



FARVI DIALECT

FARVI DIALECT, spoken in the township of Farroḳi in central Persia.

Farvi or Farvigi is the native dialect of Farroḳi, a township in the sub-province of Ḳur o Biābānak on the edge of the Great Persian Desert. The lexicon of Farvi was little known until Šādeq Kiā's (q.v.) documentation was published posthumously in a multilingual dictionary (Kiā, 2011). On the other hand, our knowledge of Farvi syntax is limited to the scanty data in articles by Richard Frye (henceforth RF; pp. 212-15) and Kiā (1954). Notwithstanding Farroḳi's population that surpasses two thousands, its vernacular is moribund. During the decades of expansion of modern education and media, Farvi has been thinning, and its number of speakers shrinking, to the extent that Farvi should be considered an endangered language.

Linguistic position. Farvi is closely related to Khuri and other varieties of the language group spoken in **Ḳur o Biābānak**. Although this language group is conventionally classified as a subgroup of Central Plateau dialects (Lecoq), the following historical phonology reveals how Farvi drifts away from them, while it shares significant isoglosses with Baluchi in various chronological stages of its development.

Within Old Iranian isoglosses, Farvi shows a fuzzy position between North and South Iranian. The proto-Iranian *ś yields the non-Perside s in *kas(su)* "small" and *pas* "goat" (cf. Av. *pasu-* "small cattle," Parth. *pas* "sheep," Bal. *pas* "goat," contrasting with Mid. Pers. *pah* "sheep," Lārestāni *pah* "goat," Bashk. *pah* "sheep" < *paθu-). For sibilants *ž, *śu, Farvi has both the North /z, sp/ (*zomā*



“son-in-law”; *espej* “louse”) and, equally deep-rooted in its phonology, Perside /d, s/, as in *duj* “yesterday” and *dušaw* “last night,” *bāhu* “arm” (< **bādu*, cf. Av. *bāzu-*); *song* “dog” (nasalized, as in some Central Plateau dialects; Ḥasandust, p. 247). For the other characteristic Old Iranian split, *θr, Farvi yields the Perside s systematically, as in *pus* “son,” *a:wes* “pregnant,” *sa* “three,” *āsiaw* “mill” and *āsiavun* “miller”.

Within the Middle West Iranian splits, Farvi shows mixed results as well. Like other Northwest Iranian languages, it has j for Old Iranian *-č- and j: *tij* “sharp,” *nuāj* “prayer,” *ruaja* “fasting” (cf. *ri* “day”); *ji/jen* “woman.” On the other hand, Farvi sides with Perside in *rd > l (*biyal* “spade”), and with Perside, Kurdish and Baluchi in *dw- > d: *dije* “other” (Pers. *digar*), and in *y > j: *jaw* “barley,” *āji* “there.”

Among more recent changes, the most remarkable one is word initial *w- > g, affecting Farvi vocabulary across the board: *gaid* “bad,” *giahtar* “better,” *gištar* “more,” *gazar* “big,” *gas* (Pers. *bas*) “enough,” *gar* “side” (Pers. *bar/var*), *gāng* “voice, call,” *gāyār/gāva(i)r* “belief” (Pers. *bāvar*), *gehina* “pretext” (Pers. *bahāna*), *gis* “twenty,” *gā* “wind,” *gārun*, *gāreš* “rain,” *garf* “snow,” *gāyem* “almond,” *galg* “leaf,” *gara* “lamb,” *geči/gačča* “child,” *gāzi* “game,” *gāli* “wart” (Pers. *bālu*, *zegil*), *gin-* “see,” *gij-* “sift,” *gaf-* “weave,” *gaz-* “jump.” The prevalence of this change suggests that the few Farvi words in v- (e.g. *vāra* “dam” (cf. Anāraki *vār*), *vasni* “co-wife,” *vasirg* “roasted unripe wheat or barley”) should either be erroneous or loanwords. Note that this change excludes syllable initials, e.g., *homvār* “flat.” The systematic development *w- > g puts Farvi in accord with Baluchi, which has *w- > g(w).

Initial f- appears in all attested Farvi words that originate in Old Iranian *hw-, namely, *fār* “sister” (< **hwahar-*), *for* “sun” (< **hwar-*), *fārd-* “eat” (< **hwar-*), *alfondon* “to read” (< **hwan-*); likewise, there is a possibility that the endonym *Farva* and exonym *Farroxi* are related to *X̣ar* “Ḳur,” the name of Farroki’s closest neighbor. Moreover, we find *fin* “blood” (cf. Av. *vohuna*, Man. Parthian *gwxn*) and *fī* “furrowed field,” originally “plow,” inferred from *fī kondōn* “to furrow” (cf. Av. *aēša-*, Mid. Pers. *ēš*, New Pers. *xēš*, Central Plateau dialects *heš* “plow”). Note also that the original x-, h- remain as a rule: *howsu* “nightmare” (cf. Pers. *xosp-* “sleep”), *huj* “bunch” (MP *hōšag*, Bal. *hōš(ag)*, Central Plateau dialects mostly *huša*), *hormā* “date,” *hunāk* “cold,” *yegina* “omelets” (Pers. *xāgina*; cf. Khuri *heyg* “egg”), *xāya* “testicle,” *xāš* “fine,” *xālux* “maternal aunt,” *xeyle* “many.” (Unlike Khuri or Baluchi, Farvi does not turn x into k: *xar* “donkey,” *xorus* “rooster”). From these sound changes we may deduce that

OIr. *hw- was first reduced to a pure labial sound in Farvi (as in Baluchi *hw- > w), then to the labiodental f.

Final *š is vocalized and further affricated in *espej* “louse,” *duj* “yesterday,” *rij* “beard,” *mij* “ewe,” *huj* “bunch,” *kiaj* “shoe,” *guj* “ear,” *harguj* “rabbit.” This sound change probably triggered a chain: -j > -č in *sāruč* (Pers. *sāruj*) “lime plaster,” *kajj* “skewed,” and -č > -rč in *morč* “wrist” (but *quč* “ram”), but the data is too scanty to hypothesize any further. On the other hand, some š-finals remain intact in Farvi: *heš* “plow,” *šuaš* “six,” *xāš* “fine,” and we find *pi* “front” as well. There is also *mošg* “mouse,” with either the historical morpheme *-ak or just a velarized final consonant, as probably also in *nafk* “navel,” *nešk* “beak,” *miahrešg* “ant,” *barašg* “palm leaf,” *avesk* “sleeve,” *āyeng* “mirror.”

Lenition. Middle West Iranian intervocalic and final d: *mā* mother, *pī(a)* father, *berā* “brother,” *giardon* “to pass,” *zī* “early,” *kāye(h)* (< *kada) “room,” *rixūne* “river,” *gā* “wind,” *gāyem* “almond” (but *gaid* “bad”). — Labials: *ā(h)/aw* “water,” *ču* “wood,” *lā(h)* “lip,” *uftā* “sun,” *sawz* (RF *saz*) “green,” *ga:r* “Gabr, Zoroastrian,” *a:very* “dignity,” *suwāk* “lightweight,” *jevū* “answer,” *drawš* “awl,” *a:sena/awsana* “fable.” The preverb *al-*, corresponding to Central Plateau dialects *var-* (e.g. in *al-gaj-* “pluck,” cf. Anāraki *ver-vaj-*) is from Mid. West Iranian *abar. — *-γ- is lost in *čeraw* “light,” *deru* “lie,” *ravo* “ghee” (but not in *coğondar* “beetroot,” *āgošta* “full”).

Consonant clusters. Certain clusters tend to shrink: *-fr- > hr in *niahrin* “curse” (Pers. *nefrin*) (but *garf* “snow,” with metathesis); *-xr- > hl in *tahl* “bitter,” *suahr* “red,” *čahr* “[spinning] wheel” (but note counterexamples: *čarxu* “cotton gin,” *salx* “pool,” *sorxača* “smallpox,” RF *suwārxi* “red,” RF *taxel* “bitter”); *-xt- > hd in *duahd* “daughter,” *al-sahd-* “weigh; pull,” *al-gahd-* “pluck,” *got-* “say” (but *gixt-* “sift”), and probably in *āsuahd* “ashes,” should it be related to *sōxt- “burn.” — *-ft- is retained in *gāft-* “weave” and *gerefton* “take.” Old Iranian *fra- > š, typical in Baluchi, may have a reflex in Farvi *šiv* “under, below.”

Nasals. *šm is retained in *češm* “eye,” *toxm-keyr* “seed planter.” Otherwise nasals show considerable instability. They tend to disappear postvocally: *ajā* “finish” (Pers. *anjām*), *aje* “there” (Pers. *ānjā*), *gešši* “hungry,” *tešši* “thirsty,” *čoqqodar* (< can^d-qadar) “how much”; and intervocalically in *nuāj/novāj* “prayer” (as in Sanandaji Kurdish *nuež*); *seg* “stone,” however, might be originated from an original non-nasal root (cf. Mid. Pers. sa(n)g, and non-nasal forms in Abuzeydābādi, Nešalji, Ko’ini, Harzani, Keringāni; see Ḥasandust, p. 46). The final vowel can be nasalized or denasalized with the combined effect



of rounding in the case of open vowels, e.g., *ezan/ezo* “this way, such,” and in verb endings and the infinitive suffix (below).

Vowels. There is a strong tendency to diphthongize: *fuahm* “understanding,” *kiard* “knife,” *bialā* “up,” *diahn* “mouth,” *miah* “nail,” *kuar* (cf. Khuri *ka:ro*) “kid,” *ārvas* “bride,” *povahn/puahn* (cf. Khuri *pāhn*) “broad,” *piahrūn* (Khuri *perun*) “shirt,” *borvahna* “nude.” — Fronting of the higher back vowels is the norm, e.g. *tanir* “oven,” *tit* “mulberry,” *zī* “early,” *rī* “face,” *mīv* “hair,” *šiv* “husband,” *gišt* “meat” (< *zūd*, *rōy*, *mōy*, *šōy*, *gōšt*), *giuz* “walnut,” *āsmīn* (< *āsmun* < *āsmān*) “sky,” *rixune* “river” (but *num* “name,” *kuhun* “hump” etc.).

Lexicon. Aside from sound changes, the vocabulary of Farvi too is divided among isoglosses. Here are some examples: *geri* “weep” (Pers. *gerya*, Parth. *brmg*); *mā* “I” (New Pers. *man*, Mid. West Iranian *az*); *ker-* “do” (Parth. *kar-*, Perside *kun-*, Bal. *kan-*); *giz-* (pres.), *got-* (past) “say” (< **wāč-* : *wāxt-*, cf. Av. *wac-* □ Old Pers. *gauba-*). Farvi modal verbs *šāyā* “to be able to” and *gu-* (pres.) *gayyā* “to want” are non-Persian.

Noun Phrase. The nouns and pronouns indicate no gender or formal case. The plural marker is usually *-(g)ún*, as in *gačegún* “children.” Possessives and adjectives follow the noun and are bound to it by an *ežāfa* marker: *gol-e-suahr* “red rose,” *toxm-e-niang* “egg,” *šiv-e-mā* “mother’s husband,” *mā-ye-je* “wife’s mother.”

Pronouns and Deixis. The personal pronouns are freestanding singular 1 *mā*, 2 *ta/tā*, 3 *āv* and plural 1 *amo*, 2 *šāmā*, 3 *āvun*; and enclitic singular 1 *-a(m)*, 2 *-at*, 3 *-a* and plural 1 *-emun*, 2 *-etun*, 3 *-ayun*. The enclitic pronouns are used as possessive pronouns (*dast-am* “my hand”) and in verbal constructions: as direct or indirect object (e.g., *dast-am al-ge!* “get your hands off me; leave me alone”) and as agent markers in the past transitive conjugation (see below). The demonstratives are *i(a)*, *em* “this,” *ā* “that,” *elu* “here,” *āje* “there.” Also *in-/an-gar* “this/that side,” *ezan/ezo/āzan/āzo* “this way, such.” Interrogatives include *barče* “why,” *četar/četawri* “how,” *kay* “when,” *ku* “where.”

Prepositions. Farvi is entirely prepositional, and its prepositions are in general agreement with those used in various Persian dialects even if with twisted phonology; for instance, *gar* “by,” *ri* “on,” *pi* “in front of” correspond to Persian *bar*, *rúye*, *piš* respectively. Notable idiosyncrasies are *he* “from,” *šiv* “under, below,” *tag* “below,” *hamzo* (Khuri *hamzon*) “like” (for Pers. *métle*), *kenāgā* “by” (for Pers. *názde*).

Numerals. The documented numbers of Farvi are: cardinals 1 *ya*, 2 *do*, 3 *sa*, 5 *panj*, 6 *šwaš*, 7 *haft*, 9 *nua*, 10 *dah*, 17 *ha:da*, 20 *gis*, 50 *panjah*, 70 *hafdia*, 80 *hašdia*, 100 *sad*; ordinals *doyyi* “second,” *sayyi* “third.”

Verb phrase. The verbal system of Farvi is based on the present stem (for the present indicative, imperative, and subjunctive) and the past stem (for the preterit, imperfect, perfect, and pluperfect). The lexical preverbs *he-* and *al-* are common; they may modify or change the meaning, e.g., *či-* “arrange” vs. *al-či-* “pick pieces from a flat surface” (= Pers. *barčidan*). Modal prefixes are durative *di-*, used in the present indicative and the imperfect; and non-durative *b(V)-* (superseded by preverbs), used in the subjunctive, imperative, and preterit. Examples: *be-gin* “see!” *bi-gin-a* “that I see,” *bi-di-at* “you saw,” *di-gin-i* “you see.” The negation morpheme *n(V)-* is prefixed to the stem; for example, *be-n-gu-v-ō* “I don’t want.”

Verbal endings consist of two sets. Set 1 endings, used in the present and the intransitive past, are singular 1 *-a* (sometimes rounded and/or nasalized), 2 *-i*, 3 *-e* (zero in the past), plural 1 *-um*, 2 *-at*, 3 *-and*. Set 2 is similar to the enclitic pronouns, and is used in the transitive past as subject (agent) markers: singular 1 *-a*, 2 *-at/-et*, 3 *-a/-e*, plural 1 *-emun*, 2 *-etun*, 3 *-ayun*. Examples for the second person singular: pres.: *či keri* “what are you doing?” past: *bišehi* “you went” vs. *bidiat* “you saw.” Imperative ending is zero for the singular: *algaj* “pluck!” *hegij* “sift!” *begaf* “weave!” *begaz* “run!” In addition to morphological distinction (Table 1), transitivity in the past tenses may play at syntactic level: in transitive past, there is a tendency for the Set 2 endings to move off the verb onto a preceding word, usually the direct object: *pī-at či-e bigūt* “what did your father say?” *či-et bekarde* “what did you do?”

Infinitives are formed by adding *-an* or *-o* (most likely *-ā/ō*) to the past stem, e.g., *bardan/bardo* “to carry,” *čaštan* “to taste,” *kossan* “pound,” *beštāhon* “to stand up,” *adiār kardan* “to disclose,” *gar kardo* “to put on (cloths).”

Lexicon. Some characteristic lexical items: *ājir* “awake,” *alnāštā* “un-breakfasted,” *aškun*, *a:waf* “yawn,” *atā* “open” (< *ṭāq* “odd, not even”), *ayāz* “nightly breeze,” *dānd* “wasp,” *geli-yang* “necklace,” *gen* (= Pers. *gom*) “lost,” *gorda* “kidney,” *haminu* “now,” *hezun* “tongue” *jufun* “heap of harvest” (Pers. *xerman*), *kanes* “soaked,” *kāte*, *gazar* “big,” *kelečč* “finger,” *kočik* “sparrow,” *kon* “hole,” *messehāye* “soaked,” *muḡ* “palm,” *nā(g)* “nose,” *nahāli* “mattress,” *nāštāčelim* “breakfast,” *nawčeng* “falls,” *nāzūk* “cat,” *niang* “hen,” *ozar* “wall,” *pašofta* “ooze,” *pīn* “pig,” *rāxčuna* “stairs” (cf. Gabri *rahčuna*, Khorasani



razina), *šehid* “thirsty” (< **“martyr”*), *tağars* “hail,” *tāsu* “nest,” *teram* “spider web,” *til* “thick, viscous,” *tollār* “hut” (< *tālār*), *tūvare(h)* “jackal,” *zerun* “knee,” *zuğ* “stomach.”

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