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## From Ancient India to Medieval Shiraz: The Journey of the Ascetic Cat

*The figure of the ascetic cat, one known for his pretense to piety, appears throughout the medieval Persian literature. This study examines the movement of this literary motif along the Silk Road where Buddhism and Manichaeism facilitated its transmission into the nascent Islamic civilization. The study traces the possible paths of their journey by examining both the literary transmission of two anecdotes of the ascetic cat from India to Shiraz, as well as by considering the historical context for such transmission.*

The character of the false ascetic, one who pretends piety by adopting all the right appearances and “does the other thing” in private,<sup>1</sup> is not uncommon in Persian literature. That of all creatures, human and otherwise, a cat should personify this character is somewhat of a puzzle. Our feline fellow appears time and again, praying, fasting and offering sermons on the material world’s impermanence, all the while scheming to devour his gullible followers. The explanation for the choice of a cat to embody the character of the false religious person, as we shall see, takes us on a journey where we witness a full-scale cultural borrowing in the form of translation, adaptation and appropriation of the character of the ascetic cat, who was on a caravan that set out from ancient India, heading to Central Asia in the late antique period, and finally settling in Shiraz during Hafiz’s lifetime. Given that the journey is far-flung, both temporally and geographically, it is necessary to discuss some of the various appearances, adoptions and adaptations of the character of the ascetic cat. The method of following the cat’s footsteps opens up a window into the paths it has traversed and ways it was transmitted across barriers of language and literary genres. This in turn sheds light, albeit in small way, on the contribution of some of the lesser known influences in the shaping of the cultural landscape of the nascent Islamic civilization in general, and that of the Persianate world in particular. In tracing the footsteps of the ascetic cat the aim, primarily, is to explore the historical context of such transmission, but in order to do so, first the path of transmission of this literary motif must be established.

Therefore, in the first two part of this study, the two most famous appearances of the ascetic cat, the first in Hafez’s poem and the second in ‘Obayd’s famous *Cat and Mouse*, will be examined. For each of these two, their Indian counterparts and their

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possible path(s) of transmission will be discussed. It must also be noted that it is not my aim to document all appearances of the ascetic cat in Persian literature, or to engage in an in-depth study of the literary motif and its development. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the study of these two instances of the invocation of the motif, especially in the case of ‘Obayd’s usage, reveals much about the structure of the poem, and how its tripartite structure was constructed from already existing stories and anecdotes. While this is an important contribution to the discussion of ‘Obayd’s work and the literary practices of his time, the conclusion drawn about the poem’s structure is a corollary to the main thesis of the study.

This leaves the discussion of the historical context and the religious and literary forces that facilitated the transmission to the last part of the study. This is significant because tracing the transmission path of the ascetic cat provides a specific example for the general idea of transmission of knowledge along the Silk Road. This in turn is of utmost importance because the field of Islamic history, at least in the past few decades, has been preoccupied with casting the religion of Islam as the sole intellectual force in the process of formation of Islamic civilization to the exclusion of others. The ascetic cat with its Manichean, Buddhist and Indian roots might be but a minute detail, one tile in the grand edifice of Islamic civilization. But first the tile must be unearthed, dusted off, examined, because once all this is done, the emergent picture of the edifice becomes nuanced, complicated and certainly a bit more colorful.

### *Hafiz: Cat and Partridge*

Let us begin by considering the most famous appearance of the ascetic cat. For that we will have to start at the end of the journey, with the following lines from Hafiz:

O graceful partridge! Halt!  
 Where are you off to? Stop!  
 Don’t be deceived by your ambitions, your greed!  
 The ascetic cat has just finished praying; take heed!<sup>2</sup>

The ambiguity of this verse—for it is ambitious for an educated, native speaker of Persian, as well as in translation—stems from the fact that neither of the two animal characters play any known symbolic roles. But the lay reader of this verse is not the only one scratching her head trying to arrive at a meaningful interpretation of this verse. Generations of Hafiz scholars have been trying to figure out who these two characters stand for. In their attempts to decipher the verse, they have all considered the oldest commentary on this verse from the sixteenth century historian Khwāndamir (d. 1534 CE), who writes:

Among the poets of Shah Shojā’s period, there was Khwājeh ‘Emād Faqih-e Kermāni, and that his eminence was a shaykh and he also ran a khāneqāh. Shah Shojā was his faithful follower. It is said that whenever Khwājeh ‘Emād performed

his prayers, the cat did the same, following him, and Shah Shojā' thought that this was due to the Khwāja's miraculous powers. Shah Shojā' was steadfast in his sincerity and his fidelity to him ('Emād). Khwājah Hafiz became jealous of this and composed the following *ghazal*.<sup>3</sup>

This passage has set the contours of discourse on this verse, because all modern scholars who have discussed it, and its reference to the ascetic cat, have either agreed or disagreed with Khwādamir's identification. Those who disagree have offered alternative identifications of religious figures who were Hafiz's contemporaries. Their arguments on this verse can be summarized as follows: if we are to believe Khwādamir, the ascetic cat is none other than 'Emād-e Faqih-e Kermāni, and if we don't then we have to search for another contemporary of Hafiz. Abdol Ali Dastghaib, for instance, sticks with Khwādamir's narrative, insisting that the ascetic cat stands for 'Emād.<sup>4</sup> Golchin-e Ma'āni and Rukn al-Din Homayunfarokh, however, have suggested that the ascetic cat of Hafiz's poem is a certain Zayn al-Din Kulāh, while Zarrinkub considers this identification doubtful but plausible.<sup>5</sup> Zarrinkub introduces another candidate to take the position of the ascetic cat: Pahlevān Asād, the ruler of Kerman, who was known for piety and ascetic inclinations.<sup>6</sup>

This emphasis on identifying one particular historical character with the ascetic cat, however, seems counter-intuitive. This is particularly so given that the entire *ghazal* is an unrelenting critique of the deception of the sufis. Verse after verse, the sufi is exposed for his various fraudulent ways: his ever-widening circle of deceit comes to encompass the safe havens of wine and music, the places where the likes of Hafiz take refuge from the nauseating false-heartedness of the sufi of Hafiz's time. So why should one assume that Hafiz refers to a single person and then set out to present conjectures about the identity of that person? This framework of discussion of this *ghazal*, in addition to the above-quoted commentary by Khwādamir, is a direct result of the preoccupation of scholars with reconstructing Hafiz's biography from the tidbits of self-referential and historical data that can be gleaned from his poems. Since information of this nature is scarce, scholarship has resorted to a lot of speculation of the kind we have seen in the case of the ascetic cat.

This insistence on identifying historical contemporary characters (or an actual cat belonging to a historical character!) with the ascetic cat becomes all the more baffling since from the very inception of modern scholarship, there seems to have been awareness that the references come from a particular fable from the *Kalileh va Demneh*. Almost eighty years ago, when the catalogue of the holdings of Iran's parliament was being compiled, Ibn Yusuf Shirāzi makes a reference to this particular verse and identifies the cat as a character from *Kalileh va Demneh*.<sup>7</sup> Ever since then a number of scholars have made reference to *Kalileh va Demneh* as the source of this particular line.<sup>8</sup> This awareness makes the incessant search for the historical characters that the ascetic cat and the partridge are supposed to represent even more surprising, as is the refusal to examine the anecdote in question, with some going so far as to deny any reference to the *Kalileh va Demneh* on Hafiz's part.<sup>9</sup>

To settle the score once for all, we shall consider the anecdote, but since the transmission process is of interest to us, a few words must be first said about *Kalileh va Demneh*'s provenance, because this exceptionally influential piece of literature has a fascinating history and a complex genealogy. It was translated during the Sasanian period from its Indian origin, the *Pancatantra*, into Middle Persian by Khosrow I's (r. 531-579) emissary, Burzuy the Physician, who was sent to India to collect scientific books.<sup>10</sup> Traversing vast terrains and crossing barriers of language through numerous translations, it became one of the most widely read and influential pieces of literature in much of the late antique world. The Sasanian version, translated by Burzuy, has not survived. The fables became a part of the literary milieu during the early Abbasid Caliphate, when the famous translator of Sasanian literature, Ibn Muqaffa,<sup>c</sup> translated them into Arabic.<sup>11</sup> It is noteworthy that aside from their literary merit, the fables of *Kalileh va Demneh*, like their Indian original, were thought to be a manual for kings and princes, because they contained crucial lessons on how to govern.<sup>12</sup>

*Kalileh va Demneh* is among the first works to be rendered into New Persian. It is first done so in prose by the Samanid vizir Bal'ami (d. 974 or 997), and almost contemporaneously a version of it was composed by Rudaki (d. 941) in much-celebrated verse.<sup>13</sup> The translation of the collection of fables into Persian seems to have been a defining moment in the literary history of Persian: its debut on the scene of Persian literature was so significant that the account of its translation(s) appears in the oldest specimen of Persian prose, *Moqadameh-ye Shāhnāme-ye Abu Mansuri*. Ferdowsi also, while narrating the account of its first translation, from Sanskrit<sup>14</sup> to Middle Persian, mentions the monumental New Persian translations of the work by Bal'ami and Rudaki.<sup>15</sup> Close to 200 years elapsed between the first Samanid renditions of the work and the appearance of its most famous Persian translation at the Ghaznavid court of Bahramshah (r. 1084-1157 CE). During these two centuries, however, many translations, recensions, adaptation of the work circulated in courtly and literary milieus.<sup>16</sup> Abu al-Ma'ālī Nasroallah Monshi's translation composed in Ghazna in the first half of the twelfth century coincides with the completion of another Persian translation in Mosul.<sup>17</sup> Aside from the general interest in producing copies of the work, translating the work into Persian coincides with the spread of Persian as a written language. By Nasroallah Monshi's time, according to him, people's desire to read Arabic books had dwindled, and because he did not want to see the wisdom contained in the book fall into oblivion, he translated it into Persian, amending it with quranic verses, historical anecdotes and many verses of Persian and Arabic poetry.<sup>18</sup> Persian versions of *Kalileh va Demneh* continued to be produced for many centuries, and its anecdotes also appeared separately in many other works with or without a mention of their origin.<sup>19</sup>

Let us now return to the ascetic cat and the partridge. All the major and known translation of the work, from Old Syriac<sup>20</sup> to Arabic,<sup>21</sup> to the two earliest extant versions mentioned above, as well as the original Indian text of *Pancatantra*,<sup>22</sup> contain a particular anecdote, where a crow narrates the cautionary tale of the ascetic cat. This is how Nasroallah Monshi's version of the anecdote reads:

A certain partridge<sup>23</sup> was living in my vicinity,<sup>24</sup> and as it is customary with neighbors, there grew a solid mutual affinity and friendship between us. Now he was gone for some time, and since the period of his absence lasted a long time, I thought that he had expired. After a long time, a hare came and settled in his abode, and I did not oppose that. But after some time, the partridge came back. When he saw the hare in his home, he became upset and told the hare: "Leave at once! This is my place!" The hare responded, "since I occupy this place I am its owner. If you feel like you have a claim over this place you need to prove it." The partridge responded, "it is my place and I can offer much by way of evidence." Then the hare said, "we should find a just arbiter who is willing to hear both sides and issue a fair verdict." The partridge told the hare, "there lives a pious cat in our vicinity, who spend his days fasting and his nights praying. He never sheds any blood and abstains from harming all animals. When he breaks his fast, the meal is confined to water and some herbs. Never will we find a judge more just than he. Let us go to him and he will set this affair of ours straight." Both agreed on this, and I (the crow) followed them to see what comes out of this and in order to see the fasting cat, and see how justly he is going to rule in this case.

As soon as the cat, that paramount of fasting, looked at them, he stood up on his two feet, and set out for the *mihrab* to perform his prayers. The hare became astonished by what he saw. They had to wait until he was finished praying. They humbly greeted him and requested that he act as an arbiter between them, and to end the enmity that had appeared between them on account of the house. The cat then ordered them to tell him what had transpired between them and they did, whereupon he said: "I've become old and my senses have become damaged as a result of old age. This is what the turning of the wheel of the universe, and the affairs of this world do: they turn a young person into an old one and they turn an old person into a wretch.

Such are nights and its new happenings:

renewing the human being's states from one to the next.

The world does not remain permanent in its happenings:

it is like a wild ass upon which are four lines.<sup>25</sup>

"Come close and talk louder." So they [approached him] and repeated their testimony. The cat then said, "now I know your story, but before I issue my verdict, let me give you some advice, and if you truly listen to it, it becomes your guide in life, and if it is taken some other way, at least I will be excused as having fulfilled my religious and moral duty in having delivered it, for it is said one who is cautious is excused. It is right that both of you should seek the truth, for the one who is

right is one who owns the truth, and he is the true winner, even if the verdict goes against what he had hoped for. The one seeking that which is not true is a true loser, even if the verdict is in his favor, for 'verily falsehood is bound to perish'.<sup>26</sup> Also know that nothing of this world, be it things, wealth or friends, nothing at all is truly yours. The only thing that you can claim as yours is your good deeds which you should accumulate for the other world. The wise person does not put his effort and his heart into gathering decaying rubbish, but instead strives for lasting goodness. Such wise person considers worldly life and the station granted to him—no matter how lofty or high—as a summer cloud or a delightful garden that is without permanence and consistency.

It's a hut in which you will not last

Whether you live for ten,

or hundred or a thousand.

Pleasures of the world,

all that which is delighted by it,

will one day be emaciated, annihilated.<sup>27</sup>

Wealth is best likened to little pebbles: if you spend it, it will be all finished, and if you accumulate it, there is no difference between that and stones and clay. Women's company is like that of a venomous snake from whose harm no one is safe, and whose loyalty no one can earn. A wise person treats everyone, be they commoner or noble, close to him or distanced from him, as he treats his dear self, and does not do unto others what he does not want done unto him." The cat continued his deceit, casting a spell on them until they became affectionate towards him and they felt safe and free without thoughts of self-preservation or caution in his presence, and so they approached him and got closer to him. The cat struck and in one swipe took hold of both and killed them.<sup>28</sup>

Our ascetic cat, notwithstanding his performance of prayer and quoting a quranic verse, bears unusual characteristics for a Muslim. Perhaps the fact that he has renounced all material wealth—something not required by Islam—can be attributed to his asceticism. But what about his aversion to violence, his warning against sexual relationship and his vegetarianism? Obviously, these are inherited traits, ones that were not changed or Islamized in the long and multi-staged translation process. They are, in fact, defining attributes of an Indian ascetic, a renunciate yogi and this, in fact, is the role that we find our ascetic cat playing in the *Pancatantra*:

Kapinjala (the partridge) asked the hare: “But who will hear our case?”

The hare replied: “What about that old cat named Dadhikarna, the Curd-ears, who lives on the banks of the river devoted to austerities? He shows compassion to all animals and know the codes of law well. He will be able to settle our case.” Now the cat, Dadhikarna, had assumed that fake appearance to gain an easy living. When he heard Kapinjala’s words, he wanted to win the bird’s confidence. So with renewed vigor he began to gaze at the sun standing on two feet with his arms raised above his head<sup>29</sup> (i.e. assuming a yogic posture). With one eye closed, he remained like this reciting silent prayers. Seeing him pray like that kindled their trust in him.<sup>30</sup>

Except for this adaptation of yogic posture for prayer, the anecdotes are the same in terms of their plot. In both cases, praying and assuming yogic postures are very visible signs of piety, done here, in the case of our ascetic, to deceive his unsuspecting victims. After all, it is after this performative act that the partridge trusts the cat enough to listen to his discourse and eventually becomes enthralled by him.

Our ascetic cat, the Indian yogi practicing austerities, most notably long periods of fasting aimed at curbing his passion for flesh, is, as we shall see, a ubiquitous character in Indian culture, both modern and ancient, and his character is consistent throughout. For instance, in yet another collection of fables by the title of *Hitopadesha*,<sup>31</sup> the cat appears as follows: A vulture lives in a tree with many birds, and this vulture is very religious, but belongs to the category of householders.<sup>32</sup> He has become quite old and because of his advanced age and his piety the birds who reside in the branches of the tree eventually trust the care of their fledglings to him. But one day, a cat appears near the tree and demands to settle in the tree. The cat introduces himself as a renunciate or a *brahmachari*, who is a strict vegetarian. In addition he informs the vulture that he has spent a considerable amount of time on the banks of the Ganges River, engaged in austerities. At first the vulture is very skeptical of the cat and threatens to kill him if he does not leave at once. The main point of contention for the vulture is the cat’s purported vegetarianism. Cats, after all, like meat, the vulture proclaims. The cat, however, eventually manages to reassure the vulture by claiming that he has overcome his passion for meat, and that he has done moon-penance, a practice in which the participant takes fifteen mouthfuls at full moon and reduces this amount by one mouthful each day until on the fifteenth day, at new moon, only one mouthful is eaten and then the whole cycle starts again in reverse. In addition to this great hardship, the cat insists that he adheres to the principle of non-injury, and professes to treat all beings with compassion. The cat then is allowed to take up residence in the tree and shortly after devours all the nestlings. The birds in turn become suspicious of the vulture and execute him.<sup>33</sup> Once again, here, the cat is the same false ascetic, and by now we are quite familiar with his antics as well as the outcome of the story. There is consistency in the depiction of the cat as a false ascetic: he stresses his asceticism and the austerities he has performed, especially the exacting moon-penance aimed at wiping out his desire for meat.

The dominant traits of our ascetic cat, the one appearing in Hafez's poem and in the *Kalilah va Demneh*, are therefore unmistakable borrowings from a false Indian yogi. As a matter of fact, the only reason why the choice of a cat for the false ascetic works is the cat's claim to vegetarianism. Aside from this, it must be noted that cats are viewed favorably in the Islamic culture because of Prophet Muhammad's love for the animal. One hadith goes as far as claiming that the water left over by a cat is not impure for the purposes of ablution.<sup>34</sup> It is interesting, therefore, that the portrayal of the ascetic cat keeps its Indian cultural references centuries after the advent of Islam.

Here, finally a few words must be said about Hafiz's usage of the motif, and for this one must consider the entire *ghazal*.<sup>35</sup> The poem in question has remarkable thematic unity. Its subject, the devious character of the sufi, functions like a vertical pole that holds all verses together. Each verse explores, admonishes against, and chides the fraudulence of the sufi. Even when the poet is to take refuge in wine and music, there is anxiety that these two safe havens, the antidote against the sufi's deceitful ways, may have been tainted by his treachery. The invocation of the ascetic cat in some ways is Hafiz's punch line: the deceptive sufi can also appear in the garb of a sufi master and can devour, so to speak, the hapless seeker as the ascetic cat had done to the partridge.

#### *'Obayd -e Zākāni: Cat and Mice*

The second major appearance<sup>36</sup> of the ascetic cat in Persian literature is once again in an anecdote fully fleshed out in verse, where he is the main protagonist. To examine this incarnation of our cat, we once again arrive at the Shiraz of Hafiz's lifetime, and to his fellow poet and townsman 'Obayd Zākāni (d. ca. 770 H./1370 CE). 'Obayd was a prolific writer and composed much poetry under the patronage of some of the same Inju and Muzzafarid patrons as Hafiz.<sup>37</sup> The best known of his works is the short *mathnavi* called *Mush u Gurbah*, a work whose attribution to 'Obayd, as we shall see, has been disputed. The poem as it is found in the standard editions of 'Obayd's collected work is between 162 and 175 verses, and was widely read by both adults and children, so much so that some of its lines have become proverbial in their usage. At the same time, the work served as a model for many other cat and mouse stories.<sup>38</sup> The poem has also been translated into various languages, the most recent of which is the Swedish translation.<sup>39</sup>

Interestingly enough, some of the most prominent Hafiz commentators have identified 'Obayd's cat as the inspiration and point of reference for Hafiz's ascetic cat, the only reasoning for such a suggestion being the cat's false claim to religiosity and asceticism.<sup>40</sup> This explanation, however, does not account for details, including the appearance of different animal characters— the partridge in the case of Hafiz's cat and the mice in the case of 'Obayd's poem. Establishing the provenance of 'Obayd's poem and its cat necessitates a formal analysis of its structure.

The story here begins with an anecdote of a mouse in a wine cellar. The little creature has overindulged himself and hence is boasting about his prowess, especially when



it comes to battling cats. Unbeknownst to him (of course!), a cat is present and overhears the drunken rant; the cat immediately catches the mouse and kills it in spite of the mouse's pleas for his life. This seems to conclude the first part of the poem and appears to be a complete anecdote in its own right. As we shall see, this was an independent story quite different in the message it tries to convey from the subsequent part of the poem.

'Obayd's cat, as we know, is not done here: next he wanders off to the mosque and there, after performing his ablutions and reciting his prayers, he expresses his remorse for his actions so fervently that he works himself up into a weeping frenzy. A mouse who is hiding behind the *minbar* overhears the cat's seemingly genuine expression of remorse and takes the good tidings to other mice that the cat has become an ascetic, a pious Muslim. Impressed with the cat's declaration of faith and his renunciation of flesh, seven distinguished mice set out to express their gratitude by offering many trays of food. Once there, the cat—in order to convince the hesitating and fearful mice to come closer to him—says the following:

Once the cat saw the little mice,

he addressed them thus:

one's daily bread is provided for by God in the heavens.

Hungry, I spend much time,

but today my provision is ample.

To gain God's blessing,

many a day I spent fasting.

Whosoever does god's work,

will be receive a hefty contribution.<sup>41</sup>

In the first line, we have an allusion to the quranic verse (surah 51, āya 22: *wa fi samā'i rizqikum wa ma tu'ūdun*), hence establishing the religious character of the cat. Next, we learn of his austerities, most specifically his excessive fasting, and these traits no doubt remind us of the ascetic cat of the Indian fables. The mice, of course, approach him and in one swipe the cat kills five of the seven mice. The survivors go back to bear the news of the cat's atrocity to their fellow mice and they decide to take their grievance to their king; here we have some of the most famous lines of the poem:

Every year, he used to catch just one of us,

but now his greed has increased by much.

Now, he catches our fellow mice, five at the time

Since he's become repentant,

Since he's become a Muslim.<sup>42</sup>

If we consider the internal logic of the narrative, there seems to be an ending here. The cat's false claim to religiosity is exposed and the point of the poem is made in no uncertain terms. In the standard version of the poem, however, the story continues with a description of a battle between the mice and the cat, with some historical references to Kerman.

If one pays attention to the development of the narrative, the tripartite structure of the poem (mouse in the cellar, cat in the mosque, battle) becomes apparent—so much so that there seems little in the way of logical development of the content from one section to the next. This curious structure of the poem takes us back to the discussion of the authorship of the poem. Mojtaba Minui, in an article published in 1957, mentions how he had at first rejected the attribution of *Mush o Gorbeh* to 'Obayd. This is because none of the manuscripts that were written between the ninth and thirteenth centuries *hijra* contain the poem. But eventually Minui came across a manuscript dated to 900-950 *hijra* (roughly the first half of sixteenth century CE), which did contain about forty lines of the poem, or the first two of its aforementioned three parts.<sup>43</sup> There remains no doubt, therefore, that the third part is an interpolation and was added to the poem at a later date.<sup>44</sup> Minui also quotes other versions of the story, and concludes that there may have been an earlier prose version of the story which 'Obayd put into verse. Among the observations that Minui makes is the prevalence of the motif of the ascetic cat in 'Obayd's literary milieu. He then speculates that 'Obayd must have borrowed the anecdote from earlier sources that were circulating in the literary circles of his time. Minui's hunch was right, as we shall see. Both the first and second part of the poem existed prior to 'Obayd's time.

Let us recall the first part of the poem where the mouse in the wine cellar makes a drunken rant against cats and is killed by one. This anecdote appears in the *Bolbolnā-meh*, a poem falsely attributed to Faridudin Attār Nishāburi.<sup>45</sup> The anecdote seems to have been famous, a tale whose primary function in the *Bolbolnā-meh* is to admonish against drinking. We know one manuscript of *Bolbolnā-meh* existed prior to or contemporaneous with 'Obayd's lifetime.<sup>46</sup> The mouse's grandiloquent boast claiming to do unimaginably daring and violent things to his much more powerful enemy, the cat, is a great introduction to the second and main part of the story.

The second part of the poem is an independent anecdote, one in which mice are deceived by the ascetic cat. The cat's remorse and repentance is necessary to link the first anecdote of the poem, where the cat is devoid of any religious traits, to the

second. The cat's character in the second part of 'Obayd's poem resembles the cat of the Indian fables: he gains the trust of his victims by pretending to be a god-fearing ascetic, one who has sworn off bloodshed and especially undertaken long periods of fasting, and at the end attacks and kills them with the exception of a few who survive to tell the tale.

'Obayd's cat behaves very much like the ascetic cat of the Indian tales. His false claim to religiosity, his supposed abstinence from violence, his long periods of fasting, should be enough to attribute the origin of this character to Indian literature. In the examples from Indian literature discussed above, however, the cat's victims were other animals and not mice. The story of the ascetic cat and the mice, far from being absent, has been told and retold for millennia in India and, as we shall see, it crops up in various manifestations in India's cultural landscape. Versions of this story are found in large compositions of Indian literature such as Mahabharata and the Buddhist jatakas.<sup>47</sup>

The anecdote of an ascetic cat deceiving a colony of mice appears in the Buddhist jatakas, or the story of the former lives of Buddha.<sup>48</sup> Here in a condensed form the anecdote is narrated, and the mouse or rat who recognizes the false character of the cat<sup>49</sup> is Bodhisattva, or the Buddha in a previous reincarnation. Similarly, in the midst of Mahabharata's famous war between Pandavas and Kauravas, a messenger is sent to the oldest of the Pandava brothers, Yudhishtira—who is known for his righteousness and virtue. The messenger, quoting Yudhishtira's archenemy, Duryodhana, accuses Yudhishtira of being a warmonger and therefore wreaking havoc on "the entire universe," all the while claiming to be the epitome of righteousness and piety. Duryodhana likens Yudhishtira's piety to that of the wicked cat who takes up residence on the banks of the Ganges and puts on airs of piety in order to fool his victims. A number of mice living in the vicinity eventually fall for his tricks until some of their fellow mice go missing while the cat keeps getting fatter. It is then that the mice decide to save themselves by chasing the false ascetic away from their neighborhood.<sup>50</sup>

The story also appears in a unique manuscript from Nepal, entitled *Tantrakhayana*.<sup>51</sup> Tale no. 38 in the manuscript is the same story of mice and the cat.<sup>52</sup> This is not the only occurrence of this particular anecdote in the vast body of Sanskrit and vernacular works in various Indian languages. Given the proverbial status of the story and its protagonist, and its popularity even today, it no doubt appears or is alluded to in other works across genres of Indian literature.

Speaking of the prevalence of the story, the image of the cat yogi and his disciples appear carved in stone in a seventh century panel at the Mahabalipuram/Mamallapuram temple (also known as the Seven Pagodas temple or Shore temple) in South India. It is situated 35 miles south of Chennai, and has been recorded by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as one of the world heritage sites.<sup>53</sup> The scene featuring our ascetic cat and his gullible disciples is a bas-relief, known as "Arjuna's Penance."<sup>54</sup> The many sculptures depicted there are drawn from unrelated episodes from the Mahabharata and the Puranas.<sup>55</sup> The temple is known to have been largely built by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman

(r. 630–688 CE), and therefore we can conclude that this story not only existed—for that is attested by its inclusion in the literary corpora such as the Mahabharata and the Buddhist jatakas<sup>56</sup>—but that it was particularly popular. It is clear that the stories depicted on the bas-relief must have been known to the temple-goers, who no doubt must have come from all walks of life, and the vast majority of whom were illiterate.

### *Transmission of Ideas: Historical Context*

While the trajectory of Hafiz's ascetic cat can be traced through the transmission of the *Kalileh va Demneh*, the same cannot be claimed for the anecdote of the cat and mice. So the question of the transmission of the anecdote of cat and mice remains unanswered. The answer to this question must be sought at a time and place very distant from medieval Shiraz. One major impetus for the movement of ideas and knowledge, literary and otherwise, was the spread of Buddhism beginning from the Kushan period in the first century CE in the eastern fringes of the Iranian lands.<sup>57</sup> The faith, philosophy and practices continued to be significant enough to have impacted and influenced the nascent Islamic civilization.<sup>58</sup> It is significant that the trade route that once had run through the region of Gandhara (Swat, Pakistan) had shifted north due to the Hun invasion of the region about a century and half prior to the Arab invasion.<sup>59</sup> This meant that many monasteries moved to the north, to Kabul valley, giving rise to the flourishing Buddhist culture in Bamiyan and Kabul. This shift, it is important to note, merely strengthened the presence of Buddhism in this region because the region of Balkh had been a center for the faith at least from the time of the Kushan king Kanishka I, whose reign is dated to the early second century. Buddhism continued to flourish in the eastern fringes of Greater Khurasan until the eighth century.<sup>60</sup> It continued to be an important player in the cultural life of the region south of Amu Darya until the tenth century.<sup>61</sup>

One of the most enduring aspects of Buddhist culture without doubt is its literature, through which some of its central philosophical tenets were transmitted. Buddhist monks of the Greater Khurasan region were among the most prominent translators and editors of Buddhist texts. It has been noted that the process of editing, translating and interpreting religious texts was undertaken according to a system. This vast literary activity predates the start of the translation of classic Greek into Arabic or the canonization of Muslim texts and traditions.<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps the best known example of the survival of Buddhist literature in Arabic and Persian works is the story of Buddha's life known as *Beluhar va Budāsef*. Like the *Kililah wa Dimnah*, it has a fascinating and complex history, and its in-depth study will be taken up elsewhere. Suffice it to say that this story was among the first to be translated into the New Persian verse on the one hand, and into Arabic on the other. It was put into Arabic verse, was incorporated in works of shia' and Isma'ili

theologians, and eventually their protagonists join the ranks of Catholic Saints as Barlaam and Josaphat.<sup>63</sup>

The other Buddhist story that is proven to have enjoyed popularity for centuries is one of the stories of Buddha's previous lives, or the jatakas. As a matter of fact, a version of this particular jataka, the vasantara jataka has been preserved in Sogdian.<sup>64</sup> What we do know is that, like the story of Buddha's life, this particular jataka became a well-known story in the Arabic and Persian literary milieus.<sup>65</sup>

The presence of Buddhist literature goes far beyond these two documented Buddhist tales, however. Certainly other jatakas were being told and retold in the territories stretching from Gandhara to Bactria to the Tarim Basin where Buddhism thrived from the Kushan period beginning in the first century CE until the eighth century. The residue of the widespread presence of the tales can be found though this wide terrain. Several of the jatakas were depicted on early Gandharan sculptures,<sup>66</sup> and there is a pictorial representation of one of the jatakas on a Sasanian silver plate.<sup>67</sup> These pictorial representations of the jatakas hint at the widespread knowledge of the tales.

When it comes to the transmission of Buddhist literature, no discussion is complete without mention of the role of Manichaeism in its dissemination. Manichean literature readily absorbed material from various literary and religious traditions along the Silk Road. As a syncretic religion, its literary repertoire grew as a result of conscious and seemingly unproblematic inclusion from Christian, Zoroastrian and Buddhist traditions.<sup>68</sup> It is through the vehicle of Manichean literature that much of the Buddhist literature remained influential for many centuries after the total disappearance of Buddhism from its former strongholds in Central Asia, Afghanistan and the Indo-Iranian borderlands. It has been noted that much of Buddhist literary knowledge was revived in early Abbasid Baghdad.<sup>69</sup> It is hardly a coincidence that the eighth century Iranian authors and translators such as Ibn Muqafa' and Ābān Lā-Haqī who were interested in Indian stories were accused of being *zendiqs* or Manicheans. The significance of their contributions notwithstanding, Baghdad was not the only place where Buddhist literature was translated and transmitted. There is ample evidence that some of the material that makes an appearance during the medieval period traverses different paths. While it is entirely possible that our cat and mouse anecdote was translated into Arabic from a collection of Manichean literature in Baghdad, it is also entirely plausible that it existed all along as a part of the oral repertoire of Central Asia and Great Khurasan. There have been even more counter-intuitive paths of transmission suggested for some of the jataka tales. For instance, the story of the ignorant bull, which according to Maojtabai was well enough known to have been alluded to by a number of authors including Ferdowsi and Mowlana Jalaludin Balkhi, though clearly of Indian Buddhist origin, reached Persian literature first by way of Greece.<sup>70</sup>

Coming back to our story of the cat and mice, it must be noted that the subject matter of the anecdote that features the ascetic cat, namely the false religious person who deceives his followers for material gain, seems to have been relevant through the ages. It is not surprising, therefore, that the character should be invoked in Shiraz of Hafiz's time when much of institutionalized sufism is criticized

as deceitful charade. The anecdote of the cat and the mouse found its way into Iranian literature because of the popularity of Buddhist jatakas in the eastern Iranian lands throughout the late antique period, and because of the continued relevance of its content. Making stops along the way in different languages and dialects, the story of the cat and the mouse found its way to Shiraz from India by way of Balkh and Bukhara.

### Notes

1. The allusion is to Hafiz's famous verse: preachers, who put on airs of piety, sitting on *minbar* or leading the prayer in *mibrāb*, behave differently in private. Hafiz, *Divān*, 205. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.
2. Hafiz, *Divān*, 270. Because the *ghazal* will be referred to later on here I quote it along with my own translation.

۱. صوفی نهاد دام و سر حقه باز کرد /  
 بنیاد مکر با فلک حقه باز کرد  
 ۲. بازی دهر بشکندش بیضه در کلاه /  
 زیرا که عرض شعبده با اهل راز کرد  
 ۳. ساقی، بیا که شاهد رعنا صوفیان /  
 دیگر به جلوه آمد و آغاز ناز کرد  
 ۴. این مطرب از کجاست که ساز عراق ساخت /  
 واهنگ بازگشت ز راه حجاز کرد؟  
 ۵. ای دل، بیا که ما به پناه خدا رویم /  
 زانچ آستین کوتاه و دست دراز کرد  
 ۶. صنعت مکز، که هر که محبت نه پاک باخت /  
 عشقش به روی دل در معنی فراز کرد  
 ۷. فردا که پیشگاه حقیقت شود پدید /  
 شرمند رهروی که عمل بر مجاز کرد  
 ۸. ای کبک خوشخرام، کجا میروی؟ بایست /  
 غره مشو که گریه زاهد نماز کرد  
 ۹. حافظ مکن ملامت رندان که در ازل /  
 ما را خدا ز زهد و ریای بی نیاز کرد

The sufi, once again, spread his trap: Set up his juggling balls to display his deceitful craft; set out to cheat this very universe, the master of all imposters. 2. But the turning of the time's wheel, will surely expose his trick. \*For foolishly he has aimed—by sleights of hand, his masterful game—to deceive those steeped in secrets. 3. O Sāqi! O cupbearer! Do come forth! For that false-hearted beauty—the beloved of the sufi—has made an appearance, has started his flirtatious coquetry. 4. From where is this musician, this artful minstrel? How has he tuned his instrument to traverse to Iraq, when he returns by way of Hijaz? 5. O heart of mine, let us take refuge in God, from the one clad in short-sleeved garb, the one who violates, the one who does not know wrong from right. 6. Let go of this devious game! For love shall shut the door—the gateway to reality's essence—to the one whose loving is checked by self-preserving restraints. 7. Tomorrow, when the truth's court comes to session, shame will be the verdict, returned to the wanderer who feigned his action. 8. O graceful partridge! Halt! Where are you off to? Stop! Don't be deceived by your ambitions or greed! Be careful for the ascetic cat has just finished praying. 9. Hafiz, do not chide the rends, for it was at creation's dawn that from us God lifted the burden of fake asceticism, all this fraudulent self-restraint! \*Here Hafiz uses imagery that was associated with juggling and other magician's tricks. The line literally reads: the wheel's turning will eventually break the eggs hidden in his cap. Therefore, the one who is performing such tricks, namely the sufi here, will face the unpleasant situation of eggs

- hidden in his cap breaking. This image, while associated with trickery, also connotes dishonor of a person involved.
3. Khwāndamir, *Habīb as-Siyar*, III: 315.
  4. Dastghaib, *Hāfez Shenākht*, II: 694-7, where he insists that Hafiz's point of reference is 'Emād, and without offering any proof, he continues to argue that 'Emād represented the corrupt class of sufis who gained status by their false claims to miraculous powers, and Hafiz's only aim in composing this *ghazal* was to deride 'Emād.
  5. Fakhr al-Zamāni Qazvini, *Mowlā 'Abd al-Nabi*, 91-2, where in a lengthy footnote Golchin-e al-Ma'āni postulates about Zayn al-Din 'Ali Kulāh Shirāzi being the dubious sufi character of Hafiz's poem. Rukn al-Din Homayunfarokh, accepts Golchin-e al-Ma'āni identification, 'Emād Faqih Kermāni, *Divān*, 81-92. Abdol Hossein Zarrinkub considers both identifications (i.e. 'Emād and Zayn al-Din 'Ali Kulāh Shirāzi) likely but also states that neither can be established beyond a doubt, Zarrinkub, *Jostoju-i dar Tassavof-e Iran*, 232.
  6. Zarrinkub, *Jostoju-i dar Tassavof-e Iran*, 232.
  7. Ibn Yusof Shirāzi, *Fehrest*, III: 361.
  8. Hamidian, *Sharh-e Showq*, III: 1973.
  9. In spite of all similarities of the characters, Homāyunfarokh, for instance states that Hafiz could not have been referring to *Kalileh va Demneh*, a text, which according to him only a handful of people had access to at the time, 'Emād Faqih Kermāni, *Divān*, 90.
  10. The Middle Persian version is no longer extant; however, a Syriac translation (known as the old Syriac version) of the work is based on the lost Middle Persian version. During the early Abbasid period, the Middle Persian version was translated into the Arabic, and the Arabic text was used for its translation into Greek, Syriac (new Syriac version), Old Spanish and Hebrew. It was translated, amended and retold in several versions of New Persian that appeared in the eleventh century. For a brief summary of the transmission and translation process and its manuscript tradition and edited volumes, as well as an updated bibliography, see Riedel, "Kalila-Demna i." For the earliest translations see De Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage*; for a concise history of the work and its translation and the various versions see Mojtabai, "Rāy va Brahman," and "Molāhezati darbāreh-ye." For a contextualized view of the translation of the work in the early Abbasid period see Muhammadi Malayeri, *Tārikh va Farhang-e*, IV: 88-92. Finally, for a comprehensive discussion of the different versions, including those appearing later in Persian and Arabic, see Mahjub, *Darbāreh-ye Kalileh va Demneh*.
  11. For the most recent work on Ibn Muqaffa' and his biography see Azarnush, "Ibn Muqaffa'"; for the published edition of the Arabic version, which is based on the oldest manuscript dating from 618/1221, see Ibn Muqaffa', *Kalila wa-Dimna*, ed. 'Azzām.
  12. In the Indian tradition, the *Pancatantra* is considered a *śastra* or a scientific treatise. The *śastras* were divided into the three categories of *dharmaśastras* (ritual, religious and ethical), *kāmaśastra* (the aesthetic, sensual and sexual) and *arthaśastras* (the economic and political). The *Pancatantra* belonged to the category of *arthaśastras*. Interestingly enough, during the Abbasid period, the function of the *Kalileh va Demneh* as a treatise on politics was retained, and as such it was influential in the shaping of the political thought. Much more can be said about this, but I shall do so elsewhere.
  13. Unfortunately none of these works are extant. For a discussion of Bal'ami's translation see Mahjub, *Darbāreh-ye Kalileh va Demneh*, 82-7. Of Rudaki's famous versification only a fraction has survived; see Nafisi, *mohit-e zendegi*, III: 532-40.
  14. Although it is still widely believed that the work was translated from Sanskrit, considering mainly philological evidence, Mojtabai has argued that the origin of the work was a Prakrit language of Pishāchi, a predecessor of the so-called Kafiri language spoken in Afghanistan.
  15. Ferdowsi, *Shāhnāme*, VI: 372; Qazvini, *Bist maqāleh*, II: 22-3.
  16. Nasroallah Monshi, the translator of the most famous version of the work mentions other translations many translations appeared after Ibn Muqaffa's Arabic translation and Rudaki's Persian verse rendition Nasroallah Monshi, *Kalileh va Demneh*, 49.
  17. Bokhari, *Dāstān-hāye Bidpāy*. This version was finished in the year 522 h., but as the editors say, although the composition was simultaneous with Monshi's more famous version, given the vast geo-

graphical distance between the two cities of Ghazna and Mosul, it is highly unlikely that the two translators were aware of each other's work.

18. Nasroallah Monshi, *Kalileh va Demneh*, 50.
19. See Mahjub, *Darbāreh-ye*, for later Persian versions.
20. Anonymous, *Kalilag und Damnag*, 65-6.
21. Ibn Muqaffa', *Kalila wa-Dimna*, 142-3.
22. Anonymous, *The Pancatantra*, 118-20.
23. *Kabk-e anjir* in Persian. For the animal see Mini's note: Nasroallah Monshi, *Kalileh va Demneh*, 216, n. 4.
24. The narrator of this story is a crow, whose own is not positive; however, one of the features of the work is that even an evil character can be right in their point of view on a particular topic. Here, in this particular anecdote, the crow acts as a narrator as well as a witness, and this is another interesting feature of the fables.
25. This verse is discussed in two commentaries on Nasroallah Monshi's *Kalileh va Demneh* both written in the first half of the sixth century H., one by Fazlallah b. Othman b. Muhammad b. Al-Asfazāri, and the second by an anonymous author. Both commentaries have been recently edited and published: Al-Asfazaāri and Anonymous, *Sharh-e akhbār*. Both commentaries (ibid., 207 and 409) identify the verse as belonging to the pre-Islamic poet Abu Zu'ib Hazli, who is said to have composed the *qasida* from which these two lines are taken after he lost five of his sons in the same year.
26. In the text we read *inna al-batila kāna zābuqā*, which is supposed to be, the change in the last word notwithstanding, from Quran, surah 17, verse 81: "Say that truth came and falsehood perished. Verily falsehood is bound to perish."
27. The author of these verses remains anonymous, Al-Asfazāri and Anonymous, *Sharh-e akhbār*, 207 and 409. It must be noted that Nasroallah Monshi's text, as edited by Minui, contains an error, i.e. *basir* instead of *yasir*.
28. Nasroallah Monshi, *Kalileh va Demneh*, 217-18. In the other contemporary translation, the anecdote, though very different in language and style, is essentially the same. As a matter of fact, the cat's characterization is exactly the same. Bokhari, *Dāstān-hāye Bidpāy*, 184-6.
29. Standing on his two feet refers to a yogic posture, where one stands on one foot gazing at the sun, but here since the cat has four legs, he's been made to stand on his two back legs.
30. Anonymous, *The Pancatantra*, 119.
31. This work, like the *Pancatantra*, contains many animal stories, and in fact there is considerable overlap between the anecdotes that appear in both works. Although the earliest manuscript dates from the fourteenth century, the work contains quotes from other literature dating back to the eighth century, Naráyana, *Friendly Advice*, 111-17.
32. Spiritual aspirants in Indian culture generally belong to the two mutually exclusive categories of householder *grihasthai* and the renunciate or the *brahmachariya*.
33. Naráyana, *Friendly Advice*, 111-17.
34. Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, I: 66. For references to the favorable view of the cats see the hadith in which cats appear in Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Hadith*, 179, 337, 350, 351, 491.
35. See note 2 for the text of the poem.
36. As in Indian literature, the ascetic cat was a well-known character in medieval Persian literature beyond his appearance in the *Kalileh va Demneh*. It is clear that the cat and his infamous deeds were widely known enough for his actions and his story to be invoked by a mere allusion. Mowlana Jallaludin Balkhi, for instance, refers to the cat assuming that his audience are familiar with the story: The fasting cat has immersed himself in his fast, pretending to be asleep to lure his unsuspecting prey. And elsewhere: The cat sat down to perform austerities at that hole.

Because from that hole, he found his nourishment. (Mowlana, *Mathnavi*, V: 975 and V: 1236)

This is one example of such usage of the motif; as stated earlier, the aim of the study is not to document all usages of the motif.

37. Meneghini, "Obayd Zākāni."



38. For a list of a number of unpublished *Mush o Gurbeh* stories see Mottaqi, "Mush-o Gorbe-ha."
39. Mohaddes and Utas, *The Mice and the Cat*.
40. Haidari, "A Medieval Persian Satirist," 118; Hamidian, *Sharh-e Showq*, III: 1973.
41. 'Obayd Zākāni, *Kolliyāt*, ed. Eqbal, 331; 'Obayd Zākāni, *Kolliyāt*, ed. Mahjub, 398.
42. 'Obayd Zākāni, *Kolliyāt*, ed. Eqbal, 339; 'Obayd Zākāni, *Kolliyāt*, ed. Mahjub, 399.
43. Minui, "Qesseh-ye mush o gorbeh," 402.
44. *Ibid.*, 408-9. After Minui, Mahjub and more recently Mohhades have also examined the question of the poem's attribution to 'Obayd. In the introduction to the edited volume of 'Obayd's work mentioned above, Mahjub seconds Minui's observations regarding the poem's attribution to 'Obayd, adding there is not enough evidence to issue a final verdict on the subject-matter, and provides evidence both for and against 'Obayd's authorship. It must be noted that all discussions are about the authenticity of the oldest version of the poem that contains two parts. It is a given that the third part was a later addition. Mohaddes, however, insists that the poem cannot be 'Obayd's, and does so not based on new evidence, but essentially bases his arguments put forth by Minui and Mahjub. Mohaddes' major argument is that the poem is uncharacteristic of 'Obayd's penmanship because the poem is obscene and distasteful. Nevertheless, he reproduces a version of the poem found in a Tunisian manuscript.
45. Although the relatively short poem is, and has been, popular among Persian speakers, there have been many lithograph editions. The poem seems to be an offshoot of 'Attār's *Conference of the Birds*, where this time the nightingale is the main character defending his love for the flower. Its attribution to 'Attār, as argued by Shafī'i Kadkani, is undoubtedly false (Shafī'i Kadkani, *Manteq al-Tayr*, 37). The poem, however, seems to have existed in the literary milieu immediately after 'Attār's demise. For a more recent publication of the *Bolbolnāmeḥ* see 'Attār Nishāburi, *Majmū'eh-i az athar-e*.
46. Nasrollah Purjavadi, the editor of work by the name of *Bolbolnāmeḥ* (Gilani Pumani, *Bolbolnāmeḥ*, 5) mentions a manuscript of the *Bolbolnāmeḥ* (attributed to 'Attār) from 828 H, that is approximately sixty years after 'Obayd's death. That, however, is the date of the oldest manuscript, and not the date of its composition. Thus it is very likely that the work existed during or prior to 'Obayd's lifetime. Furthermore, since the work has not received much scholarly attention, it is entirely possible that older manuscript(s) of the work exist. For a list of the manuscripts and the various publications and translations of the work see Mir Ansari, *Ketābsbenāsi-ye 'Attār*, 176-80.
47. The relationship between the Indian sources is complicated and far from clear. There is no doubt that many of the anecdotes that appear in the Buddhist literature have had pre-Buddhist archetypes. To determine the trajectory of their journey and transformation, and how they became incorporated into other works such as the *Mahabhrata* and the *Pancatantra*, requires careful study of each anecdote, as demonstrated by Renate Söhnen Thiem, who offers some suggestions regarding the cat and mice anecdote in "Buddhist Tales in Mahābhārata."
48. The largest collection of the jatakas—a total of 547 extant stories—is found in the Pali literature. The oldest layer of the stories is traced back to the fourth century BCE (Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, 200 and 286-7), and they are verses of gāthās that most certainly existed before the rise of Buddhism (Hinüber., *Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 56).
49. It seems that in some versions and as a result of later modification the cat became a jackal. However, in the same version, the poetry or the gāthā which is clearly older than the rest of the anecdote speaks of cat as does the title of the jataka. Anonymous, *Jataka Tales*, 115-16.
50. Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa, *Mahabharata*.
51. Bendall, "Tantrakhyaṇa."
52. *Ibid.*, 484. But on p. 467 the author mentions that this particular tale is the same cat and mouse tale that appears in the Old Syriac translation of *Pancatantra*. However, this is not the case. The tale in the old Syriac text is an unrelated story featuring a cat and a mouse, and that story appears in all subsequent versions of the *Kalilah va Demnah*. It is true that the other cat and mouse story is not found in the Indian *Pancatantra*, but its origin is also Indian as a version of it exists in the *Mahabharata*.

53. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/249/>
54. For an image see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/144315>.
55. Ayyar, *South Indian Shrines*, 151-9.
56. Establishing Indian chronology in general and that of their literary texts in particular is very difficult and is a contentious issue; however, we do know with certainty that the versions Mahabharata and the Buddhist jatakas did exist prior to the building of the Shore Temple.
57. Tremblay, "Serindia," 75-131.
58. For Buddhism in Iran see two recent studies: there is an excellent introduction to the topic by Vaziri (*Buddhism in Iran*). Patricia Crone's contribution to the topic has a much narrower focus of attempting to uncover a wide-scale campaign of persecution of Buddhists during the Sasanian period. She points to the fact that all sources are silent regarding this matter, but the lacuna of the historical sources is compensated, she argues, by certain allusions to the supposed persecution in the Pishdādi sections of the Shāhnāme tradition. The analysis of the references to Buddha's appearance in the Shāhnāme tradition, upon which her entire thesis rests, suffers from gross factual errors and misunderstanding of its periodization; see Crone, "Buddhism."
59. Sh. Kuwayama, "Pilgrimage Route Changes and the Decline of Gandhara," *Gandharan Buddhism*, 107-34. Also see Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, 83.
60. Buryakov et al., *The Cities and Routes*, 83.
61. Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, 87.
62. *Ibid.*, 86.
63. Mojtabai, "Beluhar and Budāsef."
64. For a discussion of major work and translations of the jataka see Yoshida, "Sogdian Literature." The text, along with a long introduction, has been translated into Persian by Badr al-Zaman Gharib, *Ravāyati*.
65. For a discussion of its transmission and translations see Vaziri, *Buddhism in Iran*, 59-66. For other examples of the influence of Buddhist literature on the burgeoning Persian poetry and prose beyond the jatakas, such as the invocation of Buddhist literary motifs, among other things, see Melikian-Chirvani, "Buddhism-ii"; Melikian-Chirvani, "L'évocation littéraire."
66. Naeem Qazi et al., "Jatakas."
67. Azarpay, "A Jataka Tale."
68. Kilmheit, "Buddhistische Übernahmen."
69. Asmussen, "Der Manichäismus," where the importance of Baghdad during the early Abbasid period is briefly discussed. Much more can and will be said about this.
70. Mojtabai, "Dāstān-hāye budāyi."

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