

# E I THREE

PREVIEW

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## Publisher's Introduction

In the Spring of 2007 the first instalment of *EI3* will appear, exactly 100 years after the first printed articles of *EI1* were presented to the international scholarly community. The Third Edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* will maintain the high standard of scholarship of its predecessor by inviting leading scholars to contribute state-of-the-art material, along with up-to-date bibliographies. At the same time the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* <sup>THREE</sup> will also offer more a comprehensive coverage of Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa than before. Entries on Muslim minorities all over the world will be included, and the entire 20th century will be taken into account.

The wider scope of *EI3* requires a different organisational structure than before. The Editorial Board of the Third Edition consists of four Executive Editors, all specialists, who have divided the encyclopaedia in 18 interconnected sections. Each section is coordinated by a Sectional Editor, who is a specialist in the field. The Sectional Editors are responsible for compiling preliminary lists of entries for *EI3*, finding and communicating with authors, and evaluating and editing their submissions. Some of the sections are thematic – e.g. art & architecture, music, and science –, while others cover a certain region in a specific period of time – for example, the history of Iran from 1500. The Executive Editors maintain a global overview of the project. Part of their role is to harmonize the lists of entries suggested by the sectional editors to avoid doublets and balance the various sections.

The question of why *EI3* starts so soon after the English version of the Second Edition was finished, is relevant here. The answer lies not in the moment *EI2* was completed, but when it began. This happened in the mid-1950s, the first volume appearing in 1960. Since that time Western scholarship concerning the Islamic world has changed considerably. The social sciences have entered the field and Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) has sparked a fierce scholarly debate about Western (re)presentations of Islam and Muslim societies – to mention only two factors. As a result of such developments in the course of the second half of the 20th century, significant parts of the first volumes of *EI2* have become outdated.

The texts speak for themselves. This Preview offers the entries on the Arabian Nights ('Alf laila wa-laila'), from the three successive editions of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. This topic seems appropriate, because "the Arabian Nights [constitute] the Islamic world's major contribution to world literature and an icon that has permeated literary imagery around the world" (Marzolph, *infra*, p. 30). Placed side by side these articles shed light on the evolution of Western scholarship in general. More specifically they address aspects of the oral and textual traditions in the Islamic world which continue to be relevant today.

For *EI1* the article 'Alf laila wa-laila', was written by J. Oestrup, whose monograph on the subject had appeared in Copenhagen in 1891. The opening paragraph includes the following sentences, which illustrate the scholarly discourse of the period:

Like all Orientals the Arabs from the earliest times enjoyed imaginative stories. But the intellectual horizon of the true Arabs being rather narrow, the material for these entertainments was borrowed mainly from elsewhere [...]

The article offers a survey of the discussion among scholars about the composition and origins of the Arabian Nights during the second half of the nineteenth century, ending with a brief paragraph on the manuscript tradition. Oestrop principally addressed questions of authorship and textual analysis, devoting little attention to the stories themselves.

In addition to the eight-column entry by Oestrop, the Supplement volume to the first edition has another entry on 'Alf laila wa-laila' too. In its 11 extra columns D.B. MacDonald described the manuscripts kept in Western libraries, providing a great number of additional bibliographical references. Information about the stories is only given when it is relevant for the manuscripts. Enno Littman's contribution to *EI2* on the Arabian Nights draws heavily on the two entries of the earlier edition. Oestrop's questionable observations about the intellectual horizons of the Arabs, for example, were retained by Littmann. At the same time the author added important new elements, like a discussion of the various genres of stories.

The entry on the Arabian Nights for *EI3* has been written by Ulrich Marzolph, today's leading scholar on the subject. This new text offers a balanced survey of all the important aspects of the Arabian Nights today, including the stories themselves, their origins, existing manuscripts, and cultural and literary impact. The article thus reflects the standard of scholarship both the Editorial Board and Brill endeavour to maintain for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*.

Maurits H. van den Boogert

Academic Project Manager for *EI3*  
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## The Encyclopaedia of Islam, *vol. I* (Leiden, 1913), 252-256:

### **Alf laila wa-laila (A.)**

“Thousand and one nights”, is the title of the most famous of all Arabian collections of fairy tales. Like all Orientals the Arabs from the earliest times enjoyed imaginative stories. But the intellectual horizon of the true Arabs being rather narrow, the material for these entertainments was borrowed mainly from elsewhere, from Persia and India, as we gather from the accounts concerning the Prophet’s competitor, the merchant al-Nadr. So the relations between Arabia and Persia (and even more distant eastern countries), which were commenced during the seventh and eighth centuries, gave rise to an active importation of subject matter for fables and fairy-tales. The individual stages of this process cannot now be traced with absolute certainty, a few cases only excepted such as the history of the origin of the book *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. For everything which was of the nature of a fairy tale lay outside the scope of the professional man-of-letters.

In later centuries, when Arabian civilisation had grown richer and more comprehensive, new, original tales were invented in the centres of Arabian culture, and along with the entire intellectual development fairy tale fiction also migrated gradually from the East to the West. A comprehensive view of this whole process is afforded by *Alf laila wa-laila*, the largest and most diversified Arabian collection of fairy tales; in it we find the foreign elements of eastern origin side by side with genuine Arabian matter. The account of the growth of this book constitutes a highly characteristic chapter of the history of the development of Eastern civilisation in general, but owing to the above mentioned lack of information it can only be sketched

in brief outline with approximate accuracy.

The question concerning the origin of the *Alf laila wa-laila* was for the first time thoroughly discussed in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The first scholar who expatiated upon this subject was the founder of modern Arabian philology, Silvestre de Sacy (in the *Journal des savants*, 1817, p. 678, afterwards in the *Recherches sur l’origine du recueil des contes intitulés les mille et une nuits*, Paris 1829, and in a dissertation under the same title in the *Mémoires de l’Académie des inscriptions et des belles lettres* x., 1833, p. 30). He denied a possible authorship of one single writer, and (in the two last-mentioned discourses) took it for granted, that the book was written at a very late period. He flatly disaffirmed the existence of Persian and Indian elements, and a passage in the Arabian author Mas’ūdī, where this statement is expressly made, was on that ground declared spurious by de Sacy. This passage being of the greatest importance for the entire history of the *Alf laila wa-laila*, I hope to be excused for translating it here. Mas’ūdī (ed. Barbier de Meynard iv. 89) expresses himself as follows: “It is a similar case about these legends (of Shaddād b. ‘Ād and his town of Iram dhāt al-‘Amad) as about the books which were translated into our language from Persian, Indian (one manuscript has here: Pehlevi) and the Greek, such as for example the book of *Hezār efsāneh* – which in Arabic means “thousand tales”, because the Persian word *efsāneh* corresponds to the Arabic *khurāfa* (tale) – ; this book is usually called *Alf laila* (two manuscripts have here: *Alf laila wa-laila*) and it narrates of the King, his daughter and her nurse (according to other readings: slave-girl); these two are called *Shīrāzād* and *Dināzād*”.

Contrary to de Sacy, Joseph von Hammer

(*Wiener Jahrbücher*, 1818, p. 236; *Journal asiatique*, 1st series x.; 3rd series viii.; Preface to “*Die noch nicht übersetzten Erzählungen der Tausend und einen Nacht*”, Stuttgart 1823) maintained the genuineness of the passage in Mas’ūdī with all its consequences.

William Lane, the excellent translator of part of the *Alf laila*, tried to prove that the whole book was the work of one single author and had been written in the period 1475-1525 (Preface to *The Arabian nights entertainments*, London 1839-1841).

In recent years the discussion was resumed by de Goeje (*De Arabische Nachtvertellingen in De Gids* 1886, iii. 385 and *The Thousand and one Nights* in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* xxiii. 316). On the ground of a collation of a passage in the *Fihrist* of Muḥammed b. Ishāk al-Warrāk, in which the *Hezār efsāneh* are said to have been written at the instigation of Humai, the daughter of King Bahman, with a passage in Ṭabarī (i. 688), where Esther is called the mother of Bahman and the name *Shahrazād* is assigned to Humai, de Goeje endeavoured to show a connection between the framework of the *Alf laila* and the Book of Esther. The same idea was further developed by A. Müller (*Zu den Märchen der Tausend und einen Nacht*, in *Bezenbergers Beiträge* xxii. 222); he distinguished various layers in the work, one of which he supposed to have been written in Bagdad, whereas to another and larger one he assigned Egyptian origin.

The idea of the various layers was worked out with greater accuracy by Nöldeke (*Zu den ägyptischen Märchen* in the *Zeitschr. d. Deutsch. Morgenl. Gesellsch.* xlii. 68), who gave an approximate definition of the tests, by which each could be recognised.

Stimulated by these studies Oestrup (*Studier over 1001 Nat*, Copenhagen 1891; Russian translation : *Izslidowanie o 1001 noči*, Moscow 1905) attempted to group the separate tales into three layers, of which the first

one was to comprehend the fairy tales from the Persian *Hezār efsāneh* together with the framework of the book, the second those which had come from Bagdad, and the third one the stories which had been added to the body of the work in Egypt; certain tales as for example the extensive chivalric romance of ‘Omar b. No’mān and his sons were qualified as later insertions. To this elimination of the said romance exception has lately been taken by Seybold (*Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften der Kgl. Universitätsbibliothek zu Tübingen*, Tübingen 1907, p. 75). To the above mentioned Russian translation a number of supplementary and critical notes have been added by A. Krimski.

The sifting of the separate layers of the large collection was continued by Chauvin; in *La recension égyptienne des mille et une nuits* (Brussels 1899) he has demonstrated that the Egyptian layer consists again of two separate parts, one of Jewish origin. The same (in his *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes* and in various short articles) and René Basset (*Notes sur les 1001 nuits*, in the *Revue des traditions populaires* xiii. 37 and 303) have also contributed a good many valuable observations concerning details.

At the present stage of the investigation this much can be stated with certainty: “the original nucleus of the *Alf laila wa-laila* was derived from a Persian book of fairy tales called *Hezār efsāneh*, which perhaps in the third century of the *Hidjra* was translated into Arabic; the subject-matter of these tales was for the greater part of Indian origin”. The tests for the tales belonging to this oldest layer are parallels in Indian and Persian books, which can be proved to have been written prior to the Arabian version. Such a parallel may be one of two kinds: It is either a complete duplicate of the Arabian tale, or it is some isolated trait which we recognise; the more characteristic such traits are and

the more importance they have for the entire structure and the plot of the story, the more value we attach to them. Besides these we also have purely outward criteria, such as old Persian names or the mention of Persian institutions. Lane, while striving to defend the Arabian origin of the tales, overestimated the value of such outward criteria as could be adduced in favour of his theory. For it is much easier to account for an Arabian story-teller or copyist inserting Arabian appellations and allusions to modern Arabian conditions, than for the occurrence of old Persian designations, unless we assume that the latter are fossil remains of an older stage of development. The outward tests therefore, which point towards India and Persia, must have comparatively greater weight than the others; the Arabian narrators knew how to add local colouring to their foreign tale, how to adapt it to native surroundings, but on the other hand they were destitute of that conscious artistic fiction, which enables one to lend to native matter a foreign touch and different local colour.

In the very first tale, which forms the framework of the book, both criteria for its foreign origin are found side by side. The names of *Shāhzemān*, *Shāhriyār* and others occurring in it are Persian, and the story of the infidelity of the wives of the two princely brothers, which occasioned the journey of the latter, has its Indian parallel in *Katha Sarit Sagara* (see *British and Foreign Review* xxi. July 1840, p. 266). Also the three incidental little fables, contained in the framework story, about the merchants, who understood the language of beasts and his cattle, have their analogues in Indian literature. Of special importance is the analogy between the manner, in which certain tales in the *Alf laila wa-laila* are fitted into the framework, and the method used in Indian books. This practice of interlacing one story with another is

something specifically Indian; it is observed in the *Mahabharata*, in the *Pančatantra*, in the *Wetalapančawimsati* etc. The improbable, sometimes downright unnatural result of this arrangement, by which the narrators or the listeners occasionally appear on the scene in situations entirely unfit for telling or listening to a tale, is no matter of concern to the Hindu. The leading motive of the *Alf laila wa-laila*, that the tales are told in order to gain time and prevent rashness, occurs again in the original Indian *Seven Viziers* and, in a different form, in the Indian *Šukasaptati*, where the clever parrot prevents the wife of his master from visiting her lover in the absence of her husband, by arresting her at home with the narration of a fragment of a fairy tale each day, always ending up with the remark: "Tomorrow I will tell you the rest, if you remain at home tonight." In this way the wife is hindered from executing her plan until the husband returns.

This framework system is just as common in India as it is rarely met with outside that country. I do not know a single book of ancient date, which is constructed in such a way, with the sole exception of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Consequently this practice may be considered a test of the Indian origin of certain parts of the *Alf laila wa-laila*. And not only the practice but also the phrasing belonging to it, recurs in the same form. In the Indian popular books it usually runs like this: "You may not do such and such a thing or else you will go the same way as so and so". – "How was that!" asks the other, and then the admonisher begins his story. Exactly the same form is found in the *Alf laila wai-laila*, and even the same words are used to introduce a new tale: Arabic *wa-kaifa dhālika* corresponds word for word to Sanskrit *katham etat* ("how was that?"), and I feel inclined to assume that the fundamental words occurred in this very same form both in the

*Hezār efsāneh* and in their Indian original.

The tales which come first in all manuscripts and editions of the *Alf laila wa-laila* (*the merchant and the jinnee; the fisherman and the jinnee; the porter, the three calenders and the three ladies in Bagdad; the humpback;*) are themselves examples of the frame-work system, and show besides various traits, which remind us of Indian prototypes, traits such as the trick which the fisherman uses to get the jinnee back into the vase from which he has released him; analogues are found in the Mongolian version of the *Simhasanadvatrimṣati*, i. e. the story of Arđji Bordđi Khān, and in the so-called “southern” *Pančatantra* translated by Dubois. Then there is the motive of the combat between the black and the white serpent, which are both demons, a motive which has its parallels in Tatar tales (*Journal asiatique* 7th series iv. 259), which are not of Islamic origin as their editor Pavet de Courteille is inclined to believe, but were borrowed from India; also the combat between the demon and the princess who understands magic art, to which the Mongolian version of *Wetalapančawimsati* affords an exactly corresponding parallel (see Benfey, *Pančatantra* i. 411). Finally such details as, in the history of the king and the physician Duban, the poisoning by means of the leaves of a book smeared with venom, a practice which points to Indian customs (cp. Gildemeister, *De rebus indicis scriptorum Arabum* p. 89). – Several of the tales in the beginning of the book, on the other hand, have so many features in common, that we can scarcely suppose that they existed independently from the first in their present form: probably every one of them was really taken from the *Hezār efsāneh*, but afterwards underwent some important alterations.

Other tales which doubtless are of Indian-Persian origin, are the following: (r) the *story of the magic horse* (Persian names such as

Sāpōr and the Persian feasts of Newrūz and Mihirdjān being mentioned in it), the fundamental idea of which can be traced back to the *Pančatantra* (cp. Benfey, *ibid* i. 161); - (2) the story of Ḥasan of Baṣra (in the translation by Habicht and Hagen the hero is called “Āṣim, the dyer” instead of “Ḥasan, the jeweller”, probably owing to the confusion of *ṣā’igh* with *ṣabbāgh*); the two main features of this story are the rape of the swan’s feathers, and the stratagem, by which the hero outwits the men who quarrel about the inheritance, and procures for himself a means of bringing his runaway sweetheart back again; both these traits originated in India (see Benfey, *ibid*. i. 263) and were also circulated towards the East (cp. *Zeitschr. d. Deutsch. Morgenl. Gesellsch.* vi. 536 and Stanislas Julien, *Avadanas*, Paris 1859, ii. 74); the first and greater part of the story of Ḥasan of Baṣra occurs once more in the *Alf laila wa-laila*, in the story of Djānshāh, inserted in the fairy tale of Ḥāsib Karīm al-Dīn and the queen of serpents, a fairy tale, which originally perhaps was mixed with Jewish elements; the story of Djānshāh is a later and, from the artistic point of view, unsatisfactory imitation. Curiously enough this very story of Ḥāsib Karīm al-Dīn was assigned to the *Hezār efsāneh* by the contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1886, p. 166, who otherwise most zealously denies the Persian origin of the *Alf laila wa-laila*; without laying too much stress on purely aesthetic criteria, one may state this much with safety, that this fairy tale, with its many absurd exaggerations and tasteless repetitions, can certainly not have been derived from the same source to which we owe such excellently composed fairy tales as that of the magic horse, as that of Ḥasan of Baṣra and others; - (3) the *story of Saif al-Mulūk*, the only one in the *Alf laila wa-laila*, of which we possess a complete Persian parallel; the Persian manuscripts



in question are mentioned by Lane (*Arabian nights entertainments* iii. 744; - (4) the story of *Ḳamar al-Zamān and of princess Budūr*; - (5) the story of *prince Badr and princess Djawhar of Samandal*; - (6) the story of *Ardešhūr and Ḥayāt al-Nufūs*; this tale also appears again in a different version in the manuscripts of the *Alf laila wa-laila*: in the story of *ʿOmar b. Noʿmān*, (which in spite of Seybold I venture to qualify as only a late insertion within the framework of the *Alf laila wa-laila*), an inset story of *Tādj al-Mulūk and princess Dunyā* is found, which corresponds almost literally to that of *Ardešhūr and Ḥayāt al-Nufūs*. - Uncertain is the relation between the story of *ʿAlī Shūr* and the Persian original, the former containing many details which recur in the probably later narrative of *Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī and the girdle-girl*, also to be found in the *Alf laila wa-laila*; and no less uncertainty prevails in the case of the story of *the jealous sisters* and the story of *Aḥmed and Parībānu*, these two only to be found in Galland.

These tales then from the *Hezār efsāneh* constituted the nucleus, round which on Arabian ground various layers of other matter gathered. The first of these consists of matter from Bagdad and attaches itself to the name of the ʿAbbāsīde Hārūn al-Rashīd; some tales of this group are the product of free invention, others spun out and re-modelled historical anecdotes. An example of the latter category is the story of *Abū ʿI-Ḥasan or the sleeper awakened*; the anecdote is given by al-Ishāḳī (Lane, *ibid.* ii. 376). Also several of the anecdotes which were circulated about Abū Nuwās and Abū Dulāma, were in a similar way turned to literary account. We must of course not forget that the name of Hārūn al-Rashīd had at an early period become a common symbol of the good old times, of everything miraculous and fairy-like. Consequently we are not justified in assigning a tale to the Bagdad group on the

mere ground of its containing the name of that Caliph; only internal evidence is here decisive. Apart, of course, from many details, which must remain doubtful, this general statement may be made, that the novels of middle-class life, short, simple tales of good and solid composition, with a love intrigue solved by the caliph as “*deus ex machine*” for their leading motive, are made up of Bagdad matter, whereas the picaresque novels and also the fairy tales (generally of clumsy composition), in which the element of the *Djinn*s (demons) is excessively prominent, are of later, Egyptian origin. It is worthy of notice that in the oldest fairy tales of Indian and Persian origin the demons, as a rule, act on their own account and independently, whereas in the more recent tales they are always subject to some talisman or other; hence its owner decides the development of the action, not the *Djinn*s and ʿIfrītes themselves. In the Bagdad novels everything, as a rule, happens without any magic art. In the picaresque novels we possess something specifically Egyptian, as has been demonstrated by Nöldeke (*Zeitschr. d. Deutsch. Morgenl. Gesellsch.* xlii. 68); the classic model example of this entire genre is Herodotus’s famous tale of the treasure of king Rhampsinit; an interesting analogue to part of the latter story is also found in the *Alf laila wa-laila*, in the story told by the eighth *Muḳaddam* to Sultan Baibars (Edition of Habicht and Fleischer xi. 375). The other, more recent part of the Egyptian group with its common fairy tales is probably the work of a Jewish-Egyptian author, as Chauvin has tried to prove in *La récitation égyptienne des 1001 nuits* (Brussels 1899); from the aesthetic point of view these tales are the least important of the whole book.

Besides these four different layers, which, as has been observed above, cannot with perfect certainty be distinguished from

one another in the present version of the *Alf laila wa-laila*, the book also comprises a number of larger collective stories, each of which is only found in a few manuscripts, and evidently inserted for the sole purpose of making up the number of nights required. Such stories are: *The seven viziers* (with the imitations *The ten viziers* and *The forty viziers*), which are of independent Indian origin, and the story of *Kal'ād and Shīmās*. Questionable is the position of the cycle of *Sindbād the sailor*, which evidently dates from the time when Bagdad and Baṣra had reached the zenith of their prosperity; it seems originally to have been an independent work. It is a well-known fact that we possess a number of very old Egyptian and Greek analogues of the *Sindbād* matter. Originally foreign to the *Alf laila wa-laila* are the large chivalric romance of *'Omar b. No'mān and his sons*; the story of *Sūl and Shumūl* (ed. by Seybold, Leipzig 1902), and two didactic tales, which are widely different from each other: *the history of the wise Tawaddud*, which afterwards became a favourite chap-book in Spain (*La donzella Teodor*; Teodor or Tudur is a mistake for Tawaddud, for which palaeography can easily account; cp. Ticknor, *Historia de la literatura española, traducida por Pascual de Gayangos y Enrique de Vedia* ii. 554), and the originally Jewish tale of *the wise Haikar*.

The final redaction of this voluminous matter took place in Egypt, probably during the reign of the later Mamelukes, and, as may be concluded from the frequent and minute mention of places in Cairo, it was done in the latter town. The same can be inferred from the language of the present version, which, in many respects bordering on the vulgar tongue, constitutes a free and easy development of late literary Arabic. But the redactors have not succeeded in completely effacing the original masked differences of style between the interwoven and concate-

nated parts. Also the various manuscripts diverge especially in this respect. Chauvin (*ibidem*) has made an attempt to establish more precisely the literary identity of the man who revised the two Egyptian layers, and believes him to have been a Jew converted to Islam. But the number of redactors and professional narrators, who in consecutive periods had a share in remodelling the *Alf laila wa-laila* was probably so great, that from this entanglement to unravel the work of each individual reviser would be a task which no one will dare to undertake.

In the above mentioned quotation from Mas'ūdī it is said that the Persian book *Hezār efsāneh*, which translated literally into Arabic would mean *Alf khurāfa*, was called instead *Alf laila* (the thousand nights). The formation of later date *Alflaila wa-laila* ("1001 nights") owes its origin to the superstitious aversion to round numbers amongst the Arabs (and Orientals in general), as has first been proved by Gildemeister (*ibidem* p. 86); the usual preference for a certain assonance in book-titles may also have contributed to the alteration. But just as the Persian book *Hezār efsāneh* did certainly not contain exactly 1000 tales, the numeral only indicating an indefinitely large number, neither was the fairy tale matter of the *Alf laila wa-laila* originally divided into 1000 nights, this arrangement being the work of later times. This is sufficiently evident from the fact that in this point the manuscripts diverge to a great extent, and it was just owing to the endeavours to make up the full number, that the various large insertions crept into the work. Besides, the name *Alf laila wa-laila* being so popular, the copyists liked to conglomerate under that title all sorts of extraneous matter along with that which all manuscripts contained. A good example of the latter kind of manuscripts is the Paris codex n°. 1723.

A large majority of the tales in *Alf laila wa-laila* contain a great many more or less lengthy verse quotations; the Bagdad layer is conspicuous in this respect. The usual practice is to put these quotations into the mouth of the speakers; in all passages where the narrator aims at the expression of strong emotion, whether it be grief or joy, the person in question commences his speech in verses. These verses, however, in by far the majority of cases, are not in the least sense instrumental in continuing the action, but, like the verses in the Indian dramas, rather serve as pauses, sometimes interspersed with reflections and moralisings. This circumstance is a sufficient indication, that those verses are not equally old with the rest of the context, but were inserted at a later date. This inference is corroborated by the repeated occurrence of the same quotations in identical situations; and also the frequent accumulation of different verses conveying the same meaning and linked together by the well-known expression *wa-kāla aid<sup>am</sup> fi 'l-ma'nā* ("and again he spoke in the same sense"), seems to point at the same conclusion. There are also examples of verses sounding absurd in the mouth of the speaker, evidently owing to a mistaken or clumsy insertion. Only in exceptional cases the name of the poet who wrote the quotation in question is mentioned; those who are referred to most are Abū Nuwās, Ibn al-Mu'tazz and Ishāk al-Mawṣilī. In most

cases stands the stereotyped phrase *wa-kāla 'l-shā'ir* ("the poet speaks"). The majority of verses are of a later date and as a rule plainer and simpler than the older Arabian poetry.

The manuscripts of the *Alf Laila wa-laila* belong to three different groups, as has been demonstrated by Brockelmann (*Gesch. d. arab. Litter.* ii. 60) after Zotenberg: an older Asiatic group (the manuscripts belonging to this group are all except one incomplete, containing only the first part of the book) and two later Egyptian groups. The differences between the manuscripts are very great, though less important between those of the first group. Brockelmann gives a list of the editions and European translations (*ibid.*), which was enlarged and continued by Krimski (in his above mentioned introduction to the Russian translation of Oestrup's *Studier*). An extensive bibliography is found in Chauvin *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes* iv. 12-120). The most complete and exact translations of the fairy tale cycle in European languages are the English one by Burton (Benares-London 1885, lately also published in German in the "Inselverlag") and the French rendering by Mardrus (Paris 1899 and after). The most reliable Arabic textedition is still always the Bülāḵ one in two volumes (1251); although the more recent Cairo edition in four volumes is more practical and more easily obtainable, as it has been published repeatedly.

(J. Oestrup)

## The Encyclopaedia of Islam, *Supplement* (Leiden, 1938), 17-21:

**Alflaila wa-laila (A.)**, or, more exactly "The Book of a thousand nights and a night" appeared first in Europe in the French translation by Antoine Galland (5646–1715), *Les Mille et Une Nuit* (12 vols., Paris 1704–1717). By 1706 seven vols. had appeared; vol. viii. in 1709; vols. ix. and x. in 1712; vols. xi. and xii. in 1717, two years after Galland's death. This slowness in appearance of the later vols. is significant for Galland's difficulties as to material and also for his indifference as to this side of his work as a scholar. He was a born story-teller; he had a flair for a good story and a knack to re-tell it well. Hence the success of his "Nights". But he was also fortunate in the material which fell into his hands. He began by translating Sindbad the Sailor from an unidentified MS.; then learned that this was part of a great collection of stories called "The Thousand and One Nights"; then had the almost incredible luck that there were sent to him from Syria four vols. of a MS. of that work which is still the oldest known and contains the best surviving text. The first three of these are still in the Bibliothèque Nationale, but the fourth is lost. In the first seven vols. of his translation he exhausted his three vols. of Arabic text which we still have and added Sindbad and Camaralzaman from unidentified MSS. Then, for lack of material, he stopped for three years until his publisher forced his hand by issuing, without authority, vol. viii. containing Ganem, translated by Galland from an unidentified MS., and two stories, Zeyn Alasnam and Codadad, translated by Péris de la Croix and intended for his *Mille et un jour*. Again Galland was completely out of material and stopped; he was also tired and disgusted with the whole matter. But in 1709 he met a certain Maronite from Aleppo,

Hanna, brought to Paris by the traveller Paul Lucas, and at once recognized that he had got an oral source of the best story material. Hanna told him stories in Arabic and Galland inserted in his *Journal* abstracts of some of these. But Hanna also gave him transcripts of some. In this way Galland's last four vols. were filled out; his *Journal* gives full details. Hanna's transcripts have vanished, but two Arabic MSS. of Aladdin have since come to light and one of Ali Baba. This, then, is the origin of the book which made the Nights known to Europe and which in the French text and in very many translations from the French is still the Arabian Nights for the great multitude of readers. For details see Hermann Zotenberg, *Histoire d'Alâ al-Dîn ou La Lampe Merveilleuse*, Paris 1888 = *N.E.*, Paris 1887, xxviii, i., p. 167-320. This contains also a fundamental study of certain MSS. of the Nights and of the entries in Galland's *Journal*. See, also, Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie arabe*, part iv., Liège 1900, and D.B. Macdonald, *A bibliographical and literary study of the first appearance of the Arabian Nights in Europe*, in *The Library Quarterly*, vol. ii., N<sup>o</sup>. 4, Oct. 1932, p. 387-420.

For more than a century Galland's French version meant the Nights for Europe and it was exceedingly fortunate that both his sources, MS. and oral, were of such excellent quality. But meanwhile other MSS, more or less connected with the Nights, were being brought to light and, from these, various supplements to Galland were translated and published. Just as the MSS. of the Nights themselves varied enormously as to the stories which they contained so those translators were prepared to attach to the Nights any story that existed in Arabic. The whole subject, for lack of a definite basis and a

Vulgate text, was involved in uncertainty and semi-fraud. The following supplements, partly separate and partly attached to editions of Galland, are of importance in themselves and as signs of the interests of their times. For further details on all of them Chauvin should be consulted, part iv., p. 82-520.

In 1788 there appeared as a supplement to the *Cabinet des Fées*, vols. 38-41, a series of tales translated from the Arabic, with the assistance for French style of Cazotte, by Denis Chavis, a Syrian priest brought from Rome to Paris by Baron de Breteuil on behalf of the French government. To this Chavis we owe also one of the two MSS. of the Story of Aladdin. It is significant for the interest at the time in the whole subject of the Nights that there appeared, 1792-1794, three separate English translations of this supplement by Chavis and Cazotte. In 1795 William Beloe published in the third vol. of his *Miscellanies* some Arabic stories which had been translated for him orally by Patrick Russell, the author of *The Natural History of Aleppo* (1794). In 1800 Jonathan Scott translated in his *Tales, Anecdotes and Letters* certain stories from the MS. of the Nights brought from India by James Anderson. In 1797-1798 in the *Oriental Collections* of William Ouseley he had already given considerable quotations from this MS., and in 1811 to his edition of an English version of Galland he added a sixth vol. of new stories from the Wortley Montagu MS. But in 1806 Caussin de Perceval had already added two vols. of supplement (vols. 8 and 9) to his edition of Galland. In them he gave a more exact translation from the MS. of Chavis of the tales that Cazotte had embellished. But Edouard Gauttier in his professed edition of Galland (1822-1823) went much further. Besides vols. vi. and vii. of new tales drawn from all manner of sources he freely inserted others in the course of Galland's Nights.

Von Hammer in his supplement had a much firmer foundation and used a real recension of the Nights. He had acquired in Egypt a MS. of the recension now known as Zotenberg's Egyptian Recension [hereafter ZER], which through numerous editions has become the Vulgate text of the Nights. From it he translated into French a number of stories not in Galland. But his French version is lost and we have, descended from it, a German version by Zinserling (3 vols. 1823), an English from Zinserling by Lamb (3 vols., 1826) and a French also from Zinserling by Trébutien (3 vols., 1828). In 1825 Habicht published at Breslau 15 volumes professing to be a new translation but consisting really of Galland with various supplements from Caussin, Gauttier and Scott and an ending from a so-called Tunisian MS. In the same year Habicht began to publish his Arabic text of which inure below. This text gave Weil a basis from which to begin his new translation from the Arabic (vols., 1837-1841). But the slowness with which Habicht's text appeared and difficulties with his publisher compelled Weil to fill out from Galland; he used also materials in Gotha MSS. Only with his third edition (1866-1867) based on Habicht and the Būlāk printed text was he finally satisfied.

Meantime there had been much and sometimes acrimonious discussion of the origin and literary history of the Nights. A. W. Von Schlegel, as a Sanscritist, maintained an Indian origin. That issue is now dead, for it has been recognized that the stories in the Nights, apart from world-wide folklore motifs, are of Arabic and Persian origin. Only the Frame-work story has been definitely traced back to the storiology of Farther India by Em. Cosquin (*Revue Biblique*, Jan.-April 1909) and by J. Przyluski (*J.A.*, 1924, p. 101-137). It passed into Persian national legend, affected the Book of Esther and became the Frame-work story of a Persian Nights. An-

other independent form of the same story passed through North Africa and became the Frame of an Arabic collection called *The Hundred and One Nights* (Gaudefroy-Demombynes *Les Cent et Une Nuits*, Paris, no date; with a valuable historiographical introduction). For further details on the above see the present writer's *Earlier History of the Arabian Nights*, in *J.R.A.S.*, for July, 1924, p. 355 *sqq.* But the principal parts in those early discussions were taken by De Sacy and Von Hammer. De Sacy was not fortunate in his positions. He was so deeply impressed by the stamp of mediaeval Egypt in the MSS. which had come under his notice that his mind was not open to the long antecedent history of the Nights, reaching back into Persia. He thus practically contributed nothing. Von Hammer, on the other hand, brought to light the two most important passages bearing on that earlier history, by Mas'ūdī in his *Murūdj al-Dhahab* (Paris ed., iv. 59 *sq.*) and in the *Fihrist* (ed. Flügel, p. 304 *sqq.*). For bibliographical details on these earlier controversies see Chauvin, part iv., p. r *sqq.*

Publication of the Arabic text had also begun both in Europe and in the East. William Jones, then at Oxford, had procured from a learned friend at Aleppo an incomplete MS., now lost but evidently closely akin to that of Galland, and portions from it were printed by John Richardson in his *Arabic Grammar* (5776); a complete edition was projected by Joseph White and a specimen printed (Schnurrer, *Bibl. Arabica*, p. 487, N°. 420). Another MS. in two vols., incomplete but also of the Galland recension and of about the same extent, was brought by Patrick Russell from Aleppo; the first vol. of this is now in the John Rylands Library. He had described the status of the Nights in Aleppo in his *Natural History of Aleppo*, 1794, and he contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1799 a long letter describing his MS. For two years be-

fore there had been correspondence in that magazine on the general subject.

Mention of the Patrick Russell MS. leads naturally to the first attempt at an edition of the Nights in Arabic. For there can be no question that what is called "The First Calcutta Edition" or "The Calcutta Edition of the first 200 Nights" (Calcutta, 2 vols., 1814, x8s8; 2nd ed., lithographed, Calcutta 2829) is derived, if indirectly and with much editing, from this MS.; on the exceedingly complicated problem of its origin see the present writer's *Classification of some MSS. of the Arabian Nights* in the E. G. Browne Volume, p. 307 and 313 *sq.* In part this edition is derived from L. Langles, *Les Voyages des Sind-Badh le Mann et la Ruse des Femmes*, printed by him as an appendix to Savary's *Grammaire de la Langue arabe* (Paris 1813) and separately in 1814. This 1<sup>st</sup> Calcutta edition was translated into Danish by J. L. Rasmussen (vols., Copenhagen 1824). The next attempt at an Arabic Nights was made by Maximilian Habicht in his Breslau edition (8 vols., 1825-1838); continued by Fleischer, 4 vols., 1842-1843). Of this edition it is difficult to speak with patience, for Habicht wilfully created a literary myth and enormously confused the history of the Nights. On his title page he put: "Nach einer Handschrift aus Tunis" and he had no Tunisian MS.; nor is there any evidence that a Tunisian recension of the Nights ever existed. Out of many stories in Arabic which had come to him from many sources he constructed a new recension of the Nights much in the same way that he had constructed his translation described above. The best that can be said for him is that he gave his MSS. verbatim without any attempt at correction. His texts are therefore vulgar in the exact sense. Almost all other texts have been grammatically and lexicographically "improved" by learned *shaiḫs*. The best texts in his recension are derived, but indirectly,

from the Galland MS. For details see the present writer's article on Habicht's Recension in *J.R.A.S.*, for July 1909, p. 685-704, and *Classification*, cited above, p. 314-317.

All other Arabic texts of the Nights belong to the quite modern Egyptian recension which it is the great merit of Zotenberg to have identified in its MS. form. Zotenberg reached his conclusion through an examination of the extant and accessible MSS. But there is also external evidence for this modern Egyptian recension. In July 1807, Seetzen, then in Cairo, recorded in his diary (*Reisen*, iii. 188) that Asselin had discovered that the MSS. of the Nights current in Egypt were a compilation by a certain *shaiikh* who died about 26 years before and for whose name Seetzen unfortunately left only a blank in his diary; that the original collection as it reached this *shaiikh* consisted of about 200 Nights and that he combined the rest out of separate, already known, stories; that Asselin proposed to write a "Dissertation" on this recension. Zotenberg makes no reference to this entry by Seetzen and Asselin apparently did not write his article, but we have here a brilliant confirmation of Zotenberg's hypothesis. And this is exactly what, on the evidence of the MSS., has happened again and again. On this see further below. Z(otenberg's) E(gyptian) R(ecension) may therefore be taken as assured. For the method of this unknown *shaiikh* in dealing with the number and length of the Nights see the present writer's *Classification*, p. 320 sq.

The first of the editions of ZER is commonly called "The First Būlāk edition" and appeared 1251 (1835). The Second Būlāk edition appeared in 1279. These have had a multitude of Oriental descendents and have fixed the Vulgate text of the Nights. The Jesuit Press at Bairūt has produced an independent but expurgated edition from another MS. of the same recension (5 vols., 1888-1890). A MS.

of ZER was carried to India and edited there by W. H. Macnaghten (vols., Calcutta 1839-1842). This is commonly called "The 2<sup>nd</sup> Calcutta" or "The complete Calcutta edition". The text in the first vol. has been expanded from the Breslau and from the 1<sup>st</sup> Calcutta edition. There is a lithographed reprint, Bombay, 4 vols., 1297.

From ZER have been made all the more modern western translations. The partial translation by Von Hammer into French, described above, was made from a MS. of this recension bought in Egypt. This was at the very beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Von Hammer gives details on the discovery of his and other MSS. in his *Vorbericht* to Zinslerling's German translation (Stuttgart and Tübingen 1823). It is plain that quite a number of practically identical copies of ZER were on the market in Egypt at this time. A very different translation into English from the Macnaghten edition was begun by Henry Torrens. The one volume which appeared (Calcutta and London 1838; preface dated "Simla, in the Himalayas, July 31, 1838") of the first 50 Nights only, is the first attempt since Galland to render the Nights as literature. The announcement of Lane's translation prevented Torrens going further with his; but John Payne has written that he would not have attempted his own if that of Torrens had been completed. Lane's translation, incomplete but with a very valuable and full commentary, began to appear in parts in 1839 and was finished in 1841. It was made from the first Būlāk edition of 1835 with some reference to the Breslau edition. Payne's translation from the Macnaghten edition, complete and privately printed, appeared in 9 vols. 1882-1884. Three additional vols. contained tales in the Breslau and 1<sup>st</sup> Calcutta editions (1884) and a 13<sup>th</sup> vol. (1889) contains Aladdin and Zain al-Asnam. Since Payne's death in 1916 there have been a number of complete

reprints. The translation by Sir Richard Burton, also from the Macnaghten edition, is very largely dependent upon that of Payne and often reproduces Payne verbatim (10 vols., 1885; 6 supplemental vols., 1886–1888). Besides the Smithers edition (12 vols., 1894) and Lady Burton's edition (6 vols., 1886–1888) it has been completely reprinted several times. On the strange relation between the versions of Payne and of Burton see Thomas Wright, *Life of Sir Richard Burton* (2 vols., London 1906) and *Life of John Payne* (London 1919) and for some attempt at a comparative estimate of the above English translations see the present writer's *On translating the Arabian Nights*, in *The Nation*, New York, Aug. 30 and Sept. 6, 1900. Between 1895 and 1897 there appeared in Reclam's *Universal Bibliothek* in 24 little vols. a German translation by Max Henning from the Būlāk edition. This is a thoroughly creditable performance but is somewhat expurgated and gives only half the verse. The first 17 vols. give the Nights and vols. 18–24 various supplements, largely translated from Burton. In 1899 Dr. J.C. Mardrus began a French translation of the Nights professedly from the Būlāk edition of 1835. His production ultimately reached 16 vols. by the incorporation of tales from all manner of other collections than the Nights. His rendering is free in every sense of the word. Yet there is a Spanish translation of it by Vicente Blasco Ibañez, an English translation by E. Powys Mathers and an incomplete Polish translation. An absolute contrast is the scholarly German translation by Enno Littmann (Leipzig, 6 vols., 1921–1928). This is complete and made directly from the Macnaghten edition with the aid of a Cairo edition and that of Breslau. There are interwoven supplements also of the additional stories in Galland from their best Oriental forms. This is a version of at least equal value with those of Lane and Payne.

It has been already shown that the first great step in clearing up the history of the Nights was taken by Zotenberg when he recognized the modern Egyptian Recension and separated out its MSS. This was following the critical imperative to go back to the MSS. themselves. When that is done it becomes plain that besides the so-called "complete" MSS. of that late Egyptian Vulgate there is a multitude of incomplete MSS. which represent various attempts, mostly unsuccessful, to achieve complete recensions. It is evident that many individuals to whom a fragment had come, mostly of a few Nights at the beginning, put together independent stories and attached them to the initial fragment, dividing them into Nights. Examples of this are the Wortley Montagu MS. in the Bodleian and the Reinhardt MS. in the Strassburg University Library. The Wortley Montagu MS. is the same in contents as the Galland MS. to the end of the Porter Cycle of tales and thereafter is quite different. Yet it is a quite modern MS. and shows that in the middle of the xviii<sup>th</sup> century there was no generally accepted recension. Practically the same is the situation in the Reinhardt MS. What is needed, therefore, at present, is careful description and study of the oldest among these, such as the Galland and Vatican MSS., the old MS. in the Rylands Library, the Tübingen MS. etc. and the bringing of these under a tentative classification. That has been attempted by the present writer in his *Classification* cited above and has been carried further in admirable studies by Rudi Paret in *Der Ritter-Roman von 'Umar an-Nu'mān* (Tübingen 1927) and *Früh-arabische Liebesgeschichten* (Bern 1927). But besides the MSS. professing to be of the Nights there exists a still greater multitude of independent MSS. containing stories which may or may not have been taken over into the Nights. These, to begin with, were independent; and such



stories should not be regarded as extracts from the Nights. The reverse, rather, is true. This holds of the still unpublished MS. of stories discovered by H. Ritter in Constantinople. It is of the xiii<sup>th</sup> or xiv<sup>th</sup> century and contains five stories that are in ZER (*Anhang* to Littmann's translation, vol. vi., p. 692, 702 *sqq.*). Of course the cheap little printed editions of separate stories from the Nights of which there are so many, are true extracts. From this method of growth by addition it is plain that stories of apparently Persian or Baghdad origin may be later insertions and need not go back to an earlier Baghdad recension. Another source of much confusion has been the almost subconscious assumption, with many scholars, that ZER is the Nights and that investigation of its history should begin with ZER. De Sacy held that explicitly and it vitiated his whole attitude. It was a great obscuring element in Lane's mind and appears strongly even in De Goeje's article in the *Britannica*, editions 9, 10, 11 (fuller in *De Gids* for Sept. 1886). August Müller appears to have been the pioneer towards a freer attitude in his *Sendschreiben* on the subject to De Goeje (Bezzenger's *Beiträge*, xiii. 222-244) and in a more popular article in *Die deutsche Rundschau*, xiii., July 10, 1887, p. 77-96. Those preceded even Zotenberg's *Notice*.

There is a great gap between the folk-lore sources of the Frame-work Story in Farther India and ZER. But it can be bridged by three definitely historical references and by a still extant MS. Mas'ūdī in his *Murūdj al-Dhahab* (finished A.D. 947 and re-edited 957) tells (Paris ed., iv. 89 *sq.*) about an Arabic book of stories called "The Thousand Nights and a Night" which is a translation of a Persian story-book called "The Book of a thousand tales" (Persian: *afsāna*; Arabic: *khurāfa*). The Frame-work story which he describes is practically that of our Nights. That means that the Arabic Nights of Mas'ūdī's time was

an accepted translation of a Persian book of stories; but we have no clue as to what those stories were. The same information but with many more details is given by the author of the *Fihrist*, a *catalogue raisonné* of Arabic literature compiled about 987 A.D. with later additions. The author (ed. Flügel, i. 304 *sqq.*) gives an account of the origin of story-literature, its connection with the telling of tales at night and its different classes. So he gives the story of the origin of the Persian "Thousand Tales", which was really less than two hundred tales told in a thousand nights; how it was translated into Arabic and similar collections were made. But still we do not know what the stories were; only that the Framework was roughly that of our Nights. Further there is evidence that our present Nights, from the Galland MS. to ZER, is of specifically Arabic and not Persian origin. The first Cycle of stories, that of the Merchant and the Djinnī, where the merchant's life is saved by the stories told by three chance met travellers, is already to be found narrated by al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salama (fl. 250 = 865) in his *Fākhīr*, a book of proverbs (ed. Storey, p. 137-140). It is all of pronounced desert and Arabic type and contrasts strongly with the immediately preceding and plainly Persian Framework Story. An Arabic tale had taken the place of a Persian. The third definite mention of a Nights puts the book in Egypt in the time of the Fāṭimid Khalīfas. This is told by a certain al-Ḳurtī (Brockelmann, *G.A.L.*, ii. 698 *sq.*) who wrote a history of Egypt in the time of the last Fāṭimid al-'Ādil (555-567 = 1160-1171). But again we do not know what were the stories in this Fāṭimid Nights, only that it was called *Alf Laila wa-Laila* and was very popular. For details on all the above see the present writers *Earlier History*, p. 362 *sqq.* and Littmann's *Anhang* to his translation, p. 692 *sqq.*

The MS. is that which Galland used and of which a collateral was the ancestor of ZER.

But the stories in the Galland MS. could not possibly have stood in the Fāṭimid Nights; for they are full of later historical references. Thus in the Cycle of the Porter and the three Ladies a book is cited whose author died 590 (1193). In the story of Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī and Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan there are references which compel William Popper (*J.R.A.S.*, Jan. 1926, p. 1-14) to the conclusion that the story cannot be earlier than the reign of Baibars (650-676 = 1260-1277) and he is inclined to a date later than 706 A.H. The Hunchback Cycle is clearly after the capture of Baghdād by Hülāgū in 656 (1258). Topographical references in Cairo require a date at least 745 (1344) and Professor Popper considers that the reference to the Naḳīb Barakūt puts the story after 819 (1416). In addition to all this, time must be allowed for these stories to have become so popular that they were taken into a recension of the Nights. The Galland MS., therefore, is not a MS. of the Fāṭimid Nights.

Broadly, then, we have evidence for the following forms of the Nights, meaning by that any collection of stories fitted into the frame-work which we know: I. The original Persian *Hazār Afsāna*, "Thousand Stories". II. An Arabic version of the *Hazār Afsāna*. III. The frame-work story of the *Hazār Afsāna*, followed by stories of specifically Arabic origin. IV. The Nights of the late Fāṭimid period up the popularity of which al-Ḳurtī testifies. V. The recension of the Galland MS. From notes in it that MS. was at the Syrian Tripoli in 943 (1536) and at Aleppo in 1001 (1592); it may, of course, be older. But it was written in Egypt. There remains the at present still unsolved problem of the relations between it and the other old and independent MSS. to which reference has been made above. There are at least six such MSS. which must be considered.

The contents of the Nights (that is of ZER) have been described and considered

by Nöldeke in *Z.D.M.G.*, xlii. 68, and again and again through his long life; by Oestrup in his *Studier* (Kopenhagen 1891); there is a German translation of this with a supplement and further references by O. Rescher (Stuttgart 1925), a Russian by Krymski with a long introduction (Moscow 1904) and a French résumé with notes by Emile Galtier (Cairo 1912); by Rescher in his *Studien (Isl.*, ix. 1-94); by Horovitz, in *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, Jan. 1927) and in many separate articles; by Littmann in the *Anhang* to his translation and in *Tausenduneine Nacht in der Arabischen Literatur* (Tübingen 1923). Into all this it is impossible here to enter. But it may be worth while to emphasize certain general considerations. (i.) The occurrence of common folklore motifs should not be regarded as a sign of origin in any particular country or people. This might lead to the positing of a Chinese recension of the Nights or of a Hottentot; the *Open Sesame* motive occurs in South Africa. (ii.) When a story occurs in ZER and also independently, almost certainly the independent form is original. Thus a Persian or Baghdād story in ZER does not mean a Persian or Baghdād recension of the Nights; it means that ZER added the story. (iii.) Stories showing individual literary power deserve more attention on that side than they have received. Who, for example, was the Egyptian artist or artists, who produced Ma'rūf, Djūdar, Abū Ḳir? Who invented the Hunchback Cycle and created the Barber? Under what circumstances and how was the Porter of Baghdād invented and his Cycle of stories? Who created the Arabic Aladdin? About all these productions there is a straight-forward reality and humanity which contrast strongly for western readers with the unreality of Persian and Indian fiction. They are in the same class with stories in the Hebrew Old Testament. Under what circumstances, then, did these men live and

write, for they are unique in Oriental literature? This is a problem in pure literature and as an approach to it the present writer ventures to refer to his article ҺIKĀYA, above [EI1, vol. 3, 303-305]. The many references to story-literature in the *Fihrist* should be considered and it is most desirable that the old MS. of stories discovered by H. Ritter in Constantinople should be printed in full. It is not a MS. of the Nights but it goes back into the work-shop from which the materials of the Nights came.

*Bibliography:*

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(D.B. MacDonald)

## The Encyclopaedia of Islam. *New Edition, vol. I*

(Leiden, 1960), 358-364:

**Alf laila wa-laila (A.)**, “Thousand nights and one night” is the title of the most famous Arabian collection of fairy-tales and other stories. One often reads or hears nowadays “like a fairy-tale from the thousand-and-one nights”, and, indeed, the fairy-tales are the most striking part of the collection. Like all Orientals the Arabs from the earliest times enjoyed imaginative stories; but since the intellectual horizon of the true Arabs in ancient times before the rise of Islam was rather narrow the material for these entertainments was borrowed mainly from elsewhere, from Persia and from India, as we gather from the accounts of the Prophet’s competitor, the merchant al-Naḍr. In later times when Arab civilization had grown richer and more comprehensive the literary influence from other countries was, of course, much stronger. An attentive reader of the “Nights” will soon be astonished by the manifold variety of their contents: they resemble in a way an Oriental meadow with many different beautiful flowers intermingled with a few weeds. On the other hand, the reader will notice that these stories comprise a very wide field: there are stories of King Solomon, of the kings of ancient Persia, of Alexander the Great, of the caliphs and the sultans on one side, and stories in which guns, coffee and tobacco are mentioned on the other side.

### *Its appearance in Europe.*

The entire work is enclosed in a “frame-story”, and this was known in Italy in the Middle Ages. Traces of it are to be found in a novel by Giovanni Sercambi (1347-1424) and in the story of Astolfo and Giocondo which is told in the 28th canto of *Orlando Furioso*

by Ariosto (beginning of the 16th century); travellers who had been in the East may have brought this knowledge to Italy. But the whole *Alf Layla wa-Layla* came to Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. The French scholar and traveller Jean Antoine Galland (1646-1715) published it for the first time. Travelling in the Near East at first as a secretary of the French ambassador, then as a collector of objects for museums commissioned by amateurs, he had known the world of the Orient, and his attention was directed to the great number of stories and fables told there. After his return to France he began in 1704 to publish his volumes *Les mille et une Nuits contes arabes traduits en Français*. By 1706 seven vols. had appeared: vol. viii appeared in 1709, vols. ix and x in 1712, vols. xi and xii in 1717, two years after Galland’s death. This delay in the appearance of the later vols. is significant for Galland’s difficulties as to material and also for his indifference to this side of his work as a scholar. He was a born story-teller; he had a flair for a good story and a knack of re-telling it well. Thus he adapted his translation to the taste of his European readers, changing sometimes the wording of the Arabic text and paraphrasing things that were foreign to Europeans. Hence the great success of his “Nights”. But he was also fortunate in the material which fell into his hands. He began by translating Sindbād the Sailor from an unidentified MS; then he learned that this was part of a great collection of stories called “The Thousand and One Nights”; then he had the luck to have sent to him from Syria four vols. of a MS of that work which is, except for a small fragment found by Nabia Abbott, the oldest known and contains the best surviving text. The first three of his vols. are still in the Bib-

liothèque Nationale, but the fourth is lost. In the first seven vols. of his translation he exhausted his three vols. of Arabic text which we still have and added Sindbād and Camalzaman (Ḳamar al-Zamān) from unidentified MSS. Then for lack of material he stopped for three years until his publisher forced his hand by issuing, without authority, vol. viii containing Ganem (Ghānim), translated by Galland from an unidentified MS, and two stories, Zeyn Alasnam (Zayn al-Aṣṣnām) and Codadad (Khudādād), translated by Pétis de la Croix and intended for his *Mille et un jours*. Again Galland was completely out of material and stopped; he was also tired and disgusted with the whole matter. But in 1709 he met a certain Maronite from Aleppo, Ḥannā, brought to Paris by the traveller Paul Lucas, and at once recognized that he had got an oral source of the story material. Ḥannā told him stories in Arabic, and Galland inserted in his *Journal* abstracts of some of these. But Ḥannā also gave him transcripts of some. In this way the last four vols. of Galland's translation were filled out; his *Journal* gives full details. Ḥannā's transcripts have vanished, but two Arabic MSS of Aladdin have since come to light and one of Ali Baba. This, then, is the origin of the book which made the "Nights" known to Europe and which in the French text and in very many translations from the French became the "Arabian Nights" for the great multitude of readers. For details see H. Zotenberg, *Histoire d'Alā' aldīn ... avec Notice sur quelques manuscrits des Mille et une nuits et la traduction de Galland*, Paris 1888. This contains the Arabic text of Aladdin (Alā al-Dīn) and a study of certain MSS of the Nights and of the entries in Galland's *Journal*. See also V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie arabe*, iv, Liège 1900, and D. B. Macdonald, *A Bibliographical and literary study of the first appearance of the Arabian Nights in Europe*, *The Library Quarterly*, vol. ii, no. 4, Oct. 1932, 387-420.

For more than a century Galland's French version meant the Nights for Europe, and two of his stories whose original Arabic texts were not known were even translated into Oriental languages. But meanwhile other MSS, more or less connected with the Nights, were brought to light and, from these, various supplements to Galland were translated and published. Just as the MSS of the Nights themselves varied enormously as to the stories which they contained, so these translators were prepared to attach to the Nights any story that existed in Arabic. The following supplements, partly separate and partly attached to editions of Galland, are of importance in themselves and as signs of the interests of their times. For further details on all of them see Chauvin's *Bibliographie*, iv, 82-120.

In 1788 there appeared as a supplement to the *Cabinet des Fées*, vols 38-41, a series of tales translated from the Arabic by Denis Chavis. It is significant for the interest at the time in the whole subject of the Nights that there appeared, 1792-1794, three separate English translations of this supplement. In 1795 William Beloe published in the third vol. of his *Miscellanies* some Arabic stories which had been translated for him orally by Patrick Russell, the author of *The Natural History of Aleppo* (1794). In 1800 Jonathan Scott translated in his *Tales, Anecdotes and Letters* certain stories from the MS of the Nights brought from India by James Anderson, and in 1811 to his edition of an English version of Galland he added a vol. of new stories from another MS, the Wortley Montagu MS now in Oxford. In 1806 Caussin de Perceval had already added two vols. of supplement to his edition of Galland. But Edouard Gauttier in his professed edition of Galland (1822-1825) went much farther: besides two vols. of new tales drawn from all manner of sources he freely inserted others in the course of Gal-

land's Nights. Von Hammer in his *Die noch nicht übersetzten Erzählungen der Tausend und einen Nacht*, Stuttgart 1823, had a much firmer foundation and used a real recension of the Nights. He had acquired in Egypt a MS of the recension now known as Zotenberg's Egyptian Recension, which through numerous editions has become the Vulgate text of the Nights; see the editions, below. Von Hammer's French translation of a number of stories not in Galland is lost, but Zinserling (1823) translated it into German, and this version was rendered in English by Lamb (1826) and in French by Trébutien (1828). In 1825 M. Habicht began to publish 15 volumes professing to be a new translation but consisting really of Galland with some supplements from Caussin, Gauttier and Scott and an ending from a so-called Tunisian MS. He began also to publish an Arabic text. From this text, later on also from Galland, from Gotha MSS and from a text printed in Egypt, Weil published his translation within the years 1837-1867.

#### *Editions and translations.*

The main editions of the Arabic *Alf Layla wa-Layla* are the following.

1. The first Calcutta Edition: *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*; In the Original Arabic, published under the Patronage of the College of Fort William; By Shuekh Uhmud bin Moohummud Shirwanee ul Yumunee, Calcutta, vol. i 1814; vol. ii 1818. It contains only the first two hundred Nights and the story of Sindbād the Sailor.

2. The first Būlāḳ Edition: a complete Arabic edition, printed in 1251/1835 (from MSS found in Egypt) in the State Printing Office at Būlāḳ near Cairo founded by Muḥammad 'Alī.

3. The Second Calcutta Edition: *The Alif Laila* or the Book of the Thousand Nights and one Night, Commonly known as "The

*Arabian Nights Entertainments*", now, for the first time, published complete in the original Arabic, from an Egyptian manuscript brought to India by the late Major Turner, editor of the Shah-Nameh. Edited by W. H. Macnaghten, Esq. In four volumes, Calcutta 1839-42.

4. The Breslau Edition: *Tausend und Eine Nacht Arabisch. Nach einer Handschrift aus Tunis herausgegeben* von Dr. Maximilian Habicht, Professor an der Königlichen Universität zu Breslau (etc.), nach seinem Tode fortgesetzt von M. Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, ordentlichem Prof. der morgenländischen Sprachen an der Universität Leipzig, Breslau 1825-43. D.B. Macdonald, in his article on Habicht's Recension in *JRAS*, 1909, 685-704, and in his article *A Preliminary Classification of some MSS of the Arabian Nights*, in the *E.G. Browne Volume*, Cambridge 1922, 304, discussed the value of this edition. His expert opinion is that Habicht wilfully created a literary myth and enormously confused the history of the Nights because a Tunisian recension of the Nights never existed, and out of many stories which had come to him from many sources he constructed a new recension of the Nights much in the same way that he had constructed his translation described above. However, Macdonald acknowledged that Habicht's texts are given verbatim without any attempt at correction, and are, therefore, "vulgar" in the exact sense whereas all other texts have been grammatically and lexicographically "improved" by learned shaykhs.

5. Later Būlāḳ and Cairo Editions. In the latter half of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century the complete text of the first Būlāḳ edition, in the main the same as the second Calcutta edition, was several times reprinted. They

are representatives of Zotenberg's "Egyptian Recension", which is the result of a compilation made by a certain *shaykh* in the 18th century, according to a notice in U. J. Seetzen, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, Berlin 1854-5, iii, 188; the name of the *shaykh* is not known, but this notice confirms Zotenberg's hypothesis. The Jesuit Press at Bayrūt has published an independent but expurgated edition from another MS of the same recension (1888-90).

From the Egyptian Recension have been made all the modern western translations. Lane's translation, incomplete but with a very valuable and full commentary, began to appear in parts in 1839 and was finished in 1841. It was made from the first Būlāk edition. Payne's translation from the Macnaghten edition, complete and privately printed, appeared in 9 vols. 1882-84. Three additional vols. contained tales in the Breslau and 1st Calcutta editions (1884), and a 13th vol. (1889) contained Aladdin and Zayn al-Aṣṅām. Since Payne's death in 1916 there have been a number of complete reprints. The translation by Sir Richard Burton, also from the Macnaghten edition, is very largely dependent upon that of Payne and often reproduces Payne verbatim (10 vols., 1885; 6 supplementary vols., 1886-8). Besides the Smithers edition (12 vols., 1894) and Lady Burton's edition (6 vols., 1886-8) it has been completely reprinted several times. On the strange relation between the versions of Payne and of Burton see Thomas Wright, *Life of Sir Richard Burton* (2 vols., London 1906) and *Life of John Payne* (London 1919), and for an attempt at a comparative estimate of the above English translations see Macdonald's *On translating the Arabian Nights*, *The Nation*, New York, Aug. 30 and Sept. 6, 1900, In *Reclam's*

*Universal-Bibliothek* (1895-97) Max Henning published a German translation, 24 small vols.; it is somewhat expurgated and rather prosaic and gives only half the verses. The first 7 vols. give the Nights from the Būlāk edition and vols. 18-24 various supplements, largely translated from Burton. In 1899 J. C. Mardrus began a French translation of the Nights professedly from the Būlāk edition of 1835. His translation is not very trustworthy, and it incorporates tales from all manner of other collections than the Nights. Moreover there are translations of the Nights in Spanish, English, Polish, German, Danish, Russian, Italian. The Spanish translation is by Vicente Blasco Ibañez; the English by E. Powys Mathers; the Polish translation is incomplete. The German translation by E. Littmann appeared in Leipzig, 6 vols., 1921-8; first re-edition Wiesbaden 1953, second re-edition *ibid.* 1954. It contains the complete translation of the second Calcutta edition and the following stories: *'Alā' al-Dīn and the Magic Lamp*, from the Paris MS edited by Zotenberg (cf. above); *'Alī Baba and the Forty Robbers*, from the Oxford MS edited by Macdonald (*JRAS*, 1910, 221 ff., 1913, 41 ff.); *Prince Aḥmad and Parī Bānū*, from Burton, i.e. an English rendering of a Hindustani version derived from Galland; *Abu 'l-Ḥasan or the Sleeper Awakened*, from the Breslau edition; *The Craft of Women*, from the first Calcutta edition; the end of Sindbād's sixth journey and his seventh journey, from the first Calcutta edition; supplement in the *Story of the Brass City*; the end of the *Story of Sindbād and the Seven Viziers*; *The Story of al-Malik al-Zāhir Rukn al-Dīn Baybars al-Bunduqdārī and the Sixteen Guardians*, from the Breslau edition; *The Jealous Sisters*, from Burton-Galland; *Zayn al-Aṣṅām*, from a Paris MS edited by F. Groff; *The Nocturnal Adventure of the Caliph, Khudādād and his Brothers*, *'Alī Khawādja and the Merchant of Baghdadād*, from Burton-Galland. —The

Danish translation by J. Oestrup was published at Copenhagen in 1927. The Russian translation by I. Kračkovsky appeared in 1934, the Italian translation by F. Gabrieli in 1949.

*Problems of origin and evolution.*

When the Arabian Nights first became known in Europe they served only for the entertainment of European readers; but at the beginning of the 19th century western scholars began to take an interest in the question of their origin. Silvestre de Sacy, the founder of modern Arabian philology, discussed this question in several dissertations: *Journal des savants*, 1817, 678; *Recherches sur l'origine du recueil des contes intitulés les Mille et une nuits*, Paris 1829; in the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres*, x, 1833, 30. He denied, correctly, the possible authorship of one single writer and believed that the book was written at a very late period without Persian and Indian elements; therefore, he regarded as spurious a passage in *Murūdj al-Dhahab* of al-Mas'ūdī (written in 336/947 and re-edited in 346/957) referring to these elements. This passage, published by Barbier de Meynard in Arabic and French (*Les prairies d'or*, iv, 89), reads in English: "The case with them (viz. some legendary stories) is similar to that of the books that have come to us from the Persian, Indian (one MS has here: Pahlawī) and the Greek and have been translated for us, and that originated in the way that we have described, such as for example the book *Hazār Afsāna*, which in Arabic means "thousand tales", for "tale" is in Persian *afsāna*. The people call this book "Thousand Nights" (two MSS have here: Thousand Nights and One Night). This is the story of the king and the vizier and his daughter and her servant-girl; these two are called *Shīrazād* and *Dīnāzād* (in other MSS: and her nurse; in again other MSS: and his

two daughters)".

In *al-Fihrist* by Muḥammad b. Isḥāq b. Abī Ya'kūb Nadīm (written in 377/987), ed. Flügel, i, 304, the *Hazār Afsān* are mentioned and a résumé of the frame-work story is given. The *Fihrist* adds that Abū 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abdūs al-Djahshiyārī (d. 331/942), the author of the *Book of the Viziers*, began to write a book in which he selected a thousand stories from the stories of the Arabs, the Persians, the Greek and other peoples. He collected four hundred and eighty stories, but he died before he had attained his purpose, i.e. to complete a thousand stories.

Contrary to de Sacy, Joseph von Hammer (*Wiener Jahrbücher*, 1819, 236; *JA*, 1e série, x; 3e série, viii; Preface to his *Die noch nicht übersetzten Erzählungen* (see above) maintained the genuineness of the passage in al-Mas'ūdī with all its consequences. William Lane tried to prove that the whole book was the work of one single author and had been written in the period 1475-1525 (Preface to *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, London 1839-41).

The discussion was resumed by de Goeje (*De Arabische Nachtvertellingen*, *De Gids*, 1886, iii, 385, and *The Thousand and One Nights* in the *Encycl. Britann.*, xxiii, 316). He collated the passage in the *Fihrist* (see above), in which the *Hazār Afsān* are said to have been written for Humāy (var.: Humāni), the daughter of King Bahman, with a passage in al-Ṭabarī (9th century), i, 688, where Esther is called the mother of Bahman and the name *Shahrazād* is assigned to Humāy; and consequently tried to show that the frame-work story of the Nights was connected with the Book of Esther. August Müller seems to have been the pioneer towards a freer attitude in his *Sendschreiben* on the subject to de Goeje (*Bezenberger's Beiträge*, xiii, 222) and in his article in *Die deutsche Rundschau*, xiii, July 10, 1887, 77-96. He distinguished various layers in the work, one of which he supposed



to have been written in Baghdād, whereas to another and larger one he assigned an Egyptian origin. The ideal of various layers was worked out with greater accuracy by Th. Nöldeke (*Zu den ägyptischen Märchen*, ZDMG, 1888, 68) who gave an approximate definition of the texts, by which each could be recognized.

The contents of the Nights were described and considered by Nöldeke several times. In this respect Oestrup's *Studier over 1001 Nat*, Copenhagen 1891, are of special importance; they were translated into Russian by Krymski (*Izslidowanie o 1001 noči*, Moscow 1905, with a long introduction) and into German by Rescher, "*Oestrups Studien über 1001 Nacht aus dem Dänischen (nebst einigen Zusätzen)*", Stuttgart 1925, and a French résumé with notes was published by Galtier, Cairo 1912. Other ingenious discussions of the subject were given by Horovitz, mainly in his article *Die Entstehung von Tausendundeine Nacht*, *The Review of Nations*, no. 4, April 1927; idem, in *IC*, 1927. See also Littmann, *Tausendundeine Nacht in der arabischen Literatur*, Tübingen 1923, and *Die Entstehung und Geschichte von Tausendundeiner Nacht* in the *Anhang* to Littmann's translation (mentioned above).

The earliest testimony to the existence of the book of the Thousand Nights was discovered by Nabia Abbott, *A Ninth-Century Fragment of the "Thousand Nights"*, *New Light on the Early History of the Arabian Nights*, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1949. After that the work is mentioned by al-Mas'ūdī and in the *Fihrist* (see above). In the 12th century a collection of tales called "The Thousand Nights and one Night" was known in Egypt as we learn from a certain al-Ḳurṭī who wrote a history of Egypt under the last Fāṭimid caliph (1160-71), and al-Ḡhuzūlī, who died in 815/1412, transmitted in his anthology a tale of the Nights, as Torrey recognized (*JAOS*, 1894, 42 f.). A MS discovered by H. Ritter in Istanbul

which is of the 13th or 14th century contains four stories that are in the Egyptian recension. These stories are not stated to be a part of the Nights; they will be published and translated by H. Wehr on the basis of preliminary studies by A. von Bulmerincq. Then follow Galland's MS and a number of other MSS of the Nights which cover the period from the 15th to the 18th centuries.

We know that in the common form of the Nights there are a Baghdād and an Egyptian part. Oestrup grouped the separate tales into three layers of which the first one was to comprehend the fairy-tales from the Persian *Hazār Afsāna* with the frame-work of the book, the second those which had come from Baghdād, and the third the stories which had been added to the body of the work; certain tales, as for example the extensive chivalric romance of 'Umar b. al-Nu'mān, were inserted when the number 1001 was taken in its literal sense. But the *Story of Sūl and Shumūl* in a Tübingen MS, which is professedly a part of the Nights and which was edited as such by Seybold, certainly never was an integral part of them, because in it a Muslim is converted to Christianity; in the true Nights Christians, Zoroastrians and pagans often adopt Islam, but a Muslim never adopts another religion.

The following forms of the Nights were established by Macdonald (*The earlier history of the Arabian Nights*, *JRAS*, 1924, 353 ff.)—meaning by that any collection of stories fitted into the frame-work which we know: i. The original Persian *Hazār Afsāna*, "Thousand Stories". ii. An Arabic version of the *Hazār Afsāna*. iii. The frame-work story of *Hazār Afsāna*, followed by stories of Arabic origin. iv. The Nights of the late Fāṭimid period; to its popularity al-Ḳurṭī testifies. v. The recension of the Galland MS. From notes in it that MS was in Syrian Tripoli in 943/1536 and at Aleppo in 1001/1592; it may, of course, be

older. But it was written in Egypt. There remains the at present still unsolved problem of the relations between it and the other old and independent MSS; there are according to Macdonald at least six such MSS which must be considered.

Nabia Abbott (see above) stated the following six forms. i. An eighth-century translation of the *Hazār Afsāna*. According to her belief this was most probably a complete and literal translation, perhaps entitled *Alf Khurāfa*. ii. An eighth-century Islamized version of the *Hazār Afsāna* entitled *Alf Layla*. This could have been either partial or complete. iii. A ninth-century composite *Alf Layla* containing both Persian and Arabic materials. While most of the former came undoubtedly from the *Hazār Afsāna*, other current story-books, especially the *Book of Sindbād* and the *Book of Shimās*, are not improbable sources. The Arabic materials, as Littmann had already pointed out, were not so slight or insignificant as Macdonald believed them to be. iv. The tenth-century *Alf Samar* of Ibn ‘Abdūs. Whether this was meant to include, among other materials, all the current *Alf Layla* and to supersede it, is not clear. v. A twelfth-century collection augmented by materials from iv and by Asiatic and Egyptian tales of local Egyptian composition. The change of title of *Alf Layla wa-Layla* belongs, in all probability, to this period. vi. The final stages of the growing collection extending to the early sixteenth century. Heroic tales of the Islamic counter-crusades are among the most prominent additions. Persia and ‘Irāk may have contributed some of the later predominantly Far Eastern tales in the wake of the thirteenth-century Mongol conquest of those lands. The final conquest of Mamlūk Syria and Egypt by the Ottoman Salīm I (1512-20) closed the first chapter of the history of the Arabian Nights in its oriental homeland.

The title “Thousand Stories” may have been changed to “Thousand Nights” when, with the Arabs, the frame-work story and other stories were combined; that cannot have been done later than the 9th century. Originally “1000 stories” meant only a very large number of stories; in the same way it is said of *Shahrazād* that she had collected “a thousand books”. For the simple mind even 100 is a high number, and “before 100 years” means—even for Oriental historians—the same as “a long time ago”; therefore the number 100 must not be taken in its exact sense. But 1000 is almost the same as “innumerable”. And the *Book of the Thousand Nights* which was known at Baghdād scarcely contained a thousand separate nights. But why was 1000 changed to 1001? This change may partly owe its origin to the superstitious aversion to round numbers common among the Arabs as among other peoples. But it is very likely that it was also influenced by the Turkish idiomatic use of *bin bir* “thousand and one” for a large number: in Anatolia there is a ruin called *Bin-bir-kilise* “1001 Churches”, but there are, of course, not nearly so many there. In Istanbul there is a place called *Bin-bir-direk* “1001 columns”; but there are only a few dozens of them there. The Turkish alliteration *bin bir* points to the origin of the Persian idiom *hazār yak* “1001” and of the title *alf layla wa-layla*. Since the 11th century Persia, Mesopotamia and Syria and the other countries of Eastern Islam were under the influence of the Turks. Thus the little “1001 Nights” at the beginning meant only a large number of nights, but later on the number was taken in its literal meaning, and it became necessary to add a great many stories in order to complete the number 1001.

*The various component elements.*

If then India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt

and in some way the Turks were partners in the origin of the Nights we must assume that materials derived from all these countries and peoples are to be found in them. The first outer tests might be the proper names. There are Indian names like Sindbād, Turkish names like 'Alī Baba and Khātūn; the names Shahrazād, Dīnāzād, Shāhzamān are Persian and occur, as de Goeje has shown, in Persian legends; so also Bahrām, Rustam, Ardashīr, Shāpūr and many others are Persian. However, by far the majority of names are Arabic, i.e. old Arabic names used among the Arabian Bedouin and later Islamic names. Greek and European names occur in a few cases in stories treating of the relations between Muslims and Byzantines and Franks. Egyptian names refer to places and to months in their Coptic forms. Of Hebrew names chiefly Solomon and David occur; both play an important role in Islamic tradition. Besides them Āṣaf, Barakhiyā, Bulūḳiyā and others are named. But since in very many cases stories are transferred to other persons and frequently persons without names act in them the question of the names must not be stressed.

However, the frame-work system, which is very common in India but very rare in other countries, is a test of the Indian origin of certain parts of the Arabian Nights. In the Indian popular books it usually runs like this: "You may not do such and such a thing or else you will go the same way as so and so".—"How was that?" asks the other, and then the admonisher begins his story.

The foreign elements in the Nights have been carefully studied by Oestrup. One of the interesting statements he made was that in the Iranian fairy-tales the demons or supernatural powers act on their own account and independently, whereas in the more recent tales, especially in those from Egypt, they are always subject to some talisman or

magic object; hence its owner decides the development of the action, not the Djinn and 'Ifrīts themselves. Only a short summary of the foreign elements in the Nights can be given here.

The frame-story is of Indian origin. That it consists of three different parts which originally were independent stories was shown by Emmanuel Cosquin in *Études folkloriques*, Paris 1922, 265. These parties are: 1. The story of a man who was grieved by a disloyal wife but whose grief was allayed when he saw that a high personality had the same misfortune. 2. The story of a demon or a giant whom his wife or his captive betrayed with many other men in the most audacious manner. This is the same as the tale told by the seventh vizier in the *Story of Sindbād the Wise*. 3. The story of a clever girl who by her skilful telling of stories averts an evil threatening her or her father or both of them. Of these three parts only the third one seems to have belonged to the original frame-work story, as indicated by al-Mas'ūdī and by the *Fihrist*; in it, then, only the cruel king, the clever daughter of the vizier and her true old nurse were known. It is probable that the story of the clever daughter of the vizier came at an early date from India to Persia, where it was "nationalized" and combined with the other two parts of the frame-story. A number of tales in the Nights are of Indian origin: such are the stories of pious men that remind us of Buddhist and Jainist saints, the fables of animals, the story-cycles of *Sindbād the Wise*, and of *Djali'ād* and *Shimās*. Indian motifs are to be found in different passages of the Nights: such are, e.g., the *Story of the Magic Horse*; the poisoning by means of the leaves of a book (by the physician Dūbān), a practice which points to Indian customs (cf. Gildemeister, *Scriptorum Arabum De Rebus Indicis loci et opuscula*, Bonn 1838, 89). All this passed through Persian before it reached the Arabs.

Quite a number of tales are of Persian origin, especially those fairy-tales in which the ghosts and the fairies act independently; see above. The tales which Oestrup enumerates as being of Indian-Persian origin are the following: 1) *The Story of the Magic Horse*; 2) *The Story of Ḥasan of Baṣra*; 3) *The Story of Sayf al-Mulūk*; 4) *The Story of Ḳamar al-Zamān and of Princess Budūr*; 5) *The Story of Prince Badr and of Princess Djawhar of Samandal*; 6) *The Story of Ardashīr and Ḥayāt al-Nufūs*. And according to him the relation between the *Story of 'Alī Shār* and the Persian original, the former containing many details which recur in the probably later narrative of *Nūr Dīn 'Alī and the Girdle-girl*, also to be found in the *Nights*, is uncertain. The *Story of the Jealous Sisters* and the *Story of Aḥmad and Parī Bānū* that are found only in Galland give a strong impression of being originally Persian, but Persian prototypes of them have not become known as yet.

Baghdād is situated in the region of ancient Babylonia: it is, therefore, probable that ancient Babylonia ideas should survived there until Islamic times and might be reflected in the *Nights*. Even a whole story, the *Story of Ḥaykār the Wise*, which in some MSS appears as a part of the *Nights*, is of Old Mesopotamian origin; it probably dates back to the 7th century B.C., and it found its way through the Jewish and Christian literatures into Arabic literature. *Khidr* the Ever-Youthful, has a Babylonian prototype; the journeys of *Bulūḳiyā* and the water of life fetched by Prince Aḥmad may reflect motifs of the Babylonian epic of *Gilgamesh*. But *Khidr* and the water of life were probably transmitted to the Arabs by the Romance of Alexander, and the journeys of *Bulūḳiyā* became known to them through Jewish literature. Above all, the frequent anecdotes about the 'Abbāsīd caliphs and their court and also some anecdotes about their subjects belong to the

Baghdād recension of the *Nights*. The *Story of Sindbād the Sailor* found its definite shape probably in Baghdād, the romance of 'Umar b. al-Nu'mān contains Persian, Mesopotamian and Syrian materials; the romance of 'Adjīb and Ḡharīb points to Mesopotamia and to Persia; the story of the clever slave-girl *Tawaddud* originated in Baghdād and was in some respects reshaped in Egypt. The *Stories of Bulūḳiyā*, of *Sindbād the Wise*, and of *Djali'ād and Wird Khān* were certainly known in Baghdād. But there is no certain proof that all these tales were parts of the Baghdād recension. The same is to be said of the four stories of the Istanbul MS found by H. Ritter (see above); it contains four of our *Nights* stories but does not refer to *Alf Layla wa-Layla*. These stories are: 1) *The Story of the Six Men*, i.e. of the six brothers of the barber of Baghdād; 2) *The Story of Djullanār the Seagirl*; 3) *The Story of Budūr and 'Umayr b. Djubayr*; 4) *The Story of Abū Muḥammad the Slothful*.

Egyptian origin is to be postulated of the stories in which the tricks of clever thieves and rogues are related, of the tales in which the ghosts and demons appear as servants of talismans and of magic objects, and of stories that might be called "bourgeois novels", some of which resemble modern romances of adultery. All these stories date, of course, in their present form from the time of the Mamlūk sultans and of Turkish rule in Egypt. But some of the motifs go back to Ancient Egypt. The clever rogue 'Alī al-Zaybaḳ and his companion Aḥmad al-Danfah have their prototype in the bold *condottiere* Amasis, and the treasure of Rhampsinit is found in the story of 'Alī al-Zaybaḳ, as Nöldeke pointed out. The monkey-scribe in the story of the three dames of Baghdād may have his prototype in Thot, the scribe of the Egyptian gods who is often represented as a monkey, or in Hanuman the monkey-leader of the Indian *Ramayana*. It has also been sug-

gested that the ancient story of the Egyptian shipwrecked person is to be connected with Sindbād's journeys, and that the story of the capture of Jaffa by Egyptian warriors hidden in sacks recurs in the story of 'Alī Baba; but these connections are not very likely; see Littmann, *Tausendundeine Nacht in der arabischen Literatur*, 22.

For possible Greek influences in the Nights see von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, Chicago 1946, Chapter Nine, *Greece in the Arabian Nights*.

*The various literary genres.*

It remains to give a summary account of the different classes of literature represented in the Nights; it is here, of course, impossible to mention every one of all the stories, as has been done in the *Anhang* to Littmann's translation. There six main groups were distinguished: 1) Fairy-tales; 2) Romances and novels; 3) Legends; 4) Didactic stories; 5) Humorous tales; 6) Anecdotes. A few examples of each group must suffice here.

1. The frame-story consists of three Indian fairy-tales. The tales which come first in all manuscripts (*The Merchant and the Djinnī*; *The Fisherman and the Djinnī*; *The Porter*; *The Three Calenders and the Three Dames in Baghdād*; *The Hunchback*) belong to this class; they are themselves examples of the frame-work system and contain some traits which remind us of Indian prototypes and even of some motifs which have parallels in stories from farther east. The best known fairy-tales are those of 'Alā' al-Dīn and the *Magic Lamp* and 'Alī Baba. Other examples are *Ḳamar al-Zamān and Budūr*, *The Jealous Sisters*, *Prince Aḥmad and Parī Bānū*, *Sayf al-Mulūk*, *Ḥasan al-Baṣrī*, *Zayn al-Aṣnām*.

2. The longest romance is that of 'Umar b. al-Nu'mān and his Sons; it has been discussed by Paret (*Der Ritterroman von 'Umar*

*an-Nu'mān*, Tübingen 1927), and by H. Grégoire and R. Goossens (ZDMG 1934, 213: *Byzantinisches Epos und arabischer Ritterroman*). *The Story of 'Adjīb and Ḡharīb* is the model of an Islamic popular romance. The stories of *the Porter and the Three Dames*, of 'Alā' al-Dīn Abu 'l-Shāmāt, of *Nūr Dīn and Shams Dīn*, of *Nūr Dīn and Maryam the Girdle-girl* might be called "bourgeois" romances or novels, as also the story of *Abū Ḳīr and Abū Šīr*.

Here the love-stories may be added. There are a great many of them in the Nights, and they comprise three groups: a) ancient Arabian life before Islam; b) urban life in Baghdād and Baṣra, love-affairs with girls or slave-girls in the cities or in the palace of the caliphs; c) love-novels from Cairo which are sometimes frivolous and lascivious. See Paret, *Früharabische Liebes-geschichten*, Bern 1927.

Also the stories of rogues and of seafarers are to be mentioned here. For 'Alī al-Zaybaḳ see above; many short stories of the guardians are told before the rulers of Egypt. The famous story of *Sindbād the Sailor* is based on a book *The Wonders of India*, which contained adventures and sailors' yarns collected by a Persian sea captain at Baṣra in the 10th century. The first part of the story of *Abū Muḥammad the Slothful* is composed of sailors' stories and motifs of fairy-tales.

3. There are a few ancient Arabian legends inserted in the Nights: *Hātīm al-Tā'ī*, *Iram the City of Columns*; *The Brass City*; *The City of Lebta*, which refers to the conquest of North-western Africa by the Arabs. Other legends refer to pious men and women, among them to pious Israelites (these need not necessarily be due to Jewish authors); the legend of *The Pious Prince*, who was a son of Hārūn al-Rašīd and became a dervish, is reminiscent of the famous legend of Alexius.

4. Didactic stories, fables and parables, especially of animals, are known to many peoples and have found their way into the Nights also, where most of them seem to have originated in India, as e.g. the two long cycles of *Sindbād the Wise* (*Syntipas*) and of *Djalī'ād and Wird Khān*, and many of the fables of animals, but they were sometimes remodelled in their Arabic forms. The long story of the clever slave-girl *Tawaddud* (in Spain *la doncella Teodor*, in Abyssinia *Tauded*) with its probable Greek prototype correctly discussed by Horovitz belongs in this category.

5. Humorous tales are the stories of *Abu 'l-Ḥasan or the Sleeper Awakened*, of *Khalifa the Fisherman*, of *Djā'far the Barmakid and the Old Bedouin*, and of *'Alī the Persian*; the latter is a typical story of lies. In the stories of *Mārūf the Cobbler* and of *the Hunchback* there are many humorous traits.

6. The group of anecdotes comprises here all the stories that are not classified in the preceding groups. Collections of anecdotes are the stories of *the Hunchback* and of *the Barber and his Brothers*, and they are combined to a comedy of great style. The other anecdotes are to be divided into three groups: those of rulers and their circles, those of munificent men, those taken from general human life. Those of rulers begin with Alexander the Great and end with the Mamlūk sultans: a few of them refer to the Persian kings, a very large number of them refer to the 'Abbāsīd caliphs, above all to Hārūn al-Rashīd who became the ideal ruler in the opinion of later Muslims. Some of these anecdotes may not originate from Baghdād but from Egypt where they were ascribed to him. The munificent men about whom the Nights tell are mainly Ḥātīm al-Ṭā'ī, Ma'n b. Zā'ida and the Barmakids. The anecdotes from general human life are of several kinds:

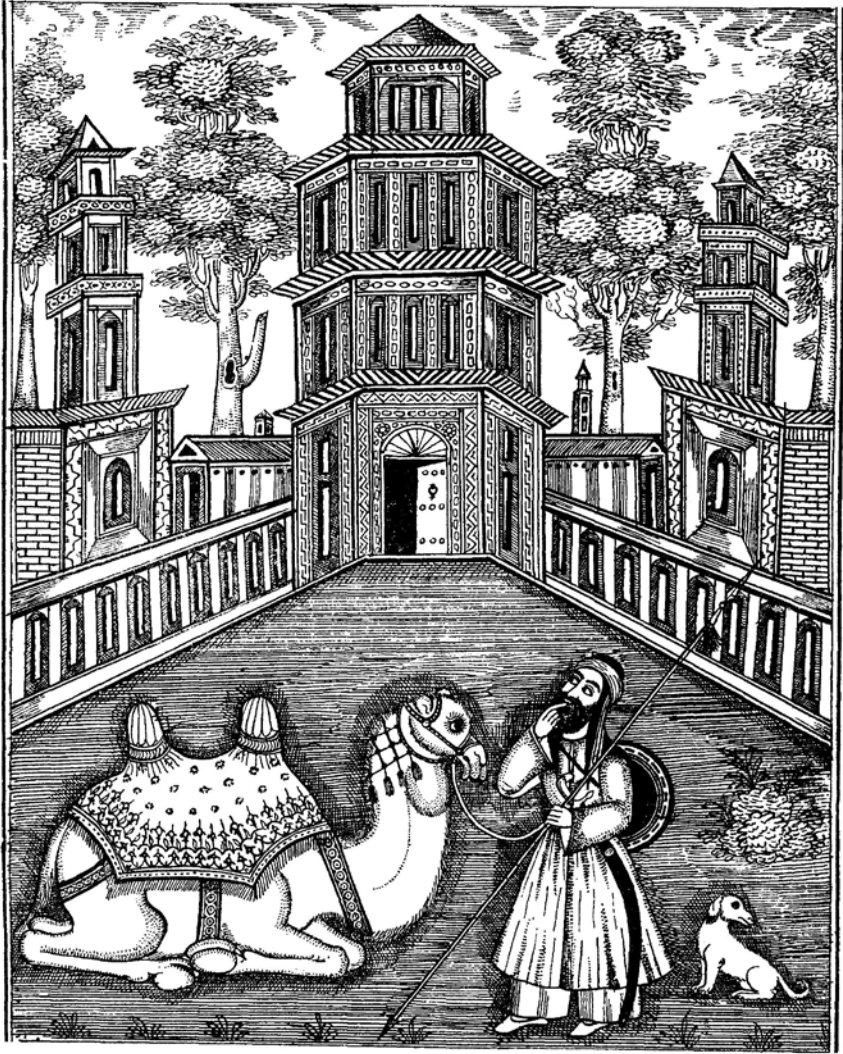
they tell of rich and poor, of young and old, of sexual abnormalities (*Wardān and the Woman with the Bear*; *The Princess and the Monkey*), of bad eunuchs, of unjust and of clever judges, of stupid schoolmasters (a type known in Greek and Roman literature as well as in modern Egyptian Arabic tales). The *Nocturnal Adventure of the Caliph* transmitted only by Galland contains three long anecdotes told at large and intermingled with motifs from fairy-tales.

There are about 1420 poems or fragments of poetry in the 2nd Calcutta edition, according to Horovitz (in *Festschrift Sachau*, Berlin 1915, 375-9) Of these a number of 170 repetitions must be deducted, so 1250 insertions of poetry remain. Horovitz has been able to prove that those insertions whose authors he could discover are to be dated from the 12th to the 14th centuries, i.e. from the Egyptian period of the history of the Nights. These poems and verses are mostly of the kind that they might be omitted without disturbing the course of the prose texts, and, therefore, have been later added to them.

(E. Littmann)

#### *Bibliography:*

Has been given in the course of the article. Here special attention should be called to Oestrup's *Studier* and their annotated translation by Rescher (see above), to N. Elisséeff, *Thèmes et Motifs des Mille et Une Nuits*, Beirut 1949, and to the full bibliography given by Brockelmann, II, 72-4, S II, 59-63. For the influence of the Arabian Nights on European literature cf. *The legacy of Islam*, 199 ff. *Cassel's Encyclopaedia of literature*, s.v.



Abdallâh ibn Abî Qilâba admiring the city of Iram.

Illustration by Mirzâ 'Ali-Qoli Kho'i from the 1272/1855 Tehran edition of the Persian translation of the "Arabian Nights".

(Courtesy Archive of Persian Lithographic Illustration, U. Marzolph, Göttingen.)

# The Encyclopaedia of Islam <sup>THREE</sup> (Leiden, 2007)

## Arabian Nights

*Arabian Nights*, a collection of stories authored by many different anonymous contributors over an extended period of time, is constituted by a frame-tale in which the narrator, Shahrazād, tells stories for a thousand nights, to entertain and distract her husband whose practice has been to marry a virgin then kill her the next morning. The stories were introduced to the West by Antoine Galland, with his French translation adapted from various Arabic sources and published between 1704 and 1717. The oldest extant Arabic MS, which Galland used, is thought to date from the mid-ninth/fifteenth century. The stories in many versions and many translations have been enormously popular, permeating literary imagery around the world.

*Arabian Nights*, the work known in Arabic as *Alf layla wa-layla*, “A thousand nights and one night,” is an oriental collection of stories that is constituted by a frame-tale focused on the narrator, Shahrazād, telling stories for a thousand nights. Derived from a pre-Islamic Iranian prototype that relied partly on Indian elements, the collection gained fame in the Western world by way of the French translation adapted from various Arabic sources and published by Antoine Galland between 1704 and 1717. Commonly known in English as *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* or, in short, the (*Arabian*) *Nights*, the collection in its many versions constitutes the Islamic world's major contribution to world literature and an icon that has permeated literary imagery around the world. Rather than denoting a specific book, the name the *Arabian Nights* implies a phenom-

enon, since the work is both anonymous and authored by many different contributors over an extended period of time. Different versions in Arabic manuscripts and printed texts exist, as well as numerous translations and adaptations into European and other languages.

### 1. Sources of information:

The only critical edition of an *Alf layla wa-layla* manuscript is the edition prepared by Muhsin Mahdi (1984), based on the Galland manuscript, which was one of the sources Galland used for his famous translation. The text of this edition has served as the basis for several translations into European languages, including English, Dutch, and German. The older English translations, such as those of Lane and Burton, which are based on various manuscripts, combinations of manuscripts, and other sources, are available as Internet resources. The volumes of Victor Chauvin's *Bibliographie* pertaining to the *Nights*, originally published 1900-03 and recently reprinted, contain detailed summaries and commentaries on the tales of the *Nights* (and many other tales). Mia Gerhardt's monograph, *The art of story-telling*, and David Pinault's “sequel” study, *Story-telling techniques in the Arabian Nights*, remain highly readable and inspiring studies. Comprehensive information about the *Nights* in English is available in Robert Irwin's *The Arabian Nights: A companion* and in *The Arabian Nights encyclopedia*, prepared by Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen. A number of important essays tracing our gradually growing understanding of the complex nature of the *Arabian Nights* have been republished by Marzolph in *The Arabian Nights reader*. The tercentenary of the publication of Galland's



translation in 2004 occasioned the publication of a number of volumes documenting the state of the art in *Arabian Nights* research (see Chraïbi; Joly and Kilito; Ouyang and van Gelder; Yamanaka and Nishio; and Marzolph, *Transnational*).

## 2. Content:

The frame-tale of the *Nights* begins with an anonymous narrator telling the story of the Sassanian kings Shāhriyār and his brother Shāhzmān, the ruler of Samargand. Deeply traumatised by the unexpected discovery of their wives' sexual debauchery, they start to roam the world in order to find out whether there are any faithful women to be found anywhere. In their travels, they meet a woman who tells them of her abduction by a demon who keeps her locked away in a box at the bottom of the sea, allowing her out only when he wishes. But while the demon sleeps, she blackmails the two men into having sex with her, thereby ultimately convincing them that men will never manage to control women's wives. On the journey home, Shāhzmān decides to live in celibacy, while Shāhriyār determines to marry a new woman every night only to kill her the next morning. Once back in his kingdom, he continues this practice until the number of marriageable women grows scarce. At this point, the *wazīr's* daughter Shahrazād (Scheherazade) takes it upon herself to save her sex by volunteering to marry the cruel ruler. After the nocturnal consummation of their marriage, she has her younger sister (or, in some versions, her nurse) Dunyāzād (Dīnāzād, Dīnārzād) request that she divert them by telling tales. With the king's permission, Shahrazād does so. As dawn breaks, Shahrazād interrupts her story at a point that leaves the king's curiosity aroused, and he decides to let her live so that he can hear the rest of the tale the following night. This

continues for a total of a thousand nights. On the thousand-and-first night, Shahrazād discloses her stratagem to the ruler, and he pardons her.

## 3. Textual history:

3.1. *Early history.* The collection developed into its present shape in several steps that can be reconstructed with a fair degree of certainty. The most important attestations for the early history of the *Nights* are two references, one preserved in the work of the Arab historian al-Mas'ūdī (d. 345 or 346/956-7) and the other in the catalogue (*al-Fihrist*) of the Baghdad bookseller Ibn al-Nadīm, written in 377/987 (see Abbott). Both authors agree that the collection derives from an earlier Persian book named *Hazār afsān(a)* ("A thousand stories"), a title rendered in Arabic as *Alf khurāfa* ("A thousand fantastic stories"), the term *khurāfa* relating to the eponymous protagonist of fantastic stories who allegedly lived during the prophet Muḥammad's lifetime (Drory). Both authors note that the Arabic translation is commonly known as *Alf layla* ("A thousand nights"). Ibn al-Nadīm also mentions the general design of the work's frame-tale and explicitly states that he had seen the book on various occasions "in its entirety" (*wa-qaḍ ra'aytuhu bi-tamāmihi dafa'āt*). While he describes the book as containing some 200 tales, he does not, however, mention the actual content of any of the tales included. Ibn al-Nadīm's evaluation of the collection as "a poor book with silly tales" (*kitāb ghathth bārid al-ḥadīth*) characterises the attitude of the learned, both contemporary and modern, and disregards the fact that the collection's tales were obviously enjoyed by the indigenous popular audience.

Several elements in the collection's frame-tale have been shown to derive from ancient Indian models (Cosquin). These elements

include the stratagem of narrating stories in order to prevent death as well as two specific tales, viz., the tale of the “Woman in the box” (Aarne/Thompson tale-type no. 1426), experienced by King Shāhriyār and his brother as a personal adventure, and the story of the man who knew the animal languages (Aarne/Thompson tale-type no. 670), told to Shahrazād by her father in the hope of dissuading her from marrying the king.

An Iranian origin is strongly suggested by the fact that the earliest known references to the *Arabian Nights* explicitly mention a Persian-language predecessor. This notion is further supported by the Persian background of the main characters in the frame-tale. Notably, the narrator’s name is of Persian origin, the Arabicised form Shahrazād being the equivalent of the Persian Chehrāzād, meaning “of noble descent and/or appearance.” Moreover, Ibn al-Nadīm reports the opinion that the book was composed for Homāni, the daughter of King Bahman. Al-Mas’ūdī identifies a certain Humāya, daughter of Bahman, himself the son of the legendary hero Isfandiyār, and a woman named Shahrazād, who was the sister of the Achaemenid emperor Darius who reigned before him; this information is corroborated by various other Arabic historians. Modern nationalistic Iranians who claim that the *Nights* are a monument of Persian literature are certainly not completely wrong. Their claim, however, has also to be considered against the tendency of traditional Arabic fiction to localise tales of magic in an Iranian atmosphere (see Marzolph, *Persian Nights*, 278-80).

Various scholars have suggested a distinct Arabic origin for the collection. In particular, the monumental collection prepared by Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abdūs al-Jahshiyārī (d. 331/942) has been proposed as a precursor to the *Nights*. As Ibn al-Nadīm states, al-

Jahshiyārī intended to compile a book of a thousand tales from the stories of the Arabs, the Persians, the Greeks, and others, with each tale covering one night. He succeeded in collecting some 480 tales before death overtook him. The Istanbul manuscript of *al-Ḥikāyāt al-‘ajība* (“Wonderful stories”), probably dating from the eighth/fourteenth century and containing several stories that also occur in the *Nights*, has, albeit erroneously, been interpreted as a fragment of al-Jahshiyārī’s compilation (see Marzolph, *Das Buch*, 632f.).

None of the available early testimonies contains an indication of the content of the Iranian prototype or its early Arabic adaptation, and any attempt at reconstructing this content is purely speculative. The content is, however, summarily intimated by a paper fragment published by Nabia Abbott in 1949. Dating from the third/ninth century, this fragment preserves the first pages of a book called *The tale of the thousand nights* (*Ḥadīth alf layla*). Here, a certain Dīnāzād asks an unspecified narrator, if she be not asleep, to tell her a story promised earlier and to “quote striking examples of the excellencies and shortcomings, the cunning and stupidity, the generosity and avarice, and the courage and cowardice that are in man, instinctive or acquired, or pertain to his distinctive characteristics or to courtly manners, Syrian or Bedouin.” None of the actual tales are quoted in the fragment. It is noteworthy that the request only to some extent matches the content of the *Nights* as documented in later Arabic manuscripts, since there is no mention of the fairy tales, fables, romantic epics, jokes, and anecdotes that make up the *Nights* as they are later known (Chraïbi, *Les mille et une nuits*, 95-104).

Additional evidence for the physical existence of the *Nights* is contained in the notebook of a Jewish physician who sold, bought,

and lent out books in mid-sixth/twelfth-century Cairo (see Goitein). The notice pertains to a book called *The thousand and one nights* and thus bears testimony to the fact that the elaborate title by which the collection is known today had by then come into use.

Since the earliest preserved manuscript of the *Nights* is dated to about five centuries later than the early testimonies to the book's existence, the content of the original collection and its further development can only be hypothesised. Obviously the nucleus of the *Nights* was a second/eighth-century Arabic translation of the Persian collection *Hazār afsān(a)*. This translation, whether Islamised or not, was known as *Alf layla*. The third/ninth-century paper fragment testifies to the fact that the collection did not necessarily exist in complete manuscripts. Rather, various different selections appear to have existed since very early times. This argument makes the existence of a canonical text of the *Nights* highly improbable. Instead, what is more likely is a constant rebuilding of the collection around a constitutive nucleus, probably not comprising much more than the frame-tale and the early tales that relate to Shahrazād's own situation, in that they also deal with the stratagem of saving one's life through the telling of tales. The collection then, originating with tales from the Indian and Iranian traditions, grew with the addition of narratives relating to the 'Abbāsid period in pre-sixth/twelfth-century Baghdad and tales of urban Cairo during the Mamlūk period.

3.2. *Manuscripts of the Nights pre-dating Galland's translation.* The oldest preserved text of the *Nights* is contained in a three-volume Arabic manuscript, known as the Galland MS (Bibliothèque Nationale, arabe 3609-11). According to numismatic evidence—mention

of the coin *ashrafī*, first issued by al-Malik al-Ashraf Barsbāy in 829/1426—the manuscript has been dated to the middle of the ninth/fifteenth century (see Grotzfeld, Age). It was acquired and used by Galland for the first part of his translation. The manuscript is incomplete and contains only the beginning of the *Nights* up to Night 282, breaking off in the middle of the tale of Qamar al-Zamān and Budūr.

Besides this manuscript, no more than half a dozen Arabic manuscripts that pre-date Galland's translation are known, none of them containing a complete text of the *Nights* (Marzolph, Re-locating). These MSS include (1) the John Rylands Library (Manchester), MS Arabic 706 (first half of the tenth/sixteenth century); (2) the Vatican MS (arabo 782), dated 1001/1592-93, in its second half probably constituting a direct copy of the Galland MS; (3) the MS Kayseri, Rašid Efendi Kütüphanesi, Edebiyat 38 (tenth/sixteenth century or later), (4) the Maillet MS, now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, arabe 3612 (second half of the eleventh/seventeenth century). In addition to the Arabic manuscripts, several Turkish translations of the work pre-dating Galland's translation exist, some of which even in his day were held in the Bibliothèque du Roi (now the Bibliothèque Nationale) in Paris.

3.3. *Galland's translation.* Galland in his *Mille et une nuits* not only translated, but to a certain extent created the *Arabian Nights*. Having spent a considerable part of his adult life in the Middle East (Bauden), Galland, after his return to Paris, was employed as the King's antiquary, mainly being responsible for the royal collection of antiquities, coins, and manuscripts. He also co-edited Barthélemy d'Herbelot's highly influential *Bibliothèque orientale*, the very first encyclo-

paedia of the Islamic world in a European language, which drew much of its information, albeit often with a strong Christian bias, from compilations in the indigenous languages. Galland's interest in the Middle Eastern literatures being aroused, he had at some time before the year 1700 acquired a manuscript of the tales of Sindbād, which he translated and intended to publish. Learning about a similar, yet much larger compilation, he postponed the publication of this work and managed to acquire a manuscript of the *Nights* from Syria. Galland's adapted translation was published in twelve volumes. Vols. 1-6, published in 1704, and vol. 7, published in 1706, present the tales from the Arabic manuscript in accordance with contemporary criteria of translation (Larzul, *Traductions*), with the Sindbād tales integrated at the beginning of vol. 3. For the tale of Qamar al-Zamān and Budūr, of which the old manuscript contained only a fragmentary version, Galland used an additional Egyptian manuscript. When his original texts had been exhausted, his enthusiastic readers demanded that he continue and complete the work up to the prospective 1001 nights. Vol. 8, published in 1709, begins with the tale of Ghānim ibn Ayyūb as translated by Galland from an Egyptian manuscript. To this, the publisher, without Galland's knowledge or consent, had added the tale of Zayn al-Aṣṣnām and the tale of Khudādād and his Brothers, as translated by Galland's orientalist colleague François Pétis de la Croix. For the remaining vols. 9-10, published in 1712, and vols. 11-12, published posthumously in 1717, Galland took recourse to various other sources. The story of the Sleeper and the Waker (a version of Aarne/Thompson tale type no. 1531) is adapted from an as yet unidentified source. For the remainder of the tales, and in particular for the tales that are most popular in later European traditions,

Galland is indebted to the performance of the gifted storyteller Ḥannā Diyāb. In his diaries, Galland states that he met Ḥannā, a Syrian Maronite Christian from Aleppo, in the house of their common friend Paul Lucas, who himself had travelled widely in the Middle East. From 6 May to 2 June 1709, Galland wrote down extended summaries of the tales Ḥannā told him (Abdel-Halim, 271-87). For the tale of Aladdin, Ḥannā is even credited with supplying a written version, the manuscript of which is, however, not available. Galland later reworked some of his summaries of Ḥannā's tales into fully fledged tales and published them in his *Mille et une nuits*. This applies in particular to the tales of Ali Baba and Aladdin, which, for various reasons, were most appreciated by Western audiences. The Arabic manuscripts of both tales later identified by orientalist scholars were for a long time taken to be of "genuine" Arabic origin. While initial doubts about the manuscripts' authenticity had been voiced at various occasions, it was only Muhsin Mahdi's detailed argument that finally unmasked them as forged adapted translations of Galland's texts (Mahdi, 3:51-86). The only one of Ḥannā's tales for which independent Arabic manuscripts have been found that pre-date Galland's translation is the tale of the Ebony Horse.

3.4. *The consequences of Galland's translation.* Galland's creative and enlarged adaptation of the Arabic manuscripts and oral sources available to him was a tremendous success in Europe. While the publication of the *Mille et une nuits* was still underway, the tales were translated into various European languages and published in complete or partial editions. Virtually all Western writers and creative artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were to some extent inspired by the *Nights* (Irwin, 237-92).

Moreover, the work gave rise to a vogue of literature in the oriental style, in particular a whole genre of orientalist fairy tales (Dammann, 138-9), and thus constitutes an exotic ingredient added into the Age of Enlightenment. Some of Galland's scholarly colleagues even aimed to imitate his success, such as Pétis de la Croix, who published a collection titled *Les mille et un jours* ("The thousand and one days"), allegedly translating a collection copied from a manuscript in the possession of a Persian dervish (see ed. P. Sebag, Paris 2003<sup>2</sup>). While Pétis de la Croix in his younger days had in fact stayed in the Iranian city of Isfahan for an extended period, his compilation was later exposed as an adapted translation of a Turkish collection of tales of the *Faraj ba'd al-shidda* genre preserved in the Bibliothèque du Roi in Paris. In the field of orientalist studies, Galland's translation inspired scholars to occupy themselves with the origin of the collection, its various tales, and the culture presented therein. Moreover, it initiated a search for complete manuscripts of the work, as all of the manuscripts available in the early eighteenth century were fragmentary.

3.5. *Post-Galland manuscripts.* In response to growing demand, Arab compilers, above all in Egypt, produced complete manuscripts, including a full set of 1001 nights. The French scholar Hermann Zotenberg later surveyed these manuscripts, dividing them into two branches. While the "Syrian branch" included the old manuscript used by Galland, later research has agreed to term the more widely documented "Egyptian branch" as "Zotenberg's Egyptian Recension" (ZER). The alleged "Tunisian" manuscript, tales of which in addition to texts from Galland and other sources were used as the basis of the Arabic edition (and subsequent German translation) by German scholar Maximilian

Habicht, turned out to be a wilful mystification prepared by the Tunisian Jew Mordecai b. al-Najjār. Similar criteria apply to the manuscripts prepared in Paris by Dom Chavis (second half of the eighteenth century) and Michel Sabbāgh (first decade of the nineteenth century). Egyptian manuscripts with partly differing contents include the Wortley-Montagu manuscript preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (dated 1764-5; see Tauer) and the Reinhardt manuscript in Strassburg (dated 1831-2; see Chraïbi, *Contes*). All of the post-Galland compilers of Arabic manuscripts were faced with the situation of having to prepare "complete" texts of the *Nights*. As no notion of a specific or canonical set of tales to be included existed, completeness referred solely to the fact that a total of one thousand nights of storytelling had to be filled.

3.6. *Printed editions and translations.* With the exception of the Breslau edition, which is partly based on the alleged Tunisian manuscript, ZER-manuscripts formed the basis of most of the printed editions of the *Arabian Nights* prepared in the nineteenth century. The most important editions are (1) Calcutta I = ed. Aḥmad al-Shirwānī, 2 vols., Calcutta 1814-8; (2) Bulaq I = 2 vols., Būlāq (Cairo) 1835; (3) Calcutta II = ed. W. H. Macnaghten, 4 vols., Calcutta 1839-42; (4) Breslau = ed. M. Habicht and H. L. Fleischer, 12 vols., Breslau 1825-43; (5) Bulaq II = 4 vols., Būlāq (Cairo) 1862. Prior to the Arabic editions of the *Nights*, Galland's French version had served almost exclusively as the source of reference for translations into other European languages.

The most widely known English-language translations published in the nineteenth century are those prepared by Edward William Lane and Sir Richard Francis Burton. Lane's translation (3 vols., London 1839-41) largely follows the Bulaq I edition. Lane was

an excellent scholar of Arabic, but his translation bows to puritanical Victorian morals in eliminating various scenes and even complete tales that according to contemporary criteria were deemed objectionable. Since Lane intended the book to be read as a mirror of Arabic customs and, in fact, a contemporary ethnographic guide, his translation is supplied with profuse and often distracting annotation.

Burton in his translation (10 vols., "Benares," i.e., London, 1885) profited to a considerable extent from the previous limited English edition by John Payne (1882-4). He employed archaic language and stressed sexual undertones and embellished any sexual scenes he could find; in particular, his "Terminal Essay" is notorious for its preoccupation with sexual matters. The main body of Burton's translation is based on the Calcutta II edition. In addition, he later published a six-volume installment of *Supplemental Nights* (1886-8) containing additional tales from other versions of the *Arabian Nights*, including the Breslau edition, the so-called "orphan stories," and tales from the Wortley-Montagu, Chavis, and Cazotte manuscripts.

The English-language translation published by Powys Mathers (1937) is based on the French version prepared by Joseph Charles Victor Mardrus (16 vols., Paris 1899-1904). This translation is the least faithful to the Arabic original but due to its public appeal has been reprinted numerous times. It contains numerous additions from a large variety of sources, including traditional Arabic literature and nineteenth-century collections of folktales from the Arab world. The Mardrus version was widely acclaimed in France by influential writers such as André Gide and Marcel Proust and also contributed to the collection's fame in its English version. More recent contributions

to the literature include an English translation of the Galland manuscript by Husain Haddawy, who has also translated some of the more popular stories, following Bulaq I; and a faithful English translation of the "complete" text, based on Calcutta II, with the addition of four stories from Galland's French text, prepared by Malcolm C. Lyons and Ursula Lyons. A German translation that has been widely praised for its sensitive adherence to the original Arabic was presented by Enno Littmann (1921-8, often reprinted since 1953; based on Calcutta II, with the addition of the "orphan tales").

#### 4. *Characteristics:*

While all versions of the *Nights* contain both the specific frame-tale and a largely identical initial set of stories, they often differ in content, particularly in their later parts. Shahrazād's stratagem of breaking off her tales at a critical point arousing the cruel king's curiosity not only had the practical consequence of saving her life and, in consequence, saving her sex. It also turned the frame-tale into a powerful device able to integrate a potentially endless number of tales. The more the narration proceeds, the looser the original device of "cliffhanger," i.e., of interrupting the tales at specifically fascinating points, is practised. And while most of the early tales are quite long, stretching over a number of nights, many of the later nights contain several short anecdotes told in a single night.

Some of the earlier tales appear to be consciously linked to the frame-tale in that they also apply the stratagem of telling stories to save one's life. In recent research, the tales with that purpose have consequently been labelled "ransom tales." This criterion applies to the tale of the Merchant and the Jinnī, the tales told by the Qalandars in The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghad, the

tale of The Three Apples, and The Hunchback's Tale, including the tales of the Broker, the Reeve, the Jewish Doctor, the Tailor, and the Barber. These tales, moreover, exhibit a particular framing device of story-within-a-story that at times goes down several layers. From the perspective of the listener and/or reader, the *Nights* are narrated by a storyteller who has Shahrazād narrate a story in which the protagonist tells his or her story, and so on. In his essay "Narrative-Men," Tzvetan Todorov has identified this device as one of the major characteristics of the *Arabian Nights*. In order to tell others who they are, the narrative characters relate their previous experience by telling their story. In this manner, telling a story signifies life, and consequently, the absence of narrative signifies death. As the characters are "merely narrative" and must narrate in order to live, their storytelling generates the overwhelming abundance of embedding and embedded tales in the *Nights*. The device of having characters within a tale tell their own tales embedded within the narrative creates a labyrinthine structure that greatly contributed to the fascination of the *Arabian Nights*, particularly with Western audiences.

As a consequence of the frame-tale's narrative potential, and to some extent resulting from the fact that "complete" manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights* were not always available, the compilers of later manuscript versions incorporated tales of the most divergent categories. These tales included folktales and fairy tales, romances of love and chivalry, religious and didactic tales, fables, and jokes and anecdotes, many of which are culled either from classical Arabic literature or from the numerous existing anonymous collections of tales. Some manuscripts even incorporated large and originally independent narratives or narrative cycles such as the lengthy romance of

ʿUmar b. al-Nuʿmān or the Persian *Sindbād-nāme*, a collection of moralistic stories better known in the West as the *Seven Sages*. The tales of Sindbād's travels that by way of Galland's version became an integral part of the *Nights* had previously been included in a seventeenth-century Turkish manuscript. Even some of the European translators, notably Mardrus, could not resist the temptation to enlarge the repertoire of the *Arabian Nights* by adding tales from extraneous sources.

Research has classified the tales of the *Arabian Nights* and their hypothetical origin or integration into several strata. While comparative folk-narrative research has in many cases succeeded in identifying the ultimate origin of the tales, it is hard, if not impossible to tell at which point they were integrated into the *Nights*. The Indian stratum probably encompasses the "wiles of women" stories about extramarital sexual relations and some of the fables, notably those having parallels in the collection *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, which is essentially an adaptation of the Indian *Pañcatantra*. The Iranian stratum is said to contribute those tales closest to the European understanding of fairy tale, in which wonder and magic occur on an unquestioned and natural level. Greek influence is particularly discernible in the romances (von Grunebaum). The Jewish stratum, often relating to stories from the *Talmud* or the Midrashim, the so-called *Isrāʿīliyyāt*, encompasses tales of a moralistic nature, often focusing on death and eternal merit in the hereafter. The Baghdad stratum prominently deals with tales of the so-called Hārūn-cycle, in which Hārūn al-Rashīd is portrayed as a model ruler, as well as jokes and anecdotes from the times of the ʿAbbāsīd dynasty, mostly culled from Arabic *adab* literature. The Cairo stratum is the latest addition to the narrative repertoire. Its tales are localised in the atmosphere of urban Cairo

and encompass Mamlūk tales of deceit and roguery. These strata cannot, as earlier research suggested, be separated from each other clearly. Rather than constituting a palace whose various chambers were added to the original building at specific periods, the *Nights* resemble a building that fell into ruin repeatedly, while new buildings were erected on the remnants in consecutive periods (Grotzfeld and Grotzfeld, 68-9).

In terms of ethical values, the narrative universe presented in the *Nights* is dominated by the world-view of the merchant class propagating the ethics of success (see Molan and Coussonnet). This is all the more understandable, as merchants and people trading or buying in the bazaar probably constituted the major audience for oral performances of tales from the *Nights* in their indigenous context. Accordingly, alluding to the traditional literary genre of the “mirror for princes,” the *Nights*, may be termed a “mirror for merchants,” that is, “a manual of basic rule in manners and customs for young merchants” (Chraïbi, Situation, 6). Though the *Nights* are by no means a unified collection, the tales convey to some extent an image of social life in the Muslim world, particularly Egypt in the Mamlūk period. They should not, however, be taken as an ethnographic manual, as, following Lane’s translation, was popular in Victorian England. In particular, the playful atmosphere of the *Nights* relating to licentious behavior or the consuming of intoxicating beverages and drugs should not be interpreted as advocating a tolerant or permissive atmosphere. It can rather be seen as a sort of compensation for the shortcomings of mundane existence and the product of wishful thinking, imagining a better, “fairy-tale” life. The enthusiastic reception of the *Nights* in Europe, particularly in Victorian England, is most probably due to the rigorous moral standards reigning at the time.

##### 5. *The impact of the Nights:*

The impact of the *Nights* on creative imagination can hardly be overestimated. Elements from the frame-tale of the *Nights* can already be traced in Italian Renaissance literature long before Galland. Both Giovanni Sercambi’s (d. 1424) *Novella d’Astolfo*, and canto 28 of Ludovico Ariosto’s (d. 1533) *Orlando furioso* contain the story of the two men being sexually betrayed by their wives. This coincidence suggests transfer by way of oral tradition, probably through Italian trade with the Levantine countries. After the tremendous success of Galland’s translation, hardly a major European writer of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could avoid being in some way or other influenced by tales of the *Nights*. By way of re-creations in oral performance or public reading from printed tales, many of which were published as separate chapbooks, tales from the *Nights* also reached the illiterate strata of society, and many of its tales have since become stock tales of European folk literature (Marzolph, Comparative folk narrative), in particular the tales of Aladdin, Ali Baba, Sindbād, and the Ebony Horse. The media of drama and, later, film, also took inspiration from the *Nights* and shared in propagating popular appreciation of the tales. Some of the earliest films ever produced by Georges Méliès are inspired by the *Nights*. Both Douglas Fairbanks’ *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924) and Lotte Reiniger’s *Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed* (1926), the first feature-length animated film ever produced, are partly based on the tale of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banu from the *Nights*. Numerous works in the modern literatures of the collection’s countries of origin, particularly Arabic and Persian literature, also take inspiration from the *Nights* (Walther, Modern Arabic Literature). Already late in the nineteenth century, the *Nights* had become a worldwide phe-



nomenon, the impact of which transcended the boundaries of both the Middle East and the West. Recently, the impact of the *Nights* has been studied in regions as far flung as Hawaii (see Bacchilega and Arista), Indonesia (see Cohen), and Japan (see Sugita).

From the twentieth century on, images and tales from the *Nights* have formed an integral constituent of world culture. The collection as a whole is regarded as the quintessential fairy-tale world of ultimate fascination, well-being, and happiness—a matrix resembling the European notion of Cockaigne, with the added spice of (imagined) uninhibited sexuality. International popular imagery includes the number 1001, denoting an endless amount, the image of

the *jinnī* who, when released from the bottle, cannot be controlled any more (from the tale of the Fisherman and the Jinnī), or the words “Open, Sesame” (from the tale of Ali Baba). The best-known tales from the *Nights* have moreover gained fame as modern trade names, chosen with the purpose of spontaneously forming a link in the popular imagination between the product and the content of the stories: “Aladdin” serves as a trade name for bail bonds and Internet search engines, “Ali Baba” is probably the most famous name for Western restaurants in the oriental style, and “Sindbad” is a popular name for travel companies, particularly for single males.

(U. Marzolph)

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