

# JUHĀ IN THE ARABIAN NIGHTS<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In his description of the nineteenth-century Madrid manuscript of the *Arabian Nights*, Duncan B. MacDonald states that there is no good reason why Juḥā, the famous trickster character of the Arab world, should not appear in the *Nights*. The present essay evaluates this statement by surveying various occurrences of Juḥā in texts related to the *Nights*, including the Mardrus translation (vol. 15, published in 1904) and the manuscript *Taimūriyya qīṣaṣ* 15 (dating from the sixteenth century). A thorough analysis of the Juḥā anecdote as integrated into the Madrid manuscript leads to the conclusion that the occurrence of Juḥā in that manuscript is a singular phenomenon.

When Duncan B. MacDonald published his “Preliminary Classification of some Manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights*”<sup>2</sup> in 1922, he referred to the manuscript in the library of the Academia de la Historia in Madrid as being close to the Galland and Vatican manuscripts, the two main representatives of the so-called “Syrian branch” of the *Arabian Nights*. Besides being of Christian origin, this fairly modern manuscript in its first volume is said to contain “the tales in the order of G [= the Galland manuscript], down to the end of the Hunchback cycle.” Then, says MacDonald, “comes *Ḥikāyat Juhá*,” which is to his “knowledge, the only appearance of Juḥā in a MS of the *Nights*.” Furthermore, MacDonald states, “there is no reason why he should not so appear.” While the content of MacDonald’s presentation of the Madrid manuscript relies on information supplied by Spanish arabist, Miguel Asín Palacios, in this case MacDonald obviously adds arguments of his own, incidentally arguments that have since been widely appreciated: “a

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<sup>1</sup> This is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented at the conference, “Les Mille et une nuits en partage,” Paris, May 25-29, 2004. A French version, translated by Mathias Hoorelbeke, has been published in the conference proceedings *Les Mille et une nuits en partage*, ed. by Aboubakr Chraïbi, Paris: Sindbad, 2004, pp. 476-490.

<sup>2</sup> Duncan B. MacDonald, “A Preliminary Classification of some Mss of the *Arabian Nights*,” in *A Volume of Oriental Studies: Presented to Edward G. Browne on his 60th Birthday*, ed. by Thomas W. Arnold, Reynold A. Nicholson (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), pp. 304-321, the following quotations are taken from pp. 308 sq.

*Kitāb Nawādir Juḥā* is given in the *Fihrist* (p. 313, l. 21) under the rubric of *Mughaffilīn* [i.e. *Mughaffalīn*]. See, too, Juḥā in the *Qāmūs* and *Tāj* and in the *Lisān* (vo. xvii, p. 189) where his kunya is given as Abū-l-ghuṣn. For the more modern Juḥā see René Basset's *Étude* prefixed to Mouliéras' "Fourberies de Si Djeh'a." [3] Thereafter comes the Story of Anīs al-Jalīs [ . . . ]. The appearance of a story about the popular Arab trickster and fool Juḥā in a fairly modern manuscript version of the *Arabian Nights* provides a fascinating piece of evidence within the large variety of tales exploited by different compilers. While researchers are generally concerned with the internal coherence of the tales added to the core collection by later compilers, in this case one needs to discuss the position and relevance of the tale about Juḥā within its context. The following essay, then, is to evaluate MacDonald's statement, by assessing the occurrence and role of the character of Juḥā in the context of the *Arabian Nights*.

MacDonald's evaluation of the Madrid manuscript has to be amended in several ways: In the first place, MacDonald does not supply an argument as for the manuscript's alleged "Christian" provenance, and Muhsin Mahdi, who in his edition of the Galland manuscript has also collated the Madrid manuscript (Gayangos 49), does not repeat this qualification.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the manuscript according to Mahdi's evaluation is not a representative of the "Syrian" branch but rather of the "Egyptian" branch, commonly known as "Zotenberg's Egyptian Recension;" it was probably compiled at the end of the eighteenth or at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As for the *Hikāyat Juḥā*, it does not come *after* the Hunchback cycle, but *within*. The tale's exact position as an inserted tale within the "Barber's Tale of His Fifth Brother" in the 162nd Night is mentioned by Mahdi who also has published a full version of the tale's text in the footnotes to his edition.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the decisive point for the present discussion is whether or not there is reason for Juḥā to appear in the *Arabian Nights*. This leads us to a number of questions that need to be discussed in detail. What exactly is the content of the Juḥā tale in the Madrid manuscript, and what is the tale's position

<sup>3</sup> The *Qāmūs*, *Tāj* and *Lisān* are the standard dictionaries of classical Arabic. René Basset's "Recherches sur Si Djoh'a et les anecdotes qui lui sont attribuées" was published in Auguste Mouliéras, *Les Fourberies de Si Djeh'a. Contes Kabyles*, Paris: Ernest Leroux 1892, pp. 1-79, 183-187 (new edition prepared by Jean Déjeux, Paris: La Boîte à Documents 1987, pp. 139-201). For a quick survey of the present knowledge about Juḥā see Charles Pellat, "Djuḥā," in *Encyclopædia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, Leiden: Brill 1960, pp. 590-592.

<sup>4</sup> Muhsin Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights (Alf Layla wa-Layla) From the Earliest Known Sources, Arabic Text Edited with Introduction and Notes*, vols. 1-2, 3, Leiden: E. J. Brill 1984, 1994, vol. 2, pp. 273-274.

<sup>5</sup> Mahdi, vol. 2, pp. 147-148 (relating to night 162, line 20); see Real Academia de la Historia, Colección Gayangos, no. XLIX, vol. 1, fol. 222a (previously numbered 219), line 10-fol. 222b, line 4 (total of 12 lines).

within the repertoire of tales about Juḥā contemporary to the manuscript's production? Is the appearance of Juḥā in the Madrid manuscript a singular case or is MacDonald right in assuming that there might be other appearances of Juḥā in the *Arabian Nights*?

The following considerations concerning these questions rely on a wide conception of the *Arabian Nights* as an ongoing process. In other words, I do not refer to the *Arabian Nights* as embodied in a specific manuscript, printed edition, or translation; rather, I regard the *Arabian Nights* as a creative notion that has given rise to various works of literature, both in its native Arabic context and in European adaptations. Given these circumstances, two other occurrences of Juḥā in the wider context of the *Arabian Nights* in addition to the Madrid manuscript will be considered, both of which in terms of chronology constitute opposing far ends of the collective phenomenon that constitute the *Arabian Nights*. One of these occurrences is the chapter titled, "Some Jests and Suggestions of the Master of Shifts and Laughter," in the fifteenth and penultimate volume of the edition prepared by Joseph Charles Victor Mardrus and published in 1904.<sup>6</sup> The other is the mention of anecdotes about Juḥā in the final passages of the manuscript Taimūriyya *qiṣaṣ* 15; this manuscript was probably compiled in the sixteenth century and is now preserved in the Egyptian National Library in Cairo. Only after discussing these works will I return to the initially mentioned evaluation of Juḥā in the Madrid manuscript.

The chapter on Juḥā in the Mardrus edition constitutes one of the additions alien to the *Arabian Nights* for which this particular edition is notorious. Victor Chauvin's detailed analysis has made it clear that Mardrus, beginning with the twelfth volume, supplemented the stories from the *Arabian Nights* with extraneous material. At first, he interlaced stories of the *Arabian Nights* with those adapted from the contemporary French collection of folk tales published by Yacoub Artin Pacha;<sup>7</sup> later he also exploited publications by Garcin de Tassy,<sup>8</sup> Guillaume Spitta-Bey,<sup>9</sup> Nicolas Perron,<sup>10</sup> and

<sup>6</sup> See Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes publiés dans l'Europe chrétienne de 1810a 1895*, 12 vols, Liège: Vaillant-Carmanne and Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz 1892-1922, vol. 9 (1905), p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> Yacoub Artin Pacha, *Contes populaires inédits de la Vallée du Nil, traduits de l'arabe parlé*, Paris: Maisonneuve 1810 à 1895; for the following evaluation see Chauvin 1892-1922, vol. 9, pp. 80-85 and Victor Chauvin, "Les Mille et une Nuits de M. Mardrus," in *Revue des bibliothèques et archives de Belgique* 3, 4 (1905), pp. 200-205.

<sup>8</sup> Garcin de Tassy, *Allégories, récits poétiques et chants populaires, traduits de l'arabe, du persan, de l'hindoustani et du turc* (Paris: Leroux 1876).

<sup>9</sup> Guillaume Spitta-Bey, *Contes arabes modernes, recueillis et traduits* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, and Paris: Maisonneuve 1884).

<sup>10</sup> Nicolas Perron, *Femmes arabes avant et depuis l'islamisme* (Paris, Alger: Librairie nouvelle 1858).

others. The jocular tales included in the chapter on Juḥā according to Chauvin's detailed analysis "font presque toutes partie du Sottisier de Nasr-Eddin-Hodja, bouffon de Tamerlan," that is to say that almost all of them are contained in the first comprehensive collection in French of the anecdotes about Nasreddin Hoja, as published by Jean Adolphe Decourdemanche in 1878.<sup>11</sup> The correspondence between the Juḥā tales in the Mardrus edition and the Nasreddin tales in Decourdemanche's publication might easily serve as an argument to discard them as "not authentic," as the Juḥā tales undeniably constitute a late and conscious addition to the *Arabian Nights*. Such a step would, however, disregard the popular appreciation of the tales by Mardrus' audience.

The Mardrus edition in its time was one of the most widely admired versions of the *Arabian Nights*, both in its French original and its English translation prepared by Powys Mathers (1937).<sup>12</sup> Many, if not most of Mardrus' readers would not have been aware of the Juḥā tales' extraneous origin and would have taken them as an integral and perfectly suitable constituent of the *Arabian Nights*. Even if readers might have been conscious of the tales' origins in some other collection, they could not have cared less, for, as MacDonald has stated, "there is no reason why those tales should not appear within the *Arabian Nights*." In other words, Mardrus profited from a widespread notion, held by popular readers as well as learned academics, that jocular tales such as those about Juḥā would correspond to the general frame of the *Arabian Nights* as an *omnium gatherum*.

On the one hand, this widespread notion holds true, inasmuch as the *Arabian Nights*, after a core corpus of introductory tales that are more or less directly linked to the general frame by their character as "ransom tales," were enlarged with material of highly diverse origins, particularly in the Egyptian manuscripts. The additional material included above all moral tales and fables, as well as anecdotes from classical or Mamluk Arabic *adab*-literature, predominantly from such more or less contemporary works as al-Itlīdī's anecdotal history *I'lām al-nās fi mā waqa'a li-l-Barāmika ma'a Banī 'Abbās* (Information of the People Concerning what Happened to the Barmakids together with the Abbasids).<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, it does not do justice to

<sup>11</sup> Jean Adolphe Decourdemanche, *Sottisier de Nasr-Eddin-Hodja, bouffon de Tamerlan, suivi d'autres facéties turques, traduits sur des manuscrits inédits*, Bruxelles: Gay et Doucé 1878; for a few of the tales, Chauvin makes reference to Eugen Müllendorf, *Die Schwänke des Naṣr-ed-din und Buadem von Mehemed Tewfik, Mit Genehmigung des Verlegers aus dem Türkischen übersetzt und stellenweise erläutert* (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam jun. 1890).

<sup>12</sup> See Mia Gerhard, *The Art of Story-Telling: A Literary Study of the Thousand and One Nights* (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1963), pp. 93-104.

<sup>13</sup> See Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen, *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*,

this problem to consider the integration of whatsoever material into the *Arabian Nights* as legitimate, and to regard Mardrus' addition as solely originating from Decourdemanche's publication. The former point will be considered again towards the end of my paper.

The most striking point for the Juḥā tales in the Mardrus edition is, moreover, one that Chauvin did not discuss: the tales that in the probable source publication are attributed to the Turkish trickster, Nasreddin, are attributed to the Arabic fool Juḥā. It would be simplifying the problem if one were to adhere to the popular notion that anecdotes such as these, "migratory tales" as they are, are subject to random changes in their protagonists ever so often. On the contrary, in the case of Nasreddin and Juḥā, the mingling and conglomeration of the respective narrative repertoires originates from a clearly identifiable historical process. While the early stages of this process took place in the popular oral tradition of the southern Mediterranean, the process was accelerated and intensified by the printed editions in Arabic published in the latter half of the nineteenth century by the Florentine Jewish printer Moshe Castelli (Mūsā Kāstīlī).<sup>14</sup> Hence, what Mardrus did, appears to have been little more than the application of a process that had been initiated long before. While this evaluation serves as the main argument for Mardrus' action, it is worthwhile to have a closer look at Chauvin's list of tales that show a correspondence between the Mardrus edition and its alleged source.

Out of thirty-three Juḥā tales in Mardrus' chapter, all but four correspond more or less directly with tales in Decourdemanche's collection. As in Mardrus' edition in general, a free adaptation in terms of both language and content is taken for granted.<sup>15</sup> For two out of the four tales not contained in Decourdemanche's collection, Chauvin has documented corresponding tales in Eugen Müllendorf's German language publication (1890). The actual source of three of these tales, not mentioned by Chauvin, is, however, Auguste Mouliéras' 1892 French publication, *Les Fourberies de Si Djeh'a*;<sup>16</sup>

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Denver, Santa Barbara, Oxford: ABC-Clio 2004, vol. 2, pp. 606 f. A total of at least 27 tales in the Calcutta II edition (1839-42), that serves as the basis of most of the European translations, are also contained in al-Itlīdī's work.

<sup>14</sup> Ulrich Marzolph, "Adab in Transition: Creative Compilation in Nineteenth Century Print Tradition," in *Israel Oriental Studies* 19 (1999), pp. 161-172; see also Olga Pinto, "Mose Castelli, tipografo italiano al Cairo," in *Francesco Gabrieli: Studi orientalistici offerti nel sesantesimo compleanno* (Rome: Giovanni Bardi 1964), p. 217-223.

<sup>15</sup> See Sylvette Larzul, *Les Traductions françaises des Mille et une Nuits: Etude des versions Galland, Trébutien et Mardrus* (Paris: L'Harmattan 1996), pp. 140-216.

<sup>16</sup> The tale Mardrus, p. 94, referred to by Chauvin as "Müllendorf, 36," is contained in the latter section of Decourdemanche, no. 1; the remaining three tales correspond to Mouliéras 1892, nos. 3, 14, and 4; see also Albert Wesselski, *Der Hodscha Nasreddin*, vols. 1-2 (Weimar: Alexander Duncker 1911), at vol. 2, nos. 377-380, particularly no. 377.

Mouliéras's collection contains analogues to a total of nine of the Mardrus tales, notably those that are mentioned at the chapter's beginning. Mardrus' manner of compilation can thus be proven to be quite similar to Moshe Castelli's "zipper technique," as practiced in the early printed editions of Juḥā tales: Mardrus attributed a few Nasreddin tales to Juḥā, then proceeded with an almost solid block of nine tales taken from the repertoire of "authentic" Arabic Juḥā (or, to be exact, Berber Si Djeh'a) tales, and then continued by quoting extensively from the Turkish *Sottisier*. The introductory tales contained in the collections of both Decourdemanche and Mouliéras generally show Juḥā as a highly spirited person, while the later ones almost exclusively quote tales of an obscene, i.e., sexual or scatological, concern. In this manner, Mardrus not only succeeded in amalgamating the Nasreddin and Juḥā repertoires, but also conferred to Juḥā tales the attribute of overt sexual predilection that in historical perspective is an exclusive constituent of Turkish tradition and has nowhere else been attributed to the Arabic Juḥā.<sup>17</sup>

At the opposite end of the chronological scale, the Juḥā tales included in the Taimūriyya manuscript also constitute an interesting phenomenon. The Taimūriyya manuscript does not constitute a manuscript of the *Arabian Nights*. It is, however, a close companion to the *Arabian Nights*, insofar as it contains a total of nine items corresponding to tales in the later editions of the *Arabian Nights*. In this respect, it is comparable to the fourteenth century Istanbul manuscript known as *al-Ḥikāyāt al-ʿajība* (Wonderful Stories), whose relevance for the earlier history of the *Arabian Nights* has been acknowledged.<sup>18</sup> The Taimūriyya manuscript's importance for the present discussion lies in the fact that it is an early representative of material, some of which has at a later stage been incorporated into the *Arabian Nights*. The manuscript has been discussed in detail in Heinz and Sophia Grotzfeld's general study on the *Arabian Nights*.<sup>19</sup> For the present discussion suffice it

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<sup>17</sup> In his sexual preferences, the Turkish character of Nasreddin in pre-modern Ottoman sources is fixated on the primacy of penetration, indifferently having intercourse with his own wife, making advances to other women, or practicing bestiality with his donkey or mule. Juḥā, to the contrary, in pre-modern Arabic sources, behaves as a pubescent adolescent who challenges his mother's sexuality by alluding to her private parts or, in later texts, tricks his "father's wife" (i.e., his step-mother) into initiating him into sexual intercourse. For a survey of relevant texts documenting the different attitudes, see Ulrich Marzolph, *Nasreddin Hodscha: 666 wahre Geschichten* (Munic: Beck 1996).

<sup>18</sup> See *Das Buch der wundersamen Geschichten: Erzählungen aus der Welt von 1001 Nacht*, ed. by Ulrich Marzolph, Munic: Beck 1999; id., "Narrative Strategies in Popular Literature: Ideology and Ethics in Tales from the *Arabian Nights* and Other Collections," in *Middle Eastern Literatures* 7 (2004), pp. 171-182.

<sup>19</sup> Heinz and Sophia Grotzfeld, *Die Erzählungen aus "Tausendundeiner Nacht"* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1984), pp. 83-86. I would like to thank Heinz Grotzfeld for furnishing me with a xerox copy of the Taimūriyya manuscript.

to mention the basic facts: the untitled manuscript consists of three originally independent parts that have been bound together at a later stage. The manuscript's second part is dated 1002 A.H./1593 C.E., and the other two parts are believed to date from the sixteenth century. The initial section of the manuscript's third part contains several longer tales, but mostly gives shorter tales of an edifying character, followed by amusing anecdotes and jokes. The concluding section contains a number of altogether eighteen tales about Juḥā. The Juḥā tales are not represented as a solid block or chapter, but are intermingled with other anecdotes of a similar kind, and deal with the usual array of suspects in classical Arabic jokelore. The Juḥā tales are presented in four units: the first seven tales form a cluster (p. 356/16-357/10); this cluster is followed by two anecdotes that are both separated from the other ones and from each other (p. 362/1-2; p. 363/6-8); later there is another cluster of nine Juḥā tales (p. 363/21-365/12). Except for the two items standing alone, all other items belong to the standard repertoire of Juḥā tales, as documented in pre-nineteenth century sources.

A closer assessment of the Juḥā tales in the Taimūriyya manuscript leads to the following evaluation.<sup>20</sup> Ten out of the initially quoted thirteen items form part of the narrative repertoire about Juḥā as documented before the thirteenth century, such as quoted in or prior to Ibn al-Jauzi's (d. 1201) book on stupid people, *Akhbār al-Ḥamqā*.<sup>21</sup> The two items standing alone have never before in Arabic sources been attributed to Juḥā, even though they derive from the same sources as those containing early Juḥā tales; both items belong to the later stock of tales on Nasreddin/Juḥā and are first quoted in works compiled around the beginning of the eleventh century.<sup>22</sup> The remaining six items are first known from sources compiled in the seventeenth century and are contained in both 'Umar al-Ḥalabī's *Nuzhat al-udabā'* (Entertainment of the Educated)<sup>23</sup> and Yūsuf ibn al-Wakīl al-Milāwī's *Irshād man nahā ilā nawādir Juḥā* (The Guidance of Those Who Feel Inclined towards the Anecdotes about Juḥā).<sup>24</sup> The sequence of the tales

<sup>20</sup> The following evaluation relies on the results of an unpublished research project conducted under my supervision by Angelika al-Massri. The project's funding by the German Israeli Foundation is gratefully acknowledged.

<sup>21</sup> See Ulrich Marzolph, *Arabia ridens: Die humoristische Kurzprosa der frühen adab-Literatur im internationalen Traditionsgewebe*, vols. 1-2 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann 1992), at vol. 2, nos. 520, 1205, 877, 1207, 665, 1026, 627, 1208, 170, 567.

<sup>22</sup> See Wesselski 1911, nos. 495, 21; Marzolph 1992, vol. 2, nos. 649, 922.

<sup>23</sup> Ulrich Marzolph, "Nuzhat al-udabā'," In *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, vol. 10 (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter 2002), cols. 166-169. The work's autographed preliminary sketch is dated 1064 A.H./1653 C.E.

<sup>24</sup> See Ulrich Marzolph, "Zur Überlieferung der Nasreddin Hodscha-Schwänke außerhalb des türkischen Sprachraumes," In *Türkische Sprachen und Kulturen*, ed. by Ingeborg Baldauf, Klaus Kreiser, and Semih Tezcan (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1990), pp. 275-285, at 278.

in the Taimūriyya manuscript does not correspond to that in any of the known earlier sources; hence, their present sequence appears to derive from an active decision on the part of the manuscript's compiler:

- 1) When applying the smell of incense, Juḥā burns his clothes. He promises from now on only to apply incense when he is naked (p. 356/16)
- 2) In order to save the money for burial, Juḥā proposes to crucify the dead person (p. 356/-7)
- 3) When Juḥā is asked to “watch the door”, he takes it along when leaving the house (p. 356/-2)
- 4) Juḥā hides when he sees a porter who has stolen his goods, as he is afraid the porter might ask for his wage (p. 357/2)
- 5) Juḥā promises to give the peach to the person guessing what he holds in his hand (p. 357/5)
- 6) Juḥā buys a dead falcon for one dinar: Had he been alive, he would not have been able to buy him for a hundred (p. 357/7)
- 7) Juḥā reckons that the moon is most beautiful at night (p. 357/9)
- 8) Juḥā thanks God that he did not ride the donkey when it was stolen (p. 362/1)
- 9) Instead of paying for the water used for the ritual ablution, Juḥā farts, arguing that he returns ritual purity rather than pay (p. 363/6)
- 10) When going out to buy a sheep's head, Juḥā eats parts of it on the way back home, arguing that it had neither eyes, ears, tongue etc. (p. 163/-3)
- 11) Juḥā ridicules the buried gravedigger: Did he not know he would eventually fall into the pit he had been digging? (p. 364/3)
- 12) Juḥā is sent to buy vinegar. When he repeats his order on the way, he gets confused (p. 364/9)
- 13) When mourning his deceased wife, Juḥā posits himself “at the place that was most useful to him:” between her legs (p. 364/13)
- 14) Reciting the Koran, Juḥā erroneously quotes “the Turks” instead of “the Byzantines” (30/2); when criticized, he argues that all are the same (p. 364/-6)
- 15) When asked about the grumble in his stomach, Juḥā argues that the dates he has eaten are glorifying God (p. 364/-4)
- 16) Juḥā argues that he cannot read a letter that has been written in a place far away: Were it written somewhat closer, he could (p. 364/-3)
- 17) Juḥā is asked to fulfill at least one out of two conditions: execute the ritual ablution or pray. When he has executed the ritual ablution and is then asked to come to prayer, he lets a fart, and argues that his partner has broken his promise, so he has broken the condition (p. 365/2).



- 18) Juḥā's father threatens to put a stick into the anus of anybody who dares to make noise at night. The following morning, Juḥā surprises his parents having sex and wonders whether his mother had been noisy (p. 365/6).

The evaluation of the Juḥā tales in the Taimūriyya manuscript shows that the manuscript's compiler has exploited a variety of earlier sources, including those profiting from traditional Juḥā tales, as well as contemporary ones. With the contemporary sources, the compiler shares the characteristic of enlarging the repertoire of tales about Juḥā by attributing to Juḥā tales, most of them anonymous, that had previously been told about other characters. While the compiler's selection betrays a certain chronological sequence, his work most likely constitutes an original effort. In relation to the considerable amount of Juḥā tales that have been documented reliably only in sources compiled in the seventeenth century, revising the manuscript's dating to a slightly later period can be considered. Much as the corpus of Juḥā tales in the Taimūriyya manuscript tells us about the technique of compilation practiced in the Mamluk period, the finding's relevance for the *Arabian Nights* is limited: None of the Juḥā tales quoted in the Taimūriyya manuscript has ever been quoted in another manuscript or printed edition of the *Arabian Nights*.

Returning to the Madrid manuscript, we now can take a closer look at the Juḥā tale inserted into the "Barber's Tale of His Fifth Brother" in the 162nd Night. The barber's fifth brother is the one who experiences the adventure classified in comparative folk-narrative research as Aarne/Thompson tale-type 1430: *The Man and His Wife Build Air Castles*.<sup>25</sup> This tale is first documented in the *Tantrākhyāyika*, the oldest version of the Indian *Pancatantra*, and is mentioned in numerous other collections, including the latter work's Arabic adaptation *Kalīla wa-Dimna*.<sup>26</sup> A version that is quite close to that of the *Arabian Nights*, and yet both older and better motivated, is included in the Istanbul manuscript known as *al-Ḥikāyāt al-ʿajība*.<sup>27</sup> Only in the Madrid manuscript, while the barber tells how his brother started to imagine the future profit gained from selling his glassware, does the narrator address the listening ruler with the remark: "All this

<sup>25</sup> Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*, Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica 1961, p. 422; see also Ruth B. Bottigheimer, "Luftschlösser," In *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, vol. 8, Berlin, (New York: Walter de Gruyter 1996), cols. 1260-1265; Hans-Jörg Uther, *The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography*, vols. 1-3 (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica 2004), at vol. 2, pp. 218-220.

<sup>26</sup> Chauvin 1892-1922, vol. 2, pp. 100 f., no. 60; see also vol. 5, p. 162, in no. 85.

<sup>27</sup> Grotzfeld 1984, pp. 76-79; Marzolph, 1999, pp. 97-100, in no. 3.

happened, O Commander of the Faithful, while he was reckoning (his profit) in his mind and while he was hoping (vain) hopes like Juḥā's dreams (*wa-huwa ya'malu āmāl miṭla ahlām Juḥā*)." The narrator then proceeds to tell the related tale:

Juḥā was sleeping one night when he noticed to his side a plate (*ṣiniyya*) filled with jewels and (precious) minerals. He also noticed a group of people who intended to buy these jewels and minerals from him. He said to them: "Buy it from me, and be generous (literally: do not offer a small price)!" As they offered him four hundred dinars, he said: "May God grant success!" (implying that they should raise their bidding). So they kept on adding to their offer until they had reached a thousand dinars, while the plate remained at his side. All this happened while he was dreaming. The merchants kept on dealing with him until they offered two thousand dinars for the jewels and minerals. But he rejected their offer and took the plate away. At that moment, his arm struck the plate that was standing above his head. He woke up and did not see anything. So he closed his eyes again and turned to his side (as if he was sleeping), stretched out his hand and said to them: "Give me whatever flows from the sea (of your generosity)!"

This jocular tale is fitted into the embedding narrative in such an unobtrusive way that it looks like a natural constituent. Moreover, the quoted expression *ahlām Juḥā* appears to be a convincing and popular proverbial coinage, well-suited to elaborate on the story's concern. Rather contrary to this first impression, a closer look shows that neither is the quoted proverbial expression popular, nor does the quoted tale belong to the standard repertoire of Juḥā narratives. While there are other popular proverbial expressions concerning Juḥā such as "Juḥā's falcon" (*bāzi Juḥā*)<sup>28</sup> or "Juḥā's nail" (*mismār Juḥā*—the proverbial 'pain in the butt'),<sup>29</sup> the available classical and modern sources do not list *ahlām Juḥā*. Probably, the expression is coined after another proverbial expression, such as *ahlām 'Ād*, "the

<sup>28</sup> Marzolph 1996, no. 51; see also Marzolph 1992, vol. 2, no. 1026.

<sup>29</sup> Marzolph 1992, vol. 2, no. 561; Fernando de la Granja, "Tras las reliquias de Roa," In *Estudios sobre el Siglo de Oro: Homenaje a Francisco Ynduráin* (Madrid: Editora Nacional 1984), pp. 253-264; Georges Vajda, "Le Clou réservé dans la maison vendue: De Guḥā à Rabbi Jacob Joseph de Polonnoy," in *Mélanges Georges Vajda*, ed. by G. E. Weil (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg 1982), pp. 701-711. The related story is widely documented; for the Arabic tradition see Hasan El-Shamy, *Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification*, vol. 1 (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1995), K 182.1; id., *Types of the Folktales in the Arab World: A Demographically Oriented Tale-Type Index*, (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 2004), 1615AŞ; for Jewish tradition see Heda Jason, "Types of Jewish Oriental Tales," In *Fabula 7* (1965), pp. 115-223 and ead., *Folktales of the Jews of Iraq: Tale-Types and Genres*, Or Yehuda: Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center 1988, 1542 \*C; for Romanian tradition see Sabina Cornelia Stroescu, *La Typologie bibliographique des facéties roumaines*, vol. 1 (Bucarest: Éditions de l'Académie de la République Socialiste de Roumanie 1969), no. 3017 and Margaret Read MacDonald, *The Storyteller's Sourcebook* (Detroit: Neal-Schuman 1982), K 182.3\*.

dreams of the ‘Ād,” a people who appear to have been as notorious for their tremendous dreams<sup>30</sup> as the tribe of ‘Udhra were for their passionate and self-sacrificing love.<sup>31</sup> If ever the expression *ahlām Juḥā* was popular at all, it might have been during the period and within the region of the Madrid manuscript’s compilation.

The tale from which the barber’s quotation derives is, at any rate, much older. Its roots go back as far as the Greek collection of jokes *Philogelos*<sup>32</sup> and has been popular in Arabic literature ever since its mention in Ibn Qutayba’s (d. 276/889) ‘*Uyūn al-akhbār*.<sup>33</sup> While the classical sources mention an anonymous protagonist, the tale is also present within the modern Arabic repertoire of tales on Juḥā, to which it appears to have been introduced by way of the adapted pre-modern Ottoman collections of anecdotes on Nasreddin.<sup>34</sup> While the dreamer in the Greek *Philogelos* dreams of selling piglets and the early Arabic versions have him offer sheep for sale, it is quite telling to see that the *Arabian Nights* version has adapted the items offered to “jewels and precious minerals” (*al-jawāhir wa-’l-ma‘ādin*). In accordance with the offered items, the amounts of money mentioned vary between a modest eight dirhams per sheep and a few thousand dinars for the jewels. Considering the context in which the tale is quoted in the *Arabian Nights*, it seems as if the narrator has mentioned the more precious items in an attempt to visualize the tale for the courtly surrounding of his listener, the “Commander of the Faithful.”

By way of conclusion on Juḥā’s role in the *Arabian Nights*, we now return to MacDonald’s initially quoted statement. The simple fact that tales about Juḥā have been known in Arabic literature for a long period does not have any relevance for their inclusion in the *Arabian Nights*. Even though humor is an essential element in the *Arabian Nights*,<sup>35</sup> patently jocular anecdotes constitute a minority; those that have been integrated into the later

<sup>30</sup> Abū Maṣṣūr ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad al-Thā‘ālībī (d. 429/1038), *Thimār al-qulūb fī ’l-muḍāf wa-’l-mansūb*, ed. by Muḥammad Abū ’l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif 1985), p. 79, no. 109.

<sup>31</sup> See Stefan Leder, “The ‘Udhri Narrative in Arabic Literature,” In *Martyrdom in Literature: Vivions of Death and Meaningful Suffering in Europe and the Middle East from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. by Friederike Pannewick (Wiesbaden: Reichert 2004), 163-187.

<sup>32</sup> *The Philogelos or Laughter-Lover*, translated with an Introduction and Commentary by Barry Baldwin (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben 1983), p. 24, no. 124; Ulrich Marzolph, “Philogelos arabikos: Zum Nachleben der antiken Witzesammlung in der mittelalterlichen arabischen Literatur,” in *Der Islam* 64,2 (1987), pp. 185-230, at pp. 212 f., no. 124.

<sup>33</sup> Marzolph 1992, vol. 2, no. 162.

<sup>34</sup> Günay Kut, “Nasreddin Hoca Hikāyeleri yazmalarının kolları üzerine bir deneme,” In *IV. Milletlerarası Türk Halk Kültürü Kongresi Bildirileri, Halk Edebiyatı* (Ankara 1992), pp. 147-200, at p. 160, no. 23; Wesselski 1911, no. 5.

<sup>35</sup> See Oskar Rescher, “Studien über den Inhalt von 1001 Nacht,” in *Der Islam* 9 (1919), pp. 1-94, at 82-87.

“standard” versions in Arabic either relate to the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd<sup>36</sup> and his court or to anonymous characters. Besides the case of Juḥā in the Madrid manuscript, not one of the popular fools and tricksters of classical Arabic literature, such as Ash‘ab, Buhlūl, Muzabbid, or Habannaqa<sup>37</sup> play a prominent role as the protagonist of a story in an Arabic manuscript or edition of the *Arabian Nights*. In fact, the only prominent mention of such a character in the *Arabian Nights* is the chapter on Buhlūl the Jester in *The Diwan of Easy Jest and Laughing Wisdom*, once more added from extraneous material to the Mardrus edition.<sup>38</sup> The closest one ever comes to a corpus of jocular tales in a manuscript of the *Arabian Nights* is the small conglomerate of tales on stupid teachers included in the story of “The Night-adventure of Sultan Muhammad of Cairo” in the Wortley-Montague manuscript.<sup>39</sup> Notably, this manuscript is notorious for its high percentage of jocular, sexually aggressive, and otherwise popular tales not contained in other manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights*. Juḥā does not figure prominently in the *Arabian Nights*, if at all, and there is good reason why his mention in the Madrid manuscript remains a singular phenomenon.

<sup>36</sup> See Mia I. Gerhardt, *The Art of Story-telling: A Literary Study of the Thousand and One Nights* (Leiden: Brill 1963), pp. 419-470 (the “Hārūn cycle”); Ulrich Marzolph, “Hārūn ar-Rašīd,” in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, vol. 6 (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter 1990), cols. 534-537.

<sup>37</sup> On these and other related characters see Marzolph 1992.

<sup>38</sup> See Chauvin 1892-1922, vol. 7, pp. 126-127, no. 393<sup>bis</sup> A-E. Chauvin points out parallels to four of the five mentioned anecdotes in either Barthélemy d’Herbelot’s *Bibliothèque orientale* (Paris, 1697) or the volume *Anecdotes arabes et musulmans* (Paris, 1772) published by François Pétis de la Croix; see also Ulrich Marzolph, *Der weise Narr Buhlūl* (Wiesbaden: Steiner 1983), nos. 63, 77, 93, 114, 115.

<sup>39</sup> *Arabian Nights With Introduction & Explanatory Notes by Richard F. Burton*. Reprint of the edition (Benares [i.e. London]: Kamashastra Society 1885, Beirut: Khayat 1966), vol. 14, supplement 4, pp. 95-102; *Neue Erzählungen aus den Tausendenein Nächten: Die in anderen Versionen von “1001 Nacht” nicht enthaltenen Geschichten der Wortley-Montague-Handschrift der Oxforder Bodleian Library*, Aus dem arabischen Urtext vollständig übertragen und erläutert von Felix Tauer (Frankfurt am Main, Leipzig: Insel 1995), pp. 84-88.