

McMahon, A. M. (1994). *Understanding Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meillet, A. (1912). L'évolution des formes grammaticales. *Scientia (Rivista di Scienze)* 12(26), 6. [Repr. in Meillet 1948 (pp. 130–48).]

Skjærvø, P. O. (2011). *The Spirit of Zoroastrianism*, New Haven/London.

Trask, R. L. (2000). *The dictionary of historical and Comparative Linguistics*. Chicago, III, Fitzroy Dearborn.

## **Comparative Analysis of the Lexis of the Khorasani Dialect and Dari**

*Armen Israyelyan*

*Yerevan State University*

Khorasani is one of the oldest dialects of Persian. The examination of the Khorasani dialect is essential for an assessment of the historical background of the vocabulary of the contemporary Iranian languages. Many words that were part of Persian vocabulary, but are no longer used in most dialects, still exist in Khorasani and Dari.

The Dari language originated in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and has become the official language of parts of Iran, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. Its dialects are divided into two groups. The first group belongs to northeastern Iran, the northern part of Afghanistan and Transoxiana, and the second group are the southern dialects (from Khorasan to Sistan).

In Khorasan, even after the spread of Islam, Dari preserved its integrity. Since that region was far from the center of the Caliphate, it was subjected to fewer linguistic influences.

Al-Muqaddasī of Shams confirms that the language of the population of Great Khorasan was "Parsi-Dari". The French scholar, G. Lazard, mentions that Dari was not only the spoken language of the people of Great Khorasan, but also Balkh. Analyzing the stages of development of Farsi, Iranologist V. Ivanov divides New Persian into two branches, Tajiki

and Khorasani. Dari and other modern Persian languages come from these two branches.

There are only lexical and phonetical differences between contemporary Persian and the dialects which are common in different parts of Iran. This means that languages which were spoken in the middle ages had a great impact on Persian. The importance of Khorasani is that Iranian has always been used in Great Khorasan. After the adoption of Islam, Middle Persian in the area of Khorasan remained more intact and its influence is apparent in modern Dari.

Khorasani still contains phonemes identical to Middle Iranian, which are either not present in literary Persian or have suffered shifts. Many words in Khorasani end in “a”, while in literary Persian it only exists in the words “va” and “na”.

Lazard classifies two main groups of dialects of the Persian language: Western and Eastern. Khorasani belongs to the latter. The words in the eastern group have phonetic and vocabulary differences. As far as phonetics is concerned, the main difference is related to the eastern *ō* and *ē* long sounds, which also exist in Khorasani.

Table 1.

<i>Middle Persian</i>	<i>Khorasani dialect</i>	<i>Modern Persian</i>
sēr	sēr	sir - سير
dōst	dōs	dust - دوست
dēr	dēr	dir - دير

Table 2.

<i>Dari</i>	<i>Khorasani dialect</i>	<i>Modern Persian</i>
baja	baja	sāat - ساعت
šamāl	šamāl	bād - باد
čaka	čaka	māst-e čekide - ماست چکیده