



QAŠQĀ'I TRIBAL CONFEDERACY II. LANGUAGE

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ii. LANGUAGE

Qašqā'i is a language of southwestern or Oghuz (see *ĜOZZ*) branch of Turkic languages, spoken in the Iranian provinces of Hamadan and Fārs, especially in the region to the north of Shiraz.

Until the middle of the 20th century nearly no Qašqā'i (and Äynallu) materials had been published. The earliest records of the Qašqā'i language were made by Aleksandr Romaskevich and Sir Aurel Stein. These materials, which are very precise descriptions of these dialects, were included in Tadeusz Kowalski's description (Kowalski, 1937). Romaskevich collected his materials (35 phonetically recorded songs) in the region of Shiraz. These records had remained the most extensive materials for a long time. After that, researchers like Oliver Garrod, Karl Heinrich Menges, and M. Th. Ullens de Schooten also collected materials on the Qašqā'i language, but these were never published. The unpublished materials of Menges (recorded in the Samirom area) are different from Kowalski's records in many ways (Caferoğlu and Doerfer, p. 286). Later, some studies of the southwestern dialects of Turkish, or Azarbaijani, dealt with Qašqā'i marginally and brought insignificant results (Gabain). Further materials were collected by Wolfram Hesché, Hartwig



Scheinhardt, and Semih Tezcan in the region of Firuzābād during the Turcological expeditions to Iran in 1967, 1968, and 1973, initiated by Gerhard Doerfer. Finally, these Qaşqā'ī materials were published in *Oghusica aus Iran* (Doerfer, Hesche, and Ravanyar), together with three texts from the collection of K. H. Menges. Extensive Qaşqā'ī materials were collected by Gunnar Jarring, but they mainly remain unpublished. In the 2000s, Éva Ágnes Csató Johanson has been working on the Qaşqā'ī language (Csató Johanson, 2001, 2005, 2006).

Various points of view were held regarding the relationship of Qaşqā'ī to the southwestern dialects of Turkish. On the basis of Qaşqā'ī samples published by Romaskevich, Kowalski wrote that the Qaşqā'ī language can be defined as the dialect most closely related to the Azerbaijani language (Kowalski, p. 4). In the same way, Annemarie von Gabain stated that in the provinces of Hamadan and Fārs, the vernaculars of Äynallu and Qaşqā'ī were close to the Azerbaijani language (Gabain, p. 174). In the opinion of Gerhard Doerfer, the two languages (Äynallu and Qaşqā'ī) are so close to the Azerbaijani that one can call them its dialects (Doerfer, 1969, p. 14). K. H. Menges, on the other hand, argued that Qaşqā'ī (and Äynallu) were more closely related to the Ottoman Turkish than to the Azerbaijani, and he supposed that they formed a third group of dialects within the southwestern Turkic languages. He wrote: “Since certain Qaşqā'ī dialects exhibit a greater similarity with Osman-Turkish than with Äzarbājdžānian, the study of the Qaşqā'ī dialects lead me to a reconsideration of the subdivisions of the southwestern Turkish languages (Osman, Äzarbājdžānian, Türkmen): Ottoman and Azerbaijani are not two languages, but two different dialect groups of one SW Turkic language—Osmano-Äzarbājdžānian, to which as a third group belong the Qaşqā'ī dialects in the South. Thus, we have in the SW-Turkic language area two languages: Osman-Äzarbājdžān-Qaşqā'ī in the West and Southwest, and Türkmen in the East of that area” (Menges, p. 278). Caferoğlu and Doerfer agreed to the fact that Qaşqā'ī deviates from Azerbaijani, but refused Menges's conception of its closer relationship to Ottoman Turkish (Caferoğlu and Doerfer, p. 281). Yet Doerfer expressed an opinion similar to that of Menges, when he wrote that Qaşqā'ī, as well as Ottoman, represented dialectal groups of one language: “But he [Menges] surely is right when he adds that Osman-Turkish and Azerbaijani actually are only dialects of *one* language” (Doerfer, 1970, p. 219). Doerfer assumed that Qaşqā'ī, Songori, and Äynallu—which was seen by Menges as a sub-dialect of Qaşqā'ī only (Caferoğlu and Doerfer, p. 281)—represented transitional forms between Azerbaijani and Khorasan-Turkish (Doerfer, 1977, p. 54). Further to that, Doerfer considered the dialects



spoken to the north of Ḳalajestān (see [KHALAJ ii. LANGUAGE OF THE KHALAJ](#)), Pugerd, and Āštiān (34° N, 50° E) to be closely connected with Qašqā'i (Doerfer, 1998, p. 274). In terms of its structure, Qašqā'i shows some closeness to the dialects of Qazvin (northeast of Tehran) and Soleymānābād (southwest of Hamadan; see Doerfer, 1998, p. 274).

The classification given in [TABLE 1](#) demonstrates the position of Qašqā'i, Songqori, and Äynallu within the Oghuz branch of Turkic languages (the classification is based on Doerfer, 1975-76, pp. 81-94; Idem, 1976b, pp. 247 ff.; Idem, 1976a, pp. 137 ff.; Idem, 1978, pp. 191-97; Idem, 1990, p. 19; Idem, 1991, pp. 107-9; Doerfer and Hesche, 1988, p. 62; Idem, 1993, pp. 20-21).

Qašqā'i seems to have the following vowels: *i, e, ä, a, å, ĩ, u, ü, o, ö*, and the following consonants: *p, b, m, f, v, t, d, n, s, z, š, ž, č, ʒ, k, g, q, γ, χ, η, l, r, h*. According to Kowalski, there are long and short forms of all vowels (Kowalski, pp. 54 f.). In Qašqā'i, *ä* became *a* (e.g., *man* 'I', Kowalski, p. 55), and *o/ö* are narrowed to *u/ü* (e.g., *ülur, ülüm*, Kowalski, p. 55). Initial *ii-, iï-,* and *iü-* in Qašqā'i became *i-* and *ü-* (e.g., *ulduz* < *iulduz*, see Kowalski, p. 55; see [TABLE 2](#)).

In the vocabulary of *Qašqā'i (as well as in that of Äynallu), the influence of Persian is recognizable. Besides that, both the materials collected by Romaskevich (cf. Kowalski, Glossar, pp. 44-53) and the texts collected in Firuzābād by Doerfer's collaborators (Doerfer, Hesche, and Ravanyar, index, pp. 114-31) show numerous borrowed elements of Arabic origin. The vocabulary of administration and the military has—as it would be expected—especially many words of Persian origin (e.g., *pāsban* 'guardian' < Pers. *pāsban*; *peykan* 'arrow-head' < Pers. *peykān*; *šah* 'king' < Pers. *šāh*). The religious lexicon is borrowed from Arabic, but transmitted through Persian, and, consequently, it reveals specific Persian features. Furthermore, there is a remarkable and expected influence of Persian elements in the medical terminology (e.g., *bimar* 'sick, ill' < Pers. *bimār*; *dārd* 'pain' < Pers. *dard*; *dāru* 'medicine' < Pers. *dāru*). Most of the toponyms are also of Persian origin or at least transmitted through it. There are a few Persian elements regarding morphology of Qašqā'i as well as Äynallu, such as the comparative suffix *-tar* (e.g., *yeytar* 'better'; see Caferoğlu and Doerfer, p. 300). The syntax, too, shows numerous elements borrowed from Persian (e.g., the Persian relative particle *ke* > Qašq. *ki*, or such figures of speech as *xa ... xa* 'whether ... or' < Pers. *kvāh ... kvāh*).

For a music sample, see [Qašqā'i](#).



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