

**FEATURES LANGUAGE VILLAGERS DZHALGAN DERBENT
DISTRICT OF DAGESTAN**

(Based on ethno-linguistic expedition of June 14-18, 2016)

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PhD in Philology Science, Senior Researcher of folklore and literature

I.V. Amaev North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Studies – the Filial of the Vladikavkaz Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences (362040, Vladikavkaz, Mira, 10), e-mail: kusaevaz@mail.ru

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PhD in Philology Science, Senior Researcher at the Department of Linguistics Ossetian

I.V. Amaev North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Studies – the Filial of the Vladikavkaz Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences (362040, Vladikavkaz, Mira, 10), e-mail: satiael@mail.ru

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PhD in Philology Science, Chief Scientific Officer, Head of the Department of Folklore and Literature

I.V. Amaev North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Studies – the Filial of the Vladikavkaz Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences (362040, Vladikavkaz, Mira, 10), fedar@mail.ru

It is believed that the ethnic map of Russia remained white spots. However, for various reasons, identify gaps in the identification of individual ethnic communities with well-known to modern science ethnocultural groups. For example, some scholars of Dagestan peoples drew attention to the cultural and linguistic characteristics villagers Dzhalgan located on a hillside near the town of Derbent. Language dzhalgans Western Iran, close to the Persian language, one of which is a dialect and Tat. However, analysis of linguistic features dzhalgan language indicates their isolation among the Iranian languages of Dagestan. In view of the linguistic differences with tatami dzhalgans and ranked as the Azeris, while the Azerbaijani language belongs to the Turkic group of languages. For this reason dzhalgans not fall within the scope of above research interests. On the basis of the factual material analyzed dzhalganian language, allowing to identify it as a separate language, though it is adjacent to the Farsi language. The basic lexical fund dzhalganian language goes back to the Iranian heritage, although colloquially dzhalgans actively used borrowed from the vocabulary of Russian and Azerbaijani languages.

Key words: ethnography, history, linguistics, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, dzhalganian language metagi-kosmolyarian talk, Farsi, Persian, Dzhalgan, dzhalgans

Dzhalgan language is a conditional name for dialect, spoken in village Dzhalgan, located at a slope of same-named mountain 3 km to South-West from the town of Derbent. History of this village is closely related to history of origin of Derbent fortress. Dzhalgan villagers believe that their village is older than Derbent fortress by 300 years, though no written historical confirmation can support this claim. At the same time, ancientry of Dzhalgan settlement is demonstrated by certain historical facts as well as language, spoken by the Dzhalgan, that is an island of Iran speaking around Turk and Caucasian languages. Iranian language group in Dagestan, particularly in Derbent district, also includes Tatskiy language. However, although both languages are referred to Western-Iranian subgroup of Iranian group of Indo-European language family, differences between them are so obvious that in fact they are totally different independent languages. Besides, many elements of Dzhalgan national culture carry multiple similarities with traditions of the Ossetic who live in

central Caucasus and are referred to Eastern-Iranian language subgroup whilst culture of the Tat has few differences with the surrounding nations of Dagestan. Thus, for example, many pre-islamic and pre-christian beliefs that remain force in Dzhalgan, are much similar to religions of the Ossetic. Worshipping heavenly protectors and sanctuaries, located around the village and at the territory of it, are almost identical to Ossetic traditions. Even ritual baking of breads that are brought to sanctuaries by the Dzhalgan, correspond to Ossetic ritual pies, without which sanctuaries are not visited. In many aspects etiquette norms of the Ossetic and the Dzhalgan are similar and differ from other nations of Derbent region. Modern Dzhalgan wedding represents a certain mix of Dagestan and “Ossetic” wedding rituals.

An explanation to the fact that Dzhalgan language relates close to Farsi, and traditional culture of the village touches upon culture of the Ossetic, is found in history of Derbent region.

The first written reference to Derbent gates is report of Herodotus in regard to the known marches of the Scythians at the merge of VIII-VII centuries B.C. to the Front Asia [6, p.23]. Other authors periodically mention penetration of Iran-language Sarmato-Massageto-Alan tribes into Southern Dagestan and territory of modern Azerbaijan. Nowadays messages of written sources confirm archeological data. “Archeological monuments confirm penetration in early centuries A.C. and even earlier of Sarmato-Massageto-Alan circle tribes’ penetration into territories of Dagestan, Southern regions of which, obviously, belonged to Mazskurt kingdom. In Dagestan of this age many monuments of material culture in Sarmat and Sarmatoid image were found... Catacomb burials and population groups with deformed skulls were discovered in several regions of Dagestan [2, p.218].

A great mark in Southern Dagestan was left by another Iran-language tribe – the Aors. Apart from military action, the Aors were involved into an active trade at the territory of Western by-Caspian belt. It is proved by report of Straborn on Aors caravan trade of Indian and Babylonian goods that they received from the Midian and the Armenian [9, p.5].

Emergence of a number of fortresses in strategically-important locations of by-Caspian Dagestan (Derbent, Shakh-Senger, Urtseki) during the period from VII century B.C. is related by researcher of Derbent history A.A. Kudryavtsev with marches of the Scythians that had a great influence upon development of Dagestan nations and their political activity, and left a mark in their material culture [6, p.43].

Armenian [4, p.15], and later Arab authors [7, p.64] have marked the tribe of the Mazkut in the Western shore of Caspia who created their own kingdom. Most researchers refer the Mazkut to Iran-speaking Maggagets [3, p.153].

Ceaseless interventions of Northern-Caucasian Iran-speaking nomads, and later – Khazar into the Front Asia through Derbent gates forced rulers of the Persian state to reinforce passage between

Caspia and Caucasian mountains. During V-VI centuries Persian shahs of Sasanid dynasty developed building of fortification constructions in Eastern Caucasus [6, p.76-79].

Apart from constructing fortifications, the Sasanid, of course, made effort to re-settle Persian population into the very fortress of Derbent and surrounding areas. "Method of consolidating the occupied territories by settling them with colonists was not new, and was used widely by rulers of the Front East since ancientry. Sasanid shahanshahs supposed correctly that being in foreign linguistic and spiritual cultural environment, surrounded by tribes, hostile towards their aggressors, Persian settlers would be the most reliable protection for these most important gates into Iranian state, understanding that their salvation is inside the strong city walls" [6, p.113].

Thus, in result of constructing fortifications in Derbent region by the Sasanid, the territory of Southern Caucasus served as place of conflict between two Iran subethnic groups, shards of which today are considered Iran-speaking Tats and Dzhalgan.

According to Dzhalgan old-timers, after Derbent fortress was founded, the Persian settled seven colonies around the town, designed to protect the new fortress, and Dzhalgan was one of these settlements. The complete list of settlements includes Komakh, Mugiarti, Darvag, Khimeidi, Maregie, Zinian, Dzhalgan.

The mentioned villages, according to our informants, were originally Persian-speaking, and it is proved by etymology of some names. Thus, 'Zidian' refers to Persian 'zindan' (prison). According to historical data, prisons were located in this village. The name 'Darvag' is translated from Persian as 'open gates'. 'Komakh' is also translated from Persian as 'prisoner'.

Information on seven settlements around the fortress, received from old-timers, has its historical confirmation. As known, fortress wall is more than 40km long and stretches up to Tabasaran. According to the data on Ibn al-Fakikh, fortress wall had "7 passages, each with a nearby town, and Persian warriors lived there" [5, p.23]. A similar information is received from Masudi, who claimed that the fortress had gates in each three or more miles, depending on roads, correspondingly to which gates were set, beyond which Khosrov "settled there from the inner side of gates a nation, obliged to protect these gates and neighboring part of the wall" [1, p.40-41].

According to historical data, we can conclude that emergence of Dzhalgan origins back to times of Dergent fortress foundation. Therefore, more than one and a half thousand years separate Dzhalgan dialect and Farsi language. At the same time, the fact that Dzhalgan dialect has not lost the basic features of Farsi language draws our attention.

As known, Iranian group of Indo-European language family is divided into Western-Iranian (Farsi, Dari, Tadjik, Beludjisk, Gilyan, Tat, Talysh, etc.) and Eastern-Iranian (Pushto, Ossetic, Pamir languages etc.) subgroups [8, p.10]. Even surficial analysis of language, spoken by Dzhalgan villagers, allows us to confirm its close relation to Farsi language, though they differ in phonetics,

morphology, and lexis. From all languages, existing nowadays in Derbent district of Dagestan, Tat language is the closest one to Dzhalgan. Tat language is referred to literature languages, upon which relatively rich figurative literature is created. Until mid-90ies the Tat, according to the latest population census of 1989, more than 30 thousand people lived in Derbent district and North-East of Azerbaijan. Therefore, the surrounding population, witnessing the closeness between Dzhalgan and Tat languages, considered the Dzhalgan for the Tat. Even nowadays, regardless of the fact that the Dzhalgan do not identify themselves and their language as Tat, and aren't able to understand each other while communicating in native language, neighbouring Turk and Caucasian nations continue to call them either the Tat, or the highland Jew, or the Persian.

Speaking of language, spoken by Dzhalgan villagers, we must say that a similar language is spoken in village Metagi-Kozmolyar and Kazmalya. There are small differences between them that can be characterized as dialects of the same language. Thus, for example, pronunciation and semantics of words can often be the same in these two dialects:

English	Dzhalgan	Metagi-Kozmolyar
<i>head</i>	<i>сэ</i>	<i>сэ</i>
<i>arm</i>	<i>дэс</i>	<i>дэс</i>
<i>bread</i>	<i>ну</i>	<i>ну</i>
<i>road</i>	<i>рах</i>	<i>рах</i>
<i>he</i>	<i>у</i>	<i>у</i>
<i>water</i>	<i>оу</i>	<i>оу</i>
<i>horse</i>	<i>æсс</i>	<i>æсс</i>

In certain cases phonetic changes in word, same in the two dialects, are observed:

English	Dzhalgan	Metagi-Kozmolyar
nose	<i>вини:</i>	<i>бини:</i>
ear	<i>уш</i>	<i>гуш</i>
sun	<i>æфтæ</i>	<i>æфто</i>
we	<i>уму</i>	<i>иму</i>
moon	<i>мæхтэ</i>	<i>мах</i>
home	<i>хунæ</i>	<i>ха^oнэ</i>
donkey	<i>хæ^o</i>	<i>ха^oа^o</i>
cow	<i>мэрэгзов</i>	<i>мæрæгов</i>
door	<i>дэ:p</i>	<i>дэрæ</i>

There are lexical differences between the two dialects, though almost none of them take their etymologic origin from Iranian heritage. Mostly these conflicts refer to borrowed words and

expressions. Thus, for example, ‘bul’ in Dzhalgan is said as Irainan’gov’, while Metagi-Kozmolyar uses obviously borrowed word ‘djonge’.

Unlikely we can define as lexical differences words that take their etymologic origin in the same source, but have transformed over time and now are perceived as completely different words. For example, Dzhalgan ‘*мæхтэ*’ (moon) in Metagi-Kozmolyar is ‘*mah*’. However, in both dialects this word originates from Ancient-Iranian ‘*ma:h*’.

As a rule, Closeness between languages can be defined according to personal pronouns. Depending on difference degree for personal pronouns we can judge if two languages are in dialect relationship or they are accents of one language [10, p.5-7].

Example:

English	Dzhalgan	Metagi-Kozmolyar	Farsi
I	мэ	мэ	мэн
you	тү	тэ	то
he	у	у	у
we	уму	иму	ма ⁰
you	ушму	тэ ⁰	шма ⁰
they	унона	уна ⁰	а ⁰ не ⁰ на ⁰

As shown by examples, differences between Dzhalgan and Metagi-Kozmolyar dialects mostly have phonetic nature (except for multiple 2nd person “we”, which has the same meaning that single 2nd person in Metagi-Kozmolyar, while in Persian multiple and single 2nd person is often expressed in multiple form). In comparison to Persian pronouns phonetic differences are more significant and might be difficult to understand in fluent speech for the Persian and the Dzhalgan. Thus, we can state that Dzhalgan and Metagi-Kozmolyar dialects have close relation and basically are accents of the same language. They both stand in dialect relations with Persian language.

Examples:

Dzhalgan	English	Farsi
<i>мэ мухардам</i>	I am eating	<i>манн михурам</i>
<i>тү мухардэми</i>	You are eating	<i>то михури</i>
<i>у мухардэ</i>	He is eating	<i>у михурад</i>

Our attention is drawn by the fact that Metagi-Kozmolyar dialect has more coincidences with Farsi:

English	Metagi-Kozmolyar	Farsi	Dzhalgan
moon	<i>mah</i>	<i>mah</i>	<i>mæhte</i>
home	<i>xa⁰ne</i>	<i>xa⁰ne</i>	<i>xunæ</i>
ear	<i>gush</i>	<i>gush</i>	<i>ush</i>

Phonetic changes in Dzhalgan language in comparison to other Western-Iranian languages, first of all, Farsi, also create certain interest.

Thus, for example, in Dzhalgan root final phoneme ‘p’ falls out, although in other Iranian languages it is preserved:

English	Др.-иранский	Джалганский	Фарси
head	<i>xara-</i>	donkey	<i>sar</i>
<i>sarah-</i>	<i>sə</i>	<i>xæ:</i>	<i>xar</i>

At the same time Dzhalgan language preserved certain archaic forms. The most important historical-phonetic feature of Dzhalgan language, in comparison to Farsi, is fallout of post-vocal ‘d’, ‘t’:

Farsi		Dzhalgan
‘ <i>pedar</i> ’	(‘father’)	‘ <i>piar</i> ’
‘ <i>deraht</i> ’	(‘tree’)	‘ <i>da^or</i> ’

A certain structural-morphological feature of Dzhalgan language is also a pre-positive qualitative definition construction. Its wide spread can be explained by influence of other Iranian languages. This feature is typical for by-Caspian Iran languages, but mostly for other Persian dialects. In fact, this feature makes Dzhalgan language very close with Eastern-Iranian languages, particularly Ossetic, in which definition comes before a defined word.

Examples:

1. In Dzhalgan: *kala da^or* ‘large tree’
In Farsi: *deraxt-e bozorg* ‘the tree is large’;
2. In Dzhalgan: *kushke du* ‘small village’
In Farsi: *deh-e kutshek* ‘the village is small’;
3. In Dzhalgan: *sie:h ou* ‘black water’
In Farsi: *a^ob-e sia^oh* ‘water is black’

Relation between Dzhalgan and Farsi language is also expressed in the area of word formation and shaping. Verb system of Dzhalgan language is characterized by presence of number of secondary personal and non-conjugated forms that could emerge in result of development of various Persian dialects. One of interesting aspects in language of the Dzhalgan is preservation of cases in relict condition. Case form is little-developed but still exists, whilst in Persian cases are almost non-present.

Two case forms are outlined in Dzhalgan language:

1. Objectless – *xunæ* ‘home’, *ketab* ‘book’, *xalq* ‘nation’
2. Object – *xunæe* ‘to home, at home, etc’, *ketabæ* ‘to book, with book, etc’, *xalqæ* ‘to nation, about nation, etc.’

According to our informers of Dzhalgan, their language is said to be similar to Talysh, however, according to their notice, they can't understand each other. Besides, we did not observe any special similarities between the studied language and Talysh or any other by-Caspian Iran languages – Gilyan or Mazendaran. There are no more coincidences with these languages than with Farsi, and this fact proves their common origin.

Emergence of phonemes that are not typical for other Iranian languages, probably borrowed from Azerbaijan language:

ü – *gükk* 'sky'

ö – *övshe* 'forest'.

At the same time Dzhalgan language preserves Persian phoneme *a'*, pronounced between *a* and *o* that was transitioned into *o* in Tadjik and *a* in Dari.

On the whole, formation of Dzhalgan language, according to our observations, received a critical influence from the following factors:

1. Isolation from other Iran languages.
2. Possible influence of neighbouring by-Caspian languages.
3. Influence of Turk, particularly Azerbaijan language.
4. Language development according to its own internal laws.

No doubt, the provided examples characterize Dzhalgan language only partially, but they are sufficient to define the self-sufficiency of this language and its difference from literature Persian language that is rather close to it. The fact that further complex study of Dzhalgan language is required, is also obvious.

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