# Dictionary of qâ 

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## Introduction

# Ethnography 

History

The $q \hat{a}(\varepsilon)$ emerged as a distinct ethnicity of mixed origin in the early 33 rd century BCE
 They rapidly adopted the horse from their new neighbours and began raiding ${ }^{4}$ passersthrough in the Pass ${ }^{5}$ and their southeastern neighbours ${ }^{6}$ and traditional enemies the $\overline{d y e} ?^{7}{ }^{7}$. This era, however, lasted only a couple of generations before the $\overline{d y e}$ ?y had enough horses of their own to challenge the qâ, restricting their raiding outside the Pass considerably. The present of the timeline is the early 32 nd century $B C E$.

## Society

The most defining feature of the qâ society is that they consider meat and organs, but not animal products such as eggs or milk, unhealthy. As primarily gatherers they require more land to feed themselves than farmers, pastoralists, or even hunters. This has led to a preference for small and extremely mobile extended family bands and a lack of complex social hierarchies and structures. Familial ties remain important even between bands, however, and blood feuds are common. Some other peculiarities of their society is their complete lack of the concepts of gender, marriage, and belief in the supernatural ${ }^{8}$.

## Art

qâ music is built around traditional repeating rhythmic patterns depending on style and theme and uses a scale of five roughly equidistant pitches per octave. The most common instruments are various types of flutes and idiophones ${ }^{9}$. Poetry is mostly sung and instead of fixed forms its structure is usually defined by the music.

Carving of and painting on rock and wood and pyrography on wood are extremely common. Cloth is usually dyed with various locally available earth pigments and plant dyes.

## Technology

qâ technology is Eneolithic, or Chalcolithic, and they mostly use tools made of ground stone. Instead of a knife their most common tool is a unifacial hand adze used for digging as well as cutting.

Their metallurgy is limited to cold-working native copper, whose practical application is thus limited to small items such as nails, needles, and jewellery. String, rope, and cloth made of nettle fibres are used instead of sinew and leather. Items made of materials or with techniques not available to the qâ are, however, often acquired through trade and raiding.

## Notes

1. Lit. 'People'. A Proto-Indo-European group analogous to the Afanas'evans (афанасьевские, afanas'evskie) of our timeline, see J.P. Mallory and D.Q. Adams, ed. Encyclopedia of Indo-European Culture (London and Chicago: Routledge, 1997), 4-6 and 417. The IPA transcription of tewtéh is based on James Clackson, Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
2. Lit. 'Windmouth'. The Dzungarian (ċov hmi, Zöün yar) Gate of our timeline. The qâ mostly inhabit the area from its top to the southern shores of the qátzhcekcokuhtcћ
 ciated river valleys.
3. The tewtéh extend farther to the south than the Afana'evans did.
4. Mounted warfare has not been invented, so the horses are used only for transport.
5. Reducing migration, trade, and other contacts between the Central and Eastern Steppes compared to our timeline.
6. In the dye?y Steppe, the Dzungarian Steppe of our timeline.
7. Lit. 'People'. A Pre-Proto-Yeniseian (енисейский, jenisejskij) group with no direct counterpart in our timeline.
8. This does not, however, mean they are atheists in the modern sense either.
9. Chordophones have not been invented.

## Phonology

## Phonemes and Allophones

| Consonants |  | Alveolopalatal | Peripheral |  | Debuccalised |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Plain | Plain | Emphatic | Plain | Emphatic |
| Plosives |  | /t/ | /k~p/ | /q~p/ |  |  |
| Fricatives |  | [6] |  |  | [h~f] | [ $\dagger \sim \ldots]$ |
| Glide |  | [j] |  |  |  |  |
| Vowels |  | Front | Raised | Retracted |  |  |
| Advanced | + | /e/ | [u~u] |  |  |  |
| tongue root | - | /ع/ | [ $\omega \sim \sim]$ | [a] |  |  |

The emphatic labials [p] and [f] are realised as pharyngealised. The nonstandard IPA letters $\hbar$ and $\omega$ are used and vowels transcribed based on their acoustics instead of their articulation to increase legibility.

In normalised transcriptions allophony is written out but free variation is not. In the latter case the most common form, listed first in the table above, is used.

## Phonotactics

The syllable structure is (C)V(C). /e/ does not occur after onset /q~p/. Vowel-initial syllables and adjacent syllables with identical bodies are rare. The domain of syllabification is the phonological word, corresponding to the morpheme.

## Allophony

Adjacent vowels are separated by an epenthetic [j]. Onset / $/ \mathrm{/}$ is lenited into [6] before /e/. Vowels are raised after onset $/ \mathrm{k} \sim \mathrm{p} /$ and retracted after onset $/ \mathrm{q} \sim \mathrm{p} /$. Codae are debuccalised into [h~f] after /e/ and into [ $\dagger \sim f]$ after $/ \varepsilon /$, and assimilate to a following onset in emphaticness and labialness. The domain of epenthesis and coda assimilation is the intonational phrase.

## Prosody

The isochrony is syllable-based. The first or only phonological word of an accentual phrase, corresponding to the morphological word, has a falling tone [ $\hat{0}$ ] that spreads into a high [6] one on its first syllable and a neutral one on the following ones if possible. Unaccented phonological words have a neutral tone. The falling tone is longer than the high and neutral ones.

Intonation is not prosodically meaningful and tends to be level. Prosodic stress /'/ on the first syllable of an accentual phrase can be used for emphasis. The boundaries of intonational phrases /|/ and utterances / $\| /$ are marked by preboundary lengthening and pausae. Clauses always form distinct intonational phrases.

## Syllabics

The phonology of qâ is not well suited for an alphabet, and IPA transcriptions of it are practically a dyslexia simulator even with the non-standard letters and conventions adopted in this work. The Syllabics are a non-canonical writing system designed to address this problem.

## Conventions

The writing direction is from left to right. Words are separated by spaces and can be hyphenated at syllable borders for line breaking. Monosyllabic compound heads are separated by non-breaking hyphens except for those ending in $\boldsymbol{I}$ and followed by 0 . Emphasis is can be marked with overlining above the x -height.

## Graphemes

| Letters |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Vowel <br> sign <br> /e/ | Punctuation |  | Other <br> Coördinator sign |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| [ $\varepsilon \mathrm{j} \varepsilon]$ | [qa] | Ligature of $\varepsilon$ and | [kw] | [ t ] | [6e] | Iteration mark | [h \%] |  | /// | /\||/ |  |
| - | $\varepsilon$ | 2 | b | 7 | 1 | $\lrcorner$ | ' | . |  | \|| | : |

There is a separate letter for each syllable body with a phonetically distinct onset. Except for 7 , the nucleus $/ \varepsilon /$ is inherent to the body letters and the nucleus /e/ is marked with the diacritic . Codae are written with the letter I .

」 iterates the preceding base letter. The domain of its use is a sequence of letters uninterupted by spaces or non-breaking hyphens.
| and || are used after prosodic units separated by a non-breaking space. \|| can also be used at the beginning of units of text such as paragraphs or headings. : can replace the coördinating conjunction êh (ọ).

The order of the letters is $0, \varepsilon, b, \not, \downarrow$,$\lrcorner , and ו$. Despite its nominal place in the order $\lrcorner$ is collated as the letter it represents. Letters with $\gtrdot$ are collated after their plain forms. Orthographic hyphens have secondary collation weight.

## Stylistic Considerations

As qâ is unwritten in-universe, texts should be written as close to spoken language as possible. Initial || should not be used in indented paragraphs because they originally developed from the omission of the roughly analogous pilcrow (I).

## Grammar

Lexicology

The open lexical word classes are verbs and nouns and the closed grammatical ones the conjunction eh (oo, :), the conjunction and prefix $k \hat{\omega} \hbar(-)\left(b_{1}\right)$, and the particle $t \hat{\varepsilon}(\mathcal{\jmath})$. Adjectival functions are taken by abstract nouns and adverbial ones by verbs. There are no words for numbers. Loaning is rare.

## Morphology

qâ has an exclusively analytic grammar and thus no inflectional morphology. Lexical words can be compounded with eachother, mixed compounds taking the class of their head. The prefix kêћ- is used to derive nouns from verbs and abstract nouns from concrete ones. Verbs acting as modifiers in compounds are not explicitly nominalised.

## Syntax

qâ has neutral alignment and right-branching syntax with topic fronting (gloss 1). Both topics and comments can be dropped if they can be inferred from context (gloss 2). Verb phrases can be chained in serial constructions ordered according to causation and order of occurence (gloss 3). Noun clauses are introduced with the conjunction k $\hat{\omega} \hbar$ (gloss 4). Clauses within a sentence usually form separate intonational phrases.

> qa kćtzce céqahtzћ || qa kill $\overline{d z e}$ e? $\|$
> "A qa killed / was killed by a dee? y ."


 Def adv lake ride soc mountain make nz:burn \| "They rode from the lake to the mountain and set up a camp."
4. ${ }^{\text {. }}$

horse | Nz ADV ride | tire ||
"The horse that they rode was tired."

Nouns can be modified by other nouns or noun clauses describing or delimiting the head or indicating a relationship with it. Describing or delimiting modifiers come before those indicating a relationship and the two are not linked with a conjunction.

Negation is marked with the word $t \hat{\varepsilon}$, acting as a preceding particle for verbs and a head noun for nouns. A verb does not take the negative particle if one or both of its arguments are negative.

Commands, questions, and conditionals are not distinguished from statements. The indefinite pronoun $6 \hat{e}(\eta)$ is used in non-polar questions. Polar questions are answered either by echoing the relevant verb or with the verb kúhts ( particle.

The coördinating conjunction eh is placed before all non-initial coördinated elements. Conjoined comparatives are used for comparison.

## Dictionary

## Dictionary

## $\|\circ\|$

® ع ह́qa Noun: right (direction). Cf. ḅ.
$\left.{ }^{\circ}\right\rceil^{1}$ દ́є́єћћqa Noun: heart, centre.

ו: (:) êh Conjunction: coördinator (COORD).

$$
\|\varepsilon\|
$$

$\varepsilon q \hat{a}$ Noun: 1. person, people. 2. human. 3. qâ. ~ $\rceil^{2}$ Phrase: (poetic) qâ.
عoı qájghte Intransitive verb: ride.
$\varepsilon^{b}$ qák $\omega$ Noun: little, few, less. Used with nouns. Cf. $\mathrm{b}_{7}$. $\mathrm{b}_{17} \sim$ Intransitive verb: little, less. Used with verbs.
$\left.\varepsilon^{b}\right\rceil^{\prime}$ qákçeh Noun: proximity, immediacy.
ع!̣」 qákukco Transitive verb: cover, surround, around.
$\varepsilon\rceil$ qátz Noun: definite pronoun (DEF). Used for second and third persons.
$\left.{ }^{〔}\right\rceil$ ' 9 átchce Noun: (body of) water. Proper noun: (colloquial) Jalayaşköl (Жалаңашкөл)
 Proper noun: Jalayaşköl Lake.

2b qácek $\omega$ Noun: strength, power.
${ }^{2}$ ๆ qácetz Noun: 1. tongue. 2. language.
દ'દך qátqatzћ Intransitive verb: burn. bi-~ Noun: 1. fire. 2. camp. 3. band, family.
$\left.{ }^{\text {عاb }}\right\rceil$ qáhkcoce Noun: size.


$\left.\varepsilon^{\prime}\right\rceil^{\text {qáh6e }}$ Noun: 1. self. 2. reflexive, reciprocal pronoun (REFL).
$\left.\varepsilon^{\prime}\right\rceil^{\prime}$ 'qáhceћqa Transitive verb: tell. bı-~ Noun: story, literature, poem, song, poetry.

## ||b \|

bǫı kćjeqaћ Noun: back (direction), lastness. Cf. bıઘıו.
$b_{\varepsilon} k$ cóqa Transitive verb: with, by (means), about, because of, from (ADV). Used for adverbial abstract nouns. Cf.

ابִا kákuhce Noun: fibre.
$b_{\ddagger} b$ kćtck $\omega$ Intransitive verb: prevail, win.
$\mathrm{b}_{77}$ kćtz6e Transitive verb: kill.
bqı $^{\text {k }}$ ḱtzћ Noun: much, many, more. Used with nouns. Cf. $\varepsilon$ b. $\mathrm{b}_{17 \sim}$ Intransitive verb: much, more. Used with verbs.
${ }^{\text {b }}$ kćse Noun: fish, aquatic animal. Obligatory reference to ghoti.
$b_{1} k \hat{\omega} \hbar$ Conjunction: clause nominaliser (NZ). Prefix: action, state, quality (NZ). Used for deriving nouns from verbs and abstract nouns from concrete ones.
bicıı kónqqahkcoh Noun: front, firstness. Cf. bogı.


ḅ̨ı kúqaћ Transitive verb: in, on, at, by (location), to, into (LOC). Used for recipients, beneficiaries, and results. Cf. $b_{\varepsilon}$.

」 J kúk $\omega$ Noun: left (direction). Cf. oq.
bృ $\ddagger$ kúkcose (tewtét $k^{w}$ ékwlos 'wheel') Noun: wheel.

${ }_{-71}$ kútzєe Noun: sheep, goat.
b. $_{7}$ kútzce (tewtéf kjrsós ‘vehicle') Noun: 1. cart, wagon. 2. vehicle.
bךŋィ kútzћqa Transitive verb: carry, pull.


$b_{17} k$ kúhte Transitive verb: do, cause, make. Used for answering polar questions.


## |n케

$\eta^{t \hat{\varepsilon}}$ Particle: negation (NEG). Noun: negative pronoun (NEG). $\exists \varepsilon b$ téqak $\omega$ Transitive verb: hear, listen.
$\rceil^{2}$ téqace Noun: 1. friend, ally. 2. tźqace.

$\ddagger \mathfrak{q}^{\ddagger} \neq$ téqahte Noun: warmth.
$ך^{b}$ ték $\omega$ Copula: be. Intransitive verb: exist.

 promise, contract, oath.
$\left.\rceil^{\natural}\right\rceil^{\text {ť́kuce }}$ Noun: 1. everything, all. 2. world.


ךıદ! t ťhqaku Transitive verb: remove.


$\left.\mathfrak{q}^{16}\right\}_{\text {tह́hkcere }}$ Intransitive verb: run. Transitive verb: escape, flee.
ךִ


## ||l|

$\rceil^{6 \hat{e}}$ Noun: indefinite pronoun (INDEF). Used in non-polar questions.
$\rceil$ ६éqa Noun: first person pronoun (1p).
$7^{2}$ бéqace Noun: 1. buran (a strong winter wind). 2. (cold, calculating) determination.

$\left.\rceil^{6}\right\rceil^{\text {Gékwse }}$ Noun: 1. mouth. 2. entrance, door. 3. mountain pass. $\sim$, $1 b_{\varepsilon}$ Proper noun: Dzungarian Gate.

$\rceil^{6, b}$ бékwhk $\omega$ Noun: rock, stone.

$7^{7}$ rétż Noun: place, land.

 argument, conflict, fight.
 2. southwest (winter) 3. northeast (summer). bı-~ Noun: 1. wind. 2. windward. 3. southeast
 ter) 3 . southwest (summer).
$7^{16}$ ¢ céhkcote Intransitive verb: come, arrive. Transitive verb: enter.
ך $\ddagger$ ধéhtzqa Noun: 1. lowness. 2. plain, steppe.
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## Example Texts

## The Buran and the Sun

The North Wind and the Sun, attributed to Aísōpos (Aî́ $\omega \pi=\varsigma$ ), is commonly used as a parallel text in comparative linguistics. This version of the text is translated and adapted from The International Phonetic Association, Handbook of (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 44.

## Text



 b.6.6)

## Transcription




 qákuk $\omega$ qáhce | êh céqace kúqah kஸ́ceqah kúh



Gloss

1. buran COORD sun ADV $\mid$ NZ INDEF have more strength $\mid$ argue | COORD person:travel ADV cloak warmth arrive \| 2. $\varnothing$ agree | NZ DEF ADV firstness cause | NZ person:travel remove cloak | win || 3. buran ADV all strength DEF blow | COORD $\varnothing$ do:more blow | COORD person:travel ADV more proximity ADV cloak DEF surround REFL \| COORD buran LOC end give.up || 4. sun ADV warmth shine | COORD person:travel LoC immediacy remove cloak || 5. COORD NZ buran agree | NZ sun have more strength | make ||

## Translation

1. The Buran and the Sun were disputing which was stronger, when a traveler with a warm cloak arrived. 2. They agreed that the one who first made the traveler remove their cloak would win. 3. The Buran blew with all of their strength, but the more they blew the more closely the traveler wrapped their cloak around themself, and in the end the Buran gave up. 4. The Sun shone warmly, and immediately the traveler took off their cloak. 5. And the Buran was made to agree that the Sun was stronger.

## Schleicher's Fable

Schleicher's Fable, also known as The Sheep and the Horses, was written in 1868 by August Schleicher in reconstructed Proto-Indo-European. This version of the text is translated and adapted from R.S.P. Beekes, Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamin's Publishing Company, 2011), 287.

## Text

||I. . 3. 3 .



## Transcription






 tгqa ||

## Gloss

1. sheep | NZ $\varnothing$ have NEG fibre | see few horse || 2. DEF pull wagon weight | COORD DEF carry thing size | COORD DEF ADV speed carry human || 3. sheep say DEF LOc horse || 4. 1P see | NZ human drive horse | Coord heart 1P hurt 1P || 5 . horse say DEF || $6 . \varnothing$ listen | sheep | 1P see DEF | COORD heart 1P hurt 1P || 7. human ADV fibre sheep make garment warmth LOC REFL || 8. COORD sheep have NEG fibre || 9. sheep hear DEF flee LOC plain ||

## Translation

1. A sheep that had no wool saw horses: 2 . one of them was pulling a heavy wagon, one carrying a big load, and one carrying a human quickly. 3. The sheep said to the horses: 4 . "I see humans driving horses and my heart pains me." 5. The horses said: 6. "Listen, sheep, we see this and our hearts pain us: 7. a human makes a warm garment for themself from the wool of the sheep. 8. And the sheep has no wool." 9. Hearing this, the sheep fled into the plain.
