



DORRAT

DORRAT, maize or (Indian) corn, *Zea mays* L. (fam. Gramineae), with many varieties and hybrids (see Ṭabāṭabā'ī, pp. 140-62).

Terminology. This important cereal, of American origin, was introduced into India in about 1500 by the Portuguese, and from there it reached southern Persia in the Safavid period (907-1145/1501-1732), probably through Portuguese and Spanish merchants (Pūr(-e) Dāwūd, p. 137). In India, Persia, and other Middle Eastern countries its names are not reminiscent of its native American name *mahiz/mays*; instead, the names of familiar cereals, especially millet, sorghum, and wheat were applied to it, sometimes with modifiers. In India vernacular designations for millet or sorghum included *jo/awār* (for other variants, see Platts, s.v. *jowār*), originally referring to *Sorghum sudanense* (Piper) Stapf (cf. Pashto [ḡaṭ-] *jwār*, lit., “(big) millet,” *jo/awārī* “sorghum” in the 16th-century text of Abūnaṣrī Heravī, pp. 100-01) and Hindī *mak(k)ā/makā'ī* “Meccan” because of the supposed Arabian provenience of sorghum (for hypotheses about the diffusion routes of sorghum from East Africa, see Watson, chap. 2; Dymock et al., III, pp. 579-80; cf. obsolete Persian *dorrat-/gandom-e Makka* “millet/wheat of Mecca,” given as synonyms for *g/jāvvars* in Tonokābonī, s.v.v.; Azeri Turk. *maka/matša* < *maka būḡdā*, lit., “Mecca wheat”; eastern Gīlakī *makā-ba/ī/ūj*, lit., “Mecca rice”). Other terms for millet or sorghum applied to corn include Persian *dorrat* (Kurd. *zōrāt*, Ar. *dor(r)a* < Akkadian *durra* “a certain kind of millet”; Hrozný, tr., pp. 147-48; cf. *dora ṣafrā'* “yellow sorghum” in Syria, *dora šāmīyya* “Syrian sorghum” in Egypt), *mısr (dari)* “Egyptian (millet)” in Turkey, and Yazdī *go'ars*, originally



“millet.” Terms for wheat (Pers. *gandom*) applied to corn include *bābā-gandam*, lit., “daddy wheat” (probably an allusion to the beard-like corn silk) in western Gilān, *kū-gand/nem* “mountain wheat” in Māzandarān, and *gan/rma šāmī* “Syrian wheat” and *ganmok*, probably “little wheat,” in Kurdish (see Hažār, s.vv.). Other appellations for maize, of uncertain origin, include Māzandarānī *kāve*, Lāsgerdī *zorok*, and Kurdish *sardārī* (probably related to a certain *sardār* “chief, general”) and *ganma pēḡambarāna*, lit., “prophets’ wheat.”

Cultivation. According to the most recent available statistics (for 1367 Š./1988-89) the areas under cultivation of corn in Persia included 48,560 ha producing 156,450 metric tons of *dorrat-e dāna’ī* (lit., “seed corn,” i.e., sweet corn) and 32,390 ha producing 581,090 metric tons of *dorrat-e kūša’ī* (sorghum) and *dorrat-e ’olūfa’ī* (lit., “fodder corn,” i.e., varieties of field corn; Markaz-e āmār, pp. 17, 40). The larger areas under cultivation of “seed corn” were in the *ostāns* of Fārs, Kūzestān, Sīstān and Baluchistan, and Māzandarān, in that order; those under cultivation of both “field corn” and sorghum were in the *ostāns* of Tehran, East Azarbaijan, Sīstān and Baluchistan, and Fārs, in that order (Markaz-e āmār, pp. 96, 119).

Uses. In Persia, sorghum and “field corn” are used mainly for cattle feed and “seed corn” for poultry and occasionally cattle feed. In some poor rural districts cornmeal is occasionally added to wheat flour to make an inferior bread. The most conspicuous use of corn is in the form of *balāl* (probably from, or akin to, Hindī *bāl* “ear of corn”; Platts, s.v.), ears of sweet corn with soft, milky grains (*šīr balāl*, lit., “milk corncob”) roasted over charcoal in sidewalk braziers or in the open, then dipped in salt water, and eaten on the spot in the summer. Popcorn (*čos-e fīl*) is also made.

In popular medicine an infusion of *kākol-e dorrat/balāl* (corn silk), alone or with *dom-e ḡīlās* (bigarreau-cherry stalks), is recommended as a diuretic and a lithotriptic, for treatment of gout, nephritis, and infections of the urinary tract (Jazāyerī, pp. 116-18).



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