

A note on the Linguistic Turkicization of Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan (Shir-e Dalir, 2009)

On the Linguistic Turkicization of Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan there has not been any detailed study (for example a book or a Ph.D. Thesis) as far as I know. The work of Kasravi although a good start needs much more work since much new evidence has been unearthed since his demise.

Three drawbacks I have seen with regards to current studies are:

Authors have lumped Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan together although Turkicization occurred differently and at different pace in these areas.

Authors have not distinguished between nomadic plains (say the Mughan steppes) and urban city centers. It takes many generations to give up the nomadic lifestyle, for semi-nomadic lifestyle, to rural settlements and finally to urban settlement.

Authors have not looked in detail at the differences of Islamic sects. For example in Western Iran unlike Khorasan, the population was mainly Shafi'i whereas the Turks that entered the region were overwhelmingly Hanafi.

This study is not a complete study but it sheds light on sources that scholars have overlooked. For example our main concern are the linguistic Turkicization of the Muslims of the area. It also uses the three above points to study the linguistic Turkicization of Azerbaijan in detail. Finally, we take a look at some arguments in the Appendix that carry no weight but have been promulgated for non-scientific reasons. Overall the study shows that until the Safavid period, the Turkicization of Azerbaijan and Sherwan were far from complete. Some other authors have mentioned that Turkification was near complete near the end of the Seljuq or Mongol era, but direct evidence provided here contradicts them. On Arran we have less data after the Mongol period although an important manuscript is brought to light. What this study does highlight is important manuscripts that have been neglected that shed light upon the linguistic Turkicization of Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan.

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Regional Iranian culture in Arran/Sherwan and Azerbaijan

Estakhri of 10th century also states:

“In Azerbaijan, Armenia and Arran 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 Arranian.”

Original Arabic:

و لسان اذربيجان و ارمينية و الران الفارسيه و العربيه غير ان اهل دبيل و حواليتها يتكلمون بالارمنييه، و نواحى بردعه لسانهم ارانيه

(Estakhari, Abu Eshaq Ebrahim. *Masalek va Mamalek*. Bonyad Moqumat Dr. Afshar, Tehran, 1371 (1992-1993))

Al-Muqaddasi (d. late 4th/10th cent.) considers Azerbaijan and Arran (sometimes it included Sherwan as in this case) as part of the 8th division of lands. He states:

“The languages of the 8th division is Iranian (al-’ajamyia). It is partly Dari and partly convoluted (monqaleq) and all of them are named Persian”

(Al-Muqaddasi, Shams ad-Din Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Ahmad, *Ahsan al-Ta’asim fi Ma’rifat al-Aqalim*, Translated by Ali Naqi Vaziri, Volume One, First Edition, Mu’alifan and Mutarjiman Publishers, Iran, 1981, pg 377.)

المقدسي، شمس الدين ابو عبدالله محمد بن احمد، احسن التقاسيم في معرفه الاقاليم، ترجمه دكتور علي نقى وزيرى، جلد 1، چاپ اول، انتشارات مؤلفان و مترجمان ايران، 1361، ص 377.

Al-Muqaddasi also writes on the general region of Armenia, Arran and Azerbaijan and states:

“They have big beards, their speech is not attractive. In Arminya they speak Armenian, in al-Ran, Ranian (Aranian); Their Persian is understandable, and is close to Khurasanian (Dari Persian) in sound”

(Al-Muqaddasi, ‘The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions’, a translation of his *Ahsan al-Ta’asim fi Ma’rifat al-Aqalim* by B.A. Collins, Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, Garnet Publishing Limited, 1994. pg 334).

Thus from Muqaddasi we can see that a regional Persian language was spoken in the area and cross referencing with Estakhri, we can conjecture that this was the main language of the muslim population, specially in the urban areas.

According to C. E. Bosworth:

“North of the Aras, the distinct, presumably Iranian, speech of Arran long survived, called by Ebn Hawqal al-Raniya”

(Azerbaijan: Islamic History to 1941, Encyclopedia Iranica).

Although we do not have any manuscripts of al-Raniya to really judge the nature of this dialect (whether it was a dialect of Parthian or Iranian languages, or was it a Caucasian language or non-standard dialect of Armenian?), nearby the Kur river, in the town of Barda' in Arran:

“The fertile rural environs produced much fruit (with a particularly noted variety of figs), nuts, and also the dyestuff madder (rūnās), which was exported as far as India. In the Kor and other nearby rivers, the sturgeon (sormāhī from Persian šūrmāhī, salt fish) and other tasty fish were caught; and there was extensive production of textiles, including silks (see Ebn Hawqal, pp. 337-39, 347, 349, tr. Kramers, II, pp. 330-32, 340, 342; Maqdesī, [Moqaddasī], p. 375; Hodūd al-Aālam, tr. Minorsky, pp. 143-44, secs. 36.21, 36.30; R. B. Serjeant, Islamic Textiles. Material for a History up to the Mongol Conquest, Beirut, 1972, p. 69)”

(Barda, Encyclopedia Iranica, Bosworth).

The word *sormāhī* which Prof. Bosworth derives from Shurmahi in Persian could actually be red fish (sor/suhr being the Pahlavi for red which in modern Persian is Surkh). Al-Muqaddasi translates the “Monday” to Yam al-Ithnayn which in Persian and Iranian dialects is Doshanbeh (the second day). An important point to mention is that Ganja like many other pre-Seljuq toponyms has an Iranian name, which naturally reflects the fact that it was founded by Iranian settlers (C.E. Bosworth, “Ganja”, Encyclopedia Iranica). One should also mention the native Iranian (Parthian/Persian) dynasty which ruled over the area of Arran up to at least the 8th century.

Al-Mas'udi the Arab Historian States:

“The Persians are a people whose borders are the Mahat Mountains and Azarbaijan up to Armenia and Arran, and Bayleqan and Darband, and Ray and Tabaristan and Masqat and Shabaran and Jorjan and Abarshahr, and that is Nishabur, and Herat and Marv and other places in land of Khorasan, and Sejistān 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.”

Source:

Al Mas'udi, Kitab al-Tanbih wa-l-Ishraf, De Goeje, M.J. (ed.), Leiden, Brill, 1894, pp. 77-8.

Thus Masu'di testifies to the Iranian presence in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan during the 10th century and even names a local Iranian dialect called Azari and says Persian peoples in Arran, Armenia and Darband and Bayleqan spoke Persian languages.

This Iranian culture was strong in the region and perhaps even grew during the Seljuqs and Ilkhanids. It is only with the Safavids that probably the traditional Sufi-Shafi'ite oriented Persian culture faded away.

Probably the best example to show the extent of Iranian culture and population in Arran and Shirawn is through the book Nozhat al-Majalis. There are 114 poets in Persian just from this book in the area of Azerbaijan, Arran, and Shirwan.

1- ابو علا شاپور، 2- ابوالفضل تبریزی، 3- ابوالقاسم، 4- قاضي ابوالمجد، 5- اسدي، 6- اسمعيل فارسي، 7- اطلسي، 8- بختيار شرواني، 9- بدر تفليسي، 10- بدرالدين محمود، 11- بديع بيلقاني، 12- برهان گنجه‌اي، 13- بهاء شرواني، 14- پسر خطيب گنجه، 15- پسر سله گنجه، 16- پسر قاضي دربند، 17- تاج خلاطي، 18- تاج زنگاني، 19- تاج صالح، 20- تفليسي شرواني، 21- جلال خواري، 22- جلالی، 23- جمال جويي، 24- جمال خليل شرواني، 25- جمال حاجي شرواني، 26- جمال عصفوري، 27- جمال عمر، 28- جمال گنجه‌اي، 29- جهان گشته، 30- حديثي، 31- شيخ حسين سقا، 32- حسين هزارمرد، 33- حميد تبريزي، 34- حميد شرواني، 35- حميد گنجه‌اي، 36- خاقاني شرواني، 37- دختر حكيم گاو، 38- دختر خطيب گنجه، 39- دختر سالار، 40- دختر ستي، 41- رشيد بيلقاني، 42- رشيد شرواني، 43- رشيد گنجه‌اي، 44- حسين گنجه‌اي، 45- رضيه گنجه‌اي، 46- رفيع بكراني ابهری، 47- ركن خويي، 48- زاهد، 49- زكي اكاف (پالاندوز)، 50- زكي مراغه‌اي، 51- سجاسي، 52- سعد صفار، 53- سعد گنجه‌اي، 54- سعيد شرواني، 55- سيد شيراني، 56- سيف تفليسي، 57- شرف شفروه، 58- شرف صالح بيلقاني، 59- شرف مراغي، 60- شرف الدين مرتضي، 61- شروانشاه، 62- شمس‌الدين اسعدگنجه‌اي، 63- شمس اقطع بيلقاني، 64- شمس الياس گنجه‌اي، 65- شمس اهري، 66- شمس تبريزي (به غير از شمس تبريزي معروف است)، 67- شمس عمر گنجه، 68- شهاب كاغذي، 69- شهاب گنجه‌اي، 70- صاين مراغي، 71- صدر زنگاني، 72- صفي بيلقاني، 73- صفي شرواني، 74- طهير خونجي، 75- طهير شفروه، 76- طهرالدين مراغه‌اي، 77- عبدالعزيز گنجه‌اي، 78- عثمان مراغه‌اي، 79- عز ابوالبقا، 80- عرشرواني، 81- عزيز شرواني، 82- عزيز كمال، 83- عماد شرواني، 84- عياني گنجه‌اي، 85- فخرالدين ابوبكر ابهری، 86- فخر گنجه‌اي، 87- فخر مراغه‌اي، 88- فخر نفاش، 89- فلکي شرواني، 90- قاضي، 91- قاضي تفليس، 92- قطب اهري، 93- قطب عتيقي تبريزي، 94- قوامي گنجه‌اي، 95- كمال ابن‌العزیز، 96- كمال ابوعمر ابهری، 97- كمال تفليسي، 98- لطيف تفليسي، 99- مجير بيلقاني، 100- محمد طبيب اردبيلي، 101- مختصر گنجه‌اي، 102- مظفر تبريزي، 103- مقرب باکويي، 104- مذهب‌الدين دبیرشرواني، 105- مهستي گنجه‌اي، 106- موفق سراج، 107- نجم سيمگر، 108- نجم گنجه‌اي، 109- نجيب گنجه‌اي، 110- نصير گنجه‌اي، 111- نظامي گنجه‌اي، 112- نفيس شرواني، 113- يحيي تبريزي. 114- جمال خليل شيرواني

We note none of these poets have a Turkish name. In the introduction, we read that the quatrains by these Persian poets were song in the Khanaqah (Sufi Houses), Bazars, Streets (Kucheh) and thus Persian was the common and every day language of Muslims in Arran and Shirwan at the time. Some of these poets are women who did not usually receive education but their Persian poetry shows the widespreadness of the Persian language during that time. The book was written between 1225 to 1290 and the only manuscript is from Istanbul dated to the early 14th century. The book is a complete mirror of the culture of Arran and Shirwan at that time.

(Jamal Khalil Shirvani, Nozhat al-Majlesh, Edited by Mohammad Amin Riyahi, Tehran, 1987)

Here we have also included the full article from Iranica which shows the common Persian language and heritage of the region before its linguistic Turkification. Some excerpts which we have bolded illustrate the full extent of Iranian culture at the time:

NOZHAT AL-MAJĀLES, an anthology of some 4,000 quatrains (*robāʿi*; a total of 4,139 quatrains, 54 of which have been repeated in the text) by some 300 poets of the 5th to 7th/11th-13th centuries, compiled around the middle of the 7th/13th century by the Persian poet Jamāl-al-Din Kālil Šarvāni. The book is arranged by subject in 17 chapters (*bābs*) divided into 96 different sections (*namaʿt*). The anthology also includes 179 quatrains and an ode (*qaṣida*) of 50 distiches written by the author himself, who is also credited with one lyric (*ġazal*) in Moḥammad Jājarmi's *Moʿnes al-aḥrār*.

As stated in Jamāl-al-Din's own ode at the end of the book, he compiled his anthology in the name of ʿAlāʾ-al-Din Šarvānšāh Fariborz III (r. 1225-51), son of Goštāsb and dedicated it to him. It has reached us in a unique manuscript copied by Esmāʿil b. Esfandiār b. Moḥammad b. Esfandiār Abhari on 25 Šawwāl 731/31 July 1331, and is presently bound together in one volume with the *divān* of Faḵr-al-Din ʿEraqi at the Süleymaniye Library in Turkey (no.1667) among Wali-al-Din Jār-Allāh's collection. This manuscript embraces some 77 leaves (fols. 41a-118a), each page having 27 lines. The first few leaves of the book, which had probably embodied a preface in prose, have been lost. Fritz Meier (p. 117) and Christian Rempis (1935, p. 179) have erroneously taken Esmāʿil b. Esfandiār, the copyist, to be the author of the book.

The manuscript of *Nozhat al-majāles* was first described by Hellmut Ritter (pp. 223-33). Three years later, in 1935, Rempis extracted and published the quatrains of Omar Khayyam (Kāyyām) recorded in the anthology, and in 1963 Fritz Meier performed the same task for Mahastī's quatrains. The first Persian scholar to use this anthology was Moḥammad-ʿAli Forugi, who obtained a copy of the manuscript and incorporated 31 quatrains of Khayyam found there in his edition of the *Robāʿiyāt-e Kāyyām* (pp. 35-44). Saʿid Nafisi (pp. 176-77) wrote on the *Nozhat al-majāles* and extracted the names of the unknown poets of Arrān and Šarvān who were mentioned in the anthology. Moḥammad-Taqi Dānešpažuh, in his article describing this anthology, rearranged the list of names extracted by Nafisi according to the names of the poets' hometowns and also gave the list of the subject matter in each section of the book (pp. 573-81).

Nozhat al-majāles belongs to an era when quatrains were very popular and formed substantial sections in the *divāns* of major poets of the time such as Anwari, ʿAṭṭār, Sanāʿi, Kāqāni, Rumi, and Kamāl-al-Din Esmāʿil. Sadid-al-Din Moḥammad ʿAwfi (d. ca. 1232-33) remarked in his biographical anthology *Lobāb al-albāb*, that many poets wrote only quatrains. At about 1192, approximately a hundred years before the compilation of *Nozhat al-majāles*, a similar anthology of quatrains entitled *Majmaʿ al-robāʿiyāt* had been compiled in Ankara by Abu Ḥanifa ʿAbd-al-Karim b. Abi Bakr, an incomplete copy of which is now at the library of Ḥālat

Afandi (Ateş, pp. 94-133). Jajarmi also devoted the twenty-eighth chapter of his *Mo'nes al-aḥrār* (comp. 1340) to *robā'is*, comprising 470 quatrains. In another recently discovered anthology, entitled *Safina-ye Tabriz*, a major part called “*Ḳolāṣat al-aš'ār fi'l-robā'iyāt*” contains 498 quatrains arranged in 50 sections (*bāb*). Most of them, however, are selected from *Nozhat al-majāles* and in a number of cases offer a more reliable reading (Afšār, pp. 535-38).

Nozhat al-majāles is a very valuable source for identifying the authors of many quatrains which had been wrongly attributed to major poets or whose authors had not been identified at all. For example, eighty quatrains published in Badi'-al-Zamān Foruzānfar's edition of Rumi's *Divān-e Šams* are now proven to belong to other poets, due to their inclusion in this anthology. The same is true about nine quatrains attributed to Hafez in some old manuscripts of his *divān*.

Another significant merit of *Nozhat al-majāles* is that it contains the quatrains of a number of poets whose collected works are no longer extant. For instance, the thirty-three quatrains by Khayyam and the sixty quatrains by Mahasti found in this anthology are among the oldest and most reliable collections of their works. *Nozhat al-majāles* also comprises many quatrains by such scholars and mystics as Avicenna, Aḥmad Ghazali, Majd-al-Din Baḡdādi, and Ahmad-e Jām, who had never been recognized as poets, and such poets and writers as Neẓāmi Ganjavi, Asadi Tusi, Faḡr-al-Din As'ad Gorgani, and 'Onşor-al-Ma'āli Kaykāvus, who had been known only by their major works and hardly any poems had been ascribed to them; as well as quatrains by a number of rulers and statesmen, including the Saljuk sultan Ṭoḡrol, Atsız Ḳwārazmšāh, Fariborz Šarvānšāh, Šams-al-Din Moḥammad Jovayni, Malek Zawzan, Solaymānšāh of Iva, Amir Kāmyār, and 'Alā'-al-Din Kabud-jāma.

The most significant merit of *Nozhat al-majāles*, as regards the history of Persian literature, is that it embraces the works of some 115 poets from the northwestern Iran (Arrān, Šarvān, Azerbaijan; including 24 poets from Ganja alone), where, due to 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 Šams-al-Din As'ad of Ganja, 'Aziz Šarvāni, Šams Sojāsi, Amir Najib-al-Din 'Omar of Ganja, Badr Teflisi, Kamāl Marāḡi, Šaraf Šāleḡ Baylaqāni, Borhān Ganja'i, Elyās Ganja'i, Baḡtiār Šarvāni) 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 the some of the poets (see below). 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.

It is noteworthy, however, that in the period under discussion, the Caucasus region was entertaining a unique mixture of ethnic cultures. Ḳāqāni's mother was a Nestorian Christian, Mojir Baylqāni's mother was an Armenian, and Neẓāmi's mother was a Kurd. Their works reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the region. Ḥobayš b. Ebrāhim Teflisi paraded his knowledge of different languages by mentioning the name of the drugs in his medical dictionary, *Taqwim al-adwīa* in several languages, including Persian, Arabic, Syriac, and

Byzantine Greek. This blending of cultures certainly left its mark on the works of the poets of the region, resulting in the creation of a large number of new concepts and terms, the examples of which can be noticed in the poems of Kāqāni and Neẓāmi, as well as in dictionaries.

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 are referred to as water carrier (*saqqā*), sparrow dealer (*oşforī*), saddler (*sarrāj*), bodyguard (*jāndār*), oculist (*kaḥḥāl*), blanket maker (*leḥāfi*), 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*; p. 444), even-or-odd game (*ṭaq yā joft bāzi*; p. 446), exercising with a sledgehammer (*potk zadan*; p. 443), and archery (*tir-andāzi*; p. 444). There are also descriptions of the various kinds of musical instruments such as *daf* (tambourine; see DAF[F] and DĀYERA), *ney* (reed pipe), and *čang* (harp), besides details of how these instruments were held by the performers (pp. 150-63). 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 (pp. 440-41).

Nozhat al-majāles suffers from certain structural shortcomings. The overriding concern of the author has been to arrange the quatrains strictly according to their contents, therefore paying little heed to the names of the poets of the verses. This has occasionally led to the attribution of a particular quatrain to two different persons. The scribe has not been very careful in doing his work either. He has apparently transcribed all of the available poetry first and then added the names of their poets so haphazardly that the name of a poet is sometimes mentioned either further down or further up than the place where his quatrains are located. Some of the errors and oversights have been identified in the edited version, and, following the publication of the text, Sayyed 'Ali Mir-Afzali pointed out a number of other errors missed by the editor (see bibliography).

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(Moḡammad Amin Riāḡi)

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(Mohammad Amin Riahi, "Nozhat al-Majales" in Encyclopedia Iranica)

Thus books like Nozhat al-Majales show that the people in the Arran and Sherwan region spoke regional Iranian dialects and were fully part of the Persian cultural milieu. Such a book as Nozhat al-Majales does not exist from the area in Turkish because at that time, the urban dwellers of major cities were Persian culturally and spoke Iranian dialects. Thus the book is a decisive proof about the culture of the area and ends any speculation by politicized authors.

As shown by the Nozhat al-Majales, we note that not only court poets, but everyday people who have various trades and works, women, and etc. have left us a glimpse of the prevalent Iranian culture of the area at one time. Every day words like "Sang-pa" and "Gel-e-Sarshur" shows that Persian and Iranian languages were the native language of Ganja (where 24 poets are mentioned

in this book alone which by itself is sufficient since politicized authors cannot even demonstrate a single Turkish verse from any author from that era) and urban Islamic areas of Arran and Sherwan. As noted by the major scholar of this work (Shaadravan Mohammad Amin Riahi, a native of Khoi in Iran): ***“Nozhat al-mājales 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 the some of the poets (see below). 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.”***

Thus the importance of Nozhat al-Majales for the study of the region's history as well as the study of some of the more uncommon symbols of poetry used from the areas of Sherwan and Arran cannot be underestimated.

According to Russian sources (“Caucasus in IV-XI centuries” in Rostislav Borisovich Rybakov (editor), History of the East. 6 volumes. v. 2. “East during the Middle Ages: Chapter V., 2002. – ISBN 5-02-017711-3. <http://www.kulichki.com/~gumilev/HE2/he2103.htm>)

Пестрое в этническом плане население левобережной Албании в это время все больше переходит на персидский язык. Главным образом это относится к городам Арана и Ширвана, как стали в IX-X вв. именоваться два главные области на территории Азербайджана. Что касается сельского населения, то оно, по-видимому, в основном сохраняло еще долгое время свои старые языки, родственные современным дагестанским, прежде всего лезгинскому.

Translation:

The multi-ethnic population of Albania left-bank at this time is increasingly moving to the Persian language. Mainly this applies to cities of Aran and Shirwan, as begin from 9-10 centuries named two main areas in the territory of Azerbaijan. With regard to the rural population, it would seem, mostly retained for a long time, their old languages, related to modern Daghestanian family, especially Lezgin.

And Igor Diakonov states:

[http://uni-persona.src.msus.ru/site/authors/djakonov/posl_gl.htm Дьяконов, Игорь Михайлович. Книга воспоминаний. Издательство "Европейский дом", Санкт-Петербург, 1995., 1995]. - ISBN 5-85733-042-4. стр. 730-731 [[Igor Diakonov]]. The book of memoirs: (Nizami) 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. (russian text: (Низами) был не азербайджанский, а персидский (иранский) поэт, хотя жил он в ныне азербайджанском городе Гяндже, которая, как и большинство здешних городов, имела в Средние века иранское население)..

Late 15th century Persian poets like Badr Shirwan who has left 12500 Persian lines and 60 Turkish and dozens or so of verses in the peculiar Persian Kenarab dialect show examples of Iranian dialects in the region. For example Badr Sherwani has poetry in the Kenarab Persian dialect.

We should also mention the many Iranic words collected in a medical dictionary by a person from Shirwan. The book Dastur al-Adwiyah written around 1400 A.D. also lists some of these native

words for plants in Shirwan, Beylakan, Arran: Shang, Babuneh, Bahmanak, Shirgir, KurKhwarah, Handal, Harzeh, Kabudlah (Beylakani word , standard Persian: Kabudrang), Moshkzad, Kharime, Bistam, Kalal.

(Sadeqi, Ali Ashraf, "New words from the Old Language of Arran, Shirvan and Azerbaijan"(in Persian), Iranian Journal of Linguistics, Vol. 17, No 1(33), pp 22-41, 1381/2002). Usually words for native plants and fish (ShurMahi/SorMahi) would be a word from the native language of the region and this shows the wide usage of Iranic dialects in the region at the time. As shown by the Nozhat al-Majales, also words for food, games, music instruments and everyday cultural items, hobbies and jobs are also all in Persian. This makes it clear that in Arran and Sherwan as mentioned by al-Muqaddesi and other travelers, Persian and Iranic languages were predominant.

Mention should also be made of Kurds of the area.

Vladimir Minorsky writes (V. Minorsky, Studies in Caucasian History, Cambridge University Press, 1957. pg 34):

"The author of the collection of documents relating to Arran Mas'ud b. Namdar (c. 1100) claims Kurdish nationality. The mother of the poet Nizami of Ganja was Kurdish (see autobiographical digression in the introduction of Layli wa Majnun). In the 16th century there was a group of 24 septs of Kurds in Qarabagh, see Sharaf-nama, I, 323. Even now the Kurds of the USSR are chiefly grouped south of Ganja. Many place-names composed with Kurd are found on both banks of the Kur"

Indeed the Kurdish presence goes back to at least Shaddadid times. According to Dr. Sadeqi: "Masudi points to the presence of Kurds in Armenia, Aran, Beylakan and Darband. Ibn Fiqiyeh, when describing the conquest of Arran and Balasagan (a region located for the most part south of the lower course of the rivers Kura and the Aras (Araxes), bordered on the south by Atropatene and on the east by the Caspian Sea.) mentions Salman ibn Rabi'a inviting the Kurds of Balasagan to Islam. Baladhuri also mentions the Kurds of Balasagan, Sabalan and Satrudan. Istakhri and Ibn Hawqal also mention the Bab al-Ikrad near Barda'. Baladhuri also mentions the Nahr-e-Akrad (Kurdish river) in Armenia. Shaddadids which ruled over parts of Armenia and Arran were also Kurds"(Sadeqi Ali Ashraf, "The conflict between Persian and Turkish in Arran and Shirvan", Iranian Journal of Linguistics, Vol. 18, No. 1 (35), pp 1-12, 2003)

The Encyclopedia of Islam also states:

Mas'udi (about 332/943) and Istakhri (340/951) are the first to give systematic information about the Kurds. In the *Murudj al-dhahab* (iii, 253) Mas'udi enumerates the following tribes: at Dinawar and Hamadhan: Shuhdjan; at Kangawar: Maddjurdan; in Adharbaydjan (so the text should be emended): Hadhabani and Sarat (probably Shurat=Khridjis [q.v.]; cf. the story of Daysam below); in Djibal: Shadandjan, Lazba (Lurri?), Madandjan, Mazdanakan, Barisan, Khali(Djalali), Djabarki, Djawani and Mustakan; in Syria: Dababila etc.; at Mawsil and Djudi the Christian Kurds: al-Ya'kūbiyya ("Jacobites") and the Djurkan (Djurughan). To this list, the *Tanbīh* of the same author (88-91) only adds Bazindjan (c.f. Istakhri, 155), Nashawira, Budhikan and Kikan (at the present day found near Mar'ash), but he gives a list of the places where there were Kurds: the *rumūm* (*zumūm*?) of Fars, Kirman, Sidjistan, Khurasan, (Istakhri, 282: a Kurd village in the canton of Asadābād), Iṣfāhān (a section of the Bāzandjān tribe and a flourishing town described as Kurd, Yakubi 275; Istakhri, 125), Djibal, notably Mah Kufa, Mah basra, Mah

Sabadhan (Masabadhan) and the two Ighars (i.e. Karadj Abi Dulaf and Burdj), Hamadhan, Shahrizur, with its dependencies Darabad and Shamghan (Zimkān), **Adharbaydjan, Armenia (at Dwin on the Araxes the Kurds lived in houses built of clay and of stone; Muḳaddasi, 277), Arran (one of the gates of Bardha'a was called Bab al-Akrad and Ibn Miskaawayh says that at the invasion of the Rus in 332/942 the local governor had Kurds under his command), Baylakan, Bab al-Abwab (Darband), al-Djazira, Syria and al-Thughur (i.e. the line of fortresses along the Cilician frontier).**

(Bois, Th.; Minorsky, V.; Bois, Th.; Bois, Th.; MacKenzie, D.N.; Bois, Th. "Kurds, Kurdistan." *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007.)

Also Hamdullah Mostowfi mentions the province of Goshtasfi in the Caucasus in the Ilkhanid era. According to Mostowfi, this Caucasus region lying between the rivers Aras and Kur and the adjoining Caspian Sea spoke Pahlavi close to Jilani (Gilaki) and were followers of Imam Shafi'i. Actual quote:

از کنار آب دریا ولایت گشتاسفی است که گشتاسب بن لهراسپ آن را ساخت و نه‌ری بزرگ از آب کر و ارس بریده‌است و از آن جوی‌ها برداشته و بر آن دیه‌ای فراوان ساخته. حاصلش غله، برنج، اندک پنبه و میوه بود مردمش سفیدچهره‌اند و بر مذهب امام شافعی. زبانشان پهلوی بجیلانی باز بسته‌است. حقوق دیوانیش بر امان سابق پیش از ظهور دولت مغول کمابیش صد تومان این زمان بوده‌است و اکنون صد و هجده هزار و پانصد دینار است و در وجه اقطاعات عساکر که آنرا ساکن اند متفرق باشد

(Mostowfi, Hamdallah. "*Nozhat al-Qolub*". Edit by Muhammad Dabir Sayyaqi. Tahuri publishers, 1957.)

The current Turkic Oghuz language spoken in Azerbaijan and Arran has its roots with the Turkoman/Oghuz nomads that arrived in the region during the Seljuq incursions. But this movement was small relative to the bulk of population. However, a large amount of nomads entered the area during the Mongol invasion. But in reality, the steadily replacement of the old Iranian dialects by Turkish takes a turning point around the beginning of the Safavid dynasty's rule in Persia. Although there are still Tati settlements in Iranian Azerbaijan and Iranian speakers in Arran, which is in the territory of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan. West Azerbaijan region of Iran also was predominately Kurdish until the Safavid era and even today, Kurds make up between 50 to 70% according to some sources.

Many Turkic speaking nomads had chosen the green pastures of Azerbaijan, Arran and Shirvan for their settlement during the advent of the Seljuq. However, they only filled in the pasturelands while the farmlands, villages and the cities remained Iranic in language. The linguistic conversion of Azerbaijan had much to do the conversion of the Azeris into Shiism, when large number of heterodox Shi'ite Kizilbash tribes moved from Anatolia, Rum and Syria into the Safavid realm and supported the new dynasty. Even during the Safavid era, Awliya Chelebi of the 17th century mentions "Pahlavi, Dari, Farsi and Dehqani" among the languages of Naxchivan (Sadeqi Ali Ashraf, "The conflict between Persian and Turkish in Arran and Shirvan", Iranian Journal of Linguistics, Vol. 18, No. 1 (35), pp 1-12, 2003).

Even up to the 20th century, there was a large number of Iranic speakers Tats (Persian), Talysh and Kurds in Arran and Shirwan, but the Turkic linguistic elements by the 20th were predominant and many of these Iranic elements were assimilated into the Azeri-Turkic identity, specially during the USSR era. For example on Tats:

“In the nineteenth century the Tats were settled in large homogeneous groups. The intensive processes of assimilation by the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijanis cut back the territory and numbers of the Tats. In 1886 they numbered more than 120,000 in Azerbaijan and 3,600 in Daghestan. According to the census of 1926 the number of Tats in Azerbaijan (despite the effect of natural increase) had dropped to 28,500, although there were also 38,300 “Azerbaijanis” with Tat as their native language.”

(World Culture Encyclopedia: “Tats”,

<http://www.everyculture.com/Russia-Eurasia-China/Tats-Orientation.html> accessed Dec, 2007)

(Natalia G. Volkova “Tats” in Encyclopedia of World Culture, Editor: David Publisher, New York: G.K. Hall, Prentice Hall International, 1991-1996).

Abbas Qoli Agha Bakikhanov, a 19th century literary figure from the Caucasia mentions in his Golestan Iram large number of Tats in the area around Baku:

There are eight villages in Tabarsaran which are: Jalqan, Rukan, Maqatir, Kamakh, Ridiyan, Homeydi, Mata'i, and Bilhadi. They are in the environs of a city that Anushiravan built near the wall of Darband. Its remains are still there. They speak the Tat language, which is one of the languages of Old Persia. It is clear that they are from the people of Fars and after its destruction they settled in those villages. ..The districts situated between the two cities of Shamakhi and Qodiyal, which is now the city of Qobbeh, include Howz, Lahej, and Qoshunlu in Shirvan and Barmak, Sheshpareh and the lower part of Boduq in Qobbeh, and all the country of Baku, except six villages of Turkmen, speak Tat. it becomes apparent from this that they originate from Fars.

(Floor, Willem. and Javadi, Hasan. i(2009), "The Heavenly Rose-Garden: A History of Shirvan & Daghestan by Abbas Qoli Aqa Bakikhanov, Mage Publishers, 2009)

Original Persian:

در صفحه 18 کتاب مذکور آمده است: هشت قریه در طبرسران که جلقان و روکال و مقاطیر و کماخ و زیدیان و حمیدی و مطاعی و بیلجی باشند، در حوالی شهری که انوشیروان در محل متصل به دربند تعمیر کرده بود و آثار آن هنوز معلوم است، زبان تات دارند. ایضا در صفحه 19 کتاب یاد شده آمده است: محالات واقع در میان بلوکیں شماخی و قدیال که حالا شهر قبه است، مثل حوض و لاهج و قشونلو در شیروان و برمک و شش پاره و پایین بدوق در قبه و تمام مملکت باکو سواي شش قریه ي تراکمه، همین زبان تات را دارند... قسم قریي مملکت قبه سواي قریه ي خنالق که رباني علیجده دارد و ناحیه ي سموریه و کوره دو محال طبرسران که دره و احمدلو می باشند به اصطلاحات منطقه، زبان مخصوص دارند و اهالی ترک زبان را مغول می نامند.

(Gulistan-i Iram, Baki Khanuf, “Gulistan-i Iram”, matn-i ilmi - intiqadi bi-sayy va ihtimam: Abd al-Karim Ali-zadah [va digaran], Bakku: Idarah-i intisharat-i Ilm, 1970.)

On the Talysh, according to Hema Kotecha:

According to a 1926 census, there were 77,039 Talysh in Azerbaijan SSR. From 1959 to 1989, the Talysh were not included as a separate ethnic group in any census, but rather they were included as part of the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijani's, although the Talysh speak an Iranian language. In 1999, the Azerbaijani government claimed there were only 76,800 Talysh in Azerbaijan, but this is believed to be an under-representation given the problems with

registering as a Talysh. Some claim that the population of the Talysh inhabiting the southern regions of Azerbaijan is 500,000.

(Hema Kotecha, Islamic and Ethnic Identities in Azerbaijan: Emerging trends and tensions, OSCE, Baku, July 2006. http://www.osce.org/documents/ob/2006/08/23087_en.pdf)

We already mentioned Kurds and Minorsky's statement on Kurds in Ganja during Shaddadid times and even in the south of Ganja during modern times.

Svante Cornell, a writer of modern politics states:*In Azerbaijan, the Azeris presently make up over 90 per cent; Dagestani peoples form over 3 per cent and Russians 2.5 per cent. 6 These figures approximate the official position; however, in reality the size of the Dagestani Lezgin community in Azerbaijan is unknown, officially put at 200,000 but according to Lezgin sources substantially larger. The Kurdish population is also substantial, according to some sources over 10 per cent of the population; in the south there is a substantial community of the Iranian ethnic group, of Talysh, possibly some 200,000 –400,000 people.*

(Cornell, Svante E. Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus . Richmond, Surrey, , GBR: Curzon Press Limited, 2000.)

It is this author's opinion, if the subsequent USSR assimilationist policies of the last 80-100 years were not upheld in the historical Arran and Shirvan, approximately 20% or more of the modern population of the Republic of Azerbaijan would be speaking an Iranian language. However this deserves its own study and the goal of this article is to examine historical facts without being involved in modern politics.

Iranic languages and people of Azerbaijan

The Turkification of Arran/Ganja had a similar pattern to that of historical Azerbaijan. Although both places were primarily used in the beginning as a pass to the wider pastures of Anatolia, but they were also Turkified through a long list of Turkic dynasties as well as the fact that they provided some pasture grounds for the Turkic nomads entering via Central Asia. Linguistic Turkification of Azerbaijan was a complex and multistage process.

According to Vladimir Minorsky:

*"The original sedentary population of Azarbayjan consisted of a mass of peasants and at the time of the Arab conquest was compromised under the semi-contemptuous term of Uluĵ ("non-Arab")-somewhat similar to the raya(*ri'aya) of the Ottomon empire. The only arms of this peaceful rustic population were slings; see Tabari, II, 1379-89. They spoke a number of dialects (Adhari (Azari), Talishi) of which even now there remains some islets surviving amidst the Turkish speaking population. It was this basic population on which Babak leaned in his revolt against the caliphate"*

(V. Minorsky, Studies in Caucasian History, Cambridge University Press, 1957, pg 112).

The process of Turkification as mentioned was long and complex and there are still remnants of Tati and other Iranian languages in Caucasasia and NW Iran. It is worthwhile to give an overview of the linguistic Turkification of Azerbaijan and some of the historical attestations. Also it is worthwhile to give samples of the ancient language of Azerbaijan. Since Azerbaijan is the closest region to Caucasasia, one may assume that the Turkification of Arran took a similar path. Although in Arran, both Caucasian and Iranic elements were present, but the Caucasian elements around Ganja had a Christian culture and the Muslim high culture at the time in and around Ganja was that of Iranian culture and Muslim Iranian dynasties ruled the area before arrival of the Seljuqs.

Ebn al-Moqaffa' (d. 142/759) is quoted by Ibn Al-Nadim in his famous *Al-Fihrist* that the language of Azerbaijan is Fahlavi and Azerbaijan is part of the region of Fahlah (alongside Esfahan, Rayy, Hamadan and Maah-Nahavand):

ابن نديم در الفهرست مي نويسد:

فأما الفهلوية فمنسوب إلى فله اسم يقع على خمسة بلدان وهي أصفهان والري وهمدان وماه نهاوند وأذربيجان وأما الدرية فلغة مدن المدائن وبها كان يتكلم من بباب الملك وهي منسوبة إلى حاضرة الباب والغالب عليها من لغة أهل خراسان والمشرق و اللغة أهل بلخ وأما الفارسية فتكلم بها الموأبدة والعلماء وأشباههم وهي لغة أهل فارس وأما الخوزية فيها كان يتكلم الملوك والأشراف في الخلوة ومواضع اللعب واللذة ومع الحاشية وأما السريانية فكان يتكلم بها أهل السواد والمكاتب في نوع من اللغة بالسرياني فارسي

(=) اما فهلوي منسوب است به فله كه نام نهاده شده است بر پنج شهر: اصفهان و ري و همدان و ماه نهاوند و آذربايجان. و دري لغت شهرهاي مداين است و درباريان پادشاه بدان زبان سخن مي گفتند و منسوب است به مردم دربار و لغت اهل خراسان و مشرق و لغت مردم بلخ بر آن زبان غالب است. اما فارسي كلامي است كه موبدان و علما و مانند ايشان بدان سخن گویند و آن زبان مردم اهل فارس باشد. اما خوزي زباني است كه ملوك و اشراف در خلوت و مواضع لعب و لذت با نديمان و حاشيت خود گفت وگو کنند. اما سرياني آن است كه مردم سواد بدان سخن رانند).

Source:

ابن نديم، محمد بن اسحاق: «فهرست»، ترجمه ي رضا تجدد، انتشارات ابن سينا، (1346)

Ibn Nadeem, "Fihrist", Translated by Reza Tajaddod, Ibn Sina publishers, 1967.

A very similar explanation is given by the medieval historian Hamzeh Isfahani when talking about Sassanid Iran. Hamzeh Isfahani writes in the book *Al-Tanbih 'ala Hoduth al-Tashif* that five "tongues" or dialects, were common in Sassanian Iran: Fahlavi, Dari, Farsi (Persian), Khuzi and Soryani. Hamzeh (893-961 A.D.) explains these dialects in the following way:

Fahlavi was a dialect which kings spoke in their assemblies and it is related to Fahleh. This name is used to designate five cities of Iran, Esfahan, Rey, Hamadan, Maah Nahavand, and Azerbaijan. Farsi (Persian) is a dialect which was spoken by the clergy (Zoroastrian) and those who associated with them and is the language of the cities of Fars. Dari is the dialect of the cities of Ctesiphon and was spoken in the kings' /darbariyan/ 'courts'. The root of its name is related to its use; /darbar/ 'court* is implied in /dar/. The vocabulary of the natives of Balkh was dominant in this language, which includes the dialects of the eastern peoples. Khuzi is associated with the

cities of Khuzistan where kings and dignitaries used it in private conversation and during leisure time, in the bath houses for instance.

(Mehdi Marashi, Mohammad Ali Jazayery, Persian Studies in North America: Studies in Honor of Mohammad Ali Jazayery, Ibex Publishers, Inc, 1994. pg 255)

Ibn Hawqal (d. ca 981) states:

“the language of the people of Azerbaijan and most of the people of Armenia is Iranian (al-faressya), which binds them together, while Arabic is also used among them; among those who speak al-faressya (here he seemingly means Persian, spoken by the elite of the urban population), there are few who do not understand Arabic; and some merchants and landowners are even adept in it”.

(E. Yarshater, “Azeri: Iranian language of Azerbaijan” in Encyclopedia Iranica)

It should be noted that Ibn Hawqal mentions that some areas of Armenia are controlled by Muslims and others by Christians. So unlike what some scholars state, we believe he means Caucasus as those were areas controlled by Christian kingdoms at that time.

Reference: Ibn Hawqal, Surat al-Ardh. Translation and comments by: J. Shoar, Amir Kabir Publishers, Iran. 1981.

Estakhri of 10th century also states in his

“In Aderbeijan, Armenia and Arran 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 Arranian.”

Original Arabic:

و لسان اذربيجان و ارمينية و الران الفارسيه و العربيه غير ان اهل دبيل و حوايلها يتكلمون بالارمنييه، و نواحى بردعه لسانهم ارانيه

(Estakhari, Abu Eshaq Ebrahim. Masalek va Mamalek. Bonyad Moqfat Dr. Afshar, Tehran, 1371 (1992-1993))

Al-Muqaddasi (d. late 4th/10th cent.) considers Azerbaijan and Arran as part of the 8th division of lands. He states:

“The languages of the 8th division is Iranian (al-’ajamyya). It is partly Dari and partly convoluted (monqaleq) and all of them are named Persian”

(Al-Muqaddasi, Shams ad-Din Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Ahmad, Ahsan al-Taqaṣi fi Ma’rifat al-Aqalim, Translated by Ali Naqi Vaziri, Volume One, First Edition, Mu’alifan and Mutarjiman Publishers, Iran, 1981, pg 377.)

المقدسي، شمس الدين ابو عبدالله محمد بن احمد، احسن التقاسيم في معرفه الاقاليم، ترجمه دكتور علي نقى وزيرى، جلد 1، چاپ اول، انتشارات مؤلفان و مترجمان ايران، 1361، ص 377.

Al-Muqaddasi also writes on the general region of Armenia, Arran and Azerbaijan and states:

“They have big beards, their speech is not attractive. In Arminya they speak Armenian, in al-Ran, Ranian (Aranian); Their Persian is understandable, and is close to Khurasanian (Dari Persian) in sound”

(Al-Muqaddasi, ‘The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions’, a translation of his *Ahsan al-Taqasim fi Ma’rifat al-Aqalim* by B.A. Collins, Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, Garnet Publishing Limited, 1994. pg 334).

Thus from Muqaddasi we can see that a regional Persian language was spoken in the area and cross referencing with Estakhri, we can conjecture that this was the main language of the muslim population, specially in the urban areas.

According to C. E. Bosworth:

“North of the Aras, the distinct, presumably Iranian, speech of Arran long survived, called by Ebn Hawqal al-Raniya”

(Azerbaijan: Islamic History to 1941, Encyclopedia Iranica).

Although we do not have any manuscripts of al-Raniya to really judge the nature of this dialect (weather it was a dialect of Parthian or Iranian languages, or was it a Caucasian language or non-standard dialect of Armenian?), nearby the Kur river, in the town of Barda’ in Arran:

“The fertile rural environs produced much fruit (with a particularly noted variety of figs), nuts, and also the dyestuff madder (rūnās), which was exported as far as India. In the Kor and other nearby rivers, the sturgeon (sormāhī from Persian šūrmāhī, salt fish) and other tasty fish were caught; and there was extensive production of textiles, including silks (see Ebn Hawqal, pp. 337-39, 347, 349, tr. Kramers, II, pp. 330-32, 340, 342; Maqdesī, [Moqaddasī], p. 375; Hodūd al-A‘lām, tr. Minorsky, pp. 143-44, secs. 36.21, 36.30; R. B. Serjeant, Islamic Textiles. Material for a History up to the Mongol Conquest, Beirut, 1972, p. 69)”

(Barda, Encyclopedia Iranica, Bosworth).

The word *sormāhī* which Prof. Bosworth derives from Shurmahi in Persian could actually be red fish (sor/suhr being the Pahlavi for red which in modern Persian is Surkh). Al-Muqaddasi translates the “Monday” to Yam al-Ithnayn which in Persian and Iranian dialects is Doshanbeh (the second day). An important point to mention is that Ganja like many other pre-Seljuq toponyms has an Iranian name, which naturally reflects the fact that it was founded by Iranian settlers (C.E. Bosworth, “Ganja”, Encyclopedia Iranica). One should also mention the native Iranian (Parthian/Persian) dynasty which ruled over the area of Arran up to at least the 8th century.

Al-Mas’udi the Arab Historian States:

“The Persians are a people whose borders are the Mahat Mountains and Azarbaijan up to Armenia and Arran, and Bayleqan and Darband, and Ray and Tabaristan and Masqat and Shabaran and Jorjan and Abarshahr, and that is Nishabur, and Herat and Marv and other places in land of Khorasan, and Sejestan 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.”

Source:

Al Mas'udi, Kitab al-Tanbih wa-l-Ishraf, De Goeje, M.J. (ed.), Leiden, Brill, 1894, pp. 77-8.

Thus Masu'di testifies to the Iranian presence in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan during the 10th century and even names a local Iranian dialect called Azari.

Original Arabic from www.alwaraq.net:

فالفرس أمة حد بلادها الجبال من الماهات و غيرها و آذربيجان إلى ما يلي بلاد أرمينية و أران و البيلقان إلى دربند و هو الباب والأبواب و الري و طبرستن و المسقط و الشابران و جرجان و أبرشهر، و هي نيسابور، و هراة و مرو و غير ذلك من بلاد خراسان و سجستان و كرمان و فارس و الأهواز، و ما اتصل بذلك من أرض الأعاجم في هذا الوقت و كل هذه البلاد كانت مملكة واحدة ملكها ملك واحد و لسانها واحد، إلا أنهم كانوا يتباينون في شيء يسير من اللغات و ذلك أن اللغة إنما تكون واحدة بأن تكون حروفها التي تكتب واحدة و تأليف حروفها تأليف واحد، و إن اختلفت بعد ذلك في سائر الأشياء الأخر كالفهلوية و الدرية و الآذرية و غيرها من لغات الفرس.

Ahmad ibn Yaqubi mentions that the

People of Azerbaijan are a mixture of 'Ajam-i Azari (Ajam is a term that developed to mean Iranian) of Azaris and old Javedanis (followers of Javidan the son of Shahrak who was the leader of Khurramites and succeeded by Babak Khorramdin).

Source:

Yaqubi, Ahmad ibn Abi, Tarikh-i Yaqubi tarjamah-i Muhammad Ibrahim Ayati, Intisharat Bungah-i Tarjomah o Nashr-i Kitab, 1969.

"Zakarrya b. Mohammad Qazvini's report in Athar al-Bilad, composed in 674/1275, that "no town has escaped being taken over by the Turks except Tabriz"(Beirut ed., 1960, p. 339) one may infer that at least Tabriz had remained aloof from the influence of Turkish until the time". ("Azari: The Iranian Language of Azerbaijan" in Encyclopedia Iranica by E. Yarshater <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v3f3/v3f2a88b.html>))

"From the time of the Mongol invasion, most of whose armies were composed of Turkic tribes, the influence of Turkish increased in the region. On the other hand, the old Iranian dialects remained prevalent in major cities. Hamdallah Mostowafi writing in the 1340s calls the language of Maraqa as "modified Pahlavi" (Pahlavi-ye Mughayyar). Mostowafi calls the language of Zanjan (Pahlavi-ye Raast). The language of Gushtaspi covering the Caspian border region between Gilan to Shirvan is called a Pahlavi language close to the language of Gilan".

Source:

("Azari: The Iranian Language of Azerbaijan" in Encyclopedia Iranica by E. Yarshater <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v3f3/v3f2a88b.html>))

Ahmad ibn Yaqubi mentions that the

People of Azerbaijan are a mixture of 'Ajam-i Azari (Ajam is a term that developed to mean Iranian) of Azaris and old Javedanis (followers of Javidan the son of Shahrak who was the leader of Khurramites and succeeded by Babak Khorramdin).

(Yaqubi, Ahmad ibn Abi, Tarikh-i Yaqubi tarjamah-i Muhammad Ibrahim Ayati, Intisharat Bungah-i Tarjomah o Nashr-i Kitab, 1969.)

Probably the best proof of Iranian language, culture and heritage of the Muslims of that time are the books of Safinaye Tabriz and Nozhat al-Majales. Both of these will be discussed later and provide a complete mirror of the culture and language of the area.

Language of Tabriz as a special case

The language of Tabriz, being an Iranian language, was not the standard Khurasani Dari. Qatran Tabrizi has an interesting verse mentioning this in a couple:

بلبل به سان مطرب بیدل فراز گل
گه پارسی نواز، گاهی زند دری

Translation:

The nightingale is on top of the flower like a minstrel who has lost its heart
It bemoans sometimes in Parsi (Persian) and sometimes in Dari (Khurasani Persian)

Source:

ریاحی خویی، محمدامین، «ملاحظات دربارہ زبان کهن آذربایجان»: *اطلاعات سیاسی-اقتصادی*، شماره‌ی 181-182

(Riyahi Khoi, Mohammad Amin. "Molehezati darbaareyeh Zabaan-i Kohan Azerbaijan" (Some comments on the ancient language of Azerbaijan), 'Itilia' at Siyasi Magazine, volume 181-182)

Also available at:

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/26.pdf>

There are extant words, phrases and sentences attested in the old Iranic dialect of Tabriz in a variety of books and manuscripts. Here are some examples:

Hamdullah Mostowafi mentions a sentence in the language of Tabriz:

انگور خلوقی بی چه در، در سوه اندرین یک جمله از زبان تبریزیان در «نزهةالقلوب» حمدالله مستوفی: تبارزه اگر صاحب حسنی را با لباس ناسزا یابند، گویند "انگور خلوقی بی چه در، در سوه اندرین"؛ یعنی انگور خلوقی (انگوری مرغوب) است در سبد دریده "98 pg

Translation:

"The Tabrizians if they see a fortunate man in an uncouth clothes say: He is like a fresh grape in a ripped fruit basket."

Source:

مستوفی، حمدالله: «نزهةالقلوب»، به کوشش محمد دبیرسیاقي، انتشارات طهوری، 1336

Mostowafi, Hamdallah. Nozhat al-Qolub. Edit by Muhammad Dabir Sayyaqi. Tahuri Publishing, 1957.

A *mulama* 'poem (meaning 'colourful', which is popular in Persian poetry where some verses are in one language and others in another language) from Homam Tabrizi where some verses are in Khorasani (Dari) Persian and others are in the dialect of Tabriz:

بدیذم چشم مستت رفتم از دست
کوام و آذر دلی کویا بتی مست
دلأم خود رفت و می دانم که روزی
به مهرت هم بشی خوش کیانم از دست
به آب زندگی ای خوش عبارت
لوانت لاود جمن دیل و کیان بست
دمی بر عاشق خود مهربان شو
کزی سر مهرورزی کست و نی کست
به عشقات گر همام از جان برآید
موازش کان بوان بمرت وارست
کرم خا و ابری بشم بوینی
به بویت خته بام زاهنام

Source:

انصاف پور، غلامرضا: "تاریخ تبار و زبان آذربایجان"، انتشارات فکر روز، 1377

Gholam Reza Ensafpur, "Tarikh o Tabar Zaban-i Azarbaijan" (The history and roots of the language of Azarbaijan), Fekr-I Rooz Publishers, 1998 (1377).

Another ghazal from Homam Tabrizi where all the couplets except the last couplet is in Persian, the last couplet reads:

«وهار و ول و دیم یار خوش بی // اوی یاران مه ول بی مه وهاران»

Transliteration:

Wahar o wol o Dim yaar khwash Bi
Awi Yaaraan, mah wul Bi, Mah Wahaaraan

Translation:

*The Spring and Flowers and the face of the friend are all pleasant
But without the friend, there are no flowers or any spring.*

Source:

کارنگ، عبدالعلی: «تاتی و هرزنی، دو لهجه از زبان باستان آذربایجان»، تبریز، 1333

Karang, Abdul Ali. "Tati, Harzani, two dialects from the ancient language of Azerbaijan", Tabriz, 1333. 1952.

Another recent discovery by the name of Safina-yi Tabriz has given sentences from native of Tabriz in their peculiar Iranic dialect. A sample expression of from the mystic Baba Faraj Tabrizi in the Safina:

انانک قدهي فرجشون فعالم آورده اووارادا چاشمش نه پيف قدم کينستا نه پيف حدوث

Standard Persian (translated by the author of Safina himself):

چندانک فرج را در عالم آورده‌اند چشم او نه بر قدم افتاده است نه بر حدوث

Modern English:

They brought Faraj in this world in such a way that his eye is neither towards pre-eternity nor upon createdness.

Source:

منوچهر مرتضوی، زبان دیرین آذربایجان، بنیاد موقوفات دکتر افشار، 1384.

Mortazavi, Manuchehr. Zaban-e-Dirin Azerbaijan (On the Old language of Azerbaijan). Bonyad Moqfaat Dr. Afshar. 2005(1384).

Indeed the Safina is a bible of the culture of Tabriz which was compiled in the Il-khanid era. It is a clear testament and proof that no trace of Turkic culture, folklore and language was present in Tabriz during the Ilkhanid era.

A sample poem in which the author of the Safina writes “Zaban Tabrizi”(Language of Tabriz):

دَچان چو چرخ نکویت مو ایر رهشه مهر دورش
چو ش د کارده شکویت ولول و دآرد سر یوه
پری بقهر اره میر دون جو پور زون هنرمند
پروکری آنزوتون منی که آن هزیوه
اکثر بحث ورامرو کی چرخ هانزمویتی
ژژور منشی چو بخت اهون قدریوه
نه چرخ استه نبوتی نه روزو ورو فوتی
زوم چو واش خلیوه زمم حو بورضی ربوه

Sadeqi, Ali Ashraf. “Chand She’r beh Zaban-e Karaji, Tabrizi wa Ghayreh”(Some poems in the language of Karaji and Tabrizi and others), Majalla-ye Zabanshenasi, 9, 1379./2000, pp.14-17.

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/zabankarajitabrizi.pdf>

A sentence in the dialect of Tabriz (the author calls Zaban-I Tabriz (dialect/language of Tabriz) recorded and also translated by Ibn Bazzaz Ardabili in the Safvat al-Safa:

«علیشاه چو در آمد گستاخ وار شیخ را در کنار گرفت و گفت حاضر باش بزبان تبریزی گو حریر
ژاته یعنی سخن بصر ف بگو حریرت رسیده است. در این گفتن دست بر کتف مبارک شیخ زد
شیخ را غیرت سر بر کرد»

The sentence “Gu Harif(a/e)r Zhaatah” is mentioned in Tabrizi dialect.

Source:

Rezazadeh, Rahim Malak. “The Azari Dialect”(Guyesh-I Azari), Anjuman Farhang Iran Bastan publishers, 1352(1973).

A sentence in the dialect of Tabriz by Pir Hassan Zehtab Tabrizi addressing the Qara-Qoyunlu ruler Eskandar:

يك جمله از «پير حسن زهتاب تبریزی» خطاب به اسکندر قراقویونلو: «اسکندر! رودم کشتی،
رودت کشاد!» (= اسکندر! فرزندم را کشتی. خدا فرزندت را بکشد) (ریاحی خویی، ص 31)

“Eskandar! Roodam Koshti, Roodat Koshaad”
(Eskandar! You killed my son, may your son perish”)

Source:

ریاحی خویی، محمدامین، «ملاحظات دربارہ زبان کهن آذربایجان»: /اطلاعات سیاسی -
اقتصادی، شماره 181-182

Riyahi, Mohammad Amin. “Molahezati darbaareyeh Zabaan-I Kohan Azerbaijan”(Some comments on the ancient language of Azerbaijan), ‘Itilia’ at Siyasi Magazine, volume 181-182.

Also Available at:

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/26.pdf>

The word Rood for son is still used in some Iranian dialects, specially the Larestani dialect and other dialects around Fars.

Four quatrains titled Fahlaviyat from Khwaja Muhammad Kojjani (d. 677/1278-79); born in Kojjan or Korjan, a village near Tabriz, recorded by Abd-al-Qader Maraghi

(Fahlaviyat in Encyclopedia Iranica by Dr. Ahmad Taffazoli,
<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v9f2/v9f232.html>)

(Dr. A. A. Sadeqi, “Ash’ar-e mahalli-e Jame’al-Alhaann,”Majalla-ye zaban-shenasi 9,
1371./1992, pp. 54-64/

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/AshrafSadeqiasharmahalimaraqi.pdf>

).

A sample of one of the four quatrains from Khwaja Muhammad Kojjani

همه کیزی نَهَنَد خُشتی بَخُشتی
بنا اج چو گه دستِ گیزی و نيزه
همه پيغمبران خُو بی و چو کی
محمد مصطفی کیزی و نيزه

Two qet'as (poems) quoted by Abd-al-Qader Maraghi in the dialect of Tabriz (d. 838 A.H./1434-35 C.E.; II, p. 142)

(Fahlaviyat in Encyclopedia Iranica by Ahmad Taffazoli,
<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v9f2/v9f232.html>)

(A. A. Sadeqi, "Ash'ar-e mahalli-e Jame'al-Alhaann," Majalla-ye zaban-shenasi 9, 1371./1992, pp. 54-64.

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/AshrafSadeqiasharmahalimaraqi.pdf>)

رُورم پری بجولان
نو کُو بَمَن و رارده
وی خَد شدیم بدامش
هیزا آو و رارده

A ghazal and fourteen quatrains under the title of Fahlaviyat by the poet Maghrebi Tabrizi (d. 809/1406-7)

(Fahlaviyat in Encyclopedia Iranica by Dr. Ahmad Taffazoli,
<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v9f2/v9f232.html>)

(M.-A. Adib Tusi "Fahlavyat-e Magrebi Tabrizi," NDA Tabriz 8, 1335/1956
<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/fahlaviyaatmaghrebitabrizi.pdf>)

A text probably by Mama Esmat Tabrizi, a mystical woman-poet of Tabriz (d. 9th/15th cent.), which occurs in a manuscript, preserved in Turkey, concerning the shrines of saints in Tabriz.

Adib Tusi, "Fahlawiyat-e- Mama Esmat wa Kashfi be-zaban Azari estelaah-e raayi yaa shahri", NDA, Tabriz 8/3, 1335/1957, pp 242-57.

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/fahlaviyaatmamaesmat.pdf>

An interesting phrase “Buri Buri”(which in Persian means “Biya Biya”or in English “Come! Come!”) is mentioned by Rumi from the mouth of Shams Tabrizi in this poem:

«ولی ترجیع پنجم در نیام جز به دستوری

که شمس الدین تبریزی بفرماید مرا **بوری**

مرا گوید **بیا**، بوری که من باغم تو زنبوری

که تا خونت عسل گردد که تا مومت شود نوری»

The word “Buri”is mentioned by Hussain Tabrizi Karbalai with regards to the Shaykh Khwajah Abdul-Rahim Azh-Abaadi:

در روضات الجنان، دفتر نخست، ص 115:

«مرقد و مزار...خواجه عبدالرحیم اژآبادی...در سرخاب مشخص و معین است...وی تبریزی اند منسوب به کوچه اچاباد(اژآباد) که کوچه معینی است در تبریز در حوالی درب اعلی...و از او چنین استماع افتاده که حضرت خواجه در اوایل به صنعت بافندگی ابریشم مشغول می نموده اند و خالی از جمعیتی و ثروتی نبوده و بسیار اخلاص به درویشان داشته، روزی حضرت بابا مزید وی را دیده و به نظر حقیقت شناخته که در معرف الهی در صدف سینه اش مخفی است، گفته: عبدالرحیم **بوری بوری** یعنی بیا بیا، که دیگران را نان از بازار است و تو را از خانه یعنی کلام تو از الهامات ربانی باشد.»

حافظ حسین کربلایی تبریزی، «روضات الجنان»، بنگاه ترجمه و نشر کتاب، 1344-1349-1965-1970.

Karbalai Tabrizi, Hussein. “Rawdat al-Jinan va Jannat al-Janan”, Bungah-I Tarjumah o Nashr-i Kitab, 1344-49 (1965-1970), 2 volumes.

This word is also mentioned in the Fahlaviyat of Baba Taher. In the Harzandi Iranic dialect of Harzand in Azerbaijan as well as the Iranic Karingani dialect of Azerbaijan, both recorded in the 20th century, the two words “Biri”and “Burah”means to “come”and are of the same root.

Source:

کارنگ، عبدالعلی: «تاتی و هرزنی، دو لهجه از زبان باستان آذربایجان»، تبریز، چاپخانه ی شفق، 1333

Karang, Abdul Ali. “Tati o Harzani, Do lahjah az zabaan-i baastaan-i Azerbaijan”, Shafaq publishers, 1333(1955) (pg 91 and pg 112)

Maragheh

Hamdollah Mostowfi of the 13th century A.D. mentions the language of Maragheh:

حمدالله مستوفي هم که در سده‌هاي هفتم و هشتم هجري مي‌زيست، ضمن اشاره به زبان مردم مراغه مي‌نويسد: «زبان‌شان پهلوي مغير است»

Interestingly enough, the 17th century A.D. Ottoman Turkish traveler **Evliya Chelebi**, who visited Safavid Iran, writes: “The majority of the women in Maragheh speak in Pahlavi”.

Source:

رياحي خويي، محمدامين، «ملاحظات ي درباره ي زبان كهن آذربايجان»: /اطلاعات سياسي - اقتصادي، شماره ي 181-182

Riyahi, Mohammad Amin. “Molahezaati darbaareyeh Zabaan-I Kohan Azerbaijan”(Some comments on the ancient language of Azerbaijan), ‘Itilia’at Siyasi Magazine, volume 181-182.

Also available at:

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/26.pdf>

Maragheh was the Ilkhanid capital and yet the language is called Fahlavi. Similarly Tabriz was an an important city of the Ilkhanids yet we have references to “Zaban-i Tabrizi” in the Safinayeh Tabriz, in the collected songs of AbdulQadir Maraghi and in the Safwat as-Safa. Thus making it explicitly clear that Tabriz was far from being linguistically Turkicized even in the Ilkhanid era.

Another look at the linguistic Turkification of Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan

There have been two theories with regards to the Turkicization of the Eastern Southern Caucasus (Arran/Sherwan now basically the same as territory of modern republic of Azerbaijan) and Azerbaijan proper (compromising North Western Iran). A third theory which does not concern us (see also the appendix) is inn the actual republic of Azerbaijan were ethno-genesis is a highly political and ideological issue. This theory dates the Turkicization back to the Khazar era or even claiming the Caucasian Albanians and Medes had Turkic components. 60+ years of USSR control had combined history and politics to such a degree that it will take time for the local historians to sort out the truth. However we have tried to examine this issue using Western sources. In Western academic circles, there seems to be two theories but the more specialized sources (that is author’s who are experts in the medieval history of the area) seem to indicate the theory mentioned by these scholars.

According to Xavier Planhol, a well known scholar of historical geography (a branch that studies both history and geography and their interaction) and specialist on cultural history of Islam as well nomadicization of Iran, Central Asia and Turkey:

“This unique aspect of Azerbaijan, the only area to have been almost entirely "Turkicized" within Iranian territory, is the result of a complex, progressive cultural and historical process, in

which factors accumulated successively (Sümer; Planhol, 1995, pp. 510 -- 12) The process merits deeper analysis of the extent to which it illustrates the great resilience of the land of Iran. The first phase was the amassing of nomads, initially at the time of the Turkish invasions, following the route of penetration along the piedmont south of the Alborz, facing the Byzantine borders, then those of the Greek empire of Trebizond and Christian Georgia. The Mongol invasion in the 13th century led to an extensive renewal of tribal stock, and the Turkic groups of the region during this period had not yet become stable. In the 15th century, the assimilation of the indigenous Iranian population was far from being completed. The decisive episode, at the beginning of the 16th century, was the adoption of Shi'ite Islam as the religion of the state by the Iran of the Safavids, whereas the Ottoman empire remained faithful to Sunni orthodoxy. Shi'ite propaganda spread among the nomadic Turkoman tribes of Anatolia, far from urban centers of orthodoxy. These Shi'ite nomads returned en masse along their migratory route back to Safavid Iran. This movement was to extend up to southwest Anatolia, from where the Tekelu, originally from the Lycian peninsula, returned to Iran with 15,000 camels. These nomads returning from Ottoman territory naturally settled en masse in regions near the border, and it was from this period that the definitive "Turkicization" of Azerbaijan dates, along with the establishment of the present-day Azeri-Persian linguistic border-not far from Qazvin, only some 150 kilometers from Tehran. (in the 15th century assimilation was still far from complete, has been the adoption of a decisive Shiism in the 16th Century)"

<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/unicode/v13f2/v13f2024i.html>

Professor Ehsan Yarshater who has also studied

"The gradual weakening of Āḍarī began with the penetration of the Persian Azerbaijan by speakers of Turkish. The first of these entered the region in the time of Maḥmūd of Ġazna (Ebn al-Aḫṣar [repr.], IX, pp. 383ff.). But it was in the Saljuq period that Turkish tribes began to migrate to Azerbaijan in considerable numbers and settle there (A. Kasravī, Šahrīārān-e gomnām, Tehran, 1335 Š./1956, III, pp. 43ff., And idem, Āḍarī, pp. 18-25). The Turkic population continued to grow under the Ildegozid atabegs of Azerbaijan (531-622/1136-1225), but more particularly under the Mongol il-khans (654-750/1256-1349), the majority of whose soldiery was of Turkic stock and who made Azerbaijan their political center. The almost continuous warfare and turbulence which reigned in Azerbaijan for about 150 years, between the collapse of the Il-khanids and the rise of the Safavids, attracted yet more Turkic military elements to the area. In this period, under the Qara Qoyunlū and Āq Qoyunlū Turkmen (780-874/1378-1469 and 874-908/1469-1502 respectively), Āḍarī lost ground at a faster pace than before, so that even the Safavids, originally an Iranian -speaking clan (as evidenced by the quatrains of Shaikh Šafī-al-dīn, their eponymous ancestor, and by his biography), became Turkified and adopted Turkish as their vernacular. Safavid rule (905-1135/1499-1722), which was initially based on the support of Turkish tribes and the continued backing and influence of the Qezelbāš even after the regime had achieved a broader base, helped further the spread of Turkish at the detriment of Āḍarī, which receded and ceased to be used, at least in the major urban centers, and Turkish was gradually recognized as the language of Azerbaijan. Consequently the term Āḍarī, or more commonly Azeri, came to be applied by some Turkish authors and, following them, some Western orientalists, to the Turkish of Azerbaijan (a large migration of Turks in 12th century, then age 13, Adar loses position in 16th century during the Safavid)"

<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/index.isc?Article=http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v3f3/v3f2a88b.html>

John Perry:

“We should distinguish two complementary ways in which the advent of the Turks affected the language map of Iran. First, since the Turkish-speaking rulers of most Iranian polities from the Ghaznavids and Seljuks onward were already iranized and patronized Persian literature in their domains, the expansion of Turk-ruled empires served to expand the territorial domain of written Persian into the conquered areas, notably Anatolia and Central and South Asia. Secondly, the influx of massive Turkish-speaking populations (culminating with the rank and file of the Mongol armies) and their settlement in large areas of Iran (particularly in Azerbaijan and the northwest), progressively turkicized local speakers of Persian, Kurdish and other Iranian languages. Although it is mainly the results of this latter process which will be illustrated here, it should be remembered that these developments were contemporaneous and complementary.

2. General Effects of the Safavid Accession

Both these processes peaked with the accession of the Safavid Shah Esma'il in 1501 CE. He and his successors were Turkish-speakers, probably descended from turkicized Iranian inhabitants of the northwest marches. While they accepted and promoted written Persian as the established language of bureaucracy and literature, the fact that they and their tribal supporters habitually spoke Turkish in court and camp lent this vernacular an unprecedented prestige.” (John Perry, “THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF TURKISH IN RELATION TO PERSIAN OF IRAN “ in G. Astarian (editor) *Iran and the Caucasus*, Vol. 5, (2001))

So it is ironic that the Safavids, themselves of Iranian fatherline but progressively Turkicized had the decisive role in the Turkicization of Azerbaijan.

In a detailed (as possible) examining the Turkicization of Arran, Sherwan and Azerbaijan we must look at primary sources as well secondary sources. It appears there were four stages to this process.

First, the Seljuqs who brought with them influx of Oghuz tribes and settled them in grazing lands. However, these had little effect on the urban centers. The best proof of this is the *Nozhat al-Majales*, *Safinayeh Tabrizi* and the description provided by Hamdullah Mutsawafi on major cities such as Tabriz, Abhar, Maragheh and etc. However the rulers themselves were Persianized and upheld Persian culture. Also one cannot expect the nomadic Oghuz tribes to settle down in urban centers after many generations of nomadic lifestyle. Rather the first step from nomadism to semi-nomadism is to establish villages and then from semi-nomadism to rural villages takes many other generations and finally from rural villages to urban centers takes some time itself. Thus in terms of urban centers, as witnessed by *Nozhat al-Majales* and *Safinaye Tabrizi*, we can say these nomads had no effects. Note in this period we consider not only Seljuqs, but the whole area of Arran, Sherwan and Azerbaijan up to the Mongol era

Second, the Mongol invasion and subsequent Ilkhanid dynasty brought a large influx of Turks into Caucasus, Iran and Anatolia. However, as noted, the two major cities of the Ilkhanids that

is Tabriz and Maragheh held their Iranian culture. The Safinaye Tabrizi explicitly states “Zaban-i Tabrizi” and this Zaban-i Tabrizi is an Iranic dialect as studied by Dr. Ali Ashraf Sadeqi. Here are samples of these dialects again for the readers:

A sample poem in which the author of the Safina writes “Zaban Tabrizi”(Language of Tabriz):

نَچان چو چرخ نکویت مو ایر رهشه مهر دورش
چو ش د کارده شکویت و لول و دارد سر یوه
پری بقهر اره میر دون جو پور زون هنرمند
پروکری آنزوتون منی که آن هزیوه
اکثر بخت ورامرو کی چرخ هانزمویتی
ژژور منشی چو بخت اهون قدریوه
نه چرخ استه نبوتی نه روزو ورو فوتی
زوم چو واش خللیوه زمم حو بورضی ربوه

Sadeqi, Ali Ashraf. “Chand She’r beh Zaban-e Karaji, Tabrizi wa Ghayreh”(Some poems in the language of Karaji and Tabrizi and others), Majalla-ye Zabanshenasi, 9, 1379./2000, pp.14-17.

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/zabankarajitabrizi.pdf>

We should also mention that an unfortunate error occurred in a recent overview of the book:

A.A. Seyed-Gohrab & S. McGlinn, The Treasury of Tabriz The Great Il-Khanid Compendium, Iranian Studies Series, Rozenberg Publishers, 2007.

And it is understandable that the authors were not linguists.

Here are the exchanges:

From: Ali Doostzadeh

To: Seyed, Gohrab A.A.

Subject: Correction on your book

Dear. Dr. Ghoraab,

I have the book you edited Safina Tabrizi and also your book on Nizami Ganjavi: Love, Madness and Mystic longing. Both are excellent books.

I just wanted to make a correction on your article on Safina. Pages 678-679 of the Safina are not about a Turkish dialect (Tabrizi and Gurji)(page 18 of your book), but they are both Iranian dialects that predate the Turkification of Tabriz. For more information, please check these two articles by Dr. Ashraf Saadeghi

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/zabankarajitabrizi.pdf>

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/AshrafSadeqiasharmahalimaraqi.pdf>

There are Karaji and Tabrizi languages. Both are studied in detail by Dr. Sadeghi Tashakkor,
Ali Doostzadeh, Ph.D.

Here was the response with this regard.

From: "Seyed, Gohrab A.A.

To: Ali Doostzadeh

Dear Dr. Doostzadeh

I would like to thank you very much for your kind email and your friendly words about my books. I deeply appreciate your constructive critical note and will surely correct this in a second edition of the book.

With kind regards and best wishes,
Asghar Seyed-Ghorab

Dr. A.A. Seyed-Gohrab

Chairman of the Department of Persian Studies

Fellow of the Young Academy of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)

Leiden University

Faculty of Arts

A sentence in the dialect of Tabriz (the author calls Zaban-i Tabriz (dialect/language of Tabriz) recorded and also translated by Ibn Bazzaz Ardabili in the Safvat al-Safa:

«علیشاه چو در آمد گستاخ وار شیخ را در کنار گرفت و گفت حاضر باش بزبان تبریزی گو حریف
ژاته یعنی سخن بصرف بگو حریف رسیده است. در این گفتن دست بر کتف مبارک شیخ زد
شیخ را غیرت سر بر کرد»

The sentence “Gu Harif(a/e)r Zhaatah” is mentioned in Tabrizi dialect. Zhaateh ژاته is etymologically equivalent to modern Kurdish Haateh هاته which means “come”.

In terms of Arran and Sherwan, Sherwan was under the Sherwanshahs and the inhabitants were primarily Tat. However, the plains of Arran had large number of nomadic Turkic and Kurdish tribes. The major urban centers however based on the Nozhat al-Majales were Persian/Iranic speaking. In Maragheh, the capital of the Ilkhanids, the language was Fahlavi as mentioned by

Hamdollah Mustafawi. Thus we have direct and primary references with regards to Maragheh and Tabriz. And the Nozhat al-Majales covers a portion of the Mongol era.

Third was the Turkmen era (Aq-Qoyunlu and Qara-Qoyunlu) going from 1378-1501/1502. It seems that Turkic languages progressed during this era. However, we have examples of Fahlaviyyat from Mama 'Esmat Tabrizi, Pir Zehtab Tabrizi and Abdul Qadir Maraghi. The most interesting is Abdul Qadir Maraghi who records again in the dialect of Tabriz:

Two qet'as (poems) quoted by Abd-al-Qader Maraghi in the dialect of Tabriz (d. 838 A.H./1434-35 C.E.; II, p. 142)

(Fahlaviyat in Encyclopedia Iranica by Ahmad Taffazoli,

<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v9f2/v9f232.html>)

(A. A. Sadeqi, "Ash'ar-e mahalli-e Jame'al-Alhaann," Majalla-ye zaban-shenasi 9, 1371./1992, pp. 54-64.

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/AshrafSadeqiasharmahalimaraqi.pdf>)

رۆرم پَری بجولان

نو کۆ بَمَن وُراَرده

وی خَد شَدیم بَدامش

هیزا آوُو وُراَرده

A ghazal and fourteen quatrains under the title of Fahlaviyat by the poet Maghrebi Tabrizi (d. 809/1406-7)

(Fahlaviyat in Encyclopedia Iranica by Dr. Ahmad Taffazoli,

<http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v9f2/v9f232.html>)

(M.-A. Adib Tusi "Fahlaviyat-e Magrebi Tabrizi," NDA Tabriz 8, 1335/1956

<http://www.azargoshnasp.net/languages/Azari/fahlaviyaatmaghrebitabrizi.pdf>)

In this era, the author does not have much information on Arran proper (primary sources).

Vladimir Minorsky writes (V. Minorsky, Studies in Caucasian History, Cambridge University Press, 1957. pg 34):

"The author of the collection of documents relating to Arran Mas'ud b. Namdar (c. 1100) claims Kurdish nationality. The mother of the poet Nizami of Ganja was Kurdish (see autobiographical digression in the introduction of Layli wa Majnun). In the 16th century there was a group of 24 septs of Kurds in Qarabagh, see Sharaf-nama, I, 323. Even now the Kurds of the USSR are chiefly grouped south of Ganja. Many place-names composed with Kurd are found on both banks of the Kur"

We should also mention the many Iranic words collects in a medical dictionary by a person from Shirwan. The book *Dastur al-Adwiyah* written around 1400 A.D. also lists some of these native words for plants in Shirwan, Beylakan, Arran: [Shang](#), [Babuneh](#), [Bahmanak](#), [Shirgir](#), [KurKhwarah](#), [Handal](#), [Harzeh](#), [Kabudlah](#) (Beylakani word , standard Persian: [Kabudrang](#)), [Moshkzad](#), [Kharime](#), [Bistam](#), [Kalal](#).

(Sadeqi, Ali Ashraf, “*New words from the Old Language of Arran, Shirvan and Azerbaijan*”(in Persian), *Iranian Journal of Linguistics*, Vol. 17, No 1(33), pp 22-41, 1381/2002)

However we propose our theory. First we need to distinguish urban centers from nomadic grazing lands. If there was large cultural activities in the area according to primary sources in the urban centers, then we need to look at the language of the cultural and also notice if there is any trace of Fahlavviyat/Kurdish or other dialects. The *Dastur al-Adwiyah* is a good start with this regard and it is from 1400 A.D. Our theory is that the urban centers of Arran were like Tabriz. They had Sunni Shafi'i religion with primary Iranian population but they were ruled by Turkmens. Thus Turkicization had advanced possibly in these cities. However, it seems from what Maraghi has called the Tabrizi language and the *Dastur al-Adwiyah*, and also the Fahlaviyyat of Mama 'Esmat Tabrizi (a mystic Women who did not have education), the primary language was Iranic. It should be noted the daughter of Fazlollah Astarabadi who was born and lived in Tabriz has all her work in Persian as well where-as in Iraq, Nasimi, a Seyyed (descendant of the Prophet Muhammad) wrote in both Persian and Turkic. Thus our first theory is that just like Tabriz, major centers in Arran were not Turkified. However, the plains of Arran were definitely an area of grazing for Iranian (Kurdish) and Turkic nomads. A contradiction to this theory would be brought if there are primary sources that mention the urban centers and their language and cultural around the 1400 A.D. period. For now, the author is only aware of *Dastur al-Adwiyah*.

As per Sherwan, the area was under the Sherwanshah. Badr Sherwani has poetry in the Kenar-ab dialect. Also there is a mistake in the *Iranica* article on Badr Sherwani which was brought to the attention of *Iranica* authors by this editor. Unfortunately the Azerbaijani writer Rahimov has omitted many verses of Badr Sherwani for political reasons and he has claimed that Badr's mother tongue was Turkish. In reality this was not the case as noted in:

Sadeqi, Al Asharf. “*The conflict between Persian and Turkish in Arran and Shirvan*”(in Persian), *Iranian Journal of Linguistics*, Vol 18, No (35). Pages 1-12. ISSN 0259-9082

Badr Sherwani clearly states he is not a Turkomen but he knows some Turkish:

لطیف طبعا ترکی دگر همی دانم
نیم از آنکه ندارم ز علم ترکی خبر....

در خط و شعر و تربیت و دانش و ادب
بالله که کم نیم من از این قوم ترکمان..

He also has harsh words against the Turkomens as it seems at that time, there was major battles between the Sherwanshah and the Turkomens:

از جفای ترکمانان خود دلی دارم خراب
زان خرابیها که زیشان شد به ملک و مسکنم

خانه ها در شماخی سوخت دود در بند بین
دود آه آتشین بر من میشود از روزنم

چون ترکمان هر یک بد پیکری
عالی قدی گنبدی سری بز ریش چند گلهبان
فارغ ز علم و معرفت چرکین حدیث و بد لغت
ایشان همه... صفت من مانده مسکین در میان

Unfortunately Rahimov did not publish “....” parts of these verses but from the other words we can see Badr Sherwani had disdain for the Turkomans.

After contacting the editor of Iranica and sending him the study by Dr. Sadeghi, this is what Dr. Yarshater stated:

“Very many thanks for your email of November 19 and the attached article by Professor Sadeghi on the languages of Arran and Shervan. I truly appreciate your drawing my attention to the inexcusable error in Rahimov’s short entry. Obviously the author was a Turkish Azarbaijani intent on the glorification of Turkish. We shall remove the entry from our electronic version and we shall add in the Addenda and Corrigenda of the Volume XV the fact that the entry in the printed version is erroneous and one needs to look at the electronic version for the correct entry.

I was wondering that since you have detected the error, whether you could give us the added assistance of putting together an entry on Badr-e Shirvani, to be published under your own signature, based on Prof. Sadeghi’s article and other articles that you may have come across on the poet? He deserves a longer and more substantial entry. I should greatly appreciate your help.”

Dr. Yarshater at first had the impression I was a scholar of Persian poetry since I introduced him to articles on Badr Sherwani. However as I explained to him, I was not and he is currently in the process of finding someone suitable to rewrite that entry.

According to Dr. Ali Ashraf Sadeqi: “However it seems in Badr’s time, some Iranian dialects, other than Persian i.e. Tati, Talesh and Pahlavi, still prevailed in the area”

What is interesting though about Badr Sherwani is that he knew Persian, a Kenar- Ab Iranic dialect and also Turkic which he had learned. He has less than 100 verses total in these two and the rest of his work (12500 verses or so) are in Persian. The Kenar-ab dialect is the rarest dialect among these and it is in our opinion the native dialect of Badr Sherwani himself. It seems that this period was a period of increasing bi-lingualism but at the same time, Badr points out “I am not one of those that do not know Turkish” which means that a large portion of the Muslim population of the area did not yet know Turkish. Thus when it comes to Sherwan, we can safely assume Iranic dialects were prevalent.

Finally, the Safavid era is a key turning point. The Safavids not only transformed the religious landscape of Azerbaijan (except some Kurdish areas which kept their Shafi’i faith), but they brought large number of nomads to settle in the Azerbaijan. Majority (if not all) of the Ghezelbash supporters of the Safavids were from Anatolia and Syria. The names of these tribes

such as Rumlu (from Rum (Anatolia)), Qaramanlu (from Qaraman in Anatolia), Shamlu (from Syria) and etc. also show this. Despite this, even in the Safavid era, the 17th century Ottoman traveler 'Awliya Chelebi mentions that most of the Women in Maragheh speak Fahlavi. On Naxchivan he also mentions Iranian dialects as among the languages spoken including "Pahlavi, Dari, Farsi and Dehqani". Also Tabriz itself was mainly a Shafi'i Sunni city. Turks who converted to Islam usually adopted Hanafism and this itself is an important distinguisher.

"The Turkmens who entered Anatolia no doubt brought with them vestiges of the pre-Islamic inner Asian shamanistic past but eventually became in considerable measure firm adherents of the near-universal Islamic madhab for the Turks, the Hanafi one"

(Mohamed Taher, "Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture", Anmol Publication PVT, 1998. Turkey: Pg 983).

"There have sometimes been forcible and wholesale removals from one "rite" to another, generally for political reasons; as when the Ottoman Turks, having gained power in Iraq and the Hijaz in the sixteenth century, compelled the Shafi'ite Qadis either to change to the Hanafi "rite" to which they (the Turks) belonged, or to relinquish office."

(Reuben Levy, "Social Structure of Islam", Taylor and Francis, 2000. Pg 183).

"Unlike the Sunni Turks, who follow the Hanafi school of Islamic law, the Sunni Kurds follow the Shafi'i school"

(Federal Research Div Staff, Turkey: A Country Study, Kessinger Publishers, 2004. pg 141).

"Hanafism was founded by a Persian, Imam Abu Hanifa, who was a student of Imam Ja'far Al-Sadeq, ... His school held great attraction from the beginning for Turks as well as Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. Today the Hanafi school has the largest number of follows in the Sunni world, including most Sunni Turks, the Turkic people of Caucasus, and Central Asia, European Muslims, and the Muslims of Indian subcontinent "

(Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *"The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity"*. HarperColins, 2004. Pg 68).

Tabriz itself was a predominanetly Shafi'i city before the Safavids. Thus the Turkicization of Azerbaijan continued in the Safavid and Qajar era, and large pockets of Talyshi/Tati dialects were Turkicized. In terms of Arran and Sherwan, it seems that Talyshi, Tati and Kurdish after the Safavid era increasingly lost space. Specially, after the demise of the Sherwanshah in Sherwan. So indeed the Safavid's brought large conversion of Azerbaijan, Arran and Sherwan to Shi'ism and this went hand in hand with Turkification. All the Sunni Talysh, Tats and Kurds of Azerbaijan proper are today uniformly Shafi'ite, which was rare or almost non-existent among Turks entering the area.

But even up to the 20th century, there was a large number of Iranic speakers Tats (Persian), Talysh and Kurds in Arran and Shirwan, but the Turkic linguistic elements by the 20th were predominant and many of these Iranic elements were assimilated into the Azeri-Turkic identity, specially during the USSR era. For example on Tats:

"In the nineteenth century the Tats were settled in large homogeneous groups. The intensive processes of assimilation by the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijanis cut back the territory and numbers

of the Tats. In 1886 they numbered more than 120,000 in Azerbaijan and 3,600 in Daghestan. According to the census of 1926 the number of Tats in Azerbaijan (despite the effect of natural increase) had dropped to 28,500, although there were also 38,300 “Azerbaijanis” with Tat as their native language.”

(World Culture Encyclopedia: “Tats”,

<http://www.everyculture.com/Russia-Eurasia-China/Tats-Orientation.html> accessed Dec, 2007)

(Natalia G. Volkova “Tats” in Encyclopedia of World Culture, Editor: David Publisher, New York: G.K. Hall, Prentice Hall International, 1991-1996).

Abbas Qoli Agha Bakikhanov, a 19th century literary figure from the Caucasia mentions in his Golestan Iram large number of Tats in the area around Baku:

There are eight villages in Tabarsaran which are: Jalqan, Rukan, Maqatir, Kamakh, Ridiyan, Homeydi, Mata'i, and Bilhadi. They are in the environs of a city that Anushiravan built near the wall of Darband. Its remains are still there. They speak the Tat language, which is one of the languages of Old Persia. It is clear that they are from the people of Fars and after its destruction they settled in those villages. ..The districts situated between the two cities of Shamakhi and Qodiyal, which is now the city of Qobbeh, include Howz, Lahej, and Qoshunlu in Shirvan and Barmak, Sheshpareh and the lower part of Boduq in Qobbeh, and all the country of Baku, except six villages of Turkmen, speak Tat. It becomes apparent from this that they originate from Fars. (Floor, Willem. and Javadi, Hasan. i(2009), "The Heavenly Rose-Garden: A History of Shirvan & Daghestan by Abbas Qoli Aqa Bakikhanov, Mage Publishers, 2009)

Despite these, we believe that one can decisively state that Turkish became the main language of urban areas in Arran, Sherwan and Azerbaijan after the Safavid era and not before that era. When exactly this occurred in the Safavid era, it is unknown to us. However taking Tabriz an example, the period of constant Ottoman and Safavid warfare which brought major decline to the fortune of the city is a possibility. A period of bilingualism is possible in the Turkmen Aq-Qoyunlu and Qara-Qoyunlu era for some urban centers (outside of Sherwan but in Azerbaijan and Arran). However when it comes to the Seljuqs, Atabeks, Khwarizmshahids and Ilkhanids, the major urban centers were predominately Iranian as mentioned and the Turkish nomads at that time had not settled down in the major urban centers in noticeable numbers.

A complete book can be written on this subject because we have many primary materials. However, some authors who are not specialist in the area or authors with nationalistic concerns or authors who do not possess the necessary languages (Persian and Arabic, and also Armenian and Georgian can be helpful), have come up with variety of conclusions. Sometimes even myths (see the appendix) have been used to come up with a totally unrealistic scenario. However, without important sources such as Safinayeh Tabrizi, Nozhat al-Majales, Hamdullah Mustawafi, ‘Awliya Chelebi, Badr Sherwani, Rodhat al-Janan, the Fahlaviiyyat of Mama ‘Esmat, Maghrebi Tabrizi and etc., a complete study cannot be claimed.

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Appendix: Response to two arguments with regards to the population of Turks in Caucasus

Do “Turkish” soldiers in Baghdad during the early Abbasid period have anything to do with Caucasus and Azerbaijan

One critic has claimed that: **there was a lot of Turks in Baghdad serving the caliphate, so Azerbaijan and Caucasia had a large Turkic military population before the Seljuqs.**

First, the Turkic military population in Iraq was not large, but Turks being employed in various armies is like Berbers, Slavs, Iranians (soghdians specially) and etc. being employed in various armies. None of these show evidence of any Turkish speaking cities and colonies in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan. Indeed, there is no Turkish toponyms in both Eastern Southern Caucasus or Azerbaijan before the Seljuqs, directly disproving any claim of any substantial Turkish population. For example unlike the Iranian names such as Ganja, Baku, Sherwan, Darband, Barda', Lahijan and etc., one would expect some Turkic names in the area. Also the area of Azerbaijan and Caucasus were controlled by Medes, Achaemenids, Greeks, Parthians, Sassanids and then Arabs (occasional Khazar incursions), then Sherwanshahs, Rawwadids, Sajids, Justanids, Daylamites and Shaddadids and etc. Thus no real Turkic rule was present until the Seljuqs. Again there is nothing comparable to say Armenian writings or the Nozhat al-Majales (a complete picture of Muslim Arran) and Safinaye Tabriz (a complete picture of Muslim Azerbaijan) that shows any proof or evidence of Turkic culture.

Let us first see how many Turks were in Baghdad and was is meant by Turks. However, the number of Turks in Iraq has nothing to do with Azerbaijan, Sherwan or Arran. But we will quote a book which consider the number of “Turks” (generic demeanor as explained by M.A. Shaban). “More difficult question surround the size of the Turkish Guard. Ibn Tahirbirdi’s example indicates the problem of relying directly on the source: “(al-Mu’tasim) devoted himself to the purchase (of Turks) such that their number reached 8,000 *mamluks*. The number also reported as 18,000, which is the more widely known (of these two numbers.”. The sources, in other words, provide a range of figures. The earliest references are those of al-Ya’qubi, who has 3000 *Ghulams* collected by al-Mu’tasim during al-Ma’mun’s reign; al-Mas’udi, who refers to 4000 Turks collected by al-Mu’tasim; and al-Kindi who reports on the 4,000 strong force of Turks in Egypt with al-Mu’tasim shortly before his rise to the caliphate. Michael the Syrian provides a similar number. It is supriting, therefore, to find later authors such as al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (50000), Nizam al-Mulk (70,000), and Yaqut al-Hamawi (70000) provide numbers in the tens of thousands (of Turkish soldiers). Between the two poles lies a third group of sources, which are content with a figure between 17000 and 20000.

...

Kennet’s number (103,000) however.. are considerably higher than those proposed by Tollner, who argues for a maximum figure of 20,000 Turkish guardsmen. Kennet’s number seems excessive and until certain issues are better resolved, the lower figure is probably to be

preferred.”(Matthew S. Gordon, “The Breaking of a Thousand Swords: A History of the Turkish Military of Samarra, State University of New York Press, 2001. Pg 72-73)

Thus a rough estimate from 4,000 (earliest sources) to 100,000 (one author) and the consensus seems to be 20,000. However what should be pointed out is that “Turk” used by these Arab authors were a generic term.

According to one modern source with regards to military personal in Baghdad:

“The name Turk was given to all these troops, despite the inclusion amongst them of some elements of Iranian origin, Ferghana, Ushrusana, and Shash – places were in fact the centers where the slave material was collected together”(‘Uthmān Sayyid Aḥmad Ismā‘īl Bīlī, "Prelude to the Generals", Published by Garnet & Ithaca Press, 2001.)

M. A. Shaban goes further:

“These new troops were the so-called “Turks”. It must be said without hesitation that this is the most misleading misnomer which has led some scholars to harp *ad nauseam* on utterly unfounded interpretation of the following era, during which they unreasonably ascribe all events to Turkish domination. **In fact the great majority of these troops were not Turks. It has been frequently pointed out that Arabic sources use the term Turk in a very loose manner. The Hephthalites are referred to as Turks, so are the peoples of Gurgan, Khwarizm and Sistan. Indeed, with the exception of the Soghdians, Arabic sources refer to all peoples not subjects of the Sassanian empire as Turks.** In Samarra separate quarters were provided for new recruits from every locality. The group from Farghana were called after their district, and the name continued in usage because it was easy to pronounce. But such groups as the Ishtakhanjiyya, the Isbijabbiya and groups from similar localities who were in small numbers at first, were lumped together under the general term Turks, because of the obvious difficulties the Arabs had in pronouncing such foreign names. **The Khazars who also came from small localities which could not even be identified, as they were mostly nomads, were perhaps the only group that deserved to be called Turks on the ground of racial affinity. However, other groups from Transcaucasia were classed together with the Khazars under the general description.**”

(M.A. Shaban, “Islamic History”, Cambridge University Press, v.2 1978. Page 63)

Note unlike what M.A. Shaban states, even Iranian Soghdians and Alans have been counted as Turkish groups in some Arabic sources. The name Turk itself does not have agreed etymology or even origin. Its identification firmly with Altaic speakers (although now Mongols are not considered part of this language family by some linguists) is fairly recent, since in old Islamic sources even Tibetians, Chinese, Mongols and etc. were all called Turks (besides Iranian peoples like Soghdians, Alans and etc. that we have mentioned). One possible hypothesis is that the word is connected to Turan and Turaj/Turag (Pahlavi), just like Iranian and Iran are connected to Iraj of the Shahnameh.

One Soghdian(Iranian) in particular who was mistaken for a Turk was the general Afshin. That is while two old Arabic sources mention Afshin as a Turk, it is clear to modern scholars he was a Soghdian and other sources have mentioned him as such.

Daniel Pipes states:"Although two classical sources claim him a Turk, he came from Farghana, an Iranian cultural region and was not usually considered Turkish"(D. Pipes. Turks in Early Muslim Service — JTS, 1978, 2, 85—96.)

Bernard Lewis also states: "Babak's Iranianizing Rebellion in Azerbaijan gave occasion for sentiments at the capital to harden against men who were sympathetic to the more explicitly

Iranian tradition. Victor (837) over Babak was al-Afshin, who was the hereditary Persian ruler of a district beyond the Oxus, but also a masterful general for the caliph.”(Bernard Lewis, "The Political Language of Islam", Published by University of Chicago Press, 1991. Pg 482)

And J.H. Kramer states about Oshrusana:

“Under Mamun, the country had to be conquered again and a new expedition was necessary in 207/822. On this last occasion, the Muslim army was guided by Haydar (Khedar), the son of the Afshīn Kāwūs, who on account of dynastic troubles had sought refuge in Baghdād. This time the submission was complete; Kāwūs abdicated and Haydar succeeded him, later to become one of the great nobles of the court of Baghdād under al-Mutasim, where he was known as al-Afshīn. His dynasty continued to reign until 280/893 (coin of the last ruler Sayr b. Abdallāh of 279 [892] in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg); after this date, the country became a province of the Sāmānids and ceased to have an independent existence, while the Iranian element was eventually almost entirely replaced by the Turkic.”(J.H. Kramers "Ushrūshana." Encyclopaedia of Islam. Edited by: P. Bearman , Th. Bianquis , C.E. Bosworth , E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007)

Thus modern scholars affirm Afshin was Iranian. However to Arab authors at the time, the term “Turk” did not specifically mean Altaic speakers as much as a person from the far away regions of Central Asia.

According C.E. Bosworth, "The Appearance of the Arabs in Central Asia under the Umayyads and the establishment of Islam", in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. IV: The Age of Achievement: AD 750 to the End of the Fifteenth Century, Part One: The Historical, Social and Economic Setting, edited by M. S. Asimov and C. E. Bosworth. Multiple History Series. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1998. excerpt from page 23: "Central Asia in the early seventh century, was ethnically, still largely an Iranian land whose people used various Middle Iranian languages.

C. Edmund Bosworth: "In early Islamic times Persians tended to identify all the lands to the northeast of Khorasan and lying beyond the Oxus with the region of Turan, which in the *Shahnama* of Ferdowsi is regarded as the land allotted to Fereydun's son Tur. The denizens of Turan were held to include the Turks, in the first four centuries of Islam essentially those nomadizing beyond the Jaxartes, and behind them the Chinese (see Kowalski; Minorsky, "Turan"). Turan thus became both an ethnic and a geographical term, but always containing ambiguities and contradictions, arising from the fact that all through Islamic times the lands immediately beyond the Oxus and along its lower reaches were the homes not of Turks but of Iranian peoples, such as the Sogdians and Khwarezmians."(C.E. Bosworth, “Central Asia: The Islamic period up to the Mongols” in *Encyclopedia Iranica*).

Anyhow, besides pointing to generic term Turk, these Turks in Baghdad have no relationship with actual large settlements of Turkic peoples in Azerbaijan and Caucasus.

There are new studies showing that the ethnonym “Turk” itself is from the Iranian Khotanese Saka language and it was then past to Altaic speakers(V.H. Mair, *Contact and Exchanges in the ancient World*, University of Hawai Press, 2006. Pp 142 for a detailed study).

In general as shown already, the urban population based on books such as Nozhat al-Majales of Arran and Sherwan was Persian and there is no mention of Turkish language in Arran by travelers (for example Estakhri clearly mentions Persian and Arabic as do others).

References (note first name of Author is put first here):

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Akbar Kitab al-Tijan: The Arab folklore Kitab al-Tijan and fight between mythical Yemenese Kings and Turks in Azerbaijan has no historical validity

The writer saw this posed in a forum: "At the time of the Arab conquest there was a large Turkish population in Iranian Azerbaijan and it is possible to find these in Arab sources. Arab sources refer to the collision of Yemeni raiders in Azerbaijan and a victory by the Yemenese and taking the children of the Turks as captive. Ibn Hisham describes to the Omayyad Caliph Mua'wiyah about the question of Azerbaijan and Turks that originally Turks lived in Azerbaijan. To sum up the message of Arab authors was that Turks were majority in Azerbaijan"

Such statements stem from nationalistic considerations rather than close examinations of the books attributed to Ibn Hisham. We believe the author is referring to the book al-Tijan (the book of crowns) by Wahb b. Munabbih which appears in recension of Ibn Hisham. Ibn Hisham (died 833 A.D.) himself lived much later than the Umayyad Caliph Mua'wiyah (602-680 A.D.). The other book is Akhbar 'Ubayd (the history, poetry and genealogy of Yemen) again both published

in 1928 based on the Hyberabad manuscript that is a copy of a 1622 lost manuscript. And also one cannot “sum up” based on a mythical story anything about Turks being majority in Azerbaijan where there is not a single reference from Arab travelers to the area (like Istakhri) and clear manuscripts like Safinaye Tabrizi and Nozhat al-Majales which shows that there was no Turkish urban culture present in the area even during the time of the Seljuqids. It seems the author who made this statement has not read the works of al-Tijan and Akhbar ‘Ubayd and has referenced another nationalist writer who has taken a certain quote out of the context of the story. Finally to make a generalization based on a legendary source shows complete disregard of methodology of history writing as well scientific observations.

Although the legendary nature of the works of Akhbar ‘Ubayd and Kitab al-Tijan are well known and have been already dismissed by Ibn Khaldun (and before him by Al-Masu’di) before being subsequently dismissed by Western scholars, we shall delve into this argument in more detail by bringing primary sources. Before we do so, we should note before the Seljuqs, Arab and Persian travelers mention the language of the Caucasus as Persian and Arabic, and not Turkish. Qatran Tabrizi’s poetry shows that the Oghuz who made a minor incursion in Azerbaijan during the Ghaznavid era (before being driven out) were foreigners. Similarly, all dynasties before the Seljuqs ruling these areas were not Turkic (only Khazars and Ummayyads skirmished for 100 years were the Khazars occasionally raided the Southern Caucasus and the ‘Ummayyads the Northern Caucasus. However in the end, the boundary of both empire remained the same as that of the Sassanids and Khazars). Dynasties such as Sajids (of Soghdian origin), Sherwanshahs, Shaddadids, Rawwadis, Justanids, and etc. have already been discussed and none of these were Turkish. Before the Arab invaders, Caucasian Albania and Azerbaijan were ruled also by Iranian dynasties such as Sassanids and sometimes minor dynasties under Sassanids such as the Mehranids and Parthian dynasties of Albania. Before that the area was ruled by the Parthians, and before that it was the Romans and Greeks in Caucasia Albania and Atropates Persian dynasty in Azerbaijan. And before the Romans and Greeks, we have the Achaemenids, and then Iranian Medes. Thus there was no interval for large numbers of Turks to inhabit Azerbaijan and displace the original Iranians of the area. The toponyms such as Ganja, Azerbaijan, Baku, Sherwan, Ardabil, Tabriz and etc. are not Turkic and one cannot find one reliable Turkic toponym from this area before the Seljuqs. And we have already brought examples of the pre-Turkish language of Azerbaijan which has been references by both Islamic authors, manuscripts (such as Safinayeh Tabrizi and Nozhat al-Majales, Homam Tabrizi and etc.). Also the book Nozhat al-Majales shows the everyday Persian culture of the Caucasus and uses many local idioms and words.

All of these and more were described in such sections and subsections of the article.

Consequently, such manuscripts as the Nozhat al-Majales using everyday Persian idioms from the Caucasus, and describing the cultural life of the area (the terms of everyday cultural life being Persian not Turkish), showing everyday average people (not related to courts) using Persian is sufficient proof that the culture of urban centers and the area of the Caucasus even during the Seljuqid era was not Turkish. Only with the Mongol invasions were large number of Turkmen/Oghuz tribes pushed in the area and it took many centuries onward (even up to the 19th century as noted by Bakikhanov Baku was still predominantly Persian) to finally linguistically Turkify the area. The tipping point as we mentioned was probably the Safavid era. Some places

like Astara in Iran Gilan province were Talysh speaking only 60 years ago and some Tati villages became Turkophone in Iran only recently (mentioned by Behzad Behzadi in his PersianAzeri dictionary and Jalal Al-Ahmad on Tat Neshinaan Bu'in Zahra).

Given these well known facts which are agreed upon by Western scholars (and Russian ones such as History of the East), there is no reason to delve into Yemenese legends of Akhbar 'Ubayd and Kitab al-Tijan. However we do so to show that these legends really have nothing to do with Turks (speakers of Altaic speakers) but have to do with Turanians (mythical Iranian group). The Yemenese components of these legends have been dismissed by Ibn Khaldun (and before him by al-Masu'di) long before modern scholars began examining the Kitab al-Tijan and Akhbar 'Ubayd.

Before we bring translations of Ibn Hisham who quotes 'Ubyad (also written as 'Abid), we should first mention who/what are Ibn Hisham, 'Ubayd, Muaw'iyah, Kitab al-Tijan and Akhbar 'Ubayd. The Kitab al-Tijan is a book that is ascribed to Ibn Hisham which has many Himyarite (name for Yemen) legends. As will be shown the Kitab al-Tijan is a legendary composite work with its oldest manuscript dating from 1622 A.D. and with many interpolations. It is ascribed to Ibn Hisham and it quotes a certain 'Ubayd who is thought of as a legendary figure. The stuff attributed to 'Ubayd is remotely related to the question of the existence of a historical 'Ubayd at the court of the Ummayyad Caliph Muaw'iyah. Furthermore, the Himyarite Kings quoted with regards to their attack on Azerbaijan are all legendary and existed during the time of ancient legendary Iranian Kings (like Manuchehr).

First we quote an entry on Ibn Hisham:

Ibn Hisham (d. 218/833)

Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hisham was an Egyptian scholar of south Arabian origin, best known for edition of the *Sira*, or life (of the Prophet Muhammad), of ibn Ishaq (d. 150/767). Ibn Hisham's edition of the *Sira* was based on the Kufan recension of al-Bakka'i (d. 183/799), extensive quotations from which were used by al-Azraqi (d. c.250/865), al-Tabari (d. 310/923) and others, and provide a basis for assessing how Ibn Hisham proceeded. The most significant change was the suppression of much of the *Mubtada'* section of the work, which dealt with the pre-Islamic background of Muhammad's life and contained much legendary material to which some authorities objected. Ibn Hisham also reduced the amount of poetry, and added many remarks, clearly separated from the main text by the introductory phrase *gala*, 'Ibn Hisham said, 'to explain obscure allusions to individuals, define unusual words, provide variants, or elaborate when he felt he had relevant material to offer. In this new form the *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq was very popular and rapidly became the authoritative interpretation of the life of Muhammad.

Also extant from Ibn Hisham's pen is his *Kitab al-Tijan fi rnuluk Himyar wa-al-Yaman (Book of Crowns, concerning the Kings of Himyar and Yemen)*, a book of Biblical and ancient Arabian lore based on an earlier collection of such materials by Wahb ibn Munabbih. The work begins with Creation of Adam and Eve, and the early patriarchs; all this is made to lead to the history of Yemen and the southern Arabs. The rest of the book stays with this subject, relating early folklore about the glories and achievements of the Yemenites, most particularly the exploits of al-

Sa'b Dhu al-Qarnayn. Legends pertaining to the Quraysh are also introduced, and the work ends with tales about Sayf ibn Dhl Yazan. The *Kitab al-Tijan* is clearly a composite work that had not stabilized even in the time of Ibn Hisham, but nevertheless reflects a type of early material that was becoming increasingly marginalized as scholars excluded it from their more formal studies.

..

Kitab al-Tijan, Fritz Krenkw (ed.), Hyderabad, 1928.

(L.I. Conrad, "ibn Hisham" in Julie Scott Meisami, Paul Starkeym, "Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature", Taylor & Francis, 1998. Page 335.)

Before delving into these Yemenese legends, we should know more about Wahb B. Munabbih. According to the Encyclopedia of Islam:

WAHB B. MUNABBIH, ABU 'ABD ALLAH, Yemeni narrator and author-transmitter from South Arabia. He was of Persian origin, having been born at Dhimar, two days' march from Sana' in the year 34/654-5. Information about his conversion to Islam in the year 10 A.H. is unreliable. More probably the details concerned his father Munabbih, of whom it was said that "he converted to Islam at the time of the Prophet and that he was a good Muslim" (Ibn Hadjar, *Tahdhib*, xi, 167). He lived with his five brothers at Sana', and Hammam was the eldest of them. The most reasonable date for the brother's death seems to be 101 or 102/719-20, and the least probable is 132, when compared with that of Wahb (see below). He left a *Sahifa* with almost 140 translations and commentaries; these were published by R.F. 'Abd al-Muttalib in 1406/1986, following a manuscript from the Dar al-Kutub in Cairo, which corrects and expands the edition by Hamfdullah, who followed mss. from Berlin and Damascus.

...

Alongside the biblical section, which all these titles denote, is another which concerns the pre-Islamic Arab period; this established a true bridge between the biblical world and the Yemeni Arab past. It is the *K. al-Muluk al-mutawwad'a min Himyar wa-akhbarihim wa kishasihim wa-kuburihim wa-asha'rihim*, and according to Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat*, iii, 671]. Ibn Kutayba is said to have seen a version of it himself. In any case, the presence of material on the same theme was attested by the *Kitab al-Tidjan* of Ibn Hisham, who referred to Wahb as his primary source, through the intermediary of the same grandson, and from him Asad b. Musa [*q.v.* in Suppl]. He found it in the library of the judge of Egypt, who received him and opened his house to him as a disciple (see Khoury, *Asad b. Musa*, 23). In the first part of this book Wahb is found everywhere as the only authority; these are the pages containing the beginning of the biblical world, where the indication

of names and dates, etc. points to certain, detailed knowledge; and it was to this world that the author wanted to connect Yemen, with a view to enhancing the worth of this country to the bosom of Islam, to Meccan and then to North Arabian roots, and to the centre of rivalries which had built up between north and south.

In the second part of Ibn Hisham's book it is noticeable that the name of Wahb is mentioned increasingly less often, eventually disappearing altogether in the last part. The global tone which dominates this book resides in its distinctively biblical character, and this distinguishes it entirely from the book of cAbid (or cUbayd) b. Sharya [see IBN SHARYA]

, *Akhbdr cAbid b. Sharyai fi akhbaral-Yaman wa-ashariha wa-ansabiha* (ed., with Ibn Hisham's *K. al-Tidjan*, Haydarabad 1347/1928-9). In that book we are dealing with a story-teller who becomes the *samir* (=legend/story teller) of Mu'awiya in Damascus, and fills out his stories mainly with poetry. This becomes the dominant element and confirms historical narrations (on this subject see Khoury, *Kalif, Geschichte und Dichtung*, esp. 213 ff.).

...

As for later authors, they often altered certain traditions which they attached to his name, which means that not all of the alterations may have come from him. In any case, in his *Kitab al-Tidjan* he showed a real knowledge of the Bible, even if this was not extensive, in certain citations from the text (see Khoury, *Quelques reflexions.*, 553 ff., esp. 555-6). What was circulated with these biblical and extra-biblical studies was a common Semitic reservoir of great antiquity, and this was often disseminated orally, especially outside the Judaeo-Christian dogmatic centres; this has been very ably noted by H. Schwarzbaum in his book on biblical and extra-biblical stories (see *BibL*). In short, Wahb is an important representative of the expansion of the historical perspective. His writings embodied a truly universal vision of history, comprising: 1. Ancient biblical history; 2. pre-Islamic Yemeni history; 3. Islamic history of the prophet; and 4. history of the caliphate.

(R.G. Khoury, "Wahb b. Munabbih", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007. (2nd edition-online version)).

We should also know about 'Ubayd ibn Sharya who is mentioned in the *Kitab al-Tijan* being the main story teller of Mu'awiya. The Encyclopedia of Islam article by Rosenthal has an article on 'Ubayd.

SHARYA. ABID/^cUBAYD AL-DJURHUMI, sage and antiquary, frequently cited as a relater of *quasi-historical* traditions. The form of his name is not certain. The manuscripts appear to vacillate between ^cAbid and ^cUbayd. 'Umayr occurs by mistake (Ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-ghaba*, Bulak 1286, iii, 351; Ibn Hadjar, *Isaba*, Calcutta 1856-73, iii, 201). The form Sharya is confirmed by the metre (cf. O. Lofgren, *Ein Hamdani-Fund*, Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, vii (1935), 24; al-Hamdani, *Iklil*, ed. O. Lofgren, Uppsala 1954, 6). However, Ibn Hadjar advocates the pronunciation Shariyya. Sariya, Sariyya, and Shu-bruma(?) also occur (Ibn ^cAsakir, *Tarikh Dimashk*; Yakut, *Udaba'* v, 10; *Usd*).

Strong attempts have been made in recent years to defend the historical existence of Ibn Sharya (cf., for instance, N. Abbott, *Studies in Arabic literary papyri*, i, Chicago 1957, 9 ff.), but his historicity as a scholar and author remains entirely conjectural. According to the sources, Mu'awiya called him to his court in order to hear him tell stories of the past. He died at the age of over 220, 240, or 300 years during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik. In the first half of the 3rd/9th century, Abu Hatim al-Sidjistani (*Mu'ammarnun*, ed. Goldziher, *Abk. z. arab. Phil.*, ii. 40-3) knew him as a long-lived sage. Al-Djahiz (*Bukhala'*, Cairo 1948, 40, trans. Pellat, 67, 337) already seems to refer to him as an authority on the great South Arabian past, and so does Ibn Hisham in the *Kitab al-Tijan*, Haydarabad 1347, 66, 209).

Later in that century, Ibn Kutayba (*Ta'will mukhtalif al-hadith*, Cairo 1386/1966, 283, trans. Lecomte, Damascus 1964, 313) knew him as a genealogist, apparently in connection with South

Arabian history. The early historians usually do not mention him by name. Al-Mas'udi (*Murudi*, iv, 89) is inclined to discount his reports on South Arabian history as fiction.

He is credited with a collection of proverbs, which is not preserved (*Fihrist*, 89; al-Bakri, *Fasl al-malakut*, Khartum 1958; R. Sellheim, *Die klassischarabischen Sprichwortsammlungen*, The Hague 1954, 45, 89, 149). His famous "Book of the kings and history of the past" (*Fihrist*, 89) was already quoted by al-Mas'udi (*Murudi*, iii, 173-5, 275 ff., iv, 89; A. v. Kremer, *Über die sudarabische Sage*, Leipzig 1866, 46 ff.). According to a somewhat corrupt passage in Ibn Hadjar, *Isaba*, iii, 202, al-Hamdani mentioned that in the 4th/10th century a great number of different recensions of the work were in circulation. One of those recensions has been preserved in an incomplete form. It has been published under the title of *Akhbdr al-Yaman wa ash'aruha wa-ansabuha*, together with *Kitab al-Tidjan*, Haydarabad, 1347, 311-487.

The quotations in al-Mas'udi are sufficiently similar to the published text (cf. *Murudi*, iii, 275 ff. = 483 ff. of the ed.) to prove the general identity. The published text has later additions; it refers often to Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas as a cousin of Mucawiya; it has an allusion to the expected South Arabian Mahdi (478, cf. also the verses quoted in Nashwan, *Shams al-'ulum*, GMS, xxiv, 103) and one to the Berber 'Alid (which may be a later, Fatimid-period addition, 323); and it mentions the Daylam and Turks (476).

The available data would seem to indicate that the use of the figure of Ibn Sharya as an historical narrator does not antedate the early 3rd/9th century, after the figure of the sage had become securely established. The author of the "Book of kings" may not have been a South Arabian patriot, but rather some Baghdad antiquarian who tried to profit from the fashionable interest in South Arabian antiquity. Whether the work contains many reflexions of genuine South Arabian folklore, as v. Kremer maintained, is another question, though great scepticism would seem to be indicated. (F. Rosenthal, "Ibn Sharya", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007. (2nd edition-online version)).

According to Norris:

Both Umayyad and Abbasid story-tellers could draw upon a fund of heroic themes. At an early date there were numerous legends of Muslim martyrs and warriors, but non-Muslim models were also provided by the flourishing Yemeni school of authors who gloried in the pre-Islamic past of the Himyarites; the material contained in such works as Wahb b. Munabbih's (d. 110/728 or 114/732) *Kitab al-Tijan* (in the recension of Ibn Hisham, d. 218/833) and al-Hamdani's (d. 334/945). *Iklil* is no less genuinely South Arabian in stamp for all its borrowings from the Alexander Romance and from Persian tales and epics. The portrait of a Yemeni hero borrowed from Alexander stories can already be seen in a poem attributed to the pre-Islamic poet Imru al-Qays:

Have I not told you that destiny slays by guile,
A slayer most treacherous indeed, it consumes men's sons.
It banished Dhu Riyash from lordly citadels.
When he had ruled the lowlands and the mountains.
He was a valiant king; by revelation he sundered the horizons.
He drove his vanguards to their eastern edges,

And, where the sun climbs, barred the hills to Gog and Magog.

(H.T. Norris, "Fables and Legends" in Julia Ashtiany, T.M. Johnstone, J.D. Latham, R.B. Serjeant and G. Rex Smith (editors) in "The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid Belles-Lettres", Cambridge University Press, 1990. pp. "138-139")

According to Crosby who has written an excellent book on the legends of Yemen:

"Islamic scholars have debated both the author and his work. Modern scholars question 'Abid's existence as well as the attribution of the Akhbar to him. Fritz Krenkow, in particular, the editor of *Tijan* and *Akhbar*, cast doubt on 'Abid's existence, his authorship of the work, and the historical validity of the material in *Akhbar*, which he dismissed as merely "*Arabic Folklore*".

(Elise W. Crosby, "The history, poetry, and genealogy of Yemen", Gorgias Press LLC, 2007. Page 1)

Crosby has done a detailed study on the oldest manuscripts of Al-Tijan and Akhbar 'Ubayd. There exists only three manuscripts (Hyderabad, London and Germany) and the oldest extant manuscript of Al-Tijan is copied from a manuscript of 1622-1625 A.D. and as mentioned (Elise W. Crosby, "The history, poetry, and genealogy of Yemen", Gorgias Press LLC, 2007. Pages 61-65). We should note that in the book al-Tijan and Akhbar 'Ubayd, the first Shi'i Imam is given the salutation ('May God be Pleased with him) when he is quoted. However history tells us that Mu'awiya had declared public cursing of the first Shi'i Imam in Friday sermons and after him, this was the case with Umayyads until the Umayyad caliph Aziz ibn Umar. This is one of the many reasons for the inconsistency of the book.

Thus we have these two books containing old Himyarite (Yemenese legend) which is attributed to Ibn Hisham (d. 833 A.D.) who collected its material from an alleged existing work of Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 728-732) and it contains much legendary information from a legendary 'Ubayd who supposedly was the story teller in Mu'awiya's court (d. 680). The Encyclopedia of Islam casts doubt on 'Ubayd's existence and if there was indeed an 'Ubayd in Mu'awiya's court, the dialogue with the Caliph as preserved in the Akhbar 'Ubayd are to be separated from any such historical figure. Islamic scholars such as Ibn Khaldun have already dismissed much of the historicity of the Yemenese legends specially with regards to the raid of Yemenese to Mosul, Azerbaijan, China, India and etc. Before we bring what Ibn Khaldun states, we should first mention some details about these Yemenese myths.

According to Kitab al-Tijan, the following were the lines of the Himyarite Kings (note we do not differentiate here between the two h and t sounds in Arabic when transliterating it into English):

Qahtan
Ya'rub b. Qahtan
Yashjub b. Ya'rub
'Abd Shams Saba' b. Yashjub
Himyar b. Saba'

Wa'il b. Himyar
 as-Saksak b. Wa'il
 Yu'fir b. as-Saksak
 Baran b. 'Awf b. Himyar (a usurper)
 Amir Dhu Rayish b. Baran b. 'Awf b. Himyar
 an-Nu'man al-Ma'afir b. Yu'fir b. as-Saksak
 Shaddad b. 'Ad b. Miltat (a descendant of Wa'il b. Himyar)
 Luqman b. 'Ad (brother of Shaddad)
 Dhu Shaddad al-Hammal b. 'Ad (brother of Shaddad)
 Dhu Marathid al-Harith b. al-Hammal ar-Raish
 As-Sa'ab Dhu al-Qarnayn b. al-Harith
 Abraha Dhu al-Manar as-Sa'ab
 Ifrqis Dhu al-Ashrar al-'Abd b. Abraha
 Dhu al-Idh'ar 'Amr b. Abraha (brother of Dh al-Ashrar)
 (at Ma'rib) Sharahbil b. 'Amr b. Ghalib (a descendant of Yu'fir b. Saksak)
 al-Hadhad b. Sharahbil
 Bilqis bint al-Hadhad (Note this is the Islamic/Hebrew Equivalent to Queen of Sheba who
 appears in the Prophet Solomon's court)
 Nashir an-Na'im Malik b. 'Amr b. Yu'fir (a descendant of Wa'il b. Himyar)
 Shammar Yar'ash b. Nashir an-Ni'am
 Sayfi b. Shammar Yar'ash
 (at Ma'arib) 'Amr b. 'Amir b. Muzayqiya'
 Rabi'a b. Nasr b. Malik
 (interregnum before and after Abu Karib)
 'As'ad Abu Karib ar-Raish b. 'Adi b. Sayfi
 Hassan b. As'ad Abu Karib
 'Amr b. As'ad Abu Karib (brother of Hassan)
 'Abd Kalil b. Yanuf
 Tubba' b. Hassan b. As'ad Abu Karib (the last Tubba')
 Rabia b. Marthad b. 'Abd Khalil
 Hassan 'Amr b. Tubba'
 Abraha b. as-Sabbah
 Lukhay'a b. Yanuf
 Dhu Nuwas Zur'a (the last king of Himyar)

Most of these Kings also occur in the Akhbar 'Ubayd.

Some of these Yemenese myths also occur in combination with other Semitic and Indo-Iranian myths in the books of Tabari, Miskawayah Dinavari and later historians.

Before bringing the relevant passages from the Akhbar which we believe the nationalistic writer is referencing, an overview of this book is in order. In Tabari and Miskawayah the Yemenese myth is joined with Iranian myth (and note Wahb was himself Persian) where Manuchehr the mythical Persian King defeats the mythical Turanian fiend Afrasiyab. While the original Turanians of Avesta have nothing to do with Altaic speakers, in the Islamic era and possibly late

Sassanid era, the term Turk and Turanian applied to any group from Central Asia. Thus by the time of Tabari and Ibn Hisham, these terms were used interchangeably.

Overall, the book of Al-Tijan and Akhbar trace back of Himyar from Dhu Nuwas Zur'a all the way back to Adam. We will go over some of the myths and the Kings associated with them in this book in order to give general feel for the reader. One of these Kings for example who allegedly made a raid into Azerbaijan is al-Harith b. al-Hammal ar-Raish. Who is the son of Dhu Shaddad as given in the table above.

According to the book al-Tijan and Akhbar, he was called Ar-Raish (Dhu Marathid al-Harith b. al-Hammal ar-Raish) because he made Yemen prosper through plunder he amassed (rasha) from his raids during his long rule. According to the book al-Tijan, which quotes the legendary 'Ubayd, he lived for 225 years. And o his rule was before King Solomon and Queen of Sheba. In Tabari, his rule is the same time as Manucehr and that of the Prophet Moses. With regards to his raids outside of Yemen, it is said that he first raided India and ordered his kinsmen Yu'fir b. 'Amr b. Sharahbil to remain behind and build a city. The city in India was named ar-Raish in the honor of ar-Raish. Ar-Raish also invaded Azarbayjan, Mosul and Anbar. In Azarybayjan, he met the Turks, defeated them and put them to flight (note this is the portion of the passage that the Turkish nationalist user is referencing). In Azarbayjan, after defeating the Turks, and taking their children captive, he celebrated his journey by inscribing in two rocks his exploits. According to Akhbar of 'Abid the rocks still exist during his own time.

Anyhow as the reader can see, all of these are in the realm of myth and legends. We will also bring Tabari and etc. later and try to find at least some historical roots with legend through the Iranian Scythians (which were confused with Turanians probably after much myth sizing of history).

Going back to al-Tijan, after Raish, his son As-Sa'ab Dhu al-Qarnayn b. al-Harith. He is identified with the Dhu al-Qarnayn of the Qur'an. However, most Muslims historians of the classical era have identified Dhu al-Qarnayn with Alexander the Great. Taking into account more detailed history, some modern Muslim historians have discounted the Alexander the Great connection and have opted for Cyrus the Great. Be that it may, the Dhu al-Qarnayn in al-Tijan conquers Ethiopia, Sudan, East and West and blocks the path of the Gog and Magog. A good portion of al-Tijan deals with the exploits of Dhu al-Qarnayn (which is before the Kingdom of Solomon in the books chronology).

After Dhu al-Qarnayn, the Kingdom if Himyar according to Akhbar and al-Tijan is ruled by Abraha Dhu al-Manar. Abaraha, who ruled for 180 years had a son name al-'Abd, whose mother was a *jinn* (almost equivalent to a daemon in Western culture but also can be friendly like the Genie bottle) called al-'Ayuf. The father and son together raided the West, while Ifriqis another son, remained in Yemen to rule. Abraha was also called Dhu al-Manar ("he of the lighthouses"), because he ordered lighthouses build and fires ignited in them to guide his armies from their raids. Al 'Abd was given the title "Dhu al-Idhar" because he brought terror and fear to the prisoners that were captured by his father. But it was Ifriqis who ruled Yemen and he ruled for 164 years. He colonized the Berbers of the West. After him Dhu al-Idhar rules for 25 years.

Later on in the story, al-Hadhad b. Sharahbil the father of Bilqis (the queen of Sheba and also mentioned in the Qura'n) takes over the throne. Many legends and stories with regards to Solomon and Bilqis (the Queen of Sheba) are described in the book.

Probably an interesting character in the Akhbar is the King Shamar Yar'ash who ruled for 160 years. He travelled to Iraq, China and Iran. According to the book he fought the Soghdians, destroyed their capital. Later on the local population build the city Shammar-Kand for him which is today called Samarqand(In reality, the name SamarKand means stone-fortress and Asmar/Samar is Old Iranian for stone and Kanth is Old Iranian for fortress/city). Of course the book contains many such legends with place names. While trying to conquer China, he was tricked, but 30000 of his troops go to Tibet and 'Ubayd mentions to Mua'wiya that their descendants are still there, and they dress like Arabs and acknowledge they are Arabs! In the Akhbar, he is involved in a fight with the legendary Iranian mythical King KayKavus (called Kay'Qaus). Kayqa'us is called the King of Babylon. Shammar fought him, defeated him and took him as prisoner according to the Akhbar. But his daughter Su'da pleads with his father (Shammar) to release him and Shammar releases him on condition that Babylon pays its annual tribute to Yemen.

Another King after him Shammar according to the Akhbar is Tubba' al-Aqran Dhu al-Qarnayn. The Akhbar identifies him as Dhul Qarnayn and he lived for 153 years because he did not reach the water of life. Another king after him was Tubba ar-Ra'id, who is the son of Dhu al-Qarnayn.

He wanted to settle a revolt among the Turks and Khazar, but they killed in his ambassador. He had no choice but revenge, and took over Mosul and Anbar, and then met the Turks and routed them out from Azerbaijan and pillaged their lands and took their children. With this regard, in the Akhbar, the tale goes that Muawiya asks what is the Turk and Azerbaijan and 'Ubayd responds those were their lands (under their control). Ubayd reports that that he himself participated in a raid in that region to ask the Persians about the events to have taken place under Ra'id. The pseudo-'Ubayd expresses the opinion that certainty on the matter can be gained only by asking about it. When it is a dimly remembered event of the past, the witnesses are dead, what really happens is no longer evident.

Ra'id comes back to Yemen and ruled for 163 years. Because of his victory over the Turks, the Persians and non-Arab kings feared him greatly. He received presents of silk, linen, porcelain, musk, and other products from China. He asked the Indian ambassador that if it is true all these products come from India and China and the Indian ambassador confirmed it to him. So Ra'id decides to take military expedition into China. His journey, takes him seven years and ten months and takes him through Khorasan. He finishes his plundering of China, and leaves a deputy there by the name of Barid b. an-Nabt. He does not leave a Persian or non-Arab land without leaving a garrison there. The troops he leaves in China still claim Arab origin and have a house which they circumambulate seven times and to which they bring sacrifices.

After Ra'id, several other Kings rule Yemen. One of them was Abu Karib who rules for 320 years. He combines astrological knowledge with experience in warfare. He would not undertake a raid without consulting astrologers. He wrote poems describing his journey and battles. He led raids to Persia, Syria, North Arabia. Into every land that was plundered by previous Himyarite

kings, he would go and plunder again. A number of poems describing the lands he conquered are said to be composed by him. He took expeditions to Iraq and found what he thought was a luxurious life. He prepared a march against the Persian King Qubadh. The Persians assembled at Babil while Abu Karib and his troops assembled near Kufa. Abu Karib got lost for a while and due to being lost, he found the city called Hira (popular etymology “lost”). He founded himself and his troop

and proceeded towards Babil and defeated the army of Qubadh (legendary Shahnameh character). They fled to Rayy (near modern Tehran), his nephew Shammar pursued the Persian King and killed the Qubadh in Rayy. Abu Karib returned to Hira after his victory. Abu Karib next went to Khorasan. Abu Karib wanted to convert the people of Himyar to Judaism, but they revolted and installed his son Hassan at his request. They killed Abu Karib but not before he gave some instructions to his son Hassan to go to a certain mountain. Hassan appointed his brother as caretaker and went to the mountain his father instructed him. A woman met him there and asked him to take a seat. He refused because of the worms he saw on his bed and pillow. She next presented him with several human heads and asked Hassan to eat them. He refused. She offered him a drink from a vessel filled with blood and he declined. The woman chastised Hassan for refusing to obey his father’s wishes that he do whatever is asked of him in the mountain. She told him if he wants to live, he should kill his father’s murderers and that his reign will be short. Hassan returns home and told his mother what happened. She tells him that his reign would have been long and easy if he had sat down on the worms; that Yemen and the Bedouins would have obeyed him if he had eaten the heads; and that he would have become able to spill blood of the people of the earth if he had drunk the vessel full of blood.

It is at this point that the manuscript of Akhbar breaks and excerpts from Ibn Athir’s al-Kamil (d. 1373) completes the story (thus probably dating the manuscript at most from 1373).

Thus as we can see both the Akhbar of ‘Ubayd and Kitab al-Tijan whose oldest manuscript is supposed to be based on a copy of a 1622 A.D. manuscript are seen as legendary works, and the figure of ‘Ubayd is highly suspect. The portion that the Turkish nationalist writer is referencing has to do with the mythical figure Rayish who lived before Solomon at the time of Moses (according to Tabari) and ruled for 225 years. The other portion has to do with Ra’ed who ruled for 163 years. Both of these encounter Turks and defeat them in Azerbaijan and route them out. However these stories unlike what the Turkish nationalist author wrote is not taking place during the time of Ummayyads (where there was actually a Khazar – Ummayyad war) but in the realm of myth. Both books are simply Himyarite legends. Obviously an Ummayyad caliph that ruled over an area would know where Azerbaijan are and the stories of ‘Ubayd in Akhbar are a legend. Also the fact is that in these mythical stories, the “Turks” are routed from Azerbaijan and are seen as conquered in some respect.

Let us cross reference these stories with Tabari. Tabari writes:

The Children of Israel

The sons of Isaac were lions when they gilded themselves with the sword belts of death, clothed in armor, And when they claimed descent they numbered al-Sibahbadh to be of them and

Chosroes, and they counted Hurmuzan and Caesar. Scripture and prophecy were among them, and they were kings of Istakhr and Tustar. There unites us and the noble ones, sons of Faris, a father after whom it matters not to us who comes later. Our forefather is the Friend of Allah, and Allah is our Lord.

We are pleased with what God has bestowed and has decreed.

...

I was informed by Hisham b. Muhammad: Between themselves Tuj and Sarm ruled the earth for three hundred years after they had slain their brother Iraj. Then Manushihr b. Iraj b. Afridhun ruled for one hundred and twenty years. Then a son of the son of Tuj the Turk pounced upon Manushihr, exiling him from the land of Iraq for twelve years. Manushihr, in turn, replaced him, exiled him from his land, and returned to his rule, reigning for an additional twenty-eight years. Manushihr was described as just and generous. He was the first who dug trenches and collected weapons of war, and the first who set up dihqans, imposing a dihqan over each village, making its inhabitants his chattels and slaves, clothing them in garments of submission, and ordering them to obey him.

It is said that Moses the Prophet appeared in the sixtieth year of his reign. It has been mentioned by someone other than Hisham that, when Manushihr became king, he was crowned with the royal crown, and he said on the day of his enthronement, "We will strengthen our fighting force and promise them to take vengeance for our forefathers and drive the enemy from our land."

Then he journeyed to the land of the Turks, seeking to avenge the blood of his grandfather Iraj b. Afridhun. He slew Tuj b. Afridhun and his brother Salm, achieving his revenge; then he left. He also mentioned Frasiyab b. Fashanj b. Rustam b. Turk (from whom the Turks claim descent) b. Shahrasb (or, as some say, the son of Arshasb) b. Tuj b. Afridhun the king, (Fashak is also called Fashanj b. Zashamin). [Frasiyab] did battle with Manushihr sixty years after the latter had slain Tuj and Salm, and [he] besieged him in Tabaristan. Then Manushihr and Frasiyab reached an agreement that they would set a boundary between their two kingdoms at the distance of an arrow shot by a man from among Manushihr's companions named Arishshibatir (but sometimes one shortens his name and calls him Irash): Wherever his arrow fell from the place where it was shot, adjacent to the land of the Turks, would be the boundary between them, which neither of them was to cross to the other side. Arishshibatir drew an arrow in his bow, then released it. He was given strength and power so that his shot reached from Tabaristan to the river of Balkh. Because the arrow fell there, the river of Balkh became the boundary between the Turks and the children of Tuj, and the children of Iraj and the region of the Persians. In this way, through Arishshibatir shot, wars were ended between Frasiyab and Manushihr.

They have mentioned that Manushihr derived mighty rivers from al-Sarat, the Tigris, and the river of Balkh. It is said that he was the one who dug the great Euphrates and commanded the people to plow and to cultivate the earth. He added archery to the art of warfare and gave leadership in archery to Arishshibatir, owing to the shooting he had performed.

They say that, after thirty-five years of Manushihr's reign had passed, the Turks seized some of his outlying districts. He reproached his people and said to them: *"O people! Not all those you have sired are people, for people are only truly people so long as they defend themselves and repel the enemy from them, but the Turks have seized a part of your outlying districts. That is only because you abandoned warfare against your enemy and you lacked concern. But God has granted us dominion as a test of whether we will be grateful, and He will increase us, or will disbelieve and He will punish us, though we belong to a family of renown, for the source of rule*

belongs to God. When tomorrow comes, be present!" They said they would and sought forgiveness.

He dismissed them, and when the next day came, he sent for those possessing royalty and the noblest commanders. He invited them and made the leaders of the people enter: he invited the Chief Magus, who was seated on a chair opposite his throne. Then Manushihr rose on his throne, with the nobles of the royal family and the noblest commanders rising to their feet. He said: "*Be seated! I stood up only to let you hear my words*". They sat down, and he continued:

O people! All creatures belong to the Creator; gratitude belongs to the One Who grants favors, as does submission to the Ail-Powerful. What exists is inescapable, for there is none weaker than a creature, whether he seeks or is sought; there is no one more powerful than a creator or anyone more powerful than He who has what He seeks [already] in His hand or one weaker than one who is in the hand of His seeker. Verily, contemplation is light, while forgetfulness is darkness, ignorance is misguidance. The first has come, and the last must join the first. Before us there came principles of which we are derivative— and what kind of continued existence can a derivative have after its purpose disappears?

Verily God has given us this dominion, and to Him belongs praise. We ask Him to inspire us with integrity, truth, and certainty. For the king has a claim on his subjects, and his subjects have a claim on him, whereas their obligation to the ruler is that they obey him, give him good counsel, and fight his enemy, the king's obligation to them is to provide them with their sustenance in its proper times, for they cannot rely on anything else, and that is their commerce. The king's obligation to his subjects is that he take care of them, treat them kindly, and not impose on them what they cannot do. If a calamity befalls them and diminishes their gains because a heavenly or earthly evil comes upon them, he should deduct from the land tax that which was diminished. If a calamity ruins them altogether, he should give them what they need to strengthen their rebuilding. Afterward, he may take from them to the extent that he does not harm them, for a year or two years.

The relationship of the army to the king is of the same status as the two wings of a bird, for they are the wings of the king. Whenever a feather is cut off from a wing, that is a blemish in it. Likewise in the case of the king, for he is equally dependent on his wings and feathers. Moreover, the king must possess three qualities: first, that he be truthful and not lie, that he be bountiful and not be miserly, and that he be in control of himself in anger, for he is given power with his hand outstretched and the land tax coming to him. He must not appropriate to himself what belongs to his troops and his subjects. He must be liberal in pardon, for there is no king more long-lasting than a king who pardons or one more doomed to perish than one who punishes. Moreover, a man who errs regarding pardon and pardons is better than one who errs in punishing. It is necessary that a king be cautious in a matter involving the killing of a person and his ruin. If a matter requiring punishment is brought to him regarding one of his officials, he must not show him favor. Let him bring him together with the complainant, and, if the claim of the wronged one is proved right against him, the sum is transferred from the official to him. But, if [the official] is unable to [pay], then the king should pay the sum for him and then return the official to his position, requiring that he make restitution for what he extorted. So much for my obligation to you. However, I will not pardon one who sheds blood wrongfully or cuts off a hand without right, unless the aggrieved one pardons. Therefore accept this from me [as my right]. The Turks have coveted you, so protect us and you will only protect yourselves. I have commanded arms and provisions for you. I am your partner in this matter, for I can only call myself king as long as I have obedience from you. Indeed, a king is a king only if he is obeyed.

For if he is contradicted, he is ruled and is not a ruler. Whenever we are informed of disobedience, we will not accept it from the informer until we have verified it. If the report is true, so be it; if not, we will treat the informer as a disobedient one. Is not the finest act in the face of misfortune the acceptance of patience and rejoicing in the comfort of certainty? Whoever is slain in battle with the enemy, I hope for him the attainment of God's pleasure. The best of things is the submission to God's command, a rejoicing in certainty, and satisfaction in His judgment. Where is sanctuary from what exists? One can only squirm in the hand of the seeker. This world is only a journey for its inhabitants; they cannot loosen the knots of the saddle except in the other [world], and their self-sufficiency is in borrowed things. How good is gratitude toward the Benefactor and submission to the One to Whom judgment belongs! Who owes submission more to One above him than he who has no refuge except in Him, or any reliance except on Him! So trust in victory if your determination is that succor is from God. Be confident of achieving the goal if your intent is sincere. Know that this dominion will not stand except through uprightness and good obedience, suppression of the enemy, blocking the frontiers, justice to the subjects, and just treatment of the oppressed. Your healing is within you; the remedy in which there is no illness is uprightness, commanding good and forbidding evil. For there is no power except in God. Look to the subjects, for they are your food and drink. Whenever you deal justly with them, they desire prosperity, which will increase your land-tax revenues and will be made evident in the growth of your wealth. But, if you wrong the subjects, they will abandon cultivation and leave most of the land idle. This will decrease your land-tax revenues, and it will be made evident in the decrease of your wealth. Pledge yourself to deal justly with your subjects. Whatever rivers or overflows there are, of which the cost [of repair] is the ruler's, hurry to take care of it before it increases. But whatever is owed by the subjects of which they are unable to take care, lend it to them from the treasury of the land taxes. When the times of their taxes come due, take it back with their produce tax to the extent that it will not harm them: a quarter [of it] each year, or a third, or a half, so that it will not cause them distress.

This is my speech and my command, O Chief Magus! Adhere to these words, and hold onto what you have heard this day. Have you heard, O people? They said, "Yes! You have spoken well, and we will act, God willing" Then he ordered the food, and it was placed before them. They ate and drank, then left, thankful to him. His rule lasted one hundred and twenty years.

Hisham b. al-Kalbi claimed—in what has been transmitted to me from him — that al-Ra³ish b. Qays b. Sayfi b. Saba b. Yashjub b. Ya^crub b. Joktan (Qahtan) was one of the kings of Yemen after Ya^crub b. Joktan b. Eber b. Shelah and his brothers, and that the reign of al-Ra'ish in Yemen was during the days of Manushihr. He was only called al-Raish, although his name was al-Harith b. Abi Sadad, because of the booty he had plundered from people he raided and had taken to Yemen,- therefore he was called al-Ra'ish. He raided India, slaying there, taking captives, and plundering wealth; then he returned to Yemen. He traveled from there and attacked the two mountains of Tayyi then al-Anbar, then Mosul. He sent out his cavalry from Mosul under the command of one of his companions, a man called Shimr b. al-Ataf. He fought against the Turks of the land of Adharbaijan, which was in their hand. He slew the fighters and took their children captive. He engraved on two stones, which are known in Adharbaijan, what had happened on his campaign.

Imru al-Qays said about this:

Did he not inform you that Time is a demon, traitor to a pact, gobbling up men? He caused the "feathered one" to cease his banquets, though he had already ruled plains and mountains, And he attached Dhu Manar to the claws and set snares for the strangles.

Dhu Manar, whom the poet mentioned, is Dhu Manar b. Radish, the king after his father, and his name was Abrahah b. al-Radish. He was called Dhu Manar only because he raided the lands of the west and penetrated them by land and by sea. He feared that his troops might lose their way on their return journey, so he built a lighthouse tower (*manar*) with which to guide them. The people of Yemen claimed that he sent his son, al-^cAbd b. Abrahah on his raid to the area of the most distant lands of the west, where he plundered and seized their wealth. He brought back to [his father] some *ndsnas*, which had wild and abominable faces. People were frightened of them and called him Dhu al-Adh^car (possessor of frightening things). He said further: Abrahah was one of their kings who penetrated deeply in the earth. I have mentioned the King of Yemen because I remembered the word of one who claimed al-Ra'ish was ruler in Yemen in the days of Manushir that the kings of Yemen were governors for the kings of Persia, which was their dominion before them.

(William M. Brinner, "The history of Al-Tabari: volume III: The Children of Israel", translated and annotated by William M. Brinner, (Editorial board: Ishan Abbas, C.E. Bosworth, Jacob Lassner, Franz Rosenthan, Ehsan Yarshater (general editor)). State University of New York Press, 1991. pp 22-29)

We bring the original Arabic of the last portion as well (accessible through various internet sites including www.alwaraq.net):

وقد زعم هشام بن الكلبي فدا حدثت عنه أن الرائش بن قيس بن صيفي ابن سبأ بن يشجب بن يعرب بن قحطان كان من ملوك اليمن بعد يعرب بن قحطان بن عابر بن شالخ وإخوته، وأن الرائش كان ملكه باليمن أيام ملك منوشهر، وأنه إنما سمي الرائش - واسمه الحارث بن أبي شدد - لغنيمة غنمها من قوم غزاهم فأدخلها اليمن، فسمي لذلك الرائش، وأنه غزا الهند فقتل بها وسبى وغنم الأموال، ورجع إلى اليمن ثم سار منها، فخرج على جبلي طيئ ثم على الأنبار، ثم على الموصل، وأنه وجه منها خيله وعليها رجل من أصحابه، يقال له: شمر بن العطاف، فدخل على الترك أرض أذربيجان وهي في أيديهم يومئذ، فقتل المقاتلة وسبى الذرية، وزبر ما كان من مسيره في حجرين، فهما معروفان ببلاد أذربيجان. قال: وفي ذلك يقول امرؤ القيس:
ألم يخبرك أن الدهر غول ... ختور العهد يلتقم الرجال
أزال عن المصانع ذا رياش ... وقد ملك السهولة والجبالا
وأنشبت في المخالب ذا منار ... وللزراد قد نصب الجبالا
قال: وذو منار الذي ذكره الشاعر هو ذو منار بن رائش، الملك بعد أبيه، واسمه أبرهة بن الرائش، وإنما سمي ذا منار لأنه غزا بلاد المغرب فوغل فيها برا وبحرا، وخاف على جيشه الضلال عند فقوله، فبنى المنار ليهتدوا بها. قال: ويزعم أهل اليمن أنه كان وجه ابنه العبد بن أبرهة في غزوته هذه إلى ناحية من أقاصي بلاد المغرب، فغنم وأصاب مالا وقدم عليه بنسنانس لهم خلق وحشية منكرة، فذعر الناس منهم، فسموه ذا الأذعار.
قال: فأبرهة أحد ملوكهم الذين توغلوا في الأرض؛ وإنما ذكرت من ذكرت من ملوك اليمن في هذا

الموضع لما ذكرت من قول من زعم أن الرائيش كان ملكا باليمن أيام منوشهر، وأن ملوك اليمن كانوا عمالا لملوك فارس بها، ومن قبلهم كانت ولايتهم بها.

In another portion of Tabari we read:

“The account of the Kings of Yaman in the Days of Qabus, and After him, the age of Bahman. B. Isfandiyar”

Abu Ja'far says: As reported previously, some assert that Qabus lived in the age of Solomon the son of David. We have also mentioned the kings of the Yaman in the age of Solomon, and the story of Bilqis, the daughter of Ilsharah.

According to Hisham b. Muhammad al-Kalbi: After Bilqis, kingship over the Yaman went to Yasir b. Amr b. Ya'fur who was called Yasir An'am. He was named Yasir An'am (the Gracious) because of the gifts he bestowed upon them, which strengthened their realm and their loyalty. The people of the Yaman assert that he conducted raids westward until he reached a dried out river bed (*wadi*) called Wadi al-Raml which had never been reached by anybody before him. Once there, he found no passage beyond it, so abundant was the sand (*rami*). However, while staying there, the sand opened up. He then ordered a man of his house, 'Amr by name, After him ruled a king {*tubba'*}, that is, Tiban As'ad, the father of Karib b. Malki Karib Tubba' b. Zayd b. Amr b. Tubba', that is, Dhu al-Adhar, the son of Abrahah Tubba' Dhi al-Manar b. al-Ra'ish b. Qays b. Sayfi b. Saba'. He was called al-Ra'id.

This king lived in the days of Bishtasb and Ardashir Bahman b. Isfandiyar b. Bishtasb. He emerged from the Yaman on the road taken by al-Ra'ish (and travelled) until he reached two mountains of the Tayyi'. He then marched toward al-Anbar, but when he reached al-Hirah—this was at night—he became confused [taHayyara) and stopped, and that place was named al-Hirah. He left some men there of the tribes of the Azd, Lakhm Judham, Amilah, and Quda'ah. They built it up and remained there. Later they were joined by people from the tribes of the Tayyi', Kalb, Sakkun, BalHarith b. Kacb and Iyad. The king advanced to al-Anbar, then to Mosul, and then to Adharbayjan, where he encountered the Turks. He put them to flight, slaying their fighting men and capturing the children. Following this, he returned to the Yaman where he spent many years; the kings held him in awe and respect, and they brought him gifts. A messenger of the king of India came to him with gifts and presents of silk, musk, aloe and other precious products of India. He saw things the like of which he had not seen before, and said, "My, is all that I see found in your country?" The messenger replied, "Bless you, some of what you see is available in our country; most of it is from China". The messenger then described China to the king: its vastness, fertility, and the extent of its borders. The king swore to conquer it. He set out at the head of the Himyar along the coast, until he reached al-Raka'ik and the wearers of black headgear. He sent one of his men—a man called Thabit—with a large force to China. However, Thabit was wounded; so the king (himself) proceeded until he entered China. He killed its defenders and plundered what he found there. They assert that his expedition to China, his stay there, and the return took seven years, and that he left in Tibet twelve thousand horsemen from Himyar. They are the people of Tibet, and assert nowadays that they are Arabs.

They are Arabs in constitution and pigmentation.. According to 'Abdallah b. Ahmad al-Marwazi—his father —Sulayman—Abdallah—Ishaq b. Yahya—Musa b. Talhah: A king [tubba'] set out with a few Arabs until they lost their way outside (what is now) Kufah. It became one of the stations where some infirm men remained. It was called Hirah because they had lost their way [taHayyur). The king proceeded on his way but later returned to them. In the meantime, they had built up the place as a permanent settlement. The king left for the Yaman but they stayed on, and among them were people from all the Arab tribes such as Banu Lihyān, Hudhayl, Tamim, Ju'fī, Tayyif, and Kalb.

(Moshe Perlmann (trans), The History of Al-Tabari. Vol IV. The Ancient Kingdoms. (Editorial board: Ishan Abbas, C.E. Bosworth, Jacob Lassner, Franz Rosenthan, Ehsan Yarshater (general editor)), State University of New York Press, Albany, 1989

Ba'lami also sees this myth during the era of Manuchehr and Afrasiyab (legendary Iranian mythical characters of the Shahnameh), the era before the Prophet Moses. Manuchehr and Afrasiyab make peace, however after the death of Afrasiyab, the Turks cross Jeyhun and occupy some Iranian lands.

The Persian Muslim historian Ahmad ibn Muhammad Ibn Miskawayh (d. 1030 A.D) also states in his Kitab Tajarib al-Umam (here we just bring the translation):

Manuchehr and Alrayish bin Qays

And in his [Manuchehr's] days, Alrayish bin Qays bin Sifi bin Yashjub bin Ya'rub bin Qahtān, who was a king from Yemen, started a military campaign. And the name of Alrayish was Alhaarith. He invaded India, and he collected great booty. He gave authority to a man of his circle, who was known as Shamar ben Alattaaf. Then he entered against the Turks from Azerbaijan, which was during that time in the hands of Turks, and he killed and enslaved and collected booty. And after him, DhuManaar ben Alrayish started a campaign. He was called DhuManaar (lit. "he of the Minaret") because he invaded the lands of the Maghreb(West) and he extended in it by land and sea, and he worried about his army from destruction after his return, so he built a Minaret (i.e. light-house) to guide them. Then he sent his son to the furthest parts of the Maghreb, where he collected booty and got some riches and enslaved some people with ugly distasteful looks -- that some people were horrified and called him DhuAlAthaar ("he of the horrors"). I only mentioned them here because of the connection with the mention of Manuchehr. The Persians claim that the kings of Yemen were subordinated to the kings of Persia, and that Alrayish was invading the Turks and others on the behalf of Manuchehr. And the Arabs deny this, and claim that their king was no subordinate to any one.

The coming of Moses in the era of Manuchehr

And in the era of Manuchehr, there appeared Moses (peace be upon him)...

(Ahmad ibn Muhammad Ibn Miskawayah, "Kitab Tajarib al-Umam", Baghdad, yuTlab min Maktabat al-Muthanna, 1965.)

Thus as we can see, these stories have no historical basis and are in the realm of myth making. Ibn Khaldun states with regards to Himyar myths: **All this information is remote from the truth. It is rooted in baseless and erroneous assumptions. It is more like fiction of story tellers.**

Before we mention the whole statement by Ibn Khaldun, since Tabari and Ibn Miskawayah mentioned the Turanians and Al-Tijan mentions that fictional 'Ubayd heard these stories from the Persians, we should mention something about the Turanians. One reason to do so is the fact that the Turanians were an Iranic group themselves and thus these Himyarite myths as well as the Avesta Turanians have nothing to do with Turks (Altaic) speakers.

Herodotus mentions Scythians attacking Media (Azerbaijan and Kurdistan and Tehran, Isfahan) before the Achaemenid era. And it is known that the Achaemenids also fought the Scythians. The Scythians are well known to be of Iranian origin:

“...of Indo-European stock belonging to...the Iranian group, often called the Scythian group of peoples...they were akin to the ancient Medes, Parthians and Persians. Their language was related to that of the Avesta...”

[Tadesuz Sulimirski, The Sarmatians, London: Thames & Hudson, 1970, p.22]

A people called Turanian are mentioned in Avesta and some scholars have claimed that the episodes between Turanians and Arya tribe in the Avesta parallel the battles of Scythians and Medes/Achaemenids. That is they have related the Turanians with the Scythians. Chief among these are the Ossetian scholar Vasily Abaev.

Professor C.E. Bosworth explains:

“In early Islamic times Persians tended to identify all the lands to the northeast of Khorasan and lying beyond the Oxus with the region of Turan, which in the Shahnama of Ferdowsi is regarded as the land allotted to Fereydun's son Tur. The denizens of Turan were held to include the Turks, in the first four centuries of Islam essentially those nomadizing beyond the Jaxartes, and behind them the Chinese (see Kowalski; Minorsky, “Turan”). Turan thus became both an ethnic and a geographical term, but always containing ambiguities and contradictions, arising from the fact that all through Islamic times the lands immediately beyond the Oxus and along its lower reaches were the homes not of Turks but of Iranian peoples, such as the Sogdians and Khwarezmians.” (Encyclopædia Iranica, "CENTRAL ASIA: The Islamic period up to the mongols", C. Edmund Bosworth)

Professor Edward A. Allworth, Emeritus Professor of Turco-Soviet Studies at Columbia University remarks: “The Iranian tribes (Massagetae and others) east and northeast of the

Persian empire, who disappeared without leaving a trace, were nomadic, as were originally most, if not all, of the Iranian people as well as those known as Soghdians, Khwarazmians, and Sakai. They were generally called, in the Persian national tradition, "Turan," as opposed to Iran, and were always considered enemies of the sedentary Persians. After the arrival of the Turks in those areas, the term Turan was ascribed by the Persians to them also, as the Turks played the same dangerous, often disastrous, historical role as had the Iranian nomadic tribes."

(Edward A Allworth, "*Central Asia: A Historical Overview*",Duke University Press, 1994. pp 86.)

Prof. Gherado Gnoli:"Iranian tribes that also keep on recurring in the Yasht, Airyas, Tuiryas, Sairimas, Sainus and Dahis". (G. Gnoli, Zoroaster's time and homeland, Naples 1980).

According to Prof. Mary Boyce, in the Farvardin Yasht "In it (verses 143-144) are praised the fravashis of righteous men and women not only among the Aryas (as the "Avestan" people called themselves), but also among the Turiyas, Sairimas, Sainus and Dahis; and the personal names, like those of the people, all seem Iranian character". (M. Boyce, History of Zoroastrianism. 3V. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991. (Handbuch Der Orientalistik/B. Spuler)).

And again according to Bosworth who quotes a Shahnameh scholar:

"Hence as Kowalski has pointed out, a Turkologist seeking for information in the Shahnama on the primitive culture of the Turks would definitely be disappointed."

(C.E. Bosworth, "Barbarian Incursions: The Coming of the Turks into the Islamic World." In Islamic Civilization, Edited by D. S. Richards. Oxford, 1973. pg 2)

The name Turk itself might be related to Turanian. However Altaic speaking Turks are distinct from the Avesta and Shahnameh (itself based on Avesta and Pahlavi myths) Turanians.

"It is possible that in Islamic times the Turks were really equated with a Tur people of an earlier age, since the designation 'Turk' is probably a plural Tur-k, with the word 'Tur' designating some totem among the Ur-Turks of Central Asia. Hence Turkic Tur-k would equal Iranian Tur-an, also plural. The history of the word 'Turan', Scanty though it is, however, must be investigated. Although the Tura in the Avestan Age were most probably Iranian, perhaps the memory of the struggles with aborigines played a part in the development of the epic. Later, of course, the Turks conveniently took the role of the great enemies of Iran. The extent of the influence of the Iranian epic is shown by the Turks who accepted it as their own history as well as that of Iran..."

(R.N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia: The pre-Islamic History of One of the World's Great Civilizations*, World Publishing Company, New York, 1963. Pg 40-41)

Thus Kashgari who mentions alp-Tongra and equates to the Avesta Afrasiyab is actually trying to equate Iranian myths with possibly those of Turks. However, scholars are clear that the Avesta/Shahnameh Turanians are not Turks (Altaic speakers) but Iranians:

The Shahnameh scholar Oglan M. Davidson also states:

The Turanians, the prime enemies of the Iranians in the *Shahnama*, are themselves paradoxically Iranians from the standpoint of Avesta. As the studies of Nyberg have shown the institutions represented as Turanians in the Avesta are thoroughly Iranian, but they are distinct in both form and content from the institutions represented as orthodox Iranians. Pictured in the Avesta as barbaric and predatory nomads, the Turanians seem to have idiosyncratic cult, especially of *vayu*, the wind-god warriors, and Anahita, the river-goddess of fertility.

(Olga M. Davidson, "The Crown-Bestower in the Iranian Book of Kings", Brill Archive, 1985. Pg 83).

Igor M. Diakonoff also connects the Turanians with Iranian Scythians. He states about the Avesta legends:

"Aryoshana was later conquered by a chief of the Tura nomad (Turanians, one of the Scythian-Sacae tribes, also Iranians, perhaps Khoresmians?), called Frangrasyan (12).

Note 12: In later legends he is called Afrasyab. The usage, widespread even in the twentieth century, of applying the demonization "Turanian" to Turkic-speaking people, is an older error" (Igor Mikhailovich Diakonov (translated by Alexandar Kirjanov), "Early antiquity", University of Chicago Press, 1991. Pg 383)

And as mentioned by Dr. Yarshater

The names of Turanian heroes leaves no doubt that the Turanians also were an Aryan people. In post-Avestan tradition they were thought to inhabit the region north of the Oxus, the river separating them from the Iranians. Their presence, and their incessant wars with the Iranians, help to define the latter as a distinct nation, proud of their land and ready to spill their blood in its defence.

The continuation of nomadic invasions on the north-eastern borders in historical time kept the memory of the Turanians alive. After the 6th century, when the Turks, who had been pushed westward by other tribes, became neighbors of Iran and invaded Iranian lands, they were identified with the Turanians. Hence the confusion of the two in Islamic sources, including *Shah-nama*, and the frequent reference to Afrasiyab as "king of Turks". Concern for the safety of the Iranian borders and the continuation of the kingdom finds eloquent expression in the national history and is unifying element in epic cycles.

(Ehsan Yarshater, "Iranian National History," in The Cambridge History of Iran 3(1)(1983), 408-409)

And all the Avesta Turanian names as well virtually all the Turanian Shahnameh names of Turanians have clear Iranian etymology. And a detailed etymology of the Iranic Turanian names have been given Professor Mayrhofer.(M. Mayrhofer, Die avestischen Namen,IPNB I/1(Vienna 1977))

Thus it is possible as Abaev has stated, that the Scythians and Massagatae and other East Iranian tribes are to be identified with the Avesta Turanians. Memories of the fight between Achaemenids/Medes vs the Scythians/Massagatae might have been mythicized as the form in these stories, if we are able to take anything from these legends.

But the Yemenese interjections into these myths are from the early centuries of Islam (probably from 9th century if not later) where rivalry between Iranians and Arabs was taking its height (Shuabbiyah) and various myths were intermixed in order to prove superiority of one group over the other (Shuabbiyah movement).

Here we bring the whole quote from Ibn Khaldun (original Arabic is readily available on the internet) who has already rejected any possibility of warriors from Yemens coming into Iranian lands such Azerbaijan or Soghd (note by the time of Ibn Khaldun Soghdians were almost extinct and here he makes a minor mistake since Altaic Turks had replaced Soghdians during his time):

The history of the Tubba's, the king of the Yemen and of the Arabian Peninsula, as it is generally transmitted, is another example of silly statements by historians. It is said that from their homes in the Yemen, the Tubba's used to raid Ifriqiyah and the Berbers of the Maghrib. Afriqus b. Qays b. Sayfi, one of their great early kings who lived in the time of Moses or somewhat earlier, is said to have raided Ifriqiyah. He caused a great slaughter among the Berbers. He gave them the name of Berbers when he heard their jargon and asked what that barbarah was. This gave them the name which has remained with them since that time. When he left Maghrib, he is said to have concentrated some Himyar tribes there. They remained there and mixed with the native population. Their descendants are the Sinajah and the Jutamah. This led al-Tabari, al-Mas'udi, and others to make the statement that the Sinajah and the Kutamah belong to the Himyar. The Berber genealogists do not admit this, and they are right. Al-Mas'udi also mentions that one of the Himyar kings after Afriqus, Dhu l-Adh'ar, who lived in the time of Solomon, raided the Maghrib and forced it into submission. Something similar is mentioned by al-Mas'udi concerning his son and successor, Yasir. He is said to have reached the Sand River in the Maghrib and to have been unable to find passage through it because of the great mass of sand. Therefore, he returned.

Likewise, it is said that the last Tubba', As'ad Abu Karib, who lived in the time of the Persian Kayyanid king Yastab, ruled Mosul and Azerbaijan. He is said to have met and routed the Turks and to have caused a great slaughter among them. Then he raided them again a second and a third time. After that, he is said to have sent three of his sons on raids, (one) against the country of Fars, one against the country of Soghdians, one of the Turkish nations of Transoxania, and one against the country of Rum (Byzantines). The first brother took possession of the country up to Samarkand and crossed the desert into China. There, he found his second brother who had raided the Soghdians and had arrived in China before him. The two together caused a great slaughter in China and returned together with their booty. They left some Himyar tribes in Tibet. They have been there down to this time. The third brother is said to have reached Constantinople. He laid siege to it and forced the country of the Rum into submission. Then, he found his second brother who raided the Soghdians and had arrived in China before him. The two together caused a great slaughter in China and returned together with their booty. They left some Himyar tribes in Tibet. They have been there down to this time. The third brother is said to have reached Constantinople. He laid siege to it and forced the country of the Rum into submission. Then, he returned.

All this information is remote from the truth. It is rooted in baseless and erroneous assumptions. It is more like fiction of story tellers. The realm of Tubba's was restricted to the Arabian peninsula. Their home and seat was San'a' in the Yemen. The Arabian Peninsula is surrounded by the ocean on three sides: the Indian Ocean on the south, the Persian Gulf jutting out of the Indian to Basrah on the east, and the Red Sea jutting out of the Indian Ocean to Suez in Egypt on the west. This can be seen on the map. There is no way from the Yemen to the Maghrib except via Suez. The distance between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean is two days' journey or less. It is unlikely that the distance could be traversed by a great ruler with a large army unless he controlled that region. This, as a rule, is impossible. In the region there were the Amalekites and Canaan in Syria, and, in Egypt, the Copts. Later on, the Amalekites took position of Egypt, and the Israelites of Syria. There is, however, no report that the Tubba's ever fought against one of these nations or they had possession of any part the region. Furthermore, the distance from the Yemen to the Maghrib is great, and an army requires much food and doffer. Soldiers travelling in regions other than their own have to requisition grain and livestock and to plunder the countries they pass through. As a rule, such a procedure does not yield enough food and fodder. On the other hand, if they attempted to take along enough provisions from their own region, they would not have enough animals for transportation. So, their whole line of march necessarily takes them through regions they must take possession of and force into submission in order to obtain provisions from them. Again, it would be most unlikely and impossible assumption that such an army could pass through all those nations without disturbing them, obtain its provisions by peaceful negotiations. This shows that all such information is silly or fictitious.

Mention of the allegedly impassable Sand River has never been heard in the Maghrib, although the Maghrib has often been crossed and its roads have been explored by travelers and raiders at all times and in every direction. Because of the unusual character of the story, there is much eagerness to pass it on.

With regard to the supposed raid of the Tubba's against the countries of the East and the land of the Turks, it must be admitted that the line of march in this case is wider than the (narrow) passage at Suez. The distance, however, is greater, and the Persian and Byzantine nations are interposed on the way to the Turks. There is no report that the Tubba's ever took possession of the countries of the Persians and Byzantines. They merely fought the Persians on the border of the 'Iraq and of the Arab countries between al-Bahrayn (Bahrain) and al-Hirah, which were border regions common to both nations. It would, however, ordinarily have been impossible for the Tubba's to traverse the land of the Persians on their way to raid the countries of the Turks and Tibets, because of the nations that are interposed on the way to the Turks, because of the need for food and fodder, as well as the great distance mentioned before. All information to this effect is silly and fictitious. Even if the way this information is transmitted were sound, the points mentioned would cast suspicion upon it. All the more then must the information be suspect since the manner in which it has been transmitted is not sound. In connection with Yathrib (Medina) and the Aws and Khazraj, Ibn Ishaq says the last Tubba' travelled eastward to the 'Iraq and Persia, but a raid by the Tubba's against the countries of the Turks and Tibet is in no way confirmed by the established facts. Assertion to this effect should not be trusted; all such information should be investigated and checked with sound norms. The results will be that it will be most beautifully be demolished.

(Ibn Khaldun, "The Muqaddimah an introduction to History", Translated by Franz Rosenthan; Edited by N.J. Dawood. Princeton University Press, 1989.)

So to conclude. We have two books in three manuscript, the oldest being a copy of a 1622 A.D. manuscript called the Akhbar 'Ubayd and Kitab al-Tijan. They talk about mythical Yemenese Kings battling China, Persia, Iran, Turks and etc. One of the books called Akhbar 'Ubayd has a fictional dialogue between Mua'wiyah and 'Ubayd about Yemenese Kings who ruled for 225 years named Ra'esh. Ra'esh does battle against Turks in Azerbaijan and defeats them and 'Ubayd in the story states that he heard it from the Persians. The characters Ra'esh lived before the Prophet Solomon and that of Ra'ed during the time of Qobad (in Tabari during the time around Bahman Ibn Esfandiyar both Qobad and Bahman the son of Isfandiyar being mythical characters). Scholars today agree that both these books Akhbar 'Ubayd and Kitab al-Tijan are myths and we know at the time of Solomon for example, there was no Altaic speakers in the area. Looking at Persian sources (which the fictional 'Ubayd of Akhbar 'Ubayd said he heard from), the events of Ra'esh and Ra'ed occur during the time of pre-historic/mythical Shahnameh characters. They are connected to the Turanians, who if historical, are to be identified with the Iranian Scythians. As shown, there was never any Yemenese warriors in NW Iran fighting Turks and all these stories are fictional as noted by Iban Khaldun. The actual history of the region goes from Iranian Medes, to Achaemenids, Seleucids, Parthians and Sassanids. Then the area becomes part of the caliphate (with occasional intrusions by Khazars which did not have any significant impact). One the area was stable, it comes under various Arab and Iranic dynasties such as the Caliphate, Sajids, Shaddadids, Shirwanshahs and etc. It is only with the Seljuq era that Altaic Turks start settling the area in a noticeable number, however the real influx of Turks occurs during the Mongol invasion where either large number of Turks were pushed in the area by fleeing the Mongols or became part of the Mongol army whose bulk was Turkic. By the mid Safavid era, it appears that most of the area was Turkified.

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