



JĀME' AL-ḤEKĀYĀT

JĀME' AL-ḤEKĀYĀT (lit. Compiler of stories), one of the oldest and most common titles of mostly anonymous Persian story collections, dating from the 13th to the 19th century. Although various manuscripts of such collections have different titles, such as *Jāme' al-masā'el* and *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* (Berlin, 1031; Pertsch, IV, p. 988), *Jāme' at-takāyāt* (Blochet, Paris, Supp. Pers. 2039), *Majm' al-ḥekāyāt* (Dushanbe, Orientalistics 11.338; Dānešpa-žuh), *Majmu'a-ye ḥekāyāt* (Dushanbe, Orientalistics 649), the title of most manuscripts is just *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt*.

Most of the comprising texts of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* are parables, a genre with a long tradition in the Persian literature, the record of which goes back to the Arsacids (*Draxt ī asūrik*) and Sasanid (*Baḳtiār-nāma*, *Sindbād-nāmag*) literature. For instance, one may mention “Ḥekā-yat-e dur oftādan-e Bahrām Gōr az laškar . . .” (Şafā, 1984b, V/3, p. 1531) and the story about Bahrām and his vizier Rāst Rowšan, related by Ḳvāja Nežām-al-Molk (pp. 31-41) as relatively recent narrations and transcript of two episodes from the adventures of Bahrām V Gōr (q.v.; Şafā, 1984b, V/3, pp. 1531-32). Some of the parables of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* in the manuscript D327 in Saint Petersburg (Akimushkin et al., I, p. 139) are so similar to the stories found in the *Marzbān-nāma* of Sa'd-al-Din Varāvini that it led Breshovskii to believe that this copy was another version of *Marzbān-nāma* (Akimushkin et al., I, p. 11).

The striking similarity of the title of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* with *Jawāme' al-ḥekāyāt*, the shortened form of the *Jawāme' al-ḥekāyāt wa lawāme' al-rewāyāt* of Sadid-al-Din Moḥammad 'Awfi (late 12th-early 13th cent. C.E.; q.v.), has caused *Jāme'*



al-ḥekāyāt to be overshadowed by the latter and to remain relatively unknown.

The most prominent characteristic of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* that singles it out among all Iranian books of this genre, is the extensive divergence of different manuscripts, to the point that one hardly finds two manuscripts of this title that consist of similar parables or have the same number of parables. This obvious variety of the content is due to the fact that various collections bearing the same title were compiled by authors at different times since the 13th century; the most recent collection was compiled in the 19th century.

'Awfi compiled his *Jawāme' al-ḥekāyāt wa lawāme' al-rewāyāt*, using a variety of sources including Abu 'Ali Moḥassen Tanuḳi's *al-Faraj ba'd al-šedda*, which he had translated into Persian ('Awfi, Mo'in's Intro., p. 34; Nafisi, I, pp. 97-98; Şafā, 1984b, V/3, p. 1028). The next author to translate Tanuḳi's book into Persian was Ḥo-sayn As'ad Dahestāni, who carried out the translation during the years 1253-74 ('Awfi, Mo'in's Intro., p. 35) and called his book *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt fī tarjamat al-faraj ba'd al-sedda wa'l-ziqa* (Şafā, 1984b, III/2. p. 1236; Dahestāni, editor's intro., p. xiv). Of all the collections that were compiled after Dahestāni, forty-one manuscripts are known to exist in the libraries of Tashkent (11 MSS), Dushanbe (9 MSS), Saint Petersburg (4 MSS), Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and Ketāb-kāna-ye melli-e Malek (3 MSS each), India Office and Berlin (2 MSS each), Āstān-e Qods in Mashad, Elāḥiyāt in Mashad, Mar'ašī in Qom, Qāzi private collection in Tehran, Ganj-baḳs in Pakistan, Ann Arbor in Michigan, and Bengal Asiatic Society in Calcutta (1 MS each).

The oldest manuscript of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt* is the manuscript A103 (902F; Akimushkin et al., I, p. 137) of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg. It was evidently compiled some time during the reign of 'Alā'-al-Din Moḥammad Shah, the Ḳalji ruler of Delhi (r. 1295-1316), to whom the book is dedicated. The youngest collection is apparently the manuscript kept at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Supp. Pers. 2039 (Blochet, IV, pp. 374-78), which bears the date 1862 and also contains several stories in verse (for a sample of verses, see Şafā, 1984b, V/3, p. 1542).

Alongside the noticeable divergence that differentiates various manuscripts of *Jāme' al-ḥekāyāt*, one also finds some clear points of similarity and even connection. The most evident sign of the texts being related to each other is the common use of some parables (e.g., "Dorudgar wa julā wa doḳtar-e pādšāh-e



‘Ommān,” “Shah Bahrām Gōr wa ‘āseq šodan be Bānu Ḥosn doktar-e šāh-e pariān,” “Māni-e naqqāš wa šāhzāda-ye Boḳārā,” “Farroḳšāh wa Farroḳkruz wa Farroḳnāz,” “Šāhzāda Moslem wa Maleka Hezār-gisu,” etc.; for the brief summaries of some stories, see Şafā, 1984b, V/3, pp. 1520 ff.). Some manuscripts also contain the stories of *Baḳtiār-nāma* attached to the end of the collection. In the view of Evagnī Eduardovich Berthels (q.v.), the purpose behind some of the late collections was to popularize the main tenets of the Shi’ite doctrine in a way that would be accessible to common folks (Berthels, pp. 83-84, apud Cejpek, p. 681).

The number of parables varies in different manuscripts of *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt*. The smallest volume in the India Office (India Office 798) contains only four parables and the largest one (India Office 797) fifty three (Ethé, I, pp. 524-26).

Unfortunately, most of *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt* collections remain anonymous, as the first and last pages, which might have contained the compiler’s name, are missing in many manuscripts, while some other manuscripts seem to have been compiled without recording any indication of the compiler’s name. A number of compilers, however, have mentioned their own names, for instance Shaikh Moḥam-mad- ‘Azim Baldāsi (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, Supp. Pers. 907; Blochet, IV, pp. 84-85; Şafā, 1984b, V/3, pp. 1535-36) and Mašhadi ‘Abd-al-Raḥim Beg Me‘mār Širāzi in Manuscript 42 (Petermann 718) in Berlin (Pertsch, IV, pp. 94-95).

The *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt* of Ketāb-ḳāna-ye melli-e Malek in Tehran (1044), apparently following suit the format of *Jawāme’ al-ḥekāyāt wa lawāme’ al-rewāyāt* of Moḥammad ‘Awfi, is divided into one hundred chapters, each one made of ten parables. This manuscript can be considered unique for the fact that it does not have any resemblance to the manuscripts of Saint Petersburg, Pakistan, or Mashad (Ḥojjati and Monzawi, p. 389). It consists of 998 parables written in *nasta’liq* calligraphy (see CALIGRAPHY) on 414 sheets, which makes it an incomplete manuscript of *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt* with the largest number of parables.

There exists three translations of *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt* into Kāšgari Turkish; the oldest one was done by Mollā Sanjar b. Ebrāhim Kāšgari in 1849-50 and the most recent one by Ḥāji Yusof Safarbay in 1906-07 (Mughinuv, pp. 99-100).

The first edition of a *Jāme’ al-ḥekāyāt* manuscript, in which the first and the last pages are missing, was published by Abu’l-Faḳr Qāzi in 1976 as *Āvarda-and*



ke (ed. Qāzi). Roxane Haag-Higuchi chose the manuscript of Āstān-e Qods as the subject of her thesis (Afšār, p. 748); her study and German translation of the text was published in 1984 (Haag-Higuchi, pp. 117-200). A selection of nine parables of the copy of Āstān-e Qods was edited and published as *Qeṣṣa-ye hezār-gisu* by Sayyed 'Ali Rażawi Behābād in 2001.

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