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NIMĀ YUŠIJ III. THE ṬABARI POEMS

Alongside his groundbreaking status in modern Persian poetry, Nimā Yušij was also a trendsetter in composing poems in Māzandarāni, his mother tongue, also known by its historical name, Ṭabari. His Ṭabari opus, known as *Rujā*, amounts to 456 quatrains (*do-bayti*, q.v.), constituting more than a quarter of his *divān* (q.v.) or collected poems (Nimā, *Majmuʿa*, ed. Ṭāhbāz, 1991, pp. 611-840). Contrary to his formal innovations in composing Persian poems, Nimā remains loyal in his Ṭabari verses to the traditional prosodic conventions of Caspian songs, particularly to the genre of Amiri, that is, *do-bayti*s consisting of four hemistiches (Borjian and Borjian, 2008). As to the content, Nimā incorporates both traditional and innovative themes in his Ṭabari poems. The praise of Caspian history and culture as found in *Rujā* is absent in Nimā's Persian verse, hence depicting parts of his outlook that are largely unknown to the Persian reader.

Editions of 'Ruj ā'. Nimā's Ṭabari poems were collected and published posthumously under the title *Rujā* (Morning Star, especially Venus, sometimes Sirius), which was also the name of Nimā's favorite cow. The first edition of *Rujā*, edited by ʿAli-Pāšā Nuri Esfandiāri and Esfandiār Esfandiāri, appeared as a supplement to the 1991 edition of Nimā's collected poems, wanting both in orthography and Persian glossing. Majid Asadi, who had been provided access to the manuscripts, penned a new edition that was first incorporated into a collection of Nimā's poems (1994), and published subsequently as a separate

volume, *Rujā*, in 2001. A year later, Moḥammad ʿAẓimi published still another edition of *Rujā.* More recently, ʿĀdel Jahānārāy (2018) has identified some of the inaccuracies of the past translations. While the editions provide some futile literary and philosophical interpretations of the poems, they often overlook the regional variability of the dialect of Yuš from their own Māzandarāni vernaculars. Unfortunately, no samples of the original manuscripts are accessible to ascertain whether Nimā had used any diacritical marks to vocalize the text. The fate of the manuscripts of *Rujā*, scribbled down on pieces of paper and never assembled by the poet himself, remains unclear after the demise of their proprietor Sirus Ṭāhbāz. In addition to the poems published in *Rujā*, there are two *do–baytis* that Ṭāhbāz had documented from the villagers in Yuš (Ṭāhbāz, 1963, pp. 98-99). A critical edition of *Rujā* would require a more methodical orthography or transcription, a systematic translation, and a comprehensive glossary.

Language. Nimā's Ṭabari repertoire is in his native dialect, the vernacular of the village of Yuš, known to its speakers as *yušij* (Borjian, 2013a, p. 127). The vocabulary and grammar of Yušij are somewhat different from those of Ṭabari proper, that is, a group of dialects spoken in the great plains of Māzandarān, notably in the major urban centers of Āmol, Bābol, Šāhi, and Sāri, as well as their upland dependencies. The dialect variety has been a continual dilemma in editing and translating *Rujā* by translators who appear to treat Ṭabari as a uniform language in use throughout Māzandarān.

Another obstacle in appreciating Nimā's Ṭabari verse is the incorporation of idioms and figures of speech specific to western Māzandarān, as well as Nimā's personal poetic taste in creating distinctive images and motifs, and the multitude of the herdsman's terminology that have fallen out of use through fundamental socio-economic transformations. What is more, a myriad of local toponyms such as peaks, ridges, spurs, cols, slopes, valleys, springs, bushlands, thickets, groves, pastures, and farms add to the challenges of *Rujā*. Clarification of these linguistic intricacies requires extensive language documentation in Yuš, its host valley Uz in the district of Nur, and the neighboring district of Kojur (q.v.; Borjian, 2013b).

Last, but not least, of the linguistic features of Nimā's Ṭabari verse is his deliberate use of archaic Ṭabari words: "If they [i.e., my fellow countrymen] have mixed their language [with Persian], so do I; but I crave for those words that are on the verge of obsolescence by my tribe" (Nimā, *Majmuʿa*, 1991, p. 614). A marked example of archaism is the medieval Ṭabari word *ruj* for

contemporary *ruz* ‘day’ (Borjian, 2009, p. 127; idem, 2013a, p. 150). An odd word found in his verse is □□□ ‘wages, reward’ (“Rujā,” 1994, no. 123; cf. “Rujā,” 1991, p. 649), which is, on the grounds of historical phonology, outlandish to Caspian languages, as they generally lack the sound /ž/ as a phoneme.

Nimā’s linguistic manipulation leads to intricate images and motifs, as it happens in his Persian verse. At the same time, Nimā offers some of the most expressive verses ever written in Ṭabari, marking his stylistic distinctiveness.

In Search of a Caspian Heritage. Nimā began his Ṭabari endeavor apparently as early as the 1920s, synchronous with his composing in Persian. The long literary tradition of the Caspian littoral was clearly a source of inspiration for him. The extent of Ṭabari literature was then little known in Iran, and few manuscripts had been identified, much less published. In his career as an educator in the Caspian provinces during 1928-33, Nimā took an interest in identifying and procuring manuscripts of medieval Ṭabari literature (Moḥammad ʿAẓimi, 2006). From Nimā’s numerous letters of his youth we learn about his venture for lyrical stories of Najmā and Ṭālebā, and the dialectal works of poets Ḥabib Bondār, Reżā Ḵordād, Reżwān Āmoli, Bayżā Navāʾi, ʿAjib Bārforuši, among others (*Nāmahā*, 1989, pp. 294-95, 371, 378-79, 383-84, 406), most of whom remain obscure to this date. Most persistently Nimā requested a copy of the *divān* of Amir Pāzvāri (q.v.) published by Bernhard Dorn (q.v.) in Saint Petersburg in 1866, from his brother Lādbon, who had taken refuge in the Soviet Union (*Nāmahā*, 1989, pp. 402, 427). In letters to Saʿid Nafisi and Parviz Khanlari (qq.v.), written in 1928-29, Nimā expresses his motivation to compile a volume on the native literature of the Caspian provinces, in his own words *tāriḵ-e adabiyāt-e welāyati*, and attempted to write a grammar of Māzandarāni (*Nāmahā*, 1989, pp. 267, 270, 279, 427). Notwithstanding these ambitions, all Nimā left behind on the native literature of Māzandarān is his own dialectal poems. Synchronous with Nimā, the Gilaki educator and publicist Ebrāhim Faḵrāʾi (q.v.) published during 1925-28 several pieces in Gilaki and wrote a paper on Ṭabari literature (*Forug* 1/9-10, 1928). See also Naficy, pp. 83 ff.; Borjian and Borjian, 2022).

The mere attention to a provincial language, although not entirely unprecedented in Iran, could have been inspired by the contemporaneous Soviet policies in favor of minor languages. In the neighboring Caucasus in particular, dozens of lesser languages had been awarded, since the mid-1920s, official and literary statuses. Nimā’s brother and brother-in-law who lived in

the Tiflis (see Ṣaʾleḥi) could have been sources of his information. The family's Caucasus contact could be related to the Georgian pedigree of his mother. (For an autobiographical account presented at the first Iranian Writers' Congress in 1946 see *Noḵostin kongra-ye nevisandagān-e Irān*, pp. 62-65; see also Āryanpur, 1995, II, p. 466-68).

Nimā refers to his native language by various names. In his letters and diaries, he normally refers to the vernacular as *dehāti* (rural) and *velāyati* (provincial). In his verse, however, he prefers the term *ṭabari* ("Rujā," 1991, pp. 624, 687). He also used the terms Tāt (see below) and Tāti. In a memo titled *Mi əttâ gap* ("a word of mine"; dated Bahman 1318/January 1940), published posthumously as a foreword to *Rujā*, Nimā expresses his wish to preserve his ancestral language and introduces himself as *sə̄ʿer-e tāti-zabān* "the poet of the Tāti language" (Nimā, *Majmuʿa*, 1991, p. 613). "Tati" is rather an odd name for the Māzandarāni dialects spoken in Yuš and surrounding villages; the inhabitants of Nur as the rest of Māzandarān call their language *gelak*, which means "Caspian" in the general sense (Borjian, 2018). "Tati" on the other hand is used in the neighboring Ṭāleqān as well as for the vestiges of the Northwestern Iranian languages in the otherwise Turkish-speaking areas of Qazvin, Zanjān, and Azerbaijan. There were also the Iranian speaking Tat people in the eastern Caucasus whose vernacular had granted literary status in the Soviet Union. Subsequently, Nimā probably used the term Tati rather casually as a token of prestige and as an emphasis that the language is non-Turkic.

Themes in Rujā. As none of Nimā's Ṭabari quatrains are dated, it is impossible to establish a chronology for their thematic development. It makes sense, however, to assume that Nimā began by simply emulating traditional Caspian themes in a simple and lucid style and gradually moved into more idiosyncratic ideas along the same evolutionary line he travelled in his Persian poems. His role model in his early lyric experimentations must have been the legendary lover-poet Amir Pāzvāri, to whom Nimā contrasts himself a number of times, for instance, *Amir gono Guhar me yâr hasto, // Nimâ gono nâmard ti xâr hasto…* "Amir says, Gowhar is my beloved // Nimā says, the dastard is your prickle" (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 822).

Nimā's poems are adorned with the adoration of young women and the aesthetics of rural life, coupled with nostalgia for the vanishing traditional life along with native stories and fables and age-old customs. In the following quatrain, the poet alludes to the Ṭabari festival of Tirəmâ Sizzə (the 13th day

of the month of Tir; Tiragān), portraying himself as a young man who participates in the ceremonies by playing dumb while visiting with a group of friends from house to house and gently stroking the residents with a stick until they offer something:

> Tirəm â Sizzə biə o m ən ču bairom,
> l â l az zəbun, ši češo xu nairom;
> biəm o kij ā ye var o tu bairom,
> dasm â l h â dem o həro-bəro bairom.
> (Nimā, Rujā, 2002, no. 207)

> The festival of Tiragān will come; I should grab a stick,
> Having become dumb, I shouldn't get sleepy;
> I'll approach the girl and I begin swinging,
> I'll give a handkerchief and receive kickshaw.

Pastoralism has a strong presence in Nimā's poetry, and domestic animals, particularly cattle, horses, and the rooster, play significant roles in Nimā's poetic style. Many poems begin with *təlâ xunno* "the rooster sings"(Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, pp. 635, 652, 670, 696, 698, 703, 731, 744, 795, 808, 835, 839), with reflexes in his Persian verses: "Ḵorus miḵᵛānad" (Nimā, *Majmuʿa*, ed. Ṭāhbāz, 1991, p. 420 [composed in 1946]; cf. "Ḵorus-e sāda" and "Ḵorus o Buqalamun," pp. 146, 153 [composed in 1929]). (Whatever symbolism the rooster may convey, it is irrelevant to build an argument on the etymology of Persian *ḵorus* [cf. Sarshar, 2004, p. 125], as the Ṭabari word *təlâ* 'rooster' is of an entirely different root.)

A group of the quatrains are obituaries eulogizing of his fellow countrymen, e.g., *nui Hešmat, nui sâlâr bamərdə* … 'Hešmat of [the district of] Nur, the chief of Nur, died' (Ṭāhbāz, 1963, p. 99). This theme in Nimā's verse is expressed in an epical rather than mystical mood, as mysticism had remained largely alien to the Caspian literature (Borjian, 2009, pp. 55-56).

A tendency toward abstraction attests to a maturation process in Nimā's poetic thoughts. Here is what he says about the morning star, echoing the refashioned imagery also found in his Persian poetic style:

> Rujâ ətt â basuto xân ə mún-ə,
> un-dam ke vəšəno, v ə rújə nešun-ə;
> əyâr nəyâr, áre, me del xun-ə,

šúe miun me r ã he rahnəmun-ə.
(Nimā, Rujā, 2002, no. 371)

The Morning Star is the one whose habitat is burned,
When glittering, it is the sign of day;
Overt or covert, oh yes, I am deeply afflicted,
In the midst of the night, it is my roadmap.

A theme outlandish to the traditional Ṭabari setting is egalitarianism, but we find a few quatrains in *Rujā* alluding to social class, which may belong to Nimā's left-leaning political period of 1941-53. An example is

mən kačəváre sárx ə jumə tali-mo
mən gəd â yúne xəráše čašni-mo
fásle vahârun bolbolúne kəli -mo
fásle z ə m ə sun taš-e sar-e tali -mo
(Ṭāhbāz, 1963, p. 99; cf. Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 745)

I am the red-shirt thorn of the foothills
I am the relish of the food of the poor
Springtime I am the nightingale's nest
Wintertime I am the fire blaze)

Ṭabari roots. The geographical domain in Nimā's entire life was limited to the Caspian provinces and Tehran. An extolled portrayal of the countryside and landscape of central Alborz, its nature and people, mode of life and culture, is a norm in Nimā's Persian and Ṭabari poems. His passion seems to have boosted during his gloomy years in Tehran (Taḥbāz, 1996b), which he called "the city of the dead" (*Nāmahā*, 1984, p. 140; see Also Naficy, p. 38) and his subsequent stay in the rapidly developing Caspian towns of Bārforuš, Rašt and Lāhijān. In his own words: "I consider my home country Iran (Māzandarān and Nur and Kojur), the best of the places on earth (Nimā, *Yāddāsthā*, 2009, p. 280)

One can also discern, in some of the quatrains, a sense of pride in the history of the Caspian provinces, the homeland of *gelak*s, vis-à-vis *araâqi*s, i.e., the inhabitants of ʿErāq-e ʿAjam(i) (q.v.), across the Alborz range. Holding his people's lineage in high regards, he goes as far as challenging Iranian mythology by proposing a new interpretation of the term *div*, or demon, associated with the mythical lands of Māzandarān in the epics. Nimā believes

that Māzandarāni *div*s were the ancestors of his people: *espíde dev gəni ke və ti jad vu* (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, 812; idem, *Rujā*, 2002, no. 401) "the White Demon, you may say, that he was your forefather." He also maintains that the *div*s were not literary demons but humans, who decided to retain their ancient practice of worshipping the sun rather than accepting the drastic religion reforms introduced by Zoroaster; consequently, the *div*s were scorned by the magi: *Moḡi doru-doru bə dev dino* (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 798; cf. idem, *Rujā*, 2002, no. 374) "the magi tell lies about the div." In the following quatrain both Rostam and Zoroaster are disdained for their antagonism towards the *div*(s).

> Mâzərúne dev əttâ gát ə num hasso;
> Rostam bə-hilə déve dássə davəsso;
> déve xunədun âftâb-parəss-o,
> Zarətoš bə-kinə bad bə və davəsso.
> (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 707)

> The Div of Māzandarān is a great name;
> Rostam tied him up only by trickery;
> The Div's kinfolk are sun worshippers,
> Zoroaster, out of rancor, rendered him evil.

The key to understanding Nimā's intention is as follows. These verses allude to two traditions and sources. The first is the *Šāh-nāma* story of Rostam and the White Demon (*Div-e Sepid*), according to which the arch-hero of Irān goes through a long journey of seven stages in the mythical land of Māzandarān to save his patron Key Kāvus from the *div*s. In the last sequence, Rostam slays the White Demon before setting the king free.

The second notion in the poem is premised on the hypothesis that Zoroaster transformed the inherited Aryan rituals into a monotheistic one by placing Ahura Mazda above all deities and expelling the *daēwa*s (*div*s) from the pantheon. In this regard, Nimā should have been influenced by contemporary Orientalism on Indo-Iranian mythology.

The following quatrain seemingly alludes to the *Shāh-nāma* story of the *div* Ulād, who collaborated with Rostam in his fifth stage and was rewarded in return the throne of Māzandarān (for a different interpretation, see Naficy, p. 85). The reference to the Mount Ararat in the second verse is difficult to make out; it may reflect Nimā's attention to the Caucasus (see above) or it simply makes up the rhyme pattern of the poem.

dev dârmi ku v ə badnúm e S ə vât-o
Rostám e var burdo bâ v ə b á sâto
dev dârmi ku bâyto v ə Arârât-o
in rišéy e dev-o, tabâr e Tât-o
(Nimā, Rujā, 2002)

We have a div who is the infamous of Savād [Kuh] (or, is the infamous [named] Savāt)
The one who went to Rostam and colluded with him
[But] we have a div who conquered Ararat
This is the root of the [real] div, the forebear of the Tats.

Why would Nimā Yushij admire the *div*s of Māzandarān? There is ample onomastic evidence supporting the survival of a positive sense for *div* (< **daiva-*; see DAIVA) in the Caspian region. Under Safavid Shah Ṭahmāsp I and his successors, a clan referred to as Jamāʿat-e Divān (Mir Teymur, p. 199) or Ṭabaqa-ye Divān (Eskandar Beg, p. 210) held administrative positions in Māzandarān, of which these personal names are mentioned: Div-e Savādkuhi, Mirak-e Div and his son Šams-al-Din-e Div, the brothers Lohrāsb-e Div and Šams-al-Din-e Div, Āqā Mir-e Div, Alvand-e Div, Jamāl-al-Din-e Div, Ḥosayn-e Div, Solaymān-e Div, Sohrāb-e Div, Moḥammad-e Div, Beygom-e Div, Div Solṭān (Mir Teymur, pp. 15 ff., 112 ff., 168 ff.; Eskandar Beg, p. 312; Ḵvoršāh, p. 227; Qomi, II, pp. 690-702; cf. Soudavar, p. 246). The contemporary surname Divsālār in Nur and Čālus (Nimā, *Yāddāštha*, 2009, p. 134; Sotuda 1976; Sotuda and Moʾmeni 2007, nos. 6640-41) belong to a clan who is believed to be offspring of the two brothers whom Shah ʿAbbās exiled from Savādkuh to Kojur (Yusofiniā et al., p. 162). As to toponymy, one finds an array of names, including Div Kalā, Divband Kalā, Div Dašt, Dig Čāl, Div Delā, Div Kuti, Div Leylam, Divā, Div Šal, in Māzandarān and Gilān (for specific locations, see Borjian, 2020).

The only other evidence about a favorable view of the *div*s among the Iranian peoples is identified in Transoxiana. The *div*s maintained themselves as divinities in a remote part of Sogdiana, as attested by the name of the ruler Dēwāštīč (q.v.), which conveys the sense “devilish’”superficially but “heavenly” actually. From the nearby district of Ostrušana rose prince Abu’l-Sāj Divdād b. Divdast (see BANU SAJ), who served as a general in the caliph’s army towards the end of the 9th century (Henning; cf. Dīw and Dīwdāδ in Justi, p. 87).

The mythological interpretations of Nimā Yušij remained unknown for decades, owing to the belated publication of his Ṭabari poems, but they are reverberated in more recent Caspian literature (Borjian, 2013b).

Revitalizing Ṭabari proper names. Nimā further advocates a sense of heroism that remarkably reverberates the Ṭabari literature of earlier centuries (Borjian, 2009, pp. 56-58) by appealing to the medieval rulers of Ṭabarestān (particularly those of the western district of Ruyān or Rostamdār; see KOJUR) as his ancestors. Accordingly, he pays tribute to Bahman-e Šahriār (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 678), Kiumarṯ (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 656) and his son Kiā Bālušā (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 619), Šerāgim (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 658), Zarrin Ketār (Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 819; idem, *Rujā*, 2002, no. 413; for origins, see Borjian, 2009, p. 72), and, above all, his own namesake Nimāvar in the following piece:

> Nimâ-mə mən. me num—núme Nimâvar.
> górde gordun, tahamtan o delâvar.
> š íre širun, Rostamdărə sarvar.
> v ə́ ne rikâ, atti ku man numâvar?"
> (cf. "Rujā," 1991, p. 665; 1994, no. 145; Rujā, 2002, p. 50; Jahānārāy, p. 46)

> I am Nimā. My name—the namesake of Nimāvar.
> The hero of heroes, unbeatable, valiant.
> The lion of lions, the chief of Rostamdār.
> [Among] its sons (Rostamdār's sons or Nimāvar's sons), where is another celebrity like me?)

The personal name Nimāvar corresponds to the orthography □□□□□ (pronounced Nemāvar or Namāvar) in sources, that is, the name or epithet of more than one of the *ostandār*s or *espahbed*s of Ruyān/Rostamdār (see Ghereghlou for the family tree), notably that of Faḵr-al-Dawla Nāmāvar b. Bisotun (d. 640/1242), the Bāduspānid (q.v.) ruler of Rostamdār, whose seat was probably Nemā-rostāq. Nimā Yushij offers his own interpretation of Nimāvar "bowman, archer" as a derivative of "*nimā*" (Pers. *kamān*) 'bow, arch' in the Avesta (Nimā, *Yāddāsťhā*, 2009, p. 287), although Avestan *nəmah–* means "to bow, stoop" (Bartholomae, col. 1068). This confusion between the two homonymous English glosses could have originated from the use of an early dictionary, most likely Kanga's (cols. 62, 27). An onomastic alternative is as simple as Nāmāvar (famous**)**, with the phonological development *nām* > *num* > *nim*, not atypical to the Caspian

region. There is also the toponym Nemā-rostāq in the district of Nur in Māzandarān.

In the period when ancient Iranian names culled from the *Šāh-nāma* had become fashionable, Nimā sought out alternatives in Ṭabarestān's past. He assigned himself the name Nimā, which has gained enormous popularity both as a male and female first name. He named his only son Šerāgim (probably originally Šēr-āgim "lion-face"), and most likely he was the advocate for his brother's adopted name, Lādbon (Reżā by birth), and his sister Niktā (also called Bahjat-al-Zamān or Ṯorayyā; cf. verse in Nimā, "Rujā," 1991, p. 624). Nimā's drive for authentic Ṭabari names even convinced his eminent relative Parviz Khanlari to espouse the middle name of Nātel, after the name of a lost city in Māzandarān (Ḵānlari, 1990, p. 431; there is also the village Nātel in the *boluk* of Nātelrostāq in the district of Nur). Moreover, Nimā's favored name Rujā or Rojā has gained some currency in the Caspian provinces.

Not long after choosing a Ṭabari name for himself, Nimā added the epithet Yušij to his penname, which also turned out to be his eventual surname. Yušij consists of the name of Nimā's home village, Yuš, and *–ij*, a derivational suffix that forms adjectives and nouns describing people or language of a particular place. Nimā attempted to revitalize this suffix which was already obsolete in Caspian languages, but survived in clan names, particularly those of the western Māzandarāni districts of Nur and Kojur, including Ārĭj, Pij, Širij, Kordnāʾij, Kalej, Bilej-tabār, Bāruj; Gelij in Tonekâbon; as well as in Caspian history: kwšyj, jšyj, šyrj, kysmʾnj, kwsʾrej (see Sotuda). In any case, the full name Nimā Yušij (without the *ezāfa* linker between the first and last name in Persian) sounded avant-garde, even European, and therefore likable to modernist Iranians.

Ṭabarisms in Nimā's Persian poems. In addition to the thematic presence of Caspian notions in Nimā's Persian poetry, there is also a good number of Ṭabari lexical items. The proportion of Ṭabarisms in some poems is substantial, as in "Kār-e šabpā" (Ṭabari words are underlined):

> māh mitābad, rud ast ārām,
> bar šāḵa-ye ujā, tirang
> dom biāviḵta, dar ḵvāb foru rafta, vali dar āyeš,
> kār-e šabpā na hanuz ast tamām…
> bača-ye binjgar az zaḵm-e paša…
> pak-o-pak suzad ānjā kalesi…

o zan-e u be nepār-i tanhā-st…
(Nimā, Majmuʿa, ed. Ṭāhbāz, 1994, pp. 412-17)

The moon is shining, the river is calm.
On the branch of the elm, the pheasant
having its tail hung, it is plunged into sleep, but in the fallow
the night guard's shift is not over yet.
The paddy planter's child, of mosquito's sting…
There the firewood is flickering…
and his wife is lonely up on a shelter…

Although most of the Ṭabari components, as shown in the word list below, are ordinary terms that afford no difficulty in translation, there are words that have challenged the readers of Nimā's poems for decades. For example, *rirā* (in *rirā ṣedā miʾāyad emšab az pošt-e kāč*; Nimā, *Majmuʿa*, ed. Ṭāhbāz, 1991, p. 505) may simply be an interjection or exclamatory word, but it has given rise to a multitude of interpretations, ranging from a female proper name to a legendary female protector of forests, a strange bird, and others. Nimā's famous *Māneli* (see part ii, above), a fisherman in a long poem of the same title (dated according to the Ṭabari calendar: Deymāh 1314 Ṭabari [should be 1334], corresponding to Ḵordād 1324/June 1945; *Majmuʿa*, 1991, pp. 350-86), has also received various interpretations, including "a mermaid" (Talattof, 2000, p. 38), a diminution for the male proper name Bemān-ʿAli (Karimi, 2004), a male and female proper name meaning "last for me" (*bemān barāyam*), a female proper name meaning "long-lasting," "dark-eyed Māzandarāni girl," among others.

A short list of the Ṭabari words in Nimā's Persian poetry:

Toponyms: *Māḵ-ulā* (title of an anthology), a mountain pass leading to Yuš valley; Azāku, a mountain near Yuš; Amzenāsar, a gorge near Yuš; Vāzenā, the mountain facing Yuš in Uz valley; Kačap, a village near Āmol; Sioliše (poem's title; *Majmuʿa*, 1991, p. 513); *serivili*, of or related to Serevil (*sere* 'house' + suffix *–vil*; cf. Nimā, *Yāddāšthā*, 2009, p. 286), a village in Kojur.

Flora: *ujā* (Pers. *nārvan*) 'elm', *tuskā* 'alder tree', *afrā* 'maple', *lam* 'raspberry shrub', *palam* 'danewort' (*Sambucus ebulus*, a wild bush with white or yellow flowers), *dārmaj* (lit. tree-runner) 'climbing plants', *surdār*(Pers. *sarv*) 'wild cypress tree'.

Fauna: *tukā* (also *tikā*) ‘sterling’, *tirang* ‘pheasant’, *dārvag* ‘frog’, *pāpeli* ‘butterfly’, *šukā* ‘deer’, *zel* ‘taill ess sheep’, *talāvang* ‘cockcrow’, *talājan* (lit. cock-strike) ‘daybreak’.

Cultural: *nepār* ‘elevated timber frame shelter built in farms’, *kele* ‘hearth’, *jule* ‘wooden bowl for milking’, *estungā* ‘sheepcote in highland pastures’, *binj* (Pers. *šāli*) ‘paddy’, *duna* ‘rice’, *zel* ‘tailless sheep’, *mulā* ‘fisher’.