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Counterfactual Mood in Iranian[1]

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According to a widespread belief, very few languages have a dedicated marker or mood for counterfactuality, i.e. a marker which can convey only counterfactual meanings (LAZARD 1998; 2006). Among such languages typologists usually cite only non-Indo-European languages as Turkana (Nilotic), Ewondo (Bantu), classic Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan) etc. In this paper I will show that some Indo-European (namely a few modern Iranian and most modern Indo-Aryan languages) also have a dedicated counterfactual mood. I will explore counterfactual moods in various Iranian languages and will argue that the dedicated counterfactual formations have appeared as a result of Turkic (Oghuz) or modern Indo-Aryan influence. The data presented in the paper can question the typological rarity of languages with a dedicated counterfactual marker or mood.

1. Counterfactual meaning

Counterfactual meaning can be defined as the meaning which is contrary to the actual state of affairs. A conditional construction with an irreal protasis is a standard example of counterfactuality. Consider the example (1) from Persian: the real state of affairs is that they took the axe from him and it saved "our" lives; the counterfactual meaning is that they had not taken the axe from him and he hacked all of us.

(1) *agar*   *tabar-rā*   *az*   *dast-aš*   *na-gerefte.bud-and*
     if   axe-OBL   PREP   hand-3SG.ENCL   NEG-take.PLUPERF-3PL
     hame-yemān-rā   *tekke*   *pāre*   *karde.bud*
     all-1PL.ENCL-OBL   piece   piece   do.PLUPERF.3SG
     "If they had not taken the axe from him, he would have hacked all of us to pieces."
     (S. HEDĀYAT, *Katja*, quoted from http://www.sokhan.com/hedayat/katia.pdf)

Counterfactuality is the core meaning of the broad semantic domain of irrealis (LANDER / PLUNGJAN / URMANČIEVA 2004; PLUNGIAN 2005). However, COMRIE (1986) states that there are no languages with a narrow dedicated counterfactual marker (i.e. a marker which can convey only counterfactuality)[2] and LAZARD (1998; 2006) argues that very few languages have such a marker. LAZARD (1998) cites Turkana (Nilo-Saharan, Nilotic), Ewondo (Benue-Congo, Bantoid), Yoruba (Benue-Congo, Yoruboid) and classic Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan). VAN LINDEN / VERSTRAETE (2008) add Chukchi (Chukotko-Kamchatkan), Hua (Trans–New Guinea), Ika (Chibchan-Paezan), Martuthunira (Pama-Nyungan), Somali (Afro-Asiatic, Cushitic) and Kolyma Yukaghir (Yukaghir) to the list.

[2] It is not essential whether the counterfactual marker is one morpheme (e.g., a counterfactual affix), or a set of morphemes which forms a grammatical category (for example, a specific counterfactual mood).

In most languages, counterfactual meaning is a part of the semantic repertoire of some other "broad" markers. LAZARD (1998) argues that usually counterfactual markers are primarily associated with the domain of possibility / probability or past (including, according to Lazard's hypothesis, such values as prospective, desiderative, debitive, inceptive, evidentiality, habitual, subjunctive and optative).

However, VAN LINDEN / VERSTRAETE (2008: 1868) state that "contrary to popular belief, neither past tense nor imperfective aspect is a universal feature in the combinations of markers used to signal counterfactuality: the only type of element that is found in every combination is a modal element marking some type of potentiality, which can be combined (i) with past-tense markers, (ii) with a combination of past tense and aspectual (perfect or perfective) markers, or (iii) just with aspectual markers". Interestingly, several reference grammars of Iranian languages postulate an "irreal" mood which is very close to a dedicated counterfactual mood. In this paper, I will concentrate on the expression of counterfactuality in Iranian languages. The main goal of the paper is to show whether Iranian languages have a dedicated counterfactual mood and if they do, whether it is a special feature of the group or a result of the external influence of other non-Iranian languages.

2. The most frequent strategies to convey counterfactuality in Iranian

According to the reference grammars and specific studies, most Iranian languages use non-modal markers to express counterfactuality. Usually the main function of these markers is related to aspect or taxis, or more precisely, to past habitual or pluperfect.

A grammatical form which is usually used to convey past habitual (and is often called imperfect) can express counterfactual meanings in Western Iranian, e.g., in Persian (with forms of the type *mi-kard*, PANOVA 2004; WINDFUHR / PERRY 2009), Talysh (MILLER 1953: 152–153), Tat (GRJUNBERG 1963: 83),[3] as well as in Eastern Iranian, e.g., in Yaghnobi and Pashto. Below I will give examples from Yaghnobi and Pashto. In Yaghnobi the imperfect (called "past continuous" by Xromov), formed by a verbal stem with special person / number affixes and the prefix *a-*, is mainly used to convey past habitual (2) and counterfactuality (3) (XROMOV 1972: 32). The imperfect is also used for expression of an assumption about a situation in the past (with *navót* "else", (4)).

(2) *ax   sahár   ajáxišt*
     he   early.morning   wake.up.IMPF.3SG
     "He used to wake up early in the morning." (XROMOV 1972: 32)

(3) *agár divári anížimišt   aláks,   γarm.avírimišt*
     if   outside go.out.IMPF.1SG walk.IMPF get.warm.IMPF.1SG
     "If I had gone out for a walk, I would have gotten warm." (ibid.)

(4) *navót abiγópoš-mox*
     else   catch.up.IMPF.3PL-1PL
     "Else they would have caught us." (ibid.)

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3   Talysh and Tat examples of the imperfect in counterfactual meaning will be given in sections 7. and 6., respectively.

Pashto has a so-called "past narrative" (formed by the particle *bə* and a finite verb in the past), which usually expresses habitual in the past and is also used in the apodosis of irreal conditional constructions (GRJUNBERG 1987: 158–159). Cf. the following example, where the past narrative form is marked with bold:

(5) ka   obo   wəṛay   wāy   no
     if   water   take.PART.PST.M   be.OPT   then
     mor   ta   **bə**   me   dzawāb   **war-kāwə**
     mother POST   PRTCL   1SG.ENCL.OBL answer   PREF-do.PST.3SG.M
     "If the water had taken me, what would I have said to my mother." (ibid.)

A grammatical form which is usually used to convey pluperfect can express counterfactuality in Western Iranian, e.g., in Persian (PANOVA 2004; WINDFUHR / PERRY 2009), in the central dialect of the Tat language (GRJUNBERG 1963: 89), and in some Pamir languages, e.g. in Shughni-Rushani group (ÈDEL'MAN 1987: 328; EDELMAN / DODYKHUDOEVA 2009: 814). Cf. the example from Persian in (1), where the pluperfect *karde bud* is used in the conditional construction to mark counterfactuality.

There are a few Iranian languages which have a dedicated or close to dedicated counterfactual mood. Below I will examine the use of counterfactual moods in Sogdian, modern Iron Ossetic, Pashto, Tat, Talysh and Parači.

3. Sogdian (Eastern Iranian)

Among the extinct Iranian languages, the only candidate for a language with a dedicated counterfactual mood is Sogdian, with its so-called "irrealis 2 mood". It is formed by special person/number endings which are added to the past stem, -ʾw for the 1SG and -ʾy for the 3SG (other person forms of the mood are not attested). This mood appears to be only used in counterfactual contexts. However, it should be noted that only a few examples are mentioned in the Sogdian grammatical studies (GERSHEVITCH 1954: 123; YOSHIDA 2009: 284; ISXAKOV 1977: 169-170). Below two examples are given where the irrealis 2 is used in the 1SG (6) and in the 3SG (7).

(6) ʾrty   ʾyw   wʾtδʾr   wʾnʾkw   Lʾ   βyrt   βʾ-y
     and   one   breathing   such   NEG   found.PST.POT   be.PRS-3SG
     ZKZY   γnδʾnym mʾtwh   ʾWZY   ʾBY   Lʾ   wmʾt-ʾy
     which   another mother   or   father NEG   be-IRR2.3SG
     "and such beings are not to be found, who were not mothers or fathers (etc.)
     to someone else" (P2, 147 sqq., GERSHEVITCH 1954: 123)

(7) ʾXRZY   prtr   ʾWZY   ʾkwty   ʾPZY   ʾWZY   kʾsy
     and   better   either dog   and   either pig
     wδwh   wmʾt-ʾw   ʾYKZY   twʾxky
     wife   be-IRR2.1SG   than   yours
     "then I would rather be a dog's or a pig's wife than yours"
     (Ancient Letter III, 23 sq., GERSHEVITCH 1954: 123)

The insufficient number of examples for the irrealis 2 does not allow us to state that Sogdian has a dedicated counterfactual mood.

4. Iron Ossetic (Eastern Iranian)[4]

Ossetic has five moods which — according to their main functions — can be labeled indicative, subjunctive, optative, imperative and counterfactive. The counterfactual mood is formed from the past stem by a special set of person / number affixes. For transitive verbs, an affix *-t-* is inserted between the stem and the personal / number affixes. The paradigm of the counterfactive is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Paradigm of the counterfactual mood in Iron Ossetic

	Transitive verb: *kænən* "to do"			Intransitive verb: *kafən* "to dance"	
	SG	PL		SG	PL
1	*kod-t-ain*	*kod-t-aikkam*	1	*kafyd-ain*	*kafyd-aikkam*
2	*kod-t-aiš*	*kod-t-aikkat*	2	*kafyd-aiš*	*kafyd-aikkat*
3	*kod-t-aid*	*kod-t-aikkoj*	3	*kafyd-aid*	*kafyd-aikkoj*

4.1 Previous research on the Ossetic mood

According to manifold reference grammars (ABAEV 1959; 1964; BENVENISTE 1959; AXVLEDIANI 1963; BAGAEV 1965; THORDARSON 1989) and specific studies of Ossetic modality (KOZYREVA 1956; TEXOV 1970; TAKAZOV 1992), the counterfactual mood in Iron Ossetic mainly conveys irreal condition, irreal desire, possibility and assumption. LAZARD (1998a) states that all the uses of the counterfactual mood (past optative in his terminology) can be summed up by irreal past in hypothetical sentences ("l'irréel passé en phrase hypothétique"). However, Lazard's study is based only on the Ossetic texts published by CHRISTENSEN (1921; about 300 sentences) and the examples cited in the reference grammars. In the next section, I will argue that in modern Iron Ossetic the counterfactual mood is not restricted to past tense reference and can be used in the irreal present and future as well. The analysis presented below is based on data collected during my fieldwork in the Republic of North Ossetia–Alania in 2007–2009[5] and examples found in our corpus of modern Ossetic literary texts (4.6 million tokens) and in our corpus of modern Ossetic spoken texts (about 1000 sentences).[6]

4.2 Counterfactive in modern Iron Ossetic

The counterfactual mood in Ossetic can be used both in various kinds of subordinate clauses and independently. In complex sentences, it is found in conditional, concessive and purposive constructions.

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[4]   The Ossetic language has two main dialects, namely Iron and Digor. The overwhelming majority of Ossetes speak the Iron dialect, and the literary language is based on it. This section deals with modern Iron Ossetic.

[5]   I express my gratitude to all my consultants, Ossetic native speakers.

[6]   Both corpora were collected by Oleg Belyaev, Julia Mazurova and myself in 2008 and 2009. The corpus of spoken texts is glossed and partly available at: www.ossetic-studies.org/en

In conditional constructions, it is obligatorily used in case of a counterfactual condition, both in the protasis and the apodosis, as in (8), exemplifying a counterfactual condition in the past while the clauses with a counterfactual condition in the present (9) and the future (10) are also possible.

(8) *žnon*   *æž*   *ænæmæng-æj*   *a-səd-ain*
     yesterday   I   obligatory-ABL   PREF-go.PST-CNTRF.1SG
     šemæ   *Wællag Kurtatkom-mæ*   *važdžə-tæ*   *mæm*
     3PL.COM   PN-ALL   guest-PL.NOM   1SG.ENCL.ALL
     kʷə   *ne*   *ʿrba-səd-aikkoj*   *wæd*
     if   NEG   PREF-go.PST-CNTRF.3PL   then
     "I would have come with them to Verhniy Kurtatkom[7] yesterday
     if the guests had not visited me."

(9) *Xetægkatə K'osta*   *ma*   *ægaš*   *kʷə*
     PN   EMPH   alive   if
     wəd-aid   *wæd*   *əl*   *nər*
     be.PST-CNTRF.3SG   then   3SG.ENCL.SUPER now
     səd-aid   *šædæ fænzaj* *až-ə*
     go.PST-CNTRF.3SG   hundred fifty year-GEN
     "If Kosta Khetagurov[8] had been alive now,
     he would have been one hundred and fifty years old."

(10) *važdžə-tæ*   *næm*   *abon* *næ,* *fælæ* *rajšom* *kʷə*
     guest-PL.NOM   1PL.ENCL.ALL today   NEG   but   tomorrow if
     ʿrba-səd-aikkoj   *wæd*   *cən*   *fər*   *argævšt-aikkam*
     PREF-go.PST-CNTRF.3PL   then   3PL.ENCL.DAT sheep   slaughter.PST-
                                                                      CNTRF.1PL

     "If the guests had come to us not today, but tomorrow,
     we would have had time to slaughter the sheep."

The counterfactive is obligatorily used in generalized concessive-conditional constructions (11) and in non-generalized concessive-conditional constructions (12).[9] In generalized concessive-conditional constructions counterfactive is used only in the subordinate clause, while in non-generalized concessives it is used both in the main and in the subordinate clause. The only restriction for the use of the counterfactive in concessive constructions is that the event described by the main clause should be in the past. While the non-generalized concessive-conditional construction in the past is a clear example of counterfactual meaning, the meaning of the generalized concessive construction in the past is factual, cf. (11), which means "He used to hide in different places and every time we found him there."

(11) *kæmdærriddar*   *ba-mbæxšt-aid*   *wæd-dær-iw*   *æj*
     wherever   PREF-hide.PST-CNTRF.3SG   then-FOC-ITER   3SG.ENCL.GEN
     alə   *xatt*   *dær*   *šš-ard-t-am*
     every   time   FOC   PREF-find.PST-TR-PST.1PL
     "Wherever he would hide, we always found him."

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7   A village in Prigorodnyj region, North Ossetia, Russia.
8   Kosta Khetagurov (1859–1906): founder of the Ossetic literature, poet, artist, sculptor.
9   This terminology follows XRAKOVSKIJ (2004; to appear).

(12) *kʷə*   *dæ*   *fed-t-aid,*
      if   2SG.ENCL.GEN   PREF.see.PST-TR-CNTRF.3SG
      wæd-dær   *dən*   *nisə*   *žaγ-t-aid*
      then-FOC   2SG.ENCL.DAT   nothing   say.PST-TR-CNTRF.3SG
      "Even if he had seen you, he would not have told you anything." (GURIEV 2004: 267)

In purposive constructions the counterfactive is used only in subordinate clauses and only if
the event described by the main clause is in the past. When used in purposive clauses, the
counterfactive implies that the situation did not take place. Hence, in purposive
constructions, the meaning of the mood under discussion is counterfactual. Cf. (13):

(13) *faron až*   *a-səd-tæn*   *Afrika-mæ*
      last year   PREF-go.PST-PST.1SG   Africa-ALL
      sæmæj   *ba-kašt-ain*   *pəl-t-æm*
      in.order.that PREF-look.at.PST-CNTRF.1SG elephant-PL-ALL
      "Last year I went to Africa to look at the elephants
      (however I did not manage to see them / *and I managed to see them)."

The counterfactive is obligatorily used in complement clauses which express a counter-
factual situation. Cf.:

(14) *æž*   *æj*   *žon-ən*   *dæ*   *bənat-ə*
      I   3SG.ENCL.GEN know.PRS-PRS.1SG   POSS.2SG   place-GEN
      kʷəd *ba-kod-t-ain*   *wəj*
      how   PREF-do.PST-TR-CNTRF.1SG   3SG.GEN
      "I know what I would have done if I were you."

Thus in complex sentences the primary function of the mood under discussion is the
expression of counterfactual meaning. The only case where it does not express counter-
factuality is the generalized concessive-conditional construction in the past.

When used independently, the Ossetic counterfactive conveys an irreal desire (15), a
hypothetical internal (16) and external (17) possibility in the past and an assumption about
the situation in the past (18).

(15) *mænæn*   *kʷə*   *wədaid*   *bažər-tæ*
      I.DAT   if   be.CNTRF.3SG wing-PL.NOM
      "If only I had wings!"

(16) *də*   *š-išt-aiš*   *šædæ*   *kilæ-jə*
      you.SG PREF-lift.PST-CNTRF.2SG   hundred   kilogram-GEN
      "Could you lift a hundred kilo [at that time]?"

(17) *mad*   *æmæ*   *ma*   *jæ*   *fəd*   *a-gʷərd-t-oj*
      mother   and   EMPH   POSS.3SG father   PREF-look.for.PST-TR-PST.3PL
      æmæ   *ma*   *jæ*   *kæsæj*   *šš-ard-t-aikkoj*
      and   EMPH   3SG.ENCL.GEN   how   PREF-find.PST-TR-CNTRF.3PL
      [The boy was kidnapped by an eagle.] "And his mother and father looked for him,
      but how (lit. "from where") could they find him?"[10]

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10   From the oral text "The boy and the eagle", 10.1, http://ossetic-studies.org/corpus/iron/boy-eagle-en.pdf

(18) *čəžg-əl*   *səd-aid*   *avd*   *až-ə,*
     girl-SUPER   go.PST-CNTRF.3SG   seven   year-GEN
     læppu-jəl   *ta*   *farašt,*   *je*   *dæš*   *až-ə*
     boy-SUPER   CONTR   nine   or   ten   year-GEN
     "The girl was approximately seven years old
     and the boy was nine or ten years old." (AXVLEDIANI 1963: 253)

Irreal desire and hypothetical possibility in the past are counterfactual meanings as they
mean, respectively, a desire which is impossible to carry out and an event in the past where
a possibility was not realized. An assumption about a situation in the past is close to the
irrealis domain, but it is not counterfactual. Examples of the counterfactual mood being
used for expressing an assumption about a situation in the past can be found in modern Iron
texts. However, some native speakers never use this mood to convey an assumption, and
without a special context they consider examples like (18) ungrammatical.

The counterfactual mood in Ossetic is obligatory with the particle of necessity $q^w am\alpha$ "it is
necessary" if the event is in the past (the event can be either factual or counterfactual). For
example:

(19) *æž*   *q^w amæ*   *a-səd-ain*   *æmbərd-mæ*
     I   must   PREF-go.PST-CNTRF.1SG   meeting-ALL
     "I had to go to the meeting" (and I went there (factual) /
     but I did not go there." (counterfactual)

The Ossetic reference grammars and some studies of Ossetic modality (KOZYREVA 1956;
TEXOV 1970; TAKAZOV 1992; LAZARD 1998a) mention a habitual function of the
counterfactual mood. Cf.:

(20) *iw*   *qælæš*   *fe-šqiwd-t-aid*   *čər-ə*   *æxšæn-æj,*
     one   voice   PREF-jump.PST-TR-CNTRF.3SG   heap-GEN   middle-ABL
     nə-dzdzənæžt-aid,   *jæ*   *fæd-əl*
     PREF-cry.PST-CNTRF.3SG   POSS.3SG   trail-SUPER
     jæ   *æmzəx-æj*   *iwwəldær*   *a-jšt-aikkoj*
     POSS.3SG   agreement-ABL   everyone   PREF-take.PST-CNTRF.3PL
     "One voice used to raise from a group of people and started to cry,
     others used to start to cry after it." (TAKAZOV 1992: 42)

According to our corpus of published Iron texts, this meaning used to be expressed by the
counterfactive in the 19th century (and probably before) and in the beginning of the 20th
century. Examples of such use of the counterfactive can be found in the Nart epic and in
fiction of the beginning of the 20th century (for example, in *Gigojə k^wəzæn* by Arsen
Kotsojty, 1892–1944). In modern spoken Iron Ossetic the counterfactual mood is never
used for habitual in the past, and my consultants consider sentences like (20) to be
ungrammatical.

4.3 The counterfactual mood in Ossetic: Conclusion

The counterfactual mood in modern Ossetic is used in the protasis and the apodosis of irreal conditional constructions, in concessive constructions (if the event described by the main clause is in the past), in the subordinate of purposive constructions (if the event is in the past and if the event described in the subordinate has not been accomplished). Independently, the counterfactual mood conveys an irreal desire, a hypothetical internal and external possibility in the past, an assumption about the situation in the past and an obligation in the past (with the particle of necessity $q^w amæ$). The meanings which prevent us from considering this mood a narrow dedicated mood for expressing counterfactuality only are concession in the past in generalized concessive-conditional constructions, an assumption about the situation in the past and obligation in the past. However, Ossetic is evidently close to a language with a dedicated counterfactive.

5. Pashto (Eastern Iranian)

In Pashto, counterfactual meanings are mainly conveyed by two grammatical forms: by the past narrative (which was considered in section 2. and which is not a dedicated counter-factual marker) and by the so-called "conditional-optative mood". The conditional-optative has two forms: imperfect and perfect. The imperfect consists of a specific participle (labelled potential participle in the grammars); the perfect consists of a past participle and the potential participle of the verb "to be" (*wāy*). In contrast to other moods, the con-ditional-optative does not have person / number forms (but is combined with pronouns or NPs). According to grammars and specific studies (among others KALININA 1954; 1961; 1966; GRJUNBERG 1987; ROBSON / TEGEY 2009), this mood can express only counter-factual meanings: irreal desire and irreal wish, irreal obligation (after the modal particle *bāyád* "it is necessary"), counterfactual condition and counterfactual consequence (in conditional constructions), counterfactual situation in a relative clause. The examples for each case are given below (the conditional-optative forms are marked with bold):

Irreal desire:

(21) *káški* *zoy* *me* *akram-xā́n* *ham* *stási* *sara*
       if.only son POSS.1SG PN also you.PL.OBL POST
       wāy *aw* *də* *watán* *də* *xidmát* *də.pāra*
       be.OPT and PREP motherland PREP service for
       ye *mlā* **taṛə́le** **wāy!**
       3SG.OBL loins bind.PART.PST.F be.OPT
       "If only my son Akram-khan had been with you
       and wanted to serve his motherland!" (GRJUNBERG 1987: 174)

Counterfactual condition and counterfactual consequence:

(22) *ka qutb-xā́n* **wāy** *no xāmaxā́ bə kor ta* **rā-tlə́y**
       if PN be.OPT then willy-nilly PRTCL house POST PREF-go.OPT
       "If it had been Kutb-khan, he would have definitely come in the house."
       (KALININA 1976: 73)

Irreal obligation (with *bāyád* "it is necessary"):

(23) *də*   *wādá*   *marāsím*   *ham*   *bāyád* *də*   *šāhzādá*
      PREP   wedding.OBL ceremony   also   must   PREP   shahzade
      pə   *wātan*   *ke*   *pər*   *dzāy*   ***šə́wi***   ***wāy***
      PREP   motherland   POST   PREP   place   become.PART.PST.M   be.OPT
      "The wedding ceremony should have taken place in shahzade's motherland
      (but it did not take place)." (GRJUNBERG 1987: 174)

Counterfactual situation in the relative clause:

(24) *bəl*   *kāsíd*   *byā*   *na*   *wu*   *če*   *mirojə́n*   *ta*
      other   messenger   more   NEG   be.PST.3SG   which   PN   POST
      ye   *hāl*   ***wá-ra-staw-əl-ay***   ***wāy***
      POSS.3SG   state   PREF-PREF-deliver-INF-PART.PST.M   be.OPT
      "There was no other messenger
      who could inform Mirojan about his state of health." (KALININA 1961: 225)

The Pashto conditional-optative can be used in the potential construction, which consists of
a verb in potential participle form and the auxiliary *kedəl / šwəl* "to become", e.g. the
potential construction of the 1SG present indicative from the verb *taṛəl* "to bind": *taṛə́lāy
šəm* "I can bind". Used in the conditional-optative, the potential forms mean either
hypothetical possibility in the past (25) or, in combination with the negative particle *na*,
impossibility of the situation to be accomplished in the present or the past (26) (GRJUNBERG
1987: 179).[11]

(25) *ka.číri*   *mā*   *lāmbú*   *wahə́lāy*   *šwə́la*   *no*   *də*   *sind*
      if   I.OBL   swimming   bit.POT   become.PST.F then   PREP   river
      hā́ɣe   *ɣāṛe*   *ta*   *bə*   *me*   *tir*   ***šə́way*** ***wāy***
      that   shore.OBL POST   PRTCL   1SG.ENCL.OBL past   become.POT be.OPT
      "If I knew how to swim, I could swim to the other side of the river."
      (GRJUNBERG 1987: 179)

(26) *zə xo na-**šə́way** təllə́y, stə́ray šə́way yəm — ka stə́ray šə́way ye aw na-šə́wāy tə́llāy,*
      no yaw ās bə dar ta paydá kṛəm če pər spor še aw zmuž sara wlāṛ še
      "I cannot go, I am tired. — If you are tired and cannot go, I'll find a horse for you
      so that you could mount on it and go with us" (ibid.)
      zə   *xo*   *na-šə́w-āy*   *təll-ə́y*
      I.NOM   EMPH.PRTCL NEG-become-OPT   go-OPT
      "I cannot go."

The last case, where the conditional-optative is used in the meaning of impossibility, is the
only non-counterfactual use of the mood. If compared to Ossetic, Pashto is a bit closer to a
language with a dedicated counterfactual mood. In the next three sections I will examine
Tat, Talysh and Parači, which have a dedicated counterfactive.

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[11]   In the case of impossibility, the indicative can be used. However, GRJUNBERG (1987: 179) does not specify
the semantic difference between the potential construction in the indicative and in conditional-optative.

6. Tat (Western Iranian)

Tat has two verbal forms for expressing counterfactual meanings: the imperfect (with primary aspectual values) and the past irreal mood. The imperfect (which is formed from the simple past by the prefix *mi- / mÿ- / mu-*) is typically used in the main clause of counterfactual conditional constructions (GRJUNBERG 1963: 83; 1963a). Cf. the following examples of the use of the imperfect in counterfactual consequence in the past (27), present (28) and future (29).[12]

(27) d *ægær mæn xund-ǽn-xund-ǽn   næ-raft-ǽn   bÿrÿm —*
        if   I   sing.PST-INF-sing.PST-INF NEG-go.PST-INF be.PST.1SG
        yaváš.yaváš raft-æn   bÿrÿm   doušánæ   migÿ́ftÿm
        quiet   go.PST-INF be.PST.1SG hare   catch.IMPF.1SG
        "If I had not been walking while singing, but had been walking quietly,
        I would have caught the hare." (GRJUNBERG 1963: 83)

(28) d *yæ   dærzǽn bir-ǽn   bu —   hÿ́zÿm pláša midúxtim*
        one   needle   be.PST-INF be.PST.3SG now   cloak sew.IMPF.1PL
        "If I had had a needle, we would have mended the cloak by now." (ibid.)

(29) d *qambáyn bir-æn   bu —   æ   pšin   bæ'dǽ marástim...*
        combine   be.PST-INF be.PST.3SG PREP midday after   finish.IMPF.1PL
        "If we had had a combine harvester, we would have finished in the afternoon..."
        (ibid.; according to Grjunberg's recordings, the sentence was said in the morning)

However, forms of the imperfect are not dedicated counterfactual markers as they also can convey aspectual meanings (mainly habitual in the past). For example:

(30) d *išúnæ   xúbæ mÿlk-há bu   bæ   Kičréx,*
        they.OBL   good   land-PL be.PST.3SG PREP PN
        unjǽyæ   mikáštim
        that.place.OBL sow.IMPF.1PL
        "They had good lands in Kičrekh, we used to sow it." (ibid.)

The past irreal mood (which is formed by the past stem with a suffix *-æn* and a finite past form of the auxiliary *biræn* "to be") conveys only counterfactual meanings (GRJUNBERG 1963: 83–84). Grjunberg mentions the following functions of this mood: counterfactual desire and wish (31), counterfactual condition (27)–(29) and consequence (32). As one can see in (27)–(29), the past irreal can be used in counterfactual conditions referred to past, present or future. The use of the past irreal in the apodosis of conditional constructions is rare. Usually, the imperfect is used in the main clause of the conditional construction.

(31) d *káškæ mæn næ-raft-ǽn   bÿrÿm   bæ   arsí*
        if.only I   NEG-go.PST-INF be.PST.1SG PREP wedding
        "If only I had not gone to the wedding!" (GRJUNBERG 1963: 83–84)

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12   Hereafter, *d* stands for the dialect of the villages Dagkuščo and Arisk'uš (central dialect), and *x* stands for the dialect of the village Khaltan.

(32) d *yæ   paprús   bir-ǽn   bu —   kǽšir-ǽn   bÿrÿm*
        one   cigarette be.PST-INF be.PST.3SG pull.PST-INF   be.PST.1SG
        "If I had a cigarette, I would smoke it." (ibid.)

According to GRJUNBERG (1963), the irreal mood can also be used with the modal word *gæræk* "it is necessary" to express counterfactual necessity. For example:

(33) x *imu   sæhv   sæxtǽy-im: ævvǽl   gærǽk   raft-ǽn   birim,*
        we   mistake do.PST-1PL first   necessary   go.PST-INF   be.PST.1PL
        værf   šund-ǽn   birim,   bæʿdǽ   amar-ǽn   birim,
        snow   throw.PST-INF   be.PST.1PL then   go.PST-INF   be.PST.1PL
        ÿzgǽ   kar   sæxt-ǽn   birim
        other   business   do.PST-INF   be.PST.1PL
        "We made a mistake: first we had to throw the snow off the roof
        and then to do other things." (GRJUNBERG 1963: 84)

The past irreal in Tat, which is used only in counterfactual contexts, can be considered a dedicated counterfactual mood.[13]

7. Talysh (Western Iranian)

In Talysh, counterfactual meanings can be conveyed by two grammatical forms, namely, the imperfect and the past conditional (MILLER 1953; PIREJKO 1976). The imperfect is formed from a stem by a prefix *a-* and a special set of person / number affixes (1SG *-im*, 2SG *-iš*, 3SG *-i*, 1PL *-imon*, 2PL *-ion*, 3PL *-in*). It can appear in counterfactual conditional constructions, both in the apodosis and the protasis, as in (34) (MILLER 1953: 152–153).

(34) *i   sor   bəna   ǽɣin   ǽšim,*
      one   year   before   there   go.IMPF.1SG
      əw-ən   čịmị   ton   ǽwoj
      he-then   POSS.1SG side   come.IMPF.3SG
      "If I had gone there a year ago, he would have come to me." (PIREJKO 1976: 350)

However, the imperfect is not a dedicated counterfactual marker as it can convey aspectual meanings, usually past habitual according to the examples in the grammars (cf. the examples in MILLER 1953; PIREJKO 1976; YARSHATER 1996; SCHULZE 2000).

The past conditional mood is formed by the past participle and the verb *be* "to be" in the conditional mood (MILLER 1953: 165). It is only used for counterfactual meanings: counterfactual condition (35) and counterfactual desire or wish (36).

(35) *ägär   ba   sa   haisa   hịšta   baim*
      if   PREP PREP donkey   sit.PART.PST   be.COND.1SG
      az   čo   rüž   gin   bā   bim
      I   four   day   missing be.PART.PST   be.PST.1SG
      "If that time I had been sitting on the donkey,
      I would have been missing four days ago." (MILLER 1953: 216)

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[13]   Note that Judeo-Tat of Daghestan lacks a dedicated counterfactual mood (AUTHIER 2010).

(36) *ägär*   *katto*   *ba*   *na-bai*
      if   village.elder   be.PART.PST   NEG-be.COND.3SG
      "If only the village elder had not been present that time..." (MILLER 1953: 216)

According to the examples in the grammars (MILLER 1953; PIREJKO 1976) and Miller's texts (MILLER 1930), forms of the past conditional are dedicated counterfactual markers.

8. Parači[14]

According to EFIMOV (2009: 101), Parači has an irreal mood[15] (formed by a verb in the past indicative and the particle *bå*, which is used only in the irrealis mood), which can be considered a dedicated counterfactual mood as it expresses only counterfactual meanings in the past and, more rarely, in the present. For example:

(37) *ágar*   *tån*   *teč*   *rušán*   *bi*   *bå,*
      if   your   eyes   bright   be.PST.3SG   IRR
      tō   *thō*   *naɣón*   *ná-xur̥*   *bå*
      you   scorched   bread   NEG-eat.PST.3SG   IRR
      "If your eyes had been clear, you would not have eaten the burnt bread..." (ibid.)

9. Dedicated counterfactive in Iranian: external influence or internal development?

In this paper, I hope to have shown that some Iranian languages (namely Tat, Talysh and Parači) have a dedicated counterfactual mood. In some other Iranian languages (Ossetic and Pashto), moods which are very close to a dedicated counterfactive have been found. However, no special counterfactual markers or moods are attested in Old Iranian and the only example of a Middle Iranian language with such a mood is Sogdian. Therefore, I believe that the existence of a dedicated counterfactive in some Iranian languages can hardly be a special feature of the Iranian group.

In my view, the most likely hypothesis about the origin of the counterfactive in Tat and Talysh advances the influence of the neighboring languages as the main factor. Though in both languages the counterfactive is formed from Iranian language material, I propose that this mood in Tat and Talysh has appeared due to their contacts with the West Oghuz branch of the Turkic languages.[16] In all West Oghuz languages (as well as in the overwhelming majority of other Turkic languages) counterfactuality is expressed by the past conditional mood, which is formed by the special affix *-se* / *-sa* and the past copula *ydi* / *idi.* The past conditional cannot convey any other meanings. Below I give examples of the Turkish past conditional in counterfactual condition in the past (38) and future (39) and independently, where it conveys counterfactual desire (40).

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[14]   Most likely Western Iranian according to EFIMOV (2009).
[15]   However, this mood is not mentioned in KIEFFER 2009.
[16]   Note that GRJUNBERG (1963a: 144-145) considers the Tat past irrealis together with other "complex" verbal forms are an innovation which has appeared at least in part due to the Turkic influence. For other Turkic features in Tat see for example GRJUNBERG 1961.

(38) *Pervin   kol-um-a   gir-me-se-ydi   düş-ecek-ti-m*
     PN   hand-1SG.POSS-DAT   take-NEG-COND-P.COP   fall.down-FUT-PST-1SG
     "If Pervin had not taken my hand, I would have fallen down." (KONONOV 1956: 530)

(39) *Vakt-im   ol-sa-ydı   ben   de   yarın*
     time-1SG.POSS   be-COND-P.COP   I   also   tomorrow
     siz-ler-e   katıl-ır-dı-m
     you-PL-DAT   join-AOR-P.COP-1SG
     "If I had time I would have joined you tomorrow
     (but I don't, and therefore I won't)" (GÖKSEL / KERSLAKE 2005: 427)

(40) *Ah,   bir   imtihan-lar-ın-ı   kazan-sa-ydı!*
     Ah   one   exam-PL-3SG.POSS-ACC   win-COND-P.COP
     Gece   yatı-sı   lise-ye   meccanı
     night   capability-3SG.POSS   lyceum-DAT   free.of.charge
     yaz-ıl-abil-se-ydi!
     write-PASS-PSB-COND-P.COP
     "Ah, I wish he had passed his exams!
     If only he could enter the lyceum free of charge!" (KONONOV 1956: 533)

Ossetic is in contact with Northwest Caucasian (or Abkhazo-Adyghean), South Caucasian (Kartvelian), Nakh languages and one Turkic language, namely Karachay-Balkar. There are no dedicated counterfactual markers in Abkhaz-Adyghe, Nakh and Kartvelian. For example, Adyghe uses a combination of the pluperfect (-*ʁa-ʁe*) with the conditional suffix (-*me*) to express counterfactual condition (ROGAVA / KERAŠEVA 1966). However, the pluperfect with conditional (-*ʁa-ʁe-me*) can appear in real condition as well (KUZNECOVA 2009: 307). Chechen has a special marker -*ēhāra* to express counterfactual condition (MACIEV 1961: 608; NICHOLS 1994), but it is also used in real conditions; cf. the following example, where the verbal form with -*ēhāra* is marked with bold:

(41) *Ch'aara   **iecnihwaara,**   dika   xir   du*
     fish   buy:CVant:CVirr:WP   good   be:FUT   D:be:PRS[17]
     "If you buy a fish, it would be good." (GOOD 2003)

Georgian, the main Kartvelian language, uses the conditional 1 and 2 in counterfactual conditional constructions in the apodosis and pluperfect (if the state of affairs is in the past) or conjunctive (if the state of affairs is in the present or future) in the protasis (ARONSON 2005). However, these forms also have other, non-counterfactual uses (Boeder 2010).

The only language which neighbours to Ossetic and has a dedicated counterfactive is Karachay-Balkar (Turkic, Kypchak). Karachay-Balkar has a past conditional mood (formed by the affix -*sa* / -*se* and the past copular *edi*) the only function of which is the same as in Oghuz Turkic languages, viz. the marking of counterfactuality. However, Karachay-Balkar is mainly in contact with the Digor dialect of Ossetic. In contrast to Iron Ossetic, the past optative in Digor Ossetic has not developed to the mood close to a dedicated counterfactive, and even in the spoken language it still preserves aspectual meanings (which are almost lost in modern Iron Ossetic, as shown in section 4.2), cf. (42). Therefore, the development of

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[17]   The glosses are borrowed those of the source.

the past optative in Iron Ossetic to the mood close to a dedicated counterfactive can hardly be explained by Turkic (Karachay-Balkar) influence. I consider the counterfactual mood to be an internal development of Iron Ossetic.

(42) ***Adtajwoncæ***   *adæn*   *ɣe*   *wæd*   *adæm*   *næ-bal*   *ba-jzad-ajdæ*
be.CNTRF.3PL   people   so   then   people   NEG-more   PREF-stay.PST-CNTRF.3SG
"There used to be people [here], now there are no people any more."[18]

The existence of the Pashto conditional-optative and the Parači irreal mood is most probably the result of the influence of geographically close Indo-Aryan languages. A dedicated counterfactual mood is typical for the Indo-Aryan languages, where it has appeared since the Middle Indian period, cf. counterfactual mood in Pali (OBERLIES / PISCHEL 2001: 250; ELIZARENKOVA / TOPOROV 2003: 97–98). In most of the modern Indo-Aryan languages counterfactuality is expressed by a dedicated counterfactual mood, which in reference grammars is usually called past conditional and which generally can not convey any other meanings beside counterfactuality.[19]

10. Conclusions

In this paper I have argued that some Iranian languages (Tat, Talysh and Parači) have a dedicated counterfactive and some (Ossetic and Pashto) have moods which are very close to a dedicated counterfactual mood. However, a dedicated counterfactive is not a special feature of the Iranian language group and the existence of the counterfactual mood in most of the cases is explained by external influence. It has been established that a narrow dedicated counterfactive is a special feature of two language groupings geographically close to the Iranian languages, namely, Turkic and Indo-Aryan. The existence of a dedicated counterfactive in Tat and Talysh is the result of the influence of neighbouring Turkic languages; the origin of the Pashto and Parači counterfactual mood is explained by the influence of the Indo-Aryan languages. The existence of dedicated counterfactual moods in some Iranian and in most of the Turkic and Indo-Aryan languages can question the typological rarity of languages with a dedicated counterfactive. However, further exploration of other language families is needed.

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[18]   This is the beginning of a story recorded by myself in 2008 in Akhsau village, Iraf region, North Ossetia.
[19]   A brief review of the counterfactive in Indo-Aryan can be found in MASICA 1991.

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Abbreviations

ABL	ablative	EZF	ezafe	PLUPERF	pluperfect
ACC	accusative	F	feminine	PN	name
ALL	allative	FOC	focus	POSS	possessive
AOR	aorist	FUT	future	POST	postposition
CNTRF	counterfactual	GEN	genitive	POT	potential
COM	comitative	IMPF	imperfect	PREF	prefix
COND	conditional	INF	infinitive	PREP	preposition
CONTR	contrastive	IRR(2)	irrealis (2)	PRS	present
COP	copula	ITER	iterative	PRTCL	particle
CV	converb	M	masculine	PSB	possibilitive
CVant	anterior (non-finite verbal suffix)	NEG	negation	P., PST	past
CVirr	irrealis (non-finite verbal suffix)	NOM	nominative	SG	singular
D	gender prefix	OBL	oblique	SUPER	superessive
DAT	dative	OPT	optative	TR	transitive
EMPH	emphatic	PART	participle	WP	witnessed past
ENCL	enclitic	PL	plural		

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