



DARĪ'A ELĀ TAŞĀNĪF AL-ŞĪ'A

DARĪ'A elā TAŞĀNĪF al-ŞĪ'A, AL-, a comprehensive bibliography of Imami Shi'ite works in twenty-five volumes compiled by [Shaikh Moḥammad-Moḥsen Āqā Bozorg Ṭehrānī](#) (1293-1389=1349 Š. /1876-1970); it contains about 55,000 entries for works written up to 1370 Š./1950-51. Āqā Bozorg initially conceived the project as a response to the work of Jerjī Zaydān (1278-1332/1861-1914), who was considered to have belittled the Imami contribution to Arabic literature (cf. Zaydān, p. 6). The original title, *al-Darī'a elā ma'refat moṣannafāt al-Şī'a*, was suggested by Āqā Bozorg's teacher Sayyed Ḥasan Ṣadr (Ṣadr-al-Dīn; 1272-1354/1856-1935). Āqā Bozorg began work on 25 Dū'l-qa'da 1329/17 November 1911, shortly after settling in Sāmarrā in Iraq. By 1331/1913 he had produced a one-volume draft of abbreviated titles of works to be cited. He completed a six-volume draft of the entire work three years later and made it available to interested scholars. Technical problems caused repeated delays in publication; some volumes took more than two years to print. Only volumes I-XIX had been published, at Najaf (I-III, XIII-XIV) or Tehran, by the time of Āqā Bozorg's death. The final volume appeared in Tehran in 1398=1357 Š./1978. A supplement, edited by Aḥmad Ḥosaynī and entitled *Mostadrakāt al-mo'allef*, was published as volume XXVI in Mašhad in 1405=1364 Š./1985.

Most of the volumes were edited by the author's sons, 'Alī-Naqī (vols. IV-XII, XV, XXIV-XXV) and Aḥmad Monzawī (XVI-XXIII); volumes XIII and XIV were, however, edited by Moḥammad-Şādeq Baḥr-al-'Olūm (*Darī'a* XXVI, p. 5). Some volumes include French or English title pages, and from volume XVI on there are author indexes. Beginning with volume XVII titles of Isma'ili works



mentioned in the *Fehrest* of Esmā'īl Majdū' were included; the edition by 'Alī-Naqī Monzawī was used. The material on poetry, originally planned for volumes IX and X, was published in four separately paginated parts, numbered IX/1 through IX/4. In preparing his magnum opus Āqā Bozorg read widely in Imami literature and also traveled in Iraq, Persia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the Ḥejāz, in order to visit public and private libraries and to consult their catalogues (*Darī'a* VI, pp. 400-04, VII, pp. 289-94, VIII, pp. 297-99). He also consulted catalogues of libraries in Turkey, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and some European countries (*Darī'a* XX, p. *hā'*) and made use of material that he requested from various scholars. The result is a work of meticulous scholarship and remarkable industry. All branches of Imami literature are fully represented, from koranic exegesis and works of tradition, history, theology, and law to science, poetry, and belles lettres. Major topics are preceded by illuminating introductory remarks, and issues in the history and transmission of problematic texts are treated in a clear and concise manner. Entries vary in length from a few lines to several pages. For many works Āqā Bozorg provided summaries of the contents, as well as lists of manuscripts and printed editions known to him. Where there were doubts about the author's identity he reviewed the available evidence, occasionally offering his own views. Cross-references are provided for works known under more than one title. For those no longer extant Āqā Bozorg noted where he had found references to them. As Āqā Bozorg noted more than once, ideally a work on the scale of the *Darī'a* requires the cooperation of a team of scholars, and he was aware that some errors or inaccuracies were inevitable. They are impressively few, however, and the *Darī'a* is generally a sound and reliable guide. It surpassed by far anything previously available, including the *Kašf al-zonūn* by Ḥājī Kalīfa (1017-67/1609-57), which contains little on Shi'ite literature, and *Kašf al-ḥojob wa'l-astār* by Sayyed E'jāz-Ḥosayn Kantūrī (1240-86/1824-70; see Āqā Bozorg, pp. 149-50). Its importance, which was immediately obvious to Muslim scholars, was soon recognized in the West as well. Carl Brockelmann used it in the second edition of his *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (though he had only the first two volumes at his disposal; cf. *GAL* I, p. 196), and it has since become an indispensable tool for all students of Imami literature.



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