

6 The Enigma of Turandot in Nizāmī's *Pentad*. Azāda and Bahrām between Esther and Sindbād

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Sequence

The earliest extant Persian Bahrām-romance is related in Firdawsī's *Shāh Nāma* (ca. 1000 AD), who constructs the plot with a prologue followed by two distinct parts. The prologue consists in a report of the reign of the Sasanian king Yazdigird I, father and predecessor of Bahrām V (r. 421-439 AD). The latter, surnamed Gūr (گور 'The Onager / The Tomb'), is the royal huntsman protagonist of the romance. An intriguing maiden of his retinue challenges the sovereign prince to show off his marksmanship, a distinctive prowess at the hunt. She is "the charming (دلارام *dilārām*)" harpist, a "Roman (رومی *rūmī*)" slave girl called Azāda, a name that is tantamount in Latin to *Liberta*: "The Free Slave Girl". This main story constitutes the framework of the Bahrām-romance. It recalls the ancient topic of the ritual challenge to a cynegetic performance, confronting king and slave, man and beast, power and nature. A variant of this story is given by Nizāmī in the *Haft Paykar*, who calls the maiden Fitna.¹

The crucial point of the challenge as it is recounted by Firdawsī, by Nizāmī and also by Amīr Khusraw, recalls a passage from *De Vita Caesarum* "On the Caesars' Life" by the Latin historian Suetonius (ca. 69-121 AD). It represents the Roman emperor Domitian (r. 81-96 AD) hunting on the Alban mounts close to Rome:

Armorum nullo sagittarum vel praecipuo studio tenebatur. Centenas varii generis faeras saepe in Albano secessu conficientem spectare plerique atque etiam ex industria ita quarundam capita figentem, ut duobus ictibus quasi cornua efficeret. Nonnumquam in pueri procul stantis praebentisque pro scopo dispansam dexteræ manus palmam sagittas tanta arte derexit, ut omnes per intervalla digitorum innocue evaderent.

He took no interest in arms, but was particularly devoted to archery. Many have more than once seen him slay a hundred wild

beasts of different kinds on his Alban estate, and purposefully kill some of them with two successive shots in such a way that the arrows seemed to be horns. Sometimes he would have a slave at a distance holding out as mark the palm of his right hand, with the fingers spread; then he would direct his arrows with such accuracy that they passed harmlessly between the fingers.²

Following this episode, Firdawsī constructs the Bahrām-romance in two distinct parts: a) the king huntsman and knight (سوار *suwwār*) explores the Persian countryside; b) the king engages in international affairs. This latter is a continuation of the theme on the ancient rivalry between the countries that dominated the world, which was represented as a quadripartite space: the four empires of China, India, Persia and Rome (روم *Rūm*), with its new capital, Constantinople.

About half of the verses of part a) develop a narrative sequence, a continuous series of fourteen tales in which the narrator paints the protagonist Bahrām as the knight-errant. The character of each tale (داستان *dāstān*) represents a different category of the realm's subjects and its respective trade: Lambak the water-carrier, Abraham the Jew, Mihrbandād the old *dihqān*, Kabrūy the greengrocer, the boy-shoemaker, Rūzbih the *mūbad*-constructor (story of the destroyed and rebuilt village), the miller-father who manages his four glamorous daughters, Mushknāz, Mushkanak, Nāzyāb and Sūsanak. This is the seventh tale. But, if we take into account the story of Azāda related in the prologue, or framework, the tale of the miller's daughters actually takes eighth place. In the successive development of the story, Bahrām represents the legitimate royal heir, as he is the discoverer of mythical king Jamshīd's hidden treasure. A merchant represents the host and the gardener's wife plays the role of the hostess. Following on this episode, the *dihqān* Būrzīn grants Bahrām the hands of his three daughters, Māhāfarīd the poetess, Farānak the harpist, Shambalīd the dancer. Then another harpist, Arizū, daughter of Māhyār the jeweller, is also given in marriage to Bahrām. The story of Farshīdvar the landlord and Dilāfrūz the little peasant, concludes this series of narratives.³

Altogether, Bahrām, the knight, resembles an obstinate wandering huntsman who at night is in search of comfortable hospitality and nice maidens, preferably sisters and artists, whom he marries in order to cheer up the royal harem. "The Nights of the Knight" seems a suitable title to the narrative sequence that constitutes the first half of Firdawsī's Bahrām-romance.

In total, Bahrām marries Seven Sisters, plus Arizū and, when abroad (part b), Sapīnūd the daughter of Shangul the emperor of India. The figure seven (which will be so paramount in Nizāmī's Bahrām-romance) reappears at the end of the second part of Firdawsī's romance, when Shangul visits the court of Bahrām together with the Seven Kings. They reign in Kabul, Sind, Jogyan, Sandal, Jandal, Kashmir and Multan, a chain-belt

between India and Persia both by land and by sea. In Dīnawarī's (d. ca. 895 AD) and Gardīzī's (d. 1050 AD) chronicles, the figure seven is strictly associated to Bahrām's deeds. King Bahrām organizes an army-corps of 'seven thousand brave men', then orders to kill 'seven thousand bulls and he carried with himself their skins and seven thousand one-year-old colts.'⁴ Note also this other occurrence of the figure seven in Gardīzī:

*Bahram Gur was a polyglot. He used to speak [1] Pahlavi when playing polo, [2] Turkish on the battle-field, [3] Dari in public audience, [4] Persian with priests and scientists, [5] Heratian (hrīv) with women, [6] Nabatean when he was on ship and [7] Arabic when he became angry.*⁵

From this structural map of Firdawsī's Bahrām-romance, we may argue that the scanty information concerning the historical deeds of King Bahrām-i Gūr required the insertion of an organic series of tales so that the basic plot assumed the substantial proportions of a romance. Thus, narrative materials drawn from a different *corpus* were included, setting up the Bahrām-romance as a composite work, a two-fold structure of which later authors remained aware.

Order

Nizāmī of Ganja displays in his great narrative *Pentalogy* (*Khamsa*) five kinds of poetical books that form a coherent series with a thread of historical perspective coordinating the items. The *Pentalogy*'s time process is retroactive, moving 1) from the Islamic tenet (*Makhzan al-Asrār*) to the pre-Islamic epoch, both of the Persian (*Khusraw u Shīrīn*) and of the Arabic (*Laylī u Majnūn*) erotic-dramatic sphere; 2) from the age of Sasanian maturity (*Haft Paykar*) to the fall of the ancient Persian empire and the establishment of a new strategic and philosophical world order (*Iskandar Nāma*, the Alexander-romance).

Nizāmī's Bahrām-romance, the *Haft Paykar* "The Seven Figures" (593/1197) is the fourth book of his *Pentalogy*. The story of Bahrām Gūr develops in the shape of a prologue and an epilogue framing the main part of the romance, the Royal Seven-day Feast, which is presented as the wedding of the king with his seven brides-cum-instructive-narrators. These beautiful damsels originate from 1) Persia, 2) China, 3) (empire of) Rome, 4) Maghreb, 5) India, 6) Khorasmia, 7) Sclavonia (*Saqlāb*). Indeed, Bahrām had ordered that his messengers travel abroad, demand and obtain these wise princely virgins in marriage, that they may give universal character and prestige to his court, according to the idea of the 'Seven Climes'. The damsels' endowments are 'The Seven Tales' and 'The Seven Bodies' they represent, as well as the seven principal members, 'namely, the head,

breast, belly, hands and feet; or the head, hands, sides and feet.’⁶ It is remarkable that the title itself of this seven-fold poem, *Haft Paykar*, can be translated in seven possible ways: *Seven Bodies*, *Seven Members*, *Seven Effigies*, *Seven Tales*, *Seven Climes*, *Seven Planets*, or *Seven Heavens*. The nature itself seems ‘to display its preference for the number seven’ (though it appears there are six, not seven, colours in the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet, while ‘the number six is, perhaps, a perfect number.’).⁷

There are four world empires (China, India, Persia and Rome), as Firdawsī reports in his *Bahrām-romance*. But Nizāmī opens up new international horizons for the King’s benefit by adding Khorasmia (neighbouring Turkistan), connected to Sclavonia (including Russia) and, finally, counting also the Maghreb, ([North] Africa, which corresponds more or less to Andalus, neighbour both eastwards and westwards to the domain of Rome – the *Iqlīm al-Rūm* ‘Rome’s Clime’ on Arabic and Persian mediaeval globes.)

Nizāmī’s seven-day narrative series, which springs from a set of different stories, presents the wedding feast held in the magnificent royal palace. During her wedding night, each bride educates the silent king with an evocative tale, for the benefit of this sole listener. The Seven Brides have become the Seven Queens of Persia and the hierarchy of their respective pavilions, cupolas, colours, symbols, planets, days-nights and tales now follows a well-defined political order: 1) India, 2) Rome, 3) Khorasmia, 4) Sclavonia, 5) Maghreb, 6) China and 7) Persia. Thus the four empires: Indian, Roman, Chinese and Persian, are set at the four corners, Khorasmia and Maghreb are situated inwards and Sclavonia fills the centre. This is a perfect narrative mapping, a dramatic scenery reproducing important routes of the Silk and Book Road. The journey there and back agrees with the following geographical pattern:

1 INDIA	↔		CHINA 6
< The Sea >	↘		↙
↓		Khorasmia 3	
< The Sea >		Sclavonia 4	↓
		↗	
	Maghreb 5		
	↗		↖
2 ROME	↔		PERSIA 7

The story narrated to Bahrām ('Mars' in Persian) by his Slavonian bride, daughter of the King of the Fourth Clime, in her 'Red Cupola' on Tuesday (Latin *dies Martis*), 'the navel of the week (ناف هفته *nāf-i haftā*)', represents the meeting-place, the cross-road on the map and the kernel in the shell of the poem. The theme of this story, which became the legend of Turandot in modern times, is that of the secluded virgin, 'The Maiden of the Castle' (بانوی حصاری *bānū-yi hisārī*). She is the royal princess, a nameless, widely-read painter of the workshop of Chin (نقاش کارخانه چین *naqqāsh-i kārkhāna-yi Chīn*). Her self-portrait is charming like the Moon Figure (پیکار ماه *paykār-māh*). Depicted on the writing black silk (سواد پرند *sawād-parand*), it was both the token of the city of Rus 'as beautiful as a bride' and also a strong talisman (طلسم *tilism*) protecting the castle perilously built on the top of the realm's mountain. There, the maiden challenges the princes who seek her in marriage as pretenders to the royal throne of her father, to perform four difficult tasks. As each competitor is defeated, he pays the blood price and his head is exposed as a trophy at the gate of the powerful city. At long last a nameless but gifted royal prince overcomes the four tasks, – the fourth of which consists in a riddle about the preliminary ritual exchange of symbolic gifts between the maiden and her aspirant, providing evidence of fitness for the nuptial pact. He thus wins the steadfast lunar maiden. As the conqueror of her castle, the hero becomes the realm's new Red-clothed King (ملک سرخ جامه *malik-i surkh-jāma*). In European term, we would compare him to the reigning Mars who meets Venus, his spouse.

As a wedding gift, the hero presents the maiden, *ex officio* guardian and transmitter of the royal legitimacy, with a small blue-eyed shell (مهره ازرق *muhra-yi azraq*). This is the precious countermark the Maiden of the Castle has long been waiting for. She, now a sweet loving bride, unfolds the sense of the emblematic enigma and concludes:

مهره مهر او به سینه من مهر گنج است بر خزینه من
(HP29,284)⁸

*His shell for the love of my heart/ is the seal of the treasury on my lap.*⁹

In fact, the enigma is not that bewildering. As a ritual procedure, in order to approach the nuptial investiture, as a last challenge, he must be able to give the right answer to the following synthesising riddle: 'How can 2 pearls (لولو *lu'lu*) and 3 related jewels (جواهر *jawāhir*), hiding 4 mysteries (رمز *ramz*), equal 1+1 gems (گوهر *gawhar*), equalling 5 secrets (راز *rāz*) and 1 seal (مهر *muh*) to 1 treasure (گنج *ganj*)?' This question is easy to solve if we use a little square board on which 'a pentad (خمسه *khamṣa*)' takes shape simultaneously. It appears the key of the bridal enigma.

Elsewhere, Nizāmī, a grand master of various arts, refers symmetrically to the ‘box (خزینه *khazīna*)’ enclosing ‘the five treasures (پنج گنج *panj ganj*)’, his *Pentology* in verse (also called ‘pearl’ in Persian poetry), on the shelves of his own library:

1		2
	5	
3		4

①	②
	⑤
③	④

Makhzan al-Asrār ① *Khusraw u Shīrīn* ② *Laylī u Majnūn* ③ *Haft Paykar* ④ *Iskandar Nāma* ⑤

As regards the fourth bridal tale of the *Haft Paykar*, Nizāmī might have gathered information about the Rūs people in the ‘*Ajā’ib-Nāma* (The Mirabilia), a narrative Persian cosmography by Muhammad (or Najib) Hamadānī (d. ca. 1160-1170 AD). This text relates how the Rūs women wear a golden or wooden jewel-case on their breast, as well as many golden necklaces, gifts from their wooers. For these women, the greatest gem is ‘the green shell (مهره سبز *muhra-yi sabz*)’. This resembles (save for the authorial choice of colour) the *muhra-yi azraq* mentioned by Nizāmī.¹⁰

Nizāmī also mentions that the Maiden of the Castle of the Rūs realm is an expert painter of the Chinese school. Her self-portrait was exactly like a Moon Figure depicted on black silk. This recalls Mānī’s outstanding painting gift and school. It is interesting in this context to mention a remains of a Manichaean painting on silk from the archaeological site of Kocho (Chinese *Gao-ch’ang*), the ancient royal Uighur capital. It represents the Portrait of ‘The Deity of Moon’, the Maiden of Light for the community of *Electi* and *Auditores*. The figure of light ‘in Uighur texts is invoked simply as “Moon God” (*ai tāngri*)’.¹¹

The theme of the wedding enigma and other elements of Nizāmī’s fourth bridal tale are already present in two older and influential narrative texts. The first is the initial part of *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* (ca. third c. AD). This Latin novel influenced the subsequent European literatures, for instance the *Gesta Romanorum* and Shakespeare’s *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1608 AD). The second is the *Kathasaritsagara*, the ‘Ocean’ of Sanskrit stories by Somadeva (ca. 1063-1081 AD).¹² In book V, 24, we find the story of the Golden City and of Kanakarekhā, the daughter of King Parapakārin. In book XII, 72, we find the story of Udayavatī, the daughter of King Udayatunga.

The story of the fair royal princess isolated on a mountain-top or secluded in a castle is a topos. Its origins pertain to the remote royal/bridal rite involving the succession to the throne, which is also at the core of ancient Latium, and consisted in a competition among the pretenders accompanied by the sacrifice of the losers. Later the motif reappears in typical stories of Georgian, Mingrelian, German lore. In Russian folk-tales, the

decisive task entails the solution of an enigma. In Christian variants, the fair maiden stands like a saint isolated on a column.¹³ Shakespeare relates another variant in *The Merchant of Venice* (1597): the story of the rich Lady of Belmont, Portia 'fairer than word / Of wondrous virtues' (act I, sc.1), whose suitors are faced with the enigmatic task of choosing one of her three caskets: the Prince of Morocco, whose scimitar 'slew the Sophy and a Persian prince' (act II, sc. I), the Prince of Aragon, who reads the inscription 'The fire seven times tried this' (act II, sc. IX) and Bassiano, the friend of Antonio the merchant of Venice, who correctly chooses the leaden casket containing 'Fair Portia's counterfeit' (act III, sc. II), the portrait of the Maiden of Belmont, her lovely countermark.¹⁴

The name Turandot, by which the Princess is known in European modern literary developments, originates in d'Herbelot's posthumous *Bibliothèque Orientale* prefaced by Galland. After a first Tourandokht, Queen of Persia and daughter of Khosrou Perviz, d'Herbelot introduces a second Tourandokht:

*C'est le nom de la fille de Hassan Ben Sahal, le plus riche Seigneur de son temps, qui fut mariée au Khalife AlMamon. Voyez la magnificence des Nôces de cette Princesse dans le Titre de Hassan Ben Sahal. Cette Princesse était fort sçavante, & douée d'un très bel esprit... Hassan, Fils de Sahal, ou de Sohail, comme quelques-uns l'appellent, fut gouverneur de l'Iraq Babylonienne, ou de la Caldée pour le Khalife AlMamon. Il était frère de Fadhel Ben Sohal Vizir & favory de ce Khalife qui épousa la fille de Hassan nommée Touran-Dokht. Le Tarikh Al Abbas, ou l'histoire des Abbasides, raconte fort au long la magnificence de ces nôces. [...] Le Prince la trouva assise sur un trône la tête chargée de mil perles [...] Le Khalife voulut que cette riche coeiffure lui fût assignée pour son doüarie. [...] L'on attribue ordinairement à cet Hassan Ben Sahal ou Sohail que l'on dit avoir été le Vizir d'AlMamon, la traduction du livre Persien intitulé Giavidân Khirde, en Arabe... La Sagesse de tous les tem[p]s. C'est un livre de Philosophie morale composé par Huschenk ancien Roy de Perse, lequel a été traduit plusieurs fois, & en plusieurs langues. Entre autres versions celle de Hassan fils de Sohail Vizir d'AlMamon septième Khalife de la race Abbasides est célèbre: il la fit en langue Arabique sur l'ancien texte Persien; & elle a depuis été mise en Turc, dans un stile très-élégant, par un Auteur qui l'a intitulée Anvâr Sohaili, c'est-à-dire, les lumières de Soheil, en faisant allusion du nom de ce Vizir à l'étoile de Canopus, que les Arabes appellent Sohail.*¹⁵

As we can see from this text, the figure of Tourandokht, the learned and sagacious Princess who became a prosperous bride of al-Ma'mun (813-833),

the seventh Abbasid Caliph, at a royal wedding feast at the powerful court of Baghdad, stands within the *Alf Layla wa Layla* ambit. Indeed, the story of the slave Tawaddud in this latter book presents some traits comparable to Nizāmī's fourth bridal tale. Furthermore, the *Javidan-khirad* "Sophia Perennis" is the Pahlavi collection of ancient Persian, Indian, Greek and Arabic moral precepts, later translated into Arabic by the Persian philosopher and historian Miskawayh (ca. 986-992 AD). The collection includes the *Kébētos Thēbaïou Pínax* (*Cebetis Tabula*, ca. first c. AD). This famous story of an allegorical Picture containing 'The Enigma of Cebes (*Qabis*)' is again presented by Miskawayh in his *Adab al-'Arab wa al-Furs* "The Arabian and Persian Cultures". It becomes a source for the Persian eschatological poem *Sayr al-'ibad ilà al-ma'ad* by Sanā'ī of Ghazna (ca. 1119-1123 AD).¹⁶ As to the *Anvār-i Suhaylī*, "The Lights of Canopus", it is a well-known Persian recasting of the Kalīla and Dimna fables, a label for the Sanskrit and subsequent Eurasian forms of "Bidpay's Fables".¹⁷ This great book, together with other ones, such as "The Precepts of Ancient Philosophers", the romances of Sindbad, Alexander, Barlaam and Josaphat, and the lost *Hazār Afsāna*, reshaped as "Thousand and One Nights", constituted the narrative bulk of what could be termed the International Library of the Mediaeval World.¹⁸

As an answer to *Les Mille et Une Nuits*, *Contes Arabes* translated by Galland (Paris 1704-1717), Pétis de la Croix and Lesage published *Les Mille et Un Jours*, *Contes Persans* (Paris 1710-1712), where Turandotte becomes the Princess of China in a Persian-Turkish variant of Nizāmī's bridal story. In this new garb, the Maiden of the Castle steps on the international scene of literature, theatre, music. Her fame spreads more particularly through *Turandot* or *Turandotte*, the 'Chinese fable', a tragic-comedy versified by Gozzi (Venice, Teatro S. Samuele, 1762) and she is also adopted by Schiller and Goethe (Weimar, Hoftheater, 1802).¹⁹ Several later operas adapted the Gozzi-Schiller's play.²⁰

Let's turn back to the *Haft Paykar*, where on the eighth day, Bahrām's one-week honeymoon comes to an end. During this period, a despot minister, Rāst-Rawshān, has mistreated the country and is now denounced by seven injured witnesses. Bahrām condemns the guilty minister to the gallows. Following on this act, the King disappears. This episode of conspiracy and consequent trial pertains to a subsidiary theme, which receives more conspicuous developments in other parallel texts (see par. 3 and 5 below).

When we include the leading-story of King Bahrām-i Gūr, we obtain eight tales instead of the seven figurative tales narrated by the royal spouses. In the same manner, Nizāmī tells of seven co-protagonists and their seven portraits, plus one: this eighth portrait was to be seen in 'the private room' of Khavarnaq. Bahrām-i Gūr himself had been portrayed 'in the middle (*dar miyān*)' of the pictorial scene representing the seven

portraits of the king's future spouses (HP13). From this point of view the title *Haft Paykar* "The Seven Portraits" refers to this bridal gallery of the romance and Nizāmī involves without emphasis, almost secretly, the number eight (the octad): by joining the scene of the seven wedding tales, the central narrative sequence, to the story of King Bahrām, the part of the romance based on historical grounds.

We first set off in search of previous books presenting a plan, or a core of structural features, similar to those of Nizāmī's Bahrām-romance. We will now continue examining several clues and, more particularly, we will examine elements springing from two dissimilar sources: the *Book of Esther* and the *Sindbād-romance*.

Feast

An ancient text yielding an interesting comparison with the *Haft Paykar* is the *Book of Esther*, named after the beautiful Jewess who becomes spouse to the Achaemenid Ahasuerus. This biblical book (fourth or second c. BC) evokes the Persian empire through an outstanding theme, the royal wedding feast.²¹ It also relates the institution of the Purim, the Jewish festival. Olmstead identifies Ahasuerus with the Achaemenid King Artaxerxes II Memnon (r. 404-359 BC). It is his court then, which the book of Esther describes in detail, also mentioning the ancient Persian term *dat* 'the law' in the Hebrew form *dath*.²² *Esther* is placed as the fifth book, the most prominent scroll (*megillā*) of the pentalogy that, according to the third division (*Ketūbhīm* 'The Writings') of the Hebrew canon, is called 'The Five Scrolls (*ḏāmeš Megillōt*)'.²³ *Esther* contains a source suitable for setting the story-telling to a framework, like the prologue of *Thousand and One Nights*.²⁴ This Arabic book transmits a separate version of the Bahrām-romance, while *Esther* and *Haft Paykar* are set within a pentalogy and bear similarities.²⁵

Let's point out the narrative traits relating the framework of Nizāmī's Bahrām-romance and its bridal core to the *Book of Esther*. The pertinent data is self-evident. The vicissitudes of Ahasuerus, who reigned over all the lands and the isles of the sea, 'are described in the books of the Medes and of the Persians' (*Esther* 10.1-2). Seven eunuchs attend to the king's personal service, while seven Median and Persian princely leaders are his special advisors on state matters (*E.* 1.10-14).²⁶ Ahasuerus orders a convivial 'seven-day feast' in the paradise-like garden of his royal palace at Susa, which contains sky-blue pavilions (*E.* 1.5-6). The king repudiates the very beautiful queen Vashti, as she demurely refuses to obey his order to show herself to the male guests at the banquet on the seventh day (*E.* 1.10-20). As the question of replacement arises, the court counsellors propose to 'search for beautiful young virgins in all the provinces' in order to install them in the royal harem, so that the king may choose the new queen. The

royal order is sent out in all languages and scripts of the provinces of the empire (*E.* 1.21-22; 2.2-4). Then seven very beautiful girls of the palatial dwelling-place are assigned to the king's service, each virgin entering his room in the evening and emerging in the morning (*E.* 2.9-14). In the seventh year of the reign of the king it is the turn of Esther (Hadassa), who then becomes his favourite spouse (*E.* 2.16). At night, King Ahasuerus, unable to sleep, orders that be read out to him instructive stories from 'the histories and the annals of the ancient times' (*E.* 6.1). Another element of the *Book of Esther* recalls the end of the *Haft Paykar*: the plot of the wicked Macedonian minister Haman and his punishment (*E.* 5-7; 12; 16.10) is analogous to the conspiracy and the punishment of Rāst-Rawshān, the tyrannous minister of King Bahrām.

It is possible that Nizāmī or his informers were aware of – at the very least had heard hints of – a compendium of the *Book of Esther*. Besides, Nizāmī pays particular attention to the convivial theme in the *Iqbāl Nāma*, (the second volume of his Alexander-romance), which is a broad variant of the Greek *Septem Sapientium Convivium*.

Trace

As already mentioned, Nizāmī also combines the Bahrām-romance with another Persian narrative text, an extended source that serves to structure the romance itself. A trace of this source is found in the "The Book of Sindbād" the philosopher. This work is famous as *Historia Septem Sapientium*, "The Seven Sages of Rome", or under other names in its European correlative variations. Several tales of Greek, Latin and Asiatic origins were included in this book and spread over the Eurasian continent.²⁷ Furthermore, the classical legend of Secundus 'the silent philosopher' affects the structure of the book, which is also connected to the mediaeval legend of the Latin poet Virgil.²⁸ The twin romances of Sindbād and of the Seven Sages are excellent examples of the mutual connections between the Eurasian narrative literatures since ancient times.²⁹ The direct communication links between the empires of Rome-Constantinople and of Persia throw light on the Latin references that are scattered and recognizable in Persian historical and narrative texts. Some Latin-Persian connections are also present in the mediaeval cosmographical texts concerning the topography and the legend of Rome.³⁰

According to the *Mujmal al-Tawārikh wa al-Qisas*, a remarkable Persian history and cosmography by an anonymous author (520/1126), the *Kitāb-i Sindbād* was an outstanding work among the 'seventy books' written during the Arsacid period (ca. 247 BC-225 AD), which might represent the now lost Parthian literary heritage. The anonymous historian quotes the *Surūr Nāma*, an archaic Persian text, recording a rare and interesting biographical note: Simnār (سمنار) the builder of the Castle of Khavarnaq (قصر

(خورنق) was the *rūmī* father of the sculptor Kītūs, to whom he evidently transferred the inheritance of his craft.³¹ In the *Haft Paykar*, Simnār is presented as 'a famous' artist from 'the land of Rome (کشور روم)' who was first of all a sculptor: 'a skilled man who makes the stone soft like the wax (زیرکی کو سنگ سازد موم)' (HP9,7). The name Simnār, related as Sinimmār in Arabic mediaeval texts, is of foreign origin, as is Kītūs, and the etymology of the word *khavarnaq* also deserves our attention.³²

It seems likely that the name Simnār/Sinimmār derives from the late Latin term *signārius* 'sculptor, statuary'.³³ For instance, a Latin obituary inscription found in Rome mentions a young artist called Maecius Aprilis Signarius, that is 'the Sculptor'.³⁴ As to Simnār's son, the name Kītūs doubtless reflects the Latin term *citus* 'swift' that exists also as the surname Citus.³⁵ At least eight ancient Latin inscriptions prove the popularity of the surname Citus for historical characters living in various provinces of the Roman Empire, above all in Africa.³⁶ Finally, it does not seem a rash conjecture to suggest that the word *khavarnaq* is linked to the classical Latin term *caverna* 'cavern, cave, cavity'. This term very often denotes 'the convex form' of a material thing, 'everything that is arch-shaped' and 'the interior part of a building'.³⁷ Indeed, in the *Haft Paykar*, Nizāmī specifies that the Khavarnaq palace (کوشک *kūshk*) built by Simnār has a 'round (گرد *gird*)' shape.³⁸

The Pahlavi version of the *Book of Sindbād* and its possible Arsacid version are lost. The archaic Persian versions of the Sindbād-romance by Rūdakī (before 940 AD), 'Amīd Abū'l Favāris Fanārūzī /Qanavāzī (ca. 950 AD) and Azraqī (before 1070 AD) are so dispersed that they also may be considered part of the world-library of absent manuscripts.³⁹ Thus, the Greek *Liber Syntipae* by Michail Andreopoulos (Mitylene, Cappadocia, ca. 1090 AD) constitutes the oldest surviving version of the *Book of Sindbād*. Andreopoulos states in his brief Prologue that his work is based on an anonymous lost Syriac book deriving from the one written by Musos the Persian.⁴⁰ This Persian author or translator, Musos (Mūsa), maybe of Christian affiliation as was his Syriac transmitter, must have been at work in the ninth-tenth c. AD.⁴¹ It is possible to identify him with Mūsa ibn 'Isa al-Kisrawī, the presumed translator of the *Book of Sindbad* from Pahlavi into Arabic (ca. ninth c. AD).⁴² This latter is also listed among the early collators and translators of the *Khwadāy-nāmag*, the lost Pahlavi 'Book of the Sovereign', already transmitted through the missing Arabic translation by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (first half of the eighth c. AD).⁴³

Trial

The pattern, the initial part and some typical traits of the *Liber Syntipae* are comparable to the framework and some narrative traits of *Haft Paykar*. A well-known passage by the Arabian historian and geographer Mas'ūdī

(d. 345/956) is worth mentioning here: under the reign of ‘Kurush?’ [Cyrus] King of India ‘vivait Syntipas (*Sindibad*), auteur du Livre des Sept vizirs, du Maître, du jeune esclave et de la femme du roi, c’est à dire du livre intitulé Kitab as-Sindibad.’⁴⁴

The name Cyrus, so authoritative but commonly lost in the Persians’ memory, reverberated widely in the Greek historical and literary tradition. Thus, King Cyrus appears also at the *incipit* of the *Liber Syntipae*. In fact, Syntipas was the foremost philosopher at his court, the master among the Seven Philosophers/Ministers, according to the text transmitted by Moses the Persian. Andreopoulos in his informative ‘Prologue’ presents the characters and the thread of the *Liber Syntipae*, that is ‘a philosophical narration concerning the Persian King Cyrus, his legitimate son, the prince’s master Syntipas, the seven court philosophers and one of the royal spouses, a wicked stepmother of the prince hatching a plot against him.’⁴⁵ As a result of this conspiracy the king harshly condemns the prince to death, but the seven wise philosophers or ministers delay the execution with a prospect of getting a fair process and the right sentence. At this point, the moral device of the seven-day narration of *exempla* is inserted. On each day of the week, each philosopher in turn tells a couple of instructive stories to the king. The stepmother, who accuses the prince, relates a contradictory tale to her husband the king, in order to refute the defence. The theme of the trial frames the narrative sequence of the romance, and the brief story of the prince is enlarged by the insertion of this series of tales.⁴⁶ In the *Liber Syntipae*, the trial is settled on the eighth day, when the prince is allowed to break his silence, becoming the ninth narrator, and Syntipas intervenes as the tenth and last narrator. Andreopoulos sums up at the *explicit* of the book: the tales by the philosophers, each one pertinent to a moral teaching, ‘are 14’; the tales by the concubine 6, the ones by the prince 6, plus 1 by Syntipas, so ‘in all 27 tales’ are reported.⁴⁷ Firdawsī’s Bahrām-romance also features a series of fourteen tales (see par. 1). This detail might be the trace of a link with the Sindbād-romance.

It is not necessary here to come back to the *Haft Paykar*, where the structural topic of the trial during which each of the seven injured witnesses tells his own brief story as a deed of indictment against the minister recalls an analogous trial of the minister who is sentenced in the *Book of Esther* (see par. 3). We shall focus on the initial part of the *Liber Syntipae* and on one of its tales that undoubtedly constitute two structural traits of the Bahrām-romance as well as of the *Haft Paykar*.

School

The narrative *incipit* of Andreopoulos’s book bears evidence of the connection between the Sindbād and Bahrām romances. The Greek text reads: ‘There was a King by the name of Cyrus who had seven spouses.’⁴⁸ This

simple line is promising: the story of the king and his seven brides is the narrative core of *Haft Paykar*. However, the *Liber Syntipae* diverges from this theme and introduces the brief story of the youth of the Crown Prince, Cyrus' son, in whom one easily recognizes the young Bahrām. In fact, Cyrus plays here the role of King Yazdigird I in the prologue of the Bahrām-romance. King Cyrus sends the prince "to a school, so that he can receive a full education about the whole knowledge" from his teacher, the philosopher Syntipas, "a great man of science" who is "also learned in medical art."⁴⁹ In the introductory part of *Haft Paykar* the master's role is played by Munzir, learned in astronomy, who teaches prince Bahrām three languages (Arabic, Persian and Greek), astronomy and finally, the art of the arms, fit for a knight (HP 10, 45). The prince's school is situated in Khavarnaq castle, which Simnār had just built as "a silver pavilion (سیمین رواقی *sīmīn riwāqī*)", chiefly white (سپید *sapīd*) and painted with "thousands of images, including astral ones."⁵⁰ Similarly, Syntipas, who as technician also plays the role of the architect and painter Simnār, builds for his pupil "a new and very large residence decorated in an artistic fashion and plastered in a shining white. Then he painted on the walls of the house all that could be a lesson for the young man." Syntipas explains the meaning of the paintings, where "he has included the Sun, the Moon, the planets and the stars" (HP 9, 15-7).⁵¹

The narrative topic evoked in the *Liber Syntipae* through the step-mother's tale on the third day of the trial relates to the introductory part of the Bahrām-romance. The *incipit* of this tale reads: "There was a king who had a son very fond of hunting." A counsellor takes the prince to a hunting party and the young man spurs his horse to chase an onager on his own (the wild ass, called *gōr* in the pre-existent Persian text). On the way, the prince meets a princess who had just fallen from her elephant and he offers her his mount. But this is "a deception," as the false princess traveller represents female deceit. It is also noteworthy that the *Book of Sindbād/Seven Sages*, as is the case with its connected literature, represents the paradigm of the misogynous novel. The princess guides the prince to "an inn," where two fellows are waiting for her. The prince, hearing their "uproar" – their quarrel about whose turn it is to share the guest-room – realizes that the princess and her fellows are "witches." Cautiously, he does not enter the inn but immediately turns back to his starting-point. There, the would-be princess appears again and, replaying what has just passed, again joins him on his horse. The prince invokes God to be saved from "this evil devil and his deceit": instantly, "the witch fell down, wallowing in the dust."⁵² This story constitutes an old version of the adventure of the prince huntsman and knight with his female fellow-traveller, who plays the role of Azāda ('Liberta' in Firdawsī's version) / Fitna ('Diversion', 'Sedition' in Nizāmī's version) / Dilāram ('The Charmer' in Amīr Khusraw's version which is inspired by Firdawsī). Thus, in

Andreopoulos's text some episodes of the story of Bahrām Gur are merged with the narrative sequence of the *Liber Syntipae*. This indicates the early literary connection between the romances of Bahrām and Sindbād.

Finally, an unusual item, a piece of Egyptian textile (seventh or eighth c. AD) has been added recently to the rich iconographical inventory of the adventure of Bahrām-i Gūr with Azāda. The only remaining medallion of this textile shows a knight archer with a young girl galloping on a horse. The girl seems to grasp an arrow and two strange figures appear in the scene.⁵³ In my interpretation, this arrow is a whip or a sickle, the girl is the princess/witch, her two fellow witches are represented as masks, one of them in the shape of a strange tree. I believe that this is a representation of the above-mentioned story of the *Liber Syntipae*. A variant of it can be found in the Pahlavi novel *Kār-nāmag ī Ardakhshīr ī Pābagān*, the story of the epoch-making struggle between Ardawān, the last Parthian King (r. ca. 215-225 AD.), and Ardakhshīr, the founder of the Sasanian kingdom. This short book contains in its first part various typical traits of the Bahrām-romance. Let us summarise this story which is similar to the Greek text of Syntipas. During a royal hunting party, Ardakhshīr spurs his horse in order to chase the onager. A slave girl (*kanīzag*) at Ardawān's service is Ardakhshīr's mistress and behaves like a spy, a female thief and 'a whore'. Treacherous to her king, she elopes with Ardakhshīr, on their respective horses towards 'the road of Pars'. At a crossroad, Ardakhshīr stops outside a village, a crucial place. Two women diviners who were sitting there predict a brilliant future to the next king. Ardakhshīr then continues on his way. The Ardakhshīr-romance does not further mention the mistress, who has presumably disappeared into the village or was abandoned on the way.⁵⁴ However, this episode is similar to that of the prince huntsman's meeting-place with the princess/witch, the Diverter, who had fallen down from her elephant in the *Liber Syntipae*. We further notice evidence about the connection of this topic, as a passage of the *Testament of Ardakhshīr* reports that elephants were kept at court. The *Elucidation* of the text records: "elephant" refers to his ordering that highway-robbers and heretics be cast beneath an elephant's feet.⁵⁵ Diverters and highway-robbers probably deserved the same kind of treatment.

Response

Amīr Khusraw's *Hasht Bihisht* "The Eight Paradises" (Delhi, 701/1301) is the earliest and major Persian variation to the *Haft Paykar*. This fifth book of his narrative *Pentalogy* is a keen poetical answer to Nizāmī's almost century-old work. It is thanks to its "answer" by the poet of Delhi that Nizāmī's *Pentalogy* became a canonical work for both the Persian narrative poetry and the art of the book. Amīr Khusraw's artistic skill is appreciated in the classical survey of the Persian poets that the Herat poet Jāmī places

in 1487 in the seventh garden of his *Bahāristān* (in which eight gardens represent eight chapters). Jāmī, who made of his own pentalogy into an heptalogy (*Haft Awrang*), states about Amīr Khusraw that “no-one answered Nizāmī’s *Pentalogy* better than he did.”⁵⁶ According to the plan of *Hasht Bihisht* the tales are eight in all, including one in the prologue, whose narrator is the author himself. He cuts down the legend of Bahrām, retains the prologue, with his delicate adventure with Dilāram, culminating with the construction of the paradisiacal palace (first tale). He also retains the epilogue that recalls the disappearance of the king huntsman. The nuptial feast, the core of *Hasht Bihisht* after the model of *Haft Paykar*, frames the narrative sequence of the Amīr Khusraw’s Bahrām-romance. During her wedding night, each new queen narrates an evocative tale to the silent king, the listener, whose mania for hunting had to be treated with a traditional psychotherapy, the story-telling. In the sixth paradise, the poet proposes a subtle rewriting of the first bridal tale of Nizāmī’s *Haft Paykar* and in the fifth paradise, he recounts the story of the fair Maiden secluded on top of a column/tower. It is a delightful variant of the tale that comparative scholarship classifies as *Inclusa* (‘Reclusa’, ‘Puteus’, too) and is found in almost all European versions of the book of the Seven Sages.⁵⁷ We have, then, further evidence that the fourth bridal story narrated in *Haft Paykar*, the legend of Turandot, is pertaining to the twin romances of *Sindbād/The Seven Sages*.

Besides Asiatic, Indian and old Greek sources, the narrative material selected by Amīr Khusraw for his *Hasht Bihisht* can be compared with Latin texts by authors like Suetonius (see par.1 above), Plautus (*Miles Gloriosus*), Vitruvius (*De Architectura*), even Saxo Grammaticus (*Historia Danica*) (ca. 1208-1218), as regards some traits of the legend of Hamlet.⁵⁸

Conclusions

The story of King Bahrām-i Gūr required the insertion of a series of tales for the book to assume fitting proportions for a romance. Firdawsī and early Persian historians associate the number seven to the character of this Sasanian King. This figure is significant for Nizāmī also who deals with the same romance in the *Haft Paykar*, the masterpiece of his *Pentalogy*. The poet of Ganja sets at the core of his romance the mysterious story of the Maiden of the Castle, a subtle painter of the workshop of China, that pertains to an ancient narrative topic appearing again as the legend of Turandokht, known as Turandot in Europe since the early eighteenth century. As he narrates the nuptial enigma proposed by the Maiden, Nizāmī also alludes to the structure of his poetical *Pentad*.

The seven-day long royal Feast, the subsequent plot of the wicked minister and his punishment depicted by Nizāmī constitute the core and the final process of the *Haft Paykar*. These motifs seem related to features found

in the *Book of Esther*, the convivial novel about the wedding of an ancient Persian King. Apparently, Nizāmī knew a compendium of *Esther*, a book which is also meaningfully placed in a definite pentalogy, the biblical “Five Scrolls”. A seven-day narration of stories and a trial also frame the romance of *Sindbād/The Seven Sages*, which is associated to the Bahrām-romance, as these books moved together, twinned like fellows active in neighbouring grounds of the mediaeval narrative world. The structural connection of the *Book of Sindbād/The Seven Sages* with the Bahrām-romance is proved by the outline and by several topics of the Greek *Liber Syntipae* by Andreopoulos, the earliest extant complete *Book of Sindbād*. The *Syntipae* is based on the Syriac translation of the work by a former author, Moses the Persian, whose historical identity remains uncertain. The text he transmitted and other comparative factors show that half of the pahlavi novel *Kār-nāmag i Ardakhshūr ī Pābagān* was based on a variant of the story labelled as the adventure of Bahrām with Azāda (Firdawsī) / Fitna (Nizāmī) / Dilāram (Amīr Khusraw), a cynegetic topic as old as its correlative Latin report by the historian Suetonius about the Roman emperor Domitian.

Amīr Khusraw of Delhi in his *Hasht Bihisht*, gave a beautiful response to *Haft Paykar*. The pattern and the narrative contents of *Hasht Bihisht*, including the typical story of the Maiden of the Castle (‘Reclusa’ in its European correlative texts), confirm that the *Sindbād*-romance was a core source of Nizāmī’s *Haft Paykar*. On the whole, he gave a splendid variation on the convivial scene of *Esther* and the framework of *Sindbād*.

Finally, several Latin texts and terms, like *signarius* ‘sculptor’ (becoming *Simnār*), appear connected to Persian mentions, particularly concerning the Bahrām-romance, through intermediary Greek, Syriac and Arabic books, or maybe in a direct manner, as shown by linguistic segments and literary findings about the contest between the empires of Rome and Persia in ancient times.

Notes

- 1 HP20. Early on, the visual arts have illustrated this story of Azāda or Fitna, together with Bahrām-i Gūr mounted on camel or horse: Bürgel (1967) 26-34. Pantke (1974) 133-42. Shreve Simpson (1985). Fontana (1986) 79-9, 103-20, plates I-XX.
- 2 Suetonius (1979) II/ 380-1: *Domitianus* XIX.2-5.
- 3 Firdawsi-Nafisi (1314) 2085-185, 111-1251; Azāda and Bahrām Gūr: 2085-7; Shangūl and the Seven Kings: 2250, 2401-4.
- 4 Dinawari (1371) 84-5.
- 5 Gardizi (1363) 77-8.
- 6 Steingass (1892) 1502, lemmas هفت حکایت = هفت اندام
- 7 Giora (1988) 171-8. Krotkoff (1984).
- 8 For the first *misra*, see Nizami-Ritter/Rypka (1934) 35,284.
- 9 Nizami-Barat-Sanjani(1373) 114-5, 3306, 3331, 3333. (*sīna* in fact denotes the *sinus*).

- 10 There are other similarities between this cosmography and Nizāmī's work: Hamadani (1375) also recounts 'the diversion (فتنه)' caused by the religions of Zaradusht and Mānī in ancient Persia. A further similarity is the mention that the Isle of Thyle is 'under the Northern Pole (زیر قطب شمالی): 121-2 (*fitna*), 229 (*Rūs*), 439 (*Tulya*). See also the article by Casari in this volume. As a character, Fitna represents 'the Diverter' in *Haft Paykar*. In the *Iskandar-Nāma* the 'Water of Life (آب زندگانی)' is found 'under the North Pole (زیر قطب شمال)'. Piemontese (2000a). Nizāmī recounts in his Alexander-romance the story of the skill of Mānī, the prodigious Chinese painter in the Persian historical and literary tradition (Piemontese (1995a). Raza (1997).
- 11 Klimkeit (1982) 7, 45-4, pl. XXV.
- 12 Somadeva (1928).
- 13 Frazer (1922) I, XIV.v. Propp (1949) II/57-62; IX/485-6. Di Nola (1978).
- 14 Shakespeare (1962) 225, 229, 233-4, 238-9.
- 15 d'Herbelot (1697) 399-400: 'Giavidan khird'; 436: 'Hassan, Fils de Sahal'; 895-896: 'Tourandokht'.
- 16 de Bruijn (1983) 39-41, 194-5.
- 17 de Blois (1990).
- 18 Piemontese (1999).
- 19 Maria de Bernardis (1932). Wesselski (1934). Wesselski (1937). Meier (1941). Rossi (1956).
- 20 For instance: a) *Turandot*, music by F. Danzi, Karlsruhe, Hoftheater, 1816; b) *Turanda*, name of the daughter of Cosroe King of Persia after d'Herbelot, libretto by A. Gazzoletti, music by A. Bazzini, performed in Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1867; c) *Turandot*, libretto in German and music by F. Busoni, dedicatee A. Toscanini, Zürich, Stadttheater, 1917; d) *Turandot*, libretto by G. Adami & R. Simoni, unfinished music by G. Puccini (1921-1924), posthumous performance in Milan, Teatro alla Scala, conductor A. Toscanini, 1926. In this latter work, an unfortunate but very handsome 'Principino di Persia' appears: he is given no chance to sing as he is promptly executed after a unique cry of 'Turandot!...' (act I). See Arcà (1983) 9. See also Chelkowski (1370).
- 21 Bible (1998) *Book of Esther* XVII, 793-812.
- 22 Olmstead (1959) 119-20, 171, 183, 395, 423). Ahasuerus is traditionally identified with Xerxes (r. 486-465 BC).
- 23 These comprise the books of 'Ruth', 'Canticles', 'Ecclesiastes (*Qohelet*)', 'Lamentations' and 'Esther'. In the biblical manuscript tradition, these five brief but important books have been grouped as a pentalogy at least since the thirteenth century. See Paton (1908) 1-2. Myers (1987) 353, 706. Prévost (1990). Lexicon (1995) columns 894-5; (1998), columns 65-6.
- 24 Cosquin (1909) 7-49, 161-97.
- 25 Piemontese (2000b).
- 26 The possibly original Persian names of the eunuchs are Abataza, Bigtha, Bizthā, Kharbōnā, Karkas, Zēthar, while the first eunuch is Mauman / Mehuman. The princes are called Admāthā, Karshna, Marsenā, Meres [: Mares], Shēthar, Tarshīsh, with the seventh prince called Mamuchan / Memukan. See Justi (1895) I, 5, 68, 69, 158, 170, 195, 203, 298, 322, 359 (Queen Washti), 385.
- 27 Historia (1912). Epstein (1967). Runte (1974). Campbell (1975). Brunner (1988).
- 28 Perry (1964). Comparetti (1896). Spargo (1934).
- 29 Comparetti (1882). Chauvin (1904). Perry (1960). Runte (1984). Belcher (1987).
- 30 Piemontese (2002).
- 31 Mujmal-Bahar (1318) 79, 93-4. Mujmal-Omidsalar (2001) ff. 30r, 34v.
- 32 Basset (1906).
- 33 Forcellini (1930) 361. Du Cange (1954) 480. Enciclopedia (1966) 288.
- 34 Inscriptiones (1882) 1289 n° 9896.

- 35 De-Vit (1868) II/296. Thesaurus (1906-12) c.1208-9.
- 36 Mommsen (1873) I/502 n° 3943, II/1092. Zangemeister (1871) 124 n° 1936. Wilmanns (1881) n° 136, 422, 3618, 4938, 9094, pp. 26, 61, 388, 494, 779. Cagnat (1891) 1458 n° 15028.
- 37 Thesaurus (1906) III, c. 644-6.
- 38 HP10,11. Vesel (1995).
- 39 Safa (1336) 1001. Rudaki (1961) 481-4. Zahiri (1975) 280-3. de Fouchécour (1986) 420-5.
- 40 Liber Syntipae (1912) 3.
- 41 Andreopoulos (1993) 10 and 42.
- 42 Tafazzoli (1376) 299-300.
- 43 Safa (1333) 68-70.
- 44 Mas'udi-Barbier de Maynard (1962) I/68.
- 45 Liber Syntipae (1912) 3.
- 46 The second tale told by the philosopher speaking on the first day bears the trace of the theme that is developed as a plan for the *Tūī-Nāma*, Nakhshabi (1330).
- 47 Liber Syntipae (1912) 129-30.
- 48 Liber Syntipae (1912) 3.
- 49 Liber Syntipae (1912) 4.
- 50 See Vesel's article in this volume.
- 51 Liber Syntipae (1912) 5 and 119. A variant of this story is found in Nakhshabi-Mujtaba'i (1372) 71-84, whose tale (*dāstān*) narrated on the eighth night represents a *textus brevior* of the "Book of Sindbad" itself.
- 52 Liber Syntipae (1912) 24-7.
- 53 Wien, Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Inv. N° T 417. Fontana (2000) 20 and 31, fig. 8), quoting Egger (1967) pl. 53 and Hagedorn (1992) 188, fig. 54. Also Waetzoldt (1964) 34, n° 120, Abb. 74.
- 54 Pagliaro (1927) 23-30. Cereti (2000) 194-8.
- 55 Boyce (1968) 48.
- 56 Jami-Hakimi (1371) 106.
- 57 Krappe (1924-37) 385-407; (1925) IX, 345-65; (1927) XI, 163-76; (1932) XVI, 271-82; (1937) XIX, 'IX. *Inclusa*' 213-26.
- 58 Piemontese (1995b). Piemontese (1995c). Amir Khusraw-Piemontese (1996) 150-78.