



LEXICOGRAPHY I. INTRODUCTION

i. Introduction

Dictionaries of New Persian (*Pārsi-e dari*), as they emerged in Iran and Transoxiana from perhaps about 900 CE and evolved chiefly in India from ca. 1300, may be divided into several groups, in accordance with the purpose they served, and also with the form they took, these considerations being to an extent interdependent. So-called “defining dictionaries” (sing. *farhang*) that ordered entries alphabetically (the modern idea of a dictionary, accounting for most Persian lexicographical works), and glossaries or vocabularies arranged primarily by topic comprise both monolingual and bi- or multilingual works. Those listing entries under separate lexical or grammatical categories (e.g., nouns, verbs, pronouns), and those restricted to a single category (e.g., nouns or verb infinitives) are mostly bi- or multilingual.

From the early 20th century, with increasing exposure to foreign interest and influences, and a growing colloquial element in the literature, modern methods began to transform traditional Persian lexicography. Publications representative of these changes have been particularly numerous during the past thirty years, and are surveyed in the final section, except for bilingual and technical dictionaries.

Reference to specific works is necessarily selective (for more information, see



DICTIONARIES and entries on selected works). V. M. Shepherd's recension of the section on lexicography in Storey's *Persian Literature* (III/1, Leiden, 1984, pp. 1-122), the principal reference for manuscripts and printed editions of classical works, is somewhat outdated and not devoid of errors (Tasbihi). Catalogs of particular manuscript collections and the introductions to printed editions of classical dictionaries are further sources of specific information.

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Mohammad-Reza Bateni, "Recent Advances in Persian Lexicography," in *Aspects of Iranian Linguistics*, eds. Simin Karimi et al., Newcastle upon Tyne, 2008, pp. 3-18; the critical survey of publications ca. 1997-2007 includes modern bilingual dictionaries.

Henry Blochmann, "Contributions to Persian Lexicography," *JRASB* 37/1, 1868, pp. 1-72; an evaluation of the principal Indo-Persian dictionaries.

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