4.13.4.2.1. The nominative is the normal quotation form of the noun. It serves as the nominal form that is used in isolation. (Regarding a similar use of the ablative, cf. 4.13.4.6.5. and 4.13.4.8. below).

In the vocative function, there are in particular three nouns that can add the particle *-ai* to the the nominative: *us-ai* = “O woman”, *čizg-ai* “O girl”, *læg-ai* “O man”. In this function the nominative may be preceded by the exclamational interjection *o / uæ, (u)o*; cp. I. *o xučau* “O my God”, D. *uo mæ zinary – mæ bæstæ* “O my own dear country” (cf. Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 95; Isaev 1966: 39; IES: II, 223).

The nominative is used to encode the subject of both transitive and intransitive verbs. It is also used, with some restrictions (cf. below), to mark the direct object of transitive verbs. Furthermore, it functions as a subjective complement (predicative), in which capacity it competes, to some extent, with the ablative.

A general cross-linguistic definition of the notion of subject is not a theme that can be discussed here. In the case of Ossetic, it seems most fruitful to identify the noun phrase in the role of a subject (if this can be an adequate term in the description of this language at all). The noun phrase agrees with the finite verb of the clause in person, and, for the first and second persons, in number as well (as to number agreement in the third person, cf. 4.13.3.7. above). Agreement is thus a special property of one of the possible arguments of the verb. This argument is put in the nominative. A clause can consist of a verb alone (cf. 4.1. above). To most finite verbal forms, however, an overt subject can be added either for prominence or for specification. As a rule, personal pronouns in the nominative can occur as the subject of a verb in the first or second person only in such cases when special emphasis is required:

fedton æi “I saw him”, but: *æz æi fedton* “I (emphatic) saw him”; – *fedta mæ* “(s)he saw me”: *aci læg (us) mæ fedta* “this man (woman) saw me”.

In poetic style and in proverbs the predicate of the clause may consist of a noun: *arsi quin – iæ listæn, tintič’i – iæ baz* “bear-skin his bed, goat-hair his pillow” (K’osta 1960: I, 98; Iron fændir, the poem Vsati). Such clauses can be paraphrased by adding a finite form of the verb “to be” that agrees with the nominative noun phrase in the way defined above.

The addressee of the imperative (second and third persons, singular and plural) can be made explicit by putting it in the nominative: (*čizžitæ*) *ærbacæuut* “(girls), come in”.

4.13.4.2.2. Ossetic possesses various types of impersonal expressions, i.e. expressions where the finite verb is used in the third person singular only. To some of these verbs, a noun phrase in the nominative can be added as a subject.

Weather expressions may consist of an impersonal verb only:

dimin / dumun “to blow” (also a transitive verb; past tense *dimdton / dumdton* “I blew”): I. *dimi* “the wind is blowing”; D. *ævast ærba-dumda Bestau* *xuænxæi* “suddenly a wind blew from the Bestaw Mountains” (Bagæratı Sozir apud Gagkaev 1956: 158); *uarin / uarun* “to rain” (past intransitive *uard(i)di / uardæi*): *uari* “it is raining”; but also *k’ævda* (‘rain’) *uari* “id.”; *mit* (‘snow’) *uari* “it snows” (*miti uard* “snowfall”); *iç* (‘ice, hail’) *uari* “it is hailing”; *cæx* (‘salt’) *uari* “it is raining salt” (MF: III, 1263). The infinitive *uarin / uarun* is also used as a noun: D. *ustur uarun* “heavy (lit. great) rain”.

The use of an “internal subject” with verbs expressing natural phenomena is evidently an Aryan – and even Indo-European – inheritance:¹¹⁵

OInd. *vāto vāti* “the wind blows”, *vr̥ṣṭír varṣati* “the rain rains”, but also *varṣati* or *vr̥ṣṭim varṣati* (with an “internal object”). Cf. also OCS. *oblakъ dъzditъ* “the cloud rains”, beside *dъzditъ*; Lith. *lietus lýja* “to rain”; Lat. *lapis depluit (multus ut in terras deplueretque lapis)* “and how many stone (many a stone) would rain down on the earth”, Tibullus 2,5,72).

Note also the following expressions: *arv* (heaven) *næri* “it is thundering”; *k’æzæx næri* “the rock thunders”; – *arv ærttivi* “it is lightning”; *xurniguilmæ sæm ærttivi*, *sizȳærinau* “it (the skull) sparkles towards sunset like gold” (K’osta 1960: I, 166, the poem *Læg ævi us?*).

The third person singular of *kænin / kænun* “to do” (in the past inflected as a transitive verb) is frequently used as an impersonal verb “to become”: *k’ævda kæni* “it rains” (lit. “it became < made rain”); *miti uard ærkodta* “it snowed” (lit. “it became snow-fall”); *ærba-uazal kodta* “it became cold” (a compound verb, cf. 3.5. above).

There are three modal verbs in Iron which take the personal actant (the experiencer) in the genitive, the verb itself being in the third person singular: *fændi mæ* “I want, will”, *qæui mæ* “I must”, *uîrni mæ* “I believe”. A nominative noun phrase can be introduced as the subject of these verbs: *mæn lævar næ qæui* “I do not need a present” (Munkácsi 1923-32: I, 32). An infinitive can also be added to the finite verb: *max næ fændi uidonæn mast skænin* “we do not want to insult them” (MF: III, 1383).

In Digor, *fændui mæ* “I want” and *ȳæuii mæ* “I must” are used in the same way. Instead of I. *uîrni mæ*, *æruagæs* (*æragæs*, *iragæs*; *iruagæs*, MF: II, 635), *un* (*kænun*) is used in the same sense. The experiencer is put in the ablative; the object of belief appears as a grammatical subject:

(1) *næ mi æruagæs kænui* “I do not believe it” (Miller 1902: 37);

(2) *dalisæi i dærk’i zurdtæ raruagæs æncæ*
dalisæi i dærk’i zurdtæ ra-ruagæs æncæ
 from-lamb (abl.) the kid’s words prevb+trustworthy are
 “the lamb trusted the words of the kid” (MF: II, 635).

I. *qua*, *quamæ*, D. *ȳæuama*, originally the subjunctive *qæuin / ȳæuun* in the third person singular plus *æmæ / æma* “and”, is commonly used as a modal auxiliary in the sense of “must”; the main verb stands in the subjunctive: *quamæ aceuui* “you must go”.

In Digor, *ænyæzui mæ* is used in the sense of “I may, it becomes me” (I. *æmqizin* “to ferment”).

In both dialects, among other meanings, *æmbælin / æmbæln* stands for “to meet” (in which sense it takes the adessive: *æmæ iil fembældi fændagil* “and he met him on the way”); it can be used as an impersonal verb in the sense “it becomes, it is fit”. In Digor, the personal actant is expressed by the adessive, whereas it appears in the dative form in Iron:

(3) I. *ne ’mbæli Xansiatæn ferox kænin æȳdau, xæzar, miggag æmæ ægas zillæi*
 “it does not befit Xansiat to forget the custom, the home, the family and the whole world” (note the genitive, as the expression of the definite object, is marked with the last noun phrase; Brit’iati Êlbizdiqo 1963: 96).

(4) D. *dæubæl cæuun ne ’mbælu* “it is not proper for you to go”.

The third person singular of the intransitive verb *tæfsin / tæfsun* “to get warm” can be used as an impersonal verb in the sense of “to be feverish”; the experiencer is put in the adessive:

¹¹⁵ Cf. Delbrück 1893-1900: 1,257; Brugmann 1904: 625; Haudry 1977: 29.

- (5) *Nat'aīil uici bon nal ǎrtǎfstis ǎmǎ uidis qǎlʒǎg* “that day Nat'a was not feverish any more and was cheerful” (Ėpxiti Tǎtǎri 1961: II, 10).

The negation *nǎi* (I., D.) “it is not”, plus the gerund preceded by the preposition *ǎnǎ-*, is commonly used in the sense of “it is impossible”: *gorǎtmǎ ǎnǎ-ǎǎu-gǎ nǎi* “it is not possible to go to the town”. A similar meaning can be expressed by the verbal noun in *-ǎn* (cf. 4.13.4.4.12. below) plus *nǎi*: *ǎnǎ-ba-kus-gǎ-ǎǎ xǎr-ǎn nǎi* “without working there is nothing to eat” (lit. “not working there is nothing for eating”).

The past participle, frequently inflected by the particle *-ǎ* and the third person singular of the verb “to be”, can be used as an impersonal expression (Abaev 1964: 66 f.; the past participle *ǎind / kind* (from *kǎnin / kǎnun* “to do”) is especially common in these expressions. In a clause like *arǎǎ xǎǎzari ǎindǎ u* “good wishes are made in the house” (a proverb), *arǎǎ* might possibly be interpreted as subject. But this hardly applies to the following sentence:

- (6) *kǎǎǎm sǎ ǎǎindǎ ua, iu ǎǎǎmi-xuiǎǎn xǎǎzar nǎi ǎǎgǎs qǎǎi*
kǎǎǎm sǎ ǎǎindǎ ua iu ǎǎǎmi-xuiǎǎn xǎǎzar nǎi ǎǎgǎs qǎǎi
 whither themaway-broughtmight-be (sj.) one decent house is-not whole in-village
 “there is not a decent house in the whole village where you might bring them”
 (example in Gagkaev 1956: 159).

4.13.4.2.3. The nominative marks the direct object of transitive verbs, in which function it competes with the genitive. The nominative is particularly found in clauses where no semantic need is felt to distinguish morphologically between the subject and the direct object. For a language with a comparatively free word order, this will most typically be the situation in clauses where the referent of the subject is an animate being and that of the object, an inanimate entity. In such clauses ambiguities will be rare; the object as a rule does not need a morphological marker which distinguishes it from the subject-agent. On the other hand, when the referent of the direct object is an animate being, it may need a morphological marker that distinguishes it from the subject. This matter will be discussed in some detail in a later section (cf. 4.13.4.3.8.).

The conflation of the nominative and the accusative is in all likelihood due to the loss of final short vowels (cf. Thordarson in Schmitt 1989: 459). At the same time, it implies a change in the grammatical structure of the language. As this development is in agreement with the general trend of the East Iranian languages, there is no reason to ascribe it to an influence from neighbour languages. Neither the adjacent Northwest Caucasian nor the Nakh languages distinguish between an accusative and a nominative case; but as they are ergative languages, their clause structures are not quite comparable with that of Ossetic. The use of the genitive to express the direct object has a partial parallel in the Turkic accusative as a marker of specified objects; cf. also Fritz 1983: 10, mentioning a similar situation in Kar.-Balk. In Khotanese, there is no distinction in the plural between the nominative and the accusative. Already in Old Khotanese, there is a tendency to use the nominative singular for accusative functions (cf. Emmerick 1968: 249 f.). In Sogdian, the light stems have in part preserved the accusative singular (*-u < *-am*); the heavy stems and the plural of light stems do not distinguish between the two cases (Gauthiot/Benveniste 1914 (1923)-1929: II, 72 ff.; Gershevitch 1961: 177 f.). In Khwarezmian, the two cases have apparently been conflated (Humbach in Schmitt 1989: 196 ff.).

4.13.4.2.4. The nominative is used as a predicative complement. The ablative is also used in this function. The demarcation between the two cases in this function is not clear-cut. In a general sense the nominative expresses the identity of the predicative complement and the noun phrase it refers to, whereas the ablative expresses some temporary or peripheral circumstances, or a modality of the verbal action. The

nominative is particularly common with verbs designating “to be”, “to become” (*uin / un, festin / festun; kænin / kænun* in its intransitive use; cf. Stackelberg 1886, 3 ff.).

Examples:

- (7) *Misa aficer uidis* “Misa was an officer”; *di xistær dæ* “you are the oldest (elder)”;
- (8) *ralæuuið ualæg, zæxx art festad, bæstæ zmælæg ssis* “the spring came, the earth was on fire (became fire), the country began to stir” (Sek’a 1979: 251);
- (9) *fælæ miy næ fildær kæni* “the fog does not become thicker” (example in Gagkaev 1956: 57).

In the following example the ablative is used with the verb “to be”:

- (10) *uidis xuiætæzi æfsæddonæi* “he was a private soldier (Gagkaev o.c.: 58).

In the function of a predicative complement, the nominative may be co-referential with a direct object:

- (11) *D. mæn ma xonæ dæ xælær* “do not call me your friend” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf 1957: 84; the poem *Vodevil*).
- (12) *I. æmæ uæ æz adæmi axszîtæ skænžinæn* “and I will make you fishers of men (SE 1902, Mk. 1.17).
- (13) *I. æmæ diuuæ čizži baurædta iæ xicæn lækkad-gænžitæ* “and he kept the two girls for himself as servants” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 78).

In the following example, the nominative expresses an incidental role rather than a permanent property:

- (14) *uæd ta min æm minævar bacu* “go to him as my messenger” (NK 1946: 210).

Evidently there is some fluctuation in the use of the two cases in the role of predicative complements.

The predicative use of the ablative will be treated in some detail in a subsequent section (4.13.4.6.18.). Concerning the use of the dative and the equative in this function, I refer to 4.13.4.4.5. and 4.13.4.8. below.

4.13.4.2.5. The nominative can be used in both a temporal (“when?”) and, more rarely, a local (“where?”) sense:

- (15) *I. bælesti auuon c’æx kærðægil æritidtoi sæ urs nimættae*
bælesti auuon c’æx kærðægil æritidtoi sæ urs nimættae
of-trees (gen.pl.) shadow (nom.) green on-grass (adess.) they-spread their white felt cloaks
“in the shadow of the trees they spread their white felt cloaks on the green grass” (NK 1946: 282).
- (16) *D. fæs-γædtæ ændiud æma bærzond instoncæ sæxe arvmæ bek’ægūn sau xūænxæ*
fæs-γædtæ ændiud æma bærzond instoncæ sæxe arvmæ
behind-woods daring and high raised themselves to-heaven (all.)
bek’ægūn sau xūænxæ
jagged black mountains
“behind the woods jagged black mountains raised themselves daring and high towards heaven” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf 1957: 95, the sketch *Xæræ*; cf. also Isaev 1966: 39 ff.; – *fæs-* preposition “behind” with the nominative).
- (17) *I. særd mil midyūin kærç makæd badar, zimæg mil tævd zil makui baxær.*
særd mil midyūin kærç makæd badar
summer (nom.) not inside-hair cloak never carry (imp.)
zimæg mil tævd zil makui baxær
winter (nom.) not hot bread never eat (imp.)
“in the summer you shall not carry the cloak with the hair on the inside, in the winter you shall not eat hot bread” (NK 1946: 179).

- (18) D. *æd æxsævæ æd-æ-bonæ i mægugæi fælgæsui* “night and day she looks out of the tower (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf 1957: 26, the poem *Žule*).

The nominative is particularly common in fixed phrases, such as *ali ran* “everywhere”, *abon* “today”, *uci aſon* “at that time”. The nominative here denotes extent of space or time: *bon ræxtisti uiling, æxsæv ta – uidisn* “during the day they grew by one span, during the night by one palm of the hand” (NK 1946: 4).

4.13.4.3. Genitive

The ending of the genitive is *-i* in Digor and, correspondingly, *-i* in Iron. In modern Iron, a velar stop becomes an alveo-palatal affricate in front of the genitive ending (č, č', ž); this change is not old (19th cent.; cf. Thordarson 1989a).

It seems most natural to derive the genitive ending from Old Iranian **-ah*, the genitive ending of athematic nouns, which implies that **-ah* has been transferred to all noun classes by loss of allomorphic variation.

Tedesco (1926: 130) derived the genitive ending *-i* of Khotanese *a*-stems, as well as the Sogdian genitive ending *-y*, from the ancient thematic ending **-ahya*. Ossetic *-i/-i* was explained in the same way by Abaev (1949: 218). This seems still to be the generally accepted explanation of the Sogdian genitive (cf. Benveniste in Gauthiot/Benveniste 1914 (1923)-1929: II, 73; Gershevitch 1961: 178; Sims-Williams 1982: 70 ff.; cp., however, the latter regarding the genitive of the Sogdian heavy stems). This explanation has been called into question by Emmerick (1968: 256), who suggests the athematic genitive ending **-ah* to be the origin of the genitive in *-i* of Khotanese *a*-stems.

In Ossetic, Old Iranian **-ahya* would probably have yielded **-æi*, cf. *mæi / mæiæ* “moon, month” < **māhyā-* (cf. Bielmeier 1977: 193 f.; Thordarson in Schmitt 1989: 460). An alleged **-ē* < **-ahya* would probably have been retained in Digor and become *-i* in Iron, cf. D. *eu, I. iu* “one” < **aiwa-*.

According to Tedesco (1926: 129) and Benveniste (Gauthiot/Benveniste 1914 (1923)-1929: II, 73), the development **-ah* > *-i* is in all likelihood common to the East Iranian languages.

4.13.4.3.1. Our hypothesis is supported by the numerative use of the genitive after cardinal numerals higher than “one” and with nouns denoting indefinite plurality, when the noun phrase as a whole functions as a nominative: I. *ærtæ xoīi nin uid* “we had three daughters”; D. *eu k'ord adæimagi* “a group of people”; I. *caldær azi* “several years”. There is, however, some fluctuation, as appears from the following text (NK 1946: 117-118; *Soslan mærdti bæsti*):

- (1) *denžizi bil æfsæinagæi sau galuan, iæ cippar fisini Aza-bælası siftæ sayd kuid ua, aftæmæi, stæi ærtæ sædæ sirdi, – uidonæi iu sædæ sægtæ kuid ua, iu sædæ zæbidirtæ, iu sædæ ta alimikkag ændæ sirdtæ* “on the shore (there will be) a black fortress of steel; in its four corners (*fisini*, iness. sg.) there will be planted leaves of the Aza tree, later (there will be) 300 beasts (*sirdi*, gen. sg.), among them there will be 100 deer (*sagtæ, sægtæ* nom. pl.; cf. IES: III, 11), 100 ibex (*zæbidirtæ*, nom. pl.), then 100 various other beasts (*sirdtæ*, nom. pl.).

Biræ / be(u)ræ “many, much” frequently takes the nominative plural: I. *biræ qæbatir læppute ži razindi* “(K'osta 1960: I, 252, the poem Xetæg; note the singular of the verb). However, there are also other syntagms as in D. *uomi ba bægæni* (nom.sg.) *dær beræ uozænei æma ærtæ boni* (gen.sg.) *minasæ kænzinan* “and there will also be plenty of beer and we will feast for three days” (Isaev 1966: 135; note the word order in

the noun phrase), and the genitive plural in *biræ xættiti* “many times” (Isaev 1966: 214; text from Uællagkom), D. *beræ xættiti* “many times” (MF: III, 1495), a contamination of the two construction types. In cases other than the nominative, the numeral syntagm follows the normal noun phrase pattern, i.e. the case ending is placed after the head: *ærtæ bæxæn* “for three horses” (dative), *ærtæ bæximæ* “with three horses” (comitative), etc.

As this construction is contrary to the general rules of the Ossetic noun phrase structure, a special explanation seems to be needed. In all probability the genitive in this case derives from an old nominative plural in **-ah*, which, due to its homonymity with the genitive, has been identified with the latter.

In Yaghnōbi, the numerals take the head noun in the oblique case of the singular (*-i*, ancient genitive < **-ah*?): *tiráy γówi* “three cows”, *haft móhi Lučób ark akunim* “for three days I worked in L.” (Xromov 1972: 21). It seems natural to assume a common origin of both the Ossetic and the Yaghnōbi constructions. In Sogdian, however, numeric phrases are not built up in this way (cp. Gershevitch 1961: 240).

The Circassian use of possessives with the numerals – cp., e.g., Kab. *šəjš* “three horses”, lit. “horse-its-three” (cp. *uɔɔi šə* “horse” (Šagirov 1977: II, 141; for *uɔɔi šə* “three” cf. Kardanov e.a. 1957: 445) – is typologically somewhat reminiscent of the Ossetic construction. But if my explanation of the latter is true, Ossetic is hardly the recipient language here.

4.13.4.3.2. An Alanic genitive in *-i* (written with Greek H) is attested in a few proper names found in the Zelenčuk inscription (11th–12 cent.):

- (2) ΣΑΧΑΡΗ ΦΟΥΡΤ, ΠΑΚΑΘΑ(Ρ)Η ΦΟΥΡΤ, Α(Ν)ΠΑΛΑΝΗ ΦΟΥΡΤ
 “Sakhar’s, Bagatar’s, Ambalan’s son”, and probably in ANH TZHPΘE “their grave” (*ani*, probably the gen. pl. of *a-* “this”, identical with the modern Digor form; cf. Abaev 1949: 260 ff.; Zgusta 1987; Thordarson 1988, review of Zgusta, o.c.).

No genitive form has been identified in the Alanic verses of Ioannis Tzetzes (12th cent.; see Abaev 1949: 254 ff.; Hunger 1953). In the Yass word list (15th cent.) there are no inflected nouns at all (Németh 1959).

4.13.4.3.3. The genitive is primarily a case that serves to mark relationships between nouns in complex noun phrases. Secondly it denotes the direct object of transitive verbs. As already mentioned above, it is also used to mark the “logical subject” (the experiencer) of a few impersonal verbs (cf. 4.13.4.2.2. above).

As a nominal modifier, the genitive serves to qualify or delimit in some way the meaning of the head noun. In this function it expresses a wide range of relationships, depending on the meanings of the constituents of the noun phrase. It marks “the belonging to, partaking of”: *mæ fidi xæzar* “my father’s house”; *Narti fæsviæd* “the Nart youth”; *bælası cong* “the branch of a tree”, *æxsævi taling* “the darkness of night”;

the “origin of”: *Inalı ærtæ fırti* “the three sons of Inal”, *Acæii fırt çisil Acæmaz* “little Acæmaz, son of Acæ” (NK 1946: 276 ff. passim; an epic formula); D. *Taqazti Marıxan* “Marıxan Takazova” (family name in the genitive plural, the ordinary type of family names in the modern language),¹¹⁶

“the quality of something”: *sæxari ad* “sugary taste”;

“similarity”: D. *dæu xuzæn læquæn* “a boy like you”; I. *læži xuizæn læg* “a man like a man, a real man” (cp. IES: IV, 274).

¹¹⁶ Formerly patronymica in *-on* (< **-āna-*) must have been common, which are even found today in archaizing style.

The delimiting function of the genitive underlies its use in partitive constructions, particularly with comparatives in *-dær*:

bæxti fidtær “the worst of the horses”; *sæ kæstær æfsimær* “the younger brother” (lit. “the younger brother of them”);

(3) *iæxædæg ta, – uædæ –, læpputi xuizdær* “he himself (is) the best of the boys” (NK 1946: 280).

(4) *ærtæ læppuii diuuæ kuista* “two of the three brothers worked” (Munkácsi 1923-32: II, 64).

4.13.4.3.4. The genitive can be added to the nominal forms of the verbs such as, e.g., the infinitive: *iæ ærbacæuini xabar* “the news of his arrival”;

the future participle: *nuazinaži sik’a* “drinking horn”;

a verbal adjective: *Kete, mæ uarzon* “K., my beloved” (a vocative expression);

the past participle (with the agent in the genitive): *uci bælas dær mæ fidi sayd u* “this tree has also been planted by my father”; *xæiræži saidæn xos ærcæuzæn, fæle kosa kæi fæsaia, uimæn xos nal ærcæuzæn* “for him who has been deceived by the devil (lit. “the devil’s deceived”), there will be (come) a medicine, but for him whom the beardless might deceive, there will never be a medicine” (a proverb; MF: II, 1031).

The use of the genitive with passive verbal adjectives (participles) in *-ta-* (OInd. also gerundives in *-ya-*) to signify the agent, is well attested in ancient Aryan texts and goes in all probability back to Indo-European (the agent conceived as the owner of the action).

In the Rigveda it is rare (Renou 1952: 353) but common in later Sanskrit: *havyo aryāḥ* “it (the *pedu* horse) shall be invoked by the devoted man (*ari-*)” (RV I.116.6); *māmed vardhasva sūṣṭutah* “grow (as you are) praised by me” (RV VIII.6.12; to Indra); *pātyuh krītā satī* “a wife bought by the husband”; *rājñām pūjitāḥ* “honoured by the kings” (Delbrück 1888 (1968): 153).

Av. (Gath.): *yōi spəntəm ārmaitīm θβahiiā mazdā bərəxδəm vidušō* “the holy Armatī, esteemed by thy knowing one, O Wise One” (Y. 34.9; Humbach’s (1991) translation); *vayhəuš manahō bərəxδē* “O (Right-Mindedness), esteemed by good thought” (Y. 48.6; Humbach’s (1991) translation).

(5) *āat yezī nasuš aiβi.ymixta sūnō vā kərəfš.x’arō* “when the body has been gnawed (eaten) by a dog or a vulture” (Vd. 7.30).

In Greek, the genitive may be used in a similar manner to designate the agent with passive participles: ὁ δ’ ὀρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο “roused (inspired) by the god he began” (Od. 8.499; the only example, as it seems, in the Homeric text, cf. Chantraine 1948-53: II, 61):

τὰ δρώμεν’ ὑμῶν “your doings (plans)” (Sophocles, *Electra* 1333); σανδάλιον τε αὐτοῦ πεφορημένον “and a shoe worn by him (Perseus)” (Herodotus II, 91). Cf. also Δίος-δοτος, an archaic proper name (“given by Zeus”).¹¹⁷ In Greek, the use of the genitivus actoris has apparently been transferred from the verbal adjectives in **-to-* to the other passive participles.

Similarly Germanic (Old High German): *thie giwihite mīnes fater sin, gisegenōte sīne* “die von meinem Vater Geweihte sind, von ihm Gesegnete” (Otftr. V, 20, 68-69), and Lithuanian *karāliaus siūstas* “sent by the king”.¹¹⁸

According to Pāṇini (2.3.67), the genitive is used with a participle in *-ta-* if it has a present sense (cf. also Speyer 1896 (1974): 61 ff.). To all appearances, this rule is

¹¹⁷ Cf. Schwyzer-Delbrück 1939-59: II, 119.

¹¹⁸ Brugmann 1897-1916 (1967): II, 2, 601; Delbrück 1893-1900 (1967): I, 348.

applicable to Ossetic as well. In the examples quoted above, the expression refers to a state in the present.

We may conclude from this that the use of the genitivus actoris with the participle in **-ta-* in Ossetic is an old Aryan, and probably even Indo-European, inheritance.

4.13.4.3.5. With comparatives in *-dær*, the genitive occasionally expresses the standard of comparison: *ænguzæi čisildær, lægi tixžindær. Næmig* “smaller than a walnut, stronger than a man: A bullet” (a riddle; Schiefner 1863: 9). As a rule, however, the standard of comparison is indicated by the ablative or, more rarely, the adessive (cf. 4.13.4.6.8. below).

4.13.4.3.6. In the meaning “belonging to” the genitive can be used predicatively: *uici fælmæn k'ux Zalduzi uidis, uii kui fedta* “when he saw that this soft hand was Zalduz’s” (Dæbe 1965: I, 10).

The genitive is used as a predicative complement when it is co-referent with a genitive object:

- (6) *D. max dæ ne stur fidæn, Uærxægæn, xonæn kinzi* “we shall marry you to our grandfather (lit. “great father”), Wærxæg” (lit. “... invite you as a bride ...”; NK 1990: 86).

4.13.4.3.7. The usage of the genitive as a marker of the direct object of transitive verbs is elusive and can hardly be defined by rigid rules.

According to Abaev (1964: 121 f.), the direct object is put into the genitive if it denotes a definite individual animate being. If an inanimate noun or the designation of an indefinite being (*неопределенное существо*) serves as a direct object, the object stands in the nominative. Inanimate nouns and the designations of animals may be put into the genitive, if their role as definite objects is stressed. A more detailed treatment, essentially identical with the above description, is given by Abaev 1949: 129 ff. and 1965: 65 ff.

Gagkaev’s (1956: 105 ff.) and Axvlediani’s (1963–69: II, 155 ff.) definitions agree substantially with those of Abaev. In its function as a direct object, the genitive marks definiteness (Russ. *определенность*), primarily of animate nouns. The definitions of Stackelberg (1886: 4 ff.) are in all essentials the same as those quoted above, too: The “Accusativus indefinitus” (i.e. the nominative) marks: (1) the indefinite direct object, (2) the definite direct object of nouns referring to inanimate entities. The “Accusativus definitus” (i.e. the genitive) marks the definite direct object of animate nouns. This is also in agreement with the definitions given by Sjøgren (1844: 49 ff.) and Miller (1903: 44).

It may be questioned, however, if the notion of *definiteness* is fully applicable to the use of the genitive as a direct object. Very often the notion of *specificity* seems to be more adequate; thus, e.g., in the following examples:

- (7) *uæd æ farsmæ xoc kærðgæ auidta iu læži, uii uidis æ xurauon* “then he saw at his side a (certain) man mowing grass, it was his shadow” (Isaev 1966: 215; a text from Uællagkom);
- (8) *iu kuirm læži iu k'æbilæ racæikodta* “a dog led a (certain) blind man” (Munkácsi 1927–32: II, 34).

In both instances the noun phrase is preceded by *iu* in the function of an indefinite article (i.e. indefinite but specific).

In the following clause, however, where the animate objects are represented as indefinite as well as unspecific, they are put into the nominative:

- (9) *am čizg æmæ læppu alizgæ næ fedtai?* “didn’t you see a girl and a boy running here downward?” (IAS 1961: II, 94).

As was already said above (4.13.4.5.), the genitive of inanimate nouns may function as a direct object if it is felt necessary or desirable to emphasise its syntactic role. This possibility can be used to avoid ambiguities, and it may be especially relevant in clauses where the subject and the object are expressed by two inanimate nouns. But in the following examples there is hardly any need to avoid ambiguities:

- (10) *niuuayta k’uibiloi æmæ arast i dardtær* “and he left the ball and continued his travel” (NK 1946: 123);
 (11) *alkæi zi iæ zaumati, kuid æmbæld, aftæ saræzton* “I arranged the equipment of each, as (it) was proper” (NK 1946: 129);
 (12) *æmæ iu zæronð c’uqqii ærxasta kæccæidær* “and he brought an old cherkesska from somewhere” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 18, 7.2.4.; note *iu* as an indefinite article);
 (13) *ruvas ævdisænne iæ dimaži ærkodta* “the fox raised his tail as a sign” (Schieffner 1863, col. 437, nr. 17);
 (14) *doni casdæriddtær næmai, uodtær don uizæni* “however often you whip the water, it will remain water” (Schieffner 1863, col. 436, nr. 3).

In all these examples we have to do with specific inanimate objects.

Personal pronouns and proper nouns, which inherently refer to known and specific – and as a rule – animate beings, stand in the genitive when used as direct objects:

- (15) *Sek’a xicæn uarzt kodta Comaqi* “Sek’a loved Comaq [his son] especially” (Gagkaev 1956: 107);
 (16) *mæn dær kui amardtai æmæ dæxi dær* “you killed both me and yourself” (Gagkaev 1956: 108).

Names of inanimate items stand in the genitive when they are used as a direct object:

- (17) *æmæ iæxsi qædæi Uacamongæii baxosta* “and he (Batradz) struck the Wacamongæ (the holy bowl of the Narts) with the stock of the whip” (NK 1946: 229; the bowl conceived as an animate being?).

The interrogative pronoun *çi / ka* “who” is put into the genitive (*cæi / ke*) when used as a direct object: *kæi amardta?* “whom did he kill?”. On the other hand, *ci / ci* “what” – in the same function – stands in the nominative: *dæ binontæ ci baxordtoi?* “what did your family eat?” (both arguments in the nominative, but the clause is hardly ambiguous).

However, the genitive of the animate interrogative pronoun may also be used when referring to an inanimate object:

- (18) *kæi nin dædta, uii iumæ dædtæd* “what He (God) may give us, he shall give both of us (... us together)” (NK 1946: 184; said in response to a preceding wish: *uæ, biræ dîn dædta xuiçau* “may God give you a good bag” (lit. “may God give you much”).

When the object is preceded by a possessive or demonstrative pronoun, it may stand in the nominative, even if it refers to a definite or specific animate being:

- (19) *çi iæ zi iæ mad xuidta, çi – iæ fid* “some (children) called him (Soslan) his (her) mother (nom.), some his (her) father (nom.)” (NK 1946: 122);
 (20) *radt min uici bæx* “give me that horse (nom.)” (Gagkaev 1956: 106);

- (21) *D. Terk-Torki bæxærȳauœi aci bæx rartastonœ* “they chose (singled out) this horse (nom.) from the Terk-Tork stud” (IAS: II 1961, 396; a *Bæx fældisin* text);
- (22) *œz næ fedton d’efsīmær* “I did not see your brother (nom.)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 86, text 4.IX.7);
- (23) *Nart uici udævȳ sæ fīngil sæværdtoi* “the Narts placed that shawm (nom.) on their table” (NK 1949: 4).

A variant of this text (“The Birth of Æxsar and Æxsærtæg”) found in NK 1946: 4 has:

- (24) *udævȳi Nart sæværdtoi sæ fīngil* “the Narts placed the shawm (gen.) on their table”.

Similarly we read in NK 1946: 6:

- (25) *ærbambird kodta tuȳi ’rtæxti* “he collected the drops (gen.) of blood”.

A variant of the same legend in NK 1949: 8 runs as follows:

- (26) *bambird in kodta iæ tuȳi ’rtæxtæ* “he collected its drops (nom.) of blood”.

In the following examples the genitive is used with a possessive pronoun:

- (27) *K’anȳi firt iæ bæxi donmæ rakodta* “K’andza’s son led his horse (gen.) to the river” (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 155; from a Nart text).
- (28) *mæ firti mæxædæg amardton* “I myself killed my son (gen.)” (Gagkaev 1956: 108).

In neither of these instances an ambiguity would arise; in the latter example it is ruled out by the concordance of the verb (1st pers. sg.) and the subject.

The direct object may be put into the nominative if it is preceded by an adjectival modifier, even if its referent is specific, cf. the following examples:

- (29) *auaxta kæsæȳi doni* “he threw the fish (gen.) into the river” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 66, text 3.VIII,6), but:
- (30) *sirx kæsag auaxta doni fæstæmæ* “he threw the red fish back into the river” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II,4).
- (31) *rattoi iin xistær čizȳi* “they gave him (as wife) the oldest girl (gen.)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 58, text 3.II,2), but:
- (32) *rattoi ta iin astæukkgæg čizg* “they gave him the middle girl (nom.)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 66, 3.II,4).

In all the instances quoted above specificity is marked by pronominal or adjectival modifiers.

There is some fluctuation in the use of the genitive in the case of animal names:

- (33) *islasta bæxi æsk’ætīmæ æmæ babasta* “he led the horse (gen.) to the stall and tied it” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 44, text 2.IV, 10), but:
- (34) *bæx babasta æsk’ætæ æmæ xæzarmæ bacidi* “he tied the horse (nom.) by the stall and went home” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 46, 2.V,16).

The genitive may be used as a predicative complement when it is coreferent with a genitive object, but the nominative is also common in these cases:

- (35) *Gicci iæ xonin* “I call her Gycci (nom.)” (Gagkaev 1956: 106);
- (36) *D. æma min æi kinȳi radtæ* “give her as a bride (nom.) to me” (NK 1990: 85); but:
- (37) *D. max dæ ne stur fidæn, Uærxægæn, xonæn kinȳi* “we shall marry you to our great father” (lit. “we shall invite you (as) a bride (nom.)...”) (NK 1990: 86).

4.13.4.3.8. In its object function, the genitive contrasts with the nominative as the marked vs. the unmarked case. The genitive foregrounds (“actualises”) a noun phrase as the object of a transitive verb. In this function it is interdependent with the categories of animacy and specificity (definiteness in terminology of the grammars). The use of the genitive as the object marker of inanimate nouns is to some extent optional and thus probably a matter of style or the paralinguistic circumstances of the utterance. To answer such questions, we will probably need the respective analyses by native speakers. The same applies to noun phrases where an animate head is preceded by a deictic modifier; in this case the use of the genitive as the marker of specificity is apparently redundant.

The interdependence of object marking and the categories of animateness and (or) specificity is a wellknown linguistic phenomenon that has arisen independently in languages all over the world. Thus, e.g., in Indo-European, distinction between the nominative and the accusative only applies to feminine and masculine nouns which, at least to some extent, have animate referents. Neuter nouns, which only rarely refer to animate beings, do not make this distinction.

In Russian, masculine animate nouns are put into the genitive as objects (cf. below).

In the Turkic languages, the accusative marks the direct object for specificity; Anat.Turk. *çocuk çiçeği satıyor* “the boy sells the flowers (acc.)”.

In Persian, where the ancient declensions have been abolished, the enclitic *-rā* is added to the object as a marker of specificity (see the detailed treatments by Hincha 1961: 177 ff. and Windfuhr 1979: 47 ff., the latter with bibliography).

In Armenian, where the nominative and the accusative of all nouns, except the personal pronouns, have merged in the singular, the preposition *z-* marks the specific (definite) object.

In the East Iranian languages except Pashto, the definite (“actualised”, Skjærvø) direct object is marked in various ways, either by pre- or postpositions or by suffixes (Ishkāshmi *-(y)i*, Wakhī *-i/əy*).¹¹⁹

In Yaghnōbi the direct object as a rule appears in the direct case (i.e., it is not morphologically marked) but may be put into the oblique case in *-i/y* (< the ancient gen. **-ah?*). To all appearances this happens when the object is a definite or known entity (Xromov 1972: 77). Judging from the examples quoted by Xromov, there seems to be some fluctuation in the use of cases with inanimate nouns:

(38) *vūzi akūšim, qāyla akūnim, žūtay-xotir-im-š akusēlim* “I slaughtered the kid (obl.), made a qayla (indef.), sent it to my son”;

(39) *xe, šumóx kúti γort* “hey, look at your dog (obl.)”;

(40) *čoyjūši mónomišt* “I put the teapot (obl.) on (boil the tea)”.

Personal pronouns, when used as direct objects, are put into the oblique case (in so far as they distinguish between the oblique and the direct case):

(41) *man áwi adihim* “I hit him” (obl.).

4.13.4.3.9. The origin of the genitive as an object marker is not clear. In the first place, the influence of Russian can be ruled out. The Ossetic use of the genitive to mark the direct object of transitive verbs has deep roots in the structure of the language and is undoubtedly old. Russian influence, on the other hand, is, as already mentioned, quite recent and largely limited to modern technical vocabulary.

¹¹⁹ Paxalina 1959: 43 f.; 1975: 45 ff.; Skjærvø in Schmitt 1989: 372; detailed investigations seem to be lacking.

Abaev, in his study on the object genitive (1965: 68 ff), suggests that this usage is an areal phenomenon common to the Slavonic languages and the Scytho-Sarmatian dialects spoken in the Ponto-Scythian lands. If that is the case, the usage must be very old. The use of the genitive to mark the direct object is already attested in Church Slavonic and common to all the Slavonic languages, although its development differs in the individual languages.

In Church Slavonic (not necessarily identical with Proto-Slavonic), the genitive of certain nominal categories marks the direct object, obviously to compensate for the fusion of the nominative and the accusative: personal pronouns, interrogative and demonstrative pronouns in the masculine singular (if they refer to persons) and proper names of the *o*-stems, all inherently implying specificity; furtheron participles and adjectives used as substantives when they refer to male persons, and *o*-stem common nouns denoting human beings. The genitive of common nouns may mark definiteness (specificity): *rabъ* “a slave” vs. *raba* “the slave” (Meillet 1897: 15 ff.; 59 ff.).

It goes without saying that Abaev’s sprachbund theory does not tell us in which language this feature originated.

4.13.4.3.10. In Slavonic as in Ossetic, object marking and the categories of both specificity and gender (animacy) are interdependent. In both languages the use of the genitive as an object marker is a therapeutic response to the damage caused by the fusion of the nominative and the accusative.

Prehistoric language contacts between the Slavonic tribes and the Iranian-speaking population of the North Pontic lands seem to be an established fact. But some doubts may be raised regarding the extent of these contacts and how far they were instrumental in a structural remodelling of these languages. We expect grammatical influence to be accompanied by extensive lexical borrowing. Slavonic words of Scytho-Sarmatian origin are few and mostly technical terms, a fact that indicates commercial rather than intimate social contacts. At least some of the Iranian etymologies that have been proposed for Slavonic words are controversial (cf. Kiparsky 1975: 59 ff.; Trubačov 1967: 3 ff.; Thordarson 1982: 255), nor are there many ancient Slavonic loanwords in Ossetic.¹²⁰ Most likely the Alanic ancestor dialect of Ossetic was spoken at some distance from the area where lexical exchange between the Slavonic and Scytho-Sarmatian dialects took place.

Linguistic phenomena typologically related to those under discussion here are found in distant parts of the world, in languages that are not known to have been in contact either with one another or the languages here cited. Thus, e.g., in Spanish the direct object of animate nouns is marked by the preposition *a* (ancient *ad*). In various Indo-Aryan languages (Hindi, Lahnda, Sindhi etc.) the definite object is placed in the oblique case followed by a postposition signifying “to” (Hindi *ko*); otherwise it appears in the indefinite (direct) case. In Marāṭhi, the object appears in the direct case if it denotes a thing, and in the oblique case followed by *lā* or *s* “to” if it denotes a person (Bloch 1965: 185 ff.; 1970: 187). In these languages, the special marking of the animate object is evidently a remedy necessitated by the phonetic merger of the nominative and the accusative.

4.13.4.3.11. In the languages cited in the above sections, the marking of the specific and (or) animate object is carried out by various means, either inflectionally or by adverbial expressions.

¹²⁰ Needless to say, the question of language contacts between the Slavonic and Scytho-Sarmatian peoples should be kept distinct from Iranian-Slavonic isoglosses dating back to Indo-European times.

When we consider these facts, it therefore seems most advisable to look for an explanation of the object genitive of Ossetic in the structure of the language itself.

The loss of short final syllables abolished the distinction between the nominative and the accusative. The genitive ending (*-ah > -i) has been retained as a distinct case marker. In the declensional system, the genitive is – as the syntactically marked case – opposed to the nominative, which is the syntactically neutral or unmarked case. In a language with an “elastic” word order, where the functional burden of the word order is comparatively small, the marked case is chosen to express the direct object in case a morphological marking of this syntactic function was felt necessary or desirable (cf. 4.13.4.2.3. above). The genitive has been chosen for this function as the general oblique case. Or, to quote Vogt’s formulation (1944: 37; repr. 1988: 301):

“Qu’on ait choisi parmi tous les cas le génitif pour exprimer cette rection, n’a rien que de très naturel. Le génitif est en effet le cas régi général qui en lui-même n’implique rien, mais qui laisse au verbe et au contexte le soin de préciser la nature concrète de la dépendence.”

In this connection, the homonymy of the genitive and the inessive (the ancient locative) of nouns (not of pronouns) is perhaps not without interest. It is also significant that Yaghnōbi – under certain circumstances – uses the oblique case to mark the direct object. It seems likely that this is one of the isoglosses that are shared by Ossetic and Yaghnōbi. If we accept a historical connection between the two languages in this respect, this testifies to the antiquity of the function of the genitive as a marker of the direct object and speaks against Abaev’s areal theory.

An alternative explanation might probably be that the Old Iranian use of the genitive for marking the partitive object gave rise to the Ossetic genitive object. But the usages within Ossetic, at least as it is known today, do not support such a theory. However, I would not altogether rule out the possibility that the ancient function of the genitive as an object marker – a function that has been existing in the language from the very outset – may have contributed to the development of the ancestor dialect of Ossetic.

4.13.4.4. Dative

The ending of the dative is *-æn* in both dialects. As a rule the ending does not cause a vowel change (syncope or shortening) in the preceding syllable. Note, however, *stævd-æn* “in the thickness of” (*stævd* “thick”), *dæry-æn* “for the length or distance of” (*dæry* “long”), *bærzænd-æn* “at the height of” (*bærzond* “high”). According to Abaev (IES: III, 145), the oblique cases of *stævd* are formed from a stem *stævd-*; *bærzænd* and *dæry* are treated as separate words in the dictionaries (Abaev 1970, s.v.; IES I, 344 f., 357 f.). The etymology of the ending will be discussed at the end of this section.

The dative functions as a grammatical as well as a concrete case (as far as this distinction is relevant).

4.13.4.4.1. With three-place verbs the dative indicates the indirect object, expressing the recipient or the benefactor of the verbal action:

- (1) I. *uii din dædton* “I shall give you that”;
- (2) D. *uomi ba kæræzemæn xuærzæ bonæ razaytoncæ* “there they said good night to each other” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 9);
- (3) *æmæ nin nippær næ xæstæ, max næ xæsžintæn kuid bæræm* “and forgive us our sins, as we forgive our debtors” (SE 1902, Mt. 6,12; the Lord’s Prayer).

The verb of the last example (*barin* plus the preverb *ni-*) is a two-place verb in the following sentence:

- (4) *mæ fid! nippar sin, umæn-æmæ ci kæninc, uii næ zoninc* “my Father, forgive them because they do not know what they do” (SE 1902, Lk. 23.34);
 (5) *Xicau, mæ æfsimæræn mil cal xatti nipparin æmbæli* “Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother” (SE 1902, Mt. 18.21).

Other examples of two-place verbs with the dative:

- (6) *æmæ kuv dæ fidaen, susægkad* “and pray to your Father who is hidden” (SE 1902, Mt. 6.6);
 (7) *xuicau, uin ma bakomæd* “might God not forgive you” (example in MF: II, 695);
 (8) *sæ čizg Qirimæn næ komi* “their daughter does not consent to Qyrym (to marry him)” (example in IES: I, 601).

4.13.4.4.2. As a concrete case the dative indicates finality, the orientation towards something or somebody, the purpose or result of an action. This is true, e.g., for the interrogative dative *cæmæn* (I., D.) “why?” (from *ci / ci*):

- (9) *D. kæræzemæn ænbaltæn cæmæn næ bæstænæcæ* “why were they not good enough as friends for one another” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 8).
 (10) *uimæn-æmæ / uomæm-æmæ* “because”: *uimæn-æmæ zi biræ xæiræžitæ bacidišti* “because many evil spirits had entered him” (SE 1902, Lk. 8.30).

In the following example the dative has a local meaning:

- (11) *xæxtæn ližin baididtoi* “they began to flee to the mountains” (Isaev 1966: 213; a text from Wællægkom).

As a rule, however, this meaning is expressed by the allative.

4.13.4.4.3. The dative expresses the purpose or fitness of something or somebody:

umæn mazal næ zonis? “do not you know a remedy for that?” (Miller 1881-87, I, 82); *fīnži bærkadæn stæg dær u* “a bone is also good for the abundance of the table” (Gagkaev 1956: 139); *uici čizg axæm læppuicæn ævγau uidi* “that girl was not proper for such a boy”; MF: I, 86, s.v. *ævγau*: “es war schade dieses Mädchen an solchen jungen Mann (abzugeben).”

The dative of the infinitive (*-in/-un-æn*) marks the purpose of the action expressed by the verb:

- (12) *kusin, cæmæ min nici cæntisi cærinæn* “I work, and nothing comes off for me to live on” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 12);
 (13) *æz aftæmæi nici bafærazzinæn adæmimæ xæcinæn* “I will not be able to fight in this way with the people” (Miller 1881-87: I, 18);
 (14) *mælinæn ævγau uidi* “it is pity that he died”, “he was improper for death” (MF: I, 86);
 (15) *quistæ qusinæn sti* “the ears are for hearing”.

4.13.4.4.4. In the functions described above, the dative is largely commutable with the allative. Thus, e.g., *zurin* “to speak”, *zæγin* “to say”, *kuvin* “to pray to” take either the dative or the allative: ... *sin* (dat.) *zayta, cuanontæm* (all.) “he said to them, the hunters” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 6).

In the following text the dative and the allative of the infinitive interchange without any difference in the meaning:

- (16) *cæmeidæridtær Mæ Uii baisærsta, mægúirtæn xorzuacquid-zurincæn, cæmæ Mæ rarvista zærdæscæstiti szæbæx-kæninmæ, axæstitan særibaržinad amoninmæ, kuirmiti skæsinkæninmæ, qiamætγænziti særibarmæ auazinmæ*

“for He has anointed Me, He has sent Me to bring (dat.) good news to the poor, and He sent Me to heal (all.) the heartbroken, to proclaim (all.) liberty to captives, to make the blind see (all.), to set the downtrodden free (all.)” (SE 1902, Lk. 4.18).

The allative is also used to denote the indirect object of three-place verbs:

- (17) D. *ædta mæmæ mæ kæsæncaestæ ærxæssetæ* “bring me (all.) my glasses” (Miller 1902: 1).

4.13.4.4.5. The dative is used as a predicate (subject or object complement) with both transitive and intransitive verbs, to mark the destination or suitability of the referent. This usage was treated in some detail (from a synchronic point of view) by Axvlediani (in a study originally published in 1923, rev. ed. in Axvlediani 1960: 26 ff.).

As a subject complement, the dative may occur with intransitive verbs such as *uīn* “to be”, *cæuīn* “to go” etc.

- (18) D. *Aci surzærinæ ærdo ke særiyūnæi æi, ieci adæimag mæ uosæn ku næ ua, uæd mænæn mæ card adæ næbal skænżænæi.*

Aci surzærinæ ærdo ke særiyūnæi æi ieci adæimag mæ uosæn ku næ
this golden lock whose from-hair is that person my wife (dat.) if not
ua uæd mænæn mæ card adæ næbal skænżænæi
will-be then for-me my life sweet no-more will-become

“if the person from whose hair this golden lock comes does not become my wife, my life will no longer be sweet” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 10); here the dative (*uosæn*) is co-referential with the subject of the copula.

The same applies to the following sentence:

- (19) I. *Peikari kæi uafī, uīī næ ronæn kui uad, ċi kæi uarzi, uīī mæ moiæn kui uaid.*

Peikari kæi uafī uīī næ ronæn kui uad ċi kæi uarzi,
Peikari what weaves that our belt (dat.) if may-be who whom loves
uīī mæ moiæn kui uaid
he my husband (dat.) if may-be

“may what Peikari is weaving become our belt, may he whom one loves become my husband” (Schiefner 1863a: col. 457; Georg. *peikari* “weaver”).

In the following sentences the dative is co-referential with the subject of *cæuīn*:

- (20) *Soslan (... cidis Acæmazi raxiz fars xistæræn* “Soslan rode on the right side of Acæmaz as the leader of the cavalcade” (NK 1946: 281; “comme chef du cortège”, Dumézil 1965: 249; *xistær* “older, oldest”, cf. IES: IV, 204).
(21) I. *æmæ min usæn cæuī* “and she will become my wife” (NK 1946: 118).

The predicative dative is frequently used with the intransitive verb *bæzzin* “to be fit for”:

- (22) I. *mæ uīndmæ min ma kæs, næ bæzzin ċizgæn* “do not look at my appearance, I am no good as a girl!” (K’osta 1960: I, 76; the poem *Či dæ?*).
(23) D. *kæræżemæn ænbaltæn cæmæn næ bæstænca?* “why were they not fit to be each other’s friends (for each other)?” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 8).

The dative ending may be added to the infinitive:

- (24) I. *dæ fid ta xærinæn kuid næ bæzza, axæm bon dil ærkaenæd* “when your meat will not be fit for eating, may such a day be on you” (NK 1946: 145).

In the following examples the dative is co-referential with the direct object of a transitive verb:

- (25) D. *mæn dæxecæn limænæn* “(take) me as your friend (as a friend for yourself)”; (Miller 1902: 6);

- (26) I. *madæn dær haci kuiȝ bazittam æmæ fidæn dær*
madæn dær haci kuiȝ bazittam æmæfidæn dær
 mother (dat.) also this dog (nom.) we-knew and father (dat.) also
 “we knew this dog as both a mother and a father” (Munkácsi 1923-32: I, 86).

According to Axvlediani (1923 / 1960, cf. above), the dative is used of something that occurs accidentally, by chance or under some condition (“notae accidentales”). The nominative, in its predicative function, denotes what is constant, invariable (“notae essentiales”). But this distinction is probably not clear-cut. In this connection it may be mentioned that the predicative function of the dative is particularly common in Digor.

4.13.4.4.6. The dative is used figuratively in comparisons where it has a limitative meaning, denoting the quality on the basis of which a comparison is made.

- (27) *mæ karæn qæd æmæ dur dær nal i* “there is no longer a tree nor a stone at my age” (*kar / karæ* “age”; example in IES: I, 571);
 (28) *iæ sau ȝikkutæ rætæni stævdæn* “her black braids thick as a rope” (“at the thickness of a rope”; *stævd* “thick” (cf. 4.13.4.4. above); Sek’a in IES: III, 145).

Cf. also expressions like *dæryæn* “for a distance of, at the length of” (*dary* “long”) or *bærzændæn* “at the altitude of” (*bærzond* “high”). A similar use may be seen in *xuizæn / xuzæn* “similar”, a lexicalisation of the dative of *xuiz / xuz* “look, semblance”: *mæ xuizæn* “like me” < “at the likeness of me” (cf. IES: IV, 274 f.; Gagkaev 1956 110 f.). Note also the adverb *ævæccægæn* “probably” (I.), in all likelihood consisting of the preposition **abi* “towards” and *æcæg* “true” (from **haþyaka-*), i.e. “for truth”; cf. D. *ævæȝi* “id.” < **abi plus *æc* “truth” (from **haþya-*) in the inessive (locative) case (cf. IES: I, 192). As a rule the standard of comparison in such phrases is put in the genitive; but cp. the dative with *xuizæn / xuzæn*: D. *xæȝaræn dær xuzæn n’ escæi* “it did not resemble the house any more” (i.e. “the house was not what it had been”; Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 5).

4.13.4.4.7. The dative designates the beneficiary, the person whose interest is affected by an action:

- (29) *fæcidtæ mæguirtæn fiaiu* “you came as shepherd for the poor” (K’osta 1960: I, 42; the poem *Mardi uælqus*);
 (30) *maxæn Tinti-kalaçi mælikmæ xæcin qæui* “we have (it is for us) to fight against the king of the town of Tynty (a mythical place)” (Miller 1881-87: I, 20);
 (31) *ænæcæugæ min nal is Elitayanmæ* “it is impossible for me not to go to Eltayan” (Gagkaev 1956: 111);
 (32) *Uærxcægæn raiguirdis diuuæ læppuii* “two sons were born to Wærxcæg” (NK 1946: 3);
 (33) *kalm lægæn ænæg is* “the serpent is the enemy of man” (Schiefner 1863: 439; a proverb);
 (34) D. *ci kænȝinan max uomæn?* “what shall we do with him?” (Miller 1902: 1);
 (35) *dæ usæn ma tærs* “do not be anxious about your wife” (Munkácsi 1923-32: I, 64).

But:

- (36) D. *bæræg uoȝænæi, kæd æz Donbettæræi fettærson, uæd* “it will become clear (time will show) if I fear Donbettyr (abl.)” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 20).

4.13.4.4.8. The dative of the enclitic personal pronouns, especially those of the 1st and 2nd pers. sg., may be inserted in the clause to draw the listener or the speaker into the

orbit of the action or situation (“dativus ethicus”). This usage seems to be characteristic of intimate colloquial speech, but it is also a feature of traditional narrative style:

- (37) *galtæ min ma fætærsin kænut* “do not scare my (for me the) oxen” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 64).
 (38) *he, uii din mæ mitæ* “these are my deeds (for you)” (Xet. K'. I, 94; poem Či dæ?).

4.13.4.4.9. In possessive constructions, the dative marks the owner. Cp.:

- (39) I. *ærtæ xoiî nim uidi* “we had three sisters” (NK 1946: 8);
 (40) D. *xanæn adtæi ieunæg læquæn* “The Khan had only one son” (Gagkaev 1956: 111);
 (41) D. *mænæn dær dæu xuzæn læquæn adtæi* “I had also a son like you” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 5).

In association with the genitive of enclitic personal pronouns, the dative marks the owner (*adæmæn sæ ku'ist* “the works of the people”, cf. 4.3.2 above). Similar usages are found in the neighbouring Northwest Caucasian languages: Kab. *ha-m yə-pa-r* “the dog’s nose” (dog-obl., 3. pers. poss., nose-abs., lit. “(to) the dog its nose”); Abkh. *à-č'k'o'an yə-y'nə* “the boy’s house (“the boy his house”); Hewitt 1979: 116; Dumézil 1932: 47 ff.). It is therefore natural to regard this usage in Ossetic as an areal phenomenon. But this usage is also in agreement with the function of the dative of concern (cf. 4.13.4.4.6.).

4.13.4.4.10. In causative constructions consisting of *kænin* “to do” as an auxiliary and the infinitive of the main verb, the agent may be put in the dative:

- (42) D. *uinun min æi fækkæntæ uædtær* “let me (dat.) see him all the same” (Miller 1902: 2);
 (43) I. *Marineiaen fequsin kodta Beso iæ fændiægtæ* “Beso let Marine (dat.) hear his wishes” (Gagkaev 1956: 109);
 (44) *bambarin kænini tixxæi adæmæn sæ irvæzininad sæ tæriyædti nipparinî kæi is, uii.*

<i>bambarin</i>	<i>kænini</i>	<i>tixxæi</i>	<i>adæmæn</i>	<i>sæ</i>	<i>irvæzininad</i>	<i>sæ</i>
to-understand	to-make (gen.)	because-of	people (dat.)	their salvation	their	
<i>tæriyædti</i>	<i>nipparinî kæi is uii</i>					
sins (gen.pl.)	to-forgive	that is	that			

“to give (his) people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins” (SE 1902, Lk. 1.77).

But the agent may also appear as the direct object of *kænin* (nom., gen.):

- (45) *çæmæi razdæxin kænna fidælti zærdætæ sæ zæncægmaæ* “so that he may turn (make them turn) the hearts (nom.) of the fathers toward their children” (SE 1902, Lk. 1.17);
 (46) *galtæ min ma fætærsin kænut* “do not scare my oxen (make my oxen (nom.) fear)” (Munkácsi 1923-32: II, 64);
 (47) *sag æi ie 'kkoi isbadtin kodta* “the deer made him (gen.) seat himself on his shoulders” (Munkácsi 1923-32: II, 8);
 (48) *çæmæi Ie balæuuiin kænnoi Xicaui razi* “to present him to the Lord” (“make him (gen.) stand in front of the Lord”; SE 1902, Lk. 2.22).

4.13.4.4.11. Iranologists have been concerned about the existence of a special dative case in Ossetic as well as by its morphological expression. Needless to say, the ending *-æn* does not derive from any of the dative endings of Old Iranian (or Aryan).

A derivation from ancient pronominal datives in **-ahmāi* (cp. Av. *ahmāi*, *aētahmāi*, *yahmāi*, *kahmāi*), as suggested by Miller (1881-87: II, 131, repeated in 1903: 33, 44, an explanation that goes back to F. Müller, see Miller l.c.), is highly improbable as final *-m* is retained in Iron and the development *-m* > *-n* is peculiar to Digor and certainly not old. A sound change *a(h)m* > *n* seems to have occurred in the 1st pers. sg. of the present tense of the verb “to be”, (*d*)*æn* (**ahmi*; both dialects), but the personal endings of the verbs have undergone so radical changes that this is a doubtful argument for the derivation of the dative ending *-æn* from **-ahmāi*. In the pronominal inflection, *-m* < **-hm-* has been retained; cf. the inessive (the old locative) *kæm* / *kæmi*, the dative *kæmæn* (I., D.), the ablative *kæmæi* (I., D.), of the pronoun *či* / *ka* “who” (cp. also Weber 1980: 128 ff.; 1983: 84 ff.).

In the ancestor dialect of Ossetic, as in the other Iranian languages, the functions of the dative were taken over by the genitive (cf. Gauthiot 1916: 28 [63]). The creation of the Ossetic dative is no doubt a secondary development, peculiar to this language.

Weber (1980: 131 f.) derives the Ossetic dative ending from Old Iranian pronominal instrumentals in *-(a)nā*: OPers., Gath.Av. *anā*, Y.Av. *ana* (from *a-* “this”, OPers. *avanā*, (from *ava-* “that”; but Av. *auuā*, Y.Av. *kana*, both Gath.Av. *kā* (*ka-* “who”, OPers. *aniyanā* (*aniya-* “other”); cf. also OInd. *canā* emphatic particle “even”, Gath.Av. *čīnā*, Y.Av. *čina* (written for **čəna*), *anā* “hereby, thus” (cf. Mayrhofer, EWAI: I, 69). This suffix is also found in the Khotanese instrumentals of *a*-stems: *-ina*, *-āna* (Emmerick 1968: 257 ff.), and, to all appearances, in the Yidgha-Munji and Wakhi oblique singular *-en*, *-an* (Morgenstierne 1938: 123, 486).

Although this explanation may be phonetically unassailable, it is hard to see how the functions of the Ossetic dative case could have derived from those of the Old Iranian instrumental.

4.13.4.4.12. In previous studies I have proposed to derive the Ossetic dative ending from the Old Iranian nominal suffix **-ana-* (Thordarson 1985: 224; 1989: 470).

In Ossetic, *-æn* is used to form deverbative nouns with the meaning “suitable, intended for”. These derivatives have been dealt with in some details by Benveniste (1959: 106 ff.) who, however, does not connect them with the dative. The derivatives in *-æn* are particularly common in verbal nouns denoting implements: *badæn* “chair, seat” (*badin* “to sit”), *kæsæn-cæst* “spectacles, binoculars” (*kæsin* “to look at”, *cæst* “eye”); *xæcæn(-garz)* “weapon” (*xæcin* “to fight”; *garz* “tool”, in compounds); *kusæn-garz* “tool” (*kusin* “to work”), *xuissæn-garz* “bed” (*xuissin* “to sleep”); also *gæncæn* in the designation of tools, apparatuses: (*kænin* “to do”): *mi-gæncæn* “tool” (*mi* / *miuæ* “thing”), I. *xærinag-gæncæn*, D. *cæl-gæncæn* “kitchen” (I. *xærinag*, D. *cæl* “meal”); etc. (cf. the survey in Abaev 1964: 87 f.).

The same suffix also forms nomina loci, suitable or intended for some activity: *ba-cæuæn* “entrance”, *ra-cæuæn* “exit” (*cæuin* “to go”) *uaræn fæz* “a place where the booty (the raided cattle) is distributed” (in the Nart tales; *fæz* / *fæzæ* “plane”, *uarin* / *uarun* “to distribute”;¹²¹ *kuvæn-don* “altar, a place of prayer” (e.g. SE, Mt. 5,23; *kuvin* “to pray”); *ærbalæuuæn-don* “a place of refuge” (*æriba-læuuin* “to come near”), I. *æmbæxsæn*, D. *rimæxsæn* “hiding place” (I. *æmbæxsin*, D. *rimæxsun* “to hide”).

The suffix *-æn* may also express a temporal meaning: *axodæn* “(time for) breakfast” (*axodin* / *axuadun* “to taste”), *bonivæicæn* “dawn” (*ivaiin* / *ivaiun* “grow pale”, *bon* “day”).

The same suffix is also common in fixed place names: *Skasæn* “look-out” (*s-kæsin* “to look”), *Kærzīngæncæn suar* “spring where bread is baked” *kærzīn* “bread”, *suar*

¹²¹ For details see Bailey 1970: 34 ff.

“spring”), *Fidficæn* “place for boiling meat” (fid “meat”, *ficin* “to boil”), *Bazilæn* “turning point” (*ba-zilin* “to bend, turn”), *Durzævnæn* “place for cutting stones” (*dur* “stone”, *cævin* “to cut, hew”), etc.¹²²

The suffix *-æn* is further used to form deverbals (nomina actionis) signifying possibility, purpose, result. As to their function, these derivatives are closely related to the infinitives in *-in* / *-un* (**-unai*, cf. Benveniste 1935b:110) and might even be termed “infinitives II”:

- (49) *næi gævnæn* “nothing to do”; *zin zævnæn u* “it is hard to say”;
- (50) *zaræg kui sævnæra, uæd in bauromæn nal is* “when a song catches on (lit. “is conceived”), it is no more to be stopped” (Dæbe 1965: I, 25);
- (51) *xæzari ci qæwi, uidon æncon ssaræn sti, bærgæ* “what a house needs is indeed easy to find” (Dæbe 1965: I, 12);
- (52) *kæræzi bauarztai zævgæ, uæd sæ nixmæ zuræn næi* “they have fallen in love with each other, they say, then it is no gainsaying them” (Dæbe 1965: I, 7; *nixmæ zurin* “to contradict, speak against”);
- (53) *D. maxæn ami fællæuuæn næbal ies* “we cannot stay here any longer” (NK 1990: 86);
- (54) *D. ma sin racæuæn ku næbal adtæi* “they could no more get out” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 6).

The dative ending may be added to the action noun, too:

- (55) *ruvas ævdisænæn je dimæzi ærkodta* “the fox raised his tail as a sign” (Schieffner 1863: col. 437; a proverb; cp. also what was said above (4.13.4.4.2.) about the dative of the infinitive).

4.13.4.4.12.1. In Old Aryan, derivatives in *-ana-* are used as verbal abstracts and as names of tools and places suitable or intended for some action: Y.Av. *ham-arəna-*, OPers. *ham-arana-*, OInd. *sam-ārāna-* “battle” (*ar-* “to move”); Y.Av. *vaṅhana-*, OInd. *vāsana-* “garment” (*vah-*, *vas-* “to dress”); Y.Av. *han-ḡamāna-* “meeting place” (*gam-* “to come”), etc. (cf. Wackernagel-Debrunner II,2: 185 f.; Thordarson 1990: 263).

4.13.4.4.12.2. The homonymy of the dative ending and the deverbals in *-æn* is hardly accidental. In both instances the suffix *-æn* expresses the meaning “to, for”, the direction or destination of the referent. It is therefore natural to presume that at some stage in the history of the language the derivative suffix **-ana-* was grammaticalised as a case ending. This development has in all likelihood taken place through a syntactic shift, a re-interpretation of the derivative noun in a predicative function: “(it is) suitable-for-x > to-x.” In this connection, the predicative use of the dative (the dative of purpose) may be the link between the derivative noun and the case ending.

4.13.4.4.12.3. Bilingual contacts with neighbour languages may have been instrumental in the creation of the Ossetic dative. Both the Turkic and the Nakh languages possess dative cases whose functions are to a large extent (but not wholly) similar to those of the Ossetic dative. But as both the morphology and the syntactic functions of the Ossetic dative are explicable within the framework of Iranian syntax and patterns of word-formation, such an explanation is not necessary.¹²³

¹²² Cf. Cagaeva 1971: 57, 171 ff., 216.

¹²³ Needless to say, a borrowing of the dative ending of the Nakh languages (*-na*, *-ana*) is out of the question. Such a borrowing of an inflectional suffix would be quite exceptional in Ossetic.

4.13.4.4.13. The functions as well as the morphology of the dative are common to both dialects, a fact which shows that its origin is predialectal. A more precise chronology is not possible. The Alanic mediaeval documents show no certain examples of the dative.

4.13.4.5. Locative cases

Ossetic possesses three locative cases that express the notions “the spot where” and “the spot whither”, depending on the meaning of the verbal phrase of the clause: the inessive, the adessive and the allative. These locative cases contrast with the ablative which expresses the notion “from”, as well as a number of postpositional phrases.

4.13.4.5.1. Inessive

The ending of the inessive (the *locativus interior*) is I. *-i*, D. *-i*. In Iron a stem-final velar stop as a rule appears as an alveo-palatal affricate in front of the ending: *læʒi* (*læʒ* “man”), *karč̣i* (*kark* “hen”), *tæšč̣'i* (*tæšk* “basket”). Forms without affricatisation are often heard, however (e.g. *Lenini uingi* “in Lenin Street”; private notes from South Ossetia). The inessive of nouns (not pronouns) is thus homonymous with the genitive (cf. 4.13.4.4.13 above).

Contrary to the allative and adessive endings, the inessive ending is added directly to the nominal stem in both declensions in Digor; cp. *gal-i* (*gal* “ox”), *sif-i* (*sifæ* “leaf”) and, correspondingly, in the plural *gal-t-i*, *sif-t-i*. For Iron, both *zærdæ-i-i* and *zærd-i* (*zærdæ* “heart”) are given by the grammars (the latter form probably created by analogy with the “normal” consonant stems).

The ending of the inessive derives in all likelihood from O. Ir. **-yā*, consisting of the ancient locative ending of consonant stems, **-i*, plus the postposition **-ā-*; cf. Y. Av. *kəhrpiia* (*kəhrp-* “body, shape”, cp. Bartholomae 1904: 467), OPers. *āpiyā* (*āp-* “water”). The locative ending of the *a*-stems, **ay-ā* (cf. Gath. *xšaθrōi.ā* < *xšaθra-* “power”; Y. Av. *zastaiia*, OPers. *dastayā* (*dasta-* “hand” < **zasta-*; Av. *zasta-*, cp. Bartholomae 1904: 1685) would probably have yielded **-æ*; the ending **-āy-ā* of the *ā*-stems would have resulted in **-æi / -æiæ* (cf. 4.5.4.5. above).

The development of final **-yā* > *-i / -i* has a parallel in *xoli / xuali* “carrion, carcass” < **xwārya-* (from **xwar-* “to eat”, IES: IV, 213) and, presumably, also in *dæśni / dæśni* “skilled”, if from **das(i)nya-*; cf. OInd. *dakṣinyā-* “worthy of the sacrificial fee” (Paṇ., Brāhm.), a derivative of OInd. *dākṣiṇa-*, Av. *dašina-* “right, dexter” (cp. Mayrhofer, EWAIA: I, 690). This explanation seems preferable to Bailey’s (1946: 8; 1981: 230 f.) derivation from **dastya-* (< *dasta-* “hand”; cf. IES: I, 359 ff.; Thordarson in Schmitt 1989: 459).

4.13.4.5.1.1. Quite like the other locative cases, the inessive indicates locations in space and metaphorical extensions of these. In its relations to the adessive and allative it is neutral or unmarked. It does not necessarily carry the notion of “being within” or “entering” a space. It is thus a general locative case which inherited both the form and the functions of the Old Aryan locative.

The use of the inessive as an unmarked locative case will be clear from the following examples:

cuani cæuin “to go hunting”; *balci cæuin* “to set out on a journey, go abroad”; *Nart fæcædisti iu bon xætæni* “one day the Narts set out on a campaign”;

k’uli badæg “a stay-at-home, hag, witch” (lit. “sitting in the inner part of the house, behind the hearth”);

- (1) *fistæ sti ting tæssag binati* “the sheep are in a very dangerous place” (example in Gagkaev 1956: 126);
 - (2) *iæ k'us zæxxi ærivrædta* “he placed his cup on the ground” (Gagkaev 1956: 128);
 - (3) *æxsæværæg sæ k'uxi næ baftidi* “the supper did not fall into their hand” (Miller 1881-87: I, 14);
 - (4) *D. fæuuidton dessag aboni – suyzærinæ surx zikkotæ felauncæ dale doni* “I saw a marvel today – golden red curls were floating below in the water” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf 1957: 43; the poem *ʒanzirag*);
 - (5) *dæ bar uæd arvi kuid u, zæxxil dær aftæ*
dæ bar uæd arvi kuid u zæxxil dær aftæ
 your will shall-be in-heaven (iness.) as is on-earth (adess.) also thus
 “your will be done, on earth as in heaven” (SE 1902, Mt. 6.10: Our Lord’s Prayer);
- but:
- (6) *max Fid kæci dæ ærvti midæg* “our Father who is in the heavens” (gen. pl. plus the postposition *midæg* “inside”; SE 1902, Mt. 6.9).

4.13.4.5.1.2. In the meaning of “towards, into”, the inessive and the allative are frequently interchangeable:

- (7) *æmæ iæ denʒizi bappær* “and throw him into the sea (iness.)” (Miller 1881-87: I, 18);
 - (8) *æmæ iæ denʒizi bappærstoi* “and they threw him into the sea (iness.)” (Miller 1881-87: I, 16);
- but:
- (9) “*Denʒizmæ m'appær*”. *Denʒizmæ iæ kui bappærsta, uæd denʒizi iu k'uiri don nal acidis, xusæi bazzadi* “Throw me into the sea’ (all.); [Batraz said]. When he had thrown him into the sea (all.), there was no water in the sea (iness.) for a week, it had become dry” (Miller 1881-87: I, 18).

4.13.4.5.1.3. The inessive also denotes the time “at which, when”:

- (10) *bakusin ræstæʒi* “in the working hour” (Schiefner 1863: col. 442; proverb; No. 102);
- (11) *uici bon izæri Dæxci racidi uingmæ* “that day in the evening Dæxci went into the street” (Gagkaev 1956: 132).

This usage implies also a number of petrified inessives used as, mainly temporal, adverbs; cp. *raʒi / ragi* “early, formerly” (IES: II, 343), *æræʒi / ærægi* “recently” (IES: I, 171 f.), *ræxʒi / ræxgi* “shortly” (IES: II, 393), *I. noʒi* “again” (IES: II, 186 f.), *ualinʒi / ualængi* “meanwhile” (IES: IV, 48), *I. calinʒi* “while, until”, but also in the allative, *ualinmæ / ualinmæ, calinmæ / calinmæ* (IES: I, 288), and *ævippaidi / æveppaidi* “suddenly”, a formation consisting of *æ-*, the privative prefix, plus the past participle of *fippaiin / feppaiun* “to notice” (IES: I, 475). Cf. also pronominal adverbs such as *am / ami* “here” (IES: I, 48 f.), *uim / (u)omi* “there” (IES: IV, 15), *kæm / kæmi* “where” (IES: I, 578).

4.13.4.5.1.4. There is some competition between the inessive and the nominative in temporal and, in part, also in local expressions (cf. 4.13.4.2.5. above):

- (12) *ficcag æxsæv kui isxuisid* “when the first evening (nom.) he went to bed” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 26, text no. 8);

but:

- (13) *ficcag æxsævi xistær læppui rad uid qaq kænin* “the first night (iness.) it was the boy’s turn to hold the vigil (at the grave)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 38, text no. 2);
- (14) *iu mæi doni nippadi zimæži* “he sits down on the water (iness.) for one month (nom.) in the winter (iness.)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 40, text no. 9);
- but:
- (15) *kæm i axæm bæstæ, zimæg zi fos xizgæ kænoi?* “where is such a place where the sheep could graze in the winter?” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 38, text no. 9).

To a large extent the choice seems to be optional or a matter of style, but in part it is evidently dialectal; cf. I. *axsæv* / D. *axsævi* “this night”, *abon* / *aboni* “today”, *a’zær* / *aizæri* “this evening”, but, e.g., only *aualzæži* / *-gi* “in this spring”, *asærdi* / *asærdi* “in this summer”, *afæzzæži* / *-gi* “in this autumn”; I. has both *azimæg* and *azimæži*, D. only *azumagi* “in this winter”. In part the choice may be idiomatic; cf. *alivars* / *al(l)ifars* “on all sides”, but pl. I. *alifærsti*. Questions regarding these matters can hardly be answered by others than native speakers.

4.13.4.5.2. Allative

The ending of the allative (locativus exterior) is *-mæ* in both dialects (as to the I. plural ending *-tæm* see below): I. *sær-mæ*, pl. *sær-tæm* (*sær* “head”) *zærdæ-mæ*, pl. *zærdæ-tæm* (*zærdæ* “heart”).¹²⁴ In Digor the allative ending is added to the nominative in both declensions: *gal-mæ* (*gal* “ox”), *sifæ-mæ* (*sifæ* “leaf”). In the plural it is added to the nominative in *-tæ*: *gal-tæ-mæ*, *sif-tæ-mæ* (this seems preferable to an analysis *sif-æmæ*, *-t-æmæ*; on the adessive ending *-bæl* cf. 4.13.4.5.3. below). In that respect the case ending behaves in the same way as postpositions combined with the nominative.

The plural ending of Iron may be analysed as either *sær-t-æm* or *sær-tæ-m* (with the case ending added to the nominative). If we accept the latter analysis, the Iron form of the allative plural is an archaic feature. Both analyses imply that the final *-æ* of the suffix was apocopated (by dissimilation *-æ-æ?*).

In previous studies (Thordarson 1985: 224 and 1989: 471) I suggested that the allative in *-mæ* must be derived from OIran. **hama-*, probably in its instrumental form **hamā* (with loss of the initial **(h)a-* in a clitic position); cf. Av., OPers. *hama-* “similar, the same”, Av. *ham*, *həm*, adv. and prefix “with, together”, Oss. *æm-bird* “meeting”, *æm-bælin* “to meet”, and, in particular, the conjunction *æmæ*, *mæ* / *æma*, *ma* “and” (possibly < **hamā*, in which case the conjunction would be etymologically identical with the allative ending).

Another explanation was offered by Weber (1980: 131), who derives the allative ending *-mæ* from the ancient pronominal dative **ahmāi*, with loss of the final **-i* and shortening of **-ā* (the latter development is regular and also implied in my explanation). If this view is acceptable, the allative is not a newcomer in the Ossetic case system. But this is inconsistent with the character of the allative ending behaving like a postposition (cf. above).

4.13.4.5.2.1. The allative signifies the direction towards a place or the rest in a place, without specifying the notion of inherence or adhesion, i.e. “by, with, at” (in the sense of Latin *ad*); cf. *xæzarmæ* “home, domum” but *xæzari* (inessive) “at home, *domi*”; *maxmæ* “at our place”, *simaxmæ* “at your place”;

¹²⁴ In K’osta’s poem *Rakæs*, *bæstæ* “place” is treated as a plural noun (K’osta 1960: I, 44: *mæ Irmæ*, *mæ raiguiræn bæstæm* “to my Ossetia, to my birthplace”).

- (1) I. *æz cæuin fæsxoxmæ* “I go behind the mountains (to the back of the mountain)” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 12, text no. 1);
- (2) I. *zæppazī ræzti cæui qædmæ fændag* “in front of the burial-place a road leads to the wood” (IAA 1960: 111);
- (3) I. *urs færdīzī koi Persi šaxmæ baiquisti* “the rumour of the white pearl had reached the ears of the Persian king” (IAA 1960: 111);
- (4) D. *izolmæ ijustæi adæmi kæunȳær æma sauængæ zærði bunmæ ȳardta* “far off the people’s wailing was heard and penetrated constantly to the bottom of the heart” (Maliti Geuærgi: Iræf 1957: 98);
- (5) I. *æfcægæi kommæ uad zinazi* “the wind wails from the defile to the gorge” (K’osta 1960: I, 36; the poem *Mæguiri zærdæ*);
- (6) I. *Batraz uidi uici ræstæzī Kuirdalægommæ* “B. was with Kurdalægøn at that time” (Miller 1881-87: I, 20);
- (7) D. *Qumi buduri ieu fūaumæ næ fusun adtæi* “in the field of Qum with a shepherd was our shelter” (Miller 1881-87: I, 92);
- (8) I. *zimæg kui ærcæui, artmæ badin uod uarzin* “when the winter comes, the people like to sit by the fire” (Schieffner 1863: col. 437, proverb).

The local allative is also found in place names such as *Zilinmæ nad* “the Crooked Road” (*zilin* “crooked”); *Komkommæ qæd* “the Opposite Wood” (*komkommæ* “vis-à-vis”); cf. Cagaeva 1971: 57.

4.13.4.5.2.2. When used in a temporal sense, the allative means “up to, until”; cf. *feninmæ* “good-by”, lit. “until we see (each other)”, a usual farewell greeting (cf. Georg. *naxvamdis*); *sixormæ* “until dinner”;

- (9) *mæ bon u Xuicaui aryuan fexalin, æmæ Iæ ærtæ bonmæ samaiin* “I have the power to destroy the Temple of God and in three days build it up” (SE 1902, Mt. 26.61);
ærqæcmæ / æryæcmæ “for a (short) moment” (*ærqæcin / æryæcun* “to wait”);
- (10) D. *Soslan æryæcmæ næ læuudtæi* “Soslan did not wait one moment” (MF: I, 200).

The allative is commonly added to local and temporal adverbs; cf. *kædmæ* “till when”, *nirmæ* “till now”, *uædmæ* “till then”, *ualinmæ* “meanwhile”, *calinmæ* “as long as, until”; *xærdmæ* “upwards”, *dælæmæ* “downwards”, *uælæmæ* “upwards”.

4.13.4.5.2.3. In its local sense the allative is to some extent interchangeable with the inessive; cp., e.g.:

- (11) *æmæ cæværdta sæ iuildær, kusag uæd xærinag uæd, iæ zippmæ* “and he put it all, the servant and the food, into his pocket” (all.) (Miller 1881-87: I, 50);
but:
- (12) *stæi iæ zippi ærtissæz tumani cæværdta* “then he put 60 tumans into his pocket (iness.)” (Miller 1881-87: I, 18);
- (13) *uīi fæstæ, Ioanni kui bakodtoi axæstoni, uæd ærcidi Ieso Galileamæ* “after that, when John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilea (all.)” (SE 1902, Mk. 1.14); the corresponding passage in Mt. 4.12 reads: ... *acidi galileamæ* (all.);
- (14) *æmæ ærcidisti Kapernaumæ æmæ uaitayd sabati bacidi uīi æmbirdgænænemæ, æmæ axur kodta* “and they went as far as Capernaum (all.), and on the Sabbath he went at once to the synagogue (all.) and began to teach” (SE, 1902, Mk. 1.21).

In the first clause the allative indicates the plain direction of the motion; in the final clause the meaning must be “into the synagogue building”. – In all three instances from

the Bible here quoted, the Russian translation, no doubt the source of the Ossetic version, has the preposition *v* (corresponding to *εις* in the Greek text).

The allative of nouns denoting human and other animate beings is hardly interchangeable with the inessive: *Xuicaumæ qæstmæ (cæuin)* “(I am going) to God to complain” (Munkácsi 1927-32: II, 12; text no. 6).

4.13.4.5.2.4. The allative may be used in an abstract directional meaning, expressing the purpose of a thing or an action; in this function it is largely interchangeable with the dative (cf. 4.13.4.4.3. above). Cp., e.g.:

(15) *færsag læg, diguron, iæ qaztæ uæimæ fæcæitardta iu bon ældari qæumæ* “one day a stranger, a Digor, was driving his geese for sale (*uæimæ*) to the chieftain’s village” (K’osta 1960: I, 145; the poem *Qaztæ*).

In this function the allative of the infinitive is common:

(16) *dada oni kæsinmæ dæsnï u* “Grossvater kennt die Kunst des Wahrsagens aus dem Schulterblatt” (lit. “grandfather is good at looking at shoulderblades”; MF: III, 1287, s.v. *wæn, won, o*);

(17) *ratidtoi iæ iæ binatæi æmæ iæ fïngil kusærttaži æværd ærkodtoi ærgævdïnmæ* “they (the giants) took him (Soslan) from his seat and placed him on the table as a sacrificial animal in order to slaughter (*ærgævdïnmæ*) him” (NK 1946: 159).

4.13.4.5.2.5. At least, the allative may occasionally express possession; cf., e.g.:

(18) *ficcag dæm ci uarzonzinad uidis, uimæi ma dæm isti is, ævi nal* “the first love that you had (lit. was with you), is anything left of it with you, or nothing more?” (Dæbe 1965: I, 21).

(19) *ændær qazt nicï is Soslanmæ? – Iu qazt ta iæm axæm is* “does not Soslan have another game? – [Yes], he has the following game” (lit. “is there no other game with Soslan? – There is such a game with him”; NK 1946: 87).

The question arises if this usage is the result of Russian influence (cf. *у меня (есть)* “I have” etc.). But its occurrence in the traditional language of the Nart tales makes this unlikely.

4.13.4.5.2.6. In competition with the dative the allative marks the indirect object of three-place verbs (cf. 4.13.4.4.1. above); cp., e.g.:

(20) *D. ædta mæmæ mæ kæsæncæstæ ærxæsettæ* “bring me my spectacles then” (Miller 1902: 1);

(21) *radtoi iæm idon* “they gave the reins to him” (K’osta 1960: I, 106, the poem *Uælmærdti*);

(22) *Xæmic mæm iæ dændag kui ravdisa* “when Hæmyc shows me his tooth” (Miller 1881-87: I, 38);

(23) *mælinmæ mæ ma radt* “do not let me die”, lit. “do not give me to death (dying, inf.)” (K’osta 1960: I, 94; the poem *Çi dæ?*);

(24) *timagæi mæm ma kæs, mæ fidi zæronð, dæ zærdæmæ ma xæss mæ zærdæii kond* “do not look angrily at me, my old father, do not take to (your) heart the ways of my heart” (K’osta 1960: 12, the poem *Nifs*).

4.13.4.5.2.7. The allative is used with a number of two-place verbs, partly in competition with the dative again; cf.:

qušin / iyosun (tr., past *quiston / iyuston*) “to listen to”:

- (25) D. *cæi, baiyosetæ mæ kædængæmæ* “now, listen to my song” (Maliti Geuærgi 1957: 37, the poem *Gongæsi furt mægur Mæxæmæt*). With the nom./gen., *qusin / iyosun* means “to hear something, someone”;

zæyīn “to say” (tr., past *zaxton*):

- (26) *čizg iæ fīdæm zaxta* “the girl said to her father” (Munkácsi 1927-32: I, 20); but the same text (same page, same subject, same meaning) also has *iæ fīdæn zaxta*;

kuvīn “to pray” (tr., past *kuivton*): *xuicaumæ kuvīn* “I pray to God”; but the dative is also possible here; cp.

- (27) D. *ma kovui sæ fælværa Anigolæn* “and he prays to their (the shepherds’) patron Saint Anigol” (Miller 1881-87: I, 96);

kæsin “to look at” (intr., past *kæstæn*):

- (28) *mæ uindmæ min ma kæs* “do not look at my appearance” (K’osta 1960: I, 76, the poem *Či dæ?*);

- (29) *ie, Širdon, ættæmæ-ma rakæs, kæd am dæ, uæd* “hello, Syrdon, look out if you are here” (NK 1946: 154).

The latter verb is found with the allative in a few idiomatic phrases; cf., e.g.:

ængælmæ k. (D. *ængæl k.*): “to wait for”:

- (30) *dī mæm ængælmæ* [sic] *kæs afæzi bonmæ* “wait for me (all.) for one year” (example in IES: I, 164);

- (31) D. *fal ængæl ba næmæ kæsetæ* “but wait for us (all.)” (Miller / Stackelberg 1891: 33).

kommæ k. “to obey” (*kom* orig. “mouth”) plus the genitive (“to someone’s, scil. mouth”) or the dative:

- (32) *ai čī u, ai uad dær, æmæ denžiz dær Iæ kommæ Kæmæn kæsin* “who is he, whom both the wind and the sea obey” (SE 1902, Mt. 8.27);

- (33) D. *sæ fīdi kommæ næbal kænzænænca* “and they will no more obey their father”.

4.13.4.5.2.8. The allative is also used with a number of affective verbs and verbal phrases; cp., e.g.:

xælæg kænin “to envy”: *maxmæ xælæg kæni* “he envies us”;

bællīn “to want, long for: *axuir kæninmæ bællīn* “I want to study”;

xæram kænin / uin “to offend / be offended”:

- (34) *Mæmmæ xæram cæi tīxxæi stut?* “why are you angry (offended) with me?” (SE 1902, Jn. 7.23);

- (35) *kurīn dæ, ma mæm fæxæram u* “I ask you, don’t be offended with me” (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 162);

but also with the dative:

- (36) *xæram dīn uæd* “be damned, confound you!” (lit. “damn be to you”, an ordinary curse);

mæsti kænin / uin “be angry with”:

- (37) *læpputæ iæm xælæg næ kodtoi, fælæ iæm mæsti kodtoi* “the boys did not envy him, but they were angry with him” (Dæbe in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 162, the novel *Qæbatīrti kadæg*).

4.13.4.5.2.9. The allative is used with the verb *cæuin* “to go” in impersonal expressions such as:

mæ zærdæmæ næ cæui “I do not like it” (lit. “it does not go to my heart”); *xuissīn mæm næma cæui* “I do not want to sleep yet”;

- (38) *Soslæmbegmæ xærin bærgæ cid* “Soslambæg certainly wanted to eat”
(example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 162).

4.13.4.5.2.10. The allative is found in the earliest documents of the modern language. Klaproth (1814: 188), e.g., lists *ma* as a postposition which “eine Bewegung nach einem Orte anzeigt” as in *Ssbarsondi wolárw ma* “zum Himmel erhoben” (= *sbærzond i uælarvmæ*, “lifted up to the sky”; cp. also 4.13.4.1.1. above). No example of the allative is found in the mediaeval Alanic documents, but in view of their content this is no surprise.

It appears from the examples quoted above that the allative, at least in part, conveys the same meaning as the dative, resp. the inessive. It seems likely that the allative has gradually encroached on the dative in most, but not all, of its functions; in its predicative function the dative alone holds its ground. The replacement of a grammatical case, the dative, by a local case or expression (a prepositional or postpositional phrase) in order to mark indirect objects has too many well-known parallels to need a comment here; it is enough to mention Lat. *ad*, Engl. *to*, Germ. *zu* in this function. There may also be some tendency to replace the inessive by the allative in the general directional meaning “towards, to”, irrespective of the notions of inherence or adhesion; but the material used here does not permit a definitive conclusion.

4.13.4.5.3. Adessive

In Digor the adessive (superessive) ending is *-bæl*, which is added to the nominative in both declensions; cf. *gal-bæl* “on the ox”, *sifæ-bæl* “on the leaf”, *bæstæ-bæl* “on the place”. In the plural it is added to the nominative: *sifæ-tæ-bæl*, *gal-tæ-bæl*. In that respect the case ending behaves in the same way as the ending of the allative, i.e. like a postposition added to the nominative (cf. 4.13.4.5.2.1. above).

In Iron, the enclitic *-bæl* has been reduced to *-il*: *gal-il*, plur. *gal-t-il*; *zærdæi-il* “on the heart” (besides *zærd-il*, also both *bæstæi-il* and *bæst-il*, cp. the inessive *zærdæi-i* besides *zærd-i*, *bæstæi-i* besides *bæsti*; cf. 4.13.4.5.1. above).

In Iron a stem final velar stop is not affricatised in front of the adessive ending; cf. *læg-il* “on the man”, *kark-il* “on the hen”, *tæsk-il* “on the basket” (cp. also 4.13.4.5.1. above). At the time of the affricatisation (*g* > *ʒ* etc.) the ending was apparently still pronounced as *-uil* (i.e., with a diphthong). This pronunciation is still (or was until recently) heard in the local idiom of the Alagir (Wællagir) district of North Ossetia (Isaev 1966: 213 ff.; Bekoev 1985: 164: *finguil* “on the table”). Sjøgren (1844:191) gives I. (“Tagauric”) *l (ul, yl)*, D. *böl* as postpositions meaning “auf, längs, durch, über, von, für”. Klaproth (1814: 188, 194) writes *-il*: *básstil* “on the earth” (= *bæstil*). Rosén (1845/46: 386) also writes *il* (“auf”). Ialguziže, whose language is based on the South Ossetic idiom, writes *uyl* in his Gospel translations, e.g. in *æmæ fænikuil badgætæ* “and sitting in the ashes” (SE, Lk. 10,13; cf. Tedeevi 1985, 35, but cp. also SE 1902: ... *æmæ fæničči badgæjæ* [sic]).

Vowel weakening (shortening) takes place occasionally; cp., e.g., I. *færsil* “on the side, sidewise”, from *fars* “side”: *ær-færsil uin* “to lie on one’s side” and even *færsil-æi* (adess. + abl.) *xuissidi* “he lay on his side”; cp. I., D. *færsæi* (abl.) “from, on the side”; *færsæi* (all.) “sidewise”, but also *iskæi læx farsil næ xæci* “another’s shit does not stick the side” (a proverb). Cp. also 4.13.4.4. and 4.13.4.5.2. above.

4.13.4.5.3.1. In all likelihood, the case ending *-il*, *-uil* / *-bæl* derives from the Old Aryan postposition *upari* (Vedic *upāri*, with the accent on the penult) “above, over”, with the usual development of **ri/y > l* and the loss of an unaccented vowel. The sonorisation of

intervocalic *p* ($p > b$) has parallels in *badin* “to sit” < **upa-had-*, (*-*sad-*), *ba-* “into” (preverb) < **upá* (but Vedic *úpa*), *bas* / *basæ* “soup” < **upa-āsā-* (“extra food, dessert”), *bæstæ* “place” < **upá-st(h)aya-*, perhaps also *buar* / *bauær* “body”, if < **upa-vara-* (from **var-* “to cover”, cf. IES: I, 275; Miller 1881-87: III, 155). In other instances intervocalic **p-* has become *-v-*, cp. *tavin* “to heat” < **tāp-*, etc. (cf. Benveniste 1959: 97 ff.). In *badin*, *-bæl* etc., the intermediate stage *-b-* ($p > b > v$) has been retained, due to its initial position after the loss of the *u-*. Abaev, who accepts the etymologies of *badin* etc. given above, derives *uæl*, *uælwæ* “on, above” from **upari* (IES: IV, 71 ff.; thus already Miller 1881-87: III, 158, who also accepts *-bæl* < **upari*, and Hübschmann 1887: 60). But this double treatment of intervocalic / initial **p* is unlikely, as pointed out by Benveniste (1959: 31 ff.), who gives another explanation of *uæl-*, *uælwæ*).

4.13.4.5.3.2. As a local case the adessive means “on, along the surface of something” (both in rest and approachment); cp., e.g.:

- (1) *æmæ fæstægmæ arast is sæ fædil* “and at last he (Uryzmæg) set out after them (in their footsteps)” (NK 1946: 158);
- (2) *sauqædi iin bælasil sirvæzti* “in the Black Wood it (the marten) saved itself into a tree” (NK 1989: I, 416);

bændænil kafæg “a tightrope walker” (lit. “dancing on a tightrope”), where the adessive functions as a nominal modifier (cp. 4.3.2. above).

4.13.4.5.3.3. The adessive is also used in a temporal meaning; cp. *dæs saxatil* “at 10 o'clock”, *zæronð azil* “last year” (“in the old year”).

4.13.4.5.3.4. In a non-spatial, metaphoric meaning the adessive is used with a number of verbs or verbal phrases; cp., e.g.:

xæcin (cf. IES: IV, 152 ff.): “fight with, seize hold of”: *æxsæv mil xuiisæg nal xæci* “in the night I do not sleep any longer” (“the sleep no longer seizes hold of me”);

aryauin / *argauun* “to baptise” (MF, I,45: “lesen, trauen lassen, Gottesdienst abhalten; das Kreuz schlagen; sich taufen”):

- (3) *æz uil aryauin donæi ..., uii uil aryauzæni Siydæg Udæi æmæ artæi* “I baptise you (adess.) with water ..., but he will baptise you (adess.) with the Holy Spirit and fire” (SE 1902, Lk. 3.16);

ivin / *(æii)evun* “to exchange”:

- (4) *iæ xor baivta quimacil* “he exchanged his bread for cloth” (Gagkaev 1956: 119),

but also:

- (5) *qug galæi baivta* “he exchanged a cow for an ox (abl.)” (example in IES: I, 557);

baidaiin, *raidaiin* / *-idaiun* “to begin” (IES: I, 539) with the the infinitive in the adessive:

- (6) *fæsmon kæniniil uæd baidaii* “then he begins to repent” (Schiefner 1863: VI, 441; a proverb),

but also:

- (7) *kusin raididtoi* “they began to work”.

4.13.4.5.3.5. In the meaning “about, because of” the adessive is used with verbs such as *zæyin* “to say”, *xudin* “to laugh at”, *kæuin* “to cry over”, *tixsin* “to worry about”, *æmbælin* “to meet”, *nimaiin* “to count, honour, look upon one as” (cp. *znagil uæ*

nimaion ævi limani!? “shall I regard you as an enemy or as a friend?” Gagkaev 1956: 118), *æuucændin* “to trust”, also *æuucenk uin* “id.”.

With compound verbs: *cin kænin* “to be pleased with”, *dis k.* “to be astonished at”, *fæsmon k.* “to regret”, *tærgai k.* “to take offence”, *uæi k.* “to sell” (*biræ aryil uæi k.* “to sell at a high price”), *qær / ɣær k.* “to shout at” (D. *ie* ‘*ʃsædtæbæl fæɣɣær kodia* “he shouted at his armies (adess. pl.)”, Miller 1902: 5), *somi k.* (*somi iil bakodton* “I swore (to do) it”).

4.13.4.5.3.6. In comparative expressions the adessive can mark the standard of comparison; cp., e.g.:

(8) *kæstæril iuildær xistær sti*
kæstæril iuildær xistær sti
 on-younger (adess.) all older are
 “everybody is older than the youngest one” (“gegen die Jungen sind alle älter”, Schiefner 1863: Va, 439 a proverb);

(9) *æz uin læg næ dæn, æz uin raisom saxaræi diuuædæs uenægil stir qumbara kui næ ærbalason.*

æz uin læg næ dæn æz uin raisom saxaræi diuuædæs
 I for-you man not am I for-you tomorrow from-town twelve
uenægil stir qumbara kui næ ærbalason
 on-oxen (adess.) big mortar when not I-may-draw

“I am not a man for you if tomorrow I will not drag from the town a mortar bigger than 12 oxen” (“Ich werde euch kein Mann sein, wenn ich nicht morgen aus der Stadt einen zwölf Fersen großen Mörser herbeischleppe”, Schiefner 1863: Vb, 26).

This usage undeniably recalls the use of the Georgian postposition *-ze* “on”; cf. *mamaze upro didia* “he is bigger than his father”; in other respects, too, the meanings of the Ossetic adessive and the Georgian postposition are closely related.

Even in Avestan, *upari* could be used in comparisons in a similar way:

(10) *cū asti masiō uayhō sraio aētām dātām yim vīdōiiūm zaraθuštri upairi aniiāiš srauuāiš* “um wie viel grösser, besser, schöner ist dies, das daēvafēindliche zaraθuštrische Gesetz als die anderen Lehren” (Vd. 5.22; Wolff’s (1910) transl.).

4.13.4.5.3.7. In a few words, the adessive has been lexicalised so that it can be inflected for case and number and appear as a head or modifier in complex noun phrases (cp. 4.3.2. above); cp., e.g.:

qomil / ɣombæl “grown up, mature, equal to doing” (from *qom / ɣom*, same meaning), cp. *qomil kænin* “bring up”, *qomil uin* “grow up”; cf. also derivatives such as *qomilad*, *qomilzinad* “upbringing, education, maturity”, *qomiladon* “educational”, *qomilgænæg* “teacher”, *qomilgond* “brought up, educated”: *qomyl ysdut banazynæn nyvazinagy* “Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?” (Mt. 20.22 in Ialɣuziɣe’s transl., Abaev’s transcription, IES II, 309);

I. *iuil* “most” (*iu* “one”): *iuildær* “all, always”, *iuil-bærzond* “very high, tallest of all”, *iuil-dissag* “highly remarkable”, *iuil-xorz* “excellent”, etc.;

æppætīl xæcæg “god” (“Allerhalter”, MF: I, 170; *æppætī* “all”);

uælæuil / uælæbæl dune “the upper world”;

D. *dælæ-bæl-t-æi* “from the infernal regions” (MF: I, 484; note the inverted order of the inflectional suffixes);

nomil-us / nonbæl-uosæ “second wife, concubine” (*nom / non* “name”);

k’uxil-xæcæg “the first bridesman” (“der erste Brautführer”, MF: II, 749; *k’ux* “hand”).

The adessive is also found in some place names; cf. I. *Ræytil* “on the mountain ridges” (cf. IES: II, 343 f.); D. *Raybæl xumæ* “the field on the mountain ridge”; I. *Riuil xuim* “the field on the jut” (*riu* “breast-bone”); I. *Ciryil* “on the summit” (sic Cagaeva 1971: 57, but cp. *sær* “head, top, upper part”, adessive *sær-il*).

4.13.4.5.3.8. As already mentioned above (cp. 4.13.4.5.3.), the allative appears in the earliest documents of the language. For the adessive, however, no occurrence has so far been demonstrated in the mediaeval Alanic documents.

4.13.4.6. Ablative(-instrumental)

The ablative (-instrumental)¹²⁵ expresses a great variety of meanings. As a local case it indicates the starting point of an action in place and time. Figuratively it is used in comparisons with or without the comparative suffix *-dær* on the adjective to signify the standpoint from which an object is judged. The adessive may as well be used in this meaning (cf. 4.13.4.5.3.6. above). The ablative further signifies accompanying circumstances of the action expressed by the verb such as the cause, the means, the material etc. and is used as a predicative complement. The Ossetic ablative thus largely covers the functions of both the instrumental and the ablative of Old Aryan.

4.13.4.6.1. The ending of the ablative is *-æi*, which is added to the stem of the noun; cf. I. *læg-æi*, pl. *læg-t-æi* (*læg* “man”), D. *gal-æi*, pl. *gal-t-æi* (*gal* “ox”). In Iron, the ending is *-iæ* after vowels: *læppu-iæ* (*læppu* “boy”), *zærdæ-iæ* (*zærdæ* “heart”), probably due to haplology. After *-ai* and *-æi*, the ending is *-æ*: *zæi-æ* (*zæi* “avalanche”), *c'ai-æ* (*c'ai* “well”) but pl. *læppu-t-æi*, *zærdæ-t-æi*, *zæi-t-æi*, *c'ai-t-æi*; D. *uru-iæi*, pl. *uru-t-æi* (*uru* “rat”).

The ablative ending is occasionally accompanied by vowel weakening (shortening) and gemination of the final consonant of the preceding syllable; cf. I., D. *tas* “fear”, abl. *tæssæi* (also *tasæi*); *tix* / *tux* “strength”, abl. *tixxæi* / *tuxxæi*, lexicalised as a postposition “on account of” (also *tixæi* / *tuxæi* “by force”); *arm* “hand”, abl. *ærmæi armmæ* “from hand to hand”; *fars* “side”, abl. *færsæi-færstæm* “side by side, from side to side”; *mast* “anger”, abl. *mæstæi*; *mæst-* is also common in derivatives and compounds (the examples of *mæst* given in MF: II, 808 under a separate lemma are all ablatives). The sound changes seem to have taken place in fixed adverbial expressions, an indication of their being old.

4.13.4.6.2. Aparadigmatic ablatives are quite common, i.e. the noun appears in no other case form than in the ablative.¹²⁶ Cp. the following examples:

æbuznæi “ungratefully” (MF: I, 82) seems to derive from an ancient noun **buzn* / *bozn* “thanks, gratitude”, cf. Av. *baoxšna-* in *pouru.baoxšna-* “vielen Rettung, Erlösung bringend” (Bartholomae 1904: 901; “reich an Labungen”, Mayrhofer, EWAIA: II, 275 ff.), from *baog-* “lösen” (Bartholomae 1904: 916). The ancient form **buzn* / *bozn* has been retained in the ablative only. The modern form is *buz* / *boz* “thanks” (but cf. *buzniġ* / *boznug* “grateful, thanks”). As to the loss of the final *-n* in *buz* / *boz* cf. *ruxs* / *rox* “light” < **rauxšna-* (IES: I, 274 f.);

¹²⁵ The Ossetic name of this case is *irtæston* (*xauæŋ*), from the verb *irtæsin* “to secede from”, no doubt a translation of Russ. *отложительный падеж*.

¹²⁶ Cf. Roman Jakobson (on Russian): “Der Instr. neigt (wie der Nom.) zur Rolle einer reinen ‘Lexikonform’.” (Beitr. zur allgem. Kasuslehre = Sel. writings II, 1971, 51).

I. *divældaxæi* (-vældayæi) “in two rows” (*d. ærbadtisti* “they sat down in two rows”, MF: I, 512), from **fældax* “a turn”, cf. *fældaxin* “to turn” (tr.; cf. IES: I, 385);

bon-cuxæi “every second day” (MF: I, 356), from *cux* / *cox* “lack, shortage”;

gazraxatæi “perfidiously” (MF: I, 376), from Georg. *ganzraxad* “on purpose”; in Ossetic, the ablative ending has been added to the Georgian adverbial case (but cf. also *ganzrax* “id.”);

guræi-gurmæ / *goræi-gormæ* “on the tracks of” (MF: I, 407); a verbal noun *gur* (*kur* from *kurin* / *korun* “to ask for”) is otherwise found in compounds only; *us-gur* “bridegroom”, *lævar-gur* “one who asks for presents”;

kæræi-kæronmæ (I, D.) “from beginning to end” (MF: II, 676); the modern form of the noun is *kæron* (I, D.) “end” (cf. IES: I, 586); cf. *adærgæi* (I, D.) “desperately” (MF: I, 13; IES: I, 29); no noun **adærg* is attested, however;

I. *armaccagæi* (*cævin*) “(to kick) with the forefeet” (of horses; MF: I, 46; IES: I, 67), a noun compounded of *arm* “hand, arm” and an otherwise unattested verbal noun **accag* (cp. *a-c-agaiin* (*kaiin*) “to touch, to gallop?”);

I. (*xi*)*qæppæræsægæi* “voluntarily, on one’s own initiative” (MF: I, 441; as to the etymology, cf. IES: II, 293);

D. *babæi* “again” (MF: I, 256; IES: I, 230); no etymon **bab* is attested, however;

I. *finæi*, D. *funæi* “sleeping, sleep” (MF: III, 1473; IES: I, 496), a lexicalised ablative of *fin* / *fun* “sleep, dream” (< **xvafna-*): *finæi kænin* “to sleep”, *finæi læg* “a sleepy man”. As an independent noun, *finæi* may be put in the ablative: *kælmitæ sæ finæiæ küi ’riqal sti* “when the serpents awoke from their sleep” (MF: III, 1473).

4.13.4.6.3. Miller (1903: 44) derives the ablative ending *-æi* (*-iæ*) from the genitive ending of the OIran. *a*-stems, **ahya*.¹²⁷ This explanation is repeated by Morgenstierne (1929: 55). If it is correct, the genitive singular of the *a*-stems has taken over the function of the ablative. This is a somewhat unexpected development of the declension of the *a*-stems, where the notion of the ablative was originally expressed by a form of its own (*-āt*) which was generalised in the other declensions.

According to another explanation offered by the present author (Thordarson in Schmitt 1989: 471), the ablative ending *-æi* derives either from **āyāh*, the genitive-ablative of the *ā*-stems, or from the instrumental, **ayā*, or from a conflation of both these endings. The shortening of *-ā-* in front of **-yā* takes place in, e.g., *mæi* / *mæiæ* “moon, month” < **mā(h)ya-*, *ræiin* / *ræiun* “to bark”, cf. OInd. *rāyati* “id.” or Av. *gāθrō.raiiant-* “der die (heiligen) Gesänge herschreit, schreiend, plärrend vorträgt” (Bartholomae 1904: 521); this is evidently an East Iranian dialectal feature, found also in Avestan, Khotanese and Sogdian (Hoffmann-Forssman 1996: 58; Gershevitch 1961: 17; Henning 1942: 50 = 1977: II, 161).¹²⁸ Similarly, the ablative and the instrumental have merged into one form in Old Persian, Sogdian and Khotanese (cf. Gauthiot 1916: 63 [28]; Sims-Williams in Schmitt 1989b: 183; Emmerick 1968: 249 f.; Kent 1953: 82).

The question arises whether the vowel weakening / consonant gemination that occasionally occurs in front of the ablative case suffix reflects an ancient accentuation of the suffix (cf. the discussion in 4.6.3. above). This feature is too sporadic to allow definitive conclusions, however.

¹²⁷ Other explanations referred to by Miller (l. c.) must be regarded as outdated: ancient ablative in *-āt* (F. Müller), the postposition *hačā* (Lerch). Cf. the references in Miller (l. c.).

¹²⁸ In the sequence **āwā*, *ā* was not shortened in Proto-Ossetic, cf. *-au* < **āwan-*, the ending of the equative, or *xicau* / *xecau* “lord” < **xvaitiāwa-*.

4.13.4.6.4. As a local case, the ablative marks the notion “from”, i.e., the separation from the referent expressed by the noun. To express specific local or temporal meanings, postpositional phrases can be added.

Cp. the following examples:

- (1) I. *æz sk'olaiae fistægæi cæuin* “I go to (lit. “come from”) school by foot” (*fistægæ* “running”, IES: I, 476);
- (2) I. *kalakæi qæumæ ærcidi* “he came to the village from the city” (*kalak* “city”, *qæu* “village”);
- (3) I. *raidaiænæi kærônmae* “from the beginning to the end”;
- (4) I. *uædæi fæstæmae* “from that time onwards” (*uæd* adv. “then”; *fæstæmae* “back, again, after, beside”; IES: I, 462);
- (5) I. *æmæ æræmbird kænʒæni Ie ævzærstitti cippar dimgætæi, zæxxi kærônæi arvi kærônmae* “and He will gather His chosen (one) from the four winds, from the end of the world to the end of the heaven” (SE 1902: Mk. 13.27);
- (6) D. *xonxæi, kenæ ba yædæi, faxsbæl urdugmae, xormæ ærtteventæ gængæ, yæu ærdæmae uadæi ieu sauædonæ* “from the mountain or from the wood, there ran a brooklet down the slope towards the village, gleaming in the sun” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf, 1957: 95, the sketch *Xæræ*).

4.13.4.6.5. Figurative employments are:

- (7) *fæ-cux dæ ærmæst bæxæi* “you only lack a horse” (K’osta 1960: I, 108, the poem *Uælmærdti*, 51);
- (8) *axæm rædidæi xi xizin qæui* “it is necessary to beware of such mistakes” (MF: III, 1557; *xi xizin* “to be on one’s guard”);
- (9) *gailag rodæi bæræg u* “ein (guter) Ochse ist schon vom Kalbe her kenntlich” (Schiefner 1863a: 437, a proverb).

4.13.4.6.6. In association with the adessive, the ablative is used in distributive expressions; cf. *azæi-azmae* “year by year”, *bonæi-bonmae* “day by day”, *bælasæi-bælasmae* “from tree to tree”, *lægæi-lægmæ (xæcin)* “(to fight) head-to-head (lit. from man to man)”.

4.13.4.6.7. The ablative may generally be used to denote the time at which / when something takes place: *izæræi* “in the evening”, *bonæi* “by day” (*bonæi raʒi acidisti* “they left early in the morning”), *æxsævæi* “at night”.

4.13.4.6.8. Basically, the meaning “from” may be regarded as inherent in the ablative of comparison. In this function, the ablative joins the comparative in *-dær* as well as some nouns meaning “other” or “different”. Cp. the following examples:

- (10) I. *quidtag arvi qugæi bærægðær* “a matter clearer than the cow of heaven” (MF: I, 338; *bæræg* “clear”);
- (11) I. *iu innæmæi tingðær* “one stronger than the other” (NK 1946: 158);
- (12) D. *max iuazægæn æ cæsgonæi æ k’ildun xuærzdær uinæn* “we see the back of the guest better than the face” (Miller 1902: 5; Miller has *xuæzdær*);
- (13) I. *iæ mizgæi uældai, ssad davta* “she stole flour exceeding (more than) her wages” (IAS 1961: II, 414, a *Bæxfældisin* text);
- (14) I. *uimæi uoldai ma isut* “Do no more than that (which is your rate)” (SE 1902, Lk. 3.13); I. *uældai*, D. *uoldai* “excess, exceeding”).

The standard of comparison may also be expressed by the adessive (cf. 4.13.4.5.3.6. above). Semantically related is the use of *bæsti* “instead of” (an inessive form) in comparative expressions; cp., e.g.:

- (15) *xudinazi bæsti mælcæt xuizdær u* “death is better than (lit. instead of) shame” (MF: III, 1592).

As to the use of the genitive to signify the object compared with (cf. 4.13.4.3. above).

4.13.4.6.9. The ablative expresses the cause or the motive of an action; cp., e.g.:

- (16) *læppu mitæi amard* “the boy died because of (was killed by) snow”;
 (17) *tæfsæg nizæi basadisti* “they fell ill with fever” (*niz* “illness”);
 (18) *uidonæi arv nærin kui næ uendi* “for fear of them (the Narts), the heaven dares not thunder” (NK 1946: 213);
 (19) *sirdtæ iuildær arseæi tærsinc* “the game always fears the bear” (Schieffner 1963: 437a, a proverb).

However, note the use of *tærsin* plus the dative “to be anxious about”: *dæ usæn ma tærs* “do not be anxious about your wife” (Munkácsi, cf. above).

4.13.4.6.10. The ablative further serves to denote the material from which something is made; cf., e.g.:

- (20) *æfsæinagæi sau galuan* “a black fortress of steel” (NK 1946: 118);
 (21) *gæxxætæi čiryæd* “a basket (made of) paper” (*gæxxæt* “paper”).

In this use the ablative is often accompanied by a past participle expressing the meaning of “made” as in:

- (22) *qædæi aræst uidig* “a spoon made of wood” (*qæd* “wood”).

The ablative can denote the instrument of an action: *fændiræi cæydin* “to play (lit. strike with) the *fændir*” (the Ossetic Lyre; but cp. also *fændir cæydin*);

paida kænin “to benefit from”: *činguitæi paida kænin* “to profit from books” (*činig* “book”, cf. IES: I, 596 f.).

The ablative can also mark the agent of intransitive (passive) verbs:

- (23) *Aaron æmæ iæ firttæ xuicauæi saužinžinadi kuistil ævzærst kæi sti* “the fact that A. and his sons were elected for priesthood by God” (Stackelberg 1886, 17, a quotation from Bishop Iosif, History of the Old Testament: 60).

4.13.4.6.11. In its partitive use the ablative denotes the divided whole a part of which is spoken of; cp., e.g.:

- (24) I. *Gažitæi læg næm ærbacidis* “a man of the *Gaži* family (clan) came to us” (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 130);
 (25) I. *nir ži iu Žilixti miggagæi cæri* “now one of the *Žilix* family is living there” (IAA 1959-62: III, 32);
 (26) D. *Tætærati avd ærvadæi kæstær* “the youngest of the seven *Tatara* brothers” (Gagkaev 1956: 96 where *ærvad-ei* is printed).

An example with *zag /izag* “full of”, *zag kænin / uin* “fill with / be filled with” is:

- (27) *adæmi uinæræi æmæ tamakoiž fæzdægæi baižag is dæryæccon zal* “the oblong hall became filled with the noise of the people and the tobacco smoke” (Gædiati Comaq 1959: 140).

Considering the Aryan origins of the Ossetic ablative as outlined above, its employments treated in the preceding paragraphs are hardly a matter of surprise.

4.13.4.6.12. The ablative signifies the circumstances that accompany an action; cp., e.g.:

aenconzinad æmæ zinzinad radæi sti “calm and trouble come (lit. are) successively” (MF: II, 934); *ænk’ardæi iæ cardī bontæ arvista* “he passed the days of his life in sadness” (MF: I, 162); D. *γe, uotæ qazautonæi kosuncæ Γet’oi-furti nombæl kolxozi xuaszaute* “so heroically (they) work, the mowers of the kolkhoz named after Getoev” (Isaev 1966: 42, where *qazauatonæi* is printed [S.F.]).

Modal adverbs may be put in the ablative to emphasise their modal meaning; cf. I. *aftæmæi*, D. *atemæi*, (u)*otemæi* “thus” vs. *aftæ / atæ*, (u)*otæ* (cf. IES: I, 81; as to the pronominal *-m-* cf. 5.7.3. below).

In a similar way, the gerund (verbal adverb) in *-gæ* is frequently put in the ablative case; cp., e.g.:

(28) *æz cæuin dæ bacamind fændagil, æmæ min kæd æræzdæxgæiæ nal ua, uæddær-iu buzniḡ*

<i>æz</i>	<i>cæuin</i>	<i>dæ</i>	<i>bacamind</i>	<i>fændagil</i>	<i>æmæmin</i>	<i>kæd</i>
I	I-go	your (gen.)	shown (past part.)	on-road	and to-me (dat.)	if
<i>æræzdæxgæiæ</i>	<i>nal</i>	<i>ua</i>	<i>uæddær-iu</i>	<i>buzniḡ</i>		
returning (ger.abl.)	not-more	it-will	then	thanks		

“I am going away along the road shown to me by you, and even if I do not return, nevertheless I will be grateful” (example in Abaev 1964: 49); here the gerund refers to the underlying subject (*æz*) of *buzniḡ* (i.e., *dæn*). – Cf. also 3.4.4. ff. above.

4.13.4.6.13. The predicative use of the ablative is closely related to the functions treated in the preceding paragraphs. As a predicative complement the ablative indicates the role played by some actant in the clause. As already mentioned above (4.13.4.2.), the ablative competes, to some extent, with the nominative in this function. As a general rule, the predicative nominative expresses a permanent or inalienable property of the actant it refers to, whereas the ablative more often signifies some passing or occasional property, i.e. an incidental role of the actant. There is, however, some fluctuation in the use of the two cases as a predicative complement. This can be illustrated by the following example:

(29) *æmæ iæ, uædæ, çi s-zæbæx kænæ, uimæn ta xorzæi ci ra-kænikkat?*

<i>æmæiæ</i>	<i>uædæ</i>	<i>çi</i>	<i>s-zæbæx</i>	<i>kænæ</i>	<i>uimæn</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>xorzæi</i>
and her (gen.obj.)	then	who	preverb-well	will-do	to-him (dat.)	but	good (abl.)
<i>ci ra-kænikkat?</i>							
what you-would-do (opt.)							

“which reward would / will you give to him who might heal her” (lit. “what would / will you do good to him”): NK 1949: 12; in NK 1946: 9, the corresponding text of the same story runs as follows:

(30) *æmæ iæ çi s-zæbæx kænæ, uimæn ci xorz* (nom.) *rakænziḡstut* (fut.)

4.13.4.6.14. The predicative ablative may be co-referential with the subject or another member of the clause it pertains to; or it may be used in absolute constructions without being attached to any particular noun phrase of the clause.

In the following examples, the predicative ablative is co-referential with the subject:

(31) *aenconæi* (abl.) *nici is* “nothing is light (easy)” (MF: I, 168);

(32) *uidis xuiḡmætæzi æfsæddonæi* (abl.) “he was a private soldier” (*xuiḡmætæzi* adv. “simply”, cf. MF: III, 1602; *æfsæddon* “soldier”, cf. MF: I, 234);

(33) *kæsi, æmæ zi duneiḡ adæm auiydæi læuuinc* “he (Soslan) looks, and there is (lit. stands) a great number of (the world’s) people hanging (abl.) (in trees)” (NK 1946: 119);

- (34) *æmæ-iu uim astæukkag čizgimæ læg æmæ usæi cardisti*
æmæ-iu uim astæukkag čizgimæ læg æmæ usæi cardisti
 and there middle with-girl (com.) as-man and wife (abl.)
 they-lived”
 “and there he (lit. they) lived with the middle girl as husband and wife” (IAA, 1962: III, 35);
- (35) *mæ sirdtæi næm avd særžin saži, ævzist uærdoni iftiȳdæi, ænqælmæ kæsžisti*
Sau xoxi ræbin.
mæ sirdtæi næm avd særžin saži ævzist uærdoni
 my hordes (abl.pl.) to-us seven large-headed stag (gen.) silver in-wagon (iness.)
iftiȳdæi ænqælmæ kæsžisti Sau xoxi ræbin
 hitched (past.part., abl.) they-will-wait Black mountain (gen.) below
 “seven stags from my hordes of beasts, hitched to a silver wagon, will wait for us below the Black Mountain” (NK 1946: 282).

In the following sentences the ablative refers to the object:

- (40) *galtæ arvista, æmæ ærdæg mardæi slastoi Alæfi* “he sent oxen, and they hauled Alaf up, half dead” (NK 1946: 216);
- (41) *D. oi k'oxi ævardtoncæ ærægi uængæ dær iæ osi zikkoti kærænttæ lux-gondæi*
oi k'oxi ævardtoncæ ærægi uængæ dær iæ osi
 his in-hand (iness.) they-placed recently until also his wife's
zikkoti kærænttæ lux-gondæi
 of-braids (gen.) cut-off (past part., abl.)
 “until recently they also used to place in his (the dead man's) hand the ends of his wife's braids, cut-off” (IAS 1961: II, 404; a description of funeral rites);
- (42) *zæbæxæi uæ xæzar kui ssarikkat* “may you find your house unharmed” (MF: I, 525);
- (43) *æmæ uælurv iæxi æmbæxstæi dardta* “and he kept him-self hidden in the heaven” (NK 1946: 208; the abl., *æmbæxstæi*, refers to the reflexive pronoun as the object).

In the following example the ablative refers to the dative:

- (44) *næ, fækæson dæm, kænnod din iunægæi zin uizæn* “no, I shall look to (help) you, otherwise it will be difficult for you (dat.) alone (abl.)” (*kæsin* “to look”; *iunægæi* adv. “lonely”; *zin* “difficult(y)”).

The ablative refers to the possessive genitive:

- (45) *Batraži qæstitæ sivællonæi* “the games of Batraz as a child” (NK 1946: 193, a heading).

The predicative ablative may also refer to the underlying subject of a verb:

- (46) *dikkag bon Araguii adæm, Iræi, Guiržiiæ, æræmbird sti*
dikkag bon Araguii adæm Iræi Guiržiiæ æræmbird sti
 second day (nom.) of-Aragvi people (nom.) Ossetes (abl.) Georgians (abl.) assembled are
 “the next day the people of the Aragvi, Ossetes (and) Georgians, assembled” (Gædiati Sek'a 1979: 236);
- (47) *Rostovæi ardæmæ Iron adæmæi uidisti* “from Rostov hither there were (lived) Ossetic people (abl.)” (Isaev 1966: 213, a text from Wællagkom);
- (48) *Uirizmæži kui fedtoi, uæd sistadisti, xistæræi, kæstæræi* “when they (the Boratæ) saw Uryzmag, they rose to their feet, old (and) young (abl.)” (NK 1946: 205).

The numerals, when used as predicative complements, are regularly put in the ablative as in:

- am badinc astæi* “they sit here, eight in number”;
- (49) *Kalotæn činz uidis æmæ iæ moi amard. Uæd iæ 'rvadæltæ diuuæiæ Bagus æmæ Baga činzmæ szirdtoi.*
Kalotæn činz uidis æmæ iæ moi amard. Uæd iæ 'rvadæltæ
 to Kalons (dat.pl.) bride was and her husband died. then her brothers (nom.)
diuuæiæ Bagus æmæ Baga činzmæ szirdtoi
 two (abl.) Bagus and Baga to-bride (all.) they-said
 “the Kalon clan had a daughter-in-law, and her husband died. Then her brothers, the two (of them), Bagus and Baga, said to the daughter-in-law” (IAA 1959-62: III, 234);
- (50) *uærtæ Adaii kommæ bacæuut dæsæi* “you shall go there, to the Ada Gorge, the ten of you” (NK 1946: 281);
- (51) *avdæi dær uæ xudtæ kæræziï midæg akænut* “you shall put your hats on, seven in number, the one inside the other” (NK 1946:194; the ablative refers to the object).

4.13.4.6.15. The naming function of the ablative is in accordance with its predicative employment. In enumerations, various noun phrases can be preposed to the utterance for topicalisation; cp., e.g.:

- (52) *ælyistæi, uæd nadæi ci næ bavzærston* “abused, then beaten, what haven’t I gone through” (K’osta 1960: I, 84, the poem *Či dæ?*);
- (53) *lægæi, bæxæi, diližansæi æmxuizonæi nippirx sti* “men, horses, stagecoaches, all alike were in a mess” (Gædiati Comaq 1959: 119, the short story *Cardi uæz*);
- (54) *k’axidaræsæi, uælædaræsæi – iuuildær sæ srævz kodtoi* “shoes, clothes, they got it all in order” (Dæbe, the novel *Qæbatirti kadæg*; example in Axvlediani 1963-69: II, 164).

4.13.4.6.16. The ablative is used in absolutive constructions without being attached to any noun phrase member of the clause it pertains to, cp., e.g.:

- (55) *ardæm ægasæi cæuini zird næi* “it is impossible to come (lit.: no word of coming) here alive”;
- (56) *uæd bæx mard iæ uælæ bastæi, iæ xæzarmæ bacidis*
uæd bæx mard iæ uælæ bastæi iæ xæzarmæ bacidis
 then horse dead his on tied his home went
 “then the horse, with the dead man tied to its back, went home” (Miller 1881-87: I, 20; *mard ... bastæi* is an absolutive construction in which the predicative complement *bastæi* refers to *mard*).

4.13.4.6.17. In combination with the verb *zaiin / izaiun* “to become” and semantically related verbs, the ablative may be used with a transformative meaning; cp., e.g.:

- (57) *D. nur baizadan eunægæi* “now we have become alone” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf 1957: 86, the vaudeville *Cauæiontæ*);
- (58) *xistærtæ ting raziïæ bazzadisti* “the (two) elder brothers became very glad” (NK 1946: 276);
- (59) *Xuicauæn ædixæi nici zird bazzaižæni* “for God nothing (lit. no word) will be impossible” (*adixæi*, abl. “without force”; SE 1902, Lk. 1.37);
- (60) *smax ænqæl uidisti – p’azgaxæi in nillæuzæn, iæ xuicau in næ zidtoi, ænqæltat iæ læg uižæn* “you expected that he would become king (abl.), you did not

know him as god (nom.), you thought that he would become a man (nom.)” (Schieffner 1863b, 38; an Easter hymn);

- (61) *læppuicæ bazzad* “he became a boy” (K’osta 1960: I, 68, the poem *Quibadi*).

However, note the use of the nominative, too:

- (62) *xærz zæγæl kæi zaiin, uii bazidton* “I understood that I am becoming wholly forsaken” (K’osta 1960: I, 82, the poem *Či dæ?*);
 (63) *Soslan festadi siydæg bolat* “Soslan became (of) pure steel” (NK 1946: 66);
 (64) *æmæ xærd æmæ nosti æfsin doni, sæn či festadi, uii ad kui fedta* “and when the housekeeper (lit. lady of food and drink) tasted the water that had become wine” (SE 1902, Jn. 2.9);
 (65) *uæd zæγ, cæmæi aci durtæ festoi zultæ* “then tell that these stones shall become bread” (SE 1902, Mt. 4.3).

In the same way, the nominative is regularly used, with *festin / festun* “to become”, it seems (< *fæ-* + *stin / istun* “to stand”).

The verb *kænin / kænun* “to make, turn into” is regularly construed with the nominative as a predicative object complement as well; cp., e.g.:

- (66) *fælæ iæ smax skodiat ævzærgænžiti lægæt* “but you have turned it (the Temple) into a robbers’ den” (SE 1902, Mt. 21.13);
 (67) *æmæ Mæ Fidi xæzar ma kænut bazargænæn xæzar* “and do not turn my father’s house into a market” (SE 1902, Jn. 2.16);
 (68) *cæmæi iæ padzax skænæi* “in order to make him king” (SE 1902, Jn. 6.15 [where ... *Iæ padcax skænoj* is printed – S.F.]);

In the same way, the causative expression *læuuin kænin* “to turn into”

(lit. “to make stay as”) takes the object complement in the nominative; cp., e.g.:

- (69) *či Mæ nillæuuin kondta smaxæn tærxongænæg, kænæ smax uaræg?* “who appointed me your judge (a judge for you) or your arbitrator?” (SE 1902, Lk. 12.14).

In combination with the verb *xonin / xonun* “to call, name”, the object complement is also put in the nominative; cp., e.g.:

- (70) *cæi tixxæi Mæ xonis xorz?* “why do you call me good?” (SE 1902, Mk. 10.18);
 (71) *æz uæ cayartæ nal xonin* “I do not call you servants any more” (SE 1902, Jn. 15.15);
 (72) *D. mæn ma xonæ dæ xælar* “do not call me your friend” (Maliti Geuærgi, Iræf: 1957: 84, the vaudeville *Cauæiontæ*).

Similarly, with the intransitive verb *xuinin / xunnun* “to be called”, the subject complement is regularly, as it seems, put in the nominative; cp., e.g.:

- (73) *Iæ mad Mariam næ xuini?* “is not his mother called Mariam?” (SE 1902, Mt. 13.55);
 (74) *Varavvæi ævi Iesoi Čiristi či xuini, Uii* “Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ” (SE 1902, Mt. 27.17).

In my material there is no example of the ablative used as an object complement with verbs denoting “to turn into” or “to call”. Concerning the predicative use of the nominative and the dative, I refer to 4.13.4.2. and 4.13.4.4.5. above.

4.13.4.6.18. The employment of the ablative as a predicative complement deserves a closer investigation than has been possible here. To mention but one point: The choice between the nominative and the ablative in this function seems to some extent to be optional. Which stylistic nuances (if any) determine the choice? To answer such questions, a linguist with the competence of a native speaker would be needed. No such studies are known to me. Gagkaev's syntax of 1956 and Axvlediani's grammar (1963-69, vol. II), thorough though they are, do not go into details in their treatment of these matters.

4.13.4.6.19. In its predicative use, the ablative bears some typological resemblance to the Cherkas adverbial-predicative in *-ew* (Adyghe), *-w* (Kabardian), and to the Abkhaz adverbial in *-s* (or *-nə*), as well as to the Georgian adverbial case in *-ad(a)*, in their essive-translative meanings. However, there cannot be any doubt that the use of the ablative-instrumental as a predicative complement in Ossetic originates from Old Aryan (and Indo-European). It is easily explicable on the basis of the sociative meanings of the ancient instrumental, the notion of "accompanying circumstances", although it may have expanded through bilingual contacts with adjacent Caucasian languages. Russian influence is out of the question here as the present use is deeply rooted in the structure of the Ossetic language and therefore undoubtedly old; as already mentioned, the presence of Russian in the Caucasus is comparatively recent.

It may be tempting, however, to ask if the expansion of the predicative use of the instrumental, which has taken place in the Baltic as well as the East and West Slavonic languages, was an areal phenomenon which was shared by the Iranian dialects / languages of South Russia. But a treatment of these matters would go far beyond the limited scope of the present studies.

4.13.4.6.20. In Old Aryan, the instrumental signifies circumstances accompanying the event or action expressed by the verb; it may denote the form of the manifestation ("Erscheinungsform") of one of the actants of the clause in the sense of "as, by way of"; cp. *jáyema táṃ dakṣinayá ráthena* "may we defeat him with the *dakṣinā* (donation to the priest) as a wagon" (RV 1.123.5).

In this function, the Old Indian instrumental combines with the verbs meaning "to be" or denoting a "change of state"; cp. *tád agnīnaivá devēṣu bráhmābhavat* "that Brahman appeared among the gods as Fire" (Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 1.4.15, 27 M (15 K)). This usage is common in Sanskrit, but it is also found in Vedic; cp. *sarvam asmai divā bhavati* "everything becomes day for him" (Pañcaviṃśabrāhm. 5.8.9); cp. *divevāsa* (< *divā iva āsa*) "it was like day(light for him)" (Śatapathabrāhm. 11.1.6.7; Renou 1968: 293). Here we may also mention the use of the instrumentals of *tanū-* and *ātman-* (*tanvā, ātmanā*) "in person"; cp. *yá vayám cakṛmā tanūbhiḥ* "what we (by) ourselves have done" (RV 7.86.5).

In the following Vedic passage, the instrumental of the numeral *śata* seems to be used as a predicative complement: *śatair apadran pañāya indrātra dásonaye kavāye 'rkāsātau* (RV 6.20.4), Geldner translates: "durch hundert (Streiche) sanken da die Pañi's hin für den zehnamigen Kavi im Kampf um die Sonne" (*arkāsātau*); shall we rather interpret *śatair* as "zu Hunderten"? In RV 5.26.9 the instrumental *sārvayā viśā* functions as a predicative complement in a similar way: *edam marūto aśvinā mitrāḥ sīdantu vārunaḥ devāsaḥ sārvayā viśā* "auf dieses [*barhis*] sollen sich die Marut, die

Ašvin, Mitra, Varuṇa setzen, die Götter mit vollzähliger Gemeinde” (Geldner’s translation).¹²⁹

4.13.4.6.21. In the Avesta, the instrumental of *kəhrp-* “body” is used predicatively in the meaning of “in the shape of, as” (Y.Av., not Gāthic); cp. *upa taçaṭ arəduuī sūra anāhita kainīnō kəhrpa srīraiiā* “da kam herzu Urdvī Sūrā Anāhita in Gestalt eines schönen Mädchens” (Yt. 5.64; Lommel’s (1927) translation); *nizbaitēmi tištrīm stārəm raēuuantəm x’arənaḡuḡantəm gəūš kəhrpa zaraniiō.srauuahē* “ich rufe herab den prächtigen glanzvollen Tištrya-Stern in Gestalt des goldhörnigen Rinds”(Vd. 19.37; Wolff’s translation). The absence of this use of *kəhrpā* in the Gāthās may be accidental.

The instrumental of numerals is used as a predicative complement; cp., e.g.:

aθra āḡḡam ḡm.bauuaiṅti duua udra upāpa: hazayrāiš sūnīš strīnāmanō hazayrāiš sūnīš nairiiōnāmanō miθβana strica nairiiasca “da in diesen [Wassern] entstehen (draus) zwei im Wasser lebende Ottern: auf tausend weibliche Hunde (und) tausend männliche Hunde (kommt) paarweise ein Weibchen und ein Männchen” (Vd. 13.51; Wolff’s translation);

(75) *ərəzuuō ašāum spitama zaraθuštra niuuaiiaka nipašnaka apa.skaraka apa.xraosaka imā [zaoθrā] paiti.višəṅte yā māuuōiia pasca vazənti xšuuuš satāiš hazayrəmcā* “fürwahr, o ašagläubiger Spitama Zaraθuštra! Die Schaudererregenden, die Schelsüchtigen, die Hohnsüchtigen, die Schmähsüchtigen stellen sich bei diesen [zaoθra’s] ein, die hinter mir zu sechshundert und tausend angeführt werden” (Yt. 5.95; Wolff’s translation with my modifications).

4.13.4.6.22. A predicative instrumental in ’ < ā is found in Sogdian (at least in Buddhist texts, cf. Gershevitch 1961: 178); cp., e.g.:

(76) *’PZY wβyḡ βwt ’sp’ ’PZY ḡr’ ’t ’ḡwštry ’PZY ’kwty* “and becomes both horse and donkey and camel and dog” (SCE, ed. MacKenzie 371, p. 22);

(77) *’rd’rn’k ḡ’w ’PZY ḡr’ ’z’yt* “is born as a mill ox or donkey” (SCE, ed.: id., 161, p. 10);

(78) *š’w ’t ’ks’ ’z’yt* “he is born black and thin” (SCE, ed.: id., 76, p. 6).

In Khotanese the instrumental of *rūva-* “shape” (< OInd. *rūpa-*) is used in a similar way as Av. *kəhrpā*; cp., e.g.:

(79) *cūḡe vā śšīyā hastā rūvāna dāstā* “why did he appear in the form of a white elephant?” (Book of Zambasta, ed. Emmerick, 24.190, p. 378).

Detailed studies on the uses of the instrumental case in Khotanese and Sogdian seem to be lacking.

4.13.4.7. Comitative

The Iron comitative in *-imæ*, which has no equivalent in Digor, signifies the accompaniment, the presence of a second actant: “besides X, Y is there too”. It is formed from nouns denoting human beings as well as animals and inanimate objects; cp., e.g.:

(1) *či uidi demæ?* “who was with you?”;

¹²⁹ Cf. Renou 1968: 293; Haudry 1977: 90 ff.; 1987: 40; cp. also Delbrück 1893-1900: III, 262 ff. on Lithuanian and Slavic Instrumentals.

- (2) *rast cima sqomil is toppimæ, kardimæ! na ued uælbæxæi iæ isçi æmgarimæ fedta ci balci?* “as if he had grown up with a gun and a sword! or has anybody seen him on horseback with a comrade on a journey?” (K’osta 1960: I, 106, the poem *Uelmaerditi*, 1.25 ff.);
- (3) *æmæ uidonimæ uæxi æmxaï kænut* “and you shall share alike with them” (Gagkaev 1956: 120);
- (4) *boni xurimæ fæzurin, æxsæv ta mæiimæ mæ zird* “by day I speak with the sun, by night (my talk is) with the moon” (Gagkaev 1956: 121).

4.13.4.7.1. The comitative ending *-imæ* derives from *-iumæ*, the allative of the numeral *iu* “one” (D. (*i*)*eu*), (cf. IES: I, 558), which has been added to the nominative as a postposition. In both dialects *iumæ* / *eumæ* is used independently as an adverb meaning “together” (IES: I, 559); cp. *uii nin iumæ daedtæd* “may he (God) give it to both of us (to us together)” (NK 1946: 184). From this the adjective *iumæiag* / *eumæiag* “common” is derived. The use of *-imæ* to signify “accompaniment” is reminiscent of Modern Georgian *-(s)tan ertad*, where the adverbial case of the numeral “one” (nom. *ert-i*) is added to the adessive in *-(s)tan*. In Old Georgian the same function was fulfilled by the postposition *-urt*, from *ert-*, combining with the instrumental; cp. *moç’apit-urt* “with the disciples”.

4.13.4.7.2. In Digor the comitative notion is expressed by the postposition *xæccæ*, which, as most other postpositions, is added to the genitive; cp., e.g.:

- (5) (*i*)*eci zurdtiti xæccæ ci dorbael badtæi, omæi fælleuirdta* “with these words he arose from the stone on which he was sitting” (Miller 1902: 5, where the postposition is spelled *xædcæ*);
- (6) *dæu xæccæ mæn znag næ fændui* “I do not want to be your enemy (enemy with you)” (Miller 1902: 6);
- (7) *mænæ K’æmintæ ’mæ Gæliati xæccæ iu ævzag nin is* “we have the same language as the Goliatæ and the K’æmyntæ” (lit. “there is one language for us with the G.’s and the K.’s”; Isaev 1966: 213, a text in the Uællagkom idiom).

In Iron *xæccæ* is found as a noun (subst., adj.) meaning “mixed, mixing”; cp. also the compound verb *xæccæ kænin* “to mix” (Abaev 1964: 67).

Bailey (1945: 30 ff.) identified Oss. *xæccæ* with Khot. *hamtsa*, which appears with *jsa* as a preposition or postposition “together with”; cp. *tyyām dašām hvamdam jsi hamtsi* “together with those 10 men”; *hamtsi vā šacūpatām jsa* “with the men from Šašsou” (Jātakastava, ed. Dresden 1955: 418). Cf. also Av. **ham-ča* “united with” (Vd. 5.59, hap. leg.; Bartholomæe 1904: 1778). This identification seems to be acceptable, although the retention of an initial *h-* as *x-* in front of *-a-* is unexpected; cf. *avd* “seven” < **hapta*, *æm-* prefix “with” < **ham-*, or *æd-* < **hada* (cf. below).¹³⁰

4.13.4.7.3. The comitative meaning can in both dialects be expressed by the prefix *æd-* “(in company) with” < **hada* < **sadha* (cp. OInd. *sadha*, I.E. **sm-dhe*). It may be used with both animate and inanimate nouns and can be prefixed to complex as well as simple noun phrases; cp. *æd saži mærdtæ* “with the carcass of a goat” (cp. nom. *sag*, IES: III, 11 ff.; example in Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 296). It occurs only with substantives and only with the nominative. Thus it is not found with pronouns or adjectives, whereas *-imæ* and *xæccæ* can be used with both these word classes; cp.

¹³⁰ But note *xom* “raw”, if from **āma-*, I.E. **ōmo-* (IES: IV, 213), *xai* “part” < **āiti-*, cf. Av. *aēta-* “allotment, share, punishment” (ibid.: 132 f.). As to the “prothetic” *x-*, cf. IES: IV, 151.

memæ, *mænimæ* “with me”, *xorzimæ* “with the good” (but not **æd-æz*, **æd-xorz*). It cannot be combined with an oblique case suffix either.¹³¹ Cp. the following examples:

- (8) *sizdæxt æd-don sæximæ* “he returned home with the water” (Dæbe: I, 23);
- (9) *Inali fīd Dudar dær æd-binontæ uirdæm aliyd* “Dudar, Inal’s father, fled there with his family” (Iron prozæii antologi 1969-70: I, 470); but cp. the same text a little later:
- (10) *fæstæmæ iæ binontimæ ærizdæxt* “later he returned with his family”;
- (11) *Sago æd-færæt xæzarmæ bacid* “Sago came home with an axe (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 296).

The MF dictionary (I, 101 ff.) lists about a dozen compound adjectives with *æd-* as their prior member; cp. *æd-guton* “(equipped) with a plow”, *æd-uidægtæ* “with roots”, *æd-daræs* “dressed, with clothes”, etc. Adjectives of this kind are mainly used predicatively, as it seems.

As was indicated above, the prototype of this derivation is found in the Old Aryan languages, viz. in OInd. *sahá*, *sadha*, Av. *hadā* (cf. Bartholomae 1904: 1756 ff.; Grassmann 1873: col. 1463 ff., 1498 ff.). Both OInd. *sahá*, *sadha* and Av. *hadā* form possessive adjectives with the meaning “provided with”, too; cp., e.g.:

- (12) RV 6.26.7: *ahám caná tát sūrībhīr ānāsyaṃ táva jyāya indra sumnám ójah tváyā yát stávante sadhavīrās trivárūthena náhuṣā śaviṣṭha* “auch ich möchte mit den freigebigen Patronen diese deine höhere Gunst und Stärke erlangen, o Indra, dass die Helden, du Heldengenosse [von Helden begleitetet], von dir gelobt werden, da du ein dreifacher Nahus bist, du Gewaltigster” (Geldner’s translation);
- (13) Y. 3.4: *imaṭ barəsmā hadā zaōθrəm hadā aiβiiāṅhanəm ašaiia frastarətəm āiiese yešti* “zu verehren hole ich her samt Zaoθra’s, samt Gürtelband dies ašamābig gespreitete Barəsmān” (Wolff’s translation).

In Old Iranian and in later Iranian languages, **hadā* and its successors are used as prepositions or postpositions denoting “accompaniment, with”; cf., e.g., Yidgha *lo*, Pashto *la*. In Khwarezmian, adjectives indicating possession are formed with a prefix *θ* < **hadā*; cf. Henning-MacKenzie 1971: 37; Benzing 1983: 620.

4.13.4.7.4. At some time in the history of the Ossetic language, the comitative meaning must have been differentiated from the ablative-instrumental by means of pre- and postpositional phrases. This may have been the result of the merging of the ablative and the instrumental into one case, which denoted generally the circumstances of an action or event, and consequently a semantic overloading of this case. The pre- and postpositional phrases have thus filled a functional gap in the inflectional system of the noun.

4.13.4.8. Equative

The equative expresses “likeness, the way a verbal action or event is proceeding”; cp., e.g., *fatau ataxti* “he flew away like an arrow”;

- (1) I. *nir sæm bakæs, uæd cavddurtau badinc færsæi-færstæm* “now look at them, they (the Narts) sit side by side (from side to sides) like petrified” (NK 1946: 158);

¹³¹ In this respect *æd-* behaves in the same way as the case endings, which are only rarely connected with one another. However, such “double” cases do exist; cp. *uæli-au* “on high” (MF: III, 1282), *uæli-au-mæ* “upwards”; *fars* “side”: *færs-il*, *færs-il-æi* “on the side” (MF: III, 1394), or *æwæž-i-au* “finally” (MF: I, 171).

- (2) D. *ku næies mænæn fændænttæ, xærscænau, kosun xæzari* “I have no wishes, like an animal I work at home” (Maliti Geuærugi, Iræf 1957: 16).

The equative suffix may be added to local and temporal adverbs, somehow modifying, or even, as it seems, intensifying, the basic meaning; cp., e.g.:

I., D. *dæliau* “below” (*dælæ*); I., D. *uæliau* “up, above” (*uælæ*); I. *fæstiau* “far behind” (*fæstæ*); I., D. *faliau* “far off” (*falæ*); *midægau* / *medægau* “deeply inside” (*midæg* / *medæg*); *æddiau* / *ændiau* “far outside” (*æddæ* / *ændæ*).

In the following examples, *-au* has been added to the inessive case: *æræžiau* / *ærægiau* “finally” (*æræg*), D. *ragiau* “earlier, a long time ago” (*raži* / *ragi*).

The suffix is often used aparadigmatically (*-au* forming adverbs); cp., e.g.:

nal sti xorzau “they do not feel well any more”;

æfstau, *fistau* / *æfstau* “on loan” (with *radtin* “to give”, *raisin* “to take, get”), probably from *fist*, past part. of *fidin* “to pay”.

4.13.4.8.1. The suffix *-au* is also used as a derivative suffix, forming adjectives and substantives; cp., e.g.:

uæzzau “heavy” from *uæz* “weight” (IES: IV, 101 f.);

I. *ævæžiau* “excellent”, from *fæd* / *fædgæ* “rule”, i.e. “not as a rule” (IES: I, 193).

4.13.4.8.2. Historically, the equative ending derives from the nominative of an adjective in **āwan-*. This is suggested by the following words:

rædau “generous” < **rātāwan-*, from **rāta-*, past part. of **rā-* “to yield, give” (IES: II, 360);

æydau “custom, tradition”, cf. Av. *haxta-* “entitled to”, Sogd. *ʔtʷ* “judge”, a substantivised adj. (cf. IES: I, 122; Benveniste 1959: 51 ff.);

I. *fiiu* (*fæiiu*, *fiiiu*) / *fiiiu*¹³² “shepherd”, if from **pāy-āwan-*, from the verb **pā(y)-* “to guard” in (cf. IES: I, 431);

xicau / *xecau* “chief” < **xwaity-āwan-* (cp. IES: IV, 197).¹³³

In both OInd. and OIran., *-van-* forms possessive adjectives with the meaning “endowed with, in possession of”; cf. OInd. *rtāvan-* “proper, keeping within the fixed order”, Av. *ašāvan-* “loyal to *aša-*” (i.e. to “truth, the righteous order”); OInd. *maghāvan-* “generous, possessing gifts” (*maghā-*; cf. Benveniste 1959: 104; cp. also Bailey 1945/6: 9; Wackernagel-Debrunner: II, 2: 900 ff.).

4.13.4.8.3. The equative suffix is added to names of national or linguistic groups to denote the language spoken by the group; cp. *Guiržiaġ-au* “(in) Georgian”; *Iron-au xorz næ zurin* “I do not speak Ossetic well”.

In Sogdian, *-āu* is similarly used for forming adjectives; cf. *kršnʷ* “beautiful” (*k(r)šn* “beauty”); cp. also the adv. *swydyʷ* “in Sogdian” (Gershevitch 1961: 164).

In Khotanese, *-au* forms adjectives and adverbs designating the nationality or the language; cf. *hvatanau* “Khotanese” (Degener 1989: 172 ff.).

The same suffix is also found in Khwarezmian; cf. *trkʷwyk* “Turkish” (Benzing 1983: 615).

The use of **āwan-* to form ethnic and linguistic names is thus well attested in the East Middle Iranian sister languages.

¹³² Cp. Abaev’s spelling of D. *fijjaw* (IES: I, 431).

¹³³ Abaev connects *xuicau* / *xucau* “god” with Georg. *xuci*, *xucesi* “old man, priest” (IES: IV, 255), arguing that among the East Georgian highlanders this word signifies a priest of a pagan deity, *xatʷi*. The *-au* may be due to an analogy with *xicau* “chief” (cf. Thordarson: 2000, 219).

Oss. *-au* is also common in place names such as *Ævzagau* “resembling a tongue”, *Kævdæsau* “resembling a manger” (Cagaeva 1971: 57; IES: I, 591; for *ivzag / ævzag* “tongue, language” cf. IES: IV, 279).

4.13.4.8.4. As pointed out by Benveniste (1959: 104), the function of *-au*, originally the nominative of an adjective, as an oblique case suffix denoting “resemblance”, originated from its use as a predicative complement: “X acts, talks as, in the capacity of”. The origin of *-au* as a case marker is thus due to a syntactic reinterpretation. This change has its parallel in the development of ancient **-an(a)-* from a derivative nominal suffix denoting “suitability or purpose”, to a marker of the dative case (cf. 4.13.4.4.12. above). In addition to their grammatical functions as case markers, both suffixes are still used for forming nominal derivatives. In either instance the suffix has been split into two morphemes, so that, from a synchronic point of view, we have to assume two homonymous morphemes, a nominal derivative suffix and a case ending here.

4.13.4.8.5. The function of the Ossetic equative has a certain resemblance to that of the Turkic equative in *-ča / -če* (Anat.Turk. *-ca / -ce*, OTurk. *-ča / -čä*). Quite like Oss. *-au*, the Turkic equative signifies the language spoken by an ethnic group; cp., e.g., Kar.-Balk. *orusča söleşirge* “to speak Russian”, Noghay *nogajša* “in Nogaian”, and also Anat.Turk. *ingilizce* “(in) English”. But as this use of the Ossetic suffix has its parallel in the East Iranian sister languages, it cannot be ascribed to an influence from the Turkic languages of the North Caucasus.

Similarly to the Ossetic equative, the Turkic suffix may also denote the behaviour of a group; cp., e.g., Noghay *kommunistlarše* “in the Communist fashion”. Turkic *-ča* further has a modifying, mostly diminutive but also augmentative, force depending on the meaning of the noun; cp. Anat.Turk. *yorgunca* “rather tired”, *uzunca* “quite long”, *güzelve* “rather pretty”, O. Turk. *azraqča* “ganz wenig” (von Gabain 1950: 59; Deny 1920: §§ 517, 349).

In this context, we may also mention the Chech.-Ing. adverbs in *-šxa*; cp., e.g., *xelxavelira hirašxa* “he dances as an Ossete, in the Ossetic fashion”, (Jakovlev 1940: 149 ff.: 111), *adamašxa* “as a man”, Russ. “*но-человеческу*”, *vežarašxa* “fraternally, as a brother (*vaša*)”, cp. Oss. *ærvadau* “as brothers, fraternally” (for *-šxa* cf., e.g., Karasaev / Maciev 1978: 407).

4.13.4.8.6. The ending of the equative is undoubtedly of Iranian origin, and the development of its functions can be accounted for within the framework of historical East Iranian syntax. However, the typological similarities to Turkic and perhaps also Nakh languages raise the question whether its development is an areal phenomenon. But in the case of a calque of the Turkic equative, the influence would have to be old, as the Khotanese and Sogdian use of the suffix indicate. If we assume that the similarities are not accidental, the direction of the borrowing remains an open question.

4.13.4.9. Conclusions

From the preceding paragraphs we conclude that 4 of the 9 (resp. 8) morphological case forms of Ossetic go back to Old Iranian cases: the nominative, the genitive, the ablative-instrumental and the inessive (locative). The remaining cases have been formed by the addition of postpositions to the nominative (adessive, allative, comitative) or by a syntactic re-interpretation of derivative nouns.

The Ossetic system, consisting of the four inherited cases, corresponds fairly well with the nominal inflection of Khotanese and, in part, also Sogdian (considering the so-

called light stems). As in Ossetic, the old instrumental and ablative have merged into one case in both these languages. Furthermore, both languages show a tendency to give up the distinction between the accusative and the nominative. In Ossetic this process has been completed.

The most striking innovation of the Ossetic declensional system is the creation of a special dative form. As in the sister languages, the dative and the genitive were in all likelihood conflated at an early stage. The syntactic re-interpretation of a derivative noun in **-ana-*, expressing a final-consecutive meaning, may have been the consequence of a functional overloading of the genitive when it became a marker of the direct object of transitive verbs as well as a nominal modifier. The formation of the allative, adessive and comitative by means of postpositions represents a residual trace of earlier syntax where postpositions followed the nominative.

The relative chronology of the development of the case system cannot be established with certainty. But it stands to reason that the syntactic re-interpretation of **-ana-* into a dative ending must have been prior to the grammaticalisation of **-upári* and **(h)amǎ* as endings of the adessive and the allative. The grammaticalisation of these two postpositions is likely to have taken place more or less at the same time. The relatively late grammaticalisation of *-i(u)mæ* as a comitative ending is evident. The development of *-au* from a derivative to a grammatical morpheme is probably comparatively recent but must have been prior to the dialectal split (if it was not diffused from Iron into Digor through dialect mixing).

4.13.4.9.1. As it has been shown above, Ossetic is likely to have employed its own internal sources in the evolvement of its extended case system. The functions of the respective cases reflect trends that were present in the language itself, thus continuing features which existed in the East Iranian languages as early as the Middle Iranian period.

All this is not to deny, however, that the given development may have received support from similar features in adjacent languages in the Caucasus or also from contacts with other languages in the distant past, prior to any probable contacts with Caucasian languages (e.g., Central Asian Turkic languages). We have already mentioned above some few grammatical features where intrasystemic developments were most likely intensified by bilingual contacts with neighbouring (Caucasian, Turkic) languages (cp. 3.4.3. ff.).

4.13.4.9.2. However, there are no system-wide identities between the Ossetic case inflection and that of any of the neighbouring languages. Thus, in particular, the noun inflection of Circassian is far remote from the Ossetic case system. Needless to say, case inflection is not the only way of marking the relationships between nouns and verbs; in one language adverbial or postpositional phrases may convey the same meaning as case forms do in another language. From our exposition as given above, it appears clearly how difficult it is to demarcate these categories of expressions.

4.13.4.9.3. In the preceding paragraphs some attention has been drawn to syntactic similarities between the usage of Ossetic cases and ways of expressing the same content in the adjacent languages. Thus, the possessive use of the dative in association with the genitive of an enclitic pronoun seems to have a parallel in the Northwest Caucasian languages (cf. 4.13.4.4.9. above). Furthermore, the predicative employment of the ablative bears some typological resemblance to that of the predicative adverbial case of Circassian (Kab. *-w*, Adyg. *-ew*).

In the following a few syntactic resemblances between the noun inflection of Ossetic and that of neighbouring languages of the Caucasus will be summarised. My remarks are not meant to be exhaustive at all, however; they should be considered as being rather tentative than conclusive.

In complex noun phrases, premodification is the principal rule in Ossetic, as was already said above. This feature Ossetic shares with the Turkic and the Nakh languages. Furthermore, it applies also to Modern Georgian.

A morphologically unmarked indefinite case (the nominative) which signifies the subject as well as the direct object of the verb is common to both Ossetic and the Turkic languages. The same case form functions as the subject of transitive as well as intransitive verbs. Both Ossetic and the Turkic languages possess the capacity to mark morphologically the definite or specific direct object (while Ossetic uses the genitive in this function, Turkic uses the accusative, which in the case of Balk.-Kar. and Kum., however, is mostly synonymous with the genitive; cf. Fritz 1983: 10). In the Nakh languages, the nominative (i.e. the unmarked zero case) marks both the object of transitive verbs and the subject of intransitive verbs. Finally, also Georgian may be mentioned in this context, although it is more distant from this type. Here, the direct object of transitive verbs is marked by the dative in screeve I, in screeve II by the nominative which also serves as the subject case of a number of many (but not all) intransitive verbs.

In both Ossetic and the Turkic languages, the modifier of complex noun phrases has no marker for case and number concord. In the Nakh languages, modifiers show a single case distinction between the nominative and the oblique cases. In the modern Georgian language, unlike Old Georgian, attributive adjectives and pronouns do not show full agreement with the noun which they qualify.

In the Circassian languages, where the noun phrase is predominantly premodifying, the inflectional markers are suffixed to the attribute; cf. Kab. *pśaaśa-daaxâ-q* ^w*aaγə* “behind the beautiful girl” (“girl-beautiful behind-obl.”; Colarusso 1992: 63; Colarusso’s spelling).

Like Ossetic, both the Nakh and the Turkic languages have a special dative case that is employed for marking the indirect object of three-place verbs. But unlike the Turkic dative, the Ossetic dative does not express a local (directional) meaning, nor does it signify the experiencer with “inverted verbs” (verbs of experience such as “to see, love, be able to” etc.) as does the dative of Nakh. The Georgian dative has a certain resemblance to the Ossetic dative in so far as it signifies the indirect object. The Circassian languages, where the oblique case, among a lot of other functions, marks the indirect object, are even less similar in this respect.

As far as these examples go, the Ossetic case system offers some points of resemblance with the Nakh and Turkic languages. The resemblance to Georgian is less salient. The noun inflection of the Circassian languages is typologically far more different.

4.14. Postpositions and prepositions.

4.14.1. The four cases that Ossetic inherited from Old Iranian had a comparatively small information value. To compensate for this, the language had recourse to periphrases consisting of postpositions combined with one of the old case forms. We have already seen that three of the cases in modern Iron – but only two in Digor – derive from adverbs which were added to the nominative as markers of syntactical relations. In the course of time, postpositional phrases were continually renewed

through grammaticalisation and semantic devaluation of independent lexical items. It is therefore difficult to give a definite list of postpositions.

4.14.2. The present-day language possesses a number of postpositions as well as a few prepositions which supplement the case forms and specify the meanings of the noun phrases.

The postpositions are of two sorts: genuine postpositions, i.e. particles which only occur in association with case forms, and nouns which are also found as independent words; among the latter we find a few verbal nouns, mainly gerunds. The majority of the postpositions belong to the latter group.

Postpositions may take markers of case and number; cf. the following examples:

bælasī sær-i “at the top (lit. head) of the tree”, *bælas-i sær-mæ* “to the top of the tree”, *bælas-i sær-æi* “from the top of the tree”; – D. *xonx-i sær-t-i* “on the tops of the mountain”;

(1) *xorz fæiaū Iæ ud ærxæssi Iæ fis-t-i sær-il* “the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep” (SE 1902, Jn. 10.11);

ia fidī cur-æi “away from his father”; *abadt iæ cur-i* “he sat down at his side”; *mæ cur-t-i niči ærbacid* “nobody came past me” (lit. “came to my surroundings”; *cur / cor* “near”);

(2) *qæd-i astæu-t-i fændag aigærstoi* “they cleared a road through (in the middle of) the wood” (example in Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 289; *astæu* “waist, middle”).

For verbal nouns used as postpositions, cp., e.g.:

(3) *kuištæn iæ raidaiæn-æi iæ kærôn-mæ* “from the beginning to the end of the work” (example in MF: II, 947; *raidaiin* “to begin”).

For gerunds used as postpositions, cp.:

gæsgæ (from *kæsin* “to look at”) “according to” (with the allat.): *prikazmæ gæsgæ* “by order”, *mænnaæ gæsgæ* “in my opinion”;

ficcægæm sentjabræj raidaigæjæ “on and after the first of September” (*raidaigæiæ* “beginning from”, ger. abl.);

næ nimaigæiæ “except, not counting” (ger. abl.; *nimaiin* “to count”).

As to the plural of local adverbs including postpositions, cf. 4.13.3.10. above)

4.14.3. Axvlediani’s grammar (1963-69: I, 282 ff.; for Digor cf. also Isaev 1966: 70 ff.) lists some 30 postpositions. Some of them are somatic terms which are used figuratively as markers of local relations; cp., e.g.:

astæu “in the midst of” (“waist, middle”), *nix-mæ* “opposite” (*nix / nix* “forehead, front, nail, claw”), *fars-mæ* “next to” (*fars* “side”), *sær* “(at the) top of” (*sær* “head”), *xuif-i*, *xuif-mæ* “inside” (*xuif / xurfæ* “belly, bowels”), *č ildim-mæ* “behind” (*č ildim / k ildum* “back”), *fæd-il / fæd-bæl* “after” (*fæd* “foot-print”), D. *finz-i* “ahead of” (*finz* “nose”) etc.

As appears from the last example, there are some differences between the dialects.

The postpositions may be put in the nominative denoting “the spot where”; cp., e.g. *donæn innæ-fars* “on the other side of the river”, *zæxx zili xuri ali-fars* “the earth turns round the sun”; *arti midæg* “in the fire” (cf. 4.13.4.2.5. above).

4.14.4. The majority of the postpositions combine with the genitive. As already said, postpositions may take markers of case and number themselves. In so far a postpositional phrase has the same structure as a complex noun phrase with a genitive modifier. Examples of this usage have already been quoted above (cf. 4.14.2).

Some postpositions may appear with more than one case according to their meaning; the semantic differences are not always easy to detect or paraphrase for others than native speakers. Thus, e.g., *midæg / medæg* (< **madyaka-*) “inside” takes either the genitive or the dative; cp., e.g.: *gollaži midæg* “in the sack” (gen.), but *duaræn midægæi kui fædæn* “when I was inside the door” (dat.; NK 1946: 125). On the other hand, we have *mid / med* (< **madya-*) “inside” as an adverb and as the prior member of complex nouns; cp. *mid-bil-ti xudin* “to smile (“to laugh inside the lips”); cp. IES: II, 113 ff.).

The postposition *ædtæ, æddæ / ændæ* “outside” (< **anta-*, an ancient instrumental because of the -æ? Cp. the abl. *ædtiæ / ændiægæi*, also used as a postposition; cf. IES: I, 104 f.) appears with the dative or the genitive; cp., e.g.: *sk’olaiæn ædtiæ* “outside the school” (dat.); *Sau denžizi ædtiæ* “beyond the Black Sea” (gen.).

As a postposition, *fars* “side” appears with the dative; cp. *donæn aci fars* “on this side of the river”, *fændagæn aci fars* “on this side of the road” (cp. IES: I, 423 f.).

The postposition *iedtæmæ (iædtæmæ; cf. MF: II, 653)* “except, apart from” may combine with any case for except the inessive and the equative (Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 285); cp., e.g.: *Gabo iedtæmæ ži nikæi bazidton* “I did not know any of them except Gabo” (nom.); *Æxsaræn iedtæmæ æz nikæmæn zaŷton* “I did not tell it to anybody except Æxsar” (dat.); *iæ fidmæ iedtæmæ nikaemæ quista* “he did not listen to anybody except his father” (all.); *iæ ræstžinad in Žabo iedtæmæ niči zoni* “nobody knows her honesty except Žabo” (Dæbe I, 22; cf. the other examples in Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 294). The personal pronouns, however, appear always in the genitive, cp. *mæni, dæui, uidoni iedtæmæ* “except me, you, them” (cf. *ibid.*: 295).

The postposition *gæron* “by, near” (reflecting the noun *kæron* “end, side, fence” < **karāna-* “end”, cf. also IES: I, 586) appears with the dative or the nominative. Cp. the nominative in *qæugæron iu digærdig xizti* “close to the village a calf was grazing” (IAA 1960: 10); *qæugæronmæ* “towards (the end) of the village”. The dative is used in (D.) *nixasæn gæronmæ ma baivaretæ* “do not bury me near the assembly place (thingstead)”.

Some postpositions denoting “approximation, closeness” appear with the allative; cp., e.g., *suadonmæ xæstæg* “near the fountain” (cf. IES: IV, 190); *ærtæ mæimæ ævvaxs* “about three months” (cp. IES: IV, 190 f. and *ibid.*: I, 206).

Postpositions denoting “absence, remoteness, difference” stand with the ablative; cp., e.g., *qaužidær / iyaugi(dær)* “unlike, in contradistinction to” (cf. IES: II, 271); *dæuæi q.* “unlike you” (as a noun meaning “difference”); *æfcaægæi falæmæ mit næ uidis* “on the other side of the pass there was no snow” (IES: I, 108). However, the dative occurs as well; cp., e.g., *xidæn falæmæ* “across the bridge” (MF: III, 1337), *donæn falæmæ* “on the other side of the river” (*falæ* < **parā* “on the other side”; IES: I, 418).

The following allatives are used as postpositions with the ablative: *ædtæmæ* “beyond”, *midæmæ* “inwards”, *uælæmæ* “upwards”, *dælæmæ* “downwards” (allatives of *ædtæ, mid, uælæ, dælæ*; cf. Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 292 ff.).

Comparatives in *-dær* used as postpositions appear either with the ablative or the nominative; cf. *xæstægdær* “closer to”, *darddær / idarddær* “farther from”, *faldær* “farther”, *æddædær / ændædær* “longer”, *dældær* “below”, *uældær* “above”, *fæstædær* “behind”, *razdær* “ahead of, before”. Cp., e.g., *Cælikkæi (abl.) razdær am niči uidi* “nobody was here before Cælykk”, but also *k’uiri (nom.) razdær* “a week ago” (Axvlediani 1963-69: I, 295).

The nominal constituent *ærd-* (< **arda-* “side, half”; cp. IES: I, 172 f.) is used like a postposition with the nominative; cp. *ardæm* “to this side”, *urdæm* “to that side” (dem. pron. *a-*, *u-* with the all. of the postpos.), *uæl-ærdæm* “upwards”, *dæl-ærdæm* “downwards”, *fal-ærdæm* “to the other side” (*falæ* “on the other side”); *læppu fæin-ærdæm akast* “the boy looked around” (Dæbe: I, 22); *bon-irdæm / bon-ærdæm* “at dawn, towards day”. In the meaning of “half, side”, the noun *ærdæg* (< **ardaka-*) is used (cf. IES: I, 172 f.).

Other postpositions with the nominative are: *ængæl(æi) / ænyæl(æi)* “awaiting, in expectation of” (*ængæl* “thought, hope”; MF: I, 156; IES: I, 163 f.); *quag / yæuægæ* “without” (meaning “want” as a noun; cp. IES: II, 319); *cux / cox* “over, across” (*bon-cuxæi* “every second day”; cf. MF: III, 1678; cp. also IES: I, 317); *dæryi* “during” (iness. of *dæry* “length”; cp. D. *dærycæ*; MF: I, 491; IES: I, 357 f.): *abon dæryi* “all of today”, but also *afæzi dæryi* “all the year round”.

4.14.5. Both Abaev (1964: 35) and Axvlediani (1963-69: I, 295 ff.) acknowledge only two prepositions for the modern language, viz. I.D. *æd-* “with” and *ænæ-* “without”. According to Isaev (1966: 74), however, the following words can be regarded as prepositions as well: I.D. *uæl* “over, on”, I.D. *dæl* “under, below”, I.D. *fæinæ* “one to each” (distributive meaning), *mid / med* “in”, *ædtæ / ændæ* “outside” (also a postposition), I.D. *fæs* “behind”. Cp. the following examples:

(4) D. *Boræmælyæ med k'ozæ Alli 'vzagæi cæydui* “the nightingale sings in the grove (*med k'ozæ*, nom.) in a shifting language” (Maliti Geuærgi, 1957: 18, the poem *ʒidʒil*).

(5) D. *fæs xuærgæ ba ændæ donmæ baxistæncæ ma fæs yædmæ ranæxstærcæncæ*.

<i>fæs xuærgæ</i>	<i>ba ændæ</i>	<i>donmæ</i>	<i>baxistæncæ</i>	<i>ma</i>
after having-eaten (ger.)	but outside	to-river (all.)	they-passed and	
<i>fæs yædmæ</i>	<i>ranæxstærcæncæ</i>			
behind	to-wood (all.)	they-went		

“when they had eaten, they passed over to the other side of the river and made their way behind (to the other side of) the wood” (example in Isaev 1966: 74).

Other examples are:

fæs-æxsævær “after the evening meal”, *fæs-duar* “behind the door”, D. *ændæ-duar* “outside the door”, *mid-qæu* “in the village”, *mid-zærdæi* “in the heart”, *dæl-ævzag* “under the tongue”, *dæl-gom-mæ* (all.) “with the face downwards”, *dæl-fæd-t-æm* (all. pl.) “at the feet of”, *uæl-bæx-æi* (abl.) “from the horse, astride”;

(6) *æmæ Satanaii uæl-qus alæuuid* “and he (Batraz) stood beside (lit. “above the ear”) of Satana” (NK 1946: 206).

As appears from the examples above, nouns preceded by prepositions can take case endings or appear in the nominative. An exception to this is the preposition *æd-*, which cannot be combined with a case ending. In this respect, *æd-* behaves like the case endings. Itself, which as a rule cannot be connected with other case endings. The use of this preposition is to express “comitativity”, which is particularly common to Digor (cf. 4.13.4.7.3).

The privative preposition *ænæ* appears either with the nominative or the ablative of the noun. Proper nouns preceded by *ænæ* appear in the nominative, personal pronouns in the genitive; cp., e.g.:

(7) *ænæ nom* (nom.) *nici is* “nothing is without a name” (a proverb);

(8) *ænæ adæm* (nom.) *cæræn næi* “without (the) people there is no life (not to live)” (a proverb);

- (9) *æne niſsæi* (abl.) *cæræn næi* “without hope there is no life (not to live)” (a proverb);
- (10) *æne Zauribeg* (nom.) *nici bakænzistæm* “without Zaurybeg we will (can) do nothing”;
- (11) *ci kænſinæn, kuid cærſinæn æne dæu* (gen.) “what shall I do, how shall I live without you” (examples in Axvlediani 1963-66: I,296 ff.).

The privative *æne* often occurs with the gerund, which may then also be put in the ablative in the sense of “without doing” (cf. 3.4.4.1. above); cp., e.g.:

- (12) *Murtaz æne-xongæ* (nom.) *nigguirsti* “Murtaz burst in uninvited” (*xonin* “to invite”; IES: IV, 214);
- (13) *æne-zurgæie* (abl.) *zævgar axuissidisti* “they lay down for a while without speaking” (*zurin* “to speak”, IES: I, 400; *zævgar* “enough, properly, much”, *ibid.*, 395).

4.15. Conclusions

Ossetic is predominantly, but not exclusively, a postpositional language. While the prepositions constitute a closed class of a few members only, easily identifiable as to their etymology, the class of postpositions is open, i.e., the stock of postpositions is continually changing as nouns or adverbs – through semantic deflation – lose their lexical meaning and become markers of space, time or mood; the boundary between these nominal forms and the postpositions is thus, at least in part, floating.

The etymologies of the adessive and allative cases indicate that postpositions formerly followed the nominative. To all appearances the language later tended towards the generalisation of the genitive as the case governed by postpositions.

While the case endings can normally not be combined with one another, the postpositions and most of the prepositions can in principle be inflected for case.

Unlike the situation of Old Aryan, the prepositions and postpositions are not identical with the orientational-aspectual preverbs.

The predominance of postpositions is a typological feature that Ossetic shares with its Turkic and Caucasian neighbour languages. Old Iranian and Vedic used both prepositions and postpositions; the same auxiliary word, used to specify the meaning of oblique cases, either follows or precedes the noun. In Classical Sanskrit the majority of such auxiliaries are put behind the nominal case.

In Sogdian and Khotanese the same word may be used as either a preposition or a postposition; in addition both languages have “circumpositions”, i.e. combinations of both devices. Detailed studies seem to be needed to account for them (cf. Gauthiot/Benveniste 1914-29: II, 163 ff.; Gershevitch 1961: 232 ff.; Gercenberg 1981: 297 f.). In Yaghnōbi postpositions predominate, but there are also a few inherited prepositions, besides those borrowed from Tajiki (cf. Xromov 1972: 53 ff.).

The Pamir languages are also mixed, but prepositions tend to be used to express simple locative meanings (cf. Payne in Schmidt 1989: 434; Édél'man 1990: 242); this feature is reminiscent of Ossetic and Yaghnōbi. As in Ossetic many postpositions are of nominal origin. In Pashto both prepositions and postpositions are used, generally in the same way as in the Pamir languages (cf. Trumpp 1873: 281; Penzl 1955: 40 f.).

Ossetic is thus in agreement with Old Iranian and its East Iranian sister languages using both prepositions and postpositions. The preponderance of postpositions in Ossetic must be seen in the light of their origin as independent nouns that were added to case forms, mostly the genitive, which function as modifiers according to the general rules of premodification. As already pointed out (cf. 4.14.4. above), postpositional

phrases are structurally akin to complex noun phrases. Whatever the impact of adjacent languages may have been, the predominance of postpositions is therefore essentially explicable as an internal Ossetic development.