



AZARBAIJAN VII. THE IRANIAN LANGUAGE OF AZARBAIJAN

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Āḍarī (Ar. *al-āḍarīya*) was the Iranian language of Azarbaijan before the spread of the Turkish language, commonly called Azeri, in the region. The currency of Āḍarī in Azarbaijan during the first centuries of the Islamic period is attested by contemporary sources. The earliest reference to Āḍarī is the statement by Ebn al-Moqaffa' (d. 142/759), quoted by Ebn al-Nadīm (*Fehrest*, p. 13), to the effect that the language of Azarbaijan was Fahlawī (*al-fahlawīya*) "pertaining to Fahla," and that Fahla was the region comprised of Isfahan, Ray, Hamadān, Māh Nahāvand, and Azarbaijan. A similar statement, on the authority of Ḥamza Eṣfahānī, and obviously deriving from the same source, occurs in Yāqūt's *Mo'jam al-boldān* (III, p. 925, s.v. "Fahlaw"), and also in K̄vārazmī's *Mafātīḥ al-'olūm* (ed. van Vloten, pp. 116-17).

Next to Ebn al-Moqaffa's the oldest reference to Āḍarī, though no name is given the language, occurs in Balāḍorī's *Fotūḥ al-boldān* (p. 328; cf. Qazvīnī, *Bīst maqāla* I, p. 145), composed in 255/869. He quotes the word *ḥān*, meaning "house" or "caravanserai" (Ar. *ḥā'er*), as belonging to the "language of the



people of Azarbaijan.” (This word shows the development in Ādarī of Middle Iranian *x* to *h*, see below.) The oldest mention of the specific term Ādarī occurs in Ya‘qūbī’s *Ketāb al-boldān*, composed in 276/891, p. 272; the population of Azarbaijan is described here as a mixture of Iranian Ādarī (*al-‘ajam al-ādarīya*) and old Jāvedānis (*al-jāwedānīya al-qedam*). By these terms he apparently means the Muslim Azarbaijanis and the Ḳorramdīnis or Jāvedānis, the followers of Jāvedān and Bābak, the neo-Mazdakite leaders who had held sway in Azarbaijan under al-Ma‘mūn. It thus appears that the term Ādarī was applied to both the population of Azarbaijan and their language.

The next testimony is the statement by Mas‘ūdī (d. 345/956) which points to the original unity of the language of the Iranians and its later differentiation into separate languages, such as Fahlawī, Darī, and Ādarī—obviously the most prominent Iranian dialects in his estimation (*Tanbīh*, p. 78). Next we have the statement of Ebn Ḥawqal (d. ca. 981 /371) that “the language of the people of Azarbaijan and most of the people of Armenia (*sic*; he probably means the Iranian Armenia) is Iranian (*al-fāresīya*), which binds them together, while Arabic is also used among them; among those who speak *al-fāresīya* (here he seemingly means Persian, spoken by the elite of the urban population), there are few who do not understand Arabic; and some merchants and landowners are even adept in it” (p. 348). Despite the exaggeration concerning the spread of Iranian languages into Armenia and the currency of Arabic in Azarbaijan, the statement clearly attests to the fact that the language of Azarbaijan in the 4th/10th century was Iranian. Moqaddasī (d. late 4th/10th cent.) also affirms that the language of Azarbaijan was Iranian (*al-‘ajamīya*), saying that it was partly Darī and partly “convoluted (*monqaleq*)”; he means no doubt to distinguish between the administrative lingua franca, i.e., Darī Persian, and the local dialects (*Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 259). Further he says that the language of the Azarbaijanis “is not pretty . . . but their Persian is intelligible, and in articulation (*fi’l-ḥorūf*) it is similar to the Persian of Khorasan” (p. 378). Again he must mean Darī Persian, which then, as now, must have been current in the urban centers of Azarbaijan.

An anecdote preserved by Sam‘ānī (*Ansāb*, s.v. Tanūkī) concerning Abū Zakarīyā Kāteb Tabrīzī (d. 502/1109) and his teacher Abu’l-‘Alā’ Ma‘arrī refers again to the vernacular of Azarbaijan in the 5th/12th century. While Kāteb Tabrīzī was in Ma‘arrat al-No‘mān in Syria, he met a fellow-countryman and conversed with him in a language which Abu’l-‘Alā’ could not understand. When Abu’l-‘Alā’ asked him to identify the language, Kāteb told him it was the



language of the people of Azarbaijan (read *al-āḍarīya* in the Hyderabad ed., III, p. 93; and *al-aḍarbījīya* [unpointed] in the Leiden ed.; cf. A. Kasravī, *Āḍarī*, p. 13 n. 1). The statement of Yāqūt (d. 626/1229) to the effect that “The people of Azarbaijan have a language which they call *al-āḍarīya*, and it is intelligible only to themselves” (*Moʿjam al-boldān* I, p. 172) makes it clear that *Āḍarī* was still current in Azarbaijan on the eve of the Mongol invasion.

From Zakarīyā b. Moḥammad Qazvīnī’s report in *Āṭār al-belād*, composed in 674/1275, that “no town has escaped being taken over by the Turks except Tabrīz” (Beirut ed., 1960, p. 339) one may infer that at least Tabrīz had remained aloof from the influence of Turkish until the time of Abaqa Ḥamdallāh Mostawfī writing in the 740/1340s calls the language of Marāḡa “modified Pahlavi” (*pahlavī-e moḡayyar*, as in Dabīrsīāqī’s reading, *Nozhat al-qolūb*, Tehran, 1336 Š./1957, p. 100; the reading *pahlavī-e mo’arrab* “arabicized Pahlavi” in Le Strange’s edition, p. 87, is not likely). Mostawfī also calls (ibid., p. 62) the language of Zanjān “straight Pahlavi” (*pahlavī-e rāst*) and the language of the Goštasfī province on the western side of the Caspian (i.e., north of the Persian Ṭāleš and south of Šīrvān) a Pahlavi close to the language of Gilān (ibid., p. 92). By Pahlavi he, like Ebn al-Moqaffa’, obviously means in a general way the vernacular of northwestern and central Iran (an area coinciding with ancient Media). This language, however, was not, contrary to Marquart’s view (Markwart, *Ērānšahr*, p. 132 n. 5) the same as Parthian, as is evident from the written remains and surviving dialects of *Āḍarī* (see below).

These various testimonies, in spite of their being occasionally imprecise and uncritical, indicate that the population of Azarbaijan spoke a major Iranian language, termed *Āḍarī* after the name of the region. It formed a group with the dialects of Ray, Hamadān, and Isfahan and remained the prevalent language of Azarbaijan until the 8th/14th century and probably for some time thereafter.

The spread of Turkish in Azarbaijan.

The gradual weakening of *Āḍarī* began with the penetration of the Persian Azarbaijan by speakers of Turkish. The first of these entered the region in the time of Maḥmūd of Ġazna (Ebn al-Aṭīr [repr.], IX, pp. 383ff.). But it was in the Saljuq period that Turkish tribes began to migrate to Azarbaijan in considerable numbers and settle there (A. Kasravī, *Šahrīārān-e gomnām*, Tehran, 1335 Š./1956, III, pp. 43ff., and idem, *Āḍarī*, pp. 18-25). The Turkic population continued to grow under the Ildegozid atabegs of Azarbaijan



(531-622/1136-1225), but more particularly under the Mongol il-khans (654-750/1256-1349), the majority of whose soldiery was of Turkic stock and who made Azarbaijan their political center. The almost continuous warfare and turbulence which reigned in Azarbaijan for about 150 years, between the collapse of the Il-khanids and the rise of the Safavids, attracted yet more Turkic military elements to the area. In this period, under the Qara Qoyunlū and Āq Qoyunlū Turkmen (780-874/1378-1469 and 874-908/1469-1502 respectively), Ādarī lost ground at a faster pace than before, so that even the Safavids, originally an Iranian-speaking clan (as evidenced by the quatrains of Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn, their eponymous ancestor, and by his biography), became Turkified and adopted Turkish as their vernacular.

The Safavid rule (905-1135/1499-1722), which was initially based on the support of Turkish tribes and the continued backing and influence of the Qezelbāš even after the regime had achieved a broader base, helped further the spread of Turkish at the detriment of Ādarī, which receded and ceased to be used, at least in the major urban centers, and Turkish was gradually recognized as the language of Azarbaijan. Consequently the term Ādarī, or more commonly Azeri, came to be applied by some Turkish authors and, following them, some Western orientalis, to the Turkish of Azarbaijan (see *ET*¹⁻², s.v. “Ādharī”).

Ādarī survivals.

These are of three kinds: (1) words, phrases, poems, and scattered verses, recorded in various written sources; (2) the present-day dialects which continue Ādarī, spoken mainly on the periphery of Azarbaijan to the south and southeast, but also in isolated pockets in the north and the center; and (3) vocabulary borrowed from Ādarī into the Turkish of Azarbaijan. The credit for first bringing together a collection of Ādarī survivals belongs to Aḥmad Kasravī (d. 1324 Š./1946; see *Ādarī yā zabān-e bāstān-e Ādarbāygān*, Tehran, 1304 Š./1925). He also sketched the Ādarī background and a history of the gradual spread of Turkish in Azarbaijan. Although his linguistic observations and methods can not always be supported, his general conclusions were essentially valid and dispelled a widespread notion that no information was available on the original language of Azarbaijan beyond Turkish. (See the reflection of his research in *Īslām Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. “Āzerī,” where *Āzerī-Fārisī lehcesi* “Iranian Azeri dialect” is distinguished from *Āzerī-Türk lehcesi* “Turkish Azeri dialect”.) Later, other Ādarī survivals were detected.



1. *Āḍarī* in written sources. These include the following: (1) A sentence in “the language of Tabrīz” in Ḥamdallāh Mostawfī’s *Nozhat al-qolūb* (ed. Dabīrsiāqī, p. 98). (2) A sentence in the “Tabrīzī” language and two sentences attributed to Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn of Ardabīl, two double distichs (*dobaytīs*) probably by him, another *dobaytī* apparently in the language of Ardabīl, and one in the language of Kalkāl, all of these in the *Ṣafwat al-ṣafā* of Ebn Bazzāz, a contemporary of Shaikh Ṣadr-al-dīn, the son of Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn, and therefore of the 8th/14th century (Bombay ed., 1329/1911, pp. 25, 107, 191, 220). (3) Eleven double *dobaytīs* by Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn, and therefore apparently in the language of Ardabīl, in the *Selselat al-nasab-e Ṣafawīya* of Shaikh Ḥosayn, a descendant of Shaikh Zāhed Gīlānī, the mentor (*morād*) of Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn (Berlin, 1343/1924-25, pp. 29-33). (4) A macaronic *ḡazal* by Homām Tabrīzī (d. 714/1314) in Persian and a local language which must be that of Tabrīz (see M. Moḥīṭ Ṭabāṭabā’ī, “Dar pīrāmūn-e zabān-e fārsī,” *Majalla-ye āmūzeš o parvareš* 8/ 10, 1317 Š./1938, p. 10; M. Ḥ. Adīb Ṭūsī, *NDA Tabrīz* 7/3, 1334 Š./1955, pp. 260-62). This specimen differs, however, from the sentence in Tabrīzī given by Ebn Bazzāz with respect to one important phonological feature: In Homām’s poem, the enclitic pronoun of the second person singular is *-t*, while in Ebn Bazzāz’s sentence it is *-r* (see below). (5) Two anonymous *qaṣīdas* in a manuscript written in 730/1329-30 and preserved in the Aya Sofia library in Istanbul (see Adīb Ṭūsī, *ibid.*, 10/4, 1337 Š./1958, pp. 367-417); the dialect of these, judging from their phonology and some of the vocabulary which can be read with certainty appears to belong to the north-central Persian Azarbaijan, probably the Tabrīz-Marand region (see below). (6) One *ḡazal* and thirteen *dobaytīs* by Maḡrebī Tabrīzī (d. ca. 809/1406-07; see Adīb Ṭūsī, *ibid.*, 8/12, 1335 Š./1956, pp. 121-27). (7) A text probably by Māmā ‘Eṣmat, a mystical woman-poet of Tabrīz (d. 9th/15th cent.), which occurs in a manuscript, preserved in Turkey, concerning the shrines of saints in Tabrīz (see M. Nawwābī, *ibid.*, 7/1, 1334 Š./1955, pp. 41-44; cf. Adīb Ṭūsī, “Fahlawīyāt-e Māmā ‘Eṣmat wa Kašf-i be-zabān-e āḍarī-eṣṣelāḥ-e rāžī yā šahrī,” *NDA Tabrīz* 8/3, 1335 Š./1957, pp. 242-57). (8) Three poems in the dialects of Kamsa and Qazvīn, quoted by Ḥamdallāh Mostawfī in *Nozhat al-qolūb* which, although not belonging to Azarbaijan in the narrow sense of the term, should be grouped with the other remnants of *Āḍarī* in accord with the classification of the modern Iranian dialects of the Qazvīn and Zanjān areas. These poems consist of a *dobaytī* by Abu’l-Majīd Bāygānī in the dialect of an environ of Qazvīn; two *dobaytīs* by Jūlāha of Abhar, apparently a contemporary of Mostawfī, in the dialect of Abhar, a town in Kamsa, and a fragment of nine *dobaytīs*, by a certain Uyanj or Utanj, in the dialect of Zanjān. The text of all



three is extremely corrupt (E. G. Browne, *JRAS*, 1900, pp. 738-41). (9) Two *dobaytīs* by Kašfī, a *ġazal* and seven *dobaytīs* by Ma‘ālī, five *dobaytīs* by Ādam, and seven by Kālīfa Šādeq from a *jong* (a manuscript of personal selections) found in Ṭāleš, and another *jong* from the Kalkāl area (Kasravī, *Ādarī*, 5th ed., pp. 57-61). Information is lacking concerning their authors and their dates of composition, but linguistically they are all close to the verses of Shaikh Šafī. (10) Ten words from the language of “Aḏarbāḏakān” in contrast to Persian, quoted in an old manuscript of Asadī Ṭūsī’s *Loġat-e fors* in the Malek Library (no. 5839) (Š. Kīā, “Kohnatarīn dastnevīs-e “Logat-e fors”-e Asadī Ṭūsī”, *MDAT* 3/3, 1335 Š./1956, pp. 4-5; idem, *Ādarīgān: āġāhīhā-ī dar bāra-ye ġūyeš-e ādarī*, Tehran, 1354 Š./1975). (11) Two short *ġazals*, five lines each, by Badr Šīrvānī (*Dīvān*, ed. A. H. Rahimov, Moscow, 1985, pp. 665f.) in the language of “Kanār Āb,” in a local dialect of Šīrvān and possibly the mother tongue of the poet who was born in Šamākī. The language of these poems is almost identical to that of Shaikh Šafī-al-dīn’s *dobaytīs* (see below); notice *čāman* “my,” *-r*, the 2nd singular enclitic pronoun (read *mehr-ər* “your love,” cf. *ġam-ər* “your sorrow”), *až* “from,” *vī* “without,” *kar-*, the present stem of “to do,” *vāč-*, the present stem of “to say.”

It should be noted that the final section of Rūhī Anārjānī’s 11th/17th-century *Resāla*, a literary miscellany, entitled “On the Terms and Phrases of Ladies, Grandees, and Dandies of Tabrīz” which has been assumed by a number of scholars to be in Ādarī dialect (Abbās Eqbāl, “Yak sanad-e mohemm dar bāb-e zabān-e ādarī,” *Yādgār* 2/3, 1324 Š./1945, pp. 43-50; M. Moġdam [Moqaddam], *Iran Kūda* 10, 1327 Š./1948, pp. 1-18; Sa‘īd Nafīsī, ed., “Resāla-ye Rūhī Anārjānī,” *FIZ* 2, 1333 Š./1954, pp. 329-72; Y. M. Nawwābī, *NDA Tabrīz* 9, 1336 Š./1957, pp. 221-32, 396-426; M. J. Maškūr, *Naẓar-ī ba tāriḳ-e Āḏarbāyjān wa āṭār-e bāstānī wa jam‘iyatšenasī-e ān*, Anjoman-e Āṭār-e Mellī, Tehran, 1349 Š./1971, pp. 221ff.; M. Mortazawī, *Zabān-e dīrīn-e Āḏarbāyjān*, Tehran, 1360 Š./1981, p. 35), bears no relationship to Ādarī, but as W. B. Henning ingeniously realized (“The Ancient Language of Azarbaijan,” *TPS*, 1954-55, p. 176 n. 5) refers to a vulgar form of New Persian, and actually attests to the continued currency of this language in Tabrīz even in the sixteenth century.

Of the written remains of Ādarī, the *dobaytīs* of Shaikh Šafī-al-dīn are the most important: They are relatively old, their linguistic area and their author are known, and they are accompanied by a paraphrase in Persian which helps their understanding. Despite Ardabīl’s location at the eastern edge of Azarbaijan, in view of its significance both before and after the advent of



Islam, its language must have been one of the more important dialects of Āḍarī. Before it fell into the hands of the Arabs, Ardabīl was the *madīna*, i.e., the metropolis, of Azarbaijan; it was the center of its fiscal administration and the seat of the Sasanian *marzbān* (Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ al-boldān*, p. 325; Yāqūt, *Moʿjam-al-boldān* I, p. 197) and was confirmed as the capital of the region by Ašʿat b. Qays during ʿAlī’s caliphate (Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, p. 329). Some three centuries later Ebn Ḥawqal (*Šūrat al-arʿ*, p. 334) still mentions it as the center and the largest city of Azarbaijan (cf. Moqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 375); Eṣṭakrī (*Masālek*, p. 181) refers to it as the largest city, the seat of the government (*dār al-emāra*), and the military encampment (*moʿaskar*) of the region (see further Qodāma b. Jaʿfar, *Ketāb al-ḵarāj*, p. 244 and Ebn Rosta, *Aʿlāq*, p. 106).

2. *Words borrowed from Āḍarī into Azeri Turkish.* These include *dardažar* “ailing” and **kušn* “field”, which occur in Shaikh Šafi’s *dobaytīs* (see Kasravī, *Āḍarī*, p. 41). Kārang (*Jahān-e aqlāq* 4, 1956, pp. 84ff.) notes a number of Tati words used also in Azeri Turkish, e.g., *dīm* “face,” *zamī* “land, field,” *olis*, Azeri *ulas* “charcoal.” But to determine the full extent of such borrowings requires further research. Several authors, notably Adīb Ṭūsī (“Nomūna-ī čand az loğat-e āḍarī,” *NDA Tabrīz* 814, 1335 Š./1957, pp. 310-49; 9/2, 3, 4, 1336 Š./1957, pp. 135-68, 242-60, 361-89; cf. M. Aržangī, *ibid.*, 9/1, 2, pp. 73-108, 182-201; 10/1, 1337 Š./1958, pp. 81-93) have collected a large number of non-Turkish words used in the Azeri Turkish of the various parts of Azarbaijan (See Maškūr, *op. cit.*, p. 263 for a count); but, ignoring proper linguistic criteria, they have taken them to be Āḍarī, whereas in fact, they are, by and large, Persian (or Arabic, borrowed through Persian), a fact which shows that Āḍarī, unlike Persian, has not affected the lexicon of Azeri Turkish significantly. The assumption of these researchers that the material in the last chapter of Rūḥī Anārjānī’s *Resāla* is Āḍarī (see above) has also tended to vitiate their conclusions. (For a listing of Azeri vocabulary see Y. M. Nawwābī, *Zabān-e konūnī-e Āḍarbāyjān* [Bibl.]; and Koichi Haneda and Ali Ganjelu, *Tabrizi Vocabulary, An Azeri-Turkish Dialect in Iran*, *Studia Culturae Islamicae*, no. 13, Tokyo, 1979.)

3. *Present-day dialects or Āḍarī.* Despite its continued decline over the centuries, Āḍarī has not died out and its descendants are found as modern dialects, mostly called Tati, sharing a wide range of phonological and grammatical features. Proceeding from north to south, these are: (1) The dialect of Kalāsūr and Ḳoynarūd, two villages of the Ḥasanow (Ḥasanābād) district of Ahar; (2) the dialect of Karīngān, a village of eastern Dīzmār in the



Vazraqān district (*baḳš*) of Ahar sub-province (*šahrestān*); (3) the dialect of Galīnqaya, a village of the Harzand rural area (*dehestān*) in the district of Zonūz, Marand sub-province; (4) the *Ḳalkāli* dialects spoken in the chief villages of the Šāhrūd *baḳš* (i.e., Askestān, Asbū, Derow, Kolūr, Šāl, Dīz, Karīn, Lerd, Kehel, Ṭahārom, Gelūzān, Gīlavān, and Gandomābād), in Karnaq, in the *Ḳoreš-e Rostam baḳš*, and in Kajal in the *Kāḡaḡkonān baḳš* of *Ḳalkāl*; (5) the Tati dialects of the Upper Ṭārom (principally in the villages of Nowkīān, Siāvarūd, Kalāsar, Hazārrūd, Jamābād, Bāklūr, Čarza, and Jeyšābād); (6) the Tati dialects of Rāmand and Zahrā, southwest and south of Qazvīn (i.e., the dialects of Tākestān, Čāl, Esfarvarīn, *Ḳīāraj*, *Ḳvoznīn*, Dānesfān, Ebrāhīmābād, and Sagzābād) which are close to the Tati of *Ḳalkāl* and Ṭārom; (7) the dialects of Ṭāleš, from Allāhbaḳš Maḡalla and Šāndermīn on the border of Gīlān in the south to the Soviet Ṭāleš in the north, including the dialect of ‘Anbarān in the Namīn district of Ardabīl; all connected with the Tati dialects of Šāhrūd. This list does not necessarily exhaust the Āḡarī-speaking villages of Azarbaijan, and there may exist villages which the writer has not been able to visit, and where Tati is still understood (see A. A. Kārang, *Tātī wa harzanī*, pp. 27; he mentions a number of villages in Dīzmār and Ḥasanābad districts, including Arzīn, where the dialect was still understood in the 1940s; on the continued waning of Āḡarī, see below).

To the same group of dialects belong in a broad sense: (1) the dialect of Māsūla in the Fūmenāt district of Gīlān; (2) the language spoken in the Rūdbār of Gīlān (Raḡmatābād, Rostamābād, etc.), in the Rūdbār of Alamūt (Dekīn, Mūšqīn, Garmārūd, and Bolūkān), and in Alamūt (Mo‘allem Kelāya, Estalbar, Gāzarḡān; Avānak, etc.); (3) the dialect of *Ḳo’īn* and Safīdkamar in the Ījrūd of Zanjān, and a few villages in the Kūhpāya of Qazvīn (Zerejerd, Nowdeh, Asbemark, Ḥešār, etc.); (4) the dialect of Vafs, between Hamadān and Arāk. There are also a number of border dialects, such as the dialect of Ṭāleqān villages between Qazvīn and Karaj, and the dialects of Āmora and Āštīān, all much affected by Persian, that have close affinities with the group. In fact, the demarcation line between these dialects and their more northerly cognates cannot be sharply drawn. Kurdish, however, spoken in Mahābād in southwestern Azarbaijan and scattered in several other areas in the region, which some have supposed to be a descendant of Median, does not belong to this group and exhibits some clear differences with it. (See D. N. Mackenzie, “The Origins of Kurdish,” *TPS*, 1961, pp. 67-83.)

The fact that these dialects are so relatively abundant and are spoken in



contiguous areas over a vast territory confirms their being indigenous to these areas and speaks strongly against the possibility that they spread into Azarbaijan and its border regions from other areas. Their shared linguistic features place them in a well-defined group of North-West Iranian, with affinities with the Central dialects, spoken to the south and southeast of the Āḍarī language area. Āḍarī and the language termed Fahlawī in the medieval Islamic sources refer in fact to the northern and southern branches of the language spoken in the territory of ancient Media, broadly corresponding to their modern continuations, namely the Tati or Āḍarī dialects in central and western Iran (excluding Kurdish and Luri). On the analogy of New Persian one may call them New Median (see further below).

That only meager traces of the language spoken in the central regions of Azarbaijan have survived is only natural, since a language that comes under pressure from other languages disappears faster in the center than in the periphery. The fact that while there are some meager remains of Āḍarī from the north, the center, the east, and south of Azarbaijan, yet the western part of the province yields no comparable material, is no doubt due to the dominance in these regions, before the spread of Turkish, of other languages, such as Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish.

The process of the linguistic Turkification of Azarbaijan continues to this day, and even in the border areas the original dialects keep giving way to Turkish. In the course of his study of these dialects in the 1960s, the writer met a number of elderly people who could remember or had been told by their fathers or grandfathers that villages now speaking Turkish formerly spoke the Iranian dialect. In Ḥalab, a village in Ījrūd on the way from Zanjān to Bījār, he met in 1964 the last three men who still retained some shaky memory of their Tati, and in Galīnqaya there was in 1972 only one old man who could speak the native dialect fluently. (See also Kārang, *Tātī wa harzanī*, pp. 27-29; idem, “Kalkālī,” *Jahān-e aklāq* 4, 1335 Š./1956, p. 83; Doka’, *Gūyeš-e Galīnqaya*, p. 6.)

Linguistic features.

The absence of vocalization, the deficiencies of the Arabic alphabet in indicating the details of pronunciation, scribal errors, and the influence of classical Persian make the reading of the literary Āḍarī remains difficult. Nevertheless they reveal some genuine features of the phonology, grammar, and vocabulary of the language in which they are written. Here the features of two written remains are explored.



A. *Shaikh Şafî-al-dîn's dobaytîs*. 1. Old Iranian intervocalic *t > r*. Examples: *žir* “life” (< **jit-*, cf. Parthian *jydg*); the enclitic 2nd singular pronoun *-(a)r* (Pers. -[a]t); past tense forms: *āmarim* “I came” (< **āmat-*), *bori* or *beri* “he was” (< **būt-*), *šoram* or *šeram* “I went” (< **šut-*), and *žar* “struck” (< *jat-*, Pers. *zad*) in *dara žar* “was pained” (Parthian *drđjd*; Henning, “Ancient Language,” p. 176 n. 4). The same sound change is found in two Tati dialects: Harzandi and the dialect of Kalāsūr and Koynarūd; cf. Harzandi *amārā* “he came” (other examples: *vör* “wind” < **wāt-*, *kar* “house” < **kat-*, *jörö-tan* “stranger” < *(*wi*)*yut-*, Pers. *jodā* “separate”); Kalāsūri *umarim* “I came,” and *šerim* “I went” (other examples: *vur* “wind,” *jeru* “separate,” *purez* “autumn” < **pātēz* [Pers. *pāʔiz*], *zura* “boy, son” < **zātak-*). In other dialects, this change occurs only sporadically; cf., e.g., Kajali *kerom* “which” (< **katām-*, Pers. *kodām*), and in the dialect of Derow in Kalkāl *šera* “he went.” The enclitic pronoun of the 2nd singular is *-r* in Kajali and Šährüdi of Kalkāl, also in Asālemi and Māsāli in the central and southern Iranian Tāleš area (but not in northern Tāleši or ‘Anbarāni). In the sentence in the dialect of Tabrîz recorded by Ebn Bazzāz as uttered by a contemporary of Shaikh Şafî-al-dîn, we find *harîf-ar žāta* “your contender has come.” One can not measure the extent of this rule in the defunct dialect of Tabrîz by this instance alone, but note also the Iranian word *därdäjär* “sick, ailing” in Azeri Turkish, and the Azarbaijani placename *Esparakün*, colloquial for *Safiidaқан*, a village in *Bostānābād*, east of Tabrîz, probably “White spring,” with *espara* < **spetak-* (Pers. *safîd* “white”). The change of intervocalic *t* to *r* is seen also in the so-called Tati, but actually (archaic) New Persian dialect of the Iranian-speaking Jews in the Apsheron peninsula and the northeast of the Azarbaijan S.S.R. The change, on the other hand, is not effected in the dialects of Tārom, Koʔin, Rāmand, and Alamüt areas to the south.

2. Old Iranian intervocalic *č > j*. Examples: *riji* “he pours,” (Av. *raēca-*), and *navāji* “you [sing.] do not say” (Parth. *wʔc-*). The same change is seen in the modern dialects of Šährüd, Kajal and Asālem: Šährüdi *verijam* “we flee,” *vāje* “he says;” Kajali *mivrije* “he flees;” and Asālemi *bivrij* “flee!” By contrast, in the dialects of Kalāsūr and Koynarūd, Tāleš, Karīngān, and Harzand, *č* has become *ʔ*: cf. Kalāsūri *ruž* “day,” *namuž* “prayer;” ‘Anbarāni *ruža* “fast,” *nəmož* “prayer;” Tāleši as spoken in the Soviet Union: *tož* “to rush, gallop,” *bad-vož* “defamer, slanderer;” Karīngāni *vuž* “say!;” Harzandi *ruž* “sun.”

3. A vowel phoneme /*ö/ə*/ is indicated by the variant spellings *-w* and *-h*: *čw* and *čh*, i.e., /*čə*/ “from” (< **hača*, Pers. *az*); and *štw* and *čth*, i.e., /*aštə*/ or /*ačtə*/



“yours” (2nd sing., rendered by Pers. *māl-e to*, lit., “your property”). A similar phoneme is found in the modern dialects of Harzand, Țăleș, Kajal, and Šährūd (not in word-final position in Šährūdi).

4. Old Iranian initial *j* > *ž*. Examples: *žir* “lile,” and *žar* “struck.” The same sound change is seen in the modern dialects of Kalāsūr and Țoynarūd: *žan* “woman,” *žare* “to hit,” *žāte* “to arrive”; Țăleși *žen* “woman,” *žae* “to hit”; Arazini *žen* and Kajali *žan* “woman,” *bežana* “strike!” The form *žāta* in Ebn Bazzāz’s sentence shows that this feature extended to the dialect of Tabrīz. In the dialects of Karīngān and Harzand, however, initial *ž* has become *y*: Karīngāni *yan* “woman” and “strike!,” *yaz/yat*– “to arrive,” and Harzandi *yan* “woman,” *yare* “to strike.”

5. Old Iranian *x, xw* > *h* in *harda* “he ate;” cf. *sohrāb* “rouge” in the manuscript of the *Loğat-e fors* mentioned above (Kīā, p. 4). This development is regular in Kajali: (*hardan* “to eat,” *hára* “ass,” *heriār* “buyer,” *howliḡ* “sister”) but sporadic in the Šährūdi group: Šāli (*h*)*ardan*, cf. Gīlavāni *ha* “sister,” *hezə* “he wants” (Parth. *wxāz-*, *wxāšt*, but Pers. *ḡvāh-*, *ḡvāst*); but Šāli *ḡri*– “to buy,” *ḡes/ḡel* “to sleep,” etc. Cf. also Karīngāni *hārdan* “to eat,” *haraši* “sun” (Pers. *ḡvoršīd*): Harzandi *horde* “to eat,” *höšn/höst* “to want,” *hištan* “self” (Pers. *ḡvīštan*); Kalāsūri *horma* “I ate,” *hāmma* “I read” (Pers. *ḡvāndam*); and in most Țăleși dialects: Asālemi *hard-*, ‘Anbarāni *hāna bim* “I was eating, used to eat,” and Northern Țăleși *hova* “sister“. But in Asālemi we find *ženā-xāzī* (Pers. *ḡvastḡārī*), and in the dialect of Māsāl in southern Țăleș we find *xa* “sister,” *xəšḡ* “dry,” etc.

6. Old Iranian *fr* > *hr* in *ahrā* “tomorrow” (Pers. *fardā* < **fra-*, cf. G. Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane*, Paris, 1963, p. 145). In the modern dialects we find Kajali *a(h)rā*, Harzandi *ohra* (cf. also *heraš/heröt* “to sell” < **frawaxš-/frawaxt*, Pers. *forūš/forūkt*), Kīāraji of Rāmand *ahrā*, Šāli *pašara* “the day after tomorrow,” Šāndermīni and Māsāli *pašerā*, Tākestāni *sarā* “day after tomorrow,” Northern Țăleși *havate* “to sell,” *hamue* “to order” (< **framāt-*, Pers. *framūdan*).

7. Oblique case/genitive in *-*i* (or so-called inverted *ežāfa* construction). This ending is written only in *ōyān-i banda* “the servant of the Lord” (*dobaytī* 11; on *ōyān* < Tk. *oyan*, see Henning, “The Ancient Language,” p. 176 n. 4; it is not a plural of *oy* “he,” as Kasravī thought) but may also be assumed in other cases, e.g., *oyān(i) ḡāššān* “special friends of god,” *čowḡān(i) ḡur-im* “I am the ball of the polo stick” (i.e., resigned to the divine will), and *ḡodrat(i) zanḡir-im* “I am



the chain of power” (*dobaytī* 3). Among modern dialects, Kalāsūri and Asālemi have accusative and genitive in *-i*, Kalkāli in *-e*.

8. The personal pronouns have four forms:

	Direct	Oblique	Possessive	Enclitic
1st	<i>az</i>	<i>man</i>	–	<i>-m</i>
2nd	–	<i>te</i> or <i>tö</i>	<i>eštö</i>	<i>-r</i>

This feature is shared by the dialects of Kalkāl and Tāleš. For instance, the corresponding forms in the Šāli dialect of Šahrūd are:

	Direct	Oblique	Possessive	Enclitic
1st	<i>az</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>čeman</i>	<i>-m</i>
2nd	<i>te</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>ešte</i>	<i>-r</i>

In Kajali the forms are:

	Direct	Oblique	Possessive	Enclitic
1st	<i>az</i>	<i>aman</i>	<i>čaman</i>	<i>-m</i>
2nd	<i>tə</i>	<i>tə</i>	<i>aštə</i>	<i>-r</i>

and in Asālem:

	Direct	Oblique	Possessive	Enclitic
1st	<i>az</i>	<i>aman</i>	<i>čəman</i>	<i>-m</i>
2nd	<i>tə</i>	<i>tə</i>	<i>aštə</i>	<i>-r</i>

A similar scheme is found in the dialect of Čāl in Rāmand. In the rest of the Rāmand area, however, the oblique form is no longer used. The dialects of upper Tārom, e.g., Nowkiāni and Hazārrūdi, have a system of actually five pronominal forms (the pronouns for the direct object and the “logical direct object” in passive constructions are differentiated; see Yarshater, “The Tati Dialects of Tārom”). In Karīngāni and Harzandi the direct pronoun has been replaced by the originally oblique form, as in Persian.

9. The 2nd person singular ending is *-i* in the present indicative (*riji* “you pour,” *navāji* “you do not say”), but *-š* in the present subjunctive (*mavāješ* “you may not say”). A 2nd person singular ending *-š* is found in several Tati dialects. In Karīngāni, in particular, it is the common form; in Kalāsūr, it is found in the present indicative (*bežareš* “you strike”); in Šāhrūdi (Šāli and Kolūri), everywhere except the present indicative and the imperative (*bešiš* “you went,” age *bevrijāš* “if you should flee”); in Asālem, everywhere except in



the imperative and the present subjunctive (*biš* “you were,” *bebaš* “be!”); in ‘Anbarāni, in the continuous past tense; and in Northern Ṭāleši throughout the verbal system. In Harzandi the ending *-š* does not occur.

10. A continuous present is made from the past stem if indeed, as it appears, the verbs in the fourth *dobaytī* are present tense, wrongly rendered by the past tense in the paraphrase of the *Selselat al-nasab*: *be-koštīm* “I kill,” *be-heštīm* “I let/leave,” and *na-daštīm* “I am not harming” (on the last verb, see Henning, “The Ancient Language,” p. 176 n. 4). The same kind of formation is found in the dialects of Karīngān, Harzand, and Kalāsūr, Northern Ṭāleši, and in Asālemi, but not in the dialects of Southern Ṭāleši: Karīngāni *heteine* “I am sleeping” (cf. *fesene* “I sleep” < **xwafs-*), Harzandi *bāvāštān* “he is carrying,” *bo-hordān* “he is eating,” Kalāsūri *ba-durem* “I am giving” (< **dāt-*), *be-žareš* “you (sing.) are striking,” *ba-šem* “I am going,” Asālemi *ba-vindiše* “you (sing.) are seeing,” *ba-bramastīm* “we are weeping.”

11. Vocabulary. Note *asra* “tear” (cf. Šāhrūdi *asər̄k*, Asālemi, Māsāli, and ‘Anbarāni *asərg*, Harzandi *ösör*, Karīngāni *aster*; cf. also *ásra* [fem.] in the dialects of Rāmand and *ars* in the Persian dictionaries) and *ahra* “tomorrow” (see above, no. 6). The question whether *-a* in *asra* is a feminine marker (as it is in Rāmandi) and whether Āḍarī of Ardabīl distinguished grammatical gender, can not be determined on the basis of the material at hand. Its affinities lie mostly with modern dialects which do not have the category of gender (see below).

It can be seen from the foregoing that the language of the *dobaytīs* is not identical with any one modern descendant of Āḍarī. Its greatest affinity seems to be on the one hand with the Tati dialects of Kalāsūr and Koynarūd to the northwest (*t > r*, *j > ž*, 2nd singular *-š*, continuous present from the past stem), and on the other with the dialects of the central Ṭāleš area to the east (*j > ž*, four-fold personal pronoun, 2nd singular *-š*, continuous present from the past stem), and Kalkāli (*t > r* in some instances, *j > ž* in Kajali, four-fold personal pronoun). This agrees well with Ardabīl’s geographical position. By contrast, the dialects of Harzand and Karīngān, the Āstārā region, and of Soviet Ṭāleš to the north that B. V. Miller (*Talyshskii yazyk*, Moscow, 1953, pp. 253ff.) for lack of information about Tati and southern Ṭāleši dialects thought were closest to Āḍarī, are relatively remoter. (Northern Ṭāleši is characterized by the dropping or greatly reducing of unstressed syllables, *t* does not become *r*, the enclitic pronouns are *-ə* and *-əon* for 2nd singular and plural, respectively.)



Another conclusion that can be drawn from these comparisons is that Tāleši should not be grouped with the Caspian dialects, as is commonly done on the basis of their geographical location, but rather with the Tati dialects of Azarbaijan, particularly Šāhrūdi.

B. The Istanbul qaṣīdas. The phonology and vocabulary of the language attested in this poem link it with the area of Tabrīz and Marand. Note the following features.

1. Old Iranian $\bar{a} > \bar{u}$ in *āžūr* “free” (Pers. *āzād*), *dūr* “hold!” (Pers. *dār*), *gūn* “soul” (Parth. and Mid Pers. *gyān*, NPers. *jān*), **huzdan* “to ask, want” (Pers. *k̄vāstan*), *pūydūr* “permanent” (Pers. *pāydār*), and *vad-nehūd* “bad-natured” (Pers. *bad-nehād*).
2. Old Iranian intervocalic $t > r$ in *āžūr*, *-r* “you” (Pers. *-t*), *zūnar* “he knows” (< **zān-*, Pers. *dānad*), and *žaran* “to strike” (< **jat-*, Pers. *zadan*).
3. Old Iranian intervocalic $\check{c} > j$ in *jeman* “my own” (< Old Iranian *hača-*).
4. Old Iranian $x, xw > h$ in *harda* “eaten” (Pers. *k̄vorda*), **hūzdan* “to ask, want”; cf. *hošk* “dry” (< Old Iranian **huška*).
5. Vocabulary. Note *gūn* “soul,” **karend* “they do, make” (Parth. *kar-*), *sag* “stone” (Pers. *sang*), and *vūn* “blood” (Av. *vohunī*, Pers. *kūn*).

The position of Ādarī among the Iranian languages.

It is obvious that the language of as broad an area as Azarbaijan could not have been uniform throughout and must have exhibited a variety of local dialects. The statement by Moqaddasī (*Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 375) to the effect that seventy dialects were spoken in the region of Ardabīl, despite its gross exaggeration, has to be taken to refer to the variety of its local subdialects. On the other hand, the fact that the language of the entire Azarbaijan has been called Ādarī in the early sources and placed alongside Darī and Pahlavi implies that the dialects of the region were similar enough to be called by a single name.

Azarbaijan and the “Jebāl” of the medieval geographers, that is, the mountainous west-central part of the Iranian plateau, coincide geographically with ancient Media and was inhabited by Median tribes in ancient times. Although no independent written document in ancient Median has yet come to



light, its fundamental phonological features are known from the Median words and names which occur in Old Persian inscriptions and, less frequently, in Greek (e.g., IE. \hat{g} , and $\hat{g}h < \text{Med(ian) } z$, OPers. d ; IE. $ku > \text{Med. } sp$, OPers. s ; IE. tr and $tl > \text{Med. } \theta r$, OPers. ζ ; see Kent, *Old Persian*, secs. 8-9; M. Mayrhofer, *Die Rekonstruktion des Medischen*, Anz. d. Österreichischen Akad. d. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl., 1968, 1, Vienna; G. L. Windfuhr, “Isoglosses: A Sketch on Persians and Parthians, Kurds and Medes,” in *Monumentum H. S. Nyberg II*, Acta Iranica 5, Tehran and Liège, 1975, pp. 457-72). All these features are characteristic also of Āḍarī and its modern relatives. Thus there are no linguistic arguments against the derivation of Āḍarī from Median, which is based upon compelling geographical and historical evidence (see below), and such a conclusion can in no way be invalidated by the fact that the phonological peculiarities of Median are found, by and large, in all northwestern branches of Iranian, including Parthian, or by the fact that it has not been possible to find exclusive Median isoglosses (see P. O. Skjærvø, *BSL* 78, pp. 244-51). It will be noted that Āḍarī differs from Parthian in some important respects, e.g. “came” is from $*\bar{a}(g)mata-$ (as in Persian) against Parthian $\bar{a}yad < *\bar{a}gata-$; Parthian has a suffix $-ift$ and the $e\bar{z}\bar{a}fa \check{c}\bar{e}$ both unknown in Āḍarī.

Likewise, the fact that the Āḍarī group of dialects shares a few isoglosses with some geographically and linguistically distant dialects in southeastern Iran, namely Lāri and Baškardi, which, like Persian belong to the South-Western Iranian dialects does not affect our conclusion with regard to the derivation and provenience of Āḍarī. The isoglosses shared with Lāri are the 2nd singular ending $-š$ and the continuous present from the past stem; cf. Lāri $a\check{c}ed\bar{a}e\check{s}$ “you are going,” $\check{c}ede\check{s}$ “you went” (A. Eqtedārī, *Farhang-e lārestānī*, Tehran, 1334 Š./1955, p. 269); the isoglosses shared with Baškardi are: $t > r$ in North Baškardi (e.g., $zar-$ “to strike”) and the continuous present based on the past stem (e.g., North Baškardi $akerd\bar{e}nom$, South Baškardi $bekert(en)om$ “I am doing,” see G. Morgenstierne in *HO* I, iv, 1: *Linguistik*, Leiden, 1958, p. 178). There is no need for assuming any special historico-geographical connection between the Āḍarī group and Lāri and Baškardi to explain these isoglosses. Indeed, since Āḍarī is phonetically a typical North-Western dialect but Lāri and Baškardi typical South-Western dialects, such an assumption would create more problems for historical Iranian linguistics than it would solve. In the case of other Iranian languages and dialects, too, we occasionally find isoglosses crossing other, fundamental, isoglosses and spanning large distances. One typical case is that of Sogdian and Old Persian (see Henning, *Mitteliranisch*, p. 108).



Historically, Media was divided into Greater Media, which was the area where today the Central dialects are spoken, and Lesser Media or Azarbaijan. Doubtless it is this geographical division which is reflected in the linguistic distinction between *al-ādarīya* and *al-fahlawīya* of our medieval sources. (The fact that while there are some meager remains of Ādarī from the north, the center, the east, and the south of Azarbaijan, yet the western part of the province yields no comparable material, is no doubt due to the dominance in these regions, before the spread of Turkish, of other languages, such as Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish.) Since there is no historical evidence that the population of the Median territories was ever dislocated on a significant scale, or that its language was superceded by any other language than Persian (in the urban centers) and Turkish (in Azarbaijan), the conclusion is inevitable that the affiliated Iranian dialects spoken in Azarbaijan, Ḳamsa, Qazvīn, Ṭāleš, Hamadān, Nahāvand, Ḳvānsār, Kāšān, Isfahan, and Semnān, to mention only the chief regions, can be none other than the descendants of the Old Median language, today divided roughly into a northern, Ādarī, group and a southern, “Fahlawī” or “Central” group of dialects.

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