



ARDESTĀNI

ARDESTĀNI, the dialect spoken in the small town of Ardestān (local name *Asō*), belongs to the group of the so-called Central Dialects, but it seems to occupy a transitional position between the northern dialects (from *Kāšān* to *Naṭanz*) and the southern ones (from *Nā'īn* to *Yazd*). According to some informants, the different quarters of the town exhibit slight sub-dialectal variations, but this requires investigation.

The consonants correspond closely to those of spoken Persian, but the vowel system is much more developed: There are 15 oral vowels (a ä ā e ē ö o ō i ī ü ü u ū) and 4 nasal vowels (ã i õ u). The latter may appear at the beginning of a word (a rather unusual feature): *ãyk* “mouth.” At the end of the word, they are pronounced with a sort of glottal stop and rounding of the lips. Iranian *ū* is represented by *ü* (*dür* “far”), but Ir. *u* by *o* (*por* “son” from *puθra-*, without compensatory lengthening); *au* becomes *o* (*ro* “day”) and *ai* becomes *ē* (*dēb* “devil”); remarkable is Ir. *ā* > *ū* (also in *Kaša'ī* in all positions (there are some exceptions in the first syllable) and not only before *n* or *m* as in colloquial Persian and in other dialects: *ūt* “flour” (*Kaša'ī ūrt*, NPers. *ārd*), *mūr* “snake” (*Kaša'ī*, NPers. *mār*), *kūt* “knife” (NPers, *kārd*); Ir. *č* > *ǰ* (*ǰē* “under,” NPers. *zīr*; *rǰ-* “to pour”, NPers. *rīz-*); initial *ǰ-* is retained (*ǰen* “woman,” NPers. *zan*), as well as *v-* (*vu* “wind,” NPers. *bād*) and equally *y-* (*ye* “barley,” NPers. *ǰow*); *fr* > *r* (*oroš-* “to sell,” NPers. *forūš-*); Ardestāni initial *h-* corresponds either to NPers. *x-* (*hūk* “earth,” NPers. *xāk*) or is secondary (*holle* “eagle”); remarkable is also the disappearance of *r*, mainly before a consonant, with a slight lengthening of the preceding vowel (*dād* “pain,” *gām* “warm,” *kād* “he did”).



Nouns have no distinction of gender. The plural marker is stressed *-(h)ā*, occasionally *-ūn/-ū* (possibly borrowed from colloquial NPers.). Nouns are made indefinite with a suffix *-ē* and optionally the numeral “one:” *ye kūt-ē* “a (certain) knife.” Ardestāni has no *ežāfa* construction and this represents the old state of the Central Dialects: *dot pādešā* “the king’s daughter.”

The personal pronouns are: *me, to, ni, hom u, šum u, niyā* (3 sing. and 3 plur. are actually demonstratives). Their enclitic forms are: *-em, -et, -eš, -emō, -etō, -ešō* (the latter are used not only as possessives, but also to indicate the agent in the ergative construction, see below). Numerals have no special features, but *ye(k)* when used as an indefinite article may be superseded by *i (tā)*; moreover, *p > b* (as in some other dialects) in *b uñ* “five,” *b uze* “fifteen,” *bāje* “fifty.”

The verbal system is based on two stems, past and present, which may be divided into four classes according to the past stem endings and the construction of past tenses: I. tr. with consonant stem (*kād, ker-* “to do”); II. tr. with vowel stem (*kišo, kiš-* “to draw”); III. intr. with consonant stem (*kat, k-* “to fall”); IV. intr. with vowel stem (*tāso, tās-* “to be afraid of”). In classes I and III, the present stem can not be deduced from the past stem. Ardestāni verbs have two modal affixes: (1) *be-* (with changing vowel according to vowel harmony), which is used in the subj., inv., pret., perf. and pluperf.; (2) *e-*, a durative marker, which is used in the pres. and imf. The person performing the action of the verb is indicated by (1) two sets of endings: (a) pres. and subj. of all verbs: *-ō, -ē, -e, -em, -eyn /-in, -en*; (b) pret. and imf. of intr. verbs: *-ō, -oy /-ey, nil, -oyñ /-eyñ, -āñ* (*-n* of 2 plur. is particularly remarkable: related dialects have either *k /g /y* or *d /t*); (2) pronominal elements in the past tenses of tr. verbs: (a) affixed (= enclitic pronouns, see above), (b) infix (slight modification of the encl. pron.). Moreover, the perfect is formed with the past participle (= past stem + *-e*), and the pluperfect is formed by adding the past tense of the verb “to be” to the perf. Examples for class I verbs (all forms given are 1 sing.): pres. *e-ker-ō*, subj. *be-ker-ō*, pret. *be-m-kād*, imf. *e-kād-em*, perf. *be-m-kāde*, pluperf. *be-m-kāde bo*; class III: pres. *e-k-ō*, subj. *be-k-ō*, pret. *be-kat-ō*, imf. *e-kat-ō*, perf. *be-katāhō*, pluperfect *be-katebāō* (perf. has some irregularities). As in many other dialects, some verbs exhibit an obligatory *-t-* infix of uncertain function and origin in the pres. and imf. (ancient durative element?): *e-t-oroš-ō* “I sell.” Many irregularities occur, such as loss of final consonants, and some common verbs may lose their modal affix in the perfect: *vūt-eš = be-š-vūt* “he said” (the pronominal element is suffixed).



Irregular verbs: “to be” has a pres. stem *b-* (2 sing. is *hi* and its subj. stem is *bā-*; “to become” has a pres. stem *b-* (pres. 1 sing. *e-b-ō*, subj. *be-b-ō*). The verb “to come” has a *t-* prefix: pres. I sing. *t-or-ō* (and no modal affix; the stem in *r-* is probably from the imperative *bor-*; this type of imv. is attested in many dialects; cf. also Parthian *wr*). The verbs “to have” and “to know” lack the prefix *e-* in the present, and the subj. is formed with the subj. of “to be:” *bā-bō* (cf. NPers. *dāšte bāšam*) and *zom-bō*.

There is no verb meaning “to be able.” For this concept a periphrastic expression is used: *teqa-m-evune* “I can” (lit. “my blade cuts”). Thus, *teqa-m-evunekebekeṛ* “I can do.” The verb “to want to” is *piyā, piy-*. Resultative verbs are: *āxo, ax-* “to be (sitting)” and *viro, vir-* “to be (lying).”

The passive is formed by adding the suffix *-iy-* to the present stem: *e-riṣ-iy-ō* “I am poured,” *bi-riṣ-iy-ō* “I was poured.” Transitive verbs in the past tenses follow the ergative construction. The personal affix is then displaced from the verb, which has no marker (= 3 sing.), to a preceding word, e.g. *be-t-kāde* “you have done,” but to *nikār-etbe-kāde* “you have done that work.” Negation is expressed by *na-/n-* which is incompatible with the modal affix *be-*, but *e-* is retained: *be-m-kād* “I made,” but *na-m-kād* “I did not make;” *n-e-ker-ō* “I do not make,” but subj. *na-ker-ō*.

The formation of the infinitive is borrowed from NPers. Verbal preverbs are roughly the same as in other dialects: *bā(r)* “out” (*bā šo* “to go out”); *de(r)* “down” (*de kat* “to fall”); *he*, no particular meaning (*do = he do* “to give”); *ve* “upwards, back” or with no particular meaning (*giret* “to take”: *ve giret* “to take back;” *kād* “to do”: *ve kād* “to open”). Causative verbs are formed by adding the affix *-en /-n* to the present stem: *tās-* “to be afraid”: *tās-en* “to frighten.” As in many dialects, pronominal affixes may be added to a verbal form to express an object, even in the past tenses of tr. verbs, in which case the verbal form may have two personal affixes: pres. *tāre-š* “he brings it,” subj. *be-t-xor* “that I eat you,” perf. *be-š-eš-vūt* “he told him.”

Ardestāni has some postpositions: *dā* “in,” *rā* “for,” and circumpositions: *az . . . dā* “from,” *pēš . . . dā* “before,” etc. The most important suffixes of derivation are the diminutive suffix *-eču* (*or-eču* “little mill, kitchen mill”) and the abstract suffix *-gi* (*dus-gi* “friendship”). Interesting is *-in /-(e)yn*, which forms names of trees (*enṣil-in* “fig tree,” *fesse-yn* “pistachio tree,” *halg-in* “peach tree,” *uz-in* “walnut tree,” *vādum-eyn* “almond tree”).



Some lexical items of interest may be noted here: “ant” *muǰale*; “ashes” *xol*; “autumn” *fāiz*; “bazaar” *vāǰū*; “bridge” *pēlu*; “to burn” *sünnah*; “cat” *meli*; “cheap” *āǰō*; “cocoon” *ǰāǰ*; “daughter” *dot*; “dog” *kue*; “flame” *lorč*; “fox” *lu*; “Friday” *āanne*; “gutter of a roof” *solgeh*; “to hear” *erešnīd*; “hole” *hilok*; “hungry” *veše*; “lentil” *marǰi*; “moth” *viye*; “mother” *mār*; “mouth” *āyk*; “naked” *peti, ur*; “parted” (N Pers. *ǰodā*) *viyu*; “pasture” *lart*; “puppy” *kotre*; “quince” *ve*; “rice” *varang*; “sister” *xuār*; “snake” *mūr*; “son-in-law” *zumū*; “spider” *tanandu*; “step of a staircase” *owčen*; “tear(s)” *barme*; “walnut” *uz*; “weed” *dīlā*; “willow” *vi*.

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