ON THE MODERN POLITICIZATION
OF THE PERSIAN POET NEZAMI GANJAVI

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ALI DOOSTZADEH

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*On the Modern Politicization
of the Persian Poet Nezami Ganjavi*

Guest Editor of the Volume
Victoria Arakelova

The monograph examines several anachronisms, misinterpretations and outright distortions related to the great Persian poet Nezami Ganjavi, that have been introduced since the USSR campaign for Nezami's 800th anniversary in the 1930s and 1940s. The authors of the monograph provide a critical analysis of both the arguments and terms put forward primarily by Soviet Oriental school, and those introduced in modern nationalistic writings, which misrepresent the background and cultural heritage of Nezami. Outright forgeries, including those about an alleged Turkish Divan by Nezami Ganjavi and falsified verses first published in Azerbaijan SSR, which have found their way into Persian publications, are also in the focus of the authors' attention. An important contribution of the book is that it highlights three rare and previously neglected historical sources with regards to the population of Arran and Azerbaijan, which provide information on the social conditions and ethnography of the urban Iranian Muslim population of the area and are indispensable for serious study of the Persian literature and Iranian culture of the period.

Note for the digitized version of the book by Victoria Arakelova:

A few modifications by the authors were regretfully received late by the editor and did not make the first print version (October 2012). However, they have been included in the digitized version of the book which holds the same ISBN. In the event of future prints of the book, these modifications will also be applied.

Some of the Misprints that were corrected include:

1) Pg 29:
From: Accept in parts that need more explanation –
To: Except in parts that need more explanation.

2) Slight modifications in Section 3.5 with regards to the count of few words which did not change the actual percentages that were mentioned previously by the authors.

3) Page 150.
From: "Currently, Qatrān Tabrizi and Asadi Tusi (both were originally from Tus, but fled to Naxchivan during the Ghaznavid era)"
To: "Currently, Qatrān Tabrizi and Asadi Tusi (originally from Tus, but fled to Naxchivan during the Ghaznavid era)"

Note: The authors in many places of the book have already emphasized that Qatrān spoke the Fahlavi dialect of Tabriz as his native language and was a Western Persian (from the Iranian region of Azerbaijan and not from Khurasan).

4) Footnote 150: "Iranioans" changed to "Iranians"

5) Title of Section 3.1 which did not show up in the index of the print edition was re-inserted.

6) Page 135:
From "Habashi is not while"
To: "Habashi is not white"

7) Page 187:
From: "such poets"
To: "such writers"

8) Footnote 277:
From: Vyronis 2001
To: Vyrnois 1993. Vyrnois 1993 added to the reference list.

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Preface

The new *Yerevan Series for Oriental Studies* is conceived as a continuation of the *Series of the Caucasian Centre for Iranian Studies*, published in Yerevan since 1996. The latter, though having never been restricted to Iranian Studies, had a narrower thematic range. Predominantly aimed at the CIS auditorium, it was mainly published in Russian. The present *Series* is first and foremost an international initiative. As such, the *Yerevan Series for Oriental Studies* will include short monographs primarily in Western European languages.

In the sixteen years of publishing the international journal *Iran and the Caucasus* (BRILL: Leiden-Boston), we have often faced a problem when an important contribution to the field remained beyond the journal's scope because of its format. Thus, the *Series* has been created to promote scholarly works, which successfully pass the peer-reviewing, but exceed the limited space allotted to articles in *Iran and the Caucasus*.

The authors of the present monograph, Siavash Lornejad and Ali Doostzadeh, and I as the Guest Editor, are privileged to open the *Yerevan Series* with research on one of the pillars of the Persian poetry — Nizami Ganjavi.

Mediaeval Ganja was the native place of many outstanding figures — poets, historians, philosophers, etc. For instance, Jamāl al-Dīn Khalīl Sharvānī's *Nuzhat al-Majālis*, an anthology of the 11th-13th century Persian literature, includes the works of 115 poets from northwestern Iran (Azerbaijan, Sharvān and Arran), 24 of them from Ganja alone. Thus, Nizami Ganjavi's personality represents an essential part of the cultural phenomenon of mediaeval Ganja and wider, the Caucasian-Iranian culture. Alas, centuries later – initially as a result of the USSR nation-building policy and afterword as a result of nationalistic aspirations in the Azerbaijan Republic, the same phenomenon became an instrument for biased, pseudo-academic approaches and political speculations.

I would like to especially emphasise that while analysing the arguments of authors involved in politicised Orientalistics, Siavash Lornejad and Ali Doostzadeh respond to the phenomenon of distortions related to Nizami as such, without calling into doubt the positive contributions of such scholars as, say, Evgenij Eduardovich Bertel's to the study of Persian literature. Yet, it was the invention of the so-called "Azerbaijani school" of Persian poetry and the political mislabeling of Persian literature as "Azerbaijani literature" by recognised Soviet scholars, which later allowed politicised amateurs to "substantiate" the annihilation of the Iranian heritage of Transcaucasia for the sake of a new "Azerbaijani" identity.

Several words should be said about the scholarly value of the present research as it is, apart from its reasoned critiques of the politicised use of culture. The comprehensive bibliography, including Western, Russian, Iranian, Armenian and other publications, which are seldom, if ever, considered together by modern authors, makes the book itself a significant source on the subject discussed, as well as on the history and culture of Shirvan and Arran. The work is based on a solid corpus of available sources, including recently published manuscripts related to the history of the region and its literary tradition. What is particularly attractive is that the narration, with its amazing insight into the colourful atmosphere of Nizami's Ganja, to a certain extent reconstructs the ethno-cultural landscape of the city, in which the great Persian poet lived.

A note about some technical aspects: The authors, the North America-based scholars prefer, naturally, the New Persian transcription of Arabo-Persian citations and names, including the poets' name itself (Nezami). We decided to keep it unchanged, despite the tradition we follow to render the early Persian texts in the classical manner, i.e. according to the rules of the Persian pronunciation before the 15th century.

I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Garnik Asatrian, the General Editor of the *Yerevan Series*, for accepting the monograph for publication in the *Series*. I would also like to extend sincere thanks to Prof. Dr. Adriano V. Rossi for his valuable comments and notes, as well as to Dr. George Bournoutian and Dr. Paola Orsatti for their evaluation of this work.

VICTORIA ARAKELOVA

<div dir="rtl">

ای نام تو بهترین سرآغاز
بی نام تو نامه کی کنم باز

</div>

Dedicated to the Memory of Prof. Mohammad-Amin Riāhi Khoi

Introduction

The USSR anniversary campaign of the Persian poet Nezami which began in the late 1930s was politicized from its very beginning[1]. From the beginning of the campaign, scholarship and politics were combined together for the purpose of nation building[2]. The campaign culminated in the festivities in 1948, but its consequences have affected scholarship by introducing anachronistic terms as well as non-scientific misinterpretations of Nezami's writings. The political ramifications of that campaign can be seen in ethno-nationalistic writings to this day, as well as works of some scholars who are not aware of sources which contain critical examinations of USSR nation-building scholarship. For example, one can mention the anachronistic and 20th century invented term "Azerbaijani School of Persian poetry" or "Azerbaijani style of Persian poetry" whereas Nezami Ganjavi, Mujir al-Din Baylaqāni, Dhulfiqār Sharvāni and other poets of the area have never used such a term. As shown, such a term is not encountered prior to the 20th century and it was solely invented for partition of Persian poetry along politically contrived basis. The poetry of these Persian poets indicates that they referenced their own style as the

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[1] For details of the campaign and its aftermath, see, e.g. Aghajanian 1992; Diakonoff 1995; Kolarz 1952; Shnirelman 2001; Slezkine 2000; Tamazishvili 2001; idem 2004.
[2] ibid.

historical term of 'Iraqi Style (see Part II). Another example is that some of these politicized USSR scholars like Bertels[3] have called the poetry of Nezami using the anachronistic and non-existent (in the 12th century) term "Azerbaijani literature" whereas Nezami himself has explicitly termed his poetry as Persian poetry (see Part II). However, this unscientific anachronism is still being applied in non-specialist literature and some non-scholarly English articles.

The politics surrounding the anniversary campaign and the nation building in USSR have been reviewed by some scholars[4]. Consequently, the aim of the present work is not to examine the politics surrounding this issue which has already been examined at varying level of details by the aforementioned scholars. Rather, we aim at critical examination of the politically driven arguments by the USSR scholars and also the writers with ethno-nationalist viewpoints.

These political fallacious claims have been collected and recently presented by authors writing from an ethno-nationalistic point of view[5]. Some of the Soviet and even ethno-nationalist viewpoints have also found their way into some English publications whose authors lack knowledge of the Persian/Arabic languages[6] and are politically biased[7]. The mainstream and specialized English publications that have been examined by us have not been affected or only minutely affected by the USSR campaign. These sources which are written by scholars of Persian literature and Nezami specialist, affirm clearly that the uniform consensus of Nezami scholars is that Nezami Ganjavi is a Persian poet and thinker[8].

However, a recent new trend is observed where some non-expert authors writing about the region have carelessly relied on politicized USSR and modern Azerbaijan Republic sources. These authors lack knowledge of the Persian language and consequently have no scholarly authority in the field of Persian literature. In order to compensate for this short-coming, they have relied on readily available politicized Soviet and modern Azerbaijan Republic sources to make invalid claims. Three authors who do not understand Persian are mentioned here to demonstrate this

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[3] Tamazishvili 2001.

[4] Aghajanian 1992; Diakonoff 1995; Kolarz 1952; Shnirelman 2001; Slezkine 2000; Tamazishvili 2001; idem 2004.

[5] Heyat 2006; Heyat 2010; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

[6] Naroditskaya 2003.

[7] Altstadt 1992 see review by Bournoutian 1992. Shaffer 2001; idem 2002 see reviews by Atabaki 2004 and Siegel 2004.

[8] de Blois 1994:438; Chelkowski 1995; Gelpke 1997:XI; Meisami 1998:69; Schimmel 1985:18; Seyed-Gohrab 1999; idem 2003.

point[9]. In one recent book on ethnic music[10], the author who uses sources published in Soviet Union and Republic of Azerbaijan, claims that: "the poetry of Nezami contained expressions of spoken Turkish"[11] and "the ghazal is the essence of Azerbaijanian classical poetry created by native poets such as Nezami, Sharvāni, Fizuli, Nasimi, Natavan and Vagif"[12]. We note that neither Nezami nor Khāqāni wrote in any language called "Azerbaijanian" nor was such an anachronistic term used until the 20th century. They both wrote in Persian and the *ghazal* genre pre-exists the poetry of both poets. Also, as shown in Part IV, there is absolutely no proof that Nezami, who does not even have a single verse in Turkish, even knew Turkish.

In another recent book[13], the author claims that: "Nezami Ganjevi, because of his wide fame and enormous contributions to Persian-language literature, is seen as an example of interconnections between Turkish and Persian cultural strands, and of Azerbaijan's place in Turco-Persian culture"[14]. However, the statement is not

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[9] A recent article by Professor Asatrian has clearly demonstrated how the field of Kurdology has become politicized. He states that: "Amateurs (dilettantes) or mere pundits have always been an integral part of any scientific milieu, especially in the Humanities (history and linguistics in the first place)" (Asatrian 2009). Furthermore, he demonstrated that the field of Kurdology due to its overwhelming political constituents has been a constant stumbling-block for scholars who follow an academic principle. The field of Nezami Ganjavi has been less affected, although many authors are not aware of the USSR politicization campaign and subsequent false theories that were written about Nezami. The three authors cited here would be considered amateurs with regards to Persian literature and Nezami studies; as they do not understand the Persian language. Given this lack of ability to do research, they have relied on the selective USSR and modern nationalist Azerbaijan Republic sources.

[10] Naroditskaya 2003. The author, using sources from the republic of Azerbaijan, also wrongly claims that the Persian rebel Babak Khorramdin (Schnirelman 2001:123) was an Azerbaijanian Turk (Naroditskaya 2003, pg 23) and states: "..a mass revolt (817-837) led by Babek, an Azerbaijanian Turk, was based on the spiritual and philosophical doctrines of the Hurramites (sic!), descendants of Zoroastrians".

[11] ibid.:14; see Part III for an analysis of this unsound claim.
[12] ibid.:17.
[13] Altstadt 1992:12.
[14] A critical review of this book has been written by Bournoutian (Bournoutian 1992). There are several other mistakes in the same page (Altstadt 1992:12). For example, the author also claims that "A major library, reported to contain perhaps 400,000 volumes, was attached to the Maragha observatory (build 1258-1261) in South Azerbaijan under the direction of a major scholar of that time, Nasreddin Tusi. Unfortunately, neither the library nor observatory survived the Mongol invasion" (ibid.:12). However, Nasir al-Din Tusi (a Persian scholar from Tus Khorasan), build the library and observatory during the Mongol era. Also the term "South Azerbaijan" was politically invented term by the USSR in order to detach historical

sourced, and there is no literary basis to claim that Nezami's work shows an interconnection of such two strands. Nezami in his many works has referenced such works as *Shāhnāma* and the Quran (see Part IV below). However, there is no such reference in any work of Nezami for any Turkish language sources as the Oghuz nomads who had just entered the area lacked a written literature (see Part II). In another highly politicized book[15], Brenda Shaffer claims that: "Authors such as Nezami, who were of Azerbaijani ethnic origin but wrote most of their works in Persian"[16]. However, Nezami wrote all of his work in Persian and the notion that he wrote "most of his work" in Persian was first proposed in the political settings of the USSR (see Part I). Also there was no "Azerbaijani" ethnicity in the 12th century and the author who lacks knowledge of the Persian language and mainly writes about modern geopolitical matters, has revealed her bias.

The same author, in another politicized gathering about geopolitical matters, has made the wrong statement that: "Some have interpreted Khusraw to be an ancestor

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Azerbaijan (Atropatene) from Iran and attach it to the Trans-Caucasian political entity which had controversially adopted this name. Furthermore, she continues: "Religious literature probably existed before that time in Albanian. Moisey Kaghankatli's (sic!) history of Albania was written in the 7th century. The 12th and 13th century boasted a number of prominent and prolific philosophers and historians. Bakhmanyar (sic!) al-Azerbaijani (d. 1160-1170) (sic!) and Tusi have received special attentions" (ibid.). We note that Bahmanyar lived in the 11th century and not the 12th century as mentioned by Altstadt. He was of Persian Zoroastrian background and has no relevance to a book titled "Azerbaijani Turks".

The relationship of the ethnic Persian scientists such as Tusi and Bahmanyar to a linguistic group that was not formed at the time in the area is implicitly implied by Altstadt. Similarly, the author fails to mention that Movses Kaghankatvatsi (Movses Dasxurants'i) is an Armenian historian and his work is in Armenian (Bedrosian 2011; Dowsett 1961). The two sentences that sequentially follow about this Armenian historian give the uninformed reader an indirect implication that Movses wrote in a "Caucasian Albanian language". She also has praised the revisionist writer and former head of the Azerbaijan Republic academy of Sciences Ziya Buniiatov as "an internationally known scholar"(Altstadt 1992:3), while it should be noted that Buniiatov has plagiarized other works from Robert Hewsen and C.F.J Dowsett under his own name and has mass published racist tracks about Armenian peoples (de Waal 2004:143). Furthermore, Buniiatov has produced translations and editions of primary sources such *Tarix-e Qarabagh* and *Golestān-e Aram* while deleting the word *Armenian* (due to obvious ethno-political biases) in these primary texts (Bakikhanov 2009; Bournoutian 1993). It should be noted Altstadt is a Professor of University of Massachusetts at Amherst. These examples of blatant distortions of history, as well as lavish praise for distorters of history are inexcusable for any academic institution.

[15] See reviews by Atabaki 2004 and Siegel 2004 where definite bias of the work is shown.
[16] Shaffer 2002:158.

of today's Turks in the Caucasus, and Shiren as a woman who is an ancestor of Armenians"[17]. Therefore she has politicized the work of Nezami by attributing false interpretations to him. It is obvious that the Sassanid king Khusraw Parviz has nothing to do with the culture or language of Turks in the Caucasus. What is important to note is that some of these politicized authors are affiliated with universities in the West[18], and although they lack knowledge of the Persian language, this has not stopped them in using Soviet and post-Soviet Azerbaijan Republic based sources to make unsound and absurd claims about history in general and Nezami in particular.

The present book is divided into four parts. In Part I, we examine some anachronistic terminology and misplaced (in both space and time) terms with regards to the 12th century in which Nezami lived.

In Part II, we examine the politicized arguments that are found in the USSR literature. We provide the first known English translation of two sections of the *Layli o Majnun* of Nezami and examine it in the light of the Persian literature of time. We also examine the unsubstantiated term "Azerbaijani school of Persian literature" or "Azerbaijani style of Persian literature" and clearly show that such a concept did not exist at the time of Nezami. Rather, the poetry of Caucasian Persian poets such as Nezami, Mujir al-Din Baylaqāni, Dhulfiqār Sharvāni shows that they considered their own style to be part of the 'Iraqi Style. This is still the most common category used for these poets in books about Persian literature studies.

In Part III, we look at arguments brought by Turkish authors with nationalist viewpoints, some of which are based on non-ethnic affiliated image/symbol of "Turk" in Persian poetry while others are outright falsifications of verses, unscientific extrapolation of sources and even false attribution of a Turkish Divan to Nezami. A list of arguments which were mainly created during the USSR era to support the thesis of an "Azerbaijani" (which actually meant a different idea in the Russian and Azerbaijan SSR) background of Nezami Ganjavi are found in Heyat and

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[17] Shaffer 2001.

[18] According to a report by the investigative journalist Ken Silverstein published in the Harper magazine; Harvard Caspian Program which was led by Brenda Shaffer was launched in 1999 with a $1 million grant from the United States-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce (USACC) and a consortium of companies led by ExxonMobil and Chevron. K. Silverstein, "Academics for Hire", Harper Magazine, May 30, 2006.

http://www.harpers.org/archive/2006/05/sb-followup-starr-2006-05-30-29929 [accessed May 2011]

Manaf-Oglu[19]. Some of these contain outright fabrications while other arguments are anachronistic and imply bad reading of the verses.

In Part IV, we examine three important historical sources which have not been examined in the scholarly literature with regards to Nezami. We also look at some verses surrounding Nezami, his religion and specifically, a section about his first wife which provides conclusive evidence that he was not of Turkish background as claimed by the authors discussed in Part III. The book is concluded with a summary and future outlook.

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[19] Heyat 2006; Heyat 2010; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

Part I

ANACHRONISTIC TERMINOLOGY USED WITH REGARD TO NEZAMI

The terminologies mentioned in this section should be known by scholars and historians who write about medieval Persian literature, medieval Islamic history or modern history. However, as shown in the previous section, this is sometimes not the case due to either lack of knowledge about ancient nomenclatures or political motivations. An overview is provided here because many authors might not be aware of how these terms have been used and changed due to political reasons.

1.1 Arrān and Azerbaijan

The name Azerbaijan has an Iranian[20] root and derives from the Iranian satrap Atropates[21]. In the older new Dari-Persian form[22], the term is given as

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[20] The term Iranian is used throughout this paper in the ethno-linguistic sense of people belonging to the Iranian branch of languages and not a citizen of the modern country of Iran. Consequently, the primary meaning designates any society which inherited, adopted or transmitted an Iranian language (Frye 2004). Here it is used in reference to the totality of the Iranian-speaking peoples both historically and today. Khurasani (Dari-Persian) dialect of Middle Persian is distinguished as Dari-Persian when it is contrasted with other dialects of Persian language (see Part IV where Qatrān Tabrizi calls his native language as Pārsi (Persian) and contrasts it with Dari-Persian).

According to the famous historian al-Mas'udi, who lived in the 10th Century AD, the Persians are: "a people whose borders are the Māhāt Mountains and Azerbaijan up to Armenia and Arrān, and Baylaqān and Darband, and Ray and Tabaristan and Masqat and Shabaran and Jorjan and Abarshāhr, and that is Nishabur, and Herat and Marv and other places in land of

Ādharbādhagān / Ādharābādhagān which is used[23] by Nezami[24] and Adharbāyagān[25]. The Modern Persian form is pronounced as Āzarbāydjān. In the 12th century, the

Khurasan, and Sajistan and Kerman and Fars and Ahvaz... All these lands were once one kingdom with one sovereign and one language... although the language differed slightly. The language, however, is one, in that its letters are written the same way and used the same way in composition. There are, then, different languages such as Pahlavi, Dari, Azari, as well as other Persian languages" (Al-Mas'udi 1894:77-8). Other examples include the fact that Warāwini, the translator of Marzabān-Nāma has called the old language of Tabaristan as "farsi-ye qadim-i bāstāni" (Kramers 1991) and the Iranian Chorasmian scholar Abu Rayhan Biruni while mentioning the Chorasmians as a separate group has also mentioned that the Chorasmians (Eastern Iranian language) are a branch of the Persian tree. What is clear is that terms like Persian, Baluch (Spooner 2010), Kurd (Asatrian 2009) denote people speaking Iranian languages. The term Persian or 'Ajam or Tat or Tajik has always been a more comprehensive term denoting Iranian speakers in general and should not be restricted to speakers of the SW Dari-Persian or other Middle Persian variants. The modern definition of some scholars in equating Persian with just Dari-Persian is limiting a historical usage and is a neologism. Their attempt to derive a single-language ethnic group based solely on Dari-Persian is equally problematic as speakers of Iranian languages (including Persian) in Iran have always considered themselves to be ethnically (not just citizenship) as Iranian or Irani. Pre-modern, non-Western nations do not fit seamlessly into the model that a dialect creates a separate nation; Iranians, Chinese, Arabs, Armenians and Greeks are several of the old nations with variety of related dialects (some hardly mutually intelligible) who self-identified as a nation and were identified as a single nation by classical historiographers. The imported model that one specific Iranian dialect and language creates a separate ethnicity is new phenomenon introduced in Iran due to Soviet influences. Consequently, the designations of Persian/Iranian are very much equivalent in the medieval Islamic era and even up to this day; the vast majority of Iranian speakers in Iran also consider themselves to be ethnic Iranian (See Amanollahi 2005). The formation of the Iranian identity in the pre-Islamic era and its evolution in the Islamic period is succinctly documented in two recent articles (Gnoli 2006, Ashraf 2006).

[21] Minorsky 1960.
[22] ibid.
[23] Dastgerdi, Vahid. "Kolliyāt Nezami Ganjavi" (the 5 collections of Nezami Ganjav), Tehran, 1372/1999. Internet Version:
http://rira.ir/rira/php/?page=view&mod=classicpoems&obj=poet&id=30 and also downloadable with search option at: http://sourceforge.net/projects/ganjoor/
The internet version was a great help in searching for relevant verses. We have also consulted with various other editions of Nezami's work which are mentioned in later sections. However, when it comes to the verses discussed in the present work, there was no real discrepancy between the various editions except for the last chapter of Layli o Majnun where the Zanjani, Servatiyan and Moscow editions have additional verses relative to the Dastgerdi edition. These editions (Zanjani, Servatiyan and Moscow) were identical or almost identical in the

name Azerbaijan was almost unanimously used for the geographical region of North Western Iran whose boundary in the north was with Arrān (including Ganja), Sharvān and Armenia[26]. An important proof bearing on this fact is the examination

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verses that were quoted in our research. To make the text of this work more accessible, MA stands for Makhzan al-Asrār, KH stands for Khusraw o Shirin, LM stands for Layli o Majnun, HP stands for Haft Paykar, SN stands for Sharaf-Nāma and IQ stands for Iqbāl-Nāma. For example KH:27/14 would mean the Dastgerdi edition of Khusraw and Shirin, Chapter 27 and verse 14 and KH:27/1-14 would mean Chapter 27, verses 1 to 14 where each verse is a couplet (bayt). Note for the Shāhnāma, we use Ferdowsi:X where X is the page number of Ferdowsi, Abul-Qasim (2003), "The Shāhnāma: A Reprint of the Moscow Edition", 2 volumes, Hermes Publishers. The Moscow edition of the Shāhnāma can also be downloaded from the same site as listed above. The Dehkhoda dictionary is available on the internet as well as CD-ROM. See: Dehkhoda Aliakbar, Loghatnama (Dictionary), CD Version, Tehran, 2000. A Persian database which includes many Persian poets including Nezami (Dastgerdi edition), Khāqāni (Sajjadi 1959 edition), Hafez, Sa'di, Qatrān Tabrizi is available here:
http://sourceforge.net/projects/ganjoor/ and also identically here: http://dorj.ir/ . This software is denoted PD in this research. This software is also available in CD format called Dorj 2. For example (PD:Anvari) means Anvari accessed from this software.

[24] SN:28/60 same form as the Shāhnāma, see Ferdowsi:1366.

[25] KH:34/27 which is the same form as the Vis o Ramin of Gurgāni see Dehkhoda: Adharbāyagān.

[26] Barthold 1963; Bournoutian 1994; Diakonoff 1994:363, fn 36; Galichian 2004; Matini 1989; Minorsky 1960; Reza 2006. Reza (Reza 2006) notes a few writers have mentioned Arrān and Shārwan as parts of Armenia or that Bal'ami's history (who was a translator and not a geographer) contains an instance of extending Azerbaijan to Darband in one place (Reza 2006). In one other place Bal'ami also distinguishes Arrān and Azerbaijan (ibid.). This confusion could be due to the fact that the administration of the Sassanid Empire was divided into four directions/districts with numerous provinces. These four districts (kust=district) were the kust-i Khurāsān, kust-i Xāwarān, kust-i Nimruz and kust-i Ādurbādagān where each was under a spāhbad. The spāhbad of kust-i Ādurbādagān was responsible for the North Western provinces which included Azerbaijan, Armenia, Arrān and surrounding provinces up to Darband (Daryaee 2002). Similarly, Ibn Khurdadbih has mentioned Arrān and Sharvān as part of the First Armenia while Muqaddasi has mentioned Urmiya, Salmas, Khoy, Ahar, Maragha and Marand as part of Armenia. That is some rulers might have made Arrān as part of the administration of Armenia (e.g. Canard 1986:642) or Azerbaijan. But as noted by Reza, the methodology that must be adopted here is to look at the **majority** of geographers, historians and cartographers of that time. The overwhelming majority of these have clearly distinguished the regions of Azerbaijan and Arrān (Reza 2006). This is clear also from the numerous maps from this era (Galichian 2004) as well as the poets of the region including Nezami and Khāqāni. Gandzakets'i, the native Armenian historian from Ganja who lived circa 1200-1270 A.D. has also clearly distinguished Atrāpātkān from the Caucasus (Armenia, Aghbania i.e. Caucasian Albania and Georgia). A survey of the sources from 1100 CE to 1200 CE

of the numerous well known historical maps that has been drawn in the span of centuries by local Christian and Muslim geographers, as well as those drawn by Western cartographers[27]. The adoption of the name "Azerbaijan" in 1918 by the Mussavatist government for classical Caucasian Albania (Arrān and Sharvān) was due to political reasons[28]. For example, the giant orientalist of the early 20th century, Vasily Barthold has stated: "... whenever it is necessary to choose a name that will encompass all regions of the republic of Azerbaijan, the name Arrān can be chosen. But the term Azerbaijan was chosen because when the Azerbaijan republic was created, it was assumed that this and the Persian Azerbaijan will be one entity, because the population of both has a big similarity. On this basis, the word Azerbaijan was chosen. Of course right now when the word Azerbaijan is used, it has two meanings as Persian Azerbaijan and as a republic, it's confusing and a question rises as to which Azerbaijan is being talked about"[29]. In the post-Islamic sense, Arrān and Sharvān are often distinguished while in the pre-Islamic era, Arrān or the Western Caucasian Albania roughly corresponds to the modern territory of republic of Azerbaijan. In the Soviet era, in a breathtaking manipulation, historical Azerbaijan (NW Iran) was reinterpreted as "South Azerbaijan" in order for the Soviets to lay territorial claim on historical Azerbaijan proper which is located in modern Northwestern Iran[30].

Nezami Ganjavi in his own work like *Khusraw o Shirin* has mentioned the queen *Mahin Bānu* as the ruler of "Arrān o Arman"[31] while mentioning Adharbāyagān[32] in the same epic poem, which clearly shows these were separate lands. In one of his *ghazals*[33], Nezami mentions his land as Arrān:

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makes it clear that Arrān and Sharvān are overwhelmingly distinguished from Azerbaijan. For example, in a book with more than one hundred maps up to the 20th century, not a single map has the name Azerbaijan for the general area of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan (ibid.). Now if one or two maps contradict close to one hundred maps (Galichian 2004), then serious historians must consider the overwhelming majority of maps and not the one or two maps. It should also be reiterated that the Iranian name Azerbaijan unlike Iran, Armenia, Arabia, Greece, etc., had no ethno-cultural value in the 12th century, and only around the 20th century, did the term Azerbaijani or Azeri began to be used as a self-reference by the Turcophone population of the Caucasus.

[27] Galichian 2004.
[28] Matini 1989; Minorsky 1960; Barthold 1963; Diakonoff 1994:363-fn 36.
[29] Barthold 1963:703.
[30] Fragner 2001:24.
[31] KH:18/15.
[32] KH:34/27.
[33] Nafisi 1959:290.

Do not be unjust to me, if you are from the lands of Arrān	مرا غلط مکن، ار تو ز شـهر ارانی
Oh idol (beauty), Nezami does not come from the outskirts	نظامی، ای صنم از روستا نمی‌آید

Abu 'Ala Ganjavi, himself a native of Ganja and contemporary of Nezami, has also called his native land as Arrān and contrasted it with Sharvān[34]:

I am now sixty and from the land of Arrān	مرا شصت سال است و از خاک اران
It is sixteen years that I have come to Sharvān	بوَد شانزده تا به شروان فتادم

Another poet who influenced Nezami Ganjavi and lived in Eastern Transcaucasia was Khāqāni Sharvāni. Khāqāni Sharvāni has also consistently called his land as Sharvān and not Azerbaijan. A keyword search in his divan shows that Arrān occurs at least 4 times, Azerbaijan occurs once, and Sharvān occurs more than 100 times[35]. Qatrān Tabrizi also has distinguished these three regions separately and has mentioned Arrān, Azerbaijan and Sharvān as separate lands[36].

Another source very close to Nezami Ganjavi's time is the work *History of Jalal al-Din Mangubirti* (reigned in 1220-1231) written by a high official of his court, Shihab al-Din al-Nasawi (d. 1249). He was part of the entourage of the Khwarazmshāh Jalal al-Din Mangubirti and followed the Khwarazmshāh in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, during the turbulent period of the Mongol invasion and recorded the events that he witnessed. In his book, he clearly distinguishes between Arrān and Azerbaijan[37]. Consequently, to even use the term "Azerbaijani" geographically for Ganja of the 12th century is an anachronism in the sense that the area at that time was geographically known as Arrān. Furthermore, some authors try to anachronistically define ancient poets by modern geographical territories whose ethnic characteristics have changed significantly in the last 1000 years. This method of naming is fallacious as calling an Armenian writer who was born in Ganja (see Part IV) as an "Azerbaijani" or calling Herodotus who was born in the territory that is now modern Turkey as "Turkish". The same concept applies to Nezami Ganjavi who lived in the 12th century.

However, one author with a nationalist viewpoint[38] has used the different historical name for the Eldiguzid, that is "Atabegs of Azerbaijan", to erroneously claim that the

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[34] Shirazi 1933.
[35] PD: Khāqāni.
[36] Tabrizi 1983.
[37] Nasawi 1965:22, 24, 26, 82, 221, 249.
[38] See Manaf-Oglu 2010 and also see some of the online sources therein. Arguments from Manaf-Oglu 2010 are analyzed and dismissed in Part III.

region of Arrān was also part of Azerbaijan. However, the author ignores that there was no ethnic concept attached to the Iranian word 'Azerbaijan' in the 12th century and so such a naming cannot have any sort of ethnic connotation. Furthermore, it should be noted that the term "Atabegs of Azerbaijan" for the Eldiguzids is simply a name used by later historians for the family itself rather than a name for an official geographical area[39]. For example, while their capital was in Tabriz (Azerbaijan proper), their territory extended to Northern Jebal, Ray, Hamadan and Isfahan[40], but this does not mean that these territories were called "Azerbaijan" in any official record of that period. Similarly, they did not control the area of Sharvān which was under the rule of Sharvānshāhs. As mentioned, Nasawi, who describes the battles between the Khwarazmshāhs and Eldiguzids, has clearly mentioned Arrān and Azerbaijan as separate lands. Similarly, later historians also used "Atabegs of Fars" (Salghurids) or "Atabegs of Yazd" or "Atabegs of Mosul" or "Atabegs of Maraghah" who controlled neighboring territories or cities, but it does not mean that their territory was officially designated by such names or there were official states with names such as Fars, Yazd, etc. Rather these are the names assigned to these dynasties by later historians for the territory of their main capital or political center. And even in this case, this term was not necessarily unique. For example, the term "Atabeg of Azerbaijan" was not unique to the Eldiguzids as it also has been used to reference an Ahmadili ruler who is called as the "Atabeg of Maragha and Azerbaijan"[41]. This clearly shows that such a title did not denote an official name of a nation state (which is anachronistic), but rather it was a title for the dynasties (not a name of a country or state or an empire) by historians to distinguish the Atabeg dynasties (mainly by the territory of their capital or their traditional power base) within the larger and decaying Saljuq Empire. A study of the works of Nasawi[42] and the Ilkhanid adaptation of Nishapuri[43] explicitly shows that Arrān and Azerbaijan are used as separate lands in their descriptions of the events of the 12th and 13th century.

1.2 Iran and 'Ajam

The same writer has claimed that the name Iran did not exist[44] in the 12th century since it was reunited under a single government during the Safavid era. Although this is non-factual as there were other Iranian and non-Iranian dynasties which had united major portions of Sassanid Iran (such as Samanids, Saffarids, Buyids,

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[39] Luther 1987.
[40] Bosworth 1965; idem 1996; Luther 1987.
[41] Nishapuri 2001:141. Rashid al-Din Fazlollah's adaptation of a work attributed to Nishapuri.
[42] Nasawi 1965.
[43] Nishapuri 2001.
[44] Manaf-Oglu 2010.

Ilkhanids, etc.), what that writer forgets is that Iran just like India or China, existed for the Persian/Arabic (as well as Armenian as shown in Part IV) writers as an ethno-cultural-geographical region despite being ruled by a variety of dynasties. For many examples of this term being used prior to Nezami Ganjavi, one can refer to the comprehensive article by Jalal Matini which has cited numerous examples from medieval Arabic texts, Persian poets and officials, as well Persian manuscripts of the Samanid, Ghaznavid, Saljuqid, Mongol, Timurid, Turcoman and Safavid eras[45]. Since the wide occurrence of the name Iran has been examined therein, we briefly provide sufficient examples from Nezami Ganjavi, Khāqāni Sharvāni and Hamdollah Mostowfi Qazvini.

The examples from Nezami are taken from verses from the prologue which is outside of the main stories. In the Haft Paykar, while addressing the local Ahmadili ruler of Maragha, 'Ala a-din Korp Arslān, Nezami Ganjavi states[46]:

The world is a body, Iran its heart,	همه عالم تن است و ایران دل
No shame to him who says such a word (The word *guyande* refers to the poet: the poet (*guyande*, i.e. Nezami) feels not ashamed in making this comparison: "the world as a body and Iran as its heart".)	نیست گوینده زین قیاس خجل
Iran, the world's most precious heart	چون که ایران دل زمین باشد
Excels the body, there is no doubt	دل ز تن به بود یقین باشد
Among the realms the kings posses	زان ولایت که مهتران دارند
The best place goes to the best	بهترین جای بهتران دارند

C.E. Wilson[47], the early translator of the Haft Paykar into the English language comments on these three verses: "The sense is apparently, 'since Persia is the heart of the earth, Persia is the best part of the earth, because it is certain that the heart is better than the body.'"

In the *Layli o Majnun*, in praise of the Sharvānshāh Axsitān[48]:

Especially a king like King of Sharvān	خاصه ملکی چو شاه شروان
Why (just) Sharvān? He is the King of Iran	شروان چه؟ که شهریار ایران

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[45] Matini 1992.
[46] HP:5/107-109; Meisami 1995:19.
[47] Wilson 1924.
[48] LM:4/46; Servatiyan 2008:46; Zanjani 1990:15.

By the 9th century A.D., the word *'Ajam* had become equivalent to the ethnic and geographical designation of Persians and Persia respectively[49]. It was used by Iranians themselves as ethnic and geographical designation as shown for example by the debate of the "Arab and 'Ajam" by Asadi Tusi[50], as well as the *Shāhnāma* of Ferdowsi[51]:

Where went Fereydun, Zahak and Jamshid?	کجا شد فریدون و ضحاک و جم
The Great Ones of the Arabs, The Kings of the Persians	مهان عرب خسروان عجم

Like in the above example from Ferdowsi, Nezami Ganjavi has also used this term for the Sassanid realm and has called the domain of Bahram Gur as *'Ajam* (Persia) and *Molk-e 'Ajam* (Persian realm)[52]. However, even outside the main body of the stories, Nezami Ganjavi has praised the Eldiguzid ruler Atabak Shams al-Din as the King of the Persian Realm. For example in the *Khusraw o Shirin*, Nezami states[53]:

In that day that they bestowed mercy upon all,	در آن بخشش که رحمت عام کردند
Two great ones were given the name Muhammad,	دو صاحب را محمد نام کردند
One whose essence was the seal of prophethood,	یکی ختم نبوت گشته ذاتش
The other who is the Kingdom's Seal, in his own days	یکی ختم ممالک بر حیاتش
One whose house/zodiac is moon of the Arabs	یکی برج عرب را تا ابد ماه
The other who is the everlasting Shāh of Realm of Persians	یکی ملک عجم را جاودان شاه

Another final example, Nezami Ganjavi, outside of his stories, calls upon the Prophet of Islam[54]:

Come to Persia ('Ajam), do not stay in Arabia	سوی عجم ران، منشین در عرب
Thou hast the light and dark steeds of night and day	زردهی روز اینک و شبدیز شب
Adorn the Empire and refresh the world.	مُلک برآرای و جهان تازه کن

[49] Bosworth 1984; Gabrieli 1960.

[50] Khaleghi-Motlagh 1977. Note these are like other terms that were self-adopted by Iranians such as Tat and Tajik.

[51] Ferdowsi:919,1178.

[52] HP:8/24; HP:11/48; HP:17/16.

[53] KH:8/9-11.

[54] Darab 1945:108; MA:8/4.

Blossom both worlds with thy name and fame	هر دو جهان را پرآوازه کن

An examination of the number of occurrences of some regional geographic terms in the work of Nezami reveals that the term *Iran* has appeared 32 times, *'Ajam* has appeared 21 times, *Arman* (Armenia) has appeared 23 times (mostly in KH), *Ādharābādhagān* appears twice (like the form in the *Shāhnāma*), *Adharbāyagān* appears once (like the form in the *Vis o Ramin*) and *Arrān* appears twice (one time in the *ghazals* and one time in the pentalogue).

The Persian poet Khāqāni Sharvāni who was an older contemporary of Nezami has also used the word *'ajam* in the sense of Persian. One of his pen-name which he referenced himself with is *Hessān al-'Ajam* which means the Persian Hessān. This title for him shows that he believed his place among the Persians is like the place of the celebrated Arabian poet Hessān ibn Thabit among the Arabs. We can see in his Divan that he considers his land as part of Persia and calls Axsitān as the Shāh of Persia[55]:

The king of 'Ajam (Persia) Axsitān who took the religion	شاه عجم اخستان که دین را
And decorated it by expanding justice	پیرایه ز عدل‌پروری ساخت

And in a poem dedicated to Axsitān[56] he mentions him as the Khāqān of Iran:

The Ka'aba will be clothed with the green of Nowruz	رَوَد کعبه در جامه‌ی سبز عیدی
If the Khaqan of Iran (Axsitān) holds a feast	مگر بزم خاقان ایران نماید

Khāqāni uses the terms 'Ajam and Iran more than 50 and 30 times respectively[57]. Examples include praising the mother of Axsitān as the queen of Iran or praising the Eldiguzid Atabak Qizil Arslān or referencing his own land while in Arabia. He considered himself to be unequalled in Persia[58]:

In Persia ('Ajam) there is none equal to me today	که نیست در عجم امروز کس قرینه‌ی من

The above examples clearly demonstrates that the cultural-geographical territory of Iran and 'Ajam during the time of these Iranian Muslim poets included Azerbaijan

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[55] PD:Khāqāni.
[56] PD:Khāqāni.
[57] PD:Khāqāni.
[58] PD: Khāqāni.

(ruled by the Eldiguzids and small portion of it by the Ahmadilis), Arrān (ruled mainly by the Eldiguzids with occasional Georgian incursions and control) and Sharvān (ruled by the Sharvānshāhs). A century after Nezami Ganjavi, the Persian historian, government official and geographer Hamdollah Mostowfi Qazvini also mentioned Ganja as part of Arrān, as well as part of Iran in his work Nozhat al-Qolub[59]:

Several cities in Iran are more opulent than many others,	چند شهر است اندر ایران مرتفع‌تر از همه
Richer and more productive, by reason of climate and soil,	بهتر و سازنده‌تر از خوشی آب و هوا
Of these is Ganja, so full of treasure, in Arrān, Isfahān in `Irāq,	گنجه‌ی پر گنج در ارّان، صفاهان در عراق
In Khurāsān Marv and Tus, in Rum (Asia Minor) Āq Sarāy.	در خراسان مرو و طوس، در روم باشد آق‌سرا

So, the ethno-cultural-geographical concept of Iran/Persia as a geographical and ethnic designation was very real[60] to the authors of that era and was not simply references to the legend portions of their story. This is similar to other ancient territories like China, India, Greece (Rum in Islamic historiography), Armenia, etc., which despite being ruled by various kingdoms and having varying borders, were nevertheless, a concrete entity for the authors of that time.

1.3 Non-existent ethnicities and ethnonyms in the 12th century

Besides Azerbaijan, which as a historical territory in the 12th century has been illustrated in the maps of that era as an area in modern northwestern Iran and distinguished from Arrān, we should mention the term "Azerbaijani". Prior to the late 19th century and early 20th century, the term "Azerbaijani" and "Azerbaijani Turk" had never been used as an ethnonym[61]. Such ethnonyms did not exist[62]. During the 19th century and early 20th century, Russian sources primarily referred to the Turcophone Muslim population as "Tatars" which was a general term that included a variety of Turkish speaker[63]. Under the Mussavatist government, in 1918 and during the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, the term

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[59] Qazvini 1919; idem 1957.
[60] Matini 1992.
[61] Bournoutian 1992; Swietchowski 2004.
[62] Bournoutian 1992.
[63] ibid.

"Azeri people" referred to all inhabitants while the Turkish-speaking portion was called "Azeri Turk"[64]. Thus the concept of an Azeri identity barely appears at all before 1920 and Azerbaijan before this era had been a simple geographical area[65].

In the Soviet era, due to political considerations, the ethnicity and the name of the language of the Turkish speaking Muslims was transformed to "Azerbaijani".[66] During the Soviet nation building campaign[67], any historical event, past and present, that ever occurred in the territories of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan and Iranian Azerbaijan, was considered a phenomenon of "Azerbaijani culture"[68]. In this period, Iranian rulers and poets began to be assigned to the newly formulated identity for the Transcaucasian Turcophones[69]. During the Stalin era, Soviet and particularly Transcaucasian Turkish historians were obliged to formulate the ethno-genesis of the Turkish speakers of the region to the Iranian Medes and to break them off from any Turkish roots[70]. This is part of the reason that the arguments in Part III which derive mainly from a pro-Turkish nationalist viewpoint are treated differently than the Soviet arguments in Part II, although they sometimes do overlap.

As we shall discuss in Part II, Soviet scholars such as Bertels, who were encouraged and coerced to follow the territorial principle of history, did not state a firm opinion on the ethnicity of the father of Nezami Ganjavi (they have described his mother as a Kurd/Iranian). Rather, they primarily tried to connect Nezami Ganjavi to the culture of Azerbaijan SSR through the territorial principle[71]. It was in the Stalin period that the Azerbaijanization of Nezami as that of Medes, Babak and other historical Iranian cultural heritages occurred in official Soviet historiography[72]. An example of this anachronistic and non-scientific viewpoint is seen in the fact that even the Zoroastrian holy book of Avesta was considered as part of the Azerbaijani literature in the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia. The 3rd edition of the Encyclopaedia under "Azerbaijani literature" states: "Among the ancient monuments of Azeri culture is also the 'Avesta' of Zoroaster, reflecting the religious, philosophical, socio-worldly conception of the ancients Azerbaijanis"[73]. We should

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[64] Shnirelman 2001:83.

[65] Roy 2007:18.

[66] Bolukbashi 2001.

[67] Shnirelman 2001; Slezkine 2000.

[68] Fragner 2001; Shnirelman 2001.

[69] Shnirelman 2001:87.

[70] Bolukbashi 2001; Shnirelman 2001:104.

[71] Fragner 2001.

[72] Shnirelman 2001:87,103.

[73] See Great Soviet Encyclopaedia, "Azerbaijan SSR", 3rd edition, pp 467.

also note that there is ambiguity between the term Azeri and Azerbaijani, since both ethnonyms have been adopted and used in reference to the Turkish speakers of Eastern Transcaucasia since the 20ᵗʰ century. Although some authors take these as synonymous, most authors use the first as a reference to the Transcaucasian Turkish group while the second, as that to the citizens of the country. However, in the state of the Azerbaijan Republic, "Azerbaijani" is used as both an ethnicity for the Turcophone population and also as a citizenship which may include non-Turkish ethnicities (including the autochthonous peoples, such as Talyshis, Lezgins, etc).

Modern historiography in the Republic of Azerbaijan on the ethno-genesis of Turkish people of Eastern Transcaucasia has tried to retroactively Turkify many of the peoples and kingdoms that existed prior to the arrival of Turks in the region[74]. The different theories of the Soviet Union and Azerbaijan SSR with regards to the ethnogenesis of Azeris are discussed in more detail elsewhere[75]. What is pertinent for this work is that at the time of Nezami Ganjavi, there was neither such a concept or self-identification, nor an ethnic group called "Azerbaijani", "Azerbaijani Turkish", "Azeri" or "Azeri-Turkish"[76]. Nezami Ganjavi has referenced a variety of people

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[74] Shnirelman 2001; and see Part III for analysis of Manaf-Oglu 2010.

[75] Shnirelman 2001.

[76] A post-Soviet Russian source relates a language to ethnic identity and puts the formation of an "Azerbaijani people" with a heavy layer of Iranian elements in the 14ᵗʰ-15ᵗʰ century. It states: "In the XIV-XV cc., as the Azerbaijani Turkic-language ethnos was beginning to form, arose its culture, as well. At first it had no stable centers of its own (recall that one of its early representatives, Nesimi, met his death in Syria) and it is rather difficult at that time to separate from the Osman (Turkish) culture. Even the ethnic boundary between the Turks and the Azerbaijanis stabilized only in the XVI c., and even then it was not quite defined yet." (Rybakov 2002). However, assigning an ethnicity to the trilingual poet such as Nasimi, whose birthplace is not yet known, is difficult. He was a Seyyed (of Arab descent) and wrote in Persian, Turkish and Arabic. We are not aware of any ethnic identification from the poet with the exception of some poems where he proudly traces his descent to the prophet of Islam. Consequently, strictly speaking, he would be of Arabic ancestry. Culturally, he seems to have been influenced mainly by Persian poets such as Hafez, Sanāi, Nezami etc. However, since Persian and Arabic already had a significant body of literature prior to Nasimi, Nasimi (despite the fact that almost half of his output is Persian) is a minor poet in these two languages whereas in the classical Turkish language that he has written, he holds a more prominent place. Another viewpoint, which posts the decisive Turkicization of Azerbaijan in the 16ᵗʰ century (see also Part IV), is the viewpoint that: "Azeri material culture, a result of this multi-secular symbiosis, is thus a subtle combination of indigenous elements and nomadic contributions.... It is a Turkish language learned and spoken by Iranian peasants" (de Planhol 2004). It should be noted that the national identity of the Turkish speaking ethnic elements in modern Iran has for the most part been integrated with the modern Iranian state identity and despite the linguistic shift from Iranian to Turkish dialects in most of the

including Persians/Iranians/Kurd (*Pārsi/Irāniān/Kord*), Armenians (*Armani*), Turks (*Tork*), Arabs (*Arab*), Russians (*Rus*, likely reference to the Viking Rus), Indians (*Hindi*), Ethiopians (*Habash*), etc. As per Turks, we note that the Oghuz speakers of that time (which can be claimed to be the linguistic ancestors of the Turcophones of the country of Azerbaijan) might have shared a common tribal identity. Besides, it is important to note that the term "Turk" had a wider, non-ethnic and geographical reference in the Persian and Arabic writings, and it often included Iranian groups of Central Asia[77], and even Tibetans[78]. However, some authors were not aware of these facts and considered early Arabic references to "Turks" in Central Asia to denote

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historical Azerbaijan (NW Iran), these Turkish speaking elements in Iranian Azerbaijan are Iranian or have a very strong Iranian element from the viewpoint of culture, legacy and specially a common history. Prior and shortwhile after Iran lost the Caucasus regions, the Muslim population of the area (specially the Shi'ite elements, even those speaking Turkish languages) identified with the wider Iranian cultural current of the Safavid and Qajars states (e.g. Mirza Fath Ali Akhunzadah or Abbas Qoli Bakikhanov). However, after Iran lost those areas, the Iranian elements (such as teaching the Persian language) were eventually to a large part excised by pan-Turkish nationalists in the Caucasus. In the Caucasus, a new Azerbaijani national identity was formed in the early 20th century based on the Turkish language (Bournoutian 1992; Kaufman 2001:56; Roy 2007:18), which actually was hostile to Persian and Iranian elements (Bayat 2008). This hostility was further encouraged by the USSR and has kept its vigor today due to the influence of pan-Turkist elements. For example, Kauffman states: "In contrast with the Armenians, the Azerbaijani national identity is very recent. In fact, the very name "Azerbaijani" was not widely used until the 1930s; before that Azerbaijani intellectuals were unsure whether they should call themselves Caucasian Turks, Muslims, Tatars, or something else"(Kaufman 2001:56). Another different viewpoint is that the formation of an Azeri nation has not been completed yet (Schnirelman 2001:146 citing Ch. Lemercier-Quelquejay 1984). Such a complex matter is not expanded upon in this research. However, for the 12th century, the term ethnic Azerbaijani and/or Azerbaijani-Turk people did not exist, nor is there proof of an Azerbaijani-Turkic language (which evolved from the Oghuz with a heavy Iranian layer). On the origin of the term Turk and the ethnogenesis of Turkic peoples, see Golden (Golden 2006). Here, the term Turk is taken to be Altaic speakers when speaking about the modern era, however for Nezami, it might have included other people such as Tibetans, Mongols, Chinese and inhabitants of Central Asia. The Persian poetry of this era also provided a decisive and clear evidence that the term *Tork* was always associated with the Mongoloid (typical modern Qyrqyz, Kazakhs etc) rather than Caucasoid look (which is found amongst modern Anatolian and Azerbaijani Turkish speakers) and Persian poets such as Nezami (SN:43/259-267,KH:71/47,HP:20/27,IQ:35/11), Hafez, Rumi, Sanāi and many others have consistently used the term *Tang Chashm* ("Narrow Eyes" meaning oriental eyes) when referencing Turks.

[77] Shaban 1978:63.
[78] See Light 1998:94 in reference to Qābus-Nāma.

Altaic speakers, while the term should be treated carefully since many early Arabic references use the term in the geographic sense for anyone from the wider area of Central Asia,[79] which at the time had a much larger Iranian speaking component than today. According to Bosworth, Central Asia in the early 7th century was "ethnically, still largely an Iranian land whose people used various Middle Iranian languages"[80]. The formation of Altaic speaking majorities in that region took place several centuries after Islam and a major impetus for this was the Mongol (majority of whose troops were of Turkic stock) destruction of the mainly Iranian speaking urban centers.

In conclusion, the terms "Azerbaijani", "Azeri", "Azeri Turk" or "Azerbaijani Turk" did not denote any specific ethnic group, culture or nationality in the 12th century. The correct term for Oghuz-Turkish speaking people (the claim in official Azerbaijan historiography seems to be that Nezami was an Oghuz Turk), i.e. the terminology used during that time was Oghuz/Ghuzz and Turcoman[81]. However, even the Soviet Union did not call Nezami a "Turcoman poet" or "Ghuzz poet". Additionally, from the geographical point of view, the Iranian non-ethnic geographical term Azerbaijan does not include Arrān/Sharvān in the works of the poets of these periods and in the maps by the geographers of that time. So application of this term, in any historical sense or form, for a person from the 12th century Ganja of Arrān is incorrect. Correct terminology dictates that Nezami Ganjavi lived in historical Arrān; henceforth geo-cultural terms such as Arrānian, Caucasian and Eastern Trans-Caucasian Persian poet can be used to designate Nezami without causing any confusion. As noted, Nezami considered the variety of rulers whom he has praised as rulers of part of Iran or the Persian realm (*Molk-e-Ajam*). Additionally, the language of his work is solely Persian. Consequently, he is correctly considered part of Persian literature and not the invented Soviet term of "Azerbaijani literature" applied to him in the Soviet politicized writings.

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[79] Shaban 1978:63.
[80] Bosworth and Bolshakov 1998:28.
[81] Bosworth 2002a.

Part II

THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF NEZAMI AND THE ARGUMENTS

In 1936, when the administrative status of Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic was recognized, the Soviets deemed it necessary that it should have its own distinct identity and history[82]. This was not unique to Azerbaijan SSR; each Soviet entity was tasked to develop its identity within the wider Soviet framework[83]. The first secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Mir Jafar Bagirov ordered Azerbaijani historians to rewrite history in order to represent the Azeri people as an indigenous population and cut them off from any Turkish roots[84]. In order for Azerbaijan SSR to have its own autochthonous national history, Armenian and Iranian cultural factors necessarily became conducive to rapid Azerbaijanization of historical heroes and cultural phenomena[85]. According to Shnirelman, "in 1938, the 800-year anniversary of Nezami was celebrated, and he was declared a great Azeri poet. In fact, he was a Persian poet that was no wonder, since the Persians accounted for the entire urban population in those days. This was recognized in all the encyclopedias published in Russia before the 1930s, and only in 1939 did the Big Soviet Encyclopedia call Nezami a 'great Azeri poet' for the first time"[86]. The sources that were mentioned in the

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[82] Shnirelman 2001:103; Slezkine 2000:300-305.
[83] ibid.
[84] Shnirelman 2001:103.
[85] ibid.
[86] Shnirelman quotes Diakonoff (1995:730-731) who states in his last work about the Nezami celebration: "And it was planned an anniversary of the great poet Nezami celebration in Azerbaijan. There were slight problems with Nezami - first of all he was not Azeri but Persian (Iranian) poet, and though he lived in presently Azerbaijani city of Ganja, which, like many cities in the region, had Iranian population in Middle Ages." In another book by Diakonoff published in 1994 and translated into English in 1999 (the year he passed away), he states in a

Introduction have covered this politicization campaign in some detail[87]. A striking example of this politicization is the report in Pravda ["The Truth" – official Communist Party of the USSR Publication"] published in March 4th, 1939. According to this report, in a talk with the Ukrainian writer, Mikola Bazhan: "Comrade Stalin spoke of the Azerbaijani poet, Nezami, quoted his works to destroy the viewpoint by his own words that this great poet of our brotherly Azerbaijani people, should not be given to the Iranian literature, just because he wrote most of his works in the Iranian language. Nezami, in his poems himself asserts that he was compelled to resort to the Iranian language, because he is not allowed to address his own people in his native tongue."[88] It is obviously well known that if one challenges Stalin's opinion in the USSR, it would have been politically incorrect, with possible severe consequences.

2.1 Nezami and the Persian Language

Two major fabrications have been propagated ever since this verdict by Stalin. The first falsification is that Nezami Ganjavi wrote "most" (where it is actually all) of his work in the Persian language and Stalin's verdict has falsely hinted that he "could have" had works in Turkish. However, Nezami mentioned several times his skill in composing Persian poetry; he never mentioned composing in any other language and all of his works are in Persian. The second distortion is that Nezami was forced to write in the Persian language; in other words implying that someone can create five

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footnote: "Nezami lived in Ganja, a Turkic (Azerbaijani) city, but he wrote in Persian"(Diakonoff 1994:364, fn 46). One can assume that perhaps the 1994 book was written in the USSR era and only published in 1994. Or possibly, the two statements do not contradict and what he meant was that Ganja is today a Turkic speaking city, but during the era of Nezami, it was Iranian speaking. This is made more explicit by Diakonoff's 1995 statement that: "Nezami was not Azeri but Persian (Iranian)" while in the 1994, he does not make an explicit statement about his ethnicity. We will see in Part IV that primary sources clearly show the urban centers including those with Persian names such as Ganja had kept their Iranian population in the era of Nezami. The most important point to note about Schnirelman's statement is that all Russian Encyclopaedias like their Western counterpart had mentioned Nezami as a Persian poet before the USSR era. Furthermore, the term "Azerbaijani" or "Azeri" as an ethnonym was not used for any person in the 12th century by these Encyclopaedias prior to the Soviet Union.

[87] See Aghajanian 1992; Diakonoff, I.M. 1995; Kolarz 1952; Shnirelman 2001; Slezkine 2000; Tamazishvili 2001; Idem 2004. The two articles of Tamazishvili (2001, 2004) have been partially translated into English with a small interview with the author (Doostzadeh 2009a).

[88] (*Pravda*, 03.04.1939, No 92; Also quoted in Aghajanian 1992; Also quoted in Kolarz 1952; and also quoted in Tamazishvili 2004)

masterpieces in distress due to force. Whereas Nezami Ganjavi emphasized that he composed his poem out of love and not for money. For example, in the *Sharaf-Nāma*[89]:

If I had told this story for Gold	گر این نامه را من به زر گفتمی
How could I have pierced shells and brought pearls then?	به عمری کجا گوهری سفتمی
Truly it was love that brought this magnificent work	همانا که عشقم بر این کار داشت
Love had a lot of people who did not seek Gold and Silver.	چون من کمزنان عشق بسیار داشت

And the quatrains and many of the *ghazals* of Nezami which were not dedicated to any king, also clearly show that Nezami passionately composed Persian poetry on his own free will. Besides, Nezami was not a court poet; he had much more freedom to write in the language he chose. Both of these distortions are analyzed in the present work, since some authors have still propagated these erroneous viewpoints, either as a result of ignorance or due to political reasons.

Evgenii Eduardovich Bertels (d. 1957) was a prolific Soviet scientist who wrote about Nezami. Some of his ideologically-driven theories about Persian literature were adopted and disseminated by the Czech scholar Jan Rypka (d. 1968). Their works have been cited uncritically by some scholars who are not aware of the USSR anniversary campaign and the politicization of Soviet orientalism (which influenced orientalism in the whole Soviet bloc). To challenge Stalin after his verdict would have been politically incorrect and even dangerous. A recent research by Tamazishvili of the private archives of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR academy of Sciences (IOSAS) illustrates an extremely politicized atmosphere, in which Orientalism was used as a political tool for the USSR nation building and support of the Soviet national interests[90]. With regards to the Soviet Orientalism and nation-building, a Soviet orientalist E.M. Zukhov is quoted as stating: "We are obligated to translate everything, through to the end, into the language of politics"[91]. That was said precisely in connection with the discussion of the works of E. E. Bertels, in the process of the academic-political campaign of the struggle against "bourgeois cosmopolitanism" in the Soviet Oriental studies that developed in the late forties[92].

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[89] SN:63/39-40.
[90] Tamazishvili 2001.
[91] ibid.
[92] ibid.

Bertels' study on Nezami in the late 1930s and early 1940s were among his most politicized works[93].

Later on, while trying to possibly revise some of his earlier politicized theories, including the USSR supported view of disunity of Persian literature; he was criticized harshly by others in the IOSAS. According to Tamazishvili, he was even reproached by other USSR orientalist for attempting to revise the politicized Soviet viewpoint of Nezami being an "Azerbaijani poet"[94]. The most significant criticism of Bertels was due to the statement in his 1949 work *Persian-language literature in Central Asia*, in which he states: "By the Persian literature we shall, from now on, understand all the literary works written in the so-called 'neo-Persian' language, irrespective of their authors' ethnic identity and of the geographical point where these works emerged"[95]. Obviously, this was a departing from his earlier political proclamations of calling the work of Nezami with the anachronistic and politicized term "Azerbaijani literature".

His fellow politicized colleagues in 1949 accused Bertels of "deviating from Marxism, for reflecting in his works the objectivist errors and the cosmopolitan views characteristic of bourgeois oriental studies"[96]. Bertels tried to respond by stating: "To find out the ethnic identity of every author worth notice, and then classify them over the various literatures – but such a task would be, first of all, impossible to perform, because we have no data on the ethnic identity of old writers, and, probably, we will never have them; and, secondly, that would be methodologically vicious to the extreme. We would, then, be constructing literature by blood, by race. It hardly needs saying that we cannot and shall not be constructing literature in such a way, I won't, at least – if someone else wants to do it, let him, that is his private affair"[97]. However, A.K. Borokov, the deputy director of IOSAS called Bertels' statement unsatisfactory and non-self-critical, and criticized Bertels for "not saying the criticism of his view is just" and "repeating those unusual assertions which he had made before"[98].

With further campaign launched by IOSAS against "bourgeois cosmopolitanism in oriental studies", Bertels was accused by another Soviet orientalist Zhukov of spreading: "the newest bourgeois-nationalist conceptions about an imaginary superiority of Iran's culture"[99]. At this time, the politics surrounding the works of

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[93] ibid.
[94] ibid:190.
[95] ibid.
[96] ibid.
[97] ibid.
[98] ibid.
[99] ibid.

Bertels was heating up and he was forced to admit "his mistake", and attempted to explain "his mistake" by blaming the opinion of Tajik public opinion for sharing the idea of the commonality of their literature with that of Iran[100]. However, these explanations were insufficient; further accusation of supporting "pan-Iranism" was leveled against him by other scholars and the IOSAS private archive show that criticism of Bertels was continuing. In a radical measure, he was excluded from the research plan of the IOSAS on the topic he was developing — "History of the Persian literature", and was instructed to temporarily concentrate on dictionary work[101]. This onslaught against Bertels possibly explains his reaction to absolve himself from accusations by abundant usage of ideological clichés and party cant in his public addresses and publications from the early 1950s[102]. This onslaught against him was especially grave because at that time his son Dmitri was behind bars but was later released[103].

What is clear from the political atmosphere surrounding Bertels is that political ideology and Soviet nation building had cast an imposing ideological shadow upon the work of Soviet bloc orientalists. However, it should be noted that both Bertels and Rypka only accepted that Nezami's mother was Kurd and did not present a verdict about his father. Using the term "Azerbaijani", they rather meant a territorial principle of historical continuity in the sense of the USSR historiography where people of a region are autochthonous and only the elites are changed due to invasions[104]. For example, Bertels states with regards to Nezami: "About the family of Nezami, we know almost nothing. The only thing we can say with certainty is that at the time of writing the poem 'Layli o Majnun', i.e. in 1188, his father had passed away. His mother too, had passed away and the poet calls her 'a Kurdish lady'"[105]. Similarly, Jan Rypka states: "We can only deduce that he [Nezami] was born between 535 and 540 (1140-46 A.D.), and that his background was urban. Modern Azerbaijan is exceedingly proud of its world famous son and insists that he was not just a native of the region, but that he came from its own Turkic stock. At all events, his mother was of Iranian origin, the poet himself calling her Ra'isa and describing her as Kurdish"[106]. Thus it seems that Rypka and Bertels did not have a firm opinion on the ethnic identity of Nezami (or due to political pressure, they could not express it),

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[100] ibid.
[101] ibid.
[102] Zand 1989.
[103] ibid.
[104] Fragner 2001:25; Shnirelman 2001:99-100.
[105] Bertels 1940:26.
[106] Rypka 1968b:578.

they rather applied the USSR nation building concepts based on the territorial principle.

Despite these facts, Soviet authors like Bertels had to follow the Soviet guidelines, establish new terminologies for nation building and write ideological history to downplay the Persian cultural, ethnic and literary heritage of the Caucasian region. This does not mean of course that all the works of these authors are distortions of historical truths; many of them, indeed, have scholarly merit and contributed to the field. However, when there was a conflict between historical accuracy and Soviet ideological concerns (e.g. nation building, which Nezami studies became part of, cutting off cultural ties with the Iranian world and ideological compartmentalization of Persian literature), the Soviet ideology of nation building and dissection of Persian literature along imaginary identities took precedence. In fairness to these writers and other writers from the Soviet bloc, the IOSAS archives clearly show that the USSR orientalism did not tolerate ideological divergence.

The ideas about Islam and socialism with regards to Nezami illustrate another dimension of the mentioned ideology. For example, Jan Rypka terms Nezami a "socialist" and claims: "such were the heights of socialist conceptions to which Nezami climbed",[107] citing the Eskandar-Nāma that "not, however, till he reaches north does he [Alexander] find people living in complete happiness and in a classless society"[108]. On the Islamic identity of Nezami, which is abundantly clear, Rypka, without any basis, tries to portray a contradiction between Islamic theology and the God of Nezami. Rypka states with this regard: "He (God for Nezami) is the supreme moral principle, far removed from the God of Islamic theology"[109]. Others even claimed erroneously that Nezami was undermining Islam[110].

E.E. Bertels, while talking about the *Eskandar-Nāma*, claims that the dream of Nezami was realized by the establishment of the USSR and further states: "We, Soviet readers of Nezami, look at this from a completely different viewpoint. We know this country; we are lucky to live in this country and know which way one should go in order to achieve such happiness. It also excites the Soviet reader that the great Azerbaijani thinker of the 12th century, put this country in the geographic location, where his great dream was in fact realized. Let us note that all of Nezami's works end here; that all of his works were to get to this culminating period ... And now, in the country where socialism became victorious, a country that does not know the fear of historical truth, Soviet scholars take onto themselves an honorable task to give to the

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[107] Rypka 1961:115.
[108] ibid.:115.
[109] ibid.:113.
[110] Kolarz 1952; GSE, "Azerbaijan SSR", 3rd edition, pp 467.

peoples of their country the treasures that were denied to them for centuries"[111]. The fact that Nezami was a pious Muslim, and modern concepts such as "socialism" and "classless society" would have been alien to him and his milieu, does not need any further elaboration. It is clear from the work of Nezami that he actually supported the Persian tradition of monarchy and believed it was an integral and sacred part of the Persian life[112]. His praise of various monarchs of the region shows that he had no problem with the system of monarchy. But, as shown, the Soviet ideological historiography tried to portray Nezami as a communist and atheist "Azerbaijani poet" of "Azerbaijani literature" who strived for a classless society.

In this work, we will focus more on the anachronism propagated by these two scholars to undermine the Persian heritage of Nezami and introduce doubts about his culture and identity. For example, Jan Rypka states: "But as we have no indication of his having spent any length of time outside of the gates of his native Gandja, we conclude that a high standard of education must have existed among the urban Mussulman communities in the Caucasus and in Gandja in particular. The mosaic of nationalities in the Caucasus in Nezami's time was probably not very different from what it is today. And even if we concede a larger number of inhabitants Persian as their mother-tongue, they were still no doubt a minority. What wonder then that Azerbaijan is not content to name the poet a native of Azerbaijan, but claim him as a member of the Turkish race? It cannot be denied that his mother, whom the poet himself, in his epic, Laili and Majnun, designates Kurdish Ra'isa, was of different (Iranian) origin. The undisputed supremacy of Persian culture, in which the Turkish tribes could only participate through the Persian tongue, makes understandable that Nezami should write in Persian. His mastery of the language is as unexampled as his command of thought. Only a detailed history of the Caucasian town can clear up the question of Nezami's nationality. Not even the Persians seem to have been quite sure of their ground. Only thus can we explain their interpolation of a verse in "The Treasury of Mysteries" in which the poet's birthplace is given at Qom, that is, in Persia proper. ... In this epos (Khursaw o Shirin), and if we except Layli o Majnun, in all his other epic poems the poet draws on Iranian materials, especially those having some connection with Azerbaijan. The Sassanid Prince (later Shāh) Khusraw Parviz hears of the lovely Armenian princess Shirin...".[113]

There are some contradictions and unjustifiable theories in the above quote of Jan Rypka that should be pointed out. For example, as we shall see in Part IV through primary sources, the mosaic of languages in the Caucasus (especially Ganja) in the 12th century of Nezami differed a lot from that of the 20th century. Indeed, the

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[111] Tamazishvili 2004.
[112] Chelkowski 1975:4.
[113] Rypka 1961:112-113.

Mongol, Turcoman and Safavid era brought a major language shift to the area. Another contradiction is the fact that Rypka rightfully admits that Nezami came from an urban and educated background, but at the same time, Rypka states that "Turkish tribes could only participate through the Persian tongue… Only a detailed history of the Caucasian town can clear up the question of Nezami's nationality." Thus Rypka contradicts the fact that Nezami was from an urban background by mentioning (although not himself accepting) the baseless hypothetical theory accepted in modern Azerbaijan, that he was a Turcoman (Oghuz) tribesman. The question is raised why the very recent and small (relative to the established native population of the area) Turcoman Oghuz tribes would forget their tribal lifestyle (yet still be Turkish tribes as Rypka calls them), decide to become urban and write about ancient Iranian myths and legends? This would be natural for an Iranian (the sedentary urban and rural populations of Ganja) to write about the myths and legends of Iranians in the Persian language; Rypka provides no reason why members of the nomadic Turcoman tribes who had just entered the region for no more than two or three generations (Ganja fell to the Saljuqs in 1075[114]), became urban (even according to Rypka,[115] Nezami came from an urban background), Persianized and decided to forget their own folk stories, and instead adopt Iranian materials. Similarly, Rypka, without any proof, claims that the verse of Qom which is considered an interpolation had to do with arguments about Nezami's ethnic affiliation (i.e. father's ethnicity). However, the verse from Qom is found in the *Sharaf-Nāma* (not "The Treasury of Mysteries" as Rypka has claimed[116]) and it predates the era of modern nation building and nationalism. This interpolation was already pointed out by Dastgerdi before the USSR scholars. So there is no proof to connect it with modern nationalism of the 20th century. After all, Qom historically, besides its Persian population, had substantial Arab settlements which were gradually Persianized. Consequently, more suitable places could have been chosen if an author from at least 400+ years (before the modern era of nationalism) ago interpolated such a verse due to nationalism.

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[114] Bosworth 2000.

[115] Rypka 1968b:578. We should note that some Turkic groups such as the Uyghurs in greater Central Asia were becoming urbanized due to contact with the sedentary and settled Iranians and Chinese of the region. However, this situation radically differed from the situation in the Caucasus, where the unruly migrant Turcoman tribal nomads, having being recent arrivals, were not urban. Also the Persianization of dynasties such as the Saljuqs, Eldiguzids, Ahmadilis and their respective courts does not mean the Persianization of the Turcoman tribal nomads. The everyday affair of these dynasties was in the hands of Iranian *viziers*.

[116] see Nafisi 1959:6. Anthologies from 400 years ago mentions he or his father was from Qom (Nafisi 1959:158-160).

An additional contradiction from the statement of Rypka is that he correctly claims Nezami drew his material from Iranian myths and legends (see Part IV), but at the same time, he adds about these Iranian materials, "especially those having some connection with Azerbaijan" and then mentions the Armenian princess Shirin and the Persian Sassanid King Khusraw Parviz[117]. However, as shown in Part I, the definition of Azerbaijan was very different at that time for Nezami and there was no ethnonym "Azerbaijani". The stories of Khusraw o Shirin, Haft Paykar, Eskandar-Nāma, and Layli o Majnun was already part of the lore of the Iranian world and was not peculiar to Azerbaijan proper (Northwestern Iran) or Arrān (the place Nezami was from). Another point of view which we shall come back to in Part IV is that Rypka and some other writers tried to portray the Persian language as "distinct from local languages", but this argument has no basis, especially with the recent finding of the *Nozhat al-Majāles* and *Safina-ye Tabriz*, as well primary sources describing the populace and language of the region (see Part IV).

E.E. Bertels, for example, has called the poetry of Nezami as "great masterpiece of Azerbaijani literature"[118]. Such use of an anachronistic term has no historical basis because as shown in Part I, Azerbaijan proper to the Persian Caucasian poets in the 12th century would be an area of NW modern Iran bordering Arrān and Sharvān, and it had no ethnic/linguistic affiliations. Nezami makes it clear that he is writing Persian poetry which naturally is part of Persian literature. For example, in the Sharaf-Nāma, the poet recounts a dream or inspiration where Khizr tells him that he should not recompose the *Nāma-ye Khusrawān* (i.e. legendary history of Iran or Shāhnāma), because Ferdowsi has already composed it[119]:

I heard you want to recompose the book of Kings	شنیدم که در نامه‌ی خسروان
Using your discourse which flows naturally like water	سخن راند خواهی چو آب روان
But do not act in a way which is unacceptable (do not imitate)	مشو ناپسندیده را پیش باز
For people do not like a disharmonious note	که در پرده‌ی کژ نسازند ساز
Accept your fate, so that you may be dear	پسندیدگی کن که باشی عزیز
Those who are approved (saints), may accept you	پسندیدگانت پسندیده نیز
Being swallowed swiftly by a dragon	فرو بردن اژدها بی‌درنگ

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[117] Rypka 1961:112-113.
[118] Bertels 1956:124.
[119] SN/8:6-15.

Or going down to the mouth of a crocodile	بی انباشتن در دهان نهنگ
Is more pleasant in front of the wise	از آن خوشتر آید جهاندیده را
Then for the wise to see unacceptable acts	که بیند همی ناپسندیده را
Do not retell what that passed away sage (Ferdowsi) has composed	مگوی آنچه دانای پیشینه گفت
One cannot pierce two holes in a single pearl (majestic work)	که دَر دُر نشاید دو سوراخ سفت
Except in parts that need more explanation (i.e. The portion of Alexander in the Shāhnāma needs more elaboration)	مگر در گذرهای اندیشه گیر
That portion(even if partially overlaps) if repeated, is necessary	که از بازگفتن بود ناگزیر
In this path, be like a new leader	درین پیشه چون پیشوای نوی
Do not follow the ancient ones (i.e. do not imitate)	کهن پیشگان را مکن پیروی
When you have the power of virgin words (i.e. new topic)	چو نیروی بکرآزمائیت هست
Do not incline towards a widow (i.e. imitate)	به هر بیوه خود را میالای دست
Do not be upset by the hunt you did not capture (i.e. Ferdowsi already has composed the Shāhnāma)	مخور غم به صیدی که ناکردهای
There are untouched food for you preserved in the store	که یخنی بود هرچه ناخوردهای

In a poetic way, Khizr tells him that: "Do not fill with grief over the hunt you did not capture". Khizr (which could symbolically mean inner divine inspiration or inner thought although in Islamic literature, it is a real person alluded to in the Quran – Sura 18) rather inspires Nezami to write the story of Alexander[120]:

Since I listened to the heartfelt inspiration of Khizr	چو دلداری خضرم آمد به گوش
My mind was uplifted with new vigor	دماغ مرا تازه گردید هوش
His words were acceptable and I accepted it	پذیرا سخن بود شد جایگیر
Good advice from the heart is acceptable to the heart	سخن کز دل آید بود دلپذیر

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[120] SN:8/35-37.

Since those advices took effect on me	چو در من گرفت آن نصیحت‌گری
I opened my tongue and started to produce Persian pearls	زبان برگشادم به دُرّ دَری

Of course, Stalin could not have claimed that Khizr in a dream forced Nezami to compose Persian poetry (or as Nezami calls it "Persian Pearls"). Stalin also could not claim that Nezami was forced with regards to his great desire and personal inclinations towards the Persian national history! But the way the poet has described his situation here also exposes the invalid claim of the USSR with regards to the introduction of Layli o Majnun. The fact that Nezami Ganjavi wanted to do an imitation of the Nāma-ye Khusrawān (the sources for the Shāhnāma or the Shāhnāma itself) itself shows his tremendous interest in his pre-Islamic Iranian culture (which we briefly touch upon in Part IV). If he was of a non-Iranian background as claimed by Stalin, he would gravitate towards composing the national history of other cultures. In the same section, Nezami writes about his own skill and only mentions the Persian language, further invalidating the politically charged claim that Nezami composed in any other language[121]:

Nezami whose skill is composing Persian poetry	نظامی که نظم دری کار اوست
Composing Persian poetry is what he is deserving of	دری نظم کردن سزاوار اوست
He will tell this beautiful story in such a way	چنان گوید این نامه‌ی نغز را
That reading it will enlighten its readers	که روشن کند خواندنش مغز را

Similarly, in a reference likely to himself, he states[122]:

The educated word-master stated such	سخن‌پیمای فرهنگی چنین گفت

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[121] SN:8/62-63.

[122] KH/19:26. We should note that *Dari* is a form of Persian and consequently it is also called Persian (Al-Mas'udi 1894:77-8, Al-Muqaddasi 1983/1:377) or *Pārsi-ye Dari (Arabic al-fārsīya al-dārīya)* in classical texts. Rarely, *Pārsi* has been used for regional Persian dialects as opposed to the literary *Pārsi-ye Dari* (shortened to *Dari*). Some authors such as Sa'di, Sanāi, Nāser-e Khusraw, Hafez, have used both *Pārsi* and *Dari* equivalently while some authors such as Attār, Rumi and Sultan Walad seem to have used *Pārsi* only. All of this makes it clear that *Pārsi-ye Dari* is one form of Persian (Lazard 1994).

| When he started piercing the Persian pearls | به وقت آن که دُرهای دَری سُفت |

Clearly, Nezami has called his own work as *dorr-e dari* ("Persian Pearl") and *nazm-e dari* (Persian Poetry). Consequently, there is no historical basis to use politically invented anachronistic terms, such as "Azerbaijani literature", which Nezami never used.

2.2 Invention of an Arbitrarily Named "Azerbaijani School" or "Transcaucasian School" of Persian Literature by the Soviet School of Oriental Studies

As noted the Soviet Union pursued the policy of dissecting Persian literature into smaller components and weakening the unity between these components for the purpose of regional nation building. Bertels even went further and invented a whole "Azerbaijani school of Persian poetry" or "Azerbaijani style of Persian poetry". He states: "All authors characterize the group, starting with Qatrān, exhibit a certain commonality of style. It is so great that I think we have the right to speak of Azerbaijani School in the XII"[123]. This invented terminology of "Azerbaijani School" was borrowed from Bertels by Rypka and introduced in his two major English works[124]. The claim by both authors is that Qatrān Tabrizi started the "Azerbaijani School of Persian poetry". It is obvious that these politically invented terms have no historical basis. That is the reason why such a school which is also called "Trans-Caucasian School of Persian poetry" has yet to be clearly defined. Its main characteristics are said to have been:

1- The school started with Qatrān Tabrizi[125].

2- More usage of Arabic words[126] relative to Khurasani School.

3- Usage of Persian archaism; that is Fahlavi which in Azerbaijan is called Old Iranian Azari not to be confused with the later Turkish language[127].

4- "Christian imagery and quotations from the Bible, and other expressions inspired by Christian sources, so that understanding Khāqāni and Nezami is impossible without a thorough knowledge of Christianity"[128].

5- "Relative freedom from mysticism"[129].

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[123] Bertels 1962:74.

[124] Rypka 1968a:201-202; idem 1968b:568.

[125] Bertels 1962:74; Berenjian 1988:4; Rypka1968b:568.

[126] Berenjian 1988:4; Rypka 1968a:201. It should be noted that the bulk of the Arabic vocabulary in Persian has been Persianized and many words are used in different context than Arabic.

[127] Berenjian 1988:4.

[128] ibid.: 4.

6-   Complexity of terms and new concepts[130].

7-   Its timeframe is supposed to be three generations of poets in the 11th and 12th century associated mainly with the courts of the Sharvānshāhs[131] (Incidentally, this was a period when Iranian languages predominated among the urban Muslims and not just the courts as shown later in this book).

With regards to the main factors above, the style of Qatrān Tabrizi is very different than that of Nezami, and Qatrān Tabrizi is considered as a poet of the Khurasani style as described below. With regards to point number two, Arabic words are the feature of School of 'Iraq and the movement of center of gravity of the Persian language in this period. More words of Arabic origin had entered the Iranian dialects and languages of Western Iran relative to Eastern Iran at that time. Incidentally, but incomparable to the influence of the Arabic, the Persian language acquired a minor Turkish vocabulary in the Ghaznavid and Saljuqid era (see Part III). With regards to Persian archaism and Fahlavi language (NW Iranian vernaculars), this has been pointed out also by the major Iranian literary scholars (as noted below), but none of them have formulated an "Azerbaijani School". Point number four about Christian imagery is a hyperbole which we shall discuss below.

With regards to point number five, this is very arbitrary but in our opinion, the Sufi influence in the Islamic world played its part in the local poetry of the Caucasus. Furthermore, Sufi influence in the chronological differentiation of Persian literature has to do with the specific Persian poet. For example, some poets of the 'Iraqi School were themselves Sufis while others show less influence of Sufism. With regards to factor number six, with the exception of Khāqāni and Nezami (who was influenced by Khāqāni) who were two outstanding Persian poets of the Caucasus (much like Hafez and Sa'di in Fars), one cannot ascribe their creative stylistic features to the hundreds of Persian poets from the region between the 11th to 12th centuries. Just like not all the poets of Fars had the creativity and style of Hafez and Sa'di. The symbolic imagery and concepts of Khāqāni Sharvāni and Nezami are part of the stylistic features of these two poets (and to a lesser extent Mujir), or else the style of Mahsati Ganjavi or Qatrān Tabrizi does not use as much imagery and new terms.

As shown, none of the main factors have to do with Turkish culture from the Western language sources that we noted. But as noted, the Soviet nation building concept of building a new Azerbaijani identity devoid of any Turkish connections was not incompatible with such a terminology. Azerbaijanis to the Soviets were the continuation of the Medes and Christian Caucasian Albanians, whereas the Iranian Medes were already absorbed into other Iranians before the arrival of the Saljuqs and

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[129] ibid.: 4.
[130] ibid.: 4.
[131] Berenjian 1988:4; Rypka 1968a:202; Rypka 1968b.

the Caucasian Albanians, who followed Christianity, were being absorbed into the Armenian peoples.

Our analysis begins with point number seven and Jan Rypka, who uses Bertels as his primary source. Rypka states: "The school, which began with Qatrān (d. 1072), formed a well defined group of teachers and pupils" and supposedly "the school" formed: "clearly defined group of three generations of teachers and pupils...All the poets worked at the courts or within the realms of the Sharvānshāhs..."[132]. However, no such group of "teachers and pupils" is found in the annals of history with the exception of Khāqāni and Falaki Sharvāni who were pupils of Abu 'Ala Ganjavi[133] and Mujir Baylaqāni who presumably was a student of Khāqāni. For example, no one knows who were the teachers of Abu 'Ala Ganjavi or Nezami Ganjavi or that of more than 100 poets (24 of them from Ganja) from Sharvān, Arrān and Azerbaijan (see Part IV) in the 11th -13th century. Indeed the generation gap between Qatrān (circa. 1009-1070 A.D.) and Nezami Ganjavi (circa. 1130-1200 A.D.) is also more than three generation. As the recently discovered manuscript of Nozhat al-Majāles (see Part IV for more details) shows, Persian poetry was the common and folk expression of the average people and not just associated with the elites of the courts of the Sharvānshāhs.

Rypka also notes that: "With the exception of Nezami's work, the entire poetic output of the region was confined to lyric poetry, to the *qasida* in particular"[134]. However, as shown in Part IV of this book, the most common poetic output of the region should now be considered the *ruba'i* (Quatrains), which is not a genre of court poetry like the *qasida* (Odes) or epic poetry. Rypka also claims with regards to the Sharvānshāh that "Persian was not the language of the princes whose praise they sang"[135], whereas the Sharvānshāhs were already Persianized[136] by the middle of 10th or early 11th century, composed Persian poetry themselves[137] and claimed descent from ancient Sassanid Kings[138]. Biruni (d. 1048) states that the common belief of people is that the Sharvānshāhs are descendants of the Sassanids (Biruni 1879:48) and Al-Mas'udi (d. circa 950) in the middle of the 10th century states there is no doubt that their pedigree goes back to Bahram Gur[139]. By the 10th century they had adopted

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[132] Rypka 1968b:568., Rypka 1968a:202.
[133] See (Beelaert 2010) for rejection of this claim with regards to Abu 'Ala being a teacher of Khāqāni and Falaki Sharvāni.
[134] Rypka 1968b:568.
[135] Rypka 1968b:569, Rypka 1968a:202.
[136] Barthold and Bosworth 1997; Bosworth 2011.
[137] Sharvāni 1996.
[138] Biruni 1879:48; Minorsky 1958:116; Barthold and Bosworth 1997.
[139] Minorsky 1958:134.

the new Iranian languages that had evolved from Middle Persian dialects (e.g. Tat-Persian in the Caucasus) and composed Persian poetry themselves[140]. According to Minorsky, "The Iranicisation of the family must have proceeded continuously" and "the most likely explanation of this change must be a marriage link established on the spot, possibly with the family of the ancient rulers of Shābarān. The attraction of a Sasanian pedigree proved stronger than the recollections of the Shaybani lineage"[141].

On a similar line, Rypka while trying to distinguish between the languages of folk literature and court literature (which he states was mainly intended for the courts of the Sharvānshāh), makes the erroneous statement that: "folk poetry of course developed in consistence with local idioms"[142] without providing a single sample of such folk poetry. As clearly described by the book Nozhat al-Majāles, primary sources describing the population of the area, and modern secondary scholarly sources, Iranian vernacular languages and Persian poetry were the folk and common languages of the urban Muslim population of the major cities of the Caucasus (see Part IV). Consequently, due to political reasons and as a direct result of Soviet nation building, a set of non-historical and non-factual statements were contrived to minimizing the influence of Persian culture and Iranian ethnic elements of the Caucasus[143].

An important fact to note is that, Rypka and Bertels claim that Qatrān allegedly started the "Azerbaijani School of Persian poetry". Qatrān who spoke Persian vernacular language (denoted as Fahlavi, see Part IV for direct attestation of the Tabrizi Iranian language and Qatrān's contrast of his native vernacular Pārsi with literary Persian or Dari) however has also intensely derided the plundering and massacres brought by the attack of the nomadic Oghuz Turks who ravaged and plundered Azerbaijan[144]. He calls these Oghuz nomads as *khunkhār* ("blood suckers"), *virāngar* ("bringers of ruin") to Iran, *kin-kār* ("workers of hatred"), *āfat* ("a calamity"), *ghaddār* ("covenant breakers") and *makkār* ("charlatan and deceivers")[145]. This portion of Qatrān Tabrizi's poetry which is very useful for historical analysis would present a major contradiction between the construction of "Azerbaijani School of Persian poetry" and attempting to connect such an imaginary school to the Oghuz

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[140] Coincidentally, even revisionist scholars like Ziya Buniiatov (see footnote 3) concede that Persian was the mother tongue of the Sharvān elite (Shnirelman 2001:123).

[141] Minorsky 1958:116.
[142] Rypka 1968a:202.
[143] Kolarz 1952 on Soviet Azerbaijan and Tajikistan; Shnirelman 2001:105.
[144] Bosworth 1968:32-33. The first attack before the Saljuqs was defeated by local rulers (ibid.).
[145] Kasravi 1957:172,197; Tabrizi 1983.

Turcomans that were not settled in Azerbaijan at that time. Of course, the "Azerbaijani School of Poetry" was not connected to the Oghuz Turcophones or any other group, but rather it was a term based on the Soviet conception of a new Azerbaijani identity (that did not exist in the 12th century) based on the Medes and Caucasian Albanians. However, this aspect of Qatrān's derision of the nomadic Turcoman incursion (which was the first attack of nomadic Turcomans in the area) is not mentioned by Rypka[146]. How Qatrān Tabrizi relates to the later emerging Turcophone culture of Azerbaijan SSR which did not exist during the time of Qatrān is unknown and not explained by Rypka. Besides, Qatrān Tabrizi is traditionally considered as part of the Khurasani School (see below). Other terminologies used by these authors for the "Azerbaijan School of Poetry" were the "Sharvān School" and "Trans-Caucasian School"[147]. However, none of these terms are clearly defined with the exception of portraying the fact that Persian poetry flourished in the 11th and 12th century in the Caucasus (which is precisely when the ethnic Iranian-speaking population constituted the bulk of the urban Muslims of the area).

After Rypka's book and article, other sources have picked up this term of "Azerbaijan School" without recognizing its political intent. For example, Dr. Sakina Berenjian has mistakenly attributed the term "Azerbaijan School" to Iranian authors such as Badi-o-Zaman Foruzanfar, Rezazadeh Shafaq and Zabillollah Safa[148], while looking exactly in the same sources that she cites, none of these prominent expert scholars of Persian literature have mentioned an "Azerbaijan school of poetry" nor an "Azerbaijani style" has been mentioned[149]. Rather, these authors, such as Safa, mention the influence of Fahlaviyāt (Persian vernacular or as Safa calls it "Old Azari") on the poetry of Qatrān, Nezami and Khāqāni[150]. They mention that due to

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[146] Rypka 1968a; idem:1968b.
[147] Rypka 1968b.
[148] Berenjian 1988:30.
[149] Foruzanfar 1940; idem 2004; Safa 1957; Shafaq 1936.
[150] Safa 1957:342. We should not that the 7th to 15th century designation of the term "Azari" for the language or people of Azarbaijan by Iranian literary experts and scholars such as Safa, Matini, Bakhtiari and others has a purely Iranian context denoting Western Persians (from Azarbaijan and surrounding areas) who speak Fahlaviyāt Iranian dialects/speakers (NW Iranian vernacular that was spread in areas such as Isfahan, Azarbaijan, Caspian provinces, Hamadan, Rayy and surrounding areas including Caucasus - see Part IV for clarification of these terms). This designation is for convenience of distinguishing the Iranian dialects of Western Persians such as Qatrān Tabrizi from Eastern Persians such as Asadi Tusi or Nāser-e Khusraw. This designation has nothing do with a separate ethnic group or peoples, as these are all considered Iranians/Persians. Additionally, this terminology has nothing to do with the modern Turkic language and its speakers in the Caucasus that have adopted the terms "Azeri\Azerbaijani" in the 20th century.

the Persian of the time, as well as Fahlaviyāt NW Iranian dialects (which had greater Arabic vocabulary than Khurasani Persian according to Safa), more Arabic words are seen in the poets of 'Arāq-e Ajam and the Caucasus[151]. At the same time, Qatrān is considered as master of the Khurasani tradition[152].

The confusion is also compounded by the fact that some scholars have mentioned an Azerbaijan or Sharvān or Tabriz or Transcaucasian School as a geographical term (rather than an independent literary stylistic term) while mentioning the major poets of these as cornerstone of the 'Iraqi style[153]. That is they differentiate between style and local geographical regions where a large number of Persian poets emerged. For example, Chelkowski rightfully mentions the primary styles of Persian literate are the Khurasani style, 'Iraqi style and Hindi style, and mentions the Azerbaijan and pre-Safavid Isfahan school under the 'Iraqi style[154]. He correctly notes that: "Khāqāni could be termed as one of the greatest poets of Iran and the cornerstone of the 'Iraqi style. In Azerbaijan, Mujir, the follower of Khāqāni, brought the style to its apogee."[155] De Bruijn also mentions the three main styles based on the chronological order to be the Khurasani, 'Iraqi and the Indian style[156] while mentioning the school of pre-Safavid Isfahan and Azerbaijan as part of the 'Iraqi style. With regards to Nezami, he notes: "On the other hand he enriched the romantic mathnawi by using imagery of lyric poetry to the full, treating it with all the rhetorical ingenuity characteristic of the 'Iraqi style"[157].

Here we briefly touch upon this point from the viewpoint of traditional Iranian scholars which is also backed up by the verses of the poets of the regions. The division of classical Persian poetry into Khurasani, 'Iraqi, and Hindi (or Isfahani) styles is a chronological differentiation. What is called today *sabk* (style) or school in Persian poetry is usually denoted as *shiveh* (شیوه = method) or *tarz* (طرز = style) in Persian poetry. For instance, Khāqāni Sharvāni, in comparing himself and Unsuri (the court poet of Mahmud Ghaznavi), states[158]:

I possess a new method	مرا شیوه‌ی تازه‌ای هست و داشت

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[151] ibid.:342.
[152] ibid.:335.
[153] Chelkowski 1974; de Bruijn 1997.
[154] Chelkowski 1974:112.
[155] Chelkowski 1974:118.
[156] de Bruijn 1997:60.
[157] de Bruijn 1997:62.
[158] Sajjadi 1959; PD: Khāqāni.

While 'Unsuri had the same ancient method	همان شیوه‌ی باستان عنصری

Or Hafez of Shiraz, in a *ghazal* attributed to him, claims:

Sa'di is the Master of ghazal (words) for everybody	استاد غزل (سخن) سعدی است پیش همه کس اما
However, ghazals of Hafez follow the style of Khwāju	دارد غزل حافظ طرز غزل خواجو

The most prominent scholars of Persian literature like poet laureate Muhammad-Taqi Bahar, Badi-o-Zaman Foruzanfar, Saeed Nafisi, and others define the following schools in Persian poetry[159].

1- School or Style of Khurasan: this style started in the 3rd and 4th century A.H. / 9th and 10th A.D. in Eastern Greater Iran (Greater Khurasan) and was followed by poets in other regions. Some important features of this school are straightforwardness, clarity, scarcity of Arabic loanwords and compounds, abundance of Persian words and compounds, and even traces of Middle Persian. The poems are characterized with description of nature and natural scenery, panegyric and elegy of kings, rulers, and high officials, epics, myths and such. Some of the most famous poets in this school are Rudaki Samarqandi, Ferdowsi Tusi, Shahid Balkhi, Kassāi Marvzi, Qatrān Tabrizi and Nāser-e Khusraw.

2- School or Style of 'Iraq: from around the 6th century A.H. / 12th century A.D., due to the invasion of Khurasan by Oghuz Turkish tribes (vividly recorded in a poem by Anvari Abivardi and another poem by Khāqāni Sharvāni), the gravity center of Persian poetry shifted to the western regions of Iran, or so-called *'araq-e 'ajam* or Iranian 'Iraq[160] in medieval geographic terminology. Due to the proximity to the center of Islamic Caliphate and the influence of Arabic language, we can find more Arabic and Quranic / Islamic terms and terminology in the poetry of this school. Poems are now more about theological concepts, Sufism and mysticism, and more philosophical discourses. Some of the most famous poets of this school include Sanāi Ghaznavi, Jamāl al-Din Abd al-Razzāq Isfahāni and his son Kamāl al-Din Ismāil, Sa'di Shirazi, Hafez Shirazi, Fakhr al-Din Ibrāhim 'Irāqi (Hamadani), Nezami Ganjavi,

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[159] See Bahar 1942; Foruzanfar 1940:1/ze; idem 2004:289-291; Nafisi 1965:99-100, 157-158, 161-162, 165-166, 172, 235,253,417,429.

[160] *'Arāq* is the Arabicized form of Persian word *Arāk* meaning "lowlands". After Islamic conquest of Iran, the Mesopotamia was called *'Arāq-e 'Arab* or Arabic 'Iraq and the western part of Iran, including Hamadan and Esfahan region were called *'Arāq-e 'Ajam* or the Persian 'Iraq.

Khāqāni Sharvāni, Farid al-Din Attār Nishapuri, Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi (Mowlāna or Rumi), Salmān Sāveji, and Abd al-Rahmān Jāmi.

3- School or Style of India/Esfahan: After the death of Jāmi in later 15th century A.D. and from the time of Safavid dynasty, Persian poetry experienced some changes. Shāh Abbas the Great moved the capital of Safavid to the city of Esfahan and this city flourished under his reign. For this reason, the poetry of this period is called Isfahani. The characteristic features of this school are delicacy of imagery, extensive use of hidden references, sophisticated compounds and such. For example, Sāeb Tabrizi says[161]:

When you extend your hand to ask from others	دست طمع که پیش کسان می‌کنی دراز
You are building a bridge to leave behind your pride	پل بسته‌ای که بگذری از آبروی خویش

Or another example[162]:

Under the pressure of Time my hair tuned white	شد از فشار گردون مویم سپید و سر زد
This is the milk that I was fed during my infancy!	شیری که خورده بودم در روزگار طفلی

Another example by Kalim Kāshani:

I'm not to be blame if the stitches of my shoes are showing	بخیه‌ی کفشم اگر دندان‌نما شد عیب نیست
My shoes are laughing at my idle wanderings	خنده می‌آید وی را بر هرزه‌گردی‌های من

Due to the political period and as a result of good relations with India, many poets (including Sāeb Tabrizi, Kalim Kāshani, and 'Orfi Shirazi) and artists of Persia migrated to Northern India and were welcomed by the Mughal Empire. Local poets started to imitate the Iranian poets but since the Persian of the Mughal courts had its own particularities and Persian was not the native language of the majority of the inhabitants of India, they came up with some strange compounds and far-fetched imageries and references. This branch is called School of India. However, some

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[161] PD:Sāeb Tabrizi.
[162] PD:Sāeb Tabrizi.

people do not use this distinction and call both groups as the School of India or School of Esfahan.

4- School of Restoration: in late Qajar period or early 13th century A.H. / 19th century A.D., Persian poetry was experiencing decline and decadence. Poems had become complex and out of reach and tasteless. So some poets decided to return to the elegance of School of Khurasan and make the poems clear and straightforward again. So this school is called "Return of Restoration" period. Some poets of this school include poet laureate Sorush Isfahani, Muhammad-Taqi Bahar, Saburi (Bahar's father) and Parvin Etesami.

This categorization and periods are obviously for ease of understanding and convenience, as such changes are gradual. For example, Seyyed Hassan Ghaznavi, a poet from Khurasan in the 5th century A.H. / 11th century A.D. (during the period of School of Khurasan) that has poems in style of School of Esfahan in which he uses delicate imagery:

I would be hiding in the middle of my ghazal	اندر غزل خویش نهان خواهم گشتن
So I would kiss your lips when you recite my poem!	تا بر لب تو بوسه دهم چون که بخوانیش!

It is said that when Sheikh Abu-Saeed Abu al-Khair, the famous Iranian mystic, heard this line, he was so impressed that along with his disciples, he went and paid the poet a visit at his home. Another example by Khāqāni Sharvāni (a representative of the 'Iraqi school in the Caucasus), which shows traces of School of Esfahan, was in existence many centuries before this school[163]:

The mirror of my kneecap has turned dark blue from (beating of) the comb of my hands	شده است آیینه‌ی زانو بنفش از شانه‌ی دستم
And I have rested my head on my knees from regret like a violet flower	که دارم چون بنفشه سر به زانوی پشیمانی

Here Khāqāni sees a violet as someone who is resting his head on his knees because of his regrets and sorrow and he portrays himself as such. Khāqāni is mentioned as also a connection between the Khurasani and 'Iraqi Style by Foruzanfar[164]. Hafez borrowed the same image in one of his *ghazals*[165]:

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[163] PD: Khāqāni, Sajjadi 1959.
[164] Foruzanfar 2004:290.
[165] PD: Hafez.

Without her unruly curls, our melancholy-stricken heads	بی زلف سرکشـش سر سـودایی از ملال
We have rested on our kneecaps like violet	همچون بنفشـه بر سر زانو نهادهایم

These school names are not bound to regions either: for instance, one of the founders of School of 'Iraq is Sanāi who lived in Ghazni in Greater Khurasan. Or Attār lived in Nishapur in Greater Khurasan, Khāqāni lived in Sharvān and Rumi (originally from Wakhsh/Balkh in Greater Khurasan) lived most of his life in Konya in Asia Minor but they are all prominent poets of School of 'Iraq. Or even though Qatrān Tabrizi lived in Azerbaijan he is a poet of School of Khurasan. And 'Orfi Shirazi, Sāeb Tabrizi and Kalim Kāshani from Iran are associated with the Indian style.

These classification and school names were common and accepted by all experts and men of letters until Iran's provinces in the Caucasus were lost to Russian Tsarist government in the 19th century after the Russo-Persian Wars and signing of the two treaties of Gulistan and Turcomanchay (in 1813 and 1828 respectively). Tsarist Russia and later, Soviet government, decided to cut any links and relationship between Iran and its former provinces. So they started their nation-building and historical revisionism project. The invented term "Azerbaijani School" by Bertels is a clear example of such nation-building concepts. The Soviet Orientalist E. E. Bertels in view of USSR nation building created new schools and labels for Persian poetry using his own contemporary geographical names and regions then under Soviet rule[166]. So he came up with these names for schools in Persian poetry: Central Asian School, Trans-Caucasian School, Persian School (?!), and Indian School[167]. Aside from the Indian Style or School, none of the other terms have any historical basis or precedence. An implication of calling a school "Persian" would be that other schools were not Iranian and the poets of those schools were not Iranian either. An obvious baseless and distorted theory that implies Rudaki was Central Asian but not Iranian, and his school was Central Asian rather than Khurasani! Of course, as has been demonstrated in the present work, Bertels had reservations about his political dissections of Persian literature and his unscientific methodology, but the political pressure upon him outweighed any attempted corrections[168].

Dr. Sakina Berenjian, while citing Rypka and Bertels, makes the extravagant claim that[169] a distinguishing feature specific to "Azerbaijani School" is "Christian imagery

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[166] Berenjian 1988:2.
[167] ibid.:2.
[168] Tamazishvili 2001.
[169] Berenjian 1988:4.

and symbolism" and continues that: "Christian imagery and symbolism, quotations from the Bible and other expressions inspired by Christian sources occur so frequently in the works of Khāqāni and Nezami in particular, that a comprehension of their work is almost impossible without a thorough knowledge of Christianity". Such a statement itself could be rooted in the Soviet attempt that shows that ancient people of The Caucasus (Georgians, Armenians and the Soviet anachronistic concepts of an Azeri people in the 12th century) being closely bound and fighting jointly against Persians, Arabs and Islam.

The fact is such symbolism and imagery is found mainly in Khāqāni and not all poets of that region. There are two reasons for Khāqāni's usage of these symbolisms. First, Khāqāni's mother was a Nestorian Christian and then converted to Islam and freed. Khāqāni explains this in one of his poems[170]:

My mother was Nestorian and had lineage from Mubads	نسطوری و موبدی نژادش
Her nature was, however, Islamic and Believer	اسلامی و ایزدی نهادش
Her birthplace was the land of Byzantine	مولد بُده خاک ذوعطابش
Her (spiritual) father was Philip the Great	فیلاقوس الکبیر بابش
So, she chose based on her reason and intuition	پس کرده گزین به عقل و الهام
Islam over the religion of the (Christian) priests	بر کیش کشیش دین اسلام
She fled from Nestorian confession	بگریخته از عتاب نسطور
And she grasped in the Written Book (=Quran)	آویخته در کتاب مسطور
She was a Lady like Zulaikha	کدبانو بوده چون زلیخا
But she became a slave like Yusuf (Joseph)	بَرده شده باز یوسف‌آسا
She was brought from the Rome of Straying	از روم ضلالت آوریده
She was raised by Slave-Trader of Salvation	نخّاس هُدیش پروریده
Since she saw Quran and "There is no God but God"	تا مصحف و «لااله» دیده
She became estranged with Bible and the crucifix	ز انجیل و صلیب دررمیده

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[170] PD: Khāqāni.

Khāqāni's mother might have told her son about the Christianity and some of his knowledge might have been through his mother. Alternatively, Khāqāni was very learned in all fields and could have studied the main concepts of other religions.

Second, not all poems of Khāqāni are laden with "Christian imagery and symbolism", rather, only few and possibly only two are such. One is called "the Christian panegyric" and its title mentions: "on complaints from imprisonment and eulogy of Master of Rome, Izzu-dowlah Caesar". Khāqāni composed this poem for the Caesar of Byzantium to intercede on his behalf and help Khāqāni out of prison. The famous orientalist Vladimir Minorsky has an extensive commentary on this poem in 30 pages and shows that this Caesar was in fact Andronicus Comnenus[171]. Khāqāni has used all of his Christian knowledge to impress the Caesar and incite him to intercede on his behalf. Many of Muslim poets did not understand this poem due to their lack of familiarity with Christian terms, symbols and imagery. Even though Minorsky was a great scholar and Iranologist, he never considered Khāqāni a poet of "Azerbaijani School". Khāqāni has another poem in which he uses "Maryam" (Mary) and "Isā" (Jesus) repeatedly with some references to their story and they are merely to show off his mastery of words. Otherwise, Khāqāni has composed many long poems about his trips to Mecca and his pilgrimages to Ka'aba and the shrine of Prophet of Islam. Or Nezami's treatment of the prophet of Islam's ascension (me'rāj) is the most elaborate amongst Persian poets. Should we not consider such "Islamic imagery and symbolism" characteristics of "Azerbaijani School"? Khāqāni has a moving poem about his visit to the Ctesiphon and remains of Sassanid palace (Arch of Khusraw) where he expresses his love for Ancient Persia and his grief about the fall of Sassanid. Nezami talks about Iran being the center of the World and composed most of his epic about Ancient Persia. Should we not consider these as characteristics of "Azerbaijani School"? Both Khāqāni and Nezami have extensive and frequent references to pre-Islamic Iran, especially the Persian Sassanid Empire (Nezami has devoted large parts of his works, 3 out of 5 books, to pre-Islamic history of Iran). Should we not consider this as characteristics of "Azerbaijani School"?

As noted by Schimmel in her study of Christian influences in Persian poetry, while Persian poetry in general contains a good number of allusions to Jesus Christ, Mary and Christianity, most of the images and ideas expressed about Jesus and Mary are Quranic elaborations[172]. According to Schimmel, only among a few poets who had firsthand contact with Christian communities of Persia and Anatolia, such as Khāqāni and Rumi, do some lines betray more intimate knowledge of Christian customs and concepts[173]. We should note that Sanāi, Rumi and Attār for example reference

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[171] Minorsky 1945.
[172] Schimmel 1982.
[173] ibid.

Christianity, Jesus and Mary more often than most of the Caucasian Persian poets. Or for example, Sa'di, Nāser-e Khusraw, Rudaki have some parables and themes about Jesus which are close to their Gospel versions[174], but this does not allow for the creation of a new school of Persian poetry or classification of these poets into a separate category. No one has ever seen in the poems of Nezami, Khāqāni, and Mujir Baylaqāni, neither has heard about other poets of Arrān, Sharvān and the Caucasus – who are wrongly claimed by the USSR writes as poets of "Azerbaijani School" – so much "Christian imagery and symbolism" that prevents readers from understanding their poems, as was claimed in the definition of "Azerbaijani School". Should all the numerous imitations of Nezami who themselves were overwhelmingly Muslim and understood the poetry of Nezami without Christianity also be considered as part of this school? As a whole, it is clear that Armenian and Georgian Christians influenced the Iranian peoples of the Caucasus more than other Iranian speaking regions. Likely, idioms from these cultures which are more permeated from Christianity had entered the Iranian languages of the area. However, as mentioned, most of the sources and imageries of Christ and Mary in Persian poetry is actually Quranic[175], and the usage of elements borrowed from Christianity in Persian poetry is not solely confined to the Persian poets of the Caucasus[176]. Even in the works of Khāqāni, who takes the foremost place amongst the Caucasian Persian poets, the usage of Christian imagery is extremely small compared to his Islamic and Iranian pre-Islamic terminology and imagery. Consequently, the formulation of new school of Persian by the USSR in the 20th century that bases one of its main pillars upon exaggeration of Christian elements is questionable.

As far we have researched in the books and works published in Iran before 1991 by Iranian author, the term "Azerbaijani School" of Persian poetry was never used by any notable literally scholar. Qatrān Tabrizi has always been considered a poet from School of Khurasan and Nezami and Khāqāni were considered poets of School of 'Iraq. Even Hafez Shirazi, who has benefited a lot from the works of Khāqāni and Nezami, compared his poetry with the poetry of Nezami[177]:

Hafez! Your poems are like a necklace of exquisite pearls from fine water	چو سِلک دُرّ خوشاب است شعر نغز تو حافظ
Considering their delicateness, they surpass the poetry of Nezami	که گاه لطف سبق می‌برد ز نظم نظامی

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[174] Aryan 1982.

[175] Schimmel 1982.

[176] Aryan 1982.

[177] PD: Hafez.

Hafez even composed his Sāqi-Nāma following similar pieces in Nezami's Eskandar-Nāma. Hafez explicitly refers his poetry to the School of 'Iraq[178]:

Hafez's lyrics are ghazals in the school of 'Iraq	غزلیّات عراقی است سرود حافظ
Who heard these heart-rending songs and never screamed for sympathy?	که شنید این ره جانسوز که فریاد نکرد؟

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, its opening to the outside world and outflow of Soviet-era materials abroad, some Iranians became familiar with the Soviet discover named "Azerbaijani School". In 1997, in the Jun-July issue of *Kayhān Farhangi* magazine in Tehran, an article was published under the title of "Azerbaijani School of Persian poetry" by Ahmad Zākeri. He, too, despite all historical evidences and even despite the explicit writings of Khāqāni and Nezami, considered them as poets of "Azerbaijani School". Interestingly, he writes about Nezami, Khāqāni, Sharvāni, Falaki Sharvāni, Mujir Baylaqāni and Dhulfiqār Sharvāni: "All these composers and poets from Azerbaijan believed that they were creating material in the School of 'Iraq not Azerbaijani School"[179]! This means, Khāqāni Sharvāni, Nezami Ganjavi, Mujir Baylaqāni, Falaki Sharvāni and others thought that they were composing poem in the School of 'Iraq, but 800 years later, the USSR nation-builders and other scholars ignorant of the USSR nation building discovered that these poets were mistaken but they did not realize it!

Khāqāni clearly proclaims himself as the successor of Sanāi Ghaznavi, who was one of the founders of School of 'Iraq and even claims that his first name, Badil, is the result of this affiliation (Badil means "alternate" or "successor")[180]:

I am the successor (badal) of Sanāi in this world	بدل من آمدم اندر جهان سنایی را
That is the reason why my father named me Badil	بدین دلیل پدر نام من «بدیل» نهاد

And he mentions[181]:

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[178] PD: Hafez.
[179] Zākeri 1997:32.
[180] PD: Khāqāni; Sajjadi 1959.
[181] PD: Khāqāni; Sajjadi 1959.

When Time wrote off the period of Sanāi	چون زمان دور سنایی درنوشت
The Sky gave birth to a Word-Master like me	آسمان چون من سخن گستر بزاد
When a poet was interred in Ghazni	چون به غزنین شاعری شد زیر خاک
The land of Sharvān gave birth to a Wizard like me	خاک شروان ساحری دیگر بزاد

It is interesting that Mr. Zākeri is himself amazed with this new discovery and quotes lines from these poets, where they clearly and explicitly called their style the School of 'Iraq. He then continues: "In our critique and judgment, a point worth considering and investigation is that all the poets of the Azerbaijani School called themselves "poets of 'Iraqi Style" and never designated their style as "Azari" or "Azerbaijani"[182]. Then he brings examples from their poems.

Khāqāni Sharvāni[183]:

I am the king of poems and prose in Khurasan and 'Iraq	پادشاه نظم و نثرم در خراسان و عراق
I have brought examples from any point to people of knowledge	که اهل دانش را ز هر لفظ امتحان آورده‌ام

Dhulfiqār Sharvāni[184]:

Even though my mind is excited in the 'Iraqi Style	گرچه بر طرز عراق است ضمیرش مشعوف
Sons of Khurasan are ashamed from (the beauty) of my words	در سخن خجلت ابنای خراسان باشد

Nezami Ganjavi[185]:

City of Ganja has grasped my collar	گنجه گره کرده گریبان من
Treasure of 'Iraq is in my grasp with no twist	بی گرهی گنج عراق آن من

Nezami Ganjavi[186]:

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[182] Zākeri 1997.
[183] ibid.
[184] ibid.
[185] ibid.

Why are you bound to this shanty town?	چرا گشتی در این بیغوله پابست
With this precious currency of 'Iraqi in your hand	چنین نقد عراقی بر کف دست

Mujir Baylaqāni[187]:

My Lord knows that I am the ultimate in poetry	داند خدایگان که سخن ختم شد به من
Since in 'Iraq my mind has been in the business of letters	تا در عراق صنعت طبعم سخنوری است

With all these clear declarations, emphases and explicit statements of these poets in calling their style the School of 'Iraq (and even Zākeri himself admitting this fact), it becomes clear that the so called "Azerbaijan School" is merely part of the Soviet nation building policy. To be fair to Mr. Zākeri, he does not consider the "Azerbaijani School/Style" as something separate from the School of 'Iraq. He writes: "With all these judgments [of these poets about their works being in the School of 'Iraq], the personal belief of this author is that Azerbaijani School is only a branch of School of 'Iraq and has fundamental commonalities with this school"[188].

Like Ms. Berenjian, he also lists features of the School of 'Iraq as characteristics of "Azerbaijani School" and quotes 10 features, which are basically found in other schools and with other poets and he also quotes examples from the "Azerbaijani School" that could be found in the works by representatives of the School of 'Iraq.

Among other characteristic features, Zākeri distinguishes what he calls 'horizontal rhymes' and brings an example from Khāqāni:

Morning is charging in blood color, it has drawn its sword	صبح است گلگون تاخته، شمشیر بیرون آخته
It has carried out raids on Night, and shed its blood on purpose	بر شب شبیخون ساخته، خونش به عمدا ریخته

But Rumi, e.g., who is not approached as part of the "Azerbaijan School" of the Soviets, has many similar lines[189]:

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[186] ibid.
[187] ibid.
[188] ibid.
[189] PD: Rumi.

Silent! As I am so in rush, I went up to the platform of justice	خامُش که بس مستعجلم رفتم سوی پای علم
Tear up the paper, break up the pen, Wine Master is coming, Hark!	کاغذ بدر، بشـکن قلم، ساقی درآمد، الصلا!

Another marker of the "Azerbaijani School", according to Zākeri, is the "Similarity of words" which he insists is different from pun. However, this feature is also similar to other wordplays common with other poets and schools.

He also emphasizes "number sequencing", i.e. using numbers in a sequence, but this is similar to other literary devices as well.

Apart from the fact that none of these poets considered themselves a representative of the "Azerbaijani School", as well as the fact that these authors distinguished Azerbaijan, Arrān and Sharvān (especially during the time of Nezami Ganjavi, Khāqāni Sharvāni, Mujir Baylaqāni and others) and leaving aside the Soviet nation building project, this tendency to fabricate a new "school" and define a group of poets as members of the "Azerbaijani School" is rooted in either the misunderstanding or disregard of the very concept of systematization of Persian poetry schools, the traditional method of distinguishing styles. The latter is based both on stylistic analysis and chronology. For example, in terms of style, the poetry of Qatrān Tabrizi is characterized as the Khurasani style, that of Sāeb Tabrizi as the Indian Style while that of Nezami and Homām-e Tabrizi, as the 'Iraqi Style.

Consequently, Bertels' analysis was aimed at fostering regionalism in the USSR nation building, which would create a basis for rewriting history and creating new fake identities[190]. Probably, had the USSR taken over more of the historical Iranian land, we would have expected to witness new regional "school" mushrooming, like Shirazi, Kermani, Sistani, Yazdi, Herati, Sabzevari, Nishapuri, and so on and so forth.

Of course, no one would call into doubt the unique style and particular characteristics of each great poet such as Ferdowsi, Hafez, Attār, Rumi, Nāser-e Khusraw, Sa'di, Khāqāni or Nezami. Thus it does of course make sense to speak of the "Ferdowsi style", "Nezami style" or "Khāqāni style". For example, the *Vis o Ramin* of As'ad Gurgāni having its own style, greatly influenced Nezami's rhetoric[191]. The question and answer session between Garshāsp and the Greek sages/Hindu Brahmins[192] in the Garshāsp-Nāma (written for the ruler of Naxchivan) most probably influenced Nezami's treatment of Eskandar in the Iqbāl-Nāma, where

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[190] Tamazishvili 2001.
[191] Davis 2005.
[192] de Blois 2000.

Eskandar learns from the Greek sages. One can objectively define certain commonality among poets from a particular region and a very preliminary sketch of common characteristics among the poets of the Caucasus, as was mentioned by the late Prof. Amin Riāhi[193]. Among such common characteristics are the influence of Persian Vernacular (Fahlavi)[194], usage of common idioms and creation of a large number of compounds and terms (mainly in the poetry of Khāqāni and Nezami) ; due to mutual interactions between Iranian, Armenian and Georgian cultures. Dr. Riāhi then considers a preliminary "Arrānian style" based on these commonalities but he warns that much more research is needed before such a terminology is accepted. His own terminology, of course, was not based on any politicized intentions as those traced in Bertels' works[195].

In conclusion, with regards to the style, it is clear that Nezami Ganjavi, Mujir al-Din Baylaqāni, Khāqāni Sharvāni and Dhulfiqār Sharvāni associated their style with the 'Iraqi school, having been definitely not aware that historical falsifications that were to come 800 years later would on purpose change that name. Scholars, both those filling the political order and ignorant of Soviet politicization, have adopted the politically invented and geographically anachronistic terms such as "Azerbaijan School" or "Azerbaijani Style" or even "Persian poetic school of Azerbaijan" (as the area was called Arrān and Sharvān in the works of those poets). The Soviet-invented term "Azerbaijan School of Persian Poetry" is an anachronism with no historical evidence for such a name and part of the USSR nation building efforts.

As per commonalities of the poets in the Caucasus, the preliminary analysis of Riāhi from the apolitical viewpoint is left for future researchers, as he has pointed out. The "Arrānian style" he sketched was at the very preliminary stage and would have to be part of the 'Iraqi style as the poets associated themselves with that school. We should note the influence of Khāqāni on Nezami, including the formation of new and creative Persian compounds. Khāqāni's style is unique, which does not mean that all the poets of the Caucasus displayed similar uniqueness. One may objectively speak of the Khāqāni style and Nezami style, however, the classification of Persian poetry in terms of its traditional chronological order, supported by the verses of the poets themselves, proves that both Khāqāni and Nezami are pillars of the 'Iraqi style.

2.3 Nezami, the Sharvānshāh and the *Layli o Majnun*

As we have already mentioned inter alia above, Stalin proclaimed that: "Nezami, in his poems asserts that he was compelled to resort to the Iranian language, because

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[193] Sharvāni 1996.
[194] Sharvāni 1996. Similar characteristics are also mentioned by Safa 1957.
[195] Tamazishvili 2001.

he is not allowed to address his own people in his native tongue". We have not found yet any trace of anyone having made this claim earlier, although it is possible, since the USSR nation building campaign had already begun by 1939 and someone else could have presented this inaccurate interpretation to Stalin. It might have been a Soviet orientalist or writer who had to work within the ideological confines of the USSR. Whatever the case, such a politicized claim should be analyzed within the context of the complex USSR ideological and modern Azerbaijan Republic nationalist politicization of Nezami.

We first translate the politicized section before proceeding with its analysis. The Dastgerdi, the Soviet, the Servatiyan[196] and the Zanjani[197] editions were compared for this portion. None of them differed about this section of *Layli o Majnun* with regards to the inaccurate ideologically interpreted verses; however, the Zanjani edition is the most complete edition known to the authors, as it is based on the oldest manuscript, and it has shown many mistakes made in the Soviet edition. The Dastgerdi edition is always useful for its commentaries and interpretation of most of the difficult verses; many translations into other languages are based upon his commentaries. For short hand notation, this portion is referenced as LMZA and "LMZA:4" means the translation of verse 4 below; each verse is a couplet.

0	The Reason for Composing the Book	در سبب نظم کتاب
1	*It was a felicitous and happy day*	روزی به مبارکی و شادی
	I was enjoying like King Kai-Qubād	بودم به نشاط کیقبادی
2	*My crescent eyebrows were undone*	ابروی هلالی ام گشاده
	My Divan of Nezami was open	دیوان نظامی ام نهاده
3	*The Mirror of Fortune was in front of me*	آینه‌ی بخت پیش رویم
	And Good Luck was combing my hair	اقبال به شانه کرده مویم
4	*Morning was making bouquets of roses*	صبح از گل سرخ دسته می‌کرد
	And with its breath it was making my day auspicious	روزم به نفس خجسته می‌کرد
5	*My butterfly of heart was holding a candle*	پروانه‌ی دل چراغ بر دست
	I was the Nightingale in the garden, and the garden intoxicated	من بلبل باغ و باغ سرمست
6	*I was carrying my standard to the Apex of Rhetoric*	بر اوج سخن علم کشیده
	In the Jewel-box of Art I had my pen	در درج هنر قلم کشیده

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[196] Servatiyan 2008.
[197] Zanjani 1990.

7	*Beak of Pen was engaged in piercing ruby*	منقار قلم به لعل سفتن
	My francolin of tongue was making fine tunes	دراج زبان به نکته گفتن
8	*I was thinking: it is time to do some work*	در خاطرم این که وقت کار است
	Good Luck is my comrade, Fortune is my friend	که اقبال رفیق و بخت یار است
9	*How long should I choose to pass idle breath?*	تا کی نفس تهی گزینم
	And sit unengaged from the world affairs	وز شغل جهان تهی نشینم
10	*Time was giving the Rich good time*	دوران که نشاط فربهی کرد
	It was keeping it distance from the Empty-handed	پهلو ز تهی روان تهی کرد
11	*A dog with thin and empty flanks*	سگ را که تهی بود تهیگاه
	Is not picked for watch and cannot earn any bread	نانی نرسد تهی در این راه
12	*In accordance with the World you can make your fortune*	بر ساز جهان نوا توان ساخت
	Those compatible with the World can win it	کان راست جهان که با جهان ساخت
13	*One can hold his head up*	گردن به هوا کسی فرازد
	Who is compatible with all like the air	کو با همه چون هوا بسازد
14	*Like a mirror wherever they are*	چون آینه هر کجا که باشد
	They would create some false image	جنسی به دروغ برتراشد
15	*Any temperament which is seeking wrong*	هر طبع که او خلاف جوی است
	Is like a wrong note in dissonance	چون پرده‌ی کژ خلاف گوی است
16	*Oh Fortune, if you are gracious*	هان دولت اگر بزرگواری
	You would beg me to do something	کردی ز من التماس کاری
17	*I was throwing my lot to this*	من قرعه‌زنان به آن چنان فال
	And a lucky star was passing then	و اختر به گذشتن اندر آن حال
18	*When someone is accepted this is it*	مقبل که برد چنان برد رنج
	When Fortune is giving treasure, this is it	دولت که دهد چنان دهد گنج
19	*Right away a courier came from the road*	در حال رسید قاصد از راه
	And a letter from His Kingship he brought	آورد مثال حضرت شاه
20	*With his beautiful handwriting*	بنوشته به خط خوب خویشم
	He had written me ten, fifteen or more eloquent lines	ده پانزده سطرِ نغز بیشم
21	*Each word of the letter like a blooming garden*	هر حرفی از او شکفته باغی
	It was more glowing than a night lamp	افروخته‌تر ز شب چراغی
22	*Saying: "O Privy to Our Circle of Service*	که ای محرم حلقه ی غلامی
	O Magic-Word of the World! O Nezami!	جادو سخن جهان نظامی

23	With the sauce of your early-risers' breath	از چاشنی دم سحرخیز
	Raise another Magic with your words	سحری دگر از سخن برانگیز
24	In the Arena of the Wondrous Works	در لافگه شگفت کاری
	Exhibit the eloquence that you possess	بنمای فصاحتی که داری
25	I want you to recite a story like a hidden pearl	خواهم که به یاد عشق مجنون
	In the memory of Majnun's love affair	رانی سخنی چو دُر مکنون
26	Like the Virgin Layli if you can	چون لیلی بکر اگر توانی
	Produce some virgin words in the literature	بکری دو سه در سخن نشانی
27	So that I can read and say: behold this sugar	تا خوانم و گویم این شکر بین
	I can shake my head and say: behold this crown!	جنبانم سر که تاج سر بین
28	Above thousand books of love	بالای هزار عشق نامه
	Adorn this story with your pen	آراسته کن به نوک خامه
29	This story is the king of all stories	شاه همه نامه‌هاست این حرف
	It is worth if you spend you effort on it	شاید که در او کنی سخن صرف
30	In Persian and Arabic ornaments	در زیور پارسی و تازی
	Beautify and dress this new bride afresh	این تازه عروس را طرازی
31	You know that I am that expert	دانی که من آن سخن شناسم
	Who recognizes the new couplets from the old	که ابیات نو از کهن شناسم
32	While you can mint new pure gold coins of wondrous words	تا ده دهی غرایت هست
	Leave out the business of fake coins	ده پنج زنی رها کن از دست
33	Watch that from the jewel-box of thoughts	بنگر که ز حقه‌ی تفکر
	In whose necklace you are piercing pearl	در مرسله‌ی که می‌کشی دُر؟
34	Our fidelity is not like that of Turkish characteristics	ترکانه (ترکی) صفت وفای ما نیست
	Torkāneh-Sokhan (literally Turkish-mannered rhetoric and in the context of the poem meaning vulgarity/lampoon) is not what we deserve (Vahid Dastgerdi interpretation: (thus) Rhetoric associated for Turks (Turkish Kings) is not what we deserve)	ترکانه سخن سزای ما نیست
35	One who is born of high lineage	آن که ز نسب بلند زاید
	He deserves high praises (lofty rhetoric)"	او را سخن بلند باید
36	When my ears found the rings of King (when I became a servant of the King)	چون حلقه‌ی شاه یافت گوشم
	From heart to mind I lost sense	از دل به دماغ رفت هوشم

37	*No courage to disobey his request*	نه زهره که سر ز خط بتابم
	No sight to find my way to this treasure	نه دیده که ره به گنج یابم
38	*I was perplexed in that embarrassment*	سرگشته شدم در آن خجالت
	Because of my old age and frail nature	از سستی عمر و ضعف حالت
39	*No privy to tell them my secret*	کس محرم نه که راز گویم
	And explain my story in detail	وین قصه به شرح باز گویم
40	*My son, Muhammad Nezami*	فرزند محمد نظامی
	Who is dear to me like soul to my body	آن بر دل من چو جان گرامی
41	*He took this copy of the story in hand dear like his heart*	این نسخه چو دل نهاد بر دست
	Like a shadow he sat down next to me	در پهلوی من چو سایه بنشست
42	*From his kindness he gave some kisses on my feet*	داد از سر مهر پای من بوس
	Saying: "O you who beat drums in the sky!	کای آن که زدی بر آسمان کوس
43	*When you retold the story of Khusraw and Shirin*	خسرو شیرین چو یاد کردی
	You brought happiness to so many hearts	چندین دل خلق شاد کردی
44	*Now you must say the story of Layli and Majnun*	لیلی و مجنون ببایدت گفت
	So that the Priceless Pearls become a pair	تا گوهر قیمتی شود جفت
45	*This eloquent book is better be told*	این نامه‌ی نغز گفته بهتر
	The young peacock is better be a couple	طاوس جوانه جفته بهتر
46	*Especially for a king like King of Sharvān*	خاصه ملکی چو شاه شروان
	Not just Sharvān, He is the King of Iran	شروان چه؟ که شهریار ایران
47	*He gives blessing and he gives station*	نعمت‌ده و پایگاه‌ساز است
	He raises people and he appreciates rhetoric	سر برزکن و سخن نواز است
48	*He has requested this book from you with his letter*	این نامه به نامه از تو درخواست
	Please sit and prepare for this story."	بنشین و طراز نامه کن راست
49	*I told him: "Your words are very true*	گفتم سخن تو هست بر جای
	O my Mirror-faced and Iron-resolved (son)!	ای آینه روی آهنین رای
50	*But what can I do, the weather is double*	لیکن چه کنم هوا دو رنگ است
	Thought is wide but my chest is tight	که اندیشه فراخ و سینه تنگ است
51	*When corridors of tale are narrow*	دهلیز فسانه چون بوَد تنگ
	Words become limp in their traffic	گردد سخن از شد آمدن لنگ
52	*The field of words must be wide*	میدان سخن فراخ باید

	So that talent can enjoy a good ride	تا طبع سواری نماید
53	*This story, even though, well-known*	این آیت اگرچه هست مشهور
	No joyful rendering for it is possible	تفسیر نشاط هست ازو دور
54	*The instruments of rhetoric are joy and luxury*	افزار سخن نشاط و ناز است
	But this story has excuse for both	زین هر دو سخن بهانه‌ساز است
55	*On the subject of infatuation and chain and bond*	بر شیفتگی و بند و زنجیر
	Bare rhetoric would be heart saddening	باشد سخن برهنه دلگیر
56	*And if decorations beyond the limits are imposed on it*	و آرایش کردنی ز حد بیش
	Would make the face of this story sore	رخساره‌ی قصه را کند ریش
57	*In a stage that I don't know the ways*	در مرحله‌ای که ره ندانم
	It is obvious how much I can show my talent	پیداست که نکته چند رانم
58	*There is no royal garden and feast in this story*	نه باغ و نه بزم شهریاری
	No songs, no wine, no pleasure	نه رود و نه می نه کامکاری
59	*On the dry dunes and hard hills in desert*	بر خشکی ریگ و سختی کوه
	How long can one talk about sorrow?	تا چند سخن رود در اندوه
60	*The story must be about joy*	باید سخن از نشاط سازی
	So couplets can play and dance in the story	تا بیت کند به قصه بازی
61	*This is the reason that from the beginning*	این بود کز ابتدای حالت
	No one has ventured around it for its boringness	کس گرد نگشتش از ملالت
62	*Poets have fled from versifying it*	گوینده ز نظم او پر افشاند
	That is the reason it has been left untold so far	تا این غایت نگفته زان ماند
63	*Since King of the World has requested from me*	چون شاه جهان به من کند باز
	"Compose this story in my name!"	کاین نامه به نام من بپرداز
64	*Now despite this narrow field of maneuver*	با این همه تنگی مسافت
	I will take it so high in delicacy	آنجاش رسانم از لطافت
65	*That when they recite it for His Majesty*	کز خواندن او به حضرت شاه
	He would cast un-pierced pearls on the road	ریزد گهر نسفته بر راه
66	*If its readers are depressed*	خواننده‌اش اگر فسرده باشد
	They would fall in love otherwise they are dead (They would fall in love if they are not dead)"	عاشق شود ار نه مرده باشد
67	*Then that worthy dear son of mine*	باز آن خلف خلیفه زاده
	Because of whom doors of this treasure are open	کاین گنج بدو است درگشاده
68	*The only child from my first marriage*	یک دانه‌ی اولین فتوحم

	The only tulip of my last morning wine	یک لاله‌ی آخرین صبوحم
69	*Told me, "O! who your rhetoric are my peer*	گفت ای سخن تو همسر من
	That is they are like my brothers	یعنی لقبش برادر من
70	*In composing this swift story*	در گفتن قصه ی چنین چست
	Do not have hesitation in your thoughts	اندیشه‌ی نظم را مکن سست
71	*Wherever Love has set up a feast table*	هرجا که به دست عشق خوانی است
	This story is like a salt-shaker	این قصه بر او نمک فشانی است
72	*Even though it has all the savors*	گرچه نمک تمام دارد
	It has raw kabob on its table	بر سفره کباب خام دارد
73	*When its pearl is pierced on your hand*	چون سفته‌ی خارش تو گردد
	The story would be cooked by you rendering	پخته به گزارش تو گردد
74	*It is a lovely beauty with nice appearance*	زیبا رویی بدین نکویی
	But it lacks any make-up and decoration	وانگاه بدین برهنه رویی
75	*Nobody has cast pearl on it what it is worth*	کس دُر نه به قدر او فشانده است
	That is why it has been left bare-faced	زین روی برهنه روی مانده است
76	*It is soul, and if nobody works one's soul on it*	جان است و چو کس به جان نکوشد
	This will not wear a rented dress [of insufficient work]	پیراهن عاریت نپوشد
77	*The soul could be decorated only by soul*	پیرایه‌ی جان ز جان توان ساخت
	Nobody has spent one's dear soul on this story	کس جان عزیز را نینداخت
78	*Your breath gives life to the whole World*	جان بخش جهانیان دم تست
	This dear soul of mine is your privy	وین جان عزیز محرم تست
79	*You start the rendering of this story*	از تو عمل سخن گزاری
	Yours truly will pray and the Fortune will help"	از بنده دعا، ز بخت یاری
80	*When I heard the heartening of my beloved son*	چون دلدهی جگر شنیدم
	I gave my heart and conquered the battle	دل دوختم و جگر دریدم
81	*I persisted in finding pearls*	در جستن گوهر ایستادم
	I dug mines and opened alchemy	کان کندم و کیمیا گشادم
82	*My talent was seeking a short path*	راهی طلبید طبع کوتاه
	Because it was worried about the road length	کاندیشه بُد از درازی راه
83	*There was no path shorter than this*	کوته‌تر از این نبود راهی
	Nothing more agile that this method	چابکتر از این میانه گاهی

84	*This is a meter light but easy flowing*	بحری است سبک ولی رونده
	The fish in this sea are not dead but alive	ماهیش نه مرده بلکه زنده
85	*There has been many stories with this sweetness*	بسیار سخن بدین حلاوت
	But none has the freshness of this	گویند و ندارد این طراوت
86	*No diver from this sea of mind*	زین بحر ضمیر هیچ غواص
	Has ever brought up a pearl so special	برنارد گوهری چنین خاص
87	*Each couplet of this book is like a line of pearls*	هر بیتی از او چه رشته ی در
	Empty of any fault and filled with many arts	از عیب تهی و از هنر پُر
88	*In seeking this elegant product*	در جُستن این متاع نغزم
	There was no a hair to slip	یک موی نبود پای لغزم
89	*I would say something and my heart would reply*	می‌گفتم و دل جواب می‌داد
	I was scratching and the spring was giving water	خاریدم و چشمه آب می‌داد
90	*Whatever I earned with my mind*	دُری که ز عقل درج کردم
	I spent on decorating this story	در زیور او به خرج کردم
91	*These more than four thousand couplets*	این چار هزار بیت اکثر
	Were composed in less than four months	شد گفته به چار ماه کمتر
92	*Had any other commitments were held up*	گر شغل دگر حرام بودی
	It would had been finished in a fortnight	در چارده شب تمام بودی
93	*On the lovely appearance of this Free-born Bride*	بر جلوه‌ی این عروس آزاد
	Prosperous be those who say 'Prosperous!'	آبادتر آن که گوید آباد
94	*It was decorated in the best possible way*	آراسته شد به بهترین حال
	In the last night of Rajab in the year Thi, Fā, Dāl	در سلخ رجب به ثی و فا دال
95	*The explicit year this book carries on it*	تاریخ عیان که داشت با خود
	Would be Eighty Four after Five Hundred	هشتاد و چهار بعد پانصد
96	*I polished and decorated this bride with the best excellence*	پرداختمش به نغز کاری
	And I sat her on this camel-litter	بنشاختمش در این عماری
97	*So that nobody could find their ways to her*	تا کس نبرد به سوی او راه
	Except for the blessed eyes of His Majesty	الا نظر مبارک شاه

Before analyzing the politicized interpretation of these verses, we should note several important facts about this section of the poem. Noteworthy is the fact that LMZA:81-93 implies that Nezami completed this whole section after the epic poem

was finished. Another important fact is that it is poetic interpretation of the letter of the Sharvānshāh. This is evidenced by the fact that Nezami mentions in LMZA:84, that he chose the meter himself. Consequently, the letter of the Sharvānshāh was likely not even versified. Since Nezami chose the meter, then none of the couplets are obviously composed by the Sharvānshāh, rather as Nezami states in LMZA:20-21:

With his beautiful handwriting
His Majesty has written me ten, fifteen or more pleasing lines
Each word of the letter like a blooming garden
It was more glowing than a night lamp

The word *saṭr* (Persian سطر meaning "line", but more often used in the context of prose) likely implies prose and not poetry. Consequently, we do not know what the Sharvānshāh actually wrote, but we have at our disposal a poetic interpretation and extrapolation of his letter by Nezami designed to fit the meter that Nezami (and not the Sharvānshāh) chose for the epic poem. This by itself means that one cannot make a firm historical judgments (let alone the 20th century anachronistic interpretations) based on poetic interpretation (with likely interpolation) of a letter about historical matters.

2.4 Turkish Language in the 12th Century

Another important point to be stressed in respect to the verdict of Stalin, the USSR misinterpretations and LMZA, is that such a request would not make sense at all in that period, since there was neither tradition of Turkish epic poetry nor Turkish literary tradition at all in the Caucasus. For example, Tourkhan Gandjei mentioned: "The Oghuz tribes which formed the basis of the Saljuq power, and to one the Saljuqs belonged, were culturally backward, and contrary to the opinion advanced by some scholars, did not possess a written language. Thus the Saljuqs did not, or rather could not, take steps towards the propagating the Turkish language, in a written form, much less the patronage of Turkish letters"[198]. Indeed, the Oghuz tribesmen who had just entered the area did not have a written literary tradition and as noted by the Encyclopaedia of Islam: "Coming as they did through Transoxiana which was still substantially Iranian and into Persia proper, the Saljuqs -- with no high-level Turkish cultural or literary heritage of their own-- took over that of Persia, so that the Persian language became that of administration and culture in their lands of Persia and Anatolia"[199]. Furthermore, K.A. Luther with regards to the

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[198] Gandjei 1986. He has criticized a Turkish scholar who might have thought otherwise.
[199] Bosworth et al.:1995.

Saljuqs also mentions: "… the Turks were illiterate and uncultivated when they arrived in Khurasan and had to depend on Iranian scribes, poets, jurists and theologians to man the institution of the Empire"[200]. These statements are also substantiated by the fact that there is not even a single verse of Turkish poetry from the Caucasus during the life-time of Nezami. Nor has any biographical-anthology (the *Tazkareh*) of poets mentioned such a tradition in the Caucasus at that time. For example, Ali-Sher Navāi (XV c.), who had a strong feeling of Turkish identity, had mentioned the Turkish poets before his time. But he regards Nezami as a Persian poet[201]. There is no mention of any Turkish poetry from the Caucasus in any of the *Tazkareh*s that write about the period of Nezami. Whereas the Nozhat al-Majāles (see Part IV) named 115 Persian poets (including Nezami) from the Caucasus and Azerbaijan; many of them were women, people with ordinary backgrounds and people with non-court related daily professions. There were also Nezami's contemporaries who wrote in Armenian (e.g. Kirakos Gandzakets'i) and Arabic (e.g. Mas'ud ibn Nāmdār, a local Kurdish historian), but no one wrote in Turkish in the area of the Caucasus and Azerbaijan.

Thus, the Sharvānshāhs were not Turks to even think about someone writing Turkish poetry for them; nor there existed a Turkish literary tradition at that time in the region of Nezami. Had the ethno-nationalist interpretation mentioned by Stalin been correct, Nezami would have composed Turkish literature for a Turkish king (not the Sharvānshāh) or written Turkish at his own will. However, Turkish literary tradition did not exist at all in the Caucasus in that period, and Nezami explicitly mentioned only his skill in composing Persian poetry (as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter).

Nevertheless, these obvious facts did not stop Stalin's proclamation to be taken up by other authors writing from a nationalist point of view[202] or those unaware who used Soviet/Azerbaijani nationalist sources and misinterpretations.

2.5 "Dar zivar-e Pārsi o Tāzi"

For example, Mehmet Kalpakli and Water Andrews commenting on LMZA:30-31, make the unsound statement that: "*Sometime in the last fifteen years of the twelfth century, the Sharvānshāh Akhsitān made a request of the poet Nezami… At the same time the ruler also made it quite clear what the language of this recollection should be: dar zivar-e pársi o tázi / in táza `arús rá terázi - In jewels of Persian and Arabic too/ Adorn this bride so fresh*

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[200] Nishapuri 2001:9.
[201] Navai 1966:40.
[202] Heyat 1986; idem 2006; R. Heyat 2010; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

and new"[203]. With regards to this inaccurate interpretation, we note that the poem is in Persian and not "Persian and Arabic". Consequently, the verse has nothing to do with the language issue, since the poem is not in two different languages. The metaphor "in jewels of Persian and Arabic", which can be interpreted as "in reflection of the two cultures (cultural realities of Iran and the Arabian world)" (see below), has, of course, nothing to do with the Sharvānshāh's order of poetry in terms of its language. If it did, then the poem would in fact be in "Arabic and Persian", rather than in Persian only.

The authors (Mehmet Kalpakli and Water Andrews) themselves correctly translated "Persian and Arabic", yet they reference a particular language in the singular rather than the plural and mention erroneously that "the language of this recollection". We also note in the Azeri translation of Samad Vurgun, it is given as: "bu təzə gəlinə, çəkəndə zəhmət / fars, ərəb diliylə vur ona zinət"[204]. This is a mistranslation, since instead of putting a conjunction "and", the author put the word "fars" and then a comma, and then the word "arab". This creates an ambiguity since the conjunction "and" was turned into "or". He added the word "diliylə" (language), whereas the correct translation is "In Persian and Arabic ornaments, beautify and dress this new bride afresh". Thus there is no mention of a language since the poetic interpretation of the words that Nezami ascribes to the Sharvānshāh are "Persian and Arabic ornaments" while the poem itself is in Persian. Nezami himself like any linguist and common person from that era has considered Persian, Arabic and Greek to be separate languages[205]:

Arabic and Persian and Greek	تازی و پارسی و یونانی
Was thought to him by the Magian Master in the school	یاد دادش مغ دبستانی

In the Iqbāl-Nāma, in the section of the beginning of the story, Nezami mentions books in Greek (Yunāni), Pahlavi and Dari[206]:

He sought leadership through the words	سخن را نشان جست بر رهبری
In Greek and Pahlavi and Dari	ز یونانی و پهلوی و دری

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[203] Kalpakli and Andrews 2001:29.
[204] Vurgun 1982.
[205] HP:10/44.
[206] IN:8/6.

Pahlavi in this case could be a reference to Fahlaviyāt which is discussed in Part IV.

The claim or interpretation that "Persian and Arabic" means a form of Persian language during the era of Nezami, Hafez and Sa'di[207] is not correct. For example, Sa'di also states[208]:

This powerful Persian (pārsi) poetry flows naturally like water	چو آب می رود این پارسی به قوت طبع
It is not a steed which Arabic can ride ahead of it	نه مرکبی است که از وی سبق برد تازی

So clearly Sa'di here is referencing to his language as *pārsi* (Persian) and distinguishing it from *tāzi* (Arabic). He is not calling his language as *pārsi o tāzi* (Persian and Arabic).

Hafez also states[209]:

All the parrots of India will become sugar-chewers	شکرشکن شوند همه طوطیان هند
From this sweet sugar of Persian poetry that is arriving in Bengal	زین قند پارسی که به بنگاله می رود

And the Persian mystical poet Rumi, mentions with regards to the Persian and Arabic languages[210]:

Say in Persian, although Arabic is sweeter	پارسی گو گرچه تازی خوشتر است
Love will find its way through hundreds of languages	عشق را خود صد زبان دیگر است

While the Persian mystic Shams Tabrizi opines[211]:

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[207] Servatiyan 2008:338.

[208] PD: Sa'di.

[209] PD: Hafez.

[210] PD: Rumi.

[211] Chittick 2004:29.

And what about the Persian (*pārsi*) language with this subtlety and beauty? Those meanings and subtleties that come out in Persian (*pārsi*) don't come out in Arabic *tāzi*	پارسی را چه شده است؟ بدین لطیفی و خوبی، که آن معانی و لطافت که در زبان پارسی آمده است و در تازی نیامده است.

Thus, it is quite obvious that Axsitān could not and was not making a request for Nezami to use a particular language. Besides, Nezami Ganjavi, as noted above, called his writing *nazm-e dari* ("Persian poetry") and *dorr-e dari* ("Persian pearl"). He never described his work as *nazm-e dari o tāzi* ("Persian and Arabic poetry") or *nazm-e pārsi o tāzi* ("Persian and Arabic poetry"). No real historian or the poets themselves have ever referred to any of the major Persian epics such as those of Nezami, Jāmi, Hātefi, Khwāju and others as a "Persian and Arabic" epics either.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the legacy of Nezami before this poem, i.e. Persian epic poetry (*Khusraw o Shirin*) and Persian didactic poetry (*Makhzan al-Asrār*), as well as the fact that Persian is the only language that Nezami proclaims he was skilled in composing poetry; the poem could only be in Persian. Epic poetry itself was not even an Arabic genre, whereas it had a long history in Persian literature before Nezami (e.g. Gurgāni, Asadi Tusi, and Ferdowsi). Furthermore, as noted previously, the court of the Persian Sharvānshāh rulers had many other Persian poets but no Turkish ones. Because neither a literary Oghuz Turkish tradition existed in the Caucasus nor were the Persianized Sharvānshāhs themselves Turkish rulers, consequently, the Sharvānshāh did not need to request a specific language for the poem as the historical circumstances makes it clear that it would be exclusively Persian.

What makes sense after a closer examination is that "Persian and Arabic ornaments" is due to the fact that the story is a mixture of the two different cultures and the epic poem derives elements from both cultures[212]. Incidentally, even authors like Jan Rypka admit that the story is "closer to the Persian conception of Arabia"[213]. Nezami himself alluded to his sources in many of the chapters of *Layli o Majnun* (see Part IV) and the story is a unification of various Arabic and Persian sources and anecdotes ("ornaments"). In a reference to himself, when composing one of the chapters of *Layli o Majnun*, he mentions the Arabic writings[214]:

The historiographer of love and romance	تاریخ‌نویس عشق‌بازی

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[212] de Bruijn 1986; Gelpke 1997; Seyed-Gohrab 2003; idem 2009; Turner 1997.
[213] Rypka 1968b:580.
[214] Servatiyan 2008:287; Zanjani 1990:169.

Will now relate some Arabic writings	گوید ز نوشته‌های تازی

In another section, which is not in the original Arabic version[215], Nezami Ganjavi making a reference to himself (see Part IV for more detail on this verse), proclaims[216]:

The eloquent Persian-born Dehqān	دهقان فصیح پارسی‌زاد
Expresses the situation of Arabs in this manner	از حال عرب چنین کند یاد

Nezami Ganjavi names his sources in the other epics. In the introduction to *Khusraw o Shirin*, he mentions his sources including the *Shāhnāma* and a reference to *Ganj-nāma* ("Book of Treasures") from the city of Barda'[217]. In the *Sharaf-Nāma*, he also mentions different manuscripts that are Pahlavi, Nasrani (Christian) and Yahudi (Jewish)[218], and also alludes to the fact that the *Shāhnāma* treated some aspects of Alexander's life[219]. In the *Kherad-Nāma*, in the section "Beginning of the Story", Nezami mentions books in Greek (Yunāni), Pahlavi, Dari and Pārsi[220]. In the *Haft Paykar*[221], Nezami also speaks of his sources:

From those words that are in Dari[222] and Arabic	زان سخنها که تازی است و دری
And the books (town?) of Bukhari and Tabari[223]	در سواد بخاری و طبری

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[215] Servatiyan 1997:19-20.

[216] LM:30/1; Servatiyan 2008:170; Zanjani 1990:91.

[217] KH:11.

[218] SN:10/20.

[219] SN:7/28.

[220] IQ:8/6-7.

[221] HP:4/28.

[222] Meisami's (the excellent translator) notes that "Dari, the language of the *Shāhnāma*, which by the eleventh century was already giving way to more polished and Arabicized Farsi [Persian]" (Meisami 1995:276). This is not correct in our view since Nezami Ganjavi has considered himself as a composer of *Nazm-e Dari* (Dari-Persian poetry). Furthermore, Ferdowsi calls his language *Pārsi-ye Dari* (Lazard 1994) as does Avicenna in the Dāneshnama. Hafez, Sa'di, Khāqāni, Sanāi, Hakim Meysari, etc. have used *Dari* and *Pārsi* equivalently for their poetry.

[223] Wilson has suggested Bukhari and Tabari could be the towns or more widely as near and afar. Dastgerdi believes it references the prophetic saying of the book Bukhari and the history of Tabari, and most commentators/translators have followed him.

And from other scattered texts	وز دیگر نسخه‌ها پراکنده
Each of them a pearl, which had been stored in a treasure	هر دری در دفینی آکنده

We note that the sources are referenced as pearls in this portion of *Haft Paykar*. This is similar to LMZA:33, where Nezami is stringing pearls into a single necklace.

From the Arabic elements of the *Layli o Majnun*, besides the Bedouin setting of the story in the deserts of Arabia, Nezami uses: "many of the Arabic anecdotes and considered several key elements of the Udri genre"[224]. Naturally, due to the story's Arabic origin, the motif, theme and many of the imagery of the poem relate to Arabic culture. At the same time, the story of *Layli o Majnun* had already been familiar to Iranians at least since the time of Rudaki,[225] and other Persians had absorbed and embellished it before him[226]. Nezami also mentions that the story is well known (LMZA:53). Some of the episodes are not found in any of the known Arabic versions of the story[227] and probably are derived from local Persian cultural elements.

Thus, Nezami adapts disconnected stories and turns them into the Persian epic romance[228] by using a Persian genre (epic poetry), whose correspondence did not exist in Arabic literature of the time. Persian elements in the story include Persian sources, Persian anecdotes, the obvious epic poetry (which was a Persian genre not attested in Arabic) and such a detail that Nawfal is a prince in the Iranian style rather than Arabic[229]. Other Persian elements are noted by Rudolph Gelpke: "Nezami preserves the Bedouin atmosphere, the nomads' tents in the desert and the tribal customs of the inhabitants, while at the same time transposing the story into the far more civilized Iranian world... Majnun talks to the planets in the symbolic language of a twelfth century Persian sage, the encounters of small Arabic raiding parties become gigantic battles of royal Persian armies and most of the Bedouins talk like heroes, courtiers, and savants of the refined Iranian Civilization"[230]. And according to Seyed-Gohrab: "Other Persian motifs added to the story are the childless king, who desires an heir; nature poetry, especially about gardens in spring and autumn, and sunset and sunrise; the story of an ascetic living in a cave; the account of the king of Marv and his dogs; the Zeyd and Zeynab episode; Majnun's supplication to the

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[224] Seyed-Gohrab 2009.
[225] Seyed-Gohrab 2003:70.
[226] Chelkowski 1975.
[227] Seyed-Gohrab 2003:53.
[228] de Bruijn 1986.
[229] ibid.
[230] Gelpke 1997.

heavenly bodies and God; his kingship over animals, and his didactic conversations with several characters"[231].

Consequently, the section on "the reason for composing the book" which was the last part to be written, is a poetic interpretation, commentary upon and extrapolation of the letter of the Sharvānshāh.

The poetic interpretation and extrapolation ascribed to the Sharvānshāh's letter, attests to the fact that Nezami himself consciously mixed elements of the Persian and Arabic anecdotes/sources. The final product is a Persian epic that is very sharp break from the Arabic versions of the story. In this final product, Nezami consciously synthesized the Persian and Arabic versions of the story and incorporated aphorism, anecdotes, imagery and themes from both Persian and Arabic cultures. The final result is a Persian epic (or as Nezami states a "necklace") which is a mixture of "Persian and Arabic ornaments".

2.6 "Torkāneh-sokhan"

More misinterpretations and mistranslations (based on politicized writings) of this section has occurred. With regards to LMZA:34-35, Kalpakli and Andrews erroneously claim that: "*But he also goes on to say what language he does not want the poet to use – apparently alluding to Mahmud of Ghazna's legendary cheapness in the matter of Ferdawsi: torki sefat vafā-ye mā nist / torkāna sokhan sazā-ye mā nist --Not in the Turkish way do we keep a promise so writing in the Turkish manner doesn't suit us. This couplet seems to indicate that the Sharvānshāh could have asked Nezami to write in Turkish and that the poet could have done this. But – either alas or fortunately, depending on your point of view – the ruler preferred Persian. So, a vastly influential tale was born, and the first complete Turkish version of the story had to wait for almost three hundred years.*"[232]

The Azeri translation of Samad Vurgun adds further mistranslations of these lines: "*Türk dili yaramaz şah nǝslimizǝ, Ǝskiklik gǝtirǝr türk dili bizǝ. Yüksǝk olmalıdır bizim dilimiz, Yüksǝk yaranmışdır bizim nǝslimiz*". Thus both Kalpakli and Vurgun have mistakenly taken the term "*torkāneh-sokhan*" to mean "Turkish language", but it literally means "Turkish-like rhetoric" and "rhetoric associated with Turks" while in the context of the poem, it has the double meaning of unmannered speech and rhetoric associated with or deserved by Turks. Here rhetoric (*sokhan*) does not mean language. For example, *fārsāneh sokhan* or *arabāneh sokhan* does not mean the Persian or Arabic language, and no one in Persian literature has used such a word formation to refer to a language. Also it should be noted that in the translation of Kalpakli, there is the verb "writing in the Turkish manner" whereas Nezami uses the word

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[231] Servatiyan 1997:19-20, idem 2009.
[232] See also Heyat 1986; idem 2006; Kalpakli and Andrews 2001.

"rhetoric" (*sokhan*), not "writing" (*neveshtan*) here and thus, this is a mistranslation. The word "writing" could have been inserted in their translation due to the fact that the authors were influenced by the Soviet viewpoint.

Before the politicized interpretation of these verses in the USSR, Vahid Dastgerdi had already provided a sound commentary on these lines: *The meaning of these verses is that our fidelity is not like the Turks and our faithfulness is not like that of Sultan Mahmud the Turk. Our fidelity and commitment will not be broken, so rhetoric that are befitting for Turkish kings is not befitting for us*[233].

Thus, the verses are about the legend of Sultan Mahmud and Ferdowsi: the popular legend says that Ferdowsi versified a lampoon and satire on Sultan Mahmud after that king broke his vow. Here the versified lampoon which contains belittling of Sultan Mahmud is being implied by Dastgerdi to be equivalent to *torkāneh-sokhan*, which has the two complementary meanings of "Turkish-mannered rhetoric" and "Rhetoric associated with Turks". Although some modern authors have fully or partially doubted the veracity of the legend of Sultan Mahmud and Ferdowsi, it was already taken as fact by Nezami 'Aruzi who lived during the same time as Nezami Ganjavi. According to Nezami 'Aruzi and biographers of that time, when Ferdowsi presented the *Shāhnāma* to Sultan Mahmud, some members of the court badmouthed the poet and mentioned that he was a Shi'ite who praised Zoroastrians. Thus Sultan Mahmud did not give him the reward of 60,000 dinars of gold he had promised him and instead gave him 20,000 dirhams (or, in other sources, 60,000 silver dinars). Consequently, a conflict arose between Ferdowsi and Mahmud, and Ferdowsi insulted him in his court and then fled from Ghazna. Nezami 'Aruzi mentions the conflict between the two as sectarian where Ferdowsi was a Shi'ite and Mahmud was Sunni. While seeking refuge at Tabaristan, Ferdowsi wanted to dedicate the *Shāhnāma* to the local Iranian and Shi'ite Bāvandid ruler. During the time of the conflict, Ferdowsi also composed a verse lampoon of Sultan Mahmud. Nezami 'Aruzi records only 6 couplets of this verse lampoon (*Hajw-Nāma*) which was originally said to have been 100 couplets, but according to the legend, Ferdowsi destroyed it after the Bāvandid ruler interceded on his behalf for Mahmud. However, many of the editions of the *Shāhnāma* (e.g. Jules Mohl edition) contain the 100 verses of lampoon[234]. Indeed, 50 years before Nezami 'Aruzi's Čahār maqāla, the Persian poet Othman Mokhtari mentions at the end of his Šahrīār-nāma of his reluctance to

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[233] Dastgerdi 1999 Vol1:583.

[234] Khaleghi-Motlagh 1999; Warner 1905. For example unlike what the legend has conveyed, Ferdowsi had already started his monumental task in the Samanid era and not the Ghaznavid era.

satirize his patron even if the latter does not reward him[235]. This should also be taken as a reference to the existence of the lampoon of Ferdowsi.

Although there are no explicit curse words in the lampoon, the mode of addressing the King in such a manner would have been out of the bounds of the polite discourse of the time. It is the opposite of high praises and lofty rhetoric alluded to by *sokhan-e boland* (high praise/lofty rhetoric). In other words, it is unmannered speech and vulgar rhetoric in the context of addressing a ruler.

Part of this versified lampoon is relevant to this section of LMZA. In it, Ferdowsi belittles the lineage of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna and states that the Sultan does not deserve his rhetoric, as he is of low birth and deserves the lampoon instead[236]:

The Slave-girl's brat is but a worthless thing	پرستارزاده نیاید به کار
Although it may be fathered by a king	اگر چند باشد پدر شهریار
But since his kindred are of mean estate	چو اندر تبارش بزرگی نبود
He cannot bear to hear about the great	نیارست نام بزرگان شنود

The veracity of the legend, which has been debated by some modern literary scholars[237] is not a relevant issue here, since this legend was taken as a fact by both Nezami 'Aruzi and Nezami Ganjavi. Nezami, while addressing his patron, also mentions this legend in his *Iqbāl-Nāma*[238] and claims himself as the inheritor of Ferdowsi:

From the wine cup of Nezami, take a cup	ز کاس نظامی یکی طاس می
Drink in the manner of the Kayanid King Kay-Kavus	خوری هم به آیین کاوس کی
Listen to these eloquent words, refresh the memory of Ferdowsi	ستانی بدان طاس طوسی نواز
Seek the rights of Ferdowsi from Mahmud	حق شاهنامه ز محمود باز
We are two inheritors of two ancient mines	دو وارث شمار از دو کان کهن
You in generosity (to Mahmud) and I (Nezami) in rhetoric (to Ferdowsi)	تو را در سخا و مرا در سخن
What the first one (Mahmud) owed (to Ferdowsi) and had not paid	به وامی که نا‌داده باشد نخست

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[235] Khaleghi-Motlagh 1999.
[236] Samarqandi 2003:63; Warner 1905:40-44.
[237] Khaleghi-Motlagh 1999.
[238] IN:7/14-17.

His inheritor (You the King) will pay to the other's inheritor (Nezami)	حق وارث از وارث آید درست

In the *Haft Paykar*, he also mentions the discord between Mahmud and Ferdowsi[239] was due to their different zodiac signs, while the concordance of Asadi Tusi and his patron Abu Dulaf was due to their compatible zodiac signs. In the *Khursaw o Shirin*, Nezami mentions that Ferdowsi was not paid his due, but Nezami's patron promised that he would reward him generously[240]. In fact, the greatest poet who influenced Nezami was Ferdowsi himself; the latter had been praised several times by Nezami (see Part IV).

Dastgerdi had already passed away before the full USSR politicized celebration of Nezami, but his interpretation of LMZA was later elaborated upon. The late Professor Abbas Zaryāb Khoi, after coming into contact with the USSR politicized misinterpretations and distortions, wrote a response about these lines over 60 years ago. Here we translate a relevant part of his article before giving further analysis. Our comments are put in the bracket. Zaryāb in response to the newspaper *Azerbaijan* which was published under the Soviet puppet regime of Ferqeh-ye Democrat[241]:

The writer of the newspaper named "Azerbaijan" has misinterpreted the lines: "torki sefat-e vafā-ye mā nist / torkāneh-sokhan sazā-ye mā nist". The author argues that Nezami wanted to write in Turkish, but the Sharvānshāh forbid him and his message said instead: "torki sefat-e vafā-ye mā nist / torkāneh-sokhan sazā-ye mā nist - ān ka az nasab-e boland zāyad / u rā sokhan-e boland bāyad". But the writer of that newspaper has made an error. Because, if we assume from the word "torki"[Turkish], the meaning that is to be interpreted is "language", then it has nothing to do with sefat-e vafā-ye [faithful characteristic] of Sharvānshāh, so that the King would write in his letter to Nezami: "torki sefat-e vafā-ye mā nist [Our fidelity/faithfulness is not of Turkish characteristics] . The meaning from "torki" in this line is a denominative verb [verb derived from noun] like "torki-gari" [To act Turkish / to do things in the manner of a Turk] and "tork budan" [to act like being Turk], and this expression is an old tradition in Persian literature. For example "torki tamām shod" [Turkish act has finished/acting Turkish has finished] which means that "harj o marj" [confusion, havoc, wildness and unruliness] has finished and "torki-gari" [To do Turkish stuff] is equivalent to cruelness, harshness and this meaning is used by Sanāi:

Do you not see those unwise who did Torki [used as a denominative verb]	می‌بینید آن سفیهانی که ترکی کرده‌اند

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[239] HP:4/147.
[240] KH:6/21.
[241] Zaryāb 1946.

May their grave be narrow and dark like the narrow eyes of Turks	همچو چشم تنگ ترکان، گور ایشان تنگ و تار

In French too, the term "turquerie" has been used often to denote rude and unmannered behavior. Thus the first part of this couplet means this: "torki [to act Turkish, which is a denominative verb], "torki-gari" [To act Turkish, to do things in the manner of a Turk] and unfaithfulness/infidelity is not the characteristic of our faithfulness/fidelity. And in some of the manuscripts it has come down as "torki-sefati vafā-ye mā nist"[Acting with Turkish characteristics is not the characteristic of our fidelity] and Vahid Dastgerdi, may God bless him, in his edition of Layli o Majnun, brings forth this interpretation and points to the story of Mahmud of Ghazna who was unfaithful to Ferdowsi. And what is clear is that at that time, Turks were known for unfaithfulness, infidelity and covenant-breaking.

And such a phrase is found in the poetry of many great poets. For example Asadi Tusi [born in Khurasan but then served in the courts of local dynasties in Arrān and Azerbaijan and mentioned by Nezami in HP] states:

Faithfulness will never appear among Turks	وفا ناید هرگز ز ترکان پدید
And from Iranians, everyone sees only faithfulness	وز ایرانیان جز وفا کس ندید

And Sanāi also writes:

We do not expect such from you, because	ما خود ز تو این چشم نداریم زیراک
You are Turk and Turks are never faithful	ترکی تو و هرگز نبود ترک وفادار

And those who want to see more expressions like these can look at the book of "sayings and wise quotes" by the great scholar Dehkhoda under [the expression] "atrak al-tork va lau kāna abuk"[Abandon the Turk even if he's your father].

And the second part of the couplet: "torkāneh-sokhan sazā-ye mā nist" means that unmannered speech and vulgarity is not befitting/deserving for us, because at that time, Turks were known for vulgarity. The proof of this is given the next verse:

"ān kaz nasab-e boland zāyad" [That who is born from a high birth and lineage],

"u rā sokhan-e boland bāyad" [He deserves a high praises/ lofty rhetoric].

Thus as we see, he has compared "torkāneh-sokhan" to mannered discourse/rhetoric and thus "torkāneh-sokhan" means unmannered and vulgar rhetoric, and the interpretation of "torkāneh-sokhan" never means to speak/write in the Turkish language.

Further comments that confirm Abbas Zaryāb's points can be made by cross-referencing with other poets. Example of Turks being stereotyped as having

unfaithful characteristics was known prior to Nezami's time and these stereotypes continued in Persian literature. We should note that *Chin* and *Chiniān* (which refers to parts of Central Asia and North Western China) are often used interchangeably with Turks by Ferdowsi, Nezami and many other Persian poets. For example Nezami writes[242]:

Opened his tongue in execration of the Turks	به نفرین ترکان زبان برگشاد
Saying: Without calamity no Turk is born of his mother	که بی‌فتنه ترکی ز مادر نزاد
Seek not from aught save the frown on the eye-brow (the vexation of the heart):	ز چینی به جز چین ابرو مخواه
They observe not the treaty of men	ندارند پیمان مردم نگاه
True speech uttered the ancients	سخن راست گفتند پیشینان
Treaty-faith exists not among the men of Chin	که عهد و وفا نیست در چینیان
They have all chosen being narrow-eyed (shamelessness/greed);	همه تنگ چشمی پسندیده‌اند
They have beheld openness of the eye (generosity) in others	فراخی به چشم کسان دیده‌اند
Otherwise , after such amity	وگر نه پس از آنچنان آشتی
Why do they take up the path of hatred?	ره خشمناکی چه برداشتی
What was the point in seeking friendliness first?	در آن دوستی جستن اول چه بود
And in the end, enmity for what account?	وزین دشمنی کردن آخر چه سود
My covenant was true and heart was too	مرا دل یکی بود و پیمان یکی
Wholesomeness great, idle talk near none	درستی فراوان و قول اندکی
I did not know that your love was hate;	خبر نی که مهر شما کین بود
That the heart of the Turk of Chin was full of twist and turn	دل ترک چین پر خم و چین بود
If the Turk of Chin had kept faith	اگر ترک چینی وفا داشتی
He would have kept the world under the folds of his garment	جهان زیر چین قبا داشتی

And also in the *Haft Paykar*[243] while mentioning Turks:

The people of Chin(i.e. Turks) have no faithfulness and are covenant-breakers	چینیان را وفا نباشد و عهد

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[242] SN:43/259-267.

[243] HP:33/47.

| Inward they are poisonous, outward they are sweet | زهرناک اندرون و بیرون شهد |

Thus, the generalization of unfaithful characteristics associated with the Turks was part of the tradition of Persian literature and had existed before Nezami. Nezami used this generalization while interpreting the letter of the Sharvānshāh.

The Zanjani edition has rather *torkāneh-sefat* than *torki sefat*. The Zanjani edition is the most correct one we are aware of, it uses the oldest manuscripts of the story. In the introduction of the Zanjani edition, multiple mistakes of the Soviet edition are also elucidated. However, we should mention that Dastgerdi, Servatiyan and the Soviet editions which are based on later manuscripts, have *torki sefat* rather than *torkāneh-sefat* of the Zanjani edition. In the verse of Sanāi mentioned by Zaryāb Khoi, the denominative verb *torki-kardan* has primary the meaning of cruelty. We can also mention the *ghazal* by Nezami where *torki* is used as a denominative verb meaning "to act in harshness/cruelty"[244]:

| Do not touch the curly locks of (its) hair except with politeness | حلقه‌ی زلفش مجنبان جز به انگشت ادب |
| Careful and careful! Do not be harsh (torki) with her Hindu locks | هان و هان! ترکی مکن با طره‌ی هندوی او |

Here *torki-kardan* as a denominative verb is used as an opposite of *adab* (manners/politeness). And the similar usage occurs in *Eskandar-Nāma*[245]:

| Do not do torki (be harsh) O Turk (Beloved) with Chinese face | مکن ترکی ای ترک چینی‌نگار |
| Come for a moment, gather not frown (chin) in the eyebrow | بیا ساعتی چین در ابرو میار |

The similar usage occurs in the *Eskandar-Nāma*, where the Chini (Turkish) damsel talks to Alexander trying to dissuade him from seeking the source of youth[246]:

| Oh whom my inclinations is towards you, do not be harsh (torki) | مکن ترکی ای میل من سوی تو |
| I am your Turk (beloved), Nay I am your Hindu (slave) | که ترک توام بلکه هندوی تو |

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[244] Nafisi 1959:321.
[245] SN:45/3.
[246] SN:58/134.

The denominative verb *torki-kardan* was not exclusive to Sanāi and Nezami as well. Khāqāni also writes[247]:

Turkish-like, you drink my blood and claim its due to friendship	خون خوری ترکانه کاین از دوستی است
Don't drink blood, Don't do torki (denominative), Don't be violent	خون مخور، ترکی مکن، تازان نشو

Consequently, if the correct form is *torki-sefat* (instead of *torkāneh-sefat*), then the other meaning of the word used in LMZA:34 would be: "cruel characteristics" or "harsh characteristics" is not our fidelity.

As per *torkāneh-sokhan*, as already mentioned, it does not mean Turkish language; also neither *fārsāneh-sokhan* means the Persian language, nor *tāziyāneh-sokhan* and *arabāneh-sokhan* have the meaning of the Arabic language. No such a term for referencing a particular language has ever been used in Persian literature. In other words, the inflectional suffix "-āneh" here, means something resembling the stem it is added to (not the stem itself), and can have a completely different meaning and usage in a context from the actual stem. The word *torkāneh* literally means "Turk-like" or "Turkish-mannered" or "associated with Turks". Similarly, *mardāneh* means "like men", "manly" or "suitable for men"; *shāhāneh* does not primarily mean "king" but "grand", "suited for kings" and "royal". As noted by Zaryāb, *torkāneh-sokhan* in the context of the poem is a reference to the lampoon, and means "vulgarity" or "unmannered discourse".

Nezami uses the word *torkāneh* two more times in his *Panj-Ganj*. For example, he speaks about the Arabian Majnun while having the seasonal migration of Turcoman tribes in mind[248]:

Turkish-like he collected his belongings from his home	ترکانه ز خانه رخت بربست
And sat ready at the place for migration	در کوچگه رحیل بنشست

While Socrates left the city and secluded himself from society, Alexander sends artisans[249]:

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[247] PD: Khāqāni.
[248] LM:15/5.
[249] IN:17/46.

From the coyness of the Turkish-mannered artisan	ز ناز هنرمند ترکانه‌وش
The courting government did not run away	رمنده نشد دولت نازکش

Thus, *torkāneh* here is used in the meaning of "Turkish-like/Turkish-mannered". We also note that Khāqāni who was Nezami's contemporary, uses *torkāneh-xordan* in the meaning "to eat Turkish-like/in the Turkish-manner", cf. [250]:

Do not be friendly to that stranger,	آشنای دل بیگانه مشو
Do not drink the water and eat the bread of the stranger	آب و نان از در بیگانه مخور
Do not eat the bread of the Turks and while eating food	نان ترکان مخور و بر سرخوان
Eat with manners/etiquette (adab) and do not eat torkāneh (Turkish-like)	با ادب نان خور و ترکانه مخور

Here Khāqāni uses *torkāneh* (Turkish-like/Turkish-mannered) as a synonym to vulgar and antonym of *adab* (with its multiple meanings of "politeness, civilized, good manners, etiquette"). Consequently, *torkāneh-sokhan* does not literally mean the Turkish language but Turkish-like/Turkish-mannered speech. For example, in the above lines by Khāqāni, *torkāneh-maxor* ("do not eat in the Turkish manner)" obviously means "do not eat in the Turkish-manner". That is *torkāneh-xordan* ("Turkish-like/Turkish-mannered eating") is used by Khāqāni as an opposite to *bā adab nān xordan* ("eating with manners/eating in civilized fashion").

Similarly, *torkāneh-sokhan* is contrasted with high rhetoric *sokhan-e boland* meaning "high praise", "mannered rhetoric". The opposite of *sokhan-e boland* as noted by Zaryāb is *sokhan-e past* ("vulgarity"). This is the way Nezami Ganjavi uses *torkāneh-sokhan* ("Turkish-manner/Turkish-like rhetoric") in the LMZA as opposed to *sokhan-e boland* ("high praises/lofty rhetoric"). The meanings elucidated by Dastgerdi and Zaryāb are complementary. Counting the elements in these four lines:

- The high descent of the Sharvānshāh is emphasized by Nezami, while the low descent of Mahmud is mentioned in the versified lampoon of Ferdowsi. These two aspects are contrasted.

- Sultan Mahmud broke his vow as mentioned by Nezami 'Aruzi, Nezami Ganjavi and in the long version of the versified lampoon of Ferdowsi. The Sharvānshāhs, on the other hand, are praised for not breaking their vow and their faithfulness of not being of "Turkish characteristics".

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[250] Sajjadi 1959.

- As the legend goes, since Sultan Mahmud broke his vow (due to possible sectarian reasons), he was addressed with the versified lampoon which are "unmannered words". That is *torkāneh-sokhan* has the complementary meanings mentioned by Dastgerdi and Zaryāb: the rhetoric used for Sultan Mahmud (an example of Turkish king) and unmannered speech (versified lampoon). However, the Sharvānshāh deserves polite and mannered addressing, lofty rhetoric and high praises (all encompassed by the term *sokhan-e boland)* because of his claim of high descent and for keeping his words. Thus, the above mentioned false interpretations by Soviet authors and those who followed them are flawed within themselves.

Reiterating why the arguments of politicized authors and those who have quoted them ignorantly are incorrect, we should once more emphasize that neither the Sharvānshāhs were Turks to request a story in Turkish, nor there existed a Turkish literary tradition in the Caucasus at that time, nor is there any proof that Nezami ever knew Turkish, nor is there a single verse in Turkish from that region in that period, nor is "Persian and Arabic" a particular language, nor did the Arabic language have an epic genre like Persian, nor does the term *torkāneh-sokhan* mean "Turkish language" but rather it literally means "Turkish-like rhetoric" and in the context of the language of the time, it simply means "vulgar and unmannered speech".

Another point is that many of the royal patrons of Nezami's works were of Turkish ancestry whereas the Sharvānshāhs were not [251]; if Nezami was a Turk and wanted to write Turkish, as wrongly claimed (e.g. Heyat 1986 – see Part III for examination of other wrong claims), then either he would have written in Turkish (again if Turkish had a literary tradition in the Caucasus at the time, which it did not, of course) for that Turkish nobility or he would written non-epic and non-court poetry in Turkish on his own free will (similar to his Persian quatrains and *ghazal*s, for example). However, as shown, throughout his epic poetry, he only mentions his skills solely in Persian poetry and all of his works are in Persian. He consistently called his poetry as Persian pearls, demonstrating his great love for the language. This is not surprising, since as shown in Part IV, in the era of Nezami, the name of 24 Persian poets from Ganja and 115 Persian poets (many of them common people with working class backgrounds not associated with any royal courts) from the area are given in one anthology. While there is no mention of even a single Turkish verse in the Caucasus in the 12th century by any anthology of poets; due to the fact that there was no Turkish literary tradition in this area and also due to the fact that the sedentary population and urban centers of that time, such as Ganja, were part of the

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[251] We should note that in order for epic poetry to be preserved, royal patronage was highly desired. Nezami himself had no shortage of such patrons. See also de Blois 1998 on the dedicatee of part or all of the Ekandar-nama who seems to be the Georgian ruler of Ahar.

Iranian civilization and not that of the Turkish nomads that had just started entering the area.

Reviewing this section of the epic, after praising this story as the king of stories, the verses of Nezami through the mouth of the Sharvānshāhs ask Nezami to utilize these jewels (stories) and ornaments (stories and anecdotes of Arab origin with Persian anecdotes, sources and cultural symbols/imagery/romantic epic) by bringing out a new version of the story through the magic of his rhetoric. At the same time, the LMZA states that he should not imitate other poets, since the King is praised as literary expert by Nezami, expecting his magical discourse. Instead, Nezami should show his magic discourse and he will be rewarded for his endeavor, unlike Ferdowsi who was not rewarded for the monumental *Shāhnāma*, according to the widely popular legend. Ferdowsi thus bestowed Mahmud the versified lampoon (unmannered speech) in which he satirized Mahmud for breaking his covenant. Thus, *torkāneh-sokhan* means unmannered and vulgar speech, but in the context of this section, it also ties to the versified lampoon of Ferdowsi which satirizes Mahmud of Ghazna. That is, Nezami is stating that the Sharvānshāhs did not deserve vulgar and unmannered speech of the lampoon (containing insults - examples of unmannered speech before kings) because they did not break their vow. Perhaps, amongst other things, the reason this section of the *Layli o Majnun* was written last was to remind the Sharvānshāh about the reward Nezami deserved.

2.7 Misinterpreting the Relationship of Nezami and the Sharvānshāh through Erroneous Readings

Javad Heyat makes a slightly different claim based on LMZA:34-35. He erroneously states that: "*Nezami Ganjavi wanted to write the story in Turkish but was ordered to write it in Persian. The Sharvānshāhs did not want Turkish, and taunt Turks, which was the everyday language of people and hence Nezami gets upset and utters LMZA:36-37*"[252]. Javad Heyat does not provide any proof that Turkish was the everyday language of the population of the region in Nezami's time. Indeed, we will examine this point in Part IV and show that the available evidences clearly shows that Persian was the everyday language of the urban Muslim people of Ganja and Turkish was the domain of the Turcoman nomads. As per the nature of the poem itself, Nezami only wrote it for the Sharvānshāh and mentioned that the Sharvānshāh had suggested the theme for him. So Javad Heyat is wrong to claim that Nezami wanted to versify the *Layli o Majnun* in any language, since the theme of the epic was suggested to him by the Sharvānshāh, whose court was already well known for their patronage of Persian poetry.

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[252] Heyat 1986:175.

Furthermore, the claim that Nezami Ganjavi wanted to write the story in Turkish is not found at all in LMZA and is a proof of distortion of LMZA due to political and nationalistic feelings. This idea was actively developed in the USSR Orientalistic circles in order to represent Persian as a foreign language that was imposed on the resisting population.

As per LMZA:36-37, Javad Heyat does not quote the rest of the LMZA section. As it can be seen, Nezami's only hesitation was about the nature of the story itself and LMZA shows that he did not want to approach the story at first. This is clear from the rest of the section LMZA:45-65. This has been recognized also by mainstream scholars.[253] As noted by the 19th century British scholar Robinson: "But the subject appears to Nezami too dry to be manufactured into a great poem. The desolate Arabian wilderness for his theatre, two simple children of the desert as his heroes, nothing but an unhappy passion — this might well daunt the poet of *Khosru and Shirin*, which, in everything, place, persons, and treatment, presented the greatest variety and grandeur"[254]. And as also noted by the Encyclopaedia of Islam: "Nezami states in the introduction to his poem that he accepted the assignment with some hesitation. At first, he doubted whether this tale of madness and wanderings through the wilderness would be suitable for a royal court"[255].

Thus, Javad Heyat overlooks the fact that Nezami himself explains that the reason for his hesitation is that the story lacked: "*neither gardens nor royal pageants nor festivities, neither streams nor wine nor happiness*". Javad Heyat further says that Nezami Ganjavi was upset at the Sharvānshāh[256]. This makes no logical sense, since Nezami Ganjavi praises the letter of the Sharvānshāh in LMZA:20-21:

With his beautiful handwriting	بنوشـته به خط خوب خویشـم
His Majesty has written me ten, fifteen or more eloquent lines	ده پانزده سطرِ نغز بیشم
Each word of the letter like a blooming garden	هر حرفی از او شـكفته باغی
It was more glowing than a night lamp	افروخته‌تر ز شب چراغی

Nezami also praised the Sharvānshāh in the whole section. Furthermore, in the next three sections of the poem (LM:5, LM:6 and LM:7), Nezami continues praising the Sharvānshāh and his son. Nezami gives advice to the son of the Sharvānshāh (in LM:7/22) to read, as a symbol of their joint Iranian culture, the *Nāma-ye Khusrawān*

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[253] de Bruijn 1986; Gelpke 1997; Seyed-Gohrab 2003; idem 2009; Turner 1997.
[254] Robinson 1883:141.
[255] de Bruijn 1986.
[256] Heyat 1986.

which is another term for the *Shāhnāma*; in the Sharaf-Nāma[257] the author calling the *Shāhnāma* by that name[258].

In order to possibly find a reason for this apparent contradiction in their politicized theory (on one hand, Nezami praises the Sharvānshāh and his son, and on the other, they wrongly claim that Nezami was upset at the Sharvānshāh), the authors with an ethno-ideologist viewpoint[259] claim that, in the end of the poem, Nezami taunts the Sharvānshāh! It should be noted again that the last chronological section of the poem to be written is the LMZA, however these authors are referring to the last section in terms of page numbers. We again, translate this last section of the poem (denoted by LMZB) based on the Zanjani[260] edition (the verses brought by Manaf-Oglu and Heyat are also the same as the Soviet edition and Zanjani editions, but the reading of Manaf-Oglu and Heyat of the actual Persian words reveals lack of familiarity with the Persian language) in order to illustrate the incorrect reading of the mentioned authors:

0	A Prayer for the King and Conclusion of the book	اندر دعای پادشاه و ختم کتاب
1	*O King! O Ruler! O Defender of World!*	شاها ملکا جهان پناها
	Not one king, rather Hundred Thousand Kings!	یک شاه نه صد هزار شاها
2	*The second Jamshid in taking throne*	جمشید دوم به‌تخت گیری
	The first sun in being unique	خورشید یکم به بی‌نظیری
3	*Sharvānshāh with the figure of King Kay-Qubād*	شروانشه کیقباد پیکر
	The Great Khāqān Abul-Mozaffar	خاقان کبیر ابوالمظفر
4	*Not the King of Sharvān, rather King of the World*	نی شروان‌شاه بل جهانشاه
	The second Kay-Khusraw, King Axsitān	کیخسرو ثانی اخستان شاه
5	*O you the Seal of Auspicious Kingship*	ای ختم قرآن پادشاهی
	May the kingship never be without your seal	بی‌خاتم تو مباد شاهی
6	*O you the Pride of Race of Sons of Adam*	ای مفخر نسل آدمی‌زاد
	O you from whom the two world are flourishing	ای ملک دو عالم از تو آباد
7	*O you sweet spring in the middle of the sea*	ای چشمه‌ی خوش میان دریا

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[257] SN/8/7. See SN/8:6-15 where as discussed already, he was upset that he did not compose the Iranian national epic Shāhnāma first.

[258] See also Seyed-Gohrab 2003:276 and commentary of Dastgerdi on the verse.

[259] e.g. Manaf-Oglu 2010:113.

[260] Zanjani 1990:177-179. Servatiyan 2008: 299-302.

	Purity and grandness is already available to you	پاکی و بزرگیت مهیا
8	*On the day when with the auspicious fortune*	روزی که به طالع مبارک
	You raise your head above the heavens	بیرون بری از سپهر تارک
9	*When you start to have good time*	مشغول شوی به شادمانی
	And when you read this eloquent book	وین نامه‌ی نغز را بخوانی
10	*From the body of this intellectual Bride*	از پیکر این عروس فکری
	You would sometimes enjoy the treasure and sometimes its virginity	گه گنج بری و گاه بکری
11	*May you endeavor in it*	آن باد که در پسند کوشی
	May you cover it in silk with your praises	ز احسنت خودش پرند پوشی
12	*To do such a nice favor*	در کردن این چنین تفضل
	From you generosity and from me trust	از تو کرم و ز من توکل
13	*Even though a pure heart and a victorious fortune*	گرچه دل پاک و بخت پیروز
	Are already your good counsel	هستند ترا نصیحت آموز
14	*From this advisor of the Divine Victory*	زین ناصح نصرت الهی
	Take a few words filled with morning glory	بشنو دو سه حرف صبحگاهی
15	*Look at the heads that this world has cause to fall*	بنگر که جهان چه سر فشانده است
	How many rulers have left behind this world	وز چند ملوک بازمانده است
16	*So handle the worldly affaires in a manner*	بر کار جهان جهان بپرداز
	That you leave behind the best in this world	کان به که تو مانی از جهان باز
17	*You are already an aware king and competent*	بیدار شهی به کاردانی
	Be a little more aware if you can	بیدارترک شو ار توانی
18	*Your generosity and endowment have no limit*	داد و دهشت کران ندارد
	It would not hurt if you can increase them	گر بیش کنی زیان ندارد
19	*The matters that are expedient for your rule*	کاری که به صلاح دولت تست
	Do not hold a loose leash in seeking them	در جستن آن عنان مکن سست
20	*Do not accept a single strand of injustice*	مویی نپسند ناروایی
	In order to keep splendor of rule and kingship	در رونق ملک و پادشایی
21	*Any land that is worthy of your standard*	ملکی که سزای رایت تست
	It is already under protection of your rulership	خود در حرم ولایت تست
22	*And whatever is not so, to this extreme*	و آنچ آن تو نیست نیز اقصاش
	Assume that it's yours, just be happy (with your lot)	پندار کز آن توست خوش باش
23	*Do not draw the punishment sword*	بر گردن هیچ نیکخواهی

	On the neck of anyone who is well-intentioned	شمشیر مکش به هر گناهی
24	*When enemy opens his mouth to excuse*	دشمن که به عذر شد زبانش
	Do not be safe and expel him from your door	ایمن مشو و ز در مرانش
25	*Be strong and be tolerant*	قادر شو و بردبار می‌باش
	Drink wine but stay alert	می می‌خور و هوشیار می‌باش
26	*Even though your arm is powerful*	بازوی تو گرچه هست کاری
	Yet, ask God for His help	از عون خدای خواه یاری
27	*Even though your opinion is wise and informed*	رای تو اگر چه هست هشیار
	Yet, do not abandon opinions of others	رای دگران ز دست مگذار
28	*Do not go to war accompanied by any doubtful*	با هیچ دودل مشو سوی حرب
	So you can mint a genuine victory	تا سکه درست خیزد از ضرب
29	*Avoid the company of those people*	از صحبت آن کسی بپرهیز
	Who are sometimes soft and sometimes harsh	کو باشد گاه نرم و گه تیز
30	*Worthless and nothing is he who*	هیچ است نه بلکه هیچ ارزی است
	Is inwardly a hypocrite and double-faced	هرکس که درون او دو درزی است
31	*Whenever you move forward into place*	هر جا که قدم نهی فرایش
	Think ahead about the steps to get out	باز آمدن قدم بیندیش
32	*When a task can be done in nine steps*	تا کار به نُه قدم برآید
	It's better if you don't spend ten on it	گر دَه نکنی به خرج شاید
33	*Do not send message to those seeking your justice*	مفرست پیام دادجویان
	Except through those who are truth-teller	الا به زبان راست گویان
34	*When you promise be so steadfast on it*	در قول چنان کن استواری
	So that asylum-seeker feels safe with you	کایمن شود از تو زینهاری
35	*Do not make anyone feel friendly with you*	کس را به خود از رخ گشوده
	Unless you have tested them once	گستاخ مکن نیازموده
36	*Do not rely on anyone's promise*	بر عهد کس اعتماد منمای
	Unless you have given them a place in your heart	تا در دل خود نیابیش جای
37	*Do not consider your foe small*	مشمار عدوی خویش را خرد
	You can remove thorn from your way like this	خار از ره خود چنین توان برد
38	*Do not whisper that secret into someone's ears*	در گوش کسی میفکن آن راز
	That when it's retold you would be embarrassed	کازرده شوی ز گفتنش باز
39	*If you smite someone, uproot them*	آن را که زنی ز بیخ برکن

	Do not put down whom you have raised	و آن را که تو برکشی میفکن
40	*From whatever you can seek during day and night*	از هرچه طلب کنی شب و روز
	Seek benevolence more than anything else	بیش از همه چیز نیکی اندوز
41	*Even though wine is halal for you*	با این که حلال تست باده
	Seek distance from this bastard	پهلو کن از این حرامزاده
42	*When drinking joins the morning wine*	گرچه به صبوح باده پیوست
	You drink but your foe would become intoxicated	باده تو خوری عدو شود مست
43	*Do not drink something that brings intoxication*	چندان مخور آنچه مستی آرد
	Because it will bring idol-worshipping	کالایش بت پرستی آرد
44	*On those days that you feel happy*	آن روز که خوشتری در آن روز
	Burn some 'spand' seeds on the fire for evil eyes	بر چشم بدان سپند میسوز
45	*And that night when you feel joyous in your temperament*	وان شب که شوی به طبع خرم
	Say a prayer and blow around yourself	بادی ز دعا به خود فرو دم
46	*Be welcoming in the wine party*	در مجلس می گشاده کن روی
	So the party would become warm	تا گرم شود نشاط آن کوی
47	*But in the public audience act like a lion*	بنمای به بار عام شیری
	So nobody dares to claim bravery	تا کس نزند دم دلیری
48	*In attending (to repair) any ruined building*	بر هرچه عمارت خراب است
	Haste for hasting is right	بشتاب که مصلحت شتاب است
49	*In killing someone who is a wretch*	در کشتن آن که با زبونی است
	Do not haste, even if they are murderer	تعجیل مکن اگر چه خونی است
50	*Do not expect your dreams to be far*	بر دوری کام خویش منگر
	For your chance would come in suddenly	کاقبال تو هم در آرد از در
51	*From all these signs that I'm speaking*	زین جمله نشانهها که گویم
	I am seeking excuse to talk to you	با تو به سخن بهانه جویم
52	*Otherwise, your heart O Lord of the World*	گرنه دل تو جهان خداوند
	Is not in need for such pieces of advice	محتاج نشد به جنس این پند
53	*Since to you belongs guidance*	ز آنجا که تراست رهنمایی
	Nothing comes from you except the correct opinion	ناید ز تو جز صواب رایی
54	*Your armor under this Whirling Wheel*	درع تو به زیر چرخ گردان
	Suffice to be prayers of good men	بس باد دعای نیکمردان

55	*Your protection in the time of happiness*	حرز تو به وقت شادکامی
	Suffice to be good thoughts of Nezami	بس باشد همت نظامی
56	*O God, protect this Possessor of the World*	یارب ز جمال این جهاندار
	From any harm and injury	آسیب و گزند را نگهدار
57	*Whatever attempt he makes You aid him*	هر در که زند تو ساز کارش
	Wherever he goes You be his friend	هر جا که رود تو باش یارش
58	*May all his friends be victorious*	بادا همه اولیاش منصور
	And May his enemies be defeated as such	و اعداش چنان که هست مقهور
59	*May the Royal Cup in his hands*	بر دستش جام خسروانی
	Be filled with the Water of Eternal Life	پر باد ز آب زندگانی
60	*May he gives me a drop from his cup*	یک قطره به من دهد ز جامش
	For I have composed this book in his name	کاین نامه نگاشتم به نامش
61	*This book that May bears his name forever*	این نامه که نامدار وی باد
	May be auspicious due to his rule	بر دولتِ او خجسته پی باد

2.8 Distortion of the word "bidārtarak"

Manaf-Oglu and the source used therein[261] read the word *bidārtarak* ("slightly more awake") in LMZB:17 as *bidār-tork* ("Awakened Turk"). They have made an egregious mistake in reading and understanding the line. The Persian word causing this misreading is *bidārtarak* (بیدارترک) which consists of the words *bidārtar*, the comparative adjective of *bidār* (awake/aware), plus -*ak*, a diminutive suffix (sometimes denoting "gentle", "kind"), e.g., *delbarak* meaning "little or lovely sweetheart"; but they read the word as *bidār-tork* (awakened Turk!). However, *bidār-tork* does not make any sense in the context: *You are [already] an awake/aware king in running affairs, become an awakened Turk if you can.* Moreover, their misreading would produce an unacceptable pause or *sakteh* in the meter of the poem, which would be a major fault in the meter, implausible for a poet of Nezami's caliber. The meter of the epic *Layli o Majnun* is مفعول مفاعلن فعولن (maf'ul o mafā'elon fa'ulon) but the wrong reading would make it مفعال مفاعل فعولن (mef'āāl o mafā'elo fa'ulon).

A possible reason for this mistake by these authors[262] is that in the Persian script, the short vowels are not written and diacritic signs are used to clarify when required. So ترک ("TRK") could be read differently including تُرک ("tork=Turk"), تَرک

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[261]Manaf-Oglu 2010:113. Heyat does not seem to have recognized that the word is *bidārtarak* and this word is not typed correctly in Heyat 2006:24. He then has wrongly claimed that "Nezami is responding to the insult of Axsitān".

[262] Note Manaf-Oglu 2010 and some of his sources might not know the Persian language.

("tark=leave") or تَرَک ("tarak=crack"). The correct reading requires education and familiarity with the language, the meter of the poem and the context of the lines. It is unfortunate that even the meter of the poem has been disregarded in order to arrive at such false misinterpretations. Even the Soviet edition transliterates the term *bidārtarak* which is the correct reading and does not create the major fault in the meter.

Below are some examples of Nezami's use of similar terms: *khoshtarak, bidārtarak, pishtarak, delak*, etc.[263]:

A little while ago, I had somebody	پیشترک زین که کسی داشـتم
I had many candles for my nights	شـمع شب‌افروز بسی داشـتم

He also writes[264]:

Ride your horse a little more gentle for the plain is nice	فرس خوشـترک ران که صحرا خوش ست
Do not pull the rein for the steed is going smoothly	عنان در مکش بارگی دلکش ست

This is common for the classical Persian poetry, and, perhaps, one of the best examples of this is a poem by Khāqāni who lived in the same region and whose poetry had influenced Nezami. Here we quote a portion of Khāqāni's famous poem which is full of such diminutives[265]:

سگسارک مخنثک و زشت کافرک	این گربه چشمک این سگک غوری غرک
این خوک گردنگ سگک دمنه گوهرک	با من پلنگسارک و روباه طبعک است
شیرک شـده است و گرگک و از هر دو بدترک	بوده سگ رمنده و اکنون به بحث من
این بوزنینه ریشـک پهنانه منظرک	خنبک زند چون بوزنه ، جنبک زند چون خرس

We should also particularly note that, apart from the *Layli o Majnun*, Nezami praised the Sharvānshāhs in the *Eskandar-Nāma*, where he also laments the death of

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[263] MA:19/30.
[264] SN:40/3.
[265] Sajjadi 1959; PD:Khāqāni.

Axsitān. This suggests that he originally planned to dedicate this book (*Eskandar-Nāma*) to a ruler of Sharvān[266]. His several *ghazal*s are dedicated to the Sharvānshāhs and Axsitān in particular[267]. For example, he calls Axsitān the *shāhanshāh-e ʿādil* ("the Just King of Kings"), *tāj-e moluk* ("Crown of Kings") and refers to him as his *sāhib divān* ("caretaker and protector")[268].

We now finish the conclusion of the analysis of the section misinterpreted by the USSR and ethno-nationalists who used the anachronistic 20th century concepts in to understand a 12th century Persian poet. Contrary to the USSR interpretation and those of Heyat and Manaf-Oglu, this whole section of LMZA clearly shows that Nezami Ganjavi was not a Turk. If Nezami was a Turk, then the Sharvānshāhs would not write a letter taunting Turks and at the same time, asking someone whom Turkish nationalists claim to be a Turk[269] to write epic poetry in their name. Nezami would not have praised the Sharvānshāhs, nor, furthermore, he would bestow praises on the Sharvānshāh all throughout the poem (in at least four sections). Nezami lived a good portion of his life under the Eldiguzids, and if he had encountered any hostility from the Sharvānshāh, he could have dedicated the poem to another ruler. But as mentioned, he also has *ghazal*s in praise of the Sharvānshāhs as well as he originally wanted to dedicate the *Eskandar-Nāma* to the memory of Axsitān. His appointment of the Sharvānshāhs as a caretaker of his own son is another aspect of this close relationship. Similarly, since the meter of the poem was chosen by Nezami, the verses are Nezami's poetic viewpoint of the Sharvānshāh's letter. This would again invalidate the misinterpretations of Manaf-Oglu and Heyat, since Nezami composed all of the LMZA (the last chronological section) himself and the whole section is full of the constant praises of the Sharvānshāh and their letter.

The verses taunting Turks (admitted as taunting by Heyat[270]) have been also noted by prominent literary scholars such as Nafisi and Riāhi[271]. Servatiyan even qualifies the Sharvānshāh's and Nezami's words in LMZA as *nejād-parastāneh* (racist)[272], while Nafisi states that the people of Ganja saw the Turks as *past* (lowly) in that time[273]. In fact, such stereo-types did exist in Nezami's time and were commonly used by Persian poets (e.g. note some of the verses mentioned by Khāqāni).

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[266] de Blois 1998.
[267] See for example Nafisi 1959:290, 299, 319, 334.
[268] ibid 1959:299, 319.
[269] Heyat 1986; idem 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.
[270] Heyat 1986.
[271] Nafisi 1959:45; Riāhi in Sharvāni 1996:24;
[272] Servatiyan 2008:338-339.
[273] Nafisi 1959:45.

The correct methodology in understanding verses of the Persian classical poetry is the comparative analysis of various works of Nezami with those of other Persian poets of the period, which would give a clear idea of the literature tradition of the corresponding time and region. It should take into consideration cultural and historical-political realities of that period and even the ethnic composition in the region. Not a line can be interpreted beyond the mentioned context, since depending on its constituents; sometimes the same or similar terms can have different meanings.

To approach the work of the 12th century Persian poet with the 20th century Soviet nation-building viewpoint or a modern Turkish nationalist viewpoint would naturally bring to misinterpretations aimed at politicization of Nezami figure and heritage. Then there would be no wonder if instead of a Muslim Iranian living in the Perso-Islamic civilization of the 12th century, Nezami is transformed into either a communist atheist advocating a classless society or a Turkish nationalist.

As shown, Nezami described each word of the Sharvānshāh's letter as a "blossomed garden". He does complain about the dryness of the story, his age and frail condition, the fact that no one else had touched this story and everyone had avoided it- due to its dryness. The theme of the story was too barren for him, yet due to the encouragement of his son and respect for the Sharvānshāh, he undertook the task.

It is worth repeating that, there is not a single testimony of Turkish poetry of Nezami's period from the Caucasus; its first samples appears much later (at least in around a century) after Nezami Ganjavi's passing away. On the other hand, a book such as *Nozhat al-Majāles* (see Part IV) shows everyday people used Persian in the Khānaqāhs (Sufi prayer house), non-court setting, and even ordinary lore poetry. The *Safina-ye Tabriz* (see again Part IV) shows that Tabriz (the major capital of both the Eldiguzids who ruled Ganja and the Ilkhanids) had its own Iranian vernacular called *zabān-e tabrizi* ("language of Tabriz") and Khurasani-Dari-Persian was its cultural language. Thus Nezami Ganjavi besides being Iranian, lived in a completely Persianate cultural environment as exemplified by *Nozhat al-Majāles*. The Sharvānshāhs themselves did not know Turkish. Had there at least existed a Turkish literary tradition in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, Nezami, assuming he ever knew any Turkish (which there is no evidence of), would have written something in Turkish for a Turkish-language ruler. As it is well known, the Saljuqs, Eldiguzids, Ahmadilis were Persianized in culture and manner[274], although all these rulers had Turkish ancestry, unlike the Sharvānshāhs who were not of Turkish ancestry. The Sharvānshāh were proud of their Sassanid descent which is praised as the "high

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[274] Bosworth 1965; Grousset 1970; Yarshater 2004.

lineage" by Nezami as opposed to what Ferdowsi stated about Mahmud. Thus, naturally, writing in Turkish for a non-Turk ruler who does not even understand this language, makes no sense. However, such a simple fact was ignored by political interpretations of Nezami. Many poets of the time were part of the Sharvānshāh's court, but all of them wrote in exclusively in Persian.

So, the identification of the mistranslated term *torkāneh-sokhan* with *zabān-e torki* is another element of the politicized theory aimed at detaching Nezami from his Iranian heritage. The Sharvānshāh's letter to Nezami was in prose; Nezami Ganjavi versified it and the verses about the unfaithfulness of Turks and Turkish-like behavior (Turkish-like rhetoric meaning vulgar as opposed to *sokhan-e boland*, and Turkish-like eating means uncivilized eating as used by Khāqāni) have been mentioned by other Persian poets as well. Finally, neither the Sharvānshāh, nor the Eldiguzids, nor any other King, nor his own son versified a single verse in any of Nezami's work.

The idea that the Sharvānshāh forced Nezami to write in Persian was invented by the biased Soviet scholars. It was further developed by those writing with ethno-ideologist mindset[275] and as noted, they mistakenly read the word *bidārtarak* as *bidār tork*. As per the claim of Persian being the elite language, the book *Nozhat al-Majāles* mentions 115 Persian poets (see Part IV) from the area, most of them with ordinary working backgrounds and not associated with any royal courts. All of them have Iranian and Arabic (Muslim) names and titles, not Turkish. Twenty four of these authors, including Nezami, are from Ganja. Interestingly enough, we are not aware of any biased researcher who would take into consideration such an important source as *Nozhat al-Majāles* in the great detail it deserves[276]. Obviously such a fact would seriously undermine the invalid Soviet historiography on the subject, since 115 Persian poets from the area (majority of them with ordinary working backgrounds and some are female) would not serve the ideological thesis that "Persian was the elite language, forced upon the population". This issue is further elaborated in Part IV.

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[275] Heyat 1986; Manaf-Oglu 2010. Prof. Dick Davis has simply called the Soviet political interpretation as "Rubbish" (Correspondence March 2011).
[276] c.f. Riāhi 2008.

Part III

THE TURKISH NATIONALIST VIEWPOINT OF NEZAMI AND RECENT FORGERIES

The character of Nezami Ganjavi continued to be politicized after the disintegration of the USSR. Pan-Turkist authors early in the 20th century had already claimed such Iranian cultural figures like Ferdowsi, the Samanids, Rudaki and Sa'di to be Turks[277]. It is quite possible that some pan-Turkist authors (from Turkey or Eastern Transcaucasia) might have claimed Nezami to be a Turk even earlier than the idea of his "Azerbaijani" identity was articulated in the Soviet Orientalistics. However those claims had not been present in any mainstream Western and Russian academic sources of that time.

Anyway, the trend of politicization with regards to Nezami Ganjavi continues today. As noted by Prof. Ivan Steblin-Kamensky, Dean of the Oriental Department of St. Petersburg University, with regards to students from some of the former Soviet Republics and presently, CIS countries : "We trained such specialists,

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[277] Bayat 2008:218-226. It should be noted that such falsifications with regards to the regional history of Iranians and other groups, to the point of denial and falsification of their history (e.g. denial of Armenian, Greek and Assyrian genocides due to modern Turkic nationalism or claims that many Iranian figures and societies starting from the Medes, Scythians and Parthians were Turks), are still prevalent in countries that adhere to Pan-Turkist nationalism such as Turkey and the republic of Azerbaijan. These falsifications, which are backed by state and state backed non-governmental organizational bodies, range from elementary school all the way to the highest level of universities in these countries. Due to prevalent political situation in the world, where historical truths are sacrificed for political and financial reasons, falsification of history has even reached some authors who claim affiliation with Western academia as noted in the Part I of this book and exposed in other books such as Vyronis 1993. Another recent example was the desecration of Armenian monuments in Nakhjavan.

but ... there are a lot of nationalistic tendencies there and academic fraud. Apparently it's related to the first years of independence. Their works include nationalist beginnings. Objective perspective, scientific understanding of the problems and timeline of historical developments are lacking. Sometimes there is an outright falsification. For example, Nezami, the monument of whom was erected at Kamennoostrovsk Boulevard, is proclaimed a great Azerbaijani poet. Although he did not even speak Azeri, they justify this by saying that he lived in the territory of current Azerbaijan. But Nezami wrote his poems in Persian language!"[278].

An Azerbaijani newspaper, for example, has claimed that president Khatami of Iran is a "Persian chauvinist" because he has stated the obvious fact that Nezami is a representative of Persian literature[279]. So, the Western scholars that have also stated the same objective idea, would also have to be considered "Persian chauvinists" by Azerbaijani journalists. We have already mentioned that Nezami himself called his own work *Persian poetry* and *Persian pearl*, so it would make no wonder if the *Ayna News* also considered Nezami a "Persian chauvinist". Another news report, in an interview with Elchin Hasanov, a member of the Writer's Union of Azerbaijan, has quoted him as stating: "We need to build a proper line of propaganda ..., in order to prove to the world that Nezami is Azerbaijani"[280]! So, it is expected that falsification surrounding Nezami Ganjavi will unfortunately continue due to nationalistic trends. What is important to note is that these falsifications cannot propagate unless there are scholars who are unaware of the politicization of Nezami, or there is a large capital invested in the falsification, or there are scholar who commit academic frauds as mentioned by Professor Steblin-Kamensky and discussed in the first section of the present work.

3.1 National Treason!

Perhaps, the most nefarious manifestation of ethno-nationalism with regards to Nezami can be seen in the case of the late Talysh scholar Novruzali Mammadov who died as political prisoner in jail in August 17, 2009[281]. Mammadov was detained,

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[278] Steblin-Kamensky 2003.

[279] See Ayna newspaper, 10 August 2004, Baku. See
http://www.armeniandiaspora.com/showthread.php?8046-BAKU-Azeri-paper-accuses-Khatami-of-Persian-chauvinism for details. [accessed May 2011]

[280] Day.az, "Pisatel' El'chin Gasanov: 'Nam nuzhno rabotat' nad tem, chtoby vo vsem mire poverili v to, chto Nezami i Fizuli – azerbajdzhancy' " 22 March, 2006
http://news.day.az/society/44452.html [accessed May 2011]

[281] Radio Free Europe- Radio Liberty, "Journalist and right activists dies in Azerbaijani jail", August 18, 2009.

beaten and arrested for attending a conference in Iran. His son who was mentally ill, was also kidnapped and severely beaten when he wanted to visited Mammadov in jail[282]. In 2010, Amnesty international concluded that: "In August, Novruzali Mammadov, a 67-year-old Talysh minority activist, died in a prison hospital. He had been serving a 10-year prison sentence for treason after a trial in June 2008 that was reportedly unfair and politically motivated because of his activities in promoting the Talysh language and culture. A thorough investigation into his death, including into whether he had been denied necessary medical treatment, was not carried out."[283] The intersection of Nezami Ganjavi with the case of Mammadov can be seen in the headline of the Azerbaijan Republic's ANS Press news portal, in the article entitled: "Editor of Tolishi Sedo [Voice of Talysh] newspaper took stand of betrayal of the country"[284]. Part of the report states: "Azerbaijani well-known poet Nezami Ganjavi and historical hero Babak were shown as Talysh in these materials... It was shown in the newspaper that Turkish came to Azerbaijan regions afterwards where Talysh people live". There is no need to emphasize again the well-known fact that Turkish became spoken in the Caucasus much later than the Iranian dialects of this area (e.g. Talyshi). With regards to Nezami and Babak, it may be noted that the Talysh are an Iranian ethno-linguistic group and at the time of Nezami and Babak, Fahlaviyāt languages (see Part IV) which are NW Iranian dialects were prevalent, and Talysh fits in this linguistic continuum. Overall, Talysh as part of the Iranian civilization can be considered as legitimate heirs to the once more widespread Iranian presence of Eastern Transcaucasia[285].

What should be emphasized here is the political implication of stating a different opinion with regards to Nezami. The actual title of the article explicitly states "betrayal", it tries to defame Mammadov by connecting him with actual facts that

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http://www.rferl.org/content/Journalist_Rights_Activist_Dies_In_Azerbaijani_Jail/1802552.html [accessed May 2011]

[282]World Organisation Against Torture, Confirmation in appeal of the sentencing against Mr. Novruzali Mammadov to ten years in prison, 7 January 2009, AZE 001 / 0808 / OBS 139.2, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/496efd900.html [accessed May 2011]
[283] AI - Amnesty International: Amnesty International Report 2010 - The State of the World's Human Rights, 28 May 2010 (available at ecoi.net).
http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/143047/243697_en.html [accessed May 2011]
[284]Ans Press News Portal, "Editors of "Tolishi Sedo" newspaper took stand of betrayl of country", 19.12.2007,
http://web.archive.org/web/20080512201826/http://anspress.com/nid51166.html [accessed May 2011]. Actual photo of the article can also be found in Doostzadeh 2009a.
[285] Asatrian 2011. See also Shnirelman 2001:123.

both the Iranian rebel Babak Khorramdin and the Iranian poet Nezami Ganjavi were not Turks. The matter of Nezami is not as politicized in any other country. We are not aware how he is treated in Turkey. In Iran, authors are free to state their viewpoint on this problem. Some authors with Turkish nationalistic position, like Javad Heyat, have claimed in local magazines and book published in Tehran, that Nezami Ganjavi was Turkish[286]. As described below, even a Turkish divan falsely attributed to Nezami was published by a nationalistic author. Thus, all this demonstrates that the issue of Nezami Ganjavi's background is severely more important in the Republic of Azerbaijan than elsewhere. The late ruler of the country, Heydar Aliev is quoted as stating: "I would encourage our youth to learn as many foreign languages as possible. But prior to that ambitious goal, they all should know their own language - Azeri. They should feel it as a mother language and be able to think in it. I wish for the day when our youth can read Shakespeare in English, Pushkin in Russian, and our own Azerbaijani poets - Nezami, Fizuli and Nasimi - in Azerbaijani"[287]. Whereas Fizuli and Nasimi have written in Arabic, Persian, and a classical form of Oghuz Turkish language (modern Turkish and that used in present-day Azerbaijan Republic do not use the profuse amount of Persian and Arabic vocabulary, as well as the Persian syntax used by those poets in their Turkish poetry), Nezami Ganjavi's work are only in Persian. Consequently, Aliev should have rather encouraged the young generation to study Persian in order to read Nezami Ganjavi in the original.

The politicized background of history in nationalist circles leaves no doubts that falsifications surrounding Nezami's work will continue in the future. In this section we list several types of inaccurate information that has sprung forth due to unscholarly political tendencies. The first type of falsifications is distortion of historical facts and attribution of false statements to ancient historians. The second type is forgeries of verses and false attribution of a Turkish Divan to Nezami. The

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[286] Heyat 1986; idem 2006.

[287] " Quotable quotes from Heydar Aliev", Azerbaijan international(11.4), Winter 2003. http://azer.com/aiweb/categories/topics/Quotes/quote_aliyev.heydar.html [accessed May 2011]. An interesting example is also illustrated by a book published in Azerbaijan SSR in 1981 and translated to English in 1991 where the author claims that: "Nezami is studied and read by many fraternal Soviet people in their own language. His translation and publications in Ukrainian, Georgian, Armenian, Turkmen, Tatar, Tajik, Byelorussians, Kirghiz and other languages are evident of this" (Rustamova (1981:60). Whereas the author has put Tajik next to Ukrainian, Tatar and Turkmen, there is no reason to translate the work of Nezami for the Persians (Tajiks) of Central Asia as they can understand it in the original Persian language. As it is well known, the Soviet Union for political reasons named the Persian language as "Tajiki"!

third type of falsifications is the claim that Nezami was of Turkish heritage by basing it on erroneous understanding of Persian poetic imagery and also loan words that were current in the Persian language of that time. These are reminiscence of the erroneous reading of *bidār-tork* for *bidārtarak* mentioned in Part II. Finally, the fourth type of falsification is the unsubstantiated claim that the statements of Nezami Ganjavi are taken from Turkish phrases. There could be other kinds of falsifications, which we have not detected in books and articles[288].

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[288] For example, in an internet forum it was claimed that Nezami thought in Turkish but wrote his thought in Persian! This unsubstantiated claim is disproven by the fact that there is no proof Nezami knew Turkish, there is no proof that he thought in Turkish and wrote in Persian, and furthermore, one cannot write poetic Persian masterpieces unless they actually have a full grasp of the Persian language and think natively in the language. Another false claim is that Nezami was a Turk because he lived under the Seljuqs or later Eldiguzids. This fallacious claim is equivalent to stating that Nizam al-Molk, or Jāmi, or Ferdowsi, or Iranians in the Qajar era who lived under the Qajar rulers, were Turks. This would be as erroneous as stating that since Iranians, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, etc. lived under the Seljuqids, they were Turks. It should also be noted that the Seljuqids and short-lived regional dynasties such as the Eldiguzids/Ahmadilis were Persianized in culture and protected Iranian lands from the Turcoman menace (Nishapuri 2001:9; Grousset 1970:164). They also had to depend upon Iranian scribes, poets, jurists and theologians to administer and run the everyday affairs of their kingdoms and empires (Nishapuri 2001:9). Ganja during the time of Nezami was an outpost of Persian culture where Persian was the main language and Persian civil servants were in great demand (Chelkowski 1975:2). Another claim was that Nezami influenced Azeri-Turkic literature and so he can be claimed to be Azeri-Turkic. There can be little doubt, that Ferdowsi greatly influenced the Ottoman Turkish or Indo-Muslim literature (see Oguzdenli 2006), which does not make him an Ottoman Turk or Indian. Indeed, Nezami's influence, like that of Ferdowsi, extends to the Eastern Islamic lands where Persianate culture was followed uninterrupted from Anatolia to the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, actual complete translations of the poems of Nezami to Azeri-Turkic occurred in the 20th century, i.e. later than translations to many of the European languages. Besides, a Persian speaker from Samarqand can read Nezami's legacy in original while the citizens of the modern Azerbaijan Republic are deprived of this opportunity. Good Poetry unlike scientific writing cannot be translated without losing its meaning. Consequently, Nezami's influence to any tradition can occur through the mediation of Persian literature. Another false claim is that since there were a small number of "Turkish" mercenaries serving under Caliph Muta'ism, then they were somehow connected to the native people of the Caucasus (see Doostzadeh 2009a for the rejection of this false claim). Another false claim is that legendary personalities from the Caucasus such as Shirin, Queen Mahin Banu and Queen Nushaba are Turkish. However, all of them have Iranian names, as do all their native places, the whole geography of their lives being either Iranian or Armenian. Although the historical Shirin was not from the Caucasus, at the time of Khusraw Parviz or Alexander the Great, Turks were not settled in the Caucasus.

3.2 Fabrication of the History of Turks in the Caucasus

In order to substantiate the long-lasting Turkish presence in the region, a whole series of Iranian and non-Turkish peoples such as the Scythian, the Cimmerians and the Caucasian Albanians were claimed as Turks,[289] also the Iranian dynasties of the Sālārids[290] and the Sajids,[291] were claimed as Turkish. Manaf-Oglu also stated that Khazars lived in Ganja, although no proof for this claim was provided. The border of the Khazar Empire had always been above Transcaucasia and although they occasionally made incursions into Transcaucasia in their battles with the Sassanids and the Umayyads, they were never able to hold this territory for a long period. There is no unambiguous reference to any permanent settlements[292] of Khazars in Transcaucasia, let alone in Ganja specifically. Similarly, the same author writes, Tabari mentioned that Azerbaijan was in the hand of Turks in the 7th century, but does not provide the location of such an alleged passage. It is well known that after the downfall of the Sassanids, Azerbaijan and the Caucasus came under the rule of the Arab caliphs and Umayyads. Similarly, after the downfall of the Sassanids, Arrān itself was ruled by the Iranian Mihranid dynasty that paid tribute to various empires of the region, while some of its main centers contained Arab garrisons.

Manaf-Oglu might have been confusing an episode of the fight in Azerbaijan between the Turanians (who are an Iranian tribe mentioned in the Avesta), ancient Iranian mythical kings such as Kay-Qubād, Bahman and mythical Yemeni kings such as Ra'esh, Ra'ed, Shamar Yar'as, some of them described as having lived for over 300 years, what is in the mythical age sections of Tabari[293]. These episodes have no historical basis[294] and had already been dismissed by the time of Ibn Khaldun as "silly statements"[295]. The travelers and chronicles from the 10th century mention Persian, Arabic, Armenian and Arrānian (see Part IV), but they never mention any Turkish language. Manaf-Oglu also claims that the historian Ibn Azraq stated in 1070 that: "Ganja is the great capital of Turks"[296] but he does not give exact citation. Ahmad ibn Yusuf ibn Ali ibn Azraq lived approximately between 1117 and 1181. We checked a

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[289] Manaf-Oglu 2010: 111.
[290] They were of Iranian Daylamite origin. See Bosworth 1996:148.
[291] They were of Iranian Soghdian origin. See Bosworth 1996:147.
[292] Golden 1992:386.
[293] Tabari 1987:17,79; idem 1991:28 and Ibn Hishām (see Crosby 2007).
[294] See appendix of Doostzadeh 2009a and the analysis of the mythical age described by the pseudo-Ibn Hisham therein.
[295] Ibn Khaldun 1969:14-17.
[296] Manaf-Oglu 2010:111.

partial original Arabic version of his book[297] and the recent partial English translation. The only statement on Ganja during the Saljuq era occurs in three places: "Sultan Toghril Beg, son of Sultan Muhammad, who was the ruler of Ganja and Arrān and he sent a *shihna* to them"[298], "… there was an earthquake in the city of Janza, which is Ganja"[299], "As for Sultan Toghril Beg, he sired Arslān-Shāh whose mother was the wife of the amir Eldiguz. He is now the Sultan from Isfahan, Hamadan, Azerbaijan and Arrān up to the city of Ganja and Shamkur"[300]. We note the first statement simply states that Toghril Beg became the ruler of Ganja and Arrān, which simply means that the area was incorporated to the larger Saljuq Empire. There is nothing about "Ganja is a great capital of Turks" in the book of Ibn Azraq. Indeed, Ganja had been the capital of the Shaddādids until 1070 AD[301], and it was not the capital of the subsequent Saljuqs and Eldiguzids. Consequently, this statement of Manaf-Oglu is a forgery. What is even more surprising, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Azerbaijan development bulletin[302] contains the same falsification: "Ibn Azrak states: 'Ganja was the great capital of the Azerbaijani Turks'", whereas we note again that Ibn Azraq had a good knowledge of the local geography and clearly distinguished Azerbaijan and Arrān. As already covered in Part I and Part II, the term "Azerbaijani Turk" was never mentioned by historians of that time.

3.3 Fabrication of a False Verse and a Turkish Divan Falsely Ascribed To Nezami

Another forgery is a verse that a Soviet Azerbaijani author, Nushaba Arasly, falsely attributed to Nezami Ganjavi[303]:

Father upon father of mine were Turks	پدر بر پدر مر مرا ترک بود
Each of them in wisdom was like a Wolf	به فرزانگی هر یکی گرگ بود

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[297] Badawi 1974.
[298] Hillenbrand 1990:38.
[299] ibid.:43.
[300] ibid.:58.
[301] Bosworth 2000.
[302]UNDP-Azerbaijan June 2003, Issue No.4,
http://web.archive.org/web/20031130190846/http://www.un-az.org/undp/bulnews3/nizami.html [accessed May 2011]
[303] See Arasly 1980:5 which is repeated by Heyat 2010. For further exposition of this false verse, see also Matini 1993a.

According to Nushaba Arasly[304]: "The Azerbaijani scholar, Ali Ganj'ali while in the Aya Sufya library noted this verse but **does not remember in which manuscript it occurred**" (emphasis added). However, the mistake in this verse is apparent, since this verse does not even have a correct rhyme (rhyming the word *gorg* with *tork*) and makes no sense for the Persian poetry of that period. The verse mentioned by Nushaba Arasly was definitely forged and is a clear example of a nationalistic falsification. M.R. Heyat tries to explain the forged verse: "Unlike other cultures where the wolf is seen as a savage creature, in Turkish culture, the wolf is a sacred symbol for Turks and is seen as a representation of someone who is knowledgeable and wise..."[305]. In actuality, Nezami Ganjavi considers the wolf as a savage beast which is mentally inferior to the fox. He also sees it as below lion in terms of courage. Consequently, if one were to accept the claim of Heyat about the wolf and its association with Turkish culture, then Nezami Ganjavi is definitely outside of the realm of such a culture.

Nezami Ganjavi considers wolf as a mentally inferior creature relative to fox and fox as the king of wolf[306]:

The reason that fox is the king over wolf	از آن بر گرگ روبه راست شاهی
Is because fox sees the trap while wolf sees only fish	که روبه دام بیند گرگ ماهی

Nezami Ganjavi, referencing people who are bothersome and burdensome[307]:

In our life time, we are distressed and burdened	به وقت زندگی رنجور حالیم
Because we are in the same hole with savage wolves	که با گرگان وحشی در جوالیم

Nezami Ganjavi, making a point about the courage of lion[308]:

Your message is supreme and your name is supreme	پیامت بزرگست و نامت بزرگ

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[304] Arasly 1980:5. This book under the USSR is apparently the first source where such a forged verse has been published.
[305] Heyat 2010.
[306] KH:48/33.
[307] KH:119/19.
[308] SN:23/153.

Do not hide a lion underneath the skin of a wolf	نهفته مکن شیر در چرم گرگ

Another significant recent forgery is the ascription of an Ottoman Turkish Divan by Nezami Qunavi (d. late 15th century) to Nezami Ganjavi by some Turkish nationalist writers in Iran[309] and, according to some websites, in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan Republic news portal APA on the 8th of June 2007 had a headline entitled: "Nezami Ganjavi's divan in Turkish published in Iran"[310]. However, that was not Nezami Ganjavi's divan, but by Nezami Qunavi who was an Ottoman poet writing in Ottoman Turkish, Persian and Arabic[311]. Such a misattribution is another example of the current process of politicization of Nezami for ethno-nationalistic reasons.

3.4 Invalid Claim: "Using Turkish Loan Words Means Being a Turk"

Another wrong viewpoint that is pushed by authors with the clear Turkish nationalist position is the highlighting of the miniscule usage of Turkish loanwords in the work of Nezami[312]. De Planhol summarizes the overall contribution of Turkish words in the Persian language: "in spite of their almost uninterrupted political domination for nearly 1,000 years, the cultural influence of these rough nomads on Iran's refined civilization remained extremely tenuous. This is demonstrated by the mediocre linguistic contribution, for which exhaustive statistical studies have been made (by Doerfer). The number of Turkish or Mongol words that entered Persian,

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[309] For analysis of this false attribution, see Tabrizi 2005.

[310] Azerbaijan Press Agency (APA) news, "Nezami Ganjavi's divan in Turkish published in Iran", 08 June 2007. http://www.apa.az/en/news.php?id=28178 [accessed May 2011]. We should note this forgery has found its way in other internet forums (e.g. http://www.window2baku.com/Monuments/mn_nizami.htm [accessed May 2011]. A curious note is that the APA report also had claimed that Saeed Nafisi is an Azerbaijani Turk whereas his background is actually from a long distinguished line of Kermani Persian Physicians going back to Hakim Burhan al-Din Nafis Kermani. In some internet forums, it has also been claimed that Vahid Dastgerdi is an Azerbaijani Turk and that is "why it is not surprising that he was the major scholar of Nezami" (e.g. http://myazerbaijan.org/index.php?p=history/36 [accessed May 2011]) However, Vahid Dastgerdi is from the village of Dastgerd in Isfahan and was not an Azerbaijani Turk. Both scholars, who hold the distinction of publishing the first critical edition of the Khamsa and the Divan of Nezami respectively, are not from a Turkic linguistic background.

[311] Oguzdenli 2008; Tabrizi 2005. See also (Saidi 1992) and the sources therein for a false attribution of a Turkish ghazal titled *sensiz* ("without you") to Nezami Ganjavi by a cultural ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

[312] For such a list see Heyat 2006; Rasulzadeh 1954.

though not negligible, remained limited to 2,135, i.e., 3 percent of the vocabulary at the most. These new words are confined on the one hand to the military and political sector..."[313]. The voluminous work of Doerfer seems to indicate that the majority of these loanwords are nomadic, military and political terms and titles that are now mostly obsolete or have been replaced.

As per Nezami, it will be shown that the Turkish loanwords used by Nezami are not unique to him (almost all of them being used by Khurasani predecessors and all of them being used by poets and prose writers from other regions), they are extremely miniscule (less than half of one percent of his vocabulary in terms of both frequency and usage), and they were common words used in the Persian poetry and prose of that era. However, the argument being advanced by Heyat[314] is also erroneous since there have been Iranians who have written Turkish (e.g. many Iranians who came to Anatolia or the Ottoman Empire)[315] or knew Turkish due to the fact that it was the language of local rulers. Indeed this is another reason that even if we take the unsubstantiated statement that "Nezami knew Turkish"[316] or the false political statement that he "wanted to write in Turkish", it does not necessarily makes him a Turk. Just like the many Persians who knew Turkish during the Il-Khanid, Safavid and Qajar times.

Since no detail study of these Turkish loanwords and their relative frequency has been completed with regards to Nezami, authors have stated different opinions. For example, Servatiyan mentions that these words were in everyday Persian and their usage by Nezami is even less than that by the Persian poets Khāqāni and Rumi[317], while Perry mentions that: "... the Turco-Mongol vocabulary in Classical Persian histories and the like is ephemeral, i.e., it comprises obsolete military and administrative terms such as *daruye* and *soyuryal*. Similarly, most Turkish words

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[313] de Planhol 2004.

[314] Heyat 2006.

[315] For example Yazici 2002; Yazici 2003 and dozens more in Yazici and Oguzdenli 2010.

[316] The unsubstantiated claim that since the first wife of Nezami was of Qifchāq background (she was a captured slave that was sent to him as a gift for his composition of Makhzan al-Asrār and became his first wife), then Nezami knew Qifchāq Turkish (which is not the Oghuz Turkish of Azerbaijan SSR but another Turkish dialect) is not provable and mere speculation. It is apparent that he sends his son to the court of the Persian speaking Sharvānshāhs and the advices he imparts on his son are all in Persian. So if his son knows Persian, then obviously his wife could have learned it as well. Slaves were actually trained before being sent as gifts in that era. There is no proof that Nezami knew any Turkish (let alone the Qifchāq version) and spoke any type of Turkish.

[317] Servatiyan 1997:168.

showcased in the Persian poetry of such as Nezami, Khāqāni, Suzani and Rumi are less than ephemeral - they have never been incorporated, even temporarily, into Persian; the verb forms and phrases, in particular (e.g. *oltur* 'sit down', *qonaq gerek* 'do you want a guest?'), were not even candidates for lexical borrowing. Like Abu Nuwas in his macaronic Fahlaviyāt the poets are being cute and showing off"[318]. Perry is correct that many of these terms are obsolete although some are still in usage, similar to the fact that many words in the *Shāhnāma* or *Lughat-Furs* of Asadi are also obsolete. However, Nezami never uses such verb forms, and Perry who has cited Tourkhan Gandjei is probably referring to Suzani[319] who, in one of his poems, addressing a Turkish beloved (imaginary or not), mentions the term *qonaq gerek*[320]. As per the notion of boasting, while this may be the case with Khāqāni and Suzani, the Turkish words used by Nezami Ganjavi as demonstrated below were common for the Persian language of that time and were used by other poets and writers. Before we examine these words in Nezami's vocabulary, we will mention the difference in the usage of words between such poets as Suzani and Nezami.

Suzani Samarqandi, who is among the greatest Persian-writing satirists, profusely used the colloquial language from his native Samarqandi Persian dialect[321]. According to Tourkhan Gandjei, the practice of using Turkish elements found its

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[318] Perry 2001.

[319] Gandjei 1986:74.

[320] In an email correspondence, Prof. Perry has made the point that: "I don't see that we are in disagreement about the basic premise – that Turkish vocabulary in most registers and genres of Persian progressively increased as Turkish rulers and immigrants expanded across Iran. And I don't see that I wrote anything at all about Turkish vocab. in Nezami. ". He also has noted that the term "Azerbaijani" has been used by him and some other authors in some works for classical Persian authors not in the ethnic sense but in the "geocultural sense". He clarifies this point: "I was speaking (using the term Azerbaijani for Caucasian poets) in regional geographical-cultural terms. We know that the majority of the population of Azerbaijan in early Islamic times was Iranian, with their own Iranian language". On the term "geocultural" he has mentioned that: "geocultural in the sense of being open to all regional influences". (Correspondence on July 2nd, 2011). However, our opinion is that terms such as "Caucasian" and "Arranian" are the historically correct terms for the Ganja of the 12th as explained in Part I. Furthermore, they do not have the multiple meanings (such as the 20th century adopted ethnic meaning) which can be used to make unscientific claims by unsuspecting researchers.

[321] See Foruzanfar 1940/1:334. The majority of Samarqand today are still Persian although the general trend in the region in the last 1000 years has been towards the spread of Turkic languages at the expense of Iranian languages. The minority population, who are Uzbeks, did not exist as an ethnic group in the region during the time of Suzani.

foremost master in Suzani who, according to him, used Turkish words, phrases and sentences[322]. However, it should be noted that the poet Suzani was of the Persian ancestry and stated it directly many times, tracing his lineage to Salman the Persian[323]. The major poem which uses Turkish words is actually addressed to a Turkish beloved[324]. As noted by Perry, Suzani might have been showing off, but it should be also noted that although Suzani's usage of Turkish words and phrases are more than that of Nezami and Khāqāni, the number should not be exaggerated and they still would make a miniscule percentage of his vocabulary. The Turkish expressions are contained basically in a few poems. They are addressing a real or imaginary Turkish beloved, and this is the reason for their usage. Such use of macaronic poetry is typical of other poets. For example, Shāh Nimatullah Wali, who traces his ancestry from his mother's side to the Iranian Shabankareh dynasty and from his father's side to the Prophet Muhammad, also has a poem, in which the last couplet contains the Turkish expression: *san nejek? san seville? Gul!* ("How are you? Are you happy? Smile!").[325] In this case, the poem could be written for one of his Turkish followers, since Shāh Nimatullah Wali claims to have followers amongst both Iranians (Tajiks) and Turks. There are several macaronic poems of mixed Persian/Arabic in his Divan as well.

As for Rumi's vocabulary, according to Schimmel: "Rumi's mother tongue was Persian, but he had learned during his stay in Konya, enough Turkish and Greek to use, now and then, in his verse"[326]. Rumi's Persian background and cultural orientation has not been a matter of dispute in the West[327] and a recent detailed study of his background shown many Soghdian and Eastern Iranian terms in the colloquial Persian of his father who actually lived in Vakhsh[328]. The number of

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[322] See Gandjei 1986:74-75. However, it should be noted that Suzani's work is poetry and not prose, thus he does not have a sentence but rather a very short phrase such as *qonaq gerek* as part of a couplet.

[323] Foruzanfar 1940/1:334; Rypka 1968b:561; Samarqandi 1959:5.

[324] Gandjei 1986:74.

[325] Nimatullah-e Wali 1995:650-651.

[326] Schimmel 1993:193.

[327] Franklin 2008; Halman 2007:266; Schimmel 1994:58; Vyronis 2001.

[328] The Turkish ambassador and scholar Halmann who is unsure of the genealogy of Rumi's father mentions that: "In terms of Rumi's cultural orientation – including language, literary heritage, mythology, philosophy, and Sufi legacy –the Iranians have indeed a strongly justifiable claim. All of these more than sufficient to characterize Rumi as a prominent figure of Persian cultural history.. and Rumi is patently Persian on the basis of jus et norma loquendi." (Halmann 2007:266-267). The same holds true with regards to Nezami's cultural orientation, language, literary heritage, mythology, philosophy and pre-Iranian history. In

Turkish terms used by Rumi also makes very small percentage of his vocabulary in both frequency and overall usage. According to the Turkish scholar Halman, "Sherefedin Yaltkaya, in an earlier study, compiled a total of 103 words of Turkish origin. This is infinitesimal compared with his output in Persian"[329]. Indeed, based on our analysis of Nezami below, we may estimate that Rumi had a similar vast vocabulary and the Turkish words in his Persian poetry (despite him living in Anatolia) are less than one percent. Besides, with regards to these 103 words, many of them might have been mistakenly regarded as Turkish[330].

As per the Persian poet Khāqāni, his usage is slightly wider than that of Nezami, but it is regular for the Persian vocabulary of the time. Khāqāni's vocabulary is vaster than that of other poets in the region and may occupy the most prominent place in the history of classical Persian literature. Both Minorsky and Foruzanfar referred to his ability to create new compounds[331] and expressions. However with regards to Turkish loanwords, only a few incidences stand out. One is the phrase *san san* ("you you")[332] in a poem about an imaginary Turkish beloved – the case which is similar to his other poem, in which he uses the Georgian term *moi moi* ("come come")[333] in reference to a Georgian beloved (Cf. the above-mentioned Suzani's address to a Turkish beloved). The other instance of Khāqāni is when he contrasts the Sharvānshāh with Turkish rulers having the titles "Bughra" and "Atsiz". He writes:

Part IV, some new and neglected sources are brought about Ganja and lineage of Nezami Ganjavi is studied, and is shown to be firmly Iranian. Overall cultural orientation is the primary definition of identity and ethnicity in our opinion, especially with regards to 1000 years ago. For example can one presume that the lineage of someone like Shakespeare might have been a Norman or Viking or Anglo-Saxon? This does not change the ethnic identity of Shakespeare. The same is true with regards to Pushkin who had paternal Ethiopian ancestry but for all practical purposes is of Russian identity. Halmann also notes that in the West, scholars have always accepted Rumi as Persian (ibid.:266) based on his cultural heritage. However, Halmann does not include some details such as: The Persian colloquial dialect of Rumi's father (with many Soghdian words) in Vakhsh, as well as the overall negative view on Oghuz Turks, his son admitting that he is not much confident in his Turkish and Greek (Franklin 2008:239-240) and actually mentions he does not know Turkish well in at least two other poems, Rumi's everyday language being a colloquial Persian evidenced by his sermons, speeches and lectures recorded down by his students, usage of Persian while composing his poetry in Sama', as well Rumi being of the Persian Sufi heritage of Attār and Sanāi, and many other details which are explained elsewhere (e.g. Doostzadeh 2009b).

[329] Halman 2007:267.
[330] Heyat 2006; Rasulzadeh 1954.
[331] Minorsky 1945.
[332] Gandjei 1986.
[333] Minorsky 1945.

Even if the body seeks *su* (water) and *atmak* (bread) from them	تن گر چه سو و اتمک از ایشان طلب کند
How can one let go of the love of Sharvānshāh for the sake of Atsiz and Bughra	کی مهر شه به آتسز و بغرا برافکند

This verse is actually a pun on these rulers ('atsiz' could be interpreted as 'no meat' and 'bughra' was name of a soup) and a praise of the Sharvānshāh. Here is an example when the poet is trying to be amusing and also showing off his skill in the court of the Sharvānshāh. The estimated number of Turkish vocabulary used by Khāqāni is slightly less than double of that of Nezami.

3.5 Analysis of Pseudo-Turkish and Turkish Words in Nezami's Works

All the Turkish loanwords used by Nezami – some of which are still in use -- were part of the common Persian language of his era and have also been used by other poets and writers; especially from Khurasan, Fars and other regions of Persia. The main sources to demonstrate this fact are the Dehkhoda dictionary, the Persian digital poetry database (see fn. 23) and the last three of the four volume research of Doerfer[334] dealing with Turkish loanwords in New Persian.

3.5.1 Non-Turkish Words Claimed To Be Turkish

Some of these words are of Persian or non-Turkish origin or do not have clear etymologies (as claimed by authors who consider Nezami a Turk[335]):

1) *bilak* (بیلک Dehkhoda: Sanāi) meaning "small shovel", is of Iranian origin and *bil* (Pers. "shovel") had already been used by Persian poets (Dehkhoda: Rudaki). *Bilak* in the meaning of "command" or "charter from a king or ruler" is not used by Nezami. The latter is another form of *bileh*, which Dehkhoda classifies as Persian. Prof. Muhammad Moghaddam proposes that it is related to Latin "bulla".

 2) *bisrāk* (بیسراک Dehkhoda: Asadi Tusi) meaning "baby camel".

3) *xātun* (خاتون PD:Ferdowsi) is of Soghdian origin[336] and mentioned in the *Shāhnāma*.

4) *nāy* (ناى Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi) is a Persian word, another form of 'nāl' - "reed flute.

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[334] Doerfer 1963; idem 1965; idem 1975.
[335] Heyat 2006; Rasulzadeh 1954.
[336] Bosworth 2006.

5) *sāv* (ساو Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi) Doerfer writes it is of ambiguous etymology. Rahnama explains that Pahlavi *sāv*, Parthian *sāg*, Soghdian *sāk*, Manichean *sāg* - all meaning "counting" and "tax"[337].

6) *sanglāx* (سنگلاخ Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi, Asadi Tusi) is a Persian compound, in which the first part is the Persian word *sang* ("rock") and the second part *lāx* may or may not be etymologically related to Turkish *lāq* ("place").

7) *divlāx* (دیولاخ Dehkhoda: Unsuri, Asadi Tusi) is a Persian compound, in which the first part *div* ("daemon") is Persian and the second part *lāx* may or may not be etymologically related to Turkish *lāq*.

8) *āmāj* (آماج PD: Sanāī, Sa'di Shirazi, Farrokhi Sistani) has an ambiguous etymology and Doerfer (Doerfer 1/552) is unsure of its etymology.

9) *miyānji* (میانجی Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi, Nāser-e Khusraw) is a Persian word. Javad Heyat wrongly claims that Nezami uses the Turkish suffix "chi" (which exists in modern Persian) and brings *miyānji* as his sole example. However, this is the shortened form of the Pahlavi *miyānajig* meaning "intermediary, the one in the middle"[338] and has nothing to do with Turkish.

10) *qermez* (قرمز PD: Nāser-e Khusraw) which is usually considered the Arabicized form of the Sanskrit krmt-ja (Pahlavi *karmir*, Armenian *karmir* – "red"), derived from *kerm* – "worm".

11) *awzān* (اوزان PD: Attār) which is actually the Arabic plural of the word "wazn". The word is used is in the *Eskandar-Nāma*:

The wondrous melody-maker minstrels	نواساز خنیاگران شـگرف
Had made their words in metric rules (i.e. were singing)	به قانون اوزان برآورده حرف

Here Arabic *awzān* (meters) is misread/misinterpreted by Heyat[339] as Mongol *uzān* meaning "artisan" and "craftsman"[340].

12) *dāgh* (داغ) is a Persian word used in its variety of Persian meanings (see Dehkhoda), but not as the similar sounding Turkish word with the meaning "mountain". Rasulzadeh interprets the second *dāgh* in HP:11/33 as "mountain"; however, the real meaning is: "The branded beast escapes all harm"[341], where *rast ze dāgh* means "freed himself from the pain/burden/harm/brand"; the Persian word *kuh* being used for "mountain" in the first part of the couplet.

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[337] Rahnama 1997.
[338] MacKenzie 1971.
[339] Heyat 2006.
[340] Minorsky 1964:85.
[341] Meisami 1995:46.

13) *gerdak* (گردک) is the diminutive of the Persian *gerd* (round) (see Dehkhoda). Doerfer does not provide a Turkish entry.

14) *jawq jawq* (جوق جوق PD: Sanāi) or *joq* (جُق Dehkhoda: Majmal al-Tawārikh), the word of uncertain etymology (Doerfer 3/1027), seems to be from the Arabic *jawq* ("group").

15) *chābok* (چابک Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi; PD:Sanāi, Hafez, Sa'di) is not Turkish and had been used before by Ferdowsi. This word occurred already in Middle Persian - *chābuk* (agile[342]) and thus cannot be Turkish. Doerfer does not even mention this word in his book and based on the fact that it is already in Middle Persian, one can safely assume it is not Turkish.

16) *chādor* (چادر Dehkhoda:Ferdowsi) is etymologically obscure (Doerfer 3/1042), but it is attested in Middle Persian[343] as *chādur* ("tent, veil, sheet"[344]). Dehkhoda connects it to the Sanskrit *chatar*.

17) *dugh-bā* (دوغبا) roughly meaning "curd" is a composite of the Persian *dugh* (milk, yogurt) with the Persian *bā* (soup). Javad Heyat without showing any etymological connections, claims that it is *duvgha* – kind of soup in modern Azerbaijan. Either way, Nezami uses *dugh-bā* which is clearly a Persian word, although such kind of food could be associated with Turk nomadic groups as well. Some other types of soups mentioned by Nezami, include *zirabā*, *shurbā*, *nārbā* and *sakbā*. These all are Persian names and follow a similar word formation: *nārbā* (pomegranate soup) from *anār+bā*, *zirabā* (cumin soup) from *zira + bā*, *sakbā* (vinegar soup) from *sarka+bā*. These Persian food names are indicative of the culture of the area.

18) *chatr* (چتر Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi) is claimed by Javad Heyat to be Turkish but it is actually Sanskrit[345].

19) *chālāk* (چالاک Dehkhoda: Asadi Tusi, Sa'di Shirazi, Manuchehri, Unsuri; PD: Attār, Sanāi). This word occurs in the work of Nezami (24 times) and in Asadi's *Lughat Furs*. Doerfer does not mention this word at all, which also allows to conclude that it is unlikely to be Turkish.

20) *withāq* (وثاق PD: Attār, Sa'di, Hafez) is actually of Arabic origin (Dehkhoda; Doerfer 4/1762).

21) *manjaniq* (منجنیق Dehkhoda: Ferdowsi, Sanai, Manuchehri, Anvari) is from Greek *manganikón*[346]. This word had two meanings: the most common is catapult and the other meaning was a wheel for spinning silk[347].

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[342] see MacKenzie 1971
[343] Gheibi 1990.
[344] see MacKenzie 1971
[345] Sims 1990.

22) *kor* (کر), i.e. the river Kur/Kura in Caucasus, cannot be Turkish as claimed by Rasulzadeh, since it pre-dates the arrival of Turks in the area.

23) *soghd* (سغد) also claimed as Turkish by Rasulzadeh,[348] is an Old Iranian word and attested in its older form in Old Persian (Darius Inscription in Behistun) and Avesta.

3.5.2 Turkish Proper Nouns Used by Nezami

Rasulzadeh and Heyat also mention some proper names as Turkish:

1) *kherkhiz* (خرخیز) (PD:Manuchehri, Nāser-e Khusrow) which is the Persian pronunciation of the word Qerqyz.

2) *tarāz* (طراز) (PD: Ferdowsi, Anvari, Sa'di, Attār) (with unknown etymology and unlikely to be Turkish).

3) *tamghāch/tamghāj* (طمغاج) (PD: also mentioned by the Persian poet Anvari). Not etymologized or assoaciated with any language as far as we are aware.

4) *qifchāq* (قفچاق) (PD:Anvari, Nāser-e Khusraw).

5) *ilāq* (ایلاق) used by Nezami in a compound Persian word Ilāqiyan. Ilāq is a medieval name for an area in modern Uzbekistan[349], which had been used prior to Nezami Ganjavi. Not etymologized with any language as far as we are aware.

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[346] Bernburg 2002.

[347] See Dastgerdi 1999 Vol1:412 for the meaning related to silk-spinning based on KH:73/36. A website with an ethno-centric viewpoint has wrongly claimed that Nezami consulted a dictionary to clarify the meaning of this Greek word in KH:73/36, so he was Turkish! However, this whole section and also the particular couplet are Shirin's word to Khusraw and have nothing to do with Nezami looking up *manjaniq* in any lexicon. Shirin is criticizing Khusraw for choosing Shakkar (his other wife) and these are examples that she gives: "Heaven is a wide expanse but a narrow path leads there and not everyone gets there"(compares narrow and wide)," "*qassāb* (butcher) is very different from *qasab-bāf* (cloth-weaver)" (compares two similar sounding words; of course *qasab* and *qassāb* are Arabic and Shirin could not have used them in pre-Islamic Iran. Here Nezami is just giving examples), "fire and water do not mix" ,"to the learned person, manjaniq could be a machine that throws stone or the other which is used to spin silk". Shirin is basically telling Khusraw that even though Shakkar (the other wife, literally: sugar) is sweet (in Persian: shirin), she cannot be another Shirin! The same way that manjaniq used to throw stone (a harsh and cheap object) is very different from manjaniq used to spin silk (a soft and expensive object).

[348] Rasulzadeh 1954.

[349] Litvinsky:2004.

6) *yaghmā* (یغما) (Dehkhoda:Hafez, Sa'di; Doerfer 16/1874: Nizam al-Molk, Amir Mu'izzi; PD: Attār, Sanāi). This word occurs in the work of Sa'di (33x). However Nezami uses it as a name of the tribe whereas in some later Persian poetry, it was used both as a name of a tribe and also as a term for plundering.

We should also mention the title of rulers which sometimes had the name of royal and predatory animals. All the titles named after hunting birds used by Nezami Ganjavi such as *Toghān*, *Toghril* and *Sonqor* were the names of Saljuq, Ahamadili and other Turkish rulers and royal princes. *Toghān* (طغان Dehkhoda:Farrokhi, PD:Anvari, Nāser-e Khusraw, Sa'adi) was a title for Turkish rulers from Central Asia mentioned by Farrokhi and Nāser-e Khusraw as *Toghan-Xān*, while Nezami and Khāqāni uses *Toghan-Shāh*. *Toghril* (Dehkhoda:Asadi)(PD: Nāser-e Khusraw, Sa'adi, Anvari) has been used by Asadi Tusi, Sa'adi and Nāser-e Khusraw in the meaning for the bird, and also has been used by poets for both the bird, and the title and name of rulers. *Aq-Sonqor*, *Bughra* (Doerfer 2/250: Bayhaqi and Mujmal al-Tawārikh va-al-Qisas where the books states that it is the title of the Kings of *Yaghmā*) and *Arslān* were also the titles and personal names of rulers. The three other titles, *Qadar-Xān* (PD: Manuchehri, Khāqāni, Dekhoda: *Ibn Athir*, *Tarikh-e Bukhara*; used by Nezami as a title for the ruler of *chin*), *Qarā-Xān* (PD: Ferdowsi, Khāqāni, Dehkhoda: used also for a title of the ruler of India) and *Gur-Xān* (Dehkhoda: Nezami 'Arudi Samarqandi, Khāqāni; Khāqāni uses it once as another epiphet for Bahram Gur and could be the source for Nezami), were also part of the Persian literature. These names had already been part of the Persian vocabulary. The last title *Gur-Xān* is used as a title for both the kings of Khotan by Nezami (1x) as well as a title for Bahram Gur (3x). The latter usage being a double wordplay on the Persian word *gur* meaning master (*Khan*) of *gur* ("Onager"), and also perhaps implying his rule or reach extended to far off regions (i.e. *Khotan*).

Overall, counting repetitions and summing the number of Turkish personal names and titles, ethnic groups and geographical regions mentioned, we obtain approximately sixty eight total occurrences. None of these terms is prerogative of Nezami, all being used by other Iranian authors as well.

3.5.3 Genuine and Possibly Genuine Turkish Words Used by Nezami

Let us now have a look at the words that are genuine or possibly genuine Turkish loan words and which are not titles, personal names, ethnic groups or place names. All these words have also been used in Persian poetry and prose by writers outside of

the Caucasus regions. All these words are not Nezami Ganjavi's prerogative either, and were common for the Persian language of the time, many of them still being used today. We have also analyzed the frequency and occurrence of these words with Nezami. The lyrical poetry of Nezami, although not digitized like the *Khamsa*, was also part of our analysis. It should be noted that many of these words are Persian compounds where Persian suffixes were added to loanwords to make new Persian words.

1) *ālāchuq* (آلاچوق) (1x)(Doerfer 2/519: Rashid al-Din Fazlollah, Mu'in al-Din Natanzi), the modern Turkish form of which, *ālāchiq*, is still used in Persian. With the initial meaning of "type of tent", it is used in a Nezami's *ghazal* once to refer to the weakness of the tent of a Turcoman under the foot of the elephant.

2) *akdash* (اکدش) (3x) (Dehkhoda: Sa'di, Rumi, Ibn Esfandyar). The word means a hybrid and mixture of objects, characteristics, groups and extreme opposites. For example, Nezami uses it in the meaning for hybrid of extreme opposites; that is for a mixture of honey or vinegar in this verse[350].

Nezami is a seclusion-seeking hybrid	نظامی اکدشی خلوت‌نشین

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[350] KH:9/28-30. An author with an ethno-nationalist view on Nezami (who also claims many ancient peoples like the Elamites as Turkish) and also an internet website, while quoting the first couplet above and ignoring the context and other surrounding couplets, have claimed that the word *akdash* (hybrid) in here means Nezami was half Kurd and half Turkish, and that sour means Kurdish and honey means Turkish! Although Nezami himself was half Kurdish and half Persian Dehqān, and these two Iranian groups or social classes are mentioned separately by Nezami, Kirakos Gandzakets'i and other authors; the verse here has no implication about ethnicity at all and to take an ethnic meaning from the verse is an out-of-context and baseless interpretation. Dehkhoda notes that sweet and sour is a reference towards a type of wine. Nezami is actually conveying to the king that *the reason I don't come to the court is that I am seeking seclusion and even though I am the village-owner or master of village (kad-khoda), and should be very active and seeking to be present in the courts, on one side, I am sour (not very adept in social gatherings) and accustomed to asceticism and long prayers and seclusion; and on the other hand, my words are sweet and suitable for gatherings and recitation in Royal courts.* If authors who are reading Nezami with a 20th century ethno-centrist mindset had enough familiarity with Persian poetry concepts of *zohd-e khoshk* (dryness of asceticism) or *talkhi-ye zohd* (bitterness of asceticism) and *shirini-ye sokhan* (the sweetness of rhetoric), they would not interpret the word as an ethnic identifier in the middle of something totally unrelated to Nezami's background.

	است
Who is half vinegar, half honey	که نیمی سرکه نیمی انگبین است
He has dug up a sweet spring from his delicate poetry talent	ز طبع تر گشاده چشمه‌ی نوش
He has packed his luggage (in this world) with his dry asceticism	به زهد خشک بسته بار بر دوش
Even though the mouth of my asceticism is a dry fountain	دهان زهدم ارچه خشک خانی است
My delicious palm-date of words are the Spring of Life	لسان رطبم آب زندگانی است

He also uses it as the heart being a mixture of body and spirit (MA:15/48); and references the epic *Khusrow o Shirin* as a product of a Hindu father and a Turkish mother (i.e. black and white, or sadness and happiness)(KH:119/107). In all three cases, Nezami has used the term as a hybrid with two extremely opposite characteristics. Sa'di also uses it as a reference for a mixture of black and white. Rumi uses it as an equivalent of an official. One of other meanings of the word *akdash* in the Dehkhoda dictionary also involves a mixture of Arab and non-Arab, a Hindu and non-Hindu, as well as Hindu father and Turkish mother (or vice versa which is a metaphor for the opposite quality of these two in Persian literature). Various types of hybrids (like breeds of horses and other animals) are also called *akdash*. However, the primary meanings of this word are composition of two opposite qualities and an equivalent term for the symbol of the beloved, with the context making the usage clear. Dehkhoda also shows a reference to the soul being a mixture (*akdash*) composed of *lāhuti* (divine) and *nāsuti* (earthly) characteristics.

3) *beyraq* (بیرق) (3x) (Doerfer 2/824:Natanzi, Abdullah Vassāf; PD: 'Obayd Zākāni, Khwāju Kermani) .

4) *chālesh* (چالش) (7x) (Dehkhoda: Kamal al-Din Isfahani; Doerfer 3/1052:Ravandi; PD: Sa'di Shirazi) – Dehkhoda quotes Williams and relates it to the Sanskrit *chāl*.

5) *chāvosh* (چاوش) (4x) (Doerfer 3/1055:Nizām al-Molk; PD: Attār, Salmān Sāveji, Sa'di) - Nezami uses its Persian plural form *chāvoshān*.

6) *cherk* (چرک) (9x) (PD: Sanāi, Attār, Nāser-e Khusraw, Seyf Farghani, Vahshi Bāfqi, Rudaki). Its usage by Rudaki makes the theory of its Turkish etymology questionable.

7) *gazlak* (گزلک) (1x) (Dehkhoda: Suzani, Afzal al-Din Kermani; PD: Hafez, Jāmi). This word is used by Nezami in the Persian form of *gazlaki* ("a gazlak") with the Persian affix *'i'*. The Dehkhoda dictionary does not provide any etymology. The Turkish scholar Tourkhan Gandjei claims this word to be Turkish[351]. It could also be related to Persian *gāz* and *gaz* (to cut). *Gāz* is a special tool for putting off candles, it also means "scissors" and is used in the modern *gāz-anbor* ("pliers"). Another term, *gazan*, means a knife used by shoe-makers to cut the corners. *Gazlak/gazlik* could be from the same group as *gaz, gāz, gazan*. There is a word *guzlik* in Dehkhoda which is Turkish and means "blinker", but this is not used by Nezami.

8) *kuch* (کوچ) (20x) (Dehkhoda: Unsuri, Kamal al-Din Isfahani; PD:Attār, Hafez, Sa'di, Sanāi) This word is also used by Nezami in the compound Persian form *kuchgāh* (place of migration).

9) *manjuq* (منجوق) (5x) (Dehkhoda:Asadi Tusi, Farrokhi; Doerfer 4/1740:Asadi Tusi; PD: Attār, Anvari, Ferdowsi). Doerfer etymologizes it as Turkish, but Dehkhoda is unsure.

10) *qalāvoz* (قلاوز) (1x) (Dehkhoda:Suzani; Doerfer 4/1054: Ravandi, Rashid al-Din Fazlollah; PD: Attār (4x), Nāser-e Khusraw – *Safar-Nāma* (1x)).

11) *sanjaq* (سنجق) (3x) (Doerfer 3:/1269: Natanzi, Rashid al-Din Fazlollah; PD: Khwāju Kermani, Seyf Farghani, Salmān Sāveji)

12) *sormeh* (سرمه) (20x) (Dehkhoda: Hodud-al-'Alam, Rudaki, Asadi Tusi, Nāser-e Khusraw; PD:Sa'di, Ferdowsi), also occurs in the *Vis o Ramin*. Doerfer approaches it as Turkish (Doerfer 3/1250), but Dehkhoda lists among Persian words. Taking into consideration its occurrence with Rudaki, Ferdowsi and Nāser-e Khusraw and the lack of its full explanation by Doerfer, the etymology is not clear.

13) *totmāj* (تتماج) (2x) (Dehkhoda: Zakhire-ye Khwarizmshāhi, Suzani; Doerfer 2/876:Juvayni, Hafez Abru; PD: Mohtasham Kashani). This is also a compound from Turkish *totm* + Persian *āj/āsh* (soup). However, the etymology of *totm* is not clear and according to one author, it is neither Persian nor Turkish[352].

14) *totoq* (تتق) (2x) (Dehkhoda:Anvari, Asadi Tusi, Attār; Doerfer 2/874:Gardizi; PD:Attār, Anvari, Hafez). Dehkhoda does not believe the word is Turkish.

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[351] Gandjei 1986.
[352] Private correspondence with Professor John Perry.

15) *tapāncha* (طپانچه) (7x) (Dehkhoda:Anvari, Unsuri; Doerfer 3/1341: Rashid al-Din Fazlollah). The etymology given by Doerfer might not be correct as it could be related to Persian *panja* ("palm/slap").

16) *toghrā* (طغرا) (7x) (Dehkhoda:Hassan Ghaznavi; Doerfer 3/1344: Nizam al-Molk, Baghdadi; PD: Attār, Hafez)

17) *voshāq* (وشاق) (7x) (PD: Attār, Sa'di, Hafez, Sanāi)

18) *xadang* (خدنگ) (34x) (Dehkhoda: Asadi Tusi, Farrokhi Sistani; PD: Ferdowsi (39x), Attār, Sanāi, Sa'di) is claimed to be Turkish by Doerfer, however the etymology relating it to the word "kaying" might be implausible.

19) *xān* (خان) (6x) (Dehkhoda:Ferdowsi, Nāser-e Khusraw, Unsuri, Anvari; Doerfer:Gardizi) occurs in Nezami's work in Persian compounds and titles such as: *Xān-e Xānān*, *Qadar-Xān* and *Gur-Xān* which are titles of rulers. The word xān is used in everyday Persian and had been in use before Nezami. Its etymology is also debated among modern scholars. Harold Bailey proposed an East Iranian etymology for this word and the word *Khāqān* (Dehkhoda:Ferdowsi, Nāser-e Khusraw)[353]. The etymologies of these two words are debated by modern linguists.

20) *xayl-tāsh* (خیل‌تاش) (3x) (Dehkhoda: Sa'di, Manuchehri, Bayhaqi; Doerfer 3/1173:Bayhaqi; PD:Sa'di, Manuchehri), is a Persian compound combining the Arabic word *xayl* ("horse, group") (Dehkhoda:Ferdowsi) with the Turkish *tāsh* (companion) which had become productive in Persian (Doerfer 3/1173) and gave rise to various Persian compounds.

21) *xwāja-tāsh* (خواجه‌تاش) (7x) (Dehkhoda:Sa'di; PD: Attār, Anvari, Jāmi), is a Persian compound consisting of the Persian *xwāja* ("master, lord") and the Turkish *tāsh* ("companion") which had also become productive in Persian (Doerfer 3/1173) and give rise to various Persian compounds.

22) *yaghleq* (یغلق) (2x) (Dehkhoda: Sa'di; Doerfer 4/1872: Ravandi), Doerfer is uncertain about its Turkish etymology, however Dehkhoda believes it is Turkish.

23) *yāghi* (باغی) (1x) (Dehkhoda:Sa'di; Doerfer 4/1837: Rashid al-Din Fazlollah, Hafez Abru; PD:Khwāju Kermani, Attār)

24) *yaraq* (یرق) (2x) (Doerfer 4/1837:Rashid al-din Fazlollah, Hafez Abru)

25) *yatāq* (یتاق) (12x) (Dehkhoda: Sa'di; Doerfer 4:/1827:Nizam al-Molk; PD:Attār)

26) *yazak* (یزک) (12x) (Dehkhoda:Anvari, Attār, Sa'di; Doerfer 4/1861:Juvayni). In Nezami's work, it occurs often in Persian compounds (e.g. yazak-dār).

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[353] Bailey 1985. Boyle 1997 has written that *Khāqān* is originally from the Juan-juan people and consequently we have not counted this word which occurs 50x in the work of Nezami and close to 200x by Ferdowsi. It makes no difference on the percentages that are calculated below.

Turkish nationalist authors have either misattributed to Nezami words, which do not occur in his poetry or claim Iranian words to be Turkish without any etymological substantiation[354]. They also claim that Nezami spelled the above 26 listed Turkish loanwords with an "Azerbaijani Turkish" pronunciation. First they don't explain the method they have used to realize Nezami's "pronunciation" of these words based on the Persian script; secondly, such a language did not exist during the time of Nezami.   Nezami spelled the above words exactly the same way as other Persian poets had spelled before him and continued spelling after him.

Summing up the number of Turkish words used by Nezami, we obtain twenty six words with their total usage of 181 times. Considering personal names, names of tribes, titles and place names, we counted 68 occurrences among a dozen words. Thus, the total number of repeated Turkish words rounds up to 250 occurrences. We also double this number in order to have a loose upper-bound despite a careful analysis. So even if, with this upper-bound, the number of occurrences of the repeated Turkish words would reach 500, then, considering that Nezami Ganjavi left 30,000 couplets in the *Khamsa* and 2000 verses of lyrical poetry, we can assume one sixth of a per cent of Turkish words in Nezami's whole vocabulary. This is actually an extremely miniscule number and it is much smaller than that in the everyday Persian speech of today by at least a magnitude.

As per the percentage of total words of his vocabulary, this is harder to calculate. In one sample, we took the first chapters of each book of the *Khamsa* and, despite the usage of more than four thousand non-unique words, only one possibly Turkish word was found (*totoq)*. The Iranian scholar Moi'nfar, who performed a detailed statistical analysis and study of the vocabulary of the *Shāhnāma*, calculated 706 words of the Arabic origin in the Shāhnāma[355]. These Arabic words make 8.8% of the *Shāhnāma's* vocabulary with the frequency of occurrence of 2.4%[356]. Consequently, the total numbers of unique words in the *Shāhnāma* is approximately 8023. Nezami Ganjavi's Arabic and Persian vocabulary, as well that of Rumi, Sanāi, Attār and Khāqāni, is significantly broader than that of *Shāhnāma*, because these authors came a century and half to two centuries later, and incorporated more terms from such fields as philosophy, science, romance, mysticism etc. into their poetry. Ferdowsi's intention

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[354] An example of such a pseudo-scholarly work is a book "Yek hezār vājeh-ye asil-e torki dar pārsi" by an amateur and non-professional writer Mohammad Sadeq Na'ebi (widely available on the Internet), which erroneously claims such common Persian words as daryā, atash, Ārash, ostād, barābar, Bābak, jushidan, āshāmidan, doshman, shāh, anāhitā, xub, bandeh, tiz, xun,.. as having a Turkish etymology.
[355] Moi'nfar 1970:61-65, Perry 2005.
[356] ibid.

was to versify the heroic epic of Iranians, and thus the *Shāhnāma* vocabulary is typical of that used for the genre of heroic epic.

Many Persian compounds had also been developed in Persian poetry since the time of Ferdowsi. Nezami himself created numerous new Persian compounds. For example, such Persian compounds available at Nezami's time and used by him (e.g. *del-band, del-dādeh, del-dār, del-garm, del-gir* and *del-kash*), had not been used by Ferdowsi. Nezami's Persianized Arabic vocabulary is also vaster than that of the *Shāhnāma*, as more Arabic words had entered the Persian language by Nezami's era.

Thus, Nezami and some other poets of the 'Iraqi style (e.g. Sa'di, Khāqāni, Khwāju, Sanāi, Rumi, Attār) used at least twice as many unique words as Ferdowsi did.

The 26 mentioned above Turkish words (some with questionable etymologies) together with the dozen words of titles, place names and personal names make 38 words. We have at most a quarter of one percent to half a percent (doubling for a loose upperbound). Thus, both the frequency of usage and overall Turkish loanwords in the work of Nezami Ganjavi is extremely miniscule. Even for other authors such as Khāqāni, Rumi and Suzani, the overall usage and frequency of usage is not that different from Nezami and they are all reasonably less than one percent.

Consequently, the system of argumentation by ideological writers is aimed at creating a distorted picture to an unsuspecting reader. For example, if one were to pull out all the Greek words used in the *Shāhnāma*, without analyzing the overall vocabulary of the epic, an unsuspecting reader, not familiar with Persian literature might think that the *Shāhnāma* has many Greek words. If such arguments had a basis, then one may also claim that many of the writers who wrote Ottoman Turkish works are Persians because the Persian vocabulary in many of their works and poems exceeds those of their genuine Turkish vocabulary. Such wrong theory is also equivalent to highlighting a dozen to couple of dozen common Persian words in English (such as Magic, Paradise, Azure, Bazaar, Pistachio, Spinach, Pajama, Caravan, Jackal (from or cognate with Sanskrit), Chess[357], Musk[358], Parasang, Arsenic, Pilaf, etc.) and claiming that whoever uses these words is an Iranian.

As shown conclusively, the Turkish words used by Nezami Ganjavi were part of the Persian language of that time, used in both prose and poetry. We note that we only used reference of around 25 classical poets, the Dehkhoda dictionary and also the book of Doerfer. Our examples from other writers/poets were by no means meant to be exhaustive. Rather these few sources were used to demonstrate that none of these Turkish words are exclusive for Nezami Ganjavi or for the area Arrān and Sharvān. They were part of the literary Persian of the time used in the Persian speaking world.

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[357] This and the word Check are from the Persian *Shāh* http://www.merriam-webster.com
[358] See King 2007 and analysis of M. Mayrhofer therein.

3.6 Misinterpretation of Symbols and Imagery

Another argument to misrepresent the work of Nezami Ganjavi is anachronistic reading of Persian poetic imagery. This distortion[359] stems from the lack of understanding of symbolic and allegorical usage of the words "Turk", "Hindu", "Rome", "Ethiop" and "Zang" in Persian poetry. To cover all the usages of these symbols in Persian poetry is beyond the scope of this research; more extensive studies have been done about this subject[360]. However, we will provide an overview assuming that some authors[361] including some of those mentioned in the Introduction, are not aware of this aspect of Persian literature.

The symbols and imagery of *tork* ("Turk"), *hendu* ("Hindu"), *rum* ("Greek"), *zang* ("Black/African"), *habash* ("Blacks", "Ethiopians") are among the favorite symbols of Persian poets in the medieval era for forming imagery and metaphor as well as describing attributes. In the context of comparison and contrast, as well as in other contexts describing characters and objects, these words did not have any ethnic meaning[362] but rather were used in an allegorical and metaphorical sense, to contrast various moods, colors, stations and feelings. However, since these symbols are not used anymore in Persian poetry, an unaware reader of classical Persian poetry, under the impression of modern ethnic mindset, might take these terms to have an ethnic meaning rather than their primary non-ethnic metaphorical, poetic imagery and symbolic meanings.

We should note that these symbols almost always occur as a noun and adjectives. In addition to these symbols, as shown in Part II and elaborated more in that section, as a denominative, the verb *torki-kardan* (literally "To act Turkish" but actually "to act cruel and harsh"), as well as *tork-tāzi* (literally "Turkish raid" but in fact "plunder") are used with the meaning of "cruelty" and "plunder", respectively. These two denominatives are not tied to any ethnic group, and are used to describe actions of various characters (e.g. Khusraw or Majnun plundering the heart). With the exception of actual epic battles having taken place in say China (which was considered "the land of Turks" in Persian poetry), India, Rome, Zang or actual rulers (such as Saljuqs) and also the two verb forms mentioned, almost all other usages of terms such as *tork* ("Turk"), *hendu* ("Hindus"), *rum* ("Greek"), *zang* ("Black/African") and *habash* ("Blacks", "Ethiopians") had a symbolic meaning in the poetry of Nezami and, more generally, the Persian poetry of this era.

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[359] See again Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.
[360] Afifi 1993 in 3 volumes; Schimmel 1974; idem 1975; idem 1992.
[361] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.
[362] Afifi 1993; de Bruijn 2003; Kafadar 2007:23 fn 19; Schimmel 1974; idem 1975; idem 1992.

With regards to adjectives and nouns, and the symbolic usage of such terms as Hindu, Turk, Rumi, Habash and Zang, they have no ethnic attribution. As noted by Kafadar when quoting the Turkish scholar Golpiranli and such ethnonyms in the works of Rumi: "Golpiranli rightly insists that ethnonyms were deployed allegorically and metaphorically in classical Islamic literatures, which operated on the basis of a staple set of images and their well recognized contextual associations by readers; there, 'turk' had both a negative and positive connotation. In fact, the two dimensions could be blended: the 'turk' was 'cruel' and hence, at the same time, the 'beautiful beloved'"[363]. And also noted by de Bruijn: "In such imagery the link to ethnic characteristics is hardly relevant, so that it may be used together with features of another ethnic type in the characterization of a single person, e.g., when Nezami describes the princess of Hend as *āhu-ye tork-čašm-e hendu-zād* ("a gazelle with Turkish eyes, of Indian blood"[364].

The context in which these terms are used elucidates their implied meaning. This context is almost always clear when these non-ethnic symbols are used in contrast or in combination. Such contrasts or combinations occur frequently in the work of Nezami and other poets of the time (e.g. Attār, Rumi, Sa'di, Hafez and Sanāi). The metaphor of Turk, Hindu, Zangi, Habash, Rum are employed as adjective and nouns to allegorically reference concepts such as: rulership, slave, thief, trees, birds, flowers, stars, climes, complexions, colors (yellow, white, black) of various objects (e.g. color of a pen is Hindu or Habash), night (Habash, Ethiop) and day (Turk, Rum), animals (the eye, face), planets, tears, hair, face, mole, various moods and feelings without taking any ethnic meaning[365].

"Turk" (sometimes other terms associated with Turks, such as Khotan, Tarāz, Qifchāq, Chin but not the Oghuz Turcoman) is used most often in contrast with Hindu, Habash and Zang. One of the main symbolic usages of this term is "light/bright" as opposed to Hindu, Habash and Zang denoting darkness. The Turks as a people are described with the mongoloid features (e.g. *chashm tang*, literally meaning "narrow-eyes") by such poets as Hafez, Sanāi, Rumi, Nezami, Sa'di and others. These are the features of the Turkish speaking Central Asians, which are not typical of the Turkicized Anatolian and people in the Azerbaijan Republic, who are generally of the Mediterranean type. A round faced type with narrow eyes and a minute mouth (the mongoloid look) became the prominent symbol of beauty in the Persian literature of that time[366]. The imagery was employed by a variety of poets

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[363] Kafadar 2007:23 fn 19.
[364] de Bruijn 2003.
[365] see Afifi 1993 under Zang, Hindu, Turk, Rum, Habash.
[366]Schimmel 1992:138. For Nezami using *cheshm-tang* see (SN:43/259-267,KH:71/47,HP:20/27,IQ:35/11)

before, concurrent and after Nezami[367]. By the early 10th century, the outstanding Persian poet Rudaki had already set a standard and described very positively the Turkish type of beauty in his poetry. In some verses of Ferdowsi, these features also had positive connotation. However for Rudaki and Ferdowsi, these features did not have a metaphorical meaning as in the poetry of later poets. According to Schimmel, the symbolic term *tork* representing the beloved, goes back to the legend of Mahmud and his devoted slave Ayāz[368].

Xwāja Abdullah Ansāri, also known as the *Pir-e Harāt* ("the Sage of Herat"), for example, in his prose[369] mentions this contrast of the Turk with the Zangi:

<div dir="rtl">

ای شب! تو کیستی؟ زنگی سیاهی و من ختنی زاده ی چون ماهی.

ای شب! تو بر خرابه های تاریک چون بومی و من بر تخت روزگار اسکندر رومی.

</div>

Oh Night, What are you? A black Zangi, and I am of Khotanese descent (looking like) a moon (bright and beautiful).

Oh Night, you are upon the dark ruins like an owl and I am on the throne of the age like Eskandar-e-Rumi (Alexander the Greek).

Obviously, this does not mean that Abdullah Ansari was Alexander the Macedonian or an ethnic Khotanese (taken as subgroup of Turks at the time). Rather, here he is referencing his spiritual station. He was actually a Persianized descendant of 'Ayyub Ansari, a companion of the Prophet of Islam. His native language was the native Herati dialect of Persian as evidenced in some of his works.

The imagery *tork* is associated with fair complexion, the beloved, beauty, military virtues, soldier, rulership, distant climes and also bright colours (e.g. yellow, pale). In terms of negative connotations, the term is associated with plundering and also sometimes with cruelty or being harsh. That is why the denominative verb *torki-kardan* (literally "to act Turkish") is used by Nezami, Sanāi and other poets to mean "harshness/cruelty", while the other verb *tork-tāzi'* (literally "Turkish Raid") is also used by Nezami, Sanāi and other poets in the meaning of "plunder"; the one who plunders or "acts in the Turkish manner" can be from any region. However as nouns and adjectives, the metaphorical symbol *tork* has a more positive connotation than in the denominatives *torki-kardan* and *tork-tāzi*. These symbols are combined in different verses for the sake of richer imagery. Subsequently, the idea of a harsh lover who plunders the being of the mystic became a symbol in Persian poetry. This is illustrated by the following verse of Xwaja Abdullah Ansari juxtaposing in both positive and negative meanings (see Dehkhoda dictionary under the word *tork*):

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[367] Afifi 1993.
[368] Schimmel 1992:160.
[369] Dastgerdi 1970:60.

Love came and plundered the heart	عشق آمد و دل بکرد غارت
Oh heart, bring the soul this good news	ای دل تو به جان بر این بشارت
A strange Turk is love, if you knew	ترکی عجب است عشق، دانی
Because it is not strange for Turk to plunder	کز ترک عجیب نیست غارت

The Hindu in Persian poetic imagery symbolizes darkness, as well as a beggar or a slave as an antonym to the term Turk, latter having opposite characteristics. In its positive connotation "hindu" is used, as, e.g. attribute of the beloved's hair and mole. It is also used as a symbol for a trusted guard, as well as for strong expression of devotion (someone's Hindu, as the Hindu was seen as a symbol of the devoted slave), especially in mystical love which was the topic of the Sufis as well as some of Nezami's romances. Notwithstanding the association with darkness, items in the conventional description of a beautiful face which are remarkable for their black color, are said to be Indian, such as the "Indian (dark) mole" (*xāl-e hendu*) of the beloved, the locks (*torra, zolf*) of the beloved and the pupils of the eyes[370].

The Ethiop, like the Hindu, symbolizes darkness, night and the place of sunset. The opposition of the Zang and the Rum also symbolizes that of night and day, as well as ugliness/dark and beautiful/fair respectively. The Zang can be also the symbol of a person with a good nature who is always cheerful. This contrast of the Zang and the Rum is still used in the colloquial Persian expression: *yā rumi e rum, yā zangi e zang* which literally means "either be a Roman in Rome or a Zangi in Zang", that is, no half-heart attempt, be perfect in either side of the spectrum or have a clear standing.

Here we list some more examples of these non-ethnic and allegorical symbols for illustration. Attār, for example, writes[371]:

When my beloved (Turk) gave me a kiss	بوسه چون داد ترک من
From the bottom of my heart, I became a slave (literally: Hindu) of my beloved	هندوی او شدم بجان

also[372]:

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[370] de Bruijn 2003.
[371] PD: Attār.
[372] PD: Attār.

The ruling sky ("the Turk of heaven" sometimes taken to be the planet Mars and also destiny) becomes a servant	ترک فلک چاکر شـود
Of the one who becomes slave (Hindu) of my beloved	آن را که شد هندوی او

In other words, Attār means here that a person, who submits entirely to the divine will, is not affected by the ups and downs of destiny. Attār also says[373]:

He is a beloved (Turk), and by my life, I am his slave (Hindu)	هسـت ترک و من بجان هندوی او
Consequently he has come with his sword towards me.	لاجرم با تیغ در کار آمدسـت

Cf. also[374]:

O Beloved, make a plunder (Turkish raid) upon my heart and soul	ترکتازی کن بتا بر جان و دل
So that from the bottom of my heart and soul, I may be your slave (Hindu)	تا زجان و دل شـوم هندوی تو

The ethnocentric readings of Heyat and Manaf-Oglu[375] turns a poet like Attār himself into an Indian, whereas mentioned such imagery had no ethnic relevance. Another poet who profusely used such imagery is Khāqāni[376]:

Khāqāni is a slave (Hindu) of that dark (Hindu-like) hair locks	خاقانی اسـت هندوی آن هندوانه زلف
And also of that round dark (Zang-like) mole	و آن زنگیانه خال سـیاه مدورش

Or, for example, using "Hindu" for "the pupils of the eye", and "children of Rum" - for tears[377]:

I am shedding bloody tears from my pupils (Hindu)	خون گریم وز دو هندوی خویش

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[373] PD: Attār.

[374] PD: Attār.

[375] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

[376] PD: Khāqāni.

[377] PD: Khāqāni.

And see tears (Children of Rum) run down from it	رومی بچگان دوان بینم

The usage of these terms by Nezami is no different from that by numerous other poets[378] and here we provide some examples from Nezami before examining the specific verses misinterpreted by Heyat and Manaf-Oglu[379]. Example of *Rum* and *Zang* [380]:

O wine-bringer, bring that white-faced (Rumi) wine	بیا ساقی آن می که رومی‌وش است
Pour for me, since my nature is happy like a Zangi	به من ده که طبعم چون زنگی خوش است

Example of *night* and *day*[381]:

The world is always in two states of color (is hypocrite)	جهان را نیست راهی جز دو رنگی
Sometimes its appears bright (Rumi) and sometimes dark (Zangi)	گهی رومی نماید گاه زنگی

As mentioned, the term Turk was used as the ideal type of beauty by many Persian poets including Nezami. It thus became an allegory without any ethnic connotations. Hafez, the finest lyrical poet used the term *tork-e shirazi* which means "the beloved Shirazi", while other authors including Nezami used the term *tork-e 'ajami* which means "beloved Persian". To describe the beauty of a Greek princess, Nezami composed the following[382]:

A beauty (Turk) from Greek origin,	ترکی از نسل رومیان نسبش
Whose epithet was the soothing of the eyes of her servants (Hindus)	قرةالعین هندوان لقبش

While describing an Egyptian by the name Māhān in the *Haft Paykar*[383]:

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[378] Afifi 1993.
[379] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.
[380] SN:16/1.
[381] KH:62/33.
[382] HP 25/29.
[383] HP:30/12-13.

In Egypt there was a man by the name Māhān	بود مردی به مصر ماهان نام
Sight of him more beautiful than the full moon	منظری خوبتر ز ماه تمام
Was the Joseph of Egypt due to his beauty	یوسف مصریان به زیبائی
A thousand beauties (Yaghmāi: Turk) his slave (Hindu)	هندوی او هزار یغمائی

While comparing the Arab and Persian beauty[384]:

An Arabian (desert) moon (beauty) when displayed her face	ماه عربی به رخ نمودن
A Persian beloved (tork-e 'ajāmi) in capturing hearts	ترک عجمی به دل ربودن

While describing the princess of India in the *Eskandar-Nāma*[385]:

A moon with a Turkish face of Hindu origin	مهی ترک رخساره هندو سرشت
From Hindustan has provided the king a paradise	ز هندوستان داده شه را بهشت
Not a Hindu, but a Khatāi Turk in name	نه هندو که ترک خطائی به نام
But when it comes to stealing hearts, as adept as Hindu	به دزدیدن دل چون هندو تمام
From her Roman face and Hindu speech	ز رومی رخ هندوی گوی او
The king of Rome (Alexander) has become her Hindu	شه رومیان گشته هندوی او

Describing Layli the ideal beauty, Nezami Ganjavi uses the allegorical term "Turk in Arabian bodies",[386] while Majnun is called Layli's "Hindu guard"[387]. The Prophet Muhammad, e.g., is called "the beloved (Turk) who rules the seven armies"[388]. Similarly, Khusraw's stealing of Shirin's heart is considered a Hindu stealing (another

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[384] LM:11/58.
[385] SN:41/56-58.
[386] LM :19/99.
[387] LM:41/43.
[388] KH:117/61.

image associated with Hindu) her heart and plundering her Hindu belongings[389] with his "Turkish raid". At the same time, the darkness of the eyes, mole or hair of these characters is compared to the Hindu or Zangi[390]. We note none of these Arab or Greek or Iranian characters were Turks or Hindu, but these terms are symbolic expressions of poetic imagery and metaphors. Such a metaphor could also be used for objects as well, as shown by the example where Khāqāni compares his tears and pupils to "Rum" and "Hindu" respectively. Numerous similar examples are collected by Afifi[391].

Nezami writes about the Prophet Muhammad and the Ka'ba[392]:

Look at the king of Ka'ba, on the throne of the seven lands	سلطان کعبه را بین بر تخت هفت کشور
Green silk on its body, a black parasol on its head	دیبای سبز بر تن، چتر سیاه بر سر
It's a beloved (Turk) with an Arab body, due to snatching hearts	ترکی است تازی اندام و ز بهر دلستانی
On its white face, there is a black mole of ambergris	بر عارض سپیدش خال سیه ز عنبر

Another concept associated with the term "Turk" is plundering[393]:

He was looking to ride a horse towards Shirin	فرس می خواست بر شیرین دواند
In a Turkish fashion, take plunder from the beauty (Turk)	به ترکی غارت از ترکی ستاند

While for Hindu, as mentioned above, it is stealing[394]:

A plunder no one has taken from a Turk	غارتی از ترک نبردهست کس
No one has trusted his belongings to a Hindu	رخت به هندو نسپردهست کس

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[389] KH:23/18-19.
[390] e.g. KH:18/32.
[391] See Afifi 1993 for numerous examples.
[392] Nafisi 1959:232.
[393] SN:65/23.
[394] MA:5/20.

Here, Nezami uses the common stereotypes, i.e. that the Turk is a plunderer and the Hindu is a thief. These two actions - stealing and plundering - are also used as positive symbols for a lover or beloved who steals hearts and plunders souls. However, beside a thief, the Hindu is also used as symbol of a reliable guard (devoted slave) as well. In one of his *ghazals*, Nezami mentions[395]:

The origin of Hindu in blackness is one [thing], but	اصل هندو در سیاهی یک نسب دارد ولیک
You may find a Hindu to be a thief and a Hindu to be a guard	هندویی را دزد یابی، هندویی را پاسبان

3.7 "Turk" as an imagery for Soldier

Another setting to use the non-ethnic symbol "Turk" is for soldiers/warriors. As noted by Schimmel "...former military slaves soon rose to become rulers (Sultans) in their own right, especially on the eastern fringes of Iran and in their homeland of Transoxiana"[396]. Even Iranian dynasties such as Samanids, Tahirids, Buyids and Saffarids recruited Turkish slaves and mercenaries from Central Asia and used them as a separate force in their army. The fall of the Samanids and the coming into power of one of their military generals, Mahmud of Ghazna is a demonstration of this wide usage of Central Asia Turkish military forces in the apparatus of Iranian kingdoms. During the reign of most of the Persianate Turkish dynasties of Iran, Turkish tribal nomads and mercenaries would be a major military force of all these dynasties while the administration of the land and important posts such as the *vizier*, were mainly in the hands of the native Iranians. In fact, it is hard to define some of these dynasties as either "Turkish" or "Persian", due to the fact that despite the Turkish origin of the Kings, they intermarried with other ethnic groups, adopted Persian culture and customs and left the everyday administration to Iranians.

For example, this imagery is used even when Alexander is threatening the "Ruler of Chin"[397]:

When my soldiers (Turkish Ghulāms/servants) stretch their bow	غلامان ترکم چون گیرند شست
From their arrow, a whole army is defeated	ز تیری رسد لشکری را شکست

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[395] Nafisi 1959:243.
[396] Schimmel 1992:160.
[397] SN:42/175.

The combination of soldier and plunder provide a rich imagery. In praise of the Eldiguzid ruler, Shams al-Din Muhammad, Nezami states[398]:

From jealousy of his name, 'ālam (world) is split in two	ز رشک نام او عالم دو نیم است
The word 'ālam has only one Mim, but his name has two Mims	که عالم را یکی او را دو میم است
The army (Turks) of pen without revoking the permission to plunder	به ترکان قلم بی‌نسخ تاراج
One Mim bestows sash/waistband, the other bestows the crown	یکی میمش کمر بخشد یکی تاج

Here the letter *mim* is compared to a waistband and to a crown in its short form, and when a pen writes "Muhammad", the first *mim* is likened to giving the pen a crown (at the top of word) and the second *mim* is giving the pen a waistband (in the middle of the word).

Nezami also uses the term "Turk" in the meaning of "conquerer" or "soldier", for example, while describing Alexander[399]:

If there was an old lady or a young child	اگر پیره زن بود یا طفل خرد

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[398] See Dastgerdi 1999 vol. 1:371 for usage of soldiers (army) here. A forum post has claimed that *torkān-e qalam* ("Turks of Pen") here means a specific group of "writing Turks" and Nezami was part of "this group". However, if taken literally, the word translates to "Turks of pen" and not "writing Turks", and Nezami is not claiming to be part of any "group" in the verse. The verse here is not about any such group and is not literal, but is about using the common Persian poetic imagery of "plundering Turks" (both words are in the couplet) for the pen; where the pen is bestowed plunder ("crown" and "waistband") every time it writes the name *Muhammad*. *Torkān-e qalam* is part of the non-ethnic metaphors where *torkān-e* ("Turks of") is used as a preposition term of an object (conceptual or physical) X i.e. "Turks of X". For example, *torkān-e falak* ("Turks of the fate/sky" -PD:Khaqani)– meaning the seven planets and symbolizing destiny – is also called a plunderer in the singular *tork-e falak* ("Turk of sky/fate") by Hafez (PD:Hafez, Attar,Rumi) and *torkān-e sokhan* ("Turks of rhetoric" ترکان سخن - used by *Khāqāni* in Afifi 1993) -- not to be confused with grammatically and semantically different *torkāneh-sokhan* ترکانه سخن in Chapter 2 –as "Turks of rhetoric go forth from the tent of the mind" by Khāqāni could be taken as "army of rhetoric" and according to Afifi "sweet rhetorics"; see Afifi 1993:462. Other such non-ethnic metaphorical terms include *torkān-e charx* ("Turks of the wheel"), *tork-e gardun*, *tork-e āseman* ("the turk of sky" i.e. the sun) and *torkan-e aflāk,* etc (see Afifi 1993). Often, these terms are connected to plundering warriors and soldiers, nomadic migration and tent dwelling; terms connected with Turkish nomads.
[399] IQ:8/41-44.

When they sought justice, they would come to him	گه دادخواهی بدو راه برد
His views were based on righteousness and truth	بدین راستی بود پیمان او
And that is why the seven lands came under his rule	که شد هفت کشور به فرمان او
He breathed in the advice of the knowledgeable	به تدبیر کار آگهان دم گشاد
From knowledge of the matter, he would resolve problems	ز کار آگهی کار عالم گشاد
How else a conquerer/soldier (turk) with a Roman hat	وگرنه یکی ترک رومی کلاه
Would have set up court in India and Chin	به هند و به چین کی زدی بارگاه

A notable example: Ruzbehān Baqli (d. 1209), an Iranian mystic and Nezami's contemporary, also uses this symbol: "Last night it was though I saw myself in the desert of China, and God arose in the form of clothing with divinity, in the forms of Turks"[400]. Here, the image of Turks is used to symbolize the divinity. In some Persian mystic poetry, Turkistan is the place of soul and Hindustan is the place of body.

As mentioned already, none of these characters (e.g. Layli, Majnun, Shirin, Alexander, Khusraw, Shirin, and the Prophet of Islam) were Hindus or Turks; the imageries such as Hindu and Turk had no ethnic implications and were used in the allegorical sense. In reality, the term Turcoman was used once in a Nezami's *ghazal* - at that time as the primarily definition of the Oghuz Turks, and it never had a symbolic meaning. While the term "Turk" in the ethnic appellation sense is mainly used for Central Asia, Qifchāqs and Chin. However it is easy to distinguish the ethnic type Turk/Hindu from the symbolic non-ethnic metaphorical meanings these terms acquire in Persian poetry.

3.8 Invalid Claim: "Talking About a Turkish Ruler Means Being a Turk!"

Taking into consideration the above analysis of imageries and metaphors, it is clear that ethnic connotations associated with these symbols are irrelevant. Nevertheless, Javad Heyat and Manaf-Oglu[401] try to claim Turkish ancestry for Nezami on the basis of two different couplets that are examined here. In the *Makhzan al-Asrār*, there is a story of an old lady who complains to the Saljuq Sultan Sanjar about injustice. Sanjar, who was essentially the last real Saljuq ruler who controlled the Saljuq Empire, does not take her complaint seriously. The old lady believes that the rise of the Saljuqs

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[400] Ernst 1996:70.
[401] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

was due to their love for justice, while their decline and dissolution took place because they stopped heeding people's demand for justice (the Saljuq Empire was divided between various regional dynasties that were nominally under their control but actually controlled the empire at instances). As noted in IQ:8/41-44 above, Nezami believed that the rise of Alexander was also the result of his love for justice. This sort of belief that the rise of an empire or dynasty is based on the rulers' justice seems to have been derived from the Quranic: "Before this, We wrote in the Psalms, after the Message (given to Moses): My servants the righteous shall inherit the earth." (Quran-21:105) and similar Biblical ideas which appears in the Psalms (Pslams-37:29). Here we quoted some parts of this story from Darab's translation while discussing the verses mentioned in more detail[402]:

	The story of the old woman and Sultan Sanjar	داستان پیرزن و سلطان سنجر
1	An old women suffered injustice	پیرزنی را ستمی درگرفت
	She laid hold on the skirt of Sanjar, she said:	دست زد و دامن سنجر گرفت
3	A drunken watchman came down my street	شحنه‌ی مست آمده در کوی من
	And kicked me sorely in my face	زد لگدی چند فرا روی من
12	Oh king if thou dost not do me justice	گر ندهی داد من این شهریار
	Will be counted against thee on the day of judgment	با تو رود روز شمار این شمار
13	Thou are a judge, I see in thee	داوری و داد نمی‌بینمت
	No justice, I cannot acquit thee of tyranny	وز ستم آزاد نمی‌بینمت
17	Thou are a slave and thou claims sovereignty	بنده‌ای و دعوی شاهی کنی
	Thou are not a king, for you bring ruin to the land	شاه نه‌ای چونکه تباهی کنی
20	Thou has turned the world upside down	عالم را زیر و زبر کرده‌ای
	In all thy life what good deeds have thou really done?	تا توئی آخر چه هنر کرده‌ای
21	The rise of the empire of Turks	دولت ترکان که بلندی گرفت
	Was due to their love for justice	مملکت از دادپسندی گرفت
22	Since thou fosters injustice	چونکه تو بیدادگری پروری
	Thou are not a Turk (i.e. Ruler, beloved, beautiful), thou art a plundering Hindu (slave, dark, ugly)	ترک نه‌ای هندوی غارتگری
23	The house of town-dweller have been ruined by thee	مسکن شهری ز تو ویرانه گشت

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[402] MA:27/1, 3, 12, 13, 17-18, 2-24, 29, 31, 33-36.

	The harvest of the land-owner have been ravaged by thee	خرمن دهقان ز تو بیدانه گشت
24	*Thou are the key to the conquest of the world*	فتح جهان را تو کلید آمدی
	Thou was not created for injustice	نه ز پی بیداد پدید آمدی
29	*The relationship of the poor to thee is that of the beloved to the lover*	رسم ضعیفان به تو نازش بود
	Thy relation to them should be to foster them	رسم تو باید که نوازش بود
33	*Sanjar who had won the empire of Khurasan*	سنجر که ملک خراسان گرفت
	Suffered loss when he disregarded these words	کرد زیان کاین سخن آسان گرفت
34	*Justice has vanished in our time*	داد در این دور برانداختست
	She has taken up her abode on the wings of the Phoenix	در پر سیمرغ وطن ساختست
35	*There is no respect under the blue dome;*	شرم درین طارق ازرق نماند
	No honor remains on the suspended earth	آب درین خاک معلق نماند
36	*Arise Nezami and shed tears beyond limits*	خیز نظامی ز حد افزون گری
	Shed bloody tears on this threshold	بر در خوناب شده خون گری

Javad Heyat and Manaf-Oglu[403] consider the couplet comparing "Turk and Hindu" as implying that Nezami was a Turk. However, we mentioned already that the comparison of "Turk" and "Hindu" is a common expression in Persian poetry and it was used metaphorically to denote two opposite extremes. That is when these two terms come together, they almost always have a metaphorical meaning (for example, Sanjar, who is Turkish, cannot literally turn into a Hindu). Here Turk is the symbol of both a ruler and beauty, while the Hindu is a symbol of a slave and darkness. In reality, the poem is actually a criticism of the Saljuq ruler Sanjar. Furthermore, to criticize Sanjar, who is attributed as "plundering Hindu"and not a "Turk", does not make sense literally; the metaphorical juxtaposition of both terms used for the criticism being quite evident here.

As per the verse about the rise of the Saljuqs, which is translated as the empire of Turks, we do not know, of course, the exact opinion of Nezami since he is actually narrating here on behalf of an old lady. In terms of popular preception, even non-Iranian non-Muslims seem to have had a positive viewpoint on some Saljuq rulers. For example, Kirakos Gandzakets'i (1200/1202-1271), an Armenian historian from Ganja also states about Malik Shāh: "In a short time he subdued the entire world not by war or tyranny, but by peace and love"[404]. The Iranian historian of Saljuqs, Rāwandi also states: "Praise be to God, He is exalted, that the defenders of Islam are

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[403] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.
[404] Gandzakets'i 1986:115.

mighty and that the followers of the Hanafi rite are happy and in the lands of Arabs, Persians, Byzantines and Russians, the sword is in the hand of the Turks, and fear of their sword is firmly implanted in all hearts!"[405]. According to Bosworth, "the Saljuqs achieved some prestige in the eyes of the Orthodox by overthrowing the Shi'ite Buyid rule in Western Iran. Sunni writers even came to give an ideological justification for the Turks' political and military domination of the Middle East"[406]. Finally, as noted by Yarshater, "By all accounts, weary of the miseries and devastations of never-ending conflicts and wars, Persians seemed to have sighed with relief and to have welcomed the stability of the Saljuqid rule, all the more so since the Saljuqids mitigated the effect of their foreignness, quickly adopting the Persian culture and court customs and procedures and leaving the civil administration in the hand of Persian personnel, headed by such capable and learned viziers as 'Amid-al-Molk Kondori and Nezam-al-Molk"[407]. Consequently, the rise of the Saljuqs (and the decline of the Buyids) themselves was viewed enthusiastically by the Sunni Iranians (at a time when religious sentiments would play more significant role and there was widespread conflicts between various sects) and the actual administration and everyday affair of these empires were in the hand of Iranians. The Saljuqs themselves, as noted by Grousset, protected the Persian lands from the Turcoman menace and themselves became Persianized[408].

The argument of Heyat and Manaf-Oglu is also wrong, since praising a ruler or certain dynasty has, as a rule, nothing to do with the ethnic belonging of the person who praises them. For example, the praise for Cyrus the Great by Xenophon in his Cyropedia and other Greek writers of the time does not make Xenophon a Persian. So, while the old lady in the story of Nezami (which may also be Nezami's opinion, given his Sunni background) believes the rise of the Saljuqs was due to their justice, Nezami actually shows that their fall was also due to the lack of justice in their later period. The other flaw in Heyat and Manaf-Oglu's argument is that the story is actually criticizing Sanjar while at the same time, in the *Makhzan al-Asrār* there are positive tales about Persian kings such as Anushiravan, Fereydun and Magian priest from India[409].

These types of arguments by Javad Heyat and Manaf-Oglu also does not consider the fact that if we are to take the positive imagery of "Turk" as expression of ethnic sympathy and association (obviously a 20th century nationalistic viewpoint and anachronistic – for the study of Nezami's work) rather than their historical

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[405] Bosworth 1968:15.
[406] ibid.
[407] Yarshater 2004.
[408] Grousset 1970:164.
[409] MA:23, MA:33, and MA:41.

allegorical meaning, then one must also look at the verses in which the term "Turk" was used in a negative fashion both in its imagery form as well as when some of the main characters (Bahram or Alexander) of Nezami's epics encounter the Turks. We have already noted in Part II that the denominative "torki" is used as "harshness, cruelty" by Nezami and other poets. Some other examples are now given or reiterated.

Nezami, for example, writes[410]:

Opened his tongue in execration of the Turks	به نفرین ترکان زبان برگشاد
Saying: Without calamity no Turk is born of his mother	که بیفتنه ترکی ز مادر نزاد
Seek not from aught save the frown on the eye-brow(the vexation of the heart)	ز چینی به جز چین ابرو مخواه
They observe not the treaty of men	ندارند پیمان مردم نگاه
True speech uttered the ancients	سخن راست گفتند پیشینان
Treaty-faith exists not among the men of Chin	که عهد و وفا نیست در چینیان
They have all chosen being narrow-eyed (shamelessness/greed);	همه تنگ چشمی پسندیدهاند
They have beheld (experienced) openness of the eye (generosity) in other persons	فراخی به چشم کسان دیدهاند
Otherwise, after such amity	وگر نه پس از آنچنان آشتی
Why do they take up the path of hatred?	ره خشمناکی چه برداشتی
What was the point in seeking friendliness first?	در آن دوستی جستن اول چه بود
And in the end, enmity for what account?	وزین دشمنی کردن آخر چه سود
My covenant was true and heart was too	مرا دل یکی بود و پیمان یکی
Wholesomeness great, idle talk near none	درستی فراوان و قول اندکی
I did not know that your love was hate;	خبر نی که مهر شما کین بود
That the heart of the Turk of Chin was full of twist and turn	دل ترک چین پر خم و چین بود
If the Turk of Chin had kept faith	اگر ترک چینی وفا داشتی
He would have kept the world under the folds of his garment	جهان زیر چین قبا داشتی

Here is another instance of Alexander describing the Turks as one poison to be used against another poison the (Russians[411]):

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[410] SN:43/259-267,
[411] SN:48/88-90.

Although the Turks are not the friends of Rum (Greeks)	اگر چه نشد ترک با روم خویش
But their hatred towards the Russians is more	هم از رومشان کینه با روس بیش
By the sharp arrows of the Turks at this stage	به پیکان ترکان این مرحله
One can induce blister upon the feet of the Russians	توان ریخت بر پای روس آبله
Often a poison that brings pain to the body	بسا زهر کو در تن آرد شکست
Another poison is the proper antidote to it	به زهری دگر بایدش باز بست

And also in the *Haft Paykar*[412] while mentioning that Turks were to attack Iran:

The people of Chin(i.e. Turks) have no faithfulness and are covenant-breakers	چینیان را وفا نباشد و عهد
Inward they are poisonous, outward they are sweet	زهرناک اندرون و بیرون شهد

Another example was the section of LMZA, in which Nezami actually praises every word of the Sharvānshāh's letter, which was, in fact, his own poetic interpretation of the letter.

Our fidelity is not like that of Turkish characteristics	ترکانه(ترکی) صفت وفای مانیست
Vulgarity/lampoon (torkāneh-sokhan) is not what we deserve	ترکانه سخن سزای ما نیست
One who is born of high race	آن کز نسب بلند زاید
He deserves a high praises (lofty rhetoric)	او را سخن بلند باید

Here is another verse by Nezami Ganjavi, with the negative connotations about Turks[413]:

I have brought so much light into eyes	ز بس کاورده‌ام در چشم‌ها نور
That (even) I distanced narrow-eyedness (i.e. greed, bitterness) from Turks	ز ترکان تنگ‌چشمی کرده‌ام دور

Such an anthropological feature of Turks as narrow-eyedness, was mentioned as a symbol of beauty, but the same narrow-eyedness was also used with the meanings of

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[412] HP:33/47.
[413] KH 71/47.

"greed", "bitterness" and "narrowness" in the works of Sa'di, Nezami and Khāqāni (Dehkhoda: *chashm-e tang, tang-chashmi*).

Another verse about the Qifchāq[414]:

Due to the savage nature of the Qifchāq people	که از بیم قفچاق وحشی سرشت
We dare not to sow any seed in this land	درین مرز تخمی نیاریم کشت

Or, for example, when Bahram's army defeats that of the Khaqan of Turks[415]:

The Turks from his sudden Turk-like raid,	ترک از این ترکتاز ناگه او
And wounds so deadly on the path he took	و آنچنان زخم سخت بر ره او
When the King's sword was brandished on all sides	آهن شاه چو سخت جوشی کرد
The Turks became soft to him	لشکر ترک سست کوشی کرد
By the shock of (his) sword he broke their ranks;	درهم افکندشان به صدمه تیغ
He was the wind, you'd say, and they were clouds	گفتی او باد بود و ایشان میغ
The hardness of the swarthy lions' claw	سختی پنجه سیه شیران
Pounded the brains of those whose swords were soft	کوفته مغز نرم شمشیران
Through the sharp dagger's work	لشکر ترک را ز دشنه تیز
The dust of flying Turk army reached the Oxus River	تا به جیحون رسید گرد گریز

Or, here "Hindu" makes a positive contrast as opposed with "Turk"[416] in the metaphorical sense:

If my eyes, due to cruelty (Turki) became narrow	و گر چشمم ز ترکی تنگی کرد
It came apologizing, like a chivalrous Hindu	به عذر آمد چو هندوی جوانمرد

Here the blackness of the eye's pupil is compared to a Hindu while there is a double play on "Turk", one being the physical narrow-eyedness and the other being the denominative "torki" meaning hard-heartedness.

However, there is no dichotomy in Nezami's feeling with regards to the usage of these terms. In the context of the epic stories, the actual Turks (not the imagery) are mentioned in some of these examples we gave, and some of these are verses with

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[414] SN:26/126.
[415] Wilson 1924; HP:22/79, 81, 83, 90, 92.
[416] KH:84/23.

negative connotations. In terms of LMZA, as mentioned, some literary scholars, and even Heyat, see it as a taunt of Turks. However, the most common usage of the terms Hindu, Turk, Rum, Habash and Zang in the poetry of Nezami is in the realm of non-ethnic imagery and metaphors. Nezami was not concerned with positive or negative usage of the symbol and non-ethnic metaphors of Hindu, Turk, Zang, Rum and Habash. Nezami, like other Persian poets, simply used a set of traditional and standard Persian poetry symbols, employing these metaphors in both positive and negative connotations. These were combined and contrasted in different contexts and allowed the poet to use a set of standard imageries which was a part of the common symbolism of the Persian poetry, as well as of the prose of the time (e.g. the sentence from Xwaja Abdullah Ansari brought above, or Hamdollah Mustawfi who writes the people of Maragha speak Arabicized Fahlavi and are *turk-vash*, which means "have beautiful faces").

As also noted, the set of imagery of Zang, Rum (which seems to have been always of positive connotation), Habash, and also Hindu have their sets of positive/negative connotations which are combined together. For example, when Nezami states that his nature is "cheerful like that of the Zangi", it does not mean he is an ethnic Zangi[417]. None of these metaphors have any implications on the actual background of the author. We shall also see an example below, in which Nezami Ganjavi explicitly refers to himself as a Habashi (Ethiopian) but this is to be taken metaphorically in the sense of the imagery rather than the actual ethnic term.

Even outside of allegorical meanings – if, for example, Nezami praises the justice of the Zoroastrians as against the Muslims, it does not mean he was not a Muslim. In the *Khusraw o Shirin*, he notices how the Sassanid king punishes his own son for breaking the law and Nezami versifies[418]:

The World became so warm (full of justice/prosperous) from the fire-worshippers	جهان ز آتش‌پرستی شد چنان گرم
That thou should be ashamed of your Muslim behaviour.	که بادا زین مسلمانی ترا شرم
We are Muslims and they were Zoroastrians.	مسلمانیم ما او گبر نام است
But if they are Zoroastrians, then what is a Muslim?	گر این گبری مسلمانی کدام است
Oh Nezami go back to telling myth/stories	نظامی بر سر افسانه شو باز
Since Bird of Advice has a bitter song	که مرغ پند را تلخ آمد آواز

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[417] SN:16/1.
[418] KH:15/32-34.

It is necessary to be aware of the cultural setting and metaphors of the classical age of Persian poetry between the 10th till 15th centuries, in order to understand its symbolism; one cannot anachronistically read it through the prism of a 20th century ethno-centric mindset.

3.9 Was Nezami Selling Curd in Ethiopia!?

Another verse that is erroneously claimed by Heyat and Manaf-Oglu to show the alleged Turkish associations of Nezami occurs in the section of the *Haft Paykar* (HP:6/116), where the poet shows his capability in the genre of wisdom, literature, spiritual counsels, and moral advices. In order to show the context of the verse, we will bring forth portion of this section with the translation the mentioned verse (HP:6/116) by Wilson[419]. However, we will analyze the verse further and cross-reference with other translations and verses of Nezami.

	In praise of rhetoric, wisdom and advice	ستایش سخن و حکمت و اندرز
1	*That which is new and also old*	آنچه او هم نوست و هم کهن است
	Is rhetoric and in this (rhetoric) there is rhetoric	سخن است و در این سخن سخن است
2	*In all creation the creator "Be" has not born*	ز آفرینش نزاد مادر کن
	A child better than rhetoric	هیچ فرزند خوبتر ز سخن
3	*So that you may not say those eloquent in rhetoric are dead*	تا نگوئی سخنوران مردند
	That they have sunk their heads beneath the stream of rhetoric	سر به آب سخن فرو بردند
4	*Speak but the name of anyone you will*	چون بری نام هر که را خواهی
	like fish he raises from the stream his head	سر برآرد ز آب چون ماهی
5	*Rhetoric which is faultless like the spirit,*	سخنی کو چو روح بی عیب است
	is the guard of the treasury of the unknown	خازن گنج خانه غیب است
6	*It knows the story which has not been heard*	قصه ناشنیده او داند
	it reads the book that has yet to be written	نامه نانبشته او خواند
7	*Of everything which God has made exist*	بنگر از هر چه آفریده خدای
	Everything dies except rhetoric	تا ازو جز سخن چه ماند به جای

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[419] Wilson 1924.

8	*What remains from mankind*	یادگاری کز آدمیزاد است
	is rhetoric, everything else is empty air	سخن است آن دگر همه باد است
9	*Strive and see from minerals and plants*	جهد کن کز نباتی و کانی
	Till the intellect and animals	تا به عقلی و تا به حیوانی
10	*Consider what is that in the existence*	باز دانی که در وجود آن چیست
	Which is able to live for eternity	کابدالدهر می‌تواند زیست
11	*He who knows what is his essence*	هر که خود را چنان که بود شناخت
	Has forever become eternal	تا ابد سر به زندگی افراخت
30	*Each person has a hidden friend*	هر کسی را نهفته یاری هست
	A companion and a devotee	دوستی هست و دوستداری هست
31	*And from the intellect comes that help*	خرد است آن کز او رسد یاری
	You have everything, if you have intellect	همه داری اگر خرد داری
39	*Live so that if you suffer from a thorn*	آنچنان زی که گر رسد خاری
	That your foes may not taunt you	نخوری طعن دشمنان باری
43	*Don't eat bread in front of those who fast*	نان نخور پیش ناشتامنشان
	And if you do, invite them to your feast	ور خوری جمله را به خوان بنشان
44	*Don't count your gold in front of misers*	پیش مفلس زر زیاده مسنج
	So that like a dragon they do not hoard up the treasure	تا نپیچد چو اژدها بر گنج
46	*Man was not made for vegetation*	آدمی نز پی علف خواریست
	He was made for skill and awareness	از پی زیرکی و هشیاریست
53	*Do not be harsh, since the harsh world*	سخت‌گیری مکن که خاک درشت
	Has killed hundreds like you for a piece of bread	چون تو صد را ز بهر نان کشت
57	*Don't try to pull tricks upon the world*	با جهان کوش تا دغا نزنی
	Don't set up tent in the mouth of the dragon	خیمه در کام اژدها نزنی
58	*Friendship from a dragon one must avoid*	دوستی ز اژدها نباید جست
	A dragon can swallow a man in whole	کاژدها آدمی خورد به درست
102	*The man who obtains his goal late*	هر مرادی که دیر یابد مرد
	Finds joy in his long journey of life	مژده باشد به عمر دیرنورد
103	*A long life is best for one to attain their goal*	دیر زی به که دیر یابد کام
	Because it is through perfection, that one's	کز تمامیست کار عمر تمام

	life is complete	
104	*The Ruby which takes a long time to form also endures*	لعل کو دیر زاد دیر بقاست
	The tulip comes quickly, and is easily uprooted	لاله کامد سبک سبک برخاست
110	*If you are a (spiritual) disciple as you are named*	گر مریدی چنانک رانندت
	Go forth on the path that the sage calls you upon	بر رهی رو که پیر خوانندت
111	*Do not be a disciple without goals*	از مریدان بی‌مراد مباش
	When putting your trust (in Pir), do not be weak in faith	در توکل کم اعتقاد مباش
112	*I am a resolver of hundred knots*	من که مشکل گشای صد گرهم
	I am the village chief of the village and its outside environ	دهخدای ده و برون دهم
113	*If from the road comes a guest*	گر در آید ز راه مهمانی
	Who is there to set a feast for him	کیست کو در میان نهد خوانی
114	*Intellect knows what I am saying*	عقل داند که من چه می‌گویم
	With these allusions, what I seek	زین اشارت که شد چه می‌جویم
115	*I am not worried from the non-existence*	نیست از نیستی شکست مرا
	If I have complaints from some people, so be it	گله زان کس که هست هست مرا
116	*This Ethiopia likes not Turkish wares* (Wilson 1924)	ترکیم را در این حبش نخرند
	hence it will have not palatable curds (Wilson 1924)	لاجرم دوغبای خوش نخرند
117	*Whilst in this furnace which one's nature ripens* (Wilson 1924)	تا در این کوره طبیعت پز
	as grape unripe I still was somewhat raw (Wilson 1924)	خامیی داشتم چون میوه‌ی رز
118	*I was pressed like an unripe grape by time*	روزگارم به حصر می می‌خورد
	made of me collyrium for the sight	توتیاهای حصر می می‌کرد
119	*Now that I have turned into a ripe grape*	چون رسیدم به حد انگوری
	I am now being stung by the bees	می‌خورم نیشهای زنبوری
120	*The wine, which is only good for the earth (possibly relates to Islamic Shafi'ite tradition where wine is recommended to be poured out to earth)*	می که جز جرعه زمین نبود

	This makes the price of its grape also worthless	قدر انگور پیش ازین نبود
121	*I go on the path that I am destined for*	بر طریقی روم که راندم
	Consequently, frozen water they call me	لاجرم آب خفته خواندم
122	*But water when it is frozen*	آب گویند چون شود در خواب
	Is like a fountain of gold, not a fountain of water *(based on myth that frozen water turns sand into gold)*	چشمه زر بود نه چشمه آب
123	*But they are in error, frozen water is like silver*	غلطند آب خفته باشد سیم
	For ice bears witness to this fact	یخ گواهی دهد بر این تسلیم
124	*Silver cannot be ranked in value with Gold*	سیم را کی بود مثابت زر
	Their difference is like the Sun and the Moon	فرق باشد از شمس تا قمر
125	*"sim" (silver) without "ya" (sm= sam = poison) appears like a copper (mes=ms) sample*	سیم بی یا ز مس نمونه بود
	Especially if you read it backward (sam=sm =reverse ms (mes))	خاصه آنگونه که باژگونه بود
126	*My iron which comes inlaid in gold*	آهن من که زرنگار آمد
	When it's to rhetoric it comes through as silver (flexible)	در سخن بین که نقره کار آمد
127	*Iron merchants wear gold*	مرد آهن فروش زر پوشد
	So that they may sell iron at the price of silver	که آهنی را به نقره بفروشد
128	*Woe to the goldsmith on the day of judgment*	وای بر زرگری که وقت شمار
	Whose gold does not measure to the worth of silver	زرش از نقره کم بود عیار
129	*Among the world's oppression, this one is hard to digest*	از جهان این جنایتم سخت است
	That luck is the source of fortunate, and not wisdom	کز هنر نیست دولت، از بخت است
130	*That keen seer who is skilled in assessing worth*	آن مبصر که هست نقدشناس
	Himself is not worth half a grain	نیم جو نیستش ز روی قیاس
131	*While the one who can't differentiate between flax and cotton*	وآنکه او پنبه از کتان نشناخت
	Nor can tell the difference between the heaven and hell (lit: sky and rope)	آسمان را ز ریسمان نشناخت

132	Has inventories full of fine linen and cotton	پرکتان و قصب شد انبارش
	With loads of gold in his chest box and fur in his load	زر به صندوق و خز به خروارش
133	Since this is the case with jewels and coin	چون چنین است کار گوهر و سیم
	Why should one fear idleness	از فراغت چه برد باید بیم
134	How long in this ruin shall we grieve	چند تیمار ازین خرابه کشیم
	How long shall we fit the sun in a jug	آفتابی در آفتابه کشیم
135	Everyone would be called from the antechamber (of death)	آید آواز هرکس از دهلیر
	One day, we would also be called	روزی آواز ما برآید نیز
136	Like me, many people have told this story	چون من این قصه چند کس گفتند
	In the end, in that story they went to sleep	هم در آن قصه عاقبت خفتند
146	Consider when you came(to the world) at first	بنگر اول که آمدی ز نخست
	What did you posses that now you have?	ز آنچه داری چه داشتی به درست
149	Strive to pay whatever debt you owe	کوش تا وام جمله باز دهی
	So that you are left and your bare mount	تا تو مانی و یک ستور تهی
150	Since you do not have a grain from the world's store	چون ز بار جهان نداری جو
	Go to wherever in the world you please	در جهان هرکجا که خواهی رو
151	You must let go of all your possessions before	پیش ازانت فکند باید رخت
	They bring your crown down from the throne	کافسرت را فروکشند از تخت
152	There are days that many pure blossomed flower	روز باشد که صد شکوفه پاک
	From the dust of envy should fall on the earth	از غبار حسد فتد بر خاک
153	I am like a rose who cast away my arms	من که چون گل سلاح ریخته‌ام
	From the thorns of envy I have fled	هم ز خار حسد گریخته‌ام
154	I have donned the clothes of poverty on my body	تا مگر دلق پوشی جسدم
	So that talc may be poured upon my flame of envy	طلق ریزد بر آتش حسدم
155	The journey in this perilous place till death	ره در این بیمگاه تا مردن
	Can only be traversed through this path	این چنین میتوان به سر بردن
156	When I have departed from this ancient inn	چون گذشتم ازین رباط کهن
	Tell destiny and time do what you wish	گو فلک را آنچه خواهی کن
157	O Nezami! how long will you be shackled	چند باشی نظامیا دربند

	Rise up and bring forth a loud song	خیز و آوازه‌ای برآر بلند
158	Give up your soul to the Eternal Divine	جان درافکن به حضرت ابدی
	So that you may obtain eternal felicity	تا بیابی سعادت ابدی
159	The sages of the school of "Be"	گوش پیچیدگان مکتب کن
	When they assimilated the tablet of discourse	چون در آموختند لوح سخن
160	They made knowledge the protector of their action	علم را خازن عمل کردند
	And solved the secrets of existing things	مشکل کاینات حل کردند

The context of the poem is the discourse and wise advices imparted by Nezami. He mentions others have also given such kinds of advices, but complains that people do not take heed of them. However, according to Javad Heyat, the verse (HP:6/116) implies that: "*Habash* here means *ignorance* and *hard-heartened* while *torkiyyam* ("my Turkish") refers to high and wise thoughts, and according to some, the Turkish language"[420]. Javad Heyat does not mention who he means by "according to some", but the second meaning, i.e. "Turkish language", does not make any sense here at all, since if we are to take *torkiyyam* ("my Turkish") to literally mean some form of the Turkish language, then we must also literally take that Nezami was in Ethiopia and literally take the fact that Nezami was selling silver, gold and curd. Such an interpretation is out of the context of the section; since the section is about imparting advice and morals, not about writing poetry in different languages. As shown in Part II, there was no Turkish literary tradition at the time of Nezami in the Caucasus. As already demonstrated, Persian poets often make such contrasts. Since the opposition of Turk and Abyssinian/Ethiopian (Habash) has a figurative meaning, it simply signifies the range of tastes and climes, cultures and complexions, specifically with the Turkish representing light, beauty and north, while Ethiop representing dark, ugliness, and south.

As example, Nezami here contrasts the star and moon with the night[421]:

The Blacks of Ethiop, the Turks of Chin	سیاهان حبش ترکان چینی
Like the night have nightly visit with moon	چو شب با ماه کرده همنشینی

Here he contrasts between day and night, where the night imposes itself upon the day[422]:

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[420] Heyat 2006:27.
[421] KH:79/76.
[422] HP:32/4.

Till the night (Zang) did not impose upon the day (Khotan)	تا نزد بر ختن طلایه زنگ
The king did not stop his joyous sport	شه ز شادی نکرد میدان تنگ

Nezami uses another contrast between day and night[423]:

When the morning cast away the cover from day's face	چو صبح از رخ روز برقع گشاد
Light (Khotan) upon darkness (Ethiop) imposed a painful cost	ختن بر حبش داغ جزیت نهاد

Once again Nezami demonstrating the two words are extreme contrasts[424]:

Was not relieved from seeking other solution	ناسوده ز چاره باز جستن
Absolute darkness(An Ethiopian) will not be luminous (Khotanese) by washing (i.e. useless effort)	زنگی ختنی نشد به شستن

Nezami using Ethiop as symbol of a devout slave of a beautiful maiden[425]:

With all my life, I am still a slave of your love	ناز تو گر به جان بود بکشم
If you are from Khallukh (Turkistan), I am from Ethiop	گر تو از خلخی من از حبشم

A similar imagery is used in the *Haft Paykar*[426]:

I am still that devoted slave	من همان سفته گوش حلقه کشم
I am from Chin but with you, I am from Ethiop	با خود از چین و با تو از حبشم

Such imagery was not used exclusively by Nezami, and the same contrast between the symbols of Ethiop and Turk was used by other poets such as Rumi, Khwāju Kermani, 'Obayd Zakani, Sa'di, etc. All these verses show that unlike what Heyat mentions, the verse is not about any Turkish language poetry and the poet is using common imagery between light and darkness. Yet, Manaf-Oglu[427] mentions an even

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[423] SN:29/137.
[424] LM:30/5.
[425] HP:29/449.
[426] HP:35/36.
[427] Manaf-Oglu 2010:112.

more unsound theory relative to Heyat[428] and claims that the verse means: "My Turkishness is not appreciated in this Ethiopia – That's why my tasty *dugh-bā* is not eaten". He then quotes a publication from an Azerbaijan SSR which comments: "Ethiopia means darkness, ignorance and obscurity, and the poet wants to say he is a Turk and his beautiful poetry, delicious as the national food of the Turkic people, is not appreciated in his homeland, for stomachs cannot digest such a wonderful meal" (!?)[429]. There are several problems with this interpretation. First, no one has referred or claimed his ethnicity in Persian poetry with the possessive ending *iyyam rā*. For example *'arabiyyam rā nakharand*, *fārsiyyam rā nakharand* or *torkiyyam rā nakharand*, literally means that "my Arabic is not bought", "my Persian is not bought", "my Turkish is not bought". It does not mean that "my Arabness is not bought" (*'arabiyyatam rā nakharand)*, "my Persianness is not bought" (*fārsiyyatam rā nakharand, Irāniyyatam rā nakharand)* or "my Turkishness is not bought" (*Torkiyyatam rā nakharand).* Consequently, *torkiyyam* means "My Turkish" rather than "My Turkishness" (*torkiyyatam).* Also the buying (literal meaning from *kharidan*) of ethnic "Turkishness" (*tokiyyat* - which is not used here), "Arabness" or "Persianness" does not make any sense in the Persian language, and in the context and content of the section. The content and context of the section has nothing to do with the poet talking about any sort of ethnicity or ethnic language as this whole section ("In praise of rhetoric, wisdom and advice") is about imparting moral advices and encouragement of spiritual values. The second problem with Manaf-Oglu's interpretation is that *dugh-bā* is a Persian word and cannot be interpreted as "the national food of Turkic peoples". While Nezami and many other writers used numerous food names, there was no notion of "national food" in the 12th century. The third problem is that, as already mentioned, these authors take *torkiyyam* literally (and interpret it with a 20th century ethno-centric viewpoint) while interpreting *habash (*Ethiop), *kharidan* (to buy) and *dugh-bā* metaphorically. This is an arbitrary and cherry-picked reading that is applied to extract the thought that Nezami had some Turkish writings. In actuality, this line is using the metaphorical and non-ethnic meaning of "Turk" and "Habash" to contrast opposites, as often used in Persian poetry by Nezami, as well as many poets before and after Nezami.

The literal translation of HP:6/116 would be: "My Turkish is not bought in this Ethiopia – Henceforth they do not eat tasty curds (*dugh-bā*)". As in many other verses, a literal translation of the verse is out of the context of the intended meaning in English, since proper understanding requires familiarity with imagery of "Turk, "Ethiopian" and even *dugh-bā.* For example, Nezami never travelled to Ethiopia to sell curds. C.E. Wilson translates the relevant passage in the following way: "*This*

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[428] Heyat 2006.
[429] Manaf-Oglu 2010:112.

Ethiopia likes not Turkish wares - hence it will have not palatable curds"[430]. While this literal translation makes more sense, however we know that Nezami was not in Ethiopia, nor did he sell Turkish wares, nor did he sell palatable curds. Wilson makes this literal translation, since the word *torkiyyam rā* is used as a possessive noun meaning "my Turkish", the word *nakharand* means "[they] do not buy" (which explains the word "wares" added by Wilson), and the word *lājaram* means "consequently" (i.e. the consequence of not buying). Wilson, noticing that the literal translation of the verse does not make real sense (e.g. Poet was not in Ethiopia selling Turkish wares and curds), comments on the allegorical meaning: "The author means possibly that where he is, the people prefer bad poetry to good. Turk amongst its various meanings has that of 'a beauty'. Hence, Turki (here a noun, not an adjective) means 'something of a beautiful or delightful nature.' The author in the second hemistich likens this to *dugh-bā*, which is equivalent to *māst* [Persian for yogurt], or the Turkish yoghurt, specially prepared thick curds of milk, a favorite dish of the Turks. 'This Ethiopia' or 'These Ethiopians', i.e. *these uncivilized people*"[431]. Wilson is correct that *torkiyyam* is used as a possessive noun and the non-ethnic symbolic imagery of Turk means beauty. As per Ethiopian, it does not mean "uncivilized" but rather "dark" and opposite of "beauty/bright" as illustrated by Nezami's *ghazal* below where he refers to himself as an Ethiopian and a beloved as a Khotanese.

Anytime, the common pairs such as Hindu/Turk or Ethiop/Turk or Zang/Rum are contrasted, one should consider the opposite qualities of these imageries; the opposite of "beauty/ bright/light" being not "uncivilized", but "ugly/dark".   These contrasts do not make sense without the consideration of their opposite meanings. Without understanding these contrasts, the meanings of such couplets cannot be understood and substantiated. The Meisami translation follows Wilson closely and translates the line as: "The Ethiop scorns my Turkish wares - rejects the fine foods I prepare"[432]. Furthermore, she comments on it: "The Ethiop scorns my Turkish wares: literally, 'The Ethiops (of this region) reject my Turkish delicacies,' that is, in this dark and savage region my fine words go unappreciated"[433]. Consequently, neither Wilson nor Meisami agree with the wrong interpretations of Manaf-Oglu and Heyat.

Thus, Javad Heyat[434] tries to hint by this verse that Nezami also composed Turkish poetry (such literary tradition did not exist in this period of the Caucasus). However, such viewpoints (e.g. Heyat, Manaf-Oglu) are outside the contextual meaning of the section, as the section is simply imparting spiritual wisdoms and moral advices. This

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[430] Wilson 1924.
[431] Wilson 1924.
[432] Meisami 1995:28.
[433] ibid.:281.
[434] Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010.

is also noted by the contextual meaning taken by other translators of Nezami (e.g. Meisami and Wilson). Heyat possibly tries to implicitly connect his misinterpretation here with his wrong view of the LMZA. But as shown in detail in Part II, there is no proof that Nezami knew Turkish, there was no Turkish literary heritage in the Caucasus, and the terminology, context, contrasts and word-constituents used are all different in the LMZA.

Since in this section, Nezami composes these lines about knowledge, spiritual and moral advices, and self-consciousness, then the possessive non-ethnic term "my Turkish" refers to the inner content of the advices, which in Persian poetry has the attributes of the non-ethnic symbol "Turk" – "bright, sweetness, white, luminous, light and beautiful". But the poet laments that what he considers his bright spiritual and moral advices are ignored in his land, contrasted with the non-ethnic symbol "Ethiopia" i.e. a place of darkness and ignorance. As per *dugh-bā*, Schimmel notes that: "*pāludeh*, a dish of milk, fine flour, and some spices, was popular enough in the thirteenth century to be mentioned several times as the symbol of spiritual sweetness"[435]. Similarly, *dugh-bā* (curd) which is actually of a bright and near white color, is a symbol for spiritual sweetness. In reality, the actual poetry of Nezami was widely acclaimed and praised during his time. That is, Nezami and Nezami's actual poetry were appreciated by rulers and normal people, but rather, he is pointing to the fact that the luminous (symbolized by the non-ethnic imagery *Tork)* moral and spiritual advices he is imparting in the section ("In praise of rhetoric, wisdom and advice") are ignored ("is not bought") in his land (symbolized by the non-ethnic imagery *Habash* i.e. place of darkness and ignorance). According to Nezami, the consequence of ignoring and not heeding these advices is deprivation of *dugh-bā*, which, like *pāludeh* mentioned by Schimmel, is a reference to spiritual sweetness.

A *ghazal* of Nezami which is amongst the most frequently cited *ghazal*s, also futher illustrates this contrast between *Ethiop* and *Turk*[436]:

You have a beautiful (Khotanese/Turkish) face, O moon, why are you called Habashi?	ختنی جمالی ای مه، حبشی چه نام داری؟
With the exception of the mole and down on the cheek line, what else do you have from Habash?	بجز از خطی و خالی، ز حبش کدام داری؟
I am an Ethiopian(Habashi), in whose body all the blood has boiled	حبشی منم، که در تن همه سوختست خونم

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[435] Schimmel 1993:143.
[436] Nafisi 1959:331.

You are a Khotanese (Turk), with a pure silver figure	ختنی تویی، که در بر همه سیم خام داری
The curl of your hair is dark (Ethiopian), but your face is bright (Khotanese)	حبشیست جعد مویت، ختنیست رنگ رویت
Among these two lands, where is your station?	ز میان این دو کشور بکجا مقام داری؟
Habashi is not white, Khotanese has no flavor	حبشی سپید نبود، ختنی نمک ندارد
But you are white and tasty, with full flavor	تو سپید با حلاوت نمک تمام داری
Forgo the talk of Habash, and raise the flag of Khotan	ز حبش سخن رها کن، ز ختن علم برآور
Because you have thousand Ethiopian slaves such as Nezami	که هزار چون نظامی حبشی غلام داری

Unlike HP:6/116, which literal or symbolic reading has no bearing on ethnicity, the verses of this *Ghazal*, if taken literally would mean Nezami was an Ethiopian. Here Nezami uses the poetic image of Ethiop twice and claims himself as an Ethiopian slave. No doubt if the word *tork* ("Turk") would have been used here instead of *habash* ("Ethiopian"), the authors with an ethno-centric 20th century anachronistic viewpoint (e.g. Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010) would have taken it literally. However, as noted, the terms "Habash" and "Khotan" (which was considered the area of Turkistan with the most beautiful looks) are non-ethnic metaphors to signify opposites and range of moods, tastes and colors. Other poets used such terminology as well. Rumi, for example, writes[437]:

I am sometimes a Turk, sometimes a Hindu, sometimes a Greek, sometimes a Zangi	گه ترکم و گه هندو گه رومی و گه زنگی
O soul, from your image is my approval and denial	از نقش تو است ای جان اقرارم و انکارم

While in another verse he mentions[438]:

You are a Turkish moon, and although I am not a Turk	تو ماه ترکی و من اگر ترک نیستم
I know this much that in Turkish, the word for water is "Su"	دانم من این قدر که به ترکی است، آب سو

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[437] PD:Rumi.

[438] PD:Rumi.

There are other examples where Rumi compares himself to a Greek (his posthumous epithet 'Rumi" actually means Greek even though he never used this epithet in his poetry and sometimes used "Khāmush" (Silent) as his pen-name), Turk, Hindu and Zang. We also mentioned Nezami calling himself Ethiopian allegorically, Khāqāni and Attār using the non-ethnic Hindu symbol for themselves, many figures, moods, attributes and objects in Persian poetry, including the poetry of Nezami, being described by these non-ethnic symbols. Consequently, the interpretation of Persian literature which uses symbolism, especially those infiltrated into Islamic mysticism and Persian poetic imagery, cannot be anachronistically interpreted from a 20th century nation-building viewpoint (e.g. Heyat 2006; Manaf-Oglu 2010). As mentioned already, such authors as Heyat and Manaf-Oglu do not concentrate on the negative attributes of these non-ethnic symbols as well as the negative attributes of the denominatives mentioned (e.g. *torki-kardan*). Nezami and many other poets such Attār, Khāqāni, Sanāi, Rumi, Hafez, Sa'di allegorically and metaphorically used these common staple set of non-ethnic imagery and symbols -- with their concurrent positive and negative meanings in different contexts-- to enrich their poetry.

3.10 Alleged "Turkish Phrases" in Nezami's Works

Finally, another area where distortions have occurred is the phraseology and idioms used by Nezami. Javad Heyat claims that Nezami Ganjavi used Turkish phrases and expressions and then translated them into Persian[439]. For example, Heyat writes that some idioms used by Nezami are originally Azerbaijani Turkish (a language and ethnicity that did not exist in the 12th century) and were translated by Nezami into Persian. Yet, he does not show any Turkish books or writings that existed in the area during the time of Nezami. Furthermore, there is a large overlap between phrases in Arabic, Persian and other languages spoken by Muslims, as well as those spoken Christians in those days. Sometimes an idiom and phrase could pass from one culture to another cultural and over time disappear from the original culture and stay preserved in the new one. This could be the case when linguistic shifts occur in the area and bilingualism was still present. Consequently, the whole thesis of Javad Heyat is not only improvable, but false.

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[439] Heyat 2006. This reminds one of the claims of an author by the name of Roshan Khiyavi who stated that the Avesta and Greek mythology had taken elements from the book of Dede Qorqud! This is a false claim obviously as Dede Qorqud comes around 300 years after Nezami (Bınbash 2010). That book expresses the culture of Turcoman nomads of Anatolia and has no relationship to the Iranian culture that is expressed in the *panj ganj*.

Had Javad Heyat sifted through and carefully analyzed the compilations of Persian expressions or the poetry of Khurasani poets, he would have easily found the same or similar expressions used by Nezami. The Caucasus was one of the area ideal for exchange of idioms and phrases between the Persian language and the languages of Christian population.

To demonstrate this point, we provide a few examples. Javad Heyat claims that the first verse of the following couplet by Nezami:

چه خواریها کزو نامد به رویم	بیا تا کج نشینم راست گویم

Is taken from the following Turkish expression[440]:

گول آگری اوتوراق دوز دانشـاق

Whereas the Dehkhoda dictionary (Dehkhoda: *kaj neshastan*) mentions that Anvari, a Khurasani poet who lived before Nezami, had already used it at least twice:

که کجی ماتم آرد راستی سـور	بیا تا کج نشینم راست گویم

بر جهان افکن نظر پس کج نشین و راست گو	کز خوشـی و خرمی اندرخور نظاره نیست

As noted, the first verse of Anvari is an exact replica of the first portion of the couplet used by Nezami. Hence, this expression has been already in use among Persian Khurasani poets before Nezami. Sometimes Nezami Ganjavi even gives his source for the phrase and yet, Javad Heyat ignores the first hemistich:

How sweet said the man from Nahāvand to the one from Tus	چه خوش گفت آن نهاوندی به طوسی
That the death of the donkey is the wedding (feast) for the dog.	که مرگ خر بود سگ را عروسی

Javad Heyat, for example, deletes the first line about Nahāvand and Tus (two Iranian speaking regions then and now) for his reader and then claims the phrase is taken from a Turkish expression.

Another one which he claims is Turkish is this:

A crow learned how to run like a partridge	کلاغی تک کبک در گوش کرد
Subsequently he forgot how to run like a crow	تک خویشـتن را فراموش کرد

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[440] Heyat 2006:32.

Heyat claims it is taken from the Turkish:

قارغا ایسته‌ده‌ی کهلیک یئرشی یئریسین – اوءز یئریشینی ده ایتیردی

Whereas there is an exact and famous Persian expression brought in Dehkhoda's book of *Phrases and Idioms* and also mentioned in his dictionary (Dehkhoda under *kabk*):

کلاغ راه رفتن کبک را بیاموزد راه رفتن خود را هم فراموش کرد

Another phrase Javad Heyat claims as Turkish is the following from Nezami:

Everyone is clever in giving excuses	هرکسی در بهانه تیزهش است
No one will say my milk is sour	کس نگوید که دوغ من ترش است

Heyat claims it is from the Turkish expression:

هیچ کس اوز آیرینا تورش دئمز

Whereas the words *hich-kas* (nobody) and *torosh* (sour) in this Turkish expression are Persian! Furthermore, Dehkhoda has the following Persian expression in his dictionary (Dehkhoda: *dugh*) which matches exactly the words of Nezami:

هیچ کس به دوغ خود ترش نمی گوید

Another phrase considered Turkish by Javad Heyat:

If you do not want to fall down like a shadow	نمی‌خواهی که زیر افتی چو سایه
Only take one step at a time on the ladder	مشو بر نردبان جز پایه پایه

Heyat believes it is from the Turkish expression:

نردبانی پیلله پیلله چیخلار

Whereas among the three unique words of this expression, two words - *peleh* (Dehkhoda: Nāser-e Khusraw; Nezami uses the equivalent Persian pāyeh="step, rung") and *nardebān* ("ladder") - are Persian. Such an ordinary expression cannot be exclusive to any specific culture; for example, this is similar to the English expression: *one step at a time.* Another claim by Heyat is that the term *del dukhtan* (lit. "to sew heart" and it means "to condole") used by Nezami, is a Turkish expression. However, we note that Attār uses exactly the same term[441]:

پاره دل زانم که در دل دوختن	نرگس تو پاره‌یی کار آمدست

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[441] PD: Attār.

We have already brought above a line from Anvari, which is actually the same as used by Nezami. Here we provide more examples from the poets who had created before Nezami - phrases from Ferdowsi, As'ad Gurgāni and Sanāi, later repeated by Nezami[442]:

فردوسی:	نظامی:
چنان دان که شاهی و پیغمبری	نزد خرد شاهی و پیغمبری
دو گوهر بود در یک انگشتری	چو دو نگین است در انگشتری

We note that the above couplets can be traced back to the Zoroastrianism of the Sassanid era. Ardashir I, the founder of the Sassanids who was also from the priestly class, is quoted as: "Know that religion and kingship are two brothers, and neither can dispense with the other. Religion is the foundation of kingship and kingship protects religion. For whatever lacks a foundation must perish, and whatever lacks a protector disappears"[443]. Two other examples from Ferdowsi, one from As'ad Gurgāni and one from Sanāi[444]:

فردوسی:	نظامی:
جهان را بلندی و پستی تویی	همه نیستند آنچه هستی تویی
ندانم چه ای هر چه هستی تویی	پناه بلندی و پستی تویی
فردوسی:	نظامی:
ز تاج بزرگی چون موی از خمیر	بر سر مویی سرمویی مگیر
برون آمدی مهترا چاره‌گیر	ورنه برون آی چو موی از خمیر

فخرالدین اسعد گرگانی:	نظامی:
شوم خود را بیندازم از آن کوه	سخن‌گو سخن سخت پاکیزه راند
که چون جشنی بود مرگ بانبوه	که مرگ به انبوه را جشن خواند
سنایی:	نظامی:
خرکی را به عروسی خواندند	خران را کسی در عروسی نخواند
خر بخندید و شد از قهقه سست	مگر وقت آن کآب و هیزم نماند
گفت من رقص ندانم بسزا	
مطربی نیز ندانم بدرست	
بهر حمالی خواند مرا	
کآب نیکو کشم و هیزم چست	

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442 PD, Dehkhoda has the poem listed from Sanāi as attributed to Khāqāni.
443 Duchesne-Guillemin 1983:877.
444 PD, Dehkhoda has the poem listed from Sanāi as attributed to Khāqāni.

The important point to be emphasized here is that the mentioned authors had lived before Nezami, so one can assume that these phrases had been prevalent in the Perso-Islamic culture of the time. Another source for quotations in Nezami's poetry is the Qur'an. For example the Quranic expression: "There is no God but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep" (Quran 2:256):

به بیداری که خواب او را نگیرد	بدان زنده که او هرگز نمیرد

Similarly, the Quranic expression: "Praise to God the most beautiful of creators" (Quran 23:14) is used by Nezami:

آرایش آفرین تو بستی	بر صورت من ز روی هستی

And the Quranic expression: "...On no soul doth God Place a burden greater than it can bear." (Quran 2:286) is also used by Nezami:

بقدر زور من نه بار بر من	منه بیش از کشش تیمار بر من

There are many other examples from the pre-Nezami period – such as those from the *Qābus-Nāma*, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, *Siyāsat-Nāma*, etc. In actuality, in most of Nezami's work, he mentions among his sources Arabic, Persian, Pahlavi, Jewish and Nestorian texts, apart from the *Shāhnāma*, Bukhāri, Tabari and also implicitly the Qur'an. He does not mention any Turkish sources by the way. In the *Khusraw o Shirin*, he quoted the Indian-origin and Persian-revised story of the *Kalila o Demna* about 40 times and summarized each moral of the story in one line.

So Javad Heyat's claim, that the Persian idioms used by Nezami are originally from Turkish, and such idioms had never existed in any other language in the region, nor had they been used in Persian before Nezami, etc., are unsubstantiated methodologically. As was shown in the multiple examples above, similar expressions had existed in Persian (as well as definitely in other languages of the regions, having then had literary tradition long before Turkish) prior to the time of Nezami.

Part IV

NEW SOURCES ON THE POPULATION OF AZERBAIJAN, ARRĀN AND SHARVĀN

The ethno-linguistic situation in Arrān, Sharvān and Azerbaijan in the 12th century significantly differed from that in nowadays. To describe all the aspects of ethnology in the Caucasus up to the 12th century is beyond the scope of the present monograph. Even though Ahmad Kasravi (e.g. *shahryārān-e gomnām*), Vladimir Minorsky[445] and some others have done excellent researches on the Iranian rule and presence in the early Islamic period in these regions, those works written in the Early-Mid 20th c. do not reflect the latest important findings in this field. A multi-volume book on Iranian presence in the Caucasus during the pre-Islamic and Islamic era is also lacking. Given these obstacles, we highlight some important and new manuscripts that have appeared in recent years. These manuscripts shed light upon the everyday culture of the Arrān, Sharvān and Azerbaijan in the 12th century: they clearly attest a wide Persian/Iranian ethnic presence in the area and illustrate the dominant Persian culture among the urban Muslim population of cities in Arrān (which includes Ganja) and Sharvān.

4.1 Iranian Languages of Azerbaijan and Arrān

Iranian incursions in the Caucasus can be dated from the Scythians and Cimmerians, whereas more substantial presence of Iranians in the region can be dated from the Achaemenids[446], if not the Medes. This presence was strengthened during the Parthian and Sassanid eras[447]. Under the pan-Arsacid Parthian family

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[445] Minorsky 1953; idem 1958.
[446] Lang 1983; Minorsky 1958.
[447] ibid.

confederation ruling Iberia, Armenia and Caucasian Albania, Iranian culture spread in the area and Parthian became the language of the educated[448]. With the Arsacid Parthian dynasty of Caucasian Albania, it is reasonable to suggest that the language and literature of administrator, and record keeping of the imperial chancellery naturally became the Parthian language written in the Aramaic ideogram script[449]. Historically, the Caspian Iranian dialects including the Talyshi language, which belong to the North West Iranian group of languages, are related to Parthian[450]. Apart from the Caspian dialects which extend to Caucasian Albania, Parthian left a strong mark on the Armenian language. Parthian itself as a Western Middle Iranian language was closely related to Middle Persian, and the two languages share a high degree of mutual intelligibility.

Middle Persian replaced Parthian in the territory of greater Iran, as language of the rulers and also as the main administrative language. This transition should not be seen as a sharp transition since both languages belong to the Western Middle Iranian language family and shared a high degree of mutual intelligibility. New Persian, while a continuation of Middle Persian, has a strong Parthian component as well. In Caucasian Albania (Arrān and Sharvān in the Islamic era), Middle Persian became the official language and had bigger importance than languages from the Caucasian linguistic family[451]. Even when Christianity spread at the cost of Zoroastrianism as well as pagan religions, the seal of the Christian church of Albania was inscribed with the Middle Persian language; which clearly demonstrates the larger cultural and political influence of Persia[452]. The Middle Persian language at that time had an official status in Caucasian Albania and was used by even the Church elite. Two important remnants of Middle Persian are the Middle Persian vocabulary found in Armenian as well as the Tat-Persian language[453], the latter being a SW Iranian language (also called the "Persid" family) and a continuation of a variant of Middle Persian. An interesting feature of Tat-Persian is its multi-religious background which encompasses Muslims (both Shi'ite and Sunni), Jews and Christians. The ancient Jewish communities of Eastern Transcaucasia and Daghestan still speak Tat-Persian

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[448] Toumanoff 1986.
[449] Gadjiev 2007:104.
[450] Asatrian 1995; Windfuhr 1989.
[451] Shnirelman 2001:79. The author uses "Caucasian Albanian language", however this language is attested unambiguously in Armenian sources as Aghvank and one does not know if it was a uniform language or many divergent dialects.

[452] Gadjiev 2007:103-105.
[453] Minorsky 1936.

dialects while there are Tat-Persians who also belong to the Armenian Church[454]. Both these non-Muslim groups who speak the Tat-Persian language must have existed before the Islamic era since conversion from Islam to Armenian Christianity and Judaism would have been unusual and prohibited[455]. However, the NW Iranian languages were also increasing during the Sassanid era. One might carefully state that there was a continuum of Western Iranian languages, among which Parthian and Middle Persian just represent the two of which we have extant samples from. According to Minorsky, the presence of Iranian settlers in Transcaucasia, especially in the proximity of passes, played an important role in spreading Iranian languages[456]. Some names such as *Sharvān*, *Baylaqān* and *Layzān* point that some of these Iranian inhabitants were from the regions around the southern Caspian Sea[457].

Eastern Transcaucasia (Arrān and Sharvān) was ruled continuously (with the exception of the minor Seleucids and Roman rule) by Iranian rulers under the Achaemenids (if not the Medes), Parthian and Sassanid dynasties. After the collapse

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[454] ibid.

[455]In an email correspondence with Prof. Don Stilo, he stated that: " I would say that the closest relative of Caucasian Tat is definitely Persian. Also remember that this is a form of Persian that came directly from Fars province before New Persian became standardized in Khorasan, that is, in pre-Dari times. This language has been in the [Caucasus] area for about ±1500 years so that the structure is really different from modern Persian, even in the grammar of the verb. This language is spoken in the Republic of Azerbaijan by both Shi'ite and Sunni communities, and there is a very large Jewish community that is divided between Republic of Azerbaijan (Quba area) and Daghestan (Russia, near Darband) and now also with a large community in Israel. In addition, it is also by a very small community of Christians who belong to the Armenian Church but don't speak Armenian or do not consider themselves to be Armenian. The Christian community originally only consisted of two villages in the Republic of Azerbaijan but since the Azerbaijan-Armenia war, most (or all?) of the Christian Tats have left Azerbaijan and moved to Armenia, primarily because the Azerbaijanis thought they were Armenian and it became dangerous for them. One of my Armenian colleagues in Yerevan worked with this community and he tells me that very few of them can still speak Tat, mostly only old people. As far as the Jewish speakers go, there is a large community in Israel and when I did field work with them there 2 years ago, they were extremely helpful to me. They told me that their community there had a population of about 150,000 but probably only 30% still speak the language. The largest immigration into Israel was in the 1970's so the generations now born outside of Azerbaijan have not been learning the language. The youngest speaker I encountered when I was there was 34 years old. However, there are (Jewish) full native speakers of all generations still living in Azerbaijan and in Daghestan although they are not very numerous." (Correspondence in March 2011)

[456] Minorsky 1958:14.
[457] ibid.

of the Sassanids, the local Iranian Mihranids ruled the area for nearly two hundred years more while paying nominal allegiance to the bigger surrounding powers. The fact that two of Nezami's stories center around the Sassanids and the other is a mainly Persian representation of Alexander, is not an accident but rather the result of the long Iranian cultural legacy that was present in this area. That is, there had been a strong Iranian cultural base in the area before the advent of Islam.

After the Islamic era and during the 10th century, first account travelers provide a description of the people and languages of Azerbaijan and the mainly Muslim portions of the Caucasus. Al-Mas'udi mentions Persians in Arrān, Darband, Armenia[458], and Baylaqān; he also mentions Fahlavi, Dari-Persian and Azari (Iranian language)[459] as Persian dialects[460]. Ibn Hawqal (d. ca 981) states: "the language of the people of Azerbaijan and most of the people of Armenia is Persian, which binds them together, while Arabic is also used among them; among those who speak Persian, there are few who do not understand Arabic; and some merchants and landowners are even adept in it. And groups from around Armenia and its surrounding environs speak other languages similar to Armenian and this is also true with regards to the people of Dabil and Naxchivan, and its surrounding environ; the language of the people of Barda' is Arrānian.."[461]. With regards to the mount Sabalān, Ibn Hawqal states that each village has its own dialect which is different from "Persian and Azari"[462]. According to de Planhol, based on Balādhuri, the mountains of Azerbaijan

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[458] Note the territory denoted as Armenia in the 10th century period had a wider border and was much larger than the modern country of Armenia. According to Ibn Hawqal, part of it was controlled by Muslims while other parts were controlled by Christians. Ibn Hawqal seems to have concentrated more on the Muslim regions.

[459] This Azari language should not be confused with the modern Azerbaijani Turkic language which has adopted the name "Azeri" in the last century or so. The Azari language mentioned by Ibn Hawqal and Al-Mas'udi, was a NW Iranian language and also has been (more correctly in our viewpoint) classified under the Fahlaviyāt. Extant samples from the old language of Azerbaijan may be found in the recent important discovery of Safina-ye Tabrizi, as well as other remnants of the Old language of Azerbaijan (Yarshater 1987). As mentioned by Riāhi, the Fahlaviyāt dialects (Tafazzoli 1999) were denoted by their region, but shared a high degree of mutual intelligibility (see Sharvāni 1996:28-29 for three evidence of this fact). Hence they were called Rāzi in Rayy (part of modern Tehran province) and Azari in Azerbaijan, and sometimes, the dialect in Azerbaijan was called Rāzi in some manuscripts due to the fact that Eastern Iranians encountered Fahlaviyāt dialects in Rayy when travelling from Khurasan.

[460] Al-Mas'udi, 1894:77-8.
[461] Ibn Hawqal 1987:96.
[462] ibid.:94.

were occupied by Kurds[463] who carried out regular migration in the flanks of the ranges – in the Sabalān, for example, where the first Arab invaders undertook not to interfere with their movement[464]. Those may very well be different dialects of North-Western Iranian and related to such languages as Gilaki, Daylamite, Talyshi, Tabari. Along similar lines, Estakhri (d. ca 934) states: "In Adherbeijān, Armenia and Arrān they speak Persian and Arabic, except for the area around the city of Dabil: they speak Armenian around that city, and in the country of Barda' people speak Arrānian"[465].

We do not have any information on the Arrānian language; it must have been named after the geographical name Arrān rather than after any specific group (e.g. Caucasian Albanians). Minorsky mentions that it could be "Caucasian Albanian",[466] while according to C.E. Bosworth, it is "presumably an Iranian language"[467]. We believe, the so-called Arrānian could hardly be Caucasian Albanian. The Caucasian Albanians, who had followed Christianity and had been subordinate to the larger Armenian church, had been rapidly absorbed into the Armenian people, while the non-Christian Caucasian Albanians were first absorbed into Zoroastrian Iranians and then into the general Muslim population[468]. Currently, there is no evidence of any Caucasian Albanian Islamic culture and the term Arrānian needs to be approached cautiously. Based on these words recorded by Ibn Hawqal, Arrānian was likely an Iranian language or a language close to Armenian; currently, we have no extant written evidence of the language which is explicitly called "Arrānian" and its identification with the Caucasian Albanian language is not firm. The name Barda' or Barḏa', which Estakhri and Ibn Hawqal mention with regards to the city where the Arrānian language was spoken, is itself the Arabicized form of the word *Partav* which is the Armenian (possibly Parthian loanword) term for the city. In Middle Persian, the city was called *Pērōzāpāt*[469]. Ibn Hawqal who calls the language of Barda' as Arrānian, mentions several local words[470]. These words may provide the best clue currently available on the affiliation of the Arrānian language. Beside these words, Ibn Hawqal mentions the gates of Kurds in Barda', where the Sunday bazaar is called

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[463] For the evolution of this term see Asatrian (Asatrian 2009).

[464] de Planhol 1968:413.
[465] Estakhri 1994:195
[466] Minorsky 1958:12.
[467] Bosworth 1989a.
[468] Bournoutian 2009:28.
[469] Bosworth 1989b.
[470] Ibn Hawqal 1987:86-87.

Korakī [471] - (ultimately a Greek form *kyriákos* (the Lord's Day), but taken from its Armenian adaptation *kiraki* (Sunday) – here in the meaning of the Sunday market).

The local word *sor-māhi* ("red-fish" in Persian) is mentioned by Ibn Hawqal[472]. Bosworth has the alternative reading of this word as *shur-māhi* which means "salt fish" in Persian[473]. Whether *shur-māhi* or *sor-māhi*, both words are of clear Iranian origin. Another local word in Barda' mentioned by Ibn Hawqal, is *ruqāl*[474]. The Arabic reading of "q" for Persian "k" is a common occurrence (e.g. Quhistan/Kuhistan or Abarqu/Abarkuh). *Kāl* in Persian means "unripe" and is used for unripe fruits. Ibn Hawqal describes this particular type of fruit, *ruqāl*, as follows: "Its seed is sweet, and the fruit itself is very tasty if ripe and very tart if unripe". A reasonable interpretation of this word is that *rukāl* might mean a fruit whose outer layer (face, or Persian *ru*) is unripe (Persian *kāl*) but whose seed is very tasty. Another word is a toponym near the city – *andrāb*, which is clearly an Iranian word. There are two more words given - for different species of fish. One is *d-r-ā-q-n* and the other is *q-sh-u-b-h*. Ibn Hawqal writes that *drāqan* is a very oily fish[475]. As for *qashubah*, Ibn Hawqal simply mentions it is very tasty.

The Arrānian language itself might be Iranian or a language with many Iranian loanwords (like Armenian). Beside these terms, the majority of toponyms that Ibn Hawqal mentions in Arrān are Iranian (e.g. Ganja, Shābarān, Sharvān, Darband, Baylaqān, Bardij, Warthān, Layzān, etc.), Armenian (e.g. Barda' from Armenian *Partav*), and a few of them - Arabic/Semitic (e.g. Shamāxiyya). These toponyms to a large extent reflect the content of the population in the 10th century and there is not a single Turkish toponym mentioned by any of the 10th century travelers.

Similarly, in the rare manuscript *Dastur al-Adwiyyah*, the words denoting fruit and plant names in Arrān, Sharvān and Azerbaijan[476] (described in more detail below), are of Iranian origin. This provides further testament of the large presence of Iranian languages and dialects in the region during this time. Al-Muqaddasi (d. late 4th/10th century) considers Azerbaijan, Armenia and Arrān as part of the 8th division of lands. He states: "The languages of the eighth division are Iranian (*al-'ajamyya*). It is partly Dari and partly *monqaleq* ("convoluted" or "vernacular") and all of them are named Persian"[477]. Al-Muqaddasi also writes on the general region of Armenia, Arrān and Azerbaijan: "They have big beards, their speech is not attractive. In Arminya they

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[471] Bosworth 1989b.
[472] Ibn Hawqal 1987:87.
[473] Bosworth 1989b.
[474] Ibn Hawqal 1987:86-88.
[475] ibid.:86-88.
[476] Sadeqi 2002.
[477] Al-Muqaddasi 1983/1:377.

speak Armenian and in al-Ran, Ranian (Arrānian). Their Persian is understandable and is close to Khurasanian Persian in sound"[478]. Given the testimonies of Estakhri and Ibn Hawqal, with that of Al-Muqaddasi, we can state that three major languages in the area were Armenian, Arrānian and Persian. Estakhri mentions Persian as the prevalent language of Arrān. The Persian close to Khurasanian Persian in sound mentioned by Al-Muqaddasi was likely an ancestor of Tat-Persian (its closest relative being the present-day Dari-Persian). This would make sense, since the essential roots of both Tat-Persian and literary Khurasani Persian (Dari-Persian) is part of the larger Middle Persian continuum.

All these testimonies (especially the Arab travelers) clearly show a wide presence of Persian/Iranian languages in the Caucasus. Taking into account these primary sources from the period that has also been designated as the *Iranian Intermezzo*, a recent source asserts that: "The multi-ethnic population of the Albanian left-bank at this time is increasingly moving to the Persian language. Mainly this applies to the cities of Arrān and Sharvān, as from 9-10th centuries these are two main areas named in the territory of Azerbaijan. With regard to the rural population, it would seem, mostly retained for a long time, their old languages, and related to modern Daghestanian family, especially Lezgin"[479]. However, given the presence of Middle Persian in the Sassanid era and Parthian in the Parthian era, it can be stated that the Iranian population of the area dates back at least to these eras, but was strengthened with the Islamization of the area as a Persianate Islamic culture developed throughout the Iranian world. Despite some unsound claims, there is currently no proof of a Caucasian Albanian Islamic culture and the Caucasian Albanians had been largely absorbed by Armenians before the arrival of the Saljuqs.

As noted, such authors as al-Mas'udi mention Persian as a term that encompasses various Iranian languages such as Dari, Fahlavi and Azari[480]. Nāser-e Khusraw in his meeting with Qatrān Tabrizi, states in his *Safar-Nāma* that "in Tabriz I saw a poet named Qatrān, who wrote decent poetry, but did not know Persian very well. He came to me and brought the works of Monjik and Daqiqi, which he read aloud to me.

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[478] Al-Muqaddasi 1983/2:66.

[479] Rybakov 2002/2. Note this was also a period which is called the *Iranian Intermezzo* by Minorsky and described in some of his works including Minorsky 1953. It is a period when Iranian dynasties reigned in many areas including large parts of the Caucasus.

[480] Note this Azari which is mentioned by Ibn Hawqal and al-Mas'udi is an Iranian dialect and should not be confused with the term "Azerbaijani Turkish" which is shortened to "Azeri". The Turkish language has only had the added appellation of "Azeri" since the 19th/20th centuries. As mentioned previously, Azari is a regional name for the Fahlaviyāt (NW Iranian vernaculars of the Islamic era) in Azerbaijan.

Whenever he came across a meaning too difficult, he asked me. I explained to him and he wrote it down. He also recited his own poetry"[481].

There are three different opinions on this passage. This passage, according to some, describes Nāser-e Khusraw boasting about his poetic abilities. Kasravi believes that this portion of the text was corrupted (given that the oldest manuscript of the *Safar-Nāma* is very recent) and that while Qatrān spoke the old Fahlavi language of Azerbaijan, his Divan showed perfect acquaintance with Persian[482]. Curiously, the manuscript (Nāser-e Khusraw 1977) has the word "Farsi" for Persian here, but when Nāser-e Khusraw enters the city of Akhlat in historical Armenia (present-day Turkey), he mentions the three languages of Arabic, Persian (*pārsi*) and Armenian. It doesn't make sense for the same author to concurrently use *fārsi* and *pārsi*, and at that time, only *pārsi* was used throughout by Nāser-e Khusraw in his own poetry[483]. However, the most plausible and correct explanation about this anecdote is noted by de Blois: "The point of the anecdote is clear that the Divans of these poets contained Eastern Iranian (i.e. Soghdian etc.) words that were incomprehensible to a Western Persian like Qatrān, who consequently took advantage of an educated visitor from the East, Nāser-e Khusraw, to ascertain their meaning"[484]. Matini who has done a detailed study of the vocabulary of the *Lughat-e Furs* of Asadi Tusi (written for poets of the area not familiar with Khurasanian-Dari), enumerates 514 Eastern Persian and 131 Arabic/mixed Persian-Arabic compounds used in the sample poetry of the *Lughat-e Furs*. Out of these words, only 145 words are explicated by definition and their meanings are provided by Asadi. Consequently, the other Persian words were known in the Iranian languages of the area, since Asadi Tusi does not bother to provide their meaning[485]. Besides, the fact that this is a Persian to Persian dictionary and elucidates the Eastern Iranian words in Persian, is further testament to the fact that the other words (with the possibility of local phonological differences) were basically understood by the Western Persians of Arrān and Azerbaijan. This could explain what Nāser-e Khusraw means with regards to Qatrān, since Nāser-e Khusraw does not state "Qatrān does not know Persian", rather he says "Qatrān does not know Persian very well": some words, which were exclusive to Khurasanian-Persian (due to Eastern Iranian languages), were not found in the Western Iranian dialects (Fahlaviyāt) spoken by Qatrān.

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[481] Nāser-e Khusraw 1986:6.
[482] Rypka 1968a:194.
[483] Unfortunately the oldest extant manuscript of the Safar-Nāma is from the 19th century while a very small portion of it is quoted in the Safina-ye Tabriz.

[484] de Blois 2004:187.
[485] Matini 1993b:408-410.

Qatrān Tabrizi himself calls his language as *pārsi* (Persian) and compares it to Dari-Persian[486]:

The nightingale is on top of the flower like a minstrel who has lost her heart	بلبل به سان مطرب بیدل فراز گل
It bemoans sometimes in pārsi (Persian) and sometimes in dari (Khurasani/Eastern Persian)	گه پارسی نوازد و گاهی زند دری

The recently discovered manuscript of the *Safina-ye Tabriz* (Anthology of manuscripts in Tabriz) provides historical proof of what the manuscript designates as *zabān-e tabrizi* ("the language of Tabriz"),[487] which is a language of the NW Iranian family and was the native language of Qatrān designated by him as *pārsi* (Persian) in the couplet mentioned above. Poets, mystics, writers and personalities that composed poetry or were quoted in the Tabrizi dialect (part of the NW Iranian vernacular) include Baba Faraj Tabrizi, Māmā 'Esmat Tabrizi, Hafez Hossein Karbalai, Pir Zehtāb Tabrizi, Homām Tabrizi, Maghrebi Tabrizi, Xwāja Muhammad Kojjāni, Sharaf al-Din Rāmi Tabriz and others[488]. We noted that many of these personalities had Sufi titles such as Baba, Māmā and Pir pointing to their common background. The first poet from Azerbaijan proper to whom Turkish poetry is attributed, is Seyyed Ali Hosseini Tabrizi also known by his epithet of Qāsim Anvār (born circa 1356 A.D., i.e. about 300 years after Qatrān). The overwhelming majority of Qāsim Anvār's poetic output is in Persian, followed by small collections of Fahlavi[489] and also a smaller number of poems in a classical Turkish dialect. He was a Seyyed, which means of the Arabic ancestry, but his native dialect was probably the Fahlavi, in which he composed his poems; the latter having had no currency in Khurasan where Anvār spent most of his life in the Timurid domain. The Turkish poems of Qāsim Anvār were possibly composed just in Timurid Khurasan, where he lived promoting the Saffavviya Sufi order, and the Turkish literary renaissance was taking place alongside the Persian literature. On the other hand, it may show the beginning of bilingualism in the area (c.f. Badr-e Sharvāni who was not Turkish[490]) and along with

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[486] Riāhi 1988.

[487] Sadeqi 2001; Tabrizi 2002.

[488] Yarshater 1987; Sadeqi 2001; Tabrizi 2002; Tafazzoli 1999.

[489] Tafazzoli 1999.

[490] Sadeqi 2003. Badr-e Sharvāni also has poetry in a Fahlavi dialect (Tafazzoli 1999). It is interesting that despite the fact that Badr Sharvāni spoke a Fahlavi dialect and has many poems deriding the Turcomans, the editor of his Divan, Abulfazl Hashim Oghlu Rahimov has falsely claimed that his mother tongue was Turkish (ibid.)! This claim is untrue from an analysis of Badr Sharvāni poetry (Sadeqi 2003). Furthermore, in the publication of Badr's

his vast Persian output numbering more than 15000 verses, has also close to one hundred lines of Persian/Fahlavi vernacular and Turkish lines) where Fahlavi speakers, who were still the greater majority of urban centers, were coming into contact with Turkish during the black and white sheep Turkmen era.

Currently, Qatrān Tabrizi and Asadi Tusi (originally from Tus, but fled to Naxchivan during the Ghaznavid era) represent the oldest known authors who lived in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, and who composed Dari-Persian poetry. However, Tabari mentioned that the elders (Arabic: *shaykhs*) of Marāgha praised the bravery and literary ability of Muhammad ibn Ba'ith (local Arab ruler in Azerbaijan circa early 9th century) and quoted his Persian poetry[491]. According to Minorsky: "This important passage, already quoted by Barthold, is evidence of the existence of the cultivation of poetry in Persian in northwestern Persia at the beginning of the 9th century"[492]. Riāhi believes that these poems belong to the Fahlaviyāt Persian dialects[493]. What is clear is that Iranian language poetry had already been present even before Asadi Tusi. The oldest extant testimony of written New Persian literature (not Middle Persian inscriptions) from Azerbaijan and the Caucasus shows that before the Saljuqs, Persian-Dari poetry had been patronized by various minor dynasties. Qatrān Tabrizi or Asadi Tusi served the courts of such rulers as the Shaddādids of Ganja, the Rawwādids of Tabriz and Abu Dulaf of Naxchivan. The fact that these minor dynasties were patronizing Persian poetry shows that Dari-Persian had already spread in the region prior to the Saljuq invasion. The Persian[494] language presence in the area of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus was of two types. One is the SW Iranian languages which are very close to the Khurasanian-Dari (New Persian) and the others are the NW Iranian languages which are also collectively called Fahlaviyāt. Remnants of these two are found still today in the Tat-Persian of the Caucasus whose

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Divan, Rahimov has omitted some of the harsh comments of Badr Sharvāni about the Turcomans (ibid.). A poor entry written by Rahimov about Badr Sharvāni in Encyclopaedia Iranica was excised recently due to a letter by the second author (Doostzadeh 2009a) of this book. The second author of this book simply forwarded the article of Sadeqi (Sadeqi 2003) to the editors of the Encyclopaedia Iranica; whereby they made their decision to delete the biased article written by Rahimov.

[491] Minorsky 1991b:504; Sharvāni 1996:24.

[492] Minorsky 1991b:504.

[493] Sharvāni 1996:18.

[494] We use the term Persian as explained in the sense of Al-Mas'udi, Qatrān Tabrizi and writers of that era. The narrow definition of Persian only for Dari or Pārsi-Dari while convenient for scholars is not historically accurate as the term Persian encompasses the bulk of Iranian languages at that time since the speakers and classical sources referred to these languages as such (e.g. Al-Muqaddasi; al-Mas'udi; Biruni). See fn 20 of this book.

closest relative is New Persian (and a SW Iranian language)[495] and also in Talyshi, and Kurdish[496], which may be widely classified as part of the Fahlaviyāt continuum (NW Iranian vernaculars).

None of these 10th century travelers and authors - Ibn Hawqal, Estakhri, al-Muqaddasi, al-Mas'udi and other mentioned – has left any note about any form of the Turkish language in Azerbaijan or the Caucasus. Although, raids by the Khazars did occur in Transcaucasia during the late Sassanid and early Umayyad era, there is no unambiguous reference to any permanent settlements[497]. As shown by these travelers and also all the extant written testimonies, the significant languages of Azerbaijan, Arrān, Armenia and Sharvān were Persian and other Iranian/Persian dialects (e.g. Tati, and Fahlavi which includes Azari and possibly Arrānian), Armenian, Arabic and Arrānian. As noted already, Dari-Persian was already being patronized by the courts of the Kurdish Shaddādid, and the Iranicized families of the Rawwādids and Sharvānshāhs. This shows that it had been already established in the area before the Saljuq era. Further proof is also the existence, prior to the Saljuqs, of such poets as Qatrān, Asadi Tusi and possibly Muhammad Ibn Ba'ith. Islamicization of the population also helped in the spread of Dari-Persian, as the urban centers of Arrān and Sharvān were rapidly adopting the Persian language in the 9th-10th centuries[498]. In the late 11th century, the Saljuq incursions began and the first wave

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[495] Despite progressive Turkicization of the region, in 1886, the Tats who speak the Tat-Persian Persid (SW-Iranian) language numbered more than 120,000 in Eastern Transcaucasia and 3,600 in Daghestan (Volkova 1994: 357-361). According to Abbas Qoli Aqa Bakikhanov, a local Muslim historian, who wrote in the early 19th century: "There are eight villages in Tabarsaran which are: Jalqan, Rukan, Maqatir, Kamakh, Ridiyan, Homeydi, Mata'i, and Bilhadi..... They speak the Tat language, which is one of the languages of Old Persia. The districts situated between the two cities of Shamakhi and Qodyal, which is now the city of Qobbeh, include Howz, Lahej, and Qoshunlu in Sharvān and Barmak, Sheshpareh and the lower part of Boduq in Qobbeh, and all the country of Baku, except six villages of Turcoman, speak Tat" (Bakikhanov 2009). This shows that Tat-Persian was more widespread in Eastern Transcaucasia during the 19th century than it is today. Its decrease has to do with both natural and political assimilation policies followed in the last century.

[496] The number of Kurds like the Tats decreased after the 20th century (Vanly 1992). The Talysh were forcefully impacted by intensive Turkification in the USSR era (Shnirelman 2001:90). Like the Tats, the domain and number of both Kurds and Talysh has decreased dramatically in the 20th century due to local government sponsored assimilation policies.

[497] Golden 1992:386.
[498] Rybakov 2002/2.

of nomadic Oghuz Turcomans came to the area[499]. However, contrary to what has been claimed by some Soviet and other sources, and repeated carelessly by some authors, the area was just entering its first phase of the gradual Turkification[500]. This first phase affected the nomadic plains rather than the urban centers. The old manuscripts that have recently surfaced bear witness upon this point in a decisive manner. They are a complete mirror of the Iranian culture of Ganja, Tabriz (capital of the Eldiguzids and the Ilkhanids), and Marāgha (the capital of the Ahmadilis and the Ilkhanids) during the Saljuq era.

4.2 First-Hand Account on Ganja

Hamdollah Mostowfi puts 659 A.D. as the date of the foundation of Ganja, while the Armenian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi mentions 859 A.D.[501]. However, as Minorsky and Bosworth note, the Iranian dialectal name of Ganza/Ganja ("treasury") indicates that the city is much older and existed in the pre-Islamic era[502]. The historical Armenian name *Gandzak* which is a loanword from Parthian (closely connected to Fahlaviyāt post-Islamic languages) also shows that the city likely existed in the pre-Islamic era. When discussing Ganja, like most major cities of that era, one does not only include the city itself but also its adjacent villages and minor towns.

An important extant source from the period of Nezami about Ganja is the *History of the Armenians*[503] written by the Armenian clergymen and historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i (1200/1202-1271), who was born in the city of Ganja. His surname containing the word *Gandzak* reflects the Armenian pronunciation of the city while the Persian pronunciation was Ganja. He was born in the early 13th century (near the end of Nezami Ganjavi's life) and witnessed the Mongol destruction of the city in the 1230s. Therefore, this source is very important as it contains useful information on the city from a native of Ganja during the era of Nezami Ganjavi. Indeed, we are not aware of any native Muslim historian from Ganja who would write about the city during this period. With regards to Ganja before the Mongol period, Gandzakets'i

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[499] Golden 1992:386; de Planhol 1987; idem 2004; Yarshater 1987. Note the previous attack circa 1040 A.D. by Oghuz Nomads was defeated and they were driven out of the area by local rulers (Bosworth 1968:32-33)

[500] Golden 1992:386.

[501] Minorsky 1958:57.

[502] Bosworth 2000; Minorsky 1958:57.

[503] This book, as far as has been researched, is not known in Iran due to lack of a Persian translation.

states in explicit terms that: "This city was densely populated with Persians[504](original Armenian Grabar text: *Ays k'aghak's bazmambox lts'eal parsko'k', ayl sakaw ew k'ristone'iwk'*) and a small number of Christians. It was extremely inimical to Christ and His worship ...An extremely large poplar tree (which they call *chandari*) which was close to the city was observed to turn around"[505]. With regards to the word *chandar* (c.f. with *sepidār* which has been used for a type of poplar tree in Persian), it is Iranian and *dār* in classical Persian (as in many Persian and Iranian dialects today) and *dar* in modern Kurdish (Kurmanji) means tree. For example the wood-pecker is called *dārkub* (literally tree-banger) in Persian. The Persian affix *-i* in the end of *chandari* denotes a particular object, association or belonging. Such a clear Iranian word used by the natives of Ganja provides us a sample of the Persian language of the city. Gandzakets'i then mentions that the city was destroyed by the Tatars[506] due to fact that "It was extremely inimical to Christ and His worship"[507] although the Turco-Mongol nomads of the Mongol confederation did not treat the Christians of the area any better.

He again alludes to the city's population describing the period when the Khwarazmshāh took over the city in 1225,: "He (Orghan) oppressed the residents of the city of Gandzak with manifold torments—not merely the Christians, but the Persians too—by demanding numerous taxes"[508]. It is important to note that when Gandzakets'i uses the term Persians, he does not mean all the Muslims. Indeed, he differentiates between Persians, Arabs (Tāchiks)[509], Turks and Kurds.

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[504] The prolific and erudite scholar, Dr. Robert Bedrosian has performed the arduous task of translating this important text and making it available for free on the Internet. He has used the term Iranian for Persian everywhere in his English translation since these two terms are often used equivalently. The original Armenian Grabar of the mentioned sentence reads as: "*Ays k'aghak's bazmambox lts'eal parsko'k', ayl sakaw ew k'ristone'iwk'…*" (Ganjakets'i 1961:235) and throughout the whole original text, the word Parsko (Persian) is used rather than Iranian. We have decided to use Persian to reflect the original Grabar.

[505] Ganjakets'i 1986:197.

[506]Tatar is a term for the Mongol invaders used by the Ganjakets'i. It should be noted that the majority of the tribes in the Turco-Mongol confederation of Changhiz Khan were actually Turkic but were collectively also called Tatars. Later on, the term Tatar was used on occasions for both Turks and Mongols in Islamic history as these two groups lived a similar nomadic lifestyle, spoke closely related languages and had similar physical features.

[507] Ganjakets'i 1986:197.

[508] ibid.:197.

[509] Very much like the Middle Persian tradition where Tajik denotes Arab. Later on Iranian Zoroastrians, and subsequently Turks (probably via Manichean Soghdians) started to use the term primarily for Iranian Muslims. Subsequently, the name was adopted as another synonym for Persians by its own speakers.

Several examples point to the fact that the author mentions Persians and Muslims separately. With regards to Persians and the Islamic conquest, he writes: "As soon as they experienced victory, they went against the Persian lordship and killed the Persian king Yazkert. Thus ended the kingdom of the Persian Sasanians"[510]. Similarly, he mentions that the Persians, who were of the religion of the Arab (Tāchiks), aided the Khwarazmshāh in Tiblis and forced others to abandon Christianity: "The Persians residing there aided him and he captured the city killing many people and forcing many others to abandon Christianity and accept the deceptive and fanatical teaching of the Tāchiks"[511]. This passage makes it clear that the Tāchiks (Tāzis = Arabs) were different from Persians, but the Persians had already accepted Islam (which the author calls the "teachings of Tāchiks"). Persian-Christian culture was either insignificant in the 13th century or actually never developed in the Caucasus[512]: although some founding members of Georgian and Armenian dynasties and saints had Iranian roots, they were absorbed in the Georgian and Armenian cultures. Persian-Jews of the Caucasus and Daghestan, however, have retained their Tat-Persian language, and a small Persian-Tat community follows the Armenian Church[513].

Many other examples of the differentiation of various ethnic groups by Gandzakets'i can be cited: "kingdoms conquered by them: from the Persians, Tachiks, Turks, Armenians, Georgians, Aghbanians/Aghuans and from all peoples under them"[514], "He then assembled his countless troops from among the Persians, Tāchiks

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[510] Ganjakets'i 1986:51.

[511] ibid.:189.

[512] Curiously, from the classical age of new Persian poetry, we do not have a record of a single Persian Christian poet from the Caucasus. This may hold for the greater Iranian cultural continent where Islam reigned supreme.

[513] In an Email correspondence with Prof. Don Stilo, he mentions: "This language is spoken in the Republic of Azerbaijan by both Shi'ite and Sunni communities, and there is a very large Jewish community that is divided between Azerbaijan (Quba area) and Daghestan (Russia, near Derbent) and now also with a large community in Israel. In addition, it is also by a very small community of Christians (who belong to the Armenian Church but don't speak Armenian or do not consider themselves to be Armenian). The Christian community originally only consisted of two villages Azerbaijan but since the Azerbaijan-Armenia war, most (or all?) the Christian Tats have left Azerbaijan and moved to Armenia (primarily because the Azerbaijanis thought they were Armenian and it became dangerous for them). One of my Armenian colleagues in Yerevan worked with this community and he tells me that very few of them can still speak Tat, mostly only old people". (Correspondence in March 2011)

[514] Ibid:260.

and Turks, and came to Armenia"[515], "[The Qifchāqs] brought the honorable men [of the captives] and sold them for some clothing or food. Persians bought them..."[516], "Persian and Tachiks who were especially inimical toward the Christians"[517], "... to go against the Tachik capital, Baghdad, which was the seat of the Tachik dominion. The king who sat in Baghdad was not called *sultan* or *melik* as the Turkish, Persian or Kurdish autocrats customarily are, but *caliph*, that is, a descendant of Mahmet"[518]. Since Gandzakets'i was from the city of Ganja itself and was born during the time of Nezami, when he described it as densely populated with Persians, he gives a firsthand account.

4.3 The *Nozhat al-Majāles*

The recently found manuscript *Nozhat al-Majāles* ("Enjoyment for gatherings")[519] also complements and validates the statement of Gandzakets'i. The *Nozhat al-Majāles* is an anthology of about 4100 quatrains by some 300 poets of the 11th-13th centuries, which was compiled by the Persian poet Jamal al-Din Khalil Sharvāni. The book was compiled in the name of 'Ala al-Din Sharvānshāh Fariborz III (r. 1225-51), the son of Gushtasp, and dedicated to him[520]. The single extant manuscript of this anthology was copied by Esmāi'l b. Esfandyār b. Muhammad b. Esfandyār Abhari on 31 July 1331 A.D.[521]. Being a native of Sharvān, Jamal Khalil included in his anthology 115 poets (including Nezami and Khāqāni) from Arrān, Sharvān and Azerbaijan. Given the date of the manuscript, the book is very valuable in identifying quatrains that were wrongly attributed to different authors or whose authors were unknown[522]. Thirty six quatrains by Khayyam and sixty quatrains by Mahsati Ganjavi in this anthology represent some of the oldest and most reliable collections of their works[523].

It is worth quoting the late Muhammad-Amin Riāhi who undertook the enormous task of publishing this important work in 1987 and again in 1996 (2nd edition) in detail: "The most significant merit of *Nozhat al-Majāles*, as regards the history of Persian literature, is that it embraces the works of 115 poets from the northwestern Iran (Arrān, Sharvān, Azerbaijan; including 24 poets from Ganja alone), where, due to

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[515] Ganjakets'i 1986:187.
[516] Ibid:169.
[517] Ibid:260
[518] ibid.:314.
[519] Sharvāni 1996; Riāhi 2008.
[520] Riāhi 2008.
[521] ibid.
[522] ibid.
[523] ibid.

the change of language, the heritage of Persian literature in that region has almost entirely vanished. The fact that numerous quatrains of some poets (e.g. Amir Shams al-Din As'ad of Ganja, 'Aziz Sharvāni, Shams Sojāsi, Amir Najib-al-Din 'Omar of Ganja, Badr Teflisi, Kamāl Marāghi, Sharaf Sāleh Baylaqāni, Borhān Ganjei, Elyās Ganjei, Bakhtiār Sharvāni) are mentioned together like a series tends to suggest the author was in possession of their collected works. *Nozhat al-Majāles* is thus a mirror of the social conditions at the time, reflecting the full spread of Persian language and the culture of Iran throughout that region, clearly evidenced by the common use of spoken idioms in poems as well as the professions of some of the poets. The influence of the northwestern Pahlavi language, for example, which had been the spoken dialect of the region, is clearly observed in the poems contained in this anthology"[524]. Furthermore, noting the ethnic cultural mix, Professor Riāhi states: "It is noteworthy, however, that in the period under discussion, the Caucasus region was entertaining a unique mixture of ethnic cultures. Khāqāni's mother was a Nestorian Christian, Mujir Baylaqāni's mother was an Armenian, and Nezāmi's mother was a Kurd"[525].

With regards to the fact that Persian was the language used by ordinary people and not confined to the courts, Riāhi writes: "In contrast to poets from other parts of Persia, who mostly belonged to higher echelons of society such as scholars, bureaucrats, and secretaries, a good number of poets in the northwestern areas rose from among the common people with working class backgrounds, and they frequently used colloquial expressions in their poetry. They ar e referred to as water-carrier (*saqqā*), sparrow-dealer ('*osfuri*), saddler (*sarrāj*), bodyguard (*jāndār*), oculist (*kahhāl*), [saddle-bag-maker (*akkāfi or pālānduz*)], etc., which illustrates the overall use of Persian in that region. Chapter eleven of the anthology contains interesting details about the everyday life of the common people, their clothing, the cosmetics used by women, the games people played and their usual recreational practices such as pigeon-fancying (*kabutar-bāzi*), even-or-odd game (*tak yā joft bāzi*), exercising with a sledgehammer (*potk zadan*), and archery (*tir-andāzi*). There are also descriptions of the various kinds of musical instruments such as *daf* (tambourine), *ney* (reed pipe), and *chang* (harp), besides details of how these instruments were held by the performers. One even finds in this anthology details of people's everyday living practices such as using a pumice (*sang-e pā)* to scrub the sole of their feet and *gel-e saršur* to wash their hair"[526]. Given these Persian (e.g. *jāndār=bodyguard*) and Persianized Arabic terms (e.g. *lehāfi* - from the Arabic *lehāf* and Persian suffix *-i*

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[524] ibid.
[525] ibid.
[526] ibid. Sharvāni 1996.

denoting relation), it is clear that the native urban and sedentary Muslim population of Ganja during the time of Nezami and the *Nozhat al-Majāles* were Iranians.

Taking into consideration this historical information, Riāhi severely criticized the false claim that Persian was just a court language that was imposed by Iranian and Iranicized (i.e. Saljuqs and their regional Atabak dynasties) rulers of the area[527]. Rather, as he correctly mentions, it was the culture of the area that Iranicized the local rulers (e.g. Sharvānshāhs and Muhammad ibn Ba'ith) and the number of common people detached from courts and with working-class background using colloquial expressions proves that it was the local Iranian language and culture that imposed itself on these rulers[528]. As noted by Riāhi and by other scholars[529], the Sharvānshāhs ancestors were Arabs but it was the local Iranian culture that Persianized them[530]. In conclusion, Riāhi mentions that: "*Nozhat al-Majāles* is thus a mirror of the social situations at the time, reflecting the full spread of the Persian language and the culture"[531] and indeed putting to rest the false claims such as: "With the exception of Nezami's work, the entire poetic output was confined to lyric poetry, to the Qasida in particular. Moreover all these poets were employed by Royal courts"[532]. Of course, Rypka was not probably aware of the *Nozhat al-Majāles* (since it is not mentioned in his two major English works) and mentions around 8 poets from the Caucasus and Azerbaijan in the Saljuq era. Now, we can state that the majority of the extant poetic styles from the region is in the form of quatrains (which is not the genre of court poetry but rather personal and popular poetry), and the majority of the people that composed quatrains were working-class people with everyday backgrounds and with no ties to royal courts.

The names of the at least 24 poets from Ganja in this anthology are known due to the fact that they are mentioned as *Ganjei* (from Ganja)[533]. Some of the other poets who do not have the epithet *Ganjei* as their surnames in this anthology, might also have been from Ganja. None of the 115 poets from Azerbaijan, Sharvān and Arrān have Turkish names like those of the Eldiguzids, Ahmadilis, Saljuqids rulers; all of them have Arabic and Persian names[534]. The term *Nezāmi* is a Persianized Arabic

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[527] Sharvāni 1996:23.

[528] ibid.:23.

[529] e.g. Barthold and Bosworth 1997; Minorsky 1958; Bosworth 2011.

[530] Sharvāni 1996:24.

[531] Riāhi 2008.

[532] Rypka 1968b:568.

[533] Sharvāni 1996.

[534] ibid.

compound (from the Arab. *nezām* and Persian suffix *–i* (from Middle Persian *–ig*)[535] denoting relationship). The term *Ganjei (Ganja-ei)* mentioned in this anthology for the poets from Ganja is also Persian, composed of the Persian word *Ganja* and the Persian suffix *-ei* denoting association and belonging. The poets from Ganja are listed as: Pesar-e Khatib-e Ganjei, Pesar-e Seleh-e Ganjei, Jamāl Ganjei, Hamid Ganjei, Dokhtar-e Khatib-e Ganjei, Rashid Ganjei, Rāzi Ganjei, Rāziyeh Ganjei, Sa'ad Ganjei, Shams Asad Ganjei, Shams Elyas Ganjei, Shams Omar Ganjei, Shāhāb Ganjei, Abdul Aziz Ganjei, 'Ayyāni Ganjei, Fakhr Ganjei, Qawāmi Ganjei, Mahsati Ganjei (53 quatrains), Mukhtasar Ganjei, Najm Ganjei, Najib Ganjei, Nezami Ganjei (10 quatrains), Nāser Ganjei, Burhān Ganjei[536]. It is interesting to note that three of these poets from Ganja as well some other poets in the Nozhat al-Majāles are women.

Before the full publication of the *Nozhat al-Majāles*, Chelkowski had already noted: "Persian remained the primary language, Persian civil servants were in great demand, Persian merchants were successful, and princedoms continued to vie for the service of Persian poets. This was especially true in Ganjeh, the Caucasian outpost town where Nezami lived"[537]. De Blois, after the publication of this book, also notes with regards to Nezami: "His *nisbah* designates him as a native of Ganja (Elizavetpol, Kirovabad) in Azerbaijan, then still a country with an Iranian population"[538].

The *Nozhat al-Majāles* provides direct and decisive evidence that Persian was not just a court language used by a select few poets. This important fact is proven by the overwhelming number of poets with ordinary backgrounds from Azerbaijan, Sharvān and Arrān not associated with royal courts. Furthermore, quatrains are not the style typical of court poetry. Unlike the embellished *qasida* and epic poetry, they are the common style of folk poetry. Quatrains were sung with the harp, reed and other instruments; bards would use them to entertain guests and the Sufis would use them in their spiritual gatherings[539]. The frequency of colloquial and common expressions[540] in the quatrains of the *Nozhat al-Majāles* (as well as quatrains in general) are not found in the qasida and epic poetry[541]. That is, quatrain by its nature was a non-elite form of poetry. Epic poetry, which was often devoted to a ruler, was

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[535] See Paul 2009 for extensive discussion of this suffix. We note that the Persian suffix *–i* is derived from Middle Persian *–ig*. Despite similarity and conflation with Arabic *–i* for different types of nouns (e.g. place names), it usages is much wider than the Arabic and it encompasses more different types of nouns (e.g. place names, professions, colors, objects, etc) and verbs.

[536] ibid.

[537] Chelkowski 1975:2.

[538] de Blois 2004:363.

[539] Sharvāni 1996:47.

[540] ibid.:48-51.

[541] ibid.:52.

popular both at the courts and among common people. However, the quatrains of poets, particularly those mentioned in the *Nozhat al-Majāles*, are not dedicated to any particular ruler or person. The important aspect of the *Nozhat al-Majāles* is that it mirrors the social conditions and thoughts of the common urban and sedentary Iranian people of Arrān and Sharvān on a rich variety of subjects.

4.4 The *Safina-ye Tabriz*

Besides the *Nozhat al-Majāles*, another important recent discovery is the extant manuscript of the *Safina-ye Tabriz*[542]. This Encyclopaedic compendium is considered a "mirror of the social conditions of the time"[543] and is a compendium of Persian and Arabic essays on a variety of subjects including literature, mathematics, history, philosophy, music theory, lexicography, etc. written by many famous scholars up to the 14th century. Many of the essays are written by the compiler himself, Abu al-Majd Muhammad ibn Masu'd Tabrizi. Besides Persian and Arabic treatises, the book contains three Iranian dialects which are termed as Fahlaviyāt, the language of Tabriz and the language of Karaji[544]. The latter two should also be seen as part of the Fahlaviyāt continuum.

With regards to Tabriz, it is important to note that the text attests an Iranian dialect named the Tabrizi language. This Iranian dialect called the *zabān-e tabrizi* (the language of Tabriz) by Abu al-Majd,[545] was the language spoken in Tabriz in the early 14th century. Although Hamdollah Mostowfi had already mentioned a short phrase in the Iranian Tabrizi language[546], the author of the *Safina* records a full poem in the Tabrizi language. Other parts of the book as well, have poems in a dialect, which the author calls *Fahlaviyāt* (NW Iranian vernacular). This touches on the point that during the era of the Saljuqs and the Eldiguzids (one of whose capital was Tabriz), the main Iranian urban centers were not Turkicized, as this would be incompatible with the lifestyle of Turkish nomads. Rather, it was the mentioned Turkish rulers who adopted Persian culture and became Persianized culturally; reminiscence of the Sharvānshāhs. The main administration posts of virtually all the kingdoms ruled by Turkish kings in Iran from the Ghaznavids till the Qajar era were in the hands of Iranians. Some of these empires went even further and, as substantiation of their legitimacy, claimed themselves as descents of the Sassanids (e.g. the Ghaznavids).

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[542] Sadeqi 2001; Tabrizi 2002.
[543] Tabrizi 2002.
[544] Related to Karaj in Western Iran, now called *Āstāna* which is 36 kilo-meters south of the modern city of *Arāk*, see Sadeqi 2001.
[545] Sadeqi 2001; Tabrizi 2002.
[546] Qazvini 1957:98; Yarshater 1987.

When Tabriz was the Ilkhanid capital, its language, as shown by the *Safina-ye Tabriz*, was the Iranian Tabrizi dialect. Had a non-Iranian dialect been the common language of Tabriz, then it would make no sense for the native Tabrizi compiler of the *Safina* to use the term the *Language of Tabriz*. This confirms what René Grousset mentions with regards to the Saljuq era: "It is to be noted that the Saljuqs, those Turcomans who became sultans of Persia, did not Turkify Persia; no doubt, because they did not wish to do so. On the contrary, it was they who voluntarily became Persians and who, in the manner of the great old Sassanid kings, strove to protect the Iranian populations from the plundering of Ghuzz bands and save Iranian culture from the Turcoman menace"[547]. Before the Safavid era, writers native to Tabriz such as Māmā Esmat Tabrizi, Homām Tabrizi, Maghrebi Tabrizi, Shams Tabrizi[548], Bābā Faraj Tabrizi, Sharaf al-Din Rumi Tabrizi, Pir Zehtāb Tabrizi etc., have composed or been quoted in Fahlavi.[549] In Tabriz, the NW Iranian vernacular would also be called the *Tabrizi language* as recorded in the *Safina-ye Tabriz*. As noted above, this NW Iranian dialect is part of the Fahlaviyāt continuum.

Two other manuscripts, the *Āthār Ahyā* written by Fazlollah Rashid al-Din and the *Ikhtiyārāt-i Badi'i* written by Ali b. Husyan Ansāri in 1368 A.D., are also important sources to be considered here[550]. In the manuscript which is a summary of the *Āthār Ahyā*, the author refers to the common Iranian language of Tabriz and Azerbaijan while mentioning Iranian words for trees, fruits and food material[551]. In the *Ikhtiyārāt-i Badi'i*, the author consistently refers to the language of Tabriz and, in one place, contrasts it with Turkish. The plant *salix aegyptiaca* is called *kala-mush* ("mouse head") in the Tabrizi Iranian language while in standard Persian, it is *bidmeshk*[552]. Even after the establishment of the Safavid era, in 1525, Antonio Tenreiro writes about the inhabitants of the city of Tabriz, the first capital of the Safavid dynasty:

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[547] Grousset 1970:164.

[548] In a poem from Rumi, the word *buri* is mentioned from the mouth of Shams Tabrizi by Rumi. Rumi translates the word in standard Persian as *biyā* (the imperative "come"). This word is also a native word of the Tabrizi Iranian dialect which is mentioned by Persian Sufi, Hafez Karbalaie in his work *Rawdat al-Jenān*. In the poem of Baba Taher, the word has come down as *bura* (come) and in the NW Iranian Tati dialects (also called Azari but should not be confused with the Turkish language of the same name) of Azerbaijan, in Harzandi Tati it is *biri* and in Karingani Tati it is *bura* (Kiya 1976). It should be noted that Shams Tabrizi was an Iranian Shafi'ite Muslim like the bulk of the Iranian population of Azerbaijan during the pre-Mongol and post-Mongol era.

[549] Riāhi 1988; Yarshater 1987; Tabrizi 2002; Tafazzoli 1999.
[550] Sadeqi 2002.
[551] ibid.
[552] ibid.

"This city is inhabited by Persians and some Turcomans, white people, and beautiful of face and person"[553]. It should be noted that Turcoman tribes that were religious followers of the Safavid Sufi leaders and kings (themselves originally of Iranian pedigree but having been progressively Turkicized linguistically, while claiming descent from the Prophet of Islam), had migrated from the regions of Anatolia (e.g. Rumlu, Shamlu, Ustajlu, etc) and formed the military backbone of the early Safavid establishment. Even the *Farhang-e Jahāngiri* (till the end of the 16th century) distinguishes between Turkish and the dialect of Tabriz which was an Iranian language[554]. The *pārsi* (Persian) mentioned by Qatrān Tabrizi alongside Dari in the couplet that we quoted, was exactly this Tabrizi Iranic dialect. The Turcophone trends became significant in Tabriz only during the mid Safavid era, and the Ottoman destructions of the city played a major role towards this end[555].

However, it was not only Tabriz which had maintained its Iranian language up to the middle of the Safavid period; when Turcophonia was gradually becoming a phenomenon coexistent with the Iranian speech in the region. Turkicization during the Saljuqs and later the Atabak dynasty obviously did not affect other capitals, such as Isfahan and Maragha, as these cities preserved their Iranian dialects. Maragha which was another major city under the Saljuqs, and also the capital of the Ahmadilis and the Ilkhanids (before the transfer of its capital to Tabriz) also maintained its Fahlavi language. Based on historical authors such as Hamdollah Mostowfi, Minorsky notes: "At the present day, the inhabitants speak Adhari Turkish, but in the 14th century they still spoke 'Arabicized Pahlawi' (Nozhat al-Qolub: Pahlawi Mu'arrab) which means an Iranian dialect of the north western group"[556].

Here is a curious statement by the Ottoman traveler Evliya Chelebi of the 17th century: "The majority of woman of Maragha speak Fahlavi"[557]. Given the fact that the majority of woman in the 17th century were not educated, this again shows that Fahlavi was still the main language of Maragha. Zanjan and Ardabil also had their own Fahlavi dialect which is mentioned by Hamdollah Mostowfi, and shown by the extant recorded Fahlaviyāt from these regions[558]. Evliya Chelebi, with regards to Naxchivan, writes: "The underclass and people speak *dehqāni*…the educated, wise and poets speak *fahlavi* and *mogholi*… the city dwellers speak *dehqāni, dari, fārsi, ghāzi (tāzi?), fahlavi* … the Turcomans in the area speak different *mogholi* dialects"[559].

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[553] Smith 1970:85.
[554] Kiya 1976.
[555] Riāhi 1988.
[556] Qazvini 1957:100; Minorsky 1991a.
[557] Riāhi 1988.
[558] Bosworth 2002b; Yarshater 1987; Tafazzoli 1999;
[559] Riāhi 1988.

Dari/fārsi (Persian) and *fahlavi* here denote Iranian dialects, while *mogholi* (Mongolian) is a name for the Oghuz language of the area. *Dehqāni*, which is a Persian word, could be a local Iranian dialect. This statement shows that Iranian languages were still persisting widely in Naxchivan in the middle of the Safavid era.

As for Ganja, Gandzakets'i (who was born likely at the time when Nezami was still alive) and the *Nozhat al-Majāles* show that the city itself had a Persian population which spoke either a South-West Iranian dialect (likely an ancestor of modern day Tati) or a North-West Iranian Fahlavi-type language. The *Nozhat al-Majāles* shows the influence of North Western Fahlavi on the poets whose quatrains were quoted from the region[560]. But the term Ganja used by the Muslim population is clearly in the Persian form rather than in the Parthian *Gandzak* form, which survived in Armenian. Zakariya Qazvini[561] also mentions some Iranian words from the peculiar Iranian dialect of the people of Ganja. Besides some Iranicized Arabic loanwords[562], the Iranian words he mentions are the river *drwrān*[563], which must have been the pre-Turkish name of the modern river *ganchay* (lit. wide-river) and the latter term illustrating the change of language in later periods. He also mentions a specific castle that was named *hark/harg* (Middle and New Persian *Arg*) by the natives and a circular rock near the *drwrān* river that "looks like a castle" and which the natives called *sang-e nim-dāng*. The latter term contains three Persian word, *sang* (rock), *nim* (half), and *dāng (1/6)*. This is an actual Persian phrase, which possibly denotes the

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[560] Sharvāni 1996; Riāhi 2008.
[561] Qazvini 1960:522-523.
[562] We should mention there are some Arabic words mentioned by Qazvini (ibid), which shows that the Ganja Iranian dialect like standard literary Persian, had been influenced by Arabic. The first two words are: *bab al-maqbara* (the gate of memorial or gate of mausoleum) and *bab al-barda'a* (gate of Barda'a). Qazvini, whose book is in Arabic, might have read the word in Arabic sources and the actual words could have been *darwaza-ye maqbara* and *darwaza-ye Barda'a*. He mentions a general clothe type that was called *qotni* (PD:Khaqani) (Dehkhoda:*qotni* from Arabic) in Standard Persian, and that the ones exported from Ganja were renowned with the Arabic exonym *al-kanji* (meaning 'from Ganja' or 'specialty of Ganja', c.f. with damascene fabric or cashmere clothes). Another word is a fruit named *muz* which he describes as unique to the area, is circular and resembles the berry which he calls the Syrian berry. In modern Persian 'muz'/mowz is used for banana, but it has been used for a long time for various fruit types (Dehkhoda:*muz*).
[563] *drwrān* is likely short form or copyist misspelling of *dwrwdān*, i.e. *do-rudān*, which is a normal Iranian river-name (with a numerative), largely attested among Iranian hydronyms (cf. *Do-āb*, etc.) The suffix –ān points rather to an area between or around two rivers (cf. *Arasbārān*, i.e. the area around the river Araxes, etc.). It can be a fair semantic parallel to *Miyan-do-āb*.

zodiac or the ring of Soleyman[564], and shows a complete Iranian phrase construction. Neither Qazvini nor Ganjkesti mention any Turkish words by the natives of Ganja for name of trees, castles, rocks and rivers. As noted already, the Iranian word *chandari*, which Gandzakets'i mentioned for a specific tree in the city, also sheds light on the Iranian language of Ganja. Consequently, the Persians who constituted the cities native Muslim population as mentioned by Gandzakets'i (a native of the city), either spoke a Fahlavi type language (as claimed by authors such as Riāhi and Safa) with heavy influence of New Persian or a SW Iranian (Persid) language (closer to modern Tati and literary Persian).

Our information on the progressive Turkicization in the area, particularly with regards to Azerbaijan[565] becomes more substantiated through such a new source as the *Safina-ye Tabriz*[566]. As for Sharvān and Arrān, there is also evidence of the persistence of the Iranian language in the major towns after the Mongol invasion. The Persianized Sharvānshāhs, which are among the longest ruling Islamic dynasties, had controlled Sharvān (as vassals or near autonomous Kings) up to the early Safavid period. Badr Sharvāni, for example, provides evidence of both the Persian of Sharvān as well as the Fahlavi *Kenār-āb* Iranic dialect of Sharvān[567]. The recently examined manuscript of the *Dastur al-Adwiyyah*, which was written probably by a person from Sharvān during the early 15th century, also lists some of the native words for plants in Sharvān, Baylaqān and Arrān: *shang, bābuneh, arzholu, bahmanak, shirgir, kurkhwārah, handal, harzeh, kabudlah* (Baylaqāni word and in standard Persian: *kabudrang*), *kamā (in some of the Iranian dialects of Avromān, this is a special type of plant used for animal feed), moshkzad, xarime, bistam, kalal*[568]. These Iranian words show the persistence of Persian and the Iranian dialects in the area. Consequently, the process of the Turkicization (especially in the urban centers) was gradual and the decisive stage occurred under the Safavids[569]. The Turcomans (Oghuz Nomads) mingled and also mutually

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[564] PD:Attar.

[565] Riāhi 1988.

[566] Tabrizi 2002.

[567] Sadeqi 2003; Tafazzoli 1999.

[568] Sadeqi 2002.

[569] See de Planhol 1987; idem 2004; Golden 1992; Yarshater 1987. The erroneous claim by some authors that the Saljuqs completed the Turkicization of the area of Azerbaijan, Arrān and Sharvān is now obviously dismissed by the *Safina-ye Tabriz, Nozhat al-Majāles*, Ganjakets'i, the noticeable testaments to the Fahlavi language in major towns by Hamdollah Mostowfi during the Ilkhanid era and also the multiple extant Fahlavi/Persian-Dari materials. Since the Saljuqs were actually Persianized and promoted Persian culture, one must look at the post-Saljuqid period when the Turkic languages gradually overtook the native Iranian and Caucasian languages. Unfortunately, there is not yet a profound research on this complex topic of Turkicization. However, an overview of the chronology of this complex process is provided by

assimilated with part of the Iranian nomads, but their nomadic lifestyle was not compatible with the lifestyle of the Iranian urban centers[570]. It took many generations for some of these nomads to give up their long tradition of nomadic lifestyle, then adopt semi-nomadism and then agricultural settlements, and finally migrate to the urban centers. That is why there does not exist any cultural relics and proof of any urban and developed Turcoman culture from the 12th century Caucasus.

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some authors (e.g. de Planhol 2004, Yarshater 1987). New studies need to take into account the *Nozhat al-Majāles* (Riāhi 2008), *Safina-ye Tabriz* (Tabrizi 2002), *Tuhfa-ye Sāmi* (Riāhi 1988), *Dastur al-Adwiyah* (Sadeqi 2002), *Sarih Al-Moluk* (which shows the trend of how Iranian toponyms were changed to Turkish during the Safavid era - see: Abdullah 'Abdi and Mayam Lotfi, "nāmhāyeh Joqrafiyāyi dar manābe' kohan",
http://www.azarpadgan.com/?content=DetailsArticle&id=205 [accessed May 2011]) and other recently published and unpublished extant sources.

[570]De Planhol mentions, basing on Nasawi, that during the period of the Mongol invasion, the Turcoman tribal groups "swarmed like ants" in Arrān and Moghān (de Planhol 1987), although it is not clear if most of these Turcomans nomads had been pushed into this area around the time of the Mongol empire. This is likely, given the time of this report (around the Mongol invasion) and also as noted by Bosworth with regards to Arran: "The influx of Oghuz and other Türkmens was accentuated by the Mongol invasions"(Bosworth 1986); which could mean both Turcomans (Oghuz nomads) fleeing or pushed out by the Mongols after their take-over of Central Asia, as well as those Turcomans who joined the Mongol army. De Planhol also quotes Yaqut that in the beginning of the 13th century (approximately 1228), the area of Mughān steppes was a region where the villages alternated with pasturage and populated exclusively by Turcomans (de Planhol 1987). In the second half of the thirteenth century, according to one source, it was no more than a winter passage for Turcoman nomads (ibid.). The lifestyle of these Turcoman nomads, who are described by their tents in one *ghazal* of Nezami(like many other passages with regards to Turks including his first wife where terms such as *nomadic migration* and *tent* are used), would be incompatible with the sedentary Iranian settlements and Iranian urban dwellers of cities such as Ganja and Tabriz. Minorsky mentions, referring to the *Sharaf-Nāma* of Bitlisi that: "In the 16th century there was a group of 24 septs of Kurds in Qarabagh" (Minorsky 1953:34). We note that up to the 20th century and even still in this era, some of the major cities in Iran such as Hamadan, Shiraz and Qazvin, the urban population is Persian speaking while the villagers and nomads use Turkish or Iranian dialects such as Luri and Kurdish. These reflect the fact that nomadic groups usually settle for semi-nomadism, then settled in the villages and finally migrated to major urban centers. The description provided by Yaqut and Qazvini (de Planhol 1987) clearly show that the Turcoman nomads would not have sedentarized within a couple of generations when they entered the area during the Saljuq era. Thus the urban centers of cities such as Ganja, Maragha, Tabriz etc. retained their Persian/Iranian population during the Saljuq era as already made clear by the evidence from the primary sources of that era and discussed in this book.

Hamdollah Mostowfi writes about the city of Abhar (near modern Zanjan): "All types of religions and sects have moved into the city, and their language has not yet become unified, but it is moving towards a Persian hybrid (*fārsi-ye mamzuj*)"[571]. This would have also been true for other major cities where new migrants would assimilate into the dominant language and each city would have some local characteristics in its Iranian dialect (hence the name *zabān-e tabrizi* in the *Safina-ye Tabriz*). In the case of Tabriz, Ganja, Maragha and other major Muslim cities of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus, the Islamic population would adopt Iranian dialects as there is no evidence for any significant non-Iranian Islamicate culture at that time. The urban centers were the last place to become Turkicized in these regions.

A major differentiator between the Turcoman nomads and most of the Iranian Muslims of the region was the different Islamic doctrines they followed. The Turcoman nomads were overwhelmingly of the *Hanafites*[572] (later on, many of them joined heterodox Shi'ite sects), while most of the people of Azerbaijan proper and adjacent areas of Arrān followed the *Shafi'ite* doctrine; which is still the common rite of the Sunni Kurds of Iran and all the Sunni Iranian Tats/Talyshis of Iran. From a historical analysis point of view, the *Shafi'ite* doctrine to a high degree is a consistent way to distinguish the native Iranian population of Azerbaijan proper and adjacent areas from the newly arrived Turkish groups[573]. As noted below, Nezami was also a follower of the Shafi'ite doctrine. Given all these informations and sources that have been neglected with regards to the area in general and Ganja in particular (e.g. Gandzakets'i, Nozhat al-Majāles), it is obvious that the Iranian culture of Nezami and Khāqāni did not show up in a vacuum. Rather, as noted by Riāhi, there was a strong layer of Persian culture and an Iranian ethnic base, with hundreds of Persian poets that made it possible to produce a few outstanding figures amongst them, mainly Khāqāni and Nezami. In terms of Arrān and Sharvān, this strong layer of Iranian culture started initially with the Achaemenids, increased during the Parthian era, peaked during the Sassanid and early Islamic era, and declined gradually after the Mongol, Turcoman and Safavid eras. As a result of the changes in the language milieu

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[571] Qazvini 1957:55-56.

[572] Bosworth 1968:15; Koprulu 2006:6.

[573] The Shafi'ite mazhab was followed by such Iranians as Shams Tabrizi, Shaykh Mahmud Shabistari, Shāhab al-Din Suhrawardi, Bābā Faraj Tabrizi, Hafez Hossein Karbalai and most of the notable Muslims figures in Iranian Azerbaijan and adjacent areas before the Safavids. It should be noted that historically(and even today), Turks overwhelmingly follow the Hanafite mazhab. Western Iranians mainly followed the Shafi'ite mazhab, while the Hanafi doctorine was followed by the majority of Iranian in Khurasan as well as some of them in the Caucasus. The Shārvanshahs and parts of Shārvan were possibly Hanafis: e.g., Nezami mentions that wine is legal for the king of Shārvan.

of the area (the decline of Iranian languages), the heritage of Persian literature has also completely vanished from Arrān and Sharvān[574].

4.5 Some Information on Nezami's Life

We now examine some of Nezami's verses, connected with certain details on his life and background. What later medieval biographers stated about him is hardly reliable,[575] (e.g. Dowlatshah Samarqandi[576] wrongly mentions that Nezami's teacher was Shaykh Akhi Faraj Zanjani[577]) and only in a few sections from his poetry can we obtain auto-biographical information. Here we will try to touch upon the points in Nezami's biography, which have not been analyzed in detail, and to present some new information. The main fundament of a person's culture is not only his native place's ethnicity, language and culture (e.g. in case of Nezami, the Iranian culture and ethnicity in Ganja), but also the culture that the person himself presents to the world, following his predecessors.

 Nezami's real name was *Ilyas. Nezam al-Din* seems to have been his title[578]. The title *Nezam al-Din* perhaps signifies his competence in religious sciences. His pen-name, Nezami, is in fact based on his title. The verse describing his name as Ilyas is

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[574] Riāhi 2008.

[575] Chelkowski 1975:2.

[576] Nafisi 1959 has quoted some of the classical anthologies about Nezami, but he did not have many of the sources about the region that are discussed in this book. See also Safa 1994 on the reliability of Dowlatshah. Despite this, one cannot deny Islamic mystic aspects of Nezami's work (Nasr 1993).

[577] Shaykh Akhi Faraj Zanjani (circa 1000-1060 A.D.) (Cahen 1968:197-198), was an Iranian (ibid.) mystic born in the Buyid period and passed away at least 50 years before Nezami. He is the earliest known person with the title *akhi* (Arabic loanword to Persian meaning "my brother") -- a term which was used in the pre-Mongol Era in context of Sufi mystics and not in the post-Mongol context of guilds (called 'Ayyaran and Fatian in the pre-Mongol era) (ibid.). Based on historical grounds (pre-Saljuq usage by Iranians), the alternative etymology from Uighyur *aqi* for post-Mongol guilds is implausible (ibid.) in the Iranian (not necessarily Anatolian) context; the usage in the Persian context always meant "brother" (Dekhoda:Akhi) (see also Riyaz Khan 1971 who quotes early Persian Sufi works such as Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani). Zanjan had maintained its Fahlavi language even after the Mongol era. Hamdullah Mustawfi (Bosworth 2002b), who was from the nearby city of Qazvin, has mentioned the language of the people of Zanjan as pure Pahlavi and there exist extant samples from the Fahlavi dialect of that city (Tafazzoli 1999).

[578] Zanjani 2005:2.

very poetic and, at the same time, shows the mixture of his Persian cultural heritage with the Islamic religion[579]:

My mother who aided me with 'spand' (see below for explanation)	مادر که سپند یار دادم
Gave birth to me with the armor of Spandyar	با درع سپندیار زادم
If you consider the numeral value of "n" "z" "a" "m" "i" (Nezami)	در خط نظامی ار نهی گام
Its sum will yield 1001	بینی عدد هزار و یک نام
If you take the "alif" from Ilyas	و الیاس کالف بری ز لامش
and also the letter "ba", its sum will yield 99	هم "با" نود و نه است نامش
This is my 1001 walls of protection	زینگونه هزار و یک حصارم
My weapons are 99	با صد کم یک سلیح دارم

The number of 99 references the 99 names of God in the Qur'an. The number of 1001 refers to the total number of names for God in the Islamic tradition where the 1 in the 1001 is the Great Name. The practice of burning *spand* (modern Persian *esfand*) seeds producing strong incense stems from the belief that it provides protection from the evil eye. It is a widely attested tradition in early classical Persian literature and derives from a pre-Islamic Iranian tradition that has survived till this day[580]. Spandyar is the hero in the Shāhnāma who fights the Turanians and defends Zoroastrianism. His body was made invincible due to a miracle by the prophet Zoroaster. These four couplets are not atypical and, as Chelkowski notes about Nezami, "his rich Persian cultural heritage... unites pre-Islamic and Islamic Iran"[581].

Unlike the Shafi'ite rite, in the Hanafi *mazhab*, any intoxicating drink fermented from anything but grapes is licit[582]. However, Nezami, who was not a Hanafi, consistently admonishes against alcoholic drinks. When he was invited to the court of the Eldiguzid ruler after composing the *Khusraw o Shirin*, he mentions that they removed all the alcoholic drinks due to the king's respect for him[583]. And in LMZB, he refers to fermented drinks (*bādeh*) as bastard (*haramzādeh*) while writing that it is is licit

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[579] LM:8.
[580] Omidsalar 1998.
[581] Chelkowski 1975:6.
[582] Melchert 1997:49-53, Wensinck 1978.
[583] KH:120/51.

for the Sharvānshāhs (who possibly followed the more liberal Hanafi doctrine or who were not strict possibly due to being Kings or having Georgian relationship from their mother's side). He also considers wine to be illegal and illicit in his sect[584]. He also makes it clear that the usage of the word *may* (wine) in his poetry is symbolic and not the material wine which he swears he never touched in his life ('I swear to God that while I have been in this world, the skirt of my lips has never been stained with wine')[585]. He also shows his devotion for the first four caliphs[586] and consequently, Nezami must have followed the Shafi'ite *mazhab* common amongst the Iranians (and not the Turks) of the region.

On his ancestry, Nezami mentions[587]:

If my father became (left) to(in) the tradition of (his) ancestor (grandfather)	گر شد پدرم به (نسبت؟) سنت جد
Yusuf son of Zakki (son of?) Mu'ayyad	یوسف پسر زکی موید
There is no point in quarreling against fate.	با دور به داوری چه کوشم
It was determined by density, no reason to bemoan and complain.	دور است نه جور چون خروشم

Some commentators[588] name him as "Ilyas the son of Yusuf the son of Zakki the son of Mua'yyad", while others mention that Mu'ayyad is a title for Zakki. Based on the analysis of the late Professor Muhammad Mo'in,[589] the second part of the first couplet above in Persian is read as: *Yusuf pesar-e Zaki Mu'ayyad*. Dr. Muhammad Mo'in rejects the alternative reading and claims that if it were to mean *Zakki son of Muayyad* it should have been read as *Zakki-e Mu'ayyad* where the *izafe* (-e-) shows the son-parent relationship, but here it is *Zakki Mu'ayyad*, and Zakki ends in silence/stop and there is no *izafe* (-e-) after it. Some may argue that the *izafe* is dropped due to meter constraints but dropping the parenthood *izafe* is very strange and rare. So it is likely that Mu'ayyad was a sobriquet for Zakki or part of his name (like Muayyad al-Din Zakki). This is evidenced by the fact that later biographers also state Yusuf was the son of Mu'ayyad[590]. For example, Hafez had a brother named Khalil al-Din 'Ādil and simply referenced him as *Khalil-e 'Ādil*. The term *jadd* in Persian is generally used for

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[584] SN:11/2
[585] SN:6/68-71.
[586] SN:4/68-69.
[587] LM:10, Zanjani 2005:2.
[588] e.g. Rypka 1968a.
[589] Zanjani 2005:3, Mo'in 2006:2.
[590] Zanjani 2005:3.

forefathers and specifically for grandfather. The above verse could also mean that Nezami's great grandfather had the name Yusuf as well. The word *sonnat* which is in the earliest manuscript[591] rather than *nisbat* (Dastgerdi edition) means "tradition".

On his mother, Nezami Ganjavi mentions[592]:

If my mother, Ra'isa the Kurd	گر مادر من رئیسه‌ی کرد
Like most Mothers, left this world before me	مادر صفتانه پیش من مرد

Based on this verse, Iranian (e.g. Dastgerdi, Nafisi, Zanjani), Western[593] and some Soviet bloc scholars (e.g. Bertels, Rypka) accept that his mother was Kurdish. Gandzakets'i also mentioned Kurds several times in his book and even separates Kurds from Persians as well as other groups like Arabs, Turks, Tatars, Armenians, etc. It should be mentioned that the term "Kurd" during this era could be applied to any Iranian-speaking nomadic group[594] and those sedentarized Iranians who at one time maintained a tribal affiliation. That is even many generations after some of these Iranian-speaking peoples had settled, they could have still be considered "Kurds" due to their heritage and former tribal lineage.

Nezami Ganjavi also mentions his maternal uncle *Xwaja Umar* who likely became his caretaker after his mother and father passed away prematurely:

Xwaja Umar, who was my maternal uncle	گر خواجه عمر که خال من بود
His leaving of this world, was a great loss	خالی شدنش وبال من بود

Xāl, an Arabic loanword to Persian meaning "maternal uncle"(Dekhoda:Ferdowsi, Nāser-e Khusraw, etc.). *Xwaja* is a Persian title denoting respect, which may also have been used for people of high positions. Both *ra'isa* and *xwaja* are titles of respect, and thus Nezami was born probably in the higher class of society[595]. Dastgerdi and some others following him say that *Ra'isa* was Nezami's mother name, while Nafisi argues that it simply means his mother was a Kurdish lady with a high position (or related to

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[591] Zanjani 1990.
[592] LM:10.
[593] Minorsky 1953:34.
[594] Asatrian 2009.
[595] Nafisi 1959.

someone with a high position), since at that time, the name Ra'isa was not a common name for people[596].

It is curious to note that Nezami only mentions his maternal uncle and not any other senior family members. One possibility is that his father had no siblings in the city or, possibly, his father migrated to Ganja at some point. While the verse mentioning his ancestry from Qom is likely an interpolation (by later copyists), which was pointed out first by Dastgerdi, nevertheless some later historical chronicles and Dastgerdi himself still believed that his father was from Central Iran[597]. The possible interpolation in previous centuries sounds curious since at that time there were no ethnic nationalistic feelings about Nezami as Rypka wrongly claims[598]. Given that Ganja was a major city that attracted people from afar, the possibility that his father migrated to there remains an open question.

Some recent biographers (who are correct, in our view) believe Nezami was born earlier than the usually mentioned circa 1140 A.D. They have noted that Nezami completed the *Makhzan al-Asrār* when he was close to the age of forty[599]. In the *Iqbāl-Nāma*, too, he mentions he had been a witness to an earthquake, and according to historians, such as Ibn Athir, a major destructive earthquake which caused numerous deaths, hit Ganja around 534 Hijri (1139-1140)[600]. Additionally, Nezami was likely orphaned early.[601] Indeed he speaks about accepting destiny with regards to his father's premature death. So it is possible that much of his family including his father and mother perished during this earthquake. De Blois after a detail scrutiny comes to the conclusion that the *Makhzan al-Asrār* was completed around 1166 and the last work of Nezami, which according to him was the *Haft Paykar*, was completed around 1197[602]. Consequently, Nezami's year of birth is suppositional to be around 526 Hijri (1131-1132)[603]. If we assume that 1166 is when he completed the *Makhzan al-Asrār*, then his birth should be around 1126 to the early 1130s rather than 1140 to 1146 mentioned by some authors. This would mean that Nezami was born during the peak time of the Saljuq Empire (prior to its regions asserting themselves) and before the earthquake of Ganja.

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[596] ibid.
[597] Zanjani 2005:9-10.
[598] Rypka 1961.
[599] Servatiyan 1997:36; Zanjani 2005:13.
[600] Zanjani 2005:11-12.
[601] Chelkowski 1975:3.
[602] de Blois 1994:438-446; idem 1997:585-591.
[603] Zanjani 2005.

4.6 Nezami's First Wife and Her Name

Nezami married three times[604] and he complains that after each of the major works of the *Khusraw o Shirin*, *Layli o Majnun*, and *Iqbāl-Nāma*, one of his wives passed away sooner than expected[605]. In the *Haft Paykar*, which was the last work he started (although some authors consider that he completed the Iqbāl-Nāma after the *Haft Paykar*), he states that he does not have a wife[606].

With regards to his first wife, Nezami states[607]:

You that have become wise due to the wisdom from this tale	تو که از عبرت بدین افسانه مانی
Don't be fooled, this is not an imaginary tale	چه پنداری مگر افسانه خوانی
For this tragic fable, one should shed tears	در این افسانه شرط است اشک راندن
Bitter rosewater should be sprinkled upon Shirin	گلابی تلخ بر شیرین فشاندن
Because she lived a very short life	به حکم آن که آن کم زندگانی
Like young rose that was snatched away by wind	چو گل بر باد شد روز جوانی
She floated away fast like my idol of Qifchāq	سبک رو چون بت قبچاق من بود
Almost like, she was my horizon (āfāq)	گمان افتاد خود کآفاق من بود
A blessed beauty and wise	همایون پیکری نغز و خردمند
She was a gift from the Dārā (ruler) of Darband	فرستاده به من دارای دربند

Vahid Dastgerdi believes that Āfāq was the name of the Qifchāq Turkish slave, who was sent as a gift from the ruler of Darband and who subsequently became Nezami's first wife. After Vahid Dastgerdi, this idea was further popularized by some scholars. Bertels[608] went even further and imagined that her original name was "āpāq" and created the Turkish etymology for it to mean 'snow-white'. Recently

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[604] Chelkowski 1975:3.
[605] Zanjani 2005:5.
[606] ibid.:5.
[607] KH:114/1-5.
[608] Rypka 1968a:211.

Johann-Christoph Burgel[609], quoting Bertels' view and basing on this wrong assumption, has extrapolated that Nezami's wife ("Āpāk") was Christian, and that Nezami's positive views about women were stipulated by his Christian wife.

We reject this whole story, taking into consideration the following arguments:

1) Rypka and Bertels' claim about "āpāq" has no basis, as the sound "p" exists in Persian and there was no reason for Nezami to Arabicize such an imagined name at that time. For example, Nezami uses *pārsi* not *fārsi*. So, this claim has no proof.

2) Going back to Āfāq: as Saeed Nafisi explains, the likely interpretation of that verse is that Nezami is not saying her name was Āfāq; rather, Nezami is alluding to the fact that his heart was so close to her and he loved her so much that she was equivalent to the horizon (the whole world) to him[610].

3) Another explanation for that verse could be based on the Islamic mystical tradition: "Whatever is in the horizon is also found in the soul". So, in a sense, it is possible that the verse means that she reflected Nezami's own being.

4) Another reason to believe Saeed Nafisi is right is based on the analysis of the word "āfāq" which occurs at least 43 times in the *Panj-Ganj*. Some of the verses outside of the main story are examined. For example, Nezami writes[611]:

From love, I have filled āfāq (horizons) with smoke	ز عشق آفاق را پردود کردم
The eyes of sanity I have made sleepy	خرد را دیده خواب‌آلود کردم

He also calls Shams al-Din Eldiguz as the shāhanshāh-e āfāq ("The King of Kings of āfāq");[612] he calls the ruler Qizil Arslān as the shāh-e āfāq ("King of āfāq")[613]. Overall, in the epic "āfāq" always means "horizons" and, wider – all the world. We believe it would be awkward for Nezami to compose the verses we mentioned above if his wife's name was actually Āfāq (which, we repeat, is very unlikely).

5) Nafisi also points to another historical fact that, Āfāq was not then a common name for women[614].

6) We should also note that it was not customary for poets to mention their own wives by name in their poems due to the social and Islamic norms of the time. We do not know any other major classical poet (Ferdowsi, Khāqāni, Sa'di, Rumi, Hafez, …)

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[609] Burgel 2011:29.
[610] Nafisi 1959:12.
[611] KH:12/27.
[612] KH:8/3.
[613] KH:10/49.
[614] Nafisi 1959:12.

who mentioned his wife by name. Nezami could hardly ignore this norm, considering the fact that he was a devout Muslim and strictly observed the social code. Besides, why then Nezami does not mention his other wives by their names, if he mentions one of them?

Overall, there is no proof of such assertion about Nezami's wife being called Āfāq, although many authors have carelessly repeated this claim without further examination of this issue.

4.7 On the Term *Tork-zād*

The next four verses from the same section about his first wife clearly prove that Nezami Ganjavi's father was not of Turkish background. These verses will be cross-referenced with other Persian writings to prove this point. Nezami states about his first wife[615]:

Like Turks, it was necessary for her to migrate	چون ترکان گشته سوی کوچ محتاج
Like Turks, she plundered my belongings	به ترکی داده رختم را به تاراج
If my Turk disappeared from the tent	اگر شد ترکم از خرگه نهانی
O God, watch over my tork-zād	خدایا ترک‌زادم را تو دانی

We note that Nezami several times distinguishes this Turkish slave by her ethnicity. She was a gift from the ruler of Darband and became his first wife. Tourkhan Gandeji translates the term *tork-zād* as "son born of a Turkish wife"[616]. However, in classical Persian literature, the term *tork-zād* explicitly refers to a person who was born of a Turkish mother and an Iranian father. In the legendary section of the *Shāhnāma,* this term is used for the Turanians (who were identified with Turks since the 6th century) and in the later Sassanid sections of the *Shāhnāma,* for Turks proper[617].

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[615] KH:114/8-9

[616] Gandjei 1986:76.

[617] According to Yarshater, the original Turanians were Iranians. However, he notes that: "After the 6th century, when the Turks, who had been pushed westward by other tribes, became neighbours of Iran and invaded Iranians lands, they were identified with the Turanians. Hence the confusion of the two in Islamic sources, including the *Shāhnāma*, and the frequent reference to Afrasiyab as the king of the Turks"(Yarshater 1983:409). Although the original Turanians were Iranians and not Turkish, as noted by Yarshater, after the 6th century, the two were taken as equivalent by Iranian authors such as Ferdowsi. Note the

Thus the semantic and context of the word in historical writings was not properly examined by Tourkhan Gandjei. The clearest example of how this word was used in its historical context is the Sassanid King *Hormoz the tork-zād* (*Hormoz-e tork-zād*), who in the *Shāhnāma*, was the son of the Persian Sassanid king Anushirawan and, according to *Shāhnāma* and other historical records, the daughter of Khāqān of Turks.

Ferdowsi recalls the tale in which Yalan-Sineh (a commander of Bahram Chubin) states to Garduya, the sister of Bahram Chubin, who advises Bahram Chubin not to go against Hormoz[618]:

Enough talk about Hormoz the tork-zād	سخن بس کن از هرمزد ترک‌زاد
May such a lineage/race/origin be eradicated	که اندر زمانه مباد آن نژاد

Consequently, the word *tork-zād* in the given historical context means a special lineage in which the father is Iranian and the mother is a Turk. Bahram Azar-Mahan complains to Sima Borzin in front of Hormoz about Hormoz[619]:

This tork-zād is not worthy of the throne	که این ترک‌زاده سزاوار نیست
No one is supportive of his kingship	به شاهی کس او را خریدار نیست
He is of the blood of the Khāqān and of evil nature	که خاقان نژادست و بدگوهرست
His form and stature is like that of his mother,	به بالا و دیدار چون مادرست
You thought that Hormoz is worthy of this crown,	تو گفتی که هرمز به شاهی سزاست
Now you see your punishment stems from his real worth	کنون زیر سزا مر ترا این جزاست

Bahram Azar-Mahan again with regards to Hormoz states[620]:

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identification of the Turanians with contemporary existing groups of the time of Ferdowsi is not unique to Ferdowsi. For example, the original Scythians were Iranians but in the writings from the Middle Ages, which is long after the disappearance of Scythians, chroniclers identified the Scythians with contemporary ethnic groups of their own time. As an example, Ganjakets'i has used Scythians for the Oghuz groups such as Saljuqs (Ganjakets'i 1986:75).

[618] Ferdowsi:1662.
[619] Ferdowsi:1609.
[620] Ferdowsi:1611.

Bahram told him (Hormoz): "O, tork-zād!	بدو گفت بهرام که ای ترکزاد
You can never be sated with bloodshed	به خون ریختن تا نباشی تو شاد
Your ancestry is from the Khāqān not Kay-Qubād	تو خاقان نژادی نه از کی قباد
Even though Khusraw (Anushirawan) bestowed upon you this crown	که کسری تو را تاج بر سرنهاد

This term is also mentioned with regards to other characters who were half-Turanian in the *Shāhnāma*. For example, Forud, the brother of Kay-Khusraw is consoled by his mother Jarira (who was a Turanian and daughter of Pirān) about his Iranian father Siyāvash when he was seeking his lineage[621]:

Pirān gave me to him (Siyāvash) first	بدو داد پیران مرا از نخست
Else he was not seeking a wife from the Turks	وگرنه ز ترکان همی زن نجست
Your lineage from both Father and Mother	نژاد تو از مادر و از پدر
Are all part of the royal and noble	همه تاجدار و همه نامور

The Iranian warrior Tus calls Forud who was half-Iranian and half-Turanian as *tork-zādeh*[622]:

One tork-zād like a black crow *(reference to possibly dark night or bad omen)*	یکی ترکزاده چو زاغ سیاه
Has in this fashion stopped the path of the troops	برین گونه بگرفت راه سپاه

Besides the *Shāhnāma*, of which Nezami had thorough knowledge, other texts contemporary to Nezami and after him have also described the context of this word. The *Mujmal al-Tawārikh va-al-Qisas* which was written in 520 Hijri (1126-1127), describes the chronology and history of the Buyid rulers originating from the Daylamites and tracing their lineage to the Sassanids. This book was composed during Nezami's era. With regards to the Iranian Buyid ruler Rukn al-Dawlah, it states: "In Isfahan, a son was born from him from a Turkish servant in the year 324 A.H. and he named him Abu-Shuja' Fana-Khusraw, and his title was 'Azd Al-Dawlah,

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[621] Ferdowsi:442.
[622] Ferdowsi:448.

the oldest son of Rukn al-Dawlah during the Abbassid Caliph Al-Radi Bi-Allah, and in the year 330 A.H., another son, also a *tork-zād*, was born to him"[623]. This passage makes it clear that in the given historical context the *tork-zād* is a child that is born of an Iranian father and a Turk mother. In the *Tārikh-e Jahān-Arā*, written around 1564-1565 A.D. and translated by Ouseley William in 1799 (with inclusion of the original Persian text), this term occurs as well. In this book, the term is defined precisely and the author states: "Hormuz - the son of Anushiravan; his mother was Kakim, the daughter of the Khāqān, from which circumstance (*lā-jaram*=consequently) he was called *tork-zād*"[624]. Thus this word in the contexts of classical Persian literature referenced a *nezhād* ("race/origin/lineage") as Ferdowsi mentions, and it particularly designates a son whose mother was a Turk and whose father was an Iranian. Consequently, this statement provides another clear proof of Nezami's Iranian background as he was the father of a *tork-zād*. Besides, had Nezami Ganjavi been Turkish himself, there would be no reason for him to constantly and explicitly distinguish his wife in KH:114/8-9 as a Turk, his son as a *tork-zād* (which means a person with Iranian father and Turkish mother in terms of the context of that time) and to make reference to the common stereotype of plundering (in addition to tent and nomadic migration associated with Turks). His first wife was of a different background (which is atypical) and that is why Nezami emphasizes her background.

4.8 Nezami, a Persian *Dehqān*

We have already covered the primary sources pointing to the fact that Ganja was populated densely by Persians (e.g. Gandzakets'i), as well as those reflecting the cultural life of the people of Ganja (e.g. the *Nozhat al-Majāles*). We now take a look at another reference to Nezami's background, by the poet himself. Some of the opening couplets from the chapters of *Layli o Majnun* reference Nezami as the source or composer. Some of these are not based on Arabic sources. For example, in the following opening couplet of one of the chapters, Nezami references himself as the source[625]:

The diver for the sea treasures of meaning	غواص جواهر معانی
Showered jewels from his own lips	کرد از لب خود گوهرفشانی

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[623] Bahar 1939:391.
[624] William 1799:56-57.
[625] LM:28/1; Servatiyan 2008:56; Zanjani 1990:83.

And also in another section he mentions himself[626]:

The decorator of this newlywed-bride	مشاطه‌ی این عروس نوعهد
Has spread such lights from this cradle	در جلوه چنان کشید از این مهد

Another example where he mentions himself[627]:

The historian of love and romance	تاریخ‌نویس عشق بازی
Will now relate some Arabic writings	گوید ز نوشته‌های تازی

In the conclusion section of the story, he references himself[628]:

The peerless verse composers	انگشت کش سخن سرایان
Will finish the story in this manner	این قصه چنین برد به پایان

Another passage, where Nezami is referencing himself[629]:

The eloquent Persian-born Dehqān	دهقان فصیح پارسی‌زاد
Expresses the situation of Arabs in this manner	از حال عرب چنین کند یاد

We note the word *pārsi-zād* needs to be also seen in the context it is used. The context of the *Haft Paykar* indicates it is an equivalent of Persian: Bahram's father Yazdigerd passed away and the noble subjects of the King were contemplating if Bahram Gur would be a good ruler[630]:

Everyone said we should not consider him	گفت هرکس در او نظر نکنیم
And should not even inform him about his father's death	وز پدر مردنش خبر نکنیم

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[626] LM 29/60; Servatiyan 2008:166; Zanjani 1990:89.
[627] Servatiyan 2008:287; Zanjani 1990:169.
[628] LM:45/1; Servatiyan 2008:289; Zanjani 1990:171.
[629] LM:30/1; Servatiyan 2008:170; Zanjani 1990:91.
[630] HP:14/25.

Because he was reared by the desert Arabs	که آن بیابانی عرب پرورد
He does not know how to run the Persian Realm (molk-e 'Ajam)	کار ملک عجم نداند کرد
He would give the Arabs power and wealth	تازیان را دهد ولایت و گنج
The Persians (pārsi-zādegān) would suffer hardship	پارسی‌زادگان رسند به رنج
No one wanted him to sit on the throne	کس نمی خواست که او شود بر گاه
Yet by God's will, he became King	چون خدا خواست برنهاد کلاه

Thus, from the context of the language of that time, it is clear that *pārsi-zādegān* means Persian, while *tork-zād* was used for a person like Hormoz, the Sassanid king whose mother was Turk and whose father was Iranian. It is important to note these subtle nuances, and what makes the meaning clear is the cross-reference with other historical texts. Servatiyan states with regards to LM:30/1 that the poet is alluding to himself by stating that this portion is from himself, and he is stating his social position as a *dehqān* and his lineage as a Persian[631]. It should be particularly emphasized once more that this chapter does not occur in the Arabic version of the story and it is by Nezami himself[632]. Nezami is mentioning the *eloquent dehqān* without specifying any previous poet (and thus not applying this epithet to anyone else). It is worth exploring this issue in detail, since several other arguments prove that the verse is about Nezami himself. The term *dehqān* emerged as a hereditary social class in the later Sassanid era, who managed local affairs and whom peasants were obliged to obey[633]. In early Islamic texts, the *dehqān*s function almost as local rulers under the Arab domain and the term was sometimes juxtaposed with *marzabān* ("marcher/governor")[634]. Aside from their political and social role, the *dehqān*s who were well versed in the history and culture of pre-Islamic Iran, played an important cultural role by serving rulers and princes as learned men[635]. For example, the governor of Basra, according to a source, had three *dehqān*s at his service, who told him of the grandeur of the Sassanids and made him feel that Arab rule was much

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[631] Servatiyan 1997:19-20; idem 2008:424. Other scholars have also mentioned this fact (e.g. see the article by retired Professor of Glasgow Caledonian University - Seyyed Hassan Amin - Amin 2007).

[632] Servatiyan 1997:19-20.

[633] Tafazzoli 1994.

[634] ibid.

[635] ibid.

inferior[636]. As noted, Iranians had not only preserved the ideals of the *dehqān*s from the Sassanid times and brought them into the Islamic period, but they also inculcated these ideals to the minds of the ruling Arab aristocracy, who also fused with Iranians[637]. During the Saljuq era, the *dehqān*s played a major role and the Saljuqs turned to the *dehqān* Iranian aristocracy in order to govern their empire[638]. The alliance between the *dehqān*s and the Saljuqs actually created resentment among the Turcoman tribesmen after 1055 when Toghril Beg took over Baghdad[639]. One of the reasons for unruliness of the Turcoman tribes during the Saljuq era was the Saljuq administrations preference for the *dehqān*s[640].

Due to the attachments of the *dehqān*s to the culture of Iran, the term *dehqān* had already made this word synonymous to "a Persian of noble blood" in contrast to Arab, Turks and Romans[641]. However, Nezami adds the adjective - "Persian-born *dehqān*", since one of the basic characteristics of the *dehqān* class was their Iranian background. According to some sources, including Nezami 'Aruzi, the Iranian national poet Ferdowsi was also of the *dehqān* lineage[642]. Another poet that refers to himself as a *dehqān* is Qatrān Tabrizi who was also well versed about ancient Iran[643]. His poetry is replete with the mention of ancient Iranian characters and their role[644]. The collection of documents from the local Iranian historian of Arran, Masu'd ibn Namdar (c. 1106) also confirms the existence of *dehqān*s in the Caucasus in that period[645].

Nezami Ganjavi uses "The eloquent Persian *dehqān*" which references both the social position and the ethnic affiliation. From Nezami's poetry, it is clear that he also fits in the class of *dehqān*s. An important aspect of the *dehqān*s' culture was their knowledge of ancient Iran. Nezami, like Ferdowsi and Qatrān, was deeply aware of ancient Iranian lore and he actually selected the themes of the *Haft Paykar*, *Eskandar-*

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[636] ibid.

[637] Frye 2003:154.

[638] ibid:154.

[639] ibid.:227.

[640] ibid.:227.

[641] Tafazzoli 1994.

[642] ibid.

[643] Tabrizi 1983:12.

[644] Examples include names such as Rustam, Sohrāb, Bijan, Giv, Keshvād, Gudarz, Nodhar, Tus, Tahamtan, Pur Pashang, Jamāsp, Manuchehr, Sefandyār, Rakhsh, Pirān, Manijah, Goshtāsp, Esfandyār, Fereydun, Zahāk, Hezār Afsān, Kāvus, Kashmar, Ruz Dozh, Haft-Khwān, Anushirawān, Sāssān, Estakhr, Bivarasp, Tur, Iraj, Sām, Narimān, Garshāsp, Zāl, etc. (Tabrizi 1983).

[645] Minorsky 1949.

Nāma and *Khusraw o Shirin* himself. With regards to the *Khursaw o Shirin*, he considers it as the sweetest story possible. As noted, Nezami himself wanted to imitate Ferdowsi and produce new edition of the Shāhnāma, but "Khizr" convinced him to work on new materials as there is no reason to "pierce two holes in a single pearl" and "imitate". Judging by the noble titles Nezami used for his mother *Ra'isa* and uncle *Xwaja*, he also belonged to the Iranian nobility.

The other aspect of *dehqān*s was their socio-economic position - they were landlords of minor villages and peasants. Nezami Ganjavi mentions in the *Haft Paykar*[646]:

I, who untie the knot of hundred problems	من که مشکل گشای صد گره ام
I, who am the possessor of a village, and its environs	کدخدای (نسخه: دهخدای) ده و برون ده ام

Additionally in the *Khusraw o Shirin*, he also mentions himself as *kad-khodā* (land/village head)[647]. The reference of being a *kad-khodā* could also be taken symbolically. However, at the end of the story of the *Khusraw o Shirin*[648], Qizil Arslān asks Nezami if he had received the two villages or pieces of land (*do-pāreh*) from the Royal lands (*molk-e xāsseh*) that Qizil Arslān's brother Nusrat al-Din Jahan Pahlawan had bestowed upon him. Nezami responds by saying that he did not compose the *Khusraw o Shirin* for reward, but the unexpected death of Nusrat al-Din Jahan Pahlavan was a big loss to everyone, and that he did not receive his due. Qizil Arslān then orders the deliverance of Nezami's deeds of ownership for this land/village and seals it with his own seal. He also orders that it should be inherited by Nezami's descendants as well. Consequently, the village of *Hamduniyān* was given to the poet for composing the *Khusraw o Shirin*.

Thus from a social, culture and economic position, Nezami fits the definition of the *dehqān*s who were minor landlords. In the LMZA we noted that his main job was not poetry and he stated that he would have completed the story in 14 days, if he was free from other functions. He also calls himself as *shāhr-band* ("the one who is forbidden to leave the city") of Ganja. This lends itself to the fact that he had an important social position which did not allow him to leave the area unattended.

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[646] HP 6/112; Zanjani 2005:5.
[647] KH9:25.
[648] KH:120.

He also has used the word *fasih* ("eloquent") in the verse in discussion[649]. This is an attributive used by Nezami to his own address for several times in his work. For example, when criticizing those who are jealous of his poetry[650]:

In the magic of words I am so complete	در سحر سخن چنان تمامم
That the Mirror of Invisible has become my title	کآیینهٔ غیب گشت نامم
My tongue like a sword in eloquence (fasihi)	شمشیر زبانم از فصیحی
I possess the miraculous breath of Jesus	دارم دم معجز مسیحی

And similarly in LMZA:48, he characterizes his own skills: "Exhibit the eloquence (*fesāhat*) that you possess".

The function of the *dehqān*s in preserving the epic genre is prevalent for the Iranian history and literature. They were actually responsible for the preservation of the stories of the national epic, the *Shāhnāma*, and pre-Islamic historical traditions; the romances of ancient Iran belong to the *dehqān*s as well[651]. Summarizing, Nezami definitely means himself writing of the "Eloquent Persian *dehqān*", in fact the poet having possessed all the specific characteristics of this social group.

4.9 Nezami's Persian Cultural Heritage

We now briefly overview Nezami's culture as expressed in his poetry, although its detailed study can fill up many volumes.

A noticeable portion of Nezami Ganjavi's poetry with its rich imagery, allusions and symbolism requires in-depth contemplation to be understood in the original language. It is no exaggeration to state that Nezami Ganjavi' poetry is among the most difficult to translate into any other language. As for the main themes of his poetry is that it is mainly based upon Iranian motifs and stories. The poet was particularly influenced by Ferdowsi. He mentions Ferdowsi and/or his *Shāhnāma* in the *Khusraw o Shirin*, *Layli o Majnun*, *Haft Paykar* and *Eskandar-Nāma*. As mentioned already in Part II, in the *Sharaf-Nāma*, Nezami Ganjavi expresses his desire to imitate the *Shāhnāma*, but then decides that: "One cannot pierce two holes in a single pearl"[652]. He was upset that he did not accomplish this task, but then Khizr (possibly

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[649] LM:30/1.
[650] LM:8/6-7.
[651] Tafazzoli 1994.
[652] SN:8/11.

a symbol for his inner inspiration and divine guidance) tells him to accept this fate. Consequently, despite his inner inclinations, Nezami did not recompose the *Shāhnāma*, because he did not want to be known as an imitator, but he wanted his legacy to be known throughout the ages as that of a new initiator and leader in Persian poetry.

The epic of the *Khusraw o Shirin* deals with national heroes of pre-Islamic Iran[653]. In the *Khusraw o Shirin*, Nezami calls Ferdowsi as a *hakim* ("sage") and *dānā* ("wise, knowledgeable")[654]. He also believes that since Ferdowsi was in his sixties when he was composing his epic, he did not expand upon the romantic nature of the story, since at that age, romance would not suit Ferdowsi. However, the reason Nezami pursued romantic epics in his later years is possibly due to the great popularity of such epics during that era as alluded by him[655].

| But there is no one today in the world | ولیکن در جهان امروز کس نیست |
| Who does not fancy reading epic love stories | که او را در هوسنامه هوس نیست |

It should be noted that these romantic epics, according to medieval Persian poets, such as Jāmi, were an out-layer used to impart ethics, philosophical and spiritual truths[656]. The romantic epic portion of the story is obviously part of Iranian folklore and all the characters such as Shirin, Mahin Bānu, Farhād, Khusraw, Bārbad, Nakisā, Bāmshād, Shāpur, etc. provide a glimpse of the culture of Iran at that time. The story has historical value for the study of the culture of ancient Iran. For example, it mentions the names of songs and modes of ancient Iranian music[657].

The themes of the *Haft Paykar* and *Khusraw o Shirin* which dealt with pre-Islamic Sassanid Iran were chosen by Nezami himself. For example, on the *Khusraw o Shirin*, Nezami states that "a sweeter story does not exist"[658]. For the *Haft Paykar*, [659] Nezami chose the theme about the Iranian king Bahram Gur, in the pseudo-historical epic genre. As for the *Eskandar-Nāma*, Nezami mentions that he first wanted to recompose the Iranian national epic, but Khizr tells him that there cannot be "two holes pierced in one pearl" and he should not be upset that he did not come before Ferdowsi. Instead, Khizr reminds the poet that the story of *Eskandar* was not covered in detail in the *Shāhnāma* and suggests that this would be the theme of the *Eskandar-Nāma*. All of

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[653] Chelkowski 1977:17.

[654] KH:11/49-50.

[655] KH:11/30.

[656] See Nasr and Razavi 1996:178-187 for the exposition of this theme.

[657] Chelkowski 1975:4.

[658] KH:11/34.

[659] HP:4.

these stories were part of the inclinations of Nezami as of an Iranian Muslim, and that is why he chose the themes from his own Iranian culture. The story whose theme was not chosen by Nezami himself, as noted already, was the *Layli o Majnun*.

In the *Layli o Majnun*, the Arab origin of the lovers is inconsequential, since the story was later absorbed and embellished by the Iranians[660]. We noted the Persianization of the story in Part I, and even Jan Rypka states that the story is "closer to the Persian conception of Arabia"[661]. Rudolph Gelpke also notes that: "Nezami preserves the Bedouin atmosphere, the nomad's tents in the desert and the tribal customs of the inhabitants, while at the same time transposing the story into the far more civilized Iranian world … Majnun talks to the planets in the symbolic language of a twelfth century Persian sage, the encounters of small Arabic raiding parties become gigantic battles of royal Persian armies, and most of the Bedouins talk like heroes, courtiers, and savants of the refined Iranian Civilization"[662]. An interesting episode in this epic is the fact that Nezami entrusts his own son to the son of the Sharvānshāh[663]. Nezami Ganjavi in this episode advises the son of the Sharvānshāh to read the *Shāhnāma*[664] which again shows the importance of the national Persian epic in the culture of Nezami.

In the Sharaf-Nāma, Nezami Ganjavi mentions Ferdowsi as the "*Wise poet of Tus who decorated the face of rhetoric like a new bride*"[665]. We should note that Alexander was glorified by Iranian Muslims (as opposed to Iranian Zoroastrians) as a prophet-king[666] and identified as the Dhul-Qarnain of the Qur'an by many prominent Muslim figures. Thus, after the Islamic conquest, "he rose from the stature of a damned evil conqueror of the country, to that of a national Iranian hero king, and even more, to that of the great prophet of God, preparing all the nations for the true religion"[667]. According to Chelkowski, the main source of Nezami's *Eskandar-Nāma*, beside Tabari, was Ferdowsi. He states with this regard: "It was Firdawsi who was Nezami's source of inspiration and material in composing Eskandar-Nāma. Nezami constantly alludes to the *Shāhnāma* in his writing, especially in the prologue to the *Eskandar-Nāma*. It seems that he was always fascinated by the work of Firdawsi and made it a goal of his life to write an heroic epic of the same stature"[668]. The final product was Alexander

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[660] Chelkowski 1977:17.
[661] Rypka 1968b:580.
[662] Gelpke 1997.
[663] LM:7.
[664] LM:7/22; Seyed-Gohrab 2003:276.
[665] SN:7/118.
[666] Abel 1978, Chelkowski 1977:19.
[667] Chelkowski 1977:10.
[668] ibid.:21.

who is a hero, principally located in Iran in the image of traditional "Iranian Knight"[669]. Besides, before the Iranicization of Alexander in the Persian epic tradition, in the case of previous romances of Khusraw and Bahram, Nezami had dealt with national Iranian heroes from pre-Islamic times[670].

Ancient Iranian figures, mythical figures and terms that occur both in the *Shāhnāma* and the pentalogue of Nezami are many, and here we just list some of them: *Simorgh* (mythical Iranian bird mentioned in Avesta), *Rustam* (the most prominent Iranian hero in the *Shāhnāma*), *Faramarz* (the son of Rustam), *Darafsh Kāwiyāni* (Kāveh's flag and the symbol of the Iranian nation), *Fereydun* (legendary ancestor of Iranians), *Anushirawān* (a famous Sassanid King), *Esfandyār*, *Zand/Avesta*, *Zahāk/Bivarasb*, *Siyāvash* (an Iranian martyr), *Sikandar* (Alexander mentioned extensively in the *Shāhnāma*), *Siāmak* (the son of Kayumarth who was killed by Daemons/Divs) , *Div* (Demons), *Bahrām Gur* (a celebrated Sassanid King), *Bahrām Chubin* (a celebrated Sassanid General), *Afrasiyāb* (a famous villain in the *Shāhnāma* of the Turanian origin - an Iranian tribe in the Avesta), *Zāl* (the father of Rustam who was abandoned by Sām but saved by Simorgh and later on reclaimed by Sām), *Sām* (the father of Zāl), *Shirin* (Armenian/Christian princess according to later poets, but also mentioned in the *Shāhnāma* as a beloved of Khusraw and a historical figure at Sassanid court), *Farhād* (who falls in love with Shirin - a legend both in the *Shāhnāma* and in the Iranian tradition from the Sassanid time), the *Kayanids* (Royal Iranian dynasty), *Parviz* ("victorious", the title of Khusraw II), *nard* (the backgammon, which is considered to be of Iranian origin and which history is given in the *Shāhnāma*), *Magi* (Zoroastrian priest), *Kisrā/Khusraw* (Sassanid Kings), *Kayumarth* (the Adam of Zoroastrianism), *Kay-Qubād* (the first Kayanid King), *Kay-Khusraw* (the great mystic/hero/king of the *Shāhnāma*), *Kay-Kāvus* (the father of Siyāvash and a Kayanid King), *Jamshid* (the great mythical King of the *Shāhnāma* and Zoroastrian texts), *Iraj* (the father of Iranians in the *Shāhnāma* and one of the sons of Fereydun.), *Giv* (a famous hero in the Shāhnāma), *Bijan* (a famous hero and a friend of Rustam), *dehqān* (Iranian), *Darius/Dārā* (the name of several Kayanid and Achaemenid kings), *Bistun* (the famous mountain with the Old Persian inscription in Kermanshāh), *Bahman* (the Zoroastrian and *Shāhnāma* King and son of Esfandyār), *Artang* (the art work of Mani), *Ardashir-e Bābakān* (the founder of the Sassanid dynasty), *Arash* (the famous Iranian hero and archer who sacrificed his life for the sake of Iran), *Bārbad* and *Nakisā* (the renowned Sassanid musicians), the *Kalila o Demna* (a collection of stories brought by the Vizir of Anushirawan from India and expanded by means of its Persian version).

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[669] Abel 1978.
[670] Chelkowski 1977:10.

Consequently, as Chelkowski has noted: "It seems that Nezami's favorite pastime was reading Firdawsi's monumental epic *Shāhnāma*"[671].

Besides Ferdowsi , Nezami Ganjavi was also heavily influenced by As'ad Gurgāni. Richard Davis, the current foremost expert and the translator of the *Vis o Rāmin* notes that: "The poem had an immense influence on Nezami, who takes the bases for most of his plots from Ferdowsi but the basis for his rhetoric from Gurgāni"[672]. Gurgāni can currently be considered as the initiator of the distinct rhetoric and poetic atmosphere of the Persian romance tradition[673], and the elaborate astrological descriptions or the lovers arguing in the snow, as well as the meter of the *Khusraw o Shirin* are based on Gurgāni's *Vis o Rāmin*[674]. Gurgāni's influence in the Caucasus can also be seen in the Georgian literature, his work having been translated to Georgian in an early period.

The other poetic work that Nezami took as his model is the *Hadiqat al-Haqiqa* by Sanāi. This poem was the first in the tradition of the Persian didactical *mathnawi*s and played a great role in Persian literature. Poets that took this work as a model include Nezami, Attār, Rumi, Awhadi and Jāmi[675]. Khāqāni Sharvāni also exercised a great influence upon Nezami through his usage of new terms and imagery[676]. Indeed, both poets are unique in terms of the amount of new concepts and imagery that they employ; they both stand out among all the Persian poets from the Caucasus. Finally, another author who also had influence upon Nezami, though, as to our knowledge, it has not been emphasized by anyone, was Asadi Tusi. Asadi Tusi is mentioned by Nezami in the *Haft Paykar*, but his influence can be seen in the *Eskandar-Nāma*. Garshāsp displays a personality of both a hero as well as a sage interested in philosophy. Just like the *Iqbāl-Nāma*, in which Eskandar asks philosophical questions from the Greek sages, Garshāsp also asks similar philosophical questions about existence, destiny, faith and other ideas from Indian Brahmins and Greek sages. Thus, Nezami' poetry would not have been possible without his Persian predecessors' ideas and themes, incorporated into it.

Nezami's cultural orientation - the language, literary heritage, mythology and philosophy - are more than sufficient to characterize him as a prominent figure of the Iranian cultural history. None of these concepts can be applied to a Turkish cultural history, since Nezami did not write in Turkish, nor did he use Turkish literary heritage. Finally, the philosophy and cultural heritage of Nezami is built

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[671] ibid.:2.
[672] Davis 2005.
[673] ibid.
[674] ibid.
[675] de Bruijn 2002.
[676] Beelaert 2010.

upon his Iranian predecessors. Even such Soviet bloc authors as Rypka, who also mentions the position Azerbaijan SSR, without himself making a definite statements about Nezami's background, has to concede, admitting "the undisputed supremacy of Persian culture, in which the Turkish tribes could only participate through the Persian tongue... Only a detailed history of the Caucasian town can clear up the question of Nezami's nationality"[677], although contradicting this statement himself by the fact that Nezami came from an urban background[678]. Thus the arguments of the authors mentioned in Part III, that allegedly a Turcoman nomad would adopt urban Persian culture and versify stories about ancient Iran, have no adequate grounds.

No cultural background comes from a vacuum, and Nezami was part of the Iranian ethnic and culture of his time. It was the same culture that was responsible for the Persianization of the Sharvānshāhs, other local rulers and the Saljuqs. After the Mongol invasion, the Turcoman upheavals, the Safavid interlude, and the subsequent Turkicization of Eastern-Transcaucasia, the Caucasus regions has not given birth to any outstanding Persian poets – not only of such a level as Khāqāni and Nezami were, but even of the rank of Mujir or Mahsati Ganjavi[679]. There was an underlying Persian culture and massive Iranian ethnic element which allowed the region to produce the two outstanding figures of Khāqāni and Nezāmi amongst the hundreds of the Persian poets of that era.

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[677] Rypka 1961:112-113.
[678] Rypka 1968b:578.
[679] Riāhi 2008.

Conclusion

Thus, we have analyzed outright falsification, forgeries and misinterpretations concerning the figure and heritage of Nezami, derived from the USSR nation building campaigns and pan-Turkist nationalist ideologies[680]. These two trends - of the Soviet nation building and pan-Turkism - were most often combined (although sometimes differed) in the anachronistic and modern nationalistic false interpretation of Nezami. When these misinterpretations were not sufficient, outright distortions like the fabrication of the so called Turkish Divan for Nezami, misreading of Persian words or forgery were used to detach Nezami from his Iranian background and misattribute him to a modern Soviet built identities or to Turkish nomads. Some of the terms introduced by the USSR nation building line, are still in currency in non-academic and particularly ideological sphere. Occasionally, they have also crept into scholarship, primarily as a result of the USSR nation building campaigns. With the Internet boom, falsification of history has significantly expanded[681].

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[680] Bayat 2008.

[681] For example, Google search on Nizami Ganjavi brings up pages where many of the false claims that were examined here, are presented to unaware readers in English, Russian and even Persian. It is obvious that for a high school or even an unaware scholar who is writing a small research or paragraph or article, such pages can provide them the wrong information. Recent news also implicates a Baku nationalist Wikipedia group list that wrote many coordinates letters to various institutions (e.g. Encyclopaedia Britannica) to de-Iranianize Nezami Ganjavi. The group also discussed methods to deny the Armenian heritage. See: Pan-Armenian News Network, "Wikipedia Arbitration Committee bans 26 Baku wikipedians' activity", July 2010. http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/it_telecom /news/50861/Wikipedia_Arbitration_Committee_bans_26_Baku_wikipedians_activity and http://www.panarmenian.net/rus/it_telecom/news/49697/26_бакинских_википедистов_ могут_быть_забанены_в_Википедии June 2010. There are also advertisements in Google about Nezami from Turkish nationalist organizations which bring readers to pages containing distortions. Thus organized ethnic lobbyists tied to governments of the region are actively

It was explicitly shown that the term "Azerbaijani" did not denote an ethnicity in the 12th century and in terms of geography, Nezami, Abu 'Ala Ganjavi and Khāqāni termed their region as Arrān and Sharvān. It was also demonstrated that the great poets such as Khāqāni and Nezami rised from the Iranian cultural milieu. Iranian cultural and ethnic elements in Eastern-Transcaucasia (12th century Arrān and Sharvān) emerged in the time of the Achaemenids (if not the Medes), increased during the Parthian era, peaked during the Sassanid and early Islamic era, and declined steadily during the Mongol, Turcoman and Safavid eras. The *Nozhat al-Majāles* shows that a native Persian culture and Iranian ethnic presence laid the solid foundation for the development of the classical Persian literature in the region, which gave to the world such outstanding figures as Nezami and Khāqāni.

The analysis of Nezami's poetic heritage makes it absolutely clear that he was the typical product of the urban Perso-Islamic culture of the time[682]. The Iranian figure Nezami arose from the same urban Iranian milieu that produced more than 100 recorded (which likely means there were many more) Persian poets from Arrān, Azerbaijan and Sharvān during this same period. However, the Iranian ethnic affiliation of Nezami Ganjavi plays a secondary role in comparison with his Iranian cultural heritage that will survive as long as the Persian culture and language endures. In the early 19th century, Nezami was considered amongst the top ranking Persian poets in Iran,[683] which still holds true. In the Pahlavid period, the memorization and recitation of his poetry, like that of other major poets, was part of popular culture[684] and his popularity has remained steady or seemingly increased since the Islamic revolution. As succinctly put by Chelkowski: "Nezami's strong character, his social sensibility, and his poetic genius fused with his rich Persian cultural heritage to create a new standard of literary achievement. Using themes from the oral tradition and written historical records, his poems unite pre-Islamic and Islamic Iran"[685].

Nezami combines the mysticism of Sanāi with heroic epics of Ferdowsi, what makes him unique in Persian literature. At the same time – and what is more important – such writers as Shakespeare, Goethe, Hafez, Nezami etc., truly belong to the universal human culture. Nezami seems to have realized this fact during his own lifetime:

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lobbying to change history for ethno-national purposes. However, history can be misrepresented for a period, but cannot be changed.

[682] Chelkowski 1977.

[683] Robinson 1883:105.

[684] Chelkowski 1975:9.

[685] ibid. 1975:6.

I went to the Tavern last night, but I was not admitted	دوش رفتم به خرابات و مرا راه نبود
I was bellowing yet nobody was listening to me	می زدم نعره و فریاد کس از من نشنود
Either none of the wine-sellers were awake	یا نبُد هیچ کس از باده فروشان بیدار
Or I was a nobody, and no one opened the door for a Nobody	یا که من هیچ کسم هیچکسم در نگشود
When more or less half of the night had passed	نیمی از شب چو بشد بیشترک یا کمتر
A shrewd, perfect man (rind)[686] raised his head from a booth and showed his face	رندی از غرفه در آورد سر و رخ بنمود
I asked him: "to open the door", he told me: "go away, do not talk nonsense!	گفتمش در بگشا گفت برو یاوه مگوی
At this hour, nobody opens door for anybody	کاندرین وقت کسی بهر کسی در نگشود
This is not a mosque where its doors are open any moment	این نه مسجد که به هر لحظه درش بگشایند
Where you can come late and move quickly to the first row	که تو دیر آیی و اندر صف پیش آیی زود
This is the Tavern of Magians and rinds dwell here	این خرابات مغان است و در آن رندانند
There are Beauties, candle, wine, sugar, reed flute and songs	شاهد و شمع و شراب و شکر و نای و سرود
Whatever wonders that exists, is present here	هرچه از جملهٔ آفاق در این جا حاضر
(in this tavern there are) Muslims, Armenians, Zoroastrian, Nestorians, and Jews	مومن و ارمنی و گبر و نصارا و یهود
If you are seeking company of all that is found here	گر تو خواهی که دم از صحبت اینان بزنی
You must become a dust upon the feet of everyone in order to reach your (spiritual perfection) goal"	خاک پای همه شو تا که بیابی مقصود
O Nezami! if you knock the ring on this door day and night	ای نظامی چو زنی حلقه درین در شب و روز
You won't find except smoke from this burning fire	مگر از آتش سوزنده نیابی جز دود

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[686] The word *rind* is not easy to translate. The word itself meant topper, hooligan, sot and unruly during the time of Bayhaqi. But by the time of Sanāi and Persian mystic poetry, it came to represent the perfect man that is detached from all bonds (physical and mental). See the Dehkhoda dictionary under this word for various definitions.

Thus, Nezami states that Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism are all valid spiritual paths and that no one can reach the highest spiritual reality ("The Magian Tavern") unless he is altruistic. This is perhaps the ultimate message which the universal figure of Nezami leaves to the present day world.

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Back Cover Comments

Using admirable caution in the mined field of the reconstruction and critical evaluation of the national stereotypes and clichés stratified through different generations about the interpretation of great literary figures, the authors analyze the ideological constructs created about the figure and work of Nezami Ganjevi.

The book presents a thorough review of many relevant aspects of the question, concerning ethnic history and identity, no less than linguistic and literary details, relevant to the regions of NW Iran and southern Caucasus in which the poetical activity of Nezami found expression.

The authors make extensive use of all available data, many of which never previously examined in connection to the subject, thus contributing to a better understanding of a difficult and sensitive issue both of political and literary history of the Persianate culture.

Prof. Dr. Adriano V. Rossi,
University of Naples

Siavash Lornejad and Ali Doostzadeh have produced a first-rate scholarly work to expose the attempts by the Soviet Union in the 1930s to falsely label Nezami as "the great national poet of Azerbaijan." This was done specifically to eliminate the Iranian cultural heritage from among the Shi'i Muslims of Transcaucasia, as well as to give the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic a national identity. To accomplish this and to lay claim to the historical Azarbaijan (in northwestern Iran), Moscow pressured its historians and writers to view the entire region of eastern Transcaucasia as "Azerbaijan," centuries prior to the establishment of the Azerbaijan Republic in the 20th century. In addition, in order to occupy historical Azarbaijan (which the Soviets did in 1946) they began to refer to the Iranian province as "Southern Azerbaijan." The present work not only debunks the numerous falsehoods, but, by carefully examining Nezami's works, also proves that Nezami, without a doubt, was an Iranian poet.

Dr. George Bournoutian
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This book provides a full survey of the distortions – dictated by nationalistic purposes – which have been pervading the field of the studies on the Persian poet Nezami of Ganje since the Soviet campaign for Nezami's 800th birthday anniversary. The authors discuss, with critical accuracy, the arguments put forward by Soviet scholars, and more recently by scholars from the Republic of Azerbaijan, which term Nezami as an "Azerbaijani poet" and his work as pertaining to an alleged "Azerbaijani literature;" and show the historic unsoundness of such theses.

Beyond this pars destruens, the book provides also a very rich pars construens, with a bulk of information and data drawn from a first-hand reading of Nezami's own works and the works by other coeval poets, as well as from historical sources. This book represents an interesting and meticulously documented study on Persian classical literature and on many historic, ethnographic and linguistic questions related to ancient Arran and Transcaucasia.

We should be grateful to the authors for having tackled a subject - the politicized use of culture - whose importance has been generally underestimated by European scholars. However the unveiling of a statue in Rome of the "Azerbaijani poet" Nezami compels us to react to such distortions; and makes this book of great topical interest, too.

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