



NEZĀMI QUNAVI

NEZĀMI QUNAVI (Nezāmi of Konya), also known as Nezāmi Qaramāni (d. 1469-73?), poet in Persian, Arabic, and Turkish. We have very little information on his life. He was born in the time of the Qaramanid dynasty, probably between 1435 and 1440, the son of Mollā Wali-al-Din, a well-known preacher and master of a religious order in Konya. After his basic schooling, his father sent him to Persia to further his education. There, he improved his Persian as well as his knowledge of poetry and literature. After completing his studies, he returned to Konya. Soon after, the Ottoman Sultan Meḥmet [Moḥammad] II (r. 1451-81) conquered the Qaramanid domain and put an end to the dynasty (1468-74). During this time of political instability, Nezāmi made the acquaintance of Maḥmud Pasha (d. 1474), the poet and grand vizier of Sultan Meḥmet II. Maḥmud Pasha praised Nezāmi's skill as a poet to Sultan Meḥmet II, and the sultan, who himself had a strong interest in poetry and literature, invited him to his capital, Istanbul. Nezāmi left for the capital, but died on the way, though he was still young. Neither the exact date of his death nor his burial site is known. According to a common rumor reported by 'Āšeḡ Čelebi, his death was caused by a curse placed on him by a shaikh whose son had been satirized by Nezāmi (Gibb, II, p. 372).

The only work of Nezāmi's that has survived to the present day is his *divān* of poetry. This has been published in a variorum edition by Halûk İpekten, who also gives a critical presentation of six manuscripts (Süleymaniye Library, Hacı Mahmud Efendi, nos. 3298 and 3579; Millet Library, Ali Emirî, Manzum Eserler, no. 451; Âtîf Efendi Library, no. 2054; İstanbul Üniversitesi Library,



no. TY 9854; Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Library, Hazine, no. 924). Another old manuscript of Neẓāmi's *divān* is held at Dār al-kotob in Cairo (no. 186 m., fols. 1-50, date 933/1526-27; see. ẘerāzi, I, p. 191; Monzawī, III, p. 2577).

Neẓāmi was well versed in both Persian and Arabic besides Turkish, which was his native language, and wrote poetry in all three. His *divān* contains sixteen *ġazals* and a good number of quatrains (*robā'i*) in Persian, some couplets in Arabic, as well as his Turkish poems (İpekten, pp. 259-75). Neẓāmi has been described as a mediocre poet of Turkish (İpekten, p. 69), although his *ġazals* are greatly appreciated and widely read. He has been praised by the authors of biographical dictionaries (*taḍkera*), among whom Laṭifi considered his *ġazals* "superior not only to those of any of his predecessors, but to the works of his famous contemporary Ahmed Pasha" (apud Gibb, II, p. 371). Neẓāmi's profound understanding of Persian literature is shown by the fact that almost all the historical and legendary aspects of his own work come from Persian sources, and his verses reflect the strong influence of the Persian poet Hafez.

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