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*An Analytical Survey of Persian Works
on Indian Learned Traditions*

OFFPRINT



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AN ANALYTICAL SURVEY OF PERSIAN WORKS ON INDIAN LEARNED TRADITIONS

is published on line at: www.perso-indica.net
ISSN: 2267-2753

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Tarjuma-yi Kalīla wa Dimna

The most significant Persian translation of Indian fables from the Arabic *Kalīla wa Dimna* was prepared in the 12th century by a secretary at the service of the Ghaznavids (r. 344-583/977-1186). He was Abū al-Ma‘ālī Nizām al-Mulk Mu‘īn al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Munšī (or Mustawfī) whose family came originally from Shiraz. During his life, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Naṣr Allāh Munšī served three Ghaznavid rulers, Malik Arsalān-šāh (r. 509-511/1116-1117), Bahrām Šāh (r. 512-555/1117-1157) and Ḥusraw Malik (r. 555-582/1160-1186) as a member of the Ghazni elite, as a writer, a secretary (*munšī*), and a vizier. He ended being imprisoned and put to death on Ḥusraw Malik’s order following the intrigues by his enemies. Naṣr Allāh Munšī prepared his translation of the Arabic *Kalīla wa Dimna* while he was a *munšī* at the divan of Bahrām Šāh in Ghazni in around 536-540/1142-1146. Bahrām Šāh was a supporter of arts and literature. Prominent scholars and Persian poets thrived under his patronage including the Persian mystic and poet, Majdūd ibn Ādam Sanā‘ī (d. ca. 525/ 1130), who dedicated his important work the *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqa wa šarī‘at al-tarīqa* (The Garden of Truth and the Law of the [Mystical] Path) to him. Other poets such as Mas‘ūd-i Sa‘d-i Salmān (d. 518/ 1121), Ḥasan Ġaznawī (d. 565/ 1170), Abū al-Faraj Rūnī (d. 527/ 1130), and Faḥr al-Dīn Muḥammad Niyšābūrī (12th century) were among the prominent experts in music, theology and *adab* literature who lived contemporary to Naṣr Allāh Munšī in Ghazni.

Bahrām Šāh attacked India twice during his kingship (see Bosworth 1977, p. 108 and Khān 1955, p. 32). Despite political interest in India, his knowledge about that country was based on Islamicized sources and he did not order any Persian translation directly from Indic sources. Naṣr Allāh Munšī’s intention for preparing a new rendering of the *Kalīla wa Dimna*, which was then considered as a representative source of Indian wisdom in the genre of mirror for princes in the Islamicate world,

accorded with Bahrām Šāh's political interests. The Persian *Tarjuma-yi Kalīla wa Dimna* is dedicated to Bahrām Šāh, and is thus known as *Kalīla wa Dimna-yi Bahrām Šāhī*.

Kalīla wa Dimna is a general title for collections of Indian animal fables and human tales in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, which became significantly popular and was widely circulated from South Asia to the Mediterranean (Riedel 2012). Originating from Sanskrit treatises such as the *Pañcatantra* (Five Treatises), the *Mahābhārata* and some Buddhist narrative texts, the tales of the *Kalīla wa Dimna* intertwined the Indian story-telling tradition and Hindu ethics derived from the *arthaśāstra* (art of governance) with moralities and disciplines of the Muslim receiving culture. The tales were first selected and translated into Middle Persian at the time of Ḥusraw I Anūšīrvān (r. 531-579) by a learned physician, Burzūya, in ca. 570 in collaboration with the king's vizier, Buzurgmihr Buḥtagān. The Middle Persian compilation was rendered into Arabic and Persian in later centuries. The old version of the *Pañcatantra*, the Kashmirian *Ur-Tantrākhyāyikā* or the *Karaṭaka Damanaka* hypotext, and the Middle Persian adaptation have been lost. Parts of the earliest Arabic translation by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. 142/759) are also non-extant and only later variations of the Arabic text have survived to our time. That is why Naṣr Allāh Munšī's translation becomes relevant, since it is the earliest extant Persian rendering of the Arabic text of Ibn al-Muqaffa' that is completely available to us today. Furthermore, the earliest dated manuscript of Naṣr Allāh Munšī's translation available today (551/1156) is earlier than the oldest available manuscript of the Arabic version (618/1221) (Riedel 2012; Buḥārī 1369 š./1990, p. 21). Roughly in the same period, a certain 'Abd Allāh Buḥārī translated the Arabic *Kalīla wa Dimna* into plain Persian under the title of *Dāstān-hā-yi Bīdpāy* (Fables of Bīdpāy), and dedicated it to 'Abū al-Muẓaffar Ġāzī ibn Zangī ibn 'Āq-Sunqur (r. 541-544/1146-1149), a Zangid Atābak of Mosul (Moradi 2023). The two contemporary Persian translations display differences in content, literary style and methods of translation.

The *Kalīla wa Dimna-yi Bahrām Šāhī* is a composite work comprised of the translator's introduction (*dibāča-yi mutarjim*), the translation of the preface (*muftatiḥ-i kitāb*) of Ibn al-Muqaffa', a chapter attributed to Buzurgmihr Buḥtagān (*tamhīd-i Buzurjmīhr*) about Burzūya's voyage to India in search of the Indian sources of wisdom, and fifteen chapters (*bāb*) encompassing fifty-three tales and subsidiary tales. Contrary to Buḥārī's Persian translation, the chapter titles in Naṣr Allāh Munšī's

rendering remain in Arabic. The fifteen chapters (*bāb*) are: (i) *bāb Burzūya al-ṭāḥib* (chapter on Burzūya the physician), (ii) *bāb al-asad wa al-ṭawr* (chapter on the lion and the ox), (iii) *bāb al-faḥṣ ‘an amr-i Dimna* (chapter on the retribution of Dimna’s [evil] act), (iv) *bāb al-ḥamāmat al-muṭawwaqa wa al-juraḍ wa al-sulaḥfāt wa al-dabi* (chapter on the friendship between the ring-dove, the crow, the mouse, the turtle and the deer), (v) *bāb al-būm wa al-ḡurāb* (chapter on the owl and the crow), (vi) *bāb al-qird wa al-sulaḥfāt* (chapter on the ape and the tortoise), (vii) *bāb al-zāhid wa ibn ‘irs* (chapter on the pious man and the weasel), (viii) *bāb al-sunnūr wa al-juraḍ* (chapter on the cat and the mouse), (ix) *bāb ibn al-malik wa al-ṭā’ir al-fanzah* (chapter on the prince and the bird named Fanzah), (x) *bāb al-asad wa ibn āwī* (chapter on the lion and the jackal), (xi) *bāb al-nabīl wa al-labūh* (chapter on the archer and the lioness), (xii) *bāb al-zāhid wa al-ḡayf* (chapter on the pious man and his guest), (xiii) *bāb al-malik wa al-barāhima* (chapter on the king and the Brahmans), (xiv) *bāb al-ṣā’ig wa al-sayyāḥ* (chapter on the goldsmith and the sailor), (xv) *bāb ibn al-malik wa aṣḥābih* (chapter on the prince and his fellows). The book ends with the translator’s conclusive chapter (*ḥātima*).

In the *dibāča-yi mutarjim*, Naṣr Allāh Munšī praises Bahrām Šāh and his ancestors, Sultan Maḥmūd (r. 387-421/998-1030) and Sultan Mas‘ūd (r. 421-432/1030-1041), as the rulers who brought Islam to India and supported and protected the religion (*ḥusraw-i dīndār* and *pādšāh-i dīndār*) (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 11). Naṣr Allāh Munšī refers to Bahrām Šāh’s two attacks on India, and names the regions and provinces under his rule, a geographical space of two thousand *farsang* (a unit approximately equal to six kilometers) – or twelve thousand kilometers – from Sind and Multan to the Ganges river. He names regions in India from Kabul to the riverside of Kannauj and the borders of Kalinjar and Banusi, from Multan to Nahravala (modern Patan), Somnath, Sarandip (Sri Lanka), Sind, Mansura and Sivastan, which were all under the rule of the Ghaznavids by then (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 12). Naṣr Allāh Munšī praises the king as the shadow of Allah whose responsibility is to bring justice and prosperity to the lands of God. He asserts that the impact of the sword is more effective than Muslims’ prayers and devotion for spreading Islam in newly-conquered lands (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 4). Naṣr Allāh Munšī reports his own observations of idol temples which were destroyed and replaced with mosques, and of Indian non-believers who learned to recite the *Quran* (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 13). According to him, fifty thousand infidel men and women were brought from India to

the capital, Ghazni, as slaves every year. They converted to Islam and as a result, they could marry Muslims and give birth to Muslim children (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p.13).

In the introduction, Naṣr Allāh Munšī briefly introduces the book of *Kalīla wa Dimna*, indicating that the tales were very popular in his time and numerous translations of them existed beside the Arabic version of Ibn Muqaffa‘ and the Persian versions of Rūdakī (d. 329/ 941) (Shahbaz 2022); but they seemed to be recited for mere storytelling and fable writing (*taqrīr-i samar wa taḥrīr-i ḥikāyat*) rather than comprehending wisdom and advice from them (*tafhīm-i ḥikmat wa maw‘īza*) (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 25). Naṣr Allāh Munšī became determined to translate the book into Persian after receiving a manuscript of the Arabic *Kalīla wa Dimna* as a gift from a friend named ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm Ismā‘īl. He described the book as the most beneficial to humankind after the religious treatises on Islam (*kutub-i šar‘ī*), the mine of wisdom (*kān-i ḥirad*) and the treasure of experience and endeavor (*ganj-i tajruba wa mumārasat*) (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 18). According to Naṣr Allāh Munšī, the book in Arabic was written in a pleasant and humorous style so that the elites (*ḥawāss*) could read it to gain knowledge while ordinary people (*‘awāmm*) read it for amusement (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p.18). He explained that his intention for preparing this new translation was first to revive (*iḥyā’*) the book among Persians who had lost interest in reading Arabic books, and secondly, to invent a new literary style (*sabk*) to impress his contemporary fellows with his own superior knowledge and writing skills in both Persian and Arabic, by adding explanations, verses from the *Quran* and fragments of poetry in both languages to the text (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 25). Poetic characteristics of his ornate prose are the use of symmetry, rhyme, a diverse range of literary devices in his figurative language, and the insertion of Arabic and Persian verses, in order to carry across one particular meaning through a variety of forms of expression.

The stories of *Kalīla wa Dimna* are narrated in a labyrinthine multiple-framing structure; several tales and apologues are integrated as carriers of didactic advice within frame-stories. Naṣr Allāh Munšī develops up to sixteen layers of tales retold in one chapter, creating a plexiform structure where the story character in one tale plays the role of internal narrator for the other. In the translator’s introduction (*muqaddima*) and conclusion (*ḥātima*), Bīdpāy the Brahman is introduced as the one who told the stories in response to Dābšālīm, a raja of India. There is no other information about them in the other chapters. Each *bāb* begins with a repetitive prologue in form of a short dialogue between the Brahman and the Indian raja. They are referred to

as *rāy* and *brahman* in Naṣr Allāh Munṣī's text, and as *malik* (king) and *ḥaylasūf* (philosopher) in Buḥārī's version. A dialogue frame as such is not unprecedented in the Sanskrit tradition and could be found in works such as the *Yogavāsīṣṭha* as well as in Pāli in the *Milinda Pañha. Śānti Parva*, the twelfth book of the *Mahābhārata* also includes a similar question and response dialogue between king Yudhiṣṭhira and Brahman Bhīṣma about various subjects such as the principles of *arthaśāstra* (art of statecraft). It is noteworthy that the old Syriac translation, the *Kalīlag-u Damnaḡ*, which dates to the sixth century and has the same title as the lost Middle Persian version, preserved the Sanskrit names of king Yudhiṣṭhira and Brahman Bhīṣma in the framing narrative (Bickell — Benfey 1876; Keith-Falconer 1885; Paikova 1964; Paikova 1967). Likewise, the Brahman's discussion with king Bilār in the frame story of Naṣr Allāh Munṣī's work recalls the dialogue between the Indian sage Bilawhar and prince *Būḍāsaf(a)* in the Persian and Arabic adaptations of the Buddha's life story known as the *Bilawhar wa Būḍāsaf(a)* (Gimaret 1971, Niẓām Tabrīzī 2002).

The Sanskrit *arthaśāstra* (art of statecraft) and *nītiśāstra* (essence of maxims and proper conduct) advice literatures provide manuals for the education of the princes in the statecraft, principles of conduct and moral values. In the framing narrative of the *Pañcātāntra*, Amaraśakti the ruler of the city of Mahilāropya (Deccan) assigns a scholar Brahman to train his three ignorant and idle sons. The Brahman promises to teach the princes the necessary knowledge of morality and conduct in six months; for that purpose, he composes the collection of fables and recites them to the young princes. The remaining Arabic and Persian adaptations of the *Pañcātāntra* under the title of *Kalīla wa Dimna* lost this framing to a huge extent and demonstrate reduction, inconsistency and irregularities from chapter to chapter. However, Naṣr Allāh Munṣī elaborates a form of framing with a formulaic epilogue, that ends each chapter (*bāb*) with fragments of poetry and moral conclusions drawn from the stories, followed by a prayer phrase in Arabic.

The narrative about Burzūya's trip to India has been told differently by the three translators, Naṣr Allāh Munṣī, Ibn al-Muqaffa' and Buzurgmihr in their introductions. The chapters of the Arabic and Persian series of *Kalīla wa Dimna* texts vary in the number of the tales they include in comparison with the Indian versions. Some Arabic versions include tales which are not found in the Persian ones, and are thus evidence for the existence of a large diversity of narrative content under the same title in both languages. The retellings of tales may differ from the Indian ones due to their cultural

adaptation under the influence of Persian and Islamic traditions. The available Old Syriac translation of the Middle Persian text has ten chapters only (Gottheil 1888; Keith-Falconer 1885; Paikova 1967). Ibn al-Muqaffa's preface lists ten chapters as coming from Indian sources and five others written by Persians (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 38), but this attribution seems to be erroneous. De Blois demonstrated that the ten Indian chapters in the Old Syriac version, which are also found in the Arabic version and in Naṣr Allāh Munšī's Persian translation, are *bāb* ii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xiii, xv. He concludes that these tales could be most certainly found in their common Middle Persian source, while the other five *bābs* could have been made up and appended to the book in later centuries by Persians or by Arabs (De Blois 1990, pp. 12-14). De Blois's research work is focused on the main chapters and their frame narratives rather than the variations of their inner tales. One should mention that the integrated tales within the frame narratives in the Indian chapters of the Persian text are not all Indian.

Naṣr Allāh Munšī's work was a trans-creation: a free rendering that suggested a new literary style in the genre of the "mirror for princes". It introduced peculiarities in style which were unprecedented in Persian literature and thus, it became a model for elaborate epistolary prose writing (*inšā'*), also known as "artistic" or "jeweled" prose (*naṭr-i fannī* or *naṭr-i maṣnū'*). Naṣr Allāh Munšī expanded the text by adding Persian and Arabic idiomatic expressions, lines of poetry, and fragments from the *Quran* and the hadith in order to adapt it to Islamic standards of morality. His long-winded descriptive phrases are embellished with poetic devices such as synonyms and antonyms, oronyms, metaphors, paronomasia and allegories. One may frequently find sentences half in Persian and half in Arabic, sometimes one clause in prose and the other in verse, in a way that the verse would be complementary to the prose and the meaning would remain incomplete without it. There are cases in which the first distich of a couplet is in Arabic while the second appears in Persian (Munšī 1355 š./1976, pp. 104, 154, 158, 370). Naṣr Allāh Munšī's translation contains two hundred and forty Persian couplets and thirty-five Persian stanzas. The quoted (*taẓmīn*) distiches and hemistiches are from the twelfth-century Persian poets who lived in Ghazni and Lahore at the service of the Ghaznavids, such as Sanā'ī (d. ca. 525/1130), Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān (d. 518/1121), Abū al-Faraj Rūnī (d. 527/1130), Amīr Mu'izzī (d. 522-524/1125-27), Farruḥī Sīstānī (d. 534/1037) and 'Uṭmān Muḥtārī (d. ca. 512-548/1115-1151) (Kardgār —Gulābiyān 1398 š./2019). Some eighty Persian couplets and twenty stanzas in the text are unknown to us and were probably composed

by Naṣr Allāh Munšī himself. He was praised by Muḥammad Awfī (d. circa 1242) in his anthology of Persian poets' biographies and works, the *Lubāb al-albāb*, for his expertise in composing poetry and for his excellent prose writing skills (Awfī 1390 š./2011, p. 87). The Arabic poetry integrated into this text comprises two hundred fifty-two couplets from a wide range of poets such as al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/ 965), al-Buḥārī (d. 248/ 897), Abū al-‘Alā al-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/ 1057), Abū Nuwās (d. ca 198-200/ 813-815), al-Imām al-Šāfi‘ī (d. 204/ 820), Šāhib ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/ 995), Mu‘ayyid al-Dīn al-Tuḡrāyī (11th century), Abū al-Ḥasan ibn al-Rūmī (d. 283/ 896), and Naṣr Allāh Munšī himself. Despite being an independent adaptation of Indian fables and tales, the adorned poetic language of Naṣr Allāh Munšī recalls the style of the book in the Sanskrit language, contrary to Buḥārī's translation which is in plain and unadorned prose and includes no addition to the stories.

Naṣr Allāh Munšī's text marks a turning point in the history of Persian prose literature from the twelfth century onwards. Its literary style is the most prominent reason for its great popularity and distinction among other versions of the *Kalīla wa Dimna*. He chose a well-known text and elevated it literarily not through “versification” which was the current trend of that time, but by creating a cultivated prosimetrum that resembled poetry. Naṣr Allāh Munšī claimed that his compendium would be accepted and praised by friends and foes, Muslims and polytheists, and those non-Muslims who lived under treaty and paid tribute to the Islamic states. He wrote that as long as the Persian language is current among people, the book will never become obsolete. He compared his own work to dressing the meaning with a splendid ravishing attire which would attract the attention of the world in a little while and people would fall in love with it (Munšī 1355 š./1976, p. 420).

Naṣr Allāh Munšī's prediction came true and his *tarjuma-yi Kalīla wa Dimna* gained such a fame that it was translated back into Arabic within a century after its production (See Beers and Khalfallah 2022). Among the numerous available manuscripts of the work, many are illustrated (O’Kane 2003), and some date only a decade after the work's production. Abū al-Faḍl ibn Mubārak ‘Allāmī (d. 1011/1602), Akbar's (r. 1556-1605) minister and the author of the *‘Ayār-i dāniš*, and Ḥāliqḍād ‘Abbāsī, the translator of the *Pančākhyāna* at the court of Akbar, both referred to Naṣr Allāh Munšī's work as “the famous” *Kalīla wa Dimna* (*Kalīla wa Dimna-yi mašhūr*) (‘Allāmī 1988, pp. 8-11; ‘Abbāsī 1973, p. 4). ‘Abbāsī called it “the criterion for the knowers of Persian” (“*mi ‘yār-i zabān-i fārsī-dānān*”) (‘Abbāsī 1973, p. 4).

Naṣr Allāh Munšī's translation was rewritten a number of times in Persian: Šāh 'Izz al-Dīn Ġawāṣṣī Yazdī versified it in the 16th century. A fifteenth century rewriting of Naṣr Allāh Munšī's work was prepared by Ḥusain Wā'iz Kāšifī in 905/1499-1500 in a more accessible Persian with less Arabic expressions, under the title of *Anwār-i suhaylī* (Lights of Canopus) which became very popular in South Asia and was translated into Turkish and Georgian, and later into other European languages (Ruymbeke 2018). The most popular Turkish translation of the *Anwār-i suhaylī* was titled the *Humāyūn-nāma*, prepared by 'Alī Čilibī (ca. 1540) for the Ottoman sultan Sulaymān (r. 1520-1566), which got re-translated back into Persian in the seventeenth century. Naṣr Allāh's *Kalīla wa Dimna* was also rendered into Oriental Turkish (Esmāīli 2005, p. 20).

The popularity of the *Anwār-i suhaylī* in South Asia overshadowed Naṣr Allāh Munšī's *Kalīla wa Dimna* to the point that the European translations of Kāšifī's work date as early as the 17th century (Ruymbeke 2016), with the most complete one by Edward Eastwick in 1854 (Eastwick 1854), while the first English translation of Naṣr Allāh Munšī's work only appeared in 2019 (Thackston 2019). Akbar (r. 1556-1605) ordered Abū al-Faẓl ibn Mubārak to prepare an abridgement of the *Kalīla wa Dimna*, which he entitled the '*Ayār-i dāniš*. An abridgement of the '*Ayār-i dāniš* was lithographed by Naval Kishore in Lucknow under the title of *Nigār-i dāniš* in 1902, edited by William Handford Sahib Bahadur ('Allāmī 1902, pp. 2, 177). An Urdu translation of the '*Ayār-i dāniš* was also prepared in the early 19th century under the name of *Hirad-afrūz* (Aḥmad 1963).

Commentaries were written about different aspects of the book including its integrated poetry in Persian and Arabic, in order to facilitate its learning at traditional schools; some are as follows: the *Nimūdār-nāma* by Ibrāhim ibn Muḥammad Abū Ishāq Niẓām al-Dīn al-Muḍī al-Ḥwārazmī (twelfth century), and *Šarḥ-i aḥbār wa abyāt wa amṭāl-i 'arabī-i Kalīla wa Dimna* by Faẓl Allāh ibn 'Uṭmān ibn Muḥammad al-Isfazarī (thirteenth century) (see Al-Isfazarī 1380 š./ 2001, p. 67).

Naṣr Allāh Munšī's well-measured prosimetrum was imitated in narrative works written afterwards such as in the *Marzubān-nāma* by Sa'd al-Dīn Warāwīnī prepared in 607-622/1210-1225, the *Rawzat al-'uqūl* prepared by Ġāzi Maḥṭiwī in 598/1201, the *Gulistān* by Sa'dī (d. 691/1291-2), the *Tārīḥ-i Jahānguṣā* by 'Aṭā al-Mulk Juwaynī (d. ca. 683/1283), the *Jawāhir al-asmār* by 'Imād ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭaġarī, the

early fourteenth century Persian adaptation of the *Śukasaptati* and some other Indian treatises prepared for Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ḥaljī (r. 695-715/1296-1316), the *Tūṭī-nāma* by Zīyā’ al-Dīn Naḥṣabī (d. 751/1350), and in the *Farā’id al-sulūk* by Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm Sajāsī (fourteenth century) (see bibliography for the editions of the aforementioned texts). Some authors openly mentioned Naṣr Allāh Munšī in the introduction of their books and praised him for his literary excellence and highest level of eloquence and rhetoric, including Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad Zangī Buḥārī (late thirteenth century) in his *Būstān al-‘uqūl fī tarjumān al-manqūl* (Zangī Buḥārī 1374 š./1995, p. 29), Warāwīnī in the *Marzubān-nāma* (Warāwīnī 1380 š./2001, p. 5), and Kāšifī (d. 910/ 1504) in his *Anwār-i suhaylī* (Kāšifī 1880, pp. 6-7).

Certain stories of the *Kalīla wa Dimna* were recited by mystical poets such as Sanā’ī (twelfth century), Jalāl al-Dīn Balḥī (d. 1273), and ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (d. 1492) in their didactic and devotional poetry. Sanā’ī narrated the stories of “the duck and the moonlight” found in the chapter of the Lion and the Ox, and the tale of “the man in the well” from the chapter on Burzūya the physician in his *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqa wa šarī‘at al-ṭarīqa* (Sanā’ī 1374 š./1995, pp. 69, 565, 712, 408; Durrī 1389 š./2010).

Balḥī referred to the *Kalīla wa Dimna* frequently in the *Maṭnawī-i Ma‘nawī*, as a book of allegorical fables with profound meanings and lessons. He narrated the myth-history of Burzūya’s voyage to India in search of the fruit of immortality as a symbol for the book of wisdom and knowledge for the Persian king (book 2, couplets 3641-3658). He named the two jackals, Kalīla and Dimna, the lion king and the crows as speaking animal characters of the story who, despite being fictive, taught lessons for human beings in real life (book 2, couplets 3616-622). He included the story of “the rabbit, the moon and the elephant” from the fifth chapter of Naṣr Allāh Munšī’s *Kalīla wa Dimna* (book 3, couplets 2738-2753). Balḥī also related the story of “the three fish” from the second *bāb* (the lion and the ox) of Munšī’s *Kalīla wa Dimna* (book four, couplets 2202-2212) and a version of the story of the “indigo jackal” (book 2, couplets 721-731) (see Ruybeke 2013, and Yūsifpūr and Šafī‘ī 1394 š./2015). Jāmī narrated the story of “the tortoise and the two geese” in the third book of his *Haft Awrang*, the *Tuḥfat al-Aḥrār* (see Jāmī 1398 š./2019).

This series of rewritings of the *Kalīla wa Dimna* was continuously produced and used by *munšīs* at traditional schools in Iran and India, and at European institutes of Persian for practicing epistolary prose writing until the 20th century. Some among

them are as follows: The poet, Šabūrī versified an abridgement of the *Anwār-i suhaylī* and dedicated it to Nāšir al-Dīn Šāh Qajar (r. 1848-1896) in 1289/ 1872 (Ms. 2433, Markazī library, Tehran University). Ḥusraw Dārāyī of Qajar family also versified Kāšifī's rewriting in 1326 š./1947 and named his work the *Šikaristān* (Sugarland) (Dārāyī 1383 š./2004). Mīrzā 'Abd al-Wahhāb Irānpūr versified the *Anwār-i suhaylī* into 17700 couplets in the year 1347/1968 in Isfahan and named it the *Gulšan-ārā* (The Ornament of the Rose Garden) (Irānpūr 1395 š./2016). The 20th-century rewritings of Našr Allāh Munšī's *Kalīla wa Dimna* are the *Aḥlāq-i asāsī wa ijtimā'ī* by Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Muḥammad Ḥasan Tehrānī (Kātūzīyān Tehrānī 1388 š./2009), the *Kalīla wa Dimna* by Ḥāj Farhād Mīrzā (d. 1305 š./1926), the *Ṭarīq al-sulūk* in verse by Muḥammad Ḥān ibn Ḥājī Ḥān Daštī (d. 1299/1920), the *Rāy wa Brahman, Kalīla wa Dimna-yi Manzūm* (in verse) by Jahān Baḥš Jumhurī published in 1323 š./1944, and the *Paymāna-yi pand* by Ġulām Ḥusayn Faḥr Ṭabāṭabā'ī in verse (see Īmānī's introduction in Al-Isfazārī 1380 š./2001, p. 51).

The contemporary Afghan poet, Mīr Bahādur Wāšifī, versified Munšī's work into *maṭnawī* in 5987 couplets, in the same meter as Rūdakī's (d. 941) *Kalīla wa Dimna* (Wāšifī 1384 š./2005). Šāliḥ Muḥammad Zīrī from Afghanistan translated Munšī's *Kalīla wa Dimna* for the first time into Pashto in 2014 (Zīrī 1393 š./2014). In conclusion, Našr Allāh Munšī's *Kalīla wa Dimna* is one of the earliest and most significant literary works which represent the Indian narrative tradition in Persian literature and which, still remains popular amongst Persian-speaking communities in the contemporary period.

Manuscripts: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Supplément Persan 1965, ff. 25, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 7. London, British Library, Add. 5965, ff. 88, ii) rajab 626/June 1229, viii) Rieu 1881, p. 746.. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 999, ff. 166, viii) Pertsch 1888, p. 968. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 380, ff. 193, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 9. , i) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 375, ff. 135, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 8. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 376, ff. 255, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 9. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 379, ff. 195, ii) 16 *šafar* 718/19 April 1318, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 10. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 385, ff. 311, ii) 10 *ša`bān* 718/7October 1318, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 10. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Persan 377, ff. 163, viii) Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p.

11. **Oxford**, Bodleian Library, Pers. f. 12, ff. 241 , **ii)** *jumādā* 730/ April 1330, **viii)** Beeston 1954, p. 16.. **Paris**, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Supplément Persan 913, ff. 217, **ii)** 20 *ramadān* 794/10 August 1392, **viii)** Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p. 11. **Islamabad**. **viii)** Munzawī 1987, vol. VI, pp. 923-924., **viii)** Munzawī 1987, vol. 6, pp. 923-924. **London**, British Library, Or. 241, ff.193, **ii)** Šafar 1094/February 1683, **viii)** Rieu 1881, pp. 745-746.

Illustrated manuscript: **Paris**, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Supplément Persan 1639, ff. 233, **ii)** 17*šafar* 872/17 September 1467, **viii)** Blochet 1934, vol. 4, p.12-13.

Legend: i) Place of copying; ii) Period of copying; iii) Copyist; iv) Commissioner; v) Information on colophon; vi) Description of miniatures/illustrations; vii) Other remarks; viii) Information on catalogue(s)

Lithograph: *Ahlāq-i asāsī (muhazzab-i Kalīla wa Dimna)*, Muḥammad ‘Alī **Kātūzīyān Tehrānī** , Tehran, 1331/1914, **Kātūzīyān Tehrānī**, Muḥammad ‘Alī, 1331 š./1914, *Ahlāq-i asāsī (muhazzab-i Kalīla wa Dimna)*, Tehran, lithographed and illustrated, 2nd edition. .

Editions: *Kalīla wa Dimna*, ‘Abd al-‘Aḏīm Qarīb, Tehran, Āryānfār, 1308/1929, 1340 š./1961. *Tarjuma-yi Kalīla wa Dimna*, Muḥtabā Mīnawī, Tehran, Amīr Kabīr, 1379/2000. *Kalīla wa Dimna Bā Muqābila-yi Čāp-i ‘Abd-al-‘Aḏīm Qarīb wa Taṭbīq-i Čandīn Nuṣṣa-yi Mu‘tabar-i čāpī-u Ḥattī*, Ja‘far Sajjādī, Tehran, Daryā, 1339/1960. *Rāy-u Brahman: Kalīla wa Dimna-yi Pārsī*, Aḥmad Ājūdānī, Shiraz, Navīd-i Shiraz, 1380/1992.

Commentary: **Al-Isfazārī**, Faḏl Allāh ibn ‘Uṭmān ibn Muḥammad, 1380 š./2001, *Šarḥ-i aḥbār wa abyāt wa amṭāl-i ‘arabī-i Kalīla Wa Dimna*, Bihrūz Imānī, ed., Tehran, Mīrāt-i Maktūb.

English translation: Munšī, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Naṣr-Allāh, *Kalīla and Dimna*, Wheeler Thackston, tr., Indiana, Hackett Publishing Company, Incorporated, 2019.

German translation: Munšī, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Naṣr-Allāh, *Kalīla und Dimna: Fabeln aus dem klassischen Persien*, Seyfeddin Najmabadi and Siegfried Weber, tr., München, C. H. Beck 1996.

Pashto translation: Munšī, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Naṣr-Allāh, *Kalīla aw Dimna: Pkhwnī Pañcatantra*, Zīrī, Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad, tr., Qandahar, Mu’assasa-yi Naṣarātī ‘Allām-i Iršād, 1393 š./2014.

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Originally published: 30 novembre 2023

How to quote this article:

Shahbaz, Pegah, 2023, "Tarjuma-yi Kalīla wa Dimna", *Perso-Indica. An Analytical Survey of Persian Works on Indian Learned Traditions*, F. Speziale - C. W. Ernst - E. Orthmann, eds., available at http://www.perso-indica.net/work/tarjuma-yi_kalila_wa_dimna.

ISSN: 2267-2753

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