

Social Values in the Persian Popular Romance *Salīm-i Javāhirī*

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For C.B.

1. Sociological research in popular literature has shown that popular narratives, let alone folk- or fairy-tales, are not the harmless “old wives’ tales” (Moser-Rath 1977: 463 sq.) and entertainment for children we were made to believe ever since antiquity. Under the guise of stimulation and appeal popular narratives convey powerful social messages which are all the more influential since they are most often unconscious to either teller, reader or listener. Communication of these social messages functions to different degrees. Children might listen with wide eyes, taking the tales as some kind of fabulous reality not basically questioned. Grown-ups might consume them out of sheer curiosity, while bearing a critical consciousness of their fictional character. Educated grown-ups, moreover, might frown upon fantastic tales and go as far as denying their entertainment value. But even those intellectually equipped with the means of critical analysis might risk digesting unconsciously the system of social values hidden within fascinating and picturesque accounts of fabulous events. To demonstrate these general considerations within the context of contemporary Near Eastern popular literature, I propose to discuss a tale published as a mid-20th century Iranian chapbook which is part of a series of booklets widely printed, distributed, and read in Iran until the very present.¹

By coincidence, the tale concerned forms the subject of a detailed discussion and careful examination in Margaret Mills’ recent book on traditional Afghan storytelling (Mills 1992: 95-158). Mills in a most admirable way presents the minute analysis of an oral performance, illustrating the tale’s intrinsic structure as well as the specific background of its actual performance in her presence. Her interpretation focuses on the tale’s meaning in context, its meaning for the specific narrator under specific circumstances, though to some extent she also discusses the tale’s literary background. While being fully aware of the fact that any given text gains meaning only by some kind of performance, whether being read, narrated or otherwise staged, I intend rather to concentrate on the

narrative's more general social impact as demonstrated by the basic structure and content of its written version. Some of the details to be mentioned here might overlap with Mills' discussion. But while her point of interest is the understanding of an oral performance, my reading aims at supplementing Mills' findings by focusing on the isolation of long-term background values under a historical perspective.

My own interest in this particular tale arose from a different angle than a performance. Actually, it was a phone call from my former Iranian teacher at Cologne university that set us off chatting about different aspects of Persian popular literature. Talking brought back his memories of *Salīm-i Javāhiri* (The jeweler Salīm; henceforth: SJ), which he read, in fact relished as a young boy. His father would not let him keep that kind of "literature", recommending instead moralistic and edifying works such as those compiled by the great Shi'ite theologians for serious moral benefit. But — though eventually he became a most learned scholar in Persian literature — the adolescent boy preferred to dwell in the realm of princes and paries (the Persian fairies), of fierce fights for fair ladies, of adventures and the mystical attainment of ultimate happiness. SJ was one of the favorite readings of his age group, then on the brink of puberty, and even today he appears to remember the booklet with a certain nostalgia.

SJ belongs to the literary category of "romance" (see Hanaway 1970, 1971a and 1971b), the most famous Persian example of which outside the Oriental world is probably *Amīr Arsalān* (Gelpke 1965; Hanaway 1985 and 1991), a long and complicated narrative originally invented by the Qājār emperor Nāṣir al-Dīn's personal court story-teller in the late 19th century. Similar narratives, termed in Persian "*dāstānhā-yi 'āmmiyāna*" (popular romances) were widespread in the Ṣafavid and Qājār periods, i.e. roughly since the 16th century. The Iranian scholar Muḥammad Ja'far Maḥjūb, who initially drew attention to the importance of studying these popular romances, distinguishes two kinds (see Maḥjūb 1341/1962): While the first comprises long and elaborate pieces of artful imagination, the second category comprises short pieces of prose, less refined, less voluminous, but not necessarily less charming. A second point of differentiation between the two categories, according to Maḥjūb, is the way those works met with their audience. While the long *dāstān*, preserved in either manuscript or printed form, would be recited to a public audience by a professional story-teller (about whom cf. Mahdjub 1971; Page 1977 and 1979; Motamed-Nejad 1979; Omidsalar 1984; Maḥjūb 1991), the short *dāstān*, more widely spread only since the introduction of printing facilities into Iran in the nineteenth century, would normally not be narrated in public, thus representing reading matter for the "folk".

This differentiation is questionable and will have to be touched upon later, when discussing SJ's historical dimension. For the present it may suffice to say that SJ belongs to the second category. It is a comparatively short narrative,

comprising not more than three printed sheets (48 pages) of about 18 lines, and can easily be read within an hour or two. SJ was apparently printed separately (first as a lithograph) since the late 19th century, early copies dating from 1295/1878 (Ṭahrānī 1380/1962: 227, no. 1488), 1301/1884 (library of the École des Langues Orientales, Paris), and 1327/1903 (Shcheglova 1975: 2, 597 sq., nos. 1657; cf. also nos. 1656, 1658) respectively. The copy on which the present study is based forms part of a series of popular booklets distributed nationwide by the booksellers of the Teheran bazaar region, most of all those belonging to the family 'Ilmī. SJ continued to be published at least until the late seventies. No data about its present state of production and distribution are available. Even though recent developments, notably since the Iranian revolution in 1979, appear to attach a certain preference to strengthening moralistic and edifying religious literature (principles which SJ partly contradicts), it seems probable that SJ is still printed or at least read today. The copy I am referring to is dated 1333/1954, and originally was part of the late L.P. Elwell-Sutton's library. Its full title reads "*Hikāyat-i Salīm-i Javāhirī/chāp-i rangī/bi-dastūr-i/kitābfurūshī va-chāpkhāna-i Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Ilmī/Tihrān — Bāzār-i bayn al-ḥaramayn / 1333 / arzish (12) [cover 6] [riyāl]/chāpkhāna-i 'Ilmī*" (47 pp., 18 lines).²

2. Before going into details of content and analysis, I would like to touch upon SJ's general qualification as "popular literature". William L. Hanaway, Jr., has dealt with Persian popular romances in a number of publications. He defines "popular literature" as "a body of narrative prose literature derived from, or in the formal tradition of the Persian national legend" (Hanaway 1971a: 59). This definition in accordance with a traditional understanding of "folk-lore" is derived mainly from content. According to the present use of the term "popular literature", notably in folkloristic narrative research, Hanaway's definition has to be considerably expanded. Here, the term "popular literature" has been developed to denote any literary product which is comparatively easily available or accessible to a larger audience. Thus, "popular literature" not only encompasses — quoting a definition I have given elsewhere — "the traditional stock of narrative and non-narrative genres, but also the huge bulk of literary production aimed at popular reception, such as devotional and trivial literature, chapbooks and penny-magazines, tracts on the interpretation of dreams or leaflets containing printed charms" (Marzolph [Forthcoming]). Taking this as a working definition, a first examination of SJ as "popular literature" should concentrate on its general and more specifically its financial availability.

The dry facts are as follows: the booklet's size is 84 × 134 mm (roughly 3.3 × 5.3 inches), the smallest of all sizes documented for Persian popular prints at the middle of the 20th century. The paper is simple, yellowish and quite thick, the letters not shining through. Though the paper's quality is moderate, it does not break even after forty years. The booklet's price, as given

on the first (inner title) page, is 12 riyāl in 1954, whereas the cover states a price of 6 riyāl. Of course, the higher price denotes the one a potential buyer would have had to pay. The difference in prices, amounting to not less than 100%, would easily be explained by inflation, the essential question being the amount of time between the different statements. Technically, the disparity originates from the fact that cover and text were printed separately, a procedure which was by no means unusual. Only when actually needed for sale would a limited number of printed text be supplied with covers, that is glued or tacked together. The cover's paper is of a slightly better quality, less yellowish, thinner, yet stronger; moreover, the cover illustration is printed in colors ("chāp-i rangī"). While this outfit implies relatively higher costs of production, the distributor obviously aimed at diminishing costs by having a larger number of cover-copies printed than actually needed at a given time; that would account for the higher price stated on the inner title page, printed as first page of the text sheets. Since only the latter states a definite date of production, one can only guess at the former's date of production (and original distribution). The Iranian national bibliography does not give a definite solution (Yār-Shāṭir 1352/1972: 2, 2019 sq.).

The difference in prices quoted leads to the problem of how to judge the contemporary value of this piece of "popular literature". Only reliable prices from about the same period could help in defining the comparative cost and allow further conclusions as to the chapbook's general availability. While reliable data for the 1950s might be obtained by way of information on currency regulations, exchange rates and purchasing power, here I would like to draw attention to a rather odd piece of historical information. Curiously enough, Elwell-Sutton had preserved a list of items of everyday needs dating from the same period as the print under consideration. In 1954 he was travelling in Iran, after having stayed there previously several times. The last time he had been there as a journalist with the British Broadcasting Corporation towards the end of the Second World War. He had used the opportunity to express his sympathy for the country then officially occupied by taking down in his own handwriting tales told by Mashdī Galīn Khānum (Elwell-Sutton 1980; Marzolph 1985; Marzolph and Amirhosseini-Nithammer [forthcoming]), a talented old woman, part of whose precious narrative repertoire he was able to document. The writing materials he used were the most diverse: paper was scarce during the war, and every sheet of white paper was a valuable object. Most of the tales Elwell-Sutton took down were written on the white backsides of posters of British war propaganda, which he had sliced into sizes suiting his needs. Other sheets include forms for sending telegrams, programs of the BBC's Persian broadcasts, and — a long list of items of everyday use for the supply to members of the British community in Teheran. The list is preserved almost in full, ranging from "Adom Attic (Wine)" for 28 (riyāl) to "Watch straps" for 10.50. Most interesting for comparison with the booklet's price are basic items such as "Rice" (two qualities

of 5 and 12 riyāl respectively), “Flour Local” (3), or “Beer Persian” (12). Most items unfortunately lack an exact statement of quantity, which inter alia is quoted for such items as “Coffee Turkish” (48 per kilo), “Bathing Costume” (207 [Men’s slip]), “Mustard” (10 pr. lb) or “Raisins” (11.50 pr. 1,5 lb). Also, the list’s usefulness as a point of comparison is slightly diminished as it is not exactly dated. However, since Elwell-Sutton was stationed in Iran as a member of the BBC between 1941 and 1947, and since on the other hand Mashdī Galīn Khānum was deceased when he returned to Iran in 1954, the list would have to date from that period. Supposing the booklet’s cover-price as dating from roughly the same period, this would mean that for the book’s value of 6 riyāl one could have bought either about three lb of raisins, one tin of sweet corn, two (bags of?) local flour, approximately one (bag of?) rice, six shoe laces, a (packet of?) Talcum powder or one tooth brush. Moreover, one would have to consider the fact that these prices were intended for foreign personnel, thus most probably were considerably higher than anything locals would have had to spend for comparable items (providing they could afford a similar quality). Thus it seems quite safe to fix the booklet’s actual price as compared with today’s standard at much less than the price of a simple meal (e.g. of rice). This in terms of financial accessibility would most probably make it available to a large percentage of Iran’s reading population—taking into account the large percentage of people without a certain reading ability, who would rather listen to tales than read themselves.

Other factors concerning the book’s actual popularity cannot be scrutinized here, for I would have to discuss such issues as the centers of printing activities as well as the mechanisms of bookselling in Iran, both of which are virtually unexplored until today.³ For the present discussion it may suffice to point out “small craftsmen and traders in the towns” and “only partly literate villagers in the country” as the distributing institutions (Cejpek 1968: 671). Anyway, according to Hanaway’s criteria of content, SJ doubtless forms part of “popular literature”, since its general plot as well as the stock of motifs incorporated are both closely connected with the formal tradition of classical Persian narrative literature.

3. As for its content, SJ is a comparatively short, though by no means simple, tale. It deals with the eponymous hero’s adventures, embodying a large number of internationally well documented folktale motifs, some of which bear close resemblance to those present in the travels of Sindbād the sailor in the *Arabian Nights*. SJ consists of a frame story and the hero’s personal life-story, which in the end mingles with the closing frame.

The frame story begins with the tyrant al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf’s (historical; died 714) outburst of anger, making him request from one of his intimate courtiers, under the threat of execution, the virtually impossible task of procuring within three days someone who can make him laugh and cry at the same time (Thompson 1955–58: F 1041.11). The courtier’s clever daughter, who is (by suckling)

the adopted daughter of a fairy (cf. *ibid.*: P 313, T 671), gets the necessary information from her fairy milk-brother whom she had summoned by burning a certain piece of wood (*ibid.*: D 1421). Her father accordingly finds Salīm, who has been in prison for the past twenty years, frees him, and after caring for him for three days, presents him to al-Ḥajjāj. There Salīm tells his life-story:

Raised in the Iraqi town of Wāsiṭ as the cherished son of a wealthy jeweler (whence his attribute “javāhirī”), he has, by the age of twenty when his father dies, learnt no other profession but caring for jewelry, besides exercising his strong body in sports and games. He wastes all his belongings in sweet entertainment, and soon is left with nothing more to spend. While he despairs, his loving wife recommends him to employ his body’s strength for carrying loads for the rich in the bazaar area. Since, because of his enormous strength, he threatens the porters’ guild’s business, they start to pay him to stay at home. After one year, he shows his prodigious strength (*ibid.*: F 610) by lifting a heavy burden all by himself. Since he forgets to praise God (cf. Aarne/Thompson 1961: type 830 sqq.; Masing 1990) for supplying him with that gift, he is struck with a severe illness from which he does not recover for over a year. The other porters, after realizing his helplessness, stop their financial support, and again he is left without income. When he repents, the prophet Muḥammad in a dream heals him (cf. Malti-Douglas 1980) and makes him leave for the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Bidding farewell to his young wife, who had lovingly supported and cared for him, he leaves, at first finding work with a travelling caravan, later staying in Syrian Aleppo, where he comes to be much respected for his strength. When the Christian army of Heracles attacks Syria, he in single combat easily conquers (and immediately kills) two of the most famous Christian warriors. The next day, however, he himself is captured by falling into a secret ditch when pursuing the enemies. In captivity he refuses to convert to Christianity, since he is requested to drink wine and slaughter his Muslim fellow prisoners. When he even dares to pray in a loud voice, he is dealt a severe blow on the head. By the repeated intervention of Muḥammad in his dreams he is again miraculously healed. On Muḥammad’s advice he kills the warden, frees the other prisoners and manages to escape.

His flight leads him first to an island where he tricks the magic sea-cow out of her “night-shining jewel” (cf. *Hidāyat* 1334/1956: 174; Thompson 1955–1958: B 722.3; Needham 1954: 199 sq. and 1974: 270). Next he comes to the country of monkeys. They take such a fancy to him as to marry him to their king’s daughter. Even though despising her animal nature he cannot help but succumb to sexual attraction and copulates with her out of sheer desire. Besides having a most intense sexual experience (cf. a similar notion in Marzolph/Amirhoseini-Nithammer [forthcoming]: 118), he makes her pregnant. Later, he escapes from that place, not even moved to stay by his monkey-wife’s repeated imploring and dramatic pleas.

The next place he comes to sees him as the victim of a strap-legged monstrous old man (see Meier 1967. An illustration of this scene in a lithograph edition dated 1345/1926 is rendered by Bulūkbāshī 1348/1969: 39) whom he has to carry around without being allowed to rest. He manages to get rid of the monster by making him drunk, and after throwing him down to the ground kills him. Later, while hidden in the hollow trunk of a tree, he watches three fairies take off their bird clothes before going for a swim, hides the clothes of the youngest one and does not let her go (Thompson 1955–1958: K 1335; cf. Aarne/Thompson 1961: Types 313, 400, 465). When she becomes aware of him, she recognizes him and accepts him as her predestined bridegroom. His happy married life is enriched by two male children, both of whom much to his wonder are given immediately after birth to carnivorous animals, a lion and a wolf (cf. Marzolph 1984: Type *832 A [2]). After many years of patiently enduring acts and incidents he does not understand, he finally accuses his wife of infidelity and cruelty. Only then does she explain to him two of the basic rules valid in the realm of the fairies: Should he die or leave, she would never marry another man; the animals, on the other hand, are but the children's tutors. Though he accepts her explanations and again puts his trust in her, he starts to feel a strong longing for the human world and gains her consent to leave for a fixed period of time. He is to be transported by a flying demon (*'ifrit*) over a distance of two year's travel in one day. Pursued by her father's angry servants, he manages to get away by throwing behind himself magic objects which in turn become unsurpassable obstacles, a mountain and a lake (Thompson 1955–1958: D 672; cf. Aarne/Thompson 1961: Types 313 sqq.). Since he breaks the tabu of not mentioning God's name while flying up in the air (Thompson 1955–1958: C 431), he is thrown down to the ground before reaching his destination. He is captured by a monstrous creature who keeps human prisoners, slaughtering, roasting and devouring one of them each day. He himself is to be slaughtered after forty days. Before it is his turn, *Salīm* manages to blind the cannibal with two heated spits, escapes by hiding under a sheep's skin (Aarne/Thompson 1961: Type 1137. An illustration of this scene in an old lithograph edition is rendered by Massé 1960: 168), and afterwards kills the monster. Only then does he manage to return home to his wife, who after initial doubt recognizes him as the husband who has been away for nineteen years. But the next day, being unaccustomed to the human world, he gets into trouble at the grocer's shop and is accused of robbery. Since nobody seems to know him, he is thrown into prison without further ado. There he lingers on for twenty years, to be freed only so as to tell his story.

While listening to the story, *al-Hajjāj* had in fact cried and laughed repeatedly,⁴ so both *Salīm* and *al-Hajjāj*'s courtier are safe, because they had fulfilled his request. *Salīm* recovers his human wife, who is still patiently waiting for him. Then, by invoking a secret name (which he had forgotten while being in prison) he summons his fairy-wife and her two sons, who immediately come

to his rescue (cf. Thompson 1955–1958: E 386.3). He is rejuvenated by bathing in a magic pond (cf. *ibid.*: D1338.1.1); soon after, his human wife is rejuvenated, too. Salīm lives happily with both his wives, first in the fairies' country, later due to his own request in the human world. There he enjoys al-Ḥajjāj's company and has more children. His story ends by his wishing to die together with his human wife, which is granted by God.

4. The content of SJ might form the subject of a folkloristic analysis concentrating on common motifs in Persian and world folktales, some of which have been pointed out in the above summary (cf. Chauvin's references to Chauvin 1892–1922 in his commentary on Bricteux 1910: 237–303). Here I propose to read SJ not in terms of its *content* as a popular tale combining various fantastic elements for entertainment, but rather as an *intentional* documentation of basic rules of social behavior. In my opinion, the author of SJ has succeeded in combining quite ingeniously some of the most basic social concepts valid in Iranian society with an attractive narrative plot. To demonstrate this, I shall isolate some of the essential statements within the text referring to any such rules, either explicit or implicit.

Margaret Mills in her analysis has demonstrated *taslīm* (submission to God's will), which by definition is the essential quality of the Muslim, and "hard work" to be the generally present concepts in SJ (Mills 1992: 131, 155). *Taslīm* does have a strong bearing on questions of social behavior, but basically it is of religious importance. This applies as well to all of the five "pillars of Islām" — *shahāda* (profession of faith), *ṣalāt* (prayer), *zakāt* (alms), *ḥājj* (pilgrimage) and *ṣawm* (fasting) — all of which are mentioned at certain points within the text, and all of which influence the tale's plot in some way or other. Another message of similar religious importance is of a distinctively Shi'ite nature, namely the one concerning the phenomenon of "*taqiyya*": When Salīm, in prison, starts to pray, he is hit and severely wounded, so that his fellow prisoners almost take him for dead. When he awakes after being unconscious for a while, they have bound his wounded head and address him with the following words: "This is the city of the infidels. Do not again mention the name of God or his messenger. It is necessary to practice *taqiyya*" (17/-7). The concept of *taqiyya*, in a summary way, concerns the legitimate hiding of one's true belief in moments of imminent personal danger (cf. Meyer 1980: 246–80). Someone outwardly professing another creed while inwardly sticking to his original creed would not be regarded as an actual apostate. This practice has been of vital importance in Muslim history, especially during the frequent violent conflicts between Sunnite and Shi'ite parties. Even though it might today largely be regarded as a remnant of only historical importance, it continues to be discussed by modern Shi'ite theologians and remains part of a distinctive Shi'ite consciousness.

Another concept of an even more general quality concerns the inevitable consequence of destiny, which in Western perception is usually taken to be characteristic of Islam. In SJ, destiny is *inter alia* indicated by the highly sym-

bolic number 40. When Salīm tells his tale, 40 years have passed since his first adventure: one year of illness, 19 years of absence, 20 years in prison. Since the number 40 already in ancient Semitic belief represents perfection, this indicates the end of all his suffering (cf. Roscher 1909; Endres/Schimmel 1984: 260–267). General messages such as these constitute a kind of fundamental layer on which the story is constructed. Their basic nature cannot account for SJ's particular appeal on a sociological level, which is rather constituted by a number of social rules addressing the specific individual.

Right at the beginning of Salīm's life-story, there is an explicitly quoted set of rules, when Salīm's dying father admonishes him with a kind of oral testament. The rules of life he passes on to Salīm are: (a) as long as you live, never forget to remember God and thank him; (b) never give up your belief; (c) be aware of your chances; (d) never push away somebody needing your help, be grateful for your body's health; (e) strive to keep your wealth, love your country, give alms to the poor, do not tell lies, keep away from base people; (f) seek the company of learned men.⁵ After giving these rules, his father passes away, and — needless to mention — no sooner has he buried his father and wept for him “the way educated people do” (7/-6) than Salīm starts to break the rules. In folkloristic terms a version of AaTh 910–915: *The Good Precepts*, this initial passage in terms of structure and motivation is to be regarded as the story's catalyst: It does not make a difference whether Salīm breaks one or more rules, since by violating any single one of the “good precepts”, he would necessarily break some others in succession. This is indeed what happens.

By breaking rule (e), “strive to keep your wealth, keep away from base people,” Salīm becomes a spendthrift and associates with false friends. This, in terms of the story's moral, seems to constitute only a minor offense, since his wife continues to keep up her support and lovingly advises him. Soon he is given a chance to make up for his wrong-doing, and by observing rule (c), “be aware of your chances,” is honored with immediate success: He regains a moderate standard of wealth without even having to work for it, being paid by the porters' guild for not endangering their monopoly. However, living a secure and peaceful life obviously does not serve the interests of an exciting story, and the catalyst factor has to work in the negative again. This time, when employing his prodigious strength Salīm violates rule (a), “as long as you live, never forget to remember God and thank him,” in general, and part of rule (d), “be grateful for your body's health,” specifically. While the first time his offense was not explicitly stated but could easily be isolated from the actual events, this time the text emphasizes the major degree of wrong-doing. After having lifted a heavy load threatening to suffocate its porter, Salīm relates: “I thought by myself that no ten people could defeat me. Suddenly I heard a voice saying: ‘Salīm, you have done a brave deed without thanking God!’ When I heard that voice, I saw a person standing by my side with a red face, white beard and eyes like pots of blood. He had his hands lifted up, ready to perform the ritual ablution” (9/-7).

The horrifying vision makes Salīm fall unconscious and leaves him confined to bed for more than a year. The social message of this event is obvious, even more so since it is not only verbalized by Salīm's falling ill, but also visually illustrated by the appearance of God's personified admonishment.

In this way two offenses have started the action. After this, the hero seems to have learnt his basic lesson. In terms of the story's plot this would mean that the action is set in motion, the good precepts are allowed to fade and further on only appear to a minor degree. Salīm is restored when sadly remembering his wrong-doing. To be exact, there is no direct mention of repentance, but only a sad "realizing how weak and poor I am now, and how healthy and strong I used to be" (10/7). When Salīm falls asleep with these thoughts in mind, Muḥammad appears to him in his dream and miraculously cures him. Similarly, when he is caught and imprisoned by the enemy, though he is put to a heavy trial, he never forgets rule (b), "never give up your belief," for which he is ultimately rewarded. In this way further social messages get to work on deeper levels, though they eventually prove to represent merely different crystallizations of the initial precepts.

Before continuing the discussion, it might be useful to point out the predominant gender roles in SJ. Salīm is a man, a male hero, the protagonist of a tale focusing on the adventures of a male, so SJ's predominant social rule is about male behavior. Taking Salīm's prodigious strength as the prominent example, it only works whenever he does not violate rule (a) to thank God. Even then he is subject to various adventures and hardships, in the course of which he usually turns things to the better by following rule (c) "taking his chance". To a Western mind the immediate killing of a conquered enemy might appear as the unnecessarily cruel act of imposing one's superiority, but to Salīm and the tale's moral it appears to be nothing but "taking his chance" whenever he can. Killing two warriors is regarded as the perfectly usual course of warfare. When he next kills the prison warden, who after all is only a minor constituent of his enemies' machinery, he is justified in doing so by the sheer advantage of "chance". Again, killing the strap-legged monster is equally unnecessary for his escape, but it is not disputed as an offensive act, because it simply constitutes revenge in a moment of "chance". Even when killing the cannibal shortly before returning home, Salīm does not have to do it in order to save his life. He had already blinded the man-eating monster and dealt him a heavy blow "breaking his neck" (41/1). The monster was helplessly lying on the ground when he finally killed him by throwing a second boulder. So here he does take his "chance", too. All of these pointed cases of cruelty, besides their legitimacy as "killing enemies of God," amount to the general agenda of "taking a chance whenever you can." It is not a question of legitimate behavior, moral judgment, paying heed to a limited set of legally applicable means, but mainly of "chance".

This social value is visible to a minor degree when Salīm steals the "night-shining jewel" (without ever bothering about the cow's life, which is linked

to possessing that jewel), or when he steals (or rather hides) the fairy's bird-garment. It is finally demonstrated vigorously near the very end of Salīm's tale, though this time working against him. For when he is victim of a minor misunderstanding at the grocer's store, the grocer takes his "chance" of being superior to a supposed thief whom nobody appears to know: His accusation does not mirror reality but results from ignorance, negligence — and "chance". Everybody knows the grocer and trusts him, nobody remembers Salīm who has been away for almost twenty years, Salīm's wife is not there to help him; so the situation is completely in favor of the grocer, who "takes his chance" and has Salīm thrown into prison.

Since Salīm is a male protagonist, the precept of "taking your chance" appears to be concerned predominantly with a male role. In a similar yet more subtle way, another powerful social message is concerned with the role of women. It is nowhere stated explicitly, working rather as a background stabilizing factor. Thus it has to be isolated by analyzing the actual role and behavior of women in Salīm's tale. There are three women in his life: a human one, an animal one, and a fairy one. These three in turn can be understood to represent different facets of a woman's life and, taken as a whole, portray the role an ideal woman is supposed to live.

Salīm's first wife is human. Their marriage is not mentioned anywhere in the text, so their being together is to be taken as a given fact not basically questioned by whatever happens. This human wife represents care and understanding. She supports him even when he acts absolutely foolishly and irresponsibly, she waits for him for long years without mourning, and welcomes him gladly the moment he returns home without asking even so much as the reasons for his absence or his motivation in coming back. She suffers and submits without the faintest hint of complaint. He does share life and worries with her, he does have sex with her, he even has children with her (who are only mentioned vaguely somewhere near the end of the tale), but he never really seems to care about her. He deserts her without any imperative reason, never thinks of her while away, and only seems to remember her when asked about her by his fairy-wife. His longing then is not to return to her, but rather to return to the world of human beings. He goes to see her because he does not have anybody else to turn to. Yet the moment he is captured and imprisoned, being physically separated from her another time, he immediately appears to forget her again.

Salīm's second wife, the monkey princess, is personified sexual desire. With her Salīm experiences "such sweetness as can only be found with virgins" which made him fall "unconscious out of happiness" (22/-1). Even without going into the details of a psychological interpretation, the implicit moral of this event is obvious: sexual pleasure is at its most intense when one acts like a beast, overcoming rules of normal human behavior and falling prey to mere instinct. This statement does not only apply to the male partner; still the man is clearly in an advantageous position. The message for him is to "take his chance" in sexual life too, but ultimately not to succumb to the animal instinct. His monkey wife

demonstrates what would happen if he did: Though she is capable of a certain measure of compassion and love (which, however, barely surpasses that of a dog following the one who feeds him), she eventually rips in two their common child, thus living a moment of unmotivated cruelty against an absolutely innocent being. Besides, the monkey wife herself is clearly reduced to functioning as an instrument to relieve sexual tension: Even though the monkey people are well organized in a hierarchic community, even though they have put into practice some basic human values, they do not share the essential means of communication within and with the human world: they do not speak the human language. Thus, Salīm's contact with his monkey wife is restricted to sexual activity. This in turn is, notably, forced upon him by her arousing his desire through caressing him and direct outspoken manipulation until he cannot contain himself any more. Thus, though he is the one to indulge in sexual activity, he is not attributed active responsibility for what happens. Accordingly, it is the monkey wife who suffers when he leaves in the end and who is (morally) punished, as demonstrated drastically by her violent destruction of their common offspring.

Salīm's third wife is a fairy. She is perfect to a superhuman degree. She knows everything that happens on earth, she is compassionate and faithful in the extreme. But in being so she remains mysterious and inexplicably strange. When giving her children to the animals, she acts in ways which appear cruel and provoking to Salīm. Ultimately explaining the reason for her behavior, she does make Salīm feel inferior. Probably it is his trying to compensate this feeling of inferiority which makes him accuse her straightforwardly, but she unwittingly only humiliates him further: While he had two women before her, both of whom he deserted, she would never have another man after him, whether he died or went away, not because she loves him more than he loves her, but because it is not part of custom in the realm of the fairies. She is perfect, since her behavior is beyond reproach. This qualification makes her another ideal partner in her own particular way, similar to the loving first and the sexually defined second wife. Her supreme quality is moreover underlined by the fact that only she bears Salīm two boys, but it also appears to be the reason why he eventually has to leave her. Not for good, to be sure, but he has to return to his human wife, because as a human himself he can never fulfill the standards of superhuman moral perfection lived by his fairy-wife.

The fairy-wife's perfection is finally demonstrated by her model behavior in the crucial question of filial piety. Filial piety constitutes a dominant social value in any traditionally structured society which relies heavily on a promise of cooperation between the members of different generations. In SJ it forms part of the general story's frame (not the actual frame-story). It is significant to note the different ways in which filial piety is handled. When in the beginning Salīm mourns his deceased father, he recalls the situation in his own words: "We lifted him in perfect esteem, buried him and mourned over him the way educated

people do” (7/-7). This sparse description denotes all his mourning. Probably Salīm acts not so much out of neglect or carelessness but rather because excessive mourning surpassing the ritually appropriate acts is condemned: Men mourn the way custom requests, on the other hand they go back to the working mechanisms of social life as soon as possible. Though parents are not a major subject in Salīm’s narrative, it is revealing to note how his fairy-wife as a female protagonist acts in a vaguely comparable situation. His human wife’s parents are never mentioned; his monkey wife is described as the king’s daughter, without any further reference to her father; only his fairy-wife’s father is allowed a more detailed mention. He is the one who sends his angry servants after Salīm when he leaves the realm of the fairies to visit his human wife. It remains slightly mysterious why he does so — perhaps out of a feeling of hurt pride, perhaps out of care for his daughter? Probably the latter, because the end of the story makes it very clear how much she respects him, or rather both her parents. When after the last happy meeting they all go to live in the fairies’ dominion, she is near her parents and there is no need to elaborate on her respect for them. But when she wants to leave, the story’s teller obviously feels the need for a lengthy justification which goes as follows: “She went to her father and mother and said: ‘You dear ones. I have got two sons by Salīm and I am his wife. He has expressed a longing for his native country, and he also has the daughter of his paternal uncle [as his wife] and has had two children with her. His heart is in that place, and I wish to please him by behaving the way he wants, so that he may be content with me. Do grant leave for me and my sons so I may go and stay with him there for a while. Every month I will come to your service’ ” (46/8). At a later stage mention is made of her visiting “her father” (47/7) every month for ten days (which might lead to the question whether fairy women menstruate?). And when finally Salīm and his human wife have both died, she returns, not so much to her own world, but to her father.

The story’s plot makes it appear perfectly normal and unrepachable when Salīm goes back to the affairs of normal life soon after his father’s death. This is the way a man’s world works. His fairy-wife, on the other hand, not only does not leave without her parents’ (to be correct: her father’s) permission, but moreover visits her parents for about a third of the time. Her social conflict is a different one than Salīm’s. Sociologically, it is based upon the fact that she is in between her original family, namely the one she was born in, and her husband’s “new” family. She is subordinate to her parents in the original family, and subordinate to her husband in the “new” one. Being a fairy, she is conscious of her dual duties and the pain any conflict might cause for members of both families. She proves to be not only a perfect wife but also a perfect daughter — and a model for young girls leaving their original family.

5. Before attempting a general evaluation, the question of authorship should be discussed, having been largely neglected so far. Dating SJ is not only of philological interest. If we want to be sure about the origin of the social concepts

contained in SJ it will be necessary to determine its textual origin as closely as possible. Also, the literary context of SJ will have to be discussed to illuminate questions of collective consciousness influencing the individual author. Definite answers to this problem are, however, extremely difficult. Before being printed and distributed as a separate booklet from the last quarter of the 19th century onwards, SJ is repeatedly documented as part of a collection (or rather various collections) of romantic tales bearing the not very distinctive title *Jāmi' al-ḥikā-yāt* (Collection of stories; see e.g. Ethé 1903: 524 sq., no. 797; Ivanow 1924: 130 sq., no. 301; Munzavī 1351/1972: 3666, nos. 39833–39835), copies of which are preserved in some of the world's major libraries. A casual search without substantial difficulty could locate seven manuscripts containing SJ in libraries of Paris (Blocher 1934: 88 sq., no. 2135 [probably 19th century]), London (Rieu 1881 [reprint 1966]: 760 a [Ms. Or. 237, fol. 198 b–208 a]), Oxford (Sachau/Ethé 1899: 437, no. 476 [Ouseley 231], fol. 113 b sqq.; English translation in Levy 1928: 33–54), Berlin (Pertsch 1888: 988 sq., no. 1031 [Minutoli 8], fol. 62 a–76 a; dated 22.Rajab 1245/17.1.1830; French translation in Bricteux 1910: 237–303), Munich (Eilers/Hinz 1968: no. 90 [Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München Ms. orient fol. 3190], dated 1243/1827), Moscow (Akimushkin e.a. 1964: no. 1072, fol. 11 b–24 b; Russian translation in Tumanovich 1963: 86–102) and Mashhad [analyzed in Haag-Higuchi 1984; see also Munzavī 1351/1972: 3666 sq., no. 39837]). The only dated manuscripts are the Munich and Berlin ones, mentioning 1827 and 1830 respectively as date of their copying. The other manuscripts are usually judged as being much older by the authors of the relevant descriptions, some of them supposedly dating from as far back as the 16th century. Only the London manuscript gives the name of an author, an otherwise completely unknown “Muḥammad Kāzim ibn Mīrak Ḥusayn Muẓaffarī Sajāvandī, mutakhalliṣ ba (known under the pen-name) Ḥubbī.” Dating undated manuscripts is an extremely sensitive affair, since one has to rely on a reconstruction of such issues as writing styles, paper quality or book-binding; moreover, any presumption might easily be influenced by wishful thinking. Thus it seems safer to rely on unquestionable facts for another attempt at dating SJ's origin.

Strangely enough, the first reliably dated text of SJ appears in a Western translation, which was published under the impact of fashionable tales in the Oriental style en vogue at the degenerate French court towards the end of the 18th century. The Comte de Caylus in 1780 published as an appendix to his collection of *Contes orientaux* his *Nouveaux contes orientaux* (see Chauvin 1892–1922: 4, 132–134, no. 335 for different editions and p. 222 for the list of contents. The text I have consulted is Caylus 1787; German translation in Ernst 1909 [1963]: 73–275, especially 257–275). They are framed by a story modelled on SJ, starting with the “Persian king's al-Hudjiadge” insomnia, making him ask for stories to fall asleep. Within this frame, the French author incorporates stories taken from various sources. The one called “Histoire du Porte-Faix”

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(The porter's story) is nothing but an adapted version of Salīm's life-story. Its protagonist bears the picturesque name of "Dgerberi". This is definitely no genuine Oriental name and can easily be demasked as a contortion of "Jawhari" (the jeweler), resulting from a misinterpretation of the original Arabic writing's graphic image.⁶ The Comte de Caylus' version testifies to the fact that there must have been manuscript versions of SJ prior to at least 1780. All attempts at an earlier dating continue to remain purely speculative. The author of the (undated) London manuscript explicitly says in his preface that while in his seventies he wrote down those tales which he had heard "in the assemblies of the great" (fol. 3 b), probably as a youth. While this mention might point to a popularity of SJ at the beginning of 18th century, it does not really help much for a precise dating; on the other hand, it leads to the problem of what kind of audience one would have to imagine for a tale like SJ.

Before proceeding to discuss SJ's audience, it might be worth while to mention rapidly some specific characteristics of the literary versions preserved in the manuscripts, since they appear to differ, notably in one of the narrative's decisive points, the hero's sexual adventure with the monkey princess. A more diligent search for manuscripts might locate still more versions and adaptations, maybe even an Arabic (original?) one. Probably even more telling than changes in the course of the indigenous literary tradition are those changes effected by the various European translators, the Comte de Caylus, Bricteux and Levy. The Comte de Caylus skips the monkey-episode altogether. After all, his tales were dedicated to "Madame***", the empress, and aimed at refined entertainment at the French court. Direct sexual allusions must have seemed perfectly unsuitable to this audience, even though courting and romantic love were surely appreciated. It was still to take some time before the French "conte de fées" would by way of Oriental influence endeavor to describe erotic situations in a more outspoken and sensual manner (see Dammann 1981: especially 135). Even more than a century later, Auguste Bricteux in his scholarly translation of the Berlin manuscript obviously did not dare to confront his audience with the particular passage, regarded by him as "un passage inconvenant" (Bricteux 1910: 302). He might have taken refuge in the well known practice of presenting this passage "relegated to the respectable obscurity of the Latin tongue" (quotation from Wallis Budge 1897: viii); instead he chose to omit the passage in translation and to present a faithful transcription in two subsequent footnotes. The translation given there actually demonstrates a definite and natural description of the actual events, contrasting sharply with the stereotype European apprehension of Islam as an anti-sexual factor. Bricteux's translation breaks off after mentioning "elle s'assit à mes pieds, se mit à me les caresser . . ." (Bricteux 1910: 271 [fol. 70 A]) and would read on as follows: "After this, she sat down at the side of my feet, caressing my feet and touching my thigh. Then she reached out to grab my Kh^vāja Abū al-'Abbās, shook it until it rose,

kissed its head, lay down underneath me and pulled me on top of her” (ibid.: 302, note 30).

Considering this wording, the rendering given by the Afghan narrator Ākhund Mullā Maḥmud appears to be an almost word by word reproduction: “[. . .] and she started from the bottom of my foot, stroking, she came along and came along, up the special tool of mine. She massaged it and did this and that and rubbed herself against it” (Mills 1992: 110). Even without checking other manuscripts it seems hard to believe how the Oxford manuscript translated by Reuben Levy could render the relevant passage in a completely different way. According to Levy’s translation, Salīm narrates that “she lulled me to sleep by embracing my feet” (Levy 1928: 46). This clearly appears to be a condensation and omission on the translator’s part, all the more so since the following paragraph contains a summary of events altogether untypical of the tale’s style: “When Salim reached this point in his story, Hajjaj burst into laughter and asked what followed. The reply of Salim was filled with the details of his life in the city of the apes, how he remained there for many days and gained the affection of all. He told what food he ate, how long he slept, and what he did daily.” After this the text goes on “. . . until at last sleep overcame Hajjaj and he heard no more. The next day, Hajjaj summoned Salim and bade him continue his story. He thereupon proceeded as follows: . . .” This recurrence to the well known mechanism of breaking stories by the listener’s falling asleep, reminiscent of the *Arabian Nights* frame-story, beyond reasonable doubt makes Levy’s translation amount to a retelling of the original text rather than a faithful translation. These preliminary remarks demonstrate how a detailed analysis of the various manuscripts and translations could contribute to an appropriate understanding of (Islamic) Near Eastern and (scholarly) Western apprehensions of sexuality.

6. The Czech scholar Jiří Cejpek in his short description of folk-prints in Jan Rypka’s *History of Iranian Literature* regards the Persian popular romances on valiant heroes and beautiful ladies as a last vain struggle of the vanishing feudal system against complete extinction. According to Cejpek, these “fantastic romances of chivalry in folk-print form are in most cases definitely not progressive — an interesting proof that the ruling classes of late feudal Iran, aware of the instability of their position, did not hesitate to make use of new technical advances in order to force their own ideology on their subjects.” As for the sources, Cejpek admits “that it is not possible to find prototypes for all of the folk-prints. . . . it is very likely that many of them consisted of single motifs and were compiled from various sources. One should not expect high artistic qualities in these literary by-products — they were mostly of the shilling shocker variety. They were intended to gloss over the miseries brought about by the decline of feudalism and to divert public attention to trivial and harmless . . . matters” (Cejpek 1968: 672). Cejpek may be right as to the fact that the Qājār era was a major period for the distribution of this genre of tales. Notably,

the most popular of all romances today, the one about Amīr Arsalān, was invented and told by the shah's personal storyteller Naqīb al-Mamālik. Yet, from a modern perspective, the socialist interpretation of those popular romances as a "symbol of decline" seems outdated. Though some of those romances were invented by members of the leading class or at least by people belonging to their entourage, authors like Naqīb al-Mamālik are definitely not to be credited with inventing the genre itself. Similar romances like the one focusing on Ḥamza, the prophet Muḥammad's uncle (cf. Marzolph 1990), had been popular in Iran ever since the 11th century, and there are other romances of equal antiquity. These romances might have been invented for the amusement of the upper classes, describing a social system and codes of behavior familiar to them. But it would mean overstressing their origin to understand them as a last stronghold of imperial values, as a vain attempt to preserve the feudal concept of governors and governed by telling stories about heroes of royal origin. Still, Cejpek is basically right in qualifying these tales as "unprogressive": They serve to stabilize existing patterns. Their stabilizing impact works within a social elite, for whom they are originally invented and told, the same as it does in regard to popular reception, when they would preserve social values long overcome by social developments in actual life.

Anyhow, SJ may only in a very limited way be counted as a typical representative of the genre of popular romances, since its hero is not of royal birth. Moreover, it is by far one of the shortest ones. As for its language, it is not embellished with refined verbal expression, and its plot and motifs are taken from a popular stock the audience would already be familiar with. Telling or reading SJ amounts to presenting a new remake of familiar expression in a different attire, to furnish a well known frame with cherished ingredients. This procedure is neither unusual for Near Eastern literatures, nor is it to be regarded as illegitimate or even boring, as it might be judged from a contemporary Western point of view which defines originality and uniqueness as part of the basic appreciation a piece of "art" would deserve (cf. Grunebaum 1944).

As for SJ's audience, the booklet's compactness makes it all the more available to a large audience. When in the beginning SJ was mentioned as belonging to the second of the categories set up by Maḥjūb, this qualification should now be further distinguished. Instead of assigning SJ to any fixed category, one has to bear in mind its literary development it underwent in the course of time, which may be roughly sketched as follows: (1) Prior to the 18th century SJ might have existed in a preliminary oral stage. This is what the author of the London manuscript suggests, when one excludes the possibility of regarding the author's statement as a stereotypical literary justification. If such an oral stage existed, SJ then probably belonged to the narrative repertoire of a bourgeois class, again suggested by the author of the London manuscript in his recalling the "assemblies of the great". (2) In the 18th century SJ is documented as belonging to a large collection of narratives in manuscript form

which was either read in private by a highly educated and considerably rich audience or served as a mnemonic aid for professional (literate) story-tellers. (3) Only in the late 19th century was SJ published separately in printed form, thus for the first time making it accessible to a larger literate audience as matter to be read alone or in public, while at the same time significantly expanding its financial availability. (4) In the middle of the 20th century, SJ was again published, then in cheap prints which could be afforded by virtually any member of the literate class.

Yet another memory of my former Iranian teacher sheds light on the mechanisms of popular reception as to the size of the audience SJ might have met with at that time. He vividly portrayed an adolescent school boy spending a few coins to buy a copy, which would then be either sold or passed on for free to innumerable friends and acquaintances, until it literally fell apart. This means that a single copy printed could account for a considerably larger number of readers, thus in terms of easy accessibility again underlining the booklet's popular character. Even though SJ might predominantly be regarded as a male narrative for a male audience, this stage in the tradition in particular might constitute an intermediate step for a potential female audience: Even though women more often than men could not read, and girls were not taught to read, and even though women and men would not mingle in public and only to a limited extent in private audiences, small boys with a certain reading knowledge would be allowed to perform before an exclusive private female audience. The above mentioned repertoire of Mashdī Gaīn Khānum testifies to the fact that a female audience could well have had access to stories propagated in the form of popular prints: Mashdī Gaīn quite faithfully retold the story of *Khusraw-i dīvzād* (Khusraw, the demon-born), a popular booklet also published since about the middle of the 19th century (Shcheglova 1975: 596 sq., nos. 1652-1655). (5) At any one of the previous stages, SJ might have been presented in oral performance, which however is only documented by the Afghan storytelling session in January 1975 recorded by Margaret Mills, when the tale was narrated by the master storyteller Ākhund. One of the last known steps in SJ's contemporary popular reception is constituted by audio-cassette copies of Ākhund's performance apparently circulating in the early 1990s within the Los Angeles Iranian exile community.

The given facts amount to enabling SJ to gain an even wider popularity than any of the larger romances, which would have to be told or read over a period of many hours or even days. As a cheap folk-print, re-read and re-sold many times, one single copy would reach a large reading or listening audience. Thus even though SJ in terms of content is not a typical example of its genre, the social messages it transmits might be even more influential, due to its wide accessibility and unsuspecting way of presentation, which would make its audience unconsciously digest the social concepts hidden behind its fantastic adornments.

7. To sum up, the social messages contained in the portraits of Salīm as well as of his three wives appear to be predominantly addressed to a male audience. The question “what did the audience make out of this?” is not easy to answer. The above analysis is based on a frozen, decontextualized version which only gains meaning in performance; thus, the analysis is highly theoretical and risks emphasizing aspects which invariably would be modified in any performance. Ultimately, every performer, reader or listener is bound to supply the tale with his or her own individual meaning, and it might be a mistake to try to isolate dominant issues from any version whose original context cannot be reconstructed. Listeners might understand the message as trying to split different needs, to live a diversity of incongruent social factors such as love, sex, and children with different women. On the other hand, they might understand that part of the message concerning the role of women is their having to strive to be the ideal wife: only a woman who could show loving care and understanding, satisfy her husband’s sexual needs, and still remain in a state of moral perfection would have a chance at keeping him. These three qualifications seem to be the given goal, and more: a woman’s role is not to live her life in a like manner that a man would, seeking the way to make his dreams come true. A woman’s vocation is to support the male without questioning his authority, right or wrong, to be there serving his needs without asking for the satisfaction of her own (as the monkey wife foolishly does), and to live moral perfection as an indispensable counterbalance to the numerous challenges nature has set up for men. Driving this understanding even further, one might condense the threefold female role to a relational definition of woman as mother, wife, and daughter (the three women in a man’s life) or to a functional one as mother, whore, and friend (the three types of women a man might encounter).

In conclusion, I would like to refer again to what has been mentioned at the beginning: that the social messages contained in SJ are not be regarded as included due to a conscious educative process. They are rather the result of an old tradition which started long before this kind of popular literature came to be known. The values of moral, religious and social importance represented in those tales, contrary to their conscious employment, supposedly did already form part of their tellers’ unconscious repertoire and would be used by them to demonstrate the basic values their society needs to function. In this way, for a newcomer to the society they would represent an initiation, while for a permanent member of the society concerned they would constitute a constant reminder of its mechanisms. Their ultimate message is to stick to a given set of rules without which the societal system would break down. In this way, up to the present day in its original surrounding SJ constitutes a vigorous stabilizing factor for conservative gender roles, moral values and general societal rules of behavior originally dating from a period probably more than two centuries ago.

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Notes

1. I would like to thank Margaret Mills and Shams Anvari-Alhoseini for their tedious readings of an earlier version of this essay and their detailed criticisms, some of which have been taken up in the present version.
2. I am aware of at least three additional different recent editions, one published by 'Ilmī, two by Shirkat-i nisbī-i kānūn-i kitāb, all of them probably dating from the late 1950s.
3. For recent discussions of chapbooks in the Near East see Khayyat 1987 on early twentieth century Arabic material and Heston 1991 on contemporary Pashto tradition. A book on chapbook production in Pakistan by W.L. Hanaway is forthcoming. Bertel's 1934, though discussing major characteristics and naming important sources, is nothing but a rough sketch. A survey of mid-twentieth century Persian chapbook production is given in Marzolph (forthcoming).
4. Laughing, notably, is mentioned at that point for which the tale appears to be notorious, namely the outspoken description of Salīm's sexual delight with the monkey princess. It is not necessarily characteristic of repressive sexual attitudes that this passage also drew laughter from the male narrator in oral performance, as noted by Mills 1992: 110, line 439.
5. It is an interesting detail to note the particular graphic layout this set of rules is presented in: While usually the text is printed in large paragraphs (about one paragraph break per page) without any punctuation, here we find stars serving to separate the rules from each other as well as to draw additional attraction visually to this essential passage.
6. The enemies later capturing Salīm are called "les Guèbres". This reading probably constitutes a similar distortion of the Persian *Gabr* meaning an unbeliever, an infidel.

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