Language Change in Time and Space

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Heterogeneity within a language in terms of variation, while compatible with regularity and structure, seems to be the most exciting area of linguistic studies. In fact the true regularity of linguistic patterns in individual speaker and speech community can be seen in on-going changes inherent in all languages. This approach will bring two axes of 'synchrony' and 'diachrony' together again.

So, a language in a given time and in a given space is an aspect of inter-relation of linguistic variation and change in a continuum of linguistic differences in which the varieties are related 'dynamically' and they represent successive stages of development not only synchronically but also historically. So, with a 'synchronic cut' across a community to be a situation of inherent variation is in fact the equivalent of a 'diachronic cut' through history: (petyt 1980:195).
The following piece of research on the language of an ancient era of Iran leads me to agree with the mentioned framework.

The history of the era, Sistan, also known as Sagastan, Sagaztan and Sajastan, goes back to 3000 B.C. The people of saka were Iranian and they were the inhabitants of the east, northeast of Iran, the central Asia and Khotan. Apparently some Saka tribes later inhabited in south eastern part of Iran, known at present time as Sistan.

Saka language is a branch of old Iranian languages Fig (1)

![Language Tree Diagram]

From old Saka, except certain words in Greek, Latin and Indian texts, no evidence is left. Old Saka structurally was quite related to Madian and old Persian as they were close to their common ancient ancestor. Middle Saka, Khotani and Tokhaz were the branches of
eastern Middle Iranian languages. From Middle Saka lots of material concerning Medicine, Commerce and Stories in Brahmanian writing are left. They are mostly translated from Sanskrit and Tibetan. Middle Saka is considered as the ancestor of Pamir dialects.

There are ample evidence concerning variations which extend from Middle Iranian right through to present day, and they have an on-going geographical and social distribution in time and in space.

They are as follows:

a. Vowel raising

It seems that a strong vowel raising process has started to operate some time from Middle Iranian period to Modern Persian.

\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
  a & o \rightarrow u \\
  \\
  i & e & o \\
  & a & \hat{a}
\end{array} \]

Fig 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-Iranian</th>
<th>Sistani</th>
<th>Mod. Persian</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dōst</td>
<td>dōst ~ dust</td>
<td>dust</td>
<td>'friend'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rōd</td>
<td>rōd ~ rud</td>
<td>rud</td>
<td>'river'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gōš</td>
<td>gōš ~ guš</td>
<td>guš</td>
<td>'ear'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rōz</td>
<td>rōz ~ ruz</td>
<td>ruz</td>
<td>'day'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čo(b)</td>
<td>čo(b) ~ čub</td>
<td>čub</td>
<td>'wood'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fig. 3

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{i} \\
\text{e} \\
\text{a} \\
\text{u} \\
\text{o} \\
\text{č}
\end{array}
\]

### Fig. 4

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{i} \\
\text{e} \\
\text{a} \\
\text{u} \\
\text{o} \\
\text{č}
\end{array}
\]

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<th>Meaning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>xona ~ xone</td>
<td>xune</td>
<td>'house'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>lona ~ lone</td>
<td>lune</td>
<td>'nest'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a₂. a → e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mēš</td>
<td>mēš ~ miš</td>
<td>miš</td>
<td>'sheep'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*deval</td>
<td>devâl ~ divâl</td>
<td>divâr</td>
<td>'wall'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### a₃. e → i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a₃. e → i</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>č</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**1909**