# From Arabic to Persian and Halfway Back Again: Naṣr Allāh Munshī's *Kalīla and Dimna*

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# About this Lecture

- We will explore a version of *Kalīla and Dimna*, the classic book of fables that was translated, in some form, into virtually every literary language of the Old World.
- My focus is on the Persian rendition by Naṣr Allāh Munshī, written ca. 540/1146 under Ghaznavid patronage.
- Naṣr Allāh's version was based on the Arabic of Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. 139/757), but the text is <u>greatly enriched</u> with quotes from the Qur'an, *ḥadīth*, Arabic and Persian poetry, etc.
- As influential as this work was within the Persian literary tradition, its reception has been surprisingly complicated...



# Stronger Discourse around Classical Persian Poetry

- We have, for better or worse, a framework for the development of classical Persian poetry.
- In the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> cs., there is the age of the panegyric ode (*qaṣīda*), epic/historical verse (esp. the *Shāhnāma*), and the quatrain (*du-baytī*).
- From the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> c., we see the flourishing of the verse romance (in *maśnavī* form), e.g., by Niẓāmī Ganjavī (d. ca. 605/1209); and mystical narrative verse, e.g., by 'Aṭṭār (d. ca. 618/1221) and Rūmī (d. 671/1273).
- Also in the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> c., the love lyric (*ghazal*) rises to popularity, esp. via Sanā'ī (d. probably in 525/1131).
- Finally,\* in the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the *ghazal* is elaborated further by Rūmī, Saʿdī (d. ca. 690/1291), and Ḥāfiẓ (d. ca. 792/1390).
- There are also textbooks that make teaching this straightforward...

# A MILLENNIUM OF CLASSICAL PERSIAN POETRY

A GUIDE TO THE READING & UNDERSTANDING OF PERSIAN POETRY FROM THE TENTH TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY





# A HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE

V

General Editor – Ehsan Yarshater

# Persian Prose

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#### Relative Fragmentation of Classical Prose

- *Despite an abundance of excellent scholarship*, it is more difficult even to speak of classical Persian prose as a single category.
- With classical poetry, we recognize a diversity of forms, genres, etc., but there is nonetheless an overarching field and discourse.
- What would be included under the umbrella of classical Persian prose literature? All forms of prose writing? Would that be useful? Or should we draw more restrictive boundaries?
- Scholars studying Persian prose texts of various kinds are often working in rather separate niches. Some might not consider themselves to be in the field of Persian literature *per se*.

#### Classical Persian Historical Writing

- Histories represent arguably the dominant subcategory of prose writing in the early centuries.
- Scholars who have worked in this area include Julie Scott Meisami, Sholeh Quinn, Jahānbakhsh Savāqib, Tilmann Trausch, and Charles Melville.
- Prominent works include Balʿamīʾs adaptation of the history of al-Ṭabarī (mid to late 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> c.); the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* (mid to late 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> c.); and the *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* (470/1077).
- Notably, specialists in Persian historiography are often focused more on history than on the literary dimension.



#### CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

Louise Marlow

# MEDIEVAL MUSLIM MIRRORS FOR PRINCES

An Anthology of Arabic, Persian and Turkish Political Advice

#### Courtly Advice Literature

- This is another key category of Persian prose writing, from the early period onward.
- Prominent works include the Qābūs-nāma; Niẓāmī ʿArūżī, Chahār maqāla; Niẓām al-Mulk, Siyāsat-nāma (a.k.a. Siyar almulūk); and, in a sense, Saʿdī's Būstān and Gulistān.
- Researchers active in this area include Louise Marlow, Nasrin Askari, Mohsen Zakeri, and Neguin Yavari.
- Courtly advice literature *has* attracted significant attention from scholars within the field of Persian literature studies.

# Classical Persian Scientific Writing

- This is one of the more capacious and difficult-to-define subcategories of Persian prose literature.
- Noteworthy texts include, in the field of geography, the *Ḥudūd* al-ʿālam (late 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> c.); in the field of medicine, the *Zakhīra-yi Khwārazmshāhī* (ca. 1110 CE) of Ismāʿīl Gurgānī; and, in the field of Persian prosody, Shams-i Qays Rāzī's al-Muʿjam fī maʿāyīr ashʿār al-ʿajam (mid 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> c.).
- Scholars working in this area include Matthew Melvin-Koushki, Justine Landau, Ali Gheissari, Živa Vesel, and John Perry.
- Scientific writing can be defined so broadly that some constituent genres would be of clear interest to literature scholars, while others would be the domain of, e.g., historians of science.



Routledge Handbook on the Sciences in Islamicate Societies

Practices from the 2nd/8th to the 13th/19th Centuries

Edited by Sonja Brentjes Associate Editor: Peter Barker, Assistant Editor: Rana Brentjes

# Authors with Prose Works in Both Persian and Arabic

These are just a few of the most prominent examples.

- Abū al-Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (d. ca. 1050 CE): wrote mostly in Arabic, but see his Persian work on astrology, *Kitāb al-Tafhīm li-awā'il ṣināʿat al-tanjīm*
- Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111): has a few Persian works, most notably the *Kīmiyā-yi saʿādat*
- Nașir al-Din al-Țusi (d. 672/1274): the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* is, of course, in Persian

How to arrange these categories is a problem which has cost me a good deal of thought. Nearly all those who have written on Persian literature have paid an-Excessive attention devoted amount of attention which I regard as excessive to Persian poetry. and disproportionate to poetry and belles-lettres, and have almost entirely ignored the plainer but more positive fields of history, biography, theology, philosophy and the ancient sciences. If we understand literature in the narrower sense as denoting those writings only, whether poetry or prose, which have artistic form, there is, no doubt, some justification for this view; but not if we take it in the wider sense of the manifestation in writing of a nation's mind and intellectual activities. Still, in deference to the prevalent view, we may begin this general survey of the recent literature of Persia with some consideration of its poetry.

# Privileging of Poetry over Prose

- In practice, the terms "classical Persian literature" and "classical Persian poetry" are often used interchangeably.
- It would be a losing battle to try to counteract this lopsided focus; but we can recognize that it hampers our ability to conceptualize and study classical Persian prose.

# Difficulty of Contextualizing Nașr Allāh's *Kalīla and Dimna*

- The lack of an overarching framework for the development of Persian prose literature enhances the difficulty of placing a work like Nașr Allāh Munshī's *Kalīla and Dimna* in context.
- Nașr Allāh was working in the mid 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> c.—not the very earliest period—yet, within a postulated category of "artistic prose" (*naśr-i fannī*) or "ornamented prose" (*naśr-i maṣnū*<sup>c</sup>), his book is viewed as a foundational text.
- We can make some progress, however, by situating Naṣr Allāh's work within the textual tradition of *Kalīla and Dimna*, and by paying attention to his borrowing from the conventions of Arabic *adab* literature.



#### Kalīla and Dimna: Basic Details

- The origins of this book of (mostly animal) fables lie in Sanskrit texts, esp. the *Pañcatantra* (*Five Treatises*) and the *Mahābhārata*.
- Over time, the contents of the book grew such that it contains—depending on the version—roughly fifteen fable-chapters.
- *Kalīla and Dimna* was, as far as we know, translated into Middle Persian in the late Sasanian period.
- The translation into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> (d. ca. 139/757) is a crucial moment: this version leads to almost all further translations.
- With the loss\* of the Middle Persian text, the Arabic also became the basis for translations "back" into New Persian.



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#### New Persian Versions of *Kalīla and Dimna*

- Prose, from the Arabic, by Abū al-Fażl Balʿamī (d. 329/940), under Samanid patronage; not extant
- Verse, by the poet Rūdakī (d. ca. 329/940–41), also under Samanid patronage; snippets extant
- Prose, from the Arabic, by Naṣr Allāh Munshī, under Ghaznavid patronage, ca. 540/1146; ed. Mīnuvī
- Prose, from the Arabic, by Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, for a Seljuk *atābeg* of Mosul, late 1140s CE; ed. Khānlarī and Rawshan
- Verse, based on Nașr Allāh's version, by Qāni'ī Ṭusī, in Seljuk Anatolia, ca. 658/1260; ed. Todua
- Prose, based partly on Nașr Allāh's version, by Ḥusayn Vāʿiẓ Kāshifī, in Timurid Harāt, end of  $9^{th}/15^{th}$  c.; ed. Rawshan

#### Special Features of Nașr Allāh's Translation

- The stories are translated from the Arabic into an elegant Persian prose style.
- Quotes from other sources, in Arabic and Persian, are integrated extensively. Naṣr Allāh often use quotes to illustrate points and buttress arguments (i.e., as *shawāhid*).
- Many of the references are to qur'anic verses and *aḥādīth*.
- A large amount of Arabic and Persian poetry is also quoted; most can be traced to well-known poets, but some is original.
- This mixing of prose and verse, of narrative and asides, of material from diverse genres, is characteristic of *adab* literature.



"What should be stressed, however, is that the prose style of the Persian Kalila wa Demna did not evolve gradually from some earlier form of prose. Rather, it was invented by Nașr-Allāh, who, drawing on his own family and administrative backgrounds, created it. The idea that all literary innovations must evolve over time, a relic of 19<sup>th</sup>-century habits of thought, underestimates the profound impact that an individual may have upon one or more aspects of his society. Nașr-Allāh was such an individual."

– Mahmoud Omidsalar, Encyclopædia Iranica

# Nașr Allāh qua Singular Figure

- It is difficult to think of Naṣr Allāh's way of writing as emerging from a tradition of Persian prose literature.
- His weaving-in of references to scripture, poetry, etc.; his seamless shifts between Persian and Arabic; his use of what was, for the time, ornate sentence structure: we do not have much sense of precedent for these features.
- Looking to the Arabic tradition, however, might help.



# A Profusion of Prefaces

- The first "real" chapter in *Kalīla and Dimna* is that of "The Lion and the Ox" (*al-asad wa-l-thawr*), but this tends to come after at least four prefatory/introductory sections.
- There is, in some versions, a preface attributed to one "'Alī ibn al-Shāh al-Fārisī," or "Bihnūd ibn Sahwān."
- The preface of Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> is almost always included.
- Also standard is the story of the voyage of Burzūya, the Iranian physician sent to India as an emissary of the Sasanians to retrieve the book of *Kalīla and Dimna*.
- Burzūya's autobiography is presented in a separate chapter.
- Plus other prefaces, depending on the specific version...

#### Nașr Allāh's Preface: Overview

- Naṣr Allāh added an unusually substantial new preface to *Kalīla and Dimna*; it is comparable in length to some of the longer fable-chapters in the book.
- There are three main purposes of this section: to praise the Ghaznavid dynasty and dedicate the work to Sultan Bahrāmshāh (r. 510–47/1117–52); to explain the motivations behind the translation project; and to argue for the value of *Kalīla and Dimna* as a work of practical ethics, esp. within a framework of just Islamic kingship.
- As with all chapters in the book, but perhaps to a greater degree than elsewhere, Naṣr Allāh writes in an "adorned" style and adds many quotes from the Qur'an, *ḥadīth*, poetry, etc.



إزالله وملايكتة يصلون على لبتي ياتها الذين المتواصلوا عليه وسلول تسلي وجوز بايت كدايزمك مخلما شد ومآس ايزامت مهه أفاقح بنابرس وصدت المخب لديكي دمعجات باقى تجهانيا نرا معلوم شود فارسوا ملايته عايد وسلم زويت لحالارض شارقتها ومخاريها وسيتبلخ فلل حتى مازوى ليمنها خلفا مصطغ باعليه السلام درامرونع وجروعفد دسي اد وفرمانى مطلق إرزابى داشت ومطاوعت الشا نزا بطاعت ونير وطاعت وسواعليه السكام حجتى حددابيد جيث فالعروط بالفالك آمنوا اطبعوا التد واطبعوا الرئسوك وادنى الامرمنكم جو تنفيا شرايع واظهار شعايج وبع سياست بادشاها زحين داربرروى روز كار مخار ماند ومدت آن مقرون بالمهارع رعام صورت نبندد واشارت جضب نبوت بدان الحرسة الربن ولللك تواجمان ، ويقيق بالدشاخ يمن وبادشامي مع شرجند بالدماد شامان اسلام سايد أفريكا دند عزاسمه لدروى ذمين مبورعدك ايشا نحال كسرد وبيبت فو ايشان آبادابيجهان وتألف اهوامتع تويا شدكه بغير تاؤيا حلاوت عبادت آن الرسواندبود كدمهاب شمشيركا واكرابزم علجت بررسيا وت رغابة فيامتح يظام كارها كسيت لمشتى واختلاف كلمت درميان المت سرالم وجنانك درطبايع مركبست هركسى براىخويش دومهات اسلام فلاخلت

Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, verse 56

ḥadīth

Sūrat al-Nisā', verse 59

(pseudo-) *hadīth* 

This is fol. 2v from Ms. or. oct. 4046, dated 683/1284, at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. The ms. features interlinear translation of most (non-qur'anic) Arabic quotes.

zuwiyat lī al-arḍ fa-raʾaytu mashāriqahā wa-maghāribahā wa-sa-yablugh mulk ummatī mā zuwiya lī minhā

"The earth was shown to me, and I saw its east and its west, and the kingdom of my community will reach what was shown to me."

yā ayyuha lladhīna āmanū aṭīʿu l-lāha wa-aṭīʿu r-rasūla wa-uli l-amri minkum

"O believers, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you."

– Sūrat al-Nisā', verse 59

bi-hīch ta'vīl ḥalāvat-i ʿibādat rā ān aṡar na-tavānad būd kih mahābat-i shamshīr rā

"The sweetness of worship cannot in any sense have the same effect as fear of the sword."

...

al-dīn wa-l-mulk taw'amān kīsh va pādshāhī ham-shikam-and "Religion and kingship are twins."

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*dīn bī-mulk żāyiʿ ast va mulk bī-dīn bāṭil* "Religion without rule will go to waste, and rule without religion is baseless."

inna l-lāha ya'muru bi-l-ʿadli wa-l-iḥsāni wa-ītāʾi dhi l-qurbā, wa-yanhā ʿani l-faḥshāʾi wa-l-munkari wa-l-baghy; yaʿiẓukum, laʿallakum tadhakkarūn

"Surely God bids to justice and good-doing and giving to kinsmen; and He forbids indecency, dishonor, and insolence, admonishing you, so that haply you will remember."

– Sūrat al-Naḥl, verse 90

*pas az kutub-i sharʿī, dar muddat-i ʿumr-i ʿālam, az ān pur-favāyid-tar kitābī na-karda-and* "After the books of religious law, in the span of the life of the world, they have not made a book more beneficial than this."

*siyāsat-i pādshāhān rā dar żabṭ-i mamālik bi-shunūdan-i ān madadī va malāzī tavānad būd* "For the governance of kings, in controlling their domains, there could be assistance and refuge in hearing [these fables]."

and in a لواندبود وهم وساط

ت شرع در مرتعم علم ازان برفوايد ترضاي فرو اند بنا،

فت دلست و

kudām fažīlat az īn farā-tar kih az ummat bi-ummat va millat bi-millat rasīd va mardūd na-gasht

"What excellence could be higher than this, that [the book] passed from religious community to religious community, and from nation to nation, and was not rejected?"

#### Reviewing Nașr Allāh's Argument

- 1. Religion cannot flourish in the world without being joined to political authority (nor could kingship have a legitimate basis other than through religion).
- 2. Justice is the most important virtue for rulers to cultivate.
- 3. In order to be instructed in the path of justice and sound governance, one should study *Kalīla and Dimna*, a uniquely valuable repository of practical ethical wisdom.





wa-khayru jalīsin fi z-zamāni kitābū
va bihtarīn ham-nishīn dar zamāna kitāb ast
"The best table-companion of the age is a book"
– al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965)

tarjuma karda āyad va dar basṭ-i sukhan va kashf-i ishārāt ishbāʿī ravad

*Kalīla and Dimna* "should be translated and, in the explanation of its speech and the unveiling of its allusions, a sufficient measure should be reached."



tā īn kitāb rā kih zubda-yi chand hazār sāl ast iḥyāʾī bāshad va mardumān az favāyid va manāfiʿ-i ān maḥrūm na-mānand

"That this book, which is the choice extract of a few thousand years, might be revived, and [that] people will not be deprived of its uses and benefits..."

# Nașr Allāh's Use of Arabic Sources

- Naṣr Allāh mentions the *Ghurar al-siyar* of al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1038). It is not farfetched to suggest that he would also have been familiar with the *Yatīmat al-dahr*.
- Also cited explicitly is the *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik*—almost certainly the work by al-Iṣṭakhrī (d. after 340/951–2).
- The pseudo-*hadīth* that "religion and kingship are twins" *may* have been taken from al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' ʿulūm al-dīn* (though there are various sources for it).
- Similarly, the anecdotes that Naṣr Allāh relates about the caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136– 58/754–75) are probably drawn from al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), or from Balʿamī (d. 990s CE).
- Many of the lines of classical Arabic poetry quoted in this version of *Kalīla and Dimna* are found in the *Dīwān al-ḥamāsa* of Abī Tammām (d. 231/845–6). Naṣr Allāh may have used this anthology, or something more recent that also draws on it.

The Ascetic and the Guest (*al-nāsik wa-l-ḍayf* )

- This fable, which occurs late in the book, is about the folly of trying to abandon one's proper position in the world to follow a different lifestyle.
- A pious ascetic is visited by a traveler. The guest is so taken with the ascetic's Hebrew tongue that he begs to learn it.
- This is a mistake: the guest will not be able to learn a new language, and he risks losing his mother tongue in the process.
- To emphasize this point, the ascetic tells the guest the story of a crow that tried, and failed, to learn to walk like a partridge.
- There is a broader sociopolitical message about maintaining the order of things—and Nașr Allāh seems interested in this.



فممض الملوك والماتر بإجل الطبقة الشفا سال اهل الطبقة الغلب واستاق الاق وفساد مثلادب ومنا بقس للسم للكرم مزالاشا فدالعدي لميتالي سمال للخطر المسم من مع الملك القعى العالية والمناب فل الشج المطب الله والفلسونيا لحال لناملخ العنيب كمتا للك متال البيلقوب الهااللك عست لف سنه وملكت لامالهم السبعه واعطب منكل تبسا وللغه فى مدورٌ مناك بوعدك قو عبن منه مل ومشاعنه مزليها والتدريد فأبه وديحل فنك الحلم والعلم وركامك لعتل وفسط وت مال لباس والحود والتق مال لعقل والعوا والسه ولا يوجد فى دالك معت ولاد قولك سعط ولافى تعلك عيب وجعنت لغوه واللهن ولاتط جباناعنا للتاولاميول لعدد مماينوب ولاشا ومدين وت الاسور وعلمت لك جواب ماسالتى منه منها واحمدت لا ع دلا كلدواى ونطرى وسلع مطنتح للناس ففى حتاك مافتر جتم يحس الشممناف عال فكر وعدائ بماوجن المصع المدايسة الاس المحير باسعد بمس الطيع لماق ولاالنامح باولا بالمحدس للمفع

فيرجع على مرتقل دلك وعده ما مصربه واست سفيك لجن اد معتنا لحن وزهدت فعالاتحد ومنزت فسك عنه ورصت ماكد وكان التاسك محلم للتان لعرابيه ما سعرز الفيف كلاندواعيه متجلد نتعلد وعالج يستعطر للألاما المحسنة فتال الناسا لصنة مااحلك انتع وما يتكتب كلارك وسكلف تعلم كلام العدايية ما وفع وللع موقالي الغيب وكن كان ولك فقالب الماسك رعوا انعرابًا لايحة جلدوهى مدرج واعجته مسبنها وطبع فيغلها ورلص يفسه علهادام الدرعلى حكامها فالمصرف لى مسببته التي كال علمها فاداهو لا معطها مقادخيران مترددام مدرك ماطلب دامحسز لياكان فى مديد حطالها ص ت الم هد المثل لعلم الم نظيو ف تركت الشا لم كالمشت علم ما لا بالالاس كلام العدابية لاشرك وان سالدى كان فى مدكمن غبره فاندورة بالعدحاهلا من طليت لامه مالاشبه ولسرين اهله ولم دركماباق والالحدم ف له ولاده موريع له مركال لليلسى لللك فالولاه ويخله تعاهدهم الرعيد في هدا واستماهد أكوم واستوا تدين لانستل الناتوب يعفل لمنا ذل وتركم مهاما فدادمو وجد المعايش

دماكان صغ مص وفاعن خللناس لحذ معبد كاللبوه المرابعة ف لتسف شبلها حتى تركت إكل للحوم ويتركت اكل لمثان لعول الشعهن واصلت الداده والتسك مالناس الجنا لنطوبى والرج غيهم مانيت صل ما لا رضا ولفسك بلا رصه لفترك و لا مد لذ البعاد (هوالعد ل العل ومالاسهاندوتغالى ورج للناشل يعنى باس اللبوه والشعهر مال ديستلم الملاف لسد ما الفلسوف قد معت معاليك مادارايت لن حدشهن يدع علدالدى يتاكله وللق يع صعنا دلال لى غير س الاعال ولامت كه وسرع لمالدى كانكسينه مصر صراناها ل ورد فارعوال المحاف مارمك لكرج ماسك فاحاق صبت وماسولا بام فدع لانا الخصية مترلط وفنة عدهم فاكلام متصعافتا لالعبب الناسة مالحلى هدا المن واطيبه ولستدا دضا التربسكها تادين كجرابخ انداد لمكى عند ناقد البينا يعن من الما دما نه من من معد على ليري مز لما وفاحا حده الى لتم وخامته وما مد والعسو فعال له الفلاحة سعدا مراجاح الي مالاعد ولاحد علالمتبعنه

Arabic text of "The Ascetic and the Guest"; British Library, MS Or. 4044, foll. 134v – 135v

كە كى جىنىت بىلى كەر بىدى كى تىت بىلى كىند ىخى مىغان خادارىد بىلىغ ابن اشارت دىدى مارىد واين خارىب را مىغت داي عقل دىلىب كى كارىد دىدا كارىما يەر بىي دىبارى بى تىف آن مىند دەر تىر ھود ئا دەن مات دان تىن بىر دىراب دىكران دواندان دى فاخل و حوالى كى الىماى ايشان بىلى دىكر يى كى كى دى تىت كى بىند دور دىد با داخرت از بىمات بىكر دىكى سى كى لىذ ان تى اللە نىغالى

تكان فريفة سؤدوجون فسطحوة لمره وكمز آن الثونغ الدوز ازانكاه دارد فالم التي التي التي المه عليه وسب مزيدق مزيير فليلنمه واذاشال انمغ لمهمكا آز باهدیت دای رسند که جکن مایت جکان لف اورد ماند هدر زمبز کنوج مردی مرک و منعق ودرد بالج بالحى بالمداشة ويطاعت وعيادت gly مكاوية بارو يود بمن الم حكت ونسوم حكامة وزوزكماذ برامط أخبرات وشفيد مصلح ان غرون واددوشتى دبا وكسب حرام منتع ومعصوم فاز وضمت را وغنت ونفاق مشل منتجاب فعالم لوة وقد بي خفاها الزالسي دالمادي خلددهن خراى دده مرجع اوست بشناى دد روركصباوى والمهاومهماوسد ناهدناري تمام ومراعاتي وافر واحب دانت واهفزاز واستعشا دستي ومازرفت مناكافار سنادر سندكمان جاياى ومعضد كنام طبب مهاز جاب دادکه برجال\_\_\_\_عاشفان مارود به ظاهرى بان اطن وقوف تتوان باف وهركى عافل وارفذم درراه عشرى اذ ومعضدا وتضادوشت الثلاثك بر . كرداندرادي فراق ويوذ ومقامات منفاوت سردين ىكتد انظر زفيلة دل افكد وخلالك لن سعادت إف طفاد زاى فرمان درميان بد والااد مان مرزجرى بندم ور

بانتى الى المام أنى اذبجك درجله فصد من درادت وسبعز مزامات ونهابت تبالنيت نفادف يجدعن فاي بنها مك شرود جناريهفاومت برداخت د ناهد فرمود افترى فريا اورد ند معرد وازان کادی در ممان کف لذیمبوه دست وا دز الان ماانىر افنەشىي كويدى مجنانغاددو بفترادي بلموافق ننبت ودران بلادانواع فواكه والوان تراركه مرك راجرالله لذق تمام وج في تالاف مي فودور ال انتخباطاهن ناهدك التمهم وط يوادوني تولدنوذ وجودان ع مع دامج الت ونك مت مشمر دازداك زرورجرى بود وبان ينجره فتعماد وادراك سعادت بشنج بشنالد واكد فرابوده سنودكه فماعف المرجو منوده است وازمع لدوم فانغ ذلبيل وفعد دمات وتصعير بمنتث وان المدينان عبرى تحرف فتى ودى شرم وعجا ورفق لطب داست مهما والجدب المحيرانة وخاست كمان لغت ادوى المودد فنستبروى فاكرد وهنجتم بددو راد صلفار بالطي تديد معادت ازنابك زمشنيده بكداخة ودنومور زات كرزانك دركام بجزيه ززبان شيخرى نيئت فالالبي عليه عليه وسيلم ازم لبان الجرا مقع يحم لمابن مرابع الماموذي وابن النظر الجانك ادمرون توسيسترد

First half of the Persian text of "The Ascetic and the Guest"; Pers. MS 68, Univ. of Manchester (616/1219)

باجاف عمد فكرداني جرا بفدمعرف دراك رام من للطفت واجرديري ودرخيات ابتواب كلف تحت احترد امروز كه وشيعك مودف ودالف صحبت حاصل امذه ابيذ الإشفف فرماى وافتتراح مراباه فنزاز لمغ تهاى فالف كرمت بذوا دائينه كردد وكل كرزان جمشكورز باند فانطح النع سعي فابه مرز اللاك الظام ازد واجهكم وكذاذامازمت عندك كاجة عابت بالابام مانعلاهما ناهده فران دادم وبرب بطت ماهات يمام والإابن نرغت صادفت وعربت درامط النصم الخ مبتر كح ددداد فصحت بجاكاد فدوه شوذ ود وتغطيم فلفتر جد ومبالعن واجربهم ممان دوى بدان اورد ومرفى دراد مفرط بدان دباضت داذاخر روزى زاهدا وناكف كه كارى دستواروركى عظم بن حرفة المنظر المواقلة واقدام والكليز عوط الفقل ممان حاب داذكه اعدابات ف درصات وجالت ارتنابج نادايت وكسب هنر مصحح وتجسيل فأبل ذان نشان فذوهاف ودليل فالم تشن المجواجة ارتبوك لت بوك بجوند اذ وبوذجوى نامدلف من شرايط مناصف بجاى وردم ومى شما دابج عراب ابريج مدت بندامت كمشد جانك ازان زاع كه بتحت ركلك

Second half of the Persian text of "The Ascetic and the Guest"; Pers. MS 68, Univ. of Manchester (616/1219)

ى مرف مهان مشبد كم حكونه است ان كف اورد وابد

برفن شكوفه بمزيري ذريلع جونانك سيناره كذر كاه كشان ل

خراميدن اود ددل ناغ جى ش كد وار فاسب جركات وجست اطراف

اواز وبرجهط باع كابوا بحابين للفات فماست وهزاب وازا

مُانا بَد ڪَالِيسَ فَوْمَةً فَلِلْمُسْتَبَعَمُ وَالأَنْفِ ظَلْ اُعْلَيْنَكِي

درجله خابيت كه انزاك موزد بخر مالى كستبد فبرانز كلك

بوبيذ نغنل وباموخ وزف إنفوب فرامي خردخانك

ه م کونه زخوع با از مکن کست وازمشل زان اورد م البانی ۸

وغبرى مينواني الموخت وكعنه الذجا هل زطلامو البيت لمخضبن

زادر کاری ایدارد که بیشه ایلخف کابنی وموافق نیب ونایند

وابنابيجم واجباط باذشاهان منعلو ايت وهروال لماور

بضبط مالك وترقيه وعايا وترقب دوستان وقع دشتان

بالتددين معانى تخطى قطلارم شرد مذك فازدله كالعل

وبكهم رغد شرداد رورن جرارارد وخد دابك اني معان

ربخ صابع وشعى باطل بىز كى ئەنە نان اسلاف ى كارى

لفاحم عادقها سجران حماد بنبة العب

كەرورى راغ كىكى زادىز كەبنىت تى ق

بدا ودید در هنآت و هزایت منک ایشان بنوارد بود واکر دو اسبه صدر در اینان سنت اور جرای منک ایشان بنوارد بود واکر دو است مزانی د د کار ه ای ولک و فراین بنایت اصلی مت برست و میان باد شامی و دهمنانی برغابت ناموس و ق توان کرد و اکر تناوت متر لهٔ اد میان رخب زد ارا دل م مردهان در آمیا مه او ساط لبد و او ساط در معا ایک انکار و فال آن دستا در با به او ساط لبد بذا آباد و ما تر ملوک و ایک دو و کار آن دستا در کرد این تر با به او ت بذا آباد و ما تر ملوک و کار آن در این در با به در با به او ت بذا آباد و ما تر ملوک و ایک دو و کار آن در ما به در با به او ت بذا آباد و ما تر ملوک و ایک دو و کار آن در ما نه کرد این تر با به در تارد کار ما مرد ما تر ملوک و ایک در و در کار در در کار مند کرد این تر با به در تا ما میز آباد و ما تر ملوک و مایک در و در کار در ما که در مانه کرد این تر با به در تر

مصور بوذوانت للم حراكة سروان من حرك ما كمان عرفه بالل فر مالتعل نبيبه أن سرواب راه خلا قات بذل ببراللج ترا بالمهل المعار مناعت آيند واصحاب مناعت كاوار بارجوف درموض حزد ولا بدستر تران بنايع وسنيفين حرد دواشبا معين حزد دولا بدستر تران بنايع وسنيفين حرد دواشبا معين مواص عوام مردمان كالاطلح في حل بذير دور شبا بن مان بهمال وفتوش ذي المعال طوق حل بذير دور شبا بن مان مردد فان لم ينفر محرف فرق ولارد وكاركو بذكر دران است داران كي معان وشنا خدم فرد دار وكاركو بذكر دران المت داران كي معان وشنا خدم فرد مران وكاركو بذكر دران المت داران معاني دستا خدم فرد مار موارد وكاركو بذكر دران المت داران معاني دستا خدم فرد مار مار الموار المت خام واراك معاني دستا خدم مار محارب في مراحل ماري شكار دو جارب في مواحل ماري شكار دو المراك ومعاني دون الماري ومارد موارد موارد موارد مراحل مواري لما موار فريز را در محارب في مواحل مراحل وماري فرا معاني دستا خدمان وعادان خدمان مراحل مواري فرا معاني دستا خدمان محارب فريز مار مراحل مواري فرا معاني دستا خدمان من محارب فرا مواري مراحل مراحل مواري فرا معاني دول اخران وماران مواري فرا مار مراحل مواري فرا معاني دستا خدمان محارب فرا معاني مان مراحل مواري فرا معاني دستا خدمان محارب فرا مواري معان معاني در محارب فرا مواري فرا مواري فرا معاني دفت فرا مرا مار مواري فرا مواري فرا معاني دستا معاني فرا فرا مرا من مواري فرا مرا مواري فرا محارب فرا محارب فرا مواري فراري فراري فراري فراري فرا مواري فراري فرواري فراري فراري فراري فراري فراي فرا

181 وبعرارزوودست درشاخار فانز وجمال صحوفه وطرادت برك آز فريفته لشود دجون بحلادت تمت ومز عاقب والقنوابة وذارانكاه دارد قار التيعلية السلام <u>h</u>adīth حات مفصور وازدوس دنيا معصم وازومت رما وغيت ونفا «جه او نیست نیشت یای م وجهانم شد ذاهر باذك وافروا حاشت وباهتزادتمام واستبسثا دميش لوبازرف جون باي افزار بكشاد برسيدها وكاي ومقصد كدامجاب است مما خواجاد ا له برجال عاشقان صادف سماع ظاهربى عيان باطر وقوف

Again, these images are from Ms. or. oct. 4046 at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (dated 683/1284). Most Arabic quotes are in large black ink, with Persian "translation" (often more like a gloss) in red.

Line from al-Buhturī



mutahajjidun yukhfi ṣ-ṣalāta wa-qad abā / ikhfāʾahā atharu s-sujūdi l-bādī [corrected]

namāz-kunanda ast panhān mī-dārad namāz rā va bi-durustī sar bāz-zad panhān dāshtan-i ān rā ašar-i sujūd-i paydā

"One who prays late at night hides his prayer, but / the manifest sign of prostration belies that concealment"

– al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897)



taqādhafu bī bilādun ʿan bilādī / ka-annī baynahā khabarun sharūdū [corrected]
mī-andāzad marā bilād az bilād / gūʾī kih man miyān-i ān bilād khabarī-am ramanda
"I am tossed from country to country / as if I were a rumor spreading among them"
– al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897)



bi-gdākht ḥasūd-i tu chu dar āb shikar zānk / dar kām-i sukhan bih zi zabānat shikarī nīst

"The one envious of you melted like sugar in water, for / there is nothing sweeter on the palate than your tongue"

- Sanā'ī (d. probably 525/1131)



ham-chu aḥrār sū-yi dawlat pūy / ham-chu bad-bakht zād u būd ma-jūy

"Strive toward felicity in the way of noble people; do not seek the lot in life of the unfortunate"

- Sanā'ī (d. probably 525/1131)

# Signs of a Difficult Text

- We have various indications that, even in the  $7^{th}/13^{th}$  c., some readers found it difficult to understand the Arabic quotes in Nașr Allāh's text.
- One example is the Berlin manuscript (dated 683/1284) with the interlinear translations.
- Another, perhaps more interesting kind of evidence is the existence of commentaries (*shurūḥ*), meant to explain the meaning of Arabic quotes.
- Two of these *shurū*<sup>h</sup> are extant and have been published by Bihrūz Īmānī.

فضل الله بن عثمان بن محمد الاسفزاري (تأليف درنيمهٔ اول سدهٔ ۷ق) مؤلفي ناشناخته مقدمه،تصحيح و تعليقات: بهروز ايماني

A line from al-Buḥturī, as explained by commentator Fażl Allāh Isfizārī (ca. early  $7^{th}/13^{th}$  c.)

فاما بواسطه ايرا دغرائب لغات واطراى كلام تحاسن عربيات ومبالغه درس تعارات تشبيجات متفرقه واطناب واطالت درالفاظ وعبارات مغلقه خاطرتهم ازالتدا ذبغرض كباب ادرك خلائه ماقى الباب بإزمى ماند دطبع قارى نيزاز عهددُ راط مسادى قصد بمقاطع وضبطًا داكر سخن تخواتم

yet, by reason of the adoption of strange idioms, and of language immoderately overlaid with the beauties of Arabic expressions, coupled with excessive use of metaphors and allegories of various kinds, added to glowing language and prolixity in words and obscurity in expression, the mind of the hearer is unable to derive any pleasure from the aim of the book, or to comprehend the object of its design : the judgment, also, of the reader cannot discriminate between the com-

Another judgment of the difficulty of Naṣr Allāh's Arabic-inflected style comes from Yāʿiẓ Kāshifī (d. 910/1504–5), in the preface to his rewriting of *Kalīla and Dimna*, the *Anvār-i suhaylī*. (The translation is by Arthur N. Wollaston, 1877.)

# Concluding Thoughts

- There is, on the one hand, the difficulty of contextualizing Naṣr Allāh's *Kalīla and Dimna* within a broader tradition of classical Persian prose literature. Does such a concept make sense? How could we build a discourse around it?
- Even if we had a more established framework within which to situate this work, there would still be the challenge posed by the seemingly idiosyncratic style pursued by Naṣr Allāh, relative to earlier authors (cf. Omidsalar).
- On the other hand, we see a tension between the popularity, high status, and influence of this version of *Kalīla and Dimna*, and the apparent difficulty that it created for many readers.
- Interpreting Nașr Allāh's work as (in part!) a "persianization of Arabic *adab*" can help on both fronts.

Mujtabā Mīnuvī's list of works influenced by the style of Naṣr Allāh's *Kalīla and Dimna*. The range of genres is extensive...