



KALILA WA DEMNA I. REDACTIONS AND CIRCULATION

KALILA WA DEMNA

i. Redactions and circulation

In Persian literature *Kalila wa Demna* has been known in different versions since the 6th century CE. The complex relations between the extant New Persian versions, a lost Sanskrit original, and a lost Middle Persian translation have been studied since 1859 when the German Indologist [Theodor Benfey](#) (1809-1881), a pioneer of comparative folklore studies, published a translation of extant Sanskrit versions of the *Pañcatantra* (lit. “five topics”; for the debate about possible interpretations of the Sanskrit title, see *Pañcatantra*, tr. Olivelle, pp. xiii-xiv). The scholarly construction of the migration of an Indian story cycle into Near and Middle Eastern languages has received considerable attention, because the project touches on the fundamental question of how to conceive of national and international literary histories if narrative traditions have moved freely between Indo-Iranian and Semitic languages. Two philological approaches dominate the research. [Johannes Hertel](#) (1872-1955), Mojtabā Minovi ([Plate i](#)), and others have focused on editing the earliest versions as preserved in Sanskrit and New Persian manuscripts, while Franklin Edgerton (1885-1963) and François de Blois have created 20th



century synthesized versions of the lost Sanskrit and Middle Persian texts.

The circulation of *Kalila wa Demna* in Persian literature documents how Iran mediated the diffusion of knowledge between the Indian subcontinent and the Mediterranean. The oldest extant versions of the story cycle are preserved in Syriac and Arabic, and originate from the 6th and 8th century, respectively, as translations of a lost Middle Persian version. Benfey was the first to note that the independent Arabic and Syriac translations of a lost Middle Persian version provide the only terminus ad quem for a lost Sanskrit original (*Kalilag und Damnag*, p. VI). The state of research regarding the Sanskrit *Pañcatantra* is beyond the scope of this entry, but it should be noted that most Sanskrit scholars still assume the existence of a single Sanskrit original (*Urtext*) compiled by a single author, though absolutely nothing is known about this author (Brinkhaus, pp. 55-56). Sanskrit scholars also agree that the literary sources of the *Pañcatantra* comprise both the technical literature of Hindu ethics and statecraft, such as the *Arthaśāstra* attributed to Kauṭilya (fl. 300 BCE), and the popular story-telling tradition. In the *Jātaka* tales about the former lives of the Buddha and in the historical epic *Mahābhārata*, animal fables have long served religious and didactic purposes.

Major recensions. The three preserved New Persian translations originated between the 10th and 12th century, and are based on the Arabic version of [Ebn al-Moqaffaʿ](#) (b. ca. 721, d. ca. 757), which is the most influential of the known Arabic versions. The European reception of the fables is beyond the scope of this entry, but it is important for the understanding of the Persian reception in the Islamic lands that between the 11th and the 13th century, around the Mediterranean, the Arabic version of Ebn al-Moqaffaʿ was translated into Greek (Hertel, 1914, pp. 401-4), as well as into Hebrew (Hertel, 1914, p. 395) and Old Spanish (Hottinger; Wacks). The older Hebrew version, customarily ascribed to Rabbi Joël (fl. 1200), became through the Latin translation of John of Capua (fl. 1260) the source of all European vernacular translations until the 1690s. The first English version appeared in Tudor England in 1570, and was prepared by Thomas North (1535-1603?) who used the Italian translation by Anton Francesco Doni (1513-74) for *The Moral Philosophy of Doni popularly known as the Fables of Bidpai*.

The Baghdadi bookseller Nadim (d. 995 or 998) listed Ebn al-Moqaffaʿ as an important translator of Middle Persian literature in his *Fehrest*, though he did not associate the *Kalila wa Demna* translation with any known patron (pp. 132, 364; cf. tr. pp. 259, 715-16). In the preface of the *Šāh-nāma* by [Abu Manšur al-](#)



Ma'mari (d. 961), the 'Abbasid caliph Ma'mun (r. 813-33) commissioned Ebn al-Moqaffa to translate the fables (Qazwini, p. 21; cf. Minorsky, p. 265). At a first glance the association with Ma'mun appears simply as a "serious historical blunder" (de Blois, p. 51). This severe judgment seems supported by the *Kašf al-zonun* (ed. Yalrkaya and Bilge, II, col. 1508), where Katip Çelebi (1609-1657) stated that Ebn al-Moqaffa' wrote the Arabic translation for the 'Abbasid caliph Maṣur (r. 754-75), which is historically feasible. Yet Moḥammad Qazwini's edition of the older *Šāh-nāma* preface does not list any variants to Ma'mun in the text's manuscripts. This observation can be related to the *Šāh-nama* by **Ferdowsi** (b. 940?, d. 1019 or 1025), who is assumed to have drawn on Abu Maṣur's work. Ferdowsi also mentions Ma'mun as Ebn al-Moqaffa's patron, and variants to Ma'mun are again missing from the collated manuscripts (VIII, p. 371, l. 3501). The undisturbed transmission of this historically impossible connection in both the *Šāh-nāma* and one of its sources may reflect that among Persian reading audiences it seemed more sensible to associate the translation of *Kalila wa Demna* from Middle Persian into Arabic with a caliph who appeared to be on the Persian side within the anti-Arab movement of the *šo'ubiya*. Ma'mun's mother had been the Persian concubine Marājel and his tutor had been the Zoroastrian convert **Faḏl b. Sahl** (d. 818), while Ma'mun himself had been the governor of Khurasan from 802 to 813. Moreover, by the 10th century, Persian reading audiences might have mixed up the Arabic *Kalila wa Demna* by Ebn al-Moqaffa' with a lost Arabic imitation of *Kalila wa Demna* that Sahl b. Hārūn b. Rāhavayh (d. 830) composed as part of a larger work for Ma'mun (Katip Çelebi, ed. Yalrkaya and Bilge, II, col. 1509; cf. Zakeri, p. 839), as they were unlikely to read the fables in either Arabic version.

The first Persian translation was prepared by the vizier **Abu'l-Faḏl Moḥammad Bal'ami** (d. 940) who wrote a prose version for the Samanid ruler Naṣr b. Aḥmad (r. 914-43). Afterwards Rudaki (de Blois, pp. 51-52; cf. Storey/de Blois, V/1, pp. 221-26) was asked to turn the prose version into a narrative poem (*mathnawi*). Bal'ami's translation is lost, but fragments of Rudaki's mathnawi are preserved (ed. Braginskii, nos. 273-357). In the 12th century Moḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Boḳāri (ed. Kānlari and Rowšan; cf. the earlier edition by Gehlhar) and Abu'l-Ma'ālī Naṣr-Allāh Monši (ed. Minovi; cf. the earlier edition by Qarib, see [Plate ii](#)) returned to Ebn al-Moqaffa's Arabic text for their new independent versions. Moḥammad al-Boḳāri wrote his prose version for Sayf-al-Din Ġāzi (r. 1146-49), a Zangid atabeg (see [ATĀBAK](#)) of Mosul. Naṣr-Allāh Monši composed a literary version, combining Arabic verses with Persian prose, for Bahrāmšāh (b. after 1084; d. about 1157), a sultan of the



Ghaznavids in the eastern Iranian lands.

Naṣr-Allāh Monši's literary version has dominated the Persian reception of *Kalila wa Demna* ever since, and two 13th century commentaries have been preserved (*Šarḥ-e aḳbār*, ed. Imāni). In 1260 Bahā'-al-Din Aḥmad b. Moḥammad Qāne'ī Ṭusi turned it into a mathnawi (ed. Tudivā) dedicated to his Rum Saljuq patron 'Ezz-al-Din Kaykāvus. In the late 15th century the Timurid man of letters Ḥosayn Wā'eḟ Kašefi (d. 1504-5) drew on both the Arabic version by Ebn al-Moqaffa' and the Persian version by Naṣr-Allāh Monši to write the *Anwār-e Sohayli*, which subsequently became the most popular Persian version of *Kalila wa Demna*. About a century later, Abu'l-Faẓl 'Allāmi (d. 1602) revised the *Anwār-e Sohayli* for his Moghul patron Akbar (r. 1556-1605), and this version circulated as *'Eyār-e dāneš* (*'Iār-e dāneš*). In the second half of the 20th century, there were not only the major recensions by Naṣr-Allāh Monši, Kašefi, and Abu'l-Faẓl in print, but also versions that present *Kalila wa Demna* as a classic of children's literature in the form of a mathnawi (ed. Jomhuri; ed. Faḳr Ṭabāṭabā'i, see [Plate iii](#)) or in a Persian purged of all Arabic words (ed. Ājudāni; see [Plate iv](#)).

Manuscripts. Research about the circulation of *Kalila wa Demna* in Persian literature has to consider the rupture between the oldest preserved manuscripts of the New Persian translations by Moḥammad al-Boḳāri and Naṣr-Allāh Monši and the indirect evidence for the work's popularity in Iran since the 6th century. Rudaki's version, however, will not be discussed in the following because the fragments are preserved in much more recent manuscripts (Storey/de Blois, V/1, pp. 224-26). Since in Iranian studies Persian literature is valued as a central component of Iranian identity, every answer to the question of how to connect the dots between a lost Middle Persian translation and the extant Persian versions is fraught with potential pitfalls. As a philologist, de Blois considers a lost Middle Persian translation the prototype of all subsequent versions of *Kalila wa Demna* (p. 1). He supposes that the lost Middle Persian translation was "a work consistent in style and intention" (p. 17) and clearly distinct from the *Pañcatantra* in both form and content. De Blois argues that early Persian literature was written in a straightforward, unadorned language, and observes that Naṣr-Allāh Monši's adaptation seems unusual among the preserved versions because its complex, adorned literary language is more closely related to the Sanskrit original (p. 5). In contrast, the sociologist Said Arjomand circumvents these philological issues by focusing on Ebn al-Moqaffa's role as a Persian secretary (*kāteb*) for Muslim caliphs so that



his Arabic literary output can be claimed as an expression of Iranian intellectual traditions, although it was not written in Persian (pp. 22-23).

The time-lag of several centuries between indirect evidence for the fables' circulation and the direct evidence of dated manuscripts is not a unique case within philological research. Yet the methodological issues of *Kalila wa Demna* are particularly complex, because any hypothesis about the relationship between the Middle Persian and New Persian versions must account for the intermediary Arabic and Syriac versions (for examples of conventional two-dimensional stemmata, see Chauvin; ed. 'Azzām, p. 40 [preface]; de Blois, p. 11; Grube, 1991, endpapers; *Šarḥ-e akbār*, p. 58). On the one hand, in many languages at least two versions of the fables circulated at the same time. The version of Bal'ami, for example, was contemporary to that of Rudaki, and thus Rudaki's cannot simply be plotted as a replacement of Bal'ami's. This observation raises the additional question as to whether it be more logical to assume that there were more than one Middle Persian version. On the other hand, premodern Muslim societies were linguistically diverse because they comprised ethnically and religiously diverse communities. The long entries on *Kalila wa Demna* in the bibliographies of Nadim and Katip Çelebi document that in the Islamic lands, between the 10th and the 17th century, readers could choose between different versions in several languages. It seems more appropriate – though difficult to visualize in a two-dimensional stemma – to suppose that influence among the Syriac, Arabic, Middle Persian, Persian, and Sanskrit versions was both multi-directional and repeated (cf. de Blois, p. 20 n. 2).

The older Syriac translation (ed. Schulthess) is contemporary with its source, a lost Middle Persian version. But the younger Syriac translation (ed. Wright) was made from the 8th century Arabic version by Ebn al-Moqaffa', so that the younger Syriac and the New Persian translations by Moḥammad al-Boḳāri and Naṣr-Allāh Monši are all based on Ebn al-Moqaffa's text. The oldest dated manuscripts of these five versions, at least as far as known and preserved at the beginning of the 21st century, suggest a direct relationship between manuscript survival and the changing status of Syriac, Arabic, and New Persian as prestigious literary languages in the Islamic lands. Few manuscripts of the older and the younger Syriac translations are known (Brockelmann, pp. 503-4; Grotzfeld, cols. 889-90), and the oldest copies are respectively dated to the early 16th (ed. Schulthess) and the 11th century (ed. Wright). The scanty evidence seems to correspond to the diminishing role of secular Syriac



literature during the flourishing of the ‘Abbasid caliphate (750-1258).

The much larger number of manuscripts of the Arabic version by Ebn al-Moqaffa’ (for a survey of just 30 Arabic manuscripts, see de Blois, pp. 66-72; cf. *GAL* I, pp. 151-52, and *S I*, pp. 234-35) reflects the work’s popularity among Arabic reading audiences, but there are no preserved manuscripts written before 1200 (de Blois, pp. 3-4). The oldest copy of Ebn al-Moqaffa’’s translation has a colophon with the date Jomādā II 618/July 1221 (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS arab. Aya Sofya [AS]; ed. ‘Azzām, pp. 21-25 [preface] and 283 [text]; cf. de Blois, p. 66; and ed. Minovi, p. *kāf* for the call numbers of 3 MSS arab. in the AS collection). This manuscript is almost 130 years older than that which Louis Cheikho had found in a Melkite monastery in Lebanon (MS arab., colophon dated 6 Rajab 739/18 Jan. 1339; ed. Cheikho, pp. 24-25 [preface] and 246 [text]). Wilfred Madelung (apud de Blois, p. 3 n. 4) has suggested that the absence of manuscripts written before 1200 reflects that damaged copies of secular literature were not repaired and recycled because they could be easily replaced with new copies. The continued demand among Arabic reading audiences for copies of *Kalila wa Demna* seems to explain why the fables were among the first typeset Arabic books printed in the Near East. In Egypt, where the first book in Arabic script was published by an Islamic press in 1822, Ebn al-Moqaffa’’s version has been in print at least since 1833 (ed. Cheikho, p. 6 [preface]; Brockelmann, p. 503). But from 1835 onwards the *Homāyun-nāma* (see below), a 16th century Ottoman translation of Kāšefi’s *Anwār-e Sohayli*, was also issued in Cairo (Burrell).

The oldest dated manuscripts of the complete Persian translations by Moḥammad al-Boḳāri and Naṣr-Allāh Monši were written during the lifetime of their patrons. Moḥammad al-Boḳāri’s patron Sayf-al-Din Ġazi ruled Mosul in the late 1140s, and the only known manuscript has a colophon dated Rajab 544/November 1149 (Istanbul, Topkapı Saray Library, MS pers. Y. Yazmalar 777; for the colophon, see ed. Kānlari and Rowšan, p. 20 [preface]; a barely legible facsimile is provided in Gehlhar, p. 239, cf. p. 232, who reads Şafar 544/June 1149). Although this version was written for a Turkish patron in northern Iraq, Katip Çelebi (ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, II, cols. 1507-9) did not mention Moḥammad al-Boḳāri’s version and there are not any known Ottoman translations. In contrast, the version that Naṣr-Allāh Monši dedicated to his Ghaznavid patron Bahrāmšāh became the most famous version in the Islamic lands (ibid., cols. 1508-9: *hādehi al-tarjama heya al-mašhura be’l-Kalila wa Demna fi hādā al-zamān lakinnahu aṭnabo wa-ashabo*



be'irād al-alfāz al-moġlaqa). The *Leithandschrift* of Minovi's edition (p. *yaṭ*; Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS pers. Carullah 1727) is dated 551/1156 (p. 422), shortly before the death of Bahrāmšāh in 1157. It is noteworthy that both Persian manuscripts predate the earliest dated manuscripts of their Arabic source. But books are always also valued for reasons other than their theological and artistic merits, and people do not only collect books that they actually read. A manuscript whose content was recognized to be an important work of literature might still be kept around, even though it did not any longer serve as reading matter. The geographical distribution and movement of all known manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Syriac, and Sanskrit remains to be analyzed, yet the better survival of early Persian *Kalila wa Demna* manuscripts seems to reflect the rising importance of Persian as formal literary language outside the Iranian lands from the 12th century onwards.

A comprehensive interpretation of the Arabic and Persian manuscript evidence, which includes a considerable number of illustrated manuscripts (see [KALILA wa DEMNA iii. Illustrations](#)), is impossible until reliable and statistically significant data be available, especially regarding the survival rates of religious and secular literature on the one hand and of illustrated manuscripts on the other. The practice of enhancing *Kalila wa Demna* books with images (for illustrated Islamic mss., see Grube 1990-1991; for a survey juxtaposing Islamic manuscripts with western manuscripts and early modern printed books, see the 76 examples collected in North, pp. 113-79) may be as old as the Persian translations from the 10th century. In the older *Šāh-nāma* preface, Abu Maṣṣūr mentioned that Rudaki's mathnawi was embellished with images (Qazwini p. 23 nn. 4-6; cf. Minorsky, p. 266). Arabic and Persian versions printed in the Near East before 1945 indicate that expensive versions of illustrated *Kalila wa Demna* books continued to be produced after the advent of large-scale commercial printing in the Islamic lands after 1800. In Qajar Persia, between 1845 and 1909, lithographic printing houses issued seven illustrated editions of Kāšefi's popular version and four editions of Naṣr-Allāh Monši's text, now perceived as the more classical version. Only the first three editions of *Anwār-e Sohayli*, published between 1845 and 1850, are richly illustrated with 56 black/white images each, while the other four editions, which appeared between 1857 and 1880, have just 7 to 13 images (Marzolph, 2001, pp. 233-34, cf. figs. 98, 110, 111, 114, 142 and pp. 225-27, 229 with captions). There are fewer variations between the four editions of Naṣr-Allāh Monši's *Kalila wa Demna* because the number of images range between 23 and 26 in the editions issued between 1865 and 1909 (Marzolph, 2001, p. 247, cf.



figs. 49, 75, 76, and 87 and pp. 220-24 for the accompanying captions). In the 1910s a simplified version for children was printed twice in a three volume series with the title *Aḳlāq-e asāsi* in Tehran (Moḥammadi and Qāyeni, I, pp. 264-65 and II, p. 715, 717). For these illustrated lithographs, Moḥammad ‘Ali Kātuziyān Tehrāni adapted Naṣr-Allāh Monši’s text ([Plate v](#)), combining it with the *Marzobān-nāma* and a selection from Sa‘di’s *Bustān*.

An important 20th century Arabic example of an illustrated *Kalila wa Demna* is ‘Abd-al-Wahhāb ‘Azzām’s edition of the aforementioned AS manuscript. This edition has been repeatedly reprinted, while copies of the 1st edition are extremely rare. In 1941, the Egyptian publisher Dār al-Ma‘āref celebrated its the 50th anniversary with this publication of a classical work of Arabic *adab* literature. The renowned intellectual Ṭahā Ḥosayn (1889-1973) contributed a foreword (pp. 7-12), while ‘Azzām argued in his introduction (pp. 13-51) for the superiority of the AS manuscript over the Lebanese one edited by Cheikho. ‘Azzām’s text is accompanied by 13 color plates of Persianate miniature paintings ([Plate vi](#)) by Roman Strekalovsky, a Russian artist who in the 1950s was associated with the American University in Cairo. But these Orientalist miniatures are usually overlooked whenever Arabists and Iranists discuss this edition (e.g., Sadan, p. 139 n. 14; de Blois, p. 66).

Indirect evidence. The popularity of *Kalila wa Demna* is attested by many references in Arabic and Persian sources, yet mention of the fables and their frame-tale in literature must be distinguished from historical information about the origins of the story cycle. This distinction is even more important, because the Arabic and Persian versions include a frame-tale about the fables’ Indian origins and their translation into Middle Persian. The wise Indian king Dābešlim asked the philosopher Bidpāy to tell him stories about important aspects of statecraft. When the Sasanian king Ḳosrow I Anōširvān (r. 531-78) learned about this book, he sent the physician [Borzuya](#) to the Indian king to obtain a copy of the Sanskrit text and to translate it into Middle Persian. In an exhaustive study of the frame-tale tradition, de Blois established five variations of this frame-tale (pp. 40-43), and observed that [Bozorgmehr-Boḳtagān](#), Ḳosrow’s legendary vizier, is mentioned in each. De Blois concluded that Burzoya’s authorship of the Middle Persian version remains historically possible, because it can be neither proven nor falsified (p. 58). Dābešlim and Bidpāy are literary characters that were added to the Sanskrit sources by the Middle Persian translator (pp. 22-23), while Borzuya and Bozorgmehr are historical characters, occasionally mixed up in the Arabic and Persian



manuscript tradition (pp. 48-50). Since the publication of de Blois' study in 1990, scholars have in principle accepted his position about the value of the frame-tale as historical evidence for the transmission of *Kalila wa Demna* from India to Iran (e.g., Grotzfeld, col. 889). The consensus, however, may reflect that Burzoya's travel to India offers the only available terminus ad quem for the lost Sanskrit original, as mentioned above (e.g., *Pañcatantra*, tr. Olivelle, xii; cf. Brinkhaus, pp. 56-57). For it is salient that in other classical works of Persian literature, the frame-tale is treated as a literary device for creating cohesion between otherwise unconnected stories, even if the work features a historical character, such as the Sasanian king Bahrām V Gōr (r. 421-39; see **BAHRĀM**) in *Haft Peykar* by Neẓāmi Ganjavi (d. 1209?).

The following examples of indirect evidence represent three groups of written sources: (1) the already cited Arabic bibliographies by Nadīm and Katip Çelebi; (2) Persian literature, such the forementioned *Šāh-nāma* by Abu Maṣṣūr; and (3) Islamic historiography in Arabic and Persian. Visual evidence for the popularity of *Kalila wa Demna* (Raby; cf. Marshak), like the murals in *Panjikant*, will not be considered.

(1) Bibliographies. In the second half of the 10th century, Nadīm tracked the books known in the 'Abbasid capital Baghdad in a systematic bibliography. In contrast, Katip Çelebi compiled an alphabetically arranged title catalog to record books that were extant or recorded in Ottoman libraries in Anatolia and in the first half of the 17th century. Both sources provide snapshots of the Arabic and Persian books in circulation. They are valuable historical evidence because they are finding aids, independent of interpretation. At the beginning of the 21st century, their different approaches to the linguistic and stylistic diversity that characterizes the circulation of *Kalila wa Demna* are instructive for editors who are charged with the task of making sense of significant differences among the manuscripts that all claim to present, for example, the version of Ebn al-Moqaffa' (cf. de Blois, pp. 3-4, for the 19th century editions by Silvestre de Sacy, Cheikho, and 'Azzām) or Naṣr-Allāh Monši (cf. Farzān and Mahdavi-Dāmḡāni about the editions by Qarib and Minovi).

Considering the continuing debate about that the fables' Indian origin and a Middle Persian translation, it is salient that Nadīm (p. 364, tr. pp. 715-17) already reported that people disagreed about the origins of *Kalila wa Demna*, considering the matter beyond his expertise while dutifully listing four theories: India as reported in the beginning of the work itself (*qila 'amilatho al-Hend wa-ḡabara dāleka fī ṣadr al-keṭāb*), the Arsacids (*al-moluk al-aškāniya*),



the Persians (*al-Fors*), or the wise Bozorgmehr (*Bozorjmehr al-ḥakim*). Nadim did not provide any information about the content of the work beyond its general classification into the section about evening stories and fables (*al-asmār wa'l-ḳorāfāt*, p. 363, tr. p. 712), and the omission may be due to the work's literary genre of bibliography. The entry, however, provides a vivid impression of the large variety of known, though not necessarily extant, versions. The Middle Persian source is described as having 17 or 18 chapters (sing. *bāb*). There is an unspecified number of Arabic versions, in prose and in verse, of varying length (esp. p. 364: *wa-ra'ayto anā fi nosḳa ziādat babayn* "I myself have seen in a manuscript an addition of two chapters"). Moreover, *Kalila wa Demna* was included into many anthologies and popular as abridgment (*lehādā al-ḳetāb jawāme' wa'ntezā'āt 'amelahu jamā'a*). Yet Nadim already knew that the poets of the Persians had prepared a version in verse (*wa-ḳad 'amilat šo'arā' al-'Ajam hādā al-ḳetāb še'ran*) and that the work had been translated from Arabic into Persian (*wa-noḳela elā al-loḡa al-fāresiya be'l-'arabiya*; note the different interpretation by Dodge, tr. p. 717).

Compiled about 600 years later, Katip Çelebi's entry is characterized by a similar multitude of Arabic and Persian versions, though the fables' Indian origin is no longer in doubt. The first part of the entry (II, cols. 1507-8) begins with the story of Bidpāy and Dābešlim, followed by a table of contents for a 14 chapter version, and concluded with the story of how Anōširvān sent Borzuya to India so that before the arrival of Islam Bidpāy's book had been translated from Sanskrit into Persian. The remainder of the entry is reserved for a survey of translators and patrons, from the Arabic version by Ebn al-Moḳaffa' to the Ottoman versions composed by his contemporaries. The modern editions include an Ottoman abridgment by Osmanzade, who died 1136/1724 (ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, II, col. 1509) or 1139/1726 (ed. Flügel, V, p. 239), which must be a later addition to the manuscripts. Yet Katip Çelebi's survey does not provide information about any changes in the number of chapters, giving thus the impression that the changes in language and style did not substantially alter the work's content. The Persian versions by Rudaki, Naṣr-Allāh Monši, and Kāšefi are mentioned, and only the Moghul recension *'Eyār-e dāneš* is missing. In addition, the reader finds cross-references under *Anwār-e Sohayli* (ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, I, col. 194; missing from Flügel's edition) and *Homāyun-nāma* (ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, II, col. 2046); the latter is an Ottoman translation of Kāšefi's *Anwār-e Sohayli* by Ali Çelebi (Vāsi Alisi, d. 1543; cf. Eleanor Sims in Grube, 1991, pp. 119-23; Burrell) and dedicated to Süleyman Qanuni (r. 1520-66).



After 1697, when Antoine Galland (1646-1715) posthumously published Herbelot's French adaptation of *Kašf al-zonun* under the title of *Bibliothèque orientale*, Katip Çelebi's interpretation of the circulation of *Kalila wa Demna* became widely known among European Orientalists. But Barthélmy d'Herbelot (1625-95) divided Katip Çelebi's entry "Kalila wa Demna" into three entries, reorganizing the bibliographical information. Ali Çelebi's "Homaïoun Nameh" (p. 456) became the main entry, while Kāšefi's "Anuar Sohaili" (p. 118) and Naşr-Allāh Monşi's "Calilah u Damnāh" (p. 245) were minor entries. This division reflected that among European Orientalists, toward the end of the 17th century, Ottoman (Plate vii) and Persian literature was much better known than Arabic literature because Ottoman and Persian were the administrative languages of the Ottomans and the Safavids. Already in 1698 the first partial translation of *Anwār-e Sohayli* became available to French reading audiences, when *Les fables de Pilpay: Philosophie indien, ou la conduite des rois* was published in Paris.

(2) Literature. Among the references in Persian prose and poetry, the mention of the frame-tale in both the *Šāh-nāma* preface by Abu Maşur al-Ma'mari and in the *Šāh-nama* by Ferdowsi has received intense scrutiny (e.g., de Blois) because of the *Šāh-nāma*'s central role in Persian literature. In the older *Šāh-nāma* preface (Qazwini, pp. 21-23; cf. Minorsky, pp. 265-66), Abu Maşur uses the story of how *Kalila wa Demna* became available to Persian reading audiences as an example highlighting the central role of high-ranking patronage for the promotion of literature. Thanks to Anuşirvān, Ma'mun, and Naşr b. Aḥmad the stories are translated from Indian to Persian, from Persian to Arabic, and from Arabic to Persian. In other words, for Abu Maşur *Kalila wa Demna* serves as a precedence for his own work. But in Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāma*, the story about the fables' Indian origins (VIII, pp. 361-73) occurs toward the end of the mathnawi, during the reign of Nuşinravān, since both Borzuya and Bozorgmehr are associated with the reign of Ƙosrow I Anōşirvān. The origin of *Kalila wa Demna* offers yet another occasion to examine a ruler's behavior towards his courtiers.

Passing references to *Kalila wa Demna* in Persian literature indicate that the fables were so popular that its content had become proverbial. In *Tāriḳ-e Mas'udi* the Ghaznavid historian Abu'l-Faẓl Bayhaqi (995-1077) cited two qaşidas by Abu Ḥanifa Eskāfi (2nd half of 11th century; cf. Storey/de Blois, V/1, pp. 64-65), each of which has an allusion to the fables. In the first, the thorough study of *Kalila wa Demna* is considered one way of learning that dishonesty is



not rewarded (p. 363 lines 5-6: *nakard hargez kas bar farib o ħilat sud / magar Kalila o Demna naḳvānda-i dah bār*). In the second qaṣida, Dābešlim is recalled to illustrate the behavior of gloating enemies (p. 493, lines 3-4: *ħāsed emruz ĉenin me-tawāri gašt o komuš / di hami bāz nadānast-mi az Dābešlim*).

(3) Islamic historiography. Historians mentioned *Kalila wa Demna* in three different contexts: the *meḥna*, India, and the Sasanians. While they classified the fables as a work of literature which originated before Islam and outside the Arab and Iranian lands, references to the story cycle itself are always positive.

In his universal history, the polymath Ṭabari (839-923) made a single passing reference to *Kalila wa Demna* during the events of the year 225/839-40, towards the end of the *meḥna* (II, 1309; tr. XXXIII, pp. 187-88). In this passage the fables are classified as Persian advice literature (*adab men ādāb al-‘ajam*), and their popularity is adduced as a defense against the charge of blasphemy (*kofr*). In the year 225/839-40, the Persian general Afšīn (d. 841) was accused of owning a blasphemous book which he had adorned with gold, jewels, and satin (*ketāb ‘andaka qad zayyantahu be’l-dahab wa’l-jawhar wa’l-dibāj fihi al-kofr be’llāh*). Afšīn explained that he inherited the book with Persian advice literature in this condition from his father (*hādā ketāb wareṭohu ‘an abi fihi adab men ādāb al-‘ajam ... fa-taraktahu ‘alā ħālehi*), and reminded the judge that he himself owned similarly adorned books, such as the *Kalila wa Demna* (*ka-ketāb Kalila wa Demna wa-ketāb Mazdak fi manzeleka*). It is noteworthy that *Kalila wa Demna* is not mentioned in connection with the reign of Ḳosrow I Anōšīrvān, because Ṭabari compiled in his annals important information about Sasanian history.

The Baghdadi geographer Ya‘qubi (d. after 905) summarized the contents of *Kalila wa Demna* in the section about the kings of India in his *Ta‘riḳ* (I, pp. 92-106; Pers. tr. I, pp. 102-116). Ya‘qubi, however, did not establish a patron-author relationship between Dābešlim and Bidpāy, and instead reported that Bidpāy composed the didactic work during the reign of Dābešlim (I, pp. 97-98; Pers. tr. I, p. 107). Ya‘qubi’s version comprises ten chapters (I, pp. 98-99; Pers. I, tr. pp. 107-9), and the section provides no information whatsoever about Persian or Arabic translations. Accordingly, the fables are not mentioned later in the work, when Ya‘qubi reports about the death of Ebn al-Moqaffa‘ (II, pp. 442-43) in the section about the reign of the second ‘Abbasid caliph Maṣṣur.

In the first half of the 11th century, the polymath Abu’l-Rayḥān Biruni (d. after



1050) mentioned *Kalila wa Demna* in his encyclopedia of India: *Ketāb fi taḥqīq le'l-Hend men maqūla maqbūla fī'l-'aql aw marḍūla* (Book concerning the investigation of India comprising statements reasonable or unreasonable). Biruni ended his survey of the books of the Indians with a passage about the *Pañcatantra* (p. 123; tr. I, p. 159), which he used for accusing Ebn al-Moqaffa' of being both a Manichean and a bad translator. Biruni begins the passage with an expression of humility, stating that he could not translate the *Pañcatantra* (*be-woddi in konto atamakkanu ketāb Pañc Tantra*). He mentioned that the work is known outside India as *Kalila wa Demna* (*wa-howa al-ma'ruf 'endanā be-ketāb Kalila wa Demna*), and described the fables' way into Arabic as a back and forth between Persian and Sanskrit, and then between Arabic and Persian (*fa-'enna-hu taraddada bayna al-fāresiya wa'l-hendiya ṭomma al-'arabiya wa'l-fāresiya*). But the introductory humility topos is now turned against the fables' translators. Biruni raises doubts about the reliability of these translators in general (*'alā alsenat qawm lā yo'men taḡriroh om eyyāho*) and of Ebn al-Moqaffa' in particular, since he had added the story about Borzuya (*ka-'Abd-Allāh ben al-Moqaffa' fī ziādatehi bab Borzuya*) to his Arabic translation. While there is a long tradition of accusing Ebn al-Moqaffa' of having been a Manichean (Guidi), Biruni is alone in praising the Indian original to fault its Arabic translator Ebn al-Moqaffa'.

The Ghaznavid historian 'Abd-al-Ḥayy b. al-Ḥaḥḥāk Gardizi (first half of the 11th century) combined in his dynastic chronicle *Zayn al-akbār* the pre-Islamic history of Persia with the Islamic history of Khurasan until the middle of the 11th century. Gardizi mentioned *Kalila wa Demna* in connection with the reign of Ḳosrow I Anōšīrvān (pp. 31-33). Bozorgmehr is the vizier of Nušīrvān-e 'Adel, and it is one of the vizier's achievements that he brought the fables from India to Iran (p. 33). It cannot be a coincidence that both Ferdowsi and Gardizi treat the Middle Persian translation of *Kalila wa Demna* as an important event of Sasanian history, though it is not clear how frame-tale and indirect evidence in both literature and historiography might have influenced each other over time. The written evidence suggests that by the 10th century *Kalila wa Demna* had become an important topos of Sasanian patronage of Middle Persian literature for those men of letters who wrote Persian literature and historiography for noble patrons in the Iranian lands.



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