



ČERĀĠ-E HEDĀYAT

ČERĀĠ-E HEDĀYAT (“lamp of guidance”), a monolingual Persian dictionary by the Indo-Muslim poet and scholar *Serāj-al-Din ‘Ali Khan Ārzu*. Its title was taken from a verse by Neẓāmi (ed. Dabirsiāqi, p. 2), and also alludes to the author’s reputed ancestor, *Naṣir-al-Din Čerāġ-e Dehli*. Completed at Delhi under the patronage of the Mughal ruler Moḥammad Shah in 1147/1734-35, the *Čerāġ* was conceived as the second volume (*daftar*) of Ārzu’s larger and better known dictionary, the *Serāj-al-loġa* (“lamp of language”); as the *Serāj* lists the non-Arabic words used by the Classical Persian poets (*motaqaddemin*), so the *Čerāġ* lists the vocabulary of the later Persian poets (*mota’aḵḵerin*) of Timurid, Safavid, and Mughal times. By these, as is evident from his citations, Ārzu means mainly his immediate predecessors and contemporaries among Indo-Persian poets, most frequently Moḥsen Ta’tir, Waḥid, Ašraf, and Toġrā; though earlier poets of Persia and Central Asia, such as Sa’di, Ḥāfeẓ, Šā’eb, Kamāl-e Ƙojandī, and Navā’i, are also quoted. Besides citations from 184 named poets, support is sought from 120 anonymous verses and 37 dictionaries, histories, *taḍkeras* and other documents (Bahridin, pp. 26-29).

Ārzu intended the work explicitly for users of Indo-Persian, rather than Persian speakers of Persia or Central Asia (ed. Dabirsiāqi, p. 2). The dictionary contains some 2,075 words and phrases which, according to Ārzu, are not to be found (or not fully defined as to their figurative meanings) in the major dictionaries of his day, notably the *Farhang-e Jahāngiri*, *Majma’ al-Fors* and *Borhān-e qāṭe’*. Though most of the vocabulary is Persian, words of Arabic and Indic origin are included. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order by initial,



in thirty chapters (*bāb*) comprising all the Perso-Arabic letters of the alphabet except *že*, and ordered internally by the second, but not subsequent, letters; short vowels are recorded longhand.

The *Čerāġ* is notable for its high proportion of metaphorical phrasal idioms, given with variants and often explained and traced to their origins at some length. An example is *dandān/ danda ba-fārsi goḏāštan/ nehādan* (lit., ‘set one’s teeth on Persian’; usually in negative contexts) ‘to consent, concur, understand’: this is traced to the (Mughal) practice of sending out to the provinces tax-collectors who spoke only Turkish and no Persian, so that they would entertain no arguments from the taxpayers.

Mss. of the *Čerāġ* are found in many libraries of India and Europe. Numerous lithographs of the *Čerāġ* were published in India (at Lakhnaw, Bombay, and Kānpūr; mostly on the margin of other dictionaries, the *Ġiāt al-lōġāt* and the *Montakab al-loġāt*), from as early as about 1850, and reproduced up until 1970 (see Storey, III/1, p. 39; Naqawi, pp. 116-17; Bahriddin, pp. 14-15). Typeset editions have been printed at Tehran (ed. M. Dabirsiāqi, 1338 Š./ 1959) and Dushanbe (ed. Amon Nurov, 1992; in Cyrillic characters).

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